



BIG LEAP

Odia theatre actor Mamata Tripathy makes her Hindi Web series debut in Danish Aslam directorial 'The Reunion'

LEISURE | P2



N KOREA WARNS UNSC

North Korea has warned the UNSC against criticising the isolated country's missile programme, in a statement Sunday

INTERNATIONAL | P10



MAXWELL DOMINATES

Glenn Maxwell's superb innings helps RCB beat PBKS and seal play-off spot in the IPL

SPORTS | P12

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MAMATA SCORES LANDSLIDE VICTORY

KOLKATA: Five months after spearheading TMC to a landslide win in the assembly election, West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee scored a personal point with a massive victory Sunday in the Bhabanipur bypoll with a record margin of 58,835 votes. Her victory, which came after her surprise defeat in Nandigram in Assembly elections held earlier this year, was expected by most analysts. By notching up an all-time high margin in this urban constituency, Banerjee seems to have underlined her popularity in her home state. Trinamool Congress is made a clean sweep in bypolls to other seats.



(More P9)

FIVE CIVILIANS DIE IN KABUL MOSQUE BLAST

KABUL: A bomb exploded in the entrance of a mosque in the Afghan capital on Sunday leaving a five civilians dead, a Taliban spokesman said. The bomb targeted the sprawling Eidgah Mosque in Kabul, where a memorial service was being held for the mother of Taliban spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid, who later tweeted the attack had claimed civilian lives. Emergency NGO, an Italian-funded hospital in Kabul, tweeted it had received four people wounded in the blast. The area around the mosque was cordoned off by the Taliban who maintained a heavy security presence.



(More P10)

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IRREGULAR by MANJUL



This is the 5th fake news you filed this week! You have any political ambition?

Mandatory Covid testing before vax keeps citizens away

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Oct 3: Not aware of the new norms in place, denizens of the smart city are at a loss when they visit the vaccination centres here. The Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC) has now made it mandatory for the beneficiaries to produce Covid-19 negative reports before being vaccinated.

While the move has been taken to avoid vaccine wastage, many citizens unaware of the new rule are forced to return from the centres without being vaccinated. This has affected the vaccination schedule in the capital city.

According to sources, the civic authority recently introduced a new regulation which stated that those seeking Covid vaccination dose must get them tested in advance.

It may be mentioned here that data from BMC till last week revealed that that more than 2.55 lakh people in the capital city are yet to be fully inoculated. The figures also suggested that about 80,602 persons (8 per cent) were yet to receive their second dose of Covid vaccine. The number of such people rose to 2.55 lakh (10.8 per cent) in September.

WEATHER		
	BHUB	CTK
MAX	34.7°C	34.8°C
MIN	24.9°C	25.0°C
Humidity	79%	78%
Rainfall	Nil	Nil
Forecast		
Light rain very likely		



SAVOURING VICTORY: Biju Janata Dal supporters in Bhubaneswar celebrating the victory of their party nominee Rudra Pratap Maharathy in Pipli Assembly bypoll, Sunday

PHOTO: MANORANJAN MISHRA

CONG: DISTRACTING ATTENTION FROM GUJARAT

SRK's son Aryan arrested

■ Saturday night, the NCB raided a cruise ship in Mumbai that was departing for a three-day 'musical voyage' with people from Hindi films, fashion and the business sectors

AGENCIES



Mumbai, Oct 3: Hindi film star Shah Rukh Khan's son, Aryan Khan, was arrested Sunday by the Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB) after drugs were seized from a cruise ship off the Mumbai coast.

Meanwhile, a day after the Narcotics Control Bureau carried out its first-ever raid of a cruise ship and recovered drugs from the vessel, Congress spokesperson Shama Mohamed accused the agency of "arresting small fish" while remaining mum about the massive heroin seizure at Gujarat's Adani-owned Mundra port.

Besides Aryan Khan, eight others - including Mumun Dhamecha and Arbaaz Merchant - have also been arrested. They were taken for medical examination and brought back to the NCB office in

Mumbai Sunday.

Earlier in the day, NCB questioned Aryan Khan in connection with the rave party that was busted Saturday night after officials raided a cruise ship off the Mumbai coast.

NCB sources said Aryan Khan's phone was seized and scanned by the authorities to check for any indication of his involvement in the possession or consumption of drugs. The NCB has also summoned six of the organisers who had planned the cruise party. Kashiff Khan, managing director of FTV India, is also under scanner and NCB has reached out to him. The event was organised under the supervision of Kashiff Khan.

A team of the NCB has been sent to nab the drug peddler who supplied drugs to the cruise ship

party. The name of a drug peddler came to light during the interrogation of those who were detained. The NCB is also looking for a person named Gopal Anand, who reportedly had a major role in organising the party on the ship.

The Director-General of NCB said detailed information on the incident would be sent to the Shipping Corporation of India and the Shipping Ministry. He said the NCB had received information about the rave party about 15 days ago.

"We had received very confidential information 15 days ago about the drugs party on the ship after which we carried out this operation. We have got evidence against those who have been detained. People who organised this party on the ship will have to face an inquiry; they cannot escape the investigation," DG NCB said.

NCB said drugs like ecstasy, cocaine, mephedrone and charas were recovered from the cruise and a case had been registered. The agency said eight people, including two women, were apprehended and their role was being investigated. Jurgen Bailom, president and CEO of Cordelia Cruises, confirmed that the NCB found drugs in some passengers' luggage.

Fuel rates hiked for fourth straight day

AGENCIES

New Delhi, Oct 3: Petrol and diesel prices rose simultaneously for the fourth day running Sunday amid volatility in global oil prices with benchmark crude remaining at a high level of over \$79 a barrel.

Accordingly, diesel price increased by 30 paise per litre in the national capital to ₹90.77 per litre Sunday, while petrol price increased by 25 paise per litre to ₹102.39 a litre, according to Indian Oil Corporation, the country's largest fuel retailer.

CITY FUEL PRICES	
Petrol:	₹103.28 (+0.25)
Diesel:	₹99.00 (+0.33)

Diesel price has now increased on eight days in the last 10 days taking up its retail price by ₹2.15 per litre in Delhi. Diesel price was raised Friday by 20 paise per litre and again by 25 paise per litre each Sunday, Monday and Tuesday and by 30 paise per litre Thursday, Friday, Saturday and Sunday.

Petrol prices had maintained stability since September 5, but the oil companies finally raised the pump prices this week given a spurt in the product prices lately.

Union minister's son runs over farmers

■ In all eight persons were killed in the violence during a farmers' protest over UP Deputy Chief Minister Keshav Prasad Maurya's visit

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Lakhimpur Kheri (UP), Oct 3: Violence erupted in Lakhimpur Kheri when the SUV of Union Minister of State for Home and local MP Ajay Kumar Mishra's son ran over two farmers protesting against the farm laws Sunday morning.

In all eight persons were killed in the violence that erupted here during a farmers' protest over Uttar Pradesh Deputy Chief Minister Keshav Prasad Maurya's visit, according to an official. Lakhimpur Kheri District Magistrate Arvind Kumar Chaurasia said four farmers and four others were killed.

Two SUVs were set on fire by angry farmers, reports said, after they hit a group of protesters.

Four of the dead were travelling in the vehicles, an UP government official in Lucknow said. The farmers had assembled there to oppose Maurya's visit to Banbirpur, the native village Ajay Kumar Mishra. Maurya's visit to Banbirpur village was cancelled in view of the violence.

The violence broke out after two

SUVs allegedly ran over a group of anti-farm law protesters, who were demonstrating at the Tikonla-Banbirpur road.

Farmers alleged that the Union minister's son was in one of the vehicles, a charge denied by Mishra. Mishra told this news agency over the phone that three BJP workers and a driver were beaten to death by "some elements" in the protesting farmers after a car in which they were travelling turned turtle following pelting of stones. Mishra said neither his son nor he was present at the site when the incident occurred. He said the incident happened when some BJP workers were going to receive Maurya, who had come to attend an event at Lakhimpur Kheri.

Earlier a UP government official in Lucknow said six people, including two farmers, were killed. "A cavalcade was going, which was shown black flags (by farmers). The cavalcade was moving as per routine. When two to three vehicles of the cavalcade were left, a vehicle of it started turning upside down, and two farmers came under it, and they died," the official added. "After this, the vehicle which was behind it was damaged. Passengers and the drivers were brought out of the vehicles and they were beaten to death," the UP government official added. Additional Director General of Police (Law and Order) Prashant Kumar has reached the spot and the situation is now under control, he added. (More P9)



BJD wins Pipli bypoll by over 20,000 votes

PNN & AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, Oct 3: The ruling Biju Janata Dal (BJD) has won the Pipli bypoll with a thumping margin of 20,916 votes.

After completion of the counting of votes, Returning Officer Pradeep Sahoo formally announced that BJD candidate Rudra Pratap Maharathy has won the MLA seat for which bypoll was conducted September 30.

Rudra Pratap maintained lead from the first rounds of counting and secured 96,972 votes, while BJP's Ashrit Pattanayak secured the second position with 76,056 votes. Congress candidate Bishwokeshan Harichandan Mohapatra was able to get only 4,261 votes, said Chief Electoral Officer (CEO) of Odisha, Sushil Kumar Lohani.

A total of 1,80,930 votes, including 893 postal ballots, were counted, while 136 voted were rejected due to various reasons, he said.

In all 10 candidates were in fray for the MLA seat lying vacant after the death of sitting MLA Pradeep Maharathy in October last year.

Among others, CPI (ML) candidate Ashok Pradhan got 898 votes,

Akhil Bharat Hindu Mahasabha nominee Jayaprakash Sethi got 455 votes, Pinklin Mohanty (Kalinga Sena) got 156 votes and Mohammed Imammuddin (Republican Party of India - Athawale) got 244 votes.

Similarly, three Independent candidates - Nagendra Nath Misra, Sulochana Sahoo and Swopneswar Nayak have secured 414, 266 and 377 votes, respectively. As many as 831 people opted for NOTA (None of the Above).

With this win, the BJD has re-trained the MLA seat. Pradeep Maharathy was elected to the Assembly from the seat for seven times. Rudra Pratap got votes than what his father Late Pradeep Maharathy had secured in the 2019 general election. The BJD had got 88,518 votes in the last election for the seat.

BJD president Naveen Patnaik thanked the people of Pipli area for their support to his party candidate Rudra Pratap in the bypoll. He also congratulated his party workers and leaders for the victory.

In 2019 Assembly election, BJP candidate Ashrit had lost to BJD by 9787 votes. This time, the winning margin increased to 20,916 votes.

Blair, King of Jordan, Czech PM figure in Pandora Papers

■ The files also detail financial activities of Russian President Vladimir Putin's "unofficial minister of propaganda" and more than 130 billionaires from Russia, the United States, Turkey and other nations

AGENCIES

Journalists (ICIJ) said.

The secret documents expose offshore dealings of the King of Jordan, the presidents of Ukraine, Kenya and Ecuador; the prime minister of the Czech Republic and former British Prime Minister Tony Blair.

The files also detail financial activities of Russian President Vladimir Putin's "unofficial minister of propaganda" and more than 130 billionaires from Russia, the United States, Turkey and other nations.

The leaked records reveal that many of the power players who could help bring an end to the offshore system instead benefit from it - stashing assets in covert companies and trusts while their governments do little to slow a global stream of illicit money that enriches criminals and impoverishes nations.

Among the hidden treasures revealed in the documents:



A \$22 million chateau in the French Riviera - replete with a cinema and two swimming pools - purchased through offshore companies by the Czech Republic's populist prime minister; a billionaire who has railed against the corruption of economic and political elites.

More than \$13 million tucked in a secrecy-shaded trust in the Great Plains of the United States

by a scion of one of Guatemala's most powerful families, a dynasty that controls soap and lipsticks conglomerate that's been accused of harming workers and the earth.

Three beachfront mansions in Malibu purchased through three offshore companies for \$68 million by the King of Jordan in the years after Jordanians filled the streets during Arab Spring to protest job-

lessness and corruption.

The secret records are known as the Pandora Papers.

The International Consortium of Investigative Journalists obtained the trove of more than 11.9 million confidential files and led a team of more than 600 journalists from 150 news outlets that spent two years sifting through them, tracking down hard-to-find sources and digging into court records and other public documents from dozens of countries.

The leaked records come from 14 offshore services firms from around the world that set up shell companies and other offshore nooks for clients often seeking to keep their financial activities in the shadows. The records include information about the dealings of nearly three times as many current and former country leaders as any previous leak of documents from offshore havens.

FORTUNE FORECAST

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ARIES

Your attractive personality is always at the disposal of others, and today you could benefit immensely through it. However, there is room for improvement and you could be drawn towards charity work. Ganesha says you will surely feel satisfied by helping the needy.

TAURUS

This day you will tend to be too bossy, too harsh on your subordinates or employees and end up making them miserable as well as hostile. Their insubordination could corrode the respect you get and, in addition, make things unworkable. This acrimony and ill will is sure to spread and foul up your larger professional connections and interests.

GEMINI

You will want some change in your daily routine today. You are likely to be fed up of the rut of daily life and are looking for a refreshing change. You need to apply your inherent creativity to your work to get more satisfaction out of it and to ease the boredom of your daily schedule, says Ganesha.

CANCER

Don't meddle in others' affairs today, suggests Ganesha. For they will not take it kindly. Adopt the middle path. Ganesha feels that you must keep your bravado and boldness in check.

LEO

Your pride and self-confidence will help you to excel in whatever task it is that you take up today. Other people will also praise you. You will buy new clothes and other possessions that you have been desiring since a long time, says Ganesha.

VIRGO

You will be faced with serious financial problems today. You may even have to pay through your nose to get what you desire. Later in the evening, you might accomplish some short-term goals. Ganesha predicts that some vital business agreements will end your day in high spirits.

LIBRA

It's time to take what is already good, and turn it into something better. Take this day as a day to bring about improvements in your life and yourself. You may also consider taking up some extra courses in the evening. Maybe it's time for a salsa lesson, or learn how to toss a few Italian delicacies. Small crash courses go a long way in enhancing your efficiency, says Ganesha.

SCORPIO

Your sixth sense would work wonders today, as per to what Ganesha has to say. Trust your instincts and work accordingly. Work enthusiastically and dedicatedly. When the pressure of work mounts on you, take a break and unwind with the help of soft music.

SAGITTARIUS

It's time for some entertainment. Movies, picnics and dining out is on your mind. Invite your beloved and enjoy quality time with each other. Also, you will spend time with you family and friends, and attend a music concert together.

CAPRICORN

Actions speak louder than words. Your sincere efforts and honest intentions will motivate others also to put in their best, feels Ganesha. You'll be like a friend, philosopher and guide to them. People will follow you, but it has a darker side to as many will even over take you. It is certainly not a pleasant sight to see opportunities pass by!

AQUARIUS

You roar with absolute bliss today! Simplicity is your new avatar, and naturally, friends and acquaintances are mystified. You may wish to commune with the higher spirit and will seek solace in a quiet temple. Ganesha approves and predicts peace in plenty.

PISCES

Staying afloat needs about as much effort as swimming. Cryptic as this may sound, what it means is you need to constantly reinvent yourself if you wish to keep going. You will shine in your profession only if it is also your passion, says Ganesha.



WHEN JENNIFER GARNER WAS LEFT EMBARRASSED

Jennifer Garner was left red-faced after sending a selfie to the wrong number. The 49-year-old actress tried to send a snap of herself to Carl Lumbly, her former *Alias* co-star, to mark 20 years since the show's pilot aired, but the photo went to a stranger.

BRITNEY STILL NEEDS A LOT OF HEALING

Britney Spears is excited after her father Jamie was suspended from her conservatorship, but she admits there is still a lot of healing to do. She wrote on Instagram: "Although there is change and things to celebrate in my life, I still have a lot of healing to do!!"



Vishal paid his class fees by selling film tickets in black

Mumbai: TV actor Vishal Kotian, from shows like *Family No 1* and *Akbar Ka Bal Birbal*, has entered the *Bigg Boss 15* house. Known for his comic roles, Vishal said he plans to entertain the housemates and is excited to meet his idol Salman Khan.

Sharing his thoughts about host Salman, Vishal, sharing his thoughts about host Salman, said, "I owe a lot in life to Salman Khan. I grew up in Dagdi chawl, so sell-

ing Salman Khan (film) tickets in black helped me pay my school and college fees and other expenses. People may not remember movies like *Veergati* but I do! I benefited more from *Veergati* than Salman did. I still remember paying my 9th class fees by selling tickets of *Bandhan* in black. Later I managed to change my circumstances for the better but those memories will never fade.



BB 15 is my biggest opportunity: MIESHA

Mumbai: Reality show actress and model Miesha Iyer entered the *Bigg Boss 15* house Saturday after appearing in reality shows such as *Splitsvilla 12* and *Ace of Space Season 1*. And she considers her entry into the biggest reality show on Indian television as 'one of the biggest opportunities' to come her way.

"I wonder why anyone would not like to be part of *Bigg Boss*," Miesha said, adding, "For me, getting a call to be a part of this show came as a big deal that I just loved to grab."

Miesha has quite a social media fan following as a fashion diva, but *Bigg Boss 15*, for her, is the ladder that will help her rise higher in her chosen profession. She said: "See, we are in the entertainment industry for a reason. And the reason is to grow and achieve success. We all want name and fame. This is the reason we are here. I would be lying if I said that I came to *Bigg Boss* to gain experience. I am here for more. For sure, it will help advance my career."



Vartika talks about her anxiety during lockdown

Mumbai: Actress Vartika Tiwari has opened up about how she battled insecurity while she was stuck alone in her Mumbai apartment during the Covid-19 induced lockdown last year.

Talking about the same, Vartika said: "I was stuck alone in Mumbai in lockdown and one day I realised that apart from me, the one living being staying with me is my plant. I used to feel I won't be able to survive in this pandemic but the plant would live."

Being inspired by the *Sacred Games* dialogue *Sirf Trivedi bachega*, Vartika named her plant 'Trivedi' and shared a post on Facebook saying how it was her one and only support during the lockdown.

Recalling the same, the actress said: "So the whole idea was to explore my lockdown with Trivediji in this situation. It was my personal experience."

On the work front, Vartika features in Rajesh Tailang's short film titled *Trivediji* which is somewhat similar to her real life experience.

Mamata enters OTT space with The Reunion

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar: After making her presence felt in Odisha's theatre circuit as an actress, renowned singer and anchor Mamata Tripathi has made her Hindi web series debut in *The Reunion* which was released on OTT platform The Zoom Studios, Saturday.

On her big break, Mamata says, "The makers planned to cast some local artistes in the Season 2 of *The Reunion* as Odisha Tourism Development Corporation was cosponsor of the web series. I auditioned twice online and got selected."

Sharing her experience the actress says, "*The Reunion* sequel is the story of a family reunion of estranged members as they rediscover their relationships and understand the true meaning of being a family. I played the character of a businesswoman. Though my role was small, I enjoyed sharing web space with theatre veterans like Lillete Dubey and KK Raina. The series was shot at many scenic sites of Odisha like Konark, Puri, Similipal, Bhitarkanika and Dhenkanal. Working with a director like Danish Aslam is a matter of pride for me."

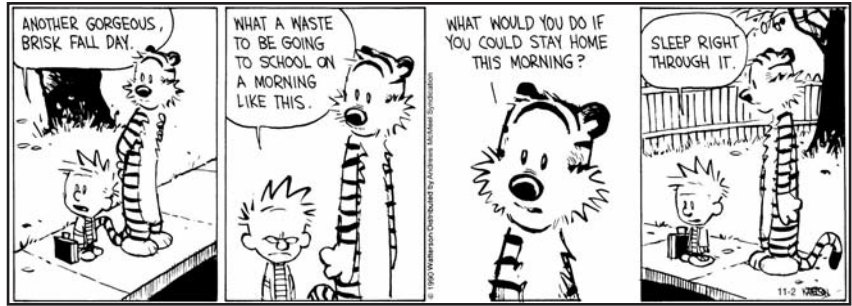
Nearly 100 members of the production team came to Odisha to shoot the series.



PEANUTS



CALVIN AND HOBBS

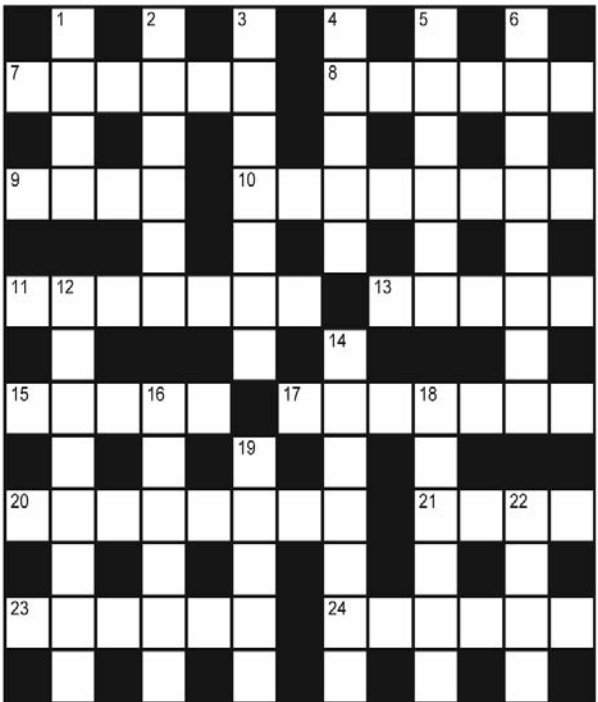


BREVITY



FUN post

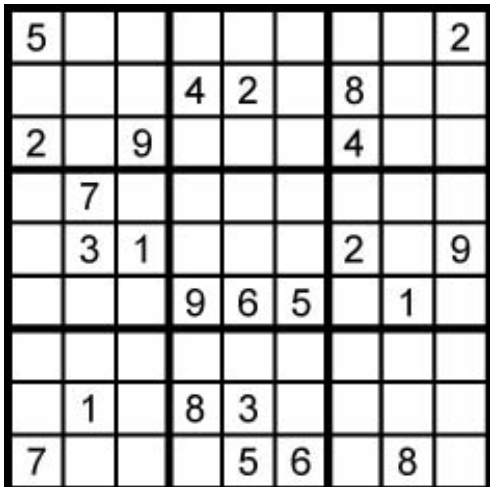
CROSSWORD



- Across**
- 7 Annoying
 - 8 Flabbergasted
 - 9 Sleeveless garment
 - 10 Fantastic
 - 11 Notwithstanding
 - 13 Lightheaded
 - 15 Stretched tight
 - 17 Tolerate
 - 20 Pilgrim
 - 21 School group?
 - 23 Northern
 - 24 Cereal fruit
 - Down**
 - 1 Like the Sahara
 - 2 Circus tent (3,3)
 - 3 Rabble-rouse
 - 4 Prince William's brother
 - 5 American elk
 - 6 Kind of table
 - 12 Otis's invention
 - 14 Chinese dish (4,3)
 - 16 Tone down
 - 18 It can be English
 - 19 Whimsical
 - 22 Insignificant

SUDOKU

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

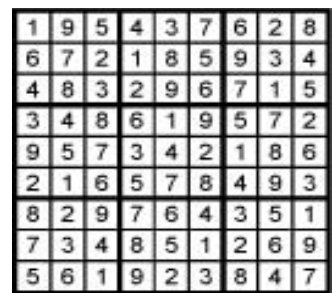


SOLUTIONS

CROSSWORD



SUDOKU



CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW

downtown

Thrust on passenger safety, comfort at Bhub rly station

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Oct 3: Railway Board Chairman and Chief Executive Officer, Ministry of Railways, Suneet Sharma Sunday inspected Bhubaneswar railway station and reviewed the ongoing projects of the region, as part of his one-day visit to Bhubaneswar.

Sharma was accompanied by General Manager, Divisional Railway Managers and Principal Heads of various Departments of the East Coast Railway (ECOR).

During the inspection, Sharma stressed on the need and significance of facilities provided to the passengers. In an interaction with the media, he said that a number of facilities have been developed already and some are currently under the process of development. The primary focus is on developing circulating areas, concourse, platform lightings, waiting rooms, toilets and recently added elevators that are much needed for the comfort of passengers. He also interacted with some of the passengers who were waiting for their trains in the waiting hall.

The chairman said that Bhubaneswar station is going to be developed into a world-class station, redevelopment plan for which has already been done. Railways is co-ordinating with Bhubaneswar Development Authority (BDA) and a joint plan is being worked out. He also said that Rail Land Development Authority (RLDA) will do the Railways' share of the developmental work and the rest will be done by BDA. Action is being taken to complete the work at the earliest. One platform and two additional lines will be added in this project.

This apart, the Bhubaneswar



Railway Board Chairman Suneet Sharma takes stock of the renovation work

TRANSFORMATIVE MEASURE

Railways is coordinating with Bhubaneswar Development Authority and a joint plan is being worked out

Rail Land Development Authority will undertake the Railways' share of the developmental work while the rest will be done by BDA

The Bhubaneswar new railway station is being developed as a satellite terminal station of the main station of the state capital

new railway station is being developed as a satellite terminal station of the main station of the state capital. All the ongoing railway projects of Odisha have national importance. Railways has given all inputs to the projects, and is getting support from the state government for land acquisition for projects.

Later, Sharma reviewed the ongoing projects of ECOR with General Manager Vidya Bhushan, all the Principal Heads of departments, senior officials, and divisional railway managers at Rail Sadan. He congratulated ECOR



BOOK RELEASE

Guests releasing 'Aphera Basanta', a poetry compilation by Nibedita Mamatarani Nayak, in Bhubaneswar, Sunday

Pratap Sarangi tests nCoV +ve

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, Oct 3: Former Union minister and BJP MP from Odisha Pratap Sarangi Sunday said he has tested positive for Covid-19 and would soon get admitted to a hospital here.

Sarangi is the third Lok Sabha member of the saffron party from the state to have contracted the virus. Earlier, Barghar's BJP MP Suresh Pujari and Mayurbhanj's Bishweswar Tudu, the Union Minister of State for Tribal Affairs, were diagnosed with the disease.

"I am tested #COVID19 positive ...Now going to AIIMS, Bhubaneswar for admission as advised by doctors," Sarangi, the Balasore MP, said.

He requested all who have come to his contact recently to remain in isolation.

STF busts cargo theft racket; 4 held

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Oct 3: The Special Task Force (STF) of state Crime Branch Sunday busted a cargo theft racket and arrested four persons in this connection. However, prime accused Ajay Pradhan alias Bhuan gave the police a slip.

According to sources, the STF received a reliable input in connection with the storage of huge quantities of charge chrome and coal in the stockyard of Bhuan at Gopalpur under Choudwar police limits in Cuttack. Subsequently, a team of the special force along with cops from Choudwar police station raided the place and found two trucks loaded with 37 tonnes of stolen hard coke and 3 tonnes of charge chrome, vital ingredient in steel production.

Police succeeded in arresting four of Bhuan's associates including his manager but Bhuan fled the

COVID-19 TRACKER

	INFECTED	RECOVERED	DEAD
World	235,577,590	212,434,326	4,813,944
India	3,37,89,398	3,30,60,980	4,48,605
Odisha	10,27,959	10,14,412	8,214



MODUS OPERANDI

Bhuan with the help of his aides used to hijack trucks loaded with industrial raw materials by threatening the drivers with firearms and other weapons

Later, they would sell the booty to the businessmen in Kolkata, Jharkhand, Bangalore and other places across the country, getting huge money in return

spot seeing the joint team of STF and local police. The cops seized the trucks, one JCB and other incriminating articles from the spot. The accused failed to produce any

valid documents or licence in support of transportation and storage of such huge quantities of hard coke & charge chrome. The accused were later arrested

by Choudwar police who registered a case (No 413/21) in this regard.

Sources in the STF told Orissa Post that Bhuan who is a habitual offender was earlier arrested many times on the charges of cargo theft.

Bhuan with the help of his aides used to hijack trucks loaded with industrial raw materials by threatening the drivers with firearms and other weapons. Later, they would sell the stolen materials to the businessmen in Kolkata, Jharkhand, Bangalore and other places across the country.

"The STF has taken strong action against such organised rackets of cargo theft in various districts of Odisha and seized huge quantities of hard coke (299 tonnes), charge chrome (219 tonnes), coal (150 tonnes), 26 number of heavy vehicles/ JCB/Hywa and arrested 32 persons so far this year," claimed STF sources.

STIR OVER MUNDALI TRAGEDY



Members of Animal Welfare Trust Ekamra stage a protest at Master Canteen Square in Bhubaneswar, Sunday, demanding a thorough probe into death of an elephant at Mundali barrage recently and adequate measures for wildlife protection

OP PHOTO

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Oct 3: The rapidly increasing cases of human-animal conflicts have been a major cause of concern for survival of wildlife and these have emerged as one of the major threats to the long-term survival of some of the world's most iconic species, as per a report by World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) and the UN Environment Programme.

Experts at a webinar on 'Current Scenario of Wildlife Conservation' on the eve of World Animal day and also the 67th Wildlife Week organised by Orissa Environmental Society (OES) Sunday also expressed concern over detrimental effect of human activities on the functioning of natural ecosystems and the wildlife thriving there. As this stress crosses the threshold of tolerance, the equilibrium of the ecosystem gets disrupted and the wildlife declines in a big way, eventually leading to their extinction, they said.

In the webinar, OES president Sundara Narayan Patro said that poaching for trading of animal body parts; destruction of forests,

Experts say poaching for trading of body parts; destruction of forests, wetlands and other habitats for mining, industrialisation and other activities have been causing considerable stress on wildlife

wetlands and other habitats for mining, industrialisation, various developmental infrastructure, agriculture, human settlement, impact of overgrazing by domestic animals, pollution and other factors have been causing considerable stress on wildlife.

He added that the 21st century sees excessive use and exploitation of wildlife. The key challenge at this juncture is to prevent the degradation of the wildlife habitats and protect the wildlife by fully neutralising the human interference. Wildlife crime offences also need to be dealt with strongly by exemplary punishment in fast-track courts while informers of such

crimes and illegal tree-cutting should be rewarded.

Wildlife expert and former additional director of Department of Animal Husbandry, Tamil Nadu, NS Manoharan, graced the occasion as the chief speaker.

Manoharan stated that wildlife is the natural heritage and biological wealth of a nation. They enrich nature and fortify the ecosystems. He deliberated on various wildlife conservation challenges, such as nutritional deficiency, inbreeding, emerging infectious diseases, toxins and poisoning, and zoonosis.

He emphasised on various measures like habitat improvement, corridor connectivity, landscape and population management, data collection and preparation of site-specific action plans, scientific research, stakeholders' awareness and participation and above all, political and administrative commitment to achieve success in wildlife conservation.

Patro also laid stress on protection of International Union for Conservation of Nature identified wild plant species of the state put under the endangered category.

STUDY: 21% HOUSEHOLDS LACK LPG CONNECTIONS

The Council on Energy, Environment and Water study highlights that 73% households continue to use solid fuels and LPG coverage is low in Sundargarh & Deogarh districts

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Oct 3: Almost half of the households in Odisha use liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) as their primary cooking fuel and 79 per cent have LPG connections, according to a recent study by the Council on Energy, Environment and Water (CEEW).

However, about 73 per cent of households continue to use solid fuels, either exclusively or by stacking them with LPG. These findings are based on data collected from around 600 households in six districts in the state. Using solid fuels such as firewood, dung cakes, agricultural residue and charcoal for cooking increases exposure to indoor air pollution for such households.

CEEW's findings are from the India Residential Energy Survey (IRES), 2020, conducted in collaboration with the Initiative for Sustainable Energy Policy (ISEP). The findings indicate that LPG coverage in Odisha is better than in states like Bihar, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh and West Bengal but poorer than in 15 other IRES states. Further, around half of the households in Sundargarh and one-fourth of households in Deogarh use only solid fuels for cooking.

Senior Programme Lead of CEEW Shalu Agrawal said, "The Union government deserves much credit for its efforts to expand clean cooking energy access, primarily through the first phase of Ujjwala scheme. But 21 per cent of house-

holds in the state of Odisha still lack LPG connections. Phase II of Ujjwala should focus on bridging the coverage gap through targeted beneficiary identification, improved enrolment processes and awareness campaigns."

The CEEW study highlighted that 71 per cent of Odisha households that use solid fuels along with LPG cite high cylinder costs as one of their reasons for stacking fuels. This finding is significant in the context of the ongoing surge in LPG prices, which have risen by Rs 240 per cylinder (a 40% hike) over the past year. Lower household income during pandemic and suspension of LPG subsidies in May 2020 have made LPG unaffordable for a section of the population.

Can blood thinners help Covid-19 patients?

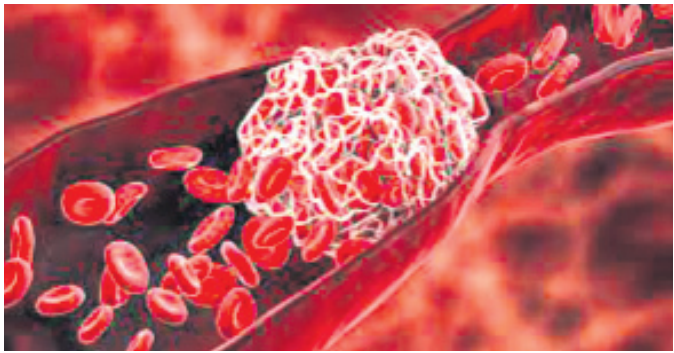
AGENCIES

People with Covid-19 infection develop abnormal blood clots from high inflammation, leading to serious health complications and mortality. A new study has revealed that blood thinners can potentially reduce the bad effects of Covid-19.

Blood thinners are medications prescribed to prevent blood clots in patients with a prior blood clot in their lungs or legs. They also prevent blood clots in the brain secondary to abnormal heart rhythms, like atrial fibrillation.

While blood thinners are the standard of treatment in these diseases, researchers from the University of Minnesota and Basel University in Switzerland looked at the data to see if it also helped Covid-19 patients.

The results published in Lancet's Open Access EClinical Medicine showed that patients on blood thinners before having Covid-19 were admitted less often to the hospi-



tal, despite being older and having more chronic medical conditions than their peers.

Blood thinners, regardless of if they are being used, before being infected with Covid-19 or started when admitted to the hospital for treatment of Covid-19, reduced deaths by almost half.

Moreover, regardless of the type or dose of the medication used, hospitalised Covid-19 patients benefited from blood thinners, the researchers said.

Unfortunately, nearly half of the patients who are being prescribed blood thinners for blood clots do not take them

SAMEH HOZAYEN | ASSISTANT PROFESSOR OF MEDICINE AT THE MINNESOTA UNIVERSITY'S MEDICAL SCHOOL

"Unfortunately, nearly half of the patients who are being prescribed blood thinners for blood

Research data showed that patients on blood thinners before having Covid-19 were admitted less often to the hospital

clots in their legs, lungs, abnormal heart rhythms or other reasons, do not take them. By increasing adherence for people already prescribed blood thinners, we can potentially reduce the bad effects of Covid-19," said lead author Sameh Hozayen, Assistant Professor of Medicine at the Minnesota University's medical school.

"At most centres around the world now, there are protocols for starting blood thinners when patients are first admitted to the hospital for Covid-19, as it is a proven vital treatment option. Outside of Covid-19, the use of blood thinners is proven to be life-saving for those with blood coagulation conditions," Hozayen added.

Boudh becomes 1st Covid-free district

The district has so far reported 12,594 infections, of which 12,482 patients have recuperated and 112 have succumbed to the disease



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, Oct 3: At least 528 more people, including 73 children, tested positive for Covid-19 in Odisha, taking the tally to 10,27,959, while Boudh became the first coronavirus-free district of Odisha with no active cases, a Health official said Sunday.

The daily infection rate among people below 18 years of age was at 13.82, up from 11.92 per cent Saturday, the official informed.

Khurda district, which comprises state Capital Bhubaneswar, recorded the highest number of fresh cases at 243, followed by Cuttack at 69.

Nine districts - Bolangir, Boudh, Dhenkanal, Gajapati, Kandhamal, Keonjhar, Kalahandi, Nuapada and Rayagada - did not report any new case in the last 24 hours.

Boudh became the state's first Covid-free district as there was no active case for the last two days. It has so far reported 12,594 infections, of which 12,482 patients have recuperated and 112 have succumbed to the disease, the official said.

Five fresh fatalities - two from Khurda and one each from Cuttack, Ganjam and Jajpur - raised the coronavirus death toll in the state to 8,214, he added. Fifty-three other Covid-19 patients have so far died due to comorbidities.

Odisha currently has 5,280 active cases, while 579 more people were cured of the disease in the last 24 hours, taking the total number of recoveries to 10,14,412

The coastal state has so far conducted over 2.01 crore sample tests, including 69,030 Saturday, and the positivity rate now stands at 5.09 per cent

While 2,24,92,053 people have taken the first dose, over 87 lakh people have been fully vaccinated in the state so far

The coastal state currently has 5,280 active cases, while 579 more people were cured of the disease in the last 24 hours, taking the total number of recoveries to 10,14,412, it was learnt.

The state has so far conducted over 2.01 crore sample tests, including 69,030 Saturday, and the positivity rate now stands at 5.09 per cent. As many as 3,12,57,812 doses have been administered.

While 2,24,92,053 people have taken the first dose, over 87 lakh people have been fully vaccinated in the state, the official informed.

Basic facilities still elude this Ganjam village

POST NEWS NETWORK

Ganjam, Oct 3: Despite a number of government schemes and crores of rupees being spent to uplift people from poverty and provide them government services, even today, many villages are still deprived of basic facilities like an all weather road, electricity, safe drinking water, sanitation, education and health services among others.

Balinkia village under Bhanjanagar block of Ganjam is such a village, where the alleged non-performance of the local administration and laxity of the people's representatives have left the villagers waiting for these basic amenities to reach them.

According to the locals, the village was given electricity connection a few years back. But now, it is back in darkness as the power supply was stopped subsequently for a couple of years due to some reason and hasn't been restored since.

Oppn: Teachers' transfer letter politically-motivated

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Oct 3: The Odisha government's decision of giving power to local MLAs for transfer of school teachers during 2021-22 academic session has not gone down well with the opposition leaders and educationists.

Critics alleged that this decision was taken keeping in mind the panchayat elections, which were scheduled to be held in March next year.

As per sources, the School and Mass Education (S&ME) department, in a letter to the Director of Elementary Education, has said that the local MLAs can recommend the district Collectors to transfer a maximum of 10 primary and secondary school teachers under specified rules.

The transfer of the teachers will be done strictly within the district and no teachers posted in the rural areas will be allowed to be transferred to urban areas, the letter has stated. Besides, the MLAs can recommend the transfer of the

teachers to other locations in the district only after considering their urgent needs.

Congress leader Suresh Routray said that the decision was a step to gather votes as the MLAs may select teachers who can work for them during panchayat election as they will be in poll duty. BJP Keonjhar MLA Mohan Majhi said that the grant of power questions the government's motive.

The S&ME Minister Samir Ranjan Dash said that the decision will help in speedy recruitment of teachers in places where there is large vacancy. BJD Bhubaneswar Central MLA Ananta Narayan Jena also supported the decision and said that it should not be taken in a negative way.

On the other hand, Odisha Secondary School Teachers' Association (OSSSTA) Secretary Prakash Chandra Mohanty said that all MLAs should take such decisions without any political motive, and the district and block education officers too should have such power.



An artisan busy making idols for the upcoming Durga Puja celebrations at Old Town in Bhubaneswar, Sunday

OP PHOTO

PVT HOSP IN SOUP OVER POST-SURGERY DEATH

POST NEWS NETWORK

Nimapada, Oct 3: A private health-care facility in Nimapada landed in trouble after a series of allegations, including faulty treatment, unreasonable fee demand and harassment, were made in an FIR at the Nimapada police station late Saturday night.

According to sources, Manaswini behera, 28, of Bamadeipur village was admitted to the private hospital for stomach pain September 14, and underwent laparoscopy September 15. Soon after the surgery, her condition worsened, and the doctors concerned and hospital staffers told her family to take her to Cuttack.

However, Manaswini's family and fellow villagers suspected faulty treatment on part of the hospital and agitated near the facility. Informed, police officials rushed to the spot and dispersed the crowd. The patient was later taken to a private clinic in Cuttack where she breathed her last after struggling for several days in ICU. The clinic charged Rs 93,000 for her treatment and the family could pay Rs 35,000. However, the staffers refused to hand over the body until the full amount was paid, it was alleged.

On the other hand, the surgeon



MANASWINI BEHERA, 28, OF BAMADEIPUR VILLAGE WAS ADMITTED TO THE PRIVATE HOSPITAL FOR STOMACH PAIN SEPTEMBER 14, AND UNDERWENT LAPAROSCOPY SEPTEMBER 15

Soon after the surgery, her condition worsened, and the doctors concerned and hospital staffers told her family to take her to Cuttack

The patient was taken to a private clinic in Cuttack where she breathed her last after struggling for several days in ICU

in the private health facility had said that treatment and surgery would be free of cost under Biju Swasthya Kalyan Yojana but later on demanded huge amount from the deceased's family, as per the allegations.

A case was registered in this connection under Sections 420, 294, 506 and 34 and the investigation is in progress.

Consistent allegations are com-

ing to the fore stating that certain influential persons are running nursing homes and private hospitals with inefficient and rookie doctors in Nimapada and Charichhak areas, and exploiting the patients with faulty treatment. Locals have time and again requested the government officials concerned to intervene and penalise the culprits, but to no avail.

AZADI KA AMRIT MAHOTSAV 75 participate in BSCL's heritage walk in City

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Oct 3: As part of the 'Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav' celebrations, the Bhubaneswar Smart City Limited (BSCL) Sunday organised a special heritage walk in the Old Town area here.

As many as 75 participants started the walk from Mukteswar Temple, which is unique for its intricate carvings and beautiful arch. The participants also explored the Parsurameswar Temple, Bindusagar Tank, Ananta Basudev Temple, old Dharmashala, Gaurishankar Temple, and lastly, Lingaraj Temple.

Seven-year-old Aaniya Rajhans from KIIT International School who was also the youngest participant in the walk enjoyed her time exploring the heritage of the state Capital. She said, "I would love to come and visit these places often in near future, once the Covid situation eases a little more. I would also want my friends to come and see the temples we have in our City."

Secretary of the Sadhana Shreegobinda said that the heritage walks provide room to explore the missing links between our past and present. As Bhubaneswar has rich history and has succeeded in becoming a smart city with notable urban development projects, knowing its history is important for every citizen.

CLEANLINESS FIRST



OP PHOTO

Labourers engaged by Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation removing hyacinths and lotus plants from Bindusagar Tank at Old Town in the Capital city, Sunday

Poor eating habits can affect fertility

Poor eating habits can take a heavy toll on your mental and physical well-being, it can even impact fertility. If you want to conceive, you need to embrace a healthy lifestyle and make some changes in your diet. By doing so, you can boost your fertility and ovulation function too.

There is a link between nutrition and fertility. Diet, weight, smoking, and alcohol intake can have a negative impact on fertility and can lead to hormonal imbalance. Thus, it is imperative to improve your eating habits. This becomes more important when you are planning pregnancy and want to improve fertility. Maintaining optimum weight and opting for foods that are safe and supportive for your baby are important. So, you have to include folic acid, iron, protein, and other important nutrients.

Remember not to try any fad diets, which can deplete your body of the nutrients it needs during pregnancy. Know what to eat and what to delete:

Low levels of iron can lead to anaemia. Right levels of iron can help those red blood cells deliver oxygen to the baby. Opt for dried beans, raisins, apricots, spinach, lentils, and peas. Choose foods like



OPT FOR DRIED BEANS, RAISINS, APRICOTS, SPINACH, LENTILS, AND PEAS

CHOOSE FOODS LIKE SPINACH, PUMPKIN, TOMATOES, AND BEETROOT TO CUT DOWN THE CHANCES OF OVULATORY INFERTILITY

spinach, pumpkin, tomatoes, and beetroot to cut down the chances of ovulatory infertility.

Eat protein-rich foods like tofu, paneer, and lentils. Omega-3 fatty acids can help you improve the quality of the eggs. Is your caffeine intake high? Beware! It can invite subfertility or a delay in conceiving.

Folate (folic acid) is essential, and slashes down the chances of neural tube defects in newborns. You can get it from various foods like green leafy vegetables, orange juice, legumes (beans, peas, lentils), and even nuts. If you are opting for any supplement then do not take it without your doctor's knowledge. Even males can take it to increase the sperm count.

Opting for sugary beverages like sodas and energy drinks can lead to low fertility. Do not consume them on a regular basis.

Do not have processed and canned foods as you will take a longer time to become pregnant. No pizza, pasta, cake, pastries, chips, namkeens, and desserts. Alcohol and smoking are not recommended at all if you want to boost your fertility.

Have less trans fat and more monounsaturated fat (from avocados and olive oil). Avoid highly processed carbohydrates and eat complex ones.

Eat fresh fruits, vegetables and whole grains. A well-balanced diet is beneficial for good sperm production.

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2 women Maoists lay down arms

POST NEWS NETWORK

Koraput, Oct 3: Two women Maoists laid down arms and surrendered before top police officials in this district Sunday. The two who surrendered were identified Deba Padiami alias Gangi and Gita Padiami alias Rajita. They were active members of Gumma area committee. Among the two, one held the rank of an area commander and carried a bounty of ₹4,00,000.

DGP Abhay, who was present on the occasion, welcomed the two tribals to mainstream social life. The Odisha Police chief also appealed to other red rebels to lay down their arms and return to the mainstream of the society.

“Koraput police have done a commendable job in facilitating surrender by Maoist surrenders in the past. The Odisha government has a very attractive rehabilitation policy and I urge all the Maoists to take advantage of it to join the mainstream,” Abhay said.

Following the surrender of Maoists, the DGP Commendation Disc was awarded to 22 personnel of Koraput district police for their

work in the past.

“Koraput has been one of the most successful districts in anti-Maoist operations. In the recent past, Koraput police have led from the front in checking smuggling of cannabis. In 2020, the district topped the state in terms of cannabis haul,” the DGP informed.

Police stations opened

DGP Abhay inaugurated the Jodambo police station building which has been constructed in the erstwhile cut-off area in Malkangiri Sunday. Expressing happiness over the development activities in the region, the DGP appealed to the Maoists to shun the path of violence and join the mainstream.

He recalled that 2nd October, 29 years back, he had come to Malkangiri and joined as the Superintendent of Police in the district. “I am really happy to have come here after almost three decades. The DVF, Malkangiri district police, SOG and the BSF are working in cohesion to counter Maoists. Their work is really commendable,” Abhay observed.

The inauguration of the



Jodambo station is a landmark for Odisha Police. The police station was earlier functioning in Chittrakonda and was shifted last year to Jodambo. Now the police station will help in rendering services to the people of Swabhimanchal, hoped the top police official.

He also inaugurated the new building of Kalimela police station, made at a cost of ₹2 crore. He held a review meeting here and discussed strategies with senior

police officials to counter the Left wing extremists in Kalimela area.

He said, “Over the past few years, the influence of Maoists in the district has declined significantly. The state government has been carrying out various development activities in the region.”

The DGP was accompanied by IGP Operations, Amitabh Thakur, Malkangiri SP Prahlad Sahai Meena, and the Range DIG, Rajesh Pandit.

Custodial torture slur on Malkangiri police

POST NEWS NETWORK

Malkangiri, Oct 3: Personnel of Motu police station in this district are in a soup over allegations of custodial torture on two youths. It has been alleged that two youths picked up for theft were brutally assaulted by the police for three days when they were in custody, a report said Sunday.

The victims identified as Biswajit Biswas and Biplab Halder sustained critical injuries due to the assault are currently undergoing treatment at the MV-79 hospital.

The incident sparked shockwaves in the area and has again brought the spotlight on custodial torture despite the apex court denouncing it as violation of human rights.

When contacted, Motu IIC Ashok Kumar Bisoi rejected the charges. He said he has just joined here two days back and so



he will not be able to say anything about it.

Locals, however, demanded a high-level inquiry into the incident. They alleged that the two youths were so badly beaten up in custody that they are unable to walk properly.

Sources said that a kangaroo court was held September 29 at Maharajpali panchayat in MPV-81 village under Motu police lim-

its to punish the two youths for committing theft. The youths had then fled to neighbouring Andhra Pradesh. However, the villagers persuaded them to come back. Once the youths returned, they were handed over to the police. Motu police, however, without conducting any probe into alleged theft, locked them up and brutally tortured them for three days, it was alleged.

Civil Supplies dept faces flak

LARGE NUMBER OF COMPLAINTS YET TO BE REDRESSED DESPITE REMINDERS



POST NEWS NETWORK

Chhatrapur, Oct 3: The Civil Supplies department in Ganjam is flooded with complaints from people in various parts of the district. However, it was alleged that the department has failed to attend to a large number of the complaints filed online.

According to reports, complaints have been made over the years through the department's portal. This has come to the notice of the Odisha State Civil Supplies Corporation (OSCS).

Biswajit Keshari Das, MD of the Odisha State Civil Supplies Corporation has issued a letter to the Ganjam Collector and the District Civil Supplies officer September 28 in this regard. He has directed the administration to take expeditious steps for disposal of such complaints. The Odisha government has laid emphasis on removing bottlenecks on public distribution system and streamlining the system in the larger interests of the people, the letter said.

According to the letter, 1,374 complaints are pending with the Civil Supplies department. Most of the complaints are related to people without ration cards and anomalies in those. Some complaints by people state that in spite of having ration cards in their possession, they are being deprived of their quota.

The MD of the Odisha State Civil Supplies Corporation has directed the Ganjam Collector and the district civil supplies officer to expedite disposal of complaints

In the past, the OSCS has sent reminders through letters to the district administration and the department to redress the pending complaints. However, the department has failed to sort out the disputes.

The district administration had received a letter in this regard July 8 from the OSCS. At that time, 2,917 cases were pending for redressal. The media also had carried detailed reports about the issue earlier.

Various outfits alleged that the department is not doing anything little to dispose of the cases.

The Civil Supplies Minister had earlier expressed his unhappiness over pending complaints and directed for quick redressal of the cases. In the letter, OSCS made it clear that the government has emphasized on expeditious disposal of cases. It has asked the administration submit report on the action taken as soon as possible, it was learnt.

Foul play suspected in woman's death

POST NEWS NETWORK

Keonjhar, Oct 3: The body of a middle-aged woman was found floating in a pond Sunday morning near Naranapur village under Town police limits in Keonjhar district, an official source informed.

According to the official, the identity of the deceased has not been ascertained yet. The age of the woman would approximately be around 32 years, the official informed.

Some residents had gone to the pond to have a wash early in the morning and saw the body floating in the water. She was wearing a sari and bangles and had slippers on. On being informed, a team of personnel from the Town police station and local fire services rushed to the pond and brought out the body.

Expressing concern over such crime, locals suspected that the woman might have been killed somewhere else and dumped in the pond.

Police have registered a case in this connection and launched an investigation which is underway, the police official informed.

Based on prima facie evidences, the woman appears to be married and was perhaps murdered, the Town police official said.

Shooting starts for ‘Saheed Peeth’ documentary

POST NEWS NETWORK

Padmapur, Oct 3: A documentary film is being made on ‘Saheed Peeth’ at Eram in Basudevpur block of Bhadrak district. The place is better known as ‘Rakta Tirtha’ (Pilgrimage of Blood) and also the second Jallianwala Bagh of India.

A total of 29 freedom fighters were shot dead September 28, 1942 at the site while they were protesting against the British rule. Pari Bewa was among those killed. She incidentally is the first Indian woman freedom fighter to be martyred. More than 5,000 satyagrahis had assembled on that fateful day

to clamour for the abolition of the British Raj. Hundreds of them were injured. Since then, the day is celebrated as ‘Saheed Diwas’ to remember the sacrifice of these freedom fighters.

It is alleged on numerous occasions that in spite of allocation of funds by the Odisha government, there has been no effort to develop ‘Saheed Peeth’ as a site of historical importance. The place is full of garbage and ‘development’ has only been done on paper.

The Information and Broadcasting Ministry, Government of India, has assigned the work to the Film Division in Mumbai to make the documentary on ‘Saheed Peeth’.

29 freedom fighters were shot dead September 28, 1942 at Eram while they were protesting against the British rule in the country

The 30-minute documentary will focus on aspects like dedication and contribution of the martyrs to the freedom struggle in India.

A crew comprising director of Film Division Abhay Kumar Mallick, cameramen S Chouhan, V Srinivasan and song and script writer M Chelapandian reached

Eram, September 28 and has started shooting for the documentary.

They have been interacting with historian Ajay Panda, elderly people of the locality, social activists, common people and others to gather information about the place of historical importance.

The documentary is expected to be completed and handed over to the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting by October end.

The then Culture and Tourism department has accorded ‘tourist spot’ status to the place and provided funds. The Union Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas has also sanctioned some funds for the development of Eram.



TAKING A PLEDGE



BJD workers take a pledge while participating in a cleanliness drive at a school in Bhatra in Sambalpur, Sunday

OP PHOTO

Sanaghagara reopened for tourists

POST NEWS NETWORK

Keonjhar, Oct 3: After remaining closed for months together due to Covid-19 restrictions, the Sanaghagara waterfall in Keonjhar was reopened recently for tourists. With winter and pleasant weather around the corner, it is expected that footfalls will only increase at this scenic location. Now however, the number of tourists is still quite minimal.

This is because tourists are not allowed to come in large groups. Also picnicking or organising cultural programmes are strictly prohibited. Locals and experts are hoping that the place will gradually attract more tourists in the coming days with ease of restrictions.

Earlier, people used to wait for a long time to enjoy boating facility available. However, since the outbreak of the pandemic the boats are lying idle.

The Sanaghagara waterfall is located close to National Highway 49 and four kilometres from the



district headquarters. It is near Anjar village. The water cascades down creating a rhythmic sound and meanders away through lush greenery. The scenery appears to be a perfect picture with a clear blue sky and birds chirping merrily in the background.

The Sanamachhakandana river meanders away in the locality and finds its way through rocks and hills before finally falling from a

huge rock from where it gets divided into two streams at the bottom.


There are also a rose garden, a flower park, a children's park with swings and an artificial lake to attract tourists. The Bada Ghagara is about six kilometres from the Sanamachhakandana river.

Locals have demanded that the administration should allow picnicking and feasts for tourists to normalise the situation.

“

When mind is still, then truth gets her chance to be heard in the purity of the silence.

SRI AUROBINDO



Lisboa Lessons

In an unfortunate decision, the UK government has decided to treat Indians entering that country, after being vaccinated with Covishield, as unvaccinated. There comes another much welcome news from Lisbona (Lisbon) that Portugal is the first country in the world where vaccination campaign is almost over now. Reports suggest the entire nation of Portugal has reposed its faith in science with no adults left to be given shots. At mass immunisation centres only the last trickle of teenagers is seen. Making a record, the country has achieved the feat of fully vaccinating 85 per cent of its population.

The experience of Portugal offers valuable lessons for the world at a time when the fight against the COVID-19 pandemic appears to be hardly holding out any hope of abatement any time soon, not to speak of vanquishing the virus. The most important of them all is how a nation can bring the virus fully under control when vaccination rates are as high as they can go. Every indicator suggests the pandemic in Portugal is losing its severity. A lot of the credit for the success goes not to any politician, but to a naval officer; Rear Admiral Henrique Gouveia e Melo who has declared with much satisfaction: “We’ve won a battle, but don’t know if we’ve won the war against the virus. For, this is a world war.” He has become a household name in Portugal since taking charge of the vaccine rollout in February, regularly appearing on television to answer public concerns about the vaccination programme.

After the record vaccination coverage in Portugal the death rate is half the European Union average and nine times below that of the United States. Restrictions are still continuing for bars, restaurants, cultural venues and at family events such as weddings and baptisms while a COVID health pass is required to access certain venues, large events, group classes in gyms and restaurants at the weekend and during public holidays. The jabs have brought in a situation where the COVID-19 infection rate and hospitalisations due to the virus have dropped to their lowest for the past few months. According to the latest reports, Portugal recorded on 29 September 891 new infections. About 400 people were hospitalised that day for COVID-19 across the country, compared to 527 a week ago. Traffic is reportedly back to normal as the pre-pandemic rhythm of life is picking up with people commuting to work.

Just as Portugal has become the world’s laboratory for tackling the menace, many questions are yet to be answered by scientists even after one and a half years into the pandemic. True, the virus spreads slower in countries with higher vaccinations than it would in places with lower vaccination rates. But, 12-and-under children are not yet eligible for shots. What is worrying still is that herd immunity remains on pen and paper only. India is a great example of the elusiveness of herd immunity. There is no let-up in the daily calculations about the risks. Portugal’s health minister Marta Temido is not only modest in claiming success (something Indian politicians and ministers should learn), but is thoroughly practical and rationalist when she says: “We have achieved a good result, but it’s not the solution or miracle one would think.” For this reason, some precautions will remain. Mask-wearing will still be mandatory at many public indoor locations in Portugal. Digital health certificates will continue to be necessary for travel and events with crowds.

The most worrying aspect of this battle is the vulnerability of the elderly to the virus even though the vaccination of this segment of the population in Portugal has reached the impossible statistical height of 100 per cent. Many of them were vaccinated more than half a year ago. And the worry stems from that time frame as studies from around the world, from the United States to Israel, have warned of a drop in protection by that point. The question of whether these elderly people are experiencing a drop in the anti-bodies in their system or if they need booster doses still has no answer.

India’s COVID vaccination drive has entered a crucial stage. Nearly 100 crore vaccinations, i.e. one crore shots a day on an average, are to be administered in the next three months if the government’s ambitious target of inoculating every adult Indian by the end of this year is to be achieved. The country has been averaging 76 lakh doses daily for about a month now, which is some improvement from the July average of 45 lakh doses. The big question is wherefrom the country will get the required supply of vaccines. About 30 per cent of the adult population has not yet got a single shot. The 12-week gap between two doses of Covishield makes things look rather bleak as it is unlikely that the target would be met before early 2022.

The need of the hour could be for the government not to indulge in making bravado based on some manipulated statistics giving a false picture about the reality. According to government figures, about 25 per cent of the eligible population has now received both shots of the vaccine and nearly 69 per cent has been administered one shot. But, that is not enough considering the fact that the third wave following the coming festive season is not being ruled out by epidemiologists. Sincerity and rising above mean politicisation of the pandemic response, which characterise the Portugal experience, should guide India’s fight against the scourge.

WISDOM CORNER

- “

Logic will get you from A to Z; imagination will get you everywhere.

ALBERT EINSTEIN
- “

When one door of happiness closes, another opens; but often we look so long at the closed door that we do not see the one which has been opened for us.

HELEN KELLER
- “

You never really understand a person until you consider things from his point of view... Until you climb inside of his skin and walk around in it.

HARPER LEE

WORDSWORTH

■ Petrichor

This word was in the news in 2009 and early 2010 for two reasons. It was cited as one of his favourite words by Ammon Shea, who read through the whole of the Oxford English Dictionary and published a book about it, Reading the OED. In February 2010, it was listed as an honourable mention in the Words of the Year list for 2009 published by the editors of the Macquarie Dictionary. Petrichor is the pleasant smell that often accompanies the first rain after a long period of warm, dry weather in certain regions. It was named by two Australian researchers, who discovered that the smell is an oily essence emitted from rocks or soils. The oil is a complicated mixture of at least fifty different compounds, rather like a perfume. The oils are given off by vegetation during dry spells and are adsorbed on to the surface of rocks and soil particles, to be released into the air again by the next rains. The Macquarie Dictionary citation suggested that in Australia it is released by the leaves of eucalyptus trees; when it’s washed by rain into watercourses it becomes a signal to fish, invertebrates, and other creatures that the season is sufficiently wet to support breeding. The word comes from Greek petros, a stone, plus ichor, from the Greek word for the fluid that flows like blood in the veins of the gods. Petrichor is a poetic creation that means something like “essence of rock”. Alas, it is encountered only very rarely. Besides the pleasant, dewy petrichor of the post-rain afternoon, I see no hope or way out of a four-hour ride with the enigmatic mumbler (VeloNews, the Journal of Competitive Cycling, 5 April 2004).

LOL

Stupid robbers

Two robbers were robbing a hotel. The first one said, “I hear sirens. Jump!”



The second one said, “But we’re on the 13th floor!”
The first one screamed back, “This is no time to be superstitious.”

FOCUS ECONOMY

PERILS OF LEMON SOCIALISM



Santosh Kumar Mohapatra

IT IS HIGH TIME THE INDIAN GOVERNMENT IMPOSES WEALTH TAXES TO GENERATE REVENUE

A part from the ideological assault on the ethos of the public sector, the very purpose of divesting or privatising the public sector and various public services or leasing out national assets is mainly to generate resources to bridge the fiscal deficit and simultaneously transfer national assets to private individuals.

But the root cause of such a decision can also be attributed to lemon socialism. Confusingly, lemon socialism may refer to government efforts to transition from capitalism to socialism but it is not an actual subcategory of socialism per se; rather, it points to corruption of free-market capitalist system.

In socialism, the government may nationalise a company in its entirety, while in lemon socialism, the company is allowed to keep its profits but its losses are shifted to taxpayers. This is akin to a policy of privatising profits while socialising or nationalising corporate losses. Lemon socialism assumes the shape of crony capitalism when corporates successfully intervene in government decisions and transactions to suit their interests.

The government resorting to a full or partial bail-out of crumbling private companies through various stimulus packages, as happened during the 2008 financial crisis and now in the aftermath of the pandemic can be dubbed as lemon socialism.

In India, lemon socialism is manifested in different forms such as tax evasion, corporates looting banks by not repaying loans and engineering banking frauds, rich transferring their ill-gotten wealth to tax havens. It is further manifested through reduction of interest rate at the cost of savers (i.e. financial repression) and not imposing legitimate taxes on the rich.

India had the highest income tax rate of 97.75 per cent with 11 tax slabs in 1974-75. Now, the highest tax rate has been reduced to 30 per cent and tax slabs to three. We don’t have inheritance taxes like many countries with wealth tax being discontinued since 1 April 2016.



In socialism, the government may nationalise a company in its entirety, while in lemon socialism, the company is allowed to keep its profits but its losses are shifted to taxpayers. This is akin to a policy of privatising profits while socialising or nationalising corporate losses

This has benefited the rich while the revenue generation capacity of the economy has been dampened. The tax rate should be progressive. It means the tax rate should increase in tandem with the increase in income.

The same thing is found in the case of the corporate tax rate. During 1991, corporate tax rate was 45 per cent which was gradually reduced due to pressure from corporate honchos. September 20, 2019, the government lowered the base corporate tax rate to 22 per cent from 30 per cent, and to 15 per cent from 25 per cent for new manufacturing companies. The precipitous reduction has achieved none of its stated objectives but has left the government poorer by ₹1.45 lakh crore. In each year, the loss is mounting. In 2020-21, for the first time in 12 years, income tax collections have outstripped the corporate tax collection.

While reduction of corporate taxes addressed the supply side problem, it did not address the demand side problem. Had those amounts been spent on health infrastructure or education or job creation, it would have benefited a

large number of people and spurred demand and growth.

As of November 30, 2019, there were around 5 lakh cases pending at various levels with disputed tax arrears amounting to approximately ₹9 lakh crore. The government’s revenue foregone in the form of incentives and tax exemptions to corporates is now nearly ₹1 lakh crore each year.

The gross NPAs which were ₹2,14,549 crore in 2014-15 had increased to ₹10,36,187 crore as of 31 March 2018. It is likely to cross ₹11 lakh crore in 2021-22. The total bad loans written off between April 2014 and March 2021, a period of seven years, stands at a mind-boggling ₹10.63 lakh crore. It may be noted that banks are able to recover only 10 to 15% of loans written off. During the last seven years, banks have lost nearly ₹5 lakh crore due to rising frauds.

By contrast, despite the havoc created by the COVID-19 pandemic, the combined net profit of the listed companies was up 57.6 per cent to ₹5.31 lakh crore in 2020-21. As a result, the corporate profit share in India’s GDP hit a 10-year high of 2.63 per cent in the last fi-

nancial year. India’s 100 top billionaires saw their fortunes increase by ₹12,97,822 crore in 2020 since March when the pandemic hit the country and this amount is enough to give 13.8 crore poorest Indians a cheque for ₹94,045 each. The Global Social Mobility Report (2020) reveals Indians born in low-income families will take seven generations to even approach the country’s mean income.

The mounting inequality is clearly manifested when debt grew faster than assets but the rich garnered major shares of assets. It is not that only household indebtedness is growing, public debt is growing too. When rich, corporates don’t pay legitimate taxes, the government resorts to heavy borrowing to sustain expenditure and growth. Despite excessive borrowing, GDP does not grow in tandem with the rise in borrowings. As the government has to repay loans and interest, the saddle of higher debt falls upon the masses through the reduction of welfare expenditure, privatisation of health and education, and escalation of indirect taxes like excise taxes on fuel which are regressive in nature and hurt the poor the most.

The lemon socialism is reflected through the compassion deficit in India’s business behemoths and affluent elite. Indian business behemoths, the rich, and celebrities are not fond of paying legitimate taxes on their own unless there is coercion.

In October 2017, the IMF had backed higher income tax rates including different types of wealth taxes on the rich to reduce inequality while demolishing the arguments that economic growth would suffer if the tax rate is increased. April 7, 2021, the IMF proposed a temporary ‘solidarity’ tax on pandemic winners like billionaires, corporates. According to the IMF, high earners and companies that prospered during the pandemic should pay an additional tax to show solidarity with those who were hit the hardest by the crisis. Now, it is high time the Indian government imposes wealth taxes to generate revenue.

The writer is an Odisha-based economist and columnist.

SPECTRUM PANDEMIC RESPONSE

Problem of binary in vaccination



Debasish Mishra

APART FROM THE INCONVENIENCE AND THE RISK INVOLVED, THIS POLICY POSES A FINANCIAL CHALLENGE TO MIGRANTS WHO ARE ALREADY AFFECTED BY THE ABSENCE OF REGULAR EARNINGS

India is gearing up to vaccinate the entire population at the earliest. According to the Health Ministry’s update September 28, the cumulative vaccination coverage in the country has crossed 87.59 crore. Almost one-fourth of the adult population has now been vaccinated with both doses and one-half has received at least one dose. India is likely to achieve the milestone of 100 crore doses by next month. With the monstrous rise of Delta Plus and Lambda variants of COVID across the globe, complete vaccination coverage of the country is the least that we can afford to achieve. The introduction of mobile booths for vaccination, engagement of regional languages in the CoWin app and doing away with the process of online booking are laudable initiatives.

In addition to these welcome measures, which have ensured social equity, what needs to be corrected is the binary of vaccines in India. In most places of the country, the population is deprived of a choice. There is no scope for preference. Having said that, considering the large population of India and the glaring scarcity of resources, expecting a menu card of

vaccines is a bit too much. However, there are exceptional cases which demand special attention. For instance, in Odisha, Covishield is provided in almost every part of the state while Covaxin is served exclusively in Bhubaneswar and Berhampur. In this scenario, if a migrant has received his/her first jab in Bhubaneswar, he/she would have to come again for the second jab or alternatively go to Berhampur. Even students who have taken their first dose of Covaxin in the capital will have to return for the second dose within 42 days or make travel arrangements to Berhampur, if in case they have gone to their places of domicile. It must be noted that communication has not yet reached normalcy due to the absence of public transport. Many trains are cancelled indefinitely and not all buses are running. It would, thus, be prudent for the government to make arrangements to see that the migrant population is served with the appropriate second dose of the vaccines in their very place of residence, without the need to travel back to the place where they got their first dose.

I have been personally affected

by the ‘problem of binary in vaccination.’ I took my first jab of Covaxin May 5, 2021. I expected to get the second jab June 5. However, I tested positive for COVID-19 June 1 and my second jab was deferred. At present, I am in Titilagarh, Bolangir. Due to the unavailability of Covaxin in my region, I have no option but to travel to Bhubaneswar to have the second dose. My case is not unique. The most affected are the marginalised people who do not have a voice. Unfortunately, they are elusively away from the media and, thus, nobody knows about them.

Apart from the inconvenience and the risk involved, this policy of binary poses a financial challenge to migrants who are already affected by the absence of regular earnings due to the lockdown. Arrangements of vaccines in the very place of dwelling would be convenient, safe and financially considerate for these poor fellows who would otherwise have to risk their lives and incur extra expenditure for their travel to the place where they had their first jab. The need to get back to the city adds insult to injury during a time of financial crunch. Due to the lack of

resources, such persons may even think of skipping their second dose within the prescribed timeframe and foil the efforts and expenditure of the government. Over 3.86 crore people in India did not get their second dose of either Covishield or Covaxin within the stipulated period of time, the government has responded to an RTI query with data till 17 August, 2021. As a matter of fact, over 12,95,000 beneficiaries in Odisha have missed the second dose of vaccines within the stipulated time, the State Health & Family Welfare Department informed 25 August, 2021. According to the government directive, “both doses of vaccine should be taken for realising the full benefit of vaccination.” Arguably, it would be a fatuous assumption to believe that all these persons would have skipped the second dose with their own choice. There would be students and migrant workers therein who may not have had a choice. The government’s intervention in this regard is inevitable to ensure social justice and also to check the rise of COVID.

The writer is a Senior Research Fellow at NISER, HBNI, Bhubaneswar.

Kanhaiya’s hangover

Sir, Kanhaiya Kumar who quit CPI and joined Congress is yet to come out of the ‘tukde-tukde’ hangover. As a new entrant, Kanhaiya has failed to inspire confidence in the Congress that he would do everything possible to rejuvenate the party which is now in shambles. What is needed for Congress is rejuvenation, not breaking other parties into pieces. Congress had a mass-base until 1975 when then Prime Minister Indira Gandhi imposed emergency to save her chair that started shaking following the Allahabad High Court verdict which held her guilty of corruption. The citadel of Congress fell when Janata Party came to power under the stewardship of Loknayak Jayaprakash Narayan. Struggle for power among Morarji Desai, Charan Singh and Jagjivan Ram edged out the Janata Party in the 1980 Lok Sabha election ultimately leading to the return of Indira Gandhi to the seat of power. The downfall of Congress started after the assassination of Indira Gandhi in 1984. The fortune looked up for Congress in 2004, but the disintegration of the party commenced after the 2014 electoral debacle. Kanhaiya has joined the party with a negative approach. Kanhaiya needs to be the cementing force in reuniting all the parties that broke away from Congress. In a democratic set-up, it is people who can make or break a party, not the people of Kanhaiya’s ilk. Now Congress is desperate to admit anybody to the party without screening the newcomers.

KV Seetharamaiah, BANGALORE

Cleanliness is must

Sir, October 2 this year marked the seven successful years of Swachh Bharat Abhiyan. It has been one of the most efficacious steps our nation has taken. I remember the time when people, without any hesitation, used to throw garbage anywhere and everywhere. But the scenario has changed. Every Indian state now is in healthy competition for making itself a clean and hygienic place to reside. Also, the launch of Swachh Bharat 2.0 and AMRUT (Atal Mission for Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation) by Prime Minister Narendra Modi with an aim to make cities garbage-free and water-safe is remarkable and worth appreciating. “Cleanliness is a lifestyle, cleanliness is a life mantra,” the prime minister stated during the launch of the programmes. The launch not only calls for social cleanliness but also demonstrates the change in mindset of the masses also.

Anushka Jaiswal, UJJAIN

Letters

TO THE EDITOR

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

OrissaPOST
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500 cough syrup bottles
confiscated, 2 arrested



Sambalpur, Oct 3: A team of Burla police in Sambalpur district seized 500 cough syrup bottles and sedatives from two bikers during routine patrolling on National Highway-53. The arrested persons were identified as Suresh Jacob, 40 and Rajesh Panchabihar, 30. A case was registered in this connection and the accused produced in court. Both were remanded to judicial custody. The seized contraband was adul-

terated Codiwar cough syrup, police informed. A scooter used in transporting the cough syrup bottles was also seized from the accused persons. Reports said that the police have identified a group who are involved in the possession and sale of adulterated cough syrup. Further investigation is underway to trace the source of procurement of the contraband. Efforts are also on to find out the others involved in the sale of adulterated cough syrup.

Five quintals of
ganja seized in
Ganjam, 2 held

Berhampur, Oct 3: In a major crackdown, a team of excise officials busted a cannabis smuggling racket at Khodasingi locality in Ganjam district. Two persons were arrested in this connection. Cannabis weighing around five quintals was seized from their possession. According to an official, the two persons have been identified as Mangilal Bhil and his close associate Mangilal Gorona. The accused are history-sheeters involved in ganja smuggling. The excise squad got information from a reliable source that the truck was on its way from Krushnapur village under Patapur police limits of Ganjam to Nagpur in Maharashtra. Swinging into action, the officials intercepted the truck at Khodasingi, the senior official said. During a thorough search, a huge quantity of cannabis packed in large sacks was recovered from the vehicle. The market price of the seized cannabis is said to be more than ₹50 lakh.



Children participate in a sit and draw competition to mark the 67th wildlife week celebration in Rajnagar block of Kendrapara district, Sunday

School merger may ‘impact’ panchayat polls

Observers said the move was implemented in haste without addressing the socio-economic problems in the region and without taking care of the electoral arithmetic, which may influence the outcome of the panchayat elections

Kendrapara, Oct 3: The state government’s move to merge schools with low student strength brought about by the merger of 217 schools in this district has posed an uncanny threat to the upcoming panchayat elections in the district, a report said. Guardians opposing the move have drawn the attention of the district administration as well as their respective sarpanchs and local MLAs several times but their pleas are yet to be addressed. However, the public representatives have failed to stop the implementation of the government order to assuage the feelings of their constituents. Guardians are not interested to send their children to schools far-off from their residence. Moreover, the merger has thrown up some surprises as boys have been admitted to girls’ schools. As many as three high schools, four upper primary schools and 210 primary schools have been merged with



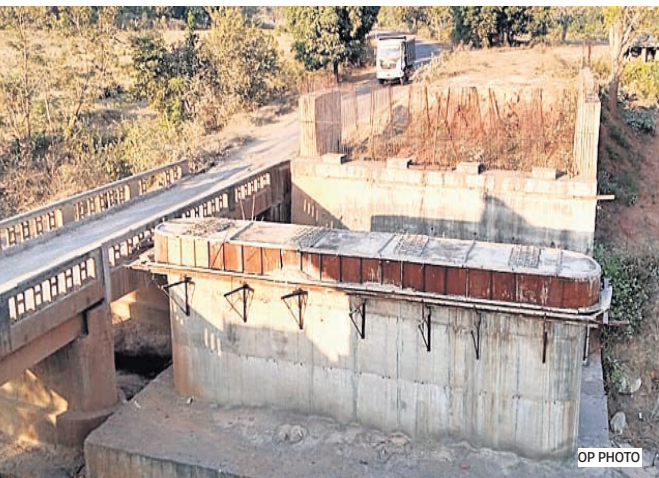
their nearest schools. The move has left the guardians furious and upset, which the political observers apprehend that it might influence the outcome of panchayat elections. Observers said the move was implemented in haste without addressing the socio-economic problems in the region and without taking care of the electoral arithmetic, which may influence the outcome of the

As many as three high schools, four upper primary schools and 210 primary schools have been merged with their nearest schools on the pretext of low student strength. Guardians are not interested to send their children to schools far-off from their residence. A guardian sending them to the new schools is fraught with thoughts of serious risks the kids may face. Moreover, the merger has thrown up some surprises as boys have been forcefully admitted to girls’ schools. Even, the certificates of the boys passing out HSC examination from this school mention the name of the school as Government Girls’ High School

from their previous schools. He said that small children have been mostly affected by this move. Children in the age group of 10 are mostly innocent. A guardian sending them to the new schools is fraught with thoughts of serious risk due to regular movement of vehicles and movement of stray cattle and animals.

Moreover, the district has many rivers and creeks and many areas lack a good road and often it involves travelling across the river to reach the schools. As a result, guardians and parents prefer to keep their children at home instead of sending them to new schools, he said. Pramod Kumar Das of Marshaghai said that the merger has forced boys to study in Government Girls’ High School in Marshaghai. However, the name of the school still remains the same. The certificates of the boys passing out HSC examination from this school mention the name of the school as Government Girls’ High School, Marshaghai which is quite awkward for the boys and their guardians for obvious reasons. Jagdish Pati of Tepur village said that the residents and guardians tried their best to stop the school merger but in vain. This has sparked anger and tension among them and this simmering anger might get reflected in the upcoming panchayat elections.

5 YEARS ON, BRIDGE
PROJECT NOWHERE
NEAR COMPLETION



Tikiri, Oct 3: People in Kashipur block of Rayagada district have long been facing commuting problems as a bridge construction across Kuchingguda river at Toyaput village has remained incomplete for the last five years. According to reports, the works department started construction of the bridge in 2016, but its work has been left halfway. In such a condition, people have no way but to commute on an old bridge risking their lives. The old bridge is in bad shape, locals said. They pointed out that as heavy vehicles ply on this bridge, major mishap cannot be ruled out any time. “If anything happens, communication to Kashipur will be completely disrupted. The construction of the bridge should be expedited and completed as soon as possible,” they said. In 2016, when its construction work was started, locals hoped that their commuting problem would be over soon, but the contractor has been delaying its work. People of Toyaput lamented that

Locals commute on a
rickety bridge under
apprehensions that a
mishap may occur at
any moment

as long as the bridge work is incomplete, they will be facing a lot of problems. The cost of the bridge project was then estimated at ₹3.67 crore. It was instructed that the work should be completed in a year. “But five years have passed, it is nowhere near completion,” locals said. The department has attributed the delay in bridge construction to a change in its design. The delay in approval of the design has led to delay in its completion. Contacted, executive engineer of the works department, Jamuna Behera said that due to design change of the bridge, a proposal was sent to the state government. “The delay in its construction is due to delay in approval from the government side. If it does not rain, the work will be resumed soon,” he explained.

Woman’s body
found in orchard

Rourkela: The body of a middle-aged woman was found under mysterious circumstances in an orchard in Sundargarh district, police said Sunday. A man was detained in this connection. The woman, a widow having two daughters and two sons, had gone to gather firewood early Saturday morning but did not return. Her half-naked body was found in the orchard in Talsara area under Subdegga block later in the afternoon, police said. Police have detained a man who had allegedly misbehaved with the woman and was reprimanded by villagers. An investigation is on, police said.

Jail inmates can now speak to visitors from glass cabin

Berhampur, Oct 3: Inmates of Berhampur Circle Jail in Ganjam district can now speak face to face with their visitors, over the intercom, with just a glass barrier separating them, a senior officer said. At least 10 such cabins were inaugurated by Director General of Prisons Santosh Upadhyay in the jail Saturday. After Bhubaneswar, the Circle Jail in Berhampur is the second prison to introduce this facility in Odisha.



“The state-of-the-art facilities have been implemented in a way that respects the privacy of convicts. Earlier, they had to converse with their visitors across a grilled barricade. “We will introduce this sys-

After Bhubaneswar, the
Circle Jail in Berhampur
is the second prison to
introduce this facility
in Odisha

Sahu said. A vigil will be maintained so that prisoners do not get a chance to accept items like tobacco from their relatives, Sahu said. During his visit, Upadhyay conducted a review of the construction of a new 100-capacity jail ward.

FREE LEGAL AID

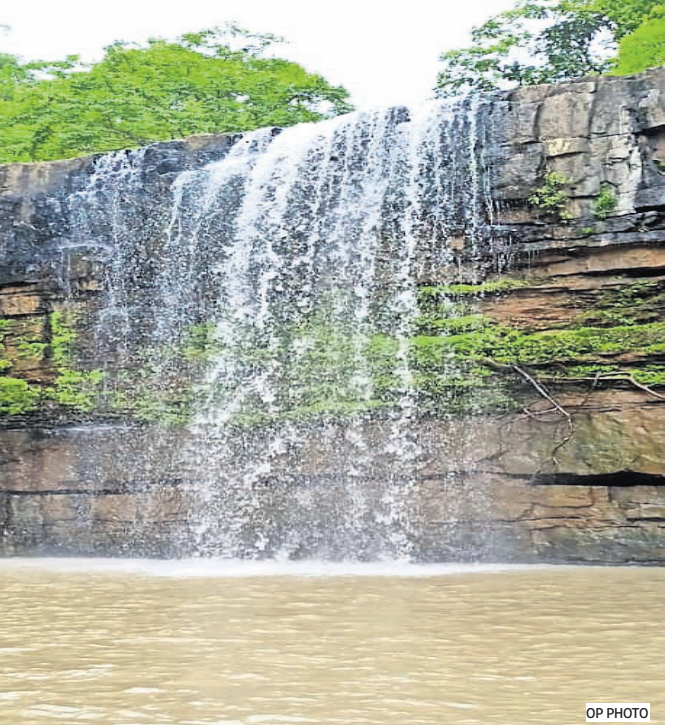


Lawyers and para-legal volunteers take out an awareness rally on free legal aid in Sonepur, Sunday

Thipakhola cries for development

Thipakhola waterfall is 15 km away from the Sinapali block headquarters, ensconced in the lap of a scenic natural setting in this hilly region. One who has visited the spot even once knows the charm of the place

Nuapada, Oct 3: Thipakhola waterfall situated in Sinapali block of Nuapada district has been accorded the status of a tourist place by the state government, but necessary infrastructure development for the spot has allegedly not been taken. Locals accused the state government of showing apathy towards its development. They have demanded adequate measures for its development. The waterfall is ensconced in the lap of a scenic natural setting in this hilly region. One who has vis-



ited the spot even once knows the charm of the place. The place is reportedly inaccessible and has remained out of the notice of the visitors in the absence of proper connectivity. Locals pointed out that communication facility is a must for development of a tourist spot. “This place has no road. People coming from far off places face problems while searching for a place to rest or any accommodation,”

they lamented. A delegation of local people recently met Culture and Tourism Minister Jyotiprakash Panigrahi in Bhubaneswar and submitted him a memorandum in this regard. Taking note of the memorandum, the minister has assured that he would visit the place and a blueprint for its development will be drawn up. “A discussion will be held with tourism officials about cost estimate for the development of the waterfall. After a proposal is approved, its work will be taken up,” the minister said. Thipakhola waterfall is 15 km away from the Sinapali block headquarters. In winter, a large number of visitors come to this place to enjoy its scenic natural beauty. People from districts like Kalahandi, Nabarangpur, Bolangir, Bargarh and Nuapada throng the place for picnics. As the place is close to the borders of Chhattisgarh, many people from this state too visit it. Local BJD leaders, social activists and members of clubs have demanded immediate measures for development of the place to make optimum use of its tourism potential.



Delhi to get 'green' funds to manage pollution

This is the first time Delhi will get funds under NCAP, a national-level strategy for a 20 per cent to 30 per cent reduction in PM2.5 and PM10 concentration by 2024, with 2017 as the base year for comparison

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Oct 3: The national capital will get over ₹18 crore from the Centre under the National Clean Air Programme (NCAP) this year to cater to critical gaps in air pollution management, according to officials.

This is the first time Delhi will get funds under NCAP, a national-level strategy for a 20 per cent to 30 per cent reduction in PM2.5 and PM10 concentration by 2024, with 2017 as the base year for comparison.

"Delhi will get ₹18.74 crore under NCAP. This is the first time it will be receiving funds under the programme since it started in 2019," an official told PTI.

NCAP covers 132 non-attainment cities, which do not meet the prescribed national ambient air quality standards (NAAQS).

These cities have been identified based on the ambient air quality data obtained during the 2011-2015 period under the National Air Monitoring Programme.

The acceptable annual standard for PM 10 and PM2.5 is 60 micrograms per cubic metre and 40 micrograms per cubic metre, respectively.



In 2017, Delhi's annual PM10 average stood at 240 micrograms per cubic metre. The targeted PM10 concentration by 2024 is 168 micrograms per cubic metre.

"The national capital did not get any funds under NCAP for two years because it had other resources available -- a green cess levied on diesel vehicles above 2,000 cc -- which is deposited with the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) and a pollution tax on commercial vehicles entering Delhi," an official in the Union Environment Ministry said.

This time, fund availability under

NCAP has improved.

"Fifty cities are already getting a good amount (Rs 4,400 in 2020-21 and ₹2,217 crore in 2021-22) for pollution management from the Finance Commission. Therefore, the availability of funds for the remaining 82 cities under NCAP has improved. So, we decided to give some funds to Delhi, too," the official said.

A total of 290 crore is available for these 82 cities this year.

The NCAP fund will be utilised to cater to critical gaps -- wherever there is any inadequacy of funds available from other resources.

WINTER ACTION PLAN

THE DELHI GOVERNMENT HAS PREPARED A 'WINTER ACTION PLAN' TO TACKLE AIR POLLUTION IN THE CAPITAL AND CHIEF MINISTER ARVIND KEJRIWAL IS EXPECTED TO ANNOUNCE IT SOON

THE PLAN FOCUSES ON 10 KEY ISSUES, INCLUDING STUBBLE BURNING, POLLUTION HOTSPOTS, WORKING OF SMOG TOWER AND VEHICULAR AND DUST POLLUTION

THE CITY GOVERNMENT HAS ALREADY IMPOSED A COMPLETE BAN ON THE SALE AND BURSTING OF FIRECRACKERS TILL JANUARY 1, 2022, AND HAS ISSUED DETAILED GUIDELINES TO CONTROL DUST POLLUTION

The rest of the funding is to be mobilised through convergence of schemes, the official explained.

Funds for bigger projects such as management of construction and demolition waste are allocated under the Swachh Bharat Urban programme and other schemes of the central government.

Weapons dropped by Pak drone recovered in Jammu

Drone activities from the neighbouring country have witnessed an alarming increase over the past one year, posing a major challenge to security forces guarding the borders

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Jammu, Oct 3: An arms consignment believed to have been dropped by a drone from Pakistan has been recovered by police near the International Border here, officials said Sunday.

The recovery made from the dropped packet included an AK assault rifle, three magazines, 30 rounds and a telescope, the officials said.

They said the recovery was made from Sounjana village of Phalain Mandal, about six km from the IB, late Saturday night after a villager informed police about a humming sound and dropping of a payload by a suspected drone from Pakistan.

Police immediately cordoned off the village and launched a search operation during which a yellow packet tied to strings and a wooden base to carry the payload was found, leading to the recovery of the arms and ammunition, the officials said.

A case has been registered and efforts are on to identify the persons who were supposed to receive the



consignment on the Indian side.

Drone activities from Pakistan have witnessed an alarming increase over the past one year, posing a major challenge to security forces guarding the borders.

Security forces shot down two drones and recovered a large quantity of payloads including rifles,

Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs), sticky bombs and narcotics at different places over the past one year.

The security grid at the border was also intensified after the dropping of two bombs by drones at the Indian Air Force (IAF) station in Jammu in June this year.

Mehbooba welcomes decision to start 'Beat the Retreat' in Jammu



A BSF personnel stands guard during Retreat Ceremony at Octroi Post in Suchetgarh International border about 35km From Jammu Saturday

AGENCIES

Jammu, Oct 3: Former Chief Minister and PDP President Mehbooba Mufti Sunday welcomed the decision to start 'Beat the Retreat'

further by using it as a trade & travel route between Suchetgarh & Sialkot. Such CBMs improve cross border ties & benefit both sides economically too," Mufti tweeted.

Saturday, J&K Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha inaugurated the Retreat Ceremony at Octroi Post, Suchetgarh on the India-Pak International Border. The event was witnessed by hundreds of tourists and local residents of Jammu and Kashmir.

Speaking on the occasion, the Lt. Governor observed that the ceremony on the lines of Amritsar's Wagah Border reflects the great legacy and valour of Border Security Force, India's first line of defence.



ART ON ROAD

Artists work during painting and art installations on a road under the Smart City Project part of Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav at Regal Chowk in Srinagar, Sunday. PTI PHOTO

Army recovers 30kg contraband along LoC in Uri

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Srinagar, Oct 3: The Indian Army has recovered around 30 kg of a contraband substance worth about ₹25 crore in the black market along the Line of Control (LoC) in Jammu and Kashmir's Uri sector, the police said Sunday.

"Saturday, alert Indian troops deployed along the LoC in Uri sector in Baramulla district of north Kashmir observed some suspicious movement. Upon a search of the area, it was found that a contraband-like substance, most likely drugs, was dropped there," Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP), Baramulla Rayees Mohammad Bhat told reporters in Baramulla.

He said that the peddlers trying to smuggle the drugs into the Indian side of the LoC ran away after observing the movement of troops.

The SSP said that two bags with Pakistani markings containing approximately 25-30 kg of a drug-like substance were recovered.

"The exact nature of the heroin-like substance is being ascertained through the authorities concerned. The value of the suspected contraband is around ₹20-25 crore in the black market," he added.

A cap, a couple of backpacks and a couple of gunny bags have also been recovered from the spot, the SSP said.

He said legal proceedings have been initiated after the suspected contraband was handed over to the police and a case has been registered under the relevant sections of law.

"The huge drug haul along the Line of Control showcases the nefarious designs of the Pakistan-based narco-terror nexus and its inimical intent to abet terrorism and finance terror in India. This drug bust is a huge setback to the nexus," the police officer said.

Cross-LoC trade case: NIA searches in J&K

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Jammu, Oct 3: The National Investigation Agency (NIA) Sunday conducted searches at nine locations in Poonch district in connection with a five-year-old case related to misuse of money generated from cross-LoC trade for fomenting terrorism in Jammu and Kashmir, officials said.

The raids were carried out with the assistance of the Jammu and Kashmir Police, Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) and the Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP) in the case registered by the NIA December 9, 2016, under section 17 of the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, a spokesperson of the NIA said.

April 18, 2019, India indefinitely suspended cross-LoC trade at two points along the Line of Control



(LoC) in Jammu and Kashmir, following reports that it was being 'misused' by elements from across the border to smuggle weapons, narcotics and fake currency.

The LoC trade across Chakan-Da-Bagh in Poonch district of Jammu region and Salamabad in Baramulla district of north Kashmir was intended as a confidence-building measure (CBM) for the population living in Jammu and Kashmir and

across the LoC in Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (Pok).

"LoC trade was started in the year 2008 as part of confidence-building measure between J-K and PoK. The trade was based on barter system and third party origin goods were not allowed. The instant case is related to the large scale transfer of funds from Pakistan to India through the import of California almonds and other items via the

cross LoC Trade Facilitation Centres (TFCs) located at Salamabad and Chakkan-Da-Bag," the NIA said.

The spokesperson said these funds were purportedly being used for fomenting terrorism and separatism in Jammu and Kashmir.

"Investigation into the case revealed that some of the traders having excess imports were channelising the surplus profits generated to terror organisations, while others are suspected to have links/connections with proscribed terrorist organisations," the NIA said.

During the searches conducted at multiple locations, the spokesperson said documents, digital devices and other incriminating material have been recovered from the premises of the suspects.

"Further investigation in the case is underway," the NIA said.

Officials asked to repair damaged Delhi roads with 'utmost precision'

AGENCIES

New Delhi, Oct 3: Delhi PWD Minister Satyendar Jain Sunday inspected the damaged and pothole-ridden roads in the national capital and directed officials to repair them with 'utmost precision' by October 20.

The Delhi government had Friday announced that a massive drive will be launched to revamp all roads under the Public Works Department which have been damaged due to rains and other factors.

"The Delhi government is repairing all the potholes caused due to heavy rainfall. In this regard, inspected the roads with PWD officials today (Saturday)."

"Directed them to work with utmost precision and complete the

work by 20 October as directed by CM Arvind Kejriwal," Jain said in a tweet.

According to PWD data, there are 1,357 potholes, while patch work is required at nearly 309 locations in the city.

The chief minister had recently directed officials to fill potholes by October 10 and repair broken patches by October 20.

PWD officials said maintenance vans will be deployed in large numbers so that every area is covered under the special drive.

Officials said Jain emphasised on the importance of impact-based output and instructed engineers to maintain the pace along with keeping the quality standards in mind while repairing the roads.

The PWD manages 1,260 km road network in the national capital.

Delhi civic bodies set deadlines to flatten landfill sites

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Oct 3: From bio-mining of legacy waste to setting up of waste-to-energy plants, the three civic bodies of the national capital are striving to flatten and shut landfill sites, which have turned into huge garbage mountains.

The three municipalities -- North, South and East Delhi Municipal Corporations -- have set deadlines of June 2022, December 2023 and December 2024, respectively to shut landfill sites in their jurisdictions.

According to civic officials, the city cumulatively generates around 11,400 metric tonnes of garbage, out of which nearly 6,200 metric tonnes is dumped at three landfills i.e. Ghazipur, Okhla and Bhalswa.

Remaining 5,200 metric tonnes garbage is processed locally with the help of compactors and waste-to-energy (WTE) plants.

The issue of garbage mounds and waste processing also surfaced

in Prime Minister Narendra Modi's speech on the launch of the Swachh Bharat Mission 2.0 on Friday.

Modi had said that "mountain of garbage" in the city should be removed. He was referring to the Ghazipur landfill site that has grown into a mountain and was touted as tallest garbage mound in 2019.

In 2019, the height of the Ghazipur landfill was 65 metres, which was only eight meters less than the height of Qutub Minar.

In 2017, a portion of the landfill had fallen on an adjacent road in which two people were killed.

The Ghazipur landfill falls under the jurisdiction of the East Delhi Municipal Corporation (EDMC), which had started the process of bio-mining at the landfill in 2019 to reduce its height by processing legacy waste dumped there.

The EDMC officials claimed that the height of the Ghazipur landfill site has been reduced by 15 metres and they have processed 7,75,000



tonnes of waste dumped at the site since 2019.

Currently, 140 lakh metric ton waste is lying at the Ghazipur landfill site. "We have set a target of closing the Ghazipur landfill site by December 2024. We have deployed 20 trommel machines to process the legacy waste but current processing capacity is about 3,000 metric tonnes per day, which will be enhanced further," EDMC mayor Shyam Sunder Agrawal told PTI.

He said that from December the overhauling of Ghazipur WTE plant will be done, which will help in processing 1,500 metric tonnes garbage. Agrawal said that the municipality is also making efforts to appoint a single agency to process the legacy waste and dispose off the residual inert material.

"The company will have to process and dispose 50 lakh metric tonnes of legacy waste in 27 months. Tenders have been issued for the same," he said.

The authorities at the North Delhi Municipal Corporation (NDMC) said that nearly 60 lakh metric tonnes garbage is lying at the Bhalswa landfill site, which they said, will be processed by the end of June 2022.

A senior official of the North Corporation's Department of Environment Management Services (DEMS) said that currently 24 trommel machines are engaged in processing of 6,000 metric tonnes legacy waste per day.

The official said that bio-mining capacity will be enhanced by engaging 24 more trommel machines.

"By October 15, we will have 48 trommel machines processing 15,000 metric ton solid waste per day at Bhalswa landfill. We will build one more WTE either at Bhalswa or in Rani Khara with 2,500 metric

tonne capacity. By all these measures we will be able to shut the Bhalswa landfill in June 2022," the official said requesting anonymity.

He added that the tenders of new WTE have been floated.

The north municipality has one WTE at Bawana which processes 2,500 metric tonnes garbage per day. The South Delhi Municipal Corporation (SDMC) has set a target to stop dumping of waste at the Okhla Landfill site by June 2022 and scientifically close the landfill by the end of 2023.

According to SDMC officials, around 3,600 metric tonnes of garbage is generated in south Delhi every day, of which only 50 per cent is processed by the SDMC and the rest is dumped at the Okhla landfill. A senior SDMC official said that the civic body will start operation of a waste-to-energy (WTE) plant in June 2022 in Takhkhand area. It will have a capacity to process around 2,000 metric tonnes waste material.

of the day uote

Now, legal fees are either court fees or fees to the advocates. Even the annual budget of the Law Ministry is only ₹1,100 crore, and advocates' fees cannot be that high. We demand an investigation into the allegations by a judge of the Supreme Court. A probe would reveal as to which political party, officials and politicians accept bribes

DIGVIJAYA SINGH | SENIOR CONGRESS LEADER

You voted for us in assembly elections leading to our victory and now you should vote for us in the rural local body elections. You had voted for us expecting that we would fulfill the promises we made during the elections and you made me Chief Minister of the state and I am working for you and fulfilling our promises

MK STALIN | TAMIL NADU CHIEF MINISTER

Farmers are forced to sell crops to private agencies below MSP due to the threat of rains and delays in government procurement,

BHUPINDER SINGH HOODA | FORMER HARYANA CHIEF MINISTER

SHORT TAKES

Drug peddling: Nigerian held

Hyderabad: The Hyderabad Police Sunday arrested a Nigerian for selling cocaine and seized 4 grams of cocaine from his possession. Acting on a tip-off, the sleuths of Commissioner's Task Force (South) team in a joint operation with Panjagutta Police arrested Daniel Ayotunde Olamide, 33, staying in Friends colony in Shaikpet.

Fight over burnt chapati turns fatal

Sambhal (Uttar Pradesh): In a shocking incident, a cook beat a customer to death after he accused the former of serving overdone and burnt 'chapatis'. The incident took place Friday and the cook was arrested Saturday. He has confessed to the crime. The victim, Khempal, was a transporter and he had ordered food from a dhaba located near his shop.

Delhi cops arrest 4 sharp shooters

New Delhi: The special cell of Delhi Police has arrested four sharp-shooters of the gangster Gogi gang and recovered arms and ammunition from them, an official said here Sunday.

Soldier shoots self

Srinagar: A soldier shot and killed himself with his service rifle Sunday in Jammu and Kashmir's Pulwama district. Police sources said sepoy Stephen of 44 Rashtriya Rifles shot himself with his service rifle in the Rajpora area of Pulwama district.

6 Naxals surrender

Raipur: Six Naxals, four of them carrying cash rewards on their heads, surrendered before police and CRPF officials in Chhattisgarh's Dantewada district, an official said Sunday. The surrendered cadres, who were active in the Barsoor area committee of Maoists, said they were impressed by the police's rehabilitation drive 'Lon Varratu' and disappointed with the "hollow" Maoist ideology, he said. They turned themselves in before senior police and CRPF officials in Dantewada town, located around 400 km away from capital Raipur, Saturday, Dantewada Superintendent of Police Abhshek Pallava said.



The society has to behave with dignity to strengthen the nation. We together will take India to newer heights. The entire world will follow the life and ideas of our country to make their lives happy and beautiful. They will recast their lives in humanity and balance with nature

MOHAN BHAGWAT | RSS CHIEF

BACK ON TRACK

As the number of visitors to the 17th century monument of love Taj Mahal increased slowly from a trickle to more than 30,000 Sunday, there were discernible signs of relief and hope in Agra's tourism sector which had seen an unprecedented lean phase due to the Covid-19 pandemic for nearly two years



Mamata wins crucial bypoll

TRINAMOOL'S JAKIR HOSSAIN AND AMIRUL ISLAM WON FROM JANGIPUR AND SAMSERGANJ, RESPECTIVELY

AGENCIES

Kolkata, Oct 3: With West Bengal Chief minister Mamata Banerjee registering a thumping victory against BJP's Priyanka Tibrewal in Bhabanipur; Trinamool Congress won in all the three constituencies that went for elections on September 30.

Trinamool's Jakir Hossain and Amirul Islam won from Jangipur and Samserganj, respectively. After 21 rounds of counting, Banerjee secured 85,263 of the total 118,580 votes, securing more than 71 per cent while Tibrewal secured 26,428 votes, little more than 22 per cent. CPI-M's Shreejib Biwas managed to get only 4,226 votes.

For Banerjee, it was a do or die battle to retain her position as the Chief Minister because she had lost to the BJP's Suwendu Adhikari in Nandigram in the Assembly election earlier this year.

"I am indebted to the people to Bhabanipur because they helped me to win with a record margin. The most interesting thing is we didn't lose in any of the wards. The polling in Bhabanipur has always been

low and there was rain. Despite that people came out in numbers and gave us votes," said Banerjee, flanked by nephew and party General Secretary Abhishek Banerjee and his daughter.

"There was a lot of conspiracy against us and the people of Bhabanipur have given the answer. When we won in all the seats, we lost in Nandigram. The matter is subjudice and so I shall not say more," she said, adding: "I shall not show victory signs raising two fingers. I am not selfish. Two of my colleagues are contesting from Jangipur and Samserganj and so I shall raise three fingers. They are also leading and

blessing them so that they can win." In Jangipur, Hossain won by a margin of 92,480 votes while Amirul Islam won by a margin of 26,379 votes in Samserganj. Hossain secured 136,444 votes while his nearest rival Sujit Das of the BJP secured 43,964 votes. On the other hand, Amirul Islam secured 96,417 votes while his nearest rival Zaidur Rahaman from Congress secured 70,038 votes.

The BJP, however, cried foul. Addressing the media, state BJP President Sukanta Majumdar said: "We need to understand that a large number of people couldn't come to

SECURES CM'S POST

Banerjee's huge victory was expected by most analysts

Banerjee secured 85,263 votes, while her nearest rival, BJP's Priyanka Tibrewal, garnered 26,428 votes

Making her victory sweeter, her party's candidates for the other two by-polls in the state, in Jangipur and Samserganj, notched up impressive victories with TMC's Jakir Hossain winning Jangipur by a massive margin of 92,480 votes in a one-sided fight

vote or they were not allowed to come to vote. But one thing we should keep in mind... Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee thought that she would wipe out the BJP from Bhabanipur but that has not happened." "We are overwhelmed by the support of the people - people who, despite all odds, have come out and voted for us. This will inspire us to fight with a new spirit in future. There are four by-elections in October and we hope that we will do better in these elections," he added.

BRAVING THE ODDS



A man pulls a temporary boat with his child atop as he wades through a flooded area at Amta in Howrah

PTI PHOTO

O₂ SHORTAGE DURING 2ND WAVE OF COVID-19

Plea in SC seeks high-level inquiry

AGENCIES

New Delhi, Oct 3: A plea has been filed in the Supreme Court seeking a high-level inquiry by a commission into the alleged non-supply and non-availability of medical oxygen for Covid-19 patients during the second wave of the pandemic from March to May this year.

The petition, which is scheduled to be taken up for hearing on Monday by a bench of justices D Y Chandrachud and B V Nagarathna, has alleged that non-availability of medical oxygen during the sec-

ond wave of the pandemic had resulted in the death of several patients in various parts of the country.

The plea, filed by a Delhi resident, has also urged the apex court to direct a court-monitored inquiry by the CBI or any other investigating agency in the matter relating to non-availability of medical oxygen in the months of March to May this year.

It has sought a high-level inquiry by a commission headed by a retired judge of the apex court or retired chief justice of any high court in the matter.



It said that the inquiry would identify negligence on the part of officials, if any, that had led to the shortage of medical oxygen supply.

The plea has arrayed the Centre and others, including the National Disaster Management Authority and health departments of several states, as respondents.

"This court through its various judgements has logically extended the interpretation of the right to life to include the right to health.

"Therefore, it is the fundamental duty of the State to care for the health of the public at large," the petitioner has said in his plea filed through advocate Rajeev Kumar Dubey.

It has also referred to media reports about the death of Covid-19 patients allegedly due to

the shortage of medical oxygen.

The plea said medical oxygen is an essential and critical life-saving drug and its shortage had resulted in several untimely deaths in the country during the second wave of the pandemic.

In May this year, the apex court, which hearing a separate matter, had constituted a 12-member National Task Force of top medical experts to formulate a methodology for allocation of oxygen to states and union territories for saving lives of Covid-19 patients and to facilitate a public health response to the pandemic.

WB, Maha top in UCB frauds cases

Maharashtra topped in the country in frauds reported by Urban Cooperative Banks (UCBs) for the past three years. If 856 cases of frauds out of a total of 1193 were reported in 2018-19 from Maharashtra, it was 386 frauds out of 568 next year and 217 out of 323 in 2020-21. In Odisha, there were no cases in 2020-21 and came down from 20 to Zero. Similarly, in West Bengal also the number of frauds was miniscule. Shockingly, the Gross NPAs of UCBs and District Cooperative Banks together were staggering ₹84,303 crores as on March 31, 2021. As per RBI data accessed, the NPAs of cooperatives is higher than the scheduled commercial banks in the country. Almost a third of India's 1,534 UCBs are in Maharashtra, 490 to be precise. The PMC bank scam came in handy and the Modi government amended the Banking Regulation Act in April this year despite stiff opposition by NCP supreme Sharad Pawar. The Maratha strongman even met the PM and the Cooperative Minister Amit Shah. Political leaders of all hues are running the management of cooperative banks across Karnataka, Gujarat, Kerala, Tamil Nadu and even Uttarakhand. However, the problem has been acute in Maharashtra, Gujarat and Karnataka.



polls. Thereafter, he had also met NCP supreme Sharad Pawar who was keen to do business with him and held a couple of meetings. Kishor was also the official poll strategist of Jagan Mohan Reddy in Andhra Pradesh and helped him sweep polls.

Difference between two surgeries

Kishor dumps Cong

The talks between Prashant Kishor and the Congress leadership ended in a fiasco and the poll strategist dumped the Congress. Kishor has been waiting for three months but the high command has been unable to make up its mind what role he should be given. A tired and frustrated Kishor walked out in a huff and told the Congress leadership, "I can't wait indefinitely." Sources say that Rahul Gandhi kept extending the date of taking a decision about his entry into the party. Kishor had met Sonia Gandhi in early July along with Gandhi's two siblings. It is learnt that Priyanka Gandhi Vadra was very keen to induct Kishor. But Rahul Gandhi was taking his own time. Kishor was also instrumental in the massive victory of TMC leader Mamata Banerjee in a bitter battle with BJP in the West Bengal Assembly

Old-timers say there is a huge difference between what Nehru did in 1963 and what Modi executed first in 2014 and in 2021. The difference between the method, procedure and style is clearly visible. It must be remembered here none of the ministers and CMs shown the door by Nehru were senior to him. If Nehru was a product of the freedom struggle, Modi had also acquired every post and survived after a bitter struggle and sacrifices. However, Nehru was a class and did everything with finesse. These old-timers tell me that Nehru telephoned each one of them himself and explained why their services are needed for the party to rejuvenate it in this hour of crisis. They were all given party work too. In the instant case, no Union minister received a call either from the PM or the Union Home Minister. The unpleasant task was given to the BJP president, JP Nadda to ring up each one of

12 Union ministers hours before the swearing-in-ceremony. It also transpires that telephones to the new appointees were made by BL Santosh, general secretary (organisation) and Union Home Minister Amit Shah. Except for Thaaavar Chand Gehlot, no Union minister has been given any party work even after 45 days. No central leader has talked to any one of them about their future role. Majority of them are Lok Sabha MPs and facing huge embarrassment while visiting their constituencies as party workers keep posing difficult questions.

Kamraj bug hits Cong too

What has happened in Punjab Congress is the reflection of "Kamraj Plan" that PM Modi affected in his ministry in July. The Kamraj bug has hit the Congress Party. Though Kamraj Plan was coined and implemented in 1963 by late Nehru, it is the turn of his great grandson Rahul Gandhi to do it now. Many had expected that Sonia Gandhi would crack such a plan in 2010-12 to effectively pave the way for Rahul Gandhi. It was proposed that she show the door to all the oldies from the ministry and induct Rahul Gandhi and his young team in the ministry in a big way. But only a miniscule number of youngsters were inducted and Sonia played it safe. Had

Sonia shown the courage to show the door to all seniors then, it would have been a different story for Rahul. Now he is struggling to run the show the way he likes. Finally, he cracked his whip and showed the door to Captain Amrinder Singh. Incidentally, no one has noticed, Sonia as Interim Congress president has appointed PCC presidents in more than 10 states who are Rahul Gandhi loyalists.

Curbs for scribes

Narendra Modi got a thundering majority in 2014 in Lok Sabha on the back of the free media. He often speaks about the importance of a free press. But ever since he came to power, he has started shunning the media, gradually and systematically. It all began with the entry of media in the Central Hall of Parliament where all sorts of restrictions were put in place three years ago. Now his government is denying media-persons access to government offices. First the Union Finance Ministry and Home Ministry was made out of bounds even for accredited journalists with the Press Information Bureau. A PIB card, given after all security clearances allows them entry to most ministries. Now ministries have issued instructions that no entry unless there is a special permission.

international

of the day quote

Smart restrictions will gradually replace lockdowns imposed across the country due to the Covid-19 pandemic



EBRAHIM RAISI | IRANIAN PRESIDENT

The daily number of COVID-19 cases in Singapore may rise to more than 5,000 next week



GAN KIM YONG | MINISTER FOR TRADE AND INDUSTRY OF SINGAPORE

The Bahraini government's welcoming of Lapid is "a blatant betrayal of the oppressed and resilient Palestinian people's cause"



HOSSEIN AMIR ABDOLLAHIAN | IRANIAN FOREIGN MINISTER

SHORT TAKES

UN peacekeeper killed in blast

Bamako: A UN Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA) peacekeeper was killed and three were seriously injured following the explosion of an improvised explosive device (IED) in the West African country, an official said. The head of the UN mission, El-Ghassim Wane, announced on Saturday on his Twitter account that it was a MINUSMA vehicle that hit the IED near Tessalit of Kidal region, reports Xinhua news agency.

Journalist killed

Kabul: At least three people, including a journalist, were killed in a shooting in Afghanistan's eastern province of Nangarhar, authorities confirmed Sunday. "Journalist and author Sayyed Marof Saadat along with his relatives were travelling in a sedan along a road in Police District 5 of Jalalabad city on Saturday evening when gunmen in a rickshaw opened fire on them," a security source told Xinhua news agency.

Five dead

Islamabad: Five security personnel were killed when terrorists attacked their vehicle in North Waziristan district of Pakistan's Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province, an army statement said Sunday. The security personnel from paramilitary troops Frontier Corps and Levies were in the vehicle when it came under attack, the military's media wing Inter-Services Public Relations said in the statement.

Woman injured

San Francisco: A man was killed and a woman injured during a shooting incident in California's Oakland city, local police said. Police Saturday responded to reports of a shooting found a man and a woman who had been shot in the city's maxwell neighbourhood, reports xinhua news agency. The man was treated on the scene but pronounced dead, while the woman was taken to the hospital.

14 arrested

Beirut: Lebanon's security authorities have arrested a human smuggling network attempting to facilitate the illegal entry of 14 Syrian nationals. The arrests were made in the northern district of Akkar, Xinhua news agency reported. The network works on smuggling Syrians between the towns of Chadra and al-Khalsa in Akkar by foot and then transfers them by minibuses to Tripoli and Beirut. The network's members and Syrian nationals were both arrested and will be subjected to further investigation and other legal procedures.

International travel to and from Australia has been heavily restricted by the federal government since March 2020 to reduce the spread of the virus

MISSILE PROGRAMME

N KOREA WARNS TOP UN BODY

After a six-month hiatus, North Korea resumed missile tests in September, launching newly developed missiles including nuclear-capable weapons that place South Korea and Japan, both key US allies, within their striking distances

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Seoul, Oct 3: North Korea has warned the UN Security Council against criticising the isolated country's missile programme, in a statement Sunday that included unspecified threats against the international body.

During an emergency closed-door meeting of the top UN body Friday, France circulated a proposed statement that expresses concern over North Korea's missile launches and calls on it to fully implement council resolutions that ban its ballistic missile firings.

On Sunday, Jo Chol Su, a senior North Korean Foreign Ministry official, warned the UN council it "had better think what consequences it will bring in the future in case it tries to encroach upon the sovereignty" of North Korea.

Jo also accused the U.N. Body of a "double-dealing standard" because it doesn't equally take issue with similar weapons tests by the



United States and its allies, according to the statement circulated by state media.

After a six-month hiatus, North Korea resumed missile tests in September, launching newly developed missiles including nuclear-

capable weapons that place South Korea and Japan, both key US allies, within their striking distances. The country still offered conditional talks with South Korea, in what some experts call an attempt to pressure Seoul to persuade

Washington to relax crippling economic sanctions on it.

Under multiple UN Security Council resolutions, North Korea is banned from engaging in any ballistic missile activities as the country aims to mount nuclear weapons on its ballistic missiles. North Korea has argued its nuclear programme is meant to cope with US military threats, though Washington has said it has no hostile intent toward Pyongyang.

Despite its recent launches, North Korea maintains a 2018 self-imposed moratorium on a long-range missile directly threatening the American homeland, a sign that it still wants to keep alive chances for future diplomacy with the US.

US officials have urged North Korea to return to talks without preconditions, but the North has argued it won't do so unless the Americans drop their "hostile policy," in an apparent reference to the sanctions and regular military drills between Washington and Seoul.

A DIFFERENT FEEL



Britain's Prime Minister Boris Johnson and Home Secretary Priti Patel try baking during a visit to HideOut Youth Zone, in Manchester, England, Sunday

NEW FINDING

Almost half (47.9 per cent) of the European general population above 18-years-old declared at least one dermatological condition in the past 12 months, finds a new study



'PROVOCATIVE ACTION'

US raises concern as China flies warplanes

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Taipei, Oct 3: The Chinese military flew 16 warplanes over waters south of Taiwan Sunday as the US expressed concern about what it called China's "provocative military action" near the self-governing island that China claims.

China sent 38 warplanes into the area on Friday and 39 aircraft on Saturday, the most in a single day since Taiwan began releasing reports on the flights in September 2020. The flights came in daytime and nighttime sorties, and it wasn't clear if China was planning more flights on Sunday night.

A statement from US State Department spokesperson Ned Price warned that China's military activity near Taiwan risks miscalculation and undermines regional peace and stability.

"We urge Beijing to cease its military, diplomatic, and economic pressure and coercion against Taiwan," the statement said. It added that the United States, Taiwan's biggest sup-



IMAGE SOURCE: AP

plier of arms, would continue to help the government maintain a sufficient self-defense capability.

China and Taiwan split in 1949 during a civil war in which the Communists took control of mainland China and the rival Nationalists set up a government on Taiwan, an island of 24 million people about 160 km (100 miles) off the east coast.

China has been sending military planes into the area south of Taiwan on a frequent basis for more than a year. Taiwan's Defence Ministry said 12 fighter jets and four other military aircraft entered Taiwan's air defence identification zone on Sunday.

Five killed in Kabul blast

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Kabul, Oct 3: At least five civilians have been killed after a bomb blast at the entrance of a mosque in the Afghan capital of Kabul Sunday, a Taliban Interior Ministry spokesman said.

Qari Saeed Khosti confirmed the deaths. Initial reports indicate the explosion was caused by a road-side bomb. Three suspects have been arrested, Bilal Karimi, Taliban official spokesman said. The bomb targeted the sprawling Eidgah Mosque in Kabul, where a memorial service was being held for the mother of Taliban spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid. He later tweeted the attack had claimed civilian lives.

Taliban fighters were not harmed in the attack, Taliban spokesman Bilal Karimi told The Associated Press.

Those killed in the attack were civilians standing outside the mosque gate. He did not provide a figure for the number killed and said

an investigation was ongoing.

An Italian-funded emergency hospital in Kabul tweeted it had received four people wounded in the blast. Following the blast the area around the mosque was cordoned off by the Taliban, who maintained a heavy security presence. Later in the afternoon the site was cleaned. The only signs of the blast was slight damage to the ornamental arch by the entrance gate.

No one immediately claimed responsibility for the attack. However, since the Taliban takeover of Afghanistan in mid-August, attacks by Islamic State group militants against them have increased. The rise has raised the possibility of a wider conflict between the two extremist groups.

IS maintains a strong presence in the eastern province of Nangarhar and considers the Taliban an enemy. IS has claimed several attacks against the Taliban, including several killings in the provincial capital of Jalalabad.

Kabul airport ready for flights



INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Kabul, Oct 3: Afghanistan's civil aviation authority has announced that the Kabul airport is completely operational for international flights for the first time since the country's takeover by the Taliban after technical issues were resolved, the media reported Sunday.

The TOLO News reported cited aviation authority officials as saying that domestic flights were already operational and the airport received some special flights from Pakistan, the United Arab Emirates and Qatar; most of them carrying humanitarian aid.

The spokesperson for Afghanistan's civil aviation authority, Mohammad Naeem Salehi, said the department has written to neighbouring countries and the international community asking them to resume flights at the airport.

"Technically, there is no problem ahead of international flights. We are looking to find answers from neighbouring countries about whether they will start flights to Kabul airport or not. Currently, domestic flights are continuing," TOLO News quoted Salehi as saying.

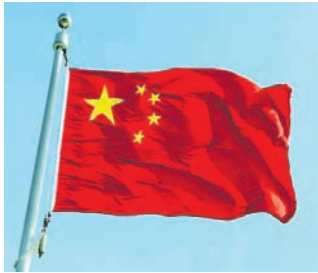
The airport was damaged with its many facilities destroyed during the withdrawal of US-led forces and American nationals that concluded August 31.

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Beijing, Oct 3: The ruling Communist Party is tightening political control over China's internet giants and tapping their wealth to pay for its ambitions to reduce reliance on US and European technology.

Anti-monopoly and data security crackdowns starting in late 2020 have shaken the industry, which flourished for two decades with little regulation. Investor jitters have knocked more than USD 1.3 trillion off the total market value of e-commerce platform Alibaba, games and social media operator Tencent and other tech giants.

NEW PATH



The party says anti-monopoly enforcement will be a priority through 2025. It says competition will help create jobs and raise living standards. President Xi Jinping's government seems likely to stay the

course even if economic growth suffers, say businesspeople, lawyers and economists. "These companies are world leaders in their sectors in innovation, and yet the leadership is willing to squash them all," said Mark Williams, chief Asia economist for Capital Economics.

The crackdown reflects Xi's public emphasis on reviving the party's "original mission" of leading economic and social development, said Steve Tsang, a Chinese politics specialist at the School of Oriental and African Studies in London. He said it could also help Xi politically if, as expected, he pursues a third five-year term as party leader.

Chinese leaders don't want to

GRIM SITUATION

Aus Covid travel curbs causing 'extreme levels' of distress

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Canberra, Oct 3: Australia's international border closure imposed in the wake of the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic has caused "extreme levels" of distress among people separated from their friends and families, a survey revealed Sunday.

Researchers from the South Australian Health and Medical Research Institute (SAHMRI) and Flinders University surveyed about 4,000 people on mental health linked to travel restrictions, reports Xinhua news agency.

It found that 84 per cent of respondents reported "high or very high levels of psychological distress" and 75 per cent had "poor mental wellbeing". International travel to and from Australia has



been heavily restricted by the federal government since March 2020 to reduce the spread of the virus. Participants in the survey identified being separated from partners and family as the most common source of grief.

"While psychological distress was extremely high across all groups, partners who were separated and international students experienced the highest distress," authors Matthew Iasiello from the SAHMRI and Kathina Ali from

Flinders wrote in the report, according to News Corp Australia on Sunday.

The study was released days after Prime Minister Scott Morrison announced that international travel will resume in November when states and territories hit key vaccination targets. On Sunday, Australia reported more than 1,900 new locally-acquired Covid-19 cases as the country continues to battle the third wave of the pandemic, which took the overall infection tally to 111,421.

The death toll currently stood at 1,334. According to the latest data by the Department of Health, 79.4 per cent of Australians aged 16 and older have received at least one Covid-19 vaccine dose and 56.5 per cent are fully inoculated.

of the day quote

In the last four years, we have added more than 150 cars. So 50% (of the total) has come in the last four years. What we anticipate is that as we go ahead, this will further increase. This will be much faster now

SHARAD AGARWAL | LAMBORGHINI INDIA HEAD

The government approval process is complex. So far there is no application pending with the government, so the ball is in our court to apply for consideration which we are working on

SANJAY BHARGAVA | COUNTRY DIRECTOR, STARLINK

Our alliance with KRIBHCO is a step ahead in furthering the agenda of the government in serving the farmers and agricultural community

DINESH TYAGI | MD, CSC E-GOVERNANCE SERVICES INDIA LTD

SHORT TAKES

LIC to file draft IPO papers next month

New Delhi: Country's largest insurer LIC is likely to file draft papers with Sebi by November for the largest IPO in country's history, a finance ministry official has said. "We target to bring the IPO within this fiscal and we have set strict timelines. The DRHP would be filed by November," the official told PTI. The government last month appointed 10 merchant bankers, including Goldman Sachs (India) Securities Pvt Ltd, Citigroup Global Markets India Pvt Ltd and Nomura Financial Advisory and Securities (India) Pvt Ltd to manage the mega initial public offering of country's largest insurer LIC.

Axis Mutual Fund launches new fund

Bhubaneswar: Axis Mutual Fund, one of the fastest growing fund houses in the country, launched new fund offer - 'Axis AAA Bond Plus SDL ETF 2026 Maturity FoF'. The benchmark index has a maturity date of April 30, 2026. The fund of fund is an extension of the 'Axis AAA Bond Plus SDL ETF - 2026 Maturity' which was launched in May, 2021. The offering aims to provide passive long term debt investment solution for investors with a 5-year investment horizon. The fund of fund will deploy its assets predominantly in the underlying ETF.

MCL sees growth

Bhubaneswar: Mahanadi Coalfields Limited registered positive growth in coal production and offtake performance during the period of April to September, 2021. According to the report, MCL's coal production achieved 10.8 per cent during two quarters of current FY. The company produced 70 MT while the production was 63.9 MT last year.

POCO launches C31

Bhubaneswar: POCO, India's 3rd largest online smartphone brand launched C31 offering a powerful and strong device. The POCO C31 will be available in two storage variants 3+32GB and 4+64GB exclusively on Flipkart. This budget smartphone is launched at a price of ₹8,499 for the 3+32GB variant and the 4+64GB variant is priced at ₹9,499. Both the variants of POCO C31 will be available at a discounted price of ₹7,999 and ₹8,999 respectively during the Flipkart Big Billion Days Sale.



In the third as well as fourth quarter of 2020-21, real GDP had already crossed pre-Covid-19 level. These facts tell me that the fundamentals of the economy are sound

ARVIND PANAGARIYA | VICE-CHAIRMAN, NITI AAYOG

AZADI KA AMRIT MAHOTSAV

The Ministry of Chemicals and Fertilizers will organise a week-long gamut of activities to celebrate Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav during October 4-10, an official statement said Sunday. Mansukh Mandaviya, Union Minister of Chemicals & Fertilizers and Health & Family Welfare, will virtually inaugurate the iconic week October 4



BSE ready with tech to launch EGRs

This comes after the Sebi board Tuesday cleared a proposal for gold exchange, wherein the yellow metal will be traded in the form of EGRs and will help in having a transparent domestic spot price discovery mechanism

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Oct 3: Leading stock exchange BSE is ready with its technology to introduce electronic gold receipts (EGRs) on its platform, which will help in creating uniform price structure of the yellow metal across the country, its chief business officer Sameer Patil said Sunday.

The instruments representing gold will be called Electronic Gold Receipts (EGRs) and it will be notified as securities. The exchange will take the required internal approvals and apply to markets regulator Sebi for the launch of the new class of security on its platform, he added.

BSE, which is well known for its technological prowess, has been the main proponent of creating a transparent and efficient spot market for gold as it is very important commodity for Indian consumers, Patil told PTI.

He, further, said the exchange was preparing the technology for very long in this market and was waiting for the in-principle approval for the same to take it further.



The exchange had made several presentations to government and regulators on how the process will work. How the participants of various types including banks, vaults, wholesaler, retailer, importers, exporters etc will participate in this ecosystem.

Patil added that the entire trading will be done in three tranches that include conversion from physical gold to EGRs, trading of EGRs and again conversion of EGR back to physical gold.

To begin with, BSE may plan

ELECTRONIC GOLD RECEIPTS

Currently, India allows trading only in gold derivatives and Gold ETFs, unlike several other countries which have spot exchanges for physical trade in gold

To enable trading in physical gold, EGRs (backed by physical gold) will be traded and settled on stock exchanges

According to Patil, like shares, these EGRs will be held in demat form and can be converted into physical gold when needed

The source of supply of the physical gold to be converted into EGR will be the fresh deposit of gold, coming into the vaults, either through imports or through stock exchanges accredited domestic refineries

will contribute to the existing programs for gold monetization such as Gold Monetization Scheme (GMS), Gold Bonds and Gold Deposits.

UNDEVELOPED MINES

Govt mulls plan to okay surrender of coal blocks

The proposed scheme will allow surrender of coal blocks without imposition of financial penalty or penalty on merit basis after examining the proposal by a scrutiny committee



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Oct 3: The Coal Ministry is planning to come up with a scheme to permit coal block allottees to surrender mines that they are not in a position to develop due to technical reasons.

To expedite production from allocated coal blocks and for ease of doing business, a scheme will be prepared to allow surrender of

coal blocks to those allocattees where present allottee is not in a position to develop the coal block due to technical reasons, according to the Coal Ministry's agenda for 2021-22.

Coal blocks surrendered under this scheme will immediately be offered for auction for commercial mining for putting the block to production early. The move would help in boosting the production of coal from the mines allocated

through auction route.

"To meet the increased demand for coal in the country, a scheme is being formulated to allow allottees to sell up to 50 per cent of the produced fuel after meeting its captive needs," the coal ministry said.

The incentive to allottees will spur them to produce more coal and sell in the market.

India's total coal production registered a marginal decline of 2.02 per cent to 716.084 million tonnes during the last fiscal year. The country had produced 730.874 million tonnes (MT) of coal in FY'20, according to provisional statistics of 2020-21 of the coal ministry.

Of the total coal production, 671.297 MT was non-coking coal and the remaining 44.787 MT was coking coal. Public sector produced 685.951 MT while the remaining 30.133 MT was produced by the private sector.

term picture, said Himanshu Srivastava, associate director (research), Morningstar India.

FPIs are slowly dropping their cautious stance and gaining higher conviction on the Indian markets.

The Indian equity market offers an attractive investment proposition from the long-term perspective. With an improving macro environment and positive outlook, FPIs are again focusing their attention on Indian equities, he added.

FPI flows is expected to remain volatile in the emerging markets, once the US Federal Reserve increase the rate, said Chouhan.

FPIs net buyers invest ₹26,517 cr in Sept

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Oct 3: Foreign portfolio investors (FPIs) were net buyers for the second month in a row in the Indian market with an investment of ₹26,517 crore in September.

As per depositories' data, FPIs pumped in ₹13,154 crore into equities and ₹13,363 crore in the debt segment during September 1-30. The total net investment stood at ₹26,517 crore. This comes after an investment of ₹16,459 crore by FPIs in August.

Most of the major emerging



markets witnessed FPI inflows in September with India reporting the highest FPI inflow, noted Shrikant Chouhan, executive vice-president (equity technical research) at Kotak Securities.

South Korea saw an FPI invest-

ment of \$884 million, Thailand \$338 million, and Indonesia \$305 million, he said.

The current trend indicates that FPIs are now willing to look beyond these short-term challenges and focus on the larger and long-

DIVESTMENT SCHEME

NTPC 'plans' to raise \$2B through 3 IPOs



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Oct 3: India's coal power giant NTPC Ltd expects to raise ₹150 billion (\$2 billion) through initial public offerings in three units including its renewable business, and the paring of a joint venture stake, according to a company official familiar with the plans.

NTPC has drawn ₹15,000 crore divestment plan which includes listing of its arms NTPC Renewable Energy, North Eastern Electric Power Corporation and NTPC Vidyut Vyapar Nigam, a source said.

The source stated that besides listing of the three firms, the plan to meet its divestment target of ₹1,500 crore also includes sale of its stake in NTPC-SAIL Power Company Ltd (NSPCL), which is expected this fiscal year.

The NSPCL is a joint venture company of NTPC and SAIL (50:50 equity) was incorporated February 8, 1999. It was formed to own and operate captive power plants for SAIL's steel manufacturing facilities located at

Durgapur, Rourkela and Bhilai.

According to the source, the ₹15,000 crore divestment plan is as per agreed targets of performance set by the company with the Ministry of Power which includes listing of NTPC Renewable Energy Ltd (NTPCREL), North Eastern Electric Power Corporation Ltd (NEEPCO) and NTPC Vidyut Vyapar Nigam Ltd (NVVNL) by March 2024.

The source said that the listing of NTPCREL is expected by October next year. NTPCREL, a 100 per cent subsidiary of NTPC Ltd, currently has a renewable project portfolio of 3,450 MW of which 820 MW projects are under construction and 2,630 MW projects have been won for which PPAs (power purchase agreements) are pending to be executed.

The listing of NTPCREL assumes significance in view of the ambitious plan of the company to have 60 GW of renewable energy capacity by 2032.

The RE installed capacity of the firm would be 45 percent of the 130 GW envisaged by 2032.

BIZ BUZZ

Amazon, Flipkart see strong start to festive sale

New Delhi: E-commerce majors Flipkart and Amazon India Sunday said they have witnessed a strong start to this year's festive sale,



with demand from tier-II and tier-III cities driving the momentum. Walmart-owned Flipkart Sunday said early access for its 'Flipkart Plus' programme (loyalty programme) saw a 40 per cent growth this year compared to last year, while about 45 per cent of customer demand has been from tier-III cities and beyond. In a separate statement, Amazon India Vice-President Manish Tiwary said the platform saw a 60 per cent increase in sellers who received their highest-ever single-day sales year-on-year on Amazon.in. The competition between the two giants is expected to be intense, similar to previous years. Flipkart's 'The Big Billion Days' (TBBD) sale is an eight-day event that will end on October 10, Amazon India's 'Great Indian Festival' (GIF) will be a month-long affair.

Audi wishes all-new Q5 SUV to drive next phase of growth

New Delhi: German luxury carmaker Audi is seeking to accelerate its sales growth in India with the launch of its all-new Q5 SUV, one of its volume drivers next month, according to a senior company official. The company will open bookings of the upcoming Q5 in the next couple of weeks. It had suspended sales of its popular SUVs Q3, Q5 and the Q7 last year when India moved to BS-VI emission norms with the company also deciding to stop offering diesel engine options in the country. "We plan to launch the locally produced Q5 in the month of November. We've been waiting for this for a long time. So far we are doing extremely well in spite of the fact that some of our volume models like Q range are not there in full strength," said Audi India Head Balbir Singh Dhillon.



HYPERLOOP IS DESCRIBED AS A SEALED TUBE OR SYSTEM OF TUBES WITH LOW AIR PRESSURE THROUGH WHICH A POD MAY TRAVEL SUBSTANTIALLY FREE OF AIR RESISTANCE OR FRICTION

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Dubai, Oct 3: Hyperloop, a high-speed mass transportation system for passengers and freight, is likely to be rolled out first in India or Saudi Arabia before in the UAE, said the CEO of Emirati multinational logistics company, DP World, Sultan Ahmed bin Sulayem Sunday.

Speaking at the sideline of the Dubai Expo 2020, a six-month long event which started October 1, Sulayem said the high-speed transport system will become a reality in many parts of the world within the end of this decade.

"I will see it either in India at first, or in Saudi Arabia at the moment. Our hope is that when we achieve economies of scale and you have long routes and it is popular, probably for the speed of an airplane you



will pay with the price of a truck," Sulayem said when asked about the time scales for the Virgin Hyperloop. The system is currently being developed by several com-

panies, including Virgin Hyperloop, in which Dubai-based port operator DP World holds a majority stake.

Hyperloop is described as a sealed tube or system of tubes with low air

pressure through which a pod may travel substantially free of air resistance or friction.

The company tested human travel in a hyperloop pod for the first

FUTURE OF TRAVEL

DP World had earlier said that the Hyperloop can shrink inventory movement timescales dramatically, reducing finished goods inventory and cut required warehouse space and cost by 25 per cent

In February 2018, chairman of Virgin Hyperloop One, Richard Branson had announced plans of a hyperloop system between Pune and Navi Mumbai in Maharashtra. Those plans have stalled due to coronavirus outbreak

time in November last year. "It's not decades, it's years," Sulayem told CNN in an interview at the Expo 2020 site, where the company is exhibiting a full-scale Hyperloop pod.

PUNJAB KINGS AGAIN FALTER AT THE DEATH
TO LOSE A THRILLING GAME BY 6 RUNS

RCB seal
play-off spot

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Sharjah, Oct 3: Glenn Maxwell smashed 57 (33b, 3x4, 4x6) and then Yuzvendra Chahal (3/29) spun a web around Punjab Kings (PBKS) as they once again bungled a chase allowing Royal Challengers Bangalore (RCB) book a play-off berth with a six-run victory in an IPL game here Sunday.

Maxwell's knock propelled RCB to 164 for seven which is the highest team total here this season and then Chahal bowled another game-changing spell which saw KL Rahul's team finish at 158 for six.

With 16 points from 12 games, RCB thus became the third team after Chennai Super Kings (CSK) and Delhi Capitals (DC) to make it to the last four stage.

PBKS with 10 points from 13 games can reach 12 points but with a net run-ae of -0.241 and having played one match more than Rajasthan Royals, Mumbai Indians and KKR (all 10 points before the evening game), they are all but out of the competition.

It was another close match that PBKS couldn't finish off and their

skipper Rahul (39, 35b, 1x4, 2x6) needs to take a lot of responsibility as his knock did more damage than help his team's cause. They were 91 for no loss in the 11th over before Rahul's indiscreet shot selection trying to hit left-arm spinner Sahbaz Ahmed (1/29) against the turn changed the course of the match. His opening partner Mayank Agarwal (57, 42b, 6x4, 2x6) was more attacking but was fooled by Chahal's clever variation of pace as he top edged a sweep shot. The rest of the batsmen just failed to get going.

PBKS needed 27 runs from the last two overs and Mohammed Siraj (0/33 in 4 overs) bowled an impressive penultimate over to bring down the equation to 19 runs off the final over and Harshal Patel (0/27

Brief scores

RCB 164/7 (Glenn Maxwell 57, Devdutt Padikkal 40, Moises Henriques 3/12, Mohammed Shami 3/39) beat PBKS 158 for 6 (Mayank Agarwal 57, Yuzvendra Chahal 3/29)



Glenn Maxwell

SHORT TAKES

Pyari stars in win

Dubai: The Indian women's football team beat lower-ranked UAE 4-1 in an international friendly match here Saturday. Manisha (20th minute), Pyari Xaxa (27th), Sweeti Devi (41st) and Anju Tamang (75th) scored for India in a match that was played behind closed doors at the UAE FA Stadium here. India are currently ranked 57th in the FIFA chart while UAE are placed at 100th spot. This was India's first win of the year. The Blue Tigress have been winless in the five matches they have played so far this year.

1st loss for Messi

Paris: Lionel Messi suffered his first defeat as a Paris Saint-Germain (PSG) player Sunday as their perfect start to the Ligue 1 season ended with a 0-2 loss at Rennes. The Argentina star smacked the crossbar with a free-kick in the first half at Roazhon Park before Gaetan Laborde volleyed Rennes ahead just before the break with his league-leading sixth goal. Flavian Tait struck less than 20 seconds after half-time to double the lead for Rennes and ensure full points for Rennes.

Stunning victory

San Diego: Cameron Norrie upset top-seeded Andrey Rublev of Russia 3-6, 6-3, 6-4 to advance to the final of the inaugural San Diego Open tennis tournament. The 26-year-old British player Norrie will face Sunday second-seeded Casper Ruud of Norway. The Norwegian beat Bulgarian Grigor Dimitrov 6-4, 4-6, 6-4 in the other semifinal. Rublev, ranked No 5 in the world, claimed the first set with a scorching 117mph ace before Norrie, ranked No 28, rebounded to force a decisive third set to reach his fifth final of the year. "It's such a big win for me," Norrie said.

Locatelli's day

Milan: Manuel Locatelli scored late as Juventus managed a narrow 1-0 win over Torino in their Serie A derby played Saturday. The only goal of the game came four minutes from the final whistle, but it was yet another disappointing performance from Juventus. However, in spite of the poor show, Locatelli looked on the bright side. "I have a whole family of Juventus supporters at home who are surely very happy today," Locatelli said. "We won the derby, it's a really strong emotion. We needed it because it was the derby, an important game," he added.

AGENCIES

Knights keep hopes
alive for last 4 stage

GILL, BOWLERS FASHION 6-WICKET TRIUMPH

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Dubai, Oct 3: Young Shubman Gill (57, 51b, 10x4) hit a fine half-century after an impressive display by the bowlers to guide Kolkata Knight Riders (KKR) to a six-wicket win over Sunrisers Hyderabad (SRH) and keep their IPL play-offs hopes alive here Sunday.

KKR first produced a clinical bowling effort to restrict SRH to a below-par 115 for eight and then rode on Gill's knock to reach home with two balls to spare. The win consolidated KKR's position at the fourth place in the standings with 12 points from 13 games.

With three play-off berths already taken by Chennai Super Kings, Delhi Capitals and Royal Challengers Bangalore, the race is on for the fourth and final spot between KKR, Rajasthan Royals and defending champions Mumbai Indians.

However, it must be stated that in spite of the below par total, the SRH bowlers made life extremely difficult for KKR batsmen. Jason Holder (2/32), Rashid Khan (1/23) and Siddharth Kaul (1/17) made run scoring extremely difficult on a slow pitch.

At two for 23, KKR looked in trouble. But Gill and Nitish Rana (25, 33b, 3x4) steadied the ship with a 55-run partnership for the third



wicket. Then Dinesh Karthik (18 n o, 12b, 3x4) gave the finishing touches to the match.

Earlier, SRH skipper Kane Williamson's decision to bat first backfired as they lost wickets at regular intervals, failing to counter KKR's incisive bowling, especially of Tim Southee (2/26) and the spin duo of Varun Chakravarthy (2/26) and Sunil Narine (0/12 off four overs). They were well-supported by Shivam Mavi (2/29).

Except for Williamson (26), Abdul Samad (25) and Priyam Garg (21) none of the other SRH batsmen got going.

Brief scores: SRH: 115 for 8 (Kane Williamson 26; Tim Southee 2/26, Varun Chakravarthy 2/26, Shivam Mavi 2/29) lost to KKR: 119 for 4 in 19.4 overs (Shubman Gill 57, Jason Holder 2/32) by six wickets.

STRIKER REMINDS FANS HOW HE WAS UNCEREMONIOUSLY BOOTED OUT BY KOEMAN

Suarez piles on Barca's misery

AGENCIES

Madrid, Oct 3: Luis Suarez piled more misery Saturday on Barcelona by scoring in a 2-0 victory for Atletico Madrid. However, in spite of the string of losses in the Champions League and the La Liga, coach Ronald Koeman insisted that he has the club's support to continue.

Goal scorer Suarez put his hands together and looked up to the sky in what was initially a muted celebration, out of respect for his former club, where he spent six years and scored 198 goals. "(It was) out of respect, love, for the journey I had at Barca and for the period they're in at the moment, for the fans as well," said Suarez after the game.

But the Uruguayan also made a telephone gesture and appeared to aim it at Koeman, perhaps referencing the abrupt manner Barca's coach told him he was surplus to requirements at Camp Nou, just over a year ago.

"That was for the people who



HITTING BACK: Luis Suarez of Atletico Madrid pretends making a telephone call after scoring against Barcelona, Saturday

think I'm still using the same number," said Suarez with a smile. Thomas Lemar had already

fired Atletico in front and, two down before half time, Barcelona looked vulnerable to another

INDIAN SHOOTERS DOMINATE AIR PISTOL EVENTS

Bhaker leads gold rush

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Lima, Oct 3: Olympian Manu Bhaker was at the heart of India's outstanding performance with two more gold medals, as the country surged to the top of the junior World Championships standings here. India collected four gold medals out of the six on offer Saturday, along with two silver medals, to claim the top position in the ISSF event.

India swept the 10m air pistol medal events, including the mixed, women's and men's team competitions as well the 10M air rifle

BHAKER HAS SO FAR WON THREE GOLD MEDALS IN THE COMPETITION

INDIAN MEN ALSO WON THE TEAM GOLD IN THE 10M AIR RIFLE EVENT

men's team gold, to end the day with six gold, six silver and two bronze medals. The 19-year-old Bhaker now has a total of three gold medals from the championships.

The USA are lying second with four gold, four silver and two bronze.

After partnering with Sarabjot Singh to clinch gold in the pistol mixed team, Bhaker teamed up with Rhythm Sangwan and Shikha Narwal to win the 10m air pistol women's team event, beating Belarus 16-12 in the final. The men's



HITTING BULL'S EYE: Manu Bhaker flashes the 'V' sign after winning one of her gold medals, Saturday

PHOTO COURTESY: NRAI TWITTER

air pistol team then also struck gold with Naveen, Sarabjot and Shiva Narwal putting it across the Belarussian men 16-14. Earlier in the day the junior men's 10m air rifle team had also won gold.

The women's 10m air pistol team event saw India dominate as they

had topped round one of qualification earlier with a combined score of 1,722 after 180 shots and then round two Saturday, shooting 569 to Belarus' 568. In the final, although it was even at the start, the Indians finished strong to seal the victory.

INDIA EVES STAND TALL
IN DRAWN ENCOUNTER

IN SPITE OF HAVING JUST TWO TRAINING SESSIONS WITH THE PINK BALL, THE INDIAN WOMEN OUTPLAYED THEIR AUSSIE COUNTERPARTS

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Gold Coast, Oct 3: After their loss in the ODI series, the Indian women's team put up a highly commendable performance, dominating Australia for the better part in the maiden Day/Night pink ball Test. The game ended in a draw Sunday primarily due to inclement weather during the first two days.

Resuming the day at 143 for three, Ellyse Perry (68 n o) and Ashleigh Gardner (51) put on an 89-run stand before Indian pacers triggered the batting collapse, reducing Australia to 241 for nine from 208 for four.

What followed was an interesting declaration from Meg Lanning at the stroke of dinner. India played 35 overs in second innings before declaring at 135 for three. Shafali Verma (52, 91b, 6x4) and Punam Raut (41 n o, 62b, 6x4) batted well for India.

Australia were never in a position to chase the 272-run victory target in just 32 overs and finished on 36 for two. Jhulan Goswami and Pooja Vastrakar shared the two Australian wickets to fall. The two Aussie batswomen to be dismissed were Alyssa Healy (6) and Beth Mooney (11).

As per rules of multi-format series, both teams settled for two points. The series score stands at 6-4 in Australia's favour. More than 80 overs were lost



Shafali Verma showed her class with a fine half century in the second innings

due to weather over the first two days, making draw the most likely outcome of the four-day match.

India, who came into the game with only two practise sessions with the pink ball, outplayed the Australians in all departments. It was the first time in 15 years that two teams played a Test.

There were many memorable performances by the Indian players with Smriti Mandhana's ton standing out tall. The bowling by the trio of pacers Jhulan, Meghna

Brief Scores

India: 377 for 8 decl and 135/3 decl (Shafali Verma 52); **Australia:** 241 for 9 decl (Ellyse Perry 68, Jhulan Goswami 2/33, Pooja Vastrakar 3/49) and 36/2. Match drawn.

Singh and Pooja put the Australian batters under pressure. It would be fair to say that the Indian fast bowlers got more out of the drop in pitch than their Australian counterparts.

Durrand Cup
goes to FC Goa

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Kolkata, Oct 3: Indian Super League (ISL) side FC Goa were crowned champions of the 130th Durand Cup football championship here Sunday. In the final played at the Vivekananda Yuba Bharati Krirangan here, they beat local outfit Mohammedan Sporting 1-0 in extra time. The only goal of the game was scored by FC Goa's captain Eduardo Bedia off a free-kick in the 105th minute of the game. The match went into extra time after both sides failed to score in regulation period. Goa pocketed a cheque of Rs 40 lakh while Mohammedan Sporting Club got Rs 20 lakh.

Though Mohammedan Sporting made some desperate efforts in the second half of extra time and came close when Nikola Stojanovic shot from distance and forced a flying save from 'keeper Naveen Kumar, it seemed Goa could not be denied from winning the Durrand Cup for the first time.

The final kicked off on a lively note in front of around 34,000 spectators with both Mohammedan Sporting and FC Goa going on the attack from the word go. However, later on the game degenerated into a midfield scramble with mis-passes galore.

Mohammedan players were also guilty of rough play. They received three yellow cards within 17 minutes with the names Azharuddin Mallick, Nikola Stojanovic, and Shaher Shaheen going into the book.

Liverpool, Man City
share points, 4 goals

AGENCIES

London, Oct 3: Some plots are conjured in heaven and no one has any inkling of events that may unfold. A game that saw no goals close to 60 minutes suddenly erupted Sunday into an action-packed pot-boiler as Liverpool and Manchester City played out a thrilling 2-2 draw at the Anfield Stadium in their Premier League encounter. Hosts Liverpool led twice in the game through goals by Sadio Mane (69th) and Mohamed Salah (76th). However, Man City had their own heroes as first Phil Foden restored parity in the (69th minute) and then Kevin de Bruyne brought his side back on level terms for the second time with a thunderous strike from 20 yards out.

At times, the best is needed to bring out the best in the opposition. And that is exactly what happened played Sunday. If Liverpool were ready to play their free-flowing brand of football, City were ready to reciprocate just that. Both sides scored twice apiece, created

at least five to six more scoring chances, only to see defenders rise to the occasion.

Among the two sides, Liverpool would certainly be the more peeved. They twice threw away the advantage of leading. But in the end it was plenty of heart-in-mouth moments for both Liverpool and Manchester City. Pep Guardiola and Jurgen Klopp's warm embrace on the touchline said it all... the game of football had won.

Among the four goals, Salah's was a peach. One of the most brilliant individual goals one is likely to see in the Premier League this season. When Salah received a pass from Curtis Jones outside the box, there was nothing really to expect. But with his perfect balance, Salah turned to throw of couple of defenders off him, ran into the box and beat another defender with sheer speed, before hammering the ball across Ederson and into the far corner.

The draw meant Chelsea held on to their top spot in the PL table with 16 points.