



AAHANA MISSES SHOTS

Actor Aahana Kumra takes to Instagram to share that she yearns for shoots and much more

LEISURE P2



HEATWAVE INTENSIFIES

About 1,000 people were evacuated in western Canada as fires raged amid an unprecedented heat wave

INTERNATIONAL P10



ENGLAND FACE UKRAINE

Gareth Southgate's England face a challenge from Ukraine for a place in the semifinals at Euro 2020

SPORTS P12

IRREGULAR by MANJUL



Like Americans, I too don't need a mask now. Our govt has beaten America in vaccination.

Tirath Singh Rawat quits, Uttarakhand to get third CM in a year

AGENCIES

Dehradun, July 2: BJP leader Tirath Singh Rawat resigned as Uttarakhand Chief Minister Friday after holding the post for less than four months.

Rawat handed over the resignation letter to Governor Baby Rani Maurya past 11 pm, hours after returning from Delhi where he was summoned by the top BJP leadership Wednesday.

The Uttarakhand BJP legislature party will meet Saturday to elect its new leader, who will be later sworn in as the next CM of the state where assembly elections are due early next year.

Tirath Singh Rawat had replaced Trivendra Singh Rawat March 10 after he was similarly asked by the party to step down.

The Constitution required Rawat, who is an MP, to get elected as a member of the state Assembly within six months to continue as CM.

But there seemed increasing uncertainty over the Election Commission holding bypolls for the two vacant seats in the state when there is less than a year to go before the next assembly elections.

Rawat met party president JP Nadda and Union Home Minister Amit Shah in Delhi, amid speculation of another leadership change in the hill state.



AT LOGGERHEADS: West Bengal Governor Jagdeep Dhankar and Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee interact at the Assembly in Kolkata, Friday. In an unprecedented development, Dhankar was forced to cut short his inaugural address at the newly formed Assembly amid ruckus by Opposition BJP MLAs who took offence after finding 'no mention' of post-poll violence in the speech. Dhankar could barely speak for four minutes as BJP MLAs, carrying posters and pictures of alleged victims of post-poll violence, rushed to the well of the House to stage protests.

UNI PHOTO

Pregnant women now eligible for vax

AGENCIES

New Delhi, July 2: Pregnant women in India are now eligible to get vaccinated against Covid with the Union Health Ministry Friday giving the approval based on recommendations of the National Technical Advisory Group on Immunisation (NTAGI).

The decision empowers pregnant women to make an informed choice on taking the Covid vaccination, the ministry said, adding these women can now register on CoWIN or walk-in to the nearest Covid vaccination centre to get themselves inoculated. The decision has been communicated to all the states and union territories to implement it under the ongoing National Covid Vaccination Programme, it said in a statement. Till now, all groups except pregnant women were eligible for Covid vaccination. Now, it is expanded to even pregnant women in the world's largest immunisation drive, the statement said. Studies have shown that Covid infection during pregnancy may result in rapid deterioration of health of pregnant women and they are at an increased risk of severe diseases and it might affect foetus too, it said.

The matter has been examined by domain knowledge experts based on the evidence that indicate that pregnant women are at an increased risk for severe illness from Covid compared to non-pregnant women in case they get infected.

"Further, pregnant women with Covid-19 infection are at an increased risk for preterm birth and other adverse pregnancy outcomes including higher chances of neonatal morbidity. Additionally, the experts have also highlighted pre-existing co-morbidities, advanced maternal age, and high body mass index as factors for severe Covid in pregnancy," the statement said.

Petrol exceeds ₹100 in state

Price of the fuel crosses the century-mark in 27 districts including Khurda, Cuttack, Sambalpur, Bolangir & Sundargarh

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 2: Petrol prices in various districts of Odisha crossed the ₹100-per-litre mark Friday.

With the latest increase in petrol prices by ₹36 paise, the fuel now costs ₹100.01 per litre in Bhubaneswar, while the diesel cost remains unchanged at ₹97.25 per litre.

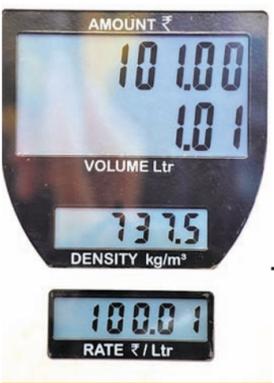
A litre of petrol now costs ₹100.32 in Cuttack.

The prices of petrol crossed the ₹100-per-litre mark in 27 districts including Sambalpur, Bolangir, Sundargarh and Rayagada.

Petrol is the costliest in the state in tribal-dominated Malkangiri at ₹105.08 per litre, while the fuel costs ₹102 per litre in Koraput.

The petrol price hike is attributed mostly to a rise in crude oil prices in the international market and taxes imposed by both state and Union governments, an official said.

Utkal Petroleum Dealers' Association general secretary Sanjay Lath said, "For the first time in history, the petrol price in Bhubaneswar crossed a century today. The two main factors responsible for the price hike are—rise in crude oil price in the international market and taxes imposed by both state government and the Centre."



CITY	PETROL PRICE (JULY 02)
Bhubaneswar	₹100.01
Cuttack	₹100.32
Malkangiri	₹105.08
Koraput	₹102.00

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SANJAY LATH | GENERAL SECRETARY, UTKAL PETROLEUM DEALERS' ASSOCIATION

Meanwhile, the state government has increased bus fares.

The fares of ordinary and express buses have been hiked by four paise to 80 paise per km and 93 paise per km respectively.

The fare of deluxe and AC deluxe buses has been hiked by eight paise to ₹1.29 per km. Super-premium services have been costlier by 12 paise to ₹2.44 per km. The revised fare will be effective from July 1.

The state government has recently allowed plying of buses in 20 districts where the Covid test positivity rate is below five per cent.

Transport Minister Padmanabh Behera said that the department will soon release an SOP on adherence to Covid protocols by bus operators and passengers.

MARKET WATCH

INDEX	VALUE	VIATION
SENSEX	52484.67	↑ 166.07
NIFTY	15722.20	↑ 42.20
DOLLAR	75.19	↑ ₹0.18
EURO	88.38	↓ ₹0.10
GOLD	₹47,25	↑ ₹217
SILVER	₹69,063	↑ ₹908

WEATHER

	BHUB	CTK
MAX	36.0°C	35.6°C
MIN	26.5°C	26.0°C
Humidity	93%	91%
Rainfall	44.0mm	Nil

Forecast: Light rain very likely

Era ends, war looms as US forces quit main base in Af

REUTERS

Kabul, July 2: American troops pulled out of their main military base in Afghanistan Friday, leaving behind a piece of the World Trade Centre they buried 20 years ago in a country that the top US commander has warned may descend into civil war without them.

"All American soldiers and members of NATO forces have left the Bagram air base," said a senior US security official on condition of anonymity.

Though a few more troops have yet to withdraw from another base in the capital Kabul in coming days, the Bagram pullout brings to an effective end the longest war in American history. The base, an hour's drive north of Kabul, was where the US military has coordinated its air war and logistical support for its entire Afghan mission. The Taliban thanked them for leaving.



Afghan soldiers stand guard at a checkpoint outside the US Bagram air base in Afghanistan, Friday as the last of American troops vacate it.

"We consider this withdrawal a positive step. Afghans can get closer to stability and peace with the full withdrawal of foreign forces," Taliban spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid told Reuters.

It was here, on a bullet-ridden Soviet-built air strip on an irrigated plain surrounded by the snow-capped peaks of Hindu Kush, that New York City firefighters and police were flown to bury a piece of the World Trade Centre in December, 2001, days after the Taliban were toppled for harbouring Osama bin Laden. It was also here that the CIA ran a "black site" detention centre for terrorism suspects and subjected them to abuse that President Barack Obama subsequently acknowledged as torture. Later it swelled into a sprawling fortified city for a huge international military force, with fast food joints, gyms and a cafe serving something called "the mother of all coffees." Two runways perpetually roared. Presidents flew in and gave speeches; celebrities came and told jokes.

An Afghan official said the base would be officially handed over to the government at a ceremony Saturday.

The US defence official said General Austin Miller, the top US commander in Afghanistan "still retains all the capabilities and authorities to protect the force" stationed in Kabul.

Earlier this week, Miller told journalists in Kabul that civil war for Afghanistan was "certainly a path that can be visualised," with Taliban fighters sweeping into districts around the country in recent weeks as foreign troops fled home. Two other US security officials said this week the majority of US military personnel would most likely be gone by July 4, with a residual force remaining to protect the embassy. That would be more than two months ahead of the timetable set by Biden, who had promised they would be home by September 11, the 20th anniversary of the attack that brought them here.

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The Indian mission has already taken up the issue strongly with the Pakistani authorities through a note verbale.

There was no official comment on the incident yet that came to light amid growing concerns in the security establishment in India after explosives-laden drones were used to carry out an attack on the Jammu Air Force station June 27.

According to security officials, it was the first instance of suspected Pakistan-based terrorists deploying unmanned aerial vehicles to strike at vital installations in India.

Army Chief Gen MM Naravane Thursday said that the easy availability of drones has increased the complexity of security challenges from both state and state-sponsored actors.

HSC exam questions from 70 pc syllabus

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 2: A day after the Board of Secondary Education (BSE) announced the dates for the physical matriculation examinations for dissatisfied students starting from July 30, School and Mass Education Minister Samir Ranjan Dash Friday said that questions for the special offline examinations for the year 2021 will be set from 70 per cent of the syllabus. The offline examinations will be held from July 30 to August 5. Filling up of forms will start July 5 and will end July 14. The exams will be conducted from 10 am to 12 noon.

"The questions in the examination will be set from 70 per cent of the syllabus as we have already reduced the Class X syllabus by 30 per cent. The Board will decide the pattern of questions for the examination," the minister said. The physical exams will be conducted for students who are unhappy with the assessment done by the BSE after offline exams were cancelled due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Students appearing for the exams will not have to pay any registration fees. They can fill up forms by visiting www.bseodisha.ac.in website July 5 onwards.

Speaking to reporters, the minister said the Board will take appropriate measures to announce the results within 15 days and the students will not face any issue in admission into Plus II courses this academic session.

Drone spotted over Indian High Commission in Pak

AGENCIES

New Delhi, July 2: A drone was spotted over the Indian High Commission complex in Islamabad late last week, prompting India to lodge a strong protest with Pakistan over the incident, people familiar with the development said Friday.

They said India considered the incident as a breach of security that triggered concerns in the mission.

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CHARLIZE THERON CONFIRMS THE OLD GUARD SEQUEL IS IN WORKS

Hollywood star Charlize Theron has confirmed that she and co-stars Marwan Kenzari and Luca Marinelli are "definitely" returning for another installment of *The Old Guard*. Theron confirmed to *Variety* that the script is already done and that they plan to start shooting the action flick early next year, reports *etonline.com*.

JASON MOMOA LOVES RIDING MOTORCYCLES

Hollywood star Jason Momoa has opened up about his guilty pleasure. He says it is riding motorcycles. "I ride motorcycles that involve gas and oil, which I'm trying to steer away to be guilty pleasure. I love riding motorcycles. That goes as my guilty pleasure," Momoa said on *The Drew Barrymore Show*.



FORTUNE FORECAST

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ARIES
Today is a bright day with favourable circumstances; all you need to do is focus in the correct place. Ganesh says if you have been waiting for a chance to cement a relationship, today is the proper time to propose. Be cautious when driving and profound while making suggestions.

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
A marathon brainstorming session with your colleagues, a scamper for meeting deadlines, and a demanding spouse will leave you quite stressed out by the end of the day. You, however, are an expert in dividing time between business, home and pleasure.

CANCER
This is your big moment. You are going to deal with a huge amount of money – the kind of amount you would want to fill your swimming pool with and swim in it. Statutory warning issued by Ganesh: Don't dive in it, for you may hurt yourself as something or someone is likely to pull the plug, draining out most of the wealth that was amassed overnight.

LEO
Shooting off the charts is an understatement when it comes to your liveliness today, says Ganesh. Guess there is just something about today that puts a spring in your step and a smile on your face. But whatever it is, it's good for you. At work, you shall be able to bring about new and successful business strategies.

VIRGO
It is quite probable that today will be an action-packed day for you, feels Ganesh. It is going to be a progressive day for your business. Later in the day, you may retreat into your shell, and refuse company.

LIBRA
It's now or never for you, as today, you may finally take out time to do some sound thinking for your future goals and success. Things seem to go your way, and all your plans are beautifully executed towards the afternoon. Also, find time in the evening to be with the ones dear to you.

SCORPIO
Work may pile up today unless you work extremely hard to meet your targets, says Ganesh. In business, you may be disappointed with the results you achieve and that may be the cause of anxiety and worry. Support may come in the form of love and affection from a dear one in the evening.

SAGITTARIUS
Spirituality may overwhelm every other state of your being today, feels Ganesh. Unavoidable expenses may also be on the cards where you must ensure you get the value for your money. Besides an odd shopping spree or some light socialising with friends and family, you are inclined to visit a holy shrine today in quest of spiritual peace, says Ganesh.

CAPRICORN
It's your lucky day. You can look forward to an exciting time, both with your sweetheart and at work, says Ganesh. A few unexpected, but rather pleasant, events will keep you amused throughout, but there may be more surprises in store even as the day comes to an end.

AQUARIUS
Success aho! Go on, challenge your friends to a game, or your adversaries to a deadline. Today is your day, says Ganesh. Your image too gets a makeover due to your superhero antics! Enjoy it while it lasts, and before the wheels turn once again.

PISCES
Not the best of days for you, haunted as you will be by feelings of insecurity. However, do not be in too much of a hurry to get in the mood to grieve, for the evening brings you pleasant times in the company of your soul mate, says Ganesh.

AAHANA MISSES SHOOTS AND MORNING CALL TIMES



Mumbai: Actress Aahana Kumra is in a major missing mood. She took to Instagram Friday to share that she yearns for shoots and much more. "I miss shoots!! I miss early morning call times! I miss being frozen yogurt! I miss real locations! I miss you Uzbekistan!" wrote Kumra. She shared pictures in the flashback post from the set of last year's release *Khuda Haafiz*, where she played the role of an Arab police officer named Tamena Hamid. "#TamenaHamid on the sets of #KhudaHaafiz in Khiva 2019 #FlashBackFriday," she

wrote as caption. In the pictures, she is seen dressed in character, and the shots are captured at the real location of Ichan Kala, Old City of Kava, Uzbekistan. She wears a black top and grey trousers for the early morning shoot. *Khuda Haafiz*, starring Vidhut Jamwal and Shivaleeka Oberoi, released in 2020 on OTT. Aahana will next be seen playing a pivotal role in Madhur Bhandarkar's upcoming film *India Lockdown*. IANS

Jacqueline is 'Persephone Girl'



Mumbai: Actress Jacqueline Fernandez looks stunning in a picture she shared on social media describing herself "Persephone Girl". Jacqueline posted two photographs on social media, where she is seen wearing a beige V-neck crop-top and

pants. The actress is seen smiling for the camera. "Persephone Girl," she captioned the image, which currently has one million views on social media. Speaking about her work, the actress recently featured in the music video *Paani paani* by rapper Badshah and singer Aastha Gill. Jacqueline has a packed schedule right now. She has *Ram Setu* and *Bachchan Pandey* coming up with Akshay Kumar; *Kick 2* with Salman Khan, *Cirkus* with Ranveer Singh and the multi-star cast horror comedy *Bhoot Police*. IANS

Shahid resumes work

Mumbai: Actor Shahid Kapoor has resumed work, going by his Friday post on social media.

Shahid has posted a video on Instagram showing him entering a set, walking into his vanity van, and getting his hair and make-up done. In the last few seconds of the clip, the actor is seen shooting. "Ready..SET..go!" he wrote as caption with the clip, which cur-

rently has 365K likes on the photo-sharing website. It seems Shahid was shooting for a TV commercial.

The actor will next be seen in the film *Jersey*, which also features his father Pankaj Kapur and Mrunal Thakur. He will also make his digital debut with a series directed by Raj and DK. IANS

Faraz on Sheer Qorma winning at Frameline Fest



Mumbai: Film maker Faraz Ansari's short film *Sheer Qorma* has won the Best Short Film Audience Award at San Francisco's Frameline Fest. Winning at this festival makes the film eligible for the BAFTA awards. The film stars Swara Bhasker, Divya Dutta and Shabana Azmi in pivotal roles. Reacting on the win, Ansari tells IANS: "I'm still numb with the fact that a film like *Sheer Qorma* that is so personal to me, that was born inside my heart and my soul, is going out and conquering the world, winning the biggest awards at the biggest film festivals. (I am) So very grateful

for our film winning at Frameline Fest." Frameline Fest is one of the biggest LGBTQ+ festivals in the world. "For a queer, brown, non binary, independent filmmaker to win so many accolades, it's surreal. It is a surreal experience because we have always been told that this is your limit, this is the most that you can get but then the universe finds a way to just give you so much more that you could dream of, you could even ask for: I'm very grateful and I'm just honoured about the fact that our film is really, not just winning awards but also really touching lives and bringing transformation in hearts," he says. The filmmaker adds: "The reason why we have made *Sheer Qorma* and I'm just very thrilled to see this child fly and so high and high and high in the sky." IANS

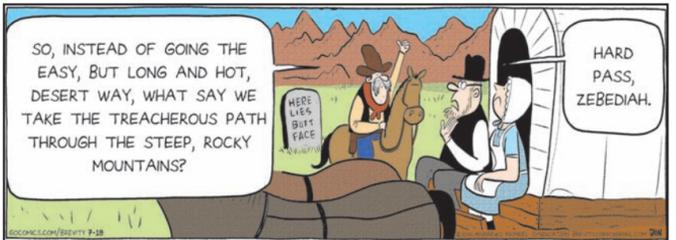
PEANUTS



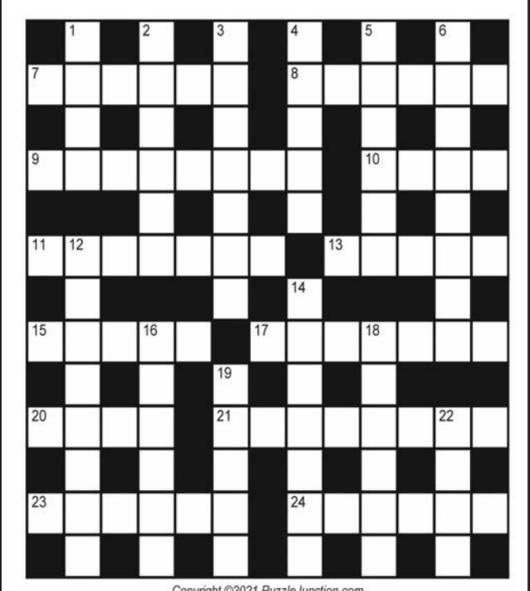
CALVIN AND HOBBS



BREVITY



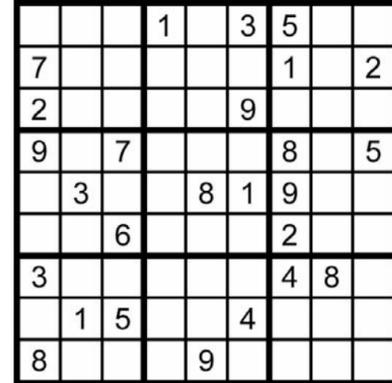
FUN post CROSSWORD



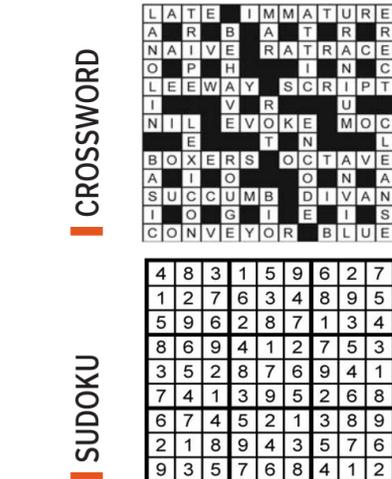
- Across**
- 7 Libra is part of it
 - 8 Badger
 - 9 Computer accessory
 - 10 Lollygag
 - 11 Sweet liqueur (4,3)
 - 13 Watch part
 - 15 In reserve
 - 17 Oscillate
 - 20 Passport endorsement
 - 21 Barbecue need
 - 23 Chest of drawers
 - 24 Light-sensitive membrane
- Down**
- 1 Timber wolf
 - 2 Runny nose aid
 - 3 Doubter
 - 4 Parasol purpose
 - 5 Panther cat
 - 6 Enjoyable
 - 12 Delectable
 - 14 Competition
 - 16 Wrapped
 - 18 Narrate
 - 19 Pathfinder
 - 22 Family member

SUDOKU

To solve the Sudoku puzzle, fill in the boxes in such a manner that every row, column and 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9, without repeating any.



SOLUTIONS



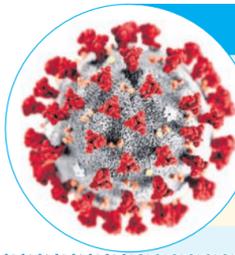
CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW

downtown



RAIN PAIN

Commuters face a tough time as rain lashes the Capital city, Friday afternoon



COVID-19 TRACKER

	INFECTED	RECOVERED	DEAD
World	18,35,29,378	16,80,11,258	39,73,615
India	3,04,58,251	2,95,48,302	4,00,312
Odisha	9,16,109	8,84,262	4,109

80 platoon cops for Rath Yatra



Chitrakar servitors give finishing touches to structures to be fixed atop chariots ahead of the Rath Yatra in Puri, Friday

AGENCIES

Puri, July 2: About 80 platoons of police force, including officers of various ranks, would be deployed in and around the Pilgrim City for the Rath Yatra scheduled for July 12 amid Covid protocol and without devotees.

All the roads leading to Badadanda (Grand Road) would be sealed and prohibitory orders under Section 144 of CrPC would be clamped to prevent people from thronging the Grand Road.

In addition to it, all three entry points

to the Holy City would be sealed and railway services would be suspended till the festival is over, Puri superintendent of police (SP) K Vishal Singh said.

Police personnel would monitor the movement of people through CCTV cameras installed at various strategic points. Efforts are on for smooth conduct of annual Rath Yatra of Lord Jagannath, his elder Lord Balabhadra and sister Devi Subhadra.

The entire Holy City would be divided into 12 security zones and the Badadanda, the venue of the Rath Yatra, would be di-

vided into three sections for the smooth celebration of the annual festival.

District Collector Samarth Verma has reviewed the preparations being executed by several departments for Rath Yatra. Like previous year, this year too the annual event would be conducted without the devotees due to the pandemic.

Hundreds of temple servitors, who were tested negative for Covid-19, would be allowed to participate in the pulling of all three chariots along the Badadanda to Gundicha temple.

"The second phase of swab sample testing of servitors is going on," Verma said, adding Badadanda would be cooled by flooding it with water.

This apart, drinking water and first aid units would be made operational to serve the servitors while pulling chariots. Unsafe buildings would be identified and sealed.

Nobody would be allowed to step onto Badadanda during chariot pulling. Special care is taken to upgrade sanitation, cleaning of drains, repairs to roads and illumination of the city particularly Badadanda the venue of the fete, he added.

A meeting with Chhatisha Nijog (apex body of temple servitors) would be held in the next two days to finalise other aspects of the fete.

All the servitors have been working to make this festival a success and a fresh SOP for the grand festival of the Trinity will be released soon, Verma said.

The Puri SP said nobody would be allowed to go to the rooftops to witness the festival proceedings.

43 roads, 14 bridges in Red-hit areas on the anvil

BHUBANESWAR: The state government has decided to build 43 roads and 14 bridges in seven districts affected by Left Wing Extremism (LWE), in a bid to facilitate conduct of anti-Maoist operations in core areas. The projects will be taken up in Koraput, Malkangiri, Nabarangpur, Rayagada, Kalahandi, Nuapada and Kandhamal districts. While two roads and as many bridges are proposed for Koraput, 14 road projects and one bridge will be constructed in Malkangiri. Similarly, two roads and four bridges are proposed for Nabarangpur. Likewise, eight road projects will be taken up in Rayagada, five roads & two bridges in Kandhamal, six roads in Nuapada and six roads and five bridges in Kalahandi. Except two road projects in Nuapada, all the road and bridge projects are coming under the administrative control of Rural Development department. The two projects in Nuapada belong to the Works department. Home department additional chief secretary Sanjeev Chopra has asked the Rural Development and Works departments to execute these projects on a priority basis.

RICH TRIBUTE TO KALINDI CHARAN

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 2: Noted Odia poet, novelist and storywriter Padma Bhushan Kalindi Charan Panigrahi was paid rich tributes on his birth anniversary at a virtual event organised by the Odisha Sahitya Akademi here Friday.

Odia Language Literature and Culture Minister Jyoti Prakash Panigrahi was the chief guest of the event while department's Principal Secretary Bishnupada Sethi was the guest of honour. Professor Adikanda Sahu graced the occasion as the chief speaker while Dr Vivekananda Panigrahi was another speaker. Akademi president Dr Hrushikesh Mallick presided over the event. Akademi vice-president Dr Sangram Jena also participated in the event.

"Kalindi Charan was a versatile genius. Many of his literary works were included in school and college curricula," said the minister while paying homage to the eminent writer.

Sethi said that Kalindi Charan had carved a niche for himself and his native state Odisha by working as the associate editor of legendary Hindi writer Premchand's magazine. Professor Sahu said Kalindi



Charan's magnum opus 'Matira Manisha' is a unique creation not only in India but also in Asia. Panigrahi also expressed his high regard for the noted writer.

"Kalindi Charan's literary works are yet to be evaluated properly," said Akademi president Mallick. Akademi secretary Prabodh Rout proposed the vote of thanks.

Vax crunch: Ganjam to get Covaxin now

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 2: Amid frequent shortage of Covishield vaccine doses in the state, the Health and Family Welfare department Friday said that Covaxin would now be used in Ganjam district for inoculation of eligible citizens.

Health department Additional Chief Secretary PK Mohapatra Friday wrote to Ganjam Collector, Berhampur Municipal Commissioner and the Chief District Medical Officer (CDMO) about the decision and asked them to make preparations for the same.

Mohapatra said that Covaxin would be introduced in the district for this month for those who had not taken their first dose of anti-Covid vaccine while other adults who have taken their first dose of Covishield would be given Covishield doses only.

The district administration and ULB authorities have been asked to make arrangements for imparting training to the healthcare workers for the amended vaccine system.

As per the latest instructions issued to the officials, medical officers, supervisors, vaccinators and others must be trained on the correct usage of Covaxin which included ensuring the required duration between two doses of the vaccine and management of the adverse effects post immunisation.

The district administration has been asked to inform the Health department about the monthly requirement of the vaccines for the district.



Clamour for reopening of gyms



Members of All Odisha Gym Owners' Association perform dips as part of their hunger strike in PMG area of Bhubaneswar, Friday

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 2: With lockdown restrictions on gymnasiums across the state still in force, the owners of such facilities staged a hunger strike here Friday urging the Chief Minister to consider gyms as part of the healthcare sector and allow them to reopen amid Covid protocol.

The state government, June 30, eased restrictions in Category A districts and extended the partial lockdown in Category B districts. However, the government has not allowed reopening of malls, beauty parlours and gyms.

"Not much thought has gone while categorising gyms under recreational activities. It's an irony that when the need of the hour is to improve health and immunity, gyms are not being allowed to operate. Thus, we request the government to include gyms in essential health services," said Odisha Gym Owners' Association president Satyajit Dash.

Stating that over 2,000 gyms operating in the state, Dash said the industry has incurred a loss of ₹1,000 crore, affecting the livelihood of about 50,000 people. With recurring lockdowns, gyms have been allowed to operate for only six months in last 15 months.

The association alleged that gym operators, who have invested a sizeable amount in procuring equipment and are continuing to pay rent and salaries to the trainers and other support staff, are under severe financial strain.

"Operating gyms has become a Herculean task at this juncture. Therefore, we urge the state government to provide adequate compensation ranging from ₹5 lakh to ₹15 lakh (based on investment), free electricity for one year and interest subvention on loans under MSME policy," Dash added.

Moreover, sources said that customers who had taken half-yearly, quarterly and yearly packages are now miffed as owing to lack of access to such services due to lockdown restrictions. While gym owners have refused to extend services, gym goers have planned not to make bulk payments once the facilities reopen.

"I had paid ₹7,500 during February 2020 for six months. However, lockdown was imposed and I could not even complete a month going to the gym. I had joined the gym in January 2021 and paid monthly fees after restrictions were lifted in November 2020. I made a bulk payment in April for three months but the lockdown again came into force," said Saumya Dash, a student. Meanwhile, Bhubaneswar Central MLA Ananta Narayan Jena, BJP leader Babu Singh and Additional Relief Commissioner Kamal Lochan Mishra listened to the grievances of the agitating gym owners and sought three days' time to address them.

Women Scientists Scheme (WOS-C)

Technology Information, Forecasting & Assessment Council (TIFAC)
(An Autonomous body of Department of Science & Technology (DST), Govt of India)

If you are an Indian woman in the age range of 27-45 years and have passion to deal with latest scientific and technological inventions and innovations, then this is for you....

Applications invited for selection of women scientists under WOS-C

Women Scientists Scheme (WOS) is a flagship scheme of DST. Through one of its components-"Women Scientists Scheme-C (WOS-C)"- it provides **One Year on-the-job training in the area of Intellectual Property Rights (IPR). Patent Facilitating Centre (PFC) of TIFAC has been entrusted with implementation of WOS-C.**

Women with Indian citizenship having Masters in Science or Bachelors in Engineering or Technology and within the age group of 27-45 years as on 01-04-2021 are eligible to apply.

Selected women will be given a stipend during the one - year training as per the following table:

MSc in Basic or Applied Sciences / BTech / MBBS or equivalent	Rs. 25,000/- pm
MPhil / MTech / MPharma / MVSc or equivalent	Rs. 30,000/- pm
PhD in Basic or Applied Sciences or equivalent	Rs. 35,000/- pm

For detailed information and online submission of application visit the website www.tifac.org.in
Applications should be submitted through **ONLINE MODE** only.

Last Date for Online Submission is July 31, 2021

BUREAU OF ENERGY EFFICIENCY

(A Statutory body under Ministry of Power, Government of India)
4th Floor, Sewa Bhawan, R. K. Puram, New Delhi - 110066
Website: www.beeindia.gov.in, Ph: 011-26766700

KIND ATTENTION : ENERGY USERS IN 13 NOTIFIED SECTORS

Submission of Report on the Status of Energy Consumption under Energy Conservation Act 2001 (52 of 2001)

All users/class of users of energy in the following energy intensive sectors having Annual Energy Consumption of and above the specified limit shown against the following energy intensive sectors are notified as designated consumers vide S.O. 394 (E) dated the 12th March, 2007, S.O. 3542 (E) dated 29th Dec. 2015, S.O. 1388(E) dated 02nd May, 2017 and 502147 (E) Dated 17th June, 2020, under clause (e) of section 14 of the Energy Conservation Act (52 of 2001).

S. No.	Notified Sector	Threshold Energy Consumption in metric tonne of oil equivalent (mtoe) per year
1.	Aluminium	7,500
2.	Cement	
	(a) Integrated Cement Unit	30,000
	(b) Cement Grinding Unit	10,000
3.	Commercial Buildings or Establishments	
	(a) Hotels	500
	(b) Airports	500
4.	Chlor-Alkali	12,000
5.	Electricity Distribution Companies (DISCOMs)*	*
6.	Fertilizer	30,000
7.	Iron & Steel	20,000
8.	Pulp & Paper	20,000
9.	Petroleum Refineries	90,000
10.	Petrochemical units having gas crackers or naphtha crackers or both	1,00,000
11.	Railways	
	(a) All Zonal Railways (Traction)	70,000
	(b) Workshops	750
	(C) 8 Production Factories of Railways namely, ICF, RCF, CLW, DLW, DCW, RWF, MCF & RWP	-
12.	Textile	3,000
13.	Thermal Power Stations	30,000

* All entities having issued distribution licence by State/Joint Electricity regulatory commission under electricity Act, 2003 (36 of 2003) are Notified as Designated Consumers (DCs) vide S.O. 3445(E) dated 28.09.2020.

All units/establishment consuming more than the listed threshold energy consumption under respective sectors, notified by the Central Government under S.O. 687 (E) dated the 30th March, 2012, S.O. 1264 (E) dated 31st March, 2016 and S.O. 998(E) dated 30th March, 2017, S.O. 1409(E) dated 28th March, 2018, S.O. 1473(E) dated 29th March, 2019, S.O. 1254(E) dated 13th April, 2020 are requested to submit to the concerned designated agency, with a copy to the Bureau of Energy Efficiency, a report on the status of Annual Energy Consumption, together with their annual production, for the last two years, namely, 2018-19 and 2019-20 in Form 1 notified under clause (I) of Section 14 of the Energy Conservation Act, 2001 (52 of 2001), duly authenticated by the Energy Manager/Chief Executive Officer.

A copy of the required sector applicable Pro-forma or Form-I could be downloaded from BEE website : <https://beeindia.gov.in/content/pat-performa>

If any person fails to submit a report on the status of annual consumption etc by 31st March, 2021, he shall be liable to a penalty under clause 26 of the Energy Conservation Act, 2001.

For more information/query please contact us on **011-26766700** or send mail on newdc@beenet.in.

Mission Director NMEEE

NHRC show-causes Chief Secy over gangrape involving cop



POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 2: The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) Friday served a show-cause notice on the Odisha Chief Secretary in connection with the alleged gangrape of a woman by three persons, including a policeman, in a moving auto-rickshaw here in May last year.

According to the case details, the incident took place May 31, 2020 night when the woman was walking down to a police station to lodge a complaint about marital discord.

Three persons, including an Odisha Auxiliary Police Force (OAPF) official, appeared as Good Samaritans and offered her a lift near Santipalli slum. As she declined their offer, the trio abducted her in an auto-rickshaw and took turns to force themselves on her in the moving vehicle.

The next morning, the woman, however, managed to escape the clutches of her tormentors and reached Sahid Nagar police station where the officials allegedly did not pay heed to her complaints. A case (325) was, however, registered under Sections 375, 354, 342 and 34

IN A NUTSHELL

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As she declined their offer, the trio abducted her in an auto-rickshaw and took turns to force themselves on her in the moving vehicle

of the IPC, after much hue and cry.

On June 2, Sahid Nagar police arrested the trio - Shrikant Kumar, Dasarath Nayak and Kalu Barik. Nayak, an OAPF official who was then working with Khandagiri police, was later placed under suspension.

Taking cognisance of the issue (1710/18/28/2020), the commission August 5, 2020 asked the Director General of Police (DGP) to initiate a high-level probe into the incident and submit an action-taken report within four weeks.

Taking note, the Bhubaneswar deputy commissioner of police submitted a report May 24, 2021.

FIGHT AGAINST VIRUS



Vaccination drive against Covid-19 underway at various centres in Bhubaneswar, Friday

OP PHOTO

₹388Cr Nabard aid for 4 potable water projects

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 2: The Nabard Friday sanctioned ₹388 crore to the state government under Rural Infrastructure Development Fund (RIDF) for taking up four piped drinking water projects.

While one project each will be taken up in Boipariguda block of Koraput and Nilagiri block of Balasore district, two others will be set up in Malkangiri and Kalimela blocks of Malkangiri district, said Nabard's Chief General Manager, Odisha region, C Udayabhaskar. The drinking water supply proj-



The projects are intended to provide 70 litre per capita per day (LPCD) clean and hygienic water to the consumers through household tap connections with eight hours of water supply in the project area of three districts. These projects are expected to

provide clean and safe drinking water to 2.57 lakh people of 467 villages and achieve the goal of supplying drinking water for all in the state by the year 2022, he said. The amount sanctioned under RIDF also includes construction

and upgradation of 20 village roads across 15 districts in the state. The road projects are expected to improve the livelihood of 1.52 lakh people in 162 villages. During the current financial year, critical rural infrastructure projects under drinking water, irrigation and rural connectivity (roads and bridges) are being planned to be supported under RIDF-XXVII.

The cumulative sanction under RIDF for the current year and sanction since inception of RIDF stand at ₹691 crore and ₹28,732 crore, respectively.

City apartment declared containment zone

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 2: The Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC) Friday declared Block E of Gymkhana Palm Height Apartment, near SUM Hospital at Sampur as a containment zone following detection of several Covid-19 positive cases.

As per a notice issued by the BMC, the containment restrictions have been clamped to ensure that there is no further spread of the virus. This is third containment zone that has come up within a week here despite drop in daily Covid cases.

"The movement of people will be restricted and nobody will be allowed to enter and go out of the containment zone. All the inhabitants within the containment zone shall strictly stay home. Moreover, all shopping establishments of whatsoever nature shall be closed immediately," the notice read.

It can be mentioned that civic authority here earlier has passed orders declaring two colonies - one at Bidyut Marg and the other at Behera Sahi in Rudrapur - to be marked as containment zones after several positive cases were reported.

46 fresh nCoV deaths take state's toll to 4,109

ODISHA REGISTERS 3,222 FRESH CORONAVIRUS CASES AFTER TESTING 74,225 SAMPLES THURSDAY

PNN & AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, July 2: Odisha reported 3,222 fresh Covid-19 cases and 46 more deaths in the last 24 hours, a Health department official said Friday.

The state has so far reported 9,16,109 cases, while the toll reached 4,109, said the official.

Nine of the latest deaths were reported from Khurda district. Puri, Sundargarh and Nayagarh reported four deaths each, followed by three deaths each in Cuttack, Dhenkanal, Ganjam, Kendrapara and Sambalpur districts.

Seven districts have so far reported fatalities less than 50, while in nine districts the death toll varies from 50 to 100. Similarly, 14 districts have registered a Covid toll of more than 100.

The infection has so far claimed the highest number of 865 deaths in Khurda district whereas Deogarh in western Odisha has the lowest fatalities of 32.

Of the new cases, 1,838 were detected in the quarantine centres while the rest 1,384 were local contact cases, the official pointed out.

Cuttack district recorded the highest number of new cases at 619, followed by Khurda (422), Jagatsinghpur (212) and Balasore (208). Each of the other 26 districts



Seven districts have so far reported fatalities less than 50, while in nine districts the death toll varies from 50 to 100

in the state reported less than 200 cases during the period.

The state, at present, has 30,950 active cases.

As many as 8,80,997 patients have recovered from the disease, including 3,457 Thursday.

The new cases were reported after testing 74,225 samples Thursday.

Till date, 11 districts have Test Positivity Rate (TPR) between 5 and 7.5 per cent, while the rest 19 districts in the coastal state have TPR less than 5 per cent.

Odisha received 10 lakh doses of Covishield vaccines in the last two days, said the official.

Sambalpur VC gets anticipatory bail

POST NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi, July 2: Noting that the court should not be persuaded by the "alarming and hyperbolic verbiage" used in media, the Orissa High Court Friday granted anticipatory bail to Sambalpur University Vice-Chancellor and others, who have been charged for abetment of suicide.

A bench of Justice SK Panigrahi held that a word uttered in the fit of anger or emotion without intending the consequences to actually follow cannot be said to be instigation for suicide. The HC did not find any ground where the VC had by his acts or by continued course of conduct created such circumstances that the deceased was left with no other option except to commit suicide.

Dinabandhu Mishra, a contractual employee, had immolated himself on the varsity premises in April, 2021. He had alleged that the VC had humiliated him for leaking information of felling of trees in front of university's administrative building.

10K RAINWATER HARVESTING STRUCTURES IN ULBs SOON

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 2: The Housing and Urban Development (H&UD) department has decided to construct around 10,000 more rain-water harvesting structures (RWHS) in potential urban local bodies (ULBs) located in western, northern and southern parts of Odisha.

The decision comes after the state government was able to build more than 10,000 RWHS in urban pockets of the state within a record period of two months.

The department has launched a statewide campaign for RWHS on the theme of 'Catch the Rain: Where it Falls and When it Falls' across all the 114 ULBs of the state under Mukhya Mantri Karma Tatpara Abhiyan (MUKTA). The campaign was launched April 15 this year with an objective of constructing at least 5,000 RWHS to facilitate in-situ water conservation and groundwater recharge in ULBs before the onset of southwest



monsoon.

H&UD Minister Pratap Jena congratulated the department for the achievement. "Our department has achieved a milestone in 'Catch the Rain' campaign by constructing 10,000 RWHS in 114 ULBs across Odisha in a record span of 75 days. It has also been decided that additional 10 thousand RWHS to be constructed in water-stressed ULBs in western, northern and southern parts of the state," Jena said.

The campaign was launched under the leadership of H&UD department Principal Secretary G Mathi Vathanan to achieve the in-

tended outcomes within the time-frame.

A community-driven approach has been adopted for field execution and to make it a success at the ground. Involvement of community based organisations (CBOs) such as Mission Shakti Groups has been accorded highest priority in the execution process. All the newly-built RWHSes are low-cost structures which have been designed as per the hydro-geological parameters prevailing in the state, sources said.

The rainwater harvesting structures have been planned in all the 2,035 wards across 114 ULBs of the state. The RWHSes are being constructed at parks, playgrounds, open spaces and vacant lands inside the institutions available in all the ULBs, sources added.

To facilitate smooth execution of the structures, a state-level task force has been set up under the supervision of the H&UD department Principal Secretary.

'Allocate more vax to govt to avoid losses'

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 2: The Health and Family Welfare department Friday again wrote to the Union Health Ministry and reiterated the demand for change in the vaccine allocation rules for Odisha to avoid loss of doses.

Health department Additional Chief Secretary Pradipta Mohapatra in his letter cited the data on how the low procurement of doses by private hospitals is leading to poor level of vaccination owing to the failure of allocated vaccines (to private hospitals).

Mohapatra said that in June 2021 the private hospitals in the state, as per the 75:25 formula of the Union government, were allocated the quota of 9.25 lakh vaccines

doses. However, only 66,500 doses could be procured by the private hospitals (7.2%) while the balance 8.59 lakh doses could not be procured by the private hospitals.

The department also cited data from July where it said that the Union government has allocated a total of 10,16,970 vaccines while the demand from private hospitals stood at 1.56 lakh (15.4%). Thus 8,60,140 doses of the total quota would remain unused in the sector.

Citing lower penetration of private hospitals in the state, Mohapatra said that the balance vaccine doses must be allocated to the state government for large scale vaccination. He said that Odisha could vaccinate a total of 3.5 lakh citizens per day with the existing health infrastructure.

Will pull out all stops to protect kids: CM

OF THE 9,16,109 COVID-19 CASES IN THE STATE, 47,776 ARE CHILDREN IN THE AGE GROUP OF 0 TO 14 YEARS

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 2: With experts apprehending that the third wave of the Covid-19 pandemic might pose a greater threat to children, Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik Friday said his government will make use of all available resources to ensure proper healthcare for them. Noting that his government

abides by the basic principle 'every life is precious' Patnaik, after virtually launching a training programme for doctors on paediatric care, said the state government has approved an action plan to build necessary infrastructure for fighting the third wave. He also launched several Covid-19 awareness videos and pocket-sized books for frontline workers on the occasion.

"We have to be extremely cautious as reports suggest that the third wave may have more impact on children. The state government will pool in all available resources to ensure proper healthcare for them," the CM maintained. Of the state's 9,16,109 Covid-19 cases so far, 47,776 are children in the age group of 0 to 14 years.

"Odisha has always been on high alert, doing its best to tackle the pandemic. We have taken pro-active steps to contain the spread of the virus. The state has established a large network of government and private Covid-19 hospitals across districts to provide free quality treatment to our people," he said, thanking all people for their cooperation. Doctors, during the programme, appreciated the government for its efforts to handle Covid-19 crisis

State gets 9.43L Covishield doses

The state Friday received 9.43 lakh doses of Covishield manufactured by the Serum Institute of India in two tranches. The state has also received around 1 lakh doses of Covishield Thursday besides 1.82 doses of Covaxin. The state government had to suspend the vaccination drive in more than half of the districts during the last few days owing to shortage of vaccines, especially Covishield.

and said that Odisha is the 'only state' to have ensured steady oxygen supply at its peripheral medical facilities.

₹50K fine for hosting feast

CUTTACK: The enforcement squad of Cuttack Municipal Corporation (CMC) raided a wedding feast for violation of Covid-19 protocol at Hanjiri Mangala here Friday. Around 400 people had gathered at the feast in violation of Covid norms. A penalty of ₹50,000 was imposed on the family that hosted the feast, said a CMC official.

CB to seek remand of fake drug kingpin

BHUBANESWAR: The Crime Branch investigating the fake anti-Covid drugs case has started the process to seek the local court's permission in Mumbai to bring the mastermind of the racket Sudeep Mukherjee on remand. Speaking to media persons, JN Pankaj, DIG of Special Task Force, said the team will soon approach the court to bring Sudeep on remand for at least 10 days.

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Single building to house SMC, SDA to be over by Oct

AGENCIES/POST NEWS NETWORK

Sambalpur, July 2: The work on the composite building, which will house the offices of the Sambalpur Municipal Corporation (SMC) and the Sambalpur Development Authority (SDA), is likely to be completed by October this year, an official said.

The work on the building, which will be a replica of Hirakud Dam, had stopped for around one year due to the coronavirus pandemic.

The SMC itself is executing the work on the four-storey building. A detailed project report and design of it was prepared by a Kolkata-based architectural firm. The estimated budget of the building, construction work of which began in November 2017, is ₹14.89 crore.

The construction work of the building stopped after the lockdown was imposed last year, SMC Municipal Engineer B B Mohanty said.

Though the work resumed after the lockdown during first wave was lifted, it didn't gain pace as very few labourers turned up to the work site, Mohanty said.

"And after a few days, the work was stopped again due to the second wave of Covid. However, workers resumed the work now and it is underway in full swing," the official said. "The building has been completed structurally. We have set a target to complete the finishing work of the building by October," he said.

At present, the SMC is operating from the building, where the office of the Sambalpur Municipality was located.

The Sambalpur municipality was constituted in the year 1867 and the existing office building of the Sambalpur municipality was constructed in the year 1927.

However, Sambalpur was accorded corporation status in the year 2014. However, the existing building of the Sambalpur municipal corporation (SMC) does not have sufficient space to accommodate all the sections of the municipal corporation.

Similarly, the office of the SDA is situated at Saliabagicha area of the city now. Since the jurisdiction of the SDA has expanded over the last few years, the SDA also requires a spacious building. All the required facilities to run the two offices will be available in the composite office building.

Drought stalks Jajpur dist

Erratic monsoon has added to the worries of industrial and environmental pollution in the district

POST NEWS NETWORK

Jajpur, July 2: Even as there is a need for at least 238.5 mm rain to grow paddy crop in this district, it has rained just 195.64 mm this year that worked out to a shortfall of 18 per cent.

The shortage in rainfall at the outset of the monsoon has hit the farm sector, said farmers in the district. Korei block, which is said to be the gateway of industries in the district, has received just 99 mm rain, Danagadi block 169.70 mm and mineral-rich Sukinda block has received 195.20 mm. Massive industrial pollution is stated to be the main reason for the shortage in rainfall in the district. The man-made climate changes have been responsible for the delinquent monsoon, said local intelligentsia.

The IMD had predicted normal monsoon this year. A normal monsoon increases the farm production and is also favourable for the growth in the service, industrial and allied sectors. This can also reduce the economic sluggishness, unemployment and socio-economic distress, triggered by the Covid-19 pandemic in the country over last one-and-half years.

However, the reduction in rain during this monsoon has been a fresh headache for the farmers in the district. Around 800 hectares of farmland in the district had been submerged in floods caused



RAIN PLAYS HIDE AND SEEK

Massive industrial pollution and man-made climate changes are stated to be the main reasons for the erratic rainfall in the district

Farmers in some parts of the district are still waiting for favourable condition to sow seeds to prepare paddy saplings

by the Cyclone Yash in May. The floods and the resulting sand-casting of farmlands had killed the fertility of the land. Farmers had gathered courage to scoop out the sand and soil from the affected land to make it suitable for cultivation. However, deficit rainfall and a harsh dry-spell in June have created fear of drought in the minds of the farmers.

The authorities have planned cultivation of paddy in over 1.11 lakh hectares out of 1,43,645 hectares of arable land in the district during this kharif marketing season (KMS). Farmers had begun preparation for growing paddy. However,

lack of rain in June has put up fresh hurdles before them.

Sources said farmers are still waiting for favourable condition to grow seeds to prepare saplings. As there was some rain in the second week of June, farmers had started sowing their land.

However, the subsequent dry-spell had sapped the seedlings in many areas, farmers said. Meanwhile, the Odisha State Pollution Control Board (OSPCB) has failed to control the runaway industrial and environmental pollution in Kalinganagar industrial area. It is alleged that the violations take place because of a nexus

'Graft' in Kharasrota breach repair work

POST NEWS NETWORK

Rasulpur, July 2: Massive irregularities have come to the fore in the repair of the breach in the right embankment of the Kharasrota river at Khanditara village in Rasulpur block under Jaraka irrigation division in Jajpur district.

It was alleged that the contractor has siphoned off ₹17 lakhs after repairing the breach with sand. Fears are being raised over the durability of the work as it has been done with sand only; not with soil and morum.

People in the riparian villages fear that the sand will not be able to withstand floods in the river this year. Misuse of government funds in the repair of the breach has raised the possibility of recurrence of breaches this year.

The Kharasrota river was in spate August 29, 2020. The floods had created a 200-ft breach on the right embankment of the river. People of around 20 riparian villages under Rasulpur, Bhotka, Gandhana, Tikarpada panchayats were affected by the breach.

A temporary patchwork on the breach was carried out to stop flood water and restore movement of people and transportation. It had been alleged that the repair work had been sub-standard. The excuse given by the administration then was that the repair work was



temporary and was done for a period of two months only. Later, it will be repaired permanently once funds were sanctioned. Later, ₹17 lakhs was sanctioned for permanent repair of the breach. However, the funds were not properly utilised.

Fresh sand was laid on the temporary sand filling on the pretext of permanent repair work, locals alleged. Under the rules laid down, the breach should have been filled with soil and reinforced with morum. To ensure that the breaches do not open up again, there is a provision of plantation of grass on either side of the breach. This would help in holding the soil together. However, the repair work has been done with sand instead of earth. There is no trace of morum. Puddles of water are formed even after a mild shower; inconveniencing the pedestrians. Instead of growing fresh grass, the contractor has spread patches of sand-mixed grass on either side of the breach. It is feared that these grass patches will wash away with flood water.

BCB eyes ₹270cr farm credit

POST NEWS NETWORK

Berhampur, July 2: The Berhampur Central Cooperative (BCC) will disburse farm loans worth ₹250 crore to farmers in Ganjam and Gajapati districts during the current kharif paddy crop.

While the government and the state cooperative bank have given this target to BCB, the latter has set itself an ambitious ₹270 crore target. The farm loans are being disbursed since April last. ₹137.23 crore has already been disbursed over last three months till June 30. A total of 39,715 farmers have benefitted from this loans.

Loans will be disbursed to farmers for the current kharif crop till September

by the bank's branches at Diggahandi, Chikiti, Patrapur, Rangelunda, Bijipur, Kukulakhandi, Samarjhol, Hinjlikatu, Purushottampur, Chhatrapur, Rambha, Khalikote, and Beguiapara in Ganjam district, sources in the bank said. Similarly, in Gajapati district, BCB branches at Kasinagar, Paralakhemundi, Garabandha and R Udayagiri have extended loans worth ₹15.75 crore to 3,699 farmers. Farm credit is provided to registered farmers in Gajapati and Ganjam districts through cooperative societies and LAMPS.

Loans will be disbursed to farmers for the current kharif crop till September

end. The government has targeted to disburse ₹204 crore through 13 branches in Ganjam district and ₹46 crore through four branches in Gajapati district. However, the BCC has kept a disbursement target of ₹270 crore. In view of the renewed focus of the government on agriculture and farmer's development, the cooperative bank has planned an ambitious loan disbursement target this year.

Meanwhile, the administration has proposed a paddy cultivation target of 2 lakh hectares of farmland. However, due to insufficient rain till now, reports of sprouts blighting and destruction of saplings are coming in.

VIMSAR cancer dept gets boost

₹35cr sanctioned for the renovation of the oncology dept at the med college & hospital

POST NEWS NETWORK

Sambalpur, July 2: Modernisation of the cancer department in VSS Institute of Medical Sciences and Research (VIMSAR) at Burla here got a boost after the state government sanctioned ₹35 crore for the upgradation and renovation of the hospital, a report said.

It stated that initially the Odisha Cancer Care Foundation (OCCF) and the Tata Trust had jointly planned to renovate the cancer department of the VIMSAR into a modern cancer hospital. However, later both the organisations withdrew from their plan owing to various reasons six months

back. Later, the state government stepped in to provide better healthcare facilities to cancer patients and has sanctioned ₹35 crore for the modernization of the hospital.

This has been confirmed by Professor Lalit Meher, the director of VIMSAR. Professor Meher said a process has been initiated to modernise and upgrade the cancer department of the hospital into a modern cancer healthcare institute. The hospital is expected to become operational within next three months if things work out as per plan.

Professor Meher further said that the present cancer department is a 30-bed hospital which will be upgraded into a 100-bed hospital. A five-storied building will be constructed for the new hospital which will have separate facilities for chemotherapy treatment. The state government has sanctioned ₹35 crore for the purpose which will be implemented by the works department.

The hospital will also have a medical linear accelerator machine which will help in the treatment of patients' tumors. The state government will bear all the expenses for infrastructure development and for ancillary equipment of the hospital for which a process has been initiated at the government level.

A letter has been dispatched in this regard. Notably, patients of the Western Odisha and of Chhatishgarh and

Jharkhand depend on VIMSAR hospital for their healthcare requirements for which demands had been made for establishment of a full-fledged cancer hospital. The state government took note of the matter in 2017 and launched the process for upgradation of the department in VIMSAR.

After the Odisha Cancer Care Foundation and Tata Trust joined hands to build the new cancer hospital, a three-member team visited VIMSAR to take stock of the situation.

The team during its visit decided to demolish the old building near the cancer department and built a new one in its place for the modern cancer hospital. However, the plan fell flat and the establishment of a new cancer hospital was delayed.

OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER, P.H. DIVISION, BERHAMPUR
Mail ID eepbam@gmail.com / eepbam@nic.in
Government of Odisha "e" Procurement Notice
NATIONAL COMPETITIVE BIDDING
Bid Identification No. EEPHAM-17/2021-22 Dt. 25.06.2021
No. C-494:-
1. **Name of work :** Provision of power back-up i.e 365 KVA, 250 KVA, and 125 KVA DG Sets for Water supply to Paralakhemundi Municipality.
2. **Estimated cost :** Rs. 86.73 lakh (approx.)
3. **Period completion :** 04 (four) months.
4. **Date & Time of availability of bid document in the Portal :** From 11.00 Hrs. of Dt. 05.07.2021 to 17.30 Hrs. of Dt. 22.07.2021.
5. **Last date / Time for Bidding in the Portal:** 17.30 Hrs of Dt. 22.07.2021.
6. **Date of opening of Tender:** On Dt. 23.07.2021 at 11.00Hrs.
7. **Name and address of the Officer inviting tender :** Superintending Engineer, P.H. Division, Berhampur.
Further details can be seen from the e-procurement Portal: <https://tendersodisha.gov.in>
Sd./- Superintending Engineer, P. H. Division, Berhampur
OIPR-13014/11/0001/2122

GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA
OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER, JEYPORE (R&B) DIVISION, JEYPORE
ID: ee.randbjyp@gmail.com; Tel & Fax- 06854-231114 (O)
e-Procurement Notice
Bid Identification No. E.E. (R&B)-02/2021-22/JYP(K)
No. B-201:- Bid Documents consisting of work, Estimated Cost, Cost of Tender paper, EMD, Time of completion, Class of Contractors and the set of terms and conditions of contract and other necessary documents can be seen in Govt. Website i.e www.tendersodisha.gov.in.
1. **Name of the Work :** Civil and EI Works as mentioned in DTCN
2. **No. of Works :** 1 No.
3. **Estimated Cost :** Rs.21.00 lakhs to 32.84 lakhs
4. **Period of completion :** One month
5. **Date & Time of Bidding :** From 11.00 hours of 09.07.2021 upto 16.00 hours of 19.07.2021
6. **Last date & time for receipt of bids in portal :** 16.00 hours of 19.07.2021
7. **Bids received online shall be opened on :** 11.00 hours of 20.07.2021
8. **Name and address of the Officer inviting Bid :** Executive Engineer, Jeypore (R&B) Division, Jeypore
Further details can be seen from the www.tendersodisha.gov.in
Executive Engineer, Jeypore (R&B) Division
OIPR-34027/11/0002/2122

OFFICE OF THE MUNICIPAL COUNCIL, DEOGARH
Letter No.- 1681, Dt.01.07.2021
Quotation Call Notice
No.C-489:- Sealed quotations in the prescribed quotation paper are invited from the intending Agency/Firm for Supply and Installation of Light Decoration work at Pradhanpat Park. The Rate should be quoted inclusive of all taxes, cost conveyance and fixing.
1. **The Cost of each Quotation Paper:-** Rs. 6000.00+ 12% GST.
2. **Last Date of Sale of Quotation Paper:-** Dt. 13.07.2021 upto 1.00 P.M.
3. **Last Date of Receipt of Quotation Paper:-** Dt. 13.07.2021 upto 5.00 P.M.
4. **Date of Opening of Sealed Quotation:-** Dt. 15.07.2021 at 11.00 A.M.
The quotation will be opened in the presence of the quotationeer or their authorized agents. The quotationer should deposit EMD @ 1% of the total quoted price in shape of bank draft/Bankers Cheque drawn in favour of Executive Officer, Deogarh Municipality. The quotation with enclosures will be received in the office of the Deogarh Municipality, in the scheduled date and time and not be accepted in any Means beyond the date and time. The quotation will be available in the office during the office hours (except holidays) till Dt.13.07.2021 (upto 1.00 PM). The details can be seen online www.deogarh.nic.in.
The Authority reserves the right to reject any or all the quotations without assigning any reason thereof.
Sd./- Executive Officer, Deogarh Municipality
OIPR-13088/11/0002/2122

Government of Odisha "e" procurement Notice
e-mail ID- rw_sambalpur@yahoo.co.in; Phone No. 0663-2401850
No. 2485, dated. 1.7.21
Bid Identification No. TENDER ONLINE SBPR-04 OF 21-22
No. C-404:-
1. **Name of the work :** Roads Works as per DTCN available in the website www.tendersodisha.gov.in
2. **Total No. of Work :** 06 (Six) Nos.
3. **Estimated Cost :** Varies from Rs.8.85 lakhs to Rs.39.82 lakhs
4. **Period of Completion :** 01 (One Calendar month) to 03 (Three) Calendar months
5. **Period and time of availability of bid document in the portal for bidding :** 05.07.2021 at 11.00 A.M. to 14.07.2021 upto 5.00 PM
6. **Date and time of opening of Tender :** 15.07.21 at 11.00 AM
7. **Name and address of the officer :** E.E.R.W. Divn. Sambalpur inviting bid
(1) Other details can be seen from detailed notice inviting tenders, available in website www.tendersodisha.gov.in
(2) Corrigendum if any shall only be published in the website: www.tendersodisha.gov.in
Sd./- Executive Engineer, Rural Works Division, Sambalpur
OIPR-25076/11/0004/2122

SAMPARK
Mob.: 9861309583, 9178475174, Off.: 06758-246238
Estd.: 1998
Regd. PR No. 5527-279/2000-01
Registered Office: At: Orei, P.O.- Mahalapada, Dist.- Puri, PIN - 752116
E-mail: sampark.orissa@yahoo.co.in, Website: www.sampark_odisha.org
TENDER NOTICE
Supply of Machinery and Equipment for CFC At Orei, P.O.- Mahalapada, P.S.- Konark, Dist.- Puri, Odisha under SFURTI Scheme.
Sealed tenders are invited from manufacturer/supplier/traders (having minimum three years experience in supply or manufacturing of machineries) for supply of Machinery and Equipment for CFC at Village: Orei, Mahalapada, Konark, Puri, Odisha being facilitated by SAMPARK, At: Orei, P.O.- Mahalapada, P.S.- Konark, Dist.- Puri, Odisha. Tender should be submitted in separate envelopes for Technical Bid and Financial Bid along with earnest money of Rs.1,00,000/- (One Lakh only) and can be deposited at the below mentioned address upto 05.00 P.M. of 23.07.2021. The Demand Draft of earnest money should be in the name of SAMPARK payable at KONARK. Tenders received will be opened before the procurement committee of the proposed common facility on 24.7.2021 at 3.00 P.M. in office.
Tender orm can be obtained from SAMPARK, At: Orei, P.O.- Mahalapada, P.S.- Konark, Dist.- Puri, Odisha any working day between 03.07.2021 to 23.07.2021 from 10.00 A.M. to 5.00 P.M. and on 23.07.2021 from 10.00 A.M. to 2.00 P.M. by payment of Rs.500/-.
The details of works and terms and conditions are available in the tender form. SAMPARK, At: Orei, P.O.- Mahalapada, P.S.- Konark, Dist.- Puri, Odisha, reserves the right to cancel any or all the tenders without assigning any reason.
Secretary, SAMPARK, At: Orei, P.O.- Mahalapada, P.S.- Konark, Dist.- Puri, Odisha, Mobile No.- 9777597284, Email: sampark.orissa@gmail.com

OFFICE OF THE DFO-CUM-DMU CHIEF
BOUDH FOREST DIVISION, Boudh-762014
Ph.-06841222073, OFSDP, Phase-II
Email- dmuchiefboudh@gmail.com
Letter No. 704 Date- 25.06.2021
CONTRACTUAL ENGAGEMENT OF FMU COORDINATOR FOR ODISHA FORESTRY SECTOR DEVELOPMENT PROJECT-II
No. MM-119:- Divisional forest Officer-Cum-DMU Chief, Boudh invites application for suitable candidate for the following position under Boudh Forest Division for working in the Odisha Forestry Sector Development Project, Phase-II.

Name of the Division	Name of the FMU	Name of the Post	Vacancy
Boudh	Manamunda	FMU Coordinator (Micro-Planning and Livelihood Support)	01

Interested candidate may obtain Terms of Reference and the Application Form from O/o the Divisional Forest Officer-Cum-DMU Chief, Boudh during office hours or may download from the website www.ofsds.in & www.boudh.nic.in. Filled in application complete in all respect along with Bank draft for Rs.500/- in favour of Divisional Forest Officer-Cum-DMU Chief, Boudh should reach the O/o the Divisional Forest Officer-cum-DMU Chief, Boudh on or before 05.00 P.M. on 14.07.2021. The last date for sale of application form and Terms & Reference is Dt.13.07.2021 upto 5.00 P.M.
Sd./- DFO-Cum-DMU Chief, Boudh Forest Division
OIPR-08090/11/0004/2122



Tribal women selling wild berries on roadside in Keonjhar.

OP PHOTO

EAST COAST RAILWAY
Tender Notice No. ECRCONTP212201, Dt. 30.06.2021
BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF MATERIALS: (I) WIDER SPECIAL PSC SLEEPERS FOR CURVE (T-8621 OR T-8622 OR T-8623 OR T-8624) & (II) WIDER PSC SLEEPERS FOR SHARP CURVES (T-8757A OR T-8757 B OR T-8757 C OR T-8757 D).
QUANTITY: (I) 61280 Nos. & (II) 4300 Nos.
Tender closing date & time : at 1200 hrs. of 22.07.2021.
No manual offers sent by Post/Courier/Fax or in person shall be accepted against such e-tenders.
Complete information including e-tender documents of the above e-tender is available in website: <http://www.ireps.gov.in>
Dy. Chief Engineer/Con/Works, Bhubaneswar
PR-34/CE/21-22

National Entrance Screening Test 2021
NEST 2021
Admission to 5-year Integrated M.Sc. Programmes in Biology, Chemistry, Mathematics, and Physics at NISER (Bhubaneswar) and UM-DAE CEBS (Mumbai) (Autonomous institutions under the Department of Atomic Energy, Government of India)
The new date of examination for NEST 2021 is : 14th of August, 2021
Candidates can continue to apply online till : 15th of July, 2021
For online application and all other details please visit: www.nestexam.in

FOCUS 'ONE NATION, ONE GRID'

EXPEDITE POWER REFORMS



India is the third largest power generating country in the world with total installed capacity increasing at a remarkable pace of around 8 per cent during the fiscal period 2010 to 2020. The installed capacity is 375.32 GW, transforming from a power deficit to a surplus power country

India's energy basket by 2030, the government plans to expand the gas transmission network and increasing the compressed natural gas (CNG) stations count. Further, there is a strong push for natural gas sector reforms. There is lot of initiative by the government to change the energy mix to control emissions as air pollution has emerged a major problem in most metros.

Slowly, but steadily utilisation of coal, which is presently around 50 per cent, has declined. On the other hand, gas-fired generation improved on the back of lower LNG prices and could find off-takers. In 2021, the Plant Load Factor (PLF) of coal plants is expected to improve to around 60 per cent with this reaching 70 per cent within a year or so.

The demand curve of India's electricity has been largely met even after significant electrification of rural areas. The process of such electrification has been moving on a sustained manner though more needs to be done to ensure that at least power is available at least 8 to 10 hours a day in the backward regions of the country.

As is generally agreed, power sector is key to rapid industrial growth of the country and it has been ensured that in potential areas there has to be 24x7 supply of electricity. With more and more automation and mechanisation of operation, the need for power has been increasing at a steady pace. But it is reassuring that most State governments are in a position to cater to the increasing demand in the coming years.

It is also necessary to attract the private sector for which more reforms are possibly necessary, specially to ensure that foreign players invest with modern and innovative technological solutions to bring about more efficiency in the power sector. There are expectations that there would be a dramatic turnaround in the power sector, especially in the realm of technology, power trading, investments in infrastructure and also digital transformation.

-INFA

Covid-induced lockdowns in several states fortunately did not impact the manufacturing and services sectors as these were more or less operational, resulting in sufficient power demand. Over the decades the power sector has undergone a significant transformation in terms of supply, fuel mix, energy demand and market operations. The power industry, in fact, has always been a key driver for industrial development, infrastructure growth and social welfare.

India is the third largest power generating country in the world with total installed capacity increasing at a remarkable pace of around 8 per cent during the fiscal period 2010 to 2020. The installed capacity is 375.32 GW, transforming from a power deficit to a surplus power country.

However, reforms in the power sector are an on-going process but do require to be taken up expeditiously. Measures such as 'One Nation, One Grid' and creating green infrastructure along with affordable housing can transform lives.

A discussion paper on 'Re-Designing Real Time Electricity Markets (RTM) in India' was proposed by the Central Electricity Regulatory Commission (CERC) way back in 2018, which invited comments and suggestions. In response 21 stakeholders including power exchanges, trading licenses, IPPs, state utilities, state LDCs and consultants submitted their views. There are plans of retiring old and inefficient plants and addressing low utilisation of gas plant capacity due to paucity of natural gas.

India has unique characteristics of variation in demand pattern in the different regions due to its climatic and socio-cultural diversity. This diversity in the demand pattern can be utilised effectively with national level organised market given the fact that electricity is more difficult to store. With national level organised market, the possibility of resource optimisation across regions to take advantage of cheap resources would

increase significantly thereby benefitting the masses.

The announcement of pursuing 'One Nation, One Grid' concept has rightly been welcomed by experts, but when it would facilitate the government's goal of power for all remains a big question. However, the reforms initiated in driving structural reforms in the power sector are expected to propel it towards the path of growth.

India had initially set a 2017 deadline for thermal power plant to install flue gas desulphurisation units that cut emissions of sulphur dioxide. But that was postponed to varying deadlines for different regions in 2022. The new order of April from the Union Environment Ministry stated that plants near populous regions and the capital will have to comply by 2022, while utilities in less polluted areas have up to 2025 to comply. As is well known, Indian cities have some of the world's most polluted air. Thermal power companies, which produce three-fourth of the country's electricity, account for some 80 per cent of its industrial emissions of particulate matter, sulphur and nitrous oxides, which cause lung diseases,

acid rain and smog.

Besides, the increase in renewable energy has been a significant development in the power sector, capturing 23.51 per cent in the last financial year. The government's ambitious target of installing 175 GW of renewable energy, specially coupled with the establishment of solar parks and the solar city programme propelled the growth of clean energy in India. Furthermore, the financial incentives offered by the government are likely to encourage State-owned operators to invest in clean energy parks and Ultra Mega Renewable Energy Power Parks (UMREPPs).

Lately, in the 2021 Budget, the Union government announced support to various clean energy programmes across various cities and launch 'Hydrogen Energy Mission' this year to generate hydrogen from green power sources. Though India has not committed to 'net zero emission plan', it is still working on a sustainable development agenda to address climate goals while delivering its commitment to energy access for all.

Moreover to achieve target of 15 per cent of natural gas in

Dhurjati Mukherjee

REFORMS IN THE POWER SECTOR ARE AN ON-GOING PROCESS BUT DO REQUIRE TO BE TAKEN UP EXPEDITIOUSLY. MEASURES SUCH AS 'ONE NATION, ONE GRID' AND CREATING GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE ALONG WITH AFFORDABLE HOUSING CAN TRANSFORM LIVES

Watch the too indignantly righteous. Before long you will find them committing or condoning the very offence which they have so fiercely censured.

SRI AUROBINDO



Who will bell the cat?

No one's willing to bell this cat! The dramatis personae are still largely the same, but a stealthy U-turn was in the works, say those in the know, at Sanchar Bhavan. The question that isn't being asked yet is whether the government acted in haste when in 2019 it chose to give VRS to thousands of employees of BSNL and MTNL? Two years later that decision has come back to haunt the babus in the Department of Telecommunications (DoT). The two financially troubled state-run telecom companies are currently struggling to remain operational after this rather drastic surgery which did not work.

There is growing desperation in Sanchar Bhavan and murmurs hint at a section of babus who now want to rehire as consultants the very babus who were retired with a golden handshake! It is now up to the very punctilious Telecom Secretary Anshu Prakash to take a view on this rather critical call. For now, some sources suggest that its caution that's the leitmotif.

Prakash has directed that no ex-staffer should be rehired until the matter is "examined thoroughly". But if BSNL and MTNL have to survive he may not have the luxury of too much time. Of course, there are some whippers about how this situation might actually spur the government to hivel off its now not so valuable stake in these telecom behemoths of the past and be able to justify it too. That would, however, be yet another acrimonious debate in the making.

Remember, the government has just announced recently a further restructuring of another state-owned organization - the Ordnance Factory Board - which is being split into seven corporate entities despite it having been strategically inviolable for long. Few are likely to question that move as this was an old pending demand of the Armed Forces.

But at Sanchar Bhavan the issues are different. After all, BSNL and MTNL are a rather different case, which may partly explain why the Telecom Ministry is walking on eggshells on this subject.



BABUDOM BYTES
Dilip Cherian

Bad timing

Last year when Environment Minister Prakash Javadekar green-lit the setting up of 19 integrated regional offices of his ministry across the country, his stated aim was that the ministry's expansion would lead to better coordination and monitoring of the work, without stretching his ministry's staff. His babus had been complaining apparently that they were understaffed and overworked - rather unusual babu logic for geographic spread.

Months later, the plan is being implemented at a painfully slow pace, which far from improving efficiency has actually led to key proposals piling up, many now found to be still pending. Informed sources say that the ministry has not even managed to fill the staff positions for the newly created regional offices. Given the scramble for jobs of this variety, the only explanation that former staffers can proffer is that the efforts were only halfhearted.

Some new offices in Jaipur, Shimla, Jammu, Kolkata and Gandhinagar have not made even a single appointment so far, after all the initial fanfare! With the plan barely moving, the ministry's workload has now actually increased. The delay in appointing new staff has created more work for the old staff officers, who now have been saddled with work of the new offices that were to have been set up. Only half of the around 500 proposals submitted since last year that require the ministry's approval for projects on forest land are still pending. While this may be a good thing, there's danger lurking on the edges.

But the bigger question is whether all this rearrangement was really necessary at a time when the nation is reeling under the Covid pandemic and the economy needs a big lift? Those proposals pending with Javadekar's babus could have been a big help some insist, though nature may have unwittingly got a brief reprieve.

Share a babu experience! Follow dilipthecherian@twitter.com. Let's multiply the effect.

WISDOM CORNER

- Life is never easy. There is work to be done and obligations to be met - obligations to truth, to justice, and to liberty. JOHN F. KENNEDY
- Watch your thoughts; they become words. Watch your words; they become actions. Watch your actions; they become habits. Watch your habits; they become character. Watch your character; it becomes your destiny. LAO-TZE
- When we do the best we can, we never know what miracle is wrought in our life or the life of another. HELEN KELLER

WORDSWORTH

Camera

The British press has reported this week on a pending court case involving a former member of the security service M16 which - as is common in such sensitive matters - is likely to be held in private, or in camera in the lawyers' jargon. So much has camera diverged from its origins that one might wonder how all those lawyers and witnesses manage to cram into such a little box. In the legal phrase camera is just the Latin word for a chamber, in particular the judge's private chamber as opposed to the public courtroom; in modern times it has taken on a figurative sense relating to the quality of privacy itself, losing its literal link to the room. Originally camera meant any vaulted or arched space, but in the Romance languages derived from Latin (such as the Italian camera or the French chambre) it became a general word for any habitable space (the English chamber comes from the same root via French). Ever since classical times it had been known that it was possible to project an image of an outdoors scene on the wall of a darkened room through a pinhole in a shutter. Such a room was called in Latin a camera obscura, literally a "dark room". Following the invention of the lens in the sixteenth century and its first application to the camera obscura by Giambattista della Porta, some of these devices were created as public visitor attractions. They commonly had a rotatable lens and mirror system on the roof that projected a panorama on to a curved screen like a shallow white bowl. A few examples of these still exist, of which two are in Bristol and Edinburgh. By the eighteenth century, portable devices of a related kind had come into use that displayed an image on a ground-glass screen, rotated through 90 degrees by a mirror for easy viewing from above. These were much used by artists to record a scene by drawing on translucent paper placed on the screen (the image was laterally inverted, but they solved that problem by looking at the sketch from behind). Such a portable unit was also called a camera obscura, by analogy with its big cousins.

LOL

PASSING THE BALL

The huge college freshman decided to try out for the football team. "Can you tackle?" asked the coach. "Watch this," said the freshman, who proceeded to run smack into a telephone pole, shattering it to splinters. "Wow," said the coach. "I'm impressed. Can you run?" "Of course I



can run," said the freshman. He was off like a shot, and, in just over nine seconds, he had run a hundred yard dash. "Great!" enthused the coach. "But can you pass a football?" The freshman hesitated for a few seconds. "Well, sir," he said, "if I can swallow it, I can probably pass it."

SPECTRUM WORLD POLITICS

MAGA Maoism



J Bradford Delong

THE MOST SYCOPHANTIC AND IMPOTENT REPUBLICANS ARE DULY SELECTED BY TRUMP FOR PROMOTION, WHILE THOSE WITH ANY MODICUM OF POWER OR SELF-RESPECT ARE CUT OFF AT THE KNEES

How does former US President Donald Trump still command the Republican Party's complete allegiance? Everyone knows he has terrible judgment and a vindictive, petty personality. Even Trump's own daughter and son-in-law are reportedly distancing themselves from him.

And yet, whatever Trump says is still gospel for the overwhelming majority of Republican officeholders and commentators. For recognising the legitimacy of President Joe Biden's election, Representative Liz Cheney of Wyoming was stripped of her GOP House leadership position.

Now, the furthest any Republican will go in challenging their dear leader is former Vice President Mike Pence's observation that he and Trump "will never see eye to eye" on the events of January 6, 2021, the day Trump incited a violent insurrection at the US Capitol. Some of the gullible Trump supporters who stormed the building, seeking to block the certification of Biden's victory, also wanted to execute Pence by hanging.

There is a disturbingly strong historical analogy to the Republican Party's transformation into a cult of personality: the Communist Party of China under Mao Zedong. At the CPC's Lu Mountain Plenary Meeting in 1958, Marshall Peng

Dehuai pointed out that Mao's judgment was flawed, and that he could no longer be trusted as primus inter pares. The only question was whether the other party grandees could move ahead without Mao's charismatic link to the party's gullible base. But Mao struck first. While party officials like Peng Zhen, Luo Ruiqing, Lu Dingyi, Yang Shangkun, and Deng Xiaoping were purged, Peng and Liu Shaoqi both turned up dead, and the rest of the grandees got with the programme.

That programme was the total chaos of the Cultural Revolution. Recognising that those who had benefited from the initial purges would need to be kept insecure and toothless, Mao continued to shake things up. Chen Boda was purged, Lin Biao was eliminated, and Deng - with his reputation for bureaucratic competence - was brought back into the fold, only to be purged again after being threatened with the promotion of Wang Hongwen and then Hua Guofeng.

Through all this shuffling, only two personnel qualifications mattered: obsequiousness and powerlessness. If the official in question fulfilled both, he would be praised, honoured, and promoted. If he lacked one or the other, he would be taken down a peg, sent to work as a pipefitter, or assassinated (the one exception was Zhou Enlai,

whose unflinching sycophancy perhaps made up for the fact that he wasn't entirely powerless).

This process could be sustained because there were always an ample number of party officials who saw the chaos as an opportunity for their own advancement. But while deferentially doing Mao's bidding could yield career advantages, he was old, low on energy, and on his way to meeting Karl Marx in the great beyond. So, the court intrigue continued, with officials falling over each other to "work toward the Chairman," even though nobody but Mao's nephew and closest aide could claim to understand his incoherent grunts and scrawls.

Even after Mao's death, various factions competed to show that they had been truer to his wishes than anyone else. Mao's immediate successor as party chairman, Hua, continued to quote Mao - "If you are in charge, I am at ease" - while extolling the successes of the Cultural Revolution. Wang and the rest of the Gang of Four boasted that they were Mao's true ideological heirs. Even Deng maintained quietly that he had remained in Mao's favour after his second purging, and that it had been Mao, via Wang Dongxing, rather than Deng's military allies, who had protected him from the Gang of Four.

The comparisons to the

Republican Party under Trump should now be obvious. The most sycophantic and impotent Republicans are duly selected by Trump for promotion, while those with any modicum of power or self-respect are cut off at the knees. Trump knows that the latter cohort would seek to sideline him as soon as it gained power or forged its own links to the base. The purges are carried out from Mar-a-Lago, where Trump denounces his former appointees and aides as losers and RINOs (Republicans in name only).

Hence, Nikki Haley, Trump's former ambassador to the United Nations, is said to have requested an audience and been refused. And everyone knows that Trump is "disappointed" with Pence and regards Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell as "a dumb son of a bitch." According to Trump, the Democrats have the advantage, because "they don't have the [Mitt] Romneys, Little Ben Sasses, and Cheneys of the world. Unfortunately, we do. Sometimes there are consequences to being ineffective and weak."

The writer is Professor of Economics at the University of California at Berkeley and a research associate at the National Bureau of Economic Research.

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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

Covid death compensation

Sir, The Supreme Court has taken the National Disaster Management Authority to task for not recommending any compensation for the relatives of those who succumbed to Covid-19. The apex court has now given the NDMA six weeks to announce the ex-gratia payment. The court, however, rejected the plea that the compensation should be ₹4 lakh per deceased, saying that it was for NDMA to decide the compensation amount. Under Section 12 of the Disaster Management Act, there are guidelines for recommending compensation for the relatives of people who die due to any disaster. The court has now said that the compensation is a statutory obligation. The Centre had earlier argued that the Covid-19 pandemic was not a one-time disaster that could be compensated with money, but was a spread out one that needed a broader approach. The government also said that there was no precedent to paying compensation for a disease or disaster spread out over several months or years. The Supreme Court's observations essentially negate these arguments against any monetary compensation. However, the court rejecting the ₹4-lakh figure offers some relief to the government.

CK Subramaiam, NAVI MUMBAI

Bad loans

Sir, It has been reported that the bad loans of banks is expected to touch 9.8 per cent by March 2022. Political meddling in the grant of loans without adequate collateral security is a cause of grave concern in the generation of non-performing assets (NPAs). The plight of banks is so bad that they have started calling the depositors to avail loans from bank. The banks are frantically in search of the sources to plug up the losses arising out of NPAs. The amount of loans granted should not exceed the 50 per cent of the market value of the properties pledged or the income earned. Total autonomy should be granted to the RBI and its subordinate banks in so far as the grant of loan is concerned. When loan amount is repaid, the banks adjust a substantial portion of the amount towards the interest component only. Therefore, the borrower remains a borrower for a very long time. Some borrowers with all potential to repay the loan are reluctant to pay back the amount. If the borrowers do not repay the loan within a stipulated time, the properties pledged against the loan must be confiscated, auctioned and the money coming from the auction to be adjusted against the loan.

KV Seetharamaiah, HASSAN

74 YEARS POST-INDEPENDENCE

NO ROAD, HERE VILLAGERS CARRY PATIENTS ON COTS

POST NEWS NETWORK

Banki, July 2: Even though 74 years have passed after the Independence, there is still no pucca road connectivity to villages in this region. Such a picture of administrative apathy can be seen in Tarapur Sabarsahi village in Dhansar panchayat under Banki-Dompada block limits in Cuttack district.

According to sources, more than 50 tribal families have been living in Ward No-14 of Tarapur Sabarsahi village of Dhansar panchayat, only 5 kilometres away from Dompada block office.

Although the inhabitants of the village have been repeatedly pleading with the public representatives for a well-built pucca road to the village, no one is lending an ear, complained the villagers. Many a promises of a road have been made during the panchayat elections campaigns or before the Assembly polls by the vote hungry politicians, but the promises proved to be hollow. A pucca road is still a dream for the village. This is really a matter of concern.

People have to wade through dirt for a kilometre on a muddy path if they need to go out of their



village in order to go to school or to work outside the village.

On the other hand, if any villager faces any health problem or in cases of pregnancy/ child delivery, the villagers carry the patients on their shoulders or hand-made

cots till the main road, lamented the villagers and the senior citizens of Tarapur Sabarsahi.

If a concrete road is not built in the village in the coming days, then the village will not vote in the upcoming 3-tier panchayat elec-

tions and stage protests on the highway, threatened the villagers including Gouri Dehury, Kumud Majhi, Ramani Dehury, Lili Dehury, Kanak Majhi, Kunirani Majhi, Ramina Majhi, Gajendra Naik, Pitabasa Majhi, Batakrushna Dehury and Anil Majhi.

Even as a plethora of schemes are being prepared by the Centre and the state government for the upliftment of the poverty-stricken, daily wagers and destitute, the present picture of this village situated in the Banki constituency, only 35 kilometre from Cuttack and 40 kilometre away from the Capital city Bhubaneswar, has attracted criticism and flak from the general populace as well as the intelligentsia of Banki who point fingers at the 'Mo Sarkar' and 5T initiative of the state government.

Only time will say when the government will alleviate the plights of the villagers after this news is published. The inhabitants of the region demand a concrete road to Tarapur Sabarsahi. They have drawn the attention of the Cuttack District Collector and the Cuttack Project Director towards their plight. They even tried to contact the BDO in this regard but he was out of network cover.

Burning midnight oil, tribal girl becomes Matric school topper

POST NEWS NETWORK

Rasulpur, July 2: Minakshi Munda, a tribal girl of Jabara panchayat under Rasulpur block in Jajpur district, has been the toast of the area since the publication of matriculation (HSC) results.

An alumnus of Jabara Govt High School, she has become the school topper, securing 499 marks out of 600 (83 per cent). A total of 68 students from the school had appeared in the HSC examinations.

For a tribal student like her to come out as topper is a matter of pride and rejoice for the villagers. At the same time, there are many such people who are still finding it difficult to believe how a tribal girl could achieve this.

However, Minakshi, who lost her father Benudhar Munda four years ago, was aware of the hurdles she had to cross and how much pain she had to endure to achieve this success.

This year, Minakshi and her brother Jay Singh sat for HSC examination. Her brother has secured 60 per cent marks.

After the death of her father, the entire burden of the family fell on her mother Gurubari. She had to work as a daily wager to fill the stomachs of the children. It has been a herculean task for Gurubari to meet their educational costs.

Yet, Minakshi and her brother put their hearts into their studies, burning the midnight oil. The vil-



Minakshi Munda with her brother

have achieved is a matter of great enjoyment but the poverty has taken the guilt out of the gingerbread. At a time when I am struggling to arrange two square meals for us, how will I be able to meet their educational expenses?" she asked.

At the same time, Minakshi and her brother have plenty of dreams in their eyes. "I want to join police department and do something for the society to get rid from crimes and criminals," observed Minakshi. Similarly, Jay Singh wants to complete his higher studies and get a job to eradicate the family's poverty and give their mother all the world's happiness.

Considering their financial problem, the villagers have urged the administration and some generous people to come forward to help the children fulfill their dreams. "Or else, these two talents will get lost in the vortex of poverty," they maintained.

When asked about the siblings, school's headmaster Siddharth Rout said that they are tremendously talented. "Seeing the financial condition of the family, the school provided some help to them on several occasions. They will fulfill their dreams if they receive help. The government has many schemes to provide education to tribal students. In this case too, we hope the government should interfere and help them translate their dreams into reality," Rout said.

Tribal man carries wife's corpse alone

THREE STAFF MEMBERS WHO REFUSED TO HELP WERE SUSPENDED FOR DERELICTION OF DUTY

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Phubani, July 2: A tribal man in Kandhamal district headquarters hospital had to carry the body of his wife alone to the waiting vehicle in the hospital premises after staff allegedly refused to extend helping hands.

The woman had died due to cardiac arrest.

After the staff and attendant declined to help the poor man, he had no alternative but to carry the body of his wife on his own till the vehicle which was parked at a distance on the hospital premises.

One Rutumati Kanhar (39), wife of Balakrushna Kanhar, a resident of Motingia village under Phiringia police station limit was

admitted to the female medicine ward following some cardiac problem June 29 and the next day she died allegedly before any proper medical help could reach her.

Her husband alleged that Ruturani had died due to lack of treatment.

After the video of the incident went viral on the social media, Kandhamal District Chief Medical Officer (CDM) Dr Rajashree Patmaik ordered an inquiry following which three staff members were placed under suspension on the charges of dereliction of duty, hospital sources said Friday.

Kandhamal Vikash Parishad, District United Citizens Forum and District Journalists Association have expressed concern over the incident.

WATER WOES



A woman collecting water from a pit to meet her family's drinking water needs in Chandrapur of Rayagada

OP PHOTO

2.54 qntl of cannabis seized, two arrested

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhawaniapatna, July 2: In a major crackdown Friday, Kesinga police seized around 2.54 quintals of cannabis at Singhbahali village in Kalahandi district. Two persons were arrested in this connection. However, one of their accomplices managed to give the police a slip.

Sources said that Kesinga police personnel received a tip-off that a resident of Singhbahali village has stashed huge cache of cannabis at a secret location near his house. Swinging into action, a team of police officials raided the house leading to the seizure and the arrests. Police have not disclosed the identities of the arrested as it would hamper the investigation.

182 Anganwadi centres to come up in SMC area

POST NEWS NETWORK

Sambalpur, July 2: Owing to obstacles in land acquisition and other reasons, Anganwadi centres could not be constructed in the area under Sambalpur Municipal Corporation (SMC). This will be solved soon as 182 Anganwadi centres are to be built in Hirakud, Burla, Dhankauda and Maneswar areas under the SMC.

Since the SMC is delaying the construction of these centres, Collector Shubham Saxena has pressed the responsibility of construction of the centres on Maneswar and Dhankauda blocks. Dhankauda BDO Basanta Hati informed that the construction process had already been started



by the block administration. As many as 94 Anganwadi centres are to be built by Dhankauda block administration, he added. The Maneswar block administration will undertake the construction of another 88 centres. Dhankauda block administration has started

construction of 50 centres. Roofs have already been completed in some of those places. Now, steps are being taken to complete the constructions as soon as possible by employing more labourers in the projects. The centres will be handed over to the Integrated Child Development

Services (ICDS) department post completion within 2 months.

A few of the sites have issues related to land acquisition. The local tehsildar has been informed about these problems. Constructions will kick-start once the land is cleared by the tehsil. There is utmost necessity of co-operation of the local populace. The tehsildar has requested them not to oppose or hinder the construction of these Anganwadi centres for the sake of the welfare of their own children.

It is pertinent to note that a sum of Rs 7 lakh has been allocated for construction of each of these centres. These centres will include verandah, class rooms, store room and a kitchen.

Villagers risk lives to cross Poteru river in rickety boats

POST NEWS NETWORK

MV 79, July 2: As their repeated requests for construction of bridges over the Poteru river, which acts as a border between Kalimela and Poteru blocks in Malkangiri district, have fallen on deaf ears, people have no option but to cross the river on rickety country boats, putting their lives at risk.

Villagers of Similibanchha, Girikanapali and Undurukonda panchayats of Padia block have to cross the river every day in order to travel across the river to Tandabai, Bhubanpali, Tigal and Nalagunthi panchayats for business, to avail health care facilities and maintain social bonding.

However, in the absence of a bridge, they are left with no other option but to travel precariously in rickety country boats. A mere

look at the boats that people use to cross the river from the ghat near Sonali village is enough to make one realise how dangerous their journey is. In rainy season, the journey is all the more dangerous.

Boatmen alleged that they had requested the administration to provide new boats but received no response as yet. When asked, people, who were waiting to board a boat, said they are travelling dangerously due to compulsion.

When contacted, Similibanchha panchayat extension officer Duryodhan Nayak said that he has already written to the administration, requesting for new boats at Sonali and Kurti ghats.

The local residents have urged the administration to take immediate steps to get the boats repaired as well as construct a bridge across the river.



Farm ponds helping farmers script success stories

POST NEWS NETWORK

Dhenkanal, July 2: At a time when farmers in different parts of the state are complaining of lack of sufficient rains to commence agricultural activities, some farmers in Dhenkanal district are sitting pretty, thanks to 'farm ponds'.

Pramod Sahu, a farmer of Sogar panchayat under Kamakhyanagar block, is one of them. Before he had a farm pond in his farmland, it was very difficult for him to grow two crops a year. But now he is cultivating crops round the year. He dug up the farm pond in his farmland under the Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchayee Yojana at a cost of Rs4,50,000.



changed for better with this pond. As of now, farmers of his and nearby villages are looking up to him as a source of inspiration.

After consulting the Horticulture department, Pramod planted 15 coconut, 60 mango and papaya trees on the bund. Besides this, he has

planted guava saplings in 0.20 acre, adjacent to the pond.

Pramod says the problem of getting water for growing crops has ended with the digging of the pond. Now, he is confident of earning around Rs4,00,000 a year by selling fruits from his farm. "In addition,

I will earn an additional Rs1,00,000 by selling the fish from my pond," he added.

While many officials keep visiting his farm pond, Director, Soil Conservation and Watershed Development department, Hemant Kumar Panda, project director,

Watershed, Prafulla Padhiari, director, Soil Conservation department, Santosh Rath, and assistant officer, Soil Conservation department, Sampad Swarup Samal visited Pramod's farm June 28 and praised his efforts. They had a discussion with Pramod on how he can benefit more from integrated farming.

Inspired by the visitors' encouraging words, Pramod and Chittaranjan Sahu, a local villager, have joined hands and dug another farm pond under the MGNREGS.

A total of 2,255 farm pond projects were started in 2019-20 and 2020-21 fiscal and, of them, digging up of 1,126 ponds has already been completed. The farm ponds have made the farmers self-reliant. Now they are a source of inspiration for others.

SIDHU CALLS FOR NEW LAW TO REVOKE PPAs

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Chandigarh, July 2: As Punjab reels under an unprecedented power shortage, Congress leader Navjot Singh Sidhu Friday batted for a law to nullify the power purchase agreements (PPAs) signed during the tenure of previous SAD-BJP government.

In a veiled attack on Chief Minister Amarinder Singh, Sidhu said there would be no need for him to go for power cuts or to regulate the office timings if the state acts "in the right direction".

Posting a series of tweets on the power issue, the former minister said the PPAs were against the state's public interest and called for bringing in a law to nullify it. Sidhu has been at loggerheads with the Chief Minister and has attacked him over a host of issues in the past. "Truth of Power Costs, Cuts, Power Purchase Agreements & How to give Free & 24 hour Power to the People of Punjab: 1. There is No need for Power-Cuts in Punjab or for the Chief Minister to regu-



Posting a series of tweets on the power issue, the former minister said the PPAs were against the state's public interest and called for bringing in a law to nullify it

late office timings or AC use of the Common People... If we Act in the right direction," said Sidhu, who earlier this week met Congress leaders Rahul Gandhi and Priyanka Gandhi Vadra amid continued fighting in the Punjab Congress. The state government on

Thursday ordered reduction in timings of state government offices from Friday and cut down on power supply to high energy consuming industries.

Chief Minister Amarinder Singh had also appealed to all government offices to make judicious use of electricity in government offices, adding that the situation was dire as the peak demand in the state had touched a whopping 14,500 MW. Regarding the PPAs approved by the former government, Sidhu said, "Punjab can purchase power from National Grid at much cheaper rates, but these [during SAD-BJP government] Badal-signed PPAs are acting against Punjab's Public Interest. Punjab may not be able to re-negotiate these PPAs due to them having legal protection from Hon'ble Courts, but there is a way forward".

He said the Punjab Assembly can bring in a new legislation with retrospective effect to cap power purchase costs to prices available on the National Power Exchange at any given time.



Members of National Students Union of India (NSUI) stage a protest against hike in fuel prices, in Amritsar, Friday

PTI PHOTO

Punjab govt doctors postpone stir after Health Min's assurance

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Chandigarh, July 2: The strike by Punjab government doctors against a recommendation of the sixth pay panel has been postponed till Tuesday after an assurance from state Health Minister Balbir Singh Sidhu Friday that their demand would be met.

The doctors were protesting the recommendation of Punjab's sixth pay commission delinking non-practising allowance from the basic pay. A delegation of the joint coordination committee led by Punjab Civil Medical Services Association president Dr Gagandeep Singh met Sidhu and said the minister has assured them about the restoration of non-practising allowance at the earlier rate of 25 per cent, which at present is fixed at 20 per cent.

The minister has also promised to issue a notification in this matter by Tuesday, Singh said, adding, "At the moment, the struggle is postponed till Tuesday."

No stay on sedition case against Ayesha Sulthana

AGENCIES

Kochi, July 2: Lakshadweep film personality Ayesha Sulthana, who has been in news ever since her controversial remark on a local TV channel, Friday suffered a setback when the Kerala High Court refused to stay a sedition case registered against her by the Kavaratti police.

Though she has been given anticipatory bail by the court, she approached the court again with a fresh petition to quash the FIR registered against her, for which she was in the island last week and presented herself for three days before the police for their questioning. Friday, when her petition came up before the high court, the Centre presented that the investigation has only just started.

The court then observed that the investigation is in the preliminary stages and hence it was not possible to quash the case nor could a stay be given at the present moment.

Sulthana had landed in the legal soup when a complaint was reg-



istered by Lakshadweep's BJP unit president Abdul Khader against her after she had in a TV channel debate, here June 7, said that the "Centre used biological weapons for the spread of Covid in Lakshadweep", which according to the complainant was anti-national. She had immediately apologised for her statement while taking part in the TV debate, but the island police decided to go proceed with action based on the complaint.

SETBACK CONTINUES

Sulthana, Friday suffered a setback when the Kerala High Court refused to stay a sedition case registered against her by the Kavaratti police

The court observed that the investigation is in the preliminary stages and hence it was not possible to quash the case nor could a stay be given at the present moment

immediately.

She reached the island and presented herself before the police and was questioned for three days. The high court also accepted her anticipatory bail plea during this time. Incidentally, following the move by Khader, several BJP leaders and workers in the island resigned from the party.

Sulthana hails from Chelath Island in Lakshadweep, and is based here. Besides being a model, she has worked in numerous films in Malayalam.

Drone research lab to be set up: Kerala DGP



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Thiruvananthapuram, July 2: A day after Army chief MM Naravane said easy availability of drones has increased the complexity of security challenges in the country, Kerala police chief Anil Kant Friday said a drone research laboratory would be set up here to mitigate any threat.

Kant, who met the media online for the first time after taking charge as the State police chief, said the State police would also consider collaborating with the Union government in the research sector to address the security threats posed by drones.

"We will set up a drone research laboratory to address the security threats. The research lab will be developed with the help of Cyberdome of the Kerala police. We will also consider collaborating with the Union government in the research sector," Kant told the media.

Cyberdome is a technological research and development Centre conceived as a Cyber Centre of excellence in cyber security as well as technology augmentation for effective policing.

Kant said the welfare of the police force was his priority and a med-

ical health insurance for policemen would be introduced soon. "We are exploring the option and will bring forward the best option for the force," he said. The State police chief said a special team would be formed to combat the gold-smuggling gang in the State and to deal with organised crime, a Maharashtra Control of Organised Crime Act (MCOCA)-like law would be enacted. "We have already submitted a similar proposal to the government," Kant said. He said the Anti-Terrorist Squad (ATS) in the state would be strengthened along with increasing the social media presence of the force to counter the cyber security threat.

Kerala CPI-M wields 'sword of discipline' on new party MLA



AGENCIES

Thiruvananthapuram, July 2: When it comes to discipline, it's difficult to beat the CPI-M as it has wielded the sword of discipline on new legislator KP Kunjahammed Kutty, a senior party leader, who won from the Kuttiyadi constituency in Kozhikode district.

The Kozhikode district CPI-M committee met the other day and found out that it was the aspiration of Kutty for the seat, which led to the massive outrage and decided to relegate him from the district committee to a lower committee.

The decision will be ratified at the party state committee meeting to be held here next week. However, Kutty has filed an appeal against the decision, but was not available for any comment. The reason for this is after reports surfaced just before the April 6 Assembly election, that this seat has been given to newly-ally-Kerala Congress (Mani).

This led to a never before seen massive outrage in the constituency by angry party workers and the

The Kozhikode district CPI-M committee found out that it was the aspiration of Kutty for the seat, which led to the massive outrage and decided to relegate him from the district committee to a lower committee

protests went for hours and was beamed live by all the TV channels. The demand of the protesters was that this seat should be given back to Kutty. Finally, the CPI-M took back the seat from Kerala Congress (Mani) and Kutty won with a slender majority of 333 votes. What hurt the party top brass most was the slogan shouting then which said 'they have the might and the control to see that they will be able to make the party reverse their decision'.

POLICE NOT SALUTING ME, COMPLAINS MAYOR

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Thiruvananthapuram, July 2: The Mayor of Kerala's cultural capital Thrissur is peeved that police officials do not only salute him when he passes through the city in his official vehicle, but "also turn away".

Not one to lie low, MK Varghese, a former air force official, has taken his complaint to the new state police chief Anil Kant with a demand that orders be passed to rectify this "mistake".

"This salute is not for me, instead it is for the post that I occupy. In my defence career I have



given and taken salutes. I have studied the protocols and it is very clear that in the Corporation area, according to the protocol, the Mayor is third in the list after the Governor and the Chief Minister," he said. "What I have noticed is while the police officials here salute the legislators, MP and other police

officials, who are all very lower in the list of protocol, the Mayor is being denied this. This is wrong and I have raised the issue with the new state police chief. Let us wait and see what happens," he added.

Varghese, who won the civic polls as a rebel Congress candidate, was a surprise choice for the Mayor as in the 54 divisions of the Corporation, the Left won in 24, the Congress in 23, and the BJP in six.

The Left offered Varghese the post of the Mayor for the first two years and he accepted it. In December, his first year will be over.

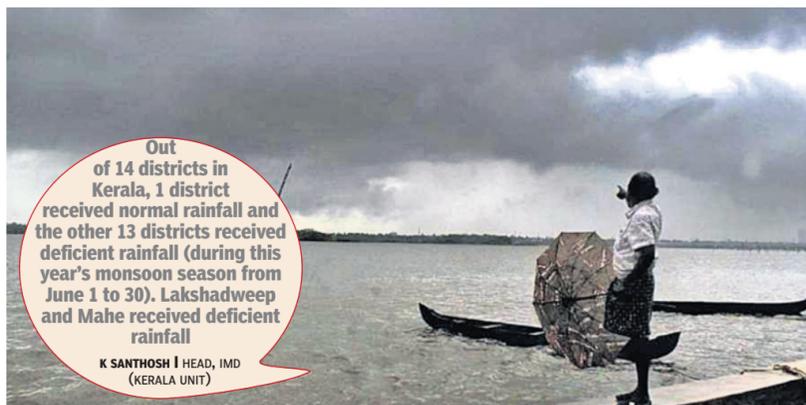
Kerala, 'gateway of monsoon', receives deficient rainfall

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Thiruvananthapuram, July 2: Though it has almost been a month after the South West Monsoon made its footfall, Kerala, the gateway of monsoon into the mainland of the country, has received deficient rainfall so far, according to India Meteorological Department (IMD).

Thirteen of the total 14 districts of the southern state received deficient rainfall while only one district received normal rains during the period from June 1-30, it said. The neighbouring union territory Lakshadweep and Mahe, part of union territory of Puducherry, also received deficient rainfall during the period. However, the monsoon is likely to be normal in the country in July, the weather agency said.

"Out of 14 districts in Kerala, 1 district received normal rainfall and the other 13 districts received de-



Out of 14 districts in Kerala, 1 district received normal rainfall and the other 13 districts received deficient rainfall (during this year's monsoon season from June 1 to 30). Lakshadweep and Mahe received deficient rainfall

Based on the present synoptic features, fairly widespread rainfall is likely over Kerala, Mahe and Lakshadweep during the first week of July. "Cumulatively, normal rainfall is likely over Kerala and

Mahe and above normal rainfall is likely over Lakshadweep during the first week," he said.

Though the normal onset date for the monsoon in Kerala, which marks the commencement of the

four-month rainfall season in the country, was June 1, it arrived two days late this year.

IMD Director General Mrutunjay Mohapatra had said Thursday that though the rainfall is not expected to be good in the first week of July, the precipitation activity is likely to pick up in the second half of the second week of the month.

The advancement of the monsoon is unlikely to happen before July 7, he said, adding that since June 19, no progress has been observed in the advancement of the monsoon.

June recorded 10 per cent more rainfall than normal and a large part of it was received between June 3 and 19, he said.

Mid-latitude westerly winds, an unfavourable Madden Julian Oscillation (MJO) and the absence of formation of a low pressure system over the north Bay of Bengal are some of the reasons for a break in the monsoon, Mohapatra added.

of the day quote

Now that I am out, I want to assure the people that the anti-CAA movement will resume. No (illegal) foreigner will be allowed to stay in the state

AKHIL GOGOI | MLA FROM SIBSAGAR, ASSAM

July has come, vaccines have not. Where are vaccines

RAHUL GANDHI | CONGRESS LEADER

However, we should not lose sight of the people and their difficulties behind the cases. The little discretion that is given to us, is the area in which a judge has flexibility to display his philosophy

NV RAMANA | CHIEF JUSTICE OF INDIA

SHORT TAKES

5 killed as vehicle falls into gorge

Banihal/Jammu: Five people died and four more were injured when a private passenger vehicle skidded off the Jammu-Srinagar national highway and plunged into a deep gorge Friday, a senior police officer said. The accident took place near Digdole in Ramban district when the driver of the car lost control after hitting a mini-load carrier. Senior Superintendent of Police P D Nitya said. She said the vehicle was on its way to Neel village from Ramban.

Mysterious boom shakes Bangalore

Bangalore: The Indian Air Force (IAF), Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) and the Karnataka State Natural Disaster Monitoring Centre (KSNMDC) have ruled out the possibility of a supersonic boom or earthquake behind the mysterious loud sound similar to an explosion that was heard across many southern parts of Bangalore Friday noon. Several residents of the city took to Twitter to share that they have heard a loud 'thud' sound.

Monsoon session of Parl from July 19

New Delhi: The Monsoon session of Parliament will commence from July 19 and will continue till August 13, an official communication said Friday. Both Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha issued official orders about the convening of the Monsoon session from July 19.

Charred body found

Chennai: The charred body of a project staff of the Indian Institute of Technology, Madras, was found on the premises Thursday night in a suspected case of suicide due to depression, police said Friday. The deceased was identified as Unni Krishnan (22) from Ernakulam, Kerala, and he is suspected to have taken the extreme step "probably out of depression," a police official said.

Yami summoned

Mumbai: The Enforcement Directorate (ED) has asked Bollywood actor Yami Gautam to record her statement with the agency July 7 in connection with an alleged violation of Foreign Exchange Management Act (FEMA) case, officials said. An ED official related to probe told IANS: "The agency has summoned Gautam to appear before it on July 7 to record her statement." He said that she was summoned as it was found that she had received ₹1.5 crore in her bank account from foreign countries.



The Samajwadi Party is left with no option but to go with smaller parties and this reflects its helplessness now

MAYAWATI | BSP PRESIDENT

ED ATTACHES ASSETS OF DINO MOREA, OTHERS

The Enforcement Directorate Friday said it has attached assets of late Congress leader Ahmed Patel's son-in-law, actors Dino Morea and Sanjay Khan and DJ Aqeel in a criminal investigation into a money laundering case linked to an alleged bank fraud



Govt stresses on vaccination

AGENCIES

New Delhi, July 2: The government Friday stressed on vaccination and following Covid-19 protocols as it noted that the second wave of the pandemic is not over yet.

Addressing a press conference on the pandemic situation, an official said people cannot and should not lower their guard. Seventy-one districts reported Covid-19 case positivity rate of more than 10 per cent in the week from June 23 to 29, the government said, adding that the second wave of Covid-19 is not over. On the ongoing vaccination drive, the government said India is vaccinating on an average 50 lakh individuals daily since June 21, which is equivalent to inoculating the entire population of Norway every day.

Till date 34 crore people - the equivalent of the entire population of the US - have been vaccinated with at least one dose of Covid-19 vaccine since the drive began January 16, the government said.

Nearly 80 per cent healthcare workers and 90 per cent frontline workers have been administered both doses of Covid-19 vaccine in the country, it said. Meanwhile, both



the doses of Covid vaccine provide around 98 per cent protection from death due to the disease, while one dose gives nearly 92 per cent shield, the government said Friday citing a study conducted on police personnel in Punjab. The study was

done by the Post Graduate Institute of Medical Education and Research, Chandigarh in collaboration with the Punjab government.

Sharing the data of the study, NITI Aayog member (Health) Dr V K Paul said 4,868 police personnel

Recovery rate crosses 97 pc

India saw a single-day rise of 46,617 new coronavirus infections, taking the tally of Covid-19 cases to 3,04,58,251, while the national recovery rate has crossed 97 per cent, according to the Union Health Ministry data updated Friday. The death toll due to Covid-19 rose to 4,00,312 with 853 daily fatalities. Over 34 crore vaccine doses have been administered under the nationwide vaccination drive so far, it said. The active cases have further declined to 5,09,637, comprising 1.67 per cent of the total infections, while the national Covid-19 recovery rate has improved to 97.01 per cent, the data updated at 8 am showed. A net decline of 13,620 cases has been recorded in the total number of active Covid-19 cases in a span of 24 hours.

were not vaccinated and out of them, 15 died due to coronavirus infection, which comes down to 3.08 incidence per thousand.

PULWAMA ENCOUNTER

Five LeT terrorists, Army jawan killed

As the security forces zeroed in on the spot where the terrorists were hiding, they came under a heavy volume of fire that triggered the encounter

AGENCIES

Srinagar, July 2: Five Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) terrorists, including a district commander, and an Army jawan were killed in an encounter between the ultras and the security forces in Jammu and Kashmir's Pulwama district Friday, police said.

The security forces had launched a cordon-and-search operation at Hanjin village in the Rajpora area of Pulwama following information about the presence of the terrorists there, a police official said. He said the operation turned into an encounter when the ultras opened fire on the security personnel who retaliated.

A soldier was injured in the initial exchange of fire with the terrorists, the official said, adding that the jawan died at a hospital



here. He said reinforcements were rushed to the area, and in the subsequent gunfight, five terrorists were killed.

The slain ultras were affiliated with the LeT, and one of them, Nishaz Lone alias Khitab, was the district commander of the outfit, Inspector General of Police, Kashmir, Vijay Kumar said. He said one of the slain terrorists was a Pakistani but is yet to be identified. Kumar said the operation was a "big success" for the forces.

Heatwave scorches north India; flash floods hit Tripura

IN TRIPURA, AT LEAST 521 HOUSES WERE PARTIALLY DAMAGED, 78 HOUSES SEVERELY, AND NINE DWELLINGS WERE ALMOST SWEEPED AWAY IN KHOWAI AND SEPAHIJALA

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, July 2: Several states of north India reeled under heatwave on Friday, though scattered rains and cool winds brought some relief to people in Delhi, while in Tripura over 2,000 people were moved to relief camps due to flash floods in two districts.

The northeastern state is being battered by torrential rains for the last 48 hours and besides power and road infrastructure, crops have also been damaged.

Though there was some respite for the national capital, temperatures in Punjab and Haryana were recorded above 40 degrees Celsius.

Churu in Rajasthan sizzled at 43.6 degrees Celsius, according to the India Meteorological Department (IMD), while it was 43.5 degrees Celsius in Haryana's Gurgaon, which falls in the Delhi-National Capital Region.

Dark grey clouds swarmed Delhi and cool-gusty winds barrelled through the capital Friday evening, bringing down the mercury by a few

notches. The city has been experiencing heatwave for the last four days. The monitoring station at Palam recorded 26 mm rain, Lodhi Road 2.5 mm, and Safdarjung 0.4 mm precipitation, the meteorological (MeT) office said. Cloudy skies and light rain are predicted for Saturday. The maximum temperature may drop by two degrees Celsius, the IMD said. However, the relief is likely to be temporary.

The maximum temperature is predicted to hover around 40 degrees Celsius from Sunday to Wednesday

next week and high humidity will add to discomfort, it said. On Thursday, Delhi had recorded a maximum of 43.1 degrees Celsius, the highest reading for July since 2012, Wednesday, it was 43.6 degrees Celsius, the highest this year, and Tuesday, it was 43 degrees Celsius. The IMD Thursday had said that there was no chance of monsoon reaching Delhi till July 7.

In a bulletin, the IMD said rainfall was also recorded at a few places over Jammu and Kashmir; Ladakh and Uttarakhand heatwave pre-

vailed in most of the parts Rajasthan, but 27 mm of rain was recorded in Alwar and 0.5 mm of rain in Dholpur.

The maximum temperature in 22 out of 33 districts of the state was 40 degrees Celsius or above, officials said. They attributed the weather condition to the slow progress of the southwest monsoon. The maximum temperature recorded in Churu was 43.6 degrees Celsius followed by 43 in Pilani, 42.8 in Sri Ganganagar, 42.7 in Karauli and 42.5 in Dholpur.

DARBHANGA STATION BLAST

NIA arrests two from UP's Shamli

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, July 2: In another breakthrough in its probe in the June 17 explosion at Bihar's Darbhanga railway station, the National Investigation Agency (NIA) has arrested two more people from Uttar Pradesh's Shamli district.

An NIA spokesperson told IANS: "We have arrested Mohammad Salim Ahmed aka Haji Salim and Kafil aka Kafel, both residents of Kairana." The two were arrested in a joint operation with the Uttar Pradesh Police, after investigation revealed that they are key conspirators in the case. The official said that arrested Lashkar-e-Taiba terrorists, brothers Nisar Khan and Imran Malik had met at the residence of Ahmed in February 2021 and finalised the plan of planting an IED in a moving train so casualties and extensive damage to prop-

erty can be caused. Terming Ahmed a close associate of Pakistan-based LeT operative Iqbal Kana, the NIA official said: "Salim Ahmed was acting as a key intermediary between Iqbal Kana and arrested brothers Nasir and Imran. He was also involved in channelling funds sent by Iqbal Kana that were used in executing the terror act." A source said that Ahmed had visited Pakistan on a number of occasions, and the agency will also probe the hawala transaction dealings between the LeT handlers based in Pakistan and their members in India. The source revealed that Ahmed has also been questioned by the team of Intelligence Bureau and several other agencies.

According to NIA sources, he had apparently recruited the brothers and paid ₹1.6 lakh for making the bomb and planting it in the train from Secunderabad to Darbhanga.

RELIEF FROM HEAT-WAVE



Pedestrians carrying umbrellas cross a street amid rain in Ranchi

PTI PHOTO

In rural MP, people shed hesitancy towards vaccination

VACCINATION DRIVE IS TAKING PLACE IN FULL SWING IN MADHYA PRADESH WITH MORE THAN TWO CRORE PEOPLE HAVING BEEN VACCINATED TILL NOW

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Bhopal, July 2: With the focus on spreading awareness to make people shed misconceptions about the vaccination drive, especially in the rural areas of Madhya Pradesh, the people have started realising that vaccination is the only potent weapon to stop the spread of the Covid-19 infection.

The evidence of this shift in attitude among the rural population towards vaccination in the state has emerged with the 100 per cent vaccination already carried out across several Gram Panchayats in the state. Vaccination drive is taking place in full swing in Madhya Pradesh with more than two crore people having been vaccinated till now. At the starting of the vaccination drive in rural areas, sev-

eral hurdles were faced by the administration and the people conducting the vaccination drive. In many places, incidents of misbehaving with the vaccination teams also came to light. It was a challenge before the government to eliminate the confusion among the people residing in villages as they felt that vaccination could lead to death or cause impotency. To deal with these situations, different strategies were prepared and implemented at the district level.

In Betul district, the priests of the tribal population came forward to tell the people that vaccination is the only way to prevent coronavirus infection and the misconceptions spread about it were false. This effort had a ripple effect and the tribals received the vaccine jabs. As the pace of the vaccination



campaign increased, the efforts made to spread awareness among the people living in the rural areas started showing positive outcome. In Jabalpur district, the vaccination data that has emerged from the

Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan said vaccination is a potent way to prevent Covid-19 infection. Every Gram Panchayat in the state needs to undergo vaccination as a protective shield just like the Jamui villagers of Shahdol district

tribal, a greater number of vaccinations have been done than the target set by the state government. Calling positive thinking behind

the awareness spread among the people in the villages, Jabalpur District Magistrate Karmaveer Sharma said this was possible only due to the joint efforts of the Health, Revenue and Rural Development Department, including Anganwadi workers, public representatives and members of Village Disaster Management Committee, as well as villagers coming forward for vaccination. Similarly, Jamui Gram Panchayat of Shahdol district has also been 100 per cent vaccinated.

Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan said vaccination is a potent way to prevent Covid-19 infection. Every Gram Panchayat in the state needs to undergo vaccination as a protective shield just like the Jamui villagers of Shahdol district.

international



To say that the government of Dominica and the government of Antigua along with India colluded in any way, give me a break, that's total nonsense
ROOSEVELT SKERRIT | PM, DOMINICA

BILLIONAIRES COMPETE
Call it a space race for billionaires: British mogul Richard Branson one-upped rival Jeff Bezos Thursday, announcing that he too will blast beyond Earth's atmosphere as many as nine days ahead of the Amazon founder



of the day quote

I can't think of a bigger black and white failure of public administration than this. Governments make lots of mistakes of course, as we all do, but this is something that was very doable
MALCOLM TURNBULL | EX-PM, AUSTRALIA

We are currently supporting and will continue to support our Belarusian friends in confronting the sanctions imposed by the European Union. The ban on the supply of a number of goods to EU countries from Belarus harms the interests of businesses and ordinary people
VLADIMIR PUTIN | PRESIDENT, RUSSIA

With no improvement in sight, more children than ever before are going to bed hungry in Lebanon. Children's health, education and their very futures are affected as prices are skyrocketing and unemployment continues to increase
YUKIE MOKUO | UNICEF REPRESENTATIVE IN LEBANON

SHORT TAKES

Labour wins poll in northern England

London: Labour leader Keir Starmer breathed a sigh of relief Friday after the party eked out victory in a special election in one of its northern strongholds, easing discontent after a series of poor showings by Britain's main opposition party. Starmer praised Kim Leadbeater's 323-vote triumph in the election to represent the Batley and Spen district of West Yorkshire in the House of Commons as a "fantastic result." While the margin of victory was far below the 3,525-vote cushion Labour achieved in 2019, polls had suggested the party could lose the seat it has held since 1997.

Slovenia takes over EU presidency

Ljubljana: Slovenia has formally taken over the six-month presidency of the Council of the European Union (EU), with a focus on tackling the Covid-19 pandemic and recovery, enhancing resilience to future crises, as well as the EU's enlargement. At a joint press conference Thursday, Prime Minister Janez Jansa and European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen highlighted the EU's post-Covid recovery as a major issue that Slovenia's EU presidency will deal with.

Australia to cut arrivals cap

Canberra: Australia's federal and state governments Friday agreed to halve the number of people allowed into the country each week in response to the widespread Covid-19 outbreaks. Prime Minister Scott Morrison announced Friday that the international arrival cap will be cut by 50 per cent after a National Cabinet meeting with state and territory leaders, reports Xinhua news agency. It means the country will accept only about 3,000 people a week.

Pak gets 2.5 mn doses of Moderna

Islamabad: Pakistan received 2.5 million doses of the Moderna vaccine from the United States Friday, easing pressure on Islamabad in overcoming the shortage of Covid-19 vaccines. According to a US embassy statement, the vaccines were delivered to the Pakistani people in partnership with the COVAX global vaccine initiative, UNICEF, and the government of Pakistan.

Experts raise red flag over WHO leading probe

NUMEROUS EXPERTS SAY THAT POLITICAL TENSIONS BETWEEN THE US AND CHINA ARE MAKING IT IMPOSSIBLE FOR AN INVESTIGATION BY THE AGENCY TO FIND CREDIBLE ANSWERS

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Beijing, July 2: As the World Health Organization draws up plans for the next phase of its probe of how the Coronavirus pandemic

started, an increasing number of scientists say the UN agency it isn't up to the task and shouldn't be the one to investigate. The first part of a joint WHO-China study of how Covid-19 started concluded in March that the virus probably jumped to humans from animals and that a lab leak was "extremely unlikely." The next phase might try to examine the first human cases in more detail or pinpoint the animals responsible — possibly bats, perhaps by way of some intermediate creature. "We will never find the origins relying on the World Health Organization," said Lawrence Gostin, director of the WHO Collaborating Center on Public Health Law and Human Rights at Georgetown University. "For a

COVID ORIGINS



year and a half, they have been stonewalled by China, and it's very clear they won't get to the bottom of it." Gostin said the US and other countries can either try to piece together what intelligence they have, revise international health laws to give WHO the powers it needs, or create some new entity to investigate. The first phase of WHO's mission required getting China's approval not only for the experts who traveled there but for their entire agenda and the report they ultimately produced. Although China initially pushed hard to look for the Coronavirus's origins, it pulled back abruptly in early 2020 as the virus overtook the globe.

Lukashenko orders closure of Belarus border with Ukraine

AGENCIES

Moscow, July 2: Belarus' leader Alexander Lukashenko Friday ordered the closure of the border with Ukraine, seeking to block what he called an inflow of weapons to coup-plotters detected by his security services, BelTA state news agency reported.

The move appears to deepen a standoff between Belarus and outside powers angered by his government's forcing down of a Ryanair flight in May and arrest of a government critic who was on the aircraft. Western countries imposed sanctions on Belarus to punish it for the action, and the European Union and Ukraine have also banned Belarus-registered flights from entering their airspace. Lukashenko, who has repeatedly accused Western ill-wishers of trying to oust him from power, said he had ordered a purge across the country, and rebel groups that were planning to carry out a coup had been uncovered in Belarus. "They have crossed the line. We cannot forgive them," he said. Speaking at a gathering marking the country's Independence Day, the veteran leader said Germany, Lithuania, Poland, Ukraine and the United States were behind the alleged rebel activity, BelTA reported. "A huge amount of weapons is coming from Ukraine to Belarus. That's why I ordered border-security forces to fully close the border with Ukraine," Lukashenko said.

'China making over 100 ballistic missile silos'

The acquisition of over 100 new missile silos would represent a historic shift for China, a country that is believed to possess a stockpile of 250 to 350 nuclear weapons

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Washington, July 2: China has begun construction of over 100 new silos for intercontinental ballistic missiles in a desert near the country's northwestern city of Yumen, signalling a major expansion of its nuclear capabilities, a leading American daily has reported citing satellite imagery. The 119 nearly identical construction sites, that could potentially house powerful weapons capable of reaching the American mainland, are similar to those seen at existing launch facilities for China's arsenal of nuclear-tipped ballistic missiles, the report said.



US expresses concern

It said that commercial satellite images obtained by researchers at the James Martin Center for Nonproliferation Studies in California show work underway at scores of sites across a grid covering hundreds of square miles of arid terrain in Gansu province, some 2,100 km from Beijing. The construction suggests a major effort to bolster the credibility of China's nuclear deterrent, said researcher Jeffrey Lewis, an expert on China's nuclear arsenal and part of a team that analysed the suspicious sites, first spotted by colleague Decker Eveleth as he scoured photos taken by commercial satellites over northwestern China.

US expresses concern

The United States expressed concern Thursday over a report that China is building more than 100 new silos for intercontinental ballistic missiles. State Department spokesman Ned Price was asked about the report Thursday. "I think what is fair to say is that these reports and other developments suggest that the PRC's (People's Republic of China) nuclear arsenal will grow more quickly, and to a higher level, than perhaps previously anticipated," he said. "This buildup, it is concerning," Price said. "It raises questions about the PRC's intent."

Fires char Canada town amid record shattering heat

The province of British Columbia has recorded 62 new fires in the past 24 hours

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

Vancouver, July 2: About 1,000 people were evacuated in western Canada, authorities said Thursday, as fires raged amid an unprecedented heat wave, charring most of at least one town.

The province of British Columbia has recorded 62 new fires in the past 24 hours, premier John Horgan told a press conference.

"I cannot stress enough how extreme the fire risk is at this time in almost every part of British Columbia," Horgan said.

The town of Lytton, 250 kilometers (155 miles) northeast of Vancouver, "has sustained structural damage and 90 percent of the village is burned, including the centre of town," local MP Brad Vis said. The village's 250 residents were evacuated Wednesday evening, one day after it set a jaw-dropping Canadian record high temperature of 49.6 degrees Celsius (121



degrees Fahrenheit).

The evacuation order was extended Wednesday night to residents of about 100 properties north of Lytton. "The last 24 hours have been devastating for Lytton residents," Defence Minister Harjit Sajjan wrote on Twitter, adding that the Canadian armed forces "are ready to support residents as we move forward in the next steps."

Provincial authorities have not yet announced any injuries or death related to the fires, a number of which were also clustered north of the city of Kamloops, located some 150 kilometers northeast of Lytton.

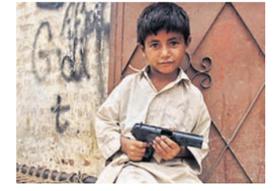
US adds Pak to CSPA list

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Washington, July 2: The US has added Pakistan along with 14 other countries in a list of Child Soldiers Prevention Act which identifies foreign governments having government-supported armed groups that recruit or use child soldiers, a designation that could result in restrictions on certain security assistance and commercial licensing of military equipment.

The US Child Soldiers Prevention Act (CSPA) requires publication in the annual Trafficking in Persons (TIP) report a list of foreign governments that have recruited or used child soldiers during the previous year (April 1, 2020, to March 31, 2021).

The countries which have been added to the annual TIP list of the US State Department are Pakistan, Turkey, Afghanistan, Myanmar, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Iran, Iraq, Libya, Mali, Nigeria, Somalia, South Sudan, Syria, Venezuela and Yemen. The CSPA prohibits assistance to governments that are identified



in the list under the following authorities: International Military Education and Training, Foreign Military Financing, Excess Defence Articles, and Peacekeeping Operations, with exceptions for some programmes undertaken pursuant to the Peacekeeping Operations authority. It also prohibits the issuance of licenses for direct commercial sales of military equipment to such governments. Beginning October 1, 2021, and effective throughout fiscal year 2022, these restrictions will apply to the listed countries, absent a presidential waiver, applicable exception, or reinstatement of assistance pursuant to the terms of the CSPA.

DEMOCRACY DILEMMA



A pro-democracy protester with a Union Flag mask, known as Grandma Wong, is taken by police at Causeway Bay after police denied permission for a protest rally during the 24th anniversary of the former British colony's return to Chinese rule and the 100th founding anniversary of the Communist Party of China in Hong Kong, China

Scientists detect new source of gravitational waves

The finding confirms that there are systems consisting of a neutron star and a black hole, and will help answer many questions about the cosmos, from star formation to the expansion rate of our universe

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

London, July 2: Scientists have for the first time detected gravitational waves — ripples in the fabric of space-



time — produced by the collision of a neutron star and a black hole. Gravitational waves are produced when celestial objects collide and the ensuing energy creates

ripples in the fabric of space-time which carry all the way to detectors on Earth. The reverberations from the two celestial objects were picked up

using a global network of gravitational wave detectors, the most sensitive scientific instruments ever built, according to the researchers from UK's Strathclyde University. The university is part of the international network of scientists, the LIGO Scientific Collaboration (LSC). January 5 this year, the Advanced LIGO detector in Louisiana, US and the Advanced Virgo detector in Italy, picked up the final throes of the death spiral between a neutron star — the collapsed core of a massive supergiant star — and a black hole as they circled ever closer and merged together. Just days later, a second signal

was picked up by both detectors coming from the final orbits and smashing together on another neutron star and black hole pair. This is the first time scientists have seen gravitational waves from a neutron star and a black hole. Previous gravitational wave detections have spotted black holes colliding, and neutron stars merging but not one of each, the researchers said. "These detections confirm that there are populations of binary systems consisting of a neutron star and a black hole," said Professor Stuart Reid from the Department of Biomedical Engineering at Strathclyde. "Such astrophysical systems can help answer many big questions

about the universe, from star formation and stellar evolution, to the expansion fate of our Universe," Reid said in a statement. Since the first ever direct detection of gravitational waves in 2015, astronomers have predicted that this type of system — a black hole and neutron star merger — could exist, but without any compelling observational evidence. In future, as these detectors are made even more sensitive, the team hopes to detect many more neutron star-black hole collisions, including cases where the black hole tearing apart the neutron star is observed in both gravitational waves and light.



Demand for chemicals was tough in 2020, but the recovery is mostly back, not only in Asia, but also in the UK and Europe, and other US markets. This is expected to continue all through the year, gradually
N CHANDRASEKARAN | CHAIRMAN, TATA CHEMICALS

BEZOS STEPS DOWN

Amazon CEO Jeff Bezos hands over the reins to his successor Monday, marking the end of an era at the internet giant supercharged by new business growth. Andy Jassy, until now the head of Amazon Web Services, is becoming the company's chief executive July 5, the same date the e-commerce firm originally incorporated in 1994



of the day quote

Our role is to empower entrepreneurs and encourage entrepreneurship during these challenging times. Keeping this in mind, through the various initiatives, we are planning to support the enterprise development cycle comprising ideation, setting up, revive and thrive as also stepping up

SIVASUBRAMANIAN RAMAMAN |
CHAIRMAN AND MD, SIDBI

Under the revised guidelines, retail and wholesale trade will also benefit from priority sector lending under RBI guidelines. This landmark decision will have a structural impact on the sector, helping it get formalised by giving better finance options for businesses that want to get structured

KUMAR RAJAGOPALAN | CEO, RAI

A survey indicates high affinity towards unit-linked insurance plans across customer profiles of age, income and geography. The key purchase triggers towards ULIP include its potential to deliver higher long-term return, flexibility to switch funds or withdraw, and added benefit of life insurance cover

CHANDRAMOHAN MEHRA |
CMO, BAJAJ ALLIANZ LIFE

Exports grow 47% to \$32.46bn in June; trade deficit at \$9.4bn

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, July 2: The country's exports rose by 47.34 per cent to USD 32.46 billion in June on account of healthy growth in sectors such as engineering, gems and jewellery and petroleum products, even as trade deficit aggregated at USD 9.4 billion during the month, according to the data released by the commerce ministry Friday.

Exports in June last year stood at US 22 billion and USD 25 billion in June 2019. In May 2021, the outward shipment was worth USD 32.27 billion, while in April this year, it was USD 31 billion.

Imports in June 2021 grew by 96.33 per cent to USD 41.86 billion, from USD 21.32 billion in June last year. In June 2019, imports stood at USD 41 billion. "India is thus a net importer in June 2021 with a trade deficit of USD 9.4 billion, widened by 1,426.6 per cent over trade surplus of USD 0.71 billion in June 2020 (India was net exporter in June 2020) and narrowed down by 41.26 per cent over trade deficit of USD 16 billion in June 2019," the ministry said in a statement.

Exports during the April-June quarter this year jumped to USD 95.36 billion as against USD 51.44 billion in the same period last year.

"Exports during the April-June period are the highest ever mer-



IN MAY 2021, THE OUTWARD SHIPMENT WAS WORTH USD 32.27 BILLION, WHILE IN APRIL THIS YEAR, IT WAS USD 31 BILLION

Imports in June 2021 grew by 96.33 per cent to USD 41.86 billion, from USD 21.32 billion in June last year

The merchandise exports were recorded at USD 82 billion during April-June 2018-19 and USD 90 billion during the last quarter of 2020-21

EXPORTS OF ENGINEERING, PETROLEUM PRODUCTS AND PHARMA DURING THE FIRST THREE MONTHS OF THIS FISCAL STOOD AT USD 25.9 BILLION, USD 12.9 BILLION AND USD 5.8 BILLION, RESPECTIVELY

chandise exports in a quarter in history of India," Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal said briefing the media here.

The merchandise exports were recorded at USD 82 billion during April-June 2018-19 and USD 90 billion during the last quarter of 2020-21, he said. He also said the ministry will work with all the stakeholders concerned to achieve the target of

USD 400 billion exports in this fiscal year.

Imports during April-June 2021 were at USD 126.14 billion, an increase from USD 60.65 billion in the corresponding three months last year.

Oil imports in June this year rose to USD 10.68 billion, as compared to USD 4.97 billion in June 2020.

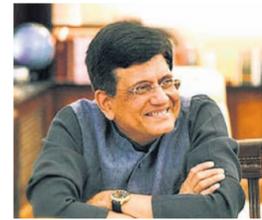
'Looking at further simplification of SEZ ecosystem'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, July 2: Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal Friday said the ministry is looking at ways to further simplify the ecosystem of special economic zones (SEZs) to make them more attractive for investors and push exports.

He also said that the department of commerce and revenue are discussing to see if SEZ units can be allowed to do business outside these zones. SEZs have urged the government to permit them to sell their products in the domestic market without payment of customs duties.

"We are also looking at further simplification of the SEZ ecosystem... We have to see that whatever advantages SEZs units have, DTA (domestic tariff area) units should not have unfair disadvantages... Soon we will find a solution in this regard," the minister told reporters here.



On USD 400 billion export target for this fiscal, Commerce Secretary BVR Subrahmanyam said a comprehensive work plan is under preparation for that.

Big Tech's push into India's financial sector raises concerns: RBI



THE CENTRAL BANK'S WARNINGS COME AT A TIME OF MUCH TENSION BETWEEN THE INDIAN GOVERNMENT AND US TECH GIANTS OVER ISSUES THAT RANGE FROM E-COMMERCE RULES TO DATA PRIVACY AND CONTENT POSTED ON THEIR PLATFORMS

REUTERS

Mumbai, July 2: Plans by Big Tech to foray further into India's financial sector pose risks for traditional banks as the tech firms have the potential to become dominant players in financial services, the central bank said.

The plans will also create governance-related challenges for regulators, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) wrote in its bi-annual financial stability report Thursday. Major technology firms "straddle many different lines of business with sometimes opaque overarching governance structures," it said.

The RBI said concerns included operational risks, too-big-to-fail issues, challenges for antitrust rules, cybersecurity and data privacy. But it added that positive outcomes

could include efficiency gains and more access to financial services.

Amazon and Google currently provide basic payment services in India. Both companies as well as Facebook and others have applied for licences to operate broader retail payment and settlement systems in partnership with Indian companies such as Reliance and lenders.

The central bank's warnings come at a time of much tension between the Indian government and US tech giants over issues that range from e-commerce rules to data privacy and content posted on their platforms. Amazon, Facebook, Facebook-owned WhatsApp and Twitter have all been caught up in disputes with New Delhi.

India's largest state-run bank

MAJOR TECHNOLOGY FIRMS STRADDLE MANY DIFFERENT LINES OF BIZ WITH SOMETIMES OPAQUE OVERARCHING GOVERNANCE STRUCTURES
AMAZON AND GOOGLE CURRENTLY PROVIDE BASIC PAYMENT SERVICES IN INDIA. ALSO, FACEBOOK HAS APPLIED FOR LICENCES TO OPERATE BROADER RETAIL PAYMENT AND SETTLEMENT SYSTEMS

and UNI Global Union which represents about 20 million workers globally last month also raised concerns about the entry of large tech companies into the country's payments sector.

SHORT TAKES

Unacademy's Sinha elevated as COO

New Delhi: Edtech platform Unacademy Friday said it has elevated Vivek Sinha to the position of Chief Operating Officer (COO) of Unacademy platform. In his new role, Sinha will lead the business verticals of Test Preparation (India Business), K-12, and Careers, a statement said. As COO, he will additionally be responsible for central capability functions such as Inside Sales, Business Development, Business Operations, Content and Academics, and User Growth, it added.

Mohanty assigned additional charge

New Delhi: State-owned RINL Friday said Deb Kalyan Mohanty has been assigned additional charge as its chairman and managing director with effect from July 1, 2021. In a statement, RINL said, "Deb Kalyan Mohanty, Director (Commercial), RINL is assigned the additional charge of the post of CMD, RINL with effect from July 1, 2021 till regular incumbent joins the post or until further orders, whichever is earlier." Mohanty assumed charge as the Director (Commercial), RINL August 1, 2019.

Zomato seeks CCI nod for stake buy

New Delhi: Online food ordering platform Zomato has sought Competition Commission's nod for buying stake in online grocery shopping platform Grofers India and one more entity. In this regard, a notice has been filed with the Competition Commission of India (CCI) for "the proposed acquisition by Zomato of approximately 9.3 per cent stake in each of Grofers India and Hands on Trades Pvt Ltd (HoT)".

Digit Insurance value soars

Mumbai: Fairfax-promoted Digit Insurance has raised USD 200 million in equity capital from existing investor Faering Capital and new investors Sequoia Capital, IIFL Alternate Asset Managers and others, valuing the four-year-old firm at USD 3.5 billion, which has nearly doubled since the last funding in January.

BIZ BUZZ

No proposal to reduce excise duty on petroleum products, says FM

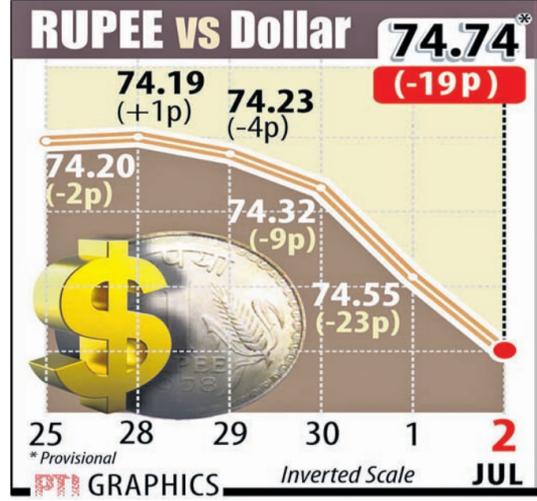


Bangalore: Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman Friday ruled out any cut in excise duty levied on petroleum products for now. Addressing a press conference here, she said that there is no such proposal at the present to

reduce prices of petroleum. "When the international price of crude oil is higher, we have to increase the prices and when the international price is lower, we have to decrease the prices here too. This is a market mechanism which is followed by oil marketing companies. We have given them the freedom," she said in response to a question. Sitharaman added that the Centre is spending on providing free food grains to the poor besides spending money on vaccines and healthcare infrastructure. "So, state governments can give relief by reducing taxes or levies on petrol," she said.

Apollo's regional CEO felicitated

Bhubaneswar: Regional CEO of Apollo Hospitals Enterprise Ltd Sudhir M Diggikar being felicitated at IMA programme for his contribution towards Covid-19 treatment and assistance to the needy on the occasion of Doctors Day July 1



FB, Insta take down millions of posts in compliance with IT rules

AGENCIES

July 2, New Delhi: Facebook took action against 2.5 million pieces of "violent and graphic content" between May 15 and June 15, the social media giant said in its India monthly report under the new Information Technology (Guidelines for Intermediaries and Digital Media Ethics Code) Rules (IT Rules), 2021. Of this, 99.9 per cent of the content was actioned proactively.

It also provided details of the content actioned for Instagram. Facebook had earlier said this would be an interim report.

Facebook described "content actioned" as content such as posts, photos, videos or comments it takes action for going against its standards. "This metric shows the scale of our enforcement activity.

India joins global consensus framework to tax MNCs

REUTERS

New Delhi, July 2: India has joined a global consensus framework deal to tax multinational companies, the government said Friday, an effort backed by the United States. Officials from 130 countries, including G20 nations and OECD members, agreed Thursday in Germany's business hub of Frankfurt to the broad outlines for an overhaul of rules for taxing international companies.

"The principles underlying the solution vindicate India's stand," the government said in a statement.

It listed advantages such as a greater share of profits for the markets, consideration of demand-side factors in profit allocation and tax rules to stop treaty shopping. But some issues, such as profit-



sharing and the scope of tax rules, remain open and need to be resolved, it added.

US Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen urged Indian Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman Tuesday to discuss a "robust global minimum tax".

The deal calls for a minimum tax rate of at least 15%, a key element pushed by the administration of US President Joe Biden.

An implementation plan and re-

maining issues will be finalised by October, with the deal expected to be implemented in 2023, said the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), which coordinated the global campaign.

After the agreement, Yellen has said global consensus would move the world a step closer to ending a "race to the bottom" on taxation and allow for critical investments in infrastructure, education and pandemic relief.

India favours a consensus solution that is "simple to implement and simple to comply with," the government said.

"The solution should result in allocation of meaningful and sustainable revenue to market jurisdictions, particularly for developing and emerging economies," it added.

'Home sales rise across top cities, NCR remains outlier'

AGENCIES

New Delhi, July 2: Housing sales rose by 23 per cent across the top seven cities in India in the first five months of 2021 to 1,32,818 units, according to a report released by PropEquity, a real estate data, research and analytics firm. During the same period last year, a total of 1,08,199 units were sold, it said. The report showed that majority of the sales happened till mid-April, just ahead of the resurgence in Covid-19 cases.

Bangalore, Chennai, Hyderabad, Mumbai Metropolitan Region (MMR) and Pune are the cities where home sales witnessed a growth in the first five months of

2021 as against the first five months of 2020, with a growth of 16 per cent, 40 per cent, 39 per cent, 29 per cent and 34 per cent, respectively.

However, the National Capital Region and Kolkata remained the outliers and witnessed a downfall of 11 per cent and 20 per cent, respectively, in home sales during the same period.

Sales in the NCR were greatly impacted as the national capital faced a major brunt of the second Covid wave during which the city came to a standstill to tackle the health emergency. This was followed by a stringent lockdown further impacting housing sales, the report noted.

The new supply or launches of



housing units decreased by 24 per cent in the same period to 86,746

units from 1,13,699 units, as developers were clearing earlier stock,

India witnessed the worst Covid wave in April and May, which drastically stopped almost all real estate activity across major cities. Fortunately, the worst is behind us as new infections and Covid-related deaths have fallen significantly, leading to major cities relaxing Covid-related restrictions

SAMIR JASJUA | FOUNDER AND MANAGING DIRECTOR, PROPEQUITY

resizing home offerings and waiting for the economy to improve.

Chennai and NCR are the areas where new launches witnessed a

growth in the first five months of 2021 versus the first five months of 2020 at 20 per cent and 50 per cent, respectively.

Bangalore, Hyderabad, Kolkata, MMR and Pune witnessed a downfall of 35 per cent, 28 per cent, 28 per cent, 31 per cent and 23 per cent respectively.

"India witnessed the worst Covid wave in the months of April and May which drastically stopped almost all real estate activity across the major cities. Fortunately, the worst is behind us as new infections and Covid related deaths have fallen significantly, leading to major cities relaxing Covid related restrictions," said Samir Jasuja, Founder and Managing Director, PropEquity.



England take on Ukraine

Czech test ahead of Denmark



England's players would be high in confidence after overcoming massive Germany test and they would be keen to seal semifinal berth

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Rome, July 2: Having overcome historic rival Germany in the last 16, facing Ukraine might seem like an easier proposition for England. Turns out, though, that Saturday's quarterfinal match at the Stadio Olimpico might be England's toughest test of the European Championship. That's because it's the only match of Euro 2020 that England will have to play away from the friendly confines of Wembley Stadium. Making matters more complicated is that the Italian govern-

ment has explicitly warned Britain-based England fans to stay away from the game unless they can prove they have observed five days of quarantine since arriving. For a team like England that is known for its traveling supporters, that's a major blow. "We've got to create our own atmosphere on Saturday in Rome, which we're capable of doing," said England goalkeeper Jordan Pickford, who has kept four clean sheets in the tournament. "The fans were tremendous the other night and throughout the group stages as well. I think that

gives us added motivation for the game Saturday to come back for a semifinal with 60,000 fans." The winner between Ukraine and England will play either Denmark or the Czech Republic in the semifinals Wednesday at Wembley, with the final also scheduled for England's home stadium. For Ukraine's coaching staff, meanwhile, playing in Italy is a homecoming. Head coach Andriy Shevchenko was one of Serie A's most prolific scorers during his playing career with AC Milan, while assistant coach Mauro Tassotti is from Rome and began

his playing career at the Stadio Olimpico with Lazio before going onto a long and successful career at Milan as both a player and assistant coach. "If the Italians support us because we're the weaker team that's absolutely fine," Tassotti said. "I'm really hoping the fans give us some big support." Still, Tassotti acknowledged that beating England is a "titanic challenge." "But we've seen what happened over the past few days with the Netherlands and France," Tassotti told the Gazzetta dello Sport. "England has enormous talent but they've also had the advantage, like other nations, of playing only at home." Expect an old-fashioned Italian "catenaccio" (lockdown defense) and counterattack approach from Ukraine to deal with talented England strikers Raheem Sterling and Harry Kane, who accounted for the goals in the 2-0 win over Germany. If Ukraine can get into the opponent's half, the attack should flow through Andriy Yarmolenko, who plays in England for West Ham. Likewise, Oleksandr Zinchenko is teammates with Sterling at Manchester City. Having barely scraped through the group phase, it will be Ukraine's first European Championship quarterfinal match. England are looking to match its performance from the 2018 World Cup, when it reached the semifinals. The last time England made it to the last four of the European Championship was in 1996. But the bigger goal for England at this point is to duplicate the success of the 1966 team that won the World Cup and lifted the trophy on home soil.

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Baku, July 2: From the despair of seeing a teammate suffer cardiac arrest to the European Championship quarterfinals, somehow Denmark keeps on going. Denmark will face the Czech Republic Saturday, exactly three weeks after midfielder Christian Eriksen collapsed on the field in the team's opening game and had to be resuscitated with a defibrillator. While Eriksen recovers — initially in the hospital and now at home — Denmark has improved at Euro 2020. A 4-1 win over Russia got Denmark out of the group stage after two losses. Beating Wales 4-0 in the round of 16 matched the team's best showing since "Danish Dynamite" won the 1992 European Championship. "Culture-wise, there're similarities. Values of sticking (together), one for all and all for one," Denmark midfielder Pierre-Emile Hojbjerg said Thursday. "There's this pride also to be playing for your country and all these values that I don't think have changed too much since 1992. But my biggest respect to the guys in '92 because they went on to win it. We haven't done anything yet." Since the "shock" of Eriksen's sudden collapse, Hojbjerg said, Denmark has gone through huge emotional ups and downs. "Now we're in the quarterfinals, so it's been a bit of a rollercoaster, a big one," he said. "And the good thing is that we are still hungry. We're still determined to push for more." More than half of the 26-man squad was not yet born when Denmark beat Germany 2-0 in the 1992 final. The only European quarterfinal appearance since then came in 2004, a 0-3 loss to the Czech Republic. Hojbjerg was 8 years old back then and recalls he was "not very happy" he couldn't watch the match because of a school trip.



Denmark stunned everyone when they routed Wales 4-0 in the round of 16 game

That tournament ended in disappointment for the Czechs, too. They lost to eventual champion Greece 0-1 in the semifinals. As Czechoslovakia, the team won the European title in 1976. As the Czech Republic, the high point was being runner-up to Germany in 1996. Both Denmark and the Czech Republic have been at their best at Euro 2020 when playing high-intensity, physical soccer against opponents who wanted possession. They could end up canceling each other out in the quarterfinals. That's playing on Denmark coach Kasper Hjulmand's mind, so much so that he admitted he was disappointed the Czech team upset the Netherlands 2-0 in the round of 16.

Danish striker Yussuf Poulsen could return after missing the Wales game with a muscle injury, when replacement Kasper Dolberg scored twice. One more goal would see Czech Republic forward Patrik Schick match Cristiano Ronaldo as tournament leader with five. Few Danish or Czech fans will be in the Baku Olympic Stadium for the game. Only Turkey, Azerbaijan's close ally, has had more than a couple hundred fans at games in the city so far. Plans for a Czech charter flight to Baku fell apart because not enough fans agreed to go. Denmark may have up to 1,000 supporters and offered 50 of its most loyal fans a ride on the federation's plane.

KROOS HANGS UP GERMANY BOOTS

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Berlin, July 2: Germany midfielder Toni Kroos says he is retiring from the national team after 106 appearances for his country. The 31-year-old Kroos says in a podcast that his decision is "irreversible." Kroos' last game was Tuesday in Germany's 0-2 loss to England in the round of 16 of the European Championship. The Real Madrid midfielder recovered from the coronavirus in time to take part in the

tournament. Kroos did not say if he had spoken with incoming coach Hansi Flick about staying. Kroos says "it's a decision for the family and for me" and adds "I want to be there and needed as a husband and papa." Kroos made his Germany debut in March 2010 in a friendly against Argentina. He was a Bayern Munich player on loan at Bayer Leverkusen at the time. He played every minute at the 2014 World Cup when Germany won the title.



HISTORIC ALL-INDIAN WIMBLEDON MATCH Bopanna-Mirza pair advances



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

London, July 2: The experienced pair of Rohan Bopanna and Sania Mirza defeated the brand new combination of Ramkaumar Ramanathan and Ankita Raina 6-2, 7-6(7-5) in the historic all-Indian mixed doubles first round match at the Wimbledon here Friday. It was the first time in open era that two Indian teams competed against each other at a Grand Slam tournament. The contest finally brought a Grand Slam debut for Ramkaumar, who has made 21 at-

tempts to qualify for the singles main draw of a tennis major. While the first set ended quickly in favour of the veterans, Ramkaumar and Raina presented a good fight in the second set, which even led for a brief period with a break of serve. Bopanna was clearly the best player on the court with his powerful serve and solid ground strokes from the baseline as well as the ability to execute a superior net game. On expected lines, Ramkaumar served big while Raina gave her all after growing in confidence. Mirza's

serve is still not at its best and would improve as she plays more matches. Mirza has moved also moved to women's doubles second round with Bethanie Mattek-Sands while Raina and her American partner Lauren Davis lost in straight sets to the US pair of Asia Muhammad and Jessica Pegula Thursday night. The 14th seeds disposed off the challenge from the Raina-Davis pair 6-3, 6-2 in 70 minutes. Bopanna and Divij Sharan are already out, having lost their men's doubles opening round match.

India look to avoid English clean sweep

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Worcester, July 2: An under-fire Indian women's team would be desperate to address vice-captain Harmanpreet Kaur's prolonged lean patch as it seeks to stop a marauding England side from completing a 3-0 sweep in the final ODI here Saturday. Having lost six out of the last seven ODIs, the Mithali Raj-led side is finding it difficult to stem the rot as it faces the ignominy of another one-sided series defeat after being thrashed by the South African women on home soil. While the bowlers did up their game in the second ODI with a much-improved performance, the batting has left the team down yet again with skipper Mithali left to do all the heavy lifting, which is also affecting her game. One of the primary issues that has been overlooked over the past four years has been Harmanpreet's shoddy performance. Harmanpreet, whose epic 171 against Australia in the 2017 World Cup, became a seminal moment for the women's game in the country, has since gone off the boil. In 28 WODI matches (in which she didn't get to bat six times) since the 2017 World Cup final against England, the Indian vice-captain has

scored only two fifties and two scores over 40, which has put the maximum pressure on the scoreboard. With Mithali and the likes of Jemimah Rodrigues, Punam Raut, Deepti Sharma and Taniya Bhatia not having the ability to play the power game, a lot of pressure is being built on openers Smriti Mandhana and teen sensation Shafali Verma. For India, Mithali has scored back-to-back half centuries with her strike rate in the 60s but she had been left with no choice as in both games, the Indian batters have splurged on dot balls like millionaires. With wicketkeeper Bhatia not being the most reliable batter in the shorter format and Deepti unable to play the big shots towards the end, it might again depend on Mandhana and Shafali, who gave a half-century-plus stand in the Test as well as the second WODI. Indrani Roy, an exciting domestic talent, should have been tried out as an enforcer but Bhatia's better keeping skills has earned her the team's vote. In the bowling department, both Goswami and leg-spinner Poonam Yadav were brilliant but the scoreboard pressure was always on India, who were at least 40 runs short on a good batting track.



Overdue Sabalenka on verge of breakthrough

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Wimbledon, July 2: No.2-seeded Aryna Sabalenka is into the second week at Wimbledon and on the verge of a career breakthrough. The hard-hitting Belarusian beat qualifier Maria Camila Osorio Serrano 6-0, 6-3 Friday to reach the fourth round, and she might be overdue for a deep run in a Grand Slam. Sabalenka is the only woman among the top 20 seeds who has yet to reach a major quarterfinal. The time seems right for that to change: Sabalenka leads the tour with 32 match wins this year, her seeding is a career high in a major, and she's navigating a draw already without eight of the highest-ranked women. Among those still in contention

is No.7-seeded Iga Swiatek, the 2020 French Open champion, who breezed into the fourth round by beating Irina-Camelia Begu 6-1, 6-0. Swiatek had one career victory on grass entering the tournament. No.18 Elena Rybakina eliminated American Shelby Rogers 6-1, 6-4 and faces Sabalenka next. No.8 Karolina Pliskova swept Tereza Martincova 6-3, 6-3. In men's play, No.25 Karen Khachanov won 6-3, 6-4, 6-4 against American Frances Tiafoe, who upset No.3 Stefanos Tsitsipas in straight sets in the first round. No.5 Andrey Rublev hit 13 aces and beat No.26 Fabio Fognini 6-3, 5-7, 6-4, 6-2. No.1 Novak Djokovic was scheduled to face American qualifier Denis Kudla.



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WIMBLEDON: Roger Federer has become the oldest man to reach the third round at Wimbledon in 46 years. Federer held every service game and extended his winning streak against Richard Gasquet to 11 matches, 7-6(7-1), 6-1, 6-4. He turns 40 next month. Ken Rosewall was 40 when he made a run to the fourth round in 1975. Federer improved to 19-2 against Gasquet and has won all five of their Grand Slam meetings in straight sets. He's bidding for his ninth Wimbledon title and his 21st major championship, which would break the men's record he shares with Rafa Nadal.