



YOGA FOR CALMNESS

Actor Jacqueline Fernandez admits that she regularly performs yoga to deal with some 'major anxieties' in life

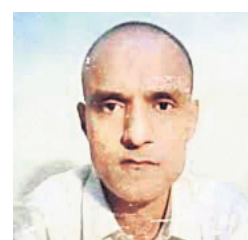
LEISURE P2



PALANISWAMI MIFFED

Commenting on the Electricity (Amendment) Bill, TN CM sounds alarm over pvt players' entry to the power sector

TWO STATES P7



PAK'S DIRTY TRICKS ON

Pak has claimed that Kulbhusan has decided to go ahead with his pending mercy plea

INTERNATIONAL P10

SHORT TAKES

8 tech solutions unveiled under 5T

Bhubaneswar: As part of 5T initiative, Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik Wednesday launched eight technology-driven solutions for home and general administration and public grievance departments. The 5T Initiative (Technology, Transparency, Teamwork and Time Leading to Transformation) model of governance requires each department to draw up an annual work-plan for faster public service delivery. Naveen said the 5T model of governance along with Mo Sarkar has brought about a perceptible improvement in the quality of governance in the city. P3

J&K cadre Odia IPS officer suspended

New Delhi: Union Ministry of Home Affairs Wednesday suspended senior Jammu and Kashmir cadre IPS officer Basant Rath for alleged misconduct and misbehaviour with the Director General of Police of the Union Territory. The Ministry has also contemplated disciplinary proceedings against Rath, a 2000 batch Indian Police Service officer, in connection with repeated instances of misconduct. In an order issued Wednesday, the MHA declared that Rath would be placed under suspension.

IRREGULAR by MANJUL



MARKET WATCH

INDEX	VAIATION
SENSEX	36329.01 ↓ 345.51
NIFTY	10705.80 ↓ 93.90
DOLLAR	75.19 ↑ ₹0.13
EURO	84.82 ↑ ₹0.11
GOLD	₹48,986 ↑ ₹186
SILVER	₹50,509 ↑ ₹ 307

WEATHER

	BHUB	CTK
TEMP MAX	34.6°C	35.0°C
TEMP MIN	25.6°C	25.4°C
Humidity	98%	95%
Rainfall	7mm	2mm

Forecast: Partly cloudy sky

Covid fast worsening in state

Chandrasekharapur, Pahala, Rasulgarh, Baramunda, Bomikhal, Jharpada, Laxmisagar, Nayapalli, Khandagiri, Patrapada, among others, in the capital city report fresh cases

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 8: The Covid-19 situation in the state has only worsened over the last week. There is an alarming rise in the number of cases while more deaths have happened due to the viral disease.

Odisha Wednesday reported 527 new cases while the total number of cases in the state has touched 10,624. The number of deaths has gone up to 48 while 13 coronavirus positive patients have died due to other reasons. Ganjam district continued to remain the hotbed of Covid by accounting for close to 3000 cases alone. The railways has decided to allow trains to skip Berhampur railway station. BJD's Prashant Behera became the second MLA in the state to report Covid positive.

The state capital has felt the heat. The total number of cases in the capital Wednesday crossed 500. The city Wednesday reported 46 new cases in the latest round of sample testing Tuesday, the civic body said Wednesday. The Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation said the city has witnessed a total of 46 new cases. According to the figures put forth by the civic body, a majority of the cases (52 per cent) were reported from outside quarantine centres. The BMC said out of 46 new cases, 22 were from quarantine centres while 24 cases were reported from the locality.

With the addition of 46 fresh cases, the city has so far reported a total of 525 cases. It also reported one more death owing to the pandemic. The number of deaths in the city due to coronavirus went up to seven. A total of nine cases were reported from private as well as government hospitals. Fresh cases

CURBS ON OFFICIALS

BHUBANESWAR: With a steep rise in Covid cases, the state government asked officials residing in areas beyond municipal limits of Cuttack and Khurda not to attend government offices in Bhubaneswar. "In view of the rapid escalation in the number of Covid-infected cases in the state, it is decided that government servants commuting from places other than the municipal limits of Cuttack and Khurda to attend offices in Bhubaneswar shall not attend office until July 31, 2020," said an order of the General Administration and Public Grievance department. The order comes into immediate effect.

20K ANTIGEN KITS

The Regional Medical Research Centre received and distributed 20,000 rapid antigen test kits among various hospitals Wednesday 4,700 kits were kept as a reserve at the RMRC while 3,000 kits were given to Ganjam, 1,500 kits to SCB and 500 kits to Acharya Harihar Regional Cancer Hospital. Besides, 1,000 kits each were sent to five government medical colleges of the state while 500 kits were sent to Gajapati district. 150 test kits were sent to each of the 32 district headquarters.



were also reported from Chandrasekharapur, Pahala, Rasulgarh, Baramunda, Bomikhal, Jharpada, Laxmisagar, Nayapalli, Khandagiri, Patrapada and other areas.

According to the latest information, the city has so far reported 525 cases out of which 222 are active. 18 people recovered in the city Wednesday morn-

ing, the BMC said. Meanwhile, a 55-year-old patient succumbed to Covid 19 Wednesday. The civic body claimed that it has been taking all measures to curb the spread of the disease. "Contact tracing is continuing. Primary contacts and nearby houses are being quarantined, sanitised & they will be under active surveillance," the BMC said.

Super-spreader in Rkl infects 95

SUNDARGARH: The Covid infection cases are steadily rising in the Steel City and other parts of Sundargarh district. 95 people in Rourkela alone have tested positive over last two days. According to the district administration, all these cases were detected in Sector 16 area. They have been infected after coming in contact with a person of Rourkela who is said to be a super spreader. As many as 49 cases were detected Tuesday from the same area. Sundargarh reported 78 new cases Wednesday while Rourkela reported 46 cases. District Collector Nikhil Pawan Kalyan said aggressive contact tracing has been initiated.

Ganjam seals borders with Khurda, Nayagarh

BERHAMPUR: In a bid to save the residents of Ganjam district from infections, the district administration Wednesday sealed its borders with Khurda and Nayagarh districts to limit the movement of people to and from the region. Ganjam Collector Vijay Amruta Kulange tweeted Wednesday, "Ganjam Khurda border is sealed. No person will be allowed to go to Bhubaneswar. Kindly cooperate." As per the order, no person from Bhubaneswar or Ganjam district will be allowed to cross the Khurda-Ganjam border until further notice. Passes will be given to travel outside the district in case of health emergency. Besides, Odagaon, Rohibanka and Bharjanagar Crossing Square roads have been sealed. In order to contain community transmission, the administration has suspended outdoor services at MKCG until further orders. P5

Recruitment for current posts will continue: Govt

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 8: Following a hue and cry over the government's decision to put a complete ban on creation of new posts, the finance department Wednesday clarified that recruitment of existing vacant positions will continue.

The process for filling up of vacant posts will continue as usual. This apart, all ongoing recruitment processes of the government will go on, sources in the department said. The restriction is only on the creation of new posts, it said.

The finance department order asked departments not to renew contract of employees engaged for temporary period.

"In case of retired government employees of different grades, as they are in receipt of pension, there shall be no payment of remuneration if they have not worked during the lockdown," it said.

Further, departments

were asked to not make any fresh engagement without due procedure after the lockdown is lifted.

The state government has taken the austerity measures as the revenue collection has come down over past three months and will continue to fall till the return of normalcy, an official said.

The state government is implementing various reforms as suggested by the Centre to increase its borrowing limits for meeting expenditures. While allowing the states to borrow up to 5 per cent of the gross state domestic product (GSDP) instead of the existing 3 per cent, the Centre has laid certain conditions. The relaxation is only for the 2020-21 fiscal.

The Finance department has pegged state's GSDP at ₹5.96 lakh crore for the year 2020-21 while the government is estimated to borrow ₹17,878 crore, which is 3 per cent of the GSDP, in its annual budget in the same corresponding period.

Affordable rental housing for urban poor gets approval

AGENCIES

New Delhi, July 8: The Union Cabinet Wednesday approved the development of affordable rental housing complexes (AHRC) for the urban poor or migrants. The complexes will be built under the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana - Urban and according to the government, will benefit 3 lakh urban poor.

Under the initiative, existing vacant government funded housing complexes will be converted to ARHCs. Further, special incentives like use permission, 50 per cent additional floor area ratio or floor space index and tax relief will be offered.

The Centre estimates ₹600 crore of expenditure in the form of 'technology innovation grant'.

The initiative was announced as part of the Aatma Nirbhar Bharat economic package by the Finance Minister in May in view of the mass exodus of migrant labourers and the poor back to their villages from urban centres post the announcement of the nationwide lockdown.

₹1 lakh crore agri-infra fund receives govt nod

AGENCIES

NEW DELHI: The government Wednesday approved setting up of an agri-infra fund with a corpus of ₹1 lakh crore to provide financial support to agri-entrepreneurs, start-ups, agri-tech players and farmer groups for infrastructure and logistics facilities.

A decision in this regard was taken at a meeting of the Union Cabinet, headed by Prime Minister Narendra Modi. The agri-infra fund was part of the over ₹20 lakh crore stimulus package announced in response to the COVID-19 crisis. Briefing the media,

Agriculture Minister Narendra Singh Tomar said: "It is a historic decision. This will further strengthen the agriculture sector." The new agri-infra fund, the duration of which will be 10 years till 2029, aims to provide medium-to-long term debt financing facility for investment in viable projects for post-harvest management infrastructure and community farming assets through interest subvention and financial support, he said.

Rs 1 lakh crore will be provided by banks and financial institutions as loans to primary agri credit societies.

MHA panel to probe 3 Gandhi family trusts

AGENCIES

New Delhi, July 8: The Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) has set up an inter-ministerial committee to probe alleged violations of legal provisions by three Gandhi family trusts, namely Rajiv Gandhi Foundation, Rajiv Gandhi Charitable Trust, and Indira Gandhi Memorial Trust.

The committee led by a Special Director of the Enforcement Directorate will coordinate investigations into alleged violation of the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA), Income Tax Act, and Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Act (FCRA) by these foundations, a ministry spokesperson tweeted Wednesday.

The Rajiv Gandhi Foundation was established June 21, 1991, to work on a range of issues, including literacy, health, disability, empowerment of the underprivileged, livelihood, and natural resources management. Its current focus

RGF has nothing to fear: Congress

NEW DELHI: The Congress Wednesday accused the government of carrying out a "blind witch hunt" against the opposition party and applying "double standards" in instituting a probe into the funding of its trusts including the Rajiv Gandhi Foundation, saying such questions are not asked of some "holy cows" close to the government. During the government to order a probe, Congress spokesperson Abhishek Manu Singhvi said the trusts have nothing to fear and will answer every question.

areas are education, disability, and natural resources management.

Congress President Sonia Gandhi is the present chairperson of the Rajiv Gandhi Foundation while former Prime Minister Manmohan Singh, Congress leaders Rahul Gandhi and his sister Priyanka Gandhi Vadra, and senior party leader P Chidambaram are members of the board.

PLA pulls back at Patrolling Points 14, 15

AGENCIES

New Delhi, July 8: The Chinese People's Liberation Army (PLA) troops have pulled back around 2 kilometres at Patrolling Point 14 and Patrolling 15 in the Galwan Valley in eastern Ladakh while the process of pull back has started at the Hot Springs, sources said Wednesday.

The disengagement started after a two-month military standoff and it is happening "as per agreed terms in the Corps Commanders' meeting". However, it has not been verified on the ground yet.

Sources said Chinese soldiers have removed tents and structures at Patrolling Point 14 and Patrolling Point 15 in the Galwan Valley. On June 15, Indian and Chinese People's Liberation Army (PLA) soldiers were engaged in brutal hand-to-hand combat at Patrolling Point 14. A total 20 Indian soldiers and an unknown number of Chinese troops were killed in the worst clash in four decades.

As per the agreement between the Corps Commanders, a buffer zone of at least 1.5 km on both sides of the Line of Actual Control has to be created in these areas.

Sources said that in Galwan Valley the water level of the Galwan river has risen suddenly due to melting of snow, which could have forced the Chinese to move from the area faster. The Indian Army is reported to be using drones to verify Chinese movement as physical verification has been hindered by the rising water levels of the Galwan river.

At Pangong lake, the most contentious issue between the two sides, Chinese troops have moved up to Finger 4 where they have brought over 120 vehicles and dozen boats. The Chinese army has also opened up a new front in the area near the Depsang Bulge, a table-top plateau north of Galwan. They have built camps and deployed vehicles and troops.

Flipkart, Amazon asked to indicate sources of products

AGENCIES

New Delhi, July 8: Consensus is building within the government that e-commerce players like Flipkart, Amazon will have to indicate the country of origin of the product on their merchandise.

DPIT under the Ministry of Commerce and Industry is likely to tell e-commerce companies that it would be mandatory to provide information about the product on their platform, where the product came from or where it was made, or the country of origin. DPIT held a meeting Wednesday with the e-commerce players on this issue.

According to sources, DPIT has suggested the deadline of August 1 to e-commerce companies to kick off this exercise. That is, all the products will be sold/listed on the e-

commerce platform from August 1, where information of the country of origin will have to be given.

However, e-commerce companies have asked the government for a little more time for this implementation.

According to the sources, e-commerce companies have talked about accepting the government's move but have asked for some time to implement. The move comes in the backdrop of a huge movement in the country to ban Chinese goods which is seeing a groundswell.

Accepting an earlier demand of the CAIT, the Union Government has declared to have mandatory inscription of all goods that are to be sold on Government e Market portal and in furtherance of the same, the Ministry of Consumer Affairs. Earlier, intensifying its national



movement for boycott of Chinese goods, the Confederation of All India Traders (CAIT) had asked Union Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal that all products sold in India through e-commerce

or offline shops or by any other method should mandatory having the mention of Country of Origin and content of valued addition in the said item. CAIT said that in the wake of

several goods import from China and other Countries are reported to be sold in India after pasting Made in India has prompted the CAIT to demand the Commerce Minister not to limit this provision only for e-commerce but make it a mandatory provision for all the products that are sold in India either by e-commerce, offline shops, corporate showroom, direct selling or by any other method.

The CAIT further demanded that products not carrying the above description should not be sold in the Country and in the event of violation of this provision, the manufacturer, producer, importer or marketer as declared on the packing of such product should be held responsible and action must be taken against them. "We are of the considered opin-

ion that provision of mentioning Country of Origin and Value addition will make the customers fully understand as to what they are purchasing and will obviate all confusions. Such a provision will also strengthen the 'Make in India' concept of Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi and will also demolish the unethical designs of certain sections to sell imported goods by wrongly labelling 'Made in India' on such goods", said CAIT.

It said that since the Union Government has begun the process of mentioning both above provisions on products sold on GeM from the date of the declaration then there should be no reason for delay from other e-commerce companies and they must implement the same with immediate effect.



JUDE LAW TO PLAY CAPTAIN HOOK

Actor Jude Law is in talks to play the classic villain Captain Hook in the upcoming live action film, *Peter Pan & Wendy*. *Pete's Dragon* director David Lowery is on board to direct the project. Lowery co-wrote the script with Toby Halbrooks, reports *variety.com*.

LUCY LIU OPENS UP ON RACISM

Charlie's Angels star Lucy Liu says she faced a lot of difficulties in her career due to racism in Hollywood. Speaking to *Sydney Morning Herald*, Liu said, she struggled to get auditions when she was just starting out as an actor in Los Angeles, reports *variety.com*.



FORTUNE FORECAST

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

ARIES
Today, you need to access every bit of your mental agility. Quick and spontaneous decisions are the need of the hour. But a word of caution from Ganesh: take advice, as these decisions could have long-term implications, especially if they involve money.

TAURUS
You have an easy care-free day ahead. There will be no woes or worries, says Ganesh. But to be inclined to take up too many things at one time, more than you can handle. This may, in turn, get you stressed and uptight.

GEMINI
You are likely to make a list of your daily chores that take most of your time. Then you will find a way to outsource these activities or eliminate them from your routine altogether. You will also devote a lot of your time to meditation. Health of a family member may give you some anxious moments, feels Ganesh.

CANCER
Today, you will put your heart and soul into whatever task you take up. But the results may not be too forthcoming. However, that should not be a reason for you to get dejected or anxious. You will get your due sooner or later. Also, spending some time with your loved ones will be quite gratifying emotionally.

LEO
If you are wondering whether you'll get the carrot or the stick today, then Ganesh has some good news for you: the day promises to bring only rewards for you. This will be especially true for your workplace, where your innate talents get recognised today.

VIRGO
Today may prove to be a turning point for you. You will explore the opportunities to secure the money needed to make your future bright. Matters regarding relationships will be on the top of your priority list today.

LIBRA
Ganesh says your friend who is very influential will be lucky for you. You will be able to start a new joint venture business with out any obstacles. Your efficiency and hard work will be appreciated.

SCORPIO
Two words will define your day – eloquence and elegance. Sweet talk and compliments may take you a long way, but do not become complacent and get carried away with your success. Sometimes, saying the right thing may be more beneficial than saying what the other person wants to hear.

SAGITTARIUS
According to Ganesh, money is likely to slip off your hand easily today. Try to wave off unnecessary expenditure. The entire day is spent managing funds, while the evening brings a lot of positive energy with it. You prefer to sit back and relax.

CAPRICORN
Paradise is where patience leads you, success is the other terminus, says Ganesh. Keeping your cool will benefit you in more ways than you would have imagined, so think twice before you unleash your vengeance on your foes.

AQUARIUS
You have been turning a blind eye towards the pending work you are loaded with. But, today you will take up the challenge of getting done with the pile of work. You may clean your desk at work or room, make payments and purchases, and clear the mess. It will bring clarity to your life.

PISCES
Your inherent talents, competitive colleagues and supportive superiors will spur you on to great heights at the workplace, beginning today. Make sure that you do not get carried away by little victories, says Ganesh. There is many a slip between the cup and the lip!

'Designing for Sushant was a pleasant experience'

Rajput didn't let his personal issues affect work, says designer duo Nikita Mohanty and Natascha Charak who did costumes for the actor one last time

ARINDAM GANGULY, OP
BHUBANESWAR: Going by the netizens' response to the trailer of *Dil Bechara* a couple of days ago, the posthumous release of the film in which Sushant Singh Rajput will be watched on screen one last time, is set to take the fans on a emotional ride. It is not only the hardcore SSR fans, the film will be long remembered by the crew members too for the way the Kai Poche actor conducted himself on the sets.

Designer duo Nikita Mohanty, having an Odisha link, and Natascha Charak who did costumes for Sushant's last film, shared some interesting facts on the late actor with **Orissa POST**.

The two had met Sushant on multiple occasions ahead of the shoot to discuss the look of the character and its



Sushant Singh Rajput and Sanjana Sanghi in *Dil Bechara*

costumes. "It was a pleasant experience to design for him," they said. "We made Sushant's character look a bit colourful

as it was not only full of energy and a free spirited soul but also fun loving. He too offered quite a few suggestions that we had incorporated in the film," added the duo. Since the post-produc-

tion work was completed a few days back, the crew members may have noticed some signs of 'depression' in his body language. On this, the duo said, "He was very professional. Much like other workaholic actors, he didn't let his personal issues affect work. He was nice to us and talked about work more often. Therefore, it is tough for us to recall what was going on in his mind at that time."

Nikita and Natascha have worked in movies like *English Vinglish*, *Kapoor and Sons*, *Baazaar*, *Dhadak*, *Bhoot* among others.

Nikita has a special connection with Odisha as she married an Odia from Cuttack district.

"Though I remain out of state due to professional commitments, I have been to places like Bhubaneswar, Koraput and Raghurajpur in Puri district on many occasions. I would love to add Odisha's art and culture in my future assignments," said Nikita.



Nikita Mohanty (L) and Natascha Charak

They now look forward to the release of *Khaali Peeli*, starring Ishaan Khattar and Ananya Pandey in the lead.

Jacqueline dealing with 'some major anxiety'

Mumbai: Actress Jacqueline Fernandez has admitted that she has been 'dealing with some major anxiety' lately.

Even though, the actress did not disclose the reason, she did confess that regularly performing yoga has helped her combat the stress.

"I have been dealing with some major anxiety these past few weeks..however being consistent with yoga has taught me the valuable lesson of being in the moment and what's even more important..gratitude.. for life and being alive.. have a great day everyone!" Jacqueline shared on Instagram Wednesday.

The actress also shared a video where she can be seen performing a few asanas. Jacqueline is a yoga enthusiast and keeps sharing her videos for fans on social media. In the past, she has shared videos of her performing asanas like Surya Namaskar, stretching of the spine and deep breathing.

On the work front, Jacqueline recently made her digital debut with the web series *Mrs Serial Killer* and launched an online dance competition titled *Home Dancer*. IANS



Priyanka, Anurag ambassadors for TIFF

Los Angeles: Actress Priyanka Chopra and filmmaker Anurag Kashyap are among global celebrities who have been invited to be ambassadors of the 45th Toronto International Film Festival (TIFF), slated to take place from September 10 to 19.

"Throughout my career @TIFF_NET has been a second home for me, with many of my films, as both an actor and producer, making their world debut at the festival," Priyanka tweeted with a video with moments of her journey with TIFF.

"Even more than that, one of the most exceptional parts of the festival are the fans of cinema who have always embraced me with so much warmth and love. I am very proud to serve as an ambassador this year."

Other ambassadors include Ava DuVernay, Darren Aronofsky, Taika Waititi, Nicole Kidman, Martin Scorsese, Nadine Labaki, Alfonso Cuarón, Tanoai Carmona, Riz Ahmed, Rian Johnson, Jason Reitman, Isabelle Huppert, Claire Denis, Atom Egoyan, Viggo Mortensen, Zhang Ziyi, David Oyelowo, Lulu Wang, Rosamund Pike, Sarah Gadon, and Denis Villeneuve. IANS

Vidya resumes work amid pandemic

Mumbai: After Taapsee Pannu, actress Vidya Balan shared that she has resumed shooting amid the ongoing Covid pandemic.

Vidya took to Instagram Stories Wednesday and posted a picture that shows her sitting in a vanity van. She sits with her crew while getting her make-up done.

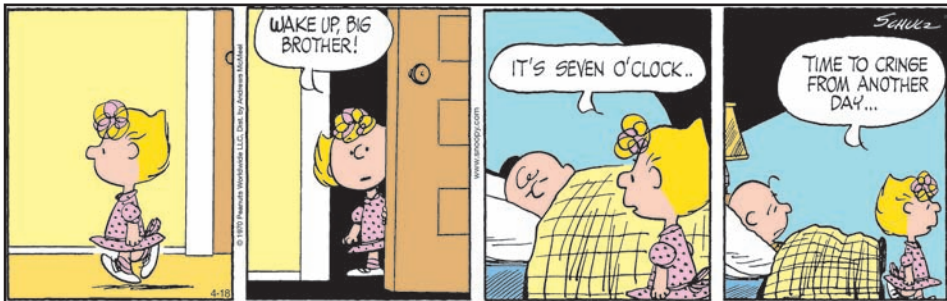
The crew members have taken proper safety precautions, wearing PPE suits and masks. "backto work," Vidya captioned the image, adding a praying emoji.

The Kahaani actor will be next seen in *Shakuntala Devi*. The film casts her in the title role of mathematics genius Shakuntala Devi and will premiere digitally July 31.

Actors Sanya Malhotra and Amit Sadh are also a part of the project.

Recently, Vidya turned producer when she co-produced the self-starring short film, *Nathkat*, which addresses patriarchy and toxic masculinity. The film had its world premiere at the We Are One: A Global Film Festival June 2. IANS

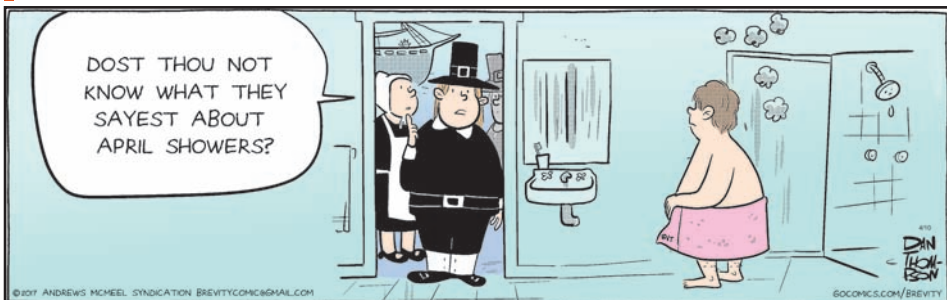
PEANUTS



CALVIN AND HOBBS

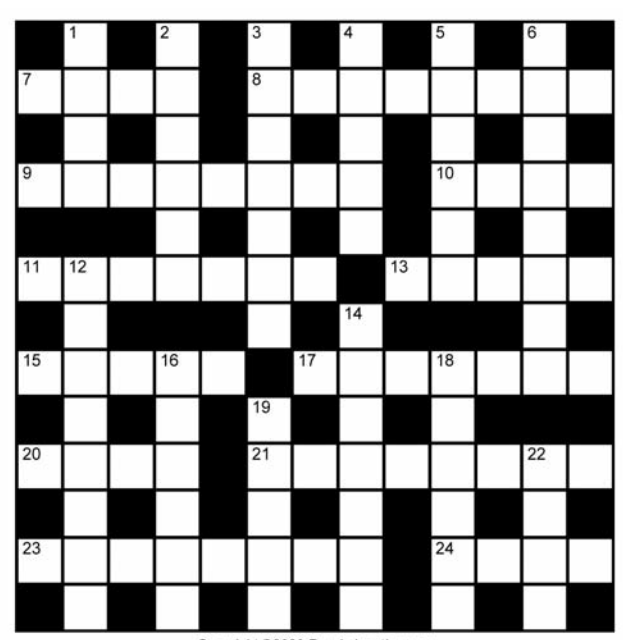


BREVITY



FUN post

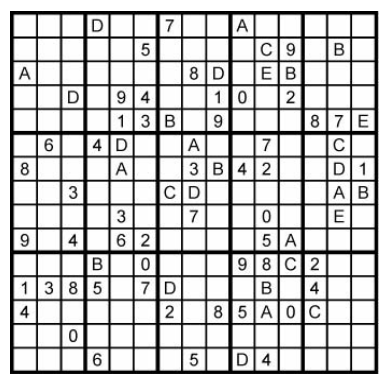
CROSSWORD



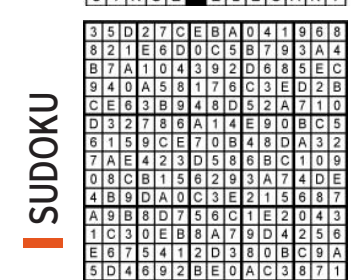
- Across
- 7 Tableland
 - 8 Budget problems
 - 9 Food and drink of the gods
 - 10 Wiener schnitzel meat
 - 11 Taqueria offering
 - 13 Weasel relative
 - 15 Seat in the park
 - 17 Sully
 - 20 In the distance
 - 21 Upbeat
 - 23 The writing on the wall?
 - 24 Petri dish filler
 - 3 On deck
 - 4 Roomy vehicle
 - 5 Fancy neckwear
 - 6 Comes apart
 - 12 "Shoot!" (4,4)
 - 14 Decathlon event
 - 16 Wine order
 - 18 Trondheim locale
 - 19 Bitter
 - 22 Russian river
- Down
- 1 Kind of spirit
 - 2 Brightly coloured bird

SUDOKU

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



SOLUTIONS



CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW

downtown



FISHING TIME

Fishermen try their luck near Naraj anicut in Cuttack, Wednesday

EVICTION IN CITY

Civic authorities in Bhubaneswar demolish illegal structures in Nayapalli area, Wednesday



Eight tech solutions to boost governance

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 8: As part of 5T initiative, Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik, Wednesday, launched eight technology-driven solutions for Home and General Administration and Public Grievances (GA & PG) departments.

The 5T Initiative (Technology, Transparency, Teamwork and Time Leading to Transformation) model of governance, launched in August 2019, requires each department to draw up an annual work-plan for faster, better public service delivery systems leading to realisation of transformational goals.

By October 2, 2020. Chief Secretary Asit Tripathy said the 5T initiative has made Odisha a model state in governance in the entire country and as many as 105 types of services are being provided online. He also appreciated the efforts of Home and GA departments in this regard.

Among others, Subrato Bagchi, Skill Development Authority Chairman, R Balakrishnan, Chief Adviser to CM, Suresh Mohapatra DC, VK Pandian, Secretary to CM (5T) and 23 senior officers were present.

The Chief Minister lunched Bhubaneswar Land Use Intelligence System (BLUIS), E-Pravesh, E-

structure has been provided as an alternate verification tool for the security personnel.

E-Bhawan (www.bhawan.odisha.gov.in) is an online system designed to provide government officials, public representatives and citizens easier access to booking rooms and other facilities provided by Bhawans located in other states. It provides online reservation and allotment, real time status tracking and multiple payment options for settlement of bills (cash/card/e-Banking/POS).

E-Atithi has been launched for online management of state Guest House while HRMS 2.0 (www.hrms-

Now, order Khadi India's face masks online

POST NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi, July 8: With a view to making face masks available at doorsteps, the Khadi India has started online sale of protective kit to benefit people in the remotest parts of the country.

According to the Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises Ministry, the Khadi and Village Industries Commission (KVIC) is selling both khadi cotton and silk masks. While cotton face masks are priced at ₹30 per piece, silk masks are available at ₹100 per piece.

"The minimum order for online purchase of masks is ₹500, wherein buyers have the option to choose from the four types of masks available - white cotton masks with black piping, white cotton masks with tri-colour piping, silk masks in solid colours and printed silk masks in multiple colours. The KVIC delivers the masks for free within 5 days from the date of order. The online sale is currently valid within the country only," said the ministry.



KEEPING VIRUS AT BAY

Khadi cotton face masks are available at ₹30 per piece while silk masks are available at ₹100 per piece

The khadi masks can be ordered by logging on to <http://www.kviconline.gov.in/khadimask>

Cotton face masks are made of double-twisted 100 per cent cotton fabric

The silk masks are triple-layered with two inner layers of 100 per cent khadi cotton and the top layer of khadi silk fabric

The khadi masks can be ordered by logging on to <http://www.kviconline.gov.in/khadimask>.

KVIC chairman Vinai Kumar Saxena said online sale of khadi face masks has been started so that people get genuine khadi masks.

"Online sale of khadi masks also aims at preventing buyers from any fraud. Many online portals have been selling masks in the name of khadi that are neither genuine nor hand-made. A number of people tend to fall in the trap of such misleading advertisements," Saxena said.

Notably, the khadi cotton face masks are made of double-twisted 100 per cent cotton fabric. These masks are double-layered with three pleats and available in three sizes - Small, Medium and Large. These masks are available in two patterns - white mask with black piping and

white mask with tri-colour piping.

The silk masks, on the other hand, are triple-layered with two inner layers of 100 per cent khadi cotton and the top layer of khadi silk fabric. The silk masks are available in a wide range of colour options in printed as well as non-printed patterns. Khadi silk masks are available in a standard size with adjustable ear loops with attractive beads.

IMPROVING EFFICIENCY

The Chief Minister lunched Bhubaneswar Land Use Intelligence System, E-Pravesh, E-Bhawan, E-Atithi, HRMS, HRMS mobile app, LMS 2.0 and ORTPSA online module

Deadline for online delivery of public services extended to Gandhi Jayanti

Odisha first state to use space technology to safeguard gov't land in Bhubaneswar



We must ensure that all public services are delivered online and no citizen visits a government office for this purpose
NAVEEN PATNAIK | CHIEF MINISTER

Naveen said the 5T model of governance along with Mo Sarkar has brought about a perceptible change in the quality of governance and improvement in delivery of public services.

He expressed happiness that Odisha is the first state in the country to have put in place an advanced system which uses space technology and artificial intelligence to safeguard precious government lands in Bhubaneswar and ensure planned development.

Patnaik hoped that it will bring in greater efficiency in overall management of government assets and enhance the accountability along with easier access to government resources by the citizens.

Speaking on his vision for the state, the CM said, "We must ensure that all public services are delivered online and no citizen visits a government office for this purpose."

Since the meeting the earlier deadline of August 15, 2020 is not feasible now owing to Covid-19 pandemic, the government has asked all the departments to ensure online delivery of all public services

Bhawan, E-Atithi, Human Resources Management System (HRMS), HRMS mobile app, Litigation Management System (LMS 2.0) and Odisha Right to Public Service Act (ORTPSA) online module.

GA & PG department has developed the BLUIS, a web and mobile-based solution, to monitor changes in all government lands in Bhubaneswar by leveraging high resolution satellite imagery.

BLUIS is a geo-tagged repository of all the government lands in Bhubaneswar, created through high-resolution satellite imagery to detect the changes taking place on government lands. The mobile app also enables crowd sourcing cases of unauthorised land use and can also be used by citizens to report any unauthorised development taking place over geo-tagged government lands, official sources said.

E-Pravesh (www.epasscitizen.odisha.gov.in) is a web and mobile based application with facial recognition technology to ease and authenticate entry for visitors to Lok Seva Bhawan, Rajiv Bhawan and Kharavela Bhawan. QR Code fea-

sodisha.gov.in) is a web and mobile based application that serves as a single window platform for all personnel related transactions for employees. It includes G2E services such as online leave application, online loan and advance application, e-service book, etc. A mobile application of the new version was also launched.

Litigation Management System (www.orissalms.in) is an online application to record information of legal cases and enable end-to-end communication between government officials and advocates during different stages of a case. It provides a smart technology solution to monitor court cases from initiation, online appointment scheduling and allotment of case to government advocate for preparation and submission of counter affidavit.

ORTPSA online module (www.central.ortpsa.in) is a dynamic dashboard launched for monitoring delivery of notified public services including integration of online services with a central monitoring system.

Mother-daughter rescued from Kathajodi river

POST NEWS NETWORK

Naraj, July 8: Fire brigade personnel Wednesday saved the lives of a woman and her daughter who were drowning in Kathajodi river here.

The duo has been identified as Anjali Mohanty, 38, and her daughter Rituparna Mohanty, 16, of Jajpur. However, they have been staying in VSS Nagar area of Bhubaneswar, sources said.

Prajat Kumar Nath, an eyewitness, said the mother-daughter duo jumped off the Netaji Subhas bridge one after another at around 4.30 pm. "I was on my way to Barang from Cuttack. Suddenly, I saw a woman jumped into the river from the bridge. Soon, another woman also jumped into the river. I informed the incident to police," Nath said.

Fire brigade personnel reached the spot and rescued the mother-daughter duo who were taken to Barang police station for quizzing. According to sources, the duo was later released by the police.

"I fell into the river while taking a selfie. My daughter jumped into the river to save me from drowning," Anjali said.

Barang police IIC could not be reached for any information on the incident.



DOLLED UP TOYS



A vendor sells dolls alongside a road near the Raj Bhawan in Bhubaneswar, Wednesday

AMRI to provide Covid care at home

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 8: The AMRI Hospitals here has come forward to assist Covid-19 patients who want treatment at home to reduce the chances of infection in hospital.

This comes after the government changed the norms and allowed home treatment of Covid-19 patients. The hospital through its 'Virtual Home Care' assistance has planned to extend medical care to the patients by linking them to doctors and paramedical staff.

The hospital authorities said that the service will provide sup-

port to patients who have been tested positive for the novel coronavirus but are either asymptomatic or have mild symptoms that do not need hospitalisation.

"The package will support such patients with remote monitoring, as patients stay in the comfort of their homes. The service is a step forward towards the care of Covid-19 patients," the hospital said in a statement. The institution has planned to provide two doctor consultations in a week and one dietician consultation for the whole period, besides monitoring by nurses on a daily basis.

NURSE STABBED TO DEATH BY HUSBY

Cuttack: A nurse was allegedly stabbed to death by her husband at Mahura Primary School under Sadar police limits here, sources said Wednesday. According to sources, the deceased, who was working as a nurse at Mahidharapada healthcare facility, had been engaged in a vaccination drive at the school. "The nurse's husband reached the school where the vaccination drive was in progress and stabbed her, resulting in her death on the spot," said a source. Locals nabbed the accused and alerted the police. The accused was detained at the police station, till the last report came in. The reason behind the man's violent behaviour is yet to be ascertained, said sources.

BJD APPOINTS 15 SENIOR GEN SECRETARIES

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 8: After appointing some party leaders as senior vice-presidents and vice-presidents, the ruling BJD Wednesday appointed 15 leaders as senior general secretaries of the party.

The leaders are Nrusingha Charan Sahu, Ashok Panda, Kalikesh Narayan Singh Deo, Pritiranjan Ghadai, Arun Sahoo, Rohit Pujari, Atanu Sabayasachi Nayak, Rabi Narayan Nanda, Rajendra Prasad Dholkia, Pratap Jena, Naba Kishore Das, Ramesh

Chandra Majhi, Sarojini Hembram, Sashi Bhusan Behera and Sumitra Jena.

General Secretary (media affairs) Manas Ranjan Mangaraj said the leaders have been given responsibility of various activities of the party.

Pictures, videos of 2020 Rath Yatra to be preserved

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, July 8: The Shree Jagannath Temple Administration (SJTA) has decided to make documentation of this year's Rath Yatra which was held amidst the Covid-19 pandemic.

This was revealed by SJTA chief administrator Krishna Kumar after attending a meeting of the Shree Jagannath Temple Managing Committee and Chhattisha Nijog (apex body of servitors) at Puri recently.

He said this year's Rath Yatra will be documented through video, still pictures and books for posterity. He said the 2020 Rath Yatra was unique in view of the circumstances under which it was successfully organised.

With smooth conduct of the festival, Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik thanked the temple servitors, the administration above all the people of Odisha for the wholehearted cooperation of Lord Jagannath's annual festival.

"Lord Jagannath has returned to Srimandir (the temple) along with his siblings. It became possible by the Lord's grace," Patnaik said.

This year's Rath Yatra is significant as the SJTA got permission to



File photo of this year's Rath Yatra

conduct the festival with less than 24 hours left for the beginning of the associated rituals. Though the Supreme Court in its June 18 order stayed the festival at Puri and elsewhere in Odisha, the apex court later June 22 had modified its decision and allowed conditional conduct of the yatra.

Kumar said apart from making this year's Rath Yatra devotee less, there are other aspects which also need to be documented.

He said the rituals associated

with chariot making, was held inside the premises of the 12th century April 26 in view of the lockdown norms. The chariot making work started about 10 days later than its scheduled date, but still the carpenters completed the three gigantic Rath before time. The experiences associated with chariot making within a record period of time will also be documented.

The senior IAS officer said, "The documentation will also include how all the preparations were made

UNIQUE FEST

The 2020 Rath Yatra was unique in view of the circumstances under which it was organised successfully

This year's Rath Yatra is significant as the SJTA got permission to conduct the festival with less than 24 hours left for the beginning of the associated rituals

About 10 lakh devotees usually congregate every year for the Rath Yatra festival, this time the Grand Road in front of the 12th century shrine remained vacant

smoothly in appropriate time and the cooperation and support from servitors and the people of the state, particularly the citizens of Puri."

While adhering to the apex court's directive, the administration had to conduct corona tests of above 1,000 servitors who later qualified for chariot pulling. "It was a tough job for conducting tests and getting reports within a short span of time," a Health department official said.

As about 10 lakh devotees usually

congregate every year for the Rath Yatra festival, this time the Grand Road in front of the 12th century shrine remained vacant. Only police personnel, some officials and servitors remained present in the festival venue.

"This time, only servitors pulled the chariot which is itself a history," Kumar said.

He said all the rituals beginning from the Lord's procession, chariot pulling, return car festival, Suna Bhesha (golden attire), Adharapana and finally Niladri Bijee (the ritual in which the deities return to the main temple after the festival) were held in the absence of devotees.

People got the opportunity to witness the festival through live telecast of all the major rituals, he said, adding that a sub-committee of the temple administration will be assigned the responsibility of documentation. Kumar said, the members of the sub-committee will hold a meeting to decide their next course of action, he said.

Lord Jagannath's annual Rath Yatra has been continuing since 1736 without any break, but this year's festival would get a place in the history book, said Bhaskar Mishra, a researcher in Shree Jagannath culture.

Cong slams govt for curbs on new postings

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 8: A day after the Finance department put a freeze on fresh recruitments, the Odisha Congress, Wednesday, staged a sit-in in front of the party office at Master Canteen to oppose the move.

The Youth Congress leaders and party leader Suresh Routray sat on a dharna and were seen polishing shoes to mark their protest against the decision, which they claimed could hamper the job prospects of several youths especially during this testing time of Covid-19.

"The Naveen government abruptly put an embargo on new recruitments. This is a time when many qualified people are sitting at their homes in search of job to sustain their families. Many people have lost their jobs in the private sector. This is unjustified," Routray said.

He also added that the decision should be rolled back and qualified youths from the state should not be left to suffer at this juncture when jobs and incomes of people have been severely hit due to the



protest.

The youth wing leaders told the media that many aspiring youths who were preparing for competitive examinations for jobs in public sector could get a setback and might lose one year of their career. Other party leaders also demanded reduction in incentives of the MLAs to lessen the financial burden on the government.

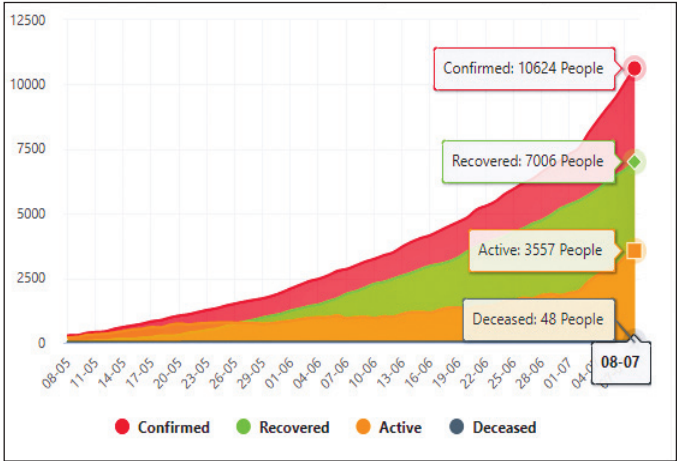
The Finance department, meanwhile, claimed that the recruitment process which had started and are ongoing will not be affected, but new posts and applications will not be entertained in order to strengthen the state financially to fight the global pandemic in a better way.

STEADY RISE IN STATE'S VIRUS CURVE

Bhubaneswar, July 8: After initial success in containing the spread of the deadly COVID-19 pandemic, the state is witnessing a dangerous coronavirus curve which is both steep and steady.

The state reported six more COVID-19 fatalities Wednesday, taking the death toll due to the disease to 48, while Odisha's total tally rose to 10,624 with 527 fresh cases, an official of the Health and Family Welfare (H&F) department said.

"Regret to inform the demise of



six COVID positive patients while under treatment in hospital," the official said, adding that three deaths were reported from Ganjam and one each from Rayagada, Kendrapara and Khurda.

Two men, aged 56 and 64, and a 50-year-old woman from Ganjam district succumbed to the disease, and they had been suffering from diabetes, said the official.

A 55-year-old man from Bhubaneswar in Khurda district

also died of the coronavirus infection, the official said.

"An 80-year-old man from Rayagada district, who was suffering from chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, died of COVID-19, while a 49-year-old man from Kendrapara also succumbed to the disease. He was a diabetic patient," the official said.

Of the 48 deaths so far in Odisha, Ganjam, the worst-hit district, accounts for 27, followed by eight in

Khurda, five in Cuttack, and one each in Bargarh, Gajapati, Angul, Kendrapara, Puri, Rayagada, Jajpur and Sundargarh, he said.

A 53-year-old coronavirus patient from Khurda district also died, but the health department attributed the cause of his death to 'non-COVID reasons', the official said, adding that he was HIV positive.

A total of 527 people, including Salipur's BJD MLA Prasant Behera, tested positive for coronavirus. Behera had come in contact with BJP's Nilgiri MLA Sukanta Kumar Nayak, who tested positive for the infection Monday, and has been undergoing treatment at a hospital in Balasore, the official said, adding that Behera's personal security officer and driver have also contracted the disease.

RECORD DISCHARGE OF 303 PERSONS IN A DAY

As many as 303 persons have recovered and were discharged from COVID facilities in the state, a record discharge in a day Wednesday, the H&F department tweeted. "Setting standards in patient care and recovery, Odisha achieved a record high discharge of 303 #COVID19 patients in a day!" the department said in a tweet. Odisha now has 3,557 active cases, while 7,006 patients have recovered from the disease.

Brown sugar worth ₹3.5cr seized from homicide accused



DIGP (central range) Ashish Singh (centre) briefing the media

Manoranjan Sahoo, 20, of Bhalilabadi under Khurda Town police limits was arrested on charges of possessing the contraband

A gun, live bullets, a bike, a mobile phone and ₹16,500 in cash were seized from the accused

DIGP (central range) Ashish Kumar Singh said Sahoo was the main accused in the murder of Lala Pradhan at Dadhimachhagadia under Khurda Sadar police limits June 15 this year

Khurda, July 8: The Special Task Force (STF) of Odisha Police Crime Branch Wednesday achieved a major breakthrough in crackdown against illegal narcotics trade and seized 3.602 kg of brown sugar from Jatni bypass here.

Police also arrested drug peddler Manoranjan Sahoo, 20, of Bhalilabadi under Khurda Town police limits. A gun, live bullets, a bike, a mobile phone and ₹16,500 were also seized from Sahoo, police said.

Acting on a tip-off, a team from the STF intercepted Sahoo at Jatni bypass and seized the brown sugar from him. The market value of the seized contraband is said to be around ₹3.5 crore.

Addressing a presser here, DIG of Odisha police Ashish Kumar Singh said Sahoo was the main accused in the murder of Lala Pradhan at Dadhimachhagadia under Khurda Sadar police limits June 15 this year.

"Sahoo was on the run since the incident. Police had registered a case in connection with Pradhan's murder and arrested a person named as Sanjay Behera June 16. A special police team had been formed to arrest Sahoo," said the DIG.

The DIG further revealed that Sahoo had fired at STF inspector Alok Kumar Jena June 6 last year. "A case had been filed against Sahoo

RTO-II shuts ops

The Regional Transport Office (RTO)-II in Patia area here was shut as a precautionary measure to contain the spread of novel coronavirus, an official said Wednesday. Earlier, the Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC) authorities had sealed RTO-I in Acharya Vihar area after four persons associated with the office tested positive for the viral infection.

ECoR cancels multiple trains to, from Ganjam

Bhubaneswar, July 8: In view of increase in spread of COVID-19 positive cases and careful consideration of the COVID-19 situation, Government of Odisha has requested East Coast Railway not to permit any boarding/alighting of passengers of any train in entire Ganjam District and Balugaon till further advice from July 9, 2020.

Keeping in view the above, East Coast Railway has cancelled one pair of train which is Bhubaneswar-Berhampur-Bhubaneswar Tri-weekly Special from Bhubaneswar.

This apart, stoppages of some trains at Balugaon, Chhatrapur and Berhampur were also withdrawn. The trains are Bhubaneswar-Chhatrapati Sivaji Maharaj Terminus, Mumbai-Bhubaneswar Special, Howrah-



Secunderabad-Howrah Special Express.

Earlier in view of increase in spread of COVID-19 positive cases, it is seen that, three trains are running with extremely poor occupancy. In view of this, ECoR had decided to cancel the services of these three trains, i.e., Bhubaneswar-Bhadrak-Bhubaneswar, Bhubaneswar-Brahmapur-Bhubaneswar and Sambalpur-Khurda Road-Sambalpur Special Trains.

OJEE deadline extended till July 25

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 8: In view of the current situation arising from COVID-19 pandemic, the last dates of the Odisha Joint Entrance Examination (OJEE) online application submission was extended by authorities to July 25.

The online application portal stated that various courses namely B.Pharm, MBA, MCA, M.Tech, M.Tech (Part Time), M.Arch, M.Plan, M.Pharm, Int. MBA, LE-Tech (Diploma), LE-Tech (BSc), LE-Pharm and B.Tech (Special OJEE) are reopened and the last dates of form submission is July 25 and online fee payment is July 31.

The detailed schedule of examination date and downloading of admit card will be notified in due



The OJEE council had May 12 announced to cancel second OJEE scheduled to be held later this year and declared that a special entrance exam will be conducted for students aspiring to take admission into B Tech courses

The detailed schedule of examination date and downloading of admit card will be notified in due course of time after July 31, said OJEE chairman Sudeep Kumar Chand. Earlier, May 12, OJEE council had announced to cancel second OJEE scheduled to be held later this year and declared that

a special entrance exam will be conducted for students aspiring to take admission into B Tech courses in all government and private engineering institutes.

The (OJEE) authorities had also extended the date of online application form submission for special OJEE exam for admission to B Tech programmes.

RGV's tweet on state draws flak

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 8: Hindi cine director Ram Gopal Verma has landed in the soup once again for a tweet where he says that he had not heard about Odisha since the 'hurricane'.

In the tweet, the 'Satya' director praises Apsara Rani, an actress working on his web flick 'Thriller'. The 24-year-old actress from Odisha was brought up in the hills of Dehradun and presently resides in Hyderabad.

The tweet did not go down well with Odia people with many criticising the director's lack of knowledge about the state.

IG of state's police ops Amitabh Thakur tweeted, "It's sad to know about your ignorance. By the way hurricanes, typhoons and willy willy are not in this part of world...just informing. By the

Never even thought of Odisha as a talent pool for film industry. But going by @apsara_rani coming from there, both the rest of the country and Odisha itself should seriously look at Odisha



A screenshot of Ram Gopal Verma's tweet

way #Odisha has been in news for all right reasons...thoda padh bhi lete."

Director Nila Madhab Panda tweeted, "Hahhaaa. No one is asking for your advice sir.

Google is available you should see to have more knowledge. We have great talents, one of the best in the world to fight natural disaster. You need two days to hear how serious we are."

Another twitterati wrote, "First of all this is Odisha not Orissa Mr Bhram (oopss Verma). Secondly you are actually an unfortunate man as you have missed a lot about Odisha since 1999. Though you are from entertainment industry, (we can't expect much)."

Odisha is the land of Lord Jagannath. Lustful myopic vision has no place in the land of Odisha," another tweeted.

Meanwhile, the actress Apsara tried to bring peace by writing, "Sir there's a lot of better talent than me in Odisha but I just got an opportunity...I wish the rest of the country recognises this and takes Odisha's talent seriously."

Delhi AIIMS to guide docs in COVID hosps

POST NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi, July 8: As part of its holistic response and management strategy for COVID-19, the Union Minister of Health & Family Welfare has involved specialist doctors from AIIMS, New Delhi to provide expert guidance and knowledge support to doctors manning ICUs in Odisha and other state hospitals through tele-consultation.

According to the ministry, tele-consultation is a critical component of the clinical intervention protocol for COVID-19. A specialist team of doctors from AIIMS, New Delhi shall provide guidance on effective clinical management of COVID-19 patients in the ICUs of different state hospitals through tele/video consultation.

They will handhold the states in clinical management of COVID-19 patients to reduce the case fatality rate. These tele-consultation sessions for providing timely and expert guidance to the doctors in the States shall be conducted twice every week, on Tuesdays and Fridays.

The first session of this exercise was commenced from Wednesday. Ten hospitals have been selected, including nine from Mumbai (Maharashtra) and one from Goa.

The ministry said that this exercise shall be extended to another 61 hospitals which have bed capacity ranging from 500-1000 on twice a week basis. Total 17 states including Odisha shall be covered in the exercise.

A calendar of these expert-led tele-consultation sessions has been drawn up to cover the states till July 31.

LONG BATTLE



The Enforcement squad of CMC inspects a fish market at Buxi Bazar in the Silver City over reported violation of norms. (Bottom) Sanitisation in progress at Choudhury Bazar area in Cuttack, Wednesday

Heavy rain likely in next 48 hours

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 8: India Meteorological Department (IMD) Wednesday said heavy rainfall will occur in some places in the state during the next two days.

Few places of Sundargarh, Deogarh, Angul and Keonjhar will receive heavy rain Thursday. Koraput, Malkangiri, Sambalpur and Mayurbhanj will receive rainfall on the next day, the IMD said.

Thunderstorm will also continue to occur in many parts of the state. One or two places of Koraput, Malkangiri, Gajapati, Ganjam, Kalahandi, Boudh, Nayagarh, Khurda, Sundargarh, Angul, Dhenkanal and Mayurbhanj will witness thunderstorm, July 9.

GOVT ISSUES SOPs TO CONDUCT MARRIAGES

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 8: The office of Special Relief Commissioner (SRC) Wednesday came out with detailed guidelines to govern marriage and cremation functions.

The norms have mandated mandatory permission from the local authorities either in writing or electronic forms. It also restricts the number of people, fixes liability on the hosts and also talks about how to go about such functions.

"Marriage and its related functions shall be held only with prior permission (in writing or through electronic communication) of the local PS. Local Police Station will

be authorized to give permission for holding marriage and its related functions subject to participation of maximum 50," it said.

It also said the same SOPs for cremations but restricted the people up to 20 maximum. It has asked the hosts to ensure provisions of hand washing while instructed people to maintain social distancing in both the functions.

The norms ask people above 65 years of age, kids below 10 years of age and pregnant women not to visit such functions. It has put the onus on the host and manager for rule violations. It also said that guests could also be persecuted for rule violations.

FOR CLASSIFIED ADVERTISEMENTS CONTACT OUR BOOKING STATIONS

- Acharya Vihar-Daya Agency-9437135727, A.P. Tours and Travel, Maitri Vihar, C.S. Pur- 9861301598, Aurobindo Market-Sai Audio & Electronics-9438304668, Airport Road-Sai Baba Variety Store-9090071530, Anish Infotech- Tankapani Road-9861341488, Bapuji Nagar- Dreamland Studio- 9777517314, Baramunda Rental Colony-Maa Ramchandi Communication-9658821469, Baramunda Housing Board Colony-Pappu Variety Store-9040500106, Cuttack Road-Alishan Snacks-8984236754, District Center (Chandrasekharpur)-Sai Google Mart-9776056507, Forest Park-DTDC Couriers & Services (HB Services)-7381024156, IRC Village-Bapi Xerox-9090090404, Gift Hut(Antriksh Gifts & Decors Pvt. Ltd.)-9954781084, Pruthvi Medicine-9853314816, Janpath-Krupajal Book Store-7978646669, Jaydev Vihar-AK Enterprises-978116618, Subam Sai Books Store-8895550649, Swain Graphics- 9337121249, Jagannath Mobile Point- Janpath Road, Ram Mandir- 9938475415, Kanan Vihar-Auro Electronics-8260697560, Khandagiri- Swosti Mobile Centre- 7992914045, World Solution- 9938317559, KIIT Road-Jugad Jn-9338545031, Laxmi Sagar-Aditya Mobile-9438191836, Lewis Road-Spider Web-7809186415, Metro Satellite City-Arogya Mitra Medicine Store-9853621640, Madhusudan Nagar-Mohapatra Communication-9124446664, Maa Santoshi travels- Gajapati Nagar- 9777675867, Nayapalli- The Cake Room- 7873660137, Near Mayfair Lagoon-Cookiemann-9439491273, Nigamananda-Omm Sai Travels-9668284823, Nr Cosmopolis Main Gate- Shreeram Medical Store- 8763711714, Net Square- Niladri Vihar (C.S. Pur)- 7205634821, Priyadarshini Market-Astro Point-9938134346, R.N. General Store-Nilakantha Nagar-9438642501, Sahid Nagar- Maa Communication- 9437353424, Sahini General Store- Near Patia Railway Station, Mahavir Vihar- 9937586626, Satya Nagar-Baishnavi Mixture & Sweets-7894821764, Samantapur- Download Point-7504557743, Sailashree Vihar-Harsha Book Store-8093449515, Saheed Nagar-Jagannath Graphics-7978652670, Photo World-7978468191, Sainath Photo Studio-8984436129, Shanti & Co-9937071063, Siripur-Omm Maa Sarala Communication-9777682449, Sushree fashion- Jagmara-9938714347, Shree Vision- Sailashree Vihar-9861476678, Unit-3-LIC of India Premium Point-9337787080, Unit-7- LIC Premium Point- 9338227422, VSS Nagar-Friends Cake & Bake-8658200930, Jeet Infoworld-7205195782, XIMB Square-LD Books-9658061373.

Security tightened in Kandhamal after police-Maoist encounters

POST NEWS NETWORK

Daringbadi, July 8: After five Maoists were gunned down in back-to-back encounters with security forces in forested areas of Kandhamal district, the police administration has sounded a high alert in some areas including Daringbadi and Brahmanigaon police station areas Wednesday, in view of a possible backlash from the Left wing extremists.

Roads in Daringbadi and Brahmanigaon police station areas were blocked while the police have intensified vehicle checking at strategic places. Security arrangements were beefed up at vulnerable places.

Since Saturday night, combing operation had been intensified by security forces in Kihalguda forest. Four Maoists, including two women cadres, were gunned by the security forces during an exchange of fire in the same forest with seizure of a huge cache of arms and ammunition.

Tuesday, the security forces had an exchange of fire with ultras. A team comprising personnel of the Special Operations Group (SOG) and District Voluntary Force (DVF) launched a combing operation in the forest in Tumudibandha area Monday night.

Last week, a Maoist camp was busted and explosives were seized



TACKLING THE RED MENACE

Security forces frisking bikers on a road

by security forces in Phiringia area.

During the Tuesday encounter, the security personnel busted a hideout where a group of 15 to 20 Maoists were suspected to be present.

According to SP Prateek Singh, many Maoists had fled the scene and disappeared deep into the forest taking advantage of darkness, but one ultra was shot dead. Two country-made guns, some ammunition, Maoist uniforms, bags and literature were found at the site.

The police were yet to identify the dead Maoist, who is suspected to be a member of the Bansadhara-Nagavali-Ghumusar (BNG) division of the banned CPI (Maoist).

One of the ultras was a state committee member of BNG division, having a bounty of Rs 20 lakh

while two others including a woman carried Rs 4 lakh rewards each.

In the wake of back-to-back encounters in the district, the police have now sensed that the escaped Maoists could unleash violence and revenge.

Following a direction from the SP, a high alert was sounded in some parts of the district while police forces are fully on alert.

Police have intensified vehicles frisking at several places under Bramanigaon and Daringbadi police limits.

The police also focused their vigil on suspected people such as strangers and wounded people seeking treatment.

The areas where Maoists used to print posters and banners are under scanner, a senior police officer said.

14-day quarantine for returnees to Subarnapur

POST NEWS NETWORK

Sonepur, July 8: With COVID-19 positive cases spiking rapidly in Odisha, the Subarnapur district administration has said in a notification Wednesday that all people returning from 13 hotspots in the state will have to undergo 14-day home/institutional quarantine.

The 13 hotspot COVID-19 districts that have been identified are Ganjam, Gajapati, Khurda, Cuttack, Jajpur, Jagatsinghpur, Balasore, Mayurbhanj, Sundargarh, Puri, Kendrapara, Bhadrak and Bolangir. Anyone from these 13 districts going to Subarnapur will have to undergo quarantine. Doctors will decide that whether the person needs home or institutional quarantine.

The returnees have to register at the district medical officer's office after their return. To control the virus, the district administration has already imposed 7.00pm to 7.00am curfew and weekend shutdown in the district. Subarnapur district reported five COVID-19 positive cases in the last 24 hours.



The total number of cases so far reported from the district stands at 44. Among those infected by the virus, 37 have already recovered and discharged from hospitals. The seven active cases are being treated at different COVID-19 hospitals. So far the district has not reported any deaths due to the virus.

Jolt to Ganjam's Covid care as pvt ambulances quit service

POST NEWS NETWORK

Berhampur, July 8: Healthcare service in corona hotspot Ganjam district received a jolt after private ambulances engaged in ferrying Covid-19 patients to Covid Care centres and Covid hospitals announced to quit the service allegedly over irregular pay-



ment and neglect of the ambulance staff, a report said.

The matter came to the fore after owners of the private ambulances staged a demonstration outside the office of the chief district medical and public health officer (CDMPHO) here and announced the halt of service until their demands were met.

The ambulance owners and drivers alleged that the district administration and the district health department are not paying them in time and neglecting in taking steps towards their protection as they stand every chance of getting infected while ferrying patients to Covid hospitals.

Moreover, despite being in high risk job, the district ad-

ministration has neglected in ensuring insurance for them, the ambulance owners and drivers alleged.

They also alleged that the promise of food and accommodation facilities for the drivers by the district health department is yet to be realised. They had submitted a memorandum to the CDMPHO but their pleas are yet to be addressed.

The district administration has requisitioned private ambulances to ferry coronavirus patients to Covid care centres and Covid hospitals as the district became a hotspot. The administration has reportedly engaged over 44 private ambulances of MKCG Private Ambulance Service in 22 blocks of the district.

Paralakhemundi to shut for three days

Paralakhemundi: In view of the rising number of COVID-19 cases in Gajapati, the district administration Wednesday announced a three-day shutdown in Paralakhemundi town to conduct massive screening drive and antigen tests.

Paralakhemundi will remain under shutdown for three days from July 10 to 12 restricting vehicular movement and sealing the major roads connecting the southern Odisha town, said Gajapati Collector Anupam Saha Wednesday. The move came after the number of COVID-19 cases increased in the southern Odisha district. As per the decision, the door-to-door antigen test will be conducted to detect coronavirus cases in the town. Till date, the district has registered 521 COVID-19 cases, of which 158 are active. One patient has succumbed to the deadly virus while recovered cases in the district stand at 362.

New road to pave way for Dhenkanal-Keonjhar link

POST NEWS NETWORK

Dhenkanal, July 8: A new road will soon connect the two headquarters town of Dhenkanal and Keonjhar districts which will reduce the distance between them by 35 km.

The road which will connect the two districts will be built in remote areas of Kankadahada block in Dhenkanal, executive engineer Manoranjan Biswal told this correspondent, Tuesday.

Meanwhile, State Mines, Steel and Works Minister Prafulla Kumar Mallick has reviewed the project by holding discussion with administrative officials and engineers, Biswal said.

The works department has submitted a proposal in this regard to the state government. Work will begin soon after receiving the approval of the state government.

The proposed road will start from the headquarters town of Dhenkanal and will pass through Kamakhyanagar, Kankadahada, Dandadhar and the Rekuti check gate on the border to connect

with Keonjhar.

The 125-km road will reduce the distance between the two towns by 35 km.

The new road is expected to boost trade and commerce between the districts. At present, one wishing to travel from Dhenkanal to Keonjhar has to take the road cutting through Kamakhyanagar-Parjang-Dihadol-Mahabirod-Telkoi which is around 160 km.

A bus operated by Odisha State Road Transport Corporation (OSRTC) plies daily between Dhenkanal and Keonjhar.

However, passenger transport on this route is not smooth as this road passes through a dense forest. As a result, the bus reportedly gets a few passengers.

The executive engineer said the works department will construct the road from the district headquarters till Rekuti after receiving the approval of the state government. Later, the Keonjhar works department will take up the construction till the Keonjhar headquarters town, he added.



The Rekuti area in Dhenkanal on the fringes of Keonjhar district

Man held for raping 7-yr-old daughter

POST NEWS NETWORK

Patna, July 8: Keonjhar police Wednesday arrested a man on the charge of raping his minor daughter. Patna police station IIC Somanath Jena arrested the accused and produced him in a court.

The police have conducted medical tests of both the accused and the victim at the Patna community health centre.

The health condition of the victim is stable, police said. According to a source, the victim

was raped when her mother had gone to a farmland on some work.

The accused allegedly raped his seven-year-old daughter Monday under the influence of alcohol. The wife of the accused lodged an FIR at Patna police station Tuesday afternoon in this connection.

Patna police registered a case under Section 376 A, B, C of IPC as well as POCSO Act and were probing into the matter following which the accused was arrested.

The incident has sent shockwaves in the area.

LIVELIHOOD MATTERS



Two labourers carrying a block of stone across a road to a construction site in Angul town

OP PHOTO

Highwaymen have a field day in Covid times

GANGS OF CRIMINALS FROM NEIGHBOURING WEST BENGAL AND JHARKHAND ARE BEHIND THE INCREASING CRIME

POST NEWS NETWORK

Basta, July 8: Even as people, the administration and the police are having a tough time in dealing with the increasing cases of Covid-19, highway robbery and other criminal gangs have been ruling their roost in fringe areas like Basta, Baliapal and Jaleswar in Balasore district, a report said.

People have lost their sleep in these areas as there is a sudden spurt in crimes like robbery and snatching. It is said gangs of criminals from neighbouring West Bengal and Jharkhand are behind the increasing crime.

The police are already on the act to break their network, but alleged non-cooperation from their counterparts of the neighbouring states is a hurdle in furthering the investigations of the crimes.

Between January and February, Basta police arrested four criminals - Manoj Nayak (20) of Balasore, Sheikh Sahil (19) of Baripada and Mohammed Intiaz Alam



THE GANGS HAVE SPREAD THEIR NETWORK IN ODISHA, WEST BENGAL, JHARKHAND AND CHHATTISGARH

THE GANG HAD ALLEGEDLY LOOTED A CAR FROM SUJIT SEN AT MATHANI ON NH-16, JUNE 16

POLICE SAID THAT THERE HAS BEEN NO SUPPORT AND COOPERATION FROM THE POLICE OF THE FOUR NEIGHBOURING STATES SO THAT THE CRIMINAL NETWORKS CAN BE BUSTED

of Gamharia in Jharkhand - in several cases of snatching, dacoity and theft. However, two members of this gang are absconding. The gang had allegedly looted a car from Sujit Sen at Mathani on NH-16, June 16. Following a complaint, the police came to know that an inter-state dacoit gang is behind this highway robbery. The accused were produced in court.

On the other hand, the police are upset over the slow progress of investigation into criminal cases. They said that there has been no support and cooperation from the police of the two neighbouring states so that the criminal networks can be busted.

The gangs have spread their network in Odisha, West Bengal, Jharkhand and Chhattisgarh.

Basta IIC Manas Kumar Deo formed a special team and raided various places in Odisha, West Bengal, Jharkhand and Chhattisgarh where the four were arrested along with the car. Police suspect that more robbers from other states are involved in highway robberies. The four will be taken into remand for further investigation.

After long wait, bridge project at Charbatia ghat gets IWAI nod

POST NEWS NETWORK

Padmapur, July 8: A long wait for a bridge at Charbatia ghat of river Mantei in Chandbali block of Bhadrak district has come to an end after the Inland Waterways Authority of India (IWAI) has given an NOC for the project.

The project was requiring clearance from the IWAI. The IWAI's NOC (115/2-18-145-2020) will pave the way for the bridge, locals said.

Orissa POST had carried a report about lack of a bridge at Charbatia ghat July 1, highlighting the plight of commuters on boat rides. Overcrowded boats ferry people with support of a hanging rope at the ghat while mishaps often

occur during boat rides.

People in riparian pockets in Basudevpur, Tihidi and Chandbali blocks have long been suffering from commuting woes in the absence of a bridge.

With boats, the ghat provides a major shortcut route for people to different places of the three blocks. A rope has been hanging across the river and the boatmen oar the boats by clutching the rope.

The boat rides are always fraught with risk while mishaps have occurred in the past as safety measures have been thrown to the winds. Last years, a boat had capsized along with a man and his motorcycle. He was rescued later.

Residents of Balimunda, Bideipur, Kismatkrushnapur, Laxmidaspur,



Balimeda, Jagannathprasad, Padmapur, Sugo, Edatal, Lunga under Basudevpur block, Sahada, Sabaranga and Goramati under Bhadrak block and several villages

■ The project was requiring clearance from the IWAI. The IWAI's NOC (115/2-18-145-2020) will pave the way for the bridge, locals said

■ With boats, the ghat provides a major shortcut route for people to different places of the three blocks. A rope has been hanging across the river and the boatmen oar the boats by clutching the rope

■ Overcrowded boats ferry people with support of a hanging rope at the ghat while mishaps often occur during boat rides

try boats daily from this ghat. Locals said this is the place where Mahatma Gandhi had crossed the river and spent night at Charbatia during the freedom struggle against the British rule.

The state government has declared this place as Gandhi Smaraki Peetha. The East India Company used this river and ghat for cargo transportation, particularly from Charbatia ghat to Jankunda in Balasore. A sluice gate built by the British government stands testimony to the maritime history of the region.

The sluice gate is still intact. Locals lamented that such a long used maritime route has been neglected with people having to suffer a lot while commuting.

FOCUS WORLD

DEMOCRACY UNDER SIEGE



Disseminating misinformation should not be confused with championing "diversity of opinion." Those who contend that more speech is the best antidote to fallacious speech are probably right, provided that the matter involves the expression of actual opinions or ideas

Recent challenges to democratic institutions and processes in the United States have raised fundamental political and legal questions to which all liberal democracies must have convincing answers. When should military leaders refuse to follow presidential orders that they believe are unconstitutional? At what point do police take responsibility for the delegitimizing effect of racism? Why must journalists place the truth above the appearance of neutrality? And when should words or images deliberately used in defiance of demonstrable facts lose legal protections?

The challenges confronting the US provide some guidance. General Mark Milley, America's top military official, was right to apologize for participating in President Donald Trump's imperious walk across Lafayette Square in Washington, DC. Not only had teargas and rubber bullets been used to clear the area of peaceful protesters, but Trump was obviously using the military as a pawn in domestic politics.

Similarly, there is reason to agree with Detroit Police Chief James Craig's use of the word "murder" to describe the killing by Minneapolis police of George Floyd, an unarmed black man. The offending officer and his three colleagues should have known that pressing one's knee on someone's neck for over eight minutes is long enough to cause asphyxiation. Insofar as it is reasonable to infer intent from such an act, murder is a reasonable charge (assuming one accepts the premise that black lives matter).

Soon thereafter, the New York Times published an op-ed by US Senator Tom Cotton, a staunch Trump ally who urged the federal government to invoke the 1807 Insurrection Act and deploy armed forces to suppress public protests. The paper's editorial board subsequently repudiated the commentary, blaming its decision to publish it on inadequate fact-checking of Cotton's spurious characterization of the protesters as anarchists and "nihilist criminals."

Disseminating misinformation should not be confused with championing "diversity of opinion." Those who contend that more speech is the best antidote to fallacious speech are probably right, provided that the matter involves the expression of actual opinions or ideas. More speech exposed Cotton's effort to mislead readers, and called into question the Times' decision to publish it. But more speech is a futile response to words or images intended merely to foment violence or otherwise disable good-faith efforts at communication.

Disguised and unlabeled political disinformation, visual "deep fakes," and injurious hoaxes run rampant across Facebook, Twitter, and other social-media platforms every day. Democracies must be able to defend themselves against the use of words or images that deliberately sow confusion and mistrust in order to disable meaningful public discourse. The US Supreme Court has ruled that the Constitution's First Amendment protections do not extend to speech acts that threaten imminent violence. This limit ought to apply whether it's "fighting words" or signal-jamming words that destroy the essential conditions of communication itself.

All of these recent challenges to democratic governance have a common denominator: bad faith. An executive order that violates fundamental principles of self-governance is bad faith. Racist policing is bad faith. Abandoning the duty of an independent press to speak truth to power is bad faith. Sowing confusion and distrust by deliberately disseminating disinformation is bad faith. Politicizing independent agencies is bad faith.

Bad faith on this scale threatens to disable the constitutional mechanisms that exist to check undue concentrations of power within any single branch of government. It also threatens to unravel the broader social compact by subverting the shared democratic values from which the state derives its legitimacy.

When a president calls upon the armed forces to quash dissent, the people – the principal source of the state's authority – become the state's enemy. Likewise, when a president maligns and threat-

ens journalists, the free press – the best guardian "of our every right," as James Madison described it – becomes, in Trump's words, "the enemy of the people."

Finally, when the executive branch uses the Department of Justice to reward political allies (like former Trump advisers Michael T. Flynn and Roger Stone) and to purge perceived foes (like former FBI Director James Comey and US Attorney Geoffrey S. Berman), equal justice and the rule of law become the enemy. And when the political process for appointing federal judges elevates loyalty to the chief executive above fealty to law and a commitment to impartial decision-making, the entire judicial branch loses credibility.

The further this friend/enemy polarization is allowed to go, the deeper the crisis of legitimacy will be. It is essential, therefore, to draw a line against state power exercised in bad faith. But simply identifying abuses of power is not enough. Defenders of democracy also must ensure that significant collective action will follow if and when the line is crossed. Mass protest is the last resort of democratic resistance. America's founders understood this. That is why "the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the government for a redress of grievances" appears among the first guarantees in the US Bill of Rights.

If a republic cannot or simply will not defend itself against brazen acts of bad faith, its days are numbered. Eternal vigilance may be the price of liberty, but tyranny fails only when a sufficient number of citizens are willing to resist it. As many have done over the past month, Americans must continue to summon the courage to defend and strengthen the democratic institutions upon which their freedom depends.

The writer is Professor of Law and Director of the Visual Journalism Project at New York Law School.

©PROJECT SYNDICATE



Richard K. Sherwin

ETERNAL VIGILANCE MAY BE THE PRICE OF LIBERTY, BUT TYRANNY FAILS ONLY WHEN A SUFFICIENT NUMBER OF CITIZENS ARE WILLING TO RESIST IT



SRI AUROBINDO

Spirituality is indeed the master key of the Indian mind; the sense of the infinitive is native to it.

Pigeons as messengers

I like pigeons. Their voices are soft and rhythmic. I have put up baskets for them in the front verandah and they live there quietly. They don't ask for food – probably because they are fed at the roundabout near my house by compassionate people who come from far to drop grains for them every day. I have a bird table of rice and fruit so they can feed there whenever they want.

The Mumbai Municipal Commissioner has made it the feature of his (hopefully brief) tenure that he will get rid of pigeons from Mumbai. Those who go looking for something to hate and often pick on pigeons should know what they have done for us humans over the years.

The first airmail using pigeons was established in 1896 in New Zealand and was known as the Pigeon-Gram Service. Their speed averaged 77.6 mph, only 40 per cent slower than a modern aircraft. Each pigeon carried five messages and special Pigeon-Gram stamps were sold for each message carried.

In the First World War, pigeons were used extensively for carrying messages. German marksmen were deployed to shoot the birds down. Pigeons were carried in tanks and released through tiny portholes in the side. Mine-sweeping boats carried pigeons so that in the event of an attack by a U-boat, a pigeon could be released with a message confirming the exact location of the sinking boat, often resulting in the crew being saved. Seaplanes carried pigeons to relay urgent information about enemy movements. In the Second World War, pigeons were used in active service in Europe, India and Burma.

The last pigeon messaging service in the world was in Odisha called Orissa Police Carrier Pigeon Service and it disbanded in 2006 after 60 years of active service and 800 birds. Carrier pigeons had provided daily communications between 400 police stations across the state. They carried essential messages during two natural disasters: the massive cyclone in 1971 and the unprecedented floods in 1982. Their ability to fly in adverse weather conditions saved many human lives.

In the 5th Century BC, the first network of pigeon messengers is thought to have been established in Assyria and Persia by Cyrus the Great. In 2000 BC, they were carrying messages to warring groups in Mesopotamia. In 53 BC, they carried Hannibal's dispatches. Julius Caesar used pigeons during the conquest of Gaul from 58 to 51 BC. Indian and Arab merchants used carrier pigeons when visiting China. At the first Olympic Games held in 776 BC, every athlete had a homing pigeon from his village. If he won his event, his would be the bird that carried the news home.

Between 63 BC and AD 21, the Greek geographer Strabo noted that pigeons flew between certain points along the Mediterranean coastline to carry messages of the arrival of fish shoals for waiting fishermen. The news agency Reuters originally used pigeons to disseminate news in the 1840s. Paul Julius Reuter's pigeons only stopped when the telegram was invented. In 1870, they carried messages throughout France during the siege of Paris.

In 1915, at the start of the First Great War, two Pigeon Corps were established on the Western Front, consisting of 15 pigeon stations each with four birds and a handler. The Pigeon Corps was so successful that further birds were recruited, and the service expanded considerably. By the end of the war, the Pigeon Corps consisted of 400 men and 22,000 pigeons in 150 mobile lofts. Messages would be put into a small canister and then attached to the pigeon's leg. The bird would be released and would return to its loft behind allied lines, sounding a bell to confirm that it had landed.

Each airfield along the coast of England had its own loft so that pigeons could be dispatched with messages in the event of invasion. Bomber crews usually carried a pair of pigeons so that in the event that the plane was shot down, the birds could be released with details of the crash site.

These birds played a major role in the Intelligence Service in the First World War. They were sent to maintain contact with resistance movements across Europe. Fewer than 10 per cent survived the shell fire, small arms fire, poison gas.

In 1940, some 300 crates of pigeons were dropped into enemy-occupied areas of Europe, each bird being packed into a box with food for 10 days. Instructions and a questionnaire were put in the box. If found by an ally, information about enemy movement could be put inside the container on the bird's leg and the bird released to fly back. As many as 16,544 pigeons were parachuted into occupied Europe during the Second Great War. Only 1,842 returned.

Over 1,00,000 British pigeons lost their lives in military service. Red Cock flew back a torpedoed trawler carrying the grid reference of the sinking boat and saving the crew. In October 1918, 500 men of the 77th Infantry were trapped in Argonne, France with no food or ammunition and being bombarded by their own side. The major sent the pigeon Cher Ami with a message for rescue. The bird was shot through the breast by enemy fire and fell to the ground. She got back into the air and flew 25 miles back to Division Headquarters in 25 minutes. The men were saved. Cher Ami had delivered the message despite having been shot through the breast, blinded in one eye and with a leg hanging by only a tendon.

The Dickin medal is awarded to any animal that has distinguished itself through an act of bravery in wartime. Of the 55 medals awarded to date, pigeons have been recognised 32 times – much less than they deserve because they saved the lives of lakhs of people. The American and Australian Services also used pigeons extensively and had their own pigeon units operating in different countries. So did Burma (Myanmar) and India. Some years ago, the Indian army captured a pigeon carrying a message from the Pakistan army.

Pigeons were used for aerial photography. A miniature camera was mounted to the bird's breast via a canvas harness and the pigeon sent to areas of strategic importance to capture images. The films provided information about enemy troop movements and air bases. Information relating to exact positions of the V1 flying bomb site in Peenemunde in Germany was conveyed by pigeons – information that turned the tide of the war.

In 2004 an impressive memorial to commemorate all the animals and birds killed during wartime was erected in Hyde Park. Pigeons have been given pride of place in the sculpture with two pack mules in the foreground weighed down with munitions and cannon parts.

Pigeons more than any other animal have been man's best friend in times of crisis. They give of themselves for a just a handful of grain. You need to repay your debt every day.

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



Maneka Gandhi

The last pigeon messaging service in the world was in Odisha called Orissa Police Carrier Pigeon Service and it disbanded in 2006 after 60 years of active service and 800 birds

SPECTRUM BRAHMAPUTRA

River as life-giver, playmate and ravager

Over the centuries, people have learnt to live with rivers. Once upon a time, Huang-he was China's sorrow. The river killed millions of people since 2nd Century BC from catastrophic floods. In 1955, China successfully controlled the Huang-he by building overflow channels and increasingly taller dikes from its ambitious 50-year construction and flood-control programme. This included extensive dike construction, repair and reinforcement, reforestation and the construction of a series of dams to control the river's flow, produce electricity and supply water for irrigation. The river has not burst its banks since 1945. River Brahmaputra also has terrifying stories of annual flooding that eat away the entire economy of Assam.

The 2,900km-long trans-boundary Brahmaputra originates as the Yarlung Tsangpo from the Manasarovar, the highest body of freshwater lake in the world. It is fed by the Kailash Glaciers near Mount Kailash in Tibet Autonomous Region. Besides Brahmaputra, this is also the sources of great rivers of Asia, namely the Ghaghara (tributary of Ganga), Sindhu and Sutlej (tributaries of Indus).

After the river flows 2,840 km



through Tibet, and receiving waters from tributaries like Nyangchu, Lhasa, Nyang and Parlung, it enters Arunachal Pradesh as River Siang. It appears in the plains as Dihang and after gathering the tributaries Dibang and Lohit, it becomes the Brahmaputra in Assam. The rain-fed Brahmaputra gathers the bulk of its volume out of tributaries. Understanding the Brahmaputra is an on-going process. Localities along its course narrate the effects of the great earthquake of 1950 when innumerable timber logs clogged the river. The river changed colour and carried sulphurous material. The fish in it died. The riverbeds have risen as sediments blocked the river's course. Brahmaputra isn't just a river. It's a huge sea. It has vastness of water landscape nearly 15km wide at some places. Assam floods are singularly different in terms of their duration and magnitude of erosion. It can't be controlled merely

by strengthening embankment and by anti-erosion measures. The other day, SM Huq, a former chairman of the Central Water Commission in New Delhi, spoke to this writer about his visit to Palasbari in the late 60s to do a study on erosion. What he saw, that was history and beyond one's imagination.

Assam's flooding woes continue from the mighty Brahmaputra. The river is part of our lives since childhood. It's a playmate for us after playing a hard day's football. We dive into the river with a mighty splash. We saw floods when water swept away our village. There were no embankments to protect us. We had to take shelter on the high ground. We saw the river up and close. We boat on a raft made of banana plantains and fish for food.

The nature of flood in Assam takes a quantum leap every year. Floods have claimed hundreds of human lives; 34 this year; and threatened endangered animal species. Indian Rhinoceros flee to Karbi Hills looking for high ground. Onlookers see herds of elephants blocking the National Highway during the monsoon. Helpless deer wander for safety. Floods damage more than 60 per cent of the total kharif crops every year.

Breaches of embankment due to bank erosion have become a common

phenomenon. The heavy silt charge and flash floods of north bank tributaries are pushing the bank of the Brahmaputra southward. Lakhs of hectares of land were eroded by the river and its tributaries. Erosion-prone landmass Majuli got reduced to half from its origin. Palasbari near Guwahati experienced the threat of erosion in 1954. Today its history is unknown.

Assam is geographically situated in the foothills of the NE states. The hills in the surroundings carry huge flow of water to the plains. Most of its large tributaries bring huge quantity of sediments to its beds. The Central Water Commission (CWC) kept hollow promises to protect us. But survival of people alongside the river is still under threat.

Should India go the Chinese way to protect Brahmaputra? Dredging of Brahmaputra was undertaken during 1975 on an experimental basis. This, though, is a huge task and should be a continuous process since sediments get deposited very fast. The traditional sand embankment just can't protect Assam. It needs long-term planning. The cost of such undertaking would be enormous. We need a lasting solution, not just flood relief, as Assamese live by the Brahmaputra.

The writer is an ex-air warrior.



Kamal Baruah

BRAHMAPUTRA ISN'T JUST A RIVER. IT'S A HUGE SEA. IT HAS VASTNESS OF WATER LANDSCAPE NEARLY 15KM WIDE AT SOME PLACES

WISDOM CORNER

- Be slow to fall into friendship, but when you are in, continue firm and constant. **SOCRATES**
- The arrow shot by the archer may or may not kill a single person. But stratagems devised by wise men can kill even babes in the womb. **KAUTILYA**
- When the wind of change blows, some people build walls and others build windmills. **CHINESE PROVERB**

LOL

Flags & taxes

A visitor from Holland was chatting with his American friend and was jokingly explaining about the red, white and blue in the Netherlands flag. "Our flag symbolizes our taxes,"

he said. "We get red when we talk about them, white when we get our tax bill, and blue after we pay them." "That's the same with us," the American said, "only we see stars, too."



Plantation drive

Sir, To compensate for the loss of green cover in mineral-rich Jajpur district, the district administration has adopted a unique initiative, making it mandatory for people to furnish certified photographs of them planting trees to avail government aid. The project was launched on June 23, the Rath Yatra day, and many people have started doing this. The applicants, besides paying the licence fee and renewing relevant documents will have to provide proof of them planting trees. The administration will cross-check the genuineness of the plantation. It is not a difficult task to plant five to 20 saplings per individual. This can be planted on temple and school premises or at government facilities. Trees provide oxygen to people, stop soil erosion, have medicinal properties, give shade, and offer food and shelter to humans as also animals.

Hitesh Kumar Parida, JAJPUR

Anubhav's tweet

Sir, Member of Parliament Anubhav Mohanty has started tweeting in favour of actor Salman Khan and has begged a like from the super star on the micro-blogging site. In his opinion, Salman Khan is greatly loyal to the nation. Anubhav should realize the present scenario in the Hindi film industry. Being a star in the Odia film industry, he should rather support his co-stars. A big star like Sushant Singh Rajput has been pushed to the extreme step of suicide by the mafia in the Hindi film industry. Rajput, a young actor at 34 was humiliated and tortured. Salman is said to be one of the perpetrators. How Anubhav alone is taking their side is what puzzles us. First of all, he should remember that he is a people's representative.

Naresh Mandal, BHADRAK

Packing, cheating

Sir, The Department of Consumer Affairs is urged to amend rules whereby it may be compulsory to pack all commodities in true metric-spirit in units of 1, 2, 5, 10, 20, 50, 100, 200, 500 gm or mltr or ltr or kg or unit only, so that consumer may judge comparative prices of a commodity marketed by different companies. Any liberty to pack in units other than the suggested ones gives manufacturers an opportunity to cheat consumers through the gimmick of packaging. Drug-manufacturers cheat consumers by packing commonly advertised medicines like cough-lozenges in eight per strip rather than normal ten because consumers judge prices per strip without realising the number of lozenges per strip.

Madhu Agarwal, EMAIL

Letters

TO THE EDITOR

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

OrissaPOST

B-15, Rasulgarh Industrial Estate, Bhubaneswar-751010

ELECTRICITY (AMENDMENT) BILL, 2020

Palaniswami flags concerns

TN CM SOUNDS ALARM OVER PVT PLAYERS' ENTRY TO THE POWER SECTOR

AGENCIES

Chennai, July 8: Tamil Nadu Chief Minister K. Palaniswami Wednesday told the central government that allowing private franchisees in power sector will lead to cherry-picking. He also said that the free power supplied to agriculture sector and households should not be brought under the direct benefit transfer (DBT) scheme.



Representative pic

CM TELLS CENTRE

If the Bill is cleared, state discoms will be left to serve social sector obligations and rural areas. It will incur them massive losses. Fixing hydroelectricity purchase obligations separately to a state like TN, as it is seasonal and monsoon-dependent, will be detrimental. However, Palaniswami praised the Centre for ₹90,000 crore package to power distribution companies.

In a letter to R.K. Singh, Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Power and New and Renewable Energy, Palaniswami said some of the provisions mentioned in the draft Electricity (Amendment) Bill, 2020 are detrimental to the state government/state utilities.

representative areas by the franchisee/sub-distribution licensee, affecting the DISCOMs directly and thereby the public interest. The state discoms

will be left with serving social sector obligations and rural areas which will result in massive losses to the discoms," Palaniswami said.

Palaniswami also said it is unacceptable to fix hydroelectricity purchase obligations separately to a state like Tamil Nadu as it is seasonal and monsoon-dependent, which is not in the control of power distribution companies.

"To avoid disparity among the States with different sources of renewable energy available, it is suggested that Renewable Purchase Obligation (RPO) can be fixed for total renewable energy rather than independently fixing for solar, non-solar, hydro etc," the Tamil Nadu Chief Minister wrote to Singh.

Welcoming the central government's liquidity infusion package of ₹90,000 crore to power distribution companies for clearing their dues, Palaniswami said the central government should relax the norms for working capital under the Ujwal DISCOM Assurance Yojana (UDAY).

He also said the state's power utility Tamil Nadu Generation and Distribution Corporation Ltd has already applied for the financial assistance of ₹20,622 crore to Power Finance Corporation (PFC) and Rural Electrification Corporation (REC).

TN CORONA COUNT GOES UP BY 3.7K; TOTAL AT 1,22,350

AGENCIES

Chennai, July 8: As many as 3,756 persons tested positive for coronavirus infection in Tamil Nadu over the past 24 hours, the state health department officials said Wednesday.

In a statement issued here Wednesday, the health department said the state recorded new coronavirus infections for 3,756 persons, taking the total tally to 1,22,350.

The total number of Covid-19 patients who died over the past 24-hours was 64 taking the death toll in the state to 1,700.

On the positive side, 3,051 Covid-19 patients were cured and discharged from various hospitals in the state.

The total number of cured persons goes up to 74,167.

The number of active Covid-19 cases in the state after taking into account the cured and dead stands at 46,480.

The state capital Chennai continues to lead the Covid-19 infection chart with 1,261 persons testing positive for the virus and the total tally stands at 72,500. The active cases in the city stands at 21,766 while the total number of Covid-19 patients discharged in Chennai stood at 1,852.

K'taka govt teachers come to their pvt counterparts' help



Representative pic

PVT AND UNAIDED INSTITUTIONS HAVEN'T BEEN ABLE TO COLLECT FEES FROM THEIR STUDENTS OR BORROW FUNDS TO PAY MONTHLY SALARIES TO THEIR FACULTY SINCE APRIL

AGENCIES

Bangalore, July 8: Responding to Karnataka Education Minister S. Suresh Kumar's appeal, teachers of state-run schools agreed to donate a day's salary to their counterparts in private schools. The private school teachers have not been paid since April due to the Covid-induced lockdown, an official said Wednesday.

"Government teachers have agreed to donate a day's salary to pay our counterparts in private schools, as they are in distress due to non-payment by their managements, which are unable to raise funds due to lockdown," said State High School Assistant Teachers' Association president H.K. Manjunath.

With hundreds of schools remaining shut across the southern state since March 25 when the lockdown was enforced and extended to contain coronavirus, managements of private and unaided institutions have not been able to collect fees from their students or borrow funds to pay monthly salaries to their faculty since April.

"As schools are yet to resume classes after summer due to rising Covid cases in the state, especially in Bangalore, their managements could not collect fees from their students till date, resulting in non-payment of their teachers' salaries for three months since April," said Manjunath.

Though the private-run schools' association rushed to the state government for relief funds to pay three-month salaries to their teacher-members, there was no official response to the plea due to resource crunch in the treasury.

"While Kumar appealed to us to donate two-day salary for our counterparts in private schools, we have agreed to pay for a day, as we have already given similar amount to the Kodagu and north Karnataka flood relief fund in September 2019 and the Chief Minister's relief fund recently," said Manjunath.

About 1.4 lakh teachers in private and unaided schools hope to partly mitigate their hardship with the donation of their counterparts in the state-run schools.

The Karnataka State Primary School Teachers' Association (KSPSTA), however, said its members were yet to decide on donating a day's salary

as they have already paid similar amount to the CM's Covid-19 relief fund in April.

"Our members have already paid for CM's flood relief fund last year and Covid-19 relief fund in April though their income is not on par with that of high school teachers and they too have been facing crisis due to lockdown and extension of vacation," KSPSTA secretary N. Chandru said.

While the minister appealed to us to donate two-day salary for our counterparts in private schools, we have agreed to pay for a day, as we have already given similar amount to the Kodagu and north Karnataka flood relief fund in September 2019 and the CMRF recently

Custodial deaths killed TN's Friends of Police?

Anti-police sentiments have gathered momentum in the state after the custodial deaths of a father-son duo at Sathankulam



The Friends of Police movement is a community policing initiative and a Joint Governmental Organisation to bring police and public closer

Friends of Police are volunteers who support police officers in every jurisdiction across the state

The initiative was started by the present DGP, Crime Branch -CB-CID, Pratheep V Philip, when he was serving as an ASP in Kancheepuram in 1991

The state govt says it received an adverse report from the DGP regarding the initiative

AGENCIES

Chennai, July 8: The Tamil Nadu government Wednesday rescinded its earlier order to extend the 'Friends of Police' (FOP) initiative across the state.

According to a government order issued Wednesday it was done after an adverse report was received from the Director General of Police.

There have been demands from

various political parties and others to ban the FOP as their members were allegedly used by the police in Sathankulam in Tuticorin district in assaulting P. Jeyaraj and his son J. Bennicks, resulting in their custodial death in June.

The Central Bureau of India (CBI) has since taken over the probe into the custodial deaths. Five suspended policemen working in the Sathankulam police station also have been arrested.

UP AGAINST MICROBIAL FORCES



Beds are lined at a temporary Covid-19 care centre for the treatment of infected patients, at Bengaluru International Exhibition Centre (BIEC) in Bangalore, Wednesday

Covid hosp in B'lore civic body building

AGENCIES

Bangalore, July 8: The Karnataka government is developing a city civic body building into a full-fledged Covid hospital to scale up the health infrastructure amid the Covid-19 pandemic, said a minister Wednesday.

"Bruhat Bangalore Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) building on the broad way road in Shivajinagar is being developed as a full-fledged

Covid hospital," said Medical Education Minister K. Sudhakar.

The minister inspected the facility Wednesday for which Infosys Foundation is providing the necessary infrastructure at a cost of ₹30 crore.

"The hospital will be functional in another 10 days," said Sudhakar.

Initially, 180 beds with high flow oxygen lines will be available in the hospital, which can also be converted into ventilator facilities when needed.

Equipped with 30 ventilators, the new hospital will have neurosurgery and cardiology operation theatres and CT scan facilities.

Later, Sudhakar also visited Bowring and Lady Curzon hospitals to inspect the facilities and interacted with patients through video-conferencing. Currently, Bangalore is the ground zero of the Covid pandemic in Karnataka, accounting for 9,395 of the total 15,297 active cases.

Factoring in pandemic, Karna plans e-classes for school kids

THE STATE GOVT APPOINTED EXPERTS' COMMITTEE RECOMMENDS LIVE AND PRE-RECORDED CLASSES FOR CHILDREN AGED THREE AND ABOVE

AGENCIES

Bangalore, July 8: An expert committee constituted by the Karnataka government on online classes has recommended live and pre-recorded classes for children aged three and above, an official said Wednesday.

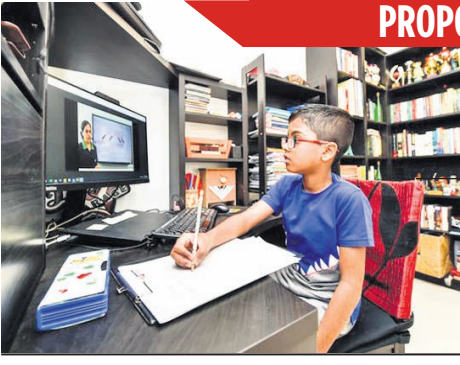
"The panel recommended that parents must accompany children in online classes up to second standard," said the official.

Screen time for children in the three-six age groups should be restricted to an hour and three days a week.

However, in the case of students above sixth standard, the panel recommended 15 minutes more of online classes.

Two days in a week should be devoted to online classes without any screen time.

Recommendations for students in high school between VI-VIII



PROPOSALS

Children up to 2nd standard to be accompanied by parents for online classes

Screen time for children in three-six age groups no more than half an hour and three days a week

Online classes without screen time for two days a week

For children in 9th and 10th standards, 4 sessions of 30-45 minutes classes per day and five days a week

classes include 30-45 minutes online class per session and three sessions a day and five days a week.

Presence of parents is optional but the panel advised interactive classes. Similarly, for children in 9th and 10th standards, four sessions of 30-45 minutes classes are recommended per day and five days a week.

For the 2020-21 academic year, the expert committee has recommended an open book type assessment by allowing students to sit in the examinations from their comfort zones.

Meanwhile, Primary and Secondary Education Minister S. Suresh Kumar said the government will evaluate the expert panel report and prepare guidelines for

online education accordingly.

Amulya, a fifth standard student of Harvest International School at Kodathi in Bangalore, said that she is attending two online classes on alternate days.

"I attend the first online class from 9 am till 9.45 am and second from 10 am to 10.45 am," said Amulya. She said the assignments given by her school are done on a sheet of paper and its pictures transmitted on Google Classroom app to her teacher.

Like many others, the student's parents had asked for online classes when the state government did a survey for their feedback some weeks ago. However, Amulya said she enjoyed real-world classroom lessons more than the online classes.

Silicon Valley of India caught off-guard

WHILE BANGALORE CIVIC OFFICIALS HAD PREDICTED THAT THE COVID CURVE WILL MOVE UPWARD, IT WAS SOONER THAN ANTICIPATED, AT LEAST BY TWO WEEKS

AGENCIES

Bangalore/Hyderabad, July 8: The sharp spurt in the number of coronavirus cases in Bangalore and Hyderabad since relaxations in lockdown curbs last month is causing concern for managers of the two southern cities.

In the first seven days of this month alone, Bangalore has added over 6,800 cases with officials attributing it largely to movement of people consequent to easing of restrictions.

These two cities had remained relatively immune to the virus till over a month ago when Chennai in neighbouring Tamil Nadu was reporting high case load due to two super-spreaders, including Koyambedu wholesale market.

In Bangalore, the country's IT capital, the upward curve came sooner than anticipated, at least by two weeks, prompting officials to expedite measures.

The number of Covid-19 cases in Bangalore was only 358 May 31 when Lockdown-4 ended but has risen to 4,555 June 30 (end of Unlock 1.0), and further zoomed to 11,361 Tuesday, according to the city civic body.

With 9,395 active cases, the city has so far reported 155 deaths and 1,810 discharges. While the positivity rate stands at 8.52 per cent, mortality rate is 1.37 per cent.

According to Dr Giridhar Babu

THEY HAD IT COMING?



Table with 3 columns: From June 1-7, Bangalore added 6,800 cases; When Lockdown 4.0 ended, May 31, Covid cases in the city were 358; By the end of Unlock 1.0, June 30, the city had 4,555 cases.

The city's positivity rate stands at 8.52 pc and mortality rate is 1.37 pc

Frontline workers say: Once the lockdown was lifted they resumed with their earlier duties, and this led to shortage of manpower for contact tracing

ACTIVE CASES: 9,395; DEATHS: 155; DISCHARGES: 1,810

of Public Health Foundation of India, while everyone anticipated the surge, the timing took them by surprise.

"So while the state and BBMP (Bruhat Bangalore Mahanagara Palike) were planning to roll out COVID care centres and everything by the end of this week expecting that the surge will happen around this time, the surge started two weeks earlier," Babu said. Also a member of the state Covid-19 technical advisory committee, he said, "So the emergency response kind

of thing did not happen, but now I think it is back on track."

Those in administration did expect the cases to increase after relaxation relating to lockdown curbs, but had no idea it would spike so early.

"In Bangalore we were aware that there would be a surge in the number of infections when we relaxed the lockdown, but the information that came to us did not show that the surge will be to this extent," Medical Education Minister K Sudhakar said.

"These numbers we are seeing now were expected by July-end, but has happened a bit earlier," he said, but added there was no need to worry as the government was making all the necessary arrangements to manage the situation.

Out of the overall 26,815 Covid-19 cases confirmed in Karnataka, 11,361 infections are from Bangalore Urban, and 800 of the 1,498 fresh cases reported in the state Tuesday were from the capital city alone.

According to Babu, Bangalore was at the risk of having a surge in cases from the beginning like some other cities, but the numbers did not see an incremental jump during the lockdown because the curbs were implemented much better.

He said coordination and preparation within BBMP post relaxations did not match with the kind of "brilliant work" they did during the lockdown and it was one of the reasons for the surge in cases.

Effective contact tracing was done during the lockdown and involving almost all the staff members, but once the lockdown was lifted they resumed with their earlier duties, and this led to shortage of manpower for contact tracing.

The government has now deployed 1,246 employees from various departments for contact tracing with special focus on Bangalore and surrounding areas and warned of strict action in case of refusal to undertake the work.



Shocked to know that the central government has dropped topics like citizenship, federalism, secularism and partisan in the name of reducing CBSE course during the Covid crisis
MAMATA BANERJEE | WEST BENGAL CM

FIRST TIME

In a first-of-its-kind initiative, the Assam government will carry out social audit of the relief provided to flood victims this year in order to eliminate corruption



of the day quote

Every state should set up a "memorial" for healthcare workers in view of their contribution in saving people's lives, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic
RAMDAS ATHAWALE | UNION MINISTER

Within two months of the announcement of the 'Atmanirbhar Bharat' programme by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on May 12, the government has brought the idea of a self-reliant India to the ground by speedily implementing many of its measures
P MURALIDHAR RAO | BJP LEADER

The Centre's move to order probe into the alleged violation of laws by three Nehru-Gandhi family linked trusts is aimed at "pressurising" the Congress for raising issues like Chinese "incursion"
BALASAHAB THORAT | MAHARASHTRA REVENUE MINISTER

SHORT TAKES

6 killed, 5 hurt

Katni (MP): Six persons were killed and five others injured when an auto-rickshaw they were travelling in collided with a truck in Katni district of Madhya Pradesh Wednesday, police said. The accident took place in the afternoon near Dhimarkheda, about 60 kms from Katni, police said. "About a dozen people were travelling in the auto-rickshaw when it collided head-on with a truck that was coming from the opposite direction. These people were going to a weekly market from their villages," a police spokesperson said.

Man killed

Mumbai: A 36-year-old man was allegedly killed by three persons using swords at Mankhurd, a suburb in eastern Mumbai, on Wednesday morning, a police official said. One of the accused, Vaibhav Mohan Devle (26), was arrested, he said. "The deceased, Javed Salim Sheikh, was engaged in a scuffle with a man at Maya Ka Mandir locality in Mankhurd on Tuesday night when Devle intervened and offered to broker peace.

Three injured

Nashik: An 18-year-old man was killed and three others injured when an old house collapsed in Bhadrakali area of Maharashtra's Nagpur city Wednesday, police said. The two-storey traditionally built house collapsed at around 4 am, killing Rajendra Borse, who was a tenant on the ground floor of the structure, an official said.

Man held for 'rape'

Mumbai: A 22-year-old man has been arrested for allegedly raping a 15 years old girl in suburban Kurla, the police said Wednesday. The alleged crime came to light after the girl was found to be pregnant. The accused was identified as Mudassar Ansari. The girl's family members took her to hospital after she complained of stomach pain last week, said an official of Chunabhatti police station.

Cop caught taking bribe

Palanpur: A police sub-inspector was allegedly caught while accepting a bribe of Rs 40,000 from a man to register a case of theft at Agthala in Gujarat's Banaskantha district, an official said Wednesday.

India may become worst-hit: MIT study

The world may witness 249 million cases and 1.8 million deaths by spring 2021 if there are no effective treatments or vaccination, according to the study

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, July 8: In the absence of a COVID-19 vaccine or drugs, the researchers from Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) have warned that India might record 2.87 lakh coronavirus cases per day by the end of winter 2021.

The world may witness 249 million (24.9 crore) cases and 1.8 million (18 lakh) deaths by spring 2021 if there are no effective treatments or vaccination, according to the study conducted by the researchers Hazhir Rahmandad, TY Lim and John Sterman of MIT's Sloan School of Management.

"In this paper, we build and estimate a multi-country model of the Covid-19 pandemic at a global scale," the study authors wrote. For the findings, the MIT research team use a multi-country modified SEIR (Susceptible, Exposed, Infectious, Recovered) model, a standard mathematical model for infectious diseases used by epidemiologists, to simultaneously estimate the transmission of Covid-19 in 84 countries (4.75 billion people).

The model tracked community transmission, excluding the global travel network and instead separately estimating the date of introduction of patient zero for each



country. Within each country, the core of the model tracks the population through susceptible, pre-symptomatic, infected pre-testing, infected post-testing, and recovered states.

"Our model captures transmission dynamics for the disease, as well as how, at the country level, transmission rates vary in response to risk perception and weather, testing rates condition infection and death data, and fatality rates depend on demographics and hospitalisation," they explained.

According to the study, the top 10 countries by projected daily infection rates at the end of winter 2021 are India, US, South Africa, Iran, Indonesia, Nigeria, Turkey, France and Germany.

India will be the worst affected country due to coronavirus followed by the US (95,000 cases per day), South Africa (21,000 cases per day) Iran (17,000 cases per day),

and Indonesia (13,000 cases per day) at the end of winter 2021.

The MIT researchers also said that infections are 12 times higher and deaths 50 per cent higher than previously reported. "While actual cases are far greater than official reports suggest, the majority of people remain susceptible. Waiting for herd immunity is not a viable path out of the current pandemic," Rahmandad said.

"Every community needs to keep the pandemic under control until a vaccine or treatment is widely available. A slow and half-hearted response only increases the human costs without offering much of an upside in terms of economic output," Rahmandad noted.

As of Wednesday morning, the overall number of global COVID-19 cases has increased to more than 11.7 million, while the deaths have soared to over 543,000, according to Johns Hopkins University.

JITENDRA CLEARS AIR

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, July 8: Union Minister Jitendra Singh said Wednesday that youths from the International Border (IB) areas in Jammu and Kashmir are eligible to avail the benefits of reservation applicable for them in government employment.

The assertion comes after some candidates raised doubts over the applicability of reservation provided for them. People living in areas adjoining International Border and Actual Line of Control (ALoC) are entitled for reservation in government jobs.

Singh, the Minister of State for Personnel, said he had a discussion with Jammu and Kashmir Lt Governor G C Murmu and Chief Secretary B V R Subrahmanyam on Wednesday on the matter and the Union Territory administration will issue a clarification accordingly.

"Important to clear apprehension of aspirants for jobs advertised by Jammu and Kashmir Govt. Had a detailed discussion with LG Murmu and CS Subrahmanyam. IB reservation for border area candidates will be available in these jobs. The UT Govt will issue clarification accordingly," Singh tweeted.

The minister said that there was some ambiguity in recent advertisements for jobs in the union territory which has now been resolved.

"I have spoken to the LG and the chief secretary about this ambiguity and they have said a clarification would be issued soon," said Singh, the MP from Jammu and Kashmir's Udhampur Lok Sabha constituency.

He said existing rules allow for three per cent reservation for people living in areas along the IB and ALoC. As many as 8,575 vacancies for class-IV jobs have been advertised by the Jammu and Kashmir Services Selection Board last month.

ANOTHER JOLT

Nirav's assets seized



INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, July 8: The Enforcement Directorate (ED) has confiscated fugitive diamondaire Nirav Modi's Rs 329.66 crore properties in Mumbai, Rajasthan, and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and the UK.

The movable and immovable assets were seized under the Fugitive Economic Offenders Act (FEOA) 2018, the ED said Wednesday. The assets included four flats at Samudra Mahal, the iconic building in South Mumbai's Worli, one sea-side farm house and land in Alibaug, one wind mill in Jaisalmer, one flat in London and some flats in the UAE, shares and bank deposits.

The ED had filed an application before the FEOA special court in Mumbai on July 10, 2018 seeking declaration of Nirav Modi a fugitive economic offender and seizure of his properties valued at Rs 1,396 crore. They belonged to him and entities directly or indirectly owned by him.

On December 5, 2019, the court declared him a fugitive economic offender. On June 8, it asked the ED to attach his assets (other than

properties mortgaged or hypothecated and secured to Punjab National Bank-led consortium) and those belonging to his companies.

It also asked the consortium of banks to move the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) special court to claim the mortgaged, hypothecated and secured

December 5, 2019, the court declared him a fugitive economic offender

properties, which were attached by the ED.

Of the properties attached, Rs 1,000 crore assets prima facie were found to be covered under mortgage. The Bombay High Court had ordered that sale proceeds of paintings (Rs 45 crore) be kept as

fixed deposit till further order. In this case, the ED has attached Rs 2,348 crore properties of Nirav Modi under the PMLA.

Nirav Modi, along with his uncle Mehul Choksi, is among the prime accused in the Rs 14,000 crore Punjab National Bank (PNB) fraud, unearthed over two years ago. Currently, Nirav Modi is in a London jail after his arrest by the local police in March 2019. Choksi has taken citizenship of the Caribbean island nation of Antigua & Barbuda.

COVID FALLOUT

STAGGERED AMARNATH YATRA THIS YEAR

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, July 8: The annual Amarnath Yatra in the Himalayas will be conducted in a staggered manner and not more than 500 pilgrims will be allowed to visit the sacred cave shrine of Lord Shiva daily due to the coronavirus pandemic, officials said on Wednesday.

The issue of pilgrimages to the Amarnath and Vaishnovevi shrines, both located in Jammu and Kashmir, was discussed at a high-level meeting attended by Union ministers G Kishan Reddy and Jitendra Singh and senior officials of the Ministry of Home Affairs and the Jammu and Kashmir administration. The Amarnath Yatra is likely to commence on July 21.

"This year's pilgrimage will be

conducted in a staggered manner and not more than 500 pilgrims will be allowed to visit the shrine daily due to the COVID-19 situation," an official privy to the discussion said. Around 9,000 people have



been tested COVID-19 positive in the Union Territory and around 145 people succumbed to the virus so far.

The route through Pahalgam is yet to be cleared as it is full of snow and the pilgrimage may be allowed only through the Baltal route this year. However, a final decision on the pilgrimage to the shrine in Himalayas will be taken later next week, the official said.

The authorities are particularly concerned over the COVID-19 pandemic as the symptoms for the virus and high-altitude sickness are almost same.

TEDIOUS JOURNEY



A man carrying his belongings walks in Nadia district, Wednesday

PTI PHOTO

NIZAMUDDIN MARKAZ

Foreign participants granted bail

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, July 8: A Delhi court Wednesday granted bail to foreigners from 21 countries who were chargesheeted for attending Markaz at Nizamuddin here by allegedly violating visa conditions, indulging in missionary activities illegally and violating government guidelines issued after the COVID-19 outbreak.

Chief Metropolitan Magistrate Gurmohina Kaur granted the relief to the foreigners on furnishing a personal bond of Rs 10,000 each.

The accused will file their plea bargaining applications on Thursday, said advocate Ashima Mandla, appearing for some of the foreign nationals.

Under plea bargaining, the accused plead guilty to the offence praying for a lesser punishment. During the hearing, all the foreign nationals who were staying at a hotel, were produced before the court through video conferencing.

They were identified by the concerned officials of the High Commissions/embassies of the respective countries as well as the investigating officer.

The foreigners belong to Afghanistan, Brazil, China, USA, Ukraine, Australia, Egypt, Russia, Algeria, Belgium, Saudi Arabia, Jordan, France, Kazakhstan, Morocco, Tunisia, UK, Fiji, Sudan, Philippines and Ethiopia.

The court had Tuesday granted bail to 122 Malaysian nationals booked in the case. They also filed applications for plea bargaining which was allowed by the court and listed before the concerned Metropolitan Magistrate Siddharth Malik for early disposal of the petitions. The court had taken cognisance of the 59 charge sheets filed against 956 foreign nationals belonging to 36 different countries in the case and summoned the accused to be produced on different dates through video conferencing.

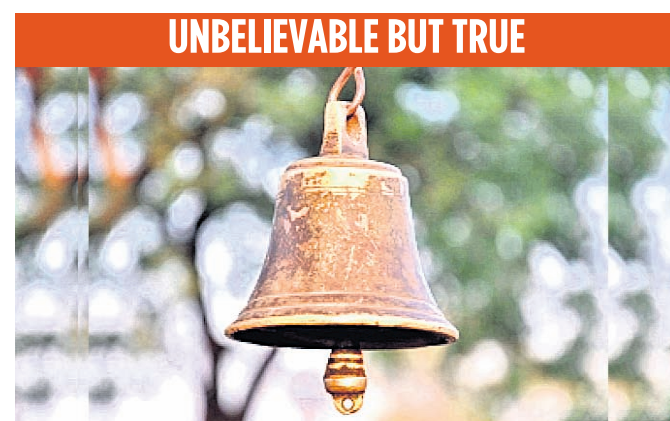
The man who chiselled a mountain into temple

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Hyderabad, July 8: This is unbelievable but true. With single-minded determination and hard work, a man chiselled a mountain into a temple.

The Lakshmi Narasimha Swamy temple at Velchal village of Vikarabad district in Telangana is a proof of what a man can achieve with his sheer determination. Paramaiah Yadav, popular as Paramaiah Dasu, dedicated his entire life to chiseling the rock into the temple located near the village in Mominpet 'mandal', about 100 km from Hyderabad.

With crowbar, chisel and hammer as the only tools, he toiled alone for several years to chisel a cave which is 20 metres deep and over five feet wide and houses the temple. Villagers say he was a young man



when he began the work in the 1960s. The area was then a dense forest and was known for tigers and other wild animals.

Paramaiah, who is now around 75, can barely speak but can recall that he embarked on the work after

a god appeared in his dream and asked to build a temple. According to locals, while rearing sheep and goats in the area, Paramaiah took shelter under the hillock and began chiseling it to shelter himself during rains. One day he slept there and

after the dream, decided to devote his entire life in chiseling a cave.

Some people say he completed the work in the 1970s but some others say he worked for two decades. From outside, it appears only as a rock but as one goes closer to the place, one can find the entrance to the cave and the temple inside. "With no technology and without support from anybody, he single-handedly completed the work and with mind-boggling perfection. You feel as if you are in Ajanta Ellora caves," said Vithal, a former member of the Mandal Parishad Territorial Constituency (MPTC).

Locals say Paramaiah gave up his family and all relationships to dedicate his entire life to building the temple. He did not get the education and used to eat only once a day. "My dream has come true,"

said Paramaiah in a trembling voice. He is happy that villagers came forward to develop the temple. They formed a committee which provides amenities to the devotees who come from surrounding villages and even far-off places.

Paramaiah lives in the same cave. He knows no mantra or rituals. Villagers say he used to tell them to pray directly to the god. It was only a couple of years ago that the temple appointed a priest. Vithal said since Paramaiah was growing old, they decided to appoint a pujari to perform the rituals and take care of the temple. Panduranga, a childhood friend of Paramaiah who later went to Dubai, recalled that he was not interested in anything other than chiseling the temple. Locals say it was the power of faith which helped the shepherd to accomplish an impossible task.

of the day quote

Goa will start treating Covid-19 patients in a critical condition with blood plasma therapy from next week

Small and medium enterprises stand destroyed. Large companies are under severe stress. Banks are in distress

UP accounts for 56 per cent of the total illegal arms cases in the entire country. Cases of cyber crimes increased by 138 per cent in UP between 2016 and 2018

SHORT TAKES

Woman killed

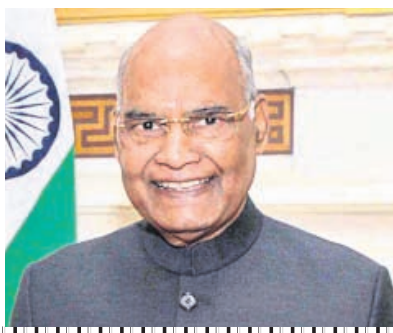
Jammu: One woman was killed and two others were injured Wednesday in ceasefire violation by Pakistan on the Line of Control (LoC) in Jammu and Kashmir's Poonch district.

Body found

Barabanki (UP): A dismembered body of an unidentified woman was found stuffed in a suitcase and polythene bags near a closed factory in Safedabad area here Tuesday night.

Doctor arrested

Imphal: A senior medical officer has been arrested in Manipur for procuring substandard N95 masks for supply to a district hospital, police said Wednesday.



India looks forward to working with the international community to strengthen global peace and prosperity as a member of the UN Security Council for the term 2021-22

MODI TO ADDRESS GLOBAL AUDIENCE

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will be making the inaugural address at the India Global Week 2020 Thursday, his first speech to a global audience in the post Covid-19 era



DUBEY'S AIDE KILLED, 6 ARRESTED

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Lucknow/Kanpur, July 8: Police shot dead an aide of gangster Vikas Dubey, arrested six other alleged accomplices and sent two of their own men behind bars in connection with the ambush which killed eight police personnel last week, officials said Wednesday.

But the gangster appeared to have given police the slip in Haryana's Faridabad, near Delhi. A team raided a house around midnight Tuesday in Faridabad's Kheli Pul area, where the gangster had stayed for a while, Haryana police said.

Also, CCTV footage showed a man who resembled the gangster at a Faridabad hotel. He did not check in when a staff member insisted on an identity card with a clear photograph. Apart from the Faridabad encounter, police engaged Dubey's alleged accomplices in Uttar Pradesh's Hamirpur, where an one man was killed, and in Kanpur, where three were arrested.

An inspector and constable were injured in the Hamirpur encounter. The Uttar Pradesh Special Task Force (STF) also detained Dubey's brother-in-law in Madhya Pradesh's Shahdol district on

KANPUR AMBUSH



Wednesday. On Monday, the relative's son was detained.

Those arrested on Wednesday included two suspended sub-inspectors, Chaubeypur station officer Vinay Tiwari and Bikru beat in-charge K K Sharma. Both are accused of tipping off Vikas Dubey, which allowed the alleged gangster to set an ambush for a police team which had gone to arrest him at his Bikru village near Kanpur.

Since the ambush early Friday, three alleged accomplices of the gangster have been killed and 10 arrested, in addition to the two policemen. All 68 personnel at the Chaubeypur police station, where Dubey's brother-in-law in Madhya Pradesh's Shahdol district on

the man killed in Hamirpur's Maudaha village, travelled with the gangster wherever he went, ensuring his security.

Additional Director General of Police (Law and Order) Prashant Kumar said there was a reward of Rs 50,000 for his arrest. An unlicensed semi-automatic .32 bore pistol was seized. "Acting on a tip-off, a team of the STF and local police surrounded the AMR: He was injured in the firing and he died during treatment at a hospital," Hamirpur Superintendent of Police Shlok Kumar said.

In the encounter in Kanpur's Chaubeypur area, under the leadership of Dubey's Bikru village falls, Shyamji Bajpai, also known as Shyam, was shot in the leg, the ADG said.

TUTICORIN CUSTODIAL DEATHS

CBI takes over probe

The CBI has also constituted a team to visit Tamil Nadu to probe the death of a man-son duo after alleged police torture in Tuticorin district

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, July 8: The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) Wednesday took over the investigation into the Tuticorin custodial deaths case and registered two FIRs after the Centre gave nod to the agency.

The CBI has also constituted a team to visit Tamil Nadu to probe the death of a man-son duo after alleged police torture in Tuticorin district. The agency filed the case a day after the Centre issued a notification to accept Tamil Nadu Chief Minister's request to transfer the probe to the CBI.

"The CBI has registered two cases on the allegations of custodial death of two traders in Kovalpatti district on the request of the Tamil Nadu government and further notification from the government of India," CBI Spokesperson R.K. Gaur said.

The agency, the official said, has taken over investigation into the case earlier registered at Police Station Kovalpatti East in Tuticorin



district. The Tamil Nadu government had last month favoured transfer of the investigation to the CBI following which the Madurai Bench of the Madras High Court had directed the CB-CID to handle the case till such time the central agency stepped in.

The CB-CID has so far arrested five policemen, including an Inspector, in connection with the alleged custodial torture of P. Jayaraj and his son Bennicks at Sathankulam police station. The duo, who ran a cellphone shop, were arrested on June 19 for alleged violation of prohibitory orders. Bennicks died on June 22 and Jayaraj the next day at a hospital due to alleged police brutality, leading to a nationwide outrage.

Covid: Goof-up in Maharashtra

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Thane, July 8: A family from Kopri in Thane city, who had cremated a stranger due to a goof-up by a COVID-19 hospital, will now again have to perform the last rites of their kin who died of the infection late on Tuesday night.

The matter came to light when the family of a 72-year-old patient filed a complaint with the police stating that the man had gone missing from Global Hub Covid Hospital, where he was shifted for treatment on June 29.

Investigations revealed that the body of the septuagenarian, who had disappeared from the hospital on July 5, was allegedly handed over to the family of another COVID-19 patient who was very much alive at the time, an official said.

"A probe by a civic team set up found that the kin of this family in Kopri is alive and under treatment at a COVID facility. The hospital has said the goof-up was a result of case papers of the two patients getting mixed up," the official said.

TN minister tests Covid-19 positive

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Chennai, July 8: Tamil Nadu Electricity Minister and senior AIADMK leader P. Thangamani Wednesday tested positive for coronavirus and was admitted to a private hospital here for treatment.

In a tweet, DMK President M.K. Stalin said he had spoken to Thangamani over phone and wished him a speedy recovery.

Thangamani is the second minister and sixth lawmaker of AIADMK to get infected by the virus.

Earlier, Higher Education Minister K.P. Anbalagan, apart from lawmakers K. Palani (Sriperumbudur), Amman K. Arjunan (Coimbatore South), N. Sathan Prabhakar (Paramakudi), and Kumaraguru (Ulundurpet) had tested positive.

Former Minister and senior AIADMK leader B. Valarmathi on Monday tested positive for coronavirus infection and has been admitted to a private hospital here. Four DMK lawmakers too have tested positive.

Attack on Ambedkar's house: Suspect held

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, July 8: The police Wednesday detained a suspect after a man vandalised 'Rajgruh', Dr Babasaheb Ambedkar's residence in Matunga in central Mumbai.

The incident, which took place Tuesday night, evoked condemnation from political leaders including Maharashtra Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray who said strict action will be taken against those involved.

As per the complaint lodged by Ambedkar's grandson Bhimrao Ambedkar at Matunga Police Station, the unidentified accused who was captured in CCTV seemed to be mentally unstable.

He had spotted the man near the house on Monday evening, Bhimrao Ambedkar told the police,

an official said.

When he asked the man why he was loitering, he glared at him in anger before leaving, Ambedkar told the police.

Tuesday night, a man entered the premises of 'Rajgruh' and smashed flower pots, damaged plants, CCTV camera and pelted stones at a window before fleeing.

A case under IPC sections 427 (mischievous causing damage and 447 (criminal trespassing) was registered, the police official said, adding that the police were examining the CCTV footage and further probe was on.

Earlier it was suspected that two persons were involved, but now it was clear that it was the act of a single man and a suspect has been taken into custody, the official said.

CLEANLINESS DRIVE



Police vehicles being sanitised in the wake of coronavirus pandemic, during Unlock 2.0, at Amberpet CPL Ground in Hyderabad, Wednesday

Jharkhand CM self-isolates

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Ranchi, July 8: Jharkhand Chief Minister Hemant Soren, has home quarantined himself after a Minister and legislator were tested positive for coronavirus.

Jharkhand Public Health Engineering Department (PHED) Minister Mithilesh Thakur, Jharkhand Mukti Morcha (JMM) legislator Mathura Mahto, and 20 journalists of Dhanbad districts have tested positive for coronavirus.

The Minister and legislator had met the Chief Minister before admitting to the hospital. Principal Secretary of the Chief Minister Rajiv Arun Ekka has also gone into home quarantine. Thakur was admitted at Rajendra Institute of Medical Science (RIMS), Ranchi and the Mahto in a Dhanbad hos-

pital. The Minister had also in-pected Hatia Dam on Monday.

Jharkhand reported 141 cases of Covid-19 on Tuesday from 12 districts. The total tally has crossed 3,000 in the state. In Dhanbad 25 peo-



ple, including 20 journalists have been tested positive for the virus.

As per the data provided by the health department, of the 3,018 total cases, 892 are active cases 2,104 people have been discharged

from the hospital after recovery. The death toll due to coronavirus in the state is 22 so far.

Out of the total coronavirus case, 2,142 are migrant workers who from the various parts of the country including Maharashtra, Gujarat, Delhi and Tamil Nadu. On Tuesday, 36 people were cured and discharged from various dedicated Covid-19 facilities in the state including 13 from Gumla and 7 from Ramgarh district. Five patients from Giridih, 3 each in Chatra, Deoghar and Koderma and 2 in Saraikela also defeated Coronavirus and returned back to their homes. The recovery rate is 69.71 per cent.

So far in the state, 1,66,317 samples have been collected out of which 1,61,564 have been tested and 1,58,546 have turned out to be negative.

Notice to TMC leaders

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kolkata, July 8: The Enforcement Directorate (ED), which is investigating the money laundering angle in the Narada tapes scandal, has sent reminders to the accused TMC leaders and BJP's Mukul Roy to provide details of their bank accounts and other assets, agency officials said Wednesday.

The notices were sent to them before the commencement of the lockdown in March but the information sought has not been received yet, they said. "We have now sent reminders to them and all of them have assured that they will reply shortly," the ED sources said.

The anti-money laundering probe agency has asked the accused politicians to furnish the details for the last seven years. Apart from the ED, the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) has also been probing the scandal.

Some of the top Trinamool Congress leaders accused in the case are West Bengal ministers Firdah Hakim, Subrata Mukherjee and Suvendu Adhikari, former minister Madan Mitra, Lok Sabha MPs Saugata Roy, Kakoli Ghosh Dastidar and Aparupa Poddar. They have been interrogated by both the agencies.

Sultan Ahmed, the former party MP and an accused in the case, died in September 2017. BJP leaders Mukul Roy and Sovan Chatterjee, a former Mayor of Kolkata, also figure in the list of accused in the Narada case when



they were with the TMC.

Roy joined the BJP in November 2017, while Sovan Chatterjee switched over to the saffron camp last year. A sting operation was carried out by Mathew Samuel, CEO of the Narada News portal, in 2014. Some senior TMC leaders and an IPS officer were purportedly seen accepting money from the representatives of a fictitious company in return for favours.

However, the sting video footages were uploaded on the news portal before the West Bengal Assembly elections in 2016, creating a furore in the state politics. The only person to have been arrested in the case is IPS officer S M H Mirza who was later released on bail.

Mirza was the superintendent of police of Burdwan district when the sting operation was conducted. Sources said Chatterjee, former city mayor, has already submitted the details of his bank accounts and other assets to the ED.

SC to hear plea on ashrams run by fake 'babas'

The plea urged the apex court to direct the authorities concerned to frame guidelines in setting up of 'ashrams' and other spiritual entities in the country

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, July 8: The Supreme Court Wednesday agreed to examine a petition that sought a direction to the Centre to close down the 'ashrams' and spiritual centres run by fake 'babas' who claimed kept hundreds of women inmates in unhygienic conditions that could potentially lead to Covid-19 outbreak.

A bench headed by Chief Justice S A Bobde told Solicitor General

Tushar Mehta, representing the Centre: "Look into this - what can be done. This gives a bad name to everyone."

The bench asked the petitioner to serve a copy of the petition to the Solicitor General's office. The top court sought



Mehta's views on the matter and posted the matter for further hearing after two weeks.

Petitioner Dumpala Ramreddy, a resident of Secunderabad said: "Though very serious criminal cases were registered against Veerendra Dev Dixit,

Asaram Bapu, Gurmit Ram Rahim Singh baba etc... their ashrams are still being run with the help of their close associates and authorities are not verifying the facilities available there."

The plea urged the apex court to direct the authorities concerned to frame guidelines in setting up of 'ashrams', and other spiritual entities in the country.

The petition filed through advocate Sravan Kumar contended that authorities had failed to crack

down against fake 'babas' who were allegedly luring innocent people, especially women. The petitioner alleged that scores of women were forced to stay in the 'ashrams' and given narcotics.

The petitioner cited the case of 'Adhyatmik Vishwa Vidyalaya' at Rohini in Delhi, where his daughter had stayed for nearly five years. Following complaints from many girl inmates, this 'ashram' was raided by a court-appointed panel.



Britain's government will seek to head off an unemployment crisis by paying bonuses to employers to bring workers back to their jobs from the state's coronavirus emergency furlough scheme
RISHI SUNAK | UK FINANCE MINISTER

SRI LANKA, MALDIVES MEASLES-FREE NATION

Sri Lanka and Maldives have become the first two countries in the World Health Organisation's South-East Asia region to eliminate both measles and rubella ahead of a 2023 target, the UN health agency announced Wednesday



of the day quote

Quarantine is necessary because we saw in particular recently in Upper Austria that people who had tested positive did not stick to the quarantine requirements and thus put other people in danger
SEBASTIAN KURZ | CHANCELLOR OF AUSTRIA

Wide ranging discussion on the economic partnership between Washington & India; significant contributions of Indian American community & Indian businesses; & collaborations in health and medicine
TARANJIT SINGH SANDHU | INDIA'S AMBASSADOR TO THE US

This (use of HCO) has become a highly politicised (matter), but India uses this widely (as) prophylaxis. There's a number of studies which point to this actually working
PETER NAVARRO | AMERICAN ECONOMIST

SHORT TAKES

PIO breaks world record
Dubai: A total of 101 hops over a stationary ruler has brought Dubai-based Indian teenager Soham Mukherjee a Guinness World Records title. Hailing from New Delhi, Mukherjee managed to break the previous title of 96 hops in 30 seconds. "In a video taken in his bedroom Mukherjee completed 110 hops in total but 9 were deemed invalid," a statement released by the global authority on record breaking was quoted as saying.

Japan battered by heavy rain again
Tokyo: Pounding rain that already caused deadly floods in southern Japan was moving northeast Wednesday, battering large areas of Japan's main island, swelling more rivers, triggering mudslides and destroying houses and roads. At least 58 people have died in several days of flooding.

Blasts rock Afghan
Kabul: A suicide truck bomber targeted a police district headquarters in Afghanistan's southern Kandahar province Wednesday, killing three officers, a local official said. Three other police officers, including a district police chief, were killed in a roadside bombing in eastern Ghazni province. The Taliban claimed responsibility for both attacks.

Landslide buries 9
Beijing: Rescue operations are underway after a landslide caused by heavy rainfall swept away nine people Wednesday in central China's Hubei province. According to the local flood control and drought relief headquarters, the landslide occurred at around 4 a.m. (local time) Wednesday in Dahe Township of Huangmei County, Xinhua news agency reported.

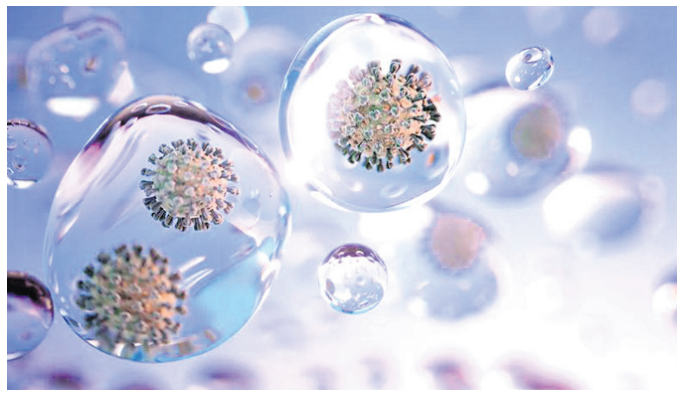
Unrest in Ethiopia
Addis Ababa: At least 239 people have been killed and 3,500 arrested in more than a week of unrest in Ethiopia that poses the biggest challenge yet to its Nobel Peace Prize-winning prime minister. In the Oromia region, the toll includes 215 civilians along with nine police officers and five militia members, regional police commissioner Mustafa Kadir told the ruling party-affiliated Walta TV Wednesday.

WHO acknowledges coronavirus may be airborne

AGENCIES

Geneva, July 8: The World Health Organisation (WHO) has acknowledged there is emerging evidence that the Novel coronavirus can be spread by tiny particles suspended in the air. The airborne transmission could not be ruled out in crowded, closed or poorly ventilated settings, an official said, the BBC reported Wednesday.

The WHO has so far said that the virus is transmitted through droplets when people cough or sneeze. "We wanted them to acknowledge the evidence," Jose Jimenez, a chemist at the University of Colorado who signed the paper,



told the Reuters news agency. "This is definitely not an attack on the WHO. It's a scientific debate, but we felt we needed to go public because

they were refusing to hear the evidence after many conversations with them," he said. For months, the WHO has insis-

ted that Covid-19 is transmitted via droplets emitted when people cough or sneeze. Droplets that do not linger in the air, but fall onto surfaces - that's why hand-washing has been identified as a key prevention measure. But 239 sci-

entists from 32 countries don't agree: they say there is strong evidence to suggest the virus can also spread in the air: through much tinier particles that float around for hours after people talk, or breathe out.

'CATCH AND KILL' AIR FILTER

Houston: Scientists have designed a "catch and kill" air filter which they say can trap the novel coronavirus and neutralise it instantly, an invention that may reduce the spread of COVID-19 in closed spaces such as schools, hospitals and health care facilities, as well as public transit environments like airplanes. According to the study, published in the journal Materials Today Physics, the device killed 99.8 per cent of the novel coronavirus, SARS-CoV-2, in a single pass through its filter. It said the device, made from commercially available nickel foam heated to 200 degrees Celsius, also killed 99.9 per cent of the spores of the deadly bacterium Bacillus anthracis which causes the anthrax disease.

Jadhav wants to go with mercy plea, claims Pak

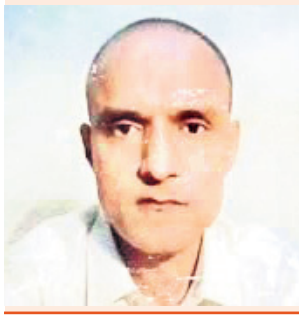
JADHAV WAS 'ARRESTED' FROM BALOCHISTAN BY PAK SECURITY FORCES MARCH 3, 2016, AFTER HE 'ENTERED' THE COUNTRY FROM IRAN AS CLAIMED BY ISLAMABAD

AGENCIES

Islamabad/New Delhi, July 8: Pakistan has claimed that captured Indian national Kulbhushan Jadhav has refused to file a review petition and has decided to go ahead with his pending mercy plea.

"On June 17, 2020, Indian national Kulbhushan Jadhav was invited to file a petition for review and reconsideration of his sentence and conviction. Exercising his legal right he refused to file a petition for review and reconsideration of his sentence and conviction," Pakistan Additional Attorney General Ahmed Irfan claimed on Wednesday.

In a press conference, the official said that Jadhav insisted on the mercy petition he filed on April 17, 2017. As per Pakistan media reports, Pakistan government has offered second consular access to Jadhav, who was sentenced to death by a Pakistani military court on charges of "espionage and terrorism" in April 2017. Following the development, India approached the



As per Pakistan media reports, Pakistan government has offered second consular access to Jadhav, who was sentenced to death by a Pakistani military court on charges of "espionage and terrorism" in April 2017

India called as 'farce' Pakistan's claim that Kulbhushan Jadhav, on a death row in an alleged espionage case, has refused to file an appeal against his sentence

International Court of Justice (ICJ) against Pakistan for denial of consular access to Jadhav and challenging the death sentence.

In May this year, Pakistan had said that it has "fully complied" with the ICJ's judgement in Jadhav case, days after India's lead counsel asserted that New Delhi had hoped it might be able to persuade Islamabad through "back channel" to release the Indian death-row convict. Senior advocate Harish Salve was the lead counsel for India in the Jadhav case at the Hague-based ICJ which ruled in

July last year that Pakistan must undertake an "effective review and reconsideration" of the conviction and sentence of Jadhav and also to grant consular access to India without further delay. Jadhav, in his 50s, is a retired Indian Navy officer. Pakistan had alleged that Jadhav was a senior Indian intelligence officer who entered the country illegally to carry out acts of sabotage at the time of his arrest. In July 2019, the ICJ ordered Pakistan not to execute Jadhav and asked it to reconsider the death sentence awarded to him by a military court.

STUDENT VISA RULE

HARVARD, MIT SUE US AUTHORITIES

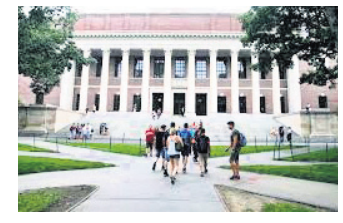
PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New York, July 8: Harvard University and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology have sued the Department of Homeland Security and the federal immigration agency over new guidelines barring foreign students from remaining in America if their universities switched to online-only classes in the Fall.

A report in The Harvard Crimson said the two preeminent educational institutions filed a lawsuit in District Court in Boston Wednesday morning against the two federal agencies.

The lawsuit seeks a temporary restraining order and preliminary and permanent injunctive relief to bar the US Department of Homeland Security and Immigration and Customs Enforcement from the enforcing federal guidelines that will force international students to leave the US.

Harvard University President Lawrence Bacow said in an email to affiliates that the "order came down without notice—its cruelty surpassed only by its recklessness. We believe that the ICE order is



bad public policy, and we believe that it is illegal."

"We will pursue this case vigorously so that our international students—and international students at institutions across the country—can continue their studies without the threat of deportation," Bacow said, according to the Crimson report. The Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) said in a press release issued Monday that for the fall 2020 semester students attending schools operating entirely online may not take a full online course load and remain in the United States. "The US Department of State will not issue visas to students enrolled in schools and/or programs that are fully online for the fall semester nor will US Customs and Border Protection permit these students to enter the United States," the release said.

FB not doing enough to fight discrimination, audit says

REUTERS

New York, July 8: Facebook Inc has not done enough to fight discrimination on its platform and some of its decisions were set-backs for civil rights, according to an independent audit commissioned by the company, the New York Times reported.

The auditors' findings are likely to add further pressure to the company which is already facing a boycott by some 900 advertisers, including major brands such as Coca-Cola, over what civil rights campaigners say is its promotion of hate speech.

"Many in the civil rights community have become disheartened, frustrated and angry after years of engagement where they implored the company to do more to advance equality and fight discrimination, while also safeguarding free expression," the

auditors wrote, according to the Times, which said it had obtained a prepublication report of the findings. Facebook commissioned Laura Murphy, a former director of the American Civil Liberties Union's legislative office, to lead the audit of its civil rights policies in 2018. It was responding to a range of criticisms over issues such as data privacy, voter suppression, incitement of violence and a lack of transparency in political advertising. A Facebook spokesperson said the audit "has been a deep analysis of how we can strengthen and advance civil rights at every level of our company - but it is the beginning of the journey, not the end. The auditors said Facebook had been too willing to exempt politicians from abiding by its rules, allowing them to spread misinformation, harmful and divisive rhetoric, and even calls to violence.



PRE-WEDDING SHOOT



A bride walks on the shore of the Mediterranean Sea as she is photographed before her wedding amid the spread of the coronavirus, in Ashdod, Israel

US formally notifies UN of decision to withdraw from WHO

AGENCIES

Washington, July 8: The Trump administration has formally notified the United Nations of its decision to withdraw the US from the World Health Organisation, the breaking off ties with the global health body amidst the raging coronavirus pandemic.

President Donald Trump said he was halting funding to the organisation in mid-April and announced his intention to withdraw from the WHO in May after he said it "failed to make the requested and greatly needed reforms." The US has also accused the WHO of siding with China on the outbreak of the virus,

which originated in the Chinese city of Wuhan late last year, alleging the health body misled the world resulting in deaths of over half a million people globally, including over 130,000 in America alone.

"China has a total control over the World Health Organisation," President Trump said in May. He has also alleged that the Chinese government tried to cover-up of the coronavirus pandemic's origins.

In April, the US stopped funding to WHO as the Trump administration reviewed the ties. A month later, President Donald Trump announced the US was terminating the relationship. The US is the single largest contributor to the WHO,



providing over \$450 million per annum. China's contribution to the global health body is about \$40 mil-

lion, one-tenth of that of the US. "I can say that 6 July 2020, the United States of America notified the sec-

China slams US

China Wednesday slammed the US decision to withdraw from the WHO as yet another example of Washington upholding "unilateralism" and defended the UN body for coordinating the global response to COVID-19, as it geared up for a visit by the health agency's experts to probe the origin of the coronavirus.

retary-general, in his capacity as depositary of the 1946 Constitution of the World Health Organisation, of its withdrawal from the World Health Organisation, effective on 6 July 2021," said Stephane Dujarric,

spokesman for the UN secretary-general, in a statement. Dujarric said the secretary-general is in the process of verifying with the WHO whether all the conditions for such withdrawal are met. Senator Robert Menendez, the top Democrat on the Senate Foreign Relations Committee tweeted that Congress has received notification that President Trump has officially withdrew the US from the WHO.

The US has been a party to the WHO Constitution since June 21, 1948. Its participation was accepted by the World Health Assembly with certain conditions set out by the US for its eventual withdrawal from this world body.

China converts HK hotel into security office

REUTERS

Hong Kong, July 8: China opened its powerful national security office in Hong Kong Wednesday, turning a hotel near a city-centre park that has been one of the most popular venues for pro-democracy protests into its new headquarters.

The office, which operates beyond the scrutiny of local courts or other institutions, will oversee the Hong Kong government's enforcement of the sweeping national security legislation that Beijing imposed on the city last week. The legislation gives its agents, operating openly in the global financial hub for the first time, enforcement powers.

China to impose visa restrictions on US citizens

REUTERS

Beijing, July 8: China said Wednesday it will impose visa restrictions on US citizens who have engaged in what it called egregious behaviour over Tibet, in an apparent retaliation against US restrictions on some Chinese officials.

Chinese foreign ministry spokesman Zhao Lijian told reporters that Beijing would allow no foreign interference in Tibetan affairs.

US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo, citing what he called human rights abuses by the Chinese government in Tibetan areas, said Tuesday the United States would restrict visas for some Chinese officials because Beijing obstructs travel to the region by US diplomats, journalists and tourists.

NCP meet on PM Oli's future postponed again

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kathmandu, July 8: A crucial meeting of the ruling Nepal Communist Party to decide the political future of beleaguered Prime Minister K P Sharma Oli was once again deferred Wednesday till Friday to allow more time for the top leaders to reach a power-sharing deal amid the heightened intra-party rift and his anti-India remarks.

As the leaders need more time for negotiations, the 45-member Standing Committee meeting scheduled for Wednesday has been postponed till Friday morning, said Surya Thapa, the Prime Minister's Press advisor.

With this, the crucial meeting has been put off for the fourth consecutive time in a bid to provide enough time for the two chairmen of the ruling party, Oli and Pushpa Kamal Dahal 'Prachanda', to sort out differences amidst the heightened intra-party rift.

The political future of 68-year-old Oli is expected to be decided Friday during the Standing Committee meeting, amidst the growing involvement of Chinese ambassador Hou Yanqui to save him.

business

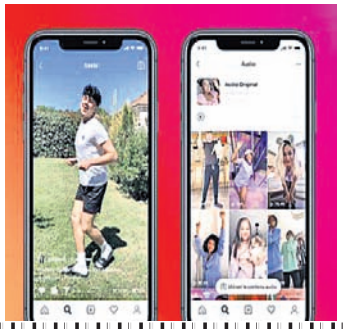


New business models and opportunities are emerging to address needs of this digital age and ones that must be agile, cost efficient and built on a foundation of trust, powered by technologies like Cloud and AI

SANDIP PATEL | GM, IBM INDIA/SOUTH ASIA

INSTAGRAM ROLLS OUT 'REELS'

With the ban on TikTok creating a huge vacuum for the 15-second videos in the Indian Internet space, Facebook-owned Instagram Wednesday announced the extension of the testing of Reels which allows users to record, edit and share short multi-clip videos, to India



of the day quote

The situation is bad and getting desperate daily. Till June 30, the hospitality industry piled up around ₹1.25L cr losses. Many hotels and hospitality chains have expressed inability to continue operating partially or fully

GURBAXISH KOHLI | VP, FHRAI

The golden age of Indian agriculture may well have just begun backed by unparalleled digital access to farmers, overarching reforms and government support. The farmer as a consumer and a producer is now being empowered by access to information, inputs, farm to fork linkages and financing support

PANKAJ KARNA | MD, MAPLE CAPITAL ADVISORS

Given Covid's deep impact on the economy and industry, any improvement will be gradual and with time we hope to see these results improving. Given the evolving situation, it is important that we continue to take measures that are supportive of businesses

SANGITA REDDY | PRESIDENT, FICCI

Global economy to contract by 5.2 pc in 2020: D&B

AGENCIES

New Delhi, July 8: The global economy is likely to contract by 5.2 per cent in 2020 with the coronavirus still spreading and the economic prospects of countries across the world looking muted, says a report.

According to Dun and Bradstreet's Country Risk and Global Outlook Report, that covered 132 countries, the wider global context remains sombre and the global economy will not reach pre-pandemic levels of activity again before 2022.

"D&B is currently forecasting that the global economy will contract by 5.2 per cent in 2020 - the biggest decline since the Second World War and a far stronger contraction than the 1.7 per cent recorded in 2009

during the global financial crisis," the report said.

The Asia Pacific region is unlikely to shake off the economic effects before the end of 2020, it added.

"Widespread quantitative easing means that financial asset prices globally are not reflecting the shock to fundamentals. But with many countries easing their lockdowns, a more varied picture of upgrades and downgrades has emerged," Dun & Bradstreet Chief Economist Arun Singh said. Singh further noted that "worryingly, a sharp recession is still



SOMBRE GROWTH

The Asia Pacific region is unlikely to shake off the economic effects before the end of 2020

According to D&B's Country Risk and Global Outlook Report, the global economy will not reach pre-pandemic levels of activity before 2022

Widespread quantitative easing means that financial asset prices globally are not reflecting the shock to fundamentals. But with many countries easing their lockdowns, a more varied picture of upgrades and downgrades has emerged

ARUN SINGH | CHIEF ECONOMIST, DUN & BRADSTREET

emerged," Dun & Bradstreet Chief Economist Arun Singh said.

Singh further noted that "worryingly, a sharp recession is still

forecast, and we expect that the world economy will not attain pre-pandemic levels of activity before 2022."

The report said any recovery

into 2021 (even without a second bout of the pandemic) is going to be curtailed by several factors. Foremost will be the presence of degrees of social distancing (despite the easing of lockdowns) and higher levels of post-lockdown unemployment and poverty.

Meanwhile, the number of cases around the world linked to COVID-19 has crossed 1.18 crore and the death toll has topped 5.44 lakh. In India, the death toll due to the disease rose to 20,642 and the number of infections increased to 7,42,417 Wednesday.

Singh further said India's economy is expected to contract this fiscal year after four decades of positive growth.

"In March, we downgraded India's rating to DB5c from DB4d - both

the magnitude of the downgrade and the risk level are the highest since 1994," Singh noted.

DB5 means high risk and denotes that "considerable uncertainty is associated with expected returns. Businesses are advised to limit their exposure and/or select high risk transactions only."

Dun & Bradstreet's Country Risk Indicator provides a comparative, cross-border assessment of the risk of doing business in a country.

The risk indicator is divided into seven bands, ranging from DB1 to DB7, with DB1 being lowest risk.

Each band is subdivided into quartiles (a-d), with 'a' representing slightly less risk than 'b' (and so on). Only the DB7 indicator is not divided into quartiles.

Tata group sole contender for AI

The Tata group is likely to go ahead with the bid while its joint venture airlines venture, Singapore Airlines, has declined to join the Air India bid due to COVID-19 woes

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, July 8: The Tata group is the only bidder in the fray for national carrier Air India with just a month left for the final bidding date. The Tata group, which already has a footprint in the airlines business, has shown interest in acquiring Air India, which at one point of time was under the Tata umbrella.

The other bidders will be known in due course as globally airlines are under severe stress due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the resultant disruptions on air travel and tourism.

The Tata group is likely to go ahead with the bid while its joint venture airlines venture, Singapore Airlines, has declined to join the Air India bid due to COVID-19 woes.

The group is currently doing due diligence for the airlines. The last date for bidding is August 31 and



the government is not in favour of extending the deadline.

Air India has been passing through a critical financial condition from much before the COVID-19 onslaught. The crippling effect of the pandemic, especially in the aviation sector, has further plummeted its finances to a precarious position.

From Tata Airlines and Air India to Vistara and AirAsia India, the Tata group has been an important part of the growing aviation sector in India.

From Tata Air Lines and the long-since nationalised Air India to

strategic joint ventures with AirAsia Berhad and Singapore Airlines (SIA) for AirAsia India and Vistara, respectively, Tata has been present in the aviation sector.

The two joint venture airlines operate independently with their respective business models - low-cost AirAsia India and full-service Vistara.

Vistara scaled up its operations significantly in 2019 by adding nine Boeing 737-800NG aircraft to its fleet and taking the final count of aircraft to 31 which helped the airline expand its network by more than 50 per cent.

Vedanta Jharsuguda takes measures against COVID-19

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar/Jharsuguda, July 8: Vedanta's Jharsuguda plant, the largest aluminium producer in the country, has intensified preventive measures and management oversight to safeguard its employees, families and business partners against coronavirus. The company is working in close coordination with the Jharsuguda District Administration to ensure business continuity with limited manpower and resources.

Speaking about the measures, CN Singh, CEO - Vedanta Ltd., Jharsuguda said, "We are in strict adherence to all guidelines and protocols of the land, and will continue to use our experiences and learnings from the pandemic to safeguard our people to the best of our abilities."

Dr Sudhamaya Nayak, Chief Medical Officer - Apollo Clinic, Vedanta Township, says, "Vedanta has put in place robust measures to guard employees, associate partners and township residents against the pandemic, and we are extending all support to ensure good collective health status in plant and township."



COVID-19 Rapid Response Team has been constituted at various sites to monitor the plant and township round-the-clock thereby supporting management in taking appropriate decisions. Increased utilisation of advanced technologies and digital solutions to boost employee connectivity and productivity, as the company continues to operate with limited manpower.

Entry into the plant and township has been strictly regulated. All travels from plant/township to out-station destinations, whether business or personal, are currently restricted. All personnel who travelled to inter-district and inter-state post-unlock have undergone medical fitness test and quarantine, if needed, before resuming work as per the government protocols.

Banks' cyber risks rise as nCoV spurs digital trends

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

London, July 8: Banks face a growing risk of cyber-attacks as the coronavirus crisis accelerates the shift to digital banking and remote working, Moody's Investors Service said in a report Wednesday.

"Social distancing has created a surge in demand for contactless payments, digital cash transfers and online banking, as well as remote working by bank employees," said Alessandro Roccati, Senior Vice President at Moody's.

Banks' digital customers are a natural target for fraudsters via phishing emails or social engineering scams.

And if bank employees use devices at home to access office net-



works, they are more likely to be or become infected with malware or spyware; unsecure home Wi-Fi networks may use routers with weaker security.

Cyber-attacks are mostly financially motivated and seek easily monetised data stored by the victim

organisations. Attacks have various, and sometimes multiple, goals but the vast majority target personal data, with a minority focused on credentials and bank data, the report said.

Cyber-attacks in the financial sector are mostly perpetrated by ex-

ternal actors (64 per cent of data breaches), mostly through web applications and errors made by company employees, according to a recent report by Verizon. The major motivation is to get easily monetised data (77 per cent of data breaches)

The report added that banks mitigate cyber risk in three ways. The

first is strong corporate governance, including cyber-security frameworks, policy enforcement and reporting. The second is risk prevention and response, and recovery readiness. And the third is information-sharing with other banks, and adoption of international standards and regulatory oversight.

These measures combined mean banks' cyber-readiness exceeds that of most other sectors, Moody's said.

Corporate managers are well aware of the cyber threat. According to a recent report from the World Economic Forum, the fourth most worrisome fallout for companies from the spread of coronavirus is an increase in cyber-attacks and data fraud.

first is strong corporate governance, including cyber-security frameworks, policy enforcement and reporting. The second is risk prevention and response, and recovery readiness. And the third is information-sharing with other banks, and adoption of international standards and regulatory oversight.

These measures combined mean banks' cyber-readiness exceeds that of most other sectors, Moody's said.

Corporate managers are well aware of the cyber threat. According to a recent report from the World Economic Forum, the fourth most worrisome fallout for companies from the spread of coronavirus is an increase in cyber-attacks and data fraud.

MCL grants ₹2.37cr for bell project in Sambalpur

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar/Sambalpur, July 8: Mahanadi Coalfields Limited (MCL) is partnering with Sambalpur district administration and R&B engineering department on the ambitious Rs 2.37 crore project of renovation, beautification, landscaping, depicting art and culture and installation of giant bell at Ghanteswari Temple in the outskirts of the city.

MCL has sanctioned Rs 2.37 crore for project under CSR, which envisages creating opportunities of self-employment for local people by boosting tourism in the circuit.

A revered place of natural green habitat with river Mahanadi flowing by the side, Ghanteswari is an abode of ancient sculpture and spirituality and a favoured tourist destination. The project manifests MCL's intensive engagement towards promotion of art, culture and tradition.

Uber to provide donors free transport in Delhi

AGENCIES

New Delhi, July 8: Ride hailing platform Uber Wednesday said it is offering free rides to donors in the city, travelling to the Institute of Liver and Biliary Sciences that houses the country's first plasma bank. It is also encouraging recovered citizens to support the chief minister's appeal to come forward and help those in need.

"The Delhi Government has been working tirelessly to contain the spread of COVID-19 and this partnership symbolises our contribution to support Delhi and its residents. Over the coming weeks, we will facilitate UberMedic trips/rides for free to COVID-19 recovered citizens to make vital plasma donations for saving lives," Uber India and South Asia Director said.

SHORT TAKES

SpiceJet offers nCoV insurance cover

New Delhi: To boost passenger confidence, airline major SpiceJet Wednesday announced a unique initiative to provide passengers with a facility to opt for Covid-related insurance cover. Accordingly, the cover is valid for a period of 12 months and ranges from ₹50,000 to ₹3,00,000 at a premium of ₹443 to ₹1,564 a year (including GST). "The insurance covers hospital expenses and all pre- and post-hospitalisation expenses for 30 and 60 days respectively," the airline said in a statement.

Samsung launches Smart TV line-up

New Delhi: Consumer Electronic major Samsung Wednesday announced the launch of its 2020 Smart TV line-up with its Crystal 4K UHD and Unbox Magic 3.0 series. The company said the 2020 Crystal 4K UHD TV line-up is powered by Crystal Technology and has an inbuilt AI capability of upscaling the content to 4K quality. The new range covers multiple screen sizes ranging from 43 inch, 50-inch, 55-inch, 65-inch and 75-inch and is priced between ₹44,400 to ₹2.37 lakh.

IOC resumes work post-lockdown

New Delhi: Indian Oil Corporation (IOC), the nation's biggest oil firm, Wednesday said with easing of lockdown restrictions, it has resumed work on projects worth ₹1.04 lakh crore which will help address future energy demand as well as kickstart the economy. IOC said it is on track to achieve its planned capital spending of ₹26,143 crore in the fiscal to March 2021.

Net leasing of office space down 73%

New Delhi: Net leasing of office space plunged 73.4% in the April-June period across eight major cities due to sharp fall in demand because of the COVID-19 pandemic, according to Cushman & Wakefield. Net absorption of office space stood at 37.15 lakh sq ft during April-June 2020 as against 139.85 lakh sq ft in the year ago period as corporates and co-working players deferred their expansion plans.

BLUES BREAK INTO CRYSTAL PALACE

Giroud, Pulisic & Abraham on target as Chelsea march into third position in English Premier League standings

London, July 8: On a night of spectacular goals in the Premier League, it was a pair of tackles that had the most significant impact on the hard-fought race for Champions League qualification. Chelsea's 3-2 win at Crystal Palace was only secured thanks to a remarkable last-ditch challenge by center back Kurt Zouma, who somehow made up ground to divert the ball away as Christian Benteke was about to shoot late in stoppage time.

Then, hours later at a rain-soaked Emirates Stadium, Jamie Vardy's late equaliser forced Arsenal to a 1-1 draw, which turned out to be a huge setback to the Gunners' improbable hopes of climbing into the top five. The two results left Chelsea in third place and a point clear of Leicester, which finally dropped to fourth after a poor run of results in the league since late January.

Manchester United is four points back in fifth place, which will secure qualification for the Champions League if second-place Manchester City fails to overturn its two-year European ban. Arsenal stayed seventh, five points behind United with only four



Tammy Abraham (C) rejoices Chelsea's winner with teammates

games remaining. United's game in hand is against Aston Villa Thursday. Chelsea manager Frank Lampard was more relieved than overjoyed after his team just about managed to hold onto its lead against Palace.

Moments before the tackle from Zouma, goalkeeper Kepa Arrizabalaga had flung himself to his right to tip onto the post a header from Scott Dann. "Not good for your nerves," Lampard said.

Chelsea rushed into a 2-0 lead by the 27th minute at Selhurst Park through goals by Olivier Giroud and Christian

Pulisic, the American winger's third in five games to maintain his great form since the restart. After Wilfried Zaha pulled a goal back with a 25-meter screamer, substitute Tammy Abraham regained the two-goal advantage for Chelsea only for Benteke to set up what proved to be a frantic finale by scoring a home goal for the first time since April 2018.

NORWICH DOOMED

Last-place Norwich could be relegated as early as Saturday after squandering an early lead to lose 1-2 at Watford and slip 10 points adrift of safety with only four matches remaining. For Watford, it was a huge win — its first since the restart — that moved the fourth-from-last team four points clear of the relegation zone.

Danny Welbeck scored the winning goal with an overhead kick from near the penalty spot in the 55th minute. Watford battled back from conceding a fourth-minute goal to Emiliano Buendia, with Craig Dawson scoring the equalizer from a corner in the 10th. Norwich's relegation will be sealed if it loses at home to West Ham Saturday.

Vardy dashes Arsenal hopes

REUTERS

London, July 8: Leicester City's Jamie Vardy pounced to score a crucial late equaliser as they hit back against Arsenal to draw 1-1 in the Premier League Tuesday after the London side's substitute Eddie Nketiah was sent off late on. Pierre-Emerick Aubameyang's 20th league goal of the season looked like handing the hosts a fourth successive win to maintain their late push for a top-four finish. Visiting keeper Kasper Schmeichel made several fine saves to keep Leicester in the game after Aubameyang's 21st-minute goal, but the visitors came back strongly in the second half. Arsenal had Nketiah sent off in the 75th minute for a reckless tackle on James Justin — a decision made after referee Chris Kavanagh viewed a pitch-side monitor. Leicester then levelled in the 84th minute as Premier League top

scorer Vardy found space at the far post to tap home Demarai Gray's low cross for his 22nd goal of the season. Vardy had an anxious wait as the decision was checked by VAR for a possible offside but the goal stood and the Foxes looked favourites to grab a late winner and claim their first league win at Arsenal since 1973. They had to make do with a point, however; although that will be a relief for manager Brendan Rodgers whose side had earlier been leapfrogged in the table by Chelsea. Leicester, who have won only twice in 10 league games, are four points above fifth-placed Manchester United who have a game in hand. Arsenal would have closed the gap on Leicester to six points had they managed to hold on but remained nine back in seventh spot with four games remaining. "We should have been three or



Jamie Vardy wheels away in celebration after scoring Leicester's equaliser

four nil up in the first half," Arsenal boss Mikel Arteta said. "We lost two points, we lost Eddie and we will

see now for how many games. But we go to Spurs (Sunday) now and try to win three points."

Leicester began the game in sprightly fashion but were rocked when Arsenal youngster Bukayo Saka played a sliderule pass across the greasy surface for Aubameyang to slot home.

The hosts were rampant for a while and Schmeichel made crucial saves to deny Alexandre Lacazette, Hector Bellerin and Saka as Leicester wobbled.

Arsenal were less of a threat after the break, however, and Vardy scuffed one effort when he should have scored. Nketiah's red card paved the way for more late pressure and Arsenal finally cracked as Vardy struck.



Vardy will not be punished despite appearing to kick Mustafi in the head

Celta hold Atletico

REUTERS

Vigo (Spain), July 8: Atletico Madrid dropped points for the third time since the season resumed after the coronavirus stoppage as they drew 1-1 away to struggling Celta Vigo in an uninspiring match in La Liga Tuesday. Striker Alvaro Morata got the visitors off to the perfect start by tapping an Angel Correa cross into an empty net in the opening minute but Celta's Fran Beltran levelled early in the second half on the volley. Atletico are third in the standings on 63 points after 35 games and the draw edged them closer to securing a top-four finish as they moved nine above fifth-placed Villarreal. Celta meanwhile nudged a step closer towards guaranteeing sur-

vival in the top flight as they moved on to 36 points in 15th, seven above the relegation zone. Once Beltran had equalised, neither side showed enough ambition to go and find a winner and the final whistle signalled a 15th draw of the season for each side, a record only matched in La Liga this season by Real Valladolid. Atleti were without record signing Joao Felix through injury and in-form winger Yannick Carrasco due to illness while striker Diego Costa was suspended. Their best moment in a flat second half came with a shot from outside the box from Thomas Lemar which was tipped away by Celta's substitute goalkeeper Ivan Villar, who came on late in the game to replace the injured Ruben Blanco.

Juve surrender lead in 2-4 loss at Milan

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Milan, July 8: Juventus missed the chance to take a big step toward a ninth successive Serie A title as they let a two-goal lead slip away in a surprising 2-4 loss at AC Milan. After second-place Lazio lost 2-1 at relegation-threatened Lecce earlier, Juventus could have extended their lead at the top of the table to 10 points with a win Tuesday. A tight first half finished scoreless after Zlatan Ibrahimovic had a goal ruled out for offside shortly before the break. But Adrien Rabiot broke the deadlock two minutes after the restart by curling a strike into the top right corner. And Cristiano Ronaldo doubled Juve's lead six minutes later. However, Milan turned the match around completely in the space of five minutes. First Ibrahimovic converted a penalty in the 62nd minute following a handball from Leonardo Bonucci. Then came quickfire goals from Franck Kessie and substitute Rafael Leao. Milan extended their advantage 10 minutes from full time when Giacomo Bonaventura capitalized on an error from Juventus defender Alex Sandro to set up Ante Rebic. Lecce missed a penalty and also had a goal disallowed, but still man-



Zlatan Ibrahimovic shares a laugh with Cristiano Ronaldo following the former's spot kick, Tuesday

aged an upset win over title-chasing Lazio. Fabio Lucioni and Khouma Babacar scored for Lecce after Felipe Caicedo had given Lazio an early lead. Lazio's bad night was made worse when defender Patric was sent off for biting Giulio Donati in an incident that could lead to a lengthy ban. Lazio was just a point behind Juventus when the season was halted because of the coronavirus pandemic. It was on a record unbeaten run of 21 straight matches but the capital side has lost three of its five matches since the season resumed.

England, WI players take a knee ahead of 1st Test

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Southampton, July 8: England and West Indies players took a knee in support of the 'Black Lives Matter' movement before the start of play in the first Test here as international cricket returned after a 4-month absence. Moments before the first ball was bowled at an empty Rose Bowl, West Indies' fielding players knelt in the outfield while

their England counterparts did the same around the field. A 'Black Lives Matter' logo also was on the collar of the Test shirts worn by players from both teams for the match played in a strict isolated environment and following repeated testing of players and staff members. The West Indies squad has said the movement, which has grown since the killing of

George Floyd in the United States in May, has been a source of motivation on this tour. There was a minute's silence in honor of those who died in the coronavirus pandemic and also West Indies great Everton Weekes, who died last week. Play was starting after a three-hour delay because of light rain and a wet outfield. There can be a maximum of 70 overs on the rain-affected first day.

It meant cricket fans had to wait a while longer for the return of international cricket since the last action in early March. England's stand-in captain, Ben Stokes, won the toss and opted to bat under overcast skies. After the toss was made, Stokes briefly forgot about social distancing when he went to shake the hand of Holder. Holder moved his hand away and both all-rounders laughed.



Dada: The self-steering wheel of Indian cricket

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, July 8: Many refer to him as the 'Bengal Tiger'. For some, he is the 'Prince of Kolkata'. But what he is most famous as is 'Dada'. Dada generally means elder brother in Bengali and in colloquial terms, it also refers to as don. And Sourav Ganguly is rightly called the 'Dada' of Indian cricket. Counted among one of the most successful Indian captains, Ganguly still remains one of the most talked-about former cricketers in world cricket. However, it was not a fairytale story for Ganguly where everything clicked right from the word go. After making his international debut in 1992 during an ODI in Brisbane against the West Indies, the stylish left-handed batsman had to wait for almost four years to play another game for India. He, along with Rahul Dravid, made Test debut at the iconic Lord's in 1996 and Ganguly scored a century at the Home of Cricket. Rest, they say, is history.

During his batting, whenever he used to step out to a spinner, it was almost certain that the bowler could do nothing but concede a monstrous six — 'a biggie' in terms of former commentator Tony Greig. However, the thing which separated Ganguly from other Indian cricketers was the aggressiveness, the bold nature and the never giving-up attitude with which he played. He was hit on numerous occasions by ferocious bouncers from Shoaib Akhtar but the left-handed batsman never gave up. In fact, the Rawalpindi Express recently admitted that Ganguly was probably the bravest batsmen he ever bowled to. But, more than the batsman, Ganguly is known to people as more



the captain. Ganguly became the skipper of the Indian team when the side was facing some really tough times following the match-fixing scandal. He was only in his mid 20s when he had to step in to become the leader of the side which already had greats like Sachin Tendulkar, Dravid, VVS Laxman and Anil Kumble. However, he brought in a new energy within the team which encouraged every player to go for the kill and never give up. Unlike other previous Indian captains who believed aggression is to be shown through performance and not words, here was Ganguly who was ready to take on teams and make them have a taste of their own medicine. His aggression and antics were all on display and he never shied

away from showing his emotions. He was someone who always led from the front and instilled belief in the team that they are not just winners at home but could win on foreign soil as well. He captained India to 11 Tests wins in 28 overseas Tests, which included victories in Australia and Pakistan as well. It was under his captaincy only that players like Virender Sehwag, Yuvraj Singh, Harbhajan Singh, Zaheer Khan etc turned from into genuine match-winners. He provided them with the opportunity to play their natural game without any fear of losing their spot. Many in the contemporary times believe that it was Ganguly only who made the team a force to reckon with. "My biggest legacy is that we left a unit that believed it could win away," said Ganguly recently.

YUVRAJ'S TRIBUTE TO 'ETERNAL CAPTAIN'

New Delhi: Former India all-rounder Yuvraj Singh referred to former captain and current BCCI President Sourav Ganguly as his eternal captain after the latter turned 48 Wednesday. The cricket fraternity took to social media to wish Ganguly on his special day and Yuvraj went a step further as he uploaded a video of them spending time together with the Indian team. Yuvraj's tweet read: "Happy Birthday to the undisputed Dada of Indian cricket. You have always led from the front, showing us what it means to be a true leader. I have learnt a lot from you and hope to become to others what you are to me. You are our eternal captain. @Sanguly99 #HappyBirthdayDada." In the short clip, Yuvraj also revealed a funny anecdote when a prank caused Ganguly to chase him and his former teammate Harbhajan Singh around the dressing room. "When we were playing against Pakistan, me and Harbhajan created a fake newspaper on April Fool's Day and we wrote quotes for every player and attributed them to you," Yuvraj said in the video uploaded on his Twitter handle. "I remember you saying 'I will resign the next day if I have said these things about you guys'. I remember your face going red till Rahul Dravid told you the truth. I think you knew who could have done such a thing and that is why you chased me and Bhajji around. Sorry for that but love you for that," Yuvraj said.

GANGULY'S WORDS

TEAM NEED TO PLAY WELL ABROAD...
You have to play well outside, they (Virat & Co) are not doing that. And there is no hiding. Even when I was captain, I said I will be only judged how good I am when we play away and it remains the same. We will have a word with Virat and Ravi and the boys and help them to play well away.

PRAISING KOHLI...
Virat understands it (consistency) and he is on the same page. There would be odd 1-2 decisions here and there but as I said our perspective is to play well away. We did not play well in New Zealand. We have Australia coming in 5-6 months time. I don't know whether I will be there or not (as BCCI president) but wherever I am, I will still want them to play well overseas

RECALLS NATWEST FINAL AT LORD'S (TAKING OFF THE SHIRT)...
This generation is a completely different generation. I see all of your involvement on Instagram. Obviously when we were growing up, there was no social media. I love the way how they train with their cameras on. Whether they are doing the bench press or whether they are doing pushups, everything is out there in the public. So, I would have been surprised if anyone would have not agreed to do so. In my generation, only two were ready to do it - myself and Harbhajan Singh

MAKING WAUGH WAIT FOR TOSS!!
It was an accident actually. Before the first Test match, I had forgotten my blazer in the dressing room. They were such a good side and I was very nervous as it was my first big series as captain and we were up against a fantastic cricket team. Initially, I realised I had forgotten my blazer and he reacted to it. Steve Waugh is a dear friend and we have always been friends. We respect each other as cricketers. It was all in good humour

PLANNING FOR IPL IN 2020...
We don't want the year 2020 to finish without an IPL. Our first priority is India and even if we get 35 to 40 days, we will host it. But we don't know where. I will put it in this order. Firstly, whether we can (have an IPL) within the time frame as IPL has limited window. Secondly India. If it's not possible then we are thinking of going out (abroad). But going out where... because if you go out it becomes expensive for everyone — franchises and board. Because of conversion rate and currency exchange rate it becomes expensive. So we are monitoring but as I said we are very keen to host it and got our fingers crossed