



POWERFUL TOOL

Actor Elnaz Norouzi says social media has emerged as a great platform for people to help one another during Covid-19



3RD WAVE MAY HIT KIDS

Maharashtra preparing for a third wave of the pandemic which is expected to hit children



MISHAP IN MEXICO CITY KILLS 23

Mexico City metro crash sends a subway car plunging toward a busy boulevard, killing at least 23 people



How do I know he is a pollster? Well, only pollsters are covering their faces and maintaining social distance these days!

Courts censure Centre for Covid mishandling

■ YOU CAN BURY YOUR HEAD LIKE OSTRICH, BUT WE WON'T: DELHI HC
■ HOW MANY MORE PEOPLE DO YOU WANT TO DIE?: KARNATAKA HC

New Delhi, May 4: The Delhi High Court Tuesday told the Centre that it intends to see the compliance of its order in connection with the oxygen supply to the national capital. The Centre's failure to implement the order also irked the court and brought the government close to a contempt case.

A division bench of Justices Vipin Sanghi and Rekha Palli asked the government to explain why a contempt case should not be initiated against it. It directed the Centre to show-cause why no action should be taken against it for failure to comply with the Supreme Court and High Court orders to supply required oxygen to the Delhi government.

"Enough is enough. We will not take a 'no' regarding oxygen supply. There is no way that you will not supply 700 metric tonne oxygen immediately. We will not hear anything except compliance," the judges said.

Making strong remarks, the bench asked the Centre: "Are you living in an ivory tower? Where are you living?" The bench further added that because the Delhi government didn't raise the demand, people should be allowed to die. "Is this what it's come to? You want to quibble while people are losing lives?"

The Karnataka High Court Tuesday came down heavily on the state government in the wake of the acute short-



age of medical oxygen required in the treatment of COVID-19 patients. While holding a hearing on the COVID-19 crisis in the state, the Karnataka HC made strong remarks on the death of 24 people in Chamarajnagar due to lack of oxygen for over a horrific two hours in the early hours of Monday and called for a judicial inquiry into the incident by a retired Judge of the HC.

The High Court also noted that the hospital had requested 300 cylinders of oxygen which was not supplied by the state government. Chief Justice Abhay Oka asked, "How many more people do you want to die? Keep aside the process, forget about the process tell us now when will you increase the quota (of oxygen)?" "Is it correct that hospital au-

COVID DOWNS IPL

League suspended after multiple cases

New Delhi, May 4: A barrage of COVID-19 cases forced the IPL's indefinite suspension Tuesday, a move that was welcomed by the franchisees even as the league's jittery foreign recruits waited for BCCI's plan of action to ensure their return amid some strict travel restrictions.

The decision to postpone the league was announced after SunRisers Hyderabad batsman Wriddhiman Saha and Delhi Capitals spinner Amit Mishra joined the infected players' list, which already had Kolkata Knight Riders' Varun Chakravarty and Sandeep Warrier.

Chennai Super Kings' bowling coach L Balaji was among the prominent non-playing staff to test positive.

"The Indian Premier League Governing Council and BCCI in an emergency meeting has unanimously decided to postpone IPL 2021 season, with immediate effect," a statement from the IPL read after the development was confirmed by its chairman Brijesh Patel to PTI.

"The BCCI does not want to compromise on the safety of the players, support staff and the other participants involved in organising the IPL. This decision was taken keeping the safety, health and well-being of all the stakeholders in mind," it added. The IPL said BCCI will do all it can to ensure that players in the event get back to their homes safely.

IPL features cricketers from England (11), Australia (14), South Africa (11) and New Zealand (10) among other countries.

Start Strong. Grow Stronger.

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Petrol up 18 paise, diesel 23 paise/ltr

New Delhi/Bhubaneswar, May 4: Petrol price Tuesday was increased by 15 paise per litre and diesel by 18 paise as state-owned fuel retailers started passing on the increase in international oil prices to consumers after an 18-day hiatus.

Petrol now costs ₹90.55 per litre in Delhi, up from ₹90.40, according to a price notification of state-owned fuel retailers. A litre of diesel comes for ₹80.91, as against ₹80.73 previously.

Rates have been increased across the country and vary from state to state depending on the local incidence of taxation (VAT). Oil companies, who have in recent months resorted to unexplained freeze in rate revision, had hit a pause button after cutting prices marginally on April 15. This coincided with electioneering hitting peak to elect new governments in five states including West Bengal.

US demand recovery and a weak dollar.

Prices have been on a continuous uptrend since April 27. Dubai crude oil price has risen by USD 2.91 per barrel. Crude oil prices in the international market may remain firm in the near future, exerting upward pressure. Indian Oil Corporation, Bharat Petroleum Corporation and Hindustan Petroleum Corporation are supposed to revise rates daily.

SHORT TAKES

JEE-Mains put off

New Delhi: Engineering entrance exam JEE-Mains scheduled from May 24 to 28 has been postponed in view of the COVID-19 situation, according to the Ministry of Education's National Testing Agency. Earlier, the April edition of the exam was postponed following an exponential rise in Covid cases. "The JEE-Mains scheduled from May 24 to 28 is being postponed in view of the current pandemic situation," the NTA said in an order.

Jagmohan dies at 93

New Delhi: Former Jammu and Kashmir Governor Jagmohan passed away after a brief spell of illness. He was 93. Jagmohan had started his career as a bureaucrat and was being by many as a tough and efficient administrator. He had also served as the lieutenant governor of Delhi and Union minister. Several dignitaries, including Prime Minister Narendra Modi and President Ram Nath Kovind, paid tributes to him. Jagmohan was appointed J&K Governor in 1984 and completed his five-year tenure.

2 cops suspended for custodial death

Gopalpur, May 4: A day after a youth allegedly committed suicide on Golanthara police station in Ganjam district, the Berhampur SP Tuesday suspended an assistant sub-inspector of police and a constable on charge of negligence and dereliction of duty leading to the custodial death.

SP Pinak Mishra also transferred the Golanthara IIC Babuli Nayak to the district police headquarters till the completion of the probe. The suspended cops were identified as ASI Prakash Chandra Acharya and constable DP Jena. The two policemen were suspended following a probe report submitted by ASP Prabhakar Routray.

Gopalpur IIC Bibeknanda Mahanta has been posted as the new in-charge at the Golanthara police station. The development comes after Southern Range DIGP Satyabrata Bhoi, Berhampur SP

HC nixes school merger plan

Cuttack, May 4: The Orissa High Court Tuesday scrapped a notification issued by the state government for the merger of schools having less than 20 students with the nearby schools.

Justice Bidyut Ranjan Sarangi pronounced the verdict while hearing a batch of petitions challenging the state government's decision on the merger of schools.

The High Court also directed the state government to take steps for the restoration of the schools which have already been merged with the nearby schools. The court also asked the state government to arrange proper infrastructure for the smooth functioning of such schools.

The state government had laid down a set of guidelines for the merger of schools May 14, 2018. Taking into account the guidelines, the School and Mass Education (S&ME) Department had issued a notification March 11, 2020, stating that schools having less than 20 students would be merged with the nearby schools for consolidation of the education infrastructure.

The S&ME department had earlier identified around 14,000 schools having enrollment of 20 or less for their merger with nearby schools in the state. It had initiated a process for closure of around 7,700 elementary and secondary schools in the first phase of which around, 900 schools have already been shut.

The petitioners, however, informed the court that the school merger plan is violating the right to education of the students. They also told the court that the state government had not taken the views of the people's representatives and guardians before devising the school merger plan.

Serum to invest 200mn GBP in UK

London, May 4: The Serum Institute of India will invest 240 million pounds in the UK to expand its vaccine business and set up a new sales office creating a large number of jobs, Downing Street announced as part of plans for a 1-billion pound India-UK Enhanced Trade Partnership creating around 6,500 jobs in Britain.

The announcement came ahead of a virtual summit between Prime Ministers Boris Johnson and Narendra Modi Tuesday. The Pune-based vaccine maker headed by CEO Adar Poonawalla is among a list of nearly 20 Indian companies across sectors such as healthcare, biotech and software services to announce significant investment plans in the UK this week. It was also revealed that the Serum Institute of India (SII) has started phase one trials in the UK of a nasal vaccine against coronavirus.

"The sales office is expected to generate new business worth over USD 1 billion, 200 million pounds of which will be invested into the UK," Downing Street said in reference to the company's plans for the UK market on Monday.

"Serum's investment will support clinical trials, research & development and possibly manufacturing of vaccines. This will help the UK and the world to defeat the coronavirus pandemic and other deadly diseases. Serum has already started phase one trials in the UK of a one-dose nasal vaccine for coronavirus, in partnership with Codagenix INC," it said.

Poonawalla, who is currently in London and had recently hinted at plans to expand vaccine production outside India, described his meetings in the UK as "excellent".

MARKET WATCH	
INDEX	VARIATION
SENSEX	48253.51 ↓ 465.01
NIFTY	14496.50 ↓ 137.70
DOLLAR	74.62 ↓ ₹0.09
EURO	89.20 ↓ ₹0.44
GOLD	₹47,391 ↑ ₹72
SILVER	₹70,162 ↑ ₹291

WEATHER		
	BHUB	CTK
TEMP		
MAX	31.8°C	32.0°C
MIN	25.6°C	24.0°C
Humidity	67%	68%
Rainfall	5.2mm	Nil
Forecast	Rain or thunder-shower	

Bill, Melinda Gates divorcing after 27 years of marriage

THE TWO HAVE FACED RELATIONSHIP STRUGGLES OVER PAST SEVERAL YEARS AND THERE WERE TIMES WHEN THEIR TIES NEARED COLLAPSE

New York, May 4: Billionaire philanthropists Bill and Melinda French Gates have announced they are divorcing after 27 years of marriage, saying they no longer believe "we can grow together as a couple", but will continue to work together at their foundation that has an endowment of about USD 50 billion.

In a joint statement posted on Twitter by both, they said: "After a great deal of thought and a lot of work on our relationship, we have made the decision to end our marriage."

They said that over the last 27 years they built a foundation that works all over the world to enable all people to lead healthy and productive lives.



"We continue to share a belief in that mission and will continue our work together at the foundation, but we no longer believe we can grow together as a couple in this next phase of our lives," the statement said. The duo, two of the richest persons in the world, asked for "space and privacy" for their family "as we begin to navigate this

new life." The divorce announcement puts focus on the couple's sprawling Seattle-based organisation, The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, which had reported total net assets of USD 43.3 billion at the end of 2019.

Bill, 65, co-founder of Microsoft, had met Melinda, 56 when she had joined the technology giant as a product manager. After dating for a few years, they got married in January 1994 in Hawaii. The couple has three children aged 18 to 25.

The foundation said in a statement that the two would remain co-chairs and trustees and no changes were expected at the organisation.

"They will continue to work together to shape and approve foundation strategies, advocate for the foundation's issues and set the or-

ganisation's overall direction," the statement said.

Late last year, the Foundation had announced new commitments totaling USD 70 million to global efforts to develop and distribute safe, affordable, and timely vaccines for low- and middle-income countries amid the COVID-19 pandemic.

Bill, formerly the world's richest person, was named by Forbes as the fourth richest person in the world with a net worth of 124 billion dollars.

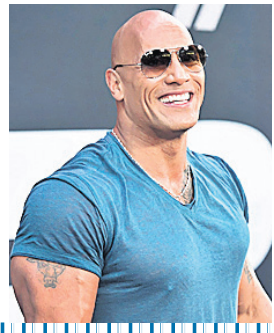
A report in The New York Times quoted Rob Reich, a professor of political science at Stanford University as saying that, "The Gates Foundation is the most important and influential philanthropic entity in the world today. The divorce may have huge repercussions for the foundation and for its work across the globe."

The report said the Gateses have faced relationship struggles over the past several years and there were times when their relationship neared collapse but they worked to keep it together.

"When he was having trouble making the decision about getting married, he was incredibly clear that it was not about me, it was about 'Can I get the balance right between work and family life?'" Melinda Gates had said in an interview to The Sunday Times of London in 2019.

"And, believe me, I can remember some days that were so incredibly hard in our marriage where you thought, 'Can I do this?'" she had said.

leisure

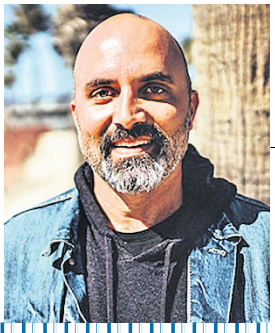


'THE ROCK' WAS OFTEN MISTAKEN TO BE A GIRL

Dwayne Johnson aka The Rock recalls how, as a child, other children would ask him if he was a girl. "I would say between the ages of seven and 11, people thought that I was a little girl because I had really soft features," recalled Dwayne while talking to *Sunday Today*.

'CINEMA IS MEANT TO BE A SHARED EXPERIENCE'

Indian origin filmmaker Ben Rekhi feels film festivals hold a lot of significance at any stage in one's career. Rekhi, whose documentary *The Reunited States* has been shown at multiple film festivals, adds that cinema is meant to be a shared experience, which is suffering now owing to the closure of movie theatres.



FORTUNE FORECAST

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ARIES
Right now you need to summon all your mental abilities as you will have to take quick, on-the-spot decisions. However, Ganesh cautions you to take proper advice as your decisions may have a long-term impact, more so if they involve monetary matters.

TAURUS
You will not lose your cool today despite the overwhelming odds, feels Ganesh. Rationale and reason will be the rhyme of your attitude as you diagnose the problems and uproot them successfully. Success beckons and you are ready to reach out and grab it by hook or by crook.

GEMINI
Emotions, not acidity, will be the cause of your uneasiness. Something important is going on in your life and you are nervous. It can be related to a matter concerning law, ethics, prejudice, education, or social customs. You are, however, likely to win admiration from all quarters for your fine taste in arts, says Ganesh.

CANCER
Today, you will be at the centre of all your plans. Your responsibilities at home are likely to be unnecessary digressions for you, with your help-yourself-only attitude. However, you may feel that you are not getting enough returns of your hard work.

LEO
If you are wondering whether you'll get the carrot or the stick today, then Ganesh has some good news for you: the day promises to bring only rewards for you. This will be especially true for your workplace, where your innate talents get recognised today. Expect positive support from your colleagues, and oodles of inspiring tips from your superiors. Just be careful not to get carried away by your success.

VIRGO
A sudden bend in the journey of life is important to understand it better, says Ganesh. Excellence will drone on throughout the day today. Top on the list are money matters and your loved ones - not necessarily in that order! Much of your time may be spent in appeasing the Gods.

LIBRA
Get a bigger wallet, since it is very likely that today shall prove to be a money-making day for you. It might be through some sort of a partnership deal that this may happen, predicts Ganesh. Destiny lends you a helping hand and guides you in your goals. But it is your sentiments that may darken your thoughts today.

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

SAGITTARIUS
Upholding all that is right and just will be the highpoint today. You will be in the right spirits to fight injustice and discrimination. The day promises to be as splendid as your will. Ganesh advises you to stand up and conquer all today.

CAPRICORN
Paradise is where patience leads you, success is the other terminus, says Ganesh. Keeping your cool will benefit you in more ways than you would have imagined, so think twice before you unleash your vengeance on your foes. You are also likely to have a heart-to-heart conversation with your beloved and make him/her feel wanted. Colleagues will appreciate the amiable and amusing side of you.

AQUARIUS
Today, you will understand the value of your job. You decide to do away with everything that has been hampering your work till now. You realise you need to set some long-term goals in your career. Grab the opportunity while the intention lasts, says Ganesh.

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

Aditya wants to vaccinate 30K cine workers

MUMBAI: Filmmaker Aditya Chopra has come forward to vaccinate daily workers of the Hindi film industry, and has requested Maharashtra Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray to allow his production house Yash Raj Films (YRF) to purchase 60,000 Covid-19 vaccines.

The filmmaker, in a statement, says: "We have sent a request to the Honourable Chief Minister of Maharashtra to allocate and allow us to purchase Covid-19 vaccines for 30,000 registered workers, who are members of the film industry's federation in Mumbai at the earliest."

The letter also mentioned that the Yash Chopra Foundation would bear all other costs associated with vaccinating the workers including raising awareness, transportation of workers and setting up of the required infrastructure for the immunisation programme. "We hope our kind request is approved which will enable our members to be safe and also get them back to work at the earliest," the statement concluded.



IAN S



Twitter suspends Kangana's a/c

MUMBAI: Kangana Ranaut's handle @KanganaTeam has been suspended on Twitter, after the actress posted a series of tweets perceived to be controversial.

In reaction, the actress said she had other platforms to raise her voice including her films.

Kangana had shared a video, where she commented on the reported violence that took place in West Bengal after the assembly election results were declared.

The actress had captioned the video:

"Distressed beyond words, death of democracy, important message for our government #BengalBurning #BengalViolence."

Reacting to the suspension, Kangana said: "Twitter has only proved my point they are Americans and by birth a white person feels entitled to enslave a brown person, they want to tell you what to think, speak or do."

She added: "Fortunately, I have many platforms I can use to raise my voice including my own art in the form of cinema but my heart goes out to the people of this nation who have been tortured, enslaved and censored for thousands of years and still there is no end to the suffering."

IANS

'Social media has kept life moving'

MUMBAI: Actress Elnaaz Norouzi says social media has emerged as a great platform for people to help each other during these tough times.

"As the world hit the pause button owing to Coronavirus, social media has kept life moving forward. In such trying times, the power of new media made it possible for everyone to come together and fight the deadly virus. From crowd-funding to making people aware of Covid to sharing the resource details, all these platforms have been contributing to a very large extent to bring lives back on track again," she said.

The actress adds that she, too, is trying her best to reach out and help as many people as possible.

"At such a critical time, every post, every request, and every query is crucial. To pitch in my contribution in helping the nation get back on its feet, I am trying to amplify Covid related information through my social media handle. Only together we can fight this virus," she says.

Elnaaz, who shot to fame with a role in the web series *Sacred Games*, was recently seen in the OTT-released film *Hello Charlie*.

IANS

Int'l award in memory of Manoj Das

Manoj Das International Literary Award carrying a cash prize of ₹10 lakh will be conferred on Odia writers every year for their exceptional works in English

POST NEWS NETWORK

BHUBANESWAR: Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik Tuesday announced that an international award in literature carrying a cash prize of ₹10 lakh will be given every year in the memory of literary genius late Manoj Das.

Titled Manoj Das International Literary Award, the prestigious honour will be conferred on Odia litterateurs for their exceptional works in English.

Besides, the government, honouring the wishes of Manoj's family members, will take over his ancestral house at Shankhari, the birthplace of the bilingual writer in Balasore district, and convert it into a museum-cum-library. It will be named as Manoj-Manmath Memorial. The library will have the books in History and Literature authored by Manoj and his illustrious brother late Manmath Nath Das. This apart, the state govern-



The state government will give away Manoj Kishore Sahitya Samman to attract high school students towards creative writing in Odia and English

ment, in a bid to attract high school students towards creative writing in Odia and English, will give away Manoj Kishore Sahitya Samman

every year. The winners will get a cash award of ₹1 lakh each.

The Chief Minister also announced that special issues of Utkal Prasanga and Odisha Review will be published in the memory of Manoj Das while Odisha Sahitya Akademi will also release a special edition of its annual magazine Konark.

Earlier, Information and Public Relation department director Krupasindhu Mishra released a special magazine on Manoj Das written by Bijay Nayak.

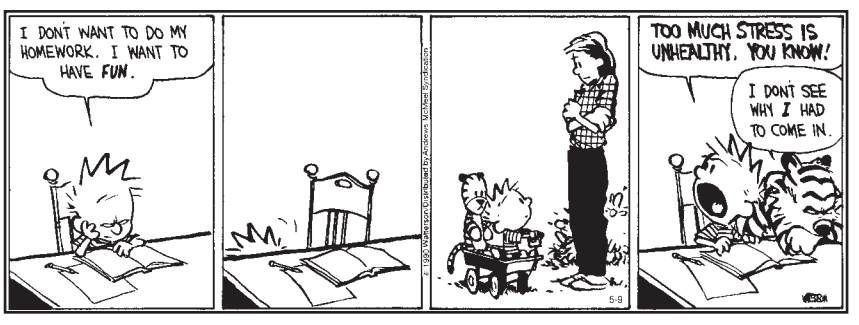
The eminent bilingual author passed away April 27 at the age of 87 following a prolonged illness in Pondicherry.



PEANUTS



CALVIN AND HOBBS

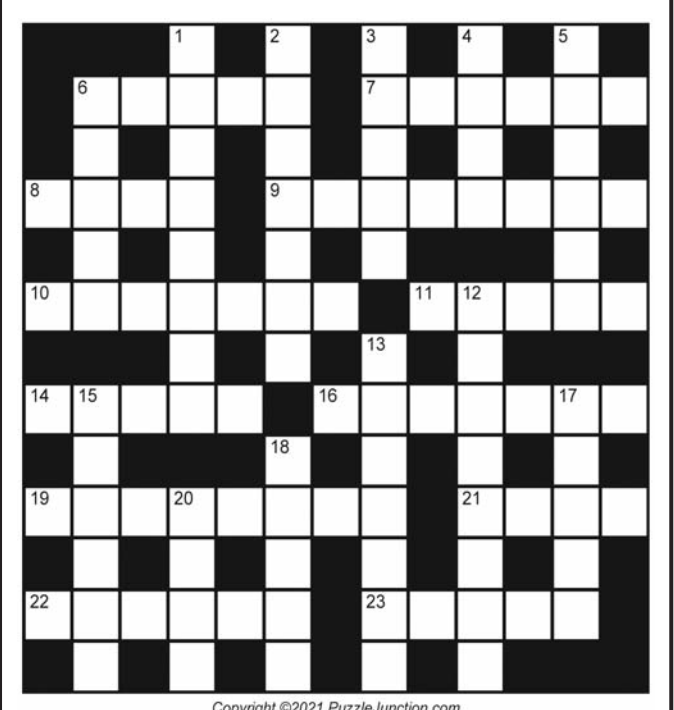


BREVITY



FUN post

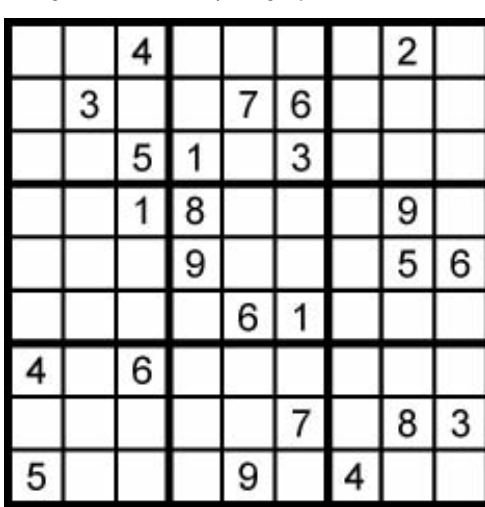
CROSSWORD



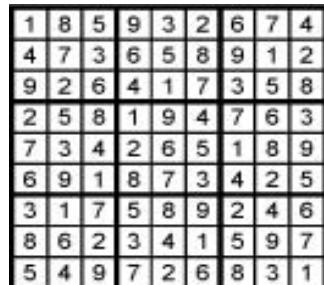
- Across**
- 6 Bogus
 - 7 Large dark-red oval organ
 - 8 Ode or haiku
 - 9 Really angry (2,2,4)
 - 10 Unswerving
 - 11 Unfolds
 - 14 Greet the day
 - 16 Mandarin dialect
 - 19 Photographer's setting
 - 21 Shade of black
 - 22 Injury
 - 23 Flip over
 - Down**
 - 1 Loud harsh outcrys
 - 2 Having ceased to exist
 - 3 Savory jelly
 - 4 Dog bane
 - 5 Roaches and rats, e.g.
 - 6 Rime
 - 12 Muller over
 - 13 Words to a sad sack (5,2)
 - 15 Explosive sound
 - 17 Reprimand
 - 18 Cougars
 - 20 Beat badly

SUDOKU

To solve the Sudoku puzzle, fill in the boxes in such a manner that every row, column and 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9, without repeating any.



SOLUTIONS



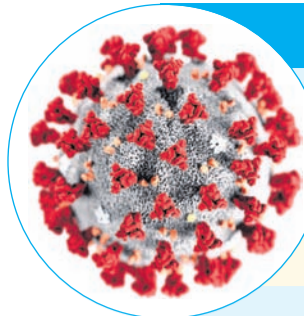
CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW

downtown



TAKEN OFF GUARD

Commuters stuck in a traffic snarl at Rajmahal Square in Bhubaneswar during a brief spell of rain, Tuesday



COVID-19 TRACKER

	INFECTED	RECOVERED	DEAD
World	15,46,30,246	13,20,84,871	32,32,764
India	2,02,82,833	1,66,13,292	2,22,408
Odisha	4,79,752	4,10,227	2,088

POLITICKLE by MANJUL



Doorstep FIR service in twin city

Bhubaneswar, May 4: A day before commencement of the 14-day lockdown, the twin city Commissionerate Police Tuesday introduced 'Doorstep FIR' service for the residents. This was revealed by Deputy Commissioner of Police (DCP), Bhubaneswar, US Dash. He said the doorstep FIR will help people to avoid going outside during the lockdown for redressal of their grievances. People can lodge complaints by making calls to 100 following which the personnel from nearby police station will reach their homes to record complaint. They can also call the inspector in-charge of their local police station, he said. The people will be given copy of the FIR electronically either by WhatsApp or e-mail, Dash said, adding that the doorstep FIR service will benefit the people who can make complaints regarding dacoity, burglary, or any other crimes. Replying to a question, the DCP said there will be no question of any lackadaisical approach in the investigation into the complaints received from the people over phone. He said that a total of 20 platoons (1 platoon comprise 30 personnel) of police and 200 police officers will be deployed in the city. The DCP said persons from the exempted category will be allowed to visit different places in the city during the lockdown by producing identity cards provided to them by their organisations. If anyone has some urgent work to finish, but unable to produce a document validating the concerned person's purpose of being out of home during the lockdown, the person can call up 100, the DCP said, adding that the same person will provide personal details and reasons behind going somewhere in the city.

People can lodge complaints by making calls to 100 following which the personnel from nearby police station will reach their homes

Annual report hints at raw deal to prisoners

Bhubaneswar, May 4: The performance of state Prisons Directorate with regard to rehabilitation of prisoners and provision of amenities for the inmates is poor, if the data for 2020 released by the directorate itself is any indication. As per the data released by Prisons Directorate Tuesday, the number of convicts receiving financial assistance has reduced to 86 in 2020 from 162 in 2019. The financial assistance provided by the department has been a great help to the prisoners who managed to live a decent life after their release from jails. Similarly, the state witnessed a decrease in the number of prisoners who received legal aid through the respective District Legal Service Authorities (DLSAs) in 2020 as compared to 2019. The para legal staffers of DLSAs provided legal aid to 1,175 prisoners lodged in jails across the state in 2019. The number reduced to just 626 in 2020. The directorate often boasts of providing ample opportunities to the inmates to continue their educational pursuits. It is considered one of most important parts of correctional activities in jails. However, statistics revealed that 738 prisoners received educational facilities like elementary education, adult education, higher education and computer courses inside the prisons during 2020 while 1,106 inmates received education facilities in 2019. Meanwhile, the jails in the state witnessed a surge in number of inmates in 2020. As per the data, 18,881 prisoners were lodged in 87 jails of the state by the end of 2020 as compared to 17,542 in the beginning of the year. The prisons were housing 3,245 convicts including 107 females by the end of 2020. As many as 61,571 persons were lodged in the prisons of the state in 2020 while 60,232 were released during the period. The data says 15,619 under-trial prisoners (UTPs) were lodged in various jails of the state till December 31, 2020. According to the annual statistics, eight prisoners had committed suicide inside the jails during 2020 as against four in 2019.

IN A NUTSHELL

THE NUMBER OF CONVICTS RECEIVING FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE HAS REDUCED FROM 162 IN 2019 TO 86 IN 2020

EIGHT PRISONERS HAD COMMITTED SUICIDE INSIDE THE JAILS DURING 2020 AS AGAINST FOUR IN 2019

738 PRISONERS RECEIVED EDUCATIONAL FACILITIES LIKE ELEMENTARY EDUCATION, ADULT EDUCATION, HIGHER EDUCATION AND COMPUTER COURSES INSIDE THE PRISONS DURING 2020 WHILE 1,106 INMATES RECEIVED EDUCATION FACILITIES IN 2019

3 shops gutted in Capital city

Bhubaneswar: Three shops were destroyed in a major fire broke out at KIIT Road under Infocity police limits here Tuesday. No casualty was reported as the shops were closed when the incident took place. According to sources, a fire broke out at the Archies Gallery in the area around 7:30pm. The fire soon engulfed the other shops, a restaurant and a cafeteria on the first floor. Though locals called the firemen immediately, the latter allegedly reached the spot after one hour, after the intervention of a local MLA. Three fire tenders took almost an hour to douse the blaze. The exact reason behind the incident could not be ascertained till the last report came in.

Sixth batch of logs reaches Puri



Puri, May 4: Preparations for this year's Rath Yatra are in full swing even as the sixth batch of logs for the construction of chariots reached the Holy City Tuesday, said sources in the Shree Jagannath Temple Administration (SJTA). "Two trucks carrying around 50 Dhaura and Asana logs from Boudh forest division reached the Holy City today. Till date, we have received a total of 237 logs in six phases for the construction of char-

riots," said an official of the SJTA. According to the official, the carpenter's require 865 logs for the construction of chariots for this year's Rath Yatra. "There were 69 surplus logs from last year's Rath Yatra. The temple administration has taken steps to arrange the remaining 796 logs from Nayagarh and Boudh forest divisions," said the official. Notably, the 12th century shrine has been shut for devotees till May 15 in the wake of the recent surge in Covid-19 cases.

14-day quarantine for people coming from AP, Telangana

Bhubaneswar, May 4: With reporting of a virulent variant of the novel coronavirus in Andhra Pradesh and Telangana, the state government Tuesday made 14-day quarantine mandatory for people coming from these two states to Odisha. In an order, Chief Secretary SC Mahapatra said, "Anyone coming to Odisha from Andhra Pradesh and Telangana by personal/hired vehicles and trains or entering the state on any other mode shall undergo mandatory institutional quarantine for 14 days in cluster temporary medical centres (TMCs) to be managed by BDOs or executive officers of urban bodies." All passengers coming from the two states through airway (Bhubaneswar or Jharsuguda airport) and railway to Odisha, will have to undergo institutional quarantine or paid quarantine for 14 days. Collectors of Ganjam, Gajapati, Rayagada, Koraput, Malkangiri and Nabarangpur have been directed to put border check posts (BCPs) on all inter-state roads (NH, state roads and local roads) along Andhra Pradesh and Odisha border with immediate effect. The district administrations were further directed to ensure border tracking for all the major and minor entry points for incoming people from state of Andhra Pradesh and Telangana or adjoining their districts to the state. They have been asked to make adequate police arrangement for such tracking. The district administrations will have to ensure appropriate facilities and logistic support to cluster TMCs. However, people travelling from Andhra Pradesh and Telangana to other states through Odisha will be allowed without disembarking from the vehicle en-route inside Odisha, the Chief Secretary said in his order. "Sarpanches/ward members of PRIs & volunteers shall be mobilised to create awareness in their areas and further report to BDO/police station/Local Authorities about any person coming from Andhra Pradesh and Telangana not quarantined in institutional facilities," the order said.



Any one, who has been administered two doses of vaccines and produces a certificate to this effect or tests negative in RTPCR test within 48 hours before entering Odisha, will have to stay on home quarantine for seven days. If there is no suitable facility for home quarantine, he/she may go for institutional/paid quarantine for a week. Persons coming on emergency works related to Covid-19 management by government and private hospitals as well as those coming in connection with work permitted by the state government have been exempted from this order. Transport Commissioner has been instructed to provide necessary assistance and guidance to the Collectors in operationalising the border check posts. Violation of these measures will invite actions in accordance with the provisions of the Disaster Management Act, 2005, the Epidemic Diseases Act, 1897 and Regulations

State loses 15 more lives to Covid-19

State logs 8,216 new cases taking the caseload to 4,79,752

Bhubaneswar, May 4: Odisha's Covid-19 caseload mounted to 4,79,752 Tuesday as 8,216 more people tested positive for the virus, while 15 fresh fatalities pushed the coronavirus death toll to 2,088, a Health and Family Welfare (H&FW) department official said. Of the new cases, 4,684 were reported from quarantine centres and 3,532 detected during contact tracing. Khurda district, which comprises the state capital Bhubaneswar, reported the highest number of fresh cases at 1,271, followed by Sundargarh (636), Cuttack (447) and Puri (402). The remaining cases were recorded in several other districts. Khurda district registered the maximum number of fresh Covid fatalities at five, while three patients succumbed to the disease in Rayagada. Two each succumbed to the virus in Kalahandi and Sundargarh and one each in Cuttack, Puri and Subarnapur



Khurda district registered the maximum number of fresh Covid fatalities at five, while three patients succumbed to the disease in Rayagada. Two each succumbed to the virus in Kalahandi and Sundargarh and one each in Cuttack, Puri and Subarnapur

novel coronavirus, including 43,682 Monday, and the positivity rate stands at 4.67 per cent. Odisha Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik had Sunday declared working journalists of the state as frontline Covid warriors. Following the government's decision, a special session has been organised here to inoculate the journalists covered under Gopabandhu Health Insurance Scheme, the official added.

Van Dhan Yojana boon for 6K Odisha tribals: Centre



LIVELIHOOD BOOST

The ministry said that the implementation of the scheme in Odisha is gaining quick ground and more than 6,300 tribal people have reaped the benefits of the scheme through 660 Van Dhan Vikas Kendras

Training, procurement of machinery required for processing, branding and packaging are in progress for the past few months in these clusters spread over Mayurbhanj, Keonjhar, Rayagada, Sundargarh and Koraput districts

In Keonjhar district, tribal beneficiaries of Anchalika Khandadhar VDVKC will process raw mango, mustard and turmeric into Aam papad, mango pickle, turmeric powder and mustard oil

According to the ministry, the tribal beneficiaries in three clusters, Luguburu VDVKC, Maa Dharithri VDVKC and Bhimkund VDVKC in Mayurbhanj district will work on processing sal leaves, sal seeds, kusum seeds and wild honey to produce plates, cups made of sal leaves, Kusum oil and processed honey. "In Keonjhar district, tribal beneficiaries of Anchalika Khandadhar VDVKC will process raw mango, mustard and turmeric into Aam papad, mango pickle, turmeric powder and mustard oil. In Ban Durga VDVKC cluster, the minor forest produces (MFPs) which will be value-added are: Tamarind, sal seeds and char seeds to be made into deseeded tamarind, tamarind cake, sal shampoo and packed char seeds," the ministry said. Other value-added products that will be processed at the VDVK clusters in Koraput, Rayagada and Sundargarh districts include tamarind cake, mahua oil, organic packaged rice, neem oil, neem cake,

State gets 6 more courts

POST NEWS NETWORK

Cuttack, May 4: Orissa High Court (HC) Chief Justice S Muralidhar inaugurated six courts at as many districts of the coastal state through videoconferencing from the Silver City here, Tuesday. The new courts are Court of Senior Civil Judge (Leave Reserve and Leave Training Vacancy) at Nayagarh, Court of Senior Civil Judge-Cum-Assistant Sessions Judge (Women's Court) at Jeypore in Koraput, Court of Senior Civil Judge-Assistant Sessions Judge (Women's Court) at Rayagada, Court of 2nd Judicial Magistrate First Class at Barbil in Keonjhar, Court of Senior Civil Judge (Leave Reserve and Leave Training Vacancy) at Bhawanipatna in Kalahandi and Court of Senior Civil Judge (Leave Reserve and Leave Training Vacancy) at Jharsuguda. Justices Pramath Patnaik, KR Mohapatra, BP Routray, SK Panigrahi and Savitri Ratho were present during the inaugural occasion. On Monday, the Chief Justice inaugurated three courts at Sohela, Berhampur and Cuttack Sadar through videoconferencing in presence of Justices Biswajit Mohanty and Debabrata Dash. It was April 30 when the Chief Justice inaugurated digitisation centres at the district courts of Cuttack, Balasore, Ganjam and Sambalpur in virtual mode. Scanning and digitisation of case records of disposed-off matters will be done at the centres.

MASKING UP IS THE MANTRA



An artist draws murals near Kalpana Square in Bhubaneswar to create awareness on the highly infectious novel coronavirus, Tuesday

Covid third wave may hit kids, BMC prepares paediatric wards

MP govt 'hiding' real death toll

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Mumbai, May 4: Preparing for a third wave of the Covid-19 pandemic which is expected to hit children, the BrihanMumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) and Maharashtra government are gearing up by setting up Paediatric Covid Care Wards in the city and elsewhere, officials said here Tuesday.



As the virus mutates and targets different age groups, our response to it must actively mutate as well

ADITYA THACKERAY
TOURISM MINISTER

Taking an early initiative, Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray last week directed all district collectors and municipal commissioners in the state to be ready for the Covid third onslaught which may also hit children in a big way.

Tourism Minister Aditya Thackeray who is Guardian Minister of Mumbai Suburban District has held discussions with BMC Mayor Kishori Pednekar, Additional Municipal Commissioner Sanjeev Jaiswal and other top officials in this regard.

Among other things, he suggested to the BMC to create separate Paediatric Covid Care Wards anticipating the next wave and the demographics it may target.

Bhopal, May 4: The Congress Tuesday accused the Madhya Pradesh government of under-reporting COVID-19 cases and deaths, claiming that over one lakh people have died due to the viral infection in the state so far against the official figure of 5,905.



The ruling BJP dismissed the claim, saying the Congress was only making allegations instead of helping people. "About one to 1.5 lakh people have died due to the pandemic in Madhya Pradesh and Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan has been misleading people," State Congress working president Jitu Patwari alleged, talking to reporters here.

Around 5,000 people have died in the state capital Bhopal alone since the outbreak of the pandemic and of these over 2,500 bodies were cremated as per the COVID-19 protocol, the opposition leader claimed.

The situation was grim on the medical facilities front too, he claimed. "Madhya Pradesh Congress will give a reward of ₹11 lakh to the chief minister if he shows us a hospital where all facilities to fight COVID are available. He could not build even a good hospital during his 17-year tenure as CM," Patwari said. He also demanded that power bills and school fees be waived, and financial assistance be given to lower and middle-class families.

Alleging rampant black marketing of Remdesivir injections, a drug used to treat coronavirus patients in certain cases, Patwari said BJP MLAs and leaders were distributing the injections.

"The government should also file criminal cases against those who are responsible for deaths due to the shortage of oxygen. A financial assistance of ₹four lakh should be given to (the kin of) those who died due to shortage of oxygen," he demanded.

Consider providing masks, sanitizers to homeless, poor: HC to Maha govt

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, May 4: The Bombay High Court Tuesday asked the Maharashtra government and civic bodies to consider using part of fines collected from the people not wearing masks for distributing sanitizers and masks to the persons from the lower strata of society.



A division bench of Chief Justice Dipankar Datta and Justice GS Kulkarni said homeless people, beggars and those living on roads are usually seen without masks and may not be in a position to purchase them regularly.

As their government struggles to tackle the pandemic, young Indians have stepped into the breach, setting up apps to crowdsource aid, delivering key supplies and using social media to direct resources to people in need.

Mumbai, May 4: Her exam revision done, schoolgirl Swadha Prasad gets on with her real work: Finding life-saving oxygen, drugs and hospital beds for COVID-19 patients as India reels from a brutal second wave of infections.

Prasad works with dozens of volunteers - all aged between 14 and 19 - as part of the youth-led organisation UNCUT, building online databases packed with information about medical resources available across the country.



Shanawaz Shaikh (right) checks the pressure of a cylinder at an oxygen distribution centre in a slum in Mumbai.

Prasad works with dozens of volunteers - all aged between 14 and 19 - as part of the youth-led organisation UNCUT, building online databases packed with information about medical resources available across the country.

It's not only about providing resources ... sometimes people just need to know they are not alone", she said. With two-thirds of its 1.3-billion people under the age of 35, India is an overwhelmingly young country, but its youth have never been called on to shoulder such huge responsibilities.

Now, GPS keeps an eye on oxygen tankers in Maha

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Mumbai, May 4: The Maharashtra Transport Department in collaboration with the Federation of Automobile Dealers Association (FADA) state unit has fitted GPS devices to monitor the movement of oxygen tankers in the state, an official said here Tuesday.

MOBO which has the technical knowhow and expertise and spent ₹10 lakh for the venture.

From Monday, 250 oxygen tankers fitted with the GPS devices have enabled the Transport Department to keep 24x7 tabs on the vehicles on a single dashboard set up in the Transport Commissioner's office.

FADA president Vinkesh Gulati said the move would strengthen the hands of the state government at the height of the second wave of COVID-19 pandemic.



Special cell for kids orphaned by pandemic

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, May 4: The Maharashtra government announced a special cell to protect children orphaned due to the COVID-19 pandemic or any other reason, an official said Tuesday.

Rickshaw 'ambulance' offers free O2, transport

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

Bhopal, May 4: When auto-rickshaw driver Mohammad Javed Khan saw people carrying their coronavirus-stricken parents to hospitals on their backs as they were too poor to afford an ambulance, he knew he had to help.



Mohammad Javed Khan and his auto-rickshaw 'ambulance'.

Khan, a 34-year-old driver in the central Indian city of Bhopal, sold his wife's jewellery and converted his three-wheeled vehicle into a small ambulance, fitting it out with an oxygen cylinder, an oximeter to measure oxygen levels in the blood, and other medical supplies.

As India grapples with a harrowing Covid-19 crisis that has seen infections skyrocket and the healthcare system stretched to breaking point, individuals like Khan have stepped forward to try and help their local communities.

As India grapples with a harrowing Covid-19 crisis that has seen infections skyrocket and the healthcare system stretched to breaking point, individuals like Khan have stepped forward to try and help their local communities.

"I see young people struggling without oxygen. Even when they call ambulances, the ambulances are charging 5,000-10,000 rupees. How will a poor person be able to afford it? Especially during this pandemic when most people don't have an income?"

A donor provided him with a cylinder and another with the oximeter. A doctor taught Khan how to use the cylinder and oximeter to safely supply the lifesaving gas to patients as he drove them to a hospital.

But when I am able to help someone, I feel like crying."

Khan briefly ran into trouble with the authorities when police charged him for operating his rickshaw without an emergency permit. But after an outcry on social media, police withdrew the charges

many people, I am able to do this. I couldn't have done this on my own."

Congress announces reward to trace 'missing' health min

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhopal, May 4: The Madhya Pradesh Congress Tuesday claimed state Health Minister Dr Prabhuram Choudhary is 'missing' at a time when people are facing various problems due to the spike in COVID-19 cases, and offered a reward of ₹11,000 to trace him.

Addressing a press conference via video-conference, MP Congress working president Jitu Patwari said nobody knows where is the state's health minister.

of the day quote

The SP became the first priority of the people in the UP panchayat polls. The victory of party candidates in large numbers shows that there is an acceptance of the party among farmers, the youth and villagers too



When the first wave of coronavirus arrived, oxygen beds, ICU and ventilators were lying vacant, but this second wave is extremely dangerous as most people are in need of oxygen, ICU and ventilators



We are committed to democratically fight this ideological battle and the activities of the TMC, which is full of intolerance



SHORT TAKES

TMC worker stabbed to death

Kolkata: A 54-year-old TMC worker was stabbed to death in West Bengal's Purba Bardhaman district, police said Tuesday. Srinivas Ghosh (54), a TMC panchayat member of Ketugram's Agardhanga area, was stabbed alleged by members of the BJP Monday night when he was returning home, they said. Ghosh was declared brought dead when taken to a nearby hospital, they added. Three people were also injured in the incident and are undergoing treatment, a police officer said. BJP denied the charges and said their members were in no way connected to the incident.

RLD's comeback in western UP

Lucknow: The Rashtriya Lok Dal (RLD) is making a spectacular comeback in Uttar Pradesh politics with the panchayat elections. The RLD which had drifted into oblivion after the Muzaffarnagar riots in 2013, is gaining ground with its proactive role in the farmers' agitation. As per the results announced till now, the RLD has bagged eight seats in the zila panchayat in Meerut while the Samajwadi Party and the Bharatiya Janata Party have got six each.

Strict Covid curbs

Kolkata: With the spike in COVID-19 cases, museums, planetarium, zoos, national parks have been closed in West Bengal to avert contamination. The Alipore Zoological Gardens in the city had recorded 400 visitors on an average in April and only 150 people April 30 before closing down indefinitely from May 1, Director Asis Samanta said.

Godown gutted

Thane: A fire destroyed a furniture godown in Bhiwandi in Thane district Tuesday, though there were no reports of anyone getting injured, an official said. The blaze started at 11:30am and was put out at around 3:40pm by fire-tending vehicles and personnel from Kalyan-Dombivli and Bhiwandi-Nizampura civic bodies, Thane Municipal Corporation Regional Disaster Management Cell chief Santosh Kadam said.

Woman hangs self

Ballia: A 23-year-old woman allegedly ended her life by hanging, following a dispute with her mother-in-law. The woman, Rani, was found hanging from a hook in the ceiling of her house in Sonvani village of Uttar Pradesh Tuesday. The police spokesman said that the body has been sent for post mortem.



When people of the country are struggling for oxygen, vaccine, hospital beds and medicines then it would be better if the government put all the resources in saving lives of people

PRIYANKA GANDHI VADRA | CONGRESS GENERAL SECRETARY

FOREIGN TERRORIST TRAPPED

One foreign terrorist involved in several acts of terror is trapped as an encounter rages on between terrorists and security forces at Sopore in North Kashmir's Baramulla district



EC asks Bengal govt to provide security to Nandigram RO



Kolkata, May 4: Making it clear that the Returning Officer's (RO) decision regarding recounting of votes is final, the Election Commission of India has asked the West Bengal government to provide adequate security to the RO of Nandigram, where BJP's Suwendu Adhikari pulled off a thrilling win over Trinamool Congress supremo Mamata Banerjee by a slim margin of 1,956 votes.

PLEA IN SC SEEKS PREZ RULE IN WB

NEW DELHI: A petition was filed in the Supreme Court Tuesday alleging "widespread violence" in the aftermath of assembly polls in West Bengal and sought imposition of President's rule, deployment of central forces and a probe by a retired apex court judge into the "targeted pogrom". Earlier in the day, senior advocate and BJP's national spokesperson Gaurav Bhatia also moved the top court seeking CBI probe into violent incidents in the state during and after the poll process. The new plea has been filed by Tamil Nadu-based 'Indic Collective Trust' through lawyer Suvindt M. S. At least six people were killed in post poll violence in different parts of the state including one in Kolkata, police said.

the application in whole or in part or may reject it in toto if it appears to him to be frivolous or unreasonable.

The poll panel also made it clear that there no anomaly has been found in the counting process. "No doubts were raised on the results of round-wise counting. This enabled the RO to proceed unimpeded with the counting of votes." The Commission added that the only remedy is to move the High Court. On the basis of media reports on undue pressure on the RO of Nandigram, the Commission directed the Chief Secretary West Bengal to provide adequate security to him, which the state government has now provided.

India receives more medical supplies



New Delhi, May 4: India Tuesday received essential medical supplies from several countries, including the US, Ireland, United Arab Emirates and Kuwait, as hospitals in several states and union territories continued to reel under an exponential growth in COVID-19 cases. Seven tankers each carrying 20 metric tonnes of Liquid Medical Oxygen (LMO) arrive at Mundra Port in Gujarat in the first such shipment of LMO to India. "Further consolidating our Comprehensive Strategic Partnership, 7 ISO tankers with 20 MT Liquid Medical Oxygen (LMO) each arrive at Mundra Port (India). First such shipment of LMO to India. Deeply value the support from UAE. Will help augment oxygen availability," External Affairs Ministry Spokesperson Arindam Bagchi said on Twitter.

prising 545 oxygen concentrators. The second shipment of medical supplies from Ireland, included two oxygen generators, 548 oxygen concentrators, 365 ventilators and other medical equipment. "Deeply grateful to our EU partner Ireland for the support which will help add to our oxygen capacities," Bagchi said. He said an Indian Air Force aircraft carrying 450 oxygen cylinders arrived in

Chennai from the United Kingdom. India also received a shipment of 282 oxygen cylinders, 60 oxygen concentrators, ventilators and other medical supplies from Kuwait. At least 40 countries have announced medical aid to India so far. The European Union Monday announced additional emergency medical support by its member countries including Denmark, Spain and Netherlands to India to help

IAF brings oxygen cylinders from UK

CHENNAI: Nearly 35 tonnes of equipment, including 450 empty oxygen cylinders donated by the UK and airlifted by the Indian Air Force (IAF) from Britain arrived here early Tuesday. According to the Indian Red Cross Society, UK donated 5,000 cylinders to India through it to meet the emergency requirement for empty oxygen cylinders during the second wave of coronavirus in the country. Of these, 900 cylinders were meant for Tamil Nadu.

it deal with the severe wave of infections. Under the additional package, Denmark is sending to India 53 ventilators while Spain is supplying 119 oxygen concentrators and 145 ventilators. The EU said the medical supplies from the Netherlands included 100 oxygen concentrators, 30,000 vials of antiviral drugs Remdesivir and 449 ventilators.

BIHAR IMPOSES LOCKDOWN

Patna, May 4: Lockdown was imposed in Bihar till May 15 amid a surge in COVID-19 cases with the state facing a positivity rate of around 10 per cent, officials said Tuesday.

The decision for the lockdown, which will come into effect Wednesday, was taken at the meeting of the Crisis Management Group presided over by Chief Minister Nitish Kumar, they said. Soon after the meeting, the chief minister announced the decision, following which Chief Secretary Tripurari Sharan along with senior police and administration officers held a press conference to announce the modalities. The chief secretary said that all government and private offices will remain closed during the period.

However, essential services such as civil defence, electricity supply, water supply, fire services, veterinary work, postal and telecommunication will continue to operate. Hospitals, medical laboratories, ambulance services and other health-related outlets have been kept out of the ambit of the lockdown. Principal Secretary of Health, Prataya Amrit, clarified that the vaccination drive will continue during the lockdown.

Lions in Hyd zoo test Covid +ve

Hyderabad, May 4: In perhaps the first such reported incident, eight Asiatic lions in the zoo here have tested positive for COVID-19 after their saliva samples were thoroughly examined by CSIR-Centre for Cellular and Molecular Biology, Rakesh Mishra, advisor of the premier research institute said Tuesday.



added. He further said the virus which is present in the lions at the Nehru Zoological Park here is not any new variant.

The Union Environment Ministry said the infection was not caused by any variant of concern, adding all the eight lions, since isolated, have responded well to the treatment and were recovering. Further, there was no factual evidence that animals can transmit the disease to humans any further, it said.

"The saliva samples of the Asiatic lions were thoroughly tested and they turned out to be positive. As they were living closely it must have been spread among them," Mishra said in a statement. "Now we are developing a method to test the samples of their faeces. This method would be useful in future as every time it is not possible to collect saliva samples from wild animals," he

added. He further said the virus which is present in the lions at the Nehru Zoological Park here is not any new variant. "They have mild symptoms and they are eating well and they are fine," he said. Replying to a query, he said there is every possibility of animals contracting the virus as they are also mammals like human beings. Mishra further said these animals must have got infected through zoo-keeping staff. A senior official of the zoo said they keep sending the samples of the ani-

mals to CCMB from time to time for analysis. As the lions started showing symptoms such as fever, the zoo officials collected the samples and sent them to CCMB. The official further said the samples from the wild animals will be collected either by 'squeeze cage' method or by tranquillising them. Accordingly, the zoo here, Kakatiya Zoological Park, Warangal, Kaval and Amrabad Tiger Reserves, all National Parks and wildlife sanctuaries in Telangana were closed from May 2.

LIFE ON WHEELS



A Covid patient on oxygen support waits to be admitted in a hospital in Kanpur

Over 15.89cr Covid jabs administered in India

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, May 4: The cumulative number of Covid-19 vaccine doses administered in the country has crossed 15.89 crore Tuesday with more than four lakh people aged between 18 to 44 years vaccinated in the Phase-3 drive. A total of 4,06,339 beneficiaries of the age group between 18 and 44 years received their first dose of Covid vaccine across 12 states and Union Territories. These are Chhattisgarh (1,025), Delhi (40,028), Gujarat (1,08,191), Haryana (55,565), Jammu and Kashmir (5,587), Karnataka (2,353), Maharashtra (73,714), Odisha (6,802), Punjab (635), Rajasthan (76,151), Tamil Nadu (2,744) and Uttar

Pradesh (33,544). Cumulatively, 15,89,32,921 vaccine doses have been administered through 23,35,822 sessions so far, as per the provisional report till 7 a.m. Tuesday, said Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoHF). Of the total vaccination, 94,48,289 Healthcare Workers (HCWs) have been administered first dose and 62,97,900 got second dose. A total of 1,35,05,877 Frontline Workers (FLWs) have received first dose and 72,66,380 got second dose. While 4,06,339 beneficiaries aged between 18-44 years have received first dose. Those aged over 45 years old to 60 years account for 5,30,50,669 who were administered first dose while 41,42,786 injected second dose.

'Covid delayed treatment of other ailments'



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, May 4: High concern for patients with Covid-19 infections resulted in delay in treatment of people with non-Covid ailments, finds a survey by NATHEALTH, a healthcare industry body. The survey "Impact of Covid-19 on patient behaviour towards accessing healthcare facilities," involved 2,134 patients from across India, between January and February 2021. The results showed that 57 per cent patients cancelled/postponed/rescheduled their treatment plan during the period of March-December 2020. About 34 per cent of OPD patients cancelled or rescheduled their visits to the hospitals, while 100 per cent of the elective surgery patients cancelled/postponed/rescheduled their surgeries. Among patients who cancelled/postponed their treatment, 62 per cent believe that their health condition has been negatively impacted, and 82 per cent patients wished to reschedule/return to their treatment plan by June 2021. "In the last few weeks, continued focus on Covid tests and treatments have reduced attention on noncommunicable diseases, non-Covid surgeries," said Harsh Mahajan, President, NATHEALTH.

HUMANITY ABOVE ALL

Pandit-Muslim duo saves lives across NCR

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, May 4: A well-known Kashmiri Pandit chef and an aspiring Kashmiri Muslim journalist are saving thousands of lives by arranging plasma for Covid affected patients across the Delhi-National Capital Region (NCR). Days after the country was hit by a severe second wave of the coronavirus, a social service initiative, "Plasma NCR", was started to help people get plasma for their near and dear ones. The initiative is spearheaded by Sanjay Raina, a Kashmiri Pandit Chef from Srinagar who is based in Delhi, and Adnan Shah, a Kashmiri Muslim who hails from Kupwara and studies journalism in Delhi. Managing the whole show on

Twitter (@PlasmaNCR), the duo said that one of the reasons to start the initiative was that "when the second wave hit the country and people came out to seek help, it was more about Oxygen, beds and ventilators, and less about Plasma. Although people needed plasma but it wasn't quite visible on social media, so we started this helpline to facilitate Plasma requests." Ever since it came into being, Plasma NCR has clocked more than 1,500 cases, receiving at least 150 requests for plasma in a single day. Raina said: "We have closed nearly 1,600 cases so far; however, 500-600 of our donors didn't have enough antibodies to actually donate the plasma. Otherwise, we could have closed nearly 2,100 cases."



Representational image

"My parents were expecting me to be home on Eid and had booked my air tickets, but when they came to know about what we were doing, they told me not to come, and serve and help as many people as I can," Adnan said in a statement. Both Sanjay and Adnan are managing nearly 150 donors a day and not a single request goes unattended. The duo provide plasma directly to the families of Covid-affected patients and not to hospital officials. In a message to the people of the country, the duo said: "This is the time to come forward and help as many people as you can. If you can, tell us and donate plasma, we will arrange the transport for you, which we are currently doing for so many of our generous and kind donors."

international

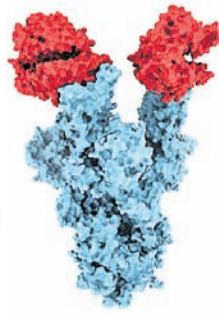


India is one of Israel's closest and most important friends. We stand with India, particularly during these difficult times India is experiencing, and are sending life-saving equipment to our Indian brothers and sisters

GABI ASHKENAZI | FOREIGN MINISTER, ISRAEL

1ST MOLECULAR IMAGES OF B.1.1.7 COVID-19 MUTATION RELEASED

Canada's University of British Columbia researchers are the first to publish structural images of N501Y mutation on SARS-CoV-2 spike protein, a change believed to be partly responsible for the infectious nature and spread of variant B.1.1.7



of the day quote

Today, we ask forgiveness in the name of the Mexican government for the injustices committed against Mayan people throughout our history and with the discrimination which even now you are victims of



OLGA SÁNCHEZ CORDERO | INTERIOR SECRETARY, MEXICO

Time to revive EU tourism industry and for cross-border friendships to rekindle – safely. We propose to welcome again vaccinated visitors and those from countries with a good health situation



URSULA VON DER LEYEN | PRESIDENT, EUROPEAN COMMISSION

Given the fact that India is under such terrible stress right now with the extent of the outbreak, the rest of the world should pitch in to help, similar to what the United States is doing



DR. FAUCI | DIRECTOR, NIAID

G7 mulls a message to China, Russia

CHINA IS THE FOCUS OF DISCUSSIONS TUESDAY MORNING WHILE AFTERNOON TALKS WILL TURN TO RUSSIA, INCLUDING HOW TO RESPOND TO A TROOP MANOEUVRES ON THE BORDER WITH UKRAINE AND THE IMPRISONMENT OF KREMLIN CRITIC ALEXEI NAVALNY



COVID-19 pandemic and climate change.

London, May 4: The Group of Seven rich democracies will discuss ways of countering challenges from China and Russia without trying to contain Beijing or escalate tension with the Kremlin, two of its top diplomats said Tuesday.

Founded in 1975 as a forum for the West's richest nations to discuss crises such as the OPEC oil embargo, the G7 is debating responses to the two vast and increasingly assertive countries as well as the

"It is not our purpose to try to contain China or to hold China down," US President Joe Biden's secretary of state, Antony Blinken told reporters Monday ahead of the first in-person G7 foreign ministers meeting since 2019.

He said the West would defend "the international rules based order" from subversive attempts by any country, including China.

China is the focus of discussions Tuesday morning while afternoon talks will turn to Russia, including how to respond to a troop manoeuvre on the border with Ukraine and the imprisonment of Kremlin critic Alexei Navalny.

China's spectacular economic and military rise over the past 40 years is seen by diplomats and investors as the most significant geopolitical events of recent times, alongside the 1991 fall of the Soviet Union which ended the Cold War.

The G7 combined is still packs a powerful punch: it has about \$40 trillion in economic clout and three of the world's five official nuclear powers.

Russia was included in what became the G8 in 1997 but was suspended in 2014 after annexing Crimea from Ukraine. China, now the world's second largest economy, has never been a member of the G7.

Britain will seek to agree decisive action from G7 partners to protect

democracies at a time when it says China's economic influence and Russian malign activity threaten to undermine them.

"The UK's presidency of the G7 is an opportunity to bring together open, democratic societies and demonstrate unity at a time when it is much needed to tackle shared challenges and rising threats," British Foreign Secretary Dominic Raab said.

Blinken said the United States would prefer more stable ties with Russia but that much depended on how Russian President Vladimir Putin decided to act, especially in theatres such as Ukraine which Blinken will visit later this week.

"We have reaffirmed our unwavering support for the independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine," Blinken said. "We're not looking to escalate: we would prefer to have a more stable, more predictable relationship. And if Russia moves in that direction, so will we."

The ministers will lay the groundwork for Biden's first scheduled trip abroad since taking office: a G7 summit in Britain next month.

In addition to the G7 members Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan and the United States, Britain has also invited ministers from Australia, India, South Africa and South Korea this week.

UK, India to sign Migration and Mobility Partnership

The agreement will facilitate legal travel and encourage talent flows between India and the UK. It is one of the outcomes related to a Virtual Summit between Johnson and Modi



talent flows." Jaishankar tweeted alongside images of his meeting with the British-Indian Cabinet minister. "The living bridge between India and UK will get stronger as a result," he said.

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

London, May 4: External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar met British Home Secretary Priti Patel in London Tuesday to sign a new Migration and Mobility Partnership Agreement, which he said would strengthen the "living bridge" between the two countries.

According to the senior Indian Cabinet minister, the agreement will facilitate legal travel and encourage talent flows between India and the UK. It is one of the outcomes related to a Virtual Summit between Prime Minister Boris Johnson and Prime Minister Narendra Modi scheduled for Tuesday.

"A fruitful meeting this morning with Home Secretary Priti Patel. Signed the Migration and Mobility Partnership Agreement that would facilitate legal travel and encourage

While details of the agreement have not yet been released, it is expected to enhance student numbers coming into the UK in return for illegal migrants being deported back to India.

The issue of illegal Indian migrants in the UK has long been on the agenda of bilateral negotiations, with both sides failing to agree on the numbers in question.

While the UK maintains around 100,000 Indians who are living illegally in the country, India has questioned the veracity of those numbers in the past because that figure is believed to also cover nationals from other parts of the Indian sub-continent. The two sides were close to signing an agreement on the issue in 2018 before it fell through over this ambiguity.

SHORT TAKES

Medical supplies for India delayed

Washington: US Air Force flights that were scheduled to leave for India with essential life-saving supplies have been delayed till Wednesday due to maintenance issues, said the Pentagon. We just received word from USTRANSCOM that the flights for India are "delayed until at least Wednesday due to maintenance issues", a Pentagon spokesperson said. So far, only two US Air Force flights have landed in India.

New govt wins confidence vote

Bratislava (Slovakia): The new Slovakian government formed after a secret deal to buy Russia's Sputnik V coronavirus vaccine triggered a political crisis won a mandatory confidence vote in Parliament Tuesday. Lawmakers voted 89-55 to endorse the four-party coalition government led by Prime Minister Eduard Heger. President Zuzana Caputova appointed the new Cabinet on April 1 after the government of populist Prime Minister Igor Matovic resigned, becoming the first European government to collapse due to its handling of the coronavirus pandemic.

Heavy flooding kills at least 37

Kabul: Heavy rains brought severe flooding to nine provinces around Afghanistan in recent days, killing at least 37 people, some of them children, officials said Tuesday. Heavy flooding compounded by mudslides often threatens remote areas of Afghanistan, where infrastructure is poor. Governor Abdul Tahir Faizzada of Western Ghor province said 10 people, including six children, were killed by floodwaters that flowed from area mountains.

Talks resumed on maritime border

Naqoura (Lebanon): After a nearly six-month pause, Lebanon and Israel Tuesday resumed indirect talks with US mediation over their disputed maritime border. The resumption comes after a new US administration took over. Lebanon has sunk deeper into its economic and financial crisis that started in late 2019 – a culmination of decades of corruption and mismanagement by the political class. The small Mediterranean country is eager to resolve the border dispute with Israel, paving the way for potential lucrative oil and gas deals.

Metro overpass plunges into road

THE MEXICO CITY METRO COLLAPSED KILLING AT LEAST 23 AND INJURING ABOUT 70 PEOPLE

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mexico City, May 4: An elevated section of the Mexico City metro collapsed and sent a subway car plunging toward a busy boulevard late Monday, killing at least 23 people and injuring about 70, city officials said. Rescuers initially searched a car left dangling from the overpass for anyone who might be trapped.

Those efforts were suspended early Tuesday, however, because of safety concerns for those working near the precariously dangling car: A crane was brought in to help shore it up. "We don't know if they are alive," Mayor Claudia Sheinbaum said of the people possibly trapped inside the car following one of the deadliest accidents for the city's subway system, which is among the busiest in the world.

Earlier Sheinbaum said someone had been pulled alive from a car that was trapped on the road below. She said 49 of the injured were hospitalized, and that seven were in serious condition and undergoing surgery. "There are unfortunately chil-

dren among the dead," Sheinbaum said, without specifying how many. The overpass was about 5 meters (16 feet) above the road in the borough of Tlahuac, but the train ran above a concrete median strip, which apparently lessened the casualties among motorists on the road below. "A support beam gave way" just as the train passed over it, Sheinbaum said.

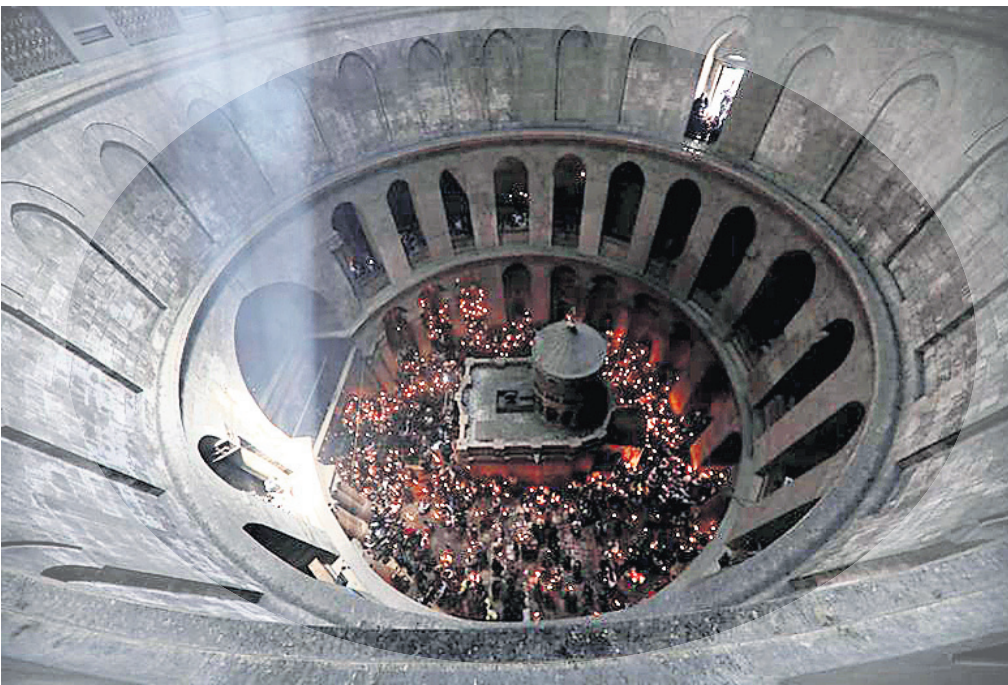
The collapse could represent a major blow for Mexican Foreign Relations Secretary Marcelo Ebrard, who was Mexico City's mayor from 2006 to 2012, when Line 12 was built, and who is considered a potential presidential candidate in 2024 elections. Allegations about poor design and construction on the subway line emerged soon after Ebrard left office as mayor. The line had to be partly closed in 2013 so tracks could be repaired.

Ebrard wrote on Twitter: "What happened today on the Metro is a terrible tragedy."

"Of course, the causes should be investigated and those responsible should be identified," he wrote.



HOLY FIRE



Orthodox Christian worshippers attend the Church of the Holy Sepulchre amid eased coronavirus restrictions in Jerusalem's Old City

REUTERS

CHINA CALLS FOR 'BASIC ETIQUETTE' AFTER PHILIPPINES MINISTER'S BLOW

REUTERS

Beijing, May 4: China urged the Philippines Tuesday to observe "basic etiquette" and eschew megaphone diplomacy after the southeast Asian nation's foreign minister used an expletive-laced Twitter message to demand that China's vessels leave disputed waters.

The comments by Teodoro Locsin, known for occasional blunt remarks, follow Manila's protests over what it calls the illegal presence of hundreds of Chinese boats inside the Philippines' 200-mile Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ).

In a statement, China's foreign ministry urged the Philippines to re-



spect the nation's sovereignty and jurisdiction and stop taking actions that complicate the situation. "Facts have repeatedly proved that microphone diplomacy cannot change the facts, but can only undermine mutual trust," it said.

"It is hoped that relevant people in the Philippines will comply with

basic etiquette and their position when making remarks."

The ministry cited comments by Philippines President Rodrigo Duterte that differences between the countries on individual issues should not affect friendship and cooperation.

"China has always worked, and will continue to work with the Philippines, to properly resolve differences and advance cooperation through friendly consultations."

China claims almost the entire South China Sea, through which about \$3 trillion of ship-borne trade passes each year. In 2016, an arbitration tribunal in The Hague ruled that its claim was inconsistent with international law.

Wine that went to space for sale with \$1 million price tag

The Petrus 2000 is one of 12 bottles sent into space in November 2019 by researchers exploring the potential for extraterrestrial agriculture. It returned 14 months later subtly altered

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

London, May 4: The wine is out of this world. The price is appropriately stratospheric.

Christie's said Tuesday it is selling a bottle of French wine that spent more than a year in orbit aboard the International Space Station. The auction house thinks



a wine connoisseur might pay as much as \$1 million to own it.

The Petrus 2000 is one of 12 bottles sent into space in November 2019 by researchers exploring the potential for extraterrestrial agriculture.

Tim Tiptree, international director of Christie's wine and spir-

its department, said the space-aged wine was "matured in a unique environment" of near zero gravity aboard the space station.

The trip turned a \$10,000-a-bottle wine known for its complexity, silky, ripe tannins and flavours of black cherry, cigar box and leather into a scientific novelty — and still a fine bottle of wine, Tiptree said.

"It's just a very harmonious wine that has the ability to age superbly, which is why it was chosen for this experiment," he said. "It's very encouraging that it was delicious on return to Earth."

At a taste test in March at the Institute for Wine and Vine Research in Bordeaux, France, a dozen wine connoisseurs compared one of the space-travelled wines to a bottle from the same vintage that had stayed in a cellar.

They noted a difference that was hard to describe. Jane Anson, a

writer with the wine publication *Decanter*, said the wine that remained on Earth tasted a bit younger; the space version slightly softer and more aromatic.

Proceeds from the sale will fund future research by Space Cargo Unlimited. Several other bottles from the dozen that went to space remain unopened, but Christie's says there are no plans to sell any of them.

Tiptree says the price estimate, "in the region of \$1 million", reflects the sale's likely appeal to a mix of wine connoisseurs, space buffs and the kind of wealthy people who collect "ultimate experiences".

"I would hope that they will decide to drink it, but maybe not immediately," Tiptree said. "It's at its peak drinking time, but this wine will last at least another two or three decades."

With mobile internet access largely cut off in a bid to quell anti-junta protests since the Feb 1 coup, Myanmar has increasingly appeared headed back to the state of isolation that preceded a decade of democratic reforms.

"Satellite television is no longer legal. Whoever violates the television and video law, especially people using satellite dishes, shall be punished with one year imprisonment and a fine of 500,000 kyat (\$320)," MRTV state television said.

"Illegal media outlets are broadcasting news that undermines national security, the rule of law and public order, and encouraging those who commit treason."

In the face of widespread opposition, the junta has struggled to impose order since overthrowing elected leader Aung San Suu Kyi and ending an uneasy transition to democracy.

business

of the day quote

We are currently discussing with Indian government an expedited approval pathway to make our Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine available for use in the country

ALBERT BOURLA | PFIZER CEO

We got a chance to buy it (Apple shares) and I sold some stock last year. That was probably a mistake

WARREN BUFFETT | BERKSHIRE HATHAWAY CHAIRMAN AND CEO

If the lockdowns/restrictions intensify in the coming days, there will be some impact on the economic recovery

UNMESH KULKARNI | JULIUS BAER INDIA MANAGING DIRECTOR

SHORT TAKES

Apple hires ex-Google AI scientist

California: Apple Inc said Monday it has hired former distinguished Google scientist Samy Bengio, who left the search giant amid turmoil in its artificial intelligence research department. Bengio is expected to lead a new AI research unit at Apple under John Giannandrea, senior vice president of machine learning and AI strategy, two people familiar with the matter said. Giannandrea joined Apple in 2018 after spending about eight years at Google. Apple declined to comment on Bengio's role.

PowerGrid InvIT IPO over subscribed

New Delhi: Powergrid InvIT's ₹7,735-crore initial public offering (IPO) was subscribed 4.83 times at closing. The first share sale by a state-run company was subscribed 4.63 times in the qualified institutional buyers (QIB) segment and 4.92 times in the non-institutional investor (NI) category. The IPO consisted of a fresh issue of ₹4,994 crore and an offer for sale of ₹2,741.50 crore. It received bids for shares worth ₹37,360 crore as against an offer of shares amounting to ₹7,735 crore. The shares were sold in the price band of ₹99-100 a share.

Infosys to hire 1,000 workers in UK

New Delhi: IT firm Infosys Tuesday said it plans to hire 1,000 workers in the UK over the next three years as part of efforts to support the country's economic recovery and growth. The new hires will work in the digital space, including cloud computing, data and analytics, artificial intelligence, open source technologies and enterprise services, to support some of the world's largest organisations navigate their digital journeys, a statement said. The company will provide critical training and mentoring opportunities for the fresh hires, it added.

Maruti cuts production

Mumbai: Maruti Suzuki India Ltd may halve its production capacity as an overwhelming surge of coronavirus infections shuts some of its sales outlets in the South Asian nation. The problem is on the "sales side because in several states there is a partial lockdown and there's a curfew in some states and the dealers who sell the cars have to close down," Maruti Chairman RC Bhargava said in an interview Tuesday. "Half the sales outlets are closed at the moment."



India's overwhelming surge of coronavirus infections has revealed complacency after last year's first wave, as well as a "lack of foresight, a lack of leadership"

RAGHURAM RAJAN | FORMER RBI GOVERNOR

NOTED DESIGNER WAYNE BURGESS TO WORK WITH OLA

Ola Electric on Tuesday announced the appointment of Wayne Burgess as Head of Vehicle Design for its entire product range including scooters, bikes, cars and more



Modi-Boris virtual summit brings deals worth GBP 1bn

THE ENHANCED TRADE PARTNERSHIP WILL SET THE AMBITION TO DOUBLE THE VALUE OF UK-INDIA TRADE BY 2030

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

London, April 4: The British government has finalised GBP 1 billion worth of trade and investment with India, creating over 6,500 jobs in Britain, ahead of the virtual summit between UK Prime Minister Boris Johnson and his Indian counterpart Narendra Modi Tuesday.

The investments confirmed by Downing Street Monday evening form part of an Enhanced Trade Partnership (ETP), which the two leaders will formally sign off during their talks.

The ETP will set the ambition to double the value of UK-India trade by 2030 and declare a shared intent to begin work towards a comprehensive Free Trade Agreement (FTA). "Like every aspect of the UK-India relationship, the economic links between our countries make our people stronger and safer," said Johnson.

"Each and every one of the more than 6,500 jobs we have announced today will help families and communities build back from coronavirus and boost the British and Indian economies. In the decade ahead, with the help of (the) new partnership signed today and a comprehensive Free Trade Agreement, we will double the value of our trading partnership with India and take



the relationship between our two countries to new highs," he said.

The trade and investment package unveiled by the British government contains over GBP 533 million of new Indian investment into the UK, covering areas such as healthcare and technology.

This includes a GBP 240 million investment by the Serum Institute of India (SII) in the UK into its vaccine business and a new sales office in the country, expected to generate new business worth over \$1 billion.

Serum Institute's investment will support clinical trials, research and development and "possibly" manufacturing of vaccines, to help the UK and the world defeat the coronavirus pandemic and other deadly diseases, Downing Street said.

New export deals
British businesses have also se-

cured new export deals with India worth more than GBP 446 million, which is expected to create more than 400 British jobs.

This includes CMR Surgical exporting its next-generation "Versius" surgical robotic system, which helps surgeons perform minimal access surgery being rolled out to hospitals in India. This export deal is worth GBP 200 million and will create 100 new jobs in the UK.

"With almost 1.4 billion people, India's population is bigger than the EU and US combined and by far the largest market the UK has committed to negotiating a trade deal with to date," Downing Street said.

The ETP agreed between India and the UK is said to create immediate opportunities for British businesses in India across industries, including food and drink, life sciences

and the service sector.

Non-tariff barriers on fruit and medical devices will be lowered, allowing British businesses to export more of their products to India and boosting UK growth and jobs.

It also commits both sides to address immediate market access barriers and seek further opportunities on the road to an FTA.

"A future UK-India trade deal will support hundreds of thousands of jobs and boost the economies of both the UK and India by potentially lowering or removing current tariffs such as those of up to 150 per cent on whisky and up to 125 per cent on automobiles as well as on other British products. It would also create huge benefits for British services - four out of five of India's fastest-growing imports are for services like IP and telecommunications," Downing Street said.

The trade barriers addressed by the ETP include lifting restrictions to enable fruit producers across the UK to export British apples, pears and quince to India for the first time and improved access for medical devices through the acceptance of UK Certificates of Free Sale in India, removing the requirement for additional accreditation of UK medical devices when exporting to the Indian market before they can be sold.

Wipro to invest £16 mn in London

BANGALORE: Wipro Limited, a leading information technology, consulting and business process services company, Tuesday announced the setting up of an Innovation Centre in Holborn, London. The Bangalore-headquartered company said it will invest GBP 16 million over the next four years in the 20,000 sq ft Innovation Centre which will serve as Wipro's flagship centre in the United Kingdom and offer technology expertise to companies in the UK and globally. "It will be integral to providing advanced digital, cyber security and cloud expertise to both established and upcoming enterprises, taking the lead on digital transformation in one of Europe's biggest technology markets," Wipro said. This year marks Wipro's 75th global anniversary, and 25 years in the UK, where it employs over 4,000 technology, digital consulting and business management professionals. The IT services provider said it has hired over 500 new employees in the UK in the past 12 months.

SAIL enters 100 most-valued Indian firms' club

AGENCIES

Mumbai, April 4: Steel Authority of India Ltd (SAIL) Tuesday regained market capitalisation (m-cap) of ₹50,000 crore, after its stock climbed over 80 per cent in the past one and half month, on expectations of strong earnings in March quarter (Q4FY21) and a healthy outlook going forward.



The state-owned steel major also entered into the league of top 100 most valued companies in terms of market capitalisation. At 10:19 am, SAIL stood at 78th position in the overall m-cap ranking with a market cap of ₹55,529 crore, BSE data shows.

In the intra-day Tuesday, the stock hit an over nine-year high of ₹135.60, up 6 per cent, on the BSE. In the past six weeks, it has zoomed 85 per cent, as compared to a 2.6 per cent decline in the S&P BSE SENSEX. It was trading at its highest level since July 2011.

SAIL is one of the leading steel producers in India, which has five large integrated steel plants (Bhilai steel plant, Rourkela steel plant, Durgapur steel plant, Bokaro steel plant and IISCO) spread across four states in eastern India.

POINTS	%
48,253.51	
5067.30	Dr Reddys Labs -2.26%
1916.55	Reliance -2.18%
645.70	Sun Pharma -1.99%
1388.55	HDFC Bank -1.74%
2377.25	HDFC -1.73%
1329.55	Infosys -1.65%
741.00	M&M -1.61%
550.85	Bharti Airtel -1.41%
1403.80	Titan -1.39%
6508.10	Maruti Suzuki -1.37%

POINTS BSE SENSEX -465.01

Goldman Sachs cuts India's GDP growth estimate for FY22 to 11.1%



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, May 4: Wall Street brokerage Goldman Sachs has lowered its estimate for India's economic growth to 11.1 per cent in fiscal year to March 31, 2022, as a number of cities and states announced lockdowns of varying intensities to check spread of coronavirus infections.

India is suffering the world's worst outbreak of Covid-19 cases, with deaths crossing 2.22 lakh and new cases above 3.5 lakh daily. This has led to demand for imposition of nationwide strict lockdowns to stem the spread of the virus - a move that the Modi government has so far avoided after the economic devastation last year from a similar strategy.

Instead, it has left it to the states to impose restrictions to manage the virus. Several states and cities have imposed lockdowns of varying degrees.

"The intensity of the lockdown remains lower than last year," Goldman Sachs said in a report. "Still, the impact of tighter containment policy is clearly visible in higher frequency mobility data across key Indian cities."

As containment policy has tightened, high frequency data - particularly on the services side - has taken a hit. The manufacturing side - as indicated by high frequency data on electricity consumption, and the stable April

As containment policy has tightened, high frequency data - particularly on the services side - has taken a hit

manufacturing PMI - has been more resilient.

Labour market indicators suggest that the daily unemployment rate has ticked up moderately in recent weeks, but the employment impact so far is much more contained than in April-June last year.

"Overall, most indicators still suggest that the impact has been less severe than it was in Q2 (April-June) last year," Goldman Sachs said.

While the lockdown impact is much less severe than last year, the recent declines in services indicators including e-way bills, mobility, rail freight and cargo traffic has led to trimming GDP estimates.

"While activity is likely to rebound back quite sharply from Q3 (July-September) onwards - assuming restrictions can ease somewhat over that timeframe - the net result is to lower our FY22 real GDP growth forecast to 11.1 per cent (from 11.7 per cent previously), and our 2021 calendar year growth forecast to 9.7 per cent (from 10.5 per cent)," it said.

14-day lockdown will deal a heavy blow to state's MSMEs

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, May 4: It's a great relief for the medium, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) as the state government has allowed these units to operate during the lockdown period, which will be in effect from May 5 to May 19.

In a letter, Special Relief Commissioner said, "A few activities are allowed in the interest of economic growth and livelihood of people. Some activities that are allowed even during the weekend shutdown are industries in both rural and urban areas, all agricultural-related activities including production, transportation, marketing and trading of agriculture products."

The trading of agriculture tools and machineries, construction activities in both government and private sectors are also allowed to

COVID IMPACT

function during the lockdown and weekend shutdown.

Though, MSMEs leaders appreciated the state government for allowing them to remain operational, they expressed their concern over the poor sales during the lockdown.

Odisha Assembly of Small and Medium Enterprises (OASME) said that the demand will be low for which they may face a crisis like what they endured during the previous lockdown.

OASME Secretary-General Satwik Swain said, "Obviously, sales will be down as the market will remain closed for 14 days. Also, we may face difficulties in managing to fix expenses during the lockdown. So, it will be a difficult time." Earlier, MSMEs units suf-

fered business loss of over ₹21,000 crore due the shutdown of these units for 21 days during the previous lockdown.

The Utkal Chamber of Commerce & Industry (UCCI) also stated that small entrepreneurs will be negatively affected by the 14-day lockdown. "Most businesses, such as restaurants, are operational after 12 pm. Since market will be closed after 12pm, such businesses will suffer greatly. So, small businesses will suffer losses during the lockdown," said Ashok Sharda, VP of UCCI (Commerce).

"We welcome the state government's decision as they do not have multiple options to curb the pandemic. It is also possible that government may extend the lockdown if the situation doesn't come under control within the next 14 days," Sharda added.

Covid 2nd wave leaves another 7mn people jobless

Unemployment increased to 7.97% from 6.5% in March, with more than seven million jobs lost last month

AGENCIES

Mumbai, April 4: India's unemployment rate rose to a four-month high of nearly 8% in April, and the outlook remains weak with state administrations extending lockdowns to curb a record surge in virus cases.

Unemployment increased to 7.97% from 6.5% in March, with more than seven million jobs lost last month, according to data from Centre for Monitoring Indian Economy Pvt, a private research firm.

"There is a fall in the jobs available. This could be due to the lockdowns," CMIE Managing Director Mahesh Vyas said by telephone. "Since the virus is still quite intense and we are stressed on the medical health-services front, it's likely that the situation will remain tense



in May as well."

Daily Covid-19 deaths in India hit a record 3,689 Sunday. The number of new cases slowed slightly Monday after India on Saturday became the first country to register more than 400,000 daily cases.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi, who announced a strict lockdown in March 2020 that resulted in millions of lost jobs and a record contraction in economic output, now is

urging states to use such measures only as a last resort. Local administrations have been forced to extend curbs as the nation's creaky health infrastructure can't cope with the flood of virus cases, jeopardizing a nascent economic recovery.

The weak employment outlook is a risk for India's chances of reaching double-digit economic growth this year. Many economists already have lowered their projections, while several are warning of possible reductions if provincial curbs are extended further.

Barclays Bank Plc Monday lowered its forecast by one percentage point to 10%, as "there is growing uncertainty around the number of cases and fatalities," economist Rahul Bajaria wrote in a research note. "Slowing vaccinations are also

hurting India's recovery prospects." **Double Whammy**

The rise in unemployment comes amid a backlash against government handling of the world's worst Covid-19 outbreak. Modi's party lost an election in a key state, while foreign envoys are joining Indians on social media clamoring for help with few medical supplies available.

A separate survey Monday by IHS Markit showed the manufacturing sector was still losing jobs in April, though the rate of contraction was the weakest in the current 13-month sequence of job shedding. The CMIE data - which economists track closely in the absence of real-time employment data from the government - show joblessness is more acute in urban areas as laborers return to their villages.

Domestic air travel recovery delayed by 3 months: Ind-Ra

RECOVERY IN DOMESTIC AND INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL HAS BEEN DELAYED BY THREE AND SIX MONTHS, RESPECTIVELY, DUE TO COVID RESURGENCE

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Mumbai, May 4: Recovery in domestic and international travel has been delayed by three and six months, respectively, due to Covid resurgence, said India Ratings and Research (Ind-Ra).

The first two months of 2021 witnessed a solid improvement in air travel, after a steep decline in EBIT-DAR losses in 3QFY21 as airline operations normalised, it said.

However, late March and April have seen a sharp rise in active Covid cases all across India which has significantly impacted air travel

and dented confidence in aviation recovery.

Besides, 2021 has brought three new challenges such as higher fuel expenses as crude prices recover amid a soaring global demand, rising competition intensity amid the possible re-start of operations by Jet Airways, and likely pressure on airline yields as the scramble for market share realignment to pre-Covid period begins.

"Ind-Ra believes the domestic air travel recovery should resume in three months, if the fresh Covid wave subsides."

"However, a meaningful inter-



national travel recovery is around six months away and contingent

on the achievement of vaccination coverage for a significant proportion

of the population," the ratings agency said.

Further, Ind-Ra expects regulator DGCA to continue to keep price controls in place till demand normalises and reaches closer to pre-Covid levels.

"However, the overall yields for two leading carriers remain at a weak level and largely in line with median yield level witnessed in the last five years."

In addition, Ind-Ra's baseline expectations for a partial but meaningful recovery in international travel have been pushed ahead by up to six months post the fresh

wave of restrictions and will continue to significantly depend on a huge decline in active cases, coupled with achievement of mass vaccination coverage.

"Even when international travel resumes in 2HFY22, significant tourism and corporate demand may not recover immediately, given restrictions requiring travellers to quarantine for up to 10 days."

"International Air Transport Association in a recent update on the global aviation recovery has highlighted that 89 per cent of air-line travel remains down with cargo being the only bright spot."

BCCI VOWS 'SAFE' RETURN OF FOREIGNERS

Australians may fly off to Maldives to return home

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, May 4: IPL governing council (IPLGC) chairman Brijesh Patel said Tuesday the BCCI will 'find a way' to send the league's foreign recruits back to their respective countries. His comments came after the event was suspended indefinitely due to a COVID-19 outbreak among the players.

The suspension of the tournament was announced after SunRisers Hyderabad's (SRH) wicketkeeper-batsman Wriddhiman Saha tested positive for COVID-19 along with Delhi Capitals' veteran spinner Amit Mishra.

"We need to send them (foreign players) home and we will find a way to do that," Brijesh said but did not elaborate beyond that.

The foreigners involved in the lucrative league are concerned about returning to their respective countries due to travel re-

strictions imposed. The BCCI had assured foreign players of a safe return earlier as well.

The IPL had 14 Australian players left, after three pullouts a few days ago. There were 10 from New Zealand and 11 Englishmen. South Africa had 11 players in the league, which also featured nine West Indians, three Afghans and two from Bangladesh.

It is the Australian government which is causing maximum headache for the BCCI bosses. It has said that no one will be allowed to enter the country from India till May 15. This decision has left cricketers like Steve Smith, David Warner, Pat Cummins, Riley Meredith and coaches like David Hussey and Tom Moody in a quandary. Amid this CSA batting coach Mike Hussey tested positive Tuesday.

Sources said that the Australians may fly off to Maldives in an at-

tempt to return home.

"Cricket Australia (CA) is in direct contact with the BCCI as they work through plans to ensure the safe accommodation and repatriation of Australian players, coaches, match officials and commentators back home to Australia," Australia's cricket body said in a release.

"CA and the ACA respect the decision of the Australian Government to pause travel from India until at least May 15 and will not seek exemptions," the statement also said.

Cricket South Africa (CSA) on the other hand, said it is in contact with its players who will need to home quarantine on arrival from India as per the WHO recommendations. CSA also said it supported the BCCI's decision to suspend the league.

New Zealand Cricket expressed faith in BCCI's ability to handle the situation. "The players are in a relatively safe environment and those in affected teams are in isolation," read a NZC statement posted by 'ESPNCricinfo'. Earlier the Indian and New Zealand players were supposed to travel together in a chartered flight to the UK in the first week of June where they will clash in the World Test Championships final in June. However now, the situation has changed.

'STAR INDIA' BACKS BCCI DECISION

MUMBAI: 'Star India', the official broadcaster of the IPL supported Tuesday the BCCI's decision to indefinitely suspend the lucrative T20 event due to a COVID-19 outbreak in its bio-bubble. "Star India supports BCCI's decision to postpone IPL 2021. The health and safety of players, staff and everyone involved in the IPL are of paramount importance. We thank the BCCI, IPL Governing Council, players, franchisees and sponsors for their support," 'Star India' said in a statement hours after the BCCI decision. The broadcasters also said it was 'indebted' to its employees, on-air talent, production and broadcast crews for delivering the broadcast to millions of homes in these challenging times. "We are also indebted to our employees, on-air talent, production, and broadcast crews for trying their best to spread positivity by delivering the broadcast of IPL 2021 to millions of homes in the face of challenging circumstances," the statement said. Sources said the BCCI stands to lose over ₹2,000 crore of broadcast and sponsorship money earmarked for IPL 2021. "We would lose anything between ₹2,000 to ₹2,500 crore for the mid-way postponement," a BCCI official said.

TOP OVERSEAS PLAYERS IN IPL

AUSTRALIA	SOUTH AFRICA	NEW ZEALAND	ENGLAND
Steve Smith	Kagiso Rabada	Kane Williamson	Jos Buttler
David Warner	Chris Morris	Trent Boult	Chris Jordan
Pat Cummins	Faf du Plessis	Jimmy Neesham	Eoin Morgan

*Many others like Chris Gayle, Andre Russell and Rashid Khan not named in list



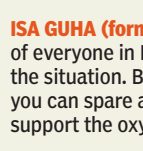
Board decision lauded

NEW DELHI: The 14th edition of the IPL was suspended Tuesday by the BCCI owing to the rise in COVID-19 cases among players and support staff of different franchises. The move sent Twitter into a frenzy with former players, commentators and even fans having something to say about the development. Here's what they had to say on the microblogging platform

MOHAMMED AZHARUDDIN: In view of the COVID crisis in India and with players testing positive, the postponement of IPL with immediate effect is the correct course of action taken by @BCCI and the IPL governing council. Hope to see IPL back soon in better & safe environment.



HARSHA BHOGLE: I guess it became inevitable in the last couple of days... Look forward to calling the action in happier times. The #IPL is a great event and I hope it returns stronger when the world is what we knew it to be.



ISA GUHA (former England player): Thinking of everyone in India. Heartbreaking to see the situation. Below is where I've donated if you can spare a penny - all money is going to support the oxygen crisis. #COVID19India.



KEVIN PIETERSEN: India - it's heartbreaking to see a country I love so much suffering! You WILL get through this! You WILL be stronger coming out of this. Your kindness & generosity NEVER goes unnoticed even during this crisis! #IncredibleIndia



DALE STEYN: Covid don't care. It has no favourites. Get well to those sick and hopefully everyone else will get home safe and in good health (sic).



AZHAR MAHMOOD (former Pakistani cricketer): We are in a worldwide pandemic - faced with several challenges. It's sad to see another big tournament being affected - however it's the right decision taken at this point. It's important to understand nothing can be water tight & working against a pandemic is challenging itself.



PANDEMIC SITUATION FORCES BCCI TO RETHINK ABOUT MEGA EVENT WITH 16 TEAMS

T20 World Cup may shift to UAE

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, May 4: This year's T20 World Cup is set to be moved from India to the UAE with the BCCI acknowledging that none of the participating teams would be 'comfortable' coming here because 'a third wave' of COVID-19 cases is expected at the time of the event. The final decision on this matter will be taken in a month's time. Sources however, said that the BCCI is jittery in organising the 16-team tournament in October-November this year.

Sources also informed that BCCI officials held discussions with some of the top decision-makers in the central

government recently and a shift to the UAE has been more or less agreed upon. The dates of the marquee competition, which was planned across nine venues, have not yet been finalised.

"The suspension of IPL within four weeks is an indicator that it's not really safe to host a global event of that magnitude at a time when India is fighting its worst health crisis in last 70 years," a senior BCCI source privy to development told this agency Tuesday on conditions of anonymity.

"There is a chance of a third wave hitting the Indian shores in November. So while BCCI will remain the hosts, the tournament will probably shift to the

A third Covid-19 wave may hit India when the T20 World Cup will be played. So BCCI will remain the host, but the event will be shifted to UAE

BCCI OFFICIAL

UAE," he added.

Health experts have warned of a third wave in India in September, a view that has been shared by Maharashtra Health Minister Rajesh Tope.

"You can be rest assured that most of the top nations wouldn't like to tour India in the next six months. The play-

ers and their families would be very wary to travel if they are in the middle of another surge. So expect BCCI to agree with shift of tournament to UAE," another source also chimed in.

"It (the IPL) was going well but the bio-bubble has now become porous. What's the guarantee it won't happen again in October-November. Nations like Australia, England and New Zealand are almost certain to have travel advisories in place," he argued.

One of the biggest reasons for conducting the tournament in the UAE is that it can be kept to three grounds - Sharjah, Dubai and Abu Dhabi - and there is no air travel, the source added.



BCCI president Sourav Ganguly and secretary Jay Shah pose with the T20 World Cup trophy

NEWS IN BRIEF

New job for Jose

Rome: Jose Mourinho has been appointed as the new manager of Italian club Roma. The former Tottenham Hotspur manager will take charge for the 2021-22 season. The club made the announcement through a social media post. "The club are delighted to announce an agreement has been reached with Jose Mourinho for him to become our new head coach ahead of the 2021-22 season," Roma said in a tweet.

Selby triumphs

Sheffield (England): In front of a full house at the Crucible Theatre here, Mark Selby won the world snooker championship title for the fourth time beating Shaun Murphy 18-15 in the final. Only four players - Stephen Hendry (seven), Ronnie O'Sullivan, Ray Reardon and Steve Davis (all six each) - have won more world titles than Selby, who also captured the biggest prize in the sport in 2014, '16 and '17.

Sad demise

New Delhi: Boxing Federation of India's (BFI) executive director RK Sacheti died Tuesday after battling COVID-19 for the past few days and was on ventilator support. He was 56. "With a deep sense of sorrow & grief, we inform you that Mr RK Sacheti, ED (BFI) left for heavenly abode today (Tuesday) morning, creating a huge void in the sports world," the BFI said in a statement. BFI president Ajay Singh said Sacheti was the 'life and soul' of the national body.

Ronaldo strikes lift Juve



ALL SET TO STRIKE: Cristiano Ronaldo about to score from the penalty spot in the game against Udinese played Sunday

AGENCIES

Turin, May 4: Inter Milan may have sealed their spot at the top of Serie A, but that hasn't stopped Cristiano Ronaldo from continuing to deliver for Juventus. The Portuguese scored two late goals and helped Juventus win their game against Udinese 2-1 here Sunday. However, for the moment, Juve are third on the points table with three games still remaining. They are on 69 points and finishing within the top four will ensure a spot in the Champions League next season.

"We earned this win with effort and pride, and it's a very important one given the other results this (Sunday) afternoon. "We lost points against teams that we should have beaten, sometimes naively, we let Inter escape and now we are focused on reaching the Champions League," said Juve

coach Andrea Pirlo.

Juventus had trailed for most of the game after Nahuel Molina put Udinese ahead in the 10th minute, blasting in off a quickly taken Rodrigo De Paul free-kick while Juventus players were still protesting.

Weston McKennie missed a chance to level for Juventus before the half-hour mark when he sent a diving header wide. The equaliser came with seven minutes to go after De Paul conceded a penalty for handball from a Ronaldo free-kick. The Portuguese forward made no mistake from the spot. Four minutes later he grabbed the winner when he headed home an Adrien Rabiot cross, with relieved coach Pirlo racing to join the celebrations.

Ronaldo's brace takes his Serie A-leading tally to 27 goals, six more than Inter Milan's Romelu Lukaku.

TEAM WORKING HARD TO SCORE MORE FIELD GOALS TOKYO BEST CHANCE TO WIN MEDAL: LALIT

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bangalore, May 4: Indian men's hockey team forward Lalit Upadhyay has said that the players need to work on converting field chances into goals ahead of the Tokyo Olympics scheduled to start July 23.

During the recent Argentina tour, the Indian team scored 12 goals in four practice matches and five goals in two FIH Pro League games against the Olympic champions. However, Lalit said there is still room for improvement as nine goals came via penalty corners. He also informed that the upcoming Tokyo Olympics is India's best chance to win a medal.

"The matches against Argentina were high-scoring games and it's never easy to score field goals against them," said Lalit, who scored in India's 3-0 win against the same side in the FIH Pro League tie.

"Over these last few months, we have really worked a lot on converting field chances as well as creating penalty corner opportunities. We have also focused on how we must work our way into the circle from the 25m mark," informed the forward.

Lalit said the team can be a bit



LALIT UPADHYAY

sharper while taking chances inside the circle. "This is something we are focusing on during our ongoing camp," he said.

Lalit asserted that India can win a medal at the Tokyo Olympics despite facing several challenges in the lead up to the Games due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

"All of us in the core group believe this (Tokyo Olympics) is our best shot at a medal. We continue to work towards that mission despite whatever challenges we may have to face in the lead up," Lalit signed off.

TIES POSTPONED

LAUSANNE: India's upcoming FIH Hockey Pro League away fixtures against Spain and Germany later this month have been postponed due to the international travel restrictions imposed in the wake of surging Covid-19 cases, the world body (FIH) informed Tuesday. India were scheduled to play against Spain, May 15 and 16, followed by the two-leg tie in Germany, May 23 and 24. "FIH, Hockey India as well as the national associations of Germany, Spain and Great Britain are trying to reschedule the games," FIH said in a statement.

Harmanpreet, 3 others to play in 'Hundred' tourney

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, May 4: The BCCI has granted no objection certificates (NOCs) to four Indian women cricketers, including T20 captain Harmanpreet Kaur, to play in the inaugural 'Hundred' tournament in the United Kingdom starting July 21. The others who have got NOCs are opener Smriti Mandhana and all-rounder Deepti Sharma. However, the name of the fourth player has not been disclosed by the BCCI. The 'Hundred' is a tournament where each side gets to bat for 100 deliveries.

"Harmanpreet, Mandhana, Deepti and another player have got the clearance as the BCCI has granted the NOC for them," a BCCI source said Tuesday.

It is learnt that these four Indian players will extend their stay in the UK following the completion of India's multi-format tour of England in June-July. The tour begins June 16 with a one-off Test at Bristol and concludes July 15 with the third and final T20I. A three-match ODI series is slotted in between.

The Indian team for the tour is yet to be announced while a new head coach is expected to be named soon by the BCCI's cricket advisory committee (CAC).

The selected players will report May 27. However, it is not known how they will travel to the UK as flights from India have been suspended by the British government.