



POSITIVE STANCE

Actor Aditi Rao Hydari, despite the ongoing insider-outsider debate, feels Hindi film industry is an inclusive space

LEISURE

P2



SUGA WINS PARTY VOTE

Yoshihide Suga was elected as the new head of Japan's ruling party, virtually making him the country's next Prime Minister

INTERNATIONAL

P10



MAIDEN GS TITLE

Dominic Thiem claims his first Grand Slam crown as he recovers from two sets down to beat Alexander Zverev

SPORTS

P12

IRREGULAR by MANJUL



... for inciting communal harmony...

SHORT TAKES

Samir Dash, Samir Mohanty Covid +ve

Bhubaneswar: School and Mass Education Minister Samir Ranjan Dash Monday said he along with his wife have tested positive for COVID-19. With Dash, the number of Odisha ministers infected with coronavirus has increased to seven. This apart, 22 MLAs and 3 MPs in the state have also been infected with the disease. Earlier in the day BJP state president Samir Mohanty also said that he has been tested positive for the infection and has been hospitalised as per the advice of the doctors.

Record 4,198 fresh Covid cases in state

Bhubaneswar: Odisha registered its highest single-day spike in COVID-19 cases Monday as 4,198 more people, a health official said. The fresh infections have pushed the state's tally to 1,55,005. Eleven more patients succumbed to the infection, taking the state's coronavirus death toll to 637, the official said. Odisha had reported its previous highest single-day spike of 3,996 cases September 11, he said. 2,476 cases were reported from quarantine centres, while 1,722 people tested positive during contact tracing.

MARKET WATCH		
INDEX		VARIATION
SENSEX	38756.63	↓ 97.92
NIFTY	11440	↓ 24.50
DOLLAR	73.815	↓ ₹0.06
EURO	87.37	↑ ₹0.22
GOLD	₹51,765	↑ ₹446
SILVER	₹68,770	↑ ₹842

WEATHER		
		Forecast
TEMP	BHUB	CTK
MAX	35.7°C	34.8°C
MIN	26.6°C	25.0°C
Humidity	94%	81%
Rainfall	1.3mm	Nil

State stops top up sops under PMKSY

BISWA BHUSAN MOHAPATRA, OP

Bhubaneswar, Sept 14: Even as farmers are going through a hard time due to Covid-19, the state government has decided to stop providing additional 35 per cent subsidy for execution of micro irrigation projects under the Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchayee Yojana (PMKSY).

The directorate of horticulture has stopped providing additional subsidy to farmers which it did over and above the assistance provided by the Centre from the current financial year due to the Covid-19. Horticulture director has written a letter in this regard to all field level officials. However, the State Level Sanctioning Committee (SLSC) under the chairmanship of Chief Secretary will take a final call on this move.

"This is to apprise that the provision of top-up subsidy over and above the subsidy provided under the Central Sponsored Scheme PMKSY (per drop more crop) for installation of drip/sprinkler irrigation system has been decided by the government not to be entertained from the state 2020-21," the director said in his letter. Nonetheless, the provision of subsidy as entertained under the scheme will continue as such as per the provisions of the scheme, he said. The district level officials have also been asked to prepare their plan for the current financial year accordingly.

The Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchayee



ANTI-FARMER MOVE

- Govt to end extra 35 pc sops for execution of micro irrigation projects
- Director, horticulture writes to field level officials to stop programme
- Chief Secretary, chairman of SLSC, will take a final call on this move

Yojana (PMKSY) was launched in 2015 with an aim to provide assistance to farmers to set up micro irrigation system drip/sprinkler in their crop fields.

As per the guidelines of the scheme, small and marginal farmers got 55 per cent subsidy for implementation of the micro irrigation project while the subsidy amount for other farmers was 45 per cent. The subsidy cost will be met by both the Centre and the state government in a ratio of 60:40 for all states except for the North Eastern and Himalayan states. In Odisha, the government was pro-

viding 35 per cent top up subsidy out of its own resources over and above the assistance mentioned above for all categories of farmers. Hence, the assistance payable to the beneficiary under micro irrigation scheme was 90 per cent for small and marginal farmers and 80 per cent for other farmers. The subsidy payable to the beneficiary is limited to an overall ceiling of 5 hectares per farmer. Small and marginal farmers in the state, especially those doing horticulture crops, will be hit hard by this move of the government.

"In view of Covid-19, the government has taken many austerity measures. This top up subsidy may be stopped for this year only," said an official of the horticulture directorate. Last year, the state government had sanctioned over 23,000 projects under the PMKSY and provided subsidy of over ₹23.58 crore to farmers. The Centre has earmarked ₹45 crore under the scheme for Odisha.

States' GST dues ₹1.51 lakh crore; Maha leads pack

AGENCIES

New Delhi, Sept 14: The GST collection during April-August declined on account of COVID-19 induced lockdown, and the compensation due to states stands at over ₹1.51 lakh crore, Minister of State for Finance Anurag Singh Thakur said Monday.

The provisional GST compensation due to states UTs for 2020-21 was highest for Maharashtra at ₹22,485 crore, followed by Karnataka (₹13,763 crore), Uttar Pradesh (₹11,742 crore), Gujarat (₹11,563 crore) and Tamil Nadu (₹11,269 crore).

The compensation due to West Bengal stands at ₹7,750 crore, Kerala (₹7,077 crore), Punjab (₹6,969 crore), Delhi (₹6,931 crore), Rajasthan (₹6,812 crore), Telangana (₹5,424 crore) and Chhattisgarh (₹2,827 crore).

The total provisional GST compensation due to 31 states and UTs for 2020-21 put together stands at ₹1,51,365 crore, as per data shared in a written reply to a question in the Lok Sabha.

Thakur said the issue of pending compensation and future course of action to meet the shortfall was discussed in the 41st GST Council meeting August 27 wherein states were given two options to meet their GST compensation shortfall for current fiscal year from market borrowing. It was also decided that states will give their preference views thereon.



Harivansh RS dy chief; BJD supports NDA again



POST NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi, Sept 14: Janata Dal (U) MP Harivansh Narayan Singh, the National Democratic Alliance's (NDA's) pick for the Rajya Sabha Deputy Chairman's post Monday was elected by a voice vote. The Biju Janata Dal (BJD) supported the NDA candidate.

The BJD parliamentary party leader in the Upper House Prasanna Acharya congratulated Harivansh for being elected as the deputy chief of the house.

"He has been a journalist for a very long time and as a journalist he has observed life from different

angles. We hope that his eyes will be on all corners while chairing the proceedings of the house. We are all impressed with his knowledge of parliamentary proceedings. He will conduct the proceedings of the house in a very dignified manner as he did earlier," Acharya said.

The BJD leader also complimented the opposition candidate and RJD MP Manoj Jha for upholding the democratic tradition of parliament. Following a whip issued by the BJD, all nine MPs were present in the house and backed the NDA candidate.

Earlier in the day, the BJD had announced that it would support the NDA candidate. According to party MPs, the decision was taken following a telephonic talk between Nitish Kumar and Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik.

Kangana leaves Mumbai, calls PoK analogy 'bang on'

AGENCIES

Mumbai, Sept 14: Actor Kangana Ranaut Monday said she is leaving Mumbai with a heavy heart but the way she was "terrorized", faced abuses and saw attempts to break her house, her analogy comparing the city with PoK was "bang on".

The actor, whose comment likening Mumbai to Pakistan occupied Kashmir triggered a spat with Maharashtra's ruling Shiv Sena, arrived in the city from her home state Himachal Pradesh last week. On the same day her office here faced action for "illegal" alterations by Shiv Sena-led Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation following which she moved the Bombay High Court which stayed the demolition.

"With a heavy heart leaving Mumbai, the way I was terrorised all these days constant attacks and abuses hurled at me attempts to break my house after my work place, alert security with lethal weapons around me, must say my analogy about PoK was bang on(sic)," Ranaut wrote on Twitter.

Targetting the ruling party, she said the protectors had declared themselves to be "destroyers".

GOVT INTRODUCES 8 BILLS

AGENCIES

New Delhi, Sept 14: The central government Monday introduced back-to-back eight Bills in the Lok Sabha on the first day of the Monsoon Session during four hour 15 minute proceedings.

The Salary, Allowances and Pension of Members of Parliament (Amendment) Bill, 2020; the Essential Commodities (Amendment) Bill, 2020; the Assisted Reproductive Technology (Regulation) Bill, 2020; the Bilateral Netting of Qualified Financial Contracts Bill, 2020; the Farmers' Produce Trade and Commerce (Promotion and Facilitation) Bill, 2020; the Farmers (Empowerment and Protection) Agreement of Price Assurance and Farm Services Bill, 2020; the Factoring Regulation (Amendment) Bill, 2020; and the Banking Regulation (Amendment) Bill, 2020 were introduced after the house met for the second time after a one-hour adjournment at 9 am.

Parliamentary Affairs Minister Pralhad Joshi began with the introduction of the Salary Allowances and Pension of Members of Parliament (Amendment) Bill, 2020 which was listed for

the Lok Sabha's legislative business for the day.

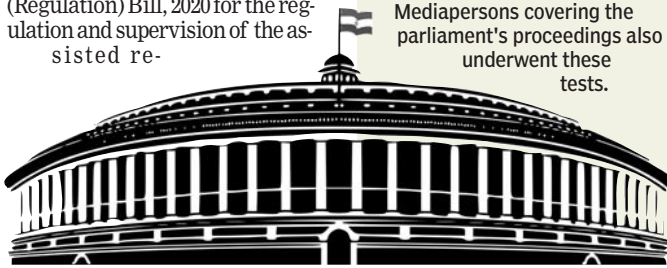
The Bill seeks immediate legislation by promulgation of the salary, allowances and pension of Members of Parliament (Amendment) Ordinance, 2020. It was among the more than 20 new Bills, including 11 that will replace ordinances, which the government targets to pass during this 18-day session of the Parliament which will conclude on October 1.

Minister of State for Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution Raosaheb Dadarao Danve introduced the Essential Commodities (Amendment) Bill, 2020 which was promulgated on June 5, 2020. It amends the Essential Commodities Act, 1955. The Act empowers the central government to control the production, supply, distribution, trade, and commerce in certain commodities. Cabinet Minister Harsh Vardhan introduced the Assisted Reproductive Technology (Regulation) Bill, 2020 for the regulation and supervision of the assisted re-

productive technology clinics and the assisted reproductive technology banks. The Bill aims prevention of misuse, safe and ethical practice of assisted reproductive technology services and for matters connected therewith.

30 MPs Covid +ve

NEW DELHI: Around 30 MPs, including BJP's Meenakshi Lekhi and Pravesh Verma, and over 50 employees of parliament have tested positive for COVID-19 so far. Many of them tested positive after undergoing compulsory coronavirus tests on the parliament premises before the start of the monsoon session, while several of them had undergone tests in their respective constituencies. All parliamentarians and staff of the secretariats had undergone mandatory COVID-19 tests before the start of the session. Mediapersons covering the parliament's proceedings also underwent these tests.



STATE SUPPLEMENTARY BUDGET

Odisha to rework budget priorities

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Sept 14: With the pandemic having ruined the state's as well as nation's economy, the government has started preparing for a supplementary budget to be presented in the Assembly during its winter session. Laying down details of the proposals, the finance department has asked administrative departments to submit their proposals by October 12.

"Covid-19 has posed challenges in every sphere of our life. The state is fighting the pandemic with all its resources with a "life above rest" approach. The fight appears longer, which would require higher expenditure. However, the strategic lockdown and shutdown to contain the pandemic has adversely affected the economic activities and revenue realization. National and state economies are likely to contract during 2020-21. Thus, there would be a resource shortfall both on account of central transfer as well as own revenues," Finance Secretary AK Meena said in a letter to all departments.

SESSION FROM SEPT 29

The monsoon session of the State Assembly will begin from September 29 and continue till October 7. This session will have eight business days. The Assembly will remain closed on account of Gandhi Jayanti (October 2). However, it will hold business October 4 despite it being a Sunday.

Meena said that it would not be possible to make substantive provisions under any unit in absence of adequate resource back up except for priority sectors. Therefore, the supplementary budget will re-prioritize the annual budget in which departments would be allowed to augment the provision in one unit only by locating equivalent savings in some other units, he said.

All departments were asked to make realistic assessments of their requirements. Focus will be given to health sector. Besides, social security transfers, employment, creation of livelihood opportunities, protecting vulnerable sections, agriculture, MSMEs as well as industries would be given importance.

CRISIS TIME



A jaguar crouches on an area recently scorched by wildfires at the Encontro das Aguas park in the Pantanal wetlands near Pocone, Mato Grosso, Brazil

Covid vax for all not possible before 2024: Serum

AGENCIES

Mumbai, Sept 14: Dampening hopes of a Covid-19 vaccine by year-end, the chief executive of the world's largest manufacturer of vaccines has said that adequate coronavirus vaccine will not be available for everybody in the world to be immunised until the end of 2024. Adar Poonawalla, chief executive of the Serum Institute of India, said that pharma firms were not ramping up production capacity swiftly to be able to inoculate the world population in less duration.

"It's going to take four to five years until everyone gets the vaccine on this planet," Poonawalla was quoted as saying. Poonawalla had earlier predicted that if the coronavirus shot is a two-dose vaccine, as is the case with measles or

rotavirus, then the world would require 15 billion doses. The family-operated Serum Institute, which is in Pune, has partnered with five international pharmaceutical companies, including AstraZeneca and Novavax, to develop a coronavirus vaccine and pledged to manufacture one billion doses, out of which it has promised 50% to India. The firm may also tie-up with Russia's Gamaleya Research Institute to produce the Sputnik vaccine.

Poonawalla's remarks on vaccine production and distribution are crucial, in view of the Serum Institute taking on the task of manufacturing shots for the majority of the developing world. Furthermore, his statements have increased scepticism on claims by political leaders who have committed to vaccines by next month amid concerns that huge pre-orders

DESPAIR TO FORE

Pharma firms were not ramping up production capacity swiftly to be able to inoculate the world population in less duration: Poonawalla

If the coronavirus shot is a two-dose vaccine, as is the case with measles or rotavirus, then the world would require 15bn doses



from Europe and US will result in developing countries being bumped to the bottom of the list.

Poonawalla added that the commitment had outdone the capacity of other vaccine manufacturers. "I know the world wants to be optimistic on it. ...[but] I have not heard of anyone coming even close

to that [level] right now," he told the publication. As part of its agreement with AstraZeneca, the firm will seek to produce Covid-19 vaccine doses that cost closed \$3 for 68 countries and under its deal with Novavax, for 92 countries.

Poonawalla, who is the son of Cyrus Poonawalla, India's sev-

enth-richest billionaire, minimised the risks over the halt in AstraZeneca trials last week after a participant fell saying, and described it as "very normal". "We're doing a ... raise and diluting equity so that we have enough capital to manage the raw materials and equipment we need in the next one or two years to operate at this scale," he told FT.

Poonawalla had in April ordered 600m glass vials and other particulars to gear up for the mass manufacturing of the Covid-19 vaccine. However, he expressed worries over distribution in India, which is witnessing a rapid rise in the number of coronaviruses infections, and said that the process would be difficult as there is an absence of a sophisticated cold chain system to transport the vaccine safely to its 1.4 billion people.

FORTUNE FORECAST

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FOR ASTROLOGY DIAL 55181

ARIES

If you're away from home, you might get a bit misty-eyed. And while you're calling your family, says Ganesha, it's a good idea to call friends you're hardly in touch with. It's a different high, to know you're loved.

TAURUS

Clarity will be a concentric circle today. You may feel trapped in a labyrinth, puzzled and perplexed, about a personal problem, predicts Ganesha. You may not be inclined to deal with unpleasant situations in the afternoon. You will exhibit your flair with words that may impress people around you, says Ganesha.

GEMINI

Today, you will be busy doing grocery shopping and other household chores. By noon, you will be pretty bored. In fact, you are likely to walk up to unknown people and chat with them to kill time. You are also likely to experiment and take a trip to the wild side.

CANCER

It is very likely that your old contacts will come quite handy for you today, foresees Ganesha. At work, your skills in developing a quick rapport with others will help you perform better. People will have a high regard for your honesty.

LEO

With today's alignment of your planets, Ganesha foresees you heading for a shopping bonanza. Be prepared to come back home weighed down with goodies, as you are likely to squander a considerable amount on them. On the work front, it's a completely different story as you display your maturity and mellowness.

VIRGO

D.E.A.F – Diet, Exercise and All-round Fitness – describes where you are much to incline today. Savour the most exquisite cuisine today, suggests Ganesha. Later in the day perhaps, you may reach a crossroad in life. A rise in the bank balance will cushion the safety of your future.

LIBRA

Call it a proof of the old saying, 'Blood is thicker than water', but it is your family that will stand you in good stead today, foresees Ganesha. And in keeping with your grateful nature, you are likely to repay your dues later in the day. Don't be surprised if your rivals admit to your feats – it's all in the stars today.

SCORPIO

The faucet of creativity will run wild today, especially when you try sorting things out with your siblings. Today, you shall bypass all incoming troubles with much ease. Your ingenuity will help you bag a job later, perhaps. In the evening, you will be the Good Samaritan and bring peace to someone, predicts Ganesha.

SAGITTARIUS

Ganesha sees you being friendly and jovial throughout the day. Planning a getaway with family will be on top of your to-do list. Honours will be showered on you at your workplace.

CAPRICORN

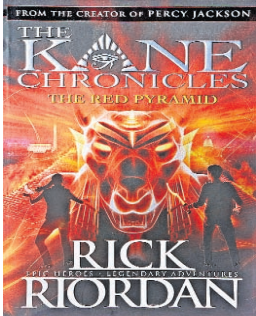
Those meddlesome neighbours of yours may suddenly come across as more seemly, and even if you can see through their ulterior motives, you will find yourself developing a good rapport with them, says Ganesha. Later in the day, you will indulge in literary works, which will provide food for thought.

AQUARIUS

Today, you will feel inclination towards antiques and arts, foretells Ganesha. You appreciate the beauty of life, but often forget to bring these emotions to the surface. You will be very sensitive today and probably the smallest of disputes may hurt your feelings badly, foresees Ganesha.

PISCES

You may find yourself unable to take critical decisions on a split-second basis today, and will probably keep second-guessing yourself. Your family will be in focus today. Romance is in the air, and the evening should probably see you spend time with your soul mate, says Ganesha.



NETFLIX TO ADAPT RIORDAN'S BOOK TRILOGY INTO FILMS

Percy Jackson author Rick Riordan has announced that Netflix is developing feature film adaptations of his Egyptian mythology book series *The Kane Chronicles*. Riordan shared the news in a Twitter post Sunday.

TAX EVASION: REFAELI ASKED TO DO COMMUNITY SERVICE FOR 9 MONTHS

Supermodel Bar Refaeli has been sentenced to nine months of community service by an Israeli court in a tax evasion case. Her mother and agent Zipi Refaeli has been given a 16-month prison term. The duo was convicted in July.



Idealism is oxygen to her soul, says Nayantara Sahgal

POST NEWS NETWORK

BHUBANESWAR: Ideals of freedom movement fused with Gandhian principle of non-violence struggle still offer oxygen to her soul which is why she does not fear to criticise any government for their flawed policies and ideologies, said legendary novelist Nayantara Sahgal (93) while participating in an online event Sunday.

The feisty nonagenarian, a member of Nehru-Gandhi family, was at the KLF Bhava Samvad to discuss her journey as a child of the freedom struggle, her upbringing in the Nehruvian era and as a writer reflecting on the contemporary times.

The Kalinga Literary Festival (KLF) has launched KLF Bhava Sambad, an online dialogue platform to bring poets, writers, thinkers, philosophers, spiritual masters, researchers, performers, and common citizens to reflect upon the lives and emotions around the society during this lockdown and beyond.



Sahgal was in conversation with popular poet and art critic Kedar Mishra of Odisha. The discussion covered the author's early days of education and how she got inspired by Gandhi Ji. She lost her father Ranjit Sitaram Pandit in her teens and her mother Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit was a strong force of support.

Talking about how the transition in politics has inspired her writings, she highlighted that the characters from her novels continue to reflect the contemporary times. She stressed that writers have moral obligation to reflect the social reality. She cited how she wrote against the policies of Indira Gandhi and criticised the emergency and for that she was denied a posting to Italy as an ambassador.

KLF a premier literary festival of India has initiated an online literary webinar series as the entire nation has come to a standstill because of Covid19 lockdown and has witnessed precarious scenarios touching all strata of life. The platform has successfully conducted 51 sessions so far garnering over nine lakhs views.

Rajkummar-Shraddha starrer releases in Japan

Mumbai: The Shraddha Kapoor and Rajkummar Rao-starrer horror comedy *Stree* has released in Japan.

Shraddha took to Twitter to share the news, with a poster of her 2018 film. "#Stree is all set to conquer #Japan! Releasing today, beware (sic)," she captioned the poster.

Helmed by Amar Kaushik, *Stree* revolves around the people of Chanderi village, where the spirit of a woman attacks men at night during four days of a religious festival every year.

Apart from Shraddha and Rajkummar, *Stree* also features Pankaj Tripathi, Aparshakti Khurana, and Abhishek Banerjee, among others. Nora Fatehi's special dance number *Kamariya* has gone on to become a rage.

Amid the ongoing coronavirus pandemic, the theatres in Japan reopened in mid-May when the government started easing restrictions. Initially, the cinema halls in Japan started with the screening of



old Hollywood classics like *Ben-Hur* (1959), *East of Eden* (1955) and *Bonnie and Clyde* (1969).

Why Malaika is heartbroken

Mumbai: Actress Malaika Arora is under quarantine after testing Covid-19 positive. Her son Arhaan recently visited Malaika with their dog Casper, and she says it breaks her heart for not being able to give them a hug.

The *Happy New Year* actor has shared a picture on Instagram, of Arhaan and Casper standing behind a wall during the meeting.

"While my heart breaks to not be able to hug my two babies for another few days, just looking at their sweet faces gives me so much courage and energy to power through," she captioned the image, with the hashtag, #this-tooshallpass.

Big B 1st celebrity voice on Amazon Alexa in India

New Delhi: Amazon Alexa Monday announced a partnership with megastar Amitabh Bachchan to create a unique voice experience for its Indian fans.

The Amazon Alexa team will work closely with Bachchan to capture his voice and deliver a new voice experience to customers.

It will include popular offerings like jokes, weather, shayaris, motivational quotes, advice and more.

Big B's voice will be available on Alexa devices next year, the company said.

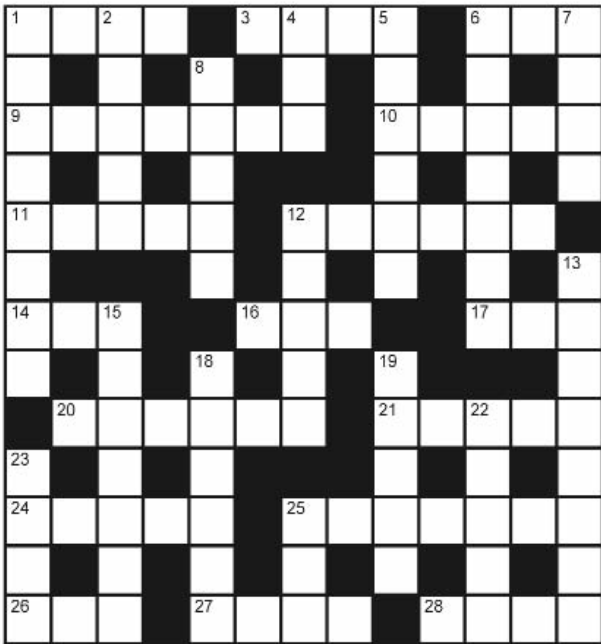
"Bachchan's voice is truly memorable for any Indian who has grown-up watching Hindi movies. This combination delivers a perfect pitch to further delight and simplify the lives of our customers," said Puneesh Kumar, Country Leader for Alexa, Amazon India.

Alexa in the US already has voices of several celebrities like Samuel L Jackson, but this is the first time that the Indian Alexa will get the voice of a celebrity from Mumbai film industry.



FUN post

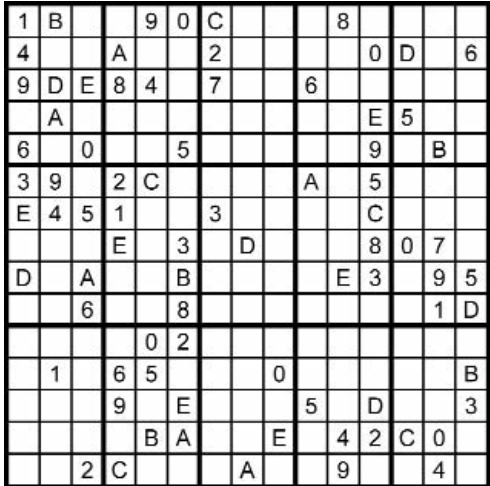
CROSSWORD



- Across**
- 1 Scheme
 - 3 Kind of race
 - 6 Water holder
 - 9 Passed out
 - 10 Deduce
 - 11 Winter wear
 - 12 Royal family member
 - 14 Sound at the door
 - 16 Game piece
 - 17 Have a tab
 - 20 Hair curler
 - 21 Toys with tails
 - 24 Sap sucker
 - 25 Singing voice
 - 26 Fishing aid
 - 27 Calendar parts
 - 28 Pastry
 - 6 In reality (2,5)
 - 7 Shopping place
 - 8 Like draft beer (2,3)
 - 12 Earlier in time
 - 13 Ring thing
 - 15 Oracle
 - 18 Sidestepped
 - 19 Safari sight
 - 22 Coronet
 - 23 Tall tale
 - 25 Reserved
- Down**
- 1 Travel document
 - 2 Bouquet
 - 4 Reel's partner
 - 5 Apparition

SUDOKU

To solve the Sudoku puzzle, each row, column and box must contain the numbers 0 to 9 and the letters A to E.



SOLUTIONS

CROSSWORD

SUDOKU

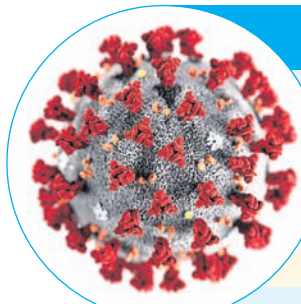


CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW



ARCHITECT OF THE UNIVERSE

An artisan gives finishing touches to clay idols of Lord Bishwakarma in Old Town area of Bhubaneswar, Monday. Bishwakarma Puja which falls this Wednesday will be a low-key affair due to COVID-19



COVID-19 TRACKER

	INFECTED	RECOVERED	DEAD
World	2,92,69,395	2,11,03,093	9,29,750
India	48,45,272	37,77,448	79,760
Odisha	1,55,005	1,22,024	637

Keep 50% beds for nCoV patients, pvt hosps told

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Sept 14: With the rapid surge in COVID-19 cases, state government Monday asked all private hospitals located in municipal corporation areas and having more than 30 beds to reserve 50 per cent of their beds for the patients.

Additional Chief Secretary, Health & Family Welfare, PK Mohapatra has issued a notification in this regard.

“All private hospitals having bed strength of 30 or above, located in Bhubaneswar, Cuttack, Berhampur, Sambalpur and Rourkela municipal corporations limits shall mandatorily designate minimum 50 per cent of their general beds and 80 per cent of ICUs for treatment of COVID positive patients, with an option to convert the entire hospital as a COVID hospital,” read the notification. The hospitals can charge the patients as per fee prescribed the government earlier.

Meanwhile, the government has also asked the Collectors to close down the temporary medical camps (TMCs) and Covid Care Homes

COVID CARE IN FIVE ULBs



80% ICU beds in the five municipal corporation areas to be reserved for COVID patients

District Collectors have been asked to close down temporary medical camps, COVID care homes

THE COLLECTORS WERE ASKED TO PERSONALLY MONITOR THIS AND GIVE COMPLIANCE ON A DAILY BASIS TO SPECIAL RELIEF COMMISSIONER

IN CASE OF ANY EMERGENCY NEED FOR THESE FACILITIES, THE GOVERNMENT HAS ALLOWED TO RECREATE SUCH FACILITIES AT A SHORT NOTICE

(CCHs) as the occupancy in these centres is nil.

If there is no patient at a Covid Care Centre (CCC), such facility will also be closed and in other places where the occupancy is less should be scaled down and the requisite manpower be re-mobilised to their original positions, Mohapatra

told Collectors. The Collectors were asked to personally monitor this and give compliance on a daily basis to Special Relief Commissioner (SRC) in prescribed format

In case of any emergency need for these facilities, the government has allowed to recreate such facilities at a short notice.

AIR presenter Nadia Bihari Mohanty no more

POST NEWS NETWORK

Cuttack, Sept 14: Ace radio presenter, anchor and writer Nadia Bihari Mohanty breathed his last Monday afternoon at a private hospital here. He was 90.

Mohanty was synonymous with the ‘Sishu Sansara’ programme which was being aired from the All India Radio, Cuttack. He had been anchoring this popular children-oriented programme for a long time as ‘Bada Bhai’. According to family

members, Mohanty had tested positive for COVID-19 and was undergoing treatment for last few days.

As a writer, Mohanty has written several short stories and poems, specifically for children. ‘Sahitya Akademi Bal Sahitya Puraskar’ was conferred on him in 2013 for his contribution towards children’s literature.

Mohanty was born in Kaupada village in Kendrapara district. He got a job offer as an announcer in AIR, Cuttack in 1958 and took it up.

AMRUT SCHEME

Mahtab bats for drainage projects in urban areas

POST NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi, Sept 14: Biju Janata Dal (BJD) MP from Cuttack Bhartruhari Mahtab Monday urged the Union government to approve projects under Atal Mission for Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation (AMRUT) for improvement of storm water drainage system in Cuttack.

The BJD MP raised the issue under Rule 377 in Lok Sabha. He said that the state government had submitted a project proposal of Rs 3,700 crore for development of storm water drainage systems in AMRUT cities. However, they are yet to be approved.

Mahtab informed the House that a large number of drainage systems in many urban areas of the state have collapsed resulting in flooding.

“This can be seen during rainy



ODISHA IN PARLIAMENT

season in major cities like Cuttack, Puri and Bhubaneswar,” he said.

Significantly, the Union government has launched AMRUT scheme with the aim of providing basic amenities like water supply, sewerage, parks and urban transport facilities to improve the quality of life especially for the poor and the disadvantaged.

Large number of drainage systems in many urban areas of the state have collapsed resulting in flooding, said Mahtab, adding this could be seen during rains in major cities

Mahtab said proper disposal of surplus rainwater is essential to tackle waterlogging problems and keeping in view the projected rate of urbanisation, a 50-year planning has been done.

He urged the Centre to approve the projects under AMRUT scheme for improvement of storm water drainage systems in Cuttack and other urban areas of the state.

INSTALL BSNL TOWERS IN KALAHANDI: PANDA

NEW DELHI: Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) MP from Kalahandi Basanta Kumar Panda Monday urged the Centre to install Bharat Sanchar Nigam Ltd (BSNL) towers for better connectivity in some Maoist-affected areas.

Speaking during Zero Hour in Lok Sabha, Panda said that people in two aspirational districts - Kalahandi and Nuapada - in the state under his



Parliamentary constituency have been facing connectivity issues while using cell phones.

He named a few places of these districts such as Sunagada and Maragada, and informed the Lower House that these places are Maoist-affected areas.

He urged the Union government to identify the black spots in these two districts and install BSNL towers for better connectivity in these areas.

RS mourns demise of 4 Odisha ex-MPs

NEW DELHI: The Rajya Sabha Monday mourned the demise of five former MPs of Odisha – Narendra Kumar Swain, Basant Kumar Das, Bishnu Charan Das, Sanatan Bisi and Bhabani Charan Patnaik – along with ex-President Pranab Mukherjee on the first day of Monsoon session.

The Upper House mourned the demise of 19 MPs including three sitting MPs.

Bhabani Charan Patnaik was a Congress leader from Odisha and a Rajya Sabha member for three terms. He was also awarded Padam

Rajya Sabha Chairman M Venkaiah Naidu adjourned the proceedings for an hour as a mark of respect to the departed members

Shri in 2018. Patnaik died in Bhubaneswar May 14 at the age 98. He had also taken part in the Quit India movement in 1942. Mourning the demise of Patnaik, RS

Chairman Venkaiah Naidu said that the country has lost a veteran freedom fighter, an able Parliamentarian and a great social worker.

Basant Kumar Das was Rajya Sabha member from 1990 to 1996 from Odisha. He died at the age of 80 in April this year. Bishnu Charan Das was a Biju Janata Dal leader and Rajya Sabha MP from July 2016 to March 2017.

He died July 6 this year at a hospital in Bhubaneswar weeks after he suffered a stroke. BJD leader Narendra Swain was a

member of Rajya Sabha from December 2015 to April 2020. He passed away September 7 at a hospital in Cuttack.

Rajya Sabha Chairman M Venkaiah Naidu adjourned the proceedings of the House for an hour as a mark of respect to the departed members.

Traditionally, proceedings are adjourned for the day when a sitting member or former President dies. However, the Chairman adjourned the House for an hour only in view of 18 days’ short session due to COVID-19.

ANOTHER CHANCE



An invigilator helps HSCE supplementary examinees find their halls at Ranihat High School in Cuttack, Monday

RAJYA SABHA DY CHAIRMAN ELECTION

Congress slams BJD for backing NDA candidate

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Sept 14: Opposition Congress, Monday, slammed the ruling Biju Janata Dal (BJD) for extending support to NDA candidate Harivansh Narayan Singh for his election to Rajya Sabha Deputy Chairman post.

“The real face of the BJD has been exposed today. In the past, the BJD had supported all the moves taken by the BJP government saying it is maintaining equidistance policy. Today, the BJD has extended support to NDA candidate for Rajya Sabha Deputy Chairman post. It is now clear that both BJD and BJP are united in Odisha,” state Congress president Niranjan Patnaik said.

The Chief Minister should not

fool the people of Odisha with his ‘equidistant from Congress and BJP’ façade, he said.

However, BJD’s Rajya Sabha MP Amar Patnaik said, “Today again J(DU) chief Nitish Kumar requested our Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik to support Harivansh in the election for the post of Deputy Chairman of the House. After considering all aspects, the BJD has supported him.”

Following BJD support, Harivansh was re-elected as Rajya Sabha deputy chairman by a voice vote. Notably, the regional party had backed the NDA candidate Harivansh Narayan Singh in 2018 as well for the Rajya Sabha Deputy Chairman’s post following a similar talk between him and Nitish Kumar.

POST NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi, Sept 14: In a major relief to Asirbad Behera, the Supreme Court has given clean chit to him in a case related to financial irregularities at Barabati stadium and land grab allegations based on the report of Accountant General (AG).

A three-judge bench of the apex court headed by Chief Justice SA Bobde and comprising Justices AS Bopanna and V Ramasubramanian has taken on record the report submitted by the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) and accepted the final form for closure of the case.

The apex court’s order came after CBI submitted to the court that “no prosecutable evidence could be gathered during the in-

₹35Cr released for tiger, jumbo protection: Pradhan

UNITED NEWS OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, Sept 14: The Union government has released over Rs 35 crore to Odisha under centrally-sponsored schemes for tiger and elephant conservation during 2019-21, Union Minister for Petroleum and Natural Gas Dharmendra Pradhan said.

Taking to the Twitter, Pradhan said project tiger and project elephant are addressing the threat of poaching and helping these majestic species thrive in their natural habitat.

He said key initiatives like compensatory afforestation to increase forest cover, National Clean Air Programme, green skill development programme undertaken by the Union government led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi are helping to create a nature-friendly ecosystem and generating new opportunities for the youths.

The Union Minister said efforts to nurture traditional compassion and tolerance in people living in and around elephant habitats is also



being encouraged.

Odisha, Pradhan said, is one of the most richly endowed states in biodiversity and has witnessed a direct impact of these conservation efforts.

The Union Minister said consistent efforts towards environmental sustainability and conservation of wildlife under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and stewardship of Prakash Javadekar has become a trailblazer for the revival of endangered animal species like tigers and elephants in the country.

CB BEGINS PROBE INTO JOB FRAUD

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Sept 14: The state Crime Branch (CB) has initiated a probe into alleged job fraud following a complaint of the Odisha Staff Selection Commission (OSSC). The CB also reportedly found prima facie evidence against the miscreants, who allegedly tried to secure jobs under OSSC using fake documents.

As per sources, one of the accused identified as Debabrata Pradhan is a resident of Odatarabai village under Delang police station in Puri. Pradhan reached the OSSC office at Barrack No-1 in Unit-V area here in October 2019 and claimed that he had received appointment letter for the post of Sub-Inspector of Police under the Combine Police Service exam conducted by the OSSC in 2013.

The OSSC staff immediately suspected his claims as the result for the said exam held during 2013 had already been declared in December 7, 2016.

Meanwhile, the OSSC selected the required number of candidates out of the total 840 who cleared the test as per the number of vacant posts. Many candidates who failed to get the job had also later staged dharna and gheraoed the OSSC office.

When the suspecting OSSC staff asked Pradhan to show documents, he presented a notice downloaded on his cell phone from his personal email address.

The OSSC staffers found the notice to be fake and created by forging the original notice related to the viva voce test for the post of welfare extension officer.

Later, OSSC authorities lodged a complaint with CB which also found during probe that along with Pradhan other persons are involved in the crime. The crime branch requested the Google search engine authorities to find out others involved in the fraud as well as the victims who were cheated.

The CB sleuths found that along with Pradhan some others are also involved in the fraud

Record 4,198 new cases push state's nCoV tally to 1,55,005

11 more succumbed to the infection, taking Odisha's coronavirus death toll to 637

PNN & AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, Sept 14: State registered its highest single-day spike in COVID-19 cases Monday as 4,198 more people tested positive for the infection, an official of Health and Family Welfare (H&FW) department said.

The fresh infections have pushed the state's coronavirus tally to 1,55,005. Meanwhile, 11 more patients succumbed to the infection, taking Odisha's coronavirus death toll to 637, the official said.

Odisha had reported its previous highest single-day spike of 3,996 cases September 11, the official pointed out.

As many as 2,476 new cases were reported from different quarantine centres, while 1,722 people tested positive for the infection during contact tracing.

Khurda district reported the highest number of fresh cases at 758, followed by Cuttack (367) and Puri (310). Ten other districts registered more than 100 fresh infections each, added the official.

Four fresh fatalities were reported in Cuttack, two each in Bolangir and Khurda and one each in Kandhamal, Nayagarh and Mayurbhanj districts, said the official.

As many as 53 COVID-19 patients have so far died in the state due to other ailments.

The state has so far tested over 24.72 lakh samples for COVID-19, including 49,393 Sunday, the official said.

Meanwhile, 3,382 persons recovered in the state, Monday, the H&FW department tweeted.

The recoveries include 503 from Khurda, 344 from Cuttack, 262 from Bargarh, 177 from Jagajpur, 175 from Mayurbhanj, 167 from Bhadrak, 156 from Balasore, 146 from Dhenkanal, 112 from Puri and 102 from Jagatsinghpur.

With this, the number of active cases in the state stands at 32,291, while 1,22,024 people have been cured of the disease so far, the H&FW official further said.



INFECTIONS & FATALITIES	
Khurda reported the highest number of fresh cases at 758, followed by Cuttack (367) and Puri (310)	Of the fresh fatalities, four were reported in Cuttack, two each in Bolangir and Khurda and one each in Kandhamal, Nayagarh and Mayurbhanj
State had reported its previous highest single-day spike of 3,996 cases September 11	

S&ME Minister, his wife test +ve

BHUBANESWAR: School and Mass Education (S&ME) Minister Samir Ranjan Dash Monday said he and his wife have tested positive for the novel coronavirus. With Dash, the number of Odisha ministers infected with coronavirus has increased to seven. This apart, 22 MLAs and 3 MPs in the state have also been infected with the virus.

"Me and my wife Sangeeta Dash have tested positive for COVID-19. We are stable and urge all those who have come in contact with us in the last seven days get their COVID test done," Dash tweeted in Odia.

Earlier in the day, BJP state president Samir Mohanty had also said that he has been tested positive for the infection and has been hospitalised as per the advice of the doctors.

Mohanty has been admitted to

AIIMS, Bhubaneswar, party sources said, adding that earlier BJP Lok Sabha MP from Bargarh Suresh Pujari, Union Minister Dharmendra Pradhan and Nilagiri MLA Sukanta Kumar Nayak, had tested positive for the infection.

Meanwhile, Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik wished quick recovery of Mohanty. Taking to Twitter, Patnaik said, "Concerned to know that #Odisha BJP President @SamirMohantyBJP ji is tested positive for #COVID19. Spoke to him to inquire about his wellbeing and wished him speedy recovery."

The other Odisha ministers who have earlier tested positive for COVID-19 include Food Supplies and Consumer Welfare Minister Ranendra Pratap Swain and Women and Child Development and Mission Shakti Minister Tukuni Sahu.

STATE CABINET TO MEET TODAY

Bhubaneswar: The state Cabinet headed by Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik will meet at 11:30am Tuesday through videoconferencing. Some crucial proposals including GST Ordinance Bill and a tender for infrastructure project by Works department are likely to be discussed. The panel may also give nod to a proposal of Higher Education department, sources said.

OKCL for holistic development

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Sept 14: The journey of Odisha Knowledge Corporation begins in the year 2011, on September 12; formed with the State Government's vision of creating a knowledge-led economy and knowledge-based communities in all the urban, rural and tribal regions of the state, recognizes bridging of digital divide is key to survival, development and empowerment of the people and the overall development of the State in the emerging knowledge era of the 21st century in the context of liberalization, privatization and globalization along with four emerging trends: digitisation, virtualisation, mobilisation and mass-personalisation.

OKCL advocated online freelancing, to create a sustainable local self-employment for semi-urban and rural youths who cannot afford to migrate to cities, since Sept 2019, when it started its pilot project with local youths in its corporate office in the area of freelancing.

GST wing crackdown on tobacco manufacturers

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Sept 14: The Odisha Commercial Tax and GST Enforcement authorities under the CT & GST Commissionerate have conducted a series of raids on 17 business premises and warehouses of tobacco and pan masala manufactures and traders since August 11.

According to sources, large scale unaccounted purchases and sales were detected during inspection for which penalty of ₹2 crore was

Unaccounted purchases and sales were detected during inspection for which penalty of ₹2 crore was collected in 13 cases

collected in 13 cases. Raids in business as well as factory premises of other two big tobacco and pan masala manufacturers and one trader are still continuing at Sambalpur, the sources added.

BPIA passenger movement soars

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Sept 14: With the phase-wise resumption of services at Biju Patnaik International Airport (BPIA) being rolled out, the city airport showed gradual increase in passengers post lockdown.

Taking to Twitter, Airport Authority of India (AAI), Monday, stated that the BPIA recently witnessed passenger footfall of 95,500 in August 2020 against just 128 earlier in April. This tremendous jump in the number of people availing the service comes as a good sign due to "travellers' trust" in the services and its "safety precautions", it added.

It can be mentioned here that flight services to and from BPIA were affected when the central government ordered suspension of all domestic and international flights earlier in March owing to outbreak of COVID-19. However, a brief hia-

tus, the city airport saw its first domestic flight landing Bhubaneswar from Delhi on May 25.

"The number of is passengers is increasing every day. This is a promising sign for us. Although we haven't resumed all our services we have been operating about 20 flights daily. Earlier due to COVID induced lockdown we had suffered 50% and the passenger traffic had dropped by 75. Passenger movement was observed as 58,953 in June and 65,137 in July," said BPIA Director, V. V. Rao.

Meanwhile, the city airport with its newly resumed services to Surat has now been catering to flights from Hyderabad, Delhi, Mumbai, Kolkata, Bengaluru, Chennai and Jharsuguda.

Moreover, as per sources, as against 45 daily flights being functional from the BPIA the authorities have allowed service for 20 until now.



State honour being given to veteran actor Ajit Das at Satyanagar crematory in Bhubaneswar, Monday. Family, friends and fans bid a tearful farewell to the departed soul

KHANDAGIRI ASI SUCCUMBS TO VIRUS

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Sept 14: After battling COVID-19 for one week at KIIMS COVID hospital here, a 45-year-old corona warrior breathed his last Monday. The corona warrior has been identified as Sisira Kumar Sethi, who was working as Assistant Sub-Inspector (ASI) at Khandagiri police station. He is survived by his wife and three daughters.

Sethi had joined Odisha Police in 1995. Earlier, he was working as ASI at Saheed Nagar police station and was recently transferred to Khandagiri PS.

Bhubaneswar DCP Umashankar Das in his official Twitter account said: "With deep sadness we inform that ASI Sisira Kumar Sethi who was working in Khandagiri PS has succumbed to COVID-19. He was an outstanding officer and sacrificed his life in the line of duty. Our prayers are with the bereaved family members."

Earlier, August 29, another corona warrior succumbed to the virus in Bhubaneswar. The corona warrior was identified as Constable Ashish Mahakul.

BIDDING ADIEU

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Sept 14: Irked over a purported plan to lease out OTDC Panthaniwases in the state, Utkal Prayatan Nigam Employees' Association (UPNEA) Monday criticised the move and demanded regular salary to the employees.

Addressing a press meet at the Panthanivas here Monday, association president Sibananda Ray said, "Initially there was a plan to lease only 5 Panthaniwases - Dhauli, Gopalpur, Bhadrak, Taptapani and Balasore to the hotel industry, but now there is a clear conspiracy to lease out the 21 profit-making Panthaniwases to various hotel industries."

Working president of OPNEA, Benudhara Patra, alleged that Pathaniwas always has been the first choice of stay by the lower middle class and middle class tourists. "However, privatisation of all the 21 Panthaniwases is like backstabbing the employees who are working in these facilities," he added.

"A few days back, we had tried to seek attention of the state government but to no avail. The financial success of the 21 Panthaniwases was ₹31.24 crore in FY 2017-18 and ₹39.39



21 Panthaniwases had made a profit of ₹31.24 crore in FY 2017-18 and ₹39.39 crore in FY 2018-19. Despite the kind of profit, why there is a plot to lease out these profitable business centres to private hotels?

BENUDHARA PATRA | WORKING PRESIDENT OF OPNEA

crore in FY 2018-19. Despite the kind of profit, why there is a plot to lease out these profitable business centres to private hotels for a period of 30 years? It's a clear scam by the so called senior officials of OTDC who are playing with the future of OTDC employees," Patra added.

Witchcraft: 2 get life term for killing woman, minor sons

AGENCIES

Baripada, Sept 14: A court in Mayurbhanj district sentenced two men to life imprisonment Monday for killing a woman and her two minor sons over three years ago on the suspicion of their being involved in witchcraft.

Rairangpur additional district and sessions judge AR Pattnaik also slapped a fine of ₹10,000 on each of the two convicted. Failure to pay the penalty would keep them

DRY WEATHER TO PREVAIL IN STATE

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Sept 14: The India Meteorological Department (IMD) Monday said dry weather is to prevail in all parts of the state for next few days as the low pressure formed over west-central Bay of Bengal tilted south westwards with height.

The low pressure area was formed over west central Bay of Bengal & adjoining north Andhra Pradesh coast and became well marked Monday afternoon. As the system has started tilting, there will no impact on the state and dry weather to prevail in many parts of the state for next few days, IMD sources said.

However, light rainfall or thunderstorm will continue to occur in few places across the state, it said. Under the impact of the low pressure, light to moderate rainfall has occurred at many places over the districts of south Odisha and at one or two places of North Odisha during the past 24 hours.

The future of the employees working at various Panthaniwases would be pushed to uncertainty. OTDC hasn't received any equity share from state government yet despite the profits, said the association, which also demanded regular salary of employees and signing of an MoU with the lessees.

If the demands are not conceded, OTDC employees will opt for mass self-immolation in front of the Chief Minister's residence

Association's general secretary Niranjan Nayak and vice president Diptri Ranjan Kar were also present at the press meet.

OTDC chairperson Shreemayee Mishra, MD Sachin Ram Chandra Yadav and tourism secretary Vishal Dev were unavailable for their comments.

behind the bars for an additional six months.

The two—Arjun Sinku (27) and Gurucharan Karua (22) had killed Rinki Sinku (35) and her two minor sons Jagannath (10) and Jasamanta (3) with sharp weapons July 18, 2017 in Jhipabandh village in the district as they suspected that she practised witchcraft.

The two were subsequently arrested by the police and booked under Section 302 (murder) of Indian Penal Code.

Road under-bridge launched in Angul

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Sept 14: East Coast Railway (ECoR) has closed another manned level crossing under its jurisdiction recently after commissioning of a road under-bridge (RUB) between Jarapada and Kerajanga railway stations in Angul district.

"Manned level crossing ST92 between Jarapada and Kerajanga stations in Angul district of Odisha was connecting Paripara and Kerajang gram panchayats. For smooth rail-road communication and in view of safety of both rail and road users, the RUB has been constructed and commissioned," said ECoR sources.

The road users were facing difficulties as the level crossing gate closes for passage of trains as per the rules.

So, it has been decided to close the manned level crossing Gate No. -ST-92 for public interest, the sources added.

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Cost escalation halts infra projects

Foundation stones for two high-level bridges in Jajpur were laid in 2013 and were to be completed by 2019, but a year has lapsed since then and amid Covid it looks that it might get delayed more

POST NEWS NETWORK

Jajpur, Sept 14: Even though the Odisha government is making every effort to carry out development work in rural areas, the efforts have not yielded desired results. Public opinion says— this is mainly because a section of the government officials are corrupt and embezzling money from various funds. They are delaying the completion of projects resulting in cost escalation.

The three-kilometre-long Bahujanga-Dhaudipada high-level bridge on Birupa river and Sakutalapur NH-5 high-level bridge on Sanagenguti river under Jaraka Rural Work Project-2 are some of the prime examples of this dilly-dallying. The deadline for completion of the bridges has long gone by. Yet the bridges are still not complete.

The foundation stone for the two



While the estimated ₹13.77 crore has already been spent, the only visible progress made is two under-construction pillars,” said Niranjana Sahu, a local resident, looking at the three-kilometre-long Bahujanga-Dhaudipada high-level bridge on Birupa river

DILLY-DALLYING ON	
THE INITIAL COST FOR BAHUJANGA-DHAUDIPADA HIGH-LEVEL BRIDGE WAS ESTIMATED AT ₹13.77 CRORE	THE INITIAL COST FOR CONSTRUCTION OF SAKUTALAPUR NH-5 HIGH LEVEL BRIDGE WAS ESTIMATED AT ₹5.55 CRORE
NOW, THE COST HAS GONE UP TO ₹15.32 CRORE	NOW, IT HAS BEEN PEGGED AT ₹5.70 CRORE

bridges were laid in 2013. HL Infrastructure, a construction company, has been awarded with the tender to construct the two bridges in 2013-14 financial year. It had promised to complete the construction of the two bridges by April, 2019. However, a year has gone by and the bridges are yet to be completed.

The initial cost for Bahujanga-Dhaudipada high-level bridge was estimated at ₹13.77 crore. Now, the cost has gone up to ₹15.32 crore.

“While the estimated ₹13.77 crore has already been spent, the only visible progress made is two under-construction pillars,” said Niranjana Sahu, a local resident.

Similarly, the initial cost for construction of Sakutalapur NH-5 high level bridge was estimated at ₹5.55 crore. Now, it has been pegged at ₹5.70 crore. Locals alleged that the dilly-dallying attitude of the officials in the Works department is causing inordinate delays in the completion of the two projects. They have threatened to stage agitations before the District Collectorate office soon unless the construction of the bridges was completed.

Admitting that fund constraint has been a hindrance for the second bridge, Chandikhole Rural Development department sub-divisional engineer Tulasi Patra said the work will start once the funds are released. “We are waiting for fund allotments,” he said.

MAN’S MUTILATED BODY RECOVERED FROM RAIL TRACKS

POST NEWS NETWORK

Sambalpur, Sept 14: In an untoward incident, the mutilated body of a man was found on the railway tracks near PC bridge in Burla Sunday afternoon.

Although, identity of the deceased was to be ascertained, it is being suspected that the man is a native of Sambalpur area.

According to reports, some local residents spotted the body on the tracks and informed the local police about it. On being informed, the GRP personnel reached the spot and seized the body.

A motorcycle was also seized from the spot.

Prima facie it is being suspected that the man committed suicide. Investigation is on

Local police have filed a case in this regard and launched an investigation in order to find out the exact reason behind the death.

Based on prima facie evidences, it is being suspected that the man has died by suicide, police sources informed.

The mortal remains were sent to a nearby hospital for postmortem. Details can be known after the postmortem report comes in.

6 held with narcotics in two separate raids

GANJA WEIGHING 6.32 QUINTAL HAS BEEN SEIZED ALONG WITH ₹40L CASH

POST NEWS NETWORK

Birmaharajpur / Jeypore, Sept 14: In a combing operation by Special Task Force (STF) and local police of both Subarnapur and Koraput districts, a huge cache of cannabis was seized, Monday. Six persons in this connection were arrested from both the districts.

In the first case, acting on a tip-off, the Special Task Force (STF) along with local police in Birmaharajpur intercepted a pick-up truck in Subalaya area in Subarnapur district. During the search operation police seized around 4.8 quintals of ganja. As per police records, the cost of the seized contraband in the black market is around ₹30 lakh.

During the seizure, one person managed to flee from the spot while police arrested four accused for their alleged involvement in the smuggling.

The four accused have been identified as Narayan Patra from Khashalapur, Sanjay Meshawa from Rairakhol, Sourav Kumar Barik from Birmaharajpur and Sushil Mishra from Madhya Pradesh.

The cops also seized ₹9.77 lakh from their possession, a Honda City car and a pick-up van.

Similarly, two youths from Uttar



Pradesh were arrested by Jeypore Sadar Police for allegedly smuggling 151 kg of ganja.

The accused were Sagar Choudhury and Akash Choudhury from Raya district of Uttar Pradesh.

Jeypore police came to know about the illegal smuggling of ganja from a reliable source. For this, the police intercepted a car going towards Raya district from Jalaput late night and found ganja packed in large polythene bags.

Two mobile phones, ₹1,70,000 cash and a car were seized from their possession.

It may be mentioned here that in a recent ganja seizure in Bangalore, the cops there hinted at a possible Odisha link. The seizure was one of the biggest catches with around 1.350 kg of ganja. Though the state police has been keeping an eye on the illegal smuggling of the contraband, the mafia has been able to hoodwink them.

FOR GREENERY



A plantation drive underway at Sajaganad in Balasore, Monday

OP PHOTO

Engineer meets watery grave at Palajhar dam

THE DECEASED HAS BEEN IDENTIFIED AS R MUKUNDAM (22), A NATIVE OF TAMIL NADU

POST NEWS NETWORK

Baghiapada, Sept 14: A young engineer drowned while taking selfies at Palajhar dam under Baghiapada outpost limits in Boudh district Sunday.

His body was fished out Monday.

The deceased has been identified as R Mukundam (22), a native of Tamil Nadu. He was working at a mega lift irrigation project in the district.

According to a source, he along with his two associates had gone to Palajhar dam built across river Salunki to take a bath. The three were clicking selfies there when Mukundam's mobile phone accidentally slipped from his hand and fell into the water.

To retrieve the phone, Mukundam jumped into the water. His friends were



waiting for him near the spot from where Mukundam dived into the water. It was when he did not come out of the water even after long hours that they immediately informed the Boudh fire station.

Fire personnel and an ODRAF team reached the spot and carried out a search operation. They continued searching till the evening but could not find him.

India is the world capital of selfie deaths, accounting for about half of the 259 reported fatalities between 2011 and 2017, according to a study by the US National Library of Medicine

They had to stop the operation due to darkness.

The operation was resumed Monday morning and they eventually stumbled upon the body of the deceased engineer at a place one kilometre from the spot of the occurrence and fished it out.

On being informed, police reached the spot and seized the body for post mortem.

PARTIES READY FOR BALASORE SADAR, TIRTOL BY-ELECTIONS

POST NEWS NETWORK

Balasore/Jagatsinghpur, Sept 14: After the announcement of by-polls by Election Commission of India (ECI) for 65 Assembly constituencies in various states, major political parties in Odisha have started the selection process of candidates for Balasore Sadar and Tirtol seats.

Congress party has shortlisted six candidates for Tirtol Assembly constituency and has picked Nabajyoti Patnaik – son of PCC president Niranjana Patnaik as its first choice for Balasore Sadar.

Talking to media persons Sunday, Congress leader Suresh Routray said that his party has started campaigning in these two constituencies. “We will positively win the by-polls in these two constituencies and raise our number in the Assembly from nine to 11,” he asserted.

Congress has formed a committee to supervise the by-polls in Tirtol and Balasore Sadar constituencies. State Congress working president Chiranjib



Congress shortlists six candidates for Tirtol Assembly constituency and picks Nabajyoti Patnaik – son of PCC president Niranjana Patnaik as its first choice for Balasore Sadar

Very soon BJP's Parliamentary Board will take a decision on the candidates' announcement

BJD's five senior leaders have been roped in and a panel has also been formed with them to look into the polls

Biswal had formed a committee July 13 and entrusted Jatani MLA Suresh Routray for monitoring the by-poll in Tirtol and Jeypore MLA Tara Prasad Bahinipati for Balasore Sadar.

The BJP's state general secretary Prithviraj Harichandan said that selection of candidates is in the final stage and their names will be sent to the Central parliamentary board in the days ahead.

Coming to ruling BJD, the party supremo has entrusted Debasis Samantray, Raghunandan Das, Sanjay Das Burma, Pratap Jena and Prasant Muduli to supervise Tirtol by-poll. Jena has been appointed as the observer in Balasore district.

Regarding the selection of candidates for these two constituencies, Samantray said that the party supremo will take a call.

Here, locals confused a butterfly with a snake

THE PATTERN ON THE WINGS OF THE BUTTERFLY WE ARE TALKING ABOUT HAS THE APPEARANCE OF A SNAKE

POST NEWS NETWORK

Koraput, Sept 14: You would have seen various amazing patterns and colour combinations on the wings of butterflies. Well, the pattern on the wings of this particular type of butterfly will top them all. The pattern on the wings of the butterfly we are talking about has the appearance of a snake.

The butterfly had perched on the wall of a house, owned by Soudamini Behera at Bhawaninagar area in this town.

“We first saw the butterfly Sunday. It was perched on the wall. Its wings bear such patterns that they look like two snakes raising their hoods on both sides. We have never ever seen such a pattern on any butterfly,” claimed family members. “The butterfly has been in our house since Sunday. We are taking great care of it so that it can't be preyed on by lizards,” they added.

The butterfly is eight inches in length and six inches in width

with its wings stretched. Its colour is a beautiful combination of orange and golden. As the news spread of this particular butterfly started doing the rounds, people from nearby areas have been flocking to the house of Soudamini to have a glimpse.

Attacus atlas, the atlas moth, is a large saturniid moth endemic to the forests of Asia. The species was first described by Carl Linnaeus in his 1758 10th edition of Systema Naturae.

ETYMOLOGY

The atlas moth is one of the largest lepidopterans, with a wingspan measuring up to 24 cm and a wing surface area of about 160 sq cm.

The body is disproportionately small compared to the wings. The upperside of the wings are reddish brown with a pattern of black, white, pink, and purple lines and triangular, scale-less windows bordered in black. The undersides of the wings are paler.

The atlas moth has no mouth, and they do not eat



The butterfly is eight inches in length and six inches in width with its wings stretched

once they have emerged from the cocoon, relying on fat storage for energy. Every flight takes valuable energy and can take days off their already short lives, as it has a very short life span of only one to two weeks. They conserve energy by flying as little as possible. A female will wait for a male to come along and be fertilised, lay eggs and die.

Their habitat is primarily dry tropical forests, secondary

forests, and shrublands across South Asia, East Asia, and Southeast Asia, including Borneo, though one specimen, an adult female, was found in 2012 in Ramsbottom, England after it landed on a windowsill, and presumed to have escaped from a private collection.

Atlas moths are named after either Atlas, the titan of Greek mythology (due to their size), or their map-like wing patterns.

Government of Odisha
Office of the Executive Engineer,
Rural Works Division, Dhenkanal
e-procurement Notice No. 8 / Road Work / 2020-21.

No.-: O-348:-

1. Name of the work	: Road Works
2. Total No. of Works	: 8(Eight) Nos.
3. Estimated Cost	: Rs. 6.20 lakhs to 31.23 lakhs (Approx.)
4. Class Contractor	: "D","C","B" Class
5. Period of Completion	: 2(Two) Calendar months.
6. Availability of Tender online for bidding	: 18.09.2020 at 11.00 A.M to 28.09.2020 upto 5.00 P.M
7. Last Date & Time of seeking tender clarification	: 25.09.2020 upto 4.00 PM
8. Date & Time of opening of tender	: 29.09.2020 at 11.00AM

Other details can be seen from the website <http://tendersorissa.gov.in>.

Sd./- Executive Engineer, R.W. Division, Dhenkanal
OIPR-25101/11/0001/2021

GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA
OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER
RURAL WORKS DIVISION, BALLIGUDA
Phone No.-06846-243114/ Mobile No.-9437562286
E-mail: rw_balliguda@yahoo.com
No.O-344:-
No.4056/RWDB, Dated: 01.9.2020
Government of Odisha e-Procurement Notice
Bid Identification No. Online Tender/05/EE RWD BLG/2020-21

1. Name of the work	: Road & Building Works
2. Total Number of works	: 10 (Ten) Nos.
3. Estimated cost	: As per Annexure
4. Class of contractors	: As per Annexure
5. Period of completion	: As per Annexure
6. Others details	

Procurement Officer	Bid Identification No.	Availability of tender online for bidding
		From To
Executive Engineer	Online Tender/05/EE	22.09.2020 08.10.2020
Rural Works Division	RWD BLG/2020-21	at 10.00 A.M. upto 5.00 P.M.
Balliguda		

Further details can be seen from the e-procurement portal website www.tendersorissa.gov.in

Sd./- Executive Engineer, Rural Works Division
Balliguda
OIPR-25150/11/0005/2021

GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA
OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER (AGRI.),
NORTHERN ZONE, AT/PO-REMED, SAMBALPUR-768006
e-mail : senzsambalpur@gmail.com
Notice No. 1272 dt.10.09.2020

NATIONAL COMPETITIVE BIDDING THROUGH e-Procurement
Identification No. 01 /Agril. / NZ / 2020-21 Dt.10.09.2020

No.L-29:-

01	Nos. of work	: 14 Nos.
02	Estimated cost	: Rs. 6.57,941/- to Rs. 88,19,912/-
03	Period of completion	: 60 to 365 days
04	Date & Time of availability of bid document in the portal	: From 10.00 Hrs. of 18.09.2020 to 17.30 Hrs. of 01.10.2020
05	Last date/time of receipt of bids in the portal	: 17.30 Hrs. of 01.10.2020
06	Date & Time of opening of bids	: 11.00 Hrs. of 08.10.2020
07	Name and Address of the officer inviting bid	: Superintending Engineer (Agril.), Northern Zone, At/Po-Remed, Sambalpur, Pin-768006.

Further details can be seen from the website www.tendersodisha.gov.in

Sd./- Superintending Engineer (Agril.),
Northern Zone, Sambalpur
OIPR-01033/11/0001/2021

OFFICE OF THE COLLECTOR & DISTRICT MAGISTRATE, JAGATSINGHPUR
(District Social Welfare Section)
Ph.- 06724-220865, E-Mail- dswsjspur@nic.in
(SHORT TENDER CALL NOTICE)

No. 816 Dt. 11.09.2020

No. g-16:- Sealed tenders are invited from the intending registered firms/authorized licensed Transport Contracotrs/ Agents for undertaking ICDS Project wise transportation of Rice & Wheat under SNP & SAG feeding Programme in all 8 nos ICDS of Jagatsinghpur District (Balikuda, Biridi, Erasama, Jagatsinghpur, Kujanga, Naugaon, Raghunathpur and Tirtol ICDS Project) for the year 2020-21

Details are available in the Office of the Collector, Jagatsinghpur (Social Welfare Section) and District Website i.e. www.jagatsinghpur.nic.in

The details of Tender process as follows:

1. Period of sale of tender document from	: 11.09.2020 (10.00 A.M.) to 25.09.2020 (5.30 P.M.)
2. Last date of receipt of tender document	: 29.09.2020 (1.30 P.M.)
3. Date of opening of Tender	: 30.09.2020 (04.00 P.M.)
4. Tender paper cost	: Rs.3000.00 (Rupees Three Thousand) only.

Sd./- Collector & District Magistrate, Jagatsinghpur
OIPR-25171/11/0001/2021



Do not conquer the difficulties there is more power in a smile than in a sigh.

THE MOTHER

Transforming Africa's Agriculture

Over the next 30 years, Sub-Saharan Africa's population will double to over two billion, and its economies will industrialize. Africa's development will therefore be critical to the world's future stability, prosperity, and health. Given this, the continent should be receiving much more international attention.

The COVID-19 crisis has highlighted a number of global vulnerabilities, including the uncoordinated nature of the world's pandemic response, its inability to support the poorest countries and their populations in managing the economic fallout, and of course the weakness of existing health-care infrastructure. Leaders must now urgently address these weaknesses, alongside other major global challenges, ranging from climate change and rising inequality to technological disruption and global terrorism.

Moreover, fragile agriculture and food systems, particularly in Africa and other low-income regions, have exacerbated the pandemic's impact. Unless addressed, these systems' shortcomings could deepen any crisis in the decades ahead.

The argument for fundamental reforms is partly a moral one. The United Nations World Food Programme warns that the number of people suffering from acute hunger in low and middle-income countries – including in Africa – could almost double this year, to 265 million, as a result of the pandemic. Strengthening Africa's agriculture systems is vital to making the continent more self-reliant and resilient to future shocks. Otherwise, economies will remain stagnant, limiting tax revenues and leaving welfare systems unable to support people through crises such as COVID-19.

But it is also in the enlightened self-interest of all countries – including members of the G20 and OECD – to ensure well-functioning agriculture and food systems in Africa and other poor regions. This is because food and agriculture are central to making the world's health, economic, and security systems fit for the 21st and 22nd centuries.

For starters, vibrant food and agriculture sectors are essential for preventing malnutrition – one of the leading global causes of illness – and strengthening them is important in managing pandemics as well. COVID-19 lockdowns and social-distancing measures failed in less developed countries with large informal economies, mainly because of concerns that such regulations would severely harm people's ability to earn enough to feed their families.

Agriculture is also crucial to successful economic transformations. There can be no global economic stability, green economy, or eradication of mass poverty if African and other developing countries do not industrialize. And as the United States, Europe, and Asia have demonstrated, industrialization first requires an agricultural revolution, which Africa has yet to experience.

Bolstering global security, too, entails transforming agriculture and the food system. Terrorism feeds on the disenfranchisement of rural populations in regions like the Sahel, where people can gain more through illicit activity than through the lawful economy and public services.

Finally, revamping agriculture – particularly in Africa – is a precondition for sustainably feeding a global population that could increase to almost 11 billion by the end of this century. Many African leaders are focusing on reforming agriculture – and making progress. Senegal's development of rice and other subsectors, Ghana's Planting for Food and Jobs program, and the work of Ethiopia's Agricultural Transformation Agency are all excellent examples of strong government leadership in this field.

Given the right focus by governments, policymakers can identify agricultural sectors, which, with the deployment of technology and new practices, can attract investment, in turn spurring employment, economic growth, and tax revenues – thereby initiating a virtuous cycle of development. Investment and reform – both domestically and externally financed – can accelerate change.

A series of upcoming global events provide the world with excellent opportunities to advance this agenda – starting with the African Green Revolution Forum, which has been taking place this week, hosted by the government of Rwanda. This gathering is crucial in highlighting the need for Africa – backed by the international community – to step up its efforts to transform its agriculture and food systems in a way that will allow the world to achieve the targets established by the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals. This year's forum focuses on how to feed Africa's rapidly growing cities and urban centers – potentially the global economy's greatest source of future growth.

I have been taking part in the forum for the third consecutive year, though for the first time remotely. My teams and I have focused on how to scale up investment in Africa's agriculture and agro-processing to transform the sector; increase its resilience to crises like pandemics and climate change, and spur the continent's burgeoning industrialization and technological revolution. Next is the UN General Assembly later this month, the G20 summit in November, and the UN Food Systems Summit next year.

The COVID-19 pandemic is a stark reminder that the inability of many poorer countries' agricultural systems to meet their populations' most basic needs will have huge geopolitical consequences if not tackled urgently. Fortunately, the upcoming global gatherings will allow the world to debate the best way forward so that governments can take rapid and effective decisions. We all have a stake in seizing the opportunity.

The writer is a former Prime Minister of the United Kingdom.

PROJECT SYNDICATE

WISDOM CORNER

- It is a curious phenomenon that God has made the hearts of the poor, rich and those of the rich, poor. **ACHARYA VINOBA BHAVE**
- Whoever is happy will make others happy too. **ANNE FRANK**
- Judge a man by his questions rather than his answers. **VOLTAIRE WORDSWORTH**

LOL

PERFECT SON

A: I have the perfect son.
B: Does he smoke?
A: No, he doesn't.
B: Does he drink whiskey?
A: No, he doesn't.
B: Does he ever come home late?

A: No, he doesn't.
B: I guess you really do have the perfect son. How old is he?
A: He will be six months old next Wednesday.



Ajit Ranade

AN ISSUE IS THAT BORROWERS WANT AN INTEREST WAIVER, AS WELL AS A WAIVER ON INTEREST ON INTEREST CAUSED BY THE DELAY IN REPAYMENTS. IT SEEMS UNFAIR TO LOAD THIS BURDEN ON BANK DEPOSITORS AND SHAREHOLDERS

Tony Blair

Fragile agriculture and food systems, particularly in Africa and other low-income regions, have exacerbated the pandemic's impact. Unless addressed, these systems' shortcomings could deepen any crisis in the decades ahead

SPECTRUM ECONOMY

More of liquidity, cash flow for migrants

Shivaji Sarkar

ACCORDING TO A SURVEY BY FEDERATION OF CHAMBERS AND COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (FICCI), THE PRESENT DEVELOPMENTS REVEAL THAT 68 PER CENT COMPANIES WILL SEE HURDLE IN RECOVERY

It is globalisation across the globe. The world has applied the brakes on the economy due to an unprecedented civilizational lockdown. India, termed as the engine of global growth, has taken a big hit and it may take quite a few years for it to regain its strength. All economies in intense relationships having lost over 30 percent of their GDP are now getting more local and regional. Never before has civilization panicked before an epidemic as it has unwisely done now. Let there be a probe whether or not this is a conspiracy to kill Indian economy.

The supposed disease is not lethal, in the Indian context, but the panicky closure of all activities, travel and business has ruined the economy. Rightly, former RBI governor Raghuram Rajan says India's GDP contraction must alarm everyone. He is correct because India, the global growth leader, had started slowing down since August 2019 amid the Sino-US trade war, the thaw in EU economy and fall in global demand. Even with some resumption of activities, the fall in GDP by minus 23.9 percent in June quarter so far may also mean an average contraction of 14.8 percent (Goldman

FOCUS BANKING

BURDEN OF BAD LOANS

The economy shrank by nearly one-fourth during the first three months of this fiscal year. Much of this was due to the harsh lockdown initiated in March. Roughly three-fourth of the economy was practically shut for a month, after which there were aseries of renewed lockdowns with partial relaxations. For this quarter, the economy suffered a triple shock, as demand, supply and finance collapsed. Unemployment rose close to 30 percent in April, rendering nearly 122 million people jobless. In cities, whose workforce consists of 40 percent migrants on an average, the toll on livelihoods was severe. With loss of jobs and income, it soon became a food crisis for many urban households, necessitating emergency measures from state governments. The Central government's initial relief package

was to enhance food security by doubling the rations and extending this up to November.

The big 20-lakh-crore package announced by the Central government in May consisted largely of liquidity support. For instance, micro, small and medium enterprises are eligible to guaranteed loans up to ₹3 lakh crore. Of this amount, roughly half has been sanctioned and loans are being disbursed. It is no wonder that the demand for loans is muted, since small businesses already hit by zero demand are not keen to take on any additional debt burden. But those small businesses which have a cash management mismatch, i.e., they have pending invoices that have not been paid by their customers, are quite willing to take loan support to tide over their crisis. In effect, such small businesses face a problem of illiquidity; not of insolvency.

The situation is similar for all sectors of the economy. RBI has injected liquidity worth nearly ₹8 lakh crore, cumulatively. This is a combination of interest rate cuts, buying up of government bonds from banks (called "open market operations") and buying foreign exchange and releasing cash. The RBI has also given low-cost,



Most of the public sector banks will need a large infusion of equity from the treasury of the Central government, especially on account of rising bad loans. There is simply no easy way to dodge this fiscal bullet

long-term funds to commercial banks as well as non-bank finance companies. This is called a long-term repo operation. Much of this excess liquidity, i.e., cash availability, has not resulted in a loan growth, but instead has probably gone into the stock market. The inflow of foreign funds plus excess liquidity in Indian banking is one reason that the stock market has recovered by more than 50 percent since the steep fall in March. To some extent, we have recovered from at least one of the three shocks in the triple shock, i.e., the financial shock.

While GDP shrinks and the supply and demand challenges remain, the second quarter GDP may show some improvement. But the growth numbers will still be negative. More than half the households, as per a survey, are reporting that their income this year will be lower than of last year. Businesses too are struggling to catch up to pre-Covid revenues. In such a situation, the bank credit to industry will be highly stressed.

The bi-annual financial stability report of the RBI had already warned in its July report that non-performing assets ratio could rise a full 4 percentage points from

March 2020 to March 2021. That is nearly a write-off of ₹4 lakh crore of bank loans. If there was a 'severely stressed scenario', the NPA ratio could be 2 percent higher at 14.7 percent, which means a write-off of an additional ₹2 lakh crore. The banks' risk adjusted capital ratio is adequate to meet these write-offs in the aggregate. Under severe stress, this required capital buffer ratio could decline all the way to 9.4 percent, which is not enough as per Basel norms. With rising bad loans, the banks can make profit, and give a decent return to depositors and shareholders by charging a profitable interest rate on the good quality loans. Hence, despite rate cuts by the RBI, the banks are unable to pass on lower interest costs to "good" borrowers, since the burden of NPAs is rising.

To add to these woes of banks, there has been the loan moratorium. To tide over the severe stress caused by the pandemic, the RBI announced a three-month moratorium on 'good' loans starting from March. This moratorium was then extended by another three months to the end of August. As of now, the moratorium matter is in the Supreme Court, and

has been effectively extended till September 28, the date of the next hearing.

The issue is that borrowers want an interest waiver, as well as a waiver on interest on interest, caused by the delay in repayments. It seems unfair to load this burden on bank depositors and shareholders. If indeed the borrowers deserve relief, then it should be given as explicit fiscal relief, i.e. from the Central government's treasury. But, such a partial waiver to borrowers who opted for the moratorium and not others who did not is also problematic.

The larger issue is what to be done about banking health in times of the pandemic. The RBI-constituted KV Kamath committee has submitted a report identifying 26 sectors to which loans will need to be restructured, so that they are not counted as NPAs. The committee has carefully identified sectors affected directly by the pandemic which hence need relief. But those that were already doing badly pre-pandemic need to be dealt with differently. Nearly 72 percent of the banking sector debt has been affected by Covid and will need some restructuring. The recommendations are based on clearly defined parameters and banks have been split into mild, moderate and severely stressed.

Meanwhile, data from August shows that industrial credit demand is not increasing. In fact, in the first quarter, the demand for 13 out of 19 major industry groups had negative growth as per a CARE Ratings report. The other six were barely positive or zero. Banks need healthy growth in credit demand to remain viable, if not profitable. Most of the public sector banks will need a large infusion of equity from the treasury of the Central government, especially on account of rising bad loans. There is simply no easy way to dodge this fiscal bullet.

The writer is an economist and Senior Fellow, Takshashila Institution.

THE BILLION PRESS



Sachs) or 11.8 percent (India Ratings) or 10.5 percent (Fitch Ratings) for 2020-21. Most of these estimates indicate a looming deterioration in asset quality in the financial sector. The agencies are expecting positive growth not before 2022. Fitch says India records the sharpest GDP contraction but expects a rebound.

The world stock markets are in tizzy except for tech giants like Apple, Microsoft, Amazon, Facebook and Google which have added \$1 trillion to their market capitalisation. Cornerstone Macro says 100 of the 500 on Standard & Poor's index, are trading at more than 50 percent below their peak. Indian situation is similar as we find that Reliance has added \$10 million.

Some other tech companies have done well. But most others in mid and small segments particularly airlines, real estate, hotels, restaurants are not in demand.

Through 2019, initial public offerings (IPO) dried up as volatility grips the market. Till August 2019, only 11 companies launched IPOs raising ₹10,049 crore compared to 24 public issues raising ₹20,559 crore in 2018. There is an 'X' factor that is being discussed since August 2019 amid the then global growth slowing down, affecting the Indian economy. It is a twin balance sheet problem of high non-performing assets and credit stress in companies.

The job creation growth fell alarmingly since 2018-19, according

to CARE Ratings study of 960 large companies, in farming, crude oil, telecom, iron and steel, mining and hospitality. In the large firms, the job growth was 4.2 percent (5.78 million) against 6.2 percent in 2017-18. The Centre for Monitoring Indian Economy estimated in 2018 that 11 million people lost their jobs – of this, 9.1 million in rural and 1.8 million in urban areas.

Rating agency ICRA has calculated that actual deficit for states would be ₹2.9 lakh crore, ₹57,000 crore more than estimated in 2021. The Centre's shareable taxes at ₹13.4 lakh crore for the current financial year, ICRA says, is 30 percent lower than the budgeted amount of ₹19.1 lakh crore.

The present developments reveal that 68 percent of companies will see hurdle in recovery. The remedy suggested is simple – additional cash transfers to migrant workers, poor and farmers and a temporary halt in GST collection. The companies also want financial liquidity, managing costs, manpower availability and supply chain issue solutions. Though unlock has a positive impact, if the liquidity and transactions in cash do not improve, the hiring and expansions may not happen.

INFA

Covid guidelines

Sir, In the initial four months, Odisha successfully controlled the spread of coronavirus, but now the spread is more than that of other states. The arrival of migrant labourers from other states might be one reason why the number of infections have seen a sharp rise in recent weeks. Notably, the all India CAGR is 2.09 per cent per day, but for Odisha it's 2.84 per cent. The daily cases per million population is 67 for India, 82 for Odisha and 242 for Khorda (Bhubaneswar included). However, due to better health services in Odisha, daily deaths per million population is at the rate of 0.25 against 0.83 for India. This is time to maintain the maximum alert and see that the spread is halted to the minimum. There is need to observe social distancing norms in more serious ways.

Gopal Mittal, BHUBANESWAR

Ladakh standoff

Sir, China never practises what it preaches in relation to agreements on border disputes. Still, there is talk of maintaining and enhancing peace in border areas, as mentioned in the joint statement issued after the meeting between External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar and his Chinese counterpart Wang Yi. In order to restore peace and tranquillity along the LAC, China's words will have to turn into action on the ground, and that will mean progress in resolving border tensions. Even as the Chinese talk about peace, large numbers of PLA soldiers continue to stand in different positions carrying rifles and iron rods. As they talk about peace, the build-up too is constantly increasing. A large number of Chinese tanks and armoured vehicles have been deployed in different areas. Even though both the countries have officially reached a 5-point consensus to attempt de-escalation, neither side is ready to take the first step. The PLA that has strengthened its positions in the areas it has infiltrated is not likely to retreat in the near future. The huge build-up of troops on the ground suggests that there may be localised conflicts between the two troops. Both the countries are sitting on a tinderbox and any misunderstanding can spark conflicts that will prove costly to both. In this context, it is imperative that both Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Chinese President Xi Jinping initiate total de-escalation and disengagement. There must be a broader understanding and agreement on border issues. It must be a give-and-take kind of deal.

Venu GS, KOLLAM

Letters

TO THE EDITOR

Readers of Orissa POST are most welcome to contribute letters (200 words), articles and columns (between 750-1250 words). Contributors are requested to send their contact numbers and full postal address/email ID. They may also send in their valuable comments, opinion and suggestions, preferably by email, to: edit@orissapost.com

OrissaPOST
B-15, Rasulgari Industrial Estate, Bhubaneswar-751010

Eye on polls, TMC woos Hindi-speaking populace

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kolkata, Sept 14: With an eye on the votes of the Hindi speaking populace in the 2021 West Bengal Assembly polls, the ruling Trinamool Congress Monday formalised the structure of its Hindi cell and appointed party MP Dinesh Trivedi as its chairman.

The Hindi speaking population holds sway in some of the areas of the state.

West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee Monday appointed Trivedi, former Railway minister and one of the prominent non-Bengali faces of the party as the chairman of the West Bengal Trinamool Congress Hindi cell.

Vivek Gupta, editor of a Hindi daily and a former TMC MP appointed as its president. Earlier in the day, Banerjee wished the people on Hindi Diwas and said the state government has taken various initiatives to strengthen Hindi education, besides the culture and welfare of the community in Bengal.

“Warm wishes on #HindiDiwas. Bengal is a land of inclusivity, and through our persistent efforts, we have proudly inculcated Tagore’s val-

CULTURAL SUB-NATIONALISM

After the electoral reverses in the Lok Sabha poll, last year and the rise of the BJP as a prime contender, Banerjee has often invoked the ‘Bengali pride’ and labelled BJP a party of ‘outsiders’

Narratives themed around ‘Bengali pride’ and ‘natives versus outsiders’ are slowly gaining momentum, with various outfits raising the pitch for reservation for domicile Bengalis in jobs and education in the state, where until a few years ago cultural sub-nationalism was an alien concept



The latest to add fuel to the fire was the alleged online vilification of Bengali women with many fans of deceased actor Sushant Singh Rajput calling his rumoured girlfriend Rhea Chakraborty and others from the community ‘gold diggers’ and ‘witches’

ues of ‘Unity in Diversity’. GoWB has taken various initiatives to strengthen Hindi Education, Culture and Welfare of the community in Bengal,” Banerjee said in a tweet.

She took the opportunity to remind the Centre to include Bengali as a classical language in the new National Education Policy (NEP). “GoWB has constantly perse-

vered to undertake inclusive development for all by giving recognition to Hindi, Urdu, Gurmukhi, Ol Chiki, Rajbanshi, Kamtapuri, Kurukh languages. I urge the Centre to follow suit by also including Bengali as a classical language in NEP 2020,” she tweeted.

According to TMC sources, the formation of the Hindi cell and ap-

pointment of Trivedi as its chairman is aimed at wooing the Hindi-speaking voters of the state, who had shifted their allegiance to BJP during the 2019 Lok Sabha polls.

“In some of the areas of North 24 Parganas, Siliguri, central Kolkata, Asansol, Durgapur and some other parts of the state the Hindi-speaking population is a de-

ciding factor in some of the assembly seats. Although they had voted for us all these years, during 2019 polls they had voted for BJP. We need to win them back,” a senior TMC leader said.

The development comes in the backdrop of Bengali sub-nationalism emerging as a rallying cry in West Bengal ahead of the assembly elections.

Speaking at an online news conference, Trivedi said the Hindi cell, which has been functioning informally since 2011, was given a formal structure to create “an open platform for bringing together all Hindi speaking people of the state.”

He said Mamata Banerjee sees all languages as a bouquet and the state has kept its doors open to people speaking different languages.

Reacting to the development, West Bengal BJP president Dilip Ghosh said the cell had been created with an eye on Hindi-speaking voters.

“It is good that those who have been saying that outsiders will not rule Bengal have understood the importance of Hindi. But the fact is this cell has been created with an eye on elections and TMC is not at all serious about it,” Ghosh said.

Bengal BJP aims at inducting 20 lakh Muslims



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kolkata, Sept 14: The Minority Morcha of the West Bengal BJP has set an ambitious target of inducting 20 lakh Muslims by the end of the year, as part of its efforts to dent the vote share of the ruling TMC in the state, ahead of 2021 Assembly elections.

According to the Minority Morcha’s state president, Ali Hossain, around 4.5 lakh people from the community have already joined the saffron party.

“We have set a target of inducting 20 lakh minorities by December. Of that, four lakh have already been inducted. In the next four months, the target will be achieved,” he said.

Muslims constitute 28-30 per cent of the state’s total vote share, and play a deciding factor in more than 120 of the 294 Assembly segments in the state

Muslims constitute 28-30 per cent of the state’s total vote share, and play a deciding factor in more than 120 of the 294 Assembly segments in the state.

According to Hossain, opposition parties, for several years, have ‘misguided’ the community members about BJP’s intentions and generated a ‘fear psychosis’.

“Many intellectuals and educated youths from the minority community have now joined the BJP as they have realised that the party believes in ‘development for all’. Opposition camps have been misleading the Muslims about the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA). Now people have come to realise that it has nothing to do with their citizenship,” he said.

According to sources in the morcha, the saffron party plans to woo around 10 lakh Muslims from 120 minority-dominated

TMC mocks ‘game plan’

The TMC mocked the BJP’s ‘game plan’ and said minorities stand firmly behind the Mamata Banerjee-led party, as it is the most ‘credible secular force’ in Bengal. “The minorities would never trust a communal force like the BJP. The TMC is the most secular force in the state, which has worked relentlessly for the development of all communities,” the ruling party’s secretary-general, Partha Chatterjee, said.

Assembly constituencies in the state, and the rest from the remaining 174 segments.

State BJP sources said the party had been trying to woo the minorities for quite some time, but its efforts received a setback following last year’s vehement protests over the CAA and the proposed exercise to prepare the National Register of Citizens (NRC) in Bengal.

“To win elections in West Bengal, it is necessary to secure a section of the minority votes or ensure that the minority votes of the TMC get divided. En bloc minority votes for a particular party can swing the elections. Over the last few years, the minorities have got disillusioned with the TMC government and restored their faith on the development agenda of the BJP,” a senior saffron party leader here said.

The BJP, over the last few years, has made deep inroads and emerged as a prime challenger of the ruling TMC in Bengal, by pushing the traditional opposition parties the CPI (M) and the Congress to distant third and fourth positions.

The saffron camp reached its all-time high in Bengal politics last year, when it stunned political pundits by bagging 18 of the 42 Lok Sabha seats in the state, four less than the ruling TMC, and with a staggering vote share of 41 per cent votes.

Kolkata Metro resumes services after 5 months



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kolkata, Sept 14: Metro rail services in Kolkata resumed Monday after a gap of more than five months, a senior official said.

The regular services were suspended March 23 due to the COVID-19 outbreak. Special trains, however, were run for NEET aspirants and their guardians Sunday.

“Services resumed at 8 am and around 12,900 people commuted till 4 pm,” Kolkata Metro Railway General Manager Manoj Joshi told PTI. “The last trains from the originating stations on both sides will commence their journey at 7 pm and complete it by 8 pm,” he said.

Joshi said all safety protocols including social distancing are being followed.

A train is halting at a station for 30 seconds instead of the previous duration of 20 seconds to avoid rush during boarding and deboarding, a Metro Railway spokesperson said.

A total of 110 services are being run on the Noapara-Kavi Subhash

line at an interval of 10 minutes during peak hours, she said.

Also, 72 services are being run on the East-West line between Sector V and Salt Lake Stadium stations, the spokesperson said.

The services will remain suspended Sundays for the sanitisation of rakes and stations, she said.

Commuters can book their tickets online and download the e-passes or use smart cards, the spokesperson said.

The e-passes mention the departure and destination points along with time slots.

Sandeep Tewary, a middle-aged commuter, said he faced difficulty in downloading the e-pass to board a train at Sovabazar metro station.

Young executives like Aparna Maity, however, felt that the no contact ticketing system is ideal in the present situation. Another commuter, Kinshuk Basu, said, “This is a welcome change. Everything was so smooth and the staff was cooperative. I hope this continues in the future. We cannot do without Metro services.”

AASU-AJYCP’s proposed party to be named ‘Asom Jatiyo Parishad’

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Guwahati, Sept 14: The political outfit to be floated by Assam’s powerful students’ organisations AASU and the AJYCP will be named the ‘Asom Jatiyo Parishad’.

Convenors of the Assam Advisory Committee (AAC) formed by the All Assam Students’ Union (AASU) and the Asom Jatiyatibadi Yuba Chatra Parishad (AJYCP) made the announcement Monday.

“The name was selected from three suggestions made during a meeting of the committee Sunday,” former Gauhati University professor Dr Krishna Gopal Bhattacharjya, one of the two convenors of the 16-member AAC, told reporters. The new political entity will be guided by the slogan ‘ghore ghore aami’ (we are in each household) to establish relations with each family in the state and not just seek votes during the elections, he said.

Elections to the 126-member Assam Assembly are due early next year. Veteran politician Jagadish Bhuyan has been appointed as the coordinator of the party, he said.

The formation of the party till the booth-level will be completed by October 30, the committee’s other convenor, former professor of Handique Girls’ College, Basanta Deka, said. The party’s constitution has almost been prepared and its state-level committee will be formed by the first week of November, he said.

The logo and the flag of the Asom Jatiyo Parishad, however, will be decided later, Deka said.

The AASU and the AJYCP had



Focus on region

ASU general secretary Lurinjyoti Gogoi had said the Assam Accord will be the key agenda of the new party and it will adopt and maintain the ‘Assam first; and will forever’ policy

The Asom Gana Parishad was also formed by AASU leaders after the conclusion of the six-year-long Assam Movement with the signing of the Assam Accord in 1985

September 12 appointed Bhattacharjya and Deka as the two convenors of the AAC to take all decisions in forming the party and preparing its road map.

The new party will focus on clean governance and work for the development of various communi-

ties, Bhattacharjya said.

The outfit will welcome like-minded individuals and organisations from various communities that share similar interests and objectives, he said.

Many people from various political parties, including the Asom Gana Parishad (AGP), which is part of the ruling coalition in the state, have expressed willingness to join the new party, Bhattacharjya said. However, caution will be exercised in letting in members by examining their motives to join the new political entity, he said.

AASU president Dipanka Kumar Nath, during a joint press conference with the AJYCP September 12, had said the two organisations will remain students’ bodies and will not be directly involved in the functioning of any political party.

Baghjan oil well blowout singes fields, fish & livelihood

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Baghjan (Assam), Sept 14: For more than 100 days, the fire raged, a tall blaze of angry orange that killed the fish in ponds and streams, destroyed homes and turned to ash the green farmlands around the Baghjan oil field in Assam’s Tinsukia district.

The fire at an Oil India Ltd well that started with oil and natural gas gushing out uncontrollably May 27 and went up in flames June 9 was controlled Sunday, said reports.

But the trauma will take much longer to subside, said residents of the area around the oil field that has 17 oil and five gas wells.

The sight of the flames that coloured the skies saffron and the sound of the blaze have led to people in Baghjan village complaining of disorientation, sleepless nights and confusion.

“It was like hearing 100 helicopters constantly over my head,” said Manoj Hazarika who hasn’t slept properly in weeks.

The tales find wide echo in the village of nearly 500 residents, many who earned their living fishing, tilling their fields, some with betel nut trees, and working in the tea gardens close by. It is a village ruined, said locals, estimating that several homes have been completely burnt and about 500 hectares of land destroyed. Kajoli Hazarika, whose home is

just about 200 metres from well no 5 which caught fire, added that the area has also been experiencing frequent tremors since the blowout in June.

“When the massive fire burnt a huge amount of oxygen in the periphery, an air vacuum was created. This resulted in sudden air movement and created minor local tremors,” an OIL official explained.

The scientific explanation does little to comfort Kajoli Saikia, who recounts in vivid detail the day it all began. It was 10:30 am May 27, she was going about her usual household chores when a series of “earthquakes” and a strange, viscous rain began. A massive sound followed, forcing the villagers to step out of their homes to figure out what was happening.

“The tin roof of my house, the windows and doors began to shake,” Saikia said.

In a couple of days, the fish in ponds and streams were dead and ashen white, added Prakash Hazarika. He said he has seen cows and goats giving birth to dead calves and kids, fish dying and birds struggling to take flight.

A carcass of a cow at the edge of a wooded area is a sign of the ravages the fire has wrought. The “strange rain” described by locals was oil and natural gas pouring down on the houses, fields and water bodies around the oil field. Thirteen



Children fish at Maguri Motapung wetland in the backdrop of a flame rising from well no 5, following OIL’s gas well blowout in June, at Baghjan in Tinsukia district. Survivors and affected residents have said crude oil contamination has caused environment damage in the vicinity besides loss of livelihood.

days later, it turned into an inferno.

Dilip Mala, a labourer who was working at a construction site rushed to attend to his pregnant wife Sumitra, when he saw fire engulf the surrounding areas. There was chaos and panic, he said.

Villagers rushed to get hold of whatever belongings they could from their homes and fled. He said he did not think the fire could be controlled but firefighters were able to douse the flames before they could spread further. Two firefighters died in the process due to burns and injuries while on duty.

But the gas well fire continued to spew flames into the air, a tall, narrow blaze that contaminated the waters and fields and changed the micro climate of the area.

“The damage to the ecosystem has been grave and largely irreparable, the ultimate impact of which will be felt in terms of ecological imbalances and lost livelihood opportunities,” said a statement by Wetlands International South Asia, an NGO dedicated to the conservation and sustainable management of wetlands in South Asia region.

Hoping to pick up the pieces of

their lives, the villagers have gathered around the deputy commissioner’s office in Tinsukia, about 40 km away.

For more than two weeks, they have been staging a sit-in to demand better shelter and future of their children, and justice for those who have lost their lives. Kajoli Hazarika, for instance, said she has received compensation of ₹20

lakh plus ₹30,000 along with 11 other families whose properties were completely ravaged in the fire.

But that is just not enough for the more than six acres of farmland that has been reduced to ashes. She said she doesn’t know what to do with the money – buy land, make a house or find an alternative livelihood.

The Assam Pollution Control Board had issued a closure notice to the Baghjan Oil field in June on the grounds that OIL had been operating without obtaining prior consent to establish and operate from the Assam Pollution Control Board.

Arnab Kishore Bordoloi, an OIL engineer, lost his life due to high voltage electric shock September 9, 2020. Two OIL officials were suspended for alleged negligence of duty at the gas well site, while a show cause notice was sent to John Energy Pvt Ltd, the outsourced private operator of the well.



The teams will be working 24X7 to address the problem. They will try to identify the origin of ‘fake news’ and stop the spread of the misinformation

The core groups have been formed for each police unit, including the police districts, he said.

“The teams will be working 24X7 to address the problem. They will try to identify the origin of ‘fake news’ and stop the spread of the misinformation. After that they will inform the force about the source of the ‘fake news’ and take action as per legal provisions,” he said.

The officers will be working in six police commissionerates, including Kolkata Police, 12 police districts and 16 district police di-

Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee had last week directed the police to take stringent measures against the circulation of “fake news” on social networking sites which suggested that curfew will be imposed in the nights of the five days of Durga Puja festivities mainly due to COVID-19 situation.

West Bengal Police had tweeted, “A rumour regarding Durga Puja is being spread through WhatsApp. No such decision has been taken. Please do not forward this message. It’s fake. Action is being taken.”

of the day quote

A country is identified by its border and geography, but its biggest identity is its language. The various languages and dialects of India are its strength as well as a symbol of unity. In India, which is full of cultural and linguistic diversity, Hindi has been a unifying force for the whole nation for centuries



AMIT SHAH | UNION HOME MINISTER

We need no other star campaigner as the NDA has, in Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the biggest star campaigner



DEVENDRA FADNAVIS | SENIOR BJP LEADER

Work should be done, to induce a feeling of self-reliance among the labourers in urban areas and farmers in rural areas



MOHAN BHAGWAT | RSS CHIEF

SHORT TAKES

Sisodia Covid+ve

New Delhi: Delhi Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia Monday said he has tested positive for COVID-19. In a tweet, the 48-year-old AAP leader said he has gone into self-isolation. "Had got my COVID-19 test done after I had a mild fever. The report has come positive. I have gone into self-isolation. As of now, I have no fever or any other issue. I am fine. By your blessings, I will recover fully and return to work soon," he said in a tweet in Hindi. Earlier in the day, he did not attend the one-day session of the Delhi Assembly.

Bus driver held

Kakinada (Andhra Pradesh): An Andhra Pradesh State Road Transport Corporation driver has been arrested for battering his wife with a dumb-bell in Indrapalem village in East Godavari district, police said Monday. "Thangedi Srinivas was arrested for the assault on his wife Madhavi on September 4 night. He is currently in remand," a police official said. Police had registered a case under Sections 498A and 324 of the Indian Penal Code, to which they later added Section 307, based on Madhavi's statement. Srinivas, 42, had come home drunk late in the night and picked up a quarrel with his wife over his drinking. "When Madhavi objected, he hit her with a dumb-bell in a fit of rage," police said.

Three killed

Tanuku (Andhra Pradesh): Three Andhra Pradesh government employees, including one working on contract, were killed when a car they were travelling in plunged into an irrigation canal in Tanuku in West Godavari district Monday morning. West Godavari Superintendent of Police K Narayan Naik said that the deceased were identified as Sekhar, a senior assistant in Tanuku municipal office; Katari Srinivas, a water boy in the RTO office; and Dasari Nagasubashini, a cluster coordinator of Velugu project.

Accused flees

Lucknow: In a shocking incident, an accused fled from the police custody when the vehicle he was being taken in, stopped for refuelling at a petrol pump in Uttar Pradesh's Lakhimpur Kheri district. The incident, which happened Sunday, was caught on a CCTV camera at the petrol pump. The CCTV footage showed the accused in a white shirt and brown pants being chased by the police personnel. The accused had been booked under the stringent POCSO Act.



Modi government said become 'aatmanirbhar' (self-sufficient) which means save your life yourself because the PM is busy with peacocks

RAHUL GANDHI | CONGRESS LEADER

NO PLAN TO REVISE NORMS: POKHRIYAL

There is no plan to revise the existing reservation norms under the new National Education Policy, Union Education Minister Ramesh Pokhriyal 'Nishank' said Monday



RJD questions Raghuvansh's letters to Nitish

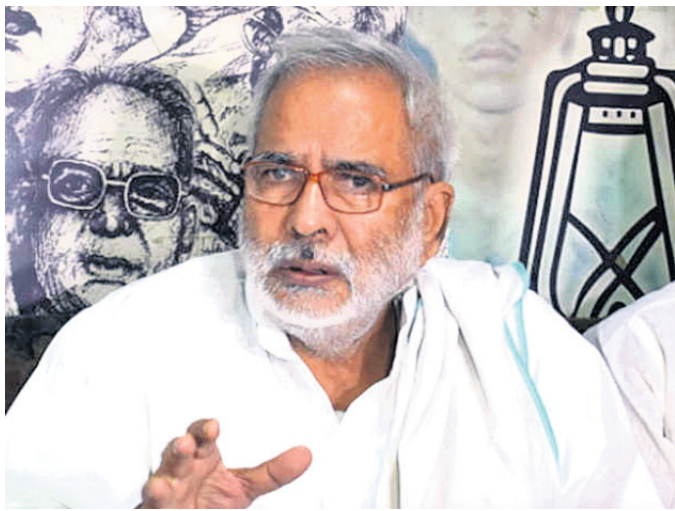
PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Patna, Sept 14: The Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD) Monday cast doubts over letters written by its founding member Raghuvansh Prasad Singh, from his hospital bed, barely a couple of days before breathing his last, drawing angry reactions from the ruling NDA in Bihar.

Singh, who died at AIIMS, New Delhi Sunday, had Thursday announced his resignation from the party vide a hand-written addressed to jailed RJD supremo Lalu Prasad and followed it up with a series of communications, the next day, drawing the attention of Chief Minister Nitish Kumar towards a number of issues.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi while paying rich tributes to the departed leader Sunday had also referred to Singh's letter to the Bihar Chief Minister where he raised the issue of development of his erstwhile Lok Sabha seat Vaishali. "I will request Nitish Kumar to execute the development projects he wrote about in the letter. Let's together—the state and the Centre—fulfill his wishes," Modi said.

Nitish Kumar, who is Prasad's arch rival and heads the Janata Dal (United), had Sunday night said at



the assembly premises, where Singh's mortal remains were brought on way to his native village for cremation, "we have started acting on the requests of late Raghuvansh babu." Some issues raised by him fall in the ambit of the Centre and we have referred these to the Union government for appropriate action". Among other things, Singh had sought extension of MGNREGA benefits to the farm sector.

A screenshot of Nitish Kumar's written reply to Singh, penned

while the latter was still alive, was also shared on the official twitter handle of the Chief Minister's Office. RJD MLA Bhai Virendra and MLC Subodh Rai smelt a rat and asserted "no person, admitted to a hospital's Intensive Care Unit, can write a letter". Singh had been admitted to the ICU of AIIMS about a week ago for treatment of complications he had developed after recovering from COVID-19. He was put on ventilator late Friday and died less than 48 hours later.

Rai, who claimed to have met Singh in Patna after his recovery from coronavirus, said "he was obviously upset over many things which he had expressed freely. But he never betrayed any intention of quitting the party he had nurtured. The state government is doing politics in the matter".

Bhai Virendra pointed out that the letters written to Nitish Kumar were "too many in number and shared on the social media at too short intervals" and claimed the whole episode pointed towards "a conspiracy by the NDA".

The RJD leaders found support from senior Congress leader Akhilesh Prasad Singh, who had formerly been with Lalu Prasad's party. "I had met Raghuvansh babu just one week back. He was a transparent man and had he really been thinking of quitting his party, he would not have tried to hide it. There is some conspiracy at some level", the Congress leader said.

Speculations are rife that the former Union minister, who remained loyal to Lalu Prasad for more than three decades, was made to change his mind by his elder son Satya Prakash Singh who is said to have given up his corporate job with the intent to make the political plunge.

Bhushan files review plea against conviction

September 12, Bhushan had moved a plea filed in the apex court seeking a right of appeal against his conviction, to be heard by a larger and a different bench

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Sept 14: Advocate Prashant Bhushan Monday filed a review petition in the Supreme Court, challenging its verdict convicting him for criminal contempt of court by making derogatory statements against the judiciary through tweets.

September 12, Bhushan had moved a plea filed in the apex court seeking a right of appeal against his conviction, to be heard by a larger and a different bench. The top court had imposed a token penalty of Re 1 on Bhushan, which he deposited in the court Monday. Addressing the media, Bhushan said that paying the fine does not mean he had accepted the verdict and he would file a review plea to contest his conviction. Bhushan has, in his plea, argued that tweet number 2 tends to convey an impression that "the judges who have presided in the Supreme Court in the period of last six years have a particular role in the destruction of Indian democracy and the last four CJs had a more particular role in it."

"This might well be the impression that the tweet in question seeks to convey, but the Court doesn't, in fact, show, or even attempt to show, how the holding of this opinion constitutes contempt of court. This is an error apparent on the face of the judgment," said Bhushan in the 444-page review petition.

August 31, a bench headed by Justice Arun Mishra, who retired September 2, had said: "We, therefore, sentence the contemnor (Bhushan) with a fine of Re 1 to be deposited with the Registry of this Court by September 15, failing which he shall undergo a simple im-



Bhushan said that paying the fine does not mean he had accepted the verdict and he would file a review plea to contest his conviction

prisonment for a period of three months and further be debarred from practising in this Court for a period of three years."

Bhushan insisted the court erroneously held him guilty of contempt, as the fair criticism of a judge and the judiciary is protected by Article 19 (1)(a) of the Constitution. He argued that contempt proceedings should not have been heard by a bench comprising Justice Mishra. "That on several occasions, Justice Arun Mishra has orally accused the review petitioner of committing contempt of court when he had merely mentioned that it may be inappropriate for a particular judge to hear a particular case in circumstances where conflict of interest was involved," said the review plea. Bhushan urged the apex court to rehear the verdict which held him guilty of contempt and also grant an oral hearing in the open court, as the facts and circumstances of the case so necessitated.

SMILE PLEASE



Girls take photographs at Masunda Lake in Thane, Monday

PTI PHOTO

GOAL ACHIEVED

Man digs 5-km canal to bring water to his village

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Patna, Sept 14: Reminding once again what a lone determined person can do if he sets out to achieve what he has aimed for, a man in Bihar's Gaya district has dug up a 5-km-long canal in 20 years to bring irrigation water to the fields in his village. The feat of Loungi Bhuiyan, a resident of Kolithwa village on the border of Imanganj and Bankebazar blocks, makes one recall the toil of 'Mountain Man' Dashrath Manjhi, another native of Bihar who cut a road through a hill near his village in 22 years.

Loungi was pained by the migration of youths from his drought-hit Kolithwa village, which was drought-prone as it



did not get to retain sufficient rainwater for irrigation due to its geographical location. The village is around 80 km from Gaya city, surrounded by forest area.

Since there were no job avenues except agriculture, a large number of village's youths migrated to bigger cities in search of livelihood. Bhuiya was unhappy that mostly women and children were left

behind in his village.

Village headman Vishnupat Bhokta said: "In August 2001, he decided to dig a canal (Paain in local language) from a natural water source in Bagetha Sahwasi forest to the village. The villagers took their cattle generally to that source for watering, which also provided sustenance to the animals living in the forest area. Loungi knew that the water source was enough to irrigate the agricultural land of the villagers. However, it was a great challenge to bring water into the village."

"Loungi did a survey of the land and earmarked the canal route. After working relentlessly for 20 years, he managed to dig the canal that is four feet wide and three feet deep," Bhokta said.

Boy sends obscene messages to teacher

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Moradabad (Uttar Pradesh), Sept 14: A Class 10 student of a private school has been booked for allegedly sending 'obscene messages' to his teacher during an on-line class.

The student's father has also been booked for 'threatening the teacher' over phone. The police took the action Saturday.

In her police complaint, the 30-year-old Social Sciences teacher of the CBSE-affiliated school in Moradabad, alleged that two inappropriate messages were sent to her while she was taking an online session through Google Meet. The messages were also read by several other students, she said.

"I approached the student's family. However, his father, instead of scolding his child, refused to listen. He even misbehaved and threatened me," she said in her complaint. The police later lodged an FIR against the father-son duo.

Circle officer Kuldeep Singh said that a case has been registered against the two and a report has been sent to the cyber cell for a detailed probe.

Civil Lines SHO, Nawal Marwah, said, "An FIR has been registered against the student under IPC Sections 504 (intentional insult with intent to provoke breach of the peace) and 67A (punishment for publishing or transmitting of material containing sexually explicit act, etc.) while his father has been booked under Section 506 (punishment for criminal intimidation) of the IPC."

105-year-old woman beats Covid

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Bangalore, Sept 14: The 105-year-old Kamalamma Lingangouda Hiregoudra has become the centre of attraction in Karnataka's Koppal district after her grandson reportedly cured her of Covid-19 with his Ayurvedic formulas.

Koppal is one of the backward districts of the state and has been a hotspot for coronavirus. Hiregoudra's grandson Srinivas Hyati is an Ayurvedic doctor practising in the state.

As the elderly woman had fever, she had undergone a corona test which came positive but she was reluctant to be hospitalised.

"It was a challenge to treat her at home. However, she had no other health issues and that was a great advantage for us to treat her like any other Covid-19 patient. She was not worried about the virus and cooperated for the treatment in home isolation," Hyati said.

Her family members said she had stopped taking food saying her life was about to end. "But we forced her to consume at least 'ganji' (porridge) and water along with the prescribed medicines that helped her to recover," a family member claimed.

of the day quote

Human history never witnessed such a pandemic. We have to work for the well being of the human kind



ARVIND KEJRIWAL | DELHI CHIEF MINISTER

Our Constitution has given the same status to all languages. Hence, people who are sitting in Delhi should not think otherwise. Therefore, the idea of celebrating Hindi Diwas is nothing but a soft way of imposing Hindi as the national language, which I oppose tooth and nail



HD KUMARASWAMY | JANATA DAL (SECULAR) LEADER

I want to thank all those who wished and prayed for my speedy recovery as well as the doctors who were involved in my treatment. There was no need to be afraid of coronavirus, but we have to remain vigilant



MANOHAR LAL KHATTAR | HARYANA CHIEF MINISTER

SHORT TAKES

Man held for selling 'beef'

Indore: A 39-year-old man has been arrested under the stringent National Security Act for allegedly selling beef in Madhya Pradesh's Indore city, police said Monday. On the basis of a police report issued Sunday, the district administration sent the accused to jail under the National Security Act (NSA), Superintendent of Police (West Zone) Mahesh Chandra Jain said.

7-kg heroin seized, 1 held

Jammu: A man has been arrested after 7 kg of heroin worth ₹35 crore was recovered in Jammu and Kashmir's Rajouri district, police said Monday. The recovery came after specific information that high-grade narcotic substance was being smuggled along the Jammu-Poonch national highway, a police official said.

Former Maoist beaten to death

Ranchi: A former Maoist guerrilla has been beaten to death in Jharkhand's Gumla district Monday, the police said. According to the police, Sandeep Tirkey, 38, a resident of Tesera village in Gumla district, was brutally beaten up by the villagers. Sandeep was earlier an active member of banned Maoist outfit People's Liberation Front of India (PLFI).

Sahara Mall in Gurugram sealed

Gurugram: Sahara Mall, one of the oldest commercial hubs of the city located on the Mehrauli-Gurugram road, was sealed by the Haryana Pollution Control Board (HSPCB) for flouting anti-pollution norms, pollution control board officials said Monday. A team from the pollution control board along with duty magistrate Kartar Singh and pollution environment engineers Neha Saharan and Ujjwal Kumar reached the mall and sealed the entire complex.

Delhi gyms open after 5 months

New Delhi: Thermal screening, entry of limited number of people, regular sanitisation of equipments -- these are some of the precautions that are being followed by gyms in Delhi as they resume operations after being closed for over five months due to the pandemic.



Ladakh has the potential to become the sporting powerhouse of India and the Union government is committed to promoting world-class sports infrastructure in the UT

KIREN RIJJU | UNION MINISTER

India leads world in COVID-19 recoveries

According to the Union Health Ministry, India's recovery rate has touched 78 per cent reflecting the increasing number of high recoveries per day



Hospital staff applaud recovered patient

PTI FILE PHOTO

AGENCIES

New Delhi, Sept 14: India Monday overtook Brazil to register the highest number of COVID-19 recoveries in the world at 37,80,107, according to Johns Hopkins University data.

According to data, 19,625,959 people around the world have recovered from the coronavirus infection while the total number of COVID-19 cases across the world are 29,006,033 and the total number of deaths reported globally stands at 9,24,105. Johns Hopkins University, which has been compiling COVID-19 data from all over the world, put India in the number one position

in terms of the number of recovered coronavirus cases at 37,80,107, followed by Brazil at 37,23,206 cases and the US at 24,51,406 cases.

According to the Union Health Ministry, India's recovery rate has touched 78 per cent reflecting the increasing number of high recoveries per day. "Around 77,512 patients have been discharged in the last 24 hours. The total recovered cases are 37,80,107. The gap between recovered cases and active cases is consistently increasing. This has touched nearly 28 lakh today (27,93,509)," the health ministry said in a statement. The ministry further said that Maharashtra, Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh

OVER 60% ACTIVE CASES IN 5 STATES

More than 60 per cent of the active coronavirus cases are concentrated in the five states of Maharashtra, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh and Tamil Nadu, the Health Ministry said Monday, underlining that the recovery rate in the country had touched 78 per cent. More than 60 per cent of the active cases are concentrated in five states -- Maharashtra (21.9 per cent), Andhra Pradesh (11.7 per cent), Tamil Nadu (10.4 per cent), Karnataka (9.5 per cent) and Uttar Pradesh (6.4 per cent), the ministry said.

and Tamil Nadu have recorded around 60 per cent of the total recovered COVID-19 cases.

The total number of active coronavirus cases in India stands at 9,86,598 as on date while the number of COVID-19 cases in the country stands at 48,46,427. Deaths have been relatively low compared with the number of infections, but the rate is rising.

DELHI RIOTS

KHALID IN 10-DAY POLICE CUSTODY

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, Sept 14: A Delhi court Monday sent former Jawaharlal Nehru University student Umar Khalid to 10 days police custody in connection with a case related to the violence which broke out in Delhi's northeast area in February this year.

Delhi Police's Special Cell had arrested Khalid on Sunday night under the stringent Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, after questioning him for over ten hours. He was produced before Additional Session Judge Amitabh Rawat of Karkardooma court via video-conferencing Monday afternoon.

During the course of proceedings, Special Public Prosecutor Amit Prasad sought 10 days police custody to confront Khalid with huge technical data running into 11 lakh pages, "as well as other evidence collected during investigation of present case and also to examine at length about other suspects and various other aspects".

According to the remand application, names of some more suspects have also cropped up during the investigation of riots and Khalid is required to be questioned at length about those suspects to obtain their exact particulars for further investigation. "Since technical data and other material are substantial which needs to be confronted, it is necessary that 10 days police custody remand be granted,"



the remand application said. Advocate Trideep Pais, representing Khalid in the case, opposed the remand application and claimed that his client was not in Delhi during the riots. Pais said that no reason has been mentioned in the remand application as to why such drawn-out police custody is required. "Application has no base. Why has the police not mentioned which speech of Umar was problematic. What do they want for him in 10 days?" he asked. Khalid is accused of hatching a criminal conspiracy to cause communal unrest by inciting people protesting against the Citizenship Amendment Act and the National Register of Citizens. On March 6, an FIR was registered against Khalid and Danish based on information provided by an informer to Crime Branch Sub Inspector Arvind Kumar. According to FIR number 59/2020, complainant Arvind Kumar said that riots are a premeditated conspiracy.

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Kanpur, Sept 14: As soon as the Sun sets, people scurry back into their homes and lock their houses in Uttar Pradesh's Bikru village that witnessed one of the worst blood-bath in recent history.

There are no informal get-togethers where people sit together and discuss everyday things under the sun, moon or stars.

An eerie silence engulfs Bikru once the Sun goes down.

It has been almost two and a half months since the Bikru massacre took place in which eight policemen were killed. People in the Bikru village though swear they still hear gunshots in the night. "Aaj bhi goliyon ki awaaz sunai deti hai.



Sab jante hain par bolta koi nahin. Kuchh logon ne to Vikas bhaiyya (Vikas Dubey) ko dekha bhi hain (Even today we hear gunshots.

Everyone knows this but no one talks about it. Some people have even seen Vikas Dubey's ghost," says a young man in the village who

HARYANA BANS VISIT TO KURUKSHETRA

The Haryana government Monday announced the imposition of ban on gathering during 'Amavasya' September 17 at pilgrimage sites -- Kurukshetra and Pehowa -- due to the coronavirus pandemic



PROTEST TURNS UGLY



Police baton charge KSU activists during a protest demanding resignation of Kerala Higher Education Minister KT Jaleel, in Thiruvananthapuram

PTI PHOTO

Pak made 3,186 ceasefire violations along LoC

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, Sept 14: There have been 3,186 incidents of ceasefire violation along the Line of Control (LoC) in Jammu region in this year till September 7, the government said in the Parliament Monday.

The centre also stated that in addition to the ceasefire violations, 242 incidents of cross-border firing have occurred along Indo-Pakistan International Border in Jammu region in this year till August 31.

Minister of State for Defence Shripad Naik in a written reply to CM Ramesh in Rajya Sabha said

also stated that there have been eight fatal casualties and two non-fatal casualties of Army personnel occurred in Jammu and Kashmir this year till September 7, 2020.

"Appropriate retaliation to the ceasefire violations, as required, has been carried out by Indian Army/BSE" the minister said. In addition, all the cases of ceasefire violations are taken up with Pakistan authorities through the established mechanisms of hot-lines, flag meetings, Directorate General of Military Operations talks as well as diplomatic channels between the two countries.

MPs use 'Attendance Register' App

The move is a step forward in digitalising operations at the Parliament

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, Sept 14: In a first-of-its-kind initiative, all Members of Parliament (MPs) registered their attendance through a mobile application when Lok Sabha assembled Monday for the first day of the Monsoon Session.

The 'Attendance Register' App initiative was adopted by the Parliament this year in view of spurt in coronavirus or Covid-19 cases so that the spread of the disease could be contained during the Session.

"The digitalisation of operations at the Parliament demonstrates India's capable and efficient response to the current pandemic," Lok Sabha Speaker



Om Birla said in a tweet while commenting on use of 'Attendance Register' App. To minimise COVID-19 transmission risks due to mul-

tipple handling of papers, the Lok Sabha as well as the Rajya Sabha secretariat this time came up with the App.

The initiative is among various first time measures adopted in the Parliament in this Monsoon Session.

Besides, all parliamentary papers will be available electronically through 'Today's Papers' tab on Members' portal during the session. Members may download and take printouts for their use. Parliamentary papers, not exclusive to the MPs, will also be available on the Lok Sabha website under the tab 'Today's Papers in the Business of the House.' The Monsoon Session will continue till October 1.

UGC-NET exam postponed

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Sept 14: The Ministry of Education's testing agency Monday postponed the National Eligibility Test (NET) after its dates were clashing with Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) exam.

The NET was scheduled to be conducted from September 16 to September 25. It will now be conducted September 24 onwards. "The National Testing Agency will be conducting ICAR exams 16, 17, 22



and 23 September. In view of that, UGC- NET 2020 Examination will now be held from September 24 on-

wards," said Sadhana Parashar, Senior Director, NTA.

"This is due to some common candidates in both exams and the requests received thereof. The exact schedule of subject-wise and shift-wise details will be uploaded subsequently," she added.

The June 2020 exam along with various other exams had to be postponed due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the resultant lockdown. The new schedule for various exams was released by the NTA in the last week of August.

having heard gunshots or 'seen' Vikas Dubey. "We have no problem in doing our duty," said one of them and refused to talk further. A local priest says that the claims of local people cannot be dismissed.

"In cases where unnatural deaths have taken place, such incidents happen. In the case of Vikas Dubey, the cremation was not performed properly and the post death rituals were also not done. The same has happened with his five accomplices who were killed in encounters," he explains. The villagers have asked a local priest to hold a puja during the on-going 'Pitra Paksh' period to appease the 'disturbed souls' but the priest has backed off saying that he does not want to get on to the police radar:

Bills for homeopathy, medicine system passed in Parliament

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Sept 14:Parliament has given its nod to two bills that propose a medical education system that improve access to quality and affordable medical education by ensuring availability of adequate and high quality homeopathy and Indian system of medicine professionals across the country.

Lok Sabha Monday passed the National Commission for Homeopathy Bill and the National Commission for Indian System of Medicine Bill. Rajya Sabha had passed them earlier, and the lower house' nod to the two proposed legislations mean that they are set to become laws after getting formal approval from President Ram Nath Kovind. Some opposition members protested against the bill, saying the Centre needed to undertake wider consultation. Health Minister Harsh Vardhan said the proposed laws will help in better administration of homeopathy and Indian system of medicines.

The proposed legislations promote equitable and universal health-care that encourages community health perspective and make services of such medical professionals accessible to all citizens, the Union government has said.

'OUR LAWS, VALUES DON'T RECOGNISE SAME-SEX MARRIAGE'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Sept 14: The Centre Monday told the Delhi High Court that marriage between same sex couples was "not permissible" as it is not recognised by "our laws, legal system, society and our values".

The submission was made before a bench of Chief Justice D N Patel and Justice Prateek Jalan by Solicitor General (SG) Tushar Mehta during hearing of a PIL seeking a declaration that same sex marriages be recognised under the Hindu Marriage Act (HMA) and Special Marriage Act.

Mehta opposed the relief sought in the petition saying "our laws, our legal system, our society and our values do not recognise a marriage, which is a sacrament, between same sex couples".

He said the plea to grant recognition to or permit registration of such marriages was "not permissible" for two reasons -- firstly, the petition was asking the court to legislate and secondly, any relief granted "would run contrary to various statutory provisions".

"Unless court does violence to various laws, this cannot be done," he added. Mehta also said that under the HMA, the various provisions regulating marriages or prohibited relationships talk of husband and wife and therefore, who would be assigned these roles where a same sex couple was concerned. The bench observed that the world over things were changing, but it may or may not be applicable to India.

It, however, questioned the need for a PIL in the instant case, saying the people who claim to be affected are well educated and can themselves approach the court. "Why should we entertain the PIL," it added.

of the day quote

Neither Russia, nor China, nor our allies ever offer someone to be friends against someone. We have a completely different diplomatic and political culture

If people in low- and middle-income countries miss out on vaccines, the virus will continue to kill and the economic recovery globally will be delayed

Passing an act of Parliament (Internal Market Bill) and then going on to break an international treaty obligation is the very, very last thing you should contemplate. It should be the absolute final resort

SHORT TAKES

3 dead in violent rampage in US

Nashville (US): A gunman killed two people and wounded three others in a series of shootings and carjackings that ended with a high-speed chase as he fled police. He ultimately wrecked the car he stole and killed himself, while his remaining hostage survived, the Tennessee Bureau of Investigation said. The string of crimes began Sunday morning along Interstate 24 near Beechgrove when Dangelo Dorsey, 29, opened fire inside a moving vehicle, killing one person and wounding another, TBI Director David Rausch said in a news release.

Saudi to lift travel curbs in Jan 2021

Riyadh: Saudi Arabia has announced that it will lift travel restrictions from January 2021. In a statement, the Interior Ministry attributed the delay in lifting the restrictions due to the severe Covid-19 situation in some countries. The Health Ministry said it has the right, according to the situation, to impose certain precautionary measures.

US envoy to China to 'step down'

Beijing: The US ambassador to China will step down early next month, ending a three-year tenure marked by a trade war and increasingly bitter relations between the world's two largest economies. Terry Branstad, appointed by President Donald Trump in 2017, confirmed his decision in a phone call with Trump last week, the US Embassy said in a statement on Monday. It did not give a reason for his departure. Word of his departure leaked out earlier in the day when Secretary of State Mike Pompeo thanked Branstad on Twitter for his service.

Pak summons Indian diplomat

Islamabad: Pakistan Monday summoned a senior diplomat from the Indian High Commission here to register its protest over the alleged ceasefire violations by the Indian forces along the Line of Control (LoC). In a statement, the Foreign Office said that due to "indiscriminate and unprovoked firing" in Hotspring Sector of the LoC Sunday night, three civilians sustained serious injuries. The Indian side was called upon to respect the 2003 Ceasefire Understanding.

Indian troops displaying newfound boldness: Report

AN OPINION ARTICLE IN NEWSWEEK SAYS THE CHINESE PRESIDENT HAS RISKED HIS FUTURE WITH THE FAILED HIGH-PROFILE INCURSIONS OF THE PLA INTO MORE AREAS OF THE LAC

AGENCIES

Washington, Sept 14: China's failure to push around the Indian troops in the Line of Actual Control (LAC) means that the ability of Chinese President Xi Jinping to intimidate anyone has reduced.

In an opinion article for Newsweek written by Gordon G Chang, a lawyer and commentator, the Chinese President has risked his future with the failed high-profile incursions of the People's Liberation Army (PLA) into more areas of the LAC, the border between India and China.

The writer says that Xi is the "architect" of these aggressive moves into India and the Chinese troops have unexpectedly flopped. The failures of the Chinese Army at the LAC will have consequences and will give Xi an excuse to pick up the pace of replacing adversaries in the armed forces with loyal elements.

However, these failures motivate Xi, who as chairman of the Chinese

SINO-INDIAN BORDER ROW



Communist Party's Central Military Commission, is the leader of the PLA, to renew his bid to launch another offensive against Indian positions. In early May, Chinese troops advanced south of the LAC in three separate areas in Ladakh. With the boundary poorly demarcated, Chinese forces have trespassed into Indian positions for years, especially after Xi was appointed the party's general secretary in 2012.

Cleo Paskal of the Foundation for

Defense of Democracies told Newsweek that large-scale manoeuvres in Tibet were not preparations for such a move.

In June, China and India were engaged in a violent face-off in Galwan Valley. Chinese troops killed 20 Indian soldiers in a premeditated move and the clash was the first deadly confrontation between the two countries in 45 years.

While the Chinese side is thought to have suffered 43 casualties in

the Galwan face-off, the number could exceed 60, according to Paskal.

Late last month, for the first time in a half-century, India launched an offensive against China, taking back strategic points the Chinese recently grabbed. The offensive took the Chinese forces aback and they retreated. Chang, the writer, says that China's subsequent efforts to counter India have proved ineffective. For now, Indian troops, in the southernmost of the three areas of Ladakh, are under its control, which was once in Chinese hands.

"India is not giving the invaders the opportunity to improve. Both sides have just accused the other of violating decades-old rules of engagement by firing warning shots. It appears, however, the Chinese are the ones closer to the truth: India's troops are displaying newfound boldness," the author says.

"The game has changed. You can say the Indians are more aggressive or more aggressively defensive, but they are in fact bolder and better," Paskal told Newsweek.

WEST COAST FIRES

Winds a worry as death toll reaches 35

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Oregon (US), Sept 14: Nearly all the dozens of people reported missing after a devastating blaze in southern Oregon have been accounted for, authorities said over the weekend as crews battled wildfires that have killed at least 35 from California to Washington state.

The flames up and down the West Coast have destroyed neighbourhoods, leaving nothing but charred rubble and burned-out cars, forced tens of thousands to flee and cast a shroud of smoke that has given Seattle, San Francisco and Portland, Oregon, some of the worst air quality in the world.

The smoke filled the air with an acrid metallic smell like pennies and spread to nearby states. While making it difficult to breathe, it helped firefighters by blocking the sun and turning the weather cooler as they tried to get a handle on the blazes, which were slowing in some places.

But warnings of low moisture and strong winds that could fan the flames added urgency to the battle. The so-called red flag warnings stretched from hard-hit southern Oregon to Northern California and extended through Monday evening.

Lexi Soulios, her husband and son were afraid they would have to evacuate for a second time because of the weather. They left their small southern Oregon town of Talent last week when they saw a "big, huge flow of dark smoke coming up," then went past roadblocks Friday to pick through the charred ruins



of their home. While they are staying farther south in Ashland, known for the Oregon Shakespeare Festival, she said by text message that the forecast may mean they could be on the move again.

"So this isn't over yet but we just had the car checked so we feel prepared," Lexi Soulios wrote.

Authorities last week reported as many as 50 people could be missing after a wildfire in the Ashland area. But the Jackson County sheriff's office said late Saturday that four people had died in the blaze and that the number of missing was down to one. At least 10 people have been killed in the past week throughout Oregon. Officials have said more people are missing from other fires, and the number of fatalities is likely to rise, though they have not said how high the toll could go as they search. In California, 24 people have died, and one in Washington state. Thousands of homes and other buildings have burned.

Barbara Rose Bettison, 25, left her farm among the trees and fields of Eagle Creek, outside Portland, when a sheriff's deputy knocked on her door Tuesday. They drove away on a road that became an ominous dividing line, with blue skies on one side and the other filled with black and brown smoke.

Johnson faces rebellion over plan to break Brexit treaty

REUTERS

London, Sept 14: British Prime Minister Boris Johnson will try to persuade rebellious lawmakers in his party to vote Monday for a bill that will break international law by breaching parts of the Brexit divorce deal and which has enraged Brussels.

The House of Commons will debate the Internal Market Bill, which the EU has demanded Johnson scrap by the end of September in the latest brinkmanship of a four-year saga since Britain voted narrowly to leave the bloc.

After the debate, in a vote that may come late, lawmakers will decide if the bill should go to the next stage. Johnson's plan to explicitly break



international law has plunged Brexit back into crisis less than four months before Britain is finally due to leave the EU's orbit at the end of a transition period, and put trade talks with the bloc in peril.

EU diplomats and officials said the bloc could take legal action against Britain, though there would be no resolution before the end-of-year deadline for Britain's full exit.

The EU has ramped up preparations for a no-deal Brexit, which



French CRS riot police officers walk past a burning car during a demonstration of the yellow vests movement in Paris, France

Trump's Mideast deals tout 'peace' where there was never war

THE OPTICS OF TUESDAY'S EVENT WILL EVOKE THE GROUNDBREAKING AGREEMENTS THAT ENDED DECADES OF WAR BETWEEN ISRAEL AND NEIGHBOURING EGYPT AND JORDAN, THE REALITY IS QUITE DIFFERENT

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Jerusalem, Sept 14: For the first time in more than a quarter-century, a US President will host a signing ceremony between Israelis and Arabs at the White House, billing it as an "historic breakthrough" in a region long known for its stubborn conflicts.

But while the optics of Tuesday's event will evoke the groundbreaking agreements that ended decades of war between Israel and neighbouring Egypt and Jordan, and that launched the peace process with the Palestinians, the reality is quite different.

The United Arab Emirates will establish diplomatic relations with Israel, a fellow US ally it has never

gone to war with, formalising ties that go back several years.

The agreement cements an informal alliance against Iran and could pave the way for the UAE to acquire advanced US weapons, while leaving the far more contentious Israeli-Palestinian conflict as intractable as ever.

That hasn't stopped President Donald Trump from referring to the UAE deal, which was announced last month, as heralding a "previously unthinkable regional transformation."

A similar agreement announced Friday with Bahrain, which welcomed a visiting Israeli Cabinet minister as early as 1994, also formalises longstanding ties.

The agreement with Bahrain



has raised the possibility that Saudi Arabia – the ultimate prize in Israel's normalisation drive – could follow suit.

Bahrain's Sunni monarchy is closely allied with Saudi Arabia,

which helped quash a popular uprising among the island nation's Shiite majority in 2011.

Saudi Arabia has quietly acquiesced to the UAE deal, opening its airspace to commercial flights be-

Abe loyalist Suga wins party vote for Japan PM

Yoshihide Suga says he is a reformist and that he has worked to achieve policies by breaking territorial barriers of bureaucracy

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Tokyo, Sept 14: Yoshihide Suga was elected as the new head of Japan's ruling party Monday, virtually guaranteeing him parliamentary election as the country's next Prime Minister.

Suga received 377 votes in the ruling Liberal Democratic Party election to pick a successor to Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, who announced last month that he would resign due to health problems.

The other two contenders received a combined 157 votes – former Foreign Minister Fumio Kishida got 89 and former Defence Minister Shigeru Ishiba had 68.

The expected victory in the party vote by Suga, currently the chief Cabinet secretary of Abe's government, all but guarantees his election in a parliamentary vote Wednesday because of the majority held by the Liberal Democrats' ruling coalition.

Suga gained the support of party heavyweights and their wing members early in the campaign on expectations that he would continue Abe's policies. That his victory appeared to be a done deal has raised



criticism from inside and outside the party that the process is undemocratic and murky.

The closed-door politics also apparently led lawmakers to support Suga in hopes of getting favourable party and Cabinet posts in the new administration.

Suga has said his top priorities are fighting the coronavirus and turning around an economy battered by the pandemic. He repeatedly has noted achievements under the Abe-led government when asked about various policies.

Despite his low-key image as Abe's right-hand man, Suga is actually known for his iron-fist approach to getting jobs done as a policy coordinator and influencing bureaucrats by using the centralized power of the prime minister's office.

Foreign labs confirm Navalny poisoned with Novichok

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Berlin, Sept 14: Specialist labs in France and Sweden have confirmed Russian opposition leader Alexei Navalny was poisoned with the Soviet-era nerve agent Novichok, the German government said Monday.

A German military laboratory previously confirmed the substance in his samples. German government spokesman Steffen Seibert said that the Hague-based Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons has also received samples and is taking steps to have those tested at its reference laboratories.

"Independently of the ongoing examinations by the OPCW, three laboratories have now confirmed independently of one another the proof of a nerve agent of the Novichok group as the cause of Mr. Navalny's poisoning," Seibert said in a statement.



He said Germany had asked France and Sweden for an "independent review" of the German findings using new samples from Navalny.

Navalny, the most visible opponent of Russian President Vladimir Putin, was flown to Germany two days after falling ill August 20 on a domestic flight in Russia. Berlin has demanded that Russia investigate the case.

Seibert Monday renewed Germany's demand that "Russia explain itself" on the matter.

of the day quote

ADB will work closely with the government to support the country in accelerating its inclusive and sustainable economic transformation

TAKED KONISHI |
COUNTRY DIRECTOR FOR INDIA, ADB

Facebook is committed to enabling economic opportunities for businesses, and this charter is more important than ever before as we navigate the economic crisis

SANDEEP BHUSHAN |
DIRECTOR, FACEBOOK INDIA

We intend to widen our domestic offerings and will target to introduce well over 100 products over the next one year. We expect several policy initiatives promoting local manufacturing

R JESWANT | CEO, FUNSKOOL INDIA LTD

SHORT TAKES

No regulation of OTT for now

New Delhi: The Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) has decided not to go ahead with any regulatory intervention on Over-the-Top (OTT) communication. In its recommendations for the OTT services released on Monday, TRAI noted that it is "not an opportune moment to recommend a comprehensive regulatory framework for various aspects of services referred to as OTT services, beyond the extant laws and regulations prescribed presently."

NSDC inks MOUs with 8 countries

New Delhi: The National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC) has signed memorandum of understanding (MOUs) with eight countries, including Japan, UAE, Sweden, and Russia, for cooperation in the field of vocational education and training, the Parliament was informed on Monday. Minister of State for Skill Development and Entrepreneurship R K Singh said that to ensure that skilling fulfils the aspiration of the people at local level.

NVIDIA acquires chip maker Arm

San Francisco: In one of the biggest tech deals, graphics giant NVIDIA has confirmed it is acquiring SoftBank-owned UK chip maker Arm for \$40 billion with an aim to create a premier computing company for the age of artificial intelligence (AI). The deal would consolidate NVIDIA's position at the centre of the semiconductor industry. While it is the leader for GPUs, it has little to do with CPU design or mobile hardware where Arm is one of the leaders.

Markets cave in to late selloff

Mumbai: Equity benchmarks failed to hold on to intra-day gains on Monday as cautious investors trimmed exposure to banking and finance counters despite firm global cues. Positive commentary from HCL Tech lifted IT stocks, but it was not enough to offset the weakness in index majors HDFC twins, Reliance Industries and ICICI Bank. The BSE Sensex opened strong and was on course to register its third straight session of gains, but suddenly came under heavy selling pressure in late-afternoon trade.



There is no proposal for raising Foreign Institutional Investment ceiling in public sector banks to 49 per cent from 20 per cent for capital mobilisation

ANURAG SINGH THAKUR |
MINISTER OF STATE FOR FINANCE

FARM SECTOR BILLS

MSP will stay, farmers to get investment, tech

AGENCIES

New Delhi, Sept 14: The Centre Monday introduced three bill in Lok Sabha on farm sector with Union minister Narendra Singh Tomar asserting that they will help farmers get a remunerative price for their produce as well as private investments and technology.

Agriculture Minister Narendra Singh Tomar introduced The Farmers' Produce Trade And Commerce (Promotion And Facilitation) Bill, The Farmers (Empowerment and Protection) Agreement on Price Assurance and Farm Services Bill and The Essential Commodities (Amendment) Bill, which will replace ordinances promulgated by the government earlier.

He said the proposed laws will enable barrier-free trade in agricultural produce, and also empower farmers to engage with investors of their choice. The minister said that these steps are only the latest in a series of measures taken by the government as part of its continuous commitment to championing the cause of welfare of the farmers of India.

Tomar said that almost 86 per cent of farmers have agricultural land of less than two hectares and they are often unable to benefit from minimum support price (MSPs).

He, however, assured the House that the MSP will stay. The Congress and other parties have been op-



posing the legislations, alleging it will undermine the safety net provided to the farmers by the MSP system and will lead to their exploitation by big companies.

Tomar said the bill will help the farmers as they are unable to invest much in their farm and do not attract investments from others.

He also rejected the criticism that it was beyond the remit of the union government to legislate on these issues, saying opposition members should trust the Centre.

The Opposition has alleged that the Centre brought in the legislations without consulting the states under whose domain 'agriculture' and 'mandis' come.

The minister asked the opposition members to study the content of the bills deeply before running

to oppose them. He stressed that farmers will get a lot of benefit from these laws as they can enter into an agreement with private traders for selling their produce.

These agreements will be about the produce and not the farmland, he asserted, rebutting suggestions that farmers may lose ownership of their land. Opposing the bills, the leader of the Congress in Lok Sabha Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury said constitutional provisions are very clear that agriculture is a subject on the State List.

Such a law can only be brought by state governments.... Through this bill, the centre will nullify Agricultural Produce Market Committee (APMC) law enacted by various state governments, Chowdhury said.

FDI inflow from China decreases



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Sept 14: There has been decline in foreign direct inflow from China in the last three years with FDI coming down to USD 163.77 million in 2019-20, Minister of State for Finance Anurag Singh Thakur informed Lok Sabha Monday.

Giving details of the total foreign direct investment (FDI) inflow from Chinese companies in India, he said, it was USD 350.22 million in 2017-18, while it declined to USD 229 million in the following year.

During 2019-20, FDI further came down to USD 163.77 million, he said in a written reply on the first day of the monsoon session.

With regard to outflow from India, he said, it was USD 20.63 million in calendar year 2020 as against USD 27.57 million in the corresponding period last year.

To curb opportunistic takeovers

or acquisitions of Indian companies due to the current COVID-19 pandemic, the government issued Press Note 3 earlier this year, he said.

A non-resident entity can invest in India, subject to the FDI policy except in those sectors/activities which are prohibited.

"However, an entity of a country, which shares land border with India or where the beneficial owner of an investment into India is situated in or is a citizen of any such country, can invest only under the government route, he said quoting the Press Note 3.

Further, he said, a citizen of Pakistan or an entity incorporated in Pakistan can invest, only under the government route, in sectors/activities other than defence, space, atomic energy and sectors/activities prohibited for foreign investment.

Replying to another question, Thakur said, the Department of Expenditure has released the central share of State Disaster Response Fund (SDRF) to the states including Maharashtra in the first week of April 2020 in the view of the pandemic.

Further, to provide additional resources to states to fight against COVID-19 and considering the request of the states for relaxation of the existing Fiscal Responsibility and Budget Management Act (FRBM) limit of 3 per cent of gross state domestic product (GSDP), additional borrowing limit of up to 2 per cent of GSDP has been allowed to states for the year 2020-21, he said.

BIZ BUZZ

Infosys to acquire GuideVision

Bangalore: Infosys Limited Monday announced a definitive agreement to acquire GuideVision, one of the largest ServiceNow Elite Partners in Europe. GuideVision is an enterprise service management consultancy specialised in offering strategic advisory, consulting, implementations, training and support on the ServiceNow platform. GuideVision's end-to-end offerings, including SnowMirror - a proprietary smart data replication tool for ServiceNow instances - enables over 100 enterprise clients to simplify complex business and IT processes, according to Bengaluru-headquartered Infosys. "GuideVision's training academy and nearshore capabilities in Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland will strengthen Infosys' ServiceNow capabilities for its clients in Europe," it said in a statement. ServiceNow is one of the fastest growing enterprise software companies, and is becoming an 'essential service.



TCS crosses ₹9L cr-market valuation mark

New Delhi: Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) Monday became the second Indian firm to attain a market valuation of over ₹9 lakh crore after Reliance Industries Limited. The company's market valuation went past ₹9 lakh crore in early trade helped by a rally in its share price. The stock of the software services firm gained 2.91 per cent to ₹2,442.80 -- its record high -- on the BSE. On the NSE, it jumped 2.76 per cent to a lifetime high of ₹2,439.80. Helped by the surge in its share price, the company's market valuation rose to ₹9,14,606.25 crore on the BSE in early trade. It is the second most-valuable domestic firm in terms of market capitalisation.



Ashok Leyland rolls out new LCV range

New Delhi: Hinduja Group flagship Ashok Leyland on Monday said it is looking to expand its presence in the light commercial vehicle (LCV) segment across domestic as well as international markets with the launch of first product based on its all-new platform. The company, on Monday, rolled out 'Bada Dost' LCV in two trims -- i4 and i3 -- with payload capacity of 1,860 kg and 1,405 kg, respectively. The i4 variants are priced at ₹7.79 lakh and ₹7.99 lakh, while i3 trims are tagged at ₹7.75 lakh and ₹7.95 lakh (ex-showroom Mumbai). The new models, which come equipped with BS-VI engines, are based on the new platform on which the company has invested.



Govt may pump ₹20K cr into PSBs

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Sept 14: The government Monday sought Parliament's approval for infusing ₹20,000 crore in public sector banks in the current financial year to meet regulatory requirements.

This is part of the first batch of

Supplementary Demands for Grants for 2020-21 moved by Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman in the Lok Sabha. In all, the government has sought Parliament's nod for additional spending of ₹2.35 lakh crore, which includes a cash outgo of ₹1.66 lakh crore, primarily to meet expenses for combating the

COVID-19 pandemic.

For meeting expenditure towards recapitalisation of Public Sector Banks through issue of Government Securities the government has asked for Parliament's authorisation of ₹20,000 crore, as per a document.

In 2019-20, the government proposed to make ₹70,000 crore capital

infusion into the Public Sector Banks (PSBs) to boost credit for a strong impetus to the economy.

However, the government refrained from committing any capital in the Budget 2020-21 for the PSBs, hoping that the lenders will raise funds from the market depending on the requirements.

ByteDance picks Oracle as partner to save TikTok US

REUTERS

New York, Sept 14: Oracle beat Microsoft in the battle for the U.S. arm of TikTok with a deal structured as a partnership rather than an outright sale to try to navigate geopolitical tensions between Beijing and Washington, people familiar with the matter said.

ByteDance, TikTok's Chinese owner, had been in talks to divest the U.S. business of its hugely popular short-video app to Oracle or a consortium led by Microsoft Corp after U.S. President Donald Trump ordered the sale last month and said he might otherwise shut it down.

While TikTok is best known for dancing videos that go viral among

teenagers, U.S. officials are concerned user information could be passed to China's communist government. TikTok, which has as many as 100 million U.S. users, has said it would never share such data with Chinese authorities.

Sale negotiations were upended when China updated its export control rules last month, giving it a say over the transfer of TikTok's algorithm to a foreign buyer. Reuters reported last week that China would rather see TikTok shut down in the United States than allow a forced sale. On Monday, China's state-run English television channel CGTN cited sources as saying ByteDance would not sell TikTok's U.S. operations to Oracle or Microsoft, and

GEOPOLITICAL TENSIONS



UNDER BYTEDANCE'S LATEST PROPOSAL, ORACLE WOULD BE THE FIRM'S TECHNOLOGY PARTNER AND ASSUME MANAGEMENT OF TIKTOK'S U.S. USER DATA



Tik Tok

would not give the source code for the platform to any U.S. firm. Under ByteDance's latest proposal, Oracle would be the firm's technology partner and assume management of

TikTok's U.S. user data, sources told Reuters Sunday. Oracle is also negotiating taking a stake in TikTok's U.S. operations, they said. The data is currently stored in

We urge the U.S. government to provide an open, fair, just and non-discriminatory environment for foreign firms operating and investing in the US

WANG WENBIN | FOREIGN MINISTRY SPOKESMAN, CHINA

Alphabet Inc's cloud. Some of ByteDance's top investors, including General Atlantic and Sequoia, will also be given minority stakes in those operations, one of the people said. It is unclear whether Trump, who wants a U.S. technology firm to own most of TikTok in the United States, will approve the deal.

The Committee on Foreign Investment in the United States (CFIUS), which reviews deals for national security risk, is overseeing the ByteDance-Oracle talks. "User data protection and assurances around how the company's algorithms push content to U.S. users are thoughtful components of a substantive solution," said regulatory lawyer John Kabealo.

Mnuchin says Trump administration will review Oracle's TikTok proposal this week. ByteDance plans to argue that CFIUS' approval two years ago of China Oceanwide Holdings Group Co Ltd's purchase of U.S. insurer Genworth Financial Inc offers a precedent for its proposal with Oracle, the sources said.

ECONOMY TO CONTRACT 9%

S&P Global Ratings said that it was expecting India's economy to shrink by 9% in the fiscal year ending March 31, 2021, larger than its previous estimate of a 5% contraction.



Bank credit grows by 5.49%, deposits by 10.92%: RBI data

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, Sept 14: Bank credit grew 5.49 per cent to ₹102.11 lakh crore, while deposits increased 10.92 per cent to ₹141.76 lakh crore in the fortnight ended August 28, according to RBI data.

In the fortnight ended August 30, 2019, banks' advances were at ₹96.80 lakh crore and deposits stood at ₹127.80 lakh crore.

In the previous fortnight ended August 14, 2020, bank credit and deposits had grown by 5.52 per cent and 11.04 per cent to ₹102.19 lakh crore and ₹140.80 lakh crore, respectively.

On a year-on-year (y-o-y) basis, non-food bank credit grew at 6.7 per cent in July as against a growth of 11.4 per cent in the same month last year, according to the data on sectoral deployment of bank credit for July 2020, released recently by RBI.



Growth in loans to industry slowed to 0.8 per cent in July as compared to 6.1 per cent earlier; the data showed.

Advances to agriculture and allied activities registered a growth of 5.4 per cent in the reporting month as against 6.8 per cent growth in the same period last year.

DOMESTIC FUEL DEMAND RISES



75,621 kilo liters of petrol was sold in August, 2020 as against 87,499 kilo liters in the same month of 2019. However, the demand is rising slowly

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Sept 14: Domestic petrol and diesel sales, which had dropped significantly due to the nationwide lockdown, has showed some improvement in August, reports say.

In July, petrol demand decreased by 34 per cent in Bhubaneswar. However, it was down by 13.66 per cent in August, showing some positive uptick in fuel sale.

According to Utkal Petroleum Dealers Association, petrol sale was significantly reduced by 85 per cent due to lockdowns in April.

General Secretary of the association Sanjay Lath said, "Petrol sale was 75,621 kilo liter in August, 2020 as against 87,499 kilo liter sale in same month of 2019. Sale is now slowly increasing in the city."

On other hand, diesel sale went down by 16 per cent in same month. Lath said that over 1,46,993 kilo liter of diesel was sold in August while it was 1,76,209 kilo liter in

same month of 2019.

Earlier, the association claimed that they faced severe losses in April for continual lockdowns. Previous report stated that petrol sales dropped by 85 per cent and diesel 80 per cent in April. Sales drop in petrol caused the industry to lose ₹15.51 crore per day. It also faced loss of ₹1162.2 crore in diesel sale in April. Overall, the dealers faced losses of around ₹1627.5 crore in April due to low consumption.

According to the association around 11, 31,600 liter petrol is being sold per day and 33, 22,000 liter diesel in Odisha. The association has targeted to reach its normal sales which are around 28, 29,000 liters of petrol and 83, 5,000 liters of diesel per day in Odisha.

Meanwhile, petrol and diesel prices dropped again in City. Petrol price was lowered by 14 paise, Monday, falling down its rate to ₹82.33. Similarly, diesel price stood 79.24 after rate was dropped by 17 paise.

RETAIL INFLATION SOFTENS SLIGHTLY TO 6.69 PER CENT

AGENCIES

New Delhi, Sept 14: Retail inflation softened slightly to 6.69 per cent in August, even as food prices continued to rule high, official data showed Monday.

The government has revised downwards the retail inflation for July to 6.73 per cent from the earlier estimate of 6.93 per cent. Food



inflation during the month stood at 9.62 per cent.

Food inflation in August fell marginally to 9.05 per cent, according to the Consumer Price Index (CPI) data. The retail inflation, mainly taken into account by the RBI to arrive at its policy decisions, has been above the regulator's comfort level.

AUSTRIAN SUPERSTAR
FIRST PLAYER SINCE
1949 TO WIN US OPEN
CROWN
AFTER
CONCEDING
FIRST TWO
SETS IN
THE FINAL
AS HE
EDGES PAST
FIRST-TIME
GRAND SLAM
FINALIST ZVEREV



THIEM MUSIC RULES

Thiem is the first man to win the US Open after trailing 0-2 in sets in the final since Pancho Gonzalez achieved it against Ted Schroeder 71 yrs ago at the event then known as US Championships

ASSOCIATED PRESS

New York, Sept 14: A US Open unlike any other finished unlike any other — with an unprecedented fifth-set tie-breaker as Dominic Thiem became the first man in 71 years to win the final after dropping the opening two sets. So close to defeat in a nearly empty Arthur Ashe Stadium — fans were banned because of the coronavirus pandemic — Thiem slowly but surely turned things around against a faltering Alexander Zverev and pulled out a 2-6, 4-6, 6-4, 6-3, 7-6(8-6) victory at Flushing Meadows for his first Grand Slam title. The match ended with both men fighting

leg cramps and, clearly, nerves. “Somehow,” said Thiem, a 27-year-old from Austria, “the belief today was stronger than the body, and I’m super happy about that.” When a backhand from Zverev landed wide on the third championship point, a weary Thiem dropped to his back way behind the baseline and covered his face with his hands. When he arose, he was met by Zverev, who walked around the net to clasp hands, then embrace his friend and foe, two sights rarely seen in this era of social distancing. Thiem then rested his head on the shoulder of the taller Zverev, who himself came within two points of what would have been

his first major triumph. “I wish we could have two winners today,” Thiem said. “I think we both deserved it.” He is the first man to win the American Grand Slam tournament after trailing 2-0 in sets in the final since Pancho Gonzalez did it against Ted Schroeder in 1949 at an event then known as the US Championships and held in Forest Hills. The event never had been settled by a fifth-set tie-breaker; no major tournament ever had until Novak Djokovic edged Roger Federer that way at Wimbledon in 2019. “I was a few games away, a few points away,” said Zverev, who was trying to give Germany its first male Grand Slam champion since Boris Becker in the 1990s. “I’m 23 years old. I don’t think it’s my last chance.” Zverev choked up when he mentioned that his parents hadn’t been able to travel to New York because they tested positive for COVID-19, although he said they are now healthy. As Thiem stepped forward to pose for pictures with his shiny new bit of hardware, Zverev remained a few feet behind, one hand clutching his less-impressive silver tray, the other hand on a hip. The proceedings took four hours and two minutes. And to think: After just one and half hours, Zverev was up by two sets and a break in the third at 2-1. “The match turned when he broke me for the first time in the third set,” Zverev said. “He started playing much better, and I started playing much worse.” Zverev, of all people, should have known what might have seemed like an impossible hill to climb for Thiem was, indeed, achievable. After all, in Thursday’s semifinals, it was Zverev who trailed 2-0 in sets against Pablo Carreno Busta before coming back to win. Thiem began the day 0-3 in Grand Slam finals, but always faced a member of the Big Three — Federer, Djokovic and Rafa Nadal — of men’s tennis in those others. This time, he was the favorite and came out jittery, but eventually worked his way out of

that, while Zverev went from cool and confident to passive and pushed around. The fifth set was just as back-and-forth as the other four, the mistakes rising with the tension and the history in the offing. Thiem broke in the opening game when Zverev shanked a pair of forehands. Zverev broke right back — and pierced the silence with a rare cry of “Come on!” — when Thiem double-faulted. Then it was Zverev’s turn to nose ahead, breaking for a 5-3 lead when Thiem sent a down-the-line backhand wide and leaned over, gasping for air. But with a chance to serve out the biggest win of his nascent career, Zverev faltered, getting broken right back when he pushed a volley into the net. That began a three-game run for Thiem, who broke to lead 6-5, earning his own chance to serve for it when Zverev netted a backhand, followed by a long forehand. After having a trainer check on his right leg during the ensuing changeover, Thiem couldn’t seal the deal, either, and on they went to the tie-breaker. Zverev double-faulted twice and offered up one second serve at 68 mph, about half the speed he’s capable of. While this was the No.7-ranked Zverev’s first Slam final, this was the first one the No.3-ranked Thiem was supposed to win, following losses to 12-time French Open champion Nadal at Roland Garros in 2018 and 2019, then to eight-time Australian Open champion Djokovic at Melbourne Park this February — back before the pandemic upended the world and put tennis on a five-month hiatus. Instead of wild applause and loud shouts greeting great exchanges, the soundtrack Sunday mainly came from outside the largest court in tennis, courtesy of roaring airplanes, rumbling trains, revving car engines, honking horns and wailing sirens. There was the occasional polite applause from the dozens of tournament workers allowed in the stands — and, deep into the match, yells from the players’ entourages. But the louder crowd noise heard by TV viewers was fake, added by the broadcaster.

England turn tides on unfortunate Oz

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Manchester, Sept 14: Australia battered themselves into a winning position before dramatically collapsing as England won the second ODI by 24 runs to stay alive in the series. England’s decision to bat first at Old Trafford had appeared to backfire with the World Champions limited to 231/9 and Australia reaching 143/2 with 20 overs left Sunday. Australia were making the run chase look easy thanks to a 107-run stand for the third wicket between captain Aaron Finch (73) and Marnus Labuschagne (48). But the tourists then collapsed to 147/6, and 166/8, here before finishing 207 all out in 48.4 overs. A trio of England pacers — Chris Woakes (3/32), Jofra Archer (3/34) and Sam Curran (3/35) — did the damage. In what has become an unwanted tour tradition for Australia, Archer again claimed opener David Warner (6). Earlier, no England batsman reached 50, with Morgan (42) and Joe Root (39) leading the scoring. Both men were dismissed by leg-spinner Adam Zampa (3/36). Morgan was dismissed lbw after Finch opted to review the original not out decision, leaving England on 117/5 in the 29th over. No.9 Tom Curran (37) and No.10 Adil Rashid (35) came to England’s rescue, sharing 76 for the ninth wicket in what would prove to be a decisive partnership. Australia were aiming to wrap up a series victory after beating England by 19 runs in the first ODI last Friday, also in Manchester. The series finale is at the same venue Wednesday, when England will be hoping to avoid their first ODI series defeat at home since 2015. There were times in both innings when Morgan’s lineup was struggling — reduced to 149/8 in the first innings, then seemingly batted out of contention by Finch and Labuschagne. Even after Tom Curran and Rashid instigated the lower-order rearguard to set Australia a more

The defeat a real punch in the guts of Aussies: Warne

Manchester: The 24-run loss to England in the low-scoring second ODI here must have been a ‘real punch in the guts’ for Australia, says spin legend Shane Warne. “Australia hadn’t played cricket for quite a long time so you sort of excuse them (that collapse) in the first T20, even though it cost them that series,” Warne told ‘Sky Sports’, referring to the first T20I where Australia slumped from 124/2 to 148/6 to lose the game by two runs. “They have been pretty good since then but this will be a real punch in the guts for Australia. They pride themselves on getting over the line in those sorts of games and doing the basics well. “They didn’t do that - they weren’t good enough, with Aaron Finch the only batsman to really show any touch. It’s 1-1 ahead of the last day of the international summer. Who writes these scripts?” From 149/8, England went on to make 231/9. “Australia got it a bit wrong. They tried to go for wickets and didn’t sum up conditions and think ‘hard length at the stumps is tough for the batsmen so it should be the same for the tail’. They got a bit greedy trying to knock them over,” Warne said.

challenging victory target of 232, that was still well within Australia’s grasp before Woakes and Archer flipped the game with a spell of four wickets for three runs. Sam Curran, recalled in place of the unfit Mark Wood, stepped into an unfamiliar role at the death with aplomb as he scooped up three lower-order wickets, with Rashid wrapping up the chase when Alex Carey was stumped with eight balls left.

BRIEF SCORES

England 231/9 (Eoin Morgan 42, Joe Root 39; Adam Zampa 3/36) beat Australia 207 (Aaron Finch 73, Marnus Labuschagne 48; Chris Woakes 3/32, Jofra Archer 3/34, Sam Curran 3/35) by 24 runs.



TIMELY BREAKTHROUGH: Chris Woakes rushes towards his teammates (not in pic) in celebration after dismissing Aaron Finch, Sunday

Ligue 1 game witnesses 5 added-on-time red cards

Neymar sent off as Marsille beat PSG



Neymar (2nd from R) involves in a heated exchange with Alvaro Gonzalez (3)

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Paris, Sept 14: Neymar was among five players sent off in stoppage time as Marseille beat bitter rival Paris Saint-Germain for the first time in nine years. PSG star Neymar got a straight red in Marseille’s 1-0 win following an altercation with center half Alvaro Gonzalez Sunday. Neymar was sent off following a video replay showing he aimed a jab to the back of Gonzalez’s head. As he went off, Neymar told officials that he had been racially abused. With apparent reference to Gonzalez, Neymar later tweeted: “The only regret I have is not hitting the face of this idiot.” In a later tweet, Neymar said “It is easy for the VAR (video review) to see

my ‘aggression’” and added he was subjected to offensive insults of a racist nature. Winger Florian Thauvin scored in the 31st minute of a tense game featuring more than a dozen yellow cards and which descended into chaos deep into stoppage time as punches and kicks were exchanged. It was Marseille’s first victory over PSG since a 3-0 home win in November 2011. PSG have now lost three straight games 1-0, including the Champions League final against Bayern Munich August 23 and away to promoted Lens last Thursday. PSG lost their opening two league games for the first time since the 1984-85 season and Tuchel may find himself under early pressure.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Everton stun Tottenham

London: Everton justified the pre-season optimism as Dominic Calvert-Lewin’s header earned them an impressive 1-0 win at Tottenham Hotspur in their Premier League opener Sunday – the Merseyside club’s first win over Spurs since 2012. Carlo Ancelotti’s side arrived buoyed by the midweek signing of Colombian playmaker James Rodriguez. After an even first half in which Richarlison wasted a great chance for Everton and keeper Jordan Pickford denied Tottenham’s debutant Matt Doherty, Everton bossed the second period. Once Calvert-Lewin sent an unstoppable header past Hugo Lloris in the 55th minute, meeting Lucas Digne’s free-kick to perfection, Tottenham huffed and puffed but offered little.

Valencia win derby in La Liga

Madrid: Valencia twice came from behind to beat rivals Levante 4-2 in a thrilling city derby Sunday to make a winning start to the new La Liga season. Jose Luis Morales scored twice either side of Gabriel Paulista’s goal for Valencia. Maxi Gomez equalised before halftime while Manu Vallejo put Valencia ahead before sealing the points with a second strike in stoppage time.

Bayern offer free virus tests to fans

Munich: Bayern Munich have offered free coronavirus tests to fans with tickets for next week’s Super Cup in Hungary. The Hungarian authorities require fans arriving for the traditional European season opener to have a certified negative result from a recent test for the virus before they are allowed into the country. The club says 3,000 Bayern fans with tickets for the game can be tested September 21 and 22 at a parking lot next to the stadium.

Hamilton claims crash-marred Tuscan GP

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Mugello, Sept 13: Lewis Hamilton won a hectic Tuscan Grand Prix Sunday to clinch his 90th Formula One win and move one behind Michael Schumacher’s record. The first F1 race on a Mugello track with super-fast corners usually used by MotoGP riders was incident-packed throughout. Two crashes on the first seven laps saw six drivers go out, and a red flag suspended the race for the first time after the second one. A second red flag late on following Lance Stroll’s heavy crash meant another grid restart — on Lap 46 of 59 — and gave Valtteri Bottas another chance to beat race leader Hamilton if he made a strong start from second. Bottas pushed hard and got to within 1.1 seconds of Hamilton on the penultimate lap but the British driver clocked a fastest lap on the



Hamilton held firm and Renault’s Daniel Ricciardo overtook Bottas, who passed him back to finish second but is now 55 points behind Hamilton in the title race. Bottas pushed hard and got to within 1.1 seconds of Hamilton on the penultimate lap but the British driver clocked a fastest lap on the

LEWIS FACES FIA INVESTIGATION

Mugello: Lewis Hamilton faces an FIA investigation for wearing a ‘political’ T-shirt at Sunday’s Tuscan Grand Prix. The World Champion sported the slogan, ‘Arrest the cops who killed Breonna Taylor’, referring to a 26-year-old medical technician in Louisville, Kentucky, who was fatally shot after her boyfriend opened fire on police during a drugs search at their house March 13. Hamilton wore the shirt during the ‘taking a knee’ ceremony and on the podium as God Save the Queen played to celebrate his 90th career win. The Kentucky Attorney General is still investigating the killing, which has led to riots in America, so Hamilton’s intervention is seen by several senior F1 figures as being potentially ‘political’. FIA statutes forbid political statements of any kind.



last one to take a bonus point. Red Bull driver Alexander Albon drove well to finish third and clinch a first career podium that will boost his chances of keeping his seat alongside team star Max Verstappen next year.

Hamilton can equal Schumacher’s record for wins at the Russian GP in two weeks and take a step closer to matching Schumacher’s record of seven world titles.

OFC rope in Onwu for a 1-year deal

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Sept 14: Odisha FC, Sunday, announced the signing of Spanish striker Manuel Onwu ahead of the seventh edition of Indian Super League (ISL). The forward joined the Bhubaneswar-based side on a one-year deal.

The 32-year-old Onwu, who had joined Bengaluru FC before the start of the ISL season in 2019, was on fire while he represented Odisha FC on loan till the end of the tournament. He managed to score seven goals last season including a hat-trick against Kerala Blasters at the Kalinga Stadium. Onwu had made his La Liga debut in March 2012 for Osasuna after playing for their B team. Prior to his association with Bengaluru FC, he was a part of another Spanish club UCAM Murcia CF in the 2018-19 season of Segunda Division B. “I am delighted to be back at Odisha FC for another season. I felt good things with the squad and the fans last year which left me with no doubt when coach Stuart (Baxter) spoke to me. “I had kept in touch with the Indian boys after the season was over and can’t wait to see them again. This year, we will try to take a step further and achieve the best possible standing for Odisha FC and the loyal fans.”