

## WORLD 5

BIDEN CALLS FOR REDUCING GUN VIOLENCE  
TO DEFEAT 'POISON OF WHITE SUPREMACY'

## MONEY 6

INDIA'S FOREX RESERVES RISES  
AFTER FOUR WEEKS OF FALLPublished From  
DELHI LUCKNOW BHOPAL  
BHUBANESWAR RANCHI  
RAIPUR CHANDIGARH  
DEHRADUN HYDERABAD  
VIJAYWADA

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## sunday pioneer

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# Dhankar elected VP with LG suspends 11 officials in Delhi Excise Policy case

Opp pick Alva gets just 182 votes

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

NDA candidate and former West Bengal Governor Jagdeep Dhankar was on Saturday elected as the new Vice President of India.

He trounced his rival and Opposition candidate Margaret Alva — a former Union Minister and Governor — by garnering about three-fourths of the votes cast. In percentage terms, Dhankar secured 72.83 per cent of the vote share.

Dhankar's win is bigger than that of outgoing Vice President Venkaiah Naidu, who had bagged 516 votes of the total 760 valid votes or 67.89 per cent vote share in 2017. He had defeated then Opposition candidate Gopalkrishna Gandhi by a margin of 272 votes. Gandhi had secured 244 votes. Dhankar will be the 14th Vice President of India.

"NDA candidate Dhankar won by 346 votes as he bagged 528 of the total 725 votes cast. "While 15 were termed invalid, Opposition candidate Alva received 182 votes in the election," Utpal Kumar Singh, Lok Sabha Secretary-General and the returning officer, said.

"Out of the 780 electors comprising elected and nominated members of the Rajya



Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Vice-President designate Jagdeep Dhankar react during a meeting in New Delhi on Saturday. BJP national president JP Nadda is also seen

PTI

Sabha and elected members of the Lok Sabha, 725 electors cast their votes with the total voter turnout being 92.94 per cent," Singh added.

Intriguingly, Alva got less than the expected around 200 votes from the Opposition camp while Dhankar received more than the little over 515 votes expected to be cast in his favour. Alva minced no words in making known her anguish. "Unfortunately, some Opp par-

ties chose to directly/indirectly support BJP, in an attempt to derail the idea of a united oppn... damaging their own credibility," Alva tweeted after the results even as she congratulated Dhankar.

The Vice President election was an opportunity for the Opposition to leave the past behind, to work together, and build trust amongst each other, she maintained.

Notably, the 39-MP-

strong Trinamool Congress (TMC) had announced it would abstain from voting as it said the 17 Opposition parties had finalised Congress veteran Alva's candidature without consultations with it. But despite TMC's announcement, its MPs Sisir Kumar Adhikari and Dibyendu Adhikari — father and brother of BJP MLA Suvendu Adhikari— defied the party line and cast their ballots.

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

In a major action in alleged corruption in formulation and implementation of the Delhi Excise Policy 2021-22, Delhi Lieutenant Governor Vinai Kumar Saxena on Saturday recommended suspension and initiation of major disciplinary proceedings against 11 officials, including then Delhi Excise Commissioner Arava Gopi Krishna, a 2012 batch IAS officer of AGMUT (Arunachal, Goa, Mizoram and Union Territories) Cadre and Deputy Excise Commissioner Anand Kumar Tiwari, over their alleged involvement.

Krishna is currently posted in the Union Territory of Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Daman and Diu. According to sources, the LG has recommended the Ministry of Home Affairs for suspension and major disciplinary actions against Krishna and Tiwari.

Tiwari was the Deputy Commissioner to Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia.

In the case of nine other officials, including three ad hoc DANICS officers, the Chief Secretary has been asked to take action against them.

The officials who have been suspended are Assistant Commissioner Pankaj Bhatnagar, Narinder Singh, Neeraj Gupta, Section Officer Kuljeet Singh, Subhash Ranjan and Suman and Dealing Hand Satya Brat Bhargav, Sachin

Solanki and Gaurav Mann.

"The L-G has taken this decision in view of the serious lapses on part of the officers concerned, including irregularities in finalising the tender and extending post-tender benefits to select vendors, as brought out by the Directorate of Vigilance (DoV) in its report after inquiry," sources in the L-G's office said.

The action against the senior officers came following an enquiry report by Chief Secretary Naresh Kumar and the vigilance department.

The said enquiry report clearly brings out blatant violation of procedures, deliberate misinterpretation and subversion of basic Government financial rules to provide benefit to licencees/tenderers obviously for a quid pro quo.

Be it the formulation of the tender document, award of tenders, undue return of EMD worth ₹30 crore, waiver of ₹144.36 crore licence fee or allowing additional liquor vendys by chosen licencees, the entire episode stinks of corruption and connivance.

"Officers of departments have tried to equate the failure of successful tenderer selected through bidding process in obtaining NOC from Airport Authorities, with unsuccessful bidders to justify the return of EMD amounting to ₹30 crore of a successful tenderer who failed to obtain NOC from the Airport authorities.

## Sisodia seeks CBI probe into ex-LG's role in Excise Policy



Delhi Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia addresses a press conference in New Delhi on Saturday

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STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Accusing former Lieutenant Governor Anil Bajjal of creating a mess in the new excise policy, Delhi Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia has written to the Central Bureau of Investigation seeking a probe against the former as to why he changed his stand on the opening of liquor shops in unauthorised colonies just 48 hours before the launch of the policy.

Sisodia claimed that the sudden change in the then LG's stand led to "thousands of crores" of losses to the Government exchequer as close to 300-350 liquor shops that were supposed to open in unauthorised colonies could not be opened.

Addressing a Press confer-

ence here at his Mathura Road residence, Sisodia said he has sent the details of the matter to the CBI and asserted that there should be a probe into it.

"Delhi Lieutenant Governor made changes in the new excise policy two days before shops were to open so he could extend special favours to a few liquor traders.

"The CBI should also find out if the decision was taken independently and without his pressure or coercion. I am fully optimistic that the CBI will investigate this matter fairly," he said.

This is the first time that the AAP Government has acknowledged that it has incurred losses worth "thousands of crores" of rupees under the new excise policy.

## Covid spurt: Centre issues guidelines for State

Stresses on early detection, vaccination

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

The Central Government, concerned over the rising Covid-19 cases in Odisha, has urged the State Government to step up the preventive measures to stop transmission of the virus.

The Union Health Ministry said Odisha has been reporting high average daily new cases for the past one month (845 average cases per day).

The State has also contributed to 5 per cent of the country's weekly new cases and a high positivity of 4.85% in the week ending August 5.

The Ministry stated that 15 districts have reported a decline in the number of total tests conducted in the week ending August 4 as compared to the week ending July 28.

Besides, 10 districts have reported an increase in cases during the same period while four districts, including Sundargarh and Sambalpur reported more than 10% weekly positivity in the week ending August 4.

Apprehending spread of the virus due to possible mass gatherings owing to various festivals in coming days, the Ministry said it is critical for the State to ensure adequate testing is undertaken in all the districts while maintaining the recommended share of RT-PCR and Antigen tests.

The State must also closely monitor districts reporting higher cases, positivity rates and clusters to prevent further spread of infection.

The Ministry also urged for renewed attention needs to be paid for ensuring of Covid Appropriate Behaviour in crowded places like markets, inter-State bus stands, schools, colleges and railway stations.

It also asked the State to increase the pace of vaccination for all eligible population and accelerate the administration of free precaution doses for 18 plus eligible population at all Government Covid Vaccination Centers (CVCs) under the 'COV 6 Vaccination Amrit Mahotsav' till September 30.

In view of some changes in symptoms and clinical manifestation of the disease, it is crucial to monitor and report district-wise influenza-like illness (ILI) and SARI cases in all health facilities as per the guidelines, on a regular basis for detecting early warning signals of the spread of infection.

Genome sequencing of prescribed samples of international passengers as well as collection of samples from Sentinel Sites (identified health facilities) and local cluster of new Covid cases is equally important, the Ministry said.

## Taiwan activates missile systems against Chinese 'simulated attacks'



AP ■ BEIJING

Taipei that infuriated Beijing.

Taiwan's armed forces issued an alert, dispatched air and naval patrols around the island, and activated land-based missile systems in response to the Chinese exercises, the Ministry of National Defense said.

Detailed report on P5

## KCR cites 'Centre's bias', to skip PM-chaired NITI meet

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Telangana Chief Minister K Chandrasekhhar Rao (KCR) on Saturday declared that he will "stay away" from Prime Minister Narendra Modi-chaired NITI Aayog Governing Council meeting to be held on Sunday here to strongly protest the Centre "discriminating against the States", "micro-managing schemes, giving complete go by to State-specific needs" and because there is "no planning and cooperative federalism".

Terming his decision as "unfortunate", the NITI Aayog responded swiftly dishing out figures to counter his claims.

KCR's announcement came even as reports about Bihar Chief Minister and president of



Telangana CM KC Rao addresses a press conference in Hyderabad on Saturday

PTI

JD(U), an ally of BJP, Nitish Kumar, also not attending the meeting have come. Interestingly, while West Bengal CM Mamata Banerjee

had been staying away from the PM Modi-chaired NITI Aayog meetings earlier, this time round she is not only attending it but has landed in Delhi a couple of days in advance. Both KCR and Mamata have been separately making efforts to forge an Opposition unity to take on Modi.

In a strongly-worded letter to the Prime Minister, the Chief Minister expressed anguish against the Centre for not giving States "flexibility to design and modify schemes based on their needs and conditions to ensure maximum benefit to people". His protest, he said, was against the "present trend of Central Government to discriminate against the States and not treating them as equal partners".

## Molestation: Fugitive K'pada teacher held

PNS ■ KENDRAPADA

Finally, Biswambar Parida, a fugitive teacher accused in a molestation case involving a student of Class-X, was arrested on Saturday. The crime had occurred on July 18 in Makalapada in the district.

A police squad conducted raids at Bhubaneswar and nabbed Parida. Kendrapada SP Madkar Sandeep Sampat was monitoring the case. Sampat visited the victim minor girl's house and met her in order to motivate her.

## Son kills woman in S'garh

PNS ■ SUNDARGARH

An elderly woman died after being slapped by her son late on Friday night in Sundargarh district, which came to the fore on Saturday morning and police arrested the accused.

Puni Tanty (65) had been

staying with her son Saroj (35) at Guala Basti of Kumbharpada under the Birmitrapur police station. She had got widow pension two days ago. Saroj asked her to give him the pension amount, but she refused. Saroj slapped her, following which she died on the spot.

# Heavy rains hit life in Twin City, Puri

BBSR records 24 mm rainfall in 3 hrs

SAROJ MISHRA  
■ BHUBANESWAR

After a few days of hot and humid conditions, heavy rains provided respite from the heat but resulted in misery of the residents of twin cities of Cuttack and Bhubaneswar by throwing normal life out of gear.

Residents in the twin cities, Puri and several other towns woke up to cloudy weather. Soon, incessant spells of heavy rains lashed many parts of the State.

In Bhubaneswar, heavy downpours caused waterlogging in several low-lying and poor-drainage areas such as ISKCON, Nayapalli, Acharya Vihar and Bomikhal, thereby



causing traffic jams.

Poor visibility and waterlogging also affected vehicular communication in other parts of the capital city.

Heavy rains also caused inundation in several parts of Cuttack city while a flood-like situation also developed in the holy town of Puri.

According to the India Meteorological Department's (IMD) Regional Office, Puri

received 87 mm of rain between 8.30 add and 11.30 on the day, the highest in the State. Bhubaneswar recorded more than 24 mm of rain followed by 15 mm in Paradip and Chandbali.

Moreover, the weather office issued an advisory for heavy rainfall in the State even as two back-to-back low pressure systems are likely to form over the Bay of Bengal.

## Mo Bus gets trapped in rainwater



Close shave for passengers

PNS ■ KHORDHA

The passengers of a Mo Bus had a close shave when the vehicle got submerged up to its window level in stagnant rainwater at the railway underpass at Sitaram Chhak in Jatni on Saturday.

However, locals managed to rescue all passengers from the bus safely.

About eight feet to 10 feet rainwater flowed on the road after an intense spell of rainfall in the afternoon. The driver of the bus had misjudged the water level and thought that he would cross it easily. But midway, the bus got

stranded as the ignition got switched off.

"Delay in construction of a flyover at Jatni has been causing water stagnation frequently here. The authorities should seriously take what happened today. It would have been disastrous if we had not promptly rushed to rescue the passengers," said a local.



# Doc develops ‘Sanjivani’ to save cardiac victims

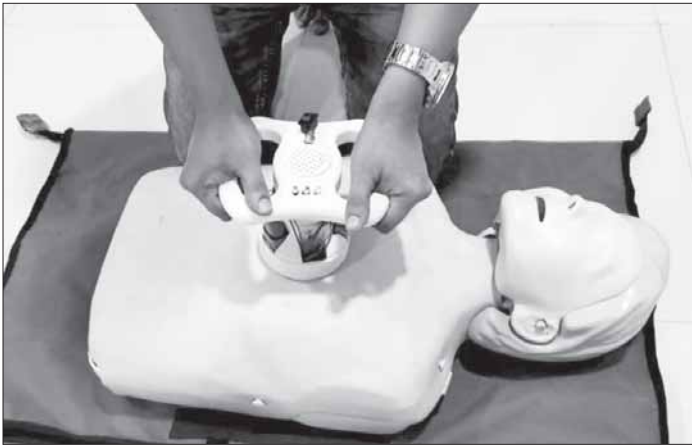
The device provides instructions in local language

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ BHUBANESWAR

A Kalinga Institute of Medical Sciences (KIMS) doctor has developed a cost-effective technology that can provide prompt assistance and save a person at home suffering from cardiac arrest. The 'Sanjivani' handheld gadget, as the name suggests, is a critical lifesaving device. Its development assumes significance as various reports and studies have reflected a significant increase in heart attack-related deaths in recent years. Now, approximately 85% of sudden cardiac arrests are reported at home or outside hospitals with a survival rate of less than 10%. The

human brain suffers irreversible damage after six minutes of cardiac arrest in the absence of high-quality chest compressions, which means pressing the middle part of the chest at a rate of 100 per minute and a depth of at least 5 centimeters while allowing complete chest recoil between two successive compressions.

The key to saving a person who has suffered a cardiac arrest is by applying the cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) procedure. If initiated early, it can triple the survival rate. Poor emergency medical service, traffic congestion and the large population in India pose a challenge. It's the family members, friends or bystanders who have to initiate the call for help and provide high-quality chest compression till the arrival of emergency medical help. This is where the Sanjivani device comes as a game-changer,



said Dr Ashok Kumar Badamali, Associate Professor of Cardiac Anaesthesia, KIMS.

Sanjivani comes in quick aid to revive the patient by the immediate respondent while waiting for ambulances. "Human hand has more than 20 small bones in palm area making quality chest compression

a difficult job for the rescuer due to 90-degree position of palm and forearm in manual chest compressions. A first responder can perform high-quality CPR till the arrival of the emergency medical team for a victim of cardiac arrest with Sanjivani where the palm and forearm bones are in a longitudinal

position," he explained.

The Department of Biotechnology has sanctioned its highest flagship "Biotechnology Ignition Grant" of Rs 50 lakh to Dr Badamali for developing the Sanjivani ecosystem to connect event sites with hospitals and ambulances seamlessly. A team of experts from various IITs, IIMs, and established business consultants have approved the project after a series of scrutiny.

The innovation has been appreciated by Odisha Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik during the inauguration of the startup building O-Hub in Bhubaneswar. It was also appreciated by the head of medical innovation, WHO, Louise Agarsnap on the World Health Day on April 7 during the inauguration of the first global WHO Medical Innovation Collaboration Centre at Visakhapatnam.

## In a first in SCB hosp Reconstructive surgeries on black fungus patient

PNS ■ CUTTACK

For the first time, doctors at the SCB Medical College Hospital here have conducted reconstructive plastic surgeries on a woman who had been affected from black fungus infection in July last year. M Meenakumari's upper jaw had been completely damaged by black fungus and she was unable to eat and speak properly. Her face was also disfigured. Meenakumari suffered from black fungus infection a few days after she tested positive for Covid-19 in July 2021. She was admitted

to the plastic surgery ward of the hospital for reconstructive surgeries on July 5 this year.

A team of doctors comprising plastic surgery department chief Bibhuti Bhushan Nayak and senior surgeons Prashant Kumar Bal, Shyam Sundar Behera, Bishnupada Nayak, Ishaan Agnihotri and Nrusingha Charan Das conducted the surgeries on July 18. "The reconstructive surgeries took around seven hours. The patient is doing well. Her health issues relating to black fungus infection have been addressed successfully," said the chief of plastic surgery department.

## Pradhan urges people to take booster dose

As 87% in State are yet to be vaccinated

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

Union Minister Dharmendra Pradhan on Saturday called upon people of Odisha to take Covid-19 booster dose during the 75-day Amrut Mahotsav being celebrated by the Government of India from July 15.

In a video message, Pradhan said that as once again Covid has started spreading, Prime Minister Modi has insisted on fast-paced immunisation drive. During 18 months of the pandemic, the Union Government administered



200 crore vaccines.

He reiterated that the Centre is providing booster doses free of cost like the previous two doses and all 18 and above-age population is entitled to get it. Unfortunately, over 87% population of Odisha has not taken booster doses. As Covid pandemic may spread fast in rainy season, it's high time all should take the booster dose, he said.

## Rasagola originated in Odisha: Sourav



PNS ■ CUTTACK

India's former cricket captain Sourav Ganguly has opined that Rasagola originated in Odisha.

Amid a battle between Odisha

and neighbouring West Bengal over geographical indications (GI tag) and origin of Rasagola for past several years, BCCI chief Ganguly has given his opinion his popular TV show 'Dadagiri' in Zee Bangla.

A video of the reality show has gone viral in social media.

"Although, Rasagola is quite popular in West Bengal, it belongs to Odisha. History of Jagannath Temple in Puri reveals a lot about its (Rasagola's) origin," Ganguly said.

"I used to enjoy the syrupy delicacy during my early visits to Cuttack city for playing cricket matches," he further said.

Noted researcher of Jagannath culture and litterateur Asit Mohanty stated that Ganguly has boldly admitted the truth about the origin of Rasagola.

"I have been raising this issue since 2016. I have presented a number of strong evidences pertaining to the origin of Rasagola. After going through the credentials, lots of eminent persons have started accepting the fact," Mohanty added.

## +2 Arts, Vocational results on Aug 8

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

Results of Plus II Arts and Vocational courses examinations conducted by the Council of Higher Secondary Education (CHSE), Odisha will be declared on August 8 at 4 pm at the CHSE office here.

The CHSE on Saturday informed that the results would be available on the CHSE website [www.chseodisha.nic.in](http://www.chseodisha.nic.in). Students can also check their scores on [www.orissaresults.nic.in](http://www.orissaresults.nic.in).

Notably, on July 27, the CHSE had announced the results of Plus II Science and Commerce annual examinations.

The examinations were held between April 28 and May 31. While 2,13,432 students in Arts stream had registered for the examination, 5,863 students in Vocational courses had registered for the annual examination.

## In Baleswar Youth gets 20-yr RI for raping minor

UBACHAK MOHANTY ■ BALESWAR

Special POC SO Court Judge Ranjan Kumar Sutar on Saturday, convicting a rape accused for 20 years' imprisonment, also slapped Rs 10,000 as penalty on him, in default, another year of jail term.

The convict Dinesh Marandi (22) of village Panpana (Polobasha) under the Khantapara police station had sexually assaulted a 13-year-old girl of same village on January 15, 2021. He committed the offence after taking the girl on some pretext without knowledge of her parents. After the parents

learnt about the incident, they were threatened and attacked by the accused when he was asked about the incident.

The girl's mother lodged an FIR with police. Dinesh was arrested and tried under different Sections of the POC SO Act.

"The court awarded different jail terms which would run currently and penalties for different sections aggregating 20 years of RI and Rs 10,000-fine. Twelve witnesses were examined and 18 documents were exhibited. The court also awarded Rs 4 lakh as compensation for the victim," said Special Public Prosecutor, POC SO, Pranab Panda.

## Paradip Port bribery case CBI arrests Mahima's son Charchit

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) on Saturday arrested shipping businessman Mahimananda Mishra's younger son Charchit Mishra a day after interrogating him in connection with a Paradip Port bribery case registered in Delhi.

The CBI arrested him under Section 120b of Indian Penal Code (IPC) and Sections 7, 8, 9, 10 and 12 of PC Act. Earlier in the day, Charchit, a Director of Orissa Stevedores Limited (OSL), had appeared at the CBI office here.

Charchit along with his elder brother Chandan were grilled by the CBI for the last two days following raids at different places, including residence and office of Mahima



Mishra.

With Charchit's arrest, the CBI has so far arrested five persons in connection with the case. The earlier arrestees are Paradip Port Chief Mechanical Engineer Saroj Kumar Das, port contractor Sumant Rout, KCT Group manager (port operations) Sankha Subhra Mitra and OSL DGM (operations) Surya Narayan Sahoo.

## Shah to reach today on 2-day visit

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

Union Home Minister Amit Shah is scheduled to reach here on Sunday evening on a two-day visit to the State.

BJP State president Samir Mohanty on Saturday said that Shah would stay at Bhubaneswar on Sunday night and visit the Lingaraj Temple on Monday morning. Then, he would proceed to Cuttack and garland the statue of Netaji at Netaji's birthplace at Odia Bazar.

Later, Shah would be chief guest at the 75th birth anniversary function of newspaper 'Prajantra' at the Jawahar Lal Nehru Indoor Stadium.



In the afternoon, Shah would interact with BJP workers in Bhubaneswar; and in the evening, he would join in a book reading programme "Modi @ 20".

## State records 836 new Covid cases

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

The State on Saturday registered 836 new Covid-19 cases in 29 districts and the State pool, taking the total tally to 13,18,145.

Among the newly-infected were 148 children in the age group of 0 to 14 years.

Notably, the State on Friday had recorded the same number of Covid cases.

Out of the new cases, 490 were reported from quarantine and 346 local contacts.

Sundargarh district reported the maximum 175 new cases followed

by Khordha with 91, Sambalpur 83, Mayurbhanj 72, Bargarh 47, Kalahandi 37, Cuttack 34, Balangir 33, Nabarangpur 32, Boudh 23, Kandhamal 21, Nayagarh 17, Nuapada 14, Koraput 12, Keonjhar 10, Baleswar and Subarnapur 16 each, Gajapati seven, Bhadrak four, Ganjam three, Kendrapada and Puri three each and Jagatsinghpur and Angul two each.

Besides, 21 cases were reported from the State pool.

The active cases numbered 6,005.

So far, 13,02,941 persons have recovered from the disease in the State.

## Aug 7 National Handloom Day

# Needed: Export-led handloom clusters in each State

We celebrate the 8th National Handloom Day today to promote the handloom sector and millions of weavers upholding their tradition and occupation for thousands of years. Imagine the world before industrialisation; it was handloom that clothed the world. This indigenous craft has a rich heritage that has been persevered through time immemorial and always remained eco-friendly.

Since 2015, August 7 has been celebrated as the National Handloom Day to honour millions of weavers and to instill a sense of pride in them. The objective is also to generate awareness about the handloom sector and its contribution to the socio-economic development of the country and at the same time, to increase income of handloom weavers.

Undoubtedly, this historic decision to celebrate a National Day in



BINAYA BHUSAN JENA

the name of handloom has brought in a sense of belongingness, pride, respect, awareness and increased demand for handloom products in the domestic and international market. The handloom sector has seen many ups and downs throughout the history, but its role and impor-

tant has never gone down. Today, the sector offers an incredible opportunity for further expansion, growth and acceptance with rising consciousness about environment and climate change.

The handloom sector is the second-largest employment provider after agriculture in rural India, employing 35.25 lakh people including 25.46 lakh (around 70%) women according to the 4th All India Handloom Census 2019-20. But unfortunately, there is a continuous decline of weavers' population. Between the last two Handloom Censuses, more than 8 lakh weavers left their traditional occupation as weavers. This is an alarming situation. But surprisingly, there is an increase in the number of handloom weavers' households during the same period.

The positive message is handloom production has increased quite significantly, despite the fall-

ing in weavers' population that indicates an increase in the yield. Handloom production data is not available for the current years. As per the Ministry of Textiles, Government of India, a total of 7,990 million sq meter of handloom was produced in the year 2017-18 which amounts to Rs 60,000 crore and handloom exports are close to Rs 2500 crore.

Historically, handloom is produced in almost every State with unique products, designs, motifs and names. So far, the country has registered 72 handloom products under Geographical Indications (GI). Last year, on the eve of the National Handloom Day celebration, Union Minister of Textiles Piyush Goyal called for increasing handloom exports to Rs 10,000 crore and doubling of handloom production to Rs 1.5 lakh crores by 2024. A year has gone and we need to evaluate our efforts and means

in achieving these targets.

A vast majority of our handloom products exported are home textiles, rugs, mats carpets, durries, bed sheets, cushion covers, etc. We have tremendous potential for exports in other handloom-based value added products like fabric, readymade garments, stoles, scarves and of course, sarees, dupattas and dress materials for a colossal Indian diaspora living across the globe. The Government should take special measures for export-led handloom clusters in each State based on their uniqueness and competencies. There is always a question mark on us, as the country produces 95% of the handloom produced in the world, but we stand as the second largest exporter of handloom products in the world.

Consumers are responding now to the growing concern and urgency towards environmental im-

pact and climate change. They are becoming vocal about their choices for environment-friendly fashion and ready to sacrifice more for eco-friendly products. Taking advantage of this rising appetite, a vast majority of brands are busy greenwashing and exaggerating their environmental efforts to woo the consumers towards their false green credentials.

Fashion industry is considered to be the second largest polluting industry in the world, responsible for about 10% of global Green House Gas (GHG) emissions, produces 20% global wastewater and about 35% of the total micro-plastic pollutions. This data is echoing everywhere and radically transforming the fast fashion consumers to eco-conscious consumers; hence, creating an ever-rising market for sustainable fashion.

There is an urgent need to revamp the handloom ecosystem and

make our policies and schemes more appropriate for this fast changing landscape. There is not a single national or State level organization of weavers in the country. For putting the handloom sector back on the track, making it a more lucrative sector for income generation and employment, we need to organise and educate the weavers first about the growing opportunities. There is a need for a national and State level association of handloom weavers to make their voices heard. On this National Handloom Day, attempt should be made to empower the handloom sector through formation of an all India association of weavers.

(The writer is Professor at National Institute of Fashion Technology (NIFT), Bhubaneswar and Chairman of Textile Association of India, Odisha unit. The views expressed are personal)



# Protests mount against Fatak station closure

Rally before RDC tomorrow

NIMAI CHARAN SAHU ■ SAMBALPUR

There will be a mass congregation in front of the office of the RDC (ND) here on August 8 to protest the demolition of the Fatak Station, Sambalpur, by the Railways where political parties cutting across party lines, students and the general public will take part.

"If the Railways does not desist from its illegal activities,

there will be Sambalpur Bandh, an indefinite rail-roko and large scale protests and for any untoward situation, the Railways will be held responsible," said Sapan Mishra of Sachetan Nagarika Committee (SNC), a forum fighting for the station's revival and improvement.

The Railways is determined to close the station forever in the name of development. But it is a 107 years old and is important in many respects due to its central location in the city near the GM University and Budharaja area,

opined the locals.

The memory of Mahatma Gandhi is also attached to the station. "Once it is closed, the people have to bear extra expenditure from city or Sambalpur station to come to the town," they said.

In the year 2007, a similar effort was made by the then Government at the Centre. But due to virulent protest, and strong attitude of the district administration, this could not be done. But the BJP Government at the Centre has made a fresh effort to close it now, they told.

# 'D'garh girl original singer of Har Har Sambhu'

Wrong info by TV channels decried

NIMAI CHARAN SAHU ■ SAMBALPUR

Some TV channels which narrated Duti Chand to be a girl from Rajasthan have also done the same thing in the case of Odia singer Avilipsa Panda, a girl from Deogarh district.

Recently, Avilipsa has gained huge popularity for her devotional song 'Har Har Sambhu'. First, she sang it on April 27 this year. The song

was so sweet, sonorous and heart-touching that the viewers have crossed more than seven crores as of today.

But some national channels telecast that Farmani Naaz is the real singer of the devotional song. They also telecast the interview of Farmani on it that hurt sentiments of the Odia people here since they never heard this song before Avilipsa. "The whole intention of the national channels is to twist the truth and give credit to some other than the real singer of the song," alleged Tarpan Kumar Pradhan, an

artist cum singer, and many others too. "Not only are the national channels propagating lies, but also they are suppressing the truth since they can't tolerate the popularity of an Odia girl," added Pradhan.

However, Avilipsa's father, Ashok Kumar Panda, while contacted, said: "I don't want to comment on this issue. It is a matter of credit for us that my daughter has brought laurels to the State through her extraordinary talents and devotion to Lord Siva Sambhu. The Lord will judge those who spread lies."

# In Athagarh 5 held for poaching in separate cases

DINESH DAS ■ ATHAGARH

Forest officials on Saturday arrested and forwarded to court four poachers, who were involved in poaching animals like deer and wild pigs.

The arrested poachers were identified as Bamadeb Pradhan of Kandhadeobhuin village, Sankar Parida of Kandhal village, Niranjan Aruka and Santosh Guru of Deobhuin village under the Narsinghpur block in the district.

They were earlier detained in connection with the death of a male elephant in Narsinghpur West Range few days ago. Information about some more accused involved in the above case has been received and further investigation

is going on to nab the culprits, said Athagarh DFO Sudarshan Gopinath Jadav.

In another development, an accused, Dhaneshwar Behera, of village Satgocchia under the Badamba police station in Cuttack district was also arrested and forwarded to court after his involvement was found in the poaching of a male elephant in Janipadar Beat of Badamba Range in Athagarh Forest Division.

He had been arrested earlier also for his involvement in the poaching of two tuskers in Badamba Forest Range in February, 2018. He is also involved in killing of a tusker in the Vegia area of Hindol Forest Range of Dhenkanal Forest Division in February 2021.

# In Balangir Woman staff alleges sexual harassment by CSO

PNS ■ BALANGIR

A woman employee of the Balangir district Civil Supplies Office on Saturday levelled allegations of sexual harassment to her by the Civil Supply Officer (CSO).

According to the complainant, when she joined, CSO Mir Raja Ali demanded Rs 30 lakh from her. When she expressed her incapability to pay the bribe, he reduced the amount to Rs 10 lakh.

As she still refused to oblige, Ali started harassing her both mentally and physically. He even made her work for long hours at night. Besides, he used to call her to his chamber when he was alone, she alleged.

She also alleged that the CSO used to make fun of her as she was unmarried. She claimed that she has proof of allegations and that investigations would reveal the truth.

Meanwhile, taking the allegations seriously, Balangir Collector Chanchal Rana has initiated an inquiry into the matter.

However, Ali has refuted the allegations and said he has never called the concerned employee to his chamber since she joined office

She is a senior employee, but her performance is not up to mark. When he told her this in front of other employees, she has levelled false allegations, he said.

# Electrocution death NHRC asks Govt to pay Rs 3L aid

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) has directed the Odisha Chief Secretary to pay a compensation of Rs 3 lakh to the family of a minor boy who was electrocuted. The order was passed taking cognisance of a petition filed by human rights activist Sitakanta Tripathy.

Tripathy had stated that Sanjay Majhi of Karanajamala GP under Chandbali block of Bhadrak district came in con-

tact with a live electric wire which had snapped from an 11-KV pole when he had gone to a relative's place at Harishpur of Chaddia GP under the Bansada police station.

The commission observed that the DISCOM TPNODL is liable for the accidental death and recommended payment of the compensation. The NHRC has also directed the Chief Secretary to submit a compliance report of payment of the compensation along with the proof of payment within six weeks.

# B'pur SP reviews cases at crime meet

KRUSHNA CHANDRA PANDA ■ BRAHMAPUR

Brahmapur Superintendent of Police Dr Sarvana Vivek M conducted a crime meeting here on Friday in which all IICs, SDPOs and Additional SPs were present. The meeting, among other things, discussed threadbare about all pending criminal cases and reviewed their progress/status.

Dr Vivek issued strict instructions to all the IICs for proper investigation and timely submission of charge sheets of all the cases pending under their respective jurisdictions.

In addition to the review, two more special sessions, one by the Forensic Medicine Department and the other by Sakhi Centre were held.



Head of Forensic Medicine Dr Sudipta Das along with Associate Professor and Assistant Professor of the Department who were present in the meeting shared some of the pressing issues relating to "medico legal cases" and put forth some valuable inputs as to how to strengthen the prosecution of rape and POCSO cases for information of the Investigating Officers.

Similarly, members of the One-stop-centre: Sakhi Centre vividly explained their roles and responsibilities, particularly their role in providing counselling to victims of domestic violence and shared

some valuable inputs pertaining to handling of family dispute cases. Expertise of "one stop centre" will be utilised while handling domestic violence and family dispute cases for settlement of such sensitive cases amicably in the interest of both the parties, said Dr Vivek.

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# Puri firm diverts boat engines under subsidy scheme

Fishermen demand action against Shareen Traders

PNS ■ PURI

The fishermen of Konark have filed a complaint petition before the district Collector, Puri, alleging that Puri-based "Shareen Traders" has illegally transported the boat engines meant for them under State Government subsidy scheme, to Andhra Pradesh for pecuniary benefits.

They have submitted a copy of the petition to the Chief Minister, Director General of Vigilance, Director of Fisheries and Director General, State Crime Branch, for necessary legal action against the trading organisation.

In the petition, it is alleged that the Greaves Company had supplied boat engines to the fishermen through the State Government, Odisha, under subsidy scheme but "Shareen Traders", CT Road, Puri, Penthakota, has illegally transported the same to Andhra Pradesh. One K Prasad and his son K Mark are owners of the Sharinee Traders and they have been involved in the scam for

the last 30 years and grabbing the subsidy amount.

On July 27, a Special Squad of Puri Commercial Tax seized 10 boat engines with an Ashok Leyland mini truck bearing Regn.No.OD-13Q 7725 at Sukala Chhaka under Puri district. The fishermen have demanded an impartial inquiry against Shareen Traders and stern legal action against the company owners.

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# B'garh mentally disabled woman rescued

Thanks to Sankalp Family

PNS ■ BARGARH

A mentally disabled woman who was lying in a coma in Dalab Panchayat's Khuntlipali market under Bheden block was rescued by members of social organisation Sankalp Family and settled in Missionary Charitable Organisation, Sambalpur.

According to information, a mentally disabled woman who has been living in Khuntlipali market for a long time had been ill for the past few days. Although she was able to eat with the help of some local people, her health had started to deteriorate due



to lack of medical treatment.

The members of the Sankalp family drew it to the attention of the district administration, besides flashing it in media, including social

media. Later, on the request of the District Social Security Officer, Sankalp Family members Bikash Agrawal and Sandeep Kumar Seth reached Khuntlipali village and res-

cued the woman. Later, they admitted her at the District Head Hospital, Sambalpur and lodged her at Missionary Charitable Organization, Sambalpur.

## INBRIEF

### PLEDGE TO PROTECT TREES ON FRIENDSHIP DAY

Bhubaneswar: Trees are the real friends of human beings. When we plant a tree, we plant a life. Trees help us provide oxygen, absorb carbon dioxide and offer countless other benefits.



This was stated by speakers at the Friendship Day celebration organised by Sahajya at Kargil Road here on Saturday. The participants took pledge to protect trees and tied friendship band to trees. At the meeting presided over by Sahajya president Dr Lingaraj Sahoo, preacher Maharshi Nachiketa, Ramesh Nanda, Saroj Sahoo, Pramod Das and Chittaranjan Bhanja urged the younger generation to save the environment.

### Cabinet swearing-in at DAV Pokhariput

Bhubaneswar: The DAV Public School, Pokhariput, Bhubaneswar conducted swearing-in ceremony of the newly-selected members of the school cabinet for 2022-23 on Friday. The programme began with Shloka chanting. Charges were handed over by the outgoing members of the cabinet to the new members. Principal



Dr Sujata administered the oath to the new cabinet. Chief guest Sqn Leader Amrit Khuntia, Commanding Officer 1(0) Air Sqn, NCC, Bhubaneswar, urged the cabinet to create and sustain the dignity of leadership. The programme ended with a vote of thanks by cabinet coordinator Jharna Mishra.

### SNLF HOLDS SENIOR CITIZENS' CAMP

Bhubaneswar: The Satyanagar Ladies' Forum (SNLF) on Saturday organised a camp for identification and health checkup for local senior citizens at the



Royal Lagoon Apartment. Forum members Sovedita Roy, Davinder Kaur, Kajal Mohapatra and Abinash Choudhury actively participated in the programme. Fifty senior citizens' cards were registered. Nandankan police station IIC Senapati explained the benefits of the cars. Forum secretary Anuradha Dash coordinated the programme.

### TUMOUR REMOVED FROM DOG AT SOA VET HOSP

Bhubaneswar: Vets at the SOA Urban Veterinary Hospital at Nuagaon here have surgically operated on a golden retriever dog to remove a large lump from its lower abdomen. The dog, which was in great discomfort, had been brought to the hospital on July 28 by its owner; and on examination, it was found that there was an abnormal growth on its right lower abdomen. The swelling appeared to be a lipoma (a fatty mass or lump) situated between the skin and the underlying muscle layer. The treating vets decided to undertake surgical intervention on July 29.

### 2 YOUTHS HELD FOR DRUG SALE IN PRADIP

Paradip: The Paradip Model police arrested two youths on the charge of selling brown sugar on Friday and prosecuted them. The accused were Lalatendu Mohanty (27) of Marichipur under the Balikuda police station of Jagatsinghpur district and Satosh Gochayat (23) of Panchpada village under the Malangpur PS of Jajpur district. Police caught them red-handed. In the presence of a magistrate, 6.6 grams of brown sugar and cash worth Rs 1,070 were seized from them. Both were sent to the Kujang court.



# Chandiposhi iron ore mine to be operational soon

Locals give nod in public hearing

PNS ■ ROURKELA

The Chandiposhi iron ore mine of Rungha Mines Limited has got the consent of the locals in a public hearing organised at Sanindpur village under Koira Tehsil of Sundargarh district. The project would be for production of 1.0 MTPA iron ore over an area of 131.582 hectares.

While ADM Sundergarh Shiv Shankar Toppo presided over the public hearing, Regional Officer of SPCB, Rourkela Dr Binod Bihari Das

and EE, SPCB, Rourkela, Rashmi Ranjan Das were also present.

Company's officials committed to commence its initiatives in environment, socio-economic and socio-cultural development of the area and requested the stakeholders to extend their support for the project. About 400 stakeholders from nearby areas participated and gave their consent in favor of the project. In another public hearing, the proposal of Purheibahal iron ore block of Rungha Mines for production of 1.0 MTPA iron ore over an area of 64.337 hectares was also supported by the locals.

# In Jagatsinghpur Orthosis, prosthesis patients identified

PNS ■ JAGATSINGHPUR

An assessment camp for fitment of orthosis and prosthesis (OP) patients was conducted by the Advanced Rehabilitation Centre (ARC), Bhubaneswar in Jagatsinghpur on Friday.

As many as 31 OP beneficiaries participated in the camp among which 12 were identified as prosthesis (artificial leg), nine orthosis (artificial limb) and 10 children recognised for modified shoes. The RBSK team and two OP professionals as Nihar Ranjan Singh and Udayanath Maharathi from ARC attended the assessment and measurement camp.



The identified beneficiaries will be sent to ARC, Bhubaneswar for further fitment and confirmation of OP items to provide them as soon as possible, official report said. Jagatsinghpur district

Collector Parul Patwari, ADM Satchidananda Sahoo, DSSO, officers from BSSO from different blocks, RBSK manager and representative from Jagatsinghpur Municipality were present.

# Koraput theatre group organises 3-day event

Including 7th Deomali nat'l theatre fest

NISHAN PATTNAIK ■ JEYPORE

The Nandanik, a local theatre group, organised a three-day programme at Koraput from August 1 to 3.

On the eve of its 9th Foundation Day, Nandanik arranged a lecture on 'Ek Patriya Natya Yatra-Lekhan se Manchan tak' by Padma Shri Shekhar Sen, a singer-actor of international repute.

Sen described the creative process of producing his famed musical mono acts like Kaber, Surdas and Vivekananda and his inspiring association with

theatre greats like Dharmvir Bharti.

On 2nd day, the 7th Deomali National Theatre Festival was inaugurated at Municipal Auditorium, Koraput in the presence of Collector, Koraput Abdal Akhtar, Chairman, Koraput Municipality Lalit Ranjan Sethy, eminent actress Bhaswati Basu, veteran theatre artist and author Umakant Das and creative director, Nandanik Dr Sourav Gupta.

Akhtar appreciated the efforts of Nandanik and extended warm support to its endeavours.

Sourav Gupta informed that the Deomali National Theatre Festival is the only national level festival in undivided



Koraput and this year, four plays in Odia, Bangla and Hindi are being showcased. The festival commemorates Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav.

Asim Basu Award 2022 was conferred on Ajay Edding, a theatre artist of Nandanik from Semiliguda by Bhaswati Basu.

The award is jointly awarded every year by Nandanik in association with Asim Basu Foundation, Bhubaneswar in memory of

late Asim Basu, Odisha's theatre icon since 2018. Basu reminisced her father's association with Koraput and praised the theatre activism of Nandanik at Koraput.

Two Odia plays were staged by Nandanik. The first is Shahid Laxman Nayak, written by Gauriprasad Rath and directed by Saumendra Swain. The second is Takkhyaka, written by Manoj Mitra and directed by Sourav Gupta.

A mono action, Kiss of

Love, was performed by AT Sunny, a PhD research scholar from Central University of Odisha. On the third day there were two plays such as Target in Hindi performed by Titli Foundation, Rourkela, and Kouto in Bangla performed by Bisargo Theatre, West Bengal.

The Hindi play is written by Shibankar Chakrabarty and directed by Pallav Chatterjee. The Bangla play is written by Mohit Chattopadhyay and directed by Dwaipayan.

While the first play dealt with Left extremism, the second play explored existential crisis of human beings in a experimental theatre pattern. People gathered in large numbers to watch the plays and appreciated the artists.



# Centre issues advisory to Delhi, 6 States as Covid cases soar

**PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI**

Amid a rise in coronavirus infections in some parts of the country and the festival season round the corner, a worried Central Government has issued an advisory to Delhi and six States asking them to ensure adequate testing, promote Covid-appropriate behaviour and increase the pace of vaccination to contain the surge.

In a letter to Delhi, Kerala, Karnataka, Maharashtra, Odisha, Tamil Nadu and Telangana, Union Health Secretary Rajesh Bhushan sounded alert about the upcoming festivals and mass

congregations in different parts of the country, saying that they may potentially facilitate transmission of infectious diseases, including COVID-19.

It is critical to ensure adequate testing is undertaken in all the districts of the state while maintaining the recommended share of RT-PCR and antigen tests. The state must also closely monitor districts reporting higher cases, positivity rates and clusters to prevent further spread of infection and effective case management, he stressed in the letter dated August 5.

In his letter to Delhi, Bhushan said the national capital has been reporting high

average daily new cases (811 cases) for the past month with a high of 2,202 new cases reported on August 5.

Delhi has contributed 8.2 per cent of India's weekly new cases in the week ending August 5 and has also recorded 1.86 times increase in average daily new cases from 802 in the week ending July 29 to 1,492 in the week ending August 5.

An increase in the weekly positivity rate was also reported in Delhi — from 5.90 per cent in the week ending July 29 to 9.86 per cent in the week ending August 5.

Bhushan said Kerala reported 2,347 average cases

per day in the past month and Maharashtra 2,135 cases. He also cited district-wise spread of infection. On Friday, Karnataka had reported 2,042 new Covid-19 cases and the positivity rate for the day was 6.32 per cent.

The Health Secretary requested states to ensure effective compliance of the revised surveillance strategy for COVID-19 which has been shared by the Union Ministry of Health and Family Welfare.

"In view of some changes in symptoms and clinical manifestation of the disease, it is crucial to monitor and report district-wise influenza-like illness (ILI) and SARI cases in all

health facilities as per the guidelines, on a regular basis for detecting early warning signals of the spread of infection. This will enable us to take pre-emptive action if required, in any areas of concern," he said.

Stressing genome sequencing of prescribed samples of international passengers as well as collection of samples from sentinel sites and local cluster of new COVID-19 cases is equally important, Bhushan said such samples must be sent promptly by the states and union territories to the designated lab of INSACOG network for genome sequencing.

"Renewed attention needs to be paid for ensuring of

Covid-appropriate behaviour in crowded places like markets, inter-state bus stands, schools, colleges, railway stations, etc," he said.

"States should aim to increase the pace of vaccination for all eligible population and accelerate the administration of free precaution doses for 18-plus eligible population at all Government Covid Vaccination Centres (CVCs) under the 'COVID Vaccination Amrit Mahotsav' till September 30," he stated.

States were advised to diligently follow the five-fold strategy of test-track-treat vaccination and adherence to Covid-appropriate behaviour within



the community.

India saw a single-day rise of 19,406 Covid-19 infections, taking the total tally of Covid-19 cases to 4,41,26,994. As per the latest data, the active cases declined to 1,34,793 today. The death toll climbed to 5,26,649 with 49 new fatalities.

# PM among first to congratulate Dhankar after his thumping win

**PNS ■ NEW DELHI**

As Jagdeep Dhankhar was elected as new Vice-President of India, Prime Minister Narendra Modi accompanied with BJP president JP Nadda and Parliamentary Affairs Minister Pralhad Joshi, arrived at his residence and congratulated him.

Prime Minister was among the first to reach 11, Akbar Road, (residence of Pralhad Joshi) to greet the vice-president-elect for his stupendous victory.

In the visuals, a smiling Modi was seen offering a bouquet to Dhankhar and congratulating him.

"Congratulations to Shri Jagdeep Dhankhar Ji on being elected India's Vice President with resounding support across party lines. I am confident he will be an outstanding Vice President. Our nation will gain tremendously from his intellect and wisdom,"

Modi tweeted later.

"I thank all those MPs who have voted for Shri Jagdeep Dhankhar Ji. At a time when India marks Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav, we are proud to be having a Kisan Putra Vice President who has excellent legal knowledge and intellectual prowess," the PM said further.

Union home minister Amit Shah in his congratulatory message said he was confident that Dhankhar would "prove himself to be the ideal protector of the Constitution".

"The Upper House will definitely benefit from his [Dhankar's] experience and close understanding of ground issues," said the home minister. Shah expressed his gratitude to all those parties who extended their support to the NDA Vice-Presidential candidate.

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh felicitated the new Vice-President saying: "Congratulations to Shri



Jagdeep Dhankhar on winning the Vice Presidential elections. His long public life, wide experience and deep understanding of people's issues will certainly benefit the nation. "I am confident that he will make an exceptional VP & Rajya Sabha Chairman," he said. Shah, Rajnath and Speaker Om Birla met Dhankar and congratulated him.

"I am so happy. I congratulate him. It was a decisive and impressive victory. He is

an eminent lawyer and a farmer, this is a rare combination: Parliamentary Affairs Minister Pralhad Joshi, at whose official residence Dhankar is staying, said.

Union Minister Piyush Goyal said Dhankar will be a wonderful Rajya Sabha chairman, an outstanding Vice President. "The nation is blessed to have the son of a farmer and an eminent jurist as VP of India. We're fortunate we will have a chance to work with him," he added.

# Rahul slams Govt over glitches in CUET

**PNS ■ NEW DELHI**

Former Congress president Rahul Gandhi on Saturday targeted the Government over glitches in the conduct of the common university entrance test (CUET), and alleged the "dictatorship of four people is leaving no stone unturned to ruin the country".

His attack came after technical glitches marred the CUET for admission to undergraduate courses in central universities, "New education policy of 'Amritkal': Before the exam 'discussion on the exam'. 'No paper, no discussion' during the exam. Future in darkness after the exam. What is happening with the students of #CUET is the story of every youth of the country today," he said in a tweet in Hindi.

"The dictatorship of four people is leaving no stone unturned to ruin the country," Rahul Gandhi said. He, however, did not name anyone.

Congress general secretary Priyanka Gandhi Vadra also took to Twitter to say that 'tech-

nical' snags have led to over 50,000 students being unable to take the CUET exam.

"Is this government so aloof and insensitive to our students that it can't see the repercussions of such a serious policy paralysis on its part? Is this what the youth of our country deserves?" she tweeted.

Technical glitches on the second day of the CUET-Undergraduate on Friday forced the National Testing Agency (NTA) to postpone the exam at 50 centres across the country. Some students also claimed to have received communication from the NTA late in the night, telling them that their exam scheduled for Saturday had been postponed due to "administrative and logistical reasons".

On Thursday, the exam was cancelled at a few centres across 17 states in the first shift, while the second shift exam was cancelled at all 489 centres.

Several students complained that they waited for two hours only to be informed that the exams had been called off.

# BJP diverting issues affecting people using name of Ram: Cong

**PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI**

The Congress on Saturday hit back at Home Minister Amit Shah for linking the party's protests to the Ram temple foundation day alleging that the BJP was trying to divert the attention of common people by resorting to their only weapon 'Ram'.

Reacting to Shah's comments, Congress MP Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury said the party was protesting against "astronomical price hike and unprecedented rate of unemployment which can't be tolerated by them (BJP)".

"In the name of 'Ram', this Government has been worshipping 'Raavan'. People are afflicted under their rule. The Congress has exposed this government as anti-people and pro-corporate," Chowdhury when sought his reactions on the sidelines of voting of Vice President elec-

tions in the Parliament.

Congress general secretary Jairam Ramesh alleged that it was a desperate attempt by the government to "divert, distract, polarise and give a malicious twist" to its democratic demonstrations against price rise.

"It's only a sick mind which can produce such bogus arguments. Clearly the protests have hit home," he tweeted.

Party general secretary Priyanka Gandhi said fighting against the burden of inflation falling on the poor and the middle class across the country is the path shown by Lord Ram.

"The one who inflicts pain on the weak by increasing prices, attacks Lord Ram. The one who misrepresents those agitating against inflation, insults Loknayak Ram and the people of India," Priyanka said in a tweet message.

# Unmarried woman can end 24-week pregnancy, SC to craft its verdict



**PTI ■ NEW DELHI**

Having ruled that denying an unmarried woman the right to safe abortion violates her personal autonomy, the Supreme Court will now interpret the Medical Termination of Pregnancy (MTP) Act and the related rules to see if unmarried women could be allowed to abort a 24-week pregnancy on medical advice.

A bench of Justices DY Chandrachud and JB Pardiwala on Friday asked Additional Solicitor General Aishwarya Bhati, appearing for the Centre, to assist the court in the exercise.

"When there are exceptions provided under the law, then why unmarried women can't be included to terminate 24-weeks pregnancy, if the medical advice so permits. The parliamentary intent appears to be clear as it has replaced 'husband' with 'partner'. It shows that they have considered unmarried women also in the bracket of those allowed to terminate 24-weeks pregnancy," Justice Chandrachud said.

The bench said it needs to craft its verdict in a way that unmarried women are also allowed to terminate their 24-week pregnancy like divorcees, widows or those in judicial separation.

Bhati contended there is a reason for not allowing unmarried women to terminate pregnancy after 24 weeks as it could take a toll on their health.

"The experts have their views over this. We need to place those views before the court. The termination of pregnancy at 24 weeks carries immense risk and could even cost the life of the women," she said.

The bench allowed Mr Bhati to place the views of experts before it and said it needs her assistance on the issue.

At the outset, the bench was informed a 25-year-old woman, who was allowed to terminate her 24-week pregnancy on July 21, is safe after a successful procedure.

On July 21, the top court had expanded the scope of the MTP Act to include unmarried women and allowed the 25-year-old to abort her 24-week pregnancy arising out of a consensual relationship.

The top court had said, "A woman's right

to reproductive choice is an inseparable part of her personal liberty under Article 21 of the Constitution and she has a sacrosanct right to bodily integrity."

"Denying an unmarried woman the right to a safe abortion violates her personal autonomy and freedom. Live-in relationships have been recognized by this Court," it had underlined.

The court had requested the Director of the AIIMS, Delhi to constitute a medical board in terms of the provisions of the MTP Act and said in the event it concludes that the foetus can be aborted without danger to the life of the woman, a team of doctors at the facility shall carry out the abortion.

The court said it was of the view that allowing the petitioner to suffer an unwanted pregnancy will be contrary to the intent of the law enacted by Parliament.

Allowing the petitioner to terminate her pregnancy, on a proper interpretation of the statute, prima facie, falls within the ambit of the statute and the petitioner should not be denied the benefit on the ground that she is an unmarried woman, it had said.

It had added the distinction between a married and unmarried woman does not bear a nexus to the basic purpose and object that is sought to be achieved by Parliament which is conveyed specifically by the provisions of Explanation 1 to Section 3 of the Act.

"The petitioner had moved the High Court before she had completed 24 weeks of pregnancy. The delay in the judicial process cannot work to her prejudice," it had said.

The top court had said Parliament, by amending the MTP Act through the Act of 2021 intended to include unmarried women and single women within the ambit of the law which is evident from the replacement of the word 'husband' with 'partner'. It, however, pointed out there is a gap in the law as while Section 3 travels beyond conventional relationships based on marriage, Rule 3B of the MTP Rules does not envisage a situation involving unmarried women, but recognises other categories of women such as divorcees, widows, minors, disabled and mentally ill women and survivors of sexual assault or rape.

# PM's global initiative LIFE to be India's theme at its COP27 pavilion in Egypt

**PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI**

LIFE – Lifestyle for the Environment, a global initiative launched by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, will be the theme of the India pavilion at the upcoming COP27 at Sharm-El-Sheikh in Egypt, the Union Environment Ministry said on Saturday.

Modi had proposed the one-word mass movement "LIFE" at the 26th session of the Conference of the Parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change at Glasgow last November.

Subsequently, he launched 'Lifestyle for the Environment – LIFE Movement' on June 5. The vision of 'LIFE' is to live a lifestyle that is in tune with our planet and does not harm it. The people who live such a lifestyle can be called "Pro-Planet People", the ministry said.

India has been setting up its pavilions at COPs since 2015 to showcase its achievements in climate actions. Several think tanks, civil society organisations, industry bodies and private sector organise side events at the



India pavilion.

The Union Cabinet has already approved India's updated Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) incorporating Prime Minister Narendra Modi's 'Panchamrit' strategy announced at the Glasgow conference aiming to strengthen global efforts to tackle climate change.

India aims to reduce emissions intensity of its GDP by 45 per cent by 2030, from 2005 level, and achieve about 50 per cent cumulative electric power installed capacity from non-fossil fuel-based energy resources by 2030. India also aims to reduce total projected carbon emissions by 1 billion tonnes and carbon intensity of the economy to less than 45% by 2030. Further, under the commitment India aims to achieve net zero carbon emission by 2070.

# IAF chief flies 3 desi aircraft in Bangalore

**IANS ■ NEW DELHI**

Indian Air Chief Marshal VR Chaudhari on Saturday flew three indigenous aircraft- Light Combat Aircraft (LCA) Tejas, Light Combat Helicopter (LCH) and Hindustan Turbo Trainer-40 (HTT-40)- which are being inducted into IAF as part of its drive towards Atmanirbhar Bharat.

The IAF chief was demonstrated the capabilities of the LCH and HTT-40 as well as updates on the Tejas. He also interacted with the designers and test crew to understand the current status and future plans.

He later delivered the Air



Chief Marshal LM Katre Memorial Lecture which was attended by serving & retired officers of IAF, HAL and other stakeholders from the aerospace industry. The IAF chief also spoke on 'Capability and Force Development Plans of IAF' towards making it a future ready combat force.

# Navy ships to visit all continents to mark 75 years of India's Independence

**PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI**

The Indian Navy ships are visiting ports in all the continents as part of Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav to celebrate 75 years of India's independence. The ships will hoist the national flag onboard on August 15 in these ports spread across six continents and six different time zones.

Giving details here on Saturday about this unique event, officials said the flag will be hoisted in the presence of the Indian diaspora and distinguished local dignitaries.

Other activities being planned include official calls by the Indian Navy crew on senior leadership of the host country, participation by the naval contingent at the Flag Hoisting Ceremony in the respective Embassies and band performance at a prominent public place. Also, the ship will be open to visitors, school children and Indian diaspora with a deck reception and various cultural events to be organised by the Indian Embassies.

At London, the crew of INS Tarangini will pay homage to the Indian soldiers, who gave the supreme sacrifice during the two World Wars, at the Commonwealth Memorial



gates. Similarly, a ceremonial wreath laying by the Indian ship is scheduled at the Kranji War Memorial and the Indian National Marker (INA) Marker at Singapore.

At Mombasa (Kenya), the naval crew will participate in the inauguration of a commemorative pillar in the Battlefield area of Taita Taveta region where Indian soldiers fought and sacrificed their lives whilst serving under East Africa campaign of World War One.

The commemorative events will also include battlefield tours, a mobile exhibition and a Light and Sound show at Fort Jesus highlighting the contribution of the Indian soldiers in World War one as well as India's struggle for independence.

The visits to foreign ports include Muscat and Singapore (Asia), Mombasa, Kenya (Africa), Perth (Australia), San Diego (USA), Rio de Janeiro, Brazil (South America) and London (Europe).

The 75th year of India's Independence, marked by Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav, is an occasion to reinvigorate and re-emphasise India's maritime moorings, officials said.

Towards this, a large number of activities were undertaken by the Indian Navy over the last one year both within the country and abroad.

Commemorative ship visits to 75 Indian ports in the year 2021-22, President's Fleet Review\* aligned with the 75th year of independence, Lokayan 2022 (sail ship expedition), display of monumental national flag at Mumbai, community outreach programs across all coastal districts of India, 'freedom run' in various cities, sailing regattas and mountaineering and cycling expeditions. The Navy also felicitated gallantry award winners and war veterans (born in or before 1947).

# Naidu India's most travelled VP

**PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI**

Venkaiah Naidu has been the most travelled Vice President of India having visited almost all State Capitals and UTs including the North-Eastern States and the far and remote places of the country during his tenure. His tenure ends next week.

Besides his tenure as ex-officio chairman of the Rajya Sabha, Naidu's period was marked by low productivity of the Upper House to start with in 2017 and a recovery later.

According to officials of the Vice President Secretariat, out

of the 13 full sessions Naidu presided over till the Budget session this year, the productivity of the first five sessions has been in the range of only 6.80 per cent to 58.80 per cent. It substantially improved in six of the next eight sessions clocking productivity in the range of 76 per cent to 105 per cent with five sessions working for about 100 per cent of the scheduled time.

Fifty eight issues were primarily responsible for the disruptions and forced adjournments of the House during this period.

Fifty seven per cent of the sittings of Rajya Sabha have

witnessed disruptions and forced adjournments of the House for either part of the day or a full day.

The issue of Special Category Status for Andhra Pradesh was raised in 36 sittings across four sitting starting with the highest number of 24 times during the Budget session of 2018," said an official statement.

The next four issues included the passing of three farm laws and farmers' protests, the Pegasus spyware, constitution of Cauvery Water Management Board and the suspension of 12 Members in the winter session of 2021.



# China military drills appear to simulate attack: Taiwan



AP ■ BEIJING

Taiwan said on Saturday that China's military drills appear to simulate an attack on the self-ruled island, after multiple Chinese warships and aircraft crossed the median line of the Taiwan Strait following US House Speaker Nancy Pelosi's visit to Taipei that infuriated Beijing.

Taiwan's armed forces issued an alert, dispatched air and naval patrols around the island, and activated land-based missile systems in response to the Chinese exercises, the Ministry of National Defense said. China's Ministry of Defense said in a statement Saturday that it had carried out military exercises as planned in the sea and airspace to the north, southwest, and east of Taiwan, with a focus on "testing the capabilities" of its land strike and sea assault systems.

China launched live-fire military drills following Pelosi's trip to Taiwan earlier this week, saying it violated the "one-China" policy. China sees the island as a breakthrough province to be annexed by force if necessary, and considers visits to Taiwan by foreign officials as recognising its sovereignty. Taiwan's army also said it detected four unmanned aerial vehicles flying in the vicinity of the offshore county of Kinmen on Friday night and fired warning flares in response.

The four drones, which Taiwan believed were Chinese, were spotted over waters around the Kinmen island group and the nearby Lieyu Island and Beiding islet, according to Taiwan's Kinmen Defense Command. Kinmen, also known as Quemoy, is a group of islands only 10 kilometers east of the Chinese coastal city of Xiamen in Fujian province in the Taiwan Strait, which divides the two sides that split amid civil war in 1949.

"Our government & military are closely monitoring China's military exercises & information warfare operations, ready to respond as necessary," Taiwan's President Tsai Ing-wen said in a tweet. "I call on the international community to support democratic Taiwan & halt any escalation of the regional security situation," she added. The Chinese military exercises began Thursday and are expected to last until Sunday. So far, the drills have included missile strikes on targets in the seas north and south of the island in an echo of the last major Chinese military drills in 1995 and 1996 aimed at intimidating Taiwan's leaders and voters.

Taiwan has put its military on alert and staged civil defense drills, while the U.S. Has deployed numerous naval assets in the area. The Biden administration and Pelosi have said the US remains committed to a "one-China" policy, which recognises Beijing as the government of China but allows informal relations and defense ties with Taipei. The administration discouraged but did not prevent Pelosi from visiting. China has also cut off defense and climate talks with the U.S. And imposed sanctions on Pelosi in retaliation for the visit. Pelosi said Friday in Tokyo, the last stop of her Asia tour, that China will not be able to isolate Taiwan by preventing US officials from travelling there.

Pelosi has been a long-time advocate of human rights in China. She, along with other lawmakers, visited Beijing's Tiananmen Square in 1991 to support democracy two years after a bloody military crackdown on protesters at the square. Meanwhile, cyberattacks aimed at bringing

down the website of Taiwan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs had doubled between Thursday to Friday, compared to similar attacks ahead of Pelosi's visit, according to Taiwan's Central News Agency. The ministry did not specify the origin of the attack.

Other ministries and government agencies, such as the Ministry of Interior, also faced similar attacks on their websites, according to the report. A distributed-denial-of-service attack is aimed at overloading a website with requests for information that eventually crashes it, making it inaccessible to other users.

Also Saturday, the Central News Agency reported that the deputy head of the Taiwan Defense Ministry's research and development unit, Ou Yang Li-hsing, was found dead in his hotel room after suffering a heart attack. He was 57, and had supervised several missile production projects. The report said his hotel room in the southern county of Pingtung, where he was on a business trip, showed no signs of intrusion.

Taiwanese overwhelmingly favour maintaining the status quo of the island's de facto independence and reject China's demands that the island unify with the mainland under Communist control. Globally, most countries subscribe to the "one-China" policy, which is a requirement to maintain diplomatic relations with Beijing. Any company that fails to recognise Taiwan as part of China often faces swift backlash, often with Chinese consumers pledging to boycott its products.

On Friday, Mars Wrigley, the manufacturer of the Snickers candy bar, apologised after it released a video and materials featuring South Korean boy band BTS that had referred to Taiwan as a country, drawing swift criticism from Chinese users.

# Ukrainian unit digs in for Russian assault on eastern city

AP ■ SLOVIANSK

Ukrainian military personnel are fortifying their positions around the eastern city of Sloviansk in expectation of a fresh Russian attempt to seize the strategic point in the fiercely fought-over Donetsk region.

As heavy ground fighting continues on the front line only miles to the east, southeast and north of Sloviansk, members of the Dnipro-1 Regiment are digging in after a week of relative calm. The last Russian strike on the city occurred on July 30.

While the lull provided Sloviansk's remaining residents a reprieve after regular shelling between April and July, some unit members say it could be a prelude to renewed attacks.



"I think it won't be calm for long. Eventually, there will be an assault," Col Yurii Bereza, the head of the volunteer national guard regiment, told The Associated Press on Friday, adding that he expected the area to get "hot" in the coming days. Sloviansk is considered a strategic target in Moscow's ambi-

tions to seize all of Donetsk province, a largely Russian-speaking area in eastern Ukraine where Russian forces and pro-Moscow separatists control about 60% of the territory.

Donetsk and neighbouring Luhansk province, which Russia has almost entirely cap-

tured since Ukrainian forces withdrew in early July from the remaining cities under their control, together make up the industrial Donbas region. The separatists have claimed the region as two independent republics since 2014, and Russian President Vladimir Putin recognised their sovereignty before he sent troops into Ukraine.

Seizing Sloviansk would put more of the region under Russian control, but it also would be a symbolic victory for Moscow. The city was the first to be taken by the separatists during an outbreak of hostilities between Russia and Ukraine in 2014, though it was later brought back under Ukrainian control.

# Indiana becomes 1st state to approve abortion ban post Roe

AP ★ INDIANAPOLIS (US)

Indiana on Friday became the first state in the nation to approve abortion restrictions since the US Supreme Court overturned Roe v Wade, as the Republican governor quickly signed a near-total ban on the procedure shortly after lawmakers approved it.

The ban, which takes effect Sept 15, includes some exceptions. Abortions would be permitted in cases of rape and incest, before 10-weeks post-fertilisation; to protect the life and physical health of the mother; and if a fetus is diagnosed with a lethal anomaly. Victims of rape and incest would not be required to sign a notarised affidavit attesting to an attack, as had once been proposed.

Under the bill, abortions can be performed only in hospitals or outpatient centres owned by hospitals, meaning all abortion clinics would lose their licenses. A doctor who performs an illegal abortion or fails to file required reports must also lose their medical licence — wording that tightens current Indiana law that says a doctor "may" lose their licence.



"I am personally most proud of each Hoosier who came forward to courageously share their views in a debate that is unlikely to cease any time soon," Gov Eric Holcomb said in the statement announcing that he had signed the measure. "For my part as your governor, I will continue to keep an open ear."

His approval came after the Senate approved the ban 28-19 and the House advanced it 62-38. Indiana was among the earliest Republican-run state legislatures to debate tighter abortion laws after the Supreme Court ruling in June that removed constitutional protections for the procedure. But it is the first state to pass a ban through both

chambers, after West Virginia lawmakers on July 29 passed up the chance to be that state.

"Happy to be completed with this, one of the more challenging things that we've ever done as a state General Assembly, at least certainly while I've been here," Senate President Pro-Tem Rodric Bray told reporters after the vote. "I think this is a huge opportunity, and we'll build on that as we go forward from here."

Senator Sue Glick of LaGrange, who sponsored the bill, said that she does not think "all states will come down at the same place" but that most Indiana residents support aspects of the bill.

# North Korea calls Pelosi 'destroyer of international peace'

AP ■ SEOUL

North Korea on Saturday called US House Speaker Nancy Pelosi "the worst destroyer of international peace and stability," accusing her of inciting anti-North Korea sentiment and enraging China during her Asian tour earlier this week.

Pelosi travelled to South Korea after visiting Taiwan, which had prompted China to launch military exercises including missile strike training in waters near the self-governed island.

China views Taiwan as part of its own territory to be annexed by force if necessary. While in South Korea, Pelosi visited a border area with North Korea and discussed the North's nuclear programme with South Korean National Assembly Speaker Kim Jin Pyo. According to Kim, the two agreed to support their governments' push for denuclearisation and peace on the Korean Peninsula based on strong, extended deterrence against the North and diplomacy.

# Explainer: What is driving current Israel-Gaza violence

AP ■ TEL AVIV

Israel and Palestinian militants in the Gaza Strip were exchanging fire Saturday in the worst bout of cross-border violence since an 11-day war between Israel and Hamas last year.

Israeli airstrikes have killed 11 people, including a senior commander from the Palestinian Islamic Jihad, an Iran-backed militant group, who was slain in a targeted attack.

Israel has carried out several deadly airstrikes, among them the targeted killing of a senior commander from the Palestinian Islamic Jihad, an Iran-backed militant group.

Militants have fired dozens of rockets at Israeli cities and towns, disrupting life for tens of thousands of people.

**Here's a look at the latest round of violence: IN HAMAS'S SHADOW**

Islamic Jihad is the smaller of the two main Palestinian militant groups in the Gaza Strip, and is vastly outnumbered by the ruling Hamas group. But it enjoys direct financial and military backing from Iran, and has become the driving force in engaging in rocket attacks and other



confrontations with Israel.

Hamas, which seized control of Gaza in 2007 from the internationally recognized Palestinian Authority, is often limited in its ability to act because it bears responsibility for running day-to-day affairs of the impoverished territory. Islamic Jihad has no such duties and has emerged as the more militant faction, occasionally even undermining Hamas's authority.

The group was founded in 1981 with the aim of establishing an Islamic Palestinian state in the West Bank, Gaza and all of what is now Israel. It is designated a terrorist orga-

nization by the U.S. State Department, European Union and other governments. Like Hamas, Islamic Jihad is sworn to Israel's destruction.

**THE IRANIAN CONNECTION**

Israel's archenemy Iran supplies Islamic Jihad with training, expertise and money, but most of the group's weapons are locally produced. In recent years, it has developed an arsenal equal to that of Hamas, with longer-range rockets capable of striking central Israel's Tel Aviv metropolitan area. Air raid sirens went off in the suburbs just south of Tel Aviv on Friday, although no rockets appear

to have hit the area.

Although its base is Gaza, Islamic Jihad also has leadership in Beirut and Damascus, where it maintains close ties with Iranian officials.

Ziad al-Nakhalah, the group's top leader, was in Tehran meeting Iranian officials when Israel began its operation in Gaza on Friday.

**TARGETING COMMANDERS**

This isn't the first time Israel has killed Islamic Jihad leaders in Gaza. The commander it killed Friday, Taiseer al-Jabari, replaced Bahaa Abu el-Atta who was slain by Israel in a 2019 strike. His death had been the first high-profile assassination of an Islamic Jihad figure by Israel since the 2014 war in the Gaza Strip.

Al-Jabari, 50, was a member of Islamic Jihad's "military council," the group's decision-making body in Gaza. He was in charge of the Islamic Jihad militant activities in Gaza City and the northern Gaza Strip during the 2021 war. Israel said he was preparing to launch an anti-tank missile attack against Israel.

His death came on the heels of the arrest by Israel of a senior Islamic Jihad commander in the West Bank earlier this week. Bassam al-Saadi, 62,

is a senior Islamic Jihad official in the northern West Bank. According to Israeli media, al-Saadi was working to deepen the group's reach in the West Bank and expand its capabilities.

Al-Saadi spent a total of 15 years over several stints in Israeli jails for being an active Islamic Jihad member. Israel killed two of his sons who were also Islamic Jihad militants in separate incidents in 2002, and destroyed his home during a fierce battle in the West Bank city of Jenin the same year.

"Once you will hit the commanders it will affect immediately all the organization," said Zvika Haimovich, the former head of the Israeli military's air defense force.

"It immediately creates a big mess in the Jihad."

**A DELICATE BALANCE**

Since seizing power in 2007, Hamas has fought four wars with Israel, often with support from Islamic Jihad fighters. Aside from a flare-up earlier this year, the border has largely been quiet since last year's 11-day war and Hamas appears to be staying on the sidelines of this current conflagration, which might keep it from spilling over into all-out war.

# Biden calls for reducing gun violence to defeat 'poison of white supremacy'

10th anniv of Wisconsin gurdwara attack

PTI ■ WASHINGTON

President Joe Biden has called for reducing gun violence and banning assault weapons in the US to defeat "domestic terrorism" and hate in all its forms, including the "poison of white supremacy," as he condemned the attack on a Sikh gurdwara in Wisconsin in 2012 on the 10th anniversary of the heinous act.

On August 5, 2012, a white supremacist opened fire inside the Oak Creek gurdwara in Winconsin, killing six people. A seventh person who was severely paralysed died from his injuries in 2020.

"The Oak Creek shooting was the deadliest attack on Sikh Americans in our nation's history. Tragically, attacks on our nation's houses of worship have only become more common over the past decade. It is up to all of us to deny this hate safe harbour. No one should fear for their life when they bow their head in prayer or go about their lives in America," Biden said in a statement on Friday.

The President said the Oak Creek incident has shown "us the way" and recalled how after the attack, the Sikh community returned to their Gurdwara and insisted on cleaning it themselves. The son of one of the victims became the first Sikh in American history to testify before Congress, successfully calling for the federal government to track hate crimes against Sikhs and other minority groups.

Every year, the congregation now hosts an annual memorial run to honour the victims. The event bears the words 'Charhdi Kala', meaning "eternal optimism," he noted.

"Fuelled by that spirit of eternal optimism, we must continue to take steps now to reduce gun violence and keep our fellow Americans safe. We must do more to protect places



of worship, and defeat domestic terrorism and hate in all its forms, including the poison of white supremacy.

"We must ban assault weapons—used in many mass shootings at houses of worship and other sites across the country—as well as high-capacity magazines," Biden asserted.

Underlining that the House of Representatives last week passed a bill to do that, he said the Senate must do that.

"To stand in defence of religious freedom, we must all stand together to ban the weapons that terrorise congregations around our country," Biden said.

Recalling the attack, the President said when generations of Sikh-Americans in Oak Creek constructed their place of worship after years of renting local halls, it was a sacred place of their own and a connection shared with the broader community. That sense of peace and belonging was shattered on August 5, 2012, when a white supremacist wielding a semiautomatic handgun arrived at the Gurdwara and began shooting.

"The gunman murdered six people and wounded four that day, as well as another victim who survived his wounds only to succumb to them years later. Jill and I know that days like today bring back the pain like it happened yesterday, and we mourn with the victims' families, the survivors, and the community devastated by this heinous act," he said.

# 5.3-magnitude earthquake jolts central Nepal

PTI ■ KATHMANDU

An earthquake measuring 5.3 on the Richter scale jolted Kathmandu Valley and other parts of central Nepal on Saturday morning.

However, there were no reports of any damage or casualties, officials said.

According to the National Earthquake Monitoring and Research Centre, the 5.3-magnitude earthquake, which occurred at 5:26 am, had its epicentre in Belkot Gadhi of Nuwakot district.

In April 2015, a devastating earthquake of 7.8-magnitude rocked Nepal, killing nearly



9,000 people and wounding nearly 22,000 others. It also damaged over 800,000 houses and school buildings.

# Hiroshima vows nuke ban at 77th memorial amid Russia threat

AP ■ TOKYO

Hiroshima on Saturday remembered the atomic bombing 77 years ago as officials, including the head of the United Nations, warned against nuclear weapons buildup and as fears grow of another such attack amid Russia's war on Ukraine.

"Nuclear weapons are nonsense. They guarantee no safety — only death and destruction," said UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres, who joined the prayer at the Hiroshima Peace Park.

"Three quarters of a century later, we must ask what we've learned from the mushroom cloud that swelled above this city in 1945," he said.

The United States dropped the world's first atomic bomb on Hiroshima on Aug 6, 1945, destroying the city and killing 140,000 people. It dropped a second bomb three days later on Nagasaki, killing another 70,000. Japan surrendered on Aug 15, ending World War II and Japan's nearly half-century of aggression in Asia.



Fears of a third atomic bombing have grown amid Russia's threats of nuclear attack since its war on Ukraine began in February.

"Crises with grave nuclear undertones are spreading fast" in the Middle East and the Korean Peninsula, Guterres said. "We are one mistake, one misunderstanding, one miscalculation away from Armageddon."

Hiroshima Mayor Kazumi Matsui, in his peace declaration, accused Putin of "using his own people as instruments of war and stealing the lives and livelihoods

of innocent civilians in another country."

Russia's war on Ukraine is helping build support for nuclear deterrence, Matsui said, urging the world not to repeat the mistakes that destroyed his city nearly eight decades ago.

On Saturday, attendees including government leaders and diplomats observed a moment of silence with the sound of a peace bell at 8:15 am, the time when the US B-29 dropped the bomb on the city. About 400 doves, considered symbols of peace, were released.

Guterres met with Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida after the ceremony and raised alarm over the global retreat in nuclear disarmament, stressing the importance for Japan, the world's only nation to have suffered nuclear attacks, to take leadership in the effort, Japan's Foreign Ministry said.

Kishida escorted Guterres in the peace museum, where they each folded an origami crane — a symbol of peace and nuclear weapons abolition.



# India’s forex reserves rises after four weeks of fall

**Mumbai:** India’s forex reserves rose around \$2.4 billion during the week ending July 29 after falling for the four consecutive weeks. The rise was seen on back of positive inflows by the foreign investors in the Indian equity market.

The country’s foreign exchange reserves rose by \$2.315 billion to \$573.875 billion during the week ending June 29, according to the Reserve Bank of India’s (RBI) weekly supplementary statistical data.

“India’s foreign exchange reserves, supplemented by net forward assets, provide insurance against global spillovers. Our umbrella remains strong,” RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das said.

“The Reserve Bank has also used its foreign exchange reserves accumulated over the years to curb volatility in the exchange rate,” he added.

During the current financial year (up to August 4), the US dollar index (DXY) has appreciated by 8.0 per cent against a basket of major currencies. In this milieu, the Indian rupee has moved in a relatively orderly fashion depreciating by 4.7 per cent against the US dollar during the same period, faring much better than several reserve currencies as well as many of its EME and Asian peers.

The depreciation of the Indian rupee is more on account of the appreciation of US dollar rather than weakness in macroeconomic fundamentals of the Indian economy.

“Market interventions by the RBI have helped in containing volatility and ensuring orderly movement of the rupee. We remain watchful and focused on maintaining stability of the Indian rupee,” Das added.

In July, foreign investors turned net buyers in the Indian equities nearly after 10 months,



with an investment of around Rs 4,980 crore in the Indian equity markets. This comes heavy sell-off by these entities of around Rs 50,203 crore.

According to the data NSDL data, investment of foreign investors in July month stood at Rs 4,989 crore, as compared to over Rs 50,000 crore outflows in June, Rs 39,993 crore in May and Rs 17,144 crore in April.

The other central banks of the asia also used their foreign exchange reserves to defend their currency.

Despite the resultant draw-down, India’s foreign exchange reserves remain the fourth largest globally.

# Paytm’s revenue jumps 89% to ₹1,680 cr in Q1

**New Delhi:** Digital financial services giant One97 Communications, that operates the brand Paytm, on Friday reported its Q1FY23 results, where it saw a massive jump in revenue from operations driven by strong monetisation in payments, device subscriptions and accelerated adoption of high-margin businesses such as lending.

In addition to 89 per cent Y-o-Y revenue growth to Rs 1,680 crore, the company also saw EBITDA (before ESOP) reduce to Rs 275 crore, an improvement of Rs 93 crore Q-o-Q. As a result, the company’s contribution profit grew 197 per cent Y-o-Y to Rs 726 crore, leading to an increase in contribution margin to 43 per cent of revenues in comparison to 35 per cent in Q4FY22.

Paytm’s payments services revenue grew by 69 per cent Y-o-Y (3 per cent Q-o-Q), supported by rapid growth in user engagement, merchant base, use cases on the Paytm super app and subscription revenue from payment devices.

The company’s user engagement, measured by monthly transacting users (MTU), grew 49 per cent Y-o-Y to 74.8 million during the quarter, while the merchant base expanded 30 per cent Y-o-Y to 28.3 million. This has resulted in a 101 per cent Y-o-Y jump in Gross Merchandise Value (GMV), which stood at Rs 2.96 lakh crore during the quarter. Paytm continues to dominate the offline payments segment, with a total of 3.8 million total devices deployed, of which 2.8 million were added in the past 12 months and 0.9 million during the quarter.

The company’s revenue from financial services grew 393 per cent Y-o-Y during the quarter, led by massive growth in Paytm’s loan distribution business. During the quarter, Paytm disbursed 8.5 million loans, representing a growth of 492 per cent Y-o-Y and 30 per cent Q-o-Q.



# AIPEF seeks PM intervention to ensure wider consultation on new electricity bill

**New Delhi:** All India Power Engineers Federation (AIPEF) has sought the intervention of Prime Minister Narendra Modi for referring the Electricity (Amendment) Bill, 2022, to the Parliamentary standing committee to ensure wider consultations on the proposed law.

After the announcement of Union Power Minister R K Singh to place and pass Electricity (Amendment) Bill, 2022, on August 8 in Parliament, AIPEF Chairman Shailendra Dubey in a letter to Prime Minister Narendra Modi has sought his intervention in the matter and has appealed him that the bill be referred to the Standing Committee of Parliament for detailed discussion with all stakeholders, an AIPEF statement said.

According to the statement, the National Coordination Committee of Electricity Employees & Engineers (NCCOEEE) and the AIPEF have already served a notice to the Ministry of Power that as and when the Electricity (Amendment) Bill 2022 is placed in Parliament, all power employees and engineers across the country shall be forced to cease the work and hold demonstrations throughout the day to register their protest.

The bill seeks to create competition in the power distribution (retail) segment. It proposes that a discom can use other power distribution licensee’s network.

The bill also seeks to strengthen payment security mechanism and give more powers to regulators.

“It has become necessary to strengthen the regulatory mechanism, adjudicatory mechanism in the Act and to bring administrative reforms through improved corporate governance of distribution licensees,” states the bill.

The bill also states that”the continuing as well as new challenges of sustainability of the power sector, contract enforcement, payment security mechanism, energy transition and the need to provide choice (of multiple service providers) to consumers in order to promote competition and the like, it has become necessary to make certain amendments in the Electricity Act”.

The AIPEF said that the bill no. 187 of 2022 contains a statement of objects and reasons which has been signed by the Minister (R.K. Singh), late on August 2, 2022.



# HPCL reports record loss of ₹10,196 cr on petrol, diesel price freeze

**New Delhi:** Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Ltd (HPCL) on Saturday reported its highest ever quarterly net loss of Rs 10,196.94 crore in the June quarter as a freeze on petrol and diesel price revision wiped away record refining margins.

A standalone net loss of Rs 10,196.94 crore during April-June compares with a net profit of Rs 1,795 crore in the same period a year back, according to a company’s filing with the stock exchanges.

During the quarter, HPCL and other state-owned fuel retailers Indian Oil Corporation (IOC) and Bharat Petroleum Corporation Ltd (BPCL) did not revise petrol and diesel prices in line with rising costs to help the government contain runaway inflation.

The basket of crude oil India imports averaged USD 109 per barrel but the retail pump rates were aligned to about USD 85-86 a barrel cost.

# Basmati rice exports up 26% in Q1 to USD 1.15 bn



**New Delhi:** Exports of basmati rice increased by 25.54 per cent in April-June 2022-23 to USD 1.15 billion, the commerce ministry said on Saturday. The exports stood at USD 922 million in the year-ago period.

Non-basmati rice exports too increased by 5 per cent in June quarter to USD 1.56 billion, it said. Exports of agricultural and processed food products rose by 31 per cent in the quarter to USD 7.4 billion.

For financial year 2022-23, an export target of USD 23.56 billion has been fixed by the Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA) for the agricultural and processed food products basket, it said.

Among these products, sectors which recorded growth during the period under review include fresh fruits and vegetables, and cereals. “The export of meat, dairy and poultry products increased by 9.5 per cent...Dairy products alone recorded a growth of 67.15 per cent as its export rose to USD 191 million in the first three months of the current fiscal,” the ministry said.

M Angamuthu, Chairman, APEDA, said by creating a necessary ecosystem of exports along with collaboration with key stakeholders in the agri-exports value chains,”we are aiming to sustain the growth in India’s agricultural and processed food exports in the current fiscal as well”.

# SBI net profit drops 7% to ₹6,068 cr in Q1

**New Delhi:** The country’s biggest lender State Bank of India (SBI) on Saturday posted a 7 per cent decline in standalone net profit at Rs 6,068 crore for the first quarter of the current financial year due to fall in income.

The bank had reported a net profit of Rs 6,504 crore in the April-June quarter of 2021-22.

Its standalone total income declined to Rs 74,998.57 crore in the first quarter of 2022-23, as against Rs 77,347.17 crore in the same period a year ago, SBI said in a regulatory filing.

The operating profit of the bank slipped by 33 per cent to Rs 12,753 crore from Rs 18,975 crore in the April-June quarter of the previous fiscal, impacted by Mark to Market (MTM) losses on its investment book.

“The MTM hit also had an adverse impact on bank’s Return on Asset and Return on Equity, which stood at 0.48 per cent and 10.09 per cent respectively,” it said.

However, interest income of the bank moved up to Rs 72,676 crore as against Rs 65,564 crore earlier. At the same time, net interest income increased to Rs 31,196 crore from Rs 27,638 crore in the first quarter of the last fiscal.

Net interest margin rose to 3.23 per cent as against 3.15 per cent.

The bank’s gross non-performing assets (NPA) ratio improved to 3.91 per cent from 5.32 per cent at June-end last year. Similarly, net NPAs declined to 1.02 per cent in June 2022 from 1.7 per cent a year ago.

As a result, the provisions for bad loans declined to Rs 4,268 crore from Rs 5,030 in the same period a year ago.

Provision Coverage Ratio (PCR) improved by 719 basis points to 75.05 per cent on annual basis.



कार्यालय अधीक्षण अभियन्ता

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पत्रांक-2214 / 23 एम-04 / 2022

दिनांक 05 / 08 / 2022

राष्ट्रीय प्रतिस्पर्धात्मक निविदा (e-tendering)

महामहिम राज्यपाल उत्तराखण्ड की ओर से अधीक्षण अभियन्ता, चतुर्थ वृत्त, लोकनिर्माण रुद्रपुर (ऊधम सिंह नगर) द्वारा निम्नलिखित कार्य हेतु ई-टेंडरिंग द्वारा टू-बिड बिड सिस्टम के अन्तर्गत निविदा आमंत्रित की जाती है। निविदा से सम्बन्धित सभी सूचनायें वेबसाइट <http://www.uktenders.gov.in> पर दिनांक 16.08.2022 से उपलब्ध होंगी।

क्र० सं०	कार्य का नाम	घरोहर घनराशि (लाख में)	निविदा प्रपत्र का मूल्य (रु० में)	निविदा की वैधता (दिवस)	कार्य पूर्ण करने का समय (माह में)	टेकेदार की श्रेणी
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1	राज्य योजना के अन्तर्गत विधानसभा क्षेत्र बाजपुर में मुकुन्दपुर पैगा ढकिया गुलाबो मार्ग (राज्य मार्ग सं० 105) के चैनज 13.700 से चैनज 16.000 तक (वीरपर से कटेया) पुनः निर्माण/सुदृढीकरण का कार्य।	7.75	5000.00 + 18% GST	120 दिन	15 माह	केन्द्र / राज्य सरकार के विभाग / उपक्रम में मार्ग कार्य हेतु श्रेणी A / A+ पंजीकृत

अधीक्षण अभियन्ता



राष्ट्रीय स्वास्थ्य मिशन, मध्यप्रदेश

( लोक स्वास्थ्य एवं परिवार कल्याण विभाग, मध्यप्रदेश शासन )

लिंक रोड नंबर 3, माधवराव सप्रे मार्ग, भोपाल ( 462003 )



: - विज्ञापन :-

विज्ञा.क्र./रा.स्वा.मि./मा संसा./सेल-1/2022/5365

भोपाल, दिनांक : 02.08.2022

राष्ट्रीय स्वास्थ्य मिशन, म.प्र. के अन्तर्गत राष्ट्रीय बाल स्वास्थ्य कार्यक्रम में सविदा दंतशल्य चिकित्सक (डीआईसी) के रिक्त पदों पर नियुक्ति के लिए आवेदन आमंत्रित करता है यह अनुबंध 31 मार्च 2023 तक के लिये होगा, जिसे आगामे वर्षों की वार्षिक कार्ययोजना में स्वीकृत अनुसार नवीनीकृत किया जा सकेगा :-

क्र.	पदनाम	रिक्त पद	मासिक मानदेय	अनिवार्य शैक्षणिक योग्यता	आयु सीमा
1	सविदा दंतशल्य चिकित्सक ( डीआईसी )	22	30,000/- रूपये प्रतिमाह	किसी भी मान्यता प्राप्त संस्थान/विश्वविद्यालय से बैचलर ऑफ डेंटल सर्जरी ( बी.डी.एस.) उत्तीर्ण। म.प्र. राज्य डेंटल काउंसिलिंग में स्थायी जीवित वैध पंजीकरण प्रमाण पत्र होना अनिवार्य।	21-40 वर्ष अधिकतम आयु सीमा में ( अनुसूचित जनजाति, अनुसूचित जाति, अन्य पिछड़ा वर्ग, निशक्त जन/महिलाओं (अनारक्षित /आरक्षित) अधिकतम आयु सीमा में 5 वर्ष की छूट) (01.01.2022 की स्थिति में)

आवेदन सेम्स लिमिटेड के वेब पोर्टल [www.sams.co.in](http://www.sams.co.in) के माध्यम से किया जा सकता है, आवेदन के लिए लिंक दिनांक 08.08.2022 से उपलब्ध की जायेगी। ऑनलाईन जमा करने की अंतिम तिथि 08.09.2022 है। ऑफ लाईन आवेदन किसी भी स्थिति में मान्य/स्वीकार नहीं किये जावेंगे।

2. पद हेतु आरक्षण निम्नानुसार होगा :-

पद का नाम	कुल सीटें	अनारक्षित	आर्थिक रूप से कमजोर	अनुसूचित जनजाति वर्ग	अनुसूचित जाति	अन्य पिछड़ा वर्ग	रिक्तियों में मध्यप्रदेश की मूल निवासी दिव्यांगजन अभ्यार्थियों हेतु आरक्षित पदों की संख्या								
सविदा दंतशल्य चिकित्सक ( डीआईसी )	22	5	2	1	1	3	1	2	1	4	2	-	1	-	-

● दिव्यांगजन का आरक्षण क्षैतिजिक (Horizonatal) के आधार पर 06 प्रतिशत का प्रस्ताव तैयार किया गया है। निःशक्तजनों के लिए कुल रिक्तियों में से 06 प्रतिशत पद निःशक्तजन के लिए आरक्षित है, जिस श्रेणी का निःशक्तजन इन पदों के लिए चयनित होगा उसे उसी श्रेणी हेतु मान्य किया जावेगा। यह पद प्रत्येक श्रेणी को बिना वर्ग/ओपन नियुक्तियों में सम्मिलित है।

3. कोविड-19 के अंतर्गत अस्थायी एवं आकस्मिक रूप से कार्य करने वाले दंतशल्य चिकित्सक जिनसे न्यूनतम अवधि 89 दिवस कार्य किया हो उसे सविदा दंतशल्य चिकित्सक ( डीआईसी) की भर्ती प्रक्रिया में 10 प्रतिशत अधिभार अंक (Weightage) प्राप्त करने की पात्रता होगी।

4. निर्धारित प्रारूप में नहीं किये गए अथवा अपूर्ण आवेदन स्वयंसेव निरस्त माने जायेंगे।

5. अंतिम तिथि के पश्चात् प्राप्त होने वाले आवेदन पर विचार नहीं किया जायेगा।

6. मिशन संचालक, राष्ट्रीय स्वास्थ्य मिशन, म.प्र. किसी भी आवेदन को बिना कारण बताये स्वीकृत निरस्त करने अथवा प्रक्रिया को निरस्त करने का अधिकार होगा।

मिशन संचालक

राष्ट्रीय स्वास्थ्य मिशन

मध्यप्रदेश

G-15127/22

कोरोना में सावधानी हटी, समझो दुर्घटना घटी।

# CAMS Q1 PAT up 2.4% to ₹65 crore

**New Delhi:** Registrar and transfer agent for mutual funds Computer Age Management Services on Saturday reported a 2.4 per cent growth in profit after tax to ₹64.78 crore for the April-June quarter of this fiscal. The company had posted a PAT of ₹63.24 crore in the same quarter of the last fiscal, Computer Age Management Services Ltd (CAMS) said in a statement.

Its revenue rose 17.6 per cent to ₹236.65 crore in the quarter under review from ₹201.18 crore in the three months to June 2021. Anuj Kumar, Managing Director CAMS Ltd, said that despite the volatile market situation, individual investor confidence remained high with buoyant equity net inflows supported by predictable, strong SIP (Systematic Investment Plan) collections of nearly ₹7,000 crore every month.

New SIPs clocking 10 lakh plus monthly registrations is another key trend pointing to mutual fund as the preferred route for long-term investors, he said. “Our share in assets under management (AUM) is at a robust 69 per cent serving 10 of the top 15 mutual funds. Our equity AUM expanded by 2.6 per cent quarter on quarter while our overall AUM saw a marginal decline of 1.6 per cent,” he added.

**New Delhi:** Max Ventures & Industries Ltd (MaxVIL) has won a bid to acquire about 4 acres of land in Noida for ₹220 crore for development of a commercial project.

In a statement, MaxVIL said its real estate arm Max Estates through its special purpose vehicle (SPV) had bid for the two land parcels being auctioned by Axis Bank.

“Axis Bank has sent a confirmation letter ascertaining the company as the successful bidder for both the land parcels,” MaxVIL said.

The two land parcels are located in Sector 129, Noida and next to Max Estates’ under-

# Google launches ‘India Ki Udaan’ to mark 75 years of Independence

**New Delhi:** Capturing the milestones India has achieved in its journey of 75 years since Independence, software giant Google on Friday unveiled a vibrant online project drawing from rich archives and featuring artistic illustrations to tell the story of the country.

Named ‘India Ki Udaan’, the project executed by Google Arts & Culture celebrates the country’s achievements and is “themed on the unwavering and undying spirit of India over these past 75 years”.

The project was officially launched at a glittering event held at the Sunder Nursery here in the presence of Union Culture and Tourism Minister G Kishan Reddy and senior officials of the Culture Ministry and Google.

As part of the countrywide celebrations, Google also announced its collaboration with the Ministry of Culture focused on reaching information online content that showcases the contributions of Indians and the evolution of India since 1947 to support the Government’s year-long Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav’ programme,” the search giant said in a statement.

It also announced that its popular Doodle4Google contest for 2022, themed on ‘In the next 25 years, my India will...’, is now open for entries to students of classes 1-10.

“The winner of this year’s Doodle4Google will see their artwork on the Google homepage in India on November 14, and win a Rs 5,00,000 college scholarship, a Rs 2,00,000 technology package for their school/non-profit organisation, a recognition of achievement, Google hardware, and fun Google collectibles. Four group winners and 15 finalists will also win exciting prizes,” it said in the statement.

**Chennai:** It was a moment of pride for the students of Allied Health Sciences of SRM Medical College Hospital and Research Centre at Kattankulathur near Chennai. About 11 students from MSc Audiology and Speech Language Pathology department have been placed in United States of America (USA) at a very handsome pay package. Founder Chancellor of SRMIST Dr T R Paarivendhar showered praises on the students who have won the placement with great pay package.

The 11 students have been placed at Pleasanton in California of USA with a salary package of 72,000 USD per annum which amounts to about ₹55 lakhs in the Indian estimates. The students have won applauds from every one at a function held in Chennai recently.

Pro Vice Chancellor (Medical and Health Sciences) at SRMIST Dr A. Ravikumar said it is a matter of pride for the institution that trained these students.







# INDIA BEAT ENGLAND BY FOUR RUNS TO ENTER CWG FINAL

PTI ■ BIRMINGHAM

All-rounder Sneh Rana showed nerves of steel by choking runs in death overs as Indian women's cricket team pipped hosts England by four runs to enter the final of the Commonwealth Games on Saturday.

Needing 165 to win, England were cruising along at 132 for 3. The hosts required only 33 runs off 24 balls but off-spinner Rana (4-0-28-2) bowled extremely well. She gave away only 3 runs in the 18th and 9 runs in the final over. England finished at 160 for 6 and even a last-ball maximum from Sophie Ecclestone couldn't save the day for the hosts with Harmanpreet Kaur's brigade earning a sweet revenge of the 2017 ODI World Cup final defeat at the Lord's.

If Smriti Mandhana's 32-ball-61 was a treat for the eyes, Rana, India's forever 'MVP', Deepti Sharma (4-0-18-1) and Pooja Vastrakar (3-0-20-0) didn't err in line or length under pressure. The match seemed to have decisively tilted in favour of England when



Harmanpreet introduced Shafali Verma, whose friendly "donkey drops" in the 16th over fetching the home team 15 runs. But Deepti and Rana collectively gave away only six runs in the 17th and 18th over respectively.

Pooja leaked 13 runs in the 19th over but the Mandhana-Taniya Bhatia combination pulled off a brilliant run out of the dangerous Nat Sciver to change the course.

It was then left to Rana to bowl at least five good balls that assured a medal for India in the inaugural edition of women's cricket. Earlier Mandhana's elegant yet brutal knock of 61 along with Jemimah Rodrigues' useful 44 not out powered India to a healthy 164 for 5 in 20 overs. Mandhana's 32-ball assault in the Powerplay laid the platform while Rodrigues, who is finally doing justice to her enormous potential, improvised well during his 31-ball unbeaten stay at the crease.

En route her knock, Mandhana also recorded the fastest T20 International fifty in women's cricket off only 23 balls.



## Boxers Nitu, Amit Panghal storm into finals, eye CWG gold medals

PTI ■ BIRMINGHAM

Indian boxer Amit Panghal (51kg) displayed his class as he reached his second consecutive Commonwealth Games final while Nitu Ghanghas (48kg) also remained on course for a gold in her maiden appearance here on Saturday.

Panghal, who is vying to win the yellow metal after his silver in the last edition, came from behind to beat an aggressive Patrick Chinyemba of Zambia with a 5-0 unanimous decision win.

Nitu, on the other hand, prevailed over Canada's

Priyanka Dhillon as she notched a RSC (Referee Stops Contest) win in the minimum weight category.

Such was the 21-year-old Nitu's confidence that she played with an open guard, inviting her opponent to strike while using her straight jabs and combination punches to great effect. In the end, the referee had to end the contest.

Both the boxers will have to overcome local challengers in Kieran Macdonald (men's fly) and Demie-Jade Resztan (women's minimum) in their respective finals on Sunday in pursuit of their maiden gold medals.

# Sindhu enters women's singles semis, Kashyap's campaign ends in CWG

PTI ■ BIRMINGHAM

Double Olympic medallist P V Sindhu struggled past Malaysia's Goh Wei Jin in women's singles quarterfinals to stay on course for a maiden individual gold medal at the Commonwealth Games here on Saturday.

A former world champion, Sindhu registered a come-from-behind 19-21 21-14 21-18 win over Goh, ranked 60th, to enter her third successive semifinals at the Commonwealth Games.

However, young Aakarshi Kashyap's CWG debut ended with a 10-21 7-21 defeat to Scotland's Kristy Gilmour, a silver and bronze medallist in 2014 and 2018 editions respectively. Sindhu, who had won a bronze and silver in the last two editions, looked slightly shaky against Goh, whom she had defeated in two tight games in the mixed team championship final.

Goh's attacking prowess was once again on display as she made the Indian work hard in the opening game.

The 27-year-old from Hyderabad had a two-point cushion in the mid-game interval but Goh managed to turn



the tables with her better display in the second half of the first game to take a 1-0 lead in the match.

A vastly experienced Sindhu, however, got back her bearing soon as the duo engaged in some superb rallies with the Indian managing to grab a three-point advantage at the break.

Sindhu, ranked world number 7, extended her lead to 19-14 and soon roared back in the contest.

The decider saw some enthralling rallies with the duo moving neck-and-neck till 6-6. Sindhu managed to eke out a 8-6 lead but Goh soon reeled off three points to turn the tables.

## Intimidating Vinesh Phogat in line for CWG gold, Dahiya eases into final

PTI ■ BIRMINGHAM

Putting aside the mental and physical struggles that pegged her back, an intimidating Vinesh Phogat pounced on her rivals to put herself in line for a hat-trick of CWG gold medals while the formidable Ravi Dahiya too cruised into the final, here on Saturday.

In what was expected to be a tough opener against world championship bronze medallist Samantha Leigh Stewart, Vinesh reduced it to a no contest and finished it in mere 36 seconds. Vinesh had the Canadian in a head lock from where she pushed her on the mat and in no time pinned her rival.

Even before people could warm up to the contest, it was all over.

Next up for the 27-year-old Vinesh was Nigeria's Mercy Bolafunoluwa Adekuoroye, who tried to resist a bit but soon the Indian had her in an iron grip. Vinesh kept her in that position for more than a minute in a magnificent show of power. With only four wrestlers in the women's 53kg draw, Vinesh now needs to beat Sri Lanka's Chamodya Keshani Maduravlage Don to win her third successive gold.

Vinesh has been struggling for form and fitness ever since her defeat at the Tokyo Games, where she made a shock first-round exit after entering the field as the hot favourite for the gold medal.

Tokyo Games silver medallist Ravi Kaumar Dahiya was also too good for his field. He won both his bouts — against Suraj Singh of New Zealand and Pakistan's Asad Ali — by technical superiority.

He will face Nigeria's Ebikewenimo Welson for his maiden CWG gold.

## World U20 Athletics C'ship: Triple jumper Selva P Thirumaran clinches silver

PTI ■ CALI (COLOMBIA)

Indian triple jumper Selva P Thirumaran improved his personal best to clinch the silver medal at the World U20 Athletics Championship here.

The 17-year-old managed a distance of 16.15m to finish two centimetres ahead of Estonia's Viktor Morozov.

The gold went to Jamaican Jaydon Hibbert who broke the Championship Record with his 17.27m effort.

Thirumaran's silver-winning jump came in his second attempt.

The Indian women's team qualified for the 4x400m relay finals.

The quartet of Summy, Priya Habbathanahalli Mohan, Rajitha Kunja and R upal clocked 3:34.18 to finish second in heat 3 and fourth fastest overall.

Olympic champion javelin thrower Neeraj Chopra was the first Indian to win a gold in the championships in 2016 in



Poland. Indian athletes have picked up three medals at the tournament, which was earlier known as World Junior Championships, so far, including two silver and a bronze.

In the last edition in Nairobi in 2021, India had won three medals — 2 silver, 1 bronze.

# Steeplechaser Sable, race walker Priyanka clinch silver medals in CWG



PTI ■ BIRMINGHAM

Avinash Sable broke his own national record to win a silver in the men's 3000m steeplechase while Priyanka Goswami also clinched a medal of the same hue in the women's 10,000m race walk on a productive day for India in the Commonwealth Games athletics competition here on Saturday.

Goswami also scripted history as she became the first Indian woman to win a medal in race walk with a silver in 10,000m event.

With the two silver, the Indian athletics team's medal count swelled to four and it has already gone past the number in 2018 Gold Coast where the country had won a gold, silver and bronze each in track and field.

High jumper Tejswini Shankar and long jumper Murali Sreeshankar had won a bronze and silver respectively in Birmingham.

The 27-year-old Sable clocked 8:11.20s to better his earlier national record of 8:12.48 and finish behind Kenyan Abraham Kibiwot (8:11.15). Another Kenyan Amos Serem took the bronze with a time of 8:16.83.

Kibiwot had finished fifth in the World Championships in Eugene, USA, last month with a time of 8:28.95s while Sable had ended a disappointing 11th, clocking 8:28.95s in the slowest ever 3000m steeplechase in the history of the showpiece.

With the silver, Sable made amends for his disappointing performance in the World Championships.



ଓଡ଼ିଶା ହସ୍ତକାର

# ରାଜ୍ୟସ୍ତରୀୟ ନାଟୀୟ ହସ୍ତକଳ୍ପ ଦିବସ

୭ ଅଗଷ୍ଟ ୨୦୨୨

ଆମ ବୁଣାକାର, ଆମ ହସ୍ତକଳ୍ପ  
ଆମ ପରମ୍ପରା, ଆମ ଗୌରବ ।

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ଆୟୋଜକ: ବୟନିକା ଓ ବୟନଶିଳ୍ପ ନିର୍ଦ୍ଦେଶାଳୟ  
ହସ୍ତକଳ୍ପ, ବୟନ ଓ ହସ୍ତଶିଳ୍ପ ବିଭାଗ, ଓଡ଼ିଶା ସରକାର







India’s telecom auction process has a long history associated with politics, corruption, and legal cases, writes J GOPIKRISHNAN

FROM 2G TO 5G AUCTION

THE GREAT  
INDIAN  
TELECOM SAGA

The 5G spectrum auction has reaped a whopping sum of ₹1,50,173 crore for the public exchequer. This massive figure is the highest value collected in India through not only spectrum auctions but also from any kind of bidding process, be it coal or power, or land auctions. As expected, the country’s leading telecom operator Mukesh Ambani-headed Reliance Jio made the highest bid for 5G waves in all 22 circles as well as for other frequencies and paid ₹88,078 crore. Jio was followed by India’s first private telecom operator Sunil Mittal’s Bharti Airtel, which made a successful bid of ₹43,084 crore by competing in all 22 telecom circles. Cash-strapped Vodafone Idea headed by Aditya Birla Group, which continues to struggle with financial woes despite Government’s grand bailout packages, bid only in 17 circles and bought spectrum for ₹18,799 crore only.

Adani Group also bid for 5G to operate their private network installed in airports, sea ports, and power stations by paying ₹212 crores for 400 MHz.

As per the convention, Public Sector Undertakings (PSU) BSNL and MTNL did not attend the auction. They will be allotted 5G spectrum at the highest price reached in auction at each circle. Sadly, these two PSUs have not yet optimized the service and even in the usage of 4G. It has to be seen how much time they take to activate 5G on their networks.

Interestingly, the 5G auction turned out to be the only auction where Chinese telecom giants have been kept out from supplying gears, machinery, etc., ringing in cheers for European telecom equipment giants like Nokia, Ericson, and Korean behemoth Samsung.

India’s auction process has a long history associated with politics, corruption, and legal cases. The government decided to conduct the auction for the first time in the telecom sector in 2001. Then India had only four million mobile phone users, and through pan Indian (all the 22 telecom circles) auction, telecom license fee with spectrum allotment arrived at a handsome figure of ₹1651 crore. Undivided Reliance and Tata Group entered the telecom sector through this process. Earlier, players like Airtel and BPL were cajoled by the Government to enter the sector in 1994 at a very low price. Those were the days when the incoming call rate was Rs Eight and outgoing ₹16 per minute on a minuscule customer base.

While the ruling BJP rejoiced over the final figures of the 5G auction that came out on August 1 after four days of bidding, 2G Scam-hit former Telecom Minister A. Raja got his chance to take a jibe at the NDA government. Raja called for a probe into the auction asserting that the 5G spectrum should have been sold for ₹5 lakh crores. Raja compared the 5G spectrum amount of ₹1.5 lakh crore with the notional loss of ₹1.76 lakh crore in the 2G auction during his tenure as calculated by the CAG and said that 5G has more spectrum, it should have fetched more for the government.

“When I recommended only 30 MHz of spectrum to TRAI, the regulatory authority, the then CAG Vinod Rai said ? ₹1.76 lakh crore loss to the Government. But now 5G only for ₹1.5 lakh crore?” Raja asked.

Raja and several other Opposition leaders vented their anger against the then CAG Vinod Rai for “sabotaging the UPA regime” and providing a platform for the rise of the BJP by alleging a scam in the 2G auction. These allegations are laughable given the gross procedural irregularities in the allotment of the spectrum during Raja’s regime.

AUCTION OF SPECTRUM, COAL AND NATURAL RESOURCES

The Government was forced to conduct a 3G and BWA spectrum auction in April 2010, when the 2G Scam of 2008 made headlines. The scam-hit UPA Government formed a Group of Ministers headed by then Finance Minister



THE MERIT OF THE AUCTION CAN BE SEEN IN THE RISE OF RATES FROM 2014 ONWARDS. IN FEBRUARY 2014, THE SPECTRUM AUCTION BAGGED ₹62,162 CRORE TO THE PUBLIC EXCHEQUER AND THE RATES WERE HIGHER THAN THE 2010 3G AUCTION, JUSTIFYING THE CAG’S LOSS FIGURE BASED ON THE 3G AUCTION RATES. IN MARCH 2015, THE SPECTRUM AUCTION FETCHED THE GOVERNMENT ₹1,10,000 CRORE, AND IN DECEMBER 2016 THE SPECTRUM AUCTION BROUGHT IN ₹65,789 CRORE TO THE PUBLIC EXCHEQUER. AGAIN IN MARCH 2021, THE SPECTRUM AUCTION GAVE ₹77, 814 CRORES WHEREAS THE RECENT 5G AUCTION PROVIDED THE HIGHEST FIGURE ₹1,50, 173 CRORES, TOTALING AROUND ₹5.9 LAKH CRORES TO THE PUBLIC EXCHEQUER BY AUCTION



Pranab Mukherjee, sidelining Telecom Minister A. Raja and the public exchequer got a huge sum of ₹1,06, 200 crores. This figure ignited the anti-corruption wave and opposition demanding the removal of Telecom Minister A Raja who allotted 2G Spectrum and 122 licenses to many companies, most of them from real estate sectors, at a throwaway price of just ₹9, 200 crores.

Raja gave telecom licenses and spectrum without auction in 2008 at a price arrived in 2001. In 2001, the pan-Indian license (total 22 licenses) value was ₹1651 crore when India had just four million mobile phone users. But in 2008, India’s number of mobile phone users crossed 300 million, and the Minister, ignoring Prime Minister Manmohan Singh’s direction, gave away licenses and spectrum at a seven-year-old fixed rate. Among the 122 licenses, around 86 licenses , did not get clearance from the Regulator TRAI to start a telecom business.

By that time BJP leader Subramanian Swamy and lawyer Prashant Bhusan approached the Supreme Court demanding the cancellation of all 122 tainted licenses granted by Raja and conducting fresh auction. The CBI in its FIR in 2009 on the 2G Scam pegged the loss to the public exchequer at 30,000 cr. Things got murkier when the beneficiary companies started selling their shares to multinational companies for huge premiums. For example, Swan Telecom sold around half of its shares to UAE telecom giant Etisalat for more than ₹4,500 crore.

HOW CAG ARRIVED AT THE LOSS FIGURE OF ₹1.76 LAKH CRORE?

In November 2010, the CAG submitted a report to Parliament outlining the illegalities in the 2G Scam allotment and claiming a notional loss of ₹1.76 lakh crore in the auction. For this, CAG Vinod Rai was maligned and bullied by

Congress and DMK MPs in JPC and PAC and in the public domain. How the auditors finalised the loss figure is a matter of record in the CAG’s depositions before JPC and PAC. The auditors had derived around 10 types of rates for calculating the expected loss to the public exchequer.

The figures were based on the sale of shares to multinationals by the beneficiary companies in the 2G scam and the companies reaping the benefit of Dual Policy (Anil Ambani’s Reliance, Tata, and Shyam Telecom). Somehow probes against the Dual Policy, the fountainhead of 2G Scam fizzled out. The lowest loss figure arrived at was a ₹60,000 crore loss based on the sale of shares of Swan Telecom to Etisalat. The highest loss figure arrived at was ₹4.25 lakh crore based on the sale of Tata shares to Japanese firm DoCoMo. As this price was based on the brand value of Tata, the auditors did not consider it.

At last CAG auditors after deliberations decided to stick to the rates of the 3G and BWA auction of April 2010, and based on these rates the 2G Scam loss was estimated at ₹1.76 lakh crore. Interestingly, the BWA spectrum was later conveniently termed the 4G spectrum. This was seen as a real Indian Jugad. In February 2012, Supreme Court cancelled all 122 licenses allotted by Raja and ordered an immediate auction and also called for an auction of all natural resources, later leading to the cancellation of all coal blocks. The Government went for Presidential Reference in the Supreme Court, which justified its decision to auction all natural resources in place of arbitrary allocations.

Many of the operators and the authorities resorted to every possible trick to sabotage the first auction in November 2012 after the Supreme Court verdict of Justices GS Singhvi and AK Ganguly. Airtel’s Sunil Mittal even said the auction would not last a day. But just 19 licenses were

sold at ₹9400 crore, while in 2G Scam 122 licenses were given away arbitrarily for just ₹9,200 crore.

The merit of the auction can be seen in the rise of rates from 2014 onwards. In February 2014, the spectrum auction bagged ₹62,162 crore to the public exchequer and the rates were higher than the 2010 3G auction, justifying the CAG’s loss figure based on the 3G auction rates. In March 2015, the spectrum auction fetched the government ₹1,10,000 crore, and in December 2016 the spectrum auction brought in ₹65,789 crore to the public exchequer.

Again in March 2021, the spectrum auction gave ₹77, 814 crores whereas the recent 5G auction provided the highest figure ₹1,50, 173 crores, totaling around ₹5.9 lakh crores to the public exchequer by auction.

WHEN WILL 5G SERVICE WILL BE AVAILABLE IN BSNL AND MTNL?

The full optimization of 5G technology will be reached only when the country’s BSNL and MTNL are equipped with the 5G technology. It is high time for the merger of BSNL and MTNL by delisting MTNL from stock exchanges. Sadly, BSNL and MTNL are not yet fully equipped with 4G. The Narendra Modi Government has come out with a huge package to revive these two strategic PSU telecom companies. If the plans work out, then only the 5G technology could reach most of the users across the country.

Incidentally, all the private operators only roll out their technology in Metros Cities and urban areas based on commercial viability. Since only BSNL can reach out to the entire country, hence 5G and all technologies must be made available to the public sector telecom firm for the benefit of the entire Indian population.

(The writer is a Special Correspondent of The Pioneer)

CLARIFICATION

The Uttar Pradesh Government has dismissed as “baseless” the report “Money spinner transfer industry” published in the agenda section of the Pioneer dated. July 31, 2022. Additional Chief Secretary , Information department, Navneet Sehgal has issued a strongly-worded rebuttal to the report and said it is not based on fact .

The Pioneer would like to clarify it has no intention to cast aspersion on the functioning of the state government and has even highlighted the stern steps taken by Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath to curb corruption. The story talks at length about how the Chief Minister has taken administrative action against over 1,000 officials to weed out corruption in the government departments. The transfer rates mentioned in the story were hearsay without corroborating the facts and were unintentional and regrettable.



# LONELINESS—A SILENT KILLER

Loneliness can affect anybody. Experts define it as a “distressing feeling that accompanies the perception that one’s social needs are not being met by the quantity or especially the quality of one’s social relationships.” Covid-19-induced restrictions have just added to the woes. The experts tell ARCHANA JYOTI that everyone who may be feeling lonely, or isolated should reach out to someone, and if they know someone who they feel might be lonely, or isolated to get in touch.

Seventy years old Kamlesh Patel (name changed) who retired as a senior bureaucrat, is a lonely man now. With his wife passing away two years ago, both the children settled abroad, and no close friends and relatives around, he is leading a secluded life in his 3-BHK apartment in a posh locality in the national capital. When in job, Patel failed to balance his personal/professional and social life. So, he is now rejected by those who really mattered in his life then. Now, he cannot blame anyone but himself for this situation that led him to loneliness.

Thirty-five years old Sanjay Rastogi is surrounded by so many people, but he is still leading a lonely life. It’s all because of an inferiority complex, he developed when he failed to convert his dream of becoming an IAS into reality. A brilliant student, Rastogi couldn’t accept any job lower than an IAS officer. Now, he avoids social contact and is in a kind of confinement because of low self-esteem, sadness, and fear of being repulsed/rebuffed.

These two cases are just the tip of the iceberg. As per the findings of the Centre for the Study of Developing Societies (CSDS) released in 2017, over 12 per cent of Indian youth reported feeling depressed often, and 8 per cent reported feeling lonely quite frequently.

A study “What causes loneliness among household heads: a study based in a primary setting in Mumbai, India” found that around 7 per cent of respondents often felt lonely, while 21 per cent sometimes experienced loneliness in the last seven days preceding the survey date.

Household heads with two or more chronic diseases had higher odds of loneliness than household heads without any chronic disease. The odds of loneliness were almost 3 times higher among females as compared to males. Household heads living alone (single) had higher odds to suffer from loneliness than those living in a joint family,” it said.

The study conducted by Vidya Yadav, Assistant Professor P.G. Department of Geography, College of Commerce, Arts & Science, Patna, Patliputra University, Patna, Shekhar Chauhan and Ratna Patel, Department of Public Health and Mortality Studies, International Institute for Population Sciences, Mumbai has been published in the BMJ Public Health.

They researchers noted that lifestyle of urban dwellers adversely affects their health not only physically but mentally too. In this context, loneliness rapidly emerged as a public health concern in the urban part.



Furthermore, many identified the risk factors of loneliness that could be avoided if timely preventive measures could be taken along with adequate care. Improvement in the aesthetic design of future slum rehabilitation projects can promote a socially cohesive environment,” they found.

Situation is not encouraging elsewhere. A study in 2020 by Cigna found that 61 per cent of Americans reported being lonely in 2019, up from 54 per cent in 2018. Some figures suggest loneliness affects the well-being of as many as 3 in 10 people. Similarly, yet another study same year but conducted by the University of Edinburgh suggests that the causes of loneliness differ depending on the age of the individual.

For example, older adults experience loneliness more frequently as a result of living alone, while middle-aged individuals aren’t likely to report living alone as a cause of their loneliness.



**JR Gupta, President of Senior Citizens Council of Delhi** avers saying that “Older individuals are more likely to have lost friends and family members, and they are more likely to experience medical or physical limitations that restrict their opportunities for activities and socializing.”

Recently released Longitudinal Ageing Study of India too says that approximately 23% of the elderly stay

alone, without children. While loneliness can have an impact across ages and be relevant irrespective of whether you stay alone or in a full house, it is most common among those above 60 and affects almost everyone at some point in time.

Gupta says that on their part they have been organising various tours and get together events so that their elder members do not feel that they are alone in their travail. “Sharing reduces the pain of loneliness,” he asserts.



**Dr. RK Dhamija, Director Delhi-based Institute of Behaviour Human Allied Sciences (IBHAS)** emphasizes that loneliness is both a cause and consequence of mental health disorders. Sometimes though, “loneliness may result in lifestyle modifications such as joining fitness classes, seeking outdoor adventure.”

Although loneliness and being alone are commonly confused, being alone doesn’t necessarily mean someone is lonely. “Loneliness is a feeling while being alone is a situation or state of being, which is not inherently negative,” says Nina Vasani, psychiatrist and professor at Stanford University School of Medicine and chief medical officer at Real, an online mental wellness membership site.

“You can feel lonely even when you’re surrounded by other people—such as a partner, family, co-workers or friends,” Dr. Vasani says.

## Tips to Manage that Feeling

But there is light at the end of tunnel. **RABYA KHATOON**, Delhi-based clinical psychologist talks about how to beat loneliness.



**Take control of your time:** When you feel lonely. It means time for yourself to make a list of your goals and try to accomplish them. **Self-care:** It tends to improve mood, quality of life, and physical and mental health. **Manage your leisure time with your skills:** You allow doing your skills like painting, cooking, dancing and some other activities. **Join a social group:** Join dance class, club, swimming, and some other social groups help to reduce your loneliness and it also helps to increase your physical and mental energy. **Give priority to close relationships:** Relationship matters in loneliness. Keep in touch with your loved one whether you touch it online or offline. **Self-love:** Be your own

best friend and gives value to your own work. It helps to improve your self-esteem which supports physical and psychological growth. **Enjoy your own company:** Connect with your own pleasant memories. **Active lifestyle:** You can beat your loneliness with your active lifestyle. Make activity schedule include your sleep 6-7 hour, healthy foods, exercise, fun, and traveling. **Enjoy the little moment:** Celebrate little moments like birthdays, organize a small party for fun, reading books that help to improve mental and physical health. **Count blessings:** Count your achievements and do appreciate them. It develops a positive approach toward your life.

## Nations Gear up to Tackle Loneliness



Delhi Government has started ‘Happiness Curriculum’ to teach students how to keep the stress and loneliness at bay

Various Governments across the world are gradually waking up to this silent killer. If the UK appointed a designated loneliness minister in 2018 to reach out to its older people, Japan last year took similar step after it felt that loneliness is afflicting across different age groups, including children, young people, women and older people. Rising cases of suicide was immediate trigger.

In India, Delhi Government has started ‘Happiness Classes’ while a few years ago, Madhya Pradesh set up a ‘Happiness Department’, with Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan saying it will work to ensure “happiness in the lives of the common people” along the lines of the neighboring country Bhutan.

Since 2008, Bhutan has

established the Ministry of Happiness to measure the happiness of its citizens. In the population census form, there is a column to fill in the information about citizens’ level of life satisfaction. This information is acquired using a holistic approach to measuring citizens’ happiness and well-being that also provides guidelines to design evidence-based policies.

Happiness classes have brought a pathbreaking change in the student’s mindset, Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia says explaining that the “curriculum has changed students’ learning experience for the better and how to tackle stress. Students’ focus on studies (is) increasing. Children are staying stress-free.”

Dr Dhamija agrees as he cautioned that solitude and loneliness should not be explained in similar ways. Solitude is enjoyed by people and it leads to creativity, and self-realization, and is totally an approach to developing one own individual space.

Loneliness is basically of three types - Emotional, Social, and Situational. Situational loneliness is when we lose someone close to our heart (bereavement), get bullied, physically/mentally abused, have chronic disease, and post-retirement fear of loss of Income, elaborates **Dr Smita Deshpande, a professor of psychiatry at St. John’s Research Institute, St. John’s National Academy of Health Sciences in Bangalore.**



Secondly, our egoistic attitude, underestimating/avoiding people for not being of our standard creates hatred for us, and people gradually start leaving us. And our high ambition to see our children get good jobs and earn a lot of money takes them away from us. They run after money leaving us behind and getting detached from us due to their busy/hectic work schedule, she points out.

Rajeev Kumar, Official on Special Duty (OSD) in Delhi Government’s Education Department who has gone through isolation stage as a Covid patient feels that people do not have time to talk to each other in this net-savvy world. New concept that “it’s no use of telling or advising anybody” is fast catching up. This also lead to loneliness even you when you have friends. Sometimes even when living in the same house they talk through Whatsapp or phone calls from their rooms. This is leading to decline in verbal communication, he says matter-of-factly.

Dr Dhamija concludes with the warning that, “Chronic feelings of loneliness can have huge adverse impact on anybody’s quality of life. If left untreated, these feelings can lead to more serious issues such as depression or other mental health conditions.

“These can be Cognitive decline/Depression/Heart disease/High blood pressure (hypertension)/Obesity/Weakened immune system /Alzheimer’s disease. Hence, it is important to reach out to a mental health professional, if you are feeling lonely.”



## Modi to inaugurate 2,400-bed Amrita Hospital in Faridabad on August 24

Prime Minister Narendra Modi, will inaugurate Amrita Hospital, Sector 88 in Faridabad, Haryana on August 24, 2022.

After making its mark in South India, Amrita Hospital is being started to cater to the patients in North India under the auspices of the Mata Amritanandamayi Math (MAM), a world-renowned humanitarian and spiritual leader who will also grace the occasion. State Governor Bandaru Dattatreya and State Chief Minister, Manohar Lal Khattar, will also attend the function along with other dignitaries.

The 2,400-bed healthcare institution will be India’s largest private sector hospital. This is the second large-scale Amrita Hospital in India after the iconic 1,200-bed Amrita Hospital, Kochi, that was established 25 years ago by the Mata Amritanandamayi Math.

Dr. Sanjeev K Singh, Resident Medical Director of Amrita Hospital, Faridabad said that cutting-edge medical research will be a strong thrust area. “The hospital will have a dedicated research block spread across a seven-floor building that totals three lakh sq. ft. with exclusive Grade A to D GMP labs. There will be a focus on identifying newer diagnostic markers, AI, ML, Bioinformatics, etc. We are in the process of entering into research collaborations with some of the world’s biggest names in medical science,” he said.

“The comprehensive transplant program offered by the hospital will be among the biggest in the country,” Dr. Sanjeev K Singh said.

Dr Prashant Mehta, Senior Consultant and Asst Professor, Department of Hematology/Medical Oncology and BMT at the Hospital added that the institute will be one-of-its kind in the country, trying to reach out to the poor and needy.

“There will be a special focus on indigenous research and innovation so as to develop therapies and solutions relevant to our country and our specific health related issues.

**HARYANA GOVERNOR BANDARU DATTATREYA AND CHIEF MINISTER MANOHAR LAL KHATTAR WILL ATTEND THE FUNCTION ALONG WITH OTHER DIGNITARIES**

“This indigenous innovation is an important step towards reducing the cost of healthcare in India more importantly for major illnesses like cancer, severe heart, kidney and liver ailments, solid organ and bone marrow transplants, and multi drug resistant infections,” he said.

The hospital’s benefits will go beyond providing access to the latest in healthcare technology and high-quality patient care in the Delhi-NCR. Once fully operational, the hospital will have around 10,000 staff and more than 800 doctors.

As part of its community initiatives, Amrita Hospitals has already started medical outreach programs at various residents welfare associations in and around Faridabad. These include awareness programs for the elderly with a focus on those suffering from neurological ailments, health talks for school children, general health checkups, and many more.

The Hospital is considered one of the country’s largest green-building healthcare projects with a very low carbon footprint, and it is an end-to-end paperless facility with zero waste discharge.

Amrita Hospital at Kochi has many firsts in its credit. For instance, in 2015, South Asia’s first ever successful Bilateral Hand Transplant Surgery was done at the Hospital. The same year, it won the British Medical Journal Award for the Best Surgical Team in South Asia after also completing the region’s second successful double hand transplant.

# That Incomparable Born Again Feeling After Dying A Million Deaths

There are bad days and there are horrific days. Even in the ‘best’ of malignancies, one cannot predict which way it will go. You have to tread the slow and painful path to reach the other side, DR NITA RADHAKRISHNAN, a child cancer specialist, shares her experience about how important it is to make sure those patients, most of whom come from the poor strata, are taken care of in every necessary aspect, from diagnosis to survivorship.

Yesterday, one more kid passed the golden hoop of 5 years to reach the other side of cancer care. The team that stood with her heaved a collective sigh of relief as she got the ‘survivor’ label. We hope and pray that she lives a full life without any side effects of cancer or its treatment. She hails from Uttarakhand and was diagnosed in 2016 with lymphoblastic lymphoma. The entire treatment over 2 years needed a lot of patience and perseverance from both sides; the family and the hospital. There were bad days and there were horrific days. Even in the ‘best’ of malignancies, one cannot predict which way it will go. You have to tread the slow and painful path to reach the other side. Every blood test, every hospital visit and every admission is a hurdle you have to jump to reach the finish line.

As a person working with sick children, I have realised that health undoubtedly is the biggest luxury for all of us.



**DR NITA RADHAKRISHNAN** Associate Professor and Head of the Department of Pediatric Hematology-Oncology, Post-Graduate Institute of Child Health, Noida.

We do not have any control over who gets a disease or who doesn’t. In most cases, we don’t even know why someone gets a disease in the first place. We also don’t have much control over who will make it and who will not. Many children whom we think will never survive, come out beautifully.

Cancer indeed is a great leveller. Although gaps do exist between high and low-

**Cancer indeed is a great leveller. Although gaps do exist between high and low-income countries and between affluent and poor families, most of those are superficial or cosmetic. The biological probability of responding to treatment remains uniform**



A doctor-patient interaction is held on the last Friday of each month to boost the courage of the families at the Noida Hospital

income countries and between affluent and poor families, most of those are superficial or cosmetic. The biological probability of responding to

treatment remains uniform. Things may not go as hoped for in the best of countries and the best of centres; often there are horrible infections that

don’t give you time to react. Often there are dreadful cancers that don’t respond to anything.

When we start treatment

for cancer, this is what most doctors tell their patients. That there is a process to it and timelines to follow. I often draw a mountain and tell them we are at the beginning of this trek uphill. We need to work together to reach the top. Everyone in the team should speak the language of hope and comfort. We need to continue the trek. The family has to put their life on hold for the duration of treatment; festivals, weddings and parties will be there next year also. We try to compensate for lost childhood and replicate life’s little joys in our hospital wards.

It can be overwhelming for the hospital team as well. We go through this rite of passage of analysing each and every child who did not do well. Abandoning treatment is perhaps the biggest tragedy of pediatric cancer care in our country. It is understandable if we lose a child to an aggressive disease. But to lose a child with a “perfectly curable” dis-

ease due to the ignorance of parents or relatives is unacceptable. A small part of you dies with each difficult patient. You are never the same as you were yesterday; you are warrior in each situation, richer in experience, calmer as a person and more restrained in your response.

As Gibran said, “the river cannot go back”. One has to keep going, with faith in a higher power, in yourself and in humanity and a promise to yourself to do your best. Each decision is vital; every child and every outcome stays with you. Happiness and sadness become parts of the same continuum. We learn to accept both; we pray. As doctors, we also realize that our profession is one of the biggest customer satisfaction portals. That at every age and stage of our lives, we are “rateable”. Most of them understand and stand with you in fighting the bigger battle of the disease. Many of them continue with you as your extended family.







