

Capital sizzles at 44.2°C, highest in March

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, March 31: The state capital Wednesday sizzled at 44.2°C making it the hottest place in Odisha. This was the highest temperature ever recorded in this city in March, the India Meteorological

Department (IMD) said. HR Biswas, Regional Director

of IMD said, "Earlier the record of maximum temperature in Bhubaneswar stood at 42.2°C which was registered March 21, 2016. This is the first time the temperature in Bhubaneswar has breached 42.2 °C in March."

Biswas also said that the highest temperature ever recorded in the state capital was 46.7°C June 5, 2012.

The met department predicted that the heat wave will continue in the city and some other districts of Odisha Thursday also.

Vaccination for 45+ begins today

AGENCIES

New Delhi, March 31: As India vaccination drive to people above

(NHA) CEO and Empowered Group on COVID-19 Vaccination chairhealth secretaries, mission directors of NHM and immunisation officers of all states and UTs during

actions there," the NHA said.

Percentage being six per cent).

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prepares to open up its COVID-19 45 from April 1, the Centre asked Wednesday states and Union Territories (UTs) to identify low vaccine-coverage pockets, particularly in districts reporting a surge in new infections, and take corrective action.

National Health Authority person Dr RS Sharma and Union Health Secretary Rajesh Bhushan chaired a high-level meeting with the day, a statement said.

The status and pace of the inoculation drive across India were reviewed at the meeting held through video-conferencing, as were the preparations for April 2021, when vaccination would be extended to cover everybody above the age of 45, the ministry said.

"A key theme underlying the meet was the identification of low vaccine coverage pockets particularly in districts showing COVID-19 surge and for taking corrective

The Centre also advised the states and UTs to maintain vaccine wastage at less than one per cent (current National Wastage

Good bye, COVID-19! MARKET WATCH

INDEX VARIATION									
BOURSES	SENSEX	49509.15	₽	627.43					
	NIFTY	14690.70	₽	154.40					
CURRENCY	DOLLAR	73.72	₽	₹0.42					
CURR	EURO	86.23	₽	₹0.47					
ION	GOLD	₹44,100		₹227					
BULLION	SILVER	₹63,375		₹251					

ナ				
	WEAT			
		BHUB	СТК	
	d Max	44.2° C	40.6° C	
	<mark>≓</mark> MIN	25.9℃	24.4°C	Forecast
	Humidity	80%	77%	Heat
	Rainfall	Nil	Nil	wave

State to review IRREGULAR by MANJUL

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APRI

power tariff hike Govt will urge OERC to consider rollback



Members of the youth wing of BJP protest against the hike in power tariff at Cuttack

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, March 31: Following ruckus in the Assembly over power tariff hike, Energy Minister Dibya Shankar Mishra said Wednesday that the state government will urge the Odisha Electricity Regulatory Commission (OERC) to reconsider the increase in rates. His announcement came after the Opposition members demanded an immediate rollback in power tariff rates. Mishra said the government will submit a petition before the OERC and request it to reconsider its earlier order.

The OERC recently approved a minimal rise of 30 paise per unit in energy charges for domestic consumers for the financial year 2021-22 with effect from



the minister's assurance

the proceedings of the Assembly several times throughout the day over the issue leading to numerous adjournments. During the Question Hour, Congress MLAs disturbed proceedings forcing Speaker Surya Narayan Patro to adjourn the House till 11.30am. After resumption of proceedings Leader of Opposition

Pradipta Kumar Naik raised the matter during Zero Hour. He said the state government should ask the OERC to withdraw the hike on electricity tariff. Congress legislature party leader Narasingha Mishra also criticised the government on the issue. Normalcy returned only after



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FORTUNE FORECAST



trekking boots and explore unknown ter

ritories. Ganesha advises you to keep busy but not to go overboard. In group

activities today, everybody will focus

compassionate side of you today, says

but you, along with support from your

loved ones, will handle them with bril-

in social outings, suggests Ganesha.

liant tact. Enjoy the company of near and dear ones and let your presence be felt

There are indications that you will spare

more time working out at a gym. Those

in the field of marketing and advertising

a tragedy, a disaster, or a simple thought

may change the course of your live. You,

changes well. It may have a strong bear

ing on your health. You may spend a lot of

time with your loved ones, says Ganesha.

however, may not be able to take the

will have a fabulous time. A good mar-

keting strategy will bring maximum profits with minimum efforts.

Ganesha. Problems may come knocking

their attention on you.

People around you will

be surprised to witness

the considerate and

GEMINI

Today, you are likely to

incident, an observation

To many, you will seem

to have got your senses

back after a long time.

Reason? You will finally

savs Ganesha.

VIRGO

LIBRA

You never let a favour

go unacknowledged, or let a ridicule pass by

Leadership is your

forte and you shall

receive kudos for the

manner in which you

have a definite career plan in mind.

Although, it's not really a big deal for you when your mind races and yearns to achieve in two warring directions, it may

seem guite jarring and unreal to the mere mortals. And, considering that you

Leos are almost always in two minds about everything, getting a definite plan of action is quite an achievement

handle your team. Much awaited promo-

extra cash in your wallet. Wisely enough,

balancing home and work, says Ganesha.

tions will materialise and so will some

you didn't get all this by not effectively

Don't slip on this tight-rope walk.

experience something life-changing. A small

Your health interests will

take precedence over

career, says Ganesha.

TAURUS

Do something really exciting today - perhaps you could put on your

UTKAL DIVAS SPECIA Reminiscing makers of modern Odisha

The builders of sepa-

rate Odisha province de-

voted their entire life for the

Odisha

greater cause of

Odisha and Odias.

Foundation Day,

Orissa POST re-

On

Odisha Day aka Utkal Divas reminds each of us of the great sacrifices and struggles undertaken by a few Odia stalwarts that gave the state a separate political identity

POST NEWS NETWORK

oday is April 1, a glorious day in the annals of Odishan history. Under the British rule, Odisha was part of the Bengal Presidency comprising the present-day West Bengal, Bihar and Odisha. But it was 84 years ago on this day that the new province of 4 Orissa came into existence on linguistic basis, marking the begin-

FAKIR MOHAN SENAPATI

orn January 14, 1843, at Mallikashpur in Balasore, Fakir Mohan played a leading role in establishing the distinct identity of Odia language and literature. He is regarded as the father of Odia nationalism and the modern Odia literature. Fakir Mohan's story is indeed the story of the "Renaissance" of Odia literature. He is aptly called as Thomas Hardy of

Regarded as the Father of Odia nationalism, Fakir Mohan created a new awareness to propagate Odia languag

Odisha. The four novels of Fakir Mohan, written between 1897 and 1915, reflect the socio-cultural conditions of Odisha. While the three nov-

easy

els, Chhamana Atha Guntha, Mamun and Pravaschita explore the realities of social life in its multiple dimensions, *Lachhma* is a historical romance dealing with the anarchical conditions of Odisha in the wake of Maratha invasions during the 18th Century. He has written guite a few memorable short stories, such as Rebati, Patent Medicine and Randipua Ananta. A great lover and a creator of new era in Odia literature, Fakir Mohan was the founder of an organisation Utkala Bhasa Unnati Bidhani Sabha in 1867 to create a new awareness among the people of Odisha and to propagate Odia language.

SRIRAM CHANDRA BHANJA DEO

orn in a royal family of princely state of Mayurbhanj December 17, 1871, Sriram Chandra Bhanja Deo worked not only for the all-round development of his state, he played a pivotal role in unification of scattered regions of Odia speaking people. Sriram Chandra brought about signifi-

cant changes in the spheres of language, health and administration. A narrow gauge railway was commissioned between Rupsa -Baripada during his reign. He con-

structed two major reservoirs at Haldiha and Haladia with an expenditure of Rs.6 lakh from royal treasury. Similarly in the educational sector he raised the number of primary schools from 44 to 400 in his royal jurisdiction. Although he was the king of **UTKALAMANI PANDIT GOPABANDHU DAS**

opabandhu Das, born October 9, 1877, was the source of inspiration and ideals for generations. He dedicated himself completely for the country to that extent that he had to lose his only son in his bid to redress the suffering of others. Recognising the noble standings of



him with the title of Utkalamani or the Jewel of Utkal June 28, 1924. His immortal words "Let my body mingle with the dust of this Land. And let my countrymen walk along my back. Let all the holes in the road of freedom be filled with my blood and bone, And let my life be sacrificed when my people awake into freedom" still inspire the younger generation.

UTKAL GOURAB MADHUSUDAN DAS

orn April 28, 1848 at Satyabhamapur in Cuttack district, Madhusudan Das was the first Odia to fetch a law degree from Calcutta University. Popularly known as Madhu Barrister, he was deeply moved seeing the discrimination, made against the Odias by administrative authorities. Madhu Babu was convinced that the Odias could not stand united only because of their annexation with three different provinces. So, he took a solid stand for

the unification of the scattered Odias by organising and mobilising strong public opinion among the Odias.

KROSAKI

ıdan was the first Odia to be the member of Legislative Council and to have the hip of Central Legislative Asse

He also pressurised the British rulers for the unification of the scattered Odia-speaking

tracts for their socio-economic and cultural growth. Madhusudan organised Utkal Union Conference to form the channel for discussions and negotiations with the authorities to solve the problems and open avenues for a new era of unification and integration. He played a piloting role in engineering the plans and programmes, pioneering the aims and objectives and championing the cause of the Odia movement.

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state



ning of a new

journey for the





that will continue to surprise you throughout the day. All in all, Ganesha wishes you a vibrant day today.

unanswered. So, it's time to settle those

old accounts that are so important to

vou, feels Ganesha, This will increase chances of interesting developments

SCORPIO You shall probably realise the fact that seeing is believing. Learn to trust

your own eyes more than what you hear. Don't get lost in the crowd, warns Ganesha. Strive to stand out and be in the spotlight, advises Ganesha

SAGITTARIUS

Your business may bring you faster growth rates than bacteria today. Moreover, banking transactions will fetch returns exceeding your expectation. Management institutes will value your expertise and experience, predicts Ganesha. All in all, a day when progressions are on the rise.

CAPRICORN

Creativity is your innate trait. But how creative can you get when dealing with day-to-day

issues? You will not only answer this question with utmost modesty, but will make a great display of your creative skills by cleverly sorting out problems with your siblings, says Ganesha. You will derive pleasure by delving into knotty problems and solving them with ease. Also, you will reach out to those in need and help them in every possible manner.

AQUARIUS

Money is on your mind today! If you want to sort out financial matters, today is the day. You may have a good time with friends in the evening. You will also realise how much your friends value you and the respect you command in your wider social circle. Ganesha says maintaining it is important.

PISCES

Today, you will find your self partitioning your time equally, and more importantly, excelling, at work as well as at home. So, while you will prove to be the right man for the job assigned to you at the office, at home you will establish yourself as the perfect family man, says Ganesha.

Mayurbhanj, he had great love for the entire Odisha. In 1903, Sriram Chandra presided over the 1st session of Utkal Sammilani. Afterwards owing to the concerted efforts of this Sammilani the dream of Odisha for becoming a separate state became a reality.

MAHARAJA SHRI KRUSHNA CHANDRA GAJAPATI NARAYAN DEO

orn April 26, 1892, Maharaja Shri Krushna Chandra Gajapati Narayan Deo of Paralakhemundi organised the annual session of the Utkal Union Conference at Paralakhemundi in 1914. He represented the case of Odisha at the Round Table Conference, London, 1930-31. Deposing before the joint

Parliamentary Committee for the union of Paralakhemundi with Odisha in 1934, he placed a memorandum before the authorities and strongly advocated for aseparate province for Odisha. Unarguably, Maharaja was one of the main architects behind the formation of modern Odisha.

HAREKRUSHNA MAHTAB

Agarpada in Balasore district, Harekrushna Mahtab was irresistibly drawn to the National Liberation Movement in 1921 while studying in Ravenshaw College, Cuttack. Thereafter his life

was a saga of struggle and dedication to the cause of country's freedom. He joined Salt Movement

and imprisoned in 1930. He was the one who opened his ancestral temple to Harijans for the first time in Odisha. Mahtab participated in Non-Co-operation Movement and courted imprisonment in 1941. Even as Mahtab remained the Chief Minister and Union minister on several occasions, he is always recognised as an architect of modern Odisha for his pivotal role in the merger and integration of former princely states. He founded the state's capital at Bhubaneswar and facilated the construction of the multi-purpose Hirakud Dam Project. Mahtab earned distinction as an accomplished writer. The compilation of his popular column Gaon Mazlis published in vernacular daily Prajatantra received the Kendra Sahitya Academy Award in 1983. A political leader par excellence, Mahtab towered over the time and events to lead the people of the state through years of transition during independence and thereafter.

Maharaja Krushna Chandra Gajapati deposed before the Joint Parliamentary Committee for the union of Paralakhemundi with Odisha in 1934



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Celebrating spring, the tribal way

OrissaPOST

HURSDAY | APRIL 1 | 2021 | BHUBANESWAR

Baha Parab or the flower festival, celebrated in the beginning of spring, revolves around man's communion with nature and the celebration of beauty

POST NEWS NETWORK

divasis comprise around eight percent of India's population. This makes India the largest country with maximum tribal population in the world. That said, barring a few like the Sentinelese (of Andaman and Nicobar Islands), most of these communities have adapted to the modern lifestyle and integrated themselves into mainstream society. However, they have at the same time held on to their roots and kept their identity intact, thanks to the distinct customs, rituals and fes-

tivities. Much like it

stream society, various festivals play an important role in tribal culture too.

One such festival is 'Salei Puja'. The festival is also known as 'Baha Parab' or 'Bahabong'. Celebrated in the beginning of spring, 'Salei Puja' is one of the most important events in the calendar of the tribals living in Odisha. Communities such as - Ho, Santals and Mundas celebrate the festival with much fervour. Orissa POST catches up with a few members from the tribal community to know more about the festival, rituals and celebrations.

> 'Baha Parab' is also known as the 'Festival of



A tribal priest performs a ritual during a puja

around man's communion with nature and the celebration of beauty. In Santali and Mundari language, 'Baha' or 'Ba' means flower. The festival is celebrated in the Odia month Falguna (February and March). Since it is usually organised under the Sal tree, the festival is also known as 'Salei Puja'.

Mohan Soren, a 60-year-old from Kuliana village in Mayurbhanj district narrates the rituals of the festival they have been celebrating for a long time now. "The place where the puja is organised is called 'Jahira' and the village priest who conducts the puja is known as 'Naike' in our community. The 'Naike' takes care of all the rituals to be observed during the puja. Before 'Salei Puja' we do not touch any fruits, flowers or colours. After reaching 'Jahira', the priest first worships 'Jaher aya' followed by prayers for other gods. There is also the ritual of sacrificing a white hen or a male goat. The three-day festival is mostly connected with nature. On the first day the 'Naike' goes to the puja site and cleans the place with cow dung. The puja starts at night," Soren said.

'The second day, we celebrate and enjoy together. Each and every person of Santal community gathers at a particular place. Wearing our traditional attires, we visit the puja place dancing and singing. The priest continues the puja and gives Sal flowers to everyone. The 'Naike' and other villagers offer a Sal flower to every family of the village. A Santali woman receives flowers in the folds of her sari from the priest after she has ceremonially ap-

plied oil on his feet and then washed them. A bachelor carries a water pot on his shoulder and, after exchanging greetings with her, sprinkles it on the woman. During the festival, the women stick some flowers into their hair and the men behind

their ears. The rest of the flowers are kept in the ceiling of their thatched or tiled roof. Then we sing the 'Baha' song. The men play an instrument called 'Dhumsa' and dance together: However, before dark all return to the village,' Soren stated.

Soren also informed that the sacrificial animal during the puja is cooked. However, only the men are permitted to eat it. After the puja is over all are allowed to take fresh fruits for the first time in the season. He also stated that relatives are invited to the celebrations. "We love nature and we worship Mother Nature in our own way," Soren added. Samananda Tudu, a resident of Khukundia vil-

lage in Mayurbhanj, said that they are proud about their traditions and rituals. "Our forefathers were celebrating these festivals and we have continued the

trend. "At present, people are forgetting their roots, but we can't as we are the sons of this soil. This forest, the flowers, trees and nature are our identity. We can't stav apart from it. We enjoy every festival with fervour and pomp. Every mem-

Tribal men and women holding a community dance during celebration of a festival inside the forest

ଜନନୀ

ber of the community joins and celebrates the festival with our traditional dance and songs. It's our happiness and it erases all the misunderstandings when we come together to worship nature." Tudu pointed out.





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Orissa POST THURSDAY | APRIL 1 | 2021 | BHUBANESWAR

downtown

Nabarangpur, Malkangiri report over 13% dropouts POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, March 31: School and Mass Education Minister Samir Ranjan Dash informed the Assembly Wednesday that the dropout rate in upper primary schools in the state stood at 4.75 per cent in 2019-20.

In his written reply before the House, the minister said that the government had taken several steps to check dropouts in primary and upper primary schools.

The written data hinted that dropout rates in upper primary schools were higher than at the primary level. It said that Malkangiri and Nabarangpur districts saw maximum cases of students dropping out. Nabarangpur with 13.5 per cent topped the list and was followed by Malkangiri (13%).

In case of primary schools, Gajapati district topped the list with 5.28 per cent dropouts followed by Malkangiri where the rate stood at 5.22 per cent. The government data since 2015-16 hinted that there had been no major improvement in dropouts in the state.

Naveen to inaugurate park in Cuttack today

Cuttack: Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik is scheduled to inaugurate a park at Belview Square here Thursday to commemorate the centenary of Gandhiji's first visit to Odisha. A sculpture depicting the historic public meeting of Gandhiii on Kathaiodi riverbank has been installed at the park. The Chief Minister will reach the city through a helicopter at 10.15am. He will unveil a statue of Utkalmani Gopabandhu Das at the Cantonment Road at 10.22am. Naveen is scheduled to inaugurate the park at 10.43am and return to Bhubaneswar at 11.10am, sources said

nCoV testing at UU ahead of convocation

Bhubaneswar: Ahead of the 50th convocation ceremony of Utkal University (UU) here, the Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC) Wednesday started a Covid testing drive for those who would be attending the mega event on the varsity premises April 3. Briefing the media at RUSA Bhawan on the university premises, varsity's Vice Chancellor Sabita Acharya said that Vice President M Venkaiah Naidu will grace the event as the chief quest. Governor Ganeshi La and Higher Education Minister Arun Sahoo will also attend the ceremony which will be held at the varsity's new convocation hall.

BPGY log on PMAY houses not permissible, says Centre Bubaneswar, March 31: The POST NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi/Bhubaneswar, March **31:** Political slugfest between BJP and BJD intensified over the use of Biju Pucca Ghar Yojana (BPGY) logo in Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana-Gramin (PMAY-G), a centrally-sponsored scheme.

Leader of Opposition, Pradipta Kumar Naik (BJP) Wednesday raised the issue in the Assembly, following the Centre's letter in this regard. Union Rural Development Secretary, Nagendra Nath Sinha, in a letter to the state Chief Secretary, said that the use of BPGY logo will lead to misinterpretation of the scheme among the PMAY-G beneficiaries.

"The use of BPGY logo is not permissible under the provisions of PMAY-G. I would once again request you to use official logo of PMAY-G only, which is available on AwaasSoft, for all purposes of PMAY-G," Sinha said in his letter. Reiterating that the scheme is to be implemented in its original form under the name of PMAY-G, the Union government asserted that the contribution of the minimum state share is a commitment by the Odisha government and it does not confer the rights to the state government for use of any

The state government is using If the hard earned money a small size logo for PMAY houses and a big size for BPGY ones. Since last December, we have been protesting the use of BPGY logo in PMAY houses. We have submitted a memorandum to the Governor also

PRADIPTA KUMAR NAIK LOP IN ASSEMBLY

government should not use BPGY logo in PMAY-G houses. He urged the Speaker to give direction to the state government on this issue. BJP members created ruckus in the House over the issue from the beginning of question hour. Following several adjournments, Speaker SN Patro called an allparty meeting and later said, 'Government may take note of this." Speaking to reporters outside the House, Naik said, "The state government is using a PMAY logo of small size and a big size for the BPGY. Since last December, we have been protesting the use of BPGY logo in PMAY houses. We have submitted a memorandum to the Governor also.

"As the Central scheme has a 60:40 sharing pattern, the state government should not do so," he said, adding, "the state government has other logo. Reading out the letter in recently ordered procurement of the House. Naik said that the state marvel logo of BPGY worth Rs 10

of Odisha people is being spent on the scheme, what is the fault in using **BPGY logo in the PMAY scheme**

SHREEMAYEE MISHRA BID SPOKESPERSON

to Rs 12 crore."

Holding a press conference over the issue, BJD leader Byomakesh Ray alleged that the BJP is conspiring to stop the rural housing scheme in the state. Odisha government is being awarded by the Centre as the best performer in this arena. In last five years, over 15, 73, 000 rural houses have been built in the state for which Centre has given over Rs 12, 928 crore while the state has spent over Rs 8, 518 crore. "If the hard earned money of Odisha people is being spent on the scheme, what is the fault in using BPGY logo in the PMAY scheme?" said BJD spokesperson Shreemayee Mishra.

Earlier, a delegation of BJP MPs from the state led by Union Minister Dharmendra Pradhan had also met Union Panchavati Rai Minister Narendra Singh Tomar in Delhi February 12 seeking his intervention in the matter.

Bhubaneswar, March 31: The state government Wednesday informed the Odisha Assembly that it had spent a total of Rs 6,690 crore in the last three years on Krushak Assistance for Livelihood and Income Augmentation (KALIA) scheme.

The information was given by the State Agriculture Minister, Arun Sahoo. He also presented a written reply on the issue where he cited data from the last three years.

In 2018-19, the In 2019-20 the government government was able to reach reached out to 51.05 lakh out to 51.05 lakh beneficiaries beneficaries and spent a and spent total of Rs around Rs



The minister claimed that in 2018-19, the government reached out to 51.05 lakh beneficiaries and spent a total of Rs 2,175.6 crore while in 2019-20 the government was able to reach out to 51.05 lakh beneficaries and spent around Rs 3,243.01 crore. In 2020-21, the beneficiaries increased to 53,55 lakh and a total of Rs 1272.19 crore was spent.

Thrust on RT-PCR test in April guidelines



POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, March 31: The state government Wednesday released Covid-19 guidelines for April to contain the spread of the highly infectious disease.

The office of Special Relief Commissioner (SRC) Wednesday issued a notification in this regard and announced the measures to be followed by the district administrations and the people.

The notification empowered the Collectors in districts and Commissioners in Urban Local Bodies (ULBs) to take decisions on declaring containment zones where higher number of cases are observed. It also said that testing of samples should be ramped up with special emphasis on RT-PCR tests. "Testing shall be carried out as

per prescribed protocol. The proportion of RT-PCR tests in the total mix should be scaled up to the extent possible," the new norms for April said.

The state government, keeping in view the election campaign for Pipli constituency, allowed the District Collector of Puri to frame norms for the same accordingly.

"In view of the by-election to the Pipili Assembly seat in Puri district announced by the Election only subject to the following conditions," the notification said.

permission for open space meetings

Highest single-day spike this year

Bhubaneswar: Odisha's Covid-19 tally Wednesday surged to 3.40.917 after 297 more people tested positive for the infection, the highest single-day spike this year, a Health department official said. Of the 297 new cases, 174 were reported from quarantine centres, while the remaining were detected during contact tracing, he said. Kalahandi district registered 57 new cases, followed by Sundergarh (38), Khurda (33) and Nuapada (31). Malkangiri district continued to remain Covid-free for a week. The states coronavirus death toll remained unchanged at 1,921 as no more fatalities were reported since Tuesday.

keeping in mind the size of the ground.

It has also barred large gatherings for social, religious, political and sports events. It also said that Utkal Divas celebrations must be done while following the protocols of Covid-19.

"Congregation for celebration of the above festivals and associated religious and cultural congregations shall not be allowed in public throughout the state. Religious rituals in churches/temples/places of worship including places where such rituals are performed traditionally will continue as usual with limited number of persons as permitted by the District Collector/Municipal Commissioner or other authorized persons in strict adherence to COVID protocols," the norms said.

The government has also fixed the number of guests for marriage functions and funerals to 200 and 50 respectively.

7 held for firearm trade in Cuttack

OST NEWS NETWORK for 15 per cent reservation for gov-respective category. Skill

Commission to be held April 17, 2021, political meetings and other functions/gatherings in connection with the said by-election, as permitted by the ECI/CEO, Odisha or the empowered/authorised officers on that behalf, shall be allowed within the jurisdiction of the said Assembly Constituency

> However, it said that even during elections in closed areas not more than 50 per cent of the hall capacity should be filled while the district administration may give





Artistes perform at the concluding event of 9th Gotipua Ustav and Aradhana Samman at Utkal Rangamancha in Bhubaneswar, Wednesday



BHUBANESWAR

- State-level Odisha Diwas, Soochana Bhawan, 6pm
- Utkal Sammilani and Samajwadi Party to garland the statue of Utkal Gourav Madhusudan Das, Raj Bhawan Square, 9an
- 16th Foundation Day of Odia Bhasha Pratisthan, Sanskruti Bhawan, 4pm
- 'Srestha Odiani' competition by Sambhabana Trust, Unit-II Primary School, 6pm

CUTTACK

- Inauguration of memorial on Mahatma Gandhi's first visit to Odisha, near Odisha Judicial Academy, 10.30am
- District-level Odisha Diwas by Cuttack administration and CMC, near Gandhi Memorial, 6pm

KHURDA

Odisha Police Foundation Day. Reserve Battalion, Taratua, 8am

PURI

- District-level Odisha Diwas celebration, Gopabandhu Avurveda College, 7am
- State-level badminton tournament, Indoor Hall, Chudanga Sahi, 3pm

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fleecing the hapless patients by

taking Rs 1,500 for a unit (525ml) of

Abinash Nayak of Banarpal in

Angul has lodged a complaint with

the Red Cross authorities accus-

ing the blood bank officials of fleec-

ing him. The blood bank at

Mangalabag in Cuttack is the only

blood bank under the Red Cross

of complainant sustained severe in-

juries in a road mishap recently. He

was later rushed to Angul District

Headquarters Hospital (DHH).

Subsequently, the doctors at DHH

referred the patient to Cuttack for

pital, where his father was un-

dergoing treatment, asked

Abinash to collect blood from

some blood bank as his father

needed urgent administration of

the same late March 20 night.

Abinash requested the blood bank

staff on duty to provide him a

unit of O+ blood. The staff al-

legedly asked him to pay Rs 2,000.

Following repeated pleadings,

the staff agreed to give blood

packet by taking Rs 1,500 per unit.

Following his complaint, the

The doctors at a private hos-

better treatment.

According to sources, the father

blood

society

Abinash requested the blood Bhubaneswar, March 31: Some bank staff on duty to provide him staffers at the Central Red Cross a unit of O+ blood Blood Bank in Cuttack are allegedly

The staff allegedly asked him to pay Rs 2,000. Following repeated pleadings, the staff agreed to give blood packet by taking Rs 1,500 per unit

INACTION BLAMED

blood bank staff pleaded guilty and returned the money he had taken from Abinash.

The victim told Orissa POST, 'Some other staffers at the blood bank told me that a handful of them have been cheating the hapless people every day but the authorities are yet to take any action against them.

Sources in the oldest blood bank of the state revealed that many staffers have been regularly fleecing the relatives of patients for blood. Some complained to have been charged as much as Rs 3.000 to Rs 4,000 per unit. As per rule, the blood bank

charges Rs 410 for the requisitions of blood received from private hospitals while it is free of cost for the patients getting treated at government owned hospitals.

Binayak Prusti, the director of the blood bank, has stated that an inquiry has been ordered and actions will follow upon receiving the report.

Bhubaneswar, March 31: The state government Wednesday issued the official notification for reservation of 15 per cent of seats in medical and engineering colleges.

Students, who have passed Class X examination under Board of Secondary Education, Odisha from government high schools and Class XII examination under Council of Higher Secondary Education, Odisha from any government higher secondary school or government junior college, will be eligible for it. Such reservations shall be horizontal covering all vertical reservations as well as unreserved group.

Earlier, CM Naveen Patnaik moved a resolution in the Assembly

ernment school students in engineering and medical colleges of the state.

The government high schools include the aided high schools, higher secondary schools, junior colleges as defined in the Odisha Education Act. 1969. Medical

courses, in relation to a Medical College, include MBBS, BHMS BAMS and BUMS and engineering courses include BTech. BE and

BArch. Such eligible students shall also be entitled to compete for the unreserved seats. Where adequate number of such eligible students is not available for seats to set apart, such unfilled seats shall be filled up by the other students of **Development and Technical** Education department has issued notification to the above effect. The department has stated that such reservation has been made with regard to the recommendation of the High-Power Committee. Students studying in government high

schools are found to

be at a disadvanta-

geous position com-

pared to their coun-

ENGG & MED COURSES

terparts in private schools while appearing in entrance examinations like NEET and JEE for their career growth, as they do not have the access, nor the economic capacity to avail coaching for medical and engineering entrance examination.

Cuttack: The Commissionerate Police Wednesday claimed to have arrested seven persons, including a few aides of gangster Tito, in connection with illegal firearm trade in the city. The police also seized seven guns and 65 bullets. six mobile phones, a car and a couple of two-wheelers from the arrested, said Police Commissioner Soumendra Priyadarshi at a presser here. The arrested have been identified as Jagannath Das.39. of Dolamundai Das Sahi, Srinath Rout, 39, of Chauliaganj Gatiroutpatna, Bijay Samal, 34, and Pvarimohan Das. 36. of Samantarapur under Tirtol police limits, Tushar Khuntia, 34, of Tangi Mathasahi, Bijay Nayak, 41, of Kendrapara and Muktar Saha. 42, of Biridi, police said.

Conductor accused of pushing man off 'Mo Bus'

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, March 31: A passenger of 'Mo Bus' sustained grievous injuries after he was allegedly pushed off the vehicle by the conductor Tuesday evening.

However, authorities of the Capital Region Urban Transport (CRUT) denied the allegation and claimed that the passenger fell down from the vehicle after getting stuck in the automatic doors

The incident reportedly took place following an altercation between the passenger and the conductor over fare.

According to sources, the pas-

senger boarded the bus from Shriya Talkies Square and bought a ticket for Hanspal. The conductor allegedly charged fare for the entire route from Master Canteen Square to Hanspal. Soon, an altercation ensued between the duo.

"The conductor assured me to return the extra amount, but he didn't. The conductor told me that money could not be refunded after issuance of receipt. I argued with him for a while and in the meantime the bus passed my destination. I requested the conductor to stop the vehicle and allow me to get down safely," the victim said.

"The driver slowed down the ve-

hicle at Puri Canal road. The conductor then pushed me out of the vehicle and closed the door immediately. I fell down and the bus ran over my leg," he added.

Taking cognisance of the incident, the CRUT authorities initiated a probe into the incident and the concerned staffer was taken off duty until completion of inquiry. Moreover, the authorities released a CCTV footage of the incident, Wednesday, and claimed that the passenger manhandled the conductor and fell down after getting stuck between the automatic doors.

"The CCTV footage revealed that the passenger tried to pull the guide out of the bus. Nowhere, the Mo Bus staff pulled or pushed the passenger during the incident. The bus duly stopped at Hanspal. However, the concerned passenger continued arguing with the guide and did not get down," said the CRUT.

The footage further revealed that the passenger got stuck between the automatic doors. He was seen banging the door to open it. The passenger fell down and sustained injuries when somebody pressed the emergency button, the CRUT added.

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The boar Vishnu

HIMANSU ROUT

ajpur town known as 'Biraja Kshetra' on the banks of the Baitarani river is also tagged as a city of temples like Bhubaneswar. Its iconic identity is Maa Biraja temple.

Barahanath temple on the bank of Baitarani is another monument that makes its presence stand out among temples because of its own uniqueness this is believably the only temple in the state and in the country where Lord Vishnu is worshiped as Baraha (the boar, one of the ten divine incarnations). Overall, Barahanath temple adds to the heritage quotient of the ancient city of Biraja Kshetra.

of the ancient city of Biraja Kshetra. Upset, he had vandalized the temple

to a great extent.

Quoting a legend about the mani-

festation of Lord Bishnu, culture re-

searcher and writer Narayan Routray

said, there was a hill named as

Manichuda Pahad near Baitarani. The

area rich with flora and fauna was in-

habited by tribals. A small river named

A sage namely Dhapa used to do

penance on the river bank. One day, the

prince of Kamswarup kingdom wan-

dered to the place while on a hunting

expedition. The sage was upset on see-

ing the prince killing wild animals.

Kaushik used to flow in the area.

The temple grabbed wide glare of people in May 2015 when six antique idols were stolen from there.

The temple has interesting legends about its inception. Located opposite to the Dasaswamedh Ghat, the Barahanath temple is believed to be constructed somewhere between 15th and 16th century AD. It was constructed during the rule of Suryavanshi Gajapati rulers. Some historians say, the temple was built by king Prataprudra Dev after his successful military campaign in Vijayanagram in the south. He was later initiated to Vaishnavism by famous religious leader Chaitanyam who is said to have visited the temple. His footprints have been preserved on a marble stone on the temple premises. According to Sanskrit scholar Bhupati Bhusan Mishra, the original temple was of a good height. If people were to stand atop the temple, they could take a bird's eye view of the faroff Gohiratikiri and Dhamnagar in

Bhadrak. According to historians, Kalapahad, the commander of Bengal ruler Suleiman Karnani, had attacked Odisha in 1568. According to some accounts, Kalapahad was passing by on his horse. His horse was frightened by the huge shadow of the Barahanath temple. Upset, he had vandalized the temple

religious leader Chaitanyam who is said to have visited the temple. His innocent animals.

anniversary special

> The prince, sad on being cursed by the sage, prostrated before the sage and besought redemption of his sin. The sage took pity on him and said: You will be born in a hunter's family and have darshan of Narayan.

In next life, the prince was born in a hunter's family as Bichitra Dhanwa. Once Bichitra Dhanwa was hunting birds and animals and forgetfully wandered deep into the forest. Weary and hungry, he invoked Narayan, the Lord.

At this time, a huge boar appeared from nowhere and charged at him, but got tossed into the hill. To the awe of the tribal prince Bichitra, the hill instantly sunk downwards. A huge sinkhole was created. Goddess Ganga gushed out of the sinkhole to see the giant boar causing mayhem there.

That sinkhole is still existent as a pond near the temple. People call it "Patali Ganga."

Dismayed and terrified, Bichitra Dhanwa raised his bow and arrow and aimed at the boar. At this time, an oracle was heard: "Hey, boy! I am here before you. You can ask any boon you wish."

The boar was no other than Lord Vishnu. Since then, he started worshiping the Barah. Lord Vishnu was found in four idols as Adi Barah, Jajana Barah, Shweta Barah and Laxmi Barah.

It is said that King of Aul (Kendrapara) was a great devotee of Lord Vishnu. He used to come a long way to the Barahnath temple by riding his horse every day. One day, Laxmi Barah appeared in his dream and wanted to go with him to his kingdom. Since, then Laxmi Barah is being worshipped in Aul.

Rabindranath Samal, a culture lover, says, a lot is to be done for conservation, protection of sculptures and publicity of the temple while stolen antique idols of the temple have not yet been recovered. Priests said, Bakula Amabsya is celebrated in a big way here as the birthday of Lord Barahnath. Thousands of devotees from far and near have darshan of the Lord. A day before Dola Purnima, the Madan Mohan, the representative deity of Barahanth, is brought to the worship alter. A belief is that if Barahanath is seen on the altar, all sins get redemption.



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POWER DEMO

SUCI activists staging a demonstration against power tariff hike outside the Kishorenagar block office in Angul, Wednesday



Forest fires in Similipal National Park resume



sources said

A satellite report Wednesday claimed that the fires have been raging at 47 places in the south division of Similipal National Park The heat generated by the fire and the blistering condition have made life unbearable for wild animals and humans in the area. Reports said people in the area have stopped stepping out of their houses if they have no urgent work

POST NEWS NETWORK

Baripada, March 31: Raging forest fires have erupted once again in the Similipal National Park in Mayurbhanj district Wednesday.

A satellite report Wednesday claimed that the fire had been raging at 47 places in the south division of Similipal National Park. The heat generated by the fire and the

AP officials conduct meeting in Kotia village as admin stays mum

POST NEWS NETWORK

Pottangi, March 31: Illegal infiltration by Andhra Pradesh into the villages in Kotia panchayat under this block in Koraput district continues unabated with the state government failing to curb such moves, a report said.

The matter came to the fore after Andhra Pradesh officials conducted a gram sabha at Tala Ganjeipadar panchayat, Monday.

A team of officials comprising VRO Gumpheswar Rao of Salur block office in Vijianagaram district in Andhra Pradesh, secretary Suri Narayan of Tala Ganjeipadar panchayat and MGNREGS assistant Srinu conducted an awareness meeting

After a couple of week's respite, the wildfire has engulfed vast areas in the national park. This has affected several endangered species of plants and animals in the park

have no urgent work.

The present heatwave condition sweeping the state might have set The raging fires in Jenabila, Naana Uttar, the Similipal area on fire, a local res-Podadiha, Pithabata in the south and in ident suspected. the tiger conservation project in the north Notably, the chief of the task have been captured in satellite image.

said March 13 that the proactive steps taken by the state governblistering condition have made life ment to curb the spread of forest fire unbearable for wild animals and huin Odisha has led to total control of the situation. mans in the area. Reports said peo-When contacted, field director ple in the area have stopped stepping out of their houses if they M Jagajayananda of the Similipal

north.

the fire

Tiger Conservation Project confirmed the development stating After a couple of week's respite, the wildfire has engulfed vast areas that sweltering heat wave might in the national park. This has afbe the reason behind the forest fected several endangered species fire which has caught 20 places in of plants and animals in the park.

The raging fires have been captured in satellite image, sources said. The fire has been raging in Jenabila, Naana Uttar, Podadiha, Pithabata in the south and in the tiger conservation project in the

Similarly, forest fires have also been reported in the forests under Baripada, Rairangpur and Karanjia forest divisions. Four ODRAF teams comprising forest officials have

been deployed in the areas to douse

The exact cause behind the for-

est fire has not been ascertained yet.

force on wildfire Sandeep Tripathy

PM's praise for local outfit triggers row



POST NEWS NETWORK

Kendrapara, March 31: Prime Minister Narendra Modi praised the director of a voluntary outfit in his 'Mann Ki Baat' Sunday for raising a mangrove forest on 25 acres in Kendrapara district to prevent coastal erosion, a report said. The Prime Minister in his address cited the example of Bijay Kabi, the director of APWA (Action for Protection of Wild Animals) in raising a mangrove forest in Badkot of Rajnagar block which has helped prevent coastal erosion. The PM called upon social workers to come forward and raise mangrove forests as these are able to prevent the coast from

the national park.



more than 99 per cent of saplings were found non-existing in these villages by September 17, 2016. Only 50 per cent of planted saplings were found existing in Junusnagar village

Kabi's outfit had taken the contract to plant the mangrove

SUCCULENT SUCCOUR



With rising heat wave making life miserable, watermelons have been piled up for sale at Gopa haat in Kendrapara

OP PHOTO

2 youths held for setting reserve forest afire

POST NEWS NETWORK

Barbil, March 31: Even as forest fires are sporadically breaking out in various forests in Keonjhar district and other parts of the state, forest officials arrested two youths on charge of setting afire Ulliburu reserve forest under Barbil range Wednesday.

The accused were identified as Shankar Munda of Barbil and Rodo Sawaya of Jharkhand.

According to reports, as forest fires break out in different forests, the state government has formed a special task force to contain the blaze. Forest officials have been trying their level best to ward off fires. Patrolling was intensified in Keonihar.

Some people and hunters allegedly set forests afire to flush out wild animals and kill them. The two youths went to Ulliburu forest to smoke bidis. For fun, they ignited dry leaves with bidis, ranger Surjit Sahu said.

3 top Maoists lay down arms

POST NEWS NETWORK

Malkangiri, March 31: Three top Maoists laid down their arms Wednesday before Malkangiri SP Rishikesh Dnyandeo Khilari and officers of the Border Security Force (BSF). The three were identified as Mainu alias Sambhu Dodi of Chinaterem village and Rama Apka of Ganglur village in Bijapur district of Chhattisgarh and Raghu Khara of Beijing village in Malkangiri district. The SP, while talking to the media said the three were active members of the Andhra-Odisha Border Special Zonal Committee (AOB-SZC) of the ultra CPI (Maoist) faction.

Mainu and Rama were carrying cash awards of Rs 4,00,000 each on their heads while for Raghu it was Rs 1,00,000 said an official.

The SP said that all three ultras

will be properly rehabilitated and given monetary assistance as per the 'Surrender and Rehabilitation



The SP said, all three ultras will be properly rehabilitated and given monetary assistance as per the 'Surrender and **Rehabilitation Scheme**

of the state government

Scheme' of the state government. They will get finances to build a house and also pursue education or vocational training.

The ultras said they decided to lay down weapons after witnessing various developmental activities undertaken by the government. They realised the futility of violence being perpetrated by the Naxalites.

Mainu and Rama had joined the outlawed CPI (Maoist) organisation in 2009. Raghu on the other hand had joined the CPI (Maoist) party in Gumma Area Committee in September 2017.

Admin vigilant on migrants from hotspot states

GANJAM COLLECTOR HAS DIRECTED THE HEALTH DEPARTMENT TO KEEP READY THE BEDS OF **ISOLATION WARDS IN COVID HOSPITAL ON MKCG PREMISES AND OTHER HOSPITALS**

and explained the benefits of various welfare schemes for the people implemented by their government.

In the meeting, newly elected sarpanch Gemel Dibakar joined as chief guest and gave away land pattas to 53 persons in the area. Village elders Gemel Bishu and Gemel Dasu coordinated the programme

It was alleged that the neighbouring state continues to trespass into Odisha territory due to alleged lack of action by the district administration. The neighbouring state is reportedly trying to grab three villages Ganjeipadar, Fagunsineri and Datusineri under Kotia panchayat and merge them in its territory by renaming the villages and pronouncing them as its own panchayats.

The neighbouring state is playing every trick in the book to take over the Kotia panchayat by extending the benefits of welfare schemes to the residents in these villages.

erosion. However, the issue has kicked up a row in social media as 99 per cent of the saplings planted by Kabi's outfit were non-existent. Kabi's outfit has mentioned in papers to have planted saplings with the funds of Rs 10.72 lakh provided to it.

The irregularities came to the fore from a reply by the local forest office available through Right to Information Act to Somanath Barik of Silapokhari village under Rainagar block. The area of plantation is spread over four villages. However, the reply says that

saplings in Goja, Chitakhola, Debendranarayanpur and Charigharia villages under Rajnagar block under Integrated Coastal Zone Management Project programme (ICZMP) in 2015.

The report over the missing saplings was earlier published by vernacular daily 'Dharitri'. The Prime Minister's praise for Kabi has surprised many when there is no sign of plantation by him. Kabi's efforts to take the credit

for the plantation by local youths has become a talk of the town. He is alleged to have inflated the plantation on two acres to 25 acres. Social media users said the praise by the Prime Minister doesn't sound good

DFO Bikash Ranjan Dash said a probe has been ordered into the irregularities. When contacted, Kabi said his outfit has planted a total of 1, 05,225 saplings under ICZMP programme. However, the saplings have been destroyed due to lack of fencing around them.

Chhatrapur, March 31: The number of Covid infections in Ganjam district was very low till recently, but for the last one week, the rate has been on the rise, leaving the administration worrying. The administration is keeping a close watch on people coming from outside. Collector Vijay Amruta Kulange held a review meeting here

POST NEWS NETWORK

Wednesday. Details of migrants are being recorded in registration books at panchayat and civic body levels

Lack of awareness and violation of Covid safety guidelines are one of the factors responsible for the rise of the infection, it is said.

People of the district are reportedly coming from Covid hotspot states like Gujarat and Maharashtra in trains to take part in festivals almost every day. Their return has triggered the possibility of more in-



fection rate.

Given the situation, Collector Vijay Amruta Kulange asked sarpanchs, Zilla Parishad members and other officials to request those staying outside Ganjam to not visit the district at this time. Famous Tarini Yatra kickstarted from Tuesday. Public congregation and mass participation has the potential of blowing up the situation.

It was alleged that at a time when the virus has already made a comeback, people in the district don't

seem to be serious. In markets and other crowded places, people are reportedly throwing the guidelines to the wind.

With an objective to find out a solution to tackle the situation, the Ganjam administration has been holding meetings to review the sit-

uation. Collector Kulange attended a meeting through video conferencing.

He requested people staying outside not to come to the district to take part in Tara Tarini Yatra. If they come to the district, chances are that they will put their family members in danger and at the same time cause trouble for others.

Those who are coming to the district due to health issues or any other unavoidable work. it is mandatory for them to come with Covid test reports.

Two wheelers and four wheelers have been banned near the Tarini temple. Police and RTO officials have intensified vehicle checking.

It was decided that Taratarini Yatra and Maa Budhi Thakurani yatra will be telecast through social media so that devotees can watch it from inside their houses, the Collector said.

ROAD BLOCKADE



Members of a local outfit block NH-16 at Bamapada Chhak in Balasore over their demands like a flyover construction and repair of level-crosing roads

Villagers lay road, build bridge on their own

POST NEWS NETWORK

Semiliguda, March 31: Upset over administrative apathy, people of a remote village in Koraput got together and laid a road to their village with their own funds and efforts, setting an example of community effort.

According to reports, over years, people of Lunguli under Semiliguda block of Koraput district had been suffering commuting problem in the absence of a road. Though the village is just two km from the district headquarters, the administration has turned a blind eye to the commuting issue of the village over years, villagers alleged. The village has a population of 2000.

They lamented that in the absence of road connectivity, the villagers had to take a roundabout

ADMINISTRATIVE APATHY



route to the panchayat office. This alternative route, a kuchha road, is 6 km from Pakajhola panchayat headquarters.

"For the last 15 years, we have been pleading with the block ad-

ministration, the MLA, the BDO, for construction of a road and a bridge so that commuting woes will be eased. But nothing was done. A creek on the outskirts of the village has been a stumbling block." said

For the last 15 years, villagers have been pleading with the block administration, the MLA, the BDO, for construction of a road and a bridge, but nothing was done, villagers alleged

villagers.

They added that their repeated pleas for a road and a bridge fell flat as the administration did not pay heed to the development. 'We decided to collect money

from each house and build the road and the bridge. We realized that if we do nothing on our own, the ad-



ministration will never come to our rescue," the villagers added.

Pasi Jani Khara, Laxman Kirsani and Jaga Kirsani led the campaign and collected Rs 100 from each household.

They purchased all construction material. All the villagers, starting from children to the elderly contributed their labour to lay the road and using two Hume pipes across the creek. The villagers are happy as their united efforts removed the commuting woes



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

on Twitter

in her favour.

Srinagar, March 31: PDP president

Mehbooba Mufti Wednesday asked where a person goes when the judiciary, the only

recourse left, "wash their hands off" mat-

ters involving fundamental rights "Under BJP's rule, Indian Constitution

is being undermined time & again. Only op-

tion & recourse left is the judiciary. Once they too decide to wash their hands off

matters which involve our fundamental rights where does one go?" Mehbooba wrote

The PDP chief's remarks came after the

Jammu and Kashmir High Court Monday

dismissed her petition seeking direction to

passport authority for issuing a passport

In a letter to Mufti, the Regional Passport

Office here March 26 rejected the applica-



Students undergo thermal screening as they arrive to attend classes on the opening day of new academic session at a school in Jammu, Wednesday

Bengal set for phase II polling, all eyes on Nandigram

The stage is set for the second phase of Assembly poll in West Bengal Thursday when more than 75 lakh voters will decide the fate of 191 candidates in 30 seats

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Nandigram, March 31: The stage is set for the second phase of Assembly poll in West Bengal Thursday when more than 75 lakh voters will decide the fate of 191 candidates in 30 seats as eves are set on the high profile Nandigram constituency where Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee is pitted against her protégé-turned-adversary Suvendu Adhikari.

All 10,620 booths where polling will be held this phase have been declared as sensitive by the Election Commission, which has deployed around 651 companies of central forces to provide security, officials said.

A total 199 companies of Central Armed Police Force will be deployed in Purba Medinipur, 210 companies in Paschim Medinipur, 170 in South 24 Parganas and 72 in Bankura, the sources said.

TMC and BJP are contesting in all the 30 seats, while CPI(M) is in the

fray in 15 and its alliance partners of Sanjukta Morcha the Congress and ISF are competing in 13 and two seats respectively. Polling will take place amid strict COVID-19 guidelines in nine seats of Paschim Medinipur, eight in Bankura, four seats in South 24 Parganas and nine in Purba Medinipur - the home ground of TMC turncoat and BJP leader Suvendu Adhikari. The agrarian constituency which shook the foundations of the mighty Left regime over the anti-land acqui-

sition movement in 2007, has now turned into a battleground of titans with Banerjee suddenly deciding to switch from her Bhowanipur seat to the constituency held by Adhikari, her former lieutenant who has switched loyalty to the BJP.

For Adhikari it is a battle for political survival as a defeat would be a devastating blow and might also put a question mark on his political graph in his new party – the BJP. Similarly, a victory would not only establish him



West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee arrives in Nandigram, Wednesday, after campaigning for Assembly polls in Hooghly district

PTI PHOTO

ADITYA BIRLA

as one of the tallest leaders in Bengal but would also push him few miles ahead of others in the Chief Ministerial

race in case the BJP is voted to power. For Banerjee, who is running for the third successive term as Chief Minister, a victory is a must to lead the government and keep together her party, which is faced with exodus.

For the Congress-Left-ISF alliance candidate Minakshi Mukherjee of CPI-M, the challenge is to regain her party's lost ground.

While Banerjee had been camping in Nandigram for the last four days, BJP fielded its 'big guns', including Home Minister Amit Shah, Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Aditvanath and superstar Mithun Chakraborty to defend Adhikari's turf, which he had won in 2016 and take on 'Didi' (as Mamata is popularly called).

'Apart from identity politics and Bengali sub-nationalism, the demand for jobs, inclusion of Hindu backward communities in the OBC category and setting up of agro-based industry have emerged as main poll planks in the second phase of polls.

Of the 30 seats which will see voting Thursday, 23 were won by TMC in the 2016 aAssembly elections, five by Left Front and Congress and BJP one each

Docs fear Bengal heading towards severe COVID-19 second wave

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kolkata, March 31: West Bengal is heading towards severe outbreak of the second wave of coronavirus as the people are not adhering to the protocol to check its spread and large numbers of them are participating in the innumerable rallies and campaigns by political leaders across the poll-bound state almost daily, city doctors fear. They warned that this violation of the COVID-19 protocol may lead to a situation similar to the one in 2020 after the outbreak of the pandemic across the globe. Sanjib Bandyopadhyay, in-charge of the post-COVID follow-up clinic at the Infectious Diseases and Beliaghata General (ID&BG) Hospital, which was a designated COVID-19 hospital, foresees a "severe outbreak" of contagion the state in the near future. Sisir Naskar, the superintendent of M R Bangur Hospital, another designated coronavirus hospital, blamed the laxity of the common people for the recent spike of COVID-19 cases in the state. "In the case of any pandemic, second and third waves are inevitable as per the law of the nature. These will eventually go away but there cannot be a careless attitude. In our state, the laxity of the common people in fighting the disease is the primary reason behind the rise in the incidences of the disease," he said. Bandopadhyay said the chances of more people being affected by the contagion is high in the state as more and more of them are participating in political rallies and meetings without wearing masks. Chances of virus transmission are higher in rallies because more droplets come out from the mouths of leaders when they address rallies and people surrounding him shout slogans - most of them without masks. This puts people near them to risk, he said.



tion for her passport based on an "adverse' police verification report.

The Regional Passport Office has also rejected the application for a passport for Mufti's mother.

Meanwhile, in another tweet, the PDP president alleged that the Army raided the house of her uncle and senior party leader

"Under BJP's rule, Indian **Constitution is being** undermined time & again. Only option & recourse left is the judiciary. Once they too decide to wash their hands off matters which involve our fundamental rights where does one go?"

Sartaj Madni who has been under custody since December last year.

"Army from RR Camp Devsar raided the house of PDP's Sartaj Madni.The place was turned upside down and these personnel also thrashed boys. It's shameful that they violated all rules and code of conduct with such impunity." Mehbooba said.



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oday on 1st April, when

Odisha Day is celebrated

by the state and the Odia

community everywhere, it

is propitious to make an intro-

spection of the Odia identity. Thanks

to the presiding deity of Odisha

Lord Jagannath, the temporal and

the spiritual Lord is now universally

worshiped. Perhaps there is no

major city in the world or for that

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Let us offer our work to the Divine; this is the sure means of progressing. Go and prepare yourself and the best preparation is to be useful to the Divine's work



THE MOTHER

Flexitarianism

ven though people have been vegetarian for centuries (Confucious, I Plato, Jesus and his brother John, Leonardo da Vinci and Einstein are ⊿ some that I can think of outside India), the term vegetarian was coined in 1839 and referred to people who ate a plant-based diet.

For the last 200 years, since commercial slaughterhouses were invented, people became strong meat eaters and the result has been devastation on the planet. Now both realisation and reaction has set in all over the world. Being vegetarian is fashionable. Few people will now insist in public that they are die hard meat eaters. Most say apologetically "we don't eat meat at home" or "we don't eat it very often". Many people will say they are vegetarian - but they eat some fish, others eat eggs, others milk. I know one vegetarian who eats the gravy of meat dishes with the excuse that it is made of vegetables!! Everyone has a different definition of what they do and don't want to eat - as vegetarians.

You must have heard this answer from a lot of people, whom you ask whether they are vegetarian or non-vegetarian: "Both"

The road from carnivore to vegan is paved with small concrete steps, each with their own designation and description. Here are a few:

Omnivore: One who eats everything.

Carnivore: One who eats meat.

Pescatarian: Someone who doesn't eat meat but eats fish. The term pescatarian was coined in the early 1990s and is a combination of the Italian word for fish, "pesce," and the word "vegetarian." Some Bengalis call themselves vegetarians because they won't eat meat, and fish are labeled Jal Torai or "vegetables of the sea". Even with pescatarians there are subgroups: for example, Jews eat fish, but are not allowed to eat shellfish. Some people eat fish but are allergic to shellfish.

Vegan: No meat, poultry, fish, seafood, eggs and dairy products — and foods that contain these products. No honey, gelatin, albumin, rennet. No wearing of animal products like leather, wool, silk

The word most currently in vogue is "flexitarian," which means "semi-vegetarian", -- primarily a plant-based diet but can include meat, dairy, eggs, poultry and fish on occasion, or in small quantities. Someone who has just started the journey towards self awareness; a meatless Monday is the beginning.

When a trend starts, obviously scientific study follows. An interesting study on the psychology of flexitarianism has been done by Rosenfeld, Rothgerber and Tomiyama (published in Food Quality and Preference Feb 4, 2021).

Flexitarians are omnivores who attempt to limit the amount of animal products they consume. While the number of vegetarians and vegans remains low in most countries, the number of flexitarians is far larger, with numbers as high as 14% in the UK, according to a recent poll done by YouGov, a UK polling company. According to the YouGov poll, 18% of women from 18-24 are flexitarian, and 3% are vegan. For men in the same age range, 10% are flexitarian and 1% is vegan. For men and women, individuals below 35 are more likely to be vegan or vegetarian.

But vegetarianism isn't just a diet choice. It's a lifestyle and identity chosen for a variety of reasons, including moral, environmental and health. Vegetarians differ psychologically from omnivores. So what is the psychology of flexitarians?

Researchers recruited 564 flexitarians and 154

vegetarians and asked them why they avoided meat, and whether the flexitarians intended to go vegetarian in the future. This is what they found: There were no age or income differences between flexitarians and vege

tarians on average. Both had a large number of vegetarians in their social network.

But they found, unlike vegetarians, flexitarians were much less likely to say that avoiding meat was central to their identity. They were less judgmental of omnivores' choice to eat meat, and less likely to feel that eating meat was morally wrong.



Maneka Gandhi

The word most currently in vogue is "flexitarian." which means "semi-vegetarian", - primarily a plant-based diet but can include meat, dairy, eggs, poultry and fish on occasion, or in small quantities

matter no major towns in India where there is no temple of Lord Jagannath. If Jagannath is the Rup Narayan Das

TODAY ON 1ST APRIL, WHEN ODISHA DAY IS CELEBRATED BY THE STATE AND THE ODIA COMMUNITY **EVERYWHERE, IT IS PROPITIOUS**

TO MAKE AN INTROSPECTION OF THE ODIA IDENTITY

iconic deity of the state, whose following is now spreading the world over, the intricate and yet expressive Odissi dance is the hallmark of the culture of the state. The exquisite Sambalpuri saree in its various shades of colours is the fashion statement with its niche clientele among the intelligentsia and the intellectuals. The silver filigree works of Odisha is yet another sought after gift items for the guests and visitors from home and abroad. The Odia pride received yet another accolade when the Union Cabinet recognised Odia as one of the chosen six classical languages of India along with Tamil, Sanskrit, Kannada, Telugu and Malayalam in February 2014. This is a vindication of the rich cultural and linguistic heritage of the state.

Is it possible to typecast an average Odia in terms of common traits? Now that they are ubiquitous all over the country, is it possible to profile them with some common characteristics or attributes? The honest answer will be perhaps a subdued 'no'. I being an Odia, my impression of Odia identity will tend to be biased and prejudiced. Still at the risk of being ridiculed let me make an attempt to profile the identity of an average Odia. Be that as it may, like any other community the Odias are a heterogeneous group. In Delhi if you call a plumber, more often than not, you will find him to be an Odia. No one really knows how they have mastered this hydro engineering. Is it a tradition with them or endemic to the region? Move a step ahead in the social ladder, you will find them as office boy or as an office assistant in corporate houses, small or big. As job opportunities are not plenty in Odisha, educated Odias migrate to

SPECTRUM CURRENCY



Is it possible to typecast an average Odia in terms of common traits? Now that they are ubiquitous all over the country, is it possible to profile them with some common characteristics or attributes? The honest answer will be perhaps a subdued 'no'

different parts of the country and also abroad for a livelihood. Their intelligence, honesty, sincerity and hard work impress owners of companies, who employ them in different capacities. Still one notch higher in the ladder you will find them in the labyrinthine of Delhi's Bhabans – Krshi Bhaban, Sashtri Bhaban to Rail Bhaban - working as Section officers or under secretaries enjoying the absolute confidence of their IAS bosses, many of them by chance could be Odias. Incidentally, currently there are about a dozen Odia secretary-level officers either from Odisha cadre of the IAS or from other state cadres of the Civil Service.

Thus the identity of the state and its people has been evolving in recent times and there has been a churning of socio-economic and political processes of the state and its people which is not very different from other states of the country. They have, it seems, woken up from the slumber of the past. Incidentally it may be mentioned that the then BBC correspondent in India Daniel Lak on a visit to the state capital Bhubaneswar some year's back described the state as 'siesta country', in one of his regular columns in India Today, when he found shops closed in the afternoon in order to enable owners to take a nap. The laid-back attitude of the people and their homesickness have now given way to upward mobility, particularly in niche service sector both in government and private sectors vertically and horizontally. While taking up a secured government job has always been a sought after career opportunity for an average

Odia, quite a few have been suc-

cessful at the elite civil services examinations. Through sheer hard work, honesty and diligence some of them have distinguished themselves and have come to occupy top echelons of government bureaucracy. How does one explain the craze of an average middle class or lower middle class Odias for the Civil Services? The reason is not far to seek. Firstly, it is the lack of other avenues of career such as engineering which, however, has improved in last few years. Secondly, lack of resources to pursue such an expensive career option and finally the low levels of socio-economic development. The Civil Service thus becomes the easy catchment area for bright middle class Odias. The gain of Civil Service is sometimes a loss to other challenging vocations such as industry, entrepreneurship and creative field. Given their innate intelligence and drive this category of people can simply do marvelously in other areas of human endeavor including teach ing and research. What has happened is that some of these bright youngsters after their success at the covetous examinations, with a few exceptions, shrink to low abyss of lethargy, mediocrity, and indolence, sometimes ignominy of suspension and dismissal.

In spite of some aberrations. however, the state in recent past has produced some of finest achievers in diverse fields ranging from politics to poetry. Quite a few wellmeaning politicians from the state have made their mark in Parliament. While the Chief Minister Nabin Patnaik, the illustrious son the indomitable Biju Patnaik carved out a niche for himself as a suave and astute politician holding his head high among his peers,

It is time now to have many more Ritesh Aggarwal of Oyo fame, Dutee Chand, the Olympian, or Sudarshan Pattnaik, the internationally-acclaimed sand artist, to create a new Odisha, second to none to uphold the name and fame of iconic figures like Madhusudan Das, Subash Chandra Bose or the legendary Biju Patnaik.

The writer is a Delhi-based scholar and writer. Views are personal.

However, the flexitarians in the study believed that society judged them far more positively for avoiding meat. The researchers found that flexitarians were less likely to be avoiding meat for a cause beyond themselves, like animal welfare or the environment, or even personal benefits like health.

Vegetarians were much less concerned about how their diet was viewed by society. They had adopted the diet for causes outside themselves – and a few for health reasons.

The researchers asked flexitarians whether they intended to go vegetarian at some point. Almost all of them said yes, and one of the main reasons they gave was that society looks favourably on vegetarians.

Both the study and the poll showed that flexitarians are nearly three times more likely, than the general public, to say that they are "actively trying to reduce their meat consumption." The poll showed that flexitarians, also tend to rely more on online media than print or television, and use social media at a higher rate. This suggests that they are in the under-30 demographic.

Flexitarians are also more likely to engage in general socially-conscious behaviour. They are generally more concerned with a brand's social views and ethics, than the general population. Flexitarians and pescatarians consume dairy or meat substitutes at a far higher rate than the general population. They are also willing to try out new foods.

The problem lies now with defining flexitarianism. A vegetarian and a pescetarian are clearly defined. But a flexitarian eats everything. People are unreliable when it comes to assessing their own behaviour. Someone who eats meat daily also describes himself in public as a flexitarian.

So, how does one turn a flexitarian into a vegetarian? If one goes by this data. I would think the best way to do it would be to make the word flexitarian far more popular, and bring it up constantly when introducing, or talking to, someone who has decided to lessen their meat habit. You need to solidify their meat avoiding identity, and to encourage them to take pride in it and bring it up in their own conversation.

These are people who are very aware of "society" and its trends -- which mean that personal benefit is a strong psychological factor. So, pushing the health benefits to them would be helpful as a backup tool.

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



Kenneth Rogoff

THE MIGHTY US DOLLAR **CONTINUES TO REIGN SUPREME IN GLOBAL MARKETS. BUT THE GREENBACK'S** DOMINANCE **MAY WELL BE MORE FRAGILE THAN IT**

APPEARS

The mighty US dollar continues to reign supreme in global markets. But the greenback's dominance may well be more fragile than it appears, because expected future changes in

likely to trigger a significant shift in the international monetary order. For many reasons, the Chinese authorities will probably someday stop pegging the renminbi to a basket of currencies, and shift to a modern inflation-targeting regime under which they allow the exchange rate to fluctuate much more freely, especially against the dollar. When that happens, expect most of Asia is likely to follow China. In due time, the dollar, currently the anchor currency for roughly twothirds of world GDP, could lose nearly half its weight.

China's exchange-rate regime are

Considering how much the United States relies on the dollar's special status - or what then-French Finance Minister Valéry Giscard d'Estaing famously called America's "exorbitant privilege" - to fund massive public and private borrowing, the impact of such a shift could be significant. Given that the US has been aggressively using deficit financing to combat the eco-

nomic ravages of COVID-19, the sustainability of its debt might be called into question.

The dollar's fragile hegemony

The long-standing argument for a more flexible Chinese currency is that China is simply too big to let its economy dance to the US Federal Reserve's tune, even if Chinese capital controls provide some measure of insulation. China's GDP (measured at international prices) surpassed that of the US back in 2014 and is still growing far faster than the US and Europe, making the case for greater exchange-rate flexibility increasingly compelling.

A more recent argument is that the dollar's centrality gives the US government too much access to global transactions information. This is also a major concern in Europe. In principle, dollar transactions could be cleared anywhere in the world, but US banks and clearing houses have a significant natural advantage, because they can be implicitly (or explicitly) backed by the Fed, which has unlimited capacity to issue currency in a crisis. In comparison, any dollar clearing house outside the US will always be more subject to crises of confidence - a problem with which even the eurozone has struggled.

Moreover, former US President Donald Trump's policies to check China's trade dominance are not going away anytime soon. This is one of the few issues on which Democrats and Republicans broadly agree, and there is little question that trade deglobalisation undermines the dollar.

Chinese policymakers face many obstacles in trying to break away from the current renminbi peg. But, in characteristic style, they have slowly been laying the ground work on many fronts. China has been gradually allowing foreign institutional investors to buy renminbi bonds, and in 2016, the International Monetary Fund added the renminbit to the basket of major currencies that determines the value of Special Drawing Rights (the IMF's global reserve asset).

In addition, the People's Bank of China is far ahead of other major central banks in developing a central-bank digital currency. Although currently purely for domestic use, the PBOC's digital currency ultimately will facilitate the renminbi's international use, especially in countries that gravitate toward China's eventual currency bloc. This will give the Chinese government a window into digital renminbi users' transactions, just as the current system gives the US a great deal of similar information.

Will other Asian countries indeed follow China? The US will certainly push hard to keep as many economies as possible orbiting around the dollar, but it will be an uphill battle. Just as the US eclipsed Britain at the end of the nineteenth century as the world's largest trading country, China long ago surpassed America by the same measure.

True, Japan and India may go their own way. But if China makes the renminbi more flexible, they will likely at the very least give the currency a weight comparable to that of the dollar in their foreign-exchange reserves

There are striking parallels between Asia's close alignment with the dollar today and the situation in Europe in the 1960s and early 1970s. But that era ended with high inflation and the collapse of the post-war Bretton Woods system of fixed exchange rates.

The writer is a Professor of **Economics and Public Policy** at Harvard University. ©PROJECT SYNDICATE

LOL

BUNGEE-JUMPING

wo entrepreneurs, Jack and John, decided to start a bungee-jumping business south of the border. They went to Casa del Sol, Mexico, built a huge platform, and opened for business. By noon the first day, they both noticed that while everyone was watching, no one was buying tickets. Jack told John to go up and jump, so everyone could see how much fun it was, and then they would buy tickets and try it. John jumped, almost reached the ground, and sprang back up.

Jack saw that his shirt was torn and his hair

was mussed John came down again and sprang back up. This time he had several bruises and his clothes were ripped to shreds. The third time down and back up, and he had several open wounds, a broken arm, and was bruised over most of his body. Jack quickly raised John to the platform and asked him what in the world was going on. John replied, "I'm not sure. Do you know what 'pinata' means?'



TO THE EDITOR

Readers of Orissa POST are most welcome to contribute letters (200 words), articles and 105 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, opinior and suggestions, preferably by email, to: edit@orissapost.com

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

Tasteless remarks

Sir, Chief Ministers and ministers are no ordinary people, at least for the common man. When all is said and done, they are the elected representatives of the common man with an onerous responsibility of shaping the governance of a state. Therefore, when these men and women show poor refinement of language and shocking understanding of history, then the confidence in their qualities of head and heart is shattered. The new Uttarakhand Chief Minister Tirath Singh Rawat's recent remarks on "ripped jeans of women" and "families with 20 children" have stirred a hornet's nest. Tripura Chief Minister Biplab Kumar Deb's "roots of Internet going to the Mahabharat era" and "Diana Hayden not representing true Indian beauty" are only two examples of politicians' misogynistic and bigotic utterances. Verbal insanity is deeply engraved on the minds of those who target others. People in power have to be very selective in words because they are under constant public scrutiny. These politicians would do no damage to their reputation at all if they shed their "controversy's favourite child" tag. Rawat and Deb are not the only ones who have displayed the foot-in-mouth syndrome. Many contemporary, and past, politicians, young and old, have unabashedly gone off the track while revealing their chronic contempt towards niceties in public life through their tasteless comments. Unfortunately, the younger lots are 'reassured' by the parties' inability to rein them in. The likes of Rawat should not be allowed to commit one gaffe after another. Ganapathi Bhat, AKOLA

WHO report on Wuhan

Sir, A joint study by World Health Organisation (WHO)-China on COVID-19 says that in the most likely case transmission of coronavirus took place from bats to human through another animal. The study also says that laboratory leak of the virus is extremely unlikely. No doubt, the findings have left everyone dissatisfied and unanswered. The matter is extremely sensitive since China bristles at any suggestion that is it to blame for the spread of the virus and causing the pandemic. Repeated delays in research have raised many questions as China was trying to align the conclusions in its favor. The report is based largely on a visit by a WHO team of international experts to Wuhan, the Chinese city where COVID-19 was first detected. The mission was never meant to identify the exact natural source of the virus, an endeavour that typically takes years. Hence, the world leaders should take a re-look into the issue and help to unearth the truth behind the spread of the disease. Anshita Rochwani, UJJAIN



I haven't come here (Assam) to lie to you. My name is not Narendra Modi. If you wish to hear him lie about Assam, farmers or any other issue, switch on the television. He lies to India 24/7. If you want to listen to the truth, hear me out RAHUL GANDHI CONGRESS LEADER

NCB SEIZES HEROIN, **AK-47 FROM SL BOAT**

The Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB) has taken custody of a Sri Lankan fishing boat and seized 300.323 kg of heroin along with five AK-47 rifles and 1,000 rounds of 9 mm ammunition

NO RESPITE



SHORT TAKES

Deve Gowda, wife test Covid-19+ve

Bangalore: Former Prime Minister H D Deve Gowda Wednesday said he and his wife Chennamma have tested positive for COVID-19. "My wife Chennamma and I have tested positive for COVID- 19. We are selfisolating along with other family members," the 87year-old JD(S) patriarch tweeted. "I request all those who came in contact with us over the last few days to get themselves tested. I request party workers and well-wishers not to panic," he added. The couple are currently undergoing treatment at the city's Manipal Hospital, hospital sources said.

Spurious liquor kills 8 in Bihar

Patna: Eight persons died in two separate incidents in Bihar -- six in Nawada and two in Begusarai -- after they reportedly consumed spurious liquor in the last 24 hours. The family members of the deceased claimed that they consumed liquor on the day of Holi Monday, after which their health conditions deteriorated by the night.

Woman gangraped

Agra: A young couple has lodged a report with the police, claiming that the 19 year-old woman was gang raped by three men in the presence of her husband while they were on their way to meet relatives on Holi. The victim, in her complaint, alleged that she was dragged to a nearby jungle where she was gang raped. Her husband was beaten up by the attackers as he tried to fight them off.

DSPL-262

Farmers plan march to Parliament in May

peated". The leaders also shared

their plans of forming a com-

mittee to control protesters if

there is police action in par-

let the protestors know what

to do in case there is police ac-

tion during the march. It will

also be made clear to them that

SKM condemns all kinds of vi-

olence. So the protestors will

know that if there is any dam-

age of property by them, they

will have to serve the penalty,'

Farmer leaders also an-

nounced their plans to block

the Kundli-Manesar-Palwal ex-

pressway for 24 hours April 10.

We will be blocking the KMP

expressway April 10 for 24 hours,

that is from 11 am April 10 to 11

am on the next day. We will be

doing this because the gov-

ernment has not been listen-

ing to us. It has been sleeping.

a farmer leader said.

"We will form a committee to

liament march



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi. March 31: Announcing their plans for the upcoming two months, farmers, who have been protesting against the new farm laws at the Delhi borders, said they will march to the Parliament on foot in May, the Samyukt Kisan Morcha said Wednesday.

'The Sanyukt Kisan Morcha met yesterday, and decided that the farmers will be undertaking a march to the Parliament. The date for the march is yet to be decided.

"It will be joined not just by farmers, but also by women, and unemployed individuals, and labourers who have been supporting the movement,' farmer leader Gurnaam Singh Chaduni said.

Addressing a press conference, he said that the march would be carried out in a "peaceful" manner, and special care would be taken that "what hapment," another farmer leader said. An event to honour the farmers who have lost their lives during the agitation will be organised May 6. "Soil from different parts of the country will be brought to these borders and a memorial will be created for all our brothers who have lost their lives while participating in this movement," a farmer leader said.

Separate events will also be organised to commemorate Ambedkar Jayanti, and Labour Day. Enacted in September, the three farm laws have been projected by the Centre as major reforms in the agriculture sector that will remove the middlemen and allow farmers to sell their produce anywhere in the country.

The protesting farmers, on the other hand, have expressed apprehension that the new laws would pave the way for eliminating the safety cushion of the Minimum Support Price (MSP) and do away with the "mandi" (wholesale market) system, leaving them at the mercy of big corporates.

SC-APPOINTED PANEL **ON FARM LAWS SUBMITS REPORT:** The Supreme Courtappointed committee to study the three new controversial agricultural laws has submitted its report to the apex court March 19 in a sealed cover, one of its members said Wednesday.

The Supreme Court had, January 11, stayed the implementation of the three laws till further orders and appointed a four-member panel to resolve the impasse. The committee was given two months to study the laws and consult all stakeholders



No news of Rohingya boat in Andamans

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Kolkata, March 31: Fifty days after they sailed out of Bangladesh's coastal region of Cox's Bazar, more than 80 Muslim Rohingya refugees were reported stranded in a boat in the Andaman sea. "But there is no news from the boat in the last 10 days.

The Indian coastguard seem to have snatched the one satellite phone on the boat. There are rumours that the Indians have pushed the boat into Bangladesh or Myanmar territorial waters while some say it remains anchored off the coast of northern Andamans," said Chris Lewa, director of "Arakan Project", which monitors conditions of Rohingyas both in refugee camps in Bangladesh and other parts of South-east Asia.

She and other human rights activists say the Indian coast guards have provided the refugees with food, drinking water and medical attention but not allowed the boat ashore.

"That is perhaps because India was negotiating with Bangladesh to take back these refugees. But since Bangladesh has refused to take them back as their boat was tracked far away from the Andamans, the fate of the Rohingyas is uncertain," said a Thailandbased human rights activist on condi-

Fire breaks



A CISF personnel walks under an umbrella while guarding at Taj Mahal on a hot day in Agra

tion of anonymity. The activists said 50 days at sea in a ramshackle boat may be 'a real tough proposition' for anybody.

Eight of the ninety Rohingyas who set sail (65 women, 20 men and 5 minors) have already died of diarohhea and dehydration after the boat's engine developed trouble on Feb 18, a week into the journey towards South-east Asia. Eighty-one Rohingyas, mostly women,

were reported to be on the boat with three Bangladesh crew members when the rights activists lost contact with the boat. The survivors confirmed eight deaths on the boat before they lost contact.

"We thank the Indian Coast Guard for providing immediate relief but Delhi should either negotiate the boat's return to Bangladesh with the Rohingyas or take them ashore to a camp for better medical care. This is a humanitarian situation," the Thailand-

Where excellence & innovation converge

based activist said.

Youth killed for putting colours on female relative

AGENCIES

Ballia (UP), March 31: A young man was killed in UP's Ballia district for allegedly smearing colour on a distant female relative during Holi. The body of Durgesh Paswan, 19, with stab wounds on his back and chest, was found late Tuesday night from Chhotaki Seria village.

Two men belonging to the same village have been arrested in connection with the crime.

According to reports, Durgesh had smeared colour on the sisterin-law of the accused, Karan, during Holi celebrations Monday after which they had a quarrel.

Superintendent of Police Vipin Tada said: "On Tuesday night, Karan called Durgesh for a meeting and then killed him with the help of his friend, Sanjeev. They then dumped his body near a tube well." On a complaint filed by the victim's father, a case was registered against Karan and Sanjeev. The accused were taken into custody for interrogation during which they confessed to the crime.

The SP said that Durgesh's mobile phone and the knife used in the crime have been recovered. The body has been sent for post-mortem.

ଗର୍ଭାବସ୍ଥା ତଥା ଗର୍ଭବତୀଙ୍କ ପ୍ରସବକାଳୀନ ସେବା ଓ ପ୍ରସବ ପରବର୍ତ୍ତୀ (୪୨ ଦିନ ପର୍ଯ୍ୟନ୍ତ) କଟିଳତା ଏବଂ ଜନ୍ନରୁ ଏକବର୍ଷ ପର୍ଯ୍ୟନ୍ତ ଅସୁସ୍ଥ ଶିଶୁଙ୍କର ଚିକିହା ସମ୍ପୂର୍ଣ୍ଣ ମାଗଣାରେ



ଯାତାୟତ ପାଇଁ ଆମ୍ଭୁଲାନୁର ସୁବିଧା

ସମୟପ୍ରକାର ଆବଶ୍ୟକୀୟ

ଔଷଧ ଓ ସାମଗ୍ରୀ ପ୍ରଦାନ



ଚିକିତ୍ସା



ସମୟ ପ୍ରକାର ଆବଶ୍ୟକୀୟ ପରୀକ୍ଷା



ମା' ପାଇଁ ଖାଦ୍ୟ ବ୍ୟବସ୍ଥା

ଆବଶ୍ୟକ ସ୍ଥଳେ ରକ୍ତ ପ୍ରଦାନ

ଏହି ସବୁ ସୁବିଧା ଏସ୍.ଏନ୍.ସି.ୟୁ (SNCU) ରେ ମଧ୍ୟ ବିନା ମୂଲ୍ୟରେ ଉପଲଛୁ ।

ଅଧିକ ଜାଣିବା ପାଇଁ ନିକଟସ୍ଥ ଆଶା କିୟା ସାସ୍ଥ୍ୟକର୍ମୀଙ୍କ ସହ ପରାମର୍ଶ କରନ୍ତୁ ।



out in Safdarjung hospital

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, March 31: A fire broke out Wednesday morning in the ICU of the Safdarjung Hospital here following which 50 patients were evacuated, fire officials said.

No casualty has been reported in the blaze that broke out around 6:30 am, they said. Nine fire tenders were rushed to the spot. Around 50 patients were immediately shifted to other wards with the help of hospital staff, the officials said.

The hospital said that the fire probably broke out due to high voltage fluctuation and a short circuit. "There was a minor fire incident in medicine ward 11 (HDU) in Safdarjung Hospital Wednesday probably due to high voltage fluctuation and short circuit. All the patients admitted in HDU and the ward were evacuated immediately to other wards by our nursing staff and security personnel. "There was no loss of life. The fire

was controlled immediately by our hos-

pital fire safety

team," the spokesperson of the hospital

said.



IMFA is India's leading, fully integrated producer of value added ferro chrome, straddling the value chain from mining to smelting. With 190 MVA installed furnace capacity backed up by 204.5 MW captive power generation capacity (including 4.5 MWp solar) and chrome ore mining tracts, our products are certified through ISO 9001 Quality Management System. Recognised worldwide as a reliable and cost competitive producer, IMFA has long standing relationships with leading international companies besides domestic stainless steel producers





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Dia Mirza | First #Simlipal now #Bandhavgarh. Urgent help to douse these fires required. 2 Days On, Fire **Rages At Madhya Pradesh's Bandhavgarh National Par**



Abhishek Bachchan | <mark>Behind</mark> every mastermind, there is a pilla of strength. Meet #TheBigBull's brother, the shadow and his strongest support, @s0humshah as Viren



STORIES

BRITNEY CRIED AFTER WATCHING FRAMING BRITNEY ...

Los Angeles: Pop star Britney Spears has shared that she "cried" after watching



released documentary Framing Britney Spears, which revolves around her career, popularity in American culture, and the conservatorship that she has been living

"bits" of the recently-

under since 2008, which has sparked the fan-driven Free Britney movement. "My life has always been very speculated watched and judged really my whole life !!!" she began the caption which she wrote alongside a video of herself dancing to the tune of Aerosmith's Crazy on Instagram.

NIKKI TRYING HER 'LEVEL BEST TO BEAT' ANOREXIA

Los Angeles: Big Brother UK star Nikki Grahame, who is currently in a



specialised facility for the treatment of anorexia, is determined to win against the condition. Her mother, Sue,

shared that Nikki is grateful for the love she is getting from people and is working towards a better life. "I heard from Nikki this morning, and she said, 'Mum, please stress how

overwhelmed I am at people's kindness towards me. I just don't get it. But I am so grateful'. "Tell everybody that I am going to try my level best this time to beat this. I want to get my life back," Sue said in an interview with The Morning.

RUSSELL SHOOTS FOR THOR: LOVE AND THUNDER

Melbourne: Australian actor Russell Crowe has joined the cast of Thor: Love And Thunder, the fourth



instalment in the Thor franchise of films. The series stars Chris Hemsworth as Thor along with actress Natalie Portman plays Jane Foster. British actor Christian Bale will be playing the villain in the new film. Crowe's role is being kept under wraps and the hope was to surprise fans with a fun cameo when the film was released, according to a report in Deadline. However, photos of Crowe hanging out with the cast as they shot in Australia were out on the Internet recently.



Pehla Satyagrahi turns pages from Bapu's life

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar: National School of Drama(NSD), New Delhi, presented *Pehla Satvagrahi*, a Hindi play. here at Rabindra Mandap, Wednesday.

The event was organised by Odisha Sangeet Natak Akademi(OSNA) in collaboration with the Department of Odia Language, Literature and Culture, Govt. of Odisha, to mark the 75th year of India's Independence.

Written by Rabindra Tripathy and directed by Suresh Sharma, the play was about the story of Mohandas' journey of truth and non-violence. Gandhi's life and his personality were quite dramatic. And his death was unprecedented. What kind of life did the Mahatma lead and what were the challenges he faced while spearheading India's freedom struggle, is what the team attempted to express and showcase through this play.

The guests who attended the event included OSNA president Manaswini Sahoo, its secretary Prabodh Kumar Rath and eminent NSDian Dolgovind Rath. Theatre director Abhinna Routray conducted a meeting ahead of the play.

Elli looks for versatility New Delhi: Elli AvrRam says she wants to be a ver-

satile actress who is able to portray just about any role. The Swedish-Greek origin actress was lauded for her role in Malang last year, and is currently seen with superstar Aamir Khan in the song number Har Funn Maula that the two actors shot for their upcoming film Koi Jaane Na.

On what would she like to be referred to as -a dancer or an actor — Elli told IANS: "I'm an actress. An actor for me is not only supposed to know how to deliver dialogues. An actor should have many skills, only then is he/she a great actor. In my case it's only a plus point that I'm great in dancing. Tomorrow I might show my other talents, for example I'm a previous figure skater, or I train mix martial arts, now that does not take away from the fact that I'm an actress.' She added: "I want to be a versatile actress who will be able to portray any role, which means whatever skills is required for that role, I will learn it and per-

form it as an ac-Aahana opens

Mumbai: Actress Aahana Kumra, who plays the female lead in the upcoming web series The Honeymooner, has her theory on why actors like her are getting their dues in the digital space than in Hindi film industry. "The web space is giving all characters their due. It is no longer the norm to have young girls, whose only pre-

requisite is to look good, as

WITH MUSCLES OF

MAGNITUDE

STUPENDOUS

WITH HERON

RESOLVE

Plus, let's face it, in films only the superstars call the shots. (The) Digital (medium) also gives you freedom to tell whatever the hell you want to say. Actors like me, who were not getting their dues earlier, have got a fresh lease of life courtesy this emerging medium," she said.

The show tells the story of a husband-wife relationship. "When director Madhur Agarwal approached me with the subject, I loved the concept and said yes immediately", she shared. IANS

CINE BITS

Kriti Sanon wakes up craving for chocolate

Mumbai: Actress Kriti Sanon is craving for chocolates at wake-up time, going by

her new post on social media. Kriti posted a picture on Instagram of a chocolate coloured, layered dress paired with a green bralette. Kriti wrote: "Just... woke up craving (chocolate,eyes



and crazy emoji) Morning everyone." On the work front, the actress has a slew of films coming up, including Bachchan Pandev, Bhediva, Mimi, Ganpath, Hum Do Hamare Do and Adipurush

Lucky Ali's Amaraya with Eliezer Botzer

New Delhi: Singer-songwriter Lucky Ali and Israeli musician Eliezer Cohen Botzer

have released the second single, Amaraya from the duos hugely-



anticipated album, Lemalla. "Amaraya is one of the songs we composed in that space, it talks about all of us being reflections of each other," says Lucky Ali. "While we were working on the project we also realised we had similarities culture-wise as well. We all went through our own process of discovery and they came with the project, we added to it and became a part of it," he adds.

Sunny's younger son to debut in Hindi film

Mumbai: Sunny Deol's younger son Rajveer Deol will make his Hindi film

debut in a comingof-age love story backed by Rajshri Productions. The film also marks the directorial debut of Sooraj R Barjatya's son Avnish S Barjatya.



PHARRELL DEMANDS JUSTICE FOR HIS COUSIN

.....

Virginia: Grammy award-winning singer Pharrell Williams has demanded justice



for his cousin, who was one of the two people shot dead in the Virginia Beach shootings March 26. "The loss of these lives is a tragedy beyond

measure. My cousin Donovon was killed during the shootings. He was a bright light and someone who always showed up for others. It is critical my family and the other victims' families get the transparency, honesty and justice they deserve," he wrote on Instagram on

Tuesday (India time). "Virginia Beach is the epitome of hope and tenacity and, as a community, we will get through this and come out even stronger," he added.

AMY SCHUMER'S FATHER HOSPITALISED

Los Angeles: Actress-filmmaker Amy Schumer has shared that her father is in



old took to Instagram and posted a selfie alongside her father on the hospital bed as she shared the news. "I have terrible news. My father was in an unfortunate magician

sawing accident. He has a good spirit through it all and we're still hoping the magician will turn back up," she captioned the selfie. Recently the actress got vaccinated for Covid-19.



PEANUTS



CALVIN AND HOBBES



BREVITY

MY PAL SUE RUNS A HAT STORE. SOMETIMES SHE LETS ME TRY ON DIFFERENT SIZES OF THOSE FUNNY HELICOPTER HATS.







CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW

SUDOKU

Dharmendra on Twitter.

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

			_	_		_			_				_	
6	9		5		Е					0	1			
	1				8		С		3				D	
					4	2	В						Е	6
						9					4		1	
С	А	В			2	с. 	Ê	÷		7		1	1	4
	2	D	А	В		С	9						0	
5	Е		0		9						6	1	4	3
	7		2	1		3	А			4				
0						В		8				7		2
		8								1		D		С
				Е		6	3		А		0		8	
3		7	9						Е			5		
9		0		3			7							D
		А	6			8		Е					1	
			7	A	0	D			8		9			

SOLUTIONS















OrissaPOST THURSDAY | APRIL 1 | 2021 | BHUBANESWAR national

PAN-AADHAAR LINKING LAST DATE EXTENDED

The government on Wednesday extended the deadline for linking PAN with Aadhaar by three months till June 30. The income tax department said it has received representations from taxpayers that the last date for intimating the Aadhaar number may further be extended in the wake of the on-going COVID-19 pandemic





There is nothing more farcical than quoting the lines of Jesus on a political stage and unleashing the prosecution on those whose lives are spent on serving the poor PRIYANKA GANDHI VADRA CONGRESS LEADER

The high polling percentage shows that people are yearning for change. (Chief

Minister) Mamata Baneriee is worried as the elections were peaceful and the TMC goons could not have a field day J P NADDA BJP CHIEF

If there are any corrupt practices during my stewardship and on the part of the previous Congress government, a probe could be ordered by the Prime Minister instead of making off the cuff allegations at the rally V NARAYANASAMY SENIOR CONGRESS LEADER

SHORT TAKES

2 LeT terrorist associates held

Srinagar: Two terrorist associates linked with proscribed terror outfit Lashker-e-Taiba (LeT) were arrested in Jammu and Kashmir's Budgam and incriminating materials seized from their possession, police said Wednesday. Police said acting on specific inputs, Budgam police along with the army's 53 Rashtriya **Rifles and the Central** Reserve Police Force's 43rd Bn apprehended two terrorist associates in a joint operation at Laloo Sheshgari, Hyderpora.

Illicit liquor claims four lives in UP

Pratapgarh (UP): Four persons died in Udaypur area here allegedly after consuming spurious liquor,

FB doubles down on efforts to protect **Assembly elections**



tinues to closely partner with elec-The company tion authorities, including to set up said that it is a high priority channel to remove content that breaks our rules or taking steps to enhance is against local law after receiving civic engagement, combat valid legal orders. Facebook said that it may dehate speech, limit ploy technology to identify new words and phrases associated with misinformation and

hate speech, and either remove *remove voter suppression* posts with that language or reduce their distribution. "In addition to our standard prac-

AGENCIES

New Delhi, March 31: Based on lessons learned from past elections in India and globally, Facebook has doubled down on its efforts to support and protect assembly elections in Tamil Nadu, West Bengal, Assam, Kerala and Pondicherry.

ing with eight partners in India The company said Wednesday who are certified by the that it is taking steps to enhance **International Fact-Checking** civic engagement, combat hate Network, to provide people with speech, limit misinformation and additional context about the conremove voter suppression. tent they're seeing on Facebook.

"To decrease the risk of problematic content going viral in these states and potentially inciting violence ahead of or during the election, we will significantly reduce the distribution of content that our proactive detection technology identifies as likely hate speech or violence and incitement," the company said in a statement.

The company said that it con-

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, March 31: Four

years after his arrest,

Pakistan-based Lashkar-e-

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, March 31: As

India experiences a fast-

growing second wave of

Covid-19, only 25 per cent

parents are willing to send

their wards to school in

April, as per a survey by

high transmissibility

within children, the ma-

jority of parents have ex-

There are 73 per cent of

parents who believe that

physical schools must not

operate if active cases in the

As per feedback in the

survey and given the mas-

sive surge in the Covid

cases experienced in the

last three weeks, the de-

fault option for the schools

should be closure from

on the basis of active case

numbers in a particular

district along with the vari-

ant-type reported, the daily

case curve to authorize

District Magistrates to per-

mit schools to operate as

Exceptions may be taken

April to June.

district are above 100.

pressed concerns.

With B.1.1.7 known for

LocalCircles.

CBI court discharges three cops in Ishrat Jahan encounter case

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Ahmedabad, March 31: A special CBI court here Wednesday discharged police officers G Ľ Singhal, Tarun Barot and Anaju Chaudhary in the 2004 Ishrat Jahan alleged fake encounter case.

Special CBI judge V R Raval allowed the discharge applications of Singhal, Barot (now retired) and Chaudhary. "The CBI has not mentioned anything specific against the sanction order (in which the Gujarat government declined sanction to prosecute the three accused) which also leads to believe the act of applicants/accused was in discharge of official duties," the court observed.

The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) March 20 conveyed to the court that the state government had declined sanction for prosecution of the three accused. The court in its October 2020 order observed that they had "acted in their official duties," so the probe agency was required to obtain sanction for prosecution.

Under section 197 of the Criminal Procedure Code, sanction is required for prosecuting government servants for anything done in the discharge of official duty.

Ishrat Jahan, a 19-year-old woman from Mumbra near Mumbai, was killed along with Javed Shaikh alias Pranesh Pillai, Amjadali Akbarali Rana and Zeeshan Johar by Gujarat police in an 'encounter' near Ahmedabad June 15, 2004. The police claimed the four were terrorists who were planning to assassinate the then Gujarat Chief Minister Narendra Modi. However, a high court-appointed Special Investigation Team concluded that the encounter was fake, after which the CBI registered a case against various police officials. Inspector General of Police Singhal, retired police officers Barot and J G Parmar, and Chaudhary had filed applications before the court seeking dropping of proceedings for want of the requisite sanction to prosecute them.

POLITICKLE by MANJUL



DCGI extends shelf life of Covishield from 6 to 9 months

AGENCIES

New Delhi, Mar 31: India's drug regulator DCGI has extended the shelf life of Covishield, the Oxford-AstraZeneca COVID-19 vaccine, from six to nine months from its manufacturing date.

In a letter to the Serum Institute of India (SII), Drugs Controller General of India V G Somani said the SII is permitted to apply the vaccine's shelf life of nine months to unlabelled vials available on hand. Shelf life is the length of time for which an item remains fit for use.

The Drugs Controller General of India (DCGI) said it has no objection in respect of 'Extension of Shelf Life of Covishield Vaccine' in multi-dose glass vial (10 dose-5ml) from six months to nine months. "You are permitted to apply the shelf life of nine months to unlabelled vials available on hand, sub-



ject to the condition that the details of such stock, batch-wise, shall be submitted to this office and Central Drugs Laboratory, Kasauli," Somani said in the letter.

According to an update by UK drug regulator dated February 22, the shelf-life of the AstraZeneca COVID-19 vaccine is six months. Meanwhile, as many as 53,480 fresh infections pushed India's COVID-19 tally to 1,21,49,335, while 354 new fa-

talities, the highest single-day spike so far this year, took the death toll to 1,62,468, according to Union health ministry data updated Wednesday. The country had recorded 355 deaths December 17.

The active caseload increased to 5,52,566 and accounts for 4.55 per cent of the total infections. The recovery rate further dropped to 94.11 per cent, the ministry data updated at 8 am showed.

National Highways Authority of India Pak-based LeT militant jailed for 10 years (Ministry of Road Transport & Highways) NHAI/11012/24/Toll/Sukhuapada/2021/PIU/BLS/365 31.03.2021

them by their handlers based in Pakistan or Pakistan-oc-Security forces arrested

Transport and Highways, the user fee rates of Sukhuapada Fee Plaza at km. 12+900 in Mayurbhanj district for the section of Jharpokharia-Baripada-Balasore from km.0+000 to km.81+257 on NH-18 in the state of Odisha for the length of 32+800 km will be applicable with effect from 06.04.2021 as per the rates given

Ali, along with his two associates Abu Saad and Abu ferent places in India, in- Darda -- all trained Lashkar terrorists -- illegally infiltrated into the valley to

cupied Kashmir (POK). Mansoor July 25, 2016, from

ender, and any such manual offe

Complete details including e-tender locuments are available at

http://www.ireps.gov.in. Dy. Chief Mechanical Engineer, Carriage Repair Workshop, PR-657/L/20-21 Mancheswar

eceived shall be ignored

PUBLIC NOTICE In accordance to the Govt. of India, Notification No.S.O.3255(E) dated 23.09.2020 of Ministry of Road

officials said Wednesday. The local police station in-charge has been suspended following the incident for alleged laxity, they said. Three of the deceased were from the same family and were residents of Katariya village. The fourth was from Aahar Bihar village. Four people -- Dilip Kori (48), his brother Pradeep Kori (35), maternal uncle Siddhanath (65) and one Dharmendra (45) -- consumed liquor Tuesday night, Additional Superintendent of Police Dinesh Dwivedi said.

Hottest March in Delhi since 2010

New Delhi: Delhi recorded a mean maximum temperature of 33.1 degrees Celsius this month, making it the "hottest" March in the last 11 years the India Meteorological Department said Wednesday. Normally, the mean maximum temperature for the month of March in the national capital is 29.6 degrees Celsius, it said. This is the highest mean maximum temperature in March since 2010, when it was 34.1 degrees Celsius, said Kuldeep Srivastava, the head of the IMD's regional forecasting centre.

4 Naxals held

Dantewada: Four Naxals, one of them carrying a reward of Rs 1 lakh on his head, were arrested from two districts of Chhattisgarh's insurgency-hit Bastar division, police said. Cadres Mannu alias Motu Barsa (24) and Sitaram Oyam (20) were apprehended from the Barsoor police station area of Dantewada district Wednesday, while Vetti Hunga (30) and Kunjam Hadma (29) were nabbed from neighbouring Sukma district Tuesday, an official said.

Taiba terrorist Saifullah Mansoor. who infiltrated fine. into Jammu and Kashmir

rigorous imprisonment and Mansoor, alias Bahadur as per instructions given to

tice of removing accounts that re-

peatedly violate our Community

Standards, we will also temporar-

ily reduce the distribution of con-

tent from accounts that have re-

cently and repeatedly violated our

The company is currently work-

In addition to English, these

eight partners fact-check in 11

Indian languages including Bengali,

Tamil, Malayalam and Assamese.

IAMAI, Facebook had set up a high

priority channel with the Election

Commission of India (ECI) for

Facebook, Instagram and

WhatsApp, to receive content-related

escalations

with the intention to carry

out terrorist attacks at dif-

cluding Delhi, has been sen-

tenced to 10 years of

cerned, the Central and

State Boards will need to

make a decision based on

the national situation. The

feasibility of conduct-

ing the board exam both

online and offline does

deserve consideration.

that three data points

released last week are

of great concern. First,

the Chief Minister of

Punjab announced that

of the genome testing

done by the state, 81

per cent of the Covid-

19 samples were found

to be of B.1.1.7 i.e., the

UK variant of SARS-

COV2. The next day,

Germany's Chancellor

Angela Merkel an-

nounced that the B.1.1.7,

which is fast spreading

in the country, is more

transmissible than the

original strain and is

more dangerous to chil-

dren and young people,

and we need to put the

The survey found

In 2019, led by the industry body

policies," it added.

carry out terrorist attacks at different places in India

Yahama Mukam village in Kupwara district in Jammu and Kashmir.



this, the city of Bengaluru in the month of March reported approximately 500 cases of Covid in children under the age of 10.

GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA									
RURAL WATER SUPPLY & SANITATION									
ORGANISATION, OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE									
ENGINEER, RWS&S DIVISION, ANGUL, AT: TALCHER									
At: Baghuabole, P.O Hatatota, Talcher, Dist Angul, PIN - 75910	3								
(Ph. No./FAX: 06760-240762, E-mail: eerwssang@gmail.com)									
National Competitive Bidding through e-Procurement									
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No. O-1306: The Executive Engineer, RWS&S Division, Angul, A	t:								
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norm of e-Procurement System in Online mode.	12400								
Nature of Work : Rural Piped Water Supp	ly								
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1. No. of Tenders : 1 No.									
2. Tender Paper Cost : Rs.6,000.00 3. Value of Work : Rs.28.98 lakhs									
3. Value of Work : Rs.28.98 lakhs 4. Class of Contractor : "C" & "B" Class									
5. Date & time of availability of : 03.04.2021 at 13.00 hrs. to									
bid document in portal 12.04.2021 upto 17.00 hrs.									
6. Date & time of seeking tender : 08.04.2021 upto 17.00 hrs.									
clarification									
7. Date & time of opening of : 13.04.2021 at 15.00 hrs in the									
tender & verification of Office of the Executive Engineer,									
original document RWS&S Division, Angul, at: Talch	er								
8. Time of Completion : 5 (Five) Calendar Months									
9. The bidders have to participate in Online bidding only. Further deta									
can be seen from the website: https://www.tendersodisha.gov.in	1.								
10. Corrigendum if any shall be publish in the above website only.									
Sd./- Executive Engineer									
RWS&S Division, Angul at Talcher									
OIPR-25019/11/0027/202	1								

SI. No.	Category of vehicles	Fee for single journey	Fee for return journey within a day	Fee for monthly pass for 50 single journeys in a month	Fee for single journey for the commercial vehicles registered within the district of fee plaza	
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	
1.	Car, Jeep, Van or Light Motor Vehicle	45	65	1430	20	
2.	Light Commercial Vehicle, Light Goods Vehicle or Mini Bus	70	105	2315	35	
3.	Bus or Truck (up to two axles)	145	220	4845	75	
4.	Commercial Vehicles (three axles)	160	240	5290	80	
5.	Heavy Construction Machinery (HCM) or Earth Moving Equipment (EME) or Multi Axle Vehicle(MAV) (four to six axles)	230	340	7600	115	
6.	Oversized Vehicles (seven or more axles)	280	415	9255	140	

The rates for monthly pass applicable for local non-commercial vehicles residing within a distance of 20 km from the above toll plaza for the year 2021-22 shall be Rs.285.00, subject to revision every year as per the provision of said rules. The fee rate mentioned at Column (6) is for single journey and is applicable for commercial vehicles (excluding vehicle plying under National Permit), registered within the District where the fee plaza is located

Address for Communication: Project Implementation Unit, Balasore, Plot No.1086, Chandmaripadia Road Sahdevkhunta, Balasore, Odisha-756001. Ph. (06782) 263366, E-mail : piubalasore@nhai.org

Sd/ **Project Director**

BUILDING A NATION, NOT JUST ROADS



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Sd/- Project Director

BUILDING A NATION, NOT JUST ROADS







The people of Pakistan should urge their government to offer a formal apology to the people of **Bangladesh for all the** atrocities committed by the Pakistani military in 1971 HUSAIN HAQQANI FORMER PAKISTANI DIPLOMAT

NEPAL 1ST IN ASIA-PACIFIC TO VACCINATE REFUGEES

Nepal started to inoculate the Covid vaccine to the Bhutanese refugees living in eastern part of the country becoming the first country in the Asia-Pacific region to provide Covid-19 jabs to refugees

In response to the

and 13 allies

including South

the UK. voiced

concern over its

findings and urged

access to experts

containing it in Wuhan the asser-

tion that it requires further probe

I don't think the quote is very

accurate because what I see is the

expert mission said they cannot

exclude the possibility of lab leak-

age but they have found no scien-

tific evidence for that, Chinese

Foreign Ministry spokesperson

caught Beijing by surprise.

China to provide full

Korea, Australia and





No one can take a single drop of water from Egypt, and whoever wants to try it, let him try. No one imagines that it will be far from our capabilities ABDEL FATTAH EL-SISSI

PRESIDENT OF EGYPT It is

indispensable to carry out prompt, independent and experts-led investigations that are free of surveillance. We are concerned that

the investigation faced delays and the lack of access to virus samples KATSUNOBU KATO

CHIEF CABINET SECY OF JAPAN

I am hopeful that those elected by the public will succeed in hearing the people of Israel, be wise enough to hear its plea for unconventional unions, for cooperation crossing sectors, for constructive and devoted work for the sake of Israeli citizens REUVEN RIVLIN PRESIDENT OF ISRAFI

SHORT TAKES

SA bans Easter liquor sales

Johannesburg: South Africa will restrict the sale of alcohol and limit the size of religious and social gatherings over Easter to prevent the holiday from contributing to a new surge of COVID-19, President Cyril Ramaphosa has announced "Given the role of alcohol in fuelling reckless behaviour, we will put in place some restrictions over the Easter weekend," Ramaphosa said in an address broadcast nationwide. He said retail sales of alcohol will be banned Friday through Monday.

China launches new satellite

Beijing: China sent a new Earth observation satellite into space from the Jiuguan Satellite Launch Center in northwest China at 6.45 am Wednesday. The satellite, Gaofen-12 02, was launched aboard a Long March-4C rocket and entered its planned orbit successfully, Xinhua news agency reported. The satellite will be used in land surveys, urban planning, road network design and crop yield estimation, as well as disaster relief.

Pak to import sugar, cotton from India

OrissaPOST THURSDAY | APRIL 1 | 2021 | BHUBANESWAR

The decision was taken at the meeting of the Economic Coordination Committee (ECC), which was chaired by Pakistan Finance Minister Hammad Azhar



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Islamabad, March 31: Pakistan will buy sugar and cotton from India, newly appointed Finance Minister Hammad Azhar announced Wednesday, lifting a ban on their import from the neighbouring country imposed in the wake of heightened tension over Kashmir in 2019.

The decision was taken at the meeting of the Economic Coordination Committee (ECC), which was chaired by Finance Minister Azhar.

Azhar said that the meeting discussed 21 items on the agenda, in-

cluding import of cotton and sugar from India, which it allowed after detailed discus-

sion.

The resumption of import of these goods will lead to partial revival of bilateral trade relations, which were suspended

after the August 5, 2019 decision of India to revoke the special status of Jammu and Kashmir. The private sector was allowed to import 5 lakh tonnes of white sugar from India, he said.

He also said that the government had allowed sugar to be imported from other countries, however, the price of the commodity in other countries was also high.

However, in our neighbouring country India, the price of sugar is quite cheap, he said. Hence, we have decided to resume sugar trade

China dodges WHO's call for further probe

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Beijing, March 31: China Wednesday called for expanding the search for the origins of the coronavirus in other countries, mainly America, as it sought to sidestep the WHO chief's assertion that further probe is required on allegations that the deadly virus may have leaked from a bio-lab in Wuhan, saying he may have not been accurately quoted.

Releasing the much-awaited report of an experts team which probed the origin of COVID-19 after visiting the controversial Wuhan Institute of Virology (WIV) in the central Chinese city of Wuhan, World Health Organisation chief Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebrevesus reopened the Trump era allegation, saying that it required further probe.

Although the team has concluded that a laboratory leak is the least likely hypothesis, this requires further investigation, potentially with additional missions involving spe-

COVID ORIGIN PROBE

cialist experts, which I am ready to deploy," Dr Tedros, who was earlier accused by the previous Trump administration as 'pro-China', said in Geneva Tuesday.

Coming from the WHO chief with whom China had built a close rapport while battling the allegations that it suppressed facts related to the deadly virus early and acted late in

Hua Chunying said while answering a vollev of questions on the experts team report and Dr Tedros's comments. Instead, Hua harped on the expert WHO report, the US team's remark that the lab leak the-

ory is extremely unlikely. In response to the WHO report, the US and 13 allies including South Korea, Australia and the UK, voiced concern over its findings and urged China to provide full access to experts. BBC quoted a statement by the 14 countries stating that the mission to Wuhan was significantly delayed and lacked access to com-

plete, original data and samples. Scientific missions like these should be able to do their work under conditions that produce independent and objective recommendations and findings. The group pledged to work together with the WHŌ.

Former US president Donald Trump was among those who supported the theory that the virus might have escaped from a lab in China



A woman trains her pet parrot in Primrose Hill, following the easing of lockdown restrictions in London, Britain

US completes H–1B initial registration

Pfizer says its COVID vax effective on adolescents

REUTERS

ton from India was banned and this had a direct effect on our SMEs, he said. However, at the recommendation of the Ministry of Commerce, we have also decided to resume the

trade of cotton with India, he added. Tension has come down between the two nations after the restoration of ceasefire on the Line of Control last month. It was followed with an exchange of letters by the prime ministers of the two countries.

Azhar also said that Pakistan

Adviser to the Prime Minister of

Pakistan for Commerce and

Investment, Dawood welcomed the

decisions taken by the ECC. All steps will be taken through

Finance Minister Azhar told the

not produced quality

cotton last year hence

it had given the green

signal for the product

to be imported from

The import of cot-

other countries.

will import cotton from India start-

ing June this year.

It is said that the two sides are working behind the scenes to restore their full diplomatic ties which were downgraded after August, 2019 action in Kashmir.

cross-border imports of cotton yarn including by land. A summary will be presented at the next ECC to ensure availability of cotton and yarn in the coming months, Dawood tweeted media that demand for cotton in Pakistan was increasing but it had

Migrants drown in shipwreck

Cairo: A boat carrying dozens of Europe-bound migrants capsized off Libva's coast. drowning two women and three children, a UN official said Wednesday. It was the latest shipwreck involving migrants seeking a better life in Europe, Safa Msehli, spokesman for the International Organization for Migration, said the maritime mishap took place late Tuesday. A fishing boat and Libva's coast guard managed to rescue some 77 migrants and returned them to shore, she said.

SL gets donated vax from China

Colombo: Sri Lanka received 600,000 doses of the Sinopharm vaccine from China as a donation Wednesday. Sri Lankan authorities said the supplied doses will go first to Chinese citizens in Sri Lanka, where thousands of people from China are working. Sri Lankan President Gotabaya Rajapaksa accepted the vaccine from Chinese Ambassador Qi Zhenhong at the airport after the doses were flown in Wednesday.

Russian Embassy officials expelled in Italy for spying

REUTERS

Rome, March 31: Italy Wednesday ordered two Russian Embassy officials expelled and arrested an Italian Navy captain on spying charges after police caught the Italian allegedly giving classified documents to one of the Russians in ex-

change for money Foreign Minister Luigi Di Maio told a joint session of the Italian Parliament's foreign relations committees that the alleged incident was a "hostile act of extreme gravity.'

The Italian Foreign Ministry said it summoned Russian Ambassador Sergey Razov to protest the "grave incident" after a sting operation on the outskirts of Rome allegedly caught the Italian and one of the Russians in a "clandestine



operation" to exchange the documents late Tuesday.

Italy's Carabinieri paramilitary police said in a statement that the Italian naval officer, who is a frigate captain, had been arrested.

The Russian observed with him, a member of the Russian armed forces stationed at the Russian Embassy in Italy, was initially detained but not immediately placed under arrest given his diplomatic status

He was ordered expelled along

with another Russian Embassy official allegedly involved, Di Maio told lawmakers. Di Maio didn't provide details about the suspected role of the second Russian.

Italy's special operations forces in Rome staged the sting "during a clandestine operation between the two, surprising them red-handed immediately after the handing over of classified documents by the Italian official in exchange for a sum of money," said the Carabinieri statement.

The Carabinieri said both were accused of "serious crimes concerning espionage and state security.'

The Russian Embassy in Rome confirmed the detention of a diplomat who was part of the military attache's office but wouldn't comment on the incident.

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Washington, March 31: The US has received enough electronic applications during the initial registration period to reach the 2022 fiscal year cap for the H-1B foreign workers visa, the most soughtafter work visa among Indian professionals.

The US Citizenship and Immigration Services, the federal agency which screens and allocates H-1B applications, said it was randomly selected from among the registrations properly submitted to reach the cap.

The H-1B visa is a non-immigrant visa that allows the US companies to employ foreign workers in speciality occupations that require theoretical or technical expertise. The technology companies depend on it to hire tens of thousands of employees each year from countries like India and China.

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Washington, March 31: Pfizer announced Wednesday that its COVID-19 vaccine is safe and strongly protective in kids as young as 12, a step toward possibly beginning shots in this age group before they head back to school in the fall.

Most COVID-19 vaccines being rolled out worldwide are for adults. who are at higher risk from the coronavirus. Pfizer's vaccine is authorised for ages 16 and older. But vaccinating children of all ages will be critical to stopping the pandemic — and helping schools, at least the upper grades, start to look a little more normal after months of disruption.

In a study of 2,260 US volunteers ages 12 to 15, preliminary data showed there were no cases



of COVID-19 among fully vaccinated adolescents compared to 18 among those given dummy shots, Pfizer reported.

It's a small study, that hasn't yet been published, so another important piece of evidence is how well the shots revved up the kids' immune systems. Researchers reported high levels of virusfighting antibodies, somewhat higher than were seen in studies of young adults.

Beer production in Pak to cater to Chinese workers

Alcohol is banned in Pakistan for consumption of the Muslims but there are some exceptions for its use for the non-Muslim population of the country which is less than 5 per cent

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Islamabad, March 31: A Chinese liquor company which was granted a licence in 2018 for making beer has formally started production at its plant in Pakistan's Balochistan province, the first such alcohol firm



from China to establish its unit in the Islamic nation, according to media reports Wednesday. Hui Coastal Brewery and

Distillery Limited, producer of some of the famous alcohol brands,

commenced production at its plant in Balochistan's industrial town of Hub. The beer produced at the plant will be supplied to Chinese nationals working at various projects launched across Pakistan.

An official of the provincial excise and taxation department told Dawn newspaper that the company had been granted a licence which it had applied for in 2017.

The company registered itself with the Securities and Exchange Commission of Pakistan (SECP) April 30, 2020, after completing installation of the liquor plant.

"The company formally started its beer production last week, which product will be supplied to Chinese nationals working at various projects launched in different areas of Pakistan under the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) and mines and mineral projects in Balochistan," Mohammad Zaman Khan, director general, Excise and Taxation South, told the Dawn newspaper.

He confirmed a licence had

been issued to the Chinese com- Lasbela, a coastal district in the pany in 2018 as it had submitted an application to the authorities concerned in 2017, pleading that the beer and liquor brand which the company produces in China is not available in Pakistan. "The application took over a year for approval and in 2018 the former Balochistan government agreed to issue a licence to the Chinese company," the DG Excise and Taxation South said.

With vast experience of manufacturing liquor in China, this will be the first Chinese company to establish its plant in Pakistan. The company is famous for producing world famous brands and it would introduce its two famous brands in Pakistan. The entire process, from manufacturing to packaging, would be carried out at its plant in province, the News International reported. Sources said the Hui Coastal Brewery and Distillery Limited made an investment of Rs 3 million for installing a modern liquor plant on a five-acre plot of land in Hub. It is learnt that for the time being, the Chinese company would produce beer to fulfil the requirement of Chinese nationals working in Pakistan.

Hundreds of Chinese workers and engineers are engaged in different development projects in Pakistan including the ambitious China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). Chinese interest in Balochistan has spiked in recent years after the announcement of the USD 50 billion CPEC, which plans to connect Pakistani port of Gwadar to Xinjiang in China.











The inflation target for the period April 1, 2021 to March 31, 2026 under the Reserve Bank of India Act 1934 has been kept at the same level as was for previous five years TARUN BAJAJ ECONOMIC AFFAIRS SECRETARY

'MOVING TO 100% RENEWABLE ENERGY'

Apple has announced that over 110 of its manufacturing partners globally are moving to 100% renewable energy for their Apple production, with nearly 8GWs of planned clean energy set to come online



uote

Hyatt remains focused on thoughtfully accelerating its brand growth and momentum by transforming the hotel landscape in India with

planned openings in some of the most frequented and desirable destinations in the country DHRUVA RATHORE VP, REAL ESTATE &

DEVELOPMENT, HYATT HOTELS CORPORATION

There are just too many categories the Public Procurement Order is attempting to facilitate, without even considering the technological complexity and

the time which will be required to import substitute PAVAN CHOUDARY CHAIRMAN & DIRECTOR GENERAL, MTAI



mattresses and post that, expanded into Last year, we expanded into the complete home

solutions range. We have been fortunate to grow very fast this financial year and are on track to hit about ₹450 crore

CHAITANYA RAMALINGEGOWDA CO-FOUNDER AND DIRECTOR, WAKEFIT.CO

SHORT TAKES

Manufacturing rebounds in China

Beijing: China's factory activity rebounded in March from a three-month slowdown as export orders rose, a survey showed Wednesday. A monthly index of manufacturing issued by the China's statistics agency and an industry group rose to 51.9 from February's 50.6 on a 100-point scale on which numbers above 50 show activity expanding.

MG to support eight startups

New Delhi: MG Motor India Wednesday said it has further extended support to eight startups with which it could explore synergies. These synergies could be in the areas of customer service, iSMART and telematics, battery management, blockchain, augmented reality and virtual reality, and autonomous technologies, the company said in a statement. "This is part of the MG Developer Program & Grant programme that aims at nurturing start-ups.

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Washington, March 31: India's economy has bounced back amazingly from the Covid-19 pandemic and nationwide lockdown over the last one year, but it is not out of the woods yet, according to the World Bank, which in its latest report has predicted that the country's real GDP growth for fiscal year 21/22 could range from 7.5 to 12.5% .

The Washington-based global lender, in its latest South Asia Economic Focus report released ahead of the annual spring meeting of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF), said that the economy was already slowing when the Covid-19 pandemic unfolded. After reaching 8.3% in FY17, growth decelerated to 4% in FY20, it said.



The slowdown was caused by a decline in private consumption growth and shocks to the financial sector (the collapse of a large nonbank finance institution), which

compounded pre-existing weaknesses in investment, it said. Given the significant uncertainty pertaining to both epidemiological and policy developments, the Given the significant uncertainty pertaining to both epidemiological and policy developments, the real GDP growth for FY21/22 can range from 7.5 to 12.5%, depending on how the ongoing vaccination campaign proceeds

real GDP growth for FY21/22 can range from 7.5 to 12.5%, depending on how the ongoing vaccination campaign proceeds, whether new restrictions to mobility are required, and how quickly the world economy recovers, the World Bank

said. "It is amazing how far India has come compared to a year ago. If you think a year ago, how deep the recession was...unprecedented declines in activity of 30 to 40%, no clarity about vaccines, huge uncertainty about the disease. And then if you compare it now. India is bouncing back, has opened up many of the activities, started vaccination and is leading in the production of vaccination," Hans Timmer, World Bank Chief Economist for the South Asia Region, told PTI.

However, the situation is still incredibly challenging, both on the pandemic side with the flare up that is being experienced now. It is an enormous challenge to vaccinate everybody in India. the official said. "Most of the people underestimate the challenge," he said.

HCCB aims zero accident working environment



POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, March 27: Hindustan Coca-Cola Beverages (HCCB), one of India's top FMCG companies, has for the first time collaborated with Indo German Focal Point (IGFP), a leading non-profit organisation aimed at promoting safety, health and social protection of workers in enterprises, state and non-state institutions; in order to raise awareness on industrial safety and social security.

In line with this vision, HCCB conducted an event in association with IGFP, supported by the government of Odisha that included trainings for companies in the Khorda Industrial Estate to ensure a "zero accident" working environment.

The event was inaugurated by Niranjan Sahu, member of Odisha Public Service Commission and sub-collector, Khorda Administration, presided over by Sanat Kumar Mohanty, (OAS) Collector & DM - Khordha.

G Ganesh, Khorda Factory Head HCCB, said, "HCCB and IGFP have similar visions when it comes to ensuring worker safety and we are leveraging the synergy to relay the importance of industrial safety and social security to other players as well."

The workshop also included a virtual presentation made by Bernard Treichel. Speaker from International Social Security Association (ISSA) Geneva on "Vision zero – For a safe workplace" which focused on measures that can be implemented to ensure accident prevention and zero accidents in industries

MoU signed by NALCO. others on 'tech development'

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, March 31: A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed on "Technology development for holistic utilisa-

₹10,900 cr PLI push for food processing industry

The Union Cabinet, chaired by PM Narendra Modi, approved the scheme which will help create 2.5 lakh jobs by 2026-27, boost exports and facilitate expansion of food processing capacity

AGENCIES

New Delhi, March 31: The government Wednesday approved a production-linked incentive (PLI) scheme for the food processing sector, entailing an outlay of ₹10,900 crore.

The Union Cabinet, chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, approved the scheme which will help create 2.5 lakh jobs by 2026-27, boost exports and facilitate expansion of food processing capacity to generate processed food output worth ₹33,494 crore. The incentive under the scheme would be paid for six years ending 2026-27.

The PLI for the food processing sector with ₹10,900 crore-incentive has been approved. The decision is a fitting tribute to our farmers.' for 12-13 sectors. Already, PLI has Food Minister Piyush Goyal said been announced for six sectors. while briefing the media about the "Today, PLI for the food pro-



cabinet decisions The effort is to take the coun-

try's food processing to a next level amid the rising global demand for Indian ready to eat foods, organic products, processed fruits and vegetables, marine products and mozzarella cheese, he said. The government said the objec-

tives of the scheme are to support food manufacturing entities with stipulated minimum sales and that are willing to make minimum stipulated investment for expansion of processing capacity and branding abroad to incentivise emergence of strong Indian brands.

Information and Broadcasting Minister Prakash Javadekar, who was also present at the briefing. said that the government in the Budget had announced a PLI scheme

cessing industries has been approved," he added.

According to the government, the first component under the scheme relates to incentivising manufacturing of four major food product segments: ready-tocook/ready-to-eat foods, processed fruits and vegetables, marine products and mozzarella cheese.

Innovative and organic products of small-to-medium enterprise (SMEs), including eggs, poultry meat, egg products in these segments, are also covered under the first component.

The second component relates to support for branding and marketing abroad to incentivise emergence of strong Indian brands.

Highlighting key features of the scheme, Food Processing Industries Secretary Pushpa Subrahmanyam said, "The government will issue an EoI by the end of April.

Core sectors' output contracts 4.6% in Feb

AGENCIES

New Delhi, March 31: The output of eight core sectors declined by 4.6% in February, the steepest contraction in the last six months which experts said could drag the overall industrial production in the month into the negative territory.

All the key segments, including coal, crude oil, natural gas, and refinery products, witnessed a decline in production, according to the official data released Wednesday.

The growth rate of the eight infrastructure sectors -- coal, crude oil, natural gas, refinery products, fertilisers, steel, cement and electricity -- stood at 6.4% in February 2020. Last time in August 2020, the sectors had recorded a negative growth of 6.9%. In January this year, the segments have registered a positive growth of 0.9%.

According to the data, coal production declined by 4.4%, crude oil by 3.2%, natural gas by 1%, refinery products by a steep 10.9%, fertilisers by 3.7%, steel by 1.8%, cement by 5.5% and electricity by 0.2% in February.

According to Commerce and Industry Ministry data, during April-February 2020-21, the eight sectors' growth declined by 8.3% as compared to (+) 1.3% in same period of the previous fiscal.

Commenting on the figures, ICRA Ltd Principal Economist

Aditi Navar said that given the

THE STEEPEST CONTRACTION he 4.6% decline is the steepest

contraction in last six months which experts said could drag the overall industrial production into

negative territory The growth rate of the eight infrastructure sectors stood at

6.4% in February this year According to the data, coal Approduction declined by 4.4%, crude oil by 3.2%, natural gas by 1%, refinery

products by a steep 10.9%, fertilisers

by 3.7%, steel by 1.8%, cement by 5.5% and electricity by 0.2% in March 2021, which should result in a modest growth of around

2% in Q4 FY2021. 'The lead indicators such as the core sector, auto output and non oil exports have revealed a decidedly mixed trend for February 2021. Based on the available data. we expect the contraction in the IIP (index of industrial production) to deepen to 2-3% in

Interest rates on **PPF, NSC slashed**

New Delhi: A big cut in small savings schemes will deliver a blow to savers who depend on these schemes for income and social security. Conversely, this will reduce interest rates, bring down the cost of capital and spur capex and stock markets. The government revised the interest rates on small savings with effect from April 1 with a massive cut Wednesday. The interest on savings deposit will be cut from 4% to 3.5% annually, while Public Provident Fund (PPF) is down from 7.1% to 6.4%. Similarly, 1 year time deposit has been cut from 5.5% to 4.4% quarterly. The senior citizen savings schemes rate is cut from 7.4% to 6.5%.

Hitachi acquires GlobalLogic

Tokyo: Hitachi Ltd. is buying US digital engineering services company GlobalLogic Inc. for \$9.6 billion, the Japanese industrial, electronic and construction conglomerate said Wednesday. Tokyo-based Hitachi said the acquisition of the Silicon Valley company will strengthen Hitachi's digital operations.

sharp base effect, the core sector output is expected to expand by 9-11%

February 2021 from 1.6% in January 2021," she said.

LPG cylinder price to fall by ₹10 from today Now, book mini-trucks online through ezTruck

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, March 31: State-run oil marketing companies (OMCs) will reduce the price of domestic LPG cylinder by ₹10 per cylinder from April 1. Domestic LPG cylinder will cost ₹809 per cylinder in

Delhi, effective April 1. In a statement Wednesday, OMC major Indian Oil Corporation said that prices of crude oil and petroleum products in the international market have been on a constant uptrend since November 2020. 'As India is largely import-de-

pendent on crude oil and the prices are market-linked, the increase in



international prices resulted in increase in the domestic price of petroleum products," the statement said. "However, due to growing worries about rising Covid-19 cases in Europe and Asia and concerns over the side effects of the vaccine. prices of crude oil and petroleum product in the international market softened in the second fort-

night of March 2021."

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, March 31: A new venture ezTruck has been launched Wednesday aiming at providing easy Mini Truck booking platform for commercial transportation.

The founder of the startup Kali Prasad Rath said, "We provide services such as lorry transport, professional house moving and office moving. We have also partnered with reputable and experienced drivers to ensure that your goods will be transported safely and securely to your destination."

The new initiative and first in Odisha aims to provide an experi-



ence in a new and fresh way to book moving deliveries in Bhubaneswar and Cuttack

Rath said that trucks will be available on time, on-time delivery to the client, priority on safety security, hygiene, quick recovery in case of technical/mechanical failure.

Booking will be starting from April 1 through online platform. People can download the ezTrick app from play store or IOS store. The app is easy to handle and they can reach to their nearest truck at a short span of time. According to the founder, the startup has occupied over 500 vehicles and they are expecting to register over 5,000 vehicles during the months of June and July, 2021. Rath aims to avail three bookings every day. The company has the high am-

bition to be present in other parts of the state as well. "At present, we will provide service in Cuttack and Bhubaneswar. But after two months, we hope to be present in other part of the state. We will focus only in Odisha," he said.

tion of red mud for extraction of metallic values and residue utilisation" between Research and development (R&D) organisations (CSIR-Institute of Minerals and Materials Technology (CSIR-IMMT), Bhubaneswar; CSIR-National Metallurgical Laboratory (CSIR-NML), Jamshedpur; Jawaharlal Nehru Aluminium Research Development and Design Centre (JNARDDC), Nagpur and Aluminium Industries (National Aluminium Company Ltd. (NALCO), Hindalco Industries Ltd., Vedanta Ltd) at CSIR (IMMT) auditorium here Wednesday.

Bauxite residue (red mud) is produced in the process of alumina extraction from bauxite. Bayer's process is the principal industrial means of processing bauxite to produce alumina (aluminium oxide).

India tops in real-time digital transactions in 2020: Report

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Mumbai, March 31: India retained the top spot in terms of digital payments in 2020 with 25.5 billion realtime payment transactions, showed a report by ACI Worldwide and GlobalData

In 2020, the transaction volume share in India stood at 15.6% and 22.9% for instant payments and other electronic payments respectively, while paper-based payments had a considerable share of 61.4%, it showed. "This is poised to change by 2025 where share of volume by instant payments and other electronic payments is expected to rise to 37.1% and 34.6% respectively, leaving the volume of paper-based transactions at 28.3%," it said.

Furthermore, by 2024 the share of real time payments volume in overall electronic transactions will exceed 50%, according to the report. China followed India and held

the second spot with 15.7 billion transactions. South Korea took the third spot, followed by Thailand and the UK in the fourth and fifth.

"More than 70.3 billion real-time payments transactions were processed globally in 2020, a surge of 41 per cent compared to the previous year, as the Covid-19 pandemic dramatically accelerated trends away from cash and cheques towards greater reliance on realtime and digital payments," it said.

The second installment of 'Prime-Time for Real-Time,' first launched in 2020, analyses global real-time, account-to-account payment volumes and forecasts across 48 global markets. It projects a Compound Annual Growth Rate (CAGR) for real-time payments of 23.6 per cent from 2020 to 2025.

"India's journey of creating a digital financial infrastructure has been characterized by collaboration between the government, the



regulator, banks and fintechs. This has helped to advance the country's goal of enabling financial inclusion and also provided rapid payments digitization for citizens.' said Kaushik Roy, VP and head of product management, Asia, ME and Africa, ACI Worldwide.

Roy added that the pandemic has further acceler ated adoption of digital pay ments with many first-time users adopting digital payments and significant uplift by merchants.

"As the industry evolves, we expect to see increased adoption across

different users and volume growth driven by mass adoption, recurring payments, transit payments as well as cross-border transac-

tions," he added. As the pandemic continues to drive changes in consumer and business behaviours, banks, merchants and in-

India's termedijourney of creating a aries digital financial infrastructure has been characterised by collaboration between the government, the regulator, banks and fin-techs. This has helped to advance the country's goal of enabling financial inclusion and also provided rapid payments'

digitisation for citizens KAUSHIK ROY, VP AND HEAD OF PRODUCT MANAGEMENT, ASIA, ME AND AFRICA ACI WORLDWIDE

> across the payment ecosystem are responding rapidly, prioritizing the

shift to digital to protect current revenue streams, and searching for new ones through a fully digitised customer experience.

With millions of people globally having to change the way they work and live - and the way they shop and pay - mobile wallet adoption rose to an historic high of 46 percent in 2020, up from 40.6 per cent in 2019 and 18.9 per cent in 2018. Countries like Brazil, Mexico and Malaysia where many people historically relied on cash are now some of the fastest adopters of mobile wallets.

"The pandemic has cast the spotlight on the importance of digital payments and robust payment infrastructures, condensing a decade of anticipated innovation into one year and creating human behavioural changes that will not reverse as we emerge from the crisis," said Jeremy Wilmot, Chief Product Officer, ACI Worldwide.











health & fitness



Diabetes drug may be new weapon against HIV

New York: A team of researchers has discovered an important vulnerability of the AIDS-causing retrovirus HIV, and has shown in preclinical experiments that a widely used diabetes drug, metformin, seems able to exploit this vulnerability.

The findings, published in the journal Nature Immunology, suggests that HIV (human immunodeficiency virus), when it infects immune cells called CD4 T cells, helps fuel its own replication by boosting a key process in the cells' production of chemical energy.

They also found that the diabetes drug metformin inhibits the same process and thereby suppresses HIV replication in these cells, in both cell-culture and mouse experiments.

"These findings suggest that metformin and other drugs that reduce T cell metabolism might be useful as adjunct therapies for treating HIV." said researcher Haitao Guo University of North Carolina.

About 38 million people around the world are living with HIV infection, according to the World Health Organization's most recent estimates.

Doctors currently treat these infections with combinations of antiretroviral drugs to suppress HIV replication. However, many patients despite this treatment show



signs of residual viral replication and immune impairment.

Even patients who respond well to antiretroviral drugs must take them indefinitely, since HIV inscribes itself into the DNA of some infected cells, and the drugs cannot clear this viral genetic "reservoir." Moreover, the toxicity of anti-HIV drugs means that many patients can take them only inter-

mittently. Thus, despite progress, there is still much room for improvement in HIV treatment. For the study, the team analyzed

CD4-cell gene expression data from a study of HIV-infected people and found that the gene-expression patterns most closely related to poor outcomes among these patients involved an energy-production process called oxidative phosphorylation.

They then found that drugs and other chemical compounds that inhibit oxidative phosphorylation in CD4 cells can inhibit HIV's ability to replicate in these cells.

The team confirmed with further experiments in primary human CD4 cells, and in mice with human CD4 cells, that metformin suppresses HIV replication in these cells.



London: A team of researchers has found that the processing of visual information is altered in depressed people, a phenomenon most likely linked with the processing of information in the cerebral cortex

In the study, published in the Journal of Psychiatry and Neuroscience, the processing of visual information by patients with depression was compared to that of a control group by utilising two visual tests.

In the perception tests, the study subjects compared the brightness and contrast of simple patterns.

"What came as a surprise was that depressed patients perceived the contrast of the images shown differently from non-depressed individuals," said researcher Viljami Salmela from the University of Helsinki.

Patients suffering from depression perceived the visual illusion presented in the patterns as weaker and, consequently, the contrast as somewhat stronger, than those who had not been diagnosed with depression.

"The contrast was suppressed by roughly 20 per cent among non-depressed subjects, while the corresponding figure for depressed patients was roughly 5 per cent," Salmela explains.

Identifying the changes in brain function underlying mental disorders is important in order to increase understanding of the onset of these disorders and of how to develop effective therapies for them. the team said.

The researchers consider it necessary to carry out further research on altered processing of visual information by the brain caused by depression.

"It would be beneficial to assess and further develop the usability of perception tests, as both research methods and potential ways of identifying disturbances of information process-

ing in patients," Salmela said. Perception tests could, for example, serve as an additional tool when assessing the effect of various therapies as the treatment progresses.

"However, depression cannot be identified by testing visual perception, since the observed differences are small and manifested specifically when comparing

groups," Salmela



Gum infection may cause elevated BP

dults with periodontitis, a severe gum infection, may be Significantly more likely to have higher blood pressure (BP) compared to individuals who had healthy gums, a new study revealed.

The findings, published in the journal Hypertension, indicate that diagnosis of gum disease was associated with higher odds of hypertension, independent of common cardiovascular risk factors.

"Patients with gum disease often present with elevated blood pressure. especially when there is active gingival inflammation, or bleeding of the gums," said lead author Eva MuAoz Aguilera from the University College London in the UK. "Elevated blood pressure is usually asymptomatic, and many individuals may be unaware that they are at increased risk of cardiovascular complications. We aimed



to investigate the association between severe periodontitis and high blood pressure in healthy adults without a confirmed diagnosis of hypertension," Aguilera added. Periodontitis is an infection of the



pants was 35 years, and 52.6 per cent were female. All participants underwent comprehensive periodontal examinations including detailed measures of gum disease severity, such as full-mouth dental plaque, bleeding of the gums and

the depth of the infected gum pock-

Caffeine intake during pregnancy linked to smaller babies

regnant women who consumed caffeine as little as half a cup of coffee a day on an average had slightly smaller babies than pregnant women who did not consume caffeinated beverages, a new study revealed.

The study found corresponding reductions in size and lean body mass for infants whose mothers consumed below the 200 milligrams of caffeine per day -- about two cups of coffee -- believed to increase risks to the fetus.

Smaller birth size can place infants at higher risk of obesity, heart disease and diabetes later in life.

"Until we learn more, our reults suggest it might be prudent to



analyzed data on more than 2.000 und produced when caffeine is

0.44 centimeters shorter (about .17 inches), and had head circumferences 0.28 centimeters smaller (about 0.11 inches).

Based on the women's own estimates of the beverages they drank, women who consumed about 50 milligrams of caffeine a day (equivalent to a half cup of coffee) had infants 66 grams (about 2.3 ounces) lighter than infants born to non-caffeine consumers. Similarly, infants born to the caffeine consumers also had thigh circumferences 0.32 centimeters smaller (about 0.13 inches)

The researchers noted that caffeine is believed to cause blood vessels in the uterus and placenta to constrict, which could reduce the blood supply to the fetus and inhibit growth. Similarly, researchers believe caffeine could potentially disrupt fetal stress hormones, putting infants at risk for rapid weight gain after birth and for later life obesity, heart disease and diabetes. IANS

chronic health conditions. The median age of the partici-

gum tissues that hold teeth in place that can lead to progressive inflammation, bone or tooth loss.

For the study, the team included 250 adults with generalised, severe periodontitis and a control group of 250 adults who did not have severe gum disease, all of whom were otherwise healthy and had no other

ets

Blood pressure assessments were measured three times for each participant to ensure accuracy.

Individuals with gum disease were twice as likely to have high systolic blood pressure compared to people with healthy gums, the researchers said.

limit or forego caffeine-containing beverages during pregnancy," said researcher Katherine L Grantz from the NIH's Eunice Kennedy Shriver National Institute of Child Health and Human Development. For the study, published in the JAMA Network Open, the team

racially and ethnically diverse women at 12 clinical sites who were enrolled from 8 to 13 weeks of pregnancy.

From weeks 10 to 13 of pregnancy, the women provided a blood sample that was later analyzed for caffeine and paraxanthine, a com-

broken down in the body.

Compared to infants born to women with no or minimal blood levels of caffeine, infants born to women who had the highest blood levels of caffeine at enrollment were an average of 84 grams lighter at birth (about three ounces), were

Most of us feel bloated after a heavy meal, when we have some digestive problems or when we are stressed out. There is a feeling of fullness and tightness in the abdomen which may cause abdominal pain. Practising yoga improves digestion by increasing blood flow to your digestive tract and twisting poses compress and massage your internal organs, which help relieve bloating and gas

Yoga asanas to relieve bloating and gas

Apanasana

This asana is also known as the 'wind relieving pose'. It not only helps to release the build-up of gas and improve digestion but also helps in detoxifying the entire system. Lie down on your back and place your hands on the knees. As you exhale, hug your knees to your chest. Rock your knees from side to side to maximise stretch. Do this for five to ten breaths and release your knees. When you inhale, loosen your grip to allow your legs to move away from your stomach.





Malasana

Also known as the Garland Pose, it is good for digestion as it helps you release all the gas out of your system that is blocking your intestines from functioning normally. Begin in the Mountain Pose (Tadasana), with your feet slightly wider than hip distance apart. Bend your knees deeply, sinking down until your hips are lower than your knees, a few inches off the floor. Bring your palms together at heart center and wedge your elbows one at a time, to the inside of your knees. Push your elbows into your knees to open your hips and gently press the inside of your knees into your elbows. Stay in this pose for 30 seconds to a minute. To get out of the pose, either sit back onto your buttocks or push back up to standing.

Setu Bandha Sarvangasana

Also known as the Bridge Pose, it will open up your gut, allowing blood to flow smoothly and subsequently, will help relieve bloating and pain. Setu Bandha Sarvangasana. Lying on your back, place your

feet flat on the floor. Fold your knees and keep your feet hip distance apart on the floor, 10-12 inches from your pelvis, with knees and ankles in a straight line. Keep your arms beside your body, palms facing down. On inhalation, press the back of your shoulders and your feet into the floor and lift your hips up.

Supta Matsyendrasana

Also known as the Spinal Twist, this pose is great for digestion as it helps your blood flow through your body, especially your gut. Lying on your back, bring your arms out to the sides with the palms facing down in a T position. Bend the right knee and place the right foot on the left knee. Exhale and drop the right knee over to the left side of your body,

wisting the spine and lower back. Gently push your right knee using your left hand to touch the ground. Make sure your right arm is extended out to the side at shoulder height. Breathe and hold for 6-10 breaths. To release, inhale and roll the

hips back to the floor, and exhale the leg back down to the floor. Repeat the same process on the other side.

AGENCIES



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'LOOKING FORWARD TO ANOTHER UNBEATEN TOUR'

With their morale high after an unbeaten tour of Europe, the Indian men's hockey team left for a competition trip to Argentina Wednesday. The six-match tour against Argentina includes four games apart from the back-to-back FIH Pro League matches April 11 and 12. "Though I missed out the Europe tour due to personal reasons, I was closely following the matches and it was very encouraging to see how the team performed against Germany and Great Britain. We are looking forward to yet another unbeaten tour," captain Manpreet Singh said in a Hockey India press release.





CR7 scores in Portugal win

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Madrid, March 31: Belgium and the Netherlands scored 15 goals combined in big routs in World Cup qualifying, while Portugal got one from Cristiano Ronaldo in its victory against a Luxembourg team that tinkered with another shock result.

Belgium crushed Belarus 8-0 to stay at the top in Group E, while the Dutch trashed Gibraltar 7-0 to go second behind Turkey in Group G, Tuesday.

Minnow Luxembourg, which opened with a surprising win against Ireland, looked on its way to pulling off another upset after it took the lead against Portugal, but the visitors came from behind to stay at the top of Group A along with Serbia, which earlier defeated Azerbaijan with another double by Fulham forward Aleksandar Mitrovic.

After being held scoreless in the first two qualifiers this year, Ronaldo scored his 31st goal in World Cup qualifying early in the second half in Portugal's victory at Luxembourg.

He has now scored for Portugal in every calendar year since his first international goal in 2004, and moved six away from tying the all-time scoring record for a men's national team. The record of 109 goals is held by former Iran striker Ali Daei, the only other male soccer player to surpass the 100-goal milestone.

Gerson Rodrigues had put the hosts ahead in the 30th minute but Diogo Jota equalized for Portugal in the second minute of stoppage time before Ronaldo and Joao Palhinha added second-half goals.

Portugal was coming off a 2-2 draw

against Serbia. Both teams are tied with seven points each from three matches.

Ireland, the other Group A team, played a friendly against World Cup host Qatar and was held to a 1-1 draw, staying winless in 11 games under coach Stephen

Kenny **BELGIUM CRUISE**

Hans Vanaken and Leandro Trossard both scored a pair of goals as Belgium trounced Belarus with four goals in each half. The home victory left Belgium three points ahead of the Czech Republic, which lost 1-0 at Wales thanks to a late Daniel James goal after an assist by Gareth Bale.

Wales and Belarus are a point behind the Czech Republic with a game in hand. **DUTCH ROUT**

Gibraltar, ranked 195th in the world,

kept the Netherlands largely at bay before the break but collapsed in the second half on the artificial turf of Victoria Stadium.

The visitors added to their 1-0 halftime lead with four goals by the 64th, then got two more closer to the end. Memphis Depay had a double for the Dutch, which trails Turkey by a point after three matches.

Turkey missed a chance to earn its third straight win after squandering a 2-0 lead in a 3-3 draw with Latvia.

Mitrovic continued his hot streak by scoring a double in Serbia's win at Azerbaijan. He has scored five goals in the first three qualifiers. He also had a double in the opening 3-2 win against Ireland, and found the net once in the 2-2 draw against Portugal.

Barty, Medvedev rise to challenge tough Miami heat



ASSOCIATED PRESS

Miami, March 31: Aryna Sabalenka clearly labored in the final set of her match. Frances Tiafoe seemed to barely have the energy needed to reach the post-match handshake. Conditions were tough at the Miami Open. The top seeds, however, were up to the challenge. World No.1 Ash Barty of Australia won the final nine points to finish off the seventh-seeded Sabalenka in a three-set women's quarterfinal Tuesday, while men's top-seeded Daniil Medvedev of Russia reached the quarters with part of a day where the American men's contingent was pared from four to one, with Sebastian Korda the lone round-of-16 survivor for the U.S. The 20-year-old Korda stunned fifth-seeded Diego Schwartzman of Argentina 6-3, 4-6, 7-5 for the biggest win of his career to date. And it'll make for an interesting Thursday for the Korda family: he'll be in the Miami quarterfinals that day while his sisters, Jessica and Nelly, will be playing in the first round of the first women's golf major of the year, the ANA Inspiration. Korda, whose father Petr Korda reached No.2 in the world during his stellar career, put on a show to delight the evening crowd. He was broken at 5-4 in the third to give Schwartzman hope, then responded by breaking the Argentine right back and finally serving out the match

the quarterfinals. Rublev beat Marin Cilic 6-4, 6-4 on Tuesday night.

After some early clouds cleared out and bright sunshine starting pounding down, the mid-afternoon temperature reached the mid-80s Fahrenheit (upper 20s Celsius) at

SMILES TO A MILLION ENERGY SECURITY

By then, it was maybe a bit cooler than the brutal conditions that players endured in the day session -but still tough, which Korda appreciated. Korda will face fourthseeded Andrey Rublev of Russia in



Hard Rock Stadium and the humidity made it feel even hotter.

Barty didn't wilt, ousting Sabalenka 6-4, 6-7(5-7), 6-3 for her third three-set win in four matches at the tournament. Medvedev beat Tiafoe 6-4, 6-3, and has gone 10-1 in sets against the American in their past four head-to-head matchups.

Barty faced seven break points in the match and saved them all. She'll meet No.5 seed Elina Svitolina in Thursday's semifinals: Svitolina eased past Anastasija Sevastova 6-3, 6-2 Tuesday night to make the final four in Miami for the first time.

Tiafoe was a quarterfinalist at Miami in 2019 and couldn't repeat that feat. nor John Isner. He wasted a match point during a third-set tiebreak and fell to seventh-seeded Roberto Bautista Agut of Spain 6-3, 4-6, 7-6(9-7).

Bautista Agut will face Medvedev in the quarterfinals. Medvedev had 11 aces and showed no signs of wear, two days after cramping in the heat during a third-round win.

It was Isner's earliest Miami exit since 2017, when he lost in the third round. He won the tournament in 2018 and lost the final in 2019 to Roger Federer in straight sets.

Tiafoe needed a medical timeout in the second set of his match, the heat and humidity taking its toll. He was up a break at the time, and the match simply slipped away from there.

No.22 seed Taylor Fritz of the US also bowed out, falling to No.32 Alexander Bublik of Kazakhstan 6-7(5-7), 6-3, 6-4. Bublik will face No.21 seed Jannik Sinner of Italy in the quarterfinals; Sinner advanced with a 6-3, 6-2 win over Emil Ruusuvuori of Finland.

No.26 seed Hubert Hurkacz of Poland pulled off a mild upset, beating No.12 Milos Raonic of Canada 4-6, 6-3, 7-6(7-4). Hurkacz is off to the quarters to face No.2 seed Stefanos Tsitsipas of Greece, a 6-2, 7-6(7-2) winner over No.24 Lorenzo Sonego of Italy in the final match Tuesday night.







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sports

SIGH OF RELIEF FOR SHAMI



(From L) Mohammed Siraj, Navdeep Saini, T Natarajan and Shardul Thakur have impressed Mohammed Shami (bottom) in Australia tour

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, March 31: Senior India pacer Mohammad Shami says the performance of the team's 'net' bowlers in the historic triumph in Australia has shown that the transition will be smooth when the current attack walks into the sunset.

The pace quartet of Shami, Ishant Sharma, Jasprit Bumrah and Umesh Yadav, arguably India's best ever, has been instrumental in the team's success overseas. However, none of them were available when India breached fortress Gabba to win their second consecutive Test series Down Under.

Someone like a Mohammad Siraj became the leader of the attack in his debut series and injuries meant that net bowlers like Shardul Thakur; T Natarajan and Washington Sundar

got unexpected opportunities which they grabbed with both hands.

and given them valuable exposure,'

getting injured during the series "The voungsters will be ready and Ishant not being around. to take over from us when our time Asked what impressed him the (to retire comes). The more they most about the likes of Siraj and play, the better they will get. I think Thakur, Shami said: Whoever the transition will be very smooth



comes in has an open mind, talks frankly and is supremely confident. They are ready to bowl with the new ball or old ball. The way they performed in Australia shows their character.

"Beating Australia in Australia once is a very big achievement, we were able to do it twice, that too with no senior bowlers around. It has shown we can rely on the voungsters.

Shami said the success of the current group boils down to the joy they share in each other's success. Giving his own example, Shami said he was helped massively by Ishant when he made his debut and that taught him to share his wisdom with the youngsters coming into the side.

The highly skilled Shami also shed light on his relationship with Ishant, who played his 100th Test dur-

ing the home series against England. 'What do I say about him. He is

the best guy around. Doesn't give you the feeling that he has played double of what you have played. When I had come in, he had already played about 50 games.

"Since day one he never behaved like a senior. He likes mingling and laughing around. His behaviour has taught me to how to treat a voungster

"When a youngster joins, it is imperative that an established player talks to him about everything under the sun, it lifts his confidence. If you have someone like Ishant around. I don't you think can feel down for a long time.

Talking more about the bond they share, Shami added: "It is a game of confidence and how you can execute plans. We have different skills, Ishant, Jassi and I and we keep reminding each other of our respective skills and persist with them.

"We are pushed by each other when we are tired. This fast bowling group is just wonderful. The last four five years with them have been really special. We have enjoyed each other's success and this is something you should learn from the Indian team. There are no talks behind the back.³

While Shami broke his wrists while batting in Australia, he has not had any major fitness issues ever since he changed his regimen post 2014.

With the IPL and a busy international season lined up, Shami is focussing on getting fitter as a cricketer. "Skill stays with you so I just try to better my fitness. The training schedule changed massively post 2014 and the way I have changed my eating habits (no more biryani) are also a big achievement," Shami added

BYJU'S BYJU'S NDIA NDIA

Kohli on top spot in

ODIs, Bumrah slips

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Dubai, March 31: India captain Virat Kohli retained his top spot in the ICC rankings for ODI batsmen, while pacer Jasprit Bumrah slipped a place to fourth position in the bowler's list released, Wednesday.

Kohli, who had scores of 56 and 66 in the first and second ODIs against England, has 870 points in his kitty. Bumrah, who was rested from white-ball series against England, slipped a place to fourth among bowlers and has 690 points.

India limited overs vice-captain Rohit Sharma is ranked third, behind Pakistan's Babar Azam, while KL Rahul has moved up from 31st to 27th spot.

All-rounder Hardik Pandya has achieved a career-best 42nd position among batsmen after scores of 35 and 64, and Rishabh Pant has entered the top 100. Seam bowler Bhuvneshwar

Kumar, who took three for 42 in the final match, has gained nine slots to reach the 11th position. which is his best since being 10th in September 2017. Shardul

Thakur's haul of four for 67 in the same match has enabled him to move up to 80th spot from 93rd.

Stokes has advanced four places to 24th, scoring 99 off 52 balls in the second ODI and is up to second among all-rounders, while Jonny Bairstow has retained the seventh place after touching a career-high 796 rating points with his player of the match effort of 124 in the same match. Moeen Ali is up nine places

In the T20 batting list, both Rahul and Kohli have dropped a rung and are now placed fifth and sixth respectively. No other Indian featured in the top 10 among bowlers and all-rounders in the latest T20I rankings.

In the Test rankings, spinner Ravichandran Ashwin retained his second spot behind Australia's Pat Cummins. In the ODIs' allrounders' list, Ravindra Jadeja is ranked third with Ashwin occupying the fourth spot.

Kohli remained fifth among batsmen while swashbuckling wicketkeeper batsman Pant and Rohit shared the seventh spot.

adventz

30 COVID-19 positive in SAI at Patiala, Bangalore

cautionary RT-PCR tests at

reports received today indi-

cate that all Olympic-bound

COVID negative," the SAI state-

ment read.

he added.

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, March 31: Thirty sportspersons and support staff across disciplines were found to be COVID-19 positive after 741 precautionary tests were conducted at the National Centres of Excellence in Patiala and Bangalore, the Sports Authority of India (SAI)

said Wednesday. However, the positive results in both the centres do

coaches and support staff in ration of India's Olympicmind, the SAI conducted prebound athletes.

"There is no question of National Centre of Excellence training being suspended. The in Patiala and Bangalore. The COVID positive cases have been isolated separately inside the colour-coded SAI camathletes at both centres are puses and they are doing fine with no serious medical issues." the source said.

It is learnt that out of 26 pos-The NIS Patiala is primarily itive cases in Patiala, 16 are the base of Olympic-bound sportspersons and rest are supboxers, track and field athport staff. The 16 quarantined letes and weightlifters along sportspersons include 10 boxwith sportspersons from some ers and six track and field athother disciplines letes, the SAI source said. The boxers who have tested In Bangalore, a race walkpositive include Asian silvering coach is among those who medallist Deepak Kumar and India Open gold-medallist have tested positive for the virus. "The good thing is that Sanjit. "Some more test reall positive cases are not sults are awaited at this point," Olympic-bound athletes. The another source stated. positive athletes have been The Olympic Games are isolated and the entire campus scheduled to be held in July-August later this year. The has been sanitised." All weightlifters housed at athletes gearing up for the big event have begun travelling the premier sports institute have returned negative for outside the country for trainthe virus. The SAI source also ing and competition after confirmed that the positive spending several months either cases in both the centres will staying at home or being conhave no bearing on the prepafined to their hostel rooms.

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with Shami, Bumrah, and Umesh



not include any Tokyo Olympicbound athlete. India's men's boxing chief coach CA Kuttappa and shot put coach Mohinder Singh Dhillon are among those who have tested positive for the virus in the recent drive at the National Institute of Sports (NIS), a SAI source confirmed to this agency. Later, SAI also issued a state-

ment which said that 313 and 428 tests were conducted in Patiala and Bangalore respectively. While 26 were found to be positive in Patiala, the Bangalore count stood at four.

'Keeping the safety of Olympic-bound athletes,

Ponting backs new skipper Pant

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, March 31: Delhi Capitals head coach Ricky Ponting is convinced that leading the side in the upcoming season of the Indian Premier League will make swashbuckling wicketkeeper-batsman Rishabh Pant an even better player. Pant was named the cap-

tain of Delhi Capitals for the upcoming IPL after regular skipper Shreyas Iyer was ruled tweeted.

out of the tournament after he injured his left shoulder during the recently-concluded

been in sensational form across formats this year. He played England's tour of India. match-winning knocks of 97 'Unfortunate that Shreyas and unbeaten 89 in the third will miss the tournament, but and the fourth Test against looking forward to seeing Australia to help India clinch @RishabhPant17 grab his opthe Border Gavaskar Trophy

portunity. It's well deserved Down Under. for his recent performances He followed that up with a

The highly-rated Pant has

and he's coming in with a lot brilliant century against of confidence. I'm convinced England in the fourth Test in captaincy will make him an Ahmedabad, forcing the selectors to include him in the even better player," Ponting white-ball squads.

Roy replaces Marsh for SRH

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi. March 31: England opener Jason Roy Wednesday replaced Mitchell Marsh in the Sunrisers Hyderabad (SRH) squad for the Indian Premier League (IPL) beginning April 9 after the Australian all-rounder made himself unavailable due to personal reasons.

Marsh had got injured in the

first game of the 2020 edition and could not play thereafter. "Sunrisers Hyderabad have signed up England batsman Jason Roy as replacement for Mitchell Marsh, who has made himself unavailable for the en-

tire season owing to personal reasons," read an IPL update. Marsh, who made his IPL debut in 2010, has played a total of 21 games. His replacement Roy made his IPL debut in 2017

playing for Gujarat Lions and later featured for Delhi Daredevils (now Delhi Capitals) in the 2018 edition.

He has played a total of eight matches and scored 179 runs with one half-century to his name. SRH have acquired Roy at his base price of Rs 2 crore. Roy showed decent form in the recent ODI and T20 series against India but was not able to convert starts

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