



GOING BOLD
Actor Janhvi Kapoor has flaunted her daring side in a latest photo-op she shared on social media Monday
LEISURE P2



KARNATAKA UNLOCKS
In a move to open up the economy, the Karnataka government further eases Covid restrictions
TWO STATES P8



ITALY FACE SPAIN TONIGHT
Italy lock horns with Spain in a battle of powerhouses at Wembley for a place in the final at Euro 2020
SPORTS P12



IRREGULAR by MANJUL
MLA saab here? Elections are still far off! Have you been suspended??

PETROL PRICE SOARS AGAIN

New Delhi, July 5: The price of petrol continued its upward march Monday, the second day running, taking its price closer to century mark in Delhi and Kolkata, the only two metro cities where the fuel is still below ₹100 a litre.
In Delhi, price of the fuel increased by 35 paise from ₹99.51 Sunday to ₹99.86 a litre Monday. In Kolkata, Petrol prices moved up from ₹99.45 a litre to ₹99.84 a litre.

CITY FUEL PRICES

PETROL	₹100.72 (+0.36)
DIESEL	₹97.45 (+0.00)

With the increase, petrol prices are expected to cross the century mark in these two cities at next revision. With this the fuel will be over ₹100 a litre in all four metros and other major cities across the country.
In the financial capital Mumbai, petrol price now stands at ₹105.92 while diesel costs ₹96.91, data available on Indian Oil Corporation's website showed. In Chennai too, petrol has hit century with pump prices being ₹100.75 a litre.
Like last week, OMCs kept diesel prices unchanged on Monday to provide relief to the transport sector that runs largely on this fuel.
The price of diesel in Delhi remains at ₹99.36 per litre, while in Mumbai, Chennai and Kolkata it is priced at ₹96.91, ₹93.91 and ₹92.27 per litre, respectively. Officials in oil companies attribute the increase in prices to development in global oil markets.

MARKET WATCH

INDEX	VALUE	ARIATION
SENSEX	52880.00	▲ 395.33
NIFTY	15834.40	▲ 112.20
DOLLAR	74.75	▼ ₹0.44
EURO	88.13	▼ ₹0.23
GOLD	₹47,317	▲ ₹32
SILVER	₹69,969	▼ ₹219

WEATHER

	BHUB	CTK
MAX	34.0°C	34.4°C
MIN	25.2°C	25.0°C
Humidity	78%	72%
Rainfall	Nil	Nil

Forecast: Light rain very likely



GRAND STRUCTURES: Chariots of Lord Jagannath, Balabhadra and Devi Subhadra are near completion ahead of the annual car festival in Puri, Monday

SC 'shocked' at use of Sec 66 of IT Act

PEOPLE ARE STILL BEING BOOKED UNDER THE SCRAPPED SECTION OF THE IT ACT

New Delhi, July 5: The Supreme Court Monday said it is "amazing" and "shocking" that people are still being booked under Section 66A of the Information Technology Act that was scrapped by the apex court verdict in 2015.

Under the scrapped section, a person posting offensive messages could be imprisoned for up to three years as also fined. A bench of Justices RF Nariman, KM Joseph and BR Gavai issued notice to the Centre on an application filed by an NGO, 'People's Union for Civil Liberties' (PUC).
"Don't you think this is amazing and shocking? Shreya Singhal judgement is of 2015. It's really shocking. What is going on is terrible," the bench told senior advocate Sanjay Parikh, appearing for PUC.
Parikh said that despite express directions of the court in 2019 that all state governments should sensitise police personnel about the March 24, 2015 judgement, thousands of cases have been registered under the section.
The bench said, "Yes, we have seen those figures. Don't worry we will do something". Parikh said there has to be some kind of method to handle the matter as people are suffering.
Attorney General KK Venugopal, appearing for the Centre, said that on perusal of the IT Act it can be seen that section 66A features in it, but in the footnote it is written that the pro-



Don't you think this is amazing and shocking? Shreya Singhal judgement is of 2015. It's really shocking. What is going on is terrible.

vision has been scrapped.
"Now when a police officer has to register a case, he sees the section and registers the case without going through the footnote. Instead what can be done is that we can put a bracket just after section 66A and mention that it has been scrapped. We can in the footnote put the entire extract of the verdict," Venugopal said. Justice Nariman said, "You please file counter in two weeks. We have issued a notice. List the matter after two weeks".
The top court was hearing a fresh application of PUC saying, "That, shockingly, despite the order dated February 15, 2019 and steps taken towards compliance thereof, the applicant discovered that Section 66A of the IT Act has continued to be in use not only within police stations but also in

cases before trial courts across India".
The NGO said, "That in spite of the order passed by this court February 15, 2019, directing that copies of the judgment of this court in Shreya Singhal should remain available with every High Court as well as all the district courts and that the police departments in the entire country i.e. All states and UTs be sensitized about the said judgment, the facts mentioned above show that not only the investigations under Section 66A by the police are continuing but even in the trial courts".
It sought direction to the Centre to collect all data/ information regarding FIRs/ investigations where Section 66A has been invoked as well as pendency of cases in the courts throughout the country where proceedings under the provision are continuing in violation of the 2015 judgment.
The PUC also sought direction to top court registry to communicate to all the District Courts throughout the country (through respective High Courts) to take cognizance of the 2015 judgment, so that no person should suffer or face any adverse consequences which violate his fundamental rights under Article 21 of the Constitution.
The NGO said the Centre be directed to issue an advisory to all police stations not to register cases under the repealed Section 66A. On February 15, 2019, the SC had directed all state governments to sensitise their police personnel about its March 24, 2015 verdict.

Central team in state to review Covid-19 situation

Bhubaneswar, July 5: The central team deployed by the ministry of health and family welfare to monitor Covid-19 management arrived in Odisha Monday.

The team consists of two members - Professor of Kolkata-based All India Institute of Hygiene & Public Health (AIIPH) Dr Shibani Dutta who reached Bhubaneswar Monday morning, and Prasanta Raghab Mohapatra, a professor in AIIMS Bhubaneswar.
"As per our programme, today we will have meetings with state gov-

STATE LOGS RECORD 52 COVID TOLL
BHUBANESWAR: Odisha Monday registered 52 Covid-19 fatalities, the highest ever in a single day, pushing the toll to 4,248, while 2,803 new cases raised the tally to 9,24,699. Nine fatalities were reported from Khurda district, five each from Ganjam, Kalahandi and Puri, four from Kendrapara and two each from Kandhamal and Mayurbhanj.

ernment officials and tomorrow will visit the districts which are having high caseloads and rising case trend," Dutta told reporters.
During the field visit, the team will see early tracing & testing of cases along with surveillance & containment activities. They will also examine whether the hospitals are equipped with sufficient numbers of beds and ventilators, she informed.
The team will monitor the overall implementation of Covid-19 norms and appropriate behaviour, the availability of hospital beds, ambulances, ventilators, and oxygen, and vaccination. It is also expected to give suggestions on health remedies.



Woman brutally murdered in City

Bhubaneswar, July 5: The capital city Monday woke up to the brutal murder of a 26-year-old married woman at Bhimtangi area under Airfield police limits here. The three-year-old son of the deceased escaped the killer's knife.

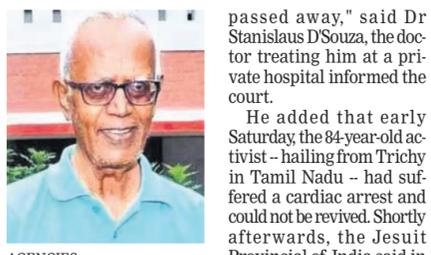
The deceased, Priyanka Priyadarshini Sahu, along with her husband, Rakesh and son, had been staying on rent in the house of a banker, Sudhakar Maharana, at plot no A/L-1 of Housing Board Colony in Bhimtangi. Rakesh works as the area manager in Eureka Forbes. Sources claimed Rakesh was in his office when he received a Whatsapp video call from an unknown caller which he didn't receive. However, after a few minutes, he received the photo of his wife with blood stains on her head. A perturbed Rakesh immediately called up his landlord to inquire about the incident. Subsequently the landowner came downstairs and found the room locked from inside.

"An anxious Maharana and his son broke open the door to find a lifeless Priyanka in a pool of blood in her bedroom while a youth wreathing in pain near her body," said a cop quoting Maharana.
Maharana then informed police as well as Rakesh about the incident. Police immediately reached the spot and rushed the accused to Capital hospital.
Later, police identified the youth as Jagannath Pradhan of Jajpur district. Pradhan was found with his wrist slit. Sources in Capital hospital said, the youth has also taken poison and is currently undergoing treatment in the hospital.
DCP Umashankar Dash said, "The control room received a call about the murder of a lady in Bhimtangi at around 12pm. ACP Zone-II along with a team rushed in and found the victim lying in a pool of blood with her throat slit. The police also found another youth in serious condition with his wrist slit nearby."
We have recorded the statement of Pradhan and came to know that both Priyanka and Pradhan were known to each other for several years. However, they had a strained relationship over past three months.



A file photo of the deceased

SWAMY DIES AWAITING BAIL



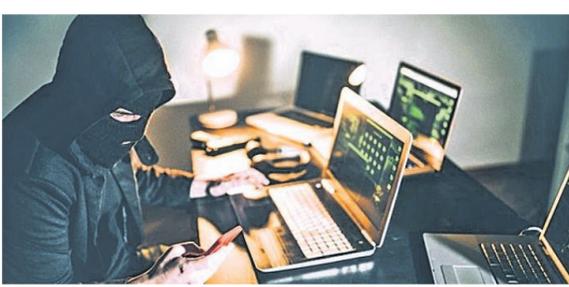
Mumbai July 5: Ailing octogenarian tribal rights activist Fr Stan Lourdu Swamy - an arrested-accused in the sensitive Bhima-Koregaon case and awaiting bail on medical grounds - passed away here Monday afternoon, officials said.
Swamy's senior advocate Mihir Desai brought to the notice of the Bombay High Court judges Justice SS Shinde and Justice NJ Jamdar of the development when his bail plea came up for hearing Monday afternoon. It's with a very heavy heart I have to inform you that Fr Stan Swamy has passed away," said Dr Stanislaus D'Souza, the doctor treating him at a private hospital informed the court.
He added that early Saturday, the 84-year-old activist - hailing from Trichy in Tamil Nadu - had suffered a cardiac arrest and could not be revived. Shortly afterwards, the Jesuit Provincial of India said in a statement: "With a deep sense of pain, anguish and hope, we have surrendered Fr. Stan Swamy, 84, to his eternal abode."
It said that 'the author of life', Fr Swamy's mission was to work among the Adivasis, Dalits, and other marginalised communities so that the poor may have life and live to the full, with dignity and honour.
Fr Swamy was arrested in October 2020 by the National Investigation Agency in connection with his alleged role in the January 1, 2018 Koregaon-Bhima caste violence in Pune, and related issues.

Swamy deserved justice: Rahul

New Delhi: Congress leader Rahul Gandhi expressed condolences over the death of Father Stan Swamy and said he deserved justice and humanitarianism. "Heartfelt condolences on the passing of Father Stan Swamy. He deserved justice and humanitarianism," he wrote on Twitter. Swamy, an accused in the Elgar Parishad-Maoist links case, died at a Mumbai hospital Monday afternoon. The tribal rights activist was admitted to the private hospital.

In crosshairs of malware crooks, cyber insurers fret

Boston, July 5: In the past few weeks, ransomware criminals claimed as trophies at least three North American insurance brokerages that offer policies to help others survive the very network-paralyzing, data-pilfering extortion attacks they themselves apparently suffered.
Cybercriminals who hack into corporate and government networks to steal sensitive data for extortion routinely try to learn how much cyber insurance coverage the victims have. Knowing what victims can afford to pay can give them an edge in ransom negotiations. The cyber insurance industry, too, is a prime target for crooks seeking its customers' identities and scope of coverage.
Before ransomware evolved into a full-scale global epidemic plaguing businesses, hospitals, schools and local governments, cyber insurance was a profitable niche industry. It



was accused of fueling the criminal feeding frenzy by routinely recommending that victims pay up, but kept many from going bankrupt.
Now, the sector isn't just in the criminals' crosshairs. It's teetering

on the edge of profitability, upended by a more than 400% rise last year in ransomware cases and skyrocketing extortion demands. As a percentage of premiums collected, cyber insurance payouts now top 70%, the break-even point. Fabian Wosar, chief technical officer of Emsisoft, a cybersecurity firm specializing in ransomware, said the prevailing attitude among insurers is no longer: Pay the criminals. It's likely to be cheaper for all involved.
"The ransomware groups got way too greedy too quickly. So the cost-benefit equation the insurers initially used to figure out whether or not they should pay a ransom - it's just not there anymore," he said. It's not clear how the single biggest ransomware attack on record, which began Friday,

will impact insurers. But it can't be good. Pressure is building on the industry to stop reimbursing for ransoms. In May, the major cyber insurer AXA decided to do so with all new policies in France. But it is so far apparently alone in the industry, and governments are not moving to outlaw reimbursement. AXA is among major insurers that have suffered ransomware attacks, with operations in Thailand hard-hit. Chicago-based CNA Financial Corp., the seventh-ranked US, cybersecurity underwriter last year, saw its network crippled in March. Less than a week earlier, the cybersecurity firm Recorded Future published an interview with a member of the Russian-speaking ransomware gang, REvil.

leisure



FLORENCE PUGH CREDITS FIGHT SCENES TO KNOW JOHANSSON

Actress Florence Pugh has credited the fight sequence in *Black Widow* with helping her to know Hollywood star Scarlett Johansson. Pugh portrays Yelena Belova in action-packed *Black Widow* and *the two* share quite a few action sequences, reports *aceshowbiz.com*.

JAMIE DORNAN WAS NEVER CONFIDENT AROUND WOMEN

Actor Jamie Dornan reveals he was never confident around women. The actor, who has three daughters with wife Amelia Warner said that he was always amazed watching his friends talking to the opposite sex.



FORTUNE FORECAST

GaneshSpeaks.com
accuracy • reliability • trust
FOR ASTROLOGY DIAL 55181*

ARIES
If you are involved in monetary matters, today you will find yourself weighing the benefits. A loan that you have applied for may be sanctioned. Look at a range of choices, says Ganesh, and you will end up feeling very happy about it.

TAURUS
This day you will have an urge to take a trip, be it a small one. Ganesh says you enthusiastically making detailed plans and arrangements, arranging for funds and getting in touch with all those you desire to take along. It is possible that you may ultimately scrap your plans and choose to stay at home.

GEMINI
You will feel blue and out of sorts today. You will feel that you are all alone in the world, emotionally. Your repressed desires and your philosophical streak will come to the fore today and will influence your dark mood, says Ganesh.

CANCER
You will get a surprise gift or god news from your friends or relatives. You will enjoy with your family. You will get the affection and co-operation of family members. Happiness and rapport in domestic life is indicated. Ganesh's grace is upon you.

LEO
Most of your time will be spent at the work place. You will excel in all your tasks today. Professional relationships will be marked by co-operation. You will have cordial relations with your colleagues. It is an auspicious and progressive day for business, says Ganesh.

VIRGO
Confidently take on the challenges that in all likelihood will test your business abilities, especially the ones that are related to your investments and monetary matters. You will most probably come up with novel ideas to solve long-pending issues, and Ganesh says that this will be very effective.

LIBRA
Ganesh says those of you who are married or in love will experience a good time today. As you spend more time with your life partner by going out for a drive or for dinner, you will come closer to them. Today is a day full of joy, vigor and happiness for you.

SCORPIO
Today, there may come up situations which may test your patience, predicts Ganesh. However, it would be wise to sit and sort out all the differences with your colleagues or family members or your partner.

SAGITTARIUS
As Ganesh foresees, you will be religiously inclined today. Listening to soft, instrumental music will soothe your nerves. You also feel like going back to school days and dig into detective and suspense stories of Nancy Drew or Hardy Boys. It was fun being kid, isn't it?

CAPRICORN
Though less, you will get money from your investments and other resources. Don't ignore pending projects; complete them at the earliest so that you will have clear picture about your requirements and responsibilities, advises Ganesh.

AQUARIUS
Cooperative and supportive, your colleagues will help you improve your performance at work. Also, your creativity will win you praises from one and all, foretells Ganesh. The day will have a perfect end as you will spend quality time with your friends and family.

PISCES
You are going to be very emotional today. You will be able to express your love to your wife or other loved ones in a very unique and dramatic way. It is not a good day for putting forth marriage or love proposals, and if you do it could be disappointing.

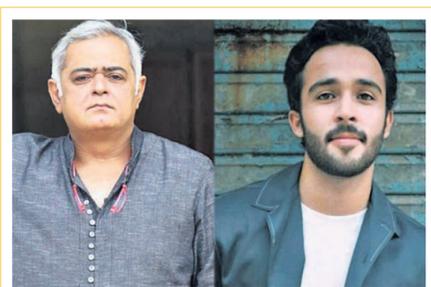
SAMANTHA TALKS ABOUT 'LITTLE MOVIE WITH BIGGEST HEART'

Mumbai: The Samantha Akkineni-starrer *Oh! Baby* was released two years ago on this day, and Monday afternoon the actress took to Instagram to share fond memories of the film's shoot.

"Two years of #Ohbaby A movie that I will cherish with all my heart. Oh baby will always be that movie I fondly look back at, more so for the people I got to make it with. The laughter on sets, the goof ups, the wholehearted trust and the everlasting friendships.. the little movie with the biggest heart," wrote Samantha Akkineni. *Oh! Baby* is a 2019 Telugu fantasy comedy film di-

rected by BV Nandini Reddy. The film is a remake of the 2014 South Korean film *Miss Granny*.

In 2021, Samantha starred in the second season of the Hindi web series *The Family Man*. She played the role of the antagonist Raji, a rebel leader from the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam.



Hansal Mehta to launch Shashi's grandson

Mumbai: Filmmaker Hansal Mehta's upcoming untitled thriller, which recently went on floors, will introduce Zahaan Prithviraj Kapoor, grandson of late actor Shashi Kapoor. Zahaan is the son of Kunal Kapoor and Sheena.

The film also features Aditya Rawal, who has earlier worked in an OTT project, and is co-produced by Anubhav Sinha.

On selecting the cast, Hansal Mehta said: "With the subject at hand, I was very keen on doing this film with fresh faces. Both Zahaan and Aditya have been selected on the basis of their talent and potential. The characters they play are very intricate and I'm sure the audience will love them too."

Anubhav Sinha says that he wanted the audience to focus on the characters instead of having any preconceived notions about watching stars on screen.

Janhvi goes bold in white

Mumbai: Actress Janhvi Kapoor flaunted her bold and beautiful side in a latest photo-op she shared on social media Monday.

Janhvi posted two pictures on Instagram. In the image, she is seen wearing a white, deep-necked crop top, paired with shorts and a jacket.

She looks every inch gorgeous as she poses for the camera. For the caption, she chose to put a white heart emoji.

Meanwhile, Janhvi is gearing up for the release of her film *Dostana 2*.

Dostana 2 recently made headlines as the production banner Dharma Productions announced actor Kartik Aaryan's exit from the film.

The actress finished the shoot for her film *Good Luck Jerry* earlier this year. She had taken to Instagram to share this news with her fans.



Gen X, Z inclined towards altruism

TO STAY POSITIVE AND HAPPY DURING LOCKDOWN, ALMOST 33 PER CENT OF THE GEN X-ERS SURVEYED PREFERRED TO SPEND TIME WITH FAMILY

Different age groups across India dealt with last year's national lockdown amid the Covid-19 pandemic in their own unique ways. A latest survey revealed how different age groups across the country coped with the lockdown in 2020 in different ways.

A majority of those in the Gen X grouping (59 per cent), aged 45 and above, and the Gen Z (53 per cent) grouping, aged 18-24, turned to altruism, distributing sanitizers, food packets, old clothes, blankets, or medical devices to those in need.

It added that a majority of millennials (54 per cent) made environmentally-conscious actions their top priority. A dissection of the millennials age-group further revealed that younger millennials (25-34) were the most environmentally-conscious among all



age-groups with 54.83 per cent giving topmost priority to growing plants at home, being conscious of energy consumption and of the environmental impact of the products they purchased.

The Little Things We Do research, sponsored by Godrej group, was commissioned to highlight how little contributions and their

subsequent impact often leaves a lasting mark on our lives.

Almost three out of five (59 per cent) millennials took to a physical or mental fitness activity like yoga, Zumba, walking or meditation to keep themselves healthy and happy.

Eating healthy home-made food due to lockdown restrictions war-

anted a behavioural consensus among respondents falling in the Gen Z and younger millennials (74 per cent) group in comparison to older millennials (75 per cent) and Gen X (77 per cent).

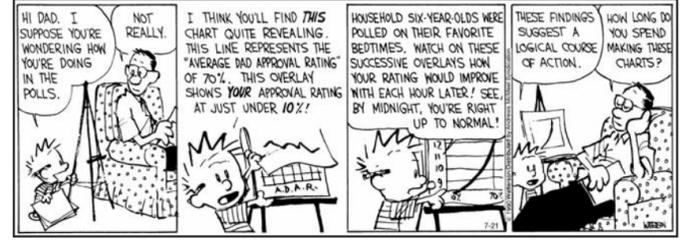
Sujit Patil, Vice President & Group Head - Corporate Brand and Communications, Godrej, said, "The current pandemic has taken a toll on the lifestyle and aspirations of Indians. People from different age groups, therefore, have started incorporating 'little' changes in their lives that can boost mental and physical well-being."

To stay positive and happy during lockdown, almost 33 per cent of the Gen X-ers surveyed preferred to spend time with family, followed by watching OTT content and TV shows (21 per cent) or listening to music or reading books (23 per cent).

PEANUTS



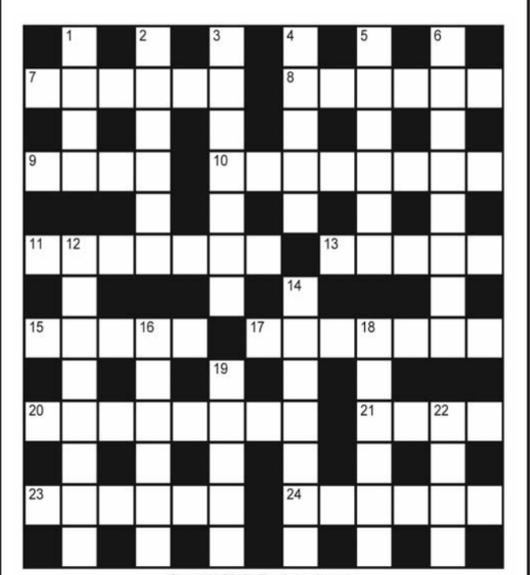
CALVIN AND HOBBS



BREVITY



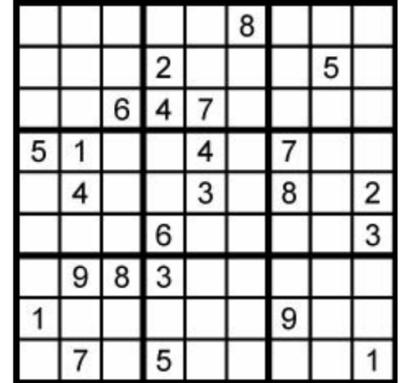
FUN post CROSSWORD



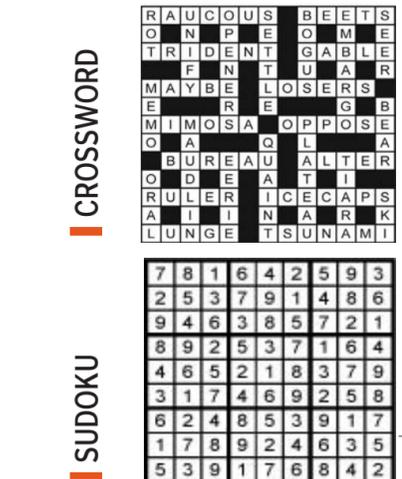
- Copyright ©2021 PuzzleJunction.com
- Across**
- 7 Baby's bed
 - 8 Type of hatch, valve or artist
 - 9 Kind of list (2-2)
 - 10 Detective's find
 - 11 Crevice
 - 13 Large wading bird
 - 15 Ceremonial elegance
 - 17 Take a hike! (3,4)
 - 20 Rude
 - 21 Song for a diva
 - 23 Main course
 - 24 Calamitous
 - 4 Casual attire
 - 5 Receive
 - 6 Phantasms
 - 12 Missile attack warning
 - 14 Rules out
 - 16 On the yacht
 - 18 Guanaco relatives
 - 19 Femme fatale
 - 22 Rainbow goddess
- Down**
- 1 Duet plus one
 - 2 Rotten to the core
 - 3 Fireballs

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



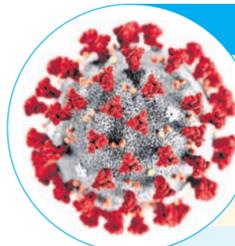
CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW

downtown



SNARL AMID LOCKDOWN

Vani Vihar-Master Canteen Road in Bhubaneswar witnesses a traffic snarl Monday



COVID-19 TRACKER

	INFECTED	RECOVERED	DEAD
World	18,47,06,315	16,90,23,490	39,95,839
India	3,05,85,229	2,97,00,430	4,02,728
Odisha	9,24,699	8,94,104	4,248

'Jilted youth' knives married woman to death

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 5: Even as the gruesome murder of a married woman in broad daylight in Bhimtang area of Capital city Monday shook the conscience of citizens, grapevines have it that the ghastly act is fallout of a failed love affair.

If sources are to be believed, a failed love affair between the accused Jagannath Pradhan and the victim Priyanka Priyadarshini alias Rinki resulted in the heartrending incident that shocked the city Monday. Some claimed that both the accused and the deceased were in a relationship since their college days.

However, fate had other plans as Rinki married Rakesh Kumar Sahu in 2015. Pradhan had also tried to meet Priyanka after her marriage despite strong objections from the lady, sources claimed.

Recently, Rinki had gone to her paternal village to attend one of her relatives' funeral ceremony. She reportedly had a fight with Pradhan during her stay in the village.

A frustrated Pradhan, in order to take revenge on the deceased, hatched a plan to kill Priyanka along with her three-year-old son. He had also decided to end his own



DCP Umashankar Dash and ACP (Zone-II) Bishnu Prasad Patra near the crime scene

DAYLIGHT MURDER IN CITY

Some claimed that both the accused and the deceased were in a relationship since their college days

However, the fate had other plans as Rinki married Rakesh Kumar Sahoo in 2015

Pradhan had also tried to meet Priyanka after her marriage despite strong objections from the lady, sources claimed

A frustrated Pradhan, in order to take revenge on the deceased, hatched a plan to kill Priyanka along with her three-year-old son

life too after killing the mother-son duo. As per the plan, Pradhan reached Bhubaneswar Monday with two large knives and a pesticide bottle which were seized from the spot by police along with the handwritten

Registration for offline Class X exam begins

POST NEWS NETWORK

Cuttack, July 5: The form fill-up for the special board exams for Class X students, who are unhappy with the marks secured through alternative assessment method of the Board of Secondary Education (BSE), began Monday, an official said.

According to BSE, the registration will continue till July 14.

"Students can visit the board's website—www.bseodisha.ac.in—and fill up the form without any fee. The offline examination will begin July 30. Students will be allowed two hours to write the papers—10am to 12 noon. However, extra 15 minutes will be allowed for mathematics," a BSE official said, adding with the new marks, students will not face any issue for taking admission into Plus II courses.

Notably, the state government had to cancel this year's matriculation examination owing to the pandemic. The students, on the other hand, were given marks on the basis of an alternative assessment method by the BSE.

Her 3-year-old son too was the target

A handwritten suicide note seized by the police from the crime scene revealed about accused Jagannath Pradhan's evil design to kill the deceased's innocent child too.

The accused has mentioned in the suicide note about killing both Priyanka and her three-year-old son.

Fortunately, the child was saved as he was playing in the landowner's house upstairs when Pradhan executed the preplanned murder of Priyanka.

The Commissionerate Police said, "A note which was written by accused Jagannath Pradhan has also been seized from the spot which seems to have been prepared much before the murder as he has



The accused at Capital Hospital

Later, Pradhan sent an image of murdered Priyanka to Rakesh.

One of the locals revealed that they had seen the couple standing outside their home along with their

child around 9am. Rakesh was leaving for his office then. The person saw PCR vans and police vans parked outside their residence a few hours later. The locals later came to know about the murder.

A neighbour, who is a colleague of Rakesh, informed the media that the couple had no past discord.

Meanwhile, some others claimed to have seen Pradhan coming to Rakesh's house during his absence.

The deceased's father-in-law, who was crestfallen after the incident, informed **Orissa POST** that he had no knowledge about the accused and why at all the man killed his daughter-in-law. He also thanked God for saving his grandson's life from the killer. He demanded capital punishment for the accused, who has ruined his son's family.

TURN OF EVENTS

9:30am Priyanka's husband Rakesh leaves for office	11:00am Rakesh receives a WhatsApp video call from an unknown number
11:15am He receives a photo of his wife with blood stains on her head	11:30am The landowner and his son break open the door of Rakesh's residence and find Priyanka lying in a pool of blood
12:00pm Police control room receives a call informing about the murder	12:30pm Police reach the crime spot and rush an injured Pradhan to hospital
2:30pm Scientific team reaches the spot to collect fingerprint and other evidence	3:00 pm Police record the statement of accused at Capital Hospital
5:30pm Body of Priyanka was sent to Capital Hospital for postmortem	

Free food grains for 3.24 crore under PMGKAY

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 5: In view of Covid-19 situation, the Centre has decided to provide free food grains to 3.24 crore people of Odisha under the Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Anna Yojana—IV (PMGKAY-IV).

5 kg of food grains per person per month will be provided to all eligible beneficiaries over and above regular monthly entitlements under NFSA

Speaking to reporters here Monday, Food Corporation of India (FCI), Odisha region general manager Nishith Kumar Pradhan said food grains at a scale of 5 kg per person per month will be provided to all the eligible beneficiaries over and above the regular monthly entitlements under the National Food Security Act (NFSA). The food grains will be distributed for five months from July to November 2021, he said. The Centre will spend ₹39 per kg for rice and ₹28 per kg for wheat. In total, food grains to the tune of ₹3,044 crore will be distributed in the state, said the FCI official. Pradhan further said that lifting of food grains under the scheme has already been started in Odisha. Approximately 1.08 lakh tonne wheat and 7.03 lakh tonne rice have been allotted for the state under the scheme. The Odisha State Civil Supplies Corporation (OSCS) Ltd has been asked to lift the food grains from the Central pool and FCI depots by October 31, 2021, he added. Under PMGKAY-III, which was announced by the Centre for two months during May-June 2021, 43,000 tonne wheat and 2.82 lakh tonne rice was allotted for Odisha. The entire cost of the food grains was about ₹1,220 crore.

Cong urges people not to buy fuel, LPG July 15 ₹1,000Cr scam in rural housing scheme: BJP

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 5: Upping the ante against BJP-led Central government, the Odisha Pradesh Congress Committee (PCC) has decided to launch a statewide agitation from July 7 to 17 in protest against the hike in prices of petrol, diesel and cooking gas. The party appealed to the people of the state not to buy petrol, diesel and cooking gas for one day - July 15 - as a mark of protest.

Speaking to reporters, OPCC president Niranjan Patnaik said, "The Covid-19 pandemic has broken the backbone of the people. During this pandemic, fuel prices have increased manifold which has hit the common man hard. Oil prices have also crossed ₹100-mark in the state."

Due to fuel price hike, the prices of essential commodities have also



skyrocketed, Patnaik said.

He said in July 2013, during the UPA regime, the price of petrol per litre was ₹74.24 and diesel at ₹67.57 while the price of crude oil per barrel was \$102.92. Although the crude oil price per barrel was now \$75 the prices of oil and cooking gas had gone up due to the anti-people policy of both the state and the Union governments, the Congress leader said.

Therefore, the party activists would launch a protest in front of all block offices July 7 while demon-

stration will be organised before all district headquarters July 9, he said.

Patnaik appealed to all the people of the state not to buy petrol and diesel and cooking gas July 15 as a mark of protest. On July 17, a signature campaign will be launched in front of all petrol pumps against the unprecedented hike in oil prices.

The party during the agitation period would also protest against the mismanagement in paddy procurement, he said.

The Congress activists would move from door to door in a month-long campaign to apprise the people about the price hike, and the anti-people policy of both the Union and state governments, the Congress leader said.

The party, he said, would interact with the family members of people infected or died due to coronavirus and submit a report to the AICC.

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 5: Alleging gross irregularities involving ₹1,000 crore in the allotment of houses under Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (PMAY), the state unit of BJP Monday said it will launch statewide protests for three days beginning July 7.

Holding a presser here, state BJP president Samir Mohanty said the irregularities have come to the fore after a Central team investigated the implementation of PMAY in nine blocks of five districts.

He alleged that PMAY houses were allotted to ineligible beneficiaries in Tangi area of Khurda district, while funds under the scheme have been granted to the people in Niali block for construction of cow shed. It is a massive scam to the tune of ₹1,000 crore, he claimed.



Mohanty further said that entitlements have been forwarded to the bank accounts of 98,562 beneficiaries by the BDOs concerned through manual override in a soft database.

Most of the houses are constructed with substandard materials with no windows, doors and toilets, he further alleged.

Ironically, no work order has been issued for construction of pucca houses in nine districts. Only four houses were allocated

Open Aawaas+ app window for a month, Naveen urges PM

PNN/AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, July 5: Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik Monday requested Prime Minister Narendra Modi to open the window of Aawaas+ mobile app for one month to migrate the data of PMAY-Gramin.

In a letter to the Prime Minister, Patnaik said he, in December last year, had requested to include about 6 lakh identified eligible households of the districts not affected by Cyclone Fani, under the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana-Grameen (PMAY-G).

However, the Ministry of Rural Development had opened Aawaas+ window only for the 14 Fani-affected districts for a period of one month, he said.

"The process of identification could not be taken up in the remaining 16 districts not affected by cyclone Fani. These are predominantly tribal dominated districts and cover all the KBK areas,"

The Ministry of Rural Development had opened Aawaas+ window only for the 14 Fani-affected districts for a period of one month

The process of identification of beneficiaries could not be taken up in the remaining 16 districts not affected by cyclone Fani



Patnaik said in his letter.

He said the state has identified the left-out eligible households in these districts through a state-developed rural housing portal observing a procedure similar to Aawaas+.

In this backdrop, the Chief Minister requested the PM to instruct the Ministry of Rural Development to open the window of Aawaas+ mobile app for the entire state for a period of one month to migrate the data of identified el-

igible households to Aawaas+. This will be a pragmatic step towards achieving the objective of 'Safe housing for all', he added.

Patnaik thanked the Prime Minister for allotting 8.17 lakh target for Odisha under PMAY. This will provide shelter security to the Fani-affected families, he said.

Extremely severe cyclone Fani had hit Odisha at a wind speed of about 200 kmph May 3, 2019 and devastated over 20,000 villages in 14 coastal districts of Odisha.

The BJP alleged that PMAY houses were allotted to ineligible beneficiaries in Tangi area of Khurda district

leaders are making false statements to encourage their party workers, who are in distress following BJP's defeat in West Bengal.

On one hand, the BJP leaders are making such allegations while on the other, the Centre awarded the state government for its performance in executing rural housing schemes, he said.

The saffron party leaders are making unsuccessful attempts to defame BJD government by leveling such false allegations, Mohanty said, adding, "People of Odisha will never forgive the BJP for this."

ODISHA REGISTERS 52 FRESH COVID-19 FATALITIES AND 2,803 CASES IN A DAY

State records biggest 1-day nCoV deaths

AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, July 5: Odisha Monday registered 52 Covid-19 fatalities, the highest-ever in a single day, pushing the toll to 4,248, while 2,803 new cases raised the tally to 9,24,699, a Health department official said.

Nine fatalities were reported from Khurda district, of which state capital Bhubaneswar is a part, five each from Ganjam, Kalahandi and Puri, four from Kendrapara and two each from Kandhamal and Mayurbhanj. One person each succumbed to the infection in Bhadrak, Boudh, Dhenkanal, Jharsuguda, Keonjhar, Nayagarh, Nuapada and Sambalpur.

Taking to Twitter, the health department said, "Regret to inform the demise of fifty two Covid positive patients while under treatment in hospitals."

This apart, 53 other Covid-19 patients in the state have also died due to comorbidities.

As many as 8,90,778 patients have recovered in the coastal state,



including 3,358 Sunday

Of the 2,803 new cases, 1,597 were recorded in quarantine centres, and the rest detected during contact tracing, the official said.

The state's overall positivity rate stands at 6.54 per cent, he said.

Khurda registered the maximum number of new cases at 475, followed by Cuttack at 441, Mayurbhanj at 193, Balasore at 155, Puri at 154.

Odisha currently has 29,620 active cases.

Over 1.41 crore samples have been tested for Covid-19 thus far, including 74,740 Sunday.

Meanwhile, the state government, apprehending the arrival of the third wave of the pandemic, has assigned additional responsibility of the Women and Child Development department to senior officer P K Meherda, who has been serving as the secretary to the Governor. Meherda has worked for the Health and Family Welfare department in the past.

NK Das, Odisha's Health minister, asserted that the state is well-prepared to face the challenges of the possible third wave. He said the department has already chalked out a Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) and shared it with district collectors and municipal commissioners.

Health experts have suggested that the third wave might pose a bigger threat to children, and measures are being taken accordingly to combat any such situation, he said.

All district headquarters hospitals and sub-divisional hospitals have been directed to reserve at least 10 beds for isolating the suspected cases, the minister explained. Similar steps will also be taken in community health centres, he said.

"Apart from that, additional beds, ICU facilities, paediatric intensive care units (PICU) and special newborn care units (SNCU) are being set up at government-run health centres. The state has also decided to have a designated paediatric wing in the existing Covid-19 hospitals," Das added.



Youths enjoy a boat ride at Silver City Boat Club in Cuttack as the facility reopens Monday after remaining out of the bounds for public owing to the pandemic

OSPCPCR demands admission of EWS children in pvt schools

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 5: The Odisha State Commission for Protection of Child Rights (OS-PCR), in its letter to School and Mass Education Department Principal Secretary Satyabrata Sahu, demanded admission of children from socio economic weaker groups in private educational institutions.

In the letter, OSCPCR chairperson Sandhyabati Pradhan said that the commission observed that the admission of children from socio economic weaker section under the 25 per cent reservation in the entry class of private educational institutions has not been taken seriously.

Pradhan said that as per report, the government had opened a dedicated portal 'RTE Paradarshi' for the admission of underprivileged students to private schools.

Apparently, this move has only widened the gap with only around 5,000 students registering for admission so far which is a little over 12 per cent of the enrolment achieved in the last academic session.

Many suggested that the main reason behind this situation is the lack of awareness on the online process and access to internet, computers and mobile phones among the poor families.

A complete absence of government initiative to identify such students and ensure their registration also compounded the problem. The registrations ended on June 30.

All staff to attend colleges, varsities from today

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 5: The Higher Education department Monday directed all the teaching and non-teaching staffers to attend colleges and universities from July 6, declaring the 50 per cent roster attendance system withdrawn with immediate effect.

In a letter to all the vice chancellors and principals, Higher Education department Principal Secretary Saswat Mishra said that the Covid-19 situation in the state has relatively improved. Considering the dangerous situation in mid-April this year, the department had introduced the 50 per cent roster attendance system April 19. Due to reduced attendance of employees for almost two and half months, a lot of important work now remains unattended.

The Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) have to conduct UG/PG final semester/final year examinations in online mode and publish results at the earliest so that career of students is not affected. This apart, the examinations of non-final year students need to be conducted consecutively



to ensure that these students do not suffer.

Under such circumstances, the 50 per cent roster attendance system is withdrawn and all teaching and non-teaching staffers have to attend the duty on all working days from July 6, 2021.

However, all Covid-19 protocols such as face masks, hand sanitisation and social distancing must be strictly followed by universities and colleges.

The letter also mentioned that the

GA and PG department instruction regarding closure of government offices on Saturdays is not applicable to HEIs. However, the institutions will be closed on Saturdays provided there is Covid-19 related weekend shutdown declared in respective districts/towns/cities.

Earlier, June 18, Higher Education Minister Arun Sahoo had said that the UG and PG final year examinations in the state would be held online ei-

The GA and PG department's instruction regarding closure of government offices on Saturdays is not applicable to HEIs

However, the institutions will be closed on Saturdays provided there is Covid-19 related weekend shutdown declared in respective districts/towns/cities

All Covid-19 protocols such as face masks, hand sanitisation and social distancing must be strictly followed by universities and colleges

ther by July or August.

The minister had said this after a virtual meeting with vice-chancellors of universities. "The universities concerned will decide the dates on which they will conduct the examinations. The universities and autonomous colleges will fix their dates for online exams. Students can appear for the examinations from home. Those who don't have the required facility at their homes can appear for their examinations from nearby degree colleges," the minister had said.

BMC authorities worried over rising dengue cases

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 5: Civic and health authorities of the state capital are in a state of bother as about 17 cases of Dengue have been reported from different parts of the city.

As per sources, about six new cases of Dengue were reported from Sailashree Vihar and Kalpana, Monday. With this, the total cases have reached 17 within a span of 10 days with about 12 of these being reported from slums of Chandrasekharpur and Niladri Vihar.

The Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC) sent a team of entomology experts and senior officials of the Health and Family Welfare (H&FW) Department, Monday, to visit the affected areas. The team held discussions with community members and found that lack of awareness regarding the disease was prevalent among people.

"We observed that mosquito larvae were found in some of the water pots meant for cattle. Dengue mosquitoes, Aedes Aegypti, lay their eggs in unclean water which are found in discarded paper cups, coconut shells, tyres, and other such items. However, unless the diagnosis of the affected people is done thoroughly, one cannot say that the people are suffering from Dengue," an expert from the team commented.

Health experts also suggested that the affected people should first

THE BHUBANESWAR MUNICIPAL CORPORATION (BMC) SENT A TEAM OF ENTOMOLOGY EXPERTS AND SENIOR OFFICIALS OF THE HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (H&FW) DEPARTMENT, MONDAY, TO VISIT THE AFFECTED AREAS

THE TEAM HELD DISCUSSIONS WITH COMMUNITY MEMBERS AND FOUND THAT LACK OF AWARENESS REGARDING THE DISEASE WAS PREVALENT AMONG PEOPLE

go through the Covid tests and then test for dengue. For ensuring the presence of Dengue, the ELISA tests would be done for all suspected persons under the North Zone of BMC.

However, the slum dwellers alleged that the cleaning work is not properly carried out here. Residents of the Sitanath Nagar of Sailashree Vihar and Harekrushna Nagar of Neeladri Vihar slums alleged that the garbage has been lying in open for days and water is accumulating in various places during monsoon due to improper drainage system.

Meanwhile, BMC Commissioner Sanjay Kumar Singh directed both the BMC and H&FW officials to ensure regular visits of Health and ASHA workers, Sanitary Inspectors, Ward Officer and Community Organisers and conduct awareness drives.

Plantation drive in Capital city

Bhubaneswar: Center for Voluntary Service, Bhubaneswar will hold a 'Plantation Programme' today, marking its contribution to the ongoing nationwide tree-planting festival Vana Mahotsav. The event will be held at Government High School, VSS Nagar at 09.00 AM. Padmashree Dr. Dillip Tirkey will honor the event as the chief guest.

OSSC reschedules recruitment exams

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 5: The Odisha Staff Selection Commission Monday rescheduled the examinations to be conducted during the month of July.

Schedules are subject to change depending on Covid-19 situation. The candidates are advised to be in

constant touch with the commission's website www.oss.gov.in to know the further updates.

As per the new schedule calendar of OSSC, the skill test for the posts of Combine Auditor, Junior Librarian, and Assistant Librarian is scheduled to be held July 18.

Skill test for the posts of

RECORD 4L DOSES IN VAX DRIVE

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 5: The state government Monday created a new record in the ongoing vaccination programme with inoculating over 4 lakh doses on a single day.

A total of 4,02,434 doses were administered at 1,735 centres across the state Monday. The previous record was 3.32 lakh doses given June 21.

"Odisha reached a new high in Covid-19 vaccination today by vaccinating over 4 lakh persons in a single day," Health and Family Welfare department said in a tweet.

According to official sources, a total of 1,99,068 people in the age group of 18-44 years have received first dose Monday while 2,279 in the same age group got the second jab.

Similarly, 38,518 beneficiaries belonging to 45-plus age group got the first jab and 1,61,692 took the second dose across the state. With this, a total of 1,24,91,857 doses have so far been administered in the state.

JOB CRY



Members of ICT School Coordinators' Association stage a sit in near the Cuttack Collector's office to press for realisation of their demands, including reinstatement of computer teachers, Monday

SC seeks state's reply on Dara Sena chief's plea

POST NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi, July 5: The Supreme Court Monday directed the Odisha government to file its response to a petition filed by Mukesh Jain, national chairman of Dharma Rakshak Shri Dara Sena, seeking quashing of cases registered against him and also clubbing of all FIRs.

A two-judge bench of the apex court comprising Justices AM Khanwilkar and Sanjiv Khanna granted a week's time to the state government to file a reply affidavit.

"One week's time to file reply affidavit, as prayed by the learned counsel for the state of Orissa, is granted," the court ruled.

During the hearing, the counsel appearing for the state government, Shibshish Misra, prayed the court to grant a week's time to file the reply. The state counsel



also apprised the court about the prayers of the petitioner.

The bench made oral observation that they can mould the reliefs and asked the state government to file the reply affidavit.

Earlier, Jain was granted bail by the Orissa High Court in April on the grounds of procedural lapses and length of his detention. Jain was arrested by the state CID-Crime Branch from New Delhi in

Mukesh Jain, national chairman of Dharma Rakshak Shri Dara Sena, was arrested from New Delhi in July last year for allegedly opposing SC order over suspension of Rath Yatra

Jain was accused of circulating WhatsApp messages casting aspersions on the impartiality of judges of the Supreme Court especially the Chief Justice of India

July last year for allegedly opposing Supreme Court order over suspension of Rath Yatra in Puri.

He has been accused of circulating WhatsApp messages casting aspersions on the impartiality of judges of the Supreme Court especially the Chief Justice of India (CJI) and provoking his like-minded people to mobilise and congregate in front of the residence of the CJI to assault him physically.

FOR CLASSIFIED ADVERTISEMENTS CONTACT OUR BOOKING STATIONS

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

After Andhra, now Ch'garh tries to encroach upon Odisha's land

Villagers alleged that Chhattisgarh has constructed a road in Akarpali village to loot minerals and forest produce available in the area



POST NEWS NETWORK

Malkangiri, July 5: Close on the heels of Andhra Pradesh's desperate bid to grab land in Kotia panchayat of Koraput district, now another neighbouring state Chhattisgarh is making similar efforts to encroach land in Malkangiri district, a report said.

These bordering states have cast their evil eyes on the fringe areas of Odisha bordering their state and are making all out efforts to grab land there, the report said. Currently, neighbouring Chhattisgarh has cast its evil eyes on the fringe areas of Malkangiri district.

The Chhattisgarh government is alleged to have taken possession of Akarpali village under Matapaka panchayat of Sadar block and constructed a road in the village.

However, it is surprising that the district administration is still unaware of the development.

Reports said that Akarpali, a revenue village in Malkangiri, is situated on beside Titibiri-Matapaka main road and is at a distance of just 1 km from the Sukma district of Chhattisgarh.

The Mangipali-Darba village in Sukma district of Chhattisgarh is just 1 km away from Akarpali and is the borderline between the two states. The border between the two

The Chhattisgarh government is alleged to have taken possession of Akarpali village under Matapaka panchayat of Sadar block and constructed a road in the village.

THE DISTRICT ADMINISTRATION IS STILL UNAWARE OF THE DEVELOPMENT

states here is demarcated by constructing stone pillars at the site between Akarpali and Mangipali-Darba villages.

Although the stone pillars still remain, the entire area has taken the form of a jungle as neither the authorities from Odisha nor Chhattisgarh have taken care to clear the area of the unwanted vegetation that has grown over the years.

Rama Kurami, 90, a villager of Mangipali-Darba village in Chhattisgarh, said he has been seeing the pillars since his childhood which have been serving as the borderline between Odisha and Chhattisgarh.

He confirmed that the local administration has trespassed into Odisha and constructed a road that leads to Akarpali village in

Malkangiri district. The area where the road has been constructed is within Odisha border, while the forest land of Akarpali village also lies in the same area.

Binayak Madkani, sarpanch of Matapaka panchayat, Akarpali village head Dula Madkani, ward member Aita Padiami and villagers Adma Kartami and Irma Madkani said that the roads in Akarpali village are in bad shape and the villagers there depend on the Sukma market for their daily provisions as well as sale of forest produce since it is closer to their village.

They admitted that the area where Chhattisgarh has constructed the road is in Akarpali village of Odisha. They also claimed that the forest, forest lands and their recorded lands all are located close to the area where Chhattisgarh has constructed the road.

Locals alleged that this has happened as the revenue officials of both the states have failed in their duty to repair the pillars once every two years by clearing the vegetation overgrowth.

Taking advantage of such inactivity of the Malkangiri revenue officials, Chhattisgarh government has constructed a road that leads to Akarpali village. The villagers further alleged that the neighbouring state has constructed the road to loot minerals and forest produce available in the area.

When contacted, Gunanidhi Nayak, Malkangiri tehsildar, said no villager has informed him about the development. He said he would soon visit the spot and take stock of the situation.

Ajay Kumar Pradhan, BDO, Malkangiri, said he had visited the spot last week after being apprised of the development. Pradhan added that he will submit a report to the project director of DRDA for action at his end. Subsequently, the revenue officials will visit the spot and demarcate the border and take necessary steps, he added.

AT LORD'S SERVICE



Devotees and a servitor making 'Dasamula', an herbal preparation, ahead of its administration to deities during their Anasur period at the Jagannath temple in Brahmapura of Sambalpur

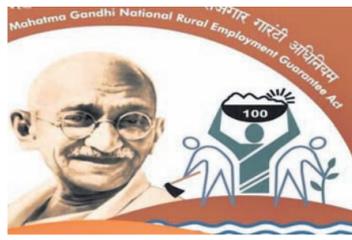
Lady teacher's hubby gets a job card under MGNREGS

POST NEWS NETWORK

Balichandrapur, July 5: Believe it or not, the husband of lady teacher in Gopalpur village under Barchana block has allegedly become the recipient of a job card issued under Centre-sponsored poverty alleviation scheme Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS), a report said.

The concerned person has received a job card bearing no-OR02-001-008-001/39591 under the rural job scheme, while funds available under various job schemes have been deposited in his bank account as wages. It is alleged that the person committed the irregularity in connivance with some panchayat officials. After reports in this regard surfaced, the incident has spread surprise and anger in the area.

The accused is even alleged to have prepared fake bills in his job



It is alleged that the person committed the irregularity in connivance with some panchayat officials

card and of other labourers and received the funds available as wages. Local residents have demanded to know as to how the accused, who is the husband of a teacher, was given a job card as a labourer under the poverty alleviation scheme.

They alleged that this could have not been possible without the involvement of panchayat officials and those involved in the implementation of the scheme. The locals have demanded a thorough

probe into the charges and stringent action against the accused person as well as those involved in the wrongdoing.

When contacted, Ajit Narayan Prasad Giri, the block development officer of Barchana block, said that it is illegal for a person to get a job card under the rural job scheme if he is the husband of a teacher. He assured to conduct a probe into the charges and take action against the accused if proven true.

Deceased teacher given Covid control room duty

POST NEWS NETWORK

Nabarangpur, July 5: In a bizarre incident, a deceased teacher has been pressed with Covid control room duty in Dabugana block here. Although it sounds strange, a letter has been issued in the name of the deceased teacher in this connection. As per the letter, he is scheduled to work from evening 6pm to night 10pm, July 28.

According to sources, a Covid control room has been set up to receive queries regarding Covid-19 on the premises of Dabugana block office. Teachers of the block have been issued order letters to be on control room duty in 4 phases from morning 7am to 1pm, 1pm to 6pm, 6pm to 10pm and from 10pm to 7am. They have been directed to stay in the control rooms, receive the phone calls from Covid-affected families, and register complaints among other things. The

Teachers in a large number, who are from other districts, are absent paying no heed to the government orders. But the ones from the locality are forced to be on the Covid duty as per the direction

Covid norms go for a toss at vax centres

POST NEWS NETWORK

Balikuda/Patrapur, July 5: Covid norms were thrown to the wind as villagers at a vaccination centre in Balikuda area of Jagatsinghpur district and in Patrapur of Ganjam district jostled with each other while standing in queues to get vaccinated, Monday.

Even as the state government as well as the Centre has been insisting that people maintain social distance and to wear masks to prevent spread of Covid pandemic, villagers were seen displaying unruly behaviour and flouting the Covid norms at the vaccination centres in Balikuda of Jagatsinghpur district and in Patrapur of Ganjam district.

The vaccination programme was carried out at Samantiapalli School in Patrapur block. It is alleged that this happened as the local administration had not made any provision to conduct the programme in an orderly and peaceful manner.

People were standing close to each other in queues without wearing masks despite availability of sufficient space in the school premises. This has sparked fear over



People queue up outside the vaccination centre at Samantiapalli School in Patrapur block

further spread of coronavirus in the area

Outside the vaccination centre at Balikuda, villagers queued up in large numbers which is nothing unusual for people waiting to receive their first dose of the vaccine. However, what has raised many eyebrows is the manner in which the villagers were standing.

They were standing so closely that there was hardly any space between them. Some even engaged in

elbowing and shoving each other, while others jumped the queue. Many were seen taking selfies while standing in a queue outside the vaccination centre in Patrapur.

The scene outside the vaccination centre resembled that of ticket counters of any stadium where people assemble hoping to get tickets to witness a cricket or football match.

However, police personnel, who were deployed outside the vaccination centre to maintain law and

The vaccination programme was carried out at Samantiapalli School in Patrapur block. It is alleged that this happened as the local administration had not made proper provision to conduct the programme

order, were seen turning a blind eye to the violation of Covid norms.

The men in uniform were seen standing as mute spectators to the unruly behaviour of people. A local intelligentsia alleged that such behaviour displayed by people defeats the whole purpose of the country's largest ever vaccination programme.

He also alleged that organising the vaccination programmes by engaging a handful of Anganwadi and ASHA workers often lead to chaos and display of unruly behaviour at the vaccination centres.

Markfed area manager suspended for venality

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar/Deogarh, July 5: Days after the Deogarh district administration engaged the state-owned Markfed to purchase groundnuts from the farmers, the senior assistant and area manager in-charge of Sambalpur was suspended from his post on charges of irregularities in procurement of oilseeds, a report said.

The suspended area manager was identified as Prasuram Panda. The action came soon after the district administration in Deogarh engaged Markfed to procure groundnuts from the farmers in Deogarh.

In the first phase, Markfed has been assigned to purchase 200 metric tonnes of groundnuts from the farmers.

Reports said that cultivation of seasonal fruits like mangoes, litchis, watermelons and oranges, paddy, vegetables and onions is the main livelihood of the farmers in the district. However, due to lack of adequate marketing facilities,

farmers fail to get the right price for their harvest and fail to earn their livelihood, thereby facing financial losses.

As a result, farmers in the district lack interest in cultivating pulses and other crops. However, the farmers, after lots of efforts, had taken up cultivation of corn and groundnut.

But they continue to remain impoverished due to lack of marketing facilities for their crops. The district administration realised this and involved Markfed in procurement of groundnuts from the farmers.

names of the teachers that are given the responsibility have been announced for the month of July by the block education department. The names have been mentioned in Letter No. 1863/21.

However, strangely enough, the name of one teacher, Medinikanta Meher, who is no more, has been mentioned there in the letter. As per information, the teacher was issued with such a letter earlier also. However, after the matter came to the fore, his name was removed immediately from the list. Teachers in a large number, who are from other districts, are staying absent paying no heed to the government orders. But the ones from the locality are forced to be on the Covid duty as per the direction.

When asked for his comment on the issue, Dabugana block education officer (BEO) Prashant Kumar Hota said that his name had been removed from the list and another teacher has been given the responsibility.

TULASI RIVER Woe of Rasalpur gram panchayat

POST NEWS NETWORK

Balasure, June 5: Flowing through Rasalpur panchayat under Sadar block limits in this district, the Tulasi river, a tributary of the Jalaka river, has bifurcated the Rasalpur panchayat.

While many schools, colleges, hospitals, banks, ration distribution centres and the panchayat office are one side of the river, hundreds of acres of farmlands including three tribal villages are situated on the opposite side. More than 70 families inhabit this tribal village, bereft of essential services like health and education.

Moreover, no MLA or MP has ever set foot in Gobindpur and Narani villages under ward No. 7 and Tulakadihar under ward No. 5 of Rasalpur gram panchayat. People residing along both sides of the river have been repeatedly writing to the Rural Development department, Irrigation department, District Collector and even to the Chief



Minister demanding construction of a bridge across the Tulasi river, but to no avail. The residents of Oladi, Bada dhanadi and Sana dhanadi, including people from Nalabahara gram panchayat have been facing a number of inconveniences in farming.

The residents of this panchayat have to cover a distance of 17 kilometres through Nalabahara to reach the district headquarters. A bridge over the river would reduce the distance to only 5 kilometres. If along with the bridge, a proper road is built from Oladi to Mirigimundi via

Gobindpur, the distance to the National Highway (NH-60) will be only 3 kilometres. Although construction of half the length of this road has already been completed, nobody seems to care about completing the rest of the road, complained the villagers.

On the other hand, most villages under this panchayat get inundated during the rainy season. On top of that, tidal water in the river enters the farmlands directly breaching the embankment. Due to tidal ingress, hundreds of acres of farmlands are rendered unfit for cultivation for years.

As a result of the efforts of the late MLA Madanmohan Dutta, Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY) was about to see the light of the day in this region, but a precious little has been done after his demise. After complaints were made before the serving MLA of this region, Swarup Kumar Das, upped his efforts to take necessary steps in this regard.

Naib sarpanch Shrikant Pani, ward member Sunita Majhi and many villagers, including Bhagaban Nayak, Makaranda Dalai, Laxmikant Soren, Satyananda Mohanty, Murali Soren, Manmath Soren, Harekrushna Dalai, Surjayakanta Marandi, Umakanta Soren, Kata Dalai and Banshidhar Dalai have demanded the construction of an all-weather bridge over the Tulasi river and a road connecting Oladi with the NH-60 via Gobindpur for the convenience of the residents of ten moujas along with Manudiha, Kushudiha, Oladi, Bada Dhanadi, Sana Dhanadi in the coming days.

ORISSA HYDRO POWER CORPORATION LTD.
O/O THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER, MURAN DAM DIVISION
UPPER INDRAVATI HYDRO ELECTRIC PROJECT
AT/P.O. - KHATIGUDA, DIST. - NABARANGPUR, ODISHA, PIN - 764085
NOTICE INVITATION FOR BIDS-(NIFB)
Tel. No. 06858 224351, E-mail - eemurandamdivision@gmail.com
Date.02.07.2021

e-Procurement Notice
No. CAD-556 Bid Identification No. EEMDD.-15/2021-22

Sl. No.	Bid Identification No.	Name of Work	Value of Works (in Rs.)	Cost of Bid Document including GST @ 18% (in Rs.) Non-refundable	Bid Security (EMD) in Rs.	Period of Completion	Last date & time of Online Receipt of Bids	Class of Contractor
1	EEMDD/15/21-22 (1/3)	Roof treatment of valve House main building at Mukhiguda, providing & laying tar-felt (BH) in two layers, with 10 Years Warranty, UIHEP, Khatiguda.	25,45,357/- (Excluding GST)	Rs.6000 + GST@18% Rs.1080 = Rs.7080	25500/-	Six Calendar Months	Date: 28.07.2021 upto 5.00 P.M.	C & B Class Contractors
2	EEMDD/15/21-22 (2/3)	Replacing damaged glass bricks of Valve House at Mukhiguda providing with 5mm +4mm laminated toughen glass with fitting and fixing by aluminium angle and channel of Main building of valve house UIHEP, Khatiguda.	25,47,579/- (Excluding GST)	Rs.6000 + GST@18% Rs.1080 = Rs.7080	25500/-	Six Calendar Months	Date: 28.07.2021 upto 5.00 P.M.	C & B Class Contractors
3	EEMDD/15/21-22 (3/3)	Improvement to Road from Khatiguda to Muran Dam site from RD. 15.415 Km to RD.20.476 Km.	47,78,009/- (Excluding GST)	Rs.6000 + GST@18% Rs.1080 = Rs.7080	47,800/-	Eight Calendar Months	Date: 28.07.2021 upto 5.00 P.M.	B & A Class Contractors

The Bid documents will be available in the Govt. website <http://www.tendersorissa.gov.in> & in the OHPC Website: www.ohpcitd.com from 11.00 AM of dt. 13.07.2021 to 28.07.2021 up to 5.00 P.M. The details of the Tender Documents terms and conditions please refer our Website <http://www.tendersorissa.gov.in> & www.ohpcitd.com.
OIPR-32230/11/0001/2122 EXECUTIVE ENGINEER, MURAN DAM DIVISION

FOCUS SOCIETY

IDENTITY & TOLERANCE



A nation's material progress depends not just on a solid foundation of human and physical capital, but more crucially also on trust capital

It was conducted by local interviews in 17 different languages and covers nearly all the Indian states and union territories. It is based on statistically sound sampling techniques.

The Pew Research Centre is an organisation which is 30 years old, and conducts public opinion polls, demographic research and does content analysis and other data-driven social science research. So, its survey findings are reasonably robust. One of the key findings of this survey is that Indians value religious tolerance and accept all faiths as belonging to India. About 85 per cent of Hindus and 78 per cent of Muslims believe that respecting all religions is important to being truly Indian. Importantly, an overwhelming percentage of the respondents (80 per cent for Hindus, and 79 per cent for Muslims) believe that respecting other religions is a very important part of their own religious identity. Presumably this is the influence of scriptural injunctions, and teachings of saints and sages over the ages of respecting and accepting all religions as true. As per the survey findings, 97 per cent of all Indians believe in God, though they may differ about the nature of God.

An interesting finding is that religious conversion is rare. This finding is based on the question,

which asked the respondents whether they were raised as something else and then acquired a new identity that is by conversion. The percentage of Hindus or Muslims who have converted is minuscule. It is Christians who had the maximum gain, i.e. there were 0.4 per cent respondents who claimed that they had changed their faith to Christianity. Even that number is small. This finding on the rarity of conversions is important in light of the spate of anti-conversion laws and prohibition against interfaith marriages that have been passed recently by several state governments. The Pew survey also found that most Indians were against interfaith marriages. This is peculiar when considering the Indian notion of syncretic co-existence, respect for other religions, and yet maintaining strictly segregated identities. For ages, Indians have demonstrated the capacity to hold strong and multiple identities based on religion, language, region and ethnicity, simultaneously. The Pew finding simply confirms this trait.

Another interesting finding is that for Hindus, national identity, religion and language are closely connected. This link between Hindu identity and nationalism is particularly strong in the north (69 per cent) and central India (83 per

cent) and weaker in the south (42 per cent). Thus, for a majority of Hindus, national identity goes hand-in-hand with politics. This fact perhaps explains the electoral and voting patterns of the last two national elections, which exploited the theme of Hindi, Hindu and Hindutva. And yet remarkably both Hindus and Muslims overwhelmingly said that they were proud to be Indian. For Muslims this was 95 per cent of the respondents.

The research report based on the Pew survey is rich in insight since it also covers many other aspects such as dietary habits, perception of personal laws and memories of partition. Importantly, it demolishes certain myths that may have emerged, thanks to amplification of certain narratives in the mainstream media and social media. This is not to deny that there are fault-lines in Indian society along religion, caste and linguistic identities. There is now also a palpable north-south divide, aggravated by issues surrounding federalism.

A nation's material progress depends not just on a solid foundation of human and physical capital, but more crucially also on trust capital. By 2050, India will have the highest number of Hindus and Muslims in the world. It will remain, as is now, one of the most incredibly diverse nations measured along dimensions of religion and other aspects of identity. Thus, as was affirmed by Swami Vivekananda more than a century ago, or by saints and sages all along, the essential maxim to practice is the recognition of unity and harmony of all religions. The latest survey indicates that such conviction is ingrained in Indians, and it is for us to reinforce, and harness that conviction, and not magnify or exploit the fault-lines.

The writer is an economist and Senior Fellow, Takshashila Institution.
©THE BILLION PRESS



Ajit Ranade

FOR AGES, INDIANS HAVE DEMONSTRATED THE CAPACITY TO HOLD STRONG AND MULTIPLE IDENTITIES BASED ON RELIGION, LANGUAGE, REGION AND ETHNICITY, SIMULTANEOUSLY

The first Parliament of the World's Religions was held in Chicago between September 11 and 27, 1893. Swami Vivekananda attended the event as a representative of Hinduism. His first speech lasted for barely three or four minutes, and was delivered on the first day itself, sometime in the afternoon. That speech began with the booming words, "Sisters and brothers of America!" to which he got a standing ovation and a thunderous applause which lasted for two minutes, from a crowd of nearly seven thousand. Press reports of the conference corroborate this phenomenal response. It is not clear, why a monk clad in an unfamiliar robe, from a distant alien land, speaking in a different accent, had such a remarkable effect with just his opening salutation. Much scholarly analysis is available on this perplexing question. His short speech was on the essential unity and harmony of religions. He said, "I am proud to belong to a religion which has taught the world both tolerance and universal acceptance. We believe not only in universal toleration, but we accept all religions as true." Not just tolerance, but acceptance. Treating different faiths as equally valid. In his closing lines he said, "I fervently hope that the bell that tolled this morning in honour of this convention may be the death-knell of all fanaticism..." The great reception that the Swami received was undoubtedly because of his spellbinding presence and personality, but perhaps also because the audience was parched and thirsty for a message of unity and harmony.

The great Swami's historic speech and life's message are worth recounting in light of the latest survey report from the Pew Research Centre of America. The report is based on a face-to-face survey of nearly 30,000 Indian adults conducted between late 2019 and early 2020. The survey takes a look at religious identity, nationalism and tolerance in Indian so-

SPECTRUM REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH

Preserving women's bodily autonomy

By the age of 24, Maya Bohara had borne four children, and she and her husband decided that their family was large enough. For nine years thereafter, despite living in a poor region of Nepal, she could rely on a local health clinic for injectable contraceptives.

But then came Covid-19, which disrupted medical supply chains and health budgets around the world. By June 2020, Maya's clinic was out of the contraceptive she had been using; and by February 2021, her fifth child was born. Although the new baby is deeply loved, a vulnerable family has now been put in an even more precarious position. They are hardly alone. For women around the world, one of the most serious costs of the pandemic – beyond the direct toll in lives and livelihoods – has been loss of reproductive choice. These are lifetime costs that might be borne even by generations to come.

This April, the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), the UN sexual and reproductive health agency, published *My Body Is My Own*, a groundbreaking edition of our annual State of World Population report. In it, we trace the link between sexual and reproductive health and bodily autonomy, a principle that is absolutely fundamental to women's self-determination and empowerment. Only when women have control over their bodies can they benefit from

rights and opportunities in all other areas of their lives, whether that means going to school, caring for their family, starting a business, or leading a country.

By the same token, any loss of bodily autonomy quickly multiplies. According to recent estimates by UNFPA and Avenir Health, an estimated 12 million women in 115 low and middle income countries faced disruptions in family-planning services during the first year of the pandemic, leading to around 1.4 million unintended pregnancies. Such outcomes – a cause of increased maternal deaths and unsafe abortions – are one of the starkest manifestations of lost bodily autonomy.

If there is one bright spot in these figures, it is that the most severe disruptions to family planning occurred early in the pandemic and were for the most part short-lived. For its part, UNFPA stepped in to provide contraceptives and other reproductive-health supplies to countries in need.

Globally, the percentage of countries reporting pandemic-related disruptions to family-planning and contraception services has fallen from 66 per cent in 2020 to 44 per cent in 2021. Concerted efforts by health officials, governments, and donors have greatly mitigated a catastrophe for women. In some cases, solutions were implemented so quickly that women

do not even know that their sexual and reproductive health rights were at risk.

In a way, that is as it should be. The 1994 International Conference on Population and Development established a common agenda for sexual and reproductive health. And at a summit in Nairobi 25 years later, governments, businesses, youth and women's activists, philanthropies, and others made bold commitments to end family-planning shortfalls, preventable maternal deaths, and gender-based violence and other harmful practices against women and girls.

This international support has enabled UNFPA to operate sexual- and reproductive-health programmes in more than 150 countries. Since 2008, medicines and contraceptives delivered through our Supplies Partnership have saved countless lives and prevented almost 90 million unintended pregnancies.

But we cannot be complacent. These gains are fragile, and funding continues to be threatened by the pandemic's economic fallout. Many countries have altered their spending and service priorities; some of the UNFPA's own programmes have been affected by major spending cuts in the United Kingdom – one of the organisation's oldest and strongest partners.

Under these conditions, we must

fight even harder to ensure that sexual and reproductive health remains a top priority. Failing that, it is not just individual women who will suffer. Entire countries will experience increased levels of socioeconomic vulnerability and inequality, making it even harder to recover from the current crisis, let alone build resilience against future natural disasters, pandemics, and climate change.

To reduce the risk to sexual and reproductive health, a top priority should be to scale up investments in these services by making them an integral part of national recovery plans. In countries with limited fiscal space, the international community must lend more support through debt relief so that governments do not have to divert funds from health care to pay off creditors.

A second priority is to ensure that services actually reach all women and girls. This requires overcoming complex barriers related to location, education, age, and other factors that can impede access to care.

All women have the right to live in safety, with easy access to the medicines that they need to make empowered, autonomous decisions about their own bodies and their lives.

The writer is Executive Director of the United Nations Population Fund.
©PROJECT SYNDICATE

To love is not to possess, but to give oneself.

THE MOTHER



Rafale Riddle

It reflects poorly on the Indian government that it is not prepared to reopen the case of alleged corruption in the controversial Rafale fighter aircraft deal following fresh revelations. In the meanwhile, France has commenced an investigation into the case and a judge has been appointed to lead an investigation into the alleged graft and favouritism in the 7.8 billion Euro sale to India of 36 fighter aircraft. On the contrary, a puerile and preposterous argument has been put forward by a BJP national spokesman contending why the government should order a probe simply because the French government has done so. It is precisely for this reason that the serious allegation of blatant corruption involving men in the highest offices for one of the country's biggest defence deals needs to be investigated. BJP's logic puts the Indian government's credentials for probity and transparency under a cloud. For, it tends to create the impression that the French government values integrity in public affairs and it doesn't hesitate to probe grave allegations. On the other hand, the government of India – the source of the deal that spawned the alleged corruption – is stonewalling even demands for a probe. It certainly goes to the credit of the French government that it did not shy away from investigation simply because the allegations are directed against the country's former President François Hollande whose finance and economy minister, Emmanuel Macron, is now the country's President.

A key minister of the Narendra Modi Cabinet has even tried to belittle the Opposition's demand for a probe on the ground that the Supreme Court had earlier dismissed petitions for such a probe. As is the tendency of government functionaries, the minister dished out half truths about the apex court verdict. Justice KM Joseph, one of the three judges of the bench constituted to deal with review petitions, ruled the main verdict would not impact any independent inquiry into the allegations of corruption after approval is taken under Section 17A of the Prevention of Corruption Act. But, the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) has not yet registered any FIR. It is not very difficult to understand the reasons behind the hesitation of the CBI to act in this case. The apex court once quite rightly dubbed the CBI a 'caged parrot' for working in many cases as a puppet in the government's hand. Then Chief Justice of India Ranjan Gogoi, who headed the bench, recently declined to comment on the French government's latest order on the probe. He is now a Rajya Sabha MP, made on the recommendation of the BJP soon after his retirement. His appointment had jolted people's faith in the sanctity of the constitutionally-approved separation of powers between the judiciary and the executive.

The French government has ordered the probe in the wake of a series of investigative reports published by Mediapart in April about the deal, including the role of a middleman whose disclosures India's Enforcement Directorate is reportedly aware of but has not, so far, investigated. Following the reports, the French anti-corruption NGO Sherpa filed a complaint with the tribunal of Paris, citing 'corruption,' 'influence peddling,' 'money laundering,' 'favouritism' and 'undue tax waivers' surrounding the deal. Interestingly, the former head of the French tribunal had gone against the advice of one of her staff in 2019 and dismissed an initial complaint filed by Sherpa. The reason she cited to justify her decision was "to preserve the interests of France." Besides other aspects, the criminal investigation will examine questions surrounding the actions of former French President Hollande, who was in office when the Rafale deal was signed, his economy and finance minister Macron and then defence minister, Jean-Yves Le Drian, now Macron's minister of foreign affairs. The investigation will be led by an independent judge.

It is only natural that the Opposition, Congress and the CPI-M, have once again demanded a Joint Parliamentary Committee (JPC) probe to unravel the truth about the deal. Even when the government was touting the apex court verdict dismissing the petitions for probe as vindication of its claim that there was no wrongdoing, the Opposition stated that only a JPC probe can unearth facts and that it is beyond the purview of the Supreme Court to go into various aspects, including pricing of the aircraft.

The government's argument that the Opposition with its probe demand is only playing into the hands of corporate rivalry in France is ludicrous, to say the least. The BJP spokesman could not even name one such rival. It is time the government cleared the air without delay since the Prime Minister's name has been dragged into the controversy. The fact that the Congress had made this issue its major poll plank and lost the elections in 2019, as has been stated by a Union minister, is no proof that the allegations are unfounded.

WISDOM CORNER

- Courage is knowing what not to fear. **PLATO**
- We must build dikes of courage to hold back the flood of fear. **MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.**
- Courage is contagious. When a brave man takes a stand, the spines of others are often stiffened. **BILLY GRAHAM**

WORDSWORTH

Obnubilate

This is as high-flown a Latinate word as the clouds it figuratively evokes (it comes from nubes, a cloud). It means to darken, dim, cloud over, or obscure. It's not a word to be wasted on everyday conversation, but on its rare outings seems to be the special province of the more ponderous political speeches and newspaper editorials. Nineteenth-century reviewers used it to suggest that a writer had been less than transparently clear in his exposition, as here in a squib in *The Princeton review* in 1832 about a book by Samuel Taylor Coleridge: "There is here fine criticism, classic wit, poetic dreaming, and some grains of sound doctrine, but so obnubilated with the fumes of German metaphysics, that we become giddy, and lose all power of comprehension". And here it appears as an adjective in a put-down of Walt Whitman in the *Southern Literary Messenger* in 1860: "Here is the sample of his obnubilated, incoherent, convulsive, flub-drub". They don't write criticism like that any more (and they don't spell that last word that way, either, but as flubdub). Some modern writers have found it useful to suggest the ponderous wordsmithery of previous generations. Neal Stephenson, for example, in his novel *Quicksilver* set in the seventeenth century: This was a wonder all by itself, with its ropewalks – skinny buildings a third of a mile long – windmills grinding lead and boring gun-barrels, a steam-house, perpetually obnubilated, for bending wood, dozens of smoking and clanging smithies including two mighty ones where anchors were made ... And Patrick O'Brian had Dr Maturin say it in *The Mauritius Command*: "It is the pity of the world, Dr McAdam, to see a man of your parts obnubilate his mind with the juice of the grape."

LOL

Installing a carpet

A carpet layer had just finished installing a carpet for a lady. He stepped out for a smoke, only to realise he'd lost his cigarettes. In the middle of the room, under the carpet, was a bump. "No sense pulling up the entire floor for one pack of smokes," he said to himself. He



proceeded to get out his hammer and flattened the hump. As he was cleaning up, the lady came in. "Here," she said, handing him his pack of cigarettes. "I found them in the hallway." "Now," she said, "if only I could find my parakeet."

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

Monumental aircraft

Sir, It is heartening and satisfying to learn that the Dakota aircraft on which the architect of modern Odisha Biju Patnaik flew to Java to rescue then Prime Minister of Indonesia Sultan Shahjirir from the clutches of enemy states on the instructions of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru in 1947 is being brought back to the state. Biju's Dakota aircraft is a symbol of the gallantry spirit and supreme sacrifice of Odias. Preserving this monumental aircraft in the Biju Patnaik International Airport in Bhubaneswar will make it a perennial tourist attraction and a pilgrimage for the youths of Odisha for whom Biju's affection was immeasurable. It will add to the richness of our Smart City. This is a welcome step by the state government.

Prabhudutt Dash, BHUBANESWAR

Futile exercise

Sir, There is widespread speculation about a Union Cabinet reshuffle soon. However, apart from its political ramifications, this exercise is not likely to result in any significant improvement in the governance with the shots being continued to be called only by the one and a half team in almost all the matters, the Council of Ministers having been rendered almost redundant in such a scenario.

Bhaskar Roy, NEW DELHI

Unique feat

Sir, A Telugu woman brought up in Houston will become the second India-born woman to fly into space after Kalpana Chawla. Sirsha Bandla will be one of the six space travellers aboard the VSS Unity of Virgin Galactic. It is scheduled to take off from New Mexico alongside the founder of Virgin Galactic, Richard Branson. Virgin Galactic is launching its test spaceflight July 11. Sirsha is strongly connected to her roots in Andhra Pradesh but her ambition of flying is now taking her to the skies. Indian-origin women continue to break the proverbial glass ceiling and prove their mettle. Sirsha felt incredibly honoured to be a part of the amazing crew of Unity 22, and to be part of a company whose mission is to make space available to all. Sirsha is the first Telugu woman to venture out on a space mission.

MR Jayanthi Mani, TRICHY

Fear of seedling death looms large in Nuapada

Locals rough up tribal families cultivating forest land

POST NEWS NETWORK

Nuapada, July 5: With Nuapada district receiving less than normal rainfall this monsoon, the fear of seedling death (Gaja Marudi) has started gripping the farmers.

Nuapada is a tribal-dominated district with 131 gram panchayats, three NACs and five blocks. Its population is over 6,00,000 and 80 per cent of them earn their livelihood from agriculture.

The farmers in the district generally start sowing paddy seeds from the first week of June. This year, buoyed by good rains in the last week of May and first week of June, the farmers felt encouraged and sowed seeds. While the seeds in the fields that had received rain water have started germinating, the seeds in the fields that are still waiting for rain water are yet to germinate.

Meanwhile, around two weeks have passed since it rained last in the district. Staring at a seedling death-like situation, the framers who are already under tremendous mental stress due to Covid-19 situation are in a fix.

At places, the paddy seedlings

BELOW NORMAL RAINFALL



REPRESENTATIONAL PIC

AROUND TWO WEEKS HAVE PASSED SINCE IT RAINED LAST IN THE DISTRICT

LESS THAN NORMAL RAIN AND THE RAIN BEING ELUSIVE HAVE LEFT THE FARMERS IN A QUANDARY. THE DISTRICT RECEIVED 906.7MM RAINFALL BY JUNE END THIS YEAR AND THIS IS 40 PER CENT LESS THAN THE NORMAL RAINFALL

AMONG THE BLOCKS, NUAPADA BLOCK RECEIVED 225.00MM RAINFALL, FOLLOWED BY BODEN BLOCK (185.80MM), KOMANA BLOCK (183.10MM), SINAPALI BLOCK (183.00MM) AND KHARIAR BLOCK (129.80MM).

have started withering and at some other places, the fields have developed cracks. "We are at loss thinking about what to do in such a situation. We have already invested the money we had saved. Now we don't have money to buy seeds. During this pandemic, we are not even getting enough works," alleged some farmers.

Less than normal rain and the

rain being elusive have left the farmers in a quandary. The district received 906.7mm rainfall by June end this year and this is 40 per cent less than the normal rainfall. Among the blocks, Nuapada block received 225.00mm rainfall, followed by Boden block (185.80mm), Komana block (183.10mm), Sinapali block (183.00mm) and Khariar block (129.80mm).

This year, out of 1,51,760 hectares of farmland, 87,600 hectares have been under paddy cultivation and 64,160 hectares have been set aside for non-paddy cultivation.

Referring to the fear of seedling death like situation, Birendra Pradhan, a Komana based farmer leader, said the district administration should take stock of the situation and announce 'Gaja

Marudi'.

Another farmer, Akhila Chandra Joshi of Tarapur area under Boden block said since they don't have money to buy seeds, the government should consider the case and provide seeds to them.

Echoing the same, B Krishna Rao, a farmer from Khariar block alleged that undeclared power cuts have added to their woes. Due to frequent power cuts, the lift irrigation points are not working properly. In this situation, the government should consider providing each farmer solar pumps on subsidy.

Mentioning about the problems the farmers face such as distress sale, Arun Kumar Biswal, a social activist of Khariar area urged the government to take steps for the betterment of the farmers.

When contacted, Nuapada district agriculture officer Samarendra Chandra Behera admitted that the rainfall the district received by June end (906.7mm) is not enough for agriculture. "However, we are yet to receive any news from any of the districts regarding 'seedling death'. Agricultural activities are underway in the district," he said.



POST NEWS NETWORK

Nabarangpur, July 5: Members of approximately 40 tribal families, who inhabit the Sahajakhol forest area in Bhatapani and Dumerpali villages bordering Kalahandi district, were severely beaten up Sunday afternoon by a group of people from a nearby village in Nabarangpur district. The tribal community alleged that their drinking water source has also been laced with poison.

According to a police official, the tribal families have been residing in Sahajakhol forest for more than 15 years now. They have been cultivating forest land to eke out a living.

Some residents of Gotamunda village under the banner of a local

outfit 'Jungle Surakha Bahini' of Gotamunda have been threatening to evict these tribal people from their villages.

Apprehending danger to their lives and properties, the tribal families have jointly lodged an FIR with the local police following which a case of atrocity has been registered, the senior police official informed.

"The Forest department has not made any complaint regarding the tribals living in Sahajakhol. However, residents of Gotamunda village have allegedly threatened and asked the tribals to vacate the land. A case of atrocity was registered in this connection and we are probing into the incident," Amapani IIC Krushna Chandra Swain said.

Dismantled dividers on NH-53 turn into death traps



POST NEWS NETWORK

Derabisi, July 5: The road dividers that were dismantled at several places allegedly by some local businessmen on the Chandikhol-Paradip national highway (NH-53) in Kendrapara district have turned into death-traps for commuters. The dismantling

took place on the stretch from Panchupandav to Anlabanka under Derabisi block in the district.

One such breach of the divider is quite visible as it is 30 feet wide and lies just opposite a petrol pump at Chhata. The divider was broken so that vehicles from the wrong side could easily approach the petrol pump. However, it leads to fre-

quent accidents and traffic snarls.

Despite repeated complaints by the locals, officials of the National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) have not reacted or made an effort to repair the divider. Senior lawyer Bidhubhusan Mohapatra stated that the entire portions that have been dismantled should be repaired as quickly as possible to prevent accidents and loss of lives.

On being contacted, regional transport officer (RTO) in Kendrapara Nikhil Pattanayak said, "We have informed about the breaches to the NHAI authorities in writing. Legal action will be taken against the wrongdoers from our side in case the NHAI fails to do anything."

Notably, NH-53 has been converted into a double lane road running from Chandikhol to Paradip. Hundreds of iron ore-laden trucks pass through this route on a daily basis.



Construction of a wall underway on the stone embankment on Mahanadi river mouth near Nehru bungalow in Paradip to save the coastlines from erosion

PREVENTIVE MEASURE

72ND VAN MAHOTSAV

State to plant 6.6cr saplings

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 5: Speaking on the occasion of the 72nd Van Mahotsav programme at Badagada High School in the City Monday, Forest and Environment Minister Bikram Keshari Arukha said that the government aims to undertake afforestation programme on around 1.50 lakh hectares in 2021-22 by spending ₹599 crore under different schemes. The government will plant 6.67 crore saplings on the land and also distribute 3.21 crore saplings.

This afforestation will be undertaken under different schemes such as Compensatory Afforestation Fund Management and Planning Authority (CAMPA), Odisha Forestry Sector Development Project, Ama Jangala Yojanam, Green India Mission and others.

The government will plant 6.67 crore saplings on the land and also distribute 3.21 crore saplings

Minister Arukha said that during the cyclone Yaas several areas of the state, especially the northern parts, suffered severe damages, as large number of trees was uprooted or broken. To replenish the damage, plantation of large number of trees is the only option. "We are working in that direction with all our strength," he said.

Additional Chief Secretary Mona Sharma said that the forest cover in Odisha has increased by 274 sq km in the last two years. The forest area of Odisha, known for its rich biodiversity, wildlife sanctuaries and wetland, has increased from 51,345 sq km in 2017 to 51,619 sq km in 2019. Odisha also secured the fourth rank in Total Forest Cover.

Stan Swamy: A life dedicated to Adivasis

Swamy, a Jesuit priest, who spent long years working among his beloved Advasis in this eastern Indian tribal state, died Monday in Mumbai, hours before his appeal for bail in a case where he is ironically accused of being an 'Urban Naxal' was to be heard

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Ranchi, July 5: The words "I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race," from the Bible seems to sum up the life of Stanislaus Lourdasamy, 84 or 'Stan Swamy' as he was known.

Swamy, a Jesuit priest, who spent long years working among his beloved Advasis in this eastern Indian tribal state, died Monday in Mumbai, hours before his appeal for bail in a case where he is ironically accused of being an 'Urban Naxal' was to be heard.

In 2016, moved by the plight of Adivasi prisoners in Jharkhand, many of whom were falsely branded as Naxalites, Swamy did a research on them titled 'Deprived of rights over natural resources, impoverished Adivasis get prison: a study of Undertrials in Jharkhand.'

His study found that 97 per cent of undertrials interviewed said that allegations that they were linked to Maoists were false, and 96 per cent of them earned less than Rs 5,000 a month, underlining the fact the poorest and the most vulnerable in the state were the among the ones arrested under stringent anti-terror laws.

It also found that 31 per cent of undertrials and a little over a third of the convicts were tribals. The percentage of tribals in jail was far higher than their proportion of the population.

His study coming after three decades of work among the tribals which focussed on their community, land and forest rights, was considered authoritative but also discomfited the powers that be.

Swamy who was born in Tiruchirappalli in Tamil Nadu according to his friends, studied theology and did a Masters in Sociology at the University of Manila in the 1970s. Later he studied at Brussels where he struck up a friendship

with Archbishop Holder Camara whose work among Brazils poor influenced him.

He later worked as Director of the Jesuit-run Indian Social Institute at Bangalore from 1975 to 1986.

He came to Jharkhand some 30 years ago and took up work among the tribals. Among other issues he took up the causes of tribals marginalised after their lands had been taken over for dams, mines and townships, often without their consent. He also worked for the release of tribal youths from prison, often in cases where they were falsely accused.

Two days before NIA took him into custody in connection with the Bhima Koregaon case, the Jesuit priest claimed stringent laws such as UAPA were being misused to arrest tribals "indiscriminately" in a video message.

The National Investigation Agency (NIA) October 9, last year had filed a charge-sheet against eight people, including Father Stan Swamy, for their alleged involvement in inciting a mob to violence in Bhima Koregaon near Pune January 1, 2018. Swamy, a cancer patient who also has Parkinsons disease,

was arrested from his home in Ranchi October 8, 2020. Despite protestations that he had never been to Bhima Koregaon, he was still taken to Mumbai where he was produced before a court and remanded to judicial custody.

He is possibly the oldest person to be charged under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA), officials had then said.

NIA officials had said investigations established he was actively involved with the CPI (Maoist).

The NIA also alleged that he was in contact with "conspirators" - Sudhir Dhawale, Rona Wilson, Surendra Gadling, Arun Ferreira, Vernon Gonsalves, Hany Babu, Shoma Sen, Mahesh Raut, Varavara Rao, Sudha Bharadwaj, Gautam Navlakha and Anand Teltumbde - to further the group's activities.

The agency alleged that Swamy had also received funds through an associate for furthering their ideological agenda. Besides, he was convener of the Persecuted Prisoners Solidarity Committee (PPSC), which the authorities dubbed a frontal organisation of the CPI(Maoist).

They said literature, propaganda



IDOL THIEF ARRESTED AFTER TWO-HOUR CHASE IN RIVER

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kendrapara, July 5: A suspected idol thief jumped into the Brahmani river in Kendrapara district to dodge the police that arrived at his house in connection with the theft case.

The accused Bharat Mallick who had decamped with idols from Lord Ram temple in Dandisahi under Pattamundai model police station limits was arrested after a two-hour chase on the river Sunday, a police officer said.

The high drama enacted on the swirling river water was witnessed by curious villagers.

Acting on a tip-off, police raided his house Sunday and seized the

stolen idols and other valuable items.

But Mallick, an expert swimmer, managed to flee from his house and jumped into the river water to evade arrest.

"With the help of locals and fire brigade personnel, we could arrest him after chasing him for about two hours in the river. We used two boats to catch him after surrounding him in the water body," said Sandhyarani Behuria, the Sub-Divisional Police Officer (SDPO) of Pattamundai.

During interrogation, the accused confessed to have entered the sanctum sanctorum of the temple by breaking open the main door, the police officer claimed.

Odia medicos in US donate ambulance, oxygen shelter

POST NEWS NETWORK

Titilagarh, July 5: With the spread of the Covid pandemic across the global, the Government of Odisha has taken various steps to save people's lives by trying everything possible in this direction, but still many patients find it difficult to avail ambulance services or suffer from lack of medical oxygen. In such a difficult circumstance, the Lions' Club of Titilagarh was seen working to reach out to Covid patients in order to provide some support to the government and administration.

Dr Hasmukhlal, a well-known doctor from Titilagarh, suggested to a group of doctors from Odisha residing in the United States of America to do something for their state.

All the doctors there, known as the Odisha Society of Americas, Health and Wellness Group (OSA HW) first extended a helping hand to the Smile Please Foundation managed by Odia film actor Sabyasachi Mishra, then supported



the 'Titilagarh Lions' Club in its endeavour to provide cooked food to the needy people of Titilagarh, promote vaccination in rural areas, distribute dry ration and now they have provided an ambulance and a post-Covid oxygen shelter, which were inaugurated at Lion's Den, Titilagarh.

The chief guests on this occasion were Titilagarh SDMO Dr Pradeep Kumar Naik, members of the Club Lion Dr Biju Agrawal, Lion Dr Narendra Agrawal and Lion Dr Jay Prakash Jain.

All the members of OSA HW, OSA brand ambassador Sabyasachi Mishra and Lion Sanjaya Sahu also joined the noble work on ZOOM App virtually.

Transport back to full capacity

AGENCIES

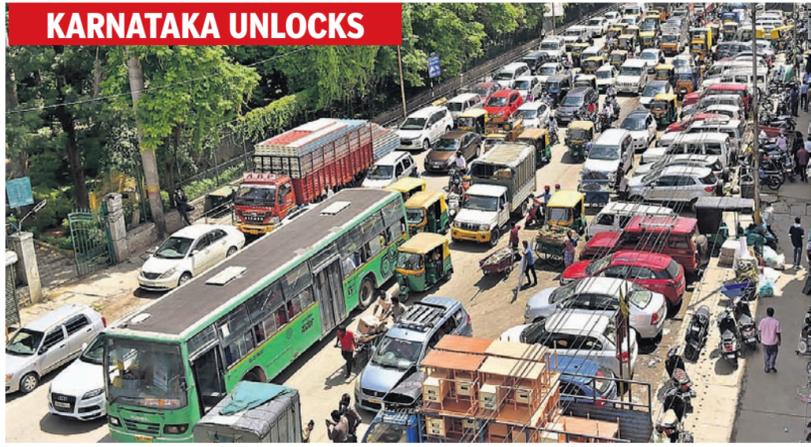
Bangalore, July 5: With the Karnataka government further easing restrictions under "Unlock 3.0" effective from Monday, life seems to have returned to normalcy as shops, restaurants, malls, private offices and religious places began their operations in full swing.

Also, all public transport-buses and metro- were seen operating up to its seating capacity. These services will be available for the public till 9 PM, as the government is imposing night curfew till 5 AM.

With the government allowing places of worship to open only for darshan, people, though fewer in number, were seen visiting temples following Covid precautionary measures at several places in the city.

Similar reports are emerging from across the state. As offices and business establishments have been allowed to function at full working strength, traffic congestion was seen on streets in Bengaluru and other cities with office-goers getting back to work.

Bangalore Metropolitan Transport Corporation has said that bus services will be operated between 5 AM and 9 PM with all pre-



KARNATAKA UNLOCKS

cautionary measures, and 4,500 buses will operate in the city and suburban area.

The corporation said based on passenger volume, services will be increased. Officials were seen ensuring that there is no overcrowding in buses and passengers don't travel by standing.

Bangalore Metro has said, Metros will operate from 7 AM to 8 PM from Monday to Friday, with fre-

quency of 5-15 minutes in peak and non-peak hours, and Saturday, Sunday and general holidays it will be with increased or decreased frequency, depending on the situation.

Customers were seen in good numbers at hotels and restaurants across the city. Also, bars will be open from Monday, but pubs will not.

The new guidelines that were announced by Chief Minister B S Yediyurappa Saturday, have come

into effect from 6 AM July 5 and will be in force up to 6 AM July 19.

Bangalore Police Commissioner Kamal Pant has said that a total of 54 special teams comprising Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) marshals and city police personnel will be deployed across the city to impose fines and register cases on individuals and commercial establishments that violate Covid-19 norms.

"I urge everyone to strictly follow Covid-19 appropriate behaviour for our own safety. Remember, the cases have decreased, but the virus is still around," he has tweeted.

In the guidelines, all shops, restaurants, malls, private offices and closed places have been asked to strictly enforce Covid appropriate behaviour failing which action will be initiated under the Disaster Management Act, 2005.

While, marriages and family functions are permitted to be conducted involving not more than 100 people and strictly adhering to Covid-19 appropriate behaviour and prevailing guidelines, cremation and funerals to be allowed with maximum of 20 people.

While night curfew will continue between 9 PM and 5 AM, the weekend curfew has been lifted.

Theatres, cinema halls and pubs will remain closed, while swimming pools, sports complexes and stadia are permitted for competitive training and practice purposes by strictly adhering to Covid appropriate behaviour.

All social, political, sports, entertainment, academic, cultural, religious functions, other gatherings and large congregations, continue to be prohibited.

HDK meets Yedi against leasing out 'MySugar'



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bangalore, July 5: JD(S) leader H D Kumaraswamy Monday met Karnataka Chief Minister B S Yediyurappa requesting him not to permit the leasing out to private industries the state-owned 'MySugar' (Mysore Sugar) factory in Mandya.

The former Chief Minister also made personal attacks against Mandya MP Sumalatha Ambareesh in connection with the issue, which elicited sharp reaction from the actor-turned politician.

"I met the Chief Minister along with our MLAs and MLCs from Mandya district, as farmer leaders from Mandya district had met me recently regarding discussion at the officials level to hand over the MySugar factory to private players," Kumaraswamy said.

He pointed out that the factory built during the time of 'Maharajas' of Mysuru and Sir M Visvesvaraya has a history and "it is the wish of every one" that it should be under the government's control.

"I met the Chief Minister today and requested him that the MySugar factory in Mandya should not be given to private hands for any reason, as it has its own history. The Chief Minister has assured me that he will not permit the factory to go into private hands. I thank him on behalf of the people of Mandya," he told reporters.

The JD(S) leader along with his party legislators met Yediyurappa at the latter's official residence, which the CMO said was a "courtesy call".

Similar visits by the former Chief Minister to Yediyurappa's residence in September and November last year had then created a flutter in political circles, triggering speculation about possible political realignments.

Further, noting that there was a proposal before the government to give the MySugar factory on a 40 years lease to a private party, he requested the Chief Minister not accept it for any reason, and hit out at Mandya MP Sumalatha Ambareesh, without taking her name.

"You have to ask her: Probably Mandya district never had such a Member of Parliament and will never have one," he said in response to a question on who was pushing for the proposal.

Citing Sumalatha's recent statement expressing concerns about the safety of KRS dam at a meeting, he said, the MP has spoken as though she will protect the dam.

"Probably if she is made to sleep at the doors of KRS everything will be tightened and the water won't flow. Without knowing about the work that is to be done, making unnecessary statements out of personal grudge won't work," the JD(S) leader said.

Claiming that the MP got elected on the basis of sympathy, Kumaraswamy said, "such opportunities will not come often; the opportunity that she has got because of the sympathy should be utilised properly by working for the people or else they will teach her a lesson".



OPEN INVITATION TO COVID

Tourists throng HP to beat Covid blues & heatwave

People from the plains are visiting tourist hotspots in Himachal Pradesh like Shimla, Kufri, Narkanda, Dalhousie, Manali, Lahaul and other places in large numbers to get rid of the scorching heat

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Shimla, July 5: Tourists have been thronging Himachal Pradesh as the heatwave has hit the plains and the second wave of Covid-19 seeing a significant decline in the country.

The occupancy in the hotels has increased in the past few days but it has yet to reach its peak, said Mohinder Seth, president of Tourism Industry Stakeholder Association. "The occupancy in the hotels remains between 60 and 90 percent during weekends, while on other days it remains around 40-45 percent," Seth said.

Shimla Hotel and Restaurant Association president Sanjay Sood said the withdrawal of the condition of negative RTPCR report and e-Covid pass to enter Himachal Pradesh recently has given a boost to the tourism industry of the state.

However, the increase in the number of tourists has posed a challenge to the state government to ensure adhering to Covid protocol by the visitors amid fears of an impending third wave of coronavirus infections.

Asserting that the hoteliers have been following Covid proto-

col in their premises for over a year, Sood hoped that the number of tourists would further increase in the coming days.

A tourist, Nikita Kukreja, said the majority of the visitors were seen following Covid protocol. She along with her family members has come from Gurgaon to visit various tourist places in and around Shimla.

Another tourist from Delhi Sanjana said the oppressive heatwave in the national capital forced her to visit the state.

Mohinder Seth said the state government has not provided any relief in the shape of financial aid or waiver of taxes to the tourism industry hit hard by the Covid-19 pandemic. While the Gujarat government has provided a hundred percent relief to hoteliers by waiving of property tax and garbage collection fees, Maharashtra and Odisha governments have given fifty percent relief, he claimed seeking relief on the same pattern in Himachal Pradesh.

In Kullu district, Atal Tunnel Rohtang (ATR) has become a major attraction for visitors. A record number of 6,400 vehicles had crossed the tunnel last Sunday.

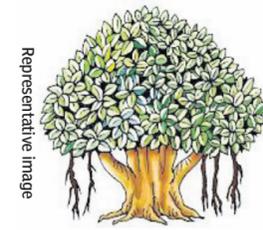
App for tree census in B'lore

The application will be available on Apple and Android devices where the public can upload photos of the trees, GPS coordinates and other details

AGENCIES

Bangalore, July 5: The tree census in Bangalore, hit by a pandemic, is finally out for the public to register. The Bengaluru civic body, Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP), and Karnataka Forest Department launched the application — 'Namma Bangalore Tree Census'.

The application will be available on Apple and android devices where the public can upload photos of the trees, GPS coordinates and other details in the application. Once these details are uploaded by citizens, the same will be verified by the forest officials. BBMP



deputy conservator of forests H C Ranganathaswamy said, "The application is developed in a unique way where the citizens can upload information easily, which include GPS readings, tree measurement,

species and other details. The app has a feature that will allow citizens to input details of trees on their premises, which will later be verified by forest officials." The tree census that was to begin in 2019 by the civic body and forest department has been delayed, despite repeated raps from the High Court of Karnataka. On Saturday, the forest department and BBMP demonstrated the app before chief justice of Karnataka Abhay Shreenivas Oka. According to Ranganathaswamy they have already counted 70,000 trees in the city. "We are hoping that the census will be done at a fast pace as the public will be involved in the process," he added.

In a first, trout reared in Himachal warm waters

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Shimla, July 5: The trout, both brown and rainbow, found in rivers and streams in higher reaches of Himachal Pradesh has been reared for the first time in warm waters of state's Gobind Sagar and Kol Dam reservoir too, Fisheries Minister Virender Kanwar said.

He said 500 fingerlings of rainbow trout, a coldwater game-fish species, were stocked in the high-density polyethylene (HDPE) floating fish-culture cages in Gobind Sagar reservoir in Bilaspur district in 2019 on an experimental

basis for diversification of trout culture in warm waters of the state.

The results were highly encouraging and worth emulation in other parts of the state. This paved the way for culturing the trout fish in warm districts during a span of five-nine months when the water temperature is congenial for its culture, the minister explained. Accordingly, the state Fisheries Department installed 24 fish cages in the Kol Dam reservoir in Bilaspur district for the culture of the rainbow trout on a pilot basis under the Central government's Blue Revolution scheme in



2020. Around 30,000 fingerlings of the average weight of 10-12 grams were stocked in the cages in September and October last year. "The results were encouraging

as the fish gained a weight of almost one kg in just eight months. Normally it takes two and a half years for a trout fingerling to gain such weight in coldwater regions, thus showing accelerated growth," said Kanwar. The history of trout in Himachal Pradesh dates back to the colonial rule. The British introduced trout in 1909 to promote game fishing.

The trout — mainly the brown ones — is currently found in a 600-km stretch on the Beas, Sutlej and Ravi rivers in the upper Himalayas where no other fish species survive because of the extreme cold climate.

North India power starved, but HP has 'excess'

HYDROELECTRIC POWER GENERATION IN HIMACHAL INCREASES IN SUMMER, WHEREAS IT COMES DOWN TO JUST 20 PER CENT DURING WINTER (FROM DECEMBER TO MARCH) DUE TO THE FREEZING OF GLACIERS AND WATER BODIES

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Shimla, July 5: While most north Indian states suffer power outages, Himachal Pradesh is generating optimum electricity, mainly from hydropower, despite delay in monsoon rains so far, but finding lack of buyers is leaving the state virtually 'powerless' — financially.

Officials said that besides the hydroelectric power generation from all state-run projects reached the optimum level of 550 lakh units per day, the cash-starved distribution companies of other states, which were



earlier procuring electricity in bulk, are opting for power cuts.

"The hydropower generation in some 70 state-owned projects, all over 25 MW, is between 500 and 550 lakh units per day. Despite scanty monsoon rains, the daily generation is optimum due to sufficient flow of water in rivers owing to the melting of glaciers," an official with state's directorate of energy said.

He said the state's demand is 300 lakh units daily, while the rest is supplied to Punjab, Delhi, Goa, among others, as per their demand. The daily per unit rate to these states varies from Rs 2.50 to Rs 5, which is quite low. "Even the distribution companies are shirking to enter into long-term purchase

agreements," he added. Besides the state-run projects, there are nearly 20 major hydropower plants that are run either by the central government, private players or joint venture companies. All these are operating at full capacity now.

Chairman and Managing Director Nand Lal of public sector SJVN Ltd that owns the 1,500 MW Nathpa-Jhakri project, in Kinnaur district, the biggest operating hydroelectric plant in India, said the current generation at the plant is 39 million units per day.

He attributed the increase in power generation to the increased flow in the Satluj river. "The river discharge is optimum

between June 10 and September 10," he said, adding in the lean season in February with the discharge in the river falling massively the overall production too comes down to just six million units per day.

Punjab, Haryana, Chandigarh, Delhi, Jammu and Kashmir, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh buy power from the Nathpa-Jhakri project. SJVN Ltd, another hydropower — the 412 MW Rampur hydroelectric projects in Shimla district — is daily supplying 10.8 million units to the northern grid. This power station is located downstream of the Nathpa-Jhakri project and is designed to utilise the de-silted water of its upstream plant.

SJVN's current installed capacity is 2,016.51 MW and it aims to be a 5,000 MW company by 2023. Besides hydropower, the SJVN has presence in wind, solar and thermal generation.

Officials admit that while most states suffer from acute power shortage in this peak season when the monsoon is deficit or delayed, Himachal Pradesh is facing challenge in disposing of its electricity in the country's two operational power bourses.

Varsity develops tech for apple cider vinegar

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Shimla, July 5: State-run Dr YS Parmar University of Horticulture and Forestry in Nauni in Himachal Pradesh has developed a technology to make use of low-grade and deformed apples for the production of vinegar as well as base wine, officials said.

The latest technology will overcome the problems of the traditional methods, which are slow and result in poor quality vinegar; Vice-Chancellor Parvinder Kaushal said.

The university on Saturday signed a memorandum of understanding with a Shimla-based food processing company for the production of apple cider vinegar, based on the technology developed by scientists of the university's Department of Food Science and Technology under a DST project.

This is the second startup that has signed a non-exclusive license agreement with the university for the transfer of this technology by paying Rs 40,000 as technology fee, said the university in a statement.

Under this agreement, the company will use the university's tech to manufacture and sell the cider vinegar and will also acknowledge it on the product label.

Explaining the technology, Department of Food Science and Technology head KD Sharma said the technology is an alternative to the traditional methods of making apple cider vinegar and can also be taken as an alternative approach for complete utilization of culled apples along with improving the farm income.

He complimented the entrepreneurs — Nanda Chhajta and Yashwant Chhajta — for putting faith in the university technology and apprised them of several other technologies and processes developed by the university, which can be beneficial to the enterprise.

The Vice-Chancellor said the demand for apple cider vinegar has increased manifold in the past few years due to its several health benefits.

national

of the day quote

AAP instructs BJP not to interfere in impartial judicial action and stop their nefarious attempts at punishing innocent farmers

RAGHAV CHADHA | AAP LEADER

Punjab has paid a fixed charge of Rs 7,000 crore to government thermal plants during the last five years as per State Electricity Regulatory Commission figures

SUKHBIR SINGH BADAL | SAD PRESIDENT

News about attack on Dalit families in Palia village in Azamgarh. Houses were damaged, and cases were registered. This indicates the anti-Dalit mindset of the government

PRIYANKA GANDHI VADRA | CONGRESS GENERAL SECRETARY

SHORT TAKES

Abhijit Mukherjee joins TMC

Kolkata: Former President Pranab Mukherjee's son and ex-Congress MP Abhijit Mukherjee joined the Trinamool Congress here Monday. The former two-time lawmaker from Jangipur Lok Sabha constituency in Murshidabad district of West Bengal had been in talks with the TMC leadership over the past few weeks, party sources said. He was welcomed into the party by TMC leader in Lok Sabha, Sudip Bandyopadhyay, amid shouts of 'Mamata Banerjee Zindabad!'

Twitter could lose immunity: Centre

New Delhi: The Centre on Monday told the Delhi High Court that social media giant Twitter Inc has failed to comply with India's new IT Rules, which could lead to losing its immunity conferred under the Information Technology (IT) Act. The Centre, in an affidavit filed in the high court, said as per the details obtained from Twitter's website or mobile application, as an interim, the grievances from India are being handled by the platform's official located in the US which amounts to non-compliance of the IT Rules, 2021.

Major tragedy averted in Maha

Mumbai: An empty gas truck veered off from the Mumbai-Nashik national highway in Maharashtra after suffering a tyre burst and came on the parallel railway tracks Monday evening, forcing suspension of traffic on the Kasara-Kalyan section which resulted into holding up of some long-distance and suburban trains for almost two hours, officials said. Fortunately, no train was passing when the incident occurred near Atgaon station, around 95 kms from here, they said, adding trains on both Up and Down tracks were just a station behind.

Five killed in road mishap

Jodhpur: Five people were killed after the SUV they were travelling in collided head-on with a truck in Rajasthan's Jodhpur district, police said Monday.

Monsoon likely to reach Delhi by July 10

New Delhi: The Southwest Monsoon will reach Delhi around July 10 this year, making it the most-delayed in the last 15 years, the India Meteorological Department said Monday. "The monsoon is likely to advance over remaining parts of west Uttar Pradesh, some more parts of Punjab, Haryana and Rajasthan and Delhi around July 10," the IMD said in a statement.



Shockingly, the retail price of petrol in many states across the county has crossed an unprecedented ₹100 per litre

MAMATA BANERJEE | WEST BENGAL CHIEF MINISTER

WILD BOARS MAY BE CULLED IN GOA SOON

Wild boars may soon be culled in Goa, Chief Minister Pramod Sawant said Monday, adding that his government is in the process of expediting the procedure to declare the species as vermin. Vermin are wild animals that are believed to be harmful to crops, farm animals or game, or which carry disease



WAR AGAINST COVID

'3rd wave likely to hit in Aug, peak in Sept'

AGENCIES

New Delhi, July 5: The much-feared third wave of coronavirus is likely to hit India by mid-August, while cases may peak in September, a report said Monday, even as the second wave is not yet over in the country. The report titled 'Covid-19: The race to finishing line', published by SBI Research, stated that vaccination is the only saviour as global data shows that, on an average, the third wave peak cases are around 1.7 times the peak cases at the time of second wave.

Only 4.6 per cent of the population in India is fully vaccinated, while 20.8 per cent have received one dose, much lower compared to other countries including the US (47.1 per cent), the UK (48.7 per cent), Israel (59.8 per cent), Spain (38.5 per cent), France (31.2), among others. "India has achieved its second wave peak May 7 and going by the current data, the country can experience around 10,000 cases somewhere around the second week of July," State Bank of India's Group Chief Economic Adviser, Soumya Kanti Ghosh, said in the report.

"However, based on historical trends, the cases can start rising by the second fortnight of Aug '21 with peak cases at least a month later," he added. Current cases are now hovering around 45,000 since the past week, indicating that the devastating second wave is "not yet over in the country and is exhibiting a fat tail". "In the first

FRESH 39,796 CASES

India saw a single-day rise of 39,796 new Covid infections, which took the tally of cases to 3,05,85,229, while the death toll climbed to 4,02,728 with 723 more fatalities, the lowest in around 88 days, according to Union Health Ministry data updated Monday. The active cases have further declined to 4,82,071 and comprise 1.58 per cent of the total infections, while the national Covid recovery rate has improved to 97.11 per cent, the data updated at 8 am showed.

wave as well, the cases declined gradually, with cases around 45,000 for 21 days before any meaningful decline in daily cases," Ghosh said.

Further, 51 cases of the Delta Plus variant have been detected, so far, from 12 states. New cases in the top 15 districts, which are mostly urban, increased again in June. But the good thing is that their fatality rate has been constant for three months. On the other hand, the share of rural districts in new cases has refused to decline meaningfully since July 2020, when it breached 45 per cent and has fluctuated since then.

"Vaccination seems to be the only answer," Ghosh said. India has started giving more than 40 lakh vaccination doses per day. While states like Rajasthan, Delhi, Himachal Pradesh, Kerala, and Uttarakhand have already given both vaccine doses to a larger percentage of the population above 60 years, the overall vaccination in rural areas remains low, the report said.



Not happy with the outcome: PAGD

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Srinagar, July 5: The People's Alliance for Gupkar Declaration (PAGD) Monday expressed disappointment over the outcome of the recent all-party meeting on J&K chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, saying there was lack of substantial confidence building measures like release of political and other prisoners.

Alliance spokesperson and PDP (M) leader M Y Tarigami said the confidence building measures (CBMs) would have initiated the much-needed process of reaching out to the people of J&K "who are the biggest stakeholders and sufferers of the J&K problem".

All the members of the PAGD expressed their disappointment at the outcome of the Delhi meeting

especially at the absence of any CBMs such as releasing political and other prisoners from jails and lack of concrete steps to end the alleged "atmosphere of suppression" that has "choked" J&K since 2019, the spokesperson said in a statement.

The PAGD met Sunday evening under the chairmanship of Farooq Abdullah - the National Conference (NC) president - at his residence.

The meeting was attended by alliance vice-chairperson and PDP president Mehbooba Mufti, Tarigami, NC leader Hasnain Masoodi, Peoples Movement chief Javed Mustafa Mir and Awami National Conference senior vice president Muzaffar Ahmed Shah.

The meeting was called to discuss the recent meeting chaired by the prime minister in Delhi June 24, the spokesperson said. The PAGD

PM'S ALL-PARTY MEETING ON J&K



PAGD leaders speak to the media in Srinagar June 22, days before the all-party meeting in New Delhi

– which seeks the restoration of the special status of the erstwhile state of Jammu and Kashmir which was revoked by the Centre August 5, 2019 – said it will fight together using constitutional, legal and political means to reverse the Centre's

decision. The PAGD reiterated its commitment to fight together to reverse the unconstitutional and unacceptable changes foisted on the people of J&K 5th August 2019 using all constitutional, legal and political means at its disposal.

LOCKDOWN WOES

1 IN 10 WOMEN RAN OUT OF FOOD: REPORT

THE LOCKDOWN FINANCIALLY AFFECTED WOMEN IN INDIA, WHO ALREADY CONSTITUTE A MINORITY IN THE PAID WORKFORCE

AGENCIES

New Delhi, July 5: More than 1 in 10, or nearly 3.2 crore women in India "limited their food intake or ran out of food" during the Covid-induced lockdown last year, finds a report.

The report, titled 'Impacts of Covid-19 on women in low-income households in India' conducted by social impact advisory group Dalberg, captures the experiences and perspectives of nearly 15,000 women and 2,300 men across the 10 states of Bihar, Gujarat, Karnataka, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Odisha, Telangana, Uttar Pradesh, and West Bengal from March 24 to May 31, 2020, and the following months from June

till October 2020. The pandemic exacerbated women's nutritional challenges, as an additional 3.2 crore reported being worried about food sufficiency in their households, the report showed.

About 16 per cent of women, who used menstrual pads before the pandemic, had no or limited access to menstrual pads, primarily because they could no longer afford these items.

In addition, more than one in three married women were unable to access contraceptives or 15 per cent of married women could not access contraceptives, primarily due to concerns about accessing a healthcare facility during the pandemic. While Kerala, Telangana and Uttar Pradesh did



well on providing women with both pads and contraceptives, Bihar had the highest proportion of women (49 per cent) with no or

CBI LODGES 2ND FIR; 189 OFFICIALS BOOKED

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi/Lucknow, July 5: The CBI has registered a case against 189 people, including 16 government servants, for alleged irregularities in the Rs 1,437-crore Gomti river front development project in Lucknow undertaken during the tenure of the Samajwadi Party (SP)

in Uttar Pradesh headed by Akhilesh Yadav, according to officials, who said this was one of the highest numbers of people booked by the agency on a single FIR. After registering the case, the agency sleuths swooped down on 42 locations spread across 13 districts of Uttar Pradesh, Alwar

in Rajasthan and Kolkata in West Bengal, they said.

Uttar Pradesh is going to polls in the first quarter of the next year. This was one of the highest numbers of people named in a CBI case. Earlier, 587 people were booked in connection with the Vyapam scam

in Madhya Pradesh. This is the second FIR related to the project by the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI).

An earlier FIR has already covered work orders worth over Rs 1,031 crore. In the present FIR, in which 16 officials, including chief engineers, and 173 contractors are accused, the agency has said 30 notices inviting tenders are under the scanner.

GOMTI RIVER FRONT PROJECT

PROTEST TURNS UGLY



Police personnel detain BJP activists during a protest over alleged fake vaccination in Kolkata

PTI PHOTO

CBSE session to be split

Term one exams will be held in November-December, 2021 while the second term exams will be conducted in March-April, 2022

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, July 5: The Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) Monday announced a special assessment scheme for class 10 and 12 board exams for next year in view of the Covid-19 pandemic, splitting the academic session into two terms.

BOARD EXAMS 2022

The board has also announced plans to rationalise the syllabus for 2021-22 academic session and to make the internal assessment and project work more 'credible' and 'valid'. As per an official order by Joseph Emmanuel, Director (Academic), CBSE, the term one exams will be held in November-December, 2021 while the second term exams will be conducted in March-April, 2022.

"The syllabus for the academic session 2021-22 will be divided into two terms by following a systematic approach by looking into



the interconnectivity of concepts and topics by the Subject Experts," he said. "The Board will conduct examinations at the end of each term on the basis of the bifurcated syllabus. This has been done to increase the probability of having a board conducted classes X and XII examinations at the end of the academic session," he said.

The syllabus for the board examination 2021-22 will be rationalised similar to that of the last academic session to be notified in July 2021. Schools will also use al-

ternative academic calendar and inputs from the NCERT on transacting the curriculum.

"Efforts will be made to make internal assessment, practical, project work more credible and valid as per the guidelines and moderation policy to be announced by the board to ensure fair distribution of marks," he added.

The plans by the board come against the backdrop of Covid-19 pandemic which forced the cancellation of board exams of some subjects last year and complete cancellation of board exams this year.

Maha: 12 BJP MLAs suspended for 1yr

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, July 5: Twelve BJP MLAs were suspended from the Maharashtra Legislative Assembly for one year after the state government accused them of "misbehaving" with presiding officer Bhaskar Jadhav in the Speaker's chamber Monday.

Leader of Opposition Devendra Fadnis termed the allegation as false and said Jadhav's account of the incident was "one-sided". However, Jadhav sought a probe into the allegation that some Shiv Sena members and he himself made uncharitable remarks, and said he was ready to face any punishment if it was proven true. The motion to suspend the MLAs was moved by state Parliamentary Affairs Minister Anil Parab and passed by a voice vote.

The 12 suspended members are- Sanjay Kute, Ashish Shelar, Abhimanyu Pawar, Girish Mahajan, Atul Bhatkalkar, Parag Alavani, Harish Pimpale, Yogesh Sagar, Jay Kumar Rawat, Narayan Kuche, Ram Satpute and Bunty Bhangdia.

international



This year, the Fourth of July is a day of special celebration for we are emerging from the darkness of ... a year of pandemic and isolation, a year of pain, fear and heartbreaking loss
JOE BIDEN | US PRESIDENT

QUEEN ELIZABETH HONOURS BRITAIN'S HEALTH SERVICE

Queen Elizabeth has awarded Britain's National Health Service the George Cross - the highest civilian gallantry award - in recognition of 73 years of dedicated service, including during the Covid-19 pandemic.



of the day quote

As we begin to learn to live with this virus, we must all continue to carefully manage the risks from COVID and exercise judgement when going about our lives
BORIS JOHNSON | BRITISH PRIME MINISTER

They (Biden Administration) have mobilized every power of government to come after me, my family, my wonderful employees and my company solely because of politics
DONALD TRUMP | FORMER US PRESIDENT

The most urgent priority is to expedite the construction of the 'Great Wall of Immunity' to fend off the virus, surpass political discrimination and carry out international anti-pandemic cooperation
WANG YI | CHINA'S FOREIGN MINISTER

CCP buys media influence; pays millions to US publications: Report

AGENCIES

Washington, July 5: China's propaganda outlet China Daily allegedly paid millions to prominent US newspapers and magazines in the last six months to buy media influence, an independent analyst reported citing documents filed with the US Justice Department.

According to disclosures made by the Justice Department, the state-run English-language newspaper China Daily paid several hundred thousand dollars to prominent American publications like Time magazine and Foreign Policy magazine in a span of six-month. As many as \$700,000 was paid to Time magazine; \$371,577 to the Financial Times; \$291,000 to Foreign Policy magazine; \$272,000 to Los Angeles Times; and over \$1 million to others.

Last month, The Daily Caller had reported China Daily, controlled by the Chinese Communist Party, paid more than \$4.6 million to The Washington Post and nearly \$6 million to The Wall Street Journal since November 2016. Both newspapers reportedly published paid supplements that China Daily produces called "China Watch." The inserts are designed to look like real news articles, though they often contain a pro-Beijing spin on contemporary news events.

As per the Justice Department, China Daily also paid for advertising in several other newspapers, including The New York Times



PROPAGANDA MACHINERY

According to disclosures made by the Justice Department, the state-run China Daily paid several hundred thousand dollars to prominent American publications like Time magazine and Foreign Policy magazine in a span of six-month

As many as \$700,000 was paid to Time magazine; \$371,577 to the Financial Times; \$291,000 to Foreign Policy magazine; \$272,000 to Los Angeles Times; and over \$1 million to others

The Justice Department has for years required China Daily to disclose its activities semi-annually under the Foreign Agents Registration Act (FARA)

MT ETNA ERUPTS



A hiker admires the view as Mt. Etna, Europe's largest active volcano, erupts in the background, in the Bove Valley of Etna Park, on the eastern slope of Mt. Etna, in Sicily, southern Italy, Sunday

ARE PAK INTERNAL GROUPS TARGETING SAEED?

Pakistan is in a desperate situation to cleanse its own image and be accepted by the civilised world

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi/Lahore, July 5: There are sections in the Pakistani society who feel that those of the likes of Hafeez Saeed, Sajid Mir, Asghar Rauf, Zaki-ur-Rehman Lakhvi are elements who are solely responsible for the ever deteriorating relations between New Delhi and Islamabad. Hence the possibility of internal groups targeting Saeed cannot be ruled out, sources said.

There have also been serious differences among the various militant group leaders in Pakistan in the past. For instance serious differences had emerged between Lakhvi, the Kashmir operations head of the LeT, and Saeed some time ago, which led to Lakhvi relocating his boys to Pakistan occupied Kashmir (PoK). The blast to target Saeed being a result of such rivalries cannot be ruled out.

Eventually Pakistan needs to realise that Saeed is a designated terrorist and has blood on his hands over the years, they added.

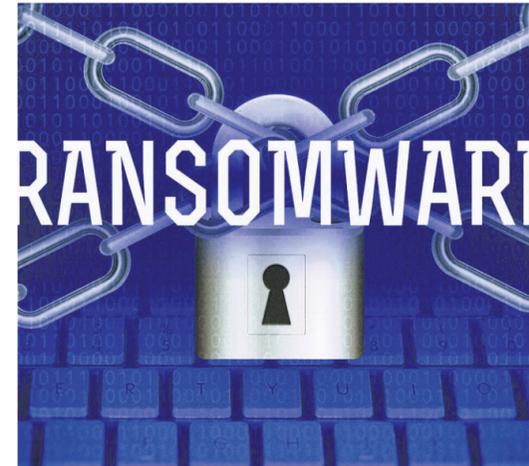
The sources said Pakistan is in a desperate situation to cleanse its own image and be accepted by the



civilised world. The clean image exercise will be extremely crucial for Pakistan to be accepted by the west especially at a time when Pakistan will be dependent on the west in order to sustain the secu-

FBI warns of large scale ransomware attack in US

Hackers hit Kaseya, a firm that provides IT services to other companies, with a ransomware attack that could have targeted as many as 1,000 other businesses Friday



AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

New York, July 5: The FBI said Sunday the "scale" of a major ransomware attack against a US IT company could mean investigators won't be able to work with every victim individually.

Hackers hit Kaseya, a firm that provides IT services to other companies, with a ransomware attack that could have targeted as many as 1,000 other businesses on Friday, just before the long holiday July 4 weekend in the United States.

The FBI said it had opened an investigation along with the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency and other US federal agencies "to understand the scope of the threat."

"If you believe your systems have been compromised, we encourage you to employ all recommended mitigations, follow Kaseya's guidance to shut down your VSA servers immediately and report to the FBI," the bureau said in a statement Sunday, referencing the signature networking software that was attacked.

"Although the scale of this incident may make it so that we are unable to respond to each victim individually, all information we receive will be useful in countering this threat," the FBI statement said.

President Joe Biden said

Saturday that he had ordered an investigation, in particular to find out whether the assault had come from Russia. "We're not sure yet," he said Saturday.

Russian-based hackers have been blamed for a string of ransomware attacks, and Biden recently raised the threat in talks with Russian counterpart Vladimir Putin.

Ransomware attacks typically involve locking away data in systems using encryption, making companies pay to regain access.

Kaseya describes itself as a leading provider of IT and security management services to small and medium-sized businesses. VSA is designed to let companies manage networks of computers and printers from a single point.

The company said in a new statement Sunday that they were working "around the clock in all geographies" to get their systems working again.

They said they hoped to get a restricted version of their platform running again within days. The disruption forced Swedish supermarket chain Coop Sweden to close on Saturday because their cash register system had been taken down in the attack.

Multiple US companies, including the computer group SolarWinds and the Colonial oil pipeline, have also recently been targeted by ransomware attacks.

SHORT TAKES

Airstrikes kill 15 Af militants

Kabul: A total of 15 Taliban militants were killed in airstrikes as the fighters have been mobilised to overrun Kunduz city, capital of Afghanistan's northern Kunduz province, an army spokesman said Monday. Acting on a tip-off, warplanes from the Afghan government forces targeted a Taliban gathering outside Kunduz city early Monday, killing 15 insurgents on the spot, spokesman Abdul Hadi Nazari said. A number of arms and ammunitions of the militants were also destroyed during the raids.

Tropical storm Elsa hits Cuba

Havana: Tropical storm Elsa has hit the eastern part of Cuba, bringing with it heavy rains and winds. The Institute of Meteorology (Insmet) reported on Sunday that the province of Guantanamo, in the extreme east of Cuba, was experiencing heavy rainfall and gusts of wind, while in nearby Santiago de Cuba, torrential downpours were also reported, reports Xinhua news agency. In Holguin, a northeastern province, some 78,000 people had been evacuated ahead of the storm.

Taal volcano could erupt 'anytime'

Manila: Authorities in the Philippines have warned that the Taal volcano, south of Manila, could erupt "anytime soon" after recording the highest levels of sulfur dioxide gas emission. "The highest levels of volcanic sulfur dioxide gas emission were recorded today at an average of 22,628 tonnes a day, the highest ever recorded in Taal volcano," the Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology said in an update Sunday. The Institute said the "current sulfur dioxide parameters indicate ongoing magma extrusion at the main crater that may further drive succeeding explosions".

Massive forest fire kills 4 in Cyprus

Nicosia: Four people were killed in a massive forest fire which has been raging for almost 24 hours in a mountainous area of Cyprus, police said. Charalambos Alexandrou, director of the Department of Forests, said on Sunday that the fire was the worst ever in the history of Cyprus, reports Xinhua news agency. The police said that the victims were four Egyptian nationals, aged 25 to 30, who were deployed as agricultural workers at Odou village.

25 KILLED IN FRESH MYANMAR CLASHES

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Kolkata, July 5: (IANS) Fresh clashes erupted over the weekend in a Myanmar town located at a border region with India, leading to at least 25 fatalities, sources from the area told this news agency.

On July 2, Myanmar troops encircled the Satpyarkyin village, west of the Tabayin township in Sagaing province.

Civilian resistance fighters of the People's Defense Force (PDF) defended the village against nearly 200 troops supported by artillery.

The resistance finally died down on Sunday when PDF fighters ran out of bullets in their hunting rifles and arrows for their bows, PDF commander in Tabayin Si Aung told IANS on Facebook Messenger. He admitted that during the long fighting for nearly 48 hours, at least 18 PDF members were killed and more than 10 injured. Aung said said four junta soldiers were killed, along with three villagers who were caught in the crossfire.

He said at least 40 artillery shells were fired into the village before the soldiers charged.

"They had to retreat many times because of our resistance, but finally we moved out of Satpyarkyin to avoid more casualties and because we had no more bullets left," Aung said. Villagers at Satpyarkyin told Burmese media groups the final toll could cross 30 because bodies of more PDF fighters and villagers were found after the soldiers occupied Satpyarkyin, a PDF stronghold.

"We can't retrieve all the bodies as regime raids continue," a villager was quoted as saying.

Hot dog! NYC marks July 4 with eating contest, fireworks

ASSOCIATED PRESS

New York, July 5: After a year lost to the coronavirus, New York City's most well-known Fourth of July traditions were back, Sunday.

The traditional Macy's Fourth of July fireworks show returned in full form with a display over the East River, as shells were shot from five barges in a televised, choreographed spectacle.

This year, crowds were welcome to gather.

The show was broadcast live on NBC as part of a two-hour special featuring artists including the Black Pumas, Coldplay, OneRepublic and Reba McEntire. The performers' appearances were pre-recorded around the country in front of live audiences.

Last year, because of pandemic restrictions, there were a series of shorter fireworks shows in the days leading up to the holiday, with the locations kept secret in advance to keep people from congregating.

"It's hugely significant because we're all back together again. We were apart for so long," said Mike Marrone, who took in the fireworks among a throng of onlookers along the Franklin D Roosevelt parkway.

Other revellers expressed a mix of joy and apprehension, noting the coronavirus remains far from vanquished. Slightly more than half of the city's population is fully vaccinated, according to the city health department, but many spectators were masked. "This is a refreshing relief for me.



People gather on Coney Island beach on the Independence Day holiday in Brooklyn, New York City, New York, Sunday

It gives us a sense of being out and being free," said Richard Armstrong, a retired police lieutenant who quarantined for months and, before Sunday, hadn't photographed any fire-

works in three years. "I'm always glad to be above ground," he quipped, "but as I look around, I can't tell who is vaxxed and who isn't." The annual spectacle of glut-

tony that is the Nathan's Famous July Fourth hot dog eating contest also once again welcomed live audiences to watch the epic showdown in Brooklyn. Joey "Jaws" Chestnut topped his own record by downing 76 franks and buns in 10 minutes in the men's competition, while Michelle Lesco took the women's title by eating 30 3/4 wieners and buns.

The event wasn't quite the same as usual. Instead of being at Surf and Stillwell avenues, just off the Coney Island boardwalk, this year's competition was held nearby in a minor league baseball stadium, Maimonides Park. Spectators were asked to register for free tickets in advance.

Last year, though, there were no spectators allowed as Chestnut

ate a then-record 75 hot dogs and buns. He said Sunday that hearing the fans again helped propel him to victory.

"They kept pushing me. They didn't give up on me," he said in an ESPN interview. "Even if I was uncomfortable, having everybody cheer me and push me, it made me feel good."

Landmarks around the state, from the World Trade Center's centerpiece tower and the Empire State Building to Niagara Falls, were lit in red, white and blue to mark Independence Day.

"If the last 16 months has reaffirmed anything, it's how precious life is and how vital liberty is to our identity as New Yorkers and Americans," Gov. Andrew Cuomo said in a statement.

business

of the day quote

We have been in constant dialogue with the food service aggregators over last 15-18 months to resolve critical issues impacting the sector. However, despite all our efforts, we have unfortunately not been able to resolve them with the aggregators. The needle hasn't moved much on these issues

ANURAG KATRIAR | NRI PRESIDENT

Our CoWIN platform is a mirror of the success of the Digital India programme, which has witnessed a consistent upward growth trajectory, achieving numerous milestones and dotted with flagship initiatives

HARSH VARDHAN | UNION HEALTH MINISTER

We are delighted to extend the capabilities of our AI-powered cloud solutions to resolve and expedite the management and delivery operations for our partner organisations in this regard

SOHAM CHOKSHI | SHIPSY CEO

SHORT TAKES

Okaya forays into electric 2W segment

New Delhi: Inverter and battery manufacturer Okaya Group has forayed into Electric two-wheeler segment. Accordingly, Okaya EV, the electric vehicle division of Okaya Power Group has unveiled a range of 'Electric 2 Wheelers'. Besides, it has launched experience centres in Delhi and Jaipur. The company's 'Electric 2 Wheelers' are available in four variants, both in 'VRLA Lead Acid Battery' and 'Lithium Iron Phosphate' (LFP) battery. "Combined with two state-of-the-art research and development centers exclusively for 'Electric Vehicles' in India and one overseas, OKAYA EV is uniquely placed to bring out 'Electric 2 Wheelers' and bikes of future," said Anil Gupta, Managing Director, Okaya Power Group.

Shakti Bhog CMD in ED dragnet

New Delhi: The ED Monday said it has arrested Kewal Krishan Kumar, chairman and managing director (CMD) of Delhi-based Shakti Bhog Foods Limited, in a money laundering case linked to an alleged multi-crore bank loan fraud. Kumar was arrested Sunday here and later produced before a special Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) court that sent him to ED custody till July 9, the federal investigative agency said in a statement. The agency, prior to the arrest, also raided at least nine premises in Delhi and Haryana. "During the searches, various incriminating documents and digital evidences have been recovered," it said.

'Super Value Days' live on Amazon.in

New Delhi: Amazon announced 'Super Value Days' offering up to 45% off on grocery and household essentials, packaged foods, personal, baby and pet care and much more. Super Value Days will be live until July 7, 2021, with great prices and offers from participating sellers and the convenience of fast delivery. Customers can avail an additional discount of 10% on SBI Credit Cards with a minimum transaction of ₹2,500 from July 1-3 and on ICICI Debit & Credit Cards from July 4-7, 2021. ICICI Cash Back Credit Card holders can also avail an instant discount of 5% from July 4-7, 2021.



The next 10 years will see about 100 million young Indians enter the workforce seeking employment - a gigantic 22 percent of the increment in the global workforce

DK JOSHI | CRISIL'S CHIEF ECONOMIST

ZOMATO GETS SEBI GO-AHEAD TO FLOAT ₹8,250-CRORE IPO

Food delivery platform Zomato has received markets regulator Sebi's go-ahead to raise ₹8,250 crore through an initial share-sale. The IPO comprises fresh issue of equity shares worth ₹7,500 crore and an offer-for-sale to the tune of ₹750 crore by Info Edge (India) Ltd



FB, Google, Twitter could quit HK over proposed data laws

THE LAWS COULD MAKE THE TECH COMPANIES LIABLE FOR THE MALICIOUS SHARING OF INDIVIDUALS' INFORMATION ONLINE

REUTERS

New York, July 5: US tech giants Facebook Inc, Alphabet Inc's Google and Twitter Inc have privately warned the Hong Kong government that they could stop offering

their services in the city if authorities proceed with planned changes to data-protection laws, the Wall Street Journal reported Monday, citing a letter.

The laws could make the tech companies liable for the malicious sharing of individuals' information online, the newspaper added.

A letter sent by an industry group that includes the internet firms said companies are concerned that the planned rules to address "doxing" could put their staff at risk of criminal investigations or prosecutions related to what the firms' users post online, Journal reported.

Doxing is an act of revealing



people's personal information such as real name, home address or workplace online without the

user's permission. Facebook, Google and Twitter did not immediately respond to Reuters'

requests for a comment.

Hong Kong's Constitutional and Mainland Affairs Bureau in May proposed amendments to the city's data-protection laws that it said were needed to combat doxing, a practice that was prevalent during 2019 protests in the city, the newspaper said.

According to the newspaper, the letter dated June 25 was sent by Singapore-based Asia Internet Coalition.

"The only way to avoid these sanctions for technology companies would be to refrain from investing and offering the services in Hong Kong," the Journal reported, quoting the letter.

Household debt jumps to 37.3 pc of GDP in FY21

AGENCIES

Mumbai, July 5: Household debt has sharply jumped to 37.3 per cent of the GDP in the pandemic year from 32.5 per cent in FY20, says a report, confirming the deeper financial impact of COVID-19.

It also warned that the ratio may rise further this fiscal due to the second wave of the pandemic.

In fact, household debt has been steadily increasing ever since the GST implementation in July 2017, which was preceded by demonetisation in November 2016.

In four years since FY18, the household debt has jumped by 720 bps - from 30.1 per cent in FY18 which was the year of GST implementation, to 31.7 per cent in FY19, 32.5 per cent in FY20 and to a massive 37.3 per cent in FY21, according to the report by SBI Research Monday.

Household debt includes retail loans, crop loans and business loans from financial institutions like banks, credit societies, non-banks and housing finance companies.

The decline in bank deposits in FY21 and the concomitant increase in health expenditure may result in further increase in household debt to GDP ratio in FY22, as per the report, pencilled by Soumya Kanti Ghosh, the group chief economic adviser at State Bank of India (SBI). However, even at over 37 per cent, the household debt to GDP ratio is still lower than most other countries, he said.

During the initial lockdowns in 2020, deposits of all commercial banks increased due to less avenues to spend. However, subsequently they declined marginally in the festive months.

Services activity slumps at fastest rate in 11 months

AGENCIES

Bangalore, July 5: Activity in India's dominant services sector contracted sharply in June as tighter restrictions to contain a resurgence of coronavirus cases hammered demand and forced firms to shed jobs at a rapid clip, a survey showed Monday.

Asia's third largest economy, which has already recorded more than 400,000 COVID-19 deaths, is still reporting over 40,000 coronavirus cases per day, taking the total number of infections to over 30.5 million.

IHS Markit's Services Purchasing Managers' Index plunged to 41.2 last month from an already depressed 46.4 in May. That was its lowest reading since July 2020 and well below the 50-level separating growth from contraction.

"Given the current COVID-19 situation in India, it was expected that the service sector would take a hit," said Pollyanna De Lima, economics associate director at IHS Markit.

"PMI data for June showed quicker declines in new business, output and employment that were sharp but much softer than those



recorded in the first lockdown."

Muted demand sank the new business sub-index to its lowest since July 2020.

As a result, firms shed headcount for a seventh straight month, with the fastest reduction rate recorded in June. A Reuters poll taken around a month ago showed the job crisis may worsen over the coming year.

The depressed services sector results are in line with the overall downturn in business activity, underscored by a sister survey on Thursday which showed manufacturing activity contracted for the first time in

almost a year in June.

Input prices rose again last month on high raw material and transportation costs, indicating inflation could stay above the Reserve Bank of India's comfort range of 2-6% in coming months.

India's retail inflation rose above 6% in May to a six-month high. Yet the RBI is not expected to tighten monetary policy this fiscal year as it looks to support economic growth.

The contraction in both manufacturing and services activity sent the overall composite index plunging to 43.1 in June from 48.1 in May.

Residential sales surge by 83% YoY in Q2: JLL

AGENCIES

Mumbai, July 5: Residential sales in Q2 (April-June) 2021 increased by 83 per cent as compared to Q2 2020, across the top seven cities.

According to JLL's Residential Market Update - Q2 2021, released Tuesday, sales were driven by the low base effect, less stringent lockdowns, and accelerating vaccination drives during Q2 2021, demonstrating improved resilience in the market. By comparison, in Q1 2021, sales of residential units continued an upward trajectory, increasing by 17 per cent on a sequential basis.

During the first wave of Covid-19, residential sales dropped by a record 61 per cent quarter-on-quarter to 10,753 units in Q2 2020. However, the impact of the second wave has been limited with sales in Q2 2021 dipping by 23 per cent to 19,635 units. Sales of more than 45,000 residential units were recorded in H1 2021 as against 38,204 units in H1 2020, an increase of 18 per cent YoY. The sustained levels of residential sales present clear signs of demand and buyer confidence coming back to the market.

The need for secured tangible assets and aspirations to own larger homes as remote working becomes the new norm is driving sales of residential properties across the country. Siva Krishnan, Head - Residential,



India, JLL said. "Development focus on mid and affordable segments continued in H1 2021 with 72 per cent of the new launches in the sub ₹10 million category. Moving ahead, while the focus on these price segments is expected to continue, developers are likely to consider new launches of larger-sized apartments in order to capture changing consumer preferences."

Mumbai has consistently been the largest contributor to sales over the past five quarters. In H1 2021, Mumbai accounted for 26 per cent of the total sales. Furthermore, Delhi NCR, Pune, and Hyderabad followed, each contributing 15 per cent or more.

Samantak Das, Chief Economist and Head Research & REIS, India, JLL said: "The residential sector displayed improved resilience in Q2 2021 when compared to Q1 2021. There is no denying the fact that the second Covid-19 wave dented the market following a good recovery curve."

OAIMA URGES STATE GOVT TO BUY FARM IMPLEMENTS

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 5: Orissa Agricultural Implements Manufacturers Association (OAIMA) expressed its concerns as the manufacturers didn't receive any orders from the state government since the Covid-19 outbreak in Odisha.

"Agriculture Department, Government of Odisha procures agricultural implements like harvesters, tractors, power tillers, pumps and manual/bullock drawn and small power agricultural implements. Since start of Covid-19 in 2020 till now practically no orders/meagre orders are being issued by executive engineers of the districts. This year, Kharif sowing season has started but no orders for implements have been placed for reasons unknown to manufacturers," OAIMA stated.

OAIMA appealed to the government to place orders to state



micro & small enterprises for purchase of implements on priority basis. The members also said that the implements are supplied to farmers at subsidy prescribed for each big implement and at 50% subsidy for manual/bullock drawn and small power agricultural implements on sharing basis by state and central governments. The association sought urgent intervention from the state government for release of pending payments and orders for manual/bullock drawn and small power implements.

Paytm to file draft prospectus next week for \$2.3 billion IPO

REUTERS

New Delhi, July 5: One97 Communications Ltd, the parent of Indian payments firm Paytm, will file a draft prospectus as early as July 12 for a domestic initial public offering (IPO) that seeks to raise \$2.3 billion, two sources close to the matter said Monday.

The money will be raised via sale of new Paytm stock as well as a secondary offering of shares at an expected valuation of \$24 billion to \$25 billion with an option to raise the amount at a later stage if required, the sources said, declining to be named as the matter is not public. Paytm's proposed \$2.3 billion IPO will make it India's third-biggest public listing in dollar terms after state-run miner Coal India in 2010 and Reliance Power in 2008. The prospectus will be filed



shortly after Paytm's extraordinary general meeting (EGM) of shareholders in Delhi July 12, possibly on the same day, the sources added. Paytm declined to comment.

Paytm, which counts China's Alibaba and Japan's SoftBank as backers, is seeking shareholder approval at the EGM to sell up to

120 billion rupees (\$1.61 billion) in new stock and have an option to retain an over-subscription of up to 1 per cent, Reuters reported previously. There were \$3.6 billion worth of IPOs in India in the first half of 2021, up from \$1.1 billion at the same time last year, according to Refinitiv.

The challenges facing Amazon's new CEO, Andy Jassy

REUTERS

New York, July 5: Amazon.com Inc Monday got a new chief executive: Andy Jassy, the mastermind behind its lucrative cloud computing division, who succeeds company founder Jeff Bezos.

Here's a look at the business Jassy is taking over and the challenges that await him on the job.

MORE THAN 'EVERYTHING STORE'

Bezos incorporated Amazon exactly 27 years ago. The internet bookseller he founded out of a garage has morphed into a purveyor of virtually any consumer good, online and in physical stores. It has grown far beyond even that: Jassy built an enormously profitable and market-leading business, Amazon Web Services, that

runs data centers serving a wide range of corporate computing needs. Amazon is also expanding further afield into Hollywood and healthcare.

Amazon's stock started out at \$1.50 per share, when adjusting for future equity splits. It now trades at more than \$3,500 per share and is worth over \$1.7 trillion total, making it one of the most valuable companies in the world.

Amazon's annual profit almost doubled in 2020 to \$21.3 billion. That's partly because the COVID-19 pandemic encouraged more consumers to shop online, helping the company grow revenue 38% to \$386.1 billion.



REGULATORY PUSHBACK

With size has come greater scrutiny. Long chased by global regulators on issues such as taxation and data collection, Amazon now is fending off antitrust complaints that could lead to big fines.

US President Joe Biden recently appointed a prominent tech critic, Lina Khan, to run the Federal Trade Commission, which is investigating Amazon.

Though the details of the probe aren't public, it is expected to involve Amazon's con-

flict of interest as a retailer of its own products that compete with third-party merchants on its platform. Amazon has been accused of using the proprietary data of third-party vendors to make cheaper, private-label versions of their products. Amazon contests these claims.

Meanwhile, Congress is considering new antitrust laws that could alter Amazon's business.

CHALLENGES CLOSER TO HOME

Amazon also faces challenges from some of the biggest U.S. companies. Walmart Inc, for instance, is chasing after Amazon's home turf with a package delivery club of its own, while Microsoft Corp has signed deals in the

cloud with top enterprises - Walmart included - to narrow the lead of Jassy's AWS.

Jassy also faces potential disruption from within. Amazon is grappling with unionization interest among warehouse employees and potentially other workers. Although it handily beat back an organizing effort at its Bessemer, Alabama, fulfillment center, labor groups including the Teamsters vow that the fight is only beginning.

The company likewise is hoping to maintain its allure among of fice staff, as some startups offer tech jobs with more flexible work schedules. The company initially said it planned an "office-centric culture," but it soon updated guidance to requiring in-person work three days a week, in line with industry peers.



LORENZO INSIGNE

Football powerhouses Spain, Italy take their respective unbeaten runs into the semifinals at the Euro 2020

CLASH OF TITANS

Perhaps. Or was it the fact that Spain was the leading scorer at Euro 2020? Maybe. Or the fact that La Roja is on an unbeaten streak stretching back to October, a run of 13 games? Quite possibly.

Spain's opponent in the European Championship semifinals Tuesday might have something to say about all that.

Italy, another of the continent's traditional powers, brings an even better run of form to Wembley Stadium — a na-

in the round of 16. The elimination of top-ranked Belgium in the quarterfinals. Maybe Enrique isn't aware, but Italy is rolling at the moment.

This might be a match between teams who have almost forgotten what it feels like to lose — Spain has only one defeat in its last 29 games — but Italy looks to have the edge, at both ends of the field.

Much has changed since Roberto Mancini took charge in May 2018, with the team having evolved into a high-energy unit that presses hard and attacks at pace. But the Azzurri's defense needs little introduction.

Formidable center backs Leonardo Bonucci and Giorgio Chiellini are still holding the fort, like they have been for more than a decade, and Italy has conceded only two goals so far.

Spain's defense, on the other hand, is a work in progress while center back Aymeric Laporte integrates following his switch of nationality from France.

In attack, striker Alvaro Morata continues to frustrate for Spain and Luis Enrique has seemingly yet to settle on his preferred wingers. Italy, though, has had strong and reliable performances from striker Ciro Immobile and wide forward Lorenzo Insigne, the scorer of the decisive second goal against Belgium.

It's in midfield where Spain can seriously challenge Italy, potentially making it the department where the match could be won or lost. Jorginho, Nicola Barella and probably Marco Verratti for Italy versus Sergio Busquets, Pedri Gonzalez and Koke for Spain is a must-

watch duel all by itself.

Neither team has made it this far in a major international competition since 2012, when they met in the European Championship final in Kyiv. Spain won that match 4-0. Two players remain from each country: Bonucci and Chiellini for Italy, and Jordi Alba and Busquets for Spain.

So while this is far from uncharted territory for two countries with nine European Championship or World Cup titles be-



PEDRI

tween them, it is for most of the players involved.

Expect the Spanish to have the majority of possession, but maybe by not as much as they are accustomed. And expect the Italians to launch quick counterattacks from turnover balls, seeking to get behind the aging Busquets and attack the soft center of Spain's defense.

A win for Spain, which has the

youngest squad at the tournament, sets up the prospect of a third European Championship title in four editions and potentially the start of new period of success for a nation that dominated world soccer from 2008-12.

A win for Italy surely means Mancini's team would enter the final as the favorites, no matter who wins the second semifinal match between England and Denmark.

TALKING POINTS

FORM

- The first Euro 2020 semifinal matchup was determined Friday after Italy beat top-ranked Belgium 2-1 in Munich and Spain defeated Switzerland in a penalty shootout in St. Petersburg.
- Italy are Europe's hottest team, extending their unbeaten run to 32 matches and its winning streak to 13 with Friday's result. By contrast, Spain is on a 12-match unbeaten run and drew their opening two group matches.

GOAL THREAT

- The match will be a face-off between the tournament's top-scoring teams, as it stands. Spain has found the net 12 times after opening with a scoreless draw against Sweden, while Italy has 11 goals.
- The goals have been shared throughout the teams with neither having a player who has scored more than two. Ciro Immobile, Matteo Pessina, Manuel Locatelli and Lorenzo Insigne have two each for Italy, and Pablo Sarabia, Ferran Torres and Alvaro Morata have the same amount for Spain.

HISTORY

- Their most recent meetings came in qualifying for the 2018 World Cup. Italy's loss and draw against Spain contributed to the team failing to qualify for the tournament for only the second time.
- The last time either team reached a major tournament final was in 2012, when Spain beat Italy 4-0 to defend their European title.
- Italy prevented Spain from winning a third consecutive European Championship by beating the defending champions 2-0 in the round of 16 at Euro 2016.
- The Spanish beat Italy on penalties in the Euro 2008 quarterfinals before ending their 44-year trophy drought.

COACHES

- Spain coach Luis Enrique was playing for his country at the 1994 World Cup when his nose was broken in the quarterfinals by Italy defender Mauro Tassotti. Italy went on to reach the final that year, losing to Brazil on penalties.
- Italy coach Roberto Mancini wasn't part of his country's squad at the 1994 World Cup because he opted out of international duty after not being sure of playing time. His return to the Italian national team only came in 2018, when he was hired as coach.

ASSOCIATED PRESS

London, July 5: Luis Enrique thought for a couple of seconds, looked straight back at the questioner, and gave the curtest of replies. "No," said the Spain coach, with the blankest of looks on his face, after being asked if he had seen a better team than his at the European Championship.

An answer out of blind loyalty?

Confident Brazil take on Peru in Copa semis



ASSOCIATED PRESS

Rio de Janeiro, July 5: Defending Copa America champion Brazil is still regarded as the team to beat — not bad for a tournament some of their players didn't even want to be in.

Few expect that favorite tag to change as Brazil gets ready for Monday's semifinal against Peru, a team that the Selecao thrashed 4-0 two weeks ago in the group stage.

The winner at the Nilton Santos Stadium here will play Saturday's final at the historic Maracana Stadium against Argentina or Colombia, which play Tuesday.

"It is obvious we are favorites for being at home, but we need to know how to deal with that," Brazil midfielder Fred said at a news conference Sunday. "Players want to have the match of their lives against Brazil. The last one (beating Chile 1-0 in the quarterfinals) was tough, but the next will be tougher. Peru will be motivated, trying to win, it will be the match of their lives."

Brazil and Peru played in the 2019 Copa America final, with host Brazil winning 3-1 before nearly 70,000 fans. Monday's match will be played without fans due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Two key strikers won't be playing in the semifinal. Brazil's Gabriel

Jesus and Peru's Andre Carrillo (against Paraguay) were sent off during the quarterfinals. Brazil's Everton, one of the top scorers at the 2019 Copa America edition, and veteran Christian Cueva are set to take their places.

Brazil advanced to the semifinals after a hard-fought win with 10 men for almost all of the second half against Chile.

Peru recovered from their 0-4 defeat against the hosts by beating Colombia and Venezuela and securing a draw with Ecuador. It reached the semifinals on penalties after a 3-3 draw with Paraguay.

"We will have the chance to face Brazil and correct all the things that went wrong in the first match," Peru coach Ricardo Gareca said. "Brazil continues to be a very powerful team, this Brazil is very good. Our team is also improving."

Alex Sandro, Neymar, Everton Ribeiro and Richarlison scored for Brazil against Peru. Peru will look to striker Gianluca Lapadula, replacing their all-time top scorer Paolo Guerrero who missed the tournament due to a knee injury.

Brazil will once again count on Neymar, their best player in the tournament so far, who finished the clash against Chile in a state of exhaustion, along with many of his teammates.

SHAW, PADIKKAL'S UK TOUR IN DOUBT

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, July 5: The Indian team management in England wants young openers Prithvi Shaw and Devdutt Padikkal to join the side but questions are being raised about whether chairman of selectors Chetan Sharma is on the same page as the think-tank.

There are big questions in the corridors of Indian cricket as to how Bengal opener Abhimanyu Easwaran made it to the England-bound team as a stand-by after a disastrous 2019-20 Ranji season and an equally dismal A tour of New Zealand.

It can be concluded that Easwaran is not believed to be technically ready for top quality Test cricket and his selection ahead of two form players like Shaw and Padikkal is bound to raise a few eyebrows.

"Shubman Gill has been ruled out of the entire Test series in the UK with shin splints that will take

minimum three months to heal.

"The team's administrative manager, at the end of last month, had sent an e-mailed requisition to former pacer Sharma asking for two more openers to be sent to the UK," a senior BCCI source privy to developments told this agency on the condition of anonymity.

However, despite being aware of the magnitude of Gill's injury, Sharma is believed to have not paid much heed to team management's requests.

It now remains to be seen if they put in a formal request for sending Shaw and Padikkal, to BCCI president Sourav Ganguly and secretary Jay Shah. Shah is also the convenor of senior selection committee.

"The BCCI president hasn't yet received any formal request about sending Shaw and Padikkal to the United Kingdom. They are in Sri Lanka for the white ball series but obviously after it ends July 26, both can be flown in. But I think, team management wants them to join be-



fore entering the bio-bubble in Durham," the source said.

In fact, had Sharma paid heed to the requisition of the team management from last month, Shaw and Padikkal could have reached England on time for the practice game.

When asked what if the team management specifically asks for Shaw, the official said: "Let them put forth an official mail and then it can be taken forward. Also Prithvi



is an integral part of the white ball team in Sri Lanka now and his focus is fully on that tour. You already have 23 players in UK, including three specialist openers, even if we discount Easwaran."

However, the discussions about getting Shaw back in the red ball scheme of things is raising questions about whether Sharma and his panel is on the same page as the team management.

"In terms of quality Easwaran

and Prithvi can't be even compared. Prithvi is miles ahead of Easwaran in terms of sheer talent and don't forget he has already scored a Test hundred. He has been in great form of late.

"But then he should have been in England in the first place and not in Sri Lanka," a former national selector, who has had a role in creating India's bench strength, said.

"But you can have a counter argument that all the runs he scored have been in white ball cricket and he hasn't had any chance to show that he is back in form as far as red ball game is concerned.

"Look if you haven't picked Prithvi right away then picking him now will send a signal that Easwaran was a wrong selection. That (Easwaran) kid will also end up losing confidence. Devdutt is destined to be a big star if things fall in place and even if he is not sent now, becoming an all-format star is just a matter of time for him," the ex-selector said.

Flag bearers named for Games



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, July 5: Celebrated boxer MC Mary Kom and men's hockey team skipper Manpreet Singh will be flag bearers at opening ceremony of Tokyo Olympics. One of India's biggest hopes, wrestler Bajrang Punia will be flag bearer at the closing ceremony August 8.



The Indian Olympic Association (IOA) has communicated the decision in this regard to the Organising Committee of the Games.

In a first, India is having two flag-bearers — one male and one female — at the upcoming Tokyo Games to ensure "gender parity". This was recently informed by IOA chief Narinder Batra.

The country's lone individual

Olympic gold-medallist Abhinav Bindra was the flag-bearer at the opening ceremony of the 2016 Games in Rio de Janeiro.

The Tokyo Games are scheduled to open July 23 and over 100 Indian athletes would be gunning for podium finishes at the showpiece, which was postponed by a year because of the COVID-19 pandemic.

At its executive board meeting last year, the International Olympic Committee had made provisions for flag-bearers from both genders at the opening ceremony.

"The IOC Executive Board also decided that there should be — for the first time ever — at least one female and one male athlete in every one of the 206 teams and the IOC Refugee Olympic Team participating at the Games of the Olympiad," IOC chief Thomas Bach had said.

DJOKO JOINED BY PARADE OF NEWCOMERS IN LAST 8

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Wimbledon, July 5: Novak Djokovic reached his 12th Wimbledon quarterfinal Monday to pull even with Arthur Gore, who had a 117-year head start, while a parade of newcomers also made the final eight.

First-timers on the men's side included Canadian Denis Shapovalov, Italian Matteo Berrettini, Marton Fucsovics of Hungary and Russian Karen Khachanov, who won a bizarre fifth set to beat American Sebastian Korda on his 21st birthday.

Women advancing to their first Wimbledon quarterfinal included No.1-seeded Ash Barty, No.2 Aryna Sabalenka of Belarus, Tunisian Ons Jabeur and Karolina Pliskova of the Czech Republic.

Djokovic, the two-time defending

champion, held every service game to tie Gore and beat No.17 Cristian Garin, 6-2, 6-4, 6-2.

Khachanov outlasted Korda 3-6, 6-4, 6-3, 5-7, 10-8. Khachanov will next face the No.10-seeded Shapovalov, who beat Roberto Bautista Agut 6-1, 6-3, 7-5. Berrettini became the first Italian man in 23 years to reach the Wimbledon quarterfinals by ousting Ilya Ivashka 6-4, 6-3, 6-1.

29-year-old Fucsovics became the first Hungarian to reach the Wimbledon men's quarterfinals since 1948 by upsetting No.5 Andrey Rublev 6-3, 4-6, 4-6, 6-0, 6-3.

Jabeur became the first Arab woman to reach the quarters by rallying past Iga Swiatek 5-7, 6-1, 6-1. Barty ended French Open champion Barbora Krejickova's 15-match win streak, 7-5, 6-3.