

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, May 21: The India Meteorological Department (IMD) Friday said a low pressure area, which may give birth to cyclone 'Yaas' will take shape in the Bay of Bengal Saturday. A cyclonic circulation lies over

southeast and adjoining central Bay of Bengal between 3.1 km & 5.8 km above mean sea level. Under its influence, a low-pressure area is very likely to form over east-central Bay of Bengal and adjoining north Andaman Sea May 22, the IMD said. The low-pressure system may intensify into depression May 23 and into a cyclone May 24. The cyclone is likely to make landfall between Odisha and West Bengal. The system is very likely to move north-westwards and reach Odisha-West Bengal coast around May 26 morning, the IMD said.

Apart from putting at least 14 districts on high alert in the wake of the IMD's forecast, the state government Friday urged the Indian Navy and the Indian Coast Guard to be prepared for the emerging situation.

IRREGULAR by MANJUL



DGP Abhay holds a discussion with ODRAF personnel on OSAP 6th Battalion premises in Cuttack, Friday

Chief Secretary SC Mahapatra, after a meeting with senior officials, said that the state administration is geared up to meet the eventuality if cyclone 'Yaas' has any impact on the state.

Special Relief Commissioner (SRC) PK Jena, who held a series of meetings on the matter, spoke to collectors of 14 districts, different line departments, power distribution companies, telecom providers, authorities of NDRF, ODRAF, Odisha police, state Fire Service and apprised them about their role during the crisis.

'The DIG of Indian Coast Guard has informed us that two of their flights and two ships are making rounds of the Bay of Bengal. They will rescue the fishermen if trapped anywhere in the sea," Jena said

TRAINS CANCELLED

74 trains originating/ terminating at Bhubaneswar & Puri and trains passing through East Coast Railway route on Howrah-Chennai line cancelled

 Centre asks Odisha, West Bengal, Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu and Andaman and Nicobar Islands to ensure that health facilities are stocked with essential medicines and supplies

So far 39 fishermen are in the deep sea and they are expected to return to the shore by Saturday morning, he added. He said the authorities of Indian Naval Ship Chilika and Indian Navy have been alerted and are in touch with the state government to meet the challenges posed by the possible calamity. Stating that five teams of NDRF have so far returned to Odisha from Gujarat, Jena said 17 NDRF teams, 20 battalions of ODRAF and 100 teams of Fire Service are in readiness for relief and rescue operation. Besides, the forest department has

been put on alert to ensure clearing

of roads likely to be blocked by trees falling due to the possible cyclone. Power distribution companies and telecom providers are told to remain prepared to start restoration work as soon as the calamity is over. Adequate generators have been kept in ready condition to ensure uninterrupted drinking water supply. Jena said collectors have identified suitable pucca buildings to keep people in safe shelter. Water Resources chief engineer

Jyotirmay Ratha said a 24-hour control room will be established with the coordination of three departments-Rural Development, Works and Water Resources.

A toll-free number will also be issued for people so that they can sound their grievances and seek help in case of any emergency during and after the cyclone, said Ratha. Since the cyclone is taking place in the summer, there is little likelihood of any flood situation in the state, he claimed.

Police DG Abhay held a review meeting with officials of ODRAF and said the disaster management wing is fully prepared to face any exigency.

AP HC declares Kotia poll invalid



POST NEWS NETWORK

Pottangi. May 21: The Andhra



State relaxes terms of global tender for vax procurement

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, May 21: In a bid to attract more vaccine manufacturers, the state Cabinet Friday relaxed the terms of the global tender floated for procurement

Briefing media persons after the meet, Chief Secretary SC Mahapatra said, "To facilitate the participation of manufacturers of vaccines to be stored in supercool temperature, the storage condition has been revised up to (-)20°C subject to condition that the vaccines will remain stable and maintain their potency at 2°C to 8°C for at least 12 hours.'

Relaxation has been approved in the EMD, bid security and liquidated damages to attract more vaccine manufacturers within the 120 days. country and abroad, he said.

As each vaccine is proprietary in nature and is not comparable to any other vaccine, the price evaluation mechanism will be made by comparison of basic quoted prices of each bidder excluding GST. All bidders will be treated in-

The Cabinet has approved the proposal to waive off license fee and other government fees on liquor

Another day, another record POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, May 21: Odisha Friday reported the highest singleday spike of 12,523 new COVID-19 cases and a record 27 more deaths, a Health Department official said. The new cases were recorded after testing 61,665 samples Thursday, taking the positivity rate to 20.30 per cent. The state has so far reported 6,68,422 cases of COVID-19 and 2,430 deaths. Of the new infections, 7,012 were detected at different quarantine centres and the remaining 5,511 were local contact cases. Khurda district, of which the state capital Bhubaneswar is a part, reported the highest 1,842 new cases, followed by

Now, white fungus cases in Odisha

SAMBALPUR: Three patients undergoing treatment at VIMSAR in Burla were diagnosed with white fungus infection Friday while two others were found having black fungus infection. Their condition is stated to be critical. However, medicines required for their treatment are not available at the premier hospital. The government has been apprised of the cases while AIIMS is being contacted, VIMSAR Superintendent Dr Lala Mohan Navak said.

Cuttack (1084), Angul (930), Sundargarh (715), Puri (568) and

Mayurbhanj (546).

Only two districts -- Gajapati (53) and Malkangiri (73) -- reported less than 100 new cases, the health official said.

Khurda and Koraput reported four deaths each, followed by three deaths each in Nuapada, Rayagada and Sundargarh. There are 1,09,438 active cases in the state at present.

In all, 5,56,501 patients have been cured of the diseases, including 9,870 in the last 24 hours.

Meanwhile, the Odisha government discontinued plasma therapy for the treatment of COVID-19 in the state as per the revised guidelines issued by the Union Ministry of Health and Family Welfare.



DRDO's antibody

defence ministry said Friday.

The testing kit is called DIP-

icantly faster turn-around-

time as it requires just 75

minutes to conduct the test

without any cross reactivity

with other diseases," the

ministry's statement noted

COVAN and it offers a "signif-

detection kit to give results in 75 mins NEW DELHI: The Defence **Research and Development** Organisation (DRDO) has developed a COVID-19 antibody detection kit that offers of Covid-19 vaccines. results in just 75 minutes, the

days and 3.8 crore doses by

The Cabinet also approved the tender for construction a portion of Rengali Left Bank Canal (7 km) at a cost of ₹247.13 crore. The work will be completed within 36 months.

13 Naxals killed in Maha encounter

Mumbai: At least 13 Naxals were killed in an encounter with police's C-60 commandos in Gadchiroli district of Maharashtra Friday, officials said. The skirmish took place around 5.30 am in the forest at Kotmi in Etapalli, where the Naxals had gathered for a meeting, said Sandeep Patil, DIG of Gadchiroli. "Based on specific inputs, the police party, comprising C-60 commandos, had launched a search operation in the forest," he said. **P**8

No hanky if he gets emotional

in front of public. He himself has

given this instruction

Tejpal acquitted of rape charges

Panaji: A sessions court in Goa Friday acquitted journalist Tarun Tejpal of sexually assaulting a former female colleague. Tejpal, former Tehelka editor-in-chief, was accused of sexually assaulting the colleague inside the elevator of a luxury hotel in Goa in 2013. Additional sessions judge Kshama Joshi acquitted Tejpal. **P**9

MARKET WATCH							
IN	RIATION						
BOURSES	SENSEX	50540.48		975.62			
BOU	NIFTY	15175.30	1	269.30			
CURRENCY	DOLLAR	75.69		₹0.74			
	EURO	89.05	♥	₹0.22			
BULLION	GOLD	₹48,390	♥	₹154			
	SILVER	₹71,645	₽	₹659			





AG Square in Bhubaneswar witnesses a rush as people go for shopping and other works ahead of the two-day weekend shutdown, Friday

deliberate upon the options, includ-

ing voluntary licence, compulsory li-

cence and government use authori-

sation under the Patents Act, 1970,

available to increase the availability

of drugs and vaccines used for treat-

The Ministry of External Affairs

has also been asked to take up the

matter with AstraZeneca, the maker

of Covishield, to encourage them to

grant more voluntary licences in

ment of COVID-19.

India

Pradesh government received a jolt Friday as the Andhra High Court declared the panchayat and zilla parished elections in the state, including in disputed Kotia panchayat, as invalid.

As per the directive of the Supreme Court, the High Court stated that the Andhra government has violated norms related to holding of elections in panchayat and zilla parishad bodies. Elections to panchayats and zill parishad bodies are supposed to be held four weeks after the notification, but the Andhra government held the election in Kotia within a week from the date of notification, violating the norms.

It may be noted here that leaders of Andhra BJP, TDP and Jana Sena had moved the Andhra High Court against the elections in Kotia April 3.

A three-member division bench of the High Court took up hearing of the case April 6 and put a stay on the elections. Challenging the HC move, the AP government moved the Supreme Court and got permission from the apex court and held election in Kotia.

dependently. The state government has

'on' shops in view of the reannounced free vaccination strictions imposed due to for the 18-44 age group. Later, Covid last year. The shops refollowing shortage in supply mained closed during June from Indian vaccine manto December, 2020. The Excise department ufacturers, the state decided to procure vaccines from has formulated a proposal to provide graded relief to the open market through global tender by the Odisha State Medical Corporation Ltd. The corporation floated a global e-tender for procurement of 3.8 crore doses

of vaccines in four phases. It expects 75 lakh doses in 30 days of the purchase order, 2.25 crore doses within 60 days, 3.75 crore doses by 90

liquor 'on' shop licensees after taking into account the profit margin earned on value of liquor lifted by each licensee. Accordingly, 364 out of a

total of 613 'on' licensees have been granted partial waiver of license fee for the period.

Oil prices see 11th hike this month

AGENCIES

crossed the ₹91-mark. This

new development came after

oil companies raised rates

again after a hiatus of two

days. Petrol price was in-

creased by 19 paise per litre

and diesel by 29 paise a litre.

This is according to a price

notification by state-owned

the 11th this month-pushed

petrol and diesel prices to all-

time high levels across India.

In Delhi, petrol rates climbed

to ₹93.04 a litre and diesel

Rates had already crossed

Pradesh and Maharashtra.

With the latest increase, the

price in Mumbai too was

inching towards that level.

fuel retailers. The hike -

PETROL ₹93.81 (+0.19) DIESEL ₹91.36 (+0.32)

CITY FUEL PRICES

A litre of petrol in Mumbai now costs ₹99.32 and diesel is priced at ₹91.01 per litre. Fuel prices differ from state to state depending on the incidence of local taxes

such as VAT and freight charges. Rajasthan levies the highest value-added tax (VAT) on petrol in India. It is followed by Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra.

Oil companies revise rates of petrol and diesel daily based on average price of benchmark fuel in the international market.

This is the 11th increase in prices since May 4. The state-owned oil firms ended an 18-day hiatus in rate revision they observed during Assembly elections in states like West Bengal.

Centre mulls producing Covaxin abroad New Delhi, May 21: Petrol price Friday inched closer to the ₹100-a-litre mark in Mumbai, while diesel

AGENCIES

New Delhi, May 21: To address the shortage of COVID-19 jabs in the country, the government is exploring the possibility of boosting production of vaccines, including identifying manufacturing sites for indigenously developed Covaxin outside India, sources said.

The government also intends to take up the matter with the World Health Organisation (WHO) to step up Covaxin production. It will also take up with Moderna,

Johnson and Johnson and other vaccine makers the issue of granting voluntary licence to third-party manufacturers in India on transfer of technology basis.

These issues were discussed in an inter-ministerial meeting May 18 to

The MEA and the Department of Biotechnology (DBT) will also prepare a roadmap to address raw material supply constraints for Covishield and identify the sources of raw material, sources said.

Many states have complained about the shortage of vaccines. To address the issue, the government has been taking measures to ramp up the production of Covaxin.

Last week, VK Paul, Member (Health) in the Niti Aayog said Covaxin requires a Biosafety Laboratory-3, a facility which is not available with all.

The DBT and the Drug Controller General of India (DCGI) have been asked to identify manufacturers having BSL-3 facility as well as those who can establish such a facility to increase manufacturing sites in India, sources said

India, Pfizer at impasse over vaccine indemnity

NEW DELHI/NEW YORK: Pfizer and New Delhi are at loggerheads over a demand by the US drugmaker for legal protection from any claims linked to the use of its COVID-19 vaccine in one of the world's biggest markets, sources told Reuters. India has not given any manufacturer of a COVID-19 vaccine indemnity against the costs of compensation for any severe side effects, which is a condition Pfizer has obtained in many countries where its shots have already been widely rolled out, including Britain and the US. "The whole problem with Pfizer is the indemnity bond. Why should we sign it?" a government source with direct knowledge of the matter told Reuters.





the ₹100-mark in several cities in Rajasthan, Madhya

rose to ₹83.80.



REBECCA TO STAR IN APPLE'S WOOL SERIES ADAPTATION

Actor Rebecca Ferguson will play the lead role in *Wool*, a drama series based on American author Hugh Howey's best-selling book trilogy, set at Apple. According to Variety, the dystopian drama has Graham Yost on board as showrunner. Ferguson, who will also serve as executive producer, will portray the role of Juliette, an independent and hardworking engineer.

LADY GAGA RECALLS TRAUMA OF BEING RAPED

Grammy and Oscar-winning singer Lady Gaga has opened up about her trauma of being raped, while speaking on Oprah Winfrey and Prince Harry's series The Me You Cant See. Gaga remembers being 19 when a producer threatened to burn her music if she didn't take her clothes off.



FORTUNE FORECAST GaneshaSpeaks.com accuracy 🔹 reliability 🛛 trust 🞑 FOR ASTROLOGY DIAL 55181 ARIES

For no reason whatsoev er, vou may clam up today. Of course, you wil give credit to others wherever they've contributed. But you need to be more generous than that, says Ganesha, and share the secrets of your success with vour compatriots.

TAURUS

Ganesha predicts that today, you will be successful in money matters. There is, at best, only an outside chance that any stimulating event or thrilling escapade will occur today. In short, the day may be boring

GEMINI

Today will be a day of joy, happiness and festivities on the home-front. You will try and spend as much time as possible with the children and will enthusiasti cally participate in home improvement projects. You will be able to solve pending issues at home by taking an intelligent interest in them, says Ganesha.

CANCER Your speech will today

explode your thoughts. You will ponder over new deals and decide to act only after much thought. Ganesha

feels that you met with success in your ambition to achieve a breakthrough

LEO

You will feel a little uneasy today. You will feel that nothing is going right. You will try to organise yourself and concentrate your scattered energies today. This phase of uncertainity will be gone in a few days, assures Ganesha.

VIRGO

The time today is ripe to venture into a new business. Projects that have been put-off will finally be completed. Looking into the week ahead, you are most likely to give yourself an energy zap. Parties will be all fun and entertainment



may seem otherwise" Let this be your motto

for the day. Today may not seem to be the most productive day, especially when it comes to interviews. You may feel like the in the chess set – sometimes con ing back to square one despite making many moves forward to the ultimate checkmate! So remember, persistence is the key, says Ganesha.

WE NEED TO FOCUS ON LITERARY TRANSLATION' Noted poet and literary critic

Dr Hrushikesh Mallick is known as one of the

trendsetters in Odia literature. No wonder, his maiden poetry anthology 'Dhana Saunta Jhia' won the Odisha Sahitya Akademi award in 1988.

With more than 40 books to his credit, Mallick has been honoured by many prestigious literary organisations in the state. Mallick reveals his

plans for the growth of Odia language and literature once he assumes office at the helm of the Odisha

Sahitya Akademi. How would you react after being nominated as OSA chief?

Frankly speaking, I didn't expect this position. I will thank Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik and the selection committee for choosing me as the President of OSA.I will give my best to live up to the expectations of the government and for the growth of

Sushmita gets

nostalgic



■ What will be your immediate plans after assuming office?

First, I will work on the Odisha Sahitya Akademi awards which have not been announced in the last five years. I will also try to organise more literary events to expand the reach of Odia language

What is the role of OSA in promoting new writers?

The Akademi selects the best author every year through a competition and publishes the best work to encourage the new writers

Please reveal your plans for the revival of old classic literature?

We have plans in place to publish old classics again as the practice has been stopped for some time. I believe this will help to reach out to the new generation readers

Do you believe that literature of other languages affects Odia? What will be your plan for the growth of Odia literature?

I don't think any language ever affects other languages adversely. In fact learning multiple languages is the best way for the students of literature to know global cultures. For the growth of Odia literature, we have to focus on translation of Odia books to other languages so that they can know the richness of our language and literature.



Motherland INDIA ...Happpyyyy 27th Anniversary of India's first ever victory at #MissUniverse in Manila #philippines

'That early morning on 21st May 1994, not only ple, from around the

have shared for 27 years & counting Thank you #misscolombia1994 Carolina @carogomezfilms for teaching me grace!!Thank you to all the kind & loving peo-

'Will work on lesser known performing art forms'

folk dance and music forms

such as Dalkhai, Bagha

Nacha, Ghumura

Dance, Gotipua

which are on the

verge of disap-

■ The state

government

has been

seeking

classical

many

status for

Odissi for

pearance.

ARINDAM GANGULY, OP

What will be your focus areas as **OSNA President?**

I was Akademi's Vice-president a few years back, so I am aware of its history and objectives quite well. OSNA works towards the growth of all sorts of art forms such as theatre, music, dance, folk art and others. At the moment, the cultural events are on hold due to Covid-19. But the recorded performances of many artistes are being streamed digitally. Therefore, I will try to involve as many talents as possible and showcase their skills online. Also, we have to be prepared to open auditoriums, subject to government's approval, once normalcy returns.

What are the works that you want to complete which were left unfinished when you were vice-president?

■ We had launched district-wise cultural activities based on local art forms like Sambalpuri dance, Chhau dance, Gotipua among others. There were also plans to organise festivals in interior pockets. The purpose was to attract more and more tourists to the less explored regions. I would like to continue these activities.

Amid the ongoing pandemic situation, what are your plans to help out state's performing artistes?

First, I will have discussions with officials of other Akademis, Minister of the Department and others to learn about issues like ground realities, fund allocations among others. Then I can say anything on the issue.

As a consummate Odissi danseuse and now being the President of OSNA, how do you plan to

Odissi danseuse and Padma Shri awardee Guru Aruna Mohanty needs no introduction to the art and culture aficionados of the state. A recipient of the Central and State Sangeet Natak Akademi Awards, she is arguably the finest among the Odissi dancers in the country. She has travelled across the globe to present solo and group presentations. Needless to say, her dance speaks a thousand words. Known for her attempts to challenge gender stereotypes through dance, Aruna, who has been selected to head Odisha Sangeet Natak Akademi, shares *her future plans with* **Orissa POST***. Excerpts:*

on a global platform, I will pay at- years. How would you take the issue tention to other lesser known forward?

> Odissi Research Centre, an autonomous institution of Government of Odisha is functioning for the growth of Odissi. Instead of working separately. the Akademi will coordinate with the unit to achieve the target.

SCORPIO



chaotic way you perform your tasks though not apparent to others. Revitalise yourself and plunge into work with newfound zest and vigour, advises Ganesha

SAGITTARIUS

You will enjoy the magic of the Midas touch today feels Ganesha. In business, sheer brilliance will

help you derive the best possible results in productivity and clinching new contracts. Your approach, in general, will be methodical, disciplined and systematic for most part of the day.

CAPRICORN

Your power of reasoning will be strong today, say Ganesha. Those of you beginning your career

will show a disposition to take up a job in television or print media. The spiritual side of you may also come to the fore and make you feel at peace, especially when visiting a holy place.

AQUARIUS

You will spend the day introspecting, but the mental peace will still seem distant. Some

unavoidable circumstances will force you to handle the situations with diligence, feels Ganesha. Due to your devotion to the Almighty and spiritualism, you will be able to deal with problems pretty well.



.....

teams, but today you can do anything you want. You will be able to show your expertise to your team today and will be praised by all. Women will make a profit today and will feel encouraged.

heartfelt post ever stared at the Dedicating the post to Motherland India, Sushmita penned a heartfelt note where she

Mumbai: Sushmita Sen

took a trip down

memory lane as she

celebrated 27 glorious

years of her winning the

Miss Universe pageant

in 1994. She also shared a

lovely throwback picture

of herself along with a

impossible & thanked God for giving you the opportunity to make it possible? I have!!! To my

thanked everyone for their wishes and blessings

The actress also added

that the victory in 1994

not only changed her life,

it also made history.

Sharing a stunning

throwback picture of her-

self, she wrote, 'Have you

changed an 18 yr olds life forever...it made History!! #mahalkita Philippines for the romance we

globe, that touched my undertake the further growth of life from a very young age & inspired the woman I am today. Agencies

FUN

the art? ■ Since Odissi is already popular









CALVIN AND HOBBES







CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW

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.

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	1	8	Γ						T	3				6	;
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7			8	3					Ι	9				2	2
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SOLUTIONS															
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ASSAULT ON 4TH ESTATE DECRIED

At a time when many believe that India is becoming unsafe for journalists and studies reveal how scribes are becoming soft targets of police, the highly condemnable incident of police brutality on Dattatreya Nayak, Puri district correspondent of leading Odia daily Dharitri, has invited widespread criticisms from all walks of life. While many demanded exemplary action against the erring men in khaki, some others termed the act of police as 'murder of democracy' and pleaded for a 'Journalist Protection Act' in the country...



Dharitri district correspondent Dattatreya Nayak staging a dharna on the Grand Road in Puri to protest the police atrocity against him

I strongly condemn such a owardice act of police on a iournalist.

This is totally unacceptable in a democracy. Instead of acting responsibly and helping people during the trying times, police officials were indulged

in such an inhuman act. Exemplary action should be taken in this case and those responsible for this must be removed from their job.

sh Patnaik, senior journalist



assault. There is a need for Journalist Protection Act in the country

Ashwani Dubey, Advocate-on Record, **Supreme Court** condemns the incident. There must be an impartial probe into the incident and stern action should be taken against the culprits Prafulla Kumar **Mohanty, Cuttack District Journalists'** Union president



Journalists are doing their duty amid this pan-

demic. A reporter in Puri has faced police brutality in this trying times. We condemn the

under the relevant Sections of IPC should be registered against the cops involved in inhuman treatment. If a journalist of an established newspaper has been subjected to such torture by cops, then police brutalities on Dalits and tribals could be easily imagined. Biswapriya Kanungo, human rights activist

While the state government has allowed the street vendors selling essential items to open their shops till 11am, why the police used force against the vendors to close their shops before 10am. The

while sympathy is an exception. A criminal case

representative of a reputed newspaper who was just performing

Media is the mirror of the society. The police highhandedness on a reporter is highly condemnable. Police should take action against the law breakers. They must not harass working journalist Jayanta Sarangi,



Misuse of power is always condemnable. Journalists are doing their work to bring the









brutal torture of the

Police atrocity against journalists is rising by the day in the state. The duty of police is to protect people and not to attack journalists who are

working round the clock for the people during this pandemic. If the journalists are not safe in a welfare state, how could one assure that the people are safe? I strongly condemn this and demand strong action against the police personnel involved in the act

Pradyumna Kumar Mohanty, state vice president of National Journalist Welfare Board

This is a very shameful and barbaric incident. We have witnessed attacks on journalists by an-

tisocial elements for fearless reporting. But, in this case, the police have assaulted a young reporter which is highly condemnable. This is high time the authorities laid down detailed guidelines for all government officials and police regarding how they should behave with the journal

ists and how to deal with atrocities against scribes. Rabi Das, senior journalist

I strongly condemn it. Police attacked the journalist in Puri in a bid to hide their loopholes. The police should act responsibly at least during this pandemic. If you are not able to protect the scribes, at least allow them to perform their duty honestly

Prasanna Kumar Mohanty, President, Odisha Union of Journalists

The freedom of press of cannot be curtailed. Press is the Fourth Pillar of democracy. Even the Supreme Court in a recent judgement has made it clear that media has freedom to report.

Attack on journalists is assault on the Fourth

Estate of democracy. Police highhandedness is not acceptable. Many media persons had faced assault from police in the past. Journalists are now gathering information for news reports by risking their lives during the pandemic. Police attack on working journalists is highly condemnable

Rabi Ranjan Sahu, Cuttack Citizens' Forum chief

While journalists are collecting news putting their lives in danger due to the pandemic, police

assault on a reporter in Puri is highly condemnable. The Odisha Human **Rights Commission** should take suo motu cognisance of the incident and ensure stern action against concerned policemen. Police highhandedness against fruit and vegetables vendors

the

is unacceptable

Satya Ray, senior journalist



Debashis Panda, criminal lawyer

The Chief Minister has declared journalists as frontline warriors against Covid-19. Many journalists have lost their lives on the line of duty amid the pandemic. Some police personnel have assaulted reporter Dattatreya Nayak just to hide their own fault. Cuttack district journalists' union incident. Poor people are now facing a difficult situation to earn their livelihood. Police highhandedness on vendors is also condemnable.

Muhammad Moquim. **Barabati-Cuttack MLA**

Journalists have every right to question the authority when they see any injustice happening around. The journalist, instead of shooting the barbaric attack by cops on the vendors, decided to speak out and question the police action. Besides being a journalist, the scribe acted

more as a human and must be respected rather than subjected to police atrocities.

Sankar Prasad Pani, Orissa HC lawyer

This is astonishing that on one hand the government is declaring them frontline workers and on the other they are

subjected to barbarity of police. The police are at fault by beating up the scribe and have set a bad example by beating a poor vendor. The police department needs to undertake special training on being sensitive especially to the poor at the time of pandemic when their livelihoods are at stake.

Priya Ranjan Sahu, senior journalist

Police don't have the right to physically assault anyone. They are misusing the powers conferred on them under the Epidemic Act during this lockdown. The highhandedness of Puri police further vindicates the fact that rudeness of the police is a rule



his duty is unacceptable and downright abuse of vested power by the cops in Puri. It is further shameful that the cops manhandled the journalist in the presence of a senior

officer. I have sought the intervention of the National Human Rights Commission on the issue.

Pradipta Kumar Nayak, rights activist

Journalists are doing their best to safeguard the freedom of speech. It is

an attempt to crush the free speech. I highly condemn the incident and urge the state government to take stringent action against the cops involved in the act. Journalists are frontline workers and so are the police officials. Any wrongful ac tion against them is unacceptable.

I strongly condemn the attack on the journalist by Puri police. The journalists are the real heroes who are bringing facts to the fore. The constitutional structure will be under threat if no action is taken against the guilty cops. The police in Odisha are yet to come out of their colonial mindset.

Chittaranjan Dash, advocate

Manoj Jena, chairperson,

Human Rights Front





against

journalists

mand proper investigastrong action against the police

Premanand Mohanty, former president of Puri Bar Association



Bhabani Shankar Mishra, president of **Koraput Press Club**



Media is the fourth estate in a democracy. Attack on journalists is like killing democracy. Pramod Rath. president of Sambalpur Lawyers' Association



Vegetable and fruit sellers are running their

business under the scorching sun. Police brutality against vendors is a crime. We condemn police assault on a fruit vendor and a working journalist in Puri. Stern action should be taken against the policemen



Nilakantha Mohanty, Secretary of Chhatra **Bazar Puja Committee**

Journalists are nobody's enemies. There is a need for strong action against the police personnel responsible for the incident Pramod Pattnaik, iournalist Sambalpu

















downtown/state

'Yaas' fear grips **Balasore dist**



POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhograi, May 21: Fear has gripped people of the coastal district of Balasore with the IMD forecasting that Cyclone 'Yaas' is likely to hit it. The district administration is also bracing for tackling the im pending situation.

A number of virtual meetings involving the District Collector, SP and block-level officials were conducted Thursday. Steps to minimise infrastructural damage and protect people have already been discussed

It has been decided that tehsildars. additional tehsildars. BDOs. fire officers, health officers, block chairmen and officials of other departments concerned will work in coordination.

Meanwhile, all the 22 cyclone shelters and 160 schools in this block have been sanitised. It has been done so that people can be evacuated to these shelters quickly.

Similarly, all measures have been taken to ensure supply of electricity, drinking water and food to people taking shelter in these buildings. The administration is also

All measures have been taken to ensure supply of electricity, drinking

water and food to people in cyclone shelters

keeping an eve on the ongoing IMD forecasts. If the situation deteriorates, people living in low-lying areas will promptly be taken to shelters.

Balasore district sharing borders with West Bengal is continuously getting feedback about 'Yaas'. With apprehensions about the storm growing, fishermen who have ventured out into the deep sea are also returning. The administration has asked them to return by May 23.

Remembering the devastation caused by 'Amphan' last year, people have started taking precautionary measures. People living in thatched houses are also worried and taking precautions. Similarly, farmers are seen brining the harvest to safer places

Bhubaneswar, May 21: In a bid to meet the growing demand for healthcare facility for Covid patients, Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik Friday inaugurated a 150bed district Covid hospital at Puri The hospital was built on the premises of Shri Jagannath Medical College at Puri, in collaboration with Sum Hospital, Bhubaneswar. The facility has 90 general oxygen beds, 40 HDU beds and 20 ICU beds. It is also equipped with a high quality laboratory and diag-Speaking on the occasion,

PURI GETS 150-BED COVID-19 HOSPITAL

been connected with oxygen pipeline, and the number of oxygen beds would be further increased if required.

This is a very challenging time The entire expenditure for opfor all of us in the country. The eration of the Covid hospital will pandemic has created a huge hube met from the Chief Minister's manitarian crisis. It's a threat to our Relief Fund (CMRF), the Chief lives, our health, and our general wellbeing." the CM stated. He stated that all the beds had

Last year, despite the economic

BRACING FOR STORM

impact, the state contained the virus with a greater success, he said, adding, "This year in the second wave, we have so far been able to contain it largely. The recovery rate is also improving.'

The Chief Minister said that the state has a robust Covid infrastructure and the government is working to improve it further. The government is making every pos-

sible effort to provide the best treatment facilities and save precious lives, he said.

Appealing to people to follow Covid norms to beat the pandemic, Patnaik said the success in containing this pandemic lies in checking the virus and breaking its chain.

Among others, Health Minister Naba Das, School & Mass

BOOST TO HEALTH INFRA

THE HOSPITAL HAS COME UP ON THE PREMISES OF SHRI JAGANNATH MEDICAL COLLEGE AT PURI, IN COLLABORATION WITH SUM HOSPITAL, BHUBANESWAR

THE FACILITY HAS 90 GENERAL OXYGEN BEDS, 40 HDU BEDS AND 20 ICU BEDS

IT IS EOUIPPED WITH A HIGH QUALITY LABORATORY AND DIAGNOSTIC FACILITY

ENTIRE EXPENDITURE FOR THE FUNCTIONING OF THE FACILITY WOULD BE BORNE BY CMRF

Education Minister Samir Ranjan Das, Sports Minister Tushar Kanti Behera, deputy chairman of the State Planning Board Sanjay Das Burma, Puri MP Pinaki Mishra. Western Odisha Development Council (WODC) chairman Asit Tripathy, Chief Secretary Suresh Chandra Mohapatra and ACS Health PK Mohapatra, attended the meeting.

Chariot construction begins in bio-bubble

Temple Administration (SJTA) Friday started chariot construction activities at Rath Yard in the highly protected bio-bubble, official sources said.

With 10 more persons testing positive for Covid-19, the number of such servitors increased to 18. However, none of the Covid-19 positive servitors had so far entered into the Rath Yard, Puri Collector

istration introduced the bio-bubble system.

sured at Rath Yard. Only authorised personnel are allowed inside the site. Specific police arrangement and barricading has been done for that, reviewed the security struction site," Puri SP said in an

The bio-bubble is an arrangement where the people can work safely without interference of outsiders. The people are protected as all the persons entering the bio-bubble zone must be Covid-19 negative

Once a servitor reports for duty, the SJTA first takes his sample and he stays in isolation at Shree Gundicha Bhakta Niwas till arrival of the test results. "If test report comes negative, then only the servitor is allowed to enter the Rath Yard or else sent to Covid-19 facility. A Covid-19 negative report is mandatory to enter into the biobubble zone," an SJTA official said.

The decision on adopting the bio-bubble technique was taken after eight servitors tested positive for the virus recently.

"The bio-bubble will keep the

He said that inside the bio-bubble, thermal screening of the servitors is being regularly conducted and they will undergo the test frequently. Construction of the chariots began on the auspicious occasion of Akshaya Tritiya, May 15, for the Lord's annual car festi-

val scheduled to begin July 12

servitors, who are engaged in construction of chariots, safe from Covid-19 infection as they will not come in contact with outsiders Only those associated with the chariot construction work will be allowed to enter the bio-bubble starting today," Verma pointed out.

official Twitter post.



tion," Routray said, asking the state government to ensure timely vaccination and treatment to the

ROUTRAY SAID AROUND 150 PEOPLE SUCCUMB TO COVID-19 **EVERYDAY IN ODISHA**

HE SAID THAT THE STATE GOVERNMENT SHOULD NOT RELY ONLY ON THE CENTRE IN

state government not to rely only

Covid crisis in Odisha. "The state government should focus on increasing the beds, oxygen facility and other healthcare assistance for the people of Odisha," Routray pointed out.

He added, "The Union government has not been giving adequate money to the states. The state government should understand the need of the hour and work towards ensuring vac-

on the Centre in managing the

cine to the people.

Heavy rain lashes Bhubaneswar, Friday

POST NEWS NETWORK

on virtual mode.

nostic facility.

Patnaik said the hospital will be helpful in providing better med-

ical care to critical Covid patients

of the district and that they would

not have to look for hospitals in

Bhubaneswar or Cuttack.

Minister announced.

Cong attacks state on rising Covid deaths

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, May 21: The Congress party Friday attacked the state government for rise in Covid deaths in the state.

Party leader Suresh Routray said around 150 people succumb to Covid-19 everyday in Odisha. "The state Health Minister and Chief Secretary are, however, clueless about it. Where are they? Let them visit the crematoriums and witness the intensity of the situa

'NCC Yogdan' helps twin city residents

NO VAX DRIVE IN 2 DISTS TODAY

CONGRESS PARTY LEADER SURESH

MANAGING THE COVID CRISIS

needy Covid patients. The Congress MLA asked the

Panigrahi, Pathak test nCoV positive

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, May 21: Gopalpur lodged in the special jail at Jharpada Panigrahi and Pathak who have been kept in isolation are under-

Sources also confirmed the duo will be immediately shifted to Covid hospital in case of deterioration in their health. On the other hand, the state prisons directorate has requested the Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC) authorities to send a Rapid Response Team (RRT) to Jharpada special jail

OP PHOTO

Sarthak Verma told reporters. He said that the district admin-

"The bio-bubble has been en-

arrangement at the chariot con-

MLA Pradeep Panigrahi and former IFS officer Abhay Kant Pathak, here, have tested positive for Covid Friday. The sources said that both



AGENCIES Puri, May 21: The Shree Jagannath

in virus war

POST NEWS NETWORK

Cuttack, May 21: The 4 (O) CTC NCC, under the guidance of Cuttack Group of Odisha Directorate, has been extending its support to the people of twin cities in handling the pandemic situation, an official said.

The cadets have been motivated to volunteer for the national duty to fight Covid-19 under 'NCC Yogdan'. Cadets are deployed to help in relief efforts and facilitate functioning of various agencies involved in fighting the pandemic, the official said.

To achieve the task, two helplines have been created and are being managed by NCC cadets. Assistance is being provided with respect to information on distribution of relief material, medicines, essential commodities, community assistance, data management, queue and traffic management, making of masks and hand sanitisers.

The cadets are engaged in spreading awareness about the importance of 'SMS'—use of sanitiser. mask and social distancingthrough video messages on Twitter and WhatsApp. During the pandemic, a 30-member group of Aryan Institute of Engineering and Technology, Bhubaneswar, Cadets of 4(O) CTC NCC, Cuttack opened a Covid Help Desk under the guidance of OC, 4(O) CTC and ANO Lt Rudra Prasad Nanda

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, May 21: The state health department Friday announced that there will be no vaccination drive Saturday in two districts of Odisha.

These districts are Keonjhar and Sonepur. However, the state government got a boost with more supply of Covishield from the

Union government which is likely to streamline the vaccination drive across the state.

As per the information by Friday night, the state has now a stockpile of 2,96,350 Covishield doses from the Centre while a total of 3,45,910 doses of Covaxin from the central share are also with the state government. The state Friday could vacci-

ON ALERT

nate a total of 49,660 persons across the state. A total of 394 active sites were used to inoculate people against the pandemic Friday.

As per the latest information from the state health department, the government has been able to inoculate a total of 69,19,986 persons till now. The vaccination drive in the state started January 16 this year.

daily to look after the positive prisoners. As many as 96 prisoners out of the 195 tested were found positive for the virus recently.

The BMC officials have assured the directorate of all help. The superintendent of Jharpada special jail has been asked to keep in touch with the BMC authorities, district administration and CDMO to avoid any eventualities.



The temporary shed for devotees on Grand Road in Puri is being removed as state braces for cyclone Yaas, Friday

Odisha dedicates awareness vehicles to sensitise people about pandemic

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, May 21: The state government Friday dedicated eight awareness vehicles to sensitise people about the severity of the second wave of Covid-19.

The vehicles decorated beautifully and fitted with audiovisuals systems, were launched in joint collaboration of the state health and family welfare, Odia Language, Literature and Culture, and Information and Public Relations departments. The initiative was launched in the presence of Information and Public Relations and Odia Language, Literature and Culture secretary Bishnupada Sethi, culture director Ranjan Kumar Dash and Unicef state culture coordinator Basudev Malabisoi.



Under the initiative, the vehicles will cover four districts — Khurda, Puri, Cuttack and Jagatsinghpurin the next three months and sen-

sitise people on the severity of the novel coronavirus which has brought life to a stand still, said an official

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special



GAGGING PEOPLE'S VOICE

In recent times, attempts by the state to gag media have reached a new low. Cases of assaults on journalists have become dime a dozen. No wonder, India has slipped to 142 on the 180-country World Press Freedom Index. An unflattering commentary on a country which prides itself as the largest functioning democracy of the world. The state has demonstrated its intolerance for criticism. In Odisha also, there have been numerous cases of cold-blooded assaults on scribes. In the latest such case, the district correspondent of Oriya daily Dharitri was ruthlessly beaten up while he was carrying out his duty--braving risks to his life and family during the second wave of Covid-19. A visual presentation of the atrocities by the police on the scribe and the widespread outbursts of people's anger against the khaki terror.



Police unleashing brutality on Dattatreya in Puri (File Photo)



Tweets & replies Media

Bibhuti Bhusan Kar ... 55s @CMO Odisha Sir, in a very unfortunate incident, journalist Mr. Duttatreya Nayak was attacked by police while on duty in Puri this morning. Sir, Utkal Journalists Association seeks your kind intervention to bring justice to working journalists.

vijaita singh 🥥

High time police is sensitised, how does hitting a fruit vendor and the journalist who covered the incident justified? Shameful conduct. #odisha

Scribesingh . 1h A correspondent of Odia daily @DharitriLive1 Dattatreya Nayak, was assaulted by police at Puri in Odisha while performing his duty. The correspondent was attacked when he was gathering information about police assault on vegetabl vendors for allegedly violating Covid norms.

ଓଡିଶା Odisha S అ 5 Bengali English Gujarati Hindi Kannada Assamese ମୁଖ୍ୟ ଖବର IPL ସଂକ୍ଷେପରେ ରାଚ୍ୟ ଚ୍ଚିଲ୍ଲା ସହର ଭାରତ ସିତାରା ଗ୍ୟା

Mediapersons holding a meeting at Bant in Bhadrak. They passed a resolution condemning the savage attack by the police on the scribe

Poonam Pandey 🥥

इन पुलिस वालों को कब और कैसे समझ आएगा कि उनका काम लोगों को सुरक्षा देना है असॉल्ट करना नहीं। ट्रेनिंग में बदलाव की जरूरत है और उदाहरण सेट करने की भी।

Translate Tweet

🚷 Anish Singh @anishsingh21 · 1h Odisha Police assaulted a journalist in Puri while he was doing his duty.

Sad state of affairs @DGPOdisha @SPPuri1 @Naveen_Odisha @scribesingh @DharitriLive



4



Journalists condemning the incident at a meeting at Malkangiri



ପୋଲିସ ବାବୁଙ୍କ ଦାଦାଗିରି, ଉଠା ଦୋକାନୀ ଓ ସାମ୍ବାଦିକଙ୍କୁ ଆକ୍ମଶ



Journalists hold a meeting at Bhuban in Dhenkanal condemning the attack on the scribe

Odisha Police assaulted a journalist i Puri while he was doing his duty. Sad state of affairs @DGPOdisha @SPPuri1@Naveen_Odisha @scribesingh @DharitriLive

Anish Singh







Journalists of Anandapur Press Club submit a memorandum to the ADM regarding the incident

OP PHOTOS







power post

FOCUS COMBATING PANDEMIC

Be only a burning fire for progress, take whatever comes to ou as an aid to your progress and immediately make whatever progress is required. THE MOTHER



Ch'garh whistleblower fights lone battle

district Women and Child Development (WCD) officer in the Mahasamund district of Chhattisgarh is on a crusade against departmental corruption. . He has gone on a hunger strike for the government's inaction in a ₹30 lakh corruption case related to various state government schemes. Though the amounts appear small, it is the principle that matters for this champion of honesty in administration.

Sudhakar Bodele is demanding action against the departmental officers who were involved in the embezzlement of funds of ₹30 lakh in two schemes of the WCD department in Mahasamund district.

Bodele has alleged that substandard material worth ₹20 lakh was purchased between March 20 and 21 under Chief Minister Kanya Vivah Yojana (CMKVY). He has also alleged irregularities of ₹10 lakh under the Ready to Eat (RTE) scheme. Despite complaints, no action was taken against the guilty staff, the WCD officer complained.

Earlier, the officer brought the matter to the knowledge of the district Collector. Despite promises when no action occurred, then he asked for permission and a place to go for a hunger strike. When the officer was not granted permission, he sat on a hunger strike at home.

All eyes are on how the government responds to Bodele's "tactics". Watch this space for updates.

DOCTORS CALL FOR AN INDIAN MEDICAL SERVICE

The devastating Covid crisis has renewed demand for the creation of an Indian Medical Service along the lines of the all-India services such as IAS and IPS etc., at the earliest. The sec-

ond wave of the epidemic has caught India's creaking health infrastructure on the wrong foot again. It has blown the lid off the 'system' exposing the shortage of critical beds, oxygen, equipment and doctors and other medical staff.



Sources say that this demand has been raised on several occasions by several medical organizations including the Indian Medical Association (IMA), the Federation of Resident Doctors Association (FORDA) and the doctors' association of the prestigious All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS).

Those in the know say that recently FORDA has renewed the demand and written to Prime Minister Narendra Modi asking him to expedite the creation of a national medical service. Interestingly, the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Health and Family Welfare had also suggested that the gov ernment explore the possibility of setting up an exclusive service as part of the much-needed changes that have now become necessary to revamp the healthcare system. Will Modi oblige?

RETIRED BABU IS 'INDISPENSABLE' FOR MVA GOVT

It is common practice with state governments, but when the Maharashtra government decided to reappoint IAS officer VK Gautam, who retired last month as additional chief secretary in charge of Irrigation as an officer on special duty (OSD) in the same department, it has not gone down well with other officers, serving as well as retired.

The rationale offered by the MVA government is that Gautam had shown able leadership in the post and the government would continue to benefit from his experience and ability to handle large projects.

Sources say that the MVA government was actually keen on retaining Gautam's services on a three-year contract as Irrigation Secretary. However, it could not do so since the post of secretary is a cadre post and cannot be made contractual to retain an IAS officer. So, it made him an OSD instead. Gautam's retention on a contractual basis seems to have upset quite a few senior IAS officers, who see this as a wrong trend. It is also pointed out that

Gautam has an inquiry pending against him for alleged violation of rules as a member of the Commonwealth Games managing committee more than a decade ago.

But Gautam is not the only senior official to have benefitted. Chief Secretary Ajoy Mehta after retirement has been hired as principal advisor to the Chief Minister's Office (CMO). Similarly, R Mopalwar who retired in 2018 is overlooking major road projects in the state and RA Rajeev is still heading MMRDA although he retired in February. So, while retaining retired babus may be bad in principle, it is a widely prevalent practice and not just in Maharashtra.

LOANS OF NO USE

he government has adopted the policy of taking loans in large amounts to tide over the crisis brought by the Covid pandemic. The total borrowings of the Central government were 74 per cent of GDP in December 2019. This has increased to 90 per cent in December 2020. The Finance Minister had announced in the Budget for 2020-21 that the government will continue to make heavy borrowings to tide over the first wave of the pandemic. The borrowings will only rise due to the second and possibly the third and the fourth waves.

Money obtained as loans are put to use in two different ways. They can be invested in productive activities. The borrower can pay the interest and principal amount from the additional earnings. This is like an industrialist borrowing money from the banks to put up an industry and paying the interest and principal from the additional earnings made. Alternatively, the money can be used cover the losses. In this case, additional earnings are not made. As a result, the interest has to be paid out of the already meager earnings. Say, a worker loses her job. She takes loan to manage the household. Let us say she gets the same job at the same salary after a few months. Now, she has to pay interest on the borrowings made during the period of joblessness out of the same earnings as before. Her standard of living is now lowered. In effect, she has multiplied the hardships of joblessness in transferring it to the future because of the additional burden of interest

The loans being taken by the Government of India and large numbers of developing countries are like the loan taken by the worker to tide over the period of joblessness. These are being used to maintain the present levels of government consumption and not for new investments. The World Bank has, therefore, warned that this policy will create more trouble in the long run. The bank has



The government has adopted the policy of taking loans in large amounts to tide over the crisis brought by the Covid pandemic. The total borrowings of the Central government were 74 per cent of GDP in December 2019. This has increased to 90 per cent in December 2020

given the example of Venezuela, which is not even able to provide food to its citizens because of the huge burden of debt. At least six developing countries namely, Zambia, Ecuador, Lebanon, Belize, Suriname and Argentina have defaulted on their loan repayments. Further, as many as 90 countries have approached the International Monetary Fund for emergency loans. It is clear that though loans taken by the developing countries in the past are becoming an unbearable burden yet they are pushing themselves deeper into the same quagmire by borrowing more. The use of money from the loans taken by the Governments of United States and China are somewhat different. The US has made direct cash transfers to its citizens out of the loans and also invested in new technologies. For example, the US Government has provided huge grants to explore the use of "phages" that are available in nature for therapy, including that of the Covid patients. Similarly, China has invested in building its own space station independent of the US and Russia, making temperatures as high as those of the sun, landing her satellite on the

mars and making her own fighter jets. The loans taken by the governments of the US and China are, therefore, more like the loans taken by the industrialist for putting up factory. The loans taken by

the Government of India are more

like the loan taken by the jobless

employee. We should not be distracted by some contrary indicators. The GST collections in April 2021 were ₹1.41 lakh crore against ₹1.23 lakh crore in March and about ₹1.0 lakh crore per month in the last two years. Other economic indicators, however, point in the other direction. A survey by McKinsey has reported that 86 per cent people in India were positive about their economic future in January 2021. Only 64 per cent are positive in April 2021. A paper published in the Diplomat magazine has reported that the Purchase Manager's Index (PMI) has fallen. A 50+ PMI indicates that purchase managers of businesses are positive; while 50-PMI indicates they are negative. It is reported that the PMI has fallen from 54.6 in March 2021 to 54.0 in April 2021. The consumption of petrol in April 2021 was less by 6.3 per cent, consumption

of diesel was less by 1.7 per cent sale of cars was less by 7 per cent and the numbers of inter-state eway bills issued was less by 17 per cent in April 2021 as compared to March 2021. Therefore, the basic indicators show a downward trend in April as compared to March. The reasons for the increase in GST collections in April are a mystery to me. I do not preclude the possibility that the government may have asked the Public Sector Enterprises to pay advance GST in order to prop up the data. Remember that rating agencies have warned to reduce India's rating from present B--- to "junk" if the borrowings of the government continue to rise. That would lead to capital flight and a host of other problems. Be that as it may, it is to be seen whether the rise in GST collections sustains in the coming months especially in the light of the lockdowns due to the second wave of the pandemic.

The government must take the following steps in this difficult circumstance. One, it must make a steep increase in the import duty on fuel oil. I am in favour of a four-fold increase so that the retail price of petrol becomes about ₹150 per liter, likewise in the case of diesel. This will lead to a reduction in oil consumption. The revenues earned must be used to reduce the debt so that we can stand during the third and maybe fourth waves of the pandemic. Two, the government must cut its consumption. The salaries of the gov ernment servants, except frontline workers, must be cut to one-half in proportion to the reduction of the incomes of the poor people. It is a tragedy of majestic proportions that the "served" is suffering while the "server" is doing okay. Three, the government must make huge investments in new technologies. It is a shame that the supplier of vaccines to the world is importing vaccines for her own use

> The writer is a former Professor of Economics at IIM Bangalore. The views are personal.

SPECTRUM PALESTINE CRISIS

Biden's Israel Problem

violence between Israel and Hamas, Netanyahu knows all too well

Then asked whether he this approach to the bilateral re- since the current crisis began, the fire after the escalation in detrimental to both countries.

would insist on a cease- lationship has ultimately been US has blocked UN Security Council statements calling for an immediate ceasefire, leading UN diplo-

thorities' systemic abuses and crimes in the occupied Palestinian territories and within Israel. Recent reports by the main Israeli human rights group, B'Tselem, and Human Rights Watch make a compelling case that Israel is now an "apartheid" state, not a democracy. Still, with key Democratic Party voices challenging the pro-Israel hegemony within their own party, the US political landscape is gradually changing. It is doubtful that Biden would have used the word "ceasefire" if not for a joint statement issued by 29 Democratic Senators urging an "immediate" one. One of the vanguards of this growing movement is Senator Bernie Sanders, who commands a significant share of support within the Democratic Party base. Equally promising, American Jews are increasingly skeptical of Netanyahu. Despite new voices in the Democratic Party and the American Jewish community, it will probably take a generational shift in US foreign-policy circles to bring the pendulum back to the middle on issues concerning Israel and Palestine.

COUNTRIES ARE LIKE THE LOAN **TAKEN BY A WORKER TO TIDE OVER THE PERIOD OF JOBLESSNESS**

Bharat

Ihunjhunwala

THE LOANS

BY THE

LARGE

BEING TAKEN

GOVERNMENT

OF INDIA AND

NUMBERS OF

DEVELOPING

Share a babu experience! Follow dilipthecherian@twitter.com. Let's multiply the effect.

WISDOM CORNER

Decide what you want, decide what you are willing to exchange for it. Establish your priorities and go to work.

H. L. HUNT

I really believe that everyone has a talent, ability, or skill that he can mine to support himself and to succeed in life.

DEAN KOONTZ

The first step toward success is taken when you refuse to be a captive of the environment in which you first find yourself. MARK CAINE

WORDS**WORTH**

Cachinnatory

Cachinnatory refers to loud or immoderate laughter. Though this may seem to be celebrating boisterous high spirits, it dates from the early nineteenth century, at a time when gentlemen in England did not laugh out loud, at least not in public. It has about it a sense of the distaste we feel when persons nearby are carousing too loudly for comfort. That master of the second-rate novel, Sir Edward Bulwer-Lytton, was a great user of the word and illustrated its exuberance in his Paul Clifford of 1842: "If Paul's comrade laughed at first, he now laughed ten times more merrily than ever. He threw his full length of limb upon a neighbouring sofa, and literally rolled with cachinnatory convulsions: nor did his risible emotions subside until the entrance of the hung-beef restored him to recollection". It also appears in Fan by Henry Harford, published in 1892, in which the heroine is visiting London Zoo: "The laughing jackasses laughed their loudest, almost frightening her with their weird cachinnatory chorus". The Romans clearly knew of this unrestrained outpouring of immoderate humour, since the word is from Latin cachinnare with the same sense.

LOL

Ignore 'H'

An English teacher told his Astudents that when pronouncing a word beginning with the letter "H" they should ignore the "H" as in hour. honor, and honest. That day when leaving for class, he left a note for his

assistant. "Please heat mv rice for me." When the teacher returned to his office. he met an empty bowl. He asked the assistant, "Where is my food?" The assistant replied, "You said I should heat the rice for you, but you also instructed us to ignore the 'H.'"



Fawaz A. Gerges **BIDEN'S STANCE IN THE CURRENT** CONFLICT AMOUNTS TO A **GREEN LIGHT FOR ISRAEL TO CONTINUE ITS** MILITARY

CAMPAIGN AGAINST HAMAS

etters

are most welcome to contribute letters

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(OT)

TO THE EDITOR

Readers of Orissa POST

(200 words), articles and

requested to send their contact numbers and full

columns (between 750-1250 words). Contributors are

US President Joe Biden said that he would speak to Israeli Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu "in an hour, and I'll be able to talk to you after that." Far from a Biden gaffe, the President's apparent deference to Netanyahu raises alarming questions about the nature of the US-Israel relationship.

Israel is what scholars of international relations would call "the tail that wags the dog." Given the asymmetry of power between the two, one would expect the United States, as the superpower that furnishes Israel with \$3.8 billion per year in military aid, to lay out the ground rules for their relations. Yet in Israel's case, the reverse is true.

Since the 1980s, the US foreignpolicy consensus has been that Israel knows best how to preserve its security, and that unequivocal US support, not pressure, would induce it to take the risks necessary for peace. Hence, US presidents often defer to their Israeli counterparts on questions of war and peace in the Middle East, even though vital American interests are at stake there. Yet far from giving the US leverage over Israel or advancing the prospects of peace,

how to influence US politics, particularly when violent conflict erupts. He has long exploited the fact that the US inevitably reiterates Israel's "right to self-defense" without taking into account Israeli leaders' responsibility for triggering a crisis. This time, too, US officials, regardless of party affiliation, have tended to shy away from acknowledging Netanyahu's direct role in sabotaging reconciliation between Palestinians and Israelis, disenfranchising Palestinian citizens of Israel, and empowering his country's most extremist and xenophobic forces.

Biden knows Netanyahu well, having dealt with him first as a Senator and then as Vice President for eight years in the Obama administration. In 2011, Netanyahu publicly humiliated America's first Black President, Biden's former boss, by lecturing to him about US policy and Israeli security live on American television from the Oval Office. Worse, he later colluded with congressional Republicans to try to kill the 2015 nuclear deal with Iran.

Biden's stance in the current conflict amounts to a green light for Israel to continue its military campaign against Hamas. Three times

mats to conclude that the Biden administration wants to keep that body "silent" in the matter.

Moreover, May 17, just as the violence in Gaza was intensifying, The Washington Post reported that Biden had approved the sale of \$735 million in "precision-guided weapons" to Israel, raising red flags for House Democrats who have been calling on the administration to push for a ceasefire and take a more active role in addressing the root causes of the conflict. The following day, after coming under increasing pressure at home and abroad, and after speaking with Netanyahu, Biden issued a statement expressing support for a ceasefire. But Netanyahu has made it clear that he is not ready to end the airstrikes on Gaza, and the White House remains seemingly unwilling to persuade him otherwise as long as Hamas is still indiscriminately firing rockets into Israel.

Clearly, Biden belongs to the generation of US officials who cling to the hoary vision of Israel as a shining democracy in a sea of Arab and Muslim autocracy. Biden and like-minded Democratic and Republican leaders are willfully oblivious to evidence of Israeli au-

The writer is Professor of International Relations and Middle Eastern politics at the London School of Economics. ©PROJECT SYNDICATE

Pinarayi's gamble

Sir, The Communist Party of India (Marxist in Kerala is preparing for a generational shift in the state. Before the Assembly elections, a massive thrust was laid on the changeover by inducing fresh faces as party members and legislators. The party refused to give tickets to those who had contested consecutive Assembly elections and won twice, and to Lok Sabha election losers. It went ahead with its plan despite advice against doing so by some party veterans. People of the state have given their thumbs-up for Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan's plans. The new Cabinet does not have a single member of his erstwhile team. However, of all the ministers, KK Shailaja's omission sparked an outrage in the state. The popular 'Shailaja teacher' was credited with efficient Covid-19 management in the state. The quick containment of the 2018 Kerala Nipah virus outbreak was possible due to Shailaja's efforts, people say. Vijayan did not budge; he wanted to make a big and bold statement. The second-time, 75-year-old, CM is keen to run the state with a new, enthusiastic team. The CM has broken a trend by beating anti-incumbency and landing a superb victory for the LDF. His role in ticket distribution is no hidden secret; the splendid win can also be seen as his own. Taking fresh faces along with him is a challenge, too, for Vijayan apart from the fact that he can function according to his will. The success of the Vijayan-2 government can always be laid at the CM's doorsteps for "guiding the inexperienced" team while failure can ways be attributed to the 'newcomers'. The CPM has, on its part, sent a message that it is a party that counts on ideologies and team; individuals are secondary to its interests. Ganapathi Bhat, AKOLA

Ban WhatsApp

Sir, This refers to Indian government's direction to WhatsApp to withdraw its new privacy policy. Crores of Indians use WhatsApp and the messaging company has a monopoly in the Indian and global market. The company's new privacy policy is a blatant attempt to abuse its authority and dominance. As per the GoI, the new changes undermine the sacrosanct values of information, privacy, data security and user's choice, while it harms the rights and interests of Indian citizens. The company must withdraw its new privacy policy or else the government must take exemplary action of banning it. The Facebook-owned company will comply when they are threatened with a ban.

Aman Raghuwanshi, UJJAIN





Centre to set up 'Defence COVID CAUSES ORPHAN CRISIS Enclave' in Central Vista AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE which made it more difficult for her

At present, the Defence Minister, his deputy, Defence Secretary, Army chief, Navy chief as well as several three-star officers have their offices at the South Block

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, May 21: The government will set up a large "Defence Enclave" to house top defence brass and personnel under its ambitious Central Vista redevelopment project, official sources in the Union Housing and Urban Affairs Ministry said.

According to the sources, the Vice President's house and its nearby buildings will be demol ished to pave the way for constructing the Defence enclave. The new residence of the Vice President will come up near the North Block. At present, the Defence Minister,

his deputy, defence secretary, Army chief, Navy chief as well as sev eral three-star officers have their offices at the South Block.



The offices of the Navy, Army and Air Force are also spread across several parts of central Delhi, including the Lutyens' Zone. Many operate from hutments near the North and South Blocks.

"There are currently various offices of the defence ministry at many places. They will now have source said.

their own large "Defence Enclave" that is also required from security point of view. The new enclave will be constructed by 2026 and this will be part of the ten buildings to be constructed under the common central secretariat," a source told this news agency The redevelopment of the Central

Vista-the nation's power corridor -envisages a new parliament building, a common central secretariat. revamping of the 3-km Raipath from Rashtrapati Bhavan to India Gate, new Prime Minister's residence and Prime Minister's office, and a new Vice President enclave. "The land where the vice pres-

ident's house exists at present will also be used for the new enclave along with the nearby land," the

New Delhi, May 21: Three days after their father died of the coronavirus, six-year-old twins Tripti and Pari were found sleeping next to their mother, unaware that she was also a victim.

In the new pandemic wave sweeping India, thousands of children have lost one or two parents. In India, there are already millions of orphans. The prospect of a proliferation of abandoned minors wor ries many people.

The names of Tripti and Pari have been changed and they are now taken care of by their mother's uncle Ramesh Singh

Singh said: "I keep telling the girls that their parents will go home soon." Her name was also changed to protect the children's identity.

"I don't want to tell them the truth now... they are still too young." Singh said their heartbroken mother rejected her husband's normal diet after his death,

to recover from the coronavirus.

When repeated knocks were of no avail, relatives poured water on the girls from the windows to keep them open. When the doctor arrived and announced that their mother had died, they were taken away.

"Emotional Tragedy"

The head of UNICEF India, Yasmin Haque, said that such children "not only live in emotional tragedies, but are also extremely likely to be neglected, abused and exploited."

In another case, the media reported last month that a baby was found next to his mother. The baby had been dead for 48 hours and his neighbour was worried that he might be infected with the virus.

Cybersecurity expert Akancha Srivastava said: "We don't know how many people are dying, let alone how many orphans there are."However, online evidence shows a devastating scale.



In this photo taken May 11, 2021, twin sisters Tripti and Pari, who lost their parents due to the coronavirus, play with toys

Social media calls on people to provide breast milk and food for bapies who have lost their mothers. Some coronavirus orphans are

also being illegally adopted on social media. Srivastava said that her helpline receives at least 300 calls and messages every day. "Our authorities have a heavy

burden and people feel annoyed. In this case. it is very easy to mistakenly assign children to some trafficking rackets or to adopt rackets," she said.

According to Indian law, orphans

month-old boy for adoption. The news said: "Children of Brahmins", implying that these children are Hindus in the upper class.

MONEY LAUNDERING PROBE ED raids premises linked to Kalra

Searches are being conducted on at least 10 places in the national capital region

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, May 21: The **Enforcement Directorate Friday** raided at least 10 premises linked to businessman Navneet Kalra and his associates in Delhi-NCR as part of a money laundering probe linked to a recent case of alleged hoarding and black-marketing of oxygen concentrators, officials said.

The concentrators are in short supply as they are being anxiously scoured by those gasping for breath amid the second wave of the Covid 19 pandemic in the country. Official sources said the searches

are being conducted on at least 10 places in the national capital region under provisions of the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA). The raids are aimed to gather ad

ditional evidence, they said. The ED had recently booked Kalra and others under the antimoney laundering law, taking cog-

nisance of a Delhi Police FIR filed May 5 after policemen raided some restaurants and premises owned and linked to Kalra The police had recovered more than 524 of these life-saving ma-

chines from these premises and it was alleged that they were being hoarded and sold in the black market.

Kalra had denied any wrongdoing and claimed that the consignment was kept for regular sale. He was sent to 14 days judicial custody by a local court here Thursday.

The agency, officials had earlier told PTI, will probe if the oxygen concentrators were illegally hoarded and sold to the family members or caregivers of coronavirus-infected patients at exorbitant prices. thereby leading to generation of "proceeds of crime" as defined under the PMLA.

The ED is empowered to question and record the statements of the accused and it can even attach their properties during the course of investigation, following which it files a charge sheet before a special PMLA court seeking their prosecution under the anti-money laundering law

Kalra was nabbed by Delhi Police Crime Branch sleuths from



Reflection of Jama Masjid in a puddle of rain water in New Delhi, Friday

РТІ РНОТО

Man loses job, abandons wife

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Patna, May 21: A man, who lost his job in the second wave of coronavirus, abandoned his wife at Bihar's Buxar railway station Thursday, police said.

Vivek Verma, a native of Mirzapur under Bariya police station in Uttar Pradesh's Ballia district, had recently married his Facebook friend Pragati Singh, a native of Arihauli in Kushinagar police station in the same district.

"Verma, working for an MNC company in Pune, secretly tied the knot with his Facebook friend Pragati Singh and both went to Pune. They stayed for a few weeks in Pune before the company where he was working, removed him from the job in the second wave

of coronavirus," said Ravi Shankar Singh, an investigating officer of Government Railway Police. Buxar.

must be met by government officials,

and if there are no relatives to take

care of them, they are placed in

shelters. Smriti Irani, Minister for

Women's and Children's

Development, warned this month

that adopting informal methods to

adopt COVID-19 orphans is "trap"

and "illegal." Agence France-Presse

received a message on WhatsApp that

included a two-year-old girl and a two-

"Both Verma and Pragati decided to return home. They reached Buxar on the Pune-Patna express on Thursday. After reaching Buxar, he told her to stay at the railway station while he arranged for a vehicle to go to Ballia. Pragati waited there for hours but he did not return. When he was contacted on phone, he said that he would never go to Ballia," the police official said.

He said that the local police has been asked to put Verma's mobile phone under surveillance in a bid to trace him, while a vehicle was arranged to send the woman to her family in Ballia under police security.

'White fungus' just a normal infection: Doctors

Experts say there is no such disease as "white

fungus". The infection that is being reported is nothing but candidiasis

AGENCIES

New Delhi, May 21: At a time when states are witnessing a rise in black fungus (mucormycosis)



ment for a long period are vulnerable to candidiasis.

"When Covid-19 becomes severe in patients and they become hypoxic, steroids are one of the mainstays of treatment besides anti-virals and antibiotics. That predisposes the development of a fungal infection depending on the dosages of steroids given and how long they have been given. Steroids cause suppression of immunity," said Dr Ishwar Gilada.

EAST COAST RAILWAY ENGINEERING WORKS File No. DRM/Engg/KUR/21-2 E-Tender/15, Dt. 19.05.2021 1.Tender No. e-Tender-HQ-KUR-40-2021, Date: 12.05.2021 on: NEW WORKS, ADDITIONS

AND ALTERATIONS TO THE EXISTING STRUCTURES, ALL ORDINARY REPAIR AND MAINTENANCE WORKS OF MISCELLANEOUS NATURE AND SUPPLIES EACH COSTING RS.5,00,000/- OR LESS IN ORH HOLIDAY HOME, COACHING COMPLEX, PURI STATION BUILDING AND RAILWAY COLONY ETC. UNDER SENIOR SECTION ENGINEER(W)/PUR

Gurgaon Sunday night and was formally arrested the next day.



cases, a disease primarily affecting immune-compromised Covid-19 patients, reports of another fungal infection, called "white fungus" have caused a stir.

However, experts say there is no such disease as "white fungus". The infection that is being reported is nothing but candidiasis, they said. The first reports of white fungus

came from Patna, Bihar. However, the government-run Patna Medical College and Hospital (PMCH) dismissed these reports. Now, a fresh case of so-called

white fungus has been detected in Uttar Pradesh. "White fungus is just a myth

and misconception. It is basically candidiasis, a fungal infection caused by a type of fungus called Candida. It is the most common fungal infection." said infectious diseases specialist Dr Ishwar Gilada.

The experts also said there was no basis to reports that "white fungus" is more dangerous than black fungus.

Dr Kapil Salgia, pulmonologist at the Bombay Hospital, who has been treating black fungus patients, said mucormycosis was more invasive and might cause lot of dam-

Procurement Officer

OIPR-25072/11/0002/2122

age to sinuses, eyes, brain and requires extensive surgery.

"Mucormycosis is more dangerous because it is normally not found in the human system, and we normally do not see many cases. Candidiasis is easily diagnosed and easily treated. Most of the times, it is not life threatening, unless vou miss treatment or symptoms completely and it becomes invasive," Dr Kapil Salgia said.

Those with frail immunity, suffering from diabetes and have been on steroids during Covid-19 treat-

No.2582

Bid Identification

No.

urther details can be seen from the website: www.tendersodisha.gov.in

Executive Engineer, Rural EERWRGD Online 40 (Forty)

Works Division, Rayagada - 01/2021-22 Nos.

GOVERNMENT OF ORISSA

OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER

RURAL WORKS DIVISION, RAYAGADA

Email: rw_rayagada@yahoo.co.in, Phone No. 06856-222188

E-Procurement Notice

Bid Identification No. EERWRGD-Online-01/2021-22

No.O-236:- 1. Name of the work: Maintenance of Road works for the year 2021-22. 2. Total No. of works : 40 Nos.

(Percentage rate tender). 3. Estimated cost: Varies from 8.00 lakhs to 36.00 lakhs. 4. Class of contractor: 'D', 'C

and 'B'. 5. Time of completion: Specified in DTCN. 6. Mode of submission of tender: Tender should be submitted only in online https://www.tendersodisha.gov.in. 7. Other details: Detailed tender condition specified in DTCN.

No. of

works

Date: 19.5.2021

From

11.00 A.M.

Availability of tender online for

bidding

28.05.2021 at 16.06.2021 upto

3.00 P.M.

Sd./- Executive Engineer, R.W. Division, Rayagada

Experts said the most common candidiasis infection is oral thrush. "This infection generally affects areas or parts of the body that have a thin lining, mucocutaneous junctions like lips, nose, or inside the mouth and genital area," Dr Gilada, known to be the first person to raise the alarm against AIDS in India, said.

He said the warning signs to look out for are headache, pain in one side of the face, swelling, loss of vision or diminishing vision and ulcer in mouth. A simple microscopic examination under 10 per cent KOH (potassium hydroxide) can be done to detect the infection, Dr Gilada said.

IN SENIOR DIVISIONAL ENGINEER (HQ)/ KHURDA ROAD'S SECTION FOR THE PERIOD UPTO 30.06.2022. Approx cost of the work: ₹99.56 lakhs, Completion Period of the work: 12 (Twelve) Months. 2.Tender No. e-Tender-HQ-KUR-

41-2021, Date: 12.05.2021 on: NEW WORKS, ADDITIONS AND ALTERATIONS TO THE EXISTING STRUCTURES, ALL ORDINARY REPAIR AND MAINTENANCE WORKS OF MISCELLANEOUS NATURE AND SUPPLIES EACH COSTING RS.5.00.000/- OR LESS IN THE SECTION PURI (EX)TO KUR (EX) UNDER SENIOR SECTION ENGINEER(W)/PURI IN SENIOR DIVISIONAL ENGINEER (HQ)/ KHURDA ROAD'S SECTION FOR THE

PERIOD UPTO 30.06.2022. Approx cost of the work: ₹70.23 lakhs, tion Period of the work: 12 (Twelve

> Tender No. e-Tender-HQ-KUR 42-2021, Date: 12.05.2021

escription: NEW WORKS, ADDITIONS AND ALTERATIONS TO THE EXISTING STRUCTURES, ALL ORDINARY REPAIR AND MAINTENANCE WORKS OF MISCELLANEOUS NATURE AND SUPPLIES EACH COSTING RS 5 00 000/- OR LESS IN TYPE-IV AND TYPE-V QUARTERS UNDER SENIOR SECTION ENGINEER(W)/HQ/KUR AT KHURDA ROAD FOR THE PERIOD UPTO 30.06.2022.

Approx cost of the work: ₹75.62 lakhs ompletion Period of the work: 12 (Twelve 4.Tender No. e-Tender-HQ-KUR-

43-2021, Date: 12.05.2021 tion: NEW WORKS. ADDITIONS AND ALTERATIONS TO THE EXISTING STRUCTURES, ALL ORDINARY REPAIR AND MAINTENANCE WORKS OF MISCELLANEOUS NATURE AND SUPPLIES EACH COSTING RS.5,00,000/- OR LESS IN ACCOUNTS COLONY(STAFF QUARTERS)AT KHURDA ROAD UNDER SENIOR SECTION ENGINEER(W)/HQ/KUR FOR THE PERIOD UPTO 30.06.2022.

Approx cost of the work: ₹76.10 lakhs Completion Period of the work: 12 (Twelve onths.

Date & time of Tender Closing: 02.06.2021 1500 hrs (For All Tenders).

No manual offers sent by Post/ Courier/Fax or i person shall be accepted against such e-Tenders, even if these are submitted on firm's etter head and received in time. All such manua offers shall be considered invalid and shall be ejected summarily without any consideration. Complete information including e-tende documents of the above e-Tenders is available n website http://www.ireps.gov.in

Note: The prospective tenderers are advised to revisit the website 10 (ten) days before the date of closing of tender to note any change corrigendum issued for this tender.

Divisional Railway Manager (Engg.) PR-106/M/21-22 Khurda Ro

Travails of a wife to cremate husband

A WOMAN FLED FROM A QUARANTINE CENTER TO PERFORM LAST RITES TO HER HUSBAND WHO PASSED AWAY ALMOST A WEEK BACK

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Patna, May 21: A heart breaking incident came to light in Bihar's Munger district where a woman fled from a quarantine center to perform last rites to her husband who passed away almost a week back.

Vikas Mandal, 28, a native of Ramnagar Patan village tested Corona positive and his health deteriorated May 13. His wife, Kanchan Devi, admitted him in Begusarai Sadar hospital where he died during treatment.

As she was alone in the hospital, she requested help from her in-laws for cremation but they refused. Kanchan then approached her own family but they also did not help. Kanchan's mother, however, came forward and reached Begusarai Sadar hospital to help her daughter.

Both Kanchan and her mother decided to go to



Munger and request the husband's kin again May 14 but they refused. They also requested neighbours for help but nobody came forward. Then, they decided to go

to Samastipur's Patalia village under Vibhutipur police station, the native village of Kanchan Devi The male members of the

family, instead of helping them. complained with district administration. The officials

of the health department of Samastipur also did not address the issue of the two women and put them into quarantine center.

Kanchan and her mother requested the officials of the quarantine center to release them so that they would go to Begusarai. Eventually, Kanchan fled from the quarantine center six days after her husband's death and May 18 and reached Begusarai.

"The victim requested the health officials of Sadar hospital to hand over the dead body of her husband. We immediately came forward and handed over the dead body for cremation. We have arranged the ambulance and sent the dead body to cremation ground at Simaria Ghat where Kanchan performed the last right," said Sanjeev Kumar Chaudhary SDO Sadar of Begusarai.

GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER BERHAMPUR IRRIGATION DIVISION, BERHAMPUR Phone / Fax No.: 0680-2281983, e-mail: eebam_irr@yahoo.com e-Procurment Notice No. e-BEID-01/2021-22 No.A-139:- 1. Name of the scheme : Critical, State Plan, Flood Restoration & Road works for the F.Y. 2021-22. 2. Total No. of works: 50 (Fifty) Nos. of individual works. 3. Estimated cost: Varies from Rs.5.136 lakhs to

Rs.26.78 lakhs. 4. Period of completion : Seven months. 5. Other details as follows: Procurement Officer Bid Identification SL Period of Period of Date and place of availability of submission of No No. opening of bids online bids online bids online Executive Engineer, e-BEID-1/2021-22 From From 04.06.2021 (11.00 A.M.) 25.05.2021 25.05.2021 in the Office of the to Berhampur Irrigation to 50 e-BEID-50/2021-22 (10.00 A.M.) (10.00 A.M.) Division, Berhampur **Executive Engineer** to 03.06.2021 to 03.06.2021 Berhampur Irrigation Division (5.30 P.M.) (5.30 P.M.) Bidders are to participate in online bidding only. Further details can be seen from the Govt. of Odisha e-Procurement Website www.tendersorissa.gov.in. Any addendum/corrigendu OIPR-32025/11/0001/2122 m/cancellation of the tender can be seen in the above website only Sd./- Executive Engineer, Berhampur Irrigation Division









Date & time

of opening

of tender

17.06.2021

at 11.30 A.M.





national



We have appealed to the Centre to provide maximum aid. The prime minister is sensitive. We don't want to indulge in politics UDDHAV THACKERAY MAHARASHTRA CHIEF MINISTER

TEMPLE FOR 'CORONA DEVI' COMES UP IN TN

As the severe second wave of Covid-19 sweeps across the country, not sparing this district too, a Coronadevi temple has come up on the outskirts of the city, thanks to a mutt, seeking divine intervention to put an end to the raging pandemic



uote

Govt objects to Twitter's 'manipulated' tag on toolkit tweets



Even after ruining health services from district to villages the exchange of praises is going on

AKHILESH YADAV SAMAJWADI PARTY PRESIDENT

UP has strongly fought the pandemic challenge under able guidance of the prime minister cooperation of the

Union government, alertness of his public representatives and a massive campaign by their district administrative teams

YOGI ADITYANATH UP CHIEF MINISTER

After Friday evening, the city will have less than one day of Covaxin stock and eight days of Covishield doses left for this category

ATISHI MARLENA AAP MLA

SHORT TAKES

📕 Lockdown in K'taka extended till June 7

Bangalore: Karnataka Chief Minister B S Yediyurappa Friday announced extension of lockdown from May 24 to June 7 for a period of 14 days to contain the spread of coronavirus in the State. The stringent restrictions are already in effect from May 10 and was supposed to end on May 24. However, due to the new order, they would end on the morning of June 7. "We have taken some decisions regarding the lockdown after discussing them with our senior Ministers, chief secretary and other officials," the Chief Minister told reporters.

Lockdown extended in Kerala

Thiruvananthapuram: The Kerala government Friday announced a one week extension of the state-wide lockdown till May 30, to contain the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic. The state has been under lockdown since May 8 after weekend restrictions and lockdown-like curbs imposed earlier failed to create any desired impact in terms of the daily caseload of the infected persons. On May 16, the lockdown was extended to May 23.

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, May 21: The government has objected to Twitter using 'manipulated media' tag for tweets on an alleged Congress toolkit used to target the Centre over its Covid-19 handling, sources said.

The government has asked Twitter to remove the 'manipulated media' tag as the matter is pending before law enforcement agency, and made it clear that the social media platform cannot pass judgment when the issue is under investigation.

Investigation will determine the veracity of the content and not Twitter, it has asserted while asking the microblogging platform not to interfere in the in-

vestigation process According to sources, the

Ministry of Electronics and IT has written a strong communication to the global team of Twitter registering its objection to the 'manipulated media' tag on tweets made by some political leaders with reference to the toolkit allegedly created to undermine, derail and demean the efforts of the government against the Covid-19 pandemic.

In its communication to Twitter, the ministry has stated that a complaint has already been made by one of the concerned parties before the local law enforcement agency questioning the veracity of the toolkit and the same is under investigation.

While the local law enforcement



agency is undertaking the investigation, Twitter has unilaterally drawn a conclusion in this matter and arbitrarily tagged it as 'manipulated media', government sources said.

Such tagging by Twitter appears pre-judged, prejudiced and a deliberate attempt to colour the investigation by local law enforcement agency, the sources pointed out.

The ministry has termed such unilateral action by Twitter as an effort to influence the fair investigation process and a clear overreach, which is totally unwarranted.

The ministry has further stated in its communication that Twitter unilaterally chose to go ahead and

designate certain tweets as 'manipulated', pending investigation by the law enforcement agency.

Such action not only dilutes the credibility of Twitter as a neutral and unbiased platform facilitating exchange of views by the users but also puts a question mark on Twitter's status as an "intermediary", they said.

This comes in the backdrop of Twitter labelling as 'manipulated media' a tweet by BJP spokesperson Sambit Patra on the alleged toolkit prepared by the Congress to target the Modi government.

Twitter says it "may label Tweets that include media (videos, audio, and images) that have been deceptively altered or fabricated."

Environmentalist Sunderlal Bahuguna dies of Covid-19

leaked in major cyber attack

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Dehradun, May 21: Renowned environmentalist Sunderlal Bahuguna, who pioneered the Chipko movement, died of Covid-19 at the All India Institute of Medical Sciences in Rishikesh

He is survived by his wife, two sons and a daughter. Bahugubna was cremated with full state honours at the Poornanand Ghat on the banks of the Ganga in Rishikesh.

Known for his pioneering role in the Chipko movement, during which activists hugged trees to save them from being felled, Bahuguna had been undergoing treatment for Covid-19 at AIIMS-Rishikesh since May 8.

Admitted to the hospital after

13 Naxals killed in Maha forest encounter



by firing at the Maoists.

After an encounter lasting for

about 90 minutes, the Maoists

made good their escape in the

thick forests, ending the dawn fir-

ing in which the police extracted

A subsequent search of the

vicinity revealed the bodies of 13

Maoists, including 7 women and

six men, carrying a collective re-

ward of Rs.60-lakhs on their heads,

and they belonged to the dreaded

groups active locally.

a heavy toll on the rebels' side.

Gadchiroli (Maharashtra), May 21: Registering a major victory in the ongoing war againt rebels, the Maharashtra Police Friday gunned down most-wanted 13 Maoists, including 7 women, in a

fierce gun-battle in the deep forests near Etapally, officials said here. The 90-minute encounter between the Maoists and the crack force of C-60 commandos, which started around 6 am today in the Paydi-Kotmi jungles, may have resulted in at least 4-5 more of the rebels getting injured but they es-

The police also recovered a caped in the jungle. cache of weapons like one AK-47 Home Minister Dilip Walseand one stengun, 5 SLRs, three 303 Patil visited the Gadchiroli Police revolvers, two 8mm guns, one pisheadquarters to personally contol, and a huge stock of ammunigratulate the teams and the top tion and explosives, besides artipolice officers including Sanjay cles of daily use from what Saxena, Sandip Patil, Ankit Goyal, appeared to be a temporary camp Manish Kalvaniya, Sameer Shaikh area and Somay Munde, Bhausaheb The district police and sur-Dhole, all IPS, among others. roundings have been put on alert An official spokesperson for the in other talukas for any retaliatory Anti Naxal Operations (ANO) unit attacks by the Maoists said that early Friday, following a This is the second important success in the anti-Maoist crutip-off that a group of Maoists were planning to come to the local

villages for its regular extortion

purposes, a team of C-60 com-

mandos was deployed to carry out

combing operation in the forests.

60-70 heavily armed Maoists began

firing indiscriminately in the di-

the rebels to lay down arms and

rection of the police teams.

At that time, a gang of around

The police first made appeals to

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA New Delhi, May 21: Air India's passenger service system provider SITA faced a sophisticated cyberattack in February leading to leak of personal data of certain number of the national carrier's flyers, an offi-

> Personal data -- including name, date of birth, contact information, passport information, ticket information and credit card data -which was registered between August 11, 2011, and February 3, 2021, has been leaked of a certain number of Air India's passengers, the statement issued by the air-

"While we and our data processor continue to take remedial actions...We would also encourage wherever applicable to ensure



Air India passengers' data

passengers -- across the world has been "affected" due to the cyberattack on SITA, the statement said.

SITA is based out of Geneva in provider has informed about a sophisticated cyber attack it was subjected to in the last week of February 2021," the airline said.

MOCKERY OF LOCKDOWN



While the level and scope of sophistication is being ascertained through forensic analysis and the exercise is ongoing, SITA has confirmed that no unauthorised activity has been detected inside the system's infrastructure after the incident, it added.

"Air India meanwhile is in liaison with various regulatory agencies in India and abroad, and has apprised them about the incident in accordance with its obligations. the airline said.

Air India along with the service provider is carrying out risk assessment and would further update as and when it becomes available, it said.

programme

The airline said it has taken following steps after the data security incident: Secured the compromised servers, engaged external specialists of data security incidents. notified and in talk with the credit card issuers and reset the passwords of Air India frequent flyer



testing positive for the infection, Bahuguna's condition had turned critical last night with his oxygen

ply and the commandos replied line said.

passengers to change passwords safety of their personal data," it said. Data of 4.5 million passengers -- which includes Air India's

Switzerland. "Air India would like to inform its valued customers that its passenger service system



J&K reports 1st black fungus death

Jammu: Jammu and Kashmir Friday reported its first death due to black fungus after a 40year-old Covid-19 recovered patient died of mucormycosis at Government Medical College (GMC) hospital here, an official said. The patient who was admitted to GMC hospital has succumbed to the infection, Financial Commissioner, Health and Medical Education, Atal Dulloo, told PTI. Giving details, Principal of GMC hospital Dr Shashi Sudan Sharma said the man suffered from a high degree of diabetes of 900 level and was immunocompromised.

Monsoon arrives over Andaman

New Delhi: The Southwest Monsoon has arrived over Andaman and Nicobar Islands, the India Meteorological Department said Friday, an indication that it will soon reach the mainland. "The Southwest Monsoon has advanced into some parts of South Bay of Bengal, Nicobar Islands, entire south Andaman Sea and some parts of north Andaman Sea today, the 21st May, 2021," the IMD said. Last week, the IMD had said that the monsoon was likely to make an onset over Kerala on May 31, a day ahead of its normal schedule.

sade of the Maharashtra Police in the past 7 months after an October 2020 encounter in Gvarapatti forests saw 5 Maoists. including 3 women, shot dead. Maharashtra Home Minister Dilip Walse Patil, who was on his first visit to Gadchiroli after taking over the home portfolio following the resignation of Anil Deshmukh, praised the police for the operation.

Vehicular traffic moving as usual during lockdown in Hyderabad

level dropping drastically. He was on CPAP therapy in the

ICU of the premier hospital and breathed his last at 12.05 pm, AIIMS Director Ravikant said. Prime Minister Narendra Modi condoled Bahuguna's death.

"Passing away of Shri Sunderlal Bahuguna Ji is a monumental loss for our nation. He manifested our centuries-old ethos of living in harmony with nature. His simplicity and spirit of compassion will never be forgotten. My thoughts are with his family and many admirers. Om Shanti," the prime min ister tweeted.

Chief Minister Tirath Singh Rawat described it as a big loss not just for Uttarakhand and India but for the entire world

'Strengthen facilities for kids orphaned by nCoV'

The centre said it is giving high priority to prevent and combat crime against women, children, senior citizens and scheduled castes/ scheduled tribes, and is putting in place institutional mechanisms for preventing and countering human trafficking

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, May 21: The Union home ministry has asked states and union territories to strengthen facilities for vulnerable groups, especially children, who have been orphaned in the second wave of the COVID-19 pandemic in order to check human trafficking, a government statement said on Friday.

The centre said it is giving high priority to prevent and combat crime against women, children, senior citizens and scheduled castes/ scheduled tribes, and is putting in place institutional mechanisms for preventing and countering human trafficking.

"Taking into account the impact of the second wave of the COVID-19 pandemic, particularly on vulnerable groups, the MHA has again

reiterated to states/union territories to focus on vulnerable sections, especially children, who may have been orphaned due to loss of parents due to COVID-19," it said.

The Centre has asked states and union territories to "immediately review" the existing facilities for such groups, especially for children who have been orphaned, senior citizens who may require timely assistance and support (medical as well as safety and security), and members of the scheduled castes/scheduled tribes who may

ment-supported facilities. The states have been asked to effectively deploy the women help desk in police stations and antihuman trafficking units in districts

need guidance to access govern-

The centre has asked states to use

National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) tools like Crime Multi Centre Agency (Cri-MAC) for sharing inter-state information among police, Crime and Criminal Tracking Network & Systems

(CCTNS) for tracking missing persons and automated photo matching web-based application UNIFY to search pictures of missing persons, unidentified bodies, among others



High Courts must avoid passing impossible Covid orders, says SC

UNI PHOTO

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, May 21: Observing that high courts should refrain from passing directions not implementable, the Supreme Court Friday stayed the Allahabad High Court order relating to management of the Covid-19 situation in Uttar Pradesh in which it had also said that the entire healthcare system in villages and small cities of the state was "Ram bharose" (at God's mercy).

A vacation bench of Justices Vineet Saran and BR Gavai said the directions of the High Court passed May 17 shall not be treated as directives but an advice to the UP government.

At the same time, the bench said there are some observations in the order which may be well meaning but passed by the court in anxiety to provide relief to the general public. "Such directions cannot be implemented and it shall be treated as advice and not directions. The state government, which will work to provide facili-

ties to the people will keep in mind the advice of the High Court", it said. The bench said that looking at the matter in depth, "We are of the opinion that the High Court should consider looking into the possibility of implementation while passing any directions, and if any such direction is not implementable, then the High Court should refrain from passing it"

It said the High Court should adopt the doctrine of impossibility (a situation when it is impossible for a party to perform), which has been upheld by this court.

'We are staving the order but we are not staying the proceedings before the High Court. The matter be listed July 14," the bench said while appointing senior advocate Nidesh Gupta as amicus curiae to assist in the matter. It said the High Court while considering a matter on management of Covid-19 situation which has a national or trans-national ramification should refrain fromdealing with it as the top court is seized of the issue.



national



Our motive is not only to kill a militant, but to end militancy as well to secure the environment for the people of Kashmir

VIJAY KUMAR | IGP KASHMIR

OXYGEN LEAKAGE TRIGGERS PANIC

Oxygen leakage at the North Bengal Medical College and Hospital in Siliguri triggered panic among Covid patients and their families Friday morning, officials said. The incident happened around 9.15 am when the leakage was detected in a pipe supplying oxygen to the Critical Care Unit (CCU) at the Covid block, hospital superintendent Dr Sanjay Mallick said





Those who are taking steroids should also keep checking their blood sugar levels. In most cases, one who

is not diabetic finds that after taking steroids, the blood sugar level shoots up to 300 to 400. Hence, it is essential to continuously monitor one's sugar levels DR RANDEEP GULERIA DIRECTOR AIIMS

The state government was in the process of floating a global tender for procurement of corona vaccines

PRAMOD SAWANT GOA CHIEF MINISTER

Telangana Tamil Nadu, Raiasthan. Odisha, Gujarat and Chandighad have declared black

fungus (Mucormycosis) as an epidemic. The Centre has also asked the states to declare an epidemic. The state should also declare it as an epidemic immediatelv

H D KUMARASWAMY JD(S) LEADER

SHORT TAKES

Ram Rahim gets 48-hour parole

Chandigarh: Jailed Dera Sacha Sauda chief Gurmeet Ram Rahim, who is currently lodged in Rohtak's Sunaria jail, has sought 'emergency parole' to meet and attend to his ailing mother. Haryana govt grants 48-hour parole. Earlier, he was denied bail on several occasions, including his plea to meet the ailing mother. Ram Rahim was granted parole October 24 last year on his wife Harjit Kaur's plea that his mother Naseeb Kaur, 85, suffering from a heart disease was seriously ill.

Another Mumbai cop dismissed

.....

Mumbai: Assistant Police Inspector Riyaz Hisamuddin Kazi, arrested by the NIA in the case of SUV with explosives found near industrialist Mukesh Ambani's residence and the subsequent death of businessman Mansukh Hiran, was dismissed from service Friday, an official said.

India faces antifungal drug shortage

AGENCIES

Bangalore, May 21: India said Friday that it was working to alleviate a shortage of a medicine used to treat a rare fungal disease hitting Covid-19 patients as its healthcare system reels under a massive wave of coronavirus infections.

Cases of mucormycosis, or 'black fungus,' a potentially serious complication which causes blurred or double vision, chest pain and breathing difficulties, have surged in India, mostly among Covid-19 patients. At least 7,250 such cases have been found across the country as of May 19, local media reported. "In this battle of ours, another

new challenge of black fungus has also emerged these days," Prime Minister Narendra Modi tweeted Friday. India has the second-highest tally of Covid-19 cases in the world and has been reporting

RARE COMPLICATION ADDS TO COVID WOES



around 250,000 infections and 4,000 deaths daily.

With mucormycosis cases rising, India's health ministry said it was looking to rope in more companies to produce the antifungal drug amphotericin B used to treat

it and also increase imports.

That would lead to a nearly 250% increase in supply to around 570,000 vials in June, the ministry said Friday. Some Indian states like Maharashtra, home to the financial capital Mumbai, said they were running low on amphotericin B as black fungus cases spiked and had asked federal authorities to provide more doses. **RURAL TESTING**

Overall, India's Covid-19 infection tally stands at 26.03 million, with a death toll of 291,331, health min-

istry data showed Friday. The country conducted roughly two million tests Thursday, but experts have said infections and deaths could be between five to 10 times higher than official estimates as the virus spreads to the vast hinterland.

India aims to double its testing capacity to 4.5 million per day by the end of June, of which 60% would be through rapid antigen tests, according to the government.

As part of the effort, the staterun Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) this week approved home testing for Covid-19,

using rapid antigen tests. These tests, less accurate than the RT-PCR method, are advised only for symptomatic cases and immediate contacts of laboratory-confirmed positive cases, according to the state-run ICMR **GOVT VERY 'CAUTIOUS'**

The Union Ministry of Health and Family Welfare has made efforts to ramp up supply and availability of Amphotericin-B, the antifungal drug used in treatment of Black Fungus disease. A statement from the government said Friday, "In May 2021, 3,63,000 vials of Amphotericin-B will be imported, thereby resulting in total availability in the country (inclusive of the domestic production) of 5,26752 vials, --3,15,000 vials will be imported in June 2021. along with the domestic supply the countrywide availability of Amphotericin-B will be enhanced to 5.70.114 vials in June 2021.'

NARADA CASE: CAL HC ORDERS HOUSE ARREST OF FOUR LEADERS



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kolkata, May 21: The Calcutta High Court Friday ordered the shifting of two West Bengal ministers, an MLA and a former mayor of the city, who were arrested by the CBI in the Narada sting tape case, to house arrest from jail incarceration.

The court passed the direction modifying its earlier order that stayed their bail granted by a special CBI court Monday when the four leaders were arrested.

The court directed that the two ministers, during their period of house arrest, can deal with official files sent to them online and hold meetings through video conferencing. The judges of the division bench presided by Acting Chief Justice Rajesh Bindal, who differed on the issue of recalling the stay on bail to the four accused, decided to refer the matter to a larger bench. For the purpose, the Acting Chief Justice has constituted a five-judge bench consisting of himself, Justices I P Mukerji, Harish Tandon, Soumen Sen and Arijit Banerjee. The matter will be taken up for

GOA GOVT TO MOVE HC: CM PANAJI: Goa Chief Minister Pramod

Sawant Friday said the state government will challenge in the high court journalist Tarun Tejpal's acquittal in a 2013 rape case by a district court here. A sessions court at Mapusa Friday acquitted Teipal of sexually assaulting his former female colleague in an elevator of a five star resort in Goa. Talking to reporters. Sawant said, "We will not tolerate any injustice to be meted out to the women in Goa. We will challenge the district court's order before the high court soon in this case." Sawant claimed that there was enough evidence against the accused.

hearing at 11 amMay 24. The new bench will hear the CBI's prayer for transfer of the case from the lower court to itself. Panchayat Minister Subrata Mukherjee, Transport Minister Firhad Hakim, Trinamool Congress MLA Madan Mitra and former Kolkata mayor Soyan Chatteriee were arrested by the CBI on Monday morning in connection with the Narada sting tape case that is being investigated by the agency as per a 2017 order of the high court. Modifying its earlier order of May 17, the division bench, also comprising Justice Arijit Banerjee, on Friday directed that "considering the age and health issues of the accused, three of whom are said to be admitted in hospital, instead of custody in jail, all the accused persons can be put under house arrest in their own homes.

Mamata to contest from Bhawanipur INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Kolkata, May 21: Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee, who lost to BJP's Suvendu Adhikari in Nandigram, is likely to contest

from Bhawanipur. Bhawanipur sitting Trinamool MLA Sovandeb Chattopadhyay has submitted his resignation to the Speaker Friday. However, Chattopadhyay is likely to continue as a cabinet minister and contest from some other seat.

Sources in the party said that the party has decided Banerjee will contest from her traditional winning seat -- Bhawanipur in South Kolkata. Banerjee had in the last two

assembly elections contested and won from the Bawanipur seat but this time she decided to contest from Nandigram in East Midnapore against turncoat Suvendu Adhikari. Banerjee was, however, defeated by Adhikari.

Though Banerjee was sworn in as the chief minister of the state, according to the rule she will have to become an MLA within six months after the formation of the government.



Party sources indicated that Banerjee expressed her willingness to contest from Bhawanipur and

so Chattopadhyay who is now the state agriculture minister has been asked to resign from that seat Chattopadhyay, who submitted

his resignation to Speaker Biman Banerjee in the afternoon, said that he had resigned following the party's decision. The minister. however, didn't divulge other details saying that he would do whatever party will ask him to do.

AGENCIES

New Delhi, May 21: In a major setback, the Goa government lost the rape case against former editorin-chief of Tehelka after a metropolitan magistrate court Friday acquitted the senior journalist of rape charges, filed by a junior colleague who had accused Tarun Tejpal of sexually assaulting her in a five-star resort in Goa in 2013.

Goa government will not tolerate any wrong done to a woman, said Chief Minister Pramod Sawant and added that his government would appeal against the verdict in the Bombay High Court.

According to Special Public Prosecutor Francisco Tavora, the verdict was a "serious setback' and the state government will be preparing to file an appeal against the order in the High Court.

Tejpal has been booked under sec tions under sections 376 (rape), 341 (wrongful restraint), 342 (wrongful confinement) 354A (sexual harassment) and 354B (criminal assault), of the Indian Penal Code.

"He has been acquitted from all charges. Order not given yet. It will be uploaded later," Tejpal's defence counsel said.

According to the complaint filed against Tejpal by the junior colleague, the rape allegedly occurred



organised by the Tehelka media group in 2013.

Tejpal subsequently stepped down as editor of Tehelka November 20, three days before the Goa Police filed a First Information Report against him accusing him of rape.

Tejpal was arrested November 30, after a local court rejected his anticipatory bail application.

After his arrest, Tejpal spent nearly eight months in police and judicial custody. He was later released on bail by the Supreme Court, months after a 2,846 page charge sheet by the Crime Branch of the Goa Police. Charges against Tejpal were later framed by the trial court in Goa in 2017, paving way for the trial.

November 7, during a conference

Goa court acquits Tejpal

IAF pilot killed

Moga (Pb): An IAF MiG-21 Bison aircraft crashed during heavy rain in a field in Punjab's Moga district, killing its pilot Squadron Leader Abhinav Choudhary, officials said. The aircraft was on a training sortie from Suratgarh in Rajasthan when it crashed in Langeana village Thursday night, said Moga Superintendent of Police Gurdeep Singh. The Indian Air Force has ordered a Court of Inquiry to ascertain the cause of the accident and said it condoles the tragic loss of its officer. "The aircraft crashed in a field and caught fire. It was raining heavily at the time." Singh said.

Culpable homicide charge against barge master, others

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Mumbai, May 21: Mumbai Police has lodged an FIR invoking charges of culpable homicide not amounting to murder against the master of the Barge Papaa-305 and others in connection with the vessel tragedy in the Arabian Sea which left at least 60 dead and many more missing, officials said Friday.

Yellowgate Police have acted on a complaint filed by barge chief engineer Rahman H Shaikh who was among the survivors rescued by the Indian Navy earlier this week even as Oil & Natural Gas

Corporation Ltd (ONGC) and Afcons Infrastructure Ltd (AIL) announced compensation for the victims.

The development came two days after the police launched its probe based on an accidental death report

ARABIAN SEA TRAGEDY

to ascertain why the barge allegedly failed to adhere to safety norms despite warnings of the impending Cyclone Tauktae which wreaked havoc on the country's west coast last Sunday onwards. Besides culpable homicide not amounting to murder, the barge

master and others are also charged with common intentions, negligent acts causing hurt to others, etc. said Mumbai Police spokesperson. Deputy Commissioner of Police S Chaitanya.

Of the 342-plus offshore installations of the ONGC, including 243 fixed and the rest floating, five of the latter including barge Papaa-305 were caught in the turbulence of the cyclone and the vessel sank late Monday.

A spokesperson for ONGC said that it will provide an immediate relief of ₹1 lakh to all survivors and ₹ 2 lakh to the families of the deceased or missing.

DEALING WITH CRISIS



Homeless people wait for food being distributed by volunteers, at a roadside in Chandni Chowk area of New Delhi

nCoV could become like common cold in future: Study

searchers noted that some evidence

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, May 21: The novel coronavirus responsible for Covid-19 could cause no more than common cold-like coughs and sniffles within the next decade, according to a study.

The research, published in the journal Viruses, makes this likely prediction based on mathematical models that incorporate lessons learned from the current pandemic on how our body's immunity changes over time.

"This shows a possible future that has not yet been fully addressed," said Fred Adler, a professor of mathematics and biological sciences at the University of Utah in the US. "Over the next decade, the severity of Covid-19 may decrease as populations collectively develop immunity," Adler said in a statement.

self. Although the SARS-

CoV-2 virus is the best-

known member of the

family, other seasonal

coronaviruses circu-

late in the human

population,

and they

are less

danger

The

ous.

re-

The study suggests that changes in the disease could be driven by adaptations of our immune response rather than by changes in the virus it-

indicates that one of these coldcausing relatives might have once been severe, giving rise to the 'Russian flu' pandemic in the late 19th century. The parallels led

the scientists to wonder whether the severity of SARS-CoV-2 could similarly lessen over time. They built mathematical models incorpo-

rating evidence on the body's immune response to SARS-CoV-2. Analysing several scenarios

and their versions set

up a situation where an increasing proportion of the population will become predisposed to mild disease over the long term. "In the beginning of the pandemic, no one had seen the virus before. Our immune system was not prepared,' Adler explained.

The models show that as more adults become partially immune, whether through prior infection or vaccination, severe infections all but disappear over the next decade, the researchers said. Eventually, the only people who will be exposed to the virus for the first time will be children who are naturally less prone to severe disease, they said.

"The novel approach here is to recognise the competition taking place between mild and severe COVID-19 infections and ask which type will get to persist in the long run," said Alexander Beams, study first author and graduate student at University of Utah. "We have shown that mild infections will win, as long as they train our immune systems to fight against severe infections," Beams said.

However, the researchers noted that the models do not account for every potential influence on disease trajectory. For instance, if new virus variants overcome partial immunity, Covid-19 could take a turn for the worse, they said.

The team also noted that these predictions will hold up only if the key assumptions of the models hold up. "Our next step is comparing our model predictions with the most current disease data to assess which way the pandemic is going as it is happening," Adler added

Congress pays tributes to Rajiv Gandhi on death anniv

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, May 21: The Congress Friday paid tributes to former prime minister Rajiv Gandhi on his 30th death anniversary and said he proved that a foresighted and committed leadership can benefit a nation for decades to come.

Rajiv Gandhi was assassinated May 21, 1991 at Sriperumbudur in Tamil Nadu by a woman suicide bomber at an election rally of the Congress party.

Former Congress chief Rahul Gandhi paid floral tributes to his father at his memorial -- Veer Bhumi -- here. He also posted a picture of his father on Twitter along with the words, "Truth, Compassion, Progress", and used the hashtag



'RememberingRajivGandhi'. Paying homage to the former Prime Minister, the Congress put out several tweets hailing hiscontribution in the nation's development.



international

Our great sympathies and support to the people of India, and what is happening there relative to the pandemic, to those who have lost their lives and are suffering as a result of the Covid-19 crisis GERRY RICE | SPOKESPERSON, IMF

INTERNET EXPLORER TO RETIRE ON JUNE 15, 2022

Microsoft has said that it is retiring its long-standing browser Internet Explorer on June 15 next year after serving the netizens for over 25 years. The veteran web browser was released with Windows 95



of the



Everyone would like to 'bite' us somewhere or 'bite off' some part of us, but they should know that we knock the teeth out of those who want to do that, so they can't bite

VLADIMIR PUTIN PRESIDENT, RUSSIA

This new data highlights the incredible impact that both doses of the vaccine can have, with a second dose of the Oxford/AstraZeneca vaccine

Oxford/Astrazeneca vaccine providing up to 90 per cent protection

I believe that in addition to the Normandy format, there will be a direct conversation with the President of the Russian Federation. I also see a format for involving the US in this discussion **VOLODYMYR ZELENSKY** PRESIDENT, UKRAINE

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SHORT TAKES

Borders opened to vaccinatinated

Brussels: The European Union has recommended to open its external borders to nonessential travel into the bloc if travellers have been fully vaccinated against Covid-19. The Council of the EU, representing the 27 member states, adopted a recommendation that eases the Covid-19 restrictions for non-EU travellers whose origin countries report no more than 75 cases per 100,000 inhabitants over the last 14 days. Before the criteria were updated Thursday, the upper limit was 25 cases

Iran's new elite from Iraq militias

Tehran: Iran has handpicked hundreds of trusted fighters from among the cadres of its most powerful militia allies in Irag, forming smaller, elite and fiercely loyal factions in a shift away from relying on large groups with which it once exerted influence. The new covert groups were trained last year in drone warfare, surveillance and online propaganda and answer directly to officers in Iran's Quds Force, the arm of its Revolutionary Guards (IRGC) that controls its allied militia abroad.

ISRAEL-HAMAS FIGHTING Egypt-brokered truce comes into effect

Sine the outbreak, Egypt worked to provide a framework that both sides could agree on. It was not immediately clear what the terms of the cease fire were, but its success is likely to bolster the country's diplomatic credentials

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Gaza, May 21: An Egypt-brokered ceasefire came into effect Friday between Israel and the Palestinian Hamas movement, ending an 11-day bloodshed in the Gaza Strip.

The ceasefire came into force at 2 am, reports Xinhua news agency. According to Egypt's official MENA news agency, Cairo will send two security delegations to Israel and Palestine to ensure the implementation of the truce.

The heaviest fighting between Israel and the Gaza militants since 2014 has so far killed 232 Palestinians, including 65 children, and 12 Israelis.

After mediation by Egypt, Israel's Cabinet approved the unilateral ceasefire late Thursday, with a Hamas representative confirming the Islamist organisation's agreement shortly afterwards.

Taher al-Nuno said the Palestinian "armed resistance" would honour the ceasefire as long as it is upheld by the Israel side. Israeli Prime Minister



Benjamin Netanyahu said his country's political leadership has stressed that the reality on the ground will determine whether fighting continues. If the Palestinians continue with

e rocket attacks, the ceasefire will be lifted immediately, he added. US President Joe Biden welcomed the ceasefire, expressing

comed the ceasefire, expressing "sincere gratitude" to Egypt for

a vala in brokaving the deal

its role in brokering the deal. "I extend my sincere gratitude to President al-Sisi and the senior Egyptian officials who played such a critical role in this diplomacy," Biden said at the White House. He said the US, the UN and other partners stand ready to help the Palestinian Authority with humanitarian aid and reconstruction assistance.

Hamas claims victory

An official from the Palestinian militant Hamas group says Israel's declaration of a ceasefire represents a defeat for Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and "a victory to the Palestinian people." Ali Barakeh, a member of Hamas' Arab and Islamic relations bureau, told The Associated Press that the militants will remain on alert until they hear from mediators who have been working for days between Hamas and Israel.

UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres welcomed the ceasefire and called on all sides to observe it.

Israeli forces and Gaza Strip militants have fired thousands missiles back and forth since May 10, in response to the rockets fired by Palestinian militants in Gaza to retaliate for Israel's violation of the sacred Islamic holy site of Al-Aqsa Mosque in Jerusalem.

Election chief considers dissolving Suu Kyi's NLD

AGENCIES

Yangon, May 21: Myanmar's junta-appointed election commission will dissolve Aung San Suu Kyi's National League for Democracy Party (NLD) because of what it said was fraud in a November election, news outlet Myanmar Now said Friday, citing a commissioner.

Myanmar Now said the decision was made during a meeting with political parties that was boycotted by many parties including the NLD.

Myanmar's army seized power Feb 1, overthrowing and detaining the elected civilian leader Aung San Suu Kyi, who fought for democracy for decades before tentative reforms began a decade ago. The military justified the coup by accusing Suu Kyi's NLD of ob-

a manipulated vote, though the electoral commission at that time had rejected its complaints.

The election fraud conducted by the NLD in November was illegal "so we will have to dissolve the party's registration", the chairman of the junta-backed Union Election Commission (UEC), Thein Soe, was cited in the report as saying. Thein Soe said the people who



The election fraud conducted by the NLD in November was illegal 'so we will have to dissolve the party's registration', said Thein Soe, the chairman of the junta-backed Union Election Commission

committed the election fraud "will be considered as traitors" and action will be taken against them.

A spokesman for the junta and for an underground pro-democracy national unity government, which includes ousted members of the NLD, did not immediately respond to requests for comment.

Tibet an integral part of China: White paper

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Beijing, May 21: China Friday claimed that Tibet has been an integral part of the country since ancient times and blamed British imperialists for cultivating the "Tibet Independence" concept, it said.

Justifying the Chinese troops taking over of the strategically vital Himalayan region in 1951, a white paper on Tibet released by the Chinese government said that with the "peaceful liberation of Tibet" 70 years ago. "Tibet has been an integral part of Chinese territory since ancient times, and one of the main Tibetan-inhabited areas in

China," the document said. "In the aftermath of the Opium Wars in the middle of the 19th century, the UK-led imperialist powers began to cultivate the idea of 'Tibet

Lama's successor has to be approved by govt

China Friday asserted that any successor to the present Dalai Lama should be approved by it, ruling out recognition to any heir nominated by the India-based Tibetan spiritual leader or by his followers. The reincarnation of the Dalai Lama and other grand Living Buddhas has been subjected to approval by the central government since the Qing Dynasty (1644-1911), claimed an official white paper issued by the Chinese government here.

times of remote antiquity, the ancestral people inhabiting the Tibetan Plateau had close ties with the Han and other ethnic groups in terms

SERENE SNOWFALL

nalets are pictured after an overnight snowfall in the village of Le Sepev in Ormont-Dessous, Switzerland

Anti-Asian hate crimes bill passed

Washington: President Joe Biden has signed a legislation to address the sudden increase in hate crime against Asian-Americans in the aftermath of the Covid-19 pandemic and expressed hope that such crimes would now be more accurately counted and reported so that it can be ended. "It will provide resources to create specialised hate crimes units that will also help states create hotlines for hate crimes at state and local levels that will be accessible for people with limited English proficiency," Biden said after signing the legislation, which has become a law after his assent.

Afghan district

falls to Taliban

Kabul: Jalrez district in

Afghanistan's Maidan Wardak

Taliban after heavy attacks by

province have fallen to the

the militant group for three

straight days, an official

confirmed Friday. Mahdi

Rasikh, an MP from the

province, said the district

police headquarters were

added that at least seven

captured by the Taliban. He

security force members were

the district, adding that some

killed during the attacks on

soldiers were missing.

Governor's compound and the

independence', intentionally undermining China's sovereignty and territorial integrity", the white paper titled 'Tibet Since 1951: Liberation, Development and Prosperity' said.

It said China is a unified multiethnic country with a long history and the Tibet has developed through the combined efforts of all the ethnic groups in the country. "Abundant archaeological and

"Abundant archaeological and academic research shows that in

 of blood, language, and culture."
"Following the peaceful liberation all ethnic groups in Tibet

tion, all ethnic groups in Tibet, united under the strong leadership of the Communist Party of China, have worked together and stood firm in safeguarding national sovereignty, unity and territorial integrity," it said. All those counties formerly classified as "poor" have risen out of poverty, and the people are leading better lives in every respect, it said.



Oli, Oppn alliance stake claim to form govt PRESS TRUST OF INDIA Kathmandu, May 21: Nepal's po-

litical crisis deepened on Friday as both embattled Prime Minister K P Sharma Oli and the Opposition parties staked a claim for the formation of a new government by submitting letters comprising signatures of lawmakers to President Bidya Devi Bhandari.

Prime minister Oli reached the President's office Shital Niwas a couple of minutes ahead of the Opposition leaders.

He submitted the letter claiming support of 121 lawmakers from his own party CPN-UML and 32 lawmakers of Janata Samajbadi Party-Nepal (JSP-N) for his reappointment pursuant to Article 76(5) of the Constitution.



JSP-N president Mahantha Thakur, JSP-N Parliamentary Party leader Rajendra Mahato and PM Oli had signed the letter submitted to the President, CPN-UML leader Bishnu Rimal was quoted as saying in The Himalayan Times. Earlier, Nepali Congress President Sher Bahadur Deuba claimed to have garnered the support of 149 lawmakers. Deuba, along with the leaders of Opposition parties, reached the President's Office to stake claim for the post of prime minister.

Nepal President Bidya Devi Bhandari told the Opposition alliance that she will seek advice from constitutional experts before taking a call on government formation.

BBC fell 'below standards' over Diana interview

THE INDEPENDENT INQUIRY FOUND BBC'S JOURNALIST BASHIR MOCKED UP FAKE BANK STATEMENTS THAT FALSELY SUGGESTED INDIVIDUALS WERE BEING PAID FOR KEEPING THE PRINCESS, UNDER SURVEILLANCE

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

London, May 21: An independent inquiry has revealed that the BBC "fell below its high standards of integrity and transparency" over the 1995 interview with the late Princess Diana.

The inquiry revealed Thursday that former BBC reporter Martin Bashir had acted in a "deceitful" way and faked documents to obtain the interview while the broadcaster's own internal probe in 1996 into what happened was "woefully ineffective", Xinhua news agency.

The independent inquiry, by retired judge Lord Dyson, was commissioned by the broadcaster last year, after Diana's brother, Earl Spencer went public with



allegations about how the interview was obtained.

It found Bashir mocked up fake bank statements that falsely suggested individuals were being paid for keeping the Princess, who died in a car crash in France 1997, under



surveillance. The BBC carried out its own investigation into the issue in 1996, but it "fell short of the high standards of integrity and transparency", according to the inquiry. The BBC's incumbent Director-General, Tim Davie, said: "Although the report states that Diana, Princess of Wales, was keen on the idea of an interview with the BBC, it is clear that the process for securing the interview fell far short of what audiences have a right to expect.

"We are very sorry for this. Lord Dyson has identified clear failings." In a letter sent by Davie to Prince Charles, the Director-General apologised for Bashir's "lurid and untrue claims" and accepts that the veteran journalist made the claims "intending to play on the Princess's fears, in order to arouse her interest in him, and without concern for the impact on those he maligned".

According to the the BBC, this was the first time a serving British Royal had spoken openly about her life, including her "unhappy marriage" to Prince Charles, their affairs and her bulimia.

Responding to the inquiry findings, Prince William said he was "most saddened" that his mother never learned she had been deceived, adding that she was failed "not just by a rogue reporter" but also by "BBC bosses". In a separate statement, his brother Harry said that the "ripple effect of a culture of exploitation and unethical practices" ultimately took his mother's life.

"Our mother lost her life because of this, and nothing has changed. By protecting her legacy, we protect everyone, and uphold the dignity with which she lived her life," the Duke of Sussex added.

Pak PM inaugurates Chinese–assisted nuke power plant in Karachi

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Islamabad, May 21: Pakistan Prime Minister Imran Khan Friday inaugurated the country's first Chinese assisted 1,100MW nuclear power plant in Karachi that coincided with the celebration of the 70th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic ties between the all-weather allies.

Khan virtually performed the inauguration of the plant, formally known as Karachi Nuclear Power Plant Unit-2 (Kanupp-2 or K-2), which was built with the support of China.

The prime minister who attended the ceremony from Islamabad said the completion of the project was made possible due to the collaboration between Pakistan and China.

"The project will produce 1,100 megawatts of clean energy, which is particularly important for us as Pakistan is one of the 10 countries most affected by climate change," he said.

The construction of K-2 plant started in November 2013 and its fuel loading started December 1, 2020 and after several tests, the plant was connected to the national grid March 18, 2021.

K-2 is a generation III, state-ofthe-art plant with improved safety systems, especially internal and external accident prevention ability and enhanced emergency response capability, according to Chairman Pakistan Atomic Energy Commission (PAEC) Muhammad Naeem.

He told a webinar Thursday that K-2 and the upcoming K-3 nuclear power are safe to operate and their inauguration would be a milestone in the country's quest to increasethe share of nuclear power in electricity generation.





business



We are pleased to partner with AMNS (ArcelorMittal Nippon Steel) and to supply the growing industrial LNG demand in India, a country that aims to more than double the share of natural gas in its energy mix by 2030 compared to today THOMAS MAURISSE SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT LNG AT TOTAL

COOK TO DEFEND 'APP STORE'

Apple Inc CEO Tim Cook Friday will take the witness stand to defend the App Store, a booming part of the iPhone maker's business that "Fortnite" maker Epic Games says is a monopoly that Apple abuses. He is expected to make the most extensive public remarks on the App Store business



uote 77 **RBI to transfer ₹99K cr surplus to Centre**

strategy team expects the overall impact on the pandemic restrictions on GDP to be about 150 bps

Our macro

in base case scenario. Even if we assume a 300 bps impact if statewide restrictions prolonged, nominal GDP growth in FY22 can still be around 13-14%

JITENDRA GOHIL HEAD, EQUITY ANALYST, CREDIT SUISSE, INDIA



labourers is mainly on account of an increase in the prices of rice, wheatatta, maize, jowar, ragi, mustard oil,

meat (goat), vegetables and fruits, firewood and kerosene DPS NEGI

DIRECTOR GENERAL, LABOUR BUREAU



1.50.000 of our

frontline staff and employees. Thousands of our delivery partners are already vaccinated

DEEPINDER GOYAL FOUNDER AND CEO, ZOMATO

SHORT TAKES

Amazon adds Pak to its sellers' list

Islamabad: E-commerce giant Amazon has added Pakistan to its sellers' list making Pakistani entrepreneurs eligible to sell on the platform, the Commerce Ministry announced Friday. The ministry said that Pakistani manufacturers would gain access to a worldwide ecommerce platform with Amazon and it would open up a new chapter of the supply chain where Pakistani manufacturers could sel directly to customers.

Volvo Group joins hands with Ikea

New Delhi: Swedish automotive firm Volvo Group Friday said it has joined hands with Bangalore's civic body BBMP and compatriot IKEA to set up a 100-bed Covid care centre. The facility set up at the Karnataka Institute of Endocrinology on Old Madras Road will commence operations in two phases. It has been equipped to cater to Covid-19 positive individuals, who are either asymptomatic, or exhibiting mild symptoms or seeking isolation services, the company said in a statement.

AGENCIES

Mumbai, May 21: The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) Friday decided to transfer ₹99,122 crore as surplus to the exchequer, a move that will help the government to channelise more resources to combat the second wave of Covid-19 pandemic. The decision to transfer the sur-

plus amount for the accounting period of nine months ended March 31, 2021 was taken at a meeting of the central board of the RBI, held through video conferencing, under the chairmanship of Governor Shaktikanta Das. The surplus is commonly called 'dividend'.

The accounting year of RBI is truncated as it has aligned its July-June accounting year with the government's April-March fiscal year. The RBI has followed a July-

June financial year since 1940, when it moved away from a January-December financial year. The RBI also decided to maintain a Contingency Risk Buffer at 5.50 per cent in line with recommendations of the Bimal Jalan

per cent for the RBI.

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

by ₹105 to ₹210 per month.

employees and workers.

minimum wages for central sphere

It will be for scheduled employ

ment in central sphere and appli-

cable to the establishments under

the authority of central govern-

ment, railway administration,

mines, oil fields, major ports or

any corporation established by the

central government. These rates are

equally applicable to contract and

Talking to PTI, Chief Labour

Commissioner Central (CLC) D

PS Negi said, "the dearness

hike ranges from ₹105 to ₹210

per month for workers in the

casual employees/workers.



DING A HAND

The decision to The accounting year of RBI is truncated as it has aligned its July-June accounting year with the government's April-March fiscal year

at a meeting of the The central bank also decided to maintain a central board of the Contingency Risk Buffer at 5.50% in line with RBI, held through recommendations of the Bimal Jalan Committee report video conferencing

THE RBI HAD TRANSFERRED ₹57,128 CRORE AS SURPLUS TO THE CENTRAL **GOVERNMENT FOR THE ACCOUNTING YEAR 2019-20**

The RBI Board, according to a release, also reviewed the current Committee report. The panel had economic situation, global and doprescribed a Contingency Risk mestic challenges and recent pol-Buffer range of 6.5 per cent to 5.5 icy measures taken by the Reserve Bank to mitigate the adverse impact

transfer the surplus

amount was taken

of the second wave of Covid-19 on the economy.

With the change in RBI's accounting year to April-March (earlier July-June), the Board discussed the working of the RBI during the transition period of nine months (July 2020-March 2021).

During the meeting, the board approved the Annual Report and accounts of the Reserve Bank for the transition period.

'The Board also approved the transfer of ₹99,122 crore as surplus to the central government for the accounting period of nine months ended March 31, 2021 (July 2020-March 2021), while deciding to maintain the Contingency Risk Buffer at 5.50 per cent."

The RBI had transferred ₹57,128 crore as surplus to the central government for the accounting year 2019-20.

A year before that (2018-19), the RBI had transferred ₹1.76 lakh crore which included ₹1.23 lakh crore as dividend and ₹52,637 crore excess provisions identified as per the revised Economic Capital Framework (ECF).

In the Budget 2021-22, the government had pegged the dividend/ surplus of RBI, nationalised banks and financial institutions at ₹53,510.61 crore. For the fiscal year 2020-21, it was revised downwards to ₹61.826.29 crore, from the earlier estimate of ₹89.648.51 crore

'Covid to obstruct recovery in domestic consumption of petroleum products'

AGENCIES

New Delhi, May 21: The resurgence of Covid-19 is expected to obstruct the recovery in domestic consumption of petroleum products, said India Ratings and Research (Ind-Ra) Friday.

In a report, the ratings agency cited that India's domestic consumption of petroleum products declined 1.8 per cent month on month to 4.4 million barrels per day (mb/d) in March 2021, after achieving FY21's peak level of 4.5 mb per day in February 2021.

The mom decline is likely to have been higher in the months of April and May due to the fresh restrictions imposed to curb the second covid wave," the agency said.

"However, Ind-Ra opines that the consumption levels to have remained higher on a yoy basis due to the lower base effect caused by the more stringent restrictions imposed during the same period last year."

JSW Steel reports highest ever profit



lative basis, production, domestic

consumption and exports on a

YoY basis declined by 11%, 8.7%

and 13.3%, respectively, during

FY21. Similarly, domestic crude

duction volumes of Oil and

Natural Gas Corporation, Oil

India and fields under produc-

tion-sharing contracts decreased

3.7% y-o-y, 1.8% y-o-y and 2.3% y-

clined 1.6% m-o-m during the

month." On a cumulative basis,

a fall of 4.7% Y-o-Y in domes-

tic crude production was reg-

istered during FY21. Besides,

the report pointed out that in

"Domestic production de-

o-y, respectively.

"During March 2021, the pro-

production fell 3.1% Y-o-Y.

ket. He said it's difficult to estimate the quantum of fall in percentage terms. Rangarajan, who is also COO of Housing.Com and Makaan.Com, said sales were decent in April but have been adversely impacted this month. The Delhi-NCR market is worst

affected, he added. "Real Estate will bounce back strongly and we will see a solid recovery," said Rangarajan. With a fall in infections in Maharashtra, Rangarajan said the demand in MMR and Pune will revive quickly. Ankita Sood, Head of Research at Housing.Com and PropTiger, said prospective home buvers are searching for properties on its realty portals, indicating that demand will bounce back once

the second wave subsides. Meanwhile, PropTiger s a statement that Hyderabad has reported the maximum increase of 39 per cent year-on-year in housing sales during the January-March period of this calendar year.

New Delhi, May 21: The Ministry of Labour & Employment Friday announced a hike in variable dearness allowance for more than 1.5 crore workers in the central sphere The hike, which will be effective from April 1, 2021, will also result in an increase in rate of

> employments in the central sphere at a time when the country is strug-Covid-19 pandemic, it added.

Gangwar said the revision will benefit about 1.50 crore workers engaged in various scheduled em-



relief to different category of workers engaged in various scheduled gling with the second wave of the

The VDA is revised on the basis of average Consumer Price Index for Industrial Workers (CPI-IW), a price index compiled by the Labour Bureau.

The average CPI-IW for of July to December 2020 was used for undertaking the latest VDA revision.

Labour Minister Santosh

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, May 21: Housing sales may decline y-o-y during the April-June quarter across eight major cities on sluggish demand due to the second wave of Covid-19 pandemic, a senior company official of PropTiger said Friday. However, sales are expected to bounce back during the second half of the 2021 calendar year on pent-up and festival demand, PropTiger COO Mani Rangarajan

told reporters

According to PropTiger, housing sales fell drastically at 19,038 units in April-June last year across eight cities from 92,764 units in the yearago period because of the nationwide lockdown.

Delhi-NCR, Mumbai Metropolitan Region (MMR), Pune.

March, natural gas production As per the report on a cumuincreased 11.3% Y-o-Y.



in its consolidated net profit to ₹4,191 crore for the quarter ended March 31, and said it will spend over ₹25,000 crore on projects in Odisha, Karnataka and Jammu & Kashmir. The company had clocked a net profit of ₹188 crore in the corresponding quarter of the previous financial year, JSW

Steel said in a BSE filing. Its total income in January-March 2021 jumps to ₹27,095 crore, compared with ₹18,009 crore in the year-ago period. Total expense rose to ₹20,752 crore, against ₹17.056 crore a vear ago

On a standalone basis, JSW Steel's net profit grew to ₹4,018 crore, from ₹242 crore a year ago. The standalone total income during the said quarter was at ₹24,593 crore, higher from ₹15,423 crore in the same period of financial year 2019-20.



📕 Country's gas output rises 23%

New Delhi: India's natural gas production jumped 22.7 per cent in April after Reliance Industries Ltd and its partner BP Plc ramped up output from their eastern offshore KG-D6 block, government data released Friday showed. India produced 2.65 billion cubic meters of natural gas in April, up from 2.16 bcm in the same month last year, as per the data released by the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas.

Cummins India shuts Pune plant

New Delhi: Engines and power equipment manufacturer Cummins India Friday said it has temporarily closed its Pune-based engine facility to combat the Covid-19 situation in the city. The

company has shut down the Kothrud-based plant from May 20 to May 23 after the Pune Municipal Corporation (PMC) officials issued an advisory to the firm. "Accordingly, in compliance with the advisory, the company has closed the said plant operations from May 20 to May 23," Cummins India said in a regulatory filing.

central sphere In a statement, the labour ministry said it has notified and revised the rate of Variable Dearness Allowance (VDA) with effect from April 1, 2021. This will be a major

ployments in the central sphere across the country. "This hike in VDA will support these workers particularly in the current pandemic times".

Bangalore, Hyderabad, Chennai, Kolkata, and Ahmedabad are the eight cities tracked by PropTiger.

"We may see a decline in housing sales" across eight cities dur-

TOP GAINERS 21 50,540.48 975.62 SENSEX								
POINTS	LITTELA	%						
1497.00	HDFC Bank	4.48%						
401.10	SBI	4.30%						
1016.25	IndusInd Bank	4.18%						
642.45	ICICI Bank	3.86%						
730.70	Axis Bank	3.51%						
2515.70	HDFC	2.89%						
1757.55	Kotak Mahi	2.87%						
819.15	M&M	1.99%						
530.90	Bharti Airtel	1.96%						
2832.30	Asian Paints	1.33%						

GRAPHICS

Aus-UK trade deal can help spur post-pandemic revival

AGENCIES

London, May 21: When Australia and the UK began discussing a free trade agreement (FTA) in 2020, they issued a joint statement with remarkably similar objectives. It now seems that a meeting of minds is imminent.

The countries' shared language, history and similar legal systems mean a deal should be relatively easy to finalise. It will also be highly significant, seen by the UK as a key step towards accession to the influential Comprehensive and Progressive Trans-Pacific Partnership, a group of 11 Pacific Rim countries representing 13% of global GDP. So far, selling the FTA to the

British public has been fairly painless, with predictions of UK exports to Australia increasing by up to £900 million per year. The deal should also create wel come opportunities for British firms through improved access to fast growing Asian markets such as Vietnam and China.

The agreement would reduce tariffs on goods, ideally to zero a situation retained between the UK and the EU after Brexit.

But while this reduction would be beneficial to consumers, tariff free access to agricultural products is becoming a contentious issue for some in the UK. Farming groups there have argued that cheap produce from massive industrial operations in Australia



would do "irreversible damage' to their livelihoods.

In response, the president of the Australian national farmers' federation said Australian farmers were "just not able to ship our

produce in any sort of a quantity to the UK". She added, "It's just way too expensive and way too far.

A potential compromise could see tariff-free access for

agricultural goods being phased in over a ten year period, but clearly not everyone will be happy.

Less controversially, the FTA will hopefully secure transparent customs procedures which minimise costs and administrative burdens for businesses, while maintaining the the safety and quality of products, including food.

The agreement should also enhance opportunities for business travel and support the mutual recognition of professional qualifications.

The UK government has promised that National Health Service operations and drug prices are not on the table.

Second wave flattens fizz for soft drink industry: Crisil

AGENCIES

New Delhi, May 21: India's nonalcoholic beverages industry, led by cola giants Pepsi and Coca-Cola, is unlikely to reclaim pre-pandemic levels this fiscal, ratings agency Crisil said. "Indeed, despite some claw-back after an estimated decline by a fifth last fiscal, revenue will still be 10 per cent short of the fiscal 2020 mark,"

the ratings agency said. 'Credit profiles of players, however, remain resilient because of their cost-control measures, strong balance sheets and ample liquidity.

As per an analysis of 13 Crisilrated bottlers of Pepsi and Coca-Cola,

which account for over 50% of the market, indicates as much. As things stand, Crisil said Pepsi and Coca-Cola have a combined market share of over 80% in India's non-alcoholic beverages industry.

The manufacturing operations are either owned by them or are done through third-party bottlers in different regions of the country."

Last fiscal, a strict nationwide lockdown and subsequent restrictions over April-September severely affected peak season demand as summer months alone account for two-thirds of annual cola sales.

"A redux looms now." According to Nitesh Jain, Director, Crisil Ratings, "Beverages sales vol-



umes will be adversely impacted in the peak season once again due to localised lockdowns and restrictions on movement to contain the second

Though these restrictions are staggered across regions and are less stringent this time around, Beverages full-year revenue may still be 10 per cent sales volumes will below pre-panbe adversely impacted in the peak season once demic levels." Besides, the again due to localised agency cited lockdowns and restrictions on that operating movement to contain the profits may be second wave of the more resilient, pandemic driven by contin-NITESH JAIN | DIRECTOR, uation of cost-CRISIL RATINGS control meas-

ures and improving product mix. "Demand for high-margin car-

"This will affect out-of-home conbonated soft drinks (CSD), which sumption of beverages the most in forms two-thirds of the beverage portfolio of players, was impacted less during lockdowns compared with juices and bottled water. This is due to higher in-home consumption of CSD, driven by increasing access to refrigeration," the agency said. Furthermore, the analysis assumes decline in demand by a fifth in the first quarter of this fiscal.

"Recovery is expected from the second quarter with the surge in number of cases and consequent lockdowns peaking in June, and the pace of vaccination also picking up," Crisil said.

"But a major part of peak season volumes would be lost by then, and any subsequent resurgence in in-fections especially in the rural segment will be a monitorable."







wave of the pandemic."

the first quarter.



OrissaPOST SATURDAY | MAY 22 | 2021 | BHUBANESWAR

sports

Series against England 'a great preparation'

SOUTHEE FEELS TWO-TEST SERIES AGAINST ROOT & CO TO SERVE AS A BOOST FOR THEIR WORLD TEST CHAMPIONSHIP FINAL AGAINST INDIA



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Southampton, May 21: Senior New Zealand pacer Tim Southee believes that the upcoming two-Test series against England would serve as "great preparation" for his team as it gears up for the marquee World Test Championship final against India here.

New Zealand are playing two Tests against England at the Lord's (Jun 2-6) and Birmingham (Jun 10-14). The WTC final final is scheduled from June 18.

Asked if the focus will be on the WTC final, Southee said: "Anytime you get to play a Test match for New Zealand, it's an amazing opportunity and I don't think you treat them as warm-ups. Our focus is first and foremost on the two match series against England."

But the 32-year-old with 302 Test wickets didn't deny that it was indeed a great opportunity to gear up for the big battle against India. "But great to have those matches

leading to the final. So for us, it's great preparation for that final but we are looking at two-match series against a quality English side in their conditions," Southee said. Southee also didn't feel that three

Tests in three weeks will be much of a workload after a welcome break for many. "It's exciting to play three Test matches in a short space of time," Southee said after his first training session at the Ageas Bowl following a three-day hard quarantine.

"It is something that the team doesn't get to do that often. We've come off a bit of a break, which has been nice, and (we have) been able to get some conditioning into our bodies," Southee said.

He believes that they will be ready to cope with the rigours with some quality training sessions in the next two weeks.

"So, the guys are refreshed in some sort of way, using the next couple of weeks to get ourselves prepared and ready to play three Test matches. They are in quick succession but we have had a chance to prepare physically leading into this with some strength and conditioning stuff.

'Now, it's just getting our loads to a point over the coming weeks so that we can rock on to those three Test matches.

He said stepping in to the Lord's ground will be emotional for them remembering the World Cup final

which they lost on boundary countback. "It's tough being emotional and caught up with it, you look at it as an amazing game of cricket, which did wonders for the one day game, from the players that were involved in it.

"It's one of those matches you relive and relive for the rest of your lives. When we turn up at Lord's there will be few guys who will have mixed emotions." Southee said.

The post-quarantine training in Southampton is also very helpful as they would play India at the same venue. "I imagine we'll probably be in the same room when we come back and it's nice for the guys who haven't been here to be able to come here and experience it," he said. "And when you come back for the final, you're a little bit more comfortable having spent

some time here.' At 32, Southee believes that he has many more years of Test cricket left in him with a role model like

James Anderson to emulate. "Age is just a number and it's great to see guys like Jimmy bowl at 38, and it's a dream playing for your country and I would like to do it for many more years to come," he signed off.

INDIA WOMEN'S TEAM FIELDING COACH SHARMA STRESSES ON PHYSICAL FITNESS **'EVES NEED TO BE ATHLE'**

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, May 21: India's women cricketers are not as athletic and strong as their foreign counterparts when it comes to running around the park and that is something fielding coach Abhay Sharma will work on extensively with them during the upcoming UK tour.

Sharma, who has worked a lot with the men's India U-19 team, was with the national women's team for the first time during the home series against South Africa in March

Since the series was organised last minute, Sharma did not get a lot of time with the players but he is looking forward to working with them on an individual basis during the UK tour, starting June 16. The Indian team are scheduled to play a Test, three ODIs and as many T20s against the hosts.

"Overall development is needed as far as fielding is concerned. The game is changing, you have to be more athletic. Technically, work needs to be done. What I observed is that a lot of girls are struggling with their throwing techniques.

"If you develop wrong technique in your early days then it troubles you with injuries. Once the technical side is taken care of, then you can build on the strength part," Sharma told this agency before entering the bio-bubble in Mumbai ahead of the UK tour.

In the home series against South Africa, Sharma observed that the opposition players were much faster in the field. "This time I will interact with more on a one to one basis rather than group and assess what they feel about the game and then try

Messi to skip season finale

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Barcelona, May 21: Lionel Messi might have played his final game for Barcelona. The Argentina star has been given permission to skip the team's final game of the Spanish league (La Liga) season — at Eibar Saturday — so he can have extra rest ahead of the Copa America, Barcelona said Friday.

Messi didn't train Friday. Barcelona is out of contention for the league title. His contract expires at the end of this season. and he hasn't given an indication he will sign a new one.

manslaughter in Maradona case

The 33-year-old Messi has been lowing the 2019-20 season, saying he wasn't happy with the direction the club was taking.

The Copa America starts June 13, when Argentina takes on Chile. Barcelona are third in the Spanish league, seven points behind leader Atletico Madrid and five behind Real Madrid.

The team could get overtaken by fourth-place Sevilla, which is two points back ahead of a home match against Alaves. Lastplace Eibar has already been relegated.

ders and they are not that strong." It was India's first series in 12

months and the players looked under prepared. South Africa ended up winning both T20s and ODIs. "We have to accept that there is

a huge difference between foreign teams and our girls. The South African girls were more athletic, they cover the ground quicker and they are little stronger also," said Sharma. "What I see that we are standing on technique, we are not standing on strength. We need to be strong on both fronts." he said.

Improvement is also needed on catching and running between the wickets, he said. "Last series what I saw was there was a lapse in judgement in some cases, may be because they were playing after a long time. A lot depends on the frame of mind. We will work sin-

"The running between wickets is a huge part of the game. If the team is having good coordination then you can convert those singles into twos and that is one area where we can add pressure on the oppo-

sition.' Young opener Shafali Verma is seen as the next big thing in women's cricket but questions have been raised over her fitness. Sharma said she is improving rapidly.

"During the last series also we worked a lot on her fielding. As far as weight loss is concerned she has really worked hard but just weight loss doesn't make you a better fielder or a player.

"We are working on her fielding, things like cutting down the angles and judging the ball early. You will see a big improvement very soon. She is a very sincere girl and does whatever has been told to her.'

First Dronacharya awardee boxing

coach passes away





really need to work hard. What I

have noticed in women's cricket



CR7 highlights Seven charged with involuntary Portugal for Euro



ASSOCIATED PRESS

Lisbon, May 21: Cristiano Ronaldo will lead a talented Portugal squad that will try to defend their European Championship title.

Coach Fernando Santos Thursday announced his list of 26 players for next month's tournament, when Ronaldo will be supported by the likes of Bruno Fernandes, Bernardo Silva, Diogo Jota and Joao Felix.

Also included in the Euro 2020 souad was 22-year-old Sporting Lisbon forward Pedro Goncalves, who has never played for the national team. Goncalves was key this season in helping Sporting win their first Portuguese league -title since 2002. Back in the squad were Nuno Mendes and Joao

THE SQUAD

to Diego Maradona in the days before his death have been charged with involuntary manslaughter. Maradona, who led Argentina to victory in the 1986 World Cup, died of a heart attack November 25 at Fonte (Lille), Pepe (Porto), Ruber a rented residence outside Buenos Aires following brain surgery two

ASSOCIATED PRESS

weeks earlier. He was 60. A medical board's report given to prosecutors this month concluded that Maradona was in agony for more than 12 hours, did not receive adequate treatment and could still be alive if he had been properly hospitalised.

Buenos Aires, May 21: Seven

health professionals who tended

Prosecutors Wednesday charged

were ignored," adding that of at least 12 hours.

pitalisation.

Maradona had suffered a series of medical problems, some due to was reportedly near death in 2000 and 2004

Julio Rivas, a lawyer for Luque, said earlier this month that medical forensics of the report were flawed and "biased ... With no scientific foundation.'

HI bags Etienne Glichitch Award

neurosurgeon Leopoldo Luque and

psychiatrist Agustina Cosachov,

the two leaders of Maradona's

medical team, and five other health

professionals with involuntary

manslaughter. A doctor, a psy-

chologist, two nurses and a nurse

"the patient's signs of risk of life

The medical panel's report said

coordinator were the others.

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Lausanne, May 21: Hockey India (HI) Friday won the prestigious Etienne Glichitch Award in recognition of its contribution to the growth and development of the sport in the country.

The awards were announced by the game's governing body FIH during the HockeyInvites virtual conference as part of its 47th FIH Congress which concluded with the FIH Honorary Awards.

"Hockey India was announced as the winners of the Etienne Glichitch Award in recognition of its remarkable contribution to the growth and development of

Hockey," FIH said in a release. The award gives recognition to numerous individuals, teams and organisations for their outstanding contributions to the sport of hockey. The Pablo Negre Award was presented to the Uzbekistan

the Super Fair Play Trophy Rene G Frank Trophy – for an individual who has made a significant mark on the development of umpiring -

HOCKEY INDIA

Hockey Federation, acknowledging its "tremendous efforts to improve playing conditions through new infrastructure and the implementation of youth development models'

The Polish Hockey Association picked up the Theo Ikema Award, thanks to the various hockey development projects resulting in 30 newly trained coaches and over 3000 schoolchildren being introduced to the sport within the country.

Among individuals, England

Maradona "showed unequivocal signs of a prolonged agony period"

The care that Maradona received at the rented house, the report said, "did not fulfill the minimum requirements" for a patient with his medical history, and that he would have survived with "adequate hos-

excesses of drugs and alcohol. He

striker Sam Ward, who suffered a

career-threatening eye injury in

2019, was named as recipient of

The Guust Lathouwers Memorial

Sharon Williamson of New

Zealand was named as the winner

of the HRH Sultan Azlan Shah

Award for dedicating thousands

of voluntary hours toward the de-

livery of New Zealand's brand-new

National Hockey Centre in

The FIH Honorary Awards took

place on the opening day of the

47th Congress. The Congress ses-

sion will take place on Saturday and

the agenda will include, elections

for the position of FIH President

and for four positions of EB

Ordinary Member.

Auckland.

went to Croatia's Ivona Makar.

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, May 21: India's first Dronacharya awardee coach in boxing, OP Bhardwaj, died Friday after battling prolonged illness and age-related issues here. He was 82 and had tragically lost his wife Santosh to ill-health about 10 days

Bhardwaj was bestowed the highest national honour in coaching jointly with Bhalchandra Bhaskar Bhagwat (wrestling) and OM Nambiar (athletics), when it was introduced in 1985.

"He had been unwell for many days with a lot of health issues and was hospitalised. Age was a factor and there was also the shock of losing his wife about 10 days back," TL Gupta, a close family friend and a former boxing coach, told this agency.

Bhardwaj was India's national boxing coach from 1968 to 1989 and also served as a national selector. Under his tutelage, Indian pugilists won medals at the Asian Games, the Commonwealth Games and the South Asian Games.

Boxing Federation of India President Ajay Singh condoled his demise. "OP Bharadwaj ji has been a flag-bearer for the sport of boxing. As a Coach, he inspired a generation of boxers, and coaches while as a selector, his work has been visionary and unparalleled,' Singh said.

"I join my colleagues in the Boxing Federation of India to mourn this irreplaceable loss and pray for his eternal peace."

A pioneer in Indian boxing, Bhardwaj was the first chief instructor for the sport at the National Institute of Sports in Patiala.

"He started his career in the Army School of Physical Training in Pune and became an accom-

plished coach for Services. In 1975, when NIS came up with the proposal for coaching diplomas, in boxing, Mr Bhardwaj was picked to start the course," Gupta said. "I am proud to say I was among his first students. He was an inspiration." he added.

In 2008, Bhardwaj had even taught some boxing techniques to Congress MP Rahul Gandhi for a couple of months. Former national coach Gurbax Singh Sandhu, who was among his first set of students at NIS, said the man from Chennai was a hands-on instructor.

Gulati said Bhardwaj was driven by a desire to make things better for the sport. "He was a dynamic man. I remember, in those days, when there were no computers and hardly anyone knew how to type, he bought a typewriter from a trip to Russia," Gupta said.

"He would write letter after letter to authorities demanding better amenities for boxers at NIS using that typewriter. He typed with just one finger because he had no formal training in typing," remembered Gupta, who retired as chief instructor from the NIS a few years ago.

Former national federation secretary general Brigadier (Retd) PKM Raja, during whose tenure he was a national selector, said Bhardwaj was highly respected for his contribution to the sport.

"He was a Services Sports Control Board legend. A truly remarkable coach and also a very impressive personality. It is unfortunate that in the last couple of years his multiple health issues restricted him greatly," he said.

Gupta said that Bhardwaj had a fierce personality which often came to fore at any perceived ill-treatment of boxers.

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stone.



with the national team in March.

playing in his fifth straight

European Championship. He is six

goals from tying the all-time scor-

ing record for a men's national

team. The record of 109 goals is

held by former Iran striker Ali

Daei, the only other male football

player to surpass the 100-goal mile-

Portugal will play in a difficult

Group F that also includes Germany,

France and Hungary. Both Germany

and Hungary will have home games

against Portugal in the group stage.

players and I have the conviction

that Portugal is a title candidate,"

Santos said. Portugal's prepara-

tions will begin May 27.

"I have great confidence in my

The 36-year-old Ronaldo will be





