



FINDING HAPPINESS

TV actor Rashami Desai has found happiness for herself after participating in the 2019 edition of Bigg Boss

LEISURE P2



MASKS BACK IN US

US govt has asked people to wear masks again due to the surging Delta variant of Covid-19

INTERNATIONAL P10



SINDHU SIZZLES

PV Sindhu beats Hong Kong's NY Cheung to seal last 16 berth at Tokyo Olympics

SPORTS P12

MAN BURNS GIRLFRIEND TO DEATH

BERHAMPUR: A man allegedly killed his 25-year-old girlfriend by burning her alive Tuesday night. The incident occurred at Pratappur village under Purusottampur police limits in Ganjam district. The two had a heated argument following which the accused identified as Krushna Chandra Sahoo, poured inflammable material on the victim and burnt her to death. Sahoo was arrested Wednesday based on the declaration given by the victim before her death. He was trying to flee, police said. Sahoo and the victim were in a relationship for the last one year. He had called over the girl to his house on the pretext of having an important discussion with her. When she arrived, he threw the highly inflammable material on the victim and fled the scene. Locals rescued the woman with severe burn injuries and took her to the hospital. **P7**

BIG RELIEF FOR DEPOSITORS ON CARDS

NEW DELHI: The Union Cabinet approved Wednesday amendment to the DICGC Act to provide account holders access to up to ₹5 lakh within 90 days of a bank coming under moratorium to ensure timely support to depositors. Last year, the government had raised insurance cover on deposits five-folds to ₹5 lakh to provide support to depositors of ailing lenders like Punjab and Maharashtra Co-operative (PMC) Bank. The Bill is expected to be introduced in the current Monsoon Session, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman said Wednesday. Once the Bill becomes law, it will provide immediate relief to thousands of depositors, who had their money parked in stressed lenders such as PMC Bank and other small cooperative banks.

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IRREGULAR by MANJUL



How did the civilisation disappear? Was it because of a pandemic, price rise or self-absorbed leadership?

Bomma sworn in as Karnataka CM

BANGALORE: Basavaraj Bommai took oath Wednesday as the new Chief Minister of Karnataka. The 61-year-old leader was administered the oath by Governor Thaaawarchand Gehlot at the Raj Bhavan here. The Karnataka BJP legislature party Tuesday evening had elected Bommai as its new leader to succeed outgoing Chief Minister BS Yediyurappa. Incidentally, Bommai is the son of former Karnataka Chief Minister, the late SR Bommai. **P8**

18 dead, 25 injured in UP bus accident

BARABANKI (UP): At least 18 people were killed and 25 injured after a truck ramed into a stationary double-decker bus here, police said Wednesday. The accident took place on the Lucknow-Ayodhya highway under Kotwali Ramsanehighat area late Tuesday night. The private bus was carrying over 130 passengers to Bihar from Ludhiana, police informed. The bus with its axle broken was being repaired when the accident occurred.

MARKET WATCH

INDEX	VALUE	CHG	VAR
SENSEX	52443.71	↓	135.05
NIFTY	15709.40	↓	37.10
DOLLAR	74.42	↓	₹0.06
EURO	87.89	↑	₹0.06
GOLD	₹47,580	↑	₹7
SILVER	₹66,581	↑	₹525

WEATHER

	BHUB	CTK
TEMP MAX	29.9°C	29.6°C
TEMP MIN	24.4°C	23.4°C
Humidity	86%	85%
Rainfall	Trace	Nil
Forecast	Light rain very likely	



Rippling muscles and bodies poised in mid-air, Britain's Daniel Goodfellow (left) and Jack Laugher compete in the qualifying round of the men's synchronized diving competition at the Tokyo Olympics, Wednesday. **PTI PHOTO**

PICTURE PERFECT

Mamata's clarion call for Oppn unity

TMC supremo states she can work under any leader

AGENCIES

New Delhi, July 28: Asserting Wednesday that she is a simple political leader, West Bengal Chief Minister and Trinamool Congress supremo Mamata Banerjee clarified she is at the forefront of the battle against the BJP and asserted that all opposition parties should unite forgetting small 'differences'. Banerjee skipped the mega meeting of the opposition over the Pegasus snooping row conducted Wednesday, but said her party is with the others on the issue. She was quizzed as to who would be the leader or face of the opposition if the parties unite. She shot back, "I am not a political astrologer. I have no problem if someone else leads. I am a simple worker, I want to continue as a worker. I want to help all the opposition parties to bell the cat." Banerjee also stated that long-term plans in the political fight against the BJP will be worked out soon and discussions will begin properly 'after the current session of the parliament'. Banerjee also said that she has already met Lalu Prasad Yadav and during her stay in the national capital she will also meet Congress



I AM A SIMPLE POLITICAL WORKER AND I CAN WORK UNDER ANYONE. I DON'T WANT TO BE THE FACE OF OPPOSITION
MAMATA BANERJEE

chief Sonia Gandhi and Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal. "There should be a common platform for all the opposition parties to work together. We will all sit together and work out a common agenda," said the TMC supremo. "BJP thinks it is a big party... wait till the opposition unites. It will be bigger than the BJP. The opposition must be together to save democracy which the BJP has destroyed," added the TMC supremo. She once more used the phrase 'Khela hobe' (game on) to challenge the BJP. "If Bengal can do it (defeat BJP), so can other states," asserted Banerjee.

Dengue cases rise

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 28: Showing no signs of subsiding, dengue cases continued to rise Wednesday in this city. Sixty two new cases were reported taking the total tally to 453. Wednesday's figure is the highest since the outbreak of the vector-borne disease here. While only 11 cases were reported till July 4, a surge of 26 times has been registered in the last 24 days. "While most patients have recovered, we are strictly monitoring those recuperating. We have recorded cases from about 62 lo-

calities of the state Capital. Among them are Jaydev Vihar, Unit-IV, Unit-VI, Unit-VIII, Kalpana Square, BDA Colony, BJB Nagar, Mancheswar, Madhusudan Nagar, Patia, Budha Nagar among others," a BMC official said. The official said a large number of cases have been reported from the slums of Niladri Vihar and Sailashree Vihar. BMC is also investigating the death of a minor boy Tuesday due to suspected dengue in Sailashree Vihar, the official said. "Inquiry is being conducted on the suspected death," informed ADUPHO, Antaryami Mishra.

Govt awaits Centre's nod

VACCINATION OF KIDS AGED 12 YEARS AND BELOW

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 28: The Odisha Health department said Wednesday it is awaiting the nod from the Centre for vaccination of kids aged 12 years and below against Covid-19. The chief of Directorate of Medical Education and Training (DMET), CBK Mohanty informed that no guidelines or approvals have so far been given by the Centre for vaccination of kids in this particular age group. "Vaccination of persons in the 12-18 years segment will begin next

month. However, till date there has been no information regarding vaccination of kids in the 12 years and below category," Mohanty informed. "Once we get the guidelines for this segment, we can immediately start the process," added the Health department official. The official also hinted that complete unlocking in Odisha will not be done abruptly, but in a phased manner. "We are studying and analysing the pandemic and its effects on a daily basis. The test positivity rate (TPR) of various districts is also being taken into

Revenue village tag accorded to 4,000 hamlets

Letter sent to all collectors to initiate process

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 28: The Odisha government has initiated the process to accord 'revenue village' tag to approximately 4,000 hamlets. So far, the government has received more than 3,500 proposals that are pending at district level for years for the creation of new 'revenue villages'. Discussions on this issue have been continuing for a substantial period of time now. Revenue and Disaster Management Secretary Bishnupada Sethi issued Wednesday detailed guidelines for declaration of the new 'revenue villages'. This development has come after the approval of Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik. All the district collectors have been asked to follow the guidelines.

As per the guidelines, hamlets with a population of 250 and above and located at more than half-a-kilometre from the mother village, will be accorded 'revenue village' tag. Hamlets with a population of more than 300 will also be given the same status. In the case of a hamlet with a population of less than 250 being separated from the mother village by a natural barrier, will also be a 'revenue village'. "It is also ascertained that misinterpretation of the existing instructions at district level pertaining to reservation limit for Gochar and communal land has resulted in non-disposal of cases," Sethi said in

- Gochar and communal land will be considered as CPR for both the mother and newly-formed villages
- Instructions to create new 'revenue villages' have already been sent to all district collectors

his letter to collectors. Residents of the newly-formed villages however, will still have access to existing Gochar and communal land in the mother village, said Sethi. He clarified that all communal as well as Gochar land shall be considered as common property resources (CPR) for both the villages. The matter of creation of new villages has been brought up several times in the state Assembly and other forums. Most of the proposals were not considered in view of shortage of Gochar and communal land, official sources said. The government was also being deprived of resources without new revenue villages, which would have been otherwise available under different Government grants/schemes, the source said. "The state will now create approximately 4,000 new villages which would benefit the people," Sethi informed.

PLUS-II (SCI, COM) RESULTS BY JULY 31

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 28: The Council of Higher Secondary Education (CHSE) will announce the Plus-II science and commerce results July 31. However, the results of arts and vocational courses will be declared few days later as it takes more time to check the papers. The CHSE has appealed to the Supreme Court seeking more time to declare the results of Plus-II arts and vocational students. Earlier, the Supreme Court had asked the state board to declare the results for Class XII exams by July 31. The internal assessment scheme needs to be formulated within 10 days, the apex court had ruled. However, the Supreme Court had stated that it is impossible for states across the country to have a uniform scheme for the assessment of Class XII students' performances after the cancellation of exams. School and Mass Education Minister Samir Ranjan Dash had earlier said that results of the annual Plus-II 2021 examinations are likely to be announced by July 31. The CHSE has to some extent managed to fulfil his declaration. Chief minister Naveen Patnaik had announced June 4 cancellation of the Class XII examinations due to the second wave of the Covid-19 pandemic. The Odisha School and Mass Education Department had constituted a 14-member experts' panel to suggest alternative evaluation criteria for Plus-II examinations.

Rebooting phones keeps hackers away

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Richmond (US), July 28: As a member of the secretive Senate Intelligence Committee, Senator Angus King has reasons to worry about hackers. At a briefing by security staff this year, King got some advice on how to help keep his cellphone secure. **Step One:** Turn off phone. **Step Two:** Turn it on. **Step 3:** Do it at least once every week. That's it. At a time of widespread digital insecurity it turns out that the oldest and simplest computer fix there is - turning a device off then back on again - can thwart hackers from stealing informa-

tion from smartphones. Regularly rebooting phones won't stop the army of cyber-criminals or spy-for-hire firms. But it can make even the most sophisticated hackers work harder to maintain access and steal data from a phone. "This is all about imposing cost on these malicious actors," said Neal Ziring, technical director of the National Security Agency's (NSA) cybersecurity directorate. The NSA issued a 'best practices' guide for mobile device security last year in which it recommends rebooting a phone every week as a way to stop hacking. King, an independent from Maine,



said rebooting his phone is now part of his routine. "I'd say probably once a week, whenever I think of it," he informed. The number of people whose phones are hacked each year is not known, but evidence suggests it's quite high. The advice to periodically reboot a phone reflects, in part, a change in how top hackers are gaining access to mobile devices and the rise of so-called 'zero-click' exploits that work without any user interaction instead of trying to get users to open something that's secretly infected. "There's been this evolution away from having a target click on a dodgy link," said Bill Marczak, a senior researcher at Citizen Lab, an internet civil rights watchdog at the University of Toronto. "Typically, once hackers gain access to a device or network, they look for ways to persist in the system by installing malicious software to a computer's root file sys-

SWITCHING PHONES OFF AND ON DISCOURAGES CRIMINALS, SAY EXPERTS

tem. But that's become more difficult as phone manufacturers such as Apple and Google have strong security to block malware from core operating systems," Ziring said. "It's very difficult for an attacker to burrow into that layer in order to gain persistence," he added. It encourages hackers to opt for 'in-memory payloads' that are harder to detect and trace back to whoever sent them. Such hacks can't survive a reboot, but often don't need to since many people rarely turn their phones off. So next time you pick up your cellphone remember to switch it off and on at least once in a week.

leisure

FORTUNE FORECAST

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ARIES
Your day is packed full. There are negotiations, commitments, plans and decisions to wade through. You may feel low on energy and swamped due to lack of information and inputs from others. But clarity will return gradually as matters conclude, says Ganesh.

TAURUS
Fortune favours the brave and you will wake up feeling gutsy. Your performance will peak today and you will reap the benefits of real estate and construction business. Your peers and boss will extend all the support you need.

GEMINI
You need to bear in mind that you need to concentrate on your own image and standing in society rather than worry about the actions of others. Those in the retail business will see an unprecedented spurt in their profits today, says Ganesh.

CANCER
You will try to improve ties with beloved ones. Your devotion and dedication will reap benefits for the future. You will have physical and mental happiness. You will keep your future in mind. This will boost your self-confidence. Ganesh's blessings are with you.

LEO
You will be confused with issues relating to the workplace today. You need to accept your present circumstances for what they are, and work towards resolving your immediate concerns to find your way ahead in life. This period of doubt will pass very soon, says Ganesh.

VIRGO
Your beloved will not only give you a surprise today but also demand one, says Ganesh. There may be some good news on the business front. Ganesh says you up to your old mistakes so that you don't repeat them, and chalk out the plans for the future.

LIBRA
Ganesh says you will get the answers to all your questions. You will tend to worry about small things and issues. You will be able to earn from different sources today. Ganeshji assures that if you keep your mind balanced you will achieve amazing results in your work.

SCORPIO
You may bump into people with different tastes and temperaments, says Ganesh. Some may surprise you, while some may just shock you. Sometimes, it is difficult to understand when people react indifferently to your success. Handle it with smartness and diplomacy.

SAGITTARIUS
You have been experiencing the adverse effects of stressful lifestyle off-late. But not anymore, as you realise the importance of good health. Maintaining good health will begin with good news of either promotion or increment at work.

CAPRICORN
Today, you'll like to hold a cup of hot coffee in one hand, relax and go down the memory lane to cherish some golden moments. You may want to give another chance to your romantic relationship as you develop likings for your ex-boyfriend/girlfriend.

AQUARIUS
You speed up your pace and try to do everything in order to complete your targets, but you won't be able to complete the tasks on time. Don't lose hope as tomorrow will be a different day, says Ganesh. Give yourself some time to relax and unwind. You have worked very hard and Ganesh assures that your efforts will not go unnoticed.

PISCES
You need to concentrate more on your personal life, and seriously think about the changes you need to make. You are guided more by your heart in these matters. However, there is nothing to worry about, as this is a golden period for you.



NO TIME TO PLAN MY WEDDING: JENNA DEWAN

Actress Jenna Dewan says she has had no time to discuss her wedding plans with fiancé Steve Kazee. "We hadn't even had a chance to talk about our wedding. A month after we got engaged, our baby was born and then a week later, (coronavirus) quarantine began," Dewan said.

ODENKIRK HOSPITALISED AFTER COLLAPSING ON SHOOTING SET

Better Call Saul star Bob Odenkirk was rushed to the hospital after collapsing on the set of the show. The 58-year-old star is currently in production on the final season of Better Call Saul, a spin-off of the wildly popular series Breaking Bad.



WE LIVE LIKE SPLIT PERSONALITIES: KIARA

Mumbai: Kiara Advani exudes GenNow assuredness while opening up on the ability to dissociate oneself from external pressures such as trolling, nepotism talk or the industry's camp culture. The actress, who traces her lineage to the legendary Ashok Kumar and Saeed Jaffery, says it's in a day's work.

"We learn to detach as actors. One lives like a split personality in a way, doing so many roles in the course of the work day, and we learn how to keep that bit separate from our lives in a way," says Kiara, about the negativity that comes with the profession. The roles she portrays on

screen could be a different deal, though. Her upcoming role of Dimple Cheema in the biopic *Sherashaah*, for instance, is an act that has stayed with her, emotionally. The film tells the story of Param Vir Chakra recipient and Kargil War hero Captain Vikram Batra. Playing Captain Batra's fiancée Dimple let Kiara play a defining role in the film's attempt to explore the war hero's love life.



Trisha was sexually harassed multiple times

Mumbai: National Award-winning documentary filmmaker and author Trisha Das says that in her earlier days, even she was sexually harassed at the workplace and in the last five years a progressive change happened courtesy #MeToo.

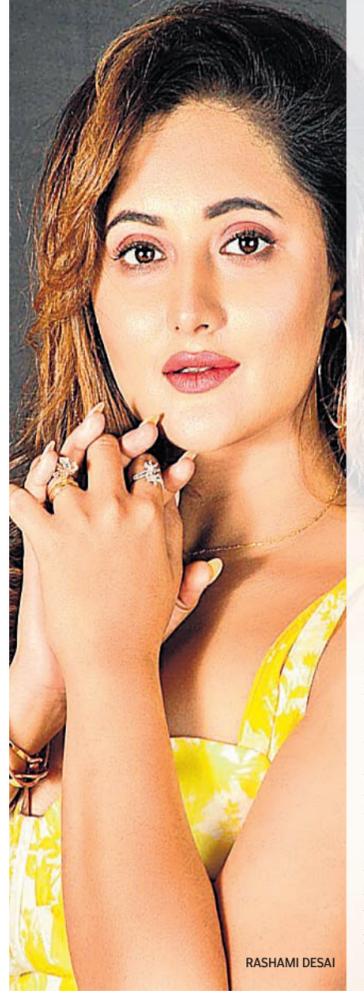
"Back in the day when I was working as a documentary filmmaker, I was sexually harassed multiple times. But it was a fairly common practice at the workplace and women would look out for other women to comfort each other and protect each other."

"There was no social media where someone can share their story, so there was no accountability also."

"When I was working as a documentary filmmaker, I was sexually harassed multiple times."

Remaining silent after facing such harassment was also common...men had no fear of repercussion. Social media and constant conversation around sexual harassment at the workplace, and the #MeToo movement has created the momentum," says the author of *Kama's Last Sutra*.

She adds, "While it is empowering for women, I hope this movement does not get politicised."



Rashami is happier with herself

Mumbai: Television actress Rashami Desai, who gained immense popularity after participating in the reality show *Bigg Boss 13* in 2019, says she has changed as a person after the show.

"Life has not changed after *Bigg Boss*. I have changed as a person, but for good. I'm more content and happier with myself. I've understood about self love. I've realised that I'm a person who loves people around her. I enjoyed a lot being on the show," Rashami said.

The actress made her digital debut with the latest web series *Tandoor*.

Revealing details of her character in the series, Rashami said: "The name of my character is Palak who is an independent, fearless and strong minded woman."

"There are situations in the story and it is difficult to decide who is right and who is wrong. At the end some will feel it's the wife, some will feel it is the husband, while some will feel the main culprit is somebody else!" the actress informed, leaving viewers in suspense. IANS

Atibadi award conferred on Ramachandra Behera

ODISHA SAHITYA AKADEMI FELICITATED 15 OTHERS ON THE OCCASION AND PRESENTED THEM WITH CHEQUE OF Rs ONE LAKH EACH FOR THEIR CONTRIBUTION TO ODIA LITERATURE

Bhubaneswar: Noted novelist Ramachandra Behera was honoured with prestigious Atibadi Jagannath Das Puraskar of Odisha Sahitya Akademi for the year 2020 at Sanskruti Bhawan here, Wednesday.

Odia Language, Literature and Culture Minister Jyoti Prakash Panigrahi presented the award to Behera along with a cheque of Rs 5 lakh and a shawl.

Fifteen other litterateurs of the state were also felicitated on the occasion and they received cheque of Rs one lakh each for their contribution to Odia literature. They were Debendra Kumar



Ramachandra Behera (centre) along with other litterateurs posing for a photo-op at Sanskruti Bhawan, Wednesday

Das, Girija Shankar Sharma, Ashok Kumar Patnaik, Babaji Charan Patnaik, Baidhara Sahu, Jiban Krishna Mohapatra, Digaraj Brahma, Rudranarayan Prusty, Soubhagini Mishra, Swarajaxmi Mishra, Krupasindhu Nayak, Nirmalaprabha Nayak, Raseshwari Mishra, Radha Binod Nayak and Maheswara Mulia.

Among others, Commissioner-Secretary Culture Department Suresh Chandra Dalai, Director Ranjan Kumar Das and other senior officials were present at the event.

Ramachandra Behera is one among the few writers known for his literary works which depict 'the slice of life' in its natural form. Earlier he was honoured with many prestigious awards including the Kendra Sahitya Akademi, the State Sahitya Akademi, Katha Samman, Sarala Samman, Utkal Sahitya Samman, and others. PNM

PEANUTS



CALVIN AND HOBBS

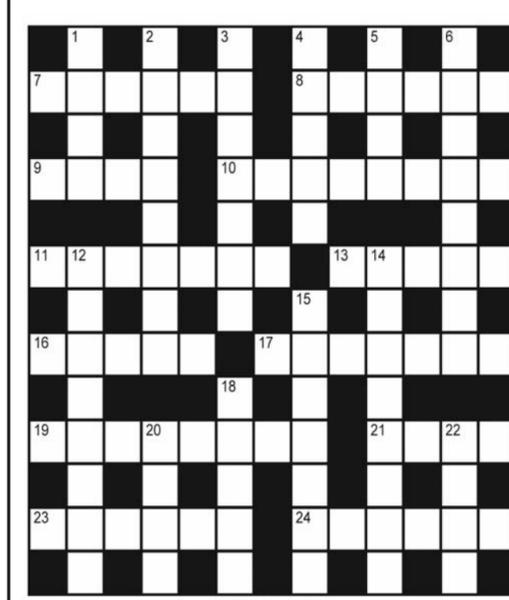


BREVITY



FUN post

CROSSWORD



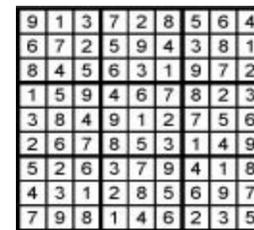
- Across**
- 7 Take your pick
 - 8 Gentle breeze
 - 9 Telescope part
 - 10 Feeler
 - 11 Soon
 - 13 Threshold
 - 16 Siesta
 - 17 To the point
 - 19 Bouffe
 - 21 Sensed
 - 23 Colouring tool
 - 24 Dress style
 - 5 Samoan capital
 - 6 Dangerous storms
 - 12 Chopper's spot
 - 14 Striped bass
 - 15 It can be smoked
 - 18 Grove of trees
 - 20 Some stingers
 - 22 Goldbrick
- Down**
- 1 Clarified butter
 - 2 Economise
 - 3 Tortoise, for one
 - 4 Thunderstorm product

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

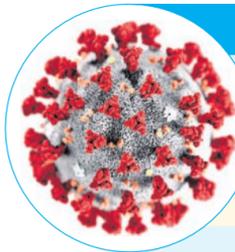


CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW



LOVE FOR DEITIES

A devotee from Bhubaneswar has donated three gold tongue cleaners for the presiding deities of Srimandir in Puri



COVID-19 TRACKER

	INFECTED	RECOVERED	DEAD
World	19,62,30,892	17,78,46,657	41,97,318
India	3,14,84,605	3,06,63,147	4,22,022
Odisha	9,72,517	9,51,049	5,703

SHGs clock ₹3,583cr biz in 2 years

A MISSION SHAKTI BAZAR TO COME UP AT STATE INSTITUTE OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT CAMPUS IN CITY

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 28: Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik has set a target to channelise government business worth ₹5,000 crore through women self-help groups (WSHGs) in five years. The business through WSHGs has reached ₹3,583.84 crore in the first two years (2019-20 and 2020-21).

Mission Shakti department has achieved of 71.67 per cent of the target in the first two years.

Mission Shakti secretary Sujata Karthikeyan revealed this at a high-level meeting held under the chairmanship of Chief Secretary SC Mahapatra on digital mode Wednesday.

Karthikeyan said that a target was fixed to have ₹5,000 crore of business through WSHGs in five years starting from the financial year 2019-20. Accordingly, there was a target to have a business worth ₹1,000 crore each year.

Beating the adversities of shutdown and lockdowns caused by Covid-19 pandemic, the total government business through WSHGs touched ₹1,411.82 crore in the financial year 2019-20 thereby recording an achievement of around 141 per cent. The business was achieved through



File photo of members of a self-help group stitching face masks

20, 449 WSHGs.

In the fiscal year 2020-21, the government business through WSHGs grew to ₹2,172.02 crore thereby boosting the achievement to more than 217 per cent. The number of WSHGs involved in government business also rose to 62,514 in the 2020-21 fiscal, she said.

Mahapatra directed the officials to explore new areas of part-

nership with WSHGs involving more number of groups. He also directed the officials to explore new projects in micro food processing, primary healthcare, pisciculture in village tanks, poultry, commercial vegetable cultivation and water supply among others. Power distribution companies have been asked to engage more WSHGs in meter reading and bill collection.

MISSION SHAKTI INITIATIVE

BEATING THE ADVERSITIES OF SHUTDOWNS AND LOCKDOWNS CAUSED BY COVID-19 PANDEMIC, THE TOTAL GOVERNMENT BUSINESS THROUGH WSHGs TOUCHED ₹1,411.82 CRORE IN THE FINANCIAL YEAR 2019-20 THEREBY RECORDING AN ACHIEVEMENT OF AROUND 141 PER CENT

POWER DISTRIBUTION COMPANIES HAVE BEEN ASKED TO ENGAGE MORE WSHGs IN METER READING AND BILL COLLECTION

It was decided in the meeting that a Mission Shakti Bazar would be set up in the campus of the State Institute of Rural Development (SIRD) in Bhubaneswar with its opening to the roadside to create round-the-year sales point for WSHG products. Mahapatra also asked the officials to explore the possibilities of opening more such counters at other prominent places.

THREADS OF AFFECTION



Retailers buying Rakhis from a wholesale shop at Choudhury Bazar in Cuttack ahead of the Raksha Bandhan festival, Wednesday

₹1cr shot in the arm for Mo Cycle

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 28: The Bhubaneswar Smart City, which was adjudged the second best city in the country for promotion of cycling-friendly initiative by the Centre Wednesday, will receive ₹1crore central assistance.

Inaugurated by the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA), the first season of India Cycles4Change Challenge saw 107 smart cities from across the country. Out of the top 25 cities that were shortlisted earlier this year, the jury selected top 11 cities for creative ideas to boost cycling.

While Bengaluru was rated the best city, Bhubaneswar was positioned second. This was followed by Chandigarh (Punjab and Haryana), Kohima (Nagaland), Nagpur (Maharashtra), New Town Kolkata (West Bengal), Pimpri Chinchwad (Maharashtra), Rajkot, Surat, Vadodra (Gujarat) and Warangal (Telangana). All these cities will receive an award of ₹1 crore each to scale up their cycling initiatives in their respective cities.

"It is indeed special that Bhubaneswar has been considered as the second best in terms of promoting cycling. We are going to promote cycling events regularly across the city during the second season and also popularise the Public Bicycle Sharing (PBS) initiative among the public to increase the ridership," said CEO Bhubaneswar Smart City Limited (BSCL) Sanjay Kumar Singh.

The event was attended by officials from Central and state governments, and other stakeholders from all cities participating in India Cycles4Change Challenge. The event also marked the release



■ Bhubaneswar was positioned second in the first season of India Cycles4Change

■ BMC authorities say they are going to promote cycling events regularly across the city during the second season and also popularise the Public Bicycle Sharing initiative

of the first Challenge report, and an online exhibition showcasing cities' cycling journey. The Ministry also announced the second season of the Challenge beginning in August, 2021, wherein fresh applications will be invited from all smart cities, capital cities of states/UTs and all cities that have an established Municipal Corporations.

However, looking at the dwindling ridership in the city, experts are skeptical about the city's achievement this time.

"The PBS under Mo Cycle scheme is in the doldrums. While riders are losing interest in cycling due to lack of dedicated tracks, the run-in between authorities and cycle agencies has made the situation worse," said Sameer Mohanty, an urban planner here.

Land hurdle delayed electric loco workshop in Kalahandi: Rly Min

POST NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi, July 28: The Union Railway Ministry Wednesday said that the electric loco periodical overhauling workshop project at Kalahandi, an aspirational district in the state, is being delayed due to unavailability of land for the project.

The state govt has handed over 141.07 acres of land to the Railways against the requirement of 328.35 acres, says Vaishnav

In response to a question asked by Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) MP Basanta Kumar Panda in the Lok Sabha regarding implementation of Electric Loco Periodical Workshop, the Union Railway Ministry said that the land required for the workshop is to be provided by the state government. The state government has handed over 141.07 acres of land in four patches to the Railways, though there is a requirement of 328.35 acres of land for setting up of the

Expedite Rayagada rly division work: BJD

Biju Janata Dal (BJD) MP Nekkanti Bhaskar Rao Wednesday met Union Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnav and urged him to take steps regarding infrastructure development for Rayagada railway division. The Rajya Sabha MP submitted a memorandum to Vaishnav stating that the Ministry of Railways had made an announcement that Rayagada would become a railway division but no such developmental work has been undertaken so far. He said

that the ministry should take appropriate measures for the implementation of this project for the socio-economic development of the area.

The BJD MP said that the development of Rayagada railway division is a necessity in the light of recent industrial projects coming up in Odisha.

Significantly, BJD MP Sujeet Kumar also requested the Railway Minister to take steps to lay new railway lines and modernise railway infrastructure in the KBB region.

workshop and rail connectivity, the ministry said.

The BJD MP from Kalahandi urged Union Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnav to implement the workshop project without any delay as almost half of the required land has been acquired.

In response, Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnav said the project is being taken up on priority basis and acquired land is being surveyed. He further said that there are some forest clearance issues which

are being addressed.

"We hope to get the required land for swift implementation of the project. The work will progress once complete land is handed over," he adds.

Significantly, 'Electric Loco Periodical Overhauling Workshop' project at Kalahandi has been sanctioned in Budget 2017-18 with estimated cost of ₹186.37 crore. The workshop was supposed to be set up on the land provided by the state government.

CUO Vice-Chancellor passes away at 67



POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 28: Vice-Chancellor of Central University of Odisha (CUO), Koraput Prof. I. Ramabrahmam passed away in Hyderabad Wednesday. He was 67.

Ramabrahmam was under treatment at Indo-American Hospital, Hyderabad since July 12, 2021 for treatment of lungs cancer due to post-Covid complication. He had joined the CUO as the VC in 2019.

He breathed his last at 4:20pm Wednesday. His wife Laxmi Ramabrahmam and all family members were present at the Hospital.

Owing to his ill health, Sharat Kumar Palita was holding the charge as the Vice-Chancellor of the CUO.

A condolence meeting was organised at the university in honour of the departed soul under the chairmanship of Palita. A two-minute silence was observed by the faculty and staffers of the university. The varsity flag was kept half mast to pay last respect to the departed soul.

Med colleges to reopen soon

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 28: The state Health department Wednesday said that it has planned to reopen medical colleges and other institutions of teaching like nursing, pharmacy, physiotherapy and occupational therapy. However, no date has been finalised as yet.



The department Wednesday issued the notification and detailed guidelines for the same. Chief of Directorate of Medical Education and Training (DMET) CBK Mohanty said that more details will be out on the exact reopening date after some planning in the next few days.

As per the norms, the government would continue the theory classes online and only practical classes with 50 per cent attendance would be allowed. It has also talked about segregation of vaccinated and non-vaccinated students, conduct of examinations amid Covid protocols among others.



An artisan shapes clay idols of Lord Ganesha in Kumbhar Sahi area of Cuttack, Wednesday

OP PHOTO

REDEVELOPMENT PLAN

Aesthetic lighting, swanky signage at Berhampur rly station on cards

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 28: East Coast Railway (ECoR) General Manager Vidya Bhushan inspected Berhampur Railway Station Wednesday and took stock of the various passenger amenities and facilities required to be developed as part of the station redevelopment plan.

Addressing the media, ECoR GM Vidya Bhushan said that Berhampur railway station will be developed and provided with modern facilities. The station will be developed with aesthetic lighting, swanky signage and improved passenger amenities including waiting hall. More amenities will be provided to the travelling public. Apart from this, circulating area will also be developed and beautified.

Bhushan stated that due to Covid protocols all regular trains have been cancelled and special trains are now running to ferry passengers during emergency. ECoR is in constant touch with the state government over this issue. Keeping in view the situation during Covid



ECoR GM Vidya Bhushan and other officials visit Berhampur railway station

pandemic and as per the advice of Odisha government, more trains will be made operational.

To a query regarding Berhampur-Phulbani railway line, the general manager said that the rate of return of the project would be estimated by the survey committee. And a decision would be accordingly. To a query on provision of a terminal point at Berhampur, the GM clarified that it is not feasible in the current scenario.

The Ministry of Railways has

granted approval for undertaking pre-investment activities for Brahampur-Sambalpur new railway line which will be constructed by Odisha Rail Infrastructure Development Limited (ORIDL).

Earlier, Bhushan had inspected Bhubaneswar railway station and took stock of various passenger amenities and facilities required to be developed as part of the station redevelopment plan. Capital railway station will be developed into a world class station.

Covid +vity rate dips to 2.16%

ODISHA LOGS 1,703 FRESH CORONAVIRUS CASES, 69 FATALITIES

PNN & AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, July 28: Odisha's Covid-19 tally rose to 9,72,517 Wednesday as 1,703 more people tested positive for the infection, while 69 fresh fatalities pushed the coastal state's coronavirus death toll to 5,703, a Health official said.

The daily test positivity rate (TPR) further dipped to 2.16 per cent from 2.59 per cent Tuesday.

As many as 988 new cases were reported in quarantine centres, while 715 infections were detected during contact tracing, said the official.

Khurda district, under which Bhubaneswar falls, registered the highest number of new cases at 386, followed by Cuttack (240), Kendrapara (149) and Puri (139).

While 26 other districts reported cases in double digits, Bolangir, Nuapada and Gajapati recorded three fresh infections each, the lowest in the state.

For the third time, Odisha reported the highest number of 69



FIGURES SAY IT ALL

IN TERMS OF ACTIVE CASES, ONLY KHURDA COMES IN THE RED ZONE WITH 4,509 ACTIVE CASES, WHILE CUTTACK (2,193), JAJPUR (1,037) AND BALASORE (2,117) ARE IN THE YELLOW ZONE, AND THE REMAINING 26 DISTRICTS ARE IN THE GREEN ZONE

State has tested over 1.57 crore samples for the deadly infection, including 78,740 Tuesday

The cumulative positivity rate stands at 6.15 per cent

Khurda continues to report a high positivity rate of 6.7%, followed by Cuttack (6.2%) and Kendrapara (5.8%). The three districts have been categorised as yellow zones, while 27 other districts that have TPR below five per cent are in the green zone

patients have died due to comorbidities to date.

Odisha has tested over 1.57 crore samples for Covid-19, including 78,740 Tuesday. The cumulative positivity rate stands at 6.15 per cent.

Despite a dip in daily TPR, Khurda continues to report a high positivity rate of 6.7 per cent, followed by Cuttack (6.2 per cent) and Kendrapara (5.8 per cent). The three districts have been categorised as yellow zones, while 27 other districts that have TPR below five per cent are in the green zone.

In terms of active cases, only Khurda comes in the red zone with 4,509 active cases, while Cuttack (2,193), Jajpur (1,037) and Balasore (2,117) are in the yellow zone, and the remaining 26 districts are in the green zone, an official said.

Districts with more than 2,500 active cases come under the red zone, those with active cases between 1,000 and 2,500 are in the yellow zone, and the ones with less than 1,000 active cases are in the green zone.

FOR A CATCH



Fishermen preparing for the day at Naraj in Cuttack, Wednesday

OP PHOTO

CBI raids 15 locations in coal mining scam

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 28: The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) Wednesday conducted searches at 15 locations in Odisha, West Bengal and Uttar Pradesh in connection with an on-going investigation of a case pertaining to illegal mining.

The searches were carried out on the premises of then officials of Eastern Coalfield Limited (ECL), including two GMs (one present and another retired), Manager (Security), Inspector (Security) and Colliery Agent.

Around Rs 20 lakh, jewellery and property documents were recovered from the premises of incumbent GM. Besides, property documents, locker key and incriminating documents were recovered from the possession of one accused, said a source.

The agency had registered a case in November 27, 2020 against six accused and unknown others on the allegations of illegal mining and theft of coal in the leasehold areas of ECL, Asansol and its adjoining private land.

Students' attendance to be uploaded on SAMS

Bhubaneswar: Directorate of Higher Secondary Education, Odisha has asked the principals of all junior colleges in the state to upload attendance of Plus II students on SAMS by 4pm every day and warned of action in case of default. In a letter to the principals of all the higher secondary schools of the state it was said that a new attendance module will be implemented in the e-space to collect daily attendance of Class XI and XII students.

Heavy to very heavy rain likely today: IMD

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 28: The regional office of the India Meteorological Department (IMD) Wednesday said that heavy to very heavy rain is likely to lash several parts of the state Thursday.

The IMD, in its evening bulletin Thursday, said, "Heavy to very heavy rainfall is very likely to occur at one or two places over the districts of Sundargarh, Keonjhar and Mayurbhanj while heavy rainfall is very likely to occur at one or two places over the districts of Deogarh, Angul, Sambalpur, Sonepur, Bargarh, Jharsuguda and Dhenkanal."

It also added, "Light to moderate rain or thundershower is very likely to occur at most places over the districts of Odisha."

The department also issued warning of heavy to very heavy rain for Friday. It said, "Heavy to very heavy rainfall is very likely to occur at one or two places over the districts of Sundargarh, Jharsuguda, Bargarh and Sambalpur while heavy rainfall is very likely to occur at one or two places over the districts of Nuapada, Bolangir, Sonepur and Keonjhar."

The department said that light to moderate rain could also occur at a few places Friday.

The Met department, meanwhile, said that a well-marked low pres-

sure area persists over coastal Bangladesh and adjoining West Bengal. The associated cyclonic circulation is likely to move westwards across West Bengal, Jharkhand and Bihar during next 48 hours.

The weatherman said that cloudy sky and one or two spells of rains could occur in Capital city Thursday while maximum temperature could go upto 30 degrees Celsius. The Met department has also issued warning to fishermen and asked them to not venture into deep sea till July 30. The department said that squally weather with surface wind speed of 40kmph to 50kmph could be seen in north Bay of Bengal and off Odisha coasts.

The department said that in the last 24 hours the cumulative rainfall in the state stood at 11.1mm. Several districts like Cuttack, Khurda, Puri, Bolangir, Nabarangpur and others received deficit rainfall.

CS, 5T Secy take stock of health infra in two southern districts

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 28: Chief Secretary SC Mahapatra and 5T Secretary VK Pandian Wednesday visited Koraput and Nabarangpur districts to take stock of the preparation for dealing with a possible third of Covid-19 pandemic.

The Collectors of both the districts briefed the Chief Secretary and 5T Secretary on the Covid-19 situation and preparation for a possible third wave.

The Collectors were asked to complete the PSA and liquid medical oxygen plant projects in the two districts by August.

The two senior officials reviewed the progress of various development projects in the district with focus on health, education and irrigation.

The officials inspected the construction work of the 650-bed hospital in SLN Medical College and Hospital at Koraput. The 5T Secretary suggested that amenities for patients should get priority and facilities like attendant sheds, food courts and parking arrangements should get due importance. A target has been set to complete the project work by 2023.

The officials also visited the district headquarters (DHH) hospital in Nabarangpur and inspected the construction work for the 200-bed building. The engineers were



Chief Secretary SC Mahapatra and 5T Secretary VK Pandian, along with other officials, take stock of the preparations for dealing with a possible third wave of pandemic

asked to ensure quality in construction and timely completion of the project. The Chief Secretary and the 5T Secretary reviewed the progress of the proposed mega lift irrigation project with an underground pipeline system in Indravati River. This project will irrigate 22,000 hectare land in Nabarangpur, Nandahandi and Tentulikhunti blocks, sources said.

The work of Turi-Guntat irrigation project was also reviewed by the two senior officers. The project will irrigate 9,135 hectare in Nabarangpur and Kosagumuda blocks. The officials concerned were directed to prepare the DPRs for both the projects on priority basis.

The team visited the construction site of a low-height storage structure across river Indr vati at Bangalaguda and a mega lift irrigation project at Daibhata in

Nabarangpur. The officials visited RCD Government Nodal High School at Nabarangpur and Government Girls High School at Koraput. As part of the high school transformation programme under the 5T initiative, many high schools have been taken up for the project with active participation of the alumni, teachers, parents and students.

Mahapatra and Pandian interacted with the teachers, alumni and students. They visited the smart classrooms, libraries, dining halls, ICT Labs playgrounds and toilets constructed under the initiative.

The Chief Secretary also reviewed the airstrip work at Jeypore. The project work includes expansion of the runway and upgradation of the terminal building. Mahapatra said that the commercial flight service to Jeypore is expected to begin soon.

2.1CR SAPPLINGS PLANTED: MIN

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 28: The Forest department has undertaken afforestation in around 65,615 hectare of land by planting nearly 2.10 crore saplings between June 1 and July 27.

The department has proposed to take up the plantation programme in an area of 1,50,000 ha under different schemes including 50,000 ha under MGNREGS during the current planting season. However, in view of deficit rainfall of 21 per cent, it was informed that plantations have been undertaken in 65,615 hectare.

In addition, nearly 76.6 lakh of seedlings have been distributed among the people and several organisations.

Forest, Environment & Climate Change Minister Bikram Keshari Arukha chaired the DFO's conference in this regard through virtual mode from Lok Seva Bhawan here Wednesday.

Arukha stressed upon the 5T & Mo Sarkar programme to be used in various activities undertaken by Forest department.

He emphasised on bringing the transparency to obtain the trust of the general public.

The department has kept a financial target of Rs 901 crore under MGNREGS.

Proposals worth Rs 500 crore were submitted, out of which Rs 70 crore has been spent generating around 18 lakh man days.

HC seeks report on doorstep vaccination of senior citizens

POST NEWS NETWORK

Cuttack, July 28: The Orissa High Court Wednesday directed the state government to file a report on the vaccination of senior citizens and differently-abled people against Covid-19 at their doorsteps.

A division bench of Chief Justice S Muralidhar and Justice BP Routray pronounced the order while hearing a PIL. The next hearing of the case has been posted to September 7.

As per the order, the Health department would submit an affidavit by August 31 mentioning the number of senior citizens and differently-abled persons who have been vaccinated at their doorsteps.

Moreover, the Health department has been asked to inform the court regarding the steps taken by the state government to vaccinate people who do not have the required identity cards.

Cong slams state, Centre for tardy pace of vax

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 28: The state unit of Congress Wednesday attacked the Union government as well as the state government for the slow pace of vaccination drive in the state.

Party leaders Amiya Pandav and Rajni Mohanty claimed that the target of vaccinating all persons above 18 years by the end of December this year could not be received with the current pace of vaccination drive.

"According to the government, there are 104 crore people over the age of 18 across the country and they need 216 crore doses of vaccines. To date, only 45 crore people have been vaccinated. Of these, only 4 crore people received double doses while 34 crore people received single doses," Pandav said.

He also added that the public had been worried about how the remaining ₹ 181 crore will be paid in the next five months. "With an average of only 40-45 lakh doses a day, how can this be done," he



The Congress leaders also raked up the issue of wastage of vaccines allocated to the state due to lesser intake by the private hospitals

asked. The leaders also raked up the issue of wastage of vaccines allocated to the state due to lesser intake by the private hospitals in the state.

He accused the state government of keeping quiet on such important issue.

Dharmendra for preservation of Swapneswar Mahadev Temple

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, July 28: Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan has urged his Cabinet colleague and Culture Minister G Kishan Reddy to direct the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) to undertake the preservation of Swapneswar Mahadev Temple and other heritage monuments recently found in Ratnachira valley in Puri district.

Pradhan, in a letter to Reddy Tuesday, said, "Keeping in mind the immense historical, spiritual and socio-cultural importance of the Swapneswar Mahadev Temple and heritage monuments in Ratnachira valley, I seek your personal intervention in directing the ASI to undertake all possible measures for preservation of this ancient temple and also documentation and conservation of other heritage monuments in Ratnachira valley."

The Union Education minister said the temple was estimated to be 1,300-1,400 years old and one of the best-preserved examples of early Kalingan architecture in the region.

The Indian National Trust for Art and Cultural Heritage (INTACH) had unearthed the ruins of the temple at Biropurusottampur in Pipli area, around 40 km north of Puri city.

The team found the structure, which can be one of the earliest temples of the post-Gupta period and may date back to the 6th-7th century Common Era, during a survey of the Ratnachira valley and its monuments.



Pradhan sought personal intervention of Reddy in directing the ASI to undertake all possible measures for preservation of Swapneswar Mahadev Temple

"Ratnachira Valley is a gold mine of ancient Kalingan monuments, most of which were undocumented till recently," Pradhan said.

Legend has it that Lord Rama had drawn the Ratnachira River to quench Goddess Sita's thirst, using her pearl ring to chart its course, according to the Union Education minister.

The temple is locally revered as Swapneswar Mahadev and dedicated to Lord Shiva, he said, but added, "I am distressed to learn that the temple structure is in a precarious state and in need of immediate preservation measures."

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Ahead of panchayat polls, BYJD rolls out digital membership drive

Baliapal, July 28: Keeping in view the upcoming panchayat elections, the Biju Yuba Janata Dal (BYJD) has pulled up its socks and started broadening its organisational base across Balasore. The ruling party has initiated a new strategy to increase members at the grassroots level so as to win the panchayat elections.

The party launched its digital membership drive at the ward level in Baliapal block Wednesday. It was said that the drive is aimed at regaining the posts of sarpanchs, samiti members and zilla parishad members in the constituency.

The Biju Yuba Janata Dal (Baliapal unit) held the first meeting of its executive committee at Parulia Wednesday. It was presided over by president of the BYJD's Baliapal unit Sanjay Pradhan. Simultaneously, the BJD youth unit rolled out its digital mem-



bership drive. The meeting was attended by executive president of State Biju Mahila Janata Dal Subasini Jena, Basta MLA Nityananda Sahu, BYJD district unit president Tapas Parida and secretary of the BJD's district digital unit Abinash Nayak.

Scores of other leaders, sarpanchs, samiti members and zilla parishad members were present at the meeting.

Addressing the meeting, senior leaders underscored the need to induct more youths into the party fold through digital platforms to consolidate the party's base ahead of the panchayat polls.

Take action against lady cop: NHRC to SP

Kendrapara, July 28: The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) has directed the Kendrapara superintendent of police (SP) to take appropriate action against a lady constable for allegedly slapping and manhandling a web reporter earlier this month.

While hearing a plea filed by rights activist Sagar Kumar Jena, the apex rights body directed the SP to take the action within eight weeks and inform the complainant about the action taken in the matter.

In his petition filed July 22, Jena had informed the NHRC that Bhimasen Sethy, a web reporter, had July 21 gone to cover an agitation by BJP activists in front of the SP office.

"While covering the agitation, Sethy clicked the photograph of lady constable Pinu Nayak, who was on duty there without wear-

ing a mask. Sethy posted it on social media. A peeved Nayak slapped the reporter in front of police as well as BJP leaders and abused him in filthy language," the petitioner said.

The rights activist urged the Commission to direct the Chief Secretary to collect Rs 2 lakh from the lady constable and pay it to the reporter, initiate action against her and submit an action taken report within four weeks.

The SP has already ordered a DSP-level probe into the incident on the direction of IGP (CR). Meanwhile, journalists' associations from several districts, human rights activists, social activists, leaders of the Congress and the BJP have condemned the action of the lady constable.

In a memorandum to the Chief Minister, the mediapersons have demanded stern action against the errant cop.

Notably, the incident had sparked sharp unrest among journalists



as irate scribes locked up five BJD MLAs at the district collector's office July 22 here demanding action against the lady cop.

The journalists detained Mahakalapara MLA Atanu Sabyasachi Nayak, Kendrapara MLA Sashi Bhusan Behera, Patkura MLA Sabitri Agrawal, Rajnagar MLA Dhruva Charan

Sahoo and Aul MLA Pratap Keshari Deb. They refused to let them go and also demanded that all the three cops present during the assault must be suspended.

The legislators had come to the district collectorate to attend a virtual meeting on construction of an inter-district water reservoir at Kujang in Jagatsinghpur dis-

trict on the Mahanadi river. The journalists released the MLAs when district administration officials assured disciplinary action against the policewoman.

The journalists had also met Collector Amrit Raturaj at his residential office and submitted a memorandum demanding suspension of the concerned cops.

Racket adulterating foreign liquor busted, 5 arrested

Aska, July 28: Police Wednesday busted a racket that adulterated branded foreign liquor at Dhanapurna village in Ganjam district and arrested five persons in that connection.

The accused allegedly manufactured duplicate liquor, filled them in bottles of expensive brands and supplied them in and around district sources said.

According to reports, the Gangpur police had earlier seized a car carrying a huge quantity of liquor at a check post near Gangpur and arrested the driver. The police came to know about the racket following interrogations of the driver.



Acting on the tip-off, a special squad conducted raids at the counterfeit liquor production unit and nabbed the accused while they were busy manufacturing the fake spirit. They were produced in court Wednesday. Huge quantities of liquor, spirit, fake stickers and other materials were seized from the manufacturing unit.

"The team seized 152 litres of fake Foreign Liquor (FL), spirit bottles, lid caps and labels. As many as five mobile phones, Rs 3,000 and a car have been seized from the spot. Further investigation into the incident is underway," said Bhanjanagar Sub Divisional Police Officer (SDPO) Subhansu Sekhar Mishra.

Earlier in February this year, the excise department had busted another fake liquor manufacturing unit at Truptinagar under the Bada Bazaar police limits with arrest of five persons.

TOUGH RIDE



A biker trying to negotiate a culvert which is in bad shape following heavy rain. His bike has sunk in the muddy road near Biriguda village under Dasamantpur block in Koraput district, Wednesday

Locals, ambulance staff carry patient for 3 km

The bad shape of the road has resulted from the ongoing construction work of a drinking water project under Basudha Yojana at Bhirkapada. The road has been dug out to lay underground pipelines

Saintala, July 28: In a shocking incident, a patient was carried by locals and ambulance staff for 3 km as the ambulance could not access a village due to bad shape of the road in Saintala area of Bolangir district Wednesday.

According to reports, Prasanna Chhatria (48) of Bhirkapada was down with fever with stomachache. His family members sought service of 108 ambulance at 8.30 am. Worried, the family members kept on waiting for the ambulance to reach the doorstep.

The road to the village is in bad shape and the ambulance could not move forward and remained stuck 3 km away from the village.

The staff of the ambulance went to the village with a stretcher. Some locals volunteered to help the ambulance staff to carry the patient to the ambulance. Later, the patient was admitted to Saintala CHC.

Villagers blamed the bad shape of the road on the ongoing construction work for a drinking water project.

Under Basudha Yojana, both



sides of the road from the main road to Bhirkapada have been dug out to lay underground pipelines of the drinking water project.

The project work has been left halfway done, locals alleged, pointing out that the contractor had dumped earth on the road making it difficult for people to commute on it, let alone access for the ambulance.

Due to bad shape of the road, accidents happen almost regularly, locals lamented.

Man, son end life in Mayurbhanj

Saraskana, July 28: A man allegedly committed suicide after his son ended life in Jharpokharia area of Mayurbhanj district Wednesday. The deceased were identified as Lal Mohan Mohant (70) and his son Raju Mohant (32).

According to reports, Raju was found hanging inside his house with a saree. His father was also

found dead in the house. It was suspected that the septuagenarian was shocked over his son's death and took the extreme step. It may be noted here that eight months ago, another son of Lal Mohan had committed suicide. However, reasons of the suicides have not been known. Jharpokharia police started an investigation into the case with a scientific team. The bodies were sent for post mortem.

Boy mentally ill after missing online game

Keonjhar, July 28: In a rare case, a Class X student from Keonjhar district became mentally ill after he failed to get a chance to play online game Free Fire as his mobile phone went out of order.

The incident took place in Akhuapal village in Harichandrapur

area of the district. As per reports, the 15-year old son of Kuanr Khanda of Akhuapal village studies in Class X at Manoharpur High School.

The boy was attending online classes as physical classes have been stopped due to the pandemic. His father had bought a mobile phone for his son so that he can attend to his online classes.

14 Hirakud gates opened

Sambalpur, July 28: Amid rains in the upper catchment areas, the authorities of the Hirakud Dam Reservoir (HDR) Wednesday started releasing water through 14 sluice gates. The water level stood at 607.18 ft against the full reservoir level (FRL) of 630 ft.

The outflow of water was 2,04,800 cusec at 6 pm Wednesday. 16, 555 cusec of water flows through power channel while 3,755 cusec of water is being released for agriculture. Besides, 272 cuses of water is being released for industries. The inflow of water per second into the reservoir was 85,750 cusec. As per information, the inflow of water into the reservoir has decreased since rainfall in the upper catchment is

falling by the day.

The inflow was 1.02 lakh cusec Tuesday. The flow has come down. The water level in the reservoir has dipped. The water level was 609.04 ft and it came down to 607.17 Wednesday.

Closure of fish seeds centre leaves farmers high 'n' dry

Kotpad, July 28: Abrupt closure of a fish seed production centre here in Koraput district has hit hard prospective fish farmers in the area, a report said.

As a result, they have to depend on neighbouring Chhattisgarh or outside of the district to procure their quotas of seeds for fish farming. In the absence of any alternative, many people who regularly carry out fish cultivation have switched to cultivation of paddy, maize, millets and various pulses due to unavailability of the seeds.

This has happened as the lone fish seeds production centre in the area lay closed for several years. The centre has been locked up and lying in a shabby condition. The authorities have also forgotten to take up its maintenance.

Sources said that the fish production centre produced quality fish seeds and supplied them as per requirement at subsidized prices through a tender process. However, the centre was soon closed down due to various reasons.

According to reports, each panchayat under Kotpad block has one to two ponds which are used for fish cultivation by villagers. Fingerlings and fish seeds are released into the pond and harvested after they grow up. However, the



Fish production centre used to produce quality fish seeds and supply them as per requirement at subsidized prices through a tender process. The centre was soon closed down due to various reasons.

Each panchayat under Kotpad block has one to two ponds which are used for fish cultivation by the villagers. Many farmers used to make good earnings from fish farming in the area. The closure of the centre has put the farmers in a fix

said a proposal for renovation of the centre has been sent to the state government for its approval. It will be renovated after the state government gives its approval for reopening the centre.

Fisheries officer Rashmita Sahani tried to ward off a question on closure of the centre stating that the district fisheries officer can better explain why the fish production centre was closed down.

A senior official of the department

PUBLIC NOTICE

This is to inform that our Hotel Building project at Plot no. 164, Mouza - Gopabandhu Nagar, Bhubaneswar has been accorded Environmental Clearance. The copies of clearance letters are available with Odisha State Pollution Control Board and may also be seen on the website of the Ministry of Environment and Forests at <http://www.envfor.nic.in>

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e-Procurement Notice
Bid Identification No. ITDAMKG-04/2021-22

1. The Project Administrator, ITDA, Malkangiri on behalf of Governor of Odisha invites Percentage Rate bids through online mode in Double Cover System for the type of works given in the table, from the eligible contractors of Class (D Class / C Class) or of equivalent range registered with the State Governments and Central Government / MES / Railways for execution of building work. The proof of registration from the appropriate authority shall be enclosed along with the bid. The successful bidder who has not registered under State Government has to register under the State PWD in appropriate class of eligibility before signing of the agreement. The bid should be submitted only online on the website www.tendersodisha.gov.in

Name / Type of works	1) Construction of Boundary wall, gate & beautification of worship place at 1) Mandiabhta, 2) Kanyamajhibannda in Malkangiri Block
No. of works	2 Nos. (Two)
Amount put to tender	As laid down in the DTCN
Tender paper cost	As laid down in the DTCN
E.M.D. amount required	Bid securing declaration in the prescribed format.
Period of completion	As laid down in the DTCN for each work.
Date & time of availability of bid document in the portal	From 1.00 P.M. of 28.07.2021 to 16.08.2021 upto 5.30 P.M.
Last date / time for receipt of bid in the portal	From 1.00 P.M. of 28.07.2021 to 16.08.2021 upto 5.30 P.M.
Last date / time for submission of paper cost & documents	From 10.00 A.M. of 17.08.2021 to 19.08.2021 upto 5.30 P.M. (During office hours in working days)
Date of opening of tender	23.08.2021 (At 11.00 A.M.)

Further details can be seen from the e-procurement portal www.tendersodisha.gov.in
Sd/- Project Administrator, ITDA, Malkangiri

EAST COAST RAILWAY

PUBLIC NOTICE FOR CLOSURE OF MANNED LEVEL CROSSING GATE BETWEEN GANGADHARPUR AND SILARI

Sl. No.	Route	Between Station	L.C No.	Rly. Km.	Class (M/UM)	Year of census	Train Vehicles Unit
1	B	Gangadharpur-Silari	248	516/41-517/1	'C' Class (M)	Oct. 2018	9283

Reason for closure : Construction of connecting road from LC No. 248 to 247. Permitted by Collector / Khurda, vide letter no. 13082/Judl., dtd.16.08.2018. Administrative approval of Principal Chief Engineer / East Coast Railway / Bhubaneswar has also accorded vide letter no. W4/351(A)/June 2021/1, Dtd.24.06.2021.

This is for the information to all concerned.
PR-238/M/21-22] Sr. Divisional Engineer (South), Khurda Road

GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA No. B-252

**OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER
PARALAKHEMUNDI (R&B) DIVISION, PARALAKHEMUNDI**

TENDER CALL NOTICE
Bid Identification No.E.E., PKD. R&B DIVN. - 04/2021-22

1. The Executive Engineer, Paralakhemundi (R&B) Division on behalf of Governor of Odisha Invites Percentage rate bid in Single cover system to be received in on ONLINE MODE only for the construction of works as mentioned below:

2. Nature of the work	El works
3. Approximate estimated cost	Rs.19.97 Lakhs
4. No. of works	(1) One number only
5. Tender paper cost (online)	Rs.6000/-
6. Class of Contractor	"HT" class / "EHT" class
7. Availability of Bid documents in the website	From dt: 06.08.2021 (10.00 AM) to 12.08.2021 (05.00 PM)
8. Date of Opening of Bid	13.08.2021 at 12.00 Noon

9. The bidders have to participate in ONLINE bidding only. Further details can be seen from the website <http://tendersorissa.gov.in>. Any Addendum /Corrigendum/Cancellation of tender can also be seen in the said website. The authority reserves the right to reject any or all bids without assigning any reason thereof.

Executive Engineer, Paralakhemundi (R&B) Division
OIPR-34065/11/0004/2122

FOCUS MULTICULTURALISM

GLOBALISATION STRIKES BACK



The still-raging pandemic and climate-related disasters worldwide demonstrate the woeful inadequacy of efforts to address the problematic aspects of globalisation. The so-called international community has again shown itself to be anything but a community

at all costs, and are unable or unwilling to adopt energy paths that will meaningfully reduce their contribution to climate change. It remains to be seen whether there is the will to adopt tariffs that raise the prices of goods made in factories fueled by coal, or to impose sanctions against governments that refuse to stop the destruction of rainforests that absorb carbon dioxide. Also to be determined is whether wealthier countries are prepared to make available the funds and technologies that poorer countries need to shift to a greener energy mix.

At the same time, focusing on slowing the rate of climate change, however necessary, is insufficient. A good deal of climate change has already happened, and more will happen regardless of what is decided in Glasgow. Efforts to adapt to existing or inevitable effects of climate change, to make cities and rural areas alike better able to withstand pervasive heat and sprawling wildfires, more frequent storms and floods, and more severe drought, will also be needed. Resilience will be as important as prevention.

Lastly, we must accelerate both the development and regulation of new technologies that promise to remove CO2 from the atmosphere or reflect sunlight away from Earth. Such potential responses to climate change are unproven and controversial. But if the collective failure to deal with Covid-19 is any indication, we had better be prepared to consider them sooner rather than later. There is no escape from globalization; the only question is whether and how we choose to manage it.

The writer is the President of the Council on Foreign Relations, previously served as Director of Policy Planning for the US State Department (2001-2003), and was President George W Bush's special envoy to Northern Ireland and Coordinator for the Future of Afghanistan.

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The summer of 2021 has come to be largely defined by the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic and accelerating climate change. Both are manifestations of globalisation and the reality of a world increasingly defined by the vast and fast cross-border flows of just about everything, from goods, services, and capital to data, terrorists, and disease.

Little nowadays stays local for long. The lethal coronavirus that first appeared in Wuhan, China did not remain there, and greenhouse gases emitted anywhere warm the atmosphere and ocean everywhere.

These two crises demonstrate the woeful inadequacy of efforts to address the problematic aspects of globalization. The so-called international community has again shown itself to be anything but a community. The supply of Covid-19 vaccines is billions of doses short of what is needed. The funds to pay for global immunisation are likewise billions of dollars short. Governments are putting their countries first, even though fast-spreading variants are emerging in under-vaccinated populations elsewhere and are indifferent to political borders.

As a result, the pandemic remains an intense threat. The death toll thus far is said to be over four million, but the real figure is several times higher, owing to flawed reporting systems and to deliberate undercounting by populist leaders in Brazil, India, Hungary, Russia, and elsewhere. The economic consequences are likewise substantial, with the pandemic estimated to have reduced global GDP by over 3%. Approximately 100 million people have fallen back into extreme poverty. Inequality between and within countries has spiked.

What makes these developments all the more frustrating is that we know what to do about Covid-19 and possess the means to do it. Several safe and extraordinarily effective vaccines exist. What remains to be done is to scale up production to

meet global demand.

In some countries, such as the United States, what needs doing is the opposite: to increase demand to meet the available supply. Vaccine hesitancy, fueled by partisan politics or misinformation circulating on social media, television, and talk radio, has become dangerously widespread. If vaccination were complemented by public-health measures known to slow the spread of disease – masking, social distancing, readily available and accurate testing and contact tracing, and quarantining – there would be far fewer and less severe infections and the pandemic as we know it would fade away.

The effects of the other crisis, climate change, have arrived sooner than many anticipated. For years, the tendency has been to put off any concerted response to the threat, despite clear and growing evidence that the planet is warming. As is often the case, the urgent crowded out the important. But the summer of 2021 is showing that climate change

is both important and urgent.

Its effects are many. In the US, wildfires in the West rage out of control as the temperature climbs, and smog has blanketed swaths of the country. Europe and China are the scenes of massive flooding. In Africa, Latin America, and the Middle East, there are signs of prolonged drought. The loss of life has been relatively modest, but it could well grow. Economic effects will likewise mount. The number of people who are being internally displaced or forced to migrate is rising sharply as large tracts of territory become inhospitable to human life.

There is much talk about how to slow or stop climate change, but it is mostly just that. The United Nations climate-change conference (COP26) in Glasgow in November will continue to emphasize an approach whereby individual countries offer voluntary commitments to reduce their emissions.

This is important, but it is obvious that many countries are focused more on economic growth



Richard Haas

THE SUMMER OF 2021 HAS COME TO BE LARGELY DEFINED BY THE ONGOING COVID-19 PANDEMIC AND ACCELERATING CLIMATE CHANGE. BOTH ARE MANIFESTATIONS OF GLOBALISATION



Paul Gruenwald

The new economics of growth no longer regards the environment as external to the economy. Rather, the economy is embedded in the environment, and can prosper and grow sustainably only as long as we manage nature wisely

What the soul sees and has experienced, that it knows; the rest is appearance, prejudice and opinion.

SRI AUROBINDO



Green Growth

Research into economic growth has a long and distinguished history, but the recent introduction of sustainability into the debate has given the field a necessary and overdue shake-up. In particular, a report on the economics of biodiversity, commissioned by the UK government and led by Partha Dasgupta of the University of Cambridge, represents a tectonic shift in thinking, rather than only a logical extension of previous growth models. While this may be unsettling to some, it provides a great opportunity to use the power of data and analytics to put growth and finance on a more sustainable path.

In a nutshell, the new economics of growth no longer regards the environment as external to the economy. Rather, the economy is embedded in the environment, and can prosper and grow sustainably only as long as we manage nature wisely. While some “exploitation” of the environment is possible, there exists a tipping point beyond which it can never recover.

There is thus a new bottom line for thinking about growth. Bigger is no longer better; nowadays, sustainable is better. Previous growth models regarded the accumulation of human and physical capital – through education and training, and investment in plant, equipment, and infrastructure – as good, because they expanded the economy. Combining these factors in more efficient ways through technological innovation was seen as beneficial for the same reason. The problem was that these models never explicitly considered the environment, or natural capital.

Some simple accounting highlights the adverse consequences of this approach. According to the Dasgupta report, at the global level between 1992 and 2014, physical capital per capita roughly doubled, while human capital per capita rose by 13%, but natural capital per capita declined by 40%. This obviously is not sustainable, particularly if the environment faces an irreversible tipping point.

Growth has become unsustainable mainly because market prices did not capture the negative environmental externalities of economic activity. Resource allocation that followed these price signals thus led to environmental degradation. Moreover, conventional GDP measures scored increases in output per capita as raising living standards. While this was true in a narrow sense, a balance sheet for the environment, or some way to adjust GDP figures for ecological damage, was missing. Many economists and policymakers thus largely ignored this negative externality.

The textbook way to create more sustainable growth is to tax things that are bad for the environment, and the simplest instrument is a carbon tax. The amount of the tax should raise the private cost of economic activity to the social cost, which includes the environmental impact. This modified market signal will then help to allocate resources in a more sustainable way.

But the private sector can go beyond being a mere price taker in the green transition and play an active role by internalizing the negative externality. Already, sovereign wealth funds, university endowments, and insurance and pension funds are seeking to invest their assets in more sustainable ways. Environmental, social, and governance (ESG) principles and other green financing tools are increasingly available to guide investment. This market segment has exploded in recent years, but more needs to be done to harmonize definitions and track results more accurately and consistently.

The key to prospering in a sustainable world will be to foster economic growth while managing the natural capital stock. Size still matters, but now in a negative way. For example, there is no demographic dividend. In traditional growth models, more labour leads to more output. But in a sustainable-growth world, higher output lowers natural capital. The corollary of this is that population declines are good, so Japan and Europe need not despair.

A command-economy model of financial repression to fund rapid investment and growth doesn't look too promising, either, unless it can enable an upgrade to a cleaner capital stock with a lighter environmental footprint.

Technology for its own sake is out as well. In a sustainable world, technology needs to reduce the environmental impact of economic activity, and innovations that increase it are unlikely to be adopted. Countries will still need technological change to drive growth, but the focus must shift to environmental efficiency.

Recasting the challenge of growth means altering priorities and policies. Countries will still have opportunities to grow, trade, innovate, and move up the value chain to secure a brighter future. But they will need to realize them in an economy that is at one with nature, not external to it.

The writer is Global Chief Economist at S&P Global Ratings.

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WORDSWORTH

CANDENT

Though only large dictionaries include it and the Oxford English Dictionary says it is obsolete or archaic, candent has retained a toe-hold on usage in the sense of something glowing, as if with white heat, largely in SF and fantasy novels whose authors delight in obscure language. Neal Asher used it in *The Voyage of the Sable Keech*: “The rock blew apart in a candent explosion, hurling pieces of itself out into space”, as did Robert Asprin in his fantasy anthology *Shadows of Sanctuary*: “Shards punched through knife holes and widened them to let quicklime spill down in a candent stream”. Clark Ashton Smith wrote it into *The Black Abbot of Puthum*: “Noon, with its sun of candent copper in a blackish-blue zenith, found them far amid the rusty sands and iron-toothed ridges of Izdrel!”, and Poul Anderson borrowed it for *The Long Night*: “The stars were scattered about in their myriads, dominantly ruby and ember, some yellow or candent, green or blue.” It was almost completely replaced by incandescent in the first decades of the nineteenth century. Both are relatives of candour, candid and candidate, the linking thread being the concept of whiteness. The last three are from Latin candidus, white (Roman candidates for public office wore togas rendered white so they could be easily seen in the Forum, which had nothing at all to do with white then being figuratively the colour of innocence and frankness). Candent is from the verb candere, to be white or to glow, and incandescent derives from the related verb incandescere, to become white-hot.

LOL

Breaking silence

Every ten years, the monks in the monastery are allowed to break their vow of silence to speak two words. Ten years go by and it's one monk's first chance. He thinks for a second before saying, “Food bad.” Ten



years later, he says, “Bed hard.” It's the big day, a decade later. He gives the head monk a long stare and says, “I quit.” “I'm not surprised,” the head monk says. “You've been complaining ever since you got here.”

SPECTRUM REBRANDING

Importance of brands in education



Chandra Shekhar Chitrala

REBRANDING EXERCISES ARE SOME OF THE TOUGHEST ASSIGNMENTS BECAUSE BRANDS ARE ALL ABOUT EMOTIONS

Bombay became Mumbai in 1996, Madras became Chennai in 1996. Calcutta became Kolkata in 2001 and Bangalore became Bengaluru in 2014; but IIT Bombay, IIT Madras, IIM Calcutta and IIM Bangalore have still not changed their names.

In each of the institutions mentioned above, the place name was initially an identifier; but now, it has become a part of the brand name. Therefore, even when the name of the city changed, the institution's name was not changed, so as not to affect the brand value that has been built up carefully over decades - a policy that is followed by all brand conscious institutions.

For example, the oldest business school in the country, Xavier Labour Relations Institute (XLRI) was set up in Jamshedpur in 1949. Over the years, however, its acronym XLRI came to represent excellence in management education, not just labour relations. Therefore, when they rebranded themselves a few years back, they ensured that the new name - XLRI Xavier School of Management, leveraged on its existing brand value.

Biju Dominic, one of the foremost thought leaders on Behavioural Economics in India today, has this to say - “Rebranding exercises are

some of the toughest assignments because brands are all about emotions. So companies are extremely careful even when they change the fonts of a brand name. The brand name becomes a part of the language and the identity of thousands of people and, hence, a decision to drop a brand name without taking into consideration the ‘emotional utility’ of the brand should be taken with a lot of caution and restraint.”

Odisha has been at the forefront in recognising the importance of branding, and the professionalism with which the government went about creating and implementing branding campaigns like ‘Odisha - New Opportunities’ for the promotion of industrial growth and the ‘Odisha - India's Best Kept Secret’ campaign for the Tourism Department, are quoted as examples of excellence in branding practices.

Which is why, it is a matter of surprise that in quick succession, two of Odisha's most reputed national level educational institutions in which the government has an important stake - a 30+ year-old management institute and a 40+ year-old engineering college, while in the process of conversion to universities and the resultant renaming,

appear to be in the danger of losing their brands.

In both these cases, the brand names with which they have been known over decades have either been mutilated or not used at all. Ironically, the B School ended up losing its 30+ year old brand while trying to leverage it for the university's growth - something that is sure to become a case study in itself! That such branding missteps could end up creating confusion in the minds of potential students, faculty and recruiters, not to mention disturbing the emotional connect the brands have with their alumni, appears to have been ignored.

It is hoped that at least in the case of the engineering college, when the Act is passed in the Assembly, the value of the 40-year-old brand that has established a place for itself in the hearts of thousands of alumni spread across the world is given the importance it deserves, and is leveraged for the growth of this great institution instead of being discarded.

This is the age of branding, and no one can afford to take the power of brands lightly. In fact, it has been suggested that there should be a full time consultative body within the government to establish brand-

ing hygiene in all government communications as well as advise in decisions regarding naming or re-naming of government led institutions.

As Saji Abraham, a renowned branding expert with over 25 years of experience in launching and growing national and international brands across categories and currently the founder of Fighting Fit Brands, a brand management company, says, “In the era of product similarity and shorter innovation cycles, creating an emotional connection with the customer is essential. This is what brands do. It has been shown beyond doubt now, that we take decisions based on emotions and justify them later even in the most rational of categories. A brand is a composite of emotions and information that we use as a shortcut. Without that shortcut we are asking consumers to spend too much brain power, which most are unwilling to. Therefore, if you have a brand, take good care of it - regardless of whether it is for a product, educational institution, a state or even a nation.”

The writer is an alumnus of XIMB, an IT entrepreneur and a startup mentor.

Blinken's visit

Sir, New Delhi has mostly had an unwavering relationship with Washington beginning with the Obama dispensation. Donald Trump, despite his unorthodox ways, was never cold to India. New Delhi shrewdly ignored the strong anti-Trump rhetoric that prevailed in parts of the world to keep President Trump in good humour. As is known, global diplomacy is all about sending subtle messages and anchoring existing ties. Gestures and signals are as important as plans and actions. On the eve of US Secretary of State Antony Blinken's first India visit, under President Joe Biden, India hopes to reap the seeds of hope and confidence sown over the years. Indo-Pacific security and the situation in Afghanistan following total US troupe withdrawal from Kabul would obviously be uppermost in the minds of the leaders of the two countries when they meet, especially when India, in spite of being perturbed by augmented Taliban violence consequent to the ongoing troupe removal, has been overshadowed by other countries in having a broad say on the matter. No India-US talks can culminate without at least a cursory mention of Pakistan. President Biden has set the tone for Blinken's visit by declaring that his country has no say in the bilateral relations between India and Pakistan unlike President Trump who had “offered” to mediate between the two neighbours only to be mildly rebuffed by New Delhi.

Ganapathi Bhat, AKOLA

Covid and joblessness

Sir, The first wave of the Covid-19 crisis pushed nearly 23 crore Indians into poverty, estimates a study by the Azim Premji University. No one knows how many times the number has gone up in the second wave. Now it has been revealed that medical bills have pushed crores of Indians into poverty during the pandemic. The government's shrinking share in healthcare is stated to have pushed up medical costs, leaving many Indians teetering on the edge of a debt trap. The second wave has amplified the crisis. For all of India, ‘out of pocket’ expenses make up 63% of the total expenditure. Experts everywhere agree that government support in healthcare can be a safety net that catches people whose medical bills would push them into poverty. If this crisis does not spur greater public health expenditure, we truly wonder what will. But it hardly matters to the BJP government which is on a privatisation spree of all sectors including health thereby laying the roadmap of further distress and debacle of the countryside.

Asit Mohanty, JAJPUR

Letters

TO THE EDITOR

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

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

Girl burnt alive in Ganjam

THE ACCUSED, REPORTEDLY HER BOYFRIEND, ARRESTED; DENIES HAND IN THE CRIME

POST NEWS NETWORK

Purusottampur, July 28: A day after a 25-year old girl was burnt alive, allegedly by her boyfriend at Pratappur village under this police limits in Ganjam district, police cracked the murder case and arrested the accused, Wednesday.

The victim was identified as Subhasmita Khadanga, 25, of Sadashivpur Sasan village under Buguda police limits in the district. Krishna Chandra Sahu, the girl's boyfriend was arrested on charge of murder, Wednesday.

Sahu was arrested on the basis of circumstantial evidence, the girl's dying declaration in the presence of executive magistrate-cum-tesildar Nitish Kumar Tripathy in Purusottampur hospital and her father's complaint before police.

However, the case has become mysterious as the deceased in her dying declaration accused her boyfriend of torching her alive while the latter refuted the allegations saying he was not present at the spot.

The deceased in her dying declaration has said that her lover Krishna Chandra poured spirit on her and set her ablaze after she



Victim Subhasmita

Accused Krishna Chandra

insisted on marriage.

The girl said when she asked him to marry, Krishna Chandra rejected her proposal stating that his marriage has been fixed elsewhere. He said he would marry the daughter of his uncle.

Krishna denied of being present at the place when the girl was burnt alive. He said he was doing office work at a shop in Purushottampur during interrogation by police.

He also termed the girl to be mentally-challenged. He said she had even tried to kill him by giving him poison. She was also suspecting him of having relationship

with other girls, the accused said before the police.

Police said the deceased was working as a laboratory technician in Mujagarh health centre and was in a relationship with the accused since 2015.

They even stayed in a live-in-relation for some days. The deceased insisted on marriage and after she came to know about the accused's plan of marrying elsewhere. Enraged, the accused hatched a plan to get rid of her forever. He called her to an abandoned house in his native Pratappur village where he allegedly poured spirit on her before setting her

ablaze. Later, he fled the scene on his motorcycle.

VIOLENT END

The deceased in her dying declaration has said that her lover Krishna Chandra poured spirit on her and set her ablaze after she insisted on marriage

Krishna denied of being present at the place when the girl was burnt alive. He said he was doing office work at a shop in Purushottampur during interrogation by police

Police said the deceased was working as a laboratory technician in Mujagarh health centre and was in a relationship with the accused since 2015

ablaze. Later, he fled the scene on his motorcycle.

Police have seized a pair of shoes, two mobile phones, a vanity bag and a scarf of the deceased, a match box, an empty spirit bottle, certificates and some documents from the crime spot. The motorcycle of the accused has also been seized.

When contacted, SDPO Suryamani Pradhan said details of the crime will be available after receiving the post-mortem report. Further investigations are on.

Security tightened as ultras observe 'Martyrs' Week'

POST NEWS NETWORK

Chittrakonda, July 28: With the Maoists observing 'Martyrs' Week' from July 28 to August 3 in the state, security has been beefed up in western and southern districts of Odisha, where they wield considerable influence, a top police source said Wednesday.

Bus services in some parts have been affected due to possible violence by ultras.

Even though Maoist-related violence has come down in the state, the state government is taking adequate security measures to avoid any untoward incident. Police DG Abhay recently toured several districts in south Odisha to review security preparedness ahead of 'Martyrs' Week'.

Meanwhile, Malkangiri district administration has sealed several entry and exit points to the district in view of 'Martyrs' Week'.

According to a source, a number of posters and banners with appeals to local villagers to observe the week have been put up at several remote villages in the district by outlawed CPI (Maoist) faction.



MALKANGIRI DISTRICT ADMINISTRATION HAS SEALED SEVERAL ENTRY AND EXIT POINTS TO THE DISTRICT IN VIEW OF 'MARTYRS' WEEK' AND TAKING ADEQUATE SECURITY MEASURES TO AVOID ANY UNTOWARD INCIDENT

A NUMBER OF POSTERS AND BANNERS WITH APPEALS TO LOCAL VILLAGERS TO OBSERVE THE WEEK HAVE BEEN PUT UP AT SEVERAL REMOTE VILLAGES IN THE DISTRICT BY OUTLAWED CPI (MAOIST) FACTION

The Red rebels have appealed villagers, in the posters, to observe the week in memory of slain Maoists and to pay homage to them. The ultras have erected memorials of Maoists in remote bordering villages of Malkangiri, who were gunned down in encounters last year.

To counter the challenge, combing operations have been intensified in the district by the police personnel and BSF Vehicles coming from Andhra Pradesh, Telangana and Chhattisgarh to Malkangiri are being checked by the security personnel at several points, a senior BSF official said.

Court rejects interim bail plea of Hyder's son

POST NEWS NETWORK

Kendrapara, July 28: A local court Wednesday rejected the interim bail petition of Sheikh Qadir alias Muna, the elder son of slain gangster Sheikh Hyder to participate in the post death rituals of his deceased father.

District Judge Gopal Chandra Behera of the District and Sessions Court in Kendrapada refused to entertain the bail petition citing law and order situation and threat to the life of the applicant Muna among other reasons.

According to official sources, Qadir had applied for an interim bail of 40 days (starting from July 24 to September 6) through his advocate to enable him to attend the post-death rituals of his deceased father.

The district and the sessions

court rejected his plea in the morning on the ground of law and order.

The petitioner will now move the Orissa High Court for the bail, Qadir's advocate Rabi Narayan Mohanty informed.

Speaking about the reason behind the denial of bail, Mohanty said the district judge apprehended that Muna might abscond if released on bail. Also there might be threat to his life.

Muna had been convicted for the murder of a cement trader of Aul area of Kendrapara in 2011.

He said, after Hyder's death there is not a single male member in the house to participate in the post-death rituals for which an interim bail application had been moved in the court to allow Muna to go on bail.

Qadir is an accused in 18 criminal cases. He was arrested in 2011

and is currently lodged in Choudwar Circle Jail in Cuttack.

Hyder died July 24 while undergoing treatment at Balasore district headquarters hospital after sustaining bullet injuries in a police encounter. He had allegedly snatched a firearm from a police official and tried to flee at Simulia in Balasore district while being shifted to Baripada jail from Choudwar.

Meanwhile, the district administration has withdrawn Section-144 clamped on the town and in its adjoining four panchayats till July 30 apprehending law and order situation following the death of Hyder.

However, all police stations in the district have been asked to remain alert and prepared in case any eventuality arises due to the death of the gangster.

MOCK DRILL



Fire personnel imparting training to Mission Shakti members on fire safety at Chaunpur Wealth Centre in Sambalpur Wednesday

OP PHOTO

48-YR-OLD MAN KILLED BY CROC

AGENCIES

Kendrapara, July 28: A 48-year-old man was killed in an attack by a crocodile in Kendrapara district Wednesday, officials said. Harihar Swain was taking bath in the Baitarani river in Khola village when the crocodile pounced upon him, they said.

His mutilated body was later fished out from the river by fire brigade personnel, they added. This is the third death in crocodile attacks at riverside villages on the periphery of Bhitarkanika National Park in the last one-and-a-half month, officials said.

In the last one year, at least eight people were killed and several others maimed in attacks by salt-water crocodiles in the area, they said. The

deceased's family will be given Rs 4 lakh compensation as per a government scheme on such deaths, officials said. Lethal assault by the reptiles and consequent retaliatory attack by humans has become a regular feature in this region of the state, a forest official said.

Most often, the mishaps happen when the victims intrude into the habitat of the wildlife, for illegal fishing, poaching, firewood collection and honey collection, he said.

The conflict and consequent loss of human lives are most recorded during the monsoon and winter months - the nesting season of the estuarine crocodiles.

The salt-water crocodile population in Bhitarkanika has increased manifold from 96 in 1975 to 1,768 at present, the official said.

Teen held for rape of infant

POST NEWS NETWORK

Kaliapani, July 28: A three-year-old girl was allegedly raped by a boy, 15, at Sansailo panchayat under Sukinda police limits in Jajpur district, police said.

The matter came to the fore after police arrested the 15-year-old and produced him before a juvenile court, Tuesday. He was taken for medical examination along with the survivor. The incident occurred when family members of the victim had gone outside while the girl's mother was working in the backyard.

The accused strayed inside the house and raped the girl. The victim's mother rushed inside on hearing the cries of the girl and caught the boy red-handed. The accused fled the scene and later the girl's father lodged a complaint at the police station.

40 booked for damaging saplings, fencing

POST NEWS NETWORK

Amarpali, July 28: The forest department has filed a case against 40 people for damaging saplings and vandalizing the protective fence around plantation in Birmaharajpur area of Sambalpur district.

According to reports, the forest department had planted hundreds of saplings over 50 hectares of land at Bhaludunguri hill in Bhalpadar panchayat. Wired fencing was raised around the plantation.

However, over 50 people from



the locality vandalized the fence and uprooted the saplings. However, it is not clear why they damaged the saplings.

Following the incident,

Birmaharajpur range officer Abinash Bariha has filed a complaint at Subalaya police station.

The plantation project was inaugurated by Commerce and

Transportation Minister Padmanabh Behera in the presence of Zilla Parishad chairperson Usha Kumari, sub-collector Ashok Kumar Bhoi, Subarnapur DFO Sushant Kumar Samantray.

In the complaint, it was said that over 40 people led by Jyotirmay Rath of Sonepur had damaged 4,800 saplings while 32,000 saplings were planted in the area. Besides, they had damaged 295 cement pillars that held the fencing.

IIC Rajendra Mandal said a case was registered against 40 people and investigation is underway.

Efforts on for restoration of Potagad

LOCALS DEMAND TOURIST SPOT TAG FOR THE HISTORIC SITE

POST NEWS NETWORK

Ganjam, July 28: Potagad on the bank of the Rusikulya river on the outskirts of Ganjam town is home to architectural remains of royals and the British. The fort and the ancillary infrastructure built by the British have been in ruins. Major portions of the fort are buried. That's why it is called Potagada.

Various outfits and legislators in the past had urged the government for renovation of the historic place so as to exploit its tourism potential. Now, locals have demanded tourism status for the place.

According to reports, Potagada was an important place in Ganjam during the royal regime and later in the British Raj.

There used to be stables in the area, which have now reduced to ruins. Many architectural structures are deep inside the soil.

A tunnel is still existent. It is said kings used to hide inside the tunnel at the time of danger or catastrophes.

Besides, a paved path is existent in the area. The path leads to Rusikulya river. In the royal regime, queens used to go to the river on this path.



PAST IMPRINT

Potagada was an important place in Ganjam during the royal regime and later in the British Raj

A tunnel is still existent. It is said kings used to hide inside the tunnel at the time of danger or catastrophes

As the place bears testimony of its royal past, former deputy speaker Ramachandra Panda had repeatedly urged the state government and the district administration for restoration of the place

As the place bears testimony of its royal past, former deputy speaker Ramachandra Panda had repeatedly urged the state government and the district administration for restoration of the place.

Now, Chhatrapur MLA Subash Chandra Behera has come out demanding development of the historic place and is putting pressure

on the administration to develop the place.

To highlight the place, former deputy speaker Ramachandra Panda has organized Potagad Mahotsav with his own efforts.

Later, Collector Vijay Amruta Kulange visited the place and had drawn attention of the Chief Minister and the tourism secre-

tary towards the sorry state of Potagad.

Besides, the Collector has drawn up a blueprint with the help of officials of various departments. Boating facility, a children park, a pantha nivas and a smart park were among the projects included in the blueprint.

Following a directive of the Collector, tehsildar Arun Kumar Nayak, executive officer of the NAC Ronit Kumar and DGM of Grasim Rabindra Kumar Mohanty initiated efforts for development of Potagad.

Local residents with the help of Graism company have removed weeds and creepers in some parts of the area.

The NAC has installed utility poles around Podagad.



FARM ISSUE



BJP activists staging a sit-in outside Subarnarekha irrigation project office at Lakshimposhi in Mayurbhanj, demanding compensation to farmers whose farmlands were submerged by advance release of water in the canal Wednesday

Bommai anointed as CM

HAILING FROM SOCIALIST PHILOSOPHY AND NOW MARRIED TO BJP PRINCIPLES, BOMMAI'S POLITICAL JOURNEY MARKED A NEW MILESTONE AS HE TOOK OATH AS THE CHIEF MINISTER

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bangalore, July 28: Basavaraj Bommai Wednesday took oath as the new Chief Minister of Karnataka, ending months of speculation about the change of guard in the state.

The 61-year-old leader was administered the oath of office and secrecy by Governor Thawar Chand Gehlot at the Raj Bhavan here.

The Karnataka BJP legislature party Tuesday evening elected him as its new leader to succeed BS Yediyurappa.

Bommai, a Lingayat leader from North Karnataka, is a close confidant of Yediyurappa and, according to party sources, there is an imprint of the veteran BJP leader in this succession plan.

Son of former Chief Minister, late SR Bommai, he was Minister for Home Affairs, Law, Parliamentary Affairs and Legislature in Yediyurappa's council of ministers which was dissolved Monday.

It's the second instance of a father-son duo becoming Chief Minister of Karnataka, after HD Deve Gowda and HD Kumaraswamy. Bommai is a three time MLA from Shiggaon constituency in Haveri district and has been MLC twice.

Yediyurappa, and Union ministers Dharmendra Pradhan and G Kishan Reddy who were appointed as central observers by BJP's parliamentary board for the legislature party meet, party's national general secretary in-charge of Karnataka Arun Singh, state president Nalin Kumar Kateel and a host of others attended the swearing-in.

Bommai, who alone took oath



30TH CM OF K'TAKA

Though he is sworn in as 30th chief minister of Karnataka, he also would be considered as 23rd chief minister as many have sworn in as chief minister multiple times

Wednesday, said he will try and expand the Cabinet soon.

"I had met central observers Dharmendra Pradhan, Kishan Reddy and General Secretary Singh, they said let's not discuss it today, once they go back to Delhi let's

see," he said in response to a question by reporters on expanding the cabinet.

Asked whether he will wait for 'Ashada' month (considered inauspicious) to get over for undertaking the expansion, he said, "nothing like that, we will do it at the earliest, won't take too much time because I need a complete team to do the work as there is Covid and floods."

When questioned whether he will continue with the same Ministers, Bommai said all these are part of the cabinet formation exercise and "everything will be decided together", adding that he will discuss and decide about his

Delhi visit.

Ahead of the swearing-in, Bommai met Yediyurappa and also BJP central leaders -- Pradhan, Reddy and Singh.

Though Yediyurappa had said he would not name his successor, it is clear that he had a major say in the selection of Bommai, who is known for his "clean and non-controversial" image.

The BJP was said to be looking at bringing in a generational shift, but by picking a leader from the Lingayat community the party's key vote base to which Yediyurappa also belongs, the party has chosen to play it safe, ahead of the assembly polls in 2023.

A slew of sops in 1st cabinet meet

Basavaraj Bommai, the new Chief Minister of Karnataka announced a slew of measures to reach out to people including a scholarship programme for children of agriculturists, Wednesday at a cost of ₹1,000 crore. He also underlined that vaccination to face third Covid wave would be his priority. Bommai, after holding a cabinet meeting, announced that a scholarship scheme for children of agriculturists has been introduced in the state as per his vision. It's going to help students from agrarian families to pursue higher education, he stated. Bommai himself chaired the meeting with the Chief Secretary and other top government officers as the full fledged cabinet is yet to be formed. The scheme will be drafted in consultation with experts and implemented soon for the first time in the state, he added. Under Sandhya Suraksha Yojana, 35.98 lakh beneficiaries got ₹1,000 so far, will get ₹1,200. This will increase the burden on the exchequer by ₹862 crore. The amount under the Widow pension scheme has been increased by ₹200 and physically challenged persons are going to get ₹200 more. These measures have been taken considering inflation. The section of the society which needs social security will be reached out by our government, he underlined. He further explained that he had given orientation for the bureaucrats in the first meeting.

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Thiruvananthapuram, July 28: Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan Wednesday said the power and responsibility to crackdown on gold smuggling rackets rest solely with the Centre and its agencies and the state government has nothing to do in it.

The Customs and airport security do not come under the jurisdiction of the state, he told the state Assembly during the zero hour.

Vijayan was replying to a notice seeking an adjournment motion moved by the Congress-led UDF opposition alleging attempts to sabotage a gold smuggling case in which local leaders of the ruling CPI(M)'s youth wing Democratic Youth Federation of India (DYFI) are allegedly involved.

The opposition raised doubts about the death of Ramees KC, a friend of the main accused in the Karipur gold smuggling case Arjun Ayanki, following a road accident soon after he was summoned by the Customs for interrogation in connection with the case.

Dismissing the opposition version of mysterious death, the Chief Minister, however, said as per the medical reports, the critical injuries to the head and ribs caused in the accident had claimed his life.

It was prima facie a case of accident death according to police and Ramees, who had driven the bike without wearing a helmet, had turned his vehicle carelessly and rammed it into a car, he said.

On the alleged involvement of local party activists in the illegal transfer of the gold through airports, he said the state government



The Central government has the absolute power and responsibility to prevent transfer of articles through airports without paying the customs duty. The Customs falls under the union list of the seventh schedule of the Constitution

PINARAYI VIJAYAN | KERALA CM

has nothing to do in it as the Customs is a central subject.

The Central government has the absolute power and responsibility to prevent transfer of articles through airports without paying the customs duty. The Customs falls under the union list of the seventh schedule of the Constitution, Vijayan reminded the opposition.

However, the state government had taken stringent measures in the cases of law and order issues related to the sale of the smuggled gold, brought due to the lapses of the agencies concerned, he added.

Stating that investigation is progressing into the death of Ramees, he said the opposition came up with the matter as they were facing dearth of topics to be raised in the House.

Kerala's daily Covid tally now 50% of India's positive cases

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Thiruvananthapuram, July 28: The Union Health Ministry data Wednesday morning showed that Kerala has 22,129 new Covid cases in the last 24 hours while the total cases in India stood at 43,654.

This means that Kerala had more than 50 per cent of the cases and this is the first time that this has happened. With regards to the active cases nationally, Tuesday there were 3,99,436 cases, while in Kerala there were 1,45,371.

Likewise the test positivity rate for Tuesday nationally stood at 2.51 per cent while in Kerala it was 12.35 per cent.

However, this issue had surfaced in the Kerala Assembly Tuesday when veteran legislator PK Kunhalikutty of the opposition IUML slammed Vijayan for what was happening on the Covid front in Kerala, and said there is something wrong in the decisions of the monitoring committee which



overlooks the Covid affairs on a daily basis.

But Vijayan defended the way things are being managed and blamed the opposition for always being on a fault finding fact mission. He said Tuesday that 80 per cent of the population in many states has been affected with Covid, while in Kerala it's only 49 per cent.

Incidentally, during the first wave, Kerala was the cynosure of all eyes from across the world on how the state was fighting the pandemic and the then State Finance Minister Thomas Issac had gone to the extent of stating that this was a feather in the cap of how the first Pinarayi Vijayan government had managed.

CAN'T EQUATE VANDALISM, FREE SPEECH: SC

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, July 28: The Supreme Court Wednesday held that privileges and immunities granted to legislators can't be used to claim exemption from the law of the land, as it dismissed Kerala government's plea seeking the court's nod to withdraw cases against CPI-M leaders, including present Education Minister V Sivankutty, for vandalism in the Assembly in 2015, when the party was in opposition.

A bench of Justices DY Chandrachud and MR Shah said "Committing acts of destruction of public property cannot be equated with either the freedom of speech in the legislature or with forms of protest legitimately available to the members of the opposition."

The bench observed the members of the state legislature have, in their character as elected representatives, a public trust impressed upon the discharge of their duties.

Allowing the prosecution to be withdrawn would only result in a singular result, which is that the elected representatives are exempt from the mandate of criminal law.



KERALA ASSEMBLY RUCKUS

This cannot be countenanced as being in aid of the broad ends of public justice, said Justice Chandrachud, who wrote the 74-page judgment on behalf of the bench.

The bench stressed that no member of an elected legislature can claim either a privilege or an immunity to stand above the sanctions of the criminal law, which applies equally to all citizens. Privileges and immunities are not gateways to claim exemptions from the general law of the land, particularly as in this case, the criminal law which governs the action of every citizen, said the court.

exemption from criminal law would betray the trust, which is impressed on the character of elected representatives as the makers and enactors of the law. The top court pointed the persons, named as the accused, held a responsible elected office as MLAs in the Legislative Assembly. Like any other citizen, they are subject to the boundaries of lawful behaviour set by criminal law, it added.

The MLAs had damaged furniture and articles including the Speaker's chair, computer, mike, emergency lamp and electronic panel, causing a loss of ₹2.20 lakh, during their protest as opposition leaders in 2015.

Apex court ruling jolts Kerala govt

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM: The decision of the Supreme Court on the ruckus in the Kerala Assembly in 2015 has come as a jolt to the two-month-old second Pinarayi Vijayan-led government in the State. The court on Wednesday dismissed a plea by the Left government seeking withdrawal of a criminal case against some LDF MLAs, including Sivankutty, in connection with the ruckus, and the opposition UDF sought the resignation of Education Minister V Sivankutty now an accused in the case. The court said allowing the prosecution to be withdrawn would amount to interference in normal course of justice for illegitimate reasons. Citing the court ruling, the Congress-led UDF mounted pressure on the CPI(M)-led coalition for resignation of the Minister by saying he has no moral right to continue in the post.

Vow to replace corrupt regime fulfilled: Yatnal

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Bangalore, July 28: Almost after a gap of seven months, former Karnataka chief minister, BS Yediyurappa's bitterest critic within the BJP, Basanagouda Patil Yatnal shaved off his beard and said that his 'vow to replace corrupt' regime in the state had been fulfilled.

After taking part in the swearing-in ceremony of new chief minister, Basavaraj Bommai at Raj Bhavan here, Yatnal said that he had neither lobbied for any post nor demanded anything except to replace Yediyurappa at the earliest to save the party. My only aim was in favour of the ruling BJP. As I had told you (media) two months ago that this year's flag hoisting will be carried out by a new CM, which has come true, he said.

He added that he would support anyone including Bommai, if the new government practices Hindutva politics and gives a corruption free government. I do not have anything personal against Yediyurappa at all. He will be our party leader. He is the tallest leader. But, nobody is bigger than BJP or Hindutva, which is our core ideology. Let the new government be



corruption free and practice Hindutva politics so that it serves its real purpose, Yatnal said.

Answering a question, Yatnal said that Bommai will act independently and keep his family members at bay. The new CM cannot afford to commit the same mistake as his predecessor Bommai will have to act independently and keep his family members from their regular interference in matters concerning the state. MLAs must be given their due respect, he said.

Replying to another question, Yatnal said that Bommai is a party high command's pick and therefore BJP MLAs unanimously raised their hands in his favour during the BJP's legislature party meeting that was held Tuesday evening.

Rescued cub begins 'rewilding' lessons in Periyar NP

Officials believed the cub was left alone in the wild when the tigress engaged in a fierce internecine combat of tigers in the forest

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Thiruvananthapuram, July 28: With bad hind-limbs and cloudy eyes, she was too feeble when found abandoned by her mother near a forest temple on the Kerala-Tamil Nadu border last year.

That frail 60-day-old tiger cub, fondly being called as 'Mangala' by the forest personnel who rescued and nursed her back to health, is now ready to learn the basics of survival and hunting skills in the sprawling Periyar Tiger Reserve (PTR), located in the Western Ghats.

When the International Tiger Day falls Thursday (July 29), a group of forest personnel, under the aegis of PTR deputy director Sunil Babu, would begin the 'rewilding' process of the female tiger cub in the reserve forest, spread over 777

INTERNATIONAL TIGER DAY



km, tomorrow. The PTR, currently, has 42 tigers, as per the figures.

The nearly nine-month-old animal, which was reared in these months under the watchful eyes of the forest officials, would be given training to go back to her wild nature as per the protocol of the National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA), Babu said.

Rewilding is a process to famil-

iarize the animal with the environment of a natural forest. It will learn the hunting and other survival skills as part of the procedure under our observation, he told PTL.

According to the NTCA protocol, the tiger cub should be reared in an in situ enclosure for a minimum of two years.

Normally, the animal would be released in the original forest after

two years of re-wilding. Here, we will decide about its release after observing the nature and health condition of the animal, he said.

Though the tiger cub was too fragile with bad hind-limbs and poor eye sight when it was rescued, the animal is perfectly healthy now, the official added.

As part of the rewilding process, the baby big cat would be shifted

to a 'cage' which is spread in nearly half-a-hectare of forest land inside the PTR. The enclosure would be widened in the later period as per the cub learning the hunting and survival skills.

Fencing would be erected considering the safety of the animal and it would be under strict camera surveillance of the forest personnel throughout the day and night.

The core objective of the procedure is to restore the wild nature of the animal which was reared under captivity for some period and make it self-reliant to live in an original forest, he said.

Though the animal would be given some feed like domestic animals such as goat in the initial period, it is expected to learn hunting down prey in the later days.

To give maximum feel of the original natural forest, the human presence in the enclosure will be made nil in the later months, the official said. Though it is an expensive procedure, the exact cost is yet to be estimated, he added.

The tiger cub was suspected to have been abandoned by its mother, but officials spotted the tigress lurking around the Mangala Devi shrine in Periyar Tiger Reserve, nearly a week after it was rescued on November 21 last year.

national

of the day quote

Most of the video conferencing platforms like Google Meet, Webex, JIO meet etc. Have extended their services during the pandemic free. Hence there was a freedom to teachers and students to choose the best platform which has got different features of control and connectivity

PRAMOD SAWANT | GOA CHIEF MINISTER

Met @Mamata Official didi today. It was our first meeting since her resounding victory in West Bengal assembly elections. Conveyed my best wishes and discussed several political issues with her

ARVIND KEJRIWAL | DELHI CHIEF MINISTER

I was deeply saddened by the news of the road accident in Barabanki. My deepest condolences to the families of the deceased. I pray to God for the speedy recovery of the injured

PRIVANKA GANDHI | CONGRESS LEADER

SHORT TAKES

India skips London Climate Meet

New Delhi: As environment and climate ministers from over four dozen countries concluded a meeting that took a step closer towards the COP26 on key issues related to actions to be taken to keep the global goal of restricting the temperature to '1.5C', India chose to skip the London Climate Ministerial citing technical reasons for not attending it.

Ajay Maken meets MLAs individually

Jaipur: Congress leader Ajay Maken Wednesday began a series of meetings with party MLAs and those supporting it for their feedback on the performance of the Ashok Gehlot government ahead of the state Cabinet reshuffle. As Maken began the two-day exercise in the assembly building here, Leader of Opposition Gulabchand Kataria said the Congress leadership holding one-on-one discussions with MLAs indicates the state government is not able to function well.

11 Maoists surrender

Dantewada: As many as 11 Naxals, one of them carrying a cash reward of ₹1 lakh on her head, surrendered in Chhattisgarh's insurgency-hit Dantewada district Wednesday, police said. The surrender coincided with the start of the 'martyrs' week' observed by the Maoists for their slain colleagues, a police official pointed out.

Landslide risk

Alibag: More than 100 villages in Raigad district of Maharashtra face the risk of getting hit by landslides and during the unprecedented floods last week, water level had risen up to 25 feet at some places in Mahad town, local residents and officials said Wednesday. Water had risen up to 25 feet at some places in Mahad, a level not seen in recent memory, submerging several single-storey buildings and ground plus first floor structures, the local residents said.

Ganja seized

Hyderabad: Police in Telangana Wednesday seized over 4,000 kilogram ganja worth ₹8.50 crore. The ganja was seized in two different incidents in Bhadradi Kothagudem and Khammam districts when it was being transported to Hyderabad and Haryana.



Good to meet US Secretary of State @SecBlinken today. I welcome President Biden's strong commitment to strengthen the India-US Strategic Partnership, which is anchored in our shared democratic values and is a force for global good

NARENDRA MODI | PRIME MINISTER

BIG BOOST

The Indian Air Force (IAF) Wednesday formally inducted the Rafale aircraft into its 101 Squadron at the Air Force Station in Hasimara under the Eastern Air Command (EAC)



India, US discuss strategic partnership, Pacific support

AGENCIES

New Delhi, July 28: India and the US Wednesday discussed measures to deepen their strategic partnership, along with Indo-Pacific cooperation and issues of regional security, including Afghanistan.

On his first visit to India, US Secretary of State Antony Blinken said he had a warm discussion with India's External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar.

Blinken said the discussion included deepening the US-India Comprehensive Global Strategic Partnership, including strengthening Indo-Pacific cooperation bilaterally and through the Quad. Jaishankar said it was a wide-ranging and productive discussion with Secretary Blinken. "Useful in mapping out the next steps in our bilateral partnership. Strong con-



vergence of views on many regional concerns. Agreed to work closely on multilateral and global issues," he added. Both countries cooperate on a wide range of diplomatic, economic, and security issues, including defence, non-proliferation, regional cooperation in the Indo-Pacific, shared democratic values, counterterrorism, climate change, health, energy, trade and investment, peace-

BLINKEN'S INDIA VISIT

Antony Blinken held a meeting with a senior representative of Dalai Lama, in a clear signal to China about the Biden administration's continued support to the Tibetan cause

Blinken plans to raise India's human rights record

keeping, the environment, education, science and technology, agriculture, space, and oceans.

The US and India are also closely coordinating on regional security issues, such as Afghanistan.

Visiting US Secretary of State Antony Blinken Wednesday praised the US mission staff here

for processing a record number of visas for Indian students to study in the US, saying "this is where ensuring connections are made", as well as repatriating citizens during the pandemic.

India is a leading global power and a key US partner in the Indo-Pacific and beyond.

At the inaugural Quad Leaders' Summit in March, President Joe Biden and Prime Minister Narendra Modi joined the Japanese and Australian Prime Ministers in pledging to respond to the economic and health impacts of Covid-19, combat the climate crisis, and address shared challenges, including in cyberspace, critical technologies, counterterrorism, quality infrastructure investment, humanitarian assistance and disaster relief, and maritime security.

NO BAIL FOR RAJ KUNDRA



INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Mumbai, July 28: In a huge setback, a Mumbai court Wednesday refused to grant bail to businessman Raj Kundra and his associate Ryan Thorpe in a case pertaining to alleged production and distribution of porn films.

Accordingly, Kundra - who was arrested July 19 by the Mumbai Police - will remain in judicial custody till August 10, as granted by the court Tuesday.

Kundra, through Senior Advocate Abad Ponda, has filed a separate petition in the Bombay High Court challenging his arrest, which he contended was "illegal", and pressed for quashing all orders of the Metropolitan Magistrate Court remanding him to police and then judicial custody.

However, Tuesday, Justice AS Gadkari refused to grant any interim relief before hearing the police version in the matter and the next hearing has been scheduled for Thursday (July 29).

Kundra is the husband of Bollywood actress Shilpa Shetty and last week the police raided their Juhu home and also recorded her statement, even as the case sent shockwaves through Hindi film industry.

EC meets CEOs of five states

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, July 28: Stepping up its preparations for the assembly polls in five states due early next year, the Election Commission Wednesday reviewed advance planning with the chief electoral officers of Goa, Manipur, Punjab, Uttarakhand and Uttar Pradesh.

The five Assembly polls could be held together early next year

While the terms of the legislative assemblies of Goa, Manipur, Punjab and Uttarakhand are scheduled to end on different dates in March 2022, the UP assembly's term ends in May. The Wednesday's preliminary meeting focused on various thematic issues including assured minimum facilities at polling stations, ease of registration for voters, electoral roll, timely resolution of grievances, arrangements of electronic voting and paper trail machines, postal ballot facility for senior citizens who are 80 and above, and people with disabilities.

NATURE'S FURY

Cloudbursts hit J&K, Himachal and Ladakh

AT LEAST 16 KILLED DUE TO A SERIES OF FLASH FLOODS

AGENCIES

Shimla/Jammu, July 28: A series of flash floods in Himachal Pradesh and the Union Territories of Jammu and Kashmir, and Ladakh killed at least 16 people Wednesday and damaged several residential houses, standing crops and a mini power plant, officials said.

In Kishtwar, a cloudburst hit a remote village around 4:30 am, leaving seven people dead and 17 others injured, while at least nine people are dead, two injured and seven reported missing in the flash floods in the hilly state, they said.

In Ladakh, two cloudbursts hit different areas of Kargil, causing damage to a mini power project, nearly a dozen residential houses and standing crops, the officials said, adding that no loss of life was reported in the cloudbursts, which struck Sangra and Khangral Tuesday evening.

Seven people died in Himachal Pradesh's Lahaul-Spiti flash floods in Tozing Nullah in Udaipur, two injured and three are still missing, while two men died in Chamba, State Disaster Management director Sudesh Kumar Mokhta said.

Besides four people, including a woman, her son, a hydro project official and a Delhi tourist are feared dead in Kullu district, he added. In Kishtwar, 19 houses, 21 cow sheds and a ration depot situated on the banks of a stream, besides a bridge were damaged in the cloudburst.

A search and rescue operation by police, Army and State Disaster Response Force (SDRF) is underway to locate over 14 people who are still missing from the scene of the cloudburst at village Hanzar in Dacchan tehsil, the officials said.



Army personnel during a rescue operation at Hanzar in Kishtwar district of Jammu and Kashmir

Condoling the loss of lives due to a cloudburst in Kishtwar district, President Ram Nath Kovind said he was deeply saddened by the death of many people.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi said the Centre is closely monitoring the situation in Kishtwar.

All possible assistance is being provided to the affected areas, he said, wishing for everyone's safety and well-being. Union Home Minister Amit Shah spoke to Jammu and Kashmir Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha and Director General of Police Dilbagh Singh and took stock of the situation arising due to the cloudburst.

"Seven bodies were recovered from the cloudburst-hit village (Kishtwar), while 17 others were rescued in an injured condition so far," a police official said.

Efforts are on to locate 14 missing people, he said, adding that the condition of five of the rescued persons was reported to be critical.

In Lahaul's Udaipur, two tents of labourers and a private JCB were washed away in the flash floods around 8 pm Tuesday, Mokhta said, adding that 12 labourers were

washed away in the flash floods in Tozing Nullah in Udaipur.

Of them, seven bodies recovered, two rescued with injuries and three are still missing, he added. In Jammu and Kashmir, Director General of Police-cum-Commandant General Home Guard, Civil Defence and SDRF, V K Singh, said two women are among the seven people killed in the cloudburst. The officials said floods have also been reported from Machail, Paddar and Bunjwah in Kishtwar district. The district development commissioner, Kishtwar, said two cloudbursts struck remote Lambard area overnight but there was no report of any loss of life.

He said 60 families were evacuated to safety from the Paddar area in view of incessant rains, which posed a threat to their homes.

Meanwhile, heavy rains continued to lash various parts of Himachal Pradesh, while most parts of Jammu region have been receiving heavy rains for the past few days with the prediction of more rains till July-end. Authorities in Kishtwar have already asked people living along water bodies and slide-prone areas to remain vigilant.

Oppn hardens stand on Pegasus issue

A number of prominent Indian politicians including Congress leader Rahul Gandhi, journalists, activists and government critics are suspected to be potential targets of the spyware

AGENCIES

New Delhi, July 28: The opposition Wednesday gathered its forces on the Pegasus spyware issue with leaders of 14 parties meeting to make a vigorous push for a debate in Parliament and a Supreme Court monitored probe, while a 15th, TMC chief Mamata Banerjee, declared the situation was worse than Emergency.

Unity was the opposition mantra for the day as multiple leaders took on the government for allegedly suppressing their voices and toughened their stand both inside and outside Parliament, where the Lok Sabha was adjourned for the day following protests and the Rajya Sabha was also repeatedly disrupted.

Earlier in the day, several leaders decided to submit similar adjournment notices on the matter of the snooping row targeting a host of people, including political leaders, journalists and civil society activists. Demanding a debate in Parliament in the presence of Prime Minister Narendra Modi or Home Minister Amit Shah, Congress leader Rahul Gandhi accused them of "hitting the soul of

India's democracy by snooping upon its institutions". "The opposition is united for a discussion on the Pegasus issue. We are not going anywhere till it is discussed in Parliament," Rahul Gandhi told reporters in the presence of leaders of 13 other opposition parties at Vijay Chowk near Parliament.

Hitting out at opposition leaders for creating a ruckus in Parliament over the Pegasus spying row and the farmer protests, and throwing papers at the Chair, the BJP said they have damaged the dignity of Parliament.

Union minister Anurag Thakur alleged that the Opposition is running away from debate and sought to know why it "doesn't want issues to be discussed in Parliament".

His colleague Sambit Patra added that "anyone who tries to prevent such a debate is striking a blow to the country". Gopal Yadav of the Samajwadi Party agreed and described as "false propaganda" the government's allegation that the opposition is running away from a discussion. Shiv Sena's Sanjay Raut said, "The government has indulged in backstabbing and attacked us with this weapon".



ASSAM-MIZORAM BORDER VIOLENCE

Decades-old relation between two states sour

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Silchar (Assam)/Aizawl, July 28: Policemen, traders, workers -- people from all walks of life -- are deeply disheartened over the violent clashes on the Assam-Mizoram borders which recently led to the killing of five Assam police personnel, besides injuring around 100 civilians and security personnel from the two neighbouring north-eastern states.

The injured Assam police personnel, traders doing business in both Assam and Mizoram, construction workers working in the two states and other people have been deeply saddened by the recent turn of events, stating that the people of the two states shared close ties for decades, which were damaged by Monday's violent border clashes.

Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma, who rushed to Silchar in southern Assam Tuesday to pay his tribute to the martyred policemen, said that

IT'S ABOUT LAND

Northern Mizoram's Aizawl, Kolasib and Mamit districts share 164.6 km borders with southern Assam's Cachar, Karimganj and Hailakandi districts. Violence this week resulted in the deaths of at least 5 Assam policemen. Scores were injured. Here's a snapshot of the Assam-Mizoram border dispute

THE PROBLEM

Mizoram was a district of Assam until 1972 when it was carved out as a Union Territory (it later became a state). Assam wants district border line to be the states' territory

Mizoram says boundary line as in Bengal Eastern Frontier Regulation (BEFR) Act 1875 should be actual boundary

LATEST INCIDENT

Five Assam policemen were killed and hundreds others were injured in border clashes July 26. Each side continues to blame the other for the continuing tension



PROVOCATION

Assam Chief Minister said 1,777 hectare of forest land in the three districts have been encroached by the Mizos

Mizoram Chief Secretary rebutted this claim, saying the area had been with Mizo villagers for over 100 years

RECENT FLARE-UPS

In October last year, violence on the Assam-Mizoram border ended after the intervention of Union Home Minister and CMs of the both states. Central paramilitary troops were deployed to prevent fresh troubles

Since June 29, trouble began following accusations of encroachment against each other

this is not like China-India border dispute, but a dispute between two Indian states in which arms should not have been used.

"The people of Assam and Mizoram have shared close relations and common interests for decades. Nobody is enemy of the other. Then why use arms? Such border disputes can be resolved amicably and through discussions," Sarma said in Guwahati Wednesday.

Jamil Ahmed, a trader who has business in both Assam's Cachar district and in Mizoram, said that such border incidents would harm the business of the traders of the two states.

Dulal Bhuiyan, a construction worker, said that hundreds of workers and labourers from southern Assam would be affected by the border disputes, as they frequently go to Mizoram for various government and private works.

Thousands of families belonging to the two states live on either sides of the inter-state borders and many of them have petty

shops, farm lands and other assets, while some run vehicles ferrying people and materials between the two states.

Meanwhile, Mizoram Chief Minister Zoramthanga Wednesday urged the people to maintain peace and calm.

"I sincerely request all to stay calm and promote peace in this time of great difficulty. Mizoram hopes for an amicable solution with the help of intervention from the Central government," he tweeted.

Mizoram Home Secretary, Pi Lalbiaktsangi, Wednesday sent a letter to the Union Home Secretary on the "economic blockade by Assam from Monday" and "destruction" of railway lines affecting the supply of essentials and foodgrains to Mizoram.

Meanwhile, a neutral central force will be deployed along the disturbed Assam-Mizoram border where five policemen and a civilian were killed following a bloody clash recently, officials said Wednesday.

international

of the day quote

41.8 million Germans now have full protection, while 61.1 percent have received at least one shot. The more people who get vaccinated, the safer we will be in autumn and winter

Others should use your experiences. This experience is a distrust of the West. In this government, it was shown up that trust in the West does not work. Westerners do not help us, they hit wherever they can

There is no other shortcut, there is no other way through, we have to just hunker down and push through. There will be lots of criticisms, there will be lots of hindsight, but this Delta strain is very unpredictable

SHORT TAKES

US, Russia hold nuclear talks

Geneva: Senior US and Russian officials Wednesday restarted talks on easing tensions between the world's largest nuclear weapons powers and agreed to reconvene in September after informal consultations, the State Department said.

Junta seeks int'l help amid surge

Yangon: Junta authorities in Myanmar are seeking help from the international community to tackle the coronavirus, state media said Wednesday, as the impoverished country looks beyond ally China in its struggle to beat back a new wave.

Palestinian killed by Israeli troops

Jerusalem: Palestinian health officials said a man was shot and killed Tuesday by Israeli forces in the occupied West Bank. The Israeli military said the man approached troops wielding an iron bar.

Toll rises to 73 in rain-hit Henan

Zhengzhou: The death toll from torrential rain in central China's Henan Province has risen to 73 as of Wednesday noon, said the provincial emergency management department.



I think the US has really messed it up in Afghanistan. And people like me who kept saying that there's no military solution, were called anti-American. I was called Taliban Khan

IMRAN KHAN | PM, PAKISTAN

MT SINABUNG ERUPTS

Indonesia's Mount Sinabung erupted Wednesday, spewing a massive column of smoke and ash into the sky. The eruption of the volcano in North Sumatra province lasted about 12 minutes, a local geological agency said



DELTA THREAT

US CDC reimposes mask mandate



NEW GUIDELINES People living in high-transmission communities to wear masks in indoor public spaces, even if they've been vaccinated

UK announces 100M global vaccine rollout

Britain announced Wednesday it would begin donating millions of coronavirus vaccine doses around the world, including Commonwealth countries, following its pledge to provide 100 million jabs globally by next June.

Taliban leader meets Chinese FM

Beijing, July 28: A Taliban delegation led by Mullah Abdul Ghani Baradar Wednesday made a surprise visit to China and held talks with Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi, during which the Taliban leader termed Beijing as a "trustworthy friend"



Afghanistan will not allow anyone to use the territory to do things that would undermine the interests of its people. Afghanistan would like to have friendly ties with its neighbours.

We hope relevant sides can go ahead with peace talks, follow an inclusive policy, relevant factions groups in Afghanistan should implement the principle of Afghan-owned and Afghan-led approach and strive for substantive outcomes at an early date and build a political architecture suited to its own national conditions

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Washington, July 28: Barely three months after suggesting that vaccinated people no longer needed to wear masks, indoors or out, the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has now recommended people to resume wearing masks amid the surging delta variant, the media reported.

lifted in May, the Washington post reported.

"It is not a welcome piece of news that masking is going to be a part of people's lives who have already been vaccinated," Walensky said. "This new guidance weighs heavily on me."

Prez Bolsonaro shuffles Cabinet

The labor ministry, dating back to 1930, was dissolved by Bolsonaro on his first day in office Jan 1, 2019

Brasilia, July 28: Brazilian President Jair Bolsonaro appointed center-right Senator Ciro Nogueira as his chief of staff Wednesday to shore up waning political support in Congress, and recreated the labor ministry to deal with record unemployment.



tasked with tackling record unemployment exacerbated by the pandemic. Brazil's jobless rate was at a historic high of 14.7% in April.

Billionaire Beijing critic jailed over provoking trouble

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

Beijing, July 28: A Chinese court sentenced agricultural tycoon Sun Dawu to 18 years in jail Wednesday for a catalogue of crimes including "provoking trouble" after the outspoken billionaire and grassroots rights supporter was tried in secret.

He was detained by police in November along with 19 relatives and business associates after his firm was embroiled in a land dispute with a state-owned competitor. Sun was also fined 3.11 million yuan (\$475,000) by the court Wednesday.

STIR AGAINST HEALTH PASS



Protesters demonstrate against the Green Pass plan, a digital or paper certificate that shows if someone has received at least the first dose of the vaccine, has tested negative or has recently recovered from Covid-19, that will be mandatory for indoor dining, cultural and sports events from next week in Rome, Italy

THE TOMORROW WAR

Biden warns of cyber conflict with Russia, China

AGENCIES

Washington, July 28: President Joe Biden Tuesday warned that if the United States ended up in a "real shooting war" with a "major power" it could be the result of a significant cyber attack on the country, highlighting what Washington sees as growing threats posed by Russia and China.



hour speech while visiting the Office of the Director of National Intelligence (ODNI). Since then, senior members of the Biden administration's national security team have been in constant contact with senior members of the Kremlin over cyber attacks on the United States, the White House has said.

to President Xi Jinping as "deadly earnest about becoming the most powerful military force in the world, as well as the largest and most prominent economy in the world by the mid-40s, the 2040s."

CAPITOL RIOT PROBE

Officers reveal horrors faced while stopping rioters

NEARLY SEVEN MONTHS SINCE THE ATTACKS, MORE VIDEO INVESTIGATIONS REVEALED SEVERAL RIOTERS HAD FLASHED WHITE SUPREMACIST GANG SIGNS AND 'WHITE POWER' HAND SIGNALS DURING THE INSURRECTION

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Washington, July 28: It had only been hinted at in previous public examinations of the Jan 6 Capitol insurrection: Scores of rioters attacked police officers not just with makeshift weapons, stun guns and fists, but with racist slurs and accusations of treason.

consumed by the fury of wanting to keep him in the White House. Capitol Police Officer Harry Dunn told lawmakers about an exchange he had with rioters, who disputed that President Joe Biden defeated Trump in the last presidential election.



told to "Put your gun down and we'll show you what kind of n— you really are!"



African American officer facing down racists and enduring racial slurs in the halls of democracy.



Dominican Republic, only to face fellow Americans who considered him a traitor for defending the Capitol Jan 6.

ple, rioters (and) citizens, turning against us." "As America and the world watched in horror what was happening to us at the Capitol, we did not receive timely reinforcements and support we needed," he said.

of the day quote

The recovery trend in key economic indicators is indicating strengthened growth trajectory of Indian economy in the coming months

SANJAY AGGARWAL | PRESIDENT, PHDCCI

The government is striving to complete privatisation of CPSEs listed out in the Budget, including Air India, BPCL and BEML, in the current fiscal ending March 2022

TUHIN KANTA PANDEY | SECRETARY, DIPAM

The MSME credit data speaks volumes of success of ECLGS scheme. The scheme has played a major role in 40 per cent YoY growth in disbursements to the sector, thereby reviving the business sentiments among the MSMEs

SIVASUBRAMANIAN RAMANN | CHAIRMAN AND MD, SIDBI

SHORT TAKES

M&M to adopt captive solar plant

Mumbai: Automobile major Mahindra & Mahindra (M&M) will adopt a 58 MW captive solar plant that is expected to generate about 100 million units of power annually beginning 2022. Accordingly, the plant is located in Parbhani district in the Marathwada region of Maharashtra, the solar plant will be built, owned, and operated for a period of 25 years by ReNew Sunlight Energy, which is a 100% subsidiary of ReNew Power.

'Dell, now country's most desired brand'

New Delhi: Austin-based Dell has become India's most desired brand (MDB), according to TRA Research. It has risen, from previous year's sixth position, to beat four-time leader Samsung Mobiles. Mi from Xiaomi became the second most desired brand in India gaining ten ranks from the 2020 report. Home-bound consumers showed a high preference for televisions and ranked LG Televisions third with a climb of twelve ranks over the previous year, closely followed by Samsung (television) at fourth rank.

ABB India net jumps four-fold

New Delhi: ABB India Wednesday posted a four-fold jump in its net profit to ₹68 crore in the June quarter compared to the year-ago period mainly due to higher revenues. The net profit of the company from continuing operations was ₹17 crore in the quarter ended June 30, 2021, the company said in a statement. ABB India follows January-December fiscal. Total revenue of the firm rose to ₹1,425 crore in the quarter from ₹986 crore a year ago.

'Zomato IPO has busted myths'

New Delhi: Zomato's stellar debut on Dalal Street has busted the myth that companies get better valuations on listing overseas, Info Edge founder Sanjeev Bikhchandani said Wednesday. He added that the "unprecedented" interest in the IPO -- especially from the millennials -- reflects how people are willing to invest in firms that may be loss making but have a solid business model. Bikhchandani wrote Zomato's first cheque of ₹4.7 crore in 2010 and was its only investor in the first four funding rounds.



We set a new June quarter revenue record of \$81.4bn, up 36% from last year, and the vast majority of markets we tracked grew double digits, with especially strong growth in emerging markets, including India, Latin America and Vietnam

TIM COOK | CEO, APPLE

CENTRE PREFERS KOO OVER TWITTER

Twitter is fast losing its sheen as a favoured communications tool for many Indian government departments and ministers keen to promote home-grown rival Koo while the US firm comes under fire for non-compliance with India's laws



MAKE IN INDIA

If Tesla joins, govt will lower import duty, offer sops

AGENCIES

New Delhi, July 28: Government may consider lowering import duty along with offering other sops to Tesla, but for that, the electric vehicle major would have to invest in setting up manufacturing facility in the country. Tesla had urged the Centre earlier to reduce import duty in electric vehicles. It wants to bring its latest electric vehicles as completely built unit initially before looking at its assembly and manufacturing in India.

An official source noted that government will consider the request electric vehicle major if it decides to manufacture its cars in the country and commits investment in putting up a plant. The official, however, made it clear that any decision on the matter or extension of sops



will apply to the entire sector and not just a particular company.

Central government along with few other state governments has already taken a number of steps to

promote electric vehicles in the country. Along with incentivising EV manufacturing in the country, government has also come up with tax benefits on purchase of electric

The EV major wants to bring its latest EVs as completely built unit initially before looking at its assembly and manufacturing in India

vehicles. Delhi and Maharashtra also have come up with their own EV policies.

Musk recently said that his electric vehicle (EV) company wants to launch cars in India, but the country's import duties on EVs are "highest in the world by far".

Replying to an Indian YouTube user on Twitter, who asked him to launch Tesla cars ASAP in India, Musk last week blamed high im-

port rates in the country.

"We want to do so, but import duties are the highest in the world by far of any large country," he wrote. "Moreover, clean energy vehicles are treated the same as diesel or petrol, which does not seem entirely consistent with the climate goals of India," he added.

At present, India imposes 60% duty on imported cars that are priced below \$40,000 and 100 per cent for those above that figure. This makes most of the completely built unit imported cars twice as expensive as they are many foreign markets.

Government formulated Faster Adoption and Manufacturing of (Hybrid & Electric Vehicles in India (FAME India) Scheme in 2015 to reduce dependency on fossil fuel and to address issues of vehicular emissions.

OnePlus launches Nord 2 5G in state

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 28: Global technology brand OnePlus launched the Nord 2 5G, the newest addition to the company's more affordable smartphone line. The OnePlus Nord 2 combines flagship-level hardware, including a 50 MP AI triple camera with a Sony IMX766 sensor and optical image stabilization (OIS), Warp Charge 65, and the flagship MediaTek Dimensity 1200-AI processor; along with OnePlus's signature Oxygen OS software to offer users a fast, smooth, and versatile experience.

The OnePlus Nord 2 5G integrates powerful camera hardware with AI-assisted software enhancements, courtesy of the new MediaTek chipset, to deliver an outstanding and versatile photography experience.

The Nord 2 brings major improvements in nighttime photography with OIS and the main 50MP Sony IMX766 sensor, which is capable of capturing 56% more light than the Sony IMX586 from the first Nord. Like the flagship OnePlus 9 series, the Nord 2 features a 4500mAh dual cell battery.

'Digital payments up 30.2% in FY21'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, July 28: Digital payments have recorded a growth of 30.19% during the year ended March 2021, reflecting adoption and deepening of cashless transactions in the country, RBI data showed. As per the newly constituted Digital Payments Index (RBI-DPI), the index rose to 270.59 at the end of March 2021, up from 207.84 a year ago.

"The RBI-DPI index has demonstrated significant growth in the index representing the rapid adoption and deepening of digital payments across the country in recent years," the RBI said.

The Reserve Bank had earlier announced construction of a composite Reserve Bank of India - Digital Payments Index (RBI-DPI) with March 2018 as base to capture the extent of digitisation of payments across the country.

The RBI-DPI comprises five broad parameters that enable measurement of deepening and penetration of digital payments in the country over different time period.

'AI technologies seen as game changer for real estate sector'

AI is seen as a game changer in the industry, especially during the pandemic that has led to increased adoption of technologies and the embracing of innovation by the industry



AGENCIES

New Delhi, July 28: Technology-enabled real estate development is rewriting the future of the sector which has faced a huge downturn during the pandemic but is gradually showing slow but sure signs of recovery, leading industry experts said Wednesday.

Technologies like AI are being seen as game-changers in the industry, especially during the pandemic that has led to increased adoption of technologies and the embracing of innovation by the industry.

From Artificial Intelligence recommendations to Virtual Reality tours, home buying and selling has undergone a drastic change with increased efficiency in marketing, due diligence and sales processes.

While investments in PropTech have been on an upswing over the last few years and the industry today has several successful PropTech companies like 99acres, PropTiger and Magicbricks operating in India for some time now, leading global real estate technology companies like Compass, Inc. have also set up their technology

hub in India in the last year.

The major focus of Compass India Development Centre has been on expediting software engineering and development across the fields of Mobile Apps, Cloud Computing, Artificial Intelligence, Machine Learning, RPA and Data analytics. For instance, the company has recently announced the launch of an AI-powered video studio globally.

"In real estate marketing, images and video are paramount. The most competitive agents must be able to create beautiful, persuasive marketing videos to attract the right buyers, but doing so is time-consuming, difficult and expensive. With Video Studio, Compass agents have the power of a professional graphic designer at their fingertips, allowing them to create compelling marketing content for social media, email or digital ads" said Joseph Sirosh, Chief Technology Officer, Compass, Inc. and a global AI expert.

Another recent technological development in the real estate landscape is virtual tours. Virtual tours and virtual reality allow customers to follow 3D views of properties online.

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 28: National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (Nabard) has sanctioned ₹356 crore for construction of 35 bridges in Odisha under the Rural Infrastructure Development Fund (RIDF) scheme. Chief General Manager of Nabard, Odisha Regional Office C Udayabhaskar said, "Nabard has sanctioned RIDF assistance of ₹356 crore to the Government of Odisha under RIDF for construction of 35 bridge projects covering 17 districts in the state. These bridge projects are intended to provide improvement in rural connectivity to 11.06 lakh people in 1,324 villages."

The 17 districts earmarked under the bridge projects are Keonjhar, Koraput, Sambalpur, Bolangir, Jajpur, Angul, Nayagarh, Jharsuguda, Balasore, Bhadrak, Cuttack, Deogarh, Jagatsinghpur, Kandhamal, Malkangiri, Nayagarh and Sundargarh.

During the current financial year, critical rural infrastructure projects under drinking water, irrigation and rural connectivity (road and bridge) are being proposed to be supported under RIDF-



FOSTERING RURAL ECONOMY

These bridge projects are intended to provide improvement in rural connectivity to 11.06 lakh people in 1,324 villages

This project will cover 17 districts in Odisha

During the current FY, critical rural infrastructure projects under drinking water, irrigation and rural connectivity are being proposed to be supported under RIDF-XXVII

XXVII. The cumulative sanction under RIDF for the current year stands at ₹1,047 crore.

These infrastructure projects will play a key role in supporting

rural economy by improving the livelihoods of people.

Nabard, in the month of June, also sanctioned an RIDF assistance of ₹254 crore to the Government of Odisha under RIDF for the setting up of two mega piped drinking water supply projects; one each in Jajpur district (covering Badachana and Dharmasala blocks) and Puri district (covering Brahmagiri and Krushnaprasad block).

These projects are expected to provide clean and safe drinking water to 8.78 lakh rural population across 1.37 lakh households in 565 villages of the state on completion. On completion, they will contribute in achieving the goal of provision of drinking water to the rural population by 2022.

BIZ BUZZ

Samsung to unveil new Z Series

NEW DELHI: Samsung announced that the company will launch its latest and greatest Galaxy Z series August, 2021. "We will unleash our latest and greatest Galaxy Z



series to reshape the smartphone category and completely reimagining your experiences," said TM Roh, President and Head of Mobile Communications Business, Samsung Electronics. Hinting at the launch of two new foldable smartphones August 11, Roh said the Z Fold will combine the very best that smartphones and tablets offer, while the Z Flip will exhibit an even more refined style, armed with more durable, stronger materials. For our third generation of Galaxy Z phones, the company has lined up even more partner apps that make the most of the versatile fold-out format.

Airtel upgrades prepaid plans

BHUBANESWAR: A leading telecom service provider Bharti Airtel announced revisions to its prepaid plans. Airtel has discontinued its ₹49 entry level prepaid recharge. The company's prepaid packs will now start from the ₹79 Smart Recharge and offer up to four times more outgoing minutes of usage to customers along with double data. This change is in line with the Company's focus on offering superior connectivity solutions. Airtel customers on entry level recharges can now stay connected for longer without worrying about their account balance. The revision is effective from July 29, 2021.



TOP LOSERS 28 JUL		
1653.20	Kotak Mahi	-2.64%
4730.20	Dr Reddys Labs	-2.36%
728.45	M&M	-2.27%
228.05	Power Grid	-1.74%
116.70	NTPC	-1.73%
1417.60	HDFC Bank	-1.54%
17988.00	Nestle	-1.37%
7150.00	Maruti Suzuki	-1.26%
722.70	Axis Bank	-1.24%
982.65	HCL Tech	-1.02%
POINTS BSE SENSEX		
-135.05		

'Capital markets to play bigger role in funding eco growth'

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, July 28: Markets regulator Securities and Exchange Board of India's (SEBI) Chairman Ajay Tyagi Wednesday said that a large part of the non-banking financial intermediation is happening through the capital markets, and going ahead, they will play a bigger role in the economic growth of the country.

"Going forward, the capital markets are going to play a bigger role in funding the economic growth," he said. Addressing the 18th Annual Capital Markets Conference, organised by FICCI, Tyagi said that going forward the focus area for the SEBI will be on strengthening the robustness of capital markets.

"The household financial savings deployed in the securities market is rising and sustaining it will give tremendous boost to both

the capital markets and the economy," he added.

On IPOs, fund raising and disclosures, he said that the success of IPOs from new age tech companies will attract more funds and help create a new eco-system of entrepreneurs and investors.

"The SEBI is constantly reviewing the regime. The framework for minimum public shareholding was revised to make it easier for large companies to make an IPO. Focus on review of equity fundraising norms will continue in future and the SEBI's Primary Market Committee is deliberating if SPAC framework should be introduced in India. From raising through traditional equity and debt instruments, corporates have diversified into a large number of new instruments. As the market dynamics change, even more innovative instruments are likely to



appear."

The SEBI chief said that the regulator has been active in the efforts to strengthen the market and several reforms are in the pipeline.

For listing of start-ups, a separate platform 'Innovators Growth Platform' was created. "For fund raising requirements of the social sector, we are in the process of setting up of an entire eco-system

Going forward, the capital markets are going to play a bigger role in funding the economic growth. The household financial savings deployed in the securities market is rising and sustaining it will give tremendous boost to both the capital markets and the economy

AJAY TYAGI, CHAIRMAN | SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE BOARD OF INDIA

called 'Social Stock Exchange,' he added.

On the issue of corporate governance, he said that while independent directors have an important role, other directors should also play a more active role in company management.

There is a need to continuously

improve the corporate governance standards and transparency should come from within the company itself, he added.

"With the increased awareness and maturing of capital markets, well-governed companies carry the trust of investors and reap benefits in the long run. I urge FICCI to step up its efforts on corporate governance improvement of its members. If industry self-governs well, the need for the regulator to step in every time will not arise," he emphasised.

National Stock Exchange of India Ltd MD & CEO Vikram Limaye said that the digital adoption and addition of new customers will continue on an accelerated trajectory in coming years. He said that SEBI is working with other stakeholders to reduce the listing time further and it is expected to be reduced to 2-3 days.

INDIAN SAILORS LANGUISH AT BOTTOM IN SKIFF 49ER

ENOSHIMA: The Indian pair of K Ganapathy and Varun Thakkar languished at 18th after four races in the men's skiff 49er sailing event at the Tokyo Olympics here Wednesday. The Indian duo finished 18th, 17th and 19th in the three races on Wednesday. They finished 18th in the first race Tuesday in 19-team race at Enoshima Yacht Harbour. Eight more races and a medal round remain in the competition. Vishnu Saravanan and Nethra Kumanan finished way behind the leaders Tuesday, ending at 22nd and 33rd spot in the respective events after six races.

INDIAN ROWERS FAIL TO QUALIFY FOR FINALS

TOKYO: Indian rowers Arjun Lal Jat and Arvind Singh failed to qualify for the men's lightweight double sculls final at the Tokyo Olympics after finishing sixth and last in the second semifinal here Wednesday. Arjun and Arvind clocked 6:24.41 to finish last in the six-team semifinal 2 at the Sea Forest Waterway. The top three pairs in each of the two semifinals qualify for the final. Arjun and Arvind have, however, produced the best-ever Olympic performance by Indian rowers by reaching the semifinals. They will finish at least at the 12th spot.

BRITISH MAKE RELAY HISTORY

TOKYO: For the first time in more than a century, Britain claimed a relay gold at the Olympic pool. The United States, shockingly, didn't even make the podium. A dynamic quartet carried the British to a dominating victory in the men's 4x200-meter freestyle relay Wednesday. Tom Dean led off and Duncan Scott swam the anchor leg. James Guy and Matthew Richards took the middle legs. The British just missed the world record with a winning time of 6 minutes, 58.58 seconds. The Americans set the record at 6:58.55 in rubberized suits at the 2009 World Championships in Rome. For the first time, the US failed to win a relay medal. It was Britain's first relay gold since that aforementioned women's 4x100 free in 1912, with their only victory coming in the men's 4x200 free relay at the 1908 London Games.

RICHARLISON LIFTS BRAZIL

SAITAMA: Richarlison scored a pair of goals and Brazil advanced to the quarterfinals of the men's Olympic football tournament with a 3-1 victory over Saudi Arabia Wednesday. Brazil started the day at the top of the standings in Group D, which includes Germany and Ivory Coast, but needed a win or draw to advance. Matheus Cunha gave Brazil the lead in the 14th minute, but Abdulleh Almarri equalised in the 27th with a goal that was confirmed by video review. Richarlison scored a header in the 76th, and then added his second in stoppage time. He now has five goals at the Tokyo Games.

Deepika through to last 16

TOKYO: World No.1 archer Deepika Kumari survived some anxious moments before getting past US teenager Jennifer Mucino-Fernandez 6-4 to sail into the pre-quarterfinals of the women's individual section and keep Indian medal hopes alive at the Tokyo Olympics here Wednesday.

On a day her teammates Tarundeep Rai and Pravin Jadhav made second round exits, Deepika seemed to feel the pressure initially as she started off hitting the red-zone, capping a poor seven at the floodlit Yumenoshima Park.

Deepika lost the first set by one point but she bounced back strongly with three 10s in a row to take a 4-2 lead. She, however, failed to wrap up the match in the fourth set as she misfired a six in her second arrow.

The 18-year-old American made it 4-4, winning the set by one-point (25-24). In the winner-takes-all fifth set, Deepika had two 8s to start with before finishing with a poor 8.

Needing a 10 in her last arrow to force a shoot-off, Jennifer signed off with a nine in what was a promising campaign for the American teenager.

Deepika's husband Atanu Das is the only other Indian left in the fray. The India No.1, who slipped to 35th place in the ranking, begins

his campaign against Deng Yu-Cheng of Chinese Taipei in his opening round of 64 match Thursday.

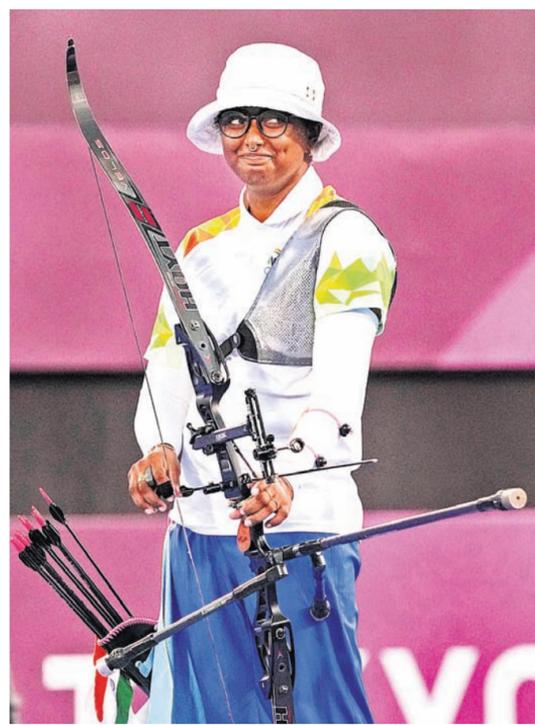
Earlier, Deepika sailed into the second round with a facile 6-0 win over lower-ranked Karma of Bhutan in her opening match.

World No.193 Karma, the flag bearer of Bhutan—a country where archery is national sport—during the opening ceremony, had poor scores of 23, 23 and 24 in the third set where she managed a 10.

The Indian also had a slow start, scoring 26 each in the first two sets, before she picked up with a 27 to seal her last 32 berth.

Olympic debutant Jadhav knocked out World No.2 Galsan Bazarzhapov in his opening match only to suffer a heavy defeat to World Champion Brady Ellison in the second round. The 25-year-old was at his best in his first round match, beating Bazarzhapov of Russian Olympic Committee in straight sets. But, he could not continue his impressive form and succumbed to Ellison, the American World No.1 in his next match.

Rai too had made a second round exit, going down to Itay Shanny of Israel in a tight shoot-off finish for a heartbreaking exit in his swansong Olympics.



Boxer Pooja Rani sails into quarters

TOKYO: Two-time Asian champion Indian boxer Pooja Rani (75kg) out-punched Algeria's Ichrak Chaib in her opening bout to enter the quarterfinals of her maiden Olympic Games here Wednesday.

The 30-year-old Indian clinched it 5-0, thoroughly dominating a rival 10 years her junior. The Haryana-boxer was in command with her right straights and also benefitted immensely from Chaib's lack of balance in the ring. All three rounds were a story of Rani's domination as Chaib, also appearing in her maiden Olympics, just could not figure a way to connect cleanly.



Next up for Rani is Olympic bronze-medallist, two-time Asian champion, and former world gold-medallist Li Qian of China. The two will square off July 31.

The 31-year-old has an impressive record against the Indian, having beaten her in the semifinals of the 2014 Asian Games as well as last year's Asian Olympic qualifiers in Jordan.

3rd straight loss for eves



Indian players celebrates their goal against Great Britain, Wednesday

TOKYO: The Indian women's hockey team wasted chances galore to lose 1-4 against defending champions Great Britain here Wednesday, their third consecutive preliminary stage defeat which reduces the side's chances of qualifying for the Olympic quarterfinals.

The Indians were guilty of wasting opportunities in their first two games and the trend continued Wednesday at the Oi Hockey Stadium as Great Britain punished them through strikes from Hannah Martin (second and 19th minutes), Lily Owsley (41st minute) and Grace Balsdon (57th minute).

This Great Britain's second consecutive win in Pool A. For India, Sharmila Devi scored the lone goal in the 23rd minute. The Indians needed at least a point from this game to be safe but they now will

have to win their remaining two matches to have any chance of qualifying for the knockout stage.

India had earlier lost 1-5 to World No.1 the Netherlands before slumping to a 0-2 defeat against Germany Rani Rampal's side will next play Ireland Friday. Despite the score-line, it was a close match between World No.11 India and World No.5 Britain.

The difference between the two teams was that India had the better share of chances but Great Britain utilised more opportunities that came their way.

India secured as many as eight penalty corners in the match but converted just one. Great Britain too didn't have great success rate from set pieces as they found the net just once from the six they earned.

INDIA'S SCHEDULE

ARCHERY: Atanu Das vs Deng Yu-Cheng (Chinese Taipei) in Men's Individual 1/32 Elimination Match; **7:30am IST;**

BADMINTON: PV Sindhu vs Mia Blichfeldt (Denmark) in Women's Singles Round of 16 Match; **6:15am IST;**

BOXING: Satish Kumar vs Ricardo Brown (Jamaica) in Men's +91kg Round of 16 Match; **8:45am IST;** MC Mary Kom vs Ingrid Lorena Valencia (Colombia) in Women's 51kg Round of 16 Bout; **3:35pm IST;**

EQUESTRIAN: Fouaad Mirza's Eventing 1st Horse Inspection; **6am IST;**

GOLF: Anirban Lahiri and Udayan Mane in Men's Individual Stroke Play Round 1; **04:00am IST;**

HOCKEY: India vs Argentina Men's Pool A match; **6:00am IST;**

ROWING: Arjun Lal Jat and Arvind Singh in Men's Lightweight Double Sculls Final B (For rankings, not medal round); **5:20am IST;**

SAILING: KC Ganapathy and Varun Thakkar in Men's Skiff 49er Race 5 and 6; **8:35am IST;** Nethra Kumanan in Women's Laser Radial Race 7 and 8; **8:45am IST;** Vishnu Saravanan in Men's Laser Race 7 and 8; **8:35am IST;**

SHOOTING: Rahi Sarnobat and Manu Bhaker in Women's 25m Pistol Qualification Precision; **5:30am IST.**

SINDHU ENTERS PRE-QUARTERS

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Tokyo, July 28: Reigning World Champion PV Sindhu stormed into the pre-quarterfinals of women's singles badminton event but B Sai Praneeth's maiden Olympic campaign ended in agony in the men's competition of the Tokyo Games here Wednesday.

Sindhu, who had claimed a silver medal in the last edition in Rio, beat World No.34 Hong Kong's NY Cheung 21-9, 21-16 in a 35-minute match to top Group J.

However, 13th seed Praneeth failed to bring his 'A' game to the table once again, going down 14-21, 14-21 to Mark Caljouw of Netherlands in 40 minutes for his second defeat in Group D. The World No.15 Indian had earlier lost his opening round to Israel's Misha Zilberman. World No.29 Caljouw, with this win, topped the group to qualify for the knockout stage.

Only the group toppers advance to the knockout stage.

For Sindhu, it was her sixth win over Cheung in as many meetings. World No.7 Sindhu will meet Denmark's World No.12 Mia Blichfeldt, who topped Group I. Sindhu has a 4-1 head-to-head record against Blichfeldt, whose only win against the Indian was at the Yonex Thailand Open earlier this year.

The shuttler from Hyderabad, seeded sixth, had defeated Ksenia Polikarpova of Israel in her opening match. Sindhu used her repertoire of strokes to good effect and her ability to vary the pace troubled the Hong Kong player.

Sindhu made her run around the court and came up with perfect placements to win points. Cheung got a few points with her deceptive cross court returns but she committed too many unforced errors to have any chance of putting pressure on the Indian in the first game.

Sindhu led 6-2 early on before galloping to 10-3. She committed a rare error at 10-3 before entering the interval at 11-5. The Indian didn't have any trouble after resumption as she zoomed to 20-9 and pocketed the opening game when Cheung netted a return.

Cheung was looking to script a turnaround in the second game as she extended the rallies and with Sindhu too struggling to control the shuttle, the duo moved to 6-6 and 8-8. Sindhu also made some errors to hand over a slender one point advantage to her opponent. Cheung tried to put pressure on Sindhu but the Indian wriggled out with her superior strokeplay which included a few straight down the line smashes.

Sindhu moved to 19-14 before grabbing six match points but she missed the lines again and netted a shot to squander two of them before sealing it with a smash.

SL level series against COVID-hit India

AGENCIES

Colombo, July 28: Dhananjaya de Silva (40 n o) helped Sri Lanka level the three-match T20I series against India as they won the second game by four wickets here, Wednesday. Chasing 133, the hosts completed the task with two balls to spare.

Sri Lanka were in a spot of bother when they were reduced to 66/4 in the 12th over after the departure of well-set Minod Bhanuka (36). But De Silva and Wanindu Hasaranga (15) added a quick 28 to excel the run-rate before Rahul Chahar (1/27) got rid of the latter.

Sri Lanka, however, had to toil hard before crossing the finish line as they lost a wicket in between. Kuldeep Yadav (2/30) was stand-out among the bowlers. Varun Chakravarthy (1/18), Bhuvneshwar Kumar (1/21) and Chetan Sakariya (1/34) also bagged a wicket each.



Chamika Karunaratne (L) gives Dhananjaya de Silva a fist bump during their innings

Earlier, Sri Lankan bowlers exploited the conditions well to restrict a COVID-hit India to a paltry 132/5 after winning the toss and opting to bowl against India, who have been forced to field four debutants.

The depleted Indian side had debutants in IPL stars Rituraj Gaikwad,

Devdutt Padikkal, Nitish Rana and Sakariya as the visitors have only five specialist batsmen after both Pandya brothers—Hardik and Krunal—were ruled out of the series.

Dhawan (40) and Gaikwad (21) and the duo played watchful cricket to help India reach 45 for no loss at

the end of the powerplay. However, Gaikwad was dismissed the next over to leave India at 49/1 in 7 overs.

Dhawan and Padikkal (29) were going well before the skipper was perished off an Akila Dananjaya (2/29) delivery. From 81/2, India were reduced to 104/4 after losing Padikkal and Sanju Samson (7). Nitish Rana (9) and Bhuvneshwar Kumar (13 n o) helped India go past 130-run mark.

The match, which was postponed after India all-rounder Krunal Pandya tested positive for COVID-19, also led to isolation of eight visiting team players who however were found negative.

BRIEF SCORES: India 132/5 (Shikhar Dhawan 40, Devdutt Padikkal 29, Rituraj Gaikwad 21; Akila Dananjaya 2/29) lost to Sri Lanka 133/6 (Dhananjaya de Silva 40 n o, Minod Bhanuka 36; Kuldeep Yadav 2/30) by 4 wickets.

'Touch artist' Natekar no more

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Pune, July 28: One of Indian badminton's earliest superstar Nandu Natekar, whose on-court grace was often compared to a ballet dancer, died Wednesday after suffering from age-related ailments here.

The 88-year-old, who won over 100 national and international titles in his career, is survived by his son former Davis Cupper Gaurav and two daughters.

"He passed away peacefully at home and we were all with him. He has been ailing for the last three months and he passed away peacefully," Gaurav told this agency.

Natekar, who was considered one of most popular sportspersons of his time, had the distinction of playing multiple sports, including tennis and badminton.

Born in Sangli, Maharashtra, in 1933, Natekar had played tennis initially in his career and even



reached the junior nationals final against the legendary Ramanathan Krishnan. But a loss to 1951-52 'Junior National' final to Krishnan saw him switch over to badminton.

Natekar, a six-time national singles champion, made his India debut at the age of 20 and went on to lead the country in the Thomas Cup men's team championship for

more than a decade from 1951-1963.

Recipient of the first Arjuna Award in 1961, Natekar was known for his artistry with the racquet, mesmerising his opponents with his deception skills and stroke perfection.

He created history being the first Indian to win an international event—the Selangor International crown in Kuala Lumpur in 1956.

He and Meena Shah had bagged the mixed doubles crown in Kings Cup International in Bangkok in 1962 and a year later he also won the singles title against all odds at the same event.

A former World No.3, he had also represented India at the 1965 Commonwealth Games in Jamaica. He also won multiple men's doubles and mixed-doubles national titles during his career spanning 15 years and reached the quarterfinals in his only All England appearance in 1954.