



KAREENA'S 'THIRD CHILD'

Actor Kareena Kapoor Khan says in an Instagram post that her new book on pregnancy is like her third child

LEISURE P2



ZIKA ALERT IN KERALA

Cases of Zika virus in Kerala went up to 14 Friday, following which the southern state has been put on alert

TWO STATES P8



SEEKING CONSISTENCY

Men's hockey team skipper Manpreet Singh wants consistent show at Tokyo Games for podium finish

SPORTS P12

'NABA JAUBAN DARSHAN' SANS DEVOTEES



DEVOTION IN THE AIR: A priest offers prayers to Patitapaban at the Lions' Gate of Srimandir in Puri during the 'Naba Jauban Darshan' ritual of the presiding deities, Friday. PIC: YAGNESWAR MOHANTY

Deities worshipped in their youthful appearances after 14-day quarantine

POST NEWS NETWORK

Puri, July 9: The 'Naba Jauban Darshan' of the sibling deities, during which they are worshipped in their youthful appearances after spending 14 days in 'Anasara Ghara' or quarantine, was held at Srimandir in the absence of devotees.

The state government announced the imposition of curfew in Puri town from July 11. The curfew will be imposed at 8 pm July 11, a day before Rath Yatra, and continue till 8 am July 13, as per a notification issued by the Special Relief Commissioner's office.

Rath Yatra will be held July 12. All the entry points to Puri town will be sealed, officials said, adding that the restrictions are being imposed to keep devotees at bay in the wake of the Covid-19 pandemic. The restrictions may be further extended in the town, said Sub-Collector Bhabataran Sahoo.

The weekend shutdown, imposed in 10 coastal districts with high test positivity rates till July 16, will be eased for Puri town, as per the notification.

"Now, in view of imposition of curfew in Puri town from 8 pm of 11.07.2021 to 8 pm of 13.07.2021 by the district administration for Rath Yatra and in the interest of the general public, the said shutdown order is partially modified exempting Puri town from the shutdown on 10.01.2021 (Saturday)," it said.

The Trinity - Lord Jagannath, Lord Balabhadra and Devi Subhadra - during the 'Naba Jauban Darshan' reappeared after spending 14 days in the 'Anasara Ghara'. However, devotees missed the rituals as no one was allowed entry into the shrine due to the pandemic. The state government has appealed to the people not to visit Puri during the festival, and instead watch the live broadcast of the Rath Yatra on TV.

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India needs uniform civil code, says HC

AGENCIES

New Delhi, July 9: The Delhi High Court Friday said there is a need for a uniform civil code in the country.

The court observed that youths of modern India belonging to various communities, tribes, castes or religions who solemnise their marriages ought not to be forced to struggle with issues arising out of conflicts in various personal laws.

The court said that the hope expressed in Article 44 of the Constitution that the state shall secure for its citizens uniform civil code "ought not to remain a mere hope." A single bench of Justice Prathiba M. Singh said the need for a uniform civil code as envisioned under Article 44, has been reiterated from time to time by the Supreme Court. "The

need for such a code - 'common to all', would enable uniform principles being applied in respect of aspects such as marriage, divorce, succession etc., so that settled principles, safeguards and procedures can be laid down and citizens are not made to struggle due to the conflicts and contradictions in various personal laws," the bench added.

She said courts have been repeatedly confronted with the conflicts that arise in personal laws, and persons belonging to various communities, castes and religions, who forge marital bonds, struggle with such conflicts. The court emphasised that in modern Indian society which is gradually becoming homogenous, the traditional barriers of religion, community and caste are slowly dissipating.

IRREGULAR by MANJUL



I did nothing else but praise govt 24x7 and fault Oppn for everything. How then can they call me a non-performer?

New IT rules: Setback for Centre in SC, Kerala HC

Apex court refuses to stay proceedings in connection with petitions challenging constitutional validity of new IT rules before HCs

Kerala HC directs Centre not to take coercive action against members of News Broadcasters Association over non-compliance of new IT rules

AGENCIES

New Delhi/Kochi, July 9: The Supreme Court Friday refused to stay proceedings in connection with petitions challenging the constitutional validity of the Centre's new IT rules before various high courts.

The Centre had moved the Supreme Court seeking transfer of all petitions to it, citing multiplicity of proceedings. Several high courts, including Delhi, Bombay, Madras and Kerala High Courts are hearing petitions against the new IT rules.

In its plea, the Centre said, the issue of regulating the OTT platform was pending before the top court.

A bench comprising Justices AM Khanwilkar and Sanjiv Khanna tagged the central government petition, seeking transfer of all such cases to the top court, with an appeal filed by Justice for Rights Foundation, which is pending before the court.

The bench also refused to pass a direction for an interim stay on the proceedings before various high courts hearing pleas challenging the Information Technology (Intermediary Guidelines and Digital

Media Ethics Code) Rules, 2021.

Meanwhile, the Kerala High Court Friday directed the Centre not to take any coercive action against the members of News Broadcasters Association (NBA), which represents several news channels, over non-compliance of the new IT rules.

Justice PB Suresh Kumar also issued notice to the Centre and sought its stand on the plea by the NBA which has contended that the new IT rules give government authorities "excessive powers" to "unreasonably and impermissibly restrict" the freedom of speech and expression of the media.

Senior advocate Maninder Singh, who appeared for the NBA, said that under the new IT rules, a joint secretary would be heading the oversight mechanism which would supervise the self-regulatory body headed by a retired judge.

Under the rules, media companies or their associations have to form self-regulatory bodies which would be headed by a retired judge of the Supreme Court or high courts or an eminent person.

Singh contended that as a result a joint secretary would be supervising orders of a retired judge.

In its petition, filed through advocate Nisha Bhambhani, the NBA has said the Information Technology (Intermediary Guidelines & Digital Media Ethics Code) Rules, 2021, are ultra vires to the Information Technology Act, 2000 apart from being violative of Article 14 (equality before law) and 19(1)(g) (right to freedom to practise any profession, or to carry on any occupation, trade or business) of the Constitution.

It has challenged Part III (Code of Ethics and Procedure and Safeguards in relation to Digital Media) of the IT rules on the ground that they create an "oversight mechanism giving the executive unfettered, unbridled and excessive powers to regulate content of digital news media."

"The grievance redressal mechanism created and the powers delegated have a 'chilling effect' on the content of the media."

The writ (petition) also states that the executive by creating such a structure, has made inroads into judicial power and vested itself with powers reserved exclusively for the judiciary and such exercise of power is without jurisdiction.

Record 61 Covid deaths in state

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 9: Odisha Friday reported record 61 Covid-19 deaths and 2,806 more cases, a Health Department official said.

The state's Covid-19 toll climbed to 4,476 with the latest deaths, he said. "This list does not reflect deaths occurring on a particular day. It gives details of past deaths for which the death audit process has been duly completed and the cause of death has been identified as due to Covid-19," the state Health Department tweeted.

Khurda accounted for 11 of the latest deaths, followed by Bargarh, Ganjam, Mayurbhanj and Puri districts (six each).

Besides, 53 other Covid-19 patients have succumbed due to comorbidities, the official said.

The state has so far reported 9,35,136 Covid-19 cases.

Of the new infections, 1,613 were detected at quarantine centres while the rest 1,193 were local contact cases. Khurda district reported the highest 590 new cases, followed by Cuttack (441), Jajpur (252), Balasore (153) and Puri (138). There are 27,429 active cases in the state at present.

There are 5,001 active cases in Khurda and 4,169 in Cuttack, because of which these two districts are in the 'Red Zone'. In the last 24 hours, 2,896 patients recovered, taking the total number of recoveries to 9,03,178. The new cases were detected after testing 78,560 samples.

The Health Department said it will begin vaccination of pregnant women after July 15.

FIRE AT BANGLADESH FOOD FACTORY KILLS 52

DHAKA: At least 52 people were killed and scores wounded as a massive fire overnight engulfed a multi-storied food and beverage factory on the outskirts of Bangladesh's capital, officials said Friday. Fire service officials and witnesses said the blaze broke out Thursday evening and tore through the factory at the Ruppang area of Narayanganj. Residents in the neighbourhood said most of the factory workers were teenagers. "Fifty two people have been killed so far but we fear more bodies were inside and a search operation is under way," an official told reporters at the scene, nearly 25 kilometres east of Dhaka. Fire service officials said 49 bodies have been recovered from the building while others succumbed to their wounds on way to or at hospitals, where many were being treated for critical wounds. Television footage showed the fire was still burning at the six-story structure, emitting thick smoke.

Taliban now 'controls' most of Afghanistan

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

Moscow, July 9: The Taliban claimed Friday to be in control of 85 per cent of Afghanistan, including a key border crossing with Iran, following a sweeping offensive launched as US troops pull out of the war-torn nation.

Hours after President Joe Biden issued a staunch defence of the US withdrawal, the Taliban said fighters had seized the border town of Islam Qala - completing an arc of territory from the Iranian border to the frontier with China.

In Moscow, a delegation of Taliban officials said that they controlled some 250 of Afghanistan's 398 districts - a claim impossible to independently verify and disputed by the government.

Separately, Taliban spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid told AFP the Islam Qala border crossing was "under



Afghan soldiers search a man at a checkpoint in Herat

The air force was under severe strain even before the Taliban's lightning offensive overwhelmed the govt's northern and western positions, putting further pressure on the country's limited aircraft and pilots

our full control," while government officials in Kabul said a fightback was under way.

"All Afghan security forces including the border units are present in the area, and efforts are under way

to recapture the site," interior ministry spokesman Tareq Arian told AFP. Hours earlier, Biden said the US military mission would end August 31 - nearly 20 years after it began - having 'achieved' its goals.

But he admitted it was 'highly unlikely' Kabul would be able to control the entire country.

"The status quo is not an option," Biden said of staying in the country. "I will not send another generation of Americans to war in Afghanistan."

With the Taliban having routed much of northern Afghanistan in recent weeks, the government is holding little more than a constellation of provincial capitals that must be largely reinforced and resupplied by air.

Afghan commandos have clashed with the insurgents this week in a provincial capital for the first time, with thousands of people fleeing Qal-i-Naw in northwest Badghis province.

President Ashraf Ghani said the government could handle the situation, but admitted difficulties lay ahead. "What we are witnessing is one of the most complicated stages of the transition," he said in a speech in Kabul.

Privacy policy on hold: WhatsApp



AGENCIES

New Delhi, July 9: WhatsApp LLC told the Delhi High Court Friday that till the data protection bill comes into force, it will not compel users to opt for its new privacy policy as it has been put on hold and will implement it "if Parliament allows it."

WhatsApp clarified before a bench of Chief Justice DN Patel and Justice Jyoti Singh that it would not limit the functionality for users who are not opting for new privacy policy in the meantime.

Appearing for the instant messaging platform, Senior Advocate Harish Salve said, "We voluntarily agreed to put it (the policy) on hold... We will not compel people to accept." Salve said that WhatsApp would nonetheless continue to display the update to its users.

In response to Salve's sub-

mission, the court observed that even though the implementation had been put on hold, the policy still continued to exist. "You are not implementing it but the policy is with you and any day it can come," the court said.

Salve reiterated that the approach would be maintained till the data protection bill becomes the law.

"Commitment is that I will do nothing till the Parliament's law comes in. If Parliament allows it, I will have it. If it doesn't, bad luck... I've taken it off till the Parliament makes a law. Either we fit in or we don't," Salve said.

The Personal Data Protection Bill seeks to regulate use of individual's data by government and private companies. Joint Committee of Parliament examining the Bill has been given extension till the monsoon session to submit its report.

6 dists get new SPs

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 9: Effecting a minor reshuffle in the IPS cadre, the state government Friday appointed new Superintendents of Police (SPs) in six districts.

According to a notification issued by the Home department, Special Operation Group (SOG) Commandant Akhileshvar Singh has been posted as SP of Jagatsinghpur district, while Rahul Jain has been posted as the SP of Bargarh district.

Similarly, IPS officer PS Parshottamas is the new SP of Nabarangpur, KR Dnyandeo is the new SP of Mayurbhanj and PS Meena is the new SP of Malkangiri district. Pratyush Diwaker has been appointed as the new SP of Nuapada.

Besides, Prakash R was transferred and posted to the Vigilance organisation whereas S Dev Dutta Singh has been posted as the IGP, Headquarters following his return from Central deputation.

leisure



QUEENPINS MAKERS FEEL FILM WILL CLICK IN INDIA

The Kristen Bell and Kirby Howell-Baptiste starrer *Queenpins* is all set to release in September worldwide. Given the theme, the filmmaker duo is excited about the prospect of the film releasing in India.

DANIEL UNSURE ABOUT REUNITING WITH HARRY POTTER CO-STARS

British star Daniel Radcliffe, who rose to fame playing the wizard Harry Potter, says there are no plans at the moment for a *Harry Potter* 20th anniversary reunion.



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ARIES
You will be in a tight fix as the day starts. However, that's exactly the kind of situation in which your skills are tested. In the evening you will draw a lot of praise for your excellent performance. If Ganesh chooses to shower his blessings on you, you will sign new deals.

TAURUS
Be careful, says Ganesh. All your calculations and conclusions, plans and moves are likely to go haywire. Time and again, you could fail and, ultimately, get frustrated. Even simple and obvious things are likely to get you worked up.

GEMINI
You are likely to be in a romantic mood today. You may just end up falling in love today. A difficult situation will bring out the competitive streak in you and spur you on to physical and mental excellence.

CANCER
You know how to make money, and you are even better in putting it to good use. Today, you will have your one eye on the developments in the stock market, and the other on brochures of tourism companies. Yes, you may plan to spend some money on leisure, entertainment and getting closer to your family.

LEO
You will be unable to express the feelings that rise up inside you in spite of wanting to. However, keep them close to your heart. You will be very serious about your work today. There is a possibility of some delay in your schedule today due to unforeseen problems, says Ganesh.

VIRGO
A la Sisyphus, you may realise the futility of your efforts and constant failure in achieving success. But do not despair, says Ganesh. Recharge your imagination, inquisitiveness and intelligence and focus on your long-term goals, says Ganesh.

LIBRA
Ganesh advises you not to take stress about small issues or matters. To avoid tension and to gain mental peace it is advised you perform yoga or meditation. There will be pressure put on you regarding certain matters at the work-front.

SCORPIO
A series of events at work front may keep you busy throughout the day. You may be unable to manage the clutter and confusion created by too many things at the same time. However, you emerge a fighter because of your power of resilience. Ganesh advises to go slow, yet steady; take one problem at a time and sort it out.

SAGITTARIUS
You rule your hear today, predicts Ganesh. You are likely to become an expert in reading people's mind. Everything is fair in love and war, is what you believe! Win over your sweetheart and set out on a journey toward destination unknown, says Ganesh.

CAPRICORN
Like you weren't already overworked, new responsibilities will keep you occupied throughout the day, says Ganesh. The excitement with which you work every day will weaken, and eventually die down by the end of the day. This is mainly because you will burn your energy and resources in helping others. But there is a good side to this too.

AQUARIUS
You have your head on your shoulders and feet on the ground. Congratulations! You've covered the first step to success. Step two, says Ganesh, involves an inquisitive mind and a questioning attitude. Later, you may resort to shortcuts and compromise a tad in quality.

PISCES
Your fount of creativity spouts everyday like there is no tomorrow. However, you need to be organised and in position to implement all those revolutionary ideas that occur to you in a jiffy, that lesser mortals take aeons to dream up. Your oratory will win you many admirers today, so let go of your inhibitions, says Ganesh.

Kareena introduces her 'third child' Farhan 'trained to be a boxer' for *Toofaan* role

Mumbai: Kareena Kapoor Khan, who welcomed her second baby boy in February this year, has shared an exciting news on Instagram Friday. She took to her handle and posted a video of herself. In the video, she revealed her new book on pregnancy.

like my third child... from conception to its birth today. Published by @juggernaut.in and the amazing

wekar, Dr. Sonali Gupta, and Dr. Prabha Chandra of NIMHANS. I'm both excited and nervous to share this with you."

Khan have finally decided on the name of their second baby. According to sources, the couple has named their newborn as 'Jeh'. Reports also suggest that they considered naming their second son Mansoor, after Saif's father and cricket legend Mansoor Ali Khan Pataudi.

On the work front, Kareena will be next seen in *Laal Singh Chaddha* and *Takht*.

Mumbai: To prepare for his character of a national level boxer in the film *Toofaan*, Farhan Akhtar didn't just train for a role. Rather, he trained to be a boxer for the role.

Neal and Darrell Foster. Drew said: "Farhan was training two hours every single day. The speed that he was learning at was probably four-folds of what a normal beginner boxer would actually take. So, instead of one year's training, he was hitting more like four years' training."

In her long note, Kareena said that her book is like her third child. She wrote, "This has been quite the journey... both my pregnancies and writing my *Pregnancy Bible*. There were good days and bad days; some days I was raring to go to work and others where I struggled to get out of bed. This book is a very personal account of what I experienced both physically and emotionally through both my pregnancies."

Bebo further wrote, "In many ways, this book is

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Mumbai: Actress Sanya Malhotra has been roped in to star alongside actor Rajkummar Rao in the Hindi remake of the Telugu blockbuster *Hit*.

Sanya said: "I have watched *Hit* and I really liked the concept of the film. When the film was offered to me, I immediately said yes. It is a very interesting and intriguing story that deserves a mass audience. I am looking forward to this one and excited to work with Raj."

"HIT—Homicide Intervention Team", tells the story of a cop who is on the trail of a missing woman. The original released in 2020 and was jointly produced by South star Nani and Prashanti Tipirneni. The film features Vishwak Sen and Ruhani Sharma in the lead roles.

The film tells the story of Vikram, a police officer grappling with a personal tragedy while investigating a missing girl named Preethi.

The Sailesh Kolanu directorial is currently in pre-production and will go on floors soon.

Diljit shares appreciation post for Lily Singh

Mumbai: Singer-actor Diljit Dosanjh Friday uploaded a picture with her own in Indian-Canadian comedian Lily Singh, popularly known as Superwoman, appreciating the fact that she has made it on her own in Hollywood and adding that she is an amazing person.

(We are very proud of you Lily! A Punjabi girl building a home of her own in Hollywood with hard work. Without any recommendations. May Guru Maharaj fulfil everyone's dreams.) Diljit captioned the image.

He added: "PS—I know Mai Tired Lagda 2 Din Ton Shoot Kar rahe Sutta Ni Proper. Par Punjabi Get Together Miss Ni Karde (I know I look tired. Shooting for two days, but not missing Punjabi get-togethers)."

"We Are Very Proud Of You @lilly Punjabi Kudi Te Hollywood ch Apna Ghar Apni Mehnat Naal.. Kisey Di Sifarish Te Ni. GURU MAHARAJ SAB DE SUPNE POOREY KAREY

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PEANUTS

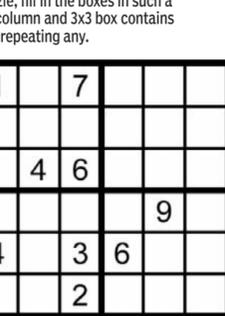
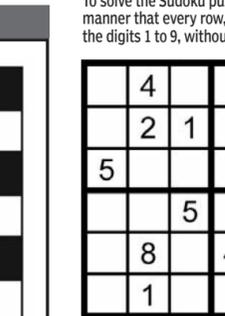
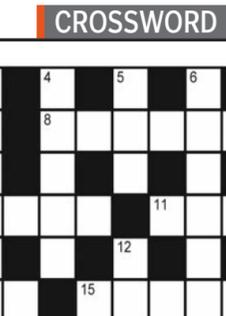
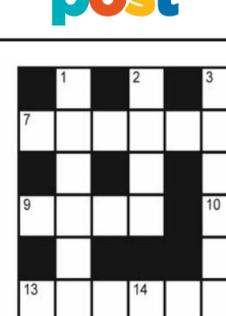
OKAY, MARCIE, IT'S YOUR TURN AT THE PLATE...

I DON'T UNDERSTAND BASEBALL EXPRESSIONS, SIR...

STOP CALLING ME 'SIR' AND BELT ONE!

HERE, YOU'LL DO BETTER USING A BAT...

WHY DO THEY MAKE THE HANDLES SO BIG, SIR?



CALVIN AND HOBBS

YOU KNOW WHAT CRACKS ME UP? ANTS RUN EVERYWHERE! IT'S LIKE THEY ALL THINK THEY HAVE TO BE SOMEWHERE ON TIME!

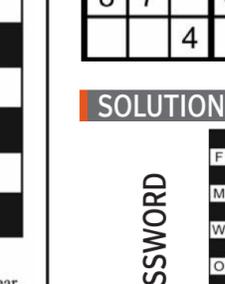
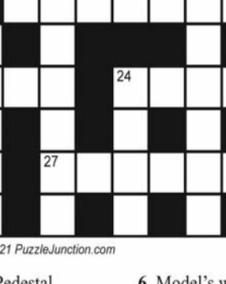
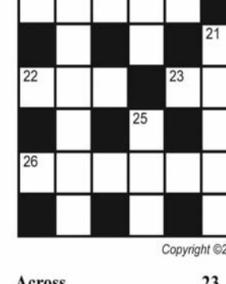
SEE, THEY NEVER JUST WALK OR POKE ALONG. THEY GO EVERYWHERE AT TOP SPEED! ISN'T THAT SILLY?

C'MON AROUND BACK, I'LL SHOW YOU SOMETHING ELSE!

YOU ASKED FOR A RENO-VATION, YOU GOT A RENO-VATION!

WHAT IN HEAVEN'S NAME HAVE YOU DONE TO MY HOUSE?

YOU ASKED FOR A RENO-VATION, YOU GOT A RENO-VATION!



BREVITY

WHAT IN HEAVEN'S NAME HAVE YOU DONE TO MY HOUSE?

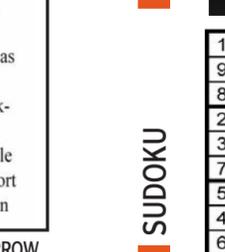
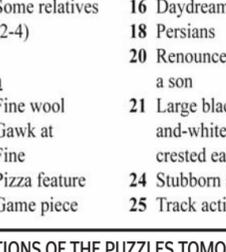
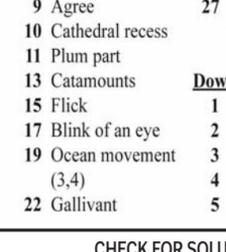
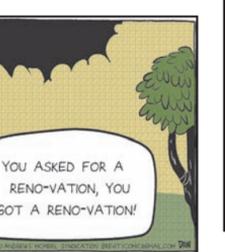
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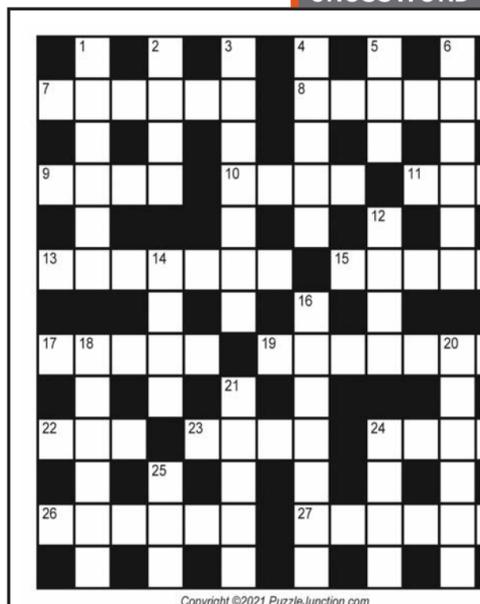
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WHAT IN HEAVEN'S NAME HAVE YOU DONE TO MY HOUSE?

YOU ASKED FOR A RENO-VATION, YOU GOT A RENO-VATION!



FUN post CROSSWORD



Across
7 Hound dog
8 Cereal fruit
9 Agree
10 Cathedral recess
11 Plum part
13 Catamounts
15 Flick
17 Blink of an eye
19 Ocean movement (3,4)
22 Gallivant

Down
23 Pedestal
24 Overlook
26 Concede (4,2)
27 Some relatives (2-4)

6 Model's wear
12 Sulk
14 Bistro
16 Daydream
18 Persians
20 Renounce, as a son
21 Large black-and-white crested eagle
24 Stubborn sort
25 Track action

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.

	4		1	7				
	2	1						
5				4	6			
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SOLUTIONS

CROSSWORD

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3	5	6	4	8	2	9	7	1
7	9	4	6	1	5	2	3	8
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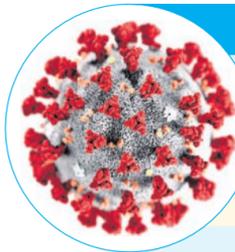
CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW

downtown



WALK IN THE RAIN

After a hot and humid day, girls enjoy a drizzle while walking on a City thoroughfare, Friday evening



COVID-19 TRACKER

Table with 4 columns: Category, Infected, Recovered, Dead. Rows: World, India, Odisha.

1,000 schools either merged or shut

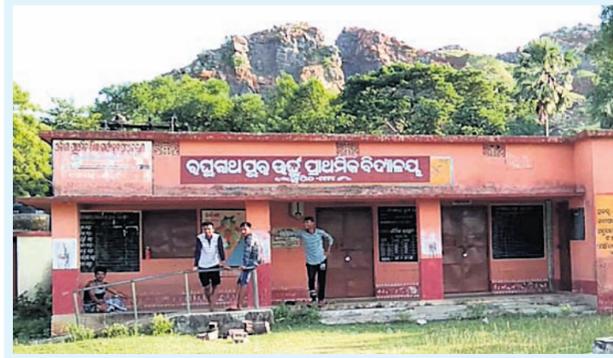
POOR ENROLMENT PROMPTS STATE GOVT TO CLOSE DOWN SCHOOLS IN RURAL AREAS

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Bhubaneswar, July 9: Even as the Covid-19 pandemic has caused severe damage to the education system in the country, the students in Odisha are facing a challenge of a different kind.

It started in 2014 when close to 200 schools with low student strength were shut. In 2019, nearly 1,000 schools with less than 10 students were either merged or closed down.

Debendra Mahakud, 9, is a Class IV student of Saharasi Primary School under Kaptipada block of Mayurbhanj. The school is barely 100 metres from his house.



THE MERGER PLAN HAS LEFT THE STUDENTS TO TRAVEL LONGER DISTANCES TO ATTEND SCHOOLS

TO ADDRESS THE ISSUE OF COMMUTING, THE GOVERNMENT HAS PROPOSED A 'TRANSPORTATION COST' BASED ON THE ATTENDANCE OF THE STUDENTS, BUT EXPERTS SAY THAT WON'T SOLVE THE PROBLEM

other school which is 3 km away from his house. Though the classes are currently suspended due to the pandemic, his father, a daily wagger, is sceptical of continuing education of his child when the classes resume.

"I am not sure if my son can continue his education. The new school is far away and I can't let him travel alone. When he was studying in the old school, I could keep an eye on him and ensure he attended classes.

said his father.

Grassroots-level activists who have worked in the field of education believe these changes will only encourage dropouts.

"In remote areas, people are usually not into educating their children. The kids start work at a young age and contribute to the household income. It had taken a lot to convince the villagers to send their children to schools and provide them with education.

says that closure is inevitable in some cases as it is practically difficult to implement mid-day meal schemes and appoint teachers in schools with low student strength.

Shehnaz, a Class VI student, explained the low enrolment problem. She was studying in Raghunathpur Primary School in Dharamshala block of Jajpur but opted out in 2018.

2 km away from their village. In 2019, the school was shut down due to low student strength.

While Shehnaz is among the fortunate ones whose parents have agreed to send their daughter to school despite the distance, other students have not been so lucky.

To address the issue of commuting, the government has proposed a 'transportation cost' based on the attendance of the students, but experts say that won't solve the problem.

"The issue here is low enrolment and the reasons behind it. Without addressing this, the government is focusing on transportation. The reality is dearth of teachers and proper classes.

After protests by activists and political parties, the government has 'officially' put the school closure decision on hold.

NEP implementation top priority: Pradhan

POST NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi, July 9: Soon after taking charge as the Union Education Minister, Dharmendra Pradhan Friday expressed his strong commitment towards implementation of education reforms as promised in the new National Education Policy (NEP).

During a media interaction here, Pradhan affirmed that the prime focus of his ministry will be to implement the new education policy at ground level.

The NEP-2020 was approved in July last year with an aim to bring vital reforms in the academics. The NEP envisions allowing students to choose subjects of their interest across various streams without being confined to a compartmentalised system.

He appreciated the work done by the former education ministers and said that he would carry forward the task with the same momentum.

"We have come here with a promise that we will govern for the welfare of people. We will gain the trust of all the people and make everyone part of this journey of a brighter future," Pradhan said.



We will gain the trust of all the people and make everyone part of this journey of a brighter future

media that as many as 30.30 crore students are studying in the state and central government registered institutions and there are over 1 crore teachers to impart them education.

Pradhan, who was given the Ministry of Education, Skill Development and Entrepreneurship, said that both the sectors are inter-connected and that he would work while keeping this in focus.

Top court stays green panel's order on gas leak at RSP

POST NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi, July 9: The Supreme Court Friday stayed the order of the National Green Tribunal (NGT) that directed the Rourkela Steel Plant (RSP) to grant compensation to the families of the persons who died in the gas leakage January 6, 2021.

A two-judge bench of the apex court comprising Justices L Nageswara Rao and S Ravindra Bhat also issued notice to the Odisha State Pollution Control Board, Central Pollution Control Board and Sundargarh Collector in a petition filed by the RSP.

During the hearing, additional solicitor general Madhavi G Divan submitted to the court that the NGT has no jurisdiction to take up the matter suo motu and this point is pending consideration in



FOUR WORKERS AT ROURKELA STEEL PLANT HAD DIED IN GAS LEAK JANUARY 6, 2021

THE NGT HAD TAKEN UP THE MATTER SUO MOTU AND DIRECTED FOR PAYMENT OF COMPENSATION TO THE FAMILIES/HEIRS OF THE DECEASED WORKERS

two appeals before the SC. She further informed the court that the dependants of three out of four workers who died in gas leak January 6 have been given compassionate appointments.

The SC, however, made it clear that the dependants of the deceased workers shall continue in employment until further orders.

Significantly, the apex green panel had registered a suo motu pe-

tion 'Four workers dead due to toxic gas leak in Rourkela Steel Plant'. The tribunal had directed payment of compensation to the families/heirs of the persons who died in the gas leak incident. The tribunal had fixed final compensation at Rs 30 Lakh for dependants of Abhimanyu, Rs 20 lakh each for heirs of Brahmanand and Ganesh and Rs 15 lakh for the next kin of Rabindra.

TWIN CITY RUSH



Bapuji Nagar in Bhubaneswar (top) and Choudhury Bazar in Cuttack are check-a-block with people, Friday, ahead of the pandemic-induced weekend shutdown

₹352 crore Covid aid for MGNREGA workers in state

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 9: As per his earlier announcement, Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik Friday distributed Covid assistance of Rs 352 crore to 32 lakh MGNREGA workers in the state.

Each MGNREGA worker, who had worked during April, May and June, has received an additional amount of Rs 50 for each day of work.

The workers have also received an additional wage of up to Rs 4,500 each for the three months. The amount was credited to the beneficiaries' bank accounts.

Addressing the gathering through videoconferencing, Patnaik said that there is always a special place in his heart for the poor.

Stating that his efforts for the welfare of poor will continue, the Chief Minister directed the district administrations to create more wage days at the district levels and provide employment to the poor.

The state had created 20 crore person days under MGNREGA last year while 7 crore person days have been created this year so far. The state has set a target to create 25 crore wage days during this financial year.

In June, Patnaik had announced Rs 1,690 crore special package for landless farmers, construction workers, poor and tribals in the state who have been affected by the Covid-19 pandemic.

On the occasion, Panchayati Raj Minister Pratap Jena highlighted the various measures taken by the state government for MGNREGA workers. He said this assistance would strengthen the rural economy.

MGNREGS workers from 314 blocks of the state were connected to the event by videoconferencing. They thanked the Chief Minister for the assistance, which would help them during the pandemic. Chief Minister's Secretary (ST) VK Pandian coordinated the programme.

Identify 100 tourist sites for boating facilities: CS



POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 9: Chief Secretary Suresh Mahapatra Friday directed the departments concerned to identify 100 tourist sites where boating facilities could be introduced.

The move aims at boosting water sports and boating facilities in potential tourist sites in the state. Holding a high-level meeting, Mahapatra asked the departments like Tourism, Forest and Environment and Water Resources to identify potential spots through a joint verification for launching boat facilities there.

The departments have been given a month's time before which they have to inform the top bureaucrat on the issue. The Chief Secretary asked the departments to ensure setting up of floating jetties and boats in quick sessions and asked them to start the services by December of this year.

The departments have been asked to find out such sites keeping in mind their potential in tourism market and their exotic locations which can also pave way for better

The Chief Secretary asked the depts to ensure setting up of floating jetties and start the services by Dec

investment in the area and services. The directions were part of the steps taken by Mahapatra to boost eco-tourism potential in the state. The officials concerned have also been asked to rope in local community in the process and ensure safety of the boating sites.

Tourism department's Principal Secretary Vishal Dev and Director Sachin Ramchandra Jadhav along with Collectors of different districts and senior officers from concerned departments participated in the meeting chaired by the Chief Secretary.

According to the data given by the state government, the state is home to 118 small and big dams and around 10 river basins apart from several river confluences which are likely to be tapped for such projects.

Heavy rain to continue for 4 more days: IMD

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 9: The India Meteorological Department (IMD) Friday issued warning of heavy rain for the next four days.

The department said that heavy rain is likely to lash five districts Saturday. "Heavy rainfall is very likely to occur at one or two places in Gajapati, Ganjam, Malkangiri, Koraput and Nabarangpur districts," the department said.

It also added, "Thunderstorm with lightning is very likely to occur at one or two places in Balasore, Bhadrak, Jajpur, Kendrapara, Cuttack, Jagatsinghpur, Puri, Khurda, Nayagarh, Ganjam, Gajapati, Keonjhar, Mayurbhanj, Dhenkanal, Kandhamal, Rayagada, Koraput, Malkangiri and Nabarangpur districts."

The weatherman claimed that heavy rain would continue till Monday in different parts of the state. The IMD also said that light to moderate rain could also be seen in other parts of the state during the next four days. Nevertheless, the department said that the maximum rain was reported in Cuttack which saw 30mm of rainfall Friday, followed by Parilakhemundi which saw 20.8mm rainfall.

Chandbali in Bhadrak recorded the highest temperature at 35.2 degrees Celsius while Phulbani recorded the minimum temperature at 18.2 degrees Celsius during the day, said the regional Met office.

Hyderabad police nabs 5 cyber crooks from Capital city

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 9: Hyderabad Police Friday arrested five cyber fraudsters including three college students from the Capital city here.

The accused were identified as Debashis Ojha, 20, Aditya Narayan Mohapatra, 22 and Soumya Ranjan Patnaik of Ghatikia area, Laxmidhar Murmu, 20, and Pramod Nayak of Baramunda area.

According to sources, the accused had fraudulently withdrawn

around Rs 30 lakh from two gold loan accounts at Himayath Nagar branch of Manappuram Finance Ltd, a non-banking financial company, June 23.

The accused persons called two officers including the assistant branch head of the same branch June 15 and June 22 identifying themselves as senior officials from the company's head office in Kerala. The fraudsters managed to fetch the secret code of the above officials during their conversations.

Later, they withdrew Rs 30 lakh from the accounts using the secret codes.

The Crime Branch officials of Hyderabad Police found during the course of investigations that the money was first transferred to accounts at a local SBI branch in Raipur of Chhattisgarh.

The money was later transferred to the cyber crooks' accounts in Bhubaneswar.

The cyber cell of Hyderabad CB registered a case on the basis of a

complaint lodged by Manappuram Finance Ltd officials.

A joint team of Hyderabad and Bharatpur police arrested the five late Thursday night. The cops also seized over Rs 25 lakh in cash, a Toyota Fortuner, 15 bank pass-books, SIM cards, cheque books, two laptops and four mobile phones from their possession.

The cops Friday produced the accused in the court and sought the permission to take them on transit remand.

ILLEGAL SAND MINING IN SUBARNAREKHA

Why not rely on scientific methods in probe: NGT

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 9: The East Zone Bench of the National Green Tribunal (NGT) Friday asked the government agencies in Odisha why they didn't rely on satellite images to buttress their points on a case pertaining to illegal sand mining in Subarnarekha River.

The green body's poser to the state government agencies came in the wake of a report filed by a Joint Committee constituted by it to look into the allegations of sand mining in Subarnarekha River at Benapur Mouza under Basta Tehsil in Balasore district. The joint panel had members from several government agencies including State Pollution Control Board, Balasore district administration, State Environment Impact Assessment Authority (SEIAA) and others.

"A reading of the report shows that all the findings on the issue are based on the observations of the local Tehasildar. However, the



report does not mention anything regarding the use of scientific methods to assess the amount of sand mined from the riverbed and resultant degradation in the environment," observed the NGT.

In its report, the panel informed the NGT that its members did not find any mining activities as the river was in spate.

The petitioner Saral Kumar Parida had alleged excessive mining from the riverbed with the use of machines. Besides, Parida also alleged several other violations of the environmental norms in the sand mining.

"We find the report of the committee shoddy. It is not mentioned

anywhere as to why the committee did not take the assistance of the satellite images at least six months prior to the onset of the monsoon and up to the date of expiry of the lease i.e. 01.05.2021," the NGT further observed.

The green body also said, "The satellite images could help the committee to determine the depth of the available sand in the riverbed and the actual amount of sand mined by the lease holder. The committee could have used scientific method to find out whether heavy vehicles were used in the sand quarrying in violation of the Sustainable Sand Mining Management Guidelines, 2016 & 2020."

The tribunal criticised the conduct of the Joint Inspection Committee and directed the panel to conduct another spot inspection in a proper scientific manner. The panel was asked to find out details regarding the allegations of excess mining and resultant environmental degradation in the river.

TEMPLE BEAUTIFICATION PLAN



A consignment of silver plates from Mumbai reaches Puri, Friday, for beautification of Srimandir doors OP PHOTO

Ensure nCoV vax for mentally ill: Govt

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 9: The state government Friday directed the district Collectors and municipal commissioners to ensure Covid-19 vaccination of mentally ill persons lodged in mental health institutions in the state.

In a letter to the district and civic authorities, Additional Chief Secretary (Health) PK Mohapatra said, "The MoHFW has communicated for vaccination of mentally ill persons who are institutionalised in mental health establishments on priority basis.

"The guideline on Near to Home CVC (NHCVC) for vaccination of elderly and differently-abled citizens including medically disabled persons was communicated from state May 31, 2021 and under this guideline, NHCVC shall be set up on the premises of Mental Health Establishment for vaccinating inmates," the letter read.

"In this context, you are requested to submit the vaccination status report on a weekly basis (every Monday) of such mental health establishments in your district/Municipal Corporation. The authorities are, therefore, requested to personally monitor and ensure the vaccination of mentally retarded persons in such mental health establishments in your districts and municipalities," the letter further read.

OHRC seeks report on Covid care at Baripada

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 9: The Odisha Human Rights Commission (OHRC) Friday sought a report from the superintendent of Pandit Raghunath Murmu Medical College & Hospital at Baripada in connection with allegations negligence by hospital staff at the dedicated Covid care hospital.

The commission issued the direction while hearing a petition filed by advocate and Congress leader Nishikanta Mishra.

The petition was filed after some photos and videos of patients lying naked and unattended to at the Covid hospital of Baripada Medical College went viral on social media last month. Mishra had also attached the viral images and videos along with his petition. The hospital management as well as the state government came under severe criticism following the issue.

"Patients are left unattended. Many of them are forced to lie on ground. Some of them are also seen sleeping near the toilet. Bed-sheets and pillows are not provided to the patients. Oxygen services seem to be a distant dream here. Nurses and doctors are not attending or treating the patients," claimed Mishra quoting Bihudatta Dash, who lost his relative to Covid May 23.

The OHRC has directed the superintendent of the medical college to submit his response by August 23. Notably, the district administration had earlier rubbished the allegations terming them as baseless.

Adopt functional cold storages, govt urged

Out of 144 cold storage enterprises established in the state so far, merely 30 are functional



POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 9: The cold storage promoters in the coastal state are now facing difficulties owing to the pandemic, lack of support from the government, consistent losses and other related issues which allegedly have turned several such units into Non-Performing Assets (NPAs).

The Cold Storage Association of Odisha Friday urged the state government to redress the grievances of cold storage units and extend a hand holding support as out of 144 cold storage enterprises established in the state so far, merely 30 are functional.

The association also said that most of them are suffering huge

losses and are unable to repay their loans.

"Considering this situation, we have come up with a request to the state government to adopt the functional cold storages from the owners along with its assets and liabilities, so that they remain alive to serve the state and its peasants. The owners will be bankrupt and will be on road if no step is taken," the association said Friday.

According to the promoters, most of the cold storage units have become NPAs in the accounts of banks and financial institutions. Many of them are on the verge of closure owing to negative growth and filing liabilities.

A cold storage promoter requesting anonymity said, "Having no other options left to escape the mounting bank interest, the owners have decided to sell their cold storages. Unfortunately, no buyers are coming out to purchase these assets. The financing banks are also trying to sell off the cold storages through auction, but they too are not getting any bidders."

The promoters, however, said that under such circumstances, the banks could auction the same at throwaway prices and sell off their infrastructure to compensate for their losses.

BMC yet to set up more than 50% micro compost centres

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 9: Aimed to manage large quantities of city's waste, the Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC)'s proposed project of setting up Micro Composting Centres (MCC) has seen less than half of works completed since more than a year of its inception.

MCCs are facilities that convert wet or bio-degradable waste into compost. The civic authority, earlier in 2019, had floated tenders of establishing about 43 MCCs and 10 Material Recovery Facilities (MRFs) around the city and had planned to complete the project by mid 2021.

However, BMC has been able to erect only 18 of these MCCs and two MRFs up until now. Out of these, two MCCs and one MRF were added, Thursday, at Railway Over Bridge (ROB) near Sundarpada. The new MCC will target 90% of waste treatment at the MCC itself and only 10% will be sent to the landfill site.

"The project has been delayed largely due to Covid. Since much of our focus was to control the pandemic in the city, the establishment of MCCs was given less priority. However, we are expediting the process now and aiming to construct all MCCs and MRFs by the end of this year," said a BMC official.

It can be mentioned that the BMC had been struggling with waste management with more than



SSEPD Minister Ashok Chandra Panda inaugurates two new MCCs at Sundarpada

MCCs are facilities that convert wet or bio-degradable waste into compost

BMC, earlier in 2019, had floated tenders of establishing about 43 MCCs and 10 Material Recovery Facilities (MRFs) around the city and had planned to complete the project by mid 2021

The civic authority has been able to erect only 18 of these MCCs and two MRFs up until now. Out of these, two MCCs and one MRF were added, Thursday, at Railway Over Bridge (ROB) near Sundarpada

500 metric tonnes of waste being generated per day. Presently, three to four tons of waste is being processed in each MCC per day instead of the projected capacity of five tons per day. Sources said that once all MCCs are functional, about 300 tonnes of waste could be processed every day.

Moreover, in order to promote the MCCs, the BMC last year had begun sale of the manure generated from the MCCs in the name of 'Mo Khata'.

The state government had also instructed all its departments to procure soil from their nearest Urban Local Bodies (ULBs).

Couple held for torture of minor

Bhubaneswar: Balipatna police

Friday arrested a couple for torturing their 7-years-old minor daughter for the last one year. The Deputy Commissioner of Police, Umashankar Dash, informed media about the arrest of the victim's father and step mother. The incident came to fore when the biological mother of the victim rescued her from the fiendish couple Wednesday. The seriously ill minor was later admitted to capital hospital where she is currently undergoing treatment. The child was brutally beaten by her father and step mother almost every day. She was chained at the verandah day and night. The step mother also used to reportedly put the poor girl's fingers into boiling water, and even kick and stand on her belly. They would give only rice and salt as meal and dinner to the hapless girl. The accused father, Bilal Khan of Barahala village under Balipatna police limits had married the victim's biological mother, Rizwana Parvin of Pipli in 2013.

Later, Parvin went to her maternal parent's home in Pipli after Khan divorced her. Khan had forcefully brought the minor girl from her mother in 2020.

112 missing girls traced in June

Bhubaneswar: The commissionerate police have rescued 112 missing minor girls during last month. Commissioner of Police, Saumendra Priyadarshi, Friday revealed that the police had launched a drive to trace the missing minor girls during the last couple of years in the city. The Kidnapping and Man Missing cell at the DCP office managed to find out 49 minors while local cops succeeded in rescuing 63 minor girls last month. Sources claimed that the city police have decided to strengthen the cell with the inclusion of more manpower. As many as 4,438 minors were reported missing at different police stations of the city during the last ten years. Out of that, the cops have managed to rescue only 2,889 children. Police are yet to trace the

whereabouts of the rest 1,549 children.

OSSTET aspirants demand change in eligibility criteria

Bhubaneswar: Students of Bachelor of Education (B.Ed) sat on a silent protest Friday at School and Mass Education Minister Samir Ranjan Dash's residence here demanding change in eligibility criteria for Trained Graduate Teacher (TGT) Arts in Odisha Secondary School Teacher Eligibility Test (OSSTET). The protest was over the new rule of 200 marks in the language paper of OSSTET. In a memorandum, they alleged that there was no provision of 200 marks in language papers in previously conducted OSSTET. The protesting students said that no student had ever faced a language paper of 200 marks in graduation after 2015. Students could be deprived of the OSSTET and would not be eligible to apply due to the new rule, they said. After meeting the students, Dash said that steps will be taken over their demands and also talked about extension of the application date.

DL testing in category-B dists from July 13

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 9: With the improvement in Covid-19 situation, the state government is going to resume tests for driving license (DL) in category-B districts, excluding Puri, from July 13.

In a notification, transport commissioner Arun Bothra Friday said that the DL skill test will resume in nine category-B districts from July 13 while the service in Puri will resume from July 14.

The tests in Balasore, Bhadrak, Cuttack, Jagatsinghpur, Jajpur, Khurda, Kendrapada, Mayurbhanj and Nayagarh will start from July 13. The test for Puri has been delayed due to the ensuing Rath Jatra festival scheduled for July 12.

Similarly, the DL skill test slot booking in those nine districts will be available from 11 am, July 10 while the service for Puri district will be available from 11 am, July 13. Thereafter, the test slots



will be opened for booking from 7 am to 10 pm every day.

Only existing DL applicants can book slots for tests. The application for issuance of new Learner's License (LL) and DL will be notified later on for all the

Applicants from containment zone and people with symptomatic sign of Covid-19 are not allowed for the test. In case, any such applicant tries to enter in DL test centre or office, the matter will be informed to the local police

districts, Bothra said. Similarly, the resumption of LL test and booking of slots for LL test will be notified later on in respect of all the districts. However, DL renewal with retest will also be allowed, he said.

Applicants from containment zone and people with symptomatic sign of Covid-19 are not allowed for the test. In case, any such applicant tries to enter in DL test centre or office, the matter will be informed to the local police, warned Bothra.

In case of an emergent situation due to Covid pandemic leading to the shutdown of the office, the test may be cancelled at short notice, he further clarified.

The DL skill test slot booking for other 20 category-A districts was already resumed from June 21 & July 5, this year.

In view of the pandemic, the DL and LL services were suspended from April 20 this year. The government has extended the validity of LL expiring from March 18, 2020 to September 30, 2021, till September end of this year. The applicants, who have already paid the fees for the DL/LL tests will remain valid, sources said.

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Mix-up in premiums under PMFBY irks Bargarh farmers



IT HAS COME TO THE FORE THAT FARMERS HAVE DEPOSITED PREMIUMS FOR THE LAND THAT THEY DO NOT OWN WHILE ORIGINAL LAND OWNERS ARE DEPRIVED OF PMFBY SOPs

Bargarh, July 9: A terrible mix-up in payments of insurance premiums under the Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY) has come to the fore in Bargarh district. Cases of people depositing premiums for the lands that they don't own are dime a dozen in the district. Farmers have started depositing PMFBY premiums from July 1 and the process would continue till July 31. Both loanee and non-loanee farmers visit local banks or Sahaj centres with required documents to deposit insurance premiums online at ₹1,300 per hectare. At the time of applying, a good number of farmers came to know that some people, claiming their lands as their own, have already de-

posited the insurance premiums. The aggrieved farmers took up the issue with the District Collector and the chief district agriculture officer seeking immediate help. They alleged that some people are being able to deposit premiums using others' land records by greasing the palms of unscrupulous staff. Suresh Sahu, a farmer of Gourenmunda panchayat under Gaisilet block, said, "There are 5.70 acres of land in my father's name. I visited the nearby Sahaj centre to deposit the insurance premium. But I could deposit premium for 1.66 acres. I was told that someone has already deposited the premiums for the rest of his lands," alleged Sahu.

Another farmer, Jamlal Sahu, who is also in the same predicament, said, "He has six acres of land in his father's name. But someone else has already deposited the insurance premiums for the whole of the land by means of forgery." Tekamani Sahu and Saheb Sahu of Dhaunrakhman and Jamlal village respectively have the same allegations to make. Despite owning 10 acres and 13 acres of land respectively, they could not deposit premiums as their land documents have earlier been used for the same. It was alleged that the cases of land documents being forged while depositing insurance premiums are being reported not only from Gaisilet block but from rest of the blocks in the district.



Farmers transplanting paddy saplings at Aul in Kendrapara district

OP PHOTO

Man thrashes uncle to death over land dispute



POST NEWS NETWORK

Raikia, July 9: A person clubbed his paternal uncle to death over a long standing land dispute at Iripuda village of Ranaba panchayat under Raikia police limits in Kandhamal district Thursday. The deceased has been identified as Hari Nayak and the accused as Bipra Nayak. Bipra is absconding after committing the crime. According to sources, Hari and Bipra used to quarrel over a land dispute. They entered into a verbal duel Thursday over the same reason. The scene turned ugly when Bipra lost his cool and started attacking Hari with a club, leading to his death on the spot. On being informed, police reached the spot and sent the body for postmortem. Registering a case on the basis of the complaint lodged by the deceased's family members, the police have launched a probe and manhunt has been launched to nab Bipra.

CRABBERS CROWDING MARINE SANCTUARY

POST NEWS NETWORK

Mahakalapara, July 9: Crabbers are gathering at the Gahirmatha marine sanctuary under Mahakalapara block in Kendrapara district. They crab and fish illegally by entering the sanctuary. Using this opportunity, they also resort to timber smuggling through boats, according to complaints. As per reports, crab dealers/businessmen in the marine sanctuary region are employing poor local residents as labourers paying them meagre wages. These labourers catch fish, crabs and hunt deer in protected forest areas of Hukitola, Madali, Lancha Ghola, Shohala Muhana, Hetamundia, lighthouse forest, Kansaradia and Tanda and the rivers flowing through these areas. While the forest department is busy observing "Vana Mahotsav", the crabbers return homes with boatfuls of timber. They sell their catch of fishes and crabs to local businessmen. Mud crabs are being sold in this region at a rate of one to three thousand rupees per kilogram. These dealers pack the crabs in big bamboo containers and smuggle them to hotels in big cities including Kolkata, Raipur and Hyderabad. These mud crabs have a high demand in the national and international markets. Foreigners are served with various dishes made with these crabs. However, these mud crabs are a primary source of food for giant saltwater crocodiles (Baula Kumbhira) and crabbing is banned



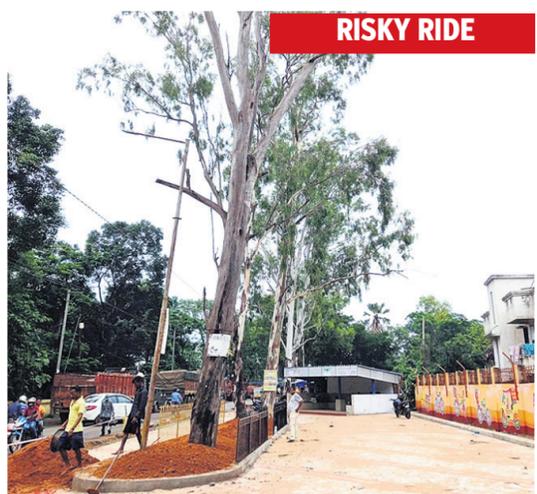
in Rajnagar area. But it has been complained that the forest department is not undertaking concrete measures to check crabbing and smuggling in Gahirmatha marine sanctuary.

The local intelligentsia and environmentalists have expressed dissatisfaction in this regard. It has been apprehended that the rampant crabbing of these mud crabs will lead to their extinction. Also the local populace has expressed concern asking what will feed the saltwater crocodiles once the crabs go extinct. A team of representatives will meet and discuss the matter with the Rajnagar DFO, said the environmentalists.

Youth held for raping minor in Keonjhar district

POST NEWS NETWORK

Patana, July 9: Police Friday arrested a youth for raping a minor girl of a village under Patana police limits in Keonjhar district. The accused has been identified as Raghunath Majhi (19), son of Manasa Majhi of Digapasi village. According to sources, Raghunath had succeeded in making the minor fall in love with him. Taking advantage of none being present in his house, he invited the girl to his house and sexually assaulted her. After coming to know about this, her father lodged a complaint with the police. Acting on the complaint, the police rescued the girl, and had the medical tests of both the victim and accused done at Patana CHC Friday. Informing about the case, Patana police station IIC Rajendra Swain, who was investigating the case, said on the basis of the victim's father, the police registered a case and arrested the accused under Sections of 363, 376 and 34 of IPC and Section 6 of POCSO Act. The accused was produced in local court the same day.



A dead tree poses threat to passersby and commuters at Telkoi bus stand in Keonjhar district

OP PHOTO

Red velvet mites on verge of extinction

POST NEWS NETWORK

Jamtikra, July 9: With the vivifying touch of monsoon rain, greenery gets resurrected on the earth as fresh foliage covers the soil. Nature is rapturous. And in this verdant blanket, the Red Velvet Mites emerge from under the soil everywhere starting from the village to farmlands, pastures and even hills and forests. These shy, bright red coloured bugs create the unmatched beauty of a scarlet veil on the green turf. These little bugs, also fondly called as 'Sadhba Bohu', are believed to be really beneficial to the environment by many. These insects are seen in various regions at the onset of monsoon. These were easily visible in



large numbers in the loamy and rocky soils of Jamtikra region under Attabira block limits in Bargarh district. But with the changing climate and the subse-

quent changes in environment, nowadays, these tiny red beauties have become a rarity. In the bygone days, these bugs used to come out of the soil indicating the arrival of rain to the farmers. They also helped maintain the fertility of the soil to an extent. In some regions the maiden girls are seen worshipping these insects. But after the rampant use of fertilisers and pesticides in the farmlands, these beautiful creatures are not easily visible like before. Environmentalists are of the opinion that if special attention is not given to the safety and preservation of these disappearing shy bugs, they will be reduced and limited to only the illustrations of children's story books in near future.

Mayurbhanj: Sabai craft biz touches ₹300 cr

POST NEWS NETWORK

Baripada, July 9: It's not for nothing that Mayurbhanj district is called the hub of Sabai grass craft. The Sabai grass products have their loyal customers not only in India but also in abroad. Worth mentioning, Odisha University for Agriculture and Technology has recently submitted an application to Geographical Indications Registry at Chennai seeking a GI tag for Mayurbhanj district's Sabai grass craft. In the tribal dominated Mayurbhanj district, most people earn their livelihood from selling minor forest produces. Sabai grass craft has also turned out to be a money spinner for many people. The craftsmen earn their livelihood from selling their products the year round. According to sources, the annual business of these beautifully woven products touches something around ₹300 crore per annum. Sabai grass plants are called 'Money Plants' by the weavers, for it takes care of their financial requirement for the entire year. The grass usually grows better in non-irrigated lands.



Once planted, the grass is harvested from the same land continuously for 10/12 years. While the grass, also known as 'golden grass' due to its colour, is grown in 22,758 hectares of land in the district, Baripada, Morada, Suliapada, Kuliana, Betanati and Kaptipada are the areas known for its cultivation. 20,000 MT grass is harvested in the district annually. Once the grass comes up to the required length, farmers harvest them. They then spread the sheaves

of grass out in sun to dry. Then the dried-up grass is procured by the self help groups. There are a total of 21 SHGs where women manufacture as many as 1,062 products. These women are skilled in making a variety of products including jewellery, furniture, household articles, decorative and gift items using the grass. These items are

so enticing that they make way to viewers' hearts instantly prompting them to own some of them. These articles are available at dedicated selling centres at the district headquarters. This apart, e-commerce companies like Flipkart, Amazon, Jabong sell these crafts. Because of being eco-friendly, durability and beauty, the demand for these crafts is only increasing by the day. Last year, rakhis made of Sabai grass sold like hot cakes. These rakhis were sold through stalls set up in Baripada, Rairangpur and Bhubaneswar. Notably, the Krishi Vigyan Kendra at Shyamakhunta requested OUAT to apply for the GI tag for the Sabai grass craft. "Once the tag is accorded, the district's residents, particularly the women weavers will become self-reliant," observed scientist of Krishi Vigyan Kendra (1), Sanghamitra Pattanayak.

EAST COAST RAILWAY
'E' PROCUREMENT SYSTEM
The following tender has been uploaded on website www.reps.gov.in
Tender Notice No. Sr.DMM/KUR/EP/2021-22/02 Dtd: 01.07.2021
TENDER NO. 81215259, BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF MATERIALS: ELECTRIC POINT MACHINE. QUANTITY: 137 SETS.
Tender closing date & time at 1500 hrs. of 04.08.2021.
Sr. Divisional Materials Manager/ Khurda Road
PR-204/M/21-22

OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER
BALASORE (ROADS & BUILDINGS) DIVISION-II
AT/PO- BHASKARGANJ, BALASORE
CONTACT NO :- 06782-263149
E Mail ID :- eepwdbis2@gmail.com
No.B-215:-
SHORT TENDER CALL NOTICE
BID INVITATION NO. EE (R and B) BLS-II- 08/ 2021-22
No. :- 4925 Date :- 01.07.2021

1	The Executive Engineer, Balasore (R & B) Division-II, Balasore on behalf of the Governor of Odisha invites Percentage rate bids to be received in ONLINE MODE only for Roads & Buildings works .	
2	No. of work	: 1 No.
3	Nature of work	: Building / Electrical work of Balasore (R&B) Division-II
4	Class of contractor	: Authorized Dealers
5	Approx. value of work	: Rs. 26.09 lakhs
6	Tender Cost.	: 6000.00 as per work
7	Availability of Bid Documents in the website	: From 10.00 Hours of dt. 09.07.2021 to 16.00 hours of dt. 14.07.2021.
8	Date of opening of bid	: Dt.14.07.2021 at 16.30 hours.
9	Other details can be seen in the Bidding documents from the website : https://tendersorissa.gov.in .	

Sd/- A.K Mohanty, Executive Engineer, Balasore (R&B) Division-II
OIPR-34078/11/0011/2122

GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA
OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER, P.H. DIVISION, BHANJANAGAR AT CHATRAPUR
Phone- 06811 263909- FAX- 06811 263950, E-mail- eepchpr@gmail.com
NATIONAL COMPETITIVE BIDDING THROUGH e-Procurement
Bid Identification No.10/03/SPH(C)/2021-22 dt.08.07.2021

Invitation for Bids (IFB)

Sl. No.	Name of the work	Identification No.	Estimated cost (Rs. in Lakhs)	Period of completion	Availability of Bid Documents for online Bidding		Name & address of Officer Inviting Bid
					From	To	
1	Providing potable drinking water by raising of platform of hand pump tubewell during exigency like flood in Purusottampur NAC under 13-4215	Identification No. 10-1/03/SPH (C) / 2021-22 dt.08.07.2021	21.20	4 (Four) calendar Months	11.00 Hrs. of 16.07.2021	17.30 Hrs. of 30.07.2021	Superintending Engineer, P.H. Division, Bhanjanagar at Chatrapur
2	Providing potable drinking water by raising of platform of hand pump tubewell during exigency like flood in Aska NAC under 13-4215	Identification No. 10-2/03/SPH (C) / 2021-22 dt.08.07.2021	20.76	4 (Four) calendar Months	11.00 Hrs. of 16.07.2021	17.30 Hrs. of 30.07.2021	-do-

The technical bid shall be opened on dt.02.08.2021 at 11.30 A.M.
Further details can be seen from the e-procurement portal <https://www.tendersorissa.gov.in>
OIPR-13172/11/0002/2122 Sd./- Superintending Engineer, P.H. Division, Bhanjanagar at Chatrapur

GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA
OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER
RURAL WORKS DIVISION, ROURKELA
E-Mail-rw_rourkela@yahoo.co.in
TENDER CALL NOTICE
BID IDENTIFICATION NO. ONLINE-EERKL-06 OF 2021-22

No.O-400:- 1. Name of the work : Road works. 2. Total No. of works: 1 (One) No. 3. Estimated cost : Rs.57.52 lakhs. 4. Class of contractor : 'B' & 'A' Class. 5. Period of completion: 04 (Four) calendar months. 6. Type of tender ; Double cover. 7. Other details:

Procurement Officer	Bid Identification No.	Availability of tender online for bidding
1	2	3
Executive Engineer, Rural Works Division, Rourkela	Online-EERKL-06 of 2021-22	15.07.2021 from 10.00 A.M. to 29.07.2021 upto 5.00 P.M.

Further details can be seen from the website www.tendersorissa.gov.in.
Sd./- Executive Engineer, RW Division, Rourkela
OIPR-25067/11/0006/2122

FOCUS HUMAN RIGHTS

FIGHT FOR OPEN SOCIETIES



Freedom is in trouble for well-known reasons. In many countries, increasing inequality and marginalisation of different groups have fueled an embrace of right-wing (and in some cases Left-wing) authoritarianism

The Cold War, today's world is one of multidimensional human-rights menaces. Inequalities exacerbated by unregulated transnational financial and corporate power, together with dramatic shifts in individual states' fortunes, are creating an ever more challenging landscape. The world is becoming more unequal – and angrier. That anger is amplified (and fueled) by social-media platforms where polarization, abuse, and lies undermine trust in institutions. A technology that many saw just a few years ago as an enabler of citizens' rights has become in many cases a tool for manipulating minds and closing societies.

The insidious copycat behaviour that Donald Trump's presidency allowed and encouraged around the world has accelerated a crisis of respect for the rule of law and human rights. Presidents stole additional terms, official corruption surged, and agreements between states brushed aside people's rights. Nowadays, human-rights defenders and those who support them are not welcome in much of the world.

Yet malign governments and globalisation, with its unintended financial and corporate consequences, are only half the problem. Many view the renewed attention to deep-seated institutional racism in the United States and around the world – and the recognition that marginalisation based on race, gender, religion, and class is often mutually reinforcing – as exposing the limits of a human-rights agenda. Human-rights remedies, victims argue, have scratched the surface, not reached the roots.

Human-rights work needs to become more political: tougher and smarter in its attacks on oppressors, and clearer about being on the side of the oppressed. We need to address the challenges people actually face, looking beyond narrow political rights to address the deeper causes of economic and social exclusion.

The writer, a former deputy United Nations secretary-general and co-chair of the UN Foundation, is President of the Open Society Foundations.

PROJECT SYNDICATE

Democracy is back on policymakers' minds. US President Joe Biden plans to host a summit on the theme, and invitations to a host of events on democracy and human rights fill my inbox.

This renewed focus is not good news. Rather, it reflects the erosion of both democracy and respect for human rights in recent years. Freedom House reports that less than 20% of the world's population now lives in what it categorises as fully free societies, the lowest share in more than a quarter-century. Many countries are drifting steadily toward authoritarianism.

Freedom is in trouble for well-known reasons. In many countries, increasing inequality and marginalisation of different groups have fueled an embrace of right-wing (and in some cases Left-wing) authoritarianism. As the world grapples with rapid technological change and economic restructuring, many are far from convinced that democracies have the edge in terms of adaptation and forward-looking policymaking. The pandemic – which many democracies mishandled – deepened these doubts.

These are difficult times for those of us who profoundly believe that the absolute, non-negotiable basis of good government is a free, democratically empowered citizenry protected equally under law. I am president of the largest private philanthropy in this domain. If we are honest with ourselves, we know that our traditional models of advancing democratic values and institutions are struggling.

The Open Society Foundations (OSF) was founded in the 1980s on the assumption that there was an urgent global public demand for freedom, and that a growing number of governments around the world were embracing its rules and norms. That allowed us (in partnership with local activists) to use a mixture of shaming and encouragement to persuade governments to adopt and respect human-rights laws and democratic procedures.

Whether our work concerned the Roma in Central and Eastern Europe, LGBTIQ communities in Africa, ethnic minorities in South

and East Asia, women's rights in Latin America, or worldwide migrant and refugee protection, it seemed that we were pursuing a historic mission. And one day, that pursuit might lead to all individuals enjoying full and equal rights and opportunities.

Today, however, a rising human-rights tide is not lifting all boats; on the contrary, it seems that all are at risk of sinking. This recent sharp reversal of 20 years of human-rights gains is forcing us to think again.

As a foundation chaired to this day by its founder, George Soros – a survivor of Nazism and a refugee from communism in his native Hungary – we will not move on to less challenging issues. After all, Soros started the foundation when prospects for human-rights advances looked as difficult as they do today.

So, the mission is non-negotiable. But we must revisit our approach. We must ask how to recover public support for democratic and human-rights norms, while also identifying more clearly the enemies of open societies and what will lead them, even grudgingly, to respect their obligations again.

In 1980s Eastern Europe, the problem was sclerotic, aging communist governments that could no longer deliver for their people.



Mark Malloch-Brown

THE INSIDIOUS COPYCAT BEHAVIOUR THAT DONALD TRUMP'S PRESIDENCY ALLOWED AND ENCOURAGED AROUND THE WORLD HAS ACCELERATED A CRISIS OF RESPECT FOR THE RULE OF LAW AND HUMAN RIGHTS

The path is long, but self-surrender makes it short; the way is difficult, but perfect trust makes it easy.

THE MOTHER



Smoke and mirrors in UP power play

Sensing the current popular mood against the UP government due to the Covid crisis, the party and the Modi sarkar are keen to ensure the party's success in the upcoming Assembly elections. A lot of that worry has to do with the perceptions about Yogi running the government with hand-picked but clearly inadequate babu support.

When the trusted PMO aide Arvind Kumar Sharma was airdropped in Lucknow, he was no regular Gujarat cadre babu or just another BJP vice-president in Uttar Pradesh (after taking voluntary retirement). He was reportedly sent to rein in Yogi who has caused considerable discontent within the state unit of the party, and he remains the PMO's eyes and ears within the Yogi government.

Yogi too has gathered around his own trusted band of babus. It is this team that steered Yogi's Covid management. Hovering over these exercises like Banquo's ghost is a familiar presence, Navneet Sehgal. This consistently powerful 1988-batch IAS officer is once again chief firefighter, in charge of the state Information Department as Additional Chief Secretary and leading the perception battle against Covid failure. His dominant presence in the state government, over the last six months has not enthused too many other babus in UP. Yet, it is this larger cohort of babus who will matter more, going ahead and how they manage their last lap briefs, which will be crucial in the months ahead.

CBDT appointment raises more questions

The spate of appointments in the Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT) seems to have raised more questions than answers among babu watchers. After the end of CBDT chairman PC Mody's extended tenure, the Finance Ministry has given additional charge of the post to JB Mohapatra, a 1985-batch Indian Revenue Service (IRS) officer. With Mohapatra as ad hoc chairman, the CBDT now has three 1985-batch board members, the other two being Anu J Singh and Anuja Sarangi.



BABUDOM BYTES
Dilip Cherian

Sources say that there is also much speculation about why Mohapatra was named the interim chairperson of CBDT and why the government chose to ignore the claim of KM Prasad, the senior-most board member. Prasad who has about three months to go before retirement could easily have been given additional charge of interim chairman.

Besides his ad hoc position, Mohapatra is the first regular Member for Investigation since 2019. The post of Member Investigations now seems to lead to the top post at CBDT, given that the current CEC Sushil Chandra held the same post before he was elevated to CBDT chairperson.

Interestingly, the CBDT board is likely to see more changes in the days ahead. Of the three new members SK Gupta will complete his tenure in July while Anu Singh will retire in August this year as will K.M. Prasad. Will the government draft new members on the board or give extension to the current ones? Let's wait and watch.

Haryana DGP caught between CM and HM

Walking a tightrope can get tiresome after a while. Haryana's Director General of Police Manoj Yadava has sought repatriation to the Intelligence Bureau (IB) for "personal reasons", in a bid to end the war of words between Chief Minister Manohar Khattar and Home Minister Anil Vij over his tenure extension.

Yadava was sent to Haryana on the recommendation by a UPSC committee for appointment as the state police chief. He had returned to his home state cadre after spending 15 years with the IB. The 1988-batch IPS officers have apparently written to Additional Chief Secretary (Home) Rajeev Arora seeking repatriation to IB and resume his old post of Additional Director While the move took some by surprise, those in the know believe that Yadava's inability to get along with his boss, the state Home Minister Anil Vij, may have been the last straw for the top cop. Earlier this year when Chief Minister Manohar Khattar had given Yadava a year's extension as DGP, the Home Minister had vehemently objected but Khattar stuck to his guns and had his way.

It's no secret that Khattar and his Home Minister do not see eye to eye on several issues. Yadava may be about to pay the price of their political rivalry if his request for repatriation is accepted.

Share a babu experience! Follow [@diliptheherian](https://twitter.com/diliptheherian) on Twitter. Let's multiply the effect.

WORDSWORTH

Can of worms

To open a metaphorical can of worms is to examine some complicated state of affairs, the investigation of which is likely to cause trouble or scandal and which you would much prefer was left alone. A recent example appeared in the Washington Times: "Uncovering past ownership, however, can open its own legal can of worms in exposing art theft." It has long since become an overused and overrated journalistic cliché, which rather lends itself to mixed metaphors: "Africa is a huge can of worms and we can no longer stick our heads in the sand" (from the Daily Record of Glasgow of 17 March 2006). The earliest example I've found is from a syndicated article in the Ironwood Daily Globe of Michigan in 1951: "The question of command for Middle East defense against Soviet aggression is still regarded as 'a can of worms' at General Eisenhower's SHAPE headquarters here." The evidence suggests that the original cans of worms were real cans with actual worms in them, collected as bait for fishing. Here's one in a largely forgotten work of 1914, Diane of the Green Van, by Leona Dalrymple: "There are times, alas, when even fish are perverse! Thoroughly out of patience, Diane presently unjoined her rod, emptied the can of worms upon the bank, and returned to camp." Fishermen have told me that the most annoying aspect of opening a can of worms is that, being live bait, they crawl out and are difficult to put back. So there may well be an association with the idea of Pandora's Box, as you suspect. It's easy to see how an angler – more probably a non-fishing friend or relative of an angler – who opened a can containing a wriggling mass of worms would see it as something that was best left closed and unexamined.

LOL

Give him another chance

A football coach walked into the locker room before a game, looked over to his star player and said, "I'm not supposed to let you play since you failed math, but we need you in there. So what I have to do is ask you a math question, and if you get it right, you can play." The player



agreed, and the coach looked into his eyes intently and asks, "Okay, now concentrate... what is two plus two?" The player thought for a moment and then he answered, "4?" "Did you say 4?" the coach exclaimed, excited that he got it right. At that, all the other players on the team began screaming, "Come on coach, give him another chance!"

SPECTRUM JAPAN

The Tokyo Games will go on



Bill Emmott

GIVEN THE REALITIES ON THE GROUND, THE JAPANESE GOVERNMENT IS UNLIKELY TO ACCEDE TO THE CANCELLATION CHORUS

Having been postponed from 2020 because of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Tokyo Olympic Games are approaching their opening July 23 amid a chorus of doom. Japanese and foreigners alike are predicting, or even outright demanding, the event's cancellation.

Among those coming out in favour of scrapping the Games is one of the event's official partners, the newspaper Asahi Shimbun. Depending on one's reading of the polls, that position is apparently supported by 60-80% of the Japanese population. And various medical groups argue that the Games will put unacceptable pressure on Japan's health system at a time when the pandemic is still raging. As if to confirm this sense of crisis, the Japanese government has now declared that Tokyo will be under a state of emergency throughout the Games.

But this is all rather strange. The cancellation chorus makes it sound like Japan is in the grip of a harrowing wave of Covid-19 cases. But that plainly is not the case. The situation is nothing like that of India or Brazil. On July 7, for example, Japan, with 120 million peo-

ple, reported just 1,683 confirmed cases and 17 deaths, down from the recent peaks of 6,460 new cases May 14 and 113 deaths May 23.

This is not to suggest that Japan should barrel ahead and host the Olympics come what may. Accommodating more than 60,000 athletes and their entourages from overseas plainly creates some risk. Similar risks were present when spectators were allowed to attend the US Masters golf tournament in early April, and when 135,000 spectators watched the Indianapolis 500 motor race May 30. And Japan's own baseball league has been holding games throughout the state of emergency.

Clearly, the alarmist chorus against the Tokyo Games could benefit from a greater sense of proportion. Yes, Tokyo and Okinawa remain in a "state of emergency," but this is a misnomer. Japanese law does not permit the government to assume the sort of emergency powers that have commonly been exercised in Europe. The "emergency" basically means that bars and restaurants cannot stay open very late in the evening and are discouraged (but not barred) from serving alcohol. Beyond that, de-

partment stores are a bit constrained, and everyone is advised to be as careful as possible. Pandemic life in Japan is a lot more normal than it is in Europe.

Moreover, given Japan's low infection and death figures, fears that hospitals will suddenly exceed true capacity are misplaced. Japan has more hospital beds per 1,000 people than almost any other country in the world. Japan's health system isn't perfect, of course. Because it is publicly financed but largely privately run, the government cannot force an increase in capacity as easily as Britain's National Health Service can. As a result, there have been some scandalous cases of Covid-19 patients being turned away and then dying at home, owing to hospitals choosing not to make more capacity available. Nonetheless, as the overall mortality numbers indicate, these cases have been exceptions, not the norm. Unlike most other advanced economies, Japan has had fewer deaths during the past 18 months than in normal times, because Japanese have been more careful.

Ultimately, it will not be a Covid-19 crisis in Japan that determines

the fate of the Tokyo Olympics, because there is no such crisis. Vaccinations have been painfully slow to get under way, but 19 million have now been administered, and the total will most likely be considerably higher by when the Games begin, protecting the most vulnerable groups. In fact, Japan is perfectly capable of keeping the visiting athletes and their entourages insulated from the population, particularly now that the authorities may prohibit spectators from all events.

Given the realities on the ground, the Japanese government is unlikely to accede to the cancellation chorus. Doing so would mean national humiliation. And because the International Olympic Committee would almost certainly oppose the decision, Japan and the Tokyo Metropolitan Government would be liable for damages.

If the Games were being held in a US or Chinese city, would America or China cancel them at this stage in the pandemic? No.

The writer is Co-Director of the Global Commission for Post-Pandemic Policy.

PROJECT SYNDICATE

Letters

TO THE EDITOR

Readers of Orissa POST are most welcome to contribute letters (200 words), articles and columns (between 750-1250 words). Contributors are requested to send their contact numbers and full postal address/email ID. They may also send in their valuable comments, opinion and suggestions, preferably by email, to: edit@orissapost.com

OrissaPOST
B-15, Rissalgarh Industrial Estate, Bhubaneswar-751010

'Tarnished' leader

Sir, The image of the 'party with a difference' and the government it heads at the Centre certainly takes a severe beating when someone as 'tarnished' as Narayan Tatu Rane is inducted as a Cabinet Minister. In fact, Rane himself and his wife and two sons have been accused at different times of multiple wrong doings, including criminal acts, ranging from money laundering, unauthorised land grabbing, assault of public servants on duty, extortion and many more, thereby earning the dubious sobriquet of being Maharashtra's "First Family of Controversies". Strangely, none of these charges have been allowed to reach their legal conclusion. The vacuous excuse apparently adduced for his inclusion in the Cabinet is to checkmate the Shiv Sena in Maharashtra, particularly in the Konkan belt. One wonders whether it's morally correct to sacrifice the self-professed virtues of honesty and transparency, flaunted so frequently by the ruling party, at the altar of political expediency. It's bad optics as well and a sad state of affairs in our polity today.

Bhaskar Roy, NEW DELHI

Irresponsible acts

Sir, A video showing hundreds of tourists bathing at the Kemptee fall in Mussoorie surfaced on the internet Wednesday and has gone viral on social media. Though the pandemic has not yet ended, people have been travelling in huge numbers looking to shake off the after effects of the deadly second coronavirus wave. It's surprising how quickly we've forgotten the huge price India has paid in the second wave just a couple of months ago. Have they forgotten the months of April and May, the suffering, the fight for breath, struggle for life. All these people have lost all rights to crib about the possible third wave, the government not being able to control it, the Kumbh Mela, election rallies or any other things related to Covid. Although the cumulative Covid-19 vaccine doses administered in the country have crossed the 38 crore-landmark, a repeat of such irresponsible behaviour may lead to an early onslaught of the third wave in India. Such irresponsible assemblies of people must be curtailed by the respective state governments by taking strict measures, sensitising shopkeepers and holding meetings with markets' and vendors' associations in this regard. In short, we have to adjust to the new normal - be it wearing masks or work from home.

Akash Kumar, PUNJAB

No amenities at Lower Suktel rehab hub

PEOPLE WAITING FOR RELOCATION ARE SHOWING LITTLE INTEREST AS BASIC FACILITIES STILL ELUDE PEOPLE AT THE REHAB CENTRE



Life woes

The residents of this pro-project village had agreed to relocate after they received full compensations and rehabilitation benefits

The people have alleged that there is no semblance of basic facilities at the place where they have been asked to relocate

Families who have shifted here first are yet to get land pattas while those who came later have been provided with land pattas

said. The administration has distributed homestead land to 47 of these families in Lower Suktel rehabilitation colony at Larkipalli.

The project-displaced people have alleged that there is no semblance of basic facilities at the place where they have been asked to relocate. Three to four years before the Paradihapalli villagers were relocated, some project-displaced people had been relocated here. Plots had been identified for 72 families at a place in front of the CRPF camp site. Twenty families have shifted here on their own and are living by themselves.

Even 20 years after the rehabilitation site had been identified, basic facilities have not been made available to people, indicating crass failure

of the administration. There are no roads, drinking water, health-care, school, streetlights, and similar other basic amenities in the rehabilitation site. Some families who had shifted here are living a hard life.

These project-affected people alleged that the administration has not taken even a fraction of interest in their well-being as it has taken for the setting up of the major irrigation project. Snakes are slithering into their homes. The whole area is covered under darkness as there are no streetlights in the area. There is no drinking water. People live on bore wells that they themselves have dug.

Besides, families who have shifted here first are yet to get land pattas while those who relocated here

after them have been provided with land pattas. District Collector Chanchal Rana said he would look into these issues and will try to resolve them as early as possible.

The District Collector has issued directions to departmental engineer and other senior officials to ensure that project-affected people get all facilities including roads, drains, drinking water, streetlights and all other basic amenities within two and half months.

Proper rehabilitation of the project-affected people at the centre will encourage those waiting to relocate to the rehabilitation centre. This will also quicken the construction work of the Lower Suktel major irrigation project, the displaced people said.



QUEUE FOR JOBS

Following social distancing norms, people stand in queue at a vaccination centre in Salipur

OP PHOTO

Woman accuses son of killing daughter-in-law

POST NEWS NETWORK

Pattamundai, July 9: In a shocking incident, a person with the help of his paramour and her husband murdered his wife at Balipatna village of Damarpur panchayat under Pattamundai police limits. Acting on the complaint lodged by none other than the accused's mother, police Thursday arrested him.

According to sources, Debashish Bai, son of Nimain Charan Bai of Balipatna village and Deepika Tarai, daughter of Basant Tarai of Balabhadrapur-Khardhapatana village were in love. They had married three years ago.

Meanwhile, Debashish had developed extra marital affair with Sonali Bai, a married woman of the same village. After coming to know about his husband's affair with the woman, Deepika had been objecting to it. Debashish had been torturing her mentally and phys-



Kshirod Bai attacked Deepika, killing her on the spot.

After committing the crime, they hung the body to pass it off as a suicide case.

In this regard, two reports were lodged at the police station. While the first report was lodged by the deceased's mother accusing Debashish of murdering his wife, the second one was lodged by Debashish's mother alleging he had killed his wife.

On being informed, a team from Pattamundai police station reached the spot, recovered the body and sent it to Aul CHC for post mortem.

According to the latest information, the police following the direction of Pattamundai Adarsh police station IIC Rakesh Tripathy conducted raids at several places and arrested the accused from a place.

The incident has been a matter of discussion in the locality. A detailed investigation is underway, it was learnt.

ically. She had even informed her family members about what was going on in her in-laws' house.

It was when Debashish's mother asked him to refrain from his act that he had thrown her out of the house. And she has since been living in a neighbour's house.

Debashish crossed all limits Wednesday night by inviting his paramour to his house. Seeing them in a compromising state, Deepika protested.

In a bid to get rid of her, he along with Sonali and her husband

Jeypore paper mill to start production in Sept



POST NEWS NETWORK

Jeypore, July 9: The Seba paper mill here will start production in coming September. This was revealed by the plant authorities after a meeting with the workers' union. The paper mill, said to be the main pillar of the local economy fell on bad times over two years back. Its management was transferred from BILT to a Hyderabad-based private company, Mother Earth Resource Pvt Ltd. After the transfer of the ownership, work on the paper mill has started on a war-footing.

Work on laying of 1200 metre long pipeline has been over. All defective and broken machines have been repaired and renovated. At least 100 workers have been engaged in the renovation work. All department heads have joined work, sources said.

At present, work on the repair of the boiler and TG has been in progress. Sources said that Rs 30 crore will be spent on amalgamation of the raw materials including wood, bamboos, chemical and coal. More people will join work this month, the sources said, adding that all existing workers will have

joined work by August 20. The plant head, SS Pal, said the paper mill will start production from September.

Meanwhile, a technical team from IDCO visited the paper mill to take stock of the land currently available with it. The team has indicated that the new industrial water policy of the state government will be applied for the paper mill. As a result of this, the plant will have to pay only for the actual volume of water that it will use. The plant authorities have urged the state government to waive the Rs 1100 crore arrear pending against the plant under water and power dues. This has been under the active consideration of the government, sources said.

It may be mentioned here that the paper mill stopped functioning since April 2019. Among others who took part in the discussions were the plant's unit head SS Pal, HR head Ramesh Yadav, and members of the workers' union Pramod Kumar Mohanty, Pradip Panjia, Sandip Patnaik, Saroj Suar, Balakrishna Pradhan, Uma Panigrahi, Dharendra Kumar Mohanty, Sudarshan Bishoyi and Pramod Tiwari.

PROBE ORDERED INTO GRAFT IN PMGSY PROJECT

POST NEWS NETWORK

Jajpur, July 9: The chief engineer of the Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY) has ordered a joint inquiry into allegations of irregularities in a road laying work at Jaraka Division-2 under Chandikhol sub-division of rural development department in Jajpur district, an official source Friday informed.

According to sources, a blacktop road has been laid recently on a patch stretching from Dekuri-Balichandrapur area connecting NH-16(A) to Bharatpur in the district. The road was damaged within months.

The chief engineer has asked

the state quality monitoring (SQM) engineers Sukanta Kumar Behera and Himanshu Kumar Acharya vide letter (No-18933, dated July 8, 2021) to probe and submit a detailed report, the official added.

It is pertinent to mention here that the superintending engineer of RD department had earlier ordered the executive engineer to conduct an investigation into these allegations vide his office letter (No.-527, Dated-18.03.2020).

Notably, the 11.2 kilometre-long road laying work started in 2018 at an estimated cost of Rs 4.10 crore. Initially, it was targeted for completion by April 25, 2019, which was delayed further by a year.

Odisha villagers urge MLA to get them under AP

POST NEWS NETWORK

Pattangi, July 9: At least 200 people of Ralegada panchayat under Pattangi block in Koraput district and of eight bordering villages abutting Andhra Pradesh Thursday met Salupur legislator Rajan Dora to urge him to take steps to merge their villages in Andhra Pradesh. Dora has promised the villagers to raise the issue in Andhra Assembly in the coming session and get their villages merged in Andhra Pradesh.

At least 200 residents of villages such as Kareidi, Bitra, Bilakabitra, Jangalbalasa, Adubadabalasa, Baranaudi, Kairubadu under Ralegada panchayat Thursday met the Andhra MLA at Pachipentapali Kanabalasa panchayat under Salur block. The villagers said, even though their revenue villages are officially in Odisha, they do not have so



much as a road to their village. They have no access to drinking

water, education, and healthcare benefits. They are attracted by the

benefits being offered by the neighbouring government. Not only that,

The villages said, even though their revenue villages are officially in Odisha, they do not have so much as a road to their village, let alone a school or a hospital

their ancestors also had land pattas offered by the Andhra government, they said. They pleaded before the MLA that he may take steps get their villages under Andhra government.

Dora assured the villagers that he would raise the matter in Andhra Assembly in the next session and try to get this proposal passed. Among others, Parvatipuram PITDA Koramnath was present during the meeting with the MLA.

FUELING ANGER



Protesting against oil price hike, Congress members take out rally to Angul Collector's office

OP PHOTO

Man solves 2,000 problems of common men through Twitter

POST NEWS NETWORK

Krushnaprasad, July 9: Residents of Krushna Prasad panchayat on Parikud island in Chilika lake in Puri district are heaping praise on Pradyumna Kumar Biswal.

They say it is he who has brought them from utter darkness to the light of knowledge. They admit, but for Biswal, they would never have received government schemes and programmes.

A resident of Brahmandeo village of Ramlenka panchayat under Krushna Prasad block, Biswal is known as Twitter Master, for he has solved around 2,000 problems of common people by using Twitter in last two years.

Born to Gangadhar Biswal, a small time businessman and Prabhasini Biswal, a housewife, Biswal lives a simple life. He starts his day scanning newspapers and social media posts. He looks for news items on people who suffer because



of their ignorance of government rules, schemes and programmes.

Then he makes tweets tagging the concerned ministers and officers, including the Chief Minister's Office, informing them the people's problems. This way, he has solved many problems suffered by people of not only Krushna Prasad but also of different areas in Puri, Ganjam, Nayagarh, Bhadrak,

Kendrapara and Balasore districts. These days, Biswal's is a known name for the district administration as well as the state government.

Listing out his achievements, Biswal said his tweets helped construction of a PMGSY road at Kodinga village of Koshagumuda block in Nabarangpur district, rehabilitation of helpless people living along the side of railway station road in Balasore, provide assistance to orphaned children of Dasapalla in Nayagarh district, provide ration card to Tikina Patra of Kapileswar village under Brahmagiri block, solve drinking water problem in Mardharajpur village of Krushna Prasad block and make public toilet of Ramba NAC in Ganjam district functional.

Biswal has been receiving appreciation from various quarters. "People's love and affection keep me going and I wish I should work for the downtrodden," he observed.

Kerala on alert following Zika outbreak

The southern state has so far reported 14 cases of Zika virus

AGENCIES

Thiruvananthapuram/Delhi, July 9: Kerala was put on alert Friday following the outbreak of Zika virus in the state, while the Centre rushed a team of experts to monitor the situation and aid the state government in management of the cases after 13 new ones were confirmed.

The number of cases due to the mosquito-transmitted disease in the southern state went up to 14 Friday following confirmation of 13 additional samples by the National Institute of Virology. Among the infected is a 24-year-old pregnant woman, who was diagnosed with the mosquito-transmitted disease Thursday, making her the first person to be infected with the virus in the state. Of the 19 samples sent to the Pune-based institute, 13 were found to be positive for Zika, the State government said Friday. The symptoms are similar to dengue and they in-



GRAVE THREAT

THE STATE IS CURRENTLY BATTLING A SURGE IN COVID-19 CASES, WITH MORE THAN 13,000 INFECTIONS REPORTED FRIDAY, MORE THAN A THIRD OF INDIA'S 43,393 DAILY CASES RECORDED ON THE DAY

INDIA SAW ZIKA OUTBREAKS IN 2017 AND 2018, WITH HUNDREDS OF CASES REPORTED IN WESTERN GUJARAT AND RAJASTHAN STATES, AS WELL AS THE CENTRAL STATE OF MADHYA PRADESH, BUT THE LATEST INFECTION IS THE FIRST IN KERALA

clude fever, rashes and joint pain. State Health Minister Veena George

said an action plan has been drawn up to control the spread of Zika.

What is Zika Virus?

Zika virus is a mosquito-borne flavivirus that was first identified in Uganda in 1947 in monkeys. In 1952, the Zika Virus Disease (ZVD) was identified in humans in Western Africa. ZVD is caused by a virus transmitted primarily by Aedes mosquitoes (AM), mainly Aedes aegypti, the same mosquito that transmits dengue, chikungunya and yellow fever. In addition, the Zika virus is also transmitted from mother to fetus during pregnancy, through sexual contact, transfusion of blood and blood products, and organ transplantation. The symptoms of ZVD include fever, rash, conjunctivitis, muscle and joint pain, malaise or headache. However, most people with Zika virus infection do not develop any symptoms.

Pregnant women should get themselves tested if they have fever, the Minister said at a meeting of the District Medical Officers (DMOs).

Following the emergence of the Zika virus, the Centre rushed a team of experts to support the government in handling the situation. Joint Secretary in the Union health ministry, Lav Agarwal, told reporters in New Delhi that "there

are some Zika cases which have been reported from Kerala."

"To monitor the situation and to support the state government, a six-member team, comprising public health experts, vector-borne disease experts and clinicians from AIIMS has already been issued instructions to reach there and support the state government in terms of management of Zika there," he said in a statement.

Helicopter service to connect tourist spots

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Srinagar, July 9: The tourism sector in Jammu and Kashmir is set to get just the kind of tail wind it needs for a thrust forward with the proposed helicopter service connecting the tourist destinations within the Union Territory.

In a move meant to cater to high-end tourists, the

by making a visit to its many scenic destinations that much more interesting.

The UT government was also looking at helicopter services to develop connectivity between important destinations in order to attract more visitors, Khan said. He directed the officers present to identify destinations in both Jammu and Kashmir where helicopter services could be started to test out the idea.



UT government has also decided to launch an air safari and air rides over tourist attractions such as the Dal Lake and adjoining areas. These plans were revealed during a meeting chaired by Basheer Ahmad Khan, Adviser to the Lieutenant Governor, and attended by senior officials Friday. Khan said the plan would boost tourism in Jammu and Kashmir

The officials present discussed the possible locations and heard Khan direct them to start the preparatory work so that the plan could take off.

Khan said the exercise was meant to change the face of travel and tourism in Jammu and Kashmir and open up new destinations in far-flung places.

FLOCKING TOGETHER



Pigeons fly around the famous shrine of Hazratbal in Srinagar in Kashmir

UNI PHOTO

Kerala HC issues notice to State govt on dowry

"Dowry is a social stigma causing un-imaginable torture and crime towards women. This evil has taken the lives of numerous innocent women from all strata of society," the petition said

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kochi, July 9: The Kerala High Court Friday issued notice to the State government on a writ petition seeking amendments and strict implementation of the Dowry Prohibition Act, 1961.

A Bench, headed by Chief Justice S Manikumar, asked the government why the Act were not being implemented strictly. The court asked why there was no appointment made to the posts of Dowry Prohibition Officers though dowry deaths were being reported frequently.

The petition, filed by Indira Rajan, the CEO of the Vikram

Sarabhai Science Foundation, sought a direction to all government servants to furnish a declaration that they have not taken any dowry.

"Dowry is a social stigma causing un-imaginable torture and crime towards women. This evil has taken the lives of numerous innocent women from all strata of society," the petition said.

The lackadaisical attitude of government and its machiner-

is the root-cause for this, it said.

It said though Parliament has enacted the Dowry Prohibition Act, 1961, it could not serve the intended purpose or eradicate dowry, the petition said. The country has seen 8,391 dowry deaths in 2010 meaning there are 1.4 deaths per 1,00,000 women, it said. Such deaths account for 40 to 50 per cent of all homicides recorded annually in the country.



Representative image

Market linkage support scheme 'Parvaz' launched

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Srinagar, July 9: The Jammu and Kashmir government has accorded sanction to the implementation of 'PARVAZ', a market linkage support scheme for shipment of agriculture and horticulture perishables being harvested in J&K through air cargo, officials said.

As per a government order, a provision of 25 per cent subsidy on perishable fruits harvested in Jammu and Kashmir for shipment through air cargo will be notified separately.

Further, subsidy shall be provided on air cargo charges inclusive of airport handling charges for shipment through one or more empanelled airlines by the government from time to time, and in the DBT mode to the farmers/FPOs/SHGs and registered intermediaries. Subsidy shall also be paid in the reimbursement mode as per the original invoices/bills of the concerned air-



lines in offline mode only till August 31, 2021, the order said.

Thereafter, the support shall be paid through online medium in DBT mode by creating a platform involving the Directorate of Horticulture and the concerned Airlines. The order further said that the scheme could be adopted by animal, sheep husbandry and fisheries departments for milk-based perishables and Trout fish, subject to availability of funds.

Routine healthcare services to resume across the Valley



Jammu and Kashmir Friday recorded 261 fresh Covid-19 cases, taking the number of infected persons to 3,18,284, while a lone death took the toll to 4,354, officials said

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Srinagar, July 9: Authorities Friday ordered resumption of routine healthcare services across the Kashmir Valley in view of the decline in Covid-19 cases.

Director Health Services,

Kashmir issued an order to resume the services in view of the decline in Covid-19 cases being reported in Kashmir division and a drastic decrease in the number of hospital admissions and also since a DRDO hospital has come up for coronavirus patients.

"It is enjoined upon all chief medical officers, medical superintendents and block medical officers under the administrative control of this Directorate to resume OPD, surgeries and other routine healthcare facilities services in all the health institutions under their respective jurisdictions forthwith in the interest of better patient care", the order said.

The officials said the Directorate has ordered that few separate well-equipped oxy-

genated beds should be kept available for emergency purposes including gynaecology/obstetrics and paediatrics.

In addition, the officials said, the standard operating procedures and guidelines laid down by the Union Ministry of Health and Family Welfare from time to time must be adhered to in letter and spirit. The OPD and other routine services in the hospital across the valley were stopped when the second wave of Covid-19 hit J&K.

Come out with crowdfunding policy: Ker HC to govt

THE COURT ASKED THE KERALA GOVERNMENT TO SPELL OUT IF THEY HAD ANY POLICY WITH REGARDS TO CROWDFUNDING, AND SAID THAT 'IF THEY DO NOT HAVE, THEY SHOULD EVEN CONSIDER FLOATING ONE'

AGENCIES

Kochi, July 9: There has to be some government control over the money being collected via crowdfunding for treatment of rare diseases and every "Tom, Dick and Harry" cannot be permitted to collect funds like this, the Kerala High Court said Friday.

The high court said it was concerned that every "Tom, Dick and Harry" was collecting funds via crowdfunding for treatment of the children suffering from rare diseases and asked the state government whether it has any control over such transactions.

Justice P B Suresh Kumar said the court does not want to interdict the crowdfunding process, but it wants the funds to go to the government instead into the account of some private individuals who may or may not give it to those who

require the money. "I do not want every Tom, Dick and Harry to collect money. Is there any state control over this collection of funds via crowdfunding? We should know where the money is going," the court said and added that if private individuals and entities can collect crores of rupees in a short span of time, why the government cannot? "For providing free vaccines the state government could collect only Rs 68 lakh, while 18 crores was collected in a week (for treatment of a boy suffering from spinal muscular atrophy)," the court said.

"I do not want to interdict the process of crowdfunding, but I want government control over it," Justice Kumar said during the hearing of an autorickshaw driver's plea seeking free treatment for his six-month old infant son who is suffering from spinal muscular atrophy (SMA) as the medicine for it costs around Rs



Representative image

18 crore and he has no means to raise that kind of money.

In his petition, filed through advocate P Chandrasekhar, the father - Arif - has said that while he obtained permission for importing the required medicine - Zolgensma Onasemnogene injection - he cannot afford to buy even one dose as the same costs Rs 18 crore. During the hearing, the Kerala government also expressed apprehensions regarding the source of the money being collected via crowdfunding. The court also observed during the hearing that

such transactions if left unsupervised could destabilize the economy. It has on its own also impleaded the Drugs Controller General of India (DGCI) and the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) in the matter. The court said it would be passing a detailed order in the mat-

ter: Arif has moved the court, claiming that he cannot ensure his son's treatment without the support of the state government.

The government, in a statement filed in court earlier, had said that neither the Health Department nor the Kerala Social Security Mission (KSSM) was in a position to extend financial support for bearing the huge cost of the treatment/medicine required by Arif's son, who has been admitted in the Kozhikode Medical College Hospital and is on ventilator support.

The government had also said that according to the National Rare Disease Policy, 2021 of the Union Health Ministry, Spinal Muscular Atrophy (SMA) is categorised in Group 3, for which the cost of treatment is very high, and it recommends a digital crowdfunding platform be leveraged for mobilising the necessary funds.

national

of the day quote

More over, cancelling Class 12 had become all the more imperative due to a vast set of combinations of subjects forcing us to rethink on conducting examinations for Class 12

S SURESH KUMAR | KARNATAKA EDUCATION MINISTER

We are moving towards achieving the capacity of producing 1,000 metric tonnes of oxygen in the state

ASHOK GEHLOT | RAJASTHAN CHIEF MINISTER

The 'Graded Response Action Plan' was passed in the DDMA meeting today. No doubts will remain about when the lockdown will be imposed or when it will open. In the meeting, there was also discussion about the Delta plus variant

ARVIND KEJRIWAL | DELHI CHIEF MINISTER

SHORT TAKES

Two doctors transferred

Kolkata: Two doctors were transferred from the state-run SSKM Hospital in Kolkata after being found guilty of sexually harassing a female post-doctorate medical student by an internal committee, an official said Friday. The transfer order was issued by the state Health Department Thursday following a huge uproar on the IPGME&R campus over the incident that first came to the fore in February 2020, but allegedly no action was taken.

Mukul Roy named PAC chairman

Kolkata: Veteran politician Mukul Roy, who recently joined the Trinamool Congress after winning the Assembly polls from Krishnanagar North on a BJP ticket, was made the Public Accounts Committee (PAC) chairman on the last day of the Budget Session in the West Bengal Assembly Friday. The BJP MLAs, who pitched for Ashok Lahiri as the PAC chief, staged a walkout as a mark of protest following the appointment of Roy.

Mamata thanks Sheikh Hasina

Kolkata: West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee has thanked Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina for sending mangoes to her. Sheikh Hasina had dispatched 2,600 kg of mangoes to Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Mamata Banerjee Sunday, July 4.

Five refugees get citizenship

Indore: Five persons who had migrated from Pakistan to India, including a woman who came here along with her family when just a few months old some 40 years ago, were given citizenship certificates by Madhya Pradesh Home Minister Narottam Mishra at a function in Indore Friday. The woman, Gita, who was born in Jacobabad in Pakistan January 31, 1981 and has been living in India since June 4 that year, said she was elated at getting citizenship, having applied for it at the collector's office here September 9, 2015.

Militant held

Srinagar: Security forces Friday arrested a Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) militant from Bandipora district of Jammu and Kashmir, a police spokesperson said.



Inflation continues to grow. 'Acche din' is heavy on the country. Prime Minister's accountability only towards his friends
RAHUL GANDHI | FORMER CONGRESS PRESIDENT

SCINDIA TAKES CHARGE AS CIVIL AVIATION MINISTER

Jyotiraditya Madhavrao Scindia took over the reins of the civil aviation ministry on Friday and V K Singh also assumed office as the Minister of State at the ministry. Soon after taking charge, Scindia chaired a meeting to review the ongoing work in the civil aviation ministry and discussed the way forward



'2nd wave not over yet'

Health officials said more than half of new Covid-19 infections were being reported from the southern state of Kerala and western state of Maharashtra

AGENCIES

New Delhi July 9: India's devastating second coronavirus wave, which has raged since March and killed thousands of people, is not over yet, a senior government official said Friday, warning citizens to avoid crowding at tourist places. "The war is not over yet," Vinod Kumar Paul, who heads a federal government panel on vaccines told a news conference Friday, minutes after a video was played showing maskless people crowding at a wa-



terfall in the Himalayan state of Uttarakhand.

India is now reporting a tenth of its peak daily numbers in May. On Friday, it reported 43,393 new COVID-19 cases in the last 24 hours, according to data from the health ministry, down from more than 400,000 in May.

Kerala Thursday reported 13,772 Covid-19 cases and has seen its daily case number rise in the past three days, prompting its health minister to warn that cases would not decline if safety protocols were not followed. But health experts said the recent uptick in Kerala's numbers was not enough to point to a trend, and could be attributed to better testing and tracing facilities. "The seven-day moving average has begun to move upwards in the

No case of Lambda yet

The government Friday asserted that no case of the Lambda variant of SARS-CoV-2 has been found in India so far. Responding to a question at a press briefing, joint secretary in the health ministry, Lav Agarwal, said Indian SARS-CoV-2 Genomics Consortium (INSACOG) is closely monitoring the variant. "Lambda was the seventh variant of interest identified by the WHO (World Health Organisation) June 14 and it has been detected in 25 countries," he said.

last couple of days, but it would have to be a consistent upward trend to worry me," said Rijo John, a professor at the Rajagiri College of Social Sciences in the southern city of Kochi.

The country's vaccination drive has also slowed down, with less than a tenth of the 950 million eligible adult population fully vaccinated so far, two months after the federal government opened inoculations for all adults. India administered an average of 3.7 million doses a day this week, similar to last week.

Punjab running out of vaccines

Chandigarh: With Punjab running out of coronavirus vaccine Covishield and left with only one day's stock of Covaxin, Chief Minister Amarinder Singh today reiterated the need for enhanced supplies from the Centre, his office said. The increase in supplies was critical also because the state Friday lifted weekend and night curfews and allowed reopening of colleges, cinema halls, malls, restaurants, bars and gyms to those who have received at least one dose of Covid-19 vaccine.

42% ministers have criminal cases against them: ADR

As many as 15 new Cabinet ministers and 28 ministers of state were sworn in Wednesday, taking the strength of the council of ministers to 78

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, July 9: Of the 78 ministers in the Cabinet, 42 per cent have declared criminal cases against them with four having cases related to attempt to murder, according to a report by poll rights group ADR.

As many as 15 new cabinet ministers and 28 ministers of state were sworn in Wednesday, taking the strength of the council of ministers to 78.

Of all the ministers analysed, 33 (42 per cent) have declared criminal cases against themselves, said the Association for Democratic Reforms report citing their poll affidavits.

About 24 or 31 per cent ministers have declared serious criminal cases including cases related to murder, attempt to murder, robbery etc. Nisith Pramanik from Cooch Behar constituency who has been appointed as the Minister of State for Home Affairs has declared a case related to murder (IPC

Four ministers have declared more than ₹50 cr worth of assets. They are Jyotiraditya Scindia, Piyush Goyal, Narayan Tatu Rane and Rajeev Chandrasekhar

Section-302) against himself. At 35, he is also the youngest minister in the Cabinet.

Four ministers have declared cases related to attempt to murder (IPC Section-307). They are - John Barla, Pramanik, Pankaj Choudhary and V Muraleedharan. Out of the ministers analysed, 70 (90 per cent) are crorepatris and the average assets per minister is Rs.16.24 crore. Four ministers have declared more than Rs 50 crore worth of assets. They are Jyotiraditya Scindia, Piyush Goyal, Narayan Tatu Rane and Rajeev Chandrasekhar.

India, Russia to work together for Af's peace

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi/Moscow, July 9: India and Russia said Friday that it is important for the two countries to work together for Afghanistan's peace, and stability and security in the region.

Following his two-day trip to Russia, External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar and Russia's Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov at a joint press conference in Moscow said that the talks were as always very warm, comfortable, comprehensive and productive. The Russian Foreign Minister was in Delhi in April this year.

As per a statement issued by the Ministry of External Affairs in New Delhi, Jaishankar also had a "very good meeting" with Russia's Deputy Prime Minister Yuri Borisov Thursday.

In the press conference, Jaishankar said, "The situation in Afghanistan occupied a lot of our attention because it has a direct implication for regional security. We believe that the immediate need of the day is really a reduction in violence. If we have to see peace within Afghanistan and around Afghanistan, it's important for India and Russia to work together and ensure that much of the progress that we've seen in economic, social and democratic terms are maintained." The two sides also talked about the developments in Syria, Iran and Libya. Sharing India's view-point on the Indo-Pacific, Jaishankar said, "We support cooperation that reflects the multi-polar and rebalanced character of global politics.

DELUGE AND DEVASTATION



Villagers look on after a temporary bridge collapsed due to flood in Vellore in Tamil Nadu

PTI PHOTO

₹1 L cr agri-infra fund for APMC mandis an empty gesture: SKM



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, July 9: The Samyukt Kisan Morcha, an umbrella body of farmers' union, Friday said the Centre's decision to allow APMC mandis to avail financial support from the Rs 1 lakh crore Agriculture Infrastructure Fund is an "empty gesture".

Reference to the Rs 1 lakh crore Agriculture Infrastructure Fund is "highly misleading", it alleged, adding the aim of the three contentious Central farm laws is the collapse of the agricultural produce market committees (APMCs).

APMC markets are set up to provide market linkages and create an ecosystem of post-harvest public infrastructure open to all farmers. The Union Cabinet Thursday approved modification in the central scheme making the APMC mandis eligible to avail financial support from the Rs 1 lakh crore Agriculture Infrastructure Fund to expand the regulated markets' capacity and provide better facilities to farmers.

Union Agriculture Minister Narendra Singh Tomar has asserted that the decision to further strengthen the APMCs allays protesting farmers' fear that these mandis will be scrapped with the

implementation of three controversial agriculture laws.

However, Friday, the Samyukt Kisan Morcha said, "To begin with, referring to a Rs 1 lakh crore Agriculture Infrastructure Fund is highly misleading because there has been no allocation of even a thousand crore rupees from the government. It has merely created a new head under which loans can be accessed from banks."

The government has presented a "minor and insignificant decision", it said in a statement. "The actual financing is dependent on regular commercial banks, and India's story of banking sector mismanagement and collusion with big capitalists is well-known. The government's role is only to provide an interest subvention of a mere 3 per cent and some credit guarantee coverage," the Samyukt Kisan Morcha said.

Only Rs 208 crore was allocated for Agriculture Infrastructure Fund in the revised budget of 2020-21 and Rs 900 crore in the 2021-22 Budget, the umbrella body of farmers' unions claimed.

Farmers have been protesting in huge numbers at Delhi's borders since November 2020, demanding the repeal of the three farm laws.

Haryana, Guj set to reopen schools

AGENCIES

Haryana, July 9: With Covid-19 cases on a decline, and several states easing Covid restrictions, schools in Haryana and Gujarat are set to reopen from July 15.

The Gujarat government Friday decided to reopen schools for class 12 students and colleges for undergraduate and postgraduate students from 15 July. Only 50 per cent of students will be allowed to attend campuses.

Students can attend physical classes on a voluntary basis. Attendance will not be mandatory, as per guidelines.

As per the guidelines, the schools and colleges will have to follow strict Covid-19 guidelines and follow the standard operating principles including mandatory masks, social distancing, sanitization among others.



Meanwhile, Haryana government has decided to reopen schools for students in classes 9 to 12 from July 16 onwards.

The decision has been taken after the number of Covid-19 cases had receded in the state. In the first phase, however, only senior students will be called back on campus. For students in classes 6, 7, and 8 summer breaks will begin from July 23. For students in classes 1 to 5, the government is yet to take the final call.

Attendance will not be mandatory. Standard Covid-19 guidelines including wearing a mask, maintaining social distancing, sanitization will be mandatory, informed Haryana Education Minister Kanwar Pal.

35% of tiger ranges are outside protected areas: Report

According to the study, India faces an increasing challenge of human-wildlife conflict, which is driven by development pressures

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, July 9: Thirty-five per cent of India's tiger ranges are outside protected areas and human-animal conflict affects over 75 per cent of the world's wild cat species, according to a new report.

The study, which has been done by WWF and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) with contribution from 155 experts from 40 organisations based in 27 countries, also stated that human-wildlife conflict is the greatest threat to animals.

"Currently, 35 per cent of India's tiger range, 40 per cent of the African lion range and 70 per cent of the African and Asian elephant ranges are outside protected areas," said the report - "A future for all-The need for human-

wildlife coexistence". "Marine species, such as turtles and whales, that travel thousands of kilometres annually, are also increasingly interacting with people. With so much overlap, effective HWC (human-wildlife conflict) management becomes increasingly necessary," it said.

The report said that human-wildlife conflict - when struggles arise from people and animals coming into contact - often leads to killing of animals in self-defence or as pre-emptive or retaliatory, which can drive species to extinction.

"Marine and terrestrial protected areas cover only 9.67 per cent of the globe, and most of these protected areas are disconnected from each other. Therefore, many species depend on human-domi-



REPRESENTATIVE IMAGE

nated spaces for their survival, and shared landscapes where both humans and wildlife exist outside protected areas play an increasingly important role for the survival of key species such as large predators and herbivores," the report said.

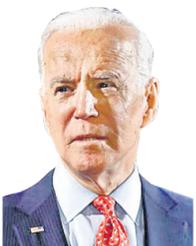
It said that many other terrestrial and marine carnivore species such as polar bears and Mediterranean monk seals and large herbivores such as elephants are also getting affected due to HWC.

"In India, data from the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change indicates that over 500 elephants were killed between 2014-2015 and 2018-2019, most related to human-elephant conflict. During the same period, 2,361 people were killed as a re-

sult of conflict with elephants," the report said. "With the world's second-largest human population along with the largest wild populations of tigers, Asian elephants, One-horned rhinos, Asiatic lions, and other globally threatened species, India faces urgent problems of human wildlife conflict that must be addressed to achieve a socially just form of conservation. India's elephants probably embody the problem the best," it said.

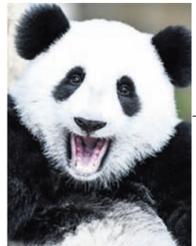
Elephants in India are restricted to just three-four per cent of their original habitat, with their remaining range plagued by deforestation, invasive species, and climate change. This is pushing elephants to seek resources outside of forests and protected areas, the report said.

international



How many more, how many more thousands of American daughters and sons are you willing to risk? I will not send another generation of Americans to war in Afghanistan, with no reasonable expectation of achieving a different outcome
JOE BIDEN | PRESIDENT, US

WILD GIANT PANDAS NO LONGER 'ENDANGERED'
The status of the wild giant pandas in China has been downgraded from "endangered" to "vulnerable" amid the country's efforts on biodiversity protection and ecological restoration, an official said



of the day quote

We've done a lot of catch up in particular over the month of June, and that's seen us now hitting the levels we need to get this job done and have everyone offered a dose by the end of the year
SCOTT MORRISON | PM, AUSTRALIA

Two weeks ago, I tweeted that our artificial intelligence models are showing the possible emergence of a fourth wave. Now there are clear early signs of a fourth wave starting
ASAD UMAR | MINISTER FOR PLANNING, PAKISTAN

Remember, this is not only about protecting ourselves -- getting vaccinated is a responsibility we all owe to each other. No jabs, no job, that is what the science tells us is safest and that is now the policy of government
VOREQE BAINMARAMA | PM, FIJI

PFIZER PUSHES FOR BOOSTER SHOT

Pfizer's Dr Mikael Dolsten said that early data from the company's booster study suggests people's antibody levels jump five to 10-fold after a third dose



the latest worrisome Coronavirus mutant. Research from multiple countries shows the Pfizer shot and other widely used Covid-19 vaccines offer strong protection against the highly contagious delta variant, which is spreading rapidly around

Washington, July 9: Pfizer is about to seek US authorization for a third dose of its Covid-19 vaccine, saying Thursday that another shot within 12 months could dramatically boost immunity and maybe help ward off

Taliban seize key Afghan border crossing with Iran

This new advance is the third border crossing the insurgents have taken in the past week, after previously seizing crossings with Tajikistan and Uzbekistan



Kabul, July 9: The Taliban Thursday seized another key Afghan border crossing, this time with Iran, according to an Afghan official and Iranian media. The seizure is part of a Taliban surge as American troops complete their pullout from Afghanistan.

It is the third border crossing the insurgents have taken in the past week, after previously seizing crossings with Tajikistan and Uzbekistan. The development came as President Joe Biden said the US military mission in Afghanistan will conclude Aug 31. The Taliban wins have caused some countries to close their consulates in the region, while Tajikistan has called up reservists to reinforce that country's southern border with Afghanistan. An Afghan official said the Taliban on Thursday took control of the Islam Qala crossing point in western Herat province. The official, who is in Herat, spoke on condition of anonymity because he was not authorized to release the

Taliban reassures Russia
A Taliban delegation in Moscow said Friday that the group controlled over 85% of territory in Afghanistan and reassured Russia it would not allow the country to be used as a platform to attack others. At a news conference in Moscow Friday, three Taliban officials sought to signal that they did not pose a threat to the wider region however. "We will take all measures so that Islamic State will not operate on Afghan territory... and our territory will never be used against our neighbours," Taliban official Shahabuddin Delawar said through a translator. information to reporters. Afghan soldiers in the border area of Islam Qala — a major transit route between Afghanistan and Iran — fled from their positions, crossing into Iran for refuge, Iranian media reported. The crossing is around 120 kilometers (75 miles) west of the city of Herat, the provincial capital. The Taliban now control roughly a third of all 421 districts and district centers in Afghanistan.

SHORT TAKES

Biden rejects Trump's proposal

New York: US President Joe Biden's administration has announced it is cancelling a proposal by his predecessor Donald Trump to limit student visas to a four-year term for scholars from India and most other countries. The DHS said that it had received about 32,000 public comments, of which 99 per cent were critical of the proposal made by the Trump administration last September and, therefore, it was withdrawing the proposed changes.

220mn doses to Africa by Unicef

United Nations: The Unicef has announced the signing of an agreement with Janssen Pharmaceutica NV to supply 220 million doses of the Johnson & Johnson single-dose vaccine against Covid-19 for all 55 member states of the African Union (AU) by the end of 2022. Some 35 million doses are to be delivered by the end of 2021, Xinhua news agency quoted the Unicef as saying in a statement Thursday. The agreement between Unicef and Janssen will help implement the Advance Purchase Commitment signed between the African Vaccine Acquisition Trust (AVAT) and Janssen in March 2021.

Tropical storm Elsa soaks NYC

New York: Fast-moving Tropical Storm Elsa hit the New York City region with torrential rains and high winds as it churned up the East Coast Friday. Maximum sustained winds from the storm peaked near 50 mph (85 kph) as it moved through New York City and Long Island, the National Hurricane Center said in an 8 am update. Wind speeds had ticked down from overnight readings as high as 78 mph (126 kph) in coastal New Jersey that appeared to be "associated with nearby tornadoes," the center reported.

Calif drought emergency

San Francisco: California Governor Gavin Newsom has decided to add more counties to the state's drought emergency declaration as a new heatwave is scorching much of the western US. Newsom Thursday declared the new emergency order for nine more counties during a press conference held in front of a drying lake in San Luis Obispo County on the Central Coast of California, making the drought official in 50 of the state's 58 counties, reports Xinhua news agency.

'RISK OF SEVERE ILLNESS, DEATH IN KIDS VERY LOW'

London, July 9: The risk of severe illness and death from SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes Covid-19, is extremely low in children and teenagers, according to a new comprehensive analyses of public health data released Friday by researchers in the UK.

However, the analyses also found that Covid-19 increases the likelihood of serious illness in the most vulnerable young people, those with pre-existing medical conditions and severe disabilities, although these risks remain low overall. The preliminary findings, published in three new pre-print studies led by University College London (UCL), the University of Bristol, University of York and the University of Liverpool, will be submitted to the UK's Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI), the Department for Health and Social Care (DHSC) and the World Health

Organisation (WHO), to inform vaccine and shielding policy for the under-18s. "These new studies show that the risks of severe illness or death from SARS-CoV-2 are extremely low in children and young people," said Professor Russell Viner from UCL Great Ormond Street Institute of Child Health and senior author on two of the studies. "Those young people at higher risk are those who are also at higher risk from any winter virus or other illness — that is, young people with multiple health conditions and complex disabilities. COVID-19 does however increase the risks for people in these groups to a higher degree than for illnesses such as influenza (seasonal flu)," he said. "Our new findings are important as they will inform shielding guidance for young people as well as decisions about the vaccination of teenagers and children, not just in the UK but internationally," he added.

NEIGHBOURHOOD FIRST India, Nepal exchange pact to increase ability in rail freight segment

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kathmandu, July 9: India and Nepal Friday signed a letter of exchange aimed at allowing market forces to come up in the rail freight segment to increase efficiency and cost-competitiveness, making another milestone in India's efforts to enhance regional connectivity under the "Neighbourhood First" policy. A virtual ceremony was held to exchange Notes Verbales and signed copies of a Letter of Exchange (LoE) between the two governments to the India-Nepal Rail Services Agreement (RSA), 2004, the Indian mission here said in a statement. The Indian side was led by Sanjay Kumar Mohanty, Member (Operations and Business Development), Ministry of Railways while the Nepalese side was led by Dinesh Bhattarai, Secretary, Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Supplies.

According to the LoE, all authorised cargo train operators, which include public and private container trains operators, automobile freight train operators, special freight train operators or any other operator authorised by the Indian Railways, will be able to utilise the Indian railway network to carry Nepal's container and other freight — both between India and Nepal or third country from Indian ports to Nepal, it said.

'Foreign hit squad killed Haiti Prez'



AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

Port-au-Prince, July 9: At least 28 people carried out the assassination of President Jovenel Moise, Haitian police said Thursday, adding that 26 of them were Colombian and two were Americans of Haitian origin. "We have arrested 15 Colombians and the two Americans of Haitian origin. Three Colombians have been killed while eight others are on the loose," national police director general Leon Charles said at a news conference. Wednesday police said four of the suspects had been killed. Charles did not explain the discrepancy. He also said the "weapons and materials used by the assailants have been recovered."

Charles spoke a day after Moise and his wife Martine were attacked by gunmen at their private residence in the capital Port-au-Prince. Moise was shot dead in the early morning attack, and his wife was wounded. She has been taken to Miami by air ambulance and authorities have said her condition is stable. The poorest country in the Americas now has no president or working parliament and two men claiming to be in charge as prime minister. Charles vowed the hunt for the other alleged assassins would continue. "We will strengthen our investigation and search techniques to intercept the other eight mercenaries," he said.

US sanctions 34 firms

AGENCE-FRANCE-PRESSE

Washington, July 9: The United States Friday announced sanctions against 34 companies and other entities involved with China's military and policy towards the Uyghur Muslim minority, and for facilitating exports to Russia and Iran. The group was sanctioned "for their involvement in, or risk of becoming involved in, activities contrary to the foreign policy and national security interests of the United States," the Commerce Department said in a statement. "We will continue to aggressively use export controls to hold governments, companies, and individuals accountable for attempting

- 14 CHINA BASED COMPANIES OVER CRIMES IN XINJIANG
- 5 COMPANIES ASSISTING CHINA TO MODERNISE ITS MILITARY
- 8 COMPANIES FOR EXPORTING US TECHNOLOGY TO IRAN
- 7 COMPANIES FOR INVOLVEMENT WITH RUSSIA'S MILITARY

to access US-origin items for subversive activities in countries like China, Iran, and Russia," Commerce Secretary Gina Raimondo said.



Soldiers driving a jeep on the Champs Elysees avenue during a rehearsal for the Bastille Day parade in Paris Friday, July 9, 2021

African-American spelling bee champ makes history with flair

MACNOLIA COX, WHO IN 1936 BECAME THE FIRST BLACK FINALIST AT THE BEE AND WASN'T ALLOWED TO STAY IN THE SAME HOTEL AS THE REST OF THE SPELLERS

ASSOCIATED PRESS



Lake Buena Vista, July 9: Zaila Avant-garde understood the significance of what she was doing as she stood on the Scripps National Spelling Bee stage, peppering pro-nouncer Jacques Bailly with questions about Greek and Latin roots. Zaila knew she would be the first African American winner of the bee. She knew Black kids around the country were watching Thursday night's ESPN2 telecast, waiting to be inspired and hoping

to follow in the footsteps of someone who looked like them. But she never let the moment become too big for her, and when she heard what turned out to be her winning word — "Murraya," a genus of tropical Asiatic and Australian trees — she beamed with confidence. It was over. Declared the champion, Zaila jumped and twirled with joy, only flinching in surprise when confetti was shot onto the stage. "I was pretty relaxed on the subject of Murraya and pretty much any other word I got," Zaila said. The only previous Black champion was also the only international winner: Jody-Anne Maxwell of Jamaica in 1998. The bee, however, has still been a showcase for spellers of color over the past two

decades, with kids of South Asian descent dominating the competition. Zaila's win breaks a streak of at least one Indian-American champion every year since 2008. Zaila has other priorities, which perhaps explains how she came to dominate this year's bee. The 14-year-old from Harvey, Louisiana, is a basketball prodigy who owns three Guinness world records for dribbling multiple balls simultaneously and hopes to one day play in the WNBA or even coach in the NBA. She described spelling as a side hobby, even though she routinely practiced for seven hours a day. Many of top Scripps spellers start competing as young as kindergarten. Zaila only started a few years ago, after her father, Jawara Spacetime, watched the bee on TV

and realized his daughter's affinity for doing complicated math in her head could translate well to spelling. She progressed quickly enough to make it to nationals in 2019 but bowed out in the preliminary rounds. She will take home more than \$50,000 in cash and prizes. The runner-up was Chaitra Thummala, a 12-year-old from Frisco, Texas, and another student of Shafer-Ray. She has two years of eligibility remaining and instantly becomes one of next year's favorites. Bhavana Madini, a 13-year-old from Plainview, New York, finished third and also could be back. "Zaila deserved it. She's always been better than me," Chaitra said. "I could review a lot more words. I could get a stronger work ethic."

of the day quote

We are committed to strengthen the skilling efforts of the ministry and equipping the youth with necessary skills to prepare them for Future of Work, and creating linkages between skilling and employment

DHARMENDRA PRADHAN
UNION EDUCATION MINISTER

We have prepared a Cabinet note for approval for making roadside townships, smart cities, logistic parks, industrial clusters

NITIN GADKARI
UNION TRANSPORT MINISTER

India is taking right fiscal policy measures to get better environmental outcomes

NIRMALA SITHARAMAN
UNION FINANCE MINISTER

SHORT TAKES

SpiceJet to launch 42 new flights

New Delhi: Airline major SpiceJet will launch 42 new flights on its domestic and international network. Accordingly, the airline is scheduled to commence their operations from July 10, 2021. The new flights will enhance connectivity between metro and non-metro cities. Besides, under the air bubble agreement, SpiceJet will launch international flights on Kochi-Male-Kochi and Mumbai-Male-Mumbai routes. "As travel demand picks up and leisure travelers step out for those much-awaited short breaks, we are ensuring that multiple convenient flight options are available to some of the most sought after holiday destinations like Male. We see a great opportunity in connecting unserved markets to more cities with direct flights on our network," said Shilpa Bhatia, Chief Commercial Officer, SpiceJet.

India, UK hold 'The Dialogue'

New Delhi: India and the UK held the inaugural meeting of the India-UK Financial Markets Dialogue ('The Dialogue') virtually. It was established at the 10th Economic and Financial Dialogue (EFD) in October 2020 to deepen bilateral ties in the financial sector. The Dialogue was led by senior officials from the Indian side by the Ministry of Finance and from the UK, Treasury, with participation from Indian and UK independent regulatory agencies, including the Reserve Bank of India, the Securities and Exchange Board of India, International Financial Services Centre Authority, Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India, the Bank of England, and the Financial Conduct Authority.

IMF backs new SDR allocation

Geneva: The executive board of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) has approved a proposal for a new general Special Drawing Rights (SDR) allocation of \$650 billion, the largest allocation in the organisation's history, to help recovery from the Covid-19 pandemic, IMF Managing Director Kristalina Georgieva said Friday. "I will now present the new SDR allocation proposal to the IMF's Board of Governors for their consideration and approval. If approved, we expect the SDR allocation to be completed by the end of August," Georgieva said in a statement. "This is a shot in the arm for the world. The SDR allocation will boost the liquidity and reserves of all our member countries, build confidence, and foster the resilience and stability of the global economy," she said.



The Chinese side will take all necessary measures to safeguard the legitimate rights and interests of Chinese companies and rejects US attempts to interfere in China's internal affairs

WANG WENBIN
CHINESE FOREIGN MINISTRY SPOKESMAN

TCS TO HIRE 40,000 FRESHERS FROM CAMPUSES IN FY22

Largest software exporter TCS will be hiring more than 40,000 freshers from campuses in the country in the financial year 2021-22, a top executive said Friday



G20 takes up plan to deter cross-border tax dodging

THE DEAL AIMS TO DISCOURAGE THE USE OF OFTEN-COMPLEX ACCOUNTING SCHEMES TO MOVE PROFITS TO WHERE THE LEAST TAX IS DUE

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Washington, July 9: Finance Ministers from the Group of 20 countries will push for agreement on proposals backed by US President Joe Biden to deter tax dodging by multinational companies.

While approval of the sweeping tax package is likely at the G-20 meeting Friday and Saturday in Venice, the proposals still face a key hurdle in the US Congress, where Republicans have vowed to oppose it.

Biden's proposal for a 15 per cent global corporate minimum tax resulted in a breakthrough in stalled international tax talks. An agreement was reached July 1 among 131 countries in negotiations convened by the Paris-based Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development.

The deal aims to discourage the use of often-complex accounting schemes to move profits to where the least tax is due.

The OECD deal asks countries where companies are headquartered to enact the minimum tax so that their companies would pay tax at home even if they shift profits to subsidiaries in low-rate countries overseas, so-called tax havens. Countries have lowered their tax rates to attract the revenue, moves described by US Treasury Secretary



Participants attend the G20 high-level tax symposium during the G20 Finance Ministers and central bank governors meeting in Venice, Friday. REUTERS PHOTO

Janet Yellen as a global race to the bottom that the proposal could stop.

Another part of the tax package would let countries tax a portion of the profits of large and profitable companies that have no physical presence but make significant amounts of money there, such as through digital businesses like online retailing and advertising.

Endorsement of that deal by the G-20 Finance Ministers is likely since all 20 member countries representing more than 80 per cent of the global economy signed the deal at the OECD.

A thumbs-up would mean more technical work at the OECD, followed by a bid for final approval at a Group of 20 leaders' summit October 30-31 in Rome hosted by Italy, which has the rotating G-20 chair.

Adam Posen, president of the Peterson Institute for International Economics, said it was an opportunity the US and the world should not miss. Asked how he would describe the deal to non-economists, he said, right now we got a bunch of countries ripping us off by essentially giving kickbacks to many American big multinationals, to pay their taxes there instead of in

THE DEAL AIMS TO DISCOURAGE THE USE OF OFTEN-COMPLEX ACCOUNTING SCHEMES TO MOVE PROFITS TO WHERE THE LEAST TAX IS DUE

THE DEAL ASKS COUNTRIES WHERE COMPANIES ARE HEADQUARTERED TO ENACT THE MINIMUM TAX SO THAT THEIR COMPANIES WOULD PAY TAX AT HOME EVEN IF THEY SHIFT PROFITS TO SO-CALLED TAX HAVENS

the US... if we make this deal we can stop it cold, so let's stop this kick-back game that some of these countries are playing.

But there are political issues to be cleared up. For one, there is friction over the EU's plans to impose what it calls a digital levy to help pay for pandemic recovery spending. The OECD deal commits countries to drop or refrain from their own digital services taxes largely aimed at US tech companies such as Google and Amazon a key demand from the Biden administration, which considers such unilateral taxes to be unfair trade practices.

European officials have downplayed concerns, saying their digital tax will not clash with the OECD agreement. US officials are not convinced; the EU will not unveil the plan until later this month and it's not clear what's in it.

NSE, BSE announce steps for investors' protection

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Mumbai, July 9: The National Stock Exchange and the Bombay Stock Exchange have come up with guidelines to be followed in case a company goes into bankruptcy.

This step has been taken to caution investors and provide all required information about the insolvency process of the bankrupt companies to them.

In separate statements, both the exchanges said. "In the recent past, we have come across instances where the approved resolution plan provides for delisting of the company or write off/cancellation/extinguishment of existing equity shares without any payout/consideration to the existing shareholders."

However, it is observed that there is a considerable time lag between the pronouncement of oral order by the NCLT and the final written order by the NCLT.



Companies generally hold on to the information and do not make any timely disclosure to the stock exchanges until receipt of a written copy of the order. "By this time, the information may be available to a select group of people and may create information asymmetry and confusion in the market."

The bourses said that they would issue a detailed guidance note to CIRP companies and the Resolution Professional (RP) on compliance and disclosure requirements as per the SEBI LODR Regulations, which

will be uploaded on the exchange website, and an email shall be sent to all the companies which are under CIRP informing them about the guidance note.

The guidance note provides that the resolution professional has to comply with SEBI LODR Regulations and in compliance, shall disclose the fact of approval of resolution plan on oral pronouncement, or otherwise of the order, on immediate basis and not later than 30 minutes.

Additionally, the resolution professional shall inform through the exchange platform any impact on the existing holders or investors of listed securities, on areas such as status of listing, the value of holding of existing holders, write off or cancellation or extinguishment of existing equity shares or preference shares or debentures, etc, without any payment to such holders, where applicable.

Zomato invests \$100mn in Grofers

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, July 9: Food ordering platform Zomato, whose ₹9,375 crore IPO opens July 14, is planning to launch a grocery section on its app soon, a senior company official said. The company recently invested \$100 million (around ₹745 crore) for acquiring a minority stake in grocery delivery platform Grofers.

"(Grocery) is a large opportunity. The online grocery is nascent right now but is growing rapidly not just in India but across the world..."

"We are actively experimenting in that space and recently invested \$100 million for a minority stake in Grofers, with the idea of getting more exposure to that space and building our strategies and plan around that business," Zomato CFO Akshant Goyal said.

"We are very soon launching online grocery on the Zomato app and that will go live soon, and with that we will foray into the space," he added.



Respite from frequent fuel price hike likely soon

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, July 9: Oil marketing companies kept the retail price of petrol and diesel unchanged Friday to analyse the global oil price movement before making further revisions.

After crossing \$77 a barrel, global crude prices have softened a bit with differences surfacing in oil cartel OPEC over continuation of production cuts.

With price pause Friday, petrol continues to be priced at ₹100.56 a litre and diesel 89.62 a litre in the national capital.

Across the country as well the fuel prices remained unchanged Friday. Fuel prices were revised upwards on previous two days taking the retail price of petrol over the century mark all across the country.

Starting from a price line of ₹90.40 a litre May 1, petrol is now



priced at ₹100.56 a litre in the national capital, rising by a sharp ₹10.16 per litre in last 69 days. Similarly, diesel price in the capital also rose by ₹8.89 per litre in past

two months to reach ₹89.62 a litre in the national capital.

With the price rise over past two months, fuel rates have been revised upwards in 37 out of 70 days between May, June and July upto now to take retail rates touch new highs across the country.

Consumers can now only expect that any further raise in fuel price is checked as OMCs start cutting the retail price of petrol and diesel over next few days to provide relief.

DOES ELON MUSK CONTROL TESLA INC OR DOES TESLA CONTROL ELON MUSK?

Musk trial asks the \$2bln question: Who controls Tesla?

REUTERS

Delaware, July 9: Does Elon Musk control Tesla Inc or does Tesla control Elon Musk?

More than \$2 billion hinges on that question as a trial kicks off Monday. Shareholders allege that Musk used his control of Tesla to force the company in 2016 to rescue SolarCity, saving the solar panel maker - and Musk's investment in the company - from bankruptcy.

The union pension funds and asset managers leading the case want Musk to repay to Tesla the cost of the \$2.6 billion deal and to disgorge the profits on his SolarCity stock. If they win, it would be one of the largest judgments against an individual.

The two-week trial in the Court

of Chancery in Wilmington, Delaware, will boil down to whether Musk, who owned about 22% of Tesla at the time of the deal, is that rare controlling stockholder who does not hold a majority stake.

"I think it's going to be very hard for the court to ignore the reality that Elon Musk is Elon Musk and his relationship with Tesla," said Ann Lipton, a professor at Tulane University Law School.

She said the case might present an unusual situation given Musk's celebrity status, his personal ties to Tesla board members and those board members' financial ties to SolarCity. "Put it all together and it might be enough to count as a controlling shareholder," she said.

Few executives dominate their company's image as much Musk,



Tesla Inc CEO Elon Musk walks next to a screen showing an image of Tesla Model 3 car during an opening ceremony for Tesla China-made Model Y program in Shanghai, China, January 7, 2020. REUTERS PHOTO

known for taunting regulators, battling naysayers and personally engaging with his 57 million Twitter

followers. "We are highly dependent on the services of Elon Musk, Technoking of Tesla and our Chief

Executive Officer," said Tesla's 2020 annual report.

Plaintiffs allege that Musk drove the negotiations and even pushed Tesla's board to raise, not lower, the price for SolarCity.

A higher price benefited Musk, who was the largest shareholder of SolarCity, with a stake of about 22%, as well as four members of Tesla's board, who directly or indirectly owned SolarCity stock, according to court records.

Board members settled allegations against them last year for \$60 million and did not admit to any fault. Plaintiffs also allege the deal benefited two of Musk's cousins who founded SolarCity, saving a company that was rapidly running low on cash. Musk has said he was "fully recused" from board nego-

tiations and that shareholders voted to approve the deal because it was central to his "Master Plan, Part Deux" that aims to integrate sustainable solar energy with electric self-driving cars.

He has said that what plaintiffs see as evidence of control is little more than strong management.

"Taken to its natural conclusion, virtually all 'hands-on' and 'inspirational' CEOs with minority stock ownership would be deemed controllers," Musk's lawyers wrote in a court filing.

If Vice Chancellor Joseph Slights determines Musk was a controlling shareholder, it will fall to Musk to prove the SolarCity deal met the high bar of the "entire fairness" standard, which examines process and price, said legal experts.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Noble gesture
London: England footballers have said they will donate a major chunk of their prize money from the Euro 2020 championships to the National Health Service (NHS) heroes. The England team are expected to get 9.6 million pounds if they win the final, plus there will be match fees and bonuses for the players. Sources said that the donation will not be less than five million pounds. The donation will be made to NHS charities after the football tournament ends Sunday. The team shared a statement to this effect Friday.

Wishing luck
New Delhi: Prime Minister Narendra Modi took stock Friday of India's Olympic preparations and also announced a virtual interaction with the country's Tokyo-bound sportspersons July 13. It will happen three days before the first batch departs for the Japanese capital. "Reviewed preparations for facilitation of India's contingent at @Tokyo2020. Discussed the logistical details, their vaccination status, the multi-disciplinary support being given," Modi tweeted. "On behalf of 130 crore Indians, I would be interacting with the Olympics bound athletes 13th July to wish them luck. Let us all #Cheer4India," he added.

Kyrgios pulls out
Sydney: Australian tennis player Nick Kyrgios has pulled out of the Tokyo Olympic Games, citing abdominal injury and absence of fans at venues. "It's a decision I didn't take lightly," Kyrgios tweeted. "It has been my dream to represent Australia at the Olympics and I know I may never get that opportunity again. But I also know myself. The thought of playing in front of empty stadiums just doesn't sit right with me. It never has," he said. Kyrgios confirmed that out of absence of spectators, the abdominal injury that forced him to retire mid-way in his third-round match at Wimbledon last week was also a reason for his withdrawal.

Contracts extended
Madrid: Atlético Madrid have extended the contracts of coach Diego Simeone and his staff until the end of the 2024 season, the club said Friday. The extensions come after Atlético won their first Spanish league title since 2014. The contracts had been set to expire next June. "Pride. Responsibility. Challenges. Joy," Simeone said on Twitter. "Happy to continue at Atlético de Madrid," he added. Someone took over Atlético in December 2011 and is the coach with the most consecutive seasons in charge of a Spanish league club. The Argentine is Atlético's most successful coach with eight titles and 316 victories.

Poor display
Silvis (Illinois): Anirban Lahiri shot an even par 71 in the first round of the John Deere Classic but with scores going really well, the Indian golfer was placed way down at tied 102nd on the leaderboard. Lahiri, had three birdies and one birdie on his first nine, the front stretch of the TPC Deere Run. However, he had a bad second nine with three bogeys against one birdie. Chesson Hadley and Sebastián Muñoz were tied for the lead at 8-under with Camilo Villegas, Hank Lebioda, and Chez Reavie tied for 3rd at 7-under.

ICC sacks Sawhney
New Delhi: Exactly four months after suspending its CEO Manu Sawhney, the International Cricket Council (ICC) has sacked him, the world body said in a terse 36-word statement issued late Thursday night. "The ICC announced that chief executive Manu Sawhney will leave the organisation with immediate effect. Geoff Allardice will continue as acting CEO supported by the 'leadership team' working closely with the ICC Board," said the statement. Sawhney was suspended March 9. He has five days to appeal to the same 16-member ICC Executive Board that Thursday decided to sack him.

Not just 1 more final for MESSI



ARGENTINE LEGEND LOOKS TO END TROPHY DROUGHT FOR COUNTRY

- Argentina have won the Copa title 14 times in comparison to Brazil's nine
- Messi is on 76 goals, one shy of Pele's South American record of 77 goals



- Messi has played 4 finals while donning national colours, yet to win a major trophy
- At 34, last chance for Messi to win the Copa America

AGENCIES

Rio de Janeiro, July 9: Many are perceiving the Copa America final between Brazil and Argentina to be a personal contest between two former Barcelona mates - Neymar and Lionel Messi. However, that may not be true as this summit clash may well turn out to be a battle within for Lionel Messi.

Since wearing the Argentina colours, the six-time Balon d'Or winner has not won anything with the national side. The closest Messi came to doing that was in the 2014 World Cup final and the 2007, 2015 and 2016 Copa America finals. However, on all occasions he finished second best.

At 34, this is the probably best chance of Messi to win something major with Argentina. Next year Messi will certainly have a go at the World Cup, but that will be a tournament of far more difficult propositions than the Copa. And one can be sure that the ongoing Copa America and the 2022 Qatar World Cup will be Messi's swansong for Argentina.

Messi and Neymar also have a chance to go past the respective icons of both their countries - Diego Maradona and Pele. In spite of winning the World Cup (Pele thrice and Maradona once), they have never been on the winner's podium in the Copa America. Saturday will be the chance to change all that for Neymar and Messi. At 29, Neymar still has age on his side... but for Messi, this indeed is a golden opportunity to break the hoodoo.

The players themselves, though, see the bigger challenge Saturday at the Maracana Stadium here. It will be between one of the toughest defensive lines to break in world soccer and the protection around one of the best players in history. Neymar's Brazil line-up have conceded only two goals in six matches at the Copa America. Veteran Thiago Silva, Marquinhos and Eder Militao are taking shifts as starters without putting the Selecao under too much risk. Defensive midfielders Casemiro and Fred are relentless. Right-back Danilo and left-back Renan Lodi are keen to defend than

go running up front. These players initially criticised the South American soccer federation for shifting the continental tournament to Brazil in emergency mode. Before the final against Messi's Argentina, they've changed their narrative to winning at all costs and also keeping a clean sheet.

"The zone where Messi plays is where I play, we face each other a lot during matches," Casemiro told a news conference Thursday. "I can't mark any player by myself, you need teammates. And you don't mark only one player. It starts with Neymar, Richardson and it ends in the goalkeeper - a team play with 11, defend with 11 and attack with 11," he added.

Messi has scored four goals and provided five assists during this edition of Copa America. Before the tournament, he said it was his dream to win his first major title with Argentina. He is playing Barcelona-style for his national team, scoring from free-kicks, dazzling adversaries with frequent runs despite his age and giving

Koeman confident about retaining Leo

AGENCIES

Madrid, July 9: FC Barcelona coach Ronald Koeman said Friday he is confident Lionel Messi will sign a new contract with the club. The Argentine is technically no longer a Barcelona player after his last contract expired at the end of June. So far, he has not put pen to paper on a new deal and is free to accept offers from elsewhere.

Barca president, Joan Laporta is continuing to negotiate with Messi and his representatives, but the club also have to ensure that the player's wages don't breach the salary cap imposed by La Liga and reaching a compromise with the player has so far proved difficult.

When asked about Messi's future during a charity golf tournament, the 'Koeman Cup' he is hosting, the manager insisted that he remained optimistic that Messi would be a Barcelona player for the next season. "It's right to be worried when things are not all going well, but I have confidence in the president to solve this question," commented Koeman. "It is important for the club and La Liga that the best player in the world stays. E Laporta has told me to remain calm and that they are working on the question and we are confident that he (Messi) will be here for several more years," Koeman added.



MANPREET HARPS ON CONSISTENCY

Skipper confident of ending India's medal drought

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, July 9: Indian men's team hockey captain Manpreet Singh understood the meaning of challenges quite early in life as his mother single-handedly struggled to bring him up. Manpreet, now a veteran of two Olympics, gears up for another challenge in life and that is to end India's medal drought in the Olympics. Since 1980 India have gone medal-less in hockey and that is indeed a sorry tale of affairs for the eight-time gold winners.

An Olympic veteran at 29, Manpreet, along with champion boxer MC Mary Kom, will be India's flag-bearer in the Olympics opening ceremony. He is the first hockey player after Pargat Singh (1996) to be given the honour.

"It's a big privilege for me to have been given that honour (flag-bearer). I am the sixth hockey player who has got this opportunity. Pargat Singh was the first hockey player from my village (Mithapur in Punjab) to lead the Indian contingent in 1996. I consider myself lucky to have got the chance," Manpreet said.

The ace midfielder knows that it won't be easy to clinch India's ninth Olympic gold and first since the 1980 Moscow Games. But he believes a concerted team effort can achieve even the impossible.

"Our target is to finish on the podium and my target can't be dif-

ferent from the team because hockey is a team game. I can't achieve anything alone," Manpreet asserted. "But to achieve that we have to keep our focus intact. We need to give importance to every team, can't underestimate any," Manpreet added.

World No 4 India are clubbed in Group A alongside current champions Argentina, mighty Australia, hosts Japan, New Zealand and Spain. Manpreet said a sound league campaign would be key to India's success in Tokyo.

"...Our focus is on every single match. If we perform well, results will definitely come our way. So we need to focus on our basics. League stage will be very important," Manpreet pointed out. "We have worked a lot on our attack, penalty corners because the coach was of the feeling that we create a lot of chances inside the box but don't get the desired outcome. So if we use the chances that come our way, we will definitely be successful," he added.

Manpreet also stated that Covid-19 protocols in Tokyo won't affect the team. "We don't know what sort of protocols and rules will be there in Tokyo. But if we speak about our group, we have been following the same Covid-19 protocols for the last one-and-half years. So I don't think we will have too many issues in following the rules in Tokyo," he signed off.

I WANT TO WIN A MEDAL FOR MY MOTHER. SHE IS MY GREATEST INSPIRATION. WITHOUT HER, I WOULDN'T BE WHERE I AM TODAY
MANPREET SINGH

Sindhu hopeful of repeat act

Indian shuttlers face tough opponents in quarters

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, July 9: Indian sports aficionados are pinning their hopes of PV Sindhu winning a medal at the Tokyo Olympics. However, it looks unlikely this time around as Sindhu in the recent past has not been able to stamp her class in the various tournaments she has played in. However, Sindhu is still optimistic about winning a medal and said Friday that she has got a favourable draw. However, she insisted that she has to be on top of her game since no match will be easy at the Olympic level.

Reigning World Champion and Rio Games silver medallist, Sindhu has been drawn with Hong Kong's Cheung Ngan Yi (ranked 34th) and Israel's Ksenia Polikarpova (ranked 58th) in Group J of the women's singles event.

"It's a good draw in the group stage. The Hong Kong girl plays well and it's going to be a good match," Sindhu, who is currently ranked seventh in the world, said in a release issued by Badminton Association of India (BAI).

"Everybody is going to be in top form, I hope I do well. Every game is important so I will take match by match. This is Olympics and it is not going to be easy, each point is very

You have to remain positive and I am trying to do that. It's not going to be easy, every point will be important in the Olympics
PV SINDHU

important," said the sixth seed. Sindhu has an all-win record against her group stage opponents Ngan Yi and Polikarpova in the five and two encounters she has played against them respectively. However, if Sindhu advances to the quarterfinals she is likely to face former World No 1 Akane Yamaguchi. The Indian shuttler has lost to her on more than one occasion.

In men's singles, World No 15 B Sai Praneeth has been placed in Group D alongside World No 29 Mark Caljouw of the Netherlands and World No 47 Israeli shuttler Misha Zilberman.

"It's a mixed draw, not so tough and not so easy. I have to be 100 per cent to win all matches and hopefully it will be a good outcome for me," World Championships bronze medallist Praneeth said.

If Praneeth advances to the quarters he is likely to face top seed and home favourite Kento Momota, a player he hasn't been able to beat in his career.

Cool cat of Indian shooting

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, July 9: Rahi Sarnobat's relaxed demeanour and her ability to withstand the most nerve-wracking situations is what sets her apart from many of her compatriots and rival competitors.

The scene is from the 2018 Asian Games in Palembang (Indonesia), where despite the air-conditioners running full blast, spectators at the arena were left sweating by the intensity of the competition. India's young Manu Bhaker had just wilted under pressure in the 25m pistol event finishing sixth, but Rahi, then 27, was smashing one target after another with pin-point accuracy to win her maiden Asian Games gold.

Celebrations over; the Kolhapur



shooter reached out to her German coach of Mongolian origin, Munkhbayer Dorjsuren - a two-time World Champion - and hugged her with glee.

Very few knew the struggle Rahi had to go through before glory. She

was suffering from an injured elbow since 2014. After a long steroid therapy and a laparoscopic surgery in 2016 Rahi returned to the Asian Games in 2018 and achieved glory.

As the 30-year-old Rahi aims at Olympic glory in Tokyo, she is once again hitting top form, having clinched gold in the ISSF World Cup held recently in the Croatian city of Osijek. She is once again motivated and her driving force is the same German coach, Munkhbayer.

Rahi had silently walked out of the 2018 Asian Games shooting arena with her equipment bag and a fat book in hand. If she attains glory in Tokyo, India will have another shooting icon, but Rahi's 'philosophy' will remain the same - a steely resolve and an unflinching temperament.

Covid scare: SL series rescheduled

AGENCIES

New Delhi, July 9: India's white ball away series against Sri Lanka has been rescheduled as the hosts have been hit hard by the Covid-19 virus. After batting coach Grant Flower had tested positive Thursday for the virus, it was the turn of analyst GT Niroshan to be infected. Sri Lanka Cricket (SLC) said in a statement that Niroshan has tested positive for Covid-19 and has been put in isolation.

The team led by Shikhar Dhawan was scheduled to open their three-game ODI campaign with the first being played July 13. However, now to enforce protocols in a proper manner, the ODI series will start July 17 with the other two games being played July 19 and 21. Similarly the dates of the T20 series have also been changed. The matches will now be played July 24, 25, 27. All the games will be played at the Sri Lankan capital Colombo. "Yes, the series will now start

from 17th of July instead of 13th. The decision was taken in consultation with SLC keeping the safety and security of players in mind," a senior BCCI official said, confirming the development.

Earlier in the day SLC confirmed that other than Niroshan all other members of the squad had tested negative. "Niroshan was found to be positive, following a PCR test carried out among the national players, coaches, and support staff yesterday (Thursday)."

Djokovic sets up Matteo date

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Wimbledon, July 9: TTop seed Novak Djokovic remained on course for yet another Wimbledon triumph with a 7-6 (7-3), 7-5, 7-5 win over Denis Shapovalov here Friday. He will meet No. 7 seeded Matteo Berrettini who overcame No. 14 seed, Hubert Hurkacz 6-3, 6-0, 6-7 (3-7), 6-4 in an earlier semifinal played on the day.

Djokovic played the crucial points well against Shapovalov and it was this ability which helped the Serb win the match in straight sets. Shapovalov had 12 breakpoints in the match against Djokovic, but failed to convert a single one.

Djokovic on the other hand got the crucial break of serve in the 11th game of the third set and then sealed the match in the next game with an ace on his first match point.

Earlier cries of "Vai!" (Go!), "Forza!" (Let's go!) and even "Andiamo, amore mio!" (Let's go, my love!) rang through Centre Court as Berrettini became Italy's first Grand Slam finalist in 45 years. With booming serves delivering 22 aces, and powerful forehands helping compile a total of 60 winners, Berrettini used an 11-game streak in the first and second sets to win the match without any major problem.

"I have no words. Really. Just, 'Thanks'. And I need, I think, a couple of hours to understand what happened," Berrettini told the capacity crowd after the match.