



ANANYA IN DILEMMA

Actor Ananya Panday is in a dilemma as she has run out of captions for her pictures on social media

LEISURE P2



G7 ON CLIMATE CHANGE

The G7 leaders aim to end their first summit in two years with an aim to tackle climate change

INTERNATIONAL P10



WINNING START

England start their Euro 2020 campaign on a winning note defeating Croatia 1-0

SPORTS P12

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IRREGULAR by MANJUL



Don't stress yourself. Start stepping out. Govt has cut taxes. Covid treatment is much cheaper now.

UNABLE TO REPAY LOAN, MAN SELLS MINOR DAUGHTER

BINJHARPUR: A man in Jajpur district allegedly sold his two-and-a-half-year-old daughter to repay a loan.

According to reports, Ramesh Barik of Malia village in Binjharpur police station area had borrowed ₹5,000 from Mitu Jena, a resident of Sayadpur in the same district. However, Ramesh, failed to repay the loan amount and was forced to sell his daughter to Mitu.

Irked over the incident, the girl's grandfather lodged a complaint with the Binjharpur police, who raided Mitu's house and rescued the baby. Police handed over the girl to the District Child Protection Officer Niranjan Kar. Subsequently, the baby was taken to a shelter home run by Sishu Mangal Samiti.

According to the police, they rescued a two-and-half-year-old baby girl from Sadaypur area in Jajpur district who was sold by her father as he could not repay a loan. Police said they have registered a case and investigating the matter.

12 KILLED, 150 INJURED IN CHINA GAS EXPLOSION

HUBEI: At least 12 people were killed and 150 others seriously injured in a huge gas explosion in central China's Hubei Province Sunday, official media reported.

The blast took place at about 6:30 am local time in the Zhangwan district of Shiyan city. Media reports said a market in the district was hard hit. Twelve people were killed and 150 others injured in the explosion which has destroyed several buildings, state-run CGTN-TV reported.

Hong Kong-based *South China Morning Post* reported that the explosion took place at the Yanhu market in Shiyan when many residents were having breakfast or buying vegetables in the market. The city's municipal office initially said "many" people were trapped after the incident. The cause of the accident is under investigation.

WEATHER		BHUB	CTK
TEMP.	MAX	28.6°C	29.5°C
	MIN	25.0°C	24.5°C
Humidity	98%	98%	
Rainfall	3.8mm	4.8mm	
		Forecast	
		Light rain very likely	

India's research outlay declining since 2014: UNESCO

AGENCIES

Thiruvananthapuram, June 13: Despite making 'solid progress' in achieving Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) targets relating to industry, infrastructure and innovation, the India's investment in research remains unsatisfactory, the UNESCO Science Report has observed.

According to the report, the gross domestic expenditure on research (GERD) has been dormant at 0.7% of the GDP for years, though in absolute terms, research expenditure has increased, the chapter on India authored by Sunil Mani, director, Centre for Development Studies (CDS), Thiruvananthapuram, noted. India has one of the lowest GERD/GDP ratios among the BRICS nations, the report, which is published every five years, noted.

"India's research intensity has been declining since 2014. The Science and Technology Policy of 2003 fixed the threshold of devoting 2% of GDP to research and development (R&D) by 2007. This target date was set back to 2018 in the new Science, Technology and Innovation Policy (2013) then again to 2022 by the Economic Advisory Council of the Prime Minister. In 2020, the task force drafting the country's new Science and Technology Policy recommended pushing back the target date to a more realistic 2030," it observed.



People gather to collect drinking water from a tanker at Sanjay Camp in Chanakyapuri as water crisis looms during the ongoing Covid-induced lockdown in New Delhi, Sunday

PTI PHOTO

FUEL PRICE HIKE

Govt is saving money for welfare schemes: Pradhan

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, June 13: With prices of petrol and diesel climbing steeply, Union Minister for Petroleum and Natural Gas, Dharmendra Pradhan, Sunday agreed that the rates were a problem, but said that since government expenses are up due to Covid-19 relief measures, "the Centre is saving money to spend on welfare schemes".

"I accept that fuel prices are pinching consumers, there's no doubt about this. But over ₹35,000 crore has been spent on Covid vaccines in a year: ₹1 lakh crore has been spent on Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Yojana in order to provide eight months' ration to the poor. A few thousand crores of rupees have also been transferred to farmers' bank accounts under PM Kisan... In such dire times, we're saving money to spend on welfare schemes," Pradhan said, speaking to the media.

With the Centre facing constant flak from the Opposition over fuel prices, Pradhan asked Congress governments in Rajasthan and Maharashtra to cut sales tax if the party was "that concerned about the burden on the common man". Asked about Congress leader



If Rahul Gandhi is so concerned he must answer why fuel prices are high in Congress-ruled states like Punjab, Rajasthan and Maharashtra

DHARMENDRA PRADHAN | UNION MINISTER FOR PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS

Rahul Gandhi's repeated attacks on the Modi government, Pradhan said, "Rahul Gandhi must answer why fuel prices are high in Congress-ruled states like Punjab, Rajasthan and Maharashtra. If he is so concerned about the poor, he should instruct the Maharashtra Chief Minister to reduce taxes, as fuel prices are very high in Mumbai."

Pradhan, however, refrained from commenting on whether BJP-ruled states, like Madhya Pradesh and

Karnataka, where petrol has crossed the Rs100-mark, would do the same.

Fuel prices differ from state to state depending on local taxes such as VAT and the freight charges levied on them. Due to this, petrol at present costs more than ₹100 per litre in seven states and Union Territories, which include Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Karnataka and Ladakh. Of these states, Congress is in power in Rajasthan and is a coalition partner with Shiv Sena and NCP in Maharashtra. Madhya Pradesh and Karnataka are ruled by the BJP. Ladakh too is under Central rule. Andhra Pradesh has YSR Congress in power while TRS rules in Telangana.

While international oil prices have crossed \$72 per barrel in anticipation of demand recovery following the roll-out of vaccination programme by various countries. Last year when rates collapsed to two-decade low, the union government instead of passing on the benefit to consumers raised excise duty to record high. The excise tax on petrol was ₹9.48 per litre when the Modi government took office in 2014, and that on diesel was ₹3.56 a litre.

Man, son beaten to death for practicing sorcery

POST NEWS NETWORK

R Udaygiri, June 13: In a shocking incident, some villagers allegedly ganged up against a man and his son and beat them to death at Muthaguda village under Adaba police limits in Gajapati district late Saturday night. The villagers suspected that the duo was practicing black magic. The deceased have been identified as Luka Dalabehera and Anak Dalabehera of the same village. Family members of the victims alleged that the locals were suspecting the involvement of Luka and Anak in the death of a minor boy in the village. They said that the boy had died due to 'black magic' performed on him by the father-son duo. They attacked and killed the two Saturday night.

Sources said that the villagers had a meeting and then took Luka and Anak to a nearby forest, where the two were mercilessly beaten up. Luka died on the spot, while Anak managed to flee the spot and return home. However, a few minutes later he also breathed his last.

The local sarpanch reported the incident at the Adaba police station. R Udaygiri sub-divisional police officer (SDPO) Dillip Kumar Nayak and other officers reached the spot and sent the bodies for post-mortem. The SDPO said that a detailed probe into the matter is underway. The police are trying to identify the villagers involved in the assault on the deceased duo.

Matric results to be published by June end

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, June 13: The state School and Mass Education Minister Samir Ranjan Dash Sunday said that the results of the annual matriculation examinations will be announced by the last week of June.

According to the minister, the process of evaluation is already underway. "We are hopeful of publishing the results within the stipulated time frame that was announced earlier."

It may be mentioned here that the Matric examinations were to be held from May 3, 2021. But, in view of the alarming spike in Covid-19 cases, the examinations were postponed. This triggered students' resentment as their fate hanged in a balance over the government's inability to take a decision regarding holding the matriculation examination.

Later, the Board of Secondary Education (BSE) Odisha announced an alternative method of as-

essment to award marks to Class X students. According to the announcement, the evaluation of marks will be done based on the performance of the students in their Class IX and Class X examinations.

It was decided that the assessment of marks will be done after considering the marks secured by a student in the half-yearly and annual examinations in Class IX and the 2nd, 3rd, 4th practice tests in Class X. The Board would then take into consideration the two highest marks in each subject from the three practice tests conducted in Class X. In addition, 40% weightage will be given to highest marks secured in Class IX.

Two highest marks in all the subjects in the three practice tests conducted in Class X will be given weightage of 30% each. In case any candidate has appeared only in one practice test, then 70% weightage will be given in the marks secured in Class IX half yearly and annual examinations.

Heavy rains likely across state today



POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, June 13: The regional office of the India Meteorological Department (IMD) Sunday said that the southwest monsoon has covered the entire state.

At the same time, the MeT has forecast heavy rainfall in different parts of the state in the next two days, while moderate to light rains are expected in other parts of the state for next few days.

Issuing a 'Yellow Warning' (be updated) for the next two days, the IMD said, "Heavy to very heavy rainfall is very likely to occur at one or two places over the districts of Sundargarh, Jharsuguda, Keonjhar, Sambalpur, Deogarh, Angul, Keonjhar, Mayurbhanj Monday."

It added that heavy rains may also occur in the other parts of the state Monday. According to the evening bulletin of the IMD, heavy rainfall is very likely to occur at one or two places over the districts of Malkangiri, Koraput, Nabarangpur, Kalahandi, Dhenkanal, Jajpur, Cuttack, Bhadrak, Balasore, Kendrapara, Jagatsinghpur, Puri and Khurda Monday."

At the same time, light to moderate rains are likely in most of the districts in North and South Odisha. Thunderstorms may also occur, the department said. The IMD said that Sundargarh, Jharsuguda, Keonjhar, Sambalpur and Deogarh districts may witness heavy to very heavy rainfall Tuesday, while districts like Kalahandi, Kandhamal, Boudh, Angul, Dhenkanal, Cuttack, Bargarh and Jajpur may see heavy rainfall. Light to moderate rains are likely to continue in many other places of Odisha Tuesday.

The department, however, has not issued any warning regarding heavy rains for Wednesday and Thursday. The IMD also said that as far as the state capital is concerned, there may be few spells of rains and thunderstorms Monday. The maximum temperature could go up to 33°C. It has also issued an advisory for the fishermen not to venture into deep sea till June 15.

The bulletin said that the highest rainfall in the last 24 hours was reported in Angul district, which saw 98mm precipitation. It was followed by Kenonjhar which saw 81.2mm rainfall during the period.

'Small' groups don't rule the world

The re-emergence of China as a leading global power is among the most significant geopolitical events of recent times

REUTERS

London, June 13: China Sunday pointedly cautioned Group of Seven leaders that the days when "small" groups of countries decided the fate of the world was long gone, hitting back at the richest democracies as they sought to act in concert to counter Beijing's might.

The re-emergence of China as a leading global power is considered to be one of the most significant geopolitical events of recent times, alongside the 1991 fall of the Soviet Union that ended the Cold War. But the return of China as a global power has unnerved the United States: President Joe Biden casts China as the main strategic competitor and has vowed to confront China's "economic abuses" and push

back against human rights violations.

"The days when global decisions were dictated by a small group of countries are long gone," a spokesman for the Chinese embassy in London said.

"We always believe that countries, big or small, strong or weak, poor or rich, are equals, and that world affairs should be handled through consultation by all countries."

The Chinese spokesman said the only valid global system was the international order based on the principles of the United Nations and "not the so-called rules formulated by a small number of countries."

The G7, whose leaders are meeting in southwestern England, has been searching for a coherent response to the growing assertiveness of President Xi Jinping

CHINA CAUTIONS G7



after China's spectacular economic and military rise over the past 40 years.

Leaders of the group, which comprises the United States, Canada, Britain, Germany, Italy, France and Japan, want to use their gathering in the English seaside resort of Carbis Bay

to show the world that the richest democracies can offer an alternative to China's growing clout.

Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau led a G7 discussion of China Saturday and called on leaders to come up with a unified approach to the challenges posed by the People's Republic, a source said. The G7 is planning to offer developing nations an infrastructure scheme that could rival Xi's multi-trillion-dollar Belt and Road initiative.

Beijing has repeatedly hit back against what it perceives as attempts by Western powers to contain China, and says many major powers are still gripped by an outdated imperial mindset after years of humiliating China.

READ EDITORIAL P6

FORTUNE FORECAST

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ARIES

You have to take care of your health, and at last you realise the importance of diet and exercise. However, today you may wish to eat something new, or try some different cuisine. Ganesha says go out with some old friends whom you have been neglecting of late.

TAURUS

You will be fondly thinking about your close friends, particularly about the ones of the opposite sex. It may suddenly dawn upon you that you are in love, says Ganesha. If per chance, there is a romantic encounter, go ahead and dive fearlessly in the pool of love.

GEMINI

Your family members and your friends will have much higher expectations from you today, and trying to fulfill the same will make your irritable. However, you will figure out creative ways to juggle the many demands made upon you and come out on top at the end of it all, says Ganesha.

CANCER

You will tackle with ease, even the most confounding challenges today. You may be the scapegoat, though, fears Ganesha. Beware, or this may shake you and lower your self-confidence. Try to shake off your weaknesses, and you should see yourself obtaining energy and positivity.

LEO

Financial gains in shares and stocks are indicated. If you are an investor, your investments will yield substantial profits. Long-standing debts are also likely to be cleared, and pending dues will be settled. Expenses for the purposes of entertainment are a possibility, says Ganesha.

VIRGO

Ganesha foretells that your writing abilities will help you give vent to your emotions without hurting others. You will finish all your incomplete tasks successfully. Ganesha says that you will experience success in everything that you choose to do today.

LIBRA

Ganesha says that there are chances that today you might start some long-pending renovation project for your house. You may decorate your home with new paintings and items. There may be guests over in the evening that will make you very happy.

SCORPIO

The one thing that we neglect the most about ourselves is health. But today you are unable to do that. Your health needs to be paid enough attention as you may be suffering from ailment/s. Try to regularise your routine along with healthy food and regular exercise, advises Ganesha.

SAGITTARIUS

For you, appreciation and recognition for the efforts you put in may be delayed, but it's not denied. There's no point losing heart and getting disappointed. This may only affect your work, instead, wait for a better tomorrow, Ganesha says giving you hope.

CAPRICORN

The hassle and bustle around you will not disturb you today. You've been holding your emotions in your heart and they have started suffocating you. Such an uncomfortable situation may hamper your logical reasoning power and make you feel trapped.

AQUARIUS

Today is the day to turn dreams into reality and how! With your talent, wit, and intelligence you will make a great impression on everyone's mind, feels Ganesha. Icing on the cake will be the cash inflow. You know your cards and you play them well to your advantage.

PISCES

You will communicate with your friends or relatives living abroad today. There is a chance that these communications could translate directly into substantial gain for you. You will find yourself in the mood for socializing. You will likely invite friends over to dinner at your place in the evening, says Ganesha.



TOM HIDDLESTON: 'LOKI' NEEDS TO EVOLVE

Actor Tom Hiddleston has talked about his role Loki, the God of Mischief, and said that the character needs to evolve and that the latest series shows that he can change. *Loki* is streaming on Disney+ Hotstar Premium and Disney+ Hotstar VIP.

NICKI MINAJ, SON TWIN IN NEW PHOTOS ON SOCIAL MEDIA

Rapper Nicki Minaj posted a picture on social media where she and her son can be seen colour coordinated in white outfits. Nicki posted a set of pictures of herself posing on a couch on Instagram. Only one photograph features her son.



Sushmita turns hairstylist for daughter Alisah

Mumbai: Actress Sushmita Sen posted an Instagram snapshot giving a haircut to her younger daughter Alisah Saturday.

Known for her witty and engaging, Sushmita called herself Alisah's 'official choice of hairdresser' in a note she wrote alongside the picture post. She credited elder daughter, actress Renee, for capturing the moment.

"Busy weekend anyone!!!! Alisah has a way of making me feel really important...I've been her official choice of hairdresser since she was 3yrs old!!! While I am all stressed about cutting her hair, she simply meditates!! Love her confidence!!! #sharing #simplejoys #mammahood. Nice shot @reeneesen47. I love you guys!!!" Sushmita wrote.

Sushmita is shooting for the second season of Ram Madhvani's web series *Arya*.



Ananya is in caption dilemma

Mumbai: Actress Ananya Panday is in a dilemma as she has run out of captions for her pictures on social media.

Ananya posted a set of pictures on Instagram. In the images, the actress is seen taking a mirror selfie.

The daughter of actor Chunky Panday looks stunning in a black outfit paired with nude make-up and pink lip stain.

For the caption, Ananya wrote: "(heart and fire emoji) (u guys will be happy to know I literally cannot think of captions anymore but I'll be back)."

The actress will next be seen in the film *Liger* opposite Telugu star Vijay Deverakonda.

The film has been directed by Puri Jagannadh. Produced by Karan Johar, the film is scheduled to release September 9.

She also stars in Shakun Batra's untitled next with Deepika Padukone and Siddhant Chaturvedi.



Tiger wishes Disha on her b'day with a dance video

Mumbai: Actor Tiger Shroff took to social media Sunday to wish his rumoured ladylove, actress Disha Patani on her 29th birthday in a special way.

What can be said as a visual treat to Tiger and Disha's fans, the actor shared a video where the two of them are dancing together. Wishing Disha on her birthday, Tiger wrote: "Happy bday villainnn @dishapatani."

Even though Tiger and Disha are rumoured to be dating for quite some time, the two actors have refrained from speaking about their relationship status.

Tiger's mother Ayesha Shroff also took to Instagram Sunday to wish Disha a happy birthday.

Ayesha shared a couple of photographs of Disha, one with herself and the other one where the actress is playing with a calf.

"Happpppppyyyy birthday deeeeeshu!! Everyone sees the glamorous you but I love this side the most!! @dishapatani," Ayesha wrote.

Commenting on her post, Disha replied: "Awww love you so much aunty. You're the best."

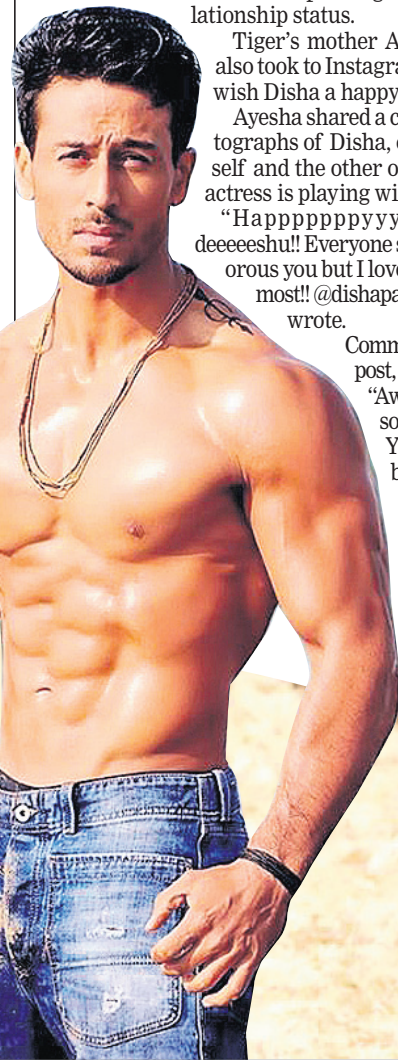
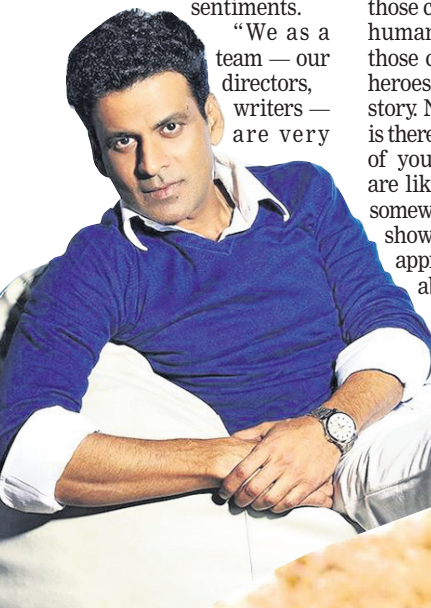
On the work front, Disha features alongside Salman Khan in *Radhe : Your Most Wanted Bhai*.

MANOJ ON THE FAMILY MAN 2 CONTROVERSY

Mumbai: Actor Manoj Bajpayee has returned as Shrikant Tiwari in *The Family Man 2*, and he is getting a good response for the role again. The series, however, faced the ire of certain sections before release, over allegations that it depicted Tamils in an 'objectionable manner'. The actor feels the series has worked, and that proves people know the story isn't about hurting sentiments.

sentimental to each and every person and state. We are sensitive to the culture. We would never do anything to offend anyone. Even in the first season, and in this season of *The Family Man* we don't talk about politics. We put the characters there and we look at those characters in a humanised way. All those characters are heroes of their own story. Now, the show is there right in front of you. I know you are liking it because somewhere you feel that the show is not at all what you were apprehensive about. It is talking about you and your sentiment in a very respectful manner with all the love," Bajpayee told IANS.

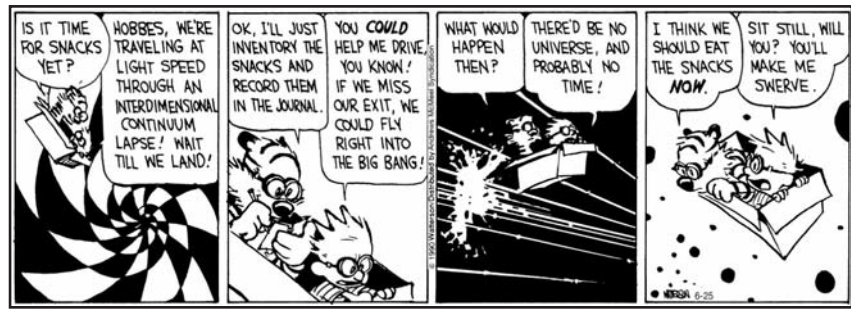
"We as a team — our directors, writers — are very



PEANUTS



CALVIN AND HOBBS

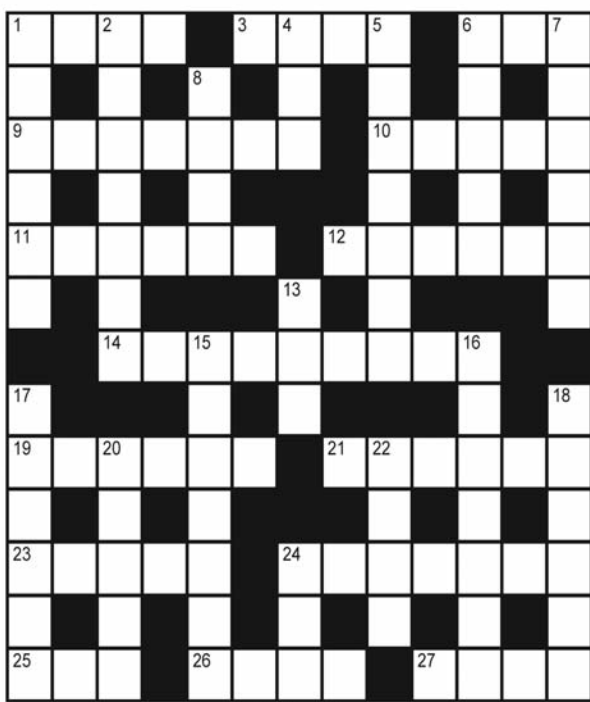


BREVITY



FUN post

CROSSWORD



Across

- 1 Tympan
- 3 Between ports
- 6 Apprehend
- 9 Idle fancy
- 10 Masterful
- 11 Hang around
- 12 Beheaded queen
- 14 Enlivens
- 19 Magic word
- 21 Buyer's warning

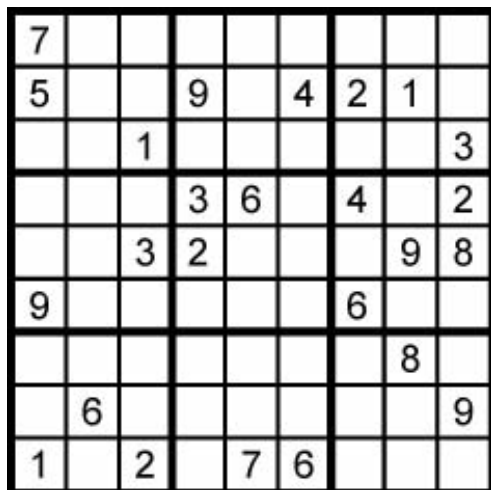
Down

- 1 Meek
- 2 Employ
- 4 Massage locale
- 5 Viragoes
- 23 Extreme
- 24 Swamp plant
- 25 Slithery swimmer
- 26 Tall tale
- 27 Chances

- 6 Family girl
- 7 Study of plants
- 8 Insignificant
- 13 Freudian topic
- 15 River section
- 16 Custodian
- 17 Coniferous tree
- 18 Horse barn
- 20 Praise
- 22 Choir voice
- 24 Limousine

SUDOKU

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



SOLUTIONS



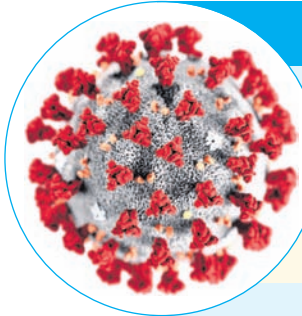
CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW

downtown



SNANA YATRA PREP

Artisans preparing decorative pieces for the upcoming Snana Yatra of Srimandir deities in Puri, Sunday



COVID-19 TRACKER

	INFECTED	RECOVERED	DEAD
World	17,64,90,773	16,04,69,213	38,12,282
India	2,94,39,989	2,80,43,446	3,70,384
Odisha	8,51,782	7,96,799	3,302

Govt warns of strict action in spurious drug cases

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, June 13: Health Minister Naba Kishore Das Sunday warned medicine dealers of strict actions if they are found indulged in malpractices such as the sale and distribution of spurious drugs in the state.

The Health minister said that raids had been undertaken after receiving information on such malpractices. "After the investigations are done and reports of involvement of persons in such cases are received from the authorities concerned, the state government will take strict action against the persons involved," he said.

"We will not tolerate such things in the state. After receiving vital information, the drug controller's office swung into action and raided a drug trader in Cuttack. We saw 170 boxes of spu-



Directorate of Drugs Control officials verifying records and samples of the seized medicines in Cuttack (File)

rious Favipiravir medicines and each box had around 100 tablets. Other drugs relating to cold and other ailments were also seized on suspicion," he said.

According to the minister, the

samples have been sent to labs in Kolkata and Bhubaneswar. He said that the health department and the police department have also been asked to act in such cases and trace the malpractices.

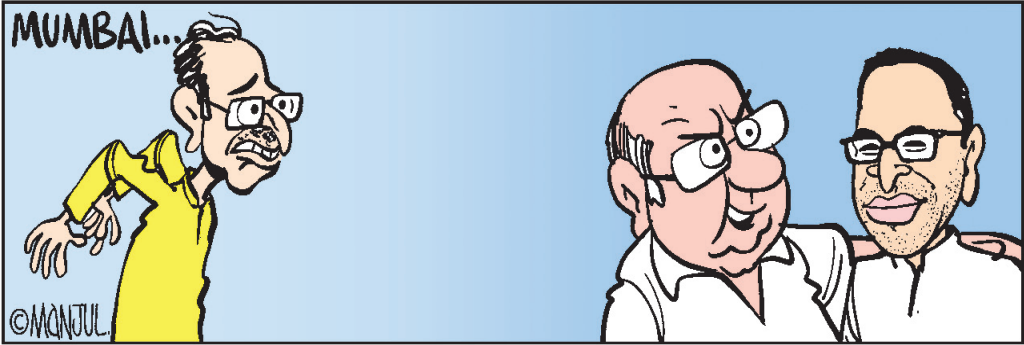
This comes after the office of the state drug controller raided several medicine stores, wholesalers dealing with the procurement, distribution and sales of medicines in the state.

The department in the last few raids in Cuttack, Rourkela and other cities has found spurious Favipiravir and nine other drugs used in the treatment of different diseases including Covid-19.

Many of the of drug traders under lens have been booked under the Drugs and Cosmetics Act which has provisions of jail as well as fine for the crimes which could directly harm people's health.

The raids were triggered by inter-state intelligence reports from the offices of drug controllers of Himachal Pradesh, Maharashtra and other states which led to more revelations post seizure and raids on selected traders and dealers of drugs in the state.

POLITICKLE by MANJUL



100 foreign-bound students shortlisted for vaccination

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, June 13: Taking an initiative to vaccinate those seeking to fly abroad for higher studies, the Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC) has prepared a list of about 100 students who will be administered the Covishield vaccine in the state capital.

As per sources, while only Covaxin doses are available in the capital city, special arrangements have been made to make available the Covishield vaccines for those planning to go abroad. The reason behind this special arrangement is that Covaxin is yet to be recognised as a vaccine by the foreign nations.

While 83 students are enlisted after verification of the necessary documents, 19 have already been administered with the doses.

"Two vaccination centres at PN College, Khurda and CMC Kalyan Mandap, Gopalpur, Cuttack have been made available for providing vaccination to students leaving for overseas. Moreover, a special desk has been set up for the document verification and listing of the students at operation centres here," a BMC official said.

The foreign-bound students for higher studies in the age group of 18-44 can register their requests through 1929 call centre. While no pre-booking of slots is necessary, students will need to keep ready documents like confirmation letter of admission from the respective foreign universities and their valid ID proof for the vaccination process. "I came home during Covid after completing my second year. I was in great stress to take the vaccine before joining the class. Now I am happy that I can go and join my class with the two doses of vaccines," said Urmila Pradhan, a third-year student of Vinnitsa National Medical University in Ukraine.

Delhi-based firm dupes NGO of lakhs

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, June 13: A firm based in New Delhi allegedly duped a non-profit organisation here of around Rs 7 lakh on the pretext of providing various financial consultancy and community-based project related services. The NGO Kalinga Kusum Foundation located at Infocity road at Patia has lodged a complaint with the police in this regard.

According to the complaint, the NGO and the accused firm Innovative Financial Advisors Private Limited signed several agreements between January and March 2019. The NGO had reportedly paid a total Rs 17, 46,400 to the Delhi-based project consultancy firm. The NGO alleged that the firm failed to provide any service for which it had received huge amount of money from the NGO. Subsequently, the consultancy company was asked by the organization to return the money. However, the company allegedly returned only Rs 7 lakhs while a cheque of Rs 5.60 lakhs was bounced due to insufficient amount in the bank account of the foundation, said the city-based organization. A separate case has also been filed against the firm under the Negotiable Instruments Act.

45 more succumb to Covid in 24 hrs

AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, June 13: Odisha Sunday reported 4,469 fresh Covid-19 cases, taking the state's tally to 8,51,782, while 45 more deaths pushed the toll to 3,302, a Health department official said.

Of the new infections, 2,546 were reported from quarantine centres, while the rest 1,923 were local contact cases.

Khurda district, where state capital Bhubaneswar is located, reported the highest 612 new cases, followed by Cuttack (413), Jajpur (370), Balasore (318) and Dhenkanal (252). At least 15 of the 30 districts reported less than 100 positive cases in the past 24 hours.

Khurda has topped the tally with a total 1,26,718 Covid cases followed by Cuttack (69,720), Sundargarh (57,815) Angul (37,892) and Jajpur (32,210).

Official sources said 45 fresh Covid deaths were reported from 19 districts in the past 24 hours. Khurda district registered the highest number of six deaths, while Cuttack district reported four deaths. Three each died in six districts, two each in six districts and one each in five districts.

So far, the Covid-19 has claimed

KHURDA DISTRICT, WHERE STATE CAPITAL BHUBANESWAR IS LOCATED, REPORTED THE HIGHEST 612 NEW CASES, FOLLOWED BY CUTTACK (413), JAJPUR (370), BALASORE (318) AND DHENKANAL (252)

JHARSUGUDA IN WESTERN ODISHA HAS THE LOWEST TPR OF 0.7 PER CENT WHILE JAJPUR DISTRICT IN COASTAL ODISHA HAS THE HIGHEST TPR OF 19.5 PER CENT

the highest number of 534 fatalities in Khurda district followed by Sundargarh (307), Ganjam (299), Cuttack (210) and Puri (152).

Sources said 11 districts in the state have reported a total positivity rate less than 4 per cent, 6 districts have between 5 to 7.5 per cent while 13 districts have more than 7.5 per cent.

Jharsuguda in Western Odisha has the lowest TPR of 0.7 per cent while Jajpur district in coastal Odisha has the highest TPR of 19.5 per cent. So far, 7,96,799 patients have recovered in the state.

In the last 24 hours, 62,034 samples were tested.

POST NEWS NETWORK

Cuttack, June 13: Contrary to the smooth vaccination claims by the civic authorities, many locals in the Silver City here have alleged several loopholes in the inoculation drive against novel coronavirus.

The locals have claimed that the authorities of Cuttack Municipal Corporation (CMC) are yet to make any special arrangement for the vaccination of elderly people. Moreover, the civic body has failed to vaccinate the slum dwellers and people from lower strata of the society, they alleged.

Sources in the CMC claimed that a total of 3,48,874 doses of Covid vaccine have been administered to the people of Cuttack since the launch of the inoculation drive against the deadly virus January 16 this year.

The civic authorities have time and again claimed that special arrangements are in place to inoculate elderly people, differently-abled persons and foreign-bound students.

"We have made special arrangements to vaccinate foreign-bound students. Around 30 students have been vaccinated in these facilities since June 9," said a source in the CMC.

However, the locals claimed that the CMC has not introduced any special measure to vaccinate the elderly people. "The civic body is yet



The civic body is yet to set up special vaccination centres for the elderly people despite repeated requests in this regard from several quarters. Many senior citizens of the city have been deprived of the vaccine due to the online registration and slot booking system

BISHNU CHARAN DAS SAMANTA | CUTTACK SENIOR CITIZENS' FORUM GENERAL SECRETARY

to set up special vaccination centres for the elderly people despite repeated requests in this regard from several quarters. Many senior citizens of the city have been deprived of the vaccine due to the online registration and slot booking system," said Bishnu Charan Das Samanta, general secretary of senior citizens' forum of Cuttack.

Moreover, it has been alleged that many people who have been administered the first dose of the vaccine are now facing difficulties in getting the second dose.

"The CMC has failed to make any arrangement at the ward-level for the smooth vaccination of the local residents. Many peo-

ple from outside the city are getting inoculated at various vaccination centres here. A few days ago, they had opened a vaccination centre at Ravenshaw University but there was no arrangement for the locals. Even, the local Puja committee was not informed on the issue," said Uttam Behera, president of College Square Puja Committee.

Several locals have claimed that they are facing difficulties in getting the vaccine even after booking slots for the same at various vaccination centres. They alleged that many vaccination centres in the city have been closed by the authorities without citing any valid reason.

"The authorities had recently opened a vaccination centre in our locality. The centre was closed after two days of vaccination. We have raised the issue with the CMC but to no avail," said social activist Sushant Kumar Sahu of Bankabazar area.

Many in the city have blamed the online registration and slot booking system as a stumbling block in the vaccination of poor people and slum dwellers. "The city has around 50,000 slum dwellers. Till date, only around a thousand people from the slums have been vaccinated against the deadly virus," said Brundaban Das Azad, president of Akhila Odisha Jhopadipati Mahasanga that champions the cause of slum dwellers.

There are also allegations that the CMC is yet to create awareness on the vaccination drive among the poor and people from the lower strata.

"Only a few educated people from our community have been vaccinated against the Covid-19. More than 80 per cent people have been deprived of the vaccine due to their ignorance about the inoculation drive," said Qadam-E-Rasool Development Committee president Sheikh Muntakim Bux.

Despite rerated attempts, CMC commissioner Ananya Das could not be reached for her comments on the issue.

OTDC launches 'Pitha on Wheels'

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, June 13: Raja festival is synonymous with varieties of cakes (pithas). Keeping this in view, Odisha Tourism Development Corporation (OTDC) Sunday launched a special programme named 'Pitha on Wheels'.

According to OTDC sources, different kinds of pithas such as 'Poda Pitha', 'Manda', 'Kakara', 'Arisha', 'Chakuli' and 'Chandrakala' have been made available at these kiosks under 'Pitha on Wheels' programme. These vehicles selling traditional cakes have been stationed in Bhubaneswar, Cuttack and Sambalpur.

In Bhubaneswar, OTDC's mobile kiosks will be available at six places namely Master Canteen Square, Khandagiri Square, CRP Square, Patia Square, Chandrasekharpur Square and Rupali Square. They will remain open from 7:00 am to 11:00 pm Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday.

Apart from 'pithas', masks manufactured by SHGs will also be on sale at the 'Pitha on Wheels' vehicles.

Meanwhile, denizens can enjoy different types of Pitha (pancakes) like Manda, Arisha, Kakara, Chakuli, Chandrakala at Bhubaneswar Panthaniwas during the three-day festival and the food items will be prepared in a completely hygienic process by the Mission Shakti mothers and OTDC workers" informed OTDC Chairperson Shreemayee Mishra.

In view of the shutdown, the Bhubaneswar Panthaniwas will deliver Pithas to the people at six places from morning 7am to 11am.

Likewise, from 15 to 17 June, Pithas will be available near Master Canteen Square, Khandagiri Square, Patia Square,



OTDC chairperson Shreemayee Mishra along with senior officials launches 'Pitha on Wheels' initiative in Bhubaneswar, Sunday

Chandrasekharpur, Rupali Square and CRP Square through the 'Pitha on Wheels' programme.

Masks made by self-help groups (SHGs) will also be available at the counters. Not only Bhubaneswar, last year Sambalpur Panthaniwas had also organised 'Pitha on Wheels'.

All the OTDC officials along with the Bhubaneswar Panthaniwas staff were present at the inaugural

Apart from 'pithas', masks manufactured by SHGs will also be on sale at the 'Pitha on Wheels' vehicles

function. OTDC sources added that OTDC had earned Rs 11 lakh from selling 'pithas' last year.



The traditional cakes on display during the annual Raja festival at Panthaniwas in Bhubaneswar

5 ECoR trains to run on revised timings

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, June 13: Ministry of Railways has decided to revise the timings of some special trains in Southern Railway Jurisdiction. Four trains passing through ECoR jurisdiction and one originating train will run on revised timings at some stations over Southern Railway.

08496 Bhubaneswar-Rameswaram Special from Bhubaneswar beginning June 18, 2021 will arrive at Chennai Egmore at 0815 hours and will leave at 0830 hours towards Rameswaram.

03352 Alleppey-Dhanbad Special from Alleppey starting June 16 will run on revised timings at Ernakulam, Alwaye, Trichur, Wadakkancheri, Ottapalam and Palakkad stations.

02666 Kanyakumari-Howrah Special from Kanyakumari will have revised timings at Kanyakumari, Tirunelveli, Kovilpatti, Satur and Virudunagar stations from June 19.

02665 Howrah-Kanyakumari Special from Howrah beginning June 21 will have revised timings at Tirunelveli station.

08190 Ernakulam-Tata Special from Ernakulam starting June 23, will have revised timings at Ernakulam, Aluva, Thrisur, Palakkad, Podanur, Tiruppur, Erode and Salem stations.

The timings of the above trains at other scheduled stations will remain unchanged. Passengers are advised to follow National Train Enquiry System (NTES) to get the revised schedules at different stations.

Covid, lockdowns hit blood donation drives

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, June 13: The outbreak of Covid-19 pandemic and subsequent lockdowns as well as shutdowns seem to have taken a toll on the blood donation drives across the state.

Several blood banks in the state saw a sharp decline in blood collection during the pandemic, making the health system vulnerable. Owing to the restrictions, the blood donation drives and overall functioning of the centres suffered a jolt.

Officials from the Central Red Cross Blood Bank, Cuttack, one of the largest blood banks of Odisha that used to collect upto 150 units of blood per day during the pre-Covid days is now struggling to get even 50 units of blood per day. However through special camps, the centre has been trying to ensure timely collections.

“Although the collections are down due to Covid, we have been roping in special blood collection drives to regularly collect blood for our blood bank,” Dr Chandrika Das, Director, Central Red Cross Blood Bank, Cuttack said.

The blood bank at Capital Hospital, which caters to the areas upto 100 kms away from the city, also suffered a setback due to the pandemic. The centre also caters to the needs of other districts far away from the state capital in case



of rare blood groups like AB group.

Dr Debasish Mishra, in-charge of Capital Hospital blood bank attributed lesser collections to the closure of educational institutions. “Like several other sectors, blood donations also got affected due to Covid-19. Educational institutions had been our prime source of blood donations but as they remained closed we focused on local clubs and other voluntary donors to keep the drive going,” he said.

Dr Mishra meanwhile urged the people to come in good numbers to donate blood which he claimed can save upto three lives. “A single unit of blood can save lives of three patients. The donated blood is used in treatment of patients of cancer, burn, thalassemia and others. Blood is the only live thing from a human body that can be donated while the donor is alive and thus its dona-

tion must be encouraged,” he said.

The blood banks in the state meanwhile claim that they screen the donated blood against diseases like HIV, Hepatitis B and Hepatitis C before administering it to other patients through techniques like NAT-PCR and other robust means.

However, till now the NAT-PCR technique is available only in Capital Hospital, MKCG Medical College (Berhampur), VIMSAR (Burla) and SCB Medical College (Cuttack).

Meanwhile there are many patients who regularly need blood transfusions for their survival or better quality of lives like patients of Thalassemia. Experts claim that centres where mandatory NAT-PCR is done for the blood samples are safer than others.

“There are several sets of people like Thalassemia patients who require regular blood transfusions. For them and for others also the receipt of safe blood from centres undertaking mandatory NAT-PCR tests give an added advantage as it can detect fatal infections like HIV in initial stages of infection,” said Dr CR Prasad, head of department of transfusion medicine, VIMSAR, Burla.

However owing to the high cost of the machine, several blood banks are still deprived of this or dependent on the NAT-PCR machines setup in different medical colleges.



A portion of a road in CDA Sector-7 area of Cuttack caves in following the recent spell of heavy rain in the Silver City. (Bottom) An SUV gets stuck in a sinkhole on a road at Ravenshaw University in Cuttack

Woman killed in crocodile attack

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kendrapara, June 13: A 55-year-old fisherwoman has died following an attack by a crocodile in close vicinity of Bhitarkanika National Park in Odisha's Kendrapara district.

An estuarine crocodile pounced on the woman while she was fishing in a creek at Vekta village under the jurisdiction of Rajnagar police station Saturday.

The half-eaten body of the woman was retrieved from Patasala river Sunday, officials said.

The incident occurred outside the limits of the national park.

The deceased woman's family will be given Rs 4 lakh ex-gratia under the compensation payment scheme, the Divisional Forest Officer, Rajnagar Mangrove (wildlife) Forest Division, Bikash Chandra Dash said.

According to this year's reptile census, the Bhitarkanika National Park and adjoining Mahanadi deltaic region are home to 1,768 saltwater crocodiles.

Lethal attacks by the reptiles



and consequent retaliatory attacks by people have become a regular feature in this part of the state, forest officials said.

The conflict and consequent loss of human lives are most frequently recorded during the monsoon and winter months, the nesting season of the estuarine crocodiles.

Often, the mishaps occur when the victims intrude into animal habitat, for illegal fishing, poaching, wood collection and honey collection, they said.

The animals, in the wake of depleted food reserves in the river system, stray into nearby rivulets and nullahs.

Odisha sends 29,313 MT O2 to 17 states in 52 days

POST NEWS NETWORK

Cuttack, June 13: In the last 52 days, Odisha has sent 1,577 containers carrying 29,313.583 metric tonne (MT) of medical oxygen to 17 states facing shortage of the lifesaving gas in treating Covid-19 patients, an official said Sunday.

According to ADGP (Law and Order) YK Jethwa, who is also the nodal officer overseeing the logistics for the transportation of oxygen, Odisha Police is leaving no stone unturned to ensure that there is no delay in loading and transportation of oxygen.

As many as 125 containers were dispatched from Angul with 2036.562 MT of medical oxygen and 339 tankers were sent from Dhenkanal with 5647.33MT of the lifesaving gas. While 312 containers carried 6358.494 MT of the gas from Jajpur; 801 tankers have so far left Rourkela with 15271.197 MT of medical grade oxygen.

While Andhra Pradesh has so far received 465 tankers containing 9111.371 MT oxygen, Telangana got 387 tankers with 6894.439 MT



of liquid oxygen. Tamil Nadu, on the other hand, received 239 tankers filled with 4416.418 MT of medical oxygen.

Haryana has received 182 containers filled with 3331.793 MT of oxygen. 41 tankers with 660.051 MT of oxygen have so far been sent to Maharashtra, while 836.711 MT of the lifesaving gas filled in 50 tankers have been dispatched to Chhattisgarh.

As many as 68 tankers have carried 1319.962 MT of oxygen to Uttar Pradesh, while 67 containers with 1182.6 MT of the gas have been sent to Madhya Pradesh. Around 22 tankers with 410.24 MT of oxy-

gen have been sent to Delhi, while four tankers with 107.89 MT of medical grade oxygen have been sent to Punjab.

While Karnataka received 21 tankers with 424.99 MT of oxygen, 3 tankers with 66.14 MT of the life-saving gas have so far been sent to Bihar. Two tankers carried 25.29 MT of oxygen to Chandigarh, while 21 tankers with 405.068 MT of the gas have been sent to Kerala. West Bengal, on the other hand, received 29.1 MT oxygen filled in a tanker.

Jharkhand and Rajasthan have so far received 52.1 MT and 39.42 MT of oxygen respectively filled in two tankers each.

OAVS FAMILY PAYS TRIBUTE TO EDUPRENEUR SAHOO

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, June 13: Odisha Adarsha Vidyalaya Sangathan (OAVS) family paid tribute to edupreneur Bijaya Kumar Sahoo, advisor of OAVS who passed away recently, through a virtual event Sunday.

On this occasion, School and Mass Education Minister Sameer Ranjan Mishra also participated in the virtual meeting. The minister said Sahoo was a visionary leader and an advisor of OAVS. He added that Sahoo had succeeded in reaching out to deserving children from across Odisha and also ensured they get quality education.

Bijaya Sahoo's hard work and determination had taken him to great heights said Satyabrata Sahoo, Principal Secretary, School and Mass Education department.

Earlier, Satyabrata Sahoo had revealed that the construction of the proposed Adarsha Vidyalaya at Andharua had already started and the entire project would be completed by 2022. The meeting also reviewed the ongoing civil works related to all Odisha Adarsha Vidyalayas (OAVs).

The model school is a dream



File photo of Bijaya Kumar Sahoo project of late OAV advisor Bijaya Kumar Sahoo and commencement of classes from the next academic year will be a befitting tribute to him, Sahoo said.

On the occasion, a music video by the students of OAVs was presented and a plantation drive was also organised to commemorate his memory.



Police enforcing the weekend shutdown at Jaydev Vihar Square in Bhubaneswar, Sunday

OP PHOTO

Tribal Museum virtual tour showcases Dongria Kandhas

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, June 13: During the rise in Covid-19 cases, ST & SC Development department temporarily shut down the Odisha State Tribal Museum located on the premises of Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe Research and Training Institute (SCSTRTI), Bhubaneswar for public.

As an initiative, virtual tour of the Museum has been taken up by the department. This Sunday the audience witnessed the 'Indigenous Knowledge System of Dongria Kandha Tribe' (Labour Cooperatives) through the Facebook and Twitter pages @stscdev, @scstrti, said Prof AB Ota, Director SCSTRTI.

Dongria Kandhas live in Bissam Cuttack, Kalyansinghpur, Munniguda blocks of Rayagada. Their main occupations are embroidery, wood carving and deco-



rating, wall painting, comb making, pineapple cultivation and fruit processing. They are shifting cultivators.

Dharani Penu is their supreme deity and sits in every village street in a hut called Kudi represented by three elevated stones. Her consort Kotabali Penu is represented by a big vertical stone with a crossed wooden pole at its back.

The important festivals are Ghanta Parba, Salangi, Mandia

Rani, Dhan Nuakhia, Pidika, Punapadi, Dongar Puja, Meria Puja, Bihan Puja. Social equality is an important feature of Dongria Kandha Society. Born out of labour-intensive nature of hill cultivation, the village labour cooperatives foster kinship, reduce the financial burden on families and ensure dignity to all members of the community.

Through the cooperative, adolescent boys and girls, men, women and elderly contribute equally in terms of labour towards the village fields and orchards. The film focuses on various types of labour cooperatives of the Dongria Kandha, their structure, organisation and functioning. The film also documents, how over time the role of these cooperatives have evolved and changed.

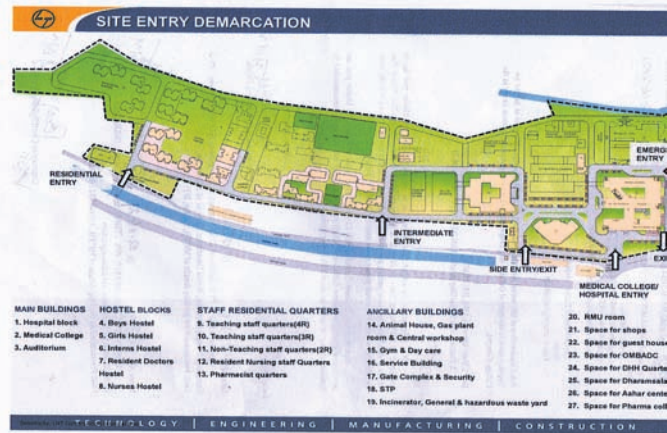
Earlier, the museum had virtually showcased the life and culture of the Juang tribe of Gonasika.

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Jaipur medical college construction plan ready

LONG STANDING DEMAND BY LOCAL RESIDENTS FINALLY GETS APPROVAL



POST NEWS NETWORK

Jaipur, June 13: The Union Cabinet has given its approval for establishment of a government-run medical college and hospital in Jaipur town in this district in December, 2020 in a special scheme of the Centre, a report said.

The matter came to the fore after the engineer-in-chief (Civil) prepared a plan outlay of Rs 426 crore for construction of the hundred-bed hospital and medical college. The district administration has also handed over 21 acres of land out of the earmarked 40 acres for the project at Ankula square.

The implementing agency L&T has submitted a master plan for construction of the main building, hostel block, staff residential quarters, ancillary building and parking slots for the medical college and hospital which will be constructed on turnkey basis. This has paved the way for the construction of the medical college, which has been a long-standing demand of the residents, the report said.

The demand for building a medical college is not an overnight development, sources said. They added that a lot of effort has gone to make the project a reality. Residents and various outfits have been demanding the establishment of a medical college at Panikoi. They have also staged agitations on more than 100 occasions.

The agitations got scaled down after the administration announced that it will set up a trauma care centre at Panikoi. The tender process for establishment of the health care centre has been completed. However, its construction has been delayed for reasons best known to the authorities. However, the construction of the medical college has gathered pace and is on in full swing.

Keeping these things in mind, L&T has prepared a three-phase layout for construction of parking slots and site entry demarcation. The layout includes construction of the hospital block, medical college, auditorium, gents and ladies hostels, and quarters for

HEALTHCARE BOOST

Engineer-in-chief (Civil) has prepared a plan outlay of Rs 426 crore for construction of the hundred-bed hospital and medical college. The district administration has also handed over 21 acres of land out of the earmarked 40 acres for the project at Ankula square

The demand for building a medical college is not an overnight development while a lot of effort has gone to make the project a reality

L&T has prepared a three-phase layout for construction of parking slots and site entry demarcation. The layout includes construction of the hospital block, medical college, auditorium, gents and ladies hostels, and quarters for resident doctors, nurses, teaching and non-teaching staff and pharmacists

resident doctors, nurses, teaching and non-teaching staff and pharmacists.

The parking slot for two-wheelers will be constructed on a 1700-sq km area. This apart, split floor parking, facilities for open parking of cars and other vehicles will also be constructed. The layout proposes to build the main entry point to the medical college from Ankula Square and an emergency entry point at Baitarani river embankment, north of the hospital.

When contacted, Arun Kumar, executive engineer of the Works department said L&T has been given the charge for construction of the medical college in the tender process. Accordingly, the agency will construct the medical college and hospital on turnkey basis, he added.

Security forces diffuse 3 bombs in Malkangiri

POST NEWS NETWORK

Malkangiri, June 13: Danger was averted when a team of BSF and Odisha Police personnel forces recovered and diffused three tiffin box bombs from Swabhimaan Anchal in Malkangiri district. The bombs had been planted by suspected Maoists, the BSF informed in a tweet.

The BSF, Odisha informed this in a tweet. "On 12th June, alert troops of BSF and Odisha Police thwart Maoist threat and recovered 03 Tiffin IEDs and explosive in the general area of Mandapalli in Swabhimaan Anchal, Malkangiri along AP-OD border," the tweet said.

Malkangiri SP Rishikesh Khilar said Sunday a joint team of the BSF and Odisha Police were carrying out routine search operations in Mandapalli area. Their attention fell on a suspicious mound under a tree. After digging up the mound, they came across the three bombs. Khilar also informed that the security forces took help of explosive experts to diffuse the bombs. He informed that had the bombs exploded it could have caused damage.

"The bombs were planted targeting the security personnel. Following the incident, the combing operation has been intensified in the locality," the district's top cop informed.

Man turns 'magnetic' after taking Covid-19 vaccine jab

POST NEWS NETWORK

Sajanagarh, June 13: There have been various reports of adverse effects in some people after taking Covid-19 vaccine jabs. However, this one certainly takes the cake. A man from Balasore district has claimed that he has turned 'magnetic' after taking the Covid-19 vaccine shot.

Rajendra Mohapatra, a resident of Malayani village from Jamudihia panchayat under Nilagiri block is now being called as 'Magnet Man'.

Rajendra said he has heard about others who have developed magnetic properties in their bodies after Covid-19 vaccination.

"I had heard about such incidents, about how people suffered changes in their bodies and turned magnetic after taking the Covid-19 injection. I had had my first dose April 26 and I experienced the same change. I put some coins and spoons on my body. I could not believe what I saw – they remained fixed to my body," Rajendra informed.

"Like many, I also thought that this might be happening due to excessive sweating. So I completely dried up my body and tried the same experiment again but in vain," he added.

The first such case of the body turning magnetic was reported by a senior citizen Arvind Sonar from Shivaji Chowk in Maharashtra's



Nashik district. He said that his body turned magnetic after taking the second dose and made a video of how coins and spoons stuck to his body. A team of doctors from Nashik Municipal Corporation met Sonar and tried to find out the reason.

Later in the day, the Press Information Bureau's (PIB) fact-checking arm said that it is common to experience mild side-effects like headaches, pain or swelling and at time also fever after getting the Covid-19 vaccine jab. However, it is impossible to get magnetic reactions. "Do not fall prey to misinformation about Covid-19 vaccines and get vaccinated," the PIB said in a statement.

Locals express their ire over bridge renaming

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhadrak, June 13: Renaming an under-construction bridge on Salandi River has triggered resentment among local residents at Kuans area in Bhadrak district, sources said Sunday. The new bridge is being constructed in place of an old one which has already been demolished, they said.

According to a source, the old bridge was constructed in 2002 at an estimated cost of over Rs 60 lakh due to the untiring efforts of erstwhile MP of Bhadrak late Arjun Charan Sethi. The bridge was named after him as 'Arjun Setu'.

Meanwhile, sitting local MLAs and MPs are keen to construct a new bridge and work for it has already begun. The 68-metre long new bridge is being constructed at an estimated cost of Rs 6.04 crore. The

target is to complete the construction in one year.

The under-construction bridge was named initially after eminent Odia poet Kantakabi Laxmikanta Mohapatra. However, it was later renamed as Kuans Setu following strong opposition by local residents.

"The foundation stone for a new bridge was laid down March 25 this year. Subsequently, the construction work started here. Without making alternative provision for road connectivity of commuters, the old bridge was hurriedly demolished," a local resident alleged.

On being contacted, Bhadrak Works Department executive engineer Manoj Kumar Singh said, "The old bridge was demolished to facilitate construction of a new as well as wider bridge in its place."

‘GOOGLE MAPS’ SHOW PATI-SONAPUR BEACH IN GANJAM DISTRICT AS THAT OF ANDHRA PRADESH

Utkal Sammilani lodges protest

POST NEWS NETWORK

Berhampur, June 13: 'Utkal Sammilani', a premier social and cultural outfit of Odisha has strongly objected after Pati-Sonapur beach in Ganjam district has been marked as an area belonging to Andhra Pradesh in 'Google Maps', a report said.

The outfit was founded in 1903 by Utkal Gourav Madhusudan Das. It pointed out the 'mistake' committed by 'Google Maps' during a virtual press conference conducted Sunday.

Ganjam district chief, Subrat Kumar Sahu presided over the meeting in which Odisha president Adwait Kumar Patra was also present. The members strongly opposed the move to show Pati-Sonapur beach in the district as belonging to the state of Andhra Pradesh.



The members demanded immediate withdrawal of the wrong depiction of the beach in 'Google Maps'. A decision was taken to inform 'Google' regarding the wrong depiction of the beautiful beach. The members said they will also attract the attention of the Odisha gov-

ernment to the 'mistake'.

The members alleged that sand mafia and fishermen from Andhra Pradesh are also affecting the environment in and around Chilika lake. They said large quantities of fish and sand are being illegally transported to the neighbouring

RAIN PAIN



People in Phampuni village under Jeypore block of Koraput district drying up paddy on road which got wet in low pressure triggered rainfall

OP PHOTO

Large quantity of 'fake' medicines seized

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bolangir, June 13: Coming close on the heels of a massive haul of fake medicines from various places in Rourkela and Cuttack, a team of officials from the office of the drug inspector in Bolangir district raided Sunday medicine distributor 'Modi Pharmaceuticals' in this town. The team also raided some other shops and godowns belonging to pharma outlets in this town.

The team raided the godown of 'Modi Pharmaceuticals' at Sudapara locality in this town. It seized 40 cartons of 'fake' medicines used in the treatment of cough and cold from the unit. It is suspected that these medicines may have come from Cuttack.

Reports said that with the vulnerability of people at an all time high amid the second wave of the Covid-19 pandemic, others gullible



are trying to take advantage of the situation. They are trying to make huge profits at the cost of the common man.

Some portions of the seized medicines will be sent to laboratory for examination and the authenticity regarding them can be ascertained only after the report arrives, said drugs inspector Babulal

Tudu. Further action will be taken after availability of the report, he added.

The wholesaler has been asked not to sell the suspected brand to the retailers or customers. However, prior to the order, the distributor had already sold substantial quantities of the 'fake medicine' to various chemists in the district

RESIDENTS SEEK PERMISSION TO HOLD RATH YATRA

Baripada servitors appeal to government



POST NEWS NETWORK

Baripada, June 13: The Odisha government has allowed the Rath Yatra festival only in Puri this year due to the Covid-19 situation in the state. However, the rituals will be conducted sans devotees and following Covid-19 protocols strictly. However, the festival is banned in all other districts.

This decision by the state government has not gone down well with people and servitors in this town. The servitors of the Jagannath temple here in association with local residents have urged the Mayurbhanj district administration to grant permission so that the car festival can be conducted.

Several servitors and local resi-

dents of this town met at the second 'Srikhetra' by adhering to Covid-19 safety protocols and lighted hundreds of lamps Saturday night so that the administration takes notice of their plea.

"Baripada is famous as the second 'Srikhetra' and the annual Rath Yatra is being celebrated here for over 450 years. In this context, it is quite unfortunate that the government is not allowing the festival to be celebrated here," Lord Jagannath's Pujapanda Arun Das lamented. "Covid-19 cases are in a declining trend in the state these days. In view of the present situation, the state government should allow celebration of the annual Rath Yatra in Baripada this year, with restrictions," Das added.

Man accused of killing sister-in-law arrested

POST NEWS NETWORK

Keonjhar, June 13: Bolani police Saturday evening arrested Rupa Singh Sidhu, who had been on the run after killing his sister-in-law. The accused had slitting her throat and had also sexually assaulted his mother-in-law. The gruesome incident had taken place in Karo forests under Bolani police limits in Keonjhar district June 6.

Acting on a tip-off, police carried out a search operation in Bamebari locality and nabbed Siddhu.

Notably, Siddhu's sister-in-law Mariam and mother-in-law had gone to the forest to collect firewood, mushrooms and other produces. Later, Sidhu reached the spot and picked up a quarrel with Mariam.

The scene turned ugly as Sidhu lost his cool and slit her throat with a sharp weapon, killing her on the spot. He then dragged the body to a stone quarry and dumped it there.

Siddhu next turned his attention to his mother-in-law. He tied her to a tree and sexually assaulted her. However, she managed to escape from the spot and reported the incident at Kiriburu police station in neighbouring Jharkhand state. The officials then informed their counterparts in Bolani police station.

Since the gruesome murder, Sidhu had been absconding. However, police through their informers managed to locate the accused and they finally arrested him.

EAST COAST RAILWAY

Tender Notice No. SBP-ELECT-2021-T-117, Date : 09.06.2021

NAME OF THE WORK : OPERATION OF PUMP SETS OF DIFFERENT CAPACITY IN VARIOUS STATIONS & OPERATION OF LIFT AT RAIRAKHOL OVER SAMBALPUR DIVISION FOR 730 DAYS (2021-2023)

Approximate Cost (₹) : 1,45,75,530.40, Cost of tender document (₹) : 5,900/-, Completion Period : 24 Months

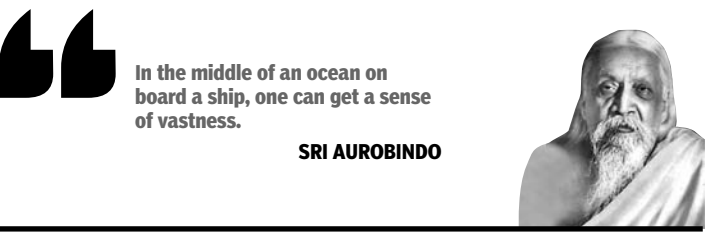
Tender Closing Date and Time : At 1530 Hrs. of 01.07.2021

No manual offers sent by Post / Courier / Fax or in person accepted against such e-tenders even if these are submitted on firm's letter head and received in time. All such manual offers shall be considered invalid and shall be rejected summarily without any consideration.

Complete information including e-tender documents of the above e-tender is available in website : <http://www.reps.gov.in>

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

Sr. Divisional Electrical Engineer (Gen.), PR-153/M/21-22 Sambalpur



Big Calls Small

The plan of the G-7 countries, currently holding a summit in the UK, to donate one billion COVID-19 vaccine doses to poorer countries has been rightly mocked at by former British Prime Minister Gordon Brown as 'passing around the begging bowl.' Various human welfare groups and agencies have likewise dismissed it as too little too late as the world is confronted with a once in a century crisis. Queen Elizabeth II seems to have correctly seized the gravity and magnitude of the crisis, when she reportedly didn't conceal her angst and asked, tongue in cheek, the beaming G-7 leaders posing for group photographs if they were "supposed to be looking as if you're enjoying yourselves." The British Prime Minister Boris Johnson's reply to the Queen in the affirmative may sound confounding, but in a way it sums up the irony of the fight against the pandemic. For, the G-7 heads of states posing for the photographs were without masks and only maintained the stipulated social distance since they had all got their jabs against COVID-19. They had, indeed, reasons to be without fear and hence cheerful, armed as they are with vaccines, while the world would need a stupendous 11 billion doses to end the pandemic!

Vaccination efforts so far are heavily linked with wealth. Rich countries such as the United States, European countries, Israel and Bahrain are far ahead of other countries in this regard. A total of 2.2 billion people against a world population of over 8 billion have been vaccinated worldwide, according to data collected by Johns Hopkins University. As most people need two vaccine doses and possibly booster shots to tackle emerging variants, charity organisation Oxfam called on G-7 leaders to support a waiver on the intellectual property rights behind the vaccines. Of the 2 billion doses under the G-7 plan, 5 million will be given out by the end of September, 25 million by the year-end and the remaining during 2022. So, the supply is not going to be fast enough.

COVID-19 has ripped through the global economy, with more than 17.5 crore infections reported in more than 210 countries and territories since the first cases were identified in China in late 2019. The World Health Organisation (WHO) estimates 11 billion doses will be needed to vaccinate the whole world to a level of 70 per cent, the point at which transmission of the virus could be significantly checked.

The head of the United Nations, Antonio Guterres, has welcomed the G-7 move, but made it clear much more is needed, warning that if people in developing countries are not inoculated quickly, the coronavirus could mutate further and become resistant to the new vaccines. "We need a global vaccination plan. We need to act with logic, with a sense of urgency and with the priorities of a war economy. We are still far from getting that," Guterres warned in a no-nonsense manner.

US President Joe Biden and British Prime Minister Boris Johnson have announced they would donate 500 million and 100 million vaccines, respectively, for the world's poorest nations, while Canada is expected to commit to sharing up to 100 million doses.

While all the G-7 drama along with the Queen's caustic remark are happening in the UK, the rest of the world is simultaneously watching the Chinese theatre. China has said that 'the days when global decisions were dictated by a small group of countries are long gone'. This statement clearly puts China on a path of virtual confrontation with the world's biggest democracies. This is not an unexpected development. China has been at its game of attaining global hegemony for the last few decades. Coronavirus pandemic has forced a new order upon the earth. The virus that originated in a lab in Wuhan, China, has not only wreaked havoc on global health and economy but has also offered China a much higher level of power. The biggest example of Chinese hard power is the inability of all these democracies to respond to the Hong Kong situation. There may have been worldwide demonstrations in support of the second anniversary of the Hong Kong uprising on 12 June 2021 but the G-7 could only voice impotent 'concern' about Hong Kong, Xinjiang, South China Sea and Tibet. That is probably why China could tell the world that these G-7 countries are 'small' and cannot dictate global decisions any longer. Chinese economy and the dictatorial government look like it will not tolerate any interference from democracies of the world. When seen through this prism, the G-7 utterances and offerings to the world may have very serious fallouts on the free world in the days to come.

WISDOM CORNER

- I have never in my life learned anything from any man who agreed with me. **DUDLEY FIELD MALONE**
- The hardest arithmetic to master is that which enables us to count our blessings. **ERIC HOFFER**
- A true friend never gets in your way unless you happen to be going down. **ARNOLD H. GLASOW**

WORDSWORTH

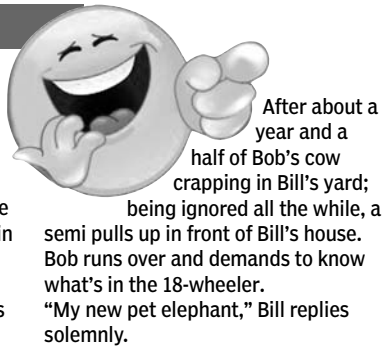
Nine days' wonder

It's odd that the number nine should be so often associated with extremes — we have dressed to the nines, cloud nine and the whole nine yards. The same number turns up in lots of places: the nine Muses, the nine orders of angels, the Nine Worthies, the nine lives of a cat (and a cat o'nine tails), the nine tailors of bell-ringing fame, and so on. There are also the proverbs: "possession is nine points of the law", "a stitch in time saves nine" and the old gardening saw that "parsley seed goes nine times to the devil" before it germinates. The most common suggestion is that the expression derives from the Roman Catholic novena, a form of worship that consists of special prayers or services on nine successive days. But there are so many other expressions that include the same number that the source of the phrase may lie elsewhere. Whatever the thought behind it, as far back as the early fourteenth century scoffers were saying that nine days, or nine nights, was the period of time that some novelty was likely to attract attention before our minds turned to something else. It later developed into our modern idiomatic form and had certainly become fixed like that by the time it was used in a play by Philip Massinger, A New Way to Pay Old Debts, of 1633. There is an earlier example. For a bet, William Kemp (or Kempe), a famous clown of the Elizabethan stage, Morris-danced 130 miles (200 km) from London to Norwich over nine days during February and March 1600. He published his account of it later that year under the title Kemp's Nine Daies Wonder. His play on words suggests that the idiom was already known in that form. There has been nothing short-lived about nine days' wonder.

LOL

Angry neighbours

Two neighbours had been fighting each other for nigh on four decades. Bob buys a Great Dane and teaches it to use the bathroom in Bill's yard. For one whole year Bill ignores the dog. So Bob then buys a cow and teaches it to use the bathroom in Bill's yard.



FOCUS ISRAEL

BIBI'S POISONED LEGACY

Israel is now more divided than it has ever been, and Israelis have largely lost hope that their country can be both Jewish and democratic

Shlomo Ben-Ami

NETANYAHU'S PENCHANT FOR BRIDGE-BURNING CAN ALSO BE SEEN IN ISRAEL'S DETERIORATING IMAGE IN THE UNITED STATES, ESPECIALLY AMONG MODERATES AND LIBERALS, INCLUDING MOST US JEWS

happy, he refused to restrain construction by Jewish settlers in the West Bank and East Jerusalem, even during the negotiations.

A similar logic lay behind Netanyahu's exorbitant concessions to Israel's Orthodox community, reversing his own previous efforts made as finance minister in the early 2000s to cut their parasitic dependence on state allowances. By contrast, he invested far less in improving the conditions in Israel's poorer periphery; he trusted that his unrelenting attacks on the old liberal "elites" would be enough to maintain the support of voters there.

Netanyahu's history of coalition-building reflects a similar focus on self-preservation. In the past, he has formed governing coalitions with left-leaning and centrist parties. After the last four legislative elections, however, he did not hesitate to govern with Jewish-supremacist factions.

This is not some reflection of a genuine ideological shift. If it was, Netanyahu would not have been willing to strike a coalition deal with Ra'am, an Islamist Party linked to the Muslim Brotherhood, this past March. This is, after all, the same man who warned in 2015 that Israeli Arabs were heading to the polling stations in droves, in order to give his party a boost in a tight race.

Netanyahu will go down in Israeli history as the politician who legitimised the participation of Arab parties in government.

between Israel and four Arab states. Netanyahu knew how to leverage regional changes to Israel's benefit. He saw that the Middle East's incumbent Sunni regimes feared popular uprisings akin to the 2011 Arab Spring, as well as the rise of a nuclear (Shia) Iran. This, together with the recognition that the US is losing interest in the region, created a golden opportunity for Israel to normalise relations with them — ostensibly weakening the Palestinians' diplomatic support significantly.

And yet, as the recent violence shows, Israel's Palestinian problem is as acute as ever, and Jerusalem remains a flashpoint that could well trigger a religious war in the Middle East. Netanyahu's counterproductive fight against the 2015 Iran nuclear deal and his consequent failure to stem Iran's nuclear ambitions and regional designs only exacerbate the risk of a regional flare-up.

Beyond the Abraham Accords, Netanyahu oversaw two other major strategic developments. First, building on Israel's new status as a gas-producing power in the Eastern Mediterranean, he established a tripartite strategic alliance with Greece and Cyprus, as a counterweight to Turkey's destabilising aspirations. Second, he expanded Israel's economic links with China, Japan, and India.

Yet Netanyahu's economic legacy also leaves much to be desired. Under his strict neoliberal policies, the welfare system was hit hard, and Israel consolidated its position as one of the OECD's most unequal countries, with 21 per cent of the population living below the poverty line.

Ultimately, Netanyahu's legacy is one of tension, loathing, and chaos. Israel is now more divided than it has ever been, and Israelis have largely lost hope that their country can be both Jewish and democratic. Can a government united only by its aversion to Netanyahu push back against this legacy?

The writer, a former Israeli Foreign Minister, is Vice President of the Toledo International Center for Peace.

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SPECTRUM MENTAL HEALTH

Fear may take greater toll than the virus



Harish Barthwal

CORONA OR NO CORONA, THE WORLD OVER AS ALSO IN INDIA, THE STATE OF MIND HAS NOT BEEN IN GOOD SHAPE

In a WhatsApp message, a wife tells her half-asleep husband, "Wake up, there is news, lockdown has been lifted from today. Get ready for the job." The drowsy husband slowly leaves the bed, and picks up the broom to clean the house. "Appears, you didn't hear me correctly. I repeat, lockdown is over. Get dressed for your office." Stunned, the husband quips, "Office, which office was I working — cannot recollect." Ever thought, resuming office after a long gap due to vacation, sickness or other reason can be intriguingly painful.

Our behaviour, attitudes and actions reflect a mental frame we inherited, nourished and modified over decades. Interwoven into our life values as this thought pattern is, it is hard to break the stereotype. We believe it is the best possible presumably because we are used to it. Then, any deviation from the existing thought pattern, even when discovered to be flawed, requires guts.

Based on certain unsegregated data, we are given to understand that over three lakh lives have been lost in India due to Covid thus far since its onset in March last year. There is conspicuous silence on damage

and mortality by other diseases.

Admittedly existence of the virus and the lingering morbidity and mortality it entails cannot be shrugged off. Yet, for a moment place yourself in pre-Corona era. India was witness to 25,270 daily deaths in the country, second to China at 28,036 as per World Economic Forum analysis for 2017. The estimated global annual death toll for tuberculosis of all kinds in 2019 stood at 14.18 lakh and 79,144 for India; for HIV-related diseases the annual death toll was 5 to 9 lakh global and around 69,000 for India in 2017. Annually, about a crore deaths take place due to tobacco-related diseases globally. Irrespective of Covid, these figures are not going to be significantly different for 2020 and 2021. A fair, comparative assessment of quantitative change in morbidity and mortality in pre- and post-Covid era over a time frame shall bring to fore that the Covid death toll as reported is misleading and eclipses mortality from classical diseases.

Corona or no corona, the world over as also in India, the state of mind has not been in good shape. Estimates of WHO and AIIMS Delhi put the quantum of mentally sick

around 20 per cent. The lifestyle we have espoused — nuclear families, mad race for material values and ostentation, scant regard for native values that provide enormous strength in crisis situations — allows little room for one to sharing of ethos and concerns, a primeval human need. With automation and prosperity we are becoming lonelier. In many families in our country a distinct room with gadgets is set aside for the 5-year kid to study, play and live. With this background it shall be folly to believe a morally strong generation rooted in cultural ethos.

The corona era witnessed exacerbating the mental morbidity all around. Children already addicted to mobile phones had excuse to spend more time with it due to online classes; an unusually large number of cases of domestic violence were registered in the year gone by; there was increase in violence, theft and dacoity though of different kind. In India, there were reports of over about a dozen school-goers having committed suicide and many times more attempted.

Over-caution in interacting with friends and relatives to the point of total avoidance to stay safe has tended to erode mutual under-

standing and trust, so vital for healthy living. People can die of mere imagination. Our perception to an untoward event is ever deadlier than the catastrophe itself, it is mind that has to be taught. Agreed, fear from Covid or any other source is natural yet fear is one thing and to be grabbed, quite another; it is former that overwhelmed people in Covid era.

Lack of a purpose in life lies at the root; in the absence of specific life mission, some of us just don't know where to keep oneself engaged. With a lengthy to-do list at hand, they believe that with lifting of lockdown on a date declared by government, pandemic will disappear overnight and they shall freely move out to indulge in all activities to their heart's content, safe and risk-free. The point is, what blueprint we have after we are completely corona-free. Even if there is no major mission, loneliness can be significantly relieved by indulging in gardening, charity, distributing surplus food and money, and topmost remembering that we shall not live in this world forever.

The author is a blogger and writes on health, spiritual, and social issues.

Letters

TO THE EDITOR

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

OrissaPOST
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Unlocking Odisha

Sir, This refers to the news on the front page of **Orissa POST**, June 13: "Dist's with low TPR to unlock soon". TPR (Test Positivity Rate) should not be the only criteria, but the present active cases in the districts should also be the criteria in deciding the unlock strategy, though there is a strong co-relation between both the parameters. Nuapada and Jharsuguda districts having less active cases can be unlocked along with the eight other districts -- Ganjam, Sonepur, Kandhamal, Deogarh, Bargarh, Gajapati, Sambalpur, and Bolangir -- mentioned in the news report.

Gopal Mittal, BHUBANESWAR

Rehabilitate orphans

Sir, Even though the COVID-19 pandemic poses its own set of obstacles for victims' families, some state governments are attempting to rehabilitate orphaned children who have lost both parents. The Rajasthan government has issued a financial compensation package for children whose parents died due to Covid, setting aside ₹2,500 per month for them until they reach the age of 18. Women whose spouses died as a result of the infection will receive ₹1500 monthly pension. The children of these widows would also receive ₹1,000 per month for each child and ₹2500 per month for textbooks and school clothing. This is a commendable effort to empower them. The need of the hour is to rehabilitate families that have lost a breadwinner as a result of the infection. Society should step forward to assist women and children in reclaiming their lives.

Amit Singh Kushwaha, SATNA (MP)

Welcome decision

Sir, The Goods and Services Tax (GST) Council's decision to waive the tax levied on critical drugs Tocilizumab and Amphotericin B and slash the levy on oxygen, hand sanitisers, pulse oximeters and ambulances while leaving the rate on vaccines untouched is welcome. Besides, the Council decided that in future, any medicine for Covid-19 treatment recommended by the Health Ministry or the pharma department will have a GST rate of only 5 per cent. While the Centre will give 75 per cent of the vaccines to citizens free of cost, those visiting private hospitals will have to bear the cost of GST. The new rates are valid till September 30 this year. The reduction will translate into lower prices for the average person fighting the second wave of Covid.

NJ Ravi Chander, BANGALORE

Full-blown factional war raging in Rajasthan's two main parties

As the raging factional feuds hit both the Congress and the BJP, questions are being asked if the state can see any kingmaker in the coming polls, bringing in new political equations

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Jaipur, June 13: There is a full blown factional war raging in the Rajasthan Congress and the BJP these days with the veterans in both parties showing reluctance in handing over power and positions to their juniors.

While Congress Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot has been delaying since months the much-awaited political appointments and cabinet expansion to accommodate young leaders like former deputy Chief Minister Sachin Pilot, former Chief Minister Vasundhara Raje is also refusing to give in to the BJP's new state leadership. She is running her parallel programmes to keep her hold intact on the state, which she has ruled twice.

Looking at the full blown confrontation between the old guard and the younger lot, there are fair chances of a third party emerging which might dent the two-party system which the state has seen since decades.

It has just been the Congress and the BJP ruling the state where power keeps shifting from one to the other every five years.

However, these days, looking at Raje launching her own campaigns such as the 'Vasundhara Jan Raso' and the Office of Raje Twitter handle, there are open discussions if she will contest individually in the coming elections. Recently, her posters have been removed from the state party headquarters.

Sources said that her teams are active on social media under the banner Team Vasundhara 2023 in



each district projecting Raje as the next Chief Ministerial face of the state.

Similarly, there are apprehensions if the rebel group led by Pilot may walk away to contest individually if he doesn't get his promised rights.

Pilot has openly accused the AICC team of ignoring the promises made to him and his team after a patch up with the party and returning to its fold, post rebellion last year.

Pilot's strength is his stronghold on the eastern belt of the state where the BJP lags behind due to the absence of any strong leader from the region. Hence, his dominance in this region makes him pivotal and he can be a kingmaker if he decides to go for a divorce with the ruling party.

However, he has already denied plans of joining the BJP. Friday, when senior BJP party worker Rita Bahuguna said that she has extended an open invitation to Pilot, the latter said that she might

have spoken to Sachin Tendulkar and not to him, quashing the speculation about his joining the saffron party.

Meanwhile, BJP leaders said that what is going on is just eyewash and more things shall unfold in coming days.

Next in the fray is another Jat leader Hanuman Beniwal, convener of RLD and Nagaur MP, who has broken his ties with alliance partner NDA over the farm laws issue and fielded three candidates in the recent by-polls for the Rajsamand, Sahada and Sujangarh seats, thereby hurting the prospects of both BJP and Congress.

If he decides to field his own candidates in the next Assembly polls he might win over the Jat voters, hurting both the Congress and the BJP in the state.

As the raging factional feuds hit both the Congress and the BJP, questions are being asked if the state can see any kingmaker in the coming polls, bringing in new political equations.

UP BJP works to strengthen its social arithmetic

Saffron party joining hands with smaller parties with a political base in different castes

AGENCIES

New Delhi, June 13: Joining hands with smaller parties with a political base in different castes was a part of the BJP strategy as it won big in Uttar Pradesh in the 2017 Assembly polls and 2019 Lok Sabha polls. The saffron party is again working to stitch up a strong social alliance as it prepares for the state elections slated for early next year.

With senior party leader and Union minister Amit Shah reaching out to the leaders of Apna Dal (S) and Nishad Party, both BJP allies but disaffected over the issue of their representation in the government, and Congress leader Jitin Prasada joining the saffron party, the ruling party seems to be taking measures to get its arithmetic right.

Prasada hails from a noted Brahmin family of the state that had remained in the Congress for three generations, and the BJP believes that the young leader's defection to its ranks will help it contain any dissatisfaction a section of the politically influential community might have with Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath-led government.

While Anupriya Patel of Apna Dal has not spoken on her meeting with Shah, Sanjay Nishad of Nishad Party made it clear that his party wants representation in the state government to "fulfil" the aspira-

tions of the marginalised communities it draws its support from.

"Political power is stronger than God's power," he told PTI to emphasise its importance to address myriad issues facing different deprived communities.

He also reiterated his demand for giving the community of boatmen, who come under various castes and subcastes, benefits under the scheduled castes and not under the category of Other Backward Communities as being given currently in UP.

In a message to the BJP, he said the community has in the past supported parties like the BSP, SP and the Congress but stopped voting for them after they did not address their concerns.

"We understand the Modi government has been busy with important national issues," he said, referring to Article 370 revocation. "Now we believe our concerns will be addressed," he said.

His son Praveen Kumar Nishad's victory as Samajwadi Party candidate from Adityanath's pocket borough of Gorakhpur had shocked the BJP, which then worked to woo him over to its camp during the 2019 Lok Sabha polls.

Patel was a minister in the first Modi government but her party's reported talks with the Congress during the 2019 Lok Sabha elections even as it finally fought as a



BJP ally resulted in the Kurmi leader being kept out of its second innings.

There have been reports that the BJP may also bring its former ally Suheldev Bhartiya Samaj Party to its fold again but its leader Om Prakash Rajbhar has ruled out such a possibility.

BJP sources said their party has always worked to give due representation to various communities and noted that it has never been averse to tying up with smaller parties.

"We have done it in various states, be it Bihar, Assam or Uttar Pradesh," a leader said.

Samajwadi Party leader Akhilesh Yadav has also been working to broaden his party's social appeal by bringing leaders from outside its core constituency.

With the Yogi government's handling of the recent COVID-19 crisis drawing questions from even state BJP leaders, with several of them writing letters to highlight

their concerns, the saffron party leadership has been taking measures to address organisational and governance challenges.

There has been strong speculation that Adityanath may go for an expansion of his Cabinet, and Shah's meetings with allies are being seen as part of the exercise.

The BJP has a lot at stake in the next round of assembly elections in five states early next year as it is in power in four of them, including Uttarakhand, Goa and Manipur besides the all-important Uttar Pradesh.

The party's performance in the latest round of five assembly polls was seen by many as below-par despite its victory in Assam and has emboldened the opposition after the Trinamool Congress handed it a heavy defeat in West Bengal while its seat tally in Kerala fell to zero. Its top brass is likely to pull out all the stops to score a win in the next phase of elections, especially in Uttar Pradesh.

Phone tapping issue resurfaces

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Jaipur, June 13: Phone tapping charges have come back to haunt the Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot led government in Rajasthan, with Congress MLA Ved Prakash Solanki alleging that some legislators have talked about their phones being tapped.

Without naming any MLA who levelled the phone tapping charge, Solanki, a staunch supporter of Congress leader Sachin Pilot, said the legislators also fear of being trapped by various agencies.

"I do not know if my phone is being tapped or not. Some legislators have told me that their phones are being tapped. I am also not aware if the state government is involved in phone tapping. Many officials told them (legislators) that it seems that there are efforts underway to trap them," Solanki, a legislator from Chaksu assembly constituency, told reporters Saturday.

"Some of these MLAs have also informed the chief minister of the matter," he said.

Solanki said he does not know whether the MLAs have technical knowledge or there is some App through which they come to know that their phones are being tapped.

Reacting to the remarks, BJP state president Satish Poonia charged that the Congress is in-



- FACT-FILE**
- In July last year, Sachin Pilot and 18 Congress legislators had rebelled against CM Ashok Gehlot
 - One of the accusations they levelled was about illegal phone tapping
 - The charges gained ground when some audio clips of telephonic conversations were shared by Gehlot's officer on special duty Lokesh Sharma

timidating its MLAs.

"Today again a Congress MLA is saying that many MLAs say their phones are being tapped and spying is happening. Congress should tell who these MLAs are? The Congress is intimidating its own MLAs," Poonia tweeted.

In a tweet, Deputy Leader of Opposition Rajendra Rathore charged that the state government was once again trying to intimidate public representatives.

In July last year, Pilot and 18 Congress legislators had rebelled against CM Gehlot. One of the ac-

cusations they levelled was about illegal phone tapping. The charges gained ground when some audio clips of telephonic conversations were shared by Gehlot's officer on special duty (OSD) Lokesh Sharma.

The audio clips were later handed over to Rajasthan Police's special operations group (SOG) to investigate charges that some legislators were trying to topple an elected government through horse trading. The SOG ultimately closed the case after the Congress high command intervened to resolve the issues between Gehlot and Pilot.



National Mission for Clean Ganga workers spray bioremediation solution in river Ganga, at Dashashwamedh Ghat in Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh.

Admin demolishes 'Corona Mata' temple

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Pratapgarh, June 13: A 'Corona Mata' temple that had come up in Juhi Shukulapur village under the limits of Sangipur police station in Pratapgarh district has been demolished by the district administration.

A probe has also been ordered regarding the construction of 'Corona Mata' temple.

According to IGP, Prayagraj range, KP Singh, the police administration has removed the 'Corona Mata' temple from the village to prevent people from getting trapped in superstitious ac-

tivities. He said that the police teams are also making efforts to create awareness among masses regarding Covid-19, claiming that it is a deadly virus and they should not get involved themselves in such superstitions.

The IG also said that police administration has also ordered a probe into issue after a man from village, Nagesh Kumar Srivastava, has submitted an application to Sangipur police station claiming that his brother, Lokesh Kumar, staying in Ghaziabad, had set up 'Corona Mata' temple without consultation of other family members and went back to Ghaziabad after

construction of the temple.

Police said that 'Corona Mata' temple had come up at Shukulapur village in Pratapgarh district three days back and hundreds of villagers had started offering prayers to ward off coronavirus.

The temple was in fact built by a group of villagers after collecting donations. The villagers had started offering prayers to 'Corona Mata' praying that the 'shadow of Covid-19 should never fall on Shukulapur and adjoining villages'.

Not only this, they also highlighted the importance of Covid-19 protocol like use of masks and social distancing while offering

prayers at the temple. The idol too wore a mask.

Villagers, who spoke on condition of anonymity, claimed, "After witnessing the coronavirus pandemic and its deadly impact which snatched lives of thousands of people, we decided to set up Corona Mata mandir under a 'neem' tree with full belief that praying to the deity would definitely offer respite to people from the deadly disease."

The little white stone idol has been placed on the wall in the open temple. With the installation of the idol, daily prayers were being organised and villagers were seeking blessings to save people from the deadly disease.

Radhe Shyam, the temple priest, said, "We have earlier heard the name of 'Chechak Mata' (smallpox mother) who cured the disease. Similarly, we had set up 'Corona Mata' mandir with the belief that Mata would solve all the difficulties. We collected funds from the villagers."

He said, however, this was not the first time such a temple has come up in the country. "When plague and other deadly diseases like smallpox spread across villages and towns and killed many people years back, people also worshipped in a similar manner."

Villagers claimed that devotees were not allowed to touch the idol and offered only yellow flowers to the goddess.

Ram temple trust accused of land scam

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Lucknow/Ayodhya, June 13: Shriram Jannabhoomi Teerth Kshetra Trust general secretary Champat Rai was Sunday accused by two Opposition leaders of buying a piece of land worth ₹2 crore at an inflated price of ₹18.5 crore for the Ram temple premises with help from Trust's member Anil Mishra.

The allegation, strongly refuted by Rai, was made by AAP's Rajya Sabha member Sanjay Singh and a former minister in the Samajwadi government, Pawan Pandey.

Terming it a case of money laundering, Singh and Pandey both sought a probe by the Central Bureau of Investigation and the Enforcement Directorate into the land purchase for the temple premises.

Both the leaders alleged that Rai purchased the land, measuring 1.208 hectares and located in Bag Baisi village under Sadar tehsil of Ayodhya district for a price of ₹18.50 crore from the first purchaser, who had bought it minutes earlier on March 18 this year from its original owners for a sum of ₹2 crores.

"Champat Rai, the general secretary of Shriram Jannabhoomi Teerth Kshetra Trust with the help of Trust's member Anil Mishra bought the land worth ₹2 crore at ₹18.5 crore. This is a case of money laundering and the government should get it probed by the ED and



CBI," Singh told reporters in Lucknow.

SP's former Ayodhya MLA Pandey reiterated the same allegation in the temple town.

Quoting entries of the registered sale deed of the land, Singh explained that the land was first purchased by Sultan Ansari March 18 this year from its original owner Kusum Pathak, wife of Harish Kumar Pathak alias Baba Hardas for a sum of ₹2 crore.

Minutes later, the same land was purchased by Trust's general secretary Rai for a sum of ₹18.50 crore from Ansari, Singh said, again quoting entries of the second sale deed showing the transaction between Ansari and Rai.

Trust member Anil Mishra and Ayodhya mayor Hrishikesh Upadhyay testified the land sale deed as witnesses and were witnesses to the purchase of the land by Rai as the Trust's general secretary, Singh alleged.

"Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his government must initiate a thorough probe by the CBI and ED, and the corrupt persons should be sent to jail, as it is the question of faith of crore devotees of Lord Ram, who have given their hard-earned money for the construction of the Ram temple," Singh said.

He also said in any trust, the board makes a proposal for the purchase of land.

"How come in five minutes, this proposal was passed and the land was immediately purchased?" he asked.

Though Mishra could not be contacted for his comments over the allegations, Rai refuted them in a statement.

"Allegations of even assassinating Mahatma Gandhi were levelled on us. We do not fear allegations. I will study the allegations levelled on us, and probe them," he said, in a statement.



SUPERSTITION RULES THE ROOST

The temple was built by a group of villagers after collecting donations. The villagers had started offering prayers to 'Corona Mata' praying that the "shadow of Covid-19 should never fall on Shukulapur and adjoining villages"

The villagers also highlighted the importance of Covid-19 protocol like use of masks and social distancing while offering prayers at the temple. The idol too wore a mask

of the day quote

Now Gujarat will change. Tomorrow I am coming to Gujarat, and will meet all the brothers and sisters of Gujarat

ARVIND KEJRIWAL | DELHI CHIEF MINISTER

The state government, along with civil society, will provide education, refuge, food and other needs to orphaned kids. A scheme on this is going to come up shortly. We can't leave such children in the lurch

SHIVRAJ SINGH CHOUDHAN | MADHYA PRADESH CHIEF MINISTER

The government of Tamil Nadu has consistently opposed hydrocarbon exploration and extraction projects in the Cauvery basin and neighboring districts, given the pivotal role played by the region in the agrarian economy

MK STALIN | TN CHIEF MINISTER

SHORT TAKES

Four die of electrocution

Ranchi: Four persons - a 70-year-old woman and three minor boys - died of electrocution at Pipla in Jharkahnds East Singhbhum district, after a high tension electric wire snapped and fell on them while they were taking bath near a dam, an official said. The minor boys were aged between eight and 12 years, he said.

Youngsters booked

Hyderabad: Cyberabad police Sunday booked 31 youngsters for organizing birthday party in violation of Covid-19 lockdown norms at Kadthal near Hyderabad. The youngsters including girls participated in the birthday party which was organized at a farm house at Kadthal in Ranga Reddy district under the limits of Cyberabad Police Commissionerate. In blatant violation of the Covid-19 protocol and the ongoing lockdown, the guests consumed liquor and danced with DJ. The participants, most of them college students, violated social distancing norms and many were without mask.

Curfew in Goa extended

Panaji: The coronavirus-induced curfew in Goa was Sunday extended till June 21 as the positivity rate in the state stood at 14 per cent, an official said. The curfew was first imposed May 9 and has been extended several times since then, as the state witnessed its positivity rate reaching a high of 51 per cent before dipping gradually to the level now, he added. "The inter-state movement of persons is allowed for those carrying COVID-19 negative report for a test done a maximum of 72 hours prior to entering Goa," the official said.

Trawler capsizes

Kolkata: A trawler capsized in the Haldi River in West Bengal's Purbia Medinipur district, killing a fisherman, while three others were missing, an official said Sunday. The incident happened Saturday night near Nandigram when the trawler with 14 fishermen on board was anchored at the mouth of a canal where it meets the Haldi river, he said. The fishermen had anchored the trawler as they wanted to have dinner before setting out for fishing, he added. The trawler toppled due to high tide, and the fishermen fell into the river.



India is a natural ally for the G7 countries in defending the shared values from a host of threats stemming from authoritarianism, terrorism and violent extremism, disinformation and economic coercion

NARENDRA MODI | PRIME MINISTER

MONSOON MARKS EARLY ARRIVAL IN HIMACHAL

The southwest monsoon on arrived in Himachal Pradesh Sunday, in its earliest onset in the past 21 years, the weather bureau said. Its normal arrival in the state is June 26



Vax drive for people with disabilities

AGENCIES

Ahmedabad, June 13: Authorities in an Indian city have organized a special drive-through vaccination camp for disabled people in a bid to address low vaccination rates, especially among more vulnerable members of society.

Organizers of the weekend campaign in Ahmedabad, the biggest city in Gujarat state, aim to vaccinate 500 disabled people, who often struggle to book slots and get access to vaccination centers.

People taking advantage of the offer queued up at the center in vehicles, wheelchairs, and on custom-topped mopeds for their free Covid-19 vaccine shots.

"The vaccination process is now more convenient," said



A physically disabled man gets a dose of Covishield during a drive through vaccination organized for disabled people in Ahmedabad.

AP FILE PHOTO

Mahendra Chudasma, a 45-year-old man who is visually impaired.

"It's a very nice feeling."

Despite being a major producer of coronavirus vaccines, India faces a huge task in inoculating its 1.3 billion people, partly due to the logistical difficulties of reaching remote areas and also skepticism about the shots.

People with disabilities often face additional problems of being unable to reach vaccination sites due to a lack of transport or no ramps at the centers for easy access, said Bhushan Punani, general secretary of the Blind People's Association in Ahmedabad, one

States/UTs to get over 4L vax doses in next 3 days

More than four lakh (4,48,760) vaccine doses are in the pipeline and will be received by the States and the Union Territories (UTs) within the next 3 days. Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoHFW) made the announcement through a statement and also clarified that more than 1.53 crore (1,53,79,233) Covid-19 vaccine doses are still available with the states and the UTs to be administered. The Ministry further said that more than 26 crore (26,64,84,350) vaccine doses have been provided to states and the UTs so far, through government of India (free of cost channel) and through direct state procurement category.

Delhi, TN ease curbs

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, June 13: Delhi and Tamil Nadu permitted more activities from Monday as the easing of restrictions by states gained momentum following a continuous decline in active Covid-19 cases in the country where most parts were under a lockdown or similar curbs for over a month.

Karnataka will also begin the unlock process, barring in 11 districts, from Monday, with the opening of parks and industrial units with riders, besides other relaxations.

Restaurants with 50 percent capacity, weekly markets and religious places will reopen in the national capital from June 14. Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal announced Sunday, saying the COVID-19 situation has significantly come under control in the city.

Salons, beauty parlours and barbershops closed since the imposition of lockdown on April 19, will reopen. Markets and malls, which were earlier allowed to reopen on an odd-even basis, will now open on all days, from 10 AM to 8 PM.

Only one weekly market per municipal zone per day will be allowed, he said. Schools, colleges, educational and coaching insti-

tutes, cinema halls, multiplexes, theatres, gyms, spas, yoga institutes, swimming pools, auditoriums, banquet halls, amusement and water parks, and public parks and gardens, will continue to be closed till 5 AM on June 21, according to the Delhi Disaster Management Authority (DDMA) order issued on Sunday.

All gatherings and congregations are also prohibited as in other states.

Religious places in the city will also be allowed to reopen from Monday, but visitors will not be allowed.

Tamil Nadu Chief Minister MK Stalin announced more relaxations in as many as 27 districts of the state which includes permission for the ubiquitous tea shops to reopen from June 14. However, there will be no easing of curbs in 11 districts, seven in western and four in Cauvery delta regions.

Restaurants and bakeries have already been allowed to function. Salons, parks and state-run liquor outlets in 27 districts in Tamil Nadu would reopen on June 14. Places of worship and tourist locations will continue to remain closed and there would be no public or private bus services during the extended spell of lockdown.



CHILLING OUT



Boys take bath in a well on a hot summer day in Ajmer

PTI PHOTO

Guj: Over 24K abortion kits seized

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Ahmedabad, June 13: The Food and Drugs Control Administration (FDCA) in Gujarat has seized 24,363 pregnancy termination kits worth over Rs 1.5 crore along with narcotic and psychotropic drugs that were being sold illegally, and eight persons have been arrested in this connection, officials said Sunday.

The accused were apprehended by the FDCA from multiple locations in the state, including Ahmedabad and Surat, as part of an operation carried out Friday and Saturday, they said.

While seven accused have been charged under the Drugs and Cosmetics Act, another one has been arrested by the Gujarat police

under the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (NDPS) Act after drugs, including three lakh vials of oxytocin, were found in his possession, FDCA Commissioner Hemant Koshia said.

He said that such abortion kits could be sold only on the prescription of gynaecologists as per the provisions of the Medical Termination of Pregnancy Act. Ahmedabad-based Pintu Shah, one of the accused, was procuring pregnancy termination kits illegally from accused Vinod Maheshwari and Lokesh Maheshwari, owners of a distributing unit in Banaskantha's Deesa, and selling them online without prescription. Shah had

sold around 800 such kits through an online platform in the last one-and-half years, the FDCA said in a release. Deesa-based Maheshwaris had got the kits on the basis of forged medical prescriptions from Javeri Sangala of Surat, who had procured them from accused Rajesh Yadav, a Gujarat region sales manager of a Mumbai-based marketing company. Among the other accused are Nilay Vora, a marketing representative of Mumbai-based firm, Vipul Patel and Monish Panchal, with whom 700 kits were found, the release said.

One of the accused, Tushar Thakkar, was found with narcotic and psychotropic drugs and has been handed over to the police.

Car swallowed by sinkhole in Mumbai housing society premises

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, June 13: A video of a car disappearing into a pool of water in a Mumbai housing complex after the spot where it was parked caved in went viral on social media Sunday.

Responding to the viral video, the BrihanMumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) said the spot where the car sank used to be a well but was partially covered with cement concrete by the housing society. The incident took place at the Ram Nivas society located at Kama lane in Ghatkopar West area on Sunday morning, police said, adding no one was injured. "The housing society had covered a well with reinforced concrete cement and residents were using the area to park their cars. A police team reached the spot and brought the car out of the water body. The spot has been cordoned for the safety of residents," an official said. Some years ago, the housing society had closed half the portion of the well by carrying out RCC work and used the spot to park the vehicles. However, due to rains, the portion caved in, and the vehicle drowned, he said. The BMC refused to take responsibility for the incident which followed a spell of heavy rains in the city. In a statement, the Shiv Sena-controlled municipal corporation stated it has nothing to do with the incident. The municipal corporation said, "There is a well in the premises of this society. It was covered by RCC on half the portion.

The residents of the society used to park their cars in that area. Preliminary information shows that a car parked on the spot was submerged." The society has been asked to take necessary safety measures immediately, the BMC said.

Mizo man with one of world's largest families passes away

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Aizawl, June 13: Ziona Chana, who is believed to head one of the world's largest families, with 38 wives, 89 children and 33 grandchildren from Mizoram, passed away at a private hospital here Sunday. He was 76.

An official of Aizawl district administration said that Chana was unwell since June 7 and a few days back admitted to a private hospital in the capital city after his diabetes, hypertension and other old age related problems deteriorated and breathed his last Sunday afternoon.

"The last rites and other related events would be finalised in consultation with his family members," the official told IANS.

Mizoram Chief Minister

Zoramthanga in a tweet said: "With heavy heart, Mizoram bid farewell to Mr. Zion-a (76), believed to head the world's largest family, with 38 wives and 89 children.

Mizoram and his village at Baktawng Tlangnuam has become a major tourist attraction in the state because of the family. Rest in Peace Sir!"

Born on July 21, 1945, Zionghaka, commonly known as Ziona Chana was the head of a Christian religious community called aChana's sect' in his village Baktawng Tlangnuam, around 100 km from Aizawl.

His family sources said that Ziona met his oldest wife, who is three years older than he was, when he was 17. Ziona family members of around 1,000 live in a four-storied house called 'Chhuan Thar



Run' (New Generation Home) with over 100 rooms in the hilly village. The mansion of Ziona has a akhualbuk' (guesthouse) to lodge relatives and visitors. There is a school and playground almost ex-

clusively for the big Christian family.

Ziona's sons and their wives, and all their children, live in different rooms in the same building, but share a common kitchen,

while his wives shared a dormitory near his bedroom.

The Ziona family supported their own resources, productions while occasionally they got donations and gifts from their followers.

The mansion of Ziona has become a tourist attraction in the mountainous bordering state and the tourists are always curious to know about their families and management of the relations and day to day functioning.

Ziona was head of the world's one of the biggest families and he has 89 children, 14-daughters-in-law, and 33 grandchildren.

According to the local officials, the family is organised with almost military discipline, with the oldest wife Zathiangi supervised the management of her fellow

partners and associates to perform household chores such as cleaning, washing besides preparing meals.

One evening meal required 30 chickens, around 60 kg of potatoes and around 100 kg of rice. Coincidentally, Ziona is also head of their sect that allows the family members to marry as many women as he wants.

Officials said that Ziona married ten women in a year many years ago, when he was at his most prolific and enjoys his double bed while his wives have to make do with communal dormitories.

He keeps the youngest wife near to his bedroom with the elder wife of the family sleeping a little away while there was a rotational system for those who visits the Ziona bedroom according to his wishes.

of the day quote

The Shiv Sena had a secondary status in the previous government and was (treated) like slaves. Attempts were also made to finish off our party by misusing the very power which was enjoyed because of our support

SANJAY RAUT | SHIV SENA MP

On one hand, there is the tremendous impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, and on the other, prices of petrol and diesel are continuously rising. Due to this, the prices of essential items are also soaring

MAYAWATI | BAHUJAN SAMAJ PARTY (BSP) CHIEF

The BJP would have slandered even B R Ambedkar, the father of Indian Constitution, as pro-Pakistan had he been alive

MEHBOOBA MUFTI | PDP PRESIDENT

SHORT TAKES

Mentally ill man beaten to death

Madikeri (Karnataka): A 50 year-old mentally unstable man in this city was beaten to death, allegedly by policemen, for violating lockdown norms last week, following which eight of them have been suspended, a senior police officer said Sunday. The policemen were booked on a complaint by the man's brother Robin D'Souza, based on which a case was registered against them, Inspector General of Police, Karnataka Southern Range, Praveen Madhukar Pawar, told reporters here.

Elephant found dead

Coimbatore: A 45-year old female elephant was found dead in the forest area in Anamalai Tiger Reserve (ATR) in the district, Forest department sources. The carcass was found by a team of Anti-Poaching Guards in the reserve forest area, who immediately informed senior officials, they said. As the autopsy revealed that the elephant died of natural causes, the carcass was kept deep in the jungles as a feed to other wild animals, the sources added.

Curbs eased in 8 J&K districts

Jammu: The Jammu and Kashmir administration Sunday announced further easing of restrictions in eight districts showing significant improvement in the Covid-19 situation. The decision to grant relaxations in Shopian, Kulgam, Ganderbal and Bandipora in Kashmir division and Poonch, Reasi, Ramban and Doda in Jammu division was taken at a meeting which focussed on total weekly new cases (per million), positivity rate, bed occupancy, case fatality rate and vaccination coverage of the targeted population, an official order said.

Farmer killed

Morena (MP): A farmer was killed allegedly in a firing by a forest department team during an operation against illegal sand mining and transportation at a village in Madhya Pradesh's Morena district Sunday, following which a case was registered against nine personnel of the department, officials said.

Doc beaten up

Latur: A doctor was allegedly attacked by four persons after the father of their friend died while undergoing treatment against coronavirus at a government hospital in Latur city of Maharashtra, police said Sunday.



Online registration is not enough for the vaccine. Every person walking at the vaccination centre should get the jab. Those who do not have access to internet also have right to life

RAHUL GANDHI | CONGRESS LEADER

INDIRA HRIDAYESH PASSES AWAY

Leader of Opposition in the Uttarakhand Assembly Indira Hridayesh passed away after suffering a cardiac arrest in New Delhi Sunday. The 80-year-old senior Congress died at the Uttarakhand Sadan in New Delhi where she had gone to attend a party meeting



India begins 'Extension of Hosps'

AGENCIES

New Delhi, June 13: To plug a major health infrastructure gap in India's fight against Covid-19, especially in rural areas and smaller towns, India has started project 'Extension of Hospitals' in various states.

Modular hospitals are an extension of hospital infrastructure and can be built adjacent to an existing hospital building.

As Covid-19 cases surged in different parts of the country, infrastructure in hospitals was under immense pressure. Keeping in view of the need, innovative modular hospitals came as a huge relief amidst the crisis. Project 'Extension Hospitals' is one such initiative for which Office of the Principal Scientific Adviser (PSA) invited private sector companies, donor organizations, and individuals to support the initiative along with various other projects of national importance. The PSA office identified requirements of close to 50 hospitals in states where the high-



est number of Covid-19 cases were reported. Modulus Housing, a start-up incubated at Indian Institute of Technology, Madras (IIT-M) developed the MediCAB hospitals. This enables building a 100-bedded extension facility in 3-weeks' time. MediCAB hospitals are designed with a dedicated zone of Intensive Care Units (ICUs) that can accommodate various life-support equipment and medical devices. These negative pressure

portable hospitals have durability of around 25 years, and they can also be shifted in the future for any disaster response in less than a week. These rapidly deployable hospitals will plug a major health infrastructure gap in India's fight against Covid-19, especially in rural areas and smaller towns. The office of PSA has been actively working towards securing Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) support to implement these projects in dif-

ferent areas across the nation.

Modulus Housing has started deploying MediCAB extension hospitals with the help of the American Indian Foundation (AIF). Mastercard, Texas Instruments, Zscaler, PNB Housing, Goldman Sachs, Lenovo, and NASSCOM Foundation have also extended CSR support. The first batch of 100 bedded hospitals is being commissioned at Bilaspur (Chhattisgarh); Amravati, Pune, and Jalna (Maharashtra); Mohali (Punjab), and a 20-bed hospital at Raipur (Chhattisgarh). Bengaluru (Karnataka) will have one each of 20, 50, and 100-beds in the first phase. The Office of PSA has also collaborated with Tata Projects Ltd to deploy modular hospitals at multiple sites in Punjab and Chhattisgarh. They have initiated work on 48 bedded modular hospitals in Gurdaspur and Faridkot (Punjab). Expansion of ICU at multiple hospitals in Chhattisgarh including Raipur, Jashpur, Bemetara, Kanker, and Gaurella is also underway.

Daily nCoV count remains below 1L

India reported 80,834 fresh Covid-19 cases, the lowest after 71 days, while the daily positivity rate further dropped to 4.25 per cent, according to the Union Health Ministry data updated Sunday. With the fresh cases, the country's tally of cases has climbed to 2,94,39,989. The Covid-19 death toll climbed to 3,70,384 with 3,303 fresh fatalities, the data updated at 8 am showed. The active cases further declined to 10,26,159 comprising 3.49 per cent of the total infections, while the national Covid-19 recovery rate has improved to 95.26 per cent. A net decline of 54,531 cases has been recorded in the Covid-19 caseload in a span of 24 hours. Also 19,20,477 tests were conducted Saturday taking the total cumulative tests conducted in the country to 37,62,32,162.

Leopard triggers panic in Srinagar



INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Srinagar, June 13: Panic gripped the densely populated Natipora area in Srinagar Sunday after a leopard was sighted.

Two weeks ago, a minor girl was mauled by a leopard in the Humhama area after which the animal was declared as a man-eater and professional hunters were employed to eliminate it. A team of the wildlife department was deputed to Natipora area earlier in the day to locate the animal and catch it before it caused any casualty.

"The animal was spotted around 10 p.m. yesterday and we informed the local police station immediately," a resident of the area said.

People have been advised not to move out unnecessarily till the animal is caught and restored to its natural habitat. Locals are making announcements about the presence of the leopard through mosque loudspeakers.

Kashmir wildlife warden, Rashid Naqash said: "Our teams are on the ground in the area. We are trying to establish the presence of the animal in the area through direct or indirect evidence." "So far, we have not been able to establish the presence of the animal in the area."

Farmers 'reinforce' protest site



INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, June 13: As the protest continues on the borders of the national capital against the three contentious farm laws passed by the Central government, the farmers, taking a note of the extreme weather conditions, and to guard themselves against the rain and storm, have set up a concrete wall around the tent.

The farmers decided to reinforce their 'camp' after a recent storm and rain blew off the tents. The farmers had to experience strong weather condition on the Ghazipur border. Beli Bhati, a resident of Gautam Budh Nagar, has come to extend his support to the farmers.

"A solid wall has been built to prevent the wooden boundary from collapsing. We farmers do not even know how much more time it will take because Tikait ji has started the movement," he said. "Also, we have set up our temporary home in a container; have an office and a double bed for the night."

A wooden boundary has been made around the container, and to strengthen the boundary, a small wall has been set up using cement and bricks. Also, to cope up with the soaring mercury levels, the farmers have installed coolers and ACs in their tents.

GREAT EXPECTATIONS



Labourers sow paddy seedlings in a field during transplantation of the crop, at Jattan Ketta village in Patiala

PTI PHOTO

BODIES CONTINUE TO BE DUMPED INTO THE GANGA

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Patna, June 13: The relatives of a man, who died due to snakebite in Bihar's Bhagalpur district, dumped his body into the Ganga Sunday, despite objections of the local residents.

The locals made video clips of the incident, which occurred in Kahalgaon block under Bhagalpur. Mithilesh Kumar died due to snake bite in his native village Nawada Bazar in Banka district. His family members took his body to the Barari Ghat in Bhagalpur but the Dom Raja of the Ghat demanded Rs 1 lakh to allow them to dump it in the Ganga.

In Bihar, there is a tradition that the last rites of someone who died of snake bite are doing by putting the body into the Ganga, along with a banana tree trunk.



The family members negotiated with Dom Raja and the latter agreed to Rs 11,000 but as they did not even have that money, they took the dead body to Kahalgaon, some 50 km away from Bhagalpur city. They negotiated with the Dom Raja of Kahalgaon Ghat for Rs 1,500, and also contacted a boat owner, and set a deal for Rs 2,500. Then they took the dead body to the middle of Ganga, tied it to a banana tree trunk and dumped it in the river.

Local residents claimed that the District Magistrate had deployed

a judicial magistrate at every cremation ground when the corona infection was at peak but these were withdrawn from June 1. Contacted for comments, R.P. Sharma, a duty officer of Kahalgaon police station, said: "We have received a complaint pertaining to this case and we are trying to contact the deceased's family."

During the severe second wave of corona, people in several districts such as Buxar, Bhोजपुर, Patna, and Bhagalpur dumped a large number of dead bodies into the Ganga.

RSS backing Yogi to the hilt

Contrary to reports, it is clearly emerging that the RSS is fully backing the saffron-clad Sadhuvartan politician who is now an icon of the Hindutva forces. Yogi's stature has gone up manifold in the Sangh Parivar who is seen among as a prominent leader in the post-Modi era as part of second rung leaders. The RSS leadership is unwilling to sacrifice Yogi like it did in the case of Kalyan Singh who was shown the door at the behest of Vajpayee in 1999. The BJP paid a heavy price for it in 2002 and waited for 15 long years to re-capture it. There was a move to send Defence Minister Rajnath Singh to UP again as CM but the RSS was determined not to repeat the mistake. It said that the next elections will have to be fought under Yogi only. As a bargaining chip, Delhi's favourite AK Sharma may be given a ministerial post but not Dy CM. Meanwhile, there are reports that Amit Shah who has batted on

the front foot in all the state Assembly polls since 2014 including West Bengal recently, may maintain a safe distance in UP. Though he will campaign and play as a pivot but will keep him at arm's length, but will not play a lead role. Shah may have to focus on the border sensitive state of Punjab elections where the party is in disarray. The Akali Dal has walked out of NDA.

Winds of change are blowing!

When the going is good, many people will be your friends. When the going becomes tough, even your best friends will run away, sung artist William Onyeabor. This saying is coming true after the BJP lost the West Bengal Assembly polls. Since then, winds of change are blowing in reverse direction for the Modi government in one arena after the other. The recent tough stance from the higher judiciary in many BJP-ruled states and even in the Supreme Court has worried the

government. The way Chief Justice of India NV Ramana ripped into the government's proposed names for the CBI's chief's post at the selection committee meeting last month, has sent shivers down the spine of powers that be. While Leader of the Congress in Lok Sabha Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury was already against the favourites of the government being appointed as CBI Chief, Ramana quoted certain provisions to keep them out too. This was a big setback. Sources say that Ramana had been deeply hurt ever since Andhra Chief Minister Jagannathan Reddy made personal allegations against him. It is still a mystery as to why Reddy made such allegations who himself is at the mercy of CBI, ED & Income tax due to various corruption cases. Jagan had the tenacity to write a written complaint to the then CJI SA Bobde and collegiums members. The objective was to keep Ramana out. But Bobde stood firmly behind Ramana. The President signed the Warrant of Appointment and now Ramana is his own master and obliged to none.



Mamata puts her foot in UP

After a bitter bout between poll strategist Prashant Kishore and BJP in the West Bengal Assembly polls, UP may witness a similar contest in February 2022. Highly placed sources said 'PK' as Kishore is known, had a long meeting with former UP CM Akhilesh Yadav in Lucknow. It transpires that the meeting was held at the behest of Mamata Banerjee who telephoned

Akhilesh Yadav as she wanted him to take the assistance of 'PK' in ensuring BJP's defeat. Though 'PK' was briefly in touch with Akhilesh Yadav during the 2017 Assembly polls also as he was advising the Congress then. But the alliance between the SP-Congress came to a halt as party leaders in Congress were unwilling to implement his suggestions. Sources close to 'PK' refused to comment on the Lucknow meeting. But Akhilesh Yadav is reported to have asked him to prepare a road-map. Mamata is keen for Akhilesh's win as it will help consolidation of anti-BJP forces in the country.

Will Choksi case go Dawood way

There is a lurking fear that the Mehul Choksi operation may be botched up by some of the operators behind the entire episode. What happened in Dominica reminded many top sleuths as to what embarrassment

they had to face when Operation Dawood was to be launched. In the Choksi case, the operation partially succeeded. But got stuck in Dominica courts, despite the assurances of the Dominica government that the fugitive will be deported. NSA Ajit Doval is a master of covert operations, works quietly and only a handful of people know how he won over six of Laldenga's seven commanders during the Mizo National Front insurgency era, remained underground for years in the Arakan in Burma & Chinese territory, played key role in Sikkim's merger with India, rescued Romanian diplomat Liviu Radu in 1988 and went inside the Golden Temple, Amritsar days before Operation Black Thunder and negotiated the release of hijacked Indian Airlines flight IC-814 in Kandahar in 1999. It was due to his exemplary record that the Monmohan Singh government made him Director IB in July 2004. Even after he retired, the UPA took his services in "Operation Dawood Ibrahim".

of the day quote

Many families are forced to send their children to work due to economic hardship and lack of decent employment opportunities for family heads. Even more concerning, children who are recruited by militias are forced into dangerous life-threatening roles such as soldiers, cooks, and cleaners

ABDIWAHAB UGAS KHALIF | MINISTER OF LABOUR AND SOCIAL AFFAIRS, SOMALIA

Many diseases have a distinct smell associated with them. We started our research with a blank sheet of paper and asked the question: Does COVID-19 have a distinct smell

STEVE LINDSAY | PROFESSOR, DEPT. OF BIOSCIENCES, DURHAM UNIVERSITY

The last seven days have seen 596 new cases and 26 deaths as compared to the same period in May 2021 when we had 132 new cases and 6 deaths

CONSTANTINO CHIWENGA | VICE PRESIDENT, ZIMBABWE

SHORT TAKES

Libya, Turkey discuss security

Tripoli: Mohamed Menfi, head of the Libyan Presidency Council, met a visiting Turkish delegation, which included Foreign Minister Mevlut Cavusoglu, and discussed security cooperation between the two countries. The visit of the Turkish delegation, also including Interior Minister Suleyman Soyulu and Defence Minister Hulusi Akar, follows a series of mutual previous ones between Libya and Turkey in 2021 that started with Menfi's trip to Turkey in March, according to a statement issued by the Presidency Council Saturday.

Border closure gets extension

Buenos Aires: The Argentinean government has decided to extend the closure of the country's borders to non-resident foreigners until June 25 in an attempt to prevent the spread of the novel coronavirus. The measure announced on Saturday also allows the continuation of suspension of all direct flights to and from the UK due to the Alpha or Kent variant of the virus that was discovered there late last year, reports Xinhua news agency.

Iran to tackle power shortage

Tehran: Iran has started importing electricity from its northern neighbour Azerbaijan to tackle the country's power shortage, an official here confirmed. The electricity grid of Moghan, Thursday, in the northwest of Iran was synchronised with an electricity grid in Azerbaijan to feed 73 megawatts of electricity to the country's power grid, Mostafa Rajabi Mashhadi, spokesman for Tehran's Power Generation, Distribution, and Transmission Company, said Saturday.

Residents urged to get vaccinated

Hong Kong: Hong Kong Chief Executive Carrie Lam Sunday urged residents of the city to get vaccinated against Covid-19 in an effort to allow the global financial hub to return to normal at an early date. Hong Kong must work to raise the vaccination rate so that people can make trips for businesses, tourism or family reunions as before, Lam said on her social media account. The vaccine rollout has picked up pace as some 54,000 doses were administered in the city of a 7.5-million population.



Before the pandemic, indoor PM2.5 generated indoors by normal human functions would be spread between the home, the office and other indoor spaces. Instead, it all builds up in our homes now. Lockdown is like a perfect storm

ALEX KNOX | VICE-PRESIDENT, ENGINEERING FOR ENVIRONMENTAL CARE

'IBN VAX DOSES ONLY A START'

The IMF MD Kristalina Georgieva said that there's a moral imperative for the world's richest countries to back programmes to end the Covid-19 pandemic but the donation of excess vaccines is only the first step



G7 leaders agree on vaccines, China and taxing corporates



ASSOCIATED PRESS

Falmouth (England), June 13: The Group of Seven leaders aim to end their first summit in two years with a punchy set of promises Sunday, including vaccinating the world against coronavirus, making huge corporations pay their fair share of taxes and tackling climate change with a blend of technology and money.

They want to show that international cooperation is back after the upheavals caused by the pandemic and the unpredictability of former US President Donald Trump.

And they want to convey that the club of wealthy democracies — Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, the United Kingdom and the United States — is a better friend to poorer nations than authoritarian rivals such as China.

But it was uncertain how firm the group's commitments will be on coronavirus vaccines, the economy and the environment when the leaders issue their final communiqué.

The G7 conveyed that the club of wealthy democracies, is a better friend to poorer nations than authoritarian rivals such as China

Also unclear was whether all of the leaders would back the United States' call to chastise China for repressing its Uyghur minority and other abuses.

UK Prime Minister Boris Johnson, the summit's host, wanted the three-day meeting to fly the flag for a "Global Britain," his government's initiative to give the mid-sized country outsized influence when it comes to global problem-solving. Brexit cast a shadow over that goal during the summit on the coast of southwest England. European Union leaders and US President Joe Biden voiced concerns about problems with new UK-EU trade rules that have heightened tensions in Northern Ireland.

Bolsonaro fined \$100 for maskless motorcycle rally

REUTERS

Sao Paulo, June 13: Brazilian President Jair Bolsonaro was fined \$100 Saturday for violating Covid-19 containment measures in Sao Paulo state by failing to wear a face mask and provoking huge crowds at a motorcycle rally for supporters.

Thousands of roaring motorcycles took part in the "Accelerate for Christ" rally in Sao Paulo, led by the far-right president, who wore an open-faced helmet and no mask, in violation of state health regulations.

Bolsonaro, who has been holding such rallies across Brazil as he gears up to seek re-election next year, defied a prior warning from Sao Paulo Governor Joao Doria, a political rival, who had said the president would be fined if he failed to observe state regulations.

Bolsonaro has repeatedly clashed with Doria and other governors over measures against Covid-19, which has claimed nearly 485,000 lives in Brazil, second only to the United States.

The president regularly criticizes stay-at-home measures and face masks, instead touting medications such as chloroquine and hydroxychloroquine despite studies showing they are ineffective against Covid-19.

Addressing a giant crowd of flag-waving supporters, Bolsonaro renewed his comments against face masks, saying he planned to order mask requirements be lifted for people who have been vaccinated



against Covid-19.

"Anyone who's against that doesn't believe in science. There's no way a vaccinated person can transmit the virus," he said.

In fact, there is little scientific consensus yet on whether vaccinated individuals risk spreading the coronavirus. Public health officials have generally urged them to continue wearing masks in risky situations.

State officials said they had fined Bolsonaro, his congressman son, Eduardo, and Infrastructure Minister Tarcisio Gomes for failing to wear masks and observe social distancing measures at the rally. Each was fined 552.71 reais, or about \$108.

The president's office did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

Japanese airline starts crew vaccination drive

AGENCIES

Tokyo, June 13: Japanese airline All Nippon Airways has begun vaccinating its pilots and cabin attendants on international flights. That makes it one of the first companies to launch workplace vaccinations in Japan, one of the world's least-vaccinated nations.

Japan is desperately pushing to accelerate the pace of inoculations before the Tokyo Olympics start in about 40 days.

Following criticism over the slow pace of the vaccine rollout, the government recently unveiled workplace inoculation programs by major companies to supplement efforts led by municipalities around the country.

On Sunday, 50 ANA pilots and flight attendants dressed in their uniforms got their first shot of the Moderna vaccine at a company inoculation site at Tokyo's Haneda airport.

Spain rejects any pardons for Catalan leaders

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Madrid, June 13: Thousands in Madrid are protesting the Spanish government's plan to issue pardons to a dozen Catalan separatist leaders convicted for their roles in the biggest challenge to the country's unity in recent history.

The demonstration has been organized by a civil society group in defense of the nation's unity, and it chose a central square that has



become a symbol for far-right political rallies. Leaders of the center to far-right

opposition to Socialist Prime Minister Pedro Sánchez are joining the protest at Colón Square, which boasts one of the nation's largest national flags.

Sánchez hasn't announced pardons for the 12 political and civil society leaders who in October 2017 pushed ahead with a banned referendum on independence for the northeastern region of Catalonia and then declared independence based on its results.

But he has defended the possible move as a way to bring Catalans and Spaniards closer together after the divisive convictions that put most of the Catalan leaders behind bars.

The prime minister is also facing criticism in his own Socialist camp, where the move is seen as a risky political gamble.

While more than 60 % of Spaniards oppose the pardons and only 29.5 % back them, according to a recent poll.

Swiss narrowly reject tax hike to fight climate change

AGENCIES

Geneva, June 13: Exit polls Sunday indicated that Swiss voters appear to have narrowly rejected a proposed "carbon dioxide law" that would have hiked fees and taxes on fuels that produce greenhouse gases.

The Alpine country has been experiencing an outsized impact from climate change. Switzerland has faced a rise in temperatures that is twice as fast as the global average, the government says.

Greenhouse gases — notably carbon dioxide — are seen as the primary culprit.

The proposal would have revised and strengthened an existing law that was aimed at reducing CO2 emissions by 2030.

It would have enacted new taxes on CO2-generating fuel and natural gas, as well as on airline tickets. The proposal was rejected by 51 per cent of the vote, Swiss public broadcaster SRF reported.

However, local media said not all votes had been counted and the final result was not expected before late Sunday or Monday.

The climate proposal was one of several measures that Swiss voters cast their ballots nationwide Sunday.



Critics of the proposal called it ineffective since Switzerland's carbon-dioxide emissions amount to a mere 0.1 % of the global tally.

Among other issues on the nationwide ballot was a referendum

on the government's COVID-19 law, which was accepted. It will generate a surge in state spending.

Another initiative to improve the quality of drinking water in Switzerland was rejected — it would

NAY FOR NOW

The proposal would have revised and strengthened an existing law that aims to reduce CO2 emissions by 2030

The law, if approved by voters and finalised in parliament, would have enacted new taxes on CO2-generating fuel and natural gas

have made it harder for farmers to get state subsidies if they use some types of pesticides and antibiotics.

A ban on the use of pesticides was also rejected. A majority of Swiss voters sup-

CANINE'S DAY OUT



French bull terrier Chouchou enjoys a bath in a public fountain at the Paradeplatz square in Zurich, Switzerland

Israel to swear in new government ending Netanyahu's long rule

Naftali Bennett, the head of a small ultranationalist party, will take over as prime minister

AGENCIES

Jerusalem, June 13: Israel is set to swear in a new government Sunday that will send Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu into the opposition after a record 12 years in office and end a political crisis that sparked four elections in two years.

Naftali Bennett, the head of a small ultranationalist party, will take over as prime minister. But if he wants to keep the job, he will have to maintain an unwieldy coalition of parties from the political right, left and center.

The eight parties, including a small Arab faction that is making history by sitting in the ruling coalition, are united in their opposition to Netanyahu and new elections but agree on little else. They are likely to pursue a modest agenda that seeks to reduce tensions with the Palestinians and maintain good relations with the US without launching any major initiatives.

Netanyahu, who is on trial for corruption, remains the head of the largest party in parliament and is expected to vigorously oppose the new government. If just one faction bolts, it could lose its majority and would be at risk of collapse, giving him an opening to return to power.

The new government is promising a return to normalcy after a tumultuous two years that saw four elections, an 11-day Gaza war last month and a coronavirus outbreak that devastated the economy before it was largely brought



under control by a successful vaccination campaign.

The driving force behind the coalition is Yair Lapid, a political centrist who will become prime minister in two years, if the government lasts that long.

Israel's parliament, known as the Knesset, will convene to vote on the new government at 4 pm local time. It is expected to win a narrow majority of at least 61 votes in the 120-member assembly, after which it will be sworn in. The government plans to hold its first official meeting later this evening.

It's unclear if Netanyahu will attend the ceremony or when he will move out of the official residence. He has lashed out at the new government in apocalyptic terms and accused Bennett of defrauding voters by running as a right-wing stalwart and then partnering with the left.

Netanyahu's supporters have held angry protests outside the homes of rival lawmakers, who say they have received death threats naming their family members. Israel's Shin Bet internal security service issued a rare public warning about the incitement earlier.

Guangzhou deploys drones to keep people inside

AGENCIES

Beijing, June 13: A fleet of 60 drones has been deployed in the southern Chinese city of Guangzhou to keep people indoors and remind those going out to wear masks.

China has largely stamped out cases of local Covid-19 transmission, but Guangzhou has seen a flare-up of the more infectious delta variant of the virus, initially discovered in India.

Six new cases were reported in Guangzhou over the previous 24 hours, raising the number in the outbreak to more than 100.

The police-operated drones carry cameras and broadcast messages to people venturing outdoors that they and others are best protected by staying inside.



Six new cases were reported in Guangzhou over the previous 24 hours, raising the number in the outbreak to more than 100

The flying unmanned vehicles add to an already dense layer of monitoring including cellphone health confirmations, temperature checks and quarantines for those living in or travelling to areas where the risk of infection is considered high.

Gungzhou has isolated several neighbourhoods, restricted travel out of the city and the surrounding province and shuttered cinemas and other indoor entertainment venue.

business

of the day quote

Going forward, we will focus more on recoveries and when it comes to buying assets the focus will be retail portfolios. Over the past few years, retail has been growing very big, and I see it taking up half the market

RASHESH SHAH | CHAIRMAN AND CEO, EDELWEISS FINANCIAL SERVICES GROUP

India is our home market where we started, but today we also have major presence in the US, the UK, Europe and the Asia-Pacific region. By the end of this year, we intend to be present in over 50 countries

MANAN KHURMA | FOUNDER AND CEO, CUEMATH

Axis Bank is to increase to 19.99 per cent in tranches. Thirteen per cent is already done over the next two quarters, we will seek approval for the balance seven per cent. So, it will reach about 20 per cent and that will be the ownership of Axis Bank

PRASHANT TRIPATHY | CEO, MAX LIFE INSURANCE

SHORT TAKES

‘Exports projected to grow 70.1%’

Mumbai: The country's total merchandise exports are projected to grow 70.1% to \$87.2 billion in the first quarter of fiscal 2021-22 from \$51.3 billion in the year, Export-Import Bank of India (India Exim Bank) said. The non-oil exports may jump 68.5% to \$78.26 billion in the April-June period as compared with \$46.4 billion in the corresponding period of fiscal 2020-21, it said.

Ruchi Soya files FPO document

New Delhi: Edible oil firm Ruchi Soya, which is owned by Baba Ramdev-led Patanjali Ayurveda, has filed draft document with SEBI to launch a follow-on public offer (FPO) for raising up to Rs 4,300 crore. The FPO is being launched to meet the SEBI norm of minimum public shareholding of 25 per cent in a listed entity. Ruchi Soya filed the draft red herring prospectus (DRHP) with market regulator SEBI on Saturday, sources said, adding that the company plans to raise up to Rs 4,300 crore through the share sale.

Exchanges to suspend trading

New Delhi: Leading exchanges BSE and NSE will suspend trading in the shares of Dewan Housing Finance Corporation Ltd (DHFL) with effect from Monday. The move, aimed at avoiding "market complications", comes against the backdrop of the National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT) approving Piramal Group's resolution plan for the bankrupt-DHFL. The resolution plan under the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (IBC) was approved by the tribunal June 7.

Amway plans to invest ₹170Cr

New Delhi: Direct selling FMCG firm Amway India plans to invest Rs 170 crore in the next 2-3 years in the country to boost research and development (R&D), manufacturing automation and innovation. The company also plans to strengthen its nutrition portfolio, which accounts for over 60 per cent of its revenue, by exploring adjacent and expanded spaces around the nutrition segment. "Amway has earmarked an investment of Rs 170 crore for the next 2-3 years in India," Amway India CEO Anshu Budhbraja said.



The green initiatives cannot wait for the COVID-19 pandemic to get over, and the newly launched programme 'HCL Harit' will be implemented following all Covid-19-safety protocols

NIDHI PUNDHIR | DIRECTOR, HCL FOUNDATION

BYJU'S MOST VALUABLE STARTUP IN COUNTRY

Edtech company Byju's is now India's most valuable unicorn startup with a valuation of \$16.5 billion, surpassing fintech company Paytm's \$16 billion valuation. As per CB Insights data, as of June 2021, Byju's is the 11th most valuable startup in the world



‘Int’l prices to help steelmakers tide over 2nd wave’

AGENCIES

New Delhi, June 13: Supportive international prices are expected to help domestic steelmakers tide over the second Covid wave, ratings agency ICRA said.

Besides, ICRA expects domestic demand to recover in the coming months with the gradual lifting of lockdowns and mobility restrictions in India during June 2021 and improving vaccination coverage. This trend in turn will result in a pick-up in capacity utilisation levels, the agency said.

"Domestic steel prices are currently trading at a significant discount to the landed cost of export

offers from China," said Jayanta Roy, Senior Vice-President & Group Head, Corporate Sector Ratings, ICRA. "Even amidst the second wave disrupting economic activity, the steep rally in international steel prices gave domestic steelmakers the headroom to roll out successive price hikes, accumulating to a 20 per cent increase since the start of the fiscal."

According to the ratings agency, the second wave of the pandemic has hit domestic steel demand in the current year, with a 22 per cent M-o-M drop in April 2021, and a further 1 per cent sequential decline reported in May 2021.

However, the current year con-



sumption data looks far better compared to last year because of the much more stringent lockdowns observed during April-May 2020.

"Despite weak domestic demand, buoyant international demand and steel prices supported the domestic steelmakers and India remained

According to the ratings agency, the second wave of the pandemic has hit domestic steel demand in the current year, with a 22 per cent M-o-M drop in April 2021

a net exporter of steel with 122 per cent Y-o-Y growth in exports reported in April 2021."

"Although exports in April 2021 were 26 per cent lower than the March 2021 levels, the export momentum continued in May 2021 with a 30 per cent M-o-M growth."

At present, India is facing an iron ore shortage in the key raw material producing state of Odisha with many of the auctioned merchant mines yet to ramp-up to their earlier level of production.

"This has resulted in domestic iron ore prices rallying to all-time high levels at present. With seaborne iron ore prices remaining elevated as well, exports have become remunerative for miners, even for higher grades which attracts a 30 per cent duty."

"Consequently, ICRA expects the domestic iron ore shortage to persist for the next 6-9 months, leading to prices remaining elevated for a greater part of FY2022."

More US finance giants tiptoe into cryptoassets



AGENCIES

New York, June 13: Investing in bitcoin and other digital currencies remains a risky game where the rules could change significantly, but the payoff could be big.

In response to this dilemma, several leading US financial heavyweights are staying on the sidelines, while an increasing number are proceeding cautiously into the growing world of cryptoassets.

"My own personal advice to people: Stay away from it," JPMorgan Chase Chief Executive Jamie Dimon said recently, before adding, "That does not mean the clients don't want it."

JPMorgan, the biggest US bank by assets, is currently assessing how it can help clients transact in cryptocurrency, Dimon said last month at the bank's annual meeting.

Formerly something of an investment sideshow dominated by computer geeks, cryptocurrencies are sparking greater interest among mainstream investors after a big jump in bitcoin prices in 2020 and early 2021.

On Thursday, the venerable giant State Street announced the creation of a new digital finance division.

On Wednesday, the head of on-line trading firm Interactive Brokers vowed to establish online trading of cryptocurrencies on the platform by the end of the summer.

Like its rivals Charles Schwab and Fidelity, Interactive Brokers

does not now offer bitcoin trading on its platform, although it does give clients the option to invest in some assets that include cryptocurrencies or bitcoin futures.

Investors who want to trade bitcoin can currently turn to Robinhood or the cryptocurrency specialist Coinbase.

For Us All, a platform that manages retirement accounts for small businesses, on Monday announced an agreement with Coinbase that allows clients to invest up to five per cent of their balances in cryptocurrencies.

Investment bank Morgan Stanley in March said it would allow wealthier clients to invest in bitcoin funds, while Goldman Sachs recently established a team dedicated to trading cryptocurrencies.

The chief executives of Wells Fargo, Citigroup and Bank of America said at a congressional hearing in late May that they are approaching the cryptocurrency landscape with caution.

Fidelity Investments, which established a digital assets division in 2018 to execute cryptocurrency trades for hedge funds and other institutional investors, filed papers with US securities regulators for a bitcoin exchange traded fund (ETF). The move could potentially expand cryptocurrency investments to a broader range of individual investors.

Still, many financial players are reluctant to dive into an investment realm associated with black markets that has sparked interest from US and global regulators.

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, June 13: The Left parties in a joint statement Sunday demanded the rollback of hike in petroleum products and urged the government to control prices of essential commodities and drugs.

The joint statement has been signed by Sitaram Yechury, General Secretary, Communist Party of India (Marxist); D Raja, General Secretary, Communist Party of India; Debabrata Biswas, General Secretary, All India Forward Bloc; Manoj Bhattacharya, General Secretary, Revolutionary Socialist Party and Dipankar Bhattacharya, General Secretary, Communist Party of India (Marxist-Leninist) Liberation.

Alleging that the government, instead of helping people to combat

AM/NS delivers second O2 cylinders consignment

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, June 13: Arcelor Mittal Nippon Steel India (AM/NS India) Sunday delivered the second tranche of a consignment of 5020 medical grade oxygen cylinders and 2000 units of flowmeters to Odisha to fight against Covid-19. The second tranche of 5,020 cylinders reached Bhubaneswar last night and will be distributed by Odisha state officials to medical centres across the state.

Lakshmi Mahapatra, Head of Corporate Affairs (Odisha Operations) at AM/NS India, handed over the second tranche of the consignment to the Odisha State Medical Corporation Limited in the presence of NB Jawale, MD, IPICOL.

Since April, over 9,200 tonnes



the ravages of the Covid health catastrophe, hiked the prices of petroleum products by at least 21 times after the announcement of results of the recent assembly elections on May 2, the parties said that this is leading to a "cascading inflationary spiral with the Wholesale Price Index (WPI) rising to an 11-year high."

"The prices of food articles have risen by nearly 5 per cent in April. Primary commodities saw a rise of 10.16% and manufactured products have risen by 9.01 per cent. By the time these commodities reach the retail markets, the consumers are charged much more."

"This is happening while the economy is witnessing a deep re-



of liquid medical oxygen has been supplied to seven states across India including Odisha.

In addition, seven nitrogen-carrying trucks have been converted to load oxygen to increase the supply of oxygen to areas with shortages. Jawale said, "Timely interference of AMNS in oxygen cylinder supply has helped state government a lot to fight against Covid19

pandemic. The company has worked swiftly to organize and deliver the second tranche of these critical medical supplies to the Odisha government.

The Government of Odisha also remains resolute in its efforts to safeguard not just the people of Odisha but also across the country, having supplied oxygen to several other states."

BIZ BUZZ

‘Current fiscal may see highest number of launches’



New Delhi: Mid-sized motorcycle maker Royal Enfield expects the current fiscal to be one of the best for the company in terms of new model launches as it looks to drive in an array of new products for domestic and international markets, according to a top company official. The company, which is part of Eicher Motors, noted that it has a rich pipeline of products under development which could hit the market in the coming days.

ICICI Prudential declares bonus for policyholders

Bhubaneswar: ICICI Prudential Life Insurance has announced an annual bonus of ₹867 crore for all eligible participating policyholders for FY2021. The bonus declared is the highest ever by the Company till date and is also 10% higher than the bonus announced in the last fiscal. All participating policies in-force as of March 31, 2021 are eligible to receive this bonus and will be added to the policyholders' benefits. A total of 9.8 lakh participating policyholders will benefit from this, taking them closer to their long-term financial goals.

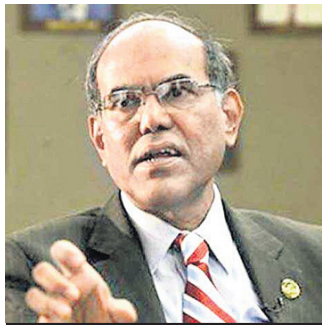
Income inequalities telling story of ‘uneven’ eco recovery

AGENCIES

New Delhi, June 13: Former RBI Governor D Subbarao has expressed concerns over "extreme unevenness" in economic recovery and "sharpening inequalities" between upper income segments and lower income households in the country, cautioning that the trend will hit growth prospects going forward.

Terming the uneven recovery "morally wrong and politically corrosive", he said liquidity in the domestic market and foreign fund inflows are leading to soaring of prices of stocks and other assets despite disruptions due to Covid pandemic.

The ex-central bank governor further said that earlier expectations of a sharp economic recovery this year have been dashed by the new pandemic wave.



"The economy contracted last year, for the first time in four decades, by as much as 7.3 per cent. That was less deep than we had first feared but still deep enough to have caused distress to millions of families in the informal sector. There was expectation of a sharp recovery this year but those expectations are now tempered by the impact of the second wave,"

The positive wealth effect of the upper income segments juxtaposed with the negative income effects of the lower income households tells a story of a very uneven recovery and sharpening inequalities. This is morally wrong and politically corrosive

D SUBBARAO | FORMER RBI GOVERNOR

Subbarao said. The RBI too reduced its growth forecast for the current fiscal by one percentage point, from 10.5 per cent to 9.5 per cent, he said adding that even 9.5 per cent growth might seem impressive but note that this is coming on a very low base of last year.

"Even if we clock this growth rate, the output during this fiscal

2021/22 will still be less than the output two years ago before the pandemic hit us. Compare that with China which never fell below its pre-pandemic level and the US which is expected to recover to its pre-pandemic level this year," the former RBI chief said.

Expressing concerns, Subbarao said that while the majority of people have lost jobs and saw reduction in their income, the wealth of some rich individuals have increased during the pandemic period.

"The positive wealth effect of the upper income segments juxtaposed with the negative income effects of the lower income households tells a story of a very uneven recovery and sharpening inequalities. This is morally wrong and politically corrosive," he said adding that it will also have a big

impact on growth prospects going forward.

Explaining further, he said the booming stock market is in fact "symptomatic of the extreme unevenness of this recovery".

The domestic liquidity coupled with foreign inflows is fuelling stock prices as also prices of other assets, he said. "Who benefits from this? People who have investable surpluses."

"Contrast that with the findings of a study by the Azim Premji University that the one year of Covid-19 pandemic has pushed 230 million people into poverty with a 15 per cent increase in poverty rate in rural India and a 20 per cent surge in urban India," he said citing the findings of a study.

India's economy contracted by less-than-expected 7.3 per cent in the fiscal ended March 2021.

Amazon India to impart core ML skills to students

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, June 13: Amazon India Sunday announced the launch of an integrated learning programme for students to learn applied Machine Learning (ML) skills, making them industry ready for careers in the new technology.

The programme - ML Summer School - has been introduced to help train students in ML and address the growing demand for talent with this skill set across various industries, Amazon India said in a statement.



The curriculum will cover the fundamental concepts in ML, while linking them to practical industry applications through an immersive three-day course, it added.

Participants of the ML Summer School will be identified through an online assessment.

3 LIONS OVERCOME CROATIA TO EARN HARD-FOUGHT VICTORY

Sterling start for England



THAT ECSTATIC FEELING: Raheem Sterling (No 10) wheels away in joy after scoring for England during the Euro 2020 game against Croatia played Sunday at the Wembley Stadium in London

AGENCIES

London, June 13: Raheem Sterling's second half strike helped England gain a hard-earned 1-0 win over Croatia in their Euro 2020 game played at the Wembley Stadium here Sunday. It was a game England could have won by a far superior margin. However, the hosts were guilty of missing quite a few chances in the first half that saw them go to the interval with the scor-

line still reading 0-0. However, then Sterling coming in as second half substitute made all the difference with a fantastic strike to seal three points for the Three Lions.

This was only the third time that both these teams faced each other in a major tournament. The last time they met, Croatia triumphed over England 2-1 in the semifinal of the 2018 World Cup. So naturally England were cautious to begin with even though they

dominated the game early on. Also the fact that they have not won a major trophy since 1996, made the England team doubly cautious. They first wanted to keep their citadel intact before invading the opposition goal.

Sterling grew up in the shadow of Wembley Stadium as it was being rebuilt, even getting a tattoo of its famous arch on his left forearm. Now playing for his country at the iconic venue, he used his

right foot to give England the start it had been longing for at the European Championships.

"I always said to myself... Growing up two minutes down the road, I've got to score," Sterling

TODAY'S MATCHES			
SCO		v	CZE
Time: 06:30 pm			
POL		v	SLO
Time: 09:30 pm			
SPA		v	SWE
Time: 12:30 am (June 15)			
Telecast: Sony TEN Network			

said after the game. "It's a great feeling doing it," the winger added.

Never before had England made a winning start to the continental tournament in nine previous attempts. This time due to Sterling, they managed to do so.

Sterling, who has struggled for game time at Manchester City in recent months, found the breakthrough for England in the 57th minute. It was the vision of Kalvin Phillips, one of five England starters making their tournament debut which created the opening.

The Leeds midfielder shook off challenges before releasing Sterling, who slipped a shot into the net via a touch off Croatia goalkeeper Dominik Livakovic.

Eriksen stable 'greet's' mates, from hospital

AGENCIES

Copenhagen, June 13: Christian Eriksen remained in stable condition in a hospital here Sunday. He also 'sent his greetings to his team-mates' as he recovers from his collapse during a European Championship game, the Danish football federation said.

The rest of the Danish team were given crisis management assistance as they process the incident that happened during Saturday's game against Finland here. Eriksen fell face-forward to the ground late in the first half and needed CPR from medical staff before regaining consciousness.

"This (Sunday) morning we have spoken to Christian Eriksen, who has sent his greetings to his team-mates," the Danish federation wrote on Twitter. "His condition is stable, and he continues to be hospitalised for further examination. The team and staff of the national team have received crisis assistance and will continue to be there for each other after yesterday's (Saturday) incident," it added.

For the record, Finland won the game 1-0. Joel Pohjanpalo scored the winning goal and Lukas Hradecky saved a penalty to give Finland a memorable win.

Eriksen was playing in his 66th competitive game in exactly one year since soccer restarted after a shutdown caused by the coronavirus pandemic.

His collapse came hours after the soccer players' union, FIFPRO repeated long-standing fears about pressure on its members in a congested season.

A Belgian masterclass

LUKAKU SUPPORT FOR STRICKEN ERIKSEN



CRUCIAL START: Belgian players celebrate Saturday after Romelu Lukaku's first goal against Russia in their Euro 2020 game

AGENCIES

St Petersburg (Russia), June 13: Belgium striker Romelu Lukaku sent a message of support Saturday to his stricken Inter Milan teammate Christian Eriksen after scoring twice to help the Red Devils open their Euro 2020 campaign with a 3-0 win over Russia here. Lukaku gave Belgium an early lead, then shouted "Chris, Chris, stay strong - I love you" into a pitchside camera during the celebration for his opening goal.

"I am really happy with the win, but it was hard for me to play because my thoughts were with Christian Erksen," said Lukaku, who revealed he cried tears of concern before kick-off for his Inter teammate.

Belgium coach Roberto Martinez also admitted other members of

his squad were also affected after seeing Eriksen suddenly slump to the turf during the Denmark-Finland game.

"We were watching the game live and five minutes after Christian collapsed, we went into a team meeting. As you can imagine, the last thing we wanted to do was talk about football," said Martinez. "There were a lot of tears from players who have shared dressing rooms and big moments with Christian," he added.

Substitute Thomas Meunier doubled Belgium's lead on 34 minutes before Lukaku put the result beyond doubt with a late second goal.

Belgium, the world's top-ranked team, are under pressure to deliver at the European Championship as some pundits claim this is Martinez's last chance to win a title with an ageing squad.

SHORT TAKES

New world mark

Adelaide: Swimmer Kaylee McKeown said the death of her father 10 months ago due to brain cancer inspired her to break the 100-meter backstroke world record Sunday at the Australian Olympic trials. The 19-year-old McKeown had a time of 57.45 seconds at the South Australian Aquatic Centre to improve on the previous mark of 57.57 second set by American Regan Smith in 2019. The passing of my dad in August last year, has been a huge build-up to these trials," said McKeown. "And I have turned it into a bit of a hunger and motivation behind me. This record is for my dad," she added.

Milkha bereaved

Chandigarh: Former Indian women's volleyball team captain Nirmal Kaur, who is the wife of sprint legend Milkha Singh, died at a Mohali hospital due to complications related to Covid-19 infection she had contracted last month. She was 85 and is survived by her husband, one son and three daughters. "We are saddened to inform you that Mrs Nirmal Milkha Singh passed away after a valiant battle against Covid at 4.00pm today (Sunday)," a statement from the spokesperson of the Milkha family said. "It is tragic that the Milkha Singh ji could not attend the cremation which was conducted Sunday evening as he is still in the ICU (of PGIMER in Chandigarh) himself," the spokesperson added.

Impressive show

Kaunas (Lithuania): India's Malvika Bansod defeated France's Anna Tatranova 21-13, 21-10 in straight games to enter the women's singles final at RSL Lithuanian International badminton tournament here Sunday. The 19-year-old will now face Ireland's fourth seed Rachael Darragh in the summit clash for the title. Malvika had earlier defeated local player Vilte Paulauskaite 21-6, 21-10 in the opening round, before crushing Heli Neiman of Israel 21-10, 21-11. She then saw off Austrian Katrin Neudolt 21-12, 21-9 in the quarterfinals.

AGENCIES

SERBIAN BECOMES 3RD MAN IN TENNIS HISTORY TO COMPLETE CAREER GRAND SLAM TWICE

'King' Djokovic rules Paris courts

AGENCIES

Paris, June 13: Grand Slam No 19 was not easy to say the least. But then for 'super human' Novak Djokovic as many commentators described him, climbing new peaks is just another natural event. In an epic French Open men's final played Sunday, Djokovic after being two sets to love down, came back to win a thriller in a match that lasted fours and 12 minutes. Djokovic in the end prevailed 6-7 (6-8), 2-6, 6-3, 6-2, 6-4 over Greek Stefanos Tsitsipas.

It was a match that none deserved to lose, but in the end there had to be one winner. And it was Djokovic's resilience, that ability to raise his level by just a few notches that took him past the youthful exuberance and brilliance of Tsitsipas. After his semifinal win against RaFa Nadal, the Serb had compared it to 'climbing a mountain as



ON TOP OF THE WORLD: Novak Djokovic is all pumped up after winning the French Open men's singles crown Sunday in Paris

PTI PHOTO

tall as Mount Everest'. Well in overcoming the fifth-seeded Tsitsipas, the World No. 1 had to certainly go one step further. He was two sets down and Tsitsipas was finding unbelievable angles on the court.

But then Djokovic weathered the storm, and then created a cy-

clone of his own in the remaining three sets of the match to finally emerge smiling. However, he was the first to acknowledge the challenge that Tsitsipas had put him through. "These challenges bring out the best. You have to dig deep and I was not just ready to throw

BATSMAN NOT WORRIED ABOUT WEATHER

Rahane ready to face WTC final challenge

RESS TRUST OF INDIA

Southampton, June 13: India Test vice-captain Ajinkya Rahane has said that a batsman who loves challenge will relish the unpredictable conditions in England. He said the key to achieve success in England is to play straight and close to the body.

"Batsmen who enjoy batting in challenging conditions will relish in England. If you get set, England is very good place for batting. As a batsman, I have realised that in England, the more you play straight and close the better it is for you," Rahane was quoted as saying by 'bccv.Tv'.

"The 33-year-old middle-order batsman said India deserved to be in the WTC final on the back of a consistent showing in the last two years. "Two years we have played consistent cricket as a team and reaching the WTC final is a result of this. It was not easy because in Test cricket you have to give

"We've had some memorable performances in the last few months. However, we need to concentrate on the WTC final now and not think about what has already happened"

AJINKYA RAHANE

your best in every match," Rahane informed. "Overall the cricket we had played since the start of tWTC, from the West Indies, the team have performed as a unit till now," the Mumbai-based added.

The hype around the Test notwithstanding, Rahane said Virat Kohli and his men are taking the match as just another game.

"Yes, it is an important match but as a team we will take it as just another game. We got quality time here to prepare ourselves. Personally I am very excited to play the WTC final. We will just try to give our best in this match," asserted Rahane.

KIWIS WARM-UP FOR WTC FINAL DEFEATING ENGLAND

New Zealand end 22-year wait

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Birmingham, June 13: England endured their first Test series defeat at home since 2014 after meekly surrendering to New Zealand in less than an hour of play on the fourth day of the second Test at Edgbaston here Sunday.

Resuming the day on 122 for nine, England lost their final wicket to the very first ball of the morning when Ollie Stone poked Trent Boult (2/34) timidly to wicket-keeper Tom Blundell. The earlier damage was done by pacers Matt Henry (3/36) and Neil Wagner (3/18)

Brief scores	
England 303 and 122 (Neil Wagner 3/18, Matt Henry 3/36) lost to New Zealand 388 and 41 for two (Tom Latham 23 n o) by eight wickets.	

That left a paltry target of 38 to take the two-match series 1-0 and the Black Caps became the first away side since Sri Lanka seven years ago to win in England with an eight-wicket victory.

in the towel," Djokovic said after the match.

In the end it was a matter of a few points here and there. If Tsitsipas was winning the crucial points in the first two sets, then it was the turn of Djokovic to do so in the next three. In the process, the Serbian achieved the feat of winning all Grand Slam titles twice or more.

The 34-year-old Djokovic eliminated 13-time French Open champion Nadal in a semifinal that lasted more than four hours Friday night. That might be why the 22-year-old Tsitsipas had the upper hand early, and Djokovic looked drained for two sets.

Eventually, he started making fewer mistakes, got his best-in-the-game returning on track, served almost flawlessly down the stretch and was able to complete his sixth career comeback from two sets down - and second of the past week.



MOMENT TO CHERISH: New Zealand players are all smiles as stand-in skipper Tom Latham stands with series-winning trophy

Stuart Broad and Stone took a wicket apiece as Devon Conway nicked behind and Will Young dragged down his own stumps, but there was little more than ironic cheering from the stands.

However, Tom Latham (23 n o) and Ross Taylor (0 n o) took the Kiwis over the line. It was indeed a memorable day for Latham who was captaining the side in place of the 'rested' Kane Williamson.

GRASSROOTS LEVEL PROGRAMME

OFC introduce digital training for youngsters

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, June 13: ISL side Odisha FC (OFC) introduced Sunday the 'Odisha FC Digital Grassroots Academy'. This will be a unique programme which will help young footballers improve their skills and also help them learn the fundamentals of the sport.

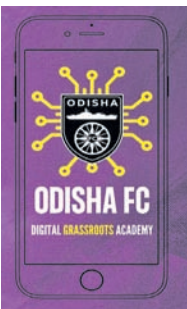
OFC have a vision regarding the development and promotion of young and talented players from Odisha and across India. The club want to make the programme accessible to every player in the state, OFC said in a statement and added that the programme will start June 20.

OFC's grassroots manager Suvam Das explained the benefits of the programme. "This pro-

gramme is to make the best of the situation we are in. It's a well-structured series of weekly webinars which will be followed by simple drills by Odisha FC stars to chal-

lenge participants. And our youth coaches Sandeep Alhan and Kirti Kashyap will monitor these skills to help them improve," Das said.

"I am delighted that 'Odisha FC Digital Grassroots Academy' is starting this month. It will be a unique way to impart knowledge and teach football skills to young footballers of Odisha. I am hopeful more and more promising youngsters will join the programme and improve their skills," club president Raj Athwal said in the same release.



Mankad inducted in ICC Hall of Fame

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Dubai, June 13: TThe ICC inducted 10 icons of the game Sunday, including India's Vinoo Mankad, into its illustrious 'Hall of Fame' with two players each from five eras, dating back to cricket's early days, making it to the list. The announcement has been coincided with the inaugural World Test Championship (WTC) final, to be played between India and New Zealand from June 18 in Southampton. "The 10 legends of the game to be inducted have all made a significant contribution to the history of Test cricket, and join an illustrious list of ICC 'Hall of Famers', taking the total number to 103 as a result of this intake," the ICC said in a statement.

Among other notable inductees are Kumar Sangakkara (Sri Lanka), Desmond Haynes and Sir Learie Constantine (both West Indies), Ted Dexter and Bob Willis (both England) and Stan McCabe (Australia).

Considered one of India's greatest-ever all-rounders, Mankad played 44 Tests, scored 2,109 runs at 31.47, took 162 wickets at 32.32. He was an opening batsman and slow left-arm orthodox bowler.