

IRREGULAR by MANJUL



They didn't touch anything else, sir! Just took away both our cooking gas cylinders!!



Actor Sidharth Shukla dead

Mumbai: Popular TV and film actor Sidharth Shukla, who became a household name with his role in the serial 'Balika Vadhu' died Thursday. He was just 40. Shukla is survived by his mother and two sisters. He was pronounced dead on arrival at the Cooper Hospital here at around 10.30am. The cause of his sudden death is not immediately clear," doctors at the hospital said. **P2**



Bhagat closes in on medal

Tokyo: Odisha's para badminton player and World No.1 Pramod Bhagat kept himself in medal contention by entering the men's singles semifinals here Thursday. Bhagat defeated Ukraine's Oleksandr Chyrkov 21-12, 21-9 in 26 minutes to top his group and enter the last four in class SL3. Bhagat incidentally is the reigning world champion and is expected to win gold. **P12**

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BJP guns for Jena's scalp

Both the BJP and the Congress created a din in the Assembly over various issues. The BJD blamed the Opposition for disrupting proceedings



called an all-party meeting to end the imbroglio.

As soon as the House assembled on the second day of the Monsoon Session, BJP MLAs flocked to the Well of the House with posters demanding removal of Jena for his alleged involvement in the murder of saffron party leader Kulamani Baral and his associate Dibyasingh Baral in January at Mahanaga near Salipur in Cuttack district.

"The law minister's name was mentioned in the FIR, but the police submitted a charge-sheet

against 12 persons, excluding Jena. The court of judicial magistrate first class in Salipur has directed the police to look into his involvement in the murder of two elderly BJP leaders in Cuttack district's Mahanga area," Opposition Chief Whip Mohan Majhi told reporters.

"We brought up the issue and demanded his resignation. We have asked for immediate removal of Jena from the House. We will continue to stage protests in the Assembly till our demand is met," Majhi added.

Congress MLAs meanwhile stated that they are not happy with the answers given Wednesday by Agriculture Minister Arun Sahoo regarding the drought situation in Odisha.

"We were not satisfied with the answers given by Arun Sahoo. We wanted a statement from the revenue minister, but a proxy responded on the issue. He turned the attention of the House to other issues. A total of 27 districts have been hit by drought in the state. We want relief for the people in these districts," pointed out Congress lawmaker Suresh Routray.

BJD meanwhile accused the BJP of sticking to rhetoric and depriving others to discuss pertinent issues during the Monsoon Session. "BJP leaders are often seen talking about criminal cases and announcing 'verdicts' as if they are judges. Every session they are adopting the same policy and depriving others from discussing important topics," BJD leader Pramila Mallick told reporters.

Self-styled godman arrested for murder

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Sept 2: Khurda police arrested Thursday self-styled godman Manas Das for his organisation's alleged involvement in various criminal activities. Also called 'Guruji', Das is the head of 'Manavbad Sanghathan' which he and his followers call a 'humanitarian' body.

Das was picked up from his Saheed Nagar residence by a team of Khurda police led by SDPO, Sushil Mishra. They were helped by the personnel of Commissionerate police. Das has been booked for murder, attempt to murder, kidnapping and criminal intimidation.

Addressing the media, IG Police Central Range, Narasingha Bhol said that Das is allegedly involved in hatching a criminal conspiracy leading to the kidnapping and murder of 45-year-old farmer, Satyabrata Nayak of Abhimanpur village under Begunia police limits, August 1. Six people were arrested August 3

for their alleged involvement in the crime. They were later produced before the court the next day. Nayak was killed for not attending a meeting held to promote tribal rights. They also forced the victim's nephew to cremate the deceased to destroy evidence.

Bhol informed that Das was taken into custody after three of the six who were earlier arrested mentioned his involvement in the crime during interrogation. He stated that Das and another person were also named in the FIR as accused. He informed that the police had been collecting evidence against Das.

Bhol also added that a former close associate of Das had Thursday lodged a complaint against the 'Guruji' and his son Manoranjan for life threats.

He informed that Manoranjan has been arrested by Begunia police for his alleged involvement in the torture of a tribal person and his son. The video of the entire incident has gone viral.

MARKET WATCH

INDEX	VALUE	VAR.	CHANGE
SENSEX	57852.54	514.33	↑
NIFTY	17234.20	157.90	↑
DOLLAR	73.40	₹0.07	↓
EURO	86.58	₹0.18	↑
GOLD	₹46,945	₹123	↓
SILVER	₹62,525	₹1048	↓

WEATHER

	BHUB	CTK
TEMP. MAX	33.2°C	34.5°C
TEMP. MIN	25.2°C	25.0°C
Humidity	71%	91%
Rainfall	Nil	3.2mm

Forecast: Generally Cloudy Sky




Ajay Kumar Das
4189872XXXX



ଓଡିଶା ସରକାର Government of Odisha
ବିଜୁ ସ୍ୱାସ୍ଥ୍ୟ କଲ୍ୟାଣ ଯୋଜନା
Biju Swasthya Kalyan Yojana

Shri Naveen Patnaik
Hon'ble Chief Minister, Odisha
announces
New Smart Health Card
with New Guidelines of
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DSPL - 133

Anyone of the following cardholders is eligible to avail Cashless Healthcare under Biju Swasthya Kalyan Yojana from 1st September 2021 at empanelled private hospitals within or outside of the State of Odisha



Biju Swasthya Kalyan Yojana Card



State Food Security Scheme Card



National Food Security Act Card



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OIPR-10001/13/0027/2122

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FORTUNE FORECAST

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ARIES
You are brimming with your creative instincts today, and will be eager to accept challenging tasks. Some benefits are on the cards at the office. But don't forget to relax, says Ganesh, as your body frequently requires careful attention.

TAURUS
This is one of those days when you are likely to misplace and lose valuable things, particularly money. Ganesh urges you not to indulge heavy gambling or blind speculation I quest of easy money. Have no doubt that you are most likely to lose whatever you wager and incur huge losses. Be careful. Don't get carried away by impulses.

GEMINI
You will be flooded with mental stress and worry today. You will have a hard time expressing your feelings and emotions today. You will feel nostalgic and will be flooded with memories, however, do not let your past cloud your present and your future, says Ganesh.

CANCER
An episode could upset you; so control your anger, suggests Ganesh. A slight hurdle on the job front. you may show interest in antiques.

LEO
The last you remember your soul mate was not a cross between Marquis de Sade and a Chinese politician, so it might be a little unnerving for you to come to terms with the authoritarian and dominating side of your partner, says Ganesh. Just remember that feeling offended is not the solution; what is really required is that you thrash out your individual differences for the sake of the larger interests of your family.

VIRGO
Look before you leap. Ganesh warns that there may be trouble brewing for you and it may catch you unawares. You will be very upbeat at work, and you realise that your high spirits benefit your colleagues too. You may reserve the evening for a quiet time with your family, reminiscing the happy times spent together in the past.

LIBRA
Ganesh says you should beware of small and petty issues that may crop up today and make you undergo mental stress. This is the time to meditate or do yoga and focus on improving your mental state of mind.

SCORPIO
Now is the time to hit the right note. As you are loaded with work, show your intelligence and try to win over your superiors and bosses. For all the businessmen, Ganesh advises to delay the bidding on sealed tenders if they are planning to do it today.

SAGITTARIUS
You juggle between your passion and profession today and try to strike a perfect balance between the two. You are ambitious and will let this know to the world through your work. During the end of the day, you will nurture your talent and passion and feel liberated, says Ganesh.

CAPRICORN
Normally, you cross every obstacle with courage and confidence, but today, you may stumble upon a small stone in your path. In a crunch situation, you will be forced to take risks. When you can't do much about a situation, step aside and let fate take its course, advises Ganesh. You have been through tougher times than this, so keep your chin up and believe the powers of the Almighty.

AQUARIUS
Time is money, and you need to understand it fast! Scrap your old schedules and plan new ones that work. Ganesh suggests that the good old planner will work wonders in organising your work. Remember the old adage? A stitch in time saves nine. So get going.

PISCES
For professionals as well as businessmen, today promises to be a progressive day. For those looking for new opportunities, interesting positions may be offered. You will have harmonious relations with your family, friends and co-workers. A progressive period for you begins from today, says Ganesh.

Celebs mourn Sidharth's demise

Mumbai: A wave of shock and grief has taken over the country after the sudden demise of actor Sidharth Shukla. Many celebrities who have known him personally and even those who didn't took to social media to share their grief and shock.

Salman Khan took to Twitter and wrote: "Gone too soon Sidharth.. u shall be missed. Condolences to the family.. RIP"

Actor Varun Dhawan, who worked with actor Sidharth Shukla in the latter's debut Humpty Sharma Ki Dulhania posted a picture of them on Instagram and wrote: "Rip brother u are loved by so many and u touched so many with ur kind heart and beautiful personality. Today heaven has gained a star and we have lost one. My deepest condolences to the family and loved ones."

Former cricketer Virendra Sehwag tweeted: "Another reminder of how fragile life is. Heartfelt condolences to #SidharthShukla's family and friends. Om Shanti."

Actress Parineeti Chopra tweeted: "Unable to process this. Rest in Peace #SidharthShukla. You were truly loved, by millions."

Actor Ajay Devgn expressed his grief as he tweeted: "Life & death are both baffling. But when someone as young as #SidharthShukla passes away with suddenness, one is very sad... Condolences to his family. RIP Sidharth"

Actress Tisca Chopra tweeted: "Numb. Sidharth, neighbour and occasional walking buddy.. #SidharthShukla RIP..."

Actress Nimrat Kaur wrote on Twitter: "Heartfelt condolences to the loved ones of late Sidharth Shukla. Terribly shocking and distressing news."

Sidharth Shukla passed away in Mumbai's Cooper Hospital after suffering a massive heart attack Thursday morning. He was 40.



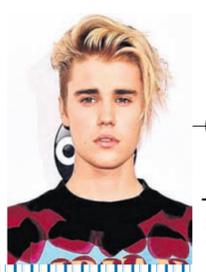
BRITNEY SPEARS CLEARED OF MISDEMEANOUR CHARGE

Britney Spears will not be charged with any crimes related to an incident that occurred at her residence involving her housekeeper, the Ventura County District Attorney said. The singer had been named a suspect in an investigation after allegedly hitting a housekeeper August 16.



BIEBER TO PERFORM AT MTV MUSIC AWARDS AFTER 6 YEARS

Justin Bieber is set to take the stage for a performance at the 2021 MTV Video Music Awards airing live Sunday, September 12, MTV announced. The announcement on MTV's Instagram page stated, "Ready for Justin Beiber to return home to the VMA's stage after six years."



Shanaya's maiden ad film gets mixed response

Mumbai: Shanaya Kapoor is gearing up for her big Hindi film debut. The daughter of Sanjay Kapoor will appear in an untitled film from Karan Johar's Dharma Productions. She will be cast opposite actors Gurfateh Pirzada and Laksh Lalwani in the lead role. The untitled film is said to be a romantic comedy with a love triangle, and has Shashank Khaitan as director.

Before performing on the big screen, it's time for viewers to watch her on the small one. Johar has shared on his Instagram account Kapoor's maiden ad film and it has garnered mixed response from netizens. A user wrote. "She is talented young actress." Another one commented- "Not good." One more user stated- "Haha cute ad, Shanaya Kapoor looking beautiful." And someone just said- "Nepotism."

Before her debut film, Shanaya worked as an assistant director on the Jhanvi Kapoor-starrer *Gunjan Saxena* to understand filmmaking and how film sets function.

Her father Sanjay Kapoor has lately been a regular on the digital space, he was seen in *Lust Stories*, *The Gone Game* and *The Last Hour*, and has *Finding Anamika* coming up.



Samir Soni on eating live octopus in Cartel

Mumbai: Actor Samir Soni has opened up on a literally stomach churning scene in *Cartel* where his character is seen eating a live octopus.

He plays Dorabji, a business tycoon who is cunning, manipulative and outright evil in the web series *Cartel*. To prove the viciousness of the character Samir had a scene in the show where he had to eat a live octopus.

Samir believed it was an essential scene and didn't shy away from doing that. Samir said while recalling the entire experience: "I hate seafood and eating a live octopus! But it was a must for the character to show how heartless, vicious and villainous Dorabji is.

"So, what we did was that we put little pieces of chicken around the octopus that I had to pick at during the shoot. The octopus scene was very creepy, and it was something I'd never do. But I thought it was an important scene because it defined the character in a lot of ways," he concludes.

Is home automation practical for long term?

Ten years ago, no one could even imagine that one day people would drive a self-automated car or rely upon a proactive healthcare management system



Today the world is progressing towards a new era. An era that blends the skills of biological humanity with contrived technology to 'automate' the ecosystem. Ten years ago, no one could even imagine that one day we would drive a self-automated car or rely upon a proactive healthcare management system. But now, we are.

Home Automation is a new-age solution to automate your home through furnishing automatic lights, automatic door locks, smart security cameras,

automatic heating and cooling among others. As this generation fascinated with modern technology, the demand has started to reach the skies. Making innovative ideas practical for the long term, here are a few reasons you should get with this trend:

It makes one feel luxurious

As this system aims to provide the best to the customers, it automates everything and when we say everything then we mean it! From remote climate control to automated doors, from smart security cameras to setting up the hues of lights, home automation takes care of your every customisation. And this makes your life utterly convenient that signifies the luxury that you always imagined.

Keeping a tab on energy consumption

Through home automation, you can record the total energy consumption of your home and customise your usage accordingly. Installation of this one-of-a-kind technology is not only beneficial for your pockets but also the environment will be grateful for switching to this mechanism.

Getting government benefits

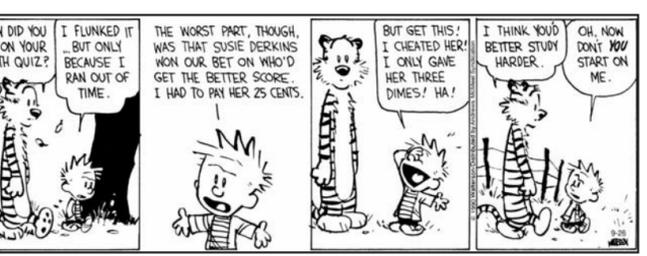
Automating your home is not only going to deduct your energy bills but also will give you benefits in subsidies and tax deductions from the government for taking steps to save the environment. As your environment concerned actions are proving you a well-aware citizen of society, the society is getting inspired by you and this makes you a superior responsible person among all.

Sharing his thoughts on the present adaptation and future stability of this industry, Vishal Kukadiya, CEO of WhiteLion Home Automation Solutions, said, "Today, many Indian startups are stepping up to create a dent in cost-effectiveness by hammering it through producing appliances with more efficiency but lesser cost, so in the upcoming days, it is an affirmation that this technology will not cost your fortunes. So precisely, it is safe to say that Home Automation is very much practical for the long term."

PEANUTS



CALVIN AND HOBBS

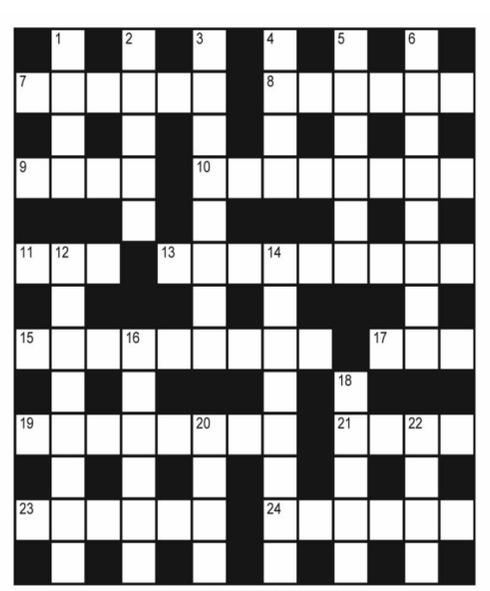


BREVITY



FUN post

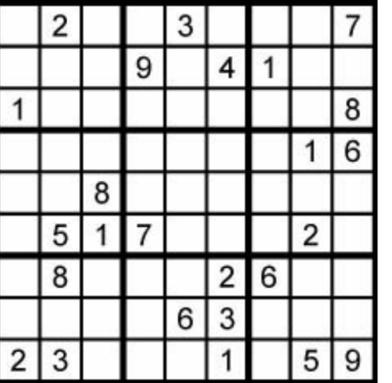
CROSSWORD



- Across**
- 7 Part of a war
 - 8 Displace
 - 9 Set aside for a rainy day
 - 10 Crude place?
 - 11 Kind of nut
 - 13 Makes the most of
 - 15 Goal
 - 17 Leaching product
 - 19 Deep-six
 - 21 Killer whale
 - 23 Indistinct
 - 24 Stressed out (2,4)
 - Down**
 - 1 Heroic tale
 - 2 Knight's need
 - 3 Run-down
 - 4 Persian, for one
 - 5 Sultanate in northwestern Borneo
 - 6 Polite behavior
 - 12 Brit's gear
 - 14 Thomas Edison, e.g.
 - 16 Chophouse
 - 18 Bee's output
 - 20 River of Hades
 - 22 Hamster's home

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



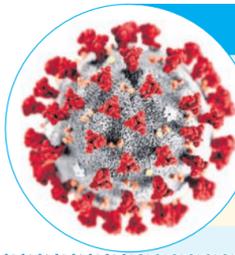
CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW

downtown



INSEPARABLE

Girls take a selfie with Lingaraj temple in the background in Bhubaneswar, Thursday, a day after the 11th century shrine reopened for people



COVID-19 TRACKER

	INFECTED	RECOVERED	DEAD
World	21,94,94,019	19,62,98,779	45,49,211
India	3,28,57,937	3,20,28,825	4,39,529
Odisha	10,09,223	9,94,639	8,028

₹323cr GST fraud unearthed

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Sept 2: The State Goods and Services Tax (GST) Enforcement Wing Thursday busted a racket involved in evasion of GST worth ₹323 crore through fake invoicing of ₹1,819 crore.

The sleuths arrested two persons - Amit Kumar Agrawal, a chartered accountant, and Satindra Kumar Yadav, a Bhubaneswar-based businessman.

While Agrawal is the partner at a CA firm in Jharsuguda - Amit Kanheyala and Co, Yadav is the owner of M/s SS Syndicate.

According to the enforcement wing, the duo had collected PAN cards, Aadhaar cards, bank passbooks, voter IDs and photographs from several people, mostly from Kolkata, on the promise of jobs.



Accused Satindra Kumar Yadav

Later, they created around 13 fake firms by obtaining GST and value added tax (VAT) registration using the identity documents collected from the victims.

"Out of 13 fictitious firms, the proprietors of three firms are found

to be jute mill workers or sweepers in Dalhousie Jute Mill located at Champdani in West Bengal," claimed sources.

Similarly, 10 fictitious firms were shown functioning on a barren land without any building or infrastructure in Jharsuguda and Samalpur. The house rent agreements, consent letters and other certificates uploaded for registration under the VAT and GST Act are found to be forged. Same photograph and one mobile number have been used for three different persons in the GST documents.

Meanwhile, the accused persons illegally obtained GST registration for the ghost firms in West Bengal, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh and Delhi in the names of the applicants whose registration certificates have already been cancelled by the state authorities including in Odisha.

The duo, in collusion with other accused, has availed and later passed on bogus input tax credit (ITC) worth ₹323 crore by submitting fake purchase and sale invoices to the tune of ₹1,819 crore in the name of the fictitious business entities. "Actual loss to the government stands at ₹58.14 crore - the ITC passed on to the recipient of outside Odisha. The culprits took advantage of simplification of GST norms," the GST enforcement wing revealed.

The wing unearthed the massive fraud with the help of authorities in states like West Bengal, Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh and Delhi. The state GST wing has so far arrested 23 persons and cancelled the GST registration of 29,002 dealers.

POLITICKLE by MANJUL



I-T dept honours state's gifted personalities



POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Sept 2: The Income Tax (I-T) department Thursday felicitated state's six eminent personalities for their valuable contributions to various fields.

The felicitation ceremony was part of 'Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav' celebrations on completion of 75 years of Independence.

The department honoured former member of Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT) Amarendra Nath Mishra, retired chief commissioner of I-T department Pradosh Chandra Mohanty, noted painter Baladev Maharath, entrepreneur Prabodh Mohanty, physician at Sparsh Hospital Dr Madhuri Patnaik for Healthcare Services and chess master Swayams Mishra.

The awardees were presented bouquets, shawls and mementoes by the department.

The dignitaries highlighted the

The dignitaries highlighted the role of I-T department in the development of the country

role of I-T department in the development of the country.

"A small number of taxpayers are contributing 30 per cent of total revenue of the government of India. It is not a small achievement. This amount is only being used for the development of the country," said Amarendra Nath Mishra, former CBDT member.

The speakers also emphasised on voluntary tax payments by citizens and zero tolerance to tax evasion.

The programme was chaired by Saroj Kumar Mohapatra, commissioner of Income tax (Administration and Tax Payers Services), Bhubaneswar.

House passes three crucial Bills

UNIVERSITY OF HEALTH SCIENCES COMING UP IN STATE SOON

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Sept 2: The state Assembly Thursday passed three important Bills including the Odisha University of Health Sciences Bill, 2021 amid ruckus by Opposition BJP and Congress.

Health Minister Naba Kishore Das said several medical and paramedical institutions affiliated to different universities in the state are granting degree or diploma or training certificates.

"These universities have no specialization on the study of medical and paramedical sciences adoptable in new methods of teaching, learning and research to achieve excellence in healthcare and overcome the incidence of new diseases," the minister said.

He said establishment of University of Health Sciences will not only address the serious lacunae but also bring about the much needed coordination. It will help achieve the educational objectives of the faculties and individual training programmes.

"To have uniformity in various academic programmes in medical and allied subjects, it is felt expedient to establish and incorporate a university exclusively as an affiliating

OTDC earned ₹2.39 lakh by selling air tickets: Minister

The Odisha Tourism Development Corporation (OTDC) has sold air tickets worth ₹31.89 crore during past three financial years and earned ₹2.39 lakh from the venture.

In a written reply to the Assembly, Tourism Minister Jyoti Prakash Panigrahi Thursday said the OTDC has sold tickets worth ₹17.09 crore in FY 2018-19, ₹13.88 crore in FY 2019-20 and ₹91.65 lakh in FY 2020-21.

The corporation has earned commission to the tune of ₹2.39 crore for selling the tickets during the three

years, he said.

The operational expenditure stood at ₹65.09 lakh, ₹57.81 lakh and ₹50.20 lakh in 2018-19, 2019-20 and 2020-21, respectively, the minister added.

He further informed the House that the OTDC has earned net profit of ₹66.63 lakh during the three years.

The corporation earned ₹51.44 lakh in 2018-19 and ₹34.32 lakh in 2019-20. However, the state PSU has borne a loss of ₹19.13 lakh during last financial year, he added.

The air-ticketing unit of OTDC provides tickets to all major government and corporate houses of the state in addition to the general public. Most of the tickets are booked by government offices only, sources said.



IN THE HOUSE

university in the name of 'Odisha University of Health Sciences' which will facilitate achieving excellence in the field of medical education and research," Das added.

The university will deal with affiliation, proper and systematic instruction, training and research in modern medicine, mental health education, dental education, homoeopathy and Ayurveda, nursing education, pharmacy education,

paramedical education, physiotherapy, allied medical sciences and any other medical or pharmaceutical courses.

The House also passed a Bill to amend Odisha Land Rights to Slum Dwellers Act, 2017. The amendment was made to provide 30 sq metres of land to slum dwellers for construction of housing units under PMAY. Similarly, the Odisha GST Amendment Bill, 2021 was also passed in the Assembly.

15 BJB students hurt in clash

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Sept 2: As many as 15 students of BJB Junior College sustained severe injuries during a group clash over passing of comments here Thursday.

A posse of police force has been deployed on the college premises to avoid further escalation of the situation.

Sources revealed that a heated exchange between the inmates of Kharavela and Ambedkar hostels ensued after an inmate from the former passed comments on an inmate of the latter Wednesday night.

The situation escalated Thursday morning when some members of Kharavela hostel assaulted an inmate of Ambedkar hostel over Wednesday's incident.

In retaliation, around 50 inmates from Ambedkar hostel attacked Kharavela hostel inmates.

The students went berserk and ransacked tables, chairs and window glasses in Kharavela hostel.

Police sources said that the college authorities have assured strict action against the students responsible for the incident.

NOTICE OF LOSS OF SHARE CERTIFICATE(S)

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Notice is hereby given that the following share certificates issued by the Company have been lost / misplaced / stolen and the registered holders thereof, have applied to the Company for the issue of duplicate share certificates.

Sl. No.	Name	Folio No.	Cert. Nos.	Dist. Nos.	No. of Shares
1.	K B Dash	39382	11840 11842 44569 48967-48968 53891	19297888-894 19297902-908 19663260-266 19917145-156 20350528-533	7 7 7 12 6

The public are hereby warned against purchasing or dealing in any way, with the above share certificates. Any person(s) who has/has claims in respect of the said share certificates should lodge such claims with the Company under registered post A/D at its registered office at the address given above within 15 days of publication of this notice, after which no claim will be entertained and the Company will proceed to issue duplicate share certificates.

K B Dash
Satya Vihar, Bhubaneswar
Name & address of the Shareholder

Olympic hero Rohitdas now ECoR sports officer

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Sept 2: Amit Rohidas, a key player of Indian National Men's Hockey team, which recently won bronze medal by defeating Germany at Tokyo Olympics, has joined East Coast Railway (ECoR) as senior sports officer.

Earlier, Rohidas was working in Western Railway as officer on special duty (OSD) in sports section. The hockey team won a medal at Olympics after 40 years as the last medal was won at Moscow Olympics in 1980.

ECoR General Manager Vidya Bhushan, and president & general secretary of East Coast Railway Sports Association (ECoRSA) congratulated him at Rail Sadan for his new assignment.



ECoR GM Vidya Bhushan congratulated Rohidas at Rail Sadan for his new assignment

Born at Saunamara village in Sundargarh district May 10, 1993, Rohidas started playing hockey in his village and joined Panposh Sports Hostel in Rourkela in 2004. He plays as a defender for Indian national hockey team.

Govt rolls out e-Receipt 2.0 for payment of taxes, dues



AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, Sept 2: The revamped electronic receipt e-Receipt 2.0 system was formally rolled out in the state to make available new modes of payment of taxes and other dues to the citizens of the state.

Chief Secretary Suresh Chandra Mahapatra launched the service at Lok Seva Bhawan Thursday.

Odisha Treasury Portal has availed the services of Indian Bank and Axis Bank through their payment gateway service providers.

In pursuance to the 5-T principles of Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik, the Finance department had taken steps to provide good governance and improving the delivery of services in electronic receipts and disbursement under Integrated Financial Management System (IFMS).

The new arrangement will provide facilities like Card, UPI id and QR code and wallets based payments.

On this occasion, service level agreements were signed between the government and the two banks - Axis Bank and Indian Bank - for use of two other pay-

E-GOVERNANCE BOOST

CHIEF SECRETARY SURESH CHANDRA MAHAPATRA LAUNCHED THE SERVICE AT LOK SEVA BHAWAN THURSDAY

ODISHA TREASURY PORTAL HAS AVAILED THE SERVICES OF INDIAN BANK AND AXIS BANK THROUGH THEIR PAYMENT GATEWAY SERVICE PROVIDERS

THE NEW ARRANGEMENT WILL PROVIDE FACILITIES LIKE CARD, UPI ID AND QR CODE AND WALLETS BASED PAYMENTS

ment gateways namely Bill desk and CC Avenue. Finance principal secretary Vishal Kumar Dev highlighted the new services that have been included through the new arrangement.

Development Commissioner-cum-Additional Chief Secretary Pradeep Jena expressed his satisfaction on the adoption of the e-Governance efforts undertaken by the Finance department.

The Chief Secretary said the e-Receipt system would fulfil the objective of Mo Sarkar by providing service delivery at the doorstep of citizens.

बैंक ऑफ बड़ोदा
Bank of Baroda

Regional Office (Sambalpur Region),
1st Floor, G.M. College Chowk, Christian Para,
Sambalpur-768001

VEHICLE AUCTION
SALE NOTICE

Applications are invited from interested bidders for purchase of following vehicles, seized by the Bank on "As is where is basis" as per terms and conditions listed below. This public notice will be treated as a notice to the borrowers/guarantors/mortgagors of the loans. They are hereby advised to be present at the auction venue on the auction date and are free to liquidate their entire dues before the auction date, failing which the vehicles will be auctioned and balance dues, if any will be recovered from them with interest and cost.

Sl. No.	Branch/Contact Number	Name of Borrower	Vehicle No.	Make & Model	Month / Year of Manufacturing	Reserve Price
1.	SUNDARGARH / 7752050866	RABI NARAYAN PATEL	OR-16 E-2098	PREET 3549 TRACTOR	02/2012	₹ 1,17,000/-
2.		ASHOK ACHARYA	OR-16 E-1778/79	PREET 3549 TRACTOR	02/2012	₹ 1,53,000/-
3.		SUDARSHAN MAHARANA	OR-16 E-1748	PREET 5049 TRACTOR	02/2012	₹ 90,000/-
4.		NARENDRA KHUNTIA	OR-16 E-0878/79	PREET 3549 TRACTOR	12/2011	₹ 1,62,000/-
5.		LALIT KUMAR CHOUDHARY	OR-16 E-1768/69	PREET 3549 TRACTOR	02/2012	₹ 1,62,000/-
6.		HENDRI KERKETTA	OR-16 E-0882	PREET 4049 TRACTOR	12/2011	₹ 81,000/-
7.		MANABODH INDIAR	OR-16 E-1753/54	PREET 3549 TRACTOR	02/2012	₹ 1,80,000/-
8.		AJIT NAIK	OR-16 E-4629	PREET 4049 TRACTOR	05/2013	₹ 81,000/-
9.		BRUNDABAN SANDHA	OR-16 E-1761/62	PREET 4049 TRACTOR	02/2012	₹ 1,62,000/-
10.	HOSPITAL ROAD SUNDARGARH / 7682829024	MUNU SA	OD-16 B-3700	M&M/ BOL XL 2WD	08/2015	₹ 2,00,000/-
11.	SARBAHAL ROAD JHARSUGUDA / 7682829022	KUNDANPAN JAYARA	OR-16 D-6754	EIC	02/2011	₹ 60,000/-
12.		KUNDANPAN JAYARA	OR-16 D-6753	EIC	02/2011	₹ 60,000/-
13.		BINAY KUMAR AGARWAL	OR-16 D-5847	EIC	01/2011	₹ 50,000/-
14.	TALCHER / 7752050867	SAMIR KUMAR SINGH	OD-02 L-4094	TATA INDIGO ECS LX TDI	11/2013	₹ 21,000/-
15.		SUMAN BEHERA	OD-19 D-3230	PIAGGIO PORTER 600	05/2014	₹ 35,000/-
16.		MANOJ KUMAR DEHURY	OD-19 D-9121	APE AUTO D3S PASSENGER	08/2014	₹ 20,000/-
17.		MANGULU BHUTIA	OD-19 D-4136	APE AUTO D3S PASSENGER	04/2014	₹ 40,000/-

Parking Yard : for Sl. No.: 1 to 9 (At: Patel Stock Yard, Amlipali- 770020), for Sl. No.: 10 to 13 (At: Patel Stock Yard, Sankara Amelipali, Sundargarh- 770001), for Sl. No.: 14 & 15 (At: Chandrabahal, Sadar Thana, Angul) for Sl. No.: 16 & 17 (At: Near Jagannath Mandir, Angul)

Auction Date & Time : 22.09.2021, 11.30A.M. to 12.30 P.M., Auction Venue: At the Concerned Branch as stated above, EMD is 10% of the Reserve Price mentioned above.

TERMS AND CONDITIONS:

- Applications accompanied by ID/address proof copy (originals to be verified) and EMD as applicable for each vehicle in shape of Banker's cheque/Draft drawn in favour of **Bank of Baroda, payable at Concerned Branch** should reach on or before **22.09.2021 upto 11.00 A.M.**
- However the bank reserves the right to accept/reject/cancel the auction process of any/all vehicles at its own discretion at any point of time without assigning any reason whatsoever.
- Bid amount does not include any statutory tax pending and applicable RTA fees. All these cost are additional and must be borne by the successfully bidder.
- Dispute pertaining to year of manufacture, documents, condition of vehicle/assets, etc. will not be considered after successful bid.
- Entry to the event is strictly restricted to the registered bidder only.
- The refund of EMD will be made immediately after the closure of the bidding process to the unsuccessful bidders.
- Successful Highest bidder has to deposit a minimum amount of 25% of the bid amount inclusive EMD on the same day, failing which the bid taken will not be considered as EMD amount will be forfeited without further intimation.
- The balance should be paid by the successful bidder within next **15 days** from the date of auction.
- Delayed interest @18%p.a. will be charged against any amount due and payable by the successful bidder beyond 15 days from the date of the event, subject to a maximum waiting period of 22 days from the date of auction.
- Default in payment beyond the stipulated 22 days, will lead to deal cancellation and forfeiture of EMD paid and the vehicle/equipment/machinery will be resold without further information. Acceptance of payment on later date will be sole discretion of Bank.
- Successful Bidders are fully responsible for taking delivery of all vehicles or equipment from Stockyard after full payment is made.
- Successful bidders must remove the vehicles/equipments within 7 days from the date of release order along with RC Transfer in to their name.

Place : Sambalpur, Date: 02.09.2021

Authorised Officer, Bank of Baroda

6-laning of NH-130 gets Centre nod

POST NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi, Sept 2: The Union government has approved six-lane of National Highway 130 under Raipur-Visakhapatnam economic corridor under Bharatmala Pariyojana.

The Union Road Transport and Highways Minister Nitin Gadkari informed that the development of 6-lane Kaliagura-Baunsagar section of NH-130-CD under Raipur - Visakhapatnam economic corridor has been sanctioned under Bharatmala Pariyojana with a budget of ₹1,539 crore in the state. "Development of 6-Lane Kaliagura-Baunsagar section of NH-130-CD under Raipur - Visakhapatnam economic corridor has been sanctioned under Bharatmala Pariyojana with a budget of ₹1,539 Cr in the state of Odisha," Nitin Gadkari informed. The Union minister also announced four-laning of the existing 2-Lane road from Ghoman to Tanda (NH-503A) with the sanction of ₹818 crore in Punjab.

3 SPECIAL TRAINS TO RESUME SERVICES

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Sept 2: The East Coast Railway (ECoR) has decided to resume the services of Visakhapatnam-Amritsar-Visakhapatnam Hirakud Special, Puri-Howrah-Puri Jagannath Special and Khurda Road-Puri-Khurda Road Passenger Special for the convenience of passengers, an official said Thursday.

Visakhapatnam-Amritsar-Visakhapatnam Hirakud Special tri-weekly will be restored from Visakhapatnam September 11 and from Amritsar September 15. Hirakud Special will also run with modern Linke-Hofmann-Busch (LHB) coaches by replacing conventional coaches running earlier. The national transporter has also issued the schedule for other trains.

ECoR loads 94.26 MT freight in 5 months

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, Sept 2: The East Coast Railway (ECoR) has loaded 94.26 million tonne (MT) freight during the period from April to August, 2021 against 72.32 MT carried in the corresponding period of last fiscal.

With this, the ECoR has loaded 21.9 MT incremental cargo during the first five months of the current fiscal. This has also surpassed the loading target fixed by Railway Board which is 89.16 MT from April to August. This could be possible due to the outstanding performance of all the three Divisions of East Coast Railway - Khurda Road, Waltair and Sambalpur.

CLASSIFIED LOST

I, Mrs. Shantilata Samal, W/o. Late Narahari Samal, resident at B1-89, Lingaraj Vihar, Pokhaript, P.S.- Airport, Aerodrome Area, Bhubaneswar, Dist- Khurda. I purchased Vacant Land vide Plot No.- 89/4143/10226, Khata No.- 801/2639, Area- Ac.0.050 decimals at Mouza-Daruthenga, Tahasil-Bhubaneswar, Dist.- Khurda. I have lost original ROR (Patta) at my Pokhaript house. Therefore notice is hereby given to general public anybody has got any right, title, interest over the property on the missing document they have to claim before within 15 days of publication. Contact details:- Mrs. Shantilata Samal, Contact Number- 9556666106.

Odisha sees highest rain deficit in 23 yrs

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, Sept 2: Odisha recorded its highest rainfall deficiency in over two decades this monsoon amid fears that the dry spell could trigger a drought in the state, said the Meteorological (MeT) Centre here.

The coastal state received only 661.1 mm of rain between June 1 and August 31 this year against a normal of 935.8 mm, a deficiency of 29 per cent, the MeT Centre said.

This was the sixth occurrence in the last 120 years when the south-west monsoon rain during the period has been deficient by 29 per cent or more, an official release said Wednesday. The previous rain-deficient years were 1924 (636.2 mm), 1954 (646.8 mm), 1974 (658.7 mm), 1987 (641.4 mm) and 1998 (657.5 mm), the department said.

The seasonal deficit is mainly due to a large deficiency in the month of August. Rainfall over the state during the month was 204.9 mm against a normal of 366.4 mm, recording a deficiency of 44 per cent. There were only three times in the last 120 years that the August



SIXTH TIME IN 120 YRS

The coastal state received only 661.1 mm of rain between June 1 and August 31 this year against a normal of 935.8 mm, a deficiency of 29 per cent

There were only three times in the last 120 years that the August rainfall was less than 204.9 mm -- 1965 (187.3 mm), 1987 (190.3 mm) and 1998 (203.5 mm)

APPARENTLY, THE ABSENCE OF DEPRESSION AND LESS NUMBER OF LOW-PRESSURE AREAS - ONLY TWO OBSERVED - OVER THE BAY OF BENGAL DURING AUGUST CAUSED LESS AMOUNT OF RAINFALL, THE WEATHERMAN SAID

rainfall was less than 204.9 mm -- 1965 (187.3 mm), 1987 (190.3 mm) and 1998 (203.5 mm). In the three-month period of the

current monsoon, only six out of 30 districts in the state were under the normal category and 24 districts were under the deficient category.

Four districts - Jajpur, Bhadrak, Bolangir and Angul - saw a deficiency of 40 per cent or more, the MeT Centre said.

In August, only four districts recorded normal rainfall, while 18 were under the deficient category. Eight districts - Boudh, Sambalpur, Subarnapur, Angul, Bolangir, Kandhamal, Bargarh and Jajpur - are under the large deficient category, it said.

Apparently, the absence of depression and less number of low-pressure areas - only two observed - over the Bay of Bengal during August caused less amount of rainfall, the weatherman said. The monsoon trough was also located north of its normal position on most days in August, causing subdued monsoon activities, it said.

The India Meteorological Department has forecast that the state would receive normal rainfall of 226.6 mm in September. Tuesday, Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik had directed officials to prepare a contingency crop plan and take measures to mitigate farmers' problems.

No public gathering during Ganesh Puja

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Sept 2: The Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC) Thursday prohibited any kind of public gathering during Ganesh Puja celebrations while issuing a set of guidelines for the festival scheduled to be held September 10.

As per the guidelines, congregations shall not be allowed within BMC Jurisdiction on the occasion of Ganesh Puja.

However, the puja committees/organisers can conduct the puja at mandaps/pandals by adhering to Covid-19 protocol and obtaining permission from the Commissionerate Police.

"Ganesh Puja shall be conducted in indoor-like conditions only for observance of rituals without any public participation and grandeur. The public address system shall not be used during the festival," read the guideline. It adds, "At any point of time,

there shall not be more than 7 persons including the organisers/priests/support staff at the pandal/mandap."

Moreover, the BMC also instructed puja committees to worship Ganesh idols of less than 4 ft in height.

The mandaps/pandals are also to be covered from three sides while only one side would remain open for use of the priest for rituals.

The fourth side should also be covered properly for preventing any public view/darshan of the idols.

"There shall be no immersion procession. The idols shall be immersed in artificial ponds to be created by the BMC. The festival would be observed with only 20 participants in educational institutes/coaching centres. The head of the educational/coaching institutes shall ensure that those above 18 years of age are fully vaccinated to be present on this occasion," said the order.

Sahoo's missive to Pradhan on admission in central varsities

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Sept 2: State Higher Education Minister Arun Sahoo Thursday wrote to Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan asking him to instruct the central universities to allow students to submit their undergraduate (UG) final semester results/mark sheets by September-end so that no one is deprived of admission for postgraduate (PG) courses during this session.

In his letter to Pradhan, Sahoo highlighted the problems of UG final year students of Odisha who are unable to take admission to postgraduate (PG) courses in central universities due to delay in publication of final semester results by universities and autonomous colleges in the state.

In view of the Covid-19 situation, The University Grants Commission (UGC) has issued a set of guidelines in July this year and instructed that all UG final year ex-

aminations must be completed by August 31 and admission for the PG courses should be completed by September 30, Sahoo said.

As per UGC guidelines, UG final year examinations have been completed by August 30 and the results are expected to be declared by September 15, he added.

However, it seems that some central universities have deviated from the UGC prescribed schedule and completed their admission process in August itself, thereby depriving students of Odisha from taking admission due to their failure in submitting the UG final semester marksheets, Sahoo pointed out.

"Therefore, I request you to kindly instruct central universities to allow PG applicant-students to submit their UG final semester results by September-end. As a result, no students would be debarred from taking admission in central universities," Sahoo said in his letter to Pradhan.

HEALTH HAZARD



Huge quantities of fake tea seized from Cuttack Sadar area being buried on Kathajodi riverbank, Thursday

Lowest Covid-19 fatalities since July

INFECTION RATE AMONG CHILDREN DIPPED TO 14.32 PER CENT FROM 17.38 PER CENT WEDNESDAY

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, Sept 2: Odisha's Covid-19 tally rose to 10,09,223 Thursday as 754 more people tested positive for the infection, a Health department official said.

Six more patients, including a 104-year-old man from Cuttack, succumbed to the disease, taking the state's coronavirus death toll to 8,028, he said, adding that the sin-

gle-day spike of six fresh fatalities was the lowest since July.

As many as 438 new cases were reported in quarantine centres, while 316 infections were detected during contact tracing. The infection rate among children dipped to 14.32 per cent from 17.38 per cent Wednesday.

Khurda district, under which Bhubaneswar falls, recorded the highest number of new cases at

261, followed by Cuttack (110) and Balasore (43). Gajapati and Subarnapur did not report any new cases.

Khurda recorded four more deaths, while Cuttack and Jajpur registered one each, the official said, adding that the coastal state's case fatality rate (CFR) of 0.79 per cent is one of the lowest in the country. The state now has 7,241 active

cases, while 9,93,901 people have recovered from the disease so far, including 666 Wednesday. A total of 53 coronavirus patients have died due to comorbidities to date.

Odisha has so far tested over 1.82 crore samples for Covid-19, including 66,688 Wednesday.

The cumulative positivity rate stands at 5.54 per cent, while the daily test positivity rate was at 1.13 per cent.

KHALLIKOTE MAN DONATES SANDALWOOD TO SRIMANDIR

POST NEWS NETWORK

Puri, Sept 2: A devotee from Khallikote in Ganjam Thursday donated two quintals of sandalwood to Srimandir here. Sakaleswar Rath along with his family members handed over the sandalwoods to Shree Jagannath Temple Administration (SJTA).

The sandalwoods have been kept at the SJTA office and they

would be used for the rituals of the presiding deities, said a temple official.

Rath had approached the SJTA for donating a sandalwood tree grown in his backyard.

After obtaining due permission, the tree was cut in the presence of Forest department officials.

The sandalwood logs were brought to Puri in a truck, added the official.

MoU signed for development of bamboo craft in state

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Sept 2: For the holistic development of bamboo craft and craftsmen in Odisha, a memorandum of understanding (MoU) was signed between Directorate of Handicrafts and Cottage Industries (H & CI) and Odisha Bamboo Development Agency (OBDA) at Odisha Crafts Museum, Kala Bhoomi premises Thursday.

Director of Handicraft and Cottage Industries, Sanatan Nayak and State Mission Director of OBDA, Prem Kumar Jha signed the MoU in the presence of Padmini Dian, Minister of Handloom, Textiles and Handicrafts.

Odisha has immensely rich craft tradition with magnificent craftsmanship. As many as 50 different crafts practiced by the artisans in varied degrees have been approved by the state government and are dispersed throughout the state. Bamboo craft is one of those.



Although the craft is practiced in almost all the districts of the state, majority of the artisans are found in districts like Dhenkanal, Mayurbhanj, Jajpur, Bargarh, Subarnapur, Khurda, Rayagada, Nayagarh, Kandhamal, Malkangiri

and Sundargarh. The population of such artisans in the state is about 22,000. The focus for development of this craft will be in six locations of five districts with funding from OBDA to the tune of ₹721.30 lakh. The loca-

The Directorate of Handicrafts and Cottage Industries will implement this programme through its district offices headed by Assistant Director of Handicrafts

The major inclusions will be construction of common facility centres (CFCs), and introduction of new technology through mechanisation in treatment and processing of raw bamboo apart from skill development of the artisans of the above areas

Besides, steps will be taken for opening of a marketing and design cell at State Institute for Development of Arts & Crafts (SIDAC), Bhubaneswar for improvement of market-oriented products

tions finalised are Ichinda (Rairangapur) of Mayurbhanj District, Gopalpur (Rasulpur) of

Jajpur District, Baulapur (Odapada) of Dhenkanal District, Bargaon/Kantapalli and Brahmanadihi (Padmapur) of Bargarh District, and Binika of Subarnapur District.

The H & CI will implement this programme through its district offices headed by Assistant Director of Handicrafts. The major interventions will be construction of common facility centres (CFCs), and introduction of new technology through mechanisation in treatment and processing of raw bamboo apart from skill development of the artisans of the above areas.

Marketing assistance will also be provided through establishment of rural markets 'Bamboo Bazar', in addition to e-commerce facility. Marketing assistance will also be provided through establishment of rural markets 'Bamboo Bazar', in addition to e-commerce facility. Besides, steps will be taken for opening of a marketing and design cell at State Institute for Development of Arts & Crafts (SIDAC), Bhubaneswar for improvement of market-oriented products.

2 more held in 2014 Malgodown murder

POST NEWS NETWORK

Cuttack, Sept 2: The twin city Commissionerate Police Thursday claimed to have arrested two more aides of notorious Dhalasamanta brothers in connection with the sensational murder of pulses trader Mohammed Farooq Tayab at Malgodown here in 2014.

The accused were identified as Chandan Behera, 35, of Mangalabag Machhua Bazar and Lalan Kumar Gupta, 35, of CDA Sector 9 here. Another accused, who was a minor at the time of the crime, now 24, has been sent to the Juvenile Justice Board.

On Wednesday, the twin city police has arrested Deepak Nayak alias Shankar, 33, of Ranihaat in connection with the murder.

According to police, Shankar along with the three had killed the pulses wholesaler at the behest of the gangster siblings—Susil and Sushant Dhalasamanta—over extortion November 12, 2014.

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Acharya Vihar-Darshan Agency-9437135727, A.P. Tours and Travel, Maitri Vihar, C.S. Pur- 9861301598, Aurobindo Market-Sai Audio & Electronics-9438304668, Airport Road-Sai Baba Variety Store-9090071530, Anish Infotech-Tankapani Road-9861341488, Bapuji Nagar- Dreamland Studio- 9777517314, Baramunda Rental Colony-Maa Ramchandi Communication-9658821469, Baramunda Housing Board Colony-Pappu Variety Store-9040500106, Cuttack Road-Alishan Snacks-8984236754, District Center (Chandrasekharpur)-Sai Google Mart-9776056507, Forest Park-DTDC Couriers & Services (HB Services)-7381024156, IRC Village-Bapi Xerox-9090090404, Gift Hut(Antriksh Gifts & Decors Pvt. Ltd.)-9954781084, Pruthvi Medicine-9853314816, Janpath-Kruparaj Book Store-7978646669, Jaydev Vihar-AK Enterprises-7978116618, Subam Sai Books Store-8895550649, Swain Graphics- 9337121249, Jagannath Mobile Point- Janpath Road, Ram Mandir- 9938475415, Kanan Vihar-Auro Electronics-8260697560, Khandagiri- Swosti Mobile Centre- 7992914045, World Solution- 9938317559, KIIT Road-Jugad Jn-9338545031, Laxmi Sagar-Aditya Mobile-9438191836, Lewis Road-Spider Web-7809186415, Metro Satellite City-Arogya Mitra Medicine Store-9853621640, Madhusudan Nagar-Mohapatra Communication-9124446664, Maa Santoshi travels- Gajapati Nagar- 9777675867, Nayapalli- The Cake Room- 7873666137, Near Mayfair Lagoon-Cookiemana-9439491273, Nigamananda-Omm Sai Travels-9668284823, Nr Cosmopolis Main Gate- Shreeram Medical Store- 8763711714, Net Square- Niladri Vihar (C.S. Pur)- 7205634821, Priyadarshini Market-Astro Point-9938134346, R.N. General Store-Nilakantha Nagar-9438642501, Sahid Nagar- Maa Communication- 9437353424, Sahini General Store- Near Patia Railway Station, Mahavir Vihar- 9937586626, Satya Nagar-Baishnavi Mixture & Sweets-7894821764, Samantapur- Download Point-7504557743, Sailashree Vihar-Harsha Book Store-8093449515, Saheed Nagar-Jagannath Graphics-7978652670, Photo World-7978468191, Sainath Photo Studio-8984436129, Shanti & Co-9937071063, Siripur-Omm Maa Sarala Communication-9777682449, Sushree fashion- Jagmara-9938714347, Shree Vision- Sailashree Vihar-9861476678, Unit-3-LIC of India Premium Point-9337787080, Unit-7- LIC Premium Point- 9338227422, VSS Nagar-Friends Cake & Bake-8658200930, Jeet Infoworld-7205195782, XIMB Square-LD Books-9658061373.

Mining firms fail to meet transportation targets



JOINT DIRECTOR OF THE JODA MINING CIRCLE, SALIL KUMAR BEHERA, SAID HEARING WAS HELD ON THAKURANI MINE LEASED OUT TO MITTAL, JURUDI MINE LEASED OUT TO JAGAT JANANI TRUST, ROIDA MINE (B) LEASED OUT TO NARVORAM AND JAJANG MINE LEASED OUT TO JSW

THESE MINING COMPANIES DURING THE HEARING STATED THAT DUE TO THE PANDEMIC, MINERAL TRANSPORTATION WAS BADLY AFFECTED WHILE THE OLD LEASE HOLDERS HAD STILL BEEN CARRYING OUT TRANSPORTATION OF THEIR MINERALS FROM THE STOCKS IN THEIR MINES

AS OLD LEASE HOLDERS WERE TRANSPORTING THEIR EXCAVATED MINERALS, THIS CREATED PROBLEM FOR THE NEW LEASE HOLDERS TO SHIFT THEIR MINERALS. BESIDES, PILES OF MINERALS AND MACHINES OF THE OLD LEASE HOLDERS WERE INSIDE THE MINES. THEY WERE CREATING HURDLES IN MINERAL TRANSPORTATION TOO

POST NEWS NETWORK

Joda, Sept 2: Mining companies that have received fresh leases of mines in Joda mining circle of Keonjhar district have failed to meet their targets in mineral transportation. The mines department held a hearing on the issue Wednesday and issued notices to five mines in this regard. Four of these mines presented their statements at the hearing.

Joint director of the Joda mining circle, Salil Kumar Behera, said hearing was held on Thakurani mine leased out to Mittal, Jurudi mine leased out to Jagat Janani Trust, Roida mine (B) leased out to Narvoram and Jajang mine

leased out to JSW.

These mining companies during the hearing stated that due to the pandemic, mineral transportation was badly affected while the old lease holders had still been carrying out transportation of their minerals from their stocks in the mines.

"As old lease holders were transporting their excavated minerals, this has created problem for the new lease holders to shift their minerals. Besides, piles of minerals and machines of the old lease holders were inside the mines. They were creating hurdles in mineral transportation too," they explained.

It may be noted here that the above mines have failed to meet

their annual mineral transportation targets. 15 days ago, the mines department had issued notices to the errant mines to pay fines.

However, Sirajuddin mine did not attend the hearing. "After this hearing, these mines will be given time to deposit their fines," said the joint director of the Joda mining circle.

It is said the new companies have taken mines on lease at high prices, but they are unable to manage the mines for lack of experience. Hence, the state government failed to receive its targeted revenue. It had to incur revenue losses. The losses can be compensated with penalties on these mines, some mining experts said.

POOR INFRASTRUCTURE



Villagers planting paddy saplings on a PMGSY road in protest against its bad shape at Bayaguda village under Khairapat block in Malkangiri district OP PHOTO

Smart schools, but no teachers to run them

POST NEWS NETWORK

Shergad, Sept 2: As many as 27 smart high schools have been inaugurated by Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik in Shergad block of Ganjam district in five phases. Students in these schools will be taught through digital mode. But management of the smart classes has now come into question as there are no information technology teachers to look after the functioning of the smart classes.

According to reports, each school should have an IT teacher to facilitate digital classes. But IT teachers have not been appointed in these schools till date. The issue has become a cause of concern for the school authorities and the education committees. For the last 10 days, classes are being somehow managed. Teachers with working knowledge of computers are running the systems.

There is a need for trained teachers to look after the smart and digitized classrooms.

A few years ago, computer teachers had been engaged in some schools through a contractual agency to impart computer education. But those teachers were later disengaged. Computers worth lakhs of rupees are gathering dust in closed rooms.



There is a need for trained teachers to look after the smart and digitized classrooms

A few years ago, computer teachers were engaged in some schools through a contractual agency to impart computer education to students. But those teachers were later disengaged. Computers worth lakhs of rupees are gathering dust in closed rooms

Each school should have an IT teacher to facilitate digital classes. IT teachers have not been appointed in these schools. The issue has become a cause of concern for the school authorities and the education committees. For the last 10 days, classes are being somehow managed. Teachers with working knowledge of computers are running the systems

Headmasters of some schools on condition of anonymity observed that the schools had been transformed digitally, but there is a need for trained IT teachers to manage the systems.

Some headmasters did not express their opinion on the issue even though they have been facing hiccups in running the smart classrooms.

It is said that the school managing committees should take up the issue of IT teachers with the government. Some said, if IT teachers are not appointed in these

schools, managing the smart classroom will be too difficult.

Local guardians of Dhinkishala, Kulagad, Narendrapur, Pital, Baramundali, Bandharuguda, Karadakana and Kumarpani villages demanded the government take immediate step to appoint IT teachers to run the smart classrooms so that children can benefit. Block education officer, Bhaskar Lenka, said the government has been carrying out the appointment process to fill up the teacher posts. The smart classrooms will be run successfully, he asserted.

Man, daughter held for brown sugar trade

POST NEWS NETWORK

Rupsa, Sept 2: Basta police arrested a man and his daughter for drug peddling during patrolling at Haldipada under Sadar block in this district. Police seized 6.35 grams of brown sugar and ₹95,100 from their possession.

The accused were identified as Sheikh Jalal and his married daughter Saina Biwi of Singarpur village in this district. A case was registered in this connection and the accused were produced in court, Thursday

They were arrested when sub-inspectors Rajalakshmi Nayak and Prabhakar Sahu were on a patrolling duty in the area. They noticed Jalal and his daughter on the road and intercepted them doubting their movement. Jalal's son Sheikh Safiruddin managed to flee from the scene.

Police questioned them and on frisking 6.35 grams of brown sugar, ₹95,100 and two mobile phones were recovered from their possession. The seized brown sugar is worth ₹63,500 in the market, police said.

Crime Branch quizzes wife Bidyabharati Panda again

POST NEWS NETWORK

Kaptipada, Sept 2: A team of Odisha Crime Branch probing into alleged murder of Paralakhemundi assistant conservator of forests (ACF) Soumya Ranjan Mohapatra quizzed wife Bidyabharati Thursday

According to an official, the four-member team led by DSP Gyana Ranjan Mishra reached the ancestral house of Bidyabharati to quiz her in this connection at Kaptipada area of Balasore.

The team members questioned Bidyabharati on a series of issues pertaining to Soumya's alleged murder, including her post-marriage relationship with the ACF and his family members.

Besides, the investigating team also cross-checked the circumstantial evidences which were collected from the government resi-



dence at Paralakhemundi town of Gajapati district, where Soumya were found critically burnt in July 12 night. After the case was handed over to Crime Branch, the state probing agency has so far questioned 14 persons, including the key accused Gajapati DFO Sangram Keshari Behera, Gurandi IIC Mamata Panda, cook Manmath Kumbha and a gardener of the DFO. The Crime Branch officials

had quizzed Soumya's father Abhiram Mohaparta, mother Tulasi, maternal-uncle Sitikantha Panda and other members of the family in connection with the case, Wednesday. The team recorded statements while questioning the family members on Soumya's previous phone calls and Bidyabharati Panda's alleged relationship with Gajapati DFO, the ACF's father informed.

DUMPING YARD



Taladanda canal, the lifeline of farmers in Cuttack and Jagatsinghpur districts, is inching towards a slow death with weeds covering the water body and dumping of waste at Paradip OP PHOTO

Locals allege bid to suppress probe, demand action

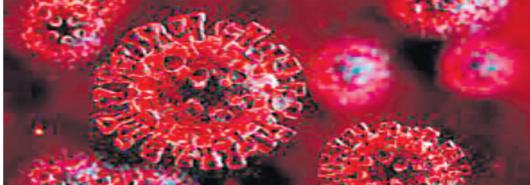
POST NEWS NETWORK

Keonjhar, Sept 2: Covid assistance funds and rations were allegedly misappropriated in Saharapada block of Keonjhar district.

According to reports, ₹1000 as Covid assistance was allocated in the names of 14 people each who died of the virus in Udayapur panchayat last year. Their aid has been embezzled. Rations lifted in their names have also been misappropriated. This was alleged by Udayapur sarpanch and locals.

As a civil supplies officer had distributed the Covid funds, he should be brought under investigation, they demanded.

MISAPPROPRIATION OF COVID AID



Reports said, the government had provided funds towards Covid assistance to 1365 beneficiaries in Udayapur panchayat last year. As per official records, 1360 beneficiaries were handed out assistance. In fact, 14 of the 1360 bene-

ficiaries had died of Covid.

The Covid assistance money of the 14 deceased had been embezzled while their rations had been misappropriated for months together.

Following such allegations, Saharapada BDO Lamdodar

Khuntia had carried out an investigation into the matter and claimed to have sent the report to Keonjhar sub-collector Ramchandra Kisku.

However, locals decried delay in action against those involved in the irregularities. They reminded the sub-collector about the delay.

As for the probe report, the sub-collector said he had not received it.

When he learnt about it, the sub-collector himself went to the block office and brought the report. He submitted it to the Collector for action, said sub-collector. Various quarters have sought to know why there was an effort to suppress the investigation report for months together.

Sarpanch Satyanarayan Nayak said he was busy for his responsibilities at quarantine centres during the Covid times. Civil supplies officials had withdrawn ₹13.65 lakh from a local bank towards Covid assistance. The sarpanch said ward members got to know of the irregularities and intimidated him about it. He complained about the scam at the block administration. He added that a committee from the block has investigated the matter. Locals have expressed unhappiness over the delay in taking action against those involved in the scam.

On the other hand, the BDO said that the investigation report has been given to the sub-collector.

Dengue spreads in Malkangiri; 46 hit

POST NEWS NETWORK

Malkangiri, Sept 2: While the third wave of Covid is likely to sweep the state in October, dengue has been spreading its tentacles in parts of Malkangiri district, a report said.

At the pandemic times, the spread of dengue has been a cause of concern for locals and the health department.

According to reports, about 46 people were affected by dengue in the district. Most of the dengue cases were reported from Sadar and Chittrakonda blocks.

Many of the patients are from outside the state. All are undergoing treatment at different hospitals in Malkangiri.

"As dengue cases are on the rise in the district, the health department is making special arrangements for the dengue patients at the district headquarters hospital," said Dr Prafulla Kumar Nanda, the chief district medical officer.

Various outfits demanded an awareness drive by the health department to contain the spread of the disease in rural pockets.

EAST COAST RAILWAY
RAILWAY ELECTRIFICATION, BHUBANESWAR

e-Tender Notice No. SNT_RE_BBS_2021_TW51, Date : 19.08.2021

NAME OF THE WORK: "ALTERATION / MODIFICATION TO EXISTING PANEL INTERLOCKING STATION IN CONNECTION WITH TOWER WAGON SIDING INCLUDING TRENCHING & LAYING OF UNDER GROUND SIGNALLING / POWER / TELECOM CABLES AND INDOOR & OUTDOOR SIGNALLING WORKS AT GUNUPUR STATION IN WALTARI DIVISION AND BHAWANIPATNA STATION IN SAMBALPUR DIVISION OF EAST COAST RAILWAY.

Advertised value : ₹ 40,61,737.56
Completion Period of the Work : 03 (Three) Months

Date & Time of Opening and Closing of Tender: At 1530 Hrs. of 20.09.2021.

No manual offers sent by Post/ Courier/ Fax or in person shall be accepted against such 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>

Note : The prospective tenderers are advised to revisit the website 15 (Fifteen) days before the date of closing of tender to note any changes / corrigenda issued for this tender.

Dy. Chief Signal & Telecom Engineer/RE/PR-55/CE/21-22
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THE MOTHER

Prosecuting Ecocide

As floods, wildfires, record-high temperatures, and zoonotic disease make the climate and ecological crisis impossible to ignore, the world may be moving closer to agreeing that serious damage to our natural environment is more than just a matter for goodwill agreements. It may amount to an international crime.

The last time a new international criminal offense was introduced was after World War II. The Nuremberg and Tokyo Charters added crimes against humanity to the existing war crimes and crimes against peace ("aggression"), enshrining the idea that certain acts are so egregious that, whoever the immediate victim may be, they concern us all. Soon after, in 1948, a particular crime against humanity - genocide - was incorporated in a new treaty.

We may be witnessing an equivalent moment in our relationship to the environment. Last month, a diverse independent panel of international lawyers issued the draft text defining the crime of "ecocide," to be proposed for inclusion in the Statute of the International Criminal Court (ICC). The parallels are clear: adopting ecocide as an international crime acknowledges that severe damage to our environment is a crime against all of us, and that we can no longer leave it to regulation by individual States.

The panel, convened by the Stop Ecocide Foundation, defined the crime as follows: unlawful or wanton acts committed with knowledge that there is a substantial likelihood of severe and either widespread or long-term damage to the environment being caused by those acts.

Two thresholds must be met for acts to constitute the crime. First, there must be a substantial likelihood that they will cause severe and either widespread or long-term damage to the environment. Severity is necessary in all circumstances, and the likely damage must be either widespread (extending beyond a limited area, crossing State boundaries, or affecting an entire ecosystem or large number of people), or long-term (irreversible or irremediable through natural recovery within a reasonable period of time). This would cover situations such as the toxic pollution of a population center - a large number of people, but a relatively limited geographical area - or the destruction of a marine ecosystem, which might be limited in size but permanently lost.

To meet the second threshold, the damage must be either "unlawful or wanton." Ideally, the environment would be adequately protected by national laws, and extreme violations would be international crimes.

"Unlawful" deals with those situations. But national legislation varies, and international environmental law contains few outright prohibitions. And some legally permitted acts that harm the environment are socially desirable: consider desperately needed housing, transport, or infrastructure projects. In such cases, international environmental law sets out principles - above all the principle of sustainable development - according to which States should behave. The term "wanton" in the ecocide definition serves an equivalent purpose, addressing legally permitted acts that are reckless, owing to the disproportionate level of likely harm.

To be recognised as an international crime alongside genocide, crimes against humanity, war crimes, and aggression, the crime of ecocide will need the support of at least two-thirds of ICC member States (currently there are 123 States in total). It will then become effective for any State that ratifies it. Individuals in positions of responsibility whose actions meet the definition will be subject to prosecution at the ICC, or by any national courts with jurisdiction, and sentenced to prison if convicted.

This is a major shift from the status quo, where criminal sanctions are lacking, at the international level and often at national level too, for many of the worst cases of mass environmental destruction. In most jurisdictions, individuals or corporations only face financial penalties.

Criminalising ecocide could have a stronger deterrent effect than the prospect of genocide or war crimes charges do, because it is largely a corporate offense. Because a company's value depends heavily on its reputation and investor confidence, managers would have much to lose by finding themselves in the same dock as a war criminal (the ICC prosecutes individual offenders rather than corporations). Even the risk of appearing to have committed an international crime may steer corporate decision-makers toward safer and more sustainable methods of operation. The hope is that the deterrent will take effect long before the law does, as the prospect of legislation becomes visible.

There are, of course, challenges to moving forward. The ICC is already navigating difficult waters, and it is clear from developments in France that domestic ecocide legislation can be problematic.

But broad international support for the crime of ecocide can and must be garnered. Governments - including those of Vanuatu, the Maldives, France, Belgium, Finland, Spain, Canada, and Luxembourg - are already expressing interest. And parliamentary motions or draft laws have been submitted in a number of countries, including Belgium, Portugal, Brazil, France, Bolivia, Bangladesh, the United Kingdom, and Chile. Countries must not wait for catastrophe to stop the international crime of our time.

Kate Mackintosh is Executive Director of the Promise Institute for Human Rights at the University of California, Los Angeles School of Law. Jojo Mehta, Co-Founder and Executive Director of Stop Ecocide International, is Chair of the Stop Ecocide Foundation.

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WISDOM CORNER

The first step toward success is taken when you refuse to be a captive of the environment in which you first find yourself. **MARK CAINE**

I really believe that everyone has a talent, ability, or skill that he can mine to support himself and to succeed in life. **DEAN KOONTZ**

Look up at the stars and not down at your feet. Try to make sense of what you see, and wonder about what makes the universe exist. Be curious. **STEPHEN HAWKING**

WORDSWORTH

Caffeinol

It's a medical mixture of caffeine and alcohol, which sounds like the refined essence of an Irish coffee, except that it is given to patients intravenously and not by mouth. It has been in the news because researchers at the University of Texas Medical School led by Professor James Grotta have announced that a study has shown that it helps to limit the effect of strokes on the brain in elderly patients. It's an interesting example of synergy, in which two compounds given together have an effect that neither has by itself. A full trial is needed to find the ideal mixture of caffeine and alcohol and study possible side-effects before it can be approved, but doctors are interested in it because there's no equivalent existing treatment.

LOL

I'm principal's daughter



Girl: I am the principal's daughter!
Boy: Do you know who I am?
Girl: No...
Boy: No...
Boy: Good! *Walks away*

SPORTS, HEALTH & RESERVATIONS

FOCUS RESERVATION

Acting on the Prime Minister's insistence, the Union government has decided that medical colleges across the country will now have 27 per cent reservation for the Other Backward Castes (OBC) and 10 per cent reservation for the Economically Weaker Sections (EWS). The idea of reservation is inclusive, which aims to incorporate the excluded sections of the society. I do not intend to question the purpose and efficacy of reservations. However, I would argue that the recent development hints at the anomaly of the system by contrasting two disparate sectors: sports and health.

Reservations were primarily introduced with a bid to uplift the socially excluded castes and to undo the effects of "the history of oppression". Reservation was synonymous with affirmative action. Dr Ambedkar was instrumental in safeguarding the interests of the weaker sections of the society. In fact, that was the need of the hour then to allow the weaker sections to gain access to opportunities of education and employment. Even after seven decades, reservation, which was initially adopted as a temporary measure, has not been withdrawn either partially or fully. In contrast, it has been bloated from time to time, largely riding on political and populist agendas. The Supreme Court in 1992 had set a limit to reservations at 50 per cent though different states have tinkered with the boundaries to allow leverage to regionally-deprived communities. In what follows, I will attempt a cross-sectoral contrast between sports and health vis-a-vis reservations and demonstrate the anomaly in the system therein.

Sports has been a common pastime in the country since Independence. People venerate and worship sports stars. Dhyan Chand, Milkha Singh, Sachin Tendulkar, PT Usha, Sania Mirza and Saina Nehwal are some notable poster-boys and poster-girls of inspiration. There are other glamorous sportspersons too who



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are adored and adorned as pin-ups. Despite the significance attributed to sports, let me put it clearly that sports do not amount to national duty. In the recently concluded Border-Gavaskar trophy, there was a hue and cry over Virat Kohli's decision to leave the series midway in order to attend the birth of his first child. While many commentators hailed his decision, some lambasted him for privileging his personal interests over professional duties. For the latter, sports was tantamount to national duty. Sadly, that is not the case. A nation obsessed with sports, mainly cricket, lives under the vague construct of national pride. Sports work as, what Louis Althusser calls, Ideological State Apparatuses in fomenting nationalism. Sports, if I put it curtly, is simply another mode of entertainment. It is, in other words, just another profession. Interestingly and fortu-

nately, sports has been insulated from reservations in India, unlike some other countries like South Africa. The only criterion for selection here is merit.

Health, on the other hand, goes beyond entertainment. It dwells on matters of life and death. To be honest, it is far more important than sports. We won't die in the absence of sportspersons. But we will obviously succumb to diseases and accident if there is a dearth of doctors. The horrendous display of COVID-19 is the latest example of the importance of health workers in the sustenance of life and activity. Sports is attached to the myth of national pride. Not more than that! Health is necessary for the existence of mankind. In scientific parlance, health is the core while sports is, at best, an auxiliary wing.

Health and sports, however, are not entirely alien to each other. Even sportspersons get ac-

cess to the best physiotherapists, who are preferably the best in the trade. In most cases, physiotherapists of the national teams are of foreign origin. They are chosen on the basis of merit. Even doctors attending the sportspersons are people who excel in their profession. Sportspersons are undoubtedly important. Nevertheless, the common citizens of the country are also important as far as access to better health facilities is concerned. In a country like India, the bulk of the population relies on public health centres for everything that goes between birth and death. It is not a matter of choice but circumstantial compulsion due to their economic status. The United Nations estimated that the number of poor in India was 364 million in 2019, or 28 per cent of the population. The pandemic has only worsened the situation and pushed a large chunk of population into poverty.

By enhancing reservation in the health sector, the edge of efficacy is blunted. In matters of healthcare, merit should be paramount. The concept of merit is itself ambiguous. The advocates of reservation speak of equitable distribution of resources which is ensured by reservations. Nevertheless, we ought to have the best hands for healthcare. Accommodating persons from weaker sections by compromising with merit in the name of affirmative action puts millions of lives at risk. That should never be the case. If sports is insulated from reservations, healthcare deserves the same treatment. Carl Jung rightly says, "Medicines cure diseases but only doctors can cure patients". For the sake of the country, let us strive for doctors who can cure patients in the best possible manner.

The author, who earlier worked with United Bank of India and Central University of Odisha, is currently a Senior Research Fellow at NISER, HBNI, Bhubaneswar. Views are personal.

SPECTRUM BANKING

Seven years of PMJDY

The 'Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana' (PMJDY) launched by the Central government on August 28, 2014 has completed seven years of successful implementation. In the first week of its implementation, the Department of Financial Services, Government of India, made a Guinness World Record by opening 18,096,130 bank accounts. During the last seven years the accounts have grown three-fold from 14.72 crore in March 2015 to 43.04 crore as on August 18, 2021. The deposits in the Jan Dhan accounts have also grown sharply from ₹22,901 crore in March 2014 to ₹1,46,230 crore in 2021.

These figures speak volumes about the success of the Jan Dhan Yojana which contributed significantly to the financial inclusion and inclusive growth in the country. Around 67 per cent of the Jan Dhan accounts are from rural areas of the country and 55 per cent are women. In Odisha, there are 1.76 crore beneficiaries of which 1.38 crore were issued RuPay cards. Around 79 per cent of the beneficiaries belong to the rural areas, whereas 21 per cent are in urban and metro areas. Nobody can deny the fact that unless and until the lowest strata of the society is given access to the finan-

cial services like banking and insurance, the country cannot develop. The Jan Dhan Yojana proved government's efficacy in reaching the unreached.

In the beginning, the scheme envisaged universal access to financial literacy and financial services like access to credit, insurance and pension with at least one basic banking account for every household. The basic features of the scheme are - no requirement to maintain any minimum balance in PMJDY accounts, interest is earned on the deposit in PMJDY accounts, RuPay debit card is provided to PMJDY account holder, accident insurance cover of ₹1 lakh is available with the RuPay card issued, overdraft (OD) facility up to ₹10,000 to eligible account holders and eligibility for Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT). Pradhan Mantri Jeevan Jyoti Bima Yojana (PMJJBY), Pradhan Mantri Suraksha Bima Yojana (PMSBY), Atal Pension Yojana (APY), Micro Units Development & Refinance Agency Bank (MUDRA) scheme.

The government launched the PMJDY 2.0 in 2018 with new features and enhanced the benefits. In PMJDY 2.0, the government shifted the focus from 'Every Household' to 'Every Unbanked Adult' and

free accidental insurance cover on RuPay cards doubled to ₹2 lakh for PMJDY accounts opened after August 28, 2018. At the same time overdraft (OD) limit was also doubled to ₹20,000 and the facility of overdraft up to ₹2,000 without conditions were introduced.

The programme has made a significant impact on the lives of the people of unbanked and unreach clusters who were brought into the folds of financial inclusion. Bank statistics say that the average balance in these accounts which is hovering around ₹3,000 to ₹3,500 is an indication of regular usage of the beneficiaries. The massive financial inclusion is visible and it is supported by the revelation of the Global Findex data base of the World Bank. As per the Index, the number of people above 15 years in the lower middle income group reached 80 per cent compared to 53 per cent in 2014.

Opening a bank account is not enough, but operation of the account is important. Until the beneficiary realises the need to keep the account active and utilises it prudently, the fruits of financial inclusion may not be available. In August, the Finance Ministry informed Rajya Sabha that 5.82 crore PMJDY accounts are inoperative, which is around 13 per cent of the

total beneficiaries. As per the guidelines of the RBI, an account is assumed to be inoperative or dormant if there are no transactions in the account for a period of two years.

However, the benefits of financial literacy can be achieved when the beneficiaries will have access to formal credit facilities. The pandemic exposed the difficulties one can face when there is no financial planning to meet the emergencies. Apart from that, it highlighted the usage of digital banking which is to be taken to the nook and corner of the country. As time and distance matters much to the people of the rural areas, digital banking will be of much help, provided network is available. Proper credit delivery models are to be found out to suit the beneficiaries. Appropriate data related to the income and expenditure of the Jan Dhan beneficiaries is collected to come out with the right strategy. Apart from financial inclusion, these steps will help the beneficiaries to attain financial empowerment.

The writer is the Head, Department of Commerce, Nowrangpur College, Nabarangpur, Odisha. Views are personal.



Dr Bhaskar Nath Biswal

IN THE FIRST WEEK OF PMJDY'S IMPLEMENTATION, THE DEPARTMENT OF FINANCIAL SERVICES, GOVERNMENT OF INDIA, MADE A GUINNESS WORLD RECORD BY OPENING 18,096,130 BANK ACCOUNTS

Reopening primary schools

Sir, The Odisha government is maintaining a stoic silent over reopening of primary schools in the state despite the fact that the ICMR as well as World Health Organisation has recommended reopening of the same. The outbreak of the Covid-19 has severely affected the education of the students over the last two years. Though an effort has been made to impart education through online mode, many students were unable to avail this facility owing to lack of smartphones and absence of Internet facilities in many areas. Now the ICMR and WHO have given their consent for reopening of schools. Besides, primary education cannot be properly imparted online. College students can attend online classes but song, dance and activity-based learning cannot be done in online mode. The state government should make necessary arrangements for primary students to safely attend physical classes. The government may adopt the odd-even method to avoid rush in schools. Opening schools only for three hours and making all students attend classes in a single batch cannot reduce rush in schools. Therefore, the government should change its strategy and allow the primary students to attend their classes physically.

Dillip Kumar Mishra, MRC, Bhubaneswar

Afghan children in peril

Sir, The USA left Afghanistan for its own interests, but it is responsible for the serious violations of the children's rights in that country. The UNICEF has said that around 10 million children across Afghanistan need humanitarian assistance to survive. An estimated one million children are projected to suffer from severe malnutrition and could die without treatment. In addition, an estimated 4.2 million children are out of school, including more than 2.2 million girls. Since January 2021, the UN has documented over 2,000 grave violations of children's rights. Approximately 435,000 children and women are internally displaced. Afghan children are in peril and they remain so regardless of the latest political developments and change in government. More than 550 children were killed and over 1,400 injured in 2021 alone. The US is reportedly responsible for this in Afghanistan. This is not new for America. In the 21st century, the United States has destroyed countries such as Cuba, Haiti, Iraq, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Israel, Somalia, the Bosnian War and the Kosovo War. By extending his dominance, the US has plundered the wealth of the country and established itself as an imperialist power.

Asit Mohanty, JAJPUR

Letters

TO THE EDITOR

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

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BANDH IN BIRMHARAJPUR



A bandh called by the Congress party was observed in Birmaharajpur demanding NAC status to the town in Sonepur district, Thursday

OP PHOTO

Farmers seek action against fert hoarding

POST NEWS NETWORK

Khaira, Sept 2: Farm activities are in full swing in Khaira block of Balasore district, but shortage of urea has affected farming, locals alleged.

They stated that despite raids by officials, some licensed outlets and dealers have resorted to massive hoarding and black marketing of urea. An artificial shortage of urea and gromore fertilizer is being created by some dealers who sell a packet of urea at double its normal price, they said.

Although despite deficit rainfall, farmers have managed to save the paddy, but black marketing of urea at this time has compounded their problem.

A packet of DAP is officially priced at ₹1200; urea at ₹266.50; gromore at ₹1450 and potash at ₹1000. "Dealers say urea is not supplied to them sufficiently. They sell a packet of DAP for ₹1600; urea



at ₹350 and gromore at ₹1700," they pointed out.

Black marketing of fertilizers has created discontent among farmers. Various farmer organizations demanded that the agriculture department and the administration take up step to rein in fertilizer black marketing

There are two wholesalers and 72 licensed retailers of fertilizers in Khaira block. It is alleged that 60 per cent of the licensed dealers sell fertilizers to other traders in rural areas while farmers are deprived of getting the fertilizers directly from dealers.

Squads carry out raids on godowns

BASUDEVPUR: Amid allegations of rampant black marketing of fertilisers, officials of the block and district level squads and the agriculture department carried out joint raids on fertilizer godowns and outlets in Basudevpur town and block area in Bhadrak Thursday.

An additional tehsildar, a block agriculture officer, a fertilizer inspector, a civil supplies officer carried out raid at Basudevpur, Edatal, Betada and Kamargaon. Another squad comprising sub-collector Pitambar Samal, fertilizer inspector Ritarani Sikh and district agriculture officer Jagannath Nanda raided a fertilizer shop at Gopalpur Chhkh.

Doc crunch cripples healthcare in Balasore

POST NEWS NETWORK

Balasore, Sept 2: Healthcare services are in tatters in Balasore district with over 159 posts of doctors lying vacant in various hospitals of the district, a report said.

This has sparked anger among denizens who visit the hospitals for healthcare services. It is apprehended that the simmering discontentment might give way to an agitation. Various outfits including Fakirmohan Medical College and Hospital (FMMCH) Action Committee have repeatedly demanded fulfillment of the posts. However, their pleas are yet to be addressed.

The establishment of the medical college and hospital in the town had led to development of big infrastructure and more equipment for the facility but shortage of adequate number of doctors and technicians has hit the healthcare services.

The number of patients visiting the hospital has increased manifold over time but the authorities have not taken care to fulfill the vacant posts. As a result, patients visiting the hospitals with serious ailments are referred to Cuttack and Bhubaneswar on a regular basis.

Reports said the district has 373 sanctioned doctor posts at various departments for the district headquarters hospital and 17 community health centres. Meanwhile, 214 doctor posts are working in the hospitals while 159 posts of doctors are lying vacant.

In this situation, healthcare services in the CHCs, district headquarters hospital and Fakirmohan Medical College and Hospital have been severely hit. The number of patients visiting the district headquarters hospital has increased after the establishment of a medical college and hospital in the town. The hospital unit of the FMMCH does not have its own wards and it operates from the district headquarters hospital. A new hospital building is being constructed at Remuna Golei.

Things have greatly improved in the DHH after the hospital unit of the FMMCH started operating from its premises. However, it is building up pressure on the DHH authorities to cater for the needs of its



patients due to shortage of doctors.

People with minor ailments and requiring simple surgery visit the district headquarters hospital but people requiring specialized medical care visit the FM Medical College and Hospital.

The hospital has 61 doctors out of 96 sanctioned posts while 35 posts are lying vacant.

Over 2,500 patients from various parts of the district and Mayurbhanj as well as West Bengal visit the outdoor of the district headquarters hospital. They get their health checked with the doctors and take medicines or undergo tests as per their advice.

Over 400 patients with debilitating condition are admitted to the indoor wards of the hospitals. While the hospital is struggling for want of doctors, the major issue here is that departments of cardiology, neurology, cancer and urology do not have doctors.

The absence of specialized doctors has hit healthcare services in the hospital as the doctors working here often refer the kin of the patients to take them to specialised hospitals in Cuttack and Bhubaneswar. An estimate says that 6,500 patients are referred to Cuttack and Bhubaneswar in a year.

Many of them without getting proper treatment visit the private nursing homes in the town and end up losing their hard earned money. The FM Medical College and Hospital which is in its fourth year was a dream come true for the locals due to longstanding demands of residents. However, it is struggling with doctor shortage. Various outfits have regularly voiced their demand over the shortage of doctors but their demands are yet to be fulfilled.

When contacted, Dr Dulalsen Jagdev, chief district medical officer said he has drawn the attention of the authorities on doctor shortage and hoped the problem would be resolved soon.

'60 acres enough for world class varsity'

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bolangir, Sept 2: Even as land shortage has come in the way of expansion of the Rajendra University in Bolangir, principal secretary of the higher education department Saswat Mishra visited the university Thursday. He said 60 acres is enough to make the varsity world class. He assured that the state government would provide funds if the central government fund is not available to this premier educational institution in western Odisha.

He interacted with Collector Chanchal Rana, Vice Chancellor Prof Umaballabh Mohapatra and other staff of the university.

Talking to reporters, he said the university has 40 to 45 acres of land under its possession while an additional 10/15 acres of land has been identified. The administration is in the process of registering the land in the name of the university. About 55/60 acres of land will be available for the university, he added.

"A master plan for the university's development has been drawn up. To make it a world class university, 60 acres of land is enough," he claimed.

Mishra also stated that a patch of 20 acres of land is behind the university which can be used as a playground. As for appointment of staff in the university, Mishra said OPSC will do the recruitment.

EXPANSION OF REJENDRA UNIVERSITY



By December, 80 to 90 posts out of a total of 126 posts in the university will be filled up, he added. "It is wrong to say that development of the university can't be carried out without central funds. The state government, the WODC and the DMF will provide fund the university. Over last three years, the state government has provided ₹1034 crore to state universities while the UGC has provided only ₹10 crore," he observed.

Notably, Rajendra University is one of the oldest educational institutions in western Odisha. But its development has been hampered by lack of land, teachers and

infrastructure.

According to reports, Rajendra College was upgraded into a university about a year ago. Despite efforts at all level, required land is not available for expansion of its infrastructure.

The University Grants Commission (UGC) has granted its recognition to the university under the UGC Act-1956. To avail of UGC grants, the university is required to meet some criteria mainly adequate teaching staff and land for infrastructure.

In fact, the university needs over 100 acres while the institution has only 45 acres under its occupation.

The university authorities had earlier intimated the Collector, the secretary of the higher education department and the additional secretary to the Governor about requirement of land for the university.

As there was no progress in this matter, the authorities again reminded them about the land. It was stated that the growth and development of the university is not feasible without the land.

Keeping the next 50 years in mind, development of the university has been envisaged. Encroached land can be reclaimed for use of the university, locals pointed out.

N'tnl Mill Manager award to JK Paper

POST NEWS NETWORK

Rayagada, Sept 2: Vinay Dwivedi, executive vice president (works) of JK Paper Mills at Jaykaypur in this district was presented with National Mill Manager-2020-21 award. This award has been presented to him at the World Quality Congress in Mumbai, August 27. Manufacturing units from all sectors across the country participated in the programme which was held in virtual mode.

National awards for excellence is a premium forum bringing elite market, brand custodian, advertisement, mill heads, and retailers together under one roof in the country. Top marketing professionals, agencies and consultants participated in the programme.

Dwivedi is a capable leader who ran the plant smoothly during the pandemic adhering to the Covid protocol and government guidelines.

JK Paper Mills continued with its production except for a few days when the industrial units in the whole country were shut because of the nationwide lockdown during the first wave of Covid-19. JK Paper Mill was the first industrial unit to resume production after the lockdown was lifted in the country. This was only possible due to efficient management and right mentorship. Dwivedi said product quality and learning are a never ending process. He has dedicated the award to the team of JK Paper Mills.

No let-up in feticide in Nayagarh, 5 held

POST NEWS NETWORK

Nayagarh, Sept 2: A private clinic in Nayagarh town was raided late Wednesday night for allegedly conducting illegal abortion of an expectant mother during her fourth month of pregnancy.

Police have arrested five persons in this connection.

Acting on a tip-off and subsequent directives of the District Collector Poma Tudu, a team comprising health officials, local tehsildar and police raided Anand Bhawan Aditya Hospital and Clinic.

According to an official, the pregnant woman was from Bahadajhola locality. She was earlier admitted to Nayagarh district headquarters hospital (DHH) located in close vicinity of the private clinic.

During ultrasonography conducted at another private clinic, the woman's family learnt that the fetus was suffering from rare Scaldal Displaci disease and might be a dwarf if born.

Upset with this, the family was desperate to abort the fetus.

A middleman negotiated with Aditya Hospital and Clinic authorities and the pregnant woman's family to facilitate the illegal abortion. Later, a deal of ₹13,000 was finalised for the purpose.

Town police arrested owner of the clinic Satyapriya Swain, middleman Rajkishore Sahu, female nurses Babita Rout and Sangita Mohanty, including the husband of



the pregnant woman Ganesh Pradhan.

Police have registered a case in this connection under Section 5

of Medical Termination of Pregnancy Act, 1971 and launched a probe. Aditya Hospital and Clinic was sealed following raid.

Fake currency seized, 3 held

POST NEWS NETWORK

Sambalpur, Sept 2: Police seized fake currency notes in Burla Thursday. According to police, counterfeit Indian currency of face value of ₹12,300 has been recovered from different places during a raid today, SP Battula Gangadhar said.

Three persons belonging to Barghar district have been arrested in this case. The police recovered 100, 200, 500 and 2000 denomination fake notes from their possession, apart from paper, rubber stamp, other incriminating material, two-wheelers and mobile phones. August 8, Town police busted a fake currency racket.

Bideshi's 'red tea' is as good as it gets

POST NEWS NETWORK

Keonjhar, Sept 2: With the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic, demand for red masala tea has increased manifold. Many tea stalls in Keonjhar town are now serving this tea to customers. But Bideshi Nayak's red tea is as good as it gets.

Bideshi's tea stall is located close to a cinema hall. At first look, his tea stall seems nondescript, but after a few sips, one will realise why the joint is so famous in this part of the town.

While enjoying the tea, one can feel the ingredients like black pepper, ginger and lemon juice that go into the making of this red masala tea.

Bideshi has loyal customers from different age groups and different strata of society. Even though the stall remains open from morn-



ing to evening, most customers visit the stall in morning and evening hours. Bideshi charges ₹5 for a cup of his red masala tea and the customers have no hesitancy paying the amount.

Bideshi, now 71 years old, has been running this stall for 50 years. Initially, he sold snacks and sweets. As he grew older, he stopped selling those items and started selling tea only.

"I no longer have the strength to prepare all those items. I am happy with my tea business. As per customers' demand, I prepare milk or red tea. There was a time when people looked down on red tea, terming it poor man's beverage. But after the outbreak of Covid pandemic, more people have been asking for red tea," observed Bideshi, adding that he would continue to serve the people till his last breath.

He resides in Gourtoha Sahi with his family - comprising his wife and himself. He had two sons but lost them long ago. While he is receiving old-age pension, his wife is yet to get this benefit. This is why he

has to run his tea stall even at this advancing age.

He says the stall is earning him money as well as some well wishers. People, some known faces and some unknown ones, visit his stall and he spends time gossiping with them.

"My customers also include people owning four-wheelers. If my shop is closed for some reason, they return unhappy," he added.

Jaykrushna Panda, a local journalist, says they have been noticing Bideshi working at the stall since their childhood days. "He has been very punctual. He keeps time even at this age. His amiable behaviour, honesty and hard working nature earn him customers. He is good at preparing sweets. Even today, if he gets orders for sweets, he prepares them and delivers them at the customers' door step," added Panda.

FARM WOES



Farmers staging protests demanding drought zone tag to Boudh district

Restive Kashmir under lockdown after burial of separatist leader

REUTERS
Srinagar, Sept 2: Veteran separatist politician of Kashmir Syed Ali Shah Geelani was laid to rest early Thursday in Srinagar, as authorities blanketed the region with troops and clamped down on communications to prevent protests. Geelani, 91, was buried in a graveyard near his home before dawn with only a few hundred people, including his family and neighbours, allowed to attend the funeral, a government official said. "There was heavy security at the funeral, including plain clothes policemen," the official said. Geelani, who died Wednesday, had been unwell for some time, his family said.



Security personnel stand guard during restrictions in Srinagar, Thursday PTI PHOTO

Among the most prominent political leaders in Kashmir, Geelani for years led an umbrella alliance of secessionists known as the Hurriyat Conference. But the group split in 2003, when hardliners led by Geelani, who advocated Kashmir's merger with Pakistan, walked out after moderates decided to hold talks with New Delhi. He was kept under house arrest more than a decade after leading several anti-India protests. Around Geelani's home and elsewhere in Srinagar, armed troops lined main roads and manned checkpoints, a Reuters witness said, as authorities sought to prevent protests in the wake of his passing. The city's main business area remained deserted, with most shops closed, and the movement of vehicles restricted, the witness said. The clamp down echoes restrictions that were imposed in August 2019 when Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi split Jammu and Kashmir - then the country's only Muslim majority state - into two federally-administered territories. The shock move was opposed within Kashmir, including by the likes of Geelani who quit his hard line Hurriyat Conference faction, saying that it had failed to counter New Delhi's efforts to tighten its grip on the disputed region.

Authorities also cut internet connections and mobile networks in the Kashmir valley since late Wednesday

where in Srinagar, armed troops lined main roads and manned checkpoints, a Reuters witness said, as authorities sought to prevent protests in the wake of his passing. The city's main business area remained deserted, with most shops

CBI nabs 'insider' for fake 'clean-chit' to Deshmukh

Rattled by the alleged leak, the CBI had issued two strong rebuttals on the issue, and quietly launched a probe into the matter which culminated in the nabbing of an 'inside hand' in the sordid episode



INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Mumbai, Sept 2: In a massive embarrassment, the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) said that it has raided and arrested its own sleuth for allegedly conniving to prepare a 'purported' clean-chit to former Maharashtra Home Minister Anil Deshmukh, here Thursday. The raids took place in New Delhi and Allahabad while the arrest took place early Thursday, hours after the CBI had swooped on Deshmukh's son-in-law Gaurav Chaturvedi and his Nagpur-based lawyer Anand Daga late Wednesday evening, from Worli in Mumbai. The Chaturvedi-Daga duo was detained and their statements recorded till the wee hours when the complicity of an inside hand, the CBI's own official -- a Sub-

Inspector Abhishek Tripathi - was also confirmed. The CBI said in a terse statement this morning that it has registered a case against its own SI, the Nagpur-based lawyer (Daga) and other unknown persons for certain allegations, including corruption. During the investigations of the said case, CBI has today arrested the SI (Tripathi), while the lawyer (Daga) is being questioned, the agency said, even as raids were carried out in New Delhi and Allahabad and his personal lockers in the CBI offices here. It may be recalled that last weekend, media and political circles were rocked by a report purportedly giving a 'clean-chit' given

to Deshmukh in the Bombay High Court-ordered preliminary enquiry (PE). Rattled by the alleged leak, the CBI had issued two strong rebuttals on the issue, and quietly launched a probe into the matter which culminated in the nabbing of an 'inside hand' in the sordid episode. The unsigned-undated-unattributed alleged PE report triggered a fresh political row with the Nationalist Congress Party and Congress demanding that the CBI should comment on the authenticity or otherwise of the report. As a fallout of the incident, the CBI picked up Chaturvedi and Daga Wednesday and early

Leaked CBI report genuine, says NCP

The Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) Thursday claimed that a leaked CBI report which purportedly gave a clean chit to former Maharashtra home minister Anil Deshmukh in a corruption case was genuine. The Central agency has now claimed that the report was leaked after a bribe was paid and it has registered a criminal case in this regard, NCP leader and Maharashtra minority affairs minister Nawab Malik told reporters here. But the Central Bureau of Investigation is not stating that the report itself was fake, he said. "To save its face, it is saying that the report had been managed," Malik alleged. "If the report is presented in the court, Anil Deshmukh will get reprieve. Whatever is happening is all politically motivated," he added.

Thursday, nabbed its own (CBI) sleuth for allegedly conniving with them to prepare the fake PE report. There has been speculation in some circles that Deshmukh, who's on the radar of the ED and CBI but has yet to respond to their multiple summons, may be in contact with his family members.

ELGAR CASE

Navlakha seeks medical check-up & house arrest instead of prison custody

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
Mumbai, Sept 2: Activist Gautam Navlakha, an accused in the Elgar Parishad-Maoist links case and currently lodged in Talaja prison, moved the Bombay High Court Thursday seeking that he be placed under house arrest as part of his judicial custody, owing to his advanced age and medical ailments. In his plea, Navlakha, 69, also sought that the HC direct authorities of the Talaja prison in neighbouring Navi Mumbai to get him medically examined for a lump developed in his chest. His counsels, Yug Chaudhry and Payoshi Roy, told a bench of Justices S S Shinde and N J Jamadar that Navlakha wished to be examined medically to rule out cancer. As per Navlakha's plea, he has spent one year and three months in prison. The HC will hear the plea further later in the day. The case relates to the Elgar Parishad conclave held in Maharashtra's Pune district December 31, 2017.

DUTY BEFORE SELF



People collect water supplied by BSF for the needy, near LOC in KG sector of Poonch, Thursday PTI PHOTO

PMLA CASE

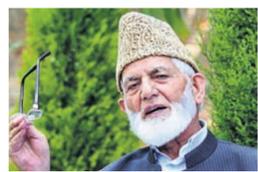
Bombay HC refuses to hear Anil's plea against ED summons

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE
Mumbai, Sept 2: The Bombay High Court Thursday refused to hear a petition filed by former Maharashtra Home Minister Anil Deshmukh seeking to quash the Enforcement Directorate (ED) summons issued against him, among other reliefs. When the matter first came up Thursday, Justice Revati Mohite-Dere recused herself from hearing the plea without assigning any reason, saying, "Not before me." The plea was filed on Wednesday by Deshmukh seeking to quash the ED summons for recording his statement, setting up an SIT comprising officers from outside of Mumbai Zone, record his statement in electronic mode, attendance through an authorised agent, and other reliefs as directions.

Geelani's end leaves a void in 'separatist movement'

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE
Srinagar, Sept 2: The death of hardline senior separatist leader Syed Ali Shah Geelani has left a void in the separatist camp that might not be easy to bridge in near future. Geelani had broken away from the Jamaat-e-Islami in 2008 when he formed his own political party called the Tehreek-e-Hurriyat. Ashraf Sehrai was his deputy in the Tehreek-e-Hurriyat and most supporters of Geelani looked upon Sehrai as his logical successor. Sehrai died of Covid infection while he was in prison May 5, 2021. His death left the question of Geelani's succession, as an icon of the separatist movement, wide open

with apparently no successor in sight. Geelani had senior colleagues and friends in the Jamaat, but after he broke away from them, the possibility of any senior leader of that organisation succeeding Geelani was over. Interestingly, when he broke away from the Jamaat, Geelani had taken away hardliners like him to Tehreek-e-Hurriyat, but none among them except Sehrai could claim succession. In 2003, Geelani split the All Party Hurriyat Conference into the hardline faction headed by him and the moderate faction headed by Mirwaiz Umer Farooq. Geelani worked with other separatists like Yasin Malik of the JKLF, Mirwaiz Umer Farooq of Awami Action Committee,

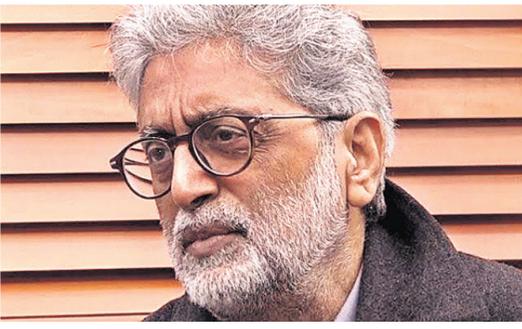


Professor Abdul Gani Bhat of the Muslim League, Molvi Abbas Ansari of J&K Itihaadul Muslimeen and Bilal Gani Lone of Peoples Conference during his association with All Party Hurriyat Conference. Yet, there is no denying the fact that he continued to live in total mistrust of his Hurriyat colleagues and vice versa. Among his two sons, Nayeem

Geelani is a doctor and Naseem Geelani is an assistant professor in the local agricultural university. Both of them have announced that they are not in the race to succeed their father in the separatist camp. These developments rule out the possibility of anyone in the present day separatist camp to succeed Geelani as an icon of separatism in Kashmir. Would his death further dampen the spirits of the separatists or would his death give another lease of life to the separatist sentiment in Kashmir? Time alone holds a firm answer to this question and yet there is no doubt that the kind of hawkish approach adopted by Geelani cannot be matched by any of his rivals in the separatist camp.



The ED has been probing an alleged money-laundering case against Deshmukh since April following a CBI FIR arising out of the corruption allegations levelled by former Mumbai police chief Param Bir Singh in March. The ED has till now issued five summons to Deshmukh, asking him to appear before it for questioning. However, Deshmukh skipped all the five summons, saying he would be seeking appropriate remedy available under law.



Fisherman nets ₹1.33cr fortune from Arabian Sea

The good fortune struck Tare when he resumed his fishing activity on his trawler 'Harbadevi' with 10 others, after the two-month-long monsoon ban ended August 15



BIG CATCH
 Tare, a resident of Murbhe coastal village, and his team set sail to Wadhwan, around 45 kms off Palghar shores, casting their nets with prayers and hopes for a good catch. Their prayers were answered a few days later when they pulled in the nets - and found the 157 'Ghols' (Protonibe Diacanthus) struggling to break

'Ghols' - also known as the sea gold - are in huge demand as a culinary delicacy and for their internal organs in south and south-east Asia

free from the tough nylon strings. Tare and his crew were stunned to find such a huge quantity of 'Ghols' - also known as the sea gold - since the fish is in huge demand as a culinary delicacy and for its internal organs in south and south-east Asia. Even before they touched shore this week, word of the mega-catch had spread like wildfire and many eager buyers had already queued up to net a bargain with Tare and his team. Finally, he sold it to a consortium of the highest bidders from Bihar and Uttar Pradesh - at ₹1.33 crore - considered the highest-ever price for 'Ghol' in the entire Konkani region. Coveted in Singapore, Malaysia, Indonesia, Thailand, Hong Kong and other countries, the 'Ghol' fish fins are said to have huge medicinal value, and are used by pharma companies to make soluble stitches,

and for wine purification, while its bladder cures kidney stones, and its heart boosts sex power and immunity, say locals. According to fisherman Jitendra Patil, in recent years, there has been a big drop in the fish population around the coastal areas owing to rampant marine pollution. We are forced to venture far into the Arabian Sea for a decent catch adding to the costs and time... We rarely net one or two 'Ghols', and once a fisherman had caught around a dozen in his nets. But, such a huge quantity (157) in a single catch is like God's blessing, said Patil. On his part, Tare gave a thanksgiving glance to the skies and said with the income he netted, all his financial problems - piled up during the two-year pandemic period - are resolved at one shot, even as he has become a hero among the fishing communities of the state.

GoC 9 corps receives 'Victory Flame' in Manali

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
Jammu, Sept 2: The victory flame, which symbolises 50 years of India's victory over Pakistan in the 1971 war, reached Manali Thursday. The victory flame was lit by Prime Minister Narendra Modi from the eternal flame of the National War Memorial in Delhi December 16, 2020 in memory of India's victory in the 1971 war and is traversing across the nation to observe the 50th anniversary of the victory. The Victory Flame, which is a part of Swarnim vijay varsh celebrations, was received by Lieutenant General PN Ananthanarayanan, said General Officer Commanding, Rising Star corps at north portal of Atal Tunnel at Rohtang, Jammu-based defence spokesman. Lieutenant General Bhupinder Singh Thakur (Retd), the senior



most veteran of the area, Brigadier Khushal Thakur (Retd), Chairman cum MD HP ESM corporation, Brig Sandeep S Sharda, Commander Pathankot sub area and DCs of Lahaul & Spiti and Kullu districts along with other dignitaries were also present during the solemn ceremony. The distinguished guests laid wreaths and rich tributes and homage paid by all veterans and serving soldiers to the valiant war heroes for their sacrifices, which led to the creation of Bangladesh in 1971 War, the spokesman said.

Palghar, Sept 2: This catch was beyond the wildest imagination of Palghar fisherman Chandrakant Tare - who pulled in a net-full of 157 'Ghol' (Croaker) fish, worth an astounding ₹1.33 crore! The good fortune struck Tare when he resumed his fishing activity on his trawler 'Harbadevi' with 10 others, after the two-month-long monsoon ban ended August 15.

national

of the day quote

Rajasthan has become the state with the lowest number of active cases in the entire country, with only 81 patients undergoing treatment. It is a matter of great happiness that no one has died due to the coronavirus in the state in the last one month

ASHOK GEHLOT | RAJASTHAN CHIEF MINISTER

It pains me deeply to see how apathetic the BJP government is and how anti-people their policies are! We have seen unprecedented hikes in petrol, diesel, cooking gas and cooking oil. This has taken a heavy toll on our people and their families. This is absolutely unacceptable and unpardonable

MAAMATA BANERJEE | WEST BENGAL CHIEF MINISTER

We are concerned about the Covid situation in Kerala. As many as 30,000 cases of Covid are being reported Wednesday. The numbers are not coming down and institutional quarantine for those coming from Kerala is being made mandatory in this backdrop

K. SUDHAKAR | KARNATAKA HEALTH MINISTER

SHORT TAKES

Flood situation improves in Assam

Guwahati: The flood situation in Assam improved marginally as the number of people affected by the deluge came down by nearly 1.55 lakh, though two more children died Thursday, a bulletin said. The number of people reeling under the natural calamity now is about 4.93 lakh while it was 6.48 lakh Wednesday, it said. According to the daily flood report of the Assam State Disaster Management Authority (ASDMA), one child each drowned in Chamaria of Kamrup and Mayong of Morigaon, taking the toll in the floods to five.

Chandan Mitra passes away

New Delhi: Veteran journalist and former Rajya Sabha MP Chandan Mitra died late Wednesday at his south Delhi residence after a long ailment. He was 65. Mitra, who did a stint in various newspapers, including the Times of India and the Hindustan Times, in his long career as a journalist before he became editor of The Pioneer, is survived by his wife Shobori Ganguly and two sons Kushan and Shakra. The death of the columnist and raconteur, known for his sharp views on politics and also his abiding love for old Hindi film music, was condoned by a host of political leaders across the spectrum as well as President Ram Nath Kovind and Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

Pak intruder held in Punjab

Chandigarh: The Border Security Force (BSF) Thursday foiled an infiltration bid by narcotic smugglers, and apprehended a Pakistani intruder, injured in its warning shots.

Minor gangraped

Banda (UP): A 14-year-old girl was allegedly gang raped at a village in the Girwan area here, police said Thursday. The incident took place August 26 when the girl was returning home. She was raped by three men, all aged around 22-23 years, Girwa Station House Officer (SHO) Arjun Singh said. An FIR was registered under relevant sections of the Indian Penal Code and provisions of the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act August 31 on a complaint from family members, he said.



Modi Government has clearly mishandled the economy. And, what this country has built over the last 70 years, is being given away to select few friends of Modi-ji

RAHUL GANDHI | CONGRESS LEADER

RARE ATLANTIC WALRUS TUSK SEIZED

For the first time in India, the tusk of a rare Atlantic walrus was seized, from a coastal village in Maharashtra's Ratnagiri district, officials said Thursday. Teams of wildlife sleuths have been formed to conduct a nationwide operation to track the gang behind the Atlantic walrus ivory tusk smuggling, their associates, the buyers, etc



SC concerned over fake and communal news



AGENCIES

New Delhi, Sept 2: The Supreme Court Thursday expressed deep concern over web portals, and YouTube channels publishing fake news, slandering reputations in the absence of a regulatory mechanism, and also broadcast of communal news by a section of media. The top court emphasized if this were to continue unchecked then it may get a bad name for the country. A bench headed by Chief Justice NV Ramana said: "On web portals, there is no control of anybody, they can publish anything... If you go to YouTube, you will find how fake news is freely circulated and anyone can start a channel on YouTube."

The bench also comprising Justices Surya Kant and A.S. Bopanna observed that the content shown in a section of private media bears a communal tone. "The problem is that everything in this country is shown with a communal angle by a section of the media..." noted Justice Ramana. He told Solicitor General Tushar Mehta, "Ultimately, this country is going to get a bad name. Have you made an attempt for a self-regulatory mechanism (for these private channels)?"

Mehta submitted before the bench that Centre has come out with new Information and Technology rules, which address concerns flagged by the top court. He added that many petitions have been filed challenging the new rules in various high courts.

Mehta contended that the Centre has filed a plea to transfer all these petitions to the Supreme Court. Mehta added: "Not only communal but also planted stories. These portals can even put fake news".

The Chief Justice added that the social media platforms do not respond if an issue is raised in

TWITTER'S 'SAFETY MODE'

MUMBAI: Finally, there is a ray of hope for those facing harassment on Twitter or are being continuously trolled. Twitter's newest test could provide some relief to them. Twitter is about to introduce a feature called 'Safety Mode'. It will be a temporary line of defence for those who are continuously abused. This mode can be enabled from the settings menu and it will act as a filter for abuse for a minimum of seven days.

connection with the content.

"I have not come across any public channel, Twitter, Facebook or YouTube... they never respond to us and there is no accountability, about the institutions they have written badly about, and they don't respond and say this is their right," said the Chief Justice. He further added this is the condition of institutions and forget the individuals.

Mehta replied, "This is what is taken care of under the IT rules". Chief justice added, "Do not know who to approach... they are only concerned with the people who are powerful... judges, common man, they are not bothered." He added, "This is what we have seen".

Mehta submitted before the bench requesting it to transfer the plea before it which deals with the IT rules. "Your lordship can have a holistic picture as it is an all-India issue", he added.

The top court made these sharp observations during the hearing of Jamiat Ulama-i-Hind petition seeking action against media reports accused of "communal branding of Covid" linked to the Tablighi Jamaat gathering at Markaz Nizamuddin in the national capital.

Concerns relating to terrorism primary focus: India

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Sept 2: India Thursday said its immediate focus relating to Afghanistan is to ensure that Afghan soil is not used for terrorist activities against it, two days after the Indian envoy to Qatar held talks with a top Taliban leader in Doha and conveyed similar concerns.

To a volley of questions at a media briefing on whether India was ready to recognise a Taliban regime in the backdrop of the Doha meeting, spokesperson in the

Ministry of External Affairs Arindam Bagchi said it is too early to talk about it.

"Let's treat the Doha meeting for what it is. It was just a meeting. I think these are very early days," he said. "We used the opportunity to convey our concerns whether it is in getting people out (from Afghanistan) or on the issue of terrorism. We received a positive response," he said.

Asked about India's engagement with the Taliban and whether it is not a terrorist organisation, Bagchi said: "That's not our focus. Our

AGENCIES

New Delhi, Sept 2: Mass gatherings should be discouraged but if attending it is essential then full vaccination should be a prerequisite, the Union government said Thursday and urged people to get the jobs and follow Covid-appropriate behaviour, especially during the festive season.

In a press conference, it warned the second wave of coronavirus infection in India was not yet over even though the weekly positivity rate was showing an overall declining trend.

Union Health Secretary Rajesh Bhushan said 39 districts in the country reported over 10 per cent weekly Covid positivity rate in the week ending August 31 while in 38 districts it was between 5 and 10 per cent.

He asserted that 16 per cent of India's adult population have received both the doses of Covid-19 vaccine while 54 per cent have been administered at least the first dose.

"In Sikkim, Dadra and Nagar Haveli, and Himachal Pradesh all the adult population have got at least one dose of Covid-19 vaccine," Bhushan said. In view of the upcoming festive season amid the

COVID CRISIS

Avoid mass events if not fully vaccinated: Govt



MANDATORY RT-PCR TEST FOR FLYERS ENTERING INDIA FROM 7 MORE COUNTRIES

Amid fear of new Covid-19 strains, RT-PCR test is compulsory for passengers arriving from seven more countries, including South Africa, Bangladesh and China, the Centre said Thursday. In a letter to all states and Union territories (UTs), the government said considering reports of new mutations in SARS-CoV-2 and rising number of Variants of Concern (VOCs) and Variants of Interest (VoIs) globally, seven countries have been added in the list of countries whose travellers will have to get another RT-PCR test done upon landing at Indian airports apart from the one they need to get before embarking on the flight. These seven countries are South Africa, Bangladesh, Botswana, China, Mauritius, New Zealand and Zimbabwe. In earlier guidelines issued in February, passengers from only the United Kingdom, Europe and the Middle East had to get the RT-PCR test done again upon landing at Indian airports.

scare of the third wave of Covid-19 infections striking the country, ICMR Director General Dr Balram Bhargava said mass gatherings

have to be discouraged and full vaccination should be a prerequisite if attending such a congregation is essential.

RISKY RIDE



People crossing the Ganga river on a boat with their belongings in Patna

UNI PHOTO

DELHI RIOTS

Can't lodge 5 FIRs in one case, says HC

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Sept 2: The Delhi High Court has held that police cannot lodge five FIRs for the same incident and quashed four of them registered for the alleged offences of looting and setting on fire a compound during the north-east Delhi riots last year.

There cannot be a second FIR and fresh investigation for the same cognisable offence, the high court said.

Five separate FIRs cannot be registered for the very same incident as it is contrary to the laws laid down by the Supreme Court, it said. While maintaining one FIR, the high court quashed the other four lodged against the same accused in March last year at Jaffrabad Police Station and all the proceedings emanating therefrom.

"It cannot be said that the incidents were separate or the offences are different. As stated earlier, a perusal of the charge sheets filed in the respective FIRs show that they are more or less identical and the accused are also same," Justice Subramonium Prasad said.

The court's order came while allowing four petitions filed by accused Atir, facing prosecution in five FIRs lodged by Delhi Police on complaints by different members of the same family that when they reached their home in Maujpur area on the evening of February 24, they saw their house was set ablaze which caused a loss of articles worth ₹7-10 lakh.

WHY DO YOUNG, FIT PEOPLE SUFFER HEART ATTACKS?

WHILE OBESITY, SEDENTARY LIFESTYLES, AND OLD AGE ARE TRADITIONALLY EXISTING REASONS FOR HEART AILMENTS, HEALTH EXPERTS SUGGEST INCREASED WORKOUTS, STRESS AND CURRENTLY COVID CAN ALSO ADD TO THE RISK

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE



New Delhi, Sept 2: The demise of television actor Sidharth Shukla, 40, due to a heart attack early this morning, has opened many questions on the health and lifestyle among young people.

"Generally cardiac issues are considered to be associated with obesity, old age or unhealthy lifestyle, but the fact is even a healthy young person apparently following a fitness regime can also suffer heart attack," Dr Anand Kumar Pandey, Director and Senior Consultant, Cardiology, Dharamshila Narayana Superspecialty Hospital said. "We can never have insight into a

person's lifestyle, which includes hectic schedule, stress - they also have so much to do with heart health," he added.

Stress plays a major role, the experts noted.

"The youth of India has adopted bad lifestyle habits to deal with the stress they are facing due to their high-pressure jobs and while ambition is good there is an urgent need for balance," Dr TS Kler, Chairman, Fortis Heart and Vascular Institute, Fortis Memorial Research Institute, Gurugram said. But can exercise, often touted as a preventive measure, also affect heart health? "While high levels of cholesterol may cause blockages in

arteries, going extremely beyond the capacity of the body for exercises or workout puts extra pressure on blood vessels, and the same condition may potentially result in cardiac attack," Pandey said. Further, the experts noted that young people no longer go for bi-annual or annual check ups and therefore, do not have an idea of what is going on in their body.

"Sometimes, you do not get warning signs. But one thing to notice is if you are getting breathless and having chest, arm, or jaw discomfort while exercising or physically exerting yourself," Kler said.

Moreover, Covid infection as well as its long-lasting effects are

also known to affect heart health. Abnormal antibody response may raise blood clot risk in Covid patients, resulting in heart attacks and strokes, according to a recent study published in the journal Blood.

"In prevailing times Covid infection may also aggravate the cardiac problems in a cardiac patient, even in post-Covid syndrome cardiac problems are majorly being seen. We need to broaden the perspectives about heart health," Pandey said. The experts added that genetic predisposition or family history is also a factor.

"If you have a family history of heart disease and are above the

age of 25... For example, if someone has a brother who passed away at the age of 35 due to a heart attack, it is imperative that they start going for regular check ups after they turn 25. The body changes and responds differently as we grow, and we need to ensure that we are aware of what is happening inside," Kler said.

However, this does not mean the conventional risk factors including diabetes, high blood pressure, high cholesterol, and smoking does not play a role.

The experts suggested regular health checkups after the age of 30 to detect and reduce risk factors.

international



There's no rush to recognition from the United States or any country we have spoken with around the world. It will be very dependent on their behaviour and whether they deliver on what the expectations are of the global community

JEN PSAKI | WHITE HOUSE PRESS SECRETARY, US

FRENCH KIDS BACK TO SCHOOL

Twelve million children in France went back to school Thursday for the new academic year, wearing face masks as part of rules. President Emmanuel Macron visited a primary school in the southern city of Marseille. He was greeted with a fist bump by children and teachers



of the day quote

If, God forbid, a war starts, the Belarusian army will be the first to engage in the fight, and the western group of Russia's armed forces will join quickly after to form a joint defense

ALEXANDER LUKASHENKO | PRESIDENT, BELARUS

China and the US have differences on some issues. In the meantime, we share common interests in a range of areas such as climate change

WANG WENBIN | FOREIGN MINISTRY SPOKESPERSON, CHINA

We will be closing the Chaman crossing for a while. Our forces are present at the border. We are proud of our security institutions for the service they are rendering for the security of the country

SHEIKH RASHID AHMED | INTERIOR MINISTER, PAKISTAN

'CHINA TRYING TO TAKE OVER AF AIR BASE, USE PAK AGAINST INDIA'

America's former envoy to UN Nikki Haley said Joe Biden has lost trust and confidence of US allies

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Washington, Sept 2: The US needs to closely watch China as it might try to take over the Bagram air force base in Afghanistan following the Taliban's takeover of the war-torn country and use Pakistan to get stronger to go against India, a former senior American diplomat has warned.

America's former envoy to the United Nations Nikki Haley said President Joe Biden has lost the trust and confidence of American allies after his hasty decision to withdraw troops from Afghanistan. She said there are many challenges in front of the US.

"We need to watch China because I think you are going to see China make a move for Bagram Air Force Base. I think they are also making a move in Afghanistan and trying to use Pakistan to get stronger to go against India. So, we have got a lot of issues," she said.

"The biggest thing he (Biden) should do is strengthen our allies, strengthen those relationships, modernise our military, and make sure we are prepared for the cyber-



We need to make sure that we are going on an anti-terrorist effort across the world because we are now going to see - with this moral victory that the jihadists have, you are going to see a heavy recruitment campaign around the world. You are going to see more lone wolf situations

NIKKI HALEY | AMERICA'S FORMER ENVOY TO UN

crimes and the terrorist crimes that are headed our way," she said in response to a question.

Ms Haley slammed Joe Biden for his disastrous withdrawal of US forces from Afghanistan.

"By the end of that speech that President Biden gave, it was the beginning of the lame-duck presidency for Joe Biden," she said.

Joe Biden, she alleged, has lost the trust and confidence of the American people. "If you look at the fact that the jihadists are celebrating in the streets because America has run out of town - and they left them with billions of dollars' worth of equipment and ammunition as a housewarming present," she said.

SHORT TAKES

S Korea making powerful missiles

Seoul: South Korea is in the final stages of developing a ballistic missile that can carry a warhead of up to 3 tons, Yonhap news agency reported Thursday, as the country unveiled budget proposals aimed at bolstering its defences against North Korea. In its defence blueprint for 2022-2026, the defence ministry said it would develop new missiles "with significantly enhanced destructive power," upgrade missile defence systems and deploy new interceptors against long-range artillery.

1st electric train line in Egypt

Cairo: Egypt has signed a contract to establish the first line of the electric express train in the country, which will link the Red Sea and the Mediterranean Sea, according to a government statement. Prime Minister Mostafa Madbouly attended the signing ceremony of the contract on the line from Ain Sokhna to Matrouh Wednesday, reports Xinhua news agency. "The 660-km-long line will be designed and implemented with maintenance operations for 15 years valued at \$4.45 billion," the statement added.

Irish watchdog fines WhatsApp

London: Ireland's privacy watchdog has fined WhatsApp a record 225 million euros (\$267 million) after an investigation found it breached stringent European Union data protection rules on transparency about sharing people's data with other Facebook companies. The Data Protection Commission said Thursday that it was also ordering WhatsApp to take "remedial actions" so that its data processing complies with the EU rules. WhatsApp said the fine was out of proportion and it would appeal the decision.

Rebels surrender in Syria's Daraa

Damascus: A new deal to defuse the tension in Syria's Daraa province has come into force, starting with a number of armed rebels surrendering to the authorities, according to state news agency SANA. A number of armed men from the Daraa al-Balad area started a reconciliation process with the Syrian authorities Wednesday, handing over their weapons as part of a new Russian-mediated deal to end months-long tension in that province.

GOODWILL GESTURE



Chinese Ambassador to South Korea Xing Haiming, right, bows in front of caskets containing the remains of Chinese soldiers with Chinese national flags during the handing over ceremony at the Incheon International Airport in Incheon, South Korea

PTI PHOTO

NGO to fund studies of fallen Indian soldiers' kids in Canada

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Toronto, Sept 2: An Indo-Canadian non-profit will sponsor the children of fallen Indian soldiers for study in Canada.

The Toronto-based Canada-India Foundation (CIF) raised over C\$100,000 for this purpose at its Charity Golf Tournament here last week. This golf tournament is our new initiative to support the families of fallen Indian soldiers.

We will support the children of these families to get higher education in Canada as well as India.

We will pay all their expenses, said CIF chairman Satish Thakkar.

The Foundation had donated C\$40,000 last year to the families of the Indian soldiers killed in the Galwan Valley clash with China's PLA.

Those children who come to Canada will be paid their expenses during the first year because international students are allowed to earn for themselves from their second year, he said.

Indian High Commissioner Ajay Bisaria, who also participated in the tournament, said The CIF's initiative to help the families of the fallen soldiers is commendable.

US, Ukraine sign key defence, security deal

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Washington, Sept 2: The US and Ukraine have signed a Strategic Defence Framework agreement, which is set to define a new stage of bilateral cooperation in the field of defence and security.

The deal inked Wednesday during the visit of Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky to Washington creates conditions for a significant strengthening of bilateral cooperation in defense and provides international legal support from the US for the sovereignty, territorial integrity and independence of Ukraine, Xinhua news agency reported.

During Zelensky's visit, Kiev



and Washington also signed a series of agreements on scientific and technical cooperation, space flight security, information protection and border security.

At the beginning of their meeting Wednesday in the Oval Office, Biden said the US remains firmly committed to Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity in the face

The agreement also helps accelerate Ukraine's entry into the North Atlantic Treaty Organization

of Russian aggression and our support for Ukraine's Euro-Atlantic aspirations.

He announced an additional \$60 million in security assistance to Ukraine, and the creation of a new strategic defence framework as well as an energy and climate dialogue. The visit came at a time of growing concerns in Kiev about

its relations with Washington.

Before the visit, Zelensky expressed his frustration with Western allies' hesitancy to greenlight Ukraine's accession to NATO in an interview with The Washington Post and other media outlets.

The Kremlin said Thursday that US military assistance to Ukraine could make Kyiv behave unpredictably and dangerously in the conflict in its east, and expressed regret at a US-Ukrainian friendship it said was motivated by opposition to Russia. Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov raised concerns about plans for US military aid in comments to reporters in the city of Vladivostok in Russia's far east.

China bans reality talent shows

SHOWBIZ CRACKDOWN

AGENCE-FRANCE-PRESSE

Beijing, Sept 2: China banned reality talent programmes Thursday and ordered broadcasters to promote more masculine representations of men, in a wide-ranging crackdown on "immoral" pop culture Beijing believes is leading young people astray.

Talent shows that put hundreds of aspiring young performers through rigorous boot camps and subject them to public votes have become massively popular in China, sparking criticism over obsessive fans and poor role models.

"Broadcast and TV institutions must not screen idol development programmes or variety shows and reality shows," China's broadcast regulator, the National Radio and Television Administration said, in a raft of new regulations.

The regulator ordered broadcasters to resist "abnormal aesthetics" such as "sissy" men, "vulgar influencers", stars' inflated pay



and performers with "lapsed morals".

Faced with falling birth rates, Chinese authorities have tried to instill traditional masculine values in the country's youth by ramping up gym classes and criticising male entertainers who model the effeminate looks of Korean pop idols.

Instead, broadcasters were urged to "strongly promote outstanding traditional Chinese culture... and advanced socialist culture."

Video streaming site iQiyi last week said it would cancel all future idol talent shows that are in de-

velopment.

Authorities began a wide-ranging crackdown on dodgy financial practices and "immoral" conduct in the entertainment sector after numerous scandals implicated some of the nation's biggest entertainers in recent months.

Beijing TV regulators abruptly took the massively popular idol talent show "Youth With You 3" off air in May, after fans resorted to buying and dumping massive quantities of yoghurt to vote for their favourite contestants.

Princess rejects \$1.2M payout before marrying commoner

JAPAN'S IMPERIAL SUCCESSION RULES MEAN THAT 29-YEAR-OLD MAKO WILL LOSE HER TITLE AFTER MARRIAGE TO A COMMONER

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

Tokyo, Sept 2: The course of true love never did run smooth, but after public controversy and a wedding delay Japan's Princess Mako is reportedly set to tie the knot and move to America.

The daughter of Japan's crown prince and niece of Emperor Naruhito has endured years of sniping and stalling over her plans to marry sweetheart Kei Komuro.

The pair have now decided to wed without some traditional ceremonies and reject a payout that usually goes to female royals marrying out of the royal family.

Komuro has still been heavily scrutinised over allegations that his mother borrowed money from a former fiancé and failed to repay it. After tabloid reporting on the claims, a furor erupted around the young couple in a country where the royal family is held to an exacting standard.

The pair postponed their wedding, and Komuro moved to the US for law school in a move that was widely seen as a bid to defuse the negative attention.

Crown Prince Akishino last year said that he supported his daughter's marriage, but that she needed to win the public's "understanding".



But she has apparently decided to get around the issue by marrying without the usual ritual cere-

monies that accompany a royal wedding, and declining a lump sum payment given to female roy-

als who marry commoners.

The size of the payment is unknown, though reports put it at 137 million yen (\$1.2 million) or more.

She is also said to be planning to move to the United States after her wedding, drawing inevitable comparisons with another controversial royal couple: Britain's Prince Harry and Megan Markle.

Mako is sister to Prince Hisahito, 14, currently the only eligible male heir to the throne other than his father as Japan's Chrysanthemum Throne can pass only to male members of the family, and the children of female royals who marry

commoners are not included.

There has been no official confirmation of Princess Mako's plans, but reports have topped news bulletins and sparked a social media frenzy.

Opinion online was split, with some insisting it was still "too early" for the marriage to go ahead. "I think there are very few Japanese who can celebrate this marriage from the bottom of their heart. I'm so worried about Princess Mako," wrote one Japanese Twitter user. But others lauded the pair's determination, with the Mainichi Shimbun saying their "strong will bore fruit".

of the day quote

The fourth industrial revolution has created an excellent opportunity for International Organisation of Supreme Audit Institutions (INTOSAI) Working Group on IT Audit (WGITA) to equip its members with practical knowledge and work procedures for addressing the emerging IT risks

Our government is soon going to launch the national master plan of (the) PM - the GatiShakti scheme of more than ₹100L cr for holistic and integrated infra development in India. The master plan will provide the framework for the NIP programme and is aimed at making Indian products more competitive

We have never been in a hurry to get to an IPO. I think this company is in a sector, we are already regulated heavily, and are getting deeper into financial services. So I think it's a foregone conclusion that the right answer for PhonePe someday is to become a public listed company

SHORT TAKES

ICC, Oz delegation hold biz talk

Bhubaneswar: Indian Chamber of Commerce (ICC), Odisha organised an interactive session with a high-level Australian delegation led by Australian High Commissioner to India Barry O'Farrell AO at a city hotel. Both team discussed on possible collaboration opportunities in field of technology, mines and minerals, carbon footprint reduction, tourism, sports, student exchange programme, logistics and supply chain management.

Nestle India ties up with Jio

New Delhi: FMCG major Nestle India Thursday said it has partnered with Reliance Jio for its campaign to encourage people to mask up and follow Covid-19-appropriate behaviour. The company has launched its 'Face of Hope' initiative, under which the packaging of Nestlé India's popular products will be shown "masked up", and aims to "reach and encourage over 250 million people" via its packs and the digital campaign, the company said in a statement.

Exim Bank extends LOC

Mumbai: Export-Import Bank of India Thursday said it has extended USD 40 million worth of line of credit (LOC) to Maldives government to provide finance for the development of sports infra. With this, Exim Bank till date has extended five LOCs to Maldives, on behalf of the Indian government, taking the total value of LOCs to USD 1.33 billion. Projects covered under these LOCs to Maldives include housing project, international cricket stadium and road construction to name a few.

NBCC signs pact with CSDCI

New Delhi: State-owned NBCC Ltd has signed a pact with Construction Skill Development Council of India (CSDCI) to conduct skill learning programmes at project sites. In a statement, NBCC said it has signed a MoU with the CSDCI August 27. NBCC Executive Director (HRM) Manas Kaviraj and CSDCI CEO Narendra Deshpande signed the pact on behalf of their respective organisations.



Since the farmers are small and marginal, the future of our domestic coconut industry lies in our ability to aggregate and pool farm level coconut production, take up processing and value addition for better income realisation and give major thrust to product diversification

SHOBHA KARANDLAJE | MOS FOR AGRICULTURE

'NO PRODUCTION DAYS' FOR M&M

Auto major M&M will observe seven 'No Production Days' in September due to the supply shortage of semiconductors. The company said that its automotive division continues to face shortage of semiconductor supply, "which has got further accentuated due to the Covid-induced lockdowns in some parts of the world"



FUEL PRICE HIKE

Oil Cos strengthen profits as consumers suffer

According to a research report from ICICI Securities, oil marketing companies are expected to strengthen their earnings in July-September quarter of FY22 on the back of rising marketing margin and improved gross refining margin

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, Sept 2: The oil price rise may have hit the fuel consumers hard, but it is the oil companies that have made the most from the current situation, strengthening their margin on the sale of petrol and diesel and jacking up profits.

At the current prevailing high fuel price levels in the country, the marketing margin taken by the oil marketing companies (OMCs) on retail sale of petrol and diesel has touched a high of around ₹3 per litre.

What this means is that while rising fuel prices earlier burned a bigger hole in the consumers' pockets, the OMCs have increased their



earnings and are getting a lift in the current difficult environment created by the Covid-19 pandemic.

According to a research report from ICICI Securities, oil marketing

companies are expected to strengthen their earnings in July-September quarter of FY22 on the back of rising marketing margin and improved gross refining margin.

The brokerage said that auto fuel net marketing margin has surged to ₹3.08 per litre in Q2FY22-till date from ₹1.43 per litre in Q1FY22 on hefty price hikes and international price fall. Net margin is at ₹2.06 a litre in FY22-TD, at ₹4.42 per litre at latest domestic and international prices, and on track to be in line with, or even higher, than our estimate of ₹2.5 a litre in FY22E, the brokerage said.

The margins for oil companies have risen as diesel and petrol prices were hiked by ₹9.3-11.4 per litre respectively since May 3. The fall in international prices from peak also boosted auto fuel net marketing margin that rose above ₹3 per litre in Q2 of FY22 till date.

ICICI Securities report said though petrol and diesel prices have been cut by ₹0.50-1.25 per litre since August 18, still companies net margin is on track to be in line with or even higher than estimated ₹2.5 per litre.

For all the OMCs, the gain is coming in wake of regular revision of retail price of petrol and diesel since the beginning of the financial year. Since then, the pump price of petrol had increased on 41 occasions. This as per analysts may have hurt fuel consumers but has pushed up marketing margins for OMCs back to about ₹3 a litre. This means companies are gaining from the rise more than expected

AM/NS commissions Paradip's 6MTPA pellet plant-II



POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Sept 2: ArcelorMittal Nippon Steel India (AM/NS India) announced the commissioning of a second pellet plant, with having 6 million tonne per annum (MTPA) capacity, in Paradip.

The pellet plant-II will boost production capacity to 12 million tonnes (double) at company's Paradip complex. With this plant, it will make the largest single-location pelletization complex in India and taking AM/NS India's national pelletization capacity to 20 MTPA.

AM/NS India CEO Dilip Oommen said, "The commissioning of our second pellet plant at Paradip is an important milestone for AM/NS India, allowing us to contribute meaningfully to India's aim of achieving domestic steel production capacity of 300 MT in the coming decade. Our ability to make the plant operational despite the challenges of the past 18 months is a testament to the commitment of our teams at Paradip and across the country."

India, UK sign up to new climate finance initiative



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

London, Sept 2: The Indian and UK governments Thursday agreed a new tie-up to finance inclusive, resilient and sustainable infrastructure in India by harnessing public and private capital to meet the country's low-carbon goals.

Climate Finance Leadership Initiative (CFLI) India initiative, which is backed by the City of London Corporation and led by Bloomberg's CFLI, was announced at the 11th UK-India Economic and Financial Dialogue held via video conference between finance minister Nirmala Sitharaman and her British counterpart Rishi Sunak. "Supporting India's green growth is a shared priority so I'm pleased that we've announced a USD 1.2 billion investment package, and launched the new CFLI India partnership, to boost investment in sustainable projects in India as the UK gears up to host COP26," said Sunak.

"We expect that the platform would be able to mobilise private capital, at scale, into climate and environment sectors, particularly green and resilient infrastructure," noted Sitharaman.

The aim of the CFLI India project is to drive capital into India through public, private, and multilateral initiatives to help the country meet its 2015 Paris Agreement commitments, which include a pledge to reduce emissions intensity of GDP by 33-35 per cent by 2030.

"The Climate Finance Leadership Initiative is working to eliminate barriers to investment and create market conditions to drive more capital to green projects

MEETING LOW CARBON GOALS

The Climate Finance Leadership Initiative (CFLI) India initiative was announced at the 11th UK-India Economic and Financial Dialogue held via video conference between FM Sitharaman and her British counterpart Rishi Sunak

The aim of the CFLI India project is to drive capital into India through public, private, and multilateral initiatives to help the country meet its 2015 Paris Agreement commitments

— and this collaboration between India and the UK, two of the world's largest and most dynamic economies, can create a model for countries around the world to learn from," said CFLI Chair Michael R Bloomberg, UN Special Envoy on Climate Ambition and Solutions.

The City of London Corporation, the governing body of the financial hub of the UK capital known as the Square Mile, said it will support the initiative by providing a secretariat from London and the organisation's long-standing representative office in Mumbai.

"CFLI India is a genuinely new approach to mobilising capital at the scale and pace demanded by the global transition to net zero," said William Russell, the Lord Mayor of the City of London.

"In order to raise the trillions of dollars of investment needed, we must connect London's innovation and talent together with India's dynamism and industry. Together we can cut emissions and fight back against climate change," he said.

Apple hit with antitrust challenge in India: Report

REUTERS

New Delhi, Sept 2: Apple Inc is facing an antitrust challenge in India for allegedly abusing its dominant position in the apps market by forcing developers to use its proprietary in-app purchase system, according to a source and documents seen by Reuters.

The allegations are similar to a case Apple faces in the European Union, where regulators last year started an investigation into Apple's imposition of an in-app fee of 30% for distribution of paid digital content and other restrictions. The case was filed by a little-known, non-profit group which argues Apple's fee of up to 30% hurts competition by raising costs for app developers and customers, while also acting as a barrier to market entry.

"The existence of the 30% commission means that some app developers will never make it to the market... This could also result in consumer harm," said the filing, which has been seen by Reuters.

Unlike Indian court cases, filings and details of cases reviewed by the Competition Commission of India (CCI) are not made public. Apple and the CCI did not respond to a request for comment.



The allegations are similar to a case Apple faces in the EU, where regulators last year started an investigation into Apple's imposition of an in-app fee of 30% for distribution of paid digital content and other restrictions

In the coming weeks, the CCI will review the case and could order its investigations arm to conduct a wider probe, or dismiss it altogether if it finds no merit in it, said a source familiar with the matter. "There are high chances that an investigation can be ordered, also because the EU has been probing this," said the person, who declined

Foundation stone of MCL's FMC project laid

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Sept 2: Chairman of Coal India Limited (CIL) Pramod Agrawal laid the foundation stone of ₹285.05 crore first mile connectivity (FMC) project— Lajkura SILO, which would add 15 million tonne per annum despatch capacity to the Mahanadi Coalfields Limited (MCL). The Chairman, who has arrived on a two-day visit to Ib Valley coalfields of MCL, laid the foundation stone of Lajkura SILO, under Ib Valley Area.

Agrawal inspected mining operations at Lakhampur OCP (21 MTY), Belpahar OCP (9 MTY), Lajkura OCP (4.5 MTY) and Samleshwari OCP (15 MTY) and interacted with field managers. Motivating field teams, the Chairman also rewarded



the best performers in projects. The Chairman also commissioned four 100 tonne dumpers and one mobile water sprinkler at Samleshwari OCP. In a first in Coal India, CIL Chairman inaugurated the new Remotely Piloted Aircraft System (RPAS) at MCL and inspected mining operations at

Lingaraj OCP and Bhubaneswari OCP in Talcher coalfields.

Designed by the MCL's Innovation Cell and the Department of E&T, the portal named Vihangam for remote monitoring was created by a Mumbai-based start-up of drone manufacturing, robotics, and automation.

This innovative initiative, which will enable the company to access real-time video through the internet, will pave the way for other allied potential use-cases of drones in mines.

Carrying forward the vision of Sustainable Mining, MCL is implementing nine FMC projects to provide pollution-free state-of-the-art rake loading system at a total capital expenditure of ₹3,600 crore. This will also generate a despatch capacity of 126 million tonne per year, expected to be achieved by year 2024.

MCL was the first coal company to introduce environment-friendly Surface Mining technology in 1999. The biggest fleet of 66 surface miners is contributing 95% to the total coal production of the company.

'Cumbersome regulations forcing startups to leave India'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, Sept 2: India added three 'unicorns' per month in 2021 to nearly double the overall number of startups valued at over USD 1 billion to 51 as of end-August, a report said Thursday. Even as, cumbersome regulations are forcing startups to leave India and settle in other countries where they enjoy better treatment, as per the Hurun India, which prepared the list.

It can be noted that over the last few years, dedicated efforts have been undertaken to hone the startups ecosystem by the government through flagship initiatives like 'Startup India'.

Hurun said the number of gazelles, which are valued over USD 500 million can turn unicorn

Some of the best enterprise SaaS companies are born in India but flipped to the USA. This is a lost opportunity for India and it is important that these start-ups are incentivised to stay back in the country

ANAS RAHMAN JUNAID | MD AND CHIEF RESEARCHER AT HURUN INDIA

in two years, was pegged at 32, while there are 54 cheetahs commanding a tag of over USD 200 million, who can achieve the coveted status in four years, as per the



Hurun India Future Unicorn list. The future unicorns are valued at USD 36 billion, it said, adding that the leap to being a unicorn can also happen swiftly, as seen in five 'cheetahs' which directly jumped into the unicorn club during the last eight months.

Anas Rahman Junaid, managing director and chief researcher at Hurun India, said preparing the list of such companies which get private placements was a difficult task and added that inputs have been taken from venture capital funds. "India is home to more than 600

million internet users and is expected to have 900 million users by 2025. The adoption of the internet in rural areas will further complement the rise of technology startups. Fintech companies operating in mobile payments, insurance, blockchain, stock trading and digital lending will grow further to capitalise the internet penetration," he said.

At present, India is the third in the list of countries having the most unicorns, trailing the US (396) and China (277), but ahead of UK (32) and Germany (18), it said.

Rahman, however, hinted that the number could have been higher in India because some startups have left the country after achieving a certain scale for better regulations and capital availability.

"Some of the best enterprise SaaS (software as a service) companies are born in India but 'flipped' to the USA. This is a lost opportunity for India and it is important that these start-ups are incentivised to stay back in the country," he said.

Among the future Unicorns, e-commerce player Zilingo leads the list, followed by Mobile Premier League and Rebel Foods.

At a time when debates rage over the importance of pedigree, the list said IITs and IIMs are the biggest bases to churn out successful entrepreneurs, while IIM-Ahmedabad was the favourite post-graduation school with 13 founders in the list.

Bangalore is home to 31 startups in the list, followed by Delhi NCR at 18 and Mumbai trails with 13.

Pramod sails into semis

SHUTTLERS SUHAS, KRISHNA AND TARUN ALSO WIN; MIXED DAY FOR KOHLI AT TOKYO PARALYMPICS

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Tokyo, Sept 2: World No.1 Pramod Bhagat sailed into the men's singles semifinals after beating Ukraine's Oleksandr Chyrkov in his second group A match of the Tokyo Paralympics badminton event here Thursday as the country's shuttlers expectedly produced strong performances.

The 33-year-old Bhagat, also a reigning world champion, saw off Chyrkov 21-12, 21-9 in 26 minutes to top his group and enter the last four in class SL3.

"I was in the groove today and played really well. Oleksandr Chyrkov is a good player and played some good strokes in the match. I am very happy that I have reached the semifinals," Bhagat said.

"Things are going to be tough from here as the knock out stages start. My focus is on one match at a time and also the last league game of the mixed doubles which is a do-or-die situation for us."

Bhagat and Palak Kohli will play Siripong Teamarrom and Nipada Saensupa in mixed doubles class SL3-SU5 Friday.

Other Indian shuttlers, including Suhas Yathiraj, Tarun Dhillon and Krishna Nagar also had a good day in office as they opened their men's singles campaign impressively.

While Suhas and Tarun notched up easy victories over Germany's Jan Niklas Pott and Thailand's Siripong Teamarrom in SL4 class respectively, second seed Krishna outwitted Malaysia's Taresoh Didin in SH6 class. Young Palak also overcame Turkey's Zehra Baglar in her second women's singles match of group A.

The 38-year-old Suhas took just 19 minutes to see off Pott 21-9, 21-



3 in a lopsided group A clash, while Tarun, 27, too didn't break a sweat, beating Teamarrom 21-7, 21-13 in a group B match that lasted 23 minutes.

Krishna then prevailed 22-20, 21-10 over Didin in a 33-minute group B match. While Suhas will

face Indonesia's Hary Susanto and then France's top seed Lucas Mazur Friday, second seeded Tarun will be up against Korea's Shin Kyung Hwan and Indonesia's Fredy Setiawan. The 22-year-old Krishna will take on Brazil's Vitor Goncalves Tavares Friday.

Suhas, who has an impairment in one of his ankles, has been at the forefront in the fight against COVID-19 menace as the district magistrate of Gautam Buddh Nagar in Uttar Pradesh.

Tarun, on the other hand, had sustained a severe knee injury while playing football at the age of eight, which resulted in restricted knee movement. He is the current World No.2 and a former two-time world champion.

Krishna, who has a short-stature impairment, is the world no 2 in SH6. He has won bronze and silver at 2019 World Championships in singles and doubles.

In SL classification, persons with standing/lower limb impairment/severe are allowed to compete, while SU refers to athletes with upper limb impairment.

In women's singles class SU5 class, Kohli beat Zehra 21-12, 21-18 in 27 minutes. She had lost her opening match to Japan's Ayako Suzuki.

Earlier in the day, the 19-year-old Kohli and her partner Parul Parmar, 48, sent down 7-21, 5-21 to second seeded Chinese pair of Cheng Hefang and Ma Huihui in a group B women's doubles SL3-SU5 class match. The Indian pair will square off against the French duo of Lenaig Morin and Faustine Noel Friday.

Parmar, who competes in SL3 class, was no match for China's Cheng Hefang, losing 8-21, 2-21 in 18 minutes in a women's singles group D match at the Yoyogi national stadium here.

Parmar gave a better account of herself in her next match against Katrin Seibert but the German managed to grind out a 21-23, 21-19, 15-21 win to shut the doors on the Indian.

PARALYMPICS DIARY

Prachi qualifies for Canoe sprint semis

TOKYO: India's Prachi Yadav on Thursday qualified for the semifinals of canoe sprint event in women's Va'a single 200m at the Tokyo Paralympics here. The 26-year-old from Bhopal recorded a time of one minute, 11.098 seconds - 13.014 seconds behind leader Great Britain's Emma Wiggs (58.084s) in class VL2 heat 1 at the Sea Forest Waterway here. The semifinal will be held Friday. Yadav, who has paralysis below her waist, has competed in Para swimming at the national level as well but took up canoeing on the recommendation of her coach Virender Kumar.



INJURED ARUNA OPTS OUT OF REPECHAGE



TOKYO: India's Aruna Tanwar was Thursday forced to withdraw from the repechage round of the Paralympics women's taekwondo K44-49kg class here because of severe injuries sustained during her opening bout of the Games despite which she fought in the quarterfinals. Aruna was scheduled to feature in the repechage round later in the evening after she lost to fourth-seeded Espinoza Carranza of Peru in the quarters. But it turned out to be an anti-climax for the 12th seeded Indian as a possible hit on her right foot during her opening round 29-9 win over fifth seed Danijela Jovanovic of Serbia drew curtains to her campaign. "Sorry to inform that our Tigress has got injured in her bout. Suspected hair line fracture. She won her first match with a great margin but we could notice the energy missing in second one. Swelling has increased and needs medical attention," said Paralympic Committee of India President Deepa Malik.

RAHUL ENDS 5TH IN MIXED 25M PISTOL



TOKYO: Indian shooter Rahul Singh signed off fifth in the P3 mixed 25m pistol SH1 event of the Paralympics here Thursday. The 35-year-old Jakhar was eliminated at the end of the seventh series in the finals after qualifying second with a score of 576, which included 284 in precision and 292 in the rapid stage. It is by far his best international performance. Athletes in SH1 pistol competitions have an impairment affecting one arm and/or the legs, resulting from amputations or spinal cord injuries. The other Indian in fray, Akash, could not qualify for the finals after ending 20th in the qualifications with a score of 551 (278 in precision and 273 in rapid). The mixed event features both male and female shooters with the top eight qualifying for the finals.

Arvind finishes 7th in shot put event



TOKYO: India's Arvind ended seventh in the men's shot put F35 event of the Paralympics here Thursday. Making his debut at the Games, the 28-year-old's best effort was a 13.48m throw in the eight-strong field. The gold medal in this event went to Uzbekistan's Khusniddin Norbekov, who produced a season's best effort of 16.13m. Argentina's Emanuel Urrea claimed the silver with a 15.90m throw, while the bronze went to China's Fu Xinhan (15.41m, season's best). The F30 classes are for athletes with coordination impairment (involuntary movements, uncoordinated movements and/or muscle tension) often due to cerebral palsy or brain injury. In F35 category of this classification, athletes compete in standing position. Arvind had lost use of his left leg after he was hit on his head by a ball as a child leading to nerve damage.

Shardul saves India the blushes against England

Mumbaikar scores counter-attacking half century to help visitors reach 191 before Bumrah, Umesh reduce the hosts to 53/3 at stumps



SHARDUL THAKUR

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

London, Sept 2: Shardul Thakur's (57, 36b, 7x4, 3x6) counter-attacking half century wasn't good enough to save the Indian batting from another embarrassment before Jasprit Bumrah's (2/15) menacing opening spell kept the visitors on an even keel against England on the opening day of the fourth Test.

At stumps, England were 53/3 in response to India's 191, having lost openers Rory Burns (5) and Haseeb Hameed (0) to the extra pace and bounce generated by Bumrah.

Umesh Yadav (1/15) then bowled an off-cutter in his second spell to breach in-form Joe Root (21)'s defence which helped the visitors end the day on a high note.

That Indian shoulders didn't droop after being reduced to 127/7 was all because of a man playing only his fourth Test.

Justifying his tag as a bowling all-rounder, Shardul smashed a half century and added 63 for the eighth wicket with Umesh to take the total closer to 200 which had looked improbable after another 'brain fade' dismissal for Rishabh Pant.



JASPRIT BUMRAH

India lasted just 61.3 overs with Cheteshwar Pujara (10) and especially Ajinkya Rahane's (14) failures becoming glaring enough and couldn't be papered over by skipper Virat Kohli (50, 96b, 8x4), who played some gorgeous strokes en route his half century. Save couple of half-centuries, none of the Indian batters crossed the 20-run mark.

For England, Chris Woakes (4/55) was splendid in his comeback game and no praise would be enough for the fast-rising Ollie Robinson (3/38), who bowled a couple of beauties to get rid of KL Rahul and Kohli.

Anderson bowled one of his classic 'in-out' (swinging in and shaping out) delivery to send Pujara back and Rahane was Overton's victim with Moeen Ali not even

required to bowl a single over. With Ravichandran Ashwin being sidelined for the fourth time, the logic of playing Ravindra Jadeja as a batting all-rounder has partially backfired after team management promoted him to No.5 ahead of Rahane and the move flopped big time.

For Rahane, the time is simply running out after yet another failure and the fact that he needed to be hid behind Jadeja under the pretence of having a left-right combination, said it all.

As far as Pujara is concerned, an expert of Sunil Gavaskar's stature has pointed out that his dismissals are a result of technical problems with hands moving towards the ball with minimal feet movement.

Anderson got one to nip back in the air as the batsman shaped to play an inswinger and by the time it landed it moved a shade away to take Pujara's outside edge. The balance was all awry and result was a simple catch to Baird to behind the stumps.

The skipper was the only one among the three middle-order big guns who looked like batting with some purpose. But when Robinson came back for his post-lunch spell and bowled one on the length which climbed as well as moved inward forcing Kohli to close the bat face for a shot towards mid-wicket. But all it did was to clip the outside edge into Baird's gloves.

If promoting Jadeja was a poor call from captain, it's about time that his young turk Pant (9) gets a rap on the knuckles for his distinct lack of game awareness which has been visible throughout this English summer.

Just when the situation needed some discretion from him, he was regularly charging out without much results and the wily Woakes got his number with a slower delivery, keeping the mid-off back.

It was then left to Shardul, who just trusted the bounce and hit through the line just when the pitch got a bit better. A six over long-off, one over deep mid-wicket and best - a pull-shoot off Robinson to bring up his second half-century had the crowd in raptures.

BRIEF SCORES: India 191 (Shardul Thakur 57, Virat Kohli 50; Chris Woakes 4/55, Ollie Robinson 3/38); England 53/3 (Dawid Malan 26 batting; Jasprit Bumrah 2/15, Umesh Yadav 1/15). Match to continue.

STEPHENS OVERPOWERS GAUFF

ASSOCIATED PRESS

New York, Sept 2: Three years ago, a reporter asked Sloane Stephens to point out a younger tennis player most fans might not have heard of yet, someone she thought could become a household name some day. Stephens paused to ponder, but not for long, before responding: Coco Gauff, then 14. Stephens had first met Gauff several years earlier and clearly knew what she was talking about. The world would quickly discover Gauff, too.

The pair of friends met in an official match for the first time Wednesday night at the US Open, and it was Stephens, the 2017 champion now ranked 66th, who pulled away for a 6-4, 6-2 victory over Gauff, now 17 and seeded 21st.

Afterward, the pair met at the net for a warm hug, before Stephens praised the player — and person — Gauff has become.

With the Ashe roof shut during a heavy downpour — a tornado warning was in effect in the region — the thump-thump-thump of the



Sloane Stephens hugs Coco Gauff after their match, Thursday

rain created a bass beat that drowned out the usual sounds of a tennis match. It was so loud Stephens could barely hear the questions during her on-court interview.

Only one other court at Flushing Meadows can be covered during bad weather, but even that was an issue Wednesday evening, because

wind helped push rain through the space between the concourse and the retractable cover at Louis Armstrong Stadium.

So the match between two-time major finalist Kevin Anderson and Diego Schwartzman was delayed for nearly a half-hour at 5-all in the first set while workers used

air blowers to dry the playing surface. Scheduled for later in Armstrong was three-time Slam champ Angelique Kerber against Anhelina Kalinina, with the winner taking on Stephens. And last in Ashe was French Open runner-up Stefanos Tsitsipas against Adrian Panarino, looking to join other men who moved on such as No.2 Daniil Medvedev and No.5 Andrey Rublev.

The conditions didn't matter at all to defending champion Naomi Osaka, who advanced earlier in the day when her second-round opponent, Olga Danilovic, pulled out of the tournament because of what she said was a viral illness — but not COVID-19.

Other past major title winners Simona Halep, Garbine Muguruza and Victoria Azarenka moved on more conventionally with straight-set wins. Muguruza next faces Azarenka, who in addition to a pair of Australian Open trophies is a three-time runner-up at the US Open, including when she lost to Osaka in the final a year ago.

Record-breaker CR7 lifts Portugal



NIGHT TO REMEMBER: Cristiano Ronaldo wheels away in celebration after breaking Ali Daei's scoring record against Ireland, Wednesday

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Faro (Portugal), Sept 2: Cristiano Ronaldo missed a penalty but still broke the men's international scoring record before adding a second goal as Portugal beat visiting Ireland 2-1 in World Cup qualifying.

Ronaldo grabbed his 110th goal in the 89th minute Wednesday to move ahead of former Iran striker Ali Daei. Six minutes into stoppage time, Ronaldo made it 111 in 180 games to break Irish hearts after defender John Egan gave his nation the lead in the 45th.

"I'm very happy, not only because I beat the record but for the special moments that we had,"

Ronaldo said. "Two goals at the end of the game is so tough, but I have to appreciate what the team did. We believed until the end."

But Ronaldo, who has returned to join Manchester United, is still 76 goals behind the game's most prolific international scorer, Christine Sinclair, who is 38 years old, scored her 187th goal for Canada last month at the Tokyo Olympics.

Ronaldo's night had been frustrating until the late heroics. His 15th-minute spot-kick was well saved by goalkeeper Gavin Bazunu, who was just two years old when Ronaldo scored his first for Portugal as a skinny winger at the 2004 European Championship.

A LOOK AT THE GROUPS

GROUP A

■ Portugal lead with 10 points from four games and sits three points ahead of Serbia, which did not play, Wednesday.

■ Luxembourg are one point behind Serbia in third after winning 2-1 against visiting Azerbaijan.

GROUP D

■ Bosnia and Herzegovina stunned 2018 World Cup winner France when veteran striker Eden Dzeko struck in the 36th minute.

■ A thrilling finish in Astana saw midfielder Ruslan Valiullin equalize in the sixth minute of stoppage time to earn Kazakhstan a 2-2 home draw with Ukraine.

■ Ukraine had a strong start as Roman Yaremchuk netted after two minutes, but Valiullin equalized in the 74th and then did so again in the last seconds.

GROUP F

■ Euro 2020 semifinalist Denmark sit proudly on top with four straight wins

after beating Scotland 2-0, thanks to goals from veteran midfielder Daniel Wass and defender Joakim Maehle.

■ Israel and Austria both won, but it's Israel in second place on goal difference thanks to striker Eran Zahavi's hat-trick in a 4-0 win away to Faroe Islands. Marko Arnautovic scored in Austria's 2-0 win away to Moldova.

GROUP G

■ Turkey remains top and undefeated but it was held 2-2 at home by Montenegro. Turkey have eight points and are one ahead of the Netherlands, who equalized against Norway, and also one point in front of Montenegro in third and then Norway.

■ Latvia beat last-place Gibraltar 3-1 in the other game.

GROUP H

■ Croatia kept first place on goal difference with seven points after drawing 0-0 away to second-place Russia in Moscow.

Ronaldo's only title with Portugal came at Euro 2016.

Although he was the top scorer at this year's European Championship with five goals in four games, his team's title defense ended in the round of 16.

Coach Didier Deschamps vowed his side would hit back strongly after disappointing Euro 2020. But Les Bleus had to settle for a comeback 1-1 draw at home against

Bosnia and Herzegovina thanks to Antoine Griezmann's 39th international goal.

France had defender Jules Kounde sent off in the 50th for protesting to the referee after he was cautioned for fouling Sean Kolosinac.

Another prolific striker was on target elsewhere, as Erling Haaland put Norway ahead in a 1-1 home draw with the Netherlands.