



PAPA'S DIEHARD FAN

Actor Shraddha Kapoor says ever since she was a kid, she has enjoyed watching her father Shakti on screen

LEISURE

P2



SUCCESSFUL EXPEDITION

Bezos blasts into space becoming the second billionaire in just over a week to ride his own spacecraft

INTERNATIONAL

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NEW COACH APPOINTED

Odisha FC appoints Francisco 'Kiko' Ramirez Gonzalez as head coach ahead of Indian Super League 2021-22 season

SPORTS

P12

VOLUME 11, ISSUE 111 | www.orissapost.com

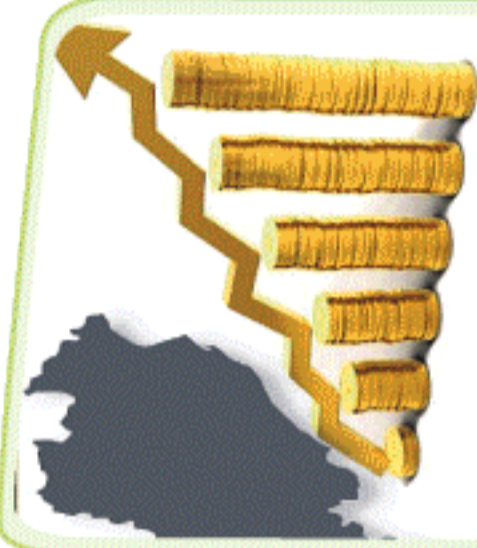
BHUBANESWAR | WEDNESDAY, JULY 21 | 2021

12 PAGES | ₹5.00



Caste census only for SCs, STs: Govt

NEW DELHI: The government has decided as a matter of policy not to enumerate caste-wise population other than SCs and STs in census, Lok Sabha was informed Tuesday. Union Minister of State for Home Nityanand Rai also said that according to the provisions of the Constitution, the seats are reserved for SCs and STs in Lok Sabha and in the assemblies in proportion, as nearly as may be, to their population. Rai said in census, the castes and tribes which are specifically notified as Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes as per the Constitution (Scheduled Castes) Order 1950 and the Constitution (Scheduled Tribes) Order, 1950 (as amended from time to time) are enumerated.



State's revenues grow by 112.54%

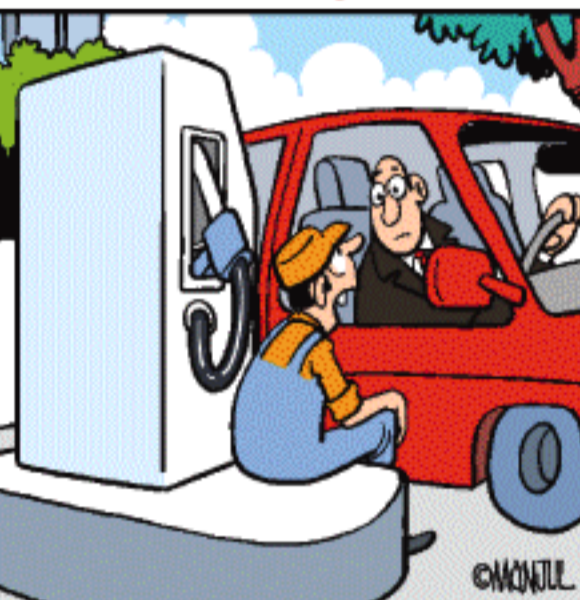
BHUBANESWAR: In spite of global slowdown due to Covid-19 restrictions and shutdowns, the state has recorded a growth of 112.54 per cent in revenue collection by the end of June of 2021-22 fiscal. This was known from the all secretaries' meeting held on a digital mode under the chairmanship of Chief Secretary Suresh Chandra Mahapatra. Finance Secretary Ashok Kumar Meena informed the fiscal status of the state in the meeting. Meena said beating all adversities caused by Covid-19, the state government has collected a total revenues of ₹17,656.70 crore by the end of June, 2021 while the collection during the same period of 2020-21 was ₹8,307.54 crore.

MORE P4

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IRREGULAR by MANJUL



I doubt fuel prices will ever go down. You see, Pegasus spyware costs a lot!

MARKET WATCH			
INDEX		VARIATION	
SENSEX	52198.51	↓	354.89
NIFTY	15632.10	↓	120.30
DOLLAR	74.95	↓	₹0.32
EURO	87.88	↓	₹0.42
GOLD	₹48,168	↑	₹74
SILVER	₹67,054	↓	₹192

WEATHER		
	BHUB	CTK
TEMP MAX	34.2°C	35.6°C
TEMP MIN	24.1°C	26.0°C
Humidity	100%	100%
Rainfall	43.2mm	31mm
Forecast: Light rain very likely		

Parl can't enact laws for coop bodies: SC

UPHOLDS GUJ HC ORDER THAT SAID COOP SOCIETIES IS A STATE SUBJECT

AGENCIES

New Delhi, July 20: The Supreme Court Tuesday upheld a 2013 Gujarat High Court judgment, which struck down certain provisions of the 97th constitutional amendment while holding that Parliament cannot enact laws with regard to cooperative societies as it is a state subject.

A bench of Justices RF Nariman, KM Joseph and BR Gavai said, "We have struck down part IX B of the Constitution related to cooperative societies but we have saved the amendment". Justice Nariman said, "Justice Joseph has given a partly dissenting verdict and has struck down the entire 97th constitutional amendment".

The 97th constitutional amendment, which dealt with issues related to effective management of co-operative societies in the country was passed by Parliament in December 2011 and had come into effect from February 15, 2012. The change in the Constitution has amended Article 19(1)(c) to give protection to the cooperatives and inserted Article 43 B and Part IX B, relating to them.



While Article 19(1)(c) guarantees freedom to form associations or unions or cooperative societies, subject to certain restrictions, Article 43 B says that states shall endeavour to promote voluntary formation, autonomous functioning, democratic control and professional management of co-operative societies.

The Part IX B of the Constitution inserted by 97th amendment deals with incorporation, terms of members of board and its office bearers and effective management of cooperative societies. The Centre has contended that the provision does not denude states of their power to enact laws with regard to cooperatives.

The apex court's verdict came on the Centre's plea challenging the Gujarat High Court's 2013 decision striking down certain provisions of the 97th constitutional amend-

ment while holding that Parliament cannot enact laws with regard to cooperative societies as it is a state subject.

The top court also examined a question whether the provision denuded states of their exclusive power to enact laws to deal with management of cooperative societies. Attorney General KK Venugopal, appearing for the Centre, said the 97th Constitution amendment is not direct or substantial attack on states' powers to enact law with regard to cooperatives.

Several intervenors have contended that the amendment made a direct inroad into the exclusive domain of states to enact laws with regard to cooperatives.

The Centre has stated that the amendment was enacted to bring in uniformity in the management of cooperative societies and it did not take away the powers of states.

The apex court had said if the Centre wanted to achieve uniformity then the only way available was to take the recourse under Article 252 of the Constitution which deals with the power of Parliament to legislate for two or more states by consent.



DELUGE ON ROADS

People navigating on a water-logged road at Bomikhal in Bhubaneswar as heavy rain lashed the city, Tuesday

Three chariots reach Lions' Gate

PNN/AGENCIES

Puri, July 20: 'Bahuda Yatra' of Lord Jagannath was held here Tuesday amid tight security with the administration having imposed curfew to avoid mass congregation of devotees in the pilgrim town in the wake of the Covid-19 pandemic. The curfew, that came into effect at 8 pm Monday will remain in force for 48 hours.

The Trinity - Lord Balabhadra, Devi Subhadra and Lord Jagannath - embarked on their return journey to the Lions' Gate of Srimandir from Srigundicha temple around noon, much ahead of the scheduled time, as servitors blew into the conch shells and played on cymbals with 'Gotipua' performers dancing on the Grand Road.

The three chariots reached the Lions' Gate by the evening, said an official of the Shree Jagannath Temple Administration (SJTA). The deities were offered 'Poda Pitha', a traditional cake, near the Mausi Maa temple during their return journey.

Bahuda Yatra is observed as the divine siblings end their annual nine-day sojourn to their birth place, and make their way back to Srimandir on wooden chariots. The Grand Road wore an empty look as local residents, too, were barred from coming out on the streets.

Over 60 platoons of police personnel have been deployed at several locations in the seaside town



SUNA BESHA TODAY

PURI: The deities would be adorned with the Suna Besha (Golden Attire) on their respective chariots at the Lions' Gate of Srimandir Wednesday. As per tradition, servitors would decorate the deities with gold ornaments as part of the ritual. Like last year, the ritual would be held without the participation of devotees. However, they can view the ritual live on television, said DGP Abhay.

to prevent congregation of people. All entry points to the holy town have been sealed and hotels, lodges and guest houses shut in order to stop people from gathering on rooftops. Lord Jagannath was encoined in the largest of the three chariots - the 45-ft high 'Nandighosh', Lord Balabhadra in 44-ft high Taladhawaja and Subhadra in 43-ft high 'Darpadalan'.

SJTA chief Krishan Kumar said, "The rituals began much ahead of the schedule. The three chariots reached the Lions' Gate of Srimandir by the evening. All credit goes to the servitors." Director General of Police (DGP) Abhay, meanwhile, thanked the residents of Puri for their cooperation.

SOUMYA HAD EXTRA-MARITAL AFFAIR: BIDYA

POST NEWS NETWORK

Kaptipada, July 20: The mystery surrounding the death of Paralakhemundi Assistant Conservator of Forest (ACF) Soumya Ranjan Mohapatra deepened further Tuesday with his wife Bidya Bharati Panda alleging that her late husband had an extra-marital affair with another woman.

She told journalists at her parental village in Kaptipada of Mayurbhanj district that once she heard him talking with a woman on his mobile phone. "He always used earphones for telephonic conversation. But I could hear a woman's voice from the other end. I had also asked him why he was not being intimate with her," she said, adding that she also once saw him texting someone 'I love you'.

"After I wanted to know whom he had texted 'I love you', he deleted his Facebook account and deleted the call history and chat records from his mobile phone.

Refuting all the allegations her in-laws have levelled against her, Bidya said she had never visited Gajapati DFO's residence after the dispute with her husband.



Notably, Soumya suffered serious burn injuries at his official residence in Paralakhemundi where his wife was also present July 12. A severely burnt Soumya was rescued and rushed to the district headquarters hospital in Paralakhemundi. He had suffered 90 per cent burn injuries. As his condition deteriorated, he was shifted to MKCG and from there to a private hospital in Cuttack. He succumbed while undergoing treatment there. His father has demanded a lie detector on Bidya.

The police have registered a murder case against three accused persons namely Soumya's wife Bidya Bharati Panda, Paralakhemundi DFO Sangram Keshari Behera and a cook who was present at the house on that day.

'3rd wave risk exists, govt prepared'

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 20: The state health department Tuesday said there are chances of the third wave of Covid-19 hitting the state in view of the large scale movement of people post relaxation of lockdowns.

Bijay Mohapatra, director, state health services, reiterated the warning of the third wave if the present condition continues in the country. "Director of AIIMS, New Delhi, has warned of a third wave in the light of the lifting of lockdowns and opening up of public spaces. Now, there are chances of the threat coming true in view of the easing of Covid curbs," he said.

The health official said when the second wave started this year, it was first seen in other parts of the country before it was felt in Odisha. "Surge has always been a part of any pandemic. But the important thing is that we take required measures



to put a brake in its growth," he said.

The official said the state government is prepared to counter the third wave. "We are now taking several steps to counter the threat of the third wave. We are vaccinating people on a war-footing. We have also escalated our focused surveillance. Now, the state has adequate treatment facilities and infrastructure to deal with the third wave," he said.

He said there are threats that

the third wave might hit adolescents and kids more and we are working in that direction. We have trained several health workers and doctors in special care like pediatric care for Covid-19. Every day we collect samples and observe the trend of the pandemic. Different officials handle it and they are keeping an eye on the pandemic. We plan to continue it strictly till August," Mohapatra said.

COVID-19 GRAPH PLATEAUS IN STATE

The state Tuesday reported 2,085 new Covid-19 cases and 56 more deaths, a health department official said. The new cases were detected after testing 70,476 samples, taking the positivity rate to 2.95 per cent, he said. Cuttack reported the highest positivity rate at 6.95 per cent, followed by Nayagarh (5 per cent) and Kendrapara (4.55 per cent), he added. Odisha has so far reported 9,58,059 Covid-19 cases and 5,172 deaths. CBK Mohanty, the chief of the Directorate of Medical Education and Training, said that though the Covid situation significantly improved in the state, the infection graph continues to be at a plateau stage. "The daily infections are not plummeting after a certain stage, the phenomenon is called thick-tail or fatty-tail," he said.



situation in the region. The Centre for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has issued a Level 3 Travel Health Notice for India due to Covid-19, indicating a high level of Covid-19 in the country, the State Department said Monday.

"Your risk of contracting Covid-19 and developing severe symptoms may be lower if you are fully vaccinated with an FDA authorised vaccine. Before planning any international travel, please review the CDC's specific recommendations for vaccinated and unvaccinated travellers," it said. "Reconsider travel to India due to Covid-19. Exercise increased caution due to

crime and terrorism," it said. The latest travel advisory replaces the one issued May 5 that had placed India in the Level 4 category.

While the CDC issued a Level 2 Travel Health Notice for Pakistan due to Covid-19, indicating a moderate level of the pandemic, the State Department maintained Level 3 risk for US citizens travelling to the country due to terrorism.

"Reconsider travel to Pakistan due to terrorism and sectarian violence. Exercise increased caution in Pakistan due to COVID-19. Some areas have increased risk. Read the entire Travel Advisory," the State Department said.

US issues advisory easing ban on India trips

THE LATEST TRAVEL ADVISORY REPLACES THE ONE ISSUED MAY 5 THAT HAD PLACED INDIA IN THE LEVEL 4 CATEGORY

AGENCIES

Washington, July 20: The US has lowered its travel advisory for India from the highest Level 4, meaning no travel, to Level 3, which urges citizens to reconsider it, amidst a drop in the number of Covid-19 deaths and cases in the country.

India recorded 30,063 new coronavirus infections, the lowest in 125 days, taking the total tally of Covid-19 cases to 3,11,74,322, according to the Union Health Ministry data updated Tuesday.

The death toll climbed to 4,14,482 with 374 daily fatalities, the lowest in 111 days, while the active cases

have declined to 4,06,130, the lowest in 117 days.

When last month's advisory was issued, India was struggling with a second wave of the pandemic with more than 3,00,000 daily new coronavirus cases being reported.

Hospitals in many parts of the country were reeling under a shortage of medical oxygen and beds. The US also eased travel recommendations on Pakistan from Level 4 to Level 3.

The improvement of the travel advisories for India and Pakistan by the State Department Monday comes in an acknowledgment of the improving Covid-19 pandemic

FORTUNE FORECAST

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FOR ASTROLOGY DIAL 55181*

ARIES

You will feel like going for a little excursion to some place today. It could be to some historical place that you have not visited before. However, Ganesha suggests, in keeping with your responsibility of being a family-man, you should pay heed to the needs of your loved ones. So a trip to the nearest park would be more desirable.

TAURUS

Physical and mental fitness will top your priority list today. You are likely to take special interest in working out and doing mental exercise, predicts Ganesha. Keep up the hard work and the efforts of today will pay rich dividends in future. You will have a fabulous time with your loved one tonight, hopes Ganesha.

GEMINI

You will be in an extremely sensitive and emotional frame of mind today. While it is alright when it comes to family matters, you need to put your head over your heart when making decisions at the workplace. It is a good day to sign new contracts and to take up new projects, says Ganesha.

CANCER

A chance of misunderstanding likely with anyone, says Ganesha. Not the time to take a decision, whereby you repent later. Transfer to a new place, or auspicious function at home are indicated. Ganesha sends his blessings.

LEO

You will pay attention only to your work and will not be distracted by other issues today, says Ganesha. People involved in Research and Development related fields will find that their knowledge will come in handy for them today. Steps taken in the right direction will make your task very easy today.

VIRGO

Today is a day to do some hard training and hard thinking. Ganesha says you will have to exercise both your muscles and your brain. Hard work will eventually lead to rich rewards. A romantic meeting with your beloved in the evening will put you in high spirits.

LIBRA

Ganesha says today is a day where you will have to make important decisions so be careful before making them. Those of you who are working professionals may find themselves favored by topmost officials who will be pleased with you and may give you promotions or a bonus. Ganesha says beware of people who wish to take advantage of your generosity and amiable disposition. Share your problems and mental stress and you will see it disappear.

SCORPIO

Ganesha advises you to practice caution today. There may be a lot of people who may be green with envy as you are better than them in every way. Words of wisdom may be not only change their opinion about you, but also win you accolades in social circles.

SAGITTARIUS

Celebrations galore, foresees Ganesha. Two different individuals may have different opinions, but that should not result into ugly arguments. Watch out for any mishap, warns Ganesha. Your near and dear ones become a priority in the evening. Also, you will look forward to a candle-lit dinner with your sweetheart in the evening.

CAPRICORN

Never judge a book by its cover. Same applies to human beings, also. And, you are one of them. At first, you may not be able to impress the other person with your looks, but once you display your communication power, you win him over, feels Ganesha. You are blessed with an art, the art to convince others. Ganesha advises you to maintain a calm head over your shoulders.

AQUARIUS

What you have been trying to hide in the corner of your heart, may come to the fore today. At work, you will be more patient and calm. Everyone will notice this change in you. Your friends and family members will also be surprised to see a different side of your personality, says Ganesha.

PISCES

Ganesha advises you not to entertain the desire to remain secluded and to spend time with friends and family. If you manage to do this then you will have a happy and exciting day. You will have memorable moments with closed ones and may even end up organizing a small party for them. Ganesha says this might be an especially good day for artists.

JULIA ROBERTS' OLD VIDEO GENERATES BUZZ AGAIN

An old video of actress Julia Roberts on environment conservation has started generating buzz again as it trended on social media. In the video, which also had gone viral in April 2020, the actress speaks from the point of view of Mother Earth.

COVID SCARE STOPS SHOOT OF HOUSE OF THE DRAGON

The production of *House Of The Dragon*, prequel to the popular fantasy show *Game Of Thrones*, has been stopped by the network HBO owing to a Covid-19 case in the unit. The shoot had been paused for two days after a positive case was detected in the unit.



'Have enjoyed seeing dad on screen'

MUMBAI: Actress Shraddha Kapoor says ever since she was a kid, she has enjoyed watching her father Shakti Kapoor on screen.

Shakti is all set to comeback in his popular avatar of Crime Master Gogo on a special OTT project. He had memorably essayed the role in the 1994 film *Andaaz Apna Apna*.

"Ever since I was little, I have enjoyed seeing my father on screen — totally in his element, adding his personal touch to characters that today have a massive cult-like following," said Shraddha.

Shraddha calls it a learning process being on sets with her father. "Being on set with him is for the books. It's so memorable to share screen space with my father and I am really excited to see how this unveils," she said.

Shakti Kapoor returns as Crime Master Gogo on Disney+ Hotstar VIP.

IAN S



Arbaaz to chase Big B for his show

MUMBAI: Actor Arbaaz Khan returns to the hosting chair with the second season of his chat show *Pinch* and he says he would literally chase Amitabh Bachchan to appear on his show, as Big B is definitely on his guest-wish-list.

"As we all know, Amitabh Bachchan is the most active on social media, plus my show is a social media show, and he is Amitabh Bachchan, he is knowledgeable and experienced and I am sure he can part with some of his experience and knowledge with us, especially about handling social media," said Arbaaz.

"I am sure, even he must be

getting some of the trolling and negativity on social media, and (we would be keen to know) how he handles it, what he has to say and what he has learned over time, because when he started out in his career, there was no social media but now the scenario is different," he added.

Pinch features celebrities opening up about trolls, the cyber-bullying they face, and their coping mechanisms. The show will premiere July 21, and will feature guests such as Ayushmann

Khurrana, Farah Khan, Ananya Panday, Kiara Advani, and others.

IAN S



Why Kangana calls showbiz a gutter

MUMBAI: Actress Kangana Ranaut took to social media Tuesday to react to the news of businessman Raj Kundra's arrest on charges of making pornographic content and pub-

lishing them through mobile applications.

Actress-producer Kangana also warned saying she would expose the underbelly of 'Bollywood' in her upcoming production *Tiku weds Sheru*.

"This is why I call movie industry a gutter... all that glitter is not gold, I am going to expose underbelly of Bollywood in my upcoming production called *Tiku weds Sheru*..." the actress wrote on Instagram story.

"We need strong value system and conscience in the creative industry and of course a whip," she added.

The Mumbai Police late Monday arrested actress Shilpa Shetty's husband and businessman Raj Kundra, on charges of making pornographic content.

IAN S



TANYA ON HOW TO DEAL WITH TROLLS

MUMBAI: Actress Tanya Maniktala says she has figured out how to deal with trolls. She simply ignores them.

"Over time, I have realised that there is no absolute way of dealing with trolls. Personally, in my short social media existence, the way I cope with it is by ignoring it. You have to gradually learn to take it in good humour, make light of it, and not take it too personally," said Tanya. She does believe that a lot of good has come from the Internet and its ability to break geographical boundaries.

Tanya will be seen in the upcoming web se-

ries *Chutzpah*, which also stars Varun Sharma, Manjot Singh, Gautam Mehra, Elnaaz Norouzi and Kshitij Chauhan amongst others.

Tanya said: "The show takes you through how the internet is a vast jungle and how it plays such a vital role in our lives. Everyone connects with it differently — on one hand there is a long-distance relationship that a couple is holding onto and on the other hand you have internet trolls trying to take over the world."

IAN S



PEANUTS



CALVIN AND HOBBS

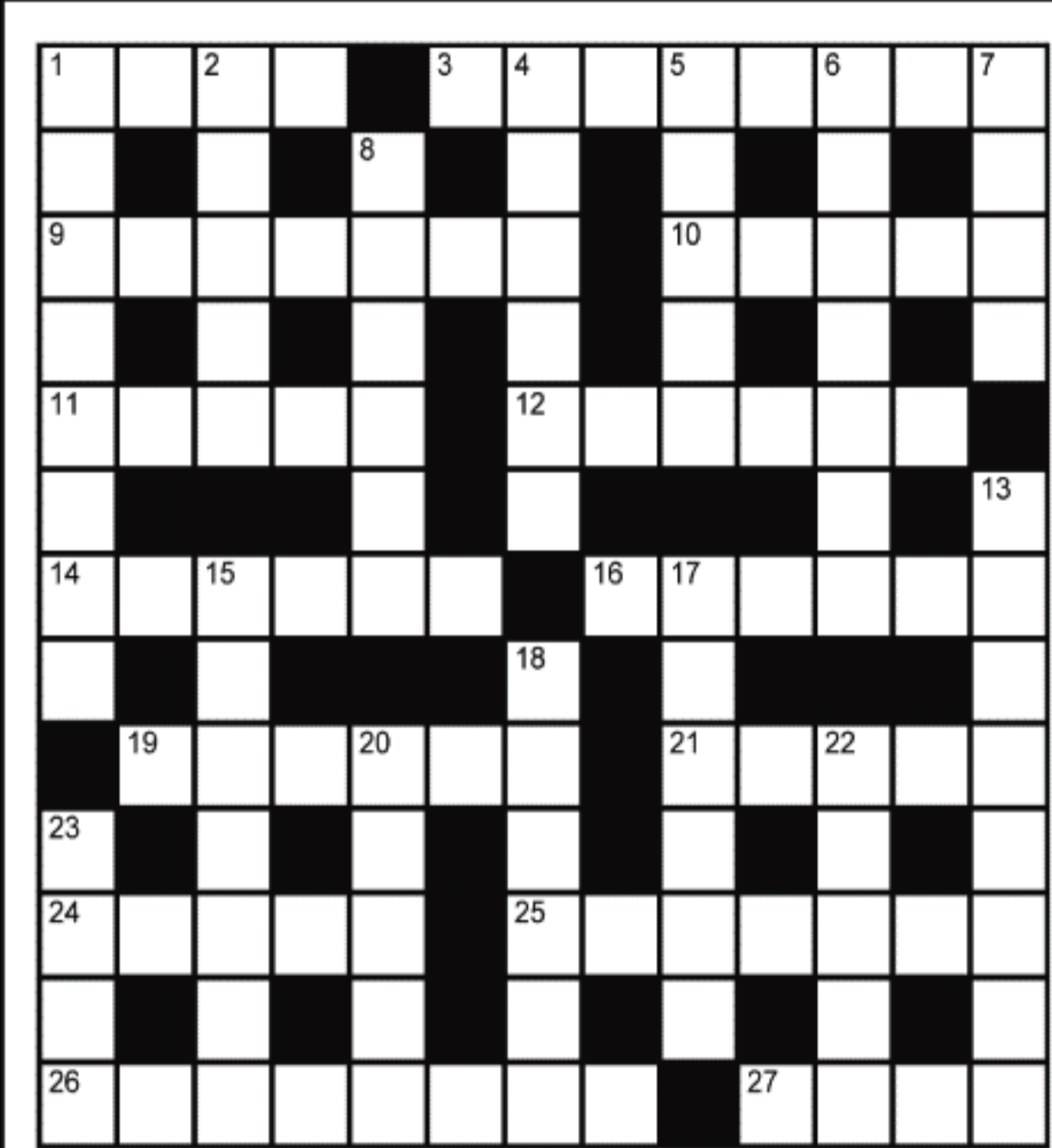


BREVITY



FUN post

CROSSWORD



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Across

- Yeats or Keats
- Tennis team award (5,3)
- Space vehicles
- Invalidate
- Bloodsucker
- Bank draft
- Leisurely walk
- One-dimensional
- Beer holder
- Rich cake
- Ill-suited

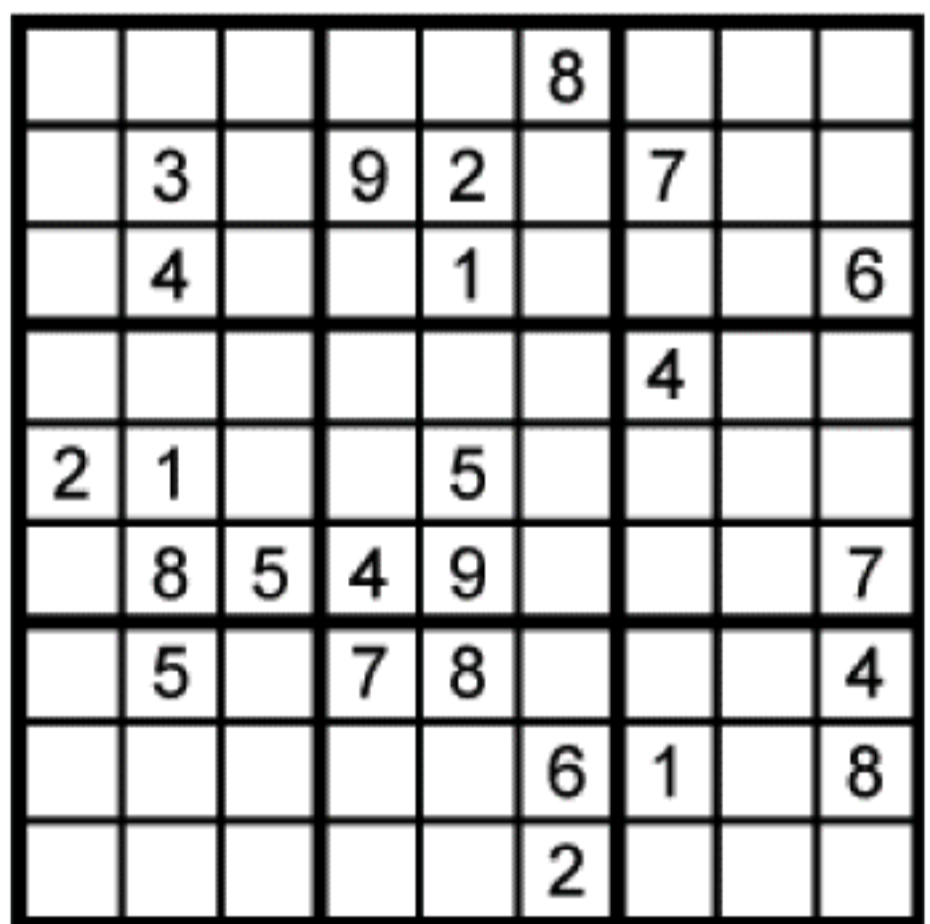
Down

- Cause immobility, as with fear
- Toastmaster
- Lorraine
- Fatuous
- Befuddle

- Game on horseback
- Deadly
- Ivy and periwinkle, e.g.
- Follow a favourite team (4,3)
- Lays to rest
- Precious stones
- Hauled
- Pub order
- Witty remark

SUDOKU

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

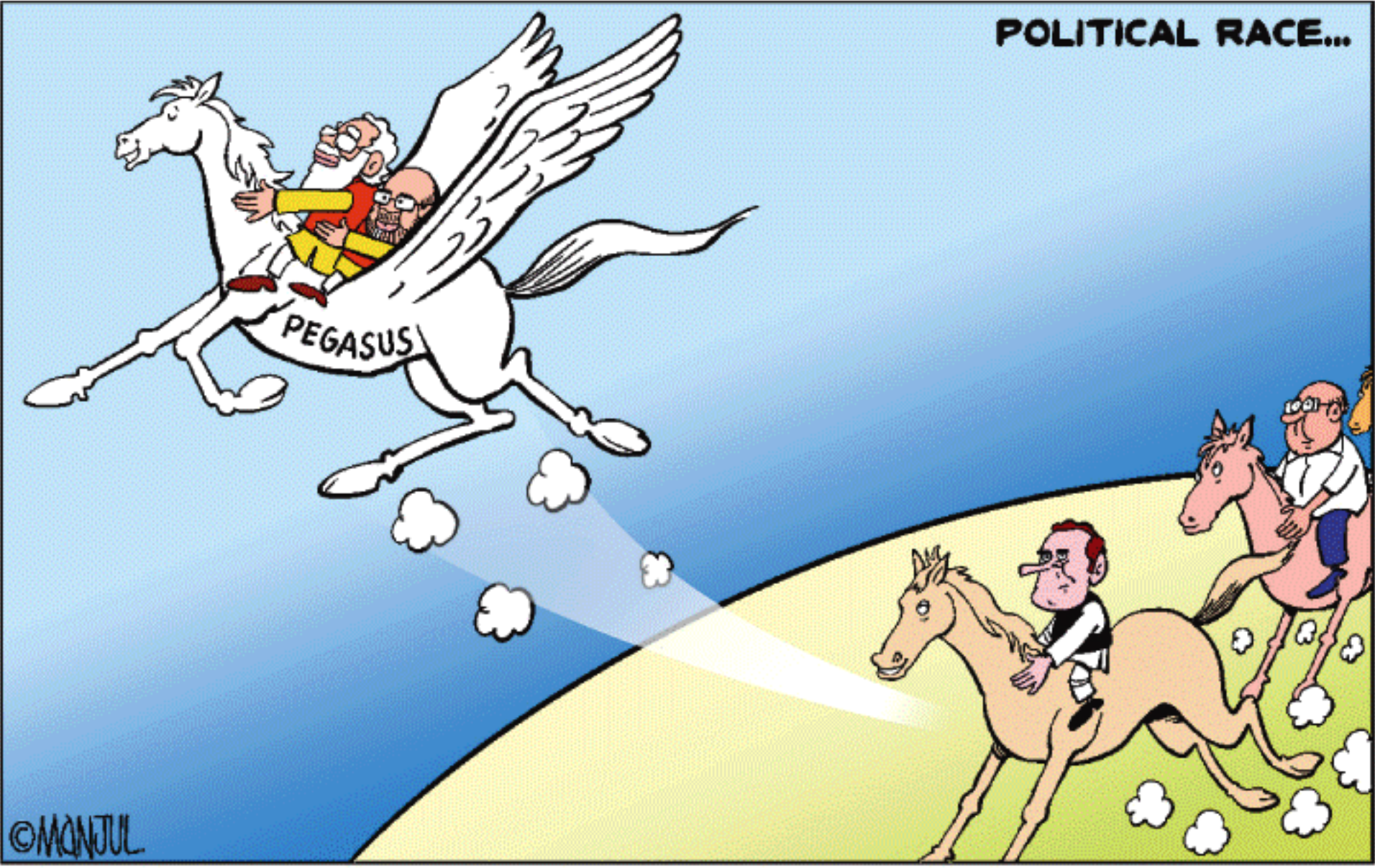


SOLUTIONS



CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW

POLITICKLE by MANJUL



27.60% jump in road mishap fatalities

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 20: Even after several meetings and strict instructions from the Supreme Court panel, the road mishap deaths have increased by 27.60 per cent in the state during the first four months of 2021.

According to official data, the state witnessed 4,095 road mishaps with 1,877 deaths during January to April of 2021 whereas 3,112 mishaps and 1,471 fatalities were reported during the same period of 2020. Commerce and Transport secretary Madhu Sudan Padhi has recently written a letter to all district Collectors asking them to submit a report in 15 days as to why the fatalities have increased.



“The SC Committee on Road Safety had directed to reduce road accident fatalities by 50 per cent by 2020 in a period of five years for the state of Odisha. But unfortunately, there has been a steady increase in the number of fatalities from 2014 (3,931) to 2019 (4,738), an increase of about 21 per cent during the period for which the Committee has expressed its concern,” Padhi said. “Unfortunately, this trend continues during 2021. There has been an abnormal increase in fatalities by about 27.60 per cent during the period of January to April, 2021 compared to the same period of 2020,” he said. Padhi asked the Collectors to crack down on helmetless riders as about 40 per cent of the persons killed are two-wheeler riders. They have further been directed to ensure joint inspection by the technical team at the spots where fatal accidents occurred.

Farmers’ participation boost to solar energy

OREDA sources said the farmers would get royalty for providing their barren lands to the solar power developers



MANISH KUMAR, OP

Bhubaneswar, July 20: The state government’s plan to generate around 2.2 gigawatt (GW) renewable energy by the end of 2022 could get an impetus as several farmers from the state have come forward to extend their support to the mission. The Odisha Renewable Energy Development Agency (OREDA) under the Pradhan Mantri Kisan Urja Suraksha evam Utthaan Mahabhiyan (PM-KUSUM) has brought more than 100 farmers onboard for the solar power mission in state. These farmers would provide their waste and barren lands for installation of solar panels, sources said. “Around 100 farmers have confirmed their participation in the solar power mission. The total availability of land for this mission has now reached around 1,100 acres. As this is an ongoing project, we are expecting more land from the farmers in future,” OREDA Joint Director (Technical) Ashok Choudhury told **Orissa POST**. As per the plan, the farmers and other rural players would provide their barren lands to the solar

power developers who would use the same to install panels and small grids for generating solar power commercially. OREDA sources said the farmers would get royalty for providing their barren lands to the solar power developers. Solar power is the prime source of clean energy is a non-starter due to lack of favourable climate. According to OREDA officials, the collaboration among the agency, solar power developers and farmers could help the state in raising its clean energy generation. According to available data, around 66 per cent of the energy in Odisha is generated from thermal plants which use coal as primary input. The state government had earlier tried to install several small standalone solar grids in remote areas of Odisha as part of its rural electrification process. It also promoted rooftop projects in several government and public buildings. Notably, the Indian government has made a global commitment to ensure the generation of 175GW of renewable energy by the end of 2022.

1400-yr-old post-Gupta era temple in Pipli

PNN/ AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, July 20: The ruins of an ancient temple dating back to the 6-7th Century and the earliest temples of the post-Gupta era were discovered by a survey team of the Odisha Chapter of Indian National Trust for Art & Cultural Heritage (INTACH). The team has stumbled upon the post-Gupta era temple while conducting a detailed survey of the Ratnachira Valley and its monuments. INTACH project coordinator Anil Dhir said like Prachi river, the mythical Ratnachira is in its death throes. Legend has it that Lord Rama had drawn the river to quench Sita’s thirst, using her pearl ring to chart its course. The ancient river, which now runs dry for most of the year, has many myths and legends with flourishing heritage on both sides of its short stretch, Dhir said. The four-member team led by Dhir documented the ancient site at Birapurussottampur under Pipli tehsil. The temple, which is by the side of another middle era Ghataswar temple, is known as Swapneswar Mahadev. According to Deepak Nayak, a team member, it is in all probability an early stone temple. The region was part of South Toshali region of the ancient Kalinga kingdom and finds mention in copper plate in-



RATNACHIRA VALLEY SURVEY

The 4-member INTACH team documents the ancient site at Birapurussottampur under Pipli tehsil. The temple, which is by the side of another middle era Ghataswar temple, is known as Swapneswar Mahadev. The temple’s ancient construction style is similar to the temples seen in the Mahendragiri hill ranges of Southern Odisha. The Kanasa plates of Sri Lanka Vighraha and Olasingh plates of Bhanu Vardhan, issued in the 6th/7th Century CE, throw light on worshipping Maninagesvar (Shiva) and Naga Cult of the South Toshali region. Taking into account the material and style of this temple, it is evident that it was built at least 1300 to 1400 years ago, and is among the oldest inscriptions of the post-Gupta period. The square stone Khandolite stone blocks have no binding or cementing, they are placed one over the other in symmetry to constitute the temple wall and roof. He said no evidence of iron clamps

INFRA BOOST

Higher Education Minister Arun Sahoo inaugurates the Human Resource Development Centre building at Utkal University in Bhubaneswar, Tuesday

Release ₹6,081cr food subsidy: BJD to Goyal

PNN/ AGENCIES

New Delhi, July 20: A delegation of Biju Janata Dal (BJD) MPs met Union Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution Minister Piyush Goyal Tuesday and urged him to release the pending food subsidy of around Rs 6,081 crore to Odisha. The BJD delegation, including the party’s Rajya Sabha leader Prasanna Acharya, submitted a memorandum to Goyal raising the demand for early evacuation of surplus rice from Odisha and resolution of gunny bag shortage issue. The MPs, through the memorandum, told Goyal that paddy/ rice procurement operations under the MSP programme is a task which is in the domain of Centre. However, in order to extend the outreach of MSP to remote and inaccessible areas, the Odisha government in 2003-04 took over the responsibility of procuring paddy from farmers in the state. As per the MoU signed with the Centre, there has to be zero financial liability on the state government or state procuring agency. The BJD also submitted that the state procuring agency should be paid quarterly provisional subsidy after deduction of the advanced amount. However, the release of advance subsidy to Odisha is irregular, they said. “Odisha State Civil Supplies Corporation (OSCS), the major



BJD MPs submit a memorandum to Union Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution Minister Piyush Goyal, Tuesday

KEY ISSUES IN MEMO		
As per the MoU signed with the Centre, there has to be zero financial liability on the state government or state procuring agency, said the BJD leaders	The OSCSC is yet to receive Rs 5,365.11 crore as provisional subsidy and advance subsidy of Rs 7,16.34 crore	Out of 52.35 lakh MT rice procured till July 6 this year, only 12.50 lakh MT has been received by the FCI

procuring agency of the state government, is to receive Rs 5,365.11 crore as provisional subsidy and advance subsidy of Rs 7,16.34 crore. The additional interest incurred because of the delay in release and non-release of subsidy comes to around Rs 4,883.55 crore which should be paid by the Centre,” the BJD stated in memorandum.

The BJD MPs also raised the issue of lifting of surplus rice from Odisha. The delegation submitted that the paddy procurement has been increasing over the years but the evacuation of rice by Food Corporation of India (FCI) has not registered a commensurate and consistent increase. The BJD stated that out of 52.35 lakh MT rice

procured till July 6 this year, only 12.50 lakh MT rice has been lifted by the FCI. “Failure to ensure timely evacuation of surplus rice from the state by FCI has serious implications of choking state’s godowns, preventing timely receipt of rice from millers, and being saddled with unwanted rice for which there will be no takers,” BJD stated in the memorandum. The BJD MPs also highlighted the shortage of gunny bags. The party stated that as against the requirement of 2.10 lakh gunny bags for the year 2020-21, only 1.37 lakh gunny bags have been received so far, resulting in the deficit of about 73,000 gunny bags.

BJD stages protest near FCI godowns

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 20: Alleging Central apathy in paddy procurement, BJD leaders and activists staged a protest before the Food Corporation of India (FCI) offices and godowns across the state, Tuesday. They demand lifting of about 7 lakh MT of surplus rice from Odisha, hike of paddy MSP to Rs 2,930 per quintal and release of subsidy dues worth Rs 6,081 crore. “As the Centre is showing step-motherly attitude to Odisha in paddy procurement, we are staging a protest. The Centre is yet to lift 7 lakh MT surplus rice from Odisha,” BJD legislator Debesh Acharya said. Paddy procurement is the primary responsibility of the Union government. Since 2003-04, the state government has taken the task of paddy procurements in all 30 districts. However, the BJP is shedding crocodile tears for farmers by accusing the state government of a mess in the procurement, he said. The BJD leaders also submitted memorandum in favour of the President of India over the issues. Reacting to this, BJP leader Pradip Purohit said that there are gross irregularities in paddy procurement and the government has failed to ensure MSP to the farmers. “As the BJP has been fighting for the rights of farmers for a long time and hit the streets on many occasions, the BJD staged the protests to hoodwink the farmers,” he said.

POST NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi, July 20: The Biju Janata Dal (BJD) Tuesday urged the Union government to come up with a strategy to vaccinate 12-18 years age group as there are speculations that a probable third wave may affect the children. Taking part in a brief discussion in Rajya Sabha on the management of Covid-19 pandemic, implementation of vaccination policy, and challenges of a likely third wave, BJD MP Amar Patnaik suggested that the



ODISHA IN PARLIAMENT

only way to tackle the challenge posed by the pandemic is to be dynamic. He said that the cooperation between Centre and state is paramount in fight against the virus. “Criticism is not the appropriate strategy. We cannot politicise handling of pandemic because no one is any wiser. The cooperation between state and Centre is paramount to fight the virus. People’s participation is extremely important and the state of Odisha is following that,” Amar said.

The BJD MP stated that the country may face more waves of Covid-19 in future and urged the government to take steps accordingly. “We have constructed thousands of cyclone shelters in the state and they are of no use when there is no cyclone. But when a cyclone strikes, these shelters help save lives. Similarly, we need to set up more and more ICU beds and hospitals to tackle upcoming challenges of Covid-19 and any other virus,” said Amar. He also requested the Centre to allot 95 per cent vaccines to the government and 5 per cent for private hospitals. He said that Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik too had requested the Prime Minister earlier for the same.

ପବିତ୍ର ରଥଯାତ୍ରା ଉପଲକ୍ଷେ ସମସ୍ତଙ୍କୁ ଦୀର୍ଘିକ ଅଭିନନ୍ଦନ

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e-mail: odisha@bpsl.net, www.bpsl.net

BJP targets oppn on 'Pegasus politics'

Bhubaneswar: The state BJP Tuesday attacked the opposition parties for politicizing the Pegasus issue and attacking the BJP government allegedly without much proof. Odisha BJP President Samir Mohanty Tuesday said, "The opposition parties had been making hue and cry with unverified media reports on spying by government. The Congress party and others, meanwhile, reached a new low by disrupting the introduction of new Cabinet Ministers," he said. "The emergence of such a report before the Monsoon Session of the parliament shows malicious intent.

Punch man Satyapira set for July 23 event

Bhubaneswar: Two-time Guinness World Records holder Satyapira Padhan, popularly known as the punch man of India, is all set to perform for his next Guinness World Records at a special programme to be organised here July 23, 2021. He is expected to break the record of famous punch striker Pavel Trusov of Slovakia. Padhan has already created two Guinness World Records - 2017 and 2018- and has been honoured by CM Naveen Patnaik.

High Court stays single-judge bench order on school merger



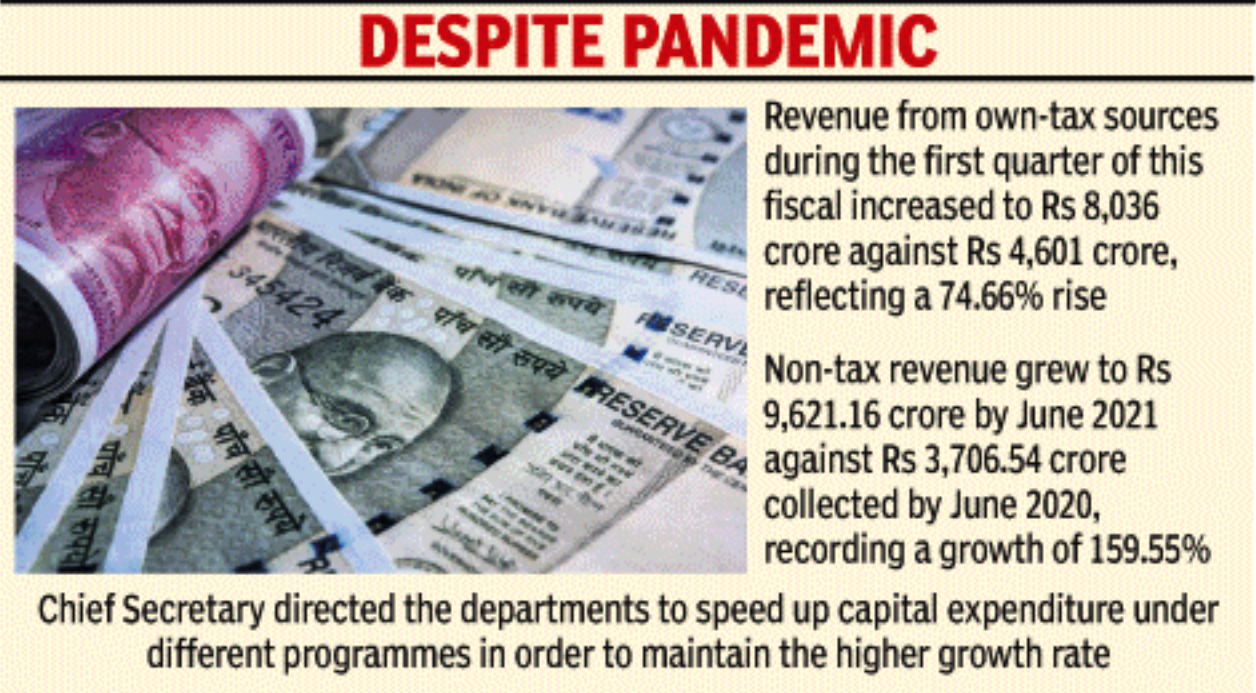
Cuttack, July 20: A two-judge bench of Orissa High Court Tuesday stayed an earlier order of a single-judge bench scrapping a notification of the state government for the merger of schools having less than 20 students with the nearby schools. A bench of Chief Justice S Muralidhar and Justice BP Routray pronounced the stay while hearing a writ petition by the state government. Justice Bidyut Ranjan Sarangi had scrapped the school merger plan of state government while

Revenue mope-up zooms 112.54%

THE INCREASE IN NON-TAX REVENUE WAS DUE TO HIGH COLLECTION FROM MINING

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 20: Despite challenges posed by Covid-induced lockdowns and shutdowns, the state has recorded about 112.54 per cent jump in tax and non-tax revenue collections by end of June 2021-22 in comparison with the corresponding period of 2020-21, an official said Tuesday. The total revenue collection by end of June of 2021-22 stood at Rs 17,656.70 crore, reflecting a rise of 112.54 per cent as compared to Rs 8,307.54 crore during 2020-21, Finance Secretary Ashok Kumar Kaluaram Meena said during the All Secretaries' meet, which was chaired by Chief Secretary Suresh Chandra Mahapatra, held on a digital mode. The revenue generation from own-tax sources during the first quarter of this fiscal increased to Rs 8,036 crore against a collection of Rs 4,601 crore during the corresponding period of last year, reflecting a 74.66 per cent rise.



Chief Secretary directed the departments to speed up capital expenditure under different programmes in order to maintain the higher growth rate. The total expenditure till end of June 2021 was Rs 25,194 crore as against Rs 20,269 crore during the corresponding period of previous year, registering a growth of 24.29 per cent. The total programme expenditure till June 2021 was Rs 13,107 crore which was 55.62 per cent more than the programme expenditure during the same period of last year. During the meeting, the Chief Secretary directed the departments

to speed up capital expenditure under different programmes in order to maintain the higher growth rate. The secretaries of different departments have been instructed to closely monitor the progress of the projects under District Mineral Foundation (DMF) and Odisha Mineral Bearing Areas Development Corporation (OM-BADC) along with the livelihood enhancement projects and schemes during the current year. Mahapatra directed the departments to focus on preparation of the digital assets register for management and maintenance of the government assets created under different departments. The Chief Secretary reviewed implementation of the projects under DMF and OMBADC. Mahapatra directed the agencies and departments to expedite completion of the projects before the scheduled time as they would go a long way in helping the people in mineral bearing areas, said a source.

OSCPCR seeks info on Covid orphans

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 20: Odisha State Commission for Protection of Child Rights (OSCPCR) Tuesday sent a letter to Women and Child Development department seeking information about Covid orphans enrolled under Ashirbad Yojana. In a letter to the Director of Social Welfare, OSCPGR chairperson Sandhyabati Pradhan said that the Odisha government has launched a scheme Ashirbad Yojana for children who lost their parents to Covid. This is a special scheme under which Rs 2,500 will be given to the orphaned kids every month. A comprehensive package was announced by Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik to support orphans. Beneficiaries had been divided into three categories - children who have lost both the parents, children who have lost one of the parents and children who have lost the earning parent.

OSCPGR sought district-wise information on number of orphans and semi-orphans and also wanted to know if the same was being uploaded on Bal Swaraj Portal daily. It also sought information about the number of children enrolled under Ashirbad for getting this entitlement from state government. The children will also get free treatment under the state government's Biju Swasthya Kalyan Yojana. Besides, they will be included as beneficiaries under the National Food Security Act (NFSA). As per the provision of the scheme, the children can also continue in the schools in which they were studying before the death of their parents. If the relative, who has taken responsibility of the child resides somewhere else, arrangement for schooling will be made in that place. If necessary, the government will help in the admission of the child in Adarsh Vidyalaya or central school.

Odisha in fatty-tail of nCoV

PNN/AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, July 20: Odisha Tuesday reported 2,085 new Covid-19 cases and 56 more deaths, a Health department official said. Stating that Odisha is witnessing the phenomenon of thick-tail or fatty-tail of Covid-19, DMET CBK Mohanty said the cases are not plummeting anymore. The new cases were detected after testing 70,476 samples, taking the positivity rate to 2.95 per cent, he said. Cuttack reported the highest positivity rate at 6.95 per cent, followed by Nayagarh (5 per cent) and Kendrapara (4.55 per cent), he added. Odisha has so far reported 9,58,059 Covid-19 cases and 5,172 deaths. Directorate of Medical Education and Training (DMET) chief CBK Mohanty said that though the Covid situation significantly improved in the state, the infection graph



continues to be at a plateau stage. "The daily infections are not plummeting after a certain stage, the phenomenon is called thick-tail or fatty-tail," Mohanty said, adding that Odisha is witnessing the situation, which was earlier seen in Maharashtra and Kerala. The Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC), meanwhile, declared 14 places, including some apartments, as micro containment zones after detection of multiple cases there. Of the new infections, 1,198 were reported from quarantine centres,

while the rest 887 were local contact cases. Khurda district registered the highest 528 new infections, followed by Cuttack (210), Bhadrak (173), Balasore (113), Jagatsinghpur (108) and Puri (106). These six coastal districts together accounted for 59.37 per cent of total infections in Odisha. Out of 56 fatalities reported in the past 24 hours, a maximum of 19 deaths were reported from Khurda district followed by eight in Sundargarh, six each from Mayurbhanj and Bargarh district. Three each died in Kendrapara, Keonjhar and Puri districts. The active cases in the state marginally reduced to 20,168 with Khurda district registering the highest number of 4557 cases followed by Cuttack (2,767), Balasore (15,88) and Jajpur (1,430), a Health official said. The Test Positivity Rate in the state stood at 2.9 per cent in comparison to the 2.33 per cent reported Monday.

SPEEDING CAR HITS SCOOTERIST TO DEATH

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 20: A 35-year-old scooterist died after being knocked down by a speeding four-wheeler in Nayapalli area here Tuesday, an official said. According to sources, the incident took place on the overbridge near CRP Square under Nayapalli police limits here when the victim, Rajesh Swain of Palanga under

Brahmani Tarang police limits in Rourkela, was on his way to VSS Nagar in the afternoon. "Rajesh was heading towards VSS Nagar when a speeding car (Hyundai i20) hit his scooter from the rear and knocked him down. With multiple injuries, a profusely bleeding Rajesh was rushed to a nearby healthcare facility where he was declared 'brought dead'," said a police official, adding that Rajesh's

body has been handed over to his family in the evening after an autopsy at Capital Hospital. Sources said that Rajesh, along with his family from the Steel City, had come to Bhubaneswar for his engagement. Rajesh was on his way to join his parents at the girl's place in VSS Nagar. "Anil Godial of Delhi, who was behind the wheels, has been arrested and the car has been recovered," said a police official.

1,717 rainwater harvesting projects come up in City

PNN/AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, July 20: The Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC) has constructed over 1,700 rainwater harvesting projects across the Capital city through Urban Wage Employment Initiative (UWEL). These projects are executed by the members of Mission Shakti self-help groups (SHGs), federations and slum dwellers associations. The UWEL, which was launched April 18, 2020 and later extended up to March 21, is being rechristened as a regular scheme to provide wage employment opportunities for the urban poor and needy people under 'Mukhya Mantri Karma Tatpara Abhiyan' (MUKTA). The rainwater harvesting projects are expected to help in stabilising and restoring the groundwater table. Experts have already warned that with the rapid urbanisation process in and around the Capital city, the groundwater table is declining. Sources said under the MUKTA Programme the SHGs and resident and slum dwellers associations, in their coordinated efforts with the help of BMC engineering wing, have successfully completed 1,717 rainwater harvesting projects. BMC Commissioner Sanjay Kumar Singh said all the 67 wards of the city are going to get the benefits of the rainwater harvesting projects. They are mostly constructed in parks, open space, grounds and the women SHGs have taken the re-



STABILISING WATER TABLE
THE BMC HAS COMPLETED THE CONSTRUCTION OF THESE RAINWATER HARVESTING PROJECTS BY JUNE 30, 2021
THE PROJECTS ARE BEING EXECUTED BY THE MEMBERS OF MISSION SHAKTI SHGS, FEDERATIONS AND SLUM DWELLERS ASSOCIATIONS
THE PROJECTS ARE EXPECTED TO HELP IN STABILISING AND RESTORING THE GROUNDWATER TABLE

sponsibilities of their local projects with the central theme of 'Progress through Partnership'. All the 1,717 rainwater harvesting projects were completed by June 30, 2021. About 3,000 members of women SHGs have participated while representing 265 SHGs through community-led participatory work.

6 students to get PGDS scholarship

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 20: Indian Metals & Ferro Alloys (IMFA) Limited in association with its CSR wing Bansidhar and Ila Panda Foundation (BIPF) announced the recipients for the prestigious Professor Ghanashyam Dash Scholarship (PGDS) for Higher Education for the year 2020-2021. The six scholarship recipients for 2020-21 are Anita Kujur (MBBS, MKCG Medical College, Berhampur), Hinamsu Ranjan Prusty (MBBS, MKCG Medical College, Berhampur), Deepak Kumar Mohanty (B.Tech-Mechanical Engineering, NIT, Rourkela), Roshan Paik (MBBS, VIMSAR, Burla), Ashutosh Sahoo (MBBS, SCB Medical College, Cuttack) and Sambit Kumar Ayach (B.Tech-Mining, Government College Of Engineering, Keonjhar). The scholarship helps these students in pursuing professional courses in medicine, engineering and liberal arts. The amount of upto Rs 4 lakh to each recipient will meet 90 per cent of their academic fees and related expenses for the entire duration of the course.

'Mo Bari Mo Bagicha' at govt quarters

Bhubaneswar: Agriculture Minister Arun Sahoo Tuesday inaugurated the plantation programme 'Mo Bari Mo Bagicha' at government quarters. Under this programme, more than 1,000 government quarters in the City will witness plantation of mango, jackfruit, jasmine and some other medicinal plants within their premises in order to make the area and City greener.

Tata Steel's water treatment plant

Bhubaneswar: In line with its commitment towards environmental sustainability, the Manganese Group of Mines, Bichakundi of Tata Steel's Ferro Alloys & Manganese Division (FAMD) set up a 400 KLD (Kilolitres per day) water treatment plant at Bichakundi under Joda block of Keonjhar. The facility was inaugurated July 19, 2021 by DB Sundara Ramam, Vice President (Raw Materials), Tata Steel. The plant will treat 400 KLD of water from Suna River and will address the drinking water need of 2,800 people.

SOA UNIV CELEBRATES 15TH FOUNDATION DAY

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 20: Siksha 'O' Anusandhan (SOA), a 'deemed to be University' in Bhubaneswar, celebrated its 15th foundation day July 17. The university has emerged as a shining academic edifice today which has illuminated the educational skyline in the east, said the varsity sources. A socially inclusive institution of higher education focused on quality education and innovative research, SOA has been churning out professionals in varied fields ready to meet the requirements and challenges of different sectors. SOA came into existence July 17, 2007 when the government conferred on it the status of a 'Deemed to be University' under Section 3 of the UGC Act, 1956. The university is home to more than 12,000 students, including those from abroad. For five consecutive years, SOA has been continuously listed among the top 25 universities in the country by the National Institutional Ranking Framework (NIRF), Ministry of Education, instituted in 2016. SOA was ranked 20th in the



country by NIRF in 2020. SOA was globally ranked in the 801-1000 bracket by the prestigious QS World University Ranking for 2022 after being placed in the 351-400 bracket in the QS Asia University Ranking in 2021. It was awarded Diamond University rating by QS I-GAUGE for outstanding performance in 2020. SOA was also the only institute in eastern India to get QS I-GAUGE E-LEAD (E-Learning Excellence for Academic Digitisation) for conducting online teaching-learning during the Covid-19 lockdown. Significantly, 11 of the researchers in SOA found place in Stanford University's prestigious world ranking of two per cent scientists which was drawn up on the basis of a subject-wise analysis.

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HOME COMING OF TRINITY



Pahandi Bijee being performed for Lord Jagannath during Bahuda Yatra in Puri



As Bahuda Yatra ends peacefully in Puri, three chariots lie stationed in front of Srimandir in Puri. Gajapati Maharaj Dibyasingha Deb performs Chhera Panhra on a chariot (Right)

OP PHOTOS



Servitors carry *poda peetha* from Mausai Maa temple for the deities



Servitors carry out *Pahandi Bijee* ritual of Lord Rama and Krishna in Puri



Servitors offer their prayers to the deities after the three chariots reach Singhadwar of Srimandir



A differently-abled youth has made a small chariot in Nilagiri of Balasore



Pahandi Bijee ritual for Devi Subhadra in Sambalpur



Devotees offer *poda peetha* to Lord Jagannath in Berhampur



Chariots made out of Tulasi wood in Jeypore



Bahuda Yatra at Sabara Srikshetra in Koraput

Tusker found dead in Dhenkanal district

POST NEWS NETWORK

Dhenkanal, July 20: A day after carcasses of two elephants were recovered from a jungle in Keonjhar district, a tusker was found dead near Thenga village under Hindol forest range in Dhenkanal district Tuesday.

Some local residents spotted the carcass and immediately informed other villagers as well as the forest department.

While the pachyderm is believed to be 7 to 8 years old, the reason for its death is yet to be ascertained. Forest officials said the post-mortem report will shed more light on the cause of its death.

According to the villagers, the tusker was roaming in a herd of 12 elephants in a nearby jungle.

Notably, two elephant carcasses were recovered from Raba village under Kushakala panchayat in Bhuyan Juang Pirh forest range in Keonjhar district, Monday.

‘Mysterious’ disease claims 5 lives in 15 days

DESPITE THE HAVOC WRECKED BY THE UNKNOWN DISEASE, TRIBAL VILLAGERS OF SUDHAKHUNTA IN MALKANGIRI STILL REPOSE THEIR FAITH ON TRADITIONAL HEALERS

POST NEWS NETWORK

Malkangiri, July 20: A mysterious disease has allegedly reared its head in a tribal village of Malkangiri district and claimed lives of five kids in 15 days, a report said.

According to the report, the death of kids one after another due to the unknown disease has triggered panic among the residents at Sudhakhunta village under Kalimela block.

Talking about the symptoms of the disease, villagers said first the patients suffer from cold and then the body temperature of the children rise all of a sudden.

Children who complained of such symptoms were treated at the local hospital. Later, all the patients suffered loss of motion.

Some villagers said that the fam-



ilies of the children had taken them to traditional healers first when they were down with fever. As locals of this remote village lack consciousness, they show greater faith in local witch

doctors than scientific medical care.

When the fever did not subside, villagers took their children to the hospital, they added. Later, the kids died. Among the victims of the myste-

rious disease are four-year-old son of Deba Madkani, five-year-old son and two-month-old daughter of Ram Madhi, three-year-old daughter of Bira Madkani and five-year-old son of Jay Sodhi.

Panicked over casualties, the residents apprehend that the unknown disease may spread in the village if necessary steps are not taken immediately.

On the other hand, the district health authorities have been accused of failure in taking immediate steps to diagnose the affected children and check the spread of the disease in the village. No health team has reached the village yet, it is alleged.

Conscious residents said that a special medical team should be sent to the village to take stock of situation and collect blood samples of the affected.

Brown sugar worth ₹17L seized

BHADRAK: Even as raids on drug peddling and bootlegging have been going on in various parts of Bhadrak and Balasore, a flying squad of Central Excise arrested a drug peddler and seized 175 gm of brown from his possession near Guamala Shiv temple Tuesday. The accused was identified as Tapan Kumar Behera. The team also seized a bike from him. Behera has been into the drug peddling for a long time even as drug peddling has been going on unabated in parts of north Odisha. The narcotic seized from him was valued at ₹17 lakh, according to Excise officials.

No. C-615

GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA

OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER,

P.H. DIVISION, BALANGIR

Ph. No – (06652 – 234647), Email. ID – eephbgr@yahoo.co.in

NOTICE INVITING TENDERS

NATIONAL COMPETITIVE BIDDING THROUGH e-Procurement

Bid Identification No. SE PH BGR 18 /2021-22 Dt. 16.07.2021

01. Name of the Work	04 Nos.
02. Estimated Cost	Rs. 7.08 to 44.11 Lakhs
03. Period of Completion	45 Days to 120 Days
04. Date & Time of availability of bid document in the portal	From 11.00 AM of dt. 22.07.2021 to 5.00 PM of dt. 31.07.2021
05. Last date / time of receipt of bids in the portal	5 PM of dt. 31.07.2021
06. Date & Time of opening of bids	At 11.00 AM of dt.02.08.2021
07. Name and Address of the Officer Inviting Bid	Superintending Engineer, P.H. Division, Balangir, At- Tulsinagar, Dist. - Balangir-767001

Further details can be seen from the website <http://tenders.ori.nic.in> or www.tendersorissa.gov.in

OIPR-13005/11/0012/2122

Sd/- Superintending Engineer, P.H.Division, Balangir

No. 4015

OFFICE OF THE MUNICIPAL COUNCIL, SUNDARGARH

DT. 19.07.2021

COMPETITIVE BIDDING THROUGH e-Procurement

NOTICE INVITING TENDER

Bid Reference No. SNGM-12/2021-22/Dt.19.07.2021

No. C-610:- On behalf of the Sundargarh Municipality, on-line e-tender

Percentage Rate Bids are invited by the Executive Officer, Sundargarh Municipality from the intending and eligible class/category of bidders in conformity with the Detailed Tender Call Notice in Double cover bid system i.e. Technical Bid & Financial Bid for execution of the works mentioned in the DTCN. Contractors validly registered/empowered under Sundargarh Municipality are also eligible to participate for the works as per conditions of DTCN.

1. Total No. of works for which Tenders invited: 01 No.

2. Place of Execution: Inside of Sundargarh Municipality

3. Estimated Cost of work: Rs.87.69,961/-

4. Eligible Class of Contractors: Registered Contractors of Class- 'B' to Class - 'A' as indicated against the work mentioned in the Tender Call Notice.

5. Intending bidders have to participate through "On-Line" bidding only. The website for online bidding is <https://www.tendersodisha.gov.in>

6. The bid documents will be available in the above website from 11 A.M. on 22.07.2021 to 5 P.M. on 31.07.2021 for online bidding.

7. Bids received online will be opened at 11 A.M. on 02.08.2021.

8. The bidder must possess valid and compatible Digital Signature Certificate (DSC).

9. The DTCN for bid shall be available in the e-procurement portal <https://www.tendersodisha.gov.in> for on-line bidding.

Sd/- Executive Officer, Sundargarh Municipality

OIPR-13130/11/0028/2122

Wanton stone mining poses threat to hill

GOVT INCURS HUGE REVENUE LOSS; LOCALS IN NAYAGARH DEMAND PROBE BY STF

POST NEWS NETWORK

Nayagarh, July 20: Random and consistent illegal blastings in stone quarries and operation of an automated stone crushing unit have spelt doom for Bhalumundia hill in Odangana tehsil of Nayagarh district. It has become a cause of concern for local people even as the hill, once rich with flora and fauna, is battling for existence. On the other hand, owing to illegal stone quarrying, the government is losing crores of rupees as revenue.

Local residents alleged that stones are being mined illegally in the hill using explosives for the last five years. Huge quantities of stones are extracted on a daily basis. Roughly estimated, stones worth ₹5 lakh are plundered from hill every day.

It was alleged that three influential persons and a local leader have carrying out such illegal ac-

tivities, which have caused huge revenue losses to the state exchequer. "Though the administration is well aware of the situation, it doesn't dare to take any action against the persons behind such illegal activities. In such a situation, the

Stones are being mined illegally using explosives in Bhalumundia hill for the last five years, but no action has been taken

STF should come into play," local alleged.

Some Congress leaders and local residents alleged that the explosives are being supplied from Kolkata and a person hailing from Bihar is looking after the stone extraction exercise.

On the other hand, the quantity of stones being extracted and crushed is apparent from the fact that chips, metal and other byproducts are transported in about 50 to 60 Hyvas every day from the stone crushing unit.

Locals said, if officials intercept any vehicles carrying stones anywhere, the issue is settled im-

mediately. Officials are hand in glove with the influential persons, locals pointed out.

President of the Congress' district unit, Ranjit Das sought to know how the state government can turn a blind eye to such rampant loot of the stones when it is losing revenue worth crores of rupees.

"All such illegal activities have been taking place for the last five years under the nose of the administration, but surprisingly no action is being taken. The STF should look into such illegalities here. If such things are allowed to happen for a few years more, the hill will be completely razed to the ground," local Congress workers lamented.

BJP youth leader Santosh Pradhan said that none is above law. If the automated stone crushing units are not closed down, the party workers will stage protests. The Congress has also warned of agitation over the issue.

DA case: Vig raids asst engineer's residence

POST NEWS NETWORK

Baripada, July 20: Sleuths from the Vigilance department conducted simultaneous raids at five places in Mayurbhanj district Tuesday related to an assistant engineer who has been accused of accumulating assets disproportionate to his known sources of income.

The accused was identified as Dharia Majhi, who is currently serving as an assistant engineer in Kuliana block. Acting on allegations about possession of huge assets disproportionate to his income, five teams of Vigilance officials conducted the simultaneous raids at Majhi's office at Kuliana, his residence at Kalikapur in Baripada, a market complex at Kotha, his parental house at Bada Shukruliakhola in Shuliapadar area and his in-laws' house at Dhanashula village in Badasahi block.

A similar raid was undertaken at various places related to secretary of Primary Agriculture Credit Society Masood Mohammed at Salepali in Bolangir district for amassing properties disproportionate to his known sources of income, July 16.

“A great thing would be done if all these God-visions could embrace and cast themselves into each other; but intellectual dogma and cult egoism stand in the way.”

SRI AUROBINDO

Afghan Cauldron

Rockets hitting Kabul during Eid prayers July 20 and landing near the presidential palace clearly indicate the shape of things to come in Afghanistan in the next few weeks when the pullout of US army is complete, save a handful of soldiers guarding the US consulate in the capital. The perpetrators remain unidentified, but there is no doubt about who they are. The Taliban have quickly taken control of nearly 85 per cent of the territory, menacingly advancing from one area to another in full battle preparedness. Videos show how the prayers went on despite the rockets landing with thuds, though fear was writ large on the devotees' faces, with security men among them taking up positions with their weapons. It will be an understatement to say Afghanistan is now on the cusp of a drastic change. In fact, those Afghans who were hoping for some semblance of democracy and education, now know that an interminable dark night lies ahead. Women, as reports pour in, shudder at the prospect of being restricted to their homes and deprived of college and university education and jobs once the Taliban take over the country, as it had happened to a previous generation bearing the brunt of a brutal Taliban regime.

The US administration under President Joe Biden has, as former President George W Bush recently said, thrown the Afghan population “to be slaughtered by the Taliban.” He recalled how the USA had hounded out the Islamist fanatics made of ‘Talibs’ (students) who formed the Taliban and teamed up with terrorists outside the country to foist a medieval and warped ideology on the people. The Taliban leadership seems to be in overt and covert talks with both Afghan government representatives and foreign governments close to the country such as Russia, China and Pakistan. Their pledge to help a peaceful settlement post-US pullout is not taken seriously, given their history of reneging on their promises.

The death of Indian photojournalist Danish Siddiqui working for Reuters in Afghanistan recently has cast a pall of gloom over India's journalist fraternity. Death and destruction have been a regular feature in Afghanistan since the Taliban were pushed out of the country and the US and NATO forces began to help the Afghanistan government manage affairs in the country. For, between 2006 and April 2021 nearly 70,000 Afghan security personnel were killed in various skirmishes, over 47,000 civilians perished, while 450 humanitarian aid workers and 72 journalists died in the conflict, as per data collated by The Watson Institute for International and Public Affairs at Brown University. The war also took the lives of 2,442 US soldiers, 1,140 allied troops and 3,846 US contractors during this period.

Considering this background, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) has warned of a looming humanitarian crisis in Afghanistan as the conflict escalates. According to the UN Refugee Agency, an estimated 2.7 lakh Afghans have been newly displaced inside the country since January 2021, mainly due to insecurity and violence, taking the total of displaced population to over 35 lakh.

With the USA withdrawing from the scene, the main task of ensuring peace in the region devolves to Pakistan, China and Russia. China probably won't allow the Taliban to grow in strength and extend moral and material support to Uyghur Moslems in its Xinjiang province. Nor will it tolerate its Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) in the region affected by the rise of the Taliban. Russia would also prevent the Taliban from extending their influence to the central Asian countries of Tajikistan, Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan – all three sharing borders with Afghanistan. A spillover of Taliban's extremist ideology into these Moslem-dominated countries would threaten to destabilise the entire region. The three Central Asian neighbours are also important for China and Russia from the energy security point of view.

Pakistan is seen as one of the largest beneficiaries of the return of Taliban in Afghanistan. However, the civil society of Pakistan is apprehensive about the impact of a changed scenario in the neighbouring country. According to Pakistani media, the pro-Taliban elements within Pakistan may get bolstered to act in a manner that would threaten the stability of that country from within.

The Afghan government has hinted that, at some point in the future, it may seek India's military assistance if talks with the Taliban fail, Farid Mamundzay, Afghanistan's Ambassador to India, told a news channel July 13. However, he made it clear that Afghanistan was not asking India to send troops. The assistance would instead be sought in areas like training and technical support.

India runs the risk of infrastructure worth billions of rupees built by it in Afghanistan being destroyed by the Taliban since all these were built with the intention of helping the Afghan government, which the Taliban considers its prime enemy. This shows the lack of thinking ahead by the Indian leadership, both political and bureaucratic, which invested huge amounts in a war-torn extremist country, which had been kept temporarily stable by the presence of western military.

WISDOM CORNER

- “Start by doing what's necessary; then do what's possible; and suddenly you are doing the impossible.” FRANCIS OF ASSISI
- “I can't change the direction of the wind, but I can adjust my sails to always reach my destination.” JIMMY DEAN
- “Don't judge each day by the harvest you reap but by the seeds that you plant.” ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON

WORDSWORTH

On the lam

On the lam has had a good life. It appeared near the end of the nineteenth century and is still common. To be on the lam is to be on the run from the police or to have escaped from prison. In its quest to find a suspected domestic terrorist on the lam for a decade, the FBI on Friday began placing his image on billboards across the country (Daily Herald, March 1, 2014). Another form has been take it on the lam, as in this example from the period of mobsters and hard-boiled detectives: He heard the shots, saw the kid tear down the steps, jump into a big sedan and take it on the lam (Trouble is my Business, by Raymond Chandler, 1934). Lam goes back a lot further than these modern senses. It may be from a Scandinavian source – dictionaries mention the Old Norse lemjá, literally to lame but usually meaning to give a beating, and the Danish and Norwegian lammé, to paralyse. When lam came into English in the late 1500s it retained the Old Norse sense of beating soundly or thrashing. Shortly afterwards it was extended to lambaste, a doublet that added emphasis by including the older baste of similar meaning that's also from Old Norse (there's no connection so far as we know with the cookery or sewing senses). Nowadays, lambaste means to criticise harshly with no implication of physical force, but that's a nineteenth-century shift. Unlike lambaste, lam and its close relatives have kept the same sense down to modern times: Three of the guards will come in with belts. They'll lam into me until they can't lam into me any more. Every day for a week, they'll do that (Come Easy – Go Easy, by James Hadley Chase, 1960).

LOL

Animals go to Heaven

A cat and a mouse died on the same day and went up to Heaven. At the top they met God and he asked them “How do you like it so far?” The mouse replied: “It's great, but can I get a pair of roller skates?” God said

“Sure,” and he gave him a pair of roller skates. The next day God saw the cat and asked him “How do you like it up here so far?” and the cat replied: “Great, I didn't know you had meals on wheels up here!”



BEYOND APATHY, FACEBOOK MAY HAVE BEEN SEEKING TO PROTECT ITS OWN BUSINESS INTERESTS, WHICH EXPLAINS WHY COMPANY EXECUTIVES REPORTEDLY PROTECTED MEMBERS OF INDIA'S RULING BJP FROM PUNISHMENT FOR VIOLATING THE PLATFORM'S HATE-SPEECH POLICIES

IN JEST THIS



IF YOU ENJOY LOOKING DOWN AT OTHER PEOPLE, JUST IMAGINE HOW MUCH FUN YOU'LL HAVE LOOKING DOWN AT THE ENTIRE PLANET!

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
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I've been a professional free-expression advocate for more than a decade. That is why I support the Facebook Oversight Board's recent decision to uphold former US President Donald Trump's suspension from the platform and Facebook's new protocol whereby public figures may be banned for up to two years during times of civil unrest. In fact, the platform should go further.

Trump used his bully pulpit on social media to attack and harass news organisations, political opponents, and former political allies. He used it to undermine confidence in the 2020 presidential election, with a significant share of Americans continuing to doubt the outcome, despite the absence of any evidence of widespread irregularities or fraud. And he used it to perpetuate misinformation during the Covid-19 pandemic.

In other words, with the help of social-media platforms, Trump undermined the norms and institutions that underpin the functioning of representative government, while increasing the coronavirus death toll in the United States. And he engaged in precisely the kinds of harassment and hate speech that social-media platforms prohibit.

Yet, for four long years, Trump was given a pass for this behaviour, because platforms deemed carrying his statements, however erroneous or dangerous, to be in the public interest. Facebook introduced this so-called newsworthiness exemption shortly before the 2016 presidential election.

But there is a circular logic at work here: world leaders are exempted from following community standards because their statements are 'newsworthy,' but it is the incendiary nature of standard-violating posts that causes them to make the news. In any case, world leaders – especially the US president – can get news coverage whenever they want, simply by holding a press conference or issuing a press release.

The suspension of Trump's social-media accounts after he incited the January 6 insurrection at the US Capitol was clearly a step in the right direction. Twitter has since made its ban permanent. But Facebook left the door open for Trump to return to its platform.

Facebook's Oversight Board upheld the original suspension, but

FOCUS FACEBOOK

BAN MORE WORLD LEADERS



Like it or not, Facebook wields tremendous power. In many countries, it is one of the few alternatives to the government-aligned outlets that dominate national media ecosystems. For users, it is often synonymous with the internet. That is why authorities have devoted so many resources to manipulating it, and why Facebook must take responsibility for stopping them

took issue with its indefinite nature, arguing that the company should not devise rules on the fly, and must develop “clear, necessary, and proportionate policies that promote public safety and respect freedom of expression.” Crucially, Facebook's response must be “consistent with the rules that are applied to other users of its platform.”

This is where the Oversight Board got things wrong. Yes, consistency should be a goal. But world leaders are not just any users; they should be held to a higher standard. After all, they can incite violence far more easily than the average Joe or Jane can. Moreover, much of what happens on social media challenges existing norms. In exceptional circumstances, exceptional decisions must be made.

Facebook's new policy at least partly recognises this. Its policy states: “Our standard restrictions may not be proportionate to the violation, or sufficient to reduce the risk of further harm, in the case of public figures posting content during ongoing violence or civil unrest.”

But this logic must be applied more broadly. Trump is hardly the only world leader who has used social-media platforms to incite and manipulate public opinion with the help of tools like com-

putational propaganda and astroturfing. And, while Facebook has acted against such abuses in countries like the US, South Korea, and Poland, it has so far done little or nothing in countries like Iraq, Honduras, and Azerbaijan.

This discrepancy is no accident. The data scientist Sophie Zhang recently revealed that during her two and a half years at Facebook, she found ‘blatant attempts’ to abuse the platform by dozens of governments seeking to “mislead their own citizenry.” Yet Facebook repeatedly refused to act. According to Zhang, “We simply didn't care enough to stop them.”

Beyond apathy, Facebook may have been seeking to protect its own business interests, which probably explains why company executives reportedly protected members of India's ruling Bharatiya Janata Party from punishment for violating the platform's hate-speech policies. Even regimes that block their own populations from accessing Facebook – including in China, Iran, and Uganda – are allowed to use the platform for their own ends.

Facebook's reluctance to act against such governments has had dire consequences. A statement by Alex Warofka, Facebook's product policy manager, notes that the company “improved proactive detection of hate speech” in

Myanmar, and began taking “more aggressive action” against accounts set up to “mislead others about who they are or what they're doing.” By that point, however, Facebook had facilitated mass atrocities against the country's mostly Muslim Rohingya minority group. Likewise, while Facebook removed the Myanmar military's official page in February for “incitement of violence,” it did so only after the military had overthrown the country's democratically elected government.

Like it or not, Facebook wields tremendous power. In many countries, it is one of the few alternatives to the government-aligned outlets that dominate national media ecosystems. For users, it is often synonymous with the internet. That is why authorities have devoted so many resources to manipulating it, and why Facebook must take responsibility for stopping them.

To be sure, regulators also have a role to play. But, so far, their approach has been deeply flawed. Some – including in Florida, Texas, and Poland – have been pushing in the opposite direction, seeking to prohibit social-media platforms from removing content or accounts that are not illegal. Regulators in the US and the European Union are considering whether some elements of the internet should be treated essentially as public utilities or ‘common carriers.’ But, overall, regulators need to focus less on content and more on platform design, advertising technology, and monopolistic power.

In the meantime, it is up to Facebook to rid itself of genocidal militaries, government propaganda that targets and manipulates populations, and leaders who block users. The algorithmic intermediation of the public sphere by private, for-profit platforms designed to maximise engagement and polarisation has been anything but emancipatory. For many, it has been deadly. Governments, public officials, and political parties must face swift and severe consequences if they violate a platform's terms of service and use it to violate people's rights.

The writer is former advocacy director at the Committee to Protect Journalists.

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Space tourism: Are you ready for it?



IF YOU ENJOY LOOKING DOWN AT OTHER PEOPLE, JUST IMAGINE HOW MUCH FUN YOU'LL HAVE LOOKING DOWN AT THE ENTIRE PLANET!

Amazon founder Jeff Bezos took a Blue Origin rocket into space Tuesday, just a week after fellow billionaire Richard Branson flew a Virgin Galactic plane into space. While these space trips may seem like self-aggrandising indulgences by a pair of tycoons, they're also ushering in the era of commercial space travel. Indeed, Virgin Galactic plans to offer regular commercial space flights beginning in 2022. In case you are interested in such flights, I've decided to answer five important questions about space travel:

1. How much will it cost to buy a ticket to space? Virgin Galactic has already sold about 600 tickets at a price of about \$250,000, but the price is expected to increase to about \$300,000 (about \$2.2 crore). This means, of course, that at my current annual savings rate, I will be able to afford a ticket to space in the year 2171. Hopefully my ticket will be much cheaper by then, es-

pecially since I will be travelling inside an urn.

Space tourism, at least initially, will be accessible only to the ultra-rich, as well as those who are somewhat wealthy and willing to forgo some other luxuries to make a once-in-a-lifetime journey to space. A number of Americans, for example, will be able to afford a space trip just by cutting back on spa treatments for their pets.

2. What will you be able to experience from space? For starters, space travel will allow you to experience weightlessness. You will feel extremely light, and not just because your wallet is much lighter. For the few minutes that you enter space, you will escape the force of gravity and be able to perform astronaut tricks such as flips or spins. But don't get carried away. Take some time to look out the window, assuming you have a window seat. Even if you don't have a window seat, weightlessness will enable

you to easily push other people out of the way.

3. What will you be able to see through the window? There are many things you will be able to see from space. Here are just three: (i) The seven continents of the world; (ii) the mountains, including Mount Everest; and (iii) Priyanka Chopra's engagement ring.

Actually, the main thing you will be able to see is the entire planet, looking like a large football. “It's, for lack of a better term, a God's-eye view and so few people have ever had a chance to see it,” former NASA astronaut Dr Scott Parazynski told Travel and Leisure magazine. “It's really a beautiful thing to be hovering in space and looking down at your planet.”

If you enjoy looking down at other people, just imagine how much fun you'll have looking down at the entire planet!

4. Will you be able to take photographs? Yes, you will be able

to take photos, but you shouldn't waste your precious minutes in space getting your camera to focus, unless you've been hired by a magazine or newspaper. Not only will it be challenging to take good photos while also handling your weightlessness, you are better off savouring the sights that you paid a fortune to view.

5. If you don't take photos, how will other people know that you've been in space? Don't worry – you will be able to take lots of photos on your way up and on your way down. Your travel operator will also take many photos of you in space. You will also have a ticket that you can frame, so your descendants can remember you as the 8,354th human to go into space. If you are lucky, you may have an even greater distinction, such as “First Space Traveller from Dharosyamsundarpur village in Cuttack district, Odisha.”

Covid warriors

Sir, It is a good idea to provide monetary benefits to our frontline Covid warriors. But, it is not enough. Conferring the Padma awards on the frontline Covid warriors of our state will go a long way in boosting their morale and it will be a perfect tribute to their undying spirit and indomitable will. The state government is urged to nominate and refer the names of our Covid warriors to the Union government for the prestigious Padma awards.

Prabhudutt Dash, BHUBANESWAR

Snooping row

Sir, The Pegasus snooping row has triggered a political storm with the Opposition parties and the BJP going hammer and tongs at each other. It has emerged that Congress leader Rahul Gandhi, former Election Commissioner Ashok Lavasa, Trinamool Congress general secretary Abhishek Banerjee and two Union ministers, including Ashwini Vaishnav, were on the potential target list. While the government has rubbished the allegations and called them an attempt to tarnish Indian democracy, the Opposition is sparing no effort to corner the government. The government would do well to come clean and absolve itself of all charges.

NJ Ravi Chander, BANGALORE

Food for all

Sir, Lucky are the people who do not have to worry about food with every rising sun. The world produces more than enough food to feed its population but still some 690 million people have to go hungry. A report titled “The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World” suggests that due to the pandemic-induced lockdowns another 83 to 132 million people may go hungry. Looking at these figures it will not be wrong to say that the ‘zero hunger’ target of the Sustainable Development Goals of the United Nations will not see the light of the day by 2030. For this we also share the blame because we can see in marriage receptions, meetings and even in our homes a lot of food is wasted. We have to change this attitude. Nearly 30 per cent of the total food produced in the world goes down the drain. Hunger is also a major driving force behind crimes in the world. No one can think anything good in an empty stomach. Needless to say that if the problem of hunger is solved crime rates would also go down.

Noopur Baruah, TEZPUR

Forester suspended, dy ranger transferred

KENDU LEAF PLUCKER CARD SCAM



POST NEWS NETWORK

Bolangir, July 20: Days after Orissa POST published a story on the alleged sale of passbooks or plucker cards of kendu leaf workers for anything between ₹500 and ₹1,000, the divisional forest officer here suspended a forester and transferred a deputy forest ranger for their role in the anomalies, a report said.

As the allegations proved true, DFO Ranjit Mallick of Bolangir kendu leaf division, who is also in-charge of Patnagarh, suspended Bagbahali forester Debaraj Sahu under Patnagarh south range on the charge. He also transferred deputy ranger Paramananda Panigrahi of Patnagarh south range to the office of kendu leaf conservator office.

Moreover, showcause notices have been issued to checker Ratikanta Sahu, Saroj Kumar Meher, Alekh Tripathy and circle checker Tikenath Sahu. The DFO said that a sum of ₹11,000 collected from kendu leaf pluckers for distribution of passbooks have been returned to the kendu leaf stock point (Phadi) committee.

The matter came to the fore

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 speaks volumes about the corruption and anomalies in the department.

Acting on the complaint, Sharma directed the principal chief conservator of forests (PCCF), kendu leaf, to conduct a probe and submit a report to her. The PCCF conducted a thorough probe into the matter by meeting various stakeholders.

Reports said high quality kendu leaves are collected in Bolangir district. The pluckers collect these leaves every year and earn their livelihood. In its bid to help the pluckers, the state government is providing them a card or passbook free of cost.

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, Kulabati Deep, Haramani Sahu, Belmati Budek and Ashtamai Putel alleged that they were forced to pay ₹500-₹1,000 to the foresters and circle checkers in lieu of the cards.

Notably, kendu leaf is known as the 'green gold' of Odisha and is one of the most important non-timber forest products of the state. Kendu leaf is also called 'silver leaf' for its greater economic value and its contribution to the state exchequer as well as for providing livelihood opportunities to the poor during lean seasons.

When contacted, Ranjit Mallick, divisional forest officer of Bolangir kendu leaf division and in-charge Patnagarh division, said action was taken after conducting a probe into the allegations.

SHOW CAUSE NOTICES HAVE BEEN ISSUED TO CHECKER RATIKANTA SAHU, SAROJ KUMAR MEHER, ALEKH TRIPATHY AND CIRCLE CHECKER TIKENATH SAHU

PRADIP PUROHIT, A FORMER MLA AND LEADER OF KENDU PATRA SRAMIK SANGHA, HAD LODGED A COMPLAINT WITH THE STATE FOREST SECRETARY MONA SHARMA

after Pradip Purohit, a former MLA and leader of Kendu Patra Sramik Sangha, lodged a complaint with the state Forest Secretary Mona Sharma.

Purohit lodged a complaint after receiving reports of money collection from the pluckers under the Patnagarh kendu leaf division and Bolangir forest circle. Purohit termed the development unfortunate and demanded a thorough probe into the charges.

The state government provides cards or passbooks for free distribution among kendu leaf pluckers but the Forest department officials were allegedly demanding ₹500 to ₹1,000 per card.

Newborn elephant calf found dead in Kalahandi village

POST NEWS NETWORK

Kesinga, July 20: A newborn elephant calf was found dead on a farmland near Mundagaon village under Kamardhha section of Narda forest range in Kalahandi district Monday, the Forest department informed Tuesday.

According to the villagers, a herd of elephants had strayed into Mundagaon village from Bargel forest in search of food Sunday night. It had entered the farmland of a villager named Banamali Budhia. Budhia had transplanted paddy in this land two days before. The land was still muddy. It was when the herd was passing through the land that a pregnant elephant got stuck. In labour pain, she trumpeted a lot and later gave birth to a baby elephant in the mud. The mother elephant and the rest of the animals in the herd kept guarding the baby for around six hours.

Hearing the trumpet, members of an elephant squad and villagers rushed to the spot. Seeing people coming towards them, the elephants ran into the jungle. But the mother elephant was still there. After a while, she also went towards the jungle. By the time the calf was recovered by the team, it had already died.

Numerous problems plague Bargarh's old DHH

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bargarh, July 20: With a new district headquarters hospital (DHH) coming up at Khedapali (Tukurla), around eight kilometres from the town one-and-a-half years ago, the old DHH has lost its importance here.

Till the time the new DHH became functional, the old DHH had been in its prime. After the new DHH came up and started functioning, the old DHH has been subjected to step-motherly treatment. It has been renamed as Urban CHC. Though the old signboard is still in place at its entrance, declaring it as the DHH, it has long lost the facilities associated with a DHH. Today the old DHH has endless problems starting from shortage of doctors and staff and lack of infrastructure, which is affecting the healthcare services here.

Apart from residents of Bargarh district, people from neighbouring districts of Sonapur and Bolangir and some parts of Chhattisgarh depend on this DHH. The DHH was shifted to a new building in January last year. At the same time, the doctors and staff working at the old DHH were also shifted there.

It was then feared that the government was mulling to complete



FACT FILE

- The old DHH has been subjected to step-motherly treatment after the new DHH came up and started functioning. It has been renamed as Urban CHC
- Apart from residents of Bargarh district, people from neighbouring districts of Sonapur and Bolangir and some parts of Chhattisgarh depend on this DHH
- There used to be 100 beds at the old DHH but the number has now been reduced to 30 with the declaration of Urban CHC. But there was no decrease in the number of patients visiting the old DHH

shifting of the old DHH. Soon, widespread protests and demonstration were staged, opposing the government's plan. Following this, the government had to announce the old DHH as an Urban CHC.

Earlier there used to be 100 beds at the old DHH. The number of beds has now been reduced to 30 with the declaration of Urban CHC. But there was no decrease in the number of patients visiting the old DHH. Even today, patients

in good numbers are visiting the facility on a daily basis. Most of them are seen leaving the premises complaining about the poor healthcare facilities.

As per the Health and Family Welfare department's recent announcement, the old DHH has 23 sanctioned posts, including one medical superintendent, one gynecologist, one pediatrician, one orthopedic, five leave training reserve medical officers, one dental surgeon, one public health emergency officer, two pharmacists, three staff nurses, one male and one female multipurpose health worker, one laboratory technician, one radiographer and one junior clerk. Presently, all these posts are lying vacant.

Now six doctors, who are on deputation, are managing the show. Similarly, barring minor tests like blood and urine, facilities for all other emergency tests are unavailable at the old DHH. People also complain that some essential medicines, including anti-rabies vaccine, are not available at the facility. Owing to this, a common patient has to spend more to get the treatment that he would have received free of cost.

Expectant mothers who visit this facility are the worst sufferers. Since no surgical delivery is being done here, they either have

to go the new DHH or VIMSAR in Burla. In such cases, it often proves to be life threatening for both the mother and the unborn child.

In a recent case, when treatment to a woman and her newborn baby was denied at the old DHH, her family members had to rush them to VIMSAR, Burla. There, the newborn died. It is alleged that such incidents are being reported on a regular basis.

The generator of the hospital is also not functional. Hence, in case of power failure, patients spend nights in darkness.

According to Ramesh Mohapatra of Hospital Banchao Abhiyan, the officials had assured them of appointment of doctors, medical staff and other employees and providing associated facilities at the old DHH at the time of announcing it as Urban CHC. But it has turned out to be a hollow assurance. "We had to launch the Hospital Banchao Abhiyan again and resort to agitation," he added.

When contacted, Bargarh MLA Debesh Acharya said the state government's top priority is to provide health service to one and all. "I have discussed the issue with the CDMO and ADMO July 17. All the facilities, including surgical delivery, will be available at the Urban CHC soon," he informed.

houses, while a survey has been completed to provide houses to the remaining families evicted from the area. The rest of the families will soon receive their houses, he said.

Locals, however, debunked the civic authorities' claims stating that very few people have received houses. They questioned why the houses of those who have not received alternative accommodations were demolished. They warned of taking to the streets in coming days if the civic body failed to provide them with houses soon.

A local resident, Kara Ghadei of Kapileshwar Road alleged that the BeMC authorities carried out the eviction drive without giving them any time. He said that he has also not received any house yet.

Arati Dash of Phulasundari Sahi said that the civic body officials took their names for providing houses but they are yet to receive any alternative accommodation. Moreover, they demolished the houses without providing them with alternative shelters, she alleged.

Pvt mine's mineral transportation put on hold



POST NEWS NETWORK

Joda, July 20: Days after the state-level enforcement squad detected irregularities in mineral transportation from Kasiv mine in Joda area of Keonjhar, the joint director of the Joda mining circle has suspended its mineral transportation.

According to reports, officials of the state level enforcement squad had examined the Kasiv mine at Jaribahal July 10.

The joint director of the Joda mining circle ordered the suspension of mineral transportation from the mine vide a letter (No 4099) July 17.

In the letter, it was stated that the company had concealed the exact grade of its mineral stocks. The high grade mineral was being transported under the garb of low grade. This was how the mining company had been carrying out this business illegally. Thus, the government was incurring losses to the state exchequer, it was learnt.

PROMOTING ORGANIC FARMING



A sales point for organic manure promoted as 'Ama Khata' was inaugurated near Police Line ground in Balasore OP PHOTO

Lecturer invents machine to dry damp paddy

POST NEWS NETWORK

Sambalpur, July 20: He is a lecturer by profession, but he is always concerned about the farmers. Recently he is in news for manufacturing a paddy drier machine. Meet the lecturer-turned-inventor Akshaya Mishra, a resident of Talab village in Sambalpur district.

Akshaya himself belongs to a farmer's family and grew up seeing problems faced by the farmers. He has seen how much pain farmers have to bear to dry their paddy soaked in rain.

It was when one of his friends suffered a huge loss after his harvested paddy got soaked in unseasonal rain that he decided to do something that would dry the wet paddy and farmers would not face problem in selling their produce. Putting his heart and soul into it, he started working on his dream project and succeeded.



"The machine's job is to dry the damp crop, if any. I have used heater, condenser, few discarded parts of mobile phones and circuits. A plastic cartoon is also used to make the machine," he said.

Regarding the manufacturing cost, he said he has spent something between ₹2,500 and ₹3,000 and the amount will increase if its size increases. "A bigger size

machine will be required if the quantity of the paddy is huge. Farmers can manufacture this machine all by themselves. It can dry the crops in three hours. Once the damp crops are dried, farmers would not suffer any loss while selling their produce," he added.

Buoyed by the success of his first project, Akshay said his next project will be a deluxe paddy drier

Akshaya himself belongs to a farmer's family and grew up seeing problems faced by the farmers. He has seen how much pain farmers have to bear to dry their paddy drenched in rain

machine. It will cost around ₹20,000, but it will be useful in drying huge quantities of paddy.

"If the government or any private organisation wants to use my technique, I will readily give it to them and I will not charge a pie for it," he claimed.

Informing that botanist Dibyaraj Beriha assisted him in manufacturing the machine, Akshay said that a bigger version of his machine will be installed at Bhalukuda village in the coming days.

BAKRID

RELAXATIONS

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, July 20: Coming down hard on the Kerala government for relaxing Covid restrictions for Bakrid, the Supreme Court Tuesday said that the government's affidavit has disclosed a sorry state of affairs, and pointed out relaxation for even one day in an area having critical spread of infection was wholly uncalled for.

A bench of Justices RF Nariman and BR Gavai said, "We may only indicate that this affidavit discloses a sorry state of affairs as has been stated herein above, and does not in any real manner safeguard the Right to Life and Health guaranteed to all the citizens of India under Article 21 of the Constitution of India."

The bench added it may also be pointed out that the relaxation for one day to a category D (area having critical spread of infection) area was wholly uncalled for.

Citing the Kerala government's July 17 notification relaxing Covid curbs for Bakrid, the bench said We may also indicate that if as a result of the notification dated July 17, 2021, any untoward spread in the Covid-19 disease takes place, any member of the public may bring this to the notice of this court, after which this court will take necessary action against those who are responsible.

Sorry state of affairs: SC



TPR rises close to 12%

Kerala Tuesday recorded 16,848 fresh Covid-19 cases, pushing the infection caseload to 31,87,716, with the Test Positivity Rate (TPR) climbing close to 12 per cent after remaining around the 10 per cent mark for several weeks. The number of people who have succumbed to the virus rose to 15,512 with 104 more deaths, a state government release said. As many as 12,052 people have been cured of the infection, taking the total recoveries to 30,45,310 and the number of active cases to 1,26,398, the release said.

sorry state of affairs." Citing Kerala's response, the

The bench added pressure groups of all kinds, religious or otherwise, cannot in any manner, interfere with this most precious fundamental right of all the citizens of India.

Defending its decision to relax lockdown norms for 'Bakrid' festivities, the Kerala government told the court that the curbs had resulted in an economic slowdown, pushing the population in a lot of misery, and also caused immense distress among traders amid the holy festival of Muslims.

The government said the traders were expecting that festival sales would alleviate their miseries to a certain extent and they had stocked up goods for this purpose much earlier. The organisation of traders started to agitate against the stringent curbs implemented... and declared that they will open shops all over the state flouting regulations, it said.

At this, the bench said, "To give in to pressure groups so that the citizenry of India is laid bare to a nationwide pandemic discloses a

bench added that the state also blithely records that the opening of shops will strictly follow Covid protocols and they are ready to follow additional regulations ordered by the state, if any.

Senior advocate Vikas Singh, appearing for a petitioner, citing high test positivity rate, close to 11 per cent, in Kerala in addition with large number of cases being recorded every day, and emphasised the court should pass some order in the matter, as Tuesday is the last day of Covid curbs relaxation.

However, the top court did not pass any order quashing the notification issued by the Kerala government. The application against the Kerala government's decision to relax Covid curbs was moved by PKD Nambiar, a Delhi resident, in the suo motu case already initiated by the Supreme Court in connection with Uttar Pradesh government's decision on Kanwar Yatra.

The application submitted that despite discontentment shown by the top court over the yatra, the Kerala government is acting in a casual manner by relaxing Covid norms. To the utter dismay of India's citizens, the Kerala government announced a 3-day relaxation of lockdown restrictions July 18, 19 and 20 keeping in view the upcoming Bakrid festival, said the plea.

Vision is to up TN GDP to USD 1L Cr by 2030: Stalin



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Chennai, July 20: The Tamil Nadu government is committed to enhancing the state's gross domestic product to USD 1 lakh crore by 2030 and appealed to industrialists to extend their support to this cause, Chief Minister MK Stalin said Tuesday.

At a function here, the CM said the government's vision is to make Tamil Nadu the 'investment favourite destination' in South Asia. To create a favourable atmosphere for industries planning to invest, and to serve all those entrepreneurs who evince interest to set up shops in the state and to expedite the approval process, I have formally rolled out the single window portal 2.0 today, he said at the Investment Conclave organised by Guidance Tamil Nadu here.

The conclave is considered to be the first such event held after the ruling DMK assumed power.

On the occasion, as many as 49 companies committed investments to the tune of ₹28,508 crore that would generate 83,482 new jobs. The exchange of documents between the government and the companies was done in the presence of Stalin. The government's vision is to make Tamil Nadu as the favourite investment destination in South Asia.

Tamil Nadu government has committed to enhance the state's gross domestic product to USD 1 lakh crore by 2030 and I appeal to industrialists to extend their support for this cause, he said.

The single window portal 2.0 of

the Guidance Tamil Nadu offers over 100 services across 24 government departments for existing and new investors in a fully digitalised manner.

The upgraded system would feature parallel processing of clearances, virtual meeting with departments, artificial intelligence based chatbot facility and deemed approval for select clearances, he noted.

We have planned to add an additional 210 government services by March 2022 (in the single window portal 2.0), he added.

The government would also lay emphasis on boosting other industries like electric vehicles production, solar and wind energy, information technology apart from the existing automobile, textiles and leather sectors. The Chief Minister said his government also planned to unveil various policies related to exports, medical products, research and development. The government is taking up various measures like developing an industrial database comprising details of all industries, setting up of an export cell (to encourage exports)... he said.

The investments signed today are spread across districts like Tirunelveli, Tuticorin, Dindigul, Virudhunagar, Madurai and others ensuring all round economic development besides generating new jobs in the region, he said.

Stalin also appealed to the industrialists who were present at the venue to extend their invitation to other companies to invest in the state.

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TN BJP to popularise party at grassroots level

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Chennai, July 20: With the appointment of 38-year-old former IPS officer, K Annamalai as the Tamil Nadu president of the BJP, the party central leadership has given a clear signal that it meant business.

Annamalai who joined the BJP ten months prior to becoming the state president has been given an uphill task to make the party a major political force and an alternative to the Dravidian political parties of Tamil Nadu in the long run.

With the national parties BJP and the Congress piggy backing on the Dravidian majors, the DMK and the AIADMK for their political survival, the BJP central leadership wants K Annamalai and his team to chalk out strategies to be in the hearts of the people of Tamil Nadu.

A national leader of the BJP on condition of anonymity told IANS, "BJP is a political party which has spread its wings across North, Central, Western India, and now in North East. Except for Karnataka and now in Puducherry, our presence in the South is minuscule and our strategy is to somehow become a major force in Tamil Nadu which is a big state with a rich culture and tradition."

The Tamil Nadu unit of the BJP is being directed to feel the pulse of the people and to chalk out strategies affecting the grassroots and at the same time to be firm on the party's ideological moorings. Even though the BJP has not made significant inroads in Tamil Nadu, the situation of the RSS is different. It has a sizeable grassroots network but most of the time, the coordination between the two Parivar forces has not been to the liking of the central leadership of the RSS and the BJP.

ent. It has a sizeable grassroots network but most of the time, the coordination between the two Parivar forces has not been to the liking of the central leadership of the RSS and the BJP.

Sources in the RSS told IANS that the Sangh will formulate proper plans for the new president to implement and will use its grassroots networks for the BJP. The RSS has been active in selfless service across the state and now wants the BJP leadership to conduct proper follow-up among the people on this.

The BJP leadership will also be taking up issues related to the common man and strict instructions have been given to the state BJP leadership to properly communicate to the masses on the various people-centric central government schemes successfully implemented by Prime Minister Narendra Modi ever since he came to power in 2014.

A BJP national leader said, "The Prime Minister has brought in several people friendly schemes but there was no proper awareness on the same among the local masses and this flaw has to be rectified. BJP state leadership has been instructed to conduct a proper awareness programme among the local, booth level people and to help people avail of central government schemes."

The party's Tamil Nadu spokesman KT Raghavan told IANS, "BJP is a political party with strong ideological moorings and we will conduct door to door campaigning on Prime minister's people-friendly schemes and educate the public on these and how they benefit the people."



Nuns pay homage to Father Stan Swamy, whose ashes were brought to Thiruvananthapuram, Tuesday

PTI PHOTO

REBUILD KERALA

PHC destroyed in 2018 floods to be inaugurated

Claimed to be the country's largest family health centre, the state-of-the-art facility at Vazhakkad will be inaugurated by Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan July 24



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Malappuram, July 20: A Primary Health Centre near here, which was destroyed in the 2018 floods, has got a new lease of life under the Rebuild Kerala initiative.

Claimed to be the country's largest family health centre, the state-of-the-art facility at Vazhakkad will be

inaugurated by Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan July 24. It was reconstructed under the 'VPS-Rebuild Kerala initiative' for ₹10 crore.

Nestled in rural Malappuram, the health centre has an advanced laboratory and modern imaging department. The family health centre has ten observation beds with oxygen concentrators and a sta-

Kerala Minister in the soup for intervening in harassment case

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Thiruvananthapuram, July 20: In what could be anxious moments for Kerala Forest Minister AK Saseendran, the coming days could turn crucial as a controversy surfaced Tuesday after a phone conversation between him and a party member surfaced. In the conversation, he asks his party member to settle amicably a case, which involves his daughter who was harassed by another party leader.

Saseendran belongs to the NCP and following the revelation, the Congress and the BJP have demanded his resignation and face the probe. Incidentally, Saseendran in March 2017, in the first Pinarayi Vijayan government had to quit following a sleaze talk with a lady. However, he later returned after a court cleared him after the lady backed out, then.

The aggrieved lady told the media that her father is an NCP leader in Kollam district and she had contested the local body polls as a BJP candidate, last year.



There were issues then saying that my father purposefully made me a candidate for money. This is totally false. A few months back, an NCP leader in our place Padmakaran, who owns a hotel and a bar after seeing me caught my hand and said if it's for money, then he will also give money. Later in a WhatsApp group an election poster and his picture was circulated and we decided to file a complaint, said the aggrieved lady.

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Chennai, July 20: The fishermen organisations of Tamil Nadu are planning to meet chief minister MK Stalin to apprise him of the dangers in the draft Indian Marine Fisheries Bill, 2021.

The South Indian Fishermen Welfare Association President, K Bharathi said that the draft bill favours the interests of big groups and that if the bill was passed in the present form it would lead to protests across the coastal belt of the country.

While speaking to IANS, the fishermen leader said, "We are planning to meet chief minister, MK Stalin to apprise him of the dangers involved in the bill and how the central government is trying to pass the bill in parliament without discussing it with the stakeholders or even with the chief ministers of the



coastal states." The joint association of fishermen had staged a black flag protest march against the Bill Monday with fishermen from across the state joining the agitation.

Viduthalai Chiruthaigal Katchi (VCK) leader and Member of Parliament from Villupuram constituency, D Ravikumar had opposed the Indian Marine Fisheries

Fishermen to meet CM over Indian Marine Fisheries Bill

THE JOINT ASSOCIATION OF FISHERMEN HAD STAGED A BLACK FLAG PROTEST MARCH AGAINST THE BILL MONDAY WITH FISHERMEN FROM ACROSS THE STATE JOINING THE AGITATION

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

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K BHARATHI | PRESIDENT, SOUTH INDIAN FISHERMEN WELFARE ASSOCIATION

Bill during a virtual discussion and had lodged protest against the provisions that they say are against the fishermen.

Ravikumar told IANS, The draft Indian Marine Fisheries Bill 2021 is loaded with provisions against the fishermen and it does not seem

to have the welfare of the fishermen as an important criterion. It is aiming to portray the poor and hapless fishermen as criminals and collect fines from them. We have called upon Tamil Nadu chief minister MK Stalin to take legal and political steps to prevent the passing of the bill in parliament in its present form.

Nanjil Ravi of the Akhila Indiya Meenavar Sangham said that the fishermen organisations would oppose the Indian Marine Fisheries Bill in its present form. The fishermen leader said that a joint action council of fishermen associations has sought an appointment of the Tamil Nadu chief minister in the coming days and would meet him to apprise him of the situation. He said that the fishermen associations have several suggestions to make in the bill for the welfare of the community.

The situation with Mizoram, however, is not conducive. We are not seeing eyeball to eyeball in Hailakandi district (bordering Mizoram). The situation is fragile. It will take some time with Mizoram

HIMANTA BISWA SARMA | ASSAM CHIEF MINISTER

The COVID-19 restrictions already in place would continue for another week as the average test positive rate was still above 10 percent

PINARAYI VIJAYAN | KERALA CHIEF MINISTER

For the past two days, the Opposition has been trying to vitiate the atmosphere of the country over the Pegasus issue and it only proves their sick mentality

YOGI ADITYANATH | UTTAR PRADESH CHIEF MINISTER

SHORT TAKES

Suo motu case against Adhikari

Tamluk (WB): The West Bengal Police Tuesday filed a suo motu case against BJP leader Suvendu Adhikari and 14 others at Tamluk police station, less than 24 hours after the Nandigram MLA asked Purba Medinipur police chief Amarnath K to "refrain from doing something that would prompt his transfer to Kashmir's Anantnag or Baramulla". Adhikari and his associates were booked under various sections of the IPC, including the one which deters a public servant from discharging his duty.

Sidhu pays tributes to Bhagat Singh

Nawanshahr/Amritsar: Newly appointed Punjab Congress chief Navjot Singh Sidhu Tuesday visited Khatkar Kalan, the ancestral village of Bhagat Singh, to pay tributes to the freedom fighter at his memorial here. Sidhu also got a rousing welcome when he reached Amritsar after becoming the PPCC chief. At Nawanshahr, he was accompanied by MLAs Kuljit Singh Nagra, who is one of the four working presidents appointed by the Congress, Raj Kumar Verka, Angad Saini, Sukhpal Bhullar, Inderbir Singh Bolaria and Gurpreet Singh GP.

6 Bangladeshis held by BSF

Kolkata: Six Bangladeshis, two of them children, were apprehended by the BSF in separate incidents in south Bengal, a statement by the paramilitary force said Tuesday.

30 kg IED defused

Srinagar: A major tragedy was averted when the security forces recovered a 30 kg improvised explosive device (IED) in J&K's Srinagar district, police said Tuesday. Police sources said, "A major terror attack was averted by security forces as a 30 kg IED was detected close to Tangpura Bandh at the outskirts of Srinagar late yesterday evening.

DA hiked to 28%

New Delhi: The Dearness Allowance (DA) payable to Central government employees will be enhanced from the existing rate of 17 per cent to 28 per cent of basic pay with effect from July 1, 2021. The Department of Expenditure under the Finance Ministry said in a circular that the increase subsumes the additional instalments arising on 01.01.2020, 01.07.2020 and 01.01.2021. The rate of DA for the period from 01.01.2020 till 30.06.2021 shall remain at 17 per cent.



In our country, festivals are occasions for families and communities to come together and celebrate. But due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, we will have to remain content with modest celebrations this year

M VENKAIAH NAIDU | VICE PRESIDENT

DRUG TRAFFICKING

The government Tuesday said that the Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB) registered 1,99,716 cases related to drugs trafficking between 2017 and 2019



Oppn disrupts Parl, seeks probe

OPPOSITION LEADERS SAID THE MODI ADMINISTRATION WAS SPYING ON JOURNALISTS, ACTIVISTS AND POLITICIANS WHO WERE OPPOSED TO ITS POLICIES

AGENCIES

New Delhi, July 20: Indian opposition parties disrupted parliament Tuesday, demanding an investigation into reports that the government used Israeli-made Pegasus spyware to snoop on scores of journalists, activists and politicians, including the main opposition leader Rahul Gandhi.

The Pegasus snooping controversy rocked the Lok Sabha proceedings Tuesday, leading to continued disruptions and repeated adjournments of the House.

Soon after the House assembled at 3 pm, the opposition members again started raising slogans on the Pegasus snooping issue, forcing the chair to adjourn the House for the day.

Shouting out slogans against Prime Minister Narendra Modi's government, the opposition members said they wanted an independent probe into the complaints of spying and the resignation of Interior Minister Amit Shah.

An investigation published Sunday by 17 media organizations, led by the Paris-based non-profit journalism group Forbidden Stories, said spyware made and licensed by the Israeli company NSO had been used in attempted and successful hacks of 37 smartphones belonging to journalists, government officials and human



rights activists. Some Congress members were holding placards about Rahul Gandhi's name appearing in the list of potential targets of snooping.

Trinamool Congress (TMC) members alleged that party MP Abhishek Banerjee's phone number was selected for surveillance.

Indian news portal The Wire reported that smartphones of politicians including Gandhi, a senior leader of the opposition Congress party, and two other lawmakers were among 300 verified Indian numbers listed as potential targets for surveillance during 2017-19 ahead of national

elections. NSO has said its product was intended only for use by vetted government intelligence and law enforcement agencies to fight terrorism and crime.

"It is an attack on the democratic foundations of our country," Congress said in a statement.

It said the government had illegally accessed the conversation of many people by hacking cell phones with the Pegasus spyware. Ashwini Vaishnaw, the minister for Electronics and Information Technology, told lawmakers on Monday there was no substance to the reports of spying. India had

Sibal demands SC probe

Former IT minister and senior Congress leader Kapil Sibal Tuesday demanded a Supreme Court-monitored probe in the Pegasus snooping matter and a white paper by the government in Parliament explicitly stating whether the Israeli spyware was used by it or not. Addressing a press conference at his residence here, Sibal also hit back at Home Minister Amit Shah for his remarks Monday that allegations of surveillance were only aimed to humiliate India at the world stage, saying the "nation is not being maligned, but due to your government's actions, the government is being maligned."

a well-established procedure in which lawful interception of electronic communication was carried out by federal and state agencies for the purpose of national security, particularly in the case of a public emergency or in the interest of public safety, he said. Indian rules ensured that "unauthorised surveillance does not occur," he said in a statement.

The government has declined to reply to questions whether India or any of its state agencies had purchased Pegasus spyware for surveillance.

67.6% people have antibodies: Govt

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, July 20: As India reported the lowest number of daily Covid-19 cases in four months, the government Tuesday said a serosurvey has found that two-thirds of the population aged above six years has SARS-CoV-2 antibodies but stressed that around 40 crore people are still vulnerable to the infection and there is no room for complacency.

The overall seroprevalence was 67.6 per cent in the ICMR's 4th national Covid serosurvey, held in June and July, that involved over 28,975 individuals (adults and children), apart from 7,252 healthcare workers, in 70 districts across 21 states where earlier three rounds were also conducted. The seroprevalence in the age group of 6-9 years was 57.2 percent, in age group of 10-17 years was 61.6 percent, in 18-44 years was 66.7 percent, in 45-

60 years was 77.6 percent and in over 60 years it was around 76.7 percent, the government said and attributed the rise to the role of delta variant in spreading the second wave and to the vaccination cover. In the third serosurvey conducted in December-January, 2021, the sero-prevalence was 24.1 percent

Besides, 85 percent of the surveyed healthcare workers in the

fourth round were found to have antibodies against SARS-CoV-2 and one-tenth of HCWs were still unvaccinated. The government said the findings show there is a ray of hope, but there is no room for complacency and Covid-appropriate behaviour and community engagement have to be maintained. According to the Union Health Ministry data updated on Tuesday, India recorded 30,093 new coronavirus infections, the lowest in 125 days, taking the total tally of Covid-19 cases to 3,11,74,322.

BATTLE AGAINST COVID-19

India sees first bird flu death

New Delhi: India Tuesday reported its first bird flu death as an 11-year-old boy, who was undergoing treatment at AIIMS for it, succumbed to the disease. A senior All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) official said that the boy, who was infected with avian influenza, has died, and the entire staff concerned has been placed in isolation as a preventive measure. As per reports, bird flu outbreaks were reported across the country earlier this year, including in Haryana where the H5N8 subtype -- which is not known to infect humans -- was detected. After the bird flu outbreaks, the Central government sounded an alert as cases were confirmed in Delhi also. A sample collected from the Red Fort had tested positive for bird flu in January. The Delhi government had then ordered the closure of the Ghazipur poultry market.

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, July 20: In the run up to the toppling of the opposition-run state government in Karnataka in July 2019, the phone numbers of then Deputy Chief Minister G. Parameashwara and the personal secretaries of then Chief Minister H.D. Kumaraswamy and former Chief Minister Siddaramaiah were selected as possible targets for surveillance, The Wire reported.

The Wire reviewed the records of the numbers that were of interest to an Indian client of Israel's NSO Group, the creator of the Pegasus spyware.

The numbers form part of a leaked database accessed by the French media non-profit Forbidden Stories and shared with an international media consortium as part of what is called the Pegasus



Project. NSO sells its Pegasus spyware -- whose use involves the crime of hacking into a smartphone under Indian law -- only to governments. Neither NSO, nor the Narendra Modi government has denied that India is a customer, The Wire reported.



The records indicate that the phone numbers of some of the key political players in Karnataka appear to have been selected around the time when an intense power struggle was taking place between the BJP and the Janata Dal (Secular)-Congress-led state gov-

RAIN WOES



Cars stuck on a waterlogged road after heavy rain in Patiala

PTI PHOTO

Mumbai airport HQ not shifting to Guj

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Mumbai, July 20: Following a massive political furor over the Adani Group's plans to relocate the headquarters of its recently acquired crown jewel -- the high-profile Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj International Airport (CSMIA) -- from Mumbai to Ahmedabad, the company late Tuesday denied any such move.

"In light of rumours that the Mumbai Airport HQ will be moving to Ahmedabad, we unambiguously state that MIAL and NMIAL

airports will remain headquarters in Mumbai," the Adani Group said in a statement. It also reiterated its commitment to make Mumbai proud and create thousands of jobs through its airport ecosystem.

In a major organizational restructuring on July 18, the Adani Group had said it has decided to shift the headquarters of Adani Airport Holdings Ltd., which runs CSMIA, from Mumbai to Ahmedabad, stunning corporate and aviation circles.

The three ruling allies, Shiv Sena-Nationalist Congress Party-

Congress, strongly castigated the move on Tuesday as part of "a larger design" to downgrade the importance of Mumbai, the country's commercial capital.

Lauding the Adani Group announcement, State Congress Spokesperson Sachin Sawant said that despite all attempts, Mumbai's relevance cannot be diluted.

Earlier Tuesday, on the AAHL's plans, he said it was "a message from (Prime Minister) Narendra Modi to the people of Maharashtra. The recent 'dandiya dance' at the CSMIA conveyed a lot"

No deaths due to lack of O2 reported by states: Centre



INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, July 20: No deaths due to lack of oxygen have been specifically reported by any states or Union Territories during Covid-19's second wave, the Parliament was told Tuesday.

In a reply to a question by Congress' Rajya Sabha member K.C. Venugopal over deaths of people due to lack of oxygen, Minister of State for Health and Family Welfare Bharati Pravin Pawar, in a written reply, said that health is a state subject and detailed guidelines for reporting of deaths were issued by the Ministry to all states and Union Territories.

"Accordingly, all states/UTs report cases and deaths to Union Health Ministry on a regular basis. However, no deaths due to lack of oxygen has been specifically reported by states/UTs," she said. Pawar also said that Centre had supported the states and undertook a series of actions including provisioning medical oxygen, and other consumables to ensure clinical care of patients in view of steep rise of the Covid-19 trajectory in the country during April-May 2021.

Raj Kundra sent to police custody

The Mumbai Police made a shocking revelation that Raj Kundra and Pradeep Bakshi are the alleged masterminds of an international porn films racket perpetrated through their content production companies based in India and the United Kingdom

AGENCIES

Mumbai, July 20: Businessman Raj Kundra, arrested in a case related to alleged creation of pornographic films and publishing them through some apps, was on Tuesday remanded in police custody till July 23 by a Mumbai court, after the crime branch alleged he was making financial gains through this illegal business.

The police claimed there were several WhatsApp chats that revealed Kundra (45), the husband of Bollywood actor Shilpa Shetty, was involved in the financial dealings of the app and its contents. The police also said three women have come forward with complaints in the case, saying they were "forced to act in pornographic movies".

The accused persons took advantage of struggling models, actors and other workers, and made them work in these pornographic movies, the police said, adding that these movies were shot in rented bungalows in Mumbai. Kundra was taken into custody Monday night by the city police's crime branch after being booked under relevant sections of the Indian



Penal Code and the Information Technology Act.

The police also arrested another person, identified as Ryan Thorpe, who was working on a senior position with an app firm, from his office along with Kundra after an enquiry into the matter, an official said. Kundra and Thorpe were produced before a magistrate's court here which remanded both of them in police custody till July 23. The police, while seeking maximum custody of Kundra, told the court that the businessman was economically gaining by making and selling pornographic material.

In their remand note, the police alleged that the accused persons "made profits in lakhs in this illegal business of making pornographic films."

international

of the day quote

The United States ganged up with its allies to make unwarranted accusations against Chinese cybersecurity. The US has ganged up with allies and launched unwarranted accusations against China on Cyber security. China will never accept this

ZHAO LIJIAN | FOREIGN MINISTRY SPOKESPERSON, CHINA

The Department (of Defence) would like to congratulate our partners in the Indian Navy who last week received the first two of 24 MH-60R Seahawk maritime helicopters from the US Navy and their 10th Boeing, P-8 Poseidon maritime surveillance aircraft in Goa, India

JOHN KIRBY | PRESS SECRETARY, US

What we saw in Zhukovsky today demonstrates that the Russian aviation has a big potential for development and our aircraft making industries continue to create new competitive aircraft designs

VLADIMIR PUTIN | PRESIDENT, RUSSIA

SHORT TAKES

Castillo declared Prez-elect of Peru

Lima: The National Jury of Elections (JNE) of Peru Tuesday officially declared Marxist village schoolteacher Pedro Castillo as the President-elect, a month and a half after the June 6 run-off polls. According to the final election results, Castillo obtained 8,836,380 votes, or 50.12 per cent, while rival Keiko Fujimori garnered 8,792,117 votes, or 49.87 per cent, a margin of just 44,263 votes, said the National Office of Electoral Processes, the body in charge of organising elections in Peru.

Over 28 killed in Iraq bomb blast

Baghdad: At least 28 people were killed and 66 others wounded in a bomb explosion in a marketplace in eastern Baghdad Monday, a source with the Iraqi interior ministry said. A bomb detonated at a crowded popular market in Sadr City, a suburb district of the capital Baghdad, before the sunset, destroying several nearby shops and stalls and damaging surrounding buildings, the ministry source said on condition of anonymity.

Jailed politician dies of Covid in Myanmar

Yangon: A confidante of deposed Myanmar leader Aung San Suu Kyi and stalwart democracy campaigner died Tuesday after becoming infected with Covid-19 in prison, authorities said. Nyan Win, a veteran senior member and former spokesperson of the National League for Democracy (NLD) party -- led by Suu Kyi -- was 78. He had been arrested after the February 1 coup removed the NLD from power and was held in Yangon's notorious Insein prison on charges of sedition.

4th wave hits France

Paris: A fourth wave of the Covid-19 pandemic has hit France which is spreading at "lightning" speed, government spokesman Gabriel Attal said and also announced tougher sanctions on non-compliance with the health pass rules. "We are seeing a wave faster than all the previous ones," Attal said while addressing a press conference late Monday. He noted that the incidence rate has spiked by nearly 125 per cent in one week, reports Xinhua news agency.



Facebook isn't killing people, these 12 people are out there giving misinformation. My hope is that Facebook, instead of taking it personally that they would do something about the misinformation, the outrageous misinformation about the vaccine

JOE BIDEN | PRESIDENT, US

CHINA UNVEILS MAGLEV TRAIN

China unveiled a maglev train capable of a top speed of 600 kph Tuesday, state media said. The maximum speed would make the train, self-developed by China and manufactured in the coastal city of Qingdao, the fastest ground vehicle globally



Bezos blasts into space on his own rocket

Unlike Branson's piloted rocket plane, Bezos' capsule was completely automated and required no official staff on board for the anticipated 10-minute, up-and-down flight

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Van Horn, July 20: Jeff Bezos blasted into space Tuesday on his rocket company's first flight with people on board, becoming the second billionaire in just over a week to ride his own spacecraft.

The Amazon founder was accompanied by a hand-picked group: his brother, an 18-year-old from the Netherlands and an 82-year-old aviation pioneer from Texas — the youngest and oldest to ever fly in space.

"Best day ever," Bezos said after the capsule touched down on the desert floor at the end of the 10-minute flight.

Jeff Bezos said the "most profound" aspect of his brief journey



"BEST DAY EVER"

to space was the spectacular view he saw of Earth, which left him amazed by its beauty and fragility.

"Every astronaut who's been up into space, they say that it changes them ... they look at it

and they're kind of amazed and awestruck by the Earth and its beauty, but also by its fragility, and I can vouch for that," he told reporters after Blue Origin's first crewed flight.

He added that while the atmosphere appeared to be "so big" from the surface, when you get above it "you see it's actually incredibly thin, it's this tiny little fragile thing, and as we move about the planet we're damaging it.

The company released footage of the newly minted astronauts performing somersaults in near zero gravity and throwing Skittles which Dutch teen Oliver Daemen caught in his mouth.

The crew took a number of mementos with them for the 10-minute trip, including a piece of fabric from the Wright brothers' first plane, a bronze medallion made from the first hot air balloon flight in 1783, and a pair of goggles that belonged to Amelia Earhart.

Afghan Prez slams Taliban; rockets target Kabul palace

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Kabul, July 20: At least three rockets hit near the presidential palace Tuesday shortly before Afghan President Ashraf Ghani was to give an address to mark the major Muslim holiday of Eid al-Adha.

There were no injuries and the rockets landed outside the heavily fortified palace grounds, said Mirwais Stanikzai, spokesman for the interior minister.

No one immediately claimed responsibility for the rocket attack, but police quickly fanned out across the area. One car parked on a nearby street was completely destroyed; the police said it was used as launching pad for the rockets.

The palace is in the middle of a so-called Green Zone that is fortified with giant cement blast walls and barbed wire, and streets near the palace have long been closed off.

Many Afghans are worried whether their war-ravaged coun-



ARMY CHIEF TO VISIT INDIA NEXT WEEK

try will fall deeper into chaos and violence as foreign forces withdraw and the Taliban gain more territory on the ground, having captured several districts and key border crossings with neighboring countries over the past weeks.

However, Afghan forces have complained about being left without reinforcements and supplies, often running low on food as the Taliban advanced. In many instances, Afghan troops surrendered rather than fight.

The two days of meetings in Doha — the highest level

of negotiations between Kabul and the Taliban so far — aimed at jump-starting stalled talks but ended with a promise of more high-level talks.

In his speech, Ghani also assailed neighboring Pakistan, which Kabul blames for harboring the Taliban leadership and providing a safe haven and assistance to the insurgents. In the most recent fighting in the Afghan border town of Spin Boldak, Taliban fighters were seen receiving treatment at a Pakistani hospital across the border in Chaman.

THIS EID HAS BEEN NAMED AFTER AFGHAN FORCES TO HONOUR THEIR SACRIFICES AND COURAGE, ESPECIALLY IN THE LAST THREE MONTHS. THE TALIBAN HAVE NO INTENTION AND WILLINGNESS FOR PEACE

ASHRAF GHANI | PRESIDENT, AFGHANISTAN

US asks Pak to keep working with FATF

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Washington, July 20: The US has urged Pakistan to continue working with anti terror-financing agency FATF to "swiftly complete" its 27-point action plan by demonstrating that terrorism financing probes and prosecutions target terrorists and commanders of the UN-designated terror groups.

At its virtual plenary meeting last month, the Paris-based Financial Action Task Force (FATF) retained Pakistan on its 'grey list' for fail-

ing to check money laundering, leading to terror financing.

It asked Pakistan to investigate and prosecute UN-designated terrorists based in the country like Jaish-e-Mohammad (JeM) chief Masood Azhar and Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) founder Hafiz Saeed.

At his daily news conference on Monday, US State Department spokesperson Ned Price said while Pakistan had made some progress on its first action plan of the FATF, it needed to work on its second action plan.

commercial surveillance tools. If the allegations of widespread targeting by NSO's Pegasus malware are even partly true, UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Michelle Bachelet said in a statement, a red line has been crossed again and again with total impunity.

NSO GROUP HAS LONG BEEN ACCUSED OF UNETHICAL HACKING. WHAT'S NEW?

The new investigation, based on leaked data of unspecified origin, builds significantly on previous efforts. Paris-based journal-

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Portland, July 20: The threat of thunderstorms and lightning has prompted officials in fire-ravaged Oregon to ask for help from outside the Pacific Northwest to prepare for additional blazes as many resources are already devoted to a massive fire in the state that has grown to a third the size of Rhode Island.

The 537-square-mile (1,391-square-kilometer) Bootleg Fire is burning 300 miles (483 kilometers) south-



BOOTLEG WILDFIRE

east of Portland in and around the Fremont-Winema National Forest,

a vast expanse of old-growth forest, lakes and wildlife refuges.

Extreme weather fuels Oregon fires

Evacuations and property losses have been minimal compared with much smaller blazes in densely populated areas of California.

The worry is that dry conditions, a drought and the recent record-breaking heat wave in the region have created tinderbox conditions, so resources like fire engines are being recruited from places like Arkansas, Nevada and Alaska.

At least 2,000 homes have been evacuated at some point during the fire and another 5,000 threatened.

PEGASUS SPYWARE

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Boston, July 20: Human rights and press freedom activists are outraged about a new report on NSO Group, the notorious Israeli hacker-for-hire company.

The report, by a global media consortium, expands public knowledge of the target list used in NSO's military-grade spyware. According to the report, that now not only includes journalists, rights activists and opposition political figures, but also people close to them.

The groups have decried the virtual absence of regulation of

commercial surveillance tools. If the allegations of widespread targeting by NSO's Pegasus malware are even partly true, UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Michelle Bachelet said in a statement, a red line has been crossed again and again with total impunity.

NSO GROUP HAS LONG BEEN ACCUSED OF UNETHICAL HACKING. WHAT'S NEW?

The new investigation, based on leaked data of unspecified origin, builds significantly on previous efforts. Paris-based journal-



Customers of NSO Group's malware and other commercial surveillance tools typically focus on high-profile targets

ism nonprofit Forbidden Stories and the human rights group Amnesty International obtained the data and say that it people potential targeted for surveillance by NSO's clients.

Journalists from the consortium combed through a list of more than 50,000 cellphone numbers, identifying more than 1,000 individuals in 50 countries. They include 189 journalists, 85 human

rights activists and several heads of state. Among the journalists were employees of The Associated Press, Reuters, CNN, The Wall Street Journal, Le Monde and The Financial Times. The list of potential targets included Roula Khalaf, the editor of the Financial Times.

According to The Committee to Protect Journalists, there are few effective barriers to prevent autocratic governments from using sophisticated surveillance technology to attempt cowering or silencing a free press.

WHAT DOES NSO SAY

NSO denies ever maintaining a list of "potential, past or existing targets." It claims to provide its services only to "vetted government agencies" for use against terrorists and major criminals, and denies any association with Khashoggi's murder.

But the company does not disclose its clients and claims it has no visibility into the data. Security researchers who have studied NSO's activity contest that claim, saying the company directly manages the high-tech spying.

On one hand they are provoking people to take loans, on the other hand they are earning indiscriminately through tax extortion. Is it a government or a greedy money lender from old Hindi films?

RAHUL GANDHI | CONGRESS LEADER

I remain confident that India's macroeconomic fundamentals are strong. Recovery is underway

DEEPAK PAREKH | HDFC CHAIRMAN

Industries have learned to work with lockdowns, though in many cases businesses have been affected adversely

KM MAMMEN | MRF CHAIRMAN & MD

SHORT TAKES

Zomato to raise \$1.26bn in IPO



Hong Kong: Indian food delivery startup Zomato Ltd will raise US\$1.26 billion by pricing its shares at 76 rupees each in its initial public offering, according to two sources with direct knowledge of the matter. The sources could not be named as the information has not yet been made public. Zomato did not immediately respond to a request for comment. The company, which is backed by Ant Group, will be valued at up to US\$8 billion following the IPO which is the first for a food delivery group in India. The pricing is set at the top of the flagged range of 72 rupees (US\$0.9649) to 76 rupees each at the start of the booking building process. Zomato's IPO was strongly backed by investors attracting bids worth US\$46.3 billion as it was more than 38 times oversubscribed when the books closed Friday, signalling confidence about the fast-growing sector.

YouTube set to acquire Simsim



New Delhi: YouTube Tuesday said it will acquire Indian video e-commerce platform Simsim, as part of its efforts to help small businesses and retailers in India reach new customers. "...We are taking another step to help viewers discover and buy products from local businesses: we have signed a definitive agreement to acquire Simsim and expect to complete the transaction in the coming weeks," Google said in a blogpost. The company, however, did not disclose the financial details of the transaction. There will be no immediate changes to Simsim and the app will continue operating independently, it added. YouTube is working on ways to showcase Simsim offers to YouTube viewers. In a joint statement, Simsim co-founders Amit Bagaria, Kunal Suri and Saurabh Vashishtha said the platform was started to help users across India shop online with ease, enabled through small sellers and brands showcasing and selling their products using the power of content by trusted influencers. "Being a part of the YouTube and Google ecosystem furthers Simsim in its mission," they added.



We will continue to provide critical assistance to developing countries through this ongoing pandemic to help achieve a more broad-based economic recovery

DAVID MALPASS | WORLD BANK GROUP PRESIDENT

IOC TO BUILD INDIA'S FIRST 'GREEN HYDROGEN' PLANT

India's largest oil firm IOC will build the nation's first 'green hydrogen' plant at its Mathura refinery, as it aims to prepare for a future catering to the growing demand for both oil and cleaner forms of energy.



Govt seeks Parliament nod for ₹23,675cr extra spend

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, July 20: Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman Tuesday sought the Parliament nod to spend a net additional ₹23,675 crore, including ₹17,000 crore for the health ministry, in the current financial year.

As per the first batch of supplementary demands for grants tabled in the Lok Sabha by Sitharaman, although the gross additional expenditure is over ₹1.87 lakh crore in 2021-22, the actual cash outgo will only be ₹23,674.81 crore as the remaining spending will be met through savings and higher receipts and recoveries.

A substantial chunk of the total gross spending is towards transfer to states for shortfall in goods and services tax compensation cess. ₹1.59 lakh crore would be transferred to states as back-to-back loan in lieu of the GST compensation shortfall. However, this will not entail any cash outgo. "As the back-to-back loans are to be met from equivalent capital re-



ceipts, the ... Expenditure will not entail any additional cash outgo," the supplementary demands for grants said.

To meet the various COVID-related and other health preparedness, ₹16,463 crore extra spending has been earmarked for the department of health and family welfare.

An extra ₹526 crore has been given to the department of health research for emergency epidemic preparedness and response.

Approval for ₹2,050 crore for Ministry of Civil Aviation is being sought, which includes ₹1,872 crore towards loans and advances to Air India for recoupment of advance

from Contingency Fund of India. The cash outgo also includes ₹1,100 crore for Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution towards providing assistance to sugar mills for 2019-20 sugar season.

Besides, nod for spending an additional ₹1,222 crore under the head Department of Pharmaceuticals has been sought towards waiver of the government loan of Indian Drugs and Pharmaceuticals Ltd (Rs 889.50 crore) and waiver of government loan (Rs 107.49 crore) and accrued interest (Rs 86.22 crore) of Bengal Chemicals & Pharmaceuticals Ltd.

The excess spending grant for pharma department also includes additional expenditure to clear pending employee dues of Hindustan Antibiotics Ltd (Rs 118 crore) and Rajasthan Drugs and Pharmaceuticals Ltd (Rs 21 crore) as loan.

The additional spending is over and above the total expenditure of ₹34.83 lakh crore projected in the Budget for 2021-22.

Swiggy raises \$1.25bn from SoftBank, Prosus

REUTERS

Bangalore, July 20: Food delivery startup Swiggy said Tuesday it has raised \$1.25 billion in a funding round led by SoftBank's Vision Fund 2 and technology investor Prosus as foreign funds raise their stake in local internet-based consumer firms.

After the fund infusion, Swiggy will be valued at \$5.5 billion, technology news site TechCrunch reported. Swiggy did not immediately respond to Reuters request for comment on its latest valuation.

Goldman Sachs and Qatar Investment Authority were also among the notable investors in the



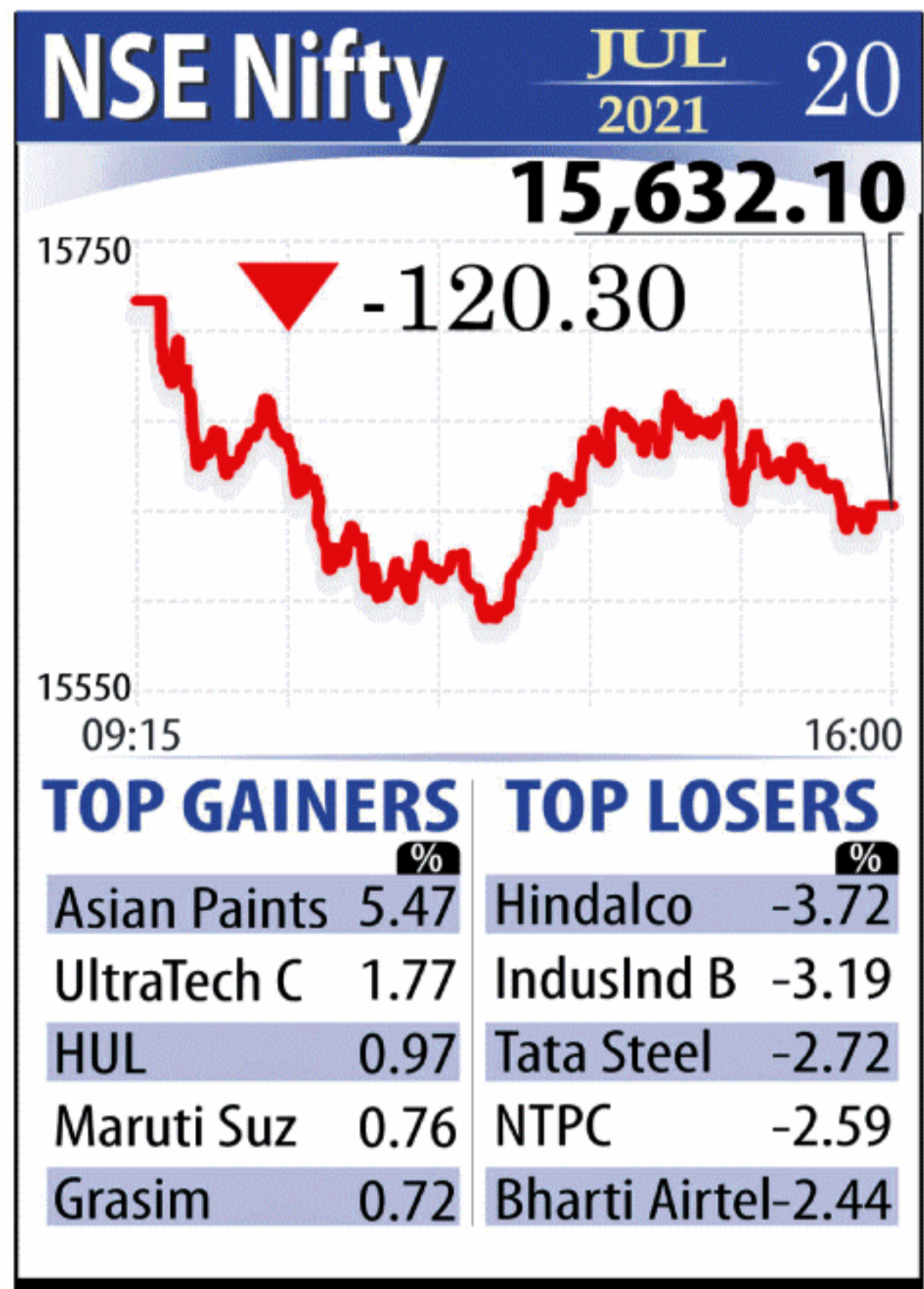
latest fundraise. Last week, rival Zomato, backed by China's Ant Group, drew bids worth \$46.3 billion in a stock offering that was oversubscribed more than 38 times.

Swiggy had raised \$800 million in April earlier this year, according

to local media. Home delivery companies in India were hit by a sudden pandemic-related lockdown last year due to doubts about how the virus is transmitted. But as initial hesitancy in ordering in eased with customers avoiding going out to eat, both Zomato and Swiggy saw a rise in delivery orders.

"The scope of food delivery in India is massive and over the next few years we will continue to invest aggressively into growing this category," Sriharsha Majety, chief executive officer at Swiggy, said.

The Bangalore-based firm has forayed into the online grocery delivery through Instamart.



MCL to supply 100MT coal from Talcher coalfields: CMD

POST NEWS NETWORK

Talcher/Bhubaneswar, July 20: Mahanadi Coalfields Limited (MCL), a subsidiary of Coal India Limited, has planned to supply 100 MT coal from Talcher coalfields, as it moves steadily to achieve the coal production and dispatch targets in financial year 2021-22.

PK Sinha, Chairman-cum-Managing Director, MCL, who was on a three-day visit to Talcher coalfields, said that MCL was performing well and steadily progressing to achieve the targets of coal production of 163 million tonne and dispatch of 182 million tonne for the current fiscal.

MCL is implementing nine First Mile Connectivity projects to provide pollution-free state-of-the-art rake loading systems at a total expenditure of ₹3,600 crore. This will also generate a dispatch capacity of 126 MT/Yr by 2024.

The company, which produced 148.01 million tonne during 2020-21, has set a target to produce



163 million tonne coal to meet the growing energy demand of the country. In the current financial year, MCL has been able to liquidate around 6 million tonne coal from the stock, which was around 23 million tonne at the end of last financial year.

On business diversification, the CMD said MCL was also planning to diversify business operations. "The company, which has suc-

cessfully set-up a 2MW solar power plant at Burla, aims to become a net-zero carbon emission company by setting-up solar power plants of a total 182 MW capacity in Odisha. Besides, the company is also exploring possibilities to diversify into aluminum sector," said Sinha.

In 2020-21, MCL had spent ₹205 crore for various socio-economic, education and healthcare projects under its CSR programme.

Running low on battery: Brexit Britain faces acid test

WITH ITS 2030 DEADLINE FOR BAN ON FOSSIL FUEL-POWERED CARS LOOMING FOLLOWED BY ITS 2035 CUT OFF FOR HYBRIDS, BRITAIN NEEDS MORE BATTERY FACTORIES - AND FAST

REUTERS

London, July 20: Britain has set a fast pace in the electric vehicle race with its 2030 ban on sales of new fossil fuel-powered cars and has offered 1 billion pounds (\$1.4 billion) to jump start its battery industry and associated supply chain.

But the cash and the headline-grabbing deadline - which is sooner than many other nations by several years - still leaves it trailing the European Union's drive to create a supply chain and far behind China, the electric vehicle (EV) battery leader. The stakes are high for Brexit Britain. To keep selling into the 27-nation EU without tariffs, Britain's car industry, which employs 170,000 people, must ensure electric vehicles and the batteries

that power them meet stringent rules of origin - with up to 70% of input in value terms coming from Britain or inside the EU.

With its 2030 deadline looming followed by its 2035 cut off for hybrids, Britain needs more battery factories - and fast. Yet, even Nissan's plans for a 9 gigawatt hour (GWh) battery plant in Britain - hailed by the government when it was announced in July - are dwarfed by two plants being built in Germany alone, Tesla's 50 GWh plant near Berlin and Volkswagen's 40 GWh factory near Wolfsburg.

"We have come rather late to the party," said Douglas Johnson-Poensgen, chief executive of Britain's Circular, who has worked with Volvo Cars and others on building sustainable supply chains.



The Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS), at the heart of Britain's

EV investment drive, says it is ensuring Britain remains a world leader in the auto industry.

EU BILLIONS

Meanwhile, the EU is powering ahead to catch up with China and transform its car industry, a major employer across the bloc, including in heavyweights Germany and France. The bloc, which has proposed an effective ban on sales of new petrol and diesel cars from 2035, has allocated 2.9 billion euros (\$3.4 billion) from 12 EU states to support new battery plants. European climate group Transport & Environment says the EU has 38 plants planned or being built, many benefiting from other support measures from the EU or individual governments.

The bloc has identified 42 companies, including U.S. company Tesla and Germany's BMW, for specific roles in the battery supply chain and lifecycle, ranging from

supplying raw materials to producing cells or recycling them.

SWIFT TRANSITION

Benchmark Mineral Intelligence (BMI) forecasts Britain needs at least 175 GWh of battery cell capacity by 2035 to supply around 3 million fully-electric vehicles. For now, it estimates Britain is way off the pace, with only 56.9 GWh by 2030.

Among the plans, Britishvolt aims to build a 30 GWh plant by 2027. BMI has only included part of that in its target as it expects the British startup to ramp up more slowly.

Britishvolt said building a 30 GWh factory was a challenge but a spokesperson said its strategy of building in three 10 GWh phases would help achieve its target by 2027.

SHORT TAKES

Bala Devi ‘Women’s Player of the Year’

NEW DELHI: Indian team forward Bala Devi has been named as the AIFF Women’s ‘Footballer of the Year’, with young gun Manisha winning the ‘Emerging Player’ award for the 2020-21 season. This marks the third time that the mercurial striker has bagged the award, having previously won it two years in a row in 2014 and 2015. Currently playing for Rangers FC in Scotland, Bala made her debut for the team in February last year and created history as she scored her first competitive goal for them in December. She remains the first Indian woman footballer to sign a professional contract in Europe.

Maymol steps down

NEW DELHI: After four years in charge of the Indian women’s senior national team, head coach Maymol Rocky has stepped down from her role due to personal reasons. Maymol, who took over the reins as head coach in 2017 after a stint as the assistant coach, led the team to a number of international successes. Speaking to www.the-aiff.com, she thanked the federation for its ‘trust’ in her abilities. The Indian women’s national team created history in November 2018 by making it through to the second round of the Olympic qualifiers for the first time ever.

Rahul, Jaddu shine

Durham: KL Rahul (101 retired, 150b, 11x4, 1x6) gave a timely reminder to the Indian team management with a sublime first-class hundred against Select County XI on the opening day of the warm-up game here Tuesday. The Indian team, without its regular skipper Virat Kohli (back niggle) and his deputy Ajinkya Rahane (hamstring injury), ended the day at 306/9 despite early hiccups, thanks to Rahul’s knock. Ravindra Jadeja (75, 146b, 5x4, 1x6) also played his part to perfection during the 127-run fifth wicket stand with Rahul. Rohit Sharma (9), Mayank Agarwal (28), veteran Cheteshwar Pujara (21) and Hanuma Vihari (24) didn’t spend enough time at the crease in the designated first-class game.

AGENCIES

CHAHAR SHOW LIFTS INDIA



PARTNERS IN CRIME: Deepak Chahar (L) gives Bhuvneshwar Kumar a fist-bump during their match-winning partnership against Sri Lanka

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Colombo, July 20: Tail-ender Deepak Chahar (69 n o, 82b, 7x4, 1x6) brought India back from the dead with a steely half century and script the visiting team’s series-sealing victory in the second ODI against Sri Lanka here Tuesday.

Chasing 276, India were down and out at 193/7 before Chahar and Bhuvneshwar Kumar (19 n o, 28b, 2x4) forged an unbeaten 84-run stand to seal a memorable three-wicket win for the visitors who extended their record of not losing an ODI on Sri Lanka soil since 2012.

Chahar, whose highest score

before this game was 12, showed remarkable resolve and composure under pressure to take his team over the line with five balls to spare. He fittingly hit the winning boundary. It was India’s ninth consecutive bilateral series win over Sri Lanka. The third ODI will be played Friday.

It was expected to be another comfortable chase for India after Sri Lanka put an improved batting effort to post 275/9. However, questionable shot selection from the majority of the Indian batsmen gave their struggling opponents hope.

Barring Chahar and Suryakumar Yadav (53, 44b, 6x4,



Deepak Chahar (L) is congratulated by Suryakumar Yadav, who later scored his maiden half century in ODIs, after dismissing a Sri Lankan batsman

the Indian batsmen faltered. Leg-spinner Wanindu Hasaranga (3/37) troubled the Indians with his variations and ended up being the stand out bowler for his team.

India felt the heat early on in the chase with Prithvi Shaw and Ishan Kishan, who both blew away the opposition in the opener Sunday, getting out to bad shots.

Skipper Shikhar Dhawan (29) was not at his fluent best for the second game in a row and was trapped in front by Hasaranga. Manish Pandey (37) was unfortunate to be run out off a deflection from the bowler’s hand and Hardik Pandya hitting it straight to mid wicket with hard hands left India reeling at 116/5.

Suryakumar and Krunal Pandya (35) stitched a 44-run stand before Chahar produced a stunner from nowhere for a remarkable win.

Earlier, leg-spinner Yuzvendra Chahal (3/50) led India’s decent effort with the ball. Pretty much like the series opener, most of the Sri Lankan batsmen got starts

but failed to capitalise after the hosts opted to bat.

Avishka Fernando (50, 71b, 4x4, 1x6) and Charith Asalanka (65, 68b, 6x4) struck fine half centuries but the home team weren’t disciplined enough to post an imposing total. Chamika Karunaratne (44 n o, 33b, 5x4) came up with another timely cameo to take the team past 270.

Chahal was the pick of the bowlers while pacers Chahar (2/53) and Bhuvneshwar (3/54) too got wickets primarily due to profligacy of the home team batsmen.

BRIEF SCORES

SRI LANKA 275/9
(Charith Asalanka 65, Avishka Fernando 50, Chamika Karunaratne 44 n o; Yuzvendra Chahal 3/50, Bhuvneshwar Kumar 3/54, Deepak Chahal 2/53)

lost to INDIA 277/7
(Deepak Chahar 69 n o, Suryakumar Yadav 53; Wanindu Hasaranga 3/37) **by 3 wickets.**

Kiko Ramirez named new OFC head coach



Joaquin ‘Kino’ Garcia Sanchez



Francisco ‘Kiko’ Ramirez Gonzalez

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 20: Francisco ‘Kiko’ Ramirez Gonzalez has been appointed as the new Odisha FC (OFC) head coach for the upcoming Indian Super League (ISL) season, the club announced through a press release, Tuesday.

The 51-year-old Spaniard has signed for the Bhubaneswar-based franchise for a year with an option to extend after the season.

After his retirement from professional football as a player, Ramirez started his coaching career with Spanish club Gimnastic as their assistant coach first in 2002 and then as their youth coach. In 2010, he joined Poble Mafumet and returned to Gimnastic again in 2012.

He has also coached other Spanish clubs like CE L’Hospitalet, CD Castellon, and CE Sabadell. He was the Second Coach at Nastic de Tarragona in the first division in Spain as well.

His first foreign assignment was with Polish football club Wisla Krakow in 2017 and before coming to India, the UEFA Pro License holder was the Manager of Greek professional side AO Xanthi FC in 2019.

“I am very excited to arrive in India and start working on this amazing project with Odisha FC to make our fans feel proud of the team. We are going to work hard to build a strong team with good players that represent our fan base,” the Spaniard was quoted in the release.

OFC has also roped in the services of Joaquin ‘Kino’ Garcia Sanchez as assistant coach and Head of Football Development ahead of the 2021-22 ISL season.

Joaquin, who has a UEFA Pro License, has a lot of experience in developing players and is a former coach at Valencia CF’s youth teams. He has also directed the Valencia CF Academy in Seoul. He also coached Levante UD in the first division of women’s football in Spain for several seasons. He was also the Director of Coaches in the Valencia area, working for the Spanish Federation.

“I am happy to be part of the team as Assistant Coach of the first team and Head of Football Development for the Club. I am really looking forward to start training with the great team that we are building. To all the fans, you will feel proud of us. See you in the pitch,” said Joaquin.

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Pomegranate (1 kg)	₹ 250	₹ 204 <small>FUTURE PAY PRICE</small>	₹ 250
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HMT Premium Loose Rice (5 kg)	₹ 300	₹ 245	₹ 250
Fortune Sunflower Oil (1 L)	₹ 210	₹ 152	₹ 177
Horlicks Health Drink Tub (2 X 500 g)	₹ 464	₹ 399	₹ 419
Britannia Goodday Cookies Cashew (600 g)	₹ 120	₹ 90	₹ 120
Tide Plus Jasmine & Rose Detergent Powder (6 kg)	₹ 725	₹ 625	₹ 699
Whisper Ultra Clean Wings Sanitary Pad (XL + 44)	₹ 449	₹ 359	₹ 415
TOTAL BILL	₹ 2998	₹ 2457	₹ 2792
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