



UP FOR THE CHALLENGE

Actor Sonakshi Sinha says she is not fretting about how the industry will change in the COVID era

LEISURE

P2



DEMONETISED NOTES GALORE

World famous Tirupati temple in AP is saddled with ₹50 cr demonetised cash offerings, which it could not utilise

TWO STATES

P7



FOCUS ON MULTILATERALISM

UNGA chief Volkan Bozkır says multilateralism is the panacea to fight the coronavirus pandemic

INTERNATIONAL

P10

VOLUME 10, ISSUE 167 | www.orissapost.com

BHUBANESWAR | THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 17 | 2020

12 PAGES | ₹4.00

IRREGULAR by MANJUL



SHORT TAKES

Tata to construct new Parl building

New Delhi: Tata Projects Limited on Wednesday won the bid to construct a new Parliament building at a cost of ₹861.90 crore, officials said. The L&T Ltd had submitted a bid of ₹865 crore, they said. "The Tata Projects Limited has won the contract to build a new Parliament building," an official said. The new Parliament building will be constructed close to the existing one under the Central Vista redevelopment project, and it is expected to be completed in 21 months.

Nitin Gadkari tests COVID-19 positive

New Delhi: Union Minister Nitin Gadkari Wednesday said he has tested positive for the coronavirus and has isolated himself. Taking to Twitter, Gadkari said, "Yesterday, I was feeling weak and consulted my doctor. During the course of my check up, I have been tested COVID-19 positive. I am at present doing well with the blessings and good wishes of all. I have isolated myself." He also urged those who have come in contact with him to undergo tests. Meanwhile, Delhi's COVID-19 tally rose to more than 2.30 lakh after 4,473 fresh cases were reported.

MARKET WATCH			
INDEX		VARIATION	
SENSEX	39302.85	▲	258.50
NIFTY	11604.50	▲	82.70
DOLLAR	74.05	▼	₹0.09
EURO	87.39	▼	₹0.28
GOLD	₹51,965	▲	₹196
SILVER	₹68,965	▼	₹2

WEATHER			
	BHUB	CTK	
TEMP	32.7°C	33.4°C	
MAX			
MIN	26.9°C	25.0°C	
Humidity	94%	83%	Forecast
Rainfall	3.5mm	2mm	Generally cloudy sky

Sputnik-V shots coming to India

RUSSIA TO SELL 100 MILLION DOSES OF THE VACCINE TO DR REDDY'S LAB

AGENCIES

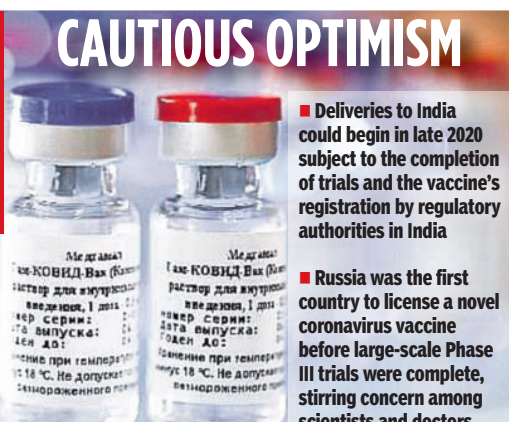
Moscow, Sept 16: Russia's sovereign wealth fund has agreed to supply 100 million doses of its coronavirus vaccine, Sputnik-V, to Indian drug company Dr Reddy's Laboratories, the fund said Wednesday, as Moscow speeds up plans to distribute its shot abroad.

The deal comes after the Russian Direct Investment Fund (RDIF) reached agreements with Indian manufacturers to produce 300 million doses of the vaccine in India, which is a major consumer of Russian oil and arms.

Dr Reddy's, one of India's top pharmaceutical companies, will carry out Phase III clinical trials of the vaccine in India, pending regulatory approval, RDIF said in a statement. Deliveries to India could begin in late 2020, it said, adding this was subject to the completion of trials and the vaccine's registration by regulatory authorities in India.

Sputnik V vaccine could provide a credible option in our fight against COVID-19 in India
G V PRASAD
CO-CHAIRMAN, DR REDDY'S

The deal comes after the Russian Direct Investment Fund reached agreements with Indian manufacturers to produce 300 mn doses of the vaccine in India



CAUTIOUS OPTIMISM

Deliveries to India could begin in late 2020 subject to the completion of trials and the vaccine's registration by regulatory authorities in India

Russia was the first country to license a novel coronavirus vaccine before large-scale Phase III trials were complete, stirring concern among scientists and doctors about the safety and efficacy of the shot. The Phase I and II results had shown promise, G V Prasad,

co-chairman of Dr Reddy's, was cited in the RDIF statement as saying.

"Sputnik V vaccine could provide a credible option in our fight against COVID-19 in India," he said. There was no detail about the price of the vaccine but RDIF has said previ-

ously it was not aiming at making a profit, just covering costs.

The agreement comes as India's coronavirus cases surged past 5 million Wednesday, piling pressure on hospitals grappling with unreliable supplies of oxygen that they need to treat tens of thousands of critical patients.

India is only the second country in the world to cross the grim milestone and said this week it is considering granting an emergency authorisation for a vaccine, particularly for the elderly and people in high-risk workplaces.

The RDIF has already reached vaccine supply deals with Kazakhstan, Brazil and Mexico. It has also signed a memorandum with the Saudi Chemical company. Russia has billed Sputnik-V as the first vaccine against the coronavirus to be registered in the world. Phase III trials, involving at least 40,000 people, were launched in Russia Aug. 26 but have yet to be completed.

Babri case verdict Sept 30; Advani, Joshi summoned

AGENCIES

Lucknow, Sept 16: A special court here will deliver judgment September 30 in the Babri Masjid demolition case, ruling whether BJP veterans like L K Advani and Murli Manohar Joshi were involved in razing the mosque in 1992.

Judge S K Yadav Wednesday directed all 32 accused to remain present in the court on the day of the judgment.

The accused include former deputy prime minister L K Advani, former Union ministers M M Joshi and Uma Bharti, former Uttar Pradesh chief minister Kalyan Singh, Vinay Katiyar and Sadhvi Ritambhara.

The CBI court was working against the month-end deadline set by the Supreme Court for the verdict. The final arguments by the defence and the prosecution were heard by September 1, and then the judge began writing the



verdict. Some of the final submissions by the accused were made through video conferencing. Issuing the order Wednesday, the judge said the verdict will be pronounced on September 30 and asked all accused to be present in court.

The Central Bureau of Investigation, which investigated the case, has produced 351 witnesses and about 600 documents as evidence before the court.

IN FOR A TREAT



Two polar bears dive for ice cream cakes in a water basin at a zoo in Hanover, Germany, Wednesday

PTI PHOTO

Govt slammed over closure of CCCs

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Sept 16: Opposition parties of the state Wednesday attacked the state government over their alleged move to close down several COVID Care Centres in light of the alarming rise in the number of cases.

Congress legislator Taraprasad Bahinipati tried to corner the government on the issue. He said, "Does the government have any idea on how many people are dying due to COVID 19? Everyday hundreds of people are dying of COVID but the government is not accepting the real numbers. They are attributing this to other diseases like heart failure and kidney failure among others." He also added, "At a time when the

number of COVID positive cases are skyrocketing, the government on the other hand is taking the decision to close down COVID Care Centres and Hospitals across the state."

The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) also attacked the government over the recent closure orders and took a dig at the government over denial of treatment of outside patients in the twin cities.

Leader of Opposition in Odisha Assembly and BJP leader Pradipta Naik said, "It is highly illogical to ask people from other parts of the state to not visit the twin cities for treatment. A lot of people across the state are struggling to get treatment from the doctors and many health institutions are shunning them off due to which they are bound to visit



other areas for better treatment." He also added, "The government denies them their right for treatment on the basis of their residence. We all saw how a COVID patient died on the floor of the hospital."

'NO BAN ON REFERRAL OF PATIENTS TO TWIN CITIES'

Clearing misunderstandings on its order for transportation of Covid patients to Bhubaneswar and Cuttack, state government Wednesday said it has not banned

referral of Covid patients to the twin city. Chief Secretary Asit Tripathy said that the state government has not banned movement of patients to Cuttack and Bhubaneswar. "Government has created advanced Covid hospital facilities in the twin city for people of the entire state. Government is only regulating to ensure that the patients travel safe and with proper medical advice arrangements and oxygen support etc," he said.

As carelessness about these matters in past has affected the patients seriously. Referral of the patients with proper medical support will be helpful in further management of the disease at referral points and will save their life, Tripathy clarified.

Yoshihide Suga named Japan's Prime Minister



AGENCIES

Tokyo, Sept 16: Yoshihide Suga was formally elected Wednesday as Japan's new prime minister in a parliamentary vote.

Suga is replacing Shinzo Abe, who resigned earlier in the day because of ill health. Suga had been chosen as leader of the ruling party on Monday, virtually assuring his succession.

Suga, who was chief Cabinet secretary and long seen as Abe's right-hand man, is to launch his own Cabinet later Wednesday.

Suga has stressed his background as a farmer's son and a self-made politician in promising to serve the interests of ordinary people and rural communities.

He has said he will pursue Abe's unfinished policies, and that his top priorities will be fighting the coronavirus and turning around an economy battered by the pandemic. Abe, Japan's longest-serving prime minister, announced last month that he was stepping down because of health problems.

"I devoted my soul for the economic recovery and diplomacy to protect Japan's national interest every single day since we returned to power," Abe said.

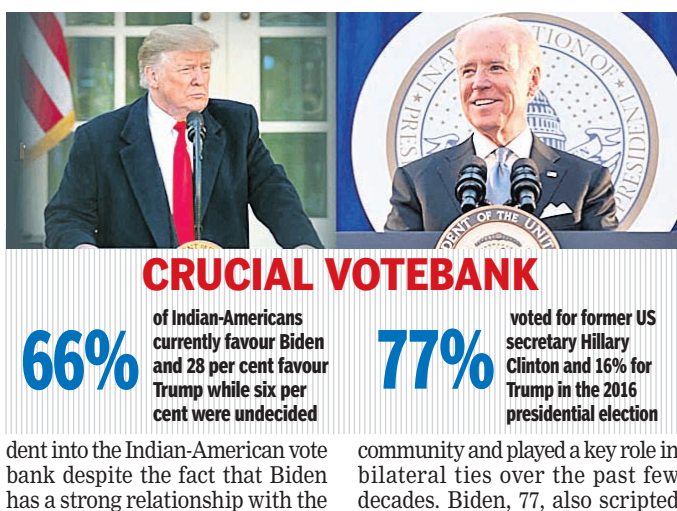
Most Indian Americans back Biden but Trump gains ground

AGENCIES

Washington, Sept 16: US President Donald Trump has made inroads into the Indian-American vote bank, the biggest ever by a Republican president, according to a survey which has sent worrying signals to the Democrats that the support of this influential ethnic community can no longer be taken for granted.

The survey by Indiaspora and Asian Americans & Pacific Islanders (AAP) Data showed that a majority of Indian-Americans still favour former vice president Biden, the Democratic Party's nominee in the November 3 US presidential election.

It found that 74-year-old Trump, seeking re-election, is making a big



dent into the Indian-American vote bank despite the fact that Biden has a strong relationship with the

community and played a key role in bilateral ties over the past few decades. Biden, 77, also scripted

history last month by selecting Senator Kamala Harris, 55, as his running mate.

According to the survey, 66 per cent Indian-Americans currently favour Biden and 28 per cent favour Trump while six per cent were undecided.

Notably in the 2016 presidential election, 77 per cent voted for former US secretary Hillary Clinton, and 16 per cent for Trump. In 2012, as many as 84 per cent Indian-Americans voted for Barack Obama.

Dr Karthick Ramakrishnan, professor of public policy and political science at University of California, Riverside and founder of AAP) Data who is author of the survey, said that the Indian-Americans' support to

Trump, in case of a swing of the undecided Indian-Americans, would probably reach the 30 per cent mark.

"Democrats absolutely should be concerned about making sure that they conduct sufficient outreach to the Indian-Americans, Indian-American Congressman Raja Krishnamoorthi said.

The Democrats should conduct sufficient outreach to the different groups that comprise Indian-Americans, because every vote is going to count, especially in those battleground states as the survey result indicated," he said.

There are a lot of Indian-Americans, for instance in key battleground states like Pennsylvania, Michigan, Florida and North

Carolina, among others and they in conjunction with other Asian-Americans could certainly be a part of the tipping factor, he said, asserting that the Indian-Americans would finally come home to the Democratic Party.

Seema Nanda, visiting fellow, Harvard Law School Labour and Worklife Programme and former CEO, Democratic National Committee, said "It is a vote (of Indian-Americans) that this research shows, absolutely, cannot be taken for granted".

While the support for Biden has dropped as compared to Clinton in 2016, the support for the Republican Party has dropped from 19 per cent to 16 per cent in these four years.



KIM KARDASHIAN TO FREEZE HER INSTA, FB ACCOUNT

Reality TV star Kim Kardashian West, who has one of the biggest Instagram followings in the world -- 188.8 million -- has decided to freeze her social media accounts to protest against the spread of 'hate, propaganda and misinformation'.

LUCIFER STAR ELLIS TAKES A BREAK FROM TWITTER

Actor Tom Ellis is taking a break from Twitter because of the negativity on the social media platform. "Twitter seems more and more a place where people like to shout horrible things at you and encourage others to do so" tweeted the *Lucifer* star.



FORTUNE FORECAST

GaneshaSpeaks.com
accuracy • reliability • trust
FOR ASTROLOGY DIAL 55181

ARIES

You will make material progress today, says Ganesha. Naturally, you want to share this abundance with your family. Ganesha suggests you give them more quality time. You may also want to take time out to pray and meditate and thank the almighty for favours received.



TAURUS

Good luck will trail you like your shadow today, predicts Ganesha. You are likely to get good news from out of the country in the afternoon. You may take a chance and express your hidden feelings to someone special.



GEMINI

You will begin a long-lasting romantic relationship today. Also, you will stay ecstatic and highly motivated throughout the day. In the afternoon, you will successfully avoid any confrontation with those who irk you to no end. That, says Ganesha, is the right way to cultivate patience.



CANCER

It is highly likely that today, a sudden turn of events will change the course of your life, foretells Ganesha. At workplace, a lot of work and running around is on the cards.



LEO

The long hours you've spent alone are nearing their end, says Ganesha, as the stars align to help you find that special someone; chances are that today shall be the beginning of an enduring romantic relationship for you.



VIRGO

There is an important turning point about to reveal itself in relationships and how they will proceed. Ganesha sees you busying yourself in arranging a get-together with friends and family. In the evening, the opposite sex will make a whale of a difference between optimism and despair.



LIBRA

Wear your best suit and put on your favourite tie, because today you shall be in the limelight at work. Watch your hard work and innate talents get their share of rewards. Also, expect the best possible assistance from your colleagues.



SCORPIO

Like an oracle, you can feel how things might turn out today. Trust only what you say, and hear yourself to avoid any sort of confrontations. Ganesha expects your antennas to be on high alert especially with your dearest at your side today.



SAGITTARIUS

Ganesha suggests you get down to looking your dashing best. Preen that plumage and make heads turn. Your social standing, on the other hand, will add that extra jazz. Talking fast and smooth might just help you effect a robust consummation.



CAPRICORN

When work starts to give nightmares, even meditation cannot restore the peace of mind. You are likely to have a similar kind of harrowing experience at work today, says Ganesha. But the day won't be completely dulling. It's an auspicious day if you have plans to buy a house or a car.



AQUARIUS

The stars foretell some good news from foreign shores. Also, you will be focused entirely on work. If you are striving to discover innovative ways to achieve speed, accuracy and efficiency, you may succeed today.



PISCES

You have been under a lot of pressure of late, but today should see a marked change in your fortunes. A progressive day when it comes to business and professional matters. Fun and frolic too is on the agenda, with invitations to parties and other social get-togethers coming your way, says Ganesha.



Sonakshi not worried about when work will restart

Mumbai: Actress Sonakshi Sinha says she is not fretting about getting back to work, or how the industry will change in the Covid era.

The actress shared that she loves the lockdown life for now.

"I am just going to admit that I am loving lockdown life. In the last 10 years, I haven't gotten a break for so long, where I have been able to spend time with myself. I'm really loving it," Sonakshi said.

"I am not worried about when work will start, and how it will be. I know it's going to be difficult going back to the set. I did one photoshoot and it was so strange being around people who are covered up head to toe

and you are the only one open. It's really weird," she added.

"Right now, everybody is in the same boat. It will start when it has to start and we will move on with this and get over it," she added.

ANS



The first look of the movie

'Ishaan is amazing as a dancer in *Khaali Peeli*'

Mumbai: Choreographer Rajit Dev says it was easy to work with actor Ishaan Khatter, who enjoys freestyle dance.

Rajit has choreographed the new song *Tehas nehas* for Ishaan in the upcoming film *Khaali Peeli*.

On working with Ishaan, Rajit said: "He's amazing as a dancer. He is a trained dancer and in love with hip-hop. He likes to do freestyle dance on any

song that he hears. So it was very easy for me to jam with him and choreograph. We connected well. I remember Ishaan and I used to vibe on Afro music. Those used to be our warm-up songs before I started teaching him the steps."

The song also has actress Ananya Panday dancing to the peppy number.

Rajit calls *Tehas nehas* a very 'cool groovy track'. IANS

I am proud of being an outsider: Anangsha Biswas

Mumbai: Actress Anangsha Biswas says she has realised that the rules in the Hindi film industry are unfair and proudly calls herself an outsider.

Actor Sushant Singh Rajput's untimely death June 14 has sparked a heated debate about 'insiders and outsiders' and nepotism in Hindi film industry. "I am a theatre actor; I'm trained in acting from Sydney. In my initial years I thought I would learn and prove my talent, and get ahead in my career. Soon I realised that the rules of this industry were unfair," Anangsha said.

She added: "No matter how much I worked hard, it boiled down to who I knew in the industry, and unfortunately I knew no one."

Anangsha says she wants the industry to be fair.

"I'm an outsider and I'm proud to be one, I never wanted things to be easy but, yes, I did wish for it to be fair," said the actress.

IANS



EASY STEPS TO REDECORATE YOUR HOME DURING MONSOON

USE SMART CEILING LAMPS, AS WELL AS FLOOR LAMPS TO BRIGHTEN UP THE SPACE AS MUCH AS POSSIBLE TO PREVENT THE INTERIORS FROM LOOKING DULL, STATES THE EXPERT.



New Delhi: Monsoons are a time for freshness and renewal as we enjoy the lush greenery, as well as respite from the heat and humidity. However, it's also a time to brighten and spruce up your homes. Here are a few monsoon makeover tips for your home, shared by Suraj Mittal, Founder of Future Concepts.

COLOUR THERAPY

The dark, gloomy skies, constant rain can make our interiors look dull and grey. Even the lightest and brightest furniture can look un-

cared for despite the best cleaning. In this case use colour therapy to take those monsoon blues away. Use pops of brighter colours like orange, yellow, red or electric blue to one focus wall or corner of your home. You can also use a couple of brightly coloured cushions to liven up your space.

PROPER USE OF OUTDOORS

Lockdown has for sure made us appreciate the small nooks and corners of any outdoor spaces you may have. If you have a tiny balcony but a big dream, then monsoon is

the best time to realise it. Use a wooden trellis to grow money plants, hibiscus or other hanging vines. Invest in some ergonomically designed furniture or use the simple jute and cane stools. Add a bunch of planters in bright colours and shapes to this space and watch your balcony or terrace bloom.

GO BARE

Monsoons while lovely are a time for dirty tracks and mud shoes. Wrap up those durries, rugs, and carpets for the winter time and allow your floors go bare. Place aside

heavy furniture as well, so that your interiors feel spacious and neat. And oh yes! Don't forget to open those windows.

FRAGRANCE TIME

If the damp smell, when it rains for days on end is getting to you, then don't fret. Monsoons are for feeling romantic, renewed and happy. Use scented candles, or incense in fragrances like Patchouli, neem, mint, citrus and jasmine to bring in a fresh and invigorating fragrance for your interiors.

LIGHT IT UP

Brighten up your space as much as possible. Natural light is still king, so make sure that there are light sheers for your windows, which allow as much of that in. Use smart ceiling lamps, as well as floor lamps with LED lights to brighten up your space as much as possible. A quick hack is bright jute or eco-friendly ceiling lamps or simple fairy lights hung over a window pane, or a cabinet to instantly perk up your space.

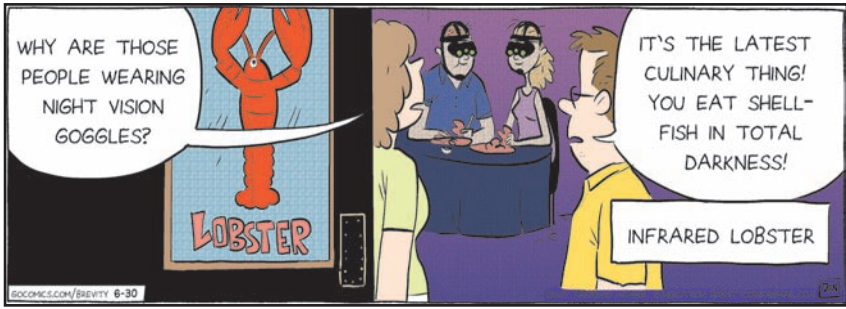
PEANUTS



CALVIN AND HOBBS

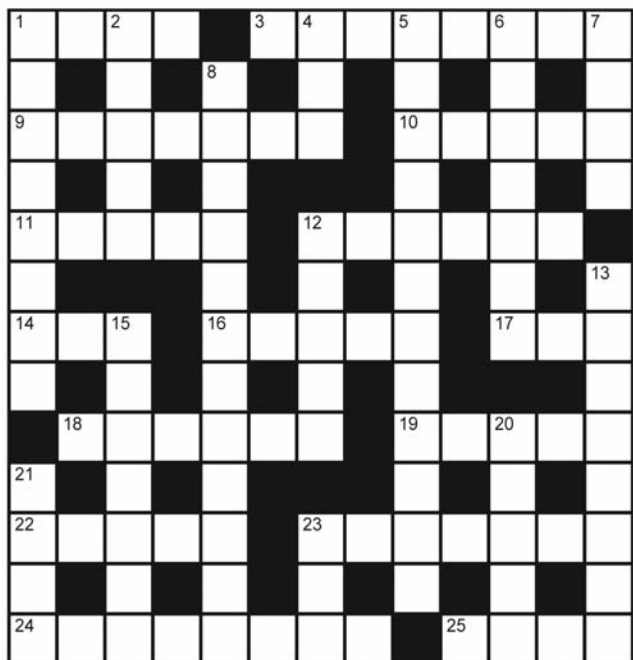


BREVITY



FUN post

CROSSWORD



Across

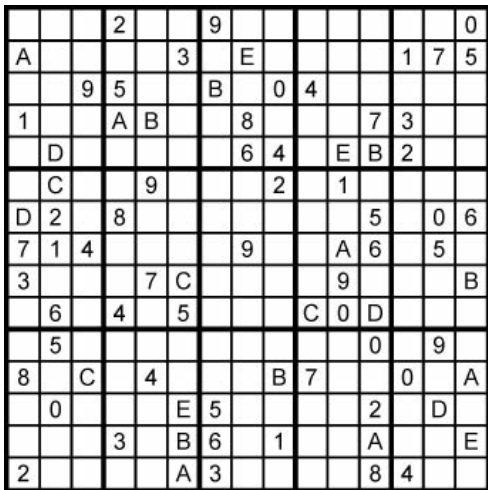
- 1 Fair-minded
- 3 Kind of whale
- 9 It could be full of hot air
- 10 Fatuous
- 11 Numbers game
- 12 Interrupt (4,2)
- 14 Prefix with classical
- 16 Zodiac sign
- 17 Storm centre
- 18 Large Old World tropical snake
- 19 Bright and clear
- 22 Jellied garnish
- 23 Phantasm
- 24 Movie genre
- 25 Connive
- 5 They pop up in debates (6,2,4)
- 6 Greed
- 7 Razor-sharp
- 8 Truck, for one (5,7)
- 12 Nobleman
- 13 Draw (4,4)
- 15 Greek peak
- 20 Life-sustaining
- 21 Red Planet
- 23 Plea at sea

Down

- 1 Gleeeful
- 2 Divided
- 4 Ornamental vase

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



CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW



MUTUAL FUNDS

Sahi Hai

CRICKETERS HO YA FANS, HAR EK KE LIYE MUTUAL FUNDS SAHI HAI.

- Retirement planning ke liye Sahi Hai
- Long-term aur short-term ke liye Sahi Hai
- Direct Plan ke zariye invest karna Sahi Hai
- SIP se investment ki shuruwat karna Sahi Hai
- Investment karne se pehle risk ko samajhna Sahi Hai

To know how Mutual Funds are right for you:

- Visit mutualfundssahihai.com
- Visit your nearest Mutual Fund office or contact a Mutual Fund distributor or an investment advisor today

Follow Mutual Funds Sahi Hai on:    

Scan for more information



Mutual Fund investments are subject to market risks. Read all scheme related documents carefully.

1103.2020

95% OMBADC projects over

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Sept 16: The projects sanctioned under Odisha Mineral Bearing Areas Development Corporation (OMBADC) have been fast-tracked and showed an impressive 95 per cent completion under Phase-I, thanks to continuous efforts made by Chief Secretary Asit Tripathy.

The OMBADC is sanctioning critical infrastructure projects under Phase-I (Ad hoc CAMPAs) and Phase-II (compensation money) for development of mineral-bearing districts. Tripathy, Wednesday, once again reviewed the progress made in utilisation of OMBADC fund.

Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the corporation, Uma Nanduri, said projects worth ₹1,080.92 crore in priority sectors like housing, drinking water, skill development and forestry have been sanctioned under Phase-I.

Major projects include construction of 29,829 housing units, 215 small pipe water supply projects and three mega pipe water supply projects, bulk plantation on 882 hectares, avenue plantation along 842 km and distribution of 9,80,000 seedlings for urban plantation, she said.

Over 28,500 (95 per cent) dwelling units, 199 (93 per cent) drinking water projects and over 95 per cent of the activities under farm/social forestry have been completed by end of August in this financial year.

BIG PUSH TO CRITICAL INFRA



Similarly, projects worth ₹12,118 crore were sanctioned under Phase-II (compensation money). These projects ranged over the sectors like drinking water supply, quality improvement in education, skill development, up-gradation of infrastructure in healthcare institutions, livelihood promotion, creation of water bodies, etc. These projects are being implemented through 12 departments.

Nanduri said, “So far, ₹2,085 crore has been released against Phase-II projects. The balance amount will be released as and when the implementing department will place the demand.”

Chief Secretary Tripathy directed the implementing departments to complete the projects within scheduled time without fail.

He laid emphasis on expeditious implementation of livelihood, drinking water and health sector projects. The corporation was asked to strengthen the district-level OMBADC cells and make them more vibrant.

Considering the potential for horticulture in OMBADC districts like Keonjhar, Jajpur, Mayurbhanj, Sundergarh, Koraput, Jharsuguda, Rayagada, Angul and Dhenkanal, Tripathy directed the department of Agriculture and Farmers’

CHIEF SECRETARY DIRECTS TO COMPLETE THE REMAINING PROJECTS WITHIN SCHEDULED TIME FRAME

PROJECTS WORTH ₹1,080CR HAS BEEN SANCTIONED UNDER PHASE-I AND ₹12,118 CR IN PHASE-II

MAJOR PROJECTS INCLUDE CONSTRUCTION OF 29,829 HOUSING UNITS, 215 SMALL PIPE WATER SUPPLY PROJECTS AND THREE MEGA PIPE WATER SUPPLY PROJECTS AMONG OTHERS

INNOVATIVE SKILL DEVELOPMENT CENTRES TO COME UP IN OMBADC AREAS

Empowerment to build up a mega nursery for all varieties of horticultural plants.

Further, the Chief Secretary asked the Skill Development and Technical Education Secretary Sanjay Singh, who was present in the meeting, to set up innovative skill development centres in OMBADC areas. Singh said that 13 popular and employable trades were identified for the area.

It was decided to develop skill centres as per manpower demands of the industries coming up in Odisha. The department was asked to work out SOP for OMBADC districts in this regard.

State’s single-day nCoV spike touches new high

PNN/AGENCY

Bhubaneswar, Sept 16: Odisha registered its highest single-day spike in COVID-19 cases Wednesday as 4,270 more tested positive for the infection, a health official said.

The new cases pushed the state's coronavirus tally to 1, 62, 920, he said. Eleven more patients succumbed to the infection during the last 24 hours, taking Odisha's COVID-19 death toll to 656, the official said.

The state had reported its previous highest single-day spike of 4,198 coronavirus cases September 14, he said.

As many as 2,478 new cases were detected in quarantine centres, while 1,792 people tested positive for the infection during contact tracing, the official said.

Khurda district registered the highest number of new cases at 876, followed by Cuttack (374) and Puri (287), he said.

Three fresh fatalities each were reported from Puri and Sambalpur districts, two in Khurda and one each in Kalahandi, Mayurbhanj and Sundergarh districts, the official said. Fifty-three COVID-19 patients have died in the state due to other ailments so far, he said.

The state has so far tested over 25.67 lakh samples for COVID-19, including 51,320 Tuesday, he added. The Capital city Wednesday re-



2,478 new cases were detected in quarantine centres, while 1,792 people tested positive for the infection during contact tracing

Three fresh fatalities each were reported from Puri and Sambalpur districts, two in Khurda and one each in Kalahandi, Mayurbhanj and Sundergarh districts

Transport minister, Amat test positive

BHUBANESWAR: The number of ruling party leaders afflicted with COVID-19 infection spiked Wednesday, with Commerce and Transport Minister Padmanabha Behera and Boudh MLA Pradip Kumar Amat testing positive for the deadly virus. Behera is the eighth Minister to have tested positive for the virus. Earlier, seven other ministers Samir Ranjan Dash, Ranendra Pratap Swain, Tukuni Sahu, Jyoti Prakash Panigrahi, Susanta Singh, Arun Kumar Sahu and Padmini Dian had tested positive. Moreover, Nabarangpur MP Ramesh Majhi and Bhadrak MP Manjulata Mandal have also tested positive in the near past. Union Minister Dharmendra Pradhan had also contracted the virus.

ported altogether 362 new positive cases, said data from the Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC).

As per the data, Bhubaneswar reported 76 cases from quarantine while 286 were local contact cases. With this, the Capital city has reported a total of 17,295 positive cases. Among them, 12,694 people have recovered from the Covid-19 infections while the active cases were 4,524. So far, the virus has claimed 64 lives in Bhubaneswar.

On the other hand, a record number of 4,121 patients in the state have recovered from the novel coronavirus infections Wednesday, said the Health and Family Welfare department. With this, the total number of recovered cases in Odisha reached 1, 29, 859.

As per the data, as many as 752 people have recovered from COVID-19 infections in Khurda district while the number was 440 in Cuttack, 275 in Puri, 272 in Jajpur and 268 from Nuapada.

GIVE STATES THEIR DUES, ACHARYA TELLS CENTRE

POST NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi, Sept 16: Biju Janata Dal (BJD) MP Prasanna Acharya Wednesday urged the Centre to release funds to the states as the financial condition of the latter is not sound.

The Rajya Sabha MP urged the Centre to issue fresh guidelines for workers returning to their workplaces

Participating in a discussion on COVID-19 in Rajya Sabha, the BJD Parliamentary party leader said that as per the current growth trend, India will become No 1 in terms of coronavirus infections. He also said that the country's GDP growth rate is the worst.

Demanding release of pending funds, Acharya said, “The financial position of the State Governments is not sound. The Centre is not coming forward to provide whatever is due with the Centre. This is crucial time.”

He said that even GST dues of many states are pending with the Centre. The Union government should release the pending amount

Mahtab bats for revision of royalty on major minerals

NEW DELHI: Cuttack MP Bhartruhari Mahtab Wednesday urged the Centre to enhance the royalty on chromite, iron ore and bauxite.

Mahtab expressed unhappiness over non-revision of royalty on these minerals and said that despite the provision permitting revision of royalty in every three years, the Centre didn't revise it since September 2014.

“The royalty on these minerals was last revised five years back, September 1, 2014, even though there is a

provision permitting revision of royalty every three years,” Mahtab said.

Mahtab apprised the House that Odisha is producing about half of the country's iron ore, besides substantial quantities of bauxite, chromite, limestone and manganese. However, he said that the state is being deprived of its reasonable expectation of revenue from such mining.

“The premiums offered by bidders in case of mining leases granted through auction are indicative of the jurisdiction for raising the royalty rates in order to improve the revenue shares of state governments. The state is being deprived of legitimate shares of revenues from such mining due to non-revision of royalty,” Mahtab added.

questioned the government to take steps to control police brutality in the name of social distancing violations. Acharya said that in many parts of the country people faced police brutality during lockdown. “It is not a Taliban state. It is a democracy. We have seen on the small screen how the police were beating people. Though police is a state subject, I think, the Central Government should come out with a broader guideline about this,” said Acharya.

to states.

The BJD MP also suggested that the Centre should consider declaring COVID warriors as martyrs. He suggested that the Centre should also consider giving ₹50 lakh compensation for COVID warrior's death.

Amid the speculation of another phase of virus surge, the BJD MP urged the Centre to issue fresh guidelines for the workers returning to their workplaces. He also re-

CM seeks COVID norm enforcement

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Sept 16: Expressing displeasure over a reported poor enforcement of COVID regulations in Bhubaneswar and Cuttack, Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik Wednesday directed the Director General of Police (DGP) Abhay to personally monitor the enforcement activities in the twin city.

Holding a meeting with senior officers on COVID management, Naveen said, “While I get good feedback about enforcement activities throughout the state, the feedback regarding Bhubaneswar-Cuttack Commissionerate Police area is not encouraging. I have been harping on this. DG must directly look into this and do the needful as being done throughout the state.”

He directed the District Collectors through videoconferencing to expand the livelihood programmes to protect rural people from the economic downturn due to the pandemic. “MGNREGS and all livelihood activities must be scaled up like never before and closely monitored. With the economy slowing down, it is important to pump in funds to rural households,” he instructed.



Collectors were asked to expand livelihood programmes to protect rural people from the economic downturn

Officials concerned were asked to extend necessary support for MSME and other industrial activities to reach pre-COVID levels.

The Chief Minister also directed to follow up implementation of intervention announced for the fisheries, animal husbandry, horticulture, soil conservation, Forestry and agriculture sector in the COVID livelihood package.

In addition, he advised to ensure sufficient credit flow to the farmers,

Wagon jumps track near Sikharpur

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, Sept 16: A wagon of a goods train jumped off the track near a level crossing in Cuttack city Wednesday, an official said.

The empty goods train was

on its way from Bhadrak to Khurda Road when one wagon slipped from the track near the level crossing at Sikharpur in Cuttack this afternoon, an East Coast Railway (ECOR) official said.

A technical team of ECOR

and Railway Protection Force (RPF) officials have rushed to the spot to assess the situation. There was no disruption in train movement as only one track is affected in the incident, the official said, adding that further details are awaited.



Cong flays changes in varsities Act

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Sept 16: Odisha Congress Wednesday said that they are opposed to the changes in the legislation relating to functioning of universities in the state and would oppose it in the Assembly.

Congress M.L.A. Taraprasad Bahinipati Wednesday said, “The decision taken by the government on amending the Odisha Universities Act is not at all in favour of students and academics at large. Educational institutions like universities are sacred places and should be free from interference.”

He also said that the government wanted to control universities and termed it as a ‘political move’.

“This is a political move to in-



terfere in the university administration. We demand that the bill should be withdrawn and whatever process was happening earlier should continue. The IAS officers in the state government have now eyed universities where they are exerting their power and interfere through such a bill.”

He said that such reasons are behind the amendments to the ear-

lier legislation and bring a new system which can allow the government more teeth.

“We will definitely take up the matter in the Assembly and question the government on the issue. We cannot allow this. We are strongly opposing this move of amendment of the earlier legislation. This can heavily impact the autonomy of the universities in the state.”

Earlier the State Cabinet had passed the proposal of doing away with multiple legislations of universities and decided to use a single legislation to government and administer the universities in the state. It also talked about other aspects of administration like recruitment, service period of Vice Chancellors and others.

Elderly man duped

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Sept 16: A common has withdrawn over ₹40,000 from the account of an elderly by exchanging the ATM card at Mahaveer Nagar in Samantarapur area. Sources said Gadadhara Prusty, 65, had gone to the ATM kiosk to withdraw ₹5,000. When he encountered some problems, a 35-year-old youth present there offered some help and replaced Prusty's ATM card with another. Later, the accused left the spot on the pretext of some urgent work. Prusty returned empty-handed as the password mismatched. He later received two messages of withdrawal of ₹40,000 and around ₹10,000 of online transaction. His son lodged a complaint with Lingaraj police.

Jumbo rehab centre in Chandaka soon

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, Sept 16: Odisha will soon have an elephant rehabilitation centre for conservation and protection of the jumbos, a senior official said.

The rehabilitation centre will help injured elephants and those who got separated from the herd, the official said.

State Forest and Environment Minister Bikram Keshari Arukha has laid the foundation stone for the Elephant Rehabilitation Centre at Kumarkhunti in Chandaka-Dampada sanctuary close to the Capital city Monday.

The project will become a milestone in conservation and protection of elephants, the minister said,



adding that arrangements have been made to complete the centre within three months.

The rehabilitation centre will be built in 10 hectare of land at an estimated expenditure of Rs 6 crore. The project has already been cleared by the Centre, the minister said.

“Elephants and their calves rescued from different places of the state will be kept in the rehabilitation centre and will be treated by experts and veterinary doctors,”

the minister said.

The Forest department will make arrangements for adequate food, water and lodging facilities for the elephants, said a senior Forest and Environment department official, adding that a laboratory facility will also be set up in the rehabilitation centre.

The rehabilitation centre is part of the Centre's Project Elephant, said additional chief secretary, Forest and Environment Mona Sharma.

The rehabilitation centre is likely to help in reducing man-elephant conflict in the state, said Chief Wildlife Warden H S Upadhyaya. He said around 70 jumbos die due to different reasons in the state every year while nearly 100 people lost their lives in jumbo attack.

FOR CLASSIFIED ADVERTISEMENTS CONTACT OUR BOOKING STATIONS

Acharya Vihar-DayalAgency-9437135727, **A.P. Tours and Travel**, Maitri Vihar, C.S. Pur- 9861301598, **Aurobindo Market**-Sai Audio & Electronics-9438304668, **Airport Road**-Sai Baba Variety Store-9090071530, **Anish Infotech**- Tankapani Road-9861341488, **Bapuji Nagar**- Dreamland Studio- 9777517314, **Baramunda Rental Colony**-Maa Ramchandi Communication-9658821469, **Baramunda Housing Board** Colony-Pappu Variety Store-9040500106, **Cuttack Road**-Alishan Snacks-8984236754, **District Center (Chandrasekharpur)**-Sai Google Mart-9776056507, **Forest Park**-DTDC Couriers & Services (HB Services)-7381024156, **IRC Village**-Bapi Xerox-9090090404, Gift Hut(Antriksh Gifts & Decors Pvt. Ltd.)-9954781084, Pruthvi Medicine-9853314816, **Janpath-Krupraj Book Store**-7978646669, **Jaydev Vihar**-AK Enterprises-7978116618, Subam Sai Books Store-8895550649, Swain Graphics- 9337121249, **Jagannath Mobile Point**- Janpath Road, Ram Mandir- 9938475415, **Kanan Vihar**-Auro Electronics-8260697560, **Khandagiri**- Swosti Mobile Centre- 7992914045, World Solution- 9938317559, **KIIT Road**-Jugad Jn-9338545031, **Laxmi Sagar**-Aditya Mobile-9438191836, **Lewis Road**-Spider Web-7809186415, **Metro Satellite City**-Arogya Mitra Medicine Store-9853621640, **Madhusudan Nagar**-Mohapatra Communication-9124446664, **Maa Santoshi travels**- Gajapati Nagar- 9777675867, **Nayapalli**- The Cake Room- 7873660137, **Near Mayfair Lagoon**-Cookiemana-9439491273, **Nigamananda-Omm Sai Travels**-9668284823, **Nr Cosmopolis Main Gate**- Shreeram Medical Store- 8763711714, **Net Square**- Niladri Vihar (C.S. Pur)- 7205634821, **Priyadarshini Market**-Astro Point-9938134346, **R.N. General Store**-Nilakantha Nagar-9438642501, **Sahid Nagar**- Maa Communication- 9437353424, **Sahini General Store**- Near Patia Railway Station, Mahavir Vihar- 9937586626, **Satyaj Nagar**-Baishnavi Mixture & Sweets-7894821764, **Samantapur**- Download Point-7504557743, **Sailashree Vihar**-Harsha Book Store-8093449515, **Saheed Nagar**-Jagannath Graphics-7978652670, Photo World-7978468191, Sainath Photo Studio-8984436129, Shanti & Co-9937071063, **Siripur**-Omm Maa Sarala Communication-9777682449, **Sushree fashion**- Jagmara-9938714347, **Shree Vision**- Sailashree Vihar-9861476678, **Unit-3**-LIC of India Premium Point-9337787080, **Unit-7**- LIC Premium Point- 9338227422, **VSS Nagar**-Friends Cake & Bake-8658200930, Jeet Infoworld-7205195782, **XIMB Square**-LD Books-9658061373.

Hopes brighten for 72,000 depositors

HC orders Baripada Urban Cooperative Bank management to disburse money within 8 weeks



POST NEWS NETWORK

Baripada, Sept 16: Over 72,000 depositors of Baripada Urban Cooperative Bank (BUCB) have long been waiting to get back their money. They throng the BUCB every day ever since the High Court issued an interim court order directing the management to disburse the money of the depositors within eight weeks.

It may be noted here that RBI had cancelled the cooperative bank's license as its financial condition was not sound in October 2014. Since then thousands of depositors were in trouble as their money got stuck in the bank.

Stakeholders of Baripada Urban Cooperative Bank (BUCB) have long been demanding their deposited money back, but their efforts have proved futile.

The recent HC order has rekindled hopes for return of their long-stuck deposits.

According to some depositors, they had appealed to the RBI April 24, 2018, to allow the bank to return their money, but their appeal was rejected.

Under pressure, the bank management had moved the High Court against the RBI directive for closure of operations. In its interim order,

the HC had directed return of money to depositors June 25, 2020. Then, the RBI filed a writ petition at the HC against its order.

However, the HC ordered return of deposits.

Meanwhile, a liquidator has been appointed for the bank management. But a case has been filed at the court over appointment of a liquidator.

Manoj Sendha, a cloth store owner of Baripada town, said, "The amount of profits I was making from this business was deposited in the bank. But all the deposits are stuck in the bank at this time of crisis."

Explaining her miseries, Swagatika Nayak, a service holder of Baripada, said, "I have a fixed deposit with monthly savings. The money has got stuck over years. I am tired of running from pillar to post. Following the HC order, I have submitted all necessary documents."

The depositors alleged that though RBI fixed guidelines for refund of depositors' money, no steps have been taken by the bank in the interest of the beneficiaries.

Many depositors frustrated with the apathetic attitude of the bank authorities had drawn the attention of the cooperation minister and Chief Minister to their plight earlier.

NABARD LAUNCHES 'WADI' IN MAOIST HEARTLAND

POST NEWS NETWORK

Malkangiri, Sept 16: In a bid to provide sustainable income to members of tribal communities and curb their migration to neighbouring states, the National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) launched 'Wadi' programme, Tuesday.

'Wadi' means a small orchard of one or two-acre having multiple crops. The programme has been launched in Manyamkunda panchayat under Kalimela block in Malkangiri district - which was once a Maoist heartland.

Under this programme, nearly 500 tribal families of Kusumpat, Potteru, Dokunda, Rajgiri and Manyamkunda villages under Manyamkunda panchayat have planted mango and cashew saplings on high land belonging to them.

"Following demand from several quarters, NABARD started Wadi programme in Manyamkunda panchayat from this year," said



Dharmendra Beuria DDM of NABARD said: Since tribals are not able to generate any income in the first few years they are being given support for cultivating inter-crops like vegetables. Manyamkunda was a Maoist-dominated area. There was no development in that patch. NABARD with the help of Netaji Development Society has taken up plantation activities and also cultivation of moong (green gram) as inter-crop

Dharmendra Beuria DDM of NABARD. The project duration of the programme is six years and this is the first year of the programme, Beuria added.

BOOSTING LIVELIHOOD FOR TRIBALS

"Our target is to ensure that 500 tribal families benefit from this. Each family has been taken as a unit. Fruit trees will be planted in one acre of highland belonging to

'Wadi' means a small orchard of one or two-acre having multiple crops. The programme has been launched in Manyamkunda panchayat under Kalimela block in Malkangiri

Under this programme, nearly 500 tribal families of Kusumpat, Potteru, Dokunda, Rajgiri and Manyamkunda villages under Manyamkunda panchayat have planted mango and cashew saplings on high land belonging to them

each family. Forty cashew saplings and 37 mango saplings will be planted." "Since cashew and mango will give good returns 4-5 years after planting, we estimate that

each family will have a minimum income of Rs 1 lakh per year," the DDM asserted.

Beuria said, since tribals are not able to generate any income in the first few years they are being given support for cultivating inter-crops like vegetables.

"Manyamkunda was a Maoist-dominated area. There was no development in that patch. NABARD with the help of Netaji Development Society has taken up plantation activities and also cultivation of moong (green gram) as inter-crop."

On being contacted, Kalimela block chairman Mala Madi said, "I believe, through these activities there will be socio-economic development of people".

"Officials of NABARD and Netaji Development Society approached us to plant fruit trees on our land so that we can eke out a living. After we agreed, NABARD planted saplings in the district. We are now growing moong and millets as inter-crop," said a local beneficiary.

BATTERED BY FLOODS



Flood-hit people have taken shelter under makeshift shanties on an embankment near a breach at Rampa under Bari block

Ch'garh jumbo calves trapped in Keonjhar canal rescued

POST NEWS NETWORK

Keonjhar, Sept 16: Two 11-month-old baby elephants, who migrated from Chhattisgarh forest, fell into the Kanpur dam's canal under Champua range in Keonjhar district. Forest officials rescued the calves after a two-hour operation Wednesday.

According to forest officials, the incident occurred near Champua range Tuesday night while an elephant herd comprising 22 elephants was crossing the Jamudalak canal of Kanpur dam. The two elephants were suspected to have been trapped while crossing the canal.

When the other elephants of the herd climbed up from the canal to the other side, the two calves, owing to their tiny stature, were unable to do so as the canal is more than 4 ft deep. The locals identified the two elephant calves Wednesday



morning. They informed forest officials about the incident. On being informed, a team, aided by an earth remover, came to the rescue of the baby elephants. The operation took more than two hours but the team was successful in rescuing the baby elephants.

Forest officials said when the herd of elephants was unsuccessful to rescue the calves, they left them at the place and went away.

Notably, these jumbos from Chhattisgarh had entered Odisha and were returning to their original habitat.

Sero survey begins in Gajapati

POST NEWS NETWORK

Paralakhemundi, Sept 16: The district administration began a serological survey from Wednesday to determine the prevalence of coronavirus infection among people in Paralakhemundi town of Gajapati district.

A 15-member team from ICMR-Regional Medical Research Center (RMRC), Bhubaneswar has been



accompanying health officials and municipality staff during the survey. In the first phase, 50

samples each will be collected from 20 localities in the town.

Meanwhile, the district administration thanked the locals for extending support to the survey. Collector Anupam Saha Wednesday visited all swab collection centres to take stock.

Besides, samples of around 500 frontline warriors engaged in the COVID-19 battle will be collected for the survey, said the Chief District Medical Officer.

Covid +ve man dies unattended; wife helpless



DHENKANAL: The video of a woman trying to resuscitate her COVID-19 infected husband at Dhenkanal district headquarters hospital (DHH) has been making rounds on social media for past two days.

A man, who earlier tested positive for COVID-19, is seen in the

video collapsing at the main door of fever and flu ward of the DHH here. The man was identified as Sushant Prusti (50) of Nadhara village. His wife can be heard crying and praying for help in the heart-wrenching video. But the DHH medical staff allegedly remained mute spectators.

As the video reveals, the woman made repeated attempts to revive her husband, but failed. She was sobbing helplessly seeking help of medical personnel.

The plight of the woman recorded on camera by locals was shared on social media.

Many pointed out to medical negligence. Chief District Medical Officer Dr Sujatarani Mishra refuted the allegations, saying the

man had multiple comorbidities such as high blood pressure and diabetes.

He was undergoing treatment at Angul and had come to Dhenkanal DHH for antigen test Monday.

"His BP level was very high. His antigen test reported positive for Covid-19. He collapsed while sitting at the main door following a massive heart attack," Dr Mishra said.

"Our specialists checked his health condition and the man was no more. We informed the municipality because this was a Covid-19 case," she added.

Collector Bhumes Chandra Behera served a show-cause notice on the CDMO over this issue.

4 killed, 10 hurt in separate mishaps

POST NEWS NETWORK

Deogarh/Baripada, Sept 16: In two separate road mishaps, four people died and 10 were wounded in Deogarh and Mayurbhanj districts.

Reports from Deogarh said, two youngsters were killed after a motorbike they were travelling in rammed into a parked truck on NH-53 near Karadapala village under Tilebani police limits in the district, Tuesday night.

The deceased were identified as Shruvan Nanda and his friend Rikan Pradhan. Reports said, both were working in a mobile network company. Sources said, Nanda and Pradhan were returning home Tuesday night after completing their night duty in a mobile network company.

However, due to the darkness, Nanda failed to detect the road and lost control over the vehicle, which crashed into the stationed truck from rear. The duo succumbed to their injuries on the spot, police said. Police started a probe into the matter and sent the bodies for post-mortem. Police seized both the truck and the motorbike.

A case was registered in Tilebani police station. Police said that there are truck bays, highway hotels and

space around the toll gate, but parked lorries often pose risk to other drivers on the NH, pointed out a police official.

Reports from Baripada said, a school student including a parent died after a speeding truck hit an auto-rickshaw in which they were travelling at Bangiriposi Ghat road on national highway (NH-49) in Mayurbhanj district Wednesday.

The tragedy took place in the afternoon when four school students along with their parents were on their way to Suliapada from Dopatta village by an auto-rickshaw for collecting rice allocated under the mid-day meal (MDM) scheme.

"The auto toppled after it was hit by the truck while on the hilly road. The deceased had suffered grievous injuries as they were thrown out of the

auto. The vehicle was mostly damaged in the accident," SP Smit P Parmar informed.

Office of the Superintendent
Sardar Vallabh Patel Post Graduate
Institute of Pediatrics
Health & F.W. Department, Govt. of Odisha
Cuttack-753002, Tel/Fax: 0671-2508978
E-Mail ID- svppgip_cuttack@rediffmail.com, www.svppgip.org
Letter No: 3936/SVPPGIP, Cuttack Date: 14/09/2020

TENDER CALL NOTICE

No. E-251:- The Superintendent, SVPPGIP, Cuttack invites sealed tender are from reputed publisher/ suppliers for supply of 1- Medical Books, 2- Medical Journals of latest edition to this institution during the year 2020-21. The tender will be two bid systems as technical bid and price bid. The details list of Books & Journals, last date of receipt of tender, opening of bid & term and condition can be found in tender paper which will be downloaded from the institution website www.svppgip.org. The bid cost Rs.1500/- (One thousand Five hundred only) should be enclosed by way of separate Demand draft towards the cost of the tender paper. The tender should send by speed post/registered post only.

Yours Sincerely
Sd./- Superintendent
SVPPGIP, Cuttack
OIPR-10017/11/0005/2021

NOTIFIED AREA COUNCIL, DIGAPAHANDI NOTICE INVITING BIDS (NIB)THROUGH e-procurement BID IDENTIFICATION NO.: DIGNAC-03/2020-21 NIB No.2266/DIGNAC, dtd.03.09.2020		
1.	Procurement Officer-Publisher/Officer Inviting the Tender/ Bids (OIT)	Executive Officer, N.A.C., Digapahandi
2.	Name of the works/packages	Sanitation work
3.	No. of works	1 No.
4.	Estimated cost (Approx.) of the works	Rs.42,64,200/-
5.	Period of availability of the bid document/tenders for online bidding	From 11.00 A.M. of dtd.15.09.2020 to 17.00 P.M. of dtd.28.09.2020
6.	Last date & time for bidding online (Submission of Technical Bids & Financial Bids)	17.00 P.M. of dtd.28.09.2020
7.	Last date & time for submission of the sealed envelopes through Regd. Post/Speed Post/Directly drop in Tender Box at Digapahandi NAC Office containing the EMD, cost of the bid documents, ABC (if reqd.) etc Documents as asked for to fulfill the eligibility criteria of the bidders for sanitation work.	17.00 P.M. of dtd.01.10.2020
8.	Date & time of opening of the bids	12.00 P.M. onwards on dtd.03.10.2020
N.B.: Further more details can be seen in the DTCN available in the e-Procurement Portal i.e. https://tendersodisha.gov.in Sd./- Executive Officer, N.A.C., Digapahandi		

Chhatar Yatra to be celebrated sans devotees

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhawanipatna, Sept 16: Even as Covid-19 cases are spiraling in various parts of Kalahandi district, the district administration has decided to impose restrictions on celebration of the famous Chhatar Yatra this year to prevent congregations and gatherings that can further spread the infections.

Chhatar Yatra will be celebrated October 24. Meanwhile, the administration had decided to seal all entry points of the Bhawanipatana town from October 22 to October 24. All routes connecting to Jenakhal Chhak and Manikeswar temple and Stebu Chhak will also be sealed.

Curfew will be imposed in the town for two days - October 23 and 24. Only cultural troupes of drums and Ghumura will be allowed during the celebration.

It was decided at a meeting Wednesday that the festival of Goddess



Manikeswari will be conducted without devotees this year due to Covid-19 pandemic.

According to the decision, no devotee will be allowed to enter the temple nor will they be allowed to take part

in rituals. Moreover, the animal sacrifice was banned at the Manikeswari temple on the occasion of Chhatar Jatra, which will be celebrated October 24 this year.

It is to be mentioned that the district

administration bans animal sacrifice during Chhatar Yatra of Goddess Manikeswari every year. However, devotees sacrifice hundreds of innocent animals to fulfill their wishes despite the ban.


As part of the celebration, a ceremonial Chhatar of Goddess Manikeswari is taken out to a location on the outskirts of Bhawanipatna from the temple in the morning following performance of secret rituals. The return journey of the Chhatar to the temple is known as Chhatar Yatra.

During immersion ceremony, only five to seven people will be present.

The preparatory meeting was presided over by Collector D Gavali Parag Harshad in the presence of ADM Saratchandra Srichandan, Kalahandi Maharaj Ananta Pratap Deo, assistant collector Shubhadipta Mohanty, BDO Prita Kumari, SDPO and several members of the Chhatar Yatra Committee.

“Widen your consciousness to the dimension of the earth and you will have a place for everything.”

THE MOTHER



When eating is an act of cruelty

I cannot make up my mind: is the meat eater, who eats dead animals killed in slaughterhouses, worse than the meat eater who kills the animal himself while eating it?

There is a certain type of person who goes to a restaurant, chooses a live fish, octopus shrimp or snake in a transparent aquarium tank, has it taken out of the glass and killed and cooked in front of him. His only reason for this to himself is that the meat should be 'fresh'. In fact some people truly enjoy suffering. That, for them, is as important as the taste.

What can I say about people who enjoy eating such food? The Chinese Ying Yang fish is fried but kept alive. You can see videos of diners prodding at the face and eyes with their chopsticks while the fish struggles to breathe with its mouth and gills. It is prepared extremely quickly, with care not to damage the internal organs, so that the fish can remain alive for thirty minutes. Fish are the most sensitive of all to pain. Imagine yourself being fried and then eaten bit by bit.

In Japan, Sashimi, which means pierced body, is a common dish consisting of fresh raw fish or meat sliced into thin pieces and eaten with soy sauce. One kind of Sashimi is Ikizukuri (prepared alive) made with live sea beings. Fish and octopus are common ingredients that move on the plate as you eat them. Sashimi could also include live frogs. The frog is stripped of its skin while alive and stabbed delicately with a fork and eaten. One restaurant in Shinjuku serves the frog's fresh, still beating heart, as starters. Lobsters are not always boiled alive and dead by the time they reach your plate. Restaurants in New York serve lobsters while they're still alive. They are upturned and diners pick out 'belly sashimi' from the lobster which flails in pain for all the time you take to slash and take out his stomach meat.

In South Korea, Sannakji is a dish that involves hacking the tentacles off a baby octopus and serving them still wriggling. Sannakji connoisseurs enjoy the sensation of the still-active suction cups on the octopus' arms as they stick to the mouth.

The Chinese cannot be bested for their addiction to cruelty. Live shrimp are put into a liquor called Baijiu and diners bite their heads off while drinking it. This can give you lung fluke disease, but what is more important than proving your manhood by killing a shrimp. In China there is a dish called 'three squeaks' in which live baby mice are dunked in sauce and eaten alive. The reason why it is called 'three squeaks' is due to the sounds the mice make when grabbed with chopsticks, dunked in the sauce and bitten through.

Raw live baby monkey brain is an expensive dish eaten by rich people in China and Hong Kong. The chef puts a live monkey beneath a table with its head poking up through a hole. The chef slices the top of the head off and the customers eat its brains while it screams. The animal has its legs tied and its body held down, while the chef cuts its body and serves the meat immediately to customers.

Live baby duck embryos, just a day from being hatched, are a famous Chinese specialty which is now common in the Philippines as well. In the latter country it is called Balut. The Filipinos eat the egg boiled. The Chinese eat it raw to get the full taste of the egg white, the little yolk left, and the live squirming chick. No wonder the Chinese make such dangerous enemies. They love violence and gore.

Consuming the beating heart and blood of live snakes is common in Vietnam. In China people eat live baby snakes.

Sea urchins are the porcupines of the sea; globular animals with long spines to defend themselves. They live on the seabed. But their spines cannot protect them from human greed. They are caught and served live. Their testicles are a delicacy across the world, especially Europe. The live animal is cut on the plate with scissors and its salty gonads are taken out and eaten raw.

The most common animal to be eaten alive is the oyster which is served alive. Its spine is broken, and its insides are slurped up raw. This was originally a French dish but is now eaten all over.

A famous chain of restaurants in Copenhagen serves salads crawling with live ants supposedly to add a zesty taste. These move slowly because they have been kept in the fridge previously. Wickety grubs are chewed live in parts of Australia. They are said to taste like nutty fried eggs.

Television game shows that I have repeatedly complained about to the Ministry over the years are Fear Factor and Primal Survivor where contestants eat live insects, spiders, cockroaches and worms. But by the time they take action, the series are already over. Then we start the cycle again with the next series. Man vs Wild is another show in which Bear Grylls shows his manhood by eating live insects.

What is the word for people who demand food that is so full of pain? Monsters? Ugly terrifying evil beings who are probably a menace to human society as well.

To join the animal welfare movement contact gandhim@nic.in, www.peopleforanimalsindia.org

WISDOM CORNER

- “There are two tragedies in life. One is to lose your heart's desire. The other is to gain it.”

GEORGE BERNARD SHAW
- “We cannot solve our problems with the same thinking we used when we created them.”

ALBERT EINSTEIN
- “When what you say is true, there is no need to use any arguments to substantiate it.”

ACHARYA VINOBA BHAVE

WORDSWORTH

Tontine

The tontine is a system of annuities in which the benefits pass to the surviving subscribers until only one is left. It's named after Lorenzo Tonti, a Neapolitan banker who started such a scheme in France in 1653, though it has been said that they were known in Italy earlier. Each subscriber paid a sum into the fund, and in return received dividends from the capital invested; as each person died his share was divided among all the others until only one was left, reaping all the benefits.

LOL

Flying without a parachute

A man jumps out of an airplane with a parachute on his back. As he's falling, he realises his chute is broken. He doesn't know anything about parachutes, but as the earth rapidly approaches, he realises his options are limited; he takes off the parachute

and tries to fix it himself on the way down. The wind is ripping past his face, he's dropping like a rock, and at 5000 feet, another man goes shooting up past him. In desperation, the man with the chute looks up and yells, "Hey do you know anything about parachutes?!" The guy flying up looks down and yells, "No, do you know anything about gas stoves?!"



Akira Kawamoto

IF JAPAN IS TO SUSTAIN ITS GLOBAL POSITION, SUGA MUST MAKE A CLEAR BREAK FROM HIS PREDECESSOR AND PATRON, AND PURSUE A BROAD RANGE OF STRUCTURAL REFORMS



Maneka Gandhi

Man vs Wild is another show in which Bear Grylls shows his manhood by eating live insects

SPECTRUM SOCIETY

Dr S Saraswathi

THE MOST STUNNING PIECE OF INVESTIGATIVE JOURNALISM SO FAR IS THE WATERGATE REVELATIONS BY WOODWARD AND BERNSTEIN (1974) THAT LED TO THE RESIGNATION OF PRESIDENT NIXON

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

FOCUS JAPAN

ABENOMICS AFTER ABE

Yoshihide Suga has been selected as the new prime minister of Japan. He will replace Shinzo Abe, who announced his resignation last month for health reasons after almost eight years in office. Japanese and international observers are now asking whether the Abe government's economic-policy course (dubbed 'Abenomics') will change significantly under Suga; and if so, how.

The answer will have important geopolitical implications. Japan, after all, is still struggling to overcome the negative shock from Covid-19, and its economic health is becoming ever more pivotal in view of the deepening confrontation between the United States and China. Many outside Japan might assume that Suga will change little, and he presented himself to the ruling Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) as the 'continuity' candidate to replace Abe. That was, perhaps, the best card that he could have played, having served as cabinet secretary, the second most powerful position in Japan, for the entirety of Abe's eight-year tenure.

On this view, Suga will remain safe by sticking closely to Abenomics. The massive quantitative easing undertaken since 2013 by Bank of Japan (BOJ) Governor Haruhiko Kuroda – an Abe appointee – will continue. Similarly, Suga will avoid vigorous and hasty fiscal tightening, even though the Abe government's pandemic-response measures have further increased Japan's net public debt, which, at around 150 per cent of the GDP, was already the highest among developed countries.

But if Japan is to sustain its global position, Suga must make a clear break from his predecessor and patron, and pursue a broad range of structural reforms. Indeed, productivity-enhancing labour-market and regulatory reforms are almost certainly the only way to increase Japan's economic growth. Although Abe's policies helped end Japan's deflationary stagnation, the overall record of Abenomics is not very impressive. Between 2013



Although Abe's policies helped end Japan's deflationary stagnation, the overall record of Abenomics is not very impressive

and 2019, annual GDP growth averaged just 1 per cent, and exceeded 2 per cent in only two of the eight years of Abe's premiership. Moreover, BOJ data show that growth under Abenomics resulted mostly from increases in capital and labour inputs, rather than from productivity gains. Contrary to the conventional view that the Japanese economy faces strong headwinds owing to its aging population and shrinking workforce, the number of people in employment continued to grow throughout the Abe years, because more women joined the labour force. But with Japan's female labour-force participation rate now higher than that of the US, this trend may not continue for much longer.

Stalled productivity growth strongly indicates that the Abe administration's structural reforms (often called the 'third arrow' of Abenomics) fell far short of what Japan required. True, Japan's rescue of the 12-country Trans-Pacific Partnership trade pact following the withdrawal of the US by President Trump, and its recent free-trade agreement with the EU, are substantial and praiseworthy achievements, particularly given the increase in protectionist sentiment that Trump has fostered. The Abe administration also made strong

progress on corporate governance. But the aggregate impact of Abenomics was simply too small. Given his consistently high approval ratings and savvy economic advisers, why did Abe fail to pursue bolder structural reforms? One answer is he did not have to, because of lack of effective opposition parties offering alternatives.

Another answer is that Abe had a big, non-economic policy priority – revising Japan's pacifist 1947 constitution – and always intended to spend his political capital on that issue. But he ultimately failed to achieve that goal, too, because there was never a moment when constitutional reform could command anywhere near majority support among the electorate.

Promoting wide-ranging structural reforms of the type that his predecessor largely avoided will require Suga to face down powerful lobbies and vested interests – many of them in his own ruling Liberal Democratic Party – and mobilise public opinion skillfully. But some of Suga's remarks during his recent LDP leadership campaign offer hope that he may be a more daring and courageous prime minister than many expect. For example, Suga explicitly welcomed the idea of allowing new competitors to enter heavily regulated

sectors such as mobile telecommunications and agriculture. He also announced his intention to establish a new agency tasked with overhauling the government's digital infrastructure. Other clues come from Suga's tenure as cabinet secretary, when he prodded Japan's bureaucrats to change policies hitherto regarded as untouchable. Easing restrictions on visa issuance paved the way for a vast increase in the number of foreign tourists visiting Japan in recent years.

Nonetheless, much uncertainty lies ahead, and Suga will face two immediate hurdles. First, he must visibly establish his own leadership style. Whereas many of Suga's predecessors as prime minister – including Abe and Taro Aso – hailed from well-known political (even aristocratic) families, Suga comes from a solid middle-class background. Although Suga proved himself an extremely capable manager as Abe's cabinet secretary, his new role will require him not only to administer, but also to lead. Rather than pulling strings behind the scenes with elite bureaucrats, Suga must inspire the country. His first test will be to lead the government's response to the pandemic, because the Abe administration's confusing signals as to whether more restrictions are preferable to more economic activity – or, indeed, the reverse – have often bewildered the Japanese public. Suga's second hurdle will be to consolidate power within his party. He was elected LDP leader with the support of the party's major factions, but does not belong to any of them. Once he has appointed his cabinet, the LDP's internal rivalries and fissures will likely re-emerge.

Suga's best strategy might well be to go to the voters soon. Winning a general election, rather than just an internal party contest, would give him the popular mandate he needs to chart a bolder economic-policy course.

The writer is former deputy director general in Japan's Ministry of Economy, Trade, and Industry.

@PROJECT SYNDICATE

Trial by media, a misnomer

The Pros and Cons of Media Trial' was the topic for the first Ram Jethmalani Memorial Lecture organised in Delhi the other day, in which renowned lawyers participated. At a time when media activism is going strong, it has become necessary to define its place in the rule of law, as the Supreme Court too has stressed this week.

One of the latest additions to most common journalist language is "Trial by Media". It is generally used as a derogatory term by sections of the society affected by concerned reports, while the neutral public is game with it. Authors, reporters, and performers do not call their product as media trial. Trial by Media is indeed a misnomer for findings of investigative journalism that has grown as a special branch of journalism practised by bold journalists who research on real-life stories. Their task requires absolute commitment to truth and unbiased coverage. The more complicated the crime, the greater is the scope for investigation.

As the general public is curious to follow criminal cases handled by the public and private entities, media picks up such incidents to satisfy their audience. Many of the high-level crimes reflect political

divisions. Media trial entered journalism in India in a big way with the Bijal Joshi rape case (2005), followed by the Priyadarshini Mattoo case (2006), the Jessica Lal case (2010) and more recently, the Aarushi murder case.

Investigative journalism is allowed in India. Readers and viewers are by and large thrilled with real life crime stories. The investigator; the facilitator; the publisher; and the sponsor are duty-bound to search and find out the truth. They are accountable for errors, biased reporting, partial coverage, and distorted disclosure. The task calls for a high level of moral responsibility and professional integrity.

Journals and television channels are no longer passive recipients and communicators of incoming newsroom reports. They are not post offices. Today, they are active explorers of truth hidden beneath the visible surface. In this transformation, journalists have become 'creators' of news revealing the inside of events and incidents and do not remain mere reporters of what is visible to the naked eye.

Washington-based International Consortium of Investigative Journalists (ICIJ) launched in 1997 is a global network of reporters and organisations of about 267 investigative journalists probing se-

rious cases of international crimes, corruption, and abuse of power. The most-stunning piece of investigative journalism so far is the Watergate revelations by Woodward and Bernstein (1974) that led to the resignation of the American President, Richard Nixon.

Popular kings in olden days adopted the practice of sending trusted secret agents to mix with people and ascertain what their subjects think and do. Some rulers used to go round their kingdom incognito. In modern free democracies, media's professed role is to act as people's agents and take upon the onerous job of unraveling the truth behind complicated crimes.

UN's basic principles on the Independence of the Judiciary states in Article 6 that the judiciary is required "to ensure that judicial proceedings are conducted fairly and that the right of the parties is respected." This principle is also in the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) which provides that "everyone shall be entitled to fair and public hearing by a competent, independent, and impartial tribunal in the determination of any criminal charge or a suit at law." ICCPR acknowledges that right to public trial is not absolute and that certain

limitations on public access are necessary.

ICCPR also confirms freedom of expression as a fundamental feature of democratic society and includes under it freedom of press. European Convention on Human Rights also admits freedom of press as paramount. However, freedom-loving USA's Supreme Court has confirmed the potential danger the impact of media could have on trials. This must be due to the continuance of jury system. The increasing tendency to use media when a matter is sub-judice is a subject of discussion among lawyers and laymen in India. In England, the court held that it is important to understand that any other authority cannot usurp the function of the court in a civilized society.

On the other hand, it is a debatable point whether media exposure before court trial can prejudice a case. Courts and judges go by written documents and evidence and, if so, cannot be influenced by media or public reaction. If media investigations expose evidence relevant for a case, it has to be welcomed. Therefore, adherence to truth must be the foundation of media investigation.

The writer is former director, ICSSR, New Delhi.

INF A

Drugs & film industry

Sir, The recent storm in the film industry on use of drugs was waiting to happen. But why speak of only the film industry? It's a known fact that drugs are smuggled around and the law enforcement agencies are not bothered. They are looking the other way. Like the Narcotics Control Bureau of India, every country has an anti-narco agency. In the United States, it is the Drug Enforcement Administration. These agencies never get near the big fish because the law-breakers have huge money to shell out to silence the investigating agencies, or enjoy political patronage. Furthermore, the enforcement agencies are corrupt to the core. Earlier, it was the underworld mafia; now the world is facing the menace of narco-terrorism. In the film industry, actors and actresses are getting into such influences due to the excess money they have. Besides, they use drugs and other such substances to overcome the tension in their creative pursuits. There is the existence of a carefree culture in the film world. Strict vigil is the only way to curb such tendencies, but the question is who is serious about it. Only small fries are put behind the bars to prove that the law has teeth.

Sunil Pradhan, Khariar, NUPADA

Digital or deadly

Sir, When I went to take the challan and pay my taxes this week, it was found that I have to pay a late fee of ₹500 for each month, for the delay in payment. This, even after the Union government has given relaxation for payment till November due to the pandemic. Regarding late fee, nobody had any knowledge. Collecting huge taxes and making people pay late-fee during this pandemic is painful indeed. Are the slogans like Atmanirbhar Bharat meant for the government or the public? Banks are doing their own looting spree by using the term moratorium. Prices are spiraling more than four times for essential items. The government has completely failed to control Covid. In the present situation, everything is out of control except the digital mechanism which the government uses to best effect to extract the maximum from the public by way of taxes. The money thus going into the exchequer is looted right and left by those wielding power at all levels. Also, those who do not pay taxes will find their GST is blocked. This is how India will emerge as Digital India!

Manmad Kumar Pitta, CUTTACK

Tirupati temple awash with ₹50 cr demonetised cash offerings


Though the Central government had demonetised ₹1,000 and ₹500 notes November 8, 2016, devotees continued to offer demonetised notes

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Tirupati, Sept 16: The world famous Tirupati temple in Andhra Pradesh is awash with ₹50 crore demonetised cash offerings, which it continued to receive from the devotees, but could not utilise.

“Though the Central government had demonetised ₹1,000 and ₹500 notes November 8, 2016, devotees continued to offer demonetised notes,” said a TTD official.

As a result, the temple in the southern state received 1.8 lakh notes of ₹1,000, amounting to ₹18 crore, and 6.34 lakh notes of ₹500, amounting to ₹31.7 crore. All the offered demonetised notes amounted to a total of around ₹50 crore.



Though replete with old cash, Tirupati, one of the richest temples in the world, could not make use of it as scrapped notes have stopped being a legal tender for four years already.

Unable to monetise the huge amount of delegitimised cash, Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams (TTD) Chairman, YV Subba Reddy, has requested Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman to enable the temple to deposit the old money with the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) or any other commercial one to monetise that amount.

“Once monetised, TTD will use it to fund several spiritual and welfare activities,” the official said.

Regarding the old notes, TTD had already written to the Union Finance Ministry and the RBI in 2017 but did not receive a favourable response. “As this issue is linked to the faith and sentiments of the devotees, Reddy requested Sitharaman for a favourable outcome, enabling the temple to deposit the money with the RBI or any other bank,” the official said.

Reddy has asked the Finance Minister for favourable instructions in this direction.

The TTD chairman said that the temple could not stop the devotees from offering old notes as it is linked with their faith and religious sentiments.

TTD is a conglomeration of 12 temples and their sub-shrines. It employs 14,000 people. Spread over 16.2 acres, the main Tirumala temple is dedicated to Lord Sri Venkateswara, also known as Srinivasa, Balaji and Venkatachalapati.

‘Bleeding Heart’ was to replace Hurriyat in Valley

Andhra asks NSO to explain literacy survey methodology

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

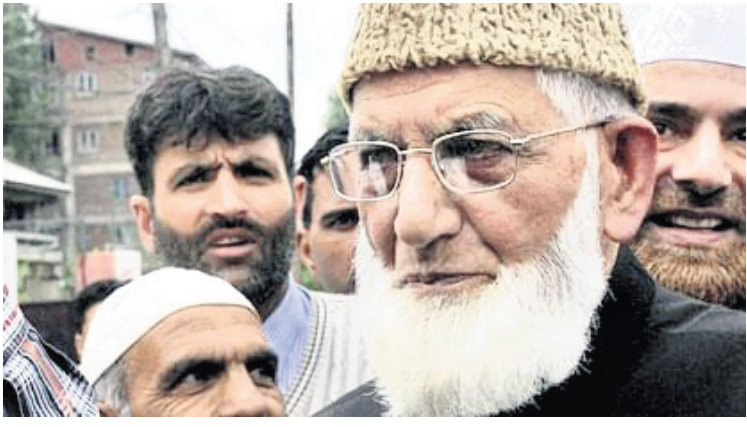
Srinagar, Sept 16: After tightening of terror funds by the National Investigation Agency (NIA), Pakistan had approved a proposal by Irfan Shafi Mir, who was arrested along with Deputy SP Davender Singh, to set up a new outfit called ‘Bleeding Heart’ as it had realised in 2018 that Hurriyat Conference, the separatist conglomerate created by ISI, won’t be able to deliver any more.

During a visit to Pakistan in 2018, Mir held an extensive discussion with ISI officials as well as terrorist top brass to set up an NGO by the name ‘Bleeding Heart’ which would replace the role of Hurriyat Conference, says the NIA chargesheet filed in a designated court of Jammu.

Mir was arrested along with Jammu and Kashmir Deputy Superintendent of Police Davender Singh and Hizbul Mujahideen terrorist Syed Naveed Mushtaq alias Naveed Babu and accomplice Rafi Ahmad Rather.

The details of the 3,064-page chargesheet, accessed by PTI, show that Mir alias ‘Advocate’ made this proposal of the NGO and had started working for it after receiving a go ahead from his mentors across the border.

The NIA filed the chargesheet under the Unlawful Activities



ISI and terror groups were rattled by the case of May 2017 registered by the NIA against members of Jamaat-ud-Dawa, Dukhtaran-e-Millat, Lashkar-e-Taiba, Hizbul Mujahideen and other separatist groups and leaders in the state for allegedly raising, receiving and collecting funds to fuel separatist and terrorist activities, conspiracy to cause disruption in the Valley, and waging war against India

NIA CRACKDOWN

■ Irfan Shafi Mir, who has emerged as a ‘double agent’, made frequent visits to Pakistan during which he came in contact with ISI officials as well as top terror leadership that had complained that separatist groups in the Kashmir valley had become defunct after the NIA cracked its whip on their anti-national activities in 2017 following registering of a terror funding case

with Naveed and Rather when their car was intercepted by Jammu and Kashmir police near Qazigund on the national highway connecting the Valley with the rest of the country.

A search of the vehicle led to the recovery of an AK-47 rifle, three pistols and a cache of ammunition and explosives. The NIA took over the case January 17 this year.

After thorough investigation into the case, the NIA arrested many people including influential businessman Zahoor Ahemd Watali and prominent politician Sheikh Abdul Rashid alias ‘Rashid Engineer’.

Two chargesheets were filed in the case which also included Altaf Ahmad Shah alias Altaf Fantoosh, the son-in-law of firebrand separatist Syed Ali Shah Geelani; spokesman of moderate Hurriyat Conference led by Mirwaiz Umer Farooq, Shahid-ul-Islam; spokesman of the Geelani-led faction of Hurriyat Ayaz Akbar; and separatists Nayeem Khan, Bashir Bhat alias Peer Saifullah and Raja Mehrajuddin Kalwal.

The NIA has also recorded confessional statements on the flow of money, especially from Pakistan, from four people accused in a case related to the funding of ‘terror activities’ in Kashmir: The case led to a decrease in stone pelting incidents in the Valley.

(Prevention) Act and various sections of the Indian Penal Code against Mir, Singh, Naveed, his brother Syed Irfan Ahmad, Rather and businessman Tanveer Ahmad Wani, former president of the Line of Control Traders Association.

According to the NIA, the accused were part of a deep-rooted conspiracy hatched by Pakistan-based terrorist organisation Hizbul Mujahideen and Pakistani State agencies “to commit violent acts and to wage war against the Union of India.”

During his extensive questioning, the NIA said Mir had met banned

terror group Hizbul Mujahideen chief Syed Salauddin, his deputy Amir Khan, the so-called operational chief Khurshed Alam and the terror group’s financial head Nazaf Mehmood where the broad concept of ‘Bleeding Heart’ was discussed.

Later during his stay in Pakistan, Mir had a meeting with ISI officers like Umar Cheema, Ahshan Chaudhary and Sohail Abbas who also tasked him to work on a new ‘Hawala (non-banking) channel’ for transfer of money for sustaining terrorist activities in the Kashmir valley. The investigation into the case

led by Inspector General Anil Shukla and his team has listed 3,017 oral and documentary evidences along with the chargesheet.

The chargesheet also gives instances of his connection with officials of Pakistan High Commission in India with whom he was in constant touch and also received monetary assistance.

Visa applications from Kashmir recommended by Mir were also given top most priority at the Pakistan High Commission, the chargesheet said.

Mir was sitting in the car driven by Singh January 11 this year along

Andhra govt seeks CBI investigation into Amaravati land deals



INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Amaravati, Sept 16: Andhra Pradesh’s ruling party YSRCP has urged the Centre to order a CBI investigation into the alleged land scam in the Amaravati capital region and irregularities in the Andhra Pradesh State FiberNet Limited (APSFL) during the previous TDP regime.

The YSRCP, which had already made a request in this regard a couple of months ago, decided to once again raise the issue during the ongoing Parliament session. The YSRCP alleged that the then TDP government resorted to insider trading, benefitting Chandrababu Naidu, his family members and those close to them.

The party reiterated that the information about choosing Amaravati as the location for building the new state capital was leaked by those in power and they through their aides purchased land in and around Amaravati at throwaway prices.

The investigations conducted so far including by the Cabinet Sub-Committee revealed that before the announcement of Amaravati as the state capital, 4,069.94 acres of land was purchased in Krishna and Guntur districts by those involved in insider trading.

The YSRCP Parliamentary Party has decided to highlight the ‘nepotism, manipulation, corruption and breaking the oath of secrecy by the people in high office who were privy to information leaking it to their close circles and the insider trading arising

out of such malpractice.’ People in the know of cabinet decisions including cabinet ministers, legislators, party associates, and their benamis reaped undue benefits by buying land ahead of the actual announcement, it said.

According to YSRCP leaders, the beneficiaries included Chandrababu Naidu, his son and then cabinet minister Nara Lokesh, his close associate and NRI, Vemuri Ravi Kumar Prasad, then minister Paritala Sunita, Public Accounts Committee chairman and MLA Payyavula Keshav, former MLAs G V S Anjaneyulu and Dhulipalla Narendra, Kambampati Rammohan Rao and several other TDP leaders.

The benami transactions that took place in the land deals allegedly involved Ministers and TDP leaders. The boundaries of the capital area were redrawn to suit their favoured few to keep their landholding at an advantageous place. The YSRCP also alleged that assigned and government land was grabbed and surrendered for land pooling to get the benefits announced by the government. Unwilling farmers were intimidated to acquire their land. The land pooling scheme rules also do not comply with the Land Acquisition Act. The YSRCP also decided to highlight the irregularities in APSFL involving then chief minister Chandababu Naidu, his son Nara Lokesh and then technical advisor to the government, Vemuri Hari Krishna Prasad.

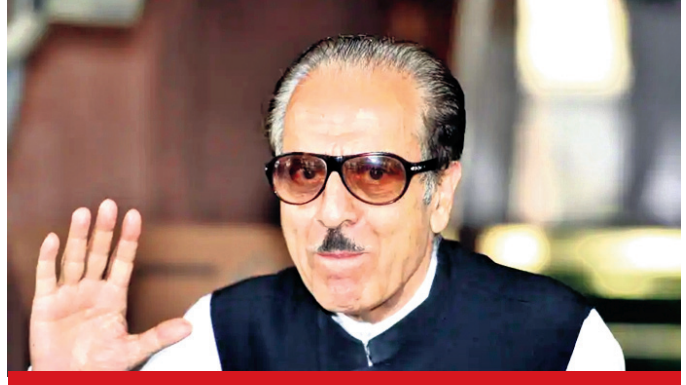
‘Kashmiris fear domicile certificates exercise can change demographics’

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Srinagar, Sept 16: Congress leader and former Union minister Saifuddin Soz has said the issuance of a large number of domicile certificates in J&K has led to apprehensions of demographic changes among Kashmiris.

In a statement Wednesday he said it is alarming that the Union Territory administration has issued over 17 lakh Domicile Certificates, of these, 12.44 lakh certificates have been issued in Jammu, while 4.16 lakh certificates have been issued in Kashmir.

“The most worrying aspect of this hot-haste exercise is that these certificates have been issued to those persons also who do not possess Permanent Resident Certificates and this is what makes this whole exercise reckless,” he said. He said Kashmiris apprehend that this exercise is a clear attempt to change the demographic profile of Kashmir, which the people of Kashmir will resist, exercising their constitutional and democratic rights. “The least that J&K UT government can do is to issue a White Paper on the intention of issuing the enormous number of Permanent Resident Certificates and how best it can



The most worrying aspect of this hot-haste exercise is that these certificates have been issued to those persons also who do not possess Permanent Resident Certificates and this is what makes this whole exercise reckless

allay the apprehensions of the people of Kashmir,” he said. “If J&K UT government is of the view that it has no concern and duty for the feelings of Kashmir’s masses, then, it must take that position, categorically,” he said.

The new domicile law is one of the many new laws the government has in unseemly haste introduced or altered many existing ones in J-K in the past one year, the enterprise to the dismay of vast

sections of its population. While the government authorities insist the enactments are legally sanctioned and follow the pattern set by the abrogation of Articles 370 and 35A ending the special status of the erstwhile state, people here in and also in Jammu ask why not a single such or similar law has been introduced in Ladakh carved out of J-K as a separate Union Territory (UT) in August last year.

Covid-19 situation alarming, Central team to visit Jammu

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, Sept 16: In view of the rising coronavirus cases in Jammu, a team from the Union Health Ministry is being immediately sent there to assist the administration, Union Minister Jitendra Singh said Wednesday.

Singh, the minister of state for personnel, said he has spoken to Jammu and Kashmir Lt Governor Manoj Sinha in this regard.

“Have taken up with the Union Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA), the issue of alarming #COVID situation in #Jammu. A special team of union Health Ministry is being immediately deputed to visit #Jammu and assist the UT Government. Also spoken to LG



Sh Manoj Sinha regarding this,” he tweeted. Singh is a Lok Sabha member from Jammu and Kashmir’s Udhampur constituency.

A total of 1,329 fresh cases of COVID-19 were recorded in the past 24 hours in Jammu and Kashmir – 741 in the Jammu region and 588 in the Kashmir valley, officials had said Tuesday.

Of the fresh cases, Jammu district reported the highest at 254, followed by 148 in Srinagar district, they had said. Nineteen coronavirus-related fatalities were reported in the past 24 hours – 14 in the Jammu region and five in the Valley – taking the death toll to 914 in the Union Territory, they said.

There are 18,678 active cases in the UT as of now, while 37,062

patients have recovered, according to the officials.

Meanwhile, two cab drivers have been arrested from Tourist Reception Center in Srinagar for allegedly providing fake COVID-19 negative reports to people wanting to travel outside the Kashmir valley amid the pandemic, police said Wednesday. The matter was reported to police by a man who had approached the TRC for a trip outside the valley with his family. The man asked the drivers about the travel norms and told them that he had not undergone a COVID-19 test. “The drivers asked the complainant to provide Aadhar cards of the passengers so that they will arrange COVID tests for them,” a police spokesperson said.

of the day uote

The Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) has blocked 224 mobile applications, including TikTok, Helo and WeChat under the provisions of section 69A of the Information Technology Act, 2000 in the interest of sovereignty and integrity of India, defence of India and security of State

SANJAY DHOTRE | MINISTER OF STATE FOR ELECTRONICS AND IT

As many as 1,198 people were detained by police under the stringent National Security Act (NSA) across the country in 2017 and 2018, of whom 563 are still under custody

G KISHAN REDDY | UNION MINISTER OF STATE FOR HOME

The biggest difficulty in contract farming will arise for small farmers as they will become servants of companies. Alternatively, the government should consider the option of mass farming by small farmers at the village level

SACHIN PILOT | FORMER RAJASTHAN DEPUTY CM

SHORT TAKES

Bommai Covid+ve

Bangalore: Karnataka Home Minister Basavaraj Bommai tested positive for Covid-19 and is in home isolation as he is asymptomatic, an official said Wednesday. "Bommai tested positive for the virus. As it is asymptomatic, he is under home quarantine in the city," one of his staff said here. In a tweet in Kannada earlier, Bommai said the infection was confirmed in the Covid test conducted yesterday (Tuesday) for a working boy in his house. "In this backdrop, I have also been tested and I have been infected. I am isolated at home though no symptoms and am healthy," said Bommai in Kannada.

Cop killed

Hyderabad: A police officer was killed as the AK 47 he was carrying went off accidentally during anti-Maoist operations in Telangana Wednesday. The incident occurred in Chennapuram forest area in Cherla mandal of Bhadradi Kothagudem district when a police party was engaged in search operations to apprehend Maoists, police said. Aditya Sai Kumar (25), a Reserved Sub-Inspector of Police (RSI), died on the spot in the incident. His body was shifted to Bhadrachalam Area Hospital for autopsy. According to district Superintendent of Police Sunil Dutt the incident occurred when the officer along with others was engaged in combing operations.

Statues desecrated

Lakhimpur Kheri (Uttar Pradesh): Desecrated statues of Lord Buddha and Dr B.R. Ambedkar were found in a park in Lakhimpur Kheri district after which tension prevailed in the area. According to Indrani Devi, the caretaker of the park where the statues were installed, the hooligans who damaged the statues also thrashed her when she tried to stop them.

Bangladeshis held

Kolkata: Thirteen Bangladeshi nationals, including five women and three children, were apprehended from West Bengal's North 24 Parganas district, while trying to cross over to the neighbouring country illegally, a BSF spokesperson said Wednesday. They were caught by a special patrolling team of the Panchberia outpost of the Border Security Force on Tuesday, he said.



There is no proposal to change the age of retirement of central government employees

JITENDRA SINGH | UNION MINISTER

TIGHTENING NOOSE

Tamil Nadu Chief Minister K. Palaniswami Wednesday said the state government has decided to increase jail terms in cases of crimes against women and girls



AFTER 45-YEAR LULL, 3 FIRING INCIDENTS



AGENCIES

New Delhi, Sept 16: Indian and Chinese border troops had an exchange of gunfire last week just days before a meeting of their foreign ministers, Indian officials said Wednesday, in a further breach of a decades-old restraint at the frontier.

The two sides have had a long-standing agreement for troops not to use firearms at the poorly defined Line of Actual Control or the informal border and for 45 years no shot has been fired.

But since late last month, there have been three incidents of warning shots fired in the western Himalayas where troops are locked in a faceoff over competing territorial claims, often in close proximity, officials aware of the situation said.

"In all these cases shots were fired in the air and not at each other thankfully," said one of the officials.

One of them occurred on the north bank of the bitterly contested Pangong Tso lake in the run-up to a meeting between Indian Foreign Minister Subrahmanyam Jaishankar and Chinese counterpart Wang Yi in Moscow last Thursday. The shooting which neither side has made public was the most intense, a second official said. The two sides are jockeying for advantageous positions on the undemarcated mountain border in the Ladakh sector which adjoins Tibet. Last Monday, troops had fired in the air on the southern bank of the lake, the two sides said.

'Fully geared to fight full-fledged war'

JAMMU: Asserting that it is fully prepared to fight a full-fledged war even in winters in eastern Ladakh, the Indian Army Wednesday said if China created conditions for war, they will face a better trained, better prepared, fully rested and psychologically hardened Indian troops. In a statement, it said compared to physically and psychologically battle-hardened Indian troops, Chinese troops mostly are from urban areas and not used to hardships or prolonged deployment under field conditions. The Army's Northern Command headquarters made these assertions reacting to China's official media Global Times reports that India's operational logistics is not geared up adequately and it will not be able to fight through winters effectively.

Jaishankar and Wang agreed to dial down tensions and since then the situation has calmed, the Indian officials said. But there is no pulling back of troops yet. Former Indian military commander lieutenant general D. S. Hooda said distrust was so large now it would be difficult to get back to the agreement under which troops carried few firearms at the contested border during their patrols. "We should no longer be talking about peace and tranquility along the LAC, but conflict prevention," he said.

LJP mulls fielding candidates against JD-U

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, Sept 16: In what could lead to a major crack in the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) in Bihar ahead of the crucial state Assembly polls scheduled later this year, Lok Janshakti Party (LJP) leaders have demanded to field candidates on the seats contested by the ruling Janata Dal-United (JD-U).

The LJP also asked the BJP to contest on more seats than the ruling JD-U in the state. According to a highly-placed LJP source, the demands were raised during the meeting of all the MPs and former MPs of the party at the residence of LJP supremo Chirag Paswan here.

A party source present in the meeting said that all the MPs and former MPs of the LJP demanded that the BJP should contest more seats than the JD-U in Bihar. "Former MP Kali Pandey demanded that the LJP should announce candidates on seats which are being contested by the JD-U in the upcoming Bihar Assembly elections," the source said.

The LJP and the JD-U have been trading barbs at each other over last few months. Chirag Paswan



has openly criticised Nitish Kumar over the handling of the migrant workers' crisis, the Covid-19 pandemic and the floods in the state, besides writing to the Bihar Chief Minister on several occasions. However, Nitish Kumar has not responded to any of his letters.

During the September 7 meeting of the LJP parliamentary board, the party decided to draw up the candidates' list for 143 out of 243 seats in the state. Its leaders reportedly demanded that the party must not contest the elections under Nitish Kumar's leadership.



The party source said that during the meeting, the party leaders also hailed the projects launched by Prime Minister Narendra Modi in Bihar in the last one week. The LJP leaders also slammed the Bihar government over the rise of 'officialism' in the state, the party source said.

During the meeting, Chirag Paswan and all the other party members opposed the works being done by Nitish Kumar in Bihar and accused him of not fulfilling his poll promise of providing three decimal land to the poor in the

state. The party leaders also passed a resolution condemning the statement of JD-U MP Lalan Singh's on the Prime Minister.

They also welcomed the statement of JD-U General Secretary KC Tyagi that LJP did not have an alliance with his party. The LJP source further said that Chirag Paswan had held a meeting with BJP President JP Nadda on Tuesday night, where both the leaders discussed the projects inaugurated by Narendra Modi in the poll-bound state.

The party source close to the LJP chief said that during the meeting, Chirag Paswan had asked Nadda to contest more seats than the JD-U. The source also claimed that the meeting of the two leaders ahead of the announcement of the poll dates was a positive sign.

The LJP, which fought the 2015 Assembly elections with the BJP as an ally partner, had contested 55 seats and managed to win just two.

The Election Commission had said earlier this month that the elections for the 243-member Bihar Assembly will be completed by November 29.

Bachchans' security tightened

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, Sept 16: Security has been increased outside bungalows of Amitabh Bachchan and Jaya Bachchan in Mumbai, a day after she told Parliament that the film industry was being defamed by some and asked the government to protect and support it, a police official said.

"Amitabh Bachchan already has X category security cover. After the speech (in Parliament by Jaya Bachchan), we stepped up peripheral security and increased patrolling outside their bungalows in Juhu," the official said.

The Bachchans have 'Jalsa', 'Janak' and 'Pratiksha' bungalows in Juhu. They live in 'Jalsa' and 'Pratiksha'. The official said the security has been stepped up as a precautionary measure to avoid any untoward incident in view of



The official said the security has been stepped up as a precautionary measure to avoid any untoward incident in view of Jaya Bachchan's speech

Jaya Bachchan's speech.

Batting for Bollywood that has been under a cloud since the death of actor Sushant Singh Rajput in June on the floor of the Rajya Sabha, Jaya Bachchan Tuesday argued for government support to the entertainment industry and slammed those tarnishing its image.

In her speech, she had used a Hindi proverb to say those defaming the industry were biting the

hands that fed them. Though Jaya Bachchan did not take any names, her speech came a day after BJP's Lok Sabha MP and Bhojpuri actor Ravi Kishan said there was a problem of drug addiction in the film industry. She had also said she completely disagrees with those who term the entertainment industry a "gutter", a term used by actor Kangana Ranaut to describe Bollywood in a tweet last month.

Mitra helps COVID patients speak to their loved ones

REUTERS

New Delhi, Sept 16: A hospital in India has deployed a customer-service robot to patrol its wards, connecting coronavirus patients to friends and relatives.

Mitra, meaning "friend" in Hindi, is best known for interacting with Prime Minister Narendra Modi at an event in 2017. Its piercing eyes are equipped with facial recognition technology to help it recall people it has previously interacted with. A tablet attached to Mitra's chest allows patients to see loved ones, as well as medical staff unable to access the wards.

"It takes a lot of time to recover, and during this time, when patients need their families the most, they are unable to visit," said Dr Arun Lakhnampal, a doctor at the Yatharth Super Speciality Hospital in Noida Extension, a satellite city of the



capital New Delhi. Mitra is mainly used by patients who are not able to communicate using their phones. "We mainly discuss my health," said Makhanlal Qazi, a retired government bureaucrat and coronavirus patient who has used the robot to communicate with relatives. "I came here Friday and now I have started feeling better. I am feeling very happy now." The robot, developed by Bengaluru-based start-up Invento Robotics, cost the hospital 1 million rupees (\$13,600), according to Yatharth Tyagi, director of the company that runs the hospital.

DELHI RIOTS COPS FILE CHARGESHEET

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Sept 16: Delhi police Wednesday filed a chargesheet before a city court under the stringent law UAPA and various sections of the IPC against 15 persons for larger conspiracy in northeast Delhi riots in February.

According to the sources, those named in the chargesheet are Taahir Hussain, Mohd Parvez Ahmed, Mohd Illyas, Saifi Khalid, Ishrat Jahan, Miran Haider, Safoora Zargar, Asif Iqbal Tanha, Shahdab Ahmed, Natasha Narwal, Devangana Kalita, Tasleem Ahmed, Saleem Malik, Mohd Saleem Khan and Athar Khan.

Special cell of Delhi Police told Additional Sessions Judge Amitabh Rawat that it has relied upon CD-R and Whatsapp chats. In the chargesheet running into 10,000 pages, the police has listed 747 witnesses and of them 51 have recorded their statements under CRPC 164



(before the magistrate).

The final report has been filed under stringent Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA), various sections of Indian Penal Codes and Arms Act. The police said it has given chronology of conspiracy and relevant events in its chargesheet which is likely to be taken up for consideration in the coming days.

"The evidence includes WhatsApp chats of February 24, the time when riots were happening. At that point, key conspira-

tors were guiding their foot soldiers about violence in the area. The key conspirators were directly in touch with their foot soldiers," police said.

"WhatsApp groups were used by conspirators for 'violence in Seelampur-Jafarabad area. There were 25 protest sites in 25 cities. 25 WhatsApp groups were especially created for each city. The impression was given that they were anti-CAA protest group but through these sites conspirators were being guided," it said.

Vulture-toxic drug still being sold in India: Researchers

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, Sept 16: More than a decade after being banned, a vulture-toxic drug is still being prescribed in pharmacies across India, according to an undercover investigation led by a group of environmental organisations and universities.

In 2003, the widespread veterinary use of a non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drug diclofenac in cattle was discovered to be decimating the most iconic birds in South Asia - Asian vultures - after entering the vultures' food chain.

This environmental disaster caused 99.9 per cent of white-rumped vultures and 97 per cent of long and slender-billed vultures to be wiped out - a staggering 40 million

birds - pushing these birds to the brink of extinction.

Governments were quick to react, with India, Pakistan, Nepal and Bangladesh banning the drug from veterinary practice. Yet cattle carcasses in India continue to be found containing potentially lethal concentrations of diclofenac along with contaminated, dead vultures.

Worryingly, populations of these critically endangered birds were not showing significant signs of recovery. The new study, published recently in the journal Bird Conservation International, set out to identify what non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs were being offered for sale for veterinary use.

From 2012 to 2017, members of the research team visited pharmacies and asked for drugs to treat



their injured cow, buying the first drug that was offered. This research was undertaken by the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds

Centre for Conservation Science, the Bombay Natural History Society, Bird Conservation Nepal, IUCN Bangladesh and the

University of Cambridge.

John Mallord, the lead author of the study, said: "As the sale of diclofenac for veterinary use is illegal, if we were open about the reasons for the survey, and that we were vulture conservationists, pharmacists would be unlikely to offer us diclofenac." "We had to pretend to be livestock owners so we could get an unbiased picture of its availability." In India, trends in sales of different non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs varied between the different regions surveyed.

In the first year, diclofenac was still the most commonly offered non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drug. Whilst sales of diclofenac declined in some states, elsewhere there were actually increases. In the five Indian states surveyed in the

final year, 2017, diclofenac was still being offered by 10 to 46 per cent of pharmacists.

Chris Bowden, Programme Manager of Saving Asia's Vultures from Extinction (SAVE), said: "The importance of these results is emphasised by the most recent published nationwide population surveys of vultures in India and Nepal." "In Nepal, there is evidence that vulture populations have begun to recover, but in India they either continue to decline or, at best, are stable but at low levels and not yet showing signs of a recovery." However, the study had some positive findings. Sales of diclofenac declined in all three countries over the course of the survey, although there was variation depending on the region.

of the day quote

With the phased unlocking of the Indian economy, high frequency economic indicators like PMI manufacturing, index of eight core industries, kharif sowing and power consumption have recovered since June 1

NITYANAND RAI | UNION MINISTER OF STATE FOR HOME

It is very unlikely that schools can be allowed to function partially. It is not possible to run schools, at least, for this month. Safety of the students is a big issue

DINESH SHARMA | UP DEPUTY CM

Five people who were injured in the Kozhikode air crash last month are still receiving medical attention at hospitals

HARDEEP SINGH PURI | CIVIL AVIATION MINISTER

SHORT TAKES

'Hawala' racket busted in Hyd

Hyderabad: Hyderabad police Tuesday busted an alleged 'hawala' racket with the arrest of four persons and seized ₹3.75 crore cash from them. Police Commissioner Anjani Kumar said two cars were also seized from the accused. Acting on a tip off, the Commissioner's Task Force (West) made the arrests. The arrested were identified as Eshwar Dileep Solanki (29), Harish Ram Bhai Patel (35), Ajith Singh (34) and Rathod Kanak Singh Natuba (42), all from Gujarat and residing in Banjara Hills in Hyderabad.

Soldier dies

Jammu: An army soldier injured in Pakistan ceasefire violation on the Line of Control (LoC) in Jammu and Kashmir's Rajouri district succumbed in the hospital Wednesday. The soldier was injured Tuesday. Defence spokesman, Colonel Devender Anand said, "Naik Aneesh Thomas, who was injured in Pakistan ceasefire violation along the LoC in Sunderbani sector, succumbed in the hospital today."

Couple booked

Thane: An offence has been registered against a couple from Kalyan town of Maharashtra's Thane district for allegedly cheating a farmer of over ₹19 lakh, police said Wednesday. A case under relevant Sections of the IPC was registered against Aslam Shaikh (40) and his wife at Mahatma Phule police station Monday, senior inspector N K Bankar said.

Probe ordered

Indore: An unclaimed body was found lying in a highly decomposed state in the mortuary of a government hospital in Indore due to alleged negligence of staffers, prompting authorities to order a probe into the matter. The matter came to light after a picture of the body, which looked like a skeleton, surfaced on social media.

CRPF ASI ends life

Sukma: An assistant sub-inspector (ASI) of the Central Reserve Police Force allegedly committed suicide by shooting himself in Naxal-hit Sukma district of Chhattisgarh Wednesday, a senior police official said. ASI K Shivanand (49), belonging to 2nd battalion of the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF), shot himself with his AK-47 rifle around 7.15 am at his unit's camp in Gadiras police station premises, located around 500 km from the state capital Raipur, he said.



The Health Minister said that this decision (lockdown) prevented 14-29 lakh COVID-19 cases and 37,000-78,000 deaths. This House must be told what is the scientific basis on which we have reached this conclusion

ANAND SHARMA | CONGRESS LEADER

DELHI BJP CHIEF COVID POSITIVE

Delhi BJP chief Adesh Gupta is the latest politician to have tested positive for coronavirus. He took to Twitter to announce this



Hospitals scramble for oxygen as Covid cases top five million

IN MAHARASHTRA, GUJARAT AND UTTAR PRADESH, THAT ARE ALSO SOME OF THE WORST-AFFECTED BY THE VIRUS, DEMAND FOR OXYGEN HAS MORE THAN TRIPLED, DOCTORS AND GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS SAID

REUTERS

Mumbai, Sept 16: India's coronavirus infections surged past 5 million Wednesday, piling pressure on hospitals grappling with unreliable supplies of oxygen that they need to treat tens of thousands of critical patients.

In the big states of Maharashtra, Gujarat and Uttar Pradesh, that are also some of the worst-affected by the virus, demand for oxygen has more than tripled, doctors and government officials said, prompting urgent calls for help.

"Desperate patients have been calling me through the night but I don't know when I will get stock," Rishikhesh Patil, an oxygen supplier in the western city of Nashik, said. The health ministry reported 90,123 new infections Wednesday, taking the total caseload to 5.02 million.

The death toll from COVID-19 is now at 82,066, the ministry said, with 1,290 fatalities recorded in the previous 24 hours. India has the world's fastest growing novel coronavirus epidemic and added its last



million infections in just 12 days. It is only the second country in the world to have more than 5 million cases, after the United States.

"At least 6% of India's nearly 1 million active cases need oxygen support," health ministry official Rajesh Bhushan said. "Supplies were adequate but state governments should monitor usage and flag shortages," he said.

COVID FALLOUT

Bengalis settled abroad learn puja rituals online



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kolkata, Sept 16: Bengalis settled in various countries are taking online lessons to perform Durga Puja rituals themselves as the COVID-19 outbreak has forced priests from West Bengal to cancel their international travel plans.

Several priests from the state used to make annual journeys to countries from the United States to Japan to perform Durga Puja rituals for Bengalis settled there. However, the coronavirus outbreak has changed the situation.

On being requested by several Bengalis settled abroad, an organisation, Sarva Bharatiya Prachya Vidya Academy, has decided to conduct online training sessions for Brahmins on September 27 and October 4, its founder Jayanta Kushari said Wednesday. "They will be trained to perform

'yagna', 'ghot puja' (worshipping an urn symbolising the Goddess) and other rituals of Durga Puja," he said.

"The COVID-19 outbreak has restricted our movement but Durga Puja cannot wait. After being requested by friends in India and abroad, we decided to conduct digital workshops where all puja rituals will be taught," Kushari said.

The workshops will be held at a time convenient for all participants across different time zones, he said. The organisation has been conducting workshops for people willing to work as priests apart from their regular jobs. It had last month conducted a similar online session for 175 people in front of the semi-finished Durga idol at Shobhabazar Rajbari in north Kolkata.

"More people can attend online sessions than in physical workshops in the present scenario. This might be the norm even in post-COVID times," Kushari said. Kolkata-based priest Srikanto Chakraborty said he is looking for offers from puja committees across the state after his regular London-based client informed him they are not organising Durga Puja this year.

NCB team member Covid +ve

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, Sept 16: A member of the NCB team probing drugs angle in actor Sushant Singh Rajput's death case tested positive for coronavirus Wednesday following which questioning of the actor's former manager Shruti Modi was postponed, an official said.

Modi reached the Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB) office in south Mumbai around 10 am for questioning by the Special

SSR CASE

Investigation Team (SIT). But, before the probe team could start recording her statement, the NCB received report of one of its SIT members testing positive for coronavirus, the official said.

The SIT member's antigen test came out positive, he said, adding that other members of the probe team will also be tested and all protocols will be followed. "Accordingly, we sent back Shruti Modi who had joined the investigation in the morning," he said.

WAR AGAINST VIRUS



A vendor sells colourful face masks during unlock 4.0 in Lucknow, Wednesday

PTI PHOTO

Centre to SC: Will welcome speedy trial

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, Sept 16: The Centre Wednesday told the Supreme Court that it would welcome any order for the speedy trial of sitting and former MPs/MLAs facing criminal and corruption charges.

Solicitor General, representing the Centre, submitted before a bench headed by Justice N. V. Ramana that the apex court can fix time frame for the completion of trials in pending cases against Legislators, sitting and former.

Senior advocate Vijay Hansaria, who is a court appointed amicus curiae, has suggested that trials in these matters should be completed within one year. The apex court will pass an order on the report

submitted by the amicus suggesting expeditious disposal of criminal trials pending against legislators across the country.

After revealing that 4,442 cases are pending against sitting and former MPs and MLAs in different courts, amicus curiae have informed the Supreme Court that there is no uniformity in setting up of Special Courts for MPs/MLAs across the country.

The High Courts may be directed to prepare a blueprint for expeditious disposal of the cases not later than one year for conclusion of trial, suggested the amicus. In the supplementary submission, Hansaria had said the analysis of the pending cases show that there is no uniformity



as to the setting up of Special Courts for MPs/MLAs.

The report said: "In the states of Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Telangana and West Bengal, there is one Special Court for all cases against MPs/MLAs. In the State of Telangana apart from the Special Court for MPs/MLAs cases are also pending before the Special Court, CBI. In all other states, these cases are pending in respective jurisdictional courts".

The report was filed on an order passed by the top court on a PIL by BJP leader and advocate Ashwini Upadhyay, who urged the court to give directions for speedy trial of criminal cases against sitting and former lawmakers.

Pradesh, Telangana, Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, West Bengal, Rajasthan, Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, and Jammu and Kashmir. The NIA -- India's anti-terror agency -- has registered 17 cases related to the presence of IS in Telangana, Kerala, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka and Tamil Nadu. It has arrested 122 accused, Reddy replied. "Islamic State, or Islamic State of Iraq and Levant (ISIL), or Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS), or Daesh, or Islamic State in Khorasan Province (ISKAP), ISIS Wilayat Khorasan, or Islamic State of Iraq and the Sham-Khorasan (ISIS-K) and its manifestations have been notified as terrorist organisations and included in the First Schedule to the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, 1967 by the central government," the minister said. Asked whether the government has any information on how these group members are funded and whether they are getting any foreign funding for terror activities, the minister replied in the positive.

However, Reddy did not explain what information the Ministry of Home Affairs -- which is responsible for internal security and law and order in the country -- has on the IS and which foreign country is funding for their terror activities.

Islamic State most active in 12 states, says Govt

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, Sept 16: With Islamic State and its various manifestations spreading base in 12 Indian states in recent years, the Sunni jihadists' group is now "most active" in these states across the country.

Apart from southern states like Telangana, Kerala, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka and Tamil Nadu -- where the Iran and Syria-based terrorist outfit penetrated years ago -- investigating agencies have found their links in states like Maharashtra, West Bengal, Rajasthan, Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, and Jammu and



Kashmir as well. The Islamic State or ISIS, which has taken control over much of Syria and Iraq since 2014 and has branches in countries like Bangladesh, Mali, Somalia,

and Egypt and links with other terrorist outfits like Lashkar-e-Taiba and Al-Qaeda, is using various social media platforms to propagate its ideology in India.

of the day quote

A climate of fear and permanent danger prevails in Hong Kong today
KARL-HEINZ PAQUE | GERMAN POLITICIAN

The executive arm of the European Union (EU) is proposing to cut emissions by 55 per cent from 1990 levels by 2030, in response to the climate emergency
URSULA VON DER LEYEN | EUROPEAN COMMISSION PRESIDENT

There are credible reports that the coastal development project at Dara Sakor could be used to host PRC military assets, and if so would go against Cambodia's Constitution and could threaten Indo-Pacific stability, possibly impacting Cambodia's sovereignty and the security of our allies
MIKE POMPEO | US SECRETARY OF STATE

SHORT TAKES

Quake shakes Kathmandu

Kathmandu: A strong earthquake of 6 magnitude shook Nepal's capital Kathmandu and surrounding areas Wednesday, forcing people to rush out of their houses. According to the National Seismological Center, the 6 magnitude quake occurred in the country's Sindhupalchowk district near Tibet border at 5.19 am.

115 Indonesian docs die of nCoV

Jakarta: The Mitigation Team of the Indonesian Medical Association (IDI) has recorded that as many as 115 doctors had died during the Covid-19 pandemic across the archipelagic country with the biggest number in East Java province. Of the total number, 60 were general practitioners, 53 were specialists and two resident doctors who were still attending an education for specialists, according to data from the IDI's Mitigation Team as quoted by Antara news agency here Wednesday.

350 ghost police identified in Zabul

Kabul: Zabul police chief Hekmatullah Kochai Wednesday said that at least 350 "ghost police" have been identified in the province, referring to police who are listed as being employed and who are paid but not serving in person. According to Kochai, during his four-month tenure, he has added 400 new policemen to Zabul police, some of whom are residents of other provinces, *tolo* news reported.

Thailand extends emergency period

Bangkok: Thai Prime Minister Prayut Chan-o-cha Wednesday said that the emergency decree will be extended for another three months in three southern provinces of the country. They are Narathiwat, Yala and Pattani Provinces. The extension announcement was signed by Prayut .

Israel strikes Gaza

Jerusalem: The Israeli military struck Hamas militant sites in the Gaza Strip early Wednesday in response to rocket fire toward Israel the previous night that coincided with the signing of normalisation agreements between Israel and two Arab countries at the White House.



Our fellow Americans are still putting things back together from the last big storm as they face the next one
JOE BIDEN | DEMOCRATIC PRESIDENTIAL NOMINEE

96% COVID RECOVERY RATE IN PAKISTAN

Nearly 96 per cent of Pakistan's coronavirus patients have made a successful recovery, a status report issued Wednesday by the country's nerve centre monitoring the pandemic read



India slams OIC, Turkey, Pak over Kashmir in Geneva



Indian representative Pawan Badhe said it has become habitual for Pakistan to make false and fabricated narratives for its self-serving malicious purposes

Thousands of Sikh, Hindu and Christian minority women and girls have been subjected to abductions, forced marriages and conversions in Pakistan, he pointed out

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Geneva/New Delhi, Sept 16: India Tuesday slammed Turkey and the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) at the UN Human Rights Council in Geneva, while shaming Pakistan for funding cross-border terrorism and ethnic cleansing of its minorities.

In response to the statements made by Pakistan, Turkey and the OIC at the Council, Indian representative Pawan Badhe, First Secretary at the Permanent Mission of India in Geneva, rejected their comments on India's internal matters, specifically Jammu and Kashmir, which was reorganised last year and bifurcated into two Union Territories.

In an unprecedented takedown of the OIC, Turkey and Pakistan, Badhe said, "The Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir is an integral part of India. The OIC has no locus standi to comment on inter-

nal affairs of India. The OIC has allowed itself to be misused by Pakistan to subvert its own agenda. It's for the members of the OIC to decide if it is in their interest to allow Pakistan to do so."

He also advised Turkey to refrain from commenting on the internal affairs of India.

Using strong words against Islamabad, Badhe said it has become a habit for Pakistan to malign India with false and fabricated narratives for its self-serving malicious purposes.

"Neither India nor others deserve this unsolicited lecture on human rights from a country that has consistently persecuted its ethnic and religious minorities, is an epicentre of terrorism, has the distinction of providing pensions to individuals on UN Sanctions list and has a Prime Minister who proudly admits training tens of thousands of terrorists to fight in Jammu and Kashmir," he said.

ByteDance to place TikTok's global headquarters in US

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Beijing, Sept 16: China's ByteDance has decided to place the headquarters of its popular video platform app TikTok in the US in order to escape President Donald Trump's ban, official media here reported Wednesday.

As per the plan presented to the US officials by ByteDance, TikTok will remain the majority shareholder of the new US headquartered company, and tech firm Oracle will be a minority shareholder, state-run CGTN TV reported. People familiar with the negotiation process emphasised that specific details of the plan may change. Independent third parties will serve as directors of the new company, and ByteDance will continue to control TikTok and its core algorithms.

In order to allay US concerns about "national security," TikTok's data from America will be stored in the US and Oracle will serve as the data service provider, the report said. Other potential US investors such as the world's largest retailer Walmart, which had launched a joint bid with Microsoft, would own a minority



stake, the report said. On August 6, Trump issued an executive order stating that TikTok's US business must be sold before September 20, and threatened to block the video app in the US.

US pushes arms sales surge to Taiwan, needling China: Sources

REUTERS

Washington, Sept 16: The United States plans to sell as many as seven major weapons systems, including mines, cruise missiles and drones to Taiwan, four people familiar with the discussions said, as the Trump administration ramps up pressure on China.

Pursuing seven sales at once is a rare departure from years of precedent in which US military sales to the island were spaced out and carefully calibrated to minimise tensions with Beijing.

But the Trump administration has become more aggressive with China in 2020 and the sales would land as relations between Beijing and Washington are at their lowest point in decades over accusations of spying, a lingering trade

war and disputes about the spread of the novel coronavirus. At the same time Taiwan's desire to buy weapons increased after President Tsai Ing-wen was re-elected here in January and has made strengthening Taiwan's defenses a top priority.

Taiwan is China's most sensitive territorial issue. Beijing says it is a Chinese province, and has denounced the Trump administration's support for the island.

Washington has been eager to create a military counterbalance to Chinese forces, building on an effort known within the Pentagon as "Fortress Taiwan", as Beijing's military makes increasingly aggressive moves in the region.

The Taipei Economic and Cultural Representative Office in the United States did not respond to a request for comment. Taiwan's

military is well-trained and well-equipped with mostly US-made hardware, but China has a huge numerical superiority and is adding advanced equipment of its own.

The weapons packages from Lockheed Martin Co, Boeing and General Atomics are moving their way through the export process, three people familiar with the status of the deals on Capitol Hill said, and a notification to Congress is expected within weeks.

One industry source said President Donald Trump was slated to be briefed on the packages this week by Secretary of State Mike Pompeo.

Some of the deals had been requested by Taiwan more than a year ago, but are only now being moved through the approval process. A State Department spokesman declined comment.

‘Social distancing globally won’t help combat Covid’

GIVING A CLARION CALL FOR STRENGTHENING MULTILATERALISM TO COMBAT THE PANDEMIC, BOZKIR SAID, “NO STATE CAN COMBAT THIS PANDEMIC ALONE. SOCIAL DISTANCING WILL NOT HELP AT THE INTERNATIONAL LEVEL. UNILATERALISM WILL ONLY STRENGTHEN THE PANDEMIC”

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

United Nations, Sept 16: Social distancing at the global level will not help as no country could combat COVID-19 alone, President of the UN General Assembly's 75th session Volkan Bozkir has said, asserting that multilateralism is the "panacea" to all the problems in the world.

Bozkir, addressing the UN ambassadors and delegates, said that since the beginning of the crisis earlier this year, critics of multilateralism have become more vocal and the pandemic has been used to justify unilateral steps and weaken the rules-based international system.

"In the past six months, our plans for the 75th year of the United Nations have changed. Today, we have other urgent priorities. Our masks remind us of the very serious threat we face. They remind us we are in this together," Bozkir said as the 75th session of the General Assembly commenced on



Volkan Bozkir holds aloft the chamber's gavel, which was handed over to him by Tijjani Muhammad-Bande, the president of the previous session

Tuesday. Wearing masks, UN diplomats and envoys sat socially distanced in the iconic General Assembly Hall as the high-level annual session begins in a largely virtual format this year due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

"International organisations have been reproached and the need for international cooperation has

been questioned. These criticisms are not baseless but their conclusions are misguided," the veteran Turkish diplomat told the 193-member General Assembly.

Giving a clarion call for strengthening multilateralism to combat the pandemic, Bozkir said, "Make no mistake: No state can combat this pandemic alone. Social dis-

tancing will not help at the international level. Unilateralism will only strengthen the pandemic. "It will move us further away from our shared goal. At this time of crisis, it is our responsibility to strengthen people's faith in multilateral cooperation and international institutions, with the UN at their center." Later, addressing the UN correspondents at a press briefing, Bozkir said that multilateralism is the "panacea" to all the problems of the world.

Responding to a question on whether he thinks the UN can survive a second term of US President Donald Trump, who has been very critical of its agencies and withdrawn from the UN entities and agreements like the World Health Organization and the Paris climate accord, he said if the UN shows to the world that it is doing its job in a strong manner and "the wind is blowing from all the world behind to the UN, then I don't think any country or any person can think of

abolishing this institution or lessening its strength."

UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres, addressing the opening of the 75th session of the General Assembly, said in the landmark year of the world organisation, "it is clear that the world has high expectations of us, as the main platform for multilateralism and co-operation on a rules-based international system."

For the first time in the 75-year history of the United Nations, state heads and government, ministers and diplomats from 193-UN member states will not be gathering in New York for the high-level UNGA week due to the coronavirus pandemic.

World leaders will send pre-recorded video statements in advance to the UN for the largely virtual General Debate as well as other virtual summits planned during the session, including the high-level meetings to commemorate the 75th anniversary of the UN.

UNCERTAIN JOURNEY



A man carries his son on his shoulders as refugees and migrants from the destroyed Moria are sheltered near a new temporary camp, on the island of Lesbos, Greece

REUTERS

Hurricane Sally hits US Gulf coast

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Pensacola (US), Sept 16: Hurricane Sally made landfall Wednesday near Gulf Shores, Alabama, as a Category 2 storm, pushing a surge of ocean water onto the coast and dumping torrential rain that forecasters said would cause dangerous flooding from the Florida Panhandle to Mississippi and well inland in the days ahead.

Moving at an agonisingly slow 3 mph, Sally finally came ashore at 4:45 a.m. local time with top winds of 105 mph (165 kmh), the National Hurricane Center said. Sally's northern eyewall had raked the Gulf Coast with hurricane-force winds and rain from Pensacola Beach, Florida, westward to Dauphin Island, Alabama, for hours before its center finally



People play in a flooded parking lot

PTI PHOTO

hit land. Some 150,000 homes and businesses had lost electricity by early Wednesday, according to the poweroutage.us site. A curfew was called in the coastal Alabama city of Gulf Shores due to life-threatening conditions. In the Panhandle's Escambia County, Chief Sheriff's Deputy Chip Simmons vowed to keep deputies out with residents as long as phys-

ically possible. The county includes Pensacola, one of the largest cities on the Gulf Coast. Sally was a rare storm that could make history, said Ed Rappaport, deputy director of the hurricane center. Energy companies also shut more than a quarter of US Gulf of Mexico offshore oil and gas production, and some refiners halted or slowed operations.

MASS MURDERER BREIVIK TO APPLY FOR PAROLE



REUTERS

Oslo, Sept 16: Norwegian mass murderer Anders Behring Breivik will seek to apply for parole, his lawyer told daily VG Wednesday.

The far-right extremist killed eight people with a bomb in Oslo and shot dead 69 others on an island nearby, many of them teenagers attending a Labour Party youth camp in July 2011, in what is Norway's worst peacetime atrocity. He is serving Norway's maximum sentence of 21 years, which can be extended indefinitely. While Breivik is eligible to seek parole after serving the first ten years of his term, a date he will reach in July 2021, it is up to the courts to determine whether a release is appropriate. "I have at his demand sent a request for parole," Breivik's lawyer, Oeystein Storrvik, told VG. "This is a right that all prisoners (who can be detained indefinitely) have and that he wants to use," he said. Storrvik was not immediately available for comment. Reactions to the news were immediate and negative.

Smoke from US fires reaches Europe

Berlin: Satellite images show that smoke from wildfires in the western United States has reached as far as Europe, scientists said Wednesday. Data collected by the European Union's Copernicus Atmosphere Monitoring Service found smoke from the fires had traveled 8,000 kilometers (almost 5,000 miles) through the atmosphere to Britain and other parts of northern Europe. The European Centre for Medium-Range Weather Forecasts, which operates some of the Copernicus satellite monitoring systems, said the fires in California, Oregon and Washington state have emitted an estimated 30.3 million metric tonnes (33.4 million tons) of carbon.

of the day quote

The Central government has taken a number of steps for the welfare of labourers during the pandemic, including disbursement of ₹5,000 crore relief to over 2 crore building and construction workers

SANTOSH GANGWAR | LABOUR MINISTER

With our unique pay after placement online platform we are democratising software development training and allowing people to cross financial and location barriers to achieve their dream of becoming a great software developer

SIDDHARTH MAHESHWARI | CO-FOUNDER, NEWTON SCHOOL

Since our economy is not burdened with either of these unlike Venezuela or the US, we need to understand that our economy is held together by not only giants like Tata, Reliance, Wipro, Adani or Mahindra

DR SHEETAL NAIR | CORPORATE HEAD, DSS GROUP OF COMPANIES

SHORT TAKES

Airlines seek \$1.5bn interest-free credit

New Delhi: Indian airlines have sought interest-free credit of at least \$1.5 billion from the government to enable them to cope with the loss of revenue from the coronavirus pandemic, the country's aviation minister said Wednesday. Airlines want the government's help to persuade aircraft lessors to ease leasing terms, as well as a deferment of taxes and abolition of excise duty on aviation fuel, Hardeep Singh Puri said.

Local goods to counter illicit trade

New Delhi: The menace of illicit trade will be dealt with in a systematic manner with concerted efforts by central and state enforcement agencies along with the paramilitary forces, said Debajyoti Dutta, Secretary, Food and Civil Supplies and Consumer Affairs, Assam. "The criminals who are indulging in smuggling and counterfeiting activities are promoting crime and economic instability and the consumers are bearing the brunt of it," he added.

5G may revive smartphone AP

New Delhi: The smartphone application processor (AP) market that declined 26 per cent in the second quarter this year is set to be on a growth trajectory from 2021 onwards as 5G adoption reaches emerging markets, according to a new report. A mobile application processor is a system on a chip (SoC) designed to support applications running in a mobile operating system environment.

Flipkart's overseas listing by 2021

Bangalore: Walmart Inc-controlled Indian e-commerce firm Flipkart is preparing for an initial public offering overseas as early as 2021, which could value the firm up to \$50 billion, sources familiar with the company's plans told Reuters. Bangalore-based Flipkart, which vies with players such as Amazon.com's local unit in India and India's Reliance Industries, will be aiming for a valuation in the \$45-\$50 billion range, according to one source with knowledge of the matter.



The ban of CamScanner has left a huge void for about 100 million users in India. We are of course targeting that number. It will be very difficult to achieve that number in one year but on a conservative side, we look to achieve at least 15-20 per cent of that market soon

GAURAV SHRISHRIMAL | CO-FOUNDER, ORDENADO LABS

194 PHISHING INCIDENTS DURING JAN-AUG 2020

A total of 194 phishing incidents and two financial fraud incidents affecting ATMs, cards, point-of-sale (PoS) systems and Unified Payment Interface (UPI) were reported between January-August this year



LS clears Banking Regulation (Amend) Bill

AGENCIES

New Delhi, Sept 16: The government has brought amendments to the Banking Regulation Act, 1949 in order to protect the interests of the depositors, Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman said in Parliament Wednesday.

The Finance Minister said the government is trying to bring amendments in order to protect the interest of depositors who in the last two years have been put to hardships.

The depositors in some unfortunate situations in the banks or co-operative societies, which are also operating as banks, are put to hardship, the Minister said while moving the Banking Regulation (Amendment) Bill, 2020 to amend the Banking Regulation Act, 1949 in the Lok Sabha.

She said the government had introduced the Bill so that the depositors' interests will be taken care of. But, the Minister said, unfortunately, during the Budget session the government could not have this Bill passed and had to bring in an ordinance. Sitharaman said the ordinance was brought in only because the financial health of many of these cooperatives, which were also performing as banks, was becoming very bad.

IN DETAILS



SECTION 45 IS BEING AMENDED BECAUSE IT WILL ENABLE THE RBI TO MAKE A THEME OF RECONSTRUCTION AND AMALGAMATION, GOVT SAYS

She informed the Lower House that the financial condition of 277 urban cooperative banks was very delicate and they were reporting losses, while 105 such banks were unable to fulfil their minimum regulatory capital requirement.

She said a total of 47 urban co-operative societies had a negative net worth and 328 urban cooperative banks were having more than 15 per cent gross NPA (Non Performing Assets).

Despite the Covid-19 pandemic, Sitharaman said the gross NPA ratio of urban cooperative banks increased from 7.27 in March 2019 to over 10 per cent in March 2020.

Therefore, the Minister said, the government had to bring an ordinance in the interest of the depositors and now that ordinance has to be replaced.

She said her Ministry has brought in amendments in Section 3, Section 45 and Section 56. By amending Section 3 and 56, the government is making provisions applicable to banking companies applicable to co-operative banks also so that cooperative banks are equally subject to better governance and sound banking regulations through the Reserve Bank of India (RBI). Section 45 is being amended because it will enable the RBI to make a theme of

reconstruction and amalgamation, she said.

Giving the example of the recent Yes Bank reconstitution scheme, she said it is to protect the interest of the public depositors without making the bank undergo a moratorium period. She also gave an example of BMC bank in which the depositors could not get a resolution till now.

The minister clarified that the Bill will not be applicable to the Primary Agricultural Credit Society and will also not be applicable to the cooperative society whose primary business is providing long term finance for agricultural development. "This will be applicable only on those who bank, banker and banking business in cooperative society"

Mentioning that her government is not doing anything new, the Minister said Section 3 and 56 have also been amended earlier in 1965, 1984, 1987, 1989 and 2012.

On the first day of the session, Sitharaman had withdrawn the Bill saying "it is being withdrawn to add a few new things giving the Reserve Bank of India a chance to be able to restructure distressed cooperative banks, which are in serious need". The Bill was not passed by Parliament during the Budget Session and subsequently an ordinance was issued.

ICICI Bank deploys mobile ATM van



The ATM van will be stationed at easily accessible locations in various districts of the state in the coming weeks, in consultation with the local authorities

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Sept 16: ICICI Bank Wednesday announced that it has deployed a mobile ATM van in several districts of Odisha. The van will enable residents, especially senior citizens to access key banking services at their doorstep in a safe and convenient manner, at a time when they are advised to stay home in the wake of the coronavirus outbreak.

The ATM van will be stationed at easily accessible locations in various districts of the state in the coming weeks, in consultation with the local authorities. These districts include Khurda, Cuttack, Puri, Ganjam, Jajpur and Kendrapara.

The mobile ATM offers all the services that are available at regular ATMs. Also, key services which can be availed by the residents are fund transfer to registered payee, change of PIN, recharge pre-paid mobile and book fixed deposits. The customers can also avail the facility of cardless cash withdrawal from this mobile ATM.

Recently, the bank deployed mobile ATMs in Delhi NCR, Noida, Mumbai, Chennai, Varanasi, Ranipet (near Vellore), Ahmedabad, Coimbatore, Tiruppur and Erode.

UNION BANK, BoI OBSERVE HINDI DAY IN CAPITAL

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Sept 16: The Field General Manager's Office, Bhubaneswar and Regional Office, Cuttack of Union Bank of India, a premier public sector bank, jointly observed Hindi Day September 14, 2020 at their Staff Training Centre, Bhubaneswar. During the function, the Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) of Covid-19 was adopted maintaining social distancing norms.

The function was inaugurated by the chief guest Subash Pani, Secretary of Bhartiya Rajbhasha Parishad. Addressing the staff members, Pani said that non-Hindi personalities had played a big role in propagation of Hindi in India.

Pani also emphasised that the main reason for Hindi not being used adequately in government offices was the mental block of staff members. Once they were mentally ready to do their official work

in Hindi, there would be no hurdle in Hindi implementation.

Ramakant Pradhan, Field General Manager, Bhubaneswar Zone said that Hindi and regional languages were indispensable when we go to the masses for financial inclusion, retail business and CASA. He further said that the language of the masses in India was either Hindi or regional languages. Pradhan added that banking business would further develop if bankers worked up to the expectations of their customers.

Also, Bank of India, Bhubaneswar Zone celebrated Hindi Month event from August 15 to September 14, 2020. All the staff members took an oath to work on Hindi. Priyabrata Pattnaik, Zonal Manager, Bhubaneswar Zone said that Hindi is official language and it is their responsibility to work in it. "With small efforts we can use Hindi language in our daily activities," said Pattnaik on this event.



Hindi Day observance of Bank of India, Bhubaneswar Zone

Fraud-hit PMC approached many for merger: Reuters

THOUSANDS OF PMC DEPOSITORS HAVE BEEN UNABLE TO ACCESS THEIR DEPOSITS FOR A YEAR AS THE RBI HAS CAPPED WITHDRAWALS AT ₹1,00,000

AGENCIES

New Delhi, Sept 16: Fraud-hit PMC Bank has approached other banks over a possible merger even as its efforts to recover funds from a big borrower have been disrupted by the coronavirus pandemic, the bank's administrator said in a court filing seen by Reuters.

Authorities started investigating Punjab and Maharashtra Co-operative Bank (PMC) for fraud last year and the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) took control of it after detecting financial irregularities. Thousands of PMC depositors have been unable to access their deposits for a year as the RBI has capped withdrawals at 1,00,000 rupees.

PMC has "tried to engage with the major banks of the country to request for a merger", the bank's administrator said in a Sept. 10 filing at the Delhi High Court, without identifying the banks or giving



other details.

The bulk of PMC's loan book was found to be disbursed to one Indian real estate company, HDIL, and an RBI-appointed administrator, Jai Bhagwan Bhorla, has been trying to recover the dues

in a bid to rescue the lender. Authorities have been investigating officials of both PMC and HDIL. HDIL and its associates owe 69.81 billion rupees (\$949 million) to PMC, but at 11.6 billion rupees (\$157.56 million), the realisable value of its securities was "grossly insufficient", Bhorla said in the filing of the case brought forward by two aggrieved PMC depositors.

Other legal processes to sell certain securities have also been hit as courts have not been fully opera-

tional during the novel coronavirus pandemic, the filing said.

Bhorla and the RBI did not immediately respond to a request for comment. HDIL, which has denied any wrongdoing, also did not respond.

Set up in 1984, PMC is a regional co-operative lender with 137 branches across six states in India, and its sudden downfall in late September 2019, has left thousands of its depositors struggling.

In his filing, Bhorla said a push to sell an HDIL yacht had also been hit as it was anchored in Sri Lanka and interested bidders had not been able to inspect it due to COVID-19 travel curbs.

Separately, two of HDIL's aircraft could not be auctioned swiftly as the Mumbai International Airport - where they have been parked - was closed to visitors, the filing said.

Covid-stung economy to see 'gradual' recovery

AGENCIES

New Delhi, Sept 16: The recovery of the Indian economy reeling from the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic will be gradual, RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das said Wednesday.

Addressing the FICCI National Executive Committee Meeting, the Central bank chief said that the country is still reeling under the impact of Covid-19 and will gradually come back on normal growth path.

He, however, said that things have considerably improved in the second quarter after adverse impact the pandemic had on economic activity in the first quarter. "Nevertheless, high frequency indicators of agricultural activity, the purchasing managing index (PMI) for manufacturing and private estimates for unemployment point to some stabilisation of economic activity in Q2, while contractions in several sectors are also easing," he said.

"The recovery is, however, not yet

NO V-SHAPE



In August 2020, the yield on 10-year G-sec benchmark surged by 35 basis points amidst concerns over inflation and further increase in supply of government papers

Although bank credit growth remains muted, scheduled commercial banks' investments in commercial paper, bonds, debentures and shares of corporate bodies in this year so far increased by ₹5,615 crore as against a decline of ₹32,245 crore during the same period of last year

SHAKTIKANTA DAS | GOVERNOR, RBI

fully entrenched and moreover, in some sectors, upticks in June and July appear to be levelling off. By all indications, the recovery is likely to be gradual as efforts towards reopening of the economy are confronted with rising infections."

According to Das, financial market conditions in India have eased

significantly across segments in response to the frontloaded cuts in the policy repo rate and large system-wide as well as targeted infusion of liquidity by the RBI.

"Despite substantial increase in the borrowing programme of the government, persistently large surplus liquidity conditions have ensured non-disruptive mobilisation

of resources at the lowest borrowing costs in a decade," he elaborated.

In August 2020, the yield on 10-year G-sec benchmark surged by 35 basis points amidst concerns over inflation and further increase in supply of government papers.

Following the RBI's announcement of special open market oper-

ations (OMOs) and other measures to restore orderly functioning of the G-sec market, bond yields have softened and traded in a narrow range in September.

"Although bank credit growth remains muted, scheduled commercial banks' investments in commercial paper, bonds, debentures and shares of corporate bodies in this year so far (up to August 28) increased by ₹5,615 crore as against a decline of ₹32,245 crore during the same period of last year," he said.

"Moreover, the benign financing conditions and the substantial narrowing of spreads have spurred a record issuance of corporate bonds of close to ₹3.2 lakh crore during 2020-21 up to August."

Besides, he pointed out that the immediate policy response to Covid in India has been to prioritise stabilisation of the economy and support a quick recovery.

Citing World Bank assessment, Das said that recovery globally would take a longer route as it is not fully entrenched.

New Delhi, Sept 16: The trade deficit between India and China in April-June this fiscal year fell to USD 5.48 billion as compared to USD 13.1 billion in the same period last year; Parliament was informed Wednesday.

In a written reply, Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal said the bilateral trade between the countries too dipped to USD 16.55 billion during the first three months of 2020-21 as against USD 21.42 billion in the same period last year. "Government has consistently taken steps to balance our trade with China by increasing our exports to China and reducing our dependence on imports from China," he said.

In a separate reply, the minister said at present, about 550 tariff lines (or products) are under the restricted/prohibited category for imports under the Foreign Trade Policy. Imports of these products are restricted from all countries, including China.

Replying to a separate question, he said merchandise exports from special economic zones (SEZs) dipped to ₹81,481 crore during April-August, 2020 as against ₹1,30,129 crore in the same period of 2019-20. "However, services exports have shown a growth of 9 per cent during April to August 2020 in comparison to corresponding period of previous year," he added.

‘THINGS WILL GO WELL’ FOR PANDYA

INJURY LAY-OFF
MOTIVATED
ALL-ROUNDER TO
WORK HARDER
AS THE MUMBAI
INDIANS STAR
ADMITS TO BE IN
BEST SHAPE AND
MENTAL STATE
AHEAD OF IPL



No matter how far I go from the game, no matter how long I stay out, when I come back, it has to be worth it. I have prepared very well and I think, great things are coming ahead

HARDIK PANDYA

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Abu Dhabi, Sept 16: Back from a lengthy injury layoff, Mumbai Indians’ star all-rounder Hardik Pandya said the setback motivated him to work harder and he is now in good shape both physically and mentally for the IPL starting September 19.

Pandya’s form will be crucial for defending champions Mumbai Indians, who will take on Chennai Super Kings in the lung-opener of the cash-rich T20 league September 19.

“The way I’m hitting the ball right now, the shape I’m in, the mental space I’m in, it is just a matter of time that I go and spend some time on the ground and I think things will come out pretty well,” Pandya said in a video posted by Mumbai Indians’ official Twitter handle.

“No matter how far I go from the game, no matter how long I stay out, when I come back, it has to be worth it. I have prepared very well and I think, great things are coming ahead,” the 26-year-old flamboyant all-rounder added.

Last year in November, Pandya had undergone a back surgery in London. He came back in the DY Patil T20 tournament held in early March.

He was even selected for the ODI series against South Africa, but the COVID-19 pandemic, which forced the rubber to be abandoned, de-

layed his return. He is now looking forward to the IPL.

“IPL is something that I have enjoyed a lot and I would like to make a comeback very strong and I’m just looking forward to it,” said Pandya.

He also conceded that injuries would be a part of his cricketing journey and motivate him to do better. “In my life I have realised one thing that injuries would be with me. No one wants to get injured, but I accept the fact that what I do, injuries would be a part of it.

“Injuries have always kept me going, always kept me motivated. Actually taught me how much I have to put in the hard yards and the hard work has always increased, never decreased,” said the Baroda all-rounder.

Pandya also threw light on how he maintained his fitness during the lockdown. “Luckily, me and (my brother) Krunal (Pandya) had the privilege to have a gym in our house. So because of that portion, we were able to work on our fitness,” he said.

“And I always feel that if you go one step ahead in your fitness, there are much more magical moments in your life (that) are waiting,” the right-hander emphasised.

Looking back at the DY Patil T20 Cup, which was his comeback tournament, Pandya, who has 1,068 runs from 66 IPL games, said it gave him confidence to implement his plans.

“Luckily, I got one tournament before, which was DY Patil, which I played for Reliance. And as a player, it gave me immense confidence to implement the hard work which I have done over a period of time and it just felt good,” he signed off.

Adjust to heat biggest test: AB

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Dubai, Sept 16: South African star AB de Villiers believes the biggest challenge for all teams in the upcoming IPL will be adjusting to the prevailing hot and humid conditions in the UAE. Most games will be played in the night but the conditions would still be challenging.

“I am not really used to these kind of conditions to be honest. It’s very hot, it reminds me of a Test match we played in July in Chennai once where Viru (Virender Sehwag) scored 300. It was one the hottest weather conditions I have experience in my life,” he said in an interview posted on RCB’s twitter handle.

“The humidity is similar to that, even at 10 at night. When I arrived here I checked the weather conditions of a few months and it seems to be getting better. It is definitely going to play a part and you have to make sure you have the energy for the backend of the innings or last 5 overs of your bowling spell.”

De Villiers said he would also miss playing in front of packed crowds in India with the event to be played behind closed doors in UAE due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

“I think obviously all are used to playing in front of crowds in big stage, there is certainly an amount of adrenaline that pumped into you when it gets really loud, especially in Chinnaswamy when the RCB crowd gets going, it’s difficult to stop the RCB team. So, we’ll miss that there is no doubt about it.

“But I won’t say I am not used to it, I have played a lot of cricket in empty stadiums. I grew up like that. It’s only in my international career that I have played in front of crowd,” he said.

The 36-year-old dashing cricketer, regarded as one of the destructive



I think obviously all are used to playing in front of crowds on big stage, there is certainly an amount of adrenaline that pumps into you when it gets really loud, especially in Chinnaswamy when the RCB crowd gets going, it’s difficult to stop the RCB team. So, we’ll miss that there is no doubt about it

AB DE VILLIERS

batsman of world cricket, said not just him, every player is just happy to be back on the field after international cricket came to a halt in mid-March because of the pandemic.

Asked whether there will be a drop in the game’s standard with

players coming from a long break, he replied: “Not at all. In the 3TC I have faced some off the best bowling in the last 3 to 5 years, the bowlers were land-ing yorkers, they showed some great skills with pace, variations.

“They are very hungry, the desire is there, the motivation. It’s not just copy and paste, now the guys are really coming out with redis-covered energy, so I think we are going to see some fireworks.”

De Villiers said young Australian wicketkeeper batsman Joshua Philippe is an exciting cricketer and he would love share his knowl-edge with the Australian opener in RCB dressing room.

Virat Kohli-led RCB will open their IPL campaign against Sunrisers Hyderabad in Dubai September 21.

Djoko behaves better in 1st match since US Open default

Rome: Novak Djokovic behaved better Wednesday in his first match since being defaulted from the US Open. The top-ranked Serb was mostly courteous with the chair umpire during a 6-3, 6-2 win over local wild-card entry Salvatore Caruso in his opening match at the Italian Open. When the umpire came down to inspect a ball mark on the red clay early in the first set and made an overrule in Caruso’s favor, Djokovic just replied, “Yup,” and rubbed out the mark with his red sneaker. When Caruso impressed him — the Italian hit 13 winners to Djokovic’s 12 — Djokovic said, “Bravo.” Djokovic’s only testy moment came during the third game of the second set, which went to deuce seven times before Djokovic finally broke Caruso’s serve. As the game wore on, Djokovic appeared bothered by crowd noise, even though the Campo Centrale is empty of fans this year because of the pandemic.

Italian teenager Musetti stuns Wawrinka in Rome

Rome: Local teenager Lorenzo Musetti stunned Stan Wawrinka 6-0, 7-6(7-2) in the first round of the Italian Open for a memorable first win on tour. Out-hitting Wawrinka’s famed backhand with a one-handed version of his own, the 18-year-old qualifier moved the three-time Grand Slam champion from corner to corner and displayed an all-court game that belied his years. Musetti became the first player born in 2002 to win on the ATP tour — after fellow Italian Janmik Sinner achieved the feat last year for players born in 2001. Wawrinka, who chose not to travel to the US Open, appeared rusty and committed a series of errors early on. Musetti, who came through qualifying, was the runner-up in the 2018 US Open junior final then won the Australian Open junior title in 2019.

Germany to take on Belgium on FIH Pro League’s return

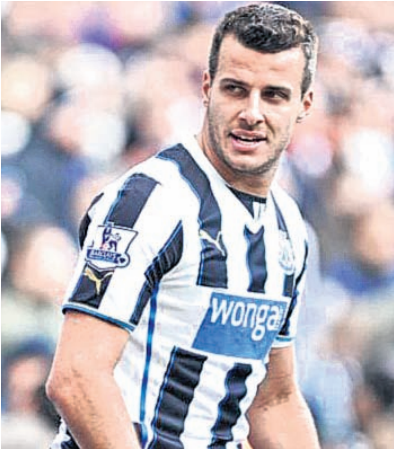
Lausanne: Following a long COVID-19 hiatus, the second season of the FIH Hockey Pro League will return next week in Dusseldorf where Germany will entertain the national women’s and men’s teams of Belgium September 22 and 23. The fixtures — which take place at Dusseldorfer Hockey Club 1905, located less than 90 kilometres from the Belgian border — will see the teams face each other twice over the two days. The International Hockey Federation had in April extended the second season of the Pro League through to June 2021 because of the global health crisis. Season 2 of the league was initially set to run from January to June 2020. Around one third of the planned matches were completed between January and early March, before the crisis brought the competition to a standstill.

East Bengal place bid to participate in ISL 2020-21

New Delhi: Kolkata football giant East Bengal have submitted the Invitation to Bid (ITB) documents to Football Sports Development Limited (FSDL) to participate in the upcoming edition of the Indian Super League (ISL). East Bengal had recently announced that they had sold a majority stake to city-based Shree Cement Ltd and would appeal to the ISL organisers in a bid to make a dramatic late entry into the country’s top-tier club competition. “We are extremely happy to announce that the consortium of Shree Cement Ltd and East Bengal club have placed the bid to participate in this year’s ISL,” the club announced on Twitter late Tuesday. The red-and-gold brigade’s new investors were slated to pick up the bid proposal for a spot in the ISL in the name of ‘Shree Cement Foundation’, a new company it has registered with the Ministry of Corporate Affairs.

Former Newcastle star Taylor joins OFC

POST NEWS NETWORK



Bhubaneswar, Sept 16: Former Newcastle defender Steven Taylor has joined Odisha FC Wednesday on a one-year deal with an option to extend for a second year.

Making his senior club debut with high-profile English club Newcastle United in 2003-04 football season, the 34-year-old centre-back played for more than a decade in the Premier League, becoming a Toon darling in the process before making a move to American professional club Portland Timbers in 2016.

The London-born footballer had also represented England B and other English clubs Wycombe Wanderers FC, Ipswich Town FC and Peterborough United FC and played age-group tournaments for England’s

U-16, U-17, U-20 and U-21 teams.

Before joining the Bhubaneswar-based ISL team, Taylor was the captain of New Zealand’s Wellington Phoenix FC which competes in the Australian A-League. His towering presence in the defence helped the Wellington side to the third position finish in the last season.

“I am extremely delighted to join OFC and I’m hopeful that my experience and leadership qualities will be helpful for the team. I am very happy to be working under (coach) Stuart (Baxter) once again and can’t wait to meet all the young Indian lads. I hope I can help the lads push on and in turn egg the team on towards the play-off spots. I am looking forward to create something special at Odisha, make no mistake about it.”

Bernal opts out of Tour de France

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Grenoble (France), Sept 16: Defending Tour de France champion Egan Bernal has pulled out of the race ahead of a mammoth stage in the Alps, his Ineos Grenadiers team said Wednesday.

Bernal had been struggling since last weekend’s stage in the Jura mountains, where he dropped more than seven minutes on the main contenders and slipped out of contention. Hampered by back pain, the 23-year-old rider lost more time during Tuesday’s first Alpine stage.

Bernal was in 16th place overall, 19 minutes and four seconds behind race leader Primoz Roglic. “This is obviously not how I wanted my Tour de France to end, but I agree that it is the right decision for me in the circumstances,” Bernal said. “I have the greatest respect for this race and I’m already looking forward to coming back in the years ahead.”

Last year, Bernal became the first Colombian to win the Tour, and the youngest



champion of the post-World War II era. His team said Bernal will try to recover as quickly as possible and redefine his goals for the rest of the season.

“We have taken this decision with Egan’s

best interests at heart,” Ineos manager Dave Brailsford said. “Egan is a true champion who loves to race, but he is also a young rider, with many Tours ahead of him.”

Bernal’s withdrawal marked the end of Ineos’ dominance at cycling’s biggest event. The successful period started in 2012 with Bradley Wiggins’ victory when the team was called Team Sky.

The squad won seven of the last eight editions with four different riders, but its best-placed rider this year is Richard Carapaz, who stood 14th ahead of Wednesday’s Stage 17.

Arguably the toughest, the trek features the Col de La Madeleine and the Col de La Loze, the Tour’s highest point this year at 2,304 meters. The traffic-free pass between the ski resorts of Meribel and Courchevel was opened to cyclists this year after a forest track was paved by local authorities. The last six kilometers of the climb are particularly difficult, with very steep sections and sharp turns.

Harikrishna in joint lead after 3 rounds

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Chennai, Sept 16: Indian Grandmaster P Harikrishna claimed a share of the top position with Armenian GM Levon Aronian after posting two wins and a draw in three rounds of rapid competition in the St Louis Rapid and Blitz online chess tournament.

The India No.2 started with a win over US Grandmaster Leinier Dominguez, before settling for a draw with Iranian prodigy Alireza Firouzja in games played late Tuesday. In the third round, Harikrishna pulled off a victory over experienced Russian Alexander Grischuk in 41 moves.

World champion Magnus Carlsen, the favourite to win the title, was fifth with three points. After a win over Hikaru Nakamura in his opener, the Norwegian went down to Russia’s Ian Nepomniachtchi in the second round. A draw with Wesley So in the third left the World No.1 in fifth spot.

Harikrishna, coming from a good showing in FIDE Online Olympiad, outwitted the American in 51 moves with black pieces, to begin his campaign in the elite 10-player event.

The Indian ace will face Nepomniachtchi in the fourth round, followed by games against Aronian and Carlsen late Wednesday.

Bairstow ton, Woakes flourish prop England

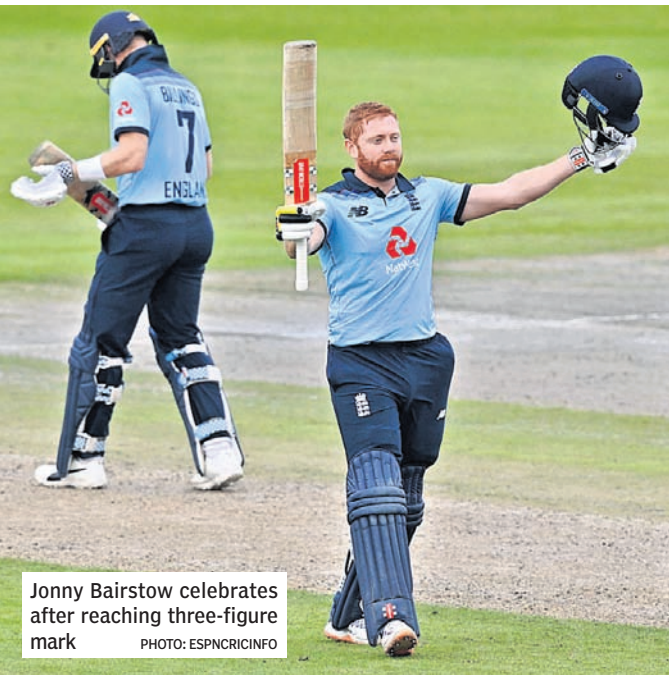
AGENCIES

Manchester, Sept 16: Jonny Bairstow’s (112, 126b, 12x4, 2x6) wonderful century and a late flourish from Chris Woakes (53 n o, 39b, 6x4) helped England post 302/7 in their 50 overs in the third and final ODI against Australia here, Wednesday. The series is locked at 1-1.

Bairstow played a superb innings on a track where most of the English batsmen struggled to get going. Bairstow was ably supported by Sam Billings (57, 58b, 4x4, 2x6), who had scored his maiden ODI century in the first ODI.

Earlier, England won the toss and opted to bat first, which was backfired in a most unexpected way. Mitchell Starc (3/74) struck twice in the first two balls of the innings pegging back Jason Roy and Joe Root.

However, England skipper Eoin Morgan (23) and Bairstow made amends adding 67 runs for the third



Jonny Bairstow celebrates after reaching three-figure mark PHOTO: ESPNCRICINFO

wicket before leg-spinner Adam Zampa (3/51) struck twice. He first broke the dangerous-looking stand removing Morgan, before getting rid of Jos Buttler to reduce the hosts to 96/4.

It proved to be the Aussies’ last laugh in the innings as Bairstow and Billings joined hands to add 114 runs for the fifth wicket. It was Zampa, yet again, who broke the stand dismissing Billings. Pat Cummins (1/53) then came to attack and he accounted for the dismissal of Bairstow.

With the scoreboard reading 220/6, Woakes had the opportunity to take England to a competitive total. He was ably supported by Tom Curran (19) as the duo put together 46 runs. Then, Woakes changed gears to find some quick runs as he and Adil Rashid (11 n o) guided the hosts past 300.

BRIEF SCORES: England 302/7 (Jonny Bairstow 112, Sam Billings 57, Chris Woakes 53 n o; Adam Zampa 3/51, Mitchell Starc 3/74) vs Australia. Match to continue.