



WORDS OF WISDOM

Actor Kangana Ranaut has shared her insights about success and failure on social media

LEISURE P2



VAX HESITANCY

As per data, nearly 17% more men are partially or completely vaccinated than women in Jammu and Kashmir

TWO STATES P8



MERKEL DEFENDS IDEA

Angela Merkel defends the idea of holding an EU meet with Putin, arguing that it would offer an opportunity to all

INTERNATIONAL P10



The Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) successfully flight-tests a new generation nuclear capable ballistic missile Agni P from Dr APJ Abdul Kalam island off the coast of Odisha in Balasore. (STORY ON P5)

Statewide protests over Class X marks

STUDENTS, PARENTS RISE IN PROTEST ALLEGING DISCREPANCY IN CLASS X RESULTS

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, June 28: Parents and students across the state Monday rose in protest against the alleged indiscretions and discrepancies in evaluation of HSC matriculation exam papers and the marks given to students by the Board of Secondary Education (BSE).

Exam results were published through special evaluation criteria under which students were given marks based on their Class IX exam results and pre-board tests in Class X.

Forty per cent weightage was given to highest marks secured in Class IX examinations in each subject, while 60 per cent weightage was given to Class X pre-board performance. Two highest marks in all subjects out of three practice tests conducted in Class X were given weightage of 30 per cent each, sources said.

Parents alleged that schoolteachers had messed up with the marks even as students pointed out that they had done very well in Class IX exams but still got less marks in Class X final results that were declared recently. Many students alleged that they were declared absent in exams even when they wrote the tests. The school authorities had failed to answer why these students were declared absent when they had already given the exams.

Basudev Bhatt, chairman of Odisha Parents' Federation, said matricula-



Class X students and their parents demonstrate near the Board of Secondary Education office at Bajrakabati Road in Cuttack, Monday, alleging 'faulty' evaluation in the recently announced matriculation results

tion results were important for students as they will decide students' admission in colleges. "We demand a separate complaint cell for matric students and the complaints must be solved in 24 hours," Bhatt said. Meanwhile, the Board of Secondary Education Monday clarified that there had been no discrepancy in the marking.

President, BSE, Ramashis Hazra said the marking system is scientific and was based on a mathematical calculation. "The assessment was done on the basis of an analysis of four years. Following this, the marking was done in a graded manner. The 9th Std and pre-board marks were considered for preparation of the

merit list," the BSE president clarified. "We got consistency in marks and adopted a standard. We decided to go for the moderation principle. All this was in the public domain and was properly communicated," Hazra added.

Vice President, BSE, Nihar Ranjan Mohanty, said, "Marks of students have not been reduced. We have done this marking on the basis of a principle - alternative mode of assessment and the moderation policy in it." The same principle has been applied to each candidate. Anyone who is not satisfied with the results can opt for the offline exam which will be held soon, he added. A record 97.98 per cent students passed the exams.

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₹106crore GST fraud unearthed

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, June 28: The state GST enforcement wing Monday nabbed Smruti Ranjan Sahoo, proprietor of M/s SR Enterprises for his involvement in availing and passing of bogus input tax credit (ITC) worth ₹19.04 crore on the strength of fake invoices to the tune of ₹106 crore.

According to the officials, Sahoo, the mastermind, availed bogus input tax credit (ITC) raising fake purchase invoices in the name of 14 fake business entities at Angul, Jajpur, Rourkela, Jagatsinghpur, Bhubaneswar and Paradip. He was also found to have passed bogus input tax credit (ITC) on the strength of fake invoices to the recipients of both inside and outside Odisha against the sale of goods purchased fictitiously defrauding the state exchequer. The GST fake invoices worth ₹106 crore have been arranged/issued within a very short span of time.

Investigation revealed that Sahoo has submitted false information regarding the locations of declared

places of businesses and forged the rent agreement. His firm M/s SR Enterprises neither physically exists nor does any business. Purchase and sale transactions shown are all paper transactions. In order to regularise the paper transaction, Sahoo has routed the amount of purchase and sale through his bank account.

During interrogations, the mastermind admitted to have colluded in creation of the dummy firms for issue of fake invoices and passing of bogus ITC through them.

The offences committed are cognizable and non-bailable offences u/s 132 (1) (b) (c) & (1) of OGST Act, 2017 read with section 132(5) of the said Act and is punishable U/s 132(1)(i) of the OGST Act, 2017.

The state GST enforcement wing has so far arrested 18 fraudsters for their involvement in issuance of fake invoices. Registration of 19,539 dealers has been cancelled in 2019-20 and 2020-21 fiscal years so far by the state GST officers on the ground of their non-existence after field inquiry or due to non-filing of returns.

IRREGULAR by MANJUL



Has FM announced any tax relief to the President?

Twitter needles India again

AGENCIES

New Delhi, June 28: Amid a stand-off with the Indian government over compliance with new IT rules, the Twitter website is displaying a wrong map of the country that shows Jammu and Kashmir, and Ladakh as separate country.

The glaring distortion, which appears on the career section of Twitter website under the header 'Tweep Life', has triggered a heavy backlash from netizens who are demanding strict action against the microblogging platform. This is not the first time that Twitter has misrepresented India's map. Earlier, it had shown Leh as part of China. A mail sent to Twitter on the issue did not elicit a response.

The US digital giant has been engaged in a tussle with the Indian government over the new social media rules. The government has confronted Twitter for deliberate defiance and failure to comply with the country's new IT rules, despite repeated reminders.

Notably, the microblogging platform has lost its legal shield as an intermediary in India, becoming liable for users posting any unlawful content.

On Monday, social media users



slammed Twitter's gross misrepresentation of India's map, that appears on its career section. The global map, showing Jammu and Kashmir, and Ladakh outside India, triggered angry responses from netizens who are demanding stringent action be initiated against the microblogging platform that has flouted rules on multiple occasions in the past.

In October last year, Twitter came under heavy criticism and faced backlash after its geotagging feature displayed 'Jammu & Kashmir, People's Republic of China' in a live broadcast from Leh's Hall of Fame, a war me-

morial for fallen soldiers in the Union Territory of Ladakh. India has issued a stern warning to Twitter that time, making it clear that any disrespect of the country's sovereignty and integrity is totally unacceptable.

In November, government issued a notice to Twitter for showing Leh as part of J&K instead of the UT of Ladakh, as Centre lambasted the platform for disrespecting the territorial integrity of India by showing an incorrect map. Twitter's apparent heavy-handedness has come under government scrutiny when the former did not fully comply with the new rules.

Alert troops foil another attack by drones in J&K

AGENCIES

Jammu, June 28: A fresh attempt to attack a military installation with the help of drones was foiled by alert Army sentries at the Ratnuchak-Kaluchak station who fired at the unmanned aerial vehicles that flew away, an incident that came hours after an IAF station saw the first terror attack using quadcopters.

The first drone was spotted at around 11.45 pm Sunday followed by another at 2.40 am over the military station, which was witness to a terror attack in 2002 in which 31 people were killed, including 10 children. Officials Monday said that alert Army troops fired nearly two dozen rounds to bring down the drones hovering over its brigade headquarters.

"...Two separate drone activities were spotted over Ratnuchak-Kaluchak military area by alert troops," Jammu-based Army PRO Lt Col Devender Anand said. He said a high alert was sounded immediately and Quick Reaction Teams engaged the drones.

Infra boost to PHCs, CHCs

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, June 28: With an aim to enhance quality of healthcare services at primary and community health centres, the state government has decided to strengthen infrastructure in all such healthcare facilities in rural and urban areas across the state. Infrastructure for health diagnosis will soon be created in all Primary Health Centres (PHCs), Community Health Centres (CHCs) and Urban Primary Health Centres (UPHCs).

This was shared with the media after a high-level meeting chaired by Chief Secretary Suresh Chandra Mahapatra here Monday.

As per the recommendations of the 15th Finance Commission, the infrastructure development works will be taken up. About ₹2,454 crore will be spent for this purpose over next five years (2021 to 2026). The money will be spent through panchayats and ULBs.

Funds will be spent on installing equipment for various medical tests. As a result, people will be able to access modern medical services in their areas.

Emphasising the importance of primary health care in rural and urban areas, Mahapatra directed the directorate of National Health Mission (NHM) to prepare a detailed action plan for this purpose. He

LONG OVERDUE

- 15th Finance Commission recommendations in place
- About ₹2,454 crore will be spent from 2021 to 2026
- NHM directorate to prepare detailed action plan
- District level action plans to be ready by July end
- Funds will be spent on installing equipment for tests

asked concerned officials to make a detailed assessment on available healthcare infrastructure and prepare a district action plan accordingly, by the end of July.

It was decided to set up special committees at the state and district levels for proper implementation and supervision of the work.

The state-level committee will be chaired by the Chief Secretary while concerned Collectors will chair the district-level committee.

Representatives from the three-tier Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs), Urban Local Bodies will be included in the state panel. The district-level panel will have officials from Health & Family Welfare, Panchayati Raj & Drinking Water and Housing & Urban Development departments along with elected representative from PRIs and Urban Local Bodies.

MARKET WATCH

INDEX	VARIAION
SENSEX	52735.59 ↓ 189.45
NIFTY	15814.70 ↓ 45.70
DOLLAR	74.21 ↓ ₹0.01
EURO	88.66 ↑ ₹0.10
GOLD	₹47,054 ↑ ₹129
SILVER	₹68,121 ↑ ₹248

WEATHER

	BHUB	CTK
TEMP MAX	34.0°C	34.2°C
TEMP MIN	26.5°C	26.0°C
Humidity	91%	77%
Rainfall	22mm	12mm

Forecast: Generally cloudy sky

Nirmala Sitharaman offers loans

AGENCIES

New Delhi, June 28: Ever since the Covid 19 pandemic came over India early last year, Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman has announced a slew of financial packages to help people tide over the crisis.

Lakhs of crores of rupees are said to have been sanctioned by the government to help the poor and reboot the economy. However, the results of these so called economic packages on the ground do not vouch for it. People continue to suffer no end. There are no jobs in the markets. Banks turn away people going to them for loans.

Yet, this has not deterred the FM to come out with another economic package Monday. Her latest offers included a ₹1.1 lakh crore credit guarantee scheme for improving health in-

NO CHANGE ON GROUND

- Sops for micro finance credit users and tourism industry
- Atmanirbhar Bharat Rozgar Yojana stretched to March 31, '22
- ₹50,000 or guaranteed loan for creation of medical infra
- ECLGS scheme enhanced by ₹1.5 lakh crore to ₹4.5 lakh cr
- ₹1.1 lakh crore loan guarantee for Covid-affected sectors
- First 5 lakh tourist visas will be issued free of charge



frastructure, and enhancing the limit under the ECLGS by 50 per cent for the MSME sector facing liquidity crunch. Sharing details of the stimulus package, the finance minister said this comprises eight relief measures and other eight measures to support the economic growth.

She announced ₹1.1 lakh crore loan guarantee scheme for COVID-affected sectors, including health sector, which includes guarantee cover for expan-

sion or for new projects. Besides, she said, additional ₹1.5 lakh crore limit enhancement done for Emergency Credit Line Guarantee Scheme (ECLGS) scheme. The existing limit for ECLGS scheme, announced as part of ₹20-lakh crore Atmanirbhar Bharat Abiyan package in May 2020 was ₹3 lakh crore.

Last month, the finance ministry expanded the scope of the ₹3 lakh crore ECLGS by including conces-

sional loans to hospitals for setting up on-site oxygen generation plants.

Besides, the validity of the scheme was extended by three months to September 30 and or till guarantees for an amount of ₹3 lakh crore are issued. The last date of disbursement under the scheme has been extended to December 31. Under the ECLGS 4.0, 100 per cent guarantee cover was given to loans up to ₹2 crore to hospitals, nursing homes, clinics, medical colleges for setting up on-site oxygen generation plants. The interest rate on these loans has been capped at 7.5 per cent.

The Centre has decided to extend the Atmanirbhar Bharat Rozgar Yojana till March 31, 2022. The scheme was so far valid till June 30, 2021. With an approved outlay of ₹22,810 crore, the scheme entails subsidy for two years to new employees drawing less than ₹15,000 per month. **More P3, 11**

leisure



MEGAN FOX CELEBRATES 20 YEARS OF BISEXUALITY

Hollywood actress Megan Fox, in a new social media post, asserted that she has been bisexual for over two decades. Fox, who is part of the LGBTQIA community, celebrated her bisexuality by sharing a number of sultry selfies flaunting rainbow-tip manicure in honour of 'Pride Month'.

SHEERAN'S LIFE CHANGED AFTER HE BECAME A DAD

Singer Ed Sheeran says his lifestyle has completely shifted since becoming a father. "My lifestyle has completely shifted. Instead of going to bed at 6 am, I'm getting up at 6 am and earlier than that," Sheeran said on *New Music Daily*, hosted by Zane Lowe.



FORTUNE FORECAST

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ARIES
If you are a gadget freak, today you will have enough opportunity to flaunt your knowledge and impress everyone else. Students with a scientific bent of mind will excel in studies. Ganesh advises housewives to experiment with their own recipes, and not to worry about the oven - it will not burst.

TAURUS
This is not one of those easy and carefree days. You are in for a lot of mental anguish. The mental pressure you feel, you will realise, is of your own making. Unless you make radical changes in your basis outlook, mental tensions are likely to become an everyday affair. You need to face and accept things as they are.

GEMINI
Your desire to go travelling with your family members will receive an impetus today and you will set out to schedule your itinerary. It is a good time for travel and you will be able to more than satisfactorily execute your travel plans within your budget, says Ganesh.

CANCER
You will win over people with the gift of the gab. Your rhetoric will prove beneficial to you. You may get into an argument or have friction with someone in the in-laws' side. But keep your cool and face it bravely, so as to stave off mental depression.

LEO
Traders and businessmen will face heightened competition today. Financial losses are possible. It is not a good day for investments and speculations. Avoid heated discussions with people. Be cautious in all your dealings today, says Ganesh.

VIRGO
Your communication and creative abilities are your best weapons. You will be overflowing with zest for life and will exude cheerfulness. However, Ganesh warns that your creativity will bloom fully only in situations where there is no pressure or strain.

LIBRA
Ganesh says that you will be full of joy, enthusiasm and vigor today. Your knowledge will improve by being in the company of intelligent people. Anything that you take up today will have your luck or destiny supporting you. Ganesh wishes you success in all your undertakings

SCORPIO
Focus is the buzzword for you; your eyes should be set on the things you aim, advises Ganesh. You may even indulge into some kind of research work. Today, you may bump into an old pal with whom you relive those good old school days and rejuvenate yourself.

SAGITTARIUS
Being a part of all things bright and beautiful will remain the highpoint today, says Ganesh. You may don the hat of an activist and fight injustice and discrimination in the right spirits. Even if you are asked to conquer the world, you will be able to do it today, says Ganesh.

CAPRICORN
You have been waiting to hear some good news for long, and today is the day when the wait will be finally over. With your eyes firmly set on your goal, you will develop likings for your work. This will help you make plans and take decisions for the future, feels Ganesh.

AQUARIUS
Your plate will be full with plenty of work, and you will have no clue about how to handle all the chaos. Patience and organisational skills, your best qualities will help you sail through these difficult times, assures Ganesh. You will successfully wind up the day at work and geared up to party later in the evening.

PISCES
Today you will feel generous and calm. You will shower those in the family who are younger than you with this generosity and as a result be the object of their fondness. With a clear perspective you will be able to see things for what they are.



Priyanka goes all-white to celebrate 'Pride Month'

Mumbai: Actress Priyanka Chopra Jonas went all-white to celebrate Pride Month in New York.

Pride Month is an entire month dedicated to the uplifting of LGBTQ voices, celebration of LGBTQ culture and the support of LGBTQ

rights. Priyanka posted a set of pictures on Instagram. In the images, Priyanka is seen sporting an all white coordinate blouse with a thigh high skirt. She completed her look with nude pumps and gold accessories. "Sunday's OOTD. Feeling

the love in NYC Happy Pride! @anjula_acharia," Priyanka wrote as the caption.

Priyanka was last seen on screen in the digital film *The White Tiger*. The Ramin Bahrani directorial stars Adarsh Gourav and also features Rajkumar Rao in a

pivotal role.

She is currently busy with *Citadel*. Helmed by *Avengers* makers Joe and Anthony Russo, *Citadel* is a spy thriller series co-starring Richard Madden, and is billed as a global event for OTT.

Babil quits studies to pursue acting

Mumbai: Debutant Hindi film actor and late Irrfan Khan's son Babil Khan Monday announced he was dropping out of University of Westminster to pursue acting.

"I will miss you so much. My beautiful friends. I have a very tight circle here in Mumbai, literally 2-3 friends in total. You all gave me a home in a strange cold place and made me feel like I belonged. Thank you, I love you. Film BA, dropping out today, with over 120 credits cause I'm giving it all to acting as of now. Goodbye university of Westminster. I love you my truest friends," he wrote in an Instagram note. He also shared pictures of his college days, shooting with a film camera.

Babil announced the news a day after signing Shoojit Sircar's next film. He will soon make his debut with the film *Qala*, co-starring Triptii Dimri and directed by Anvita Dutt.



Kangana debates on success and failure

Mumbai: Actress Kangana Ranaut has shared some Monday wisdom about success and failure on social media.

"If you are a failure, people will abandon you, they will treat you badly and the world won't let you live, if you strive and thrive become very successful then they will get threatened and pull you down, isolate you and make you their target." Kangana wrote on Instagram story. She added: "Anyway you have to be alone 'cause they say 'winner stands alone', you will never be able to decide what is worse, success or failure."

Speaking about her professional life, Kangana's upcoming line-up includes *Thalaivi*, *Dhaakad* and *Tejas*. She recently announced she would be playing former Prime Minister Indira Gandhi in a film titled *Emergency*.



Rare works of Indian freedom fighters to go under hammer

Highlights from the auction include the carefully collated writings, opinions and thoughts of Mahatma Gandhi during his non-violence movement against the British rule

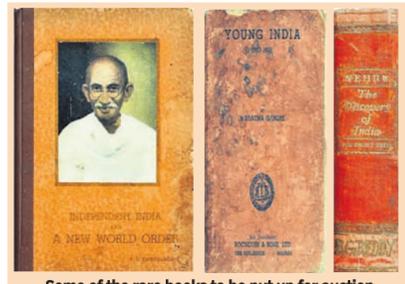
A collection of rare and undocumented books printed in India between the 1920's to 1960's including Mahatma Gandhi's *Young India* and titles written by India's first Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru will go under the hammer at the Prinseps Nationalism Book Auction closing July 15, the auction house said Monday.

According to the auction house, most of these titles 'have not been offered for sale before' and are 'first editions', with few copies having survived.

The auction offers a rare glimpse into pre-independence India, the pe-

riod which gave rise to freedom fighters, ideologies, revolutionaries and renowned leaders.

Highlights from the auction, says the auctioneer, include the carefully collated writings of Gandhi, documenting his opinions and thoughts while organising the non-violence movement during the British Raj (*Young India* by Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi, 1922) and comprehensive documentation of Gandhi's speeches during his struggle for independence (*Speeches and Writings - Fourth Series* by Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi, 1933).



Some of the rare books to be put up for auction

It says in a statement: The catalogue comprises 63 lots collectively ranging from the pre-independence to the post-independence period, bringing alive a plethora of stories and narratives of distinctive political lead-

ers, authors and philosophers. "These literary assets will not merely guide Indians but the wider diaspora of people in the world to observe the greater picture of India's struggle towards independence and freedom.

Also on auction will be *The Constitution of India* by Rajkamal publications, 1950, *Letters from a Father to his Daughter* by Jawaharlal Nehru, 1929 and *The Discovery of India* by Jawaharlal Nehru, 1946, says Prinseps.

According to Prinseps founder and this auction's curator Indrajit Chatterjee, "The Nationalism Book Auction brings a collection of important texts to the market for the first time. As an auction house with research as our foundation, I am proud to offer a rare glimpse into pre-independent India through fine texts penned by the well-renowned personalities of the Indian freedom struggle".

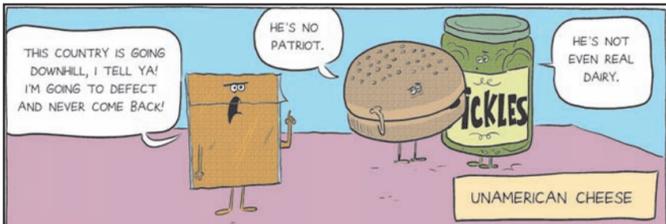
PEANUTS



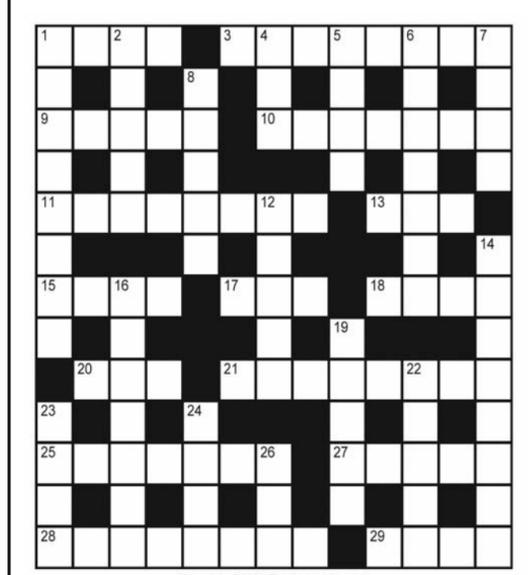
CALVIN AND HOBBS



BREVITY



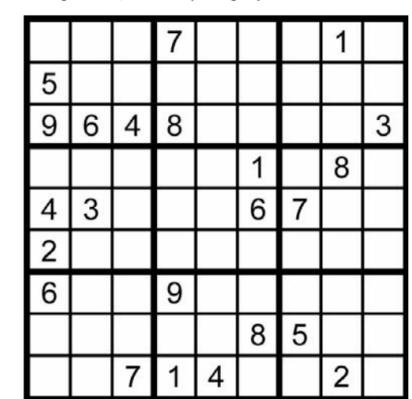
FUN post CROSSWORD



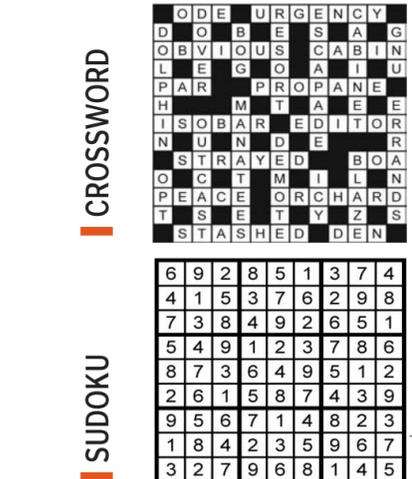
- Across
- 1 Weaving machine
 - 3 Bullfighter
 - 9 Family girl
 - 10 Rotate
 - 11 Canadian province
 - 13 Outback runner
 - 15 Scruff
 - 17 Flue residue
 - 18 Gateau
 - 20 Physics unit
 - 21 Fearless
 - 25 Kind of penguin
 - 27 Unit of petrol
 - 28 Disappoints (4,4)
 - 29 Scheme
 - 6 Quandary
 - 7 Casting need
 - 8 Bad impressions?
 - 12 Yellowstone sight
 - 14 Draw (4,4)
 - 16 Protective wall
 - 19 Hibachi
 - 22 Flower feature
 - 23 Bargain
 - 24 Desiccated
 - 26 Set-to
- Down
- 1 Pain reliever
 - 2 Classic theatre
 - 4 It fits in a lock
 - 5 Jealousy

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

42 SHOPS SEALED FOR VIOLATION OF COVID-19 NORMS

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, June 28: More than 40 shops in the Capital city were sealed and their owners penalised Monday for gross violation of Covid norms during a joint raid conducted by Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC) and Commissionerate Police.

As per sources, a team comprising officials from the BMC and city police conducted surprise raids in six zones and sealed 42 shops. While several mobile shops at Bapuji Nagar were sealed, about 18 auto-mobile shops along Cuttack-Puri Road were also sealed.

"During the raid today, we found many mobile phone shops opened at Bapuji Nagar in violation of lockdown norms and sealed them. A liquor shop was also sealed at Ashok Nagar and strict action will be taken against the owner. Police will continue to take action against the violators," said Manas Ranjan Garmaik, Zone-1 ACP.

Popular garment shop Maa Tarini Bastralaya at Kalpana Square was also sealed and fined Rs 75,000. Sources said the shop was found operating behind closed doors during the raid. While the shop was ordered to shut down till June 30, all customers in the shop were also booked for violating Covid-appropriate behaviour.

Sources at the BMC said that the civic body has decided to intensify its enforcement drive after several Covid-19 cases emerged in some particular areas this week.

Supply 6 lakh Covishield doses pronto, Centre told

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, June 28: The state government Monday urged the Centre to immediately supply at least 6 lakh doses of Covishield vaccine in order to ensure an uninterrupted inoculation drive in the month of June.

Health and Family Welfare Minister Naba Kishore Das has written to the Union Health Minister Harsh Vardhan, in this regard.

The state has administered 1.14 crore doses of Covid-19 vaccines and saved 2.9 lakh doses since January 16, 2021

As per allocation for June (2nd fortnight), the state has received 13,78,310 doses of Covishield which have been sent to all the districts.

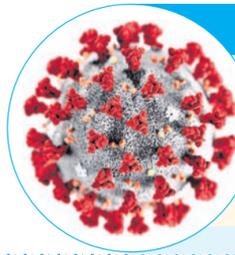
"As of today, we have a stock of 3.38 lakh Covishield doses, which will last for two days. Thus, Covishield doses will be out of stock in the state from Tuesday onwards. In this situation, it will not be possible to conduct sessions in the state after Tuesday," Das said in his letter.

Therefore, Das urged Vardhan to allocate additional 6 lakh doses of Covishield to the state for the month



NOBLE GESTURE

BJD workers pose at Jeevan Bindu, a blood donation camp, at the party office in Bhubaneswar, Monday



COVID-19 TRACKER

	INFECTED	RECOVERED	DEAD
World	18,19,75,799	16,64,71,190	39,41,190
India	3,02,79,331	2,93,09,607	3,96,730
Odisha	9,03,789	8,70,787	3,930



People queue up at a vaccination centre in Unit-IV area of Bhubaneswar

10 nursing colleges in state on the anvil

The Health minister informed the media Monday that his department has taken steps for establishment of one 60-seat nursing college each in 10 districts. The districts where these nursing colleges would be set up are: Mayurbhanj, Bolangir, Koraput, Balasore, Jharsuguda, Puri, Sundargarh, Angul, Keonjhar and Jajpur. Besides, a pharmacy college will be attached to each of the three existing medical colleges and hospitals in the state, Das said.

of June in order to ensure smooth vaccination sessions.

For July 2021, the Centre has indicated an allocation of 25.31 lakh vaccine doses, but no consignment has reached Odisha so far. Therefore, the state requested the Union Minister to provide vaccines in advance to prevent any event of stock-out.

Since January 16, the state has administered 1.14 crore vaccine doses and maintained wastage of 3 per cent while saving 2.9 lakh doses. Since June 21, Odisha is vaccinating an average of 3 lakh citizens per day and the state is having a capacity to vaccinate 3.5 lakh doses each day, the minister pointed out.

No student will be deprived of Plus II admission: Minister

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, June 28: Rubbishing the reports of lack of Plus II seats at various colleges in the state, School & Mass Education Minister Samir Ranjan Dash Monday said that no student will be deprived of admissions.

He said that depending on the situation the seats will be increased in the junior colleges.

Presently, there are 6,03,113 Plus II seats available at various colleges in the state, said Dash adding that the number of seats will be increased if required, as done in previous years.

The minister also said that the CBSE and ICSE results are yet to be announced. The decision will be taken as per the circumstances. Once the results are out, the students will seek admissions to various colleges.

Dash further said that while

the government had decided to announce Plus II results by the second week of August, it is trying to adhere to the directions of the Supreme Court to announce it by July 31.

The Council of Higher Secondary Education (CHSE), Odisha had said Friday that the results of the annual Plus II examinations, 2021 will be declared in the second week of August.

Meanwhile, several student organisations alleged that more than 1 lakh students will be deprived of Plus II admissions because of lack of seats in the colleges.

AIDSO's state president Ganesh Tripathy said that altogether 5,62,010 students have passed the HSC exam this year but there are only 4,60,000 seats available in Plus II streams.

"So, we have urged the government to increase the seats in the colleges," he added.

Seven cyber criminals arrested

Bhubaneswar: In a major breakthrough, the Commissionerate Police claimed to have arrested seven cyber criminals from different places of the state. According to sources at the Commissionerate Police, as many as six cyber fraudsters have been arrested from Balasore and Bhadrak areas. Sources claimed that police busted the racket while investigating into a complaint lodged by a woman at Sahid Nagar police station last week. The Commissionerate Police found that the fraudsters were making calls from a place in Cuttack following which a team of twin city police swung into action and arrested one accused from the Silver city. They also arrested six accused from Balasore and Bhadrak districts. The fraudsters had reportedly opened an office at Cuttack and were duping innocent people of lakhs of rupees on various pretexts like KYC updates, quick & easy loans and jobs.

DEVOTEES MOVE SC FOR RATH YATRA AT TULASI KSHETRA

POST NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi, June 28: Citing that the Kendrapara chariot festival brings different communities together, a petition has been filed in the Supreme Court seeking directions to the state government to permit the annual Rath Yatra of Lord Baladev Jew in Kendrapara district.

The petitioners challenged the June 23 order of the Orissa High Court that refused to stay the order of the Odisha government restraining the annual chariot festival in the state, except in Puri.

"Undoubtedly the Puri Rath Yatra is a global event drawing lakhs of devotees, but what the High Court has failed to appreciate is that the annual car festival of Lord Baldev Jew in Kendrapara also has a special spiritual and religious significance. Shree Gundicha Rath Yatra is usually observed for two days in Kendrapara, widely known as Tulasi Kshetra, while elsewhere it's a one-day festivity. Many Muslim devotees also take part in the Rath Yatra," the petition reads.

The petitioners contended that the Orissa High Court and the state government failed to assign any reason behind its decision of not allowing the chariot festival in Kendrapara. The petitioner said there are very less Covid cases in the district and Kendrapara is in green zone. The petitioner pleaded the apex court to permit chariot festival in Tulasi Kshetra at par with directions as has been issued for Puri.

Centre to provide free visas to 5 lakh tourists

POST NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi, June 28: In order to revive the tourism sector that has been ravaged by the outbreak of Covid-19, the Union government Monday announced that it would provide financial support to tourist guides and travel & tourism stakeholders. The Centre has decided to provide free visas to the first 5 lakh tourists once the international travel resumes.

During a press briefing in the national capital, Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman said that the government will provide loans to people in the tourism sector to discharge liabilities and restart businesses impacted due to Covid-19. The Union minister said that over 11,000 registered tourist guides and tourism stakeholders will be provided the financial support.

The Union government will provide loans up to Rs 10 lakh for travel and tourism stakeholders and up to Rs 1 lakh for tourist guides licensed at regional or state level with 100 per cent guarantee.

The Finance minister said that there would be no processing charges and foreclosure charges would also be waived.

According to the Centre, as many as 10,700 tourist guides recognised by the Ministry of Tourism and state governments will be covered under the scheme. Similarly, around 904 travel and tourism stakeholders recognised by the Ministry of Tourism will also be benefitted under the scheme.

Significantly, the Union government has decided to provide free visas to the first 5 lakh tourists, once the international travel resumes, with an aim to increase the footfall of tourists from abroad.

"Once visa issuance is restarted, the first 5 lakh tourist visas will be issued free of charge. The benefit will be available only once per tourist," the Finance minister said.

The Centre said that the scheme will be applicable till March 31, 2022 or till 5,00,000 visas are issued. The scheme will have a financial implication of ₹100 crore.

CAR FEST AHEAD



Chariot construction in full swing at Rath Yard in Puri, Monday

OP PHOTO

BJP slams govt over Covid-19 mgmt

BJD SAYS SAFFRON LEADERS ARE MAKING FALSE STATEMENTS IN ORDER TO ENCOURAGE THEIR PARTY WORKERS, WHO ARE IN DISTRESS FOLLOWING BJP'S DRUBBING IN WEST BENGAL

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, June 28: The Odisha unit of Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) criticised the state government alleging that the latter has failed to manage the Covid-19 crisis properly. This was revealed at the party's executive body meeting held virtually, Monday.

During the meeting, the party has passed various resolutions on political and social issues related to Odisha.

The meeting was held under the chairmanship of state BJP president Samir Mohanty while senior leaders including state-in-charge D Purandeswari, Union ministers Dharmendra Pradhan & Pratap Sarangi and party national vice president Baijayant Panda along with party MPs and MLAs attended the meeting.

The party has prepared the roadmap including strategy to counter the BJD-led state government during the next three months.

During the meeting, Union Petroleum Minister Dharmendra Pradhan urged all his colleagues to work as a soldier to bring real changes in the lives of 4.5 crore people of Odisha.



After the meeting, BJP leader Bhrugu Buxipatra said the government has failed in 'testing, tracking and treatment' to combat Covid. Despite severity of the Covid-19 situation in the state, testing has not been enhanced. The government has also suppressed the actual number of fatalities due to the virus, he alleged.

The state government has opened temporary medical centres (TMCs) utilising the Central grant during the first wave of the pandemic. However, no such centre has opened again during the second wave and the government is yet to disclose the money spent for this purpose,

Buxipatra alleged. Apart from Covid mismanagement, the party has passed resolutions for state government's failure in allotment of houses under Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (PMAY). The PMAY houses are being allotted to BJD workers while the real beneficiaries are deprived of the Central scheme, they alleged. To provide livelihood support to the poor during this pandemic, the Centre is allocating thousands of crores under MGNREGA. But, the state government is using machines in the works which has created jobless-

ness in rural areas, the BJP leaders further alleged.

The government has shown golden dreams to the migrant labourers, who suffered a lot due to the pandemic. But, nothing has been done for them till now, they alleged.

The party unanimously passed a motion of thanks for Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Pradhan for providing free vaccines, free ration and assistance to farmers.

Reacting on this, BJD spokesperson Elina Das said the BJP leaders are making such false statements to encourage their party workers, who are in distress following BJP's defeat in West Bengal.

Odisha has successfully managed Covid-19 as compared to BJP-ruled states like Uttar Pradesh, Haryana and Madhya Pradesh, she said, adding, the state government was also awarded by the Centre for its work in MGNREGA and rural housing schemes.

Making a mockery of the BJP leaders, the BJD spokesperson said the saffron leaders should be appointed as advisors to the Union government on Covid-19 management.

POST NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi, June 28: Raising concern over poor state of public health system in the country, Orissa High Court judge Justice SK Panigrahi Monday said that the courts have to take an activist approach to make healthcare a fundamental right.

The Orissa High Court judge stressed the need for building a stronger healthcare system with better capacity and interconnectedness. He cited the Supreme Court's 1988 ruling wherein the apex court had held that 'the government has an obligation to ensure that medical attention is provided to every citizen in the country'.

"The courts have to take an activist approach vis-a-vis right to health as fundamental right. We have to work towards a fairer health system that has explicit intentions to work towards a more inclusive and equitable healthcare system without any barrier of access due to cost, distance etc," Justice Panigrahi said.

Justice Panigrahi's statement came during the valedictory session of 'Public Health Law National Moot Court Competition' jointly organised by National Law University of Odisha (NLUO) and Public Health Foundation of India

'Courts' role pivotal in making healthcare a fundamental right'

JUSTICE PANIGRAHI ASSERTED THAT THE HEALTH SYSTEM VISUALISED FOR THE INDEPENDENT INDIA AND THE CURRENT SYSTEM ARE VERY DIFFERENT

Lack of political will resulted in failure of achieving the vision of comprehensive healthcare for all, he said

Stressing on the need of augmenting the health budget, Justice Panigrahi said that public health spending of the country is little more than 1% of our GDP which is one of the lowest in the world

(PHFT). He asserted that the health system visualised for the Independent India and the current system are very different.

"Currently, in India, much of our curative healthcare space is occupied by private sector (70-80%), and mostly through out-of-pocket expenditure," said Justice Panigrahi. Lack of resources and political will resulted in failure of achieving the vision of comprehensive healthcare for all, he added.

"This role division between public and private healthcare systems was not originally envisioned for India. One of the first blueprints of the healthcare system in our country in 1946 emphatically de-

fends the building of a universal (for all), comprehensive (covering a wide range of services) healthcare network in India, thinking of health as a right of all the citizens and the government as the main player. This document envisioned no citizen should be deprived of the healthcare needs..." (sic) Justice Panigrahi said.

Stressing on the need of augmenting the health budget, Justice Panigrahi said that public health spending of the country is little more than 1 per cent of our gross domestic product (GDP) which is one of the lowest in the world. This reflects our misplaced priorities, Justice Panigrahi said.

Collectors asked to proactively promote MSMEs

ALL DISTRICTS TO HAVE INVESTMENT PROMOTION AGENCIES BY COMING MARCH

Bhubaneswar, June 28: In a bid to boost rural economy, the state government has asked District Collectors to take proactive role in promotion of MSMEs in their respective districts. The government has already decided to set up District Investment Promotion Agencies (DIPAs) in all the districts to provide hand-holding support to the micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs). Chairing a high-level meeting on digital mode Monday, Chief Secretary Suresh Chandra Mahapatra said, "MSMEs are movers of economic growth and their promotion in the district will result in equitable growth." "The DIPAs will be dedicated towards facilitation and hand-holding of the micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs). They should operate as single-point-contact for all entrepreneurs and investors," he said. The Collectors were asked to provide decent office space in the Collectorate for setting up the DIPA.



The agencies will facilitate the MSMEs on project formulation, capacity building, financing, starting of production and market linkages. It would also facilitate the units for availing different assistances from government as per prevailing provisions. It was decided that DIPAs would

be managed by three professionals under the direct supervision of the respective Collector. Those would be set up in different districts in phased manner with feedback and learning about the functioning and outcome of the agencies from each preceding phase. It was decided to pilot the intervention in three districts—Ganjam, Sundargarh and Jagatsinghpur. Industries Secretary Hemant Sharma said that the first phase piloting could be started by the month of August. Then it would be extended to the districts like Angul, Balasore, Jajpur, Jharsuguda, Keonjhar, Rayagada, Sambalpur and others on the basis of feedbacks and learning from the pilot phase. Target was set to cover all districts by March, 2022, he added.



The Rasulgarh-Vani Vihar Road witnesses a usual traffic even during lockdown, Monday

OP PHOTO

Body of 49-year-old found in Capital city

Bhubaneswar, June 28: A 49-year-old person was found dead under suspicious circumstances on the outskirts of the city here Monday afternoon. The deceased was identified as Bhaskar Swain of Balanga area in Puri district. Police sources revealed that Swain worked as a peon on contractual basis at the office of Odisha Mining Corporation (OMC) in the city. Locals near Lingipur area under Dhauli police limits informed the police after coming across the body of Swain at around 3.30pm Monday. Subsequently, police reached the spot and sent the body to the Capital Hospital for post mortem. Police also found the tiffin box and bicycle of Swain lying near his body. Police suspected that Swain was on his way to his office on bicycle when he suddenly fell sick and died on the spot. They also claimed about finding some marks or evidence on his body pointing towards foul play. The family is yet to file any complaint alleging any mischief regarding Swain's death.

Sanjeeb Panda takes charge as CB ADG

Cuttack, June 28: Senior IPS officer Sanjeeb Panda took charge as the additional director general (ADG) of Crime Branch (CB) here, Monday. Panda, a 1994-batch IPS officer, had served as the state transport commissioner before holding several key positions in the state police. About his focus area in the premier investigating agency, Panda said he would prioritise curbing crimes against women and children. "We'll focus on curbing crimes against women and children. This apart, usage of forensic science

and modern techniques in crime investigation will be stressed," Panda said. When asked about the rising cybercrimes in Odisha, the senior officer said the CB would sensitise people on cybercrimes. "With the rising usage of the internet, Odisha has also witnessed a sharp rise in cybercrimes. We'll sensitise people on cybercrimes as it will go a long way in curbing the menace. Stringent action will be taken against the cyber offenders," he pointed out. When asked about the rise in drug peddling cases in the state, Panda, however, said he would comment on the issue only after going through the reports.

Minor rape victim yet to get compensation

Bhubaneswar, June 28: The district administration in Kendrapara seems reluctant to pay compensation to a minor rape victim despite repeated instructions by the National Human Rights Commission. Hearing a plea filed by rights activist, Sagar Jena, a livid NHRC Monday again issued a reminder to the administration to pay the financial aid to the minor victim within four weeks. The panel has warned the District Collector of personal appearance before the commission in case he fails to comply by next date. The 13-year-old girl was sexually abused by a 28-year-old youth as the victim's parents were away in Pattamundai area of Kendrapara in 2016. The accused allegedly posted the video of the incident on social media.

3,319 FRESH COVID-19 CASES, 43 FATALITIES IN 24 HOURS

Bhubaneswar, June 28: At least 3,319 more persons tested positive for Covid-19 in Odisha, which pushed the tally to 9,03,789, while 43 fresh fatalities raised the toll to 3,990, a Health department official said. Of the 3,319 new cases, 1,869 were recorded in quarantine centres and the rest were detected during contact tracing, the official said. Cuttack district reported the maximum number of fresh infections at 566, followed by Khurda at 440 and Balasore at 397, he stated. Taking to Twitter, the Health department said, "Regret to inform about the demise of forty-three Covid-positive patients while under treatment in hospitals." Khurda district, of which state

highest number of 5,283. As many as 8,67,402 patients, including 3,578 Sunday, have recovered from the highly infectious disease. Of the total 66,109 samples examined for Covid-19 Sunday, 3,319 tested positive for the infection, taking the daily test positivity rate (TPR) to 5.02 against Sunday's 4.98 per cent. Khurda has the highest TPR in the state of 11.8 per cent followed by Nayagarh with 10.5 per cent. Altogether 19 of the 30 districts in the state have TPR less than 5 per cent, while seven districts have between 5 and 7.5 per cent and four districts more than 7.5 per cent. Odisha has thus far conducted over 1.36 crore sample tests, the official added.

capital Bhubaneswar is a part, reported nine deaths, followed by Bargarh, Nayagarh and Puri at five each and Sundargarh at four. The coastal state currently has 32,404 active cases. Official sources said as many as 21 districts in the state have active cases less than 1,000 and five districts have less than 2,500 cases. Only four districts have active cases more than 2,500 with Khurda registering the

More trains cancelled

Bhubaneswar, June 28: To break the chain of Covid-19 infection, the Railways has decided to cancel more trains. As per notification, six trains will remain cancelled from July 1 to 14. The trains are Bhubaneswar-Bolangir-Bhubaneswar Special, Bhubaneswar-Kendujhargarh-Bhubaneswar Special, Bhubaneswar-Bhadrak-Bhubaneswar Special, Cuttack-Bhadrak-Cuttack Special, Cuttack-Paradeep-Cuttack Special, and the Cuttack-Bhadrak-Cuttack Special. Similarly, two trains - Bhubaneswar-Palasa-Bhubaneswar Special and Bhubaneswar-Bangiriposi-Bhubaneswar Special will remain cancelled from July 3 to 4 and from July 10 to 12, 2021. Another train Puri-Cuttack-Puri Special will remain cancelled from July 1 to 23 July from both the directions. Another train Puri-Angul-Puri Special will remain cancelled on 3, 4, 10, 11, 12, 17, 18, 20 & 21 July, 2021. This train will remain cancelled between Talcher and Angul and run between Talcher & Puri from both the directions on other days between 1 and 23 July, 2021.

Encouraging research top priority: New VSSUT VC

Bhubaneswar, June 28: Ganeshi Lal, Governor and Chancellor of Universities, Odisha Monday appointed Prof Bansidhar Majhi as the new Vice Chancellor of Veer Surendra Sai University of Technology, Burla for a period of three years with effect from the date he assumes office as such or until further orders whichever is earlier. In exercise of powers conferred by Sub-section (1) and (5) of Section 11 of Veer Surendra Sai University of Technology Act 2008, the Governor appointed Majhi. Majhi is presently working as Director, IIITDM, Kancheepuram, Chennai. He has more than 26 years of academic experience. He has guided 18 PhD scholars successfully and 70 MTech and 8 MTech (R) scholars. He has been awarded with Samanta Chandrasekhar Award in 2016 by the Government of Odisha.



Governor Ganeshi Lal Monday appointed Prof Bansidhar Majhi as the new Vice Chancellor of Veer Surendra Sai University of Technology

Talking to OrissaPOST, Majhi, who is in Chennai presently said "After taking the job my main focus will be to give importance to research and to motivate the faculties and students during this pandemic."

I will try to collaborate with other national and international medical and technological institutes and will also encourage more scholars to do more research on sectors such as health care and will motivate them to build the institute as a hub of research, he added. Majhi said that present faculty and scholars must be motivated to use their full potential as their work will shape the future of the institute. Earlier in January, Governor appointed eminent academician Professor Sanjiv Mittal as the Vice Chancellor (VC) of Sambalpur University. Mittal was working as the Professor of University School of Management Studies, Guru Gobind Singh Indraprastha University, Delhi. Governor also appointed Prof Kamal Jeet Singh as the Vice-Chancellor of Madhusudan Law University for a period of four years in April 2021.

Integrated headache clinic coming up in City

Bhubaneswar, June 28: Care Hospital in the city is coming up with an integrated headache clinic. Dr Mitalee Kar, a neurologist at Care Hospital in the city highlighted the causes and problems associated with different types of headache which has been a very common issue among people. "Headaches can be of two types, mainly primary and secondary. A primary headache is not a symptom of an underlying disease. One common type of primary headache is migraine. The secondary causes of headache often have features that resemble migraine, tension-type headache, or a trigeminal autonomic cephalalgia. Caution must be exercised and warning signs and symptoms of secondary headache must be evaluated," Kar said. According to Kar, the hemispherical headache which is often of throbbing quality and can be

associated with nausea, upset abdomen, vomiting with irritation to sound, light and strong smells. These often have identifiable stressors or triggers which we call as migraine triggers. It is more common in women and in urban population. It often causes considerable harm in quality of life due to the immediate effect of loss of concentration in the work at hand. A headache history is the most important aspect of the evaluation of a patient presenting with headache, and eliciting worrisome features with directed questioning is necessary. The history must be taken without assuming that key features will be volunteered by the patient. Since the headache needs multidisciplinary approach, the Care Hospital is coming up with an integrated headache clinic at Bhubaneswar to address the issue and it will involve the neurologist, an ENT specialist and an ophthalmologist.

BGU-ICAI webinar on chartered accountancy

Bhubaneswar, June 28: Eastern India Regional Council of the Institute of Chartered Accountants of India (EIRC ICAI) has recently organised a career counselling webinar on "Chartered Accountancy: a career option" in collaboration with Birla Global University (BGU). Chairman of EIRC ICAI Sunil Kumar Sahoo was the resource person for the webinar. He motivated and encouraged the young students with his rich experiences of practising for more than 28 years. BGU's Birla School of Commerce Dean, Samson Moharana, delivered the welcome address and highlighted the growing importance of professional education in the dynamic financial environment. He also proposed more of such academic collaborations with ICAI for the betterment of all the stakeholders. Susmita Sen, student counsellor, EIRC, ICAI made a presentation on the pathway of being a CA and unlimited opportunity of the course. The session was moderated by Neha Joshi, Assistant Professor, Birla School of Commerce, BGU.

187 students feted as IIM-Sbp celebrates annual convocation

Bhubaneswar/Sambalpur, June 28: The fourth and fifth annual convocation of Indian Institute of Management (IIM)-Sambalpur held virtually Monday saw felicitation to as many as 187 students, with the fifth batch having highest gender diversity among all IIMs. The fifth batch (2019-2021) has 46 females out of the total 95 students, sources said. JSW Group chairman and managing director Sajjan Jindal, who graced the virtual event as chief guest, hailed the premier institute's experimental learning. "IIM-Sambalpur has made a rapid stride to be a learning centre as it has been imbuing young

talent with experimental learning and orientation. IIM-Sambalpur director Mahadeo Jaiswal highlighted that the institution has performed well despite the challenges posed by the pandemic. "IIM-Sambalpur's performance in 2019 and 2020 academic years has been remarkable and momentous despite the disruptions caused due to the pandemic. We're proud of our graduates. We are confident that we have been able to mould the young minds in a way that today we are sending out responsible leaders with an entrepreneurial mindset," Jaiswal added. Other dignitaries who attended the convocation include Institute of Company Secretaries of India president CS Nagendra D Rao.



The Cuttack unit of CPI stages a demonstration near the Collector's office in the Silver City condemning the skyrocketing prices of commodities

OP PHOTO

CLASSIFIED AFFIDAVIT

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Illegal iron ore mining, transportation rampant in Joda

Poaching bids thwarted in Ganjam district

POST NEWS NETWORK

Joda, June 28: The price of iron ore in the international market has been on the rise and so is its illegal mining and transportation. In the mining areas of Joda in Keonjhar district such illegal activities are rampant.

The fact that over 50 trucks carrying iron ore mined illegally have been seized so far jointly by the police and Forest department in June this year alone has laid bare the volume of illegal iron ore transported from the region. All these trucks were seized from the areas that were leased for mining. With the seizure, it came to the fore that the transportation of iron ore was being carried out without approval of the Directorate of Mines, resulting in revenue losses of lakhs of rupees.

When asked, senior joint director, the Directorate of Mines, Bhubaneswar, Umesh Chandra Jena said the government has taken



Seizure of over 50 trucks carrying iron ore mined illegally by the police and Forest department in June this year alone laid bare the volume of illegal iron ore transported from the region.

Pilferage of lakhs of tonne of seized and unclaimed iron ores heaped at railway sidings under the Joda mining circle is also rampant as no one is there to look after these ores.

various steps such as i3MS and forming enforcement squads at the state level. Henceforth, more stringent steps would be taken to check illegal transportation of iron ores.

According to a source, the old lease holders of mines had excavated iron ores in excess of the

permitted level and are unable to show the volume mined in their records. As of now, these lease holders are showing the volume of mined ores as under the permitted limits and resorting to various irregularities to get approval from the concerned department. Going a step ahead, one mining

company is even transporting the iron ores mixed with earth known as run of mine (ROM) to its plant and using it for own purposes after processing. As per the law, if processed iron ores are transported, the government earns revenue. But in this particular case, the government is losing that revenue.

At the same time, since minerals are being transported to their own plants, many trips are allegedly being done with a single challan. Some miners are transporting the ores without approval only to avoid paying the auction premium.

In addition, pilferage of lakhs of tons of seized and unclaimed iron ores heaped at railway sidings under the Joda mining circle is also rampant as no one is there to look after these ores.

It is also alleged that some lease holders are showing that the ores mined in their mines are of poor quality. "How is it possible that the mines that once used to produce iron ores of 62% Fe quality are now producing 58% Fe quality? Only a high level enquiry can reveal the lease holders' designs and help the government to earn revenues from the iron ores mined there," observed a section of former lease holders on the condition of anonymity.

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Berhampur, June 28: Wildlife poaching attempts were foiled in two different forests in Ganjam district, officials said Monday. A 23-year-old man was nabbed from Bhalumundia hill in the Jagannath Prasad forest range in Ghumusar North division Sunday, they informed. The accused, identified as Sukuta Behera, is a resident of Durguripali village. Around two kilograms of GI wire, 30 glass bottles and dry wood were seized from him, said Range Officer Umakant Das. He was going to use the wire in the forest by hooking it illegally and kill wild animals. The man was caught red-handed, the Range Officer added.

In the other incident, around 15-20 armed people had assembled at Mahulia locality when the forest staff patrolling the area spotted them, an official said. On seeing the



forest personnel, some of them fled the spot. Two country-made guns and mobile phones were seized from the spot. We have registered a case and started an investigation to find them," the official added. He also pointed out that the miscreants can be traced through the guns they left behind in their bid to escape.

LOWER SUKTEL IRRIGATION PROJECT

Residents of affected villages asked to evacuate

Villagers alleged that the order is in violation of the Covid guidelines as it is forcing them to vacate their homes and villages when lockdown is in force in the area



POST NEWS NETWORK

Bolangir, June 28: Expediting the construction of Lower Suktel Irrigation Project, the district administration here has asked the residents of three villages, who have received compensation for their acquired lands in the second phase, to immediately vacate their homes and relocate elsewhere, a report said Monday.

The district administration issued the order Saturday making use of public address systems in Pardhiapalli, Koindapalli and

Khuntapalli villages, which are affected by the irrigation project. The order has given rise to anger and panic among the residents and also drawn flak from various quarters. The villagers alleged even before fulfilling many of their demands the district administration is forcing them out of their homes.

A jeep fitted with a public address system and with officials inside was seen moving around in these three villages urging the villagers who had received their second installment of compensation to vacate

their homes within a week and relocate elsewhere. This is the first time in two decades that the district administration has issued any such an order.

The order added that soon the administration will launch a drive in these villages to demolish the houses of people who had received their compensation in the second phase.

Meanwhile, villagers alleged that the order is in violation of the Covid guidelines of the state government as it is forcing them to vacate their homes and villages when lockdown is in force in the area.

Information available from the Lower Suktel Irrigation Project office said that over 70 per cent of the villagers in Pardhiapalli have received their ex-gratia and second installment of compensation.

Similarly, 26 per cent of the villagers in Koindapalli and 15 per cent in Khuntapalli have received their ex-gratia and second installment of compensation. Over 200 families out of 290 families in Pardhiapalli village have also received their compensation. In all, compensation worth over ₹7 crore has been paid in this village during last four months.

All the villagers who have re-

ceived their ex-gratia and second installment of compensation have been asked to immediately vacate their houses. Earlier, a similar move by the district administration during the lockdown had come under flak from various quarters.

Collector Chanchal Rana had assured then that the displacement of the villagers affected by the project will be considered on a humanitarian ground. However, the issue has surfaced again triggering tension and resentment in the areas after the Rehabilitation and Resettlement department of the Lower Suktel Irrigation Project issued the order for displacement, June 16. Later, the district administration announced the order through public address system, Saturday.

When contacted, Niranjana Rout, chief engineer of the irrigation project, said that 76 per cent of spillway work and 42 per cent of soil embankment work have been completed. He said that as the rainy season has already set in the state, it will be better for the residents in these three villages to vacate their homes and relocate elsewhere. Moreover, villagers who have received their ex-gratia and compensation amounts should leave their houses.

HUNGER PANGS



A woman farm labourer rendered jobless due to Covid pandemic collecting paddy from a heap of harvested haystacks to earn a livelihood in Jaleswar area of Balasore district

Agni Prime missile successfully test-fired

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Balasore, June 28: India Monday successfully test-fired its new generation nuclear-capable Agni Prime missile from a defence base off Odisha coast, an official statement by DRDO said.



The surface-to-surface ballistic missile has a range of 1000 to 2000 km, it said. The sleek missile, an advanced variant in the Agni series, was test-fired from a mobile launcher off the Abdul Kalam Island in Odisha at 10.55 am, said a DRDO source.

Its trajectory was monitored by sophisticated tracking radars and telemetry along the coast line.

The nuclear-capable missile, which met all mission objectives with high level of accuracy, has been designed and developed by the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO), the statement added.

Woman's body recovered in Kandhamal; family members allege murder

POST NEWS NETWORK

Khajuripada/Balaskumpa, June 28: Police Monday recovered the body of a woman lying in mysterious condition on the verandah of one Basishth Nayak's house at Bhalia Pulabhathi Shala village near Sidingi village under Khajuripada police limits in Kandhamal district.

The deceased has been identified as Soudamini Nayak (19), wife of Kuber Nayak, a resident of Sidingi village. While the husband and in-laws of the deceased alleged Soudamini committed suicide, her family members alleged that she had been murdered.

On the basis of a report lodged by the deceased's uncle, Khajuripada police registered a case in this connection and launched an investigation.

According to a source, Kuber, son of Nilakanth Nayak, and Soudamini, daughter of late Labanya Behera of Rupajhari village under Baniguchha police limits in Nayagarh district, were in love. They married six months ago. After the initial marital bliss, Soudamini's husband and her in-laws started torturing her physically and mentally, allegedly demanding dowry. Soudamini had informed her

Khajuripada police registered a case in this connection and launched an investigation

parents about the behaviour meted out to her by her in-laws over phone on several occasions, but her family members could not visit her due to lockdown restrictions.

On June 27, they received a call from Kuber saying their daughter had gone out of the house and committed suicide by hanging self. The woman's family members rushed to her in-laws' village and, on seeing the body, alleged that she had been murdered.

The deceased's uncle lodged a report with Khajuripada police station. Acting on the report, Khajuripada IIC Ramakant Patra, tehsildar Swapnila Naik, ASIs Basant Kumar Behera and Bikas Kumar Mallick and scientific team reached the spot Monday morning and sent the body for post-mortem.

Police said the post-mortem report will confirm whether it is a case of suicide or murder. A detailed probe is underway, it was learnt.

'Bagdi' gets a new lease of life

LONG-FORGOTTEN GAME SELECTED FOR TOYCATHON -2021 DUE TO BOLANGIR NATIVE'S EFFORTS

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bolangir, June 28: Already on the verge of extinction, Western Odisha's 'Bagdi' game has once again got a new lease of life. The game has once more come to the fore after it was selected to be a part of Toycathon-2021 by jury members. All this has happened due to the tireless efforts of Itismita Mishra, a native of Bolangir district, who presently works as a teacher in Assam's Bongaigaon town.

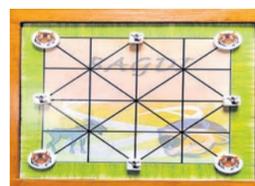
The objective of Toycathon-2021, an inter-ministerial initiative under 'AtmaNirbhar Bharata Abhiyan' floated by the Centre, is to crowd-

source innovative games and toys on the basis of India's civilization, history, culture, mythology and legends.

The event was jointly organised by various ministries including Education, WCD, MSME, Textile, I&B and the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT), and All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE).

For participation in Toycathon-2021, projects were invited from students, teachers, startups, researchers and professionals.

The selection of projects was held in four rounds. They were national level, final round, grand fi-



nale and power judging round. All the rounds were conducted on digital mode. Itismita, a TGT teacher at Bangaigaon Navodaya Vidyalay in Assam, formed Creative Masters' Team and deposited the project based on Western Odisha's forgotten game 'Bagdi'.

'Bagdi' is played by two players on a square design drawn on a board or floor with many rooms. While one player handles tigers, the second player controls goats and tries to save those from the carnivores. The innovation associated with the game prompted the national level judges to select it for 'Toycathon'.

A jubilant, Itismita said she is hopeful that the selection of 'Bagdi' will help the game get a new identity in future. Itismita's husband Manoranjan Padhi, a native of Bolangir district, also works as a teacher at Bongaigaon Navodaya Vidyalay.

Kendrapara sculptor wins hearts at NDA

A sculptor for 18 years, Trilochan Behera from Kendrapara district is on cloud nine ever since he received an order for making 25 statues of soldiers, which are to be installed at the National Defence Academy

POST NEWS NETWORK

Rajkanika, June 28: A sculptor for 18 years, 37-year-old Trilochan Behera from Kendrapara district is on cloud nine ever since he received an order for making 25 statues of soldiers, which are to be installed at the National Defence Academy in Dehradun.

These 25 statues will be displayed in such a way that they will speak the bravery of Indian soldiers, informed Behera, a resident of non-descript Nuagaon village of Nahuni panchayat under Rajkanika block.

He said he has been outing his heart and soul into it as this is going to be his first work to be displayed at a place like the NDA.

"Born in a potter (Kumbhar) family, I have grown up playing with clay and making idols. Initially I tried my hand at making idols and dolls of clay. My parents - Brundaban and Jyoti - never discouraged me. Rather they helped me



improve my skill," he said while working on a statue.

After completing his Matriculation from Shri Ramchandra High School at nearby Sapalang village, he did his graduation from Olaver College. After the 1999 Super Cyclone ravaged Odisha he had to step out of his village to help his poor father run the family.

Atharanal," he remembered wistfully.

From thereon, he travelled to Berhampur and worked for some days staying at a friend's house. He then visited several places including Mumbai, Delhi, and Mathura etc. and kept on honing his skill all the while.

He said his work was being appreciated by his employers as well as the visitors and the words of appreciation encouraged him. During this period, an opportunity came his way to work at the ashram of Jagatguru Kripaluj Maharaj in Uttar Pradesh and he worked there for 15 years.

"As days passed by, my popularity as a sculptor increased. In 2020 when I was staying in New Delhi, a contractor known to me offered me a job to make statues for the National Defence Academy. Without giving a second thought I accepted it. The offer came at a time when I was wondering how to proceed with

the project during the Covid-19 pandemic broke out. I followed my parents' advice and returned home," added he.

Back in his village, he talked to some like-minded and unemployed youths regarding his dream project and formed a team comprising 35 youths.

As of now, the work on the project is on in full swing with him overseeing it as a team leader. Regarding the work, he said, "The statues are being made of clay. Then coats of plaster of Paris will be given to them. The last stage involves converting them into fiber. The statues are being made in such a way that they will speak about the valour of our soldiers."

Meanwhile, the villagers are cock-a-hoop at their own Trilochan's work going to be displayed at National Defence Academy. "He may earn more name and fame and bring glory to the village, the district and the state," they wish.

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e-procurement notice No. - 06/OPHCW/2021-22 & 07/OPHCW/2021-22

No. CAD-504: **INVITATION FOR BIDS (IFB)**

1. The Chief Engineer (OSPH&WC), Odisha, Bhubaneswar invites Percentage rate bid in Double Cover/Single Cover system in ONLINE MODE only, for the work as detailed below:	
2. Nature of work	Building works
3. No. of Works	25 Nos.
4. Bid Cost	Rs.11,800/- (To be paid online) for Double Cover bid Rs.2,360/- to Rs.7,080/- (To be paid online) for Single Cover Bid Rs.1.00 Lakh to Rs.10.00 Cr.
5. Value of Tender	'D' Class to 'Super' Class
7. Availability of Bid Documents in the website	From Dt.29.06.2021 to Dt.14.07.2021
8. Last date/time of Receipt of Bids in the Portal	From Dt.14.07.2021 up to 5.00 P.M.
9. Date of Opening Bid	From Dt.15.07.2021 at 11.30 A.M.
10. The Bidders have to participate in ONLINE bidding only. Further details can be seen from the website: https://tendersodisha.gov.in . Any addendum/corrigendum/cancellation of tender can also be seen in the said website.	

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

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

OIPR-12025/11/0009/2122

FOCUS CRYPTOCURRENCY

IN BITCOIN WE TRUST?



Coordinated cross-border policies are needed to ensure that cryptocurrencies don't do more harm than good in developing countries. Unless both the public and private sectors embrace critical reforms, people and governments will increasingly be attracted by low-cost, high-risk, and murky alternatives to traditional banking

Bukele is right about the need to challenge this system, including by providing low-cost and low-risk alternatives. But Bitcoin is the wrong tool. Yes, it allows people to transfer value directly and globally, without the costly third-party intermediation. But its volatility makes it at best an asset – and an extremely risky store of value – rather than a means of exchange. The risk of a sudden drop in its price means that migrants and their families back home can never be sure about the amount transferred.

Rather than dismiss El Salvador's Bitcoin adoption as just another example of the crypto craze, we should reflect on why many people around the world are willing to embrace cryptocurrencies for non-speculative purposes. Perhaps the answer lies in the fact that the current international financial system serves them either poorly or not at all.

Innovations in digital money, such as the M-Pesa mobile money service in Africa, have made significant inroads into many developing countries' payment systems. But more needs to be done to provide the infrastructure and regulatory frameworks to support digital money. For now, the terrain remains patchy.

Coordinated cross-border policies are urgently needed to ensure that Bitcoin and its variants don't do more harm than good in developing countries. Unless both the public and private sectors embrace critical reforms and make basic banking services available to all at low costs, people and governments will increasingly be attracted by Bitcoin and other low-cost, high-risk, and murky alternatives to traditional banking.

The writer, a Professor of International Economics at the University of London's Queen Mary Global Policy Institute, is the author, most recently, of 'The Cost of Free Money'.

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Many regard the market for Bitcoin – the world's leading cryptocurrency – as a game of winners and losers played out among hedge funds, amateur investors, geeks, and criminals. The huge risk inherent in a highly volatile anonymous digital currency is best left to those who understand the game well, or who don't really care because they can mitigate the risk or absorb any losses. But Bitcoin recently has become more attractive for countries and individuals with limited access to conventional payment systems – that is, those least equipped to manage the underlying risk.

Earlier this month, El Salvador became the first country to adopt Bitcoin as legal tender, enacting legislation that will take effect in September. This means that Bitcoin can be used to pay for goods and services throughout the country, and recipients are legally obliged to accept it.

Salvadorans are not new to this type of monetary experiment. The US dollar became legal tender in El Salvador in 2001 and is the currency used in domestic transactions. At that time, the government of President Francisco Flores allowed the dollar to circulate freely alongside the national currency, the colon, at a fixed exchange rate.

Dollar advocates argued that the expected benefits of macroeconomic stability would outweigh El Salvador's loss of economic sovereignty, monetary independence, and even seigniorage – the difference between the cost of producing coins and banknotes and their face value. But purchasing power suddenly plummeted and left the economy even more dependent on remittances, which have averaged about 20% of GDP per year over the past two decades.

Using Bitcoin as legal tender will exacerbate the monetary constraints that dollarisation revealed – notably, the lack of an independent macroeconomic institu-

tional framework around which to shape domestic policies. Moreover, Bitcoin is much more volatile than the dollar: Between June 8 and 15, its value swung between \$32,462 and \$40,993, and in the period from May 15 to June 15, it ranged from \$34,259 to \$49,304. Such wide fluctuations – and the fact that they are entirely market-driven, with no scope for policymakers to manage the swings – make Bitcoin an unsuitable instrument for macroeconomic stabilisation.

El Salvador's president, Nayib Bukele, tweeted that Bitcoin will facilitate remittance transfers and considerably reduce transaction costs. The fees that migrants must pay to send their money home are scandalously high, despite many calls by the United Nations and the G20 to reduce them. According to the World Bank, the average global cost of sending \$200 internationally is approximately \$13, or 6.5%, well above the Sustainable Development Goal target of 3%.

Nonetheless, in 2020, low- and middle-income countries received

remittances of \$540 billion – only slightly less than the 2019 total of \$548 billion, and much larger than these countries' inflows of foreign direct investment (\$259 billion in 2020) and overseas development assistance (\$179 billion in 2020). Reducing the fees to 2% could increase remittances by as much as \$16 billion per year.

The large but globally fragmented remittance business relies on electronic transfers via commercial banks' payment systems, and banks charge hefty fees for the use of this infrastructure and the benefit of a safe and reliable international network. But high fees are not the only issue. Many migrants don't have a bank account in the country where they work, and their families back home may also be among the 1.7 billion unbanked people worldwide. Furthermore, some migrants may need to transfer money to countries that either are not integrated into the international payment system or are restricted in their ability to receive cross-border transfers – for example, Syria or Cuba.



Paola Subacchi

MANY REGARD THE MARKET FOR BITCOIN – THE WORLD'S LEADING CRYPTOCURRENCY – AS A GAME OF WINNERS AND LOSERS PLAYED OUT AMONG HEDGE FUNDS, AMATEUR INVESTORS, GEEKS, AND CRIMINALS

CPC at 100

The Communist Party of China (CPC) will turn 100 July 1. When the party was founded in 1921, the CPC had only about 50 members and China was then an impoverished and weak country being bullied by foreign powers. Hundred years later, the CPC today has over 90 million members and China occupies the position of the second largest economy of the world. After having created and distributed COVID-19 world over, China is ready to celebrate the party's centenary with fanfare for which elaborate arrangements have been made. It has become such an economic powerhouse that while developed countries such as the USA, Europe and Japan are reeling under the COVID-induced economic slowdown, China has emerged as the sole winner. It has achieved an economic expansion of around 2% in 2020 and is preparing to set a growth target of around 8% for 2021. The way it is progressing, China is going to overtake the US to become the world's largest economy by 2028, five years earlier than previously predicted. This is the latest estimate made by the UK-based Centre for Economics and Business Research (CEBR).

The CPC has planned the celebration in such a manner that it is using all its agencies to send the message across the globe that its political system of one-party rule is the best despite Western democracies' 'slander campaign' of serious human rights violation and repression of minority population in China. The CPC claims credit for what it calls 70 years' struggle since 1949 to establish a relatively complete and independent industrial and national economic development to significantly improve people's livelihood and boost comprehensive national power. Since the end of World War II, more than 100 economies have achieved national independence. However, only two economies grew from the low-income stage to the high-income stage from 1950 to 2008. They are South Korea and Taiwan. CPC asserts China can rightfully claim to be the third one by 2025.

It also believes developing countries can learn from it on how to run a party system as political parties in other countries have over the years been either fragmented, reorganised or withered away. But, CPC claims it has grown from strength to strength as it has its roots in the people. However, China's per capita income – about \$11,900 – is way behind that of developed countries such as the USA.

China's State Council Information Office issued a white paper titled "China's Political Party System: Cooperation and Consultation," elaborating on the distinctive characteristics and strength of the country's political party system. The white paper explains the system is the product of a combination of Marxist political party theory and China's reality best described by President and CPC General Secretary Xi Jinping as socialism with Chinese characteristics.

The 19th CPC Central Committee adopted a new strategy late last year formulated by Xi to make domestic consumption in China the main pillar of the economy so as to reduce reliance on external demand. The strategy envisions a future global economy in which China does not rely on the world but the world cannot stand without China. The strategy's purpose, as summed up by Xi, is to increase the dependence of international supply chains on China and establish powerful retaliatory capabilities against foreign powers that would try to cut supplies.

The new strategy was adopted as Xi seems to be convinced that the US under Joe Biden would decouple its economy from China's. At any rate, the world powers are eyeing with suspicion China's expansion in the South China Sea and the Asia-Pacific region.

WISDOM CORNER

- The whole secret of a successful life is to find out what is one's destiny to do, and then do it.** HENRY FORD
- Do all the good you can, for all the people you can, in all the ways you can, as long as you can.** HILLARY CLINTON
- Life imposes things on you that you can't control, but you still have the choice of how you're going to live through this.** CELINE DION

WORDSWORTH

Cad

If ever any person justified this epithet for a man who behaves dishonourably, especially towards a woman, it was Major-General Sir Harry Paget Flashman, VC, KCB, KCIE. George MacDonald Fraser, who died in January 2008, borrowed the fictional bully of Tom Brown's Schooldays and made him the hero of a series of novels. Their conceit was that Flashman ended his life as a famous and highly decorated soldier, though by his own admission he had throughout been a scoundrel, cheat, lecher, poltroon and cad. Cad is the classic British contemptuous epithet of the nineteenth century. It appears, for example, in Jerome K Jerome's Passing of the Third Floor Back: "That you and your wife lead a cat and dog existence is a disgrace to both of you. At least you might have the decency to try and hide it from the world – not make a jest of your shame to every passing stranger. You are a cad, sir, a cad!" Its history is as weird as one might like. The word started life as cadet, either a military trainee or a member of a younger branch of a family. That developed into caddie, now solely a golfer's bag carrier, but in the eighteenth century any lad or man who hung about in the hope of getting casual work as an errand-boy, messenger or odd-job man. Both cadet and caddie were shortened to cad. Early on – for reasons unknown – it had the sense of an unbooked passenger who had been picked up by the driver of a horse-drawn coach for personal profit. By the early 1830s, it had come to mean the conductor of one of those new-fangled London omnibuses, the man who rode inside to take the fares. Might the job have been one that was taken as casual employment by caddies? My references don't say. In 1895, George Augustus Sala commented in London Up to Date: "An omnibus conductor, nowadays, would, I suppose, were the epithet of 'cad' applied to him, resent the appellation as a scandalous insult; and, indeed, 'cad' has come to be considered a term of contempt, now extended to any mean, vulgar fellow of whatever social rank he may be."

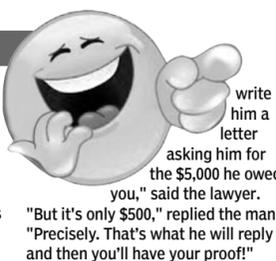
Cadge

In falconry, a cadge is a frame on which hawks are carried. In shape, it's traditionally a square, padded wooden frame on which the hooded hawks perch; it's hung from a man's shoulders by straps. Nobody is entirely sure where its name comes from, but the experts believe it was an alteration of cage under the influence of the old verb to cadge, meaning to carry things.

LOL

Loan repayment

A man went to his lawyer and told him, "My neighbor owes me \$500 and he won't pay up. What should I do?" "Do you have any proof he owes you the money?" asked the lawyer. "Nope," replied the man. "OK, then



asking him for the \$5,000 he owed you," said the lawyer. "But it's only \$500," replied the man. "Precisely. That's what he will reply and then you'll have your proof!"

SPECTRUM COVID INOCULATION

Vaccine cocktail: A conundrum



N Soumik

EXPERTS BELIEVE THAT MIXING OF VACCINES PREPARES THE IMMUNE SYSTEM AGAINST A WIDER RANGE OF THREATS INCLUDING NEW VARIANTS

An unprecedented incident took place in Siddharthnagar district of Uttar Pradesh, around the third week of last month, wherein at least 20 elderly people of Avadikala village were accidentally administered with two doses of different vaccines. Reportedly they had first received a dose of Covishield and then a dose of Covaxin. CMO Siddharthnagar, Sandeep Chaudhary has made his statement regarding the incident. He stated that the mistake was a negligence of the medical staff and that it was totally unintentional. The government or the Union Health Ministry released no such guidelines that supports the vaccine cocktail theory and has also requested citizens not to propagate confusion amid the ongoing fierce battle with the second wave of the pandemic.

Until now, all twenty, those who were the victims of vaccine mix and matching are healthy and have not reported any side effects, though they are scared, lest it precipitated any future bad results. This incident might be a mistake, but has evidently become an advent of intense debate amongst doctors and scientists; posing the question whether the mix and matching of vaccines is viable. If we go down the history lane, im-

munisation programmes against ebola, hepatitis, polio and many other diseases used different vaccinations to improve compatibility. It's not a new thing we are discussing, but yes, in the germane of Covid-19, it's a new thing. Let's know and get an insight into what is 'vaccine cocktail'. It's a process of interchangeability of different vaccines. Not necessarily taking the subsequent dose of same vaccine as the initial dose. Studies on it have found that mixing and matching could potentially lead to a robust immune response against the virus, compared to the two doses of the same vaccine, by strengthening the antibodies in our body.

Studies are underway around the world in full swing to determine whether mixing doses of different vaccines are compatible or not. Experts believe that mixing of vaccines prepares the immune system against a wider range of threats including new variants. We have accounts of many countries giving its nod to the vaccine cocktail approach. For example, countries like Canada, France, Spain and many others have the nod for using a different vaccine for second dose if the first dose inoculated is AstraZeneca vaccine. Oxford found in an experiment on mix and match of vaccines

conducted in UK last month, that taking AstraZeneca vaccines followed by a Pfizer shows mild to moderate post-vaccination symptoms. Also, another study is on roll in the UK, monitoring the effects of different combinations of Pfizer, Moderna, AstraZeneca and Novavax vaccines on volunteers to check the compatibility. A Spanish study had conducted an experiment involving 600 volunteers, from which 400 were administered with 1st dose of Covishield and second dose of Pfizer in 8 weeks gap. The result showed that the volunteers produced higher levels of antibodies compared to others. Russian vaccine Sputnik V is a combination vaccine by its design and, therefore, it has one of the highest efficacies – i.e. 91.6%.

Several European countries are now advising its younger group of people to take up AstraZeneca vaccines as the first dose and an mRNA vaccine, mostly of Pfizer's as the second dose. However, the UK and the US have hitherto warned against mixing and matching unless it's unavoidable. As seen, they are sitting on surplus doses of vaccines; therefore it's not a worry for them. But low-mid income countries are facing the worst. The scarcity of vaccines and delayed vaccination may lead the

whole effort to futility. Because, experts have warned that if vaccination is not done within speculated time, there's high probability that the new variants would not be neutralised by the contemporary vaccines.

India however, like always, has played the safe side. The government has made it clear that it won't change its vaccine protocol until solid results of scientific studies come up. But India is not far behind. Dr NK Arora, chairman of Covid-19 Task Force under NTAGI, has told the media that India is soon likely to start experiment and monitor the feasibility of interchangeability of different Covid-19 vaccines. The experiment will be conducted on a trial basis and if the results are positive, we can expect the Health Ministry to possibly consider taking vaccine cocktail into its vaccine protocol. Personally, I'm neither in support nor do oppose the approach but totally with the scientific approach. But since our country has a gigantic obstacle to vaccinate its population in lesser time, it is necessary that the study bear fruitful results so that we can maximise our inoculation.

The writer is an ex-student of Sainik School Bhubaneswar.

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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End child labour

Sir, A report by the International Labour Organization and UNICEF shows a sharp rise in children aged 5 to 11 years being forced to work over the past four years. It is worrisome that more and more children are being pushed into jobs that are harmful to them. The report shows that almost 1 in every 10 children is subjected to child labour worldwide. Another nine million children are at risk of being pushed into child labour by the end of 2022 due to the Covid-19 pandemic. The study also finds that global fight against child labour has stopped in two decades and it puts the international community's goal of ending child labour at risk. According to the report, Covid-19 pandemic has a severe effect on child labour. Nine million more children are at risk of being pushed into child labour by the end of 2022. If immediate action is not taken, this number could rise to 46 million. Loss of jobs due to the pandemic is forcing families to turn to child labour for livelihood. Closure of schools has led to children working for long hours or in worse conditions. According to UNICEF Executive Director, actions must be taken to get children out of workforce and send them school. Families must be helped so that they can avoid making the choice of child labour.

Pointless apology

Sir, an integral part of our VIP culture is stopping traffic on public thoroughfares when an undeserving member of their tribe happens to be passing by, ostensibly for security reasons. Apart from satisfying their bloated ego, it is also a prerequisite which they are privileged to enjoy, even in a democracy. So to hell with the critical patient gasping for breath in an ambulance or an expectant mother requiring immediate delivery, who are stuck in such blockades and die or miscarry before reaching the hospital. The President and his entourage caused just this in Kanpur when a critical middle aged woman met an untimely death. Apologies from the police and standard tweets of sympathy by the President are hardly of any consolation or consequence to those who lose their loved ones during such mindless acts which does not happen in any other country except ours. There has to be a change in mindset which seems highly unlikely in our country.

Venu GS, KOLLAM

Bhaskar Roy, NEW DELHI

PERILOUS JOURNEY

Balasore residents want border routes sealed

RELAXATION OF RULES BY ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICIALS FLYED

POST NEWS NETWORK

Jaleswar, June 28: The porous village routes in Balasore district connecting West Bengal were sealed off during the second wave of Covid-19. However, the areas where barricades and check posts had been put up are lying unguarded now. This has created apprehension among the local residents here. They are unhappy that the local administration has let its guard down now even as discussions about the third wave grow.



The routes connecting Balasore district to different parts of West Bengal had been sealed during the early stages of the second wave of the Covid-19 pandemic. The number of new infections had started going up drastically which prompted the district administration to implement strict measures. Checking at the Laxmannath toll plaza on National Highway-60 was also intensified. However, all that has considerably eased now.

Even though the number of daily new infections have started decreasing, the pandemic situation in the district is still grim. So locals said that restrictions are still needed.

Sources said that taking advantage of the relaxations infected persons from the neighbouring state are slipping into the district. The barricades put up at Hatapada on Jagannath Sarak, at the toll plaza on NH-60, Ambaliath-Solpata Road and Sugo-Matipura Road are currently not manned by police personnel. So vehicles from West Bengal are easily entering Odisha, locals said.

Besides, people from both sides are attending weekly markets held at places close to the border areas.

They are also taking part in social functions. In most cases Covid-19 protocols like wearing masks and maintaining social distancing are not being followed.

"Because of these factors, the number of Covid-19 cases in Jaleswar town is increasing," worried local residents alleged.

"At a time when the predicted third wave and Delta plus variant are a cause of concern and Covid-19 situation is still grim in the district, it is time for the police to intensify patrolling and take stringent action against Covid-19 violators," they added.

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Slum women walk perilously on a railway track to collect drinking water for their homes at Nuapada under Loisingha block of Bolangir district

Bank employee arrested for fraud in Dhenkanal town

Fake credit cards used to swindle lakhs of rupees of account holders



POST NEWS NETWORK

Dhenkanal, June 28: Police arrested Monday a bank official for allegedly swindling quite a few customers, lakhs of rupees. The employee used fake credit cards to achieve his goals. The credit cards were made in the names of account holders and those were then used to withdraw hefty sums. The accused was identified as Manoj Patnaik, a business devel-

opment representative of credit cards in the bank. The matter came to fore after a customer of the bank drew the attention of the authorities over his credit card bill which amounted to over ₹3,00,000. The man lodged a complaint at the Dhenkanal Town Police Station in this regard.

The bank official is also alleged to have swindled around ₹70,000 in the name of another account holder. The matter came to fore after the account holder received a notification directing him to repay the credit card bill issued in his name. Police during investigation, found the official involved in both the cases.

A complainant has alleged that he received a notification a few days back about pending credit card bills. He was also getting calls asking him to clear his dues. When he visited the bank, he found that the accused had been using a credit card with his name. He had also withdrawn money with it. A senior bank official said that exemplary action will be taken against the accused. Sources said that another man had complained that a credit card was issued in his name without his knowledge and ₹3,00,000 withdrawn with it. IIC Namita Nayak of Town Police Station here informed that a number of complaints have been lodged against the accused and they were probing each carefully.

Case lodged for power theft in Jharsuguda dist

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, June 28: In order to curb rampant power theft by unauthorised usage and metre bypass in different parts of Western Odisha, vigilance and distribution teams of TPWODL have been conducting raids at different villages. The company said in a press release Sunday that it has lodged a case at Kolabira police station vide FIR No: 0080, dated 21.06.2021 under section135 of Electricity Act 2003 against a person found guilty of power theft. It said police have started investigation and initiated action against the accused.

The company also said that raids will now be conducted on a regular basis to control power theft and revenue leakage menace

The company said that the accused in Singhbahal village under Jharsuguda district, has been running a rice mill and also using electrical gazettes in his home through unauthorised connection from the nearby III- phase electricity pole. The company also said that raids will now be conducted on a regular basis to control power theft and revenue leakage menace. TPWODL has requested all consumers to regularise their residential and/or commercial connections. It has also asked consumers to change defective metres by reporting the matter to their section and sub-division offices.

'Mo Nibedan' resumes in Ganjam district

POST NEWS NETWORK

Chhatrapur June 28: The public grievance hearing programme 'Mo Nibedan' initiated by Ganjam District Collector Vijay Amruta Kulange had been stopped for the last couple of months due to the second wave of Covid-19 pandemic. However, it resumed Monday as the daily new Covid cases continued to decline in the district.

The programme was conducted over video-conferencing with Kulange connecting to a Rangeilunda block panchayat-level meeting.

Locals informed the Collector about their problems and grievances. The officers present had to answer various questions put up by the people.

Henceforth, the district- and block-level hearings will be held every Monday and Saturday respectively, informed Kulange.

The 'Mo Nibedan' programme will help address people's problems. People can lodge their complaints with the authorities without visiting any office.

Notably, Ganjam district had been a Covid-19 hot spot during the first wave, but the situation was brought under control by undertaking various measures.

The district Monday reported 18 fresh cases and three deaths, taking the tally and death toll to 33,008 and 330 respectively.

While 32,545 patients have already recovered from the disease, the number of active cases stands at 125.

Dongrias get crumbs as AP traders reap profits

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bissamcuttack, June 28: The bumper harvest of pineapple in the Niyamgiri hill in Rayagada district is no longer a cause of joy for the Dongria Kondhs. With lockdown and shutdown restrictions in place and no cold storage facility or food processing unit nearby, they are ending up getting the crumbs, while the traders and middlemen from neighbouring Andhra Pradesh are laughing all the way to the banks.

There are 65 villages with a population of over 6,000 under Bissamcuttack block in Rayagada district. Of them, over 700 families earn their livelihood by selling vegetables and minor forest produce. Most of the inhabitants are Dongria Kondhs living in 23 villages of Kurli panchayat, Kinjamjodi village of Chanchadaguda panchayat, some villages of Daliakuji panchayat in Bissamcuttack block and some villages of Munikhole panchayat in Muniguda block.

During this time of the year, huge quantities of pineapples are harvested here. Since the climate here is conducive for farming pineapples, on an average around



According to information shared by Dongria Kondh Development Agency at Chatikana, over 300 MTs of mangoes, over 200 MTs of oranges and over 28,00,000 pineapples are harvested in Niyamgiri areas every year

28,00,000 pieces of pineapple are harvested from 2,000 acres of land.

Besides pineapples, they also cultivate and sell turmeric, ginger, arrowroot, plantain, jackfruit and tamarind. In addition, they also manufacture brooms from forest grass. According to information shared by Dongria Kondh Development Agency (DKDA) at Chatikana, over 300 MTs of mangoes, over 200 MTs of oranges and over 28,00,000 pineapples are harvested in Niyamgiri areas every year.

Generally, traders from Chhattisgarh, Maharashtra, Gujarat, Delhi and different parts of Odisha purchase these produces from the Dongria Kondhs

Generally, traders from Chhattisgarh, Maharashtra, Gujarat, Delhi and different parts of Odisha purchase these produces from the Dongria Kondhs.

This season, the Dongria Kondhs were hopeful of a good earning. However, the second wave of Covid-19 has dashed their hopes to the ground. Owing to the restrictions, neither are the regular traders from outside the state able to come to the area to buy their produces nor are they able to sell them in the local markets.

Meanwhile, the traders from Andhra Pradesh are cashing in on the situation. They are procuring the pineapples and other produces at throwaway prices and selling those in their state, earning huge profits in the process.

The Dongria Kondhs said they are forced to sell their produces at the price offered by the traders from Andhra to earn at least something than nothing because the shelf-life of pineapples is just one week and there is no cold storage facility in the region.

When contacted, deputy head, Odisha Rural Development and Marketing Society (ORMAS), Manoj Kumar Patra said some traders from Delhi recently visited the area and examined the quality of the pineapples grown by the Dongria Kondhs. "At present, pineapple is sold for ₹25 a piece here. The traders have asked for ₹18 a piece. Efforts are on to send the pineapples to Delhi after the price of the fruit drops here."

Notably, SC and ST Development Minister Jagannath Saraka, during his recent visit to Bissamcuttack, held a discussion with Dongria Kondhs to take stock of the problems faced by them.

POLITICAL PROTEST



Members of Communist Party of India (Marxist) stage an agitation over hike in fuel, edible oil prices and other issues at Vedavyas near Rourkela, Monday

Problems plague Jagatsinghpur sub-jail

POST NEWS NETWORK

Jagatsinghpur, June 28: The Jagatsinghpur sub-jail at Alipingal in the district is suffering from serious security lapses and is open to influence from outside, a report said.

There is road passing next to the south boundary wall of the prison. It has turned out to be quite useful for the prisoners to connect to the outside world. Associates of the convicts regularly come close to the wall and throw inside all types of material and contraband items like mobile phones,

ganja and other forms of narcotics. This has been going on for many years now. With the help of mobile phones, prisoners are able to keep in touch with the outside world and carry on their criminal activities.

There are a number of reasons why such activities are continuing. Prison authorities are yet to install mobile phone jammers within the premises. The prison also lacks watch towers to keep a proper watch on the inmates who carry out their criminal activities with impunity. Sources said the Jagatsinghpur sub-jail is spread



over five acre of land and has the capacity to house 176 prisoners including 167 males and nine females. Currently, 161 prisoners are lodged in the jail.

The jail has seven male and one female ward and four male and one female cell. Some of the in-

mates have been convicted of heinous crimes. Yet their activities are not monitored in a proper manner by the authorities.

The road to the south of the jail is used by the residents of Nauangan block as well as 50 other villages to commute to their destinations.

The henchmen and associates of the criminals come to side of the road when it gets deserted. They throw various items over the wall for their associates. Even though at times, these are confiscated by the authorities, on most occasions they find their way into the hand of the inmates. Local intelligentsia has demanded for a permanent solution to the problems. They claimed that the compound wall is only seven feet high. They feel if the height is increased substantially, it will prevent the supply of materials into the jail. Also the presence of a jammer will pre-

vent mobile connection. Two watch towers should be constructed for keeping a watch on the prisoners. Some of them also suggested that CCTV cameras should be installed within the prison premises to watch the activities of the inmates.

The lone dispensary in the jail premises providing healthcare to the inmates should be upgraded, former jailor Rabinranath Behera said. When contacted, jailor Ratikant Shukla admitted to the charges and assured to draw the attention of the higher authorities to resolve these problems.

RAISING MYTHS

Vax hesitancy high among J&K women



Very few women in the villages of Kashmir are getting themselves vaccinated against Covid-19 as many believe it can cause problems in menstruation, pregnancy and fertility

lage in south Kashmir's Shopian district has been consistently hearing negative comments regarding the Covid vaccine, especially from other married women. "They say if women take a dose of the vaccine, it will create problems in pregnancy. Women won't conceive then," she said, sounding concerned.

Such comments have prevented her from taking the jab so far. Talk about the multiple benefits of the vaccine, and she still isn't sure. "But who can guarantee our safety?" she questioned.

(CDC) recently put out a statement regarding pregnant women in which they said that pregnant women are at a higher risk of Covid-19 infection and one way to avoid serious implications of Covid-19 is to take the vaccine. The CDC also states that 'Based on how these vaccines work in the body, experts believe they are unlikely to pose a risk for people who are pregnant. However, there is currently limited data on the safety of Covid-19 vaccines in pregnant people.'

Experts believe that rumours have played a crucial role in the behaviour of women and men in Kashmir towards vaccination. There are concerns of menstrual problems, infertility and high risk in pregnancy post-vaccination.

In the villages of Pulwama, about 21 km from Shopian, vaccination drives have been going on for nearly two months now. People are being vaccinated in many villages like Palpora, Chatripora and Trichal.

Najma Parvaiz, a 25-year-old field worker from Trichal village, who is part of the drive, has been going door to door to motivate people to take the vaccines. But this has not been an easy task as she has faced a lot of opposition from women, who believe vaccinations can cause them harm. One way in which she has encouraged others to get vaccinated is by telling them that she is herself vaccinated. "This encourages a few," she said.

But local myths are not the only reason for vaccine hesitancy here. A few weeks ago, a message was widely circulated on social media regarding French Nobel laureate, Luc Montagnier, who claimed that everyone who has taken the vaccines will die in two years.

The message created chaos among people and even reached the villages where Parvaiz was working. It caused massive vaccine hesitancy, especially among women.

AGENCIES

Pulwama (J&K), June 28: India started its vaccination drive against Covid-19 almost six months back and consistently, a lot more men have been vaccinated as compared to women.

In fact, government vaccination data has revealed that nearly 17 per cent more men are partially or completely vaccinated than women. And this gender disparity is almost double in the region of Jammu and Kashmir. This is mainly because myths and suspicions about the safety of the vaccine abound in the region. Shameema, a 35-year-old woman, who lives in Balpora vil-

NARADA STING CASE

Mamata files fresh plea in Calcutta HC



Subrata Mukherjee, Firhad Hakim, Trinamool Congress MLA Madan Mitra and former mayor of Kolkata Sovan Chatterjee were arrested May 17 by the CBI, which is investigating the Narada sting tape case

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Kolkata, June 28: West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee and state law minister Moloy Ghatak along with the state government have filed fresh applications in the Calcutta High Court for their Narada case affidavits Monday.

The application came after the Supreme Court asked the Calcutta High Court to accept the affidavits in regard to the ongoing Narada case probe.

The Calcutta High Court June 9 had refused to accept the reply-affidavits of Mamata Banerjee and Moloy Ghatak. The court was urged by Solicitor General Tushar Mehta that the affidavits cannot be accepted on the ground of delay as they were filed after the completion of his arguments. The next hearing in the case is scheduled for June 29. Mamata Banerjee and Moloy

Ghatak moved the Supreme Court against the verdict and the vacation bench of Justices Vineet Saran and Dinesh Maheshwari, while setting aside the Calcutta High Court order refusing to accept the affidavits, asked the duo to file a fresh application in the High Court stating the reason for not filing it earlier, even as hearing in the Narada case had started May 27 itself.

The Supreme Court also asked the High Court to decide on affidavits filed by the ministers first before deciding on the CBI plea seeking transfer of the case.

The CBI has made a plea to transfer the case to any other state, anticipating that in Bengal the high-profile leaders involved in the Narada sting tape case might influence the case.

The five-member bench will hear the case June 29.

The CBI had made Mamata Banerjee and Moloy Ghatak parties to the Narada case, claiming they had influenced the agency's operation and the CBI court's verdict by visiting the Nizam Palace office in Kolkata when three TMC leaders were arrested.

WB extends Covid curbs

AGENCIES

Kolkata, June 28: The West Bengal government Monday extended the Covid-related restrictions till July 15, announcing certain relaxations.

Addressing a press conference, Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee said public buses will be allowed to operate in the state with 50 per cent capacity. Government and private offices would also be allowed to function with 50 per cent workforce, she said.

Gymnasiums and beauty parlours can also operate with 50 per cent capacity from 11 am to 6 pm, she added. Social gatherings such as weddings would be allowed with a maximum of 50 people, Banerjee

Jammu extends Covid curbs

AGENCIES



said, urging people to continue wearing masks and maintaining social distance.

The government also allowed vegetable markets to remain open from 6 am to 12 pm. The restrictions, imposed on May 16, were last extended till June 30.

BEATING THE HEAT



Youngsters bathe in a canal during a hot day at Magura in Malda district of West Bengal

PTI PHOTO

Gupkar alliance meeting today

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Srinagar, June 28: The People's Alliance for Gupkar Declaration (PAGD) – an amalgam of six mainstream political parties in Jammu and Kashmir seeking the restoration of the special status of the erstwhile state – will meet here Tuesday to discuss the recently held all-party meeting chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

This will be the first meeting of the alliance after the all-party meet chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi in New Delhi June 24. "The PAGD will meet tomorrow," the alliance's spokesperson M Y Tarigami said Monday. He said the meeting will be held at the alliance's chairperson Farooq Abdullah's residence in Gupkar area of the city at 11 am.

DRONE ATTACK

Anti-Pak protest held in Jammu



Shiv Sena Dogra Front (SSDF) activists burn a Pakistani flag

PTI PHOTO

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Jammu, June 28: Shiv Sena Dogra Front (SSDF) activists Monday torched a Pakistani flag to protest the drone attack on the Indian Air Force (IAF) station here, and the killing of a special police officer (SPO), his wife and daughter by militants in Pulwama district.

Two explosive-laden drones crashed into the IAF station at Jammu airport in the early hours of Sunday. The explosions that took place around 1.40 am within six minutes of each other left two IAF personnel injured.

Hours later, militants struck a village in south Kashmir's Pulwama district and gunned down an SPO along with his wife and daughter.

Dozens of SSDF activists led by their chairman Ashok Gupta assembled at Rani Park in the heart of Jammu and set afire the

Two explosive-laden drones crashed into the IAF station at Jammu airport in the early hours of Sunday

Pakistani flag amid chanting of slogans in protest against the latest terror strikes.

The protesters, who were carrying the national flag in their hands, later dispersed off peacefully officials said. "We have organized this protest to condemn the killing of an SPO and his family and the first-of-its-kind attack on an IAF base in Jammu and Kashmir and demand appropriate measures to counter such attacks and a befitting response to Pakistan for this shameful action," Gupta told reporters.

Without naming any political

party but apparently referring to PDP chief Mehbooba Mufti, he said such incidents should serve as an eye-opener for those who are seeking dialogue with Pakistan which wants to "destroy our country".

"Pakistan is not going to mend its ways and the only solution to end this conflict is to unfurl the Indian flag across the border," Gupta said, adding "there is a need to wage a war against Pakistan and its supporters in Jammu and Kashmir after this heinous act (drone attack on IAF base)."

He said the drone attack has posed a new challenge as earlier Pakistan was using the flying machines to drop weapons and narcotics.

"India should strengthen its security by installing anti-drone technology and also send those who talk about dialogue with Pakistan to Tihar jail," he said.

MOCKERY OF ANTI-DEFECTION LAW

WB Assembly: No disqualification in a decade

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kolkata, June 28: Once a reviled practice in West Bengal, the "Aaya Ram Gaya Ram" culture has made deep inroads into the state as several MLAs, in the past decade, were seen frequently crossing the floor, with none facing any action under the anti-defection law.

Speaker Biman Banerjee agreed that there was no instance of MLA disqualification in the last ten years on the ground of defection, but did not elaborate further.

"It is true that the Assembly has not recorded any case of disqualification since 2011. But I would not get into details," the three-time speaker told PTI.

The latest flashpoint is the defection of veteran leader Mukul Roy, who won the March-April Assembly polls on a BJP ticket but switched over to the TMC earlier this month.

The saffron party, on its part, has filed a plea before the Speaker seeking Roy's disqualification, only to receive flak from the ruling TMC, which said that MPs Sisir Adhikari and Sunil Mondal, who had joined the BJP ahead of assembly polls, should first quit the



membership of Lok Sabha.

Since the ascendance of the TMC in Bengal, switching parties, a practice looked down upon prior to 2010, has almost become commonplace, according to political pundits.

Over four dozen legislators from the Congress, Left Front and the TMC switched sides in the 15th and 16th Legislative Assembly – between 2011 and 2021, they said.

In the 16th Assembly alone, around 25 of 44 Congress MLAs and eight of 32 Left MLAs had crossed over to either the TMC or the BJP.

However, only 12 disqualification pleas were filed by the Congress and one by the CPI(M). Also, since 2019, at least 22 TMC MLAs had switched over to the BJP, but none barring Suvendu Adhikari and Rajib Banerjee resigned from the membership of the Assembly.

In many cases, parties have refrained from filing disqualification pleas for "fear of losing the main opposition party status in the assembly". Former Leader of the Opposition Abdul Mannan told PTI that the anti-defection law "has turned into a joke" under the BJP rule at the Centre and the TMC in the state. "Sadly, no action was taken by the speaker in the disqualification cases that we filed

over the years. We stopped doing that after a while as it would have harmed our party's strength in the House. We could have lost the opposition party status," Mannan said.

Giving an example, former Left Front Legislative party leader Sujjan Chakraborty said Left MLA Dipali Biswas, who had switched over to the TMC just after the 2016 assembly polls only to dump the party for the saffron camp last year, continued as a member of the House, despite 26 hearings on her disqualification case.

"When no action was taken against her, we understood that the speaker wasn't willing to initiate any. We stopped filing such application. End of the day, it is a matter of political will," he said.

The Anti-Defection Law, 1985, states that a member of a House belonging to any political party shall be disqualified if he or she has voluntarily given up the membership of a political party, votes or abstains from voting in the House contrary to any direction issued by the party he represents, and if a representative of a certain political party joins another outfit after the election.

national

of the day quote

Occurrence or non-occurrence of any wave, is in our own hands. To my mind, it is not fair to put any date for any wave



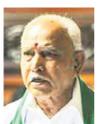
V K PAUL | COVID TASK FORCE CHIEF

No student in Delhi shall deny admission to a child on grounds that the child is declaring name of his or her single parent only



MANISH SISODIA | DELHI DEPUTY CHIEF MINISTER

The change of village names will hurt the feelings of the people and their sentiments detrimentally. This will also destroy the Kannada and Tulu culture, which is in existence since long



B S YEDIYURAPPA | KARNATAKA CHIEF MINISTER

SHORT TAKES

Gunfight breaks out

Srinagar: Two CRPF personnel, including an officer, were injured during an encounter between security forces and militants in Parimpora area of the city here Monday, officials said. The encounter took place at Malhoora in Parimpora area of the city, they said. The officials said a deputy superintendent of the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) and a constable of the paramilitary force were injured in the gunfight.

Antilia case: Ex-cop sent to custody

Mumbai: A special NIA court here Monday remanded former 'encounter specialist' police officer Pradeep Sharma in judicial custody till July 12 in the case of an explosives-laden vehicle found near the residence of industrialist Mukesh Ambani and the murder of businessman Mansukh Hiran. The court also extended the NIA custody of two other accused - Manish Soni and Satish Motkuri. The National Investigation Agency (NIA) arrested Sharma along with Soni and Motkuri June 17.

Nine killed in road mishap

Shimla: Nine people died and three others were injured as a vehicle fell into a deep gorge in Himachal Pradesh's Sirmaur district Monday, the police said. A pick-up van carrying members of a marriage party fell into the gorge near Pashog in Shillai sub-division, Paonta Sahib Deputy Superintendent of Police Bir Bahadur said.

Six of family commit suicide

Yadgir (Karnataka): Shockwave spread across Shahapur taluka of Yadgir district where six members belonging to a family committed suicide by jumping into an open farm pond on Monday afternoon, said the police. Shahapur taluka is around 550 kms from Bangalore, and is part of one of the most backward districts of the state, where migration of labourers is quite often reported.

Quake hits U'khand

Pithoragarh (Uttarakhand): An earthquake of magnitude 3.7 jolted Pithoragarh and its adjoining areas in Uttarakhand Monday, the District Disaster Management office said. Mild tremors were felt in Pithoragarh, Kanda and Bageshwar at 12.19 pm, it said. The tremor had a depth of 10 km and its epicentre was in Pithoragarh district, the office said. There is no information yet of any damage caused by the quake, it said.



We have decided not to contest zila panchayat elections in UP. I want to clarify if the elections would have been impartial, then we would have contested

MAYAWATI | BAHUJAN SAMAJ PARTY PRESIDENT

MATTER OF CONCERN

The second Covid wave has led to children across age groups falling prey to psychological issues due to increased screen time, no social interaction and parents not having time for them despite working from home, experts have said



INDIA SHIFTS 50K TROOPS TO CHINA BORDER

The reorientation comes when China is refurbishing its existing air-fields in Tibetan Plateau that will allow twin-engines fighter aircraft to be stationed, sources said

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, June 28: For the first time in 70 years, India has changed its posture towards China, unlike its previous defensive approach that placed a premium on fending on Chinese aggression, India is now catering military options to strike back and has reoriented its military accordingly

India has reoriented around 50,000 troops whose main focus will be the disputed border with China. Sources said that the Mathura-based 1 strike Corp, earlier tasked to cross the western borders into Pakistan, has been reoriented from its position to disputed border areas with China.

In addition to this, in the Central Sector - the least disputed portion of the border running along with Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand to Nepal, deployment has also been strengthened with at least division level troops. A Division of the Indian Army has at least 10,000 troops.

The Panagarh based Mountain Strike Corps has been assigned to the Eastern sector of the border. The XVII Mountain Strike Corps, also called the Brahmastra Corps,

has been assigned to hit back along with the eastern sector when the need arises. The Mountain Strike Corps was cleared by the Centre about a decade ago but it had only one Division attached to it so far. The government is taking all requisite steps for strengthening of the Mountain Strike Corps. This reorientation of the troops will lessen the soldiers dedicated solely to Pakistan but at the same time, more acclimatized troops who can shift from the northern border to the western border with Pakistan will be available to Indian military planners. This gives the Indian defence establishment a higher level of maneuverability and flexibility vis-a-vis its neighbours.

The reorientation comes when China is refurbishing its existing air-fields in Tibetan Plateau that will allow twin-engines fighter aircraft to be stationed, sources said. In addition, China has also brought troops from the Tibet Military region to the Xinjiang region - which largely extends from Karakoram pass to down south Uttarakhand. Further, they have deployed larger numbers of long range artillery and are rapidly building infrastructure in the Tibetan Plateau.



GREAT EXPECTATIONS



Farmers transplant paddy saplings in a field on the outskirts of Bhabua city in Kaimur district of Bihar

PTI PHOTO

'Army capable of giving befitting reply if provoked'

AGENCIES

New Delhi, June 28: India believes in resolving disputes with neighbours through dialogue but it will not tolerate if provoked or threatened, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh said while addressing soldiers in Ladakh on Monday, in a clear message to China amid a stalemate in the disengagement process in remaining friction points in eastern Ladakh.

Speaking at an event in a forward location on the second day of his visit to the region, Singh said India is a peace-loving nation that never resorts to any kind of aggression but its armed forces are always prepared to give a befitting reply to those who "show their eyes" to the country.

Asserting that the nation's safety and security will not be compromised at any cost, Singh said the solution to any dispute can be found if there is a clear intent. The defence minister also paid glowing tributes to the 20 soldiers killed in the Galwan Valley clashes



in June last year, and said the country will never forget their sacrifices. "India is a peace-loving nation which does not believe in aggression, however, if provoked, we will give a befitting reply," he said. Singh's three-day visit to the region comes in the midst of a stalemate in resolving over a year-long standoff between Indian and Chinese troops in several friction points in eastern Ladakh though they withdrew troops and weapons from Pangong lake areas in February. "We had to face a big challenge along the Northern bor-

der last year. But our armed forces displayed their courage and dedication to deal with it... Our Army has the capability to give a befitting reply to every challenge," he said. The defence minister assured the nation that the armed forces are fully prepared to deal with any situation. "We have always worked for world peace. We never attack anyone. Our objective has never been to achieve victory against anyone. India has neither attacked any country nor occupied an inch. Our intention is very clear," he said.

DRONE ATTACK

Preliminary analysis shows use of RDX in explosives: Officials

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Jammu, June 28: A preliminary analysis of the payload carried by the two drones used in attacking the IAF station here Sunday indicates that a cocktail of chemicals including RDX may have been used, officials said Monday, with investigators yet to establish the flight path of the unmanned aerial vehicles.

The IAF station located at Jammu airport continued to remain out of bounds for everyone with probe teams, which included one from the National Investigation Agency, picking up every bit of evidence available on the ground.

The officials said the explosive material dropped by the drones might have been manufactured using a cocktail consisting of RDX but a final confirmation was still awaited.

They said an NSG post-blast analysis team has been sent to the IAF station to study the material. This team will share its findings with the Jammu and Kashmir police and the NIA after completing the task.

BATTLE AGAINST COVID-19

India overtakes US in vaccinations

AGENCIES

New Delhi, June 28: India has overtaken the US in the total number of Covid-19 vaccine doses administered so far, the Union Health Ministry said Monday.

While India launched the Covid-19 vaccination drive on January 16, and has administered over 32.36 crore doses till date, the US which started its inoculation drive December 14, 2020 has given over 32.33 crore doses.

"India achieves another milestone in COVID-19 vaccination and overtakes USA in total number of COVID-19 vaccine doses administered," the ministry said.

India's cumulative vaccination coverage exceeded 32.36 crores on Sunday. A total of 32,36,63,297 vaccine doses have been administered through 43,21,898 sessions, as per the provisional report till 7 am on Monday, the ministry said.



It said 17,21,268 vaccine doses were administered in the last 24 hours. According to the data, so far 1,01,98,257 healthcare workers have taken the first dose while 72,07,617 have taken the second dose. As many as 1,74,42,767 front-line workers have received the first dose while 93,99,319 have taken the second dose. In the 18-44 age group, 8,46,51,696 individuals have taken

Take up inclusion of Covishield in EU vax passport: Serum Institute

Serum Institute of India (SII) has urged the government to take up inclusion of Covishield in the EU Covid-19 Vaccination Passport with the European Union and other countries, saying if not done it will affect students and business travellers, and disrupt the Indian and global economy. Only four vaccines -- Comirnaty of Pfizer/BioNTech, Moderna, Vaxzevria by AstraZeneca-Oxford and, Johnson & Johnson's Janssen -- have been approved by the European Medicines Agency (EMA). Only those inoculated with these vaccines will be given vaccination passports and allowed to travel within the EU during the pandemic. "India has a large population. However, not including Covishield in the EU Covid-19 Vaccination Passport will not allow Covishield vaccinated people to travel to European countries and this will affect students, business travellers back and forth, and cause severe disruptions to our economy and to the global economy," a source quoted Adar C Poonawalla, CEO of SII, as having communicated in a letter to External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar.

then first dose, while 19,01,190 have received the second dose.

In the 45-59 age group, 8,71,11,445 people have been administered the first dose, while 1,48,12,349 have

taken the second dose.

Besides, 6,75,29,713 people aged above 60 years have received the first dose, while, 2,34,08,944 have taken the second dose.

Pvt schools in Delhi can collect annual fee

AGENCIES

New Delhi, June 28: The Supreme Court Monday refused to stay the Delhi High Court order allowing private unaided schools to collect annual and development charges from students for the period after the lockdown ended in the national capital last year.

A bench comprising Justices A M Khanwilkar, Dinesh Maheshwari and Aniruddha Bose did not agree with the submission of the Directorate of Education (DoE) of Delhi government that it has the power to regulate the levy of fees by private unaided schools and as an interim order, the high court judgement permitting such a levy of annual and development charges be stayed.

The bench, however, said although it was dismissing the appeal of the Delhi government, this would not come in the adjudication of its



plea by a division bench of the high court as nothing on merits have been recorded by it.

Senior advocate Vikas Singh, appearing for Delhi government, vehemently sought the stay of the high court's judgement saying, "lakhs and lakhs of parents will be affected. Please don't shut us out".

On May 31, a single-judge bench of the high court had quashed the office orders of April and August 2020 issued by DoE of the Delhi government for forbidding and postponing collection of annual charges and development fees.

FAKE APPS TARGETING VAX REGISTRATION PLANS

TROJANS POSE ONE OF THE BIGGEST THREATS TO CONSUMERS THIS YEAR, ACCOUNTING FOR 90 PER CENT OF ALL PANDEMIC-RELATED MALWARE

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, June 28: Cybersecurity company McAfee has said that following a year of lockdowns and a surge in time spent online and on devices, fraudsters are capitalising on the situation with more approaches, with 2021 shaping up to be a year of 'malware misinformation and sneak attacks'.

McAfee's latest Mobile Threat Report finds hackers capitalising on the pandemic to target unsuspecting consumers.

These include fake apps targeting vaccine registration programmes and India and Chile have been most attacked with these campaigns. They also include billing

fraud malware that makes purchases behind the backs of consumers. Hackers are also using banking Trojans to target hundreds of financial institutions around the world.

As per the report, more than 90 per cent of all pandemic-related malware took the form of Trojans. McAfee researchers found evidence of an SMS worm targeting Indian consumers, forming one of the earliest vaccine fraud campaigns.

Both SMS and WhatsApp messages encouraged users to download a vaccine app and once downloaded, the malware is sent itself to everyone in the user's contact list via SMS or WhatsApp. The malware be-



hind this is the same family that was involved in India's ban on the Tik-

Tok app in July last year. Researchers have also uncov-

ered new information on a mobile malware dubbed Etinu. Targeting users in Southwest Asia and the Middle East predominately, Etinu was found being distributed via Google Play, with more than 700K downloads before being detected and removed.

Once an app harbouring this malware is installed via the Google Play Store, the malware steals incoming SMS messages using a Notification Listener function. It can then make purchases and sign up for premium services and subscriptions that get charged to the user's account.

McAfee's new Mobile Threat Report reveals that 2021 is shaping up to be a year of malware

misinformation and sneak attacks

At the end of 2020 (Q4), total mobile malware detected by McAfee reached 43 million, with over three million of these detections being new hackers are using mobile malware dubbed Etinu to read SMS messages and extract the information needed to confirm subscriptions to premium-rate services, unbeknown to the user. Over 700K downloads were reported before being detected and removed.

With most of the world still anxious about COVID-19 and demand for vaccines high, McAfee's research sheds light on how hackers are targeting these fears with bogus apps, text messages, and social media invitations.

international



No decision, either negative or positive has been made on camera deal with UN nuclear inspectors; neither the continuation of the deal nor the erasure (of data). We are in the previous position for the time being
SAEED KHATIBZADEH | FOREIGN MINISTRY SPOKESMAN, IRAN

APPLE DAILY WRITER ARRESTED
An editorial writer of the now-defunct Hong Kong-based newspaper Apple Daily was arrested at the airport Sunday while attempting to leave the city. A local daily cited unidentified sources saying that Fung Wai-Kong was arrested on suspicion of foreign collusion to endanger national security



of the day quote

The Chinese Communist Party's international influence, appeal and attraction have continually increased, placing it at the forefront of world politics
GUO YEZHOU | DEPUTY HEAD (EXTERNAL LIAISON DEPARTMENT), COMMUNIST PARTY, CHINA

Theatre actors are going to work in a parking lot outdoors in the hot sun, while their equivalent peers in film are working 50 people indoors, while their equivalents in the athletic world are practising for their games indoors
MITCHELL MARCUS | ARTISTIC AND MD, THE MUSICAL STAGE COMPANY

The measures that we are putting in place now are designed to allow as much economic activity as possible to continue while containing the spread of the virus. Most businesses will continue to operate at full capacity and should not be affected as long as they observe all the health protocols
CYRIL RAMAPHOSA | PRESIDENT, SOUTH AFRICA

SHORT TAKES

Malaysia announces \$36bn Covid package

Kuala Lumpur: Malaysia's leader announced a 150 billion ringgit (\$36.2bn) financial package Monday to help needy households and businesses and bolster vaccination efforts after a national coronavirus lockdown was extended indefinitely. The country has been under a near-total lockdown since June 1 that was due to expire Monday, but PM Muhyiddin Yassin said over the weekend that it will not be eased until new infections fall below 4,000 a day and at least 10% of the population has been vaccinated.

Ukraine, NATO launch joint drills

Kyiv: Ukraine and NATO Monday launched Black Sea drills that will involve dozens of warships, an exercise that follows last week's incident with a British destroyer off Crimea. Moscow said one of its warships fired warning shots and a warplane dropped bombs in the path of British destroyer Defender on Wednesday to force her out of an area near the Crimean Peninsula, which Russia annexed in 2014.

Hong Kong to ban flights from UK

Hong Kong: Hong Kong says it will ban all passenger flights from the UK starting Thursday as it seeks to curb the spread of new variants of the coronavirus. It said in a statement Monday that the UK has been classified as "extremely high risk" because of the "recent rebound of the epidemic situation in the UK and the widespread delta variant virus strain there". Under the classification, people who have stayed in the UK for more than two hours will be restricted from boarding passenger flights to Hong Kong.

Swedish PM Lofven resigns

Stockholm: Swedish Prime Minister Stefan Lofven resigned Monday, handing the speaker of its split parliament the task of finding a new government to deal with the continuing COVID-19 pandemic. Lofven had faced a deadline of midnight on Monday to either step down or call a snap election after losing a June 21 confidence vote when the Left Party withdrew its support.

China turns on world's 2nd-largest hydropower dam

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

Beijing, June 28: China began operating the world's second-largest hydropower station Monday in what officials hailed as a milestone towards Beijing's carbon neutrality goals, despite warnings of environmental damage. The 289-metre (948 feet) high Baihetan Hydropower Station in southwest China, second in the world only to the country's Three Gorges Dam in terms of power generation, began partial operation Monday morning, state media reported.

Baihetan was built with a total installed capacity of 16,000 megawatts, which means it will eventually be able to generate enough electricity each day once to meet the power needs of 500,000 people for an entire year, according to state broadcaster CCTV. The country has been on a hy-



dropower building spree in recent years as it races to meet the ever-growing energy needs of the world's largest population.

The dam spans a deep, narrow gorge on the upper section of the Yangtze, China's longest river, on the earthquake-prone border between Yunnan and Sichuan provinces. Chinese President Xi

Jinping said he hoped the plant would be able to "make greater contributions toward achieving the goals of carbon peaking and carbon neutrality," in a congratulatory message published by the government.

The Baihetan dam's trial run on Monday coincides with celebrations of the Communist Party's

Baihetan was built with a total installed capacity of 16,000 megawatts, which means it will eventually be able to generate enough electricity each day once to meet the power needs of 500,000 people for an entire year

centenary this week.

Xi's pledge last year to reach carbon neutrality by 2060 has added urgency to the construction.

But environmental groups have warned for years that dam-building disrupts the habitats of rare plants and animals, including the critically endangered Yangtze

Finless Porpoise.

Dam construction on the river has changed the composition of sediment in the water, causing "large-scale hydrophysical and human health risk affecting the Yangtze River Basins downstream," scientists wrote in a paper published in Elsevier's Science of the Total Environment journal this month.

The massive engineering projects have also displaced hundreds of thousands of local communities and prompted concern in neighbouring countries.

China's planned mega-dam in Tibet's Medog County, which is set to surpass the Three Gorges Dam in size, has been described by analysts as a threat to Tibetan cultural heritage and a way for Beijing to effectively control a substantial portion of India's water supply.

Merkel defends idea of summit between EU, Putin

AGENCIES

Berlin, June 28: German Chancellor Angela Merkel Monday defended the idea of holding a European Union meeting with Russian President Vladimir Putin, arguing that it would offer an opportunity to confront Putin with European concerns. The idea was rejected last week by eastern EU members.

At a summit Friday, EU leaders agreed only to "explore formats and conditionalities of dialogue with Russia." There was no mention of any high-level meetings or plans for a summit with Putin, an idea that Germany and France had pushed. The outcome reflected deep divisions in the 27-nation EU's approach to Moscow. The EU is concerned that Putin

Russia, China declare friendship treaty extension

Moscow: The leaders of Russia and China Monday hailed increasingly close ties between their countries and announced the extension of a 20-year-old friendship treaty, a show of unity amid their tensions with the West. Speaking in a video call with Chinese President Xi Jinping, Russian President Vladimir Putin said that the treaty signed in July 2001 in Moscow helped take relations between Moscow and Beijing to an "unprecedented height" and would be extended for another five years. The Russian leader noted that the coordination of foreign policy efforts by Russia and China has played a "stabilizing role in global affairs."



is turning increasingly authoritarian and wants to distance himself from the West. Both it and the NATO military alliance are struggling to bring Russia back to the table. US President Joe Biden's meeting with Putin this month was a rare exception.

"The concern was that we perhaps wouldn't be able to put up a united front, (and) such a summit of course requires very intensive preparation," Merkel said at a question-and-answer session with German and French lawmakers. She said it would allow Europeans to "address all the questions that weigh on us and also those on which we want to cooperate."

Pointing to worries such as "hybrid attacks" that Germany, France, Italy and the Baltic nations have faced, Merkel added: "It's better

not just always to talk about this among ourselves, but to confront the Russian president with these things and to say that beneficial cooperation can't take place on such a basis."

"This was made very clear by President Biden regarding cyberattacks, and why should Europe not be able to do exactly that?" Merkel said.

But the Baltic states are among those deeply concerned about reaching out to Moscow when the Minsk agreements meant to bring peace to Ukraine are still not being respected. On the other hand, Russia is the EU's biggest natural gas supplier and plays a key role in a series of international conflicts and issues linked to Europe's strategic interests, including the Iran nuclear deal and conflicts in Syria and Libya.

Poland hopes Israel will change view on WWII claims law

AGENCIES

Warsaw, June 28: Poland's deputy foreign minister said Monday he hoped that Israel would change its "approach" to a bill on World War II restitution claims which the Jewish state has condemned as "immoral".

The bill, which passed the lower house of parliament last week, is intended to provide greater legal certainty for property owners against historical claims dating back to the Nazi occupation. But critics say it could effectively block Jews from claiming property seized during the Holocaust.

Deputy Foreign Minister Pawel Jablonski spoke after Israel's charge d'affaires in Warsaw, Tal Ben-Ari

Yaalon, was summoned to the Polish foreign ministry to be briefed on the new law.

Jablonski said in a televised briefing after Monday's meeting that Israeli criticism was "inappropriate" and "we hope that the approach of the Israeli side will change".

Jewish claims for property were frozen during the Communist era and, unlike other countries in the region, Poland has never had a comprehensive law on restitution claims since the fall of Communist rule in 1989. Some families who lost property have since sought restitution or compensation but the process has been chaotic and long. In some cases, there have been

UN urges to dismantle systematic racism

AGENCIES

Geneva, June 28: The UN rights chief called Monday for systemic racism against black people to be immediately dismantled around the world to avoid repeating outrages like the killing of George Floyd.

In a report triggered by the death of Floyd, who was murdered by a white US police officer, Michelle Bachelet said the dehumanisation of people of African descent had fed a culture of tolerance for racial discrimination and violence.



The United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights set out a four-point agenda for transformative change on racial justice and equality, and urged states to implement it.

Bachelet's recommendations include reparations for historical racism, as well as funding for groups like Black Lives Matter.

US to soon see explosive outbreak of Delta variant

Concerns are rising about the spread of the variant of Covid-19 in the US as President Biden falls short of his July 4 vaccine rollout goal and cases explode in the UK

AGENCIES

Washington, June 28: The US is set to witness an explosive outbreak of the Delta Covid variant in a month's time, if people are not fully vaccinated, warned Eric Feigl-Ding, an epidemiologist and a public health scientist.

"The US has just one month to act before it becomes full blown Delta variant dominant. One month to slow it down. One month to fully vaccinate," Feigl-Ding said in a series of tweets. He urged the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the World Health Organization (WHO) to take urgent steps to vaccinate people in the US. "But we likely have even less



time than that if CDC doesn't act soon," Feigl-Ding said.

"If the CDC doesn't issue new guidelines to stem the growth of #DeltaVariant, which can transmit via merely 5-10 seconds of passive breathing exposure, it will be extremely derelict," he said.

"The Delta variant is leaps and bounds faster than any other variant known to date. It represents a clear and present danger to the world. This Delta variant surge will not end well for low vaccination areas," he noted.

Feigl-Ding emphasised on the need for two doses of vaccines and

said "1 dose is definitely not enough".

Concerns are rising about the spread of the Delta variant of Covid-19 in the US as President Joe Biden falls short of his July 4 vaccine rollout goal and cases explode in the UK. The highly contagious Delta variant, first identified in India, has spread to at least 92 countries.

According to the CDC, the variant now represents at least 20 per cent of Covid cases in the US, and is expected to become dominant in a matter of weeks. Besides vaccinations, it is imperative to wear masks.



fraudulent claims for restitutions. The new law sets a cut-off date for some legal challenges of up to 30

years. This means that if a person bought a pre-war property in 1989 and has a specific official confir-

mation from that time proving their right to own it, any previous historical owners will now be excluded from contesting that right. Jablonski said critics in Israel "refer to the issue of the Holocaust, which this law does not address in any way. This demonstrates, I have the impression, a lack of knowledge of the facts".

"This law is not aimed against anybody," he said. The new law still has to be passed by the Senate and signed by the president to enter into force. The Israeli embassy in Warsaw had earlier said "this immoral law will seriously impact relations between our countries".

It "will in effect prevent the restitution of Jewish property or compensation requests from Holocaust survivors and their descendants as well as the Jewish community that called Poland home for centuries. It's mind-boggling," the embassy said.

Israel's foreign ministry also summoned Poland's ambassador to Israel, Marek Magierowski, Sunday.

business

of the day quote

This timely intervention will definitely provide a boost to sectors like health, micro finance, tourism, fertilizer, export, digital connectivity, and electronics.

VIKASH AGARWAL | PRESIDENT, INDIAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

The FM's announcement on free visas has a very strong symbolic message that we have the confidence to welcome visitors and that tourism and hospitality is a strong pillar of post-COVID economic recovery strategy

MADAN PRASAD BEZBARUAH | SECRETARY-GENERAL, HOTEL ASSOCIATION OF INDIA

FHRAI appreciates the FSSAI's endeavour to set up a robust customer grievance system in the country. This will also improve the overall awareness of the FSSAI and its underlying objectives of creating a safe and hygienic ecosystem for FBOs

GURBAXISH SINGH KOHLI | VICE PRESIDENT, FHRAI

SHORT TAKES

Trade curbs related to Covid falling: WTO

Geneva: G20 countries have repealed nearly half of the trade restrictions they introduced in response to the pandemic, a World Trade Organization report said Monday. "While the report's findings indicate trade-restrictive measures are coming down, G20 economies have more work to do to ensure the free flow of the medical inputs and supplies critical to saving lives," said director-general Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala.

Parthasarathy denied bail

Chennai: A special court has denied bail to Ravi Parthasarathy, former Chairman of the bankrupt Infrastructure Leasing and Financial Services (IL&FS) and arrested by the Economic Offences Wing of state police, for allegedly defrauding investors to the tune of ₹200 crore. Parthasarathy was refused bail recently by the Special Court constituted under the Tamil Nadu Protection of Interest of Depositors (In Financial Establishment) Act.

Udaan, Captain Harvest join hands

Bhubaneswar: Udaan, India's largest B2B e-Commerce platform announced a major initiative in the unorganised bulk staples market in partnership with Captain Harvest brand. As part of this partnership, Captain Harvest range of quality and affordable bulk staples - including atta, maida, wheat, rice, pulses, besan will be available exclusively on the Udaan platform. This national level intervention is aimed at solving the problem of inconsistency in product quality, availability, affordability and weight compliance that exist in the unorganised bulk staples sector.

SanDisk launches new products

Bhubaneswar: The Western Digital's brand SanDisk launched iXpand Flash Drive Luxe that allows users to save and back up their data without fuss. This is first flash-drive with dual Lightning and USB Type-C connectors. It provides a sleek experience to seamlessly access and move files between Apple devices, and USB Type-C devices, including Android smartphones.



The partnership with BT is a huge sign of progress in the resilience and advancement of the overall telecom infra in the UK. OneWeb's network will be vital in bridging the last digital divides across the network and we are excited to be part of the solution

NEIL MASTERSON | CEO, ONEWEB

MWC KICKS OFF

A major wireless technology trade fair kicked off in Barcelona Monday with scaled-back attendance and beefed-up health and safety measures, changes that reflect the new reality for industry conventions in the post-pandemic era



FM announces ₹50,000 crore loan guarantee scheme for health infra

AGENCIES

New Delhi, June 28: Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman Monday announced additional funding of ₹23,220 crore for setting up paediatric beds and facilities in hospitals. Announcing a set of measures for reviving the economy battered by a severe second wave of Covid-19, Sitharaman also announced a ₹50,000 crore credit guarantee scheme for setting up of medical or health infrastructure by private hospitals in cities other than eight metropolitan cities.

"We are now providing ₹23,220 crore more primarily focussing on children and paediatric care. This ₹23,220 crore will be spent this financial year itself.

"It will also focus on funding of HR augmentation so that medical students, interns, nurses can also be brought in for helping in such emergencies. ICU beds will be made available, oxygen supply at central, district and subdistrict level will be ensured and also making sure that equipments and medicines, tele-consultation and ambulance service... All of that will be taken care of with primary focus on children. So paediatric care is the emphasis," Sitharaman said at a press conference.

She said last year a ₹15,000 crore emergency health systems project was implemented. Using that ₹15,000 crore, there was a 25-fold increase in COVID dedicated hospitals. Besides, 7,929 Covid health cen-



There is already a NHM, this will be additional funding for a new set of outputs which is available immediately. This (Rs 23,220 cr) is available immediately, the pace of expenditure will depend on how quickly the states are able to do what needs to be done

TV SOMANATHAN | EXPENDITURE SECRETARY

tres and 9,954 Covid care centres were set up, and oxygen supported beds increased by 7.5 times. There was also an increase in isolation beds and ICU beds by 42-fold and 45-fold, respectively.

"The ₹15,000 crore which was used till March 2021 aiming at providing additional infrastructure and facilitating COVID care had good response and now ₹23,220

core is being provided with primary focus on children, but others also will benefit from it," the minister added.

Explaining the funding mechanism for the health sector, Expenditure Secretary TV Somanathan said the ₹23,220 crore has been made available to the Ministry of Health immediately.

"It is part of this year's budget spending available to Ministry of Health as a Centrally Sponsored Scheme to be distributed to states and to be used in the National Health Mission.

"There is already a National Health Mission, this will be additional funding for a new set of outputs which is available immediately. This (Rs 23,220 crore) is available immediately, the pace of expenditure will depend on how quickly the states are able to do what needs to be done. We are ensuring that funding is not a constraint," Somanathan added.

Maruti Suzuki expands subscription services to four more cities

AGENCIES

New Delhi, June 28: Auto major Maruti Suzuki India (MSIL) has announced the expansion of 'Subscription' services to four new cities -- Jaipur, Indore, Mangalore and Mysore. With the latest additions, Maruti Suzuki's Subscribe services is now available in 19 cities.

The company has launched a marketplace model for 'Maruti Suzuki Subscribe' that will serve as a unified platform to offer customised car subscription products through multiple partners at competitive rates.



"In its newest form, the 'Maruti Suzuki Subscribe' platform will offer tailor-made products to its customers through three subscription partners namely Orix Auto Infrastructure Services Ltd (Orix), ALD Automotive India (ALD Automotive), and Myles Automotive Technologies Pvt Ltd (Myles)," it said.

Besides, it provides the customers an added option of choosing between white or black registration plates.

'Set up Aluminium Park to attract investments in state'

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, June 28: The proposed Jharsuguda Aluminium Park will attract investments of up to ₹2,000 crore from MSMEs in Odisha, said Abhay Raj Mishra, National Convener, Indian Industrial Value Chain Collective (IIVCC).

During a discussion on 'Unfolding the MSME Opportunity for a Resurgent Odisha', Mishra said, "The proposed Jharsuguda Aluminium Park will be the largest such facility in India and can alone bring in additional investments of ₹1,500-2,000 crore, with over 100 MSMEs engaged in aluminium downstream value chain.

This Aluminium Park can generate an economic value of ₹4,500 crore which will in turn contribute to the state exchequer and generate direct livelihood opportunities for 1 lakh people with indirect benefit accruing to over 4 lakh people."

The members of IIVCC set certain agendas for MSME development. The members asked to remove policy bottlenecks for investments. "State government should look at enabling mechanism for industrial Parks like in Jharsuguda by channeling surplus power coming from captive power plants in Jharsuguda for downstream Aluminium production," the panelists said.

They also hoped for innovative



and funding mechanisms. "Encourage conducive ecosystem of ease of doing business through PPP model which can bring investments to the tune of ₹2,000 crore for the MSMEs in projects like Aluminium Park," they stressed.

SARAT SAHOO | DIRECTOR, ODISHA INDUSTRIES FEDERATION

The speakers agreed on the need for resolution of bureaucratic bottlenecks to accelerate the growth of MSMEs in the state. "Jharsuguda Aluminium Park alone can approximately generate Economic Value Addition to the state of ₹4,500 crore per year, creating additional 1 lakh livelihood opportunities and enabling community outreach to more than 4 lakh people," the speakers said.

Sarat Sahoo, Director, Odisha Industries Federation said, "There should be a specific corridor for small industries and projects should be identified with an investment of ₹5 to 10 crore which small entrepreneurs can take up."

'e-Sports industry expected to grow four folds by 2025'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, June 28: The e-sports industry in India is expected to grow four folds to ₹1,100 crore by 2025, a report by consultancy firm EY said Monday. The current size of the Indian e-sports industry, also known as electronic sports, is ₹250 crore and is expected to grow at a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 46 per cent in the next four years.

Unlike online gaming, e-sports is defined as online games of skill that are played in tournaments where different teams or individual players compete against each other to win the championship, league or title like physical sports.

This is growing faster in the country than the global e-sports in-

dustry and the number of players is expected to reach 1.5 million and 250,000 teams by 2025.

"The industry is expected to grow at 46 per cent CAGR to grow over four-fold from ₹250 crore in 2021 to ₹1,100 crore by 2025," said the report titled 'Ready, Set, Game ON!'

The prize money pool in India is expected to grow at 66 per cent CAGR and may reach ₹100 crore during the period, it added.

As the Indian e-sports industry rises at a faster pace than the global e-sports industry, India is picking up the pace in growing its prize pool as well.

"The Indian e-sports prize pool accounts for a meagre 0.6 per cent of the global prize pool but is expected to reach almost 2 per cent by 2025. Growth in the prize pool



remains one of the most important factors and incentives for attracting new serious players," the report said.

With increase in the number of e-sports tournaments catering to a growing audience and gamer

UK watchdog bans cryptocurrency exchange Binance

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

London, June 28: The UK's Financial Conduct Authority has banned the major crypto exchange Binance from conducting regulated activity in the country, including Binance Markets Limited and its parent Binance Group, the media reported.

The watchdog didn't say just why it blocked Binance but noted that an "imposition of requirements" kept Binance from operating.

Binance has until June 30 to confirm that it's honoring the FCA's demands, citing Financial Times, Engadget reported.

According to the report, in the past, it said it took regulatory obligations "very seriously" and was "committed" to honouring the rules wherever it operated.



Binance is one of the largest crypto exchanges on the planet, with locations around the world and an industry-leading trading volume of about \$2.46 trillion as of May 2021.

The FCA's crackdown could not only limit trading in a major market but hurt the company's reputation. It's not clear how easily Binance can address its situation, but it's under more than a little pressure to act quickly.

'Co-op banks shall not outsource core management functions'



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, June 28: The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) Monday directed cooperative banks not to outsource core management functions such as policy formulation, internal audit and compliance, compliance with KYC norms, credit sanction and management of investment portfolio," the guidelines said.

The guidelines, the RBI said, have been issued to enable the cooperative banks to put in place necessary safeguards for addressing the risks inherent in outsourcing of activities.

They have been asked to conduct a self-assessment of their existing outsourcing arrangements and bring the same in line with these guidelines within a period of six months.

As per the guidelines, outsourcing of any activity by a cooperative bank does not diminish its obligations and those of its Board and CEO along with the management, who have the ultimate responsibility for the outsourced activity.

A cooperative bank intending to outsource any of its financial activities will have to put in place a comprehensive outsourcing policy, approved by its Board, in line with the criteria indicated in the guidelines.

The indicative key risks in outsourcing that need to be evaluated by the co-operative banks, include, strategic risk, reputation risk, compliance risk, operational risk, legal risk, exit strategy risk, and country risk.

Nalco posts ₹1299.56cr net profit in FY 2021

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, June 28: National Aluminium Company Limited (NALCO), the Navratna CPSE, registered impressive net profit jumping by 840% in financial year 2020-21 in compared to last fiscal. According to officials, the company posted ₹1299.56 crore in FY'21 as against ₹138.23 crore in financial year of 2019-20.

Also, Nalco achieved net turnover of ₹8,869.29 crore in FY'21 compared to ₹8425.75 crore in FY'20.

During the year 2020-21, NALCO has achieved the highest ever production of bauxite at 73.65 lakh tonnes. Similarly, the Company also achieved the highest ever export of 1.92 lakh tonnes of Aluminium metal in 2020-21, surpassing the decade old record of 1.46 lakh tonnes achieved in 2009-10. Further, the Company also achieved production of 20.85 lakh tonnes of alumina hydrate and 4.18 lakh



tones of Aluminium metal. Nalco CMD Sridhar Patra said that the company had made exemplary contributions in promoting and putting focus on plant, production, productivity and people. "After the peak period of Covid outbreak and with the opening of the markets, we witnessed a significant recovery in the second half of the financial year of 2020-21.

With further easing of restrictions and resumption of economic activities, we are optimistic for a robust growth in the long run with our focus on increasing the production in mining and refining segments and opening up of the new coal blocks," he said.

BRIGHTER DAYS AHEAD

The current size of the Indian e-sports industry is ₹250 crore and is expected to grow at a CAGR of 46% in the next four years

In contrast to the west, mobile phones are the preferred choice of device for e-sports in India with over 90% players participating in mobile e-sports tournaments

by 2025 generating the largest portion of e-sports revenues. Tournament sponsorship and syndication revenue is expected to grow at 45 per cent CAGR to reach ₹350 crore by 2025," it said.

EY India Partner and Media & Entertainment Leader Ashish Pherwani said, "e-Sports in India tells a great growth story. As a

game of skill accessible indoors and on the ubiquitous mobile phone, it has gained popularity during lockdowns witnessed in 2020 and 2021. Consequently, it has become an attractive option for brands to connect with young and empowered audiences."

It is estimated that India currently has 150,000 players and around 60,000 teams.

"As e-sports becomes a viable profession for the youth, the number of players playing e-sports is expected to grow at 78 per cent CAGR by 2025 to reach 1.5 million players and 250,000 teams," it said.

The growth will be propelled by the increase in prize money, more games, localisation, regional adaptation and growth of smartphone, laptop and broadband infrastructure, it added.



RED DEVILS ADVANCE

World No.1 Belgium ride on Thorgan Hazard's screamer to drop the Euro 2020 curtains for defending champions Portugal, setting up their quarterfinal face-off with Italy

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Seville, June 28: Belgium stopped Cristiano Ronaldo on one end, and had just enough attacking power on the other. The top-ranked Belgians held Ronaldo scoreless Sunday and held onto a first-half lead to beat Portugal 1-0 and advance to the quarterfinals of the Euro 2020. Ronaldo, who threw his captain's armband to the ground in despair after the final whistle, is still one goal shy of becoming the all-time men's top scorer in international soccer. He came into the match tied with former Iran striker Ali Daei at 109 goals. Belgium, which has never before won a major soccer title, will next face Italy Friday in Munich. Belgium's potent attack, led by Kevin De Bruyne, Eden Hazard and Romelu Lukaku, also strug-

gled, but Thorgan Hazard scored the winning goal in the 42nd minute with a swerving shot from outside the area. Portugal goalkeeper Rui Patrício was left wrong-footed and was late to swat the ball away. Belgium played most of the second half without De Bruyne, who had to be substituted after being tackled from behind and injuring his left ankle. De Bruyne missed the team's first game at Euro 2020 while recovering from a facial injury sustained in the Champions League final. Portugal had several good chances to equalize late in the match, including a header by Ruben Dias saved by Belgium goalkeeper Thibaut Courtois and a shot by Raphael Guerreiro that hit the post. The Portuguese did most of the attacking in the second half, finishing the match with 24 attempts. Belgium had six in total and scored

the only time it hit the target. While Portugal's run for a second consecutive European title ended, Belgium stayed on track to end its title drought. The Belgians lost in the European Championship final in 1980 and finished third three years ago at the World Cup for their best finish at that tournament. The Red Devils have won all four matches so far at Euro 2020 and won all 10 qualifiers for the tournament. The team is unbeaten in 13 consecutive matches in all competitions, since a loss to England last year in the Nations League. Belgium has lost only one of its last 27 int'l matches.



Euro exit caps CR7's poor season

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Seville, June 28: Cristiano Ronaldo was slowly walking off the field when Romelu Lukaku came over to give him a hug. The two embraced for a few moments, with Lukaku speaking into the Portugal great's ear. Ronaldo politely thanked him, but quickly made his way back to the tunnel. He wasn't in much of a chatting mood. While Lukaku was moving on to the European Championship quarterfinals with Belgium, Ronaldo was heading home after a disappointing end to his tournament — and to his season. There was no repeat European title. There was no world scoring record. And there probably won't be a player of the year award, either. The 36-year-old Ronaldo capped a lackluster season in Portugal's 0-1 loss to Belgium in the round of 16 at Euro 2020 Sunday. Even though he scored more than 40 goals with his club and his country, his numbers were far from impressive by his standards. He failed to win the Italian league with Juventus, where his future remains uncertain with his contract ending next year. His only titles in 2021 came in the Italian Cup and the Italian Super Cup. Ronaldo got off to a fantastic start at Euro 2020, though, scoring five goals in the first three matches to move level with former Iran striker Ali Daei as the



BETTER LUCK NEXT TIME: Belgium's Romelu Lukaku consoles a disappointed Cristiano Ronaldo after the match, Sunday

one of the first to walk off. Portugal had several chances throughout the match at La Cartuja Stadium in Seville, but Ronaldo himself wasn't much of a threat. He had a few chances off free kicks in each half, and with a shot from inside the area near the end of the match. Ronaldo was backed by a talented Portugal squad that included Bernardo Silva, Bruno Fernandes and Diogo Jota, among others. But they also faltered in attack Sunday, and Thorgan Hazard's first-half goal ended up being enough to send Belgium to the quarterfinals. Portugal lost at the same stage at the 2018 World Cup, two years after winning their first major title at Euro 2016. The team's other triumph was winning the inaugural Nations League in 2019. "It's a big disappointment for us because we believed we could win, like we did in 2016," Portugal coach Fernando Santos said. "But there are things to look forward to. In 2018, we were eliminated as well but then in 2019 we won the Nations League. Now we will try to win the World Cup (in 2022)." Ronaldo will be 37 by then, and most likely will already have broken the international scoring record. For now, he could still take solace from having a chance to finish as the top scorer at Euro 2020. He remains the tournament's leading scorer with five goals, one more than Patrick Schick of the Czech Republic, who has advanced to the quarterfinals.



KNIGHT ON THE NIGHT: Thorgan Hazard reacts after scoring the winner against Portugal with his brother Eden Hazard (No.10) and Axel Witsal follow him to join the celebration, Sunday

Ronaldo was kept in check for most of the match, with his best scoring chance coming from a free kick saved by Courtois in the 25th minute. He also was off target with a free kick in the 74th, and then only managed a weak shot on goal from inside the area a few minutes later. The Juventus striker seemed frustrated by the lack of opportunities, and he also couldn't do much to help his teammates, with Diogo Jota misfiring from close range after a pass from Ronaldo in the 56th. The game grew heated at times, with a small altercation starting in the 76th after Portugal defender Pepe came in hard on Thorgan Hazard while play was stopped as Lukaku waited to be attended by doctors after being hit on the head by an opponent's foot.

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Sao Paulo, June 28: Ecuador held a below-strength Brazil to a 1-1 draw to secure a spot in the Copa America quarterfinals. Neymar, defender Thiago Silva and striker Gabriel Jesus didn't play against Ecuador at the Olimpico Stadium in Goiania. The draw moved Ecuador to fourth spot in Group B, eliminating Venezuela and likely setting up a quarterfinal match against Argentina. Brazil had already secured top spot in the group before the match began, allowing coach Tite to continue testing his line-up with an eye on the 2022 World Cup in Qatar. The defending champions opened the scoring in the 37th minute with a header by Eder Militao after a



Ecuador players celebrate their equaliser against Brazil. corner. Angel Mena equalized for Ecuador in the 53rd when he finished with an angled shot in front of goalkeeper Alisson. The draw ended a streak of 10 consecutive Brazil wins. Brazil's next challenge will be either against Uruguay or Chile, the two teams which can finish fourth in Group A. Peru beat Venezuela 1-0 with a goal by Andre Carillo from close range in the 48th minute. The Venezuelans needed a win to progress to the playoff stage.

Anguished England face Germany test

ASSOCIATED PRESS

London, June 28: When you train on the Sir Bobby Charlton Pitch, it's hard escape the burden of past glory. And when Gareth Southgate is your coach, it's even harder for the England players to escape the anguish that can come from playing Germany at a tournament. It was Southgate's penalty miss in a shootout against Germany that prevented England from reaching the 1996 European Championship final at the old Wembley Stadium. There had already been the loss to Germany on penalties at the 1990 World Cup. Twenty years later came more World Cup agony against Germany, laced with the injustice of a wrongly disallowed goal. No wonder the renewal of the rivalry with Germany Tuesday in the round of 16 at this year's European Championship is rousing so many memories of past meetings in England. But it can seem to be a lopsided rivalry. There's little sense in Germany about righting any wrongs of the past, despite the still inconclusive debate over whether Geoff Hurst's decisive goal really did cross the line before Charlton and Co. Lifted the World Cup in 1966 at Wembley. Even though Uwe Seeler did say ahead of Tuesday's 33rd England-Germany match "this would will always be there" from the 1966 team he captained. That final produced what re-

TODAY'S MATCHES			
ENG	+	v	GER
Time: 09:30 pm			
SWE	+	v	UKR
Time: 12:30 am (June 30)			
Telecast: Sony TEN Network			

mains England's only major international trophy and a reference point in the history of the nation, beyond sports. Germany had already won the World Cup by that point — in 1954 — and has won another three titles since then pre and post-unification. Add a trio of European Championship wins on top of that and you see that Germany has many glory-filled memories, while England clings to the nostalgia of 1966 and the subsequent heartache often inflicted by its foe. But it can seem largely former players and fans feeling the weight of history. "We've got boys born into the 2000s, which is obviously scary," Southgate said. "It's of no consequence to them... what happened in 1990 and so on. Of course, they're watching that stuff." Ask many current England players about their first memories of a match against Germany and it's the 2010 World Cup when Frank Lampard's shot crossed the line but was ruled out, sparking the introduction of goal-line technology.

WT20 TO BE SHIFTED TO UAE

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, June 28: The T20 World Cup scheduled to be held in India is being shifted to the UAE owing to the health safety concerns posed by COVID-19. BCCI President Sourav Ganguly told this agency Monday, ending weeks of speculation surrounding the mega-event in October-November. "We have officially intimated the ICC that the T20 World Cup can be shifted to the United Arab Emirates. The details are being chalked out," Ganguly said. "The decision was taken keeping health safety concerns of all stakeholders in mind," he added. The BCCI will, however, remain the hosts of the showpiece.

Asked if October 17 has been finalised as the start date of the tournament, Ganguly said: "We will be able to finalise itinerary details in some days. October 17 start hasn't yet been finalised." Even an ICC spokesperson confirmed that the global body is yet to zero in on a final schedule. The ICC, at the start of the month, had given BCCI a four-week window to decide and inform whether India could host the marquee event considering the COVID-19 situation in the country. The news agency was first to report May 4 that the tournament was being shifted to the UAE. This was after the pandemic forced the postponement of IPL, the second part of which is also being held in

the UAE in September-October. It was a foregone conclusion that India will find it difficult to host a 16-country tournament across nine cities with so many layers of health security concerns being there. In fact, the ICC had already started its preparations and logistics for the tournament which will be held in Dubai, Sharjah and Abu Dhabi. The qualifying round could be played in Muscat, which will give ideal time to the pitches in UAE to freshen up after 31 remaining games of IPL are held till October 15. Once the IPL was shifted to the UAE, it was a foregone conclusion that the World T20 will move too given the looming concerns about a possible third wave of COVID-19 infection around that time.

Shooter Rahi bags gold at World Cup

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Osijek, June 28: Olympic-bound Rahi Sarnobat displayed sensational form to clinch the women's 25m pistol gold medal at the ISSF shooting World Cup here Monday but teen sensation Manu Bhaker ended seventh in the same event. Sarnobat's gold is India's first in the ongoing edition after the country secured one silver and two bronze medals earlier in the tournament. The 30-year-old Sarnobat fired a final score of 39 after qualifying second with a total of 591. Her stupendous performance in the final included perfect scores in the third, fourth, fifth and the sixth series. The silver went to France's Mathilde Lamolle, who scored 31 in the final. In the qualification, Sarnobat fired a brilliant 296 in the rapid fire round Monday. Her precision score was an equally impressive 295 Sunday. Bhaker recorded a total of 588 to qualify third after firing a 296 in the rapid fire round on Monday following an impressive 292 in the precision round Sunday. However, she was eliminated early in the final with a disappointing score of 11, losing a shoot-off to Bulgaria's Viktoria Chaika. Bhaker had teamed up with Saurabh Chaudhary for the 10m air pistol mixed team silver. She had earlier clinched the women's 10m air pistol team bronze with Sarnobat and Yashaswini Deswal. Before that, Chaudhary



had won the men's 10m air pistol individual bronze medal. This is the last competitive outing for the Olympic-bound shooters, who will go to Tokyo after their stint here.

NEWS IN BRIEF

- Deepika reclaims top spot after gold rush**
PARIS: Star Indian archer Deepika Kumari Monday regained the No.1 position in global rankings following her hat-trick of gold medals at the World Cup Stage 3 here. The 27-year-old from Ranchi Sunday claimed gold medals in three recurve events — women's individual, team and mixed pair. "This is going to take Deepika to the No.1 spot in the world rankings Monday," World Archery had tweeted after Deepika's gold rush. Deepika had become only the second Indian woman after Dola Banerjee to grab the numero uno status in June, 2012.
- India arrive in SL for limited overs series**
COLOMBO: The India white-ball team led by Shikhar Dhawan, featuring as many as six uncapped players, arrived here from Mumbai for their four-week tour which will feature six limited overs games against Sri Lanka, starting July 13. The Dhawan-led team will play three ODIs and three T20is in the island nation. According to the Sri Lanka Cricket website, the Indian team will be in room quarantine from June 29 to July 1 and then there will be phased out training from July 2 to 4 and subsequently team training from July 5. They will also play intra-squad simulated games for better idea.
- No Hyderabad Open, India Open this year**
NEW DELHI: The India Open Super 500 and Hyderabad Open Super 100 tournaments were Monday cancelled by the Badminton World Federation (BWF), which announced a revamped international calendar to salvage the remaining season affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. The USD 400,000 India Open, which was supposed to be one of the qualifiers for the Tokyo Olympics, was scheduled to be held from May 11 to 16 but was postponed in April due to rising COVID cases in the national capital. The USD 1,00,000 Hyderabad Open was slated to be held from August 24 to 29.