



FRIDA FAN

Actor Tisca Chopra says Mexican painter Frida Kahlo continues to inspire her in many ways

LEISURE P2



MATTER OF CONCERN

Delhi records an increase of 125% in NO2 pollution between April 2020 and April 2021

TWO STATES P8



FEDERER BOWS OUT

Roger Federer's Wimbledon campaign ended with a straight-set loss to Hubert Hurkacz of Poland

SPORTS P12

IRREGULAR by MANJUL



He says he's mourning Dillip saab, not his exit from the Cabinet!

SHORT TAKES

Former minister's spouse murdered

New Delhi: Kitty Kumaramangalam, 68, wife of former Union Minister PR Kumaramangalam was murdered Tuesday night inside her house in south Delhi's Vasant Vihar, the Delhi Police said Wednesday. They arrested Wednesday morning 24-year-old suspect Raju Lakhan. Police said Lakhan, a washerman had been visiting the house daily for the last five years. He was arrested after Kumaramangalam's domestic help said Lakhan visited the house Tuesday at 9.00pm with two accomplices. She informed that all three entered Kitty's room.

Gunmen assassinate Haiti President Moise

Port-au-Prince (Haiti): Gunmen assassinated Haitian President Jovenel Moise and wounded his wife in their home early Wednesday, inflicting more chaos on the unstable Caribbean country that was already enduring an escalation of gang violence, anti-government protests and a recent surge in coronavirus infections. Claude Joseph, the interim prime minister, confirmed the killing and said the police and military were in control of security in Haiti, where a history of dictatorship and political upheaval has long stymied the consolidation of democratic rule. **P10**

MARKET WATCH

INDEX	VARIATION
SENSEX	53054.76 ↑ 193.58
NIFTY	15879.70 ↑ 61.40
DOLLAR	75.35 ↑ ₹0.15
EURO	88.08 ↓ ₹0.08
GOLD	₹47,801 ↑ ₹117
SILVER	₹69,227 ↓ ₹285

WEATHER

	BHUB	CTK
TEMP MAX	33.8°C	33.8°C
TEMP MIN	27.6°C	25.0°C
Humidity	79%	77%
Rainfall	Nil	Nil

Forecast: Light rain very likely



PROTESTS CONTINUE AGAINST FUEL PRICE RISE : As petrol price crossed the ₹100-mark per litre TMC supporters in Kolkata protested by carrying motorcycles on hand-pulled carts. They also voiced their dissent against the increase in LPG cylinder prices **PTI PHOTO**

2 from Odisha in ministry

36 NEW MINISTERS IN CABINET, 7 ELEVATED, 12 SENT PACKING TO COUNTER CRITICISM

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, July 7: In a major overhaul, Prime Minister Narendra Modi brought in Sarbananda Sonowal, Narayan Rane and Jyotiraditya Scindia in the Cabinet while dropping 12 including Health Minister Harsh Vardhan, IT and Law Minister Ravi Shankar Prasad and I&B Minister Prakash Javadekar. Odisha's Ashwini Vaishnaw, a Rajya Sabha member was sworn in as a Cabinet Minister while Bishweswar Tudu, Lok Sabha MP from Mayurbhanj was given the role of a Minister of State (MoS).

Fifteen Cabinet ministers and 28 Ministers of State (MoS), comprising new faces and those elevated, were sworn in Wednesday at a ceremony held at the Rashtrapati Bhavan here. This is the first reshuffle in the Council of Ministers by Modi since he assumed

ASHWINI GETS RAIL, IT; PRADHAN LOSES OIL

NEW DELHI: Odisha's new inductees into the Modi Cabinet Ashwini Vaishnaw and Bishweswar Tudu were allocated their respective portfolios while Dharmendra Pradhan was shifted from the Ministry of Petroleum & Natural Gas and Steel. Ashwini was given charge of the Railways, Electronics, IT and Communications Ministry. This incidentally is the first time that Odisha has got the prestigious Railway Ministry. Tudu was made Minister of State (MoS) for Tribal Affairs and Jal Shakti. Pradhan, on the other hand, was given charge of the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship. Earlier in the day, Balasore MP and MSME & Animal Husbandry Minister (MoS) Pratap Sarangi had resigned from his position.

charge for a second term in May 2019.

An extensive and protracted review was carried out by Modi and the BJP top brass through a series of meetings with ministers ahead of Wednesday's big exercise. These meetings were also held in the wake of widespread criticism of the Central government's handling of the Covid-19 crisis.

Rane, 69, a Rajya Sabha MP and a former Maharashtra CM, was the

first to take oath. He was followed by former Assam CM Sonowal who took oath in English. The 58-year-old leader has earlier served as Union Minister of State (Independent charge).

Jyotiraditya Scindia, a Rajya Sabha MP from Madhya Pradesh, also took oath as a Cabinet minister. The 50-year-old leader was Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Power and Union Minister of State for

Commerce & Communications in the earlier UPA government.

Lok Sabha MP from Tikamgarh in Madhya Pradesh, Virendra Kumar, RS MP from Bihar and JD(U) leader RCP Singh and Lok Sabha MP from Bihar's Hajipur, Pashupati Kumar Paras, were also sworn-in as Cabinet ministers. Kiren Rijju, RK Singh, Hardeep Singh Puri, Mansukh Mandaviya, Parshottam Rupala, G Kishan Reddy and Anurag Thakur were elevated and reassigned.

A total of 28 Ministers of State took oath including seven from Uttar Pradesh which goes to polls next year with the BJP seeking a second term there. Pankaj Choudhary, Anupriya Patel, Bhanu Pratap Singh Verma, Kaushal Kishore, SPS Baghel and Ajay Kumar - all Lok Sabha MPs from Uttar Pradesh - took oath as new Union Ministers of State.

Centre concerned over fatality rate

UNION HEALTH SECRETARY ASKS ODISHA GOVT TO MONITOR ALL DEATHS

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 7: Even though the number of Covid-19 cases in Odisha is decreasing on a daily basis, some districts are still demonstrating high test positivity rate (TPR). Keeping this situation in mind, the Centre has asked the Odisha government to take a slew of measures before the situation slips out of control.

Union Health Secretary Rajesh Bhushan has written a letter to Chief Secretary Suresh Chandra Mahapatra in this regard. Stating that Odisha has a low fatality rate of less than 0.46 per cent, Bhushan wrote, "There still has been an increase in the number of deaths reported by the state over

Highest one-day fatality

BHUBANESWAR: Odisha reported Wednesday 59 new fatalities due to Covid-19, taking the total tally in the state to 4,358. This incidentally is the highest number of deaths reported in the state in the span of 24 hours since the outbreak of the pandemic. Ten deaths were reported from Khurda district while Bargarh, Dhenkanal and Puri registered five deaths each. Odisha also reported 2,602 new cases Wednesday. **P4**

the past two weeks. Khurda district has reported 58 deaths in the last week, which is the highest in Odisha. The total number of deaths is 309 in Odisha for the same period."

In the letter, Bhushan also talked about the high fatality rate. "All facilities should be monitored with respect to the overall fatality, including deaths being reported between 24, 48, and 72 hours of hospitalisation to identify any weak spots and to undertake required corrective action," the letter stated.

Bhushan also said that five districts - Balasore, Cuttack, Jagatsinghpur, Kendrapara, and Khurda have shown an increase in positivity rate in for the week ending July 4 in comparison to the week before. He said it was a matter of concern as the TPR in the districts of Balasore, Nuapada and Dhenkanal is more than 10 per cent at present.

NOW DOORSTEP EDUCATION FOR ODISHA STUDENTS

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 7: The Odisha government has taken a new initiative for primary school students deprived of online classes in remote areas of Odisha. The School & Mass Education Department has decided to assign teaching students to provide education at their doorsteps during the Covid-19 pandemic, minister Samir Ranjan Dash informed Wednesday. A total of 10,000 such persons will be appointed for the job," Dash informed. The minister stated that each teaching scholar will be imparting education to at least 10 students in remote areas without internet facilities.

Billionaires brace for solar power battle

AMBANI'S ENTRY INTO RENEWABLE ENERGY SECTOR MAY AFFECT ADANI'S PLANS

AGENCIES

Chennai, July 7: Well the battle between two of India's top billionaires is set to attract all the attention. Mukesh Ambani's \$10 billion entry into renewable energy could drive solar tariffs further to the ground and ignite bidding wars with fellow billionaire Gautam Adani, according to industry analysts. Two of India's richest men are vying to be at the forefront of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's ambi-

tion to ramp up green energy capacity more than four-fold to 450 gigawatts (GW) by 2030.

Both Ambani and Adani have avoided stepping into each other's territory. However, the renewable energy push by Ambani's flagship Reliance Industries and the Adani Group of Companies will be the highest profile faceoff between them. Call it coincidence - Modi, Ambani and Adani have their roots in Gujarat.

Ambani announced in June that his group will build 100 GW in solar energy capacity over the next nine years. He stated his group would spend \$10 billion over the next three years in building solar manufacturing units, a battery factory for energy storage, a fuel cell factory, and a unit to pro-



AMBANI WILL INVEST USD 10 BILLION TO BUILD SOLAR ENERGY UNITS IN THE NEXT 3 YEARS

INDIA'S TARGET IS TO PRODUCE 450 GW OF GREEN ENERGY BY 2030

duce green hydrogen.

Three days later, Adani announced that his green energy venture would add five GW every year this decade, from a current level of about 3.5 GW.

Analysts say there is sufficient space for multiple companies to grow as a part of India's ambitious green energy target, but tariffs could fall further as companies try to outdo

each other in aggressive bidding wars to win projects. Solar tariffs in India are already among the lowest in the world. They have fallen below two rupees per kilowatt hour in auctions conducted in Gujarat.

"I would expect by 2030 that they (solar tariffs) will probably touch rupees one per kilowatt hour in India," Tim Buckley, director of energy fi-

nance studies at the Institute of Energy Economics and Financial Analysis was quoted as saying by 'Reuters'.

Both groups are trying to improve their clean energy credentials as investors pay more attention to the environmental impact of their businesses and make decisions based on ESG ratings, analysts say. One of Adani's main businesses, Adani Green Energy, currently dominates India's renewable space. Its shares have soared over 156 per cent in the past year.

Reliance has a track record of disrupting rival businesses. With cheap smartphones and data plans, its telecom venture 'Jio' has in five years dethroned market leaders Vodafone Idea and Bharti Airtel to become the largest telecom operator in India.

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ICONIC DILIP KUMAR BREATHES HIS LAST



Melancholy's own child bids farewell

AGENCIES

Mumbai, July 7: Legendary actor Dilip Kumar, who embodied the best of India through his films and seven decades in public life, died at a hospital here Wednesday morning after prolonged illness. He was 98. Kumar, an enduring film legend through the decades, had been admitted to the hospital, a non-Covid-19 facility, since last Tuesday. In June also he had been admitted to the same hospital a number of times due to age-related ailments. The "tragedy king" of Indian cinema is survived by his wife Saira Banu. His last rites were performed in Juhu Qabristan at Santacruz, Wednesday evening.

"He passed away due to prolonged illness at 7.30 am," Dr Jalil Parkar, who had been treating Kumar stated. "With a heavy heart and profound grief, I announce the passing away of our beloved Dilip Saab, few minutes ago. We are from God and to Him we return." family friend Faisal Farooqui posted from the actor's Twitter handle at 8.01am.

Kumar was also nominated to the Rajya Sabha for one term, awarded the Padma Bhushan (1991) and the Padma Vibhushan (2015). He also served as sheriff of Mumbai. **MORE P5**

Kumar's body was taken to his Pali Hill residence around 9.30am where friends, colleagues and fans, including Dharmendra, Shabana Azmi, Vidya Balan and producer Siddharth Roy Kapur paid their respects. One of the first to arrive at his residence was Shah Rukh Khan and filmmaker Karan Johar.

Petrol hits century in all metro cities

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, July 7: Petrol price Wednesday crossed the ₹100-a-litre mark in both Delhi and Kolkata after fuel prices were hiked again on the back of firming international oil rates. In the process, petrol price achieved the dubious distinction of hitting a century in all the metros.

Petrol price was increased by 35 paise per litre, while diesel rates were increased by 17 paise a litre, according to a price notification from state-owned fuel retailers. In Delhi, the price of petrol soared to ₹100.21 per litre and diesel rates rose to ₹89.53 a litre.

The national capital and Kolkata are the last of the metro cities to see petrol rising above the ₹100-a-litre mark. Mumbai, Chennai, Hyderabad, Bangalore and Pune already have prices above that mark. Petrol in

LEFT PARTIES CALL FOR BANDH JULY 15

BHUBANESWAR: Several Left parties including the CPI, CPI (M), Forward Block, CPI-M (Liberation) have called for a bandh in the state July 15 to protest against exorbitant hike in fuel prices and other essential commodities, a source said Wednesday. The bandh will be for six hours from 6.00am to 12.00 noon. Movement of vehicles will be prevented and business establishments will remain closed during the bandh, a senior Left leader informed.

CITY FUEL PRICES

PETROL	₹101.07 (+0.35)
DIESEL	₹97.63 (+0.38)

Kolkata was being sold for ₹100.23 per litre Wednesday. The hike Wednesday is the 36th increase in the price of petrol since May 4.



HADID'S OPEN LETTER TO PRESS, PAPARAZZI AND FAN ACCOUNTS

Model Gigi Hadid has written a long open letter to the paparazzi, the press and fan accounts with an appeal to protect her 10-month-old daughter's privacy. Gigi, 26, has daughter Khai with boyfriend, singer Zayn Malik.

TARANTINO HAD TO CUT SCENE FROM QUATIH

Hollywood maverick Quentin Tarantino has revealed that one of his favourite parts of the film *Once Upon A Time In Hollywood*(OUATIH), where Leonardo DiCaprio and Julia Butters, have an emotional phone call conversation, had to be cut from the final edit.



FORTUNE FORECAST

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ARIES
Business affairs and love will flourish today. You can expect some monetary benefits and even some loans to be sanctioned. In love, you anticipate a romantic evening, where you will confide your deepest feelings to your beloved. Ganesh says you couldn't possibly ask for more.

TAURUS
Today, your passion for punctuality, for insistence on maintaining schedules is in for real appreciation. But, warns Ganesh, it could also create immediate and unexpected problems for some. You are like to become exceeding impatient restless as the day progresses.

GEMINI
The first half of the day may see you in a foul mood, and the reason for it is likely to be some mental worry that has been bothering you for quite some time now. If things worsen, it is best to see a doctor. You will feel the urge to do something that really appeals to you, in the evening, says Ganesh.

CANCER
With Ganesh's grace you will reap an unexpected gain, and help, joy and excitement on the home front. You will be affectionate towards family members. Yet in afternoon, you may have mood change. Ganesh counsels you to be calm, or else you will lose peace of mind.

LEO
You will think of decorating or renovating your house today. You will likely buy some new decorative articles for your house today. You will take a huge business related or financial risk today but due to Ganesh's blessings it will transform into substantial gain for you.

VIRGO
You will look up to your family to put you in high spirits, says Ganesh. However, you will have to loosen your purse strings and blow up some money on them to win their appreciation. Later in the evening you may start writing an account of a platonic affair.

LIBRA
Ganesh says you will be busy in work related to your business field. People in the field of research will gain success today. In legal matters that are pending, the judgment will be in your favor today. Solutions regarding the success of your business will come out too.

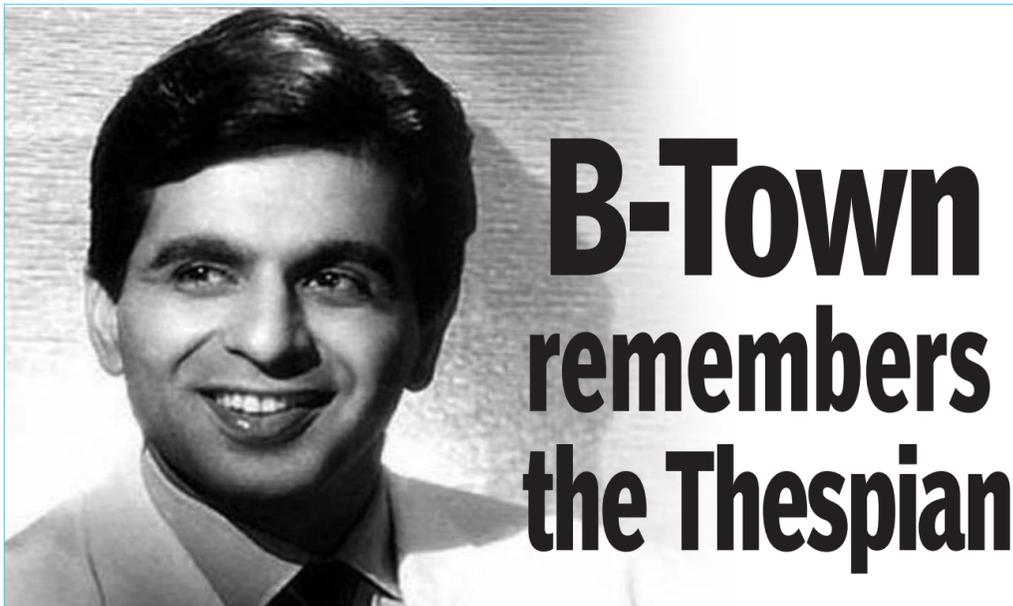
SCORPIO
Intoxicated by success, just make sure you do not get addicted to the luxuries of life, forgetting your roots. More the success, more the work. You are likely to be loaded with heaps of work in business. Keep your determination firm, and you shall reach for the stars.

SAGITTARIUS
Caught in a whirlpool of thoughts, you are likely to give a new look to your lovely abode. You plan to decorate it with rare artefacts and object de art. Evening will be high on romance as you treat your sweetheart and taste-buds with sumptuous dinner.

CAPRICORN
You don't shy away from working hard and today, at your work you will do everything to improve upon your performance. But, perfection seems distant no matter how hard you try, says Ganesh.

AQUARIUS
Your sudden inclination for philosophy and spirituality will make you spend a lot of money on the books related to the same. Don't ignore reality, rather maintain a balance between both the worlds, advises Ganesh. You must keep tab on your food intake and habits, and follow a healthy lifestyle.

PISCES
You are sensitive and considerate and that is the core of your charming attitude which will help you win over the opposite sex today. There is also a good chance that you will be getting into a long term relationship, feels Ganesh.



B-Town remembers the Thespian

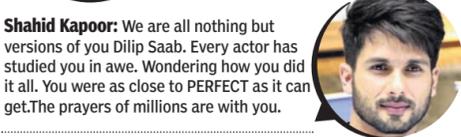
Tributes and condolences continued pouring in from the film fraternity for late legend Dilip Kumar all through Wednesday. Actors, singers, filmmakers and others associated with the film industry, especially whose lives he had touched, took to social media to mourn his demise, recall their experiences of meeting him and working with him



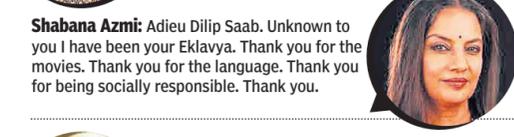
Salman Khan: Best actor Indian cinema has ever seen and will ever see ... #RIP Dilip Saab



Hema Malini: Veteran actor, exemplary role model for all heroes, my respected co star in Kranti, Dilip Kumar ji, is no more. My heart goes out to Saira ji, his life partner of many years, for this loss.



Shahid Kapoor: We are all nothing but versions of you Dilip Saab. Every actor has studied you in awe. Wondering how you did it all. You were as close to PERFECT as it can get. The prayers of millions are with you.



Shabana Azmi: Adieu Dilip Saab. Unknown to you I have been your Eklavya. Thank you for the movies. Thank you for the language. Thank you for being socially responsible. Thank you.



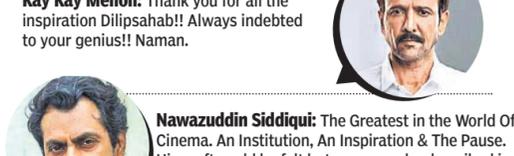
Anil Kapoor: Our world is a little less bright today because one of our brightest stars has left us for the heavens. He was and will always be the finest and greatest actor of our industry for me. Rest in peace Dilip Sahab, you remain in our minds and hearts forever.



Anupam Kher: The legend lives on!! There is and there will always be a part of #DilipKumar Saab in every Indian actor for generations to come! His performances were like magic. Thank you Sir for those amazing moments i could spend with you! You taught me so much about life, living & acting!!



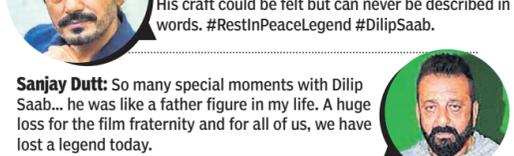
Madhuri Dixit: Every now & then some individuals come along who single-handedly alter the present & write history... One such legend was Dilip saab for the world of cinema.



Kay Kay Menon: Thank you for all the inspiration Dilipsahab!! Always indebted to your genius!! Naman.



Asha Bhosle: I'm very sad to hear that Dilip Saab is no longer with us. He was like a big brother to me. I have great admiration and respect for his wife Saira bhabhi who has really looked after and dedicated her life to him. Lots of love to her and the family. We share your grief.



Nawazuddin Siddiqui: The Greatest in the World of Cinema. An Institution, An Inspiration & The Pause. His craft could be felt but can never be described in words. #RestInPeaceLegend #DilipSaab.



Sanjay Dutt: So many special moments with Dilip Saab... he was like a father figure in my life. A huge loss for the film fraternity and for all of us, we have lost a legend today.

'Tea-time is always a good time'

Mumbai: Actress Tanisha Mukerji took to Instagram Wednesday afternoon and posted her tea-time pictures.

"Chaitime is always a good time! I love having a nice cup of tea after my meal. Rather than dessert! Chai is my dessert!" wrote Tanisha on social media.

In the picture post, Tanisha is seen sitting with a cup of tea looking out of a glass window. The actress is dressed in a white T-shirt and shorts.

Tanisha Mukerji made her digital debut recently in a short film directed by Vikram Razzan titled *Life Is Short*. She plays a delusional actress in the film.



FRIDA MANIA GRIPS TISCA CHOPRA

Mumbai: Actress Tisca Chopra Wednesday shared a post saying Mexican painter Frida Kahlo continues to inspire her in many ways.

Tisca posted a picture in her post dressed in a Frida Kahlo-printed saree on

Instagram. "It was Ms Frida Kahlo's 114th birthday yesterday. I count the years and what I wouldn't have done to meet her," Tisca wrote. She added: "#FridaKahlo continues to inspire me in so many ways... her existential search for identity, her toughness and joie de vivre in the face of pain and heartbreak... But beyond it all is her absolute defiance in letting her gender define her identity, her fluidity with her sexuality. Such is my #Fridamania that I had to have this #Frida sari," Tisca wrote as the caption.

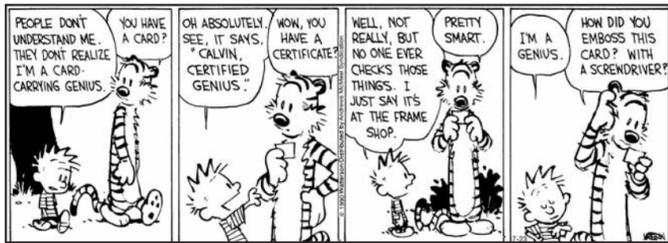
Tisca came out with her book *What's Up With Me?* in March. She was last seen on the big screen in the 2019 film *Good Newwz*.



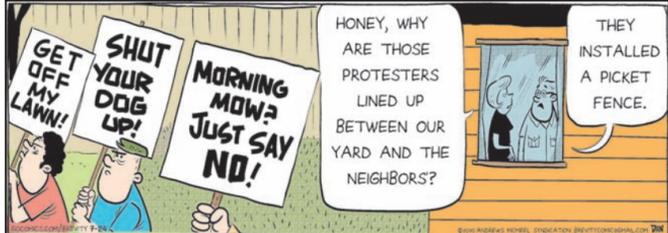
PEANUTS



CALVIN AND HOBBS

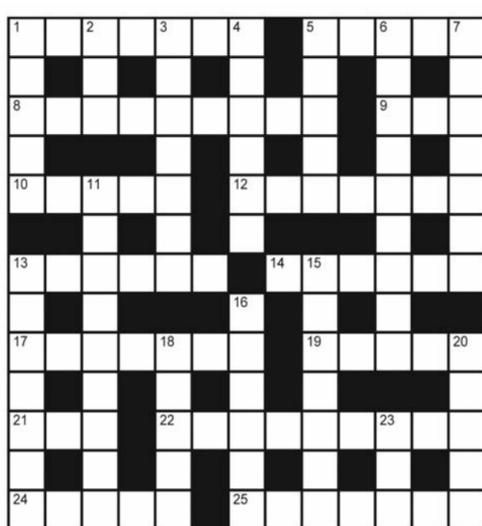


BREVITY



FUN post

CROSSWORD



- Across**
- 1 Ermines, e.g.
 - 5 Unit of length
 - 8 Cruise ship accommodations
 - 9 Upholstery problem
 - 10 Latin dance
 - 12 Wrench
 - 13 Sales lure
 - 14 British automaker
 - 17 Environs
 - 19 Fastener
 - 21 Luau souvenir
 - 22 Miss the runway?
 - 24 Hostile force
 - 25 Lots and lots, poetically
- Down**
- 1 Some stingers
 - 2 Menu words
 - 3 Deluxe
 - 4 Better half
 - 5 African killer
 - 6 Wolf spider
 - 7 Kind of penguin
 - 11 Gigolo
 - 13 Drive back
 - 15 Charge of wrongdoing
 - 16 Cry of satisfaction
 - 18 Often-missed humour
 - 20 Burger starter
 - 23 Possess

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.

3	2	5	6	1	9	7	8	4
6	8	7	4	5	3	9	2	1
4	1	9	2	7	8	3	6	5
5	6	1	3	8	4	2	9	7
2	3	4	7	9	5	8	1	6
9	7	8	1	2	6	5	4	3
7	5	2	8	4	1	6	3	9
8	4	3	9	6	7	1	5	2
1	9	6	5	3	2	4	7	8

SOLUTIONS

CROSSWORD

M	I	C	E	O	F	F	S	H	O	O	T
A	O	S	I	E	B	S	T	R			
C	A	V	E	M	A	N	D	U	S	T	Y
A	E	O	E	G	C	S					
B	U	R	B	O	T	R	E	S	U	L	T
R	T	I	E	R							
E	R	G	H	A	V	E	N	E	T	A	
A		Y	I								
M	E	L	O	D	Y	S	M	Y	R	N	A
A	L	R	E	B	O	L					
N	I	E	C	E	B	A	L	C	O	N	Y
G	O	A	O	E	K	S					
O	R	N	A	M	E	N	T				

SUDOKU

8	3	5	4	9	7	6	1	2
6	7	2	8	3	1	4	9	5
1	4	9	2	5	6	7	3	8
2	6	4	3	7	5	9	8	1
7	5	1	9	6	8	3	2	4
3	9	8	1	4	2	5	7	6
9	8	3	6	2	4	1	5	7
4	1	7	5	8	3	2	6	9
5	2	6	7	1	9	8	4	3

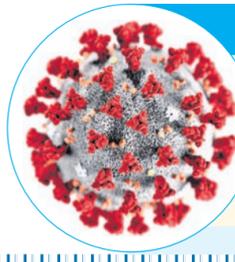
CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW

downtown



PLANTATION DRIVE

Rajya Sabha MP Subhash Singh and former MLA Debashish Samantaray among others plant samplings at Biren Mitra park in Cuttack to observe the Van Mahotsav Week, Wednesday



COVID-19 TRACKER

	INFECTED	RECOVERED	DEAD
World	18,55,72,620	16,98,36,974	40,12,279
India	3,06,63,665	2,97,99,534	4,04,211
Odisha	9,29,788	9,00,282	4,358

Cong begins 10-day stir over fuel price

PNN & AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, July 7: Hundreds of Congress party workers Wednesday held demonstrations in front of all block development offices in the state as the party launched a 10-day statewide agitation against the skyrocketing fuel prices.

Beating cymbals and bells, the Congress activists lodged their protests against the hike in prices of oil, cooking gas and other essential commodities. The agitation will continue in phases till July 17.

Odisha Pradesh Congress Committee (OPCC) president Niranjana Patnaik said the prices of petrol and diesel have crossed Rs 100 per litre in many cities due to additional taxes imposed by both the Union and state governments.



Congress activists stage a sit-in in front of the Sub-Collector's office in Bhubaneswar to protest against the frequent hike in fuel prices

The hike in oil prices has led to rise in the prices of essential commodities and hit the people hard,

Patnaik said. Condemning the fuel price hike at a time when the Covid pandemic has ruined the financial backbone of the people, Patnaik demanded rollback of the hike in taxes on petroleum products imposed both by the state government and the Centre.

As per the agitation programme, the Congress would organise demonstrations July 9 before all district headquarters, protesting the hike. On July 14, a state-level protest and agitation will be held in the state Capital, the party sources said.

The OPCC chief appealed to all people of the state not to buy petrol and diesel, and cooking gas July 15

OPCC CHIEF NIRANJANA PATNAIK SAID THE PRICES OF PETROL AND DIESEL HAVE CROSSED RS 100 PER LITRE IN MANY CITIES DUE TO ADDITIONAL TAXES IMPOSED BY BOTH THE UNION AND STATE GOVERNMENTS

HE DEMANDED ROLLBACK OF THE HIKE IN TAXES ON PETROLEUM PRODUCTS IMPOSED BOTH BY THE STATE GOVERNMENT AND THE CENTRE

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 Congress activists would launch a month-long door-to-door campaign to apprise people about the price hike and the anti-people policy of both the Union and state governments.

Meanwhile, the left parties gave a call for a six-hour Odisha bandh July 15 in protest against the hike in oil prices.

CPI state secretary Ashis Kanungo said the Odisha bandh called by CPI, CPI(M), CPIM (L) and Forward Bloc will be held from 6am to noon.

Kanungo said the vehicles will be off the roads and all commercial establishments will be closed on the day.

RT-PCR lab in every dist by August 15

COVID SITUATION LIKELY TO IMPROVE IN 14 DAYS, SAYS PK MOHAPATRA

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 7: The Health department Wednesday claimed that all 30 districts in the state would have at least one RT-PCR lab by August 15 in its attempt to boost the testing facilities for Covid-19.

The announcement was made by Health department Additional Chief Secretary PK Mohapatra. He also said that nine ECMO machines will also be made functional by August 15 at SCB Medical College and Hospital. The official also said that by the end of July, all required equipment for paediatric Covid ward would arrive in the state.

"By July-end or first week of August we may get all required equipment for paediatric treatment for Covid-19. Tender process for the same has been completed. Works have started to get RT-PCR labs in all the districts by August 15. These facilities will be set up at District Headquarters Hospitals (DHHs)," he said.

"We will install nine ECMO machines at SCB Medical College and Hospital. Manpower for the same



■ Nine ECMO machines will be made functional by August 15 at SCB Medical College and Hospital

■ By end of July, all required equipment for paediatric Covid ward would arrive in the state

will be trained in Kolkata and their training will be completed by July end. The machines will be ready by August 15," he said.

According to the official, there is no dearth of hospital beds in the state and the cases are reducing gradually. "Eighty per cent of active cases are now in home isolation. The state's positivity rate Wednesday stood at 3.49 per cent," he said.

He also added that the positivity rate in May was around 15.47 per cent. "This is going down slowly. Around 10 districts have reported TPR below 1 per cent and there

are 24 districts which show below 5 per cent and six districts are reporting above 5% TPR. The condition is likely to improve in the next 14 days," he said.

"ASHA and Anganwadi workers are making door-to-door visit. They had helped in identification of 1,15,162 Covid cases including around 75,000 comorbid cases," he said.

Past experiences and scientific studies hint that in case there is a third wave of the pandemic, it could come around October but the state government is equipped with required infrastructure to face it, he said.



Party workers holding a demonstration near Cuttack Collectorate

Not a single PMAY house in 9 dists: BJP

UNITED NEWS OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, July 7: The state unit of Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) launched three-day-long agitation across Odisha, protesting the alleged irregularities in the allotment of pucca houses to 'ineligible' beneficiaries under Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (PMAY). The party alleged that nine districts in the state did not get a single house under the PMAY.

The saffron party activists held demonstrations in front of all block offices in the state. The protest will continue till July 9.

BJP state president Samir Mohanty alleged a scam of Rs 1,000 crore in the allotment of houses under the PMAY and demanded a CBI inquiry into it.

Mohanty said an inquiry by a central team into the irregularities in the allotment of houses under PMAY in nine blocks spread over five districts exposed the scam.

He said an inquiry conducted by the central team has revealed that houses have been allotted to inel-

igible beneficiaries in the state.

The bank accounts of the beneficiaries have been changed to transfer the funds to other people, he said, adding the BDOs have transferred funds manually to 98,562 beneficiaries. The inquiry, Mohanty said, also found that most of the houses were incomplete and the construction was of inferior quality.

The BJP leader demanded the government to constitute a 'Jana Nirikhyana Committee' at the panchayat level to oversee the successful implementation of the central schemes. The committee, he said, comprising the village head, members of the youth and women organisations should check everything right from the selection of beneficiaries to the construction of houses for maintaining transparency in the process.

The BJP leader said not a single house has been allotted under the scheme in nine districts—Baragarh, Bolangir, Boudh, Kalahandi, Koraput, Nabarangpur, Rayagada, Sambalpur and Sundargarh.

CAR FEST AHEAD



Chitrakara servitors of Srimandir paint chariot parts ahead of the Rath Yatra in Puri, Wednesday

OP PHOTO

73 shops razed for Smart Janpath

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 7: About 73 shops were demolished Wednesday during a joint eviction drive by Bhubaneswar Development Authority (BDA), Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC), and Bhubaneswar Smart City Limited (BSCCL) for Smart Janpath project.

According to BSCCL sources, the evicted area will be transformed into a beautiful landscape under Smart Janpath while Smart Kiosks with a symmetrical design along the entire stretch of 5.8 km will uplift the overview between Sishu Bhawan and Vani Vihar Square.

The area under the evicted zone will also be developed as a utility corridor as planned under the Smart City Proposal to make way for the gas pipeline, optical fibre cable network and trunk supply pipelines of Water Corporation of Odisha Limited (Watco), among others. Moreover, a small shopping complex - Vendor Haat Plaza - will also be developed near the existing vending zone opposite to Satya Nagar Church.

"The work for Smart Janpath and other important projects under the Bhubaneswar Smart City Proposal are in progress on war-footing and we are expecting to finish them up as per their timelines. However, there could be minor deviations due to Covid-19 pandemic," said BSCCL chief executive officer Sanjay Kumar Singh.

More berths for Odisha in Union ministry will benefit BJP: Tudu

In a significant development, two new faces from Odisha were inducted into the Union Council of Ministers Wednesday. BJP Lok Sabha MP from Mayurbhanj **Bishweswar Tudu** and Rajya Sabha MP Ashwini Vaishnav took oath as Union ministers at the President's House. However, BJP MP from Balasore and Union Minister of State for Animal Husbandry, Dairy and Fisheries and MSME, Pratap Chandra Sarangi, resigned from his ministerial post ahead of the Cabinet reshuffle. In a tete-a-tete with **Orissa POST**, Tudu said more representation of Odisha in Union Council of Ministers will benefit the BJP in the state politics. Excerpts...

KULDEEP SINGH, OP

to carry out the responsibility given to me.

OP: You have been appointed as a Union minister in the Narendra Modi government 2.0. What would be your first reaction?

I had not expected that I would get a ministerial berth. I got a call yesterday only and was told to attend a meeting at the PM's residence Wednesday. In the meeting, we were told to remain present at the President's House for the oath taking ceremony. I'm grateful to the Prime Minister and I will do my best

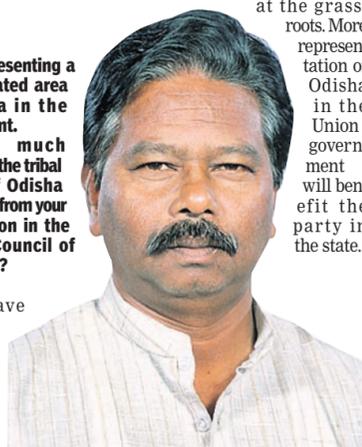
OP: You are representing a tribal-dominated area of Odisha in the Parliament. How much benefit the tribal belt of Odisha will get from your induction in the Union Council of Ministers?

I have enough experience in working with tribal people. I belong to that area and know what kind of problems they face and what steps we

need to take for their well-being. I will work accordingly for the development of tribal people of Odisha.

OP: The BJP now has more representation from Odisha in the Union government. Will it benefit the party in the state politics?

Yes, definitely. The PM wants a BJP government in Odisha. Earlier, there was Assembly elections in West Bengal. The PM wanted that the BJP should perform well in the elections. His aim is to strengthen the party at the grass-roots. More representation of Odisha in the Union government will benefit the party in the state.



Vaishnav helped govt in tackling Super Cyclone

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, July 7: Bureaucrat-entrepreneur-turned-politician Ashwini Vaishnav's entry in the Union cabinet comes two years after he surprised all in Odisha's political circles when he was elected to the Upper House of Parliament as a BJP candidate despite the saffron party lacking the required numbers to send a member to Rajya Sabha.

The 51-year-old BJP leader Vaishnav, born in Rajasthan's Jodhpur, is a suave and former Odisha-cadre IAS officer from the 1994 batch. He managed to obtain support from the ruling BJD president and Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik despite being in the rival camp.

This happened in spite of criticisms and objections by many within the ruling BJD. Allegations were traded that the BJD supremo succumbed to Narendra Modi-Amit Shah's pressure in supporting Vaishnav. He was inducted into the saffron party barely six days ahead of the Rajya Sabha elections June 28, 2019.

Just about two years later he has landed himself a job in the country's Cabinet ahead of veteran saffron leaders from Odisha.

His batch-mate and Lok Sabha member from Bhubaneswar, Aparajita Sarangi, who won the



As the Collector of coastal Balasore district, Vaishnav collected information on the cyclone from a US Navy website and sent reports to the then Chief Secretary at regular intervals

2019 elections after defeating BJD candidate and former Mumbai police commissioner Arup Patnaik, was among the front runners in the race for a berth in the Union government.

During his stint as an IAS officer, Vaishnav worked as the District Magistrate-cum-Collector of Balasore and Cuttack districts. His bureaucratic acumen, in fact, came to the fore when the Super Cyclone hit Odisha in 1999 killing at least 10,000 people.

As the Collector of coastal Balasore district, Vaishnav collected information on the cyclone from a US Navy website and sent reports to the then Chief Secretary at regular intervals. His information helped the state government

to take advanced measures in order to save lives.

Vaishnav worked in Odisha till 2003, before being appointed as deputy secretary in the office of former Prime Minister Aataal Bihari Vajpayee. He was later appointed as Vajpayee's private secretary after the NDA lost the election in 2004.

A product of IIT, Vaishnav, quit government service in 2008 and went to Wharton University in USA to pursue an MBA. On his return, after working for top firms, he set up his own automotive components manufacturing units in Gujarat.

Interestingly, in April, Vaishnav was nominated as a member of the Press Council of India, for three years.

State logs record 59 Covid fatalities

PNN & AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, July 7: Odisha Wednesday reported the highest single-day Covid-19 fatalities as 59 people died, taking the state's toll to 4,358, a Health department official said.

The state also registered 2,602 new cases, pushing the tally to 9,29,788, he said.

At present, there are 28,015 active cases in the state.

In the last 24 hours, 3,258 patients recovered. So far, 8,97,362 have been cured of the disease in the state.

The number of deaths is on the rise in the state, bucking the country-wide trend in a cause of concern for the government.

The highest 10 deaths were reported from Khurda district, followed by Bargarh, Dhenkanal and Puri (five each).

Ganjam, Nayagarh, Rayagada and Sundargarh reported four deaths each.

Khurda district also reported the highest 529 new cases, followed by Cuttack (397), Jajpur (183), Puri (174), Balasore (164) and Mayurbhanj (141).

Odisha tested 74,468 samples Tuesday.

At least three districts—Khurda, Cuttack and Mayurbhanj—have come under the 'Red Zone' with high active cases. Khurda has reported 4,974 active cases followed by Cuttack (4,085) and Mayurbhanj (2,707).

While four districts have active cases ranging from 1,001 to 2,500 and



FILE PHOTO

HIGHLIGHTS

The highest 10 deaths were reported from Khurda district, followed by Bargarh, Dhenkanal and Puri (five each).
Six districts have a test positivity rate between 5 and 7 per cent, while only Cuttack has a high TPR of 15.1 per cent

Kalahandi district has the distinction of the lowest TPR of 0.4 per cent in the state.

Around 0.13 per cent of the people, who are either fully vaccinated or received one dose, have been found to be Covid-positive in the state, officials said.

"While 9,154 persons (0.09 per cent) of 1,00,43,077 people getting the first dose tested positive, 7,806 (0.31) people got infection even after taking both the doses," an official said. The state government urged the Centre to allocate more Covishield vaccines on an urgent basis as the state was facing a shortage.

Additional Chief Secretary, Health, PK Mohapatra wrote to Union Secretary of Health and Family Welfare in this regard.

In view of the shortage in vaccines, the state government advised the district Collectors, municipal commissioners and other local authorities to prioritise those who require the second dose.

are declared 'Orange Zones', the other 23 districts with less than 1,000 active cases are declared 'Green Zones'.

Similarly, six districts have a test positivity rate between 5 and 7 per cent, while only Cuttack has a high TPR of 15.1 per cent.

Among the rest 23 districts having TPR less than 5 per cent,

Govt, Watco file affidavits in High Court

POST NEWS NETWORK

Cuttack, July 7: The state government and the Water Corporation of Odisha (Watco) Tuesday submitted two affidavits to the Orissa High Court in connection with death of four labourers due to asphyxiation in the twin cities of Bhubaneswar and Cuttack.

The state government and the Watco, through the affidavits, informed the HC about implementation of Manual Scavenging Act in Odisha and the compensation paid to the next kin of the deceased labourers.

A bench of Chief Justice S Muralidhar and Justice Savitri Ratho asked amicus curie Bibhu Prasad Tripathy and Pami Rath to submit an affidavit in the case by the next hearing September 2. The court also directed the mem-

ASPHYXIATION DEATHS IN TWIN CITY



In Cuttack asphyxiation incident, Watco has paid a compensation of ₹10 lakh each to the families of the two deceased labourers. The private contractor has also provided a sum of ₹10 lakh each to the families

The families of the two deceased workers in Bhubaneswar asphyxiation case have been provided with a compensation of ₹5 lakh each by the private firm engaged in the sewerage work. Watco has also deposited ₹6.26 lakh with the court for compensating the families of the deceased

ber secretary of Odisha Sewerage Board to file an affidavit on the implementation of Manual Scavenging Act in state.

In their affidavits, the state government and Watco informed the HC that the families of the two deceased workers in Bhubaneswar as-

phyxiation case have been provided with a compensation of ₹5 lakh each by the private firm engaged in the sewerage work.

This apart, Watco has also deposited ₹6.26 lakh with the court for compensating the families of the deceased.

In Cuttack asphyxiation incident, Watco has paid a compensation of ₹10 lakh each to the families of the two deceased labourers. Similarly, the private contractor has also provided a sum of ₹10 lakh each to the families.

The contractor has also provided a compensation of ₹2 lakh to another labourer who had sustained injuries in the incident.

Notably, Sunaram Sardar of Jharkhand and Silu Birua of Mayurbhanj had died due to asphyxiation while cleaning a manhole in Brahmeswar Patna area of Bhubaneswar March 20 this year. Similarly, P Shankar of Cuttack and Bishnu Nayak of Baramba area died while cleaning a manhole in CDA-10 area of the Silver City April 15.

The HC had taken suo motu cognisance of matter.

TAKING TO STREETS



Terming Father Stan Swamy's death as an 'institutional murder', members of AIPF stage a demonstration in Master Canteen area of Bhubaneswar, Wednesday, demanding abolition of Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act

Central team takes stock of Covid situation in Puri

POST NEWS NETWORK

Puri, July 7: A two-member central team Wednesday visited the Holy City here and took stock of the Covid-19 situation in Puri district.

The team comprising Shivani Datta of Calcutta University and Prashanta Mohapatra of AIIMS held discussions with the Puri district Chief District Medical Officer (CDMO) Sujata Mishra.

The CDMO made a detail presentation on the status of the Covid-19 pandemic in Puri before the central team.

"The rate of infection in Puri is coming down slowly. We are satisfied with the data submitted by the CDMO," said Mohapatra.

The CDMO said the Health department is now testing around 3,700 samples in a day in Puri.

The central team also visited a Covid care centre at the Infectious Disease Hospital here, sources said.

14-yr-old girl undergoes surgery for congenital uterus disease

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 7: Doctors at Utkal Hospital here successfully treated a rare congenital uterus disease found in a 14-year-old girl from Bhanjanagar in Ganjam district.

The ultrasound report of the patient hinted at a medical condition known as unicornuate uterus (abnormal or less growth of uterus). The MRI report revealed that the patient had congenital disorder of unicornuate uterus, a rare genetic disorder where the uterus does not grow normally inside the womb.

"This is a rare disorder which accounts for 2.4 per cent to 13 per cent of all anomalies that are detected only after the onset of puberty. It is noticed in 1 out of 1 lakh females of reproductive age group," said Abhisa Mishra, a consultant gynaecologist at the hospital.

The MRI scanning also revealed collection of blood inside the uterus and fallopian tube which needed surgery.

"We preferred laparoscopic surgery for less post operative pain, less chance of adhesion, minimal bleeding, less post operative stay and



The patient had congenital disorder of unicornuate uterus, a rare genetic disorder where the uterus does not grow normally

faster recovery as compared to conventional surgeries," she said.

According to doctors, such medical conditions are often linked to painful periods and recurrent miscarriages. It could also be associated with gynaecological and obstetric complications like infertility, endometriosis, hematometra (blood collection in uterus), urinary tract anomalies, abortions and preterm deliveries.

Pact inked with SOSCVI for 'Kinship Care Prog'

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar/Sundargarh, July 7: District Child Protection Unit, Sundargarh Tuesday signed an MoU with SOS Children's Villages of India (SOSCVI), the childcare NGO, for designing and implementing 'Kinship Care Programme' for 50 children, who have lost parental care due to Covid-19.

The MoU was signed by Sundargarh Collector Nikhil Pawan Kalyan in the presence of child protection officer of Sundargarh Sribanta Jena and assistant village director in-charge of SOS children's village-Rourkela Pravati Dei. Upon the successful completion of the programme, this partnership with SOSCVI will be extended to take up similar programmes in other districts.

Kinship care refers to the care of children by relatives or extended family members. As per the agreement, Sundargarh administration will identify children who need kinship care and will come up with a list of potential caregivers. SOSCVI will contribute to the selection of caregivers, and map the capacity building needs of caregivers, train them and place the children with them.

₹5K Covid aid for PVTG families

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 7: The state government Wednesday distributed ₹5,000 special Covid assistance to particularly vulnerable tribal group (PVTG) families each.

Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik transferred the amount directly to the bank accounts of 64,214 PVTG families and said that it would ensure financial security to them.

"I know that the Covid-19 pandemic has had a huge impact on the livelihood of the poor. You are not alone during this critical situation. The government is with you and working for your welfare," Patnaik said while addressing the occasion.

He said more than 300 people

At least 314 Covid cases were reported from PVTG villages but not a single death has been reported from there

belonging to PVTG group were infected with Covid-19 and were provided with ration kits worth ₹2,250. They were also provided ₹1,400 as labour compensation.

The Chief Minister also distributed pre-matric scholarships to about 60,000 SC and ST students for the months of April, May and June. Each girl student will get ₹2,400 while each boy student has been provided with a scholarship of ₹2,250.

A total of 5 lakh students will get the scholarship money in a phased manner, he stated.

He appealed to the tribal population to follow Covid norms and take two doses of vaccines.

Similarly, free masks and sanitisers are being distributed to all PVTGs. Door-to-door survey and screening would also be carried out for detection of Covid-19 symptoms, the sources said.

There are 1,679 PVTG villages in 14 districts of Odisha. At least 314 such tribal people have been infected with the virus so far and all have recovered successfully, the source said. However, not a single death has been reported from the PVTG villages.

BMC TO INTENSIFY ENFORCEMENT

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 7: With daily positive cases hovering around 300, the Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC) Wednesday said that it would further intensify its enforcement activities to reduce the caseload.

After the state government announced a few relaxations, June 30, several shops and markets saw large footfall of people leading to steady rise in daily cases.

"We are planning to intensify the enforcement activities. About 20 more teams will be formed that will ensure Covid-appropriate be-

haviour in the city. These enforcement activities are to be carried on a daily basis and will continue even after relaxation hours. The objective of the enforcement is not to earn revenue but to enforce the Covid norms among people," said a BMC official.

Only those shops will be allowed to operate that fall under the guidelines of the state government. Responding to requests by traders to allow operation of shops not coming under shopping mall category, the BMC in an order stated that only establishments whose area is less than 25,000 square feet will be allowed to function.

ICAR-CIFA'S APP FOR AQUA FARMERS

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 7: Union Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying Minister Giriraj Singh has launched a mobile app—Matsya Setu—to disseminate the latest freshwater aquaculture technologies to the aqua farmers.

The app has been developed by the ICAR-Central Institute of Freshwater Aquaculture (ICAR-CIFA) in Bhubaneswar with the funding support of the National Fisheries Development Board in Hyderabad.

Puri-Indore spl train services resume

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 7: The Indian Railways has decided to restore the services of Puri-Indore-Puri Special from July 13, 2021 until further advice. The train was cancelled from the first week of May due to poor passenger footfall.

The Indore-Puri-Indore Special will run from Indore every Tuesday w.e.f. July 13 and from Puri on every Thursday w.e.f. July 15 until further advice.

The timings and stoppages of this train at scheduled Stations will remain unchanged. However, this train will run be-

tween Indore and Khurda Road from Indore July 13 and 20 and from Puri July 15 and 22, 2021 and will remain cancelled between Khurda Road and Puri from both the directions in view of Covid protocol during Rath Yatra in Puri.

Earlier, for the convenience of the passengers and to avoid heavy wait list in western India-bound regular trains, the Railways had decided to run a pair of special trains between Khurda Road and Udhna near Surat in Gujarat.

It was decided that Khurda Road-Udhna-Khurda Road Special via Vizianagaram and Titilagarh

would leave Khurda Road at 20:30hrs July 5 (Monday) and reach Udhna at 03:40hrs July 7 (Wednesday).

In return direction, this train will leave Udhna at 06:00hrs July 7 (Wednesday) and arrive at Khurda Road at 15:40hrs July 8, 2021 (Thursday).

Similarly, for the convenience of passengers, the Railways had decided to run more special trains from and through East Coast Railway jurisdiction.

Seven trains including six originating trains from ECoR and one passing through train will run until further advice.

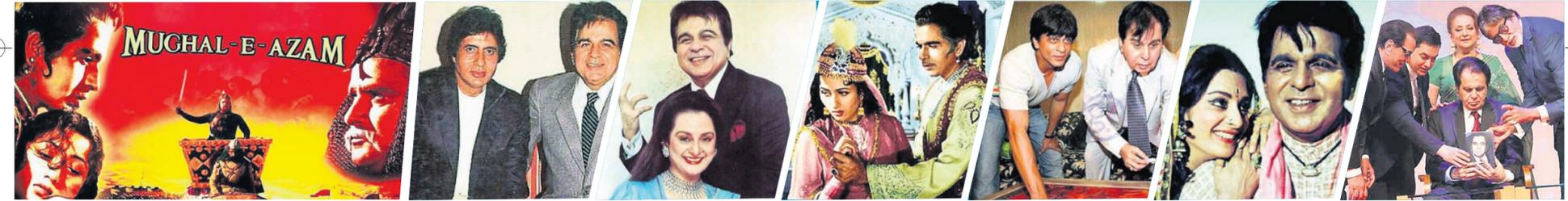


A group of women distributes saplings in Bhubaneswar, Wednesday

OP PHOTO

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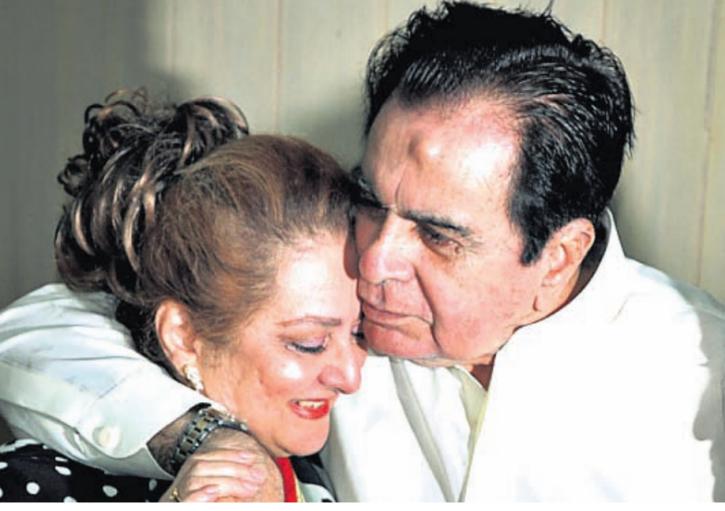
THE 'GOD' DEPARTS

One of 12 children born to a Peshawari fruit merchant, Dilip Kumar for many represented the gold standard in film acting. His trademark quiet delivery, his attention to detail and his sheer versatility made him one of Indian cinema's monuments



Few actors in Hindi film industry have had as many clones as Dilip Kumar. The assertion would seem like the greatest note of flattery in a film industry that survives and thrives on being 'inspired', more than superlatives such as star, superstar, megastar, thespian -- even legend, for the word is often loosely used in the industry.

Dilip Kumar, who passed away Wednesday in Mumbai at the age of 98, was always the bench-



mark. He had a direct impact on many actors who worked in his time, from the forties to the nineties. He continues to indirectly impact actors post nineties too, for those who fashioned their acting after him continue to influence many rank newcomers of today.

Perhaps that is the mark of a legend - when the trademark style of your art continues to outlive you, and find new ways to reinvent itself through budding talents who started out long after you quit.

There are tales about Dilip Kumar's method acting. The most widely-known pertains to the self-produced Gunga-Jumna, the Nitin Bose directorial of 1961 that, many whisper, was ghost-directed by the actor himself. Coming immediately after his 1961 superhit Mughal-e-Azam, Dilip Kumar is said to have run all around the studio premise, to the point of collapsing, in order to get the right look and feel for his death scene in the film. The

And The Shadow, released in 2015.

"I am an actor who evolved a method, which stood me in good stead," he says.

That alone explains the consummate acting we saw in all his films, right from his debut effort Jwar Bhata (1944), to his last film Qila (1998).

The five decades of acting is balanced by the irony that Dilip Kumar never released a film as director. In his lifetime, he is said to have been involved with direction twice. He is said to have directed the 1966 drama Dil Diya Dard Liya along with the officially-mentioned helmer, Abdul Rashid Kardar, though he isn't credited as a director for the project. Decades later, he would launch the self-starring Kalinga, with Jackie Shroff, Meenakshi Sheshadri and Amitoj Mann. Some say the film was shot, though it never saw light of day.

For a man known to take an active interest in all departments of some of the biggest projects of his heydays, it remains a mystery why Dilip Kumar lost interest in releasing Kalinga. Perhaps the phenomenon, one of 12 children born to a Peshawari fruit merchant, knew when to go cold on a bad business prospect.

performance is counted among one of the finest by any male actor in mainstream Hindi films, and plot of the film would find resonance in many subsequent Hindi hits, notably Deewar.

If the subject of method acting largely defines Dilip Kumar's oeuvre, the actor himself tried to deconstruct it in his autobiography Dilip Kumar: The Substance

India means everything to me. It is my homeland. India is my country. It is here that I have gotten love and affection as a film star from millions and millions of my fans over the last five decades

My becoming a film actor was more a twist of tale than a chosen course because I dared not to think I could ever become an actor. I couldn't even walk up on a stage and say 'Thank you' when we were to receive trophies at our sports meets at college

LIFE IN A TIMELINE

Dilip Kumar's life is nothing short of a beautiful film, replete with every colour of life. From his birth in Peshawar to becoming the First Khan of Hindi film industry, the screen legend's life is an inspiration to anyone who dares to dream

THINGS WE MAY NOT KNOW

As the mortal world bids farewell to the man so many revered as 'Yusuf Sahab', here is a look at some lesser-known facts about him

A RAJ KAPOOR DISCOVERY: Well, in terms of strict historical accuracy, Dilip Kumar was the biggest star to be discovered by Raj Kapoor. Mind you, Raj Kapoor was not a filmmaker himself at the time. The two lived close to each other and went to the same college (Khalsa College). And evidently it was then that Raj Kapoor told Yusuf Khan, "You can be a star."

CINEMA KILLED THE FOOTBALL STAR: For all the star-ry advice from Raj Kapoor, Dilip Kumar actually wanted to become a good football player. He was a very good player at school, and was the secretary of his school's football association, but well, reel life had other ideas!

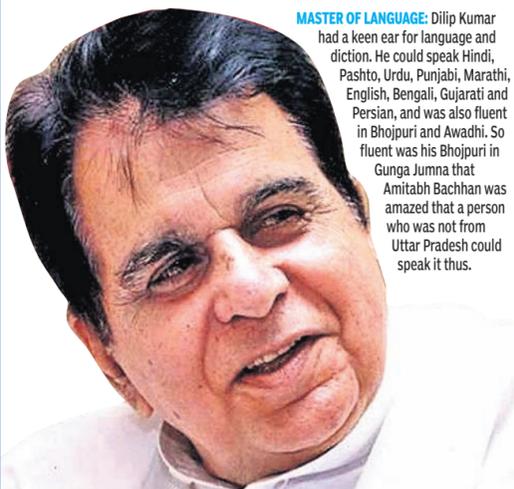
NOMENCLATURE BY ANOTHER LEGEND: As many know, Dilip Kumar was born Mohammed Yusuf Khan. He changed his name to Dilip Kumar on the advice of Hindi film legend, Devika Rani, who had hired him for Bombay Talkies. He would however be known as "Yusuf Sahab" to many people.

HE COULD SING: Although best known for his acting skills, Dilip Kumar was known to sing well too. He, however, sang only once on screen - in Musafir (1957), where he sang Lagi nahin chhote rama kahe jaya jai. Many were struck by how similar his voice sounded to that of the man who sang so often for him, Talat Mahmood.

WAS HIRED INITIALLY AS A SCRIPT WRITER: His proficiency in Urdu got him a job in Bombay Talkies (owned by the legendary Devika Rani) in 1942, as a script writer. He was hired at Rs 1,250 per month. Little did they know he would make uttering lines as great an art as writing them.

BOSSING THE FILMFARE AWARDS: The famous Filmfare Awards were first presented in 1954. And the first person to win the Best Actor award was Dilip Kumar for his work in Daag. He won the award eight times, a record he shares with Shah Rukh Khan, and is the only one to win the award three years in a row

ONLY INDIAN TO WIN PAKISTAN'S HIGHEST CIVILIAN AWARD: Dilip Kumar was awarded the Nishan-e-Imtiaz in 1998. The award itself kicked off a fierce controversy with a few political parties getting involved, but Kumar ultimately received it. He remains the only Indian with that honour.



MASTER OF LANGUAGE: Dilip Kumar had a keen ear for language and diction. He could speak Hindi, Pashto, Urdu, Punjabi, Marathi, English, Bengali, Gujarati and Persian, and was also fluent in Bhojpuri and Awadhi. So fluent was his Bhojpuri in Gunga Jumna that Amitabh Bachchan was amazed that a person who was not from Uttar Pradesh could speak it thus.

THE LEADING LADIES

Though known as Tragedy King, Dilip Kumar has romanced many top actresses on screen over his six decades in Hindi films. Here are five heroines who made an outstanding pair with Dilip Kumar



NARGIS

Dilip Kumar had declined to play the role of Nargis's son in Mother India in 1957 after romancing the actress in previous films. Nargis acted in seven films with Dilip Kumar, from Anokha Pyar (1948) to Deedar (1951).

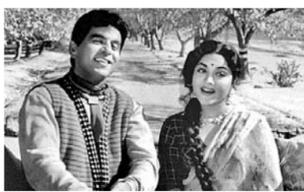
MEENA KUMARI

Meena Kumari was the Tragedy Queen of the industry while Dilip Kumar was Tragedy King. Yet, interestingly, they worked together in the light-hearted films Azaad (1955) and Kohinoor (1960), where the two did cheerful roles. They also acted together in Foot Path (1953) and Yahudi (1958).



VYJAYANTHIMALA

Kaun kambakht bardasht karne ke liye peeta hai? says Devdas, played by Dilip Kumar, to Chandramukhi played by Vyjayanthimala. The pair gave epic romances to the screen in Devdas, Madhumati and Gunga Jumna. They worked in seven films together, from Naya Daur (1957) to Sunghursh (1968).



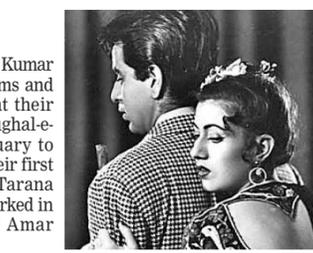
MADHUBALA

Madhubala and Dilip Kumar were a pair of dreams and doom. It is said that their pair in the epic Mughal-e-Azam was an obituary to their tragic love. Their first film together was Tarana (1951). They later worked in Sangdil (1952) and Amar (1954).



SAIRA BANU

It is said that initially Dilip Kumar refused to pair with Saira Banu dismissing her to be too young for him. His real-life heroine Saira went on to do films like Gopi (1970), Sagina (1974) and Bairaag (1976) after marriage.



DILIP KUMAR PLAYLIST

Writing about Dilip Kumar's memorable songs in Hindi films could fill up an entire tome. However, we pick up only a few of the most memorable songs when the thespian mesmerised the audience with his charm.

- YEH HAWA YEH RAAT... - SANGDIL (1952)
- UDE JAB JAB ZULFEIN TERI - NAYA DAUR (1957)
- YEH DESH HAI VEER... - NAYA DAUR (1957)
- DIL TADAP TADAP KE - MADHUMATI (1958)
- SUHANA SAFAR... - MADHUMATI (1958)
- MADHUBAN MEIN RADHIKA - KOHINOOR (1960)
- MUJHE DUNIYA WALO... LEADER (1964)
- SAALA MAIN TOH... - SAGINA (1974)
- DIL DIYA HAI JAAN BHI DENG - KARMA (1986)
- IMLI KA BUTA- SAUDAGAR (1991)

THESPIAN'S TOP 10

Dilip Kumar, the original Khan of the Hindi film industry, has nearly 60 movies to his credit in a career spanning over five decades. Nine of his films in the 1950s were ranked in the top 30 highest-grossing films of the decade. Here's a look at his top 10 Hindi movies

- Daag (1952)
- Devdas (1955)
- Naya Daur (1957)
- Madhumati (1958)
- Mughal-e-Azam (1960)
- Gunga Jumna (1961)
- Ram Aur Shyam (1967)
- Shakti (1982)
- Mashaal (1984)
- Karma (1986)



1922: Born as Mohammed Yusuf Khan in Peshawar, North-West Frontier Province, British India to Lala Ghulam Sarwar Khan and Ayesha Begum on December 11.

1944: Makes his acting debut in Jwar Bhata, directed by Amiya Chakravarty, with the screen name Dilip Kumar.

1947: Tastes first major box office success, Jugnu, co-starring Noor Jahan and directed by Shaukat Hussain Rizvi.

1949: First breakthrough role in Mehboob Khan's Andaz, co-starring Raj Kapoor and Nargis.

1951: Rumoured to fall in love with actress Madhubala during the shoot of Tarana.

1955: Release of career-defining film, Bimal Roy's Devdas alongside Vyjayanthimala and Suchitra Sen.

1960: Featured in K. Asif's epic historical drama Mughal-e-Azam as Prince Salim, his career defining role, alongside Madhubala and Prithviraj Kapoor.

1961: Turns producer with the self-starring Gunga Jumna. Broadly inspired by Mehboob Khan's Mother India, the Nitin Bose directorial was allegedly ghost-directed and ghost-edited by Dilip Kumar, according to unconfirmed rumours.

1966: Marriage with actress Saira Banu, 22 years younger than him.

1980: Appointed honorary Sheriff of Mumbai.

1981: Marriage with Hyderabad-based Asma Sahiba, or Asma Rehman.

1983: Divorce with Asma Rehman

1991: Honoured with Padma Bhushan, the third-highest civilian award in India.

1994: Honoured with Dadasaheb Phalke Award, India's highest award in the field of cinema.

1998: Honoured with Nishan-e-Imtiaz, the highest civilian award of Pakistan.

1998: Release of his last Hindi film Qila, directed by Umesh Mehra and starring Dilip Kumar in a dual role.

2014: The thespian's autobiography The Substance And The Shadow is published.

2015: Honoured with Padma Vibhushan, the second-highest civilian award in India.

2020: His younger brothers Aslam Khan and Ehsan Khan pass away owing to Covid.

2021: Dilip Kumar passes away at a Mumbai hospital around 7.30 am July 7. He is cremated with state honours at Juhu Qabristan, Santacruz, Mumbai around 5 pm.

Change yourself if you wish to change the world.
THE MOTHER



Lipstick & Covid

"Is my lipstick protecting me against COVID-19?" ranks as one of the more intriguing email queries we have received from a member of the public since we began coordinating the world's largest tracker of sex-disaggregated data on the pandemic. In fact, the question points to an important universal truth regarding public health.

We established the tracker in March 2020 because we thought that Covid-19 was unlikely to be equally distributed in any population. That hunch has proved correct. Our data show, for example, that women are more likely than men to get tested (and vaccinated) for Covid-19, less likely to be hospitalised, much less likely to have a severe infection requiring admission to an ICU, and around 30 per cent less likely to die from the disease.

More generally, the pandemic has shone a much-needed light onto unequal health and well-being, and laid bare the relationship between inequality and disease. It has highlighted unequal risks within societies – with marginalised populations and those who have suffered historical and contemporary injustices reporting higher rates of Covid-19 – and unequal burdens between societies.

While our own focus is on understanding the role of gender in the pantheon of health inequalities, our tracker shows that low income countries' male-to-female Covid-19 mortality ratio is more than double that of high income countries. Clearly, economic and other inequalities cannot be ignored, and these often interact with and reinforce gender inequalities.

The concern with social inequalities and health is not new. In the mid-nineteenth century, Friedrich Engels described how the English proletariat's appalling living and working conditions led to "excessive mortality, an unbroken series of epidemics," and a "progressive deterioration in the physique of the working population." A few decades later, the German physician, pathologist, and politician Rudolf Virchow helped establish the field of "social medicine," which regards health and disease as outcomes of society itself.

In the late 1930s, Chile's health minister (and future president), Salvador Allende, one of the architects of social medicine in Latin America, proposed political and economic reforms aimed at improving the health of the public. Allende advocated for fundamental changes in social structures and environments rather than a focus on specific diseases or their treatments.

Drawing on this relationship between social environments and health yields a more detailed explanation of the male-female differences in our data tracker: While biology is clearly playing a role, gender, a social construction, also is driving unequal Covid-19 outcomes.

Gender is embedded in the institutional structures that govern our lives, such as families, legal and economic systems, religions, financial institutions, education systems, and workplaces. It is also experienced and enacted through the everyday norms representing what it means to be a man, woman, or transgender or non-binary person in a particular society.

Gender drives our expectations and opportunities, and determines whether it is socially acceptable for someone to smoke, drink, drive a bus, or work in a factory, and even whether wearing lipstick is considered transgressive or acceptable. It also influences our health outcomes.

Where women are more likely to be employed in public-facing occupations such as care work, retail, and hospitality, their risk of exposure to Covid-19 may be higher – particularly if their personal protective equipment is designed for men, and thus fits them poorly. On the other hand, Covid-19 has been widespread among male migrant labourers in many settings. This reflects the poor and unhygienic conditions in which many foreign workers live, and, more broadly, the global economy's reliance on unequal power relationships between high and low income countries and between citizens and non-citizens.

Following exposure to the coronavirus, gender-related factors can influence the likelihood that an individual can access testing and care. If testing is carried out in clinics with restricted opening hours, people in the formal paid workforce, which in many countries comprises more men than women, may have reduced access. Conversely, women with restricted social freedoms outside the home will have limited access to health services.

Once admitted to a hospital with Covid-19, men suffer from more severe disease and are at greater risk of death. Along with underlying biological differences, men's higher rates of exposure to harmful environments may increase their risks of chronic diseases, which in turn can lead to poor Covid-19 outcomes.

These "gendered environments" are associated with harmful norms of both production and consumption. Two of the world's biggest killers – tobacco and alcohol – have been marketed through the exploitation of specific, and often explicit, gender norms since at least the 1920s. This has contributed to higher rates of heart and lung disease – both of which are associated with Covid-19 mortality – in men.

Another question is why male-female Covid-19 mortality gaps are much larger in low income countries. One possible explanation centers on the appallingly low rates of registration of women's deaths in some countries.

The world is not lacking empirical evidence that inequality has driven this and previous pandemics. Our tracker collates data from 195 countries to explore the relationship between gender and Covid-19. Other, more localised datasets assess the impact of race or ethnicity, occupation, and other inequalities on the pandemic.

Despite this, pandemic responses have focused overwhelmingly on biosecurity rather than addressing inequalities. Instead, Covid-19 must serve as a wake-up call to reinvent a social-medicine approach and what we call a neo-public health movement.

Given the entrenched, universal, and historical nature of many inequalities, building fairer – and thus healthier – societies in the midst of a pandemic will be a Herculean task, requiring a shift in thinking and action.

Above all, policymakers must recognise that individuals' good health and improved well-being are vital to social flourishing. That means demanding that leaders in the public, private, and civil-society sectors address the social, political, and economic factors that leave so many exposed and vulnerable. We must shift our focus from treating disease to a more radical reform of the environments and conditions in which all can have equal opportunities to achieve good health, well-being, and dignity.

While lipstick may be a harmless reflection of gender norms in some societies, it symbolises a powerful, deep-rooted, and universal social determinant of health. The pandemic has highlighted the need to ensure that everyone understands that gender equality is a public good – one that will help to usher in the healthier societies we seek.

Sarah Hawkes is Professor of Global Public Health at University College London. Kent Buse is Director of the Healthier Societies Programme at the George Institute for Global Health.

PROJECT SYNDICATE



Djoomart Otorbaev

THE PROSPECT THAT AFGHANISTAN WILL BECOME A SOURCE OF DEEPENING POVERTY, MASS MIGRATION, AND INSTABILITY IS QUICKLY BECOMING EVERYONE'S PROBLEM

Sarah Hawkes & Kent Buse

The pandemic is a stark reminder that gender is a powerful, deep-rooted, and universal social determinant of health. Ushering in the healthier societies we seek requires viewing gender equality as a public good

SPECTRUM DEFENCE

An apt response to hybrid warfare



Padmalochan Dash

THE IDEA OF DIRECT COMBAT REBOOTING CAN BE OFFERED AS A PRECISE REJOINER TO HYBRID WARFARE

In hybrid warfare, various methods and components, both conventional and unconventional, are brought to a synchronised usage. Among the important components employed; the electronic warfare system and the unmanned aerial system (UAS) are very much at the forefront of choice because of the low-cost and less-predictability involved in.

Given their affordability even for pitiable adversaries like Pakistan; countries like India, are now becoming prone to hybrid warfare. The recent series of drone misadventures and attacks on India's critical military infrastructure bearing the signature of the Sino-Pak node is one among the glaring examples of the recent day threats of hybrid warfare, calling for India's response in apropos.

Artificial intelligence (AI) and robotics are cost-effective and swift-tactical options to consider for strategic response to hybrid warfare. But AI and robotics in isolation cannot serve the purpose; rather they need some purposeful integration into certain existing systems, enabling those systems to become immensely efficient and promptly responsive to the adversary's unconventional behaviour.

Direct combat rebooting
The idea of direct combat rebooting (DCR) can be offered here as the precise rejoinder to hybrid warfare – the warfare of this generation. DCR is an AI-enabled 'system of systems' where the resilience of the defence platforms and systems is apt, while its inherent response to enemy activities is quick,

wild and automatic. Several platforms, systems, and domains of combat, if AI-embedded, can serve the DCR purpose, thereby transforming India's combat resilience capability.

AI-enabled ISR system
Responding to hybrid warfare requires an ever-working ISR (intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance) system, which is swift and piercing. The ISR system is very much in the first line of combat against electronic and hybrid warfare, like the recent drone attacks on Jammu airbase. The ISR system is responsible for threat monitoring and situational awareness. However, in view of the failure in terms of deterring the recent drone attacks, the whole business of the ISR system requires transformation. In the ISR mission, the UAS is among the major components. While UAS carries out ISR missions for several purposes, its integration and control over AI will enhance and multiply its ability and endurance.

Combat simulation exercise
When hybrid warfare is more tactical than strategic, responding to such warfare requires best practices of combat simulation tactics. While combat simulation training is essential for conducting mock war-gaming, AI-enabled simulation training platforms will help enhance the capacity of the tactical mission support system and pre-emptive wisdom of security forces, reinforcing their response capacity to real threat situations.

AI-enabled target recognition
A tactical misadventure like a

drone attack requires a proportionate tactical response. Here, the decision of piercing the bull's eye has to be very much automatic. This is possible, provided, in-depth understanding of the potential target is readily made available to the security forces by the target recognition system. And, in a complex combat environment, AI-enabled target recognition systems can perform miracles. This is because, such systems can assess the mission approaches, forecast enemy behaviour; map the potential supply tracks or blockades of the enemy aggregate the environmental trajectories with expected vulnerabilities, and finally suggest alternative tactical choices to security forces.

Remote surgical support
Remote surgical support and evacuation activities are the other important elements of DCR. In a real battle theater, DCR will very much depend on the defence force resilience, and defence force resilience will critically depend on support mission platforms. All these things enabled by AI integration are expected to expand the tactical choice options.

Defence logistics
For DCR to sustain another important area of consideration is the AI-enabled defence logistics and supply-chain functions with less human participation. The success of military operations requires the effective handling of defence logistics and supply-chain lines. Given the huge cost and high-scale human operational efforts involved, AI, by its integration into the logistic and supply-chain system, can shrink

Asian governments that will be on the front lines. Still, many regional officials remain surprisingly optimistic. Following a recent visit to the US to discuss Afghanistan and regional security, the Uzbek foreign minister, Abdulaziz Kamilov, gave an extensive interview in which he argued that only Afghans, including the Taliban, can resolve Afghanistan's problems.

"We have some optimism," he explained, "Because the situation has changed. First, the two sides began direct contact for the first time in 40 years. The Taliban also want direct negotiations to reach a peaceful agreement." While stressing that he is no defender of the Taliban, Kamilov pointed to an official publication on the group's website where it claims to want to build an independent, sovereign Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan without any outside interference. In this new country, the rights of women, girls, and minorities would supposedly be guaranteed.

It is hard to believe that a seasoned diplomat like Kamilov would fall for such honeyed words. Yet, in also arguing that Afghanistan should be more deeply integrated into the Central Asian economy, he is on sound strategic footing. Even the Taliban would be attracted to the idea of a renewed "Greater Central Asia" that could recreate some of the economic dynamism of the glory years of the Great Silk Road (1100-1600 AD).

With China determined to deepen its trade, investment, and infrastructure ties across Eurasia, this vision has a chance of becoming reality. But first, peace must prevail, above all within Afghanistan.

The writer is a former Prime Minister of Kyrgyzstan.

PROJECT SYNDICATE

FOCUS GEOPOLITICS

IF AFGHANISTAN FALLS



With US and NATO troops on their way out and the Taliban making rapid territorial gains, Russia, China, and Central Asian governments are increasingly worried about what a destabilised Afghanistan will mean for the wider region. While all hope is not lost, the outlook is becoming bleaker by the day

July 2, the US military handed control of the vast Bagram Air Base to the Afghan government. US troops and their NATO allies are now on track to leave Afghanistan by mid-July, well ahead of US President Joe Biden's September 11, 2021, withdrawal deadline.

According to a new analysis by researchers at Brown University, America's two-decade war in Afghanistan cost it nearly \$2.3 trillion. Now, Afghanistan's neighbours – Pakistan, Iran, China, India, and the Central Asian countries – are wondering just how much it will cost them to maintain security after the United States is gone.

In late June, the US intelligence community concluded that the Afghan government could collapse within six months of the US withdrawal – a stark downward revision of its earlier, more optimistic assessment. As the Taliban has swept through northern Afghanistan, capturing dozens of districts and major cities, Afghan security forces have often surrendered without a fight. According to a June report from the United Nations Afghanistan Sanctions Monitoring Team, the Taliban now exercises direct control over more than half of the country's regional administrative centres, and controls up to 70 per cent of the territory outside urban areas.

The tremors from these Taliban victories are already being felt across the region. Fierce fighting has occurred a mere four hours from Tajikistan's capital, Dushanbe. June 20, Taliban militants operating in northern Afghanistan surrounded government forces in Kunduz, the country's sixth-largest city (population 300,000). Then, June 22, the Taliban captured the Afghan-Tajik border outpost of Sher Khan Bandar without a fight. Meanwhile, Tajikistan's border

service reported that 134 Afghan servicemen had received asylum at the crossing. Another 53 Afghan border troops and local militia-men retreated from a Taliban onslaught in Afghanistan's Shortepa district by crossing into Uzbekistan; and July 5, more than 1,000 Afghan soldiers reportedly fled across the border from Badakhshan Province into Tajikistan.

A complete Taliban takeover of the Amu Darya and Panj Rivers dividing Afghanistan from Uzbekistan and Tajikistan will likely occur within weeks. Since this outcome would allow the Taliban to control Afghanistan's international borders along this front, the risk of large refugee flows from Afghanistan into Central Asia, and then on to Russia and Europe, has sharply increased.

After clandestinely supporting the Taliban as a means to undermine the US war effort, Russia now fears broader destabilisation in Central Asia and beyond. In response to recent developments in Afghanistan, Russian Defence

Minister Sergei Shoigu says that, "By the end of this year, the command of the Central Military District will have to re-equip two aviation regiments with modernised Su-34M fighter-bombers and MiG-31BM fighter-interceptors." These reinforcements of Russian airpower in the region "will significantly increase the district's capabilities to engage the enemy with fire and combat cruise missiles in the Central Asian strategic direction."

Similarly, after having made nice with the Taliban, China also now fears the greater regional instability that the US withdrawal may incite. In addition to disrupting Chinese President Xi Jinping's Eurasia-spanning Belt and Road Initiative, a revitalised Taliban could re-energise the Islamist extremist threat in China's western Xinjiang province.

The prospect that Afghanistan will become a source of deepening poverty, mass migration, and instability is quickly becoming everyone's problem. But it is Central

The writer is a former Prime Minister of Kyrgyzstan.

PROJECT SYNDICATE

WISDOM CORNER

- Nature does not hurry, yet everything is accomplished. LAO TZU
- Trust in dreams, for in them is hidden the gate to eternity. KAHILU GIBRAN
- Be kind whenever possible. It is always possible. DALAI LAMA

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

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Insensitive system

Sir, Father Stan Swamy's demise has left a vacuum in the lives of the downtrodden. He fought all his life for the marginalised and the underprivileged. Fr. Stan died in an inhuman condition that exposed an insensitive system. It is agonising to learn that an elderly man suffering from Parkinson's disease was denied even a sipper to drink water. It is ironic that courts which are supposed to be the custodians of justice failed to understand the plight of an elderly man. Even though Fr. Stan's health deteriorated day by day, he was denied bail or sympathy. He had to spend several months in jail under unproven charges. This exposes the vengeful attitude of the system. It is shocking to know that even when Fr. Stan's end was near, he was still on trial for medical bail. His death calls for introspection. He could not have imagined that he would have to sacrifice his life in the fight against injustice. In Fr. Stan's death a martyr has emerged. Let's hope the tragic death of Fr. Stan may change the unsympathetic and insensitive system. We need a system that will never deny basic human rights to citizens.

Venu GS, KOLLAM

Super Sindhu

Sir, Abhinav Bindra has been the only individual gold medallist for India in Olympics. Fifteen other players have won either silver or bronze for India in individual games. Badminton ace PV Sindhu won silver in the 2016 Rio de Janeiro games. Sports connoisseurs now want nothing less than gold from Sindhu. The 25-year-old's toughest competitor, three-time world champion Carolina Marin has given Tokyo the miss due to an injury. Can Sindhu make the most of the absence of the Spaniard? Many experts believe Sindhu has the best chance at Tokyo, and she should make the most of it. The top Indian shuttler has worked hard to reach where she is now. She bounced back with a bang when people started doubting her levels of motivation and fitness. The superlative gold medal winning performance at Basel, Switzerland in the 2019 World Badminton Championships helped Sindhu silence her critics. Her run-up to Tokyo has not been that impressive, but the world champion may possess a trick or two up her sleeve. Every day is a fresh day, and a top class player knows it is important to leave all disappointments behind on a particular day. On her day, Sindhu cannot put a foot wrong. That is why she has so many career titles, and more will come.

Ganapathi Bhat, AKOLA

Farmers seek end to politics in paddy procurement



FILE PHOTO

POST NEWS NETWORK

Sambalpur, July 7: Even as political parties are engaged in a bitter war over the problems in paddy procurement in western Odisha, these agitations have failed to bear fruits. Farmers continue to suffer due to absence of a clear cut policy on paddy procurement, a report said.

Reports said the opposition BJP and the Congress are attacking the state government on the issue. The ruling BJD is also not silent and blames the Centre for the impasse. Various farmer outfits have been staging agitations on the issue but nothing has helped the farmers so far.

During last kharif marketing season, demand was made to procure all paddy stocks brought to the mandis. Farmers also sought abolition of the token and the iris systems and to end the process of karni-chhatni in paddy procurement.

The agitations threw traffic out of gear on the major national and state highways for hours together.

The protestors even staged demonstrations outside the offices of civil supply officer and sub-collector by piling up paddy packets outside their offices.

The agitations failed to be of any help as the same rules were found applicable during the paddy procurement in rabi season.

In rabi season, farmers faced problems like crop loss due to un-

PROTESTORS EVEN STAGED DEMONSTRATIONS OUTSIDE THE OFFICES OF CIVIL SUPPLY OFFICER AND SUB-COLLECTOR BY PILING UP PADDY PACKETS OUTSIDE THEIR OFFICES

AS PER GOVERNMENT RULES, PADDY PROCUREMENT WAS STOPPED FROM JUNE 30. THIS INFURIATED THE FARMERS AND THE OPPOSITION PARTIES.

RULING BJD TRIED TO SHIFT THE BLAME ON THE CENTRE, STATING THAT THE PADDY PROCUREMENT TAKES PLACE UNDER THE SUPERVISION OF THE LATTER

seasonal rain and cyclonic storms. This led to a delay in harvest of their crops following which tokens issued to hundreds of farmers expired and their paddy packets remained unsold in the mandis.

As per government rules, paddy procurement was stopped from June 30. This infuriated the farmers and the opposition parties as the BJD took to the streets on the issue. The party staged road blockades and gheraoed the CSO office. It also warned to intensify the agitation in coming days if the demands are not met. Similarly, the Congress also staged agitations on price hike of petroleum products and essential commodities

as well as on farmer issues.

The ruling BJD tried to shift the blame on the Centre, stating that the paddy procurement takes place under the supervision of the latter. Farmers alleged that the ruling BJD has refused to entertain its demand for bonus and compensation.

Samir Ranjan Babu, district president of the BJP Krushak Morcha said the party is fighting for the interest of the farmers but the state government is not implementing its promises.

He alleged that the state government had assured to procure the paddy of actual farmers before June 30 but failed to keep its promise for which his party has staged protests. He said no decision has been taken on protests against hike in fuel prices and other essentials.

Ashok Pradhan, convener of Paschim Odisha Krushak Sangathan said the problems faced by the farmers are manmade and blamed the politicians and officials for this.

He said the BJP and the Congress should have staged agitations when the paddy procurement was continuing. However, staging protests after the expiry of the deadline on paddy procurement are of no use and termed them as cheap politics.

Manoj Mohapatra, former state secretary of the farmers' wing of the erstwhile Janata Dal alleged that the BJP is shedding crocodile tears on the issue. He said the saffron party is staging agitation without increasing the MSP on paddy on the basis of the Swaminathan Commission report.

The state government is always working to safeguard the interests of farmers and will continue to do so in future, he added.

Gobind Mishra, the district president of the Kishan Congress said the agitation is being staged to put pressure on the government. He warned that the problems of the farmers would remain unresolved as long as the paddy procurement rules are not framed by a district level committee.

MISSING MONSOON



With farmers yet to start cultivation due to lack of rainfall, cattle graze on the farmlands in Bant block of Bhadrak district

Girl killed, brother critical in lightning

POST NEWS NETWORK

Koraput/Narayanpatna, July 7: A nine-year old girl was killed and her infant brother rendered critical after lightning struck them in a shanty near their farmland at Pachingi village under Narayanpatna block in Koraput district, Wednesday. The deceased was identified as Anjali, 9, daughter of Lengu Mandingi in the village. Her brother Manoj was rendered critical in the calamity and admitted to the local health centre.



FILE PHOTO

The mishap occurred when the siblings were playing inside a shanty near their farmland with their mother busy in farm works on their agricultural land, in the afternoon. Villagers rescued the siblings and rushed them to the Narayanpatna hospital where doctors pronounced the girl dead and admitted the infant for treatment.

The boy's health condition has improved and he is recovering, Dr Lakshmi Narayan Mohanty of the hospital said.

Demand for barrage on Vamshadhara river swells



POST NEWS NETWORK

Rayagada, July 7: Residents and social outfits have urged the state government to construct an irrigation project on the upstream of Vamshadhara river to help farmers in the region irrigate their farmlands, a report said.

The matter came to the fore after a delegation of the Vamshadhara Ababahika Suraksha Samiti in Gunupur submitted a memorandum in this regard to District Collector Saroj Kumar Mishra, addressed to the 5T Secretary, Tuesday.

Samiti members Pradeep Kumar Das, Manoj Kamal Pani and Umashankar Das were present during the submission of the memorandum to the Collector.

The members claimed that farm-

ers in the region have failed to make the best use of the river water despite the Vamshadhara Water Dispute Tribunal permitting the state government to make use of 50 per cent of the river water. Construction of an irrigation project will help solve the problem, they said.

According to an order passed by the tribunal, both Odisha and Andhra Pradesh can use 50 per cent each of 115 TMC water of the Gota barrage in their own areas.

Accordingly, the neighbouring Andhra Pradesh has expedited the construction of Katraguda and Neredi projects to use 50 per cent of the river water in its area. However, the Odisha government is yet to think of constructing a project on the upstream of the river in

the state, the Samiti members alleged.

The Samiti members claimed that water to the farmland could be provided for irrigation in the area if the state government takes up construction of the barrage, check dams and mega irrigation projects on the upstream of the river. The construction of the barrage and irrigation projects will also help in checking water scarcity during summer season and floods during rainy season, they said.

EAST COAST RAILWAY
Tender No. MCSW-Scrapdisp-21-22-08
Name of the Work: SEGREGATION, LOADING, SHIFTING/TRANSPORTATION OF VARIOUS CATEGORIES OF SCRAP IN CARRIAGE REPAIR WORKSHOP, MANCHESWAR AND UNLOADING/ DISPOSAL OF THE SAME AT DESIGNATED PLACES.
Advertised Value: ₹ 40,94,317.80, **Period of completion:** 18 months.
Bidding start date: 09.07.2021 **Tender closing date & time:** 23.07.2021.
Manual offers are not allowed against this tender and any such manual offer received shall be ignored.
Complete details & tender documents will be available at website www.ireps.gov.in
Dy. Chief Mechanical Engineer (POH)/CRW/ PR-195/M/21-22 Mancheswar

Ganjam Collector declares 'A day for children'

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 7: After direction from the state government, Ganjam Collector Wednesday declared a day for children. In a letter to all Child development project officers (CDPOs) and Child Marriage Prohibition Officers (CMPO), the Collector said in order to ensure child rights and bring harmony among the members of the task force committee on child rights protection, it is decided that the 14th of each quarter ending be fixed and declared as -A day for children.

For second quarter ending, the date is fixed on July 14, for the 3rd quarter ending, September 14, and for 4th quarter ending December 14, 2021.

On these days, all the meetings of the existing child protection committees will be convened under the chairpersonship of respective chairpersons to take stock of the grievances related to children, effective implementation of the child protection laws, schemes and programs including child marriages, child trafficking and violence against children.

Family forced to live outside by kangaroo court

POLICE DO NOT TAKE ACTION AGAINST THE ACCUSED CITING COVID TIME RESTRICTIONS

POST NEWS NETWORK

Nayagarh, July 7: There is no end to the suffering of Laxmidhar Bantha, who along with his family has been subjected to torture of a village kangaroo court.

The village mafias are not allowing him to set foot on his village, forcing the family to stay outside. The kangaroo court took away his harvest. Although police promised to help him relocate to his village, they are not coming to his rescue citing Covid time restrictions.

Laxmidhar of Kendudhipi village under Itamati police station works in Kerala. His two sons also work outside the state. The three together remit between Rs25,000 and Rs 30,000 to Rupa, wife of Laxmidhar, who stayed alone in the village.

Rupa would lend money to co-villagers who approach her when they needed cash. In January, 2020, Rupa died. Laxmidhar and his two



FILE PHOTO

sons returned to the village to perform her last rites.

After the rituals were over, some villagers approached Laxmidhar and claimed her wife has borrowed money from them and they want return of money. The three were shocked to learn that Rupa had taken money on loan when they sent large amounts of money to her

They did not believe the demand of the villagers and refused to repay the so called loans.

On April 24, 2020, the same group of people armed with sharp weapons barged into the home of Laxmidhar. They forcibly took away paddy, and other food grains stored in the house.

Even though Laxmidhar approached police the later did not come to his

rescue.

The police's silence emboldened the rogues and they again forced their entry into the house of Laxmidhar and took away whatever was stored in the house.

This time they evicted the family from their own house. The goons did not stop at that, they tied Laxmidhar to an electric pole in the village. On tip-off, police reached the village and rescued Laxmidhar.

However, even after complaints were lodged with police, the later did not take action against the culprits named in the complaint. Later, the kangaroo court members again looted the belongings from Laxmidhar's home. This time, Laxmidhar lodged a case at the SDJM court (Case No IIC 83/20).

Meanwhile, Laxmidhar has moved the state human rights commission against the kangaroo court. Laxmidhar along with his family has been forced to live outside his home for over a year now, seeking justice.

Shortage of doctors hits healthcare service

THERE ARE NINE HOSPITALS IN ATHAMALLIK SUB-DIVISION. THEY TOGETHER RUN A SHORTAGE OF 27 DOCTORS

POST NEWS NETWORK

Boinda, July 7: With 24 doctor posts lying vacant for a long time, health facilities in Athamallik sub-division in Angul district are in a pathetic state, a report said.

There are a total of nine hospitals in the sub-division and as many as 27 doctor posts had been lying vacant for long. However, bowing to the local people's demands, the government had appointed seven doctors at different hospitals. But three of them joined their duties and the rest four are learnt to be reluctant to join in.

Prior to the appointment, alone at Athamallik sub divisional hospital, out of 16 sanctioned doctor posts, nine were lying vacant. With one new doctor joining his duty here, eight posts are still lying vacant.

Similarly, out of eight doctor posts at Madhapur community health centre (CHC), six were lying



vacant before new posting. Two new doctors have joined their duties here and four posts are yet to be fulfilled.

appointment here.

At the same time, the primary health centres (PHC) at Boinda, Handapa, Angapada, Pataka, Paikasahi and Thakurgarh have each a vacant doctor post. A new doctor had been appointed at Pataka, Paikasahi and Boinda PHCs. But the doctors are yet to join their duties at the PHCs.

The Handapa PHC has a post-mortem centre but it has no doctor to carry out the autopsy. The post-mortem is done only when a doctor from Kishorenagar CHC arrives here after travelling a distance of 30 kilometres.

Meanwhile the residents of Athamallik sub division threatened to resort to strike to make their demands fulfilled.

"Over 15,000 people of three panchayats depend on Pataka PHC. The lone doctor post here has long been lying vacant. The people are facing a lot of problems in getting

timely treatment," alleged Pradeep Pradhan, a resident of Pataka area.

The residents of Boinda, Paikasahi and Thakurgarh shared the same concern. "Demanding appointment of doctors in six vacant posts at Kishorenagar CHC, Jeevan Jibika and Krishi Jami Suraksha Committee' had organised a strike in past. Then we were assured that the vacant posts would soon be fulfilled. But the government had reneged on its promise," observed Ramani Ranjan Pradhan, a resident of Kishorenagar.

When contacted, CDMO, Angul, Dr Trilochan Pradhan said the government has appointed seven doctors at different facilities. Of them, some have already joined in their duties. The government has been apprised of the vacant posts in Athamallik sub division. The problem will come to an end once the government takes step to fill up the vacant posts.

NOTICE FOR LOSS OF DOCUMENTS
Notice is hereby given on behalf of my Client LICHFL, CUTTACK for advancing construction loan to Mrs. Binju Thakur on her property at Plot No.-2053/11560, Khata No.-801/4505, Area-Ac 0.014 decimals at Mouza- Daruthenga, Tahasil-Bhubaneswar, Dist.-Khurda. But it was found that, Mrs. Binju Thakur, has lost the Original link Regd. sale deed bearing No.-11131309576 dt.15.07.2013 and Original link Regd. sale deed bearing No. - 11131309938 dt. 25.07.2013, while She was coming from the court to her residence, in her Vehicle. Therefore notice is hereby given to general public that if anybody has got any note, title interest over the property on the missing document, they have to claim before the LICHFL, within 15 days from the date of publication. And after that the documents will lose its legal force and LICHFL will not be responsible for any claim what-so-ever on the property after 15 days. Address for communication: **Branch- LICHFL, CUTTACK. Bhubaneswar, N.C.Pattnaik (Advocate) MOB- 9853311189**

OFFICE OF THE REGULATED MARKET COMMITTEE, SARGIPALI, SUNDARGARH
INVITATION OF BIDS THROUGH E-PROCUREMENT
e-Procurement Notice No.380 Dated: 06.07.2021
BID IDENTIFICATION NO. 04/2020-21
The Office of the R.M.C., Sargipali, Sundargarh invites percentage rate bids in single cover system on online mode from eligible contractors for execution of the different works under RMC, Sargipali. The details of which are available at e-procurement portal www.tenderorissa.gov.in from 09.07.2021. The interested tenderers are advised to visit the above website for submission of e-tender. Tender will be closed at 17.00 hours on 19.07.2021.
Sd./- Collector, Sundargarh-cum-Chairman R.M.C., Sargipali, Sundargarh

GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA
"e"-PROCUREMENT NOTICE
WORKS DEPARTMENT
E-mail: pwoff_khd@yahoo.com
Tender Call Notice No. 12/2021-22
No.B-208- The Executive Engineer, Khurda (R&B) Division, Khurda on behalf of Governor of Odisha invites percentage rate bid in Single cover system in ONLINE MODE from eligible class of contractors having valid registration certificate for execution of the E.I. works as detailed below:
1. Nature of Work : E.I. work
2. No. of Work : 02 Nos.
3. Tender cost : SI.No. 1 to 2 Rs.6000.00 (Online)
4. Class of contractor : SI.No 1 & 2 : MV/HT licences
5. Available of bid : From Dt. 15.7.2021 at 10.30 A.M. documents in the website to Dt. 23.7.2021 at 5.00 P.M
6. Date of opening of bids : Dt 26.7.2021 at 11.30 A.M.
7. Bidders have to participate in ONLINE bidding only. Further details can be seen from the Website: <https://tenderodisha.gov.in>. Any information regarding Addendum / Corrigendum / Cancellation of tender can be available in the said website.
Sd./- Executive Engineer, Khurda (R&B) Division, Khurda OIPR-34095/11/0005/2122

PETROL HITS ₹100/LITRE IN DELHI

NETIZENS TAKE TWITTER BY STORM

REACTIONS ON THE SOCIAL MEDIA ARE A REFLECTION OF THE FRUSTRATION THAT IS BOILING UP BEYOND THE INTERNET



Representative image

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, July 7: As the price of petrol crossed an all-time high of Rs 100 per litre in Delhi and several other cities Wednesday, netizens flooded microblogging site Twitter with varied reactions -- some coping with the unfortunate news with humour and others just expressing plain, simple shock.

Humour seems to be the key to coping with the news as memes and jokes started doing the rounds soon after the price hike. Sharing a picture of a bicycle that has been made to look like a motorcycle using cardboard, a Twitter user said this was the kind of 'bike that Indians would be able to ride following the fuel price hike.

"Desi bike...After petrol, diesel price hike," the user tweeted. Taking a dig at Narendra Modi's 2014 poll

pitch of "acchhe din aayenge" (good days would come), a Twitter user shared a caricature depicting a man saying, "Kaash woh bure din he wapas atay" (I wish the bad days could return).

A photograph of a petrol bill from 1963 when petrol cost 72 paise per litre has emerged as a favourite among the Twitterati.

Reposting the image of the cash memo, a social media user wrote, "Petrol cash bill on 02/02/1963... 1 litre = 0.72. If I had #Timemachine I'll go back and fill my vehicles."

According to a price notification of state-owned fuel retailers, petrol price was increased by 35 paise per litre and diesel by 23 paise a litre. In Delhi, petrol now costs Rs 100.21 a litre and diesel is priced at Rs 89.53 per litre.

Delhi is the last of the metro cities to see petrol rising above the Rs 100-a-litre mark. Mumbai, Chennai, Hyderabad and Pune already have prices above that mark. Kolkata also saw petrol prices climbing over Rs 100 per litre Wednesday.

According to a social media user, the fuel prices were being jacked up so frequently that waking up to a price hike had become a way of life.

"No stoppage to hike in price for diesel and petrol. Every morning wake up with this news. Feels like it is no more a news now. Now only elections can relieve us middle class people(sic)," the user wrote.

For others, the unprecedented hike in fuel prices simply reinforced their disappointment and anger at the current dispensation. "Masterstroke by Modi government. Petrol in Delhi crossed? 100 and Modi is celebrating the occasion by expanding his cabinet," a Twitter user posted.

"Situation of inflation in Delhi and other parts of India is really worrisome. These are times when the government should be with people of India, helping them. But instead they are asking people to pay Rs 100 a litre," another user wrote.

The fuel price hike has added significantly to Delhi-based Sayan Kundu's expenses. "I purchased my only car in August 2017. Due to this reckless rise in fuel prices, according to my calculations, my last round trip to Lucknow from Delhi cost me nearly Rs 3,000 more than what it would have in 2017. A nearly 30 per cent increase!" the 32-year-old said.

Now, 28-year-old Ankit Gautam has to think twice before deciding to take out his car. Unless it is for an essential purpose, a car is a big no. "I used to get the tank full as soon as my salary arrived every month. Now, I take my car out only when it is absolutely necessary. Need the same frequency of hikes in my salary too," he said.

PRESERVING THE BEAUTY



A worker of Archaeological Survey of India busy at Taj Mahal in Agra

PTI PHOTO

Trees to be translocated, not felled in UP

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Lucknow, July 7: In another move to save the environment, the Yogi Adityanath government in Uttar Pradesh has decided to translocate trees which are more than 20 years old, instead of cutting them down to pave the way for developmental projects.

The state forest department on Tuesday successfully translocated a peepal tree to another location on the Mohanlalganj-Gosaiganj route in Lucknow.

The tree was uprooted using a machine as it came in the way of road widening in the area. It was translocated at least 2 kilometres away.



Representative image

Uttar Pradesh Forest Minister Dara Singh Chauhan and senior forest department officials were present

when the translocation was done using a specialised machine, which not only digs out the tree with

The process has to be completed quickly or else the tree may not survive

its roots and mother soil but also replants it at the alternative site made ready for the replantation in advance.

The Minister said with this policy, hundreds of trees that are felled every year because of developmental projects will now be saved.

"We are planting crores of trees every year and if we can save the existing trees, it would go a long way in forest conservation," he added.

Now AU students to rate their teachers

THE FEEDBACK FROM THE STUDENTS WOULD BE TAKEN ONLINE AND WOULD BE KEPT STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Prayagraj, July 7: Allahabad University will this year felicitate its teachers with the 'Dronacharya' award for their performance and it will be the students who will assess their performance.

The assessment of the teacher would be based on the secret feedback of more than 30,000 students. This is the first time that such an exercise is being undertaken.

The felicitation ceremony will be a part of the university's annual convocation scheduled tentatively for September 23.

According to Jaya Kapoor, Allahabad University Public Relations Officer, "The central varsity plans to identify one teacher for each of its four faculties - Arts, Science, Commerce and Law - and then give away the 'Dronacharya Award' for the first time at its forthcoming annual convocation function that it plans to hold in September." The teachers would be assessed on the feedback of the students who would rate them against various parameters that include enthusiasm for teaching, regularity in taking classes to knowledge and command over the latest research and developments concerning their specific fields, among others. The feedback from

the students would be taken online and would be kept strictly confidential.

The initiative is designed to help the university identify specific areas where it should get a particular teacher to improve and also motivate the teachers to take regular classes and ensure good interaction with students during their lectures.

"The information regarding this has been made available on the university website. The varsity has also introduced a feedback form for the current students on its official website. The feedback form gives students an opportunity to register their response towards the teachers who teach them in their classroom," Kapoor said.

The form finalized as part of the process involves two steps.

"In the first step, all the necessary directions and information have been made available and students need to fill in the basic details there. In the second, students need to mark their responses as asked," she added. She said the feedback will also help to assess the performance of individual faculty members and facilitate Uttar Pradesh's Allahabad University to reward high performers. It will also help the teachers in enhancing their performance.



Representative image

Shopkeepers struggling for livelihood

Due to the Covid-19 the Red Fort remained closed for a long time, for which it has had a great impact on the shopkeepers of the Chhatta Bazaar present on the fort premises

AGECNIES

New Delhi, July 7: The Red Fort has always been a subject of attraction not only for the people of the country but also for foreign tourists as well.

But due to the Covid-19, the Red Fort remained closed for a long time, due to which it has had a great impact on the shopkeepers of the Chhatta Bazaar present in the fort premises.

"This market is found as soon as you reach inside the Lahori Gate of the Red Fort. There are more than 40 shops in this market.

Handicraft goods are sold at these shops. Now days, international flights are banned due to Covid restrictions. Due to which foreigners are not able to visit all these mon-



Chhatta Chowk, Red Fort, Delhi

FILE PHOTO

uments. This is the reason that it has become a problem for the shopkeepers now. Although this market now also has an association whose name is "Redfort Bazaar Shopkeepers Association". Asim Hussain's shop is from the year 1893, his great grandfather was given this shop by the British Army.

Asim Hussain said, "Our shop is here from 1893, our 'Par Dada' did a photography course from London at that time, then he was given this shop in honour by the British Army. Our firm was registered in 1904." "This pandemic has

affected the most on tourism. The shopkeepers who are dependent on the tourists are in very bad condition. Most of them are currently debt-ridden and running their lives on loan money."

Chhatta Bazaar means covered market. The idea of "Chhatnuma Bazaar" came to Shah Jahan's mind after visiting the city of Peshawar (now in Pakistan) in the year 1646.

The Vice President of the association, Manish, also has an ancestral shop in this market. Due to the effect of the epidemic, he is also thinking of doing a job somewhere.

UP to allow Kanwar Yatra from July 25

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Lucknow, July 7: The Uttar Pradesh government will allow the annual Kanwar Yatra in the state from July 25 and officials have been asked to coordinate with neighbouring states to ensure Covid guidelines are followed, a senior official said Wednesday.

'Kanwariyas' (devotees of Lord Shiva) collect water from River Ganga at Haridwar to offer at Shiva temples in their areas as part of the yatra.

Uttar Pradesh Additional Chief Secretary, Navneet Sehgal told PTI that "Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath

has asked to coordinate with neighbouring Bihar and Uttarakhand and ensure Covid guidelines are following during the yatra."

Sehgal said that detailed guidelines regarding the Yatra will be issued soon and a meeting of senior officials will be held to discuss the matter.

Uttarakhand has appealed to officers of neighbouring states to ask devotees not to come to Haridwar this month for the annual pilgrimage to collect water from the Ganga.

The Kanwar yatra was not held in Uttar Pradesh last year due to Covid restrictions.



Delhi's NO2 pollution increased by 125% in one yr: Study

NO2 IS A DANGEROUS AIR POLLUTANT THAT IS RELEASED WHEN FUEL IS BURNED, AS IN MOST MOTOR VEHICLES, POWER GENERATION, AND INDUSTRIAL PROCESSES

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, July 7: Delhi recorded an increase of 125 per cent in NO2 (nitrogen dioxide) pollution between April 2020 and April 2021, according to a Greenpeace India study which analysed NO2 concentrations in India's eight most-populous state capitals.

NO2 pollution has increased in all the eight capitals studied - Mumbai, Delhi, Bengaluru, Hyderabad, Chennai, Kolkata, Jaipur and Lucknow - but Delhi has seen the "most dramatic increase" during the period, the report said.

Exposure to NO2 can severely impact people's health at all ages, affecting the respiratory and circulatory systems and the brain, leading to an increase in hospital



Representative image

admissions and mortality. "Satellite observations reveal NO2 pollution increased to 125 per cent of April 2020 levels. The analysis suggests

the increase would have been even greater (146 percent) had weather conditions been similar to 2020," read the report, titled "Behind the

Smokescreen: Satellite Data Reveal Air Pollution Increase in India's Eight Most Populous State Capitals".

Although relatively better than the capital, other Indian cities too recorded an equally worrying increase in NO2 levels. NO2 pollution increased by 52 per cent in Mumbai, 90 per cent in Bengaluru, 69 per cent in Hyderabad, 94 per cent in Chennai, 11 per cent in Kolkata, 47 per cent in Jaipur and 32 per cent in Lucknow in April 2021 compared to the same month last year, the study showed.

As the pandemic continues to have a severe impact on India during 2021, there is growing evidence that polluted cities suffer disproportionately more coronavirus cases.

The health impact of fossil fuel-related air pollution is severe and has been reflected time and again in several reports. Yet there has been little change in our reliance on fossil fuels, including coal, oil and gas. Increased economic activity is still largely coupled with toxic air pollution in most cities, Greenpeace India said.

"The air quality levels in these cities are alarming. The cities and the people are already paying a huge price for our reliance on burning fossil fuels, this business as usual cannot continue. People saw clean skies and breathed fresh air during the nationwide lockdown though it was an unintended consequence of the pandemic," said Avinash Chanchal, senior climate campaigner at Greenpeace India.



The resignations of the Union Health Minister and the MoS Health is a candid confession that the Modi government has utterly failed in managing the pandemic
P CHIDAMBARAM | CONGRESS LEADER

HIMACHAL TO GET TOUGH AGAINST OVERCROWDING

A day after the central government expressed concern over tourist overcrowding at hill stations, the Himachal Pradesh Cabinet Wednesday issued directions to local authorities to ensure Covid-appropriate behaviour to contain the spread of the virus



of the day quote

Hindu philosophy is very comprehensive. Digvijaya Singh will never understand it because his thinking is narrow and negative. So he always chose the way of appeasement

KAILASH VIJAYVARGIYA | BJP GENERAL SECRETARY

We have targeted July 30 as the date for completion of 100 per cent first vaccine jab coverage. We can think of opening up tourism only after that

PRAMOD SAWANT | GOA CHIEF MINISTER

The entire economy is in doldrums. Fuel prices are increasing everyday and the Union government is sitting idle. Our Prime Minister is only busy with his Mann ki Baat. He should instead hold petrol ki baat, diesel ki baat and vaccine ki baat

MAMATA BANERJEE | BENGAL CHIEF MINISTER

Cabinet gets a major overhaul



President Ram Nath Kovind, First Lady Savita Kovind, Vice President M Venkaiah Naidu, Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla in a group photograph with the newly sworn-in Council of Ministers, at the Rashtrapati Bhavan in New Delhi

AGENCIES

New Delhi, July 7: The massive Union Cabinet reshuffle Wednesday bears the techno-managerial imprint of Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

In his first term, Modi persisted with around 58 ministers in the Council of Ministers when the slogan was "Minimum Government, Maximum Governance".

More or less, this number has persevered although now with 43 new members, the Council of Ministers now stands at 77, the highest in this government's tenure.

It also marks the realisation that multiple portfolios with one minister may not be a very efficient play

and representation needs to be given to different regions and for administrative efficiency, adequate numbers are required.

In addition, this reshuffle also bears the imprint of techno-managerial heft to boost administration. As the Modi government gets a makeover, the new Council of Ministers is being shaped in terms of experience and qualifications.

Modi had during interactions sought transformative ideas from the bureaucracy but since not much was achieved from that avenue, there seems to be an initiative to incubate ideas through technocracy.

In the new Council of Ministers, there are four former Chief

Ministers in the Cabinet, 18 former state ministers, 39 former MLAs and 23 MPs who have been elected for three or more terms.

This demonstrates the wealth of experience in the new Cabinet as the government has been criticised for lack of bench strength and not enough heft in administrative experience.

The new ministers will also be an eclectic mix of distinguished qualifications including 13 lawyers, 6 doctors, 5 engineers, 7 former civil servants, 46 ministers with experience in central government.

This is also a young looking Cabinet with average age of the Cabinet at 58 and 14 ministers will now be below 50.

CONCERN OVER nCoV SURGE IN 9 STATES: CENTRE

AGENCIES

New Delhi, July 7: Ramping up testing and vaccination, healthcare infrastructure planning and effective clinical management are among the measures to be focussed upon in nine states reporting a surge in Covid-19 cases, the health ministry said Wednesday.

In a letter to the states -- Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Kerala, Meghalaya, Nagaland, Odisha, Tripura and Sikkim -- the ministry has highlighted the areas of concern.

Stressing that there is a need to strengthen the collective efforts to curb the spread of the virus, Union Health Secretary Rajesh Bhushan said ramping up testing and vaccination, healthcare infrastructure planning, following Covid-appropriate behaviour and effective clinical management are among the measures to be taken by these states.

In Arunachal Pradesh, he said it is a point of concern that the state has a weekly positivity rate of 16.2 per cent (Jun 28-July 4), which is continuously increasing for four weeks.



"Nineteen of the 25 districts are reporting a positivity rate of more than 10 per cent, which is a cause of concern. The state has shown almost a 12-per cent increase in the number of cases reported in the last four weeks. Twelve districts are showing an increase in the number of new cases over the past four weeks," Bhushan said.

Changlang, East Siang, Lohit, Papum Pare, Tawang and Upper Subansiri districts reported more than 100 new cases each in the week ending July 4. Namsai district has shown an increase in the number of deaths (four deaths in the week ending July 4 compared to one in the week ending July 13).

For Assam, he said although the state has shown a decline in the number of new cases, four of its 33 districts have shown an increase in the figure for the last four weeks and 29 districts have reported over 100 new cases in the week ending July 4.

Kannur, Kasaragod, Kollam, Kozhikode, Malappuram, Palakkad and Thrissur had over 100 new cases in the previous week with a weekly positivity rate of more than 10 per cent, the ministry said.

7 HEAVYWEIGHTS AXED IN ONE GO



It is not every day that seven Cabinet Ministers are axed from the Union Cabinet in one fell swoop. Wednesday was one such day when the Narendra Modi government led to the axing of several heavyweight ministers holding key portfolios. Most of these resignations were unexpected and not part of the usual speculation binge which takes place in the run-up to a Cabinet reshuffle. Health Minister Harsh Vardhan was in the firing line because of perceived mismanagement of the Covid second wave which took a toll of millions of lives. Harsh Vardhan had been widely criticised for the ensuing situation as the Health Ministry is seen as the nodal ministry for management of the Covid situation and vaccine administration. Among the senior ministers, Education Minister Ramesh Pokhriyal 'Nishank', Chemicals and Fertiliser Minister DV Sadananda Gowda, and Labour and Employment Minister Santosh Gangwar have also resigned. Law and IT Minister Ravi Shankar Prasad and I&B and Environment Minister Prakash Javadekar have also put in their papers, while Social Justice and Empowerment Minister Thawar Chand Gehlot has been appointed as Governor of Karnataka. A total of 12 ministers have resigned from the Modi government and President Ram Nath Kovind has accepted their resignations, a statement from Rashtrapati Bhavan said. Among the Ministers of State who have resigned are Debasree Chaudhuri (Women and Child Development), Rattan Lal Kataria (Jal Shakti and Social Justice & Empowerment), Sanjay Dhotre (Education), Pratap Chandra Sarangi (Animal Husbandry), Babul Supriyo (Environment), and Raosaheb Danve Patil (Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution).

Chinese hackers target SBI users

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, July 7: In fresh trouble for the State Bank of India (SBI), hackers of Chinese origin are targeting bank users with phishing scams, asking them to update their KYC using a particular website link and offering free gifts worth Rs 50 lakh from the bank via a WhatsApp message, cybersecurity researchers warned Wednesday.

The research wing of New Delhi-based think tank CyberPeace Foundation, along with Autobot



Infosec Pvt Ltd, studied two such incidents on the name of SBI that

were faced by some smartphone users. "All the domain names associated with the campaign have the registrant country as China," the research team said. In the first case of the text message requesting KYC verification, the landing page that appears resemble with the official SBI online page.

On clicking the "Continue to Login" button, it redirects the user to full-kyc.php page, asking confidential information like username, Password and a captcha in order to login to the online banking.

"Following this, it asks for an

OTP sent to the user's mobile number. As soon as the OTP is entered, it redirects the user to another page that asks the users to enter some confidential information again like account holder name, mobile number, date of birth," the researchers informed.

The research team came to a conclusion that the campaign is pretended to be launched from State Bank of India but hosted on the third-party domain instead of the official website www.onlinesbi.com, which makes it more suspicious.



7 JUNIOR MINISTERS ELEVATED

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, July 7: Seven members of the Union Council of Ministers were elevated as cabinet ministers Wednesday for their persistent performance in their respective portfolios.

At Wednesday's expansion and reshuffle of the council of ministers, Kiren Rijju, Raj Kumar Singh, Hardeep Puri, Mansukh Mandaviya, G Kishan Reddy, Parshottam Rupala and Anurag Singh Thakur were elevated as cabinet ministers.

Rijju, a prominent face from the northeast in the government headed by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, was the minister of state (independent charge) in the Ministry of Youth and Sports before the rejig. He was also a MoS in the minority affairs ministry.

Rijju is now the new Law Minister. A former Union home secretary, R K Singh was the MoS with independent charge in the power and new and renewable energy ministries. He was also a MoS in the Ministry of Skill Development.

Now he heads the Power and Ministry of New and Renewable Energy as a cabinet minister. A surprise pick during a cabinet expansion in 2017, Puri, a former diplomat, was given two important portfolios - housing and urban affairs and aviation - in the BJP-led government's second term.

As the housing and urban affairs minister, he has been piloting the Central Vista project, the pet project of the Modi government which is slated to revamp a considerable portion of the Lutyens' Zone in Delhi. When the government was facing an intense attack over the Central Vista project, Puri took on the opposition strongly while defending the initiative.

Puri is now the Petroleum, and Urban Development minister. Son of Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) veteran from Himachal Pradesh Prem Kumar Dhumal, Thakur was the minister of state in the ministries of finance and corporate affairs.

He has often hit out at the critics of the government inside and outside Parliament. He now heads the Information and Broadcasting as well as the Youth Affairs and Sports ministries.

WB govt tables Budget 2021-22 in Assembly

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kolkata, July 7: The West Bengal government Wednesday waived road tax on passenger transport vehicles and offered a rebate on stamp duty as it tabled a Rs 3.08-lakh-crore Budget in the assembly for the financial year 2021-2022.

Presenting the Budget, state industry minister Partha Chatterjee said the government has decided to extend the one-time exemption of motor vehicle tax for the period starting July 1, 2021 to December 31, 2021. The government has also proposed to reduce stamp duty by two per cent for registration of deeds, while circle rate was slashed by ten per cent.

Chatterjee presented the budget as finance minister Amit Mitra is unwell. In February, Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee had placed the vote-on-account in the House, during which 26 schemes and projects were announced.

SHORT TAKES

NPCC protest against fuel hike

Kohima: The Nagaland Pradesh Congress Committee (NPCC) Wednesday joined the nationwide Congress protest against skyrocketing fuel prices and increasing inflation. NPCC working president Khriedi Theunuo said that common people are suffering due to the unprecedented hike in prices of essential commodities, including petrol and diesel amid the impact of the Coronavirus pandemic.

Army Chief begins 2-day visit to Italy

New Delhi: Chief of Army Staff Gen MM Naravane Wednesday began a two-day visit to Italy with an aim to further expand bilateral strategic cooperation. Gen Naravane arrived in Italy from the UK on the second leg of his two-nation tour. "General MM Naravane #COAS arrived at #Italy on a two-day visit. The visit aims to further strengthen strategic and defence cooperation between both the countries," the Army tweeted.

Quake hits Assam, Meghalaya, Bengal

Guwahati: An earthquake measuring 5.2 on the Richter scale was reported in western Assam, neighbouring Meghalaya and North Bengal Wednesday, officials said. According to the National Centre for Seismology (NCS), the tremors were felt in Goalpara in western Assam at 8.46 a.m. They occurred at a depth of 14 km from the surface, and were also felt in neighbouring Bangladesh.

Man killed in tiger attack

Nagpur: A 62-year-old man was mauled to death by a tiger at a forest in Maharashtra's Chandrapur district, the second such incident in two days, officials said Wednesday. The body of Motiram Garmale was found in Hadla beat of the Brahmapuri division Wednesday morning, a statement issued by Chandrapur's chief conservator of forests said.

Woman raped in front of hubby

Patna: A woman was raped in front of her husband in Bihar's Saran district, an official said. The incident came to light when a video of the incident went viral on social media. Saran SP Santosh Kumar, has ordered an inquiry.

Patchy monsoon to pick up later this week



AGENCIES

New Delhi, July 7: India's crucial monsoon rains, which turned patchy at the tail-end of June, will pick up later this week, a weather department official said, helping farmers accelerate planting of summer-sown crops and easing concerns about dry weather conditions.

"The monsoon is likely to revive over southern India by July 8 and over central and northwestern India by July 10, and rains are likely to gather pace by July 11, when a low-pressure area will create more favourable conditions," Mrutyunjay Mohapatra, director-

general of the India Meteorological Department (IMD) said in a statement. After lashing the southern-most Kerala coast June 3, the monsoon covered two-thirds of India by the end of the first half of the month, nearly 15 days earlier than normal. As a result, rains were above average during the first three weeks of June, before the monsoon tapered off. While overall monsoon rains were still 10% above average in June, they have been 46% below average so far in July - a crucial month for planting crops such as rice, corn, cane, cotton, and soybean. The IMD defines average, or normal, rainfall as between 96% and 104% of a 50-year

average of 88 cm for the entire four-month season beginning in June. According to the IMD, rainfall is likely to be average in July.

"Better rains in the second half of July will make up for the shortfall that we have seen in early July. Also...rain-fed areas of central India are likely to get good rainfall, and that's good news," Mohapatra said.

Nearly half of India's farmland has no irrigation and is dependent on monsoon rains that account for 70%-90% of annual rainfall. Farming contributes almost 15% to India's \$2.7 trillion economy but sustains more than half the population of 1.3 billion.

international

of the day quote

I do hope that member states do not forget history and divide terrorism again into different categories and take us back to the era of 'your terrorists' and 'my terrorists' and erase the gains we have had over the last two decades

T S TIRUMURTI | INDIA'S PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE TO THE UN

We will not put economic interests first. We will put the broader national interest first and that means standing up with a very clear and consistent sense of where our national interest is and that is what we have done

JOSH FRYDENBERG | BY LEADER, LIBERAL PARTY, AUSTRALIA

I have deep respect and appreciation for His Holiness Dalai Lama's grace, wisdom, and humility, as well as his dedication to greater global equality and the equal rights of all people, including his fellow Tibetans

ANTONY BLINKEN | US SECRETARY OF STATE

SHORT TAKES

Defence Minister appointed Dy PM

Kuala Lumpur: Malaysian Prime Minister Muhyiddin Yassin has appointed Defence Minister Ismail Sabri Yaakob as the Deputy Prime Minister, the government said Wednesday. The appointment is to help Muhyiddin manage the administration of the country and deal with the current health and economic crisis due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the Prime Minister's Office said in a statement.

Russia detains Estonian consul

Moscow: Estonia's consul in St Petersburg has been detained after allegedly being caught receiving classified documents, Russia's Federal Security Service said Tuesday. The agency statement did not give further information about the detention of Consul Mart Latte but said that "such activities are incompatible with the status of a diplomatic worker and are openly hostile to Russia". Estonian Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Aari Lemmik said the detention is "a provocation and damaging to European Union member states and the EU as a whole". Russia has expelled Estonian diplomats two times this year, both in retaliation for Estonia's expulsion of Russian diplomats.

Dutch crime journo shot

Amsterdam: Dutch crime reporter Peter R de Vries was shot in the centre of Amsterdam, according to national broadcaster NOS. Amsterdam police had confirmed that a man has been shot at the Lange Leidsdwaarsstraat Tuesday night, reports Xinhua news agency. He was moved to a hospital with serious injuries. De Vries, 64, is the most successful crime reporter in the country, according to NOAS. He had just attended TV Show RTL Boulevard until 7.30 pm Tuesday, where he is a regular guest.

Volcano billows 'greyish plume'

Manila: A 'short-lived' preearthquake eruption occurred at the restive Taal volcano in the Philippines Wednesday, producing a 300-metre high 'greyish plume'. The Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology said the eruption occurred at 5.18 am, adding that it has recorded 55 volcanic earthquakes in the past 24 hours, including one 'explosion-type' tumbor and 44 low-frequency ones, reports Xinhua news agency.



Not even during the Civil War did insurrectionists breach our Capitol, the citadel of our democracy. But six months ago today, insurrectionists did. This was not dissent. It was disorder

JOE BIDEN | PRESIDENT OF THE USA

JILL BIDEN TO ATTEND SPELLING BEE FINALS

US First Lady Jill Biden will attend July 8 the 2021 Scripps National Spelling Bee finals in Orlando in which nine of the 11 finalists are Indian-Americans



Nearly 190 shot dead across US during July 4th weekend

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Washington, July 7: Nearly 190 people were shot dead across the US over the July 4th or Independence Day holiday weekend, according to data compiled by the Gun Violence Archive, a research organisation. By Monday, the non-profit group reported that 189 people were killed and 516 were injured in more than 540 shootings over the three-day weekend that started July 2. US media outlet NPR said Tuesday after reviewing the data, noting that those numbers may go up as the organisation is continuing to collect additional information. The Chicago Tribune newspaper reported that at least 95 people were shot in the city during the long weekend, and among those



At least six children were killed in shootings across the country over the holiday weekend, sparking calls from officials to end the gun violence plaguing their communities

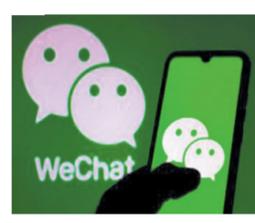
injured were two police officers, reports Xinhua news agency. In New York, there were 26 victims from 21 shootings from July 2-4, the New York Police Department said. In Norfolk, eastern state of Virginia,

police have charged a 15-year-old boy in the weekend shooting of four children between the ages of 6 and 16 July 2, said the NPR report. Police in Cincinnati, Ohio, said two males aged 16 and 19 respectively who

were "engaged in a verbal altercation that resulted in the two exchanging gunfire" were shot dead, and three others were injured at a holiday celebration at a park July 4. In Toledo, Ohio, a 17-year-old boy was killed when a block party was disrupted by gunfire early Monday, according to police. At least 12 people were hurt in the shooting. On July 4, at least eight people were shot and injured after an argument broke out in Fort Worth, Texas, local media reported. On the same day five men were found shot in Dallas, Texas, and three of them later pronounced dead. In suburban Atlanta, Georgia, golf professional Gene Siller was fatally shot at a country club July 3. Two other gunshot victims were also found on the course and police

are still looking for the suspect. Through the first 172 days of 2021, gun violence killed 9,420 Americans, an average of 55 people a day, according to the Gun Violence Archive. The figures include homicides and accidental gun deaths but not suicides. A sample of 37 cities with data for the first three months of this year saw an 18 per cent spike in murders compared with the same period in 2020, according to an earlier New York Times report. Many experts already predicted that gun violence will get even worse this summer, when it historically goes up with the arrival of warm weather. Furthermore, most states have relaxed Covid restrictions after months of shutdowns.

WeChat shuts LGBT accounts



AGENCIES

Bangkok, July 7: China's most popular social media service has deleted accounts on LGBT topics run by university students and non-government groups, prompting concern the ruling Communist Party is tightening control over gay and lesbian content. WeChat sent account holders a notice they violated rules but gave no details, according to the founder of an LGBT group, who asked not to be identified further out of fear of possible official retaliation. She said at least dozens of accounts were shut down, all at about 10 pm Tuesday. It wasn't clear whether the step was ordered by Chinese authorities, but it comes as the ruling party tightens political controls and tries to silence groups that might criticize its rule. WeChat's operator, Tencent Holding Ltd, confirmed it received an email seeking comment but didn't immediately respond. The Communist Party decriminalized homosexuality in 1997, but gay, lesbian, bisexual, transsexual and other sexual minorities still face discrimination. There is more public discussion of such issues, but authorities have blocked some LGBT activities. The official attitude is increasingly strict, the founder of the LGBT group said. Contents of the WeChat accounts, which included personal stories and photos of group events, were erased, according to the group founder. The former operator of a different group for university students, who asked not to be identified for fear of retaliation, called the step a devastating blow. University officials asked students two months ago to shut down LGBT social media groups or to avoid mentioning their school names, according to the LGBT group founder. She said universities in the eastern province of Jiangsu were told by officials to investigate groups for women's rights and sexual minorities to "maintain stability."

Taliban attack capital of northwestern Af province

AGENCIES

Herat/Kabul, July 7: Taliban insurgents Wednesday reached the entry points to the capital of Afghanistan's northwestern Badghis province, officials said, causing panic among local people and prompting prisoners to break out of the city's prisons. Provincial governor Husamuuddin Shams told Reuters the Taliban had attacked the city of Qala-e-Naw from three directions in the morning and Afghan security forces were fighting them back. "They entered some parts of the city, but later on the enemy was faced with a strong reaction," he said. "Right now, after around two hours of clashes in the city, the enemy is forced to retreat." Local officials described a state of panic. "Qala-e-Naw was in a state of disarray as security forces and

people do not know what to do now," said Abdul Aziz Bek, head of Badghis provincial council. "More than 200 prisoners in the central prison of the Badghis broke the prison gate and escaped," said Bek. As foreign force withdraw from Afghanistan after almost 20 years, Taliban fighters are swiftly gaining ground across towns in the north and western provinces, forcing soldiers to surrender and civilians to flee. Shams said other districts of Badghis outside the capital were in the hands of the Taliban as security forces evacuated. Afghan defence minister Bismillah Mohammadi said in a statement the war was entering a "difficult" stage and security forces were "defending Afghanistan and our compatriots with all their might and resources under all circumstances."

Haitian Prez assassinated

FIRST LADY MARTINE MOISE WAS SHOT IN THE OVERNIGHT ATTACK AND HOSPITALISED, INTERIM PREMIER CLAUDE JOSEPH SAID

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Port-au-Prince (Haiti), July 7: Haitian President Jovenel Moise was assassinated in an attack on his private residence early Wednesday, according to a statement from the country's interim prime minister, who called the killing a "hateful, inhumane and barbaric act."

First Lady Martine Moise was shot in the overnight attack and hospitalised, interim Premier Claude Joseph said.

Even before the assassination, Haiti had grown increasingly unstable and disgruntled under Moise. The president ruled by decree for more than two years after the country failed to hold elections and the opposition demanded he step down in recent months. "The country's security situation is under the control of the National Police of Haiti and the Armed Forces of Haiti," Joseph said in a statement from his office. "Democracy and the republic will win."

In the early morning hours of Wednesday, the streets were largely empty in the Caribbean nation's capital of Port-au-Prince, but some people ransacked businesses in one area. Joseph said police have been deployed to the National Palace and the upscale community of Pétionville and will be sent to other areas. Joseph condemned the assassination as a "hateful, inhumane and



Overnight killing of Jovenel Moise was 'barbaric act' - PM
State of emergency invoked
Samid confusion over succession
Comes amid rampant gang violence, humanitarian crisis
Attack condemned by US, nearby Latin American states
Haiti plagued by poverty, political unrest, shortages

barbaric act." In the statement, he said some of the attackers spoke in Spanish but offered no further explanation. He later said in a radio address that they spoke Spanish or English, again offering no details. The White House described the attack as "horrific" and "tragic" and said it was still gathering information on what happened. US President Joe Biden will be briefed later Wednesday by his national security team, spokesperson Jen Psaki said during an interview on MSNBC. "The message to the people of Haiti is this is a tragic tragedy," she said during a previously scheduled interview on CNN. "It's a horrific crime and we're so sorry for the loss that they are all suffering and going through as many of them are waking up this morning and hearing this news. And we stand ready and stand by them to provide any assistance that's needed." Haiti's economic, political and social woes have deepened recently, with gang violence spiking heavily in Port-au-Prince, inflation spiraling and food and fuel becoming scarcer at times in a country where 60% of the population makes less than USD 2 a day. These troubles come as Haiti still tries to recover from the devastating 2010 earthquake and Hurricane Matthew that struck in 2016.

S'pore to bring in Indian workers on small scale and in calibrated manner

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Singapore, July 7: Migrant workers from India will be brought into Singapore on a small scale and in a calibrated manner this month through a pilot programme led by the construction, marine and process (CMP) sectors, according to a media report here Wednesday. If successful, this method will be used to facilitate a steady inflow of migrant workers in a safe and secure manner, The Straits Times reported, quoting a joint statement by the Singapore Contractors Association, Association of Singapore Marine Industries and Association of Process Industry. The move comes after zero incidences of Covid-19 in the first

The move comes after zero incidences of Covid-19 in the first few batches of workers entering from Malaysia under the pilot project

few batches of workers entering from Malaysia under the pilot project, according to the statement. We will continue to carry this (the pilot) out on a small scale and in a calibrated manner to better manage the risks involved and validate the robustness of the tightened end-to-end process, the trade bodies said. Since the coronavirus out-

break, the CMP sectors have been severely affected by restrictions on the inflow of migrant workers. Currently, those who have recent travel history to Bangladesh, Nepal, Pakistan, Sri Lanka and India are not allowed to enter Singapore under enhanced border restrictions. In May, the Ministry of Manpower stopped accepting new entry applications for work pass holders from higher-risk countries or regions due to Covid-19, except for workers needed in key strategic projects and infrastructural works. Work pass holders from these countries who were approved to enter Singapore before July 5 were no longer allowed to do so, with some exceptions, said the daily.

Palme d'Or



A Chopard representative displays the Palme d'Or, the highest prize awarded to competing films, during an interview before the start of film festival

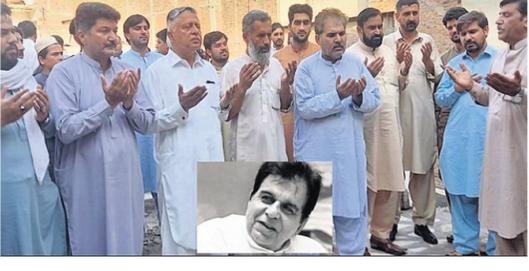
Funeral prayers in absentia offered at Dilip Kumar's ancestral house

KUMAR WAS BORN DECEMBER 11, 1922 AT HIS ANCESTRAL HOME IN QISSA KHAWANI BAZAAR AREA OF PESHAWAR IN KHYBER PAKHTUNKHWA PROVINCE

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Peshawar, July 7: A large group of people Wednesday offered ghaibana Namaz-e-Janaza (funeral prayers in absentia) for legendary Indian actor Dilip Kumar at his ancestral house in Qissa Khawani Bazaar area of Peshawar in Pakistan. They also offered fateha (prayers) for the 98-year-old cinema icon and prayed for his eternal peace. Kumar was born December 11, 1922 at his ancestral home in Qissa Khawani Bazaar area of Peshawar in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province. His original name was Yousuf Khan. Pakistan's top leadership, including President Arif Alvi and

Prime Minister Imran Khan, consoled Kumar's death, describing him as an outstanding actor, a humble man, and a dignified personality. Kumar, India's enduring film legend through the decades, died at a Mumbai hospital Wednesday after prolonged illness. In 1998, the Pakistan government honoured Kumar with the 'Nishan-e-Imtiaz' - the country's highest civilian award. The government of Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa (KP) consoled the demise of the legendary actor, saying he will always be remembered for the love and affection he had for the people of his ancestral home town



in the province. The Pakistan government has already declared his native house as a national heritage and completed all formalities to convert it into a museum in his name. Lateef-ur-Rehman, Spokesman of KP Archeology, Sports and Tourism Department, said the provincial government has taken

over the possession of Kumar's ancestral house and it would soon be converted into a museum. Kumar visited Peshawar in the early 90's. He was given an unprecedented reception and welcome by the people of Peshawar. The Directorate of Archaeology and Museums, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, put up a banner of offering special condolences to his bereaved family. Peshawar's leading businessman and ruling Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf Senator Mohsin Aziz said Kumar was his uncle in relation and the entire Peshawar city is in a state of mourning due to his demise. I am deeply shocked after hear-

ing that my uncle is no more in this world, said Aziz. Aziz said Kumar left Peshawar in 1935 at the age of 13 for Mumbai and excelled himself in the field of acting. When Dilip uncle visited Peshawar in 1998, he exclusively requested for Peshawari Chappal and Kurta Pajama being his favourite shoe and dress that was provided by his family, Aziz said. Sarfraz, who deals in artificial jewellery business in Mohallah Khudadad close to Kumar's ancestral property, expressed deep sorrow and grief over the actor's death. We lost a great man. The people of Peshawar will always remember him and his services, he said.

of the day quote

Yes, we can fly Starship around space and chomp up debris with the moving fairing door

ELON MUSK | TESLA AND SPACEX CEO

The pandemic has opened up additional opportunities in digital services due to surge in remote working, e-commerce and automated services

ANU SETHI | CRISIL'S SENIOR DIRECTOR

We at Nucleus firmly believe in the demographic dividend that the youth of our country can provide, given the right opportunity and exposure

VISHNU DUSAD | NUCLEUS SOFTWARE MD

SHORT TAKES

New UBI regional head appointed

Bhubaneswar: DGM Satyaban Behera took the charge as Regional Head of Union Bank of India, Berhampur region. Prior to this, Behera worked as the head in transaction banking division at the bank's central office-annex in Mangalore. Having more than 25 years of vast experience, Behera worked in different functional capacities in different places in West Bengal, Odisha, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, New Delhi, Uttar Pradesh, Maharashtra, Chhattisgarh and Madhya Pradesh. He was promoted to the post of AGM in 2017 and DGM in 2020 for his sincerity, dedication and efficiency. Likely to have more interest in MSME, agriculture and retail sectors, Behera will focus on rehabilitation of industries affected by the Covid-19 pandemic.

Haier's new fridges unveiled

Bhubaneswar: Haier, the global leader in home appliances and consumer electronics, unveiled 17 new variants of big top mounted refrigerators in the 3-star range. The new additions to Haier's Top Mounted Refrigerator series come with the all-new magic convertible feature that allows temperature to be controlled between a wide range of +7°C to -24°C to cater to the unique requirements of different food items for retaining their freshness and nutrition for longer duration. The new refrigerators are now available in the market with 10 years of assured warranty on the inverter compressor and dual inverter fan motor. The models are priced between a range of ₹55,000 and ₹64,700 for 345L models, and ₹62,200 and ₹68,900 for 375L models. The refrigerators come in a wide colour range - steel, glass, and floral finish to complement the interiors of contemporary Indian kitchens.

Recovery picking pace in India: Oyo

Bangalore: Oyo Hotels and Homes chief executive said Wednesday the SoftBank-backed hospitality startup's business was likely to return to levels seen before the second wave, but did not provide a timeline for its potential public offering. "In India, if all goes well, in a couple of weeks our numbers will be back to pre-wave two and then growing from there," Founder and CEO Ritesh Agarwal said at a Reuters Next Newsmaker event Wednesday. The hotel aggregator, in which SoftBank owns 46 per cent stake and is one of its biggest bets, has endured months of layoffs, cost cuts and losses during the global health crisis. But with easing travel curbs and increasing vaccinations, the travel demand is slowly recovering in India, with local tourism attractions witnessing a higher traffic.



While further fiscal support in some major advanced economies, including the United States, would benefit growth more broadly, it could also further fuel inflationary pressures

KRISTALINA GEORGIEVA | IMF MD

RBI NOTIFIES INCLUSION OF RETAIL, WHOLESALE IN MSME CATEGORY

The Reserve Bank Wednesday notified the inclusion of retail and wholesale trade under the micro, small and medium enterprises (MSME) category. This will help retail and wholesale trade benefit from priority sector lending under RBI guidelines.



Fitch cuts India growth forecast to 10%

AGENCIES

New Delhi, July 7: Fitch Ratings Wednesday cut India's growth forecast to 10 per cent for the current fiscal, from 12.8 per cent estimated earlier, due to slowing recovery post second wave of COVID-19, and said rapid vaccination could support a sustainable revival in business and consumer confidence.

In a report, the global rating agency said the challenges for banking sector posed by the coronavirus pandemic have increased due to a virulent second wave in the first quarter of the financial year ending March 2022 (FY22).

"Fitch Ratings revised down India's real GDP for FY22 by 280bp to 10 per cent, underlining our belief that renewed restrictions have slowed recovery efforts and left banks with a moderately worse outlook for business and revenue generation in FY22," it said.

Fitch believes that rapid vaccination could support a sustainable revival in business and consumer confidence; however, without it, economic recovery would remain



vulnerable to further waves and lockdowns.

It said localised lockdowns during the second wave kept economic activity from stalling to levels similar to those during 2020, but disruption in several key business centres has slowed the recovery and dented Fitch's expectations of a rebound to pre-pandemic levels by FY22. India's economy con-

tracted 24.4 per cent in June quarter of 2020.

Fitch views India's rebound potential to be better than most comparable 'BBB-' peers because it does not expect a structurally weaker real GDP growth outlook. However, there is a risk that India's medium-term growth could suffer if the business and consumer activity were to experience scarring from

Global rating agency says rapid vaccination could support a sustainable revival in business and consumer confidence

The agency estimates India's medium term growth potential at about 6.5 per cent. Stating that vaccination is key for business revival and relief measures would only provide interim support, Fitch said the low vaccination rate makes India vulnerable to further waves of the pandemic.

"Only 4.7 per cent of its 1.37 billion population was fully vaccinated as of July 5, 2021... This poses risks to the prospects of a meaningful and sustainable economic recovery," it added.

Indian economy contracted by 7.3 per cent in fiscal 2020-21 as the country battled the first wave of COVID, as against a 4 per cent growth in 2019-20. GDP growth in

current fiscal was estimated to be in double digits initially, but a severe second wave of pandemic has led to various agencies cut growth projections.

RBI too earlier this month cut India's growth forecast to 9.5 per cent for this fiscal, from 10.5 per cent estimated earlier.

While S&P Global Ratings lowered its growth estimate to 9.5 per cent, another US-based rating agency Moody's has projected a 9.3 per cent growth in the current fiscal ending March 2022. For 2021 calendar year, Moody's has cut growth estimate sharply to 9.6 per cent.

Last month, World Bank slashed its GDP growth forecast for current fiscal ending March 2022 to 8.3 per cent, from 10.1 per cent estimated in April, saying economic recovery is being hampered by the devastating second wave of coronavirus infections.

Domestic rating agency ICRA too had projected economic growth at 8.5 per cent for this financial year, while British brokerage firm Barclays had last month cut India's growth forecast to 9.2 per cent.

Rath Yatra: Tanishq launches 'Rajadhiraj' special collection



POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 7: On the auspicious occasion of Rath Yatra, jewellery brand Tanishq Wednesday launched a special jewellery collection 'Rajadhiraj' to celebrate the divine glory of Lord Jagannath.

Tanishq aims to pay a tribute to Lord Jagannath through a special collection of pendants and rings carved by master craftsmen who have put in their heart and soul into crafting the divine jewellery pieces. Hand carved and embellished further with enamel work, these jewellery pieces stand as a testament to the spirit of devotees.

Abhishek Rastogi, Head of Design, Jewellery Division, Titan Company Ltd said, "These new pendants have been designed in 22Kt Gold, as powerful talismans of protection and good fortune and make as a perfect symbol of auspiciousness and adornment."

The collection was launched in the presence of Amit Dharap, Regional Business Head, East, Titan Company Limited and Anirban Banerjee, Regional Business Manager, East, Tanishq at a city hotel.

To make the occasion more exciting for the customers, Tanishq has also introduced special offers this Rath Yatra. Tanishq is offering up to 25% off on diamond jewellery value and on making charges of gold jewellery. The offer is valid across all Tanishq stores in Odisha. The offer is valid for a limited time period only.

In a bid to further strengthen its strong position in the Odisha market, the brand also announced Odia celebrity Prakruti Mishra as the face of Tanishq in Odisha. She brings in grace and elegance that fits perfectly for the brand embarking on a new journey in Odisha.

Anti-monopoly cases: China fines internet giants

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Beijing, July 7: Companies including internet giants Alibaba and Tencent were fined Wednesday by anti-monopoly regulators in a new move to tighten control over their fast-developing industries.

In 22 cases, companies were fined 500,000 yuan (USD 75,000) each for actions including acquiring stakes in other companies that might improperly increase their market power; the State Administration for Market Regulation announced. It said violators include six companies owned by Alibaba Group, five by Tencent Holding Ltd. And two by retailer Suning.Com, Ltd.

China's leaders worry about the dominance of its biggest internet companies, which are expanding into finance, health services and other sensitive areas. The ruling Communist Party says anti-monopoly enforcement, especially in tech, is a priority this year.



In the biggest penalty to date, Alibaba was fined 18.3 billion yuan (USD 2.8 billion) in April on charges of suppressing competition. Other companies have been fined or reprimanded for violating competition, data protection, censorship and other rules.

Sunday, ride-hailing service Didi Global Inc., which had a US stock market debut last week, was ordered by regulators to overhaul its collection and handling of customer information.

It's IPOs ahoy! 40-odd issues on way to mop up ₹80,000cr

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, July 7: The primary market is set for a bumper ₹80,000-crore bonanza with 30 companies already filing IPO papers to raise ₹55,000 crore, while around 10 more are lined up for this month itself, seeking to mop up another ₹25,000 crore, say investment bankers.

The market has been on a non-stop rally, hitting new records almost every week, on the back of an influx of investors -- a vast majority of them first-timers -- coupled with a flood of liquidity.

Foreign funds alone had pumped in a record USD 35 billion into the market in FY21, while the trend has continued this fiscal as well.

Domestic institutions led by LIC have also infused trillions of rupees, helping woe retail investors in troves -- the year saw over 20 million new investors coming to the market.

Having already raised ₹27,426 crore from 22 issues so far this year, 2021 is set to be a record year for fundraising through initial public offerings (IPOs).

In 2020, 16 issues had mopped up ₹26,628 crore, and a similar number of IPOs had collected ₹12,687 crore in 2019, but 2018 was the best year so far for the primary market as 25 companies had raised ₹31,731 crore.

Some of the leading issues in the March quarter of the year included IRFC (Rs 4,633 crore), Indigo Paints (Rs 1,176 crore), Railtel (Rs 819 crore), Home First Finance, Laxmi Organic, Barbeque Nation, Anupam Rasayan, Kalyan Jewellers, Brookfield India Reit, Home First Finance, Stove Kraft, Nureca, and Heranba Industries, among others.

Apart from these, companies including Utkarsh Small Finance Bank, Glenmark Life Sciences, Rolex Rings and Seven Islands Shipping have received Sebi's go ahead to float their IPOs.

Companies that are likely to hit the market this month include Glenmark Lifesciences, Zomato (roadshow for the ₹8,500-crore issue



is from Thursday), Windlas Biotech, Medi Assist TPA, Tatva Chintan Pharma, Paras Defence and Seven Island Shipping, together looking to raise about ₹13,650 crore.

That apart, about 10 companies are also expected to file IPO documents with Sebi this month.

These include Star Health & Allied Insurance, Sapphire Foods, Northern Arc, Fino Payments Bank, Paytm, Ixigo, VLCC, Sahajanand Medical Technologies, Lava International, and Veeda Clinical Research, seeking to mop up ₹25,000 crore.

Digital payments leader Paytm is planning an over ₹18,500 crore issue and is likely file the papers this month. If closed successfully, this will be the biggest issue ever in the country, after the around ₹15,000-crore Coal India issue of October 2010.

The companies that have already filed the draft red herring prospectus (DRHP) with the market regulator include Aadhar Housing Finance, Zomato, Glenmark Lifesciences, Medi Assist TPA, Fincare Small Finance Bank, Chemplast Sanmar, Jana Small Finance Bank, Nuvoco Vistas, Cartrade, Arohan Financial Services, Windlass Biotech, Shriram Properties, Sansera Engineering, Supriya Lifesciences and Rolex Rings, among others, according to Sebi data.

According to merchant bankers, about 10 more companies are likely file the DRHPs with Sebi this month itself to raise ₹25,000 crore.

Chinese nationals step down from Paytm board ahead of planned IPO

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, July 7: All Chinese nationals on the board of digital payments firm Paytm have been replaced by US and Indian citizens, while there is no change in the existing shareholding, according to a regulatory filing of the company.

Alipay representative Jing Xiandong, Ant Financial's Guoming Cheng, and Alibaba representatives Michael Yuen Jen Yao (US citizen) and Ting Hong Kenny Ho have ceased to be directors of the company, as per the regulatory document.

According to a source, Paytm now has no Chinese nationals on its board.

US citizen Douglas Feagin has joined the Paytm board on behalf of Ant Group.

Saama Capital's Ashit Ranjit Lilani and SoftBank representative Vikas Agnihotri have also joined the board, the company's filing showed. Todd Anthony Combs, investment manager at Berkshire Hathaway, has retired from the board. It was erroneously reported Tuesday that Combs had joined the board.



Combs retired by rotation from One97's board on June 30, as per Registrars of Companies (ROC) filings. One97 Communications is the parent firm of Paytm.

Paytm shareholders include Alibaba's Ant Group (29.71 per cent), SoftBank Vision Fund (19.63 per cent), SAIF Partners (18.56 per cent) and Vijay Shekhar Sharma (14.67 per cent). AGH Holding, T Rowe Price, Discovery Capital and Berkshire Hathaway hold less than 10 per cent stake each in the company. The development comes at a time when Paytm is gearing up

for public listing.

Paytm is expected to seek shareholders' approval on July 12, to raise up to ₹16,600 crore through its initial share sale, giving it a valuation of over ₹1.78 lakh crore, a source said.

The extraordinary general meeting of Paytm is scheduled for July 12, in which the company may seek approval to raise up to ₹12,000 crore through issuance of fresh equity.

Another ₹4,600 crore is expected to be raised from the sale of equity shares by existing and eligible shareholders.



Ever Given begins exit from Suez Canal after 106 days

CEREMONY WAS HELD AT THE CANAL TO MARK THE DEPARTURE OF THE VESSEL, WHICH IS LOADED WITH ABOUT 18,300 CONTAINERS

REUTERS

Cairo, July 7: The Ever Given, one of the world's largest container ships, resumed its journey to leave the Suez Canal Wednesday, 106 days after becoming wedged across a northern section of the waterway for nearly a week and disrupting global trade.

A Reuters witness on board a tug boat saw the Ever Given start to move north in the Great Bitter Lake, which separates two sections of the canal and where it has been moored with its Indian crew since being refloated March 29.

Canal sources said the Ever Given would be escorted by two tug boats and guided by two experienced pilots as it makes its way



through the canal, one of the world's busiest waterways, towards the Mediterranean.

A ceremony was held at the canal to mark the departure of the vessel, which is loaded with about

About 15 per cent of world shipping traffic transits the Suez Canal, which is the shortest shipping route between Europe and Asia. It is an important source of foreign currency revenue for Egypt

18,300 containers.

The Ever Given had become grounded in the southernmost, single-lane stretch of the canal March 23 amid high winds.

It was then held by the Suez Canal Authority (SCA) under court

order while the authority sought compensation from the ship's Japanese owner Shoen Kisen and its insurers.

The SCA demanded more than \$900 million for the salvage operation and other losses, later lowered to \$550 million. The Ever Given's owners and insurers had disputed its detention and the compensation claim. After protracted negotiations, an undisclosed settlement between the parties was reached and the SCA announced that the ship would be released.

About 15 per cent of world shipping traffic transits the Suez Canal, which is the shortest shipping route between Europe and Asia.

It is an important source of foreign currency revenue for Egypt.



Italy juggernaut continues

Mancini's men overcome Spanish challenge via penalty shootout to seal a Euro 2020 final berth



A WIN AWAY: Italian players begin celebration after winning the penalty shootout against Spain, Tuesday

ASSOCIATED PRESS

London, July 7: Facing a wall of nervous blue-and-white clad Italy fans behind the goal, Jorginho took his trademark hop and skip before calmly stroking in the winning penalty. So much for the pressure of a shootout in the European Championship semifinal.

A dash of Italian panache completed a 4-2 penalty shootout win over Spain at Wembley Stadium Tuesday, setting up a title match against either England or Denmark back at the same stadium Sunday.

The match finished 1-1 after extra time and provided Italy with its toughest test of the tournament, with Spain controlling possession for long periods. Federico Chiesa scored for Italy with a curling shot in the 60th minute but substitute Alvaro Morata equalised for Spain in the 80th.

Morata, dropped from the starting line-up for the first time in a tournament during which he has received verbal abuse and even death threats from his own fans, will go down as Spain's scapegoat once again after having a penalty saved by Gianluigi Donnarumma in the next-to-last kick of the shootout.

As he walked back to the center circle with his head bowed, Jorginho made the opposite journey and didn't make the same mistake.

The Chelsea midfielder has his own style when it comes to taking penalties and he didn't abandon it when it mattered most, sparking a throng of celebrations as Italy's players sprinted from the halfway line.

Jorginho was mobbed. Italy coach Roberto Mancini was hugged by the rest of coaching staff. The



EFFORT IN VAIN: Pedri, who has been praised by many for his impressive performances throughout Euro 2020, is consoled by teammate Thiago and coach Luis Enrique after Spain's loss at Wembley

players lined up on the edge of the area and ran together, holding hands, toward the fans.

Leonardo Bonucci went further, leaping over the advertising hoardings to get even closer to the crazed supporters whose loud cheering had lifted the team in their most difficult moments.

Riding a national record unbeaten run of 33 games, Italy will play in its fourth European final and look to win the title for a second

until the last day, too. But it's at the home of English soccer where the team has had its toughest matches.

Against Austria in the round of 16, the Italians were taken to extra time at Wembley and they had to go the distance, too, against Spain.

Spain's striker-free formation initially flummoxed the Azzurri, who have become a more progressive team under Mancini but were given a clinic at times in ball possession and movement in midfield.

Experienced center backs Giorgio Chiellini and Bonucci looked uncertain at times, not knowing whether to drop back or follow deep-lying forward Dani Olmo — who started ahead of Morata — into the center of midfield.

Spain's pressing also drew some rash clearances from the back from Italy. That created the team's best chance in the first half with Ferran Torres' shot requiring a low save from Donnarumma.

The Italians had even more problems when Morata came on as a substitute but, by then, Chiesa had put them ahead after latching onto a loose ball, cutting inside and curling a shot into the far corner. It was his second goal at Wembley in this tournament, having scored just as impressively against Austria.

Morata's movement stretched Italy's defense to set up chances for Mikel Oyarzabal and Olmo. Then he scored for the third time at Euro 2020.

For a player often accused of wasting chances when he has too much time in front of goal, Morata showed calmness to sidefoot in a left-footed shot after exchanging passes with Olmo at the edge of the area.

Morata grabbed a camera behind the goal and thrust his face into it. But he had nowhere to hide after

becoming the second Spain player to miss in the shootout — after Olmo — following 30 minutes of extra time.

Italy started the shootout with Manuel Locatelli's shot saved by Unai Simon, but Andrea Belotti, Bonucci and Federico Bernardeschi all scored before Jorginho.



time, after 1968. It's quite the

redemption story for a country which failed to qualify for the 2018 World Cup.

They have had the aura of champions since Day 1 of the tournament and they'll be sticking around

Isaac joins Odisha FC on two-year contract



POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 7: Odisha FC have roped in 24-year-old Isaac Vannalsawma ahead of the eighth season of the Indian Super League (ISL). The Indian winger has penned a two-year deal with the Bhubaneswar-based club with an option to extend for a third, the club said in a statement Wednesday.

A source close to the club said that Isaac would be the final Indian signing for Odisha FC. However, there might be foreign signings after appointing a new head coach for the upcoming season.

After representing India U-19

in 2013 and graduating from the AIFF Elite Academy, the winger from Mizoram started his professional career with I-League side Shillong Lajong FC.

He then started his ISL journey with FC Pune City in 2017 and went on to play for ISL clubs Chennaiyin FC and Jamshedpur FC as well. The promising footballer had made his senior India debut against Bhutan under Coach Stephen Constantine.

Speaking on the development, club president Raj Athwal commented, "We are delighted to welcome Isaac to the Odisha family. Another quality addition to the squad and a highly respected player who I am sure will make a huge impact next season."

After signing for Odisha FC, Isaac expressed, "I am delighted to join this young and exciting team. We will play vibrant and entertaining football, delighting our loyal fans who have been with us every step of the way I want to assure them that, neither I nor the team will ever give up and will keep fighting till the final whistle."

"I would like to thank the Odisha FC management for this opportunity, and I shall work hard to repay the faith that they have shown in me," the winger concluded.

Argentina set up Brazil date

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Brasilia (Brazil), July 7: It will be Lionel Messi's Argentina against Neymar's Brazil in the Copa America final Saturday at the historic Maracana Stadium in Rio de Janeiro.

Argentina won their semifinal against Colombia 3-2 on penalties after three saves by goalkeeper Emiliano Martinez. Regular time ended 1-1 at the Mane Garrincha Stadium here, Tuesday.

Argentina haven't captured a major title since 1993 when they won Copa America. On that occasion, the team eliminated Colombia on penalties 6-5 in the semifinal after a goalless draw.

Brazil beat Peru 1-0 Monday to advance to the final. The Selecao have never lost a Copa America final at home winning five out of six matches so far. Neymar said after the semifinal he wanted to meet his Barcelona mentor Messi at the decider.

"Both of us are in the final, I know Neymar said it because we are friends and he wanted me to be there too," Messi said.

"It will surely be very close and difficult. We are aiming high, we managed to get the first objective of playing the final, playing all matches. Now we are aiming higher than ever; we are going to seek that Copa."



Lionel Messi hugs Emiliano Martinez in delight after the match

It took Argentina only seven minutes to open the scoring. Rodrigo de Paul found Messi in the penalty box with a through pass. The star earned his fifth assist in the tournament with a pass to Lautaro Martinez, who put the ball in the right corner past Colombia goalkeeper David Ospina.

A more aggressive Colombia levelled in the 61st minute with Luis Diaz, who received the ball on the left of Argentina's box shot almost with no angle to beat Martinez.

Martinez saved the shots taken by Sanchez, Yerry Mina and Edwin Cardona in the shootout. Messi converted his opportunity from the spot and was one of the most joyous players in the celebrations. He seeks his first major title with Argentina against favorites Brazil.

Rodrigo de Paul missed his shot, but Leandro Paredes and Lautaro Martinez netted their chances for Argentina in the shootout. Cuadrado and Miguel Borja scored from the spot for Colombia.

Federer bows out of Big W quarters

ASSOCIATED PRESS

London, July 7: Roger Federer has been feted by plenty of ovations at Centre Court. None quite like this one, though. This was not a celebration. It felt more like a "Thank you" or — just in case — a "Goodbye."

The eight-time Wimbledon champion lost 6-3, 7-6(7-4), 6-0 to 14th-seeded Hubert Hurkacz of Poland in the quarterfinals at the All England Club on Wednesday, a surprisingly lopsided finish to Federer's 22nd appearance in the tournament.

Federer underwent two operations on his right knee in 2020 and was sidelined for more than 12 months in all. He arrived at Wimbledon having played a total of eight matches this season.

Factor in age — Federer turns 40 August 8, so this was his last major in his 30s — and maybe it was just too much to ask that he make his way to the closing weekend, even if this is a tournament he's won more than any other man, and even if it's contested on a surface, grass, on which he's best.

He simply never was able to summon the serving and shot-making that have carried him to 20 Grand Slam titles overall, tied with Rafa Nadal for the men's record.

Hurkacz, a 24-year-old from Poland, never had made it beyond the third round at any major; that's when he lost to Djokovic at Wimbledon two years ago.

Still, Hurkacz looked quite comfortable on this unfamiliar stage. He played sublimely, with three times as many winners, 36, as unforced errors, 12.

In the opening set, he didn't face so much as a single break point

and was guilty of just four unforced errors to Federer's 10.

It appeared Federer finally was beginning to make some headway early in the second set, earning a trio of break points and nosing ahead 2-0 on a double-fault. After his second serve found the net, Hurkacz pointed an index finger at his temple, then shook his head. Federer then weathered three break points in the next game to lead 3-0.

But Hurkacz conceded nothing. Undaunted by the setting, the stakes, the foe or the almost-uniformly-for-Federer fans, Hurkacz claimed four of the next five game to pull even at 4-all, breaking along the way with a stinging forehand return of a 101 mph serve that rushed Federer and drew a backhand into the net.

In the tie-breaker — which was preceded by loud chants from the full-to-capacity stands of "Let's go, Roger! Let's go!" and rhythmic clapping — it was more of the same: Hurkacz hitting his spots and Federer stumbling.

On one foray to the net, Federer lost his footing and, in the process of catching his balance, missed what could have been a simple volley.

The third set went by in a blink, and when it ended with Federer missing a forehand well wide, he quickly packed his bags and hustled off toward the locker room with a wave and a thumbs-up.

Novak Djokovic and Denis Shapovalov also reached the semifinals with wins Wednesday. If Djokovic beats Shapovalov and then goes on to claim a sixth Wimbledon title — and third in a row — on Sunday, that would allow the 34-year-old from Serbia to pull even with Federer and Nadal at 20 Slam trophies.



Indian hockey great Keshav Datt no more

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, July 7: Two-time Olympic gold medal-winning hockey legend Keshav Datt died Wednesday due to age-related ailments, marking the end of a glorious era in the sport. Datt was 95 and is survived by his wife, two sons and a daughter, all of whom are settled abroad.

The former centre halfback died around 12.30 am at his residence in Santoshpur, Kolkata where he was living alone. "It's a very sad time for our family. Normally I visit him three-four times a year but because of the pandemic, I've not been able to see him since 2019," his daughter Anjali Keshav Poulsen told this agency from Copenhagen. "I've booked my tickets and will be there from July 11-13 to perform the last rites," she added.

Born December 29, 1925 in Lahore, Datt was a part of India's golden era in hockey after making Kolkata his home following the partition.

A formidable half-back, he was part of India's historic feat at the 1948 Olympics where the country beat home team Britain 4-0 at the Wembley Stadium in London to win the first gold post Independence.



Before the 1948 Olympics, Datt toured East Africa under the leadership of the iconic Major Dhyan Chand in 1947.

Datt was also a part of the Indian team at the 1952 Helsinki Games, where they beat Netherlands 6-1 in the summit clash to become the Olympic champions for the fifth consecutive time.

An integral part of the Indian team, Datt also captained the Mohun Bagan hockey squad from 1951-1953 and again between 1957 and 1958. As a Mohun Bagan player he won the hockey league six times and Beighton Cup three times in a span of 10 years.

He was conferred with the Mohun Bagan Ratna award in 2019, becoming the first non-footballer recipient of the honour.