



DELAYED DEBUT

Kangana Ranaut is all set to make her OTT debut in an adaptation of American TV series 'Temptation Island'

LEISURE P2



CRUCIAL GAIN

Taliban claim they have captured the strategic border crossing of Spin Boldak separating Afghan from Pak

INTERNATIONAL P10



NEW ASSIGNMENT

Former India opener and top run-getter in domestic cricket, Wasim Jaffer appointed chief coach of Odisha

SPORTS P12



GUNNING FOR GLORY: Cyclists vie for places as they negotiate a steep rise Wednesday during the 17th stage of Tour de France in which the competitors completed a 178.4km tough journey from Muret to Saint-Lary-Soulan

Huge quantity of drugs seized, 5 dealers arrested

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 14: Police seized Wednesday 550 gm of brown sugar and ₹34 lakh in cash from a house in this city, a senior officer informed. Two persons including a woman were arrested in this connection, Commissioner of Police (CP) Soumendra Priyadarshi told reporters. He said the value of the seized brown sugar is ₹55 lakh. This is the first time that such a large quantity of heroin has been seized in the Odisha capital, Priyadarshi informed.

Following a tip-off, the narcotics wing of the Commissionerate of Police along with the personnel of Sahid Nagar police station raided a house at Kesura and seized the brown sugar packets and ₹34,80,000 in cash. However, the arrested woman's husband managed to give the police a slip. Police said that the husband of the woman is a notorious drugs peddler in the area and a manhunt has been launched to nab him.

The CP said that preliminary investigation has revealed that the arrested duo and the absconding man are linked to a racket in Balasore district's Jaleswar locality.

Priyadarshi informed that the police will intensify investigation and raids under the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (NDPS) Act. He said the investigation will also include the financial aspects of the drug trade in the state.

In another separate development police also seized a huge cache of cannabis worth ₹5,00,000 which was being smuggled in a car in Tamando area in the city. The cannabis was hidden in the dicky of the car. Three persons travelling in the vehicle have been arrested, police said. During interrogation, it was revealed that the contraband item was being smuggled from Phulbani to Salia Sahi Basti locality in this city.

Police have taken serious note of the financial trail of the syndicate during the probe of the case filed under the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (NDPS) Act, an official said.

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RELIEF FOR CANCER PATIENTS Naveen launches free MRI, CT scan services

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 14: Odisha Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik launched Wednesday free MRI and CT scan services for cancer patients at the Acharya Harihar Post Graduate Institute of Cancer (AH-PGIC) in Cuttack. It will certainly help those patients who cannot afford high-end treatment facilities. Cancer patients are usually charged ₹2,500 to ₹5,000 for availing of such services.

While launching the services virtually the Chief Minister said that in the next three years the state government will develop adequate cancer care centres. Then people will not have to visit other states for treatment of the

dreaded disease.

People needing to avail free MRI and CT scan facilities earlier had the option of either going to the SCB Medical College and Hospital in Cuttack or Ciptial Hospital here. However, with the opening of the new facilities at the AHPGIC, patients will now get to avail of the free services at another hospital also.

Patnaik also said that the proposed Bargharh Cancer Hospital would also soon be operational to facilitate treatment of people in Western Odisha. The Odisha CM also talked about improving facilities like chemo and radio therapy at district level hospitals. The CM said this would also help in treating cancer-stricken patients.



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Just imagine you there... amidst thousands of visitors... during a deadly pandemic... without mask...

Cong slams Centre over fuel price hike

LEFT PARTIES CALL FOR 6-HOUR BANDH TODAY ACROSS ODISHA

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 14: Congress workers in the state Capital took to the streets Wednesday to protest against the steep hike in fuel and LPG prices. They blamed the Centre for increasing the misery of the people during the pandemic with the almost-daily increase in petrol and diesel rates. Women members of the party also joined in the demonstrations.

Several women leaders of the party were seen demonstrating on the road near the Congress Bhawan here with LPG cylinders to express the plight of housewives and the middle class who have been the most severely affected by the exorbitant hikes.

Odisha Pradesh Congress Committee (OPCC) president Niranjan Patnaik and leaders like Suresh Routray with a large number of party workers took out a cycle rally from Ram Mandir square to the Congress Bhawan near Master Canteen square. Niranjan incidentally used an electric bicycle during the rally.

"The people of Odisha have been suffering terribly and their misery has been compounded by the sharp increase in prices of fuel, including LPG. It seems that the Centre is keen to help the rich and is not thinking about the poor. This is certainly not a government of the poor," Niranjan said.

Routray also attacked the BJP government at the Centre for the



Congress women workers protest against the rise in LPG prices

hike in petrol, diesel and cooking gas prices. "We all have come together today to protest against the constant rise in fuel prices by the Union government. Either the PM should reduce the burden implemented due to the hike in fuel prices, or quit from his position," Routray asserted.

The Congress will also support the six-hour bandh called Thursday by the Left parties in Odisha to protest against the fuel price hike. The Left parties have called for a bandh from 6.00am to 12 noon.

Meanwhile Special Secretary (Home department), Santosh Bala in a letter to collectors and district magistrates spelled out measures to be taken during the Odisha bandh which include keeping all essential services functional. Officials said it was apprehended that protestors may close down business and other important establishments.

BJP FLAYS STATE OVER POWER RATES

BHUBANESWAR: BJP workers and leaders Wednesday protested in the city against the rise in power tariff in the state. They blamed the BJP-led government for increase in electricity rates. "We have been demanding roll back of increased electricity tariff but in vain. The Odisha government has even failed to write a letter in this regard to the Odisha Electricity Regulatory Commission (OERC) which is increasing the rates at their own whims and fancies," said Babu Singh, president of BJP's Bhubaneswar unit.

MORE P4

Petrol prices have already crossed the century mark in a number of cities in Odisha including Bhubaneswar. Diesel rates are also nearing the ₹100-per-litre mark in most of the states.

SC to look into sedition law again

PLEA SAYS RULE RESTRICTS FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION

AGENCIES

New Delhi, July 14: The Supreme Court agreed Thursday to examine a fresh plea by a former army officer challenging the Constitutional validity of the sedition law on the ground that it causes 'chilling effect' on speech and is an unreasonable restriction on free expression, a fundamental right. A bench comprising Chief Justice NV Ramana, AS Bopanna and Hrishikesh Roy directed the petitioner to serve a copy of the plea to the Attorney General KK Venugopal.

The plea, filed by Major-General SG Vombakere (Retd) submitted that Section 124-A of the Indian Penal Code (IPC), which deals with the offence of sedition, is wholly unconstitutional and should be 'un equivocally and unambiguously struck down'.

"The petitioner contends that a statute criminalising expression based on unconstitutionally vague definitions of 'disaffection towards Government' etc is an unreasonable restriction on the fundamental right to free expression guaranteed under Article 19(1)(a) and causes constitutionally impermissible 'Chilling Effect' on speech," the plea said. The

11% DA BOOST FOR CENTRAL GOVT WORKERS

AGENCIES

New Delhi, July 14: The Union Cabinet decided Wednesday to restore Dearness Allowance (DA) and Dearness Relief (DR) for central government employees and pensioners from July 1, 2021. In another significant development the rate of allowance was increased to 28 per cent from the existing 17 per cent. The increase in the DA and DR will impose an additional annual burden of ₹34,401 crore on the exchequer. This information was provided Wednesday by Information and Broadcasting Minister Anurag Thakur after the first physical Cabinet meeting for more than a year ended.

In view of the Covid-19 pandemic, the Union Government had frozen the three additional instalments of the DA and DR which were due from January 1, 2020, July 1, 2020 and January 1, 2021. The move which will come into effect July 1, 2021 onwards will benefit about 48.34 lakh

HC MISSIVE FOR CBSE OVER FEES

NEW DELHI: The Delhi High Court directed Wednesday the CBSE to decide within eight weeks if it would refund the examination fees taken for Class X and Class XII board examinations as they have been cancelled due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Justice Prateek Jalan ordered CBSE to consider as representation a petition by Deepa Joseph, mother of a Class X student studying in a CBSE affiliated school here, who had paid ₹2,100 as examination fee. CBSE's decision would be open to challenge if Joseph is not satisfied, the court clarified as it disposed of the petition. There has to be reasonableness on both sides, the judge added.

petition said there is need to take into account the 'march of the times and the development of the law' before dealing with Section 124-A.

Earlier, a separate bench of the top court had sought response from the Centre on a plea challenging the Constitutional validity of sedition law, filed by two journalists - Kishorechandra Wangkhemcha and Kanhaiya Lal Shukla - working in Manipur and Chhattisgarh respectively.

Payment of DA had been suspended for 3 instalments due to Covid-19

The increase in DA allowance will cost the govt an extra ₹34,401 crore

MARKET WATCH	
INDEX	VARIATION
SENSEX	52904.05 ↑ 134.32
NIFTY	15854.00 ↑ 41.60
DOLLAR	74.93 ↑ ₹0.06
EURO	88.15 ↓ ₹0.27
GOLD	₹48,215 ↑ ₹326
SILVER	₹69,570 ↑ ₹489

WEATHER		
	BHUB	CTK
MAX	32.6°C	32.8°C
MIN	25.5°C	25.0°C
Humidity	77%	75%
Rainfall	0.3mm	Nil
Forecast	Light rain very likely	

Tokyo medals made of discarded mobiles, laptops

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, July 14: From olive wreaths to recycled metals sourced from old cell phones and electronics, the reward for winning at the Olympics, the most sought-after achievement in an athlete's life, has come a long way, much like the Games itself.

Made of recycled electronic devices and pebble-like in appearance, the medals in the upcoming Tokyo Games will measure 8.5 centimetres in diameter, featuring the flying image of 'Nike', the Greek goddess of victory. But, unlike previous years, these will be produced from gold, silver and bronze (in this case, copper and zinc) that has been stripped from over 79,000 tons of used cell phones and other small

electronic devices collected from all over the world.

During the ancient Olympic Games, athletes who emerged victorious were awarded 'Kotinos' or olive wreaths. Those were considered a sacred prize in Greece, representing the highest honour.

In 1896, the long-lost tradition of ancient Greece, the Olympic Games was reborn in Athens. New practices made way for older ones and thus the custom of awarding medals began. Initially it was silver for the winners while the runners-up received a copper or bronze medal. It wasn't until eight years later in the 1904 St Louis Games, where the now standard gold, silver, and bronze medals, were first used. However, sizes and shapes of the medals varied among the host countries.



In 1923, the International Olympic Committee (IOC) launched a competition for sculptors to design the medals for the Summer Games. The Italian artist Giuseppe Cassioli's design was chosen as the winner in 1928.

At a time when environmental consciousness was on the rise, the 2016 Rio Games scripted history by becoming the most sustainable edition in Olympic history. The organisers opted for more usage of re-

cycled material. The medals were made of 30 per cent recycled material while the ribbons they were attached to, were made of 50 per cent recycled plastic bottles. The gold was mercury-free.

Following in Rio's footsteps, the Tokyo Games' organisers have opted for medals made of recycled electronic devices, including discarded laptops and smartphones phone, a proposal that won the 'Everyone's Medal' campaign launched by the Tokyo 2020 organising committee in 2017.

"I never dreamed that the design I submitted, only as a memorial to this lifetime event, would be actually selected," winner of the design, Junichi Kawanishi, had told media when the medals were launched.

Ceremony tweaked for gender parity

TOKYO: The number of oath-takers at the Olympics opening ceremony has been doubled from three to six for the Tokyo Games to ensure gender parity. Giving this information Wednesday, the IOC said that the oath has also been reworked slightly to incorporate 'inclusion and equality' in it. The Olympic oath is taken by an athlete from the host country, on behalf of all the competitors and the ceremony also includes one coach and a judge. This time, Japan will pick two - one male and one female - from each group for the event. "This has been done to maintain the gender balance of the oath-takers," the IOC said. "Also 'inclusion' and 'equality' have been added to the opening line of the Oath.

central employees and 65.26 lakh pensioners, Thakur said.

"The government has decided to increase DA to central government employees and DR to pensioners with effect from July 1, 2021 representing an increase of 11 per cent over the existing rate of 17 per cent of the basic pay/pension," said a government release.

Thakur also said, "In view of the unprecedented situation, which arose due to the Covid-19 pandemic, three additional instalments of Dearness Allowance to the central government employees and Dearness Relief to the pensioners... were due," Thakur said.

"#Cabinet approves restoring of three instalments of Dearness Allowance and Dearness Relief with effect from 01.07.2021 representing an increase of 11% over the existing rate of 17% of the Basic Pay/Pension. No arrears for the period from 01.01.2020 till 30.06.2021 shall be paid," the official handle of PIB tweeted.

leisure



ROBBIE NEEDS BREAK FROM HARLEY QUINN

Actress Margot Robbie, who has played the dark role of Harley Quinn, says she intends to take a break from the character after working on *Birds Of Prey* and *The Suicide Squad* as it was exhausting.

CHRIS MARTIN'S VIEW ON MUSIC

Coldplay frontman Chris Martin has a different definition of music. "Music is this constant conversation that goes back to the beginning of time when humans were hitting bones on rocks and going, 'Oh, that sounds nice'. It's an evolving sort of time," he said.



FORTUNE FORECAST

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ARIES
To speak of your persuasive powers, you can even convince people to holiday in Alaska! Naturally, today also, the results will be amazing. But you also realise the need to improve yourself and your home. Today, there should be some action on this front, says Ganesh.

TAURUS
Good luck will trail you like your shadow today, predicts Ganesh. You are likely to get good news from out of the country in the afternoon. You may take a chance and express your hidden feelings to someone special. Overall, you will have a hassle-free frame of mind.

GEMINI
There are indications that you will get into a deep thinking mode today, feels Ganesh. Your craving for a little pleasure will get satisfied. You'll perform well at work, but it wouldn't come close to what you will achieve back home.

CANCER
You will like to display your money power and clout. But it will be purposeless. Normally, you are methodical but in the afternoon you may finish a task mindlessly and you may have to repent.

LEO
You will be busy dealing with health-related issues. You need to watch your diet carefully. You will work with a feeling of responsibility. You will become more serious about your work. Everything will go smoothly in your personal life, says Ganesh.

VIRGO
Today will be a day full of emotions and insights into love. Dependency may trouble you all through the day. However, Ganesh advises you to remain unaffected by it in your work. At your workplace you will be in great demand as a problem solver.

LIBRA
Ganesh says you will have to spend more time in the office because of extra responsibilities on you. This will result in you paying less attention to your family members. You will also be more careful about spending money today and will be wary of your mounting expenses.

SCORPIO
You are likely to be occupied with your health issues in the first half of the day. Your stars indicate some fortunate events during this time. Evening will be spent relaxing at a serene place in pleasant company of your friends or beloved.

SAGITTARIUS
Charming as ever, your close ones will be swooned by your beauty today. Thanks to the new look your beautician suggested. Clad in the best of attires, you grab eye-balls at a social do. Your status and prestige is likely to increase. As Ganesh says, people may just go gaga over you today!

CAPRICORN
Your jokes and humour will keep your loved ones in a happy mood. After all, laughter is the best medicine. Their desire to spend more time with you is a testimony to your friendly and jovial nature, feels Ganesh.

AQUARIUS
The rising Sun of today, brings one of the most important days of your life. You will make important decisions which will have long-term impact on your life. During the second half of the day, you may be lucky to have a windfall. It is a very favourable day for all the professionals, says Ganesh.

PISCES
Work will shadow your personal life as you focus all your energy towards achieving your goals today. The irony is that you are doing this to achieve success and provide a better life for your family. So even though you will concentrate at work and spend time away from your loved ones, they will still be in your thoughts and intentions. You will still manage ample time to spend with your spouse, says Ganesh.



Kangana to make OTT debut in *Temptation Island* adaptation

Mumbai: Actress Kangana Ranaut is all set to make her OTT debut with an Indian adaptation of the popular television series *Temptation Island*. "Kangana is going to be the host of a reality show which will premiere on an OTT platform. The show will be an Indian adaptation of the American reality show *Temptation Island*, and the actress has already signed on the dotted lines and is all set to

kick start the shoot," a source close to the development revealed. The show *Temptation Island* brings together couples and singles to test their bond and strengthen their connections.

Besides this, Kangana is gearing up for the release of her film *Thalaivi*, which has been delayed due to the second wave of the Covid-19.

She also has *Dhaakad*, the period drama *Manikarnika Returns: The Legend Of Didda* and *Tejas* in the pipeline. Besides this, Kangana will also don the director's hat for *Emergency*, based on the life of late Indian Prime Minister Indira Gandhi.

Tuesday, the official website of her film production company Manikarnika Films announced Nawazuddin Siddiqui had been signed for her upcoming production *Tiku Weds Sheru*. **ANS**

When Darshan was trained as pro boxer

Mumbai: Darshan Kumar, who plays a boxer in the upcoming film *Toofaan*, was trained by Hollywood star Will Smith's trainer Darrell Foster for the role. The actor tagged it as 'a once in a lifetime experience'.

Darshan said: "I remember that in our first meeting, Darrell said that he would teach me how to take a punch and not take a punch. He said he won't train me for a film, but he'd train me as a real pro boxer."

"That's what the audience will get to witness when they watch the film. They'll feel that they are watching two real pro boxers," he claimed.

Darshan shared that the exhaustive training sessions with Foster happened from 7am to 3pm over a month.

Toofaan tells the story of a boxer, played by Farhan Akhtar, who pushes his limits and works hard to winning in boxing. The film also features Paresh Rawal in the role of a boxing coach. **ANS**

Now Bhoomika launches her YouTube channel

Bhubaneswar: Odia film actress Bhoomika Dash, joining a host of other actors, has launched her official YouTube channel, Wednesday.

Earlier, several Odia cine celebrities of the likes of Mahasweta Ray and Varsha Priyadarshini had created their YouTube channels to build deeper connections with fans.

Speaking to **Orissa POST**, Bhoomika said, "I wanted to start the channel a long time ago but it got delayed due to my hectic work schedule."

Apart from motivational content, the channel aims to present funny and entertaining

videos to the subscribers, added the actress.

She will also showcase her lifestyle and important events on the channel, shared the actress.

In the introduction video, Bhoomika has shared her journey in the Odia film industry and talked about the progression of her academic career.

On the work front, the actress has her upcoming movie *Mana Mora Kagaja Gudi* ready to hit the screens. **ANS**



Veterans on a comeback spree

Mumbai: Age is just a number is a line that the B-town is taking seriously now. A slew of veterans are all set to return on screen over the next months.

Here goes a list of names that are all set to come back and set the screen on fire in upcoming projects.

ZEENAT AMAN
Veteran actress Zeenat Aman, who has always captured the nation's imagination with her stunning screen presence, is all set to be seen in an upcoming murder mystery *Margaon: The Closed File*. The film tributes Agatha



Christies genre of work, and casts the 69-year-old actress as head of an Anglo-Indian family.

NEETU KAPOOR
Veteran actress and late actor Rishi Kapoor's wife Neetu Kapoor was last seen on screen in the 2013 film *Besharam*. She is now set to make a comeback with the new film *Jug Jugg Jeeyo*, which also stars Anil Kapoor, Varun Dhawan and Kiara Advani.

DHARMENDRA
At 85, Dharmendra is all set to return in Karan Johar's upcoming directorial *Rocky Aur Rani Ki Prem Kahani* starring Ranveer Singh and Alia

Bhatt. The film also features Shabana Azmi and Jaya Bachchan. In his over 61-year-journey in the industry, Dharmendra redefined machismo and is also known for his on-screen pairing with wife Hema Malini.

JAYA BACHCHAN
Veteran actress and politician Jaya Bachchan will be seen in a full-fledged role in Karan Johar's latest-announced film *Rocky Aur Rani Ki Prem Kahani*. The film also features Ranveer Singh and Alia Bhatt along with Dharmendra and Shabana Azmi. **PNN**

PEANUTS



CALVIN AND HOBBS

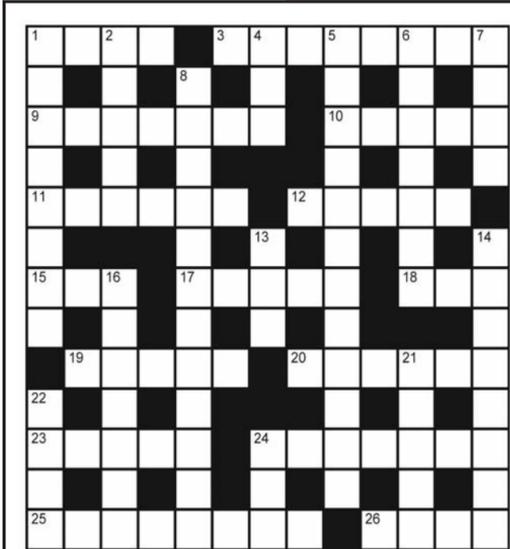


BREVITY



FUN post

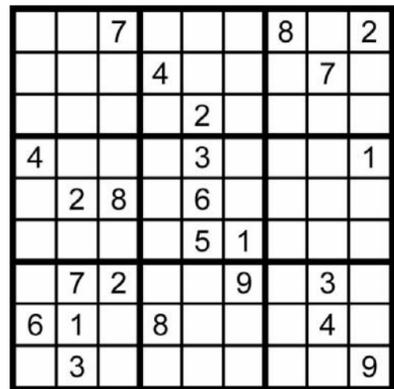
CROSSWORD



- Across**
- 1 Table extender
 - 3 Where to find castles and horses (5,3)
 - 9 Protective wall
 - 10 Wherewithal
 - 11 Garish, cheap and shoddy
 - 12 Poker term (3,2)
 - 15 Engine part
 - 17 Great divide
 - 18 Sun follower?
 - 19 Hammond instrument
 - 20 Jailbird
 - 23 Port-au-Prince's land
 - 24 Multi-coloured pony
 - 25 Medical eruption
 - 26 Macho-man
 - 4 Radioactive
 - 5 Lacking grey matter (6-6)
 - 6 Amphitheatre
 - 7 Ivory source
 - 8 Expressing gratitude
 - 13 Shrew
 - 14 Bride-to-be
 - 16 Gin or vodka cocktail
 - 21 Anticipate
 - 22 Clarified butter
 - 24 Taro dish
- Down**
- 1 Purse item
 - 2 Cupid's projectile

SUDOKU

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

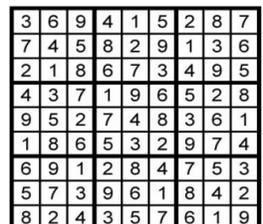


SOLUTIONS

CROSSWORD



SUDOKU



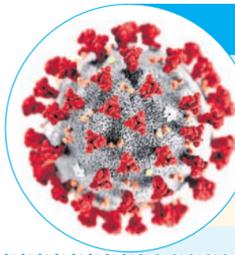
CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW

downtown



RIOT OF COLOURS

A man repairs a colourful umbrella in Chandini Chowk area of Cuttack, Wednesday



COVID-19 TRACKER

	INFECTED	RECOVERED	DEAD
World	18,88,96,721	17,25,73,566	40,69,513
India	3,09,46,074	3,01,04,720	4,11,408
Odisha	9,45,749	9,20,646	4,795

WAIVER OF TAXES ON PVT BUSES LIKELY

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 14: In a relief to the private bus owners, the state Transport and Commerce Minister Padmanabha Behera Wednesday hinted at waiver of various taxes being paid by the bus owners, in view of Covid-19 pandemic.

Due to the outbreak of the second wave of Covid-19, the state government has imposed lockdown and shutdown measures and accordingly, the bus services were also suspended. As a result, the bus operators are facing a lot of hardship.

"Various relaxations on taxes have been extended to the bus owners and we will continue to provide them tax exemptions," Behera told reporters here.

Currently, private buses are plying in as many as 20 Category-A districts. A decision regarding plying of buses in 10 Category-B districts will be taken soon, he said. Last week, the private bus owners' association had urged the state government to waive the taxes in view of the losses incurred on account of the protracted lockdowns.

The ongoing partial lockdown restrictions imposed in the state will end Thursday. The state government will come up with its new guidelines Thursday. All eyes are on the guidelines as to whether more relaxations will be allowed or not.

Meanwhile, the Health Services director Bijay Mohapatra said that the state government will take a decision for the next unlocking process after a review of the present pandemic situation. The government is taking necessary steps to bring down the infection rate in Cuttack and Bhubaneswar, he said.

MARITAL DISCORD

Anubhav files contempt plea against Varsha



FILE PHOTO

POST NEWS NETWORK

Cuttack, July 14: Actor-turned-parliamentarian Anubhav Mohanty Wednesday lodged a contempt of court petition against his actress wife Varsha Priyadarshini in connection with a case pertaining to their marital discord.

Mohanty also urged the family court here to close the mediation process.

The couple appeared at the mediation centre of the family court. The conciliator counselled the couple over two hours to settle the discord through mutual consultation.

"I do not want to discuss issues related to my personal life in public. If you have any queries, you can ask my lawyer," Mohanty told media persons while returning from the court.

Talking to media, Mohanty's lawyer said, "Today, Varsha refused to sign on the counselling report saying that she did not have faith in the counseling process. So, we have lodged a contempt plea in

The conciliator counselled the couple for over 2 hours to settle the discord through consultation

the court seeking closure of the mediation process."

The conciliator will take a call on the issue and file a report in the court, which is scheduled to take up the case Thursday, Mohanty's lawyer added.

"Anubhav and Varsha had appeared at the mediation centre of the family court July 9. They were counselled to end the dispute through mutual consultation. Today, the couple was also counselled at the mediation centre. Anubhav has urged the court to close the mediation process, to which I have raised an objection. The court will take a call and issue an order in this regard," said Varsha's lawyer Ramakrushna Rath.

High Court joins Telegram

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 14: The Orissa High Court has officially joined social media platform 'Telegram' to provide court related information to advocates and the public.

The HC, through this platform, aims to provide advocates, litigants and the people at large with real-time and instantaneous access to information regarding court's events, circulars, notices, press releases and case lists, said HC's Registrar General in a statement, Wednesday. One can join the Orissa High Court's official telegram channel by signing in through <https://t.me/OrissaHighCourt>.

In an attempt to ensure that stakeholders get time to subscribe the channel, it has been decided to commence information sharing on Telegram with effect from July 19, 2021 (Monday).



Now, the subscribers will be able to get updated information about the court without having to frequently visit the court's website or during times when the services of the website are inaccessible for any reason. Any information relating to the HC published or shared through Telegram would automatically alert the subscriber (if so opted for by the subscriber via notification option).

This will augment the court's efforts towards making official information accessible online through the comfort of personal hand-held devices almost as soon as such information is published, the Registrar said.

Centre for regular review of pvt procurement of vax

POST NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi, July 14: Perturbed by the sluggish pace of Covid-19 vaccination, the Union Health Ministry Wednesday advised the states to review the status and progress in vaccine procurement by PCVCs on a daily basis.

This was revealed at a review meeting on the immunisation programme wherein the ministry took stock of the vaccine procurement and administration by Private Covid Vaccination Centres (PCVCs) in Odisha and 14 other states.

Union Health secretary Rajesh Bhushan chaired a high-level meeting with the Health secretaries and senior immunisation officials of Odisha and other states on the issue. The Union Health secretary informed the states about the usage of CoWin platform as the backend management tool for order placements.

During the review meeting, roles of the states/UTs for demand aggregation and roles of Covid vaccine manufacturers in quick dispatch were further outlined, the ministry said.

Underlining the tardy pace of vaccination through the PCVCs, the Union Health secretary advised the states to review the status and progress in vaccine procurement by PCVCs on a daily basis.

States were also advised to ensure speedy and effective coordination between the PCVCs and the vaccine manufacturers to remove bottlenecks, if any. It was pointed out that advance visibility of Covid-19



TAKING STOCK

STATES WERE ALSO ADVISED TO ENSURE SPEEDY AND EFFECTIVE COORDINATION BETWEEN THE PCVCs AND THE VACCINE MANUFACTURERS TO REMOVE BOTTLENECKS, IF ANY

THE MINISTRY SAID THAT MANY PCVCs HAVE NOT PLACED ANY INDENT FOR THE EARMARKED QUANTUM OF COVID VACCINES

ADVANCE VISIBILITY OF COVID-19 VACCINES TO THE STATES BY THE UNION HEALTH MINISTRY WAS IN TURN REQUIRED TO BE COMMUNICATED TO THE CITIZENS BY THE STATES

vaccines to the states by the Union Health Ministry was in turn required to be communicated to the citizens by the states.

"Many PCVCs have not placed any indent for the earmarked quantum of Covid vaccines. Many state governments need to facilitate the vaccine procurement by the PCVCs. States were advised to review the status on a daily basis and ensure that indents for the earmarked

quantum are quickly placed with the private vaccine manufacturers," the Health Ministry said.

The Union Health Ministry has organised five regional workshops to orient nodal officers of the states and PCVCs for placing indent on CoWin, payment for the quantum of doses among others. The Health secretary further advised the states to indicate if any refresher training sessions are required.

ADAPA ABADHA



Workers bring 'Adapa Abadha' from Srigundicha temple for sale at a counter near the shrine in Puri, Wednesday. Lord Jagannath and his siblings Lord Balabhadra and Devi Subhadra are now on a sojourn at Srigundicha temple as part of the annual Rath Yatra festival

NORMS 'BREACHED' DURING RATH YATRA

POST NEWS NETWORK

Puri, July 14: Police have launched a probe into the alleged entry of some unauthorised persons into the Grand Road during the Srigundicha Yatra of Srimandir deities July 12.

Kumbharpada police, meanwhile, sealed a lodge on allegation that several people were present on its roof during the pulling of chariots on the Grand Road.

"There are allegations that some unauthorised people had witnessed the mega festival in violation of the guidelines issued by the state government. We will examine the CCTV footage and try to identify such persons. Stern action would be taken against the guilty," said city DSP Janardan Padhi.

Puri Youth Lawyers' Association has lodged an FIR in this regard with Singhadwar police. The association has also submitted a memorandum to Collector Samarth Verma and sought an impartial probe into the incident.

The association alleged that some unauthorised persons had witnessed Rath Yatra by impersonating Srimandir servitors and media persons.

Many locals, meanwhile, alleged that some people including a few contractors, mining barons, personnel of Haryana police and people from West Bengal had witnessed the festival in violation of the norms issued by the state government.

They had submitted a memo to the Chief Minister too through the district Collector.

SUNDARAM HOME
Regd Office: No. 21, Patullo Road, Chennai-600 002.
Corporate Office: 46, Whites Road, Chennai-600 014.
Branch Office: A/108, 1st Floor, Banadev Bhawan, Saheed Nagar, Khurda Dist, Bhubaneswar - 751 007. Phone: 0674 - 254 4677

POSSESSION NOTICE
Rule 8(2) of Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002
Whereas the authorized officer of **SUNDARAM HOME FINANCE LTD** erstwhile **SUNDARAM BNP PARIBAS HOME FINANCE LTD.**, under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 and in exercise of the powers conferred under Section 13 (12) read with rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 issued a **Demand Notice U/s. 13(2) dated 01-12-2016** calling upon the **Borrower Mr. Pradeep Kumar Rout, Co-Borrowers, Mrs. Lopamudra Rout, Mr. Mahendra Rout** to repay the amount mentioned in the notice being **Rs. 28,90,783/- (Rupees Twenty Eight Lakhs Ninety Thousand Seven Hundred Eighty Three Only)** being the amount due and payable under the **Loan Account number 66200244** and with Future Interest + Statutory Expenditure + Legal expenses + Incidental charges within 60 days from the date of receipt of the notice.

The Borrower, Co-Borrowers having failed to repay the amount in full, notice is hereby given to the Borrower, Co-Borrowers and the public in general that the Authorised Officer has taken possession of the property described herein below in exercise of powers conferred on him under Section 13(4) of the said Act read with rule 8 of the said Rules on this **13-07-2021**.

The borrower's attention is invited to provision of sub-section (8) of section 13 of the Act, in respect of time available, to redeem the secured assets.

The Borrower, Co-Borrowers in particular and the public in general are hereby cautioned not to deal with the property and any dealings with the property will be subject to the charge of **SUNDARAM HOME FINANCE LTD.**, for an amount **Rs. 25,54,646/- (Rupees Twenty Five Lakhs Fifty Four Thousand Six Hundred Forty Six Only)** as of **13-07-2021** and interest thereon @ 24% p. a. + Statutory Expenditure + Legal expenses + Incidental charges.

SCHEDULE OF PROPERTY
All that piece and parcel admeasuring AC 0.415 decimals out of total area AC 0.815 decimals, KISSAM : Gharabari (Homestead), Khata No.230, Plot No.207, Sub-Plot No.2. Situated at Dist: Khurda, Tahasil: Bhubaneswar, P.S.-New Capital, P.S, No.14, Hal P.S.-Nandankanan, Mouza/ Revenue Village: Raghunathpur.

Date: 08-07-2021 for **SUNDARAM HOME FINANCE LTD., AUTHORISED OFFICER**

NHRC summons Bhadrak SP over minor's rape

If the SP submits the report by August 24, 2021, personal appearance of the officer shall stand dispensed with

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 14: The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) has issued a conditional summons to the superintendent of police (SP) of Bhadrak to appear before it August 31, 2021 in connection with the alleged rape of a five-year-old girl by her neighbour in June last year.

The commission pronounced the order July 13 while hearing a plea filed by rights activist Himanshu Sekhar Nayak June 17, 2020. The petitioner had informed the commission that the heinous incident took place in Chadia under Chandbali block in Bhadrak June 13.

"It was around 7 pm when Babu Mahalik, 32, found the girl playing near her house and lured the minor to his house by offering her chocolates. Later, he took her to a nearby deserted place where he forced himself on her. As the victim screamed,



locals rushed to the spot and captured Mahalik," Nayak told the apex rights body, pointing out that the incident saw widespread resentment in the locality.

The commission took cognisance of the issue June 26, 2020 and sought

a report from Bhadrak SP within four weeks. However, the SP did not revert despite multiple reminders September 24 and November 27.

Irked over the dilly-dallying attitude of the SP, the apex rights body ordered him to appear before

IT WAS AROUND 7 PM JUNE 13 WHEN BABU MAHALIK, 32, FOUND THE GIRL PLAYING NEAR HER HOUSE AND LURED THE MINOR TO HIS HOUSE BY OFFERING HER CHOCOLATES

LATER, HE TOOK HER TO A NEARBY DESERTED PLACE WHERE HE FORCED HIMSELF ON HER

AS THE VICTIM SCREAMED, LOCALS RUSHED TO THE SPOT AND CAPTURED MAHALIK

it in person along with the report at 11am August 31. "In case the report is received by August 24, 2021, personal appearance of the officer shall stand dispensed with," the NHRC order, a copy of which is with **Orissa POST**, read.

REGIONAL OFFICE:
108 - B, Unit-VII, Surya Nagar, Gopabandhu Square, Bhubaneswar-751003, Ph. No.: 0674-2397551, 2397199

PUBLIC NOTICE
This is for the information to the General Public that following borrowers have availed loan facility from our **Mahatab Road Branch** against the mortgaged property whose details are given below.

Sl. No.	Name of the Borrowers	Mortgagors Name	Address of the Property	Date of Symbolic Possession
1.	Mr. Rudra Narayan Roy, At: Dahaliabag, P.O.: Bhanpur, P.S.: Cuttack, PIN-753011	Mrs. Bina Sahoo, W/o: Late Lokanath Sahoo, Mr. Bikram Sahoo, S/o: Late Lokanath Sahoo, Mrs. Sanghamitra Sahoo, D/o: Late Lokanath Sahoo, All are resident of Vill- Gandhipalli, P.O.: Nuabazar, P.S.: Chauhaganj, Dist.: Cuttack, PIN-753004	House Property at Khata No.: 570, Plot No.: 757/1282, Area: Ac.0.030dec. i.e. 1306.80 Sq.ft situated at Mouza: Sikharpur (Unit 26), P.S.: Chauhaganj, Tahasil: Cuttack Sadar, Dist.: Cuttack	07.10.2016
2.	Mr. Bijay Kumar Sahoo & Mrs. Jharna Sahoo, At/P.O.: Tarola, Jagatpur, Cuttack, PIN-754021	Mr. Bijay Kumar Sahoo, S/o: Late Biswanath Sahoo, situated at Mouza: Tarol, P.S.: Tangi, Tahasil: Tangi, Dist.: Cuttack	House Property at Khata No.: 620/401, Plot No.: 1902, Area: Ac.0.080dec.	06.01.2015
3.	1. Mr. Dipti Ranjan Pattnaik, S/o: Sri Binod Kishor Pattnaik, C/o: Dr. B N Dash, Friends Bazar, Chandini Chowk, Colony, Buxi Bazar, Cuttack-753002	Mr. Upendra Behera, S/o: Daitari Behera, Mansinghpattna, Saikh Bazar, Chandini Chowk, Cuttack-753002	House Property at Mouza: Cuttack Sahar, Unit No. 13, Chandinichowk, P.S. No.: 1, Lalbag, Tahasil: Cuttack Sadar, Tahasil No.: 202, Dist.: Cuttack, Khata/Hal Khata No.: 1170, corresponding to Sabik Khata No.: 207, Plot No.: 3048, corresponding to Plot No.: 116(P), Area: Ac.0.0037dec.	18.10.2017

The above said properties are under symbolic possession of the Bank. If anybody going for any transaction / dealing with the said properties, the Bank will not be held responsible.

Date: 14.07.2021 **Sd/- Asst. General Manager**

Utkal students demand proper academic prog

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 14: The students' council of Utkal University Wednesday alleged irregularities in implementation of funds under Rashtriya Uchcharat Shiksha Abhiyan (RUSA) and made multiple demands that include filling of multiple teaching and non-teaching staff vacancies in different departments of the University.

At a presser held near new administrative building, the students' council members also demanded closure of departments opened under public-private partnership mode as they are focused more on doing business than providing quality education. They also alleged that many buildings such as the E-library and the instrumental room are not working properly.

Manas Kumar Sahu, a member of the council said that in last two years the education system of the varsity has suffered a lot. "We demand the University and the government to prepare proper education programme for the academic session so that students get proper education facility," Sahu said.

Bandh: Dists asked to ensure law & order

AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, July 14: In view of the six-hour 'bandh' call given by the Left parties Thursday, the state government directed the district administrations to take preventive measures to maintain law and order, an official said Wednesday.

Home department special secretary Santosh Bala asked the Collectors and District Magistrates to ensure that essential services are not affected during the Odisha 'bandh'.

Bala mentioned, in the letter, it is apprehended the protestors may close down business establishments, market places, government offices, courts petrol pumps, banks and financial institutions during the strike. Vehicular traffic as well as train services are likely to be hit, the official said.

CLASSIFIED AFFIDAVIT

I, Moksh Jacob Danuka, aged about 21 yrs., S/o. Jacob Dayakar, residing At: Qtr. No. C/200, NALCO Nagar, P.S./P.O.- Nalco Nagar, Dist.- Angul, my actual name is Moksh Jacob Danuka. But my Passport No. J7315906 my surname in that passport was reflected as Moksh Jacob Dhanuka instead of Moksh Jacob Danuka. Both are same and one person. Henceforth, I shall be known as Moksh Jacob Danuka for all purpose. Moksh Jacob Danuka.

LOST

The given below original title deed has been lost from our Branch. Kindly inform us any information regarding this original title deed to Punjab National Bank, Jharsuguda Branch, Beheramal. Schedule of the land: Deed No. 699 of the year 1999 vide Khata No. 929/1587, Plot No. 1209, Mouza: Jharsuguda unit No. 06, P.O./Dist.- Jharsuguda area of land 0.04 acres in the name of Santi Suna.

65 more deaths push Covid-19 toll to 4,795

Test positivity rate in the state stands at 6.40%

PNN/AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, July 14: Odisha's Covid-19 tally rose to 9,45,749 Wednesday as 2,074 more people tested positive for the infection, while 65 fresh fatalities pushed the state's coronavirus death toll to 4,795, a Health official said.

Although there has been a significant decline in daily cases and test positivity rate, fresh single-day fatalities continue to remain around 60 since July 8.

Odisha's active caseload has also significantly come down to 22,860 July 14 from 55,923 June 14. The total number of recoveries has also soared to 9,18,041, including 2,641 Tuesday, said the official.

The high number of fatalities remains a cause of concern for the state. As many as 68 people had succumbed to the infection Tuesday. A total of 1,192 new cases were registered in quarantine centres, while 882 infections were detected during contact tracing.

Khurda district, under which Bhubaneswar falls, recorded the highest number of fresh cases at 443, followed by Cuttack (283) and Puri (133).

Khurda also registered the highest number of fresh fatalities at 20, followed by Bargarh (10) and Sundargarh (7).

As many as 53 other coronavirus patients have died due to comorbidities to date.

Odisha has thus far tested over 1.47 crore samples for Covid-19, including 69,287 Tuesday. The positivity rate stands at 6.40 per cent.

At least four districts—Puri, Khurda, Cuttack and Nayagarh—have a test positivity rate of more than 5 per cent with Puri recording the highest TPR of 12.4 per cent, followed by Khurda (7.6), Cuttack (6.8). The rest 26 districts in Odisha have TPR below 5 per cent.

IN A NUTSHELL Khurda registered the highest number of fresh fatalities at 20, followed by Bargarh (10) and Sundargarh (7) Odisha has thus far tested over 1.47 crore samples for Covid-19, including 69,287 Tuesday Puri, Khurda, Cuttack and Nayagarh have a TPR of more than 5 per cent with Puri recording the highest of 12.4 per cent, followed by Khurda (7.6%), Cuttack (6.8%). The rest 26 districts in Odisha have TPR below 5 per cent There is a need to monitor and regulate the interstate movement of people to keep the Covid-19 infection rate under control in Odisha CBK MOHANTY | DMET

Even though the rate of infection has come down in around two dozen districts, six coastal districts continue to report more than 100 fresh cases every day.

"There is a need to monitor and regulate the interstate movement of people to keep the Covid-19 infection rate under control in Odisha," chief of the Directorate of Medical Education and Training (DMET) CBK Mohanty said.

He said that Odisha may push itself into danger and invite the third wave of the pandemic if measures to regulate inter-state movement are not taken immediately.

Mohanty cited instances of how the infection spread rapidly in the border districts of Odisha after a high number of cases were reported in neighbouring Chhattisgarh and Jharkhand during the second wave. The infections which spread to the border districts later came to Bhubaneswar and Cuttack, he added.

BJP stir over power tariff hike

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 14: The BJP workers Wednesday staged a protest here demanding a rollback of the hiked electricity tariff in the state.

Several party workers flocked to Master Canteen Square here raising slogans against the state government and demanding fulfillment of their demands.

Babu Singh, Bhubaneswar BJP president, said, "We have been demanding the rollback of increased power tariff from the state government but to no avail. The state government has even failed to write a letter in this regard to the Odisha Electricity Regulatory Commission (OERC)."

He also said, "OERC is increasing the electricity tariff as per its whims and fancies. Huge amount of funds received by OERC do not have a proper account on how they have been spent."



Another party leader Dilip Mohanty said, "We have decided to take the protest to every corner of the state. The electricity tariff has increased in the state due to the inability of the government to tackle it. This is an example of bad governance."

He also added, "The state government has failed in the whole process. The middle class and the citizens of the state are now facing

the heat due to the failure of the state government. The party will fight for the interests of the people of the state."

The saffron party had earlier announced week-long protests across the state on the tariff hike issue. It demanded reduction of power tariff and provision of subsidies to the people like in other states.

ECMO facility at City AIIMS from today

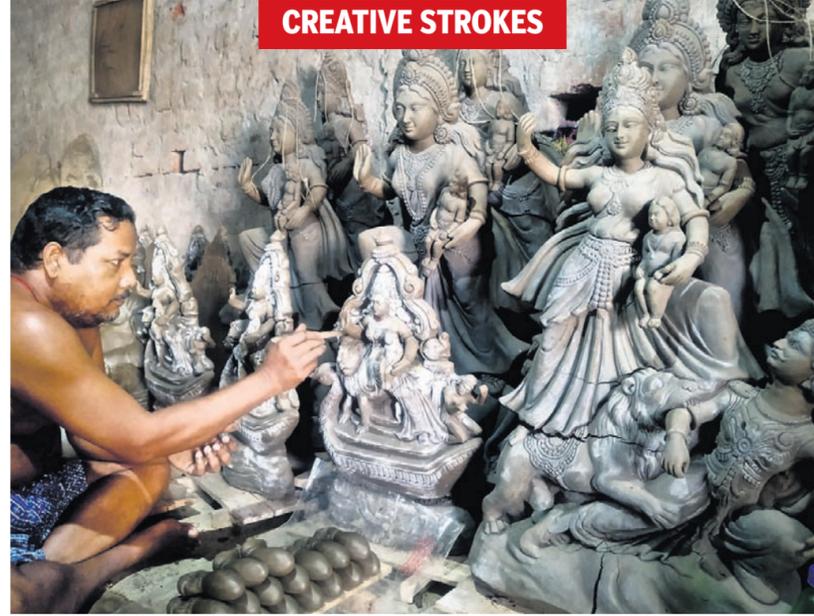
POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 14: The All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) here will offer extracorporeal membrane oxygenation (ECMO) facilities from Thursday, the institute's ninth foundation day, an official said Wednesday.

According to sources, the launch of the extracorporeal life support facility at the premier healthcare institute assumes significance as critically-ill Covid-19 patients requiring ECMO treatment were being airlifted to other states as Odisha did not have the facility. AIIMS-Bhubaneswar is the first government hospital in the coastal state to offer the life-saving treatment.

Department of Biotechnology secretary Renu Swarup will grace the event, which will be celebrated virtually, as its chief guest. "The event will kick-start with a welcome note from the AIIMS Bhubaneswar director Gitanjali Batmanabane. Then, Dean (Academics) Debasish Hota, Dean (Examination) Manoj Kumar Mohanty and Dean (Research) Binod Kumar Patro will highlight achievements of the premier healthcare institution," said the official.

On the occasion, AIIMS medical superintendent Sachidananda Mohanty will elaborate on the contribution of the institute in handling Covid-19 along with recent progress in installation of technologies like Paediatric Bronchoscopy machine, PET-CT Scan machine, lithotripsy and DEXA scan machine.



An artisan works on clay idols of goddess Khudurukuni in Kumbhar Sahi area of Cuttack, Wednesday

Train hits boy playing mobile game

POST NEWS NETWORK

Cuttack, July 14: A 15-year-old boy reportedly went missing in Kathajodi river after he was hit by a train on the railway bridge near Khannagar here Wednesday.

The boy has been identified as Sujit Mohanty, son of Mitu Mohanty, of Bishinab area in the city here.

A train came from behind and hit Sujit who was wearing the earphones. An injured Sujit fell into the river. However, the other three managed to escape

According to sources, Sujit and three of his friends were reportedly playing mobile games while walking on the railway tracks in the evening. They walked on the railway bridge



A rescue operation on to trace the missing boy

unmindful of the imminent danger. Suddenly a train came from behind and hit Sujit who was wearing the earphones. An injured Sujit fell into the river. However, the other three managed to escape.

"The train came from the behind. Sujit was wearing the earbuds and was busy playing the mobile games. He could not hear the alarm raised

by the other three. He fell into the river after being hit by the train," said a local.

Informed, Badambadi police, Government Railway Police and fire brigade personnel reached the spot and launched a rescue operation.

However, the rescuers could not trace the boy from the river till the last report came in.

Sarangi terms fuel price protesters as 'andolanjivis'

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 14: Former Union Minister Pratap Sarangi Wednesday termed those protesting against fuel price hike as "andolanjivis" and claimed that some are used to protest over the daily affairs of the government.

Sarangi was responding to the protest calls in the state on the issue of consistently rising prices of petrol, diesel and cooking gas. He, however, admitted that the skyrocketing prices of fuel due to high taxes imposed by the Union government has hit the middle class hard, but Sarangi talked about several steps taken by the government like production of electricity from cow dung.

"All parties are free to protest but there is not a single issue that such parties do not oppose. The Union government brought a pro-farmer

The ex-minister admitted that the skyrocketing prices of fuel due to high taxes imposed by the Centre has hit the middle class hard

legislation, still there were protests. When we brought CAA, then there were protests too. They are really 'andolanjivis' as termed by the PM earlier," he said.

Admitting the effect of inflated fuel prices under the BJP government at the Centre, the former Union minister said, "It (high petrol prices) is indeed pinching the people but for that the government is arranging alternative sources of fuel. The Union government is now working on ethanol plants, solar plants and others," he said.

RSP supplies steel for Manipur bridge

AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, July 14: The Rourkela Steel Plant (RSP) has supplied steel for Makru bridge of Manipur, which was inaugurated by Union Road Transport and Highways Minister Nitin Gadkari.

Makru bridge is constructed across river Makru in Tamenglong district of Manipur.

The RSP has supplied 986 tonne of high tensile E410 grade New Plate Mill (NPM) plates for the construction of the bridge that is one of the key bridges of Imphal-Jiribam highway (NH-37) which will improve connectivity between Assam and Manipur, an official statement said.

The bridge was inaugurated by Gadkari Monday. It said that the

Makru bridge is constructed across river Makru in Tamenglong district of Manipur

plates rolled out in the state-of-the-art NPM of RSP has been used in several other mega bridge projects like Chenab bridge, Mahatma Gandhi Setu and others.

RSP, a unit of Steel Authority of India Limited (SAIL), has reinforced its place as a committed contributor in nation building endeavours under Atmanirbhar Bharat, the statement said, adding that it has supplied steel to many important structures of national importance.

8K City vendors shortlisted for Covid relief

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 14: The Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC) Wednesday, stated that it will provide financial assistance of up to Rs3,000 to about 8,038 vendors falling under Letter of Recommendation (LOR) through Chief Minister's Relief Fund.

As per sources, each vendor under the LOR category will get Rs3,000 through Direct Beneficiary Transfer (DBT) mode. The funds will be distributed to 13,459 vendors shortlisted by the BMC in phased manner: Under the first phase, it will cover 8,038 street vendors.

"The DBT mode of money transfer will maintain transparency in the distribution process so that none of the deserving beneficiaries are deprived of the relief measure. In the first wave of the pan-



demical last year too, the BMC had extended helping hands to small time traders and street vendors.

About 28,000 roadside vendors within the BMC jurisdiction have been shortlisted for the payment, of which, around 14,000 have been identified for receiving funds

under the two phases," said a BMC official.

It can be mentioned that street vendors are given assistance under Pradhan Mantri Street Vendor's Atmanirbhar Nidhi (PM SVANidhi) launched earlier in August, 2020. Street vendors, who

don't have identity cards or certificates of vending, can avail benefits under the PM SVANidhi scheme through LOR.

Vendors can apply for LOR with any urban local body. They can avail a working capital loan of up to Rs 10,000 which is repayable in monthly instalments in the tenure of one year.

The BMC officials mentioned that Rs 3.57 crore has been earmarked for this purpose. Last year, the state government had also announced financial assistance worth Rs 3,000 each to over 65,000 street vendors across 114 urban local bodies (ULBs).

Welcoming the decision, secretary of Nikhila Odisha Street Vendors' Association Manoj Swain said the assistance will be of immense support to small vendors as the pandemic has ruined their livelihood.

FOR CLASSIFIED ADVERTISEMENTS CONTACT OUR BOOKING STATIONS

Acharya Vihar-Dayal Agency-9437135727, A.P. Tours and Travel, Maitri Vihar, C.S. Pur- 9861301598, Aurobindo Market-Sai Audio & Electronics-9438304668, Airport Road-Sai Baba Variety Store-9090071530, Anish Infotech- Tankapani Road-9861341488, Bapuji Nagar- Dreamland Studio- 9777517314, Baramunda Rental Colony-Maa Ramchandi Communication-9658821469, Baramunda Housing Board Colony-Pappu Variety Store-9040500106, Cuttack Road-Alishan Snacks-8984236754, District Center (Chandrasekharpur)-Sai Google Mart-9776056507, Forest Park-DTDC Couriers & Services (HB Services)-7381024156, IRC Village-Bapi Xerox-9090090404, Gift Hut(Antriksh Gifts & Decors Pvt. Ltd.)-9954781084, Pruthvi Medicine-9853314816, Janpath-Krupajal Book Store-7978646669, Jaydev Vihar-AK Enterprises-7978116618, Subam Sai Books Store-8995550649, Swain Graphics- 9337121249, Jagannath Mobile Point- Janpath Road, Ram Mandir- 9938475415, Kanan Vihar-Auro Electronics-8260697560, Khandagiri- Swosti Mobile Centre- 7992914045, World Solution- 9938317559, KIIT Road-Jugad Jn-9338545031, Laxmi Sagar-Aditya Mobile-9438191836, Lewis Road-Spider Web-7809186415, Metro Satellite City-Arogya Mitra Medicine Store-9853621640, Madhusudan Nagar-Mohapatra Communication-9124446664, Maa Santoshi travels- Gajapati Nagar- 9777675867, Nayapalli- The Cake Room- 7873660137, Near Mayfair Lagoon-Cookieman-9439491273, Nigamananda-Omm Sai Travels-9668284823, Nr Cosmopolis Main Gate- Shreeram Medical Store- 8763711714, Net Square- Niladri Vihar (C.S. Pur)- 7205634821, Priyadarshini Market-Astro Point-9938134346, R.N. General Store-Nilakantha Nagar-9438642501, Sahid Nagar- Maa Communication- 9437353424, Sahini General Store- Near Patia Railway Station, Mahavir Vihar- 9937586626, Satya Nagar-Baishnavi Mixture & Sweets-7894821764, Samantapur- Download Point-7504557743, Sailashree Vihar-Harsha Book Store-8093449515, Saheed Nagar-Jagannath Graphics-7978652670, Photo World-7978468191, Sainath Photo Studio-8984436129, Shanti & Co-9937071063, Siripur-Omm Maa Sarala Communication-977682449, Sushree fashion- Jagmara-9938714347, Shree Vision- Sailashree Vihar-9861476678, Unit-3-LIC of India Premium Point-9337787080, Unit-7- LIC Premium Point- 9338227422, VSS Nagar-Friends Cake & Bake-8658200930, Jeet Infoworld-7205195782, XIMB Square-LD Books-9658061373.

Cards for kendu leaf pluckers up for sale

Jaleswar man back in home after 25 yrs

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bolangir, July 14: The kendu leaf department, allegedly a den of corruption and exploitation of workers, has hit the headlines for all the wrong reasons again, a report said.

The state government provides cards (pass books) meant for free distribution among kendu leaf pluckers, but the forest officials allegedly demand ₹500 to ₹1000 per card, the report said.

The cards issued to pluckers contain the details of leaves collected by the pluckers and the volume of leaves deposited by them at the stock points (Phadi). However, the alleged collection of money from the pluckers by the forest officials has blown the lid off the exploitation of pluckers in the hands of forest officials.

The matter came to the fore after Pradip Purohit, former MLA and leader of Kendu Patra Shramik Sangha, lodged a complaint with the state forest secretary Mona Sharma. Purohit lodged a complaint after receiving complaints of money collection from the pluckers under Patnagarh kendu leaf division and Bolangir forest circle. Purohit has termed the development unfortunate and demanded a thorough probe into the charges.

Acting on the complaint, Sharma has directed the principal chief conservator of forests (PCCF), kendu leaf, to conduct a probe and



EXPLOITING TRIBALS

- The cards issued to pluckers by the department contain details of leaves collected by them and the volume of leaves deposited at the stock points (Phadi)
- Alleged collection of money from the pluckers by the forest officials has blown the lid off the exploitation of pluckers in the hands of forest officials
- Ranjit Mallick, divisional forest officer of Bolangir kendu leaf division and in-charge of Patnagarh division, said he is aware of the charges and will visit Patnagarh soon to conduct a probe

submit a report to her

Reports said high quality kendu leaves are collected in Bolangir district. The pluckers collect these leaves every year and from this they earn their livelihood. In its bid to help the pluckers, the state government provides them cards or pass books free of cost.

These cards contain the details

of the total number of leaves collected by the pluckers and the volume of leaves deposited at the stock points (Phadis).

The Munshis and checkers at the stocks points fill up these cards which help in releasing the wages and bonus of the pluckers.

Kendu leaf pluckers Hemalata Naik, Sabita Patel, Nira Deep,

on the pretext of repair and renovations of the stock points, kendu leaf binding and transportation. The money has been misappropriated by preparing false bills and vouchers.

Notably, kendu leaf, known as the green gold of Odisha, is one of the most important non-timber forest products of the state. The kendu leaf is also called silver leaf for its greater economic value and its contribution to the state exchequer. They provide livelihood opportunities for the poor during lean seasons. The kendu leaf business is a pride for the state because of its specialized operations.

More than 8000 stock points (phadis) operate in the state where the procurement and processing of leaves takes place. The net profit goes to the state exchequer 50% of which is ploughed back as kendu leaf grant in the development activities in the leaf growing areas. According to a government report, it creates 30 million man-days within three to four months and plays an important role in the socio-economic development of tribal people, dalits and marginalized communities in the state.

When contacted, Ranjit Mallick, divisional forest officer of Bolangir kendu leaf division and in-charge of Patnagarh division said, he is aware of the complaints and will visit Patnagarh soon to conduct a probe.



POST NEWS NETWORK

Jaleswar, July 14: Shantilata Roul, a resident of Sugo village under Jaleswar block in Balasore was on cloud nine as her son returned home after 25 years.

Gourahari is the only son of Baidhar Roul and Shantilata. She married Baidhar when she was only 13 years old. But fate dealt her a blow when her husband passed away leaving her and her minor son to fend for themselves.

At that time, Gourahari was 17 years old. He got married and has a daughter.

He took upon himself the burden of his family, but his earning was not enough to keep his pot boiling. With hope of better earning, Gourahari left for Kolkata 25 years ago. But he had forgotten that he had to look after his widowed mother, wife and daughter left behind at home.

He earned a lot and changed his fortune. He owns a three-storied

On the day of Rath Yatra, Gourahari returned home all of a sudden to the surprise and joy of his mother. This reunion of Gourahari with his family made all emotional

building and leads his family well in Kolkata.

On the other hand, his mother struggled to save the family. She managed to cultivate 10 acres on lease and strengthened her economy.

Besides, she earns from diary and goat farming.

On the day of Rath Yatra, Gourahari returned home all of a sudden to the dismay and joy of his mother. This reunion of Gourahari with his family made all emotional. He has decided that he would not return to Kolkata.

MOHALLA CLASS



Students of Jawanpalli UP School under Kalimela block in Malkangiri district attend a Mohalla class abiding by the Covid norms, Wednesday. The Mohalla class aims at imparting lessons to students of remote and inaccessible regions in the state where internet connectivity is a constant problem

1 run over by truck, 2 critical in Kalahandi

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhawanipatna, July 14: A man was killed and two others including a woman sustained grievous injuries after they were hit by a speeding truck at Dharamgarh on NH-26 near Koksara canal under Koksara police limits in Kalahandi.

According to eyewitnesses, three locals were standing on roadside and gossiping at around 5 am. A goods-laden truck ran over them.

One of the three died on the spot while two others were critically injured. The deceased was identified as Juge Bimal of Chikili village and the in-



jured were Anta Gahir and Rambati Deep.

Locals informed Koksara police who rescued the injured from a pool of blood and rushed them to hospital at Koksara. Police have registered a case and launched a probe.

Land sold off in Angul dist forging owner's signature

POST NEWS NETWORK

Angul, July 14: A complaint was filed at the Angul police station on sale of over 32 decimals of land with forged signature of the actual land owner.

The matter came to the fore after the sub-registrar in Angul lodged a complaint at the Angul police station. Police registered a case and started an investigation.

Kadu Charan Gadnaik, a villager of Phulpada-Pandapur area under Banarpal police limits visited the sub-registrar office in Angul to verify and update the records of his ancestral properties before selling them

to others. However, to his surprise he found that more than eight gunth land (0.33 acre) on plot no-5 and khata no-5 in Charatapatna mouza has been sold off to others by forging his signature.

He lodged a complaint with the sub-registrar as the disclosure created a furore in the office. Acting on the complaint, the sub-registrar, Amlan Aparajita Mishra, filed an FIR at the Angul police station.

When contacted, a senior official of the office said the matter is under investigation. Police will take legal action against the accused if the charges are proved true during the investigation.

Solar-charged drinking water projects defunct in hilly areas

POST NEWS NETWORK

Keonjhar, July 14: As electricity is unavailable in hilly, forested and remote pockets of Keonjhar district, the government has made the provision of solar-powered pumping systems to ensure safe drinking water in its various parts.

Sadly, most of these systems are lying defunct for lack of repair and routine maintenance. Distressed by want of drinking water, people meet their water needs from rivers and streams in many cases.

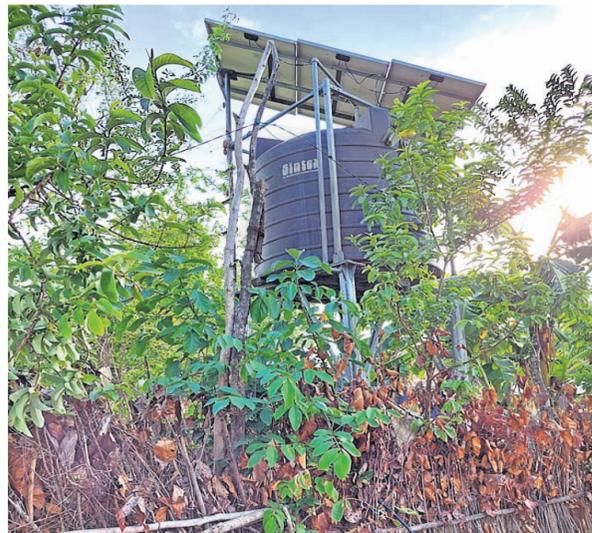
It was alleged that the company which installed the solar system is not setting things right despite signing an agreement with the government for its maintenance for five years.

A case in point is Purunajoda panchayat under Telkoi block in Keonjhar district where 40 families depend on river water since the day their solar energy-based drinking water project became defunct

Over 150 solar-powered pump sets are defunct in Anandapur sub-division, leaving people to face drinking water crisis. In such cases, people feed on water from rivers, rivulets and streams in their localities.

A case in point is Purunajoda panchayat under Telkoi block where 40 families depend on river water since the day their solar energy-based drinking water project became defunct. Hundreds of people living in

PEOPLE FEED ON RIVER, STREAM WATER



Ramchandrapur and Tigiria villages under Kaliahata panchayat have been suffering a lot for the same reason.

The villagers pleaded for quick repair of these drinking water projects which are being executed by Rural Water Supply and Sanitation (RWSS) department.

People in the tribal pockets lamented that they are being deprived of basic drinking water. Locals observed that drinking unhygienic water is causing sickness and diseases.

They pointed out that lakhs of rupees are spent on drinking water projects, but the department has failed to dis-

charge its responsibility to maintain these in hilly and remote areas.

They added that the company is bound by an agreement with the RWSS department to repair these projects wherever necessary till five years after their installation, but nothing is being done.

Though affected villagers apprised the RWSS authorities about their miseries due to shortage of water, no steps have been taken to set these projects right. Locals have been demanding immediate repair of solar-powered drinking water projects to alleviate their sufferings.

GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA No. A-301
OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER
MINOR IRRIGATION DIVISION, KHARIAR
e-Procurement Notice
 Bid Identification No.- 01 /EE MIDKHR/2021-22
 e-mail ID : eemidivision_khariar@rediffmail.com

No. 975 Dt. 07.07.2021

- Name of the work : Construction of civil Work under M.I.Division,Khariar.
- No of Works : 23 (Twenty three) Nos.
- Estimated cost : Varies from Rs.0.45 lakhs to Rs.22.32 lakhs (Approximately)
- Cost of Tender paper : Varies from Rs.400/- to Rs. 6000/- (Non-Refundable)
- Class of Contractor : "D", "C" & "B"
- Period of completion : Varies from 01 to 04 Calendar months
- Date and Time of availability of bid Documents in the portal : From 17.07.2021 (10.00 AM) to 26.07.2021 (5.00 PM)
- Last date / time of receipt of bids in the portal : 26.07.2021 (5.00 PM)
- Date of opening of Bid documents : On dt. 27.07.2021 at 10.00 A.M in the Office of the Executive Engineer, M.I. Division, Khariar
- Date of lottery (if required) : 31.07.2021 at 11.00 AM
- The detail tender call notice can also be seen in the e-procurement portal : <http://tendersodisha.gov.in>
- Digital Signature Certificate of Bidder : The bidders must possess Compatible Digital Signature Certificate (DSC)
- Name & Address of the Officer Inviting Tender : Executive Engineer, M.I.Division, Khariar, At/PO: Khariar, Dist: Nuapada PIN-766107, Ph. No. - 06671-224284, eemidivision_khariar@rediffmail.com

Email ID "Further details can be seen from the e-Procurement market place. <http://tendersodisha.gov.in>

Sd./- S.P. Kalamuri
 Executive Engineer, M.I. Division, Khariar
 OIPR-3209011/0001/2122

BHUBANESWAR MUNICIPAL CORPORATION
 E-Mail Id: ae-elect@bmc.gov.in and
 No. C-570: sethshyamsundar@gmail.com
 No. 58069 XXVII-146/21 Dt.07.07.21

TENDER CALL NOTICE

- Bid Reference No. : BMC-EED-II/03(EL)/2020-21 Dt.07.07.2021
- Tender Call Notice No. : No. 58069 Dt.07.07.21
- Name of Work : 1. Supply and fixing of Electric incinerator of capacity 05 Kg/ Hr with Control panel & 3 mtr chimney.
2. Supply & installation of AMF panel including earthing of DG set at Gas Human Crematorium, Jalimunda Sahi for 35 KVA DG Set.
- Bid Value of Work : Rs.1,60,000.00 & Rs.3,25,000.00
- Period of Completion : 30 days

Date and time Schedule

Start	End	Opening
11.00 A.M.	5.00 P.M.	11.00 A.M.
Dt.15.07.21	Dt.26.07.21	Dt.28.07.21

6. The Bid documents will be available at the Office of the Asst. Executive Engineer (Elect.), BMC, BBSR.
 Sd./- Executive Engineer, Div.-II
 Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation
 OIPR-13002/11/0037/2122

GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA
AGRICULTURE DEPARTMENT
OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER (AGRI.),
DHENKANAL DIVISION, DHENKANAL
INVITATION FOR BIDS (IFB)
e procurement notice

Bid identification number / Tender call notice no – E E (A) D/D-01 of 2021-22

No. L-29:- The Executive Engineer (Agril.), Dhenkanal Division, Dhenkanal who has been authorised as the procuring officer for the projects of Dhenkanal Division, Dhenkanal is directed to invite percentage rate bid on behalf of the Governor of Odisha for the Civil construction works under Dhenkanal Division. The costs of the projects are approximately from 7.00 lakhs to 35.00 lakhs. Bid document consisting of detailed tender call notice, the schedule of quantities and the set of terms and conditions of the contract and other necessary documents can be downloaded from www.tendersorissa.gov.in from 19.07.2021 at 10.00 hours to 31.07.2021 at 16.00 hours. The bid will be opened on 04.08.2021 at 11.00 hours in the O/o Executive Engineer (Agril.), Dhenkanal Division, Dhenkanal. All other details regarding term and conditions, corrigendum from time to time if any, DTCN etc. can be seen and downloaded from www.tendersorissa.gov.in.
 Email ID:-eeagri.dhenkanal@gmail.com
 Executive Engineer (Agril.)
 Dhenkanal Division, Dhenkanal
 OIPR-01004/11/0001/2122

ତହସିଲଦାରଙ୍କ କାର୍ଯ୍ୟାଳୟ, ଜଳେଶ୍ୱର
 ବିଜ୍ଞପ୍ତି ସଂଖ୍ୟା: ୨୫୩୧ ଚାଂଚା୦୭୨୧

ସୈରାତ ଉତ୍ସ (MTA) ନିଳାମ ବିଜ୍ଞାପନ ନିମନ୍ତେ

No. F-69: ସତ୍ୟବାଦୀ ସର୍ବସାଧାରଣଙ୍କ ଅବଗତ ନିମନ୍ତେ ଜଣାଇ ବିଆଯାଉଅଛି ଯେ, ଓଡ଼ିଶା ସରକାରଙ୍କ ରାଜସ୍ୱ ଓ ବିପର୍ଯ୍ୟୟ ପରିଚାଳନା ବିଭାଗ ଅଧିକୃତ ଜଳେଶ୍ୱର ତହସିଲ ଅନ୍ତର୍ଗତ ସୈରାତ ଉତ୍ସକୁ ବିକ୍ରୟ କରିବା ପାଇଁ ଚର୍ଚ୍ଚା ୨୦୨୧-୨୨ ନିମନ୍ତେ ନିର୍ଦ୍ଧାରିତ ଚାହିଣ ୨୦୦୭୨୧ ବିଦା ୧୧.୦୦ ଘଟିକା ସମୟରେ ଜଳେଶ୍ୱର ତହସିଲ କାର୍ଯ୍ୟାଳୟରେ ଖଣ୍ଡପ୍ରାପ୍ତ ଅଧିକାରୀଙ୍କ ଦ୍ୱାରା ପ୍ରକାଶ ନିଳାମଦେବା ପାଇଁ ଶୁଭାକୃତ ହୋଇଅଛି। ନିଳାମ ହେବାପରେ ସୈରାତ ଉତ୍ସକୁ ବିକ୍ରୟ କରିବା ଓ ନିଳାମ ସମ୍ପର୍କିତ ତଥ୍ୟ ସମସ୍ତ କାର୍ଯ୍ୟ ବିବରଣୀଗୁଡ଼ିକ ସୈରାତ କାର୍ଯ୍ୟାଳୟରେ ଉପଲବ୍ଧ ହେବ। ଚାହିଣ ସମ୍ପର୍କିତ ସୂଚନା ପାଇଁ ଜଳେଶ୍ୱର ବିଭାଗର Website: www.baleswar.nic.in ଉପରେ ଉପଲବ୍ଧ ହେବ। ଏହି ନିଳାମ ନେତାଙ୍କୁ ଆଗ୍ରଣୀ ବ୍ୟକ୍ତିଗଣେ ଉଚ୍ଚ ଧାର୍ଯ୍ୟ ଚାହିଣ ଓ ସମୟରେ ତହସିଲ କାର୍ଯ୍ୟାଳୟରେ ଉପସ୍ଥିତ ହୋଇ ସମସ୍ତ ଉପ ନିମନ୍ତେ ଧାର୍ଯ୍ୟ ସରକାରୀ ମୁଦ୍ରିତ ଶୁଳ୍କଦା ୧୦% (ବଣ ପ୍ରତିଶତ) ବରାଦା ଧରା (earnest money) ବାବଦକୁ ନଗଦ ଅର୍ଥ କିମ୍ବା ବ୍ୟାଙ୍କ ଡ୍ରାଫ୍ଟ ଆକାରରେ ଜମା ଦେଇ ନିଳାମରେ ଅଂଶ ଗ୍ରହଣ କରି ପାରିବେ। ଉପରୋକ୍ତ ଧାର୍ଯ୍ୟ ଚାହିଣରେ ନିଳାମ ହୋଇ ନ ପାରିଥିବା ସୈରାତ ଉତ୍ସକୁ ବିକ୍ରୟ ପାଇଁ ଧାର୍ଯ୍ୟ ଚାହିଣରେ ଉପସ୍ଥିତ ହୋଇ ନିଳାମ କରାଯିବ। ଅନିର୍ଦ୍ଧାରିତ କାରଣଗୁଡ଼ିକ କିମ୍ବା କୌଣସି କାରଣ ନ ଦର୍ଶାଇ ନିଳାମ ପ୍ରକ୍ରିୟାକୁ ଘୁଟିତ ରଖିବା କିମ୍ବା ବାଟିକ କରିବାର ଖଣ୍ଡପ୍ରକାର ରହିବିନା।

୩/- ତହସିଲଦାର, ଜଳେଶ୍ୱର
 OIPR-24123/11/0001/2122

FOCUS GEOPOLITICS

BIDEN'S AFGHAN BLUNDER



Robert Gates, who served as secretary of defence under Presidents George W Bush and Barack Obama, wrote in 2014 that Biden "has been wrong on nearly every major foreign-policy and national-security issue over the past four decades." The hurried US withdrawal from Afghanistan is set to extend that pattern

Now, the US is leaving Afghans at the mercy of a marauding Islamist force – one with a long history of savage behaviour. Already, the Taliban offensive has displaced tens of thousands of civilians. And while the Afghan government in Kabul teeters, the Taliban is seizing American weapons from the Afghan military and showing them off as they march across the country.

The world's most powerful military, and then handing Afghanistan back to that militia. This undercuts global trust in the US, jeopardises Afghan and regional security, and threatens to trigger a resurgence of terror worldwide.

The Taliban's impending return to power will surely emerge and embolden other terrorist groups in the larger global jihadist movement. Furthermore, the Taliban, a creature of Pakistani ISI, still receives significant aid from Pakistan's military. So, while Biden says that Afghanistan's future is now in its own hands, it is actually mostly in Pakistani hands, as Afghan President Ashraf Ghani recently noted. Among those facing the most acute risks is India. When the Taliban was last in power, from 1996 to 2001, it allowed Pakistan to use Afghan territory to train terrorists for missions in India. Its return to power could thus open a new front for terrorism against India, which would then have to shift its focus from intensifying military standoffs with China in the Himalayas.

The Taliban's resurgence in Afghanistan helps China in other ways, too. Given that Pakistan is a Chinese client, the US withdrawal paves the way for China to make strategic inroads into

Afghanistan, with its substantial mineral wealth and strategic location between Pakistan and Iran.

China would achieve this by offering the Taliban the two things it desperately needs: international recognition and economic aid. With Russia also likely to recognise the Taliban's leadership in Afghanistan, the group will have little incentive to moderate its violence, despite its current attempts to polish its image.

Biden had a better option: The US could have maintained a small residual force in Afghanistan, in order to provide critical air support and reassurance to Afghan forces. Yes, this would have violated the deal that Biden's predecessor, Donald Trump, struck with the Taliban in February 2020. But the Taliban have already violated that Faustian bargain. Biden was happy to overturn many of Trump's other actions, making his insistence on upholding this deal difficult to understand.

Biden says the US is "developing a counterterrorism over-the-horizon capability" that does not require a physical presence in Afghanistan. But if Afghan security continues to unravel, "over-the-horizon" operations will make little difference. The more likely scenario will be an emergency evacuation of US embassy personnel and other American citizens from Kabul, much like the evacuation from Saigon in 1975.

Robert Gates, who served as secretary of defence under Presidents George W. Bush and Barack Obama, wrote in 2014 that Biden "has been wrong on nearly every major foreign-policy and national-security issue over the past four decades." The hurried US withdrawal from Afghanistan is set to extend that pattern.

The writer is Professor of Strategic Studies at the New Delhi-based Centre for Policy Research and Fellow at the Robert Bosch Academy in Berlin.

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Brahma Chellaney

ALREADY, THE TALIBAN OFFENSIVE HAS DISPLACED TENS OF THOUSANDS OF CIVILIANS. AND WHILE THE AFGHAN GOVERNMENT IN KABUL TEETERS, THE TALIBAN IS SEIZING AMERICAN WEAPONS FROM THE AFGHAN MILITARY AND SHOWING THEM OFF AS THEY MARCH ACROSS THE COUNTRY

Afghanistan is on the brink of catastrophe, and it is US President Joe Biden's fault. By overruling America's top generals and ordering the hasty withdrawal of US troops, Biden opened the way for Taliban terrorists to capture more than a quarter of Afghanistan's districts. Now, the Taliban is pushing toward Kabul, and the United States is looking weaker than ever.

The US effectively ended its military operations in Afghanistan July 1, when it handed over to the Afghan government the sprawling Bagram Air Base, which long served as the staging ground for US operations in the country. In fact, "handover" is too generous a description. In a sign of what is to come, US forces quietly slipped out of the base overnight after shutting off the electricity. The resulting security lapse allowed looters to scavenge the facilities before Afghan troops arrived and gained control.

Biden has vehemently defended his decision to withdraw, arguing that the US "did not go to Afghanistan to nation-build" and that "staying would have meant US troops taking casualties." He has also stood by his rushed approach, insisting that "speed is safety" in this context. "How many thousands more of America's daughters and sons are you willing to risk?"

The implication was clear: Questioning the wisdom of the US withdrawal is tantamount to supporting the endangerment of Americans. But it is Afghans who are really in jeopardy.

Recall the last time the US left a war unfinished: In 1973, it hastily abandoned its allies in South Vietnam. The next year, 80,000 South Vietnamese soldiers and civilians were reportedly killed as a result of the conflict, making it the deadliest year of the entire Vietnam War. It is also worth noting that in 1975, the US effectively handed Cambodia to the China-backed ultra-communist Khmer Rouge, who went on to carry out unimaginable horrors.

SPECTRUM SOCIETY

Judicial overreach for uniform civil code

Justice Prathiba M Singh of the Delhi High Court while hearing an estranged couple's plea for divorce has observed that a common code for all citizens as expressed in Article 44 of the Constitution "ought not to remain a hope, but become a reality." She was referring to the landmark Shah Bano case verdict wherein the Supreme Court in 1985 had observed: "A common civil code would help the cause of national integration by removing disparate loyalties to laws having conflicting ideologies." The SC had observed that Article 44 of the Constitution has remained a dead letter and there is no evidence of any official activity for framing a civil code for the country.

The Shah Bano verdict was the first challenge to the Muslim Personal Law (1937) which denied maintenance to indigent divorced Muslim women. Then CJI YV Chandrachud had observed that right to equality and absence of discrimination against women enshrined in Articles 14 & 15 equally apply to Muslim women. Section 125 of CrPC, which provides for maintenance to divorced women, would over-ride archaic and patriarchal Muslim Personal Law. However, the contentious part of the judgement was its direction to the government to bring in a uniform civil

code at the earliest. The court referred to Dr Tahir Mahmood's scholarly book on Muslim Personal Law which says: "In pursuance of the goal of secularism, the State must stop administration of religion-based personal laws... Instead of wasting energies in exerting political and theological pressure... the Muslims will do well to begin exploring and demonstrating how the true Islamic laws, purged of their time-worn and anachronistic interpretations, can enrich the common civil code of India."

The court has been assiduously following this line of argument in subsequent judgements like the Sarla Mudgal judgement, 1985, where Justice Kuldeep Singh had observed: "When 80 per cent of the citizens have already been brought under the codified personal law, there is no justification to keep in abeyance introduction of a uniform civil code." In Lily Thomas Case, 2000, desirability of a uniform civil code particularly in regard to succession was reiterated. In ADC vs. NCT (2015), the SC lamented the absence of a uniform civil code with regard to guardianship of a Christian child.

Interestingly, the Law Commission of India in its report in August 2018 had stated that a uniform civil code is neither necessary nor desirable at this stage. "Secularism cannot con-

tradict the plurality prevalent in the country," the Commission said.

In this backdrop it would be useful to look at the larger picture of conflicting provisions in the Constitution and the contrarian viewpoint of academia and activists who are opposed to introduction of a uniform civil code. The Constitution has clearly provided in Articles 25 and 26 the right to profess, practice and propagate religion to all. On the other hand, Article 44 is an invocation to the State to endeavour for introduction of a uniform civil code. Therefore, introduction of a uniform civil code would be a clear negation of fundamental rights given to religious minorities.

The idea of achieving common Indian identity is undesirable because Indian identity is plural and a synthesis of differing views. Detractors believe that instead of a uniform social code, the state should attempt to bring in substantive equality at all levels and promote socio-economic justice for all.

Flavia Agnes, a well-known women's rights activist, believes that uniformity has not worked well for women in India. Rather than uniformity women need an accessible and affordable justice delivery system and inclusive model of development. Prof Nivedita Menon believes that national in-

tegrity as a rationale for a uniform civil code along with its conflation with women's rights is unacceptable because of its implicit homogenising thrust. She strongly advocates reforms in personal laws which are patently unjust.

The above perspective clearly brings home the inherent dangers of cultural homogenisation, given the plurality of Indian society. The Sarla Mudgal judgement made a sobering observation: "The desirability of uniform civil code can hardly be doubted. But it can concretise only when social climate is properly built up by elite of the society; statesmen amongst leaders who instead of gaining personal mileage rise above and awaken the masses to accept the change."

Given the divisive times that we live in, respecting plurality in practice of personal laws rather than foisting Hindutva under the guise of a uniform civil code would be advisable. Promoting socio-economic justice, transcending religious consideration should be the predominant remit of the government. The judiciary should not be seen as promoting a uniform civil code at a time when the pluralistic fabric of India is under severe strain.

The writer teaches Constitutional Law.

Can everybody contact the higher forces? No, not indeed; but they submit themselves to a discipline and this brings them success.

SRI AUROBINDO



Build Forward Better

The Covid-19 pandemic has recast the world for millions of people. Or, more correctly, the pandemic has exposed and aggravated deep inequalities of race, gender, and class across societies, and highlighted the inability of many political systems to respond in ways that protect individual human rights and dignity. The world will neither rebuild from this crisis, nor have any chance of tackling wider existential threats such as climate change, until we can once more instill a sense of hope in political and civic life.

Fortunately, in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, a roadmap already exists to help humanity chart a path forward. The declaration, adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 1948, is as relevant today as it was amid the physical and moral devastation caused by World War II.

Article 1 of the declaration states an abiding truth with resounding clarity: "All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights." To realise this vision today, we must push leaders to go beyond warm words and commit to meaningful, feasible, and measurable actions. In particular, they need to ensure equitable global distribution of Covid-19 vaccines and provide adequate financial support to countries most vulnerable to the ravages of climate change.

For starters, high-income countries must take steps to achieve the Gavi COVAX Advance Market Commitment target of providing at least one billion vaccine doses to the world's poorest countries no later than September 1, 2021, and more than two billion doses by mid-2022.

It is both morally unjust and – in health and economic terms – myopic for rich countries to hoard Covid-19 vaccines for their own populations. The longer the coronavirus persists and mutates in poorer countries with fewer resources, the further away humanity as a whole will be from fully vanquishing the threat to lives and livelihoods.

In the same spirit, G7 and G20 leaders should support calls at the World Health Organisation and the World Trade Organisation for voluntary licensing and technology transfer for production of vaccines. Failing that, they should back an immediate waiver of certain intellectual-property rights under WTO rules – a move that US President Joe Biden recently supported.

Sadly, at their recent summit in the United Kingdom, G7 leaders failed to show an understanding of the scale of their responsibility to address the inequalities exacerbated by the pandemic. More broadly, Covid-19 has exposed the shortcomings of narrow nationalism and populist policies that disdain scientific evidence and empathy. No country, regardless of its power or size, can tackle the public-health threat effectively on its own.

It is essential that leaders learn from their mistakes and heed the recommendations of the expert Independent Panel for Pandemic Preparedness and Response. Only properly financed, integrated, and organised health systems will be able to withstand future pandemics and health emergencies.

As matters stand, however, the rich world's failures in tackling Covid-19 have increased the trust deficit between the Global North and South. This in turn will make it more difficult to reach an agreement at the next critical international diplomatic gathering: the COP26 climate summit in Glasgow in November.

All countries need to ratchet up their near-term emissions-reduction targets ahead of COP26, and we are still waiting for the major emitters to do so. In addition, rich countries must rebuild trust by showing how they will increase their climate finance contributions – including a greater share for adaptation – to deliver the long-pledged \$100 billion per year to help developing countries combat global warming and its effects.

Two common threads run through the shared challenges we face in defending human rights, overcoming the pandemic, and tackling the climate crisis: the need for vigilance against complacency, and the responsibility to act for the greater good. In these testing times, we can all draw inspiration from a leader who never wavered in his commitment to human rights and justice: Nelson Mandela.

It is a historical irony that the Universal Declaration of Human Rights was adopted in the same year that South Africa established its apartheid regime. But Mandela immediately saw the declaration's power and potential. Speaking in 1997 as President of South Africa, he reflected that, "For all the opponents of this pernicious system, the simple and noble words of the Universal Declaration were a sudden ray of hope at one of our darkest moments."

Today more than ever, we need to rediscover and reassert the declaration's principles of solidarity and common endeavour that Mandela so powerfully articulated throughout his life. Our task now is not to "build back better," because we cannot build back from a status quo ante that produced inequitable and dysfunctional systems. Rather, we must "build forward better," marshaling our efforts with hope, discipline, and determination to build a sustainable, peaceful, and just world for future generations.

The writer, former President of Ireland and UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, is Chair of The Elders.

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WISDOM CORNER

- He is not a lover who does not love forever. EURIPIDES
- We first make our habits, and then our habits make us. JOHN DRYDEN
- Education is a progressive discovery of our own ignorance. WILL DURANT

WORDSWORTH

Omnishambles

A rather splendid word entered the UK political lexicon in 2012. It was uttered in the House of Commons during Prime Minister's Questions April 18 by the Labour leader of the Opposition, Ed Miliband. He called the coalition government of the Conservatives and Liberal Democrats an omnishambles because of several serious policy and public-relations blunders, including some unexpected consequences of the Chancellor's budget of the previous month. The Daily Mail commented that omnishambles "described the combination of tragedy and farce that characterises modern politics" and the word has been gleefully taken up by many commentators, some even in the Conservative press. It began life in The Thick of It, a satirical BBC TV series about Westminster politics created by Armando Iannucci. It was said in an episode in October 2009 by the foul-mouthed government head of communications Malcolm Tucker, played by Peter Capaldi, though he meant by it one particular person's incompetence in everything she did. The word appeared a few times following the broadcast but Ed Miliband's use set it trending, as they say over on Twitter. Its instant popularity was indicated through a number of compounds that were soon coined, including omnishambolism and omnishambolic.



SN Misra

THE JUDICIARY SHOULD NOT BE SEEN AS PROMOTING A UNIFORM CIVIL CODE AT A TIME WHEN THE PLURALISTIC FABRIC OF INDIA IS UNDER SEVERE STRAIN

Letters

TO THE EDITOR

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

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

Green ambience & students

Sir, Following the concept of Satyabadi Vana Vidyalaya of Pandit Gopabandhu Das and Shantiniketan of Rabindranath Tagore, the state government has taken the initiative to provide soothing environs in educational institutions. All government-run schools in the state are to be gifted with a luxuriant green ambience under the Institutional Plantation Programme. The School and Mass Education Department has asked the District Collectors to ensure that plantation is taken up in a massive way in schools having boundary walls or proper barricade fencing. The Panchayati Raj & Drinking Water Department has agreed to provide funds for maintenance of these plants for four years from the NREGA funds. The saplings of forest species and fruit-bearing varieties which are suitable to local conditions must be planted inside the campuses. It is necessary to ask the managements of private-run schools to take up such plantation drives. Parents will be motivated to send their children to schools to let them learn in the lap of nature.

Hitesh Kumar Parida, JAJPUR

Unruly fans

Sir, Ticketless football fans clashed, breached security cordons and charged into the Wembley Stadium during Italy versus England Euro 2021 final. Three England stars - Marcus Rashford, Jadon Sancho and Bukayo Saka - whose penalty shootout misses handed victory to the Azzurri became targets of racial abuse. The shameful display has come in for condemnation from several quarters, including political leaders and football chiefs and could jeopardise England's 2030 World Cup bid.

NJ Ravi Chander, BANGALORE

Quitting politics forever

Sir, Super star Rajinikanth has once and for all decided to quit politics as he has realised that politics is not his cup of tea. The statements of the actor made earlier and his hesitation to launch a political party unlike Kamal Hassan have made it clear that he has no interest in politics and it is because of the pressure from fans and well-wishers that he talks about politics. The matinee idol has decided to dissolve the Rajini Makkal Mandram but will continue with his fan club - Rajinikanth Rasigarr Narpani Mandram to provide humanitarian services to the poor and the downtrodden. It is better Rajinikanth continues to remain in the entertainment industry where he is a matchless legend.

M Pradyu, KANNUR

People from Bihar push illegal liquor

POST NEWS NETWORK

Baripada, July 14: Spurious liquor trade and drug peddling are thriving in many pockets of Mayurbhanj district. It is said that liquor mafia from Bihar is pulling the strings of this illegal trade, a report said.

According to the report, spirit and other materials used for making spurious liquor and brown sugar are supplied from parts of West Bengal to Mayurbhanj.

Scores of outlets have been permitted to Odia people to sell country and foreign liquor in the district, but most of the shops have been leased out to people of Bihar. In fact, the entire liquor trade is being controlled by Bihar people.

On the other hand, brown sugar smuggling is flourishing despite raids by police and STF. Brown sugar worth lakhs of rupees has been seized in the past too. Compared to previous years, such illegal activities have gone up several times in the district.

The liquor business in the district generates over 30 crore as revenue per annum. More revenue could be generated from the district, if excise officials succeed to curb illegal liquor trade.

Liquor is sold even at grocery shops, betel shops and road-side eateries in many areas. Spurious liquor business is also run parallel in most pockets.

According to official informa-

RAMPANT BOOTLEGGING



LIQUOR IS SOLD EVEN AT GROCERY SHOPS, BETEL SHOPS AND ROAD-SIDE EATERIES IN RURAL AREAS. SPURIOUS LIQUOR BUSINESS IS RUN PARALLEL IN MOST TRIBAL POCKETS OF THE DISTRICT

Scores of outlets have been permitted to Odia people to sell country and foreign liquor in Mayurbhanj district, but most of the shops have been leased out to people of Bihar. In fact, the entire liquor trade is being controlled by Bihar people

Brown sugar smuggling is also flourishing despite raids by police and STF. Brown sugar worth lakhs of rupees has been seized in the past too

tion, there are 86 off foreign liquor shops, 14 bars and 20 country liquor outlets in the district.

It was learnt that the district had recorded a huge turnover of liquor trade during shutdown and lockdown last year—the volume of liquor sale was Rs 300 crore. However, this turnover is expected to go up to Rs 350 crore this year.

Given the scope of liquor trade in the district, the excise department has set a target of generating Rs 35 crore as revenue from the current year.

However, illegal liquor trade has been a hurdle in generation of more revenues in the district. The excise department has been un-

successfully carrying out raids and seizures to curb such parallel trade. Last year, 41 people were arrested in connection with bootlegging and drug-peddling in the district while 164 cases had been registered.

However, in the current year, the excise department has stepped up its action against bootleggers. Till June 15, excise officials have registered 357 cases and arrested 286 people in the district.

The department explains that shortage of manpower has been a hurdle in containing the illegal liquor trade. The department now requires 27 constables.

Four excise range offices are op-

erating at Baripada, Udala, Rairangpur and Karanjia, besides two mobile units.

Only four vehicles are available with the department to conduct raids. More manpower and vehicles are needed to act against the liquor traders, it is said.

Shantanu Pal, a resident of Baripada, said the people from Bihar supply spirit (meant for liquor making) from West Bengal. This spirit is supplied to local youths who churn out liquor in the name of branded companies.

Rakesh Singh, president of Dalit Adivasi Mahasangh, expressed concern over the proliferation of the spurious liquor trade. "People of Bihar take out liquor outlets on lease, but push spurious liquor through them. Poor tribals are at the receiving end of the spurious liquor business. Most of them squander away a major part of their daily income while their domestic life is affected by their alcoholism," he added.

Many tribal families have come to the streets due to routine consumption of spurious liquor, he added.

Excise superintendent Ashok Kumar Seth said raids are being carried out to catch the bootleggers.

"The department can curb the illegal liquor trade to a great extent if vacant posts are filled up and more four-wheelers are supplied to us," he observed.

POPULATION CONTROL LAW



Activists of a social organisation take out a rally in Sambalpur, pressing for implementation of the strict population control law in the country

OP PHOTO

Passenger-halt facility at Machhapada likely

POST NEWS NETWORK

Baisinga, July 14: People have demanded passenger train halt at Machhapada in Baisinga area of Mayurbhanj district for decades. Their hope for the project has brightened after a technical team of the railways conducted a survey at the place recently.

The survey came hours after a delegation from the area met Union Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnav in New Dehli.

Over 30,000 people living in Santra, Raghupur, Ambagadia and Baisinga panchayats will benefit from the passenger halt at Machhapada.

It was stated that Thakurtota railway station of Rupsa-Bangiriposi railway is 2 km from Machhapada. People of these areas have been putting pressure on leaders for a passenger halt facility.

They pointed out that after



Over 30,000 people living in Santra, Raghupur, Ambagadia and Baisinga panchayats will benefit from the passenger halt at Machhapada

Ashwini Vaishnav became Union Railway Minister and Mayurbhanj MP Bisweswar Tudu was made Union Minister of State for Tribal Affairs and Jal Shakti, their demand will surely be fulfilled.

A couple of days ago, a delegation of people's representatives of Baisinga and Betanoti areas led by Union Minister Bisweswar Tudu had met the Union Railway Minister. During the meeting, the delegation demanded upgradation of Betanoti railway station and

establishment of a passenger halt at Machhapada.

Hours after this meeting, a technical team from the Railway Ministry, comprising a section engineer, a telecom engineer, a commercial inspector and a divisional manager, conducted a survey at Machhapada.

Scores of local people met the technical team and, insisted on immediate steps for establishment of a passenger halt facility at the place.

Youth hacked to death over past enmity

POST NEWS NETWORK

Chhendipada, July 14: A youth was hacked to death by a co-villager over past enmity at Patrapada village under this police limits in Angul district, late Tuesday night.

Profusely bleeding, Jeetendra Sahu, 35, collapsed on the road and succumbed before any help could reach him. On being informed, Bagadia outpost police reached the spot and started an investigation.

Athamallik SDPO Bhabani Shankar Udgata, Nisha and Chhendipada police officials Wednesday reached the spot and took stock of the murder. Police registered a case over a complaint lodged by the deceased's family and detained the deceased's friend Pitabas and four of his associates. A forensic team and sniffer dogs were pressed into service. The murder weapon was seized and the body sent for post-mortem.

Police said the deceased, Jeetendra and the accused, Pitabas, were friends. A dispute arose between them over the marriage of a minor girl and non-payment of fare of a hired vehicle. This soured their relationship and led to an altercation between the two Tuesday evening. Deeply hurt, Jeetendra returned home and hurled abuses at Pitabas and his family in an inebriated condition. He left home and was resting near a temple when Pitabas noticed him and hacked him with an axe.

BJP protests PMAY irregularities

POST NEWS NETWORK

Naktideula, July 14: The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) alleged massive irregularities in the allotment of pucca houses under the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (PMAY). Hundreds of BJP workers from various parts of Naktideula block staged protests near the block office here in Sambalpur Wednesday.

They lamented that due to irregularities and corruption, the PMAY has failed to meet its objective in the district. Thousands of genuine beneficiaries are suffering without roofs over their heads.

The agitation was led by the party's mandal president Netrananda Rouh. The BJP workers slammed the state government for its involvement in corruption in the rural housing scheme.



They stated that large scale corruption in housing scheme had come to the fore after a central government team revealed it in its report. They alleged that pucca houses were allotted to ineligible beneficiaries in the district. They also stated that the state government had hijacked the central housing scheme by branding it as Biju

Pucca Ghara Yojana. Plaques are seen fixed on the walls of the PMAY houses, they alleged, adding that housing units are distributed to ruling party workers.

They also said that genuine beneficiaries are deprived of their rights. Later, the delegation submitted a memorandum to the Governor through the BDO.

13 injured as van overturns in Ganjam

POST NEWS NETWORK

Patrapur, July 14: At least 13 persons were rendered hurt including seven of them critically after a van they were travelling in overturned near a temple at Talapada village under Patrapur block in Ganjam district.

Locals and police rescued the injured and rushed them to Patrapur Community Health Centre (CHC). The doctors administered them

treatment. Seven of the injured were shifted MKCG Medical College and Hospital in Berhampur as their condition deteriorated.

The mishap occurred when 20 construction workers were returning from Nuapentha village when the vehicle overturned after a tyre of the vehicle burst on the road.

On being informed, Jarada police personnel, Patrapur BDO and teshildar rushed to the spot and launched a rescue operation.

Sambalpur: Rtd prof, sons held for possessing gun

POST NEWS NETWORK

Sambalpur, July 14: Burla police arrested a retired professor of Sambalpur University and his two sons under the Arms Act, 1959 for illegally possessing a double-barrel gun and also for allegedly using it while threatening a local man in this town, Wednesday.

According to a senior police of-

ficial, the accused identified as Keshav Chandra Panda was a professor in Physics department of the university. He had retired about 10 years ago. The retired professor's two sons have been identified as Durgesh and Dinesh, the official said.

Acting on an FIR lodged by Rahul Sharma from Burla town, police have arrested the professor and

his sons. The accused trio had allegedly threatened the complainant July 12 when the latter objected to a boundary wall erected on his plot along NH-65 near Hirakud railway station.

After being threatened with dire consequences, Sharma had left the construction site fearing for his life. However, he had managed to record the entire incident on his mo-

bile phone. On the other hand, based on a counter-FIR lodged by Keshav, police have arrested two more persons named Basant Naik and Magadhu Singh.

The professor alleged that a group of people led by Rahul and Amit Guru had demolished his boundary wall on the same plot and assaulted one of his sons, Burla SDPO S Dash informed.

HELPING HAND



A one-stop centre at PRM Medical College and Hospital in Baripada will provide emergency assistance, medical and legal help to destitute and distressed women

OP PHOTO

Commuters suffer as construction of bridges hangs fire in Malkangiri

POST NEWS NETWORK

Malkangiri, July 14: Construction work on two high-level bridges on Balimela-Malkangiri road here are far from over despite four years having lapsed since the projects were launched.

Even a slight drizzle causes the residents to experience a harrowing time commuting on the road as rain water flows about four to five feet above the low-level bridges and culverts.

In order to alleviate the sufferings of the people from this perennial problem, the government had started construction of three high-level bridges at MV-11, Korukonda and MV-37 on Balimela-Malkangiri road over four years ago. At present, there are low level culverts at these places.

As of now, the construction of the high level bridge at MV-11 has been completed and vehicular movement has also been allowed. But the fate of the two other bridges at Korukonda and MV-37 is still hanging in balance.

The Malkangiri-Balimela road is the only path that connects Malkangiri and Balimela. Thousands of people of residing in villages under Korukonda, Tarlakota and Patrol panchayats depend on this road. In order to visit the block and teshil offices, people have no other alternative. During



Fate of two other bridges at Korukonda and MV-37 has been hanging in balance as people continue to suffer in silence

the rainy season, these villagers experience immense hardships as they remain cut off from the district headquarters for days together.

Local villagers said they were hopeful that the bridges would be completed at least before this rainy

season. But that did not happen. "We are suffering as the contractor is not earnest in completing the work. During the monsoon when rainwater flows over the culverts, we have no choice but to wait till the water recedes," rued some villagers.

When contacted, Malkangiri Additional District Magistrate Birsan Pradhan said that the contractor has already been directed to complete the remaining work at the earliest. The half-constructed bridges will soon be completed, he added.

Catholic nun appears in HC to fight her own case

Sister Lucy Kalapurakkal had supported the nuns' strike in Kerala demanding the arrest of rape-accused Bishop Franco Mulakkal

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Kochi, July 14: In a first of a kind move, a Catholic nun Wednesday appeared as 'party in person' in the Kerala High Court to fight her own case.

Sister Lucy Kalapurakkal was dismissed from the church at Kerala's Manthavady in August 2019 by the Franciscan Clarist Congregation, after getting the Vatican's clearance, for disobeying church authorities.

Since then, she has been fighting her case and she refused to move out from the convent in Wayanad district that she is residing in.

Wednesday after her counsel withdrew for personal reasons, the nun herself appeared as party in person and said that since she already has the case against her congregation in another court, she should be allowed to reside at her convent, till its verdict comes.

She also wanted a review of an earlier directive of the High Court, which, in the course of the proceedings in the case, expressed doubts if she can continue to reside in the convent.

Making a passionate plea, Sister



Lucy, noting that she has completed 25 years of service as a nun and wish to continue the same way, said she has nowhere to go and should not be driven on to the streets. She requested police protection at the place where she resides in the convent.

But the counsel for the congregation contended that as a rule, a nun, when she moves from one place to another place, should only stay in a convent and Sister Lucy, in the course of conducting the

case, has violated all this.

The court, however, pointed out that they are prepared to ensure that she gets protection to her life and property, wherever she stays. The court later posted the case for giving its final verdict.

Sister Lucy had supported the nuns' strike in the state demanding the arrest of rape-accused Bishop Franco Mulakkal, who headed the Roman Catholic Diocese in Jalandhar.

However, she became a target of the Church authorities after she joined the nuns' protest against the delay in Mulakkal's arrest despite the FIR against him.

But even though she was asked to move out from the convent then, she got an order from a court that she should not be forced out and has been staying there since then.

Since then she had been receiving notices from the church on charges such as airing her opinion about the bishop on TV channels, owning a car, and writing a book.

Incidentally, the Kerala High Court, in December 2019 declined to ban the nun's autobiography titled "Karthavinte Namethil (In the name of Christ)" and it was released later.

HC admits CM's plea against Suwendu's election

COURT DIRECTS ELECTION COMMISSION TO PRESERVE ALL RECORDS AND DEVICES RELATED TO THE POLLS IN NANDIGRAM

AGENCIES

Kolkata, July 14: Admitting West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee's petition for hearing, the Calcutta High Court Wednesday directed that notice be served upon Leader of Opposition Suwendu Adhikari, whose victory from Nandigram in the Assembly elections was challenged by her.

Justice Shampa Sarkar directed that Banerjee's election petition will be taken up for hearing August 12.

The judge directed that in the meantime, notice be served upon Adhikari, a BJP MLA, and other parties in the matter.

Justice Sarkar held that as per a report received by her bench from the high court administration, the election petition was filed in compliance with the provisions of the Representation of the People Act.

The court also directed the Election Commission to preserve all records and devices related to the polls in Nandigram.

The matter was reassigned to the bench of Justice Sarkar by Acting Chief Justice Rajesh Bindal after Justice Kausik Chanda refused himself from hearing the Trinamool Congress chief's petition.

As per the result declared by the Election Commission, Adhikari defeated Banerjee by a margin of 1,956 votes.



TMC raps EC over 'delay' in holding Bengal bypolls

Kolkata: Voicing displeasure over the 'delay' in holding elections to seven West Bengal Assembly seats, crucial for Mamata Banerjee's uninterrupted continuance as the chief minister, the TMC said Wednesday a party delegation will meet the Election Commission July 15 to press for it. Sukhendu Shekhar Ray, a senior leader of the state's ruling party, also taunted the poll panel, wondering whether it was "waiting for a third Covid wave"

Maintaining that the pandemic has eased considerably, Ray said the situation was conducive for holding the polls. Bypolls are to be held for five vacant seats, and fresh elections to two others where polling was countermanded following the death of candidates. The byelections are of critical importance to Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee, who lost the assembly poll to BJP's Suwendu Adhikari in Nandigram.

The Constitution allows a person to occupy a ministerial position only up to six months without getting elected to a state legislature or the two Houses of Parliament. It mandates that a minister who is not a member of legislature for six consecutive months shall cease to occupy the position at the expiration of that period. Banerjee needs to get elected to the assembly by November 4 to continue as the chief minister.

Film shoots being shifted out of Kerala

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Thiruvananthapuram, July 14: After Kitex, a leading industrial group decided to move to Telangana alleging harassment in home state Kerala, many film producers here are upset because Covid restrictions are not being eased, and therefore are shifting shooting locations to Telangana and Tamil Nadu.

One of the biggest producers in the Malayalam film industry, Antony Perumbavoor said that despite waiting for long, things here are still under lockdown norms.

"One of my films has been waiting for release for the past 18 months due to the pandemic. Now two films starring Mohanlal, which were to have been shot here, have been long delayed and hence we are moving to Telangana and the first one will begin its shoot tomorrow. This film is being directed by actor Prithviraj," said Perumbavoor.

Due to the lockdown norms in Kerala, film shooting is not taking place here which is affecting the industry severely. However, with Telangana and Tamil Nadu open-



ing up, industry sources said that seven films are all set to move out. "I have taken up the issue of re-

suming film shooting with numerous people, including Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan, but due

to obvious reasons, nothing has happened. But, we cannot wait any longer. We all know that shooting outside Kerala is expensive, but still we have to do it," added Perumbavoor.

The Covid pandemic has taken a heavy toll on the Malayalam film industry and according to industry sources close to 100 films are ready for release, but are unable to be released and around Rs 800 crore is currently blocked because of this.

There are 720 movie halls in the state and the owners are also in dire straits. Many expected that these halls will open soon, the second Covid wave, however, has derailed all plans.

"This is a big loss as many of those who eke out a living working in the film industry here will be further crippled as when a shoot is shifted from one state to another, only those who are really needed, will move from here, and the other support will be taken from the location only," said a worried person who works as a light boy at the film sets and has out of job for a long time.

Own up mistakes in tackling Covid: Expert asks Kerala CM

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Thiruvananthapuram, July 14: Former WHO health expert SS Lal Wednesday asked the Pinarayi Vijayan government to accept the mistakes committed in tackling the Covid pandemic and to take the corrective path now.

The situation of Covid in Kerala, despite observing strict protocols, continues to be grim as it has the highest number of daily cases and active cases and also has a sizeable number of deaths.

Lal, a Congress candidate who lost the April 6 Assembly polls, is also an acclaimed health professional. He said the Covid pandemic, which has been raging since January last year, has caught many governments napping.

"To make a mistake is natural, but Kerala government behaves as if it has not erred and that is the biggest mistake and the need of the hour is to take corrective steps," said Lal. He said initially the gov-



ernment blamed the returning diaspora. "Every time the government came out with new rules, a section was there which was trying to correct the wrong, but they were admonished and there were those who batted for the government. Later, when it surfaced that the strategy was wrong, the government was trying to defend its wrong," said Lal.

Lal pointed out that the present

strategy to open shops Monday, Wednesday and Friday has turned out to be a big flop as on these days, there were huge crowds in front of shops and establishments.

"Gone are the days of never ending lockdowns as the economy has to move on and only if there is activity will the people be able to move forward. So immediate corrective steps have to be taken," said Lal.

In Sundarbans, boats full of vaccines bring hope

Home to more than 4.5 million people and the largest mangrove forest in the world, residents of the Bay of Bengal delta endure all the miseries nature throws at them - from cyclones to erosion

REUTERS

Gosaba, July 14: For Deepak Jena, a labourer on a remote island in the Sundarbans delta in India, getting a COVID-19 vaccine was proving to be difficult. Then a government boat arrived with vaccines.

Home to more than 4.5 million people and the largest mangrove forest in the world, residents of the Bay of Bengal delta endure all the miseries nature throws at them - from cyclones to erosion.

But the pandemic is testing a region with only basic healthcare facilities.

"It's very difficult to get vaccinated in this village area," said Jena. "We used to line up at crowded hospitals to get a shot, unsuccessfully, before the boat came along."

The state government of West Bengal, where the Indian side of the Sundarbans is located, has



launched a "vaccination on boat" programme to reach the remotest parts of the forested area. On the other side is Bangladesh.

"We have targeted some migrant people and the people who can't reach our sub-centre ... or any other session site (for coronavirus vaccinations)," said Indranil Bargi, a medical officer in the Gosaba area. AstraZeneca and partner Serum Institute of India's

Covishield is being used for the vaccination drive.

More than 400,000 people have died from COVID-19 in India and the government is trying to expand its immunisation drive to protect more people.

But logistical challenges of reaching remote islands and treacherous villages in the mountains have complicated the immunisation effort.

Bengal reports negative wastage of vax

Negative wastage means not only ensuring zero wastage but actually eking out and administering an extra dose from each vial

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Kolkata, July 14: West Bengal managed to extract 13 lakh extra doses of vaccine in the last two months from its stipulated quota only by saving the extra dose given in a vial to compensate for the wastage. Kerala is the only state after West Bengal that has recorded a negative wastage by skilfully administering the vaccine and has earned accolades from the central government.

Technically the process is called 'negative wastage' which means not only ensuring zero wastage but actually eking out and administering an extra dose from each vial. State health department records said that in the last two months the state has recorded minus seven per cent wastage of Covishield doses, an impressive feat considering the low supply of vaccines.

"A vial of vaccine contains enough doses to administer 10 shots. But manufacturers add an extra dose in each vial as a wastage factor. In most cases, a tiny amount of the vaccine gets wasted each time the vaccine is drawn into the syringe. The extra dose is added in the vial to compensate for this loss. But if the vaccinator is skilful, it is possible to save this extra dose to vaccinate 11 persons from many vials," a senior official of the

health department said.

"The negative vaccine wastage in Bengal is now around -7 per cent, and the quantity saved will go up further as we go on saving more doses as the inoculation drive progresses," a state family welfare officer said.

In other words, for every 1 lakh doses, the state is managing 7,000 extra doses. Such efficiency was also recorded by Kerala, a feat that came in for appreciation from central government officials.

In Covaxin's case, Bengal initially had 1 per cent wastage, the optimal wastage limit suggested by the Centre. This has been reduced to zero. The initial wastage was due to public inhibitions about the vaccine, sources said.

A vial containing 10 doses has to be utilised within four hours of opening. There were several cases of insufficient recipients turning up during this window, leading to wastage.

Official data for May show Kerala and West Bengal standing in sharp contrast to states like Jharkhand and Chhattisgarh which recorded a high 33.9 per cent and 15.7 per cent wastage respectively. The wastage for other states is lower, but still on the higher side like in Madhya Pradesh (7.3 per cent), Delhi (3.9 per cent), Gujarat (3.6 per cent) and UP (3.7 per cent).

Till Tuesday evening, Bengal had administered a total of around 2,45,29,000 doses approximately, about 28 lakh doses of which were done by private vaccination centres. So far, the state has received a total of about 1.93 crore Covishield doses and 32 lakh Covaxin doses for government centres since the inoculation drive

began, apart from 25 lakh doses for the private sector since May.

The extra vaccination comes at a time the scanty vaccine supply to Bengal has slowed the pace of vaccination in the state. More than 3 lakh doses were being administered daily around the third week of June; the figure now is 2 lakh plus.



national

of the day quote

Our vision for Kashi is to build quality infrastructure for the coming generations. In that spirit, will be laying the foundation stone for CIPET, rural projects under Jal Jeevan Mission and mango as well as vegetable integrated pack house in Karkhiyaan

NARENDRA MODI | PRIME MINISTER

The state government is discussing the implementation of the National Population Policy in Karnataka on the lines of Uttar Pradesh

ASHWATH NARAYAN | DEPUTY CHIEF MINISTER OF KARNATAKA

Now many families, including the downtrodden sections, are realising the importance of having one or two children. I think public awareness should be created and laws should not be made only for the sake of politics

BHUPESH BAGHEL | CHHATTISGARH CHIEF MINISTER

SHORT TAKES

Piyush Goyal new leader of RS

New Delhi: BJP leader and Union Minister Piyush Goyal was Wednesday appointed as the Leader of the House in Rajya Sabha, an elevation that makes him the face of the government in the upper house. With the ruling BJP not having a majority in Rajya Sabha, Goyal will be tasked with navigating various political challenges in the House while delivering on the government's legislative agenda. Announcing the appointment, Parliamentary Affairs Minister Pralhad Joshi congratulated Goyal.

Over 9k kids rescued: KSCF

New Delhi: Over 9,000 trafficked children were rescued from trains, buses and factories by law enforcement agencies and Bachpan Bachao Andolan since the beginning of the Covid pandemic, the Kailash Satyarthi Foundation said as its founder Kailash Satyarthi appealed for urgent passage of anti-trafficking bill in the Monsoon Session of Parliament.

Himachal: 8 dead in rain-related incidents

Dharamsala: Six bodies were recovered in Boh valley following a landslide triggered by heavy rains which altogether claimed eight lives in Kangra district, police said Wednesday. According to the police, a Punjabi Singer died after he fell into a nullah. Manmeet Singh, a resident of Amritsar, had gone to Kareri lake with his friends.

India, Maldives to boost ties

New Delhi: In a telephonic conversation, Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Maldives President Ibrahim Mohamed Solih Wednesday took stock of the overall bilateral relations and the ongoing substantive cooperation between the two countries.

New milestone

New Delhi: The Ministry of Jal Shakti said Wednesday that one lakh villages and 50,000 Gram Panchayats have become 'Har Ghar Jal'. The Jal Jeevan Mission achieved a milestone in providing tap water supply to every household in one lakh villages across India, in a short period of 23 months.



Rajasthan government took several key decisions to take state to new heights in higher education

ASHOK GEHLOT | RAJASTHAN CHIEF MINISTER

TRIBAL WOMAN STRIPPED OVER EXTRA-MARITAL AFFAIR

At least 19 persons were arrested in Gujarat's Dahod district Wednesday after a young tribal woman was stripped and paraded by her husband and others for allegedly running away with another man, police said



COVID NORM VIOLATION

Centre issues fresh warning to states

AGENCIES

New Delhi, July 14: The Union Home Ministry Wednesday said blatant violations of Covid-19 norms have been observed in several parts of the country, including hill stations, and asked states and union territories to take action against officials responsible for ensuring compliance to laid down guidelines.

In a letter to all states and UTs, Union Home Secretary Ajay Bhalla also said Covid-appropriate behaviour is not being adhered to in public transport and massive crowds are thronging marketplaces, violating social distancing norms.

Bhalla emphasised the second wave of Covid is not yet over and there is no room for complacency and everyone must follow Covid-appropriate behaviour.

He said that with the decline in the number of active cases, states and UTs have started reopening economic activities in a gradual manner but the process of relaxing restrictions should be carefully calibrated.

During the periods of low positivity, efforts must be stepped up to prevent any probable future surge, he said.

"However, blatant violations of Covid norms have been observed in several parts of the country, especially in public transport and at hill stations. Massive crowds are also thronging the market places, violating norms of social distancing," he said.

The consequent increase in the 'R'-factor (reproduction number) in some of the states is a matter of concern, Bhalla said.

The 'R'-factor indicates the speed at which the infection is spreading in the country. An 'R'

factor below 1 indicates that each infected individual is on average passing on the disease to less than one person.

"You may be aware that any increase in 'R' factor above 1.0 is an indicator of spread of Covid-19. Therefore, it is important that the authorities concerned shall be made responsible for ensuring Covid Appropriate Behaviour (CAB) in all crowded places, such as shops, malls, markets, market complexes, weekly markets, restaurants and bars, mandis, bus stations, railway platforms, stations, public parks and gardens, gymnasium, banquet halls, marriage halls, stadia, sports complexes (if opened up by the State) as well as at all areas identified as hotspots for transmission of Covid-19 virus," he said in the letter.

Any establishment, premises, markets and other such places where Covid-appropriate behaviour is not being maintained is liable for the re-imposition of restrictions and the defaulters may face action under the relevant laws, the home secretary said.

He also said Covid testing needs to be continued with the same vigor as it is extremely essential for an early identification of cases and checking the virus spread.

"You would appreciate that we must guard ourselves against complacency and laxity, which creep in as positivity declines. Instead, during the periods of low positivity, efforts must be stepped up to prevent any probable future surge," he said in a statement.

Bhalla said there should be continuous focus on the five-fold strategy for effective management of Covid-19 i.e. Test-track-treat-vaccinate and adhere to Covid-appropriate behavior.



Not in Presidential race: Pawar

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Mumbai, July 14: Seeking to scotch all speculation, Nationalist Congress Party supremo Sharad Pawar Wednesday said that he was not standing in the Presidential election in mid-2022, as reported in some sections of the media.

Rubbishing the rumours circulating in political circles since this morning after poll strategist Prashant Kishor met top Congress leaders in New Delhi, Pawar said it was "absolutely false" that he will contest for the post of President.

"I know what the result will be, given the party (ruling Bharatiya Janata Party) has more than 300 MPs," the 81-year-old told media.

On his meetings with Kishor,



Pawar said that though they met twice, the discussion pertaining to a company of his, in mid-June in Mumbai and New Delhi.

"No talks were held regarding the leadership for the 2024 elections

or the Presidential polls. He also informed that he has quit the field of devising election strategies for parties," he added.

The veteran leader pointed out that nothing has been decided so far, whether it is the 2024 Lok Sabha or Maharashtra Assembly elections, since the polls are still far off, and the political scenario keeps changing.

"I am not going to assume any leadership for the 2024 elections," declared Pawar with an air of finality on the issue.

The NCP's national spokesperson and Maharashtra Minister Nawab Malik also made it clear that there was no discussion pertaining to the Presidential polls in the party.



Children play during heavy rain in New Delhi

Ever since the disengagement agreement in February this year, there has been no attempt by either side to occupy the areas from where the disengagement had been undertaken. There have been no clashes in Galwan or any other area, the Army said

AGENCIES

New Delhi, July 14: There has been no attempt by the Indian or the Chinese side to occupy the areas in eastern Ladakh from where they disengaged in February and both sides are involved in talks to resolve the remaining issues in the region, the Indian Army said Wednesday.

The Army said it has been monitoring activities by the Chinese People's Liberation Army (PLA) including turnover of troops in the region.

The Army stated this in a statement trashing a media report which claimed the Chinese military has again crossed the Line of Actual Control (LAC) in eastern Ladakh at several places and that there has been at least one incident of clash between the two sides.

It also said that the report mentioning that agreements with China have collapsed is "false and baseless". "Both sides have continued with negotiations to resolve the balance issues, and regular patrolling in respective areas continues. The situation on the ground continues to be as hitherto. PLA activities, including turnover

FUN IN THE RAIN

Army monitoring China's activities

LAC ROW



of troops, continue to be monitored by the Indian Army," the Army said. To a query about the Indian media report, Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Zhao Lijian said in Beijing that he was not aware of it.

"I am not aware of the situation you mentioned," Zhao said. India and China have been locked in a military standoff at multiple friction points in eastern Ladakh since early May last year.

The two sides completed the withdrawal of troops and weapons from the North and South banks of Pangong lake in February following a series of military and diplo-

matic talks. The two sides are now engaged in talks to extend the disengagement process to the remaining friction points.

Meanwhile, external Affairs Minister S Jaishankar Wednesday firmly conveyed to his Chinese counterpart Wang Yi that the prolongation of the existing situation in eastern Ladakh was visibly impacting the bilateral ties in a "negative manner" and rued that there was no forward movement from the Chinese side since the disengagement in Pangong lake areas in February that had created conditions for resolving the remaining issues.

Terrorists arrested in Kolkata may have Al-Qaeda links: Police

AGENCIES

Kolkata, July 14: The three neo-Jamaat-ul-Mujahideen Bangladesh (JMB) terrorists, arrested in Kolkata, were setting up terror modules in West Bengal and may have links with Al-Qaeda and Harkat-ul-Jihad al-Islami (HuJI), police said.

It is suspected that they have associates in some districts of the state, a senior officer of the Special Task Force (STF) of the Kolkata Police said Tuesday.

"Initial interrogation revealed that the JMB operatives were trying to build modules in West Bengal. These terrorists may have links with terror groups Al-Qaeda and Harkat-ul-Jihad al-Islami (HuJI).

The documents seized from them indicate this," the officer said. The STF arrested JMB operatives Najjur Rahman, Rabiul Islam and Sabir from Haridevpur area in south Kolkata Sunday. They are Bangladeshi nationals who had used forged documents to get a room on rent.

Their linkman, identified as Salim Munshi, had used the identity card of an unsuspecting elderly man to prepare a fake identity card for Najjur, the officer said. Najjur became Jayram Byapari in the fake identity card and the elderly man his father.

A number of JMB operatives, including Indians, were arrested in West Bengal in the past few years.

SC ISSUES NOTICE TO CENTRE, UP GOVT

ALLOWING OF KANWAR YATRA

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, July 14: The Supreme Court Wednesday took suo motu cognisance of a disturbing news on Uttar Pradesh government's decision to allow 'Kanwar Yatra' amidst the Covid-19 pandemic and sought responses from the state as well as the Centre "given the disparate political voices" on the matter.

A bench headed by Justice R F Nariman referred to the statement of Prime Minister Narendra Modi that not even a bit of compromise can be made on Covid-19 containment and said the citizens were perplexed about the happenings in view of the fact that as the UP government has allowed the religious 'yatra' commencing from July 25.

It issued notices to the Centre and the state governments of Uttar Pradesh and Uttarakhand while posting the matter for hearing Friday.



The bench, also comprising Justice B R Gavai, said that it was "little disturbed" to read that UP has chosen to continue with the Kanwar yatra, while Uttarakhand with its hindsight of experience, has decided against it.

The Yogi Adityanath government Tuesday allowed the yatra from July 25 despite concerns raised in various quarters over the risk posed by such events in triggering a possible third wave of Covid-19. Every year, tens of thousands of "Kanwariyas" (devotees of Lord Shiva) from northern states travel on foot or by other means to collect water from River Ganga at Haridwar to offer at Shiva temples in their areas as part of the yatra.

Decoding 'no mask-no distancing' public recklessness

AGENCIES

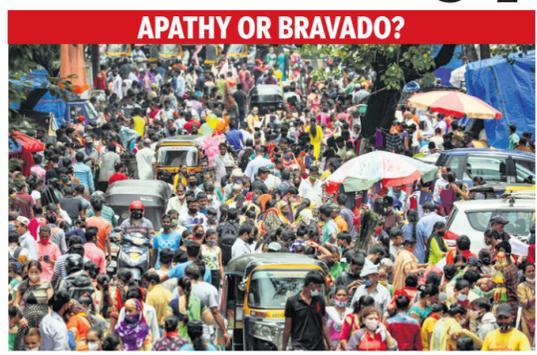
New Delhi July 14: Why are thousands crowding into markets, public places and holiday destinations seemingly without thought for the devastating second wave India is barely out of? If you have asked yourself that question, you are not alone. That is the question baffling experts too.

It's a combination of apathy and a certain fatalistic attitude, said senior epidemiologist Lalit Kant. Attempting to decode the 'no mask-no social distancing' recklessness underlying societal behaviour, psychiatrist Nimish Desai added that the public is unable to see the risks and correlate the restrictions on them.

India has seen "heavy trends of social irresponsibility", Desai said.

Concerns have mounted after images on social and other media of snaking queues of cars waiting to enter hill stations and of people so anxious to get their lives back on track that basic precautions have been given the go by as they throng vacation spots and leisure sites.

"In all cultures what should have happened is what is called risk perception — how much does a society perceive the threat (to be) and how much does it modify its behaviour accordingly," Desai, director of the Institute of Human Behaviour and Allied Sciences said in a statement. While the pandemic is primarily a health crisis, experts say the role of a society in controlling or fanning a contagion cannot be overlooked. "The public in their conscious



A crowded market after ease in lockdown curbs in Mumbai

or unconscious minds could not see and correlate the restrictions on them," Desai said, referring to

the peak of the first wave during the festive season last year. Around the Diwali-Durga Puja season, peo-

LEARNING LOSS

A whopping 85% of the higher education students in India believe they had a learning loss, according to a survey by TeamLease EdTech. The survey, titled "Covid-19 Learning Loss in Higher Education", showed that while students feel that the loss is between 40% and 60%, university leaders state that the loss has been 30 per cent to 40%. The loss is twice the estimated learning loss in G7 countries and it may take three years to repair.

ple seemed to be over-compensating for the time they spent confined in their homes, he said. This unlock doesn't seem very dif-

ferent. The seeming return to normalcy as India's Covid numbers dip is comforting. But the scenes of people not adhering to basic Covid protocols are also alarmingly familiar — that's exactly what happened when the first wave was ebbing only to make way for a ferocious second one.

According to the senior epidemiologist, the non-adoption of Covid appropriate behaviour (CAB) is part of the reason for the second wave. Social distancing already seems a thing of the past, and double masks are on their way out, as single ones resume their 'chin position'.

India's Covid death toll crossed the four lakh mark earlier this month. Of this, nearly 60 per cent was during the second wave, the Union Health Ministry has said.

international



Afghan women and girls are going to suffer unspeakable harm. This is a mistake... They're just going to be left behind to be slaughtered by these very brutal people, and it breaks my heart
GEORGE W BUSH | FORMER PRESIDENT, US

POPE RETURNS TO VATICAN

Pope Francis was discharged from a Rome hospital and returned home to the Vatican Wednesday, 10 days after undergoing surgery to remove half his colon. Francis, 84, gave thanks for the success of the operation and offered prayers for others



of the day quote

Iran's Atomic Energy Organisation can enrich uranium by 20% and 60% and if one day our reactor needs it, it can enrich uranium to 90% purity
HASSAN ROUHANI | PRESIDENT, IRAN

Pledges of doses and funds are welcome -- but they are not enough. We need at least 11 billion doses to vaccinate 70 per cent of the world and end this pandemic
ANTONIO GUTERRES | SECRETARY-GENERAL, UN

My reference is to the challenges that have emanated by changing the status of the illegally occupied state of Jammu and Kashmir. There is a principal stand that we continue to stand with and that is in accordance with the UN resolutions
MUHAMMAD SAAD KHATTAK | HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR SRI LANKA, PAKISTAN

Taliban flag raised above Afghan-Pakistan border

The interior ministry insisted the attack had been repelled and government forces had control, but a Pakistan security source said the Taliban's white flag was flying over the town



AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

Kandahar, July 14: The Taliban said Wednesday they had captured the strategic border crossing of Spin Boldak along the frontier with Pakistan, continuing sweeping gains made since foreign forces stepped up their withdrawal from Afghanistan. The situation on the ground could not immediately be verified, but social media was abuzz with pictures of Taliban fighters looking relaxed in what appeared to be the frontier town. If confirmed, the taking of Spin Boldak would be the latest in a string of border crossings and dry ports seized by the Taliban in recent weeks, with the insurgents looking to choke off much-needed revenue from the government in

Kabul while also filling their own coffers. Its seizure follows days of heavy fighting across Kandahar province, where the government was forced to deploy commando fighters to prevent the fall of the provincial capital even as the insurgents inched closer to taking the frontier crossing. In a statement, insurgent spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid assured traders and residents there that their "security is guaranteed". But Afghan officials insisted they still had control. "The terrorist Taliban had some movements near the border area... The security forces have repelled the attack," said interior ministry spokesman Tareq Arian. The particular border crossing is arguably one of the most strate-

'Over 2.7L Afghans displaced since Jan'

An estimated 2,70,000 Afghans have been newly displaced since January due to insecurity and violence, the UN refugee agency has said, warning of a looming humanitarian crisis in Afghanistan as security concerns grow over Taliban fighters rapidly seizing control of large number of areas and the US troop withdrawal from the war-torn country. The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) is "warning of a looming humanitarian crisis in Afghanistan as the escalating conflict brings increased human suffering and civilian displacement." The number of civilian casualties has risen 29 per cent during the first quarter of this year compared to 2020, according to UN Assistance Mission in Afghanistan and an increasing proportion of women and children were among those targeted.

gically valuable for the Taliban. It provides direct access to Pakistan's Balochistan province - where the insurgents' top leadership has been based for decades - along with an unknown number of reserve fighters who regularly enter Afghanistan to help bolster their ranks. Balochistan is also a favoured destination for fighters regularly heading for medical treatment and hosts many of their families.

NEPAL POLITICAL CRISIS

Confidence vote to decide govt's tenure

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kathmandu, July 14: The appointment of Sher Bahadur Deuba as Nepal's Prime Minister for a record fifth time after the Supreme Court's intervention does not seem to provide the much sought-after political stability in the country as he will have to go for a floor test in Parliament within 30 days. Even if the 75-year-old veteran politician and Nepali Congress (NC) president, who has only 61 seats in the 275-member House of Representatives, somehow wins the confidence vote, fresh elections will have to be conducted in 18 months, The Kathmandu Post newspaper reported. In its order to appoint Deuba as Prime Minister, the Supreme Court Monday said that he should complete the process of getting the vote of confidence as per Article 76 (6) of the Constitution, the report said. According to Article 76 (6), he will have to go for a floor test in Parliament within 30 days of appointment, it said. "The result of the vote of trust will decide the fate of the Deuba government," the newspaper quoted Bipin Adhikari, former dean at Kathmandu University School of Law, as saying.

9 Chinese nationals among 13 dead in Pak bus blast

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

Peshawar, July 14: Beijing said nine Chinese workers were among 12 people killed Wednesday by a bomb attack on a bus in north-western Pakistan and called for severe punishment, but Islamabad blamed the explosion on a "gas leak".



Islamabad is Beijing's closest regional ally, but the security of Chinese workers has long been of concern in Pakistan. Large numbers of them are based in the country to supervise and build infrastructure projects. Pakistan's foreign ministry in a statement said the bus "plunged into a ravine after a mechanical failure, resulting in leakage of gas that caused a blast". Meanwhile, China's foreign ministry spokesman Zhao Lijian expressed his "shock and condemnation over the bombing". He urged Pakistan to "severely punish" those responsible and "earnestly protect" Chinese nationals and projects. The Chinese embassy in Islamabad also earlier said its nationals had come under "attack". Both countries said nine Chinese workers and three Pakistanis had died in the disaster which happened at around 7 am. Arif Khan Yousafzai, a senior government official in Kohistan district where the blast happened, said around 28 people were also injured. They were airlifted to hospital by the military, officials said. Pakistan authorities said an investigation was under way. In April, the Pakistani Taliban claimed responsibility for a deadly suicide blast at a luxury hotel hosting the Chinese ambassador, who was unhurt, in southwest Balochistan.

China urges Pakistan to start a probe into the matter as they don't believe Islamabad's gas leak story

pressed his "shock and condemnation over the bombing". He urged Pakistan to "severely punish" those responsible and "earnestly protect" Chinese nationals and projects. The Chinese embassy in Islamabad also earlier said its nationals had come under "attack". Both countries said nine Chinese workers and three Pakistanis had died in the disaster which happened at around 7 am. Arif Khan Yousafzai, a senior government official in Kohistan district where the blast happened, said around 28 people were also injured. They were airlifted to hospital by the military, officials said. Pakistan authorities said an investigation was under way. In April, the Pakistani Taliban claimed responsibility for a deadly suicide blast at a luxury hotel hosting the Chinese ambassador, who was unhurt, in southwest Balochistan.

BASTILLE BLAST



Alpha jets from the French Air Force Patrouille de France fly past Carrousel du Louvre during the Bastille Day celebrations in Paris, France

'Awaiting greenlight from India to send vaccine assistance'



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Washington, July 14: The United States Tuesday said that it is ready to ship its Covid-19 vaccines expeditiously when it has the green light from the Indian government which has told the Americans that it needs further time to review legal provisions related to accepting vaccine donations. "We are ready to ship those vaccines expeditiously when we have a green light from the Government of India," State Department Spokesperson Ned Price told reporters at his daily news conference. However, the vaccines to India could not be sent because the Indian government is yet to clear the necessary legal hurdles for such an emergency import. "Before we can ship those doses, however, each country must complete its own domestic set of operational, regulatory, and legal processes that are specific to each country. Now, India has determined that it needs further time to review legal provisions related to accepting vaccine donations," Price said. "Once India works through its legal processes, our donations of vaccines to India will proceed expeditiously. We would need to refer you to the Government of India on the status of its discussions with

The Biden Administration has announced to share 80 million doses from its domestic stockpile with countries around the world, including India

COVAX, which, in this case, is helping to facilitate that delivery," he said. Responding to another question, Price said that the COVID-19 cooperation between the two countries is built on decades of successful partnership in health and biomedical research. "We are partnering to strengthen the global response to COVID-19 on issues ranging from addressing infectious disease outbreaks to strengthening health systems to securing global supply chains," he said. "We recently welcomed an initiative to collaborate through the International Center of Excellence in Research focused on infectious diseases, and in this case that includes COVID-19 and other emerging threats. We look forward to an overarching MOU, a memorandum of understanding, to enhance health cooperation beyond that," he added.

US overdose deaths hit 93,000 in 2020

ASSOCIATED PRESS

New York, July 14: Overdose deaths soared to a record 93,000 last year in the midst of the Covid-19 pandemic, the US government reported Wednesday. That estimate far eclipses the high of about 72,000 drug overdose deaths reached the previous year and amounts to a 29% increase. "This is a staggering loss of human life," said Brandon Marshall, a Brown University public health researcher who tracks overdose trends. The nation was already struggling with its worst overdose epidemic but clearly "COVID has greatly exacerbated the crisis," he added. Lockdowns and other pandemic restrictions isolated those with drug addictions and made treatment harder to get, experts said. Overdose deaths are just one facet of what was overall the deadliest year in US history. With about 378,000 deaths attributed to COVID-19, the nation saw more than 3.3 million deaths. The 21,000 increase is the biggest year-to-year jump since the count rose by 11,000 in 2016.

4 Iranians charged in plot to abduct journo in New York

ASSOCIATED PRESS

New York, July 14: An Iranian intelligence officer and three alleged members of an Iranian intelligence network have been charged in Manhattan with plotting to kidnap a prominent Iranian opposition activist and writer in exile and take her back to Tehran, authorities said Tuesday. An indictment in Manhattan federal court alleges that the plot was part of a wider plan to lure three individuals in Canada and a fifth person in the United Kingdom to Iran. Victims were also targeted in the United Arab Emirates, authorities said. The identities of the alleged victims were not released but Brooklyn-based Masih Alinejad confirmed that authorities had told her she was among the targeted victims. "I knew that this is the nature of the Islamic Republic, you know, kidnapping people, arresting people, torturing people, killing people. But I couldn't believe it that this is going to happen to me in United States of America," Alinejad told The Associated Press. The indictment acknowledges that, naming an exiled Paris-based journalist later seized by Iran and executed. Also named was a California-based member of an Iranian militant opposition group in exile whose family says he was abducted by Iran while staying in Dubai in 2020. Prosecutors alleged the Iranian intelligence officer had an electronic device containing a graphic of Alinejad alongside those two men, prosecutors said. Alinejad, who worked for years as a journalist in Iran, long has been targeted by its theocracy after fleeing the country following its disputed 2009 presidential election and crackdown.

EU unveils sweeping climate change plan

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Brussels, July 14: The European Union Wednesday unveiled sweeping new legislation to help meet its pledge to cut emissions of the gases that cause global warming by 55% over this decade, including a controversial plan to tax foreign companies for the pollution they cause. The new legislation will involve around a dozen major proposals - most of them building on laws already in place to meet the EU's old goal of a 40% cut in gas emissions by 2030, compared to 1990 levels - and must be endorsed by the 27 member countries and EU lawmakers. World leaders agreed six years ago in Paris to keep the global warming increase to below 2 degrees Celsius (3.6 degrees Fahrenheit), and ideally no more than 1.5 degrees C (2.7 F) by the end of the century. Scientists say both goals will be missed by a wide margin unless drastic steps are

FIT FOR 55

DELIVERING THE EUROPEAN GREEN DEAL

- Phasing out of gasoline and diesel cars by 2035
- Companies to pay for CO2 they emit
- Taxes on shipping and aviation fuels for the first time
- New national limits on gases from heating buildings

taken to begin cutting greenhouse gas emissions. "The principle is simple: emission of CO2 must have a price; a price on CO2 that incentivizes consumers, producers and innovators to choose the clean technologies, to go toward the clean and sustainable products," European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen said. The aim of the "Fit for 55" legislation, commission officials say, is to wean the continent off fossil

UK to decarbonise domestic transport

Cleaner air, healthier communities and tens of thousands of new green jobs are set to become reality thanks to the UK's revolutionary transport decarbonisation plan, Transport Secretary Grant Shapps announced Wednesday. With just months to go until major climate summit COP26, the plan provides a world-leading 'greenprint' to cut emissions from seas and skies, roads and railways, setting out a credible pathway for the whole transport sector to reach net zero by 2050. Cleaner transport will create and support highly skilled jobs, with the production of zero emission road vehicles alone having the potential to support tens of thousands of jobs worth up to 9.7 billion pound GVA in 2050. This will also ensure the air breathe is cleaner in communities and reduce time spent in traffic. fuels and take better care of the environment by policy design, rather than be forced into desperate measures at some future climatic tipping point, when it's all but too late. Among the most controversial elements is a plan for a "Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism." It will impose duties on foreign companies, and so increase the price of certain goods, notably steel, aluminum, concrete and fertilizer.

of the day quote

The global semiconductor shortage and subsequent component supply constraints have extended lead time for some enterprise mobile PC models to as long as 120 days. This has led to prices increasing in the bill of materials, which vendors have passed on to end users

MIKAKO KITAGAWA | RESEARCH DIRECTOR, GARTNER

Small businesses' optimism is rising as the economy opens up, yet a record number of employers continue to report that there are few or no qualified applicants for open positions

BILL DUNKELBERG | CHIEF ECONOMIST, NFB

The way 2021 has started, I would call it a year of ransomware. We are only half way through this year and already \$1tn has been paid in ransom. Financial sector will have to be absolutely on its toes to ensure that all the efforts required for cyber resilience are put into place

RAJESH PANT | NATIONAL CYBER SECURITY COORDINATOR

SHORT TAKES

Infy Q1 profit rises 22.7%

New Delhi: IT services major Infosys Wednesday posted a 22.7 per cent rise in net profit to Rs 5,195 crore for the April-June quarter of 2021-22, and raised its revenue growth outlook for the full fiscal. The Bangalore-based company's net profit (after minority interest) was at Rs 4,233 crore in April-June 2020. Its revenue from operations grew 17.8 per cent to Rs 27,896 crore in the first quarter of FY22 from Rs 23,665 crore in the year-ago period, Infosys said.

RBI issues draft circular

Mumbai: The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) Wednesday came out with draft guidelines allowing primary urban cooperative banks (UCBs) to augment capital through issuance of equity shares, preference shares and debt instruments. The UCBs, it said, could raise share capital by issue of equity to persons within their area of operation enrolled as members and also through additional equity shares to the existing members.

TCS to expand ops in Arizona

New Delhi: Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) Wednesday announced plans to expand its operations in Arizona in the US and invest more than USD 300 million (about Rs 2,236 crore) by 2026. The Mumbai-based company will also hire more than 220 employees by 2023, it said. "TCS will also continue to expand the reach of its STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) and Computer Science education programmes in Arizona by increasing teacher training and online content for students over the next two years," it added.

IT spending to grow 8% in 2021

Mumbai: The information technology (IT) spending in India is expected to reach \$92.7 billion in 2021, growing 8 per cent from last year, as many companies still suffer revenue declines and IT spending is accelerating ahead of revenue expectations amid the pandemic, a new Gartner report showed Wednesday.



We are excited to launch the 'AWS Startup Ramp' in India where there is incredible opportunity for startups to solve public sector challenges through their innovative solutions

SANDY CARTER | VP, PUBLIC SECTOR (PARTNERS AND PROGRAMMES), AWS

M-CAP OF BSE-LISTED FIRMS TOUCHES RECORD HIGH

The market capitalisation of BSE-listed companies reached an all-time high of Rs 2,33,06,440.17 crore Wednesday, mainly driven by optimistic sentiments in the broader market. At close of trade, the BSE Sensex jumped 134.32 points to 52,904.05, registering two straight session of gains



JUNE WPI INFLATION EASES ON LOWER FOOD PRICES

Snapping the five straight months of uptick, WPI-based inflation in June softened as prices of food articles and crude oil eased, even though manufactured products hardened

AGENCIES

New Delhi, July 14: The wholesale price-based inflation eased marginally to 12.07 per cent in June as crude oil and food items witnessed some softening in prices. However, WPI inflation remained in double-digit for the third consecutive month in June, mainly due to a low base of last year. WPI inflation was at (-) 1.81 per cent, in June 2020. In May 2021, the inflation was at a record high of 12.94 per cent.

Experts said the continuing double-digit WPI inflation and its potential future spillovers into the retail inflation could inject uneasiness into the tone of monetary policy and noted that WPI is expected to remain at an elevated level till October 2021.

Snapping the five straight months of uptick, wholesale price index (WPI)-based inflation in June softened as prices of food articles and crude oil eased, even though manufactured products hardened. "The annual rate of inflation is 12.07 per cent for the month of June, 2021 (over June, 2020) as compared to (-) 1.81 per cent in June 2020.

"The high rate of inflation in June 2021, is primarily due to low base effect and rise in prices of mineral oils viz petrol, diesel (HSD), naphtha, ATF, furnace oil etc, and manufactured products like basic



metal, food products, chemical products etc, as compared the corresponding month of the previous year," the Commerce and Industry Ministry said.

Inflation in fuel and power basket eased to 32.83 per cent during June, against 37.61 per cent in May. Inflation in food articles too eased to 3.09 per cent in June, from 4.31 per cent May, even as onion prices spiked.

In manufactured products, inflation stood at 10.88 per cent in June, as against 10.83 per cent in the previous month.

The Reserve Bank of India in its monetary policy last month kept interest rates unchanged at record lows and committed to maintain an accommodative policy stance to support growth.

Retail inflation remained above the RBI's comfort level of 6 per cent for two straight months at 6.26 per cent in June, data released earlier this week showed.

ICRA Chief Economist Aditi Nayar said the headline WPI inflation is expected to continue to soften, while remaining in double-digits in the September quarter.

"With the CPI inflation likely to have peaked, we expect policy normalisation to commence in Q4 FY2022, after the growth revival solidifies," Nayar said.

Industry chamber PHDCCI President Sanjay Aggarwal said significantly high fuel and power inflation is escalating the input costs of the industry and its competitiveness in the domestic and international markets.

RBI imposes curbs on Mastercard over data storage

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, July 14: The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) Wednesday barred Mastercard Asia Pacific from onboarding new credit, debit and prepaid card customers with effect from July 22 as it failed to comply with data storage norms. The supervisory action will not impact existing customers of Mastercard, the RBI said.

Taking action against Mastercard, RBI said, "notwithstanding lapse of considerable time and adequate opportunities being given, the entity has been found to be non-compliant with the directions on Storage of Payment System Data".

According to RBI, the directions will not impact existing customers of Mastercard. "Mastercard shall advise all card issuing banks and non-banks to conform to these directions".



In terms of its circular on Storage of Payment System Data on April 6, 2018, all system providers were directed to ensure that within a period of six months the entire data relating to payment systems is stored only in India, as per the central bank. Mastercards becomes the third major Payment System Operator on which restrictions have been imposed for non-compliance with RBI's direction on Storage of Payment System Data.

India's microfinance sector hit as loan defaults surge



REUTERS

Mumbai, July 14: Small loan specialists in India that typically cater to people without bank accounts are facing a jump in pandemic-related defaults that could force some of them out of business, industry experts warn.

Loans overdue by 30 days are expected to reach 14-16% of all so-called microfinance loans in the immediate aftermath of the second Covid-19 wave sweeping India, said Krishnan Sitaraman, senior director at credit rating agency CRISIL.

That's higher than 6-7% in March, before the second wave took hold, and also above the 11.7% reached in March 2017 after India's demonetisation drive - an attempt to boost digital transactions and

crack down on undeclared money that also hit microfinance lenders hard.

"Older loans that were taken in 2019 or early 2020 are at a higher risk of defaults and they form about 60-65% of the loan book for lenders," said

Harsh Shrivastava, former head of the Microfinance Institutions Network, an association representing the sector in India.

Rahul Johri, chair of Vector Finance, a microfinance firm that provides loans to small enterprises, said many support measures brought in by the government had only helped larger institutions, while smaller players had struggled.

Older loans that were taken in 2019 or early 2020 are at a higher risk of defaults and they form about 60-65% of the loan book for lenders

HARSH SHRIVASTAVA | FORMER HEAD, MICROFINANCE INSTITUTIONS NETWORK

Uniform Junction to invest USD 1mn



POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 14: Uniform Junction, India's first one stop integrated supply chain platform for K-12 schools, a part of the Arvind Mafatlal group, Wednesday announced its partnership with Israel's x10ed, a leading and cutting edge learning analytics solution provider. At a virtual press meet held Wednesday, the company announced an investment of USD 1 million in international partnerships.

The association will enable Uniform Junction bring x10ed's best in class data science methodologies empowering schools map the content to a set of abstract learning outcomes such as cognitive skills, social skills, creativity and more. Priyavrat Mafatlal, Co-

Founder & Director, Uniform Junction and MD & CEO, Mafatlal Industries said, "The demand for K 12 education technology is at an inflection point. At a time when educational institutions are investing in deploying technology and digitisation and are seeking newer ways to engage young and bright minds, the demand for futuristic and global learning solutions is on the rise." Gil Almog, Founder & CEO, x10ed said, "Israel has hundreds of unique EdTech solutions that are a perfect fit for adoption to the Indian education market.

This partnership will be the first step in long-term knowledge-sharing cooperation aimed at creating impact, bring the best of education to the children, preparing them for a dynamic and technological future."

BIZ BUZZ

Arundhati Motobikes rolls out third Hero showroom in City

Bhubaneswar: In association with leading two-wheeler firm Hero Moto Corp, Arundhati Motobikes inaugurated its third Hero dealership at Lewis Road near Pantha Niwas, in city. State Transport Minister Padmanabha Behera and MSME Minister Dibya Shankar Mishra were present at the inaugural ceremony. Hero Moto Corp national sales head Ashutosh Varma and East Zone head Swami Nathan were also present. Arundhati Motobikes Managing Partner Brahmananda Meher said that they have been associated with the company since 15 years and providing the best possible service. The showroom is spread across 10,000 sq ft equipped with modern tools and automotive workshops. With this showroom, Arundhati Motobikes aims to provide best buying experience apart from providing reliable service. Moreover, the services like online buying, servicing booking, home pickup and delivery for senior citizens will be made available.



TPWODL to address consumer issues

Bhubaneswar/ Bhawanipatna: As a part of its continuous efforts to provide better services to consumers, TPWODL decided to reach out to consumers in a phased manner, instead the consumers reaching out to its offices for their requirements like new connection applications and upgradation of load. As a first step in this direction, the company has decided to start the pilot service camp at Kesinga today. It will start by 11 a.m. and continue till evening 5 p.m. at the Sub-Division Office of TPWODL. During this period the consumers in Kesinga can reach out to the company officials and submit their application for new connections, load change and ownership change. In order to provide the services, a team from Burla along with the circle office team from Bhawanipatna is reaching Kesinga today.

Samsung launches Galaxy F22

New Delhi: Samsung, India's most trusted smartphone brand, announced the launch of Galaxy F22 on Flipkart. Galaxy F22 comes with segment-leading 6.4 inch HD+ sAMOLED display with 90Hz refresh rate. At its price point, Galaxy F22 will be the most affordable sAMOLED 90Hz display available on Flipkart. Galaxy F22 also sports massive 6000mAh battery and True 48 MP Quad camera. Galaxy F22 is launching in two memory variants 4GB+64GB and 6GB+128GB priced at Rs 12499 and Rs 14,499 respectively. Galaxy F22 will be available in two attractive colours - Denim Blue and Denim Black. As an introductory offer, consumers can avail Rs 1000 off on prepaid transactions on Flipkart. It supports Android 11 and One UI 3.1. The smartphone also supports Samsung Pay Mini.



INFLATION and WPI for JUNE 2021		
[Base 2011-12=100]		
	2020-21	2021-22
Inflation Rate (Prov)	12.07%	133.7
MAY 12.94%	MAY 132.7	
All	12.07	133.7
Commodities -1.81		
Primary Articles -0.07	7.74	151.8
Food Articles	3.09	160.2
Non-Food Articles -2.80	18.86	148.7
Fuel & Power	16.24	32.83
Manufactured Products 0.08	10.88	131.5

PTI GRAPHICS

India plans to create Longevity Finance Hub

AGENCIES

New Delhi, July 14: The Centre proposes to develop the Gujarat-based GIFT International Financial Services Centres (IFSC) as a 'Longevity Finance Hub' to cater to the investment and wealth management needs of the 'silver generation' comprising individuals aged 60 years and older.

As part of this initiative, the International Financial Services Centres Authority (IFSCA) has constituted an Expert Committee to recommend approach towards development of a Longevity Finance Hub and provide a road map for this end.

PANDEMIC PAIN

Fuel prices rose over ₹20/litre in FY21, by ₹10 this year

AGENCIES

New Delhi, July 14: You must be feeling the pain of rising fuel prices after it hit the century mark across the country last month. But, the rise has not been sudden and the pain has been consistent throughout the last financial year and this year too, taking the pump prices of petrol and diesel to unprecedented levels not seen before, even during the big surge in global oil during 2010-14 period when crude prices remained largely above \$100 a barrel.

A close look at the official data provided by Petroleum Planning and Analyses Cell reveals that petrol prices (in the national capital) rose by a whopping Rs 20.97 per litre between April 1, 2020 and



March 31, 2021 in FY21, the highest ever levels to be recorded so far.

Petrol was priced at Rs 69.59 a litre at the beginning of FY21 on April 1 last year and it was priced at Rs 90.56 a litre on March 31 year. This

is a growth of 30.13 per cent in FY21.

The story of price hike doesn't end in the last fiscal. It has continued well into FY22, albeit at a much sharper pace. In the three and half months of current fiscal, petrol

PURI DIALS UAE FOR AFFORDABLE OIL PRICES

New Delhi: As fuel prices climbed to a record high, India's new Petroleum Minister Hardeep Singh Puri has started dialling oil-producing nations to impress upon them for a need to make prices affordable for consumers. Puri, who last week called Energy Minister of Qatar, Wednesday, dialled his counterpart in the UAE, Sultan Ahmed Al Jaber.

"Conveyed my desire to work closely with UAE and other

friendly countries to bring a sense of calm, predictability and realism among other suppliers in the energy market to make it more affordable for consumers," Puri tweeted.

The rebound in international oil prices from lows hit in May on the back of demand recovery has sent petrol and diesel rates to a record high in India.

Petrol has crossed the Rs-100-a-litre mark in more than one and

a half dozen states and union territories, while diesel is being sold at over Rs 100 a litre in Rajasthan and Odisha.

"Had a warm courtesy call with HE Dr Sultan Ahmed Al Jaber, UAE Minister of Industry and Advanced Technology and MD & Group CEO of @AdnocGroup. Discussed various and means to invigorate the vibrant bilateral strategic energy partnership between India and UAE," Puri said.

In comparison to petrol, diesel price rise has been less sharper. One reason for this has been VAT cuts effected by several state governments to keep the price rise of

this transport fuel under some manageable levels. Also, OMCs have gone soft on diesel price rise lately, reducing the quantum of hike compared to petrol.

Dhawan to follow own ideology



IT IS A BIG ACHIEVEMENT FOR ME THAT I HAVE BECOME THE CAPTAIN OF THE INDIAN SIDE. AS A LEADER, MY IDEA IS TO KEEP EVERYONE TOGETHER AND HAPPY - THAT IS THE MOST IMPORTANT THING

SHIKHAR DHAWAN

tion, and now we have good chemistry. And now that we have the chance to play six matches together, so it will be great fun, and I think we all sync nicely," he said.

The selectors have picked many uncapped players, including the likes of Ruturaj Gaikwad and Chetan Sakariya, and Dhawan wants the youngsters to enjoy their journey. "Happy to get the youngsters in the team and see their dreams come true. It's a big thing that these youngsters have come from their respective home towns with certain dreams, and their dreams are getting fulfilled.

"And now, they should enjoy the journey which landed them in team India, and they should know the value of their strength and how to improve it," he said.

Dhawan said that both the seniors and youngsters from the squad will learn from each other. "There are seniors in the team, so the youngsters will learn from them, and we will get to learn from the youngsters. Whenever I meet the youngsters they often have new ways of thinking, and I try to learn things which will help us," Dhawan signed off.

sent to England for the WTC Final against New Zealand and the five-Test series against the hosts. Sri Lanka's limited overs tour, comprising of three ODIs and as many T20s, will begin July 18 in Colombo.

"It is a big achievement for me that I have become the captain of the Indian side. As a leader, my idea is to keep everyone together and happy

- that is the most important thing," Dhawan said on Star Sports show 'Follow the Blues'. "We have got a lovely bunch of boys, great support staff, and we have worked earlier as well."

Dhawan says he shares a good chemistry with legendary Rahul Dravid, who is the head coach for the series. "I have a good relation

with Rahul Bhai. When I started playing Ranji Trophy, I played against him, and I have known him since then. When I went to play for India A match, I was the captain, and he was the coach, so there was interaction.

"When he became the director of NCA, we used to go there for around 20 days, so we had a lot of interac-

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Colombo, July 14: Handed captaincy for the Sri Lanka tour; Shikhar Dhawan's idea of leadership is all about keeping the flock together and in a good state of mind.

The left-handed opener was given the reins of the team after Virat Kohli and other key players were

Jaffer named as new Odisha chief coach



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Cuttack, July 14: Former Test opener and domestic great Wasim Jaffer Wednesday has been named chief coach of the Odisha senior side for the upcoming domestic season.

"He (Jaffer) will be the head coach. He has been given a two-year contract," Subrata Behera, Odisha Cricket Association CEO told this agency.

The decision was taken following a meeting of OCA's Cricket Advisory Committee as Jaffer would replace former state captain Rashmi Ranjan Parida, who was at the helm for two seasons.

"Besides development of cricket across all age-groups, he (Jaffer) will also be a part of coaches development programme across the state," OCA secretary Sanjay Behera said in a statement.

This will be Jaffer's second stint

as the head coach of any state team. Following his retirement in March 2020, Jaffer, who is the leading run-getter in Ranji Trophy, had coached Uttarakhand but he later resigned following a fall-out with the Association.

Jaffer, who has played 31 Tests and 2 ODIs, is also the batting coach of Kings XI Punjab, which plays in the cash-rich IPL.

The Mumbai stalwart, who later played for Vidarbha at the fag end of his illustrious career, winning back-to-back Ranji Trophy and Irani Cup.

Odisha had last reached quarters in the 2019-20 season when they lost to Bengal and batting has been the team's weakness for a long-time.

The camp for the senior team is slated to begin from July 25, subject to the state government's approval keeping mind of the COVID-19 guidelines.

4 added to hockey squads

TOKYO OLYMPICS: VARUN, SIMRANJEET LATE INCLUSIONS IN MEN'S SIDE; NAMITA, REENA IN WOMEN'S TEAM

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, July 14: Defender Varun Kumar and mid-fielder Simranjeet Singh are set to make their Olympic debuts after they were added to India's men's hockey squad following the IOC's decision to allow "alternate athletes" in team events because of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Hockey India, which had originally named 16-member men's and women's squads for the upcoming Games, have now added two players each in both the teams. While Varun and Simranjeet were late inclusions in the men's team, defender Reena Khokhar and experienced mid-fielder Namita Toppo were added to the women's side.

"Varun and Simranjeet have been added to the 16-member side. Now it is an 18-member side. Though they are additional, both of them are up for selection in every match as per IOC's special guidelines for Tokyo 2020," a source told this agency.

Traditionally, hockey teams in Olympics comprise 16 players each but the International Olympic Committee (IOC) has made an exception this time around, allowing every competing nation to have two extra players in their squads for the COVID-hit Summer Games.

As per the IOC, the sports in which "alternate athletes" will be

able to replace permanent players in each match are hockey, football, handball, rugby and water polo.

In previous Olympics, stand-by players used to travel with hockey teams but could only take part in the Games in case a player in the 16-member squad suffers an injury or is out of the Games permanently.

Despite the additions, only 16 players will be able to play in a match and the teams will have to submit their list a day before their

games.

While Varun, Simranjeet and Reena will be competing in their maiden Olympics, Namita was part of the women's hockey team that qualified for the 2016 Rio Olympics after a hiatus of 36 years.

Drag-flicker Varun, a member of India's 2016 Junior World Cup-winning side, will give eight-time gold medalist India another penalty corner option alongside the likes of Harmanpreet Singh, Rupinder Pal Singh and Amit Rohidas.



Namita Toppo (R) will join her state-mate Deep Grace Ekka as one of the two late inclusions in the women's squad for Tokyo Games

WTC gets new points system

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Dubai, July 14: The ICC Wednesday officially confirmed that teams will be awarded standardised 12 points for a win, four for a draw and six for a tie during the second World Test Championship cycle which kicks off with the five-match series between India and England in August.

The ICC further said that percentage of points won will be used to determine standings in the 2021-23 cycle. Earlier, each Test series carried a value of 120 points which led to certain inequality in the table as a team winning a Test in a two-match series got 60 points compared to five-game series where a Test win is valued at 24 points.

ICC Acting Chief Executive Geoff Allardice said the changes were made to simplify the points system while taking learning from the disruption last year.

The nine Test series will play a total of six series - three home and as many away - just like the previous edition.

Pogacar triumphs Stage 17



REUTERS

Saint-Lary Soulan (France), July 14: Tadej Pogacar controlled his rivals and extended his overall lead in the Tour de France as the final podium took shape in a gruelling mountain 17th stage won by the defending champion Wednesday.

The Slovenian outsprinted Dane

Jonas Vingegaard and Ecuador's Richard Carapaz at the top of the lung-busting Col du Portet (16km at 8.7 per cent) for his first stage win in this year's Tour after being the first attacker in the final climb.

He now leads Vingegaard by five minutes, 39 seconds with Carapaz in third place, a further four seconds back while Colombian Rigoberto

Uran slipped down to fourth, 7:17 off the pace, after cracking in the mist of the Col du Portet.

Pogacar burst away 8.4km from the top of the Pyrenean pass and only Vingegaard, Carapaz and Uran could follow at first.

The 178.4 km stage from Muret to the summit finish at the Col du Portet came down to a battle on the final climb, where the GC riders were closing in on the last survivors of the day's break as they made their way up the early slopes.

Pogacar tried and tried again to get clear inside the last 2 km, but he was unable to open a gap. Then Carapaz struck. The move initially dropped Vingegaard, but Pogacar held on, and Vingegaard ultimately clawed his way back up inside the last few hundred meters.

Finally, with 200 meters to go, Pogacar put in another big acceleration and pulled away from his rivals, taking his fifth career Tour stage victory at the line. Vingegaard took runner-up honors after his impressive recovery, with Carapaz finishing third on the day.

UEFA inspects fan stampede at Wembley

ASSOCIATED PRESS

London, July 14: Hundreds of fans without tickets broke through security barriers to get into Wembley Stadium in a bid to watch Sunday's European Championship final against Italy. UEFA Tuesday asked an investigator to study violence by England supporters at the game.

The English Football Association has been separately charged with multiple offences by fans before and during their team's loss to Italy in a penalty shootout after a 1-1 draw.

UEFA's charges against England's FA also relate to booing Italy's national anthem, a fan who stopped play by running on the pitch, throwing objects, and lighting fireworks.

The official attendance was around 67,000 of the stadium's 90,000 capacity, with many seats intended to be left empty to distance fans.

OLYMPICS DIARY Number of oath-takers increased



TOKYO 2020

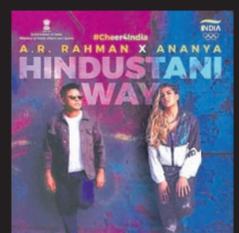
TOKYO: The number of oath-takers at the Olympics opening ceremony has been doubled from three to six for the Tokyo Games to ensure gender parity, the IOC said while announcing that the oath has also been reworked slightly to incorporate 'inclusion and equality' in it. The Olympic oath is taken by an athlete from the host county, on behalf of all the competitors and the ceremony also includes one coach and a judge. This time, Japan will pick two - one male and one female - from each group for the event, which has been an integral part of the Games since 1920.

THE NEW OATH

Depending on the group that is speaking, the new oath reads: "In the name of the athletes", "In the name of all judges" or "In the name of all the coaches and officials". "We promise to take part in these Olympic Games, respecting and abiding by the rules and in the spirit of fair play, inclusion and equality. Together we stand in solidarity and commit ourselves to sport without doping, without cheating, without any form of discrimination. We do this for the honour of our teams, in respect for the Fundamental Principles of Olympism, and to make the world a better place through sport."

Official song on Indian contingent launched

NEW DELHI: Sports Minister Anurag Thakur Wednesday launched the 'Cheer4India' song of the country's Olympic contingent and urged the public to wholeheartedly rally behind its athletes during the Tokyo Games. Grammy Award winner composer AR Rahman and young singer Ananya Birla collaborated to present the official song of the Indian contingent for the Tokyo Olympics, titled Cheer4India: Hindustani Way.



Emperor Naruhito likely to open Games

TOKYO: Japan's Emperor Naruhito is likely to attend the opening ceremony of the Tokyo Olympics July 23 and declare the Games open, according to a report. The Olympics host country is making arrangements for the emperor's attendance at the opening ceremony, Kyodo news agency reported, quoting an unnamed official privy to the development. The report said Naruhito "is prepared to also meet with visiting foreign dignitaries at the Imperial Palace." The 61-year-old emperor is the honorary patron of the Tokyo 2020 Olympics and Paralympics.

BLAST FROM PAST

With the Olympics approaching, let's take a look at interesting facts and trivia about the Games from its previous editions. Part of a series that starts Wednesday, here are some highlights and fun facts from the first two editions of the modern Olympics held in 1896 and 1900

GREECE OLYMPICS, 1896

A long-lost tradition of ancient Greece, the Olympic Games stood revived in Athens 1,500 years after being banned by Roman Emperor Theodosius I

Like their ancient counterpart, the 1896 Athens Games were an all-male affair. It was the only time in the history of modern Olympics that there were no women competitors

There were 241 athletes from 14 countries who competed in the Games, held from April 6 to 15

The athletes competed in 43 events covering athletics (track and field), cycling, swimming, gymnastics, weightlifting, wrestling, fencing, shooting, and tennis

Medals were awarded to the winners for the first time. However, none were gold. Athletes finishing first received a silver medal, an olive branch and a diploma while those in second place were given a bronze/copper medal, a branch of laurel and a diploma

The International Olympic Committee (IOC) retroactively assigned medals to all third-placed athletes

American track and field athlete James Connolly won the triple jump to become the first Olympic champion in more than 1,500 years April 6, 1896

The Games produced the first-ever organised marathon but nearly half the competitors were forced to quit from exhaustion. Greece's Spyridon Louis won the race.

Swimming events were held in the Bay of Zea. Competitors were ferried out to a wooden raft and from there, they raced towards the shore with a string of floating, hollowed-out pumpkins as lane markers

Germany's Carl Schuhmann emerged as the most successful athlete of the first Olympic Games of the modern era, finishing top in four events in gymnastics and wrestling. He also competed in the weightlifting event

Greek gymnast Dimitrios Loundras became the youngest documented Olympian. At 10 years and 218 days old, Loundras competed in the team parallel bars event. His team finished third

No weight classes existed for the wrestling competition, held in the Panathenaic Stadium. This meant that there was only one winner among competitors of all sizes. The rules used were similar to modern Greco-Roman wrestling, although there was no time limit



Jeux Olympiques PARIS OLYMPICS, 1900



The Games were held in Paris as part of the World's Fair. The organisers spread the competitions over five months

Unlike the 1896 Athens Games, no opening or closing ceremonies were held

It was the first time that women featured in the Games

American-born Helene de Pourtales became the first female Olympic champion as part of the Swiss winning team in the 1-2 ton sailing event

UK's Charlotte Cooper became the first female to win an individual Olympic event - the women's singles tennis competition.

The track-and-field events were held on a grass field that was uneven and often wet. Broken telephone poles were used to make hurdles, and hammer throwers occasionally found their efforts stuck in a tree

Weightlifting and wrestling were dropped and 13 new sports were added. It was the only time cricket featured in the Olympics. Only two countries competed, Great Britain and hosts France

Athletes from different nations competed on the same team in tennis, football, polo, rowing and tug of war

Live pigeons were used as targets in the shooting events. It was the first and only time in Olympic history when animals were killed on purpose. Birds were released one at a time from "traps" in front of the shooters. Winners were determined by whoever shot the most birds out of the sky

Franco-Haitian rugby player Constantin Henriquez became the first black athlete to win gold when France beat Great Britain and Germany to victory. He is also believed to be the first black competitor at the Olympics