



BALANCING ACT

Paatal Lok actor Anindita Bose says her heart is in Mumbai while the mind is in Kolkata

LEISURE **P2**



NO MARTYRS' DAY

For the first time, no official function was held to commemorate the Martyrs' Day observed July 13 every year in J&K

TWO STATES **P7**



CHINA'S TIT FOR TAT

Beijing announced sanctions against US officials in retaliation for measures announced by Washington last week

INTERNATIONAL **P10**

SHORT TAKES

FabiFlu price cut

New Delhi: Glenmark Pharmaceuticals has announced that it has commenced a Post Marketing Surveillance (PMS) study on FabiFlu to closely monitor the efficacy and safety of the drug in 1000 COVID patients that are prescribed with the oral antiviral. Further, Glenmark has announced a price reduction of 27 per cent for FabiFlu. The new MRP is ₹75 per tab from the earlier ₹103 per tab. The price reduction has been made possible through benefits gained from higher yields and better scale, as both the API and formulations are made at Glenmark's facilities in India, the benefits of which are being passed on to patients in the country.

2 Jaish men killed

Srinagar: Two Jaish-e-Mohammad (JeM) militants, including a Pakistani, were killed while a woman was injured during a gun battle between the ultras and security forces in Anantnag district of Jammu and Kashmir on Monday, police said. One of the slain militants has been identified as Nasir alias Shahbaz alias Baz Bai, a police spokesman said, adding he is a Pakistan resident and an 'A' category militant. The identity of the other militant is yet to be ascertained. Security forces had launched a cordon and search operation early Monday in Srignufwara area of Anantnag district, the spokesman said.

IRREGULAR by MANJUL



Saving the party is not our concern. Focus on saving the govt!

MARKET WATCH		
INDEX		VARIATION
SENSEX	36693.69	▲ 99.36
NIFTY	10802.70	▲ 34.70
DOLLAR	75.28	▼ ₹0.10
EURO	85.47	▲ ₹0.54
GOLD	₹49,080	▲ ₹217
SILVER	₹52,662	▲ ₹1300

WEATHER		
	BHUB	CTK
MAX	30.7°C	32.2°C
MIN	25.4°C	24.0°C
Humidity	98%	91%
Rainfall	0.2mm	Nil
Forecast: Generally cloudy sky		

Govt tweaks norms for home quarantine

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 13: The state government Monday changed the COVID-19 treatment guidelines allowing home isolation for asymptomatic patients and those with milder symptoms who do not have co-morbidities.

Announcing this, Chief Secretary Asit Tripathy said the state government took this decision as a majority of COVID-19 patients have mild symptoms and do not need hospitalization. He said the change followed the receipt of new guidelines issued by the Centre.

"We have new norms on COVID-19 treatment from the WHO and the Centre for mild and asymptomatic cases. We have decided to allow home isolation of asymptomatic and mild patients in urban areas. This will also include divisional, sub divisional and block headquarter towns," Tripathy said.

He said the state survey of COVID 19 patients has revealed new facts which propelled the government to take such a decision. "Our survey claims that many asymptomatic persons who stay in hospitals developed psychological stress.

616 NEW CASES IN STATE; TOLL UP BY 6

The COVID-19 death toll in the state rose to 70 with six more people succumbing to the virus, even as 616 fresh cases pushed the state's tally to 13,737, a health department official said Monday. Four deaths were reported from Ganjam district, the state's coronavirus hotspot, while Khurda and Cuttack accounted for the remaining fatalities, he said. "Regret to inform the demise of six COVID positive patients while under treatment," the department said. Many of the deceased were suffering from diabetes, hypertension and other ailments. Of the 616 fresh cases, 415 were detected among those in quarantine, while 201 are local-contact infections, he said. Ganjam reported 283 of the fresh cases, followed by Koraput.

NEW RULES

- Home isolation for asymptomatic COVID 19 patients allowed
- Cancer, HIV, transplant, elderly patients now covered under this
- Posters of home isolation to be fixed on the doors/houses of patients

Many also take self medication to suppress development of symptoms," he said, adding the decision can also help the patients reduce chances of secondary infections developed from hospitals.

The new norms however bar certain categories of patients who cannot avail the facility of home isolation. "HIV patients, transplant patients, cancer patients, elderly

patients with co-morbidities, lung, liver and heart disease patients cannot opt for home isolation, if tested positive," he said. The government allowed corporate houses and other institutions to keep asymptomatic patients on their campuses (in isolation) if members from their intuitions test positive.

Civic bodies, ECoR, Jharsuguda airport, all ports, PSUs, CISE, BSF, CRPF, NDRF, Odisha Police and all universities, religious institutions, RWAs and NGOs can keep their employees on campus. An adult caregiver will be entrusted with the task to act as a bridge between the government and the patient. It has also been mandated to ensure adequate online training for bio-medical management in such situations.

Cong keeps doors still open for Pilot

AGENCIES

Jaipur/New Delhi, July 13: Congress MLAs were holed up Monday in a resort near Jaipur after a legislature party meeting, where they expressed support for Rajasthan Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot and only indirectly referred to Sachin Pilot, whose rebellion threatens his government.

Top party leaders, including Rahul Gandhi and Priyanka Gandhi Vadra, were also in touch with Pilot, assuring that his grievances will be addressed. A resolution adopted at the Congress Legislature Party meeting urged "strong disciplinary action" against any party office-bearer or CLP member who does anything to weaken the government or the party.

But the resolution stopped short of naming Pilot, who is the deputy chief minister and also heads the state unit of the party. Before the meeting, senior Congress leader Randeep Surjewala also adopted a conciliatory tone, saying Pilot and other MLAs could still attend the CLP meeting from which they had distanced themselves.

"Doors are open for Sachin Pilot and other MLAs. They will be heard and solutions will be found. This is the discipline of the party,"

BTP withdraws support

NEW DELHI: The Bharatiya Tribal Party (BTP), a regional outfit with just two MLAs in the Rajasthan Assembly, has reportedly withdrawn support from the Ashok Gehlot government in Rajasthan which is trying to weather its worst crisis since 2018. The ruling Congress stands on the brink of a split in the state with Mr Gehlot's deputy, Sachin Pilot, openly rebelling. Mahesh Bhai Vasava, the chief of the BTP, has written to his MLAs saying his party will remain neutral in case of a floor test in the assembly. The MLAs have been asked to remain absent during a floor test. Pilot has claimed he has the support of 30 MLAs and that government is now a minority.

Surjewala, who is the AICC spokesperson, said. Apart from Rahul Gandhi and Priyanka Gandhi, other Ahmed Patel, former Union finance minister P Chidambaram and AICC general secretary KC Venugopal are also learned to have spoken with Pilot.

Pilot has been upset since he was denied the Rajasthan chief minister's post after the December 2018 Assembly elections. There was no official word on the number of MLAs who attended the meeting at Gehlot's home.



In a photo provided by the US Navy, Port of San Diego Harbor police boats fight a fire aboard the USS Bonhomme Richard at Naval Base San Diego. Twenty-one people suffered minor injuries in an explosion and fire on the ship (Report 10)

STF seizes 302 kg of gem stones

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhawanipatna, July 13: The Special Task Force (STF) arrested a man from Palash village under Junagarh police station in Kalahandi district for possessing and selling unfinished precious stones Sunday.

The unfinished ruby and panna stones weighing 302.18 kg were seized from his possession.

The accused has been identified as Sujit Kumar Meher, son of



Rameshwahr Meher of Palash village. Acting on a tipoff, a team of STF conducted a raid on Sujit's

house. During search operation, they stumbled upon four gunny bags containing 302.18 kg of unfinished ruby and panna stones kept in the house.

In this connection, a case (case No-196/2020) has been registered under Sections of 379/411 IPC r/w, Section 12 of the Odisha Mineral Prevention of Theft, Smuggling and Others (Unlawful Activities Act 1988). Police have launched an investigation to track down others involved in the racket.

SC upholds Kerala royals' rights over ancient temple

AGENCIES

New Delhi, July 13: The Supreme Court Monday upheld the rights of the Travancore royal family in the administration of historic Sree Padmanabhaswamy Temple in Kerala, considered to be one of the richest temples in the country.

It set aside the Kerala High Court's 2011 verdict which had directed the state government to set up a trust to take control of management and assets of the temple.

A bench headed by Justice UU Lalit said that as an interim measure, the District Judge of Thiruvananthapuram will head an administrative committee to manage the temple's affairs. The top court delivered the verdict on a batch of appeals, including the one filed by legal representatives of the Travancore royal family, challenging the January 31, 2011 verdict of the high court.

The sprawling temple, an architectural splendour in granite, was rebuilt in its present form in the 18th century by the Travancore Royal House which had ruled southern Kerala and some adjoining parts of Tamil Nadu before integration of the princely state with the Indian Union in 1947.



While pronouncing the judgement, the apex court held that the death of earlier ruler of Travancore royal family does not affect the right of 'Shebaitship' (the right to manage the deity and the temple as a priest) of Marthanda Varma, the brother of last ruler of the royal family, and his legal heirs.

The top court said that the death of the last ruler of the royal family does not entitle the state government to take over the management of committee as law of escheat does not apply in this case and the management of the temple continues to vest in trust of the ruler of Travancore. **P8**

Google to pump in ₹75K cr to help India go digital

AGENCIES

New Delhi, July 13: Google and Alphabet CEO Sundar Pichai Monday announced a Google for India Digitisation Fund through which the company will invest ₹75,000 crore, or approximately \$10 billion, over the next five to seven years to drive digital transformation in the country.

"We'll do this through a mix of equity investments, partnership investments, and operational, infrastructure and ecosystem investments. This is a reflection of our confidence in the future of India and its digital economy," Pichai said during the Google for India virtual conference.

The fund will focus on four areas that are important to India's digitisation. They include enabling af-

fordable access to the internet and to information for every Indian in their own language and building new products and services that are deeply relevant to India's unique needs including consumer tech, education, health and agriculture.

The Google for India Digitisation Fund will also focus on empowering businesses especially small and medium businesses as they continue or embark on their digital transformation. Another area of focus will be leveraging technology and Artificial Intelligence (AI) for social good, including digital literacy, outbreak predictions, and support for rural economies, Pichai said.

Giving a special address at the event, India's Union IT Minister Ravi Shankar Prasad expressed hope that with this new fund, Google



FOCUS AREAS

- Enabling affordable access to the internet and to information for every Indian in their own language
- Empowering businesses especially small and medium businesses as they continue or embark on their digital transformation
- Leveraging technology and AI for social good, including digital literacy, outbreak predictions, and support for rural economies
- Building new products and services that are deeply relevant to India's unique needs including consumer tech, education, health and agriculture

will also focus on promoting the country's startups further.

"There is immense scope for Google to deploy artificial intelligence and undertake new initiatives in the field of agriculture, weather prediction, healthcare in the wake of Covid-19 challenges

and most importantly in digital education," Prasad said.

"Today, India's app economy is growing very powerfully but we must not just download apps. It is important also to upload apps from India," the IT minister noted. Google also announced new initiatives as part of

its ongoing efforts towards the response to the Covid-19 pandemic.

"Now more than ever, to survive and grow, every Indian business must be a digital business. And we are investing in helping Indian businesses go digital and helping Indian workers learn, grow and find better jobs," said Caesar Sengupta, GM & VP of Payments and Next Billion Users, Google.

He announced a new initiative with Prasar Bharati, launching an edutainment series on Doordarshan on how small businesses can adopt digital tools and adapt to the current situation, using examples of real life Indian businesses.

Talking about the "Spot Platform" on Google Pay, he shared that the Google Pay Nearby Stores Spot which was introduced in March this year to

improve offline merchant discoverability and to help people find shops near them to see what essential food items are in stock, has been used by more than two million users.

To support people who are looking for work, he shared that the Job Spot on Google Pay, now allows for remote interviews and remote work listings so that people who are unemployed can secure employment and income more quickly during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Google also announced a partnership with CBSE to train over one million teachers in 22,000 schools across India by the end of 2020, to deliver blended learning that combines the classroom approach with online learning, using free tools like G Suite for Education, Google Classroom, YouTube and more.

FORTUNE FORECAST

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FOR ASTROLOGY DIAL 55181

ARIES
Today nostalgia tinges your mood, and this reflects in your dealings at work, where others see your softer side. You even spend carefully, seeming to be wiser regarding your savings. Ganesha sees profits for cashiers and money lenders.

TAURUS
You are likely to get into arguments today, predicts Ganesha. You should avoid any open confrontation. Legal disputes may bother you as well. Try your hand at meditation or resort to music of your preference to relax and unwind. It is best if you delay the start of any important activity today, suggests Ganesha.

GEMINI
You have been ignoring a few problems that have been plaguing your family members for quite some time now. It's time you looked into the matter, says Ganesha. Irrespective of how difficult the challenges are, today you will emerge victorious.

CANCER
Your strange and unconventional behaviour doesn't always go down well with many people. If you think you are different, and maybe even better than others, it is advisable that you keep it under the wraps.

LEO
Nothing will overshadow your love for your kids today, and they will be the number one priority for you. It seems like a good day to take time out and monitor their progress in school; so, do not skip that PTA meeting.

VIRGO
All the work done in the past will reap rich rewards today, says Ganesha. You'll direct things your own way, and in no way would you take orders from anyone. But do not go overboard with all the authority and keep a cool, calm head.

LIBRA
Sometimes, you lend a helping hand and people end up taking the entire arm. Well, that's kids for you! So beware, because young ones around you may try to take undue advantage of your sympathetic nature today, hints Ganesha.

SCORPIO
There are strong indications that today you will be receptive and sensitive towards the needs of other people. Negative vibes will disrupt your thinking, and you will rely on the company of close friends to keep you in good cheer. Do not succumb to the pessimism that might cloud your thought today as it is only a passing phase, advises Ganesha.

SAGITTARIUS
Your business is all set to expand with you making the most of your overseas contacts. Effective communication skills will help you sail through your tasks. And you are making all the right moves to become the leader of your pack.

CAPRICORN
Numerous projects and building work pressure can keep you busy, but get done with whatever you have on hand, for Ganesha says the day has a host of recreational activities lined up for you. This will also be the right time to reach out to more people, and devour whatever knowledge or information they have to offer.

AQUARIUS
You have already fulfilled your short-term objectives. But you are ambitious, and straightaway begin setting your long-term goals. But all work and no play makes Jack a dull boy, says Ganesha. Leisure time with family will rejuvenate and prepare you for a better stint at work.

PISCES
While you like cooperating with your colleagues, there is nothing like a little competition to spice things up. You will nonchalantly take on the challenges coming your way, and thrive on the sweet smell of success today. Luck is in your favour as well. Make the most of it, says Ganesha.



JOHN TRAVOLTA'S WIFE KELLY PRESTON DEAD

Actor John Travolta's wife and actress Kelly Preston has died of breast cancer. She was 57. The actor took to Instagram to share the news of her demise with an emotional post, reports [dailymail.co.uk](#).

LIZZO ON DEALING WITH ANXIETY

Singer Lizzo, best known for her song *Truth Hurts*, feels like dying while battling anxiety issues. She recently opened up about her anxiety issues and how circulated breathing helps her to feel better, reports [femalefirst.co.uk](#).



'My heart in Mumbai, mind in Kolkata'

Mumbai: Anindita Bose, who plays a pivotal role in the new web series *Mafia*, says being a Mumbai girl she has to float between the city and Kolkata to maintain her space as an actor in the Bengali entertainment industry.

"I would say I am floating in between Mumbai and Kolkata. I was born and brought up in Mumbai, and after finishing my education I went to Kolkata and started my career as an actor. I have got a huge response. The people of Kolkata has accepted my and they made me the celebrity that I am today. How can I not reciprocate to their love? But my heart is in Mumbai! Mumbai is home. Having said that, last year I bought

my first property in Kolkata because I know that no matter where I travel, I would like to return to this city. So, my heart is in Mumbai, the mind is in Kolkata," Anindita explained.

Anindita's notable roles have been in films like *Clerk*, *Bhooter*, *Bhabishyat*, *Hemlock Society* and *CakeWalk*. She has also appeared in Hindi web series like *Paatal Lok*, *Skyfire* and *Thinkistan*.

IANS



Anindita Bose



Tiger opens up on his 'stage fright'

Mumbai: Action star Tiger Shroff has revealed that he usually has 'stage fright', and shared an incident when it was scarier as he had to perform in front of superstar Akshay Kumar.

Tiger shared a throwback clip of himself on his official Instagram account, where he can be seen making two flips and then attempting a flying kick. Akshay is seen cheering him on.

"Usually have stage fright, and this particular day was

even scarier when our legendary action hero @akshaykumar sir asked me to show a couple kicks to the audience at his tournament. Just glad I didn't mess up #pressure #throwback," Tiger captioned the clip.

The young actor recently posted a throwback picture of himself from the time he did not have facial hair on Instagram. In the image, a shirtless Tiger is seen lying down, flaunting his well-chiselled built and sporting maroon shorts.

IANS



Rakul's wait for a normal world

New Delhi: Actress Rakul Preet Singh has described what 'waiting for the world to be normal' is like for her, through her expressive snapshot on Instagram.

In the image, Rakul is seen resting her head on the table with a faraway gaze. She describes the look with the words: "Waiting for the world to be normal be like..." The image currently has 778K likes.

The *De De Pyaar De* actress recently shared a glimpse from her outdoor session with her father. She posted a clip in which she can be seen playing badminton with her father in her residential so-

ciety premises.

She arrived in Delhi from Mumbai last month. She even shared her experience of travelling amid the Covid pandemic, sharing a picture of her arrival at the airport. In the image, she was seen wearing a PPE suit, face shield, gloves and a mask.

Coming up for Rakul is a rom-com co-starring Arjun Kapoor. She will also be seen in Kamal Haasan's ambitious upcoming film *Indian 2*, which co-stars Kajal Aggarwal and Siddharth.

IANS



Odia visual artist's solo art expo in California

His paintings under 'Urban Avatara' series represent consumerist culture and human life in a neo-liberalised world, says acclaimed artist Birendra Pani

BHUBANESWAR: At a time when everything seems to have come to a screeching halt due to COVID-19, holding a solo art expo, that too in a country like the USA which is amongst the worst hit nations, is certainly no mean feat. But eminent Odia visual artist Birendra Pani has managed to pull it off.

He launched his exhibition titled *Urban Avatara- A New Mythopoeisis* July 8 at Gallery Fresh Paint, San Diego, California which will conclude July 27. The event aims to summarise Pani's artistic journey of last 30 years. Recipient of several important fellowships and prestigious awards, Pani, after making a humble beginning in Odisha, has left his strong impressions at art centres in places like Santiniketan, Vadodara, Mumbai, Delhi and in other countries. Presently, he is in the USA to put his painting skill on display.

Urban Avatara is about drawing-based paintings that

represent consumerist culture and human life in a neoliberalised world, said Pani to **Orissa POST** while speaking about the theme of his exhibition.

"The drawings in this series have sometimes evolved as an unconscious process of art making while at times they speak about the magic of life. I believe that even one line can speak a dialogue; there is no colour in just a line but there are deep layers of emotions, feelings and experiences embedded in it," he added.

Many of his paintings draw references from mythologies and yogic postures, while his works invoke and invite a new form of balance in human life.

Known for using bright colours and playful images, Pani often gets inspired by humans, animals, birds, flowers, nature, yogic images and mythological figures.



Arun Pallur, a fellow artist from Odisha, said, "Birendra has truly made Odisha proud through his masterful brush strokes. Holding a solo art exhibition including diverse elements like capsule, syringe, heart and brain during the pandemic is incredible."

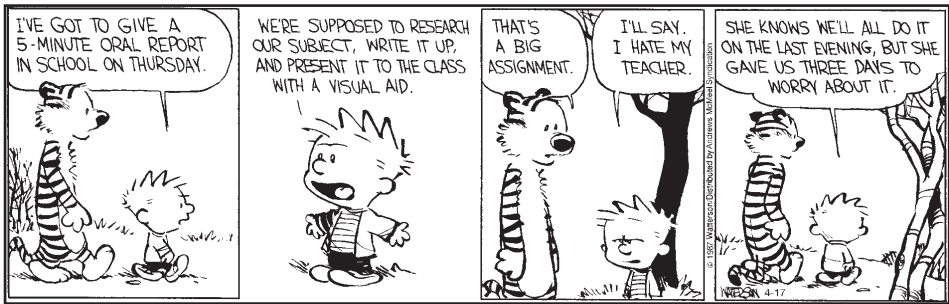


Birendra posing with his paintings

PEANUTS



CALVIN AND HOBBS

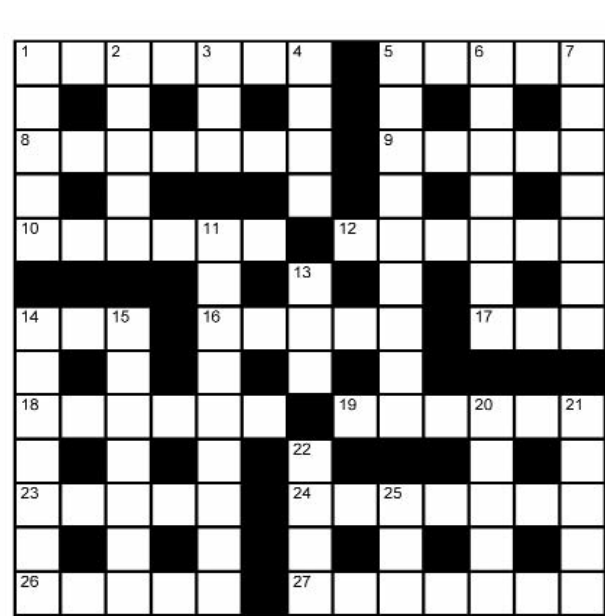


BREVITY



FUN post

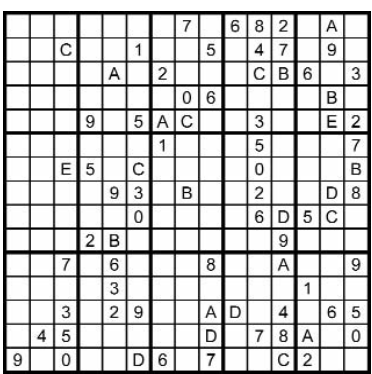
CROSSWORD



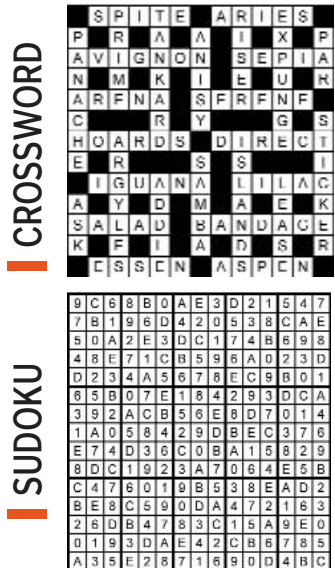
- Across**
- 1 Where to pick apples
 - 5 Poison plant
 - 8 Stoves
 - 9 Seating request
 - 10 Magical drink
 - 12 Abandon
 - 14 World view
 - 16 Fancy home
 - 17 Survey choice
 - 18 Gibraltar, for one
- Down**
- 1 Earthy colour
 - 2 Raccoon relative
 - 3 King Kong, e.g.
 - 19 Double cross
 - 23 Bikini, for one
 - 24 Ghost
 - 26 Relieves
 - 27 Bawled out
 - 4 Work station
 - 5 Impasse
 - 6 Enigma
 - 7 Whips up
 - 11 Wheedles
 - 13 Class
 - 14 Bloopers
 - 15 Cockatoos
 - 20 Evaluated
 - 21 Submit
 - 22 Wife of Osiris
 - 25 Freudian topic

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

A case of unnatural death has been registered and the body sent for autopsy.

"We suspect Deo, a daily wage earner who had married just four months ago, took the extreme step due to some family dispute. The exact cause, however, could be ascertained from the post-mortem report," Sethy added.

State's COVID-19 toll rises to 70

■ GANJAM REPORTS 4 MORE DEATHS ■ 505 PEOPLE DISCHARGED IN A DAY

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 13: State's COVID-19 death toll rose to 70 with six more people succumbing to the virus, even as 616 fresh cases of the disease pushed Odisha's tally to 13,737, an official of the Health and Family Welfare (H&FW) department said Monday.

Four deaths were reported from Ganjam district, Odisha's coronavirus hotspot, while Khurda and Cuttack accounted for the remaining fatalities, he said.

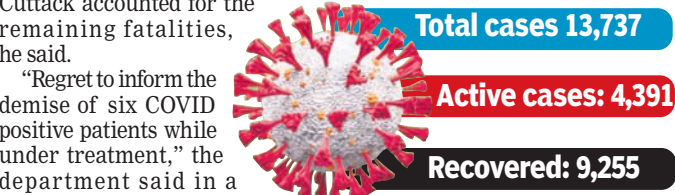
"Regret to inform the demise of six COVID positive patients while under treatment," the department said in a statement.

Many of the deceased were suffering from diabetes, hypertension and other ailments, the official said.

Of the 616 fresh cases, 415 were detected among those in quarantine, while 201 are local-contact infections, he said.

Ganjam district, reported 283 of the fresh cases, followed by Koraput (50) and Nabarangpur (40).

On the other hand, 505 persons recovered from the viral infection Monday, the H&FW department tweeted. The recoveries include 248



the civic body.

On the other hand, 29 persons who were earlier tested positive for COVID-19 recovered Monday.

With this, the Capital city has 353 active COVID-19 cases, while 356 persons have recovered from the viral infection so far.

Bhubaneswar saw 718 coronavirus cases and eight persons have succumbed to the infection so far.

Cuttack (City), on the other hand, reported 16 fresh cases of COVID-19 Monday, taking the total cases in

WITH PRECAUTIONS



A serpentine queue of SBI customers near the bank's branch at Kacheri Road in Cuttack, Monday

OP PHOTO

New dist chairperson for Inner Wheel Club

POST NEWS NETWORK

Cuttack, July 13: Ina Purohit has been declared as the district chairperson of Inner Wheel Club here for 2020-21, an official said.

Purohit, a senior financial consultant with a multinational life insurance company, took over the charge from Jagruti Doshi of Dhamtari.

"She's associated with many non-profit organisations including Sahaya, Red Cross Centre for special children. Purohit is determined to provide educational support, vocational training, health facilities and good environment for the needy," said an official of the club.

Man found dead inside truck

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 13: The body of a driver was found under mysterious conditions inside a mini truck parked near Durga Mandap at Cuttack road area here. The deceased was identified as Krushna Pradhan, 35, Champapokhari in Chintamaniswar area under laxmisagar police station limits.

According to sources, locals after experiencing a mysterious foul odor emanating from the vehicle (OD 02BD 2203) informed the police Monday afternoon.

Upon reaching, police found Pradhan's body lying underneath the driver's seat in the Mini truck.

from Ganjam, 71 from Sundargarh, 52 from Khurda, 45 from Cuttack and 11 from Puri.

Odisha now has 4,391 active cases, while 9,255 people have recovered from the disease so far.

Meanwhile, as many as 14 persons were tested positive for novel coronavirus in the Capital city here, Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC) tweeted Monday.

While 10 are local contact cases, four are quarantine cases, said

the civic body.

On the other hand, 29 persons who were earlier tested positive for COVID-19 recovered Monday.

With this, the Capital city has 353 active COVID-19 cases, while 356 persons have recovered from the viral infection so far.

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WITH PRECAUTIONS



A serpentine queue of SBI customers near the bank's branch at Kacheri Road in Cuttack, Monday

OP PHOTO

Tap & Pay soon in Mo Buses

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 13: Aiming to reduce physical contact amidst spread of the pandemic, Capital Region Urban Transport (CRUT) here is set to make payments for its Mo Bus contactless vis a vis 'Tap And Pay' method.

'Tap and Pay' is a technique where a mobile application that has the HCE (Host Card Emulation) technology allows a customer to initiate contactless payments with the help of short-range wireless android smart phones by just tapping his/her phone near a contactless merchant terminal.

"With the rising cases in the city

A stressful, disruptive academic calendar for students

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 13: With 91.46 per cent pass percentage in the Bhubaneswar region, students here reveled in their performance in CBSE Std XII boards.

However, many of them shared the mental pressures associated with having to prepare for the exams amid the pandemic. Sidhanth Das, who secured 96.2 percent, said, "I did not take the business studies exam and was quite tensed before the declaration of results. I was worried that my average marks will affect the overall marks. However, at the end, I am satisfied with the result."

On being enquired whether he will appear for the exams again to

SERO-SURVEILLANCE 900 samples collected in first round

The first round of sero-surveillance to access the extent of spread of Covid-19 in the Capital city here saw collection of around 900 samples from households

across the Temple City, an official said Monday.

Conducted by Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC) in association with the Regional Medical Research Centre (RMRC), the survey aims at estimating the level of community transmission, if any, and to see the community infection level among other things, the official pointed out.

"The first round of sample collection for sero-surveillance in Bhubaneswar was completed. Five teams were engaged and 25

the Silver City to 264.

"While six cases are from institutional quarantine, two are from

clusters were included in this round. We've successfully collected samples from over 900 randomly selected households, which was our target sample size," said

Debadutta Bhattacharya of RMRC.

Furthermore, the analysis of the samples will be completed at RMRC within three or four days now and report will be handed over to BMC for further action, Bhattacharya said.

Sources said the civic body will soon collect around 1,600 samples from high-risk groups.

Around 2,500 samples will be collected in first round from 25 selected wards across the City. The second round of survey will begin 28 days after the conclusion of the first round.

home quarantine and eight are local contact cases," Cuttack Municipal Corporation tweeted.

GOVT DIRECTIVE

Don't deny treatment to patients over virus scare

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 13: Amid reports that patients were being denied treatment in some non-COVID hospitals of Odisha over fears of virus transmission, the state government Monday issued an order, asking all healthcare facilities to ensure necessary medical services are provided to those in need.

The health department directive also stated that emergency procedure should not be delayed or deferred over COVID-19 scare.

"No patient shall be denied healthcare service and no life-threatening emergency procedure or treatment shall be deferred on grounds of suspicion of COVID-19 infection. "It is our duty to provide immediate and proper treatment to all patients during the pandemic," the department said in its directive.

Over 100 novel coronavirus cases were recently detected in non-COVID hospitals such as Acharya Harihar Regional Cancer Centre in Cuttack and SCB Medical College in Bhubaneswar.

Sources in the health department said several people have over the last few days complained that patients were being denied admission in hospitals, despite the fact that they were suffering from serious health problems.

Urging all the medical facilities to set up a separate fever clinic at the hospital, away from the main working area, the department said healthcare providers and support



HUGE RELIEF

Several people have over the last few days complained that patients were being denied admission in hospitals, despite the fact that they were suffering from serious health problems	The health department directive also stated that emergency procedure should not be delayed or deferred over COVID-19 scare	It asked the hospitals to create an isolation ward for patients with breathing issues, and those who have come from COVID-19 hotspots
It also urged healthcare providers and support staff to wear personal protective equipment for their safety		

staff should wear personal protective equipment for their safety.

"Screen all patients, all SARI (Severe Acute Respiratory Infection), ILI (Influenza-like illness), or other persons along with their attendants as soon as they enter the hospital," the department said, adding that authorities at non-COVID facilities should inform the district surveillance unit if they come across a suspected coronavirus case.

The department also asked the

hospitals to create an isolation ward for patients with breathing issues, and those who have come from COVID-19 hotspots. "When a positive case is detected in any unit of the hospital, the other patients in that room must be temporarily shifted to another ward. They can move back once the unit has been sanitized. This apart, staff members posted in isolation wards should refrain from working in other sections of the hospital," the department said.

Octogenarian wins battle against virus

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 13: Scripting a story of hope in the battle against COVID-19, 81-year old Gopinath Dakua of Kandhamal district has survived the virus after a 15-day ordeal.

Dakua, a native of Tala Intradaga in Raikia Block of the district, was initially undergoing treatment at Intradaga Public Health Centre (PHC) after having influenza and cough.

June 28, as his health conditions deteriorated after developing symptoms of Covid19, he was shifted to the nearby Temporary Medical Centre (TMC) at Kalinga Model Residential School (KMRS) at Raikia. Later, he was found to be corona positive.

Though his condition was stable, he was shifted to Covid Hospital at Phulbani July 4 for further treat-

ment. His health condition improved gradually. Finally, he was discharged from the Covid hospital Monday.

On being discharged, Dakua expressed gratitude to the Chief Minister for extending free treatment to Covid patients like him in the state. He also expressed his gratitude to the district administration and the staff of the Covid Care Hospital.

"During my treatment at Covid Hospital, doctors, nurses and other staff attended to me sincerely and took good care of me. Good quality food was also provided there", said Dakua. He is a bright example of hope and courage for many infected persons. In spite of his old age and various ailments, he defied coronavirus which gives a positive message that all should be hopeful to combat the disease in future, said a government official.



Khurda admin, hosp sign MoU



UNITED NEWS OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, July 13: Khurda district administration Monday signed two Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) with IMS & SUM Hospital for the management and operation of two Covid care centers in the district.

Khurda Collector Sitanshu Kar signed the agreements with the representatives of the SUM Hospital here.

As per the agreement, SUM Hospital would manage the 300-bed Covid care centre to be set up at Khudupur near Jami and 500-bed Covid care centre to be set up at Jamujhari.

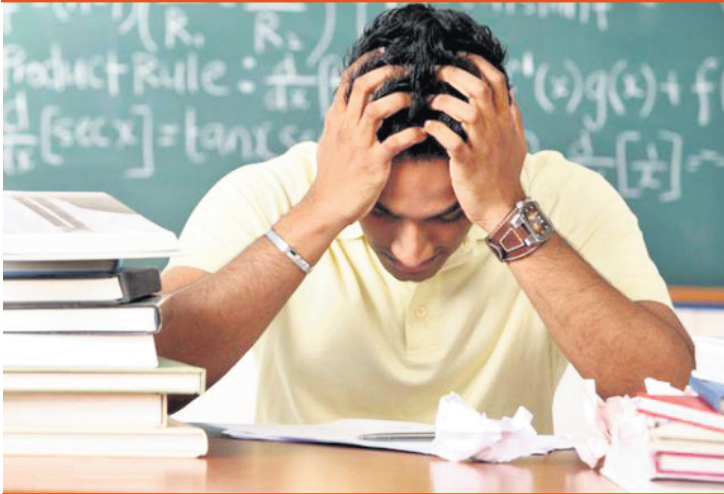
SUM Hospital would provide Rs.1,000 per day per bed for the management of the centres.

While the district administration would provide infrastructure for the Covid care centres, SUM Hospital would make arrangements for doctors, nurses, medicines and food for Covid positive mild and asymptomatic patients.

to pursue Bcom."

Ashutosh Panigrahi, who secured 98.4 percent said, "My family had decided to not follow COVID-19 news during the pandemic as it affects the wellbeing of a person. Moreover, there is not much that you can do about it. Now I am planning to prepare for OJEE entrance exam.

Megha Panda, who got 91.6 percent, said, "I was a little tensed about the results as I had flunked my accounts paper. The pandemic gave us an opportunity to be with family and stay away from the hectic school life. It gives us the opportunity to realise the things which actually matter. I am interested in pursuing law in future."



“Waiting for the exams and its subsequent cancellation was not good for the mental health of the students. I won't take any retests

SIDHANTH DAS

My family had decided not to follow any COVID-19 developments around the world as it affects the mental wellbeing of a person

ASHUTOSH PANIGRAHI

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Berhampur's main entry point sealed

POST NEWS NETWORK

Berhampur, July 13: With the number of Covid-19 infections and deaths continuing to spiral in Ganjam district, the police Monday sealed the First Gate for an indefinite period to prevent the entry of outsiders into this city.

The First Gate, a major entry point to the city, was sealed on the direction of DIG (South-Western range) Satyabrata Bhoi and Berhampur SP Pinak Mishra. Two sections of police force led by an inspector have been deployed at First Gate to oversee the implementation of the order.

The last two weeks have seen a sharp rise in the number of coronavirus positive cases which is indicative of the disease penetrating into every ward of the city. In this case, stepping out of house is fraught with high risk. This has become a cause of concern for the administration and the Berhampur Municipal Corporation as they battle to contain the spread of the virus.

Speaking to reporters, IIC Prasant Kumar Bhupati of Bada Bazaar police station Monday said violators, especially people from rural and adjoining areas, are regularly entering the city despite imposition of shutdown.

They are entering the city on various pretexts such as to purchase medicines or to visit a doctor and unnecessarily crowding the city. He said such unnecessary entries will no more be tolerated as this has led to a spurt in coronavirus cases in the city. Likewise, the other entry points will be sealed soon, he said. The situation in Ganjam is critical with the number of Covid positive cases and death toll increasing by the day. This has also



WORRYING TREND

Two sections of police force led by an inspector have been deployed at First Gate to oversee the implementation of the order

The last two weeks have seen a sharp rise in the number of coronavirus positive cases which is indicative of the disease penetrating into every ward of the city. In this case, stepping out of house is fraught with high risk

The behaviour of violators is a cause of concern as they never abide by the rules and roam around the city on their two-wheelers for no reason at all. Many violators have been penalised but that has failed to deter them

7 PATHO LABS SEALED FOR FLOUTING COVID-19 NORMS

BALASORE: The district administration Monday sealed seven pathological labs in the town for gross negligence and violation of COVID-19 norms such as social distancing, wearing of masks, using sanitisers and sanitisation of the premises.

Reportedly, rise in Covid positive cases has become a cause of concern for the district administration following which it has launched a drive to check whether

Covid guidelines are being followed in nursing homes and patho



labs in the town.

An 8-member team comprising officials of the health department

and local administration conducted raids at 11 places near the district headquarters hospital Monday and initiated action on seven patho labs for violating the Covid-19 guidelines of the state government, additional tehsildar Shatrughna Sethi said.

The administration also sealed a diagnostic facility after one of its staff was found positive. The administration also sealed the regional transport office till July 15

and collected swabs of five staff in the town after a driver in the office tested positive, RTO Bikash Chandra Chowdhury said. The remaining staff in the office were asked to go on quarantine.

Meanwhile, the editor of a local newspaper was admitted to the Covid hospital at Kuruda in the district after he tested positive for the virus. The swab samples of all the staff in the office have been collected for examination.

Mayurbhanj Rajmata Bharati Rajyalaxmi passes away at 94



POST NEWS NETWORK

Baripada, July 13: The Rajmata of former Mayurbhanj principality and mother of senior BJP leader Praveen Chandra Bhanja Deo, Bharati Rajyalaxmi Bhanja Deo passed away in her palace at Belagadia here in the wee hours of Monday.

Sources said that Bharati was well and had taken her lunch and dinner Sunday. She, however, breathed her last in sleep. Bharati was born February 18, 1927 to King Tribhuvan Bir Bikram Shah and Queen Kanti at the Narayanhitu Royal Palace in Kathmandu, Nepal. She later married king of Mayurbhanj, Pradeep Chandra Bhanja Deo in 1952. Pradeep Chandra Bhanja Deo passed away in 2000. The twitter handle of Belgadia Palace issued a condolence message mentioning the late Rajmata as an avid art and culture enthusiast with a passion for sports. It further described her as a philanthropist and strong advocate of women empowerment.

Body left to rot for 14 hours at Angul DHH

POST NEWS NETWORK

Angul, July 13: Family members of a deceased had to wait for as long as 14 hours to receive the body from Angul district headquarters hospital (DHH).

The family alleged the DHH authorities first neglected in treating their patient and then kept them waiting for 14 hours to receive the body. The body was handed over to them Sunday evening only after the deceased's swab sample came out to be negative for COVID-19.

But why it took so much time for the report to arrive, they asked.

Sudrashan Barik, 65, a resident of Hulusisingha had met with an accident June 26. In a serious condition, his family admitted him to the DHH. Later, he was shifted to SCB Medical College and Hospital in Cuttack as his condition deteriorated.

In view of the increasing number of coronavirus-infected patients at SCBMCH, he was sent

back to Angul DHH July 6.

At the DHH, he was admitted into orthopaedic department. He was shifted to coronavirus isolation ward July 10. Though his swab was collected July 8, his report did not come till Saturday. Meanwhile, he breathed his last Saturday night.

The fear of COVID-19 has gripped everyone so much so that the hospital authorities neither sent the body to morgue nor conducted post-mortem Sunday morning.

The DHH keeping the body unattended for 14 hours has left the family fuming. Dillip, son of the deceased, alleged his father died only due to the DHH's negligence. He said the DHH had no answer to his question as to why his father's swab report took so much time to arrive.

Chief District Medical Officer Dr Abhay Kumar Das said, "The swab sample was collected July 8 and sent for test the next day. But the report took time to reach as the testing centre was being sanitised. This was why the post-mortem got delayed."



STATE'S FIRST FISH MUSEUM READY

POST NEWS NETWORK

Balugaon, July 13: The state's first fish museum has finally come up near Barkul in Khurda district on the western side of Chilika lake.

Chilika, the largest brackish water lagoon in Asia, is a home to hundreds of varieties of fish. The museum will go a long way in providing information to tourists about the different variants of aquatic species found in the lake.

According to official sources, there are 330 varieties of fish and 12 types of prawns available in the lake. The availability of such huge varieties of fish is a boon for over two lakh fishermen living in 132 villages close to the lake.

Built in conventional reinforced cement concrete (RCC) structure, the museum has a fish-like structural design. It is said that the museum's architectural beauty will one day prove to be a major draw for tourists from across the globe. The museum



ARCHITECTURAL BEAUTY

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The museum built in conventional reinforced cement concrete (RCC) structure, has a fish-like structural design. It is said that the museum's architectural beauty will one day prove to be a major draw for tourists from across the globe

Both the state and the Central governments have taken up several projects for the development of Chilika, which is listed as a tentative UNESCO World Heritage site

Sushant Nanda informed in a tweet. For the development of Chilika, which is listed as a tentative UNESCO World Heritage site, both the

Odisha and the Central governments have taken up several projects. It has recently been discussed that in the first phase steps will be taken to preserve the lake's biodiversity and rehabilitate the local people with earning opportunities. As per the plan drawn out, the CDA will take steps to get rid of illegal prawn gheries that are flourishing within the lake. Also the tourism department will develop the nearby islands into natural tourist spots.

According to CDA sources, more than 160 sqkm of illegal gheries have been destroyed in the lake over the last three years. This move has had a favourable impact on the lake. The return of the Irrawaddy dolphins to Chilika is a positive sign that the environmental around the lake is conducive.

Chilika is also home to 37 types of reptiles and the safe breeding haven for over 60 varieties of migratory birds.

Pandemic leaves rural economy in doldrums

POST NEWS NETWORK

Kendrapara, July 13: The COVID-19 outbreak followed by a series of lockdowns has devastated the rural economy in Kendrapara district.

Over 78,000 returnees in the district have adopted vegetable farming and handicrafts in order to eke out their living. However, in the absence of adequate marketing facilities, they are facing severe difficulty in selling their produce.

Farming is generally carried out by male members of the family while handicrafts items are produced by women to maintain the financial stability of the families.

The state and central governments have been emphasising on formation of self-help groups (SHGs) in every village for the purpose of strengthening fiscal management and empowering rural women.

SHGs here are being encouraged by subsidies provided by the Odisha Livelihoods Mission (OLM). Despite all efforts, the rural products do not find their ways to reach outside markets and bear no profits for the locals.

"There are over 22,809 SHGs in Kendrapara district. Even as Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) had been looking after fiscal development of SHGs, about 10,478 such groups were given subsidy money of Rs 15,000 each by Mission Shakti after it was formed in 2017 April in the state. The remaining SHGs were given subsidy money of Rs 5,000 to Rs 10,000 each. Similarly, over Rs 31,00,00,000 was given by OLM under Community Investment Fund (CIF) in order to enhance the living standards of rural people in Kendrapara," local social activist Pramod Swain said.

"Rural women in the district who are working in different SHGs have excelled in mushroom cultivation, fish farming, terracotta craft, bamboo work and rosary pea craftworks. As against this, huge quantities of handicraft products have been lying unsold at SHGs for nearly past four months," he added.



On the other hand, different panchayats and municipal bodies have been allocating shops to various vendors in dedicated vending zones. Some shops in vending zones should be reserved for members of SHG to capitalize on sales, social activists say.

Likewise, Odisha Rural Development and Marketing Society (ORMAS) should be proactive and make necessary arrangement for selling rural produce through mobile vans to give a fillip to women empowerment, they added.

Kendrapara Sub-Collector Jyotishankar Mohapatra said, "The state government has plans to open mandis at every panchayat in the district. Efforts are being made by ORMAS to provide marketing facilities for local handicraft items."



FOR A GOOD CATCH

A fisherman casts his net in Mahanadi in Sambalpur as the river is filled to the brim with Hirakud dam discharging floodwater.

OP PHOTO

Teacher held for blackmailing colleague

POST NEWS NETWORK

Padmapur, July 13: A teacher was put behind bars for blackmailing a female colleague with her obscene pictures. The incident was reported from Basudevpur in Bhadrak district.

The man was produced in a local court Monday morning and was sent to jail as his bail plea was rejected.

The teacher was identified as Chakradhar Sethy, a resident of Kismatkrishnapur village. However, it is yet to be ascertained if the accused and the lady teacher were of the same school.

Sources said the accused had clicked some photographs of the



lady teacher. With the possession of these photos, he had been blackmailing the teacher. It was when he sent those photos to her in-laws' house that the lady teacher lodged

an FIR at Nayakanidihi police station. Taking the case seriously, the police swung into action. After registering a case, the police arrested the teacher.

6-YEAR-OLD GIRL RAPED BY TUTOR

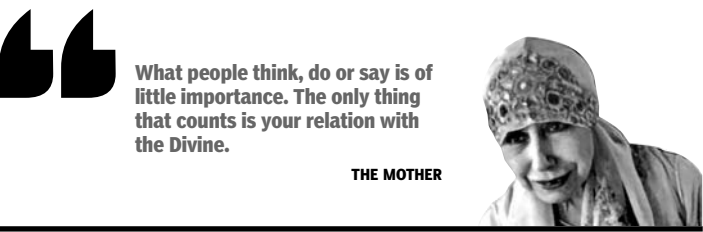
POST NEWS NETWORK

Rayagada, July 13: A six-year-old girl was allegedly raped by her tuition teacher on the pretext of providing her chocolates in Putasingh police station area in this district, the police said Sunday.

The girl suffered injuries on her body parts due to the assault. The incident has spread shockwaves in the area. Police registered a case and detained the accused for questioning after family members lodged a complaint, IIC Padma Muthu said. Later, the police recorded the statement of the survivor and sent her for medical examination, the IIC said

**ZILLA SWASTHYA SAMITI, KEONJHAR**
CHIEF DISTRICT MEDICAL & PUBLIC HEALTH OFFICER, KEONJHAR
Advt. No. 2772 Date: 13.07.2020

TENDER CALL NOTICE
No. E-109: Sealed tenders are invited under two-bids system from reputed and experienced bidders/agency for **"Supply of TRUENAT (PCR Analyzer with Cartridge) for NTEP of Keonjhar District"**. The details regarding the terms and conditions and tender papers may be downloaded from the district NIC website i.e. **www.kendujhar.nic.in** upto **Dt.30th July, 2020**. The tender document should reach to the office of the undersigned by **30.07.2020 upto 5.00 P.M.** through **Regd. Post/Speed Post** only along with all the relevant documents and E.M.D. with sealed cover and the envelope should be superscribed on the top of the envelope clearly, **"Tender supply of TRUENAT (PCR Analyzer with Catridge) for NTEP for Keonjhar distrcit"**. The tender will be opened on dated **31.07.2020 at 11.00 A.M.** in **DTU Conference Hall, DHH, Keonjhar** in presence of the bidders/their authorized representatives.
The undersigned has reserves the right to reject or cancel any or all the tender without assigning any reason thereof.
Sd./- Chief District Medical & Public Health Officer, Keonjhar
OIPR-10033/11/0009/2021



What people think, do or say is of little importance. The only thing that counts is your relation with the Divine.

THE MOTHER

TEMPLES' WEALTH

In a landmark judgement on Monday, the Supreme Court (SC) has upturned a verdict of the Kerala High Court and ruled that one of the world's wealthiest shrines, the Sree Padmanabha Swamy Temple in the Thiruvananthapuram, would remain in the hands of the erstwhile Travancore royal family. The High Court (HC) order, on which the appeal went to the SC, had been to hand over the temple governance to the state government. The wealth of this ancient temple near the coast of the Arabian Sea is estimated to be of the order of more than Rs 140,000 crore (20 billion dollars). The SC ruling apart, feelings are strong that, rather than keeping as much wealth in the temple's vaults, it could be released for public good or used in ways that the society is benefited. The shrine is cited to be the world's richest temple.

Allegations of removal of precious gold and valuables had been raised against the temple managing panel consisting mostly of the royal family members, though the overall wealth of the temple had remained the same. The royal family enjoys a high reputation for integrity though authority over the province had shifted from them to the democratically elected governments since Independence. It is this integrity that possibly weighed in favour of them when the Supreme Court took up the appeal. This simple fact highlights the greatly diminishing trust factor on the government in India, whether at the Centre or the States.

The safety of such huge wealth should be a matter of concern for one and all. The royal family's members in the temple trust change with change of generations. While government officials cannot be trusted with such a large amount of wealth, similarly, the changing generations of the royal family also may not be trustworthy in future. Obviously, this is not a concern limited only to the Sree Padmanabha Swamy Temple. The Lord Venkateswara Temple in Tirupati, run by the Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams and cited as the second wealthiest temple by virtue also of the huge donations it gets, is another case in point. The earnings of this temple are huge. With the Andhra Pradesh state government playing a major role in the temple's administration through appointment of members to the trust governing panel, there are frequent allegations of massive loot of the temple wealth. Similar allegations have been raised against other rich temples in the country, and the frenzy of loot is believed to be increasing as years pass, matching with the trend in corruption in public life as a whole.

There have been calls for proper use of this wealth which is lying unutilized for the public or the Hindu community, in ways that would benefit the nation. Once this is done, the issue could arise as to why target only Hindu temples. Jain, Christian and Islamic institutions too have huge wealth stocked without any benefit to the nation. There have been submissions that if the stored wealth of 10 top shrines are released, that could help banish poverty from the country. Admittedly, this argument may sound far-fetched and unrealistic.

On the flip side, fears are that this enormous wealth could end up in the hands of unscrupulous men in power structures who will be tasked with the overseeing of such a transfer. No institution in this country is free from corruption today. Even the Judiciary, which held a great aura of uprightness till recently, is now shamed with instances of corrupt practices. Chances are that if the temple vaults are opened and the stocks taken out, much of it could end up in foreign shores or tax havens and the nation will lose them forever.

The positive side of such a release of shrine wealth cannot be ignored. These Covid times call for a rethink on the way India manages its wealth and economy. Wealth of religious institutions packed in vaults may be taken out for proper use that would benefit the people, if the safety of its proper use is assured through one or other mechanism. Even temple administrations might respond positively to such a collective urge. But the question is, who will assure whom about honest practices. When the nation is being deprived of knowing how much of the PM-Cares Fund is spent where, it might be impossible to expect honesty from lower rung officials.

T Jacob John and Jagdish Rattanani

IT IS THE RIGHT OF THE GOVERNMENT TO PUSH. BUT IT IS THE DUTY OF THE SCIENTIFIC COMMUNITY, LED IN THIS CASE BY THE ICMR, TO SAY WHY THE DEMAND IS IN VIOLATION OF ITS OWN SCIENTIFIC STANDARDS AND ETHICAL NORMS

FOCUS COVID-19

RESEARCH IN A RUSH

There is criticism against the ICMR over its recent diktat to deliver a vaccine for Covid-19 by Independence Day, August 15. The direction is flawed and the ICMR has made itself and India lose respect. That the purpose of this frenzy was political gains rather than technological gain is obvious from the proposed date itself.

Science is in pursuit of truth and technology for human welfare, and it has its rules of probity and procedures. Science is nourished by evidence while the unbiased gathering of evidence is sacrosanct. Politics is in pursuit of several goals with some universally accepted norms in democracies. Politics can make use of science, but there exists the Lakshman-rekha of non-interference. If the line is crossed, scientists must stand their ground and politicians will back off. They will know eventually that this is in the humanity's interest.

Scientific medicine comes in a package of three elements - Public Health, Healthcare and Research - each with its own ethical principles and norms. Medicine believes in and practises science with its demands of ethics and honesty, and can speak truth to the powers that be. Politicians in democracies respect such sentiments even when they do not gel well with their own political or personal agenda.

If we look to our history, from kings and their palace intrigues to the way colonisation looted our wealth and self-respect, and delivered a bureaucracy born to sing in the masters' voice, we can begin to see our weaknesses on demands of duty, character and doing what is right by the people. Activating the 1897 British Epidemic Diseases Act when the pandemic struck this time was not exactly a signal of self-respect and self-reliance, but an admission of 'they knew India better than we' attitude. The Act that Bal Gangadhar Tilak opposed then became the prime weapon of democratic India in 2020!

The Indian Council of Medical Research is an example of the excellent elements of the British legacy. In 1911, the British created



Politics can make use of science, but there exists the Lakshman-rekha of non-interference. If the line is crossed, scientists must stand their ground and politicians will back off. They will know eventually this is in humanity's interest

the Indian Research Fund Association (IRFA) to promote medical research through institutions like King Institute in Chennai (Madras) and the Haffkine Institute in Mumbai (Bombay). After independence, IRFA was renamed as the Indian Council of Medical Research. In 2007, the Department of Health Research (DHR) was created under the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare. The secretary to the government in DHR is simultaneously the director-general of ICMR. Has that design, combining a government department with the Indian Council of Medical Research, been good, bad or worse?

When any branch of the Health Ministry needs answers to problems through research, the DHR is there to conduct, commission or encourage and fund the required research - intramural or extramural. Research is integral to scientific medicine, raising the bar constantly on public health and healthcare. As the Ministry does not have a Department of Public Health, a few functions of Public Health are handled by the existing departments, of Health Services and Health Research. Search hard and deep, and we don't see how the executive wings of the government have used DHR and ICMR to solve problems identified by them and raised the bars constantly.

DHR and ICMR on their part

had turned a Nelson's eye on the elephant - the lack of a department of public health and its repercussions on the lack of control over innumerable communicable diseases like cholera, typhoid, chickenpox and hepatitis A. As a medical expert at the NITI Aayog put it, this is like a veritable zoo, to which a new one called Covid-19 is now added.

When the SARS-CoV 2 hit India, the ICMR's National Institute of Virology (NIV), Pune, another legacy of colonial times, doubled up for diagnosis, diagnostic reagent-preparation and research. And NIV cultured several isolates of the coronavirus. One of them was supplied to the Bharat Biotech International Ltd in Hyderabad, for the purpose of developing an indigenous vaccine against Covid-19.

We can now see that ICMR has two guiding principles/forces, one as a government department and government-funded institution and the other being the principles of scientific medicine - ethics being sacrosanct. Rudolf Virchow (1821-1902), the physician known as the father of modern-day pathology, once observed that "medicine... as the science of human beings, has the obligation to point out problems and to attempt their theoretical solution; the politician, the practical anthropologist, must find the means for their actual solution." It follows that the

two must work in tandem, demarcating territories. When this doesn't happen, as is the case with the Indian administrative line up, we can see tension between the government's demands and scientific discipline. If the government wants to declare an indigenous vaccine on 15 August, the tension becomes a dilemma.

Does not the government have high calibre advisers on science, technology, vaccine trials and regulatory requirements, or did the government not want to listen? Vaccine research has both science and uncertainties. The approach of Bharat Biotech, not of the Ministry of Health, is to develop a vaccine candidate out of inactivated (rendered non-infectious) viruses. There is no guarantee that the product will be safe enough for human use or effective enough to protect the vaccinated from the coronavirus disease. Until safety is proven in Clinical Trial Phase 1 and immune response efficacy in Phase 2, the product is not yet a vaccine, but merely a candidate. If both phases are certified successful, Phase 3 can follow. Until protective efficacy against Covid-19 is proven in Phase 3, there is no vaccine for launching, only the hope of a vaccine, a lot of hard work and financial investment.

Wishes are not horses. Patience is required and the government should not be seen to be interfering in the technical processes, by which everyone gets a bad name - the nation, its scientists, the vaccine industry, the health ministry and the government itself - all for some evanescent moment of imagined glory. Of course, it is the right of the government to push. But it is the duty of the scientific community, led in this case by the ICMR, to say why the demand is in violation of its own scientific standards and ethical norms.

Dr T Jacob John is retired Professor of Clinical Virology, CMC Vellore, and past President of the Indian Academy of Pediatrics. Jagdish Rattanani is a journalist and faculty member at SPJIMR.

THE BILLION PRESS

SPECTRUM EDUCATION

Learning is more than examinations



Dhanada K Mishra

CENTRALISED BOARD EXAMS HAVE VERY LITTLE VALUE IN THE TECHNOLOGY-DRIVEN WORLD WHERE CERTIFICATES, GRADES, AND RANKS MATTER VERY LITTLE

We are an examination-obsessed country proven conclusively by the latest guidelines issued by the top higher education regulator, the University Grants Commission. The guidelines say the universities "are required to complete the examinations by the end of September 2020 in offline (pen & paper)/ online/ blended (online + offline) mode following the prescribed protocols/ guidelines related to Covid-19 pandemic."

It took several weeks of deliberations by UGC to come up with the directive, which also modified its guidelines issued in last week of April. UGC goes on to say that "Academic evaluation of students is a very important milestone in any education system. The performance in examinations gives confidence and satisfaction to the students and is a reflection of the competence, performance, and credibility that is necessary for global acceptability." Unfortunately, the so-called competence, performance, and credibility are much more dependent on the overall system and educational framework than just the final semester examination of a multi-year degree programme! Coming as it does in the face of

the ongoing Covid-19 spread, the UGC guidelines supported by the Ministry of HRD have plunged millions of students into despair and confusion. The annual ritual of examinations is an unchangeable fixture in the Indian education calendar even as the world has moved on from this relic of the past. Centralised board exams have very little value in a technology-driven world where certificates, grades, and ranks matter very little. After Independence when Dr. Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan chaired the first University Education Commission till the release of the latest draft New Education Policy 2019, examination has been a major target for reform. Dr. Radhakrishnan said, "If we are to suggest one single reform in University Education, it should be that of examinations."

The subsequent committees have all emphasised on examination reforms. The new draft education policy emphasises on making examinations more adaptive, flexible, and focused on core concepts rather than memorisation. Our education system has lagged in adapting itself to global best practices though many committees and commissions discussed the matter for years. The scourge of coaching

classes, student suicides due to examination pressure, malpractices are all symptoms of a deeper systemic malaise that the nation has not been able to diagnose and treat.

Now, states like Maharashtra, Delhi and Punjab have declared their intention to circumvent UGC guidelines. Lakhs of students on social media are appealing for the same to be done nationally. Yet, the vice-chairperson of UGC goes on TV to say examination can be held as per UGC guidelines since the country is able to open and run even liquor shops, and as internet is available even at panchayat level!

Already, all examinations other than the terminal examination of final-year students have been scrapped with an alternative assessment process being used to promote students. The same can be done for final year students. Instead, many universities including Delhi University have twice announced dates for final examinations only to defer the same later. Most developed countries have long moved away from centralised terminal examinations at university level. In India, we have adopted a semester system after much dilly-dallying. Conducting common semester examinations across the university

where papers are set and evaluated by a third party is an anachronism. When IITs, IIMs, NISERs, AIIMS, and Central Universities are excelling with the more-sensible fully internal assessment by the professor who teaches the course, why are we unable to adopt it across the board? Even a top university like Delhi University is unable to trust its faculty to be capable and diligent in assessing their students.

The 2019 draft education policy recommends: "All assessment systems must be decided by the Higher Education Institutions, including those that lead to final certification. The Choice-Based Credit System of the current UGC will be revised and improved, in order to make clear the basic vision while leaving plenty of room for innovation and flexibility. HEIs should also move away from high-stakes examinations towards more continuous and comprehensive evaluation." If only UGC had read what is being proposed by its parent body, the HRD Ministry, it wouldn't have come up with such obscurantist guidelines!

The writer has a doctorate in civil engineering from University of Michigan and is a professor of civil engineering of BPUT.

WISDOM CORNER

We shall not cease from exploration, and the end of all our exploring will be to arrive where we started, and know the place for the first time. TS ELIOT

Simple can be harder than complex: You have to work hard to get your thinking clean to make it simple. But it's worth it in the end because once you get there, you can move mountains. STEVE JOBS

It is unwise to be too sure of one's own wisdom. It is healthy to be reminded that the strongest might weaken and the wisest might err.

MAHATMA GANDHI

WORDSWORTH

Suburb

In opposition to the conventional wisdom about the irreversible flight from the inner cities, it was reported not long ago in the Economist that Britain's city centres are booming, not only commercially, but through the willingness of people to move back to them from the suburbs. There is so much of a twentieth-century feel about the suburbs, which have grown hugely alongside rail and road links to city centres, that it is a surprise to discover that the word is first attested as long ago as 1380. The word was a combination of the Latin urbanus, a derivative of urbs, "city", with the prefix sub-, "under, close to". It had a subtly different meaning then, referring to those parts of towns or cities that lay outside the city walls and thus beyond their protection, mainly occupied by the poor and indigent. It survived solely in this meaning for some two hundred years, being joined by its adjective suburban only in the early 1600s, at about the time that the suburbs began to get a bad press among metropolitan writers, who saw them as inferior and debased places of licentious behaviour (a largely deserved reputation to judge from contemporary accounts). With the growth of the railways in the 1840s, and later of the motor car, the chance to move away from crowded, dirty, insanitary and unsafe city centres into suburban villas with space and greenness and particularly a bit of garden became irresistible (greatly encouraged around London and other big cities by railway companies, who knew very well how to generate trade). Among the people who live there, suburbs have undoubtedly been popular, despite their frequent lack of jobs, amenities or access to entertainment. But writers have regularly castigated the repetitive and uninspiring architecture of suburbs, built quickly all from a mould to meet the unceasing need for new homes and summed up by the term suburban sprawl (a favourite hatred of John Betjeman, who once famously exhorted "come friendly bombs, and fall on Slough"). Such writers reject the comfortable narrow-mindedness and lack of vision or opportunity which they feel is so often characteristic of the suburbs, a view summed up in the late nineteenth-century coinage suburbia.

LOL

POCKETS

A bureaucrat went into a Liberal clothing store to do some purchases. When he started trying on a few pairs, he noticed that all the pockets except one were visibly



removed. He stopped a clerk and asked him why so. He said "Liberals always want a hand out." Well, what happened to the other pockets. Pat came the reply: "They don't go to waste: Conservatives use them to line theirs."

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

Congress, youth

Sir, Rajasthan is heading for political turmoil. The Congress party has never expressed its confidence in youth. Instead, it stressed on maturity and experience. The oldest political party has always relied on old leaders other than those from the Nehru family. The party did not learn anything from Madhya Pradesh where a young leader revolted against the party and pulled down the state government. Now, the same story is getting repeated in Rajasthan at the hands of Sachin Pilot. Democracy is the magic of numbers. The Congress has toppled many state and central governments in similar ways in the past. "As you sow, so shall you reap." Prabhudutt Dash, BHUBANESWAR

PhD, suicides

Sir, The news of a PhD scholar hanging herself at an IIT must be seen in the context of the issues involved in PhD enrollment in this country. Suicides are increasingly happening in the IITs, NITs, IIEST etc, while such incidents are rare in state universities. In most cases, there are allegations of harassment (may be even sexual) from the supervisor/guide, sheer work pressure, blackmail, and harsh recommendations in the annual progress report, all of which hurt research scholars. Perhaps, a large number of research scholars are undergoing such trauma while doing PhD, and finally becoming mental wrecks. There often is the unprofessional behaviour of research guide that aggravates such matters. Learning should be more cordial and joyous at PhD level. The Ministry of HRD & UGC must take note. Disciplinary action should follow in such situations. Ramdas Ray, ex-RIE, BHUBANESWAR

Covid, economy

Sir, RBI has alerted us that the national economy remains in a bad shape. Supply chains and markets are yet to be restored fully while the trajectory of the coronavirus spread and its impact are alarming. The economy, though, might have started showing signs of a revival. A recapitalisation plan for Indian banks is necessary as the economic impacts of the pandemic may result in higher bad loans and an erosion of capital for banks. Many private and public sector banks are looking to raise capital through various means this fiscal. Economic revival is a must by all means. Naresh Mandal, Prachi Nagar, BHADRAK

Punjab bans all public gatherings

Monday, Mohali reported 31 new coronavirus cases and Patiala 59 which is the dist's highest single-day spike

AGENCIES

Chandigarh, July 13: Stepping up its fight against Covid-19, the Punjab government Monday imposed a complete ban on all public gatherings, while restricting social gatherings to five and marriages and other social functions to 30 instead of the current 50.

These were among the revised guidelines issued in line with the announcement made by Chief Minister Amarinder Singh.

Mandatory first information reports (FIRs) shall be filed against those found violating the curbs on public gatherings, which now stand strictly disallowed.


A detailed notification issued by the government says joint teams of police and civil administration shall strictly enforce the restrictions on social gatherings (restricted to 5 under section 144 imposed in all districts) as well as weddings and social functions.

The management of marriage halls and hotels would be held responsible and would face suspension of licence in case of violation of norms.

Further, the management of marriage halls, hotels and other commercial spaces will have to certify that adequate arrangements for ventilation of indoor spaces have been made.

The state government has also partnered with IIT-Madras experts to intensify surveillance, using technology in order to identify super-spreader gatherings that in the past that have resulted in spread, to guide future action.

Wearing of masks has been made compulsory in work places, offices



COVID-19 Crisis
PUNJAB

OPTIMUM UTILISATION

A SYMPTOMATIC AND MILDLY SYMPTOMATIC PERSONS WITH NO COMORBIDITIES OR VULNERABILITIES WILL HAVE TO BE IN COVID CARE CENTRES/HOME ISOLATION

B EDS IN LEVEL II AND III FACILITIES WILL NOT BE USED TO CATER TO SUCH PATIENTS

A PERSON IN A LEVEL II OR III FACILITY WHO NO LONGER NEEDS THIS FACILITY MUST BE REFERRED BY WAY OF REVERSE REFERRAL TO A LOWER LEVEL TREATMENT FACILITY

and closed places, as per the new guidelines, which also call for strict enforcement of the Health Department advisory on air conditioning and ventilation and air circulation.

Public dealing in offices may be curtailed to cater to need based and urgent issues, according to the guidelines, which provide that the online public grievance redressal system recently approved by the Cabinet should be extensively popularised and used.

'Local transmission' in Patiala, admin on toes

Patiala: Several areas in Patiala district have already entered into

the 'local transmission' stage of Covid after a sudden spike in the number of positive cases.

Patiala has reported over 160 cases in the past three days. Consequently, the Health Department had to declare four micro-containment zones in Samana and one containment zone in Patiala. As per the department, several cases were reported without any contact or travel history. Moreover, random samples also tested positive in the area which indicated local spread.

In Top Khana Mor and adjoining areas, 45 cases have already been reported while test reports of many residents are awaited. Similarly, more

than 55 cases have already been reported from the Samana block. The department has already started extensive tracing in these areas.

Meanwhile, a doctor posted with the department, who has been conducting tests in containment areas, said only symptomatic and people with co-morbidities should be taken care of in the wake of local transmission.

Patiala Civil Surgeon Harish Malhotra said, "It appears there is local transmission as cases continue to increase in these areas. We are conducting house-to-house surveys. Besides, we have started rapid antigen testing in these areas."

Detained Abdullahs knock on HC doors

A habeas corpus petition in the high court is filed challenging the 'unconstitutional and illegal' house detention of 16 NC leaders and functionaries

AGENCIES

Srinagar, July 13: Jammu and Kashmir National Conference (NC) president and Srinagar MP Farooq Abdullah and his son and party vice president Omar Abdullah Monday filed a habeas corpus petition in the high court challenging the 'unconstitutional and illegal' house detention of 16 NC leaders and functionaries.

As per the statement issued from the party headquarters, Farooq Abdullah has filed a petition for the release of Ali Mohammad Sagar, Abdul Rahim Rather, Nasir Aslam Wani, Aga Syed Mehmood, Mohammad Khalil Bandh, Irfan Shah and Sahmeema Firdous from house detention, while Omar Abdullah has challenged the detention of Mohammad Shafi Uri, Aga Syed Ruhullah Mehdi, Chaudhary Mohammad Ramzaan, Mubarak Gul, Bashir Veeri, Abdul Majeed Larmi, Basharat Bukhari, Saifudin Bhat Shutru and



Mohammad Shafi through their counsel advocate Shariq Reyaz.

Party spokesperson Imran Nabi Dar said the decision to move to the court has been taken as a last resort to provide relief to various party members who have continuously been under house arrest or have been kept under house detention after being shifted from detention centers.

"Shifting of the detainees from detention centers to their homes only characterised revolving-door detention practice. Quashing of the PSA on party General Secretary Ali Muhammad Sagar underscored the indefensible nature of all detentions in the court of law, leading us to believe that the admin-

istration will release all the detainees in the absence of any convincing reason."

"Unfortunately that was not to be. The house detentions without any administrative orders are unlawful, undermining the due respect to human rights and individual liberty," he added.

"We are hopeful that the court will come to the rescue of our colleagues, who have been suffering for no fault of theirs ever since the abrogation of Article 370 and Article 35-A on August 5, 2019. This was the only recourse left to us. We are hopeful that the court will uphold the civil liberties of our colleagues, most of whom have not been keeping well," Dar said.

No Martyrs' Day observance in Kashmir

For the first time in the history of Jammu and Kashmir, no official function was held to commemorate Martyrs' Day observed July 13 every year in memory of those killed in firing by soldiers of Dogra ruler Maharaja Hari Singh in 1931

AGENCIES

Srinagar, July 13: Jammu and Kashmir, and Ladakh did not observe 'Martyrs' Day' as an official state holiday Monday, for the first time since 1948, even as political groups in the Valley paid tributes to the '13 July martyrs'.

The erstwhile state of J&K observes 'Martyrs' Day' July 13 as a state holiday to mark a 1931-protest against the rule of Maharaja Hari Singh in the then princely state. On that day, 22 Kashmiri men and women were shot dead as they gathered outside the Srinagar central jail to protest against the arrest and subsequent trial of Abdul Qadeer Gazi, who was seen as a crusader against Singh's Dogra regime.

The people of Kashmir started ob-



The day is the watershed moment in the peoples' struggle for restoration of their universal human rights. It was their valor that inspired millions of others to rise against the then despotic and autocratic regime

OMAR ABDULLAH I
VICE-PRESIDENT, NC

serving Martyrs' Day from 1932 onward. After J&K acceded to India in 1947, the day was incorporated in the official list of holidays.

Usually, July 13 would see important government functionaries, including the Governor, Chief Ministers, cabinet ministers, heads of various political parties and even separatist groups, visit the martyrs' graveyard or Mazaara-Shuhada to pay homage.

However, this was undone last year when the newly-created union territories of J&K and Ladakh re-

moved July 13 as a state holiday from the official calendar after the Article 370 was scrapped August 5, 2019.

Last year, former and last

Governor of the erstwhile state of J&K, Satypal Malik, had skipped the official 'Martyrs' Day' function. His predecessor NN Vohra had also skipped the official function for the first time in 2018, but paid homage to the slain men and women.

This year, however, would go down in history as the first one to not mark the decades old tradition. This time, the day coincided with

Manpreet further introduced Amanpreet, Simarjit and Sukhwant with Sumit Kumar.

Armed with these disclosures, the Jalandhar Rural Police arrested Simarjit and Manpreet July 12, while the BSF constable was arrested in coordination with the BSF after the DGP took up the matter personally with his BSF counterpart July 11.

The DGP said constable Sumit Kumar had disclosed his involvement in repeated smuggling of narcotics and weapons from across the border.



AGENCIES

Chandigarh, July 13: Punjab Police have busted a Pakistan-sponsored drugs and illegal arms smuggling racket with the arrest of four people, including their kingpin who is a BSF constable posted in Samba district of Jammu & Kashmir, officials said Monday.

Foreign-made weapons, including a 9 mm pistol along with 80 live cartridges, etched with Pakistan Ordnance Factory markings, two magazines and two cartridges of 12 bore along with ₹32.30 lakh in drug proceeds were recovered from BSF constable Sumit Kumar.

COPS SEIZE

- A 9 mm pistol along with 80 live cartridges etched with Pakistan Ordnance Factory markings
- Two magazines and two cartridges of 12 bore
- ₹32.30 lakh in drug proceeds

Director General of Police (DGP) Dinkar Gupta said constable Sumit Kumar of Gurdaspur district was apprehended along with three other members - Simarjit Singh, Manpreet Singh and Amanpreet Singh.

He said Jalandhar (Rural) Police arrested Amanpreet Singh July 11 for murdering Jagjit. During investigation, Amanpreet disclosed that he and his brothers were in touch with one Shah Musa of Pakistan for smuggling of nar-

cotics and weapons across the Indo-Pak border. Amanpreet said they had come into contact with Shah Musa through Manpreet Singh and a constable of the Border Security Force posted on the Jammu & Kashmir border.

He said constable Sumit Kumar had earlier been lodged in the Gurdaspur jail during the trial of a murder case, where he had come in contact with Manpreet Singh.

Gupta said the conspiracy to smuggle drugs and weapons from across the border was hatched in the Gurdaspur jail.

Constable Sumit Kumar of Gurdaspur district was apprehended along with three other members - Simarjit Singh, Manpreet Singh and Amanpreet Singh

DINKAR GUPTA I
DGP, JALANDHAR (RURAL) POLICE

SC refuses to cancel Amarnath Yatra

THE PETITIONER ARGUES THAT ANNUALLY SEVERAL LAKH DEVOTEES VISIT AMARNATH CAVE SHRINE, AND IF THIS IS ALLOWED THEN IT MAY LEAD TO SPREAD OF THE DISEASE

AGENCIES

New Delhi, July 13: The Supreme Court Monday said it cannot enter into the domain of the executive and district administration, as it declined to entertain a plea seeking a direction to the Centre, J&K administration and Shri Amarnath Shrine Board to cancel/restrict access of general public/devotees for the Amarnath Yatra this year in the backdrop of the coronavirus outbreak.

The petitioner has alternatively sought live 'darshan' of Lord Amarnath through internet and television "so that crores across the country can have access."

A bench, headed by Justice DY Chandrachud, said, "With due respect to principle of separation of powers...we leave it to the concerned authorities



Whatever difficulty you (the petitioner) apprehend, we cannot take over functioning of district administration

JUSTICE CHANDRACHUD

to take a decision on the matter. We are not inclined to entertain this petition." The top court observed that the decision on whether the annual pilgrimage should be permitted and required safeguards to be observed falls in the domain

of the executive arm of the state.

"Whatever difficulty you apprehend, we cannot take over functioning of district administration," Justice Chandrachud told the counsel for the petitioner Amarnath Barfani Langar organisation.

The petitioner argued in the plea that annually several lakh devotees visit Amarnath cave shrine,

and if this is allowed then it may lead to spread of the disease. The plea has also contended that though Shri Amarnath Shrine Board has not given permission to begin the annual pilgrimage, yet few Bhandara organisations have been asked to reach the venue by June 28 and also asked to begin service (seva) from July 3 onwards.

This move indicates that there may be some plans to give requisite permission for the annual pilgrimage therefore the petitioner moved the apex court seeking direction to the Centre to restrict the access to the general public/devotees.

The petitioner has urged the apex court to direct the Centre to make arrangements to provide live darshan of Lord Amarnath through internet and TV, which would allow access to crores of people across the country to get 'darshan'. Apart from the Centre, the Jammu & Kashmir administration and Shri Amarnath Shrine Board have also been made respondents in the plea.

NOT A SOUL IN SIGHT



Security personnel stand guard near a barricade after J&K administration imposed an intensified lockdown in some parts of the Valley to curb the spread of coronavirus disease in Srinagar, Monday

of the day quote

Both Sachin and Jyotiraditya Scindia are worthy. Both are like my nephews. If Sachin comes here (in the BJP) we will be very happy

UMA BHARTI | SENIOR BJP LEADER

Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot government is in minority after over 30 Congress and some independent MLAs have pledged support to me

SACHIN PILOT | RAJASTHAN DY CM

Pilot should tell us when he will come to attend the Congress Legislature Party meeting. We have kept our doors open for Pilot and his MLAs. Sonia Gandhi and Rahul Gandhi are keen to resolve the crisis

RANDEEP SURJEWALA | SENIOR CONGRESS LEADER

SHORT TAKES

Scribe booked for raping 5 women

Bhopal: A case was registered against an elderly journalist and his female accomplice in Bhopal Sunday in connection with the alleged rape of four girls and a woman, police said. The police have taken the accused woman into custody, while the man is missing. The case was registered at the city's Ratibad police station and it will be transferred to Shahpura police station.

Varavara's health deteriorates

Mumbai: The health of poet and activist Varavara Rao, an accused in the Elgar Parishad case, is deteriorating and he is "hallucinating and is in a delirious state", his family claimed Sunday and urged the authorities concerned to provide him better medical aid. The 81-year-old activist is currently lodged at the Talaja jail in Maharashtra's Navi Mumbai. Rao's wife, daughters and other family members said they were worried about his "deteriorating health".



The BJP doesn't believe that non-BJP parties have the right to function in a democratic set-up

SHARAD PAWAR | NCP PRESIDENT

MUMBAI DABBAWALAS PRAY FOR BACHCHANS' RECOVERY

The dabbawalas of Mumbai performed a special 'pooja' and prayed for the early recovery of COVID-19 affected megastar Amitabh Bachchan, his family and others in the country, Monday



LT COL MOVES HC AGAINST ARMY'S DECISION TO BAN USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS

THE PETITION, LIKELY TO COME UP FOR HEARING TUESDAY, SOUGHT THE COURT'S DIRECTION TO THE DIRECTOR-GENERAL OF MILITARY INTELLIGENCE TO WITHDRAW ITS JUNE 6 POLICY

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, July 13: A senior rank officer of the Indian Army Monday approached the Delhi High Court challenging a recent policy banning armed forces officials from using social networking platforms like Facebook and Instagram.

The petition, likely to come up for hearing Tuesday, sought the court's direction to the Director-General of Military Intelligence to withdraw its June 6 policy to the extent that it orders all the members of the Indian Army to delete their accounts from Facebook and Instagram and 87 other applications.

Lieutenant Colonel PK Choudhary, who is currently posted in Jammu and Kashmir, said in the plea that he is an active user of Facebook and uses the platform to connect with his friends and family as most of them are settled abroad, including his elder daughter.

In the petition, filed through advocates Shivank Pratap Singh and Sanandika Pratap Singh, the officer sought direction to the Central government through Ministry of Defence to withdraw its June 6 policy to "ensure that the fundamental rights of armed forces personnel are not abrogated amended or modified by arbitrary executive action which is not backed by the mandate of law, offends the provisions of the Army Act and Rules made thereunder and is unconstitutional".

The plea said Choudhary got to



know through a July 9 news report about the Army's order requiring him and other personnel to delete Facebook, Instagram and 87 other applications by July 15.

On July 10, he received a letter titled "Policy On Use Of Social Media Platforms And Mobile Phones In IA" issued by the Director General of Military Intelligence, banning the use of 89 applications and websites and directed deletion of the accounts, the plea said, adding that as the policy is classified as restricted, he is not reproducing any part of it here.

The plea claimed that the provisions of the policy violate various fundamental rights of the petitioner under the Constitution including the right to freedom of speech and expression and right to privacy.

It said soldiers serve in remote areas, extreme weather conditions, difficult terrain, with the lingering threat of an enemy attack at all times and the professional hazards are a direct cause of soldiers com-

mitting suicides and in some cases shooting at their fellow soldiers before taking their own lives.

"In a majority of cases the precursor to such incidents is denial of leave to the soldier. The soldiers rely on social networking platforms like Facebook to address various issues arising in their families while posted in remote locations and often use the virtual connect to compensate for the physical distance existing between themselves and their families."

"Soldiers can view pictures, videos etc. of events such as weddings, birthdays and other events of cultural significance in real time or even at a later date as per their convenience and need. This is the beauty of social network platforms like Facebook. Therefore, the respondents (authorities) must wake up to the benefits that these websites/applications enable the use of these websites and applications for soldiers and put in place a mechanism to ensure its misuse," the petition said.

It alleged that the policy which

bans social media platforms is "illegal, arbitrary, disproportionate, violates the fundamental rights of soldiers including but not limited to the freedom of speech and expression, the right to life and the right to privacy".

It said the authorities have cited security concerns and risk of data breach as the basis of imposing the restrictions contained in the policy regarding usage of social media platforms but the act of banning it is a clear violation of Article 14 (Equality before law) of the Constitution.

"It is submitted that no other professional army serving in a Constitutional democracy has put such unreasonable and mindless restrictions on its soldiers. The respondent no.2 has conveniently shifted its own burden and responsibility to regulate use of social networking platforms onto the soldiers, assuming that it has unfettered power to abrogate and restrict the fundamental rights of soldiers."

"It is noteworthy that the policy has an entire section dedicated to measures such as sensitisation and training of personnel to avoid breach of security and data. This gives rise to a glaring absurdity," the plea said.

It also sought to declare that the Director General of Military Intelligence is not empowered under the Constitution or under any other law to modify, amend or abrogate the fundamental rights of the petitioner and other members of the armed forces.

Assam flood situation worsens; 42 dead

Embankments, roads, bridges, culverts and other infrastructure have been damaged in heavy rain and landslides across the state



NDRF personnel taking the flood-affected people to safer places

AGENCIES

Guwahati, July 13: The flood situation in Assam worsened after four straight days of heavy rainfall. 42 people have died in flood-related incidents and 13 lakh affected. A severe flood warning has been issued in Assam and neighbouring Arunachal Pradesh after water levels of the Brahmaputra River crossed the danger mark. Heavy rainfall is likely till July 16, the India Meteorological Department (IMD), has said in its latest bulletin.

The Brahmaputra is flowing above the danger level at Guwahati, Dibrugarh, Dhubri, Goalpara, Jorhat and Sonitpur districts.

The state disaster management body said, extensive floods have been reported in Dhemaji, Lakhimpur, Biswanath, Sonitpur, Udaiguri, Darrang, Baksa, Nalbari, Barpeta, Chirang, Bongaigaon, Kokrajhar, Dhubri, Goalpara, Kamrup, Morigaon, Nagaon, West Karbi Anglong, Golaghat, Jorhat, Majuli,

Dibrugarh and Tinsukia districts. Over 2,000 villages in 24 districts of the state have been inundated. Dhemaji in upper Assam and Barpeta in lower Assam are the worst-hit. In Arunachal Pradesh, low-lying areas of Pasighat and Namsai are under water. Over 70 per cent of the Kaziranga National Park is also flooded. According to the wild life department, 41 animals have been killed, while 49 were rescued in Kaziranga.

There are reports of deaths due to landslide in Sonapur area, the Assam State Disaster Management Authority said. So far, since the rainy season started, floods and landslides have killed 70 people, according to the Assam government.

The state government has set up 224 relief camps across 16 districts, where over 21,000 people have currently been put up.

Embankments, roads, bridges, culverts and other infrastructure have been damaged in heavy rain and landslides across the state.

CHASTISEMENT



Security personnel punish a man for not wearing face mask during the total lockdown imposed by the State Government due to surge in COVID-19 cases in Patna, Monday

PTI PHOTO

Travancore Royal family to manage Sree Padmanabhaswamy temple's treasure

THE SUPREME COURT MONDAY UPHELD THE RIGHTS OF THE TRAVANCORE ROYAL FAMILY IN THE ADMINISTRATION OF HISTORIC SREE PADMANABHASWAMY TEMPLE IN KERALA

The Supreme Court Monday upheld the rights of the Travancore royal family in the administration of historic Sree Padmanabhaswamy Temple in Kerala, considered to be one of the richest temples in the country.

It set aside the Kerala High Court's 2011 verdict which had directed the state government to set up a trust to take control of management and assets of the temple. A bench headed by Justice UU Lalit said that as an interim measure, the District Judge of Thiruvananthapuram will head an administrative committee to manage the temple's affairs.

The top court delivered the verdict on a batch of appeals, including the one filed by legal representatives of the Travancore royal family, challenging the January 31, 2011 verdict of the high court.

The sprawling temple, an architectural splendour in granite, was rebuilt in its present form in the 18th century by the Travancore Royal House which had ruled southern

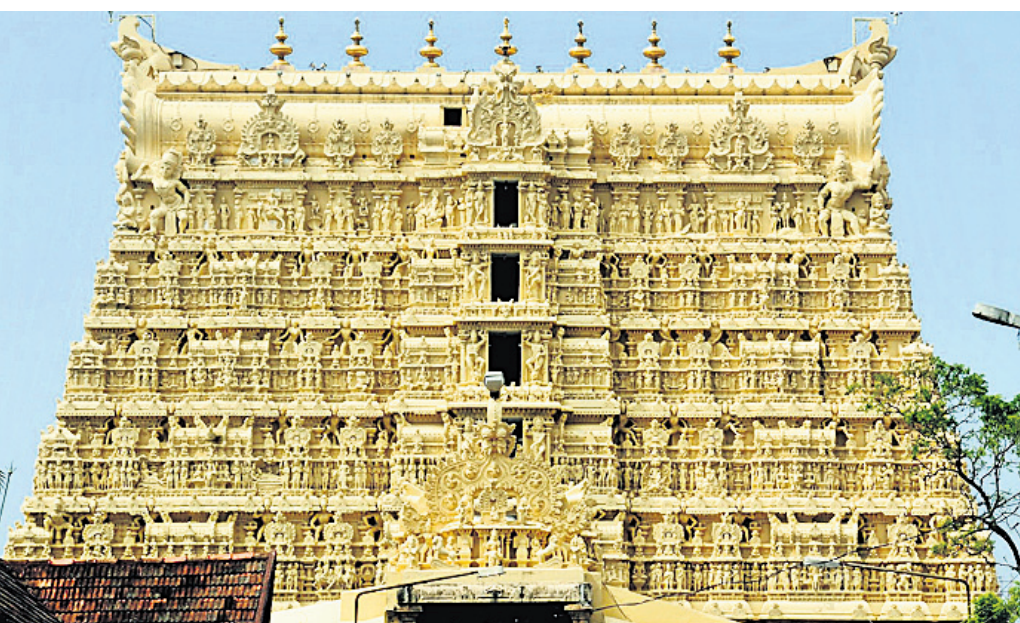
Kerala and some adjoining parts of Tamil Nadu before integration of the princely state with the Indian Union in 1947.

While pronouncing the judgement, the apex court held that the death of earlier ruler of Travancore royal family does not affect the right of 'Shebaitship' (the right to manage the deity and the temple as a priest) of Marthanda Varma, the brother of last ruler of the royal family, and his legal heirs.

The top court said that death of the last ruler of royal family does not entitle the state government to take over the management of committee as law of escheat does not apply in this case and the management of the temple continues to vest in trust of the ruler of Travancore.

While making an interim arrangement to manage the affairs of the temple, the apex court said that it will remain in force till a fresh committee is set up and all the members of the committee must be Hindus.

The controversy over the administration and management of the



historic temple was pending in the apex court for last nine years in the wake of charges of alleged financial irregularities.

Even after India's independence, the temple continued to be governed by a trust controlled by the erstwhile royal family for whom Lord Padmanabha (Vishnu) is their family deity. The top court had April 10 last year reserved its judgement on the appeals against the high court's verdict.

The high court had directed the state government to take steps to set up a body or a trust to take control of the temple, its assets and management and to run the temple in accordance with the traditions.

It had May 2, 2011 stayed the high court's direction regarding taking over of the assets and management of the temple.

The top court had also directed that there shall be a detailed inventory

of the articles, valuables, ornaments in Kallaras (vaults) On July 8, 2011, the apex court had said that "opening of kallara 'B' is to be kept in abeyance till further orders".

In July 2017, the apex court had said it would examine the claims that one of the vaults the temple contained extraordinary treasure with "mystical" energy. It had passed a slew of directions including on the security of the treasures, auditing of accounts and repair of the deity.

The top court was in July 2017 told by senior advocate Gopal Subramaniam, who is assisting the court as amicus curiae in the matter, that 'Kallara' (vault) B of the temple should be opened as it was closed "on the apprehension that there is some mystical energy".

SC VERDICT A GAME CHANGER

The apex court's verdict upholding the Travancore royal family's right to administer the temple was "landmark", and possibly a "game changer" as it would lead to consensus in society as far as religion and politics are concerned.

ANANDA BOSE I FORMER CHAIRMAN OF THE SC COMMITTEE ON SREE PADMANABHASWAMY TEMPLE TREASURES

The state government welcomes the apex court order. We still need to analyse the Supreme Court order. The detailed order is yet to come. The government respects the verdict. We will implement the Supreme Court verdict

KADAKAMPALLY SURENDRAN I KERALA DEVASWOM MINISTER

We regard today's Supreme Court verdict as the blessing of Padmanabha Swamy not just for the family, but for all his devotees. We pray for his continued benevolence on all humanity to keep us all safe and well. Thank you all who stood by us in these difficult years. God bless you

POOYAM TIRUNAL GOWRI PARVATI BAYI I SENIOR MEMBER OF TRAVANCORE ROYAL FAMILY



CASE CHRONOLOGY

Following is the chronology of events in the case pertaining to the management of one of the richest temples, Sree Padmanabhaswamy, in Kerala:

2009: TP Sundarrajan, a former IPS officer, files a PIL before Kerala HC seeking transfer of control of temple from the royal family to state government.

legal heirs later substitute him in SC.

Jan 31, 2011: HC orders state government to take over the temple's control; restrains executive officer and Maharaja of the royal family against opening any of 'Kallaras' (vaults).

April 15, 2014: Amicus Curiae submits report.

May 2: An appeal of Uthradam Thirunal Marthanda Varma, brother of the last ruler, comes up for hearing before the SC, which grants interim stay on the high court directives. It also directs conducting a detailed inventory of the articles/valuables/ornaments in Kallaras.

April 24: The court appoints Administrative Committee headed by the District Judge, Thiruvananthapuram, to manage the temple.

Aug-Sept 2014: Gopal Subramaniam writes to SC opting out as amicus curiae. Later, he withdraws his resignation and continues to assist the SC.

July 8: SC orders that opening of kallara 'A' and 'B' is to be kept in abeyance till further orders.

Nov 2014: Royal family questions Amicus Curiae Gopal Subramaniam's report, files objections before SC.

July 21: SC considers state's response, directs setting up of an Expert Committee to advise on inventory, conservation and security. It says panel would examine and give an opinion whether it is necessary to open Kallara 'B'.

Nov 27: SC accepts some of the recommendations made by the Amicus Curiae.

Sept 22: SC examines interim report of the Expert Committee, issues directions. It says issue relating to opening of Kallara 'B' shall be considered after substantial progress is made in regard to documentation, categorisation, security, preservation, conservation, maintenance and storage in the other Kallaras.

July 4, 2017: SC appoints Justice KSP Radhakrishnan as Chairman of the Selection Committee for the Sreekovil and other allied works.

Aug 23, 2012: The SC appoints senior advocate Gopal Subramaniam as Amicus Curiae.

Jan-April 2019: The cases are posted before the bench comprising of Justices UU Lalit and Indu Malhotra for final hearing.

Dec 6, 2013: Uthradam Thirunal Marthanda Varma passed away; his

April 10: SC reserves verdict on pleas challenging January 31, 2011 judgement of the Kerala HC in the matter.

July 13, 2020: SC upholds right of Travancore royal family in administration of Temple.

of the day quote

The NCP's decision to support the Shiv Sena is not giving any benefit to the NCP. If Pawar sahab (NCP president Sharad Pawar) wants the country's development and that the Centre gives more fund for the development of Maharashtra, then he should take the decision to support Narendra Modi and he should think about joining NDA

RAMDAS ATHAWALE | UNION MINISTER

The battle against coronavirus could be a long-drawn-out process in which caution and awareness would serve as the most effective weapons

TRIVENDRA SINGH RAWAT | UTTARAKHAND CM

To hide its failure, the UP government is playing while the disease is growing

PRIYANKA GANDHI | CONGRESS GENERAL SECRETARY

SHORT TAKES

Maoists blow up road

Ranchi: Maoist guerrillas blasted a tarred road, a forest guest house and set 13 vehicles on fire in Jharkhand in the last two days, police said. According to Police, Maoists blew up a tarred road at Khutipani block of West Singhbhum district early on Monday. They used a cylinder bomb to blow up the road. The guerrillas buried the cylinder bomb inside the road, connected it through a wire and later blasted it. A crater like pit has been formed on the road. Sunday, Maoists blew up a forest range guest house at Barakela and set 13 vehicles on fire in the same district.

Cong leader dies of Covid

Hyderabad: Yet another leader of the opposition Congress party in Telangana died of coronavirus Monday. Telangana Pradesh Congress Committee (TPCC) secretary G. Narendra Yadav succumbed to the virus at a private hospital in Hyderabad, where he was admitted a few days ago. Yadav had recently participated in various programmes to distribute aid among poor hit hard by the lockdown. Yadav's family members were tested for COVID-19. As the leader had participated in the party programmes held at party headquarters Gandhi Bhavan in recent days, efforts were on to trace those who had come in contact with him.

Fine raised

Ahmedabad: In a bid to curb the spread of coronavirus in Ahmedabad, the city authorities Monday raised the penalty for not wearing face mask in a public place to ₹500 from ₹200 announced earlier. A fine of ₹10,000 will also be imposed on paan shop owners if their customers are found spitting in the open near their shops, said Additional Chief Secretary Rajiv Gupta.

Ammunition seized

Rajnandgaon: Security forces have recovered a cache of ammunition, detonators and wireless sets from a Maoist dump in the forests of Chhattisgarh's Rajnandgaon district, police said Monday. The seized items included a diary of Dipak Teltumbade, a Central Committee Member (CCM), a senior officer said. The recovery was made from a hill located between Dhubedalli, Mangikholi and Chhuipani villages under Gatapur police station limits on Sunday on the basis of inputs given by a naxal 'commander'. Rajnandgaon Superintendent of Police Jitendra Shukla said.



He's (Narendra Modi) 'lying' asleep. And India is paying for it
RAHUL GANDHI | FORMER CONGRESS PRESIDENT

SURVEY INFO

Worried over the rising number of cases, 69 per cent feel a stringent lockdown in 49 districts which have India's 80 per cent case load is needed to contain spread of Covid, according to a survey



BENGAL MLA DEATH: BJP SEEKS CBI PROBE

Debendra Nath Ray was found mysteriously hanging Monday morning, a few metres away from his home near a local market in his village. Ray had joined the BJP in 2019. Earlier, he was elected on a CPI-M ticket in 2016

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Kolkata, July 13: Protesting against the unnatural death of West Bengal Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) Legislator from Hemtabad Debendra Nath Ray Monday, the party called for a 12-hour shutdown in the district Tuesday. The party also demanded a Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) inquiry into the matter.

Debendra Nath Ray was found mysteriously hanging Monday morning, a few metres away from his home near a local market in his village. Ray had joined the BJP in 2019. Earlier, he was elected on a CPI-M ticket in 2016.

"We demand a CBI enquiry into the incident. We also demand videography of the entire post-mortem examination of the body so that every aspect is recorded," state BJP President Dilip Ghosh said. Meanwhile, police sources said a suicide note was recovered from the de-



ceased's shirt pocket which mentioned two names. The police, however, refused to disclose the names.

The family members of the deceased BJP lawmaker alleged that Ray was murdered for his political affiliation and demanded a thorough probe into the matter. State BJP leaders said that people are of the clear opinion that he was first killed and then hung in his village. "His

crime was that he joined the BJP in 2019," state BJP tweeted.

BJP MP from Asansol Babul Supriyo said that in 2017 Mamata Banerjee had said that democracy was under threat in this country. "What does she have to say now? When hundreds of opposition workers and supporters have been killed by Trinamool Congress goons?" the singer-turned BJP MP tweeted.

Senior state BJP leader Sayantan Basu said: "If an elected MLA is not safe in Bengal, what will be the safety for common people here? We will demand a Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) probe into the matter. There is no law and order in the state."

North Dinajpur district Trinamool Congress leader Amal Acharya dubbed it as a 'sad incident'. "I came to know about it this morning. I am deeply saddened. He was a good man. I would urge the police administration to investigate the matter and punish the real perpetrators. This is absolutely uncalled for and whoever is guilty should be immediately punished, irrespective of any political colour," said Acharya, a Trinamool MLA.

Condemning the incident, BJP national General Secretary Kailash Vijayvargiya tweeted: "Ray was killed". He also raised the question of Ray's political affiliation behind the killing.

CBSE Class 12 results: Girls outshine boys



Students celebrate after the announcement of CBSE Class 12 results in Patna, Monday

PTI PHOTO

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, July 13: Girls outshone boys by nearly 6 percentage points in CBSE Class 12 examination results declared Monday based on an alternative assessment system adapted after some tests had to be cancelled due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Central Board of Secondary Education has decided against releasing the merit list and replaced the term "fail" with "essential repeat" because of the exceptional circumstances. Accordingly, the term "fail" will not figure in the result documents. The pass percentage of girls was 92.15 and that of boys was 86.19. Transgender candidates recorded a pass percentage of 66.67.

The overall pass percentage increased by 5.38 points this year. While 83.40 per cent students cleared the exam last year, 88.78 per cent students cleared it this year. More than 38,000 students secured marks above 95 per cent and over 1.57 lakh scored above 90 per cent. A total of 11.92 lakh candidates appeared for the examination.

The Trivandrum region recorded the highest pass percentage of 97.67 while the Patna region recorded the lowest at 74.57. Delhi recorded 94.39 pass percentage. Also, the government-run Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalaya group recorded the highest pass percentage of 98.70. Private schools recorded a pass percentage of 88.22. The results of 400 students, however, could not be com-

puted as per the alternative scheme and will be announced later, a senior board official said. Students had a tough time accessing the board website which crashed within minutes of announcement of the results and was not accessible even hours later. The board officials advised students to reach out to their respective schools to learn about their results in the meantime.

The board announced the results on the basis of an alternative assessment scheme after the pending exams were cancelled due to a spike in COVID-19 cases in late March. According to the four-pointer scheme, marks have been awarded on the basis of marks scored by a student in his or her best performing subjects.

According to the assessment scheme, students were divided into four categories. The first had students who sat in tests for all their subjects; their results have been declared on the basis of their performance in all the papers.

Students in the second category had appeared for more than three subjects. They have been awarded marks for subjects they did not appear for based on the average of the marks obtained by them in the three best performing subjects.

The board identified a third category of students who appeared in only three subjects. For them, the average of marks obtained in the two best performing subjects has been awarded in the subjects whose examinations were not conducted.

India, China to hold military-level talks

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, July 13: The Indian and Chinese military are scheduled to hold their fourth round of Lt General-level talks Tuesday with an aim to finalise modalities for the next phase of de-escalation and disengagement of troops in eastern Ladakh, government sources said Monday.

The meeting is set to be held in Chushul on the Indian side of the LAC in eastern Ladakh, they said. The two sides are also expected to finalise a roadmap for restoration of peace and tranquility in the high-altitude region that witnessed an eight-week bitter standoff between the troops of the two countries. China's PLA has already completed pulling back troops from Gogra, Hot Springs and Galwan Valley and significantly thinned down its presence in the ridgeline of Finger Four in the Pangong Tso area.

COVID MISERY



Migrants with their belongings travel in a tempo as they leave the city after authorities announced one week lockdown due to surge in Covid-19 cases in Bangalore, Monday

PTI PHOTO

Girl found dead in school

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, July 13: A 14-year-old girl was found dead at a boarding school in UP's Noida. Her family has alleged that she was raped, killed and the body cremated without their consent by the institute management, police said Monday.

The incident allegedly took place July 3 in the school in Sector 115 and came to light Sunday after an uproar on social media, demanding justice for the girl's family, police said.

No case has been registered as there has been no formal complaint yet at the local Sector 49 police station, even as senior officials assured investigation into the incident if the family approached them with any evidence supporting their claim.

However, the family, based in Mahendragarh district of Haryana, has written to their Chief Minister Manohar Lal Khattar, seeking legal action against senior officials of the Noida school.

The Class 10 student's mother has urged people to support them

THE INCIDENT ALLEGEDLY TOOK PLACE JULY 3 IN THE SCHOOL IN SECTOR 115 AND CAME TO LIGHT SUNDAY AFTER AN UPROAR ON SOCIAL MEDIA, DEMANDING JUSTICE FOR THE GIRL'S FAMILY, POLICE SAID

THE FAMILY, BASED IN MAHENDRAGARH DISTRICT OF HARYANA, HAS WRITTEN TO THEIR CHIEF MINISTER MANOHAR LAL KHATTAR, SEEKING LEGAL ACTION AGAINST SENIOR OFFICIALS OF THE NOIDA SCHOOL

to get "justice", citing weak financial condition of the family. "Police got to know about the case from social media.

The family has alleged that the girl was murdered and raped. The matter was taken up immediately. Police contacted the school management and gathered information from the spot," Additional Deputy Commissioner of Police Ranvijay Singh said.

"It came to light that the girl killed herself on July 3 and left be-

hind a suicide note," Mr Singh claimed.

He added that police have reached out to the girl's family and shared the information with them. If they still have any grievance, they can approach police, he said.

The family has claimed that their three children studied in the school. Two girls on the same campus in Sector 115 of Noida, while a boy in another branch run by the school. The children had returned home due to the COVID-induced lockdown and went back to their schools on June 18.

On July 3, the girl's parents got a call from the school, asking them to immediately reach there because it had "something" to do with their eldest child.

The girl's mother said when she and her husband reached the school, their phones were forcibly taken away by institute officials and they were shown the body of their daughter.

The mother alleged the school forcibly got them to sign some papers regarding the cremation of the body.

LOVE FOR MANKIND

TELANGANA DOC SETS AN EXAMPLE

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Hyderabad, July 13: At a time when one comes across news reports and visuals of inhuman disposal of bodies of COVID-19 patients, a doctor in Telangana has set an example for others by driving a tractor to shift a coronavirus victim's body for burial.

Dr Sriram of government-run hospital in Peddapalli came forward to drive the tractor to shift the body from the hospital on Sunday since the driver of a Peddapalli Municipality's vehicle did not report for duty for some reason.

Dr Sriram offered to drive the tractor since the shifting of the body was getting delayed, much to the relief of the victim's family. Wearing a Personal Protection Equipment kit, the doctor later ferried the body for disposal, earn-



ing praise from one and all.

The victim had died at the district hospital at Peddapalli Sunday. Area people said the doctor was not only performing his duties diligently on the frontline despite all the risks involved but also going out of the way to help the patients and families.

Telangana Finance Minister T. Harish Rao tweeted his praise: "Dr Sriram garu. Heartfelt wishes. You have proved the humanity is still alive. You are an inspiration to all those who are fighting this battle against corona."

SHOT IN THE ARM

Mumbai's doubling rate improves



INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Mumbai, July 13: In a significant landmark, the BrihanMumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) has achieved a doubling-rate of 50 days for Covid-19 cases, a top official said here Monday.

This was possible because of the civic body's 'open testing policy', implying tests without prescriptions, making it the only city in the country to implement it. "After the open testing policy, our testing has gone up from 4,000 to 6,800, daily. But the total positive cases have come down from 1,400 to 1,200 now," BMC Municipal Commissioner I.S. Chahal said.

Of these 1,200 positive cases, the symptomatic cases are less than 200, so the BMC needs only 200 beds daily, the civic chief said. Even the BMC's discharge rate now stands at 70 per cent, and on Sunday, after allotting beds to all patients, there were still 7,000 Covid beds plus 250 ICU beds lying vacant, said Chahal.

For this achievement, Chahal gave the credit to the entire 'Team BMC' where - despite losing a little over 100 officials to the virus - civic officials and other Corona warriors are engaged 24x7 in controlling the pandemic for over four months.

Since the first case was detected in Mumbai on March 11 (after the state's first infectees in Pune on March 9) and the state's first death notched in Mumbai on March 17, the current Maharashtra Covid-19 tally stands at 2,54,427 cases and fatalities at 10,289, while Mumbai has recorded 92,988 cases with a death toll of 5,288.

Chinese toys, rakhis may not be sold this festive season

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, July 13: After the Galwan Valley skirmish followed by the economic boycott of Chinese products by India, toys, rakhis and other decorative goods from China may not be sold in the market this festive season.

Indian businessmen have stopped placing orders for toys and decorative lights from China. Rakhi manufacturer and wholesaler in Delhi's Sadar Bazar Magan Jain said the decorative items used in rakhis were no longer being imported from China, so the Chinese accessories will not attract customers on Raksha Bandhan this year.

He said that any businessman having Chinese goods in stock may use them to make rakhis, but this



time around the customers are interested in indigenous rakhis.

The rakhis from Delhi's Sadar Bazar are sold all over the coun-

try, but with less than a month left for this year's Raksha Bandhan, the market is not decorated with bright rakhis as it used to be in

previous years. Raksha Bandhan will be celebrated on August 3 this year. Jain said the rakhi business is sluggish this time due to the ongoing corona pandemic.

Toy Association of India president Ajay Aggarwal said that the retail toy business in the country is worth around ₹18,000- ₹20,000 crore, of which around 75 per cent was met with imports from China.

Traders say the toy quality control order issued by the Indian government in February this year, which will be effective from September 1, will deter businessmen from importing Chinese goods.

According to a February 25, 2020 order by the Department of Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade, Ministry of Commerce and Industry, the display of the ISI mark on toys will be mandatory. This

rule will be applicable to both imported and domestic products.

Aggarwal said that the order would enable Indian traders to have a level-playing field. Manu Gupta, managing director of Playgrow Toys Group, said the growing toy business in the country will provide employment to artisans, especially women.

Gupta said that stopping the import of toys from China would boost the domestic toy industry in the long run, contributing to the 'Make in India' and 'Self-Reliant India' campaign. In the short-term, it is possible that small retail traders may go out of business because 80 per cent of the toys come from China. Ajay Aggarwal said India imports toys from Thailand, Malaysia and other countries also, but they are imported in bulk from China.

of the day quote

I would say that it's a relationship that if it is to endure, has to be one that is honest, and I think we are providing honesty and frankness when it comes to important issues like Hong Kong



ROBERT BUCKLAND | UK JUSTICE MINISTER

The British people voted to take back control of our borders and introduce a new points-based immigration system



PRITI PATEL | UK HOME SECRETARY

Chinese actions, not only on the border with India, but in the South China Sea, the Taiwan Strait and in Hong Kong, have been provocative and destabilising



RICH VERMA | EX US AMBASSADOR TO INDIA

SHORT TAKES

141 dead or missing in China floods

Beijing: Over 140 people have died or are missing in the catastrophic floods that have been wreaking havoc in China since last month, affecting more than 37 million and damaging 28,000 houses, media reports said Monday. China's State Flood Control and Drought Relief Headquarters upgraded the emergency response for flood control from level III to level II Sunday, as incessant downpours continued across vast stretches of the country.

Polish President wins second term

Warsaw: Polish President Andrzej Duda, a conservative who ran a campaign with homophobic and anti-Semitic overtones, narrowly won a second five-year term in a bitterly fought weekend election, defeating the liberal Warsaw mayor, according to a near-complete count of votes.

PIO couple on trial in Dubai

Dubai: An Indian man and his wife have gone on trial at a court in Dubai after being accused of issuing death threats, it was reported. The 36-year-old Indian defendant threatened to kill his employer and his family members if the employer didn't withdraw an absconding case against him, Gulf News reported Sunday.

EU, Turkey clash over Hagia Sophia

Brussels: Turkey and the European Union clashed Monday over Ankara's decision to change the status of Hagia Sophia from a museum to a mosque and its continued energy exploration in disputed Mediterranean waters. After their first face-to-face meeting in months, the 27 EU foreign ministers said that they "condemned the Turkish decision to convert such an emblematic monument as the Hagia Sophia." EU foreign affairs chief Josep Borrell said.

14 killed in Taliban attack

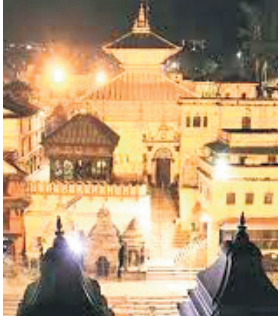
Kabul: At least 14 people, including three assailants, were killed and 63 others wounded when Taliban militants attacked a provincial branch of the country's national intelligence agency in Aybak, capital of Afghanistan's northern Samangan province, Monday, an official said.



We are firmly committed to the US-India corridor that builds a better future
NISHA DESAI BISWAL | USIBC PRESIDENT

NEPAL'S MIN CALLS FOR REOPENING OF PASHUPATINATH TEMPLE

Nepal's Culture minister has asked the staff of the trust that operates the Pashupatinath Hindu Temple to start making preparations to reopen the iconic religious and heritage site where special worship was suspended following a spike in COVID-19 cases



Pak to resume Afghan exports through Wagah

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Islamabad, Jul 13: Pakistan said Monday that it will restore Afghanistan's exports through the Wagah border with India from Wednesday at the special request of Kabul and to facilitate Afghan Transit Trade.

Pakistan closed the Wagah border with India in mid-march March in the wake of the coronavirus pandemic. "At the special request of the Government of Afghanistan and with a view to facilitating Afghanistan's transit trade, Pakistan has decided to resume Afghan exports through Wagah border crossing from 15 July 2020, after implementing COVID-19 related protocols," the Foreign Office said in a statement.

The FO stated that with this step, Pakistan has fulfilled its commit-



ments under Pakistan-Afghanistan Transit Trade Agreement (APTTA). It also said that Pakistan remains "fully committed" to improving bilateral relations with Afghanistan in all areas including trade, and to facilitate Afghanistan's transit trade under the agreement.

Mohammad Sadiq, the Pakistan Prime Minister's Special

Representative for Afghanistan, said that his country has already restored bilateral trade and Afghan transit trade at all border crossings. Pakistan and Afghanistan share 18 crossing points. Pakistan closed its border with Iran and Afghanistan after COVID-19 cases increased in the country early this year.

Pakistan last week opened the

Angor Adda point in South Waziristan and the Kharlachi crossing in Kurram districts bordering Afghanistan to boost trade between the two countries after months-long closure due to the coronavirus pandemic. While the Angor Adda was operationalised on Friday, two days ahead of its scheduled opening, the Kharlachi was reopened on Saturday.

Last month, Pakistan reopened Torkham crossing in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province, Chaman point in Balochistan and Ghulam Khan in North Waziristan tribal district to promote bilateral business and trade activities. Pakistan has so far recorded 5,266 coronavirus fatalities and more than 251,000 cases. According to officials, Pakistan is the largest importer of Afghani products, while Afghanistan is the 4th largest destination for Pakistani exports.

WHITE BATH



People are drenched by sea spray thrown up by huge swells as a cold front moves in over Cape Town, South Africa

57 injured in fire aboard ship at Naval Base

ASSOCIATED PRESS

San Diego (US), July 13: Firefighters were still battling a blaze Monday on a Navy combat ship that injured at least 57 people and sent smoke billowing over San Diego.

The fire began Sunday morning aboard the USS Bonhomme Richard, apparently in a vehicle storage area as the ship was in a berth under-

going maintenance, according to Rear Adm. Philip Sobeck.

Initially, 17 sailors and four civilians were reported injured but by early Monday the number had grown to 57 and five remained hospitalized for observation, the Navy said.

Firefighters attacked the flames inside the ship while firefighting vessels with water cannons directed streams of seawater into the

ship and helicopters made water drops. "Sailors across this waterfront are absolutely doing a magnificent job," Sobeck said at a press conference Sunday.

About 160 sailors and officers were on board when an explosion and flames sent up a huge plume of dark smoke from the 840-foot (255-metre) amphibious assault vessel, which has been docked at Naval Base San Diego.

Hug a tree to beat the Covid blues

REUTERS

Apollonia National Park, Israel, July 13: Can't embrace friends and family these days? Hug a tree instead.

That is the message Israel's Nature and Parks Authority is spreading on social media to try to help people overcome the sense of detachment that coronavirus social-distancing rules can bring.

"In this unpleasant corona period we recommend to people around the world to go out to nature, take a deep breath, hug a tree, express your love and get love," Orit Steinfeld, the authority's marketing director, said in Apollonia National Park.

At the park, about 15 km (nine miles) north of Tel Aviv, tree-huggers such as Barbara Grant heeded the advice during a tour arranged by the Authority.

"The most basic human need is

MOST BASIC HUMAN NEED



for connection, for touching, for hugging," she said, lamenting that, as a health precaution, she can't hug her grandchildren. Also out in the park, Moshe Hazan said he wanted to widen his embrace beyond his partner, Pat Arthur, who accompanied him to the forest.

"We are not hugging too many people these days - not our children, not our grandchildren - and hugging a tree is quite a nice thing to do," Hazan said. After flattening

a coronavirus infection curve in May, Israel has experienced a spike in new cases over the past several weeks.

Protective masks are mandatory outdoors and Israelis are advised to avoid close physical contact with elderly relatives, with visits at nursing homes held only in the open air. Israel's tree-hugging campaign follows a similar endeavour launched in April by Iceland's forestry service.

S'pore deports 10 Indians

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Singapore, July 13: Singapore has deported 10 Indian nationals, including students, and barred them from re-entering the country for violating the "circuit breaker" rules enforced to curb the spread of the coronavirus, officials announced Monday, warning that the government would not hesitate to take "strong action" against those blatantly disregarding the laws.

The "circuit breaker" period in Singapore began April 7 as part of which all non-essential work places were closed and residents were barred from leaving their houses except to buy food and groceries or to exercise alone in the neighbourhood. The period ended June 2. Singapore is currently in the Phase-2 of its reopening - starting from June 19 - with the gradual resumption of operations by more businesses. The 10 Indians, holding student or work passes, were caught having a social gath-

ering at a rented apartment May 5, the Singapore Police Force (SPF) and the Immigration and Checkpoints Authority (ICA) said in a joint press release. Last month, they pleaded guilty to their offences under the COVID-19 (Temporary Measures) Act and penalties ranging between SGD 2,000 (USD 1,439) and SGD 4,500 (USD 3,237) were imposed on them. According to the authorities, on May 5, Navdeep Singh, 20, Sajandeep Singh, 21, and Avinash Kaur, 27, invited six men and one woman for a social gathering at their rented apartment along Kim Keat Road. Navdeep, Sajandeep and Avinash were charged with permitting other individuals to enter their residential unit without a valid reason.

The seven visitors - Waseem Akram, 33, Mohammed Imran Pasha, 26, Arpit Kumar, 20, Vijay Kumar, 20, Karmjit Singh, 30, Sharma Lukesh, 21, and Bhullar Jasteena, 23, - were charged with violating the prohibition on social gatherings.

Covid crisis may get 'worse and worse and worse', warns WHO

AGENCIES

Geneva, July 13: The raging coronavirus pandemic has the potential to get far worse if all nations do not adhere to basic healthcare precautions, the World Health Organization (WHO) warned on Monday.

"Let me be blunt, too many countries are headed in the wrong direction, the virus remains public enemy number one," Director General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus told a virtual briefing from WHO headquarters in Geneva. "If basics are not followed, the only way this pandemic is going to go, it is going to get worse and

INFECTIONS ROSE ABOVE 13 MILLION ACROSS THE WORLD MONDAY

PARTS OF THE WORLD, ESPECIALLY THE UNITED STATES WITH MORE THAN 3.3 MILLION CONFIRMED CASES, ARE STILL SEEING HUGE INCREASES IN A FIRST WAVE OF COVID-19 INFECTIONS, WHILE OTHERS "FLATTEN THE CURVE" AND EASE LOCKDOWNS



worse and worse. But it does not have to be this way."

Infections rose above 13 million across the world Monday, according to a Reuters tally, climbing by one million in just five days in a pan-

demic that has killed more than half a million people. Parts of the world, especially the United States, with more than 3.3 million confirmed cases, are still seeing huge increases in a first wave of COVID-

19 infections, while others "flatten the curve" and ease lockdowns.

Some places, such as the Australian city of Melbourne and Leicester in England, are implementing a second round of shutdowns. Chinese-ruled Hong Kong, albeit with a low 1,522 cases, is to tighten social distancing measures again amid growing worries about a third wave.

The United States reported a daily global record of 69,070 new infections on July 10. In Brazil, 1.86 million people have tested positive, including President Jair Bolsonaro, and more than 72,000 people have died. Meanwhile, the United Nations says the ranks of the world's hun-

gry grew by 10 million last year and warns that the coronavirus pandemic could push as many as 130 million more people into chronic hunger this year.

The grim assessment was contained in the latest edition of the State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World, an annual report which was released Monday by the five UN agencies that produced it. Preliminary projections based on available global economic outlooks suggest the pandemic "may add an additional 83 (million) to 132 million people to the ranks of the undernourished in 2020," the report said.

Also compounding the situation

is what the report's authors described as "unprecedented Desert Locust outbreaks" in Eastern Africa.

STAY AT HOME

Hungary has imposed new restrictions on cross-border travel as of next Wednesday in order to prevent the spread of the coronavirus after a surge in new cases in several countries, Prime Minister Viktor Orban's chief of staff said on Sunday.

The leader of the Spanish region of Catalonia called on residents of an area that has seen a surge in coronavirus cases to stay at home despite a ruling by a judge who threw out a mandatory lockdown order for the district of 160,000 people.

of the day quote

People of India have given a thumbs up to the Prime Minister's call to use Made in India goods and platforms, and we see that happening across all avenues including mobile applications

P VENKATESWARA RAO | CEO & CO-FOUNDER, DUBSHOOT

Financial activities in H1 reflect the realities on the ground. Even though solar stocks have performed well, and corporate funding in Q2 looked slightly better, global economies and solar activities are still far from being back to where they should be

RAJ PRABHU | CEO OF MERCOM CAPITAL GROUP

We are expecting to achieve a GMV of about \$200mn in the current financial year and are expecting tier-II and -III cities to be our growth drivers in coming times. We already have 22 operational fulfillment centres and expect to double this count in the next few quarters

VIVEK TIWARI | FOUNDER AND CEO, MEDIKABAZAAR

SHORT TAKES

Nabard to provide bank refinance

Mumbai: The National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (Nabard) Monday announced ₹5,000 crore of refinance scheme for banks and financial institutions for providing finance to the beneficiaries of its 2,150 watershed development projects. The development finance institution also earmarked another ₹5,000 crore for turning Primary Agricultural Credit Societies, building blocks of the country's cooperative banking structure, into multi service centres.

No plan to layoff employees: Wipro

Bangalore: Wipro Chairman Rishad Premji Monday said the company has not laid off any employee due to the COVID-19 impact and has no plans to do so for now. Premji said this in response to a question by a shareholder at the 74th annual general meeting (AGM) of the company, held virtually. "We are trying to drive cost reduction through various other means, through operationally and otherwise, but we have laid off no people and have no plans to lay off anybody at the moment," he said.

Gem, jewellery exports dip 34%

New Delhi: The country's gem and jewellery exports contracted by 34.72% to \$1.64 billion (around ₹12,333 crore) due to dip in global demand on account of the COVID-19 pandemic, according to the Gems and Jewellery Export Promotion Council. The exports stood at \$2.52 billion (around ₹18,951 crore) in June last year. The labour-intensive sector contributes about 15% of the country's overall exports.

TechM brings back 210 staff

Hyderabad: Tech Mahindra has facilitated return of over 210 of its employees and their dependents stranded in the United States due to COVID-19 induced lockdown, the IT giant said Monday. A special chartered flight carrying them took off Monday from Dallas/Fort Worth International Airport and will land here Tuesday, it said in a release.



The current crisis will steer the banking industry to remote working which is likely to shape the cost structure in the days ahead

SS MALLIKARJUNA RAO | MD AND CEO, PNB

RIL'S M-CAP ZOOMS PAST ₹12L CR MARK

Reliance Industries Limited's (RIL) market valuation zoomed past the ₹12 lakh crore mark Monday, driven by a sharp rise in its share price. The market-heavyweight stock rose by 2.97% to close at ₹1,934.30 on the BSE. During the day, it jumped 3.64% to a record high of ₹1,947



Annual retail inflation rises to 6.09% in June

JUNE'S INFLATION REMAINED ABOVE THE MID-POINT OF THE RESERVE BANK OF INDIA'S 2-6% TARGET RANGE, THE MINISTRY OF STATISTICS DATA SHOWED

REUTERS

New Delhi, July 13: India's retail inflation picked up in June, pushed by price increases for some food and fuel items, but economists said the central bank could still ease rates because of concerns about economic slowdown caused by lockdown.

Annual retail inflation rose to 6.09% in June, compared to 5.84% in March, and 5.30% forecast in a Reuters poll of economists.

June's inflation remained above the mid-point of the Reserve Bank of India's 2-6% target range, the Ministry of Statistics data showed Monday.

The government had suspended the release of CPI inflation headline numbers for April and May due to insufficient data during the lockdown period.

Some economists expressed fear of rising price pressures amid lockdown, but said the central bank could still ease interest rates further after cutting repo rate by 115 basis points since March, in addition to



providing liquidity support to address damage to the economy caused by the pandemic.

Rahul Gupta, Head of Research-Currency, Emkay Global Financial Services, Mumbai, said the central bank's rate cut decision would "depend on growth more than inflation figure because growth was still a worry."

"Going ahead, as coronavirus led restrictions slightly recover and as supply crunch reduces, we may see CPI falling below 6%," he said.

Annual food inflation eased to 7.87% in June from a downwardly revised 9.20% in May, the data showed, and is expected to slow down in coming months amid good rainfall in many

parts of the country.

The International Monetary Fund has predicted Asia's third largest economy could contract 4.5% in the current financial year beginning in April, from an earlier forecast of 1.9% growth.

Cases of COVID-19 have surpassed 878,000 with the death toll at 23,174, even as parts of the country went into fresh lockdown last week.

The medium-term outlook for the Indian economy remains uncertain with supply chains and demand yet to be restored fully while the trajectory of the coronavirus spread and the length of its impact remain unknown, Reserve Bank of India (RBI) Governor Shaktikanta Das said Saturday.

THE ANNUAL RETAIL INFLATION ROSE TO 6.09% IN JUNE, COMPARED TO 5.84% IN MARCH

THE GOVERNMENT HAD SUSPENDED THE RELEASE OF CPI INFLATION HEADLINE NUMBERS FOR APRIL AND MAY DURING THE LOCKDOWN PERIOD

THE IMF HAS PREDICTED THAT ASIA'S THIRD LARGEST ECONOMY COULD CONTRACT 4.5% IN THE CURRENT FINANCIAL YEAR BEGINNING IN APRIL

BIZ BUZZ

Obero Realty leases office space to Morgan Stanley

Mumbai: City-based realtor Oberoi Realty Monday said it has leased 1.1 million sq ft of its office space in Goregaon, Maharashtra, to Morgan Stanley for 9.5 years for around ₹1,700 crore. This is being done to consolidate Morgan Stanley's Mumbai Global In-house Centre (GIC) operations to a single campus in the city, the company said in a regulatory filing. Property consultant JLL was the transaction advisor for the deal.

Under the deal, the US investment bank will pay a rent starting from ₹180 per sq ft per month on carpet with a 15 per cent escalation every three years for the 1.1 million sq ft space. This takes the total rent over 9.5 years to be close to ₹1,700 crore. The new campus will be located at Oberoi Realty's Commerz III building in Goregaon and will be ready in 2023, it said.



NTPC wins CII-ITC sustainability awards

Bhubaneswar: NTPC Ltd, India's largest power generation company, won the prestigious CII-ITC Sustainability Award 2019, under outstanding accomplishment in corporate excellence category. Also, the company received Commendation for Significant Achievement in CSR category.

NTPC always strives for sustainable development of its communities around the power stations. Its flagship CSR program GEM (Girl Empowerment Mission), a 4-week residential program has been institutionalised in the vicinity of its power stations for benefit of school going girls from underprivileged background to support in their overall development. NTPC has also initiated Contractors' Labour Information Management System (CLIMS) through which payment to contract labourers is paid on the last day of the month at project sites.



DPIIT to approach govt for 74% FDI in defence: Report

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, July 13: The DPIIT would soon approach the Union Cabinet to seek approval for relaxing norms to allow up to 74% foreign direct investment (FDI) in defence manufacturing under the automatic route, with a view to attract overseas players in the sector, sources said.

They said the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) has discussed the matter with the defence ministry.

The decision to permit up to 74% FDI in the defence manufacturing through the automatic route was announced by Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman in May while announcing the fourth tranche of the ₹20 lakh crore stimulus package for the coronavirus-hit economy.

As per the current FDI policy, 100% overseas investments are permitted in the defence industry - 49% under the automatic route, while beyond that the government approval is required.

In July 2018, the government had relaxed foreign direct investment norms in the defence sector by allowing up to 49 per cent FDI under the automatic route. The move was aimed at boosting domestic industry as India imports about 70 per cent of its military hardware.

COVID IMPACT

'Asset quality of banks to weaken'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, July 13: Moody's Investors Service Monday said the challenging economic and credit conditions stemming from COVID-19 will weigh on the asset quality and profitability of banks in India and ASEAN countries.

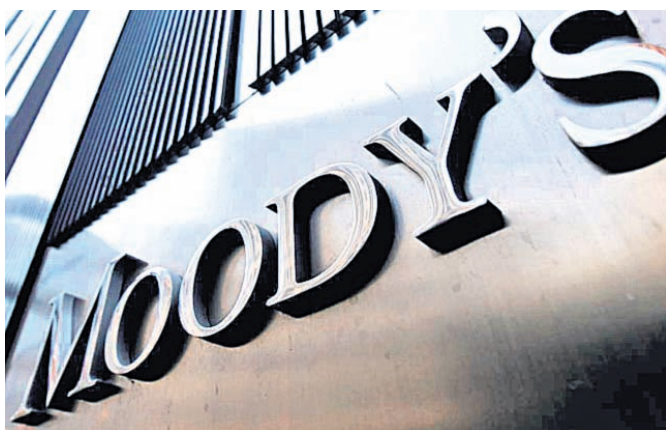
Moody's expects that asset quality and profitability will deteriorate from "good" levels in 2019 across most banking systems, and while government support measures will offset some of the pressure, they will not fully eliminate the negative impact.

"In ASEAN and India, bank downgrades in 2020 have been

Moody's expects asset quality and profitability will deteriorate from "good" levels in 2019 across most banking systems

COVID-19 will weigh on ASEAN and Indian banks' asset quality and profitability," Moody's said.

In a report titled 'Banks - ASEAN and India: Asset quality, profitability will weaken as economic challenges grow', Moody's said the largest banks will continue to ben-



driven by Indian banks, following the downgrade of the sovereign in June," Moody's Vice President and Senior Credit Officer Eugene Tarzimanov said.

Despite the challenging outlook, the majority of banks are adequately capitalized, it added.

"The challenging economic and credit conditions stemming from

efit from deposit inflows as they are seen as safe havens in times of stress. Moody's expects the GDP of most ASEAN economies and India to contract in 2020 and gradually recover in 2021.

The relaxation in lockdowns and resumption of economic activity will be key factors supporting the recovery, it added.

Aditya Aluminium observes World Population Day



POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 13: With the objective of increasing people's awareness about various issues related to population, Aditya Birla Group's Aditya Aluminium Company observed the World Population Day at its RR colony Pondoloi, of Lapanga in Sambalpur district. This was observed by adhering to the Covid Guidelines of the government.

To mark the occasion, one awareness session on Reproductive Health and Hygiene was organised for adolescent girls in which 30 girls in the age group of 10 to 19 participated. Debasmita Senapati from Aditya Aluminium, Yadumani Garnik, the Coordinator of National Rural Health Mission (NHRM) from Laida CHC (Community Health Centre) and Sanjay Patel Coordinator for malaria dengue

diarrhoea of NRHM were present. Rengali block Vice Chairman Satyanarayan Agarwal also graced the occasion by his presence.

The event started by lighting of lamp and a COVID-19 awareness video. Garnik gave elaborate information on the pandemic and its prevention. In his deliberation, Patel spoke on the measures to prevent dengue & diarrhoea.

Sensitising the girls on reproductive health, Debasmita shared a video and explained the importance of family planning and advised them to maintain a healthy diet. Sweta Upadhyay (Lead CSR) also addressed the girls in her interactive deliberation, focused on girl's right on pregnancy, awareness of contraceptives and role in family planning. The local Asha Karmi and Anganwadi workers also actively participated in the discussion.

Vedanta begins 2nd phase of 'Meal for All' programme



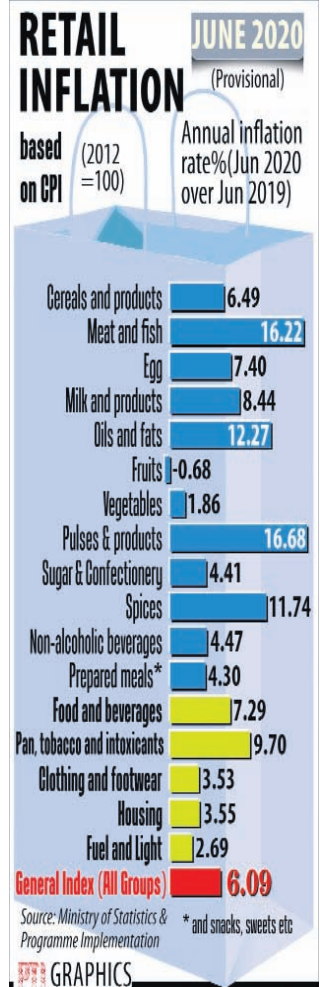
POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 13: Vedanta Limited, a subsidiary of Vedanta Resources Limited, a global oil & gas and metals company, launched phase-2 of its 'Meal for All' program to provide meals to daily wage earners across the country amid the COVID-19 pandemic.

The program successfully provided more than 11.08 lakh meals to daily wage earners in the first phase. The project also distributed 49,626 dry ration packets to local communities and engaged more than 15,000 women in mask-making activities. The program not only provided aid to the suffering people, but also extended a helping hand to stray animals in the rural and urban areas.

Chairman of Vedanta Resources Anil Agarwal said, "The spread of COVID-19 pandemic has led to the closure of many economic and employable institutions. This has left a huge number of daily wage earners stranded without any scope of income and daily essentials.

Our initiative is an effort to provide them with the basic necessities and ease their pain as much as possible. We aim to reach maximum number of people with this initiative and provide a ray of hope to the daily wage earners and give them strength."



nCoV leads to \$1tn global corporate debt in 2020: Survey

REUTERS

London, July 13: Companies around the world will take on as much as \$1 trillion of new debt in 2020, as they try to shore up their finances against the coronavirus, a new study of 900 top firms has estimated.

The unprecedented increase will see total global corporate debt jump by 12% to around \$9.3 trillion, adding to years of accumulation that has left the world's most indebted firms owing as much as many medium-sized countries.

Last year also saw a sharp 8% rise, driven by mergers and acquisitions, and by firms borrowing to fund share buybacks and dividends. But this year's jump will be for an entirely different reason - preservation

as the virus saps profits.

"COVID has changed everything," said Seth Meyer, a portfolio manager at Janus Henderson, the firm that compiled the analysis for a new corporate debt index. "Now it is about conserving capital and building a fortified balance sheet".

Companies tapped bond markets for \$384 billion between January and May, and Meyer estimates that recent weeks have set a new record for debt issuance from riskier "high yield" firms with lower credit ratings.

Lending markets had slammed shut for all but the most trusted firms in March, but have been opened up wide again by emergency corporate debt buying programmes from central banks like the US Federal Reserve, the



European Central Bank and Bank of Japan.

Companies included in the new debt index already owe almost 40% more than they did in 2014, and growth in debt has comfortably outstripped growth in profits.

Pre-tax profits for the same group

UNPRECEDENTED INCREASE

The total global corporate debt is expected to jump by 12% to around \$9.3 trillion

Lending markets had slammed shut for all but the most trusted firms in March

Pre-tax profits for top 900 companies have risen a collective 9.1% to \$2.3 trillion

of 900 companies have risen a collective 9.1% to \$2.3 trillion. Gearing, a measure of debt relative to shareholder finance, hit a record 59% in 2019, while the proportion of profit devoted to servicing interest payments also rose to a new high.

US companies owe almost half of

the world's corporate debt at \$3.9 trillion and have seen the fastest increase in the last five years of any major economy with the exception of Switzerland where there has been a wave of major M&A deals.

Germany comes in at number two at \$762 billion. It also has three

of the world's most indebted firms including the most indebted, Volkswagen, which with \$192 billion of debt is not far behind countries like South Africa or Hungary, though it is inflated by its car finance arm.

In contrast, a quarter of the companies in the new index have no debt at all, and some have vast cash reserves. The biggest of these stands at \$104 billion and belongs to Google's owner Alphabet.

Meyer said credit markets still had some way to go to get back to pre-COVID conditions and the ongoing threat of the virus, especially the recent surge in US cases, remained investors' central concern.

"It is all a recipe for a more challenged outlook than we thought two months ago," he said.

MAN CITY 1-0 UEFA

CAS upholds Manchester City's appeal as the Citizens overturn two-year UEFA ban from Champions League, but fined 10mn euro for not cooperating with independent investigators



ASSOCIATED PRESS

Geneva, July 13: Manchester City successfully overturned their two-year ban from the Champions League Monday in a surprising legal victory.

The Court of Arbitration for Sport (CAS) upheld City's appeal against the UEFA ban, but imposed a 10 million euro (USD 11.3 million) fine on the club for failing to cooperate with independent investigators.

Some UEFA allegations accusing City of breaking finance rules dating back several years were 'time-barred', the court said. CAS plans to publish a detailed written verdict within days.

The decision by the three judges clears the team coached by Pep Guardiola to play in the group stage of the Champions League next season. The case does not affect City's place in this season's competition, which resumes next month.

City's win guarantees tens of millions of dollars in UEFA prize money next season. It also protects against players leaving to seek Champions League action with another club.

Guardiola had pledged to stay in Manchester 'no matter what happens' in the courts. "The club welcomes the implications of today's ruling as a validation of the club's position and the body of evidence that it was able to present," City said in a statement.

UEFA punished Man City in February for "serious breaches" of finance monitoring rules and failing to cooperate with investigators. The allegations included that City, owned by Abu Dhabi's royal family, misled UEFA over several years to meet financial integrity rules — known as Financial Fair Play — required to enter European club competitions.

City denied wrongdoing, and said it had "irrefutable evidence" the claims were not true. "The CAS award emphasized that most of the alleged breaches reported by the Adjudicatory Chamber of the (UEFA club finance panel) were either not established or

time-barred," the court said.

City's win will raise doubts about the future of the UEFAs Financial Fair Play program, created in 2009. Man City joins Paris Saint-Germain and AC Milan in defeating UEFA at CAS in the past two years.

The urgent ruling came one month after a three-day hearing held by video link between Switzerland and England. A full verdict detailing the evidence, expert witness testimony and the judges' reasons is unlikely to be published for at least several weeks.

UEFA-appointed investigators opened a case after leaked club emails and documents from City officials were published by German magazine Der Spiegel in November 2018. They were likely obtained by a hacker from Portugal.

The published evidence appeared to show City deceived UEFA by overstating sponsorship deals from 2012-16 and hid the source of revenue linked to state-backed companies in Abu Dhabi.

City never disputed the documents were authentic, but argued the evidence was stolen and reported out of context.

UEFA had previously signed off on City's submitted accounts since 2014. That year, UEFA fined City 20 million euros (USD 22.6 million) of its Champions League prize money in a first wave of assessments of European clubs' finances.

UEFA could choose to challenge the CAS ruling at Switzerland's Supreme Court. Federal appeals in CAS cases rarely succeed and only consider narrow grounds of legal procedure.

UEFA decided to create the FFP system 11 years ago, following the global financial crisis, to monitor finances of 200-plus clubs which qualify each year for its competitions.

Clubs must approach break-even on commercial income and spending on transfers and salaries. Sponsor deals linked to wealthy owners must be set at fair market rates.



Pep Guardiola, Manchester City manager

TIMELINE

MAY, 2014: City were fined 49 million pound by UEFA —32mn of which was suspended — for breaching its Financial Fair Play rules and were restricted to a 21-man Champions League squad for the 2014-15 season

NOVEMBER, 2018: German magazine 'Der Spiegel', citing documents and emails provided by the whistle-blowing platform Football Leaks, published a series of articles which accused City of trying to get around European football's FFP rules. City had repeatedly described Der Spiegel's reports as the product of a 'clear and organised' attempt to tarnish their reputation

MARCH 7, 2019: UEFA announced it had launched a formal investigation into alleged breaches of FFP rules by City following a series of fresh allegations in the media. City said in a statement: "Manchester City welcomes the opening of a formal UEFA investigation as an opportunity to bring to an end the speculation resulting from the illegal hacking and out of context publication of City emails. The accusation of financial irregularities are entirely false"

MARCH 8, 2019: The Premier League confirmed it was investigating City over alleged FFP breaches.

MAY 16, 2019: UEFA's club financial control body (CFCB) chief investigator referred City's case to UEFA's adjudicatory chamber following the conclusion of his investigation.

JUNE 6, 2019: City asked the Court of Arbitration for Sport to throw out the FFP case brought against them by UEFA.

NOV 15, 2019: City failed in their bid to get UEFA investigation kicked out, although CAS arbitrators stated their claim was "not without merit"

FEB 14, 2020: City were banned from UEFA club competitions for the next two seasons and fined 24.9mn pound after being found to have "committed serious breaches of the UEFA's club licensing and FFP regulations". City announced they would appeal to the Court of Arbitration for Sport.

JUNE 8-10, 2020: City's appeal was heard by CAS.

JULY 13, 2020: City's European ban was lifted by CAS. In addition, the club's 30 million euro fine was reduced to 10mn euro



VS



ENGLAND LOSE 1ST TEST AS TEAM CRITICISED FOR DROPPING BROAD

Stokes defends decision



Two captains Jason Holder and Ben Stokes exchange a fist bump after the match, Sunday

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Southampton, July 13: Stand-in captain Ben Stokes won't regret the decision to drop Stuart Broad from the side despite losing the first Test against the West Indies but lauded the senior pacer's burning desire to play for England.

England lost the series-opener by four wickets with Jermaine Blackwood leading the West Indies to a gripping four-wicket win on the final day. Broad minced no words in railing the decision, saying he felt 'angry, frustrated and gutted'. Stokes said Broad's reaction was natural.

"Stuart's interview was absolutely brilliant. For a guy who has played over 100 Tests and taken the amount of wickets he has to have that emotion and desire still burning inside is amazing," Stokes told BBC Sport. Stokes defended the selection for the first Test, which marked the resumption of international cricket since March.

"In terms of the selection, if I was to regret that it doesn't send a very good message to the guys who played. We went with the decision that pace would do better for us in the long run on this game. You make decisions and you've got to stand by them.

I'm not the type of person to look back and regret them."

England were bowled out for 204 in the first innings after deciding to bat in damp conditions and squandered strong position on the fourth day.

"We all know where we made the errors. You have to be good enough to put first-innings runs on the board, no matter what the conditions. We put another 60, 70 or 80 runs on what they had to chase and it's a completely different game," said Stokes, who led in place of Joe Root, who was on a paternity leave.

The West Indies won the first international cricket match since the sport's return after the coronavirus outbreak, beating England late in Day 5 of a thrilling first Test at an empty Rose Bowl Sunday.

Jermaine Blackwood was the top scorer with 95 as West Indies overcame an early wobble to win by four wickets in the final session. John Campbell hit the winning run. West Indies finished on 200/6 in its second innings to take an early lead in the three-Test series. Archer ended with 3/45. The second Test starts Thursday in Manchester.

BRIEF SCORES: England 204 & 313 lost to West Indies 318 & 200/6 (Jermaine Blackwood 95, Roston Chase 37; Jofra Archer 3/45) by four wickets.

HAMILTON CLAIMS STYRIAN GP



REUTERS

Spielberg (Austria), July 13: Six-time World Champion Lewis Hamilton dominated the Styrian Grand Prix in a Mercedes one-two Sunday to celebrate his 85th Formula One (F1) win and move a step closer

to Michael Schumacher's record of 91 victories.

His Finnish teammate Valtteri Bottas, winner of last weekend's season-opener that was also held without spectators at Austria's Red Bull Ring, finished 13.719 seconds behind with his championship lead

Tottenham gun down Gunners

REUTERS

London, July 13: Toby Alderweireld's 81st-minute header sealed a 2-1 Premier League victory for Tottenham Hotspur against Arsenal in the first north London derby in their new stadium Sunday.

The match appeared to be heading for a draw after Son Heung-min cancelled out Alexandre Lacazette's opener. However, Alderweireld's header claimed all three points for Spurs to move Jose Mourinho's side above Arsenal into eighth place in the battle for local bragging rights.

With three games left Tottenham have 52 points to Arsenal's 50, but are seven points behind fourth-placed Leicester City.

Victory maintained Mourinho's impressive record in home games against Arsenal — he has now won six and drawn four — and was a rare highlight for Tottenham in a mediocre season.

While both teams occupied similar league positions before kickoff, Mikel Arteta's have looked the more impressive of the two since the Premier League resumed.

After a cagey opening the derby sparked into life with two goals in quick succession — both from the kind of defensive lapses that have been all too common for Spurs and Arsenal. Tottenham's Serge Aurier was guilty of a poor touch and then lost out in a 50-50 tackle with Granit Xhaka with the ball breaking to Lacazette who looked up and smashed a right-foot shot into the top corner.

The Gunners were not able to enjoy their lead though as they gifted Tottenham their equaliser. Sead Kolasinac's sloppy pass wrong-footed team mate David Luiz and Son was alive to the chance, going through to dink a cool finish over goalkeeper Emiliano Martinez.

Tottenham leftback Ben Davies almost outdid Lacazette with a thumping drive from 30 metres that struck the bar while at the other end Nicolas Pepe curled wide and Pierre-Emerick Aubameyang fired a free kick just past the post.

Arsenal were brighter in the early stages of the second half and Aubameyang fired against the woodwork on the hour after being played in by Lacazette.

Tottenham were re-energised after the second-half drinks break, though, with Harry Kane bursting into the area and setting up Son who delayed his shot too long. The winner was as simple as it gets — Son swung in a corner and Alderweireld rose highest to glance home.

Kane, who was mainly a subdued figure, then almost extended Tottenham's lead late on but was denied by Martinez.

FOXES OUTFOXED

Bournemouth: Dominic Solanke scored twice as Bournemouth's bid for Premier League survival was boosted by a 4-1 victory over Champions League-chasing Leicester, who were reduced to 10 men. They were the striker's first goals since joining from Liverpool in January 2019 after failing to score in his 38 previous league appearances. Jamie Vardy put the Foxes ahead in the 23rd minute and kept it intact until the break. Junior Stanislas equalized from the penalty spot in the 66th minute before Solanke put the hosts in front. Leicester defender Caglar Soyuncu was shown a straight red card in the aftermath for kicking out at Wilson as he attempted to retrieve the ball. An own goal by Jonny Evans helped the home team have a two-goal advantage, before Solanke wrapped up the game three minutes from time.



Toby Alderweireld rejoices with a teammate after scoring Spurs' winner against Arsenal as the other scorer Son Heung-min (No.7) rushes in to join the celebration, Sunday