



HARD-WORKING ACTOR
Actor Bhumi Pednekar says she is not an accidental actor and has worked hard to taste success **LEISURE P2**



CONUNDRUM IN KERALA
Trouble mounts for Vijayan as ED arrests son of CPI-M Kerala secretary Kodiyeri Balakrishnan **TWO STATES P7**



PAK ADMITS TO PULWAMA
A Pakistani minister admitted that Pakistan was responsible for the Pulwama attack in J&K **INTERNATIONAL P10**

Woman beheaded as 3 killed in knife attack

IT WAS THE THIRD ATTACK IN TWO MONTHS IN FRANCE AMID A GROWING FURORE OVER CARICATURES OF THE PROPHET MUHAMMAD THAT WERE RE-PUBLISHED BY THE SATIRICAL NEWSPAPER CHARLIE HEBDO

Nice, Oct 29: A knife-wielding attacker shouting "Allahu Akbar" beheaded a woman and killed two other people in a suspected terrorist incident at a church in the French city of Nice Thursday, police and officials said.

Nice's mayor, Christian Estrosi, who described the attack as terrorism, said on Twitter it had happened in or near the city's Notre Dame church.

Estrosi said the attacker had repeatedly shouted the phrase "Allahu Akbar", or God is greatest, even after he had been detained by police. One of the people killed inside the church was believed to be the church warden, Estrosi said, adding that a woman had tried to escape from inside the church and had fled into a bar opposite the building.

"The suspected knife attacker was shot by police while being detained, he is on his way to hospital, he is alive," Estrosi told reporters. "Enough is enough," Estrosi said. "It's time now for France to exonerate itself from the laws of peace in order to definitively wipe



The scene outside the Notre Dame church in Nice after the knife attack

out Islamo-fascism from our territory." Reuters journalists at the scene said police armed with automatic weapons had put up a security cordon around the church, which is on Nice's Jean Medecin Avenue, the city's main shopping thoroughfare.

SOLIDARITY
In Paris, lawmakers in the National Assembly observed a minute's silence

Estrosi said the victims had been killed in a "horrible way".

Meanwhile, Prime Minister Jean Castex said the country's threat level will be raised to its maximum after an attack near a church killed three people Thursday in Nice.

The move comes just hours before the country was going into its second coronavirus lockdown.

It was the third attack in two months in France amid a growing furor over caricatures of the Prophet Muhammad that were re-published by the satirical newspaper Charlie Hebdo.

Other confrontations and attacks were reported Thursday in the southern city of Avignon and in the Saudi city of Jiddah, but it was not immediately clear if they were linked to the attack in Nice. Sounds of explosions could be heard as sappers exploded suspicious objects.

Pope Francis is praying for the victims of the knife attack at a Roman Catholic basilica in the southern French city of Nice and for an end to all "terrorist" violence.

FACTBOX
Here are some other attacks that have taken place in France

- **SEPT 25, 2020:** Two people were stabbed and wounded in Paris near the former offices of the Charlie Hebdo satirical magazine
- **OCT 3, 2019:** Mickael Harpon, 45, an IT specialist with security clearance to work in the Paris police headquarters, killed three police officers and one civilian employee before being shot dead by police
- **MARCH 23, 2018:** A gunman killed three people in southwestern France after holding up a car, firing on police and taking hostages in a supermarket
- **JULY 26, 2016:** Two attackers killed a priest and seriously wounded another hostage in a church in northern France before being shot dead by police.
- **JULY 14, 2016:** A gunman drove a heavy truck into a crowd celebrating Bastille Day in the French city of Nice, killing 86 people and injuring scores more in an attack claimed by Islamic State

PETROL PUMP BLAST

DNA test report of body parts out

Bhubaneswar, Oct 29: The Commissionerate Police Thursday clarified that the human body parts found at the petrol pump filling station near Raj Bhawan Square belonged to Simanchal Parida. He had gone missing since a devastating blast rocked the pump, October 7.

With police confirmation, it is now clear that Parida had died due to the blast. With this confirmation, the death toll in the blast climbed to two. Twin City Police Commissioner Sudhansu Sarangi revealed this a press conference here Thursday.

"The State Forensic Science Laboratory (SFSL) today submitted the DNA analysis of the 21 body parts of a human found from the blast site. They have said that the body parts belonged to Simanchal Parida. His family has been informed," Sarangi said.

He also informed the media that the IOCL authorities have been informed about the outcome as well. The Commissionerate Police are also hopeful of receiving other reports, including the CCTV footage examination report, soon.

Meanwhile, the family members of Parida told **ORISSA POST** that they were only orally informed by the



cops about the outcome of the DNA examination. They are yet to send the officially documents regarding the death of Simanchal so that the family can secure his death certificate and fulfill other legalities.

The IOCL authorities have also said that they will release the financial compensation announced earlier to Parida's family after getting all the documents in this regard from the commissionerate police.

Notably, fire broke out at the Indian Oil petrol pump near Raj Bhawan area in Bhubaneswar October 7 at around 1.10pm following a huge blast. One person was killed and seven others injured due to the blast. Parida, a diploma engineer and a resident of Aska in Ganjam district, was engaged in maintenance work at the pump on the fateful day. He was missing since then.

Investigation officers of the police had collected 21 body parts of an unidentified person. They had sent those to the SFSL for DNA test. From the DNA test it became clear that those were of Parida.

IRREGULAR by MANJUL

Don't know about RJD, BJP, JDU, LJP, etc but the voter has defeated COVID scare badly!

SHORT TAKES

Govt bans export of onion seeds

New Delhi: The government Thursday banned exports of onion seeds with immediate effect amidst rising prices of the bulb in the domestic markets. Earlier, the export of onion seeds was in the restricted category, which means an exporter was required to obtain a licence or permission from the government for shipments.

Keshubhai Patel passes away

Ahmedabad: Former Gujarat Chief Minister Keshubhai Patel died here Thursday after prolonged illness, family sources said. Patel (92) had recovered from COVID-19 recently and was rushed to a hospital in Ahmedabad Thursday morning following health complications, the sources said.

MARKET WATCH

INDEX	VARIATION
SENSEX	39749.85 ↓ 172.61
NIFTY	11670.80 ↓ 58.80
DOLLAR	74.58 ↑ ₹0.51
EURO	87.38 ↑ ₹0.37
GOLD	₹50,374 ↓ ₹121
SILVER	₹59,790 ↓ ₹348

WEATHER

	BHUB	CTK
TEMP MAX	31.6°C	32.2°C
TEMP MIN	19.5°C	19.0°C
Humidity	85%	63%
Rainfall	Nil	Nil

Forecast: Mainly clear sky

Govt to retire inept babus by year-end

Bhubaneswar, Oct 29: With a view to perk up efficiency in administration, the state government has set timelines for pre-mature retirement of employees of doubtful integrity and inefficiency in public services.

Though the state government had issued a circular (No.27037, Dt.24.09.2019) for the purpose, most of the departments/directorates/district offices are yet to execute the instructions.

Hence, with a view to streamline the procedure and facilitate implementation of the earlier instructions, the General Administration (GA) department has issued fresh circular setting deadlines for proper implementation of the instructions.

All departments have been asked to constitute a single committee for the purpose of screening employees for premature retirement, out of turn promotions and awarding incentives by November 15.

An online application in the human resources management system (HRMS) has been developed for the purpose of submission of nominations, obtaining Vigilance clearance and Performance Appraisal Report (PAR) details by the field authorities/directorates/district offices.

The authorities can visit <http://hrmsodisha.gov.in/> and click on the link for out of turn promotion/incentive/premature retirement.

The subordinate authorities, including field establishments, directorates and district Collectors,



The state government had issued a circular (No.27037, Dt.24.09.2019) for the premature retirement of inept babus, but the instructions were not implemented

With a view to streamline the procedure and facilitate implementation of the earlier instructions, the General Administration department has issued fresh circular setting deadlines

have been asked to submit their recommendations to the concerned department latest by November 30.

The proposed committee for premature retirement, out of turn promotion and incentives will hold its meeting by December 10, while the final report of recommendation/nomination to be submitted to the respective administrative department by December 15.

The departments have been asked to convene meetings and finalise the list of employees for premature retirement, out of turn promotion and award of incentives and submit it for government orders/Cabinet approval by December 31.

Rourkela driver receives ₹28cr GST default notice

Rourkela, Oct 29: In a bizarre development, the Goods and Services Tax (GST) department Thursday served a defaulter notice of over ₹28 crore to Rajendra Kumar Palai, a driver residing in Sector-20 area of Rourkela city.

Palai has been charged with gross tax liability under Section 74(5). The department claims that he has received taxable goods amounting to over ₹23.96 crore. He allegedly also defrauded about ₹4.31 crore under CGST and SGST by producing fake invoice.

The department has demanded Palai to pay the tax amount along with the applicable interest amount and penalty under Section 74(5), failing which a show-cause notice would be issued.

However, the accused is clueless about any such transaction or tax fraud. "I learnt from the notice served to me that somebody has opened a fake firm named RP Enterprises in Cuttack. Some GST officials had come to my house for investigation in this connection," Palai said.

Palai had given his personal documents to a person who is known to him. He might have misused the credentials, the man added. "I have neither carried out any business transaction, nor am I involved in any fraud", said Pali refuting the charge.



Cabinet approves DRIP for 36 dams in Odisha

New Delhi, Oct 29: The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs Thursday approved a ₹10,211-crore project to improve the safety and performance of select dams across India, including 36 dams in Odisha.

The Dam Rehabilitation and Improvement Project (DRIP) - Phase II and Phase III - is financially supported by the World Bank and Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank.

The project envisages comprehensive rehabilitation of 736 existing dams located across the country. This includes 189 dams in Rajasthan, 167 in Maharashtra, 59 in Tamil Nadu, 41 in Karnataka, 39 in Uttar Pradesh and 36 in Odisha. It will be implemented over a period of 10 years duration in two phases, each of six years duration with two years overlapping from April, 2021 to March 2031.

According to the government, the share of external funding is ₹7,000 crore of the total project cost, and balance ₹3,211 crore is to be borne by the concerned Implementing Agencies (IAs). The contribution of the Union government is ₹1,024 crore as loan liability and ₹285 crore as counter-part funding for central component.

The project aims to improve the safety and performance of selected existing dams and associated appurtenances in a sustainable manner and to strengthen the dam safety institutional setup in participating states as well as at central level. It also aims to explore the alternative incidental means at few of selected dams to generate the incidental revenue for sustainable operation and maintenance of dams

The project will work on rehabilitation and improvement of dams and associated appurtenances. It project envisages exploration of alternative incidental means at few of selected dams to generate the incidental revenue for sustainable operation and maintenance of dams.



Why Kashmiri Pandits are opposing J&K land sale to outsiders

THE MIGRANT KASHMIRI PANDITS DEMAND THAT THERE SHOULD BE A BAN ON THE SALE OF ANY LAND UNTIL THE COMMUNITY IS REHABILITATED

Srinagar, Oct 29: Migrant Kashmiri Pandits Thursday demanded a ban on sale of land to outsiders in Jammu & Kashmir till the community is rehabilitated in Kashmir.

Satish Ambardar, chairman of Reconciliation, Return and Rehabilitation, an organisation of migrant Pandits said in a statement: "The Government of India notified land law for Jammu & Kashmir Tuesday, October 27, 2020. The law paves the way for any citizen of India to buy land in J&K."

"Kashmiri Pandits feel betrayed. For 31 years we have been waiting



ganged up and murdered," he said. "The forced exodus has cut us from our roots. This has affected our unique religious, cultural and traditional identity. Today, we feel we feel this

"The exodus has scattered the community and after this order the community will always remain scattered, lose its ethnicity and die a slow death. A community which has a 5,000-year history in Kashmir is finally being slowly poisoned by the powers that are there."

"Our Constitution has ensured singularity in plurality, diversity in unity and safeguarding of minorities, but the successive governments have failed to protect the ethnicity of the minority in Kashmir. This order of the Government of India sounds like a death knell for the KP community. It seems that J&K has been put up for sale. The rich and powerful will buy

lands and take over the place whereas the original aborigines will continue to live in exile," he said.

"We fear that land sharks will usurp our lands, including our temples, shrines and other KP institutions. We demand that there should be an immediate ban on the sale of any kind of land until the Kashmiri Pandit community is rehabilitated. We demand that those 419 families be rehabilitated, who a year ago had given in writing to the Union Ministry of Home Affairs that they want to return. We request all parliamentarians to kindly come forward and help to rehabilitate Kashmiri Pandit refugees in Kashmir."



DUA LIPA TO BRING VIRTUAL STUDIO 2054 GIG TO INDIA

International pop star Dua Lipa is all set to bring her virtual show, *Studio 2054*, to India, adding that she hopes to be back to the country and perform before a live audience again. *Studio 2054* is said to deliver a brand new multi-dimensional live experience.

POP STAR BEBE REXHA TO MAKE HOLLYWOOD DEBUT AS ACTRESS

Pop star Bebe Rexha is all set to make her debut as an actress in a crime comedy film titled *Queenpins*, starring Kristen Bell. Rexha will be playing the character of Tempe Tina, an eccentric computer hacker in the film, reports *variety.com*.



FORTUNE FORECAST

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ARIES
The day sparkles with opportunities and pleasures, you just have to look in the right place. If you've been looking to seal a relationship, today is the day to propose, says Ganesha! Be careful while driving, and be subtle in suggestion.

TAURUS
You will hear the division bell beckoning you to strike a balance between your personal and professional life. Today is an encouraging day for big business deals and new projects. In the afternoon, you may fall victim to iniquity.

GEMINI
You have great business plans and can't wait to launch a few of your ideas today. Your colleagues will lend you their complete support. You may spend the evening decorating your home or finding peace in the arms of your beloved.

CANCER
You will finalise business dealings with your partners today. Your high spirits may be subdued later in the day. However, as evening approaches and you get ready for a party, you will be back in your elements, cracking jokes and generally putting a smile on people's faces.

LEO
Call it a day with a positive difference, but today, you are more keen and inclined towards entertainment and relaxation. Everybody needs a break from the routine, says Ganesha, so make the most of today. On a more personal note, you are required to make subtle moves as there are hints that you may want to give your love life a more definite turn, like a marriage.

VIRGO
Your professional life may just bounce up higher than ever today, predicts Ganesha. Expect incentives as well today. Executing plans to perfection will come naturally to you. In the evening, family will drown you in their unconditional love.

LIBRA
We all have our own worlds to manage, and play the superhero for. And our family, friends and work are what make up our world. Ganesha foresees a day in which you shall remain engrossed in managing these different aspects of your life.

SCORPIO
Proposals of your choice will come your way today says Ganesha. You shall probably retreat into your shell in the afternoon. But the passing hours will bring out a different you. At work, you shall greatly impress your boss with sparkling results, predicts Ganesha.

SAGITTARIUS
You shall push yourself to the limit to make sure your authority goes unquestioned. Colleagues and seniors will laud you for your commitment. Expect that wallet to get heavier as you receive some cash gains, says Ganesha.

CAPRICORN
Socialising is on the cards, and with increase in the number of acquaintances will be the increase of your social clout, says Ganesha. Later in the day, you will take to reading, and will pick just about any book. You will set out in search for peace as dusk sets in, and will find solace in holy places, where you would strive to improve your concentration power.

AQUARIUS
Today, you will realise the importance of time in the business world. Ganesha says you will understand how much risk is involved in going about things in a haphazard manner. As a natural corollary, you will rewrap and reschedule a lot of your plans, whether it's business or travel or just a family vacation.

PISCES
A day of hectic socialising awaits you, not that you mind it. But you may also catch yourself wishing for some time alone for yourself, says Ganesha. The evening will probably see you deck up and head for a happening party, with lots of members of the opposite sex to woo.

Prakruti getting groomed by Tiger's trainer

POST NEWS NETWORK

BHUBANESWAR: Mumbai-based Odia actress Prakruti Mishra is getting fitness tips from Tiger Shroff's personal trainer Vikram Swain for an upcoming project. Sharing the information with Orissa POST, Prakruti's team disclosed that she was getting trained by Vikram, another Odia from Antargam in Ganjam district, at Fly Zone fitness gym in Mumbai where she also met Tiger during a training session. "Vikram is an old friend and a great talent who

works with Tiger Shroff. He is helping me for a project," said Prakruti. Vikram has been working as a dance and gymnastics trainer for many other actors including Tiger Shroff and Disha Patani.

On her meeting with the *Heropanti* actor, Prakruti said that he is a sweet guy and was quite humble towards her.

Prakruti's short film *Masala Steps* got released on Disney Hotstar recently and she also sang a cover of *Taaron Ke Sheher* with singer Pravash Padhi.



'I am not an accidental actor'

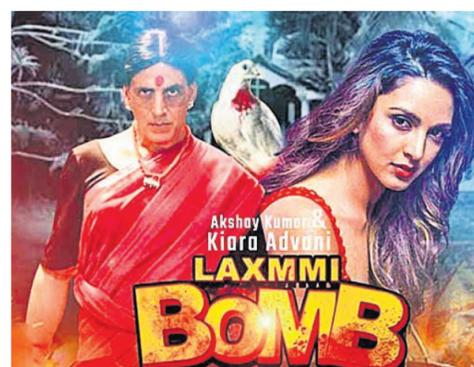
Mumbai: Actress Bhumi Pednekar says she is not an accidental actor and that her journey has been of survival.

"It's been five years and it still feels like a dream! I am not an accidental actor and I say this time and again. This is something that I really wanted to do and I have worked really hard to be here. I am born and brought up in Bombay so that definitely helped because just having some sort of a support system in the city, which is the city of our Hindi film industry, makes your journey slightly easy," Bhumi said.

"However, because I am not from a traditional film family or I really didn't have any contacts, I was very confused at first about how to go about it," she added.

The actress said she had to convince her parents that she wanted to be an actor. "I mustered courage to speak to my parents about it. They weren't very happy and I think they were being protective. So, I decided to join film school and the fee was expensive, so I took a loan," she recalled.

Bhumi will be next seen in the heroine-centric horror drama, *Durgavati*. **WNS**



Akshay Kumar-starrer Laxmi Bomb renamed Laxmii

Mumbai: The Akshay Kumar-starrer *Laxmi Bomb* has been renamed *Laxmii*, following suggestion of the Central Board of Film Certification (CBFC). The decision was taken by Akshay along with co-producers Shabina Khan and Tusshar Kapoor Thursday.

The news was confirmed by trade analyst Taran Adarsh on Twitter. "NEW DEVELOPMENT... #LaxmiBomb title changed... New title: #Laxmii... Premieres 9 Nov 2020 on #DisneyPlusHotstarVIP... Stars #AkshayKumar and

#KiaraAdvani," tweeted @taran_adarsh.

The film directed by Raghava Lawrence was submitted for censor certification and the decision was taken after the screening for the CBFC members.

According to earlier reports, the makers had received a legal notice from the Rajasthan-based outfit, Shri Rajput Karni Sena, claiming that the name *Laxmi Bomb* was demeaning towards Goddess Laxmi, adding that the title insulted sentiments. **WNS**

Global icons to participate in 3rd Chair Poetry Evenings

Poetic musings from the UK, the USA, Macedonia, Italia, Estonia, Netherlands, Israel and India would be heard across five days

Kolkata: The Chair Literary Trust is organising its yearly signature poetry festival, Chair Poetry Evenings online this year that successfully had two of its earlier editions in Kolkata.

Poetry lovers of the city and elsewhere can look forward to some moving verses from global stalwarts from November 1 to 5.

This unique annual event by the poets for the cause of poetry has an impressive line of prestigious participants from all corners of the globe. Poetic musings from the UK, USA, Macedonia, Italia, Estonia, Netherlands, Israel and India would be heard across screens spread across five days. Poets Sarabjeet Garcha, Ashwani Kumar, Saima Afreen and Sunil Bhandari would be moderating the sessions and be in conversation with poets who would be joining in each day. Poets to join are Booker Prize



winning writer Ben Okri, Pulitzer Prize winning poet Vijay Seshadri, Padma Shri Keki Daruwalla, Ashok Vajpeyi, Poet laureate of the Netherlands Tsead Bruinja, Kaveh Akbar; 2020 Golden Wreath laureate Amir Or; TS Eliot prize winner George Szirtes, Nikola Madzirov, Trin Soomets, Elisa Biagini, Harry Man, Helene Cardona, Ajmer Rode and Christopher Merrill. From India the names who would be partici-

pating are Neelesh Raghuvanshi, Nabina Das, Ganesh Visputay, Manohar Shetty, Christina Davis, Bibhas Roy Chowdhury, Prabal Kumar Basu, Nilim Kumar, A.J. Thomas and Priya Sarukkai Chabria. Speaking on the virtual event, poet and festival director Sonnet Mondal states, "It is indeed painful to go online this year but I believe that the poetry that will be shared in the 3rd edition will

be no less than a festival of human realisation."

Sharing his thoughts, Hindi poet Tushar Dhawal Singh, adds, "Our emphasis is on promising poetry from around the globe. The hard work is on and the allure is guaranteed. The world has seen enough this year but such a crisis shall not be able to bind our thoughts. It's high time the real human voice is heard through poetry that has sustained us through the ages."

A musical session by singer and music composer Prajna Dutta would be the highlight of the festival.

The event would be available for viewing through live streams on the YouTube and Facebook pages of the Chair Poetry Evenings for a global viewership on all five days.

SUROOPA CHATTERJEE



PEANUTS



CALVIN AND HOBBS

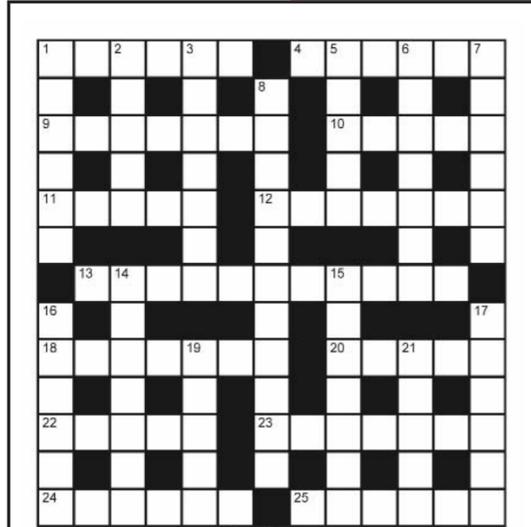


BREVITY



FUN post

CROSSWORD



- Across**
- 1 Movic genre
 - 4 Donnybrook
 - 9 Ritzy
 - 10 Sonnets and such
 - 11 Makes level
 - 12 Israeli metropolis (3,4)
 - 13 Cruise ship stops (5,2,4)
 - 18 Biting
 - 20 Hospital figure
 - 22 Investigate
 - 23 It's known for its tail
 - 24 Stop
 - 25 Anchorages
 - 6 16th century small vessel
 - 7 Deviate
 - 8 Medical instrument
 - 14 Spotted wildcats
 - 15 Confidence trick (3,4)
 - 16 Out of shape
 - 17 Banded lizards
 - 19 Caskets
 - 21 Perch

SUDOKU

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

C	A	E	4		2			6			3	
5	9		7				A			2	C	
B			7								0	
0		2	E	4				D	8			
8		C	D	5		B						
	3			1	6	E	9			5	B	8
2	B		4	0						3		
	3	8	D		4			5	2	1		
E		A	6							7	4	2
1								D	6	9		
5	A			9				4	E		8	3
		E								D		4
		9				7				5		
4					2		7	9	3	B	A	
7	6	0	A				D					

SOLUTIONS

CROSSWORD

J	I	L	T	M	O	A	O	S	L	O
A	U	C	P	P	P	A				
K	I	C	K	O	U	T	A	L	L	O
A	I	U	N	I	H					
R	E	D	U	C	E	M	A	N	T	A
T	H	A	M	U						
A	R	M	P	A	S	T	A	P	O	I
L	O	A	O	K	C					
L	O	C	A	T	E	B	A	B	B	L
O	A	A	N	R	L					
R	O	B	O	T	O	C	A	R	I	N
R	S	E	R	E	L	F	S	K	I	D

SUDOKU

C	5	8	A	3	2	9	4	6	D	1	B	0	7	E
D	2	3	4	C	B	A	5	E	7	0	6	1	9	8
4	9	0	8	6	1	3	D	7	2	E	A	C	5	B
6	E	5	0	7	1	2	C	9	3	8	4	D	A	
1	A	7	D	9	E	8	B	0	4	C	5	2	6	3
B	D	2	7	8	A	6								
D	0	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9					
7	3	A	9	E	D	B	1	2	8	4	C	5	0	6
0	1	C	6	5	A	E	7	8	3	9	D	B	2	4
8	4	E	3	1	0	5	9	A	0	8	2	D	C	7
0	6	5	2	B	C	D	0	4	E	A	7	3	8	1
5	8	4	C	A	6	8	9	0	1	D	E	7	3	0
3	8	1	0	0	9	C	6	5	A	7	4	E	B	2
A	7	9	B	2	3	4	A	D	C	6	0	8	1	5
2	0	D	E	4	5	7	3	1	8	9	6	0	A	C
E	C	6	1	7	8	0	A	B	5	2	3	9	4	D

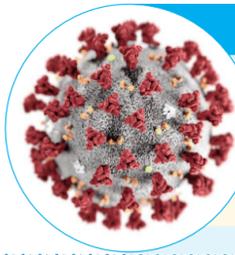
CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW

downtown



READY FOR A RIDE

Camel and horse owners waiting for tourists on Puri beach, Thursday



COVID-19 TRACKER

	INFECTED	RECOVERED	DEAD
World	4,49,78,190	3,28,43,766	11,81,955
India	80,40,203	73,15,989	1,20,527
Odisha	2,87,099	2,72,038	1,297

Provide loan to farmers: CM to bankers

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Oct 29: In an aim to provide livelihood support to the people during Covid-19 pandemic, Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik Thursday urged bankers to provide credit to farmers, self-help groups (SHGs) and MSME units.

Addressing a State Level Bankers Committee (SLBC) through virtual mode, Naveen said, "Covid as a pandemic has impacted both lives and livelihoods. Doctors and Covid warriors are fighting to save lives. Bankers are also Covid warriors as you are central to our efforts to revive and restore livelihoods."

Stating his government is very serious about restoring economy both at state and at individual household levels, he said the government is providing more than ₹600 crore for interest subvention to facilitate interest-free loans for



If doctors have a major role in saving lives, bankers play a crucial role in saving livelihoods

NAVEEN PATNAIK | CHIEF MINISTER

farmers up to ₹50,000 and at 2 per cent up to ₹3 lakh.

In case of women SHGs, the government is providing 100 per cent interest subvention up to ₹3 lakh. Similarly, he said, the state has de-

signed some interest subvention to boost the MSME sector.

Naveen said he would be closely monitoring credit flow to these three crucial sectors and have a district-wise review with Collectors and bankers jointly by the end of November.

Best performing banks would be awarded with Chief Minister's award for champion banks, the Chief Minister said, adding, "I would also inform about the performance to the Union Finance Minister."

"If doctors have a major role in saving lives, bankers play a crucial role in saving livelihoods. I am sure all of you will rise to the occasion in helping the poor and needy, especially—women, farmers, and MSMEs," he added. He appreciated the services being provided by the banking community during the lockdown period.

Package soon for coal mine-hit in Angul

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Oct 29: Chief Secretary Asit Tripathy Thursday asked Angul Collector to prepare a comprehensive rehabilitation package for the people affected by Mandakini coal mine.

package without involvement of any middleman.

"Proper housing with basic infrastructure facilities must be provided at rehabilitation sites," he directed.

The matters relating to conduct of socio-economic survey (SES), pro-



CHIEF SECY FIAT

Chief Secy Asit Tripathy instructed Angul Collector to prepare the package as per provisions of the Coal Bearing Areas Act and rehabilitation policy of the state

The mines developing authorities were asked to design rehabilitation package as per local needs in consultation with district administration

Nabakrushna Choudhury Centre for Development Studies made the pre-study preparations for socio-economic survey

Reviewing the progress made in coal exploration from Mandakini mines in Angul district, Tripathy instructed the district Collector to prepare the package as per provisions of the Coal Bearing Areas (Acquisition and Development) Act and rehabilitation policy of the state.

"Odisha's rehabilitation policy is very dynamic and progressive and proper packaging of the compensation awards would be beneficial to the people," he said.

The mines developing authorities were asked to design rehabilitation package as per local needs in consultation with district administration.

Further, the Chief Secretary instructed the Angul Collector, Superintendent of Police (SP) and the tehsildar concerned to directly transfer the benefits of the rehabilitation

cessing of forest diversion proposal, getting environmental clearances from statutory authority in Government of India, drilling activities by Central Mine Planning & Design Institute for estimating resource quality and preparation of scientific mining plan etc were discussed in the meeting.

Additional Chief Secretary Forest and Environment Mona Sharma apprised that forest diversion proposal was prepared, which would be sent to Ministry of Forest and Environment in the coming week.

Steel and Mines Secretary Surendra Kumar said that Nabakrushna Choudhury Centre for Development Studies made the pre-study preparations for SES. It was decided to start SES and non-coal proving operations in the coming week.

POLITICKLE by MANJUL



Naveen's virtual rally to woo voters

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Oct 29: Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik Thursday held his virtual rally for the people of Balasore in the wake of upcoming byelection to Balasore Sadar Assembly seat.

During his speech, the BJD President cited several developmental works undertaken by his government and also promised to take development of the region to the next level.

"I know you have a lot of love and affection for me. Had I gone to Balasore today you would have come in large numbers. I never wanted anyone to be in danger for me. That's why I'm meeting you through virtual rally. After the pandemic goes away, I will come to Balasore and meet you," he said.

He also added, "Balasore is a major city in northern Odisha. The state government has set up a new government Medical College with Fakir Mohan University in Balasore. There are many opportunities for development of Balasore. I want to take the develop-

BALASORE BYPOLL



CM Naveen Patnaik addresses the virtual rally

ment of Balasore to the next level."

Naveen also said that he had been working for the welfare of the slum dwellers of Balasore and wanted to provide all the basic facilities to them.

"I have always been emphasising on the welfare of slum dwellers. We have ensured electricity and other basic amenities for slum dwellers. We are also working towards making model colonies in slums. We are also converting kucha houses into pucca ones. Safe drinking

There are many opportunities for development of Balasore. I want to take the development of Balasore to the next level

NAVEEN PATNAIK | CHIEF MINISTER

water and other amenities will be my main focus," he said.

He also personally appealed to the people of Balasore to support the BJD candidate from the area. "I urge you to bless the Biju Janata Dal candidate in this by-election. Vote on conch shell symbol," he said.

"I believe that India will one day be a Super Power in the field of missile technology and Balasore will earn repute all over the world. You know, the general election is three years away. Much work can be done in these three years. I will personally understand the development responsibilities of Balasore like Bijepur and special attention will be paid to this," he said.

BJP, BJD join hands to sell assets: Cong

BHUBANESWAR: Odisha Congress Thursday alleged that the BJP and the BJD are hand in gloves in selling the valuable assets of the state. Addressing a presser, Congress leader Panchanan Kanungo said, "Both the parties are trying to show that they are fighting against themselves. When they sell properties of the state and take share then they become friends. In the case of selling Nilachal Ispat Nigam Limited (NINL), Union Minister Dharmendra Pradhan, State Minister Prafulla Mallick and Chief Secretary Asit Tripathy were there in the meeting over its disinvestment. They resolved together to divest from NINL."

HOUSE BURGLED

BHUBANESWAR: Unknown miscreants have decamped with gold ornaments, mobile phones worth around ₹7 lakh from the residence of a person at OUAT colony under Khandagiri police limits. A complaint has been lodged in this regard. The miscreants entered Animesh Abinash's house when the family members were away and decamped with 10 gold rings, four bangles, two bracelets, four earrings, one necklace and six costly mobile phones worth over several lakhs.

Admin urges Habisyalis not to throng Holy City

POST NEWS NETWORK

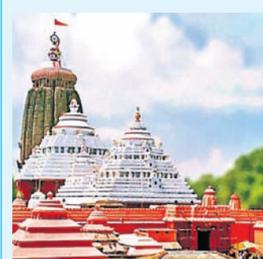
Puri, Oct 29: The district administration Thursday urged the Habisyalis not to congregate in the Holy City during the Hindu month of Kartika in the wake of the Covid-19 pandemic.

"We are yet to win the war against the deadly virus. We should be more cautious. Therefore, we urge the elderly women who observe Habisa in Kartika month not to visit Puri this year. The Habisyalis have been urged to stay home and offer prayers to Lord Jagannath," said Sub-Collector Bhabataran Sahu.

Sahu further revealed that the district administration will not provide free accommodation and other facilities to the Habisyalis this year due to the pandemic.

"Srimandir, the abode of Lord Jagannath has been shut for devotees due to the pandemic. So, the Habisyalis will not be allowed to enter the shrine," Sahu said. Thousands of Habisyalis

Devotees can't witness Nagarjuna Besha



the Srimandir ritual (Niti) sub-committee Thursday. The meeting chaired by Srimandir chief administrator Krishan Kumar also finalised timetable and other details for special rituals during the holy month of Kartika. Nagarjuna Besha, a rare ritual at Srimandir, would be held after a gap of 25 years.

from across the state usually throng the Holy City to observe the Kartika Brata. They used to stay in mutts, Dharmshalas and other religious institutions during the month-long ritual.

As per the tradition, the elderly women take holy dip in Markanda, Shwetaganga, Narendra and Indradryumna ponds early in the morning and visit Srimandir to offer prayers. The Habisyalis also offer prayers near Basil plant twice a day and observe food restrictions. In 2016, the state government had launched a scheme to provide free accommodation and other facilities to the elderly women.

CORONA VIRUS (COVID-19)

It is the need of the time, to follow COVID rule more strictly

DO'S

Wash hands frequently for at least 40 seconds

Always wear mask properly

Maintain 2 Mtr. physical distance

Special care for elderly, persons with co-morbidity, pregnant women & children

DONT'S

Don't spit in public places

Don't go to crowded places

Don't travel unless very necessary

Don't violate COVID norms during social & religious events

Let's make behavioural change, Adopt COVID Appropriate Behaviour to defeat CORONA

Health & Family Welfare Department, Govt. of Odisha

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@HFWOdisha

STATE'S VIRUS TOLL NEARS 1,300

ODISHA REPORTS 1,617 NEW NOVEL CORONAVIRUS CASES, 13 FRESH FATALITIES IN 24 HOURS

PNN & AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, Oct 29: State's novel coronavirus disease (Covid-19) tally mounted to 2,87,099 Thursday as 1,617 more people tested positive for the infection, an official of Health and Family Welfare (H&FW) department said.

Thirteen fresh fatalities, on the other hand, pushed the coastal state's coronavirus death toll to 1,297, said the official.

As many as 941 new cases were reported in quarantine centres, while 676 infections were detected during contact tracing, according to the Information and Public Relations (I&PR) department.

Khurda district, under which Bhubaneswar falls, reported the highest number of new cases at 222, followed by Cuttack (128), Sundargarh (93), Mayurbhanj (85) and Kalahandi (84).

Khurda has so far registered 48,287 Covid cases followed by Cuttack (25,674), Ganjam (21,123) and Puri (12,404).

Two fresh fatalities each were reported in Khurda, Cuttack, Balasore, Nuapada and Angul, and one each in Keonjhar, Jagatsinghpur

PANDEMIC WOES



A vehicle rolled out to spread awareness on nCoV in Khurda

Khurda reported the highest number of new cases at 222, followed by Cuttack (128) and Sundargarh (93)

Two fresh fatalities each were reported from Khurda, Cuttack, Balasore, Nuapada and Angul, and one each in Keonjhar, Jagatsinghpur and Sambalpur

Ganjam has so far reported the highest number of coronavirus fatalities at 228, followed by Khurda (223) and Cuttack (108)

Odisha has so far tested over 44.63 lakh samples for Covid-19, including 41,395 Wednesday

and Sambalpur districts, the official pointed out.

As many as 53 coronavirus pa-

tients have so far died due to other ailments.

Ganjam district has so far re-

Covid hospitals to function till Dec

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Oct 29: The state government has extended the functioning of Covid-19 hospitals which have signed MoU with government and funding agencies till December as the state continues to record Covid-19 cases.

Following the recommendation of a technical committee, the Health department has recently communicated the decision of government with all district Collectors.

In order to rationalise the use of general beds, number of general beds approved in Covid hospitals, which have shown below 50 per cent occupancy in the last two



weeks, will be reduced by 50 per cent of the approved capacity.

The approved capacity in the intensive care units (ICUs) and other facilities like Maternity OT, Labour Room, Dialysis etc, will remain the same, said the Health department notification.

ported the highest number of coronavirus fatalities at 228, followed by Khurda (223) and Cuttack (108), the official said.

The state has so far tested over 44.63 lakh samples for Covid-19, including 41,395 Wednesday, the official said, adding the positivity rate stands at 6.43 per cent.

The Capital city, on the other hand, reported 93 Covid-19 cases, taking the total cases to 28,985, the Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation said Thursday.

Meanwhile, 254 Covid patients in the Temple City recovered, taking the total recoveries in Bhubaneswar to 27,060, the BMC said.

SC reprieve for 3 convicts in Maoist attack case

POST NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi, Oct 29: The Supreme Court Thursday granted bail to Radhika Mallick, Sebastian Mallick and Tirupati Kadapa, who have been awarded life imprisonment in a Maoist attack case in Kandhamal district in 2011.

A two-judge bench of Justices SK Kaul and Hrishikesh Roy granted bail to all the appellants on the ground that they have been in jail for over nine years.

During the hearing, petitioners' counsel advocate Anupradha Singh argued that the appellants have been in jail for more than nine years.

"Appeals of petitioners have been pending in the High Court for five years. There is no likelihood of the appeals to be heard by the High Court in near future," advocate Anupradha Singh submitted to the SC.

Earlier, the SC had October 5 sought state government's response on the bail petition filed by the petitioners.

According to the petitioners, a complaint was filed by Suna Rupamajhi August 5, 2011 alleging

that around 18 Maoists reached his house and abducted his son at gunpoint before killing him.

He said in his complaint that Radhika, Sebastian and Tirupati were in the group of alleged Maoists.

An FIR was filed on the basis of his complaint at Kotagada police station and three days after that the appellants were arrested by the police.

A court in Phulbani, January 31, 2015, passed a judgment in the case and sentenced them to life imprisonment.

The order was, however, challenged in Orissa High Court, which dismissed the petition January 14.

The petitioner contended that the entire case of prosecution was based upon two eyewitnesses, the father and the sister of the deceased, and there are contradictions in the statements of the witnesses.

It was further submitted that police had not recovered any material related to Maoists from the petitioners' possession. The prosecution failed to prove any cogent evidence to link the Maoists to the petitioners.

Drivers seek aid for lockdown losses

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Oct 29: The Odisha Motor Drivers' Association Thursday held a protest march here seeking compensation from the government for the losses it incurred during the lockdown.

The association has put forth several demands before the government for consideration. It has threatened to intensify the agitation if their demands are not met.

"We have been badly hit by the subsequent spree of lockdowns in the state. We are demanding ₹10,500 as monthly compensation from the government for the losses. We also want amendment to the Motor Vehicle Act as many of the drivers are harassed by the hefty fines imposed by the government in the name of fines," a member of the association said.

He also said that many of them have also got their licences suspended in the light of the MV Act. "Their licences must be revoked. No driver wants to meet with an accident and gets into trouble. Many of such drivers in such cases are often facing a lot of problems. We have faced a lot of troubles during Covid-19 but we tried to work during the tough times. The government has now said anything for us and didn't address our issues," he added. "The government should consider giving us monthly pensions after they cross 60 years of age. Labourers in the state get some government aid but we are deprived of the same. We need attention of the government. We deserve Labour Cards as per others," the association said. The association members said that they had made representations before the CM and Transport Minister but in vain.

Now, tour Nandankanan virtually

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Oct 29: Zoo enthusiasts can now have a virtual tour of Nandankanan Zoological Park (NZP) as a portal was launched in this regard Thursday.

Informing this on social media, the NZP authorities said that people can visit www.Nandankanan.org to experience the virtual tour of the city-based zoo.

With this, the NZP joined the league of some other prominent zoos in the country including Alipore, Chennai and Lucknow, sources said.

The virtual tour of NZP will enable people to see the animals of the zoo and nearby Botanical Garden and Kanja lake through images and videos. The virtual tour was planned two months ago but it could not be implemented due to the Covid-19 pandemic, sources added. The zoo was closed for visitors in the third week of March and reopened October 4.



Earlier, the state government had issued a set of guidelines for reopening of zoos and deer parks.

As per the guidelines, there will be no entry without masks. Visitors with cold, fever and cough, senior citizens and people with infants have been advised not to visit the zoo.

Besides, all visitors should pass through medicated foot mat, body sanitiser put up at the entrance of the zoo.

Moreover, security personnel would advise the visitors to avoid congregation and use sanitiser and hand wash provided at different utility areas inside the zoo.

Night temperature to dip further

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Oct 29: The Bhubaneswar Meteorological Centre Thursday said night temperature will remain 2 to 3 degrees Celsius below the normal temperature for next three days.

"With the passing of southwest monsoon, the night temperature will come down by 2 to 3 degrees Celsius at some places in the state. A few places may also experience light to moderate rainfall," said Centre director HR Biswas.

Some places like Sonapur and Angul will record 2-3 degrees Celsius less than the normal temperature of 15 degrees C, he said.

In past 24 hours, Sonapur recorded lowest minimum temperature of 13.4 degrees Celsius while it was 13.6 degrees at Angul, 14.5 degrees at Phulbani and 15 degrees each at Koraput and Bhawanipatna.

NEP a paradigm shift in edu sector: Utkal VC

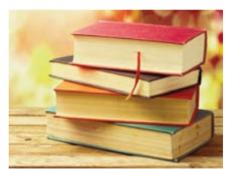
POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Oct 29: A national webinar on 'New Education Policy for 21st Century' was organised by State Institute of Special Education and Research here Thursday where Vice Chancellor (VC) of Utkal University, SM Patnaik, said that the policy focuses on a neo-liberal economy. It would be a paradigm shift from human resources to real education and establish a culturally vibrant economy.

Padmashree Uma Tuli, former chief commissioner for persons with disabilities (CCPD) and the

Education without inclusion of all irrespective of physical or psychological or sensory deficiencies is meaningless

PADMASHREE UMA TULI | FORMER CHIEF COMMISSIONER FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES



member of Human Rights Commission stressed that New Education Policy would help create a barrier-free conducive learning environment for all. "Education without inclusion of all irrespective of physical or psychological or sensory

deficiencies is meaningless. So, implementation of the policy in true sense of its spirit is warranted," Tuli added.

Speaking on the occasion, writer Jitendra Narayan Dash said that in his perception the NEP highlights

an accommodative society as a whole. "Education is for empowerment and not just for enlightenment. It is for integration, inclusion and ensuring equal opportunities for all. Teacher will be at the focal point of education and so good human beings as teachers can prepare good human beings for the society," Dash stated.

Shakti Prasad Dash, director of Swami Vivekanand National Institute for Rehabilitation, Training and Research (SVNIRTAR), Cuttack said that the NEP would strengthen democratic process of education and learning.

Wildlife activist gets Biju Patnaik Award

BHUBANESWAR: Wildlife activist and environmentalist Gayatri Devi has been conferred with Biju Patnaik Award for Wildlife Conservation for 2020. Gayatri Devi was honoured at a function held at Khurda District Forest department office recently in adherence to Covid-19 guidelines. In the function, ACF RK Mohapatra, PK Panda, Sarat Mishra, Goura Gopal C and Ayush Jain were present. Gayatri Devi is the founder of 'Go with Nature' and organisation dedicated to wildlife conservation and environment protection. She is also doing research on wild animals and birds.

Body found from rly track in City

BHUBANESWAR: The body of an unknown person was found near the track at new railway station here, Thursday. The GRP is yet to ascertain the identity of the deceased aged between 30 and 35 years. Locals informed the railway authorities about the incident following which GRP recovered the body and sent it for an autopsy. Police sources claimed that the person while commuting by train might have fallen off the running train. The GRP is investigating into the incident after registering a case (40/20) in this regard. The body has been kept at Capital Hospital's morgue after an autopsy.

GREENERY ALL AROUND



A man collects lotus leaves from Bindusagar in Old Town area of Bhubaneswar, Thursday

PICT: MAUSAM NANDA

Efforts on to revive nCoV-hit Chilika tourism

POST NEWS NETWORK

Puri, Oct 29: The district administration has made elaborate arrangements to revive the local tourism that has been hit hard by Covid-19 pandemic while making sure that tourists to Chilika take back pleasant memories.

Chairing a review meeting with several boat owners' associations on Chilika's development at the Circuit House here Wednesday, Puri Collector Balwant Singh issued a set of guidelines while keeping tourists' safety and comfort on the forefront.

According to Singh, it is mandatory for passenger boats to have lifejackets. A tourist will not be allowed to board a boat if s/he denies wearing lifejacket.

Now, tourists would no more face a harrowing time negotiating with the boat owners over fare with the process going online.

"Now, tourists can book and pay for the boats online. The Chilika

ACTION PLAN

IT IS MANDATORY FOR PASSENGER BOATS TO HAVE LIFEJACKETS. A TOURIST WILL NOT BE ALLOWED TO BOARD A BOAT IF S/HE DENIES WEARING LIFEJACKET

TOURISTS CAN NOW BOOK AND PAY FOR THE BOATS ONLINE AS THE CHILIKA DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY IS ALL SET TO INTRODUCE A MOBILE APPLICATION FOR THE PURPOSE

UNSCRUPULOUS ELEMENTS SELLING FAKE PEARLS WILL FACE STRINGENT ACTION

Development Authority is all set to introduce a mobile application for the purpose. The application is being developed taking suggestions

from the boat owners and other stakeholders. The application will display a detailed fee chart on boat journey to various strategic locations

within the brackish water lagoon. This would ensure transparency," Singh said.

These apart, unscrupulous elements selling fake pearls will face stringent action. "If required, the district administration will initiate suo motu proceedings against those found fooling the tourists with bogus pearls," the Puri Collector said.

Only licensed persons would be allowed to operate the boats. "Tourists should avoid littering plastic in Chilika and use the trashcans in the boats," Singh said, requesting the stakeholders at the meeting to offer their best to the tourists so as to revive the local tourism.

Tourism assistant director Sashank Sekhar Rath, district emergency officer Itishree Nayak, Sadar SDPO Kishore Chandra Mund apart from members of several boat owners' associations attended the meeting.

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Admin orders probe into farm land and bank A/Cs

POST NEWS NETWORK

Chhatrapur, Oct 29: In a bid to ensure transparency and check irregularities in paddy procurement, the Ganjam administration has decided to examine if the farmers having registered their names for paddy sale have land in their names or not.

Besides, their bank accounts, if inactive or active, will also be checked well before the paddy procurement.

A decision to this effect came at a review meeting on the preparedness for paddy procurement at Chhatrapur Wednesday. The meeting was presided over by ADM Kabindranath Sahu through video-conferencing. It was learnt that 1,34, 462 new farmers had registered their names for paddy procurement in fiscal 2019-20.

In the current fiscal, the total number of farmers having registered their names is 1, 39, 648. Of them, 20, 567 have newly registered names while 1, 19, 081 have renewed their registrations for the current year. The bank accounts of 492 farmers have been blocked while the cases of eight others are under consideration.

Amid allegations of irregularities of non-farmers pushing paddy in procurement system, the ADM directed revenue inspectors, amins and VLWs to investigate if the registered farmers own lands and do paddy cultivation and prepare a report. Doubts were raised in some quarters over lands where paddy was claimed to have been cultivated. These cases will be under scanner.

1 DEAD, 2 CRITICAL IN FIRECRACKER BLAST

POST NEWS NETWORK

Shergad, Oct 29: A man was killed while two others sustained critical injuries when they were making firecrackers to poach wild boars at Bhimpura village under Badagada police limits in Ganjam district in the wee hours of Thursday.

Police said, the deceased was identified as Bulu Mallick, 40, of the village. The two injured are Prakash Majhi, 50, and Nandiyana Nayak, 40, of Batasasan village. The injured were admitted to MKCG Medical College and Hospital.

After hearing a loud sound, residents of K Bhimpur village rushed to the spot and found the victims in a pool of blood. The three were rescued by villagers.

Aska SDPO Suryamani Pradhan, IPS probationer G Raghavendra, Aska IIC Prasant Kumar Sahu also reached the spot and took stock of the situation.

MIPs face threat to existence from stone mining in Jajpur



POST NEWS NETWORK

Jajpur, Oct 29: Regular extraction of black stones from six stone quarries on Rahadpur hill under Dharmasala tehsil in the district has posed a serious threat to the existence of two minor irrigation projects in the area.

The Ranibandh and Paikarapur minor irrigation projects lying close to the hill were set up to provide irrigation facilities to farmers in the district.

The state government is constructing large, medium, minor irrigation projects, dug wells and bore wells to increase the irrigation cover. However, the district administration is allegedly frustrating the objective by catering only for the groups with vested interests.

Quarrying of black stones on Rahadpur hill under Dharmasala tehsil, close to Ranibandh and Paikarapur MIPs is a case in this point. A case against mining of black stones on Rahadpur hill is sub-judice in Orissa High Court. However, the district administration has given six stone quarries on lease ignoring the interest of farmers and the HC case.

It was alleged that the Ranibandh MIP might get extinct due to regular mining of large quantities of black stones.

TRANSPARENCY IN PADDY PROCUREMENT



AMID ALLEGATIONS OF IRREGULARITIES OF NON-FARMERS PUSHING PADDY IN PROCUREMENT SYSTEM, THE ADM DIRECTED REVENUE INSPECTORS, AMINS AND VLWS TO INVESTIGATE IF THE REGISTERED FARMERS OWN LANDS AND DO PADDY CULTIVATION AND PREPARE A REPORT

Doubts were raised in some quarters over lands where paddy was claimed to have been cultivated. These cases will be under scanner.

MARKETING INSPECTORS HAS BEEN DIRECTED TO TALLY DETAILS OF THE FARMERS IN THE LIST

was claimed to have been cultivated. These cases will be under scanner.

A list of registered farmers was put on the public domain. It was alleged that some farmers had in fact less land against the volume of land shown in the list.

Marketing inspectors had been directed to tally details of the farmers in the list.

The meeting discussed steps to identify unfit farmland, increasing the number of cooperative societies to be involved in paddy procurement and setting the anomalies

A list of registered farmers was put on the public domain. It was alleged that some farmers had in fact less land against the volume of land shown in the list.

in the bank accounts of registered farmers right.

The review meeting was attended by Chhatrapur sub-collector Priyaranjan Prusty, district civil supplies officer Umashankar Pati, additional district civil supplies officer Brajendra Kumar Mohanty, civil supplies officer Puspamunda, and assistant registrar of cooperative societies (Berhampur division) Biswaranjan Das, district agriculture officer Bhaskar Padya and district information and public relations officer Rabinarayan Behera.

Missing bizman was murdered: Boudh SP

POST NEWS NETWORK

Boudh, Oct 29: Boudh police Thursday claimed they have cracked a missing case of a young businessman. Boudh superintendent of police V Raghunath Rao said Pramod Prasad alias Raja, the missing businessman, had been murdered and two accused have been arrested for their involvement in the crime.

The arrested duo has been identified as Milan Patra and Abhisekh Sahani of Odapada in Boudh town.

According to police, Abhisekh had called Raja on his mobile and asked him to come to Milan's houses at Podapada at 6pm, October 11. There, the accused duo first stabbed Raja and then strangled him to death. After committing the crime, they took the body to Mahanadi riverbed and, in their attempt to get rid of the body, they burnt it with

petrol and firewood. Before leaving the spot, they threw the partially-burnt body into the river. The body was recovered from the Hanuman Temple ghat of the river the next day.

During investigation, the police zeroed in on Abhisekh and Milan who confessed to their crime. Raja had taken Rs35,000 from Milan to get him a pistol. Even after a long time, Raja had neither delivered the pistol to Milan nor returned the money.

and executive engineer of MIPs were made party to the case. A bench of the High Court heard the matter and directed the Collector to decide on the matter within six weeks and submit a report to it, August 6, 2019. However, the administration started leasing out the stone quarries to interested bidders instead of implementing the HC order. Interestingly, the administration has leased out six quarries while the remaining six quarries are operating illegally.

The complainant again went to HC and a contempt case was filed. The HC hearing the matter has issued a notice to the parties, October 20, 2020. Collector Chakraborty Singh Rathore held discussions with Behura and sought reply from the MIP authorities in this regard.

Reportedly the state government has sanctioned Rs 8 lakh from critical fund in 2017-18 fiscal over Rs 4 lakh in two phases for concretization of the canal from non-plan budget in 2015-16 fiscal, around Rs 9 lakh in 2017-18 fiscal and Rs 19 lakh in 2019-20 fiscal.

The existential threat to the two MIPs came to the fore after a social activist, Sarbeshwar Behura, filed a public interest litigation (case no-3065/2018) in High Court, February, 2018. He alleged that over 12 stone quarries are operating in the area without having environmental permission.

He further alleged that the establishment of modern crusher units near the irrigation project and construction of a road in the area has posed serious threat to the existence of the irrigation projects.

Moreover, violation of environment and forest Act and minor mineral concession rules has aggravated air and water pollution in the area.

Earlier, residents had submitted a memorandum to the Collector demanding a joint probe into the irregularities. They alleged they often face drought like conditions despite presence of two MIPs. Later, the district administration clamped prohibitory order Section-44 in the area.

Behura also submitted the copies of the memorandum submitted to the Collector while filing the PIL. State revenue secretary, forest and environment secretary, member secretary, state pollution control board chief engineer

Youth may turn blind in one eye

POST NEWS NETWORK

Baripada, Oct 29: A youth may lose vision in one of his eyes thanks to police excesses. The incident was reported from Baripada in Mayurbhanj district Thursday.

Sipu Das, a resident of Ward No-25 of Baripada Municipality area, had gone to Station Bazaar to buy medicines Wednesday. At the shop he realized that he had not carried money. In haste, he was returning home and forgot to put on a helmet.

The police were carrying out a helmet and mask checking at Palabani roundabout. Seeing Sipu riding without a helmet, police tried to stop him. It was when Sipu was parking his bike, a constable hit him with his lathi. The lathi hit his right eye and it started bleeding profusely.

Seeing the injury, the police, instead of taking him to a hospital,

POLICE EXCESSES



asked him to leave the spot immediately.

Sipu's eye got swollen and he complained of not being able to see in his injured eye Thursday. He is undergoing

I had discussed with SP Smit P Parmar regarding the matter. All the required medical aid will be made available to the youth and stringent action will be taken against the constable

BIRENDRA SENAPATI I TOWN POLICE STATION IIC

treatment at PRM Medical College and Hospital in Baripada. It is learnt that the pupil has been damaged.

Sipu's father is a daily labourer. When contacted, Town Police Station inspector-in-charge Birendra Senapati said he had discussed with SP Smit P Parmar regarding the matter. All the required medical aid will be made available to the youth and stringent action will be taken against the constable.

Family performs last rites for pet parrot

POST NEWS NETWORK

Nabarangpur, Oct 29: A family at Gulipatna Sahi in Umerkote town in Nabarangpur district is mourning the death of a parrot. The bereaved family is observing all the rituals that are observed for a departed family member.

Ex-soldier Lochan Swain lives at Gulipatna Sahi. For 30 long years, they had tamed a parrot. Ruby, the parrot, had become a family member of the Swain family. All the members had developed intense relationship with Ruby. Possibly due to old age, Ruby breathed her last Wednesday. The bereaved family performed her last rites as per Hindu tradition.

"Ruby was very much like a family member. It will be difficult for us to forget the moments we had shared with her. We have performed her last rites following Hindu rituals. And now we are observing all the shradh rituals," observed a family member. Umerkote residents were in awe for the unheard of relationship between the Swain family and a bird.

Mao posters spark panic

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhawanipatna, Oct 29: After a brief lull, Maoists have made their presence felt in Lanjigarh block in Kalahandi district as Mao posters and banners surfaced Thursday.

The residents of Ghatikundru village under Maljibang panchayat woke up Thursday morning to see Maoist posters and banners having been pinned onto trees and tied to trees. Through the banner and posters, the state committee of the outlawed CPI (Maoist) claimed police and government officials have indulged in oppression.

They also urged people to join Maoists' hardcore group 'People's Liberation Guerrilla Army'.

With the surface of Mao banners and posters, the villagers are in a state of panic, it was learnt.

Notably, five suspected Maoists, including three women, were killed September 9 during a gunfight between jawans of Special Operation Group (SOG) and District Voluntary Force (DVF) and the rebels on Kalahandi and Kandhamal border.



The encounter also saw casualties of two SOG jawans. The Special Operation Group (SOG) is a specialized anti-Naxal force of the Odisha police.

Such posters have come to the fore a day after security forces seized a huge cache of explosives from Dumadanga reserve forest of Swabhimana Anchal in Malkangiri during a combing operation. Based on intelligence inputs about the movement of armed Maoists in Dumadanga reserve forest Tuesday

9 women held for attacking police

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhadrak, Oct 29: Bonth police Thursday arrested nine women for attacking police and government officials during a demonstration at Bonth block office in Bhadrak district Wednesday. The police arrested the women after examining the CCTV footage of the office.

Sources said a group of women was demanding the dismissal of the secretary and president of their self-help group at Bonth block office. They turned violent and attacked police and block administration officials present at the spot. Four policemen and two government officials sustained severe injuries. Among those injured were an OLM coordinator and block project manager. Some others allegedly barged into the office and ransacked furniture.

CUTTACK MUNICIPAL CORPORATION
Tel. No. 2308517, 2308424, 2312663, 2308104 (Fax)

NOTICE

In consonance with "Prohibition of Employment as Manual Scavengers and their Rehabilitation Act, 2013", the Cuttack Municipal Corporation (CMC) hereby declares that, no manual scavenging incident happened for the financial year 2019-20.

Sd./- Commissioner
Cuttack Municipal Corporation

ODISHA LIFT IRRIGATION CORPORATION LTD.
(A Govt. of Odisha Undertaking)
No. CAD-659
OFFICE OF THE
EXECUTIVE ENGINEER, L.I. DIVISION, BARGARH

E-mail: eeolicbgh@gmail.com, Phone: 06646-246126

E-Procurement Notice - 06/2020-21

- Name of the Tender Inviting : Executive Engineer, L.I. Division, Bargarh
- Name of the Work : Power Supply, installation of 24 Nos. New L.I. Projects and revival of 30 Nos. of CLIPs in different blocks of Bargarh district.
- No. of Packages : 54 Nos.
- Tender Amount : Varies from 07.02 lakhs to 44.13 lakhs
- Date & time of availability of bid documents in the portal for Online bidding from 10.00 hrs dated 07.11.2020 to 24.00 hrs dated 16.11.2020
- Last date and time of receipt of bids in the portal upto 24.00 hrs. dated 16.11.2020.
- Last date and time of clarification upto 17.00 hrs. dated 13.11.2020.
- Date of opening of Technical Bid (Cover-1) at 11.00 hrs. dated 17.11.2020.
- Date of opening of Financial Bid (Cover-2) will be informed after evaluation of Technical Bids.
- Further details can be seen from the e-procurement portal of Govt. of Odisha i.e. www.tendersodisha.gov.in.
- Subsequent corrigendum/addendum if required shall be available in the above portal.

Sd./- Executive Engineer
L.I. Division, Bargarh
OIPR-32277/11/0008/2021

OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER
BHUBANESWAR (R&B) DIVISION NO.-III, BHUBANESWAR
bbsrandb03@yahoo.com
60Estg. No.- 4969 Date: 21.10.2020

No. B-354
Government of Odisha
"e" - Procurement Notice No. (26) of 2020-21
Bid Identification No. C.C. (R&B) 03

1 Name of the Work	E.I. Work
2 Total No. of Works	1 No. Work
3 Estimated Cost	Rs.13,16,088.00
4 Class of Contractor	HT
5 Period of Completion	1 (One) Calendar Month
6 Type of Tender	Single Cover System (Online)
7 Date & time of availability of bid document in the portal	From 02.11.2020 at 10.00 hours to 09.11.2020 at 17.30 hours
8 Last date & time for receipt of bids in the portal	09.11.2020 upto 17.30 hrs.
9 Name & address of the Officer Inviting Bid	Er. Himansu Sekhar Sarangi, Executive Engineer, Bhubaneswar (R&B) Division No.-III, Bhubaneswar

Further details can be seen from the e-procurement portal <https://tendersorissa.gov.in>.
N.B.: Subsequent corrigendum/addendum if required shall be available in the website as indicated above.

Executive Engineer
Bhubaneswar (R&B) Division No.-III, BBSR
OIPR-34089/11/0006/2021

OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER
RURAL WORKS DIVISION, BARGARH
Email: rd_bgh@yahoo.co.in // Fax : 06646-230676, Gmail: adityabhoi@gmail.com
e-Procurement Notice No. ONLINE-BGH- 05 OF 2020-21

No.O-482- 1. Name of the Work : Construction of 12 (Twelve) Nos. road works during 2020-21 in the district of Bargarh. 2. EMD : 1 (One) % of Estimated Cost. 3. Other details : As per DTCN.

Procurement Officer	Bid Identification No.	Availability of tender online for bidding		Last date & time of seeking tender clarification	Date & time of opening of tender
		From	To		
1	2	3	4	5	6
Executive Engineer, Rural Works Division, Bargarh	ONLINE-BGH-05 of 2020-21	05.11.2020 at 11.00 A.M.	13.11.2020 upto 5.00 P.M.	12.11.2020 upto 5.00 P.M.	16.11.2020 at 11.00 A.M.

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

Sd./- Executive Engineer, R.W. Division, Bargarh
OIPR-25062/11/0007/2021



True knowledge is not attained by thinking. It is what you are; it is what you become.
SRI AUROBINDO

Build agro infra

Skyrocketing prices of kitchen essentials continue to harass the common man. Most vegetables have remained out of bounds for the poor: Onions and potatoes are getting less visible in kitchens. Only the upper-middle class and the ultra rich from amongst us can afford to buy them. With the Odia month of Kartika a few days away, the demand for vegetables in the state is set to further soar and with that their prices will go up. In our state, onions and potatoes are the only vegetables whose prices tend to spiral out of reach within days of their breakout. Other vegetables, most of which are locally produced, remain more or less steady or, at the worst, take time in gaining prices. As Odisha is prone to natural calamities, imports of perishables from other states remain vulnerable to price vicissitudes. Natural disasters such as cyclones and floods disrupt road communications. Vast stretches of national highways are washed away cutting off communication links to the state. Transportation goes haywire at the slightest natural disaster. Yet, little has been done to find a lasting solution to this problem. Short-term measures like raiding hoarders, capping stocks and, on the all-India level, blocking exports or incentivising imports are taken to soften the prices. However, these measures by their very nature fail to deliver the goods. They only serve to bring in temporary relief. Also, these actions, being inherently pro-consumer and anti-producer, deter farmers from raising their farm output, thereby perpetuating rather than mitigating the price instability. This time round, the government, both at the Centre and the state, have reacted to the problem in a similar fashion. Ipso facto, the results are bound to be temporary. Can't the government throw its blinkers now and think out of box to find a lasting solution to this nagging crisis?

The failure of the government to create effective agro infrastructure in the state has resulted in finding a permanent solution to price shocks. Incentivising private players to create farm infrastructure could be an option worth considering by the government. Odisha is a consumable surplus state in paddy. However, it does not have enough warehouses to preserve the commodity. Farmers here grow paddy not as a choice but under compulsion as they do not have an alternate crop to fall back on. The total consumable surplus of rice in the state is around 35 lakh metric tonne, while the total installed capacity of warehouses does not exceed 15 lakh metric tonne. Of this, nearly 13 lakh metric tonne of space is government-owned, while hardly 2 lakh metric tonne is privately owned and, hence, scattered around the state. There is an urgent need to create additional storage capacity so that farmers here can be encouraged to produce more. In Kalahandi district, onion farmers were forced to sell their produce at ₹5 p/kg which they are now buying at ₹80 p/kg. They had been forced to resort to distress sale as there was no storage capacity in the district. Last year, the district had around 2,500 hectares of onion crop with a projected output of 38,000 tonne. Farmers in Dharmagarh, Golmunda, Jaypatna, Koksara, Kalampur, Junagarh, Borda, Gurjang, Artal, Kuliama, Madiguda panhayats and many panchayats in Kesinga and Madanpur Rampur had grown onions. However, due to lack of storage facilities in the district, onion farmers resorted to distress sale. Fearing losses, many old onion farmers are turning away from the crop this year. Inviting private investment in development of agro storage could encourage such farmers. Even large numbers of farmers in Bolangir, Boudh and Kandhamal districts grow onions. Local availability of storage space and creation of market linkages for their produce will go a long way in encouraging them to grow the tuber. The 'Make In Odisha Conclave' should invite corporate houses who could invest in building agro infrastructure in the state. This could be one way of sobering the price volatilities of agri produce and reduce the state's dependence on other states.



John Agyekum Kufuor

AFRICA HAS THE HIGHEST PREVALENCE OF MALNUTRITION OF ANY REGION AND MAY SOON OVERTAKE ASIA IN TERMS OF THE NUMBER OF HUNGRY AND MALNOURISHED PEOPLE

An African proverb says, "When the music changes, so does the dance." As governments around the world strive to protect their populations from the Covid-19 pandemic's health and economic effects, the role of decisive leadership has never been more important – not least in the area of nutrition.

When we established African Leaders for Nutrition four years ago, our aim was to highlight revolutionary thinking in addressing malnutrition across the continent. None of our group's founders – African Development Bank President Akinwumi A Adesina, the late former United Nations Secretary-General Kofi A Annan, and I – could ever have imagined the burden that the pandemic would impose on the global development agenda.

The threat posed by this new virus requires us to tackle malnutrition in new ways. Covid-19 has revealed inefficiencies and inequities in all of our efforts to achieve robust and long-lasting improvements in nutrition. Africa's rising number of Covid-19 cases threatens to increase hunger and malnutrition further, and has brought into focus how our thinking must change.

African leaders have a particular duty to mitigate the economic crisis. We must act urgently to safeguard and develop our health and food systems, as well as our social safety nets, in order to slow down the cycle of intergenerational poverty. Only integrated efforts will enable us to coordinate nutrition-related investments and improvements to social protection, and then to examine their impact.

Our task is huge. The 2020 State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World (SOFI) report and recent research published in The Lancet on the impact of COVID-19 on childhood malnutrition make for grim reading. After decades of progress in reducing all forms of malnutrition, the trend is reversing, owing to insufficient investment in promoting good nutrition, climate shocks, violent conflict, and now the effects of the Covid-19 crisis.

Africa has the highest prevalence of malnutrition of any region, and may soon overtake Asia in terms of the number of hungry and undernourished people. Among children younger than five, the economic impact of Covid-19 is projected to increase the incidence of wasting, which results from severe weight loss due to starvation and diseases associated with acute malnutrition. This, combined with reduced access to health and nutrition services, is expected to result in more than 128,000 additional deaths globally in 2020 among under-fives, with more than half of these occurring in Sub-Saharan Africa.



The threat posed by this new virus requires us to tackle malnutrition in new ways. Covid-19 has revealed inefficiencies and inequities in all of our efforts to achieve robust and long-lasting improvements in nutrition. Africa's rising number of Covid-19 cases threatens to increase hunger and malnutrition further, and has brought into focus how our thinking must change

Our leaders therefore must meet the challenge of providing adequate resources for the highest-impact interventions. These include exclusive breastfeeding, targeted complementary feeding, micronutrient supplementation, and food fortification.

Third, a strong nutrition component in pandemic-related social-protection programs is vital to ensure that Africa no longer trails other regions in this regard. Weaknesses in the continent's social-security programs may prove disastrous for people already suffering from hunger or malnutrition. With disruptions to food systems and supply chains compounded by rising prices, social-protection programs need to focus on broadening access to affordable and nutritious diets.

African Leaders for Nutrition's focus remains the same: to amplify the voices of the continent's leaders in order to support Africa's policy conversations – including by facilitating high-level political engagement. Through our African Leaders for Nutrition Champion, King Letsie III of Lesotho, we are calling on heads of state and government of the African Union Assembly, the continent's premier political institution, to ensure that

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nutrition features prominently in their Covid-19 response and recovery plans.

At the same time, our advocacy tools, such as the Continental Nutrition Accountability Scorecard, compile hard data on African countries' progress on improving nutrition, services, governance, and socioeconomic outcomes. African governments must make data-driven choices to save lives and livelihoods during the pandemic and beyond, and such tools aim to guide them toward allocating financial resources and other support to achieve the greatest impact.

Above all, African countries must respond in concert to the challenges they face. That means fighting the pandemic in the framework of a longer-term strategy to end malnutrition and boost Africa's collective problem-solving capacity. By uniting and amplifying the voices of Africa's leaders, we can change the dance.

The writer, a former president of Ghana (2001-09), is a co-founder of the African Leaders for Nutrition initiative.

©PROJECT SYNDICATE

WISDOM CORNER

- The man of knowledge must be able not only to love his enemies but also to hate his friends. FRIEDRICH NIETZSCHE
- Trees are poems the earth writes upon the sky, We fell them down and turn them into paper, That we may record our emptiness. KAHILIL GIBRAN
- The only way to get through life is to laugh your way through it. You either have to laugh or cry. I prefer to laugh. Crying gives me a headache. MARJORIE PAY HINCKLEY

WORDSWORTH

Brand spanking new

These days, spanking in expressions like that can be said to mean something like "extremely, strikingly, or remarkably", but really it's no more than a flag to give extra force or emphasis to what you're saying. The word appears in English about the middle of the seventeenth century, but then implied something that was exceptionally good or especially fine, often something showy or smart. It may have come from a Danish or Norwegian word spanke, to strut (it seems not to be connected with the more usual sense of spank, to slap, which may be imitative). Later on horses often had the word applied to them, to mean one capable of moving very fast, but particularly in a smart way. Later still, it could mean no more than moving fast in any kind of conveyance, with no link to horses. Frank T Bullen wrote in The Log of a Sea-waif in 1899: "A large canoe ... was coming off to us at a spanking rate". H G Wells used it in 1904: "The char-a-banc ... was clattering along at a spanking pace" [char-a-banc, an early form of bus, used for pleasure trips]. The idea behind the modern sense in brand spanking new is not so very different from its first use.

Brass ring

A cursory glance at American newspaper archives shows that the expression is common; a recent example is in Ebony for 1 April 2004: "If you're like the millions of women who are on the go – grabbing for the brass ring, focusing on the family or trying to shatter that glass ceiling – it's past time for you to take a step back and concentrate on finding the real you." In response to a plea for help, John Baker of the American Dialect Society made the key connection and from then on it was plain sailing. We are in the fairground, specifically on a carousel or merry-go-round. At one time, the riders on the outside row of horses were often given a little challenge. Once the ride started moving, a metal arm was swung out – on some rides this held a single brass ring, which riders could try to grab as they passed. Anyone who managed to retrieve it could redeem it for a free ride. Another system had a dispenser of rings, most of which were steel and had no value, but one per ride was the brass one that won the prize. Brass ring came to have the figurative sense of a prize, in particular one that was hard to gain.

LOL Caught by a local tribe

A Frenchman, an Englishman and a New Yorker were captured by cannibals. The chief comes to them and says, "The bad news is that now we've caught you and we're going to kill you. We will put you in a pot, cook you, eat you and then we're going to use your skins to build a canoe. The good news is that you can choose how to die." The Frenchman says, "I take ze sword." The chief gives him a sword, the Frenchman says, "Vive la France!" and runs himself through. The Englishman says, "a pistol for me please." The chief gives him a pistol, the Englishman points it at his head and says, "God save the queen!" and blows his brains out. The New Yorker says, "Gimme a fork!" The chief is puzzled, but he shrugs and gives him a fork. The New Yorker takes the fork and starts jabbing himself all over—the stomach, the sides, the chest, everywhere. There is blood gushing out all over, it's horrible. The chief is appalled and asks, "My God, what are you doing?" And the New Yorker responds, "So much for your canoe you stupid cannibal!"

SPECTRUM FOOD SURPLUS

Food surplus and hunger in India

It is an irony that hunger problem exists in India although there is surplus of food in the country. Both seem to be contradictory to each other but it is a fact. It is also a fact that food is the third basic necessity after air and water for humans to remain alive. No welfare country can ignore its hunger problem. It is the first and foremost duty to see that not a single person remains hungry due to lack of food.

In spite of the fact that food is the most essential commodity for human life, it is not available to all. We are living in a world where all kinds of food are available to some people within a few minutes, whereas another group waits days together to get a handful of food stuff. People in developed countries are living amidst abundance of food and wasting tones and tones of food everyday while the ill-fated people in developing countries endure the pangs of hunger. Especially during the pandemic Covid-19, the plight of the people in countries like Yemen, Congo, Ethiopia and South Sudan etc. to mitigate hunger is really indescribable.

India is second in food production, after China. As a result of continuous efforts of the Indian government after introducing the Green Revolution in the country in the 1960s it claims to be self-dependent in procurement of food grains. Even the output has become surplus. In spite of the said achievement, 19 crore people in India starve every day. The number of hungry people globally crosses 82 crores.

As per the statistics, in 2020 India has remained in the 94th position among 107 nations in the Global Hunger Index. In 2019 its position was 102 among 117 nations and in 2018 it ranked 55th among 77 nations. This indicates that India hasn't been able to solve its hunger problems till today. All other Asian countries, except Afghanistan, have remained above India in the Global Hunger Index. Bangladesh is in the 75th position and Myanmar in the 78th position. Even Pakistan is above India in this Index and occupies 88th position. If this situation continues it is meaningless to call India a food grain surplus nation. Despite its developed economy and adequate food production it has failed miserably in tackling

the hunger problem. Apart from starvation, many people in India suffer from malnutrition. It is a matter of great regret that in India over 7,000 people die of hunger every day. Similarly about 4,500 children below the age of 5 years die every day due to lack of food and malnutrition. Question arises as to what are the causes of this paradox. Poverty is the main cause of hunger in India. It not only leads to hunger, but also seriously affects the availability of adequate amount of nutritious food for the most vulnerable section of people. It is estimated that in India about 276 million people are in the very low income groups. Thus, major food and nutrition crises occur as people are too poor to obtain enough food.

One major cause of hunger problem is wastage of food in India. India is one of those countries that waste huge quantities of food every day. According to a report, India wastes as much as food United Kingdom consumes. According to the United Nations Development Programme, nearly 40% of the food produced in India goes waste. In terms of money India wastes ₹244

crore worth of food a day and ₹50,000 crore worth of food in a year. Huge amount of fruits and vegetables are also wasted every year due to lack of adequate storage facilities. The gGovernment has launched several schemes over the years to help alleviate the hunger problem. The notable schemes are Antyodaya Anna Yojana, Garib Kalyan Anna Yojana, Annapurna Scheme, Midday Meal Scheme etc. The intentions behind these schemes are very noble. But due to lack of proper execution at the grass root level and rampant corruption prevalent everywhere the benefits do not always reach the people who need it most.

The hunger problem in India indicates the mismanagement of public distribution system. Several welfare schemes of the government to feed the poor also suffer from many lacunae. Most of the times the subsidies of the government meant for poor are not reaching them. This is due to lack of proper identification of deserving beneficiaries. All the loopholes and weaknesses found in the system should be eradicated by the government immediately in order to make India hunger-free.

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, Rasulgarh Industrial Estate, Bhubaneswar-751010

Water scarcity & industrial units

Sir, It really pains to learn that some rivers in Odisha are left dry even in monsoons. Environmentalists have warned that Odisha is going to face severe water crisis by 2050. Some of the industrial units have been using and exploiting the water from rivers and canals at throw away prices. It is feared that Odisha will struggle for a drop of water in the coming years. According to the information from Water Resources department, about 245 industrial units have been drawing 55928.544 litres of water from 10 major rivers, while 794 industrial are exploiting 1064.56 litres of ground water. Official data stated that many industrial units are using water exceeding the limits. They have drawn 987.54 billion litres of river and ground water in 2018-2019. It is really shocking to learn that some of the industrial units are not paying water taxes to the state government. In the last several years 15 industrial units have managed to evade tax amounting ₹2665.88 crore. On the pretext generating employment, the rich are establishing their plants utilising the state's resources and looting like water resources. In the name of development we must not damage our environment and waste our most valuable water resources.

Hitesh Kumar Parida, JAJPUR

India-US 2+2 dialogue

Sir, The India-US 2+2 dialogue is highly significant in view of the fact that it was held amid a pandemic, a fierce presidential election campaign and the mounting tension between the troops of India and China along the LAC. The main outcome of the combined talks between the US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo and Defence Secretary Mark T. Esper with Indian External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar and Defence Minister Rajnath Singh was the signing of the Indo-US Basic Exchange and Cooperation Agreement (BECA) for geo-spatial co-ordination. Referred to as the fourth of the "foundational agreements", BECA would allow India and the US to access a wide variety of geo-spatial data from each other. This data will give India's long-range missiles or drones the ability to strike targets thousands of kilometres away with great accuracy. BECA will enable India to access the highly accurate navigation satellite networks run by the US. Considering that the cooperation also includes data exchange on Chinese troops and weapons deployment along the 3,488-km India-China border (LAC), it would certainly give India an advantage over China in terms of defence.

Venu GS, KOLLAM



KERALA CPM SECY'S SON ARRESTED

The double whammy for the ruling CPI-M has come at a time when the party was getting ready to face two polls – for local bodies in December and the Assembly election in May 2021

AGENCIES

Thiruvananthapuram, Oct 29: Hours after the Enforcement Directorate secured custody of Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan's former secretary M Sivasankar, in Bangalore, the ED arrested Bineesh Kodiyeri, the son of CPI-M Kerala secretary Kodiyeri Balakrishnan.

The ED has arrested Bineesh in connection with the funding of money to an accused in a narcotic case – Anoop Mohammed.

Anoop Mohammed was arrested by the Narcotics Control Bureau in Bangalore a few months back.

Bineesh was first interrogated by the ED officials last month and soon after that the ED had also sent him a notice under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act and asked him to give the list of his assets and they directed the State Registration department to prepare a list of his assets and to see

that there is no transfer or sale of his assets (properties) without their knowledge.

He was then asked to appear before them October 21, but he wrote to ED that he needs some time and appeared before them Thursday morning.

Soon he was taken into custody and was produced before a court there. Reacting to the developments, Leader of Opposition Ramesh Chennithala said this is not the first time the sons of Balakrishnan have landed in trouble.

"The CPI-M in Kerala is now in custody. First, the secretary to Vijayan – Sivasankar was arrested by ED, now CPI-M party secretary's son has been arrested by ED in a narcotics case. Our request is Balakrishnan should not resign as state secretary. Only if he remains in that post, will it be good for us," said Chennithala.

"Look what's happening, Vijayan's office is in the midst of gold smug-



Our request is Balakrishnan should not resign as state secretary. Only if he remains in that post, will it be good for us

RAMESH CHENNITHALA | LEADER OF OPPOSITION, KERALA ASSEMBLY

People in Kerala know everything. Already Balakrishnan had said that neither the party nor the government will come to the help of wrongdoers. This is going to affect the image of the opposition parties

SITARAM YECHURY | GENERAL SECRETARY, CPIM

gling, while Balakrishnan's home is a den of narcotics," said Chennithala.

State BJP president K Surendran

said strange are the ways what's happening to the CPI-M in Kerala.

"On one hand Vijayan is caught in the gold smuggling case and none

will forget the decision of the CPI-M wherein they said the family members of all party members should be equally clean. See what has happened to Balakrishnan's son. It's time the CPI-M in Kerala undergoes a total cleansing and no state government in the country would have had a double whammy on a single day. Both Vijayan and Balakrishnan should quit," said Surendran.

But putting up a brave face CPI-M general secretary Sitaram Yechury said BJP is desperate.

"People in Kerala know everything. Already Balakrishnan had said that neither the party nor the government will come to the help of wrongdoers. This is going to affect the image of the opposition parties," said Yechury.

The double whammy for the ruling CPI-M has come at a time when the party was getting ready to face two polls – for local bodies in December and the Assembly election in May 2021.

Vijayan has gone silent and in the past whenever there is some relief that either he or his government used to get in court cases, he often made it a point to address the media but when something goes wrong, he often surfaces only after a few days.

'Harassed' Karna IPS officer resigns

Controversial 1989-batch IPS officer Additional Director General of Police P Ravindranath resigned late night Wednesday after the govt released a promotion list of IPS officers



AGENCIES

Bangalore, Oct 29: A senior Indian Police Service officer has resigned from service accusing 'a few individuals' of harassing him indirectly.

Controversial 1989-batch IPS officer Additional Director General of Police P Ravindranath resigned late night Wednesday after the government released a promotion list of IPS officers.

He has reportedly alleged that his batch mate and former Bengaluru City police commissioner, T Sunil Kumar was promoted just a day before his retirement.

Despite calls by IANS to his mobile and office numbers, the police officer did not respond.

When IANS called his office, his office staff confirmed that he had come to office and was attending work. According to a senior police officer, Ravindranath has a history of resigning from his posts and withdrawing after sometime.

"This has become a habit to him. In the last 12 years, he must have resigned thrice including this one," an officer told IANS on the condition of anonymity.

The police officer further added that the officer might be using these resignation tactics to ensure that he too gets the promotion. "He might withdraw his resignation

in some time now," the officer quipped.

Ravindranath is no stranger to controversies— he was the one who was caught red-handed by a woman journalist in a coffee shop in 2014 clicking her pictures without her consent. The complaint also stated that he had taken "inappropriate pictures."

He resigned over this episode alleging that then the Bengaluru City police commissioner, Raghavendra Auradkar had fixed him by sending those women to the coffee shop.

As part of the investigation procedure, his mobile phone was seized after a woman journalist lodged a complaint.

After sometime, he withdrew his resignation and the complaint was also given a silent burial.

In 2008, he resigned for the first time when his leave application was rejected by his immediate boss, BE Umapathy, who was then ADGP and Ravindranath was IGP then.

"Both did not enjoy any cordial relations on the work front, when Ravindranath sent his leave application, Umapathy rejected his application. Citing that Umapathy was intentionally harassing him as he had applied medical leave to attend some medical urgency," an officer disclosed and added that after sometime protest, he withdrew his resignation.

After Sivasankar, will ED, Customs go after Vijayan

Congress and the BJP have increased their demands of asking Vijayan to quit



AGENCIES

Thiruvananthapuram, Oct 29: While the game is over for Kerala's most powerful IAS officer M Sivasankar whose arrest by the Enforcement Directorate (ED) has been recorded, all eyes are on which direction would the probe agencies be now looking and indications are that it could well reach the office of Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan.

While Vijayan ever since his trusted Secretary Sivasankar was first removed from the post and later suspended has been time and again washing his hands off the crime of Sivasankar and his stock statement has been, "I do not know anything and none from my office has called the Customs. This has been confirmed by the Customs themselves."

However Vijayan's stock statement appears to have fallen flat as the arrest memo of the ED reveals Sivasankar had called the Customs to see if the baggage of the UAE Consulate can be given without the mandatory check up

Indications are that the probe agencies very soon are expected to list out two more names from Vijayan's office and he is likely to be called in for questioning

Sivasankar were close friends.

And since then till last night Sivasankar was questioned by the Customs, ED and the NIA and all through he said he had no clue of Swapna's smuggling links.

But after over 100 hours of questioning and with the Kerala High Court Wednesday rejecting his anticipatory bail plea, the ED took him away and one by one his detailed links with evidences has started coming out on the role of his, which was totally opposite to what he had so far claimed.

While the Congress and the BJP have increased their demands of asking Vijayan to quit, he has not opened his mouth and has ducked the routine Covid press briefing.

Meanwhile, indications are that the probe agencies very soon is expected to list out two more names from Vijayan's office and is likely to be called in for questioning.

Incidentally, this gold smuggling case is also linked to the Life Mission project (the pet project of Vijayan where homes are built for the homeless using sponsorship money) and even though the CBI had commenced probe, the government has managed to get a partial stay in that questioning.

The links of both Sivasankar and Swapna Suresh has also surfaced that a fat sum of Rs 9 crore of the total Rs 20 crore project cost has been paid as commission. So all in all, the coming days is going to be crucial not just for Vijayan, but for the CPI-M who by now has been trying their best to blame Sivasankar and give a clean chit to Vijayan.

Eid amid Covid curbs in Karna

AGENCIES

Bangalore, Oct 29: Karnataka has imposed restrictions on processions and programmes on Eid Milad Friday to avoid large gatherings in mosques and public places in the Covid-hit state, an official said Thursday.

"Processions and congregations in large numbers at mosques and in maidans (grounds) for prayers (namaz) and celebrating Eid Milad Friday are banned to contain the coronavirus spread," a Waqf board official told IANS here.

Eid Milad-un-Nabi celebrates the birthday of Prophet Muhammad in the third month (Rabi al-awwal) of the Islamic lunar calendar the world over.

"Cultural and discourse events in mohallas (neighbourhoods) are also not allowed to prevent the devout from gathering in large numbers in pandemic times," said the official.



WAQF BOARD DECIDES

Processions and congregations in large numbers at mosques and in grounds for Namaz and celebrating Eid Milad are banned

Devotees above 60 years are advised to offer prayers and celebrate the festival at their homes

The devout are, however, allowed to assemble in mosques for prayers in limited numbers to ensure physical distancing, while wearing a face mask. Sanitisation of hands is

mandatory for all.

"Devotees above 60 years are advised to offer prayers and celebrate the festival at their home due to restrictions on their movement as per the guidelines of the Union Ministry of Home Affairs," said the official.

The board has also barred organisers from using loudspeakers for discourse or cultural events.

In Mangaluru on the state's west coast, the district administration banned mass prayers and processions to restrict the devout from gathering in large numbers in open grounds Friday.

"The spiritual discourse in mohallas has been prohibited in view of the Covid spread. Prayers can be offered in mosques and dargahs by adhering to the guidelines and maintaining social distance. Wearing a mask is mandatory," said Dakishna Kannada deputy commissioner KV Rajendra in a statement.

You can book KSRTC's double decker buses for photo shoot

AGENCIES

Thiruvananthapuram, Oct 29: Cash-starved Kerala State Road Transport Corporation (KSRTC), which is having a hand-to-mouth existence and is searching for non-operative revenues in order to earn extra cash, has decided to rent out its exquisite product – double decker buses – for photo shoot opportunities.

The KSRTC had made profit only in its first year of operation way back in the sixties and since then payment of salaries and pensions has always been a big pain for successive governments. On most occasions, it's the state government which bails out KSRTC, whenever things turn sour for the organisation.

After finding great response to its offer to rent out a double decker bus for a pre-wedding photo shoot



to Ganesh and Lekshmi, who will tie the knot January 18, 2021, the KSRTC officials have decided to make it a money making venture.

The present rate that has been fixed is Rs 4,000 for 50 km travel and an eight-hour duration in the state capital.

Interested persons can book this double decker bus for conducting pre and post-wedding shoots and also for birthday parties.

The KSRTC has decided to see the response and in all likelihood this scheme would now be extended to other cities like Kochi and Kozhikode as well.

Fresh 7K Covid cases in Kerala

AGENCIES

Thiruvananthapuram, Oct 29: The Covid-19 recoveries in Kerala crossed the 3.25 lakh mark with 8,474 persons recovering Thursday, while 7,020 fresh cases were detected.

The total infection count climbed to 4,05,545 and the toll mounted to 1,429 with 26 deaths, Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan told reporters here.

As many as 91,784 people are presently undergoing treatment in various hospitals across the state, he said, giving the infection details after a Covid review meeting.

Of the fresh cases, 168 people had come from outside the state, 6,037 were infected through contact and the source of infection of 734 was yet to be known, he said.

Thiruvananthapuram reported the highest number of cases Thursday-964, followed by Ernakulam 594 and Thiruvananthapuram 625, he said.



Eighty one health workers were among those who tested positive.

"As many as 8,474 persons who were under treatment in various hospitals have recovered. With this, the total number of people who have got well has touched 3,25,166 so far," the Chief Minister said, adding that currently 2.91 lakh persons are under surveillance.

As many as 54,339 samples were tested in the last 24 hours and so far 45,31,069, specimens have been sent for examination.

Twenty two new areas were added to the list of hotspots, taking the total number to 694, he added.

The incidents of people not wearing masks has been increasing of late, the Chief Minister said, adding there is a need to start another campaign highlighting the need to wear them.

At least 1,439 persons were registered in the state for flouting Covid protocol. Thirty two cases were registered for violating prohibitory orders, a police press release said.

Women-founded tech startups are bleeding

FUNDING FOR THESE STARTUPS FELL 24 PC TO \$280 MILLION IN THE FIRST HALF OF THIS YR, COMPARED TO \$369 MILLION (YoY)

AGENCIES

Bangalore, Oct 29: Amid Covid-19, funding for women-founded and co-founded startups in India fell 24 per cent to \$280 million in the first half of this year, compared to \$369 million in the same period last year, said a new report Thursday.

In H1 2020, funding declined across all three stages – early, growth, and late – compared to H1 2019, said the report by MAKERS India, a strategic partnership between Verizon Media and YourStory Media.

Many women-led startups scaled down their operations or pivoted their business models to stay afloat amid the pandemic, said the report titled 'State of Women in Tech Entrepreneurship in India 2020'.

Women behind some apparel startups branched out to manufacturing protective face masks and

PPE kits. However, despite Covid-19, startups with at least one woman founder were able to secure 71 funding deals in H1 2020, at par with H1 2019 (70 deals) and H1 2018 (70 deals).

The report is based on in-depth interviews with 100 women tech entrepreneurs across sectors and cities in India, independent research and analysis of data for the period between January 2018 and June 2020.

The research showed that there has been a phenomenal '11X increase' in the number of women entrepreneurs in tech in the last decade (2010-2020). Female-founded and co-founded tech startups in India currently stand at 285, it said.

Between 1990 and 2010, only 26 startups had at least one woman founder. However, 75 startups added at least one woman founder by 2014 and 184 more by 2019.



The total funding raised by tech startups led by women founders only remains minuscule – just 1.43 per cent (\$480 million) across 80 deals between January 2018 and June 2020, said the report.

During the same period, funding raised by startups with at least one woman founder accounted for

only 5.77 per cent (\$1.69 billion) across 378 deals of the total funding.

However, women entrepreneurs in tech are exploring offbeat, and male dominated sectors such as automotive, cleantech, hyperlocal, SaaS, PaaS, space tech, sports and online gaming.

This trend has grown through

THERE ARE 285 FEMALE-FOUNDED AND CO-FOUNDED TECH STARTUPS IN INDIA

WOMEN BEHIND SOME APPAREL STARTUPS BRANCHED OUT TO MANUFACTURING PROTECTIVE FACE MASKS AND PPE KITS

DESPIITE COVID, STARTUPS WITH AT LEAST ONE WOMAN FOUNDER WERE ABLE TO SECURE 71 FUNDING DEALS IN H1 2020, AT PAR WITH H1 2019 (70 DEALS) AND H1 2018 (70 DEALS)

the Covid pandemic, with investors testing the waters in niche areas.

While fintech and financial services are sectors that raised the highest amount in funding and saw the most number of deals by women entrepreneurs between January 2018 and June 2020, edtech was a top gainer in terms of funding in H1 2020.



The core issue of this election is unemployment, job creation, development and people know it. Despite this they (the NDA) are not talking on real issues. They are busy in personal attacks. This is not an election of Modi, Rahul, Chirag or Nitish but the bottom-line of this election is real issues

TEJASWINI YADAV | MAHAGATHABANDHAN LEADER

EMERGENCY LANDING

Bharatiya Janata Party MP Manoj Tiwari's helicopter was forced to make an emergency landing at Patna airport Thursday after it lost communication with the Air Traffic Control



of the day quote

Jammu and Kashmir has been converted into a jail where voices of politicians, journalists and civil society members are being stifled

I wish we had forged an alliance earlier. Maybe we could have avoided the situation (revocation of special status of Jammu and Kashmir)

The National Highways Authority of India must speed up the four-laning of the Kalka-Shimla and Kiratpur-Manali highways

New law to curb air pollution in Delhi-NCR

Under the ordinance released by the Ministry of Law and Justice Thursday, the Environment Pollution (Prevention and Control) Authority (EPCA) has been dissolved and replaced by a commission comprising over 20 members

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Oct 29: Faced with rising air pollution in Delhi-NCR, the Centre has introduced a new law through an ordinance that puts in place a powerful oversight body and provides for up to five years of jail term and Rs one crore fine for violators with immediate effect.

Under the ordinance released by the Ministry of Law and Justice Thursday, the Environment Pollution (Prevention and Control) Authority (EPCA) has been dissolved and replaced by a commission comprising over 20 members. "The ordinance may be called the Commission for Air Quality Management in National Capital Region and Adjoining Areas Ordinance 2020. It shall apply to national capital region and also adjoining areas in so far as it relates to matters concerning air pollution in the NCR. It shall come into force at once," it said. The ordinance was signed by the President on Wednesday.

As per the ordinance, the areas where it shall be in force include Punjab, Haryana, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh, adjoining areas of the NCR and Delhi where any source of pollution is located which is causing an adverse impact on air quality in the national capital region. The commission will have the power to lay down parameters of air quality, discharge of environmen-



tal pollutants, inspect premises violating the law, ordering closure of non-abiding industries/plants etc. "Any non-compliance or contravention of any provisions/rules or order/direction of the commission will be an offence punishable with a jail term up to five years or with fine up to Rs one crore or with both," it said.

The ordinance comes within days of a statement made by the Centre through Solicitor General Tushar Mehta in the Supreme Court during a matter related to pollution in the NCR in which he had said the Centre will bring a new legislation on "Air Quality Management in the National Capital Region and adjoining areas".

The Centre informed the Supreme Court on Thursday that it has come out with an Ordinance on curbing pollution and it has been promulgated already. As per the new law, the Supreme Court appointed body,

EPCA which was formed in 1986, has been dissolved and any action taken by it shall be deemed to have been taken under the corresponding provisions of the ordinance.

"The order made under environment protection act 1986, constituting Environment Pollution (Prevention and Control) Authority (EPCA) for the national capital region wide order dated January 29, 1998, is hereby repealed and the EPCA is hereby dissolved. "Notwithstanding such repeal, anything done or any action taken by the EPCA for the NCR under the said order, shall be deemed to have been taken under the corresponding provisions of this ordinance," it said.

The EPCA was a two-member body with Chairman Bhure Lal and member Sunita Narain, who also heads the Centre for Science and Environment (CSE), an environment think tank.

The members of the new com-

mission as per the ordinance shall include a chairperson, who is or has been the secretary of Government of India or chief secretary of a state, a representative of environment secretary and five ex-officio members who are either chief secretaries or secretaries in charge of the environment department of Delhi, Punjab, Haryana, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh.

The commission will also include two full time members who have specific scientific knowledge regarding air pollution, one technical member from Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB), one technical member nominated by ISRO and three members of NGOs having experience in matters concerning combating of air pollution.

"There shall be a full-time secretary who shall be the chief coordinating officer of the commission and shall assist in managing the affairs of the commission," it said. Other than these, the commission may also appoint associate members, one representative each from the Ministry of Road Transport, Ministry of Power, Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs, Ministry of Petroleum, Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Commerce and Industry and a representative of any association of commerce and industry.

Mayawati suspends seven rebel MLAs

Amid speculation that the MLAs could switch sides in Uttar Pradesh, Mayawati also said to ensure the defeat of Samajwadi Party candidates in future MLC elections, her party will even vote for BJP or any other party's nominee



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Oct 29: BSP chief Mayawati Thursday suspended seven of her party's MLAs, who had opposed the nomination of its official candidate Ramji Gautam for the elections to the Rajya Sabha, for anti-party activities.

Amid speculation that the MLAs could switch sides in Uttar Pradesh, Mayawati also said to ensure the defeat of Samajwadi Party candidates in future MLC elections, her party will even vote for BJP or any other party's nominee.

The former Uttar Pradesh chief minister said as soon as the rebel MLAs join any party, the BSP would take action against them under the anti-defection law. She also said the party organisation has been informed that the suspended legislators should not be invited to any BSP function.

Those suspended are Chaudhary Aslam Ali, Hakim Lal Bind, Mohammad Mujtaba Siddiqui, Aslam Raini, Sushma Patel, Hargovind Bhargava and Bandana Singh, according to a party statement. She said the suspended lawmakers would not be fielded by the BSP in any future election. People from the castes and religion of the suspended MLAs would be fielded against them. BSP would continue to nurture people from the castes, communities and religions the sus-

pending MLAs represented, Mayawati said.

"Their communities would not be punished for their deeds," Mayawati said her party would leave no stone unturned to defeat SP candidates in the future even if it meant voting for candidates of the BJP or any other party.

Any candidate who dominates over the Samajwadi Party's second candidate will get BSP MLAs' vote, she said in a statement. In a jolt to the BSP on Wednesday, six party MLAs reportedly met Samajwadi Party chief Akhilesh Yadav and later threw hints that they may switch sides.

Four of the group of rebels also filed an affidavit, saying their signatures on the party candidate Gautam's nomination for the Rajya Sabha polls had been "forged".

The move turned out to be futile with the Returning Officer still accepting Gautam's nomination as the Bahujan Samaj Party candidate for the November 9 biennial elections for the 10 Uttar Pradesh seats that are falling vacant.

Mayawati claimed that when the Samajwadi Party fielded its senior leader Ram Gopal Yadav, BSP general secretary Satish Misra tried to contact SP chief Akhilesh Yadav over phone but failed. He later contacted Ram Gopal Yadav who said the SP would not field another candidate.

SHORT TAKES

12 injured

Jalpaiguri (WB): At least 12 people were injured when a minibus overturned after losing control while trying to save two buffalos in West Bengal's Jalpaiguri district, police said Thursday. The incident took place on a state highway in Targhera forest in Malbazar police station area on Wednesday night, they said.

Naxal killed

Sukma: A Naxal was killed in an encounter with the security forces in Chhattisgarh's insurgency-hit Sukma district, police said Thursday. The skirmish occurred Wednesday in a forest between Duled and Minpa villages under Chintalnar police station area, where a joint team of security forces was out on an anti-Naxal operation, inspector general of police (Bastar range) Sundarraj P said.

Girl raped

Chandigarh: A 4-year-old girl was allegedly raped by a juvenile in Punjab's Barnala district, the police said Thursday. The 16-year-old boy, who lived in the same neighbourhood as the victim in Dangarh village, allegedly took her to his home where he committed the crime on Wednesday, said the police. The accused has been booked under the relevant sections of the IPC and the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences, said the police.

Ganja seized

Malda (WB): Two packets of ganja worth around Rs 2 lakh were seized in West Bengal's Malda district, and one person was arrested in this connection, police said Thursday. Acting on a tip-off, a patrolling team intercepted a vehicle near Badha Pukur area on National Highway 34 on Wednesday night and recovered 20.6 kg of ganja from it, English Bazar police station's inspector-in-charge Madan Mohan Roy said.

Man shot dead

Kathua/Jammu: A man was shot dead after an altercation with his friend over repayment of money borrowed by him in Jammu and Kashmir's Kathua district Thursday, officials said. Sanjeev Sharma went to the house of his friend Banu to get back his money borrowed by his friend in Kathua, they said. An altercation between the duo ensued and Sharma was fired upon by the accused with a single barrel gun, they added. The injured was shifted to a hospital but doctors declared him dead on arrival, they said. The police arrested the accused and seized the rifle from his residence, the officials added.

SC ruling for NDPS cases

PNN, AGENCIES

New Delhi, Oct 29: In a major judgement critical for cases under the NDPS Act, the Supreme Court Thursday held that a statement recorded under its Section 67 cannot be used as a confession in the trial of an offence under the Act.

By a 2:1 ruling, a three-judge bench overruled two previous Supreme Court verdicts to hold that the statements of accused recorded under Section 67 of the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (NDPS) Act cannot be used as a confession during the trial.

The majority judgment by Justices Rohinton F. Nariman and Navin Sinha said: "The officers who are invested with powers under Section 53 of the NDPS Act are 'police officers' within the meaning of Section 25 of the Evidence Act, as a result of which any confessional statement made to them would be barred under the provisions of Section 25 of the Evidence Act, and cannot be taken into account in order to convict an accused under the NDPS Act."

Justice Indira Banerjee, the third judge on the bench, dissented with the majority view. The top court noted that if confessional statement made before an officer were to be treated as evidence, then it would be a direct infringement of the constitutional guarantees contained in Articles 14, 20(3) and 21 of the Constitution. Citing the previous two verdicts, the top court said both these judgments do not state the law correctly, and are thus overruled. "Other judgments that expressly refer to and rely upon these judgments, or upon the principles laid down by these judgments, also stand overruled for the reasons given by us," it said.



Farmers block railway tracks during a protest against the new farm bills, at Jandiala Guru in Amritsar, Thursday

VENTING ANGER

India files protest with Saudi for wrong map on banknote

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Oct 29: India has conveyed its serious concern to Saudi Arabia over "gross misrepresentation" of its external territorial boundaries in a banknote issued by the Gulf nation last week, and asked it to take "urgent corrective steps", the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) said Thursday.

The global map printed on the new 20 Riyal banknote, released to mark Saudi Arabia's presidency of the G20 grouping, does not feature Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh as part of India.

MEA Spokesperson Anurag Srivastava said India has asked Saudi Arabia to take "urgent corrective steps" in the matter, and asserted that the entire Union Territories of Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh are integral parts of the country.

"We have seen the banknote referred by you which gives an

incorrect depiction of India's external territorial boundaries. The note was issued by Saudi Arabian Monetary Authority on October 24 to mark the occasion of Saudi presidency of the G20," Srivastava said.

"We have conveyed our serious concern to Saudi Arabia, both through their Ambassador in New Delhi as well as in Riyadh, for this gross misrepresentation of India's external territorial boundaries on an official and legal banknote of Saudi Arabia and asked the Saudi side to take urgent corrective steps in this regard," he said.

Srivastava said, "I would like to reiterate that the entire Union Territories of Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh are integral parts of India." According to reports, the map does not even depict Pakistan-occupied Kashmir including Gilgit-Baltistan as part of Pakistani territory.

SC seeks govt reply on plea on COVID drugs

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Oct 29: The Supreme Court Thursday sought the Centre's reply on a plea alleging that two medicines Remdesivir and Favipiravir, are being used for treatment of COVID-19 without approval.

A bench headed by Chief Justice S A Bobde issued notice to the Centre on the plea and sought its response in four weeks. Advocate ML Sharma petitioner in-person referred to the bench, also comprising Justices A S Bopanna and V Ramasubramanian, the World Health Organization (WHO) report of October 15 and said that nowhere these medicines are designated officially as medicines for coronavirus.

The bench said it is only going to make the central government aware of it and therefore issuing notice. On September 16, the top court had said that there was an approval by the central government on use of



Remdesivir and Favipiravir, as medicines to treat COVID-19.

The top court was hearing a plea seeking registration of an FIR by the CBI against ten Indian pharmaceutical firms for manufacturing and selling these two medicines for treating COVID-19 patients allegedly without valid licences. Remdesivir and Favipiravir are antiviral drugs and their efficacy in treating COVID-19 patients has been a matter of debate among medical experts.

On September 16, the top court had referred to the New Drugs and Clinical Trials Rules, 2018 and said these medicines have been permitted by the government for using in treatment of novel coronavirus patients. Seeking CBI probe, Sharma had filed the PIL alleging that these two medicines have been wrongly manufactured and sold for treating COVID-19 patients without any valid licences from the Central Drugs Standard Control Organisation.

Sharma has sought prosecution of the Indian companies for offences of cheating and criminal conspiracy besides under the provisions of the Drug Act, 1940. The PIL said that these medicines have not been certified as medicines for COVID-19 till date by any country.

"They are under trial and no country, including India, has issued licence to manufacture and sell them in the country..." it said.

Pune varsity apologises after question on 'jihad' creeps in exams



INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Pune (Maharashtra), Oct 29: The Savitribai Phule Pune University (SPPU) authorities late on Wednesday tendered an apology after bizarre questions on 'jihad' terror crept in the online papers of TYBA and TYBCom examinations, officials said here Thursday.

The question in both Marathi-English figured in the multiple-choice options of TYBA Modern World History paper and TYBCom. Defence Budgeting paper, stumping the students.

The TYBA question reads: "Jihad is an example of what type of terrorism?" with options "Religious,

Revolutionary, Political, State-Sponsored".

The TYBCom question said: "Which one of the following is the main cause of Jihadi terrorism?" with the choices "Globalisation, Spread of Communism, Armament Proliferation, Use of violence in the name of Islamic radicalism".

Both questions stumped students and many immediately brought it to the varsity authorities and even took to social media. One such student Hashim Ansari said that though there is a topic on terrorism in the Modern World History subject, there is nothing pertaining to the manner in which the question was framed in the TYBA exam,

and others questioned the relevance of the question for the TYBCom exams.

Despite repeated attempts, SPPU Vice-Chancellor Dr. Nitin R. Karmalkar and Registrar Prafull Pawar were not available for comments. Following a furore, the varsity issued a statement admitting that a "wrong word" had inadvertently crept into the question paper.

"The administration expresses its regret for the same. The person heading the committee, which prepared the question paper, has been asked to give an explanation for the same and the persons concerned have been reprimanded," according to the statement. Ansari and others said that even the SPPU's apol-

ogy is half-hearted since it has not clarified on the word 'Jihad' in the mischievously framed questions with "leading" multiple options aimed at a particular religion.

"We are demanding that the university must issue a proper apology, take strong action against those responsible for this mischief in a time-bound manner, and refrain from targeting the students who raised the issue," Ansari said. Subsequently, the SPPU authorities claimed that even after the apology, some 'doctored images' were being circulated on the social media for which separate action is being initiated.

of the day quote

The city government has changed its strategy and is now going for aggressive tracing and testing of people who came in contact with those found positive for the infection



SATYENDAR JAIN | DELHI HEALTH MINISTER

The nation has lost a stalwart leader in the demise of former Gujarat chief minister Keshubhai Patel whose long public life was dedicated to improving the lives of millions, especially in villages



RAM NATH KOVIND | PRESIDENT

The BJP-led government framed new laws for agriculture reforms. Therefore, the Congress is now suffering from stomach ache



NARENDRA SINGH TOMAR | UNION AGRICULTURE MINISTER

SHORT TAKES

Doctor booked

Palghar: Police in Maharashtra's Palghar district have registered a case against a Mumbai-based doctor for allegedly raping his colleague, an official said Thursday. The 30-year-old woman lodged a complaint at Dahanu police station alleging that the accused raped her multiple times between July 2018 and September 2020 on the false promise of marrying her, the official said.

Bizman ends life

Pune: A 54-year-old businessman allegedly committed suicide due to financial worries in the Deccan Gymkhana area here, the police said Thursday. Jayant Rajput, who ran a pharmaceutical firm, was found hanging inside his office on Law College Road on Wednesday evening. A suicide note recovered from the spot mentioned that he was under financial distress, a police officer said. Rajput's wife is a city Congress leader and former corporator.

Baby found

Moradabad: An abandoned newborn baby was found in a sugarcane field in Uttar Pradesh's Moradabad, the fourth such incident in the district in two months. Some locals from Kundarki village, who had gone to the field to collect fodder, saw the baby whose umbilical cord was still intact. The anti-human trafficking squad was informed and the baby was taken to the district hospital's ICU unit. Child welfare committee (CWC) officials her condition is said to be stable and will be soon shifted to a state-run orphanage in Rampur.

Three arrested

Guwahati: Assam forest officials have busted a racket in the illegal trade of animal skins and bones and arrested three poachers, officials said Thursday. Kaziranga National Park Director Karmashree P. Sivakumar said that three poachers were arrested on Wednesday near Bihpukuri within Biswanath Wildlife Division for illegal trading and possession of leopard skin and bones. "The leopard is suspected to be hunted in between Assam and Arunachal Pradesh border area. Forest officials probing the case to unearth further details of the racket," Sivakumar said in a media communication. Forest officials are now interrogating the three detainees -- Yudhisthir Tati, 28, Subhash Mirdha, 24 and Bulet Munda, 37.



Development and environment conservation should go hand in hand as we not only need a stronger India but also a greener India

M. VENKAIAH NAIDU | VICE PRESIDENT

DOUBLE WHAMMY

As the Delhi-NCR faces the double whammy of the surge in Covid-19 cases and pollution, about 79 per cent of the residents want a ban on sale of regular crackers this Diwali, a survey revealed Thursday



Nitish's twin challenge

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Islampur/Patna, Oct 29: It's a twin challenge for Chief Minister Nitish Kumar - retaining power in Bihar and keeping his party's top position within the ruling alliance - but a sense of uneasiness seems to be creeping in, including in his home district Nalanda.

While trying to keep the crowd engaged till the chief minister arrives for his election rally, one after another speaker has a common urge for the party's traditional support base of Dalits and extremely backward that they should not get "misled" by the opposition and keep their faith in Kumar.

Their plea underscores the task before the ruling JD(U) - that is to rally its traditional base of voters around Kumar in his twin fight. The EBCs, which comprise of numerous small castes, account for around 28-30 per cent of the state's population, and the Nitish Kumar government has wooed them over the years with various initiatives.

Though they are not as politically active as some other castes, a section of EBCs has traditionally



backed the JD(U), while so has been the case with 'Mahadalits' - a term for scheduled castes except for Paswans, who make up for around one-third of Dalits in the state.

Political watchers believe there is an erosion in the support of upper castes for the JD(U), though they remain strongly behind its ally BJP, and its task has become all the more difficult in several seats due to Chirag Paswan-led Lok Janshakti Party putting up its candidates against Kumar's party across the state.

Organisationally never as strong as the BJP or the RJD, the JD(U) has relied on the "sushashan babu" image of Kumar to power its politics, and it is this mojo of the chief

minister, which has dimmed now, critics say. "Nitish ji to kaam kiye hain. Lekin abhi badlaav ka hawa hai (Nitish has worked but there is a buzz of change)," Ranjan Ram says in a typical local accent.

Asked if he will vote for change, he says he has not decided yet. "He has built roads and given us electricity. But we need roti (employment) too. Why no new industry has come to Bihar?" asks Akash Kumar, a first-year undergraduate student.

Higher education is in such a sorry state that his Part-I examination has not been held even in more than two years, he says. What good is all this talk of good governance when even Patna suffered so much of flood in 2019, his friend Amarendra Singh says.

Most of Kumar's achievements, be it boosting girls enrolment in schools, empowering women with quota in local polls and jobs or augmenting road network, trace their origins to his earlier terms in power, and his initiatives like prohibition in his latest tenure do not seem to be eliciting many positive vibes on the ground.

SC stays CBI probe against Rawat

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Oct 29: The Supreme Court Thursday stayed the Uttarakhand High Court's "drastic order" for a CBI probe into corruption allegations against Chief Minister Trivendra Singh Rawat, saying it was passed without hearing him and taking "everybody by surprise".

The corruption allegations levelled by two journalists pertained to the money transferred allegedly into the accounts of relatives of Rawat in 2016 to support appointment of a person as head of 'Gau Seva Ayog' of Jharkhand when Rawat was the in-charge of Jharkhand BJP unit.

A bench headed by Justice Ashok Bhushan said the "drastic order" passed by the high court without hearing the Chief Minister has taken "everybody by surprise" as there was no prayer in the plea by the scribes to lodge an FIR against

Rawat. "The state was not a party and all of a sudden, an FIR was ordered and such a drastic order was passed taking everybody by surprise," said the bench, also comprising Justices R S Reddy and M R Shah.

Attorney General K K Venugopal, appearing for Rawat, said that an FIR cannot be lodged without hearing the party who is the Chief Minister and this would "unsettle the elected government". "An elected government cannot be unsettled like this. The question is can a suo motu order be passed without hearing the party," Venugopal said.

"A demand for resignation of the chief minister has already been made and the order has been passed without hearing the CM," he added. Venugopal told the bench that the high court has "mixed up all grounds".

"The person against whom FIR is registered is bound to be heard especially in case of a person who holds a public office," he said. "The



high court passed the order disregarding the fact that this order may destabilise an elected government," he said.

"The high court is entirely wrong on law when it says that it can direct lodging of an FIR without hearing the party and the high court cannot be oblivious that it will result unsettling of the government," he said. Senior advocate Kapil Sibal, appearing for the two scribes, said that he was not opposing the stay order but there was ample evidence in support of corruption allega-

tion against Rawat. The apex court, while staying the high court order for CBI probe against Rawat, issued notices to the state and the two scribes Umesh Sharma and Shiv Prasad Semwal. "Issue notice. Counter affidavit be filed in four weeks," the bench said. The apex court, however, has not stayed the part of the high court order by which it had quashed the FIR lodged against the two scribes in July this year under various provisions of the IPC relating to sedition, cheating, forgery and criminal conspiracy.

FRESH VIOLENCE ERUPTS IN MUNGER

The EC statement said Munger will get a new DM and a Superintendent of Police Thursday itself



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Patna/Munger, Oct 29: The Election Commission has removed the District Magistrate and the Superintendent of Police of Munger over the violence during a Durga Puja event early this week, even as a group of protesters went on the rampage in the town Thursday, setting some police stations and outposts on fire and ransacking the SP office.

The poll panel Thursday also ordered an inquiry into the firing and stone-pelting during the immersion of an idol of goddess Durga late Monday night in which one person had died and several others were injured. The election commission has asked Magadh Divisional Commissioner Asangba Chuba Ao to complete the probe within a week.

Rajesh Meena is District Magistrate and Lipi Singh is SP of Munger. The EC statement said Munger will get a new DM and a Superintendent of Police Thursday itself. Alleging that no action was taken against the SP and other police personnel over the Monday night incident, the agitators allegedly torched mufasil and women police stations in the town.

They also allegedly set police outposts at Purab Sarai and Basudeopur on fire, and ransacked the SP office and several other police stations and outposts. The office of Sub Divisional Officer (SDO) was also allegedly targeted by the

protestors, official sources said. Witnesses said that finding themselves outnumbered, the police personnel at all these stations escaped from the premises. Official sources said the agitators went berserk and also tried to set kotwali and Kasim bazar police stations on fire, but there they faced a strong resistance from the policemen who fired in the air to disperse the mob.

They burnt tyres near Rajiv Chowk in the Munger town, demanding action against the SP and the police personnel responsible for allegedly opening fire during the idol immersion procession. Additional Director General of Police (Headquarters) Jitendra Kumar told PTI-Bhasha in Patna that extra police force has been sent to Munger.

Deputy Inspector General of Police, Munger, Manu Maharaj led a flag march in Munger town to bring the situation under control. The RJD-helmed Grand Alliance has strongly criticised the Monday incident, likening the district police with General Dyer of infamous Jallianwala Bagh incident in Punjab during British rule on April 13, 1919. IPS officer Lipi Singh is the daughter of RCP Singh, the JD(U) leader in the Rajya Sabha.

Coming on the eve of the first phase of polling, the incident had its impact voting too as two of the three Assembly seats - Munger, Jamalpur - in the district witnessed lower voter turnout as compared to the 2015 polls.

DELHI RECORDS LOWEST OCT TEMPERATURE IN 26 YEARS

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Oct 29: The national capital recorded a minimum temperature of 12.5 degrees Celsius on Thursday, the lowest in October in 26 years, according to the India Meteorological Department.

The normal minimum temperature for this time of the year is 15 to 16 degrees Celsius, it said. Kuldeep Srivastava, the head of the regional forecasting centre of IMD, said the last time Delhi recorded such a low temperature in October was in 1994.

The national capital had recorded a minimum of 12.3 degrees Celsius on October 31, 1994, according to IMD data. The city recorded the all-time lowest temperature (9.4 degrees Celsius) on October 31, 1937, Srivastava said.



The senior IMD scientist said the absence of cloud cover was the major reason for such low minimum temperatures this time. Clouds trap some of the outgoing infrared radiation and radiate it back down-

ward, warming the ground. Another reason is calm winds which allow formation of mist and fog, Srivastava said. The minimum temperature is likely to dip to 11 degrees Celsius by November 1, the IMD added.

Two out of five Srinagar residents have COVID antibodies

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Srinagar, Oct 29: Over 40 per cent people living in Srinagar district have developed COVID-19 antibodies, claims a latest sero-prevalence survey conducted by a government hospital here, the results of which were questioned by the district administration citing small sample size of the study.

The results of the study conducted by the Government Medical College Srinagar (GMC) show a quantum jump from 3.8 per cent sero-prevalence recorded in a similar study conducted in the city in June, and suggests that a large fraction of the population in the summer capital of Jammu and Kashmir may have been infected by the novel



coronavirus. A sero-survey involves testing the blood serum of individuals to check for the prevalence of antibodies against an infection. "We have conducted a sero-

survey in Srinagar district which has revealed that over 40 per cent of the 2,400 persons tested negative but had developed antibodies," said Dr Muhammad Salim Khan,

head of community medicine at GMC Srinagar.

Khan noted that the samples were taken randomly from 20 clusters in Srinagar district which also showed higher prevalence of antibodies in the female population than males.

However, officials said the results should be interpreted with caution due to its small sample size. "The sample survey was only 2,400 in a population of around 15 lakh. In order to get an accurate picture, the sample size should have been more," an official said.

Giving details, the official said that earlier Srinagar had witnessed 18 per cent of positivity rate for COVID-19 when the testing capacity was around 60,000. "However, when test-

ing capacity was increased to 4 Lakh, the rate of positive patients in Srinagar was only 18,000," the official said.

The official noted that the survey results could be misconstrued, and can lead to complacency among the people. "The trend is encouraging but there is no way we can say that COVID-19 will be defeated at a certain level of population by developing the antibodies. The scientific community is also wary of using the term herd immunity in the absence of a vaccine," he added.

Herd immunity occurs when a large number of people, usually 70 to 90 per cent, become immune to a contagious disease after being infected by it. But there are many grey areas clouding the issue as

far as the novel coronavirus is concerned with no consensus on when herd immunity sets in.

Srinagar has been the worst affected district by COVID-19 in Jammu and Kashmir with nearly 19,000 persons infected so far and 348 deaths due to the pandemic. The district has 1,651 active cases as compared to 5,300 in the remaining 19 districts of the union territory.

Khan said a wider sero-survey is underway across the remaining nine districts of Kashmir valley where 400 samples have been collected from each district. "The results are expected to come within two weeks from now," he added. Jammu and Kashmir has witnessed nearly 85,000 COVID infections and 1,455 deaths so far due to the pandemic.

international



Germany is in a dramatic situation as it goes into winter
ANGELA MERKEL | CHANCELLOR OF GERMANY

OREGON EXTENDS STATE OF EMERGENCY

Oregon Governor Kate Brown has extended a state of emergency in an effort to extend support to the affected counties due to the ongoing wildfires and help in the recovery efforts



of the day quote

It was not likely for a Covid-19 vaccine to be available in the US until next year
ANTHONY FAUCI | AMERICAN PHYSICIAN

We know that many European countries have already signed contract for deliveries of the vaccine from Britain
VLADIMIR PUTIN | PRESIDENT OF RUSSIA

We urge the US side to keep their words, take effective measures to stop military provocations in the sea and air spaces around China, and stop any actions that harm China's core interests and major concerns
WU QIAN | CHINA'S DEFENCE SPOKESMAN SENIOR COLONEL

UK's Labour Party suspends Jeremy Corbyn

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

London, Oct 29: The UK's Opposition Labour Party on Thursday suspended former leader Jeremy Corbyn from its ranks after a report by the country's human rights watchdog held the party "responsible for unlawful acts of harassment and discrimination" during his time in charge.

The Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC), which had launched an investigation into antisemitism within the party following a string of complaints, found that Labour had broken the law in its failure to handle antisemitism, or anti-Jewish, complaints and there were "serious failings" by its leadership at the time.

However, in his reaction to the report, Corbyn said that the number of complaints made during his tenure were "dramatically overstated". "One antisemite is one too many, but the scale of the problem was also dramatically overstated for political reasons by our opponents inside and outside the party, as well as by much of the media. That combination hurt Jewish people and must never be repeated," said Corbyn, in reference to the report. A Labour Party spokesperson issued a statement soon after to announce that Corbyn had been suspended from the party.

PULWAMA: PAK MIN ADMITS TO GOVT ROLE

The international community led by the US has pressed Pakistan to deny safe haven to terror groups operating from its soil and bring the perpetrators of the attack to justice

AGENCIES

Islamabad, Oct 29: In a sensational admission, a senior Pakistani minister Thursday admitted that Pakistan was responsible for the Pulwama terrorist attack in Jammu and Kashmir in 2019 that killed 40 CRPF personnel and brought the two countries to the brink of a war.

"Humne Hindustan ko ghus ke maara (We hit India in their home). Our success in Pulwama, is a success of this nation under the leadership of Imran Khan. You and we are all part of that success," Science & Technology Minister Fawad Chaudhry said in the National Assembly during a debate.

When some of his fellow lawmakers objected to his mention of "success in Pulwama", the minister said that "after the Pulwama incident, the way Pakistan went inside the Indian territory to target it, the entire media in India was ashamed of it."

However, he didn't retract his statement about "success in Pulwama" under Prime Minister Khan's leadership. Chaudhry, a close aide of Prime Minister Khan, made the remarks a day after Opposition Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) leader Ayaz Sadiq said that Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi in an important meeting pleaded to

BIG CONFESSION



release Indian Air Force Wing Commander Abhinandan Varthaman, who was captured by the Pakistani Army on February 27, 2019 after his MiG-21 Bison jet was shot down in a dogfight with Pakistani jets. In the early hours of February 26, 2019, the IAF jets bombed the Jaish-e-Mohammad (JeM) terror camps in Balakot in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa of Pakistan and avenged the Pulwama terrorist attack that claimed the lives of 40 CRPF personnel.

The international community led by the US has pressed Pakistan to deny safe haven to terror groups operating from its soil and bring the perpetrators of the Pulwama attack to justice.

"Legs were shaking and forehead perspiring, and the foreign minis-

ter (Qureshi) told us, 'For God's sake, let him (Varthaman) go back now because India is attacking Pakistan at 9 PM in the night', Sadiq said, recalling the high-level meeting which was also attended by Army chief Gen Qamar Javed Bajwa, and added that "India was not planning to attack... They just wanted to kneel before India and send back Abhinandan."

Chaudhry, who was the information and broadcasting minister at the time of the Pulwama attack, criticised Sadiq's remarks and termed them as "inappropriate". He said Sadiq lied with a lot of confidence regarding his statements and asserted that everyone has the right to disagree with the government but the state should not be subjected to criticism.

India, UK strike new Covid-19 research tie-ups

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

London, Oct 29: India and the UK have clinched new partnerships to boost bilateral cooperation on combating the coronavirus pandemic as part of the 10th UK-India Economic and Financial Dialogue (EFD), held virtually following the COVID-19 lockdown and travel constraints.

A GBP 8-million joint funding initiative announced on Wednesday as part of the EFD outcomes will support collaborative research focused on understanding the severity of COVID-19 in South Asian populations in India.

The UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) and the Department of Biotechnology (DBT) in Indian Ministry of Science and Technology said their collaborative research will support research projects that are trying to understand the pandemic through the study of related ethnic groups in different environments in both countries. "This joint programme builds on the strong foundation of India-UK research collaboration and is an opportunity to bring together our collective expertise to understand the severity of COVID-19 infection in South Asian populations of both India and the UK," said Dr Renu Swarup, Secretary of the Department of Biotechnology.

'Coronavirus infections rising rapidly in England'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

London, Oct 29: New coronavirus infections are rising by an estimated 96,000 cases daily across England, according to the findings of a new government-backed study released in London Thursday.

An interim report led by Imperial College London and Ipsos MORI, which includes swab tests on thousands of people taken between October 16 and 25, shows that the prevalence of infection has more than doubled since the last round of similar testing.

This means an estimated 128 people per 10,000 of England's population has the virus that causes COVID-19, compared to 60 as of October 5. "These interim findings paint a concerning picture of the situation in England, where we're seeing a nation-wide increase in infection prevalence, which we know will lead to more hospitalisations and loss of life," said Professor Paul Elliott, director of the programme at Imperial College London.

SHORT TAKES

Typhoon, landslides leave 35 dead

Hanoi: Typhoon Molave set off landslides that killed at least 19 people and left 45 missing in central Vietnam, where ferocious wind and rain blew away roofs and knocked out power in a region of 1.7 million residents, state media said Thursday. The casualties from the landslides bring the over-all death toll from the storm to at least 35, including 12 fishermen whose boats sank Wednesday as the typhoon approached with winds of up to 150 kilometers (93 miles) per hour. Vietnamese officials say it's the worst typhoon to hit the country in 20 years.

55 held over madrasa blast

Peshwar: At least 55 people have been arrested over their suspected involvement in the Peshawar madrasa explosion that killed eight people and injured 120 others earlier this week. In a statement issued on Wednesday, the police said the arrests were made during a major crackdown, which was launched by the Rapid Response Force, Ladies Police and Bomb Disposal Unit in Dir Colony, where the Jamia Zuberia madrasa is located, and its adjoining areas, Dawn news reported.

'Zeta' batters US Gulf Coast

Washington: Hurricane Zeta, the 11th of the 2020 Atlantic hurricane season, made landfall in the US Gulf Coast, bringing with it high winds, heavy rain and a life-threatening storm surge, according to weather authorities. In its latest update, the National Hurricane Centre (NHC) said that Zeta made landfall Wednesday evening as a Category 2 storm with winds of 110 mph, but it weakened to Category 1 as of 9 p.m., CNN reported.

Eight killed in prison riot

Kabul: At least eight inmates were killed and 12 others injured during a prison riot in Afghanistan's Herat province, officials said Thursday. The riot took place at Block 5 of the Herat Prison on Wednesday evening after police began clearing some partitions created by the inmates, TOLO News quoted Mohammad Rafiq Shirzai, a spokesman for the provincial public health directorate, as saying. The wounded were taken to Herat hospital, he said.

Imran acquitted in Parliament House attack case

An Islamabad-based anti-terrorism court (ATC) on Thursday acquitted Pakistan Prime Minister Imran Khan in the 2014 Parliament House attack case. ATC Judge Raja Jawad Abbas Hassan, announced the ruling, Geo News reported. The petition for Khan's acquittal was submitted by a lawyer for the federal government, with the prosecutor arguing at the last hearing that the case was made on political grounds and that it would be "a waste of the court's time". The premier had informed the court through his lawyer, Abdullah Babar Awan, that the prosecution was in favour of the acquittal. The court also decided to halt proceedings against President Arif Alvi owing to him holding the presidential office. The court, however, decided to indict others named in the case, including Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi, Defence Minister Pervez Khattak, Education Minister Shafiqat Mehmood, and Planning Minister Asad Umar, as well as prominent party leader Aleem Khan and a former close aide of the premier, Jahangir Khan Tareen.



US proposes to scrap lottery system to select H-1B visas

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Washington, Oct 29: The Trump administration has proposed to scrap the computerised lottery system to grant H-1B work visas to foreign technology professionals and replace it with a wage-level-based selection process, a move that is expected to counter the downward pressure on the wages of US workers.

A notification on the new system is being published in the Federal Register Thursday. Stakeholders have 30 days to respond to the notification, the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) said on Wednesday, less than a week before the US presidential election.

Replacing the computerised draw of lots to decide on the successful H-1B applicants, the DHS said it is expected to help counter the downward pressure on the wages of American workers that is created



by an annual influx of relatively lower-paid, new cap-subject H-1B workers.

The H-1B visa, most sought-after among Indian IT professionals, is a non-immigrant visa that allows US companies to employ foreign workers in speciality occupations that require theoretical or technical expertise. If finalised as proposed, US Citizenship and Immigration Services would first select registrations (or petitions,

if the registration process is suspended) generally based on the highest Occupational Employment Statistics prevailing wage level that the offered wage equals or exceeds for the relevant Standard Occupational Classification code and areas of intended employment. "Prioritisation and selection based on wage levels better balances the interests of petitioners, H-1B workers, and U.S. workers," the DHS said.

Face mask can kill nCoV

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Boston, Oct 29: Scientists at MIT have designed a novel face mask that can not only filter out the SARS-CoV-2 virus, which causes COVID-19, but also inactivate it using heat.

The new mask incorporates a heated copper mesh and does not need to be decontaminated or thrown away after use, according to the researchers.

As the person wearing the mask breathes in and out, air flows repeatedly across the mesh, and any viral particles in the air are slowed and inactivated by the mesh and high temperatures, the researchers said.

Such a mask could be useful for healthcare professionals, as well as members of the public in situations where social distancing

would be difficult to achieve, such as a crowded bus, they said. "This is a completely new mask concept in that it doesn't primarily block the virus. It actually lets the virus go through the mask, but slows and inactivates it," said Michael Strano, a professor at Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) in the US.

The researchers have begun building prototypes and hope to begin testing them soon. The new design has been described in a paper posted on online preprint server ArXiv, and submitted to a peer-reviewed journal.

"The masks that we wear now are designed to capture some of the virus. They do offer protection, but there's no one really thinking about inactivating the virus and sterilising the air. That surprised me," Strano said.



images courtesy of the researchers @ MIT

US 2020 ELECTION: A PRELIMINARY ASSESSMENT

Joe Biden has been enjoying an edge over President Trump in the opinion polls as well as leading in the ratings in the aftermath of first round of national debate held September 29 as well as in the second round of national debate held October 23

With just less than a week for the finale to the US presidential election scheduled for November 3, flurry of hectic political campaigning through electronic, print and social media, including rallies, is going on in both Republican and Democrats' camps at a much rapid pace. Both Republican Party, also known as GOP (Grand Old Party) and Democratic Party have strained every nerve to attract voters through hectic campaigning by convincing them about their respective agenda to garner electorates' support. The incumbent Republican nominee is President Donald Trump who is seeking reelection and Joe Biden is the presidential nominee of the Democratic Party and the challenger.

VOTERS' PROFILE

According to US Census Bureau, as of July 2019, total population of the US stood at around more than 328 million; and of these White Americans are the racial majority accounting for 76.3%. Hispanic and Latino Americans are the largest ethnic minority, comprising an estimated 18% of the population. African Americans are the second largest racial minority, constituting an estimated 13.4% of the popula-

tion. There were approximately 4.16 million people of Indian descent in the US in 2018, with 2.62 million of them being US citizens. Out of them, 1.9 million citizens are eligible to vote in the upcoming election - 0.82% of all eligible voters in the US.

ELECTION ISSUES

In August 2020, Washington-based Pew Research Center conducted a survey of registered American voters to ascertain important issues in the 2020 Presidential Elections and according to the response and percentage following issues emerged: economy (79%), healthcare (68%), Supreme Court appointments (64%), COVID-19 pandemic (62%), violent crime (59%), foreign policy (57%), gun policy (55%), race and ethnic inequality (52%), immigration (52%), economic inequality (49%), climate change (42%), and abortion (40%). As per US media reports, in the final debate between Donald Trump and Joe Biden, the debate veered round following issues - fighting COVID-19, American families, race in America, climate change, national security and leadership.

MAIL-IN VOTING

Mail-in voting, also known as ab-



sentee voting or postal ballot, has been in vogue in the United States for a long time. Approximately 240 million American citizens are eligible to vote this year. The US has centuries-long history of voting by mail. In the 17th century Massachusetts, people could vote from home if their homes were 'vulnerable to Indian attack.' Nevertheless, it was during the Civil War that America first experimented with absentee voting on a bigger scale, and during the 1864 presidential election, Union soldiers were allowed to vote in camps and hospitals, under the supervision

of clerks or state officials. The absentee voting mechanism was permitted during the First World War for soldiers. In the subsequent period, the people who voted by mail often had to have a specific reason for not being able to vote in person on election day; and this situation underwent a change in 1978, when California became the first State in the US to allow voters to apply for an absentee ballot without having to provide any reason or excuse. In the State of Oregon, the first entirely mail-in federal primary elections occurred and in 1996, the first mail-only general election took

place, and at present it is said to be an all vote-by-mail state. Interestingly, prior to the outbreak of Covid-19, five states - Colorado, Hawaii, Oregon, Washington and Utah - were already conducting entirely mail-in elections. As per American media reports, 29 states and Washington D.C. permitted 'no excuse' mail in absentee voting, and 16 states allowed voters to cast a ballot by mail if they had an excuse. Interestingly, in the 2016 presidential election, about 25% voters are said to have cast their votes via ballots mailed to them. In present times of COVID-19 that are characterised by uncertainties, election officials this author came across in Washington have opined that American electorate can rely on vote-by-mail mechanism being 'safe and secure.'

TOWARDS THE FINALE

Undeniably, national polls are a good guide as to ascertain as to how popular a candidate is across the entire country; nonetheless, they're not essentially a reliable criterion to predict the result of the election. In 2016, for example, Hillary Clinton led in the polls and won nearly three million more votes than Donald Trump, but she still lost - that's be-

cause there exists an electoral college system that indicates that winning the most votes doesn't always win you the election. People in the US vote for the persons called 'electors' in their state who are supporting the candidates they want to be in the Oval Office, and this process is called the Electoral College. The more populous a state, the more 'electors' there are for that state. For instance, California, with a population of 38.8 million, has 55 votes whereas Delaware, having a population nearly a million people, has just three votes. Presently, there are 538 electors in the Electoral College, corresponding to the 435 Representatives, both congressmen and congresswomen, and 100 senators, along with the three additional electors from the District of Columbia. Election experts in Washington have apprised this author that the candidate with the most electors wins all the state's electoral colleges' votes and the first candidate securing 270 electoral votes is elected to the office of President of the United States of America.

By Dr Anil Singh, who is currently in Washington to cover the presidential election.



The Indian economy is getting back on track faster than expected as a timely lockdown and various relief measures helped address issues faced by all
NARENDRA MODI | PM

SENSEX EXTENDS LOSSES

Equity benchmarks nursed losses for the second straight session as investors offloaded banking, finance and infra stocks amid expiry of monthly derivative contracts.



of the day quote

India is an incredibly attractive market and one that provides excellent long-term growth opportunities. We are committed to the vision of self-reliant India



OWEN WILSON | CEO, REA GROUP

We are setting up P&G's 'India Growth Fund' to collaborate with partners on building capacities that will further localise the manufacturing of finished products



MADHUSUDAN GOPALAN | CEO, P&G INDIAN SUBCONTINENT

In order to help the jute industry, the government decided that 100 per cent food grains and 20 per cent sugar will be mandatorily packaged in jute bags



PRAKASH JAVADEKAR | UNION I&B MINISTER

Fiscal deficit at 115% of target

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Oct 29: The government's fiscal deficit rose to ₹9.14 lakh crore, about 114.8 per cent of the annual budget estimate, during the first six months of the current financial year, mainly on account of poor revenue realisation.

The revenue realisation during the current fiscal suffered on account of the lockdown imposed by the government to check the spread of coronavirus pandemic.

In absolute terms, the deficit was ₹9,13,993 crore, as per the data released by the Controller General of Accounts (CGA).

The deficit at the end of the first six months of the previous financial year was 92.6 per cent of the annual target.

The fiscal deficit or gap between the expenditure and revenue had breached the annual target in July this year.

The government received ₹5,65,417 crore (25.18 per cent of BE 2020-21 of total receipts) up to September, the CGA data said. The receipts were 40.2 per cent of the target a year ago.

Of the total receipts, ₹4,58,508



POOR REVENUE REALISATION

The revenue realisation during the current fiscal suffered on account of the lockdown imposed by the government

In absolute terms, the deficit was ₹9,13,993 crore, as per the data released by the Controller General of Accounts (CGA)

The deficit at the end of the first six months of the previous financial year was 92.6 per cent of the annual target

crore was tax revenue (Net to Centre), ₹92,274 crore was non-tax revenue and ₹14,635 crore non-debt capital receipts. Non-debt capital receipts consists of recovery of loans (₹8,854 crore) and disinvestment proceeds (Rs 5,781 crore).

₹2,59,941 crore has been transferred to state governments as devolution of share of taxes by Government of India up to this period, which is ₹51,277 crore lower than the previous year, the finance ministry said in a release.

As per the CGA data, the total ex-

penditure incurred by the government was ₹14,79,410 crore (48.63 per cent of BE 2020-21), out of which ₹13,13,574 crore was on revenue account and ₹1,65,836 crore on capital account.

Out of the total revenue expenditure, ₹3,05,652 crore was on account of interest payments and ₹1,56,210 crore towards major subsidies. During the same period of the last fiscal, the total expenditure was 53.4 per cent of the annual target. The government had pegged the fiscal deficit for 2020-21 at ₹7.96 lakh

crore or 3.5 per cent of the GDP in the Budget, presented by Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman in February. These figures, however, may have to be revised significantly, in view of the economic disruptions created by the outbreak of the Coronavirus.

Fiscal deficit had soared to a seven-year high of 4.6 per cent of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in 2019-20, mainly on account of poor revenue realisation, which dipped further towards the close of March because of the lockdown.

DOMESTIC FLIGHTS

Govt extends fare limit till February

AGENCIES

New Delhi, Oct 29: The civil aviation minister Hardeep Singh Puri Thursday extended the cap on domestic airfares till 24 February. In the wake of coronavirus outbreak, the aviation ministry implemented a cap on domestic airfare till 24 November.

India started operating domestic flights after a gap of two months in the last week of May. The domestic flights in India have a cap on fares with both an upper and lower limit. Flights between cities that are under 40 minutes have been classified under section one, while those under 40-60 minutes are under section two. Section three consists of destinations 60-90 minutes apart by flight, section four comprises cities 90-120 minutes apart, section five consists of cities 120-150 minutes apart.

Destinations between 150-180 minutes and 180-210 minutes have been classified under sections 6



and 7, respectively.

The base minimum airfare of domestic flights ranges from ₹2,000 to ₹6,500 and the maximum range from ₹6,000 to ₹18,600. Airlines have to make available 40% of total seats in an aircraft at less than the mid-point price between the highest and lowest fares, aviation secretary Pradeep Singh Kharola earlier said. Puri earlier said the move will mean that the lowest fare between Delhi and Mumbai will be capped at ₹3,500 and ₹10,000 at the higher end.

While the upper price limit is aimed at preventing any sharp rise in fares due to pent-up demand, the lower limit will help ensure that financial viability of airlines does not suffer amid high costs, Puri said.

SHORT TAKES

RBI imposes ₹22L fine on DCB Bank

New Delhi: Private sector lender DCB Bank Thursday said RBI has imposed a fine of ₹22 lakh on the bank for violating marketing norms for financial products. The Reserve Bank imposed the penalty by an order dated October 28, DCB Bank said in a BSE filing. "The RBI has...imposed a monetary penalty of ₹22 lakh on DCB Bank for non-compliance with certain provisions of directions issued by RBI contained in the circular," the RBI order attached with the filing said.

2% rise in Maruti Suzuki's Q2 profit

New Delhi: The country's largest carmaker Maruti Suzuki India (MSI) Thursday reported 2.04 per cent increase in its consolidated net profit for the second quarter at ₹1,419.6 crore on the back of higher sales. The auto major had posted a net profit of ₹1,391.1 crore in the July-September quarter of the previous fiscal. Total revenue from operations rose by 10.34 per cent to ₹18,755.6 crore for the second quarter as against ₹16,997.9 crore in the same period of 2019-20.

Toyota unveils N-E stockyard

Mumbai: Toyota Kirloskar Motor (TKM) Thursday announced the launch of its first regional stockyard in Guwahati, which aims at reducing delivery time from the current 13 days to a maximum of two days for the dealers in the northeastern states. The new stockyard will significantly enhance distribution efficiency, reduce inventory costs and turnaround time for dealer working capital besides facilitating TKM dealers to meet customer requirements faster, the automaker said in a release.

Contract workers in high demand

Bangalore: Job seekers' interest in 'contract or temporary jobs' jumped by 150 per cent, while postings for these jobs increased by 119 per cent between January and July 2020, a flow-on effect of pandemic-induced economic shutdowns across industries, according to data from job site 'Indeed'. While the demand for contract workers has risen steadily since January this year, month-on-month comparisons between 2019 and 2020 showed that hiring for contract jobs more than doubled in June and July this year, Indeed said.

BIZ BUZZ

L&T shares tank nearly 5 pc after Q2 earnings

New Delhi: Shares of Larsen & Toubro (L&T) Thursday tanked nearly 5 per cent after the company posted a 45 per cent decline in consolidated net profit for the quarter ended September. The stock plunged 4.88 per cent to ₹935.55 on the BSE. On the NSE, it tanked 4.85 per cent to ₹935.10. The engineering and construction giant on Wednesday posted a 45 per cent decline in consolidated net profit to ₹1,410.29 crore for the quarter ended September, hit by the COVID-19 pandemic. The company had clocked a net profit of ₹2,551.67 crore in the year-ago period, it said in a regulatory filing. Total consolidated income fell to ₹31,593.77 crore in July-September quarter.



Global gold demand dips 19 pc in Sep quarter

Mumbai: Global gold demand declined by 19 per cent during the July-September quarter to 892.3 tonnes, the lowest quarterly total since Q3 of 2009, due to coronavirus-induced disruption, World Gold Council (WGC) said in a report. The total global demand during July-September 2019, stood at 1,100.2 tonnes, according to WGC's Q3 Gold Demand Trends' report. Though the overall demand declined during the third quarter of this year, there was a significant growth in investment demand, the report said. The overall investment demand grew by 21 per cent at 494.6 tonnes as investors globally bought 222.1 tonnes of gold bars and coins and an additional 272.5 tonnes through gold-backed ETFs (electronically traded funds). Gold ETFs have increased their holdings by a record 1,003.3 tonnes, it added.

IBM, Indian Oil collaborate for digital services

New Delhi: Tech giant IBM Thursday said it has collaborated with Indian Oil Corporation Ltd (IOCL) to transform the latter's customer experience using digital tools. Around 12,400 IOCL distributors covering about 130 million consumers can now use the IndianOil One mobile app and portal, developed by IBM Services, a statement said. The IndianOil One mobile app and portal are part of Indian Oil's Project ePIC, an integrated platform for Customer Relationship Management (CRM) and Distribution Management System (DMS). This platform ensures real-time updates to inventory, orders, and invoices, thereby reducing the time to order fulfillment. "It has been a privilege for IBM to strategically partner with Indian Oil on this path-breaking digital transformation journey to build customer experiences in its downstream business operations."



SP stakes claim in Tata cos

AGENCIES

New Delhi, Oct 29: The Shapoorji Pallonji Group (SP) has sought a pro-rata division of all Tata Sons assets based on its 18.4 per cent stake in the holding company of the Tata conglomerate, said the group in its settlement filings in the Supreme Court.

The SP group has sought a direct stake in all listed entities of the Tata group, including a 13.22 per cent stake in the conglomerate's crown jewel, Tata Consultancy Services. It has claimed a pro-rata share of the Tata brand and asked for a neutral third-party valuation for the unlisted assets adjusted for net debt.

The SP Group, one of India's largest construction firms, has an 18 per cent stake in Tata Sons, but the two groups have been embroiled in a legal battle since 2016 when Cyrus Mistry, scion of the family that



controls the SP Group, was sacked as chairman of Tata Sons.

The SP Group said in the statement that, as a non-cash settlement, it should get pro-rata shares in listed entities of the Tata Group where Tata Sons currently owns stake. "For example, 72% of Tata Consultancy Services Ltd. (TCS)

is owned by Tata Sons and SP Group's ownership of 18.37 per cent translates to 13.22% per cent shareholding of TCS (valued at ₹1,35,000 crore at present market capitalisation of TCS)," the Group said in its filing.

The pro-rata share of brand value adjusted for net debt (ie debt less cash

Mistry family's group claims a 13.22 per cent stake in Tata Consultancy Services and a pro-rata share of the Tata brand

and cash equivalents) can be settled in cash and / or in listed securities. For the unlisted companies, an expedited valuation can be done with a valuer selected by both sides, it said. The Tata brand was valued at \$20 billion as per its last valuation.

"The SP Group said the "quicker to implement" settlement is a win-win deal for both sides as control would remain with Tata Sons and it would remain promoters of group companies and also enjoy a control premium on its shareholding.

Common LPG booking no. unveiled

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Oct 29: Coinciding with the ongoing festive season in the country, Indian Oil (IOCL) has launched a common number for Indane LPG refill booking across the country. The common booking number for LPG refills for the whole country is 7718955555. It is available 24x7 for the customers.

According to IOCL, the common number for all-India LPG refill booking - through SMS and IVRS - is an important step to boost customer convenience and ease of booking Indane LPG refills. This means that even if customers move from one telecom circle to another across states, their Indane refill booking number remains the same.

The current system of telecom circle-specific phone numbers for booking Indane LPG refills will be discontinued after October 31 midnight and the common booking



number for LPG refills i.e. 7718955555, will be in force.

Indane LPG booking can be done using the customer's registered mobile number only. If the customer's number is already registered in Indane records, IVRS will prompt the 16-digit consumer ID. This 16-digit consumer ID is mentioned on the customer's Indane LPG invoices/cash memos/subscription voucher. Upon confirmation by the customer, the refill booking will be accepted. If the customer's mobile number

is not available in Indane records, then one-time registration of the mobile number should be done by customers by entering their 16-digit consumer ID starting with 7. This should be followed by authentication in the same IVRS call. Upon confirmation, the customer's mobile number will get registered and the LPG refill booking will be accepted. This 16-digit consumer ID of the customer is mentioned on Indane LPG invoices/cash memos/subscription voucher.

GOVT REVAMPS AI SALE TERMS

AGENCIES

New Delhi, Oct 29: The government has revamped the terms for selling distressed national carrier Air India, shelving the earlier offer of the company along with a fixed level of debt, civil aviation minister Hardeep Puri said Thursday.

As per the new offer, Air India will be offered on its enterprise value and bidders can quote the level of debt they are comfortable with. The investor who quotes the highest enterprise value gets the carrier.

"After detailed preparations, we revisited this (earlier offer for sale) and it was decided to change the bidding parameters and ask for bids at the enterprise value that is, bids will be invited on equity and debt basis," Puri said.

AMERICAN TOWER FOUNDATION JOINS HANDS WITH APF

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Oct 29: American Tower Foundation, a global philanthropic initiative of American Tower Corporation (ATC) partnered with Akshaya Patra Foundation, a leading humanitarian organization, to distribute grocery kits through ATC CSR Foundation India towards COVID-19 relief measures.

The program entails to provide 19 lakh meals across 31 locations to families who have been adversely impacted owing to the ongoing coronavirus pandemic. These include daily wagers, contract workers, and migrant population who have been displaced and are out of work because of the lockdown. The distribution drive in Odisha was carried out over a period of 14 days, providing around 84,000 meals.

Higher rural demand unlikely to offset urban plunge

AGRICULTURAL ACTIVITIES HAVE NOT BEEN HIT VERY BADLY, RAISING HOPE THAT RURAL DEMAND MAY DRIVE THE RECOVERY, WHICH IS OVER-OPTIMISTIC, SAYS A REPORT

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, Oct 29: The 270 basis points (bps) likely incremental growth in agricultural gross value add (GVA) to 17.3 per cent of the economy this year and the resultant spike in rural demand may not compensate for the massive plunge in urban demand, warns a report.

However, an India Ratings analysis of the agri GVA performance of the states says the six states that accounted for nearly 33 per cent of the farm GVA will see a spurt in overall demand.

In spite of the pandemic and the ensuing lockdowns, agricultural activities have not been hit very badly, raising hope that rural de-

mand may drive the recovery, which is over-optimistic, says the report.

We believe rural demand will perk-up somewhat, but will not be able to offset the shortfall in urban demand because the share of agriculture in GVA of the economy has ranged between 14.6 per cent and 17.8 per cent during FY13-FY20 and is expected to be 17.3 per cent in FY21, up from 14.6 per cent in FY20," warns the report.

Furthermore, "the contribution of agriculture to GVA growth has ranged between 4.8 per cent and 11.2 per cent during FY13-FY20 and is expected to increase to only 14.4 per cent in FY21, up from 8.6 per cent in FY20, despite the pandemic-induced contraction in the industrial



and services sectors," the report stated and added that on the negative side the rural wages have been on a steady decline for many years now. But Andhra Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh,

Punjab and West Bengal stand to benefit and see higher rural spend as the share of their agriculture in GSV and its contribution to GSV is higher as these six states contributed 32.7 per cent

to real GVA in FY20.

According to the first advance estimates of Union agri ministry last month, Kharif food grains production in FY2021 is estimated at 144.52 mt, up from 143.38 mt in FY2020, up only 1.14 mt.

Since the largest chunk of rural population consists of daily wage earners and not farmers, a peep into the rural wages is as vital as the agricultural income to understand the rural demand. And this suggests that rural wages have been under pressure and declined substantially both in nominal and real terms during FY16-FY20. Thus, FY21 may not result in very higher income either for farmers or wage earners than previous years.

RAMPAGING KXIP FACE ROYALS

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Abu Dhabi, Oct 29: A rampaging Kings XI Punjab (KXIP) would look to extend their exceptional run and inch closer to a Play-offs berth while Rajasthan Royals would be desperate to stay alive in the tournament when the two sides clash in an IPL match, here Friday.

It has been a dramatic turnaround for the KL Rahul-led side after a string of losses earlier in the tournament. They have managed to weave together five consecutive wins against the top four sides in the tournament,

infusing life into their campaign. They are in fourth position with 12 points from as many games, while the Royals have slumped to the penultimate spot with 10 points having suffered seven defeats from 12 outings.

It's a mad scramble for the play-offs. With Mumbai Indians all but through, six teams are in the hunt for the remaining three spots.

The Royals can't afford to slip up, if they lose Friday they will be out of the reckoning while a defeat for Punjab will dent their chances for a top-four finish.

They would expect their skipper Rahul, the leading run-scorer of the tournament, to fire in the crucial

game after three underwhelming performances with the bat.

The addition of Chris Gayle has done wonders for the team's confidence. It is to be seen if Mayank Agarwal, who missed two games with a bruised knee, returns to the side. In his absence, Mandeep Singh revelled in the role of an opener with a match-winning unbeaten 66 in the

win against Kolkata Knight Riders.

Punjab's bowling, which has been their weakest link throughout the tournament, has been exceptional in their recent wins, choking the opposition for runs.

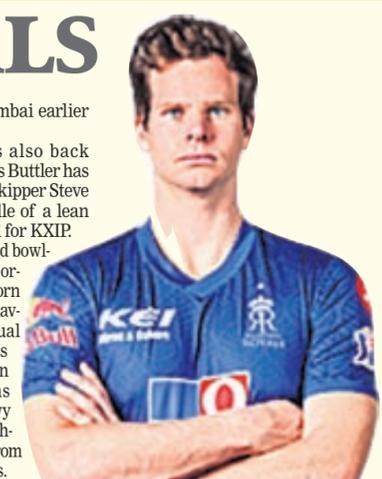
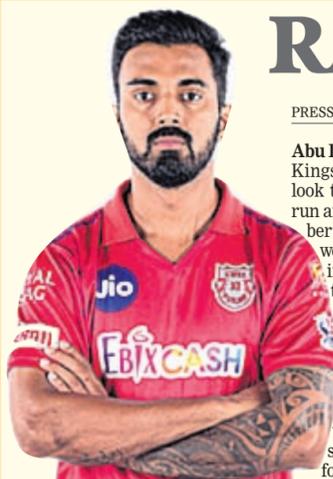
The Royals will also be high on confidence after their morale boosting win over table toppers Mumbai and would be desperate to keep the winning momentum going.

The biggest positive for the Royals is Ben Stokes roaring back to form after rusty displays in previous five outings. The English all-rounder, who has been elevated to the role of opener, smashed an unbeaten 107 to help seal a seven-

wicket win over Mumbai earlier this week.

Sanju Samson is also back among runs, while Jos Buttler has looked erratic. That skipper Steve Smith is in the middle of a lean patch will augur well for KXIP.

The Jofra Archer-led bowling attack has looked ordinary. The Barbados-born English pacer, who is having a stellar individual season with 17 wickets from 12 matches with an economy of 6.71, has done most of the heavy lifting with the ball without adequate support from the rest of the bowlers.



Jaddu, Gaikwad lift CSK



RUTURAJ GAIKWAD & RAVINDRA JADEJA (INSET)

AGENCIES

Dubai, Oct 29: Ravindra Jadeja (31 n o, 11b, 2x4, 3x6) played a splendid cameo after a propelling knock by Ruturaj Gaikwad (72, 53b, 6x4, 2x6) as Chennai Super Kings (CSK) defeated Kolkata Knight Riders (KKR) by six wickets Thursday in their IPL encounter here, denting the Eoin Morgan-led side's hopes of a play-off berth.

Chasing a challenging 173, CSK were in a good position as they were needed 34 runs off last three

overs with seven wickets in hand. However, Pat Cummins (2/31) conceded only four runs and got rid of well-set Gaikwad in the 18th over to put immense pressure on CSK.

Lockie Ferguson bowled the 19th. He had conceded only three runs off the first three balls before conceding 17 off the next three to change things around. Jadeja struck a four in the fourth ball, before an over-the-waist-height no-ball cost him three. In the free-hit, Jadeja hit a six before finishing the over with another four.

With 10 required in six balls, CSK had the match in hand. But, Kamlesh Nagarkoti bowled well and it all came down to 7 off two balls. Jadeja struck consecutive sixes to seal a sensational win for MS Dhoni & Co.

Before that, Shane Watson (14) and Gaikwad had added 50 runs for the opening wicket, before the latter and Ambati Rayudu (38) forged together 68 runs for the second wicket. Varun Chakravarthy (2/20) was brilliant for KKR.

Earlier, opener Nitish Rana's (87,

TEAM	M	W	L	N/R	NRR	PTS
MI	12	8	4	0	1.186	16
RCB	12	7	5	0	0.048	14
DC	12	7	5	0	0.030	14
KXIP	12	6	6	0	-0.049	12
KKR	13	6	7	0	-0.467	12
SRH	12	5	7	0	0.396	10
RR	12	5	7	0	-0.505	10
CSK	13	5	8	0	-0.532	10

61b, 10x4, 4x6) half century and a late burst from skipper Eoin Morgan (15) and Dinesh Karthik (21 n o) helped KKR get to 172/5.

CSK, who pulled things back in the middle overs after a fine start from KKR openers Rana and Shubman Gill (26), leaked 66 runs in the last five overs. Lungi Ngidi (2/34) was the best bowler for CSK while Sam Curran also bowled well early on.

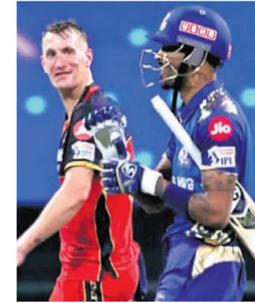
BRIEF SCORES
KKR 172/5 (Nitish Rana 87; Lungi Ngidi 2/34) lost to CSK 178/4 (Ruturaj Gaikwad 72, Ambati Rayudu 38, Ravindra Jadeja 31 n o; Varun Chakravarthy 2/20) by 6 wickets.

Morris, Pandya reprimanded for heated exchange

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Abu Dhabi, Oct 29: Royal Challengers Bangalore (RCB) all-rounder Chris Morris and his Mumbai Indians' (MI) counterpart Hardik Pandya have been reprimanded for a verbal altercation during their teams' IPL clash here.

The incident took place in the 19th over of Mumbai Indians' chase when Pandya struck Morris for a massive six and gestured towards the South African.



Morris got his revenge when he dismissed Pandya in the fifth ball of the over and gave him a send off. Mumbai Indians won the match by five wickets.

A press release from the IPL said that both of them admitted to breaching the Code of Conduct. "For Level 1 breaches of the Code of Conduct, the match referee's decision is final and binding," said the release.

DHONI'S RETAINMENT AS CSK SKIPPER

Gambhir 'would not be surprised'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Oct 29: MS Dhoni and Chennai Super Kings (CSK) owners share such mutual trust and fabulous relationship that he could be retained as captain of the side in 2021 despite enduring an abysmal IPL season in the UAE, says former India opener Gautam Gambhir.

Three-time winners CSK have failed to lead the leagues stage for the first time in the tournament's history and are currently placed at the bottom of the points table following an unprecedented eight defeats in 12 outings.

"I keep saying that why CSK is CSK is because of the relationship between the owners and the captain. They have given all the freedom to MS, and MS has received all the mutual respect from the owners as well," Gambhir was quoted as saying by ESPNcricinfo.

"So I would not be surprised if they continue with MS and MS plays till the time he wants to play. And then next year he still continues to be the captain and have a much different squad than what he has this time around. He deserves that much of appreciation from the owners."

The 39-year-old Dhoni's future has come under scrutiny in the

wake of CSK's mediocre performances in the ongoing IPL. Gambhir, who flourished under Dhoni's captaincy in international cricket, pointed out his overall record as CSK skipper.

"What he has done for the franchise and how the franchise actually deals with MS and treats MS is a fabulous relationship. And that is how every franchise should deal with their captain, who has delivered for them," said Gauti.

The ongoing season has been a far cry from their glory days, having managed only eight points so far after four wins. Gambhir said, "MS has won them three (IPL) trophies, couple of Champions Leagues, he has made them one of the top successful sides in the IPL after Mumbai Indians."

"So CSK saying they are going to continue with MS - it is just the mutual respect, it is just the mutual respect. That's why MS has been so loyal (to the Super Kings). That's why MS has given everything: heart and soul, his sweat, sleepless nights - I'm sure he must have had sleepless nights while he has continued captaining CSK."

Earlier, the CSK management has said that Dhoni would be retained at the next mega auction, which is likely to be held in 2022.

Barca pass Juventus test Rashford treble helps Man Utd win



LEADING FROM FRONT: Lionel Messi (C) points skywards after scoring from the spot against Juventus, Wednesday

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Turin, Oct 29: Barcelona played some of their best football in a while to win 2-0 at Juventus in a Champions League match that offered plenty of entertainment even though the absence of Cristiano Ronaldo prevented a highly anticipated duel against Lionel Messi.

Ronaldo was out for the game, more than two weeks after the Juventus forward initially tested positive for the coronavirus. Alvaro Morata, who scored twice against Dynamo last week, again replaced Ronaldo but frustratingly had three goals ruled out for offside.

Messi converted a late penalty for Barcelona after Ousmane Dembele had given the visitors the lead in the 14th minute to send Barcelona on the way to their first victory over Juventus here.

"I believe it was the most complete match since I arrived," Barcelona coach Ronald Koeman said. "I think the team showed a lot of personality in midfield, it was our best game."

Barcelona took the sole lead of Group G, three points above Juventus. Dynamo Kyiv and Ferencvaros have one point each

after drawing 2-2 Wednesday. Barcelona have been in turmoil this week after losing the 'El Clasico' 1-3 at home to Real Madrid last weekend, while club president Josep Maria Bartomeu and his entire board resigned Tuesday.

The scoreline could have been worse for Juventus if the visitors had been more clinical with their chances. Juventus threatened little. But, apart from Ronaldo, it was also missing Giorgio Chiellini, Matthijs de Ligt and Alex Sandro and Bianconeri coach Andrea Pirlo said that their absences and the lack of experience in his squad would be to blame for the defeat.

Barcelona almost took the lead with less than two minutes on the clock as former Juventus midfielder Miralem Pjanic forced a save from Wojciech Szczesny before Antoine Griezmann's follow-up bounced off the left post.

It didn't take the visitors much longer to break the deadlock. Messi played a great ball over the top to Dembele on the right flank and he cut inside before unleashing a shot which was deflected into the far top corner.

instantly but Morata's effort was ruled out for offside. Barcelona almost doubled their lead in the 23rd minute when Griezmann played a delightful backheeled flick to release Messi but the Argentina international fired wide of the right post.

Morata had another effort ruled offside and Szczesny again came to his side's rescue late in the first half with two saves in quick succession to deny first Messi and then Griezmann.

Morata finally appeared to get his goal 10 minutes into the second half when Juan Cuadrado acrobatically volleyed Federico Chiesa's cross back into the box and Morata turned it into the back of the net.

But after a lengthy check by the video assistant referee, and with both teams back in the center of the pitch waiting to kick off, that too was ruled out for offside.

Juventus defender Merih Demiral was sent off with five minutes remaining following a second yellow card and Barcelona sealed the result shortly after when Federico Bernardeschi crashed into the back of Ansu Fati and Messi fired the penalty into the top left corner.

REUTERS

Manchester, Oct 29: Substitute Marcus Rashford scored a superb quickfire hat-trick for Manchester United as they overhauled Germany's RB Leipzig 5-0 at Old Trafford in Champions League group H Wednesday.

The striker, in the headlines recently due to his campaigning over free school lunches, showed he has not been distracted from his day job as he came off the bench with 27 minutes left and led United to an impressive victory.

Rashford is only the second United player to score a hat-trick as a substitute after his manager Ole Gunnar Solskjaer did so against Nottingham Forest in 1999.

Having won at PSG in their opening game, United are now in a commanding position in the group and are beginning to look like a squad

with real strength in depth.

Mason Greenwood opened the scoring in the 21st minute, delivering a clinical finish after being slipped through by Paul Pogba. The VAR review suggested Greenwood may have been narrowly offside but the goal was allowed to stand.

Rashford came on for Greenwood in the 63rd minute and soon set about deciding the match. The England striker raced on to a long ball from Bruno Fernandes to make it 2-0 in the 74th minute, with the initial offside call being overturned on review.

Rashford made it 3-0 after Fred robbed Marcel Sabitzer and Anthony Martial added the fourth from the penalty spot after he had been brought down by Sabitzer.

The hat-trick, inside 19 minutes, was completed in stoppage time when Rashford blasted home after good work from Martial cutting in from the left.



Marcus Rashford (R) celebrates a goal, while a Leipzig player looks dejected

CHAMPIONS LEAGUE ROUND-UP

Chelsea thrash hosts Krasnodar 4-0

Krasnodar (Russia): Chelsea enjoyed their first match in front of fans in nearly eight months, beating Krasnodar 4-0 in the Champions League to spoil the Russian club's home debut in the competition. Krasnodar goalkeeper Matvei Safonov let a shot from Callum Hudson-Odoi squirm through his grasp and over the line to gift Chelsea a 37th-minute lead, before Timo Werner - from the penalty spot - Hakim Ziyech and Christian Pulisic added further goals.



Kean hits brace

Istanbul: New signing Moise Kean scored twice as Paris Saint-Germain beat Basaksehir 2-0 in the Champions League but lost Neymar to an injury. Kean grabbed his goals in the 64th and 79th minutes as PSG weathered some strong attacks to get back on track after losing their opening game at home to Manchester United. Champions League newcomer Basaksehir sustained a second defeat after losing to Leipzig. Neymar limped off with an apparent thigh injury after 26 minutes and was replaced by winger Pablo Sarabia.

Dortmund victorious

Dortmund: Borussia Dortmund needed a 78th-minute penalty from Jadon Sancho and a stoppage-time goal from Erling Haaland to beat visitors Zenit St Petersburg 2-0 in their Champions League Group F match Wednesday. The Germans, who lost their opener to Lazio, controlled the game for the start but carved out few chances before Vyacheslav Karavaev inexplicably wrestled Thorgan Hazard to the ground for Sancho to score from the spot. Haaland added a second in stoppage time with a powerful run.

Jayaram, Dey forced out of SaarLorLux Open meet

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Saarbrücken (Germany), Oct 29: Indian shuttlers Ajay Jayaram and Shubhankar Dey were Thursday forced out of the SaarLorLux Open after being put in isolation owing to contact with COVID positive father-cum-coach of defending champion Lakshya Sen, who has already withdrawn.

The 19-year-old Lakshya withdrew Wednesday after his father DK Sen returned a positive test for the dreaded virus. DK Sen is asymptomatic at this point.

"BWF can confirm three players have been withdrawn from the tournament as a precautionary measure for all participants after they were in contact with a member of their team entourage who tested positive for COVID-19," the Badminton World Federation said in a statement.

Later, Jayaram, in a Twitter post tagging sports minister Kiren Rijiju, the national badminton federation

and BWF, said that he and Dey would like to return to India as the organisers have not given them any information or assistance apart from asking them to isolate.

"Owing to one of the players failing to follow the COVID protocol and the organisers failing to enforce the protocols set in place, I and Shubhankar have found ourselves in an unfortunate situation..." he wrote without specifying the lapse on part the player concerned and the organisers.

"We have currently been asked to isolate with absolutely no other information from the organisers including our meals. We have our COVID negative certificates, and have NO symptoms. We are unable to contact the local authorities. We would like to know if it is possible for us to get tested here again and come back to India," he added.

Dey also demanded compensation for the ordeal. "Requesting authorities to compensate us while also allowing us to return to India."