



DREAM FULFILLED

Actor Richa Chadha's dream of working with filmmaker Tigmanshu Dhulia has been fulfilled with 'The Six Suspects'

LEISURE P2



DANISH MURDERED

Indian photojournalist Danish Siddiqui was not killed in a crossfire, but murdered by Taliban forces

INTERNATIONAL P10



SINDHU IN QUARTERS

PV Sindhu sees off Mia Blichfeldt to set up a quarterfinal face-off with World No. 5 Akane Yamaguchi at Tokyo Games

SPORTS P12



DUTEE EYES 100M SEMIFINAL SPOT

BHUBANESWAR: Even though her most ardent admirer is not expecting a medal from her, all eyes will be on sprinter Dutee Chand when the 100 metres heats take place Friday at the Tokyo Olympics. There will be a total of seven heats that will take place between 8.45am and 9.30am (all times IST). Dutee will be featuring in one of the heats. As most of the sprinters are taller than Dutee, it will be indeed a great achievement if the Odia athlete can even qualify for the semifinals of the 100m event. Dutee herself has said that she is not expecting a medal. She will be happy if she reaches the semifinals and better her own national record.

STATE SEEKS TIGER RESERVE TAG FOR SUNABEDA

BHUBANESWAR: The Odisha government is now planning to convert the Sunabeda Wildlife Sanctuary into a tiger reserve. The government is coordinating with the National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA) to get the 'Tiger Reserve' tag for the Sunabeda forest, informed officials of the Forest and Environment department Thursday. Principal Chief Conservator of Forests (Wildlife) Shashi Paul said that the process has already been initiated in this regard. "The Odisha government is now trying to get a new tiger reserve in Sunabeda which has some big cat population. We are coordinating with the NTCA for recognising the Sunabeda forest as a 'Tiger Reserve'," Paul informed. On the occasion of 'World Tiger Day', Paul informed that the department is implementing all measures to protect tigers in the state. "There is now more awareness among the youth towards tiger conservation and I hope with this trend we can see the number of big cats increasing in the state in future," added the official.

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IRREGULAR by MANJUL



The crowd outside wants Pegasus on their phones so that you can know their mann ki baat!

Govt boost for OBC medical aspirants

NEW DELHI: The government Thursday announced a 27-per cent quota for OBCs and 10 per cent reservation for the Economically Weaker Section (EWS) category in the All-India Quota (AIQ) scheme for undergraduate and post-graduate medical and dental courses from the current academic year, 2021-22. "This will immensely help thousands of our youth get better opportunities and create a new paradigm of social justice in our country," Prime Minister Narendra Modi tweeted while lauding the historic decision.

Seeking CJJ's help

NEW DELHI: Over 500 individuals and groups have written to Chief Justice of India (CJI) NV Ramana seeking immediate intervention of the Supreme Court in the alleged Pegasus snooping matter and declare a 'moratorium on the export, sale, transfer and use of Pegasus' spyware in India. "Above all, we look to the Supreme Court to declare a moratorium on the export, sale, transfer and use of Pegasus in India," said the signatories to the letter. Among the signatories are activists like Aruna Roy and Anjali Bhardwaj and authors like Vrinda Grover and Jhuma Sen.

MARKET WATCH

INDEX	SENSEX	52653.07	↑	209.36
NIIFTY	15778.50	↑	69.10	
DOLLAR	74.72	↓	₹0.12	
EURO	88.46	↑	₹0.19	
GOLD	₹48,178	↑	₹601	
SILVER	₹68,378	↑	₹1988	

WEATHER

	BHUB	CTK
TEMP MAX	28.0°C	29.6°C
TEMP MIN	24.2°C	23.4°C
Humidity	92%	83%
Rainfall	0.3	Nil
Forecast	Light rain very likely	



FIGHTING AGAINST EXTINCTION: A full-grown tiger prowls around his enclosure at Byculia Zoo in Mumbai

PTI PHOTO

SIT probe into Dhanbad judge's planned murder

AGENCIES

Ranchi, July 29: The Jharkhand High Court ordered Thursday an SIT probe into the death of Dhanbad judge Uttam Anand. He died Wednesday after being hit by an auto-rickshaw while out for a morning jog.

CCTV footages showed that Anand, a district and sessions judge of Dhanbad court was jogging early Wednesday when an auto-rickshaw veered towards and hit him from behind and fled. Another auto-rickshaw driver found him lying in a pool of blood and took him to a nearby hospital, where doctors declared him dead on arrival.

Two persons have been arrested in this connection so far said Dhanbad SSP Sanjiv Kumar. "Lakhan Kumar Verma and Rahul Verma - have been arrested and the auto was seized. They have confessed to hitting the judge," said Amol Vinukant Homkar, IG Jharkhand police.

Taking cognizance of a letter filed before the court by the Dhanbad principal district judge in the case, Chief Justice Ravi Ranjan converted it into a writ petition, and ordered the formation of a Special Investigation Team (SIT), under

HIT-AND-RUN CASE

■ Dhanbad judge Anand was out jogging when he was hit by an auto-rickshaw

■ Supreme Court to follow investigation developments, informs CJI NV Ramana

the leadership of ADGP Sanjay Latkar, to look into the matter. He further said that Chief Justice of India, NV Ramana has spoken to him regarding the matter. The court said it will monitor the probe.

Chief Justice Ranjan warned police that if investigations are not conducted in a proper manner, the case will be transferred to the CBI. The court expressed its displeasure over the delay in registration of FIR following the incident.

Ranjan asked the police to ensure that culprits, if any, are punished in the case. Not just the auto driver, the person who hatched the conspiracy should also be unmasked, he added. Judge Anand had been handling many cases of mafia killings. He had recently rejected the bail pleas of two gangsters. The murder case of Ranjay Singh, a close aide of MLA Sanjeev Singh, was also pending before his court.

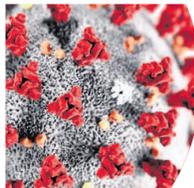
State gears up for 3rd Covid-19 wave

DISTRICT COLLECTORS ASKED TO INCREASE AND RETAIN MANPOWER TILL FURTHER NOTICE

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 29: After giving instructions to increase beds in all Covid care facilities, the Odisha government has asked collectors and heads of healthcare institutions to strengthen manpower to tackle a possible third wave of the virus attack. Even though the number of cases has been decreasing in the state for the last few days, the government does not want to let down its guard. The high number of cases in the state capital as well as in Khurda and Cuttack districts has become a source of headache for the administration.

Health and Family Welfare Additional Chief Secretary, PK Mohapatra has written letters to all collectors, directors of Capital



610 beds reserved for critical Covid-19 patients across Odisha

TOP OFFICIALS OF ALL COVID-19 HOSPITALS ASKED NOT TO DECREASE MANPOWER

High number of infections in Khurda district a worry for the administration

Hospital and Rourkela Government Hospital, dean of all government medical colleges and chief district medical officers, in this regard. He has requested the management to increase manpower as the third wave of Covid-19 cannot be ruled out in the near future.

Keeping in view the decreasing trend of Covid-19 positive cases, it was proposed to reduce manpower already engaged till July end.

However, now the situation has changed. In view of the anticipated third Covid-19 wave, the collectors have been asked to retain manpower for another three months.

All dedicated Covid-19 hospitals (DCHs) and medical college and hospitals (MCH) with more than 50 per cent bed occupancy (Covid positive patients) have been asked to retain all personnel already engaged till July end. Similarly, all

6K Odisha kids lost 1 or both parents

POST NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi, July 29: The Covid-19 pandemic has left a long-lasting impact on children of Odisha and has affected a total of 6,562 kids who have lost either one or both their parents between April 2020 and July 23, this year.

Odisha is the second most affected state after Maharashtra, where 13,589 children have lost either one or both parents during the pandemic. The National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR) in an affidavit filed in the Supreme Court said that 75,320 kids have lost either their mother or father or both since the

outbreak of Covid-19 last year.

In the affidavit, the NCPCR states that in Odisha 818 children have become orphans while 5,742 others have lost one of their parents. Similarly, at least 6,855 children have become orphans, 68,218 lost either of their parents and 247 were abandoned across India between April 2020 and July 23, 2021.

It should be stated here that the Supreme Court had Tuesday directed Odisha and other states to file a status report before August 23 giving details of the number of children who have become orphans or have lost either of their parents after March, 2020. The apex court has also asked for details of the

children who have been provided with the benefits of the schemes announced by the respective state governments.

The apex court has also directed the state governments to ensure that all the affected children must be permitted to continue in the same school at least for this academic year, be they private schools or government-run institutions.

"If there are difficulties in the cases of students being permitted to continue their education in private schools, they may be accommodated under the provisions of the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act, 2009," the court had said.

Dev shifted to Finance

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 29: Ahead of Panchayat elections in 2022, the Odisha government Thursday affected a reshuffle among senior-level IAS officers. One of the major changes has been the appointment of Vishal Dev as the new Principal Secretary of the Finance department. He was earlier the Principal Secretary of Tourism, Sports and Youth Affairs.

In the reshuffle, 1993 batch IAS officer Deorajan Kumar Singh has been transferred from Panchayati Raj department to Steel and Mines. He was holding the Panchayati Raj post since June 1, 2013.

Ashok Meena, who is currently serving as the Principal Secretary of the Finance department, has been transferred to the Panchayati Raj and Drinking Water department. In another development Surendra Kumar has been transferred to the General Administration and Public Grievances department. Additional charge of the Tourism department has been given to Kumar. Special Secretary to CM, R Vineel Krishna has been given the additional charge of Sports and Youth Services department. In the past also, Krishna had been associated with the Sports and Youth Services department. Dev had earlier served as Special Secretary in the Finance department. In the past, Dev has all along served in most of the developmental sectors. Now funding for the developing sectors will be the key role for him during the times of the Covid-19 pandemic

Covid-19 hospitals with less than 50 per cent bed occupancy for virus positive patients have been asked to retain at least 50 per cent of the engaged manpower till further orders. The extension of engagement of manpower has been allowed for a period of three months from August or until further notice.

The Health department has already earmarked 3,000 beds including 610 for critical care for the possible third wave. Similarly, a 32-bed paediatric unit has also been planned while Sishu Bhawan, Cuttack will be developed as 'Centre of Excellence'.

In another separate development it has been said that manpower engaged in the testing laboratories will continue for a period of another three months from August.

OFFLINE MATRIC EXAMINATIONS BEGIN TODAY

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 29: Approximately 15,151 students will appear physically for the Matriculation (Class-X) examinations that start Friday. The exams will be conducted offline at 505 centres by the Board of Secondary Education (BSE) and will end August 5. This is the first time physical exams will take place in the state since March 2, 2020.

The exams will be held after a large number of students expressed displeasure over grades given on the alternative method of assessment as well as their school's past performances.

Many students, especially those from private schools alleged they have been awarded marks below their expectations. They questioned the controversial evaluation method and staged state-wide protests criticising the role of the BSE, which had tweaked marks of some students submitted by their respective school teachers.

Facing criticism, the BSE in a face-saving effort announced offline examinations for disconcerted students. They were however, given just four weeks to prepare and attend the examinations physically at designated centres. The board also announced that marks obtained from the exams will be final and no pleas will be entertained once results are out. Evaluation of the answer papers will begin August 6.

Controversy mars Mary's final Games bout

MC MARY KOM BEATEN AT TOKYO OLYMPICS DESPITE WINNING 2 OUT OF 3 ROUNDS

AGENCIES

Tokyo, July 29: How does one end up losing despite winning? It may sound odd. However, this is exactly what happened to one of India's greatest-ever sportspersons. Six-time World Champion and London Olympics bronze winner MC Mary Kom bowed out of the Tokyo Games here Thursday losing to Ingrid Valencia in a pre-quarterfinal bout of the 51kg category. The funny part, Mary Kom actually won two of the three rounds.

"I don't know what happened, I thought in the first round, we were

both trying to figure out our strategies and I won the next two," said the perplexed legend after the bout.

The Indian boxer trailed 1-4 in the opening round with four of the five judges scoring it 10-9 in favour of Valencia.

In the next two rounds, Mary Kom got three of the five judges to rule in her favour but the overall scoreline was still in favour of Valencia. The Manipuri clinched the third round too but once again, it was 3-2 and not 4-1 which is what she needed to swing the final score in her favour.

The 38-year-old, who is a multiple-

time Asian champion gave it her all, but could not progress against her opponent who was a bronze winner at the Rio Olympics. She had tears in her eyes but sported a wide smile as the referee raised Valencia's hand.

Despite the heartbreak, Mary Kom said she has no desire to call it quits just yet. However, she acknowledged that chances of participating in another Olympic Games appear dim.

"I can still fight, I am still strong enough. If you have will power (you can fight). Of course training is also important along with discipline and that increases with age. I have been fighting for 20 years,"

Mary Kom said.

"Manipuri people have fighting spirit, both men and women. But Manipuri women are extra powerful, they have extra strength. But another Olympics... it is too far away," laughed the mother of four, who is also a Rajya Sabha MP.

Mary Kom's coach Chhote Lal Yadav was the most perplexed. "I don't understand this scoring system. How did she (Mary) lose the first round 1-4 when there was hardly anything separating the two boxers," national assistant coach and Mary Kom's personal trainer Yadav said.



TRUE CHAMPION: MC Mary Kom is all smiles as she hugs her opponent Ingrid Valencia after a heart-breaking loss Thursday at the Tokyo Games

PTI PHOTO

leisure

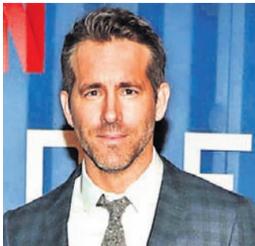


ANA DE ARMAS STARRER MONROE BIOPIC TO RELEASE NEXT YEAR

Ana de Armas-starrer *Blonde*, which is a fictionalised telling of Hollywood star Marilyn Monroe's life, will release in 2022. Directed by Andrew Dominik, who also adapted the novel by Joyce Carol Oates, *Blonde* was one of the year's most anticipated films by industry insiders and consumers, reports *variety.com*.

RYAN REYNOLDS OPTIMISTIC ABOUT HIS 'HIDDEN CAMEOS'

Hollywood star Ryan Reynolds feels that the audiences will love the 'hidden cameos' in his upcoming sci-fi comedy film *Free Guy*. "There's so many little hidden cameos, there's so many moments. I wish people to have a couple of hours of pure joy in their lives," the 44-year-old star told *CinemaBlend.com*.



FORTUNE FORECAST

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ARIES

The day sparkles with opportunities and pleasures, you just have to look in the right place. If you've been looking to seal a relationship, today is the day to propose, says Ganesh! Be careful while driving, and be subtle in suggestion.

TAURUS

Getting through today will be like a cruise, says Ganesh. Business deals will kneel to the charm of your honey tongue and you will taste success. As the day progresses, you may lose interest in things. Beware of being too sentimental in the evening, warns Ganesh. You will feel loved and generous in social gatherings tonight.

GEMINI

You will be able to run through all your tasks today. The fruits that you reap today will be in much higher proportion to the efforts that you put in, and this will make you happy. You need to pay more attention to your societal ties, says Ganesh.

CANCER

It will be a profitable day for realtors. Accidental gains are likely. Fame and prestige will increase. Your dedication and efficiency will stun people. They will just emu-late you, without any reservations.

LEO

You will be bound closer to your near and dear ones. They will be able to understand your feelings and expressions. Your day will be spent in pleasurable company. If you have been desirous of something for quite some time, you will attain it now. New relationships begun today will last for a long time, says Ganesh.

VIRGO

Your ability to keenly focus on things will reach its zenith today, says Ganesh. You will enjoy your work and complete your tasks proficiently and quickly. An unexpected turn of events may take place later today, but it will not give you too much cause for worry. Ganesh says physical intimacy will only enhance your love for your beloved.

LIBRA

Ganesh says today is a favorable day and you will gain more than the efforts put in by you. You may want to go in for a new wardrobe change or a different hairstyle to change your outward appearance. Towards evening you will start reminiscing about past memories. Be aware of the reality and it will showcase changes in you today.

SCORPIO

It's a bright and beautiful day for you, foresees Ganesh. You will be surrounded by family and friends today. You feel blessed as you realise that your loving husband has some special plans for you, along with showering lots of love and affection.

SAGITTARIUS

Come what may, you are all set to win the heart of your beloved today. Roses, romantic songs and gifts sum up the expressions of your love of him/her. However, work is always on your mind, even when you are shopping for your sweetheart. Have a lovely day!

CAPRICORN

Your smile works like charm for you. If you want to start a new venture, the beginning of the day seems to be a favourable time for you. This doesn't mean that everything will fall into your lap without you making efforts, says Ganesh. It will be an exhausting day for sure. Spend some good amount of time with your loved ones so that you feel relaxed and get ready for the next day.

AQUARIUS

Your family and friends are the pillars of strength for you. Today, they will make plans for leisure and recreation for you, and Ganesh advises you to go along with the flow. They want you to be happy and relaxed. You will realise how lucky you are to have them in your life.

PISCES

The day will begin with you moving towards clarity as your doubts and problems begin to clear. You will feel active and enthusiastic today and tackle your problems by the horns. Not only will you be able to find tangible solutions to your problems but you will also begin to implement them. Be careful about starting anything new and if you do so then put in the required amount of thought, suggests Ganesh.

SARA'S RAVISHING LOOK IN NEW PHOTOSHOOT



MUMBAI: Actress Sara Ali Khan sprinkled monochrome magic with her latest photograph dressed in a gorgeous black bikini top paired with a sarong. She posted a set of images on Instagram, where she is seen posing next to a door flaunting her perfect curves in a tiny bikini top paired with a layered sarong with a thigh high slit.



"Kash Kabhi Yu Ho Na Hasrate Na Junun Ho... Tera Khyaal Ho Aur Tu Ho Dil Me Bas Sukoon Ho," the actress captioned the image. She also posted a short clip of the shoot to her Insta Stories with the song *Khuwab ho tum ya koi haqiqat* from Dev Anand-starrer *Teen Deviyen*. The 25-year-old actress' picture currently has 1.7 million likes on the photo-sharing website.

Sara will be next seen in *Atrangi Re*, co-starring Akshay Kumar and Dhanush, and directed by Aanand L. Rai. *Atrangi Re* is written by Himanshu Sharma and is billed as a cross-cultural love story.

Richa always wanted to work with Tigmanshu



MUMBAI: Actress Richa Chadha will be seen in the upcoming project *The Six Suspects*, directed by Tigmanshu Dhulia. The actress says she has wanted to work with the filmmaker since forever. Richa, who is all set to impress with her role as an investigative officer in the web series, was elated to have collaborated with Dhulia. "I have wanted to work with Tigmanshu Dhulia since forever. And this opportunity to work with him is really an opportunity that I wouldn't have missed. The book from which the show is adapted is so amazing and even the cast is so wonderful," Richa said. The actress added: "It's been great to be working on the show, the shoot is on and I'm playing an investigative officer, my character has so many layers which make it a very rewarding experience for me to be playing this part." The murder mystery series, which also stars Pratik Gandhi, is an adaptation of author Vikas Swarup's 2008 novel of the same name.

Toofaan leads race as most watched Hindi film in 2021

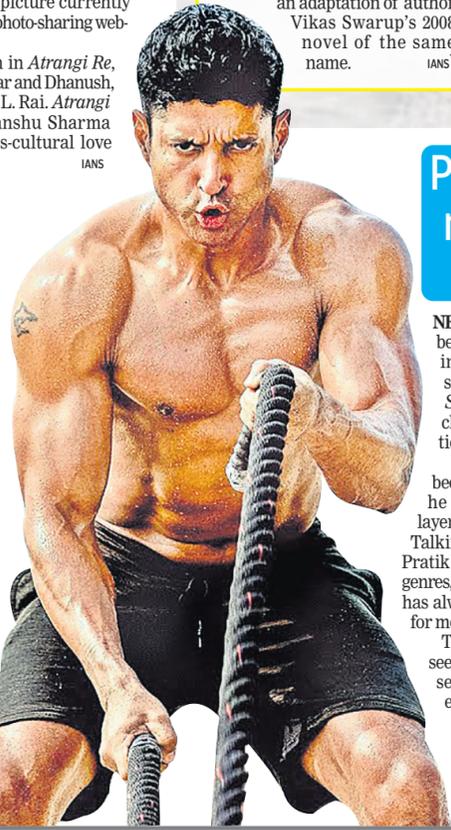
MUMBAI: In rare instance, OTT platform giant Amazon Prime Video has released data, revealing its highest streaming projects within their launch-weeks so far in this year. Actor Farhan Akhtar's *Toofaan* is on top position as the most watched video within the first week of its release globally.

According to the date released by the OTT platform, the Rakeysh Omprakash Mehra's directorial was watched by more customers on Prime Video India than any other Hindi Film in its opening week. The film was viewed in over 3,900+ towns and cities in India and in 160+ countries and territories across the globe.

Besides this, in the local languages category, films *Narappa* (Telugu), *Sarpatta Parambarai* (Tamil) and *Malik* (Malayalam), were each watched in over 3,200+ towns and cities in India and in over 150+ countries and territories globally.

In the category of web shows, Adarsh Gourav's *Hostel Daze* (S2) emerged as one of the most loved shows amongst young adults within just a week of its launch, with viewership from 3,600+ towns and cities in India and from over 100+ countries and territories around the world. The data comes to light as Amazon marked July 26 and July 27 as Prime Days. Prime Day 2021 saw the most Small and Medium Businesses (SMBs) selling on Amazon.in ever, as they saw an overwhelming response from Prime members.

Directed by Hardik Gajjar, the film has been shot in Mumbai and Mathura. The actor will also be seen sharing screen space with actress Taapsee Pannu for a new film tentatively titled *Woh Ladki Hai Kahaa*.



Pratik discovers multiple layers of comedy

NEW DELHI: Actor Pratik Gandhi, who became an overnight sensation playing Harshad Mehta in the popular series *Scam 1992: The Harshad Mehta Story*, is all set to make the audiences chuckle with his upcoming romantic comedy film *Atithi Bhooto Bhava*. The actor says comedy as a genre has been very interesting for him and that he is eager to explore the various layers of it.

Talking about starring in a comedy film, Pratik said: "I have done a lot of different genres, especially comedy on stage. Comedy has always been a very interesting genre for me. I was always inclined towards it."

The 41-year-old star, who will soon be seen in the upcoming murder mystery series *The Six Suspects*, is keen on exploring the layers of comedy.

"Comedy has multiple layers like slapstick and sarcastic comedy or dark... There are a lot of things and I am eager to explore that," he concluded.



PEANUTS



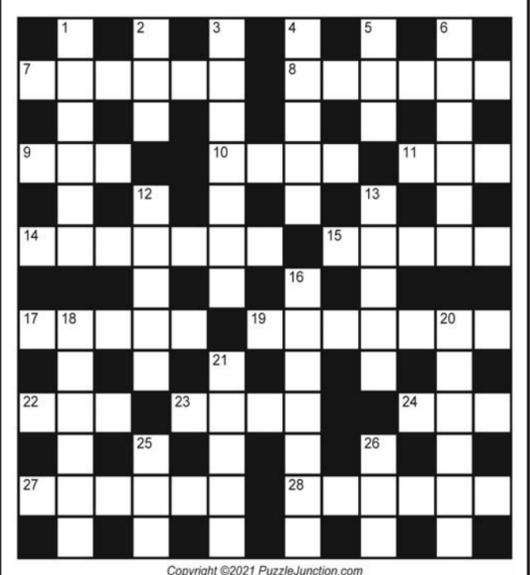
CALVIN AND HOBBS



BREVITY



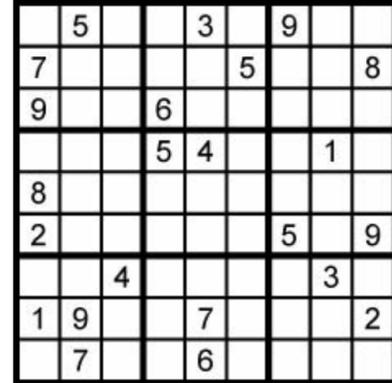
FUN post CROSSWORD



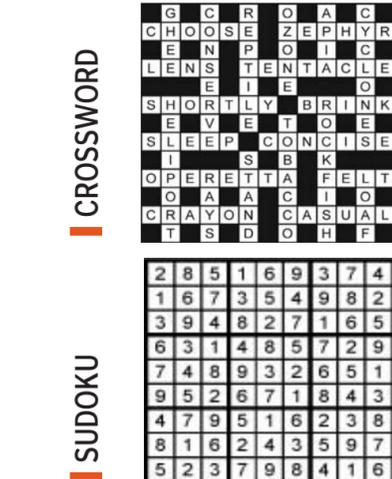
- Across
- 7 Mexican wrap
 - 8 Wealth
 - 9 Keep out
 - 10 Collagist's need
 - 11 Kimono tie
 - 14 Bland
 - 15 Spiral-horned antelope
 - 17 Lover
 - 19 One of the ABC islands
 - 22 Consume
 - 23 Hoodwink
 - 24 Frigid
 - 27 Banquets
 - 28 North Sea archipelago
 - 5 Air hero
 - 6 Mouselike jumping rodent
 - 12 Deadly snake
 - 13 Think tank output
 - 16 Pug-nosed pooch
 - 18 Bluepoint
 - 20 Bowed
 - 21 Crow
 - 25 Recipe amt.
 - 26 Cousin of calypso

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



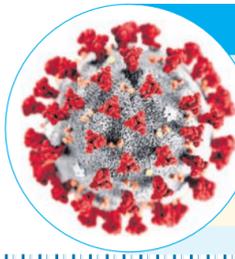
CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW

downtown



AWARENESS FIRST

Members of the Inner Wheel Club of Puri hold a Covid awareness programme at Baliapanda slum in the Holy City, Thursday



COVID-19 TRACKER

	INFECTED	RECOVERED	DEAD
World	19,69,81,831	17,83,11,606	42,08,682
India	3,15,28,114	3,07,01,612	4,22,662
Odisha	9,74,132	9,53,088	5,768

CM rolls out 'one nation, one ration'



Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik rolling out the 'one nation, one ration' programme through videoconferencing, Thursday. ST Secretary VK Pandian is also present

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 29: In a bid to strengthen the food security system, Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik Thursday rolled out the 'one nation, one ration' programme throughout the state.

With this, the programme, was already piloted in Bhubaneswar; has now been extended to all parts of the state.

Henceforth, all ration card holders of the state and from outside the state can get their ration in Odisha. Similarly, people of Odisha residing in other states can also get their ration as per their choice.

The Chief Minister also launched

Now, all ration card holders of the state and from outside the state can get their ration in Odisha

Similarly, people of Odisha residing in other states can also get their ration as per their choice

This facility will be made available in all 10,578 fair price shops across the state

distribution of fortified rice under the public distribution system (PDS) in Malkangiri district on pilot basis.

Speaking on the occasion, Patnaik said, "Living with dignity is the right of every individual and no one can deprive the poor of

this right. We have always respected this right of people through our various programmes and schemes. We will continue to work for the welfare of the poor."

Stating that the food security scheme is the biggest welfare scheme of his government, Naveen said about 3.5 crore members of 93 lakh families are getting benefits of the scheme. In 2008, the state government had started supplying rice at ₹2 per kg to the ration card holders. Later, the price of the rice was reduced to Re 1 per kg in 2013.

He reiterated his commitment that not a single poor would be deprived of food security. As the fortified rice contains Vitamin B-12 and folic acid, he hoped that it would be helpful for the health of poor,

especially women and girls.

Highlighting various welfare schemes of the state, he said the government has taken steps for free education to children along with food security. The government is providing school uniforms, shoes, books, bicycles and other facilities to the students, Patnaik said.

Free medical care is being provided to everyone in all government healthcare facilities. In addition, various livelihood schemes are being implemented for the poor. Mission Shakti scheme has given livelihood support to the women while the whole nation has praised the KALIA scheme for farmers, he added.

Covid has taken a heavy toll on the livelihood of people, especially the poor. Hence, the state government has granted ₹2,000-crore livelihood assistance for farmers, women and labourers for which development has been achieved in socio-economic sector; he added.

Attending the function, Food Supplies and Consumer Welfare Minister Ranendra Pratap Swain highlighted the various steps being taken by the state government to ensure food security for the poor. He said that Odisha has become one of the leading states in the country in food security.

Among others, ministers Tusharkanti Behera, Bikram Keshari Arukha & Ashok Panda, MLAs Purna Chandra Baka, Bikram Kumar Panda & Ananta Narayan Jena spoke at the function. ST Secretary VK Pandian coordinated the programme.

POLITICKLE by MANJUL

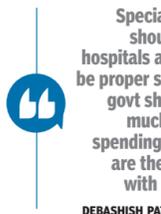


Oppn blames BMC, Health dept for dengue menace in Capital



The civic body is mandated to inspect vulnerable areas and take timely steps in this regard. There are also special funds for the purpose but the civic authorities did not take any step

DILLIP MOHANTY | BJP LEADER



Special dengue wards should be opened in hospitals and there should be proper surveillance. The govt should reveal how much funds are they spending and what steps are they taking to deal with dengue menace

DEBASHISH PATNAIK | CONG LEADER

Provide aid to weavers: Amar

POST NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi, July 29: Biju Janata Dal (BJD) MP Amar Patnaik Thursday urged the Union government to consider introduction of a livelihood scheme for the weavers as the sector is the second largest employer in the country.

Speaking during Question Hour in the Upper House, the BJD MP said that the condition of weavers has worsened during the pandemic. He said that the government should start a livelihood support scheme similar to PM KISAN. He suggested that the Centre should consider providing the weavers ₹1,000 per month as livelihood support.

However, Union Minister of State for Textiles Darshana Vikram Jardosh expressed reluctance in bringing a livelihood support scheme as suggested by the BJD MP for weavers.

The minister said that the Union government has already been running a plethora of schemes for artisans. The minister also said that people working in unorganised sectors also do other works like farming.

Utkarsh Panda tops state in CLAT 2021

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 29: Utkarsh Panda of Mother's Public School has topped the state in the Common Law Admission Test (CLAT 2021), the results of which were declared by Consortium of National Law Universities (NLU) Thursday.

Utkarsh has the all India rank of 53. Mother's Public School principal Poly Patnaik extended her heartfelt congratulations to the young achiever and wished him success for milestones ahead.

Son of banker couple Byomaranjana Panda and Rimmy Panda, Utkash has done his matriculation and intermediate from Mother's Public School, Bhubaneswar.

Manhar Bansal from Punjab has secured AIR-1 in the test.

Consortium of NLU's published results of the exam on its official website consortiumofnlus.ac.in at 12:30am. The CLAT 2021 results have been released for both the 5-year LLB and LLM entrance exams conducted July 23.

The Consortium was established



Mother's Public School principal Poly Patnaik extended her heartfelt congratulations to the young achiever

August 19, 2017 with an aim to improve the standard of legal education in the country and justice system through legal education.

The Consortium aspires to facilitate better coordination amongst national law schools to achieve highest standards of legal education in the country. Altogether 21 National Law Universities have joined the Consortium as founder members.

Make arrangements for specially-abled examinees: OHRC

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 29: The Odisha Human Rights Commission (OHRC) Thursday directed the Board of Secondary Education (BSE) and the Social Security & Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (SSEP) department to make proper arrangements for 139 differently-abled students who would sit for offline HSC examination beginning Friday.

The OHRC, while hearing a plea filed by rights activist Manoj Jena, directed the BSE to 'arrange scribes for 55 visually impaired students who require the same.'

Earlier, BSE vice-president Nihar Mohanty has assured the commission that the board would engage scribes to help writing the answer-sheets for the visually impaired students during the exam.

It instructed the department to make arrangements for transportation of 139 students to their respective test centres. The OHRC also asked the department to 'make accommodation at government cost, if any student or his/her guide requires it during the exam.'

I-DAY AHEAD



A stall in Gangamandir area of Cuttack sells the Tricolours ahead of the Independence Day celebrations, Thursday

UK, Odisha talk on race to zero emission

THE UNITED KINGDOM IS READY TO TRADE WITH ODISHA GOVT AND SUPPORT IT IN ITS CLEAN ENERGY TRANSITION JOURNEY IN EVERY POSSIBLE MANNER, THE WEBINAR REVEALS

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 29: The British Deputy High Commission, Kolkata and the state government Thursday collaboratively organised United Kingdom-Odisha Dialogue on the upcoming 26th meeting of Conference of the Parties (COP 26), and Clean Energy and Clean Transport Transition with support from Confederation of Indian Industry (CII).

There are five key themes for COP26 Climate Summit: clean energy, clean transport, adaptation and resilience, nature-based solutions and green finance.

The virtual webinar held



NICK LOW | BRITISH DEPUTY HIGH COMMISSIONER TO KOLKATA



Thursday focused on two of the key themes-clean energy and clean transport. This high-level conference set the stage for focused discussions on strategic and innovative interventions to accelerate the transition towards zero emission vehicles and the adoption of cleaner energy as Odisha progresses its portfolio of sustainable development policies and pathways.

The event highlighted that the UK is ready to trade with the Odisha government and support the state in its clean energy transition journey in every possible way.

In the programme, British Deputy High Commissioner to Kolkata, Nick Low said, "As we've seen from its disaster response to Cyclone Amphan and Yaas, Odisha's achievement in climate change adaptation has been immense. There is so much that we can and should do at the local and regional level to reduce greenhouse gas emissions through adopting clean and green energy and transport solutions. It's a journey that my own country has made, reducing the proportion of electricity produced by burning coal from 40 per cent in

2014 to 2 per cent today."

State Science & Technology secretary Manoj Mishra said, "Accelerated transition to clean energy and clean transport is the top priority for the Odisha government in order to mitigate impacts of climate change and adopt a sustainable roadmap towards green recovery. We are indeed pleased to partner with the UK in exchanging knowledge and practices for driving up climate ambition."

Development Commissioner-Additional Chief Secretary Pradeep Kumar Jena said, "We have come together today, exactly three months before COP 26, to deliberate on ways to deal with climate crisis and discuss key strategies to up our game on climate action."

The world needs greater ambition from companies and investors. The programme encouraged them to join the 'Race to Zero'. This requires businesses to take robust short-term action in a bid to halve global emissions by 2030, and to achieve net zero emissions as soon as possible and by 2050 at the very least.

What is COP26?

The United Nations Climate Change Conferences are annual conferences held in the framework of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). The formal meeting of the UNFCCC Parties is known as Conference of the Parties (COP) held for the assessment of progress in dealing with climate change, and for negotiating the Kyoto Protocol to establish legally binding obligations for developed countries to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions. COP26 is the 26th United Nations Climate Change conference. It is to be held in the city of Glasgow from October 31 to November 12, 2021 with the UK spearheading the meet. The conference is set to incorporate the 26th COP to the UNFCCC, the 16th meeting of the parties to the Kyoto Protocol (CMP16), and the third meeting of the parties to the Paris Agreement (CMA3).

Suicide cases up in City as woman jumps before train

Experts blame mental pressure due to Covid-induced lockdown and financial stress for making people take such extreme steps



A police official stands next to the body of the deceased woman beside the railway tracks near Kargil slum, Bhubaneswar

it to Capital Hospital for post-mortem. The police have launched a detailed probe into the incident, it was learnt. This apart, sources also claimed that the deceased was under medication for some psychological issues which she reportedly developed following childbirth a few years ago. She would stay at her parent's residence for a few days whenever she started suffering from the psychological problems.

Similarly the body of an unidentified youth aged around 25 years was found hanging from a tree at Master Canteen bus stand Thursday. Some locals spotted the body hanging at the bus stand early morning. Upon informed, Capital police reached the spot and recovered the body which was later sent to Capital hospital for post mortem.

However, police are waiting for anyone to claim the body before carrying out autopsy.

The body has been kept in the mortuary of the Capital hospital. According to sources, the youth was found hanging with a Saree used in temples for the puja.

On the other hand, Commissionerate Police has recently revealed that the city witnessed a significant rise in the cases of suicide this year as compared to the previous year.

As per the available data, as many as 151 persons have committed suicide in the city during 2020 as against 220 in 2019.

As many as 38 persons (16 in May and 22 in June) committed suicide in the city during the last two months. Experts blamed mental pressure due to Corona-induced lockdown and financial disturbances for making people take such extreme steps.

Man held for selling duplicate watches

POST NEWS NETWORK

Cuttack, July 29: Badambadi police Thursday arrested a person in connection with the sale of duplicate wristwatches of a reputed brand at a shop here.

The arrested has been identified as Kali Prasad Mohanty, 42, of Kishorenagar area of Cuttack district. Mohanty was working as a salesman in a watch shop at Jeet Market in Badambadi area of the Silver City, police said. "A total of 884 duplicate wristwatches for both men and women have been seized from the shop. However, shop owner Raj Kishore Harichandan is absconding," said Assistant Commissioner of Police SN Muduli.

There were allegations that the shop was dealing in fake wristwatches of a reputed brand for last several days. "A case has been registered under Section 420 of the IPC. The man was produced in a court. We will soon arrest the owner," said Badambadi police in-charge Rashmi Ranjan Mahapatra.

Plan to open liquor shops on Puri beach draws flak

POST NEWS NETWORK

Puri, July 29: Several social outfits as well as a few political parties have taken exception to a proposal of the Odisha Tourism Development Corporation (OTDC) to allow opening of liquor shops on Puri beach.

Opposing the OTDC proposal, as many as 25 social outfits have submitted memoranda to district Collector Samarth Verma, sources said. The outfits are of the opinion that opening of liquor shops on Puri beach will vitiate the religious environment of the Holy City that attracts devotees from across the globe.

"Puri beach has a special link with Jagannath culture. The state government will commit a sin by opening liquor shops on Puri beach. Perhaps, the state government has no intention to make Puri a clean and crime-free city," said an activist of Mada Mukti Abhiyan, an outfit that pleads for total prohibition.



Social activists submit memoranda to Puri Collector Samarth Verma

Many intellectuals and social activists have urged the state government not to turn Puri beach into a Goa coast.

"Incidents of crime will see a manifold rise if the state government goes ahead with its proposal to open liquor shops on Puri beach. The state government should protect the sanctity of Puri," said CPM leader Sarat Kumar Rayguru.

Nischalananda Saraswati too opposed the proposal. "The Gowardhan Peeth has taken steps to offer prayers to the sea god on Puri beach. But, the state government is eager to open liquor shops on the beach," said the seer. The Collector said the district administration would raise the issue with the state government. "We will convey the opinions of various outfits and activists to the government."

Raj man held for duping Odisha depositors

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 29: The Economic Offences Wing (EOW) of the state Crime Branch has arrested one of the directors of a Cuttack-based chit fund company from Uttar Pradesh (UP) in connection with ₹2-crore ponzi scam, an official said Thursday.

According to EOW sources, Dillip Kumar Jain of Bikaner in Rajasthan, one of the directors of M/s Inter Ocean Videsh Limited, has been taken into custody from Bareilly in UP in connection with an EOW case (08/2016) registered under Sections 467, 468, 471, 420, 406 and 120B of the IPC, 4, 5 and 6 of Prize Chits and Money Circulation Schemes (Banning) Act 1978 and 6 of the Odisha Protection of Interests of Depositors (OPID) (in Financial Establishments) Act, 2011.

Jain was produced before the chief judicial magistrate in Bareilly Wednesday. Later, he was brought on a transit remand for his pro-



duction before a designated OPID court in Cuttack.

The fraud came to the fore after Laxmi Narayan Mohapatra of Talcher, one of the duped depositors, approached the investigating agency alleging unauthorised collection of deposits from public under different schemes and non-payment of maturity amount by the directors of M/s Inter Ocean Videsh Limited and its sister concerns.

PONZI SCAM

The directors of the firm and its sister concerns had unauthorisedly collected public deposits to the tune of ₹2 crore by luring investors of high rate of interest

Dillip Kumar Jain of Bikaner in Rajasthan, one of the directors of M/s Inter Ocean Videsh Ltd, has been taken into custody

According to EOW, M/s Inter

Ocean Videsh Limited was registered with Registrar of Companies (RoC) in Cuttack having its registered office at Bhubaneswar and branch offices in other parts of the state.

"During 2010-13, the directors of the firm and its sister concerns—Alpine Fin Corp Limited, Inter Ocean Impex Private Limited and Inter Ocean Retail India Limited—have unauthorisedly collected public deposits to the tune of ₹2 crore by luring investors of high rate of interest," said an EOW statement.

Thereafter, they closed down the offices and remained unreachable since January 2013 without repaying the monthly returns as well as the principal amount of the depositors. The company cheated the investors and misappropriated their invested amount. Jain was on the run since the registration of the case. He was nabbed from Bareilly with the help of local police.

CPET-2021 exam from August 23

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 29: The Higher Education (HE) department will hold the Common PG Entrance Test (CPET) 2021 from August 23 to September 3, 2021, an official said Thursday.

CPET-2021 is being conducted for admissions to state public universities and colleges offering PG courses for 2021-22 academic session.

According to the HE department, online applications for the test will be received from 11am August 2. "Students can fill the common application form (CAF) by visiting www.samsodisha.gov.in. The last date for submission of the applications is August 14," it said.

IMD warns heavy rain for 2 days

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 29: The regional office of the India Meteorological Department (IMD) Thursday issued warning of heavy rainfall for two days.

The department, issuing the warning for Friday, said, "Heavy rainfall is very likely to occur at one or two places over the districts of Sundargarh, Jharsuguda, Bargarh, Sambalpur, Bolangir and Nuapada."

It also said that light to moderate rain or thundershower is very likely to occur at most places over the districts of Odisha Friday.

Saturday too will bring heavy



rainfall in three districts—Sundargarh, Deogarh and Keonjhar. It also warned of light to moderate rains in the state for Saturday.

The weathermen warned fishermen not to venture into deep sea for the next 48 hours. It also said that under the influence of well

marked low pressure area over West Bengal and adjoining Bangladesh, squally weather with surface wind speed reaching 45-55 kmph gusting to 65 kmph is likely to be experienced over North Bay of Bengal, neighbourhood and off Odisha coast in the next 48 hours. Bhubaneswar might see one or two spells of rain or thundershower while the maximum temperature could go upto 30°C.

Cumulative rainfall in the last 24 hours stood at 14mm. Several districts like Puri, Khurda, Jagatsinghpur, Mayurbhanj, Angul, Cuttack and Malkangiri reported deficient rainfall.

HC seeks reply on OSBC polls

POST NEWS NETWORK

Cuttack, July 29: The Orissa High Court Thursday sought response from the Odisha State Bar Council (OSBC) and the Bar Council of India (BCI) in connection with holding elections to OSBC.

Justice Biswanath Rath sought the response while hearing a petition filed by OSBC former chairman Chinmay Mohanty and former OSBC senior member Sitanshu Mohan Dwivedy July 23 last. The petitioners have informed the HC that as per provisions under Section 8 of Advocates Act, the term of office of the elected members of a State Bar Council shall be five years. The OSBC election was last held May 5, 2014 wherein 25 members were elected. Under such circumstance, there should have been another election within six months of May 4, 2019.

However, the election could not be conducted owing to reasons best known to authorities, said the petitioners.

Farmwomen get nutrigarden tips

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 29: A training programme on 'Nutrigardens for Food and Nutritional Security' was organised by Krishi Vigyan Kendra, Khurda, ICAR-Central Institute of Freshwater Aquaculture (CIFA), Bhubaneswar in collaboration with Darbar Sahitya Sansad (DSS), Khurda, for the farmwomen of Padmapur village under Balipatna block, Thursday.

Inaugurating the training session, KVK principal scientist and head (In-Charge) SS Giri highlighted the importance of inclusion of fresh fruits and vegetables in the daily diet for a healthy and healthy life.

Khurda DSS secretary Kedaraswar Choudhury encouraged the trainees to grow vegetables and fruits organically in their kitchen garden for ensuring good health.

INVITING TROUBLE



Shoppers ignore social distancing norms at Unit-II market in Bhubaneswar, Thursday, even though daily Covid tally in the Capital city hovers around 300

STATE LOGS 1,615 NEW COVID CASES, 65 DEATHS

OVER 1.21 CRORE PEOPLE HAVE RECEIVED THE FIRST DOSE WITH 37,88,432 HAVING RECEIVED BOTH DOSES OF THE ANTI-COVID VACCINE

PNN/AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, July 29: Odisha's Covid-19 tally mounted to 9,74,132 Thursday as 1,615 more people tested positive for the infection, while 65 fresh fatalities pushed the state's coronavirus death toll to 5,768, a Health official said.

The daily test positivity rate (TPR) dipped to 2.09 per cent from 2.16 per cent Wednesday, he said. Of the new cases, 937 were reported from quarantine centres and 678 detected during contact tracing.

Khurda district, which comprises the state capital Bhubaneswar, reported the highest number of fresh cases at 442, followed by Cuttack (229) and Puri (123).

The new Covid cases were detected from 76,946 sample tests conducted in the last 24 hours, he said.

The Health and Family Welfare department said 65 Covid fatalities were reported from 22 districts.

Khurda registered the maximum number of nine deaths, followed by Bargarh (7), Sundargarh (6), Jharsuguda and Sambalpur (5 each), Angul, Bolangir, Cuttack, Ganjam, Jajpur, and Puri (3 each) and Bhadrak, Gajapati, Jagatsinghpur and Kendrapara (2 each).

One Covid patient each succumbed to the infection in Balasore, Dhenkanal, Kalahandi, Keonjhar, Koraput, Mayurbhanj and Nuapada, the official added.

Taking to Twitter, the Health department said, "This list does not reflect deaths occurring on a particular day. It gives details of past fatalities for which the death audit



TPR PLUMMETS

The daily test positivity rate dipped to 2.09 per cent from 2.16 per cent Wednesday

Khurda district reported the highest number of fresh cases at 442, followed by Cuttack (229) and Puri (123)

The new Covid cases were detected from 76,946 sample tests conducted in the last 24 hours

The Health department has administered more than 1.59 crore doses of Covid-19 vaccine till Wednesday

process has been duly completed and the cause of death has been

identified as due to Covid-19." Fifty-three other coronavirus patients have died due to comorbidities, the official said.

Odisha currently has 17,262 active cases, while 1,699 people were cured of the disease Wednesday taking the total number of recoveries to 9,51,049. The coastal state has so far conducted over 1.58 crore sample tests for Covid-19, including 76,946 Wednesday, and the cumulative positivity rate stands at 6.13 per cent.

The Health department has administered more than 1.59 crore doses of Covid-19 vaccine till Wednesday.

Over 1.21 crore people have received the first dose with 37,88,432 having received both doses of the vaccine, the official added.

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Food grain procurement in Jaipur raises stink

OSWC AND RMC STAFF UNDER SCANNER; SHOW CAUSE NOTICES SERVED ON PROCUREMENT INSPECTORS

POST NEWS NETWORK

Jajpur, July 29: Irregularities have come to the fore during food grain procurement at the Odisha State Warehousing Corporation (OSWC) godown at Dhanmandal and the RMC godown at Panikoili in Jajpur. Four show-cause notices were served on the two procurement inspectors at the godowns, establishing anomalies in the process, a report said.

It was alleged that food grains supplied to poor people under NFSA are repackaged and recycled here. The authorities of OSWC and RMC are supposed to procure and preserve food grains safely at their godowns. It was found that procurement inspector of Panikoili-based RMC Biswanath Tudu was accused of committing anomalies in issuing gate passes to contractors under supply chain management system (SCMS). Taking into this account, the district civil supplies officer has served a show cause on the procurement inspector July 23. He had also been show-caused in a similar case June 18, this year.

As per rules under the SCMS, the rice supplied by millers should be allowed entry into the godown first before it is supplied to distributors. But this rule was



It was found that procurement inspector of Panikoili-based RMC Biswanath Tudu was accused of committing anomalies in issuing gate passes to contractors under supply chain management system (SCMS)

Due to anomalies, the district civil supplies officer has served a show cause on the procurement inspector July 23. He had also been show-caused in a similar case June 18, this year

The district civil supplies officer has also asked Sahu July 23 about why he had not received rice from millers even though there was enough space at the OSWC godown. The OSWC godown has capacity to stock 92000 quintals of food grains while only 13,673.75 quintals of rice and 851.94 quintals of wheat were stocked at the godown

violated at the RMC godown. Millers' rice was directly sup-

plied to the distributors leading to mess in the system.

Moreover, large quantities of rice are suspected to have been misappropriated in the names of supply contractors. The district civil supplies officer in his show cause notice has pointed out violation of guidelines and dereliction of duty by the procurement inspector.

The district civil supplies officer has also issued show cause notices twice to procurement officer of OSWC (Dhanmandal) Sanjib Kumar Sahu April 27 and April 15, for fur-

nishing faulty data about SCMS.

In his reply, Sahu had explained that the anomalies had cropped up as supply contractors had engaged a number of vehicles in the rice transportation.

The district civil supplies officer has also asked Sahu July 23 about why he had not received rice from millers even though there was enough space at the OSWC godown. The OSWC has capacity to stock 92000 quintals of food grains while only 13,673.75 quintals of rice and 851.94 quintals of wheat were stocked at the godown.

The procurement inspector was accused of ignoring the directives.

It may be noted here that the quality control cell of the Union food and public distribution department had inspected the stocks at Dhanmandal godown and detected that large amounts of food grain were ridden with pest. Earlier, managing director of the state civil supplies corporation, during his visit to Jajpur, had inspected Panikoili godown and found large stocks of rice unfit for consumption. The rice was supplied by custom millers in Bhadrak district and Brahmanigaon and Baljitpada.

Thereafter, the district civil supplies officer was asked to look into the irregularities.

VIMSAR tense as employees attacked

PROTESTERS VANDALISE ASSETS; THREE DETAINED

POST NEWS NETWORK

Sambalpur, July 29: Grade four employees of VIMSAR in Sambalpur staged protests over their multiple demands Thursday. However, tension flared up when miscreants attacked the agitating employees with sharp-edged weapons. The campus turned into a battlefield for some time. Two people were injured. Police have detained three people in this connection and seized weapons.

On the other hand, angry staff had allegedly ransacked a building. They broke doors, windows and furniture in a room.

According to IIC of Burla police station Kamalochan Panda, the grade four employees of VIMSAR had been staging protests for last two days demanding job regularization, ESI facility, reengagement of retrenched staff and hike in salaries.

Thursday morning, a group of five to seven people allegedly attacked the agitating staff. It was alleged that the attack was orchestrated by a contractual firm which is looking after sanitation work.

The agitating staff have filed a complaint at the police station against Guru Panchbihar, Fakir Nayak, Ram



The grade four employees of VIMSAR had been staging protests for last two days demanding job regularization, ESI facility and salary hike

Panchbihar, Shyam Panchbihar, Satish Muna and manager of the contractual firm Nayan Patel. Police registered a case and started an investigation into the incident. Police have detained three accused. On the other hand, the VIMSAR authorities have filed an FIR against those who resorted to vandalism at the time of agitation.

Police registered a case and booked 30 of them. It may be noted here that there was a tripartite meeting among VIMSAR officials, the agitating staff and the contractual firm Wednesday.

Kandhamal riots: 30 more guilty



AGENCIES

Phulbani, July 29: A court in Kandhamal district Thursday sentenced 30 people to two years' rigorous imprisonment after convicting them in a case related to the 2008 communal riot, in which 47 people were killed.

Anurag Dehuri, the Judicial Magistrate (First Class), Kotagarh, also fined each of them ₹1,000. Altogether 31 people attacked the house of a person at Bondopipli village Kotagarh police station September 20, 2008, and damaged it. One of them died during the trial of the case which was lodged

nearly 13 years ago.

Several other people were earlier convicted in this connection with the riot. Kandhamal district witnessed large-scale communal violence after a group of people, allegedly with the help of Maoists, gunned down prominent VHP leader Swami Laxmananada Saraswati and four others in his ashram August 23, 2008.

The violence continued for about four months during which 47 people were killed and about 4,000 houses burnt rendering many homeless. Senior Maoist leader Sabyasachi Panda was arrested in connection with the case in 2014.

Balasore municipality urges HUD for expansion of civic body areas

28 REVENUE VILLAGES ARE LIKELY TO BE INCLUDED IN THE MUNICIPALITY



POST NEWS NETWORK

Balasore, July 29: The authorities of the Balasore municipality have taken an initiative to expand the jurisdiction of the civic body by including more revenue villages, a report said.

According to the report, the civic body has identified 28 revenue villages and sent a proposal to the housing and urban development department to bring villages like Sinduri, Kanibag, Karnja, Tulankasahi, Bilapantia, Banaparia, Chhanapur, Januganj, Bhimpura, Balia, Dahapada, Harida, Alupur, parts of Meghadambaru and Kesharpur under its jurisdiction.

However, the proposal has met with protests from local leadership because some panchayats will lose their areas, leading to a fall in the number of voters.

In the first phase, the civic body aims at expanding its areas and then making efforts to obtain the tag of the municipal corporation in the next phase.

In view of this, the civic authorities have focused on expanding its territorial areas and augmenting its revenue.

The civic authorities have proposed the housing and urban development department to bring villages like Sinduri, Kanibag, Karnja, Tulankasahi, Bilapantia, Banaparia, Chhanapur, Januganj, Bhimpura, Balia, Dahapada, Harida, Alupur, parts of Meghadambaru and Kesharpur under its jurisdiction.

However, the proposal has met with protests from local leadership because some panchayats will lose their areas, leading to a fall in the number of voters.

In the first phase, the civic body aims at expanding its areas and then making efforts to obtain the tag of the municipal corporation in the next phase.

Civic body has drawn up a blue print to include more villages like Remuna, Phuladi, Patrapada, Gabagaon, Khannagar, Saraswati, Naraharipur, Ganipur and Mandarpur in its jurisdiction

However, the civic body requires 80,000 more population for approval of the municipal corporation status from the government.

Working on the proposal, the civic body has drawn up a blue print to include more villages such as Remuna, Phuladi, Patrapada, Gabagaon, Khannagar, Saraswati, Naraharipur, Ganipur and Mandarpur in its jurisdiction, sources said.

Contacted, executive officer of the Balasore municipality Ashish Iswar Patil said people living in some panchayats around the municipality have good civic facilities like in towns. But they are deprived of urban area status. Elected representatives of two to three panchayats have been proposed to pass resolutions for inclusion of parts of their panchayats in the municipality. The process to expand the municipality areas is underway, he added.

FARM WORK



Women farmhands uprooting paddy saplings and making them into bundles for transplantation in Ganjam district

OP PHOTO

Vehicle with migrant's body detained

POST NEWS NETWORK

Koksara, July 29: An ambulance carrying the body of a migrant worker of Kalahandi from Karnataka was detained for 16 hours by his kin and co-villagers at Baradanga under Amapani police limits in the district Thursday.

According to reports, Nidhi Chalan (20), son of Gobinda Chalan, went to Kadukopa area of Karnataka to work in a private company, three months ago. However, Nidhi was found hanging from a tree near the company Monday under mysterious circumstances.

Being informed, police seized the body and had a post mortem conducted on the body. Then, they with



the help of the company sent the body in an ambulance to his village.

As the ambulance reached the village at 8 pm Wednesday, his family members and villagers were shocked to see the body. They suspected foul play with Nidhi and demanded compensation for the loss.

They detained the ambulance. Being informed, a police team

from Amapani led by IIC Krushnachandra Swain rushed to the village and facilitated talks between the company management and the bereaved family members. The company assured the bereaved family to pay ₹1.5 lakh as compensation. The migrant worker is survived by his wife and a 3-year-old son.

EAST COAST RAILWAY

Tender Notice No.: MSM-TW-CERT-SBP-9-21
Name of work: LOADING / UNLOADING, PAINTING, ADJUSTING AND TESTING OF 20 KG. CI TEST WEIGHTS, ISSUE OF VERIFICATION CERTIFICATES BY STATE LEGAL METROLOGY DEPARTMENT, ODISHA AS PER WEIGHTS AND MEASURES ACT & RULE INCLUDING PROVIDING LABOUR FOR CALIBRATION AND STAMPING OF TEST WAGON AT SAMBALPUR SADAR.
Approx cost of the work: ₹18,09,747.20
Completion period of the Work: 03 (Three) Months.
Tender closing date & time: at 1100 hrs. of 13.08.2021
No manual offers sent by Post/Courier/Fax or in person shall be accepted against e-tenders even if these are submitted on firm's letter head and received in time. All such manual offers shall be considered invalid and shall be rejected summarily without any consideration.
Complete information including e-tender documents of the above e-tender is available in website: <http://www.ireps.gov.in>
Sr. Divisional Mechanical Engineer, Sambalpur
PR-239/M/21-22

Cottages at Hirakud island to boost ecotourism potential

POST NEWS NETWORK

Sambalpur, July 29: The state government is planning to set up cottages and several other tourist facilities on an island in Hirakud reservoir to promote ecotourism in Sambalpur district, Western Odisha Development Corporation (WODC) chairman Asit Tripathy said Wednesday.

Provisions will be made at an estimated cost of ₹130 crore to provide requisite facilities to domestic and foreign tourists, Tripathy informed. A blueprint has already been prepared for the purpose, with the assistance of a multi-national company. The ambitious project would include a cruise boat, two luxury boats, a boating club and restaurants as well, an official source informed.

According to the source, hotel and water-sport facilities will be developed



on the island to attract and entertain domestic and foreign tourists. Besides, the state government has sanctioned ₹250 crore for the development of the Samaleswari temple under Samalei Yojana. Arrangements have also been made to pay compensation to around 200 families who are likely to be displaced for the beautification project of the temple premises.

SECTION - I No. E-279
NOTICE INVITING TENDER
Tender Reference No. 4110/Medical Equipment, Drugs & Consumables for DCH, SLNMCH, Koraput, Dated: 29.07.2021
TENDERS ARE INVITED FROM ELIGIBLE BIDDERS
(Downloadable from website: www.koraput.nic.in)
1 Period of availability of Tender Document In case of any bid amendments and clarification, responsibility lies with the bidders to collect the same from the above mentioned website before last date of submission of tender document and the tender inviting authority shall have no responsibility for any delay/omission on part of the bidder.
Date: 23.08.2021 Time: 11.00 A.M.
2 Last date & time for submission of Tender Address of Submission of Bid: Office of the Medical Superintendent, SLNMCH, Koraput (Through Speed Post/Registered Post) only
A. Technical Bid (Cover A) Opening 25.08.2021 at 12.00 Noon in the address mentioned above.
B. Financial Bid (Cover B): Financial Bid will be opened on : 25.08.2021 (04.00 P.M.) (Venue is mentioned at the address mentioned above) (Bidders authorized representative may remain present at the time of opening of bid)
3 Date, time and place of opening of Tender
Superintendent
SLNMCH, Koraput
OIPR-10121/11/0006/2122

BALANCING ACT



A boy angling in the Mahanadi river as he holds an umbrella to save him from rain in Sambalpur, Thursday

OP PHOTO

FOCUS MULTICULTURALISM

EUROPE'S HIJAB TEST



Rather than asking whether Islam is liberal enough to belong in Europe, the more relevant question today appears to be whether Europe is liberal enough to accept Muslim women

Likewise, Lama, a French-Algerian woman now living outside France, laments the phenomenon of "white men in the media debating whether we should have the hijab." The problem, she says, is that "it's never about the objective garment, it's about what the garment symbolises [to them]."

In the mirror in the morning and think, 'do I look friendly? Do I look approachable?'" Maha, a journalist, explained. And it is not only men whose judgment these women worry about. Khadija, a young French-Algerian woman, confessed that she once stopped to put on red lipstick before going to an interview for a babysitting job. "I told them I wore the hijab ahead of time. I don't know why I did that, preparing them for me," she said. "I took out my lipstick and put it on so that [the mother] can see I am French, [that] I am not a terrorist."

pearance is problematic. Khadija went on to tell me that the experience of removing her hijab for a job when she was 19 left her feeling denigrated and ashamed. "It made me feel like I am nothing," she said. "I am not the same as everyone else. I am a little bit lower." She went on to ask, rhetorically, "What gives you the right to do that?"

The writer is a political analyst on the Middle East, US foreign policy, radicalisation, and violent extremism.

PROJECT SYNDICATE



Jasmine M. El-Gamal

A RECENT RULING BY THE EUROPEAN UNION'S HIGHEST COURT RAISES THE QUESTION OF WHETHER THERE IS A PLACE FOR VISIBLY MUSLIM WOMEN IN PUBLIC LIFE

In mid-July, the Court of Justice of the European Union (CJEU) ruled that private employers in the EU can ban employees from wearing religious symbols, including headscarves, in order to present an image of "political, philosophical, and religious neutrality" in the workplace. The verdict reaffirmed a 2017 CJEU ruling and highlights longstanding tensions over multiculturalism in Europe. In particular, it raises the question of whether there is a place for visibly Muslim women in European public life.

I have spent the last several months interviewing Muslim women, many of them citizens and residents of European countries, about their portrayal in the media and perception of belonging in their countries. While many reported similar experiences of ostracism or harassment, the European women, particularly those who choose to wear the hijab (head covering), told me time and again: "I feel like I don't exist."

The hijab is more than a religious symbol to those who wear it. Muslim women cover their hair out of tradition, to maintain a connection to their cultural heritage, or for reasons of modesty. Several young European women I spoke to explained that they wear the hijab despite protests from their immigrant families, who do not want them to face undue scrutiny or discrimination at work.

But their choice carries a high personal cost. The rampant European misperception of the hijab as a symbol of a supposedly misogynistic Islamic culture has made women who wear one feel like faceless, nameless 'victims' who must be saved, instead of empowered individuals making a personal decision. "It's frustrating, because [the media] always brings out [sic] the male members of the family," one of them, Sama, said in a message she sent me from Italy. "It's like, 'did your father force you to make this choice that I actually made?'"



A hero fears nothing, complains of nothing and never gives away.

THE MOTHER

US-Russia Deal on Af?

During their June 16 Geneva summit, Russian President Vladimir Putin reportedly offered US President Joe Biden the use of Russian military bases in Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan in order to coordinate actions vis-à-vis Afghanistan. The Kremlin's motives, of course, are not altruistic. Russia wants to prevent the United States from building its own bases in the region. But Putin's offer is tempting, and Biden may well find a way to accept it.

Central Asia, a region nearly the size of the European Union nestled between Russia and China, is thus back in international headlines – again because of bad news, and again in connection with the violence and instability in Afghanistan. Biden's decision to withdraw the remaining US troops from the country will bring to an end a 20-year war that has cost America nearly \$2.3 trillion and failed to achieve any of its goals. And analysts now warn that the ongoing Taliban offensive could lead to full-scale civil war, a surge in drug trafficking, massive migration, and the spread of Islamic fundamentalism to neighbouring countries.

The results of the US-led war were disastrous. According to official figures, 2,312 US military personnel have been killed, and 20,666 wounded, in Afghanistan since 2001. And more than 3,800 US private-security contractors have lost their lives.

But the Afghan people have suffered the most. According to the Costs of War project at Brown University, the conflict has killed at least 47,245 civilians and 66,000 to 69,000 Afghan troops. It has contributed to the total of 2.7 million Afghans forced to flee the country over the past four decades, mainly to Pakistan, Iran, and Europe, and it has left more than 3.5 million of Afghanistan's 40 million people internally displaced.

With the US troop withdrawal almost complete, the Biden administration says it will continue to support the Afghan government from a distance in order to help contain the Taliban and other Islamist militant groups. But, in order to maintain a regional foothold, the US needs bases to house troops, drones, fighter jets, and artillery.

Among Afghanistan's neighbours, neither Iran nor China will allow US bases on their territory under any circumstances. Pakistan has also resolutely rejected the idea. But America has previously had large airbases in some of Afghanistan's Central Asian neighbours to the north – from 2001 to 2014 at Manas International Airport in Kyrgyzstan, and from 2001 to 2005 at the Karshi-Khanabad air base in Uzbekistan. (I was Kyrgyzstan's deputy prime minister during the final year of the US presence at Manas.) The basing arrangements agreed with Russia's strategic allies in Central Asia were made possible by a personal agreement between Putin and former US President George W. Bush. Now, Putin is extending a similar offer to Biden.

The US has few if any alternatives. Russian public opinion strongly opposes US plans to regain a foothold in Central Asia, and the Kremlin has reportedly warned the Central Asian countries that the US is more interested in containing Russia, China, and Iran than in maintaining control over the situation in Afghanistan. Russia further strengthened its position during recent talks in Moscow with high-ranking Taliban representatives, who promised that the group would not cross the borders of Central Asian states, would fight other radical Islamist groups, and would forbid drug production in Afghanistan.

At the same time, three Central Asian countries – Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan – are likely to refuse the Biden administration's request that they temporarily host up to 10,000 at-risk Afghans who previously collaborated with US forces. Pakistani Prime Minister Imran Khan's recent statement about the US-led invasion's adverse effects on his country, which hosts 2.7 million Afghan refugees, has impressed other Central Asian leaders. As Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov stated bluntly in mid-June, "None of our allies [in Central Asia] have announced their intention to expose their territories and populations to such a risk."

Everyone knows that only Putin can resolve the current impasse, and at the Geneva summit he made the first move. While the US and Russia had previously agreed on other issues without a presidential meeting, the situation in Afghanistan apparently required a face-to-face discussion. Biden, too, may well have realised that the Kremlin now holds the key to the continued US presence in Afghanistan.

All of the other issues on the summit's agenda – cyber espionage, Ukraine, Iran, and Syria – were predictable and yielded no visible breakthroughs. The Biden administration must now decide whether to cooperate with Russia and its allies in Afghanistan. Putin's proposal may give America the chance to save face and shore up its shaky international reputation following its hasty withdrawal. Most important, the US and Russia must aim to ensure a future free of conflict and chaos for Afghanistan's long-suffering people.

The writer is a former prime minister of Kyrgyzstan.

PROJECT SYNDICATE



Djoomart Otorbaev

The US and Russia must aim to ensure a future free of conflict and chaos for Afghanistan's long-suffering people

SPECTRUM ECONOMY

'Miles to go before I sleep'

A lot of discussion has been going on in support of the economic reforms that were introduced in our country in July 1991. But it is rarely discussed that the reforms were imposed on us by the IMF and the World Bank as part of the Washington Consensus.

Thirty years after the reforms, we are still plagued by a host of economic problems. India recorded a fiscal deficit of 9.3 per cent of GDP in 2020-21 as against 8.4 per cent in 1991. Public debt which was stable at around 70 per cent of GDP over the past decade has exceeded 90 per cent of GDP in 2020-21. The wholesale price-based inflation accelerated to a record high of 12.94 per cent in May 2021 on rising prices of crude oil and manufactured goods and India's retail inflation rose to 6.30 per cent in May 2021. Job losses are so pervasive and discernible that they don't need any statistics.

It is publicised that the reforms spurred economic growth, progress, and modernisation in India. But it is never discussed how India extricated itself from the quagmire of an economic abyss after Independence by adopting a socialistic pattern of economy. Certainly, due to the reforms, the markets roared, industrialists flourished and amassed wealth, the middle class prospered, GDP

accelerated, per capita income rose more rapidly than before, life expectancy improved, infant and maternal mortality rates declined, and poverty receded. But India has lost its economic sovereignty. Today, we have the right to open any sector but no right to close it.

According to estimates, the average growth rate of the past three decades was 5.8 per cent per annum which is slightly higher than 5.6 per cent in the decade before 1991. However, this growth has been uneven, inequitable, and has not benefited larger sections of society and triggered mammoth inequalities. India is today divided into two parts – a shining India representing the rich and a suffering India representing the voiceless and the vulnerable.

According to an Oxfam report, India's richest one per cent hold more than four-times the wealth held by 95.3 crore people who make up for the bottom 70 per cent of the country's population. After Brazil, India is the second most unequal country in world, according to Credit Suisse's 12th wealth report.

According to the global multidimensional poverty index (MPI) 2020, India still had 36.4 crore poor in 2015-16, the largest for any country. Due to the pandemic, around 23 crore people fell below the

poverty line, while the middle class population shrunk by about 3.2 crore.

In comparative terms, progress in India has been trifling. India ranked 94th among 107 countries in the Global Hunger Index, 2020, even behind Nepal (73), Pakistan (88), Bangladesh (75), and Indonesia (70). Out of 189 countries, India ranked 131st on the Human Development Index, 2020 prepared by the UNDP.

India ranked 139th out of 149 countries in the list of the UN World Happiness Report, 2021. According to the 15th Edition of the Global Peace Index, 2021 released by the Institute of Economics and Peace, India ranked 135th out of 163 countries, indicating 'low state of peace.'

Public healthcare is a great leveller and directly helps in reducing health inequalities. But sharp inequalities exist across castes, religions, classes and genders on various health indicators, according to a report by Oxfam India. The report titled 'India Inequality Report 2021: India's Unequal Healthcare Story' shows that the 'general category is better off than the SCs and STs, Hindus are better off than Muslims, the rich are better off than the poor, men are better off than women, and the urban population is better off than

the rural population' on most health determinants, interventions and indicators. As per Oxfam's report, 2020, India's health budget is the fourth lowest in the world. The report data showed India spent less than 4 per cent of its budget on health and ranked 155th out of 158 countries on the health spending index.

India looks more like a poor country when compared to China after 30 years of reforms. In 1987, the GDP (nominal) of both countries was almost equal; in terms of PPP, China was slightly ahead of India in 1990. In 2020, China's GDP (\$14.7 trillion) was more than five times India's GDP (\$2.63 trillion).

In his July 1991 Budget speech announcing the economic reforms, then Finance Minister Dr Manmohan Singh had paraphrased Victor Hugo: "No power on earth can stop an idea whose time has come." But ideas can only come of age in an environment conducive to nurturing them. Thirty years later, Dr Manmohan Singh recalls Robert Frost's poem: "But I have promises to keep, and miles to go before I sleep." This is today's reality: Time has come to make reforms that are people-centric, not just profit-centric.

The writer is an Odisha-based economist and columnist.

WISDOM CORNER

- Only two things are infinite, the universe and human stupidity, and I'm not sure about the former. ALBERT EINSTEIN
- With the past, I have nothing to do; nor with the future. I live now. RALPH WALDO EMERSON
- This is the precept by which I have lived: Prepare for the worst; expect the best; and take what comes. HANNAH ARENDT

WORDSWORTH

Oogification

This is a truly curious word, a whimsical creation to identify a linguistic process that doesn't exist. Nobody is ever likely to use it in real life, although it has appeared in a number of works that list language oddities. It refers to a supposed process by which an oo sound is substituted for another vowel, either to turn a regular English word into slang or to make a slang word even more slangy. It was invented about 30 years ago by Roger Wescott, who was then Professor of Linguistics at Drew University in Madison, New Jersey. It appeared in a little article in the linguistic magazine Verbatim under the title Oogification in American English Slang. He claimed to have derived the word as an expansion of the American slang oogy, which he said meant "extremely attractive" and "extremely unattractive". It has never aspired to the former sense, being a modified form of ugly, thus being an example of the process he describes. Though oogification isn't a real process in English, Professor Wescott is making a serious point facetiously. Anatoly Liberman commented in his Oxford Etymologist blog in July 2010 that "The vowel sound oo has the ability of giving a word an amusing appearance. Whoever hears snooze, canoodle, and nincompoop begins to smile; add boondoggle to this list." Roger Wescott listed a number of slang terms from the past century that share this quality. Most of his examples are either uncommon or defunct. Divine has appeared as divoon, Scandinavian is known as Scandinoovian (sometimes as Scandihooovian), and at one time cigaroot was a well known variation on cigarette, as here: "I can 'elp!" persisted Albert. "Got a cigaroot?" "Do you smoke, child?" "When I get 'old of a cigaroot I do." "I'm sorry I can't oblige you. I don't smoke cigarettes." "Then I'll 'ave to 'ave one of my own," said Albert moodily (A Damsel in Distress, by PG Wodehouse, 1919). One that is very common is shoot as a euphemism for shit, which fits the suggestions of both professors.



Santosh Kumar Mohapatra

THIRTY YEARS AFTER THE REFORMS, WE ARE STILL PLAGUED BY A HOST OF ECONOMIC PROBLEMS

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, Rasulgari Industrial Estate, Bhubaneswar-751010

JE during Covid

Sir, Japanese encephalitis (JE) is a life-threatening disease. The mosquito-borne disease was first recognised in India in 1955. Since then, major outbreaks of it from different parts of the country have been reported, predominantly in rural areas. Between 2008 and 2014, there were more than 44,000 JE cases and nearly 6,000 deaths in India, particularly in UP and Bihar. In 2016, there was a rise in JE cases, with over 125 children reported to have died in one hospital in Gorakhpur (UP) alone. In the monsoon season, Assam receives huge amount of rain making us vulnerable to mosquito-borne diseases like malaria and JE. The JE also spreads like an epidemic in flood-hit and water-logged areas. The government is urged to conduct awareness programmes in rural areas and take required measures to stop the outbreak of JE while managing the Covid-19 pandemic simultaneously.

Aditya Ankur Nath, TEZPUR

Bomma's task cut out

Sir, By choosing Basavaraj Bommai, a trusted lieutenant of BS Yediyurappa, as the next Chief Minister of Karnataka, BJP's first priority was to keep the former CM in good humour. Yediyurappa's emotional outburst at the time of his resignation, indicating the resignation was forced upon combined with the pressure tactics played out by the congregation of seers and heads of Lingayat mutts demanding to nominate another Lingayat in place of the outgoing CM put the BJP in a fix. The BJP has chosen to play safe to retain its Lingayat vote base. However, the new CM has his task cut out. The question is how will Bommai, who has held several high-profile ministerial positions in the past, deal with political veterans in BJP, many of whom were in the race for the CM's post? Will he be able to assert himself before them and get his vision for the party implemented? With less than two years left for elections, he really has to perform. He will also have to deal with issues from the past. Creating rapport with senior party colleagues and cadre will be one of his biggest challenges. Besides, he will also have to deal with issues ranging from the impending third wave of Covid-19 to floods and financial crisis. Bommai would also have to take on the Opposition, which has been criticising the government over corruption and Covid mismanagement.

N Sadhasiva Reddy, BANGALORE

COVID IMPACT

Parents rush in to govt schools for admissions



REVERSE TREND

- The change in the mindset of parents is attributed to their worsening financial conditions due to the pandemic
- The matter came to light as 633 students from 16 private schools under this block got themselves admitted in 102 government schools by July 15
- Assistant block education officer Menaka Mohapatra said no children can be deprived of education for their arrears as per Right to Education Act

Reports said many parents are now struggling for livelihood and manage their families with shoe-string budgets. Thus, it has become all the more difficult for them to meet the rising expenses demanded by private schools.

As a result, they get transfer certificates (TCs) of their children from private schools and admit them in their government counterparts. It was alleged that some private schools are deliberately harassing parents by not giving them summary TCs. However, there are many who are aware of an order of the mass education department allowing kids to get into government schools on the strength of Aadhaar cards. The order of the mass education department was valid till June 30.

Later, many parents were learnt to be trying to get their wards admitted in government schools but the private schools are reluctant to give them TCs. This happens because the authorities of private schools fear that they will not be able

to get the arrears of students for the previous year and might face a drop in student enrollment.

Among the private schools, only seven have received certificates of recognition from the state government while the rest operate sans permission.

Locals demanded that the state mass education department should immediately intervene and allow interested students to get admitted in government schools.

Local intelligentsia said that the reason behind the spurt in interest among parents is free and quality education available at government schools hitherto not realised by many. When contacted, assistant block education officer Menaka Mohapatra said no children can be deprived of education for their arrears as per Right to Education Act. Anyone is free to take TCs from private schools and read elsewhere. She assured action if complaints of harassment of parents or students come to her notice.



MAKING A POINT

A speaker making a point on breeding and hatching of juvenile carp fish during a demonstration on Carp Hatchery Technology at Karchamal in Nabarangpur, Thursday

Artificial flood hits crops in Mayurbhanj

POST NEWS NETWORK

Baripada, July 29: Large swathes of farmlands were inundated in Mayurbhanj district after water was released from Subarnarekha irrigation project, which is yet to be completed.

Hundreds of farmers have decried the action of the administration for the damage caused by the flash floods due to water release. They alleged that officials of the irrigation project hardly checked the canal system before releasing the water.

In protest against the crop loss, BJP workers along with Baripada MLA Prakash Soren, Badasahi MLA Sanatan Bijuli and the zilla parishad chairperson staged protests at the office of the



Subarnarekha irrigation project at Laxmiposi. A delegation of the BJP has submitted a memorandum to the Collector, which will be sent to the Governor.

BJP has demanded action against the officials who were responsible for releasing water without checking the project work

pleted, but the authorities released water through a channel leading to massive floods on the farmlands. Hundreds of farmers have suffered huge losses, it was alleged. The BJP has demanded action against the officials who were responsible for releasing water without checking the ground reality of the project work. They also demanded compensation for the affected farmers.

Three arrested for making minor's obscene video viral



Derabish, July 29: Police arrested three persons for making an obscene video of a minor girl viral Thursday. The victim is a resident of a village under Sadar police limits in Kendrapara district.

SDPO Rajib Lochan Panda informed this at a press meet at Sadar police station.

The accused have been identified as Milan and his brother Mulayam of Nadia area in West Bengal and Debadutta Behera, a resident of an area under Salipur police limits in Cuttack district. They were produced in a local court.

According to the victim's allegations, her family and the neighbouring family has a long standing dispute over a piece of land. It was when Milan and Mulayam were

Milan and Mulayam were working as masons in the locality. They filmed the video and handed it over to the neighbouring family

working as masons in the locality, they filmed the video and handed it over to the neighbouring family. Later, some members of the family, Debadutta and others made it viral. In this regard, the victim's family had lodged a report at Sadar police station June 4. The SDPO said two mobile phones have been seized from the accused and the rest of the accused will be arrested soon.

Teacher crunch to hit studies at Khallikote Autonomous College

OLDEST COLLEGE IN SOUTH ODISHA TO BECOME UNITARY VARSITY FROM AUG 1

POST NEWS NETWORK

Berhampur, July 29: Even as only three days are left for Khallikote Autonomous College to turn into a unitary university, acute shortage of teaching staff is likely to hit studies in the college, a report said.

Preparations are on the last leg as the college will become a unitary university from August 1. The matter came to the fore from an RTI query by advocate Pitabas Panda. Panda is also a former secretary of the students' union of Khallikote College.

Panda alleged that professor posts are lying vacant in 11 out of 18 different departments in the college. Similarly, several posts of readers and lecturers are also lying vacant in various departments.

Out of the sanctioned posts of 77 lecturers, the college is managing with only 26 lecturers. The vacancy of the teaching staff has seriously hit the classroom studies but hardly anyone is concerned about it, he said.

The college authorities in their reply have admitted that the posts of lecturers are lying vacant in Chemistry, Environmental Science, Zoology, Economics, Physiology,



Out of the sanctioned posts of 77 lecturers, the college is managing with only 26 lecturers. The vacancy of the teaching staff has seriously hit classroom studies

Education, Telugu and Hindi departments. Moreover, several posts of non-teaching staff are also lying vacant. The vacancy has hit the day to day functioning of the college. Notably, Khallikote Autonomous College is the oldest and the largest institute of higher education in south Odisha.

Online game addiction during pandemic claims student's life

POST NEWS NETWORK

Keonjhar, July 29: A Class X student, who had become addicted to online games during Covid-induced lockdown and had been suffering from mental health issues, succumbed while undergoing treatment at SCB Medical College and Hospital in Cuttack Thursday.

According to sources, Agasti Khanda - son of Kuanra Khanda from Akhupala village under Harichandanpur police limits in Keonjhar district - had been using his father's mobile phone for online classes during lockdown. He got addicted to online games while using the smartphone.

Gradually his mental health started deteriorating and he started behaving abnormally. Following this, his family members rushed him to Keonjhar dis-

Agasti Khanda of Akhupala under Harichandanpur police limits had been using his father's mobile phone for online classes

trict headquarters hospital Tuesday. The doctors there referred him to SCB Medical College and Hospital in Cuttack Wednesday for advanced treatment. However, he succumbed Thursday morning. As the news broke, a pall of gloom descended on Akhupala village. Many observed that the online class system had its own flaws. "Students are becoming addicted to online games and watching materials other than study-related ones," a local man said.



JOB STIR



Cooks and assistants staging a demonstration outside the office of the district education officer in Balasore against merger of schools and demanding government employee status to them, Thursday

GANJAM: 3 MORE REHAB HUBS FOR BEGGARS SOON

POST NEWS NETWORK

Chhatrapur, July 29: Three more beggar rehabilitation centres will be set up in Ganjam district. The director of the social security and empowerment of persons with disabilities department (SSPD) has issued a letter to the Ganjam Collector, intimating him that the state government has approved three beggar rehabilitation centres.

The state government had approved a beggar rehabilitation centre for Ganjam in February. However, no step has been taken to initiate groundwork of the project. Including this, four such projects will be executed for welfare of the mendicants.

It was learnt that some NGOs will look after the management of these beggar rehabilitation centres. In the letter, the Collector has been asked to float a tender to choose NGOs el-



igible to handle these centres. The selected voluntary organisations are supposed to run rehabilitation centres at their own places, look after the food and shelter of the beggars. It was learnt that the NGOs will receive ₹3,403 as fund for care of each beggar. The Collector has been asked to take expeditious steps and pick up the NGOs. However, neither the district administration nor the social security and empowerment department has

data about the number of people engaged in begging in the district. As per information, a survey conducted in 2017 detected 500 people engaged in begging in the district. Their number could have increased manifold by now. Contacted, district social security and empowerment officer Subhansu Moharana said a rehabilitation centre will be opened at Berhampur in the first phase and a tender will be floated soon.

Cartographers' lines vs people's perception

ALMOST ALL NORTHEASTERN STATES, BARRING TRIPURA AND MANIPUR WERE CARVED OUT OF ASSAM IN THE DECADES FOLLOWING INDEPENDENCE

HIGH-PITCHED IDENTITY POLITICS WHICH IS THE NORM IN THE NORTHEAST HAS CONTINUED TO COMPOUND THE BOUNDARY PROBLEM

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kolkata/Guwahati, July 29: Cartographers' lines drawn on survey maps pitted against local people's perception of traditional boundaries are at the root of a slew of border disputes between Assam and states that were carved out of it post-Independence.

With one such line drawn through a forest turning into a flashpoint for a violent clash between Assam and Mizoram police and civilians Monday, Assam's conflicts with its neighbours have come under renewed focus.

Almost all northeastern states, barring the former princely states of Tripura and Manipur were carved out of Assam in the decades following India's Independence in 1947.

District borders drawn by cartographers on a 1 cm: 1 km scale became inter-state borders for what were till then hilly and remote districts of a huge state.

"Sometimes the lines were drawn across a hill, sometimes through a forest on maps which did not clarify whether the hill slope or forest patch through which the line went was Assam's or its new neighbouring state's. On the ground it meant a lot of headache for administrators as the line often also clashed with a tribe's perception of its traditional hunting or grazing or jhum (shifting) cultivation lands," pointed out Ranjan Chatterjee, former Chief Secretary of Meghalaya, who served Assam for much of his career.

PH Hauzel, former chief secretary of Mizoram, said land in the Lushai Hills, which is what Mizoram was called before 1972, when it became a separate union



Activists of Veer Lachit Sena Assam stage protest in front of Mizoram House in protest against Monday's Assam-Mizoram border clashes, in Guwahati, Thursday.

territory, was controlled for centuries by chieftains and the areas which form the current conflict zone were the hunting grounds of some of these chiefs.

An inner line drawn up by the British for these tribal areas in 1875 to protect tribes from influences of plainsmen seemingly sanctified these tribal claims. "When district boundaries were later drawn up by the British in the 1930s, some of these traditional tribal land appeared on the other side of the boundary... This was perhaps done as tea gardens were encroaching on these forests," said Hauzel.

As long as these states remained part of Assam, these perceptions and lack of details in the cartographic maps did not matter, as a tribe's claims on the other side of

a district's border were not challenged by any authority.

However, as these became inter-state borders with excise and police posts, land ownership on either side of the imaginary line became a hotly contested issue. With populations in all states spilling over, and land in a once scarcely populated part of India turning into a prized possession, the issue started acquiring economic underpinnings. Throw in a state's or a tribe's sub-nationalism into the brew, and the pot often became a red hot recipe for conflict.

"Conflict was sometimes inherent in the way boundaries were drawn up when states were created... Very often not in keeping with the population's composition or terrain," explained Sanjiv Sood,

former additional director general of BSE. Nagas who were the first to get a state of their own in 1963, have been among the most aggressive in demanding redrawing of maps so that all areas where they live, regardless of the state where the land is located, are part of Nagaland.

"Assam wants status quo... The tribal states which were carved out of it do not agree. Each tribe has its own historical narrative on land ownership, these are often at variance with the official map or another tribe's or a plains community's narrative," Chatterjee said. Though disputes and clashes started within years of the new states coming into being, the first major conflict was in 1985, when a firefight between armed Nagas

and Assam police resulted in more than 40 people losing their lives.

Assam alleges that Nagas have over the years taken over more than 60,000 hectares of forest land in Sivasagar, Golaghat and Jorhat districts, while Nagaland politicians claim that these were traditional Naga lands and should never have been shown as part of Assam.

Seven years after Nagaland was formed, a separate autonomous state comprising Khasi, Garo and Jaintia hills was carved out within Assam. In 1972, this became a full-fledged state Meghalaya - named by the famous linguist Suniti Chatterjee.

In the same year, the North Eastern Frontier Agency, which after 1947 had become part of Assam, was renamed Arunachal Pradesh and made a Union Territory.

A North-East States Reorganisation Act passed by the Parliament laid down the boundaries of these states. However, soon after becoming states, both Meghalaya and Arunachal disputed their borders.

While Meghalaya disputed the award of part of Mikir Hills which went to Assam, Arunachal claimed that Assam had encroached on its land. Attempts by successive central governments to sort out the border conflicts have failed till now. The latest is a round of talks last week initiated by Union Home Minister Amit Shah, who asked the chief ministers to try and resolve their boundary conflicts in the 75th year of Indian Independence.

Whether this well-meant move will succeed or flounder like the ones before because of intransigence of political leaders is something only time will tell.

1 yr after fake encounter, father waits for justice



I have lost my son. I was very satisfied earlier with the pace of the probe but now it seems that my hope has started diminishing as nothing is moving since last December. I have received Rs five lakh from the Jammu and Kashmir administration. Is that the price of my innocent son and others killed in cold blood?

MOHAMMED YUSUF

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Srinagar, July 29: A little over a year has passed but an anxious father is still awaiting justice for his son and two others who were killed in a fake encounter by an army officer in South Kashmir's Shopian district.

And the wait gets longer as the army is still finishing legal work six months after completion of its internal inquiry.

The army had completed its Summary of Evidence against two of its soldiers involved in the Amshipura encounter in which three youths were killed and indications were that a court martial proceeding against one officer would be initiated.

In a parallel inquiry, a Special Investigation Team constituted by the Jammu and Kashmir police had filed chargesheet against three persons including Captain Bhoopendra Singh for 'staging a fake encounter' in the higher reaches of Shopian district and killing three youths - Imtiyaz Ahmed, Abrar Ahmed and Mohammed Ibrar, hailing from Rajouri district of Jammu region - in Amshipura July 18 last year.

"I have lost my son. I was very satisfied earlier with the pace of the probe but now it seems that my hope has started diminishing as nothing is moving since last December. I have received Rs five lakh from the Jammu and Kashmir administration. Is that the price of my innocent son and others killed in cold blood," Mohammed Yusuf, father of Abrar Ahmed, told PTI from Rajouri over phone.

The army, however, maintained that the process of Summary of Evidence had been completed and the papers for the beginning of the final process were likely to be initiated soon.

"We will be completing the process soon and the person concerned is still in close custody (jail) with the army," a senior officer said on the condition of anonymity. A sobbing Yusuf contended that the plight of a father who had lost his son needs to be understood.

Lt Governor of Jammu and Kashmir Manoj Sinha had visited the families in Rajouri last year and conveyed to them Prime Minister Narendra Modi's message that the government stands with the aggrieved families, and they will be taken care of with all support from the government.

The army had completed its Summary of Evidence in the last week of December 2020 and the army had issued a statement at that time saying "the process of recording the 'summary of evidence' has been completed. The same is being examined by the concerned authorities in consultation with legal advisors for proceeding further."

The Army had, however, denied that its captain staged the encounter for cash reward saying there was no such system for its personnel for any acts in combat situations or otherwise in the line of duty.

"The evidence was destroyed by accused Captain Singh," the chargesheet said, adding he along with the other two accused set fire to a shelter at the encounter site. The SIT chargesheet gave details of forensic analysis of the crime scene which was photographed "from all possible perspectives." The FSL (Forensic and Scientific Laboratory) team recovered vital evidence that was seized. The chargesheet listed 75 witnesses in support of its findings and has also provided technical evidence including call data records of the accused persons.

Assam cops to probe role of Mizo MP in border violence

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

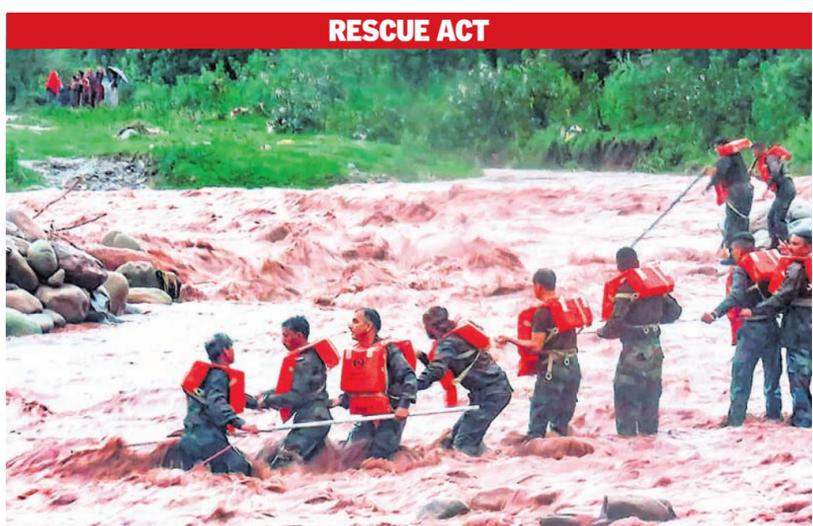
Guwahati/Aizawl, July 29: An Assam police team, including CID officers, is going to Delhi to probe Mizoram's Rajya Sabha member K. Vanlalvena's alleged role in Monday's violence along the inter-state border, which left six Assam cops dead, officials said Thursday.

A senior Assam police official said that the decision to question Vanlalvena was taken following his "controversial interview to the electronic media in which he allegedly warned the Assam police with objectionable words."

Contacted by IANS, Vanlalvena said: "I do not have any comment now. I have not received any official information." The most violent clashes along the Assam-Mizoram

border left six Assam police personnel dead and around 100 civilians and security personnel of the two neighbouring states injured, including an IGP in Assam and Cachar SP Vaibhav Chandrakant Nimbalkar.

Assam police's Special Director General GP Singh, in a tweet, said: "Assam police team including officers of CID are leaving for Delhi to take lawful action relating to conspiracy behind the incident in light of media interviews of Rajya Sabha MP Sri K Vanlalvena indicative of his active role in conspiracy." In another tweet, he said a case has been registered at Dholai police station in Cachar district in the killing of Assam Police personnel, under various provisions of IPC and the Arms Act besides Prevention of Damage to Public Property Act.



Army personnel conduct a rescue operation after flash floods at Dangri village in Rajouri district of Jammu and Kashmir, Thursday. The Army rescued three civilians.

Hurriyat seeks Mirwaiz Umar Farooq's release

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Srinagar, July 29: The Hurriyat Conference Thursday demanded the release of its chairman Mirwaiz Umar Farooq, saying his fundamental rights and civil liberties stand completely curbed for the last two years.

The demand for the release of Mirwaiz was made following a meeting of the executive committee of the Hurriyat Conference held at the residence of Bilal Lone. "Hurriyat Conference executive members seek his (Mirwaiz) immediate release from illegal arbitrary house detention by the state authorities," the amalgam said in a statement.

They appealed to all rights activists, organisations, and democracies of the world to ensure Mirwaiz's release and "restoration of his human rights."

The Hurriyat Conference said its executive members Prof Abdul Ghani Bhat, Bilal Lone and Masroor Abaas Ansari were denied permission to meet the Mirwaiz at his Nigeen residence where he is under house arrest since August 5, 2019 following the Centre's decision to revoke the special status of Jammu and Kashmir.

"The executive members strongly condemned their chairman's continued and arbitrary house detention since August 2019. Outside



Mirwaiz's residence gates, mobile bunkers and armed vehicles have been stationed, manned by CRPF and state police personnel and the road partially blocked from both sides and no one is allowed to go inside," the amalgam said.

The executive members had gone to meet Mirwaiz to inquire about his health after his recovery from Covid but the armed personnel stationed outside sent them away, the Hurriyat said.

The amalgam said this "despotic attitude" of the ruling class towards the Hurriyat chairman is highly regrettable.

"All his human and fundamental rights and civil liberties stand completely curbed for past two years. He has been caged inside his home arbitrarily at the will of the rulers, for firmly standing by Hurriyat's principled stand of peaceful resolution of the Kashmir conflict in accordance with the people's aspirations," it said.

Drug abuse surges in Valley as Pak facilitates supply

Police have not been able to stop smuggling of psychotropic substances from Afghanistan via Pakistan

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, July 29: Drug abuse is on the rise in Kashmir, with supplies routed through the infamous Af-Pak region-the combination of Afghanistan and Pakistan, known as the ground-zero for drugs, violence and terrorism. The Jammu and Kashmir police in collaboration with the Department of Health and Medical Education have set up drug de-addiction centres and treated thousands of patients at all the district headquarters in the Kashmir Valley but they have not been able to stop smuggling of psychotropic substances from Afghanistan via Pakistan.

According to the statistics maintained at the Government Medical College (GMC) Srinagar and other drug de-addiction centres, heroin smuggled in from Afghanistan has become the main drug of abuse. Around 95% of the patients treated or under treatment at different de-addiction centres have been found abusing this deleterious psychotropic drug.

At the Srinagar GMC's de-addiction centre, among those under treatment are a couple married as late as in 2019. The 29-year-old husband with his 28-year-old wife has been found taking heroin through an intravenous route. They occasionally cross paths in

the hospital's corridors outside their contiguous wards.

According to one of the four doctors attending the patients at the de-addiction centre, a large number of the families had admitted two or more members simultaneously for consuming heroin through IV or other routes. "Many of them come in from affluent families who fall in the wrong company and spend a lot of money to acquire this high-priced drug," says a psychiatrist at the GMC Srinagar. "We have noticed a remarkable increase in the heroin abuse in the last two years but we have no means to determine a political reason behind it. It can or cannot be coincidence that the drug abuse has assumed menacing proportions during a combination of political and medical lockdown. Since March 2020, the Covid pandemic has kept everybody indoors. There have been familial implosions. Marriages have broken and students have forgotten about their school cultures. Smuggling and circulation of psychotropic substances have multiplied during the same period," said a doctor at the Police Control Room in Srinagar.

According to a senior police officer, 35 kg of heroin, 5 kg of marijuana and 3 kg of brown sugar valued at Rs 182 crore in the Indian drug markets have been seized by police in the Kupwara police dis-



trict-half of the Kupwara revenue district-in the first six months of the current year. The recoveries made by the security forces, particularly the Army, are equally voluminous.

Drugs from Afghanistan via Pakistan have been flowing in through Kupwara and Baramulla districts on the LoC in Kashmir as also through Poonch and Rajouri districts on the LoC and Jammu, Samba and Kathua districts on the International Border in Jammu. "Over 90% of the quantities are smuggled in through conventional

routes and methods but at least 10% of the quantities are now believed to be entering through tunnels and drones," said a senior police officer in Jammu.

"Until recently, we used to say Udda Punjab. But now we say Udda Jammu and Kashmir," said the officer. According to him, 60% of the drugs, particularly heroin, was going all the way to Amritsar, Chandigarh, Delhi and Mumbai and about 40% was believed to be in the local consumption. Some of the officers, not authorised to speak to the media, put it at Rs

1,000 crore a year business.

Those admitted and treated at GMC's DDC recently include two members of a family, in their mid-40s and the family head's 10-year-old grandson. The boy is on Opioid Substitution Therapy (OST), a treatment regimen that induces abandonment of heroin and other opium derivatives-highly addictive and with life-threatening consequences. The doctors treating the boy detected that he had been infected with Hepatitis-C virus, a common infection among IV drug abusers. If ignored, Hepatitis-C can lead to liver cirrhosis and prove to be fatal.

The 10-year-old is now under treatment for Hepatitis-C and under the supervision of a composite team of doctors and psychiatrists including a couple of professors from GMC's Department of Gastroenterology.

According to the official statistics, 6,234 patients have been examined and treated for drug addiction at the DDCs in Kashmir since the outbreak of Covid-19 in March 2020. Of these, 4,830 had been found taking heroin intravenously. Additionally, 1,054 were those taking heroin through other routes. With this combination of 5,884 patients, 95% of the drug addicts were found consuming heroin. 70% of them were taking it by syringe.

of the day quote

We reiterate our commitment to ensuring safe habitats for our tigers and nurturing tiger-friendly eco-systems



NARENDRA MODI | PRIME MINISTER

I requested Gadkariji that it will be good if we get a manufacturing industry in our state to make electric vehicles. Bengal shares borders with Bangladesh, Nepal, Bhutan and northeastern states, so we need proper roads



MAMATA BANERJEE | WEST BENGAL CHIEF MINISTER

Dear Mary Kom, you lost in Tokyo Olympics by just one point but for me you are always a champion! You have achieved what no other female boxer in the world has ever achieved. You are a legend. India is proud of you. Boxing and Olympics will miss you



KIREN RIJU | UNION LAW MINISTER

SHORT TAKES

Maha to ease Covid curbs

Mumbai: Mumbai and 24 other districts of Maharashtra which have reported Covid-19 positivity rates lower than the state's average are likely to get more relaxation from restrictions, state Health Minister Rajesh Tope said Thursday. The government is also considering if those who are fully vaccinated against coronavirus can be allowed to travel by local trains in Mumbai, he said. Speaking to reporters after a meeting of the state's Covid-19 task force chaired by Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray, Tope said in the remaining 11 districts, where the infection rate is high, more restrictions may be imposed.

IMD forecasts heavy rainfall in Rajasthan

Jaipur: The Meteorological department has issued red and orange alerts for heavy rains in several districts of Rajasthan Friday. The active southwest monsoon will gain more intensity in the coming days due to which heavy to very heavy rain (115 to 204 mm) in Nagaur, Sikar and Ajmer districts is likely and a red alert has been issued for these places, the Met department said.

Militants shot dead

Itanagar: Security forces gunned down two hardcore militants of the NSCN (K-YA), a faction of the National Socialist Council of Nagaland-Khaplang, during a joint operation in Tirap district of Arunachal Pradesh, according to a government report made available here Thursday. A cache of arms and ammunition was seized after the encounter which took place Wednesday. When personnel of the security forces ordered the militants to surrender, they fired on the team, the report sent from Tirap district said. Security forces returned the fire killing two hardcore militants of the Yung Aung faction of the NSCN-K.

Goa CM under fire

Panaji: Under pressure from the opposition over the gang rape of two girls, Goa Chief Minister Pramod Sawant has drawn flak over his statement in the Assembly that the parents should 'introspect' why their children were out on a beach late at night. One of the accused who is a government employee has been suspended, the Chief Minister informed the House Thursday.



The foundation of our democracy is that Parliamentarians should be the voice of the people and should discuss issues of national importance. Don't waste more time of the Parliament, let them talk about inflation, farmers and Pegasus

RAHUL GANDHI | CONGRESS LEADER

ALL-INDIA MEDICAL ADMISSION

27% quota for OBCs, 10% for EWS

The reservation is meant for undergraduate and postgraduate medical and dental courses -- MBBS, MD, MS, Diploma, BDS and MDS -- from the current academic year (2021-22) onwards

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, July 29: The Union Ministry of Health and Family Welfare decided Thursday to provide 27 per cent reservation to Other Backward Classes (OBCs) and 10 per cent reservation to Economically Weaker Sections (EWS) in the All India Quota (AIQ) scheme for medical courses.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi at a meeting held July 26 had directed the concerned Union ministries to facilitate an effective solution to this long-pending issue. Soon after the decision, Modi lauded the step in a series of tweets, saying: "Our government has taken a landmark decision for providing 27% reservation for OBCs and 10% reservation for Economically Weaker Sections in the All India Quota scheme for undergraduate and postgraduate medical/dental courses from the current academic year. "This will immensely help thousands of our youth every year get better opportunities and create a new paradigm of social justice in our country." The decision would benefit nearly 1,500 OBC students in MBBS and 2,500 OBC students in postgraduation courses, besides benefiting around 550 EWS students in MBBS and around 1,000 EWS students in postgraduation



courses every year. The AIQ scheme was introduced in 1986 under the directions of the Supreme Court to provide for domicile-free, merit-based opportunities to students from any state to study in a medical college located in another state. The AIQ consists of 15 per cent of total available undergraduate seats and 50 per cent of total available post-graduate seats in the government medical colleges. Initially, there was no reservation in the AIQ scheme up to 2007.

In 2007, the Supreme Court had introduced 15 per cent reservation for SCs and 7.5 per cent reservation for STs in the AIQ scheme. When the Central Educational Institutions (Reservation in Admission) Act became effective in 2007, providing for uniform 27 per cent reserva-

tion to OBCs, the same was implemented in all the Central Educational Institutions such as the Safdarjung Hospital, Lady Harding Medical College, Aligarh Muslim University and Banaras Hindu University etc. However, this was not extended to the AIQ seats of state medical and dental colleges.

Being a Central scheme, the Central list of OBCs shall be used for this reservation. Around 1,500 OBC students in MBBS and 2,500 in post-graduation will benefit through this reservation. In order to provide benefit to students belonging to the EWS category in admission to higher educational institutions, a constitutional amendment was made in 2019 which enabled the provision of 10 per cent reservation for the EWS category.

SHOCKING INCIDENT

30 monkeys were found killed at a village in Hassan district of Karnataka in the early hours of Thursday. As many as 20 other monkeys were found to be injured. However, barring 2 monkeys, others have recovered and left after local residents tended to them



Not just Ker, nCoV flaring up in the Northeast as well

AGENCIES

New Delhi, July 29: The R-factor, which indicates the speed at which Covid-19 infection is spreading in the country, is climbing steadily with Kerala and the northeastern states occupying top spots fuelling worries about the pandemic rearing its head again.

Among the metro cities, the R-values of Pune and Delhi are inching towards one, suggests an analysis by researchers at the Institute of Mathematical Sciences in Chennai.

When the second wave of the Covid-19 infection was at its peak, the overall R-value in the country was estimated to be 1.37 between March 9 to April 21.

It declined to 1.18 between April 24 and May 1 and then to 1.1 between April 29 and May 7, according to the analysis. The Union Health Ministry Thursday said it will depute a six-member team to Kerala for effective Covid-19 management as the state reports a spike in daily cases.

The team headed by National Centre for Disease Control Director S K Singh will reach Kerala on Friday and visit some districts reporting a high case positivity rate. The high case positivity has remained a cause of concern at a

Kerala has the highest number of active cases and continues to have an R-value around 1.11.

time when the overall coronavirus numbers are on a decline in the country. In the northeast, only Tripura has an R-value substantially lower than one while Manipur has gone only marginally below one. Among other states in India, Uttarakhand has an R-value very close to one at the moment.

Among the major cities, the R-value of Delhi was inching towards one. The R-value between June 21-26 was 0.8. It declined to 0.66 between June 28 and July 6, but rose to 0.84 between July 4 and 20.

Explaining the situation in the national capital, he said if the number of active cases is constant, then the R-value is one.

India logged 43,509 new coronavirus infections taking the total tally of Covid-19 cases to 3,15,28,114, while the active cases registered an increase for the second consecutive day, according to the Union Health Ministry data updated Thursday.

Now SEBI nails Raj Kundra and Shilpa

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Mumbai, July 29: Bad news continues unabated for embattled Raj Kundra and his actress wife Shilpa Shetty. Market regulator SEBI imposed a penalty of Rs 3 lakh on the couple and their company Viaan Industries for contravening insider trading rules.



Kundra, Shetty and Viaan have been fined for a three-year delay in the disclosure of an allotment of preferential shares. In 2015, Viaan Industries had made a preferential allotment of 500,000 equity shares. Of this 128,800 equity shares each were allotted to Kundra (referred to as Ripu Sudan Kundra) and Shetty, the promoters of the company. According to SEBI's Prohibition of Insider Trading Rules, 2015, the promoters had to disclose this transaction to the company within two days if it exceeded Rs 10 lakh in value. The company, in turn, has to relay this disclosure to the stock exchanges within two trading days. In this case, SEBI said the value of the transaction was Rs 2.57 crore each and the disclosures pertaining to the 2015 transaction were made only in 2019. In reply to a notice from the regulator, Shetty and Kundra acknowledged the mistake and said it was not done with malafide intent.

LS passes two Bills amid din

AGENCIES

New Delhi, July 29: Amid continuous uproar by opposition members over Pegasus spying row and farmers' issue, the government Thursday pushed ahead with its legislative business as the House passed two Bills without a debate.

As opposition continued their protest on Pegasus snooping controversy and three farm bills, Birla adjourned the House till 11.30 am. After the Question Hour ended at 12 noon, Rajendra Agrawal, who was chairing the proceedings of the House, asked protesting members to go back to their respective seats.

Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury, Leader of the Congress in the Lok Sabha, said the opposition has not been able to put forth its point due to the stubborn attitude of the government. Parliamentary Affairs Minister Joshi said the members, who resorted to tearing papers, don't even want to apologise. The House later passed two Bills before the proceedings were adjourned for the day amid continuous protests by opposition members over the Pegasus spying row and farmers' issue.



The Airports Economic Regulatory Authority of India (Amendment) Bill 2021 and The Inland Vessels Bill, 2021 were passed without debate. When the House met at 2 pm, Kirit Premjibhai Solanki, who was chairing the proceedings, took up the two bills.

He urged the protesting members to go back to their seats.

Amid din, Civil Aviation Minister Jyotiraditya Scindia moved the Airports Economic Regulatory Authority of India (Amendment) Bill, 2021.

Similarly, Ports, Shipping and Waterways Minister Sarbananda Sonowal moved the Inland Vessels Bill, 2021, which seeks to provide safety of navigation, protection of life and cargo and prevention of pollution that may be caused.

In the middle of the protests, Lok Sabha had Wednesday passed the IBC amendment bill without a debate.

Lok Sabha had also approved the first batch of supplementary demands authorising the government to spend an additional Rs 23,675 crore, including Rs 17,000 crore for the health ministry, in the current financial year.

STRUGGLE TO SURVIVE



A hand rickshaw puller waits for passengers on a waterlogged road during heavy rain in Kolkata

PTI PHOTO

175 tourists stuck in HP after cloudburst

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Shimla/New Delhi, July 29: Intense rainfall is likely over eastern, western, and central India till August 1 even as 175 tourists were stranded in Himachal Pradesh's Lahaul-Spiti following a cloudburst and landslides triggered by heavy showers, while two people died in separate rain-related incidents in Delhi and Uttar Pradesh. Rescue operations were under-

way Thursday to trace 20 people missing after a cloudburst hit Kishtwar district of Jammu and Kashmir with authorities pressing more teams into action.

Heavy rains lashed several parts of Delhi-NCR Thursday bringing the mercury down. However, two people lost their lives in rain-related incidents. A 40-year-old woman died and her daughter was injured after the roof of their shanty collapsed due to heavy rains in south-

east Delhi's Govindpuri area. Police said the roof of the first floor of the 'jhuggi' in Navjeevan Camp collapsed due to heavy rains Thursday evening.

In neighbouring Ghaziabad, which is a part of the Delhi-National Capital Region, a six-year-old girl died as she was buried alive after a portion of a house collapsed due to heavy rainfall. The incident took place at Pasonda village when a balcony of a house under which

the girls were playing caved in. The water level of the Yamuna river in Delhi rose to 203.74 metres Thursday close to the warning mark of 204.50 metres after heavy rains in the upper catchment areas of the river.

Delhi's maximum temperature settled at 27.6 degrees Celsius -- seven notches below normal, while the minimum temperature was recorded at 24 degrees Celsius, three notches below normal.

COVID'S HIDDEN BLOW

'Lockdown negatively impacted women's nutrition'

AGENCIES

New Delhi, July 29: The nationwide lockdown in India last year due to the Covid-19 pandemic caused disruptions in agricultural supply chains that negatively impacted the nutrition of women in the country, according to a study.

The research, published in the journal *Economia Politica*, shows that although food value chains and allied activities were exempted from the lockdown, women's dietary diversity -- the number of food groups consumed -- declined during the period compared

to 2019. The researchers at Tata-Cornell Institute for Agriculture and Nutrition (TCI), New Delhi, found that the drop was due to decreased consumption of foods like meats, eggs, vegetables and fruits, which are rich in micronutrients that are crucial to good health and development.

"Women's diets were lacking in diverse foods even before the pandemic, but Covid-19 has further exacerbated the situation," said Soumya Gupta, a research economist at TCI who co-authored the study.

"Any policies addressing the impact of the pandemic on nutri-



tional outcomes must do so through a gendered lens that reflects the specific, and often persistent, vulnerabilities faced by women," Gupta added. The nationwide lockdown was enforced to slow down the spread of Covid-19 March 24, 2020. The lockdown was lifted May 30, last year, though some restrictions remained in certain areas of the country. The researchers, including TCI director Prabhu Pingali, Mathew Abraham, assistant director, and consultant Payal Seth, analysed surveys of food expenditures, dietary diversity and other nutrition indicators at the national,

state and district levels in the states of Uttar Pradesh, Bihar and Odisha. They found that unequal burden on women was also caused in part due to the closure of aanganwadi centers during the lockdown.

The centers, which provide take-home rations and hot cooked meals to nursing and expecting mothers, are an important source of nutrition for women and children.

Data from 155 households surveyed showed 72 per cent of eligible households lost access to aanganwadi services during the pandemic.

international



The US supports the @WHO plans for additional studies into Covid-19 origins, including in (the People's Republic of China), to better understand this pandemic and prevent future ones
ANTONY BLINKEN | SECRETARY OF STATE, US

AUSTRALIA TO RETURN 'STOLEN' ART TO INDIA

Australia will return 14 artworks to India, including at least six believed to have been stolen or illegally exported, the National Gallery announced Thursday. The collection is composed largely of "religious and cultural artefacts" worth a total of about US\$2.2 million



of the day quote

The meeting dealt with a number of important health issues, including an agreement on cooperation in medical services between the two sides (Israel & Palestine), mainly about combating the spread of Coronavirus

MAI AL-KAILA | MINISTER OF HEALTH, PALESTINE

We urge the US to honour its commitment to stop meddling in China's internal affairs under the pretext of Tibetan affairs, and offer no support to Tibet independence forces to engage in anti-China separatist activities

ZHAO LIJIAN | FOREIGN MINISTRY SPOKESMAN, CHINA

What the Taliban are doing or aren't doing has nothing to do with us. We are not responsible, neither are we spokespersons for the Taliban

IMRAN KHAN | PM, PAKISTAN

SHORT TAKES

Castillo sworn in as Peru's new Prez

Lima: Pedro Castillo has been sworn in as the new President of Peru, after weeks of uncertainty following defeating a right-wing rival in a hard-fought presidential runoff. "It is the first time that our country will be governed by a peasant, a person who, like many Peruvians, belongs to the sectors oppressed for so many centuries," Castillo said in his first speech as President Wednesday after he was sworn in. He announced a series of reforms, including drafting a new Constitution, after receiving the presidential sash from the highest authority in parliament.

China names new ambassador to US

Washington: One of China's most prominent "Wolf Warrior" diplomats was Wednesday announced as his nation's new ambassador to the United States. The hawkish Qin Gang, a close confidante of President Xi Jinping, has arrived in Washington at a time of high tensions between China and the United States, and is expected to deliver a combative message.

Turkey wildfires leave 3 dead

Ankara: At least three people were killed and dozens of people were hospitalized in southern Turkey after strong winds fanned two separate forest fires, officials said Thursday. A wildfire that broke out Wednesday near the Mediterranean coastal resort town of Manavgat, in Antalya province, had largely been contained, Agriculture and Forestry Minister Bekir Pakdemirli said. But another fire that started early Thursday and swept through the district of Akseki, some 50 kilometers (30 miles) north, kept firefighters engaged.

8.2 magnitude quake shakes Alaska coast

Perryville: A powerful earthquake which struck just off Alaska's southern coast caused prolonged shaking and prompted tsunami warnings that sent people scrambling for shelters. Residents reported only minor damage, but officials said that could change after sunrise and people get a better look. The US Geological Survey said the quake was magnitude 8.2 and 91 kilometers southeast of Perryville, Alaska at about 8:15 pm Wednesday. The quake was about 46 kilometers below the surface of the ocean.

'Danish Siddiqui was brutally murdered by Taliban'

SIDDIQUI WAS ALIVE WHEN THE TALIBAN CAPTURED HIM. THE TALIBAN VERIFIED SIDDIQUI'S IDENTITY AND THEN EXECUTED HIM

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Washington, July 29: Pulitzer Prize-winning Indian photojournalist Danish Siddiqui was not simply killed in a crossfire, nor was he a collateral damage; rather,

he was brutally murdered by the Taliban, Michael Rubin wrote in the Washington Examiner.

Local Afghan authorities say that Siddiqui had travelled with an Afghan National Army team to the Spin Boldak region to cover the clash between Afghan forces and the Taliban to control the lucrative border crossing with Pakistan.

When they got to within one-third of a mile of the customs post, a Taliban attack split the team, with the commander and a few men separated from Siddiqui, who remained with three other Afghan troops, the report said.

During this assault, a shrapnel hit Siddiqui, after which he and



his team went to a local mosque where he received first aid. As the word spread, however, that a journalist was in the mosque, the

Taliban attacked, as per the report. The local investigation suggests that the Taliban attacked the mosque only because of Siddiqui's

presence there, it said.

"While a widely circulated public photograph shows Siddiqui's face as recognisable, I reviewed other photographs and a video of Siddiqui's body provided to me by a source in the Indian government that show the Taliban beat Siddiqui around the head and then riddled his body with bullets," Rubin, a senior fellow at the American Enterprise Institute, wrote in the report.

"The Taliban's decision to hunt down, execute Siddiqui, and then mutilate his corpse shows that they do not respect the rules of war or conventions that govern the behaviour of the global community," Rubin said.

Ex-Cardinal McCarrick charged with sexually assaulting teenager

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Boston, July 29: Former Cardinal Theodore McCarrick, who was defrocked after a Vatican investigation confirmed he had sexually molested adults as well as children, has been charged with sexually assaulting a teenage boy during a wedding reception in the 1970's, court records show.

Court documents obtained by The Boston Globe shows that McCarrick is charged with three counts of indecent assault and battery on a person over 14.

McCarrick is the first cardinal in the US to ever be criminally charged with a sexual crime against a minor, according to Mitchell Garabedian, a well-known lawyer for church sexual abuse victims who is representing the man alleging the abuse by McCarrick.

A report filed in court says that McCarrick was a family friend and began abusing him when he was a boy.

Tokyo Covid surge 'alarming'

TOKYO REPORTED 3,865 NEW CASES THURSDAY, UP FROM 3,177 WEDNESDAY AND DOUBLE THE NUMBERS A WEEK AGO

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Tokyo, July 29: Japanese officials sounded the alarm Thursday as Tokyo reported record-breaking coronavirus cases for the third-straight day with the Olympics well underway.

"We have never experienced the expansion of the infections of this magnitude," Chief Cabinet Secretary Katsunobu Kato told reporters. He said the new cases were soaring not only in the Tokyo area but across the country.

Nationwide, Japan reported more than 9,500 confirmed cases Wednesday, also a record, for a total of about 892,000 infections and about 15,000 deaths since the pandemic began.

Japan has kept its cases and deaths lower than many other countries, but its seven-day rolling average is growing and now stands at 28 per 100,000 people nationwide and 88 per 100,000 in Tokyo, according to the Health Ministry. This compares to 18.5 in the United States, 48 in Britain and 2.8 in India, according to data from Johns Hopkins University.



Sydney enters into sixth week of lockdown

Australia's biggest city Sydney posted a record one-day rise in local Covid-19 cases Thursday and warned the outbreak would get worse, as authorities sought military help to enforce a lockdown of 6 million people poised to enter its sixth week. Australia has struggled to contain an outbreak of the highly infectious Delta variant in and around Sydney in recent weeks, which threatens to push the country's A\$2 trillion (\$1.5 trillion) economy into its second recession in as many years. With even tighter restrictions set to begin Friday, New South Wales Police said it had asked for 300 military personnel to help enforce lockdown orders.

"While almost nothing is helping to slow the infections, there are many factors that can accelerate them," said Dr. Shigeru Omi, a top government medical adviser, noting the Olympics and summer vacation. "The biggest risk is the lack of a sense of crisis, and with-

out it the infections will further expand and put medical systems under severe strain."

Tokyo has been under its fourth state of emergency since July 12, ahead of the Olympics, which began last Friday despite widespread public opposition.

Brazil shelves import permit of Covaxin

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Hyderabad, July 29: After suspending the proposed clinical trials of Bharat Biotech's Covid-19 vaccine Covaxin and a request for Emergency Use Authorisation, Brazil now has suspended its decision to import four million doses of the jab into that country.

According to a statement issued by the National Health Surveillance Agency of Brazil, Anvisa its Collegiate Board Tuesday took a decision to suspend the exceptional and temporary authorisation for import and distribution of Covaxin after Bharat Biotech informed the South America government about the termination of its pact with its Brazilian partners.

"The Collegiate Board of Anvisa unanimously decided, Tuesday (27/7), to provisionally suspend the exceptional and temporary authorisation for import and distribution of the vaccine against Covid-19-Covaxin, requested by the Ministry of Health," Anvisa said in a statement posted on its website.

"The measure prevails until there is new information that allows us to conclude that the legal and technical security of maintaining the decision that authorised the importa-



The termination of the MoU came after the deal with the Brazilian government for the supply of 20 million doses of Covaxin landed in controversy and attracted investigation by authorities in that country

tion is maintained," Anvisa further said in a roughly translated version of Portuguese of the statement.

Though the exceptional and temporary importation of the vaccine had been authorized June 4, at the ninth Extraordinary Meeting of the Collegiate Board of Anvisa, Brazil never imported the jab.

BB will continue to work diligently with Anvisa, to complete the regulatory approval process, Bharat Biotech had said while announcing the termination.

Russia fines Google for flouting data law

AGENCIES

Moscow, July 29: Russia Thursday fined Google 3 million roubles for violating personal data legislation, Google's first fine for that offence, Moscow's District Court said.

The penalty comes amid a wider standoff between Russia and Big Tech, with Moscow routinely fining social media giants for failing to remove banned content and seeking to compel foreign tech firms to open offices in Russia.

State communications regulator Roskomnadzor said last month that Google, a subsidiary of Alphabet Inc, could be fined up to 6 million roubles for not storing the personal data of Russian users in databases on Russian territory.

Russia has previously fined Google for not deleting banned content. Google has also irked the Russian authorities by blocking some YouTube accounts owned by pro-Kremlin figures and media.

COMMEMORATING MARTYRS



In this photo provided by the North Korean government, North Korean leader Kim Jong Un lays a wreath at Friendship Tower in Pyongyang, a day after North Korea marked the 68th anniversary of the end of the Korean War

Thousands homeless in Rohingya camps

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Dhaka, July 29: Days of heavy rainfall have pelted Rohingya refugee camps in southern Bangladesh, destroying dwellings and sending thousands of people to live with extended family or in communal shelters.

Just in the 24 hours to Wednesday alone, more than 30 centimeters (11.8 inches) of rain fell on the camps in Cox's Bazar district hosting more than 800,000 Rohingya, the UN Refugee agency said. That's nearly half the average July rainfall in one day while more heavy downpours are expected in the next few days and the monsoon season stretches over the next three months.

"The situation is further compounded by the Covid-19 pandemic. There is currently a strict national lockdown in response to rising cases across the country," the agency said.

The agency said it was saddened by the deaths of six people at the camps earlier this week, five in a landslide caused by the rains and

BATTERED BY FLOODS



a child swept away by floodwaters.

Citing initial reports, the UN High Commissioner for Refugees said more than 12,000 refugees were affected by the heavy rainfall while an estimated 2,500 shelters have been damaged or destroyed. More than 5,000 refugees have temporarily been relocated to other family member's shelters or communal facilities, the agency said in a statement.

Refugees said they were struggling to eat or drink properly.

"Due to the continuous rainfall for the last four days, today my

house is full of water," says Khatija Begum, who has five children. "We are not even able to eat." Begum says she fears her children will drown and die in their sleep.

Cyclones, heavy monsoon rains, floods, landslides and other natural hazards are an annual difficulty in the camps. More than 700,000 Rohingya have lived in refugee camps in Bangladesh since August 2017, when the military in Buddhist-majority Myanmar began a harsh crackdown on the Muslim ethnic group following an attack by insurgents.

BEIRUT BLAST Probe stalls again, leaving families fuming

THE MASSIVE EXPLOSION LAST AUGUST KILLED OVER 200 PEOPLE, INJURED THOUSANDS AND DESTROYED LARGE PARTS OF THE CITY



AGENCIES

Beirut, July 29: Ibrahim Hoteit lost his younger brother, Tharwat, in the huge explosion that ripped

through the port of Beirut last August. He went around hospitals collecting body parts, starting with Tharwat's scalp, and buried his remains in a small coffin.

Nearly a year later, Hoteit, a spokesperson for families of more than 200 people who died in the disaster, is still trying to call to account those he says are responsible for allowing the accident to happen.

Earlier this month, during a protest outside the caretaker interior minister's house in the Lebanese capital, he said security forces used tear gas during scuffles with the crowd.

"We can't be deprived of truth and justice in the face of a crime of such magnitude," he told Reuters.



In the latest twist, Tarek Bitar, the judge leading the probe, had a request to question Major General Abbas Ibrahim - head of the pow-

erful General Security agency - turned down by caretaker interior minister Mohamed Fahmy. Ibrahim said he was subject to

TOP OFFICIALS HAVE NOT BEEN QUESTIONED OVER BLAST

Many Lebanese angry at lack of accountability one year on

Blast killed hundreds, destroyed large swathes of capital

Families of victims, police clash as frustration simmers

The relatives' frustration reflects widespread anger among Lebanese about the investigation and, more broadly, over how the country is being run.

Much of the devastation from the blast is still visible. The port resembles a bomb site, and many buildings have been left in a state of collapse.

Major questions remain unanswered, including why such a large shipment of ammonium nitrate, a highly explosive chemical used in bombs and fertiliser, was left stored in the middle of a crowded city for years after being unloaded in 2013. The immunity enjoyed by senior officials has raised suspicions among some families that there may never be accountability.



My association with JetSynthesys goes back to almost 5 years now. We started our journey with Sachin Saga Cricket Champions and strengthened it with a unique Virtual Reality cricket experience
SACHIN TENDULKAR | FORMER INDIAN CRICKETER

'PARLE TOPS MOST-CHOSEN FMCG BRAND LIST'

Homegrown food company Parle Products has emerged as the most-chosen brand among the fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG) companies in the country, according to the 'Brand Footprint' report by marketing research firm Kantar



of the day quote

As far as profits are concerned, my net interest income has gone up, operating income has gone up and the cost to income ratio has gone down

S KRISHNAN | MD AND CEO, PUNJAB & SIND BANK

The biggest gainers in brand footprint 2020 were expectedly the hygiene brands. That said, the traditional leaders also held their positions by ensuring penetration growths even during the pandemic

K RAMAKRISHNAN | MD-SOUTH ASIA (WORLDWIDE DIVISION), KANTAR

The survey we did across a small segment of 800 plus buyers and users of EVs in India shows clearly that two-wheeler owners understand even today that it is better to buy an e-scooter than a conventional one

AARTI KHOSLA | DIRECTOR, CLIMATE TRENDS

Favourable global outlook to accelerate India's export growth

AGENCIES

New Delhi, July 29: Favourable global trade outlook is expected to accelerate India's export growth, said India Ratings and Research (Ind-Ra). Ind-Ra said that India's exports, which have been languishing for quite some time, can take advantage of the favourable trade growth outlook of 2021 and consolidate its position further than what has been witnessed in Q1FY22.

"In YoY growth terms, India's exports grew 60.29 per cent, 195.72 per cent, 69.35 per cent and 48.35 per cent in the months of March, April, May and June 2021, respectively. "No doubt, the growth numbers reflect the depth of the Covid-19 shock last year but Ind-Ra believes they also show the strength of the current recovery, adequately captured by the monthly export number."

As per Ind-Ra, the average monthly exports during Q1FY22 jumped to \$31.80 billion. "In fact, the exports momentum began in March 2021, which witnessed the highest ever monthly exports of \$34.45 billion. India's average monthly exports in FY20 were \$26.14 billion, nearly same as in FY14."

"It had peaked at \$27.54 billion in FY19. However, FY22 has begun on a positive note. The sustained high monthly export number is even more noteworthy as this was also the period when the country was struggling with devastating Covid 2.0."

According to the agency, the pickup in Q1FY22 exports has pri-



Ind-Ra said that India's exports can take advantage of the favourable trade growth outlook of 2021

As per Ind-Ra, the average monthly exports during Q1FY22 jumped to \$31.80 billion

According to the agency, the pickup in Q1FY22 exports has primarily been driven by the higher exports of engineering goods, petroleum products, cotton yarn, drugs and pharmaceuticals and iron ore

marily been driven by the higher exports of engineering goods, petroleum products, cotton yarn or fabs or made-ups, organic and inorganic chemicals, drugs and pharmaceuticals, plastic & linoleum, and iron ore.

"Performance of gems and jewellery, another key export product, has been somewhat lacklustre. Although monthly exports of gems and jewellery did show some pickup, it remained in the range of \$2.5 billion-3 billion since September 2020 with the exception of March and April 2021, when monthly exports of gems and jewellery was \$3.6

billion and \$3.4 billion, respectively."

"Readymade garments, another labour-intensive and crucial export commodity, witnessed monthly exports of \$1.1 billion in 1QFY22, lower than the average monthly exports of \$1.4 billion witnessed during FY16-FY20."

In addition, the agency pointed out that 'World Trade Organisation Trade Barometer' on May 28, 2021 was 109.7, nearly 10 points above the baseline value of 100 for the index and 21.6 points higher than same period last year, reflecting the strength of the current recovery.

Inflation will moderate, expect it to be below 6 pc in July, says CEA

AGENCIES

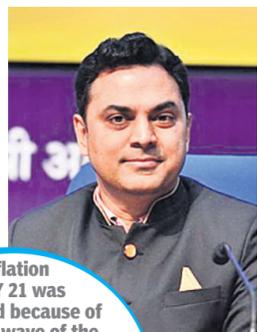
Mumbai, July 29: Headline inflation will come down under the 6 per cent mark in July itself but will stay at an elevated level of over 5 per cent for some time, Chief Economic Advisor KV Subramanian said Thursday. Such an outcome will get the price rise back into the upper-end of the target band given to RBI, he said, adding that consumer price inflation had breached the mark for three consecutive quarters last fiscal because of supply side issues like challenges in movement of goods.

"With reasonable probability, I expect this month the (inflation) print to come less than 6 per cent," Subramanian told a conference organised by industry lobby Ficci.

Right after data for May showing inflation at 6.4 per cent had come out, Subramanian said he had predicted it will cool down in internal meetings and also during "deliberations with the regulator".

The sequential momentum in the number is range-bound despite the challenges posed by factors like commodity price rises, he added.

The CEA said in FY21, inflation was impacted because of the first wave of the pandemic which lasted



Inflation in FY 21 was impacted because of the first wave of the pandemic which lasted longer, while the second wave saw distributed lockdowns and did not have a deep impact on inflation

KV SUBRAMANIAN | CHIEF ECONOMIC ADVISOR

longer, while the second wave saw distributed lockdowns and did not have a deep impact on inflation. The RBI

has been holding rates to aid growth despite the surge in inflation. However, after the recent data prints, concerns have been expressed over the price rise. The next monetary policy meeting of the central bank will be held during August 4-6.

On the growth front, Subramanian said the FY22 number should be within the ballpark of 10.5 per cent as estimated by the finance ministry earlier. It can be noted that the RBI had revised down its estimate to 9.5 per cent given the reverses of the second wave.

'Air India sold its 115 properties for ₹738 cr since 2015'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, July 29: Air India has sold its 115 properties for ₹738 crore since 2015 to offset its debt, Minister of State for Civil Aviation VK Singh said Thursday.

According to the decision of Air India Specific Alternative Mechanism (AISAM) in 2018, disinvestment-bound Air India has been monetising its immovable assets to offset its debt. The carrier had a debt of around ₹60,000 crore as on March 2019.

In his written reply to a question in Lok Sabha, Singh said Thursday, "Air India has identified 111 parcels of properties for monetisation, out of which 106 parcels of properties are in India and the rest five are overseas properties." The 111 parcels of properties consist of 211 units, which are under monetisation, he added.



Singh said, "Air India has so far received ₹738 crore from sale of 115 units from 2015 to 12th July, 2021. Air India also realises about ₹100 crore per annum from lease rental income."

The Centre is currently in the process of selling Air India. Financial bids for the carrier are likely to be received from qualified interested bidders by September 15.

SHORT TAKES

Tech Mahindra Q1 profit up 39%

New Delhi: IT major Tech Mahindra Thursday reported 39.2% rise in consolidated net profit at ₹1,353.2 crore for June quarter 2021-22. The company had registered a net profit of ₹972.3 crore in the year-ago period, Tech Mahindra said in a statement. Revenue stood at ₹10,197.6 crore in the quarter under review, up 12% from ₹9,106.3 crore in the year-ago period. CFO Milind Kulkarni said the company continues to build on its profitability journey and has reported the highest-ever quarterly revenue.

Rolex Rings gets 9.26 subscriptions

New Delhi: The initial public offer (IPO) of auto components maker Rolex Rings was subscribed 9.26 times on the second day of subscription Thursday. The IPO received bids for 5,26,70,832 shares against 56,85,556 shares on offer, as per data available with the NSE. The category meant for qualified institutional buyers (QIBs) was subscribed 23 per cent, while those for non-institutional investors 5.85 times and retail individual investors (RIIs) 15.89 times.

FRL-Reliance deal: SC reserves verdict

New Delhi: The Supreme Court Thursday reserved verdict on the pleas of e-commerce giant Amazon against the ₹24,713 crore deal for merger of Future Retail Ltd (FRL) with Reliance Retail. Amazon.Com NV Investment Holdings LLC and FRL are embroiled in a bitter legal fight over the deal and the US-based firm has sought in the apex court that the Singapore's Emergency Arbitrator (EA) award, which restrained FRL from going ahead with the merger, was valid and enforceable.

Nasscom partners with UK, UKIBC

New Delhi: IT industry body Nasscom Thursday said it has collaborated with the UK Government's Department for International Trade (DIT) and the UK India Business Council (UKIBC) to address the digital skills gap in that country. A two-day virtual university tour, focusing on talent acquisition for the Indian tech industry, was organised. This covered several of the UK's top universities such as University of Nottingham, University of Glasgow and Durham University.

SELF-RELIANT INDIA

'Odisha to be a major contributor in mining'

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 29: The Government of Odisha aims to double production of minerals in the next few years to reduce import dependency by allocating and regulating minerals in a transparent and sustainable manner, said Nirupama Kotru, Joint Secretary, Ministries of Coal and Mines. She was addressing a Virtual Odisha Mining Summit organised by Minerals and Metals Committee of PHDCCI.

"Some of the goals of the ministry were incentivising exploration via private sector participation, ensuring zero waste mining and encouraging sustainable mining," she added.

Co-Chairman, Minerals & Metals Committee, PHDCCI Naveen Jindal said, "With the announcement of reforms in the

mining sector, India is expected to embark on a rapid growth in coal, steel, and mining sectors and also achieve self-reliance in the years to come. Odisha will indeed be one of the major contributors to Atma Nirbharta in this sector in future," Jindal said.

Chairman Anil K Chaudhary suggested that there is a need to increase production by starting the newly auctioned mining blocks, and improving the infrastructure and transportation.

Ritabrata Ghosh, Assistant Vice President, and Sector Head, Corporate Sector Ratings, ICRA Limited, emphasised that focusing on infrastructure can lead to growth so as to accelerate demand; coal gasification will be the new growth driver for the mining sector and, Odisha will emerge as a hub for the export of coal by commercial miners.

MINING SUMMIT



TOP GAINERS 29 JUL

POINTS	%
1459.00	6.87%
14590.45	4.48%
441.75	3.83%
1007.60	2.54%
703.25	2.28%
6394.30	2.17%
2055.25	0.90%
1735.55	0.87%
1127.95	0.75%
1616.85	0.72%

US economy grows solidly in Q2

REUTERS

Washington, July 29: US economic growth solidly in the second quarter as massive government aid and vaccinations against Covid-19 fuelled spending on travel-related services.

Gross domestic product increased at a 6.5% annualized rate last quarter, the Commerce Department said Thursday in its advance estimate of second-quarter GDP. The economy grew at a revised 6.3% rate in the first quarter.

Economists polled by Reuters had forecast GDP rising at an 8.5% rate last quarter. With the second-quarter estimate, the government published revisions to GDP data,



which showed the economy contracting 3.4% in 2020, instead of 3.5% as previously estimated. That was still the biggest drop in GDP since 1946.

The revisions to growth in other years and quarters were minor. From 2015 to 2020, GDP increased at an average annual rate of 1.1%,

unrevised from previously published estimates.

The National Bureau of Economic Research, the arbiter of U.S. recessions, declared last week that the pandemic downturn, which started in February 2020, ended in April 2020.

Even with the second quarter marking the peak in growth this cycle, the economic expansion is expected to remain solid for the remainder of this year. A resurgence in Covid-19 infections, driven by the Delta variant of the coronavirus, however, poses a risk to the outlook. Higher inflation, if sustained, as well as ongoing supply chain disruptions could also slow the economy.

Easing of restrictions opening up job opportunities: Report

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, July 29: Relaxation of restrictions on economic activity coupled with increasing focus on ramping up operations and sales by businesses is having a positive impact on hiring of freshers, according to a TeamLease report. The TeamLease Employment Outlook report for the July-September quarter noted that the intent to hire freshers has increased by 7 per cent in the current quarter.

Further, the intent to hire junior level staff is also on a positive trajectory, indicating that the second quarter of this fiscal year is expected to be dominated by volume hiring, the report said.

The survey covered 661 small,

medium and large companies across 4 geographical areas (metros, tier-1, tier-2/3 and rural), 4 hierarchical levels (entry, junior, mid and senior levels) and 7 functional areas (sales, marketing, information technology, engineering, office services, human resources, blue collar).

"Most of the industries seem to have overcome the impact of the second wave and are moving towards growth. In fact, the focus of industries on profiles that are at the execution level is an indication that businesses have got their strategy as well as plan in place and this trend of positive momentum is here to stay," said Rituparna Chakraborty, Co-Founder & Executive Vice President,



TeamLease Services. According to the report, the growth in the GST collection, e-way bills, vehicle registrations, electricity demand, rail freight,

and petrol consumption seems to indicate that the economy has started to recover from the impact of the second wave and this seems to be having a ripple and positive

The report for July-September quarter noted that the intent to hire freshers has increased by 7 per cent in the current quarter

impact on the hiring sentiments as well.

"The festive season is round the corner and most of the sectors would want to put the season to maximum use and this also a reflection why there is a significant rise in demand for freshers and junior talent," Chakraborty added.

The positivity in the intent is largely dominated by Healthcare

& Pharmaceuticals, Information Technology, Educational Services, Ecommerce & Technology Start-ups, Fast Moving Consumer Goods, Agriculture & Agrochemicals, Retail [Essential], Logistics and Manufacturing, Engineering & Infra.

The report further said that in India, a better than projected GDP growth, demand uptick, higher export valuation and healthy ultra-high frequency data - during Q1, and the relaxation of restrictions on economic activity is opening up opportunities.

"However, drop in the PMI for Manufacturing and Services in the aftermath of the second wave lowers the growth in hiring intent," it noted.

INDIA MEN IN QUARTERS

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Tokyo, July 29: The Indian men's hockey team stormed into the quarter-finals of the Olympic Games with a comprehensive 3-1 victory over defending champions Argentina, scoring two goals in the final two minutes of its penultimate pool match here Thursday.

After goalless first two quarters, India broke the deadlock in the 43rd minute through Varun Kumar before Vivek Sagar Prasad (58th) and Harmanpreet Singh (59th) struck in the closing minutes of the match to seal the contest.

It was India's third win in Pool A at the Oi Hockey Stadium. Argentina's lone goal came from a penalty corner conversion by Schuth Casella in the 48th minute.

By virtue of this win, India have consolidated their position in the second spot of Pool A with three wins and one loss out of four games, behind Australia.

Argentina are struggling at the fifth spot in the six-team pool and need to beat New Zealand in their final preliminary match on Friday to stay in the hunt for a quarter-final berth.

The top-four make the last-eight stage from each group. India will play hosts Japan in their final pool match Friday.

The Indians were aggressive and put pressure on the Argentine defence from the very beginning, attacking in numbers. India completely dominated the first quarter,

mounting attacks after attacks but the Argentines defended stoutly to frustrate their opponents.

The Indians nonetheless dominated possession and penetrated the Argentine circle on numerous occasions but the final pass was missing. Manpreet Singh's men had their first shot at the goal in the third minute.

But Dilpreet Singh's hit from close range from a Simranjeet Singh pass was nicely saved by Argentina goalkeeper Juan Vivaldi. India were almost rewarded in the 27th minute when a diving Simranjeet's effort sailed over the post.

Two minutes later, Argentina had the first real scoring opportunity but Nahuel Salis' powerful shot from right corner of the circle was padded away by Sreejesh's outstretched hands.

It was a frustrating first half as both the teams failed to secure a single penalty corner to head into the breather goalless. The script was similar in the third quarter as India continued to waste chances.

First Gurjant Singh missed from close range in the 35th minute and then Rupiner Pal Singh wasted back-to-back penalty corners minutes later. Soon the Indians had their hearts in their mouth when the defence was caught off guard by Argentina but Matias Rey couldn't beat Sreejesh from a one-on-one situation.

It took India 43 minutes to break the deadlock through Varun who scored from the team's third penalty



IMPRESSIVE GAME: Indian players celebrate a goal against defending champions Argentina, Thursday

corner. Seconds from the end of third quarter, India wasted four consecutive penalty corners as Argentina defended bravely.

It was even in the 48th minute

when Casella scored Argentina's first penalty corner. Two minutes from the hooter, Vivek restored India's lead tapping in from a rebound after Dilpreet's attempt was

saved by Vivaldi and then in the nick of time Harmanpreet drew the final nail in Argentina's coffin by converting the team's eighth penalty corner.

Manu fifth in 25m pistol qualifications

TOKYO: Indian shooters Manu Bhaker and Rahi Sarnobat were placed 5th and 25th respectively in the women's 25m pistol qualification (precision) at the Tokyo Olympics here Thursday. In a field of 44 shooters, Bhaker scored 292 after 30 shots on target in the precision round while compatriot Sarnobat aggregated 287 in the qualifications at the Asaka Shooting Range. The second stage of the qualification - the rapid round - will take place Friday. The top 8 shooters in the qualification will enter the final. Serbia's Zorana Arunovic led the pack with 296 points, followed by Greece's Anna Korakaki who has 294.

Solid start by Lahiri

TOKYO: Playing in his second Olympics, India's Anirban Lahiri got off to a solid start, carding a 4-under 67 in the first round to be placed tied sixth at the weather-hit Tokyo Games golf competition at the Kasumigaseki Country Club here Thursday. The former Asian Tour No.1 struck six birdies against two bogeys in a field in which many players were yet to finish their rounds because of a lightning storm at the venue. The other Indian, Udayan Mane, who made the field of 60 at a late stage, also had a fine start and he was 1-under through 10 holes. He was T-30 though his position will change as the round ends. The field was led by Austrian Sepp Straka, who came into the Games after six missed cuts in last seven starts. He equalled an Olympic record of 8-under 63. Straka lipped out his birdie attempt on the 18th that would have created a new record.



Sailors languish at 17th spot

ENOSHIMA: Indian sailing pair of KC Ganapathy and Varun Thakkar finished a creditable seventh in one of the two races in men's skiff 49er but still languished at 17th position overall at the Tokyo Olympics here Thursday. Ganapathy and Thakkar ended at 16th in Race 5 before pulling off a seventh-place finish in the next to occupy 17th place out of 19 competitors with 76 net points. Six races and medal round still remain in the competition at Enoshima Yacht Harbour. Another Indian, Vishnu Saravanan was at 23rd position overall out of 35 sailors in the laser event with 138 net points after finishing 27th and 23rd in Race 7 and 8 Thursday.

Sindhu enters last 8 Das shows Olympic champ the exit door

TOKYO: Reigning badminton World Champion PV Sindhu sailed into the women's singles quarter-finals at the Tokyo Olympics with a straight-game triumph over Denmark's Mia Blichfeldt here Thursday.

The 26-year-old Indian, who won a silver in the 2016 Rio Olympics, completed a 21-15, 21-13 win over 13th seed Blichfeldt in a 41-minute match. Sindhu will next face Akane Yamaguchi of Japan, who defeated Korea's Kim Ga Eun 21-17, 21-18 in another pre-quarterfinals.

The sixth seeded Indian has an 11-7 head-to-head count against the Japanese World No.5, whom she had last beaten at the All England Championship in March this year.

Sindhu mixed her strokes well, putting her attacking clears and drops to good use besides smashing her way to finish points whenever there was a chance. She anticipated the shuttle better and showed good court coverage.

Blichfeldt did have her moments but she was too erratic to sustain the pressure on the Indian, who was always a step ahead of her rival during the contest.

Blichfeldt had a 2-0 lead early on but Sindhu soon took back control at 6-4 and kept her nose ahead before unleashing a cross court smash to enter the interval with a healthy 11-6 lead.

The Danish shuttler scripted a mini comeback, winning six of the next seven points, riding on a few smashes and Sindhu's unforced errors. An unlucky net chord broke the run of points but Blichfeldt



sent down two straight smashes to again narrow it to 14-16 before succumbing to a series of unforced errors.

The Indian revved up the pace in the second game to zoom to 5-0 but a wrong line judgement from her ended the run of points. Blichfeldt tried to find an opening but Sindhu was always a step ahead as she again held a five-point advantage at the break.

After the interval, Sindhu lost a few points due to the occasional brilliance shown by her rival and sometimes, her own unforced error; but she was always in control and soon wrapped it up with a delicate shot near the net.

TOKYO: Indian archer Atanu Das Thursday proved a point by knocking out two-time Olympic champion Oh Jin Hyek to join his wife Deepika Kumari in individual pre-quarterfinals of the Tokyo Olympics.

Das, who had lost his place to rookie Pravin Jadhav in the fancied mixed team event after slipping to 35th place in the ranking round Friday, showed nerves of steel to edge out the legendary Korean in a one-arrow shoot-off.

The individual Olympic champion from London 2012 and a team gold medalist here, Oh started the



shoot-off with a 9 as Das delivered a perfect 10, hitting the bull's eye to seal the issue 6-5 (10-9) in an extraordinary fashion.

Earlier in the day, Das saw off a tough challenge from Chinese Taipei's Deng Yu-Cheng to win 6-4 from being locked 4-4. There will

be another tough challenge in the last-16 for Das, who will face home favourite Takaharu Furukawa, an individual silver medalist at London 2012 Olympics and a team bronze winner here. The remaining individual events, including the medal rounds of the women's and men's, will be decided Saturday and Sunday respectively.

Chasing India's first ever Olympic medal in archery, Deepika and Das, who are the first Indian couple to take part in the same discipline in the Games, are the only two Indians left in fray.

BOXER SATISH SAILS INTO QUARTERFINALS

TOKYO: India's first super heavyweight (+91kg) boxer to compete in the Olympics, Satish Kumar, eased into the quarterfinals of his debut Games, defeating Jamaica's Ricardo Brown in his opening bout here Thursday.

In the battle of the debutants, the 32-year-old Satish prevailed 4-1, a comfortable win for him despite the split verdict. The two-time Asian Championships bronze-winner Indian, who has been a multiple-time national champion, was helped by Brown's poor footwork throughout the bout though he did end up sustaining two cuts - one on his forehead and the other on his chin.

Next up for Satish is Uzbekistan's Bakhodir Jalolov, the reigning world and Asian champion. Jalolov out-punched Azerbaijan's Mahammad Abdullayev 5-0 in his last-16 bout. Satish, also a 2018

Commonwealth Games silver-medallist, dominated with his right hand and allowed Brown to repeatedly make the mistake of lunging in with very little balance.

Brown seemed to be looking for that one big punch that could unsettle the Indian but failed miserably, owing to his inability to move quickly enough after launching into Satish. The Indian, in comparison, was light on his feet and thereby sharper in responding to Brown's attacks. The late bloomer from Uttar Pradesh's Bulandshahr is an Army man, who used to play kabaddi, and was introduced to the sport owing to his good physique by the Army coaches.

The 31-year-old Brown, who is the first boxer from his country to qualify for the Games since 1996, was Jamaica's flag-bearer at the opening ceremony.



Shastri support for Simone Biles

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

London, July 29: "Take your time, Simone Biles. You owe explanation to no one," said Indian cricket team's coach Ravi Shastri as he lent his support to the multiple Olympic medalist American gymnast after she pulled out of the team and individual events at the Tokyo Games citing mental health concerns.

The 24-year-old Biles had withdrawn from the women's team final Tuesday and all-around final Wednesday to focus on her mental health. "Take your time Simone Biles. You have earned the right to owe it to yourself at this tender age. 48 hours or 48 days it might take. Just do it Champion. You owe no explanation to no one. Naomi Osaka, you too. God bless you girls," Shastri wrote on his twitter handle.

Following her withdrawal, Biles had said: "I have to do what's right for me and focus on my mental health and not jeopardise my health and my wellbeing."

Hasaranga helps SL win T20I series

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Colombo, July 29: Exposing India's young batsmen's inability to tackle spin, Sri Lanka conjured up a seven-wicket victory in the deciding third T20 to hand the fancied neighbours a 2-1 series defeat, here Thursday.

Leg-spinner Wanindu Hasaranga (4/9) made the Indians dance to his tunes on his 24th birthday, playing a crucial role in restricting them to a paltry 81/8, which is their lowest against the Lankans.

The small target gave the hosts the luxury to adopt a cautious approach. They too struggled against the Indian spinners before overhauling the target with 5.3 overs to spare. It is Sri Lanka's first ever T20 series win over India. India had won the preceding ODI series 2-1.

Rahul Chahar (3/15) got all the three wickets for India. Sri Lanka's top batsman Dhananjaya de Silva (23 n o), though, nudged the ball



WRECKER-IN-CHIEF: Wanindu Hasaranga (3rd from L) is surrounded by his teammates after the leg-spinner got rid of Rituraj Gaikwad (not in pic)

around nicely for singles and doubles to take the side past the finish line. After shining with ball in his hand, Hasaranga also scored 14 runs.

Earlier, only three Indian batsmen could manage the double-digit score with number seven Kuldeep Yadav being the best with his 23-run unbeaten knock. Such was the dominance of the home bowlers that India hit only four boundaries in entire 20-over innings.

India were reduced to 36/5 in the ninth over after losing top five batters. However, Bhuvneshwar Kumar (16) and Kuldeep took India past 50-run mark. Kuldeep tried his best and led India to 81-run total.

BRIEF SCORES: India 81/8 (Kuldeep Yadav 23 n o, Bhuvneshwar Kumar 16, Rituraj Gaikwad 14; Wanindu Hasaranga 4/9, Dasun Shanaka 2/20) lost to Sri Lanka 82/3 (Dhananjaya de Silva 23 n o, Minod Bhanuka 18; Rahul Chahar 3/15) by 7 wickets.

Anurag all-round show fashions Boudh victory

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 29: Anurag Kanojia (87 n o, 85b & 4/29) contributed handsomely with both bat and ball to help Boudh register a convincing 29-run win over Kendrapara in their Kalahandi Cup Inter-District cricket tournament match at the Ravenshaw Cricket Ground-II in Cuttack, Thursday.

In a match that was reduced to 31 overs per side, Boudh won the toss and opted to bat first. Thanks to Kanojia, Boudh posted 180/5 in their innings. He got some assistance from Prakash Jha (37). Biswabhusan Bihari (2/25) bowled well for Kendrapara.

In response, Kendrapara were bowled out for 151 with four balls to spare. Satya R Samal (46) and Aakash Chandra Nayak (36) batted well for the losing side. Like his batting, Kanojia led the bowling chart for Boudh.

OTHER RESULTS

ECORSA beat Angul by 86 runs; Standout player: Sujit Lenka (101 n o, 70b);

Ganjam beat Kalahandi by 7 wickets; Standout player: Muditana S Bhanu (4/12);

Cuttack B beat Dhenkanal by 7 wickets; Standout player: Subrat Samal (59, 59b);

Sundargarh beat Malkangiri by 7 wickets; Standout player: Ankit K Munda (66, 103b);

Bhadrak beat Nabarangpur by 75 runs; Standout player: Ansuman Mohanty (25 & 4/8);

BBSR A beat Nuapara by 7 wickets; Standout player: Narendra Dash (75, 60b);

Khurda beat Nayagarh by 7 wickets; Standout player: Sumit Maharana (3/9).