



STRIKING GOLD
Actor Priyanka Chopra Jonas signs a deal with streaming platform of Amazon
LEISURE P2



INFRA WOES
Malkangiri continues to struggle with poor connectivity as half-done bridges trouble commuters
STATE P5



NO LALBAUGCHA RAJA
First time in its 86-year history, the iconic Lalbaugcha Raja will not be installed during the 11-day Ganeshotsav
TWO STATES P7

AMID DE-ESCALATION TALKS China deploys more troops along LAC

Two divisions of troops, each comprising 12,000 soldiers, along with heavy artillery are deployed on the Chinese side of the LAC

AGENCIES
New Delhi, July 1: Talks between the Indian and Chinese military delegates to resolve the border issue in Eastern Ladakh went on for around 12 hours, sources said. The meeting which started at 10.30 am ended at 11 pm Tuesday night, the sources said.
However, amid this de-escalation attempt, Indian intelligence agencies said Wednesday that Chinese People's Liberation Army has brought in troops of two more divisions along the Line of Actual Control near the disputed areas. The PLA troops have been deployed on the Chinese side of the LAC.
This will escalate the matter even though South Xinjiang military chief Major-General Liu Lin



BRAGGADOCIO
In Tibet region, China generally stations two divisions of troops
But now they have brought in two more divisions from far away locations
Indian troops along the Indian side of LAC (FILE PHOTO)
had agreed to disengage troops from Galwan Valley during talks with Indian counterpart, Lieutenant General Harinder Singh, the commander of Leh-based XIV corps.
"In total, China has deployed around 24,000 soldiers more in the eastern Ladakh region," said sources, adding that a division comprises of 12,000 soldiers. Sources further stated that the Chinese forces have also brought in heavy guns, tanks and fighter aircraft across the Line of Actual Control in a bid to aggravate the border situation. India is closely watching the de-

velopment across the Line of Actual Control and has decided to carry out mirror deployment in the region. Moreover, it may be mentioned here that the Tuesday-meeting was third such one between the two sides. The last two meetings at Corps Commander-level were held June 6 and June 22. While Tuesday's meeting was held in Chushul on the Indian side, the previous two took place in Moldo on the Chinese side.
"All contentious areas during the current stand-off were discussed to stabilise the situation," the sources said. China has agreed to move back in Pangong Tso but they did not. India claims Line of Actual Control at Finger 8 and Chinese are sitting between Finger 4 and Finger 5. Similar, differences exist in Depsang and Demchok.

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BAHUDA YATRA Three chariots reach Srimandir Lions' Gate



The three chariots at the Lions' Gate of Srimandir, Wednesday
PNN & AGENCIES

Puri, July 1: The Bahuda Yatra - return car festival - of Lord Jagannath and his siblings was organised here Wednesday in the absence of devotees, and amid tight security and curfew. The Holy City was virtually shut-down to prevent gatherings in view of the Covid-19 pandemic.
As the divine siblings - Lord Jagannath, his elder brother Lord Balabhadra and their sister Devi Subhadra - embarked on their return journey to reach the Lions' Gate of Srimandir, the administration appealed people to stay home and watch the rituals on TV. The three deities ended their annual nine-day sojourn to Srigundicha by riding their respective chariots.
SJTA sources said the Mangal Alati ritual of the deities was performed at the Adapa Mandap of Srigundicha temple at 3.50 am Wednesday. Lord Sudarshan, the holy weapon of Lord Jagannath, was the first to reach the chariot through Pahandi, followed by Lord Balabhadra and Devi Subhadra. Lord Jagannath was the last to ascend his chariot.
"All the deities were placed on their respective chariots through Pahandi procession by 9.55 am. Gajapati king Dibyasingha Deb performed the Chhera Pahanra ritual with a golden broom at 10.25 am. The pulling of chariots began at 11.25 am, at least 35 minute ahead of the schedule," said a Srimandir servitor.
MORE P3

CB arrests IIC hiding in woods

Biramitrapur IIC traced from Angul forest ■ Odisha police apologises to minor rape survivor

Bhubaneswar, July 1: Odisha Police's Crime Branch Wednesday arrested the inspector-in-charge (IIC) of Biramitrapur police station from a forested area in Angul in connection with the sexual assault case involving a minor girl.
"Crime Branch has traced and arrested Ananda Chandra Majhi, dismissed Inspector and accused in this case from forested area under Handapa PS of Angul district. He will be produced before judicial court now. Well done Crime Branch of Odisha Police," (sic) Odisha DGP Abhay said in a tweet.
The Odisha police also tendered an apology to the minor rape survivor Wednesday.
The accused IIC was placed under suspension June 26 for his alleged involvement in the rape and abortion of the 13-year-old girl, police said.
He was dismissed from service by DGP Abhay Wednesday, they said.
"His conduct was shameful. Our apologies to the young girl," the DGP tweeted.
The DGP had Tuesday ordered a Crime Branch probe into the incident. A four-member team of the Crime Branch visited Biramitrapur and



Accused IIC Ananda Chandra Majhi

Health Centre June 15, the police said.
According to a complaint lodged by the district child protection officer of Sundargarh district, the girl had gone to visit a fair at Biramitrapur March 25 but the event was cancelled due to the lockdown.
A police team on patrol duty found the girl roaming near a bus stand after she failed to return home from Biramitrapur.
When she was brought to the police station, the inspector allegedly raped her and released her the next morning, the complaint said. After that she was often called to the police station and allegedly repeatedly raped by some policemen, including the inspector.
The girl became pregnant after which her foetus was aborted, the complaint said. Six persons, including the inspector, doctor and the girl's stepfather, have been named as accused in the FIR.
Kavita Jalan, the deputy inspector general of police (Western Range), is supervising the case.
DGP has dismissed Inspector Ananda Chandra Majhi former IIC of Biramitrapur Police Station from service. His conduct was shameful. Our apologies to the young girl
-tweet by DGP ODISHA

CHSE +2 exams cancelled, CBSE model followed



POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 1: The state government, here Wednesday, cancelled examinations for all Plus-II pending subjects, conducted by the Council of Higher Secondary Education (CHSE), due to the spread of Covid-19 in the state.
The government also announced an alternative method of assessment, similar to the one announced by the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE). School and Mass Education minister Samir Ranjan Dash said, "Examinations for all the pending papers of all streams - Arts, Commerce, Science and vocational education - have been cancelled."
It may be mentioned here
erage of the marks in theory obtained in three papers will be awarded in the theory papers whose examination have not been conducted.
REPLICATING CBSE
For the students who have appeared in the examination in only three papers, the average of the marks in theory obtained in best of two papers will be awarded in the theory papers whose examination have not been conducted.
For the compartmental exams where candidate has appeared all the required papers, marks will be declared basis of their performance. The department would try to publish the results by July 31, he added.
"If the students are not happy with their marks,

IRREGULAR by MANJUL



Meet my star cast... who are also my cousins. We are making a movie against nepotism.

UPSC aspirants can change exam centre

New Delhi: The UPSC has allowed candidates for Civil Services (preliminary) examination, 2020 scheduled to be held October 4 to change their exam centres in view of coronavirus pandemic.
MORE P9

MARKET WATCH	
INDEX	VARIATION
SENSEX	35414.45 ↑ 498.65
NIFTY	10430.00 ↑ 127.90
CURRENCY	
DOLLAR	75.80 ₹0.02
EURO	84.88 ₹0.10
BULLION	
GOLD	₹48,170 ₹592
SILVER	₹48,801 ₹ 850

WEATHER	
BHUB	CTK
MAX	36.5°C
MIN	26.2°C
Humidity	95%
Rainfall	Nil
Forecast	Partly cloudy sky

LPG price hiked for 2nd month in a row, ATF price up by 7.5 pc

AGENCIES
New Delhi, July 1: Jet fuel or ATF price was hiked by 7.5 per cent Wednesday, the third increase in a month, while petrol and diesel rates were unchanged for the second day in a row.
Aviation turbine fuel price was hiked by ₹2,922.94 per kilolitre, or 7.48 per cent, to ₹41,992.81 per kl in the national capital, according to a price notification by state-owned oil marketing companies.
This is the third straight increase in ATF prices in a month. Rates were hiked by a record 56.6 per cent (Rs 12,126.75 per kl) June 1, followed by ₹5,494.5 per kl (16.3 per cent) increase June 16.
Simultaneously, non-subsidised cooking gas LPG rates were increased by Re 1 to ₹ 594 per 14.2-kg cylinder in the national capital. On the other hand, petrol and diesel rates were unchanged for the second day in a row.
This, after diesel rates scaled a new high after prices were hiked 22 times in just over three weeks.
While the diesel price has been hiked on 22 occasions since June 7, petrol price has been raised on 21 occasions.
The cumulative increase since the OMCs relaxed the cycle June 7 totals to ₹9.17 for petrol and ₹11.14 for diesel.

Attention! Now, you have to pay more for banking services

AGENCIES
New Delhi, July 1: From Wednesday many banking services and norms changed. These changes are going to directly impact bank customers. In order to give people some relief during the pandemic, the government had relaxed some rules of financial services like bank transaction charges after exhausting free cash withdrawal limit on ATM, minimum account balance.
The relaxation was announced for three months - April, May, June - the deadline was June 30, 2020.
Bank deposits: Bank account holders will get a lesser amount on bank deposits in terms of interest rates.
Savings account minimum balance: From July 1, all bank customers will have to maintain a minimum balance in their savings account (depending upon bank to bank). The amount varies from bank-to-bank.
ATM cash withdrawal rules: The SBI has waived off service charges for all ATM transactions made not only on SBI ATMs but other bank ATMs as well but it was till Tuesday. SBI allows eight free transactions to its regular savings account holders to transact in a month. Different banks have different ATM withdrawal rules.
Account Freeze: Reportedly, a bank account may become frozen if the banking customer fails to submit documents needed to continue the banking services.

US hit by wave of big ticket bankruptcies

AGENCIES
New Delhi, July 1: The US is witnessing a wave of bankruptcies of erstwhile storied names especially in the retail and energy sector due to Covid-19 pandemic.
The bankruptcies this year due to Covid-19 have already gone past the number and volume seen in 2008, the year of the global Financial Crisis.
The biggest bankruptcy has been Hertz, the car rental company.
The bankruptcy list is dominated by sectors like restaurants, construction, real estate, healthcare, oil and gas, retail, transportation, agriculture, banking and financial services and telecom.
Major US retailers J.C. Penney, Neiman Marcus, J. Crew, Gold's Gym, True Religion Apparels, among others, have filed for bankruptcy under Chapter 11 (Reorganization Bankruptcy) of the US Bankruptcy Code in the past few months.
Analysts expect more bankruptcy filings in industries like retail and the energy sector, which have been hit by lower demand.
Chesapeake Energy, a shale oil company, filed for bankruptcy protection Sunday. With assets of roughly \$16.2 billion and liabilities of \$11.8 billion, the filing represents the fourth-largest bankruptcy this year.
The other big bankruptcies include Latam Airlines, Frontier Communications, Intelsat, McDermott International, Whiting Petroleum, Avianca Holdings, Diamond Offshore Drilling, Extraction Oil and Gas, Hornbeck Offshore, Foresight Services, Unit Corporation, Chuck E Cheese, Stage Stores, LSC Communications and Quorum Health.
The bankruptcies this year have already gone past the number and volume seen in 2008, when began global financial crisis

GOLD PRICES HIT ALL-TIME HIGH
₹48,982
MCX Gold hit fresh all-time high per 10 gm Wednesday; rallying nearly 24 pc this yr
The precious metal had the best quarter, April-June, in more than four years in terms of price rise
Internationally, gold price is near an eight-year high, trading at around the \$1,800/oz
Experts predict that with the current trend, gold may reach historic levels around ₹65,000 per 10 gm in two years' time
Fear of second wave of Covid, easy liquidity by Central banks across the globe (which has pushed interest rates down) and trade war between USA and China are making gold an attractive hedging option
Analysts expect domestic futures to touch ₹52,000 per 10 gm in the next few months till Diwali

leisure



LOCKDOWN MAKES JAMIL LESS IGNORANT

Actress Jameela Jamil feels the COVID-19 has helped her become a less ignorant person. In an interview with Grazia magazine, Jameela spoke about how the ongoing pandemic changed her perspective about life.

WAITING FOR SMITH UNVEILS LINES OF LOVE

British singer-songwriter Harry Lloyd, also known as Waiting For Smith, has released his song *Lines Of Love* which was inspired by a long-distance phone call. The song is a plea for someone to hold on through a difficult time in their life.



FORTUNE FORECAST

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ARIES
You need to be very cautious today, says Ganesh. The results of a lot of hard work over a long time may be undone by one impulsive decision. After a stressful morning, you could just wish to spend time with children, playing their childish games.

TAURUS
This day, you will be able to express and communicate your ideas and feelings very convincingly, assures Ganesh. All those to whom you come in contact with today will be clear, and appreciative about whatever you tell them.

GEMINI
Your sensitive and emotional nature will prove to be a problem for you. Hence you need to control your emotions. Tread carefully when it comes to personal relationships. You need to wait for a better time before you think of proposing to that special someone, says Ganesh.

CANCER
You will be in a joyous mood. You will be delighted in whatever task you do. Financial matters will confound you, with even a petty issue causing tension.

LEO
You will be extremely serious about your work today and will work diligently to finish your tasks. You will be focussed and disciplined about your projects. You will feel the need to improve your style of functioning.

VIRGO
Ganesh advises you to keep your distance from partnership ventures. You are much better off all alone and have the ability to quell the stampede. Left to yourself, you are the best manager of your sphere of work.

LIBRA
Ganesh says that you will be able to attain a huge benefit because of your nature to take chances. Higher ups in the office will take notice of your skills and ability to work well. Seniors in your office will promote and inspire you to give your best. Ganesh says this is not a good time to get into a direct fight with anyone since it will lead to more problems and issues.

SCORPIO
Keep your eyes and ears open and believe in only what you see. Remember, believing in rumours may lead to ugly situations. Your efforts to be different and stand out would pay off well, predicts Ganesh.

SAGITTARIUS
The day begins on a bright note and you decide to flaunt your sunny side up, foresees Ganesh. At home front, sharing of work with your partner will keep the home atmosphere peaceful and harmonious. Both of you discover a joy in cleaning and cooking together.

CAPRICORN
At times you are very direct in your approach and often end up hurting your near ones badly. Today, you'll bandage some old wounds and make efforts to restore old relationships, says Ganesh. But, your struggle to improve rapport may not be as successful as you want it to be.

AQUARIUS
Sometimes it feels like you are stuck in a quicksand, and there is none out there to pull you out. But, the independent Aquarius is capable of dealing with adversities alone. And, that tendency shall hold you in a good stead even today.

PISCES
The mundane routine of daily life will finally catch up with you, and you will feel the urge to take a break and travel somewhere. And a break is well deserved considering the number of hours you have slaved over your current projects.

Multi-million dollar TV deal for Priyanka

Los Angeles: Actress Priyanka Chopra Jonas has signed a two-year multi-million dollar, first-look television deal with the global streaming platform Amazon.

A general meeting with Amazon Studios head Jennifer Salke led to the first-look deal.

"Priyanka and I bonded over a shared passion for diverse global storytelling," Salke said, adding: "Priyanka is drawn to exciting original content and characters that can resonate globally. She's a powerhouse producer, and we are thrilled to collaborate with her for years to come."

"My quest really is to be able to tell female stories, work with creators from around the world and create a cross-pollination of storytelling," Priyanka said, adding: "Amazon is such a great partner to do that be-

cause their reach and outlook is so global. My Amazon television deal is a global deal, so I can do Hindi language, I can do English language, I can do whatever language I want."

Presently, Priyanka is also collaborating with Amazon on two television projects. The first is *Sangeet*, an unscripted series co-produced with her husband, Nick Jonas. The other project is *Citadel*, Anthony and Joe Russo's spy series in which she will star with Richard Madden.



ELNAAZ TO RAISE FUNDS FOR MIGRANT WORKERS

Berlin: *Sacred Games* actress Elnaaz Norouzi is going to celebrate her birthday by doing a good deed.

Ahead of her birthday July 9, Elnaaz will raise money to help feed six to seven thousand families of Indian migrant workers. This will be done in association with an NGO. Whatever money is raised by Elnaaz and her fans, will directly go to the NGO for the cause.

"A few weeks back I saw a video of some migrant workers crying and saying that they don't even have money to eat roti. It was such a heart-breaking video. I am helping the ones I know around me but there are so many more who need help," she said.

"I'm so fortunate and could survive and live well for one more year. I needed to give back. India has given me the life that I have now, I want to thank the people with this small gesture," added the Iran-born and German-raised actress.

Mumbai: Actress Jacqueline Fernandez feels cinema is the most beautiful fraud in the world. "Cinema... the most beautiful fraud in the world... inside looking out," Jacqueline posted on Instagram along with pictures of herself. In the images, the actress is seen wearing a shimmery top, has kept her hair open and has completed the look with subtle make-up and pink lip colour. In the first picture, Jacqueline is looking sideways, and in another she stares right into the camera while gazing outside the window. Recently, the actress shared that the COVID-19 pandemic taught her the importance of life and that each day needs to be valued. "This pandemic has helped me realise that life is too short. We need to value each day to the fullest and make the most of each day we are living," Jacqueline said. On the work front, Jacqueline recently made her digital debut in the web series *Mrs Serial Killer* and launched an online dance competition, *Home Dancer*.



City TikTok users not ready to bargain on national security

Bhubaneswar: With addition of millions of users every month worldwide, the Chinese mobile application TikTok was gradually becoming an addiction for countless teens and twines. However, it was often alleged that the app, despite providing a platform to the youth to showcase their skills, caused more harm than good to them. Therefore, the ban imposed by the Centre on several Chinese mobile apps including TikTok Monday to deal with the threat to country's sovereignty and security' came as a relief to many.

In the backdrop of Sino-Indian stand-off, some avid users, including a few celebrities, of this Chinese app tell *Orissa POST* on how they view the restrictions. Actress Manaswini who has more than 127K followers on TikTok says, "This popular app certainly offered a platform to the youth, those living in rural pockets in particular, to showcase their skills. However, I am with my country and my heart bleeds for our soldiers who made supreme sacrifices in the Galwan Valley in eastern Ladakh. We need to stand by the government and say 'no' to all those which are Chinese. I believe, we have enough talents in our country to design a better app than TikTok."

Annie Anubhuti is another actress who has 134K followers on TikTok. "I have no hesitation in admitting that the app has helped



me hone my dancing and acting skills. But there is no question of compromising with the security of my country. Therefore, the ban on the Chinese apps sounds logical given the unprovoked aggression of PLA and killing of our bravehearts," says Anubhuti.

"Now, we should pull our shocks up to develop indigenous apps that can compete with the ones churned out by Chinese," she adds.

Charan who works with a local IT company as a software developer has been extremely critical of TikTok for long. "I am really excited with the blocking of this app as it will surely save precious time of the youth who used to spend hours shooting short clips," says the jubilant programmer.

He goes on to add, "I don't think, the ban will have much an impact on Indians as they can still reveal their skills using apps like Bolo Indya which already has clocked 100K+ downloads in a short span. Then there are other popular Indian apps such as Roposo, Chingari and Share Chat also."

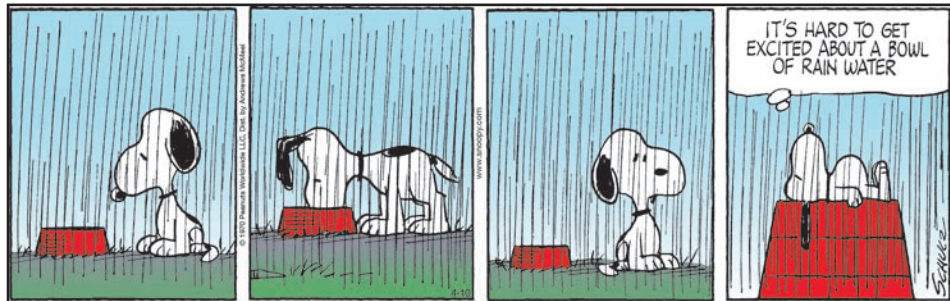
Lifestyle coach Riddhi Varma who recently launched her online counseling sessions for the youth feels that it is just a matter time the youngsters overcome this TikTok madness. "We have enough talent in our country to develop something better than this time-consuming Chinese app," adds Varma.

Homemaker Madhusmita Parekh who is also a TikTok star says she is now searching for other options to show her skills on social media platforms.



'Cinema is most beautiful fraud'

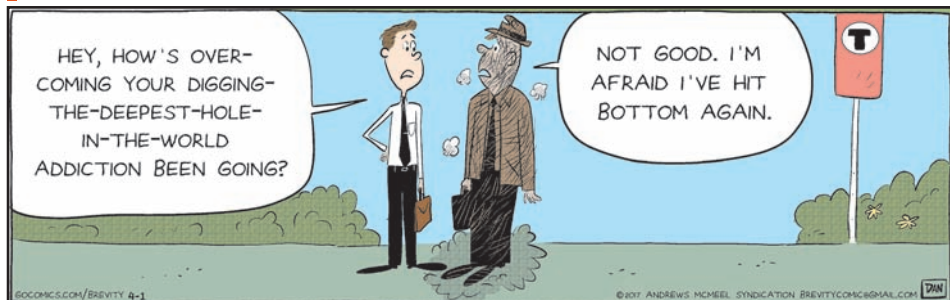
PEANUTS



CALVIN AND HOBBS

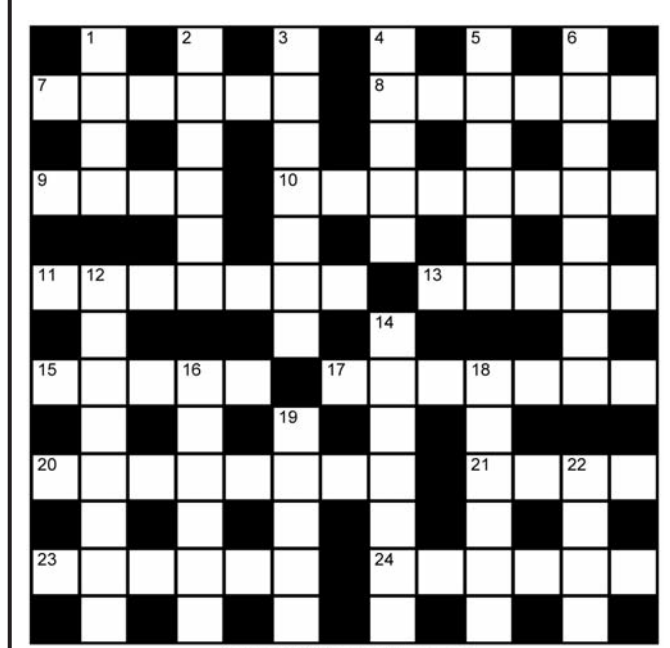


BREVITY



FUN post

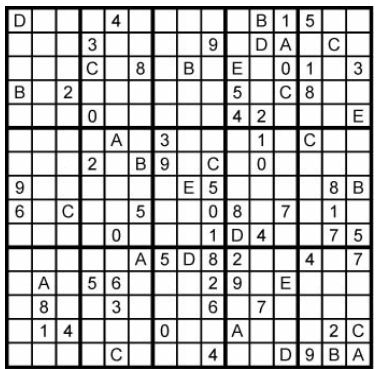
CROSSWORD



- Across**
7 Wool of a sheep
8 Waterways
9 Yoked beasts
10 Earthquakes
11 Chums
13 Wrinkled fruit
15 Confuse
17 Wood eater
20 Splendour
21 Endure
- Down**
23 Lassie was one
24 Tease
1 Bend
2 Liqueur
3 Couches
4 Rip-offs
5 Fisherman
- 6 Orchestra member**
12 Swimmer's bane
14 Kipper
16 Devoid of friends
18 Free-for-all
19 Force back
22 Auctioneer's shout

SUDOKU

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



SOLUTIONS

CROSSWORD
DECADES FIBRE
W T E E A A L
E N T I G E D T E T R A
L E T A H P
L I D D E T O N A T E S
U E O U E
P I A N O S P R O B E S
O G U S W
M I N U S C U L E T A M
P O L L G R I
O O M P H T R I D E N T
U E A R A A R
S A N D Y Y A N G T Z E

SUDOKU
8 0 5 D 7 4 8 8 C 1 9 E 3 A 2
C A 4 1 6 8 E 9 7 3 8 2 0 5
0 7 0 9 2 A 6 4 8 3 5 1 6
1 9 8 3 6 2 5 0 6 A 0 7 4 8
2 E 6 A 8 5 0 1 3 4 7 0 9 C 4
E 6 A 3 0 9 3 4 0 B C 1 3 7
0 2 3 5 8 B 1 7 9 D 6 A 4 C
5 C D 7 2 E 0 A 6 9 4 3 8 B 1
9 8 B 4 D 1 C 2 5 E 0 7 6 3 A
7 4 1 C A B 3 3 E 2 5 8 0 0 9
8 7 0 B 4 3 9 C 1 A D 6 2 5 E
6 8 2 9 E D 5 0 A 7 3 C 1 8 4
4 5 C 6 1 0 3 E 8 8 2 9 A 7 D
A E D 2 3 7 4 6 8 0 1 B C 9 3
3 1 9 8 C A 7 2 0 5 E 4 6 0

CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW



PRAYER TIME

An elderly woman offers prayers to Lord Jagannath from a distance near Srimandir, Wednesday

DANCE & DEVOTION

Artistes perform Odissi at Saradhabali near Srigundicha temple ahead of the pulling of chariots, Wednesday



ORGANISATIONAL RESTRUCTURING

Anang, Acharya, 6 others given sr VP posts in BJD

The party may induct about 20 general secretaries and as many secretaries in the new team soon

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 1: On the auspicious occasion of Bahuda Yatra, Chief Minister and BJD President Naveen Patnaik started re-shaping his team by appointing new vice-presidents.

For the first time since inception of the BJD in 1997, the party has appointed senior vice-presidents as office bearers.

Senior leaders Anang Uday Singh Deo, Bijayshree Routray, Prasanna Acharya, Prasanna Patasani, Prafulla Samal, Lal Bihari Himrika, Ananta Das and Bimbadhur Kuanr have been appointed as senior vice presidents of the BJD, party general secretary (media affairs) Manas Ranjan Mangaraj said in a press note.

Similarly, Mangala Kisan, Soumya Ranjan Patnaik, Debi Prasad Mishra, Bikram Keshari Arukha, Usha Devi, Pramila Mallick, Badri Narayan Patra, Pradip Kumar Amat and Padmanabha Behera were appointed as new vice-presidents.

The new vice-presidents have been given charge of various programmes of the party.

Mangala Kisan has been given charge of tribal empowerment & minority affairs while Soumya Ranjan Patnaik will be responsible for art, culture & human resources development. Likewise, Debi Mishra will be in charge of Odisha; Mo Parivar



programme, Arukha environment, Usha Devi social welfare, Pramila Mallick women empowerment, Badri Patra regional development, Amat Sashakta Odisha and Behera SC empowerment.

Naveen appointed senior leader Sanjay Das Burma as general secretary, (headquarters). Earlier, Jajpur MLA Pranab Prakash Das was appointed as the organizational secretary.

Appointment of new office bearers was put on hold due to Covid-19 pandemic. Since today is an auspicious day, Naveen started induction of new leaders in the team, sources said.

Naveen was reelected as the BJD president for the eighth consecutive term in February this year. BJD sources said the party may appoint about 20 general secretaries and as many secretaries in the new team. The regional party will soon restructure its three key frontal organisations — students, youth and women wings — and form committees for various district units, the source said.

Home delivery charges go up in City

MANISH KUMAR, OP

Bhubaneswar, July 1: With the petrol and diesel prices shooting above ₹81 per litre, several home delivery service providers here have increased the delivery charges while many are planning to revise tariffs.

Several mobile application platforms and other service providers are citing the fuel price hike as the reason for increasing their charges and shifting the burden to customers. Many of the service providers who were providing free home delivery service have also started increasing their charges.

"Owing to increase in fuel prices, per packet milk cost will see an increase by 50 paise on MRP which will be included in delivery charges

FUEL PRICE HIKE

from July 6. This is required to support the delivery team," an update from HomeXpress, home delivery app for milk and groceries, told its customer.

Several other players have also joined the fray. "Earlier, we were providing free home delivery but now we have started charging ₹20 per delivery for below ₹1,000 orders. The fuel price hike has increased our overhead expenditures," another retail brand said requesting anonymity.

"Many middle class salaried employees, engaged in private sector, have been receiving half the salaries from their employers due to rev-

enue loss. At this juncture, the double whammy will add more costs monthly and it may compel citizens to venture out more for shopping," said Nitya Panigrahi, a housewife from Bhubaneswar.

Debasis Mohanty, a civil service aspirant from city, said, "The repercussions of hiked fuel prices are already felt. Several essential items have become costlier by a few rupees. Several traders are now feeling the pinch of fuel price hike."

While several of the home delivery operators have already escalated their charges, some are now planning to revise their charges based on assessment of their businesses and additional costs likely to be incurred due to fuel price hike.

Govt hikes bus fares

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 1: Following a continuous rise in fuel prices, the state government, Wednesday, hiked bus fares for passengers. The increase in ticket prices is for across the categories and has been implemented through the automatic fare adjustment mechanism.

The Commerce and Transport department in a notification said that the fares of ordinary and express buses have been increased by 2 paise per km.

For deluxe and AC buses the fare has been increased by 4 paise per km.

Now, ordinary buses will charge 72 paise/km while express buses will

Now, ordinary buses will charge 72 paise/km while express buses will charge 75 paise/km

Deluxe buses will charge ₹1.05/km as against ₹1.01 p/km

charge 75 paise/km. Earlier the fares were 70 p/km and 73 p/km respectively.

On the other hand, deluxe buses will now charge ₹1.05/km as against ₹1.01 p/km. Similarly, air conditioned buses will charge ₹1.27 per km as against ₹1.23 per km earlier.

The fare was revised due to increase in diesel price from ₹73.42 per litre June 16 to ₹78.67 per litre July 1, official sources said.

The bus fares in the state were last revised June 16.

Elderly can consult docs online through Sachetak app

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 1: With a view to protecting senior citizens from the novel coronavirus, the Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC), Wednesday, organised an awareness programme at Biju Patnaik Park here to help the elderly people understand the functionality and benefits of the Sachetak app.

The app, developed by Bhubaneswar Smart City Limited (BSCL), and commissioned by BMC, exclusively meant for the co-morbid and senior citizens in the Capital city.

More than 50 senior citizens of the city attended the first edition of the programme between 6am and 7am with a lot of enthusiasm and curiosity to know about the mobile application.

During the hour-long programme, Water Resources department joint secretary and senior supervising officer, Covid-19, BMC, Subrat Panda joined the event as chief speaker and spoke about how the app helps in consulting doctors online.



BENEFITS OF BSCL'S APP

- Helps in exploring resources shared on Covid protection
- Consulting a doctor online for specific diseases
- Viewing responses from doctors
- Viewing updates on Covid quarantine and positive cases in your ward as well as other wards and Bhubaneswar and Odisha
- Updating the profile if necessary
- Share feedback & refer friends and family

"As elderly population and senior citizens are most vulnerable to Covid-19, they should use this app extensively to consult with specialist doctors without stepping out of their homes," Panda advised.

Similarly, Zonal Deputy Commissioner of BMC South East Zone, Ansuman Rath, too addressed the occasion and urged senior citizens to take precautions even at home such as wearing masks, avoiding exposure to those who cough or sneeze and to avoid unnecessary

visits to public places.

"The Sachetak app will prove to be a really helpful tool for senior citizens to avail basic medical services as well as in the dissemination of essential information related to Covid-19. Such programmes will be conducted on a regular basis at different places in order to reach out to the senior citizens of the city to ensure their safety and well-being," Rath explained.

Besides, Covid sachetaks and community organisers of South East

Zone participated in the workshop and helped senior citizens personally in addressing their queries and downloading the app on the spot.

"It's a very good initiative by BMC to protect the vulnerable people (adults/senior citizens) as they become more prone to infections due to several factors. We cannot avoid some of these risks but as a society, we have to learn and obey the guidelines and cooperate with the government for the larger good," said RB Nayak, 73, a retired IAS officer, who

How to download it

The Sachetak app is currently available for download on the Google play store of android phones and one can view it on www.sachetakapp.in. Users can register themselves using their mobile number and a one-time password (OTP). After registering, one has to enter the age, occupation, ward of residence in Bhubaneswar, address, comorbidity or existing diseases, any type or surgery etc, caregiver and doctor details. This database will help identify people at risk. The BMC can also use this data to plan healthcare camps in advance for a particular area where vulnerable groups are present.

attended the programme and was seen downloading the Sachetak App.

The app helps the civic body in keeping track of the vulnerable section of the society in the city.

FRAMES FROM BAHUDA YATRA



Lord Balabhadra, Devi Subhadra and Lord Jagannath being taken to their chariots from Srigundicha temple in Puri through Pahandi procession, Wednesday



Lord Sudarshan being taken to the chariot

Gajapati king Dibyasingha Deb performs Chhera Pahanra ritual



Hundreds of servitors pull Taladhwaaja chariot of Lord Balabhadra towards Srimandir

Deities to glitter in golden attire today

POST NEWS NETWORK

Puri, July 1: Lord Jagannath and his siblings Lord Balabhadra and Devi Subhadra would be adorned with Suna Beshha (golden attire) on their chariots at the Lions' Gate of Srimandir here Thursday.

However, the unique ritual would be performed without the congregation of devotees on the Grand Road due to the Covid-19 restrictions, said an official of the Shree Jagannath Temple Administration (SJTA).

As per the legend, Suna Beshha ritual of the deities was introduced during the reign of Gajapati king Kapilendra Deb. This ritual is also called as 'Bada Tadhau Beshha' of Lord Jagannath, said a researcher.

UNIQUE RITUAL

The unique ritual would be performed without congregation of devotees on the Grand Road due to the Covid-19 restrictions

Servitors would collect gold and silver ornaments from the outer chamber of Ratna Bhandar amid tight security Thursday morning

As per the tradition, the three deities are adorned with gold and silver ornaments as part of the Suna Beshha ritual, he added.

SJTA sources said servitors would collect gold and silver ornaments from the outer chamber of Ratna Bhandar, temple treasury room, amid tight security Thursday morn-

ing. The ornaments would be spruced up in the presence of Bhandar Mekap and skilled goldsmiths.

"Servitors would adorn the deities with the ornaments between 4pm and 5 pm. The deities will appear in golden attire for two to three hours," said the temple official.

The district administration has imposed curfew at the stretch from Market Square to the Lions' Gate for the organisation of Suna Beshha ritual. "Security personnel would be on high alert during the ritual. Security cordons would be thrown around the three chariots. We urge the devotees to witness the Suna Beshha ritual on television," said SJTA chief administrator Krishan Kumar.



Darpadalan chariot rolls on the Grand Road



Nandighosa chariot on its way to Srimandir

PICS: YAGNESWAR AND ANIL

Massive violations of lockdown norms in Ganjam

RESTRICTIONS IMPOSED BY THE ADMINISTRATION GO FOR A TOSS IN GANJAM AS CROWDS SWARM AROUND MARKET PLACES LITTLE CARING FOR THE NEED TO ADHERE TO SOCIAL DISTANCING NORMS

POST NEWS NETWORK
Berhampur, July 1: Restrictions triggered by the spread of coronavirus have gone for a toss as people in Silk City rushed to stock up essentials with the lifting of the four day shutdown, Wednesday.
All market places in the city witnessed unprecedented crowds with people resorting to panic buying violating social distancing guidelines imposed by the Centre and the state government.
The fact that the district has turned out to be a Covid hotspot in the country seemed no worry for locals. Apprehending further spread of the disease, the district administration had imposed a complete shutdown in the city for four days



Police checking mask-wearing by bikers and commuters in Berhampur

The Covid positive cases are alarmingly rising in Ganjam while the virus has spread its tentacles in 35 areas under BeMC
starting from Saturday.
People were seen crowding various markets, vending zones, grocery stores, fruits shops, garment stores. Shops selling sports items and books also witnessed unprecedented crowds. Temples were seen opened with people crowding outside violating social distancing norms on the occasion of 'Bada Ekadashi' and

Swab tests of 141 Nalco staff conducted after DGM's death

BANARPAL: Swab tests of 141 staff of Nalco were conducted Wednesday at a stadium on its campus.
Office premises of a deputy general manager (DGM), outpatient department (OPD) of the company's hospital, staff canteen were sanitised and sealed as well to prevent any spread of COVID-19 infection. The company authorities have started contact tracing of the DGM. Nalco staff and locals are known to be panicky.
Reacting to this and seeking anonymity, a senior official said, "Some specific locations in the campus have been shut for coming two days. Swab tests were conducted of persons who were suspected to have come in contact with the DGM."
A DGM of Nalco had died Monday night after he was attacked



OPD of Nalco hospital being sealed

by COVID-19. His wife also tested positive for having coronavirus infection. These developments have triggered fear among staff as well as local residents in the area.

2 locals, Covid warrior infected

Baripada: Even as COVID infection cases are on the rise in Mayurbhanj, the administration is worried about local infections are coming up in some areas. Five people tested positive for COVID Wednesday while two of them were due to local infections. The total tally of the infection has touched 213 Wednesday. One infected is a COVID warrior. Badasahi, Karanjia, Bijatala, Rasgobindapur blocks and Baripada town have reported one infection each. The person infected with the virus in Baripada is a COVID warrior. The district administration has started contact tracing of the local infection cases.

Teacher mastermind behind pangolin racket

POST NEWS NETWORK

Athagarh, July 1: Forest officials of Athagarh Forest Division in Cuttack district Tuesday arrested the mastermind of the pangolin smuggling racket from Dhenkanal. Briefing the media here Wednesday, Athagarh Divisional Forest Officer (DFO) Sasmita Lenka identified the accused as Shyamsundar Behera of Badamba area. He is the headmaster of a primary school at Kayalapada panchayat under Tangi-Choudwar block.
Giving details of the arrest, the DFO said that a special team of forest staff had recently rescued a pangolin near Madhusudan Setu while it was being taken on a scooter and arrested a person.
"During the interrogation of the arrested person, we came to know that the chain of the pangolin racket is linked to Angul and Redhakhol. In the course of the investigation, five persons were arrested from Angul and Dhenkanal.
From the statement of the five arrested persons, we found that Behera was the mastermind of the racket. As he frequently changed his SIM cards, we were unable to trace his whereabouts.
With the help of the cyber police, we finally nabbed him yesterday," the DFO added.
She said the accused will be forwarded to the court after the interrogation.
It may be noted here that forest



During the probe, it was learnt that the chain of the pangolin racket is linked to Angul and Redhakhol. In the course of the probe, 5 persons were arrested from Angul and Dhenkanal

officials of the Athagarh division had busted a big pangolin smuggling racket November 19, 2019 and arrested six persons.
Pangolin scales were recovered from the arrested people. The arrested admitted their involvement in trading of the reptiles and their scales in and outside the state.

Woman ends life at quarantine centre

POST NEWS NETWORK
Balasore, July 1: Police recovered the body of a migrant woman who allegedly committed suicide at a quarantine centre in Balasore.
The body was found hanging from a tree inside the premises of a quarantine centre at Jayarampur village Tuesday night. The woman along with her family returned from Hyderabad June 20. She was put in quarantine at Jayarampur High School.
Officials in charge of the quarantine facility failed to notice that the woman had gone missing for sometime.
On being informed, police seized the body and launched a probe Wednesday.
They are also trying to find out the reason as to why the woman took the drastic step. Police also blamed security personnel at the quarantine facility for the mishap, even as Covid infection cases in the district are alarmingly increasing.

LIVELIHOOD MATTERS



A man hawking aluminum utensils for a living at Kacheri Square in Sambalpur, Wednesday

Half-done bridges trouble people in fringe pockets of Malkangiri

POST NEWS NETWORK

Malkangiri, July 1: Even seven decades after Independence, lack of commuting infrastructure has been a major problem in the hilly and remote areas of the bordering parts of Malkangiri.
Even as these areas are crisscrossed by multiple rivers, this inconveniences people in the absence of bridges. Though work of some bridge projects were undertaken years ago, their construction moves at a snail's pace, a report said.
Every year, floods in Kadigada and Saptadhar rivers leave life miserable in fringe areas of Malkangiri and Koraput. In the absence of bridges, life comes to a standstill for days together.
After bridges were built across rivers in 2002, commuting problems were sorted out to some extent. However, people living in Kalimela and Potteru panchayats have to suffer a lot in the absence of bridges on Tamasa river.
Locals have been demanding a bridge across the river near Kanyashram. In view of the problem, the government had undertaken construction of a bridge two years ago, but only 30 percent of the work was completed.



Construction of a bridge moving at a snail's pace in Kalimela

It was learnt that the contractor has failed to complete the work in time while no action is being taken against him.
Another bridge project near MV-11, Korukunda and Tarakota villages has remained incomplete. Once completed, the bridge will facilitate communication between Malkangiri and Balimela via Chittrakonda.
"The rate at which the bridge work at Tarakota and Korukunda is being carried out, it may not be completed before monsoon hit the area," locals raved. The district administration had held a meeting on disaster management May 7 and laid stress on expediting bridge projects.
After the bridge near MV-11 was completed, a decision at the meeting was taken to inaugurate that within seven days. However, a month has since passed, but it has not been dedicated to people. Some ancillary works are yet to be completed.
Vehicles negotiate with an old culvert near the bridge. Subash Chandra Patra, the executive engineer of the roads and buildings department, said some works are yet to be completed and its inauguration has delayed.

Tribals seek end to old land dispute



POST NEWS NETWORK

Daringbadi, July 1: Land dispute between scheduled tribe and non-scheduled tribe has remained un-

resolved for over 20 years in Daringbadi of Kandhamal district. Locals of Kutlari, Gadma and other villages in Jhijariguda panchayat accused the administration of failure to sort out the land issue that started in 2000.
The land dispute between the two communities is becoming rather acute with sporadic tension in the area, a report said. Some lands, being cultivated by the ST people over years, have been acquired by non-tribals.
Upset over the long pending issue, people of Gadma and Kutlari recently held a meeting in this regard. After the meeting, they drafted a letter and sent it to the District Collector, seeking immediate steps by the district administration to resolve the issue.
They pointed out that tribals have farmland of 300 acres in the area since 1999. They have been eking out their living by doing cultivation. But some non-tribals forcibly occupied their land through fraudulent means. Though they had taken the legal route, the issue has not been settled till date.
The tribals demanded that steps be taken to reclaim their land from non-tribal people and land pattas be issued to them.
Padhan Millick, a villager, said, "Memoranda were submitted by tribals to the Collector, southern range RDC, local police, tehsildar and the revenue inspector in this regard."
However, Brahmanigaon IIC Ranjit Kumar Muni said the situation in the area has been stable. "Due to COVID situation, we have taken some time. Talks were held between the two sides. I will talk to the local tehsildar for solution to the issue," the IIC said.

₹22-crore allocated for Khallikote cluster varsity

Berhampur: Five years after it was set up in Ganjam, construction of a permanent campus of the Khallikote Cluster University has started. Rs 22 crore will be spent for the project to be spread over 20.2 acres of land at Satchit Vihar. Its foundation stone was laid by Governor Ganeshi Lal through videoconferencing at Pallur Hills Wednesday. It is stated that construction of the administrative block and auditorium block will be completed in 18 months.

GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA
DEPARTMENT OF WATER RESOURCES
OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER
MECHANICAL DIVISION, BHUBANESWAR-3
e-mail I.D. smdivisionbbsr@yahoo.com
e-PROCUREMENT NOTICE NO. 2 (W)/2020-2021
No. A-162:- The Executive Engineer, Mechanical Division, Bhubaneswar on behalf of the Governor of Odisha invited against "e-procurement Notice No. 2(W)/2020-21 is hereby cancelled".
Executive Engineer
Mechanical Division, Bhubaneswar-3
OIPR-32385/11/0005/2021

Nuapada farmers 'gingerly' over crop failure

POST NEWS NETWORK

Nuapada, July 1: Even as the district administration expected to harvest a good ginger crop this year, farmers in the district were disappointed that government-supplied seeds have failed to germinate up till now, a report said.
The climatic condition of the district helps farmers go for ginger cultivation. However, 30 per cent of the government-supplied seeds this year have failed to germinate. Taking the matter seriously, senior officials in the district agriculture department are moving from door to door to take stock of the situation.
Ginger cultivation had started in the district on the advice of District Collector Madhusmita Sahoo. The district agriculture department and Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK) to-



Farmers preparing beds for ginger cultivation in Nuapada

About 45 farmers of Bhera, Saliha, Kodomeri, Jengera and Kotenchuan villages were provided with 50kg of ginger seeds each by ATMA
Officials of the agriculture department said, farmers have not followed the proper procedure. If the seedlings do not germinate, fresh ones will be provided
Technology Management Agency (ATMA). Likewise, 22 farmers of Palsabhadar village were provided with ginger seeds by MAFCC. Ginger

seeds supplied to farmers are known to be of Subhadra variety - a hybrid type.
Even though farmers went by the guidelines issued by the district agricultural department issued from time to time, the seeds did not germinate even after over 20 days.
Department officials said, farmers have not followed the proper procedure. Things will be clear after eight to 10 days. If the seedlings do not germinate, fresh ones will be provided. Hybrid varieties of seeds were purchased from Koraput".
Nuapada deputy director of agriculture Javed Mohammed, assistant agriculture officers Himanshu Kumar Mohapatra, Narendra Mishra, including agricultural scientist of KVK Nuapada Lakhn Lal Meena and several others visited the farmlands.

OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER
BHUBANESWAR (R&B) DIVISION NO II, BHUBANESWAR
eerb2_bbsr@yahoo.com
INVITATIONS FOR BIDS THROUGH e-Procurement
No. B-115:- Bid Identification No- C.C. (R&B) - 02
e-Procurement Notice No. 10 of 2020-21

Sl No	Name of the Work	Building Works.
1	Total No. of works	1 No. work
2	Estimated Cost	Rs.59,62,830.00
3	Class of Contractor	B & A
4	Period of Completion	6 (Six) Calendar Months
5	Type of Tender	Double Cover System.
6	Date & time of availability of bid document in the portal	From Dt.08.07.2020 to 17.00 hrs of Dt.23.07.2020.
7	Last Date & Time for Receipt of bids in the Portal	Dt.23.07.2020 up to 17.00 hrs
8	Opening of Bid through online	Dt.24.07.2020 at 11.00 A.M.
9	Name & Address of the Officer inviting Bid	Er. B.Jagabandhu Rao, Executive Engineer, Bhubaneswar (R&B) Division No II, Bhubaneswar

Further details can be seen from the e-procurement portal <https://tendersorissa.gov.in>
N.B.: Subsequent corrigendum / addendum if required shall be available in the website as indicated above.
Sd./- Executive Engineer, BBSR (R&B) Division No.II, BBSR
OIPR-34088/11/0002/2021

'Courts not to solve your personal issues'

issues, the country is already dealing with grave and tough times," said a single judge bench of the high court presided by Justice Suresh Kumar Kait.

The court's observation came while it was hearing a petition filed by the Delhi Police seeking cancellation of bail granted to the owner of Rajdhani School owner Faisal Farooqui in a case relating to the riots.

During the course of hearing, while the court was about to hear the matter, Delhi government counsel Rajesh Mahajan raised objections on the point that the said petition is non-maintainable as the authorisation of the Standing Counsel's office was not taken by the Centre.



'We wish to file an identical petition with the said prayers as the current petition isn't maintainable,' Mahajan told the court adding

Ministers. Opposing his submissions, Additional Solicitor General (ASG) Aman Lekhi clarified that the petition is filed by the Delhi Police and not the Centre. He also submitted that he is appearing in the matter on the directions of the L.G.

"On every occasion, they come and create noise. This is nothing legal and is only political. Lawyers shall not indulge in such a thing. It's a serious matter and we are not able to argue because of this," Lekhi argued before the court.

Following which the court became furious and said, "This controversy can't continue. What is this drama going on? You people

are creating ruckus in the court. This isn't acceptable."

He then asked the lawyers, "How can you change your stance like this, why Mr Rahul Mehra didn't appear before the court today. You can't appear as per your pleasure. This can't continue like this, I'll impose costs."

The court also asked the ASG to place on record the letter which authorised him to appear in the present case. The matter was adjourned post lunch. When the hearing of the matter resumed post lunch, the court was informed that the Additional Solicitor General (ASG) is not comfortable in appearing in the said matter.

HC SLAMS CENTRE, DELHI

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, July 1: After the tussle between the Centre and Arvind Kejriwal government again popped up in the courtroom over the representation of Delhi Police in matters concerning northeast Delhi

riots, the Delhi High Court while taking a strong note of the same remarked "courts are not here to solve your personal issues".

"Courts aren't here to solve your personal issues... Instead of wasting the time of the public, you both should concentrate on greater

NO LALBAUGCHA RAJA IN MUMBAI

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Mumbai, July 1: First time in its 86-year history, the famed and iconic Lalbaugcha Raja will not be installed during the upcoming 11-day Ganeshotsav, official sources said here Wednesday.

It will be replaced by a small idol of around 3-4 feet for the traditional 'puja' and other ceremonies, at the 127-year-old 11-day Ganesh festival, which starts on August 22.

This will be in adherence to an appeal by Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray to celebrate Ganeshotsav 2020 with more devotion and less pomp in the wake of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

"This year, we shall celebrate Ganeshotsav as 'Arogyautsav' with 11-days of blood and plasma donation camps, donate Rs 25 lakh to the CM Relief Fund for corona aid, help families of the soldiers martyred in the recent India-China border skirmish and Maharashtra Police personnel who lost their lives in the ongoing war against virus," Sudhir Salvi, Secretary, Lalbaugcha Raja Sarvajanic Ganeshotsav Mandal (LRSGM) told mediapersons.

Lalbaugcha Raja or King of Lalbaug is among the most popular and most visited Ganesh idols in Mumbai. Every year, millions of

MORE DEVOTION, LESS POMP



LALBAUGCHA RAJA OR KING OF LALBAUG IS AMONG THE MOST POPULAR AND MOST VISITED GANESH IDOLS IN MUMBAI

EVERY YEAR, MILLIONS OF DEVOTEES, INCLUDING CELEBRITIES LIKE AMITABH BACHCHAN VISIT THE FAMED PANDAL TO GET BLESSINGS OF THE DEITY

devotees, including celebrities like Amitabh Bachchan, Shilpa Shetty Sonu Sood, Ajay Devgn and others visit the famed pandal of Lalbaugcha Raja to get blessings of the deity.

Every day, 80,000 to 1 lakh people visit the pandal. During the festival, devotees offer donations in crores, including gold and silver ornaments being offered to the 'King of Lalbaug', as per the report.

In view of Thackeray's plea, all Ganeshotsav Mandals in the state took a voluntary decision to restrict the height of Ganesh to less than four feet, first time in over four decades since the trend of gi-

gantic idols started.

The normal imposing, 15-feet plus tall idol of Lalbaugcha Raja, and other mega-idols in Mumbai, Pune and other cities will be conspicuous by their absence in the Maharashtra Ganeshotsav celebrations.

A majority of the mandals will have subdued celebrations with small, manageable idols as there will be no huge processions or the elaborate immersion ceremonies at seafronts or other water bodies, as decided by the government.

Besides concentrating on social activities related to the pandemic, many huge mandals will make

arrangements to offer online "aarti", "puja" or "darshan" to the devotees to avoid crowds.

During a video conference with various Ganesh mandals, Thackeray asked them to set an example before the world about celebrating the festival in a simple way while keeping in mind their social responsibility.

Ganeshotsav is the most popular festival in Maharashtra. The pandals set up by various mandals in Mumbai and other places in the state attract thousands of devotees during the festivity.

The 10-day festival begins on 'Ganesh Chaturthi', which falls on August 22 this year.

Situation improves but 'no room for negligence'

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, July 1: Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal Wednesday reiterated that the situation in the capital city is now under control and not adverse as it was a month ago but warned that there is no room for complacency as the coronavirus is unpredictable.

Addressing a press conference, Kejriwal asserted that the situation is in-check due to increase in number of beds, testing, recovery rate and decrease in the death rate due to the coronavirus.

"The situation is under control and not as adverse as it was a month ago. This is due to our concerted efforts," he said, asking people to follow the social distancing norms and wear masks religiously.

He added, "Situation is improving in Delhi in the last few days. However, there is no room for complacency. This virus is unpredictable. We must continue our efforts with more vigour."

The Chief Minister, however, hinted that the situation predicted by his government a month ago did not turn out to be accurate.



The situation is under control and not as adverse as it was a month ago. This is due to our concerted efforts

"We had predicted that by June 30, there will be one lakh total cases and sixty thousand active cases, but now there are only 26,000 active cases, almost one-third. With the help of people, doctor, nurses, we have now controlled the situation," he added.

Last month, he had projected an exponential growth in the city's COVID cases. "We would hit one lakh cases and would require 15,000 beds by June 30," he had warned.

"There was fear. We have now arranged 15,000 beds in Delhi, but

there are only 5,800 people admitted right now. One month ago, there were only 8,500 beds. The number of COVID-19 patients is decreasing," Kejriwal added.

The 51-year-old leader further said that the recovery rate is also improving. One month ago, 38 per cent had recovered which has now improved to 68 per cent, he said.

He went on to say that the daily cases have also come down. "On June 23, the city recorded 4,000 new cases and yesterday only 2,200 tested positive."

Thackeray prays for a 'miracle'

Speaking after the 'mahapooja', Thackeray said he prayed to Lord Vitthal to make the country coronavirus-free

AGENCIES

Pune, July 1: Maharashtra Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray Wednesday performed the 'mahapooja' of Lord Vitthal at Pandharpur on Ashadhi Ekadashi and said he prayed for a miracle to overcome the coronavirus crisis.

Ashadhi Ekadashi, an important day in the Hindu calendar, is the 11th lunar day of Ashadha month.

I prayed to Mauli. We want to see a miracle. Show us a miracle. Human beings have given up. We don't have medicine. There is nothing. How to go on with life by covering the mouth with a strip, Thackeray tweeted after the 'mahapooja' at 2 am along with wife Rashmi.

Lakhs of warkaris (devotees of Lord Vitthal) from across Maharashtra and several other states through the temple town in Solapur district each year on Ashadhi Ekadashi.

There were only a handful on Wednesday after the state authorities cancelled the annual 'wari' pilgrimage - characterised by people walking to Pandharpur with palanquins -

due to spiraling coronavirus cases.

Maharashtra's coronavirus case tally rose to 1,74,761 on Tuesday with addition of 4,878 new patients while the death toll mounted by 245, including 57 fatalities in Mumbai, to 7,855, state health department said.

Thackeray and his wife performed the 'mahapooja' wearing face masks.

Speaking after the 'mahapooja', Thackeray said he prayed to Lord Vitthal to make the country coronavirus-free.

His son and state minister Aaditya Thackeray was also present at the 'mahapooja'. During the ritual, Aaditya apparently felt uneasy and returned to his car parked outside the temple for some time.

'Warkari' couple Vitthal Badhe and Anusuya Badhe, from Chinchpur-Pangul village in Pathardi taluka of Ahmednagar district, performed the mahapooja along with the Thackerays.

Curfew is in force in Pandharpur since Tuesday to prevent any gathering of people in the temple town, located around 350 km from Mumbai.



Sec 144 imposed in Maximum City

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, July 1: Mumbai police on Wednesday issued prohibitory orders under Section 144 of CrPC in the city, restricting movement of people in public places, and said the measure was taken to check rising COVID-19 cases. Mumbai Section 144 imposed to check rising COVID-19 cases.

With 903 new patients reported on Tuesday, coronavirus case tally in Mumbai increased to 77,197 while death toll rose to 4,554 with 93 more fatalities. The order says curbs on movement for non-essential work came into force from Wednesday and shall remain so till July 15, unless withdrawn earlier.

The order prohibits presence or movement of one or more persons in public places or gathering of any sort, a senior police official said. Police have prohibited gatherings of any sort, including at religious places subject to stipulations, he said.

The order said movement of one or more persons in areas designated as containment zones by the municipal authorities is prohibited, except for essential activities, supply of essential goods and medical emergency.

Police have also prohibited movement of one or more persons in



Sukha Singh Chhabra with his kin

103-YEAR-OLD VANQUISHES VIRUS

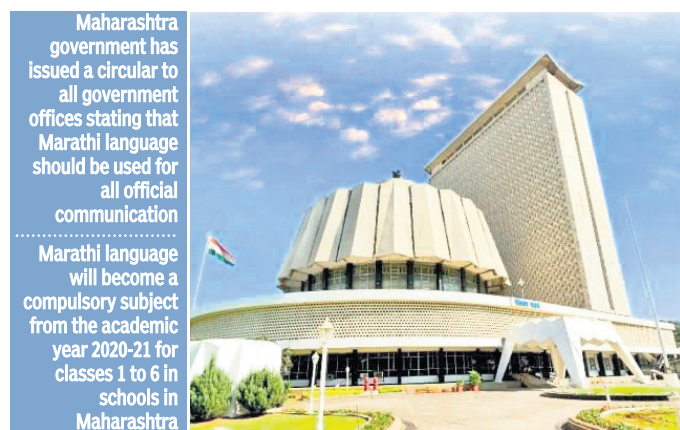
Thane: In a huge relief for his anxious family comprising many great-grandchildren, a sprightly 103-year old Sikh man here vanquished Covid-19 and has returned home to savour the victory, close relatives said. He is Sukha Singh Chhabra, who was wheeled out of Kaushalya Medical Foundation Trust Hospital on Monday in Thane -- and is ranked as India's oldest ICU survivor of Covid-19. Chhabra's 86-year old younger brother Tara Singh, who was also infected, spent days in the ICU, has now been shifted in the ward, awaiting discharge from the hospital in a couple of days.

the city between 9 pm to 5 am, except for medical emergencies, the official said, adding emergency services, government and semi-government agencies and their officials on duty are exempted.

Establishments providing essential services like food, vegetables, milk supply, medical and grocery stores, hospitals, medicines, pharma and related establishments are also exempted, the official said.

Maha's diktat to babus: No Marathi, No Pay Hike

OFFICERS ALSO NEED TO MAKE AN ENTRY OF THEIR USAGE OF THE MARATHI LANGUAGE IN THEIR ANNUAL CONFIDENTIAL REPORT



AGENCIES

Mumbai, July 1: Maharashtra government has issued a circu-

lar to all government offices stating that Marathi language should be used for all official communication. The notice also said that if

any official failed to adhere to the new rule, he may face delay in their annual increment.

"Maharashtra Government issues Government Resolution (GR) directing officers to use Marathi for their official communications. Officers who fail to adhere to the GR may face delays in their annual increment," news agency ANI tweeted along with the circular. "If officers are found not using the Marathi language in their confidential reports, then their annual increment will not be given to them," stated the order.

This government resolution was issued by Marathi Bhasha Vibhag based on the 1986 government resolution of the General Administration Department.

"Many departments are still issuing circular, government resolutions etc in English language. Websites of many departments are also only in English language. Similarly, many municipal corporations are issuing notices, letters, applications and samples only in English. Complaints in this regard have been raised by the public representatives time and again," stated the circular as reported by Hindustan Times.

The state govt had passed a law making Marathi language a mandatory subject in schools in the budget session in February. Marathi language will become a compulsory subject from the academic year 2020-21 for classes 1 to 6 in schools of different medi-

ums and education boards in Maharashtra, the state government had said earlier.

Former principal secretary Mahesh Zagde welcomed the decision. "If you're working in Maharashtra, you must communicate in Marathi. In the past, government issued warnings, but they had no impact. Now, it seems the government has taken a serious view," Zagde said. A former bureaucrat said nothing is wrong in issuing orders in English, but the same must be available in Marathi in a reasonable period. "All orders issued by chief secretary Ajoy Mehta are in English, entire state is waiting for Marathi version of these orders," the bureaucrat said.



Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath told the PM at an event that lakhs of jobs are being provided in small and medium industries. But the reality is that weavers, who are the pride of Varanasi, PM's parliamentary constituency, are today forced to live by pledging their jewellery and houses. All their work has come to a standstill during the lockdown

PRINYANKA GANDHI VADRA | CONGRESS GENERAL SECRETARY

687 INDIANS RESCUED

A total of 687 Indians stranded in Iran were brought to V.O. Chidambaram Port in Tuticorin Wednesday by Indian Navy Ship Jalashwa, a defence official said



of the day quote

The tragedy that the bodies of COVID-19 victims being thrown into trenches in Ballari, Karnataka is height of cruelty and an insult to humanity. Though incidents related to inhuman cruelty with corona patients are rampant but guilty of Ballari must be punished by the state government



Governments are trying to "manage the perception" about coronavirus infections and give a sense that the problem is not as bad as it is



Best wishes to all doctors on #DoctorsDay. We express our gratitude to the doctors for their selfless service in fighting the COVID-19 pandemic. The nation admires and salutes your professionalism and sacrifice in the service of fellow citizens



RAM NATH KOVIND | PRESIDENT

SHORT TAKES

Six of family hospitalised

Kannauj: Six members of a family have been hospitalised at Miyaganj in Kannauj district of Uttar Pradesh after they consumed a dish made of hemp (bhanga), a variety of cannabis, police said Wednesday. The family mistook the dried leaves of hemp to be fenugreek (methi). According to police, on Tuesday, one Naval Kishore gave the weed to his neighbour Om Prakash's son, Nitish, saying that it was dried fenugreek. Nitish gave the leaves to his sister-in-law Pinky who apparently made a curry with it. The family consumed the dish and after some time, their condition started deteriorating. Om Prakash, somehow, managed to inform his neighbours and soon the entire family fell unconscious. The neighbours informed the police and the family was rushed to the district hospital.

Girl ends life

Kanpur (UP): In a bizarre incident, a girl, student of class 10, ended her life Tuesday merely because her friend had scored more marks than her in the UP Board examinations. The incident took place in Kalyanpur police circle. The victim, Amisha (15), had scored 83 per cent marks while her friend had got 85 per cent marks. SSP Kanpur Dinesh Kumar told reporters that no suicide note had been found and the girl's family said that she was upset after the results of the Board examinations were announced last Saturday.

UP MLA weds again

Gorakhpur (UP): Aman Mani Tripathi, an independent legislator from the Nautanwa Assembly seat, got married for the second time on Tuesday night at a hotel. Aman Mani married Oshin Pandey of Madhya Pradesh and the wedding was a small private affair. The legislator's sisters and other relatives attended the wedding. His parents, Amar Mani Tripathi and Madhu Mani Tripathi, are serving a life term for the murder of a poetess Madhumita Shukla and are in jail.

Boy kills self

Ranchi: A 13-year-old boy committed suicide after denied new Android mobile phone in Jharkhand's Gumla district on Wednesday, police said. According to Police, 13-year-old Alok Kumar, son of Assistant Sub-Inspector (ASI) of police Jaymangal Kharia, consumed insect killing tablets to kill himself.

SIMMERING TENSION

BLOW TO CHINA

INDIA TO BAN CHINESE COMPANIES FROM HIGHWAY PROJECTS, SAYS GADKARI

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, July 1: India will not allow Chinese companies to participate in highway projects, including those through joint ventures, Union Minister Nitiin Gadkari said Wednesday amid border standoff with China.



Gadkari also said the government will ensure that Chinese investors are not entertained in various sectors like Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs). The senior minister's assertions assume significance against the backdrop of border standoff between India and China in Ladakh that also saw the death of 20 Indian Army personnel last month.

In large projects, I have directed the Highways Secretary (Giridhar Aramane) and NHAI Chairman (SS Sandhu) to hold a meeting for relaxing technical and financial norms so that our companies can qualify to work," he said.

Amid escalating tensions, the government on Monday banned 59 apps, mostly having Chinese links, citing threats to national security.

Elaborating on the decision, Gadkari said if a contractor can qualify for a small project, he can also qualify for a large project. "Construction norms are not good so I have asked to change it. We are changing it so that we can encourage Indian companies," he added. According to him, qualification norms for projects are being rationalised to ensure Indian companies do not require to enter into pacts with foreign partners to grab projects. "Even if we have to go for foreign joint venture in the areas of technology, consultancy or design, we will not allow Chinese," the Minister said.

"We will not give permission to joint ventures that have Chinese partners for road construction. We have taken a firm stand that if they (Chinese companies) come via joint venture in our country, we will not allow it," Gadkari said in an interview.

About the MSME sector, Gadkari said the effort is to enhance the capacity of local production but at the same time foreign investment is being promoted. However, he made it clear that despite decision to encourage foreign investment, Chinese investors would not be allowed. "For upgradation of technology, research, consultancy and other works, we will encourage foreign investment and joint ventures in MSMEs but in case of Chinese we will not entertain them," he said.

The Road Transport, Highways and MSME minister said a policy will be out soon banning Chinese firms and relaxing norms for Indian companies to expand their eligibility criteria for participation in highway projects.

Currently only a few projects which were undertaken much earlier involve some Chinese partners. When asked about this, the Minister said that the new decision will be implemented in current and future tenders. With respect to existing tenders and future bids, Gadkari said rebidding would be done if there are any Chinese joint ventures.

"We have taken a decision to relax norms for our companies to ensure that they qualify in bidding

HC paves way for minor's abortion

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, July 1: The Bombay High Court has permitted a 17-year-old rape victim to terminate her 25-week pregnancy despite a report submitted by the civic-run KEM Hospital here advising against the abortion.



A division bench of Justices K K Tated and Milind Jadhav gave the order Tuesday while hearing the girl's petition filed through her father, seeking permission to undergo medical termination of her 25-week pregnancy

A division bench of Justices K K Tated and Milind Jadhav gave the order Tuesday while hearing the girl's petition filed through her father, seeking permission to undergo medical termination of her 25-week pregnancy.

As per the plea, the girl is a victim of rape and a case against the perpetrator is lodged at the Vokola police station in Mumbai. Provisions of the Medical Termination of Pregnancy Act do not permit a woman to terminate pregnancy, if it has crossed 20 weeks and she will have to seek the high court's per-

mission to do so.

The victim, in her plea seeking permission to undergo medical termination of pregnancy, said her mental and physical health is at risk. The court last week directed the petitioner to appear before the medical board of the KEM Hospital in Mumbai for examination and sought a report from the board.

The board in its report advised against termination and said if the pregnancy is continued, a

healthy baby could be delivered and the petitioner and her family could then decide if they want to care of the baby or put him/her up for adoption.

The board said the petitioner should be able to take care of the baby with psychological support and counselling. The bench in its order, however, noted that in the present case the pregnancy was caused by rape and hence, there is no doubt that continuance of this pregnancy "is causing a grave

injury to the mental health of the petitioner".

Therefore, the court permitted the petitioner to undergo medical termination of the pregnancy. "In case the child is born alive during the termination procedure and if the petitioner and her parents are not willing or are not in a position to take responsibility of the baby, then the state government and the agencies concerned will have to assume full responsibility of the child, the court directed.

COVID IMPACT



A city road wears a deserted look during Unlock 2.0 in Coimbatore, Wednesday

PTI PHOTO

BENGAL BJP CHIEF HECKLED

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Kolkata, July 1: West Bengal BJP president Dilip Ghosh was allegedly attacked by Trinamool Congress backed miscreants at Rajarhat-New Town located on the north-eastern fringes of Kolkata.



The incident took place when the state BJP president went there with his supporters to talk to people in the locality. "I went there with some of my supporters to talk to people and had tea at Rajarhat market area. But Trinamool supporters stopped me on the way and heckled my party men. When my security personnel tried to stop them, the miscreants also heckled them. I have shifted to a new house in the area. Local Trinamool supporters must be having some serious problems with that. I don't understand why," Ghosh said.

He further alleged that some of his party members were beaten by Trinamool-backed goons. "They also vandalised some of our vehicles," he said. "My party colleagues will lodge a complaint with the local police. I will also inform the Kolkata Police commissioner about the incident," Ghosh added. Meanwhile, Trinamool Congress' Lok Sabha leader Sudip Bandopadhyay said that it was a small incident.

MODI QUITS WEIBO

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, July 1: Prime Minister Narendra Modi has quit Chinese social media platform Weibo, the BJP said Wednesday, with its general secretary (organisation) B L Santhosh saying that Modi has sent out a "strong message" at the border, on economic front and now at "personal level too".

"After govt move of banning 59 Chinese Apps, PM Narendra Modi exits from Chinese social media platform WEIBO also. Strong message at the border, on economic front & at personal level too," Santhosh said. Sources have said Modi decided to quit Weibo, which he had joined in 2015, as soon as the decision was taken to ban 59 Chinese apps in India.

They added that Weibo has a more complex procedure to quit for accounts of important personalities which is why an official process was initiated. For reasons best known to the Chinese, there was a great delay in granting this basic permission, they said.

The prime minister had 115 posts on Weibo, and it was decided to manually delete them and after much effort 113 posts were removed, they said. The two posts left were those where Modi had photos with Chinese President Xi Jinping, they noted, adding that it is difficult to remove posts on Weibo in which pictures of Xi feature.

Patanjali to sell its drug as 'immunity booster'

Ramdev claimed that the ministry had asked him to use the term "Covid management" in place of "Covid treatment" and he is following the instruction

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi/Haridwar, July 1: The Union AYUSH Ministry Wednesday said Patanjali can sell Coronil but only as an immunity booster, days after yoga guru Ramdev's company launched it as a medicine for COVID-19 and is now calling it a product to "manage" the disease.



Patanjali Ayurved Ltd said there is no disagreement now between it and the Union ministry, which had last week asked it not to sell the ayurvedic drug till the issue it examined.

BIG U-TURN

restriction on their sale now and they will be available in a kit everywhere in the country from today," Ramdev said, referring to Coronil and the two other products Patanjali is promoting together.

At his press conference in Haridwar, Ramdev lashed out over the flak he received after the launch of the drug, saying some people are hurt by the "rise of Indian culture".

The company claimed that the AYUSH Ministry has "categorically agreed" that Patanjali had "appropriately worked on COVID-19 management". "Now there is no difference of opinion between AYUSH Ministry

"I want to tell people who want to try these medicines that there is no

and Patanjali," it added in a statement.

The ministry confirmed that Patanjali can sell the product but not as a cure for the disease. "AYUSH Ministry has only given permission to sell this particular formulation as immunity booster and not as a medicinal cure for COVID-19," it said.

Ramdev claimed that the ministry had asked him to use the term "Covid management" in place of "Covid treatment" and he is following the instruction. Even while backtracking on describing Coronil as a "treatment" for COVID-19, the company stuck to its claim that its trial on mild to moderately ill patients was successful.

The company's statement said the trial, conducted after the necessary approvals, showed 100 per cent recovery of patients within seven days.

WARRIORS ON THE FRONTLINE

Fighting corona challenging, say health workers

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, July 1: Treating COVID-19 patients, providing them psycho-social support to help keep them calm and dealing with the constant fear of contracting the infection are some of the many battles that the country's healthcare workers are fighting daily since the outbreak of the pandemic.



On National Doctor's Day, some of the women healthcare workers working at dedicated COVID-19 facilities across the country shared their experiences of emerging as the frontline force in fighting the virus that has claimed over 16,000 lives and infected 5.6 lakh people across the country.

programme from Johns Hopkins University in the US, working at a dedicated COVID-19 facility in Patna has been challenging not only mentally but also physically.

"This pandemic is not dedicated to one class or one group of people; it is for everybody so there is a constant fear among doctors too be-

cause we are in the middle of (coronavirus) positive patients and they are panicky. We assure them that their testing positive does not mean the end of the world," the 32-year-old said over phone.

Kaur, who has been a part of different projects of Doctors Without Borders in coordinating emergency

response across Indonesia, Cambodia, Laos, the Philippines and Vietnam, said she treats about 25 COVID patients daily in her shifts which are 12-hour long.

"I have a very weird biological clock which I am literally setting and resetting every few days. We have a 12-hour shift so you can't stick to one personal routine," she said. "When I get up I do a little stretching because standing in PPEs (personal protective equipment) for 12 hours at a stretch is really exhausting. Our breaks are not really scheduled or aligned with our lunch breaks as we cannot come out to leisure," she added.

Agreed Pooja Iyer, a psychologist working at a COVID facility, who said that the biggest challenge for her is to counsel COVID patients while covered in PPEs as there is no eye contact. "The most important thing during the counselling is eye contact and that is missing due to the PPE. We use gestures, head nods and speak loudly so that the patients could hear us," she said.

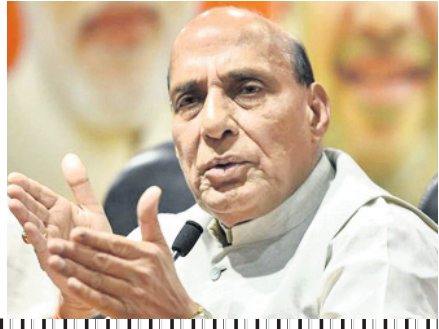
national



India's fight against corona proved effective because of the early lockdown announced by Prime Minister Narendra Modi

RAJNATH MAY VISIT LADAKH

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh is likely to visit Ladakh Friday to review India's military preparedness in view of the bitter border standoff with the Chinese army in the region, sources said



of the day quote

The way we all stayed at home on March 22 during the Janata curfew announced by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, in the same way we would stay at home from 5 am on Sunday to next day 5 am

In next two years, drinking water will be made available to every household in Bundelkhand

Only banning some apps will not give results. We want to give China a befitting reply. How we do it - the central government now has to decide

Terrorists kill CRPF jawan, civilian; toddler rescued

As people scurried for cover, 60-year-old Bashir Khan who was travelling with his grandson in his car abandoned the vehicle and made an unsuccessful attempt to run for safety but was killed, officials said



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Srinagar, July 1: Terrorists hiding inside a mosque opened fire at a CRPF patrol team in Jammu and Kashmir's Sopore town on Wednesday, killing a jawan and a civilian whose three-year-old grandson narrowly escaped the hail of bullets and was rescued by security forces, officials said.

ists were holed up inside the mosque. As people scurried for cover, 60-year-old Bashir Khan who was travelling with his grandson in his car abandoned the vehicle and made an unsuccessful attempt to run for safety but was killed, officials said, narrating the sequence of events.

UPSC aspirants can change exam centre

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, July 1: The Union Public Service Commission (UPSC) has decided to allow candidates for Civil Services (preliminary) examination, 2020 scheduled to be held on October 4 to change their exam centres in view of coronavirus pandemic.

an additional or enhanced capacity intimidated by the respective centres for accommodating additional candidates. The time window for submitting revised choices of centres will be operational in two phases - July 7-13 (till 6 pm) and July 20-24 (till 6 pm) on the Commission's website https://upsonline.nic.in.

The opportunity to change the centres will also be applicable to Indian Forest Service (preliminary) examination, 2020 which will also be held along with the Civil Services examination all over India on the same date as per the revised schedule.

Keeping in view the large number of candidates and requests received for change of exam centres, the Commission said it was decided to give them an opportunity to submit revised choice of centres.

SHORT TAKES

Kolkata shocker

Kolkata: In a shocking incident, the body of a septuagenarian who died of Covid-19 kept lying in his city home for two days ago before it was taken away by Kolkata Municipal Corporation (KMC) Wednesday, the National Doctor's Day. Mohan Mallick, 71, died at his apartment in Amherst Street area around 3 pm on Monday. Family sources said that Mallick returned home from a local market and suddenly succumbed to his illness.

Seven killed

Guwahati: Seven more people were killed in floods and landslides across Assam, taking the death toll in the deluge and related incidents to 33, a government report said Wednesday. Nearly 15 lakh people in 21 of the 33 districts of the state are affected by floods, the Assam State Disaster Management Authority (ASDMA) said in the report.

New MP Governor

Bhopal: Uttar Pradesh Governor Anandiben Patel took oath as Governor of Madhya Pradesh Wednesday at a ceremony at Raj Bhawan here. Patel was given additional charge as Madhya Pradesh governor following the illness of incumbent governor Lalji Tandon. Chief Justice of the Madhya Pradesh High Court Ajay Kumar Mittal administered the oath of office to Patel in the presence of Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan, some other state politicians and officials, the Raj Bhawan spokesperson said.

Naxals surrender

Raipur: Altogether 18 Naxals, four of them carrying cash rewards on their heads, surrendered Wednesday in Chhattisgarh's Dantewada district, police said. The rebels, including a woman, turned themselves in before Dantewada Collector Dipak Soni, Superintendent of Police Abhishek Pallava and CRPF officials at Bhansi police station, and expressed desire to lead a normal life and contribute in development of their area, they said.

SIX DEAD, 16 HURT IN TN BOILER EXPLOSION

Tamil Nadu CM announces relief of ₹3 lakh for families of those who died; ₹1 lakh for the severely injured and ₹50K for those with less severe injuries

AGENCIES

Neyveli, July 1: Six men were killed and 16 others injured when a boiler exploded at the NLC India's thermal plant here Wednesday, an official said.

Home Minister Amit Shah, expressing anguish over the loss of lives, spoke to Chief Minister K Palaniswami and assured all possible help. While preliminary inputs from the explosion site said two people died, the toll has gone up to six now, the NLC official said.



ple who sustained injuries have been rushed to a hospital in Chennai," he said. The six deceased men, aged between 25 and 42 years, were contract workers.

Father, son beaten all night: Cop

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Tuticorin(TN), July 1: Personnel at the Sathankulam police station here thrashed a deceased father-son duo the whole night there, with lathis used for allegedly assaulting them and a table carrying blood stains, a woman head constable attached to the station has told a judicial probe.

Mentioning Head Constable Revathy's statement in a four-page report to the Madras High Court Madurai Bench, the Judicial Magistrate probing the deaths said she feared receiving threat if she revealed the facts.

TN CUSTODIAL DEATHS



death of the duo - P Jeyaraj and Bennicks, alleged victims of police torture, had on Tuesday transferred the probe to the CB-CID under DSP Anil Kumar. It had also ordered protection for Revathy and her family.

lice personnel there (Sathankulam PS) using lathis." Due to this there were blood stains on the lathis and a table and she said they (stains) should be collected immediately as they (police) could try to erase them," the report said.

Priyanka asked to vacate bungalow

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, July 1: The government Wednesday asked Congress leader Priyanka Gandhi Vadra to vacate her bungalow in Lutyens' Delhi within a month, saying she is not entitled to the facility following withdrawal of her SPG protection.

According to an order issued by the Union Housing and Urban Affairs Ministry, Priyanka Gandhi was asked to vacate her official bungalow by August 1 failing which "it will attract damage charges/penal rent as per rules".

The government had in November last year replaced the Special Protection Group (SPG) cover of Congress president Sonia Gandhi and her children Rahul Gandhi and Priyanka Gandhi Vadra, with Z-plus security by the CRPF. "Consequent upon withdrawal of SPG protection and grant of Z+ security cover by the Ministry of Home Affairs, which does not have provision for allotment/retention of government accommodation on security grounds to you (Gandhi), the allotment of Type 6B House No. 35, Lodhi Estate, New Delhi is hereby cancelled w.e.f 01/07/2020. One month concessional period on the same rent up to August 1 is allowed as per rules," the Directorate of Estates said in its order.

COVID: JUNE WORST MONTH

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, July 1: India Wednesday recorded the highest single-day jump of 507 COVID-19 deaths and also a majority of cases - close to four lakh - in June to make it the worst month for the country prompting some states to go for varying degrees of lockdown.

Maharashtra, Delhi and Tamil Nadu have accounted for over 70 per cent of 17,400 coronavirus deaths, according to the Union Health Ministry data. The data updated at 8 am on Wednesday also showed that 18,653 new infections were reported in 24 hours taking the tally to 5,85,493. At the same time, the recovery rate was also steadily improving to touch nearly 60 per cent.

It is for the fifth consecutive day that coronavirus cases have increased by more than 18,000. The country has seen a surge of 3,94,958 infections or nearly 68 per cent of the total in June, according to an analysis of the ministry data.

The number of active cases stands at 2,20,114, while 3,47,978 people have recovered, and one patient has migrated, the data showed, indicating that around 59.43 per cent of patients have recovered so far.



India reported its first case of coronavirus on January 30 from Kerala when a student who had returned from Wuhan, China tested positive. It is now the fourth worst-affected country in terms of cases after the US, Brazil and Russia.

Health officials in Karnataka reported the country's first COVID-19 death on March 12 after samples of a 76-year-old man, who was a suspected coronavirus patient and passed away two days earlier, tested positive for the disease.

In a bid to halt the rapid surge in new infections, Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, West Bengal,

NO STRONG NETWORK

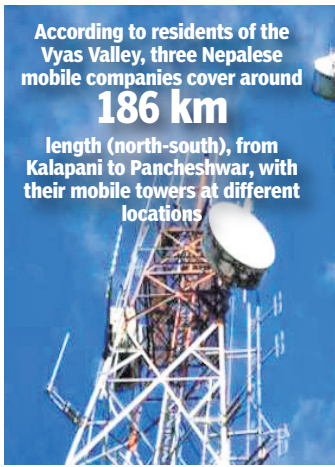
U'khand border villagers rely on Nepal for connectivity

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Pithoragarh, July 1: Kunwar Singh Kutiyaal complains there are no Indian mobile towers within several kilometres of Uttarakhand's Vyas Valley, near the Indo-Nepal border, where he lives, and he has to depend on Nepalese infrastructure to connect to the world outside.

A resident of Kuti village of the Valley, he said he noticed that the Nepalese government recently provided Wi-Fi facilities in Changru village on its side of the border to strengthen communication for their security personnel deputed at a post there. "We also need such facilities in our villages. We need to depend only on Indian communication facilities," he said.

ing this demand. He represents thousands of villagers of three localities - Vyas Valley, Chaundas valley and Dharchula sub-division - in this district who have no connectivity due to the lack of Indian mobile towers. Some of them somehow manage to procure Nepalese SIM cards and use them to get Internet and phone connectivity by latching onto Nepalese network.



According to residents of the Vyas Valley, three Nepalese mobile companies cover around 186 km length (north-south), from Kalapani to Pancheshwar, with their mobile towers at different locations

facilities in most parts of Dharchula sub-division, payments related to MGNREGA works cannot be made

to the beneficiaries nor can online classes be held in sub-divisional schools," Shukla said. "We need a

strong and dependable network for communication at Dharchula border with Nepal," the SDM said.

The Vyas Valley is adjacent to Indian territory of Kalapani, which Nepal recently claimed as its own. Villagers have approached the administration several times in the past with the demand to bolster mobile network infrastructure and submitted a number of memorandums, Shukla said.

There is just one low-capacity BSNL mobile tower at Dharchula which barely meets even the town's requirements, he said. A section has tried to justify the poor connectivity, saying it is meant to deny Internet access to smugglers and criminals operating in the border, but it does not hold much ground as Nepalese network is widely avail-

able in the area, Shukla said. "In the light of these facts, the communication policy at the Indo-Nepal border needs to be reviewed as better communication facilities to border people is the need of the hour," the SDM said.

The Congress MLA from Dharchula, Harish Dhami, said he has offered his MLA funds to create communication facility in the area. "I am ready to give whatever money is required for installing basic infrastructure of communication at the Indo-Nepal and India-China border," Dhami said.

According to residents of the Vyas Valley, three Nepalese mobile companies cover around 186 km length (north-south), from Kalapani to Pancheshwar, with their mobile towers at different locations.

