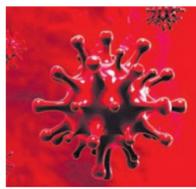




VALUE OF LIFE

Actor Diana Penty says the pandemic has been nature's way of telling humans to learn the value of life

LEISURE P2



LONG BATTLE

After recent rise in virus cases in the US and elsewhere, governments imposed new restrictions

INTERNATIONAL P10



LIVERPOOL EPL CHAMPS

Man City's 1-2 loss to Chelsea helps Liverpool claim the Premier League title after 30 years

SPORTS P12

SHORT TAKES

3-day shutdown in parts of Gajapati

Gajapati: In view of the sudden rise in COVID-19 cases, Gajapati district administration Friday announced a complete shutdown in several blocks and one gram panchayat of the district. Collector Anupam Shah informed that the shutdown will be enforced from June 28 for a period of three days in two blocks- Gosani and Gumma, Paralakhemundi town and Ranipentha gram panchayat in Kashinagar block. The district administration has formed 40 teams comprising health officials to conduct door-to-door survey to identify persons suffering from cold, cough, fever and other flu-like symptoms.

Govt quarantine must for some

Bhubaneswar: The Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC) Friday announced that people returning from five hotspot districts of Odisha would not be allowed to stay in home quarantine in the slums of Bhubaneswar. BMC Commissioner Prem Choudhary told the media that people coming from Ganjam, Balasore, Cuttack, Gajapati and Jajpur now cannot opt for home quarantine in slums of the city and have to mandatorily go for institutional quarantine. P4

IRREGULAR by MANJUL



I doubt we can trust the Chinese. They say they would withdraw as soon as achhe din comes

MARKET WATCH

INDEX	VAIATION
SENSEX	35171.27 ↑ 329.17
NIFTY	10383.00 ↑ 94.10
DOLLAR	75.47 ↓ ₹0.15
EURO	85.08 ↑ ₹0.09
GOLD	₹47,719 ↓ ₹222
SILVER	₹47,594 ↓ ₹ 522

WEATHER

	BHUB	CTK
TEMP	MAX 36.6°C	35.8°C
	MIN 27.0°C	25.0°C
Humidity	92%	81%
Rainfall	Nil	Nil
Forecast	Partly cloudy sky	

Auto, pharma firms not ready to wean off China

REUTERS

New Delhi, June 26: Days after a border clash with China this month in which 20 Indian soldiers were killed, New Delhi told firms to find ways to cut imports from China. But two big industries, automobiles and pharmaceuticals, say this is easier said than done.

Like many countries, India relies on China for products such as electronic components and drug ingredients because it cannot make them or source them elsewhere as cheaply, company and industry figures say. Thus any moves to curb imports or make them costlier without developing alternatives will hurt local businesses.

India imported around \$70.3 billion of goods from China in the fiscal year to March 2019, and exported just \$16.7 billion - its widest trade deficit with any country.

The government is now consulting with companies on tightening curbs on 1,173 non-essential products, a trade body official said on condition of anonymity. They include toys, plastics, steel items, electronics and specific auto components - which feed vehicle manufacturing. "If things do escalate, then India stands to lose a lot more than



NO ALTERNATIVES

- Over a quarter of India's auto part imports - \$4.2 billion - came from China in 2019
- Chinese supplies have also been a key factor in India's booming drug industry, which exports cheap generic medicines
- Hence, any moves to curb imports or make them costlier without developing alternatives will hurt local businesses

China," said the chief of corporate strategy at one of India's top 10 drug-makers. "We cannot afford this." "We cannot have a knee-jerk reaction, especially when we are emerg-

'Made in India' logos in Xiaomi stores

Chinese handset maker Xiaomi has begun covering its retail store branding with 'Made in India' logo in white colour amid fears of vandalism at outlets in the backdrop of the Sino-India border tension, the All India Mobile Retailers Association (AIMRA) said. The association had written to Chinese mobile brands to highlight the threat of vandalism at offline stores by people amid calls for boycotting Chinese products in certain sections.

WE DON'T IMPORT BECAUSE WE LIKE TO, BUT BECAUSE WE HAVE NO CHOICE

R C BHARGAVA | CHAIRMAN, MARUTI SUZUKI INDIA



ing from the disruption caused by the pandemic," he said. Chinese supplies have also been a key factor in India's booming drug industry, which exports cheap generic medicines.

No scheduled int'l flights till July 15: DGCA

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, June 26: The aviation regulator DGCA said Friday it is extending the suspension of scheduled international passenger flights in the country till July 15 but added that some international scheduled services on selected routes may be permitted on a case to case basis.

Scheduled international passenger flights were suspended in India on March 23 due to the coronavirus pandemic. The competent authority has decided that scheduled international commercial passenger services to or from India shall remain suspended till 2359 hrs IST of July 15, 2020, said the DGCA circular.

However, international scheduled flights may be allowed on selected routes by the competent authority on a case to case basis, said the circular by the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA).

Air India and other private domestic airlines have been operating unscheduled international repatriation flights under the Vande Bharat Mission, which was started on May 6 by the Central government.

India resumed scheduled domestic passenger flights on May 25, after a gap of two months.



CBSE unveils 4-point assessment scheme

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, June 26: Marks for the pending class 10, 12 exams, which have been cancelled in view of the COVID-19 pandemic, will be awarded on basis of marks scored by a student in his or her best performing subjects, according to Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE)'s four-point assessment scheme.

The board notified the scheme after receiving a nod from the Supreme Court which was hearing a petition by a group of parents. As per the scheme, results of class 10 and 12 students, who have completed all their exams,

will be declared based on their performance in the exams.

For students who have appeared in the examinations in more than three subjects, the average of the marks obtained in the best three performing subjects will be awarded in the subjects whose examinations have not been conducted, CBSE Exam Controller

Sanyam Bhardwaj explained. For students who have appeared in the examinations in only three subjects, the average of the marks obtained in the best two performing subjects will be awarded in the subjects whose examinations have not been conducted, Bhardwaj added.

All decks cleared for Sundari's relocation

MANISH KUMAR, OP

Bhubaneswar, June 26: All road-blocks have now been cleared to relocate tigress Sundari from Satkosia Tiger Reserve to Madhya Pradesh with the National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA) allaying fears of the Madhya Pradesh government.

Few days back, the state had raised apprehensions against the relocation of tigress Sundari and wrote their reservations against the move to the NTCA after the Odisha government decided to send the tigress back to MP.

"We had received the letter from the MP government raising their specific concerns against the relocation. We have now had our communication with them and the matter has been sorted out. We have told them that they can relocate the tigress anywhere in the state as per their local assessment of habitat and safety," a senior member from NTCA told **Orissa POST**.

The officer also said that the future of the next relocation has not been cancelled but put on indefinite halt under the ambitious maiden project of inter-state relocation of the tigers for increasing

- Sundari was shifted from MP to Satkosia Tiger Reserve in Odisha June 28, 2018, and was released in the wild July 6
- She was captured by Odisha forest officials November 6, 2018, after it killed two people in the STR core area

the population of tigers in Odisha. "The main motive for which a tiger and a tigress were released in the wilds of Satkosia has failed and thus the whole project was put on hold," he said.

The Odisha government said that within one month, the tigress will be shifted to Madhya Pradesh. "The government had earlier decided to shift back the tigress and now within one month she is likely to be shifted back to the state as per the protocol under strict monitoring and security," PCCF (Wild Life) HS Upadhyay said.

The return will mark the formal culmination of the maiden experiment of inter-state translocation of tigers to increase tiger population in the country. In the maiden phase, a tiger named Mahaveer and a tigress Sundari were sent from MP to Satkosia.



Woman finds out she is a 'man'

Her chromosome complement was found to be 'XY' and not 'XX', as found in a woman

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kolkata, June 26: For thirty years she led a normal life with no complications, until recently, when doctors, while treating her for abdominal pain, discovered that she was a 'man' suffering from testicular cancer.

Surprisingly, her 28-year-old sister, who underwent necessary tests following the revelation, was also diagnosed with 'Androgen Insensitivity Syndrome' - a condition in which a person is born genetically male, but has all physical traits of a woman.

The 30-year-old Birbhum resident, married for the last nine years, had visited city-based Netaji Subhas Chandra



Bose Cancer Hospital with severe pain in lower abdomen, following which clinical oncologist Dr Anupam Dutta and surgical oncologist Dr Soumen Das conducted her medical tests, and found out her true identity.

From her appearance, she is a woman. Starting from her voice, developed breasts, normal external gen-

italia, everything is that of a woman. However, uterus and ovaries were absent. She has also never experienced menstruation, Dr Dutta said.

It's a very rare condition, and can be found one in every 22,000 people, he said. We conducted clinical examinations, after she complained of abdominal pain, and found out she has testicles inside her body. A biopsy was conducted, following which she was diagnosed with testicular cancer, also called seminoma, Dr Dutta explained.

It was learnt, that the couple had tried for babies a number of times but failed. The patient's two maternal aunts were also diagnosed with Androgen Insensitivity Syndrome in the past.

DADLS-43

AVOID GOING OUT.

AVOID CORONA.

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

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

#OdishaFightsCorona

OIPR-15001/13/0064/2021



FRANCIS DENIES WINONA'S CLAIMS

Legendary director Francis Ford Coppola has denied Winona Ryder's claim that he asked Keanu Reeves and other actors to insult her on the set of Bram Stoker's *Dracula* back in 1992. Ryder claimed that Coppola told actors to shout offensive comments at her to make her cry while filming.

IAN RETURNS AS HAMLET ON STAGE

More than 50 years after appearing as William Shakespeare's young prince, veteran star Ian McKellen will be essaying the role of Hamlet on stage again. The 81-year-old actor has been announced as the lead in an age-blind production at Theatre Royal Windsor.



FORTUNE FORECAST

GaneshSpeaks.com
accuracy • reliability • trust
FOR ASTROLOGY DIAL 55181

ARIES
Today, love will be a delightful thing for you. You would want to spend all your time with friends and family, not to forget your Lhasa Apso. This doesn't go down well with your peers, who may think you're a shirker, says Ganesh.

TAURUS
There is a bright chance that you will have a both thoughtful and rewarding day today, predicts Ganesh. Do not get upset should things not work in your favour; keep in mind that today is not apocalypse.

GEMINI
There are chances that you will take a break from the routine to recharge your batteries today, feels Ganesh. In the afternoon, children will bring home delight and joy. Second half of the day will strengthen your financial position.

CANCER
Today, your loved ones will prove again how much they love you. It's high time you stopped doubting the intentions of your family members. It's time to start over, start afresh and start giving back the love and trust that your loved ones give you.

LEO
Today, you will think with your heart, not with your mind, says Ganesh. While that is a good thing sometimes, it may blur your analytical logic. If you happen to be in the business of money-lending, you can be assured of a fantastic afternoon wherein you will rake in profits.

VIRGO
Lady Luck is your date for the day today. Good tidings bear their way to you from distant lands, and may be across the seas too. Chances are you make take an initiative to let the cat of love out of the bag. Your outlook will be free of confusion today, says Ganesh.

LIBRA
For every matter, there is a particular solution unique to it. With your systematic approach to things, you are a firm believer of this statement. And it is a good thing too, since today, this habit shall help you grab the limelight at work, says Ganesh.

SCORPIO
You will tackle work and commitments with a renewed zeal today, says Ganesh. Your enthusiasm will catch on at the workplace, contagious and inspiring as it is. On the career front, things will look up later in the day and opportunities will shower a plenty.

SAGITTARIUS
Your nerves are taut, and you are more aware than ever of things around you. Your spiritual side gets a major boost today. On the career front, expect it to be busy day giving interviews for better prospects. In the evening, your charm might just have a few women dangling by your side at places you party.

CAPRICORN
Your extraordinary sense of humour will keep those around you amused throughout the day, so much so that they will look forward to spending more time with you in the future as well, says Ganesh. Also, your ability to solve problems with ease will impress many.

AQUARIUS
Today is reserved for out-lining projects that will ultimately shape your future. You may want to chalk out a plan for your education, job, or even a relationship. Later in the day, you may get lucky with sudden and unexpected profits. If you're a professional, there are rewards galore, expects Ganesh.

PISCES
If legal hassles have been troubling you of late, they are likely to reach a satisfactory conclusion today, says Ganesh. Your finances look good. Family matters will keep you busy in the afternoon. Your evenings are likely to be filled with music or dance classes.

VIDEO STREAMING AT THE FOREFRONT

New Delhi: Video streaming is at the forefront of the new normal, as a result of home sheltering worldwide in the last six months. According to a new report, Indian consumers are engaging with online video for an average of 5 hours and 16 minutes every day— which is the highest amongst the surveyed countries— even as the global video consumption average has quadrupled in the last six months.

role as a top source of entertainment, social interactions and information. In fact, the global average of four hours and three minutes per day of online video viewing is a dramatic increase compared to a single hour average measured in the State of Online Video 2019 study just six months ago. In fact, over 85 per cent of people globally now watch up to six hours of online video per day," a market research report



NEW NORMAL

hours, the country has the largest percentage (7.1 per cent) who watch more than 12 hours per day. The lowest average viewing hours is in South Korea, closely followed by France and the UK.

The report also found that as people age, online video viewing hours decrease, as younger people take more online classes, video chat with friends and play video games. Given the significant increase in

viewing hours per day, it's not surprising that more than 70 per cent reported a spike in the amount of time they watched online video in the past two months. The largest increase was in India (about 85 per cent) and lowest in South Korea (7.4 per cent). The report also shows that around 68 per cent Indians said going virtual has allowed them to do most activities (work, school, hobbies) they did pre-COVID-19.

"During COVID-19, 89 per cent of people have used video to communicate. Video chat is most popular in India, where the majority of people (65 per cent) use it multiple times a day. A whopping two-thirds (64.3 per cent) of Indian consumers had their first esports experience during the pandemic. With other live events cancelled as well, more than two-thirds (68.8 per cent) of Indian respondents also attended their first

virtual concert. Exercising is also going virtual as athletic facilities remain closed. Yoga has also been popular in India as it helped people to maintain physical fitness during the lockdown. In line with this trend, 55.6 per cent Indians said that they had participated in an online fitness class and another 26.8 per cent plan to do so in the next six months," Limelight Networks said in its *How Video is Changing the World* report.

In the last two months there was a rise in people attending online auctions. In fact, nearly one-third of people recently attended their first online auction, added the report. Online classes also have many, including professionals, hooked online.

"Beyond entertainment and social interactions, streaming enables easier access to critical information. Doctor's visits have shifted to telehealth appointments with 49 per cent of people open to the idea, 22 per cent of people saying they've recently met virtually with their doctor and another 27 per cent planning to in the next 6 months," the report revealed. IANS



"As people worldwide were forced to stay at home during the pandemic, online video has taken a whole new

by Limelight Networks said. While most Indian users (about 43 per cent) watch online video for 4-



Mumbai: Actress Diana Penty says the COVID-19 pandemic has been nature's way of telling humans to stop, adding that the outbreak has taught her to value life. "I think this pandemic has been nature's way of telling us to just stop. We were moving at a pace too fast for our own good. This time, as tough as it has been, has given me the chance to disconnect and just be," Diana said.

"Most importantly it's taught me to value life, the people I love and the world around me. I'm grateful to have the things that I have, and I've learnt not to take anything for granted," she added.

Amid lockdown, Diana has come out with an initiative called *The Khaki Project* to extend help and support to Mumbai Police, who have been in the forefront in the city's fight against the coronavirus outbreak.

On the work front, she will next be seen in the romantic drama *Shiddat*. Talking about the film, she said, "*Shiddat* is a beautiful story of love and the strong bonds between people. It is pure and intense and also very relatable. I am usually not a love story kind of person, but when I heard the script, it moved me a lot." IANS

"Pandemic has taught me to value life"

Abhishek wants to be directed by Aamir



Mumbai: Actor Abhishek Bachchan has a special request to his *Dhoom 3* co-star Aamir Khan. He says he would like to be directed by the latter one day.

"*Dhoom* gave me the once in a lifetime opportunity to work with @aamirkhan and if given

another opportunity I wouldn't act with him, I want to be directed by him!!! So Aamir, if you're reading this, kindly consider my request," Abhishek posted on Instagram.

He also recalled shooting with him during *Dhoom 3*.

"Aamir was so warm and forthcoming as a co-actor. Very helpful and accommodating. I can only imagine what a wonderful director he must be. Apart from his great talent he is so down to earth and fun loving on set despite what scene we would do.

"One of my fondest memories was when we shot a few scenes in Six Flags amusement park in Chicago. The park was shut and it was just the unit that was allowed in. The minute Aamir and I would get the shortest of breaks, we'd run off the the closest roller-coaster and ask them put it on just for us. What a luxury! Good times," Abhishek added. IANS



Anushka on *Bulbbul*: Wanted to show strong women through cinema

Mumbai: Actress-producer Anushka Sharma says she always wanted to show strong, independent women through cinema and *Bulbbul* is our new offering in this regard," she said.

Anushka stressed that the portrayal of women 'in our cinema has always been skewed and lopsided', adding: "I felt that as an actress and I decided that I will correct this as much as I can through my productions."

"We are really proud that *Bulbbul* is being loved by the audience because Karnesh and I really put our necks on the line

always wanted to show strong, independent women to audiences through cinema and *Bulbbul* is our new offering in this regard," she said.

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"We are really proud that *Bulbbul* is being loved by the audience because Karnesh and I really put our necks on the line

to make projects that we hope will be clutter-breaking. The fact that people have called each and every attempt of ours as daring and adventurous is validation enough for us," she said.

She is happy that *Bulbbul* is garnering a good response among viewers and positive reviews: "Karnesh and I aren't scared storytellers. We make each project thinking we have nothing to lose. We are non-conformists and that's what has really, really helped us to explore and create." IANS

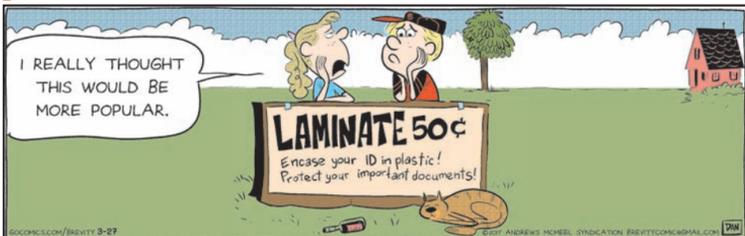
PEANUTS



CALVIN AND HOBBS

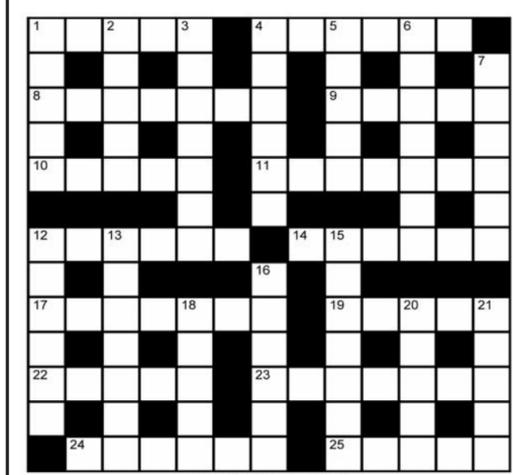


BREVITY



FUN post

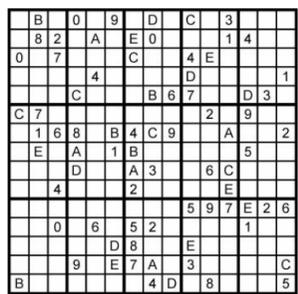
CROSSWORD



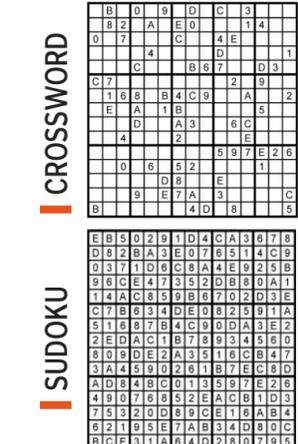
- Across
- 1 Watchful
 - 4 Kind of artist
 - 8 Sully
 - 9 Colour of honey
 - 10 Sine or cosine
 - 11 Railroad support
 - 12 Kids' totes
 - 14 Scimitars
 - 17 Mexican dish
 - 19 Vinyl collectible
 - 22 Make jubilant drink
 - 23 In need of a drink
 - 24 Jelly ingredient
 - 25 Parachute material
 - 5 Swap
 - 6 Satellite
 - 7 Putting surfaces
 - 12 Like a platypus's feet
 - 13 Relevant
 - 15 High-spirited horse
 - 16 Like lava
 - 18 Unreactive
 - 20 Pesto base
 - 21 Ancient Central American civilisation

SUDOKU

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



SOLUTIONS



CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW



TACKLING COVID-19

Collector Bhawani Sankar Chayani inaugurates a sanitisation tunnel set up by the Inner Wheel Club at the Cuttack collectorate, Friday

FIGHTING VIRUS

Officials of state Vigilance department donate Rs 13 lakh to the CMRF through Chief Secretary Asit Tripathy in Bhubaneswar, Friday



Cardiac care hosp at Jharsuguda by March

MAHANADI COALFIELDS LIMITED PROVIDES FINANCIAL AID FOR CONSTRUCTION OF THE FACILITY

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, June 26: If everything goes as per plan, the civil construction and installation of equipment for the cardiac care hospital at Jharsuguda will be completed by March 2021.

Health & Family Welfare Minister Naba Kishore Das and Chief Secretary Asit Tripathy reviewed the progress of the work at Lok Seva Bhawan here, Friday.

Additional Chief Secretary Health & Family Welfare PK Mohapatra outlined the issues for discussion.

National Health Mission Director Shalini Pandit said, "The hospital is being set up on Public Private Partnership (PPP) mode. The Mahanadi Coalfields Limited (MCL) is providing financial support for construction of the facility and installation of equipment. The required land of 5.05 acre has been provided by district administration."

Care Hospital has been selected as the PPP partner through an appropriate bidding process for operation and management of the hospital. It will be a 100-bed specialised cardiac care hospital in which around 50 per cent of the beds will be available for the patients having Biju Krushak Kalyan Yojana



Health Minister Naba Das, Chief Secretary Asit Tripathy and additional chief secretary (Health) PK Mohapatra at the meeting

FILLIP TO HEALTH INFRA

■ It will be a 100-bed specialised cardiac care hospital in which around 50% of beds will be available for the patients having BKKY cards

■ The super specialty hospital will have facilities like radiation oncology, linear accelerator, brachytherapy, nuclear medicine, PET CT, MRI, CT Scan, mammography, X-Ray, CR System, ultrasound and blood bank

■ Health Minister directs officials to ensure construction of quarters for health staff on hospital premises

(BKKY) cards, she said.

The super specialty hospital will have facilities like radiation oncology, linear accelerator, brachytherapy, nuclear medicine, PET CT, MRI, CT Scan, mammography, X-Ray, CR System, ultrasound and blood bank.

Review showed, presently the construction work has been expedited. The Odisha State Medical Corporation (OSMC) has also started the process for procure-

ment of the equipment. The suggestions for dedicated electricity and water supply for the hospital was also discussed in the meeting.

During the meeting, Das directed the officials to ensure construction of residential quarters for doctors and paramedics on the hospital premises itself. Jharsuguda Collector and executive engineer were directed to prepare separate estimates for the quarters.

The Chief Secretary emphasised

on quality service, day-to-day operation, management and upkeep of the hospital. He directed the PPP cell functioning under the Finance department to work out definite procedures for these requirements as per the conditions of PPP agreement.

Tripathy also ordered to put in place definite institutional framework for operation and management before completion of the construction.

DEOs told to implement VidyaDaan

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, June 26: In view of the Covid-19 pandemic, the Odisha School Education Programme Authority (OSEPA) has urged all district education officers (DEOs) to implement VidyaDaan programme.

The OSEPA directed the DEOs to implement VidyaDaan, a national programme, urging individuals and organisations to contribute contents for e-learning in schools. Under the programme, e-learning contents will be invited from experts, teachers, individuals and organisations for school education on DIKSHA and in order to leverage its potential uses by our students and teachers. Contributions can be made by individual, educationists, subject experts, colleges, universities, institutions, schools, offices, government and non-government organisations.

HC reprieve for Uliburu mining scam accused

POST NEWS NETWORK

Cuttack, June 26: Orissa High Court, Friday, granted interim bail to Uliburu mining scam prime accused Deepak Gupta for 30 days.

Though Gupta had applied for regular bail, the court has granted him an interim bail.

The High Court directed Gupta to submit Rs 1 crore in cash through a nationalised bank, Rs 2 crore for bail bond and his passport following which the court will grant him regular bail. Besides, the court has ordered Gupta not to go outside Keonjhar without the court's permission. The court also directed him to appear before it physically on the date when the hearings would take place even during the interim bail period.

The HC has also told Gupta to surrender in the court after completion of the interim bail period of one month. Gupta had applied for bail in High Court for five times and in the Supreme Court twice but his



The HC directed Gupta to submit ₹1 crore in cash, ₹2 crore for bail bond and his passport

plea was rejected every time.

Notably, Gupta had the power of attorney of an iron ore mine at Uliburu in Keonjhar, lease of which was with BK Mohanty. Leaseholder of the mine Mohanty illegally extracted iron ore beyond the permissible limits in the mining plan following which Gupta and several others were arrested by state Vigilance department September 4, 2013 for his alleged involvement in the scam.

Naveen for smooth conduct of Bahuda Yatra

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, June 26: Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik Friday directed the officials concerned to ensure smooth conduct of Bahuda Yatra, Sunabesha, Adharapana and Niladri Bije in compliance with the direction of Supreme Court and Covid-19 guidelines.

Reviewing the preparedness for Bahuda Yatra in Puri, Naveen thanked the servitors, police, district administration, temple administration, Health department and Puri citizens for smooth completion of Rath Yatra and sought same cooperation during Bahuda Yatra.

Naveen urged the officials concerned to ensure timely completion of all rituals involving only those sevayats who were tested Covid negative. He directed for aggressive surveillance for symptoms and ramping up testing in Puri town.

Information and Public Relation (I&PR) department was asked to ensure the live telecast of Bahuda Yatra, Sunabesha, Adharapana and the Niladri Bije rituals on various TV channels.

"As I said earlier, the world is watching Puri. We must put our best efforts, to ensure all precautions are taken," he said.

Law Minister Pratap Jena, Chief Secretary Asit Tripathy, DGP Abhay SJTA Chief Administrator Krishan Kumar and other senior officials attended the meeting.

2 enter Gundicha temple in guise of servitors

POST NEWS NETWORK

Puri, June 26: The Kumbharpada police here Friday detained two persons as they entered the Gundicha temple under the guise of servitors.

According to sources, the duo managed to gain entry into the shrine during 'Mangal Alati' of the

deities in the morning. "Their unusual behaviour forced us to think otherwise and we informed the police," said a servitor.

Later, Kumbharpada police officials reached the spot and took the duo into custody.

"Smruti Ranjan Mohanty of Markandeswar Sahi and Ajay Kumar Mohapatra of Kumbharpada

area have been detained at the police station for interrogation. A case (159/20) has been registered in this regard," additional superintendent of police (ASP) Arun Kumar Jena said.

Later in the day, the security personnel nabbed another man while he was entering the Gundicha temple with a 'forged' entry pass.

CMC to revamp garbage disposal

POST NEWS NETWORK

Cuttack, June 26: The Cuttack Municipal Corporation (CMC) has introduced several measures to improve garbage disposal system in the Silver City here. The civic authorities have planned to deploy at least six battery-operated vehicles for door-to-door collection of garbage.

"We are giving importance to door-to-door collection of garbage to keep the city clean. In the first phase, at least six battery-operated vehicles will be used to collect trash from ward no. 27, 28 and 44," said an official of the CMC.

The municipal corporation Friday launched a campaign to make people aware of the new garbage disposal system. CMC Deputy Commissioner Sanjibita Ray inaugurated the awareness drive at Vikash Bhawan here.

"We will create awareness among the residents of the city for segregation of garbage at source. People will be urged to keep their dry and wet waste separately for proper management of garbage in the city," said the official.

Protest erupts in City over Covid management

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, June 26: As many as 13 political parties Friday staged a protest near Master Canteen Square here against the ruling NDA government at the Centre and the BJD-ruled Odisha government for their alleged failure in managing Covid-19.

The agitators raised slogans and highlighted the issues of livelihood security during and after the lockdown. The members also met Governor Ganeshi Lal and submitted their memorandum.

Parties like Congress, CPI, CPM, CPI (ML), Samajwadi Party, Aam Aadmi Party, RJD, NCP, BSP, All India Forward Bloc and others participated in the protest.

They alleged that community transmission has already started as the Covid test of returnees is not being done properly. The incentives of Rs 2,000 as announced by the state government to people on completion of their quarantine period, is also not being given.

Odisha Pradesh Congress



Leaders of 13 political parties hold a demonstration at Master Canteen Square in Bhubaneswar, Friday

The state govt is not conducting enough tests which eventually results in a surfeit of Covid-19 cases in Odisha

SURESH ROURAY | CONGRESS LEADER

Committee (OPCC) president Niranjan Patnaik said the Union and state governments are wasting money without any tangible results with regard to coronavirus pandemic.

Congress leader and Jatni MLA

Suresh Routray said that the government is not conducting adequate number of tests against the deadly virus which results in a surfeit of Covid-19 cases in the state every passing day. "The Chief Minister had announced in April that 15,000 samples will be tested in the state every day, but unfortunately the number does not even cross 4,000 a day," he added.

The political parties through their memorandum to the Governor urged the government to distribute 10 kg ration to Covid-affected peo-

PCC PRESIDENT FINED

Meanwhile, Odisha Pradesh Congress Committee (OPCC) president Niranjan Patnaik was Friday fined Rs 500 for violating social distancing norms during the demonstration staged near Master Canteen Square participated by 13 opposition political parties.

ple, Rs 7,500 to the affected families for six months and job to the migrant workers returned from other states. The leaders alleged large-scale irregularities in the running of TMCs and massive corruption in procurement of masks, PPE, testing kits and other covid equipment.

Reacting to the allegations, Biju Janta Dal (BJD) leader Pramilla Mallick said that Congress has already lost the plot and is resorting to such tactics only to remain in media glare.

Similarly, BJP general secretary Prithviraj Harichandan said that when the country is limping back to normalcy and witnessing a steady growth in recovery cases of Covid, the Congress and the Left parties are trying to mislead people by creating panic.

Cops from other dists can't enter Puri: DGP

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, June 26: Director General of Police (DGP) Abhay, Friday, issued an order saying no police personnel, except officials deployed for checking law and order during the nine-day long Rath Yatra, will be permitted to enter Puri town on the pretext of official duty till July 4.

The decision has been taken in view of the recent incident of an IIC from Jajpur district violating Covid-19 guidelines.

"Possibility of some officers alone or with family visiting Puri on the pretext of official work or otherwise for darshan cannot be totally ruled out. Hence, it is hereby laid down that other than officers posted in Puri district and those deputed for L&O duty, no officer will be permitted to go on official duty to Puri till July 4," said a statement issued by the Police Headquarters, Cuttack with approval from DGP Abhay.

In case of urgency and if the

THE DECISION WAS TAKEN IN VIEW OF THE RECENT INCIDENT OF AN IIC FROM JAJPUR VIOLATING COVID-19 NORMS

THE POLICE OFFICER FORCEFULLY ENTERED SRIMANDIR FLOUTING THE LOCKDOWN NORMS

duty cannot be postponed, permission will be taken from state Police Headquarters via ADG (Law and Order) for visit to Puri, the statement added.

Notably, Puri police had arrested the Barchana IIC Deepak Jena, April 20, 2020, for flouting lockdown norms.

Jena had forcefully entered the Srimandir despite the temple remaining out of bounds for devotees due to the nationwide lockdown induced by Covid-19. A servitor of Puri temple also helped him enter the 12th century shrine.

FESTIVAL AMID PANDEMIC



1

1) The three chariots of Lord Jagannath and his siblings parked near Srigundicha temple in Puri, Friday. The chariots will be pulled back to Srimandir on the occasion of Bahuda Yatra



2

2) People buy Mahaprasad from a special counter near Srigundicha temple

3

3) Saradhahali in front of Srigundicha temple looks empty in the absence of devotees due to the Covid-19 restrictions



OP PHOTOS

NZP gets new deputy director

POST NEWS NETWORK

Barang, June 26: Senior forest officer Bimal Prasanna Acharya will take over as the deputy director of Nandankanan Zoological Park (NZP) here, an official said Friday.



Acharya, who served as the divisional forest officer (DFO) of Dhenkanal, will replace Jayant Kumar Das. Das will join as the general manager (operations) of Odisha Mineral Bearing Areas Development Corporation.

As many as eight DFOs have been transferred and three assistant conservators of forest (ACFs) have been elevated to the post of DFO, Thursday, an official said.

No home quarantine for hotspot returnees

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, June 26: The Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC) Friday announced that people returning from five hotspot districts in the state would not be allowed to stay in home quarantine in Bhubaneswar.

BMC Commissioner Prem Choudhary told media that people coming from Ganjam, Balasore, Cuttack, Gajapati and Jajpur cannot opt for home quarantine in slums and have to mandatorily go for institutional quarantine.

"After the relaxation in lockdown conditions and opening up of economic activities in Bhubaneswar, people have started coming from other districts to work and they mostly reside in slum areas. It is observed that few returnees from other hotspot districts (districts having more number of positive cases) to Bhubaneswar have been found positive for COVID-19," a notification from BMC said.

People coming from Ganjam, Balasore, Cuttack, Gajapati and Jajpur cannot opt for home quarantine in slums and have to mandatorily go for institutional quarantine



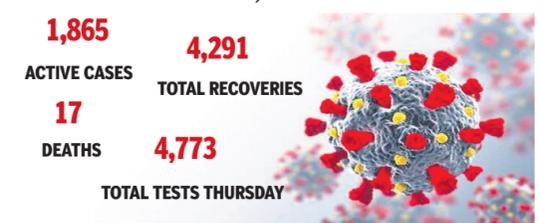
The information of such returnees will be captured by active slum surveillance teams

The zonal deputy commissioners of BMC shall obtain this from the slum surveillance teams and take steps to shift them to the institutional quarantine centres

It added, "Such returnees, if asymptomatic, can affect many others as social distancing is practically not possible in slum areas because of small houses and high population density. Therefore, in larger public interest, the returnees from these districts to slum areas of BMC will be kept in institutional quarantine for the specified period of 14 days from the date of return from other district," The BMC said the infor-

mation of such returnees will be captured by active slum surveillance teams on a daily basis. The zonal deputy commissioners of BMC shall obtain this from the slum surveillance teams and take steps to shift them to the institutional quarantine centres.

State's COVID tally crosses 6,000-mark



PNN/AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, June 26: The state's COVID-19 tally crossed the 6,000-mark Friday with 218 more people, including seven NDRF personnel, testing positive for the infection, a health department official said.

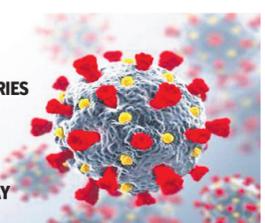
With these fresh patients, the total number of coronavirus cases in the state has gone up to 6,180, he said. Of the fresh cases, 191 were reported from quarantine centres where returnees have been staying for preliminary observation.

Seven National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) personnel, who had returned from cyclone Amphan restoration work in West Bengal, were also in quarantine facilities and tested positive for COVID-19, while the remaining cases were detected during the contact-tracing exercises, the official said.

A total of 289 personnel of disaster response teams of NDRF, Odisha Disaster Response Force (ODRAF) and Odisha Fire Services and nine Border Security Force jawans have been infected with the virus in the state, he said.

The highest number of fresh cases excluding NDRF personnel was reported from Ganjam district at 49. Jagatsinghpur (29), Gajapati (27), Bhadrak (25), Khurda (17), Sundargarh (11) and Puri (10) were among the districts where new cases were found.

Ganjam is the worst-hit district with 1,137 cases, and the local ad-



ministration has declared a four-day shutdown in Berhampur Municipal Corporation (BMC) area beginning Saturday, the official said. The shutdown will be imposed to carry out contact tracing and door-to-door survey, District Collector VA Kulange said, adding that 70 teams have been formed for these purposes. They will examine the health condition of citizens and take stock of the home quarantine status, he said.

However, emergency medical services and milk delivery have been kept out of the purview of the shutdown, the Collector pointed out. With fresh patients, the state has now 1,865 active cases, while 4,291 people have recovered from the disease. As many as 17 persons have so far succumbed to the disease in the state, while seven others, who had tested positive for the infection, died due to 'non-COVID reasons', the official said.

The state Thursday conducted 4,773 tests, added the official.

Meanwhile, the Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC) said 16 persons were tested positive for the viral infection under its jurisdiction Friday.

"Of the positive cases, two were from home quarantine and 14 were local contact cases," the civic body said, adding that 11 persons who were earlier tested COVID-19 positive have recovered and were being discharged from the COVID care facilities. With this, the Capital city has 132 active corona cases.

NGT seeks action plan on elephant corridors

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, June 26: The National Green Tribunal (NGT) has asked the state government to furnish an action plan relating to the notification of the 14 proposed elephant corridors in the state.

This comes against a decade-long petition before the tribunal which had demanded early notification of the demarcated elephant corridors in the state which are used by jumbos to avoid man-elephant conflict.

"We direct the state respondents to place before us an action plan with specific timelines, if not already prepared within a period of two months in accordance with observations and recommendations made in the report submitted by the Asia Nature Conservation Foundation (ANCF)," the NGT order said.

In 2017, the NGT had prohibited such activities in highly eco-sensitive zones. This was followed by a direction to expedite demarcation of the corridors and the processes for formal notification within a specific time.

The state government had identified 14 elephant corridors in the state with the help of Asia Nature Conservation Foundation (ANCF) which was entrusted with the task of examining the ground reality

in jungles with regard to jumbo movement and the area which needed to be demarcated.

The government had made an interim identification of the path but a formal notification in this regard was due. Experts claim that when the elephant corridors are formally demarcated, hazardous activities would come down, reducing interference in jumbo movement.

"Once the notification is out and the corridors legally protected, mining, and other harmful activities cannot take place on such areas protecting the jumbos from such hurdles which otherwise come in the way of their natural movement, leading to human-elephant clashes," Sankar Prasad Pani, a lawyer with NGT said. The petition in the NGT said that there was a subsisting cause of action because of the continuing delay in the notification of elephant corridors though they have been identified and surveyed by the Principal Chief Conservator of Forests (Wildlife) and Chief Wildlife Warden, Odisha.

According to data given by the Centre, Odisha has an estimated elephant population of 1976 (by 2017), the highest in east central region. According to the government, more than 250 elephants died in Odisha over last three years due to several reasons.



Odisha has an estimated elephant population of 1976 (by 2017), the highest in east central region



The floodwater released from Hirakud dam into Mahanadi river reaches Jobra barrage in Cuttack, Friday

SCB expansion to commence soon

POST NEWS NETWORK

Cuttack, June 26: Revenue Divisional Commissioner, (Central, Anil Kumar Samal Friday directed the departmental officers to expedite expansion work of the SCB Medical College and Hospital campus. A meeting in this regard was convened Friday.

Samal directed the officials to start the eviction drive and get all the quarters under several departments vacated by July 7. District Collector Bhabani Shankar Chayani said the district administration will start the rehabilitation drive in sweeper and Behera colonies after discussing with them. The district administration will give Rs 50,000 as compensation money to each family in both the colonies.

BSCL projects to be designed on nCoV crisis

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, June 26: With no signs of improvement in Covid-19 pandemic, the Smart City proposals for the Capital city are likely to align its projects in conformity with the steps to tackle the pandemic, as directed by the Union government.

The Centre has directed the Special Purpose Vehicles (SPVs) of smart cities to develop future projects in view of the pandemic. These include IT-based psychological support systems to Covid-19 patients, smart surveillance systems for crisis management, provision for online education to children studying in municipal and government schools, mobile health clinics and use of social media analytics for better understanding citizen perception among others

"The need for smart cities to build greater resilience has been voiced by stakeholders with the goal to align their project implementation with the emergent situation and the 'new normal' expected in the future. The SPVs were suggested to incorporate innovative practices in the plan which not only cater to demands of the current crisis but are promising in times to come," the Centre wrote to the smart cities.

The 16th Board of Directors Meeting of Bhubaneswar Smart City Limited (BSCL) held here, Thursday, on the eve of the fifth anniversary of the Smart Cities Mission discussed the same.

Among discussions, the board approved budget for the financial year 2020-21, draft accounts, HR and accounts policy were also passed for the SPV in BSCL.

Following this, the BSCL in its meet with Board of Directors approved extension of nine months to IBI Group as project management consultant (PgMC) with the Smart City for smooth execution of technology-based projects. Panned under 'Pan City Smart Solution' some of these projects include Intelligent City Operations and Management Centre (IOMC); Common Payment Method and Traffic Management Project.

"We have directed the BSCL to expedite its work with various ongoing projects during post Covid-19 situation and to complete

infrastructure projects including Smart Parks so that it may be put to efficient public use," stated BSCL Chairman, Suresh Chandra Mahapatra.

Housing and Urban Affairs Minister Hardeep Singh Puri advised smart cities quickly implement cycling-friendly initiatives in response to Covid-19. Floating 'CyclesChange Challenge', the ministry suggested the SPVs to explore low-cost interventions such as pop-up cycle lanes, non-motorised zones and community-led cycle rental schemes. The meet thus saw BSCL Chairman directing the Capital Region Urban Transport authorities to deploy more cycles across all the cycle docking stations across the city so that people can use them as means of transport, physical exercise and last mile connectivity and reduce dependency on overburdened public transports.

Greens seek scrapping of EIA draft note 2020

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, June 26: Environmental activists in the state have opposed the latest EIA (Environmental Impact Assessment) draft notification-2020 issued by the ministry of environment, forest and climate change (MoEFCC), saying it goes against the country's stance on biodiversity and militates against the agreements India signed as part of the Paris Climate Accord.

Several green activists and experts have sent their objections to the ministry, stating that the draft proposes to fundamentally alter India's current environmental rules and regulations, assessment and public participation and goes against the legal conventions under environmental laws. While the draft EIA will encourage violations, if implemented it will result in an exponential increase in GHG emissions and other pollutants released by industries. The deadline for objection ends on June 30, 2020.

According to the latest draft, the rules will be relaxed to ease work-



ing of ongoing projects and other 191 projects which are set for approval in near future.

However, the ministry has instead decided to relax norms on clearances and simultaneously has initiated the 'Unleashing Coal' campaign, auctioning 50 more new coal blocks to private players in the heart of the country. Such coal-bearing regions in Odisha, Maharashtra, Chhattisgarh and Madhya Pradesh are rich in biodiversity and home to indigenous communities.

Archana Soreng of Khadiya Tribe

in Odisha, research officer at Vasundhara Odisha, said, "A flurry of environmental clearances will have catastrophic effects on wildlife corridors and well-being and tenurial rights of adivasis and forest dwellers in India. Forest and nature are the source of life and identity of adivasis and forest dwelling communities. Unlike others, who see forest and nature as commercial commodities."

Ashish Birulee, photojournalist and a co-founder of Adivasi Lives Matter, said, "EIA will affect adivasi community because all the proj-

ects will be built after displacing adivasis from their land on which they have been living for long. The adivasi community has been dependent on resources from forests. They go foraging for fruits, firewood, leafy vegetables and medicines. Their self-reliant livelihood will be completely ruined."

Meher Abadian, a veterinarian, said "I am not sure what message the government is trying to send to us through this shoddy draft. This will result in a huge loss of biodiversity, damage ecosystems and aggravating man-animal conflict and pushing wildlife towards extinction."

Shweta Agrawal, an environmentalist, said #DraftEIA2020 relies on self-compliance - it assumes that violators will report themselves, this is an upside-down logic! This draft is a mockery to the process of environmental protection. It must be revoked. We've had 63 football fields' equivalent forest land being chopped everyday for three consecutive years (2014-17) in the name of #development due to industry-friendly clearances. We don't want history to repeat itself, she added.

5 cyber frauds of around ₹15L

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, June 26: The capital city witnessed a sharp increase in cyber frauds. The rise in such cases followed imposition of a nation-wide lockdown to stem the spread of coronavirus. The fraudsters also followed different types of tactics to fleece their targets.

Five cyber frauds worth over Rs 15 lakh came to notice in the city over past seven days. Pradipta Kumar Mishra of Pokhariput area under the Airport police limits was duped by cyber criminals to the tune of Rs 15 lakh. The miscreants called Mishra through a customer care number of Paytm, an Indian e-commerce payment system, and told him that the bank account linked to his Paytm account had expired due to the non-submission of KYC details.

They asked him to give them all the details related to his bank account. Subsequently, they withdrew Rs 9.80 lakh from the account of Mishra who gave his bank account details. Another victim identified as Sanjeeb Kumar Biswal of Sailashree Vihar under



Chandrasekharpur area was also duped by cyber fraudsters in a similar manner. Biswal lost around 2 lakhs after he shared his PAN, Adhar and bank account details with the miscreants.

Two other persons in Khandagiri area have lost Rs 46,000 and Rs 37,000 respectively. They sent the KYC details of their bank accounts to the fraudsters after the latter fooled them by saying that Paytm accounts have expired.

Meanwhile, cyber fraudsters duped a woman of around Rs 60,000

on the pretext of winning some coupon for the use of her credit card. The lady was identified as Madhumita Pattnaik of Jaydurga Nagar under Laxmisgar police station. The women asked the lady to send them her 16 digit credit card number, CVV and the OTP which she sent accordingly. Later, she was shocked to receive shopping bills worth Rs 60,000 while the transaction was conducted through her credit card. Police have been investigating the three cases by registering cases in this regard.

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Middlemen traffic returnee migrants to Andhra Pradesh

WITH COVID-19 INFECTIONS SURGING DAY BY DAY THE TRAFFICKING OF WORKERS HAS BECOME A CAUSE OF CONCERN FOR MALKANGIRI ADMINISTRATION

POST NEWS NETWORK

Malkangiri, June 26: Migrant workers from Odisha who returned to the state from various parts of the country in the wake of the coronavirus outbreak are being trafficked by labour contractors to neighbouring Andhra Pradesh.

This has been happening even as the administration is yet to identify the returnees and map their skills for their employment in the state, a report said.

The administration has spent lakhs of rupees for transportation of the stranded migrant workers from other states.

With COVID-19 infections surging



The family members of the youths who were taken to the neighbouring state

ing day by day the trafficking of migrant workers has become a cause of concern for the administration. Surprisingly, the labour trafficking has been going on without the knowledge of the labour department and local sarpanchs.

Some families of Sindhiguda village in Mathili block alleged told media persons that two middlemen forcibly took away seven youths from the village June 19 to Andhra Pradesh where they will be engaged in a bore well company. The health condition of the youths is not known, the villagers said.

The seven youths were identified as Purna Durua, Surya Durua, Lakh Durua, Sitaram Madkami,

Kuduku Madkami, Smaru and Pardeshi of Kasarbhata and Sindhiguda villages.

Despite opposition by the family members of the youths, the middlemen took them and assured that they will come back soon.

Locals alleged said if the vehicle in which they were transported to the neighbouring state had been checked, the middlemen and the workers could have been caught.

Mahupadar outpost police said the matter will be investigated and the youths will be brought back.

Sarpanch Shivshankar Durua said the youths were taken without his knowledge. Now, projects worth Rs 50 lakh under MGNREGS are being executed, he added.

DGP SUSPENDS RAPE ACCUSED BIRAMITRAPUR IIC

POST NEWS NETWORK

Sundargarh, June 26: DGP Abhay suspended Biramitrapur police station inspector-in-charge Anand Chandra Majhi Friday for impregnating a minor and later forcing her to undergo termination of pregnancy.

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

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

The girl visited Biramitrapur CHC June 16 after she fell sick. The IIC also terminated her pregnancy, without even informing the Child Welfare Committee. A case was registered against the accused police officials.

4-day shutdown in Silk City

POST NEWS NETWORK

Chhatrapur, June 26: Worried over the sharp rise in COVID-19 cases in Berhampur Municipal Corporation (BeMC), the Ganjam district administration has announced a four-day complete shutdown of the municipal area. The shutdown will come into effect June 27 and continue till June 30. Officials are hoping that the shutdown will prevent the spread of infection.

"The move is to contain the spread of coronavirus," Ganjam Collector Vijay Amruta Kulange said in a video message, Thursday.

Kulange said during the four days 70 medical teams from the district health department will do active contact tracing, symptom identification and health checking of people in isolation wards and home quarantine through door-to-door surveillance.

During the shutdown emergency services will remain functional. Also delivery of milk to houses has been permitted.

Kulange urged the people to cooperate with the medical teams during the health screening procedure. The medical teams will register

VIRUS CONTROL STRATEGY



During the four days, 70 medical teams from the district health department will do active contact tracing, symptom identification and health checking of people in isolation wards and home quarantine through door-to-door surveillance

The medical teams will register the names of the people with fever, cough, diabetes and diarrhoea symptoms and will take appropriate steps accordingly

During the shutdown emergency services will remain functional, while home delivery of milk has been permitted

the names of the people with fever, cough, diabetes and diarrhoea symptoms and will take appropriate steps accordingly

Ganjam district tops the COVID-19 infection list in Odisha with 1,138 cases. The district reported 49 new cases Friday. Among those hit by the virus, 13 are healthcare workers.

Eight of them are from Aska, three from BeMC and one each from Kodala and Kabi Surya Nagar.

Among those who tested positive for the disease Friday, four have travel histories. Two have recently returned from Mumbai while one has come back from Surat and the other one from Pune.

LIVELIHOOD MATTERS



A man tending his herd of goats and sheep out of Sambalpur town

OP PHOTO

POST NEWS NETWORK

Kendrapara, June 26: Farmers in Kendrapara district are a worried lot after the year's first floodwater was released from Hirakud dam Thursday.

From past experience, they say the floodwater released into Mahanadi will reach Mundali in Cuttack by Saturday and then it will reach their district. This season, they fear, the embankments that have gone weak may not stand the floodwater. If the embankments gets breached somewhere, huge damage to farmlands and open areas in the lower end is inevitable, they apprehend.

There are seven rivers and 27 distributaries in Kendrapara district. These rivers and rivulets get water from the Mahanadi and Brahmani systems as well as from the Baitarani.

Once the water flowing in the Mahanadi system reaches the district, rivers like Mahanadi, Luna, Chitratpola, Paika, Birupa and Gobari, and canals like Kendrapara canal, Gobari canal, Pattamundai canal will swell.

The farmers' rough estimate says the floodwater will affect 50, 000 hectares of agricultural land where kharif cultivation has just started.

According to Laxmikant Swain, a farmer of Mahakalpara block, after cyclone Amphan and monsoon rain farmers have already prepared beds for kharif paddy. At some places, farmers have even begun paddy transplantation. At the same time, some riparian farmers give importance to growing vegetable. At this time if floodwater comes, it will damage the crops.

Swain alleged that at places there are no embankments and at places the embankments are not strong enough to withstand the force of floodwater. If the farmlands get inundated, in the absence of any facility to drain out the accumulating water, it will stand for days



The floodwaters will swell water in Luna, Chitratpola, Paika, Birupa and Gobari, and canals like Kendrapara canal, Gobari canal, Pattamundai canal

together.

"Most farmers have taken loans. And they are now worried about how they will repay the loans in case their crops go waste," Swain added.

Farmer Niranjan Parida of Kansara village under Kandrapara block said this year many labourers who returned from other states have tried their hands at cultivation. If the floodwater causes damage to their crops, it will be from frying pan to the fire like situation for them.

Local farmers' leader Gayadhar Dhal said, "The water resources department has not yet carried out embankment strengthening exercises. Similarly, the branch canals are covered with weeds. No steps for their resurrection have been taken. The department has identified 24 such points where the embank-

ment may breach owing to floodwater. Since the branch canals are choked with weeds, the floodwater will hit hard the farmers of upper end."

This apart, 55 revenue villages will bear the brunt as there are no embankments in the downstream of Mahanadi system. While, cyclones Phani and Amphan have already broken the farmers' backbone, if the floodwater causes damage to crops, it will only be a last straw, he added.

When contacted, water resources department executive engineer, Prabodh Kumar Rout, said the weak embankments have been identified and they are being repaired. The floodwater will not affect the crops as it has been estimated by the farmers as the release of water will continue only for a few days, he observed.

Illegal cattle trade racket busted

POST NEWS NETWORK

Nayagarh, June 26: Amid allegation of illegal cattle trade going unchecked in Nayagarh district, the police seized seven trucks and two pickup vans with 88 cattle near Kantilo in Nayagarh district, Friday.

According to the police, the vehicles were on their way to West Bengal when a patrolling team seized them. Police also arrested a cattle transporter and driver and the duo is being interrogated.

Locals claimed that many trucks are engaged in illegally trafficking cattle to the neighbouring state on a daily basis. They said that in spite of repeated appeals and complaints, the police have not initiated any action against the illegal cattle traders.

All the rescued bovines were sent to an animal home in the district.

A few days back, the Odisha police had seized two pick-up vans carrying 25 cattle heads from Choudwar in Cuttack district. The police had also arrested some local youths in this connection. According to sources, the cattle were being sent to Bhadrak and Balasore districts.



PMGSY road on forest land riles locals

POST NEWS NETWORK

Joda, June 26: A rural road project being laid under the Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY) through a forest land has triggered a controversy in Champua range of Keonjhar district.

People of Jamirta and Kamalpur villages have strongly opposed construction of the road on a forest land. They have also alleged that the contractor was messing up the construction work.

Reports said the rural development department has awarded the contract to a person to lay 8.76-km road from Jurudi to Kamalpur. The contractor has started construction

from Panpokharia. The road is laid through a patch of forest land. The project entails 16 culverts and some bridges.

"Instead of executing the work properly, the contractor has botched it up. Old culverts and bridges are being repaired. Soil is being dug out from private land and forest land and used in the road work while murram should have been used," villagers of Kamalpur alleged.

Digging or making use of forest land is in complete violation of the Forest Conservation Act. Any work on forest land needs the permission of the forest department.

Villagers including Prasant Ghana, Mitrabhanu Behera,

Kamalakant Behera, Bholanath Ghana, Sarat Ghana and Niranjan Ghana questioned the durability of the road project for which crores of rupees are being spent.

The villagers had opposed the substandard work June 22, alleging that the contractor had threatened them through hooligans.

Similarly, people of Jamirta accused the contractor of laying the road on the forest land. Balibandh forester Khageswar Barik said that no permission was given to the contractor to use the forest land and the matter will be investigated. DFO Santosh Joshi said, "The allegation will be probed, if the forest land has been dug out."

State starts fishing cat conservation in Bhitarkanika National Park



Endangered species

Double the size of the common house cat, the fishing cat breeds all year round and spends most of the time in dense vegetation areas close to water bodies

The fishing cat is classified under the Schedule I of the Wildlife Protection Act, 1972

Its paws and sharp teeth make it a potent hunter and the animal prefers hunting fish

A good swimmer, the fishing cat also preys on snakes, frogs, birds and feeds on carcasses of other animals

POST NEWS NETWORK

census.

Kendrapara, June 26: Already on the verge of extinction, the fishing cat is going to see more of its species at the Bhitarkanika National Park (BNP) as the state government has launched a project for its conservation.

Classified under the Schedule I of the Wildlife Protection Act, 1972, there are 20 fishing cats at BNP as per the 2019

According to environmentalist Hemant Kumar Rout, various reasons have pushed this animal to near-extinction. Starting from sea coast erosion to infiltration, encroachment and illegal construction in BNP area have widely been responsible for bringing down their numbers.

In the last 10 years, prawn gheries have extensively damaged rivers, rivulets

and the environment. The chemical gas emitted from these gheries has played a major role in reducing the number of aquatic animals. In 2018, as many as 307 dolphins were sighted here. The last census put their number at only 62. "If the biodiversity of the BNP is not protected, our next generation will find them only in pictures," Rout warned.

When contacted, divisional forest officer (DFO) Bikash Ranjan Dash said globally the population of this animal is abysmally low. If the surrounding atmosphere of BNP delta is considered, their number must have been more.

Fishing cats are great hunters. They prefer catching fish in water. Their paws and sharp teeth make them potent hunters. The state government has recently emphasised on its conservation, Dash said.

Fishing cats are double the size of common house cats. Apart from fish, they also prey on snakes, frogs, birds and feed on carcasses of other animals.

They are good swimmers. They breed all year round and spend most of the time in dense vegetation areas close to water bodies.

ITI LIMITED
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EOI is invited for selection of Back-end partner for Supply, Installation, testing of Desktop computers, printers and Video Conferencing system in Odisha. Due date: 29.06.2020, at 15:00 hrs. For details please visit the website www.itiltd-india.com / www.eprocure.gov.in
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आई टी आई लिमिटेड
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फोन: (0674) 2567225 / 2567229
ओडिशा में डेस्कटॉप कंप्यूटर, प्रिंटर और वीडियो कॉन्फरेंसिंग प्रणाली का आपूर्ति, स्थापना, परीक्षण के लिये बैक-एंड पार्टनर चुनने हेतु ई ओ आई अंतिम तारीख 29.06.2020 (15.00 घंटा)
वेबसाइट: www.itiltd-india.com / www.eprocure.gov.in
डी जी एम, आई टी आई लिमिटेड, भुवनेश्वर

EAST COAST RAILWAY
PROVISION OF COACH INDICATION BOARDS
E-Tender Notice No. ST-SBP-TENDER-2020-05, Dated: 23.06.2020

Name of Work: PROVISION OF COACH INDICATION BOARDS (CIBs) AT BARGARH ROAD (BRAGA), TITLAGARH (TIG), KESINGA (KSNB), KANTABANJI (KBJ) & RUPPARAO (RPRD) STATIONS.
Value of Tender (₹) ₹ 3,34,39,240/-
EMD: ₹ 3,17,200/-, Cost of Tender Document: ₹ 11,800/-
Date and time of closing of tender: 15:00 hrs of 14.07.2020.
No manual offers sent by Post/Courier/ Fax or in person shall be accepted against such e-Tenders even if these are submitted on firm's letter head and received in time. All such manual offers shall be considered invalid and shall be rejected summarily without any consideration.
NOTE: The prospective tenderers are advised to visit the website 15 days before the date of closing of tender to note any changes / corrigenda issued for this tender.
Complete information including e-tender documents is available in website <http://www.reps.gov.in>
Divisional Railway Manager (S&T), Sambalpur
PR-119/L/20-21

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PH.D ADMISSION - 2020

Institute of Physics, Bhubaneswar is an autonomous research institution of Department of Atomic Energy (DAE), Government of India. The research activities in the Institute span theoretical and experimental research in the areas of condensed matter physics, nuclear physics, high energy physics and interdisciplinary areas such as quantum information, biological physics, complex systems, nano-science, material science, etc.

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- A valid CSIR-JRF / UGC-JRF fellowship OR
A valid GATE score with rank up to 200 OR
JEST - 2020 rank up to 407 (for Ph. D only)
- M.Sc. in Physics with a minimum of 55% marks (in aggregate) or equivalent cumulative CGPA. (Candidates appearing for M.Sc. in 2020, and who satisfy the criteria mentioned above can apply. However, if selected, their admission will be provisional subject to satisfying the minimal criteria and submission of the M. Sc. certificate).

For details and online application please visit <http://iop.res.in/phd2020>.
The last date of applying online is **15th July, 2020**.
Tentative dates of selection are **27th - 29th July, 2020**. The selection will be based on written test and/or interview. However, depending on the Covid-19 situation, the dates and/or the selection process may be modified.

DIRECTOR

FOCUS NATION

WAKE UP INDIA



The average salary of government servants in China is about 1.5 times the per capita GDP of China, which is about 4.6 times in India. My assessment is that our government has had little money left for research or for other necessary expenditures such as defense after the Fifth Pay Commission

5 times that of India. The main reason for our low investment is the consumption by our government. Our government revenues are being used to pay hefty salaries to the government servants. The average salary of government servants in China is about 1.5 times their per capita GDP of China while it is about 4.6 times in India.

My assessment is that our government has had little money left for research or for other necessary expenditures such as defense after the Fifth Pay Commission. I daresay that the government servants are eating away the sovereignty of the country by capturing government revenues and preventing investments in research and defense. I am cognizant that large numbers of government servants, especially in the armed forces, are honest and diligently serving the country. However, that does not obviate the collective impact of the high salaries paid to them in comparison to the GDP per capita of the country.

The second cause of our technological backwardness is the decadent state of government-funded universities and research institutions. A few years ago, I had the occasion to ask a university professor how he spent his time after retirement. He replied, "I have got used to not working for the last 40 years. The time just passes by." Remember that American lead in technologies is substantially supported by their universities. Chinese universities are also playing the same role. Our universities, however, are mainly busy distributing certificates so that the students get government jobs and get used to "not working" like themselves.

India needs to wake up. This is not the time to shout about the arm-twisting and manipulations by China. That is geopolitics. We have to set our own house in order. The government will have to stop pandering to the government servants and increase outlay in research; and enforce accountability in the government-funded universities and research institutions.

The writer is formerly Professor of Economics at IIM, Bangalore.

it leads to the removal of inefficient researchers. The question is not of the fact of political interference but of the nature of political interference.

How should we then deal with China's technological prowess? A number of Indian companies, especially startups like Ola, are riding on Chinese investments. These companies are remitting profits to China. Tencent is a major Chinese investor in India. Some 47 per cent of its profits come from India. We can certainly stop taking these investments. But that will not solve anything.

The impact of such a move will depend on our nerves. Taking Chinese investments can be beneficial if Ola can absorb the technology and develop an indigenous clone that then threw Ola out. On the other hand, Indian economy will suffer if we become perpetually dependent on Chinese aggregation technology. The Chinese experience illustrates the matter. The Harvard study says: "In 2002, the [Chinese] government launched an open bidding process for wind farm projects to encourage competition among turbine makers. Foreign imports soon flooded China's fledgling market... The government then required state-owned enterprises to source 70 per cent of their components from domestic firms. By 2009, six of the top 10 wind turbine firms were Chinese." So, the question is not

whether we take Chinese investment or not. The question is how we ride upon them.

Trade is similarly placed. Our cost of production of, say, auto parts is higher than China. We can stop these imports. In that case, if we are unable to upgrade, our auto manufacturers will have to buy more expensive home-made parts. The cost of cars in India will increase and become a burden on our consumers. We will also be thrown out of the world market. On the other hand, if we upgrade and make parts as cheap as China, then we will win. So, once again, the question is not whether to trade with China or not. The question is whether we can reduce our cost of production and compete with China.

We will have to solve the underlying issues. We must have the nerve to put Chinese investments on their head just as China did with wind turbines; and we reduce our cost of production.

Facing the technological challenge will require action both on financial and political fronts. The Economic Survey published by the Ministry of Finance noted that India's expenditure on Research and Development has remained flat at 0.7 per cent of GDP while Korea and Israel are spending 4.6 per cent and China 2.1 per cent. The total expenditure by China becomes 15 times that of India once we account for its GDP being about



Bharat Jhunjhunwala

THE GOVERNMENT WILL HAVE TO STOP PANDERING TO THE GOVERNMENT SERVANTS AND INCREASE OUTLAY IN RESEARCH; AND ENFORCE ACCOUNTABILITY IN THE GOVERNMENT-FUNDED UNIVERSITIES AND RESEARCH INSTITUTIONS

Delhi-based Observer Research Foundation has said that today China is leading the world in a number of technologies such as in genetics, hypersonics (faster than sound), 5G Internet and facial recognition through Artificial Intelligence. In coming times, the technologies of 5G, Artificial Intelligence, Internet of Things (self-operation of machines through internet such as self-opening of a door after recognising face of the person), 3D Printing (manufacture of clone of an object such as a chocolate) and robotics will determine which country will dominate the world.

Here, China is fast attaining ascendancy. Inventors file applications for the grant of patents before the World Intellectual Property Organisation (WIPO). The inventor gets the global right on the said technology after such filing. The numbers of patents filed by China exceeded those filed by the US for the first time in 2019.

The US had been leading in this since inception of the WIPO. China had filed merely 300 applications in 1999. This has increased to 59,000 in 2019, surpassing the 58,000 applications filed by the US. In parallel, the Chinese company Huawei has filed the highest number of patents filed by a company for the third year in a row. China has already become the technology guru of the world.

A paper published in the Harvard Business Review of March 2014 has said that this technological progress of China is built upon the two legs of financial support by the government and political determination. Although the authors have expressed doubt that China will be able to become the world leader in technology because of political intervention, the record of the last 20 years clearly shows that political intervention has had a beneficial and salutary impact on China's technological advancements. It should be obvious that the political intervention will have a negative impact if that leads to harassment of honest researchers for not toeing their ideological line; but will have a positive impact if

SPECTRUM SOCIETY

Rule of Law in season of pandemic

The Supreme Court has asked the government to treat a writ petition filed in the court seeking setting up of expert panels to find ways of enhancing India's rank in the Rule of Law Index as a "representation" and respond within six months. For, it is not a judicial issue, but a matter for government consideration.

In the Rule of Law Index 2020 prepared by the World Justice Project (WJP), India is given THE 69th rank among 128 countries and jurisdictions. WJP is an independent, multi-disciplinary organisation working for promoting the Rule of Law (ROL) worldwide. It is a quantitative assessment tool designed to provide a detailed and comprehensive picture of the extent to which those who govern various countries are bound to act according to laws and regulations and prescribed procedures and adhere to the rule of law in practice. An independent judiciary, individual freedom, and free press are considered essential ingredients of ROL.

Effective Rule of Law prevents arbitrary decisions, and can reduce corruption and protect people from injustices. Whether it can

combat poverty as claimed by its advocates may be disputed by welfare theorists. But, it is to be accepted as the foundation for justice, equal opportunity and peace underpinning development, and fundamental rights for all citizens. It guarantees an accountable government that holds law as supreme.

Rule of Law is being discussed from the days of Plato and Aristotle. As a political concept, it can be traced to 16th Century Britain as a right of subjects against the divine right of kings. Its originator was Sir Edward Coke, Chief Justice in the reign of James I. To John Locke, freedom in society means being subject only to laws made by a legislature that apply to everyone equally. British jurist AV Dicey popularised the concept of Rule of Law as the corner-stone of parliamentary democracy.

Under Rule of Law, all members of a society, including the governing group, are considered equally subject to existing law of the land and the contents and processes of which are publicly disclosed. Equality and openness are two essential characteristics of the Rule of Law. The term is closely associated with

"constitutionalism" – a political situation and not any specific law. ROL is not just a weapon against unquestionable State domination or against the whims and fancies of the ruling groups; it is also a shield protecting the civil society. It has grown in various forms apart from legal and procedural codes like permitting judicial activism, public interest litigation, suo moto judicial intervention on press reports and so on thus making justice more easily available and accessible to the citizens.

WJP index is based on the results of a survey of over 130,000 households and 4,000 legal practitioners and experts to measure how the Rule of Law is perceived and experienced worldwide. Countries covered have different political and juridical systems, economic standing, ethnic-social characteristics, historical background, population complexion, and domestic and international problems. But, these are not taken into account in the preparation of the index as in any such global index which goes by scores given on the specific indicators used in the project. Denmark, Norway, Finland,

Sweden, Netherlands, Germany, New Zealand, Austria, Canada, and Estonia are the top 10 while Zimbabwe, Pakistan, Bolivia, Afghanistan, Mauritania, Cameroon, Egypt, Democratic Republic of Congo, Cambodia, and Venezuela are the bottom 10 countries in the index, repeating the 2019 record. Noteworthy is the removal of the US from top 20 and Spain getting an elevation. France declined from 17 to 20 in rank. The UK stands at rank 13. On the whole, the global trend is found to be declining in the past three years. Last year, the fall was in fundamental rights, absence of corruption, and particularly on constraints on governmental power.

The question whether the pandemic may be used as an excuse for restrictions on personal freedom and economic activities has arisen as a political issue in some countries. The foundations of the ROL are strong enough in our country to survive the threats from the pandemic which are temporary.

The writer is a former Director, ICSSR, New Delhi.

What men call knowledge, is the reasoned acceptance of false appearances. Wisdom looks behind the veil and sees.

SRI AUROBINDO



Urjit is back, Rajan likely

The COVID-19 pandemic has made friends of erstwhile foes! Urjit Patel, who left 18 months ago after a fractious tenure as RBI Governor, is back as chairman of the National Institute of Public Finance and Policy (NIPFP). In 2018, he had resigned barely four days before a crucial meeting of the board of RBI that would have discussed the central bank's simmering differences with the Modi sarkar. Patel replaces former bureaucrat Vijay Kelkar who helmed NIPFP for six years and will have four-year tenure.

Why has the government brought back an economist with whom it had major differences, and whose tenure at the RBI was marked by a running battle between Patel and the Finance Ministry on various issues? Clearly, much has changed since then. The economic slowdown coupled now with the havoc wreaked by the coronavirus outbreak has limited the options of the government. Its present set of advisers on matters economic has not been able to chart a new course. So, the government has been forced to fall back on those people who it had once forcefully ejected because their ideas did not match those of the ruling dispensation, or they were unwilling to do the government's bidding.

It appears that the Modi sarkar is now trying to make the best out of an unhappy situation. Clearly, the Centre wishes to draw upon Patel's experience as it navigates policy in these turbulent times. Apparently, there is also mounting pressure to bring back Raghuram Rajan, Patel's predecessor at the RBI who too had quit because he couldn't get along with the powers that be, most notably on the issue of demonetisation. Hopefully, Patel's second innings with the Modi sarkar will be a smoother affair.



BABUDOM BYTES

Dilip Cherian

NITI Aayog hires domain experts

Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision of adding domain experts to the bureaucratic mix is alive. After last year's hiring of eight domain experts as joint secretaries through the UPSC, not much was heard about lateral entry – until now.

The NITI Aayog, the premier government think tank, has reportedly recruited 38 experts through lateral entry at the level of director and deputy secretary. Their expertise ranges from economics and finance, trade and commerce, and data management and analysis, to rural development and infrastructure connectivity. Letters of appointment were issued to the appointees in March. While 20 appointees have already joined NITI Aayog, the coronavirus outbreak has delayed the joining of the rest.

Interestingly, unlike the lateral entrants hired through UPSC and who have the same privileges as career civil servants, the officers appointed on contract basis will not be entitled to residential accommodation, official transport, leave encashment or any other allowances/facilities as admissible to a regular government employee.

No foreign training for babus

The coronavirus pandemic is affecting all sorts of activities. Facing a financial crunch during the raging coronavirus pandemic, the Modi sarkar has decided to discontinue foreign training for bureaucrats the current financial year. The government has removed the international component from the training programme, citing financial austerity in the wake of the pandemic.

According to sources, the Department of Personnel and Training (DoPT), issued a circular directing all cadre-controlling authorities and central training institutes to not conduct foreign training in FY 2020-2021. Besides the tight fiscal situation, the government also felt that the decision was necessary from the health and safety points of view as well.

The circular further states that if there is "an urgent need to send civil servants overseas, the authorities will need to seek permission from the DoPT".

With the COVID-19 pandemic showing no sign of a let-up, the government has a huge task on its hand and clearly needs to use its strained resources for fighting the deadly virus.

Share a babu experience! Follow dilipthecherian@twitter.com. Let's multiply the effect

WISDOM CORNER

There are three gems upon this earth: Food, Water and Pleasing words – Fools consider pieces of rocks as gems. CHANAKYA

There is no God higher than truth. Even if you are in minority of One, the Truth is always the Truth. MAHATMA GANDHI

There is something splendid about innocence; but what is bad about it, in turn, is that it cannot protect itself very well and is easily seduced. IMMANUEL KANT

WORDSWORTH

Steganography

Steganography derives from the Greek steganos, hidden or covered, plus sgraphein, to write. Someone who uses this technique is a steganographer. This is the art or technique of creating and transmitting hidden messages. The dictionaries – those few that include it, for it has been in the past an uncommon word – say this is connected with cryptography. But those in the spy business make a careful distinction between the techniques of cryptography and steganography, although both are aspects of the art of secret communication. Cryptography is the technique of scrambling a message in a systematic way so that (hopefully) it can be read only by its intended recipient. Steganography, on the other hand, keeps the message secret by hiding the fact that it exists, a technique that cryptographers sometimes snifflily refer to as "security through obscurity". So the microdot of the Cold War spy novels – in which a document is photographically reduced to the size of a pinhead and stuck to an otherwise innocuous typescript – is an example of steganography. Invisible ink is another example. You can, of course, combine the two techniques if you believe in the braces-and-belt approach to life. The word has become more common in the digital age, since it is now relatively easy to hide messages within otherwise innocuous-looking images.

LOL

BULL



finds out that it costs one dollar per word. She is stumped on how to tell the blonde to bring the truck and trailer. Finally, she tells the telegraph operator to send the word "comfortable." Skeptical, the operator asks, "How will she know to come with the trailer from just that word?" The redhead replies, "She's a blonde so she reads slowly: 'Come for ta bull.'"

Letters

TO THE EDITOR

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

OrissaPOST

B-15, Rasulgari Industrial Estate, Bhubaneswar-751010

Students, reading

Sir, Most children now have less of reading ability. So much so, students of Class VII are unable to read, say, Class III textbooks. There is no reading atmosphere in schools, communities, and families. In the past, most of primary and upper primary schools were paying attention to enhance the reading ability of children. Today, 30 per cent of teachers do not care for such matters. Lack of reading ability has affected other abilities of children too. Parents pay more time now watching TV serials or playing with their mobile phones. Even educated parents have no interest in reading. Many are stopping subscriptions to newspapers and journals at their home. School libraries are no more functional other than for namesake. A lot of books remain locked in shelves or the almirahs. Every year, the government spends money on training to orient teachers to library activities. But, in Odisha, we will find only 20 per cent of schools have a functional library. Unless teachers encourage children to read, the future generation will suffer.

Santosh Kumar Mohanty, CUTTACK

China's money to RGF

Sir, Reports that China contributed a hefty sum of \$300,000 to the Rajiv Gandhi Foundation in 2005-06 to carry out certain studies are shocking. The Congress is now the front-runner in making RTI and other queries about the PM CARES scheme. The party should make clear what it did with this money. It must give all details of the funds received and spent so far by the Rajiv Gandhi Foundation. China is an aggressor nation. It waged a war with India in 1962 for no reason and no provocation from the Indian side. If the Foundation does not make public the details of its funding and the money spent, the government must order an inquiry into these aspects.

Madhu Agarwal, EMAIL

Order probe

Sir, With news about the Rajiv Gandhi Foundation receiving hefty funds from China, it is clear personal interest has preceded the national interest for some people. Obviously, the Chinese Embassy gave the money in anticipation of major gains. India's trade deficit vis-a-vis China rose 33 times between 2003-04 and 2013-14, the period when the Congress-led UPA held power!

KV Seetharamaiah, EMAIL

With surge in virus cases, Hyderabad traders go for voluntary 'lockdown'

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Hyderabad, June 26: In view of the continuing surge in Covid-19 cases in Telangana and especially in hotspot Hyderabad, traders in different commercial clusters in the state capital have voluntarily announced a 'lockdown'.

Though the government has already ruled out re-imposing lockdown, traders' associations decided to close the shops for a period ranging from one to two weeks.

While traders in Begum Bazaar, a major trading centre in the city, had reduced the business hours a few days ago, businessmen in several other areas decided to down shutters as a precautionary measure.

Some of the commercial centres either fall in containment zones or are close to the worst-affected areas.

Textile traders of General Bazaar in Secunderabad voluntarily decided to shut down the business for a few days to help contain the spread of coronavirus. Their as-



sociation voiced concern over the increasing number of cases and said the decision was taken in the interest of people.

The Hyderabad Kirana Merchants Association and the Hyderabad and Secunderabad Sanitary Association have announced that their members will keep the shops closed for next few days.

A similar decision was taken by traders in Troop Bazaar, a key commercial hub. Traders in historic

Laad Bazaar near Charminar famous for bangles and bridal wear also decided to shut the shops. Traders in Patthargatti, also near Charminar, shut the shops from Thursday.

The decision by the trade bodies came amid growing public concern over the spread of Covid-19. With every passing day, the state and Hyderabad are witnessing a new high in cases.

The state recorded 891 cases Wednesday, the highest single-day

jump. As many as 719 of these cases were reported from Greater Hyderabad. The total number of cases in the state rose to 10,444 Wednesday. Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation (GHMC) accounted for 5,883 cases.

More than 4,000 cases were recorded in the last week alone and 80 per cent of them were from Hyderabad and adjoining districts.

Meanwhile, Hyderabad MP Asaduddin Owaisi welcomed the decision by the traders of Lad Bazaar and other areas in Hyderabad. He appealed to people to ensure social distancing, avoid large gatherings, wear masks and not to step out unless it is absolutely essential.

"Do not panic. Immediately seek medical help in case you have symptoms of COVID-19. Protect senior citizens & folks with chronic illnesses," tweeted Owaisi.

The All India Majlis-e-Ittehadul Muslimeen (AIMIM) President appealed to all to get themselves and their families tested for Covid-19 as soon as possible.

Notice to hospital for conducting 'Coronil' trial on COVID patients

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Jaipur, June 26: Rajasthan's Health Department has served a notice to NIMS hospital here seeking an explanation on conducting trials of Patanjali Ayurved's drug Coronil on coronavirus patients, an official said Friday.

"We served notice to the hospital Wednesday evening seeking explanation in three days. The hospital did not inform the state government nor sought permission," Chief Medical and Health Officer, Jaipur, Dr Narottam Sharma said.

He said the reply from National Institute of Medical Science (NIMS), Jaipur is awaited. The launch of the drug by yoga guru Ramdev Tuesday triggered a debate after which the Ayush Ministry sought all information on its trial and put a ban on advertising it as a drug to cure coronavirus. The Rajasthan government has clarified that the drug cannot be used as a medicine in the state without the permission of the Ministry of AYUSH.

State Health Minister Raghu Sharma had said Wednesday that



strict action would be taken against the seller as per the rules in case of sale of any drug as a medicine to treat the coronavirus infection.

At the Coronil launch, the company had claimed that its medicine can cure the contagious disease within seven days. It said Coronil, taken along with another product developed by it, had shown a 100 per cent success rate in clinical trials on infected patients, except those on life support.

Ramdev said the medicines were developed by Patanjali Research Centre, Haridwar in association with privately-owned National Institute of Medical Science (NIMS), Jaipur. The Uttarakhand government will serve a notice to Patanjali Ayurved for launching a drug claim-

ing to be a cure for COVID-19 when it had only applied for a licence to manufacture an immunity booster against cough and fever.

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

A complainant approached the court seeking the registration of an FIR against Ramdev and company chairman Acharya Balkrishna, alleging that they put at risk the lives of lakhs of people by claiming to have developed a COVID-19 cure. Chief Judicial Magistrate Mukesh Kumar posted the matter for hearing June 30.

Why Telangana paused mass testing in hotspots

WAR AGAINST VIRUS

CHIEF MINISTER K CHANDRASHEKHAR RAO HAD ANNOUNCED JUNE 14 THAT 50,000 COVID-19 TESTS WILL BE DONE IN 30 ASSEMBLY CONSTITUENCIES IN GREATER HYDERABAD MUNICIPAL CORPORATION LIMITS

TILL JUNE 16, THE HEALTH AUTHORITIES COLLECTED 36,000 SAMPLES

WITH 8,235 SAMPLES STILL PENDING IN THE LABS FOR TESTING, THE AUTHORITIES SAID COLLECTION OF MORE SAMPLES WITHOUT TESTING THE PENDING ONES WILL CREATE PROBLEMS

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Hyderabad, June 26: The health authorities in Telangana Thursday decided to pause the ongoing mass testing for Covid-19 in Hyderabad and surrounding districts in view of the piling-up of samples in testing laboratories.

With 8,235 samples still pending in the labs for testing, the authorities said collection of more samples without testing the pending ones will create problems.

Director, Public Health and Family Welfare, G Srinivasa Rao said collection of samples by conducting special camps has been stopped for two days so that the testing of pending samples is completed and labs and collection centres are sanitised.

Telangana Chief Minister K Chandrashekhara Rao had announced June 14 that 50,000 Covid-19 tests will be done in 30 Assembly constituencies in Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation

(GHMC) limits. Till June 16, the health authorities collected 36,000 samples.

The official said in a statement that each sample has to be tested within 48 hours and till then it has to be preserved in controlled temperature. "If there is delay in testing the samples, it may show false positive result," he said.

The director said collection of samples through special camps was paused but tests in hospitals would continue uninterrupted. Those with suspected symptoms of Covid-19 can get themselves tested in hospitals.

He said that people should not have any fears as the process of testing for those in need would continue.

The mass testing in the hotspot had led to a big surge in positive cases during the last one week. The total number of cases in Telangana mounted to 10,444 Wednesday with 891 cases, the highest single-day jump.

Dalit activists want Manu statue removed from Raj HC premises



INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, June 26: In a letter to interim Congress president Sonia Gandhi, nearly 600 Dalit activists, scholars and well-wishers have urged her to remove Manu's statue from the premises of the Rajasthan High Court, saying the statue is an 'insult to the Indian Constitution and Dalits'.

"We are writing this letter because we believe that as the president of the Indian National Congress, which has the government in power in Rajasthan, you have the required power to take a step which would prove historic in strengthening the Dalit movement for equality," said the letter written by Martin Macwan, founder of Navsarjan Trust, a grassroots Dalit organisation based out of Gujarat.

He said the statue of Manu is 'an insult to the Indian Constitution as well as Dalits,

women and all those who believe in equality and justice'.

According to Hindu mythology, Manu is the progenitor of mankind and the author of 'Manusmriti', which codifies the rights and duties of various social groups.

Macwan wrote that the statue is a symbol of an oppressive past and harks to the reality of Dalits and women in India, whose lives are still affected by the discriminatory laws put down by Manu in Manusmriti. The text is known to have formalised regulations around the caste system and the patriarchal values often propagated in Hindu tradition.

"Moreover, the law of Manu stands in total contradiction to what the Indian Constitution has committed itself to, while the latter upholds equality and fraternity, social justice and freedom, the former indulges in archaic teaching about inequality and social segregation, hierarchy and divi-

OVER 600 ACTIVISTS HAVE WRITTEN TO INTERIM CONGRESS CHIEF SONIA GANDHI AND GIVEN AN ULTIMATUM TO THE CONGRESS GOVT IN RAJASTHAN, STATING THAT IF THE STATUE IS NOT REMOVED BY AUGUST 15, THEY WILL CALL FOR AN AGITATION

sion, injustice and servitude." "That this country has tolerated this contradiction for 73 years post-Independence is testimony to our failure to live by the invaluable heritage of the Constitution bequeathed to us by Dr Ambedkar and the Constitution-makers," the letter said.

The statue, built in 1989 by the Rajasthan Judicial Officers Association, has withstood several protests, court cases and even an order by judges to remove it.

Members of the Navsarjan Trust have given an ultimatum to the Congress government in Rajasthan, stating that if the statue is not removed by August 15, they will call for an agitation.

Man video-calls wife before suicide bid, cops come to rescue



INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Hyderabad, June 26: A video call made by a man to his wife before trying to commit suicide saved his life as she alerted the Hyderabad Police which acted swiftly to stop him from taking the extreme step.

Ramakrishna was found between Nampally and Lakdikapul railway stations in the heart of the city Thursday evening, waiting for a train to jump under it.

"Technology saves life. Man made a video call to his wife about his plan to commit suicide. Wife informed Tappachabutra Police which swung into immediate action and traced him on the railway track and saved him from getting run over by a train. Felt so satisfied about the life," Hyderabad Police Commissioner Anjani Kumar tweeted Friday.

According to police, the medical representative was depressed over not receiving the salary for

the last three months.

Resident of Markunday Nagar under the Tappachabutra police station limits, Ramakrishna, 34, had left his house with a decision to end his life and reached the railway track. He made a video call to his wife Sallaja informing her that he is committing suicide. Shocked over this, the woman immediately dialed 100.

The police swung into action and traced Ramakrishna's location from the mobile phone signals. Tappachabutra Additional Inspector Prasad Rao sent a constable with Sallaja to the railway track and they stopped him from taking his life. Minutes later a train passed through the track.

The woman heaved a sigh of relief. The police counselled Ramakrishna, who confessed that he was depressed due to no work and no salary for three months and decided to end the life after consuming liquor.

Udaipur Film City turning into reality



INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Jaipur, June 26: Udaipur, it seems, will finally be getting a Film City in its vicinity. The Rajasthan Chief Minister's Office has written to the Revenue Department requesting suggestions and proposals regarding land allotment in Gogunda, Mukesh Madhwani, Udaipur Film Sangharsh Samiti chairperson, told IANS. He said Laxman Singh Shekhawat, Joint Secretary, recently wrote to the Principal Secretary, Revenue to provide information regarding the land. The letter was received Thursday, he added.

The demand for Film City in Udaipur has been raised under Madhwani for the last 10 years.

Initially, there was a challenge to get the land for the Film City in Udaipur. However, with his persistent efforts in collaboration with the Udaipur administration, the land was finally identified in Gogunda near Udaipur. The proposal for this land was sent to the state government a few months back and the latter has now renewed its interest in the matter, he said.

"The government is showing a positive attitude and we are just waiting for the announcement," said Madhwani adding that they have investors ready to invest money in the Film City. Once the project is ready, it will boost tourism and will also generate employment for one lakh people, he said.

Row rages over textbook remarks on Maharana

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Jaipur, June 26: Negative comments in Rajasthan Board of Secondary Education textbooks regarding legendary warrior Maharana Pratap and his father Udai Singh II have riled not only the erstwhile Mewar royals, but also politicians and common people who have voiced their strong disapproval for the 'twisting of historical facts'.

While the Maharana has been described as someone who 'lacked control and was impatient due to which he lost the Haldighati battle to Akbar', his father and Mewar ruler Maharana Udai Singh has been dubbed a 'murderer'.

The Class XII textbook claims on page number 101 that Maharana Pratap lost the Haldighati battle as he was impatient and lacked moderation and control. The chapter entitled 'Muslim Invasion, Aim and Impact' further claims that the army head should always adopt patience even in adverse situations, something which Maharana Pratap lacked.

Also, facts related to the Haldighati battle have been removed from the social science textbooks. In the Class X textbook 'Rajasthan ka Itihaas aur Sanskriti', Maharana Udai Singh II has been termed as a man who murdered one Balvir to capture the Mewar kingdom. Many history books on the

other hand point out that Balvir had died somewhere in Maharashtra after he fled Mewar.

Mahendra Singh Mewar of the erstwhile Mewar royal family said that 'attempts to tarnish the image of Rajput warriors Maharana Pratap and Udai Singh will not be tolerated'.

"Who are these people who want to change the history of Haldighati," he questioned.

The Haldighati battle was fought between Moghul emperor Akbar's army led by Man Singh of Amber and Maharana Pratap's Rajput warriors in June 1576.

Another Mewar family scion, Vishvaraj Singh, condemned the changes in historical facts. "History distorted to an absurd extent and included in textbooks for schools. Abundant display of ignorance and crass, boorish mentality of the decision-making authority(s) in peddling distortions to suit their own agenda. History itself will not be kind to them, nor to those who accept their ways," he said.

Meanwhile, state Education Minister Govind Singh Dotsara said, "Our committee will review the facts which are being argued upon. As per my knowledge, no new facts have been introduced in the book. I appeal to everyone to let me know what is wrong in the book and where and why it is wrong. Our committee of secondary education board will review them."



'TWISTING OF FACTS'

The Class XII textbook claims that Maharana Pratap lost the Haldighati battle as he was impatient and lacked moderation and control

Negative comments in Rajasthan Board of Secondary Education textbooks have riled not only the erstwhile Mewar royals, but also politicians and common people who have voiced their strong disapproval for the 'twisting of historical facts'

State Education Minister Govind Singh Dotsara, who appeared to be on the back foot, said, their committee will review the facts which are being argued upon

The textbook also claims that Haldighati was not named so due to the yellow colour of the soil but because many newly-wed brides jumped into the battleground dressed as warriors with turmeric-smear faces. This claim has been taken from Mahendra Bhanawat's book 'Ajooba Bharat Ka'.

It further claims that the Moghul army was led by Jagannath Kachwaha though historians say it was Man Singh. Kachwaha arrived in Mewar eight years after the epic battle in 1576, say historical records.

Union Minister Gajendra Singh Shekhawat also criticised the 'misleading information' on Maharana

Pratap in school textbooks and said that the history of Marudhara has been insulted by the Rajasthan Education Department, which was unacceptable.

Rajsamand's BJP MP Diya Kumari criticised the development and claimed that the 'Congress government's historians' had insulted Maharana Udai Singh II, Maharana Pratap, and the Haldighati battle.

"By manipulating the personality of an ideal man like Maharana Udai Singh II, this government is bent on ruining the image of its great men. The act of tampering with history only takes place under

the Congress rule. What kind of a message does the state government want to give to the younger generations?"

"Writing such shameful and false facts is a public insult to the great warriors who sacrificed their lives for the pride and dignity of the motherland," the MP said.

Congress Minister Pratap Singh Khachriyawas said these textbooks should never be allowed to reach students since these had 'twisted historical facts'. "Strong action shall be taken against the committee which changed the facts. I will meet Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot on the issue," he added.

of the day quote

Lack of ideological clarity was harming the party (Congress) more than the 'media sponsored' junior-senior divide within it

DIGVIJAYA SINGH | SENIOR CONGRESS LEADER

...some of them might be positive, some of them might be carriers, some of them might be supercarriers. How do I know? Why are they (ICMR) preventing us from testing? I don't understand. Everywhere in the world, they are allowing testing

KIRAN MAZUMDAR-SHAW | EXECUTIVE CHAIRPERSON OF BIOCON

I am no longer an MP and have been freed from active politics as well. Due to my age I will no longer be touring around. In such a situation, now I do not require an escort facility anymore

SHANTA KUMAR | BJP LEADER

SHORT TAKES

IAF copter makes emergency landing

Chandigarh: An Indian Air Force helicopter made an emergency landing on the Kundli-Ghazabad-Palwal expressway in Haryana Friday following a technical glitch, a police official said. All the personnel are reported to be safe, he said. "The IAF helicopter made an emergency landing due to some technical snag. All Police Control Room vehicles and police personnel were rushed to the spot. Later, IAF engineers attended to the chopper and it took off after two hours," Assistant Sub-Inspector of Sonapat Police Sandeep Kumar said.

Priest found hanging in temple

Bareilly (UP): A priest, aged about 30 years, was found hanging in a temple complex in the Baradari area here, the police said. According to the police, the body was found Thursday. The priest, Ram Dikshit a.k.a. Manish Dikshit, had committed suicide, but no suicide note was found in the temple, said a police officer. The priest was living in the temple complex for almost a decade. His parents had gone to their native village in Hardoi a few days ago.

One held for killing minor

Bareilly: A 55-year-old man was arrested for allegedly sodomising and killing a five-year-old boy and later dumping the body in bushes near railway tracks here, police said Friday. The incident took place June 9 but the accused Tejram was arrested Thursday, almost a fortnight after the crime was committed. According to police reports, Tejram lured the boy away on the pretext of giving him candy while the boy's family was busy at a wedding function. When the boy went missing, the family informed the police.

Migrant labourer ends life

Chitrkoot (UP): A migrant labourer, who returned from Surat about three months ago, allegedly committed suicide as he did not have money for his wife's treatment, police said Friday. Shiv Murat (30) killed himself by hanging from a tree in his village Thursday. According to his wife who is unwell, the couple had an argument about her treatment and he left the house saying that he had no money for it. Later, his body was found hanging from a tree.

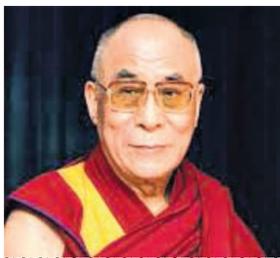


Do whatever you want to do. I will keep bringing the truth to the fore. I am the granddaughter of Indira Gandhi, not an informal BJP spokesperson from an opposition party

PRIYANKA GANDHI | CONGRESS GENERAL SECRETARY

GLOBAL CELEBRATIONS TO MARK DALAI LAMA'S 85TH BIRTHDAY

Dalai Lama, the world's most respected spiritual leader is turning 85 July 6 and his followers have lined up global virtual celebrations to dedicate him the 'Year of Gratitude'



BJP slams Manmohan, Cong over ₹100cr allocation to RGF in Budget

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, June 26: The Congress government while in power was doling out largesse to the Rajiv Gandhi Foundation (RGV) and Manmohan Singh as Finance Minister in 1991 allocated ₹100 crore over 5 years.

The disclosures are coming to light as the RGF comes under scrutiny following exposes that the Government of China and China Embassy were donors to the Foundation.

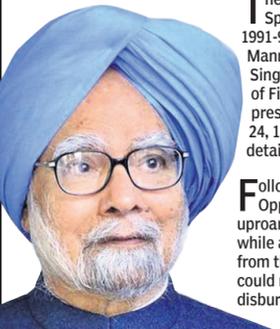
However, reportedly, following Opposition uproar, the funds while allocated from the Budget could not be disbursed to the RGF.

The Budget Speech of 1991-92 by Manmohan Singh, Minister of Finance presented July 24, 1991 has the detail.

"The Rajiv Gandhi Foundation has been established to perpetuate the memory of the great leader and to promote the ideals and objectives for which he lived and laid down his life," Singh said.

"This Foundation, among other things, will lay particular emphasis on research and action programmes relating to the application of science and technology for the development, propagation of literacy, the protection of the environment, the promotion of communal harmony and national integration, the uplift of the underprivileged, women and handicapped persons, administrative reforms and India's role in the global economy," he added.

THE DISCLOSURES ARE COMING TO LIGHT AS THE RGF COMES UNDER SCRUTINY FOLLOWING EXPOSES THAT THE GOVERNMENT OF CHINA AND CHINA EMBASSY WERE DONORS TO THE RAJIV GANDHI FOUNDATION



The Budget Speech of 1991-92 by Manmohan Singh, Minister of Finance, presented July 24, 1991 has the detail

Following Opposition uproar, the funds while allocated from the Budget could not be disbursed to RGF

As a homage to the late Shri Rajiv Gandhi and in support of the laudable objectives of the Foundation, Government has decided to contribute ₹100 crore to the Foundation at the rate of ₹20 crore per annum for a period of five years beginning from the current year," the then Finance Minister said in the Budget speech.

BJP national spokesperson Sambit Patra launched an attack on the central government allocating ₹100 crore to RGF led by Sonia Gandhi. Patra said it is an example of Congress corruption and the RGF was formed to collect money. Patra said that on three occasions, money from PM Relief Fund was diverted to RGF. The money was taken in the form of a shell company. Patra said that Rameshwar Thakur was the auditor of the RGF. The rule is that the auditor has to be changed in three years but Thakur was not changed. Patra said instead Thakur was rewarded with a Rajya Sabha seat and also appointed as Parliamentary Affairs Minister. Patra has alleged that the RGF under Sonia Gandhi was formed to collect funds and is an example of Congress corruption.

Patra said that Rameshwar Thakur was the auditor of the RGF. The rule is that the auditor has to be changed in three years but Thakur was not changed. Patra said instead Thakur was rewarded with a Rajya Sabha seat and also appointed as Parliamentary Affairs Minister. Patra has alleged that the RGF under Sonia Gandhi was formed to collect funds and is an example of Congress corruption.

BJP IT Cell chief Amit Malviya said in a tweet, "When Finance Minister Dr Manmohan Singh allocated ₹100 crore to Rajiv Gandhi Foundation. ₹20 crore per year for 5 years... Former PM, supposedly 'Mr Honest', has been serving the interest of the Gandhis for as long as one can go back to!"

Life term for K'taka serial killer in 20th murder case

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Mangalore, June 26: A local court in Karnataka's coastal city sentenced serial killer Mohan Kumar to life imprisonment after he was convicted for raping and murdering his 20th victim 11 years ago, police said Thursday.

"Sessions Judge Sayeedunnisa, who found June 20 Kumar guilty of killing his 20th victim in Bangalore in July 2009, sentenced him to life imprisonment under Section 302 of the IPC," Sullia police inspector MR Harish told this news agency.

The 25-year-old victim, who hailed from Sullia, near this port city in Dakshina Kannada district, was a cook in a women's hostel at Kasargod in Kerala, when she got acquainted with Kumar, a teacher then, who promised to marry her. Mohan Kumar is lodged at Hindalga central jail at Belagavi, after he was convicted and sentenced to death in four murder cases and life imprisonment in 15 similar cases over the last decade.

The judge also slapped a fine of ₹25,000 on him, 10 years and ₹5,000 for feeding poison, 7 years and ₹5,000 for rape, 5 years and ₹5,000 for robbing the victim's jewellery and destroying evidence.

In all, the court cross-examined 46 witnesses and inspected 89 documents and 31 assets.

Mohan Kumar was arrested in this case in October 2009 after the victim's family recognised him when his photo was published in a local newspaper following a missing complaint her younger sister filed in the Sullia police station over a decade ago.

According to the charge sheet, the victim left Kasargod July 8, 2009 to visit a temple at her home town Sullia from where Mohan took her to Bangalore on the pretext of marrying her and had physical relationship with her in a city lodge where he kept her for three days.

"When the family members enquired about the victim three days later, Mohan told them that they both were married and would return to Sullia soon. He did not, however, allow them to speak to the victim," the charge sheet said.

"Kumar took the victim to the bus stand for returning to Sullia and gave her a cyanide tablet saying it was a contraceptive pill to prevent pregnancy. She collapsed in a toilet near the bus stand soon after consuming it while Kumar vanished from the spot. A constable rushed her to a hospital where she was declared brought dead," Harish said.

Autopsy of the victim revealed traces of cyanide in her body.



DISASTER MANAGEMENT



National Disaster Response Force and State Disaster Response Force carry out a rescue operation after a massive landslide at Shanti Nagar in Kahilipara area in Guwahati, Friday

60 GST listings linked to Chinese national from Wuhan unearthed

The man had obtained the premises on lease, and over 60 registrations had been made, both under Central and state jurisdictions of the GST Act

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bangalore, June 26: The commercial taxes department in Karnataka has unearthed 60 GST registrations linked to a Chinese national from Wuhan and seized Chinese goods worth ₹4 crore from an undeclared warehouse here during a raid.

A total of 25,446 Chinese made electronic and Fast Moving Consumer Goods (FMCG) were seized from the warehouse on Old Airport Road during the recent raids, a department press release said. The man had obtained the premises on lease, and over 60 registrations had been made, both under central and state jurisdictions of the GST Act, in the name of a number of persons for online trading of Chinese made goods. Most of the registrations were



found irregular in filing of returns and payment of tax and a majority of firms either filed nil returns or did not file returns, the release said. The registration data showed that one business was registered in 2017-18, 43 in 2018-19, 14 in 2019-20 and 2 in 2020-21, the department said.

Most of the 60 firms were private limited companies and 24 persons were interchangeably directors in 58 firms. During the raid, neither

BJP media blitz to boost Scindia's brand value

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Bhopal, June 26: While party president JP Nadda latched on to a report on Chinese donation to Rajiv Gandhi Foundation at a virtual rally the BJP members in Madhya Pradesh were busy studying the nuances of Jyotiraditya Scindia's presence by his side.

"I saw television and I was shocked and surprised that the People's Republic of China and Chinese Embassy gave \$300,000 to the Rajiv Gandhi Foundation in 2005-06," Nadda said addressing the party's virtual Jan Samvad rally from Delhi.

Nadda's assertions on donations made to RGF in 2005 may or may not translate into electoral gains for BJP in the bye-elections for the 24 Assembly seats a couple of months later. But Scindia's drooping brand value got a booster in being seen by the party president's side Thursday.

Ever since Scindia left the Congress to join the BJP, the Kamal Nath camp has been suggesting he had compromised his stature in the political hierarchy. The BJP asked its local unit to highlight Scindia's presence with Nadda as a fitting reply to Kamal Nath and



Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan, who was away in Tirupati, made it back to Delhi to join the rally. Chouhan's supporters and the Congress members who had joined the party along with Scindia tried to publicise the "honour conferred on Scindia in his new party".

Missing pictures from the election hoardings in the Malwa region and subsequent placement alongside the junior members like Kailash Vijayvargiya's son Akash had caused considerable damage to Scindia.

Another image of a former minister, Prabhul Choudhary, being offered snacks on a disposable paper plate while his BJP host parrot food with him in a stainless steel salver was uploaded on the social media to show the caste discrimination against new members from Congress.

ED raids suspended AAP leader Tahir Hussain's house

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, June 26: Three days after the Enforcement Directorate (ED) carried out searches at over half a dozen premises linked to suspended AAP leader Tahir Hussain, the financial probe agency Friday once again raided his home here in connection with its money laundering probe.

According to ED sources, the agency sleuths carried out searches at Hussain's residence in north-east Delhi's Chand Bagh area. According to ED sources, the agency sleuths carried out searches at his premises to look for the documents pertaining to his companies and the financial transactions.

On June 23, the financial probe agency team carried out searches at four locations in northeast Delhi and two locations in Uttar Pradesh's Noida. The sources had said that the raids were carried out at Hussain's Khajuri Khas residence and at companies allegedly controlled by his wife and children. The source had also disclosed that the four-storey building in Khajuri Khas is owned by Hussain and houses the office of Show Effect Advertisement Private Limited.

According to the ED, the suspended AAP leader is also the director of two more companies - Show Effect Worldwide Private Limited and Essence Cellcom Private Limited. The ED action comes almost three weeks after it registered a case of money laundering against Hussain, who is currently in judicial custody. The ED had registered a case against Hussain and the Popular Front of India for money laundering.

Yusuf Memon, Tiger Memon's brother, dead

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, June 26: Yusuf Memon, a 1983 Mumbai serial blasts case convict and a brother of absconding accused Tiger Memon, died Friday at Nashik Road Prison in Maharashtra's Nashik district, a prison official said.

The cause of death was yet to be ascertained and the body would be sent to Dhule for autopsy, he said.

Nashik police commissioner Vishwas Nangre-Patil confirmed Memon's death.

While Tiger Memon was allegedly the mastermind of the blasts conspiracy along with fugitive gangster Dawood Ibrahim, Yusuf was accused of allowing his flat and garage at Al-Husseini building in Mumbai for terrorist activities.

A special TADA court had sentenced him to life imprisonment.

Yakub Memon, another Memon brother who was arrested in the case, was hanged in 2015.

At least 250 persons were killed and hundreds were injured when 12 blasts ripped through Mumbai March 12, 1993.

India's social inequalities reflected in corona care

ASSOCIATED PRESS

New Delhi, June 26: When Pradeep Kumar's wife was admitted to a government-run hospital in New Delhi for treatment of COVID-19, it took two days before she was able to see a doctor.

"There are six other women in her room and everyone is frustrated," he said outside New Delhi's LNJP Hospital. "They're behaving like they're leprosy patients."

Kumar's wife had just given birth when she found out she had the virus. She was told she would have to change hospitals and be admitted to one set up to handle coronavirus patients, an exhausting process that took hours.

Though leaders have promised coronavirus testing and care for all who need it, regardless of income, treatment options are as stratified and unequal as the country itself.



People wait in a queue for COVID-19 test at a government designated hospital in New Delhi

Care ranges from crowded wards at public hospitals that some worry will make them sicker than if they stayed home to spacious suites at private hospitals that only the wealthy can afford.

World Health Organization data

shows that the Centre spent \$63 per person on health care for its 1.3 billion people in 2016. By comparison, China spent \$398 for each of its 1.4 billion people in 2016, according to the WHO.

Though India has managed to

halve its poverty rate over the past 15 years, some 176 million people still live on less than \$1.90 a day, and experts say the pandemic is shining a spotlight on the country's vast inequalities in everything from employment rights to health care.

"Epidemics usually are good mirrors of society and country," said Pratik Chakrabarti, a history of science professor at the University of Manchester, adding that this one "has exposed how precarious people's lives are" in India.

At RML Hospital in New Delhi, a government-run facility that offers free COVID-19 tests, dozens of people waiting on a recent day to be registered for a test stood in line or lay on metal benches shaded by a green tarp in scorching summer heat. A small indoor emergency triage area had been converted into a crowded waiting room for confirmed COVID-19 cases.

A personal trainer who fears he has the coronavirus, Manoj Kumar was lined up outside another public hospital just waiting to get in. He said he saw some people give the guards money in order to skip the line.

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A personal trainer who fears he has the coronavirus, Manoj Kumar was lined up outside another public hospital just waiting to get in. He said he saw some people give the guards money in order to skip the line.

of the day quote

Women should enhance their skills, equip themselves with technology to become 'atmanirbhar'



NITIN GADKARI | UNION MINISTER

China praised the Indian PM for his statement and he has become popular in that country. We are concerned over the Chinese intrusion in Galwan valley and are proud of our jawans stationed at the borders. Protecting the borders and preventing intrusion is the main responsibility of the government. Congress has been raising this issue but the government had neglected it



All efforts would be made to control the spread of coronavirus in Bangalore and there will be no fresh lockdown



SHORT TAKES

Singhvi tests Covid positive

New Delhi: Congress leader and party spokesperson Abhishek Singhvi has home quarantined himself after testing positive for COVID-19, sources close to him said Friday. While he has mild symptoms like fever, the sources said, his wife has also tested positive for the virus and has isolated herself at home as per the government guidelines. After Singhvi tested positive, his son and other family members and staff are also being tested for the virus. Singhvi is the second Congress leader after Sanjay Jha to test positive for COVID-19. Jha has since recovered in Mumbai.

Jain to be discharged

New Delhi: Delhi Health Minister Satyendar Jain Friday tested negative for Covid-19 and will be discharged from the hospital. The 55-year-old had tested positive on June 17 after developing breathlessness, following which he was shifted to Rajiv Gandhi Super Speciality hospital. He was then shifted to Max Hospital, administered plasma therapy and kept on oxygen support in an ICU ward. June 9, Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal had also tested for coronavirus after he complained of mild fever and sore throat. His test report, however, came out to be negative.

SP workers lathi-charged

Lucknow: Samajwadi Party (SP) workers were lathi charged by the Lucknow Police Friday while they were protesting against the increase in petrol prices outside the Vidhan Sabha. The prices of fuel have been rising in India for the past 20 days after oil marketing companies (OMCs) started daily revision since June 7. Over a dozen of SP workers, including members of the youth wing, had gathered outside the UP assembly on Friday with placards to protest over the hike in fuel prices.

Tremors in Haryana

New Delhi: A mild earthquake measuring 2.8 on the Richter scale hit close to Rohtak district in Haryana Friday afternoon. According to the National Centre for Seismology, its epicentre was 17km east-southeast of Rohtak and the tremors were felt at 3.32 p.m. No casualties or damage to properties have been reported so far.



The BJP, to hide its own failures, its own Himalayan strategic blunders, is targeting the Congress. The BJP leadership has complete disregard for history, or else they would have never said that Congress compromised national security

ADHIR RANJAN CHOWDHURY | CONGRESS LEADER

LG CRACKS THE WHIP

With Delhi recording 2,141 cases of snatchings and 596 of robberies in the first five months of this year, an angry Lieutenant Governor Anil Bajjal has directed Delhi police to increase vigil



Monsoon covers entire country



BRIGHT PROSPECTS

- The monsoon has covered the entire country nearly two weeks earlier than usual, brightening prospects for healthy summer-sown crops and promising higher incomes in the countryside where most Indians live
- The farm sector employs more than half of the country's 1.3 billion population and accounts for nearly 15% of India's \$2.9 trillion economy

India Meteorological Department (IMD) said in a statement Friday. The monsoon has covered the entire country nearly two weeks earlier than usual, brightening prospects for healthy summer-sown crops and promising higher incomes in the countryside where most Indians live. The farm sector employs more than half of the country's 1.3 billion population and accounts for nearly 15% of India's \$2.9 trillion economy. A low-pressure area over the Bay of Bengal and a cyclonic circulation over central India helped

the monsoon cover the entire country earlier than expected, the IMD said. The normal date for this is July 15, and in 2013 seasonal rains covered India on June 16, the IMD said.

Since then annual rains have either covered India around June 15 or later than expected. Monsoon rains arrived on the southern-most Kerala coast on June 1. The Monsoon delivers about 70% of India's annual rainfall and waters nearly half of the country's farmland that lacks irrigation.

India is likely to receive above average monsoon rains for the second straight year in 2020, the IMD said in its revised forecast on June 1. IMD defines average, or normal, rainfall as between 96% and 104% of a 50-year average of 88 cm for the entire four-month season. Farmers plant crops such as rice, corn, cane, cotton and soybeans in the rainy months of June and July, with harvests from October.

REUTERS

New Delhi, June 26: India's annual monsoon, crucial for farm output and economic growth, has rapidly advanced to cover the entire country, spurring crop sowing and alleviating the economic dam-

age caused by a nationwide lockdown to stem the coronavirus.

"The southwest monsoon has further advanced into the remaining parts of Rajasthan, Haryana and Punjab (states) and thus it has covered the entire country today, June 26," the state-run

COVID: Highest single-day spike

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, June 26: The highest single-day surge in COVID-19 cases went past 17,000 on Friday, pushing India's tally to 4,90,401, while the death toll climbed to 15,301 with 407 new fatalities, according to the Union Health Ministry data. Updated at 8 am, the data showed the daily COVID-19 cases increased by the highest-ever 17,296 cases. India registered over 14,000 cases for the seventh day in a row and witnessed a surge of 2,99,866 infections from June 1 till 26.

The number of active cases stands at 1,89, 463 while 2,85,636 people have recovered and one patient has migrated, according to the updated figure at 8 am. "Thus, around 58.24 per cent patients have recovered so far," an official said.

The total number of confirmed cases includes foreigners. According to the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR), a cumulative total of 77,76,228 samples have been tested up to June 25 with 2,15,446 samples being tested on Thursday.

Of the 407 new deaths reported till Friday morning, 192 were in Maharashtra, 64 in Delhi, 45 in Tamil Nadu, 18 in Gujarat, 15 each in West Bengal and Uttar Pradesh, 12 in Andhra Pradesh, 10 in Haryana, eight in Madhya Pradesh, seven in Punjab, six in Karnataka, five in Telangana, four in Rajasthan and two in Jammu and Kashmir.

Arunachal Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh, Jharkhand and Uttarakhand have reported one COVID-19 fatality each in the last 24 hours. Of the total 15,301 deaths reported so far, Maharashtra tops the tally with 6,931 deaths, followed by Delhi with 2,429 deaths, Gujarat with 1,753, Tamil Nadu with 911, Uttar Pradesh with 611, West Bengal with 606, Madhya Pradesh with 542, Rajasthan with 379 and Telangana with 230 deaths.

The COVID-19 death toll reached 198 in Haryana, 170 in Karnataka, 136 in Andhra Pradesh, 120 in Punjab, 90 in Jammu and Kashmir, 57 in Bihar, 36 in Uttarakhand and 22 in Kerala. Chhattisgarh and Jharkhand have registered 12 deaths each.

BANK 'FRAUD' CASE

More trouble for Nath's nephew

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, June 26: Spelling more trouble for former Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Kamal Nath's nephew Ratul Puri, the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) Friday carried out raids at multiple locations in Delhi and Noida in connection with the alleged fraud with the Punjab National Bank and other consortium of banks worth ₹787 crore.

A CBI official said, "Multiple teams of the agency are conducting searches in Delhi and Noida at the premises of the accused, including Moser Baer Solar Ltd (MBSL) Directors Dipak Puri, Ratul Puri and others in a case related to alleged loss of ₹787.25 crore to PNB and other consortium of banks."

The official said that the raids came in the wake of a case being registered on a complaint by PNB against MBSL and others, including its Directors and other un-



known persons and bank officials. In August 2019, the CBI had registered a case against Moser Baer India Limited (MBIL) and conducted raids at six places to nab its current and former officials for cheating the Central Bank of India to the tune of ₹354.51 crore.

According to the CBI, Deepak Puri, Managing Director of MBIL, his wife Nita Puri, whole-time director of MBIL, son Ratul Puri,

former Executive Director of MBIL, Sanjay Jain, Director, Vineet Sharma, Director, and other unidentified private servants and private persons were booked on charges of criminal conspiracy for cheating, forgery and criminal misconduct.

Nita Puri is the sister of Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Kamal Nath and Ratul Puri is his nephew. Ratul Puri was arrested by the Enforcement Directorate (ED) in connection with money laundering involving the ₹354 crore fraud with the Central Bank of India.

The ED had reregistered the case on the basis of the CBI FIR. Ratul Puri is also under scanner for allegedly receiving kickbacks in the AgustaWestland deal through his companies. The ED has alleged that accounts associated with firms owned and operated by Ratul Puri were used to receive kickbacks and launder money in the ₹3,600 crore VVIP helicopter deal. Ratul Puri was granted bail December 2, 2019.

RESCUE CALLS MULTIPLY

SNAKE CATCHERS ON THEIR TOES

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Agra, June 26: As temperature rises, snakes, big and small, are coming out of their safe hideouts and entering urban space that is cooler and comfortable.

Expert snake catchers of the NGO Wildlife SOS have been busy answering distress calls almost on a daily basis. Multiple sightings of reptiles in Agra city has kept them on their toes. In June alone, the team has responded to over 30 reptile rescue calls, including a 4-foot long monitor lizard that was found inside an air cooler.

The rising temperature has forced reptiles and other wild animals to venture out of their natural habitat in search of cooler places to seek respite from the



excessive heat. Earlier this week, the Wildlife SOS team rescued a 5-foot-long rat snake which was found coiled up on top of a car's spare tyre in Nikhil Garden, Taj Nagari Phase-2.

As chaos spread after the reptile was spotted, a team of rescuers from the NGO immediately rushed. After ensuring that all potential hiding places and escape routes were blocked off, the team carefully transferred the snake into a safe

transport container.

In another incident, a 4-foot-long monitor lizard was discovered resting inside an air cooler in a house in Friends Vihar, Dayalbagh. This was followed by the rescue of a python that was found wandering in the C-Impact Institute premises located behind Gokulam Water Park in Agra.

Wildlife SOS also rescued a King Cobra from a house in H-block, Kalindi Vihar and a Wolf

snake from Gayatri Vihar colony in Sikandra. Kartick Satyanarayan, Co-founder and CEO of Wildlife SOS, said, "Snakes are cold-blooded animals so their body temperature varies with that of the environment. They are unable to self-regulate their temperature if it gets too warm and have to seek out cooler places to retreat to during daytime."

Baiju Raj M. V, Director Conservation Projects, Wildlife SOS, said, "In this month alone, we have rescued more than 30 reptiles and the number is still on a rise. We are glad to see people taking the right measures and considering the well-being of these highly misunderstood reptiles by calling our helpline."

UNPRECEDENTED CRISIS

PM lauds UP's corona battle



Lucknow, June 26: With the whole world in the grip of coronavirus, Prime Minister Narendra Modi lauded the Uttar Pradesh government for its efforts in handling the unprecedented crisis.

Modi Friday launched the Aatmanirbhar Uttar Pradesh Rojgar Abhiyan to provide employment to migrant and daily wage workers who had returned to the state during the lockdown imposed to check the spread of coronavirus.

The Prime Minister also held talks with beneficiaries of the campaign which provides employment to more than one crore people, saying that UP had launched a major plan for its implementation. Modi said, "The work done by the Yogi Adityanath government in Uttar Pradesh was instrumental in preventing the spread of the pandemic in the most populous state."

"Under the leadership of Yogi Adityanath, the state government had left behind developed countries such as France, Italy and Spain in the precautionary measures and solutions to save its citizens from the pandemic. The government had not missed the chance to turn disaster into opportunity and fought effectively against the global crisis."

Modi said, "While other states are struggling in the fight against corona, UP has launched major development plans. Once again, many congratulations to you for starting these employment opportuni-

ties." The other states of the country, he added, could also learn a lot from this approach.

"UP people must be saved from the coronavirus. No drug or vaccine has come till date. The only medicine against this pandemic is maintaining a gap of two yards from one another and covering mouth, using face cover or a scarf. Until the corona vaccine is devised, we would be able to prevent it with this medicine," he added.

The state's doctors, paramedical staff, sweepers, policemen, anganwadi workers, bank and post-office staff, transport department, migrant workers, etc had contributed to fight this menace with full devotion. Uttar Pradesh's efforts and achievements are huge as it is a bigger state than many countries combined in the world, he said.

Modi said, "The hard work by the UP government, in a way has helped save the lives of at least 85,000 people (as the death toll could have reached that figure without precautions). Today if we are able to save the lives of our citizens, it is a matter of great satisfaction."

Jawan, minor boy killed in militant attack



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Srinagar, June 26: A CRPF jawan and a minor boy were killed when militants attacked a security forces team in Anantnag district of Jammu and Kashmir Friday, police said.

The militants fired upon a road opening party of the CRPF 90 battalion near Padshahi Bagh bridge in the Bijbehara area of the south Kashmir district around 12 noon, a police official said.

He said a CRPF personnel and an eight-year-old boy were injured in the attack. The injured were taken to a hospital in Bijbehara where both of them succumbed, the official said.

The CRPF personnel has been identified as constable Shamal Kumar, while the boy has been identified as Nihan Yawar, a resident of Yaripora area of the neighbouring Kulgam district, he said. He said the security forces have cordoned off the area and a hunt has been launched to nab the attackers.

Meanwhile, National Conference vice-president Omar Abdullah condemned the boy's killing. "An innocent...boy is the latest victim of the violence in Kashmir. His death in a dastardly grenade attack by militants is tragic and condemned without reservation," he wrote on Twitter.

SETTING AN EXAMPLE

This UP man grows apples in guava land

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Prayagraj (UP), June 26: Prayagraj, for as long as one can remember, has been known for its white and pink guavas.

But this year, a driver-turned-farmer Rudra Pratap has accomplished a feat by growing in a climate not known to be favourable for the fruit. Rudra's apple orchard is located in Rampur village in Prayagraj and has about 35 apple trees that are bearing fruit for the first time.

Rudra Pratap said that he decided to have an apple orchard about five years ago when he inherited some land in the village. "I wanted to build a house here and have an apple orchard next to it. However, when I discussed it with others, in-



cluding my father, Keshav Bahadur Singh, a seasoned farmer, everyone made fun of me. They said that it was impossible to grow apples in this climate because the fruit needs a cold climate," he said.

Rudra was working in Mumbai as a driver when he met another driver from Shimla who gave him tips on apple farming. "Three years ago, I got 200 apple tree saplings of Hariman-99 variety and planted

them on my farmland but they failed to flourish and the trees wilted away. I did not give up and took the advice of an apple grower from Kashmir. We decided to cross breed by grafting with an apple variety called 'Anna'. "This clicked instantly and the grafts flourished within a year," he said.

Explaining how he protects his apple trees, Rudra said, "To protect the trees from moths, mites and other pests, I spray a safe pesticide procured from the local Jari market once a month. I irrigate the trees once every three days to ensure that they have adequate water and humidity using a submersible pump. To protect the trees from the hot winds that blow during summers, I have planted banana trees all

around the orchard and it seems to be working perfectly."

His father, aged 75 years, helps him in tending to the orchard. Rudra Pratap is now settled in Prayagraj while his sons are working in Mumbai and daughter is pursuing her MBA there. Meanwhile, Krishna Mohan Chaudhary, chief horticulturist at the Horticultural Experiment and Training Centre in Kushrubagh, said, "Rudra Pratap's efforts are praiseworthy. We have low chilling varieties of apples and efforts are on to grow them in plains, including UP. The quality of apples is judged by taste, texture and fragrance and only after checking these apples on those parameters, will we be able to determine the commercial value of the fruits."



There is no good reason, for example, for any country to include coal in their COVID-19 recovery plans

NEW STUDY ON PANDEMIC

Majority of COVID-19 patients under 18 years experience a mild disease, and fatalities are extremely rare, according to the first multinational study of 582 children and adolescents



of the day quote

We're going to make sure we're posted appropriately to counter the People's Liberation Army (PLA). We think that the challenge of our times, and we're going to make sure we have resources in place to do that



MIKE POMPEO | US SECRETARY OF STATE

Britain is working on an plan to relax its quarantine for international travellers with some countries where there is a lower risk of contracting the novel coronavirus



GEORGE EUSTICE | UK ENVIRONMENT SECRETARY

We need to continue to be absolutely crystal clear that Canada has an independent judiciary and those processes will unfold independently of any political pressure, including by foreign governments



JUSTIN TRUDEAU | CANADIAN PRIME MINISTER

SHORT TAKES

Pak records lowest spike

Islamabad: Pakistan's COVID-19 patients will be around 225,000 by the end of June as compared to the estimated 300,000, a senior minister said Friday, as the country recorded 2,775 infections, the lowest single-day spike in coronavirus cases in about a month. Planning Minister Asad Umar said the government succeeded in keeping the expected number under control after people showed responsibility.

S'pore mosques partially reopen

Singapore: Mosques across Singapore have partially reopened Friday, months after they were closed due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Muslims in the country were once again allowed to gather for Friday prayers via an online booking system limited to 50 people per session under strict social distancing measures, Efe news reported. Worshipers who attended the sessions had to book their slot via an online application system developed by the council and were restricted to one of two 30-minute sermons that mosques began to offer for Friday's 'Salaat al-Jumma' as well as regular daily prayers.

Unrest in Manila

Manila (Philippines): Philippine police arrested 20 protesters who marked the Global Pride event with a march Friday to demand government aid for poor workers and drivers displaced by a monthslong coronavirus lockdown. Manila police spokesman Lt. Col. Carlo Manuel said the 20 protesters staged a march and rally at a historic bridge near the presidential palace without a permit and defied orders when they tried to flee after being accosted. About 30 other protesters managed to flee, he said.

IS militant jailed

London: An Islamic State militant who encouraged mass murder in Germany has been sentenced to at least nine years in prison in Britain. Fatah Abdullah, 35, had been charged under Britain's terrorism laws with encouraging another person to plow a car into crowds, attack people with a meat cleaver and detonate bombs, "with the aim of killing and/or causing serious injury." The incitement took place between April 9 and December 11, 2018.

LONG BATTLE

nCoV cases rising globally

AGENCIES

Rome, June 26: While China moved closer to containing a fresh outbreak in Beijing, the coronavirus took a stronger hold elsewhere, including the United States, where surging infections across southern states have highlighted the risks of reopening economies without effective treatment or vaccines.

Another record daily increase in India Friday pushed the caseload in the world's second most populous nation toward half a million, and other countries with big populations like Indonesia, Pakistan and Mexico grappled with large numbers of infections and strained health care systems. South Africa, which accounts for about half of the infections on the African continent with 118,375, reported a record 6,579 new cases, as transmissions increase after it loosened what had been one of the world's strictest lockdowns earlier this

month. Britain's health secretary, Matt Hancock, warned that the government has the power to act to prevent overcrowding that could cause new infection spikes. He was responding to scenes of packed beaches and trains heading to coastal resort towns a day earlier and throngs of jubilant fans celebrating Liverpool's first English soccer league title in 30 years.

Hancock told TalkRadio that he was "reluctant" to close public spaces as "people have had a pretty tough lockdown." However, he said "we will take action" if there is a spike in the number of



coronavirus cases.

Italy, one of the hardest hit European nations, battled to control an outbreak among Bulgarian seasonal crop pickers near Naples. The governor of southern Campania region insisted that the workers who live in an apartment complex with dozens of COVID-19 cases must stay inside for just over two weeks, not even emerging for food — authorities will deliver groceries to them.

The complex must be kept in "rigorous isolation," Gov. Vincenzo De Luca said. That means that for 15 days, "nobody leaves and no body enters" the apartments, where some 50 cases have been confirmed among about 700 residents.

Sweden's chief epidemiologist, Anders Tegnell, lashed out at the World Health Organisation Friday, calling it "a total mistake" to put his nation on a list of countries where "accelerated transmission" could overwhelm health systems.

"This is unfortunately a total

US sets one-day COVID record

Lubbock, Texas: The governor of Texas temporarily halted the state's reopening Thursday as COVID-19 infections and hospitalisations surged and the country set a new record for a one-day increase in cases. Texas, which has been at the forefront of efforts to reopen devastated economies shut down in the face of the coronavirus pandemic, has seen one of the biggest jumps in new cases, reporting more than 6,000 in a single day Monday.

misjudgment of the Swedish data," Tegnell told Swedish radio. A report by the WHO's Europe office on Thursday named 11 countries, including Sweden, Armenia, Albania, Kazakhstan and Ukraine.

Sweden has seen a steep rise in the number of COVID-19 cases but this has been attributed to an increase in testing.

In China, where the pandemic originated in December, authorities have mobilized resources for mass testing and locked down parts of Beijing this month due to an outbreak that has infected 260 people. The 11 new cases reported in the capital Friday continued a downward trend that suggests transmissions have been largely brought under control.

The United States, which counts the most infections in the world, is seeing daily jumps in COVID-19 cases nearing the peak reached in late April.

Arizona's 3,056 additional infections reported Thursday was the fourth day in a week with an increase over 3,000.

Vaccine maybe in a year: WHO

Brussels: It is not certain that scientists will be able to create an effective vaccine against the coronavirus that has caused the Covid-19 pandemic, but it could take a year before one were to be invented, the head of the World Health Organisation said. The World Health Organisation said that a global initiative to speed up the production of COVID-19 tests, vaccines and treatments will require more than \$30 billion over the next year.

'Kids being forced to use arms'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Washington, June 26: A US State Department report on human trafficking in India has said that non-state armed groups continue to recruit and use children as young as 14 years in direct hostilities against the government in Jammu and Kashmir.

The Congressional-mandated 2020 Trafficking in Persons report of the State Department, released by Secretary of State Mike Pompeo Thursday, noted that Maoist groups, particularly in Chhattisgarh and Jharkhand, forcibly recruited children as young as 12 to handle weapons and Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs), and in some cases be human shields.

According to the report, India made significant efforts towards the elimination of human trafficking in 2019, but did not fully meet the minimum standards.



Several women and girls formerly associated with Maoist groups reported that sexual violence, including practices indicative of sexual slavery, was a practice in some Maoist camps

MAOIST GROUPS, PARTICULARLY IN CHHATTISGARH AND JHARKHAND FORCIBLY RECRUITED CHILDREN AS YOUNG AS 12

"Non-state armed groups continued to recruit and use children as young as 14 in direct hostilities against the government in Jammu and Kashmir," the report said.

"Maoist groups, particularly in Chhattisgarh and Jharkhand forcibly recruited children as young as 12 to handle weapons and improvised explosive devices,

and in some cases be human shields.

"Several women and girls formerly associated with Maoist groups reported that sexual violence, including practices indicative of sexual slavery, was a practice in some Maoist camps. Non-state Naxalite groups continued to systematically recruit and use child soldiers," it added.

Trump administration urges to axe Obamacare

REUTERS

Washington, June 26: Government advocate Noel Francisco argued in a filing late Thursday that the Affordable Care Act (ACA) — one of former President Barack Obama's signature achievements — became invalid after the previous, Republican-led Congress axed parts of it. "Nothing the 2017 Congress did demonstrates it would have intended the rest of the ACA to continue to operate in the absence of these three integral provisions," said Francisco, who leads the Justice Department's Office of the Solicitor General.

"No further analysis is necessary; once the individual mandate and the guaranteed-issue and community-rating provisions are invalidated, the remainder of the ACA cannot survive."

The legal push is sure to be an important political battleground in

the presidential election, where Trump is seeking re-election against the challenge of Democratic candidate Joe Biden in a November vote.

Democrats call legal push amid coronavirus crisis an 'act of unfathomable cruelty'

"President Trump and the Republicans' campaign to rip away the protections and benefits of the Affordable Care Act in the middle of the coronavirus crisis is an act of unfathomable cruelty," said Democratic House of Representatives Speaker Nancy Pelosi.

"If President Trump gets his way, 130 million Americans with pre-existing conditions will lose the ACA's lifesaving protections and 23 million Americans will lose their health coverage entirely. There is no legal



justification and no moral excuse for the Trump Administration's disastrous efforts to take away Americans' health care."

BIDEN CALLS MOVE "CALLOUS"

The United States is the nation worst-hit by COVID-19, with more than 124,000 deaths and 2.4 million infections.

NATURE'S POWER



Lightning strikes over the sky in Nagykanizsa, Hungary, Friday

PTI PHOTO

Bhutan rejects reports on water stoppage to Assam

"It is a deliberate attempt by vested interests to spread misinformation and cause misunderstanding between the friendly people of Bhutan and Assam," Bhutan's Foreign Ministry said



AGENCIES

Thimphu, June 26: Bhutan Friday rejected media reports claiming that it has stopped the supply of irrigation water to farmers in Assam, terming them "totally baseless" and a "deliberate attempt" by vested interests to cause misunderstanding with India.

In a statement, Bhutan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs said that since June 24, 2020, there have been several news articles published in India alleging that Bhutan has blocked water channels that supply

irrigation water to Indian farmers in Baksa and Udalguri districts in Assam adjoining the country's Samdrup Jongkhar district.

Bhutan's statement came hours after Assam Chief Secretary Kumar Sanjay Krishna, in a late night tweet, termed the media reports as incorrect and said that the actual reason was natural blockage. "Recent media reports about Bhutan blocking water supply to India has been incorrectly reported. The actual reason being the natural blockage of informal irrigation channels

into Indian fields! Bhutan has been actually helping to clear the blockage," Krishna said.

His comments came in the backdrop of reports that hundreds of farmers from 25 villages of Assam's Baksa district along the India-Bhutan border alleging that the Bhutan government was not allowing farmers from the Indian side to channelise water from the Bhutanese side for irrigation.

The people of Bhutan, especially those living along the borders of India, "deeply value their age-old ties of friendship and cooperation with the people of India, particularly their close neighbors across the borders in Assam and West Bengal", it said, adding that such ties of friendship, cooperation and support must continue and be reinforced during these difficult times.

Since the lockdown in India and the closure of Bhutan's borders due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Assamese farmers are unable to enter Bhutan to maintain the irrigation channels as was done in the past, it said.

3 killed in stabbing attack in Scottish city of Glasgow

REUTERS

London, June 26: Three people were killed in a stabbing attack in the Scottish city of Glasgow on Friday and the suspect was shot by police, British media reported.

"It is believed three people have died after being stabbed in the stairwell of a hotel," the public broadcaster BBC said. Scottish police said the suspect had been shot.

An eyewitness told Sky News she had seen several people covered in blood being treated by emergency services, and armed police on the scene, at around 1:15 p.m.

(1215 GMT). Sky said there were fatalities.

"A police officer has been stabbed," the Scottish Police Federation said. Greater Glasgow Police said emergency services were dealing with an incident on West George Street in the centre of Glasgow.

"The situation is contained at this time and there is no danger to the general public," police said. Last week, three people died in the southern English town of Reading when a man wielding a five-inch knife went on the rampage in a park. Police said they were treating that incident as terrorism.

ASEAN leaders warn of 'alarming' SCS incidents

REUTERS

Hanoi, June 26: Vietnam and the Philippines warned of growing insecurity in Southeast Asia at a regional summit Friday amid concerns that China was stepping up its activity in the disputed South China Sea during the coronavirus pandemic.

Both Hanoi and Manila lodged protests with China in April after Beijing unilaterally declared the creation of new administrative districts on islands in the troubled waterways to which Vietnam and the Philippines also have competing claims.

"Even as our region struggles to contain COVID-19, alarming incidents in the South China Sea occurred," Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte told an online meeting of Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) leaders on Friday.

"We call on parties to refrain from escalating tensions and abide by responsibilities under international law," he said. China has been pushing its presence in the Exclusive Economic Zones of other countries while claimants are preoccupied tackling the COVID-19 pandemic, prompting the United States to call on China to stop its "bullying behaviour" there.

In early April, Vietnam said one of its fishing boats was sunk by a Chinese maritime surveillance vessel. China said that Vietnam's claims in South China sea are illegal and "doomed to fail". In his opening remarks at the ASEAN Summit, Vietnamese Prime Minister Nguyen Xuan Phuc said international institutions and international law had been seriously challenged during the global crisis.



The COVID-19 crisis has given us an opportunity to redesign the world; to be more egalitarian, and without global warming
MUHAMMAD YUNUS | NOBEL LAUREATE AND SOCIAL ENTREPRENEUR

'CHINESE INVESTMENTS GROW 12 TIMES'

There has been a 12 times growth of Chinese investments in Indian startups over the past 4 years to \$4.6bn in 2019 from \$381mn in 2016 with a majority of unicorns in India being backed by corporates and pure-play investment firms from China, according to GlobalData



of the day quote

Increasing credit supply alone will not get us out of this (pandemic) crisis. It requires a strong, meaningful fiscal stimulus to support the most vulnerable segments of the population. Left unchecked, the shock to consumption will affect credit growth and stymie production



ABHISHEK AGARWAL | CO-FOUNDER AND CEO, CREDITVIDYA

In general basic custom duty imposition is a welcome move in the context that it is the time to focus on domestic manufacturing, which would help conserve substantial forex and create at least 3-4 lakh jobs in the (Power and Renewable Energy) sector in the next 2-3 years



SAIBABA VUTUKURI | CEO, VIKRAM SOLAR

India is a power surplus nation. We are well connected (in terms of power transmission). Over one lakh MW electricity can be transmitted from one region to other in the country. We have met all challenges in the sector but the only challenge left here is making it viable



RK SINGH | POWER MINISTER

'Indian economy in deep trouble, growth likely to fall 5% this fiscal'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, June 26: S&P Global Ratings Friday said Indian economy is in deep trouble with growth expected to contract by 5% this fiscal.

"India's economy is in deep trouble. Difficulties in containing the virus, an anemic policy response, and underlying vulnerabilities, especially across the financial sector, are leading us to expect growth to fall by 5% this fiscal year before rebounding in 2021," S&P said in a report.

In its report titled 'Asia-Pacific losses near USD 3 trillion as balance sheet recession looms', S&P projected the region's economy to shrink by 1.3% in 2020, but grow by 6.9% in 2021.

This implies a loss nearing USD 3 trillion output over these two years.

"Asia-Pacific has shown some success in containing COVID-19 and, by and large, responded with effective macroeconomic policies," said Shaun Roache, chief economist for Asia-Pacific at S&P Global Ratings.

"This can help cushion the blow and provide a bridge to the recovery. The recovery looks set to be weighed down by indebted balance sheets, however."



Asia-Pacific has shown some success in containing COVID-19 and, by and large, responded with effective macroeconomic policies
SHAUN ROACHE, CHIEF ECONOMIST | ASIA-PACIFIC, S&P GLOBAL RATINGS

One risk now looming larger is yet another "balance sheet recession" in which at least one important sector of the economy - the gov-

ernment, firms, or households - tries to bolster its weak financial position by saving more, paying down debt, and spending less, S&P said.

"The downturn caused by COVID-19 did not start as a balance-sheet recession but may end up as one," Roache said. "This means less investment, a slower recovery, and a permanent hit to the economy that will last even after a vaccine is found."

"The pandemic caused a sudden stop in activity and to prevent a collapse, policymakers, helped by banks, have provided extraordinary financial support to firms and households. Banks may lend less than they

PANDEMIC IMPACT

In its report titled 'Asia-Pacific losses near USD 3 trillion as balance sheet recession looms', S&P projected the region's economy to shrink by 1.3% in 2020, but grow by 6.9% in 2021

The pandemic caused a sudden stop in activity and to prevent a collapse, policymakers, helped by banks, have provided extraordinary financial support to firms and households

S&P Global Ratings kept its forecasts for growth in Chinese economy at 1.2% and 7.4% for 2020 and 2021, respectively

normally would in a recovery to focus on the overhang from the pandemic. Private firms may prefer to stabilize debt rather than ramp up spending on new investments, even though demand is improving. S&P Global Ratings kept its forecasts for growth in Chinese economy at 1.2% and 7.4% for 2020 and 2021, respectively.

The economy is healing but private sector confidence remains fragile.

'Asset quality of housing lenders likely to worsen'

REUTERS

Mumbai, June 26: Indian housing finance companies (HFCs) are likely to face worsening of asset quality this year, with about 30% of their portfolios falling within the regulator-approved moratorium as of end-May, rating agency ICRA said Friday.

ICRA said gross non-performing assets (GNPA) in the housing segment could increase 2.5-3% in the fiscal year through March 2021 from an estimated 1.7%, as of March this year. In the non-housing segment, the GNPA could be higher at 3-4.5% by the end of fiscal year 2021 from 2.5% at the end of this fiscal year, the rating agency said.

"While home loans are expected to show higher resilience on the asset quality front vis-à-vis other asset classes owing to their secured nature, the loss of income for borrowers could lead to an increase in the GNPA in the housing loan segment as well," Supreeta Nijjar, Vice-President, Financial Sector Ratings at ICRA said.



The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) in two moves allowed all financial institutions to offer a six-month moratorium to borrowers on term loans to help tide over the difficulties due to the national lockdown imposed March 25.

The rating agency, however, noted that lifetime losses may remain under control for the housing finance companies.

"The lifetime credit losses for the HFCs could be an interplay of factors such as the duration for revival of the borrowers' income levels, borrowers' emotional attachment to the property, and whether the properties are self-occupied or under construction," Nijjar said.

SBI eyes boosting MSMEs in state



Ruma Dey, CGM, SBI Bhubaneswar Circle

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, June 26: State Bank of India (SBI) is giving more priority to continue to boost the MSME sector in the view of COVID-19 pandemic, said Ruma Dey, Chief General Manager (CGM), SBI Bhubaneswar Circle.

Dey said, "The nation is going through crisis due to COVID-19 outbreak. Odisha's MSMEs is our priority. We have been introducing various schemes that would bring benefit to the sector. The bank has deputed four additional AGMs in zonal levels across the state, so that MSMEs can avail benefits. These AGMs will take care of loan disbursement and manage assets qualities of these sectors."

She also mentioned that the bank is regularly communicating to MSME units in state so that they can't miss any disbursement scheme. "We have written letters to 48,168 eligible existing MSME customers. In first phase, around 20,182 customers have already been benefited," the CGM added.

SBI has achieved reasonable success under the e-Mudra scheme in the state. The bank has already disbursed ₹70 crore to 14, 603 customers.

To mark the MSME day June 27, SBI has planned to hold six e-town hall meetings in the state to interact with the units. E-town hall meetings will be held in Bhubaneswar, Sambalpur, Berhampur and other cities.

SBI has also organised 24 webinars for MSMEs to create awareness about various schemes. Around 400 people participated the webinars.

Considering the present situation, Dey said, "The demands in domestic market have dropped due to the COVID-19 outbreak. The situation will come to normalcy once the crisis is controlled."

The CGM suggested offering tax break and other similar steps to encourage MSMEs during the pandemic. As many as 20,182 customers have been sanctioned loans amounting to ₹645 crore by the bank under the Emergency Credit Line Guarantee Scheme.

Godrej launches new washing machines, refrigerators

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, June 26: Godrej Appliances Friday launched new models of semi-automatic washing machines and refrigerators. The refrigerators will be marketed under the brand names Edge Rio and Edge Nio range while the semi-automatic washing machine will be called the Edge Ultima.

According to company's release, the refrigerators come with a large vegetable tray of 16.4 litres which gives consumers enough space to store all their vegetables. "The new Godrej EDGE RIO and EDGE NEO refrigerators are available in 192 litre capacities with 5-star, 4-star, 3-star and 2-star variants and these are priced from ₹14,000. The 190 - 195 litres capacity segment is 50% of the single door refrigerators which in turn forms 77% of the refrigerator industry," says the releases.

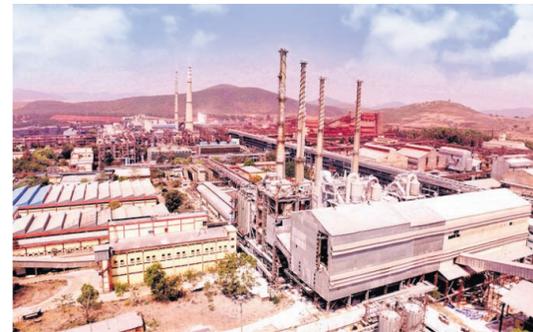


Similarly, Godrej EDGE Ultima is 5 Star new age semi-automatic washing machine.

"The Edge Ultima keeps you worry-free with a 5-year warranty on wash motor, and a 2-year warranty on the entire washing machine. Available in 3 colours of Crystal Red, Crystal Black and Crystal Blue in 8 kg and 8.5 kg variants, the washing machines are priced at ₹16,400 onwards," the statement says.

The company officials also said that currently, the 8 - 8.5 kg washing machine variant contributes to 23% of the semi-automatic washing machine segment and this segment is growing at the rate of 11% for the industry.

Nalco posts ₹138 cr net profit in FY19-20



POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, June 26: National Aluminium Company Limited (NALCO) Friday announced that the 'Navratna CPSE' posted a net profit of ₹138.23 crore during the financial year of 2019-20. The financial result was declared by the Board of Directors in a meeting.

According to Nalco's statement, "During the year, the company has achieved net turnover of ₹8,426 crore, which has been adversely impacted by about ₹2,900 crore due to fall in global metal prices. The export turnover of the company for the fiscal was ₹3,511 crore."

The Navratna CPSE has also achieved a significant growth in production and sales.

"Bauxite production of 73.02 lakh MT in mines and 21.61 lakh MT of Alumina Hydrate in alumina refinery, have been the highest ever since company's inception. Both Mines & Refinery of NALCO has been performing beyond its installed capacities. The company also produced 4.18 lakh MT of Aluminium metal in FY 19-20, mentioned the statement.

Nalco CMD Sridhar Patra said, "We are optimistic that in the long run with our focus on increasing the production in mining and refining segments, opening up of the new coal blocks, backward integration in supply of key raw materials like caustic soda, we shall be able to tide over present economic crisis."

Microsoft to permanently close all physical stores

New York: Microsoft said Friday it is permanently closing nearly all of its physical stores around the world. Like other retailers, the software and computing giant had to temporarily close all of its stores in late March due to the COVID-19 pandemic. According to its website, Microsoft has 83 stores worldwide, including 72 stores in the US, and several others abroad where they showcase and sell laptops and other hardware. Friday's announcement reflects what the company calls a "strategic change" for its retail business as sales increasingly shift online. Microsoft said it would "reimagine" the physical spaces at its four high-profile Microsoft Experience Centers in New York, London, Sydney, and at the company's headquarters in Redmond, Washington. Microsoft Corp. said the closures would result in a pretax charge of about \$450 million, or 5 cents per share, taken in the current quarter ending June 30. The company didn't say if the move would result in layoffs.

Pepsi, Swiggy, NRAI collaborate to support lockdown-hit staff

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, June 26: Beverage maker PepsiCo has launched a fund-raising initiative in collaboration with food ordering platform Swiggy and the National Restaurant Association of India (NRAI) to render support to the restaurant industry employees who are hit hard by the coronavirus lockdown.

PepsiCo's fund-raising initiative #PepsiSaveOurRestaurants is aiming to provide approximately 2.5 million meals to distressed workers of the restaurant industry.

As part of the initiative, whenever any consumer adds any soft drink to a meal order on Swiggy

from June 25 to July 19, Pepsi will contribute part of the proceeds in respect of each soft drink ordered to the NRAI COVID-19 Relief Corpus.

"This fund will be further used to provide meals (dry ration) to restaurant workers who have served us and are suffering due to these challenging times," said a joint statement by PepsiCo India, Swiggy and NRAI.

The offer is valid on any packaged soft drinks ordered from restaurants listed on Swiggy platform which includes carbonated soft drinks, packaged iced tea, packaged juices & packaged juice-based drinks and is not restricted to just the purchase of Pepsi, it added.



"The restaurant industry is an integral part of our ecosystem and has

PepsiCo's fund-raising initiative #PepsiSaveOurRestaurants is aiming to provide approximately 2.5 million meals to distressed workers of the restaurant industry

been severely impacted by the ongoing health challenge. Both restaur-

rants and restaurant workers are struggling," said a PepsiCo India spokesperson adding that it is an "endeavour to find various meaningful ways to provide support to the ecosystem."

Earlier, liquor maker Diageo India had announced a ₹75-crore programme "Raising the Bar" to support bars, pubs and restaurants.

According to NRAI President Anurag Katriar the pandemic has impacted every sector but has perhaps manifested itself more sharply on the workforce in the restaurant sector because of the sheer volumes.

The restaurant industry is the second-largest employers of human

capital in India after agriculture, he added.

Swiggy VP - Marketing Srivats TS said during these times when the hospitality sector is facing major setbacks in adjusting to the 'new normal' and sustaining themselves, Swiggy is focused towards supporting the restaurant community in every way possible.

"As several restaurants evaluate their next course of action to re-mobilise their operations, we are happy to support #PepsiSaveOurRestaurants initiative along with NRAI towards striving to ensure that restaurant workers and their families don't stay hungry," he said.

REDS REDEMPTION

Manchester City's loss to Chelsea helps Liverpool claim Premier League title making an end to a 30-year drought



ASSOCIATED PRESS

Liverpool, June 26: The 30-year wait is over: Liverpool are champion of England again. Liverpool clinched their first league title since 1990 Thursday, ending an agonizing title drought without the players even having to take the field.

Instead, the Premier League crown was secured when Chelsea beat second-place Manchester City 2-1, a result that means City can no longer catch Liverpool with seven games remaining.

For the city of Liverpool, this has been a party three decades in the making, and even the restrictions caused by the coronavirus failed to prevent fans from gathering to celebrate outside Anfield.

Only a few dozen supporters were outside the stadium as the final whistle blew at Stamford Bridge. But hundreds more quickly arrived, setting off flares and fireworks, waving flags and singing 'Allez, Allez, Allez' on the steps of the stadium.

"It is such a big moment, I am completely overwhelmed," said Liverpool manager Jurgen Klopp, who was almost in tears as he spoke to broadcaster Sky Sports via video link. "I never would have thought it would feel like this. I had no idea."

After a dominant campaign that was interrupted by the coronavirus pandemic, Liverpool became England's earliest-ever champion — and the latest. No team since the inception of the country's league system in 1888 has clinched the title with seven games remaining. And no team has been crowned Premier League champion in June.

The title itself had hardly been in doubt since December, with Klopp's team quickly building a massive lead with a rampant attacking style of play that has earned 28 wins in 31 games so far.

"The world has watched the fierce determination of this club on the field for every single match," said John Henry, Liverpool's American-based owner. "The preparation, the resolve and the talent of those who put together perhaps the greatest league performance ever in any country's history."

For a while, though, it seemed the coronavirus could still prevent Liverpool from ending its drought. The club was 25 points clear when the league was abruptly halted in March as the country was forced into lockdown to contain the spread of COVID-19.

"Null and void" became the dreaded term in the red half of Liverpool amid fears the season could be canceled completely as the coronavirus death toll soared and clubs struggled to agree on a strategy to restart the league during

Liverpool became England's earliest and latest champion; clinched with the most games to spare and by the latest calendar date

This title had hardly been in doubt since December. A fluid, attacking style of play earned 28 wins and two draws in 31 games with a loss at Watford

The club was 25 points clear when the league was abruptly halted by the coronavirus in March

the country's gravest emergency since World War II.

After Liverpool finally returned to the field Sunday, a 0-0 draw in the Merseyside derby against Everton delayed the crowning moment. But not for long.

The team quickly rediscovered its scintillating attacking form as it swept aside Crystal Palace 4-0 Wednesday inside an empty Anfield.

Chelsea then put Liverpool over a winning line that had proved so elusive for a team accustomed to dominating English football in the 1970s and 80s.

After waiting so long to win a 19th English title, the pandemic left an anticlimactic cloud over celebrations on the hottest day of the year so far.

Fans couldn't even gather in pubs, which have been shut since March, to watch Chelsea clinch the title for them. Gatherings of multiple households are also still banned inside.

The only communal viewing experiences allowed are for groups of up to six people to meet outside. Photos of garden viewings spread on social media. A few fans watched on phones outside Anfield.

Klopp, the German manager who has restored a winning mentality to Liverpool with his brand of "heavy metal" football, already led the club to the Champions League title last year. But this will widely be regarded as the moment he truly brought Liverpool back to the pinnacle of English football.

The last time Liverpool won the league, it was still called the First Division and the club held the English record for most titles with 18. But the inception of the Premier League in 1992 transformed the landscape of the English game.

Liverpool faded as a force, to be eclipsed by Manchester United. Sweeping to 13 Premier League titles, United manager Alex Ferguson succeeded in his mission of knocking Liverpool "off their perch" by helping the Mancunians become the wealthiest sports teams in the world.

Liverpool FC (Premier League Champions) @LFC



Manchester City @ManCity

Congratulations to @LFC on winning the Premier League.

Chelsea FC @ChelseaFC

Congratulations @LFC, worthy Premier League champions this season.

Gerrard slipped on the field at a crucial moment — was hard to recover from.

A slump in form saw Rodgers fired in 2015, which ushered in the arrival of Klopp. After a slow start, and another eighth-place finish, Liverpool regained its swagger.

Not even the sale of Philippe Coutinho to Barcelona in 2018 derailed Liverpool's ambitions. Instead, that money was reinvested wisely to ensure that the entertaining attack unit had a robust barrier at the back with then world-record fees paid for goalkeeper Alisson and center back Virgil van Dijk.

More frustration was to come, though. After leading the league for much of the campaign, Liverpool finished just one point behind winner Man City last season following one of the closest and most entertaining title races in history.

There was no stopping Klopp's team this time.



(Clockwise) Dejan Lovren, Roberto Firmino, Alisson Becker, Fabinho and Mo Salah, (inset) Jordan Henderson, Joe Gomez and Virgil van Dijk celebrate Liverpool's title-winning feat

GUARDIOLA CONGRATULATES LIVERPOOL AFTER CITY'S REIGN ENDS

City stumble at Stamford Bridge

ASSOCIATED PRESS

London, June 26: It was a day Pep Guardiola saw coming a long time ago, as early as the first weeks of the longest season in the history of English football.

"Maybe we didn't arrive with the same passion," the Manchester City manager said Thursday after seeing his team's two-season hold on the Premier League title ended by Liverpool.

"Liverpool played every single game like it was the last chance they have. And maybe we didn't get that moment, especially the key moments in the first part of the season."

So when the moment finally came, at the final whistle of City's 1-2 loss to Chelsea at an empty Stamford Bridge, Guardiola was emotionally prepared for it. "I've never thought, 'Always we can win,'" he said.

Yet Guardiola could never have envisaged City losing its grip on the trophy with seven rounds of games left, his team 23 points behind Liverpool.

It was only two years ago that Liverpool finished 25 points behind City. Guardiola sent a "big congratulations" to Jurgen Klopp and his players after a game when City's big flaw this season — defensive shakiness — was exposed once again.

Christian Pulisic scored a superb individual goal to put Chelsea ahead in the 36th minute — the American winger started his run from inside his own half — but it stemmed from a loose pass by Benjamin Mendy after he gathered a clearance by Chelsea from a corner.

Pulisic skipped past the weak challenges of Ilkay Gundogan and



Christian Pulisic and Willian (R) celebrate after the former's goal against Manchester City, Thursday

ARSENAL VICTORIOUS

SOUTHAMPTON: Eddie Nketiah pounced on a goalkeeping blunder and Joe Willock added his first Premier League goal to give Arsenal a much-needed 2-0 win at Southampton. Ninth-place Arsenal had lost both games since the league restarted after being postponed amid the coronavirus pandemic. Southampton goalkeeper Alex McCarthy helped the Gunners on their way when his sloppy play led to Nketiah's 20th-minute goal. Receiving a pass from a defender, McCarthy tried to pass it back but Nketiah intercepted the ball before tapping into an empty net. Southampton defender Jack Stephens was sent off late on for chopping down Pierre-Emerick Aubameyang. From the free kick, forward Alexandre Lacazette's effort was blocked by the wall. The ball fell back to Lacazette, whose powerful strike was saved by McCarthy but fell to fellow substitute Willock, who slotted in the second goal in the 86th.

Mendy before curling home a finish from the edge of the area.

After Kevin De Bruyne equalized for City with a long-range free-kick into the top corner, the visitors needed another goal for a victory that would have prolonged the title race for another week.

However, Fernandinho was sent

off for punching the ball away on the goal line after Pulisic, then substitute Tammy Abraham attempted to bundle the ball in from close range.

Willian sent goalkeeper Ederson Moraes the wrong way from the penalty spot and the party could get started in earnest for Liverpool.

Peyton named new assistant coach of OFC

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, June 26: Odisha FC has roped in Gerry Peyton as the new assistant coach Friday ahead of the seventh edition of Indian Super League (ISL). The 64-year-old joined the Bhubaneswar-based side on a two-year deal.

Peyton played for numerous reputed clubs like Chelsea, West Ham United, Everton as well as Fulham and he was a member of the coaching teams of Arsenal, Fulham beside few other teams.

Before joining Odisha FC, the former goalkeeper of the Irish national team was the assistant manager of Japanese club Shimizu S-Pulse.

"I am thrilled to have someone of coach Gerry's caliber helping us out this year. His 15 years of experience at Arsenal will give a great lift to the boys, particularly our goalkeepers. He is someone who can help us achieve excellence on and off the pitch," said OFC president Rohan Sharma.

Expressing his delight, Peyton said: "I am looking forward to working in India with my friend and colleague Stuart Baxter along with all the staff and players. Together we aim to build a successful project at Odisha FC that will leave a legacy for all of Odisha for years to come."



Stint with Sunrisers turning point: Bhuvu

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, June 26: Indian pacer Bhuvneshwar Kumar says playing for IPL side Sunrisers Hyderabad has been a turning point in his career as he learnt to handle the pressure of bowling at the death.

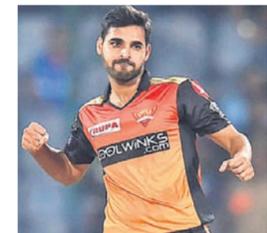
India's fierce pack attack is now one of the best in the world and Bhuvneshwar is a key figure in the set-up along with Jasprit Bumrah, Mohammed Shami and Umesh Yadav.

Bhuvneshwar said he always had the ability to bowl yorkers but delivering in crunch moments is something that he learnt after joining the Sunrisers squad back in 2014.

"I always had the ability to bowl yorkers but then I lost it. At Sunrisers Hyderabad, they wanted me to bowl at the start of the innings as well as at the end. The 14 matches I played in 2014, I learnt to handle pressure and that was a turning point," Bhuvneshwar told Deep Das Gupta 'Cricketbaazi' show. "I learnt new things, especially handling pressure at death bowling (during Sunrisers stint)," he said.

Bhuvneshwar, who has taken 132 ODI and 63 Test wickets, said he has been most successful whenever he has managed to detach himself from the outcome of the games like former India skipper MS Dhoni.

"Like MS Dhoni, I try to detach myself from the result and focus



on small things, which I also refer to as process. And this helps in getting the desired outcome. During IPL, when I had a couple of good seasons, I was in this zone. I was so focused on my process, that the result had become secondary. And results were positive."

Talking about how he is keeping himself motivated while being away from the game due to the COVID-19 pandemic, Bhuvneshwar said it hasn't been easy.

"I was very motivated for the first 15 days of the lockdown. No one knew how long it would last and I didn't have any equipment to exercise at home either. We thought things would get better in a couple of months," he said.

"But after 15 days, I started finding it difficult to motivate myself. I then ordered equipment at home and things have improved since...I am working on coming out of this lockdown as a better version of myself. On-field performance is different, but I can work on my fitness, or my athletic ability, or gaining more strength," he added.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Davis Cup Finals in 2021

London: The Davis Cup Finals, which was to be held in November this year, has been postponed to next year due to the coronavirus pandemic, the International Tennis Federation (ITF) announced Friday. The venue for the tournament remains Madrid and will now be held from November 22, 2021. "The decision to postpone the event comes following a three-month review of the considerable logistical and regulatory challenges that have arisen as a result of the pandemic and all potential hosting scenarios with the health and safety of all involved of paramount importance," said ITF in a statement.

Fed Cup Finals in next April

London: This year's Fed Cup Finals have been rescheduled for 2021 because of 'challenges' related to the coronavirus pandemic. The International Tennis Federation says the women's team competition will take place April 13-18 in Budapest, Hungary. The 2020 event was originally scheduled for April but was postponed because of the pandemic. Officials had hoped to squeeze the competition in this year. The ITF says there are "significant logistical and regulatory challenges" to holding "an indoor mass gathering" at the Laszlo Arena. The tennis body says "guaranteeing the health and safety of all involved will not be feasible." The Fed Cup finals feature 12 national teams competing in a new format.

Dada-Dravid partnership important for Indian cricket: Laxman

Mumbai: Having risen through the ranks together as players, BCCI President Sourav Ganguly and NCA Head Rahul Dravid hold important administrative positions in Indian cricket at present and former teammate VVS Laxman believes that their partnership will be crucial for Indian cricketers rise in the years to come. Speaking on Star Sports show 'Cricket Connected', Laxman spoke about the importance of Ganguly and Dravid partnership in the administration of Indian cricket. "It is great! The partnership between BCCI President Ganguly and National Cricket Academy (NCA) Head Dravid. If the Indian team want to be successful in every format, then this partnership is of utmost importance. I think everyone is important, the team captain, NCA Head and BCCI President."