

YET ANOTHER 'VICTIM'

Late actor Inder Kumar's wife Pallavi Kumar says how her husband was a victim of nepotism in Hindi cinema

LEISURE

P2

VICTORY DAY PARADE

Indian contingent takes part in the Victory Day Parade marking the 75th anniversary of Nazi defeat in WWII

INTERNATIONAL

P9

RAKITIC SAVES BARCA

Ivan Rakitic comes off the bench to help Barcelona claim a win over Athletic Bilbao

SPORTS

P12

VOLUME 10, ISSUE 84 | www.orissapost.com

BHUBANESWAR | THURSDAY, JUNE 25 | 2020

12 PAGES | ₹4.00

IRREGULAR by MANJUL



Of course, all our medicines are certified... self-certified

FIR against cops, doctor for rape, abortion



POST NEWS NETWORK

Rourkela, June 24: A 13-year old girl was impregnated after being allegedly raped over a period of time by the head of Biramitrapur police station and other police officials, a report said.

The survivor was housed in the upper floor of the police station and coerced into physical relationship by the IIC. Later, the IIC hurriedly took the minor to the nearby public health centre and aborted her pregnancy with the help of a doctor.

Raiboga police registered a case against the accused police officials under various sections of IPC and POCSO Act after the district child protection officer (DCPO) lodged complaint against five persons including two police officials, a doctor, the step-father of the girl and another person. The government doctor is absconding after reports surfaced.

Sundargarh SP Saumya Mishra visited the spot, Wednesday.

The issue dates back to March 25 when the girl had come to witness a fair at Biramitrapur which had been cancelled due to the lockdown. She failed to return back to her village and was roaming near the bus-stand when a police patrolling team noticed her and brought her to the police station.

The IIC took the girl to upper floor and raped her. The police officials dropped the girl at her home the next day. The girl was then regularly called to the police station and raped by the IIC and other police officials.

India reinforces flashpoint region

AGENCIES

Leh, June 24: Indian fighter jets roared over the flashpoint Himalayan region Wednesday as part of a show of strength following a violent clash between the two armies in Galwan valley in eastern Ladakh. Chinese forces have held onto a chunk of land covering several square kilometres (miles) at the mouth of the Galwan, Indian military sources said.

The two sides publicly declared they would pull back following the clash, which saw 20 Indian soldiers killed in a battle involving rocks and nail-studded batons.

But both have maintained troops around the valley, with India deploying more forces and trying to project military might. Indian jets regularly took off Wednesday from a military base in Leh and headed towards the mountainous border 240 kilometres (150 miles) away. There were also checkpoints on main roads and a frenzy of military activity around the main town, which lies at 3,500 metres (11,500 feet).

Residents reported long lines of military trucks and artillery on roads near Leh. "We now have a good strength present in the area," an official of the Indian Army's Northern Command said on condition of anonymity, referring to the reinforcements.

After the latest round of talks between military commanders Monday, Chinese foreign ministry spokesman Zhao Lijian said the two sides had "agreed

MASSIVE CHINESE BUILD-UP

JUNE 22, 2020



Even as India and China continue to talk, the Chinese have continued the build-up all along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) including the Finger area where they have strengthened themselves with more positions and constructions. The Chinese army started its build up along the LAC in Eastern Ladakh sector on May 4 and deployed more than 10,000 troops along with heavy artillery, armoured regiments and defence batteries.

TALKS SIGNAL DE-ESCALATION

India and China Wednesday agreed that expeditious implementation of the previously agreed understanding on disengagement of troops from standoff points in eastern Ladakh would help ensure peace and tranquillity in the border areas, the Ministry of External Affairs said. The two sides held diplomatic talks through video conference to explore ways to ease tension along the Line of Actual Control in the eastern Ladakh region.

The two sides publicly declared they would pull back following the clash, which saw 20 Indian soldiers killed in a fierce face-off

However, both have maintained troops around the valley, with India deploying more forces and trying to project military might

The military mobilisation is unprecedented in a sensitive region touching Pakistan as well as China

TASHI CHHPEAL | INDIAN ARMY CAPTAIN (RETD)



to take necessary measures to promote a cooling of the situation". But they made similar comments after a fist-fight in May that proved to be a warmup for the deadly clash at Galwan.

According to Indian military sources, Chinese troops ambushed Indian soldiers and forced them down a ridge where they had gone to remove a Chinese "encroachment". A bilateral accord prevents the use of guns, but the fighting was still fierce, reportedly with rocks and batons wrapped with

barbed wire. China has in turn accused Indian soldiers of twice crossing the Line of Actual Control, the unofficial boundary, provoking its troops.

But the Chinese appear to be sticking to their gains at Galwan and the nearby Pangong Tso lake, police intelligence as well as military sources told AFP. China is now claiming the valley as its own, in statements that India has rejected. Indian analysts are dubious of the chances of a major easing of the tensions or that India will reclaim the territory.

Co-op banks now under RBI's charge



TIGHTER GRIP

- 1,482 urban and 58 multi-state cooperative banks will now come under the supervisory powers of the RBI
- The development assumes significance after last year's PMC scam

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, June 24: The Centre has decided to bring urban and multi-state cooperative banks under the direct supervision of the Reserve Bank of India to protect depositors in these financial institutions. The Union Cabinet, in a meeting held Wednesday, decided to initiate the move via the Ordinance route.

The move will bring 1,482 urban and 58 multi-state cooperative banks under the supervisory powers of the RBI. In terms of regulatory power, the central bank had limited control over these institutions, thereby, increasing the risk on the depositors.

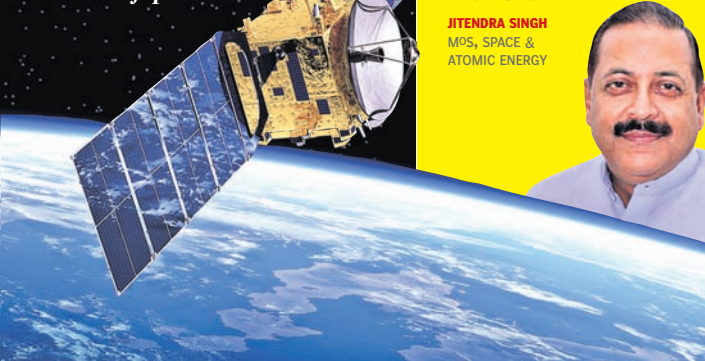
At present, there are various types of cooperative banks which come under different central and state regulations. The development assumes significance after last year's PMC scam.

According to Union Information and Broadcasting Minister Prakash Javadekar, the move will give an assurance to 8.6 crore depositors in these banks that their money will stay safe. In February, the Banking Regulation Act was amended to give RBI more regulatory powers over cooperative banks.

However, these amendments failed to be passed through the Budget session due to Covid-19 outbreak. Currently, the RBI cannot audit these banks or give its consent for the appointment of the bank's CEO, without these new powers.

Space assets open for all

The reforms will re-orient space activities from a 'supply driven' model to a 'demand driven' one, thereby ensuring optimum utilisation of space assets



A new curiosity has developed in the space sector in the country in recent years. These reforms will prevent brain-drain

JITENDRA SINGH
MOS, SPACE & ATOMIC ENERGY

who is the Minister of State in the Prime Minister's Office, said.

This centre will also hand-hold, promote and guide the private industries in space activities through encouraging policies and a friendly regulatory environment, Singh added.

The New Space India Limited (NSIL), a PSU under the Department of Space, will endeavour to re-orient space activities from a 'supply driven' model to a 'demand driven' model, thereby ensuring optimum utilisation of our

space assets, the minister said. The Cabinet decisions come weeks after Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman announced opening up of the space sector for private entities.

Some of the planetary exploration missions will also be opened up to private sector through an 'announcement of opportunity' mechanism, a government statement said.

"This will not only result in an accelerated growth of this sector but will enable Indian Industry to be an important player in global space economy. With this, there is an opportunity for large-scale employment in the technology sector and India becoming a global technology powerhouse," it said. The proposed reforms will enhance the socio-economic use of space assets and activities, including through improved access to space assets, data and facilities.

These reforms will allow ISRO to focus more on research and development activities, new technologies, exploration missions and human space-flight programme, Singh said.

Space applications have, in fact, entered every household of the country. However, the PM felt that these initiatives are not enough. Therefore, the decision has been taken to open the space sector for all," Singh said.

WE GO OUT. CORONA COMES IN.

Please don't step out if it's not absolutely necessary.

And if you have to, please wear a mask, maintain social distancing and wash your hands when back.



#OdishaFightsCorona

FORTUNE FORECAST

GaneshaSpeaks.com
accuracy • reliability • trust
FOR ASTROLOGY DIAL 55181*

ARIES
Joining a yoga class? Good for you. Try an Ayurvedic diet too. You may be in for a lot of new things in your life, but you will have to choose today! There's a bit of money coming in to smoothen the road, assures Ganesha.

TAURUS
There are chances of you embarking on a frivolous shopping spree today, foretells Ganesha. Putting two and two together, you may end up spending a (not so) small fortune in the afternoon. You will be the last person to tolerate if some one tries to dominate you. Your sweetheart will sugar your soul today.

GEMINI
Today, you will be extra careful about hygiene and cleanliness, predicts Ganesha. You may plan to wash your car, clean your yard, and arrange household items, only to be followed by a liberal spray of disinfectants in the afternoon.

CANCER
You will put your family members above everything else. You will plan the entire day keeping them in mind. Your family will respond in kind and will make you feel loved and blessed. Your rivals will acknowledge your accomplishments and abilities.

LEO
Ganesha foresees a mixed day for you. Your pecuniary problems may persist until later in the day, so your desire to see them sorted out is going to have to wait a little. However, chances are you may rake in money from various sources in the afternoon. Good thing is that you are likely to retain your independence at the workplace.

VIRGO
Homesickness will make you yearn and leave you musing during the day. You will try making sincere efforts to add more fibres to the cloth of relationships. Energy levels will go bonkers today. All in all, Ganesha sees a sanctified day.

LIBRA
Ganesha says today is a day where your attention will be on your family. You will give prime importance to them and may even keep aside work to pay attention to the happiness and well being of your family members. This is a good opportunity to plan an outing with your family members. Work wise too you will be getting golden opportunities to move up. Ganesha says wait and watch, there will soon come the time when you can change your dreams into reality.

SCORPIO
Athletes will achieve prime fitness and form today, says Ganesha. Engineers will design plans that will concentrate their resources on laying the foundation to new business ventures. Your social reputation will get a major boost later in the day.

SAGITTARIUS
Today will be a day when you are inclined not only to being upbeat but also firm, says Ganesha. In your line of work, you may get passionate about your views. But compromise is on the cards and that too without any harm to your dignity. Your better half will keep you occupied, says Ganesha.

CAPRICORN
Dreading the consequences of errors induced in the past, you will be extra cautious while working on important assignments and will try to save your skin, says Ganesha. This apart, you will spend a major part of the day worrying over career prospects and mulling a change of job.

AQUARIUS
You have been very busy, but today it is a different day. You will make efforts to be calm and relaxed, and go on the path of spirituality. You may visit a temple or any other religious place, or meditate to find solace, foretells Ganesha. Shopping, probably for clothes, is also on the cards for you.

PISCES
A mixed bag of goodies awaits you today. Your boss is likely to grant you a few unexpected concessions at work. For those pursuing studies, good results are in the offing. The evening is likely to be fun-filled and pleasant, says Ganesha.

MILEY LEADS A SOBER LIFESTYLE

Singer Miley Cyrus says she is currently leading a sober lifestyle. In an interview with *variety.com*, the *Wrecking Ball* fame artiste spoke about what made her follow sobriety and her therapy sessions. She also spoke about the stigmas attached to sobriety.

LUCIFER SEASON-5 IN AUGUST

The popular crime drama *Lucifer* is all set to come up with the fifth season in August, a post on Netflix UK's Instagram page read. Created by Tom Kapinos, *Lucifer* features Tom Ellis, Lauren German, DB Woodside and Lesley-Ann Brandt in the lead roles.



Elli amuses fans with 'Mango Dance'

Mumbai: Actress Elli AvrRam has come out with a funny new dance form that she calls 'Mango Dance'.

Elli took to Instagram, where she and her friend are seen dancing on Maria, Maria by Carlos Santana but with a twist. The two are seen holding two mangoes each in their hands.

"Ever heard about 'The Mango Dance'? It's a tropical ancient dance form, where you gently hold the mangoes and shake them as you move your body in a soft way that will seduce and trap it's audience," Elli captioned the video.

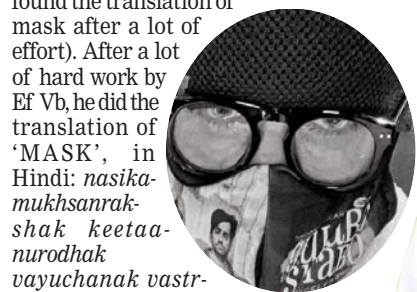
The Swedish-Greek actress keeps entertaining her fans and followers with her dance moves with her regular updates on social media.

She was recently seen in filmmaker Mohit Suri's multistarrer *Malang* and will reportedly next be seen in *RoohiAfza*.

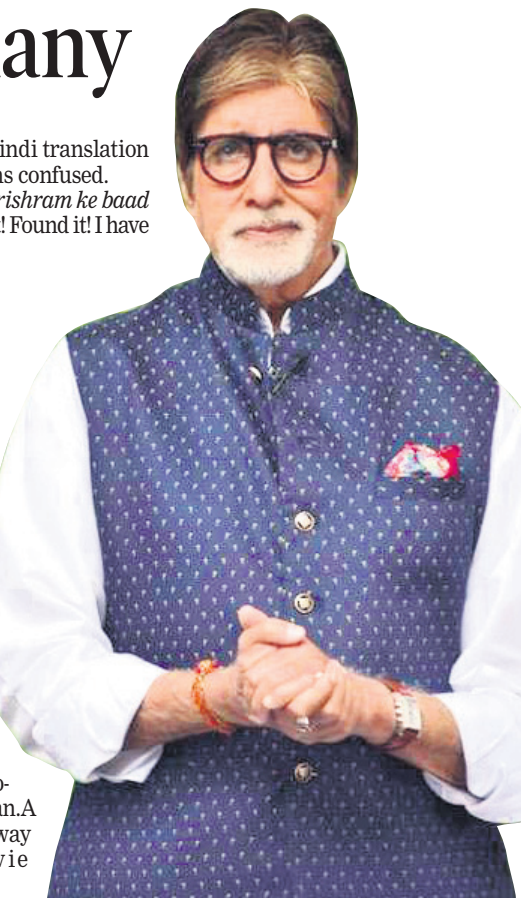
Big B's 'mask' translation confuses many

Mumbai: Amitabh Bachchan's lengthy Hindi translation of the word 'mask' has left many of his fans confused.

"Mil gaya! Mil gaya! Mil gaya! Bohut parishram ke baad mask ka anuvad mil gaya (Found it! Found it! Found it! I have found the translation of mask after a lot of effort). After a lot of hard work by Ef Vb, he did the translation of 'MASK', in Hindi: *nasika-mukhsanrak-shak keetaa-nurodhak*



vayuchanak vastr-doriyuktattika," shared the *Pink* actor on social media. Big B also shared a selfie where he can be seen wearing a *Gulabo Sitabo* printed mask. Not many fans seemed too impressed, though. While some feel it is difficult to remember such a lengthy term, some feel the language in which it has been translated is not Hindi but Sanskrit. "It is such a long word, by the time we finish pronouncing it, coronavirus will die," joked a fan. A section of netizens also felt this was just a way of promoting his latest movie *Gulabo Sitabo*.



Inder was a victim of nepotism, says wife

Mumbai: Late actor Inder Kumar's wife Pallavi Kumar shared a long Instagram post on how her husband had been a victim of nepotism in Hindi film industry, before mysteriously making her account private.

On the account named *unfathomable.9*, which is not verified, Pallavi has also

shared a picture of Inder along with superstar Shah Rukh Khan. In the image, the two can be seen shaking hands.

Alongside the image she wrote: "These days everyone is talking about...Nepotism...Just like Sushant Singh Rajput my husband late actor Inder Kumar achieved his fame

on his own. He was at a peak in 90s."

She recalled Inder meeting two 'big shots', before he died of cardiac arrest in 2017.

"He went to Mr Karan Johar, I was there too. He made us wait outside his van for 2 hrs. Then his manager Garima comes and says Karan is busy. But we waited and when he came out, he says 'Inder keep in touch with Garima. At the moment there is no work for you, (sic)' Pallavi wrote. She recalled how filmmaker Karan Johar 'blocked' Inder.

Pallavi said the same behaviour was given to Inder by Shah Rukh Khan.



Mahanataka tells the declining status of theatre

The short film is all about the resolve of Debi Prasad Patnaik, a noted theatre director, played by Jayant Santara, to stage a drama against all odds

POST NEWS NETWORK

BHUBANESWAR: In a rapidly evolving society, theatre, which had been one of the most popular forms of performing art in the state until a few years ago, now confronts unprecedented challenges. From 3-D movies to YouTube video to smart-phones, live theatrical performances now compete with an array of media to get the attention of the audience. Can the theatre survive the onslaught of electronic and digital technologies? The viewers have to watch *Mahanataka*, a short film released on Rath Yatra, to get an answer.

The film is made by Jeypore Film Company (JFC) in collaboration with Panchabati Srujanalaya with theatre as a backdrop. The plot revolves around the declining popularity of stage plays with the audience swaying in favour of other forms of entertainment like films and web series, said the makers.

"The film was premiered March 5 and we had planned to release it on World Theatre Day (March 29) since the film is based on theatre. However, the release date was postponed due to the lockdown triggered by the outbreak of COVID-19. Therefore, we released the film on YouTube channel on the occasion of Rath Yatra," said producer Sudhakar Patnaik.

Within 24 hours of its release *Mahanataka* has so far garnered more than 2,000 views, the makers claimed.

The film is directed by Vishal Patnaik and written by producer Sudhakar Patnaik. Tosh Nanda has composed the music while the VFX for the film is done by No Logic Films. It has also bagged an award



for Best Editing in two-day long Golden Triangle International Film Festival held at Bhubaneswar February 12.

Elaborating on the plot a little more, the director said, "The film is all about the determination of the character Debi Prasad Patnaik, a noted theatre director, played by Jayant Santara, to stage a play against all odds. Though theatre

is seen as a dying art form, Debi always believes that the charm of live theatrical performance can be revived.

"I belong to a place where no one honours the deserving, a culture which is moving away from its roots," said the film's director quoting the protagonist Debi. JFC & Panchabati Srujanalaya's maiden music video *Subharambha* won Best Music Video Award at several international film festivals held across the country.

JFC's other noteworthy productions include *Chondalo* and *Pension* which were adjudged best films at Odisha State Tele Film Awards in 2017 and 2018. The latter also bagged Jury's Choice award at North East International Film Festival held at Kolkata in 2018.

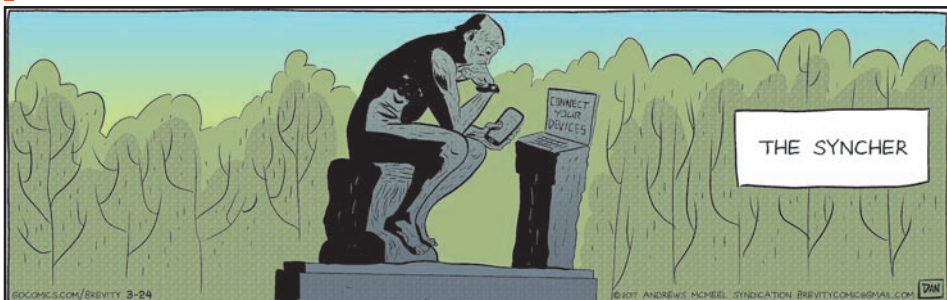
PEANUTS



CALVIN AND HOBBS

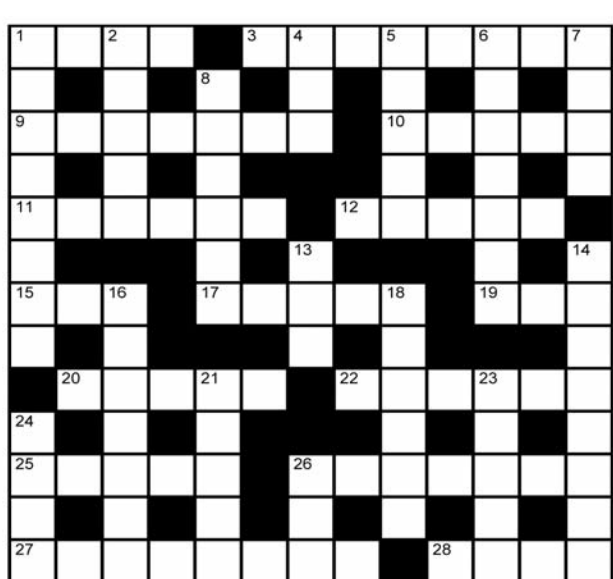


BREVITY



FUN post

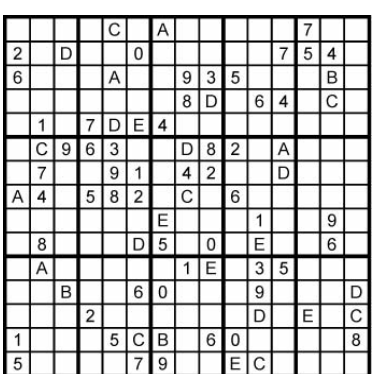
CROSSWORD



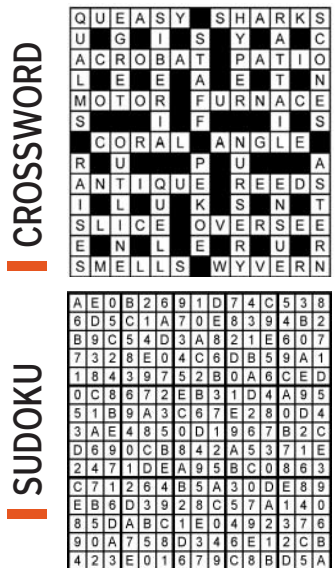
- Across**
1 Crowd noise
3 Quagmires
9 Put on a pedestal
10 Damp
11 Abraded
12 Hackneyed
15 Missile's path
17 Pick-me-up
19 Logger's tool
20 Jellied garnish
22 Birds of prey
25 Spin
- Down**
26 Shakespeare tragedy
27 Ladders
28 Distress signal
1 Foul weather gear
2 Fragrance
4 Have chits out
5 Loathe
6 Indonesian island
7 Fizzy drink
8 Like an early movie
13 Roadhouse
14 Ruby, for one
16 Largest inland body of water in the world
18 Latin dance (3-3)
21 Goldbrick
23 Sachet scent
24 Organ knob
26 Miner's load

SUDOKU

To solve the Sudoku puzzle, each row, column and box must contain the numbers 0 to 9 and the letters A to E.



SOLUTIONS



CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW

282 fresh cases take Covid tally to 5,752

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, June 24: Covid-19 cases continued to rise in various districts of Odisha as 282 fresh cases were reported across the state Wednesday, with Ganjam becoming the first district to report over 1,000 cases.

With this, the total number of coronavirus cases in the state has reached 5,752. While 4,123 patients have recuperated from the disease, 17 persons have lost their lives due to the disease so far, according to the data released by the Information and Public Relations (I&PR) department. Out of the total 282 fresh cases reported from across 17 districts of Odisha, 256 were detected from quarantine centres while the remaining 26 are local cases.

Gajapati continues to report severe spike in Covid-19 cases with 76 new cases, the highest in the state Wednesday followed by Ganjam with 75 cases, said the I&PR de-



TOTAL RECOVERIES	4,123
CASUALTIES	17
CASES IN GANJAM	1,031

partment.

The total cases in Ganjam now stand at 1,031. Of the remaining districts, Khurda reported 26 cases, Jharsuguda (23), Kandhamal (17), Sambalpur (13) and Jagatsinghpur (11). Similarly, Puri reported nine cases, Jajpur and Mayurbhanj six cases each, Cuttack (4), Balasore (3) and one case each from Angul, Sundargarh, Bolangir, Koraput and Nayagarh districts.

Besides, as many as eight NDRF

personnel who returned from West Bengal after carrying out rescue and restoration operations post Cyclone Amphan were also tested positive with the virus.

135 recovered
Meanwhile, 135 persons who earlier tested positive for the virus have recovered and are being discharged.

Out of the 135 persons, 49 are from Ganjam, 19 from Khurda, 16 from Kalahandi, 14 from

22 new cases in Capital city

BHUBANESWAR: The Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC) Wednesday said that 22 more people have tested positive for Covid-19 in the city in past 24 hours.

While three of them are home quarantine cases, as many as 19 cases are from local contacts.

Of the three home quarantine cases, one was a 28-year-old male from Maitree Vihar area with travel history to Kolkata, the second one is a 29-year-old male railway staff with travel history to Delhi and the third is a 24-year-old male from VSS Nagar area with travel his-

tory to Delhi.

"Further contact tracing is still continuing. Primary contacts & nearby houses are being quarantined, sanitised and will be under active surveillance," BMC said. It further added that all positive cases have been shifted to dedicated COVID hospitals.

According to a notification issued by the civic body, as of Wednesday morning, 220 persons have tested positive for Covid-19 in Bhubaneswar out of which 113 have recovered. While there are 103 active cases, three persons succumbed to the disease.

Jagatsinghpur, seven from Balasore, six from Cuttack, four each from Angul, Jajpur and Puri, three from Sundargarh, two each from Keonjhar and Kendrapara, one each

from Bargarh, Bhadrak, Jharsuguda, Mayurbhanj and Sambalpur.

With this, total recoveries in the state now stand at 4,123.

‘Elderly deaths due to family negligence’

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, June 24: The state government Tuesday said that nearly 83 per cent of the persons who died of Covid-19 were either above 60 years or were living with co-morbidity.

"Out of the 24 deaths due to Covid-19 and other underlying ailments in the state, nine of them were above 60 years while 11 of them were living with co-morbidities which denote living with more than one disease," said Subroto Bagchi, Chief Spokesperson of the Covid Management of Odisha government, said.

He also said that the remaining six were local cases without travel history. He also said that there had been cases where the elderly succumbed to the infection without stepping out of their houses.

"There are people who never stepped out of their houses. If people in their family do not maintain hygiene would invite coronavirus and sacrifice the lives of the elderly. The question now arises whose fault actually caused the deaths? Should coronavirus be blamed for this or the irresponsible person?" he said.

He also cautioned people living in home quarantine in urban areas and asked them to refrain from meeting guests and relatives besides complying with other norms of quarantine.

"Home quarantine is not a time for family reunion. This will be fatal and the elderly will be most hit.



Bagchi cautioned people living in home quarantine in urban areas to refrain from meeting guests and relatives

Do not meet guests, friends and family members. Do not take part in family functions. Do not mix the usage of towel, plates and others when you are in home quarantine," he said.

Bagchi also asked youths to take special care of their elderly family members to prevent them from contracting the virus. "Wear masks when you visit to your elderly family members. Disinfect their articles often used and do not bring guests to homes as of now. Do not let your elderly travel these days in bus and trains. Maintain proper hygiene," he said.

According to Bagchi, 5,75,000 Odias have come back to Odisha. He appreciated the rural population who stayed in quarantine centres.

ANTIBODY TEST FOR VIRUS SOON

Bhubaneswar: Director of Institute of Life Sciences (ILS) Ajay Parida Wednesday said that the antibody kits approved by the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) will reach Odisha by next week. Stating that these kits will be used in the ongoing door-to-door COVID test in the state, he said a final blueprint will be ready Thursday. Parida said there has been no community transmission in the state as of Wednesday. "The RT-PCR test is the most reliable test but it is time-consuming and can be conducted only in specialised laboratories. A huge consignment of kits for the test will come to Odisha by next week," he added.

Pvt hosps to bear staffers’ treatment cost

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, June 24: With the increase in number of coronavirus infection among healthcare workers in hospitals, the state government has issued an order asking the private healthcare institutions to bear the treatment cost of its staff, if infected with COVID-19 on duty.

The Directorate of Medical Education and Training (DMET) issued the order, Wednesday fol-

lowing detection of 27 Covid positive cases at Blue Wheel Hospital at Mancheswar.

"Health care workers (HCWs) are not only at higher risk of infection but can also amplify outbreaks within health care facilities if they get infected. This bestows a high level personal responsibility and accountability. The promoter and/or the management of private hospitals also owe responsibility for implementation of the infection prevention and control

measures," the government said in the order. If any healthcare worker of a private hospital is infected with the virus during the course of on duty, the concerned hospital authority will bear the treatment and management costs.

All private hospitals have been asked to ensure completion of training of staff on prescribed infection prevention and control measures (IPC) within seven days and submit a certificate.

The government has also asked

the private hospitals to submit the name of nodal officer along with phone number and e-mail address to the Director of Public Health.

Further, the hospitals have been instructed to establish a dedicated fever clinic and reserve an isolated area for management of suspected and confirmed cases of COVID-19. The area will be managed by dedicated staff who shall not be deployed in other areas of hospital.

LEGAL AID CLINIC



Orissa High Court Chief Justice Mohammad Rafiq inaugurates a legal aid clinic at the campus of National Law University, Odisha in Cuttack, Wednesday

OP PHOTO

25% quota sought in pvt schools

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, June 24: The Odisha Abhibhabak Mahasangha (OAM), Wednesday, wrote to Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik seeking 25 per cent reservation for students belonging to poor and disadvantaged sections in private English medium schools, as per the Right to Education (RTE) Act.

Basudev Bhatt, chairman of OAM, said, "The School and Mass Education department has issued an order, bearing Letter No 8059, dated 05.06.2020, regarding admission of elementary and secondary students for session 2020-21 from 15th July 2020 in all government, aided and unaided schools in Odisha. This order is only meant for govt/aided and unaided recognised schools, Madrasas and Sanskrit Toles etc under the department during the lockdown period."

However, another 12 lakh students with one lakh new students are waiting for admissions to private English medium schools, he said.

"After our demand, the S&ME department has modified the pre-



The parents’ body has urged the state govt to issue a specific order to allow the reservation for EWS students

vious order and issued another order with SOPs for admission of students in elementary and secondary students only affiliated to BSE and CHSE boards. It was a welcome step to not call parents and students to schools during lockdown," Bhatt added.

The CBSE, ICSE and other affiliated English medium schools should comply with the Act.

The department should issue a specific order as per RTE Act and ensure the admission of students belonging to Economically Weaker Section (EWS) and Disadvantaged Groups (DG) in private English medium Schools. These schools should allow reservation of 25 per cent seats for these students under RTE Act, he added.

"Now we request your special in-

tervention and instructions to the department to come up with an order without students and parents in all private English medium schools and issue an SOP. Further, the private schools should not collect fees arbitrarily and unnecessarily in the name of admission and readmission. We believe your kind intervention will solve this problem and we will get justice from you. In the present circumstances, we request your kind intervention and immediate order to stop this violation by private English medium schools in Odisha in the name of admission and readmission. We also request your kind order to implement RTE Act failing which the OAM will go for an agitation from July 1," Bhatt stated.

POST NEWS NETWORK

Puri, June 24: The state government will conduct Covid-19 tests on all 5,000 people involved in this year's Rath Yatra.

A decision to this effect was taken at a high-level meeting here Wednesday. Notably, a Srimandir servitor was tested positive for the deadly virus Tuesday.

As per the decision taken at the meeting, all servitors, police personnel, officials of the district administration and employees of the Shree Jagannath Temple Administration (SJTA), who are involved in this year's Rath Yatra directly or indirectly, would go through two rounds of Covid-19 tests before the culmination of the annual mega event.

"The Supreme Court has directed the state government to make all effort to check the spread of coronavirus during Rath Yatra. A servitor has been tested positive for the virus. So, it has been decided that all people who are supposed to take part in the Bahuda Yatra, Suna Besha, Adharapana and Niladribeji ritual would go through Covid-19 tests," said Srimandir Managing Committee working chairperson Suresh Mahapatra.

According to Mahapatra, Covid-19 tests would be conducted on all



SJTA chief administrator Krishan Kumar said that the temple administration would distribute 5,000 cotton masks among the servitors

servitors, police personnel, officials of the district administration and employees of the SJTA who are involved in the mega festival.

Mahapatra further revealed that a meeting of the Chhatisha Niyog would be held Thursday and all servitors' groups would be told to inform their members about the Covid-19 tests.

"We have planned to conduct

WOMAN DELIVERS IN SPECIAL TRAIN

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, June 24: A 32-year-old lady, Saira Fatima, gave birth to a male child in Secunderabad-Howrah Special train at about 11:30am at Khurda road railway station with the help of Railway doctors and a medical team.

On getting information about the labour pain to the lady, Railways acted quickly and train was detained at Khurda Road where the doctors and the health team attended to the lady to deliver the baby.

Later, the Railways arranged an ambulance and sent both the mother and the newborn to a local hospital. Both new born and mother are doing well, said ECoR sources.

Mo Bus to Pipli starts today

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, June 24: Good news for those who wish to pay a visit to the appliqué town, Pipli, as the CRUT has decided to launch its Mo Bus service to Pipli from Thursday.

The first bus will leave Master Canteen at 7:15am. The bus service from Bhubaneswar to Pipli could not be launched June 23 due to the lockdown declared in Puri for the Rath Yatra.

Earlier, the Capital Region Urban Transport (CRUT), June 21, decided to start Mo Bus services from Bhubaneswar Railway Station (Master Canteen) to Pipli from June 23.

Covering a stretch of 24.8 km, a total of four buses will run on this route connecting 33 bus stops. While the first bus will leave Bhubaneswar Railway Station at 7am, the last bus will be available



at 5:50pm. Similarly, the first bus will depart from Pipli at 7:45am and the last bus will leave at 7pm.

"Our expert committee has decided to operate services on this route based on the demand. Mo Bus would link citizens and tourists alike to the appliqué town," said Dipti Mahapatra,

General Manager, CRUT.

"Presently, the buses will ply only during the peak hours – 7am to 12pm and 3pm to 7pm at a frequency of 40 minutes. Only one bus will ply on the inauguration day. Regular service will start Wednesday onwards," Mahapatra said.

The bus service from Capital city to Pipli could not be launched June 23 due to the lockdown declared in Puri for the Rath Yatra

FOR CLASSIFIED ADVERTISEMENTS CONTACT OUR BOOKING STATIONS

Acharya Vihar-DayalAgency-9437135727, A.P. Tours and Travel, Maitri Vihar, C.S. Pur- 9861301598, Aurobindo Market-Sai Audio & Electronics-9438304668, Airport Road-Sai Baba Variety Store-9090071530, Anish Infotech- Tankapani Road-9861341488, Bapuji Nagar- Dreamland Studio- 9777517314, Baramunda Rental Colony-Maa Ramchandi Communication-9658821469, Baramunda Housing Board Colony-Pappu Variety Store-9040500106, Cuttack Road-Alishan Snacks-8984236754, District Center (Chandrasekharpur)-Sai Google Mart-9776056507, Forest Park-DTDC Couriers & Services (HB Services)-7381024156, IRC Village-Bapi Xerox-9090090404, Gift Hut(Antriksh Gifts & Decors Pvt. Ltd.)-9957481084, Pruthvi Medicine-9853314816, Janpath-Krupal Book Store-7978646669, Jaydev Vihar-AK Enterprises-7978116618, Subam Sai Books Store-8895550649, Swain Graphics- 9337121249, Jagannath Mobile Point- Janpath Road, Ram Mandir- 9938475415, Kanan Vihar-Auro Electronics-8260697560, Khandagiri- Swosti Mobile Centre- 7992914045, World Solution- 9938317559, KIIT Road-Jugad Jn-9338545031, Laxmi Sagar-Aditya Mobile-9438191836, Lewis Road-Spider Web-7809186415, Metro Satellite City-Arogya Mitra Medicine Store-9853621640, Madhusudan Nagar-Mohapatra Communication-9124446664, Maa Santoshi travels- Gajapati Nagar- 9777675867, Nayapalli- The Cake Room- 7873660137, Near Mayfair Lagoon-Cookiemana-9439491273, Nigamananda-Omm Sai Travels-9668284823, Nr Cosmopolis Main Gate- Shreeram Medical Store- 8763711714, Net Square- Niladri Vihar (C.S. Pur)- 7205634821, Priyadarshini Market-Astro Point-9938134346, R.N. General Store-Nilakantha Nagar-9438642501, Sahid Nagar- Maa Communication- 9437353424, Sahini General Store- Near Patia Railway Station, Mahavir Vihar- 9937586626, Satya Nagar-Baishnavi Mixture & Sweets-7894821764, Samantapur- Download Point-7504557743, Sailashree Vihar-Harsha Book Store-8093449515, Saheed Nagar-Jagannath Graphics-7978652670, Photo World-7978468191, Sainath Photo Studio-8984436129, Shanti & Co-9937071063, Siripur-Omm Maa Sarala Communication-9777682449, Sushree fashion- Jagmara-9938714347, Shree Vision- Sailashree Vihar-9861476678, Unit-3-LIC of India Premium Point-9337787080, Unit-7- LIC Premium Point- 9338227422, VSS Nagar-Friends Cake & Bake-8658200930, Jeet Infoworld-7205195782, XIMB Square-LD Books-9658061373.

Nayagarh Chhenapoda’s eternal wait for GI tag

THE PROPOSAL HAS BEEN LYING IN COLD STORAGE DUE TO ALLEGED LACK OF SUPPORT OF THE UNION GOVERNMENT

POST NEWS NETWORK

Nayagarh, June 24: The move to accord geographical indication (GI) tag to ‘Chhenapoda’, the famous sweetmeat of this district, has been pushed into uncertainty with the state government and a social outfit spearheading the movement pulling in opposite directions, a report said.

Reports said that the proposal has been lying in cold storage also due to lack of support of the Union government.

This has happened as the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) under the Ministry of Commerce and Industry is yet to make any move despite submission of all necessary documents for grant of GI tag.

The file is gathering dust in the



The movement for GI tag to Chhenapoda will be intensified soon

PRAMOD PATNAIK I
PRESIDENT, SHANTI CHARITABLE TRUST

DPIIT while an outfit spearheading the movement for GI tag has been maintaining silence due to coronavirus induced lockdown. All taken together have proved serious setback in according GI tag for the famous sweetmeat.

A social outfit ‘Shanti Charitable Trust’ has been spearheading a movement for grant of GI tag to Nayagarh Chhenapoda and other indigenous items of the district. The trust president Pramod Pattnaik claimed to have submitted all necessary documents at the district ORMAS office which later redirected the documents to the DPIIT.

However, Praveen Kumar Jha, chief executive of ORMAS, Nayagarh rejected the claims. He said not to have received any proposal for according GI tag to Chhenapoda and other indigenous items.

Sources said that the credit for inventing Chhenapoda goes to Sudarshan Sahu of Satapatna village in Daspalla block. Sahu shot into prominence after he invented the famous sweetmeat.

His ‘Chhenapoda’ soon found many takers and former Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru and former Chief Minister Biju Pattnaik showered praises on him after tasting the sweetmeat. Sahu is no more but his famous Chhenapoda has become a household name. Over 230 families in the district are earning their livelihood by preparing Chhenapoda. Such is the taste of Chhenapoda that the sweetmeat is daily transported to Sundargarh, Berhampur, Rourkela, Keonjhar, Sambalpur, Koraput, Rayagada, Baliguda, Joda, Barbil and Jharsuguda in buses.

The trust president organised a press meet and demanded GI tag for the famous sweetmeat. He was soon joined by some eminent residents following which the state Science and Technology department asked him to submit all necessary documents in support of their claims at the district ORMAS office.

Later, the trust members submitted all necessary documents at the ORMAS office demanding GI tag for Chhenapoda and six other items of the district.

When contacted, Pattnaik said that the movement for GI tag to Chhenapoda will be intensified after the lockdown is lifted in the country.

A Chhenapoda cook Antaryami Behera of Macchipada village said that the efforts in according GI tag to Chhenapoda should be intensified.

1 DEAD, 20 INJURED AFTER BUS FERRYING MIGRANTS HITS TRUCK

The private bus with around 40 passengers collided with a stationary truck on NH-16 near Jamjhadi area

POST NEWS NETWORK

Balasure, June 24: One person was killed and 20 others were injured, when a Bihar-bound bus carrying migrants from Pondicherry hit a truck in Balasure district Wednesday, a senior police officer said.

The mishap occurred when the private bus with around 40 passengers collided with a stationary truck on NH-16 near Jamjhadi area, he added.

One person died in the accident and 20 others sustained injuries, Simulia Police Station inspector-in-charge Parsuram Sahu said.

He added that police personnel rushed to the site and the injured people were sent to a nearby hos-



pital. Three with serious injuries were later shifted to the Balasure district hospital, he said.

The migrants were returning to their native places in Bihar after being stranded in Pondicherry in the wake of the lockdown.

Arrangements are being made to send other passengers to Bihar, the police officer added.

Inter-state communication paralysed as bridge caves in

After heavy rains for two days straight, Khalana bridge along the border of Chhattisgarh collapsed in Nuapada

POST NEWS NETWORK

Nuapada, June 24: Communication between Odisha and Chhattisgarh was disrupted after Khalana bridge on the border of Nuapada district caved in due to heavy rains for the last two days, a report said.

Thousands of people who used to operate on this route on a daily basis are now inconvenienced.

The Khalana bridge is 8 km from the district headquarters of Nuapada, sharing borders with the neighbouring state.

Given the significance of communication on the borders, the rural development department has laid a road. A bridge on the route was built with funds of the block



The collapsed bridge

OP PHOTOS

administration about eight years ago.

Thousands of people living in ten panchayats on both sides usually use the route for various purposes including trading.

“The bridge turns to bad shape in every three to four years and requires renovation. Contractors are awarded its work, but they botch up

its renovation instead. Thus, lakhs of rupees go down the drain. In the monsoon, woes of the people multiply,” Satya Sundar Mohanty, a local, said.

Locals said that heavy rains lashed the area for two days, triggering floods in the nearby river and the bridge caved in. Acres of land on both sides of the river were cast with sand, they lamented.

People have no way, but to wade through chest high water to cross the river now, they added.

Locals have apprised the officials of the rural development department about the bridge.

When asked about it, Suresh Rai, the executive engineer of the Rural Development division said that the matter was being looked into and a report has been submitted to the higher authorities.

“We have proposed the department in February for a bigger bridge in view of commuting importance on the border areas. The work of the bridge will be undertaken,” Rai assured.



Commuters have no way, but to wade through the river

Jagatsinghpur wins natn’l-level SKOCH award

POST NEWS NETWORK

Jagatsinghpur, June 24: Bringing laurels to Odisha, Jagatsinghpur district has bagged the prestigious SKOCH Award for e-office governance, informed district Collector Sangram Keshari Mohapatra, Wednesday.

Mohapatra congratulated the district administration team for the achievement and thanked Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik for his support and guidance.

SKOCH award, instituted in 2003,



JAGATSingHPUR ADMINISTRATION LAUNCHED THE E-OFFICE SYSTEM, MARCH 2019

THE AIM WAS TO SPEED UP MOVEMENT OF FILES AND ENSURING TRANSPARENCY

recognises people, projects and institutions that go the extra mile to make India a better nation.

Sources said with an aim to ensure transparency and speed up

the pace of movement of files from one level to another and from one department to the other, the district administration of Jagatsinghpur launched the e-

office system, March 2019.

The e-office system in the district offices reduced the use of paper.

Due to the e-office system the hassles of file movement from one department to another has been reduced. The new system is also helping in ensuring transparency and accountability among the office staff.

Now the office staff at all government offices in the district can easily locate the files due to the e-office system. Notably, the e-office system is under the 5-T initiative of the state government.

3 including 2 minors held for offensive comments on Rath

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhawaniapatna/Koksara, June 24: Police arrested three persons including two minors on charges of making objectionable comments on ‘Rath’ in social networking sites, under Koksara block of Kalahandi district, Wednesday.

Among them, two of the accused are minors while one of them is an administrator of a Whatsapp group. The third accused was identified as Subal Singh, 20 of Charbahal village and administrator of another Whatsapp group. The accused after their arrest were taken for interrogation. Later, Singh was produced in a court while the two minors were produced at Bhawaniapatna juvenile court. Both the courts rejected their bail pleas.

Earlier, Koksara police registered cases in their names following com-



plaints filed by various Hindu outfits Vishwa Hindu Parishad, Bajrang Dal and local unit of BJYM at Bhawaniapatna Town police station. Two of the minor are residents of the area while Singh is a native of Charbahal village of Temra panchayat.

The incident has spread shockwaves in the area with the comments of the accused persons drawing severe flak from the residents.

COVID CASES IN GANJAM DIST BREACH 1000-MARK

At present, there are 343 active cases in the dist and death toll stands at eight

POST NEWS NETWORK

Chhatrapur, June 24: With 76 new Covid-19 positive cases reported in Ganjam district Wednesday, the total number of persons who have tested positive for the virus in the district crossed the 1,000-mark with the total tally reaching 1,031.

The number of active cases in the district has now reached 343. The district has also reported eight deaths due to the coronavirus disease so far.

On the other hand, Ganjam district administration has restricted the entry of public into all government offices in the district for the next 10 days from Wednesday after senior government officials tested positive for COVID-19 in the district.

Sources said that ten senior government officials who had frequently visited various government offices in the district due to official work are infected by coronavirus. Following which, both government officials and public are in a state of panic.

Collector Vijay Amruta Kulange said, “The decision to close all gov-



Senior govt officials test positive for Covid-19 in the district

Ganjam admin restricts entry of public into all govt offices for the next 10 days from Wednesday

citizens for next 10 days. We have to take this decision as our senior officers getting corona affected. We pray for their quick recovery,” Kulange tweeted Wednesday.

However, the Ganjam district administration had declared complete lockdown till June 30 to curb the community transmission of coronavirus.

The lockdown restrictions in the district are in force from 12.00 pm to 7.00 am every day till June 30, Kulange informed.

HONOURING SACRIFICE



Keonjhar Zilla Gondwana Gond Mahasabha organises a cultural programme to mark the ‘Balidan Divas’ of Maharani Durgabati, at Premlatika Kalabhawan in Keonjhar

OP PHOTO

OPHCW
Odisha Police Housing Corporation Ltd.

No.: CAD-201

(A Government of Odisha Undertaking)

JANAPATH, BHOINAGAR, BHUBANESWAR - 22

Ph.: 0674-2541545, 2542921, Fax: 0674-2541543

E-mail: ophwc.od@nic.in, Website: www.ophwc.nic.in

e-Procurement Notice No.-08

THE ODISHA STATE POLICE HOUSING & WELFARE CORPORATION LTD.

(A Government of Odisha Undertaking)

JANAPATH, BHOINAGAR, BHUBANESWAR - 22

Ph.: 0674-2541545, 2542921, Fax: 0674-2541543

E-mail: ophwc.od@nic.in, Website: www.ophwc.nic.in

e-Procurement Notice No.-08

INVITATION FOR BIDS (IFB)

1.	The (OSP&WC), Odisha, Bhubaneswar invites Percentage Rate bid in Double Cover system in ONLINE MODE only, for the works as detailed below:	
2.	Nature of Work	Building Works
3.	No. of Works	05 Nos.
4.	Bid Cost	Rs.11,800/- (To be paid online)
5.	Value of Tender	Rs.2.45 Cr. to Rs.2.70 Cr.
6.	Class of Contractor	'B' Class to 'A' Class
7.	Availability of Bid Documents in the website	Dt.25.06.2020 to Dt.13.07.2020
8.	Last date/time of receipt of Bids in the Portal	Dt.13.07.2020 upto 5.00 P.M.
9.	Date of Opening Bid	Dt.14.07.2020 at 11.30 A.M.
10.	The bidders have to participate in ONLINE bidding only. Further details can be seen from the website: https://tendersodisha.gov.in . Any addendum/corrigendum/cancellation of tender can also be seen in the said website.	

Sd./- Chief Engineer (OSP&WC), Odisha

N.B.: The quoted rate should be all inclusive but excluding G.S.T. as applicable under works contract.

OIPR-12025/11/0012/2021

“ The whole world yearns after freedom, yet each creature is in love with his chains; this is the first paradox and inextricable knot of our nature. **”**

SRI AUROBINDO

Animals for forests

District forest officers and rangers are not trained in ecology. Ecology means the interrelationship of all things – what happens to the whole when one part is affected. They don't know about plants or animals. In fact, this entire service should be disbanded because all they do is an illiterate kind of policing. And for the most part they don't do that either. Many of them are the fences that eat the grass: they use their positions to cut trees illegally and many are involved with animal killing mafias.

All the bureaucrats of the forest department are generalists: one day they are secretaries of steel and another they head the forest and wildlife department. The chief wildlife wardens come by attrition to their jobs. One of them has just suggested that we take all the tigers out of the forest and put them into zoos. Another had all the wild boar in Chandrapur shot and then took out killing warrants against the hungry tigers. Yet another has recommended that all the fallen trees of the forest be removed manually. All of them agree that the forest floor should be burnt annually "to prevent further burning".

The ones in Kerala and Tamil Nadu see nothing wrong in a Schedule One animal like the elephant being beaten to death by the temples. The teachers in the so-called forest and wildlife institutes are chosen from these worthies and so they teach what they know – nothing. The number of animals killed by this service would probably be equal to the damage that poachers do. Unfortunately, since most of the forest ministers are joyously self-proclaimed illiterates in this field, they bring nothing to the table except more misery – simply rubber stamping the diversion of huge tracts of forest for unnecessary and outdated technologies like dams.

I am yet to meet a minister who even understands what an elephant corridor is. In fact, the "most loyal" politician is usually made the forest minister – because he puts up no resistance to any "development" project, like a cement factory or a five star hotel, in the heart of the forest. To all of them, a natural forest can easily be replaced by mono cultural plantation, and the animals in the forest can be replaced by a zoo.

The day the rain controls us – in either its fury, as in Kolkata, or in stopping totally, is the day we will realize that we needed a specialist service. But by then it will be too late. The favourite targets of these politicians, bureaucrats and forest service "time-passers" are wild boar, nilgai and rhesus monkeys. So, let me tell you what will happen if you remove all three.

The single most important animal to the forest is the wild boar. He is a major seed and fungi spreader and, through his constant rooting, he increases the forest and provides biodiversity. He reduces insect pests and carrion. He is the only species that eats the large fern, called bracken, which otherwise would not allow seeds to come up. All the studies on the impact of wild boar on the ecosystem (soil, water, plants, fungi and fauna) show that the species has very high ecological importance and they significantly contribute to the characteristics, as well as development, of terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems. He is a major food source for large carnivores. All these benefits are overlooked, and the wild boar is treated as a pest species for no reason except that farmers want to kill and eat wild pork. When all the wild boars have been hunted down, the forest and all the large cats in it will disappear. It is time for someone sensible in the forest hierarchy to objectively evaluate the importance of this animal.

Nilgai is the largest Asian antelope, found all the way from the Himalayas to the state of Karnataka in the south. Nilgai eats grass, leaves, flowers and fruits, surviving long periods without water. They are mixed feeders, even eating the woody plants in the dry tropical forests of India. The nilgai can tolerate interference by livestock and degradation of vegetation in its habitat, better than deer possibly because they can reach high branches and do not depend on surface vegetation.

When a species becomes threatened or extinct, this removes a check and balance in the food chain. If Nilgaies are removed, the area of grassland, on which they graze, will increase hugely. A 1994 study drew attention to the ecological value provided by the Nilgai in ravines lining the Yamuna River. In summer, the faeces of the antelope contain nearly 1.6 percent nitrogen, enhancing the quality of the soil to a depth of 30 centimetres. Seeds in their droppings germinate easily and assist in afforestation.

States like Himachal Pradesh are extremely brutal in their treatment of monkeys and have, in fact, killed thousands in the last ten years. Monkeys are prey, predator, and mutualist species in food webs, and influence ecosystem structure, function, and resilience. Their evolution, feeding ecology, and geographic distribution are closely linked to the diversification of flowering plants, herbaceous plants, shrubs, grasses, and most trees, a principal source of food for many animals and humans.

Monkeys are highly frugivorous, and their relatively large size enables them to disperse small and large seeds over long distances, enhancing forest regeneration. In the absence of their seed dispersal, plant populations and their genetic heterozygosity will decrease. For example, Madagascar lemur's gradual extinction is causing certain Malagasy tree species to disappear. The population collapse in the heavily hunted forests of Amazonia has severely degraded forest dynamics and the sustainability of many hardwood tree species, with implications for their carbon-storing potential.

In a study published in February in the journal Oryx, researchers found that many tree and plant species in the Congo rely exclusively on monkeys for seed dispersal. In the LuiKotale forest, where the study was conducted, 18 plant species were completely unable to reproduce if their seeds did not first travel through a monkey's guts. According to the paper, if the monkey disappeared, the plants would also likely go extinct.

The research, by biologist David Beaune of the Max Planck Institute for Evolutionary Anthropology, found that monkeys eat for about 3.5 hours every day and travel a mean of 1.2 kilometres from meal sites before defecating and depositing the seeds that have passed through their systems. The monkey has two major functions here. First of all, many seeds will not germinate well unless they have been "handed" (as scientists call it) by another species. Stomach acids and intestinal processes weaken a seed's tough external coating, making it more able to absorb water and later sprout.

Secondly, many seeds won't succeed if they remain too close to their parental trees. Beaune found that the seeds that fell to the ground near their parents either did not germinate, or the seedlings did not survive. According to Beaune, no other species in LuiKotale have travel patterns sufficient to serve the same dispersal service as monkeys.

Unfortunately, monkeys face a constant threat of poaching and official killing. If monkeys disappear from any of its habitats, this will create a cascading extinction cycle. Not only will the trees disappear, but so will many of the other species that rely on the trees for food or shelter. It's a condition known as "empty forest syndrome" – the forest itself may still exist, but its biodiversity levels will crash, leaving it a pale shadow of its former self. There are so many forests like that in India – Brindavan, for example, in which the monkeys have disappeared and so has all other life.

To join the animal welfare movement contact gandhim@nic.in, www.peopleforanimalsindia.org



Ashok Mahapatra

IN COOPERATION WITH OTHER QUAD MEMBERS, EXPAND ITS MEMBERSHIP TO INCLUDE COUNTRIES WHOSE TERRITORY IS BEING CLAIMED BY CHINA AND FORM OUR OWN GARLAND OF COALITION



Maneka Gandhi

The favourite targets of politicians, bureaucrats and forest service time-passers are wild boar, nilgai and rhesus monkeys. So, let me tell you what will happen if you remove all three



Dhanada K Mishra

THE SOONER WE REALIZE THE TRUTH ABOUT THE SHALLOWNESS OF OUR KNOWLEDGE, THE BETTER

Letters

TO THE EDITOR

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

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

FOCUS CHINA

HIT WHERE IT HURTS



Ever since the 1972 meeting between Mao Zedong and Richard Nixon, the world has accepted a One-China policy. This is the Achilles Heel for China

Nonetheless, President Xi believes that China can take India down a notch or two in the subcontinent and show it up as a political lightweight to its smaller neighbours and would tie down India, thus making it unable to provide any meaningful support when things heat up in the South China Sea.

The other aspect is the fallout of the COVID pandemic which has resulted in a halt to the world economy – the Great Lockdown which has had a major adverse effect on Chinese production factories. The workers for these units come from the hinterland and do not enjoy adequate protection under labour laws. The present pandemic has resulted in many factories closing, which resulted in large scale redundancies. Unconfirmed reports indicate that this has given rise to frustration and discontent among the rural population within China.

The CCP as well as all authoritarian regimes are mortally scared of any situation where they are not able to control the narrative. So how do they control the narrative? One needs to look at George Orwell's (a disillusioned Communist) books, Animal Farm and 1984. 1984 describes a dystopia where the state follows a brutal policy of draconian control by propaganda, surveillance,

disinformation, denial of truth (double think), and manipulation of the past. It also states that power is into tearing down the human mind to pieces and putting them together in new shapes of your choosing.

Therefore, we need to reset our China policy to deal with both situations in an assertive but not aggressive manner with long and medium term perspectives. The first being China's desire to be the most dominant power in the post-COVID world order. The second being China's need to control the masses by diverting attention from its domestic challenges to raising the bogey of external threat.

In politics, there are no permanent friends or permanent enemies, only permanent interests where every country promotes its own interests. While doing so, one should bear in mind that while the earlier strategies may have served us satisfactorily, we should not be held hostage to them.

Ever since the 1972 meeting between Mao Zedong and Richard Nixon, the world has accepted a One-China policy. This is the Achilles Heel for China. It would be appropriate for India to openly court a more cooperative diplomatic relationship with Taiwan for mutual benefits. It is plausible that Taiwan could symbolically

accept the official Indian territorial map.

In consonance to our Look East Policy, our diplomats need to aggressively court all the countries in the South China Sea rim to safeguard each other's economic and territorial interests.

In cooperation with other QUAD members, expand its membership to include countries whose territory is being claimed by China and hold joint naval exercises and form our own Garland of Coalition. Increase patrolling in the Indian Ocean region to not only be a deterrent to Chinese navy but also increase surveillance on China's energy requirements which passes through the Malacca Straits.

India needs to augment its assets on the ground for collection of intelligence. This has taken a backseat ever since the Gujral Doctrine. In this context, we should include Tibet and Xinjiang – area which we have neglected over years.

Another issue that has been plaguing India is that it is considered a soft negotiator – willing to bend backwards to conclude agreements without assertive negotiations – perhaps a result of a lack of long-term strategy as well as political need for short-term headline results. This always gives the other party an upper hand. Time and again, India has been saddled with agreements and treaties that are a millstone around its neck. It is time that India showed some spine and stood up for its interests rather than be temporarily be appreciated as the good boy.

Without undermining the present efforts to defuse the present standoff in Eastern Ladakh and the prospects of an evolving new world order post COVID-19, it is imperative that India needs to reset its long-term and medium-term strategies and find its rightful place in the new world order. Together with other Asian countries we can usher in the Asian Century. Let's do it.

The writer is a retired director of the Safety Division of the International Maritime Organisation of the UN.

SPECTRUM SOCIAL MEDIA

Fools enter where angels fear to tread

In a very well-known social science experiment, a sample of randomly selected people is asked whether they understand how a bicycle worked. An overwhelming majority would say they do! Yet, on asking to draw a rough sketch of the bicycle, most would get it wrong! This phenomenon applies equally well to most subjects and most groups of people irrespective of their background.

The well-known theory in social psychology, known as the Dunning-Kruger effect, was first introduced in 1999. It relates to the human tendency to over-estimate one's own knowledge and competence. A cognitive bias, this is generally corrected as we learn more about the subject. This theory was further generalised into what was later termed as the Illusion of Explanatory Depth or IoED by psychologists Leonid Rozenblit and Frank Keil in 2002.

As per this theory, most people feel they understand the world with far greater detail, coherence, and depth than they really do. This goes a long way in explaining the predicament we face with the avalanche of information we encounter all the time, which makes us feel we know a lot. Such a cognitive bias leads to

most of the uninformed, fruitless, and rancorous debates online on most subjects. The sooner we realize the truth about the shallowness of our knowledge, the better. This would help us better appreciate the opinion of others.

One of the major challenges today is of holding a civilized discussion on any topic particularly on social media – without it degenerating into partisan bickering. Lies and half-truths are traded. The world is more divided than ever before with leaders taking advantage of social divisions for partisan and populist political interests. Such tendencies are visible most prominently on social media platforms like Twitter and FB. The avalanche of fake information mostly in the guise of legitimate news is worrisome. Such misinformation can range from innocent pranks to deliberate campaigns that are politically motivated.

The emergence of the paid trolls armies and bot factories has made it easy for political parties and others to control the narrative however incredible it might be. Unfortunately, the impact of these trends is no longer limited to online conversations only but frequently spilling over to real-life with deadly con-

sequences. Whether in the case of recent communal riots in Delhi or the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, the threat of fake news and misinformation campaigns has proven to be lethal. Notably, even national elections as important as the presidential in the US have been manipulated by third party actors with vested interest.

Traditional sources of authentic information have come under deadly fire as they are the biggest threat to those who stand to benefit from the spread of fake news. Ironically, powerful leaders take the lead in destroying the reputation of the mainstream media by questioning their credibility. A recent report suggested that more than 50 journalists have been booked by Indian police on one pretext or the other since the COVID-19 outbreak.

Allowing the system to prosecute important voices that stand up for human rights, for the environment, for probity in public life has had a chilling effect on civil society. Numerous non-profit NGOs have been harassed in the name of national interest. The war between truth and falsehood seems to be raging and the outcome will have a decisive impact on our future as a society.

The cognitive bias in most of us

to have an overestimation of our ability to understand issues and thereby underestimate voices of sanity and reason, goaded by populist leaders, is turning out to be a deadly cocktail! Understanding this conundrum and explaining complex ideas in simple terms without loss of its essence will be a crucial skill in the future in order for the wise to be heard over the cacophony of ongoing discourse. One of the redeeming features of a genuine expert or an intellectual with a certain depth of expertise in any field is his humility. As the Sanskrit saying goes – ‘*Namranti Falina Vrikhsya*’, which means ‘trees full of fruits tend to bend down’.

Long before the ideas of Dunning-Kruger or IoED were introduced, the famed philosopher Bertrand Russel had captured the essence almost perfectly in simple words as follows: “The whole problem with the world is that fools and fanatics are always so certain of themselves, and wiser people so full of doubts.” Here lies the source of most of our current troubles!

The author is an academican currently visiting Hong Kong University of Science and Technology as a research scholar.

Odisha, elephants

Sir, During the past one decade, man and elephant have fought severely for their existence, in which 685 jumbos have lost their lives while 660 people were also killed. Thanks are due to the state government for its efforts to safeguard elephants. The state is having 70 per cent of India's total population of elephants. To give protection to them, the state has initiated elephant corridors. We now have about 14 elephant corridors having a cumulative length of 421 km spread over 870.65 square km. The state decided to enhance the area of Mahanadi Elephant Corridor from 1038 sqkm to 2472sqkm which will protect the elephants. Dr. Raman Sukumar of Asian Nature Conservation Foundation who looked into the matter of conflict between man and elephant during 2014-2017 made concrete recommendations in 2019. He stated that the number of elephants is increasing in the state but the area under elephant corridors is not increasing. Responding to this, the government is taking steps to enlarge the Mahanadi Elephant Corridors.

Hitesh Kumar Parida, JAJPUR

Lord's Yatra

Sir, The incredible did happen. Who could imagine unto the last that wheels of the Juggernaut would come and touch the Grand road of Lord Jagannath! The Supreme Will prevailed in the midst of the directives from the apex court that had turned down the appeal presented to it on behalf of the Jagannath devotees. On reconsideration, the court permitted the annual nine-day sojourn of the deities subject to strict observance of Covid-19 guidelines. Ethos of crores of Odia people and millions of Jagannath lovers were honoured by the supreme judgement. The bond between the lord and devotees can never be broken. Such a relationship, very rare in any cult, proved that the Lord who is close to hearts of his devotees can never confine Himself to the precincts of his abode. Though the devotees couldn't get a glimpse of their loving gods in person, they expressed their satisfaction, seated at home glued to the television screens, as the servitors pulled them from the temple to the Gundicha premises, the birthplace of elder brothers and sister. The miracle did take place, or else the devotees' sorrows would have been inconsolable. It has been rightly said not a single leaf swings without His volition.

Sanjib Das, CUTTACK

IMA Ponzi scam-tainted IAS officer kills self

59-YR-OLD BM VIJAYSHANKAR WAS FOUND HANGING AT HIS RESIDENCE IN BANGALORE'S JAYANAGAR

AGENCIES

Bangalore, June 24: Senior IAS officer BM Vijayshankar, who was reportedly involved in the multi-crore IMA Ponzi scam, allegedly committed suicide in his house, an official said Tuesday. He was 59.

"Vijayshankar was found hanging in a room on the first floor of his residence at Jayanagar in the city's southern suburb by his wife late evening," the official told IANS on anonymity.

The incident came to light when Vijayshankar's wife who was in the ground floor, went up to meet him. The family informed the police and his body was sent to a state-run hospital for autopsy.

Vijayshankar was arrested and jailed after he was allegedly found involved in the multi-crore IMA scam in the city during 2018-19.

The Karnataka cadre officer was suspended from service when he was Deputy Commissioner of Bangalore Urban district after he admitted to have taken ₹1.5 crore bribe



As the Ponzi scam in the guise of Islamic banking involved investors in other states, with international ramifications, the BJP govt transferred the case to the CBI in August from the SIT of the state police

from the IMA scam kingpin Mohammed Mansoor Khan though he alleged to have sought ₹5 crore from the latter.

The state government revoked Vijayshankar's suspension recently and posted him as Commissioner

of the Sakala scheme to provide citizen-related services in a stipulated time.

"The officer was under pressure after he learnt that the state government has permitted the CBI, probing the scam, to interrogate and

WRECKED WITH GUILT

Vijayshankar was arrested and jailed after found involved in the multi-crore IMA scam during 2018-19.

He had admitted to have taken ₹1.5 crore bribe from the IMA scam kingpin Mohammed Mansoor Khan.

The Karnataka cadre officer was suspended from service when he was Deputy Commissioner of Bangalore Urban District

prosecute him," added the official.

The amended Prevention of Corruption Act mandates the state government's sanction for a criminal inquiry into a government servant. Khan and 5 directors of I-Monetary Advisory (IMA) were arrested and jailed last year after their alleged involvement in the ₹4,000-crore scam came to light in June 2019.

Class X board exams start today in Karna

The three-hour SSLC exam will commence daily at 10.30 am and the students have been told to report at their respective centres by 9 am for thermal screening, wearing mask and sanitise their hands entering the centre



AGENCIES

Bangalore, June 24: Allaying fears and defying calls to defer them, Karnataka is all set to conduct the Covid-hit rescheduled Secondary School Leaving Certificate (SSLC) board exams for Class 10 students across the southern state from Thursday, an official said Wednesday.

"Elaborate arrangements have been made to hold the SSLC exams from Thursday to July 4 for 8.5 lakh students in 3,179 centres across the state as per the lockdown guidelines to ensure the safety and welfare of the wards," Karnataka Secondary Education Examination Board Director V. Sumangala told IANS here.

Of the 8.5 lakh students registered to appear for the exams, 4,48,560 are boys and 3,99,642 are girls.

Of the total centres, 2,879 are main and 300 in block, set up to accommodate students spilling over from other centres to ensure social distancing.

Though the 3-hour exam will commence daily at 10.30 a.m., the students have been told to report at their respective centres by 9 a.m. or 90 minutes earlier for thermal screening, wearing mask and washing hands with sanitizer before entering the centre, said Sumangala.

A whopping 86,000 people, including 63,000 state-run school teachers and 23,000 from other departments like health, police and social welfare will be on duty for the smooth conduct of the exams in 6 subjects, including English, Kannada, third language, natural science, social science and mathematics.

About 200-250 students will sit for the exam at each centre, with about 200 in the centres located in the containment centres, said Sumangala.

Though all students appearing for the exams have been given

ADAPTING TO COVID

6 3,000 STATE-RUN SCHOOL TEACHERS AND 23,000 FROM OTHER DEPTS LIKE HEALTH, POLICE AND SOCIAL WELFARE WILL BE ON DUTY

A ABOUT 200-250 STUDENTS WILL SIT FOR THE EXAM AT EACH CENTRE

A 2-METRE DISTANCE HAS TO BE KEPT BETWEEN TWO STUDENTS

THE STATE SCOUTS AND GUIDES WILL DISTRIBUTE TWO MASKS TO EVERY STUDENT AT THE SCHOOL ENTRANCE

masks to wear along with hall tickets, additional masks will be kept at each centre as wearing it is compulsory for writing the paper.

The exams were earlier scheduled from March 27 to April 9, but were put off as the lockdown was extended thrice up to May 31.

The state department of public instructions released the revised time table May 18 for the board exams and uploaded it on its website for downloading by the students.

As a 2-metre distance has to be kept between two students, more exam centres have been arranged to comply with the guidelines.

The state scouts and guides will distribute two masks to every student at the school entrance to wear one before entering the exam centre and keep the other as a spare.

Each exam centre has also been equipped with sanitizer dispensers to wash hands before and after the exam.

Students who shifted to their home town during the prolonged lockdown have been allowed to write exams from the nearest centre, where they are staying.

You can cycle on Kempegowda airport premises every Sunday



AGENCIES

Bangalore, June 24: Kempegowda International Airport (KIAB) - where a runway upgrade is under way - has opened its premises to let cycling enthusiasts to pedal their way to health for a few hours on Sundays, an official said Wednesday.

"KIAB in conjunction with Bangalore's Bicycle Mayor Sathya Sankaran have announced the opening of the city airport premises to cyclists every Sunday between 6 and 9.30 am," said the airport official.

However, the airport authorities have not divulged how many kilometres of cycling track will be made available and other finer details though a dedicated bicycle parking facility will be made available.

Earlier, cycling was restricted on the airport premises on safety grounds, but this has now changed owing to the improved road infrastructure.

"We believe that this initia-

Cycling was restricted on the airport premises on safety grounds

This has now changed owing to improved road infrastructure

tive will encourage more and more people to take up cycling," said the official.

Sankaran said the city cycling community has always been on the lookout for safe and picturesque places to pedal.

He said the city cyclists welcomed this opportunity and looked forward to enjoying cycling at the airport.

Meanwhile, the airport has shut its north runway for six months to upgrade it to one with indigenous Aviation Weather Monitoring System (AWMS). The northern runway will consequently undergo strengthening, resurfacing, and installation of centerline lights.

Once upgraded, the airport will offer operation of both runways in low visibility as well as other adverse weather conditions.

Asymptomatic patients' discharge rules relaxed

In Karnataka, asymptomatic patients can be released in case of no fever, saturation above 95 pc and respiratory rate less than 24 per min

AGENCIES

Bangalore, June 24: The Karnataka Health Department has revised rules on the discharge of Covid-19 patients, mandating that asymptomatic patients can be released in case of no fever; saturation above 95 per cent and respiratory rate less than 24 per minute, said an official Wednesday.

"Asymptomatic individuals with corona positive report, who continue to remain asymptomatic during hospital stay, shall be discharged 10 days after the positive test," said Additional Chief Secretary Jawaid Akhtar.

Similarly, there is no requirement for an RT-PCR, CBNAAT or True-NAT test for an asymptomatic case before discharge but will be advised home-quarantine and self-monitoring for a fortnight.

In case of mild and moderate cases, the patient should not exhibit any symptoms such as fever for three days before discharge, without using antipyretics.

They should also maintain saturation above 95 per cent for four consecutive days before discharge without oxygen support. Breathlessness, clinical signs and symptoms should also be resolved.

"Repeat inflammatory markers (S. Ferritin, S. LDH, D-Dimer and CRP) at the time of discharge. These should be in normal range and decreasing trend," said Akhtar.



Asymptomatic individuals with corona positive report, who continue to remain asymptomatic during hospital stay, shall be discharged 10 days after the positive test

JAWAID AKHTAR | ADDITIONAL CHIEF SECRETARY, KARNATAKA

A mild or moderate case can be discharged 10 days after the onset of symptoms after meeting the explained parameters and can extend up to 17 days depending on the health condition.

In severe cases, including immunity compromised HIV patients, organ transplant recipients and malignancy cases, the patients shall be discharged only after complete

clinical recovery.

Such patients should also not have fever for three consecutive days before discharge, without using antipyretics.

They also have to maintain saturation above 95 per cent for the last four days before discharge without oxygen support. The issues of breathlessness, clinical signs and symptoms also need to be resolved.

Similar to mild and moderate cases, inflammatory markers (S. Ferritin, S. LDH, D-Dimer and CRP) should be repeated at the time of discharge. These should be in normal range and decreasing trend.

"One RT-PCR, CBNAAT and True-NAT test should be done three days after complete clinical recovery and the patient should be discharged if the report is negative," said Akhtar.

In the event of positive report, the swab test shall be repeated after 72 hours.

At the time of discharge, all asymptomatic, mild, moderate and severe cases should be advised home-quarantine and self-monitoring of health for a fortnight.

Likewise, all cases have to undergo regular temperature and pulse oximetry checks.

All stolen computer parts of INS Vikrant 'recovered'

WEDNESDAY, AN NIA TEAM RECOVERED THE STOLEN COMPUTER PROCESSORS

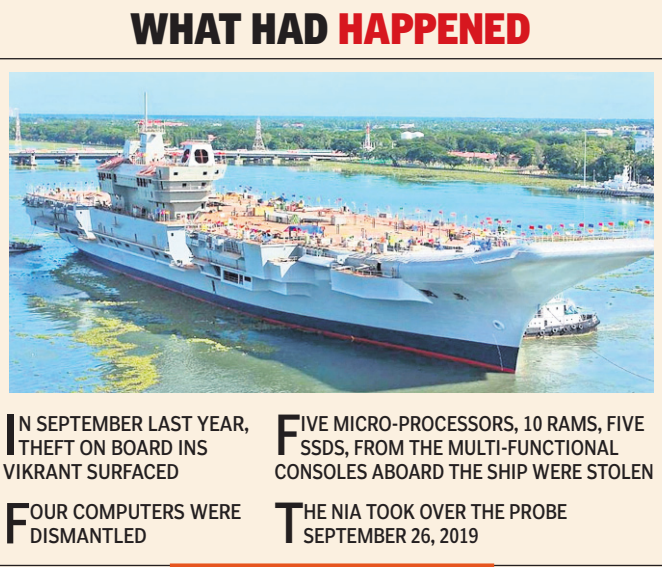
AGENCIES

Kochi, June 24: An NIA team probing the theft of computer parts from the under-construction Indigenous Aircraft Carrier (IAC) at the Cochin Shipyard Ltd Wednesday recovered the processors from a person who had brought the gadgets from the two arrested thieves. By now, the NIA team has recovered all stolen parts of the computers.

In September last year, theft on board INS Vikrant had surfaced. Kerala Police had registered a case of criminal trespass and theft of critical electronic components installed on board the IAC following complaint by the Cochin Shipyard authorities. The NIA took over the probe September 26, 2019 following national security concerns since sensitive information was stored in these hard disks.

The NIA had arrested two suspects from Bihar and Rajasthan this month. The arrested accused Sumit Kumar Singh, 23, of Munger district, and Daya Ram, 22, of Hanumangarh were engaged in painting activities when they committed the crime.

After their arrest, the NIA team had brought the two here and con-



WHAT HAD HAPPENED

IN SEPTEMBER LAST YEAR, THEFT ON BOARD INS VIKRANT SURFACED

FIVE MICRO-PROCESSORS, 10 RAMS, FIVE SSDS, FROM THE MULTI-FUNCTIONAL CONSOLES ABOARD THE SHIP WERE STOLEN

FOUR COMPUTERS WERE DISMANTLED

THE NIA TOOK OVER THE PROBE SEPTEMBER 26, 2019

tinued with its probe.

According to NIA officials, four computers were dismantled and their hardwares stolen, including five micro-processors, 10 RAMs, five Solid State Drives (SSDs), from the Multi-Functional Consoles (MFCs) aboard the ship.

INS Vikrant is the first indigenous aircraft carrier of the Indian Navy. The work on the ship's design began

in 1999, and the keel was laid in February 2009. As of 2019, the ship is expected to start sea trials in February 2021 and enter active service as early as 2023. The project cost has neared ₹20,000 crore.

With the completion of INS Vikrant, India will join the ranks of the US, UK, Russia, France and China in the construction of aircraft carriers.

KERALA'S COVID FIGHT RECEIVES UN RECOGNITION

The webinar was attended by UN Secy General and other dignitaries who applauded state Health Minister KK Shailaja

AGENCIES

Thiruvananthapuram, June 24: Kerala Tuesday was among those honoured for tackling the Covid-19 pandemic when the United Nations celebrated the Public Service Day.

The function, held on a virtual platform, saw the participation of UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres and other top UN dignitaries who applauded all the leaders which included state Health Minister K.K. Shailaja for effectively tackling Covid-19.

Speaking on the occasion, Shailaja noted that the experiences of tackling Nipah virus and the two floods - 2018 and 2019 - where the health sector played a crucial role, all helped in tackling Covid-19 timely.

"Right from the time when Covid cases got reported in Wuhan, Kerala got into the track of the WHO. We have been able to keep the contact spread rate to below 12.5 per cent and the mortality rate to 0.6 per cent," she said.



152 Covid-19 cases in 24 hours rattle Kerala

THIS IS THE HIGHEST-EVER ONE-DAY SPIKE EVER IN THE STATE

AGENCIES

Thiruvananthapuram, June 24: Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan Wednesday said the state recorded 152 coronavirus positive cases in the last 24 hours, which is highest ever on a single day so far.

"Of this, 98 people came from abroad, 46 were those who came from within the country and there were eight local infections. At present there are 1,691 positive patients, while in all 3,603 got this disease," said Vijayan.

Vijayan said starting Thursday all those arriving from the Middle East have to follow new guidelines and if anyone has a Covid negative certificate it should not be beyond 72 hours of departure.

"Those arriving from Kuwait and Saudi Arabia have to wear PPE kit besides N95 mask, face shield and gloves. Those coming from UAE have to carry the certificate (facility is available for testing there) while those from Qatar should have green status on the App which is valid in their country. Those from Bahrain and Oman should



have N95 masks, face shield and gloves," said Vijayan.

He said once they land at the airports in Kerala, all will have to abide by the health protocols that are in place.

"Those who do not come with a valid Covid negative certificate will have to undergo a rapid antibody test at the airport and those who are positive

should then undergo either a RT-PCR or TrueNat test and whatever be the result, they will have to undergo 14 days quarantine. Those with any symptoms will be sent to hospitals. Any violation of quarantine would be dealt with strongly by enforcing the provisions in the Disaster Management Act," added Vijayan.

of the day quote

Jhansi: One death out of every 10 coronavirus patients, Meerut: One death out of every 11 coronavirus patients, and one death out of every 14 coronavirus patients in Etah and Agra. It is a matter that one should think about -- if the cases are not increasing then why is the death rate so high?

PRIVANKA GANDHI VADRA | CONGRESS LEADER

TMC workers are misappropriating relief materials and food meant for cyclone Amphan victims in West Bengal

BHUPENDER YADAV | BJP NATIONAL GENERAL SECRETARY

The second expansion of Madhya Pradesh cabinet will take place soon

SHIVRAJ SINGH CHOUHAN | MP CM

SHORT TAKES

TMC MLA dies

Kolkata: Trinamool Congress (TMC) MLA Tamonash Ghosh, who had tested positive for COVID-19 in May, died at a hospital here Wednesday, party sources said. He was 60. The three-time MLA from the Falta assembly constituency in South 24 Parganas district was admitted to a hospital after he tested positive for the disease, they said.

Lockdown extended

Kolkata: West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee Wednesday announced extension of the lockdown in the state till July 31 to contain the spread of COVID-19. The ongoing lockdown in West Bengal was to end on June 30. Banerjee, after attending an all-party meeting held at an auditorium adjacent to the state secretariat, said though there were differences of opinion among the leaders, it was finally decided to extend the curbs till the end of July with relaxations.

Woman raped

Korba: A 21-year-old woman was allegedly abducted and raped by a 32-year-old man in Chhattisgarh's Korba district, police said Wednesday. The main accused Bhaityalal and two of his accomplices, who helped him abduct the woman, have been arrested, a police officer said. The victim was abducted June 19 night after she stepped out of her house to attend nature's call in a village under Pasaan police station limits, said Ram Kumar Rana, Station House Officer (SHO), Pasaan police station.

Pangolin rescued

Jalpaiguri (WB): A pangolin was rescued from a village adjoining Baikunthapur forest in Jalpaiguri district of West Bengal and a poacher was arrested in this connection, forest officials said Wednesday. Acting on a tip-off, the Special Task Force of the North Bengal Forest Division raided Mantadari village on Tuesday and rescued the pangolin, which is a critically-endangered animal, from the possession of poacher Fajnu Mohammad, Baikunthapur Forest Ranger Sanjay Dutta said.

Four arrested

Srinagar: Four persons linked to Lashkar-e-Toiba, and involved in a grenade attack on a police post in Sopore area of Baramulla district in Jammu and Kashmir have been arrested, police said Wednesday.



The Modi government has 'unlocked' the corona pandemic and prices of petrol-diesel
RAHUL GANDHI | CONGRESS LEADER

WORST SPIKE

India witnessed a spike of almost 16,000 fresh cases of the novel coronavirus in the past 24 hours taking the total in the country to 4.5 lakh with 465 new deaths, data from the Union Health and Family Welfare Ministry revealed Wednesday



Come clean on Chinese intrusions: Cong

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, June 24: Amid a stand-off with Chinese troops in eastern Ladakh, the Congress Wednesday sought to corner the BJP-led NDA government over the claims about Chinese intrusions in Arunachal Pradesh made by a BJP MP from the state and asked it to come clean on the issue.

It also asked the government to give a "strong reply" to China as regular dialogues would not work, and India needs to use other means like trade to take it on.

Congress spokesperson Manish Tewari said BJP MP Tapir Gao had in a recent TV interview claimed that China has occupied areas on both banks of the Subansiri River in Arunachal Pradesh's Upper Subansiri district and on the Indian side of the McMahon Line.

Tewari said ever since reports about Chinese aggression into Indian Territory emerged, the NDA government has been walking the extra mile to downplay these reports and was trying to obfuscate the facts on the ground. "Will the Prime Minister (Narendra Modi) and his government come clean on the claims made by the BJP



MP," he asked at a virtual press conference.

Tewari sought to know from the government if what Tapir Gao, the former BJP chief of Arunachal Pradesh, was saying was right or not. "What is the truth behind what Tapir Gao is saying? There should be an immediate clarification from the government," he said.

Another Congress spokesperson Gaurav Gogoi said India cannot afford to have another Doklam-like situation in Ladakh and needs to look at other forms of leverage like trade to have successful ne-

gotiations with China. Troops of India and China were locked in a 73-day stand-off in Doklam near Sikkim in 2017 after the Indian side stopped the building of a road in the disputed area by the Chinese Army. "We demand that the Government of India does not look at what's happening in Arunachal Pradesh or Ladakh as isolated incidents. These are grand designs and this needs to be responded strongly," Gogoi said. "China needs a strong response from India, as regular dialogues won't work. Despite all meetings, the Chinese launched a

strong, premeditated attack. China has learnt one thing from the Doklam episode that the (Narendra) Modi government is willing to settle for a military disengagement," he said. Gogoi highlighted that the pattern of the Chinese Army shows they are gradually encroaching upon Indian Territory across the LAC and the responsibility of protecting Indian territory solely lies with the government of India. Tewari said BJP MP Tapir Gao has claimed that the Army has set up another base called new Majha, deeper in Indian territory after Chinese aggressions.

He said this is not the first time that Tapir Gao has made these revelations, as he stated the same in the Lok Sabha in November 2019, but the government has remained silent on the issue. Tewari also played a video of Gao's speech in Lok Sabha.

"We do know something with regard to Galwan valley, Pangong Tso lake, hot springs area in the western sector, and with regard to Chinese intrusion in Naku la in the Central sector. But, facts continue to remain opaque on the eastern sector which is perhaps most disputed," he said.

TAKING STOCK



Army Chief Manoj Mukund Naravane interacts with troops while reviewing operational situation on the ground after the stand-off in the region during his visit in Eastern Ladakh, Wednesday

PTI PHOTO

Himanta signals crisis averted

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, June 24: BJP's troublesooter in the northeast, Himanta Biswa Sarma, had to step in once again as did the party's 'Super President' Amit Shah, who despite relinquishing the top post early this year, was required to intervene in an attempt to save the troubled NPP-BJP government in Manipur.

However, after the crucial meeting in the national capital, Sarma, the North East Democratic Alliance chief tweeted that "both BJP and NPP will continue to work together for the development of Manipur".

Not only Sarma and Shah were present but Conrad Sangma, who heads the NPP and is also the Meghalaya CM was also present in the meeting. NPP's Manipur unit went rogue and threatened to join the Congress-led alliance if there is no change of Chief Minister in the state.



MANIPUR DRAMA

After the crucial meeting in the national capital, Sarma, the North East Democratic Alliance chief tweeted that "both BJP and NPP will continue to work together for the development of Manipur"

NPP's Manipur unit threatened to join the Congress-led alliance if there is no change of Chief Minister in the state

Manipur's Deputy Chief Minister S. Joymkar was also part of the meeting. Earlier on Tuesday evening, the 4 dissident NPP MLAs were flown to Delhi by Sangma and Sarma. While Sarma claims that the two parties will continue to work together in Manipur, suggesting the problem is averted, it is however unclear whether it means that Chief Minister Biren Singh will be replaced or not. The 4 NPP MLAs earlier called it a "non negotiable" demand of theirs.

Just before the Rajya Sabha elections on June 17, 3 BJP MLAs re-

signed and joined the Congress. At the same time, four ministers of the ally National People's Party also resigned due to resentment and withdrew support from the government.

Another independent along with a Trinamool Congress MLA too parted ways from the Biren Singh government. After the rebellion of a total of nine MLAs, the Biren Singh government came under threat. However, the BJP was successful in winning one seat in the Rajya Sabha elections held on June 19.

Ramdev in soup over Covid medicine claim

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Dehradun/New Delhi June 24: The Uttarakhand government is serving a notice to yoga guru Ramdev's Patanjali Ayurved for launching a drug claiming to be cure for COVID-19 when it had only applied for a licence to manufacture an immunity booster against cough and fever, an official said Wednesday.

AYUSH Minister Shripad Naik Shripad Naik said Patanjali coming with the medicine was a "good initiative" but due process has to be followed. Hours after the launch of "Coronil" on Tuesday, the Union AYUSH Ministry had asked the

firm to provide details on the research and the product's composition, telling it to stop advertising it till the issue is examined.

Naik said Patanjali Ayurved has submitted the documents. "The reports which were sent to the ministry on Tuesday will be examined," he said. "At a time when everybody is grappling for a cure for COVID-19, such an initiative is definitely good but then the due process has to be followed," the minister said.

Apart from the notice from the Uttarakhand government, the Haridwar-based herbal products firm could also face litigation in Bihar. A complaint has been filed against it in a Muzaffarpur court



over its claim.

Uttarakhand's Ayurved department's licence officer Y S Rawat said the notice is being issued to the firm to explain from where it got the permission to launch a "corona kit" as a cure for the virus.

INDO-CHINA TENSION

Arunachal CM adds fuel to fire

Posting the pictures of an army event in the state, Khandu tweeted, "The valour of Indian Army is what we counted ever since our Independence. Had an opportunity to interact with the brave jawans today at Bumla post on the Indo-Tibet border"

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, June 24: Amid the tension between India and China over the violent face-off in Ladakh, where 20 Indian soldiers were killed 10 days ago, Arunachal Pradesh Chief Minister Pema Khandu, here Wednesday, termed the Line of Actual Control (LAC) as the "Indo-Tibet border".

Posting the pictures of an army event in the state, Khandu tweeted, "The valour of Indian Army is what we counted ever since our Independence. Had an opportunity to interact with the brave jawans today at Bumla post on the Indo-Tibet border. Their josh (excitement) is at the highest level. We are in safe hands when it comes to our borders."

The statement assumes significance as China has been in occupation of the autonomous region of Tibet, an area of around 2.5 million sq km, since 1951 and the Tibetan government has been in exile in India. New Delhi refers its border with Tibet in Arunachal Pradesh as the LAC.

China disputes India's sovereignty over Arunachal Pradesh, which has an area of around 84,000 sq km and population of around 1.5 million. India's boundaries were



defined by the British before Independence. But China occupied Aksai Chin in Jammu & Kashmir and raised dispute over the boundary of Arunachal Pradesh in the 1962 war with India.

Around 1,00,000 Tibetans (73 per cent of all Tibetans), including the Dalai Lama, their spiritual leader, are in exile in India.

But in the last few years, the central government seemed to be distancing itself from the community. In 2018, the government prohibited its officials and leaders from attending the events to mark the 60th anniversary of Tibetan exile.

The prohibition came on the eve of an informal summit between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Chinese President Xi Jinping.

'Custodial death' sparks outrage in TN

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Tuticorin/Chennai, June 24: The death of a father-son duo in a hospital after they were allegedly beaten up by police has caused a furore in Tamil Nadu, with the Madras High Court seeking a report on the matter.

Tamil Nadu Chief Minister K Palaniswami said four police personnel, including two Sub-Inspectors, have been suspended in connection with the incident while an inspector has been put on wait. He also announced a cash relief of Rs 10 lakh each to the respective families of the victims, besides offering a job.

The Madurai bench of the Madras High Court directed the police to submit a report on June 26 over the death of the duo. The relatives of P Jayaraj and his son J Fennix alleged that the two, earlier picked up for questioning for keeping their mobile accessories shop open during the lockdown, were thrashed by the police personnel in the station.

Meanwhile, Palaniswami detailed the chain of events leading to the deaths, and said the duo were picked up on June 19 after a case was filed against them for not heeding police'

direction to close their cell-phone shop as it was functioning beyond stipulated hours.

They were later arrested and lodged in the Kovilpatti sub-jail. June 22, Fennix complained of breathlessness and was admitted to a local government hospital where he died around 9 pm after failing to respond to treatment, the Chief Minister said in a statement. The next morning, Fennix's father Jayaraj was admitted to the hospital after he complained of illness, but died, he added. Subsequently, a case was filed in this connection. When the relatives of the deceased moved the Madurai bench of the Madras High Court, it ordered video recording of the post-mortem, even as it took up the case on its own today.

IG South Zone Shanmuga Rajeswaran and Tuticorin district police chief Arun Balagopal appeared before the court in the virtual hearing on Wednesday, Palaniswami said. They informed the bench that two sub-inspectors and two head constables attached to Sathankulam police station have been placed under suspension, while the inspector was put on waiting list.



India's mood is clear [for all to see] as it wants to divert attention from its border dispute with China to Pakistan
SHAH MAHMOOD QURESHI | PAK FOREIGN MINISTER

PREVENTION IS BETTER THAN CURE

Regions with an early interest in face masks had milder COVID-19 epidemics, according to a report



of the day quote

We hope that India and China will meet each other, effectively implement the important consensus between the leaders of the two countries, strictly abide by the agreement reached by the two parties, and continue to properly resolve relevant issues through dialogue and negotiation at all levels



COL WU QIAN | CHINESE DEFENCE MINISTRY SPOKESMAN

Yesterday a violent earthquake hit the south of Mexico causing victims, injuries and enormous damage. Let's pray for them. May the help of God and our brothers give them strength and support. Brothers and sisters, I am very close to you



POPE FRANCIS

New York State is one of only three states that are on track to contain the COVID-19 according to a study by COVID Act Now. We went from one of the highest infection rates to one of the lowest and we did it by making decisions based on the science, the data and the facts -- not on politics



ANDREW CUOMO | GOVERNOR OF NEW YORK

SHORT TAKES

First COVID-19 vaccine trial in SA

Johannesburg: Africa's first participation in a COVID-19 vaccine trial started Wednesday as volunteers received injections developed at the University of Oxford in Britain, while officials said the continent of 1.3 billion people cannot be left behind. The large-scale trial is being conducted in South Africa, Britain and Brazil. South Africa has nearly one-third of Africa's confirmed cases with more than 106,000, including more than 2,100 deaths. The country late Tuesday reported its biggest one-day death toll of 111.

Rouhani warns UN agency

Tehran: Iran's president on Wednesday warned the UN nuclear watchdog to expect a "stern response" from his country regarding the agency's demands for Iran to provide access to sites where Tehran is thought to have stored or used undeclared nuclear material. In a televised speech, President Hassan Rouhani said a stern response "is easy" for Iran but that the country prefers cooperation with the UN watchdog.

Indian couple murdered

Dubai: An Indian businessman and his wife were brutally murdered by a Pakistani man inside their villa in Dubai during a break-in and robbery bid, according to a media report. Hiren Adhiya and Vidhi Adhiya, both in their 40s, were killed inside their villa at the Arabian Ranches. Dubai Police arrested the Pakistani man in less than 24 hours, Gulf News reported Tuesday.

Mongolians vote

Ulaanbaatar (Mongolia): Mongolians were voting in parliamentary elections Wednesday across the vast, lightly populated country, a US ally squeezed between authoritarian governments in China and Russia. The polls are being held amid considerable success in the country's fight against the coronavirus, with just 215 cases of COVID-19 recorded. All of them have been imported and no one has died.

US slams Pak for not acting against anti-India terrorists

AGENCIES

Washington, June 24: Pakistan took "modest steps" in 2019 to counter terror financing and re-strain India-focused militant groups from conducting large-scale attacks following the Pulwama attack in February, but it remained a "safe harbor" for regionally focused terrorist groups, the US said Wednesday.

The suspension of US aid to Pakistan, which was announced by President Donald Trump in January 2018, remained in effect throughout 2019, the State Department said. "Pakistan took modest steps in 2019 to counter terror financing and restrain India-focused militant groups from conducting large-scale attacks following the February attack on a security convoy in the Indian state of Jammu and Kashmir linked to Pakistan-based Jaish-e-Mohammed (JeM)," it said.

In its Congressional-mandated annual report 2019 Country Reports on Terrorism, the State Department said Pakistan took action against some externally focused groups, including indicting Lashkar e-Taiba (LeT) founder Hafiz Saeed and associates in three separate terrorism financing cases. "However, Pakistan remained a safe harbor for other regionally focused terrorist groups," the State Department said.

It allowed groups targeting Afghanistan, including the Afghan Taliban and affiliated Haqqani



■ Pakistan, however, did make some positive contributions to the Afghanistan peace process, such as encouraging Taliban reductions in violence

■ Pakistan made some progress toward meeting the Action Plan requirements for the FATF, allowing it to avoid being blacklisted, but did not complete all Action Plan items in 2019, it said

Network (HQN), as well as groups targeting India, including the LeT and its affiliated front organisations, and Jaish-e-Mohammed (JeM), to operate from its territory, the report said. "It did not take action against other known terrorists such as JeM founder and UN-designated terrorist Masood Azhar and 2008 Mumbai attack 'project manager' Sajid Mir, both of whom are believed to remain free in Pakistan," alleged the State Department.

Although al-Qaeda in Afghanistan and Pakistan has been seriously degraded, key figures among the outfit's global leadership, as well as its regional affiliate al-Qaeda in the Indian Subcontinent (AQIS), continued to operate from remote locations in the region that historically served as safe havens, it said. Pakistan is one of the countries that figures in the terrorist safe havens list. Although Pakistan's

National Action Plan calls to "ensure that no armed militias are allowed to function in the country," several terrorist groups that focus on attacks outside the country continued to operate from Pakistani soil in 2019, including the Haqqani Network, Lashkar-e-Taiba, and Jaish-e-Mohammed, it said.

"The government and military acted inconsistently with respect to terrorist safe havens throughout the country. Authorities did not take sufficient action to stop certain terrorist groups and individuals from openly operating in the country," said the State Department.

According to the report, in January 2018, the US government suspended most of its security assistance to Pakistan over the government's failure to adequately address the threat posed by militant and terrorist groups operating on Pakistani soil.

Strong quake rattles Mexico

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Mexico City, June 24: A powerful earthquake measuring 7.5 on the Richter scale hit the southern Mexican state of Oaxaca, killing four people and injuring four others, the National Civil Protection Coordination (CNPC) said Wednesday.

A tsunami warning was sounded on the Oaxaca coast. The country's seismological service recommended that residents move away from the coastline.

The epicentre of the quake, which hit at 10.29 a.m. here on Tuesday, was located 23 km south of La Cruzceta, a Pacific Coast village in southern Oaxaca state, the National Seismological Service (SSN) said via Twitter.

Two men and a woman were among the dead in separate incidents as a result of damage to roofs and walls. The fourth victim was a male employee of the state oil company Pemex, who fell from a structure during the quake and died from his injuries in the hospital, Xinhua news agency reported.

The strong quake was felt in 12 south and central states, and by 2.30 p.m. over 447 aftershocks had been reported. Some structures, including houses, markets, schools, churches and four hospitals at different locations, sustained damage, according to the CNPC. In Mexico City, 32 buildings in the downtown area, near the National Palace, sustained damage to their facades, but only one already condemned building had structural damage, the CNPC said.

NK suspends military action plans against SK



REUTERS

Seoul, June 24: North Korea is suspending military action plans against South Korea, the official KCNA news agency reported Wednesday, as a report from Seoul suggested North Korean troops were taking down loudspeakers reinstalled at the fortified border.

Political tensions between the rival Koreas had been rising over Pyongyang's objections to plans by defector-led groups in the South to send propaganda leaflets into the North. Stalled negotiations regarding economic sanctions imposed because of the North's nuclear weapons programme had also fuelled tensions.

It was not immediately clear why North Korea had softened its position, which came after it blew up a liaison office last week and cut off communication hotlines with the South. North Korean leader Kim Jong Un presided over a video conference meeting of the ruling

party's Central Military Commission Tuesday, where members "took stock of the prevailing situation" before deciding to suspend the military plans, KCNA said, without elaborating.

The committee also discussed documents outlining measures for "further bolstering the war deterrent of the country," KCNA reported. Late Wednesday, KCNA issued another statement by Kim Yong Chol, a senior Pyongyang official, criticising the South Korean defence minister's remarks to parliament that the North's actions must be withdrawn, not suspended.

Kim called the comment "foolish and inappropriate", warning Seoul should "think and behave wisely" not create a greater crisis.

South Korea's Yonhap news agency, citing unnamed military sources, said North Korea's military was seen removing about 10 loudspeakers near the demilitarised zone (DMZ) Wednesday, just days after they were seen reinstalling around 20 of the devices.

FACE THE FEAR



Swiss acrobat Ramon Kathriner performs Wheel Of The Death during the Airshow, marking the reopening of facilities after the coronavirus lockdown in Les Diablerets, Switzerland

REUTERS

‘Beware second wave of nCoV’

REUTERS

London, June 24: A second coronavirus wave is a real risk for the United Kingdom and local flare-ups are likely, major health bodies said Wednesday, in one of the strongest warnings yet to Prime Minister Boris Johnson as he eases lockdown to help the economy.

The United Kingdom has one of the world's highest death tolls from COVID-19 but infections have fallen. The government plans to lift many restrictions in England from July 4 to help an economy facing the deepest contraction in three centuries. With fears of second spikes haunting leaders around the world,



some of Britain's most eminent health leaders want urgent preparations for such a possible scenario.

"While the future shape of the pandemic in the UK is hard to predict, the available evidence indicates that local flare-ups are increasingly likely and a second wave a real risk," the medics said in a letter in the British Medical Journal.

It was signed by 15 of the most eminent health professional groups and trade unions including the heads of the Royal College of Surgeons, the Royal College of Physicians, the Royal College of Emergency Medicine and the British Medical Association.

JOHNSON UNDER PRESSURE

European nations emerging from painful shutdowns are nervously watching a new outbreak at a meat-packing plant in Germany, where two municipalities have regressed to lockdown. Announcing that England was emerging from "hibernation", Johnson is letting pubs, restaurants and hotels reopen from July 4.

PIA AIRCRAFT CRASH

Pilots were 'overconfident'

AGENCIES

Islamabad, June 24: The pilots of the Pakistan International Airlines (PIA) plane that crashed last month were not focussed and they were discussing coronavirus during the flight, the country's aviation minister told Parliament on Wednesday as he pointed out their "overconfidence and lack of concentration" as some of the reasons for the tragedy that killed 97 people on board.

The domestic flight from Lahore to Karachi crashed in a residential area near the Jinnah International Airport in Karachi May 22.

The Airbus A320 aircraft of the national carrier had 91 passengers and a crew of eight when it crashed into the Jinnah Garden area near Model Colony in Malir on Friday, minutes before its landing. One girl died on the ground after suffering burn injuries.

Two passengers miraculously survived the crash.

Federal Minister for Aviation Ghulam Sarwar Khan presented the interim investigation report on the PIA plane crash in the National Assembly, saying that the pilots were not focused and their lack of concentration had caused the crash. Human error by the pilots and air traffic control caused the crash of the Pakistan International Airlines (PIA) plane, he said.

The minister said that the pilots had ignored the instructions of the air traffic control on the height of the aircraft. "The pilots and the ATC both did not follow the protocol," he said.

Indian Armed Forces participates in Victory Day Parade in Russia

AGENCIES

Moscow, June 24: Defence Minister Rajnath Singh said he was extremely proud that a 75-member Tri-service contingent of the Indian Armed Forces participated in the 75th anniversary of the Victory Day Parade at the iconic Red Square here Wednesday.

Singh arrived here on a three-day visit on Tuesday at the invitation of the Russian Ministry of Defence to attend the celebrations.

"Attending the Victory Day Parade at Red Square in Moscow today to commemorate the 75th Anniversary of Victory of the Soviet People in the great Patriotic War of 1941-1945," Singh tweeted. "I am proud that a Tri-Service contin-

gent of the Indian Armed Forces is also participating in this parade," he tweeted.

"Impressive turnout of the Tri-Service contingent of the Indian Armed Forces at the Victory Day Parade in Moscow is indeed an extremely proud and happy moment for me," Singh said in another tweet. The Indian embassy later tweeted that the Defence Minister was accompanied by Defence Secretary Ajay Kumar, Vice Admiral Hari Kumar and Ambassador D B Venkatesh Varma.

The Tri-Service contingent of the Indian Armed Forces comprised 75 all ranks and marched along with contingents of Russian Armed Forces and 17 other countries, according to an official statement.



The British Indian Armed Forces during World War-II were one of the largest Allied Forces contingents which took part in the North and East African Campaign, Western

Desert Campaign and the European Theatre against the Axis powers. This campaign witnessed sacrifice by over 87,000 Indian servicemen beside 34,354 being wounded, the state-

ment said.

The Indian Military not only fought on all fronts, but also ensured delivery of goods along the Southern, Trans-Iranian Lend-Lease route, along which weapons, ammunitions, spare parts for equipment and food went to the Soviet Union, Iran and Iraq, it said.

On Tuesday, Singh called on Russian Deputy Prime Minister Yuri Borisov and the two leaders held discussions on the bilateral relationship, regional issues, and reviewed the India-Russia defence cooperation. Singh also conveyed his greetings for the solemn ceremonies of the 75th Victory Day and congratulated the "friendly" people of Russia, specially the veterans, who have contributed to the common

security of India and Russia, the statement said on Tuesday. The parade was reviewed by Russian President Vladimir Putin, war veterans and guests, including Defence Minister Singh.

This year, 14,000 troops and several hundred military machines took part in the parade, including 30 historic T-34 tanks. Modern vehicles also participated, including AFV Terminator, T-72, and T-14 Armata tanks, 9K720 Iskander missile systems, and many other cutting-edge military hardware, Sputnik International reported.

Planes and helicopters also participated in an air parade, with Su-25s colouring the sky in white, blue, and red - the colours of the Russian flag, the report added.

COVID'S HIDDEN THREAT

EVERY CHILD DESERVES TO HAVE A CHILDHOOD THAT IS FULL OF FUN AND LEARNING. UNFORTUNATELY, MANY CHILDREN ACROSS THE WORLD ARE DEPRIVED OF EVEN THE MOST BASIC OF RIGHTS. CURRENTLY, IT IS FEARED THAT THE COVID-19 CRISIS MAY PUSH MILLIONS MORE CHILDREN INTO LABOUR. ORISSA POST TAKES A SHARP LOOK INTO THE BIGGEST HIDDEN THREAT POSED BY THE PANDEMIC

WHAT THEY SAID

The COVID-19 crisis may push millions more children into child labour, including in countries like India, Brazil and Mexico, reversing progress made over the last 20 years during when it was brought down by 94 million, according to a new report.

According to the new brief from the International Labour Organisation (ILO) and UNICEF titled 'COVID-19 and child labour':

The report, released on the occasion on World Day Against Child Labour marked June 12, said that children already in child labour may be working longer hours or under worsening conditions and more of them may be forced into the worst forms of labour, which causes significant harm to their health and safety. The report noted that children are often the most available labour in households and when families need more financial support, they turn to children.

"Parental unemployment due to economic shocks in Brazil has led children to step in to provide temporary support, for example. Similar effects have been documented in Guatemala, India, Mexico and the United Republic of Tanzania," the report said.

Evidence is also gradually mounting that child labour is rising as schools close during the pandemic, the agencies said adding that temporary school closures are currently affecting more than one billion learners in over 130 countries. As a result, more children could be forced into exploitative and hazardous jobs. Gender inequalities may grow more acute, with girls partic-



THIS IS A UNIVERSAL CRISIS AND, FOR SOME CHILDREN, THE IMPACT WILL BE LIFELONG

ularly vulnerable to exploitation in agriculture and domestic work, the brief says. "As the pandemic wreaks havoc on family incomes, without support, many could resort to child labour," ILO Director-General Guy Ryder said. The brief proposes a number of measures to counter the threat of increased child labour, including more comprehensive social protection, easier access to credit for poor households, the promotion of decent work for

adults, measures to get children back into school, including the elimination of school fees, and more resources for labour inspections and law enforcement. The ILO and UNICEF also said they are developing a simulation model to look at the impact of COVID-19 on child labour globally. India ranks 113 in 176 countries on the wellbeing of children, according to the End of Childhood Index. Countries with high poverty rates fare badly in the index due to the need for children to supplement their family income, the report said, but economically important countries like China, India, Russia and Brazil were also found to have extreme risks because child labor laws are often poorly enforced.

AGENCIES

10 WORST COUNTRIES FOR CHILD LABOUR

MYANMAR: Almost one in ten of Myanmar's 12 million children between the age of 5 and 17 are engaged in child labour, too often exposed to hazards and risks. Pushed by poverty, estranged from school, children enter the workforce with little awareness about occupational safety.

NORTH KOREA: In North Korea there have been numerous reports of child 're-education through labor', where youths are placed in labor camps as punishment for political offences. While millions are spent on Kim Jong UN's missile programme, many North Korean people are forced to eke out a living in grinding poverty. To make things worse, North Korean kids are also subjected to grave injustices, including backbreaking manual labor.

SOMALIA: Half of all children between ages 5 and 14 from central and southern Somalia are employed. Many of these tasks include agricultural and household jobs, such as farming and cleaning.

SUDAN: According to the International Labor Organisation, a UN agency focused on setting labor standards and policies, a child is not allowed to work below a country's minimum legal age, which is 15 in most nations. Some less developed countries such as South Sudan have a minimum working age of 14 or younger. South Sudan's five-year civil war has devastated the economy, fueling child labor in some of the country's most impoverished regions.

DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO: According to the UN children's agency, UNICEF, about 40,000 children work in cobalt mines in the Democratic Republic of Congo. For a shift of up to 24 hours underground, most earn less than \$2 a day - many receive half of that.

ZIMBABWE: Children and adults who work on Zimbabwe's tobacco farms are facing serious risks to their health as well as labor abuses, Human Rights Watch as per a report. Child labor and other human rights abuses on tobacco farms in Zimbabwe tarnish the tobacco industry's contributions to the country's economic growth and improved livelihoods.

AFGHANISTAN: At least a quarter of Afghan children between the ages 5 and 14 work for a living or to help their families. Many are employed in jobs that can result in illness, injury, or even death due to hazardous working conditions.

BURUNDI: Children in Burundi are often unable to enjoy fulfilment of their rights due to the difficult context in which they live. Children are vulnerable to serious risks which undermine their safeguarding including: child trafficking, poverty, environmental disaster and forced displacement.

PAKISTAN: The Human Rights Commission of Pakistan estimated that in the 1990s, 11 million children were working in the country, half of whom were under age ten. It was estimated that one quarter of the country's work force was made up of children.

ETHIOPIA: Child labour is a pervasive problem in Ethiopia. A national Child Labour Survey conducted in 2001 with ILO assistance indicated that 52 per cent of children aged 5 - 17 years were economically active. RANKING FROM MAPLECROFT



LOST CHILDHOOD

- Child labour is a global problem that requires a global solution.
- With the COVID-19 pandemic, we face the risk of reverting years of progress.
- ILO and UNICEF decided to look into the ways the crisis is affecting child labour.
- The number of children in child labour has declined by 94 million since 2000, the rate of reduction slowed by two-thirds in recent years
- "COVID-19 is very likely to lead to an increase in child labour and previous experiences in public health emergencies have indicated that there is a heightened risk of children being victims of violence, abuse and exploitation, and that includes child labour", said Soledad Herrero, Chief of Child Protection, UNICEF (India)
- In 2011 the national census of India found the total no. of child labourers, aged 5-14, to be at 10.1 million, out of the total of 259.64 million children in that age group.
- India has a federal form of government, and labour being a subject in the Concurrent List, both the Central and state governments can and have legislated on child labour. INTERNATIONAL LABOUR ORGANISATION (ILO REPORTS)

BEST COUNTRIES FOR RAISING KIDS

1. Denmark	7. Switzerland	14. France
2. Sweden	8. New Zealand	15. Spain
3. Norway	9. Australia	16. Italy
4. Canada	10. Austria	17. Portugal
5. Netherlands	11. United Kingdom	18. United States
6. Finland	12. Luxembourg	19. Japan
	13. Germany	20. Poland

BEST COUNTRIES REPORT

TIME TO ACT

World Day against Child Labour was celebrated June 12. In India, child labour still thrives and COVID-19 and the subsequent lockdown have seen an increase in it. The country needs to have an effective policy to avert this

Millions of women and children in poor countries are at risk because the COVID-19 pandemic is disrupting health services they rely on, from neonatal and maternity care to immunisations and contraception, a World Bank global health expert has warned. Nearly all countries (88 per cent) have laws in place to protect minors, less than half (47 per cent) say they strongly enforce them, said the Global Status Report on Preventing Violence Against Children 2020.

Countries have failed to follow established strategies to protect children, about one billion are affected each year by physical, sexual or psychological violence, it said.

The report -- launched by the World Health Organisation, the UNICEF, the UNESCO, the Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General on Violence against Children and the End Violence Partnership -- charted progress in 155 countries against the "IN-SPiRE" framework, a set of seven strategies for preventing and responding to violence against children.

With the ongoing coronavirus pandemic, this year World Day Against Child Labour was conducted as a virtual campaign, with the theme called "Protect Children From Child Labour: Now More Than Ever". Meanwhile, with the child labour legislation allowing



children to help in family-run enterprises, there is a probability of them being engaged to manage family enterprises or to help families. As industries reopen with labour law relaxations, small enterprises are likely to be critical contributors in the supply chain, thereby expanding the scope for employment of children, especially when the enforcement mechanism is weak.

Fearing that relaxations of labour laws following the lockdown may impact women workers and drive children to join the workforce, an alliance of NGOs have appealed to the government to review the legislations.

The alliance -- Working Group on Women in Value Chains (WiVC) -- highlighted how relaxations of varying degrees adopted by a few states to promote business operations and maintain steady output to drive economic growth can lead to dilution of labour law.

AGENCIES



of the day quote

It is more of a responsibility for the country. A responsibility to grow ourselves and build such skills and capabilities that could enable us to compete in the China market as well

HARI OM RAI | FOUNDER & MD, LAVA

Private sector should come forward to make such (bulk drug and medical devices) parks, and the government can support them. This would provide impetus for the growth of the healthcare sector

MANSUKH MANDAVIYA | MOS FOR CHEMICALS AND FERTILISERS

The listing of Yaris on the GeM will now ensure that car buyers from central and state governments will have a wider choice in the sedan category

NAVEEN SONI | SENIOR VP (SALES AND SERVICES), TKM

SHORT TAKES

Kinetic Green ties up with DIAT

Mumbai: Electric vehicle maker Kinetic Green Wednesday said it has entered into a pact with Pune-based Defence Institute of Advanced Technology (DIAT) for manufacturing and marketing of a nano technology-based disinfectant, developed by the latter, to combat the spread of COVID-19. Under the transfer of technology agreement, Kinetic Green will manufacture and market advanced nanotechnology-based disinfectant, 'Kinetic Ananya', which is effective in disinfecting all types of surfaces.

IOC reports loss of ₹5,185 cr in Q4

New Delhi: State-owned Indian Oil Corp (IOC) Wednesday reported a massive ₹5,185 crore loss in the March quarter after a slump in oil prices resulted in record inventory losses for the company. The net loss of ₹5,185.32 crore in January-March compared to ₹6,099.27 crore net profit in the same period a year back, IOC Chairman Sanjiv Singh said. The loss was primarily due to inventory losses and lower refining margins.

TAKE Solutions gets new CFO

Chennai: TAKE Solutions Wednesday said Lalit Mahapatra would be its Chief Financial Officer (CFO). Mahapatra, in his over 25 years of service, has served in various organisations including Price Water House Cooper, Siemens and Schneider Electric among others. Currently, he serves TAKE Solutions as its global head (mergers and acquisitions) and has led the company's growth through managing complex acquisitions and divestitures, city-based TAKE Solutions said in a statement here.

Sony records 35% jump

New Delhi: Consumer electronics major Sony India has logged up to 35% jump in sales of audio devices, which mainly include headphones, home theatres etc, in the last 30 days from compared with pre-Covid era sales, a top company official has said. This rise in sales has been witnessed in both online and offline channels and is primarily driven by "work from home" and "learn from home" atmosphere, which has shot up the demand of headphones -- both in wired and wireless category.



COVID-19 is still in India and it is very likely that the government will have to spend a bit more on fiscal measures to support the economy

THOMAS ROOKMAAKER | DIRECTOR, SOVEREIGN RATINGS, FITCH

HINDUJA BROTHERS BATTLE OVER \$11BN

The Hinduja family is locked in a dispute over the future of the \$11.2 billion fortune with ongoing litigation in the UK. Three brothers of the Hinduja Family: GP Hinduja, PP Hinduja and AP Hinduja Tuesday had issued a statement on the litigation issue



INDIAN ECONOMY TO CONTRACT BY 4.5% IN 2020: IMF

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Washington, June 24: The IMF Wednesday projected a sharp contraction of 4.5% for the Indian economy in 2020, a "historic low," citing the unprecedented coronavirus pandemic that has nearly stalled all economic activities, but said the country is expected to bounce back in 2021 with a robust 6% growth rate.

The International Monetary Fund (IMF) projected the global growth at -4.9% in 2020, 1.9 percentage points below the April 2020 World Economic Outlook (WEO) forecast.

"We are projecting a sharp contraction in 2020 of -4.5%. Given the unprecedented nature of this crisis, as is the case for almost all countries, this projected contraction is a historic low," Indian-American Gita Gopinath, IMF's Chief Economist, told PTI as she released the World Economic Outlook Update here.

The COVID-19 pandemic has had a more negative impact on activity in the first half of 2020 than anticipated, and the recovery is projected to be more gradual than previously forecast. In 2021, global growth is projected at 5.4%, the report said.

For the first time, all regions are projected to experience negative growth in 2020. In China, where the recovery from the sharp contraction in the first quarter is underway, growth is projected at 1.0% in 2020, supported in part by policy stimulus.

"India's economy is projected to contract by 4.5% following a longer period of lockdown and slower recovery than anticipated in April," the IMF said.

PANDEMIC EFFECT



THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC HAS HAD A MORE NEGATIVE IMPACT ON ACTIVITY IN THE FIRST HALF OF 2020 THAN ANTICIPATED, AND THE RECOVERY IS PROJECTED TO BE MORE GRADUAL THAN PREVIOUSLY FORECAST

THE IMF'S RECORD REVEALS THAT THIS IS THE LOWEST EVER FOR INDIA SINCE 1961

THE LATEST 2020 PROJECTION FOR INDIA IS A MASSIVE -6.4% LESS THAN ITS APRIL FORECAST

IT PROJECTED THE GLOBAL GROWTH AT -4.9% IN 2020, 1.9 PERCENTAGE POINTS BELOW THE APRIL 2020 WORLD ECONOMIC OUTLOOK FORECAST

IN A FIRST, DIESEL GETS COSTLIER THAN PETROL

AGENCIES

New Delhi, June 24: Diesel price for the first time in living memory crossed the rate of petrol in the national capital Wednesday when prices were raised for a record 18th day in a row.

According to a price notification of state OMCs, petrol price was unchanged after 17 consecutive increases, while diesel rates were increased by 48 paise per litre across the country

According to a price notification of state OMCs, petrol price was unchanged after 17 consecutive increases, while diesel rates were increased by 48 paise per litre across the country.

Diesel now costs ₹79.88 per litre in Delhi as compared to petrol price of ₹79.76 a litre. Rates differ from state to state depending on the incidence of VAT.

However, diesel is costlier than petrol only in the national capital where the state government had raised local sales tax or VAT on



the fuel sharply last month.

Petrol costs ₹86.54 a litre in Mumbai and diesel is priced at ₹78.22. In Chennai, a litre of petrol comes for ₹83.04 and diesel for ₹77.17.

In Kolkata, petrol is priced at ₹81.45 per litre and diesel costs ₹75.06. In Bengaluru, petrol comes for ₹82.35 a litre and diesel for ₹75.96. In Hyderabad, petrol is priced at ₹82.79 a litre and diesel at ₹78.06.

Traditionally, diesel was priced ₹18-20 a litre lower than petrol due to lesser taxation. But over the years, the taxes have increased, narrowing the gap.

The Delhi government had on May 5 hiked Value Added Tax (VAT) on diesel from 16.75 per cent to 30 per cent and on petrol from 27 per cent to 30 per cent. Since the levy is ad valorem, the actual incidence

Diesel costlier due to VAT increase by Delhi govt: IOC

New Delhi: Diesel price for the first time in living memory crossing the rate of petrol in the national capital Wednesday was a result of a steep hike in VAT by the state government, Indian Oil Corp (IOC) Chairman Sanjiv Singh said, pointing to lower rates across other cities. According to a price notification of state oil marketing companies, petrol price was unchanged after 17 consecutive increases, while diesel rates were hiked by 48 paise per litre, the 18th daily increase in a row across the country.

has gone up every single time oil companies raised retail selling price in the last 18 day.

The 18th daily increase in rates since oil companies on June 7 restarted revising prices in line with costs after ending an 82-day hiatus in rate revision, has taken diesel prices to fresh highs. In 18 days, diesel price has gone up by ₹10.49 per litre. Petrol price had risen in the past 17 days by ₹8.5 a litre.

FB's stake acquisition in Jio gets CCI nod

The \$5.7 billion deal: the single largest FDI in the technology sector in India was announced in April

AGENCIES

New Delhi, June 24: The Competition Commission Wednesday said it has cleared Facebook's proposed acquisition of 9.99% stake in Jio Platforms, the digital arm of Reliance Industries.

The \$5.7 billion (Rs 43,574 crore) deal: the single largest FDI in the technology sector in India was announced in April. The US social-networking major had set up a separate entity Jaadhu Holdings LLC for making the investment.

The Competition Commission of India (CCI) has approved "acquisition of 9.99% stake in Jio Platforms by Jaadhu Holdings LLC", according to a tweet.

Jaadhu is an indirect wholly-owned subsidiary of Facebook and formed in March under the laws of the state of Delaware, US. The Facebook group offers various products and services that help people connect to their friends and family, find communities, and grow businesses, the CCI said in a release.

The deal would bring together JioMart, the e-commerce venture of Asia's richest man Ambani, and Facebook's WhatsApp platform to



connect consumers with neighbourhood kirana stores.

WhatsApp has over 400 million users in India while Jio has more than 388 million phone subscribers. Facebook has about 250 million users in India.

Jio Platforms owns and operates digital applications and holds controlling investments in certain technology-related entities. Jio Platforms also holds 100% of the issued and outstanding share capital of Reliance Jio Infocomm Ltd.

Deals beyond a certain threshold require approval of the CCI, which seeks to prevent unfair business practices and promote fair competition in the market place.

CM TO INAUGURATE IOC'S PADC IN PARADIP TODAY

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, June 24: In order to facilitate and support the polymer industry development in Odisha and eastern part of India, Odisha Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik will inaugurate the Product Application & Development Centre (PADC) at Paradip, Thursday through virtual platform. Union Petroleum Dhamendra Pradhan will also join during the inauguration ceremony.

Indian Oil's PADC is set up with an amount of ₹43 crores adjacent to its Refinery and Petrochemicals complex in Paradip. The newly built PADC is spread across 5 acres of land with a built up area of 3334 sq. meter.

"In line with Atmanirbhar Bharat



scheme of the Government of India, PADC will be working on development of newer grades from Paradip and curtail polymer imports through substitution. Innovative application development is one of the prime focuses of the centre to replace finished goods imports to the country in niche fabrics and technical textiles etc. The centre will identify area of development of applications of polymeric material and products for enabling India as self reliant promoting indigenous manufacturing, said Indian Oil official.

The technical centre has become the sixth centre of its kind in the country and second such technical centre of Eastern India.

According to the officials, the centre would also act as a supporting technical centre for polyester yarns and fabrics for the upcoming textile downstream units in Bhadrak and Dhamra. PADC would be working closely in application and developments of polymers in collaboration with other reputed research institutes such as ICT, Bhubaneswar; CIPET and NCL, Pune. The centre is equipped with latest sophisticated testing and processing equipment to cater to the needs of customers and new investors.

Fitch revises outlook on HUDCO to negative

New Delhi: Credit rating agency Fitch has revised the outlook on state-owned Housing and Urban Development Corporation Ltd (HUDCO) to negative from stable. The long-term Issuer Default



Ratings (IDRs) have been affirmed at 'BBB-'. "The rating action follows the revision in the outlook on India's 'BBB-' sovereign rating to negative from stable on June 18, 2020 as HUDCO's rating is credit-linked to that of India," Fitch Ratings said in a statement.

MCL to fund 11 rural development projects

Bhubaneswar/Sambalpur: Mahanadi Coalfields Limited (MCL) approved rural development projects worth ₹98 lakh for Panchgaon Gram Panchayat in Jharsuguda district. The projects consists of RCC drains, concrete road,



community centers, mandap, library, public toilet, rest shed cum waiting hall at Panchgaon bus stand and loka kala training hall. All projects were discussed in the meeting of Resettlement & Peripheral Development Advisory Committee (RPDAC) held at Jharsuguda in 2019. These projects will benefit around 18,000 people.

'Pandemic to spur credit relevant ESG trends'

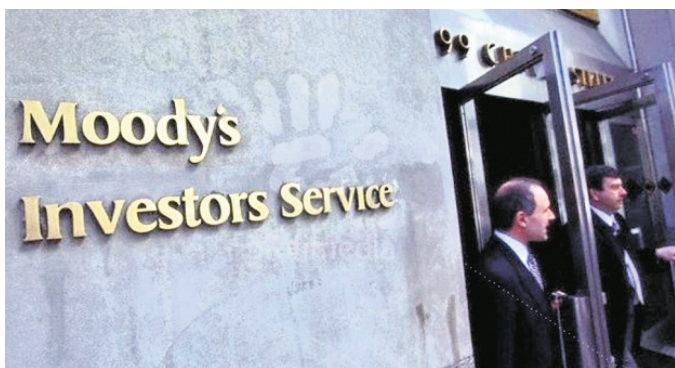
INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, June 24: The coronavirus pandemic will intensify the focus of companies, investors and other stakeholders on environmental, social and governance (ESG) factors, and increase the credit-relevance of ESG risks, according to a report by Moody's Investors Service.

"The coronavirus pandemic has vividly illustrated how a social issue like a public health shock can have severe macroeconomic and credit implications," says Matthew Kuchtyak, AVP-Analyst at Moody's Investors Service.

He added that entities demonstrating a stronger capability and willingness to address such ESG risks will increasingly differentiate themselves from their peers over time.

Investors are recognising that



just as financial factors such as margins, leverage and liquidity defined how vulnerable debt issuers' financial profiles were as they entered the crisis, management of ESG risks will influence how they navigate through and out of such crises, Kuchtyak added.

Scrutiny will extend beyond public health crises to other identified global risks with potential for high impact, such as climate change and social inequality.

The Moody's report focuses on three long-term ESG trends that will receive increased attention due

to the coronavirus pandemic and could have material credit implications over time.

The long-term trends include institutional preparedness for greater types of global risks, social considerations related to healthcare access and economic inequality and a shift from shareholder primacy in corporate decision-making toward a consideration of the needs of other stakeholders, including society at large.

The pandemic has highlighted variations in institutional frameworks and collective action at state, national and international levels

to prepare for significant anticipated risks, as per the report.

The recent experience may result in a greater governmental, corporate and investor focus being placed on institutional preparedness for other identified global risks with potential for high impact, including climate change and other environmental issues.

"Such heightened focus on institutional preparedness will encourage governments and corporates alike to undertake additional planning for such risks and potentially increase spending to mitigate or adapt to them," it said.

The coronavirus pandemic has vividly illustrated how a social issue like a public health shock can have severe macroeconomic and credit implications

MATTHEW KUCHTYAK | AVP-ANALYST, MOODY'S INVESTORS SERVICE

ITR filing for FY19 extended till July 31

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, June 24: The government Wednesday extended the deadline for filing income tax returns (ITR) for the 2018-19 fiscal by a month till July 31, 2020.

The Centre has also extended the time limit for linking biometric Aadhaar with PAN till March 31, 2021

The Centre has also extended the time limit for linking biometric Aadhaar with PAN till March 31, 2021. The Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT) through a notification also extended the time limit for making various investments for claiming deductions under the I-T Act for the 2019-20 fiscal by a month till July 31, 2020.

The due date for filing ITR for FY2019-20 has already been extended till November 30, 2020.

Cabinet approves add'l investment by OVL in Myanmar gas blocks



AGENCIES

New Delhi, June 24: The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) Wednesday approved additional investment of USD 121.27 million by ONGC Videsh Ltd for further development of Block A-1 and A-3 blocks in Myanmar.

The CCEA, chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, approved the additional investment for the Shwe oil and gas project in Myanmar blocks, an official statement said. OVL, the overseas arm of state-owned Oil and Natural Gas Corp (ONGC), had picked up a stake in the Shwe Project in Myanmar in 2002. The firm has invested \$722 million in the project till March 31, 2019.

Govt okays ₹15K cr animal husbandry infra boost fund

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, June 24: The government Wednesday announced

a ₹15,000 crore infrastructure development fund with an interest subsidy scheme to promote investment by private players and MSMEs in dairy, meat processing and animal feed plants, a move which is expected to create 35 lakh jobs.

The fund is part of the ₹20 lakh crore stimulus package announced in May to help people affected by the lockdown to prevent the spread of COVID-19. An interest subvention of 3-4% will be provided to farmer producer organisations, MSMEs and private players for setting up of dairy, meat processing and animal feed plants, an official release said.





Super-sub Rakitic saves Barca's day

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Barcelona, June 24: Barcelona earned a hard-fought 1-0 win against Athletic Bilbao to put the pressure back on Real Madrid in the Spanish league.

Ivan Rakitic's second-half winner Tuesday moved Barcelona back in front of Madrid ahead of the rival's home match against relegation-threatened Mallorca.



Rakitic broke the deadlock in the 71st minute to leave Barcelona three points in front of Madrid, which can retake the lead with a win because it has better tie-breakers.

"We can't worry about our rival, just about us," Barcelona coach Quique Setien said. "We needed to win, and now we wait to see what happens in their match."

Rakitic scored less than 10 minutes after coming off the bench, firing a right-foot shot into the cor-

ner after an assist by Lionel Messi. It was Rakitic's first goal for Barcelona since March 2019. "It was an important win in a very difficult match," Rakitic said. "It took a while for us to get into the match. They did

well by not giving us a lot of space." "It took 31 rounds for me to finally score my first goal of the season," he said. "I was mad at myself that it took so long." Messi, who turned 33 Wednesday, again wasn't able to score his milestone 700th career goal for club and country. He came close twice with shots that just missed the target late in the second half.

Barcelona was coming off a 0-0 draw at Sevilla, a result that allowed

Madrid to take over the lead for the first time since the league resumed after the pandemic break.

Athletic, which has won only one of its four matches after the break, dropped to 10th place.

Athletic Madrid extended their good run after the pandemic break with a 1-0 win at Levante. An own-goal by Bruno Gonzalez in the 15th minute gave Athletic their third straight win and moved Diego Simeone's team back into third place in the standings. Athletic are two points ahead of Sevilla, which had temporarily moved in front after a 2-2 draw at Villarreal Monday.

Athletic were sixth when the league was interrupted by the coronavirus, but its winning run — coupled with a series of poor results from their rivals — allowed the team to quickly get back into the Champions League places. "Happy for another victory and for these very important three points that take us closer to our goal of qualifying for the Champions League," Atletico midfielder Marcos Llorente said.

Gonzalez found his own net while trying to intercept a cross from Llorente to Diego Costa inside the area. Athletic are six points clear of fifth-place Getafe, which drew 1-1 at Valladolid.



A DAY AFTER BEING DECLARED COVID-19 POSITIVE, PAK CRICKETER TESTS NEGATIVE

Hafeez positive for only a day!

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Karachi, June 24: Former Pakistan captain Mohammad Hafeez has tested negative for COVID-19, a day after the PCB found him positive for the deadly virus ahead of the team's much-anticipated tour of England.

Hafeez and Wahab Riaz were among the 10 Pakistan players, who tested positive for COVID-19 Tuesday. The team is due to leave for England Sunday for a Test and T20 series in August.

Hafeez, Wednesday, took to twitter and clarified that he and his family members have tested negative and also posted the medical report to back his claim.

"After Tested positive COVID-19 acc to PCB testing Report yesterday, as 2nd opinion & for satisfaction I personally went to Test it again along with my family and here I along with my all family members are reported Negative (sic) Alham du Lillah. May Allah keep us all safe," Hafeez tweeted.

Fakhar Zaman, Imran Khan, Kashif Bhatti, Mohammad Hasnain, Mohammad Rizwan, Shadab Khan, Haider Ali and Haris Rauf are the other eight players who tested positive as per PCB Chief Executive Wasim Khan.

PCB had earlier said all who have tested positive did not report any symptoms prior to testing. "The PCB medical panel is already



in contact with these players and the masseur, who have been instructed to observe strict quarantine at their homes for their and their families' wellbeing," the PCB said in a statement Tuesday.

Khan had said that players testing positive for the virus is a warning for the general public. He also revealed that a support staff member, masseur Malang Ali, had also tested positive for COVID-19.

Khan said that the players and officials would now assemble in Lahore and another round of tests would be carried out Thursday and a revised squad would be announced the next day. "It is a matter of concern but we shouldn't panic at this time as we have time on our hands," Khan said.

The players and officials would be retested on reaching England. Despite the developments over two days, Khan said the tour is on track.

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, June 24: Star Bangladesh all-rounder Shakib Al Hasan deeply regrets his 'silly mistake' of not reporting a corrupt approach by an Indian bookie to the ICC, leading to his one year suspension from the game.

Shakib was banned for two years, one year of it suspended, for failing to report corrupt approaches during an IPL edition by an alleged Indian bookie named Deepak Aggarwal.

"I took the approaches too casually when I met the anti-corruption guy and told them and they knew everything. Gave them all the evidence and they knew everything that happened," Shakib told Harsha Bhogle on 'Cricbuzz in Conversation'.

Vaishali joins Harika, Humpy for Speed Championship GP

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Chennai, June 24: India's International Master R Vaishali has qualified for the FIDE Chess.com Women's Speed Chess Championship Grand Prix which begins later Wednesday.

The Chennai player, sister of young chess prodigy R Praggnanandhaa, joins India's top two players Koneru Humpy and D Harika in the tournament. Hou Yifan and World Champion Ju Wenju, both Chinese, will also be



part of the event. While Humpy is among the seeded players, Harika qualified for the event through the playoff qualifiers.

Vaishali will take on Antoaneta Stefanova of Bulgaria while Humpy meets Le Thao Nguyen Pham (Vietnam). The Grand Prix will consist of four legs, with a total of 21 participants. Each of the 21 players participates in three out of four Grand Prix legs. Each GP is a 16-player knockout event and the first one is from June 24 to 28.

Shakib Al Hasan

KANE INSPIRES SPURS WIN

ASSOCIATED PRESS

London, June 24: Harry Kane had to watch helplessly while recovering from surgery as Tottenham's Champions League qualification hopes slipped away. It looked like Kane's season was over — until the Premier League was suspended for three months.

Now, at a time when the striker expected to be playing for England at the European Championship, he is back scoring for Tottenham.

On his 200th Premier League appearance, Kane scored his first goal of 2020 — after Tomas Soucek's own goal — to complete a 2-0 victory over West Ham Tuesday, moving Tottenham within a point of the Champions League places.

"When you have been out for over six months it's just getting

that feeling back on the pitch," said Kane, who moved to 137 league goals overall. "You can train as much as you want but being out here is totally different."

So very different, these days. For one, there were no fans in the stadium due to the coronavirus pandemic. Group celebrations are also prohibited. So there was only a solo slide across the field, and Erik Lamela briefly going to jump on Kane's back before withdrawing.

It was Lamela who gained possession inside his own half to launch the counterattack that ended with Son Heung-min releasing the ball and Kane racing through the porous defense before striking into the net in the 82nd minute.

Only Manchester City striker Sergio Aguero has scored more

goals in his first 200 Premier League games — 138 — than Kane. "It goes so quick," the 26-year-old Tottenham academy graduate said.

"I feel as fit as I've probably ever done before, it's been a good chance to rest and recover and work on a few things I haven't been able to over the years. I'm feeling in good shape."

Son was denied an opener in the first half after VAR spotted he was offside. But the technology didn't deny Tottenham in the 64th minute when Soucek inadvertently turned the ball into his own net from Giovanni Lo Celso's corner.

West Ham manager David Moyes thought the ball hit Tottenham defender Davinson Sanchez's arm from the corner in the buildup but the video assistant referee clearly didn't agree.

A second successive loss since the restart left West Ham only out of the relegation zone on goal difference. But Tottenham is now only a point behind Manchester United in fifth place, which will be the final Champions League berth if second-place Manchester City's two-season ban from Europe is confirmed by the Court of Arbitration for Sport next month.

Nine points clear of United, third-place Leicester City are still well placed to return to the Champions League after four years despite back-to-back draws since the return of the Premier League.

Leicester goalkeeper Kasper Schmeichel saved a first-half penalty from Neal Maupay during a 0-0 draw against Brighton, which moved six points clear of the relegation zone.



GETTING INTO THE RHYTHM: Spurs' Harry Kane begins his celebration following his first goal of this calendar year against West Ham, Tuesday

Odisha FC rope in youngsters Isak, Paul

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, June 24: Odisha FC continue to bolster their squad ahead of the seventh edition of Indian Super League as the Bhubaneswar-based club announced Wednesday the signings of Indian youngsters Isak Vanlalruatfela and Paul Ramfangzauva. Both the players played for I-League side Aizawl FC in the previous season.

The 21-year-old midfielder Paul hails from Mizoram and played for Aizawl FC's U-18 team before making it to the senior team in 2018-19 season. He has now signed with OFC for three years.

On the other hand, 19-year-old winger Isak was a part of Bengaluru FC U-18 team before starting his professional career with Aizawl FC and has now joined OFC on a four-year deal.

"Today (Wednesday) I'm very excited to welcome two very special players, Isak and Paul to our club.

Isak is an extremely skillful young winger who has oodles of potential. He's very intelligent and could become the next big winger of India," said club president Rohan Sharma.

"Paul to me is one of the most unheralded midfielders who played in the I-league. I love how he plays and distributes the ball with confidence. He's going to be a big part of our club next season and he's going to create a good midfield room with Vinit and Thoiba," Sharma added.

Paul, on his part, said, "I am really happy that Odisha FC showed interest in me. The club management are investing a lot in youngsters which is very good for me and my career. I am looking forward to play for them in the ISL and I am sure that it will be a great opportunity for me to grow further."

Isak expressed his delight saying, "I have always aspired to play in the ISL and I am very thankful to the



Odisha FC management for giving me this opportunity and putting their trust in me making me a part of the team. I am going to give my best and do everything to achieve the club's goals as I know it is going to help me improve my game and take it to the next level. I can't wait to join my teammates at Odisha FC and play in front of thousands of fans at the Kalinga Stadium."



Regret casual attitude that led to my ban: Shakib

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, June 24: Star Bangladesh all-rounder Shakib Al Hasan deeply regrets his 'silly mistake' of not reporting a corrupt approach by an Indian bookie to the ICC, leading to his one year suspension from the game.

Shakib was banned for two years, one year of it suspended, for failing to report corrupt approaches during an IPL edition by an alleged Indian bookie named Deepak Aggarwal.

"I took the approaches too casually when I met the anti-corruption guy and told them and they knew everything. Gave them all the evidence and they knew everything that happened," Shakib told Harsha Bhogle on 'Cricbuzz in Conversation'.



"To be honest, that's the only reason I was banned for a year, otherwise I'd have been banned for five or 10 years," he added on the ICC's investigation.

The 33-year-old, who was in brilliant form before the ban, amassing 606 runs in the 2019 World Cup in the UK, said he regrets how he went about the situation.

"But I think that was a silly mistake I made. Because with my experience and the amount of international matches I've played and the amount of ICC's anti-corruption code of conduct classes I took, I shouldn't have made that decision, to be honest."

Lesson learnt, Shakib's advice to all young cricketers is to never take any such message lightly. "I regret that. No one should take such messages or calls (from bookies)

lightly or leave it away. We must inform the ICC ACSU guy to be on the safe side and that's the lesson I learnt, and I think I learnt a big lesson," he added.

The all-rounder, whose ban ends October 29, said he became a bit arrogant and never felt he was doing anything wrong by not reporting the bookie's approach immediately.

"Because you do most things right in your life, you tend to get arrogant with some decisions. You may not realise but you're doing wrong by the books. It never came to my mind that I am doing something wrong."

"It was just a feeling of 'okay, what's going to happen, leave it' and I continued with my life. But that's the mistake I made. And that happens," Shakib said.

Djoko's parents defend son

ASSOCIATED PLAYER

Belgrade, June 24: Novak Djokovic's parents defended their son Wednesday and blamed another tennis player for spreading the coronavirus at a series of exhibition matches hosted by the top-ranked player.

Djokovic and his wife tested positive for the virus Tuesday. The 17-time Grand Slam champion then apologized online for organizing the Adria Tour events, which brought together professional players from various countries to play matches in Serbia and Croatia. Thousands of spectators attended the matches and no social distancing was observed. Djokovic's outspoken father



blamed the cancellation of the tour on Grigor Dimitrov, one of the three other players to test positive in the last few days. There is no evidence to suggest Dimitrov spread the virus to others.

"Why did it happen? Because that man probably came sick, who

knows from where," Srđjan Djokovic told RTL Croatia TV. "He didn't test here, he tested somewhere else ... I think that's not fair. He inflicted damage to both Croatia and to us as a family in Serbia," Srđjan Djokovic said. "Nobody is feeling well because of this situation."

Dimitrov, a three-time Grand Slam semifinalist from Bulgaria, was the first Adria Tour participant to test positive for the virus. He was followed by Bornia Coric and Viktor Troicki.

Dimitrov reportedly arrived in Serbia from the United States and his native Bulgaria. He did not immediately respond to this agency's request for comment while recovering from the infection in Monaco.