

IRREGULAR by MANJUL Oh no! It looks so heavy ... I won't be able to

Toll Free 1800 3131 777

# **Bengal CS retires**

lift it alone!!

KOLKATA: Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee Monday said she was appointing West Bengal's Chief Secretary (CS) Alapan Bandyopadhyay as Chief Advisor for three years effective from Tuesday, after allowing the bureaucrat who was ordered by the Central government to report to Delhi, to retire. Baneriee told newspersons here that the Central government had asked Bandopadhyay to report to Delhi's North Block Tuesday, but she added an officer cannot join a new office without permission from the state MORE P8 administration.

# Covid-26, Covid-32 AGENCIES

namic but policymakers must have

their ears on ground. You keep on

saying digital India, digital India but

the situation is actually different in

rural areas. How will an illiterate

labourer, from Jharkhand get regis-

tered in Rajasthan? Tell us how you

will address this digital divide," the

bench sought to know from Solicitor

It said, "You must smell the coffee

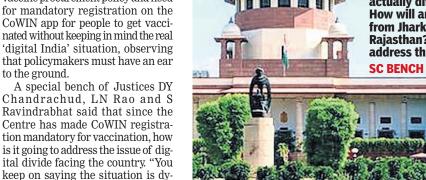
US experts warn of

General Tushar Mehta.

to the ground.

New York, May 31: Two senior US disease experts have said the world needs China's cooperation in tracing the origins of Covid-19 to prevent future pandemic threats, Bloomberg reported

According to Scott Gottlieb, a commissioner of the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) in the Trump administration and now a board mem-



and see what is happening across the country. You must know the ground situation and change the policy accordingly. If we had to do it, we would have done it 15-20 days back.

Mehta replied that registration is mandatory as a person needs to be traced for a second dose and as far as rural areas are concerned there are community centres where a person can

How will an illiterate labourer, from Jharkhand get registered in Raiasthan? Tell us how you will address this digital divide

get registered for vaccination. The bench questioned Mehta

whether the government thinks that this process is viable and asked him to place the policy document on record. The top court was hearing a suo

motu case on management of the COVID situation in the country. At the outset, it asked the Centre

about the vaccine procurement policy

particularly in the light of media rights and free speech, as it gave protection to Telugu news channels -- TV5 and ABN Andhrajyothi -- from any coercive action in a case lodged against them under the colonial era provision. **MORE P9** 

of the Centre by referring to the fact that states like Punjab and Delhi are in the process of issuing global tenders to procure foreign vaccines for COVID-19.

The bench said that even Municipal Corporation like Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) has received bids.

"Is this the policy of the Central government that the state or municipal corporation can procure the vaccine or the Union government is going to procure for them like a nodal agency? We want clarity on this and rationale behind this policy," the bench said.

in May while 1,13,591 cases were reported in April. The number of deaths increased to 711 in May from 118 in April. Highest 12,852 cases were reported May 23 while 35 deaths were reported on three days (May 26, 29 and 31). Twenty-six deaths were

reported May 22 and since then the toll is on the rise. However, daily fresh cases have come down from 11,623

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, May 31:

Under the severe impact of the second wave of Covid-

19, the state recorded over

3.20 lakh new cases and

711 fatalities during the

As per official data, at

least 3,20,803 persons have

been infected with the virus

month of May.

(May 26) to 8313 (May 31). A few days ago, the daily spike suddenly witnessed a sharp fall because of less testing in the wake of Cyclone Yaas in several districts. Now, though testing has been restored to its usual capacity (over 60,000 per day), the state has been reporting less number of Covid cases



May: Is worst

over for state?

sons here Monday, Public Health Director Niranjan Mishra said, "In Odisha, the cases are on declining path in some districts while a few other districts are still witnessing high caseload. Therefore, this is not a uniform phenomenon and cannot be generalised. But overall, the rate of infec-

tion is plummeting." Going by this trend, cases in Odisha are expected to go down further in June, he said. Speaking at the Covid-19 Vaccination Advisory Committee three days back, Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik had said that the current trend of Covid cases is on decline across the state except for a few districts. The second wave is beginning to recede, he hoped. "We are focusing on vaccination and intend to utilise all resources to quickly vaccinate our people." the Speaking to mediaper- CM had stated.

# GDP shrinks 7.3 % in FY21

AGENCIES

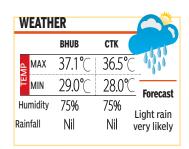
New Delhi, May 31: India's economy contracted by less-than-expected 7.3 per cent in the fiscal year ended March 2021 after growth rate picked up in the fourth quarter, just before the world's worst outbreak of coronavirus infections hit the country.

The GDP in Asia's third-largest economy grew by 1.6 per cent in the January-March period, up from 0.5 per cent in the previous quarter when India began pulling out of a steep pandemic-induced recession in the earlier six months. GDP had grown by 3 per cent in the January-March quarter in the previous year.

slowdown even before the pandemic broke out last year, contracted by 7.3 per cent during FY21, weighed down by nationwide lockdown that pummelled consumption and halted most economic activities. This is the first fullyear contraction in the Indian economy in the last four decades since 1979-80, when GDP had shrunk by 5.2 per cent. The economy had grown by 4 per cent in the previous 2019-20 fiscal

The GDP expanded by 8.3 per cent in FY17 before slipping to 7 per cent in the following fiscal and to 6.1 per cent in 2018-19. According to data released by NSO, India's real GDP contracted to ₹135 lakh crore in FY21 (2020-21) from ₹145 lakh crore at the

N	MARKET WATCH					
INDEX VARIATIO						
BOURSES	SENSEX	51937.44		514.56		
	NIFTY	15582.80		147.10		
CURRENCY	DOLLAR	72.89		₹0.08		
CURRI	EURO	88.53		₹0.32		
	GOLD	₹48,810		₹268		
BULLION	SILVER	₹71,890	1	₹279		



ber of Pfizer Inc, information to support the theory that the SARS-CoV-2 virus may have escaped from a lab in Wuhan, China, has increased. China hasn't provided evidence to disprove that theory, while the search for signs that the virus emerged from wildlife hasn't yielded results, Gottlieb said on CBS News' "Face the Nation." Not knowing how the pandemic started puts the world at risk of future outbreaks, Peter Hotez, co-director of the Texas Children's Hospital Center for Vaccine Development, said in a separate TV appearance.

There's going to be Covid-26 and Covid-32 unless we fully understand the origins of Covid-19," Hotez said on NBC's "Meet the press."

Almost a year and half after the new pathogen was first detected spreading in a wet market in Wuhan, the precise origins of the virus remain unknown. Scientists have hypothesised that it most likely spread from wild animals to humans. The idea that the virus may have accidentally escaped from a research lab, long promoted by some epidemiologists, virologists, bat ecologists in Hubei province for a six-month, year-long period

We need a team of

PETER HOTEZ US DISEASE EXPERT

scientists.

Republicans, has gotten renewed attention from the Biden administration. In a surprise statement Wednesday, President Joe Biden called for a renewed investigation into the virus' emergence. US intelligence agencies had conflicting assessments of whether it was more likely the virus crossed the species barrier from a natural reservoir or leaked from the Wuhan Institute of Virology, Biden said. He ordered the agencies to "redouble their efforts" and report to him again in 90 days.

Debate over the virus' origin was fu-elled anew by a Wall Street Journal report May 23 that three researchers from the Wuhan Institute of Virology became sick enough in November 2019 that they sought hospital care for "symptoms consistent with both Covid-19 and common seasonal illness.

The economy, which was facing a

**Fuel prices continue** to see upward spiral

AGENCIES

New Delhi, May 31: After a day's pause, fuel prices increased once again Monday reaching new highs across the country with petrol crossing ₹100 per litre mark in several cities

#### CITY FUEL PRICES PETROL ₹95.01 (+0.29) DIESEL ₹92.84 (+0.29)

Accordingly, the pump prices of petrol and diesel increased by 29 paise and 26 paise per litre to ₹94.23 and ₹85.16 per litre respectively in Delhi Monday. Across the country as well, petrol and diesel prices increased Monday but the quantum varied depending on the level of local taxes in different states.

end of March 2020.

PEAK 'LOCKDOWN' HOUR



Heavy traffic seen on the national highway near Rasulgarh-Vani Vihar road in Bhubaneswar during lockdown, Monday

*China adopts 3-child policy amid demographic crisis* 

The crisis was expected to deepen as the population above 60 years grew to 264 million, up by 18.7% last year

the demographic crisis China faced

was expected to deepen as the popu-

lation above 60 years grew to 264 mil-

As the calls for the government to

lion, up by 18.7 per cent last year.

#### AGENCIES

Beijing, May 31: China's ruling Communist Party Monday announced a relaxation of its strict two-child policy to allow all couples to have up to three children, in a major policy change after recent data showed a steep decline in birth rates in the world's most populous country.

China permitted all couples to have two children in 2016, scrapping the draconian decades-old one-child policy which policymakers blame for the demographic crisis in the country. Chinese officials claim the onechild policy implemented for over three decades has prevented over 400

million births. The decision to permit the third child came after this month's once-in-a-decade census showed that



China's population grew at the slowest pace to 1.412 billion amid official projections that the decline may begin as early as next year. The new census figures revealed that

do away with the family planning restrictions grew louder due to the concerns that the declining population in the country could result in serious labour shortages negatively impacting the world's second-largest economy, the Communist Party of China (CPC) headed by President Xi Jinping decided to permit a third child while declining to completely scrap the family planning policy.

"China will support couples that wish to have a third child," state-run Xinhua news agency reported, quoting a decision made at the Political Bureau of CPC, presided over by President Xi. "Implementing the policy and its relevant supporting measures will help improve China's population structure, actively respond to the aging population, and preserve the country's human resource advantages," the meeting said.

"Data shows the aging of the Chinese population has further deepened, and we will continue to face the pressure to achieve long-term balanced population development," Ning Jizhe, head of the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS), said while releasing the census figures May 11.

Also the two-child policy failed to enthuse couples to have a second child as fewer opted for the second child citing heavy expenditure in raising the children. The poor response made Liang Jianzhang, professor at Peking University's School of Economics, to suggest to the government to offer parents one million yuan (USD 156,000) for each newborn child to shore up the country's declining birth rate.

# **Snatchers active** during lockdown

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, May 31: After a brief lull, snatchers again became active in the capital posing a challenge to the city police. Sources said around 100 robberv and theft cases were reported in Bhubaneswar in May.

In a shocking incident, a looter attacked a housewife with a knife reportedly during a failed snatching bid here Monday morning.

The woman Anshu Gupta is a resident of IRC Village under Nayapalli police limits. According to sources, the miscreant followed Gupta who was going to the

nearby market and attacked her with a knife from behind to snatch away a gold chain which she reportedly was wearing. He failed to take out the chain but Gupta suffered serious injuries in the attack. Locals rushed to her help when the snatcher again tried to attack the woman. The miscreant managed to flee. The whole incident was captured in a CCTV camera. Several such cases of robbery and thefts were reported here during the last

couple of days. Criminals are having a field day de-police across the city for lockdown enforcement.











# eisure



## **MCKELLEN DOES ONLINE PILATES TO STAY FIT DURING LOCKDOWN**

Veteran star Ian McKellen has credited online pilates sessions for keeping him active during Covid-19 lockdown. "On and off I've been aware that exercise is a good idea and I've done various disciplines. I've been doing pilates online through lockdown. It just keeps me active," Mckellen said. 

## I ENJOY WORKING WHICH HAS **KEPT ME GOING: HOPKINS**

Anthony Hopkins is 83 and in fighting form in front of the camera, having just won an Oscar as Best Actor for The Father. He asserts that he enjoys working, which is what keeps him going.



#### FORTUNE **FORECAST**





could plant a sapling, or organise some dustbins to keep the neighbourhood clean. If you wish to make the world a better place to live in, do it but take it step by step.

#### TAURUS

Ganesha sees you acting very possessive about people and things. You are, consequently, likely

to feel suspicious, uncertain and inse cure about everything, particularly people. It's even possible that you may even suspect the feelings and intentions of those who are close to you

#### GEMINI You will ponder over reli-

gious and cultural values and issues today. You will indulge in a fair amount of discussion with your family members over the issue and present your thoughts and feelings on the subject. These discussions could end up covering topics like law education, societal concerns, manners and etiquette etc., savs Ganesha.

## 

The day looks set to be an ordinary day, for both work and play, says Ganesha. Yet. if you are planning to participate in an event or a competition today, march ahead, by all means. There will, practically, be no one who'll be able to compete with you

# **LEO**



take critical decisions if you aren't in the right frame of mind. Decisions you take today may have to be rethought of later. Important meetings will proceed smooth ly, but you will not be able to commit to any final conclusions or contracts

#### **VIRGO** Appreciate the things that people do and try

your best to inspire them to achieve greater success, says Ganesha. Put on your thinking cap and contemplate seriously. Simply criticising others will only hurt you. Be as level-headed as you can and keep pegging on towards your targets



# against 5G implementation Mumbai: Actress Juhi Chawla has filed a

Juhi files suit

suit against the implementation of 5G in India. She says that while she is not against technology and uses it as well, she feels that it's important to address the problems it causes to environnent. The first hearing was held Monday. 'We are not against the implementation of technological advancements. On the contrary, we enjoy using the latest products that the world of technology has to offer, including in the field of wireless communications. However whilst using the latter kind of devices, we are in a constant dilemma, because after doing our own research and studies regarding the RF radiation from wire-free gadgets and network cell owers, we have sufficient reason to believe that the radiation is extremely harmful and injurious to the health and safety of the people,'

she says IAN



# Shilpa's tips to combat weakness

Mumbai: Actress Shilpa Shetty Kundra Monday shared yoga therapy to combat weakness, in her new Instagram post.

Sharing a video that captures the actress practicing Mandukasana, she wrote: "To support all kinds of healing processes, the main source of energy comes from the core of our being. So, the Mandukasana is a very important asana as it focuses on your navel centre, which also happens to be your life-force centre called the second brain. It has the ability to give you the energy to combat all weaknesses. That's why they say, 'Go with your gut feeling'.'

She added: "Please remember: people with knee, ankle, and back pain issues should avoid this asana - Tag a friend who should start this ritual right away.'

The actress' family recovered from Covid-19 recently and she returned as a judge on the dance reality show Super Dancer: Chapter 4. IANS



Mumbai: Actor Himansh Kohli has lately appeared in the music videos of a couple of hit recreated songs, and says he would love to work in a dance number with Nora Fatehi.

"I think if it's a dance number, I would love to collaborate with Nora Fatehi because she is literally the hottest dancer out there, and extremely talented," he says.

Himansh appears in the music video of Meet Bros and Jubin Nautiyal's new single Wafa na raas aayee, which has crossed 130 million views in less than 10 days of being dropped officially on YouTube. The video also features Arushi Nishank and Rohit Suchanti.

"I am feeling ecstatic and overwhelmed. I had expectations from this song because I experimented with my acting. I wanted to see if people would accept me in this new role or not," Himansh said. IANS



# DIY tips for sustainable decor choices

These do-it-yourself guides can help one make environment-friendly changes to the interiors without causing a dent in pocket.

his World Environment Day, let's vouch to focus on sustainability and make environment-friendly changes to the interiors. Worried that it will cause a dent in your pocket? Fret not, here are a few suggestions that will help you fit these stunners within your home and transform it into an exquisite one.

A light to remember: Next time you go for a stroll in the garden and find dried tree branches, don't walk past it as it has serious statement decor potential. Pick it up and get it home! You can either paint the branches in a single hue like black/white or paint it in multiple pastel hues. Once dried, tie the branches together, wrap those festive fairy lights around it and hang it in that barren corner.

Hang(er) it: We all have spare hangers stuffed somewhere in the back of our storage or wardrobe. It's time to transform them into stunning pieces of decor. Got a macrame wall piece but can't find the right spot to hang it? Don't stress, paint that spare hanger in a neutral hue. hang it up on your accent wall and tie the macrame wall piece to it. You



have an aesthetically pleasing accent wall ready. Jar full!: Don't throw away the

empty jam jar. There are a gazillion ways to reuse it. For all the plantsmen out there, we have another alluring suggestion to display those tiny succulents indoor. Take that empty jar and paint it in your

If you are somebody who often ends up running around the house last minute looking for car keys, mask and other knick-knacks then using the jar as a storage option is ideal for you. So, the next time you're plan-

knowledge about new technological inventions

in your spare time today. Some of you may have queries regarding higher education that you may be able to take up today and reach a conclusion about.

#### **SCORPIO**

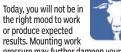
Till now you have experienced all the highs. Today you may come across the lows of the professional world. The equation between your boss colleagues and you may get slightly disturbed. However, you will make it up by evening. Freshers may look for some career opportunities.

#### SAGITTARIUS

Conversation and interaction with like-minded peo ple is going to make your day, says Ganesha.

Shooting ideas, brainstorming and casual discussions may enlighten you today. Those around you will enjoy your company.

## CAPRICORN



pressure may further dampen your selfconfidence, foretells Ganesha. The dullness will vanish in the air by the evening and you will be back to your happy self

### AOUARIUS

You spend a lot of time planning for a better future. Sure. it does minimize the chances of errors as you know possible obstacles in advance. But, the time you spend for calculations

takes you away from the reality and you don't fully concentrate on what you have now. Learn to balance, advises Ganesha.



favourite colour or you can wrap a metallic wire around it. Put the succulent in the jar and place it on your work desk or bedside table.

tify some empty, boring spaces. Get creative with these DIY tips and watch your space pop. AGENCIES

FUN

ning to throw something out, first

have a quick look around to iden



# PEANUTS





## CALVIN AND HOBBES



## BREVITY





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.

			4			1	8	
		5						
			2		5			
·	4			3	-			Ĩ
	2		1		1	9	5	
3			8	2		6	1	Ĩ
	1		3		4	8	6	Į
	3			6				
8			7				4	1

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SO



7 3 8

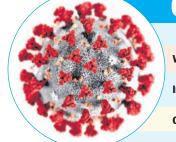


# downtown



## **KEEPING FRESH**

A roadside seller sprinkles water on a heap of lychee in Mangalabag area of Cuttack, Monday



## **COVID-19 TRACKER**

	INFECTED	RECOVERED	DEAD
orld	17,10,96,345	15,32,43,246	35,58,216
lia	2,80,47,534	2,56,92,342	3,29,100
lisha	7,64,997	6,80,932	2,754

Odisha gets 50

**Amphotericin-B** 

more vials of

# **Decision on Class XII exams** in 2 days, Centre tells SC

THE MATTER HAS BEEN LISTED FOR HEARING THURSDAY

POST NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi, May 31: The Union government Monday apprised the Supreme Court that it would take a decision within two days on whether the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) and Indian Certificate of Secondary Education (ICSE) Class XII board exams will be held this year or not.

A two-judge vacation bench of the apex court comprising Justices AM Khanwilkar and Dinesh Maheshwari granted two days time to the Centre to take decision and posted the matter to June 3.

"List the matter on Thursday as requested by Attorney General KK Venugopal, as the competent authorities are examining all aspects of the matter and are likely to take in-principle decision, which would be placed before the court on that date," the bench said.

The bench also observed that students have sanguine hope that the policy adopted last year would be followed this year too. The bench asked the government that if it is departing from its last year's policy, then it must cite good reasons. During the hearing, Attorney



The Supreme Court bench observed that students have sanguine hope that the policy adopted last year should be

#### followed this year too The bench asked the government that if it is departing from its last year's policy, then it must cite good reasons

General KK Venugopal submitted to the court that the government would take a decision on the Class XII board exams within two days.

Significantly, petitioner Mamta Sharma had prayed the apex court to strike down the recent notification that postpones the Class XII board exams to an unspecified date. The petitioner prayed the SC to direct the boards to cancel the

Class XII final exams and devise an objective methodology to declare the results within a specific time frame

"As far as the innocent students of Class XII are concerned, a stepmotherly, arbitrary, inhuman direction has been issued to postpone their final examination for an unspecified duration, instead of following the directions propounded and accepted by them last year," the petition reads.

The petitioner contended that the CBSE and ICSE authorities cannot remain "mute spectators" to the present scenario by not taking a timely decision regarding the exams of around 12 lakh students of Class XII.

It is to be mentioned here that the SC had last year asked the boards to determine and declare Class XII exam results on the basis of earlier assessment of students. The petitioner argued that the boards could use the same methodology that was used last year. It has been contended that the students cannot be subjected to suffer uncertainty in the midst of a public health crisis posed by the second wave of pandemic.

New Delhi, May 31: Union Minister for Chemicals and Fertilizers DV Sadananda Gowda Monday allotted another 50 vials of Amphotericin-B, used for treatment of mucormycosis, to Odisha.

POST NEWS NETWORK

The Union minister said that 30,100 vials of Amphotericin-B drug have been allocated to all states and Union Territories. He said that the allocation has been made based on the number of patients under treatment across the country.

On Sunday, the state health secretary PK Mohapatra had said that the state has reported 25 cases of mucormycosis till now. Around four patients of black fungus have already succumbed to the infection. However, the government had cited reasons other than the fungal infection behind the four deaths.

Significantly, the Odisha government has also floated tenders to directly procure the scarce drug from the manufacturers. However, several manufacturers claimed that they are unlikely to deal with states regarding the supply of the drug as the Union government has control over its supply.

The Union government supplies the drug to state governments on the basis of caseload.

# ₹87 CRORE 'YAAS' BLOW TO WATER RESOURCES DEPT



Havoc wreaked by cyclone Yaas at Balasore

#### POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, May 31: The Water Resources department has estimated a loss of ₹87 crore due to cyclonic storm Yaas and heavy rainfall in the aftermath of the storm that battered vast areas of north Odisha.

Water Resources department chief engineer Jyotirmaya Rath said that the department has handed over the preliminary damage assessment report to the state gov-

s per the preliminary Adamage report, major irrigation projects and saline embankments in coastal region suffered a loss of ₹69.18 crore while ₹7.66-crore loss has been caused to the drainage projects

ift irrigation projects and medium irrigation projects in the cyclone-hit areas incurred losses to the tune of ₹2.63 crore and ₹7.08 crore respectively

A total of 77 breaches had been reported in various embankments out of which 35 have been completely repaired

Stating that many places in Balasore district are still marooned due to heavy rain and high tidal waves, the techie said detailed assessment on the damage will be made after the water recedes.

A total of 77 breaches had been reported in various embankments out of which 35 including big and small ones have been completely repaired, he added.

Notably, tropical cyclone Yaas had hit the north Odisha coast May 26, causing heavy damage to public and private properties in the region.

# Anti-Covid shots at City residents' doorsteps

#### POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, May 31: In an aim to speed up vaccination for 45-plus age group in the Capital city, Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC) Monday launched doorstep inoculation drive under its jurisdiction.

Informing about the initiative, BMC Commissioner, Sanjay Singh, said that the drive has been rolled out in six residential apartments of the three zones of the civic body. As part of the vaccination programme, the BMC is reaching out to Resident Welfare Associations (RWAs) and has set a target of inoculating 200 people in each apartment.

"We are targeting large housing societies which have more than 100 beneficiaries above 45 years of age. Our aim is to complete the vaccination under BMC's jurisdiction as soon as possible. The drive is being conducted with all the government guidelines in place, Singh stated. As part of the doorstep vaccination, the drive was Monday conducted at Balaji Apartment in Jharpada and BMC Bhawani Enclave at Sahid Nagar under South East Zone, DHFL Sahu Residency in Mancheswar, Arcon



The BMC is targeting large housing societies with more than 100 beneficiaries above 45 years of age

## **CURBS ON PUBLIC ENTRY TO OHRC OFFICE TILL JUNE 17** POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, May 31: The Odisha Human Rights Commission (OHRC) Monday extended the restriction on entry of general public and petitioners to its office at Toshali Bhawan here till June 17

due to the upsurge in Covid-19 cases. However, the OHRC will continue to function with bare minimum staff during the period. Applicants can lodge their complaints with the commission through

its official email Id (ohrc@nic.in). "Registration and scrutiny of the complaints will continue on a regular basis," the commission said in its notice. The petitioners can also contact the assistant registrar of the OHRC by calling him on 8763642080 for urgent hearing.

"Extremely urgent matters can be taken up/heard after obtaining



ects and medium irrigation projects in the cyclone-hit areas incurred losses to the tune of ₹2.63 crore and ₹7.08 crore respectively, Rath said.

ernment and the losses are pegged at ₹87 crore. As per the preliminary damage report, major irrigation projects and saline embankments in coastal region suffered a loss of ₹69.18 crore while ₹7 66-crore loss has been caused to the drainage projects, he said. Similarly, the lift irrigation proj-

(FILE PHOTO)

Retreat in Patia and Club Town Apartment in Chandrasekharpur under North Zone.

Minor reshuffle in Commissionerate Police

of Investigative Units for Crime

Inspector Trupti Ranjan Nayak,

now posted at the CP headquarters,

will be the new IIC of Malgodwon po-

lice station in Cuttack. Rabi Narayan

Bhanj, the Malgodwon IIC, has been

posted as the IIC of Lalbag PS. Beauty

Mohanty has been appointed as the

IIC Markatnagar police station in

Cuttack. Pradipta Kumar Nayak,

Bhubaneswar, May 31: In defer-

ence to the directives issued by the Union Ministry of Education, many

institutions here Monday observed

'World No Tobacco Day', virtually,

with this year's theme - Commit to

Quit-which assumes significance

On this occasion, the Central

University of Odisha organised a

webinar on 'World No Tobacco

Day' where a pledge was taken by

the students, and teaching & non-

The guests also administered

The university's Vice-Chancellor,

the pledge in Hindi and English

and elaborated on the hazards of to-

Prof I Ramabrahmam, called upon

the varsity community to guit to-

against Women UPD.

Meanwhile, under South-West Zone, Covaxin was administered to residents at Cosmopolis Residency in Dumduma

permission from the Hon'ble Chairperson and parties may opt for hearing through virtual mode by providing their mobile no and email Id to the Asst. Registrar," the OHRC notice said.

Notably, the authorities had restricted the entry of pubic to the office May 17 after several officials working at various government offices at the building were found infected with the novel coronavirus.

who currently holds the post of IIC

Markatnagar, will be the new IIC of

Bidansi PS. Krupasindhu Barad has

been posted as the IIC of Balipatna

police station while inspector Jyoti

Ranjan Pati will be in charge of

Bharatpur police station. The incumbent Bharatpur IIC, Durgaprasad

Jena has been transferred to the district crime records bureau of

Bhubaneswar UPD.

The Unit-I market in Bhubaneswar and Nuapatna area in Cuttack witness a rush as the twin cities exit a weekend shutdown, Monday

#### POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, May 31: The **Commissionerate Police Monday** affected a minor reshuffle in the rank of Assistant Commissioner of Police and Inspector of Police.

Krushna Chandra Sethi has been appointed as the ACP headquarters of Bhubaneswar UPD while Ashutosh Mishra will be the ACP

## **Crop diversification** to start in 4 districts

#### POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, May 31: Agriculture and Farmers Empowerment, Fisheries & Animal Resources Development Minister Arun Sahoo Monday approved the pilot project of crop diversification to increase farmers' income, an official said

The department has decided to start crop diversification project on a pilot basis in four districts— Kalahandi, Malkangiri, Nabarangpur and Koraput- at 12,000 hectare land, said the official. This pilot project will be done dur-

ing the kharif season and will cover 101 villages under mega irrigation projects. Cultivation will be done in 12

clusters and in each cluster 1.000 hectare of land will be cultivated by diversifying crops.

#### POST NEWS NETWORK

in this pandemic era.

teaching staff.

bacco use.

bacco for a healthy life. Prof Sharat Kumar Palita, Dean, School of Biodiversity and Conservation of Natural Resources, presided over the virtual meeting and delivered the welcome address. Ritu Duggal, Professor and Chief

of Centre for Dental Education & Research, AIIMS, New Delhi, termed tobacco as a silent killer. She said, "Habit of tobacco changes into behaviour and behaviour later becomes an addiction. This addiction can affect the entire family. So. this is the right time to quit tobacco." She stated that it needs to start from you (the individual), for a change not to use tobacco and thereby spreading the message of change to the world. Be positive, focused and be in good health by quitting tobacco.

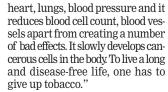
KVV Prasad, Professor,



Kick the habit for a disease-free life, say experts

Department of Public Health Dentistry, SDM College of Dental Science and Hospital, Dharwad, Karnataka, highlighted the effects of tobacco by citing statistical data on mortality rates all over the world due to consumption of tobacco.

Prasad said, "Smoking or chewing tobacco affects our skin, face, memory power, strength, mind,



He also pointed out that consumption of tobacco could be more hazardous for women than men and suggested for proper educa-

## **GRIT MATTERS**

KVV Prasad, Professor, Department of Public Health Dentistry, SDM College of Dental Science and Hospital, Dharwad, Karnataka, highlighted the effects of tobacco by citing statistical data on mortality rates all over the world due to consumption of tobacco

Chinmaya Pani, Medical Oncologist, Apollo Cancer Centre, Bhubaneswar, said almost one-third of cancer cases in India are caused by tobacco

tion from school level to university level on the repercussions of tobacco use

Meanwhile, Institute of Dental

Sciences, SOA University, also organised a webinar on 'Commit to Quit: A 369-degree approach to tobacco cessation' for dental professionals. Many students participated in the webinar and showcased their short films on awareness about debilitating impact of tobacco on human health. They also prepared posters on the theme.

OP PHOTOS

The Sum Hospital here too organised a webinar wherein experts said quitting tobacco becomes challenging due to its addictive properties. "So, don't shy away from seeking support of family members and friends or joining smoking cessation programs," they said.

Chinmaya Pani, Medical Oncologist, Apollo Cancer Centre, Bhubaneswar, said almost one-third of cancer cases in India are caused by tobacco.





## OrissaPOST TUESDAY JUNE 1 2021 BHUBANESWAR

# downtown

# **7 PLACES** RECORD **40 DEGREES C**

#### POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, May 31: Following cyclone Yaas, heatwave like situation continues to grip many parts of the state, especially western Odisha.

At least seven places recorded a maximum temperature of 40 degrees Celsius or above Monday.

As per India Meteorological Department (IMD), Titlagarh was the hottest place in the state Monday recording a day temperature of 41.2 degrees

Another two western Odisha towns Sonepur and Bhawanipatna have recorded a maximum temperature of 41 degrees each while it was 40.5 degrees at Malkangiri, 40.4 degrees each at Bolangir and Sambalpur and 40 degrees at Boudh.

The IMD said there will be no large change in maximum temperature during next 4-5 days. However, thunderstorm and light ning activity will continue for another three days in some parts the state.

Thunderstorm with lightning would occur at one or two places of Sonepur, Boudh, Nuapada, Bolangir, Kalahandi, Kandhamal, Nabarangpur, Rayagada, Koraput, Malkangiri, Gajapati, Ganjam, Nayagarh, Khurda, Sundargarh, Keonjhar, Mayurbhanj, Balasore and Bhadrak. Tuesday.

Heavy rainfall is likely to occur at one or two places over the districts of Kalahandi, Kandhamal, Rayagada and Gajapati Tuesday, it said

# Online booking for vax to be preferred over on-site



POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, May 31: In a bid to ensure zero wastage and maximum utilisation of anti-Covid-19 shots, the state government Mondav directed all the district and local administrations to give preference to the beneficiaries who have taken online appointment over those opting for on-site registration.

In a letter to the district Collectors, District Magistrates and Municipal Commissioners, the Health and Family Welfare (H&FW) department stated that CoWIN platform, which has been exclusively designed for Covid vaccination programme, should be the preferred mode of providing vaccination

"CoWIN platform provides the option for online self-registration and appointments for facilitated cohorts. The central government has also advised the use of application for availing slots. However, it has been observed that some vaccination centres have both on-

line and on-site slots open. As a result, online beneficiaries have to wait for longer periods to get vaccinated," the letter read.

Instructing against use of such practice, the H&FW department directed the authorities concerned to inform their programme officers, managers and vaccinators to give preferences to those who have taken online appointment over those availing on-site registrations. "The on-site registration should only be used for the purpose of enabling access for facilitated cohorts and for minimising vaccine wastage," it added.

Moreover, the state government also suggested the local authorities to prepare detailed plans for near to home vaccination (NHV) for elderly and differently-abled citizens. While door-to-door vaccination is not possible, the targeted group can be vaccinated under NHV programme. Thus meticulous planning should be done for smooth execution of the initiative," the state government said.

# **Engineers told to ready infra for LMO plants in hospitals** POST NEWS NETWORK Bhubaneswar, May 31: The state government has asked its engi-

neers to execute civil and electrical works required for installation of medical oxygen plants in all major hospitals of the state.

Following Health department's instruction, engineer-in-chief, Buildings, BC Tripathy Monday asked all executive engineers under Roads & Buildings (R&B) wing to construct required civil and electrical infrastructure for setting up of liquid medical oxygen (LMO) storage facilities and pressure swing adsorption (PSA) plants in the district headquarters hospitals (DHHs), Capital Hospital, RGH and medical colleges.

"I am directed to intimate that the civil works (including electrical, missing 02 line connectivity, approach road link) for LMO and PSA oxygen plants in all 32 DHHs including Capital Hospital and Rourkela Government Hospital and eight medical colleges shall be taken up by Works department as per the government's decision,' Tripathy said in his letter.

He asked the engineers to select site for construction of civil structure with the help of head of concerned health institution and LMO/PSA supplier and prepare detailed plan for electrical connection and approach road as per request, he said.

Tripathy asked the officials to



### SELF MOVE

Il executive engineers under AR&B wing were asked to construct required civil and electrical infrastructure for setting up LMO storage facilities and PSA plants in the district headquarters hospitals. Capital Hospital, RGH and 8 medical colleges

he engineer-in-chief asked the engineers to select site for construction of civil structure with the help of head of concerned health institution and LMO/PSA supplier and prepare detailed plan for electrical connection and approach road as per request

submit the estimates for this purpose on priority basis. Health de-

## Niranjan Sethi new I&PR dir in-charge

BHUBANESWAR: After retirement of Krupasindhu Mishra as director of Information and Public Relations (I&PR) department May 31, 2021, Niranjan Sethi, director (Technical) has been appointed as director-incharge of I&PR department till regular posting of a director by General Administration department

## 10-bed ward soon for third gender inmates

BHUBANESWAR: The special jail at Jharpada is likely to have a 10-bed Kumar Upadhyay Monday revealed security and other arrangements in

## Youth nabbed for flouting Covid norms

BHUBANESWAR: Commissionerate Police arrested a drunken youth who allegedly misbehaved with the traffic police right in the middle of a road late Sunday night. The youth identified himself as the nephew of State Commerce & Transport Minister Padmanabha Behera and the relative of a DCP rank police officer of Commissionerate Police while arguing with the cops at Fire Station square. The Minister Monday clarified that he had no links with the accused, Jiban Jyoti Mallick.

# State logs 8,313 fresh Covid cases, 35 fatalities

#### PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, May 31: Odisha Monday registered 8,313 new Covid-19 cases, which took the tally in the coastal state to 7,64,997, while death toll rose to 2,754 as 35 more people succumbed to the disease in the state, a Health department official said.

Of the new cases, 4,655 were reported from quarantine centres and the remaining 3,658 detected during contact tracing

Khurda district, which comprises the state capital Bhubaneswar, registered the maximum number of fresh cases at 974, followed by Cuttack (593), Mayurbhanj (532), Angul (505) Sundargarh (465), Balasore (452) and Dhenkanal (407). The remaining new cases were reported from sev-

eral other districts. Taking to Twitter, the Health and Family Welfare (H&FW) department said, "Regret to inform the demise of thirty-five Covid positive patients while under treatment in hospitals.' Angul accounted for five fresh fatalities, while three each were reported from Cuttack, Kalahandi, Kendrapara, Khurda, Nabarangpur and Subarnapur and two each from Deogarh, Gajapati, Ganjam, Jharsuguda and Sundargarh.



A man gets inoculated against Covid-19 in Bhubaneswar

One Covid patient each suc- over 1.17 crore sample tests for cumbed to the ir

ction in Navagarh Covid-19, including 61,613 Sunday,

## HIGHLIGHTS

ngul accounted for five fresh fatalities, while three each were reported from Cuttack. Kalahandi, Kendrapara, Khurda, Nabarangpur and Subarnapur and two each from Deogarh, Gajapati, Ganjam, Jharsuguda and Sundargarh

One Covid patient each succumbed to the infection in Nayagarh and Nuapada

he state has so far conducted over 1.17 crore sample tests for Covid-19, including 61,613 Sunday

positivity ratio in Nabarangpur has declined to 13 per cent from 20 per cent recorded recently, while the district has got an RT-PCR machine which will be operational very shortly.

An oxygen plant at the district



in 15 districts of Odisha.



Cuttack Collector Bhabani Shankar Chayani flags off an 'X-ray on wheels' facility for Covid patients in the Silver City

X-ray on wheels for home isolation patients

home isolation.



partment will provide required

funds for execution of the proj-

In an aim to ensure uninter-

rupted supply of medical oxygen

in health facilities across the state

for treatment of Covid patients,

the government has decided to set

up LMO storage system and pres-

sure swing absorption (PSA) plants

at all 30 DHHS, Capital Hospital,

Rourkela Government Hospital

(RGH) and eight medical colleges

The state government has also

submitted a proposal to the Centre

for installation of oxygen plants in

the state. Union Minister

Dharmendra Pradhan also wrote

to Union Health Minister Harsh

Vardhan, requesting allocation of

19 more PSA medical oxygen plants,

ects, sources said.

on priority basis

special ward exclusively for transgender prisoners. Speaking to media persons, Prisons DG Santosh that soon the 10-bed ward for transgender prisoners would come up at the special jail here. Upadhyay Monday visited the special jail and reviewed the the jail. This apart, another 10-bed ward for sick and elderly prisoners will be created at the Jharpada jail.

and Nuapada, the official said. Fifty-three other Covid-19 patients have also died in the state due to comorbidities, he said.

Odisha now has 91,663 active cases. At least 11,881 people were cured of the disease Sunday, taking the total number of recoveries in the state to 6.70.527.

The state has so far conducted

and the positivity rate stands at 6.5 per cent.

Chief Secretary Suresh Chandra Mohapatra and the Health department's Additional Chief Secretary PK Mohapatra Monday visited Nabarangpur and Koraput districts to review the Covid situation there. The chief secretary said the test

headquarters hospital will start working in the next three months, he said.

Along with the collector and other senior officers of the district, the two senior bureaucrats visited a Covid hospital and enquired about the functioning of the ICU there and the construction of a 200-bed ward.

"This is an initiative to pro-

vide services by portable X-ray

machines for early detection of

lungs infection so as to shift pa-

tients to hospitals before the in-

fection gets severe," said district

Collector BS Chaini after launch-

#### PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Cuttack, May 31: The Cuttack district administration Monday launched an 'X-ray on Wheels' facility to provide radiography services to patients at Covid Care Centres and to those who are in

# Covid care: Khimji Foundation donates 60 beds to BMC

#### POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, May 31: In its efforts to combat Covid-19, Khimji Foundation, the philanthropic wing of Khimji Jewellers, Monday donated 60 beds with mattresses, pillows and other accessories as well as 60 bedside units to Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC).

Khimji Jewellers director Sumeet Khimji handed over the items to BMC commissioner Sanjay Singh here. The beds will be used in Covid Care Centres (CCCs) in Bhubaneswar, including those at Patia, Dumduma, which are being run by BMC.

On the occasion, Sumeet said, "Bhubaneswar, the Capital city, is battling with the second wave of pandemic with a lot of grit and responsibility. During this hour of crisis, it is commendable to see the way BMC has been taking constructive initiatives in giving aid and services. Khimji Foundation

has always extended its support to the Odisha government as well as the BMC in times of crisis."

"I would request the citizens of Bhubaneswar to be strong, not to panic and take utmost precautions like using masks, washing hands and maintaining social distance. I urge all to get vaccinated at the earliest," he added.



official said Monday. Loaded with LMO rakes from Durgapur, Tatanagar and Rourkela, as many as 40 Oxygen Express trains have carried the life-saving gas through 162 containers to many states. Delhi and Haryana received around 1,010.09 MT of LMO loaded in 63 containers of 19 Oxygen Express trains. "ECoR has also helped in transporting 545.31 MT of LMO to Maharashtra, 117.9 MT to Kerala, 685.7 MT to Telangana, 120 MT to Tamil Nadu and 120.98 MT to Karnataka," said a statement.

ing the facility.

launch programme.

The 'X-ray on wheels' facility

has the capacity to take X-ray pictures of at least 1,000 patients daily,

said Cuttack Municipal

Corporation commissioner Ananya

Das, who was also present at the

ECoR delivers 2,600MT

Bhubaneswar, May 31: The East Coast Railway (ECoR) has deliv-

ered around 2,600.02 metric tonne

(MT) of liquid medical oxygen

(LMO) to many states facing acute shortage of the life-saving gas in

treating Covid-19 patients through Oxygen Express trains during the

second wave of the pandemic, an

O<sub>2</sub> across country

POST NEWS NETWORK

CAR FEST PREP

Chariot construction going on in full swing at Rath Yard in Puri, Monday

#### CLASSIFIED ADVERTISEMENTS CONTACT **BOOKING STA** OUR

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# state

# Weavers seek CM's intervention to bail out Jajpur's tussar industry

MANY WEAVERS HAVE THREATENED TO MIGRATE TO OTHER STATES IF THEIR PROBLEMS ARE NOT RESOLVED

#### POST NEWS NETWORK

Rasulpur; May 31: The famous tussar industry in Gopalpur village under this block in Jajpur district is facing an acute crisis with over 1,000 weavers sitting idle without any work due to back-to-back onslaughts of Covid-19 pandemic as well as the devastation caused by natural calamities like cyclonic storm and floods.

**OrissaPOST** 

TUESDAY JUNE 1 2021 BHUBANESWAR

Gopalpur village under Prathamakhandi panchayat of the block is known as "tussar village" of the state. Tussar clothes manufactured by the weavers in this village are in great demand among the people within as well as outside the state. However, repeated onslaughts of Covid pandemic and natural calamities like cyclonic storm and floods have hit them hard. As a result, they have failed to sell their produce as buyers have stopped visiting or contacting them.

Moreover, they have failed to obtain raw materials to manufacture new clothes. Weavers' cooperative societies which act as intermediaries between the weavers and merchants have also failed to pro vide work to them

This has pushed the weavers families into distress and hit their livelihood hard. Left with no option, family members of hundreds of weavers have drawn the attention of Chief Minister towards their problems in a memorandum.

They have threatened to leave the state and work as migrant labourers if the Chief Minister does not intervene into their problem, weaver leaders Makardhwaj Guin, Ramesh Chandra Das, Pratima Guin, Shakuntala Chand, Malati Dutta, Gobind Das, Narayan Das, Duryodhan Chand and Balaram Das said.

In the memorandum, the weavers have mentioned that they were se-

Suspected black

fungus patient

dies in VIMSAR

Repeated onslaught of Covid pandemic and natural calamities like cyclonic storm and floods have hit them hard. As a result, they have failed to sell their produce as buyers have stopped visiting them or

contact them

Weavers have failed to obtain raw materials to manufacture new clothes Weavers' cooperative societies which act as intermediaries between the weavers and merchants have also failed to provide work to them

Floodwaters came gushing into the villages in Gopalpur and Chakagopalpur and entered their houses where the looms were functioning. As a result, raw materials and finished products worth several lakhs were damaged

verely affected when the cyclone Fani hit the state in 2019. They were somehow carrying on with their business but things came to a full stop when the Covid pandemic struck the state in 2020. In 2017, a devastating flood in Brahmani wreaked havoc in their area when a 200-feet-long embarkment on the river breached in Gopalpur.

The floodwaters came gushing into the villages in Gopalpur and Chakagopalpur and entered their houses where the looms were functioning. As a result, raw materials and finished products worth several lakhs were damaged. Over 800 families were affected due to this flood hitting their lives and livelihood.

The Chief Minister, taking pity on the weavers, announced grant of 50 kg rice and ₹ 500 for each family as assistance and an additional ₹4,100 as compensation for their loss. As per the announcement, the affected families received only rice and ₹500, but are to get ₹4,100 towards compensation.

Since then, four years have passed but many of the affected families are yet to put up their looms in order. The government has also not provided them with any workplace where they can put their looms and resume working. The Chief Minister had announced a special package of ₹25 crore for the weavers during the

Covid pandemic. The weavers have demanded, in the memorandum, that the government should increase the amount as it falls short of their requirement. They have also demanded that the government grant them the status of artisans and provide them allowance of ₹1,200 to each weaver above 50 years of age

The weavers have also demanded a scholarship scheme for the meritorious students of weavers' families. In addition, they want the government to make the Handloom and Handcraft Development Council functional again and utilise the ₹20crore fund under it for the benefit of the weavers' community.

## POST NEWS NETWORK

Jajpur; May 31: A slab of an underconstruction bridge on the National Highway-16 near Brajanagar under Panikoili police limits in this district caved in, Monday.

However, no casualties were reported during the incident as the construction work was not underway at the site during the mishap, which occurred around at 3.30 pm. However, locals claimed some labourers might have been trapped underneath the rubble and iron mesh.

The bridge work was being carried out by a consultancy agency named DBL as part of an expansion work of NH-16 near Brajanagar on Bhadrak route, about six km from Panikoili.

THE BRIDGE WORK WAS BEING ( AGENCY DBL AS PART OF AN EX BRAJANAGAR ON BHADRAK ROUT THE BRIDGE WORK IS PART OF UNDERTAKEN BY NHA	PANSION WORK OF NH-16 NEAR E ABOUT SIX KM FROM PANIKOILI. SIX LANING WORKS OF NH-16
LOCALS ALLEGED THE BRIDGE COLLAPSED DUE TO POOR QUALITY AND SUB-STANDARD WORKS WHICH STARTED THREE MONTHS BACK. THEY ALSO ALLEGED SAFETY RULES TO HAVE BEEN COMPROMISED WHEN THE BRIDGE WAS BEING CONSTRUCTED	NHAI AUTHORITIES IN BALASORE NEVER VISITED THE SPOT WHICH HAS ONLY EMBOLDENED THE CONTRACTOR TO CARRY OUT THE WORK ON HIS WHIMS WHICH WAS SUBLET TO HIM BY THE MAIN CONSULTANCY AGENCY, LOCALS ALLEGED
The bridge work is part of six- laning work of NH-16 undertaken	fringe contractors and this might have be the reason behind the

mishap

by NHAI, Balasore division. Locals alleged that the consultancy agency had further sublet the work to some

A local villager, Sarat Chandra Biswal said that a cesspool of water has formed under the bridge which ΒY led to the rusting of the pipes in the columns of the bridge. The roof of the bridge, which was recently laid, collapsed due to inferior qualght ity of raw materials.

Efforts to contact the project director, NHA, in Balasore over phone failed as he did not respond to the calls

T

ΤΛΤΛ

terials and sub-standard work

They added that safety rules were

compromised when the bridge was

being constructed. Moreover, the

NHAI authorities in Balasore never

visit the spot, which has only em-

boldened the contractor to carry out

the work according to his whims.

The bridge work started three

months back.

# Koraput to have new Covid hospital in two days: CS

#### POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, May 31: With the alrming increase in Covid-19 cases in Koraput district, the state government has decided to open a new Covid hospital in the districts soon, said Chief

Secretary SC Mahapatra Monday. Mahapatra, along with Addition

ICU, construction of new hospital wards and establishment of oxygen plants, testing facilities etc.

Mahapatra said that a new Covid hospital will start functioning in Koraput district within the next two days. The facility will have 94 beds along with 24 ICU beds and three ventilators, adding, the Covid situation is under control in the Koraput district. Medical oxygen plants will be set up at the medical college and district headquarters hospital (DDH) in the Koraput district within the next three months, he said. During the review it was found that the test and positivity ratio in the two districts have reduced during the last few days because of weekend shutdown and other enforcement measures taken by the government. This trend is declining in the state and is expected to reduce further in coming davs, sources said.

Replying to media queries after the field visit and review at Nabarangpur, the Chief Secretary



#### PUBLIC NOTIFICATION

Locals alleged that the bridge

collapsed due to poor quality ma-

Notice is hereby given to all users of Railway lines & premises situated on the completed sections of the under noted sections of the private siding of M/s TATA Steel Limited/JKPR(Alpha code-TSLJ & Numerical code -12121064) of East Coast Railway, that the 25,000 Volts, 50 Hz, A.C. overhead traction wires will be energized on or after the date specified against the section. On & from the same date the overhead traction line shall be treated as live at all times and no unauthorized person shall approach or work in the proximity of the said overhead line.

Electrification details of following sections of TSL Siding Taking off from JKPR:-

# Under construction bridge caves in on NH-16



Sambalpur. May 31: A suspected mucormycosis or black fungus patient died at VIMSAR, Burla in Sambalpur district, hospital superintendent Lalmohan Nayak said Monday.

POST NEWS NETWORK

Giving details of the case, Nayak said the patient with black fungus symptoms was admitted to VIMSAR five to six days back. As his condition deteriorated, he was shifted to the ICU and tests were necessary to confirm whether he was suffering from black fungus infection. Unfortunately, the tests could not be undertaken.

Nayak however, asserted that the victim had most of the symptoms that are usually found in a black fungus-infected patient. However, as tests could not be carried out, he decided to call it a suspected case of black fungus.

It may be mentioned here that Chief Secretary Suresh Chandra Mohapatra had Sunday informed that 25 black fungus patients have been identified in the state. "With respect to black fungus cases, if compared to other states, we are in a better position," he had stated.

Chief Secretary (ACS) Health and Family Welfare, PK Mohapatra, Monday visited Koraput and Nabarangpur districts to review the Covid management situation in the two districts. They held meetings with senior officials of the two districts and visited the Covid hospital, reviewed the functioning of said that a new RT-PCR testing machine would be operational in the district shortly. It would provide testing facility of around 500 samples per day. All efforts would be made to complete the construction of the oxygen plant and new ward within 3 to 4 months, he added.

# Man impersonating as doctor molests woman patient, held

POST NEWS NETWORK

Aul, May 31: Aul police Monday arrested a youth on charges of molesting a woman patient admitted at the Aul community health centre (CHC) in Kendrapara district by impersonating as a doctor.

The accused has been identified as Deepak Mohanty of Badaambila village. According to reports, a middleaged woman from Aragala village under the Aul police limits was admitted to the Aul CHC after she complained of stomach disorder and vomiting, Sunday morning. She was administered saline and medicines



after her admission into the ward.

The complaint further stated that Deepak, impersonating as a doctor, visited the ward at around 11pm Sunday night and went near the woman's bed. There, he talked to her husband regarding her treatment by identifying himself as a doctor of nearby

chosis among children who visit the

hospital. Despite having requisite

equipment and machinery, a proposed mortuary on the sub-divisional hospital

premises is yet to come up. The proj-

ect could not be commissioned owing

to the alleged apathetic attitude of

Dhenkanal district administration.

pital Saturday (May 29, 2021) due to dif-

Four patients died in the Kamakhyanagar sub-divisional hosGobindpur health centre

Later, he allegedly groped the woman and touched her private parts on the pretext of a check-up. The woman resisted his advances and cried out for help as her husband went to call the nurse. Meanwhile, Deepak, fearing that he would be punished for the misdemeanour, fled the scene before anyone could arrive.

On being informed, Aul police rushed to the spot and scanned the CCTV footage of the hospital and arrested Deepak from his residence in Badambila village. A case was registered in this connection and he was produced in the court.

# Kamakhyanagar hospital functioning sans mortuary

POST NEWS NETWORK

Kamakhyanagar, May 31: Despite the surge in the number of Covid-19 cases as well as fatalities in Dhenkanal district, the sub-divisional hospital at Kamakhyanagar is functioning without a mortuary - thanks to the district administration.

In the absence of a mortuary, the bodies of unidentified persons and accident victims are left on the verandah of the hospital for hours together, often giving rise to foul smell and unpleasant situations. The sub-divisional hospital is one of the prime healthcare facilities in Dhenkanal district. Hundreds of locals from Bhuban and Kankadahada areas, including patients from villages located in close vicinity, depend on the hospital here, attendants of patients said.



When some bodies are not identified soon after their arrival at the hospital, they are usually buried with assistance from the local police. Later, some of the decomposed bodies are exhumed for the purpose of investigation or to them handover to the victims' families.

Sometimes, bodies are also kept under the trees and outside the hospital building for hours creating fear psy-

ferent reasons. Surprisingly, three bodies were kept on stretchers near a dressing room and another under a tree outside the hospital building.

When contacted for his comments, Sub-Division Medical Officer (SDMO) Dr Ratnakar Samal said, "Since long we have been demanding the construction of a mortuary on the hospital premises. At times, post-mortems are being conducted immediately, in order to avoid decomposition of the bodies. We feel the pressure during tough times like the Covid-19 pandemic."

Notably, the Kamakhyanagar sub-divisional hospital was started in a building with thatched roof in 1856. It was located around 30 km away from the existing hospital building. The new one was established in 1926, but the proposed mortuary could not come up allegedly owing to administrative red-tape.

э.	Description	Cita	mage	TKM	Date	
No.		From Location	To Location	IKM		
1	Crossover of Line No 25 & Incoming approach line Inside Plant	Loc No. TSL- 09/31 CH: 09/727.29	Loc No. TSL/2066 CH: 9/449.29	0.278 TKM	02/06/2021	
2	South connectivity line Outside Plant	Loc No. TSL/1001 CH:00/145.00	Loc No. TSL/1048 CH: 01/922.50	1.777 TKM	02/06/2021	
3	Crossover Between UP Line & South Connectivity Outside Plant	TSL/1043 CH:01/675.00	TSL/02/13A CH:01/959.40	0.284 TKM	02/06/2021	
4	Incoming approach line Inside Plant	Loc No. TSL/09/23 CH:09/556.09	Loc No. TSL/10/27 CH:10/356.29	0.800 TKM	02/06/2021	
	20		TOTAL TKM	3.139	- 1844	

Chief Projects (Rail Logistics & Infrastructure) TATA STEEL LIMITED, Kalinganagar

Registered Office: Bombay House, 24, Homi Mody Street, Fort, Mumbai: 400 001, India Tel.: 022 66658282 Fax: 022 66657724 \* (CIN) - L27100MH1907PLC000260 Website: www.tatasteel.com

#### **GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA** OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER, P.H. DIVISION, BHANJANAGAR, AT: CHATRAPUR e: 06811-263909, Fax: 06811-263950, E-mail NATIONAL COMPETITIVE BIDDING THROUGH e-Procurement Bid Identification No. 06/03/SPH(C)/2021-22 Dt.27.05.2021 INVITATION FOR BIDS (IFB) Estimated Period of Documents for Online Name & CI

No.	Name of the Work	Identification No.	Cost (Rs. in Lakhs)	Completion	Bidding		Officer Inviting
0.57	11				From	То	Bid
1	Improvement of source with pumping arrangements and other ancillary works for provision of water supply to Pakalpalli Marathi Sahi, Santoshimaa Mandir Marathi Sahi and adjoining areas of Ward No. 12 to 18 of Aska NAC under State Plan 2020-21.	Identification No. 06- 1/03/SPH(C)/ 2021- 22 Dt.27.05.2021	54.88	9 (Nine) Calendar Months	11.00 hrs. of 04.06.2021	17.30 hrs. of 21.06.21	Executive Engineer, P.H. Division, Bhanjanagar at Chatrapur
2	Improvement of Water Supply to Phulbani Municipality under State Plan 2020-21.	Identification No. 06- 2/03/SPH(C)/ 2021- 22 Dt.27.05.2021	78.14	9 (Nine) Calendar Months	11.00 hrs. of 04.06.2021	17.30 hrs. of 21.06.21	- do -
3	Provision of Water Supply to phasula and adjoining areas of Ward No. 7 to 12 of Khallikote NAC under State Plan 2020-21.	Identification No. 06- 3/03/SPH(C)/ 2021- 22 Dt.27.05.2021	85.51	9 (Nine) Calendar Months	11.00 hrs. of 04.06.2021	17.30 hrs. of 21.06.21	- do -
4	Providing potable Drinking Water by raising of platform of hand pump tube well during exigency like flood in Purusottampur NAC under 13-4215.	Identification No. 06- 4/03/SPH(C)/ 2021- 22 Dt.27.05.2021	21.20	4 (Four) Calendar Months	11.00 hrs. of 04.06.2021	17.30 hrs. of 21.06.21	- do -
5	Providing potable drinking water by raising of platform of hand pump tube well during exigency like flood in Aska NAC under 13- 4215.	Identification No. 06- 5/03/SPH(C)/ 2021- 22 Dt.27.05.2021	20.76	4 (Four) Calendar Months	11.00 hrs. of 04.06.2021	17.30 hrs. of 21.06.21	- do -







Be only a burning fire for progress, take whatever comes to you as an aid to your progress and

immediately make whatever progress is required.

# power post

### FOCUS INFORMAL SECTOR & ECONOMY

# **PRIVATE DEMAND CRITICAL**

he repeated natural disasters and Covid-19 lockdowns are taking a heavy toll on India's economy and hit the informal sectors the most. The Central relief to three states, Gujarat, West Bengal and Odisha is ₹2,000 crore in addition to states also allocating part funds.

The raging second Covid wave is impacting states' finances. The Centre has released ₹8.837.6 crore in advance as the first installment of its share to State Disaster Response Fund (SDRF) for 2020-21. It is a huge sum for a country subsisting Budget expenses on debt. The World Bank gave \$1 billion (Rs 72,000 crore) support to to India's health sector. The second tranche of \$250 million is to be released this year. There is also a

\$400 million International Development Association soft loan. The Reserve Bank of India says at end-March 2020, India's external debt was placed at \$558.5 billion, recording an increase of \$15.4 billion over its level at end-March 2019. India's overall debt is \$2628.49 dollars or ₹3.80 lakh crore as on March 2021. Debt servicing cost has also increased. Interestingly enough no money was raised through "masala bonds" as rupeedenominated bonds (RDB) are called in a choppy global market and tight domestic monetary conditions. External commercial borrowings during March 2021 amount to \$9.23 billion.

While its debt burden is growing, the domestic situation is a matter of concern. The UNICEF South Asia Regional Director George Laryea-Adjei has warned that the scale and speed of the Covid-19 surge is "outstripping" India and its neighbours' abilities to provide life-saving treatment to the people and "there is risk of fragile health systems collapsing".

Even the RBI has expressed concern on India's growth prospects in its annual report this week as it depends on how fast the country can arrest the second pandemic wave. It sees uncertainties and the only hope is from the bumper Rabi

The World Bank in its latest study, 'The Long Shadow of Informality: Challenges and Policies', says that India has the highest share. over 70 per cent, and one-third of GDP, of informal employment along with Bangladesh and Pakistan. These workers are excluded from labour laws and social protections schemes

crop or agriculture sector and some activities in housing, road construction, freight transportation and the IT. Interpreted, it means most other sectors remain stagnant or in many cases like the SMEs and the unorganised or informal sector in trouble.

The World Bank in its latest study, 'The Long Shadow of Informality: Challenges and Policies', says that India has the highest share, over 70 per cent, and one-third of GDP, of informal employment along with Bangladesh and Pakistan. These workers are excluded from labour laws and social protections schemes. They lose jobs and face extreme poverty and food insecurity as the pandemic has intensified. This diminishes the ability to mobilise the fiscal resources for conducting macro-economic policies and build human capital for long-term development.

Government expenditures also were lower by as much as 10 percentage points of GDP. Similarly, central banks' ability to support

comes, greater poverty, greater income inequality, less developed financial markets, and weaker investment and are farther away from achieving the goals of sustainable development", it says.

The report is critical of heavy regulatory and tax burdens being imposed leading to the rise in numbers of informal employment. It castigates Europe, Central Asia, Latin America, the Caribbean, West Asia and North Africa tax excesses.

India needs to learn from the observation as it is resorting to increase taxes of all kinds during these difficult days and even medicines have at least 5 to 12 per cent taxes. The state governments are increasing annual taxes on houses by over 5 per cent and many other facilities including tolls and fuel charges. The various stipulations of GST and its penalties need to be eased if the country has to grow.

The stark revelation is that since 2018 the numbers in the informal sector are growing, though since 1990 to 2018 it registered a fall This is a pointer to a global slowdown and Indian finances have seen falling during the last three years adding poverty in absolute numbers. Even the jobless in the IT sector and manufacturing has swelled. Many gainfully employed till a year ago are now without an income support. The CMIE recently reported that over 80 per cent people have suffered income losses. The World Bank suggests that

steps have to be taken to improve governance and business climates and harps on streamlining the taxation system for lowering the cost of production and help increase operational margins.

The Central government has repeatedly been suggested to review its high taxation and extortionist approaches. Unless the lowest in the rung, the unorganised daily wa gers, are empowered, expecting better conditions shall remain a dream. And yes, it has also to give up cosmetic avoidable debt-funded expenditures like the Central Vista of Delhi. The panacea is simple if

## SPECTRUM WORLD MILK DAY

# Odisha needs Anand pattern co-ops

# **Fact and Fiction**

THE MOTHER

The current crop of top BJP leadership, it seems, hasn't learnt or, even worse, refuses to learn any lesson from the egregious mistake of its senior leaders when they made the cruel joke of "India Shining" campaign in 2004 to cover AB Vajpayee-government's failure. Many may not agree with the word 'failure' but eventually, in any democracy, success or failure can only be measured through the ballot box. The result at that time was that the BJP was voted out of power at the Centre. Similar dishonesty is being dished out once again as the present government observed its seventh anniversary May 30. The Prime Minister claimed the country is "progressing, following the path of inclusive development" encapsulated in its slogan of "Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas, Sabka Viswas". Union Home Minister Amit Shah went a few steps further to boast of "unprecedented achievements" in fields of security, public welfare and reforms.

All this when the country is witnessing fuel price hikes virtually daily and the news that filtered in today is of the Indian economy contracting by 7.3% in FY 2020-21.

Blowing one's own trumpet is a normal human trait and it applies even more to politicians and governments. Public memory is proverbially short and people in general tend to be swayed by a blitzkrieg of government propaganda. But, there is a point up to which even the gullible public can be manipulated. The Vajpayee-government was shown the door for crossing that limit.

The current dispensation at the Centre appears to be deluding itself about the efficacy of such propaganda relying on the unprecedented power and reach of the social media platforms to send across narratives about progress made under its rule. It has done so time and again, be it through propaganda over demonetization, implementation of Goods and Services Tax (GST), the manipulated Balakot surgical strike (was made apparent from disclosures of WhatsApp messages between the head of a pro government television channel and his acolyte) or its failure to checkmate China in Ladakh.

This is why it is difficult to digest when it congratulates itself on its performance on its seventh year, when the country's progress has nosedived taking the nation back to a level of economy that prevailed four decades ago. That too in a year when COVID-19 pandemic has shattered the lives of millions and torpedoed the country's economy with the government acting like a helpless, passive spectator. A close examination of the work of this government will reveal the unvarnished reality shorn of false official bravado.

In 2014, then Gujarat Chief Minister Narendra Modi took the country by storm capturing the coveted Delhi throne to become PM on the promise of bringing about 'Vikas' (economic growth) and 'Achhe Din' (better days). India's economy then appeared to have lost its way in terms of GDP growth even as retail inflation was soaring and private investments were getting stalled. Yet hopes were raised that a new day would dawn with a new set up in Delhi. That did not seem to have borne fruit. In 2019 the economy worsened further, yet BJP repeated the success by returning with an even bigger mandate. That this government's performance was even more miserable can be gauged with the usual economic yardsticks of GDP, unemployment rate, inflation rate, fiscal deficit of the government - an index of the health of government finances, savings and investment rates in the economy, the domestic currency's relative value against the US dollar, the balance of payment and the level of poverty and inequality.

The GDP growth rate for the past five years reveals the government's poor performance in managing the economy. After the decline in the wake of the Global Financial Crisis, the Indian economy started its recovery in 2013, i.e. over a year before the Modi-government took charge. But, the economy decelerated since the third quarter (October to December) of 2016-17. The main reason is the government's decision to demonetise India's currency overnight and the poorly-designed and hastily-implemented Good and Services Tax (GST). The GDP growth rate, as per Reserve Bank of India's Annual Report for FY21, steadily fell from over 8% in FY17 to about 4% in FY20, just before Covid-19 hit. Even before COVID was declared a global pandemic the fundamentals of Indian economy were already weak. In per capita income, India has performed worse than Bangladesh.

India's unemployment rate, according to government's own surveys, was at a 45-year high in 2017-18. The total number of employed people between 2012 and 2018 fell by 9 million which was the first such instance in independent India's history. As against the norm of 2%-3% unemployment rate. India started routinely witnessing unemployment rates close to 6%-7% in the years leading up to Covid-19. The pandemic, of course, made matters far worse. One easy parameter that the layman can well understand is the exchange rate of the rupee with the US dollar. Here, too, the Modi government's record does not inspire any confidence. A US dollar was worth ₹59 when Modi took over as the PM. Seven years later, it is closer to ₹73. The relative weakness of the rupee reflects the reduced purchasing power of the Indian currency Many powerful politicians have parroted the government narrative that the BJP government has changed the lives of millions of farmers with landmark decisions and reforms and also ensured affordable and quality health service to the people in the last seven years. The ongoing farmers' agitation and groans of millions of people traumatised by the pandemic give lie to such fairy tales It is time the Central government acknowledged its shortcomings and acts on rectifying mistakes of the recent past. It is imperative to prepare the nation not only for vaccinating everyone but also to prepare a detailed plan on health care to face future waves as also get the economy going by pumping government money through developmental works in large scale.

saying children). They have little recourse to social safety and suffer severe income losses. "Limited access to social safety nets has meant that many participants in the informal sector have neither been able to afford to stay at home nor adhere to social-distancing requirements' World Bank observes. "High levels of informality lead to weaker development outcomes.

economies is constrained by the

underdeveloped financial sys-

tems associated with widespread

informality. Though global body

reports praise India's free food

programmes during the first

phase, not continued in the sec-

ond one, finds even the central

bank constrained. It virtually

clubs the country with the emerg-

ing markets and developing

The other concern is that most

informal workers are predomi-

nantly women and young peo-

ple (in reality it shies away from

economies (EMDE)

Countries with larger informal adhered to.

**THE REPEATED** 

NATURAL **DISASTERS AND** COVID-19 LOCKDOWNS **ARE TAKING A HEAVY TOLL ON INDIA'S ECONOMY AND** 



Shivaji Sarkar

HIT THE

**INFORMAL** 

**SECTORS** 

THE MOST



sectors have lower per-capita in-

There does not seem to be a wide open window as far as time is concerned in these issues.

#### WISDOM CORNER

LOL

starts shouting:

blonde jokes.

human being?

VENTRILOQUIST

A young ventriloquist is Atouring the clubs and one

night he's doing a show in a small

club in a small town in Arkansas.

With his dummy on his knee, he's

jokes when a blonde woman in the

fourth row stands on her chair and

"I've heard enough of your stupid

What makes you think you can

What does the color of a person's

hair have to do with her worth as a

stereotype women that way?

going through his usual dumb blonde

- 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



Prakash Kumar Sahoo

**ODISHA HAS 5,579** DAIRY **CO-OPERATIVE SOCIETIES WITH** 290,785 MEMBERS, WHEREAS GUJARAT **HAS 18,595 DAIRY CO-OPERATIVE SOCIETIES** 

WITH 3,455,886 **MEMBERS** 

World Milk Day' was first launched 81% of milk. Only nine states have in strengthening the dairy secin 2001 by the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) of the United Nations to recognise the important contributions of the dairy sector in boosting sustainability, economic development, livelihoods and increase awareness regarding nutritional value of milk and milk products around the world. Since 2014, India has been celebrating its National Milk Day on November 26 every year in memory of Dr. Verghese Kurien, the Father of the White Revolution in the country. To highlight the importance of milk in human life, the significance of World Milk Day is yet to be realised in its true sense by all stakeholders concerned across the world.

The world will celebrate the

The livestock sector in India contributes about 4.11% to India's GDP and 25.6 % towards total agriculture GDP, whereas the dairy sector claims majority of share (67%) in value of outputs within livestock (National Accounts Statistics, 2019). From the global point of view, India is world's largest producer and consumer of milk. According to FAO, India contributes 22 per cent to global milk production and produced 187.7 million tons of output in 2018, followed by USA.

performed per capita availability of milk at par with the national level. The data shows that India's milk production is concentrated in a few states because of their robust dairy cooperative networks and a higher remunerative price of milk received by the farmers in their respective states.

21st anniversary of World self-sufficient milk production,

Milk Day on June 1, 2021. only ten states in India produce

As Odisha is concerned, it contributes 1.23% of milk production during the period 2018-19, producing 2.3 million tons. In Odisha, milk is produced by small and marginal farmers whose land holdings, less than 2 hectares and with 3 or 4 animals. In terms of per capita availability of milk in 2018-19, Punjab was the leader among states with 1,181 grams of milk available per person per day, followed by Haryana (1,087 grams), Rajasthan (870 grams), and Gujarat (626 grams). Milk production in Odisha mainly consists of cow and buffalo milk. Cow milk dominates the total milk production, accounting for the majority of the entire production. Though the Odisha dairy market grew at a CAGR of 11% during 2014-2019, the per capita milk availability in Odisha is deficient at 143 gm/day, much below

tor, which boosts milk production. Odisha has 5,579 dairy co-operative societies with 290.785 members, whereas Gujarat has 18,595 dairy co-operative societies with 3,455,886 members. During the 1980s, the co-operatives were not so organised to procure milk and milk products in the state. The Odisha State Cooperative Milk Producers Federation (OMFED) started functioning in 1985 during the phase II of the

Even though India has achieved the national average of 394gm/day. huge decline in demand for milk.

In this context, the dairy co-

operative plays an influential role

'Operation Flood" programme. Milk procurement from the farmers is also low in the state compared to other states. While the procurement of milk was 94,000 kg/day in 2000-01, the procurement in 2018-19 was around 5.01 lakh kg/day, whereas the daily procurement in Gujarat is 18.22 lakh kg-the highest procurement in the country. Despite having a significant livestock base of milch animals and being the largest milk producer globally, India lacks cold storages in many milk shed areas, resulting in wastage of milk and milk products. The recent Covid-19 pandemic has also adversely affected the dairy sector. Milk procurement has been affected severely during this pandemic as there is a

able dairy development policy for enhancing milk production and procurement in the remaining potential districts and states. Recently, India announced ₹15,000 crore funds for setting up Animal Husbandry Infrastructure Development Fund, which will promote private investments in dairy processing and value addition and cattle feed infrastructure. Though the state-owned milk federation (OMFED) is working progressively to achieve the procurement level, milk unions in Odisha have to be strengthened like Anand Pattern' in Gujarat, which will help in increasing production and higher procurement. This move will help get more private investments in the dairy sector, suffice the OMFED efforts in pegging up the milk procurement, and generating employment opportunities. Now, the time has come to adopt advanced scientific techniques and rational dairy policies to augment milk production in the state and the country.

To overcome this situation, the

government needs to devise a suit-

The writer is a Lecturer in Economics at Vikram Deb (Autonomous) College, Jeypore, Odisha. Views are personal.

#### NCERT comic books

Sir, Recently the Union Minister of Education Ramesh Pokhriyal Nishank launched more than 100 curriculum-based comic books aligned to chapters of NCERT textbooks. The books are created by more than 1,000 teachers of CBSE-affiliated schools and have been designed by NCERT based on its curriculum. The aim of this initiative is to increase the social and cultural sensitivity among children through teaching. The comic books have been developed for 16 subjects and for Classes III to XII. Each comic book comprises concise chapters followed by worksheets. They are supported by application-based examples to understand the concepts and some of the chapters cater to gender sensitivity, women empowerment and value education. The 21st century schooling focuses on knowledge, skills, attitudes, values and transformative competencies that create holistic learners, as per CBSE, the comic books have "ushered in transformation of education to personalised learning". The comic books are available on the government's online portal named 'DIKSHA' official website - diksha.gov.in or on 'DIKSHA' mobile application. The step, as per CBSE, has been taken in line with the National Education Policy - NEP 2020 to bring a shift from textbook learning to ensuring conceptual clarity among the students.

Hitesh Kumar Parida, PANIKOILI, JAJPUR

### **Recall of Bengal CS**

Sir, The abrupt and unilateral recall of West Bengal's Chief Secretary Alapan Banerjee by the Modi government has shocked the conscience of the entire nation. This is a double whammy when viewed in light of the fact that the Chief Secretary was granted an extension for three months by the Modi government itself just four days ago and it is a death knell for federalism. When the head of bureaucracy in a state is summarily removed by the Union government, why would any IAS or IPS officer, whether a district magistrate or a secretary or a police officer, listen to and follow the orders of the state government or implement any of its policies or programmes? This is a lethal blow to the Constitution of India, as also federalism. If the Union government is permitted to recall the All India Service Officers, i.e. IAS and IPS, from the states for partisan political considerations and at its whims and fancies, the entire architecture of the rule of law and the Constitution will crumble. This would lead to complete and total anarchy in the country. Recall of Bengal Chief Secretary – is not in good taste in a democratic country like India.

CK Subramanian, MUMBAI

like you being respected at work and in the community

yells.

talking to that little idiot on your knee!



and from reaching our full potential as a person, because you and your kind continue to perpetuate discrimination against, not only blondes, but women in general...and all in the name of humor!" The ventriloquist is embarrassed and begins to apologize, when the blonde

'You stay out of this, mister! I'm



#### TO THE EDITOR

Readers of Orissa POST are most welcome to contribute letters (200 words), articles and columns (between 750-1250 words). Contributors are 101 requested to send their contact numbers and full postal address/email ID. They may also send in their valuable comments, opinion and suggestions, preferably by email, to: edit@orissapost.com

## Orissapost B-15, Rasulgarh Industrial Estate, Bhubaneswar-751010









# Mumbai gets 2 more metro lines, CM flags off trials

THIS MARKS AN IMPORTANT PHASE FOR THE CITY CURRENTLY SERVED BY A SINGLE EAST-WEST 11.4 KM MUMBAI METRO **ONE LINE FROM VERSOVA-ANDHERI-GHATKOPAR. INAUGURATED IN JUNE 2014** 

#### INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Mumbai, May 31: In a significant development, seven years since its first Metro line was started in June 2014, Mumbai is all set to get two more north-south Metros, both elevated, in its north-western suburbs.

Maharashtra Chief Minister Uddhav Thackerav Mondav kicked off the trial runs for the city's 2A Yellow Line and 7 Red Line and other projects, officials said.

Soon after the symbolic green flags were waved by Thackeray Deputy Chief Minister Ajit Pawar, Mayor Kishori Pednekar and other ministers of Shiv Sena-Nationalist Congress Party-Congress alliance, the Mumbai Metropolitan Region Development Authority (MMRDA) commenced the trial runs.

Over the next few days, the MMRDA will test the two lines with a 6-car rake at various speeds and both the lines are planned to be commissioned in two phases starting September and finally by January 2022.

This marks an important phase



Trial run on the Metro Line near Akurli Metro Station ahead of its inauguration, in Mumbai, Monday PTI PHOTO

for the city currently served by a many started clicking photos or single east-west 11.4 km Mumbai videos from their balconies or Metro One line from Versovarooftops and made them viral on Andheri-Ghatkopar, inaugurated social media. The first phase would cover 9

Excited people clapped and stations each for both the lines cheered on the roads below in the covering a distance of 10.5 km north-western suburbs as they sud-(Line 2A) and 9.2 kms (Line 7) and denly viewed the sleek new rakes the remaining sections shall be running at controlled speeds and made operational in the second phase, said an official.

Line 2A, running from Dahisar to DN Nagar, is fully elevated for 18.6 km with 17 stations being built at a cost of around Rs 6,400 crore, while Line 7, from Dahisar East to Andheri, is fully elevated for 16.5 kms with 13 stations, being constructed at a cost of around Rs 6.200 crore.

Both lines will slash the current travel time from the existing 75-90 minutes to barely 25 minutes and are expected to notch a daily ridership of over 600,000 in a decade, besides helping decongest the road traffic.

More than 93 per cent of all the civil works on both the Metro lines are completed and now other system and station works are currently on in full swing to make them ready for the first commuters by September in the first phase opening, said the official.

Lauding the MMRDA for the achievements, Thackeray said that despite the two Covid-19 waves and the strict pandemic restrictions, the pace of the city and its development work has not halted.

He also performed the foundation-laying ceremony of Controlled Access Subway-Elevated Road Project on Western Express Highway to give a direct access to the Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj International Airport terminals 1 and 2, and flyovers and bridges.

Pawar said that the Maha Vikas Aghadi government is working at a fast pace and cited how a 30-km long asphalt road in Khatau in Satara was built in just 24 hours. a feat taken note by Limca Book of Records and an entire cement road in Mumbai finished in just 12 hours during the night.

Union Minister Ramdas Athawale promised all help to take up the state's development and other issues with the centre.

Other prominent dignitaries present were state ministers Balasaheb Thorat, Eknath Shinde, Nawab Malik, Aditya Thackeray Aslam Sheikh, Subhash Desai Prajakt Tanpure, besides MPs and MLAs, MMRDA Commissioner RA Rajeev and other top officials.

# Markets reopen in J-K as easing of curbs begins



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Jammu/Srinagar, May 31: After a month-long lockdown imposed due to a surge in Covid-19 cases, markets reopened in Jammu and Kashmir Monday as the process of partial unlock started in the Union Territory, officials said. According to new guidelines im-

posed by authorities Sunday, shops have been allowed to open on alternate days.

The public transport was allowed to ply at 50 per cent of the seating capacity in the Orange category districts, it remained shut in the Red category districts.

With the grim Covid pandemic situation appearing to be on the ebb in the last two weeks in the Union Territory, the administration Sunday began the process of easing out the lockdown, limiting the corona curfew to nights and weekends only.

The ease-out process was launched amid the case positivity rate falling to 6.2 per cent from 13 and the daily Covid-19 sliding down to an all-time high of 5,500 to 2,200 in the past two weeks.

While deciding to relax the corona curfew, the Jammu and Kashmir 'State' Executive Committee (JKSEC), however, opted to keep all educational institutions, including the private coaching centres, closed till June 15.

It also opted to keep all cinema halls, multiplexes, clubs, gyms, spas and paid parks closed till further orders.

Half of the 10 districts in Kashmir valley -- Pulwama, Anantnag, Baramulla, Budgam and Kupwara -- have been classified as Red, while the other half --Srinagar, Shopian, Ganderbal, in Kashmir valley -Pulwama, Anantnag, Baramulla, Budgam and Kupwara have been classified as Red, while the other half - Srinagar, Shopian, Ganderbal, **Kulgam and Bandipora** belong to the Orange category

Half of the 10 districts

#### Kulgam and Bandipora -- belong to the Orange category.

Meanwhile, policemen in Jammu were seen making rounds of the partially opened markets and asking people to follow Covid-appropriate behaviour strictly, especially maintaining social distance and wearing of face masks.

"We are not out of Covid-19 as yet. Please keep in mind your safety and the safety of others by following the guidelines properly," a policeman, using the public address system fitted in his patrolling vehicle, said while moving through Shalimar market in Jammu city.

The commuters, however, faced difficulties due to the absence of public transport as only State Road Transport Corporation (SRTC) vehicles and three-wheelers were seen playing on different routes.

The private transporters went on an indefinite strike April 21 after the government came out with Covid-19 guidelines which among other things allowed operations of public transport at 50 per cent of the authorised seating capacity in Jammu and Kashmir.

# 20L 'golden cards' issued under AB-PMJAY-Sehat

in June 2014.

and Medical Education Atal Dulloo

said. Till date, 20.46 lakh golden

cards have been issued. At least

one member of 6.68 lakh families

has been issued golden card in the

It provides health insurance

cover of up to Rs 5 lakh per family

per year on floater basis to 7.14

lakh additional families of the

Thus, about 10.31 lakh families in

the division are currently availing

benefits under the scheme, he said.

As many as 92 hospitals have been

empanelled by the government

As a part of Ayushman Bharat pro-

gramme, 599 health and wellness

centres (HWCs) have been set up in

the Jammu division to provide com-

prehensive primary health care, in-

cluding universal screening of com-

mon non-communicable diseases like

cancer and diabetes he said

under the scheme, Dulloo said.

Jammu division. Dulloo said.

Jammu region, he said.

#### PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Jammu, May 31: The Jammu and Kashmir Health department till now has issued over 20.24 lakh 'golden cards' under the Avushman Bharat-PMJAY-Sehat scheme in the Jammu division to provide a yearly health insurance cover of up to Rs 5 lakh, an official said Monday.

The Ayushman Bharat-Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojna (AB-PMJAY), a universal health insurance scheme, was launched December 1, 2018, to provide coverage to about 3.17 lakh below poverty line (BPL) families in the Jammu division.

With a view to provide universal health coverage, the AB-PMJAY-Sehat scheme was conceived and rolled out in the union territory in convergence with the AB-PMJAY scheme from December 26 last year, Financial Commissioner for Health



A shopkeeper cleans his shop that was reopened after partial relaxation in the ongoing Covid lockdown by the J-K government, in Jammu, Monday

# New CS to take over without predecessor handing over charge IAF JOINS FIRE FIGHTING OPERATI

ing over the charge to him. Subrahmanyam was recently

ecessor, BVR Subrahmanyam hand- cause of the reluctance of the out

**UDHAMPUR FOREST FIRE** 



Srinagar, May 31: Jammu and Kashmir will witness a piquant administrative situation Monday when the incoming chief secretary will take charge without the outgoing officer relinquishing office.

Lt Governor Manoj Sinha is chairing a meeting attended by the new chief secretary, Arun Kumar Mehta and administrative secretaries of various departments Monday in summer capital Srinagar.

The meeting is a routine administrative exercise except that

government. If I didn't know better I'd read this order to mean the outgoing CS wasn't keen to hand over charge to his successor. Either way I haven't seen an order like this before

Mehta would be taking over as the chief secretary without his pred-

OMAR ABDULLAH I FORMER CHIEF MINISTER, J-K

posted as the OSD in the commerce ministry in anticipation of his taking over as the commerce secretary consequent upon the retirement of the present incumbent June 30 this year. J&K saw an unusual administrative order two days back which was issued by the general administration department.

The order said all files will be submitted to the Lt Governor and his advisors through the new chief secretary, Arun Kumar Mehta. The order became necessary be-

going chief secretary to hand over charge to Mehta who has been asked to assume office Monday.

Former chief minister. Omar Abdullah reacted to the administrative order that said files should be routed through the new chief secretary.

"Verv unusual order issued by the J&K government. If I didn't know better I'd read this order to mean the outgoing CS wasn't keen to hand over charge to his successor. Either way I haven't seen an order like this before," Omar said in his comment on Twitter.

Udhampur (Jammu), May 31: The Indian Air Force (IAF) Monday joined a fire fighting operation to control a massive forest fire in Ghordi block in Udhampur district of Jammu and Kashmir, officials said.

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

The fire in Daya Dhar forest started Sunday and engulfed a vast area, damaging hundreds of trees, the officials said.

The forest protection force, along with fire department and emergency services personnel, police and civilian volunteers from nearby villages are making efforts to put off the blaze in the forest, home to

Youngest sarpanch keeps Maha village Covid free

CM UDDHAV THACKERAY IN HIS VIRTUAL ADDRESS TO THE PEOPLE SUNDAY HAD LAUDED HIS CONTRIBUTION AND APPEALED

fire, responding to the call of Udhampur Deputy Commissioner Indu Kanwal Chib.

Monday morning to help douse the

The officials said the cause of the fire was not known immediately but it is believed that the blaze started after the dry grass caught fire due to rising mercury. The exact damage caused to the green gold and the wildlife would be known only after the fire is controlled completely," a forest official said.

District Development Council (DDC) member, Ghordi, Rakesh Chander Sharma said 80 per cent of the fire was controlled and joint efforts are on to douse the flames

# HSC exam more important for students: Govt tells HC

#### PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, May 31: The Maharashtra government Monday told Bombay High Court that SSC (Class X) and HSC (Class XII) exams could not be compared as the latter was a relatively more important milestone for students as their careers depended on it.

The state government, in an affidavit, said SSC exams for this vear were cancelled amid the coronavirus outbreak after considering the safety of students, teachers, parents and other stakeholders.

The affidavit, by the state's School Education and Sports department deputy secretary Rajendra Pawar, was in response to a PIL filed by a professor, Dhananjay Kulkarni, challenging the April 19 decision of the state government to cancel Class X exams this year.

The HC, May 20, had come down heavily on the state government saying it was making a mockery of the education system, and had directed it to file its affidavit on the plea. The HC also sought an explanation as to why the state government was holding Class XII exams. The state government's affidavit said Class XII exams are postponed presently and a final decision on it would be taken after the Centre makes a move on the national level.

examinations were a relatively more important milestone in the education of the students as their future careers depend upon the same as compared to the 10th standard examination the affidavit said.

Usually, unlike 10th standard, after 12th standard the path of the students' overall career is decided, it said, adding that students in 12th standard are more matured, independent, socially aware and bodily and

mentally fit than those in Class X. It is like comparing apples with cheese only because both are edible, the state government said in the affidavit. The state government said it cannot be held that SSC exams cannot be cancelled just because no decision has been taken

on HSC exams. The affidavit said holding SSC exams, for which around 16 lakh students appear each year, was a mammoth exercise also involving teachers and parents as well as the police and transport system. It said the academic year of 2020-21 underwent turmoil with physical classes getting stopped and teachers managing with online classes due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

TO ALL SARPANCHS IN THE STATE TO DRAW INSPIRATION WHILE ANNOUNCING MY VILLAGE CORONA FREE INITIATIVE It was thought fit that 12th board PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, May 31: Implementation of a five-point programme and inculcating a sense of responsibility among people was the mainstay of various measures undertaken by Ruturaj Deshmukh, the youngest sarpanch in Maharashtra, and his task force to rid their village in Solapur district of coronavirus.

Maharashtra Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray in his virtual address to the people Sunday had lauded Deshmukh's contribution and appealed to all sarpanchs in the state to draw inspiration in the battle against the pandemic while announcing My Village Corona Free initiative.

The Ghatne village, of which Deshmukh (21) is the sarpanch, has a population of 1,500. The village had not reported any Covid-19 cases from March 2020 to April 2021. But in the first week of April, we had two Covid-19 cases but both the patients died. This triggered panic and many people started leaving their homes to live in their farms, he recalled Monday.

At this stage, Deshmukh said



he decided to involve all stakeholders and create awareness about fighting coronavirus.

My mantra was to be positive in outlook with confidence that we can keep our village free of coronavirus, Deshmukh told PTI over the phone.

Talking about the efforts, the sarpanch said he and his team framed a five-point programme involving tracing, testing, treatment, vaccination and adherence to Covid-appropriate behaviour. Moreover, ASHA (Accredited Social Health Activist) work-

ers were roped in who visited every house in the village to check the blood oxygen level and body temperature of its occupants, he said.

The villagers whose blood oxygen level is found to be below 92 are shifted to either isolation centres or to Covid Care Centres in Mohol taluka, which is 4 km away from the village. he said. Simultaneously, corona safety kits comprising a face mask, hand sanitiser, disinfectant, and vitamin tablets were supplied to the people. A steam machine was kept at the gram panchavat office which can be used by anybody in need, he added.

various species of the wild animals

and birds. The IAF deployed its

choppers with a bucket carrying

thousands of litres of water early

Deshmukh said residents who have to travel outside the village for work are randomly tested

The while outsiders coming chief minister to the village are quarmay have mentioned antined for three me in his address but local days and made to political opposition remains. undergo a rapid There is no difference in the antigen test. To inculcate political opposition at the discipline in peostate level or village level

ple, police person-RUTURAJ DESHMUKH | SARPANCH, nel were deployed in GHATNE VILLAGE the village to ensure that the pandemic norms are followed and those found without a face mask were fined.

Since April, 15 coronavirus positive cases were detected in our village out of which two died. The village has now become coronavirus-free but the campaign continues with the help of ASHA workers. he added. Deshmukh also underlined the

challenges in the form of lack of awareness among people and general hesitancy about Covid-19 testing in rural areas. There is no mindset for testing in villages, he said. He flagged the shortage of vaccines as the biggest hurdle in rural areas.

When asked about the CM praising him, Deshmukh said, "The chief minister may have mentioned me in his address but local political opposition remains. There is no difference in the political opposition at the state level or village level." In his view, micro-management will help eradicate coronavirus in villages.

When asked about his future course of action, Deshmukh said preparations are on to tackle the projected third wave of the pandemic.

Ghatne gram panchayat is planning to set up a 20-bed isolation centre and a paediatrics task force with two doctors in the village. I also want to make Ghatne the first fully vaccinated village in Solapur district with the state government's help, he said.













# national

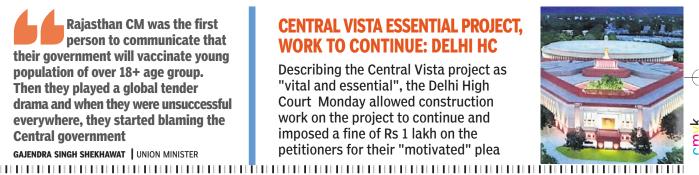


**Rajasthan CM was the first** person to communicate that their government will vaccinate young population of over 18+ age group. Then they played a global tender drama and when they were unsuccessful everywhere, they started blaming the **Central government** 

GAJENDRA SINGH SHEKHAWAT UNION MINISTER

## CENTRAL VISTA ESSENTIAL PROJECT, WORK TO CONTINUE: DELHI HC

Describing the Central Vista project as "vital and essential", the Delhi High Court Monday allowed construction work on the project to continue and imposed a fine of Rs 1 lakh on the petitioners for their "motivated" plea



**Complaint filed** 

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

against Poonawalla

Lucknow, May 31: Pratap

Chandra, a resident of Lucknow has

filed a complaint against Serum

Institute of India (SII) CEO Adar

Poonawalla and others, alleging

that he did not develop antibodies

despite taking a Covishield dose.

Aashiana police station in Lucknow.

plaint are DCGA director, Joint

Secretary of Health Ministry Luv

Agarwal, ICMR director Balram

Bhargava, National Health Mission

director Aparna Upadhyay, among

The complaint has been filed at

Those also named in the com-

uote

In fact, when the issue of Article 370's abrogation cropped up, I stood in support when Haryana Assembly brought a

resolution (welcoming the Centre's decision on Article 370) BHUPINDER SINGH HOODA SENIOR

CONGRESS LEADER

Instead of celebrating the completion of its seven years, the **BJP-led** central government should apologise to the

countrymen for the horrific coronavirus situation today. The Centre completely failed to make timely arrangements to control the spread of coronavirus

SACHIN PILOT CONGRESS LEADER



more than 500 Covid cases daily while the state has over 2.500 cases

R ASHOKA KARNATAKA REVENUE MINISTER

## SHORT TAKES

#### **Hooch tragedy:** Toll rises to 36

Aligarh (UP): The toll in the Aligarh hooch tragedy climbed to 36 Monday with 11 more deaths being confirmed by the district authorities amid apprehension that it may rise further. Viscera samples of 35 other people, who are suspected to have died after consuming spurious liquor, have been sent for examination to confirm the cause of death. Chief Medical Officer (CMO) Dr Bhanu Pratan Kalvani said, Former Samajwadi Party (SP) MLA from Aligarh Zameerullah Khan produced before the media the families of 12 people who he claimed died over the past three days after consuming the spurious liquor and whose post-mortem was not conducted.

Sushil Kumar

## PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

of Patel and requested the imme-Thiruvananthapuram, May 31: The Kerala Assembly Monday unanimously adopted a resolution Lakshadweep seeking Administrator Praful Khoda Patel's recall, becoming the first state in the country to express solidarity with the islands, where regulaof Lakshadweep people. tions over beef and liquor, among The BJP slammed the resolu-

**CENTRE-BENGAL ROW** 

Now, CS to serve as

Mamata's advisor

others, have sparked a row. Voicing concern, the House adopted the first Assembly resolution moved by the ruling CPI(M) in its successive term on the issue, with the Opposition Congress bloc backing the government.

#### The members sought the recall LAKSHADWEEP ROW

diate intervention of the Centre had earlier written to Prime to protect the lives and livelihood Minister Narendra Modi, reof the citizens. The hard-hitting resolution alleged attempts were questing his intervention in the being made to impose "saffron matter, while criticising Patel's adagendas" and "corporate interests" ministrative measures. by destroying the unique way of life

tion adopted by the Assembly

against the Central government

appointed administrator and said

the House had no authority to do

Congress leader Rahul Gandhi

and NCP supremo Sharad Pawar

An archipelago located in the Arabian Sea, Lakshadweep is witnessing protests by local people for some days over the recent actions and the administrative reforms.

Ker Assembly passes resolution to call back administrator

Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan moved the government resolution, the first in the 15th state Assembly, reminiscing the historic and cultural bond between Kerala and Lakshadweep and criticised the Centre for allegedly trying to destroy the natural democracy there. Stating that the future of Lakshadweep is a matter of concern, he said any attempt to undermine its unique culture and indigenous lifestyle is unacceptable.

who upholds Anyone Constitutional values should register a strong disagreement against the actions of the administrator of Lakshadweep, Vijayan urged.

Setting aside their political differences, members of the ruling CPI(M)-led Left Democratic Front and the Congress-headed United

backed the resolution, except some amendments suggested by the latter. The implementation of the "saffon agenda," rolled out in the name of reforms, began with painting coconut trees with the colour and has now grown to destroying the traditional habitat. life and natural relationships of the island dwellers, the resolution alleged. Steps have been taken to imple-

Democratic Front unanimously

ment the Goondas Act in the islands, where the crime rate is exceptionally low, it said, adding such measures were in anticipation of any protests and to silence voice of dissent

others. Pratap Chandra has said in the complaint that he received the first dose of Covishield on April 8. Chandra said he was supposed to receive the second dose 28 days later but on the said day, he was told that the date for the second dose had been extended by six weeks.

Later, the government revised the time gap between the two doses to 12 weeks

Chandra said that after receiving the first dose of the vaccine, he felt weak and unwell.

Citing ICMR director general Balram Bhargav's quotes in media where he had said 'good levels of antibodies are produced in the body after the first dose of Covishield', Chandra took a Covid Antibody GT test from a government-approved lab. The test result revealed that the complainant did not develop any antibodies against Covid-19, instead his platelets had gone down to 1.5 lakh from 3 lakh.

Chandra alleged that after taking the vaccine he has become more prone to the virus as his platelet count has been reduced by half. The police have received the complaint but no FIR has been filed in the case. The police said considering the sensitivity of the matter, they have informed the top officials before taking any further action.

## Lowest daily Covid cases in 50 days

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, May 31: India reported the lowest daily new coronavirus infections in 50 days with 1,52,734 cases, taking India's total tally to 2,80,47,534, while the active caseload further declined to 20,26,092, according to the Union Health Ministry data updated on Monday. The death toll climbed to 3,29,100 with 3,128 daily deaths, the data updated at 8 am showed. Recoveries continued to outnumber the daily new cases for the 18th consecutive day. The number of people who have recuperated from the disease surged to 2,56,92,342, with 2,38,022 patients having recovered in a span of 24 hours, while the case fatality rate stands at 1.17 per cent, the data stated. Also, 16,83,135 tests were conducted Sunday, taking the total cumulative tests conducted so far in the country to 34,48,66,883, while the daily positivity was recorded at 9.07 per cent. It has been less than 10 per cent for seven consecutive days, the ministry said. Weekly positivity rate has declined to 9.04 per cent. The active cases have further reduced to 20,26,092, comprising 7.22 per cent of the total infections, while the national Covid-19 recovery rate has improved to 91.60 per cent.



Cadets of the Urban Commando Wing under the Anti-Terrorist Squad practice hostage rescue operation drill in Kochi

# Court pulls up drug controller over Gautam Gambhir report

#### AGENCIES

New Delhi. May 31: The Delhi High Court Monday came down heavily on the drug controller for not properly examining how BJP MP Gautam Gambhir procured



**The Centre cannot** 

force one to join it without the consent of the state government. I will

governments of India, all opposition leaders, IAS, IPS officers, NGOs to be together

The chief minister told newspersons here that the central government had asked Bandopadhvav to report to Delhis North Block Tuesday, but she added an officer cannot join a new office without permission from the state administration. "The CS got a letter from the Centre asking him to join North Block by tomorrow. This is not a West Bengal. reply to my letter but to the CS. I

appeal to all state

to fight the battle

Bandyopadhyay's services and asked the state government to immediately release the top bureaucrat, hours after Banerjee met the Prime Minister at Kalaikunda airbase for 15 minutes instead of a longer scheduled review meeting of the post-cyclone situation in



## MAMATA BANERJEE

## taken to Haridwar

New Delhi: The Delhi Police Monday took two-time Olympic medal winner Sushil Kumar to Uttarakhand to find out where he had sheltered while he was on the run before being arrested in connection with the wrestler Sagar Dhankar murder case. According to Crime Branch officials, he was taken to Haridwar to find out the details that where he took shelter and who all had helped him. An official said that it was stated that he had stayed in an ashram in Haridwar.

### T'gana's Covid positivity drops

Hyderabad: Telangana's Covid-19 positivity rate dropped further to 2.9 per cent Monday. The state reported 2,524 new cases in the 24 hour period ending 5.30 p.m. Monday. The number of cases has come down from 2,982 Saturday. A total of 87.110 samples were tested Monday against 1,00,677 Saturday.

### Woman raped

. . . . . . . . . .

Guwahati: A woman was allegedly raped by two men in eastern Assam's Charaideo district while she was returning home from a hospital after recovering from Covid-19, the police said Monday. The police have arrested both the accused persons. According to the police, accompanied by her daughter, the woman from the tea tribe community was returning home from the Sapakheti Model Hospital after testing negative for Covid when two men allegedly kidnapped her and took her to a nearby tea garden where they raped her.

have not received any reply from it to the letter which I had sent earlier today," she said.

AGENCIES

Delhi, to retire.

Kolkata, May 31: Chief Minister

Mamata Banerjee Monday said

she was appointing West Bengal's

Chief Secretary (CS) Alapan

Bandyopadhyay as Chief Advisor

for three years effective from

Tuesday, after allowing the bu-

reaucrat who was ordered by the

central government to report to

The Chief Minister earlier in the day had written to Prime Minister Narendra Modi requestof West Bengal by the Centre in ing him to withdraw the Centre's order recalling the Chief Secretary, and asserted her government "cannot release, and is not releasing" the top bureaucrat.

The move opens up various possibilities on possible action by the Central government against the top bureaucrat. It also lays bare the adversarial relationship between the state and central government which has been simmering for some time and which seems to be deteriorating into what many observers described as a no holds barred battle. "We are not relieving him (Bandopadhyay). He has superannuated today, but he will act

as chief advisor to the CM for the next three years," Banerjee said. The Centre, in a surprise move, had on May 28 night sought was scheduled to retire Monday after completion of 60 years of age. However, he was granted a threemonth extension as Chief Secretary

view of his work in managing the ongoing pandemic. The Chief Ministers statement that her state has allowed Bandopadhyay to retire indicates that the state government is not utilising the Centres permission to grant the chief secretary an ex-

tension. Home Secretary HK Dwidevi will be the new chief secretary and BP Gopalika would come in Dwivedis place, Banerjee said.

At the press conference, the chief minister told reporters that Modi and Union Home Minister Amit Shah were trying to bulldoze the federal structure of the country and creating problems for the state as they were unable to digest the BJPs defeat in the recently concluded assembly elections.

huge quantity of Fabiflu, used for treating COVID-19 patients, and said the tendency of people to take advantage of a situation to appear as saviours has to be denounced.

The high court said its confidence in the drug controller has shaken and rejected its status report filed in connection with its inquiry into procurement of the medicine by the cricketer-turnedpolitician Gambhir.

The high court said everyone knows that the drug was in short supply and while Gambhir bought thousands of strips of the medicine, other people who needed it could not get it on that day.

'You (drug controller) are wrong to say it was not in short supply. You want us to shut our eyes. You think you would get away with this. "You can't take us for a ride. If you think we are so gullible so naive we are not You better do your job. If you can't do

The high court said everyone knows that the drug was in short supply and while Gambhir bought thousands of strips of the medicine, other people who needed it could not get it on that day

your job, tell us, we will have you suspended and let someone else do

your job," a bench of Justices Vipin Sanghi and Jasmeet Singh said.

The bench also pulled up Gambhir for again making a statement that he will continue to do such work

"We have already said it is a malpractice. This tendency of people trying to take advantage and then trying to appear as a saviour when they themselves created the problem, has to be denounced. And then the person goes on to state he would do it again. If it continues. we know how to deal with it." the bench said.

# Health experts urge people to quit smoking WORLD NO TOBACCO DAY

#### INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, May 31: Tobacco consumption has long been associated with lung disease, diabetes, cardiovascular disease, and cancer. But, a recent guidance by the World Health Organization (WHO) states that smokers face a 40-50 per cent higher risk of developing severe disease and death from Covid-19. Health experts have urged smokers to quit as it is necessary now more than ever.

World No-Tobacco Day is observed on May 31 every year. This year's theme is 'Commit to Quit'.

"Given the correlation between the severity of Covid-19 and tobacco, the need to create awareness about ending tobacco use has never been more critical. World No Tobacco Day (WNTD) is an opportunity to raise awareness on

the harmful and deadly effects of tobacco use and second-hand smoke exposure, and to discourage the use of tobacco in any form," said Dr. Roderico H Ofrin, WHO Representative to India, in a statement.

"This year's theme for WNTD 'Commit to Quit' aims to support 100 million people worldwide in their attempts to give up tobacco through various initiatives. We all must help create healthier environments that are conducive to quitting tobacco use," Ofrin added

According to WHO, the act of smoking means that fingers (and possibly contaminated cigarettes) are in contact with lips which increases the possibility of transmission of the virus from hand to mouth. Smokeless tobacco users may spread the disease through spitting.



"There is growing evidence that smokers have a higher mortality rate with respect to coronavirus infection compared to non-smokers. Especially the smokers who already have certain health conditions like COPD or other heart diseases are at a greater risk of succumbing to death if they get infected with the virus," Dr Vikas Maurya, Director and Head of Department, Pulmonology, Fortis Hospital

Shalimar Bagh.

Aligning with the theme, the WHO has launched a national mass media campaign to encourage tobacco users to quit, along with global health organisation Vital Strategies.

The campaign, "When You Quit" explains how smoking cigarettes or bidi can cause heart attack and may also increase the risk of severe Covid-19.

The WHO is supporting the "When You Quit" campaign developed in multiple Indian languages and to be aired across 15 states covering 169 districts with high burden of tobacco use through All India Radio, MY FM & Radio City. Additionally, Vital Strategies will augment the amplification of the message through major online streaming platforms - Facebook, Hotstar, Voot, Zee5, SonyLiv and MX

According to health experts, the Covid-19 pandemic has also led to a strengthening of resolve among tobacco users in their commitment to quit (tobacco).

This could also be because the majority of people were more at home due to Covid-induced lockdowns and they were worried about exposing their children to tobacco smoking, said Dr. Pratima Murthy, Professor of Psychiatry and Head of the Department at the National Institute of Mental Health and Neuro-Sciences (NIMHANS) Bengaluru.

"As many as three fourth of all who called to quit said they had given up and nearly about 40 per cent had quit in one month. This is the double of what we wouldsee in the pre-Covid times," Murthy said.







# national



We have been assured that after June 20, we will get some doses. Sputnik V vaccine is not being produced domestically so far. A part of the doses imported from Russia will be provided to Delhi ARVIND KEJRIWAL DELHI CHIEF MINISTER

## **ADDITIONAL SUPPORT FROM FRANCE**

France announced Monday that it will send additional medical supplies, including around 16 large oxygen generation plants, to India to support the country's fight against the second wave of the coronavirus pandemic



BIG MOVE

announces 10 per cent

students and candidates

This comes amid massive

pressure build-up on the

issue after SC struck

Maharashtra govt over the

down 13% reservation for

In another development, the

Shiv Sena-led MVA government

extended till June 7, the tenure

of the Justice Dilip Bhosale

Committee, set up to review the

apex court's May 5 verdict and ad-

vice the state on the future course

of action. Earlier, the multi-mem-

EWS reservation for

belonging to Maratha

Maharashtra govt

community

Marathas



Centre is trving to wash its hands of it and asking the states to make its own arrangements even as companies are not that keen to enter into arrangements with the states

PINARAYI VIJAYAN KERALA CHIEF MINISTER



exams and to consider the suggestions made by them (students and parents) very very seriously

PRIYANKA GANDHI VADRA CONGRESS GENERAL SECRETARY

In India, over 1.3 million deaths are attributable to tobacco use every year amounting to 3,500 deaths per day imposing a lot of avoidable socioeconomic burden HARSH VARDHAN UNION HEALTH MINISTER

## SHORT TAKES

## Security forces destroy 2 IEDs

Srinagar: Security forces foiled twin attempts by militants to stage deadly attacks by detecting and defusing two improvised explosive devices (IEDs) in Pulwama district of Jammu and Kashmir Monday, police said. "Inputs were received that #terrorists were planning to carry out #IED attacks which shall be spectacular. Acting swiftly 02 IEDs have been recovered from two different places in #Awantipora area (of Pulwama district)," Kashmir Zone Police tweeted. Police said the timely detection of explosives averted major terror incidents. The first IED was detected by a joint team of security forces near Railway link road at Panzgam in Pulwama district, a police official said.

#### **Bihar: Lockdown** extended till June 8

# **RIGHT OF PRESS, FREE SPEECH** SC to examine interpretation of sedition law

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, May 31: The Supreme Court Monday said it will examine the interpretation of sedition law, particularly in the light of media rights and free speech, as it gave protection to Telugu news channels -TV5 and ABN Andhrajyothi -from any coercive action in a case lodged against them under the colonial era provision.

The two channels were booked by Andhra Pradesh police for alleged sedition in showing 'offensive' speeches of YSR Congress rebel MP K Raghu Rama Krishna Raju. A bench of Justices DY Chandrachud, L N Rao and S Ravindra Bhat said, "We are of the view that provisions of 124A (sedition) and 153 (promoting enmity between classes) of the IPC require interpretation, particularly on the issue of the rights of press and

free speech". It restrained the Andhra Pradesh police from taking any coercive action against the channels and their employees or staffers in connection with the FIR.

The bench also sought the response of the state government within four weeks on the pleas of the channels which are charged for various offences including the harsh penal offence of sedition.

Both the media houses have recently moved the top court seeking quashing of an FIR registered against it in a sedition case in Andhra Pradesh, with one house claiming the attempt is to "create a chilling effect" for news channels in the state so that they are wary of hosting any content which is critical of the government.

Shreya Broadcasting Pvt Ltd, which owns TV5 news channel with bureaus in Hyderabad, Vishakapatnam and Vijayawada, has alleged in its petition that the state "intends to silence" its critiques and the media by filing a "vague FIR" and abusing the process of law.



#### PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, May 31: The Maharashtra government Monday extended benefits under the the economically weaker section (EWS) quota to the Maratha community. days after the Supreme Court scrapped a separate reservation in jobs and education for the dominant social group.

A government order (GO) to this effect was issued by the General Administration Department (GAD) here. At present, a 10 per cent EWS quota is in force for those sections of the society which are not covered by any kind of reservations. The central law on the EWS quota was enacted more than two years ago to allow reservation for the poor in jobs and education among the general category.

The GAD order said the Maratha community, which has been classified as a Socially and Economically Backward Class (SEBC), can avail the 10 per cent EWS quota. The SC had, May 5,



struck down a state law that granted reservations in jobs and education to the Maratha community.

The EWS quota will be applicable to the community from the period of interim stay (on Maratha reservation) September 9, 2020, to the final verdict by the Supreme Court in May 5 this year, the government order said

ble for SEBC candidates whose appointments were pending before the interim stay and will not be applicable to those candidates who have benefited from the SEBC quota in appointments and admissions, it said.

The EWS quota will be applica-

## ber committee was supposed to submit its report on or before May 31. **UIDAI** issues

# 6 more bodies found floating in Ganga

AN OFFICIAL SAID THAT THE BODIES COULD NOT BE **IDENTIFIED AS THEY WERE HIGHLY DECOMPOSED** 



AGENCIES

Fatehpur (UP), May 31: Six more bodies of suspected COVID-19 victims were found floating in the Ganga in Uttar Pradesh, an official said Monday.

covered from the river, he said. Later in the day, a team of doctors performed the last rites at Bhitora Ganga Ghat as per the Covid

guidelines, the SDM said. The bodies could not be identified as they were highly decomposed, the SDM said, adding that they appear to have come floating from far-off places. Earlier this month, at least 52 bodies were seen floating at the Ujiyar, Kulhadia and Bharauli ghats in Ballia's Narahi area

However, the district authorities did not tell the exact number of bodies found there.

According to a report more than 2,000 bodies were found floating or buried in a 1,140 km stretch along the river Ganga in Uttar Pradesh.

Last week, a video of a coronavirus patient's body being dumped into a river had emerged from Uttar Pradesh's Balrampur district. In the Collector (SDM) Pramod Jha said video, two men can be seen lifting a body on a bridge over river Rapti. he was informed about the bodies floating in the river Sunday One of them, wearing personal morning, following which a protective equipment, seemed to be search operation was launched. trying to open the body bag to Six decomposed bodies were redump the corpse

# draft for new

## Aadhaar norms INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

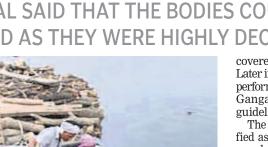
New Delhi, May 31: The draft Aadhaar (Authentication and Offline Verification) Regulations, 2021 stipulate that the Authority may enable an Aadhaar number holder to permanently lock his/her biometrics and temporarily unlock it when needed for biometric authentication.



The draft regulations prepared by Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI) stipulate that all biometric authentication against any such locked biometric records shall fail with a "No" answer with an appropriate response code. These draft norms are in supersession of the Aadhaar (Authentication) Regulations, 2016. There have been privacy con-

cerns with Aadhaar on identity

theft and illegal use of biometrics.



Patna: The Nitish Kumar government in Bihar Monday extended the lockdown till June 08 but eased many restrictions, relieved over the decline in intensity of the Covid-19 second wave which has killed thousands and infected lakhs of people in the state. The decision was taken at a meeting of the highpowered crisis management committee, chaired by the Chief Minister, which decided to continue with the lockdown, effective till Tuesday, for another week.

#### Woman gangraped

Jaipur: A woman was allegedly raped by three men when she stepped out of her house to attend nature's call in Rajasthan's Nagaur district, police said Monday. The incident took place May 24, they said. The victim, who is married, had gone out with her sister to attend nature's call. The main accused, Devekaran Gurjar, and two others threatened to kill her, forcibly took her to a secluded place on a tractor and raped her there, Station House Officer (SHO), Makrana, Roshan Lal Samaria said.

Naxal killed

# **MOCKERY OF COVID NORMS**

The FIR against the TV channel

has connection with the sedition

case lodged against Raju, who has

already been arrested by the Andhra

The channels have claimed that

the FIR has been lodged against

it for airing programmes involving

Raju who has been critical of the

state government led by his own

party. The channels have sought the

apex court's direction to restrain

the authorities in Andhra Pradesh

from taking any coercive action

against the management and em-

ployees of the news channel in

pursuance of the case lodged

Department (CID), which has ar-

rested Raju in the case, has also

named two media houses and oth-

In its plea filed in the apex court

through advocate Vipin Nair, Shreya

Broadcasting Pvt Ltd has said that

freedom of speech of media is of

great importance and the FIR

clearly intends to breach the same

by "chilling the media houses into

submission". On May 21, in a relief

to the MP granted him bail in a

sedition case registered in Andhra

Pradesh saying that considering the

medical report received from Army

hospital, the possibility of his "ill-

treatment" in custody cannot be

The Crime Investigation

Pradesh police.

against them.

ers as accused.

ruled out



Beneficiaries wait to receive Covid-19 vaccine doses at a district government hospital in South Dinajpur, West Benga

# India's oldest train turns 110

#### INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Mumbai, May 31: The oldest running long-distance train of the Indian Railways, Punjab Mail, connecting Mumbai-Firozpur - originally linking Bombay with Peshawar (now in Pakistan) - turns 110 Tuesday, Central Railway officials said here Monday.

To begin with, there were the P&O steamers bringing in the mail, and excited officers of the British Raj along with their spouses, coming to their first postings in colonial India after a 13day long sea voyage from Southampton to Mumbai Port.

Since the British officials held a combined ticket both for the sea voyage to Bombay and then onward inland journey by train to their place of postings, after disembarking they would simply board



one of the trains from here bound for Delhi, Calcutta or Madras.

The Punjab Limited used to run on fixed mail days from Bombay to Peshawar covering 2,496 kms in around 47 hours along the Great Indian Peninsular route, via Itarsi, Agra, Delhi and Lahore.

Later, from 1914, the Punjab Limited started originating and terminating at the Bombav VT Station, now Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Terminus Mumbai and a UNESCO World Heritage site.

#### An Aadhaar number holder shall be allowed to temporarily unlock his biometrics for authentication, and such temporary unlocking shall not continue beyond the time period specified by the Authority or till completion of the authentication

transaction, whichever is earlier. The Authority may make provisions for Aadhaar number holders to remove such permanent locks at any point in a secure manner. Similarly, the Authority shall enable an Aadhaar number holder to lock his/her Aadhaar number and unlock it when needed for authentication. (2) All authentication requests using Aadhaar number against any such locked Aadhaar number shall result with a "No" answer with an appropriate response code. (3) In case of a locked Aadhaar, the Authority will allow the resident to authenticate using Virtual ID or other means.

# Finally, India halts vaccine exports: RTI

All major parties in the country including Congress, Nationalist Congress Party, Shiv Sena, Aam Aadmi Party, the Left and other Opposition parties had repeatedly slammed Prime Minister Narendra Modi and the Bharatiya Janata Party-led Central government on the issue

#### INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Dantewada: A woman Naxal, carrying a reward of ₹2 lakh on her head, was killed in an encounter with security personnel in Chhattisgarh's Dantewada district Monday, a police official said. The gunfight took place around 6.30 am near Gumalnar village under Geedam police station limits when a team of the District Reserve Guard (DRG) was out on an anti-Naxal operation, Superintendent of Police Abhishek Pallava said. After a brief exchange of fire, the rebels escaped.

Pune, May 31: In a relief of sorts, from May 5, India has apparently halted exports of vaccines which has erupted into a massive political furore across the country, as per an RTI reply released here Monday. In a response to the RTI query

filed by Pune-based activist Prafful

Sarda, the Ministry of External

Affairs (MEA) has provided de-

tails of the vaccines exported in dif-

ferent categories to 95 countries

also made it clear that in future,

To a question, the MEA has

supplies (export) would be undertaken, "keeping in view the domestic production and the requirements of the national

vaccination programme". "However, barring the basic export data, the government has kept mum on many other related info but critical aspects pertaining to the exports of such a huge quantity of doses which deprived Indians in a

big way," Sarda said. For instance, the Centre has said it has no record or documents if any committee was formed by the government to decide on the vaccines export, its members, the details and minutes of the meetings if

#### any of such a committee.

"This is quite mysterious. Which ministry has actually taken the decision for the massive donations or exports especially since at least two key ministries - Health and MEA - could be directly involved in the process," Sarda pointed out.

The RTI reply has mentioned in passing that the vaccines were procured for the export purposes as Grant, contractual supplies and under the Covax facility - as per the authorization from the Ministry of Health & Family Welfare.

However, it throws no light on who took the such a critical de-



cision when the country is reeling under the massive second has given away a whopping 107.15 wave of the Covid-19 pandemic, lakh vaccines free as 'Grant' to 47 countries, sold 357.92 lakh doses said Sarda.

at commercial rates to 26 nations, and under the Covax programme sold 198.63 lakh vaccines to another 47 countries - totaling to a staggering 663.70 lakh doses.

Till May 31 (today), India has vaccinated a total of 21,31,54,129 people under various approved categories, including those who got their second dose.

For the 'Grant', the government had purchased the vaccines from Pune-based Serum Institute of India Ltd (SII) at ₹200+GST per dose, and from Hyderabad-based Bharat Biotech International Ltdat ₹295+GST per vaccine, said the RTI reply.

till May 5.











As per the official data, the Centre



# **OrissaPOST** UESDAY JUNE 1 2021 BHUBANESWAR international

Australia and New Zealand are trading nations. But neither of us would ever trade our sovereignty or trade our values. We have stood side-by-side to defend and protect and promote these values **SCOTT MORRISON** | PRIME MINISTER, AUSTRALIA

# **PLANE DIVERTS**

A Ryanair flight from Ireland to Poland diverted to Berlin after the crew were warned of a "potential security threat" on the plane, the airline said. German ATC warned the crew of the Dublin-Krakow flight of the potential threat Sunday, Ryanair said.



# uote

More than 86,000 children under age 5 could be affected, compared with 41,000 reported last vear. I was saddened

to see so many children suffering from malnutrition. Some will not recover unless they receive treatment on time

JEAN GOUGH REGIONAL DIRECTOR (LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN), UNICER



made the virus spread to other places. Or another assumption is that a lot of them work as sub-contractors, so they have to move from one site to another all the time

APISAMAI SRIRANGSAN GOVERNMENT SPOKESPERSON (CORONAVIRUS CENTER)

One day this global pandemic will subside. But I do not expect Covid-19 to disappear. It will remain with

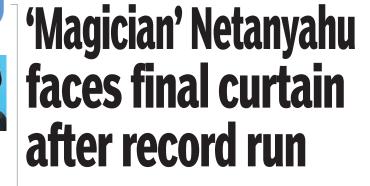
humankind, and become endemic. The virus will continue to circulate in pockets of the global population for vears to come

LEE HSIEN LOONG PRIME MINISTER, SINGAPORE

## SHORT TAKES

# ambassador

Seoul: Belgium will bring home its ambassador to South Korea amid public anger over his wife's alleged assault of two employees at a shop in Seoul. The Belgium Embassy said the country's Minister of Foreign Affairs, Sophie Wilmès, decided it was in the best interest of bilateral relations to end Ambassador Peter Lescouhier's tenure this summer. He has been the envoy in Seoul for three years. The embassy didn't provide a specific date on when Lescouhier's term will end or name a replacement.





"Fraud of the century," an indignant Netanyahu declared Sunday, after fellow right-winger aftali Bennett turned against him and opted to align with centrist opposition chief Yair Lapid

> Israeli political commentators said the political knives have been out for a while for letanyahu, the country's longest

serving leader fering any evidence, that he is a victim of a deep state conspiracy

against him. Don't count him out yet, political commentators warn. "It's still too early to declare that (the) "Bibi era" of Israeli politics has

ended. But if change is ultimately achieved, Netanyahu will have been toppled by his colleagues on the right, who had it with his leadership," Aluf Benn, editor of the left-wing Haaretz newspaper, wrote Monday. **GRACIOUS IN DEFEAT?** 

Popularly known by his childhood nickname, Bibi, Netanyahu is the son of a historian and attended high school and college in the United States, where his father taught.

Never lost for a soundbite, his booming baritone has resounded on the world stage since serving as Israel's ambassador to the United Nations from 1984 to 1988. Entering politics in Israel as a Likud legislator, he became party leader in 1993. Netanyahu last lost the premiership, in his first term, before the turn of the millennium.

## Lankan authorities begin probe in cargo vessel fire accident AGENCIES

Colombo, May 31: Sri Lankan authorities have begun the investigation into the fire on board a Singapore-flagged cargo ship near the Colombo beach on May 20 in the country's worst-ever marine ecological disaster, and said statements would be recorded of one Indian and two Russian officials on duty in the vessel.

The cargo vessel - MV 'X-PRESS PEARL'- was carrying a consignment of chemicals and raw materials for cosmetics from Hazira in Gujarat to Colombo Port May 20 when it caught fire some 9.5 nautical miles away from the port of Colombo.



The fire-fighting effort on May 21 was assisted by the Indian Coast Guard vessels and an aircraft, in addition to the Sri Lanka Navy and Air Force.

Apart from the 325 metric tonnes of fuel in its tanks, the vessel was loaded with 1,486 containers carrving about 25 tonnes of hazardous nitric acid.



AGENCIES

Wellington, May 31: Heavy rain and floods that forecasters said could be a "once-in-a-100-year" event continued to lash New Zealand's South Island Monday. The heavy rain caused severe floods, evacuations of more than 240 homes, power cuts and rising rivers, reports Xinhua news agency.

Authorities declared a state of emergency after some places received as much as 40 centimeters (16 inches) of rain over the weekend and into Monday. Forecasters warned of possible heavy rain through Monday evening before conditions improved.

The military helped evacuate more than 50 people including several overnight in an NH-90 military helicopter.

One man was clinging to a tree near the town of Darfield when he jumped into floodwaters and tried to swim to safety but was swept away, the military said.

Helicopter crews scoured the water for 30 minutes before finding the man and plucking him to safety. The military helicopter also rescued an elderly couple from the roof of their car.

"Seeing the community overnight pull together and support



Authorities declared a state of emergency after some places received as much as 40 centimeters of rain over the weekend

the displaced residents who were evacuated from their homes has been heartening," said Army Liaison Officer Cpt. Jake Faber. Another man was rescued by a civilian helicopter pilot Sunday

after he was swept from his farm as he tried to move his stock to safety

Paul Adams told news organi-

zation Stuff he thinks he got hit by a wall of water he didn't see coming. He was swept down the raging Ashburton River before managing to drag himself onto a fence and then into a tree. Another farmer spotted his headlamp and organized a rescue mission.

"The rescuers are fantastic," Adams told Stuff, adding that he was now back on his farm and "good as gold." He said that so far he'd only found about 100 of his herd of 250 animals alive. Australian Prime Minister Scott

Morrison, who was visiting New Zealand, told reporters that he was thinking of those caught up in the floods.

## Under Obama-Biden, US spied on top **German leaders**

#### AGENCIES

Copenhagen, May 31: Under President Barack Obama and then Vice President Joe Biden's administration, the US was spying on Germany's Chancellor Angela Merkel from 2012 to 2014, using Denmark's secret service.

The scandal was exposed by Danish media, triggering a political storm. This is the second time since 2013, that the US has been accused of spying on European politicians and officials, especially Germany.

However, this time the Danish\_ media has gained access to the reports which provide insights into how the Defence Intelligence Service (FE) of Denmark collaborated with the US National Security Agency (NSA) to collect intelligence and in-



Graduates toss their hats after receiving their diplomas at the graduation and commissioning ceremony for the U.S. Naval Academy's Class of 2021 with Vice President Kamala Harris in attendance, at the U.S. Naval Academy in Annapolis. Marvland REUTERS



# **Belgium recalls**



#### gician" by his admirers, has any cards left up his sleeve. After years in which he exerted near-complete hegemony over Israeli politics, an emerging broad coalition of opponents could be about to unseat him. "Fraud of the century," an in-

dignant Netanyahu declared Sunday, after fellow right-winger Naftali Bennett turned against him and opted to align with centrist opposition chief Yair Lapid despite a

public promise that he wouldn't. And while Netanyahu's Likud party has remained unflinchingly loyal to him, Gideon Saar, a disillusioned Likud defector, is in line to join the new government-inmaking as head of his own New Horizon party.

Israeli political commentators said the political knives have been out for a while for Netanyahu, the country's longest-serving leader. A sense that he was living on borrowed time after 12 consecutive years in office was compounded by a corruption trial now under way. The cases involve alleged favours

to media tycoons and illegal receipt of expensive cigars and champagne. Netanyahu has denied all wrongdoing and says, without of-

POLITICAL Jerusalem, May 31: Long the fa-UNREST miliar face of Israel, Benjamin

### all 9mn residents

Hanoi: Vietnam plans to test all 9 million people in its largest city for the coronavirus and imposed more restrictions Monday to deal with a growing Covid-19 outbreak. People in Ho Chi Minh city are only allowed to leave home for necessary activities and public gatherings of more than 10 neople are banned for the next two weeks, the government announced.

#### Walmart attack plotter arrested

Kerrville (Texas): Authorities in Texas arrested a man accused of plotting to carry out a mass shooting at a Walmart, and a search of the suspect's home turned up firearms, ammunition and materials officials described as "radical ideology paraphernalia." Coleman Thomas Blevins, 28, was arrested Friday in Kerrville and has been charged with making a "terroristic threat to create public fear of serious bodily injury," the Kerr County Sheriff's Office said in a news release Sunday.

## Egypt, Sudan end war games

Cairo: Egypt and Sudan Monday concluded joint war games that involved ground, air and naval units. The sixday drill meant to showcase deepening security ties between the two neighboring countries and present a show of force amid mounting tensions with Ethiopia. The dispute stems from Ethiopia's controversial unfinished dam on the Nile river's main tributary.

# UK in early stages of third Covid wave, report finds

#### INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

London, May 31: The UK is in the early stages of a third wave of Covid-19, a scientist advising the UK government said, media reports said Monday. The B1617 variant, which was first detected in India in October 2020, had fuelled "exponential growth" and is responsible for at least three-quarters of cases in the UK, Ravi Gupta, a professor at the University of Cambridge, was quoted as saying by the BBC

'Of course the number of cases is relatively low at the moment -all waves start with low numbers of cases that grumble in the back-



ground and then become explosive, so the key here is that what we are seeing here is the signs of an early wave," Gupta told BBC Radio 4's Today programme. However, he said the number of people who have been vaccinated in the UK meant this wave would probably

take longer to emerge than the pre-

#### vious ones.

"There may be a false sense of se curity for some time, and that's our concern," he noted, suggesting that ending Covid restrictions in the UK on June 21 should be postponed

It should be delayed "by a few weeks while we gather more intelligence", said Gupta, a member of the UK government's New and **Emerging Respiratory Virus** Threats Advisory Group (Nervtag). The concern was echoed by other experts who said that the B1617 variant could "pick up speed and become a big problem" in the UK as the country further eases lockdown measures

# **COUNTERING NATO** Russia to form 20 new military units in west

#### ASSOCIATED PRESS

Moscow, May 31: The Russian military will form 20 new units in the country's west this year to counter what it claims is a growing threat from NATO.

Defense Minister Sergei Shoigu made the announcement Monday at a meeting with top military officials. He pointed to a growing number of flights by US strategic bombers near Russia's borders, deployments of NATO warships and increasingly frequent and massive drills by alliance forces.

He charged that such actions "destroy the international security system and force us to take

the relevant countermeasures. 'We will form another 20 units and formations in the Western Military District until the year's end," Shoigu said

He added the military units in Western Russia have commissioned about 2,000 new pieces of weaponry this year. Last month, a massive troop buildup in Russia's south and southwest near the Ukrainian border raised concerns in Ukraine and the West, which urged Moscow to withdraw its forces.

Russia annexed Ukraine's Crimean Peninsula in 2014 following the ouster of the country's Moscow-friendly president.

the US.

formation on Germany, an ally of

According to the Danish media reports, the spying operation was targeted at Merkel, German President -- and then Foreign Minister - Frank-Walter Steinmeier and the then opposition leader Peer Steinbruck

Code named as 'Operation Dunhammer', the US NSA, with the help of Denmark's FE, tapped into Danish internet cables to access phone conversations and text messages of several prominent European politicians.

# WHY COMEDY IS IMPORTANT IN TIMES OF CATASTROPHE

LAUGHTER SERVES AS A GREAT WORKOUT, HELPING TO RELAX OUR MUSCLES AND PROMOTE CIRCULATION

#### AGENCIES

Bristol, May 31: Most of us have needed a good laugh over the last 12 months. Searches on Netflix for horror dipped at the peak of the first lockdown, while stand-up comedy

saw a huge jump in viewers. In the world of social media, accounts poking fun at responses to the virus have also gained enormous followings, with accounts like Quentin Quarantino and the Reddit thread CoronavirusMemes

surging in popularity in the past vear We've spent a significant amount of time joking about Zoom meetings, hand-washing songs, and home haircuts. But what makes us switch so quickly between panicking at death tolls and chuckling at a video sent by a friend?

As a scholar who's spent much of my career studying laughter and comedy, I often come across surprising functions of humour. I've studied Italian comedy and its reception in 16th-century France. the political consequences of laughter in the Wars of Religion, and the historical antecedents to today's main theories of humour.

Humour in ancient Rome Our need to laugh in the face of disaster is by no means new. In ancient Rome, gladiators would leave humorous graffiti on barrack walls before going to their deaths. The ancient Greeks also sought new ways to laugh at deadly disease. And during the Black Death pandemic

#### LAUGHING THROUGH LOCKDOWN



in 1348, the Italian Giovanni Boccaccio wrote the Decameron, a collection of often funny tales told by storytellers isolating from the plague.

The need to avoid offence with humour is just as ancient. In 335

BCE, Aristotle advised against laughing at anything painful or destructive. The Roman educator Quintilian also outlined in 95 CE the very fine line between ridere (laughter) and deridere (derision). It's still generally accepted a com-

mon position that humour shouldn't hurt, and this is particularly true when the object of laughter is already vulnerable.

When the boundary between laughter and derision is respected, comedy can play a key role in helping us to recover from disaster. providing benefits which explain our tendency to seek humour in serious situations, especially in terms of enhancing our sense of physical and mental wellbeing.

How humour helps during crises Laughter serves as a great workout (laughing 100 times burns as many calories as 15 minutes on an exercise bike), helping to relax our muscles and promote circulation. Combinations of exercise and laughter — such as the increasingly popular "laughter yoga" can also provide significant benefits to patients with depression.

Laughter also decreases stress hormones and increases endorphins. In tough times, when we have thousands of thoughts a day, a bout of giggling provides our brains with respite we desperately need.

In the same way, we seek humour in a crisis because it is difficult to feel scared and amused at the same time, and most often, the combination of these emotions result in feeling thrill and not terror.

Sigmund Freud explored this in 1905 when revising the so-called "relief theory", suggesting that (laughter feels good because it purges our system of pent-up energy.











# business



The overall impact of the second wave of Covid-19 on the country's economy is not likely to be large but cautioned about an uncertainty surrounding the pandemic going ahead kv subramanian I CHIEF ECONOMIC ADVISER

### **GJC WRITES TO FM, RBI**

The All India Gem and Jewellery Domestic Council (GJC) has written to FM Nirmala Sitharaman and the RBI seeking immediate financial assistance and banking related relief for the stressed gem, jewellery and allied businesses post the devastating second wave of the Covid pandemic



# Juote 77

We are a ₹1,000 crore turnover company. We are very close to becoming profitable. As soon as the market opens, I think

it will show our first profit mark. After this we plan to go for an IPO in the next 12-18 months

ASHISH SHAH | CO-FOUNDER AND COO, PEPPERFRY

We are delighted to welcome Fidelity and our other new investors to our can-table. This round of financing

significantly strengthens our balance sheet and is a statement of confidence as we plan to go public

SAHIL BARUA CO-FOUNDER AND CEO, DELHIVERY

Launching realme X7 Max 5G is yet another feather in the cap, which is India's first Mediatek Dimensity 1200

powered 5G smartphone. The MediaTek Dimensity 1200 in Realme X7 Max 5G will provide a far advanced dual 5G experience to our users

MADHAV SHETH INDIA AND EUROPE CEO, REALME

### SHORT TAKES

## Microsoft dumps **Internet Explorer**

Lismore (Australia): Tech giant Microsoft recently announced the retirement of its longstanding web browser, Internet Explorer, in favour of its newer product, Microsoft Edge. With support for Internet Explorer only set to last until June 15, 2022, its remaining users have just over a year to find an alternative. But of course, most web users already have. While the eventual downfall of Internet Explorer was seen as a foregone conclusion, the news might come as an unwelcome surprise for those who are somewhat less up-to-date.

#### **Biz resumption** index turns +ve

# REUTERS

Dubai, May 31: The global economic outlook is improving as vaccine rollouts allow businesses to resume operations and as the United States pumps trillions of dollars into the world's largest economy, the OECD said Monday, nudging its forecasts higher.

The global economy is set to grow 5.8% this year and 4.4% next year, the Organisation for Economic **Cooperation and Development** (OECD) said, raising its estimates from 5.6% and 4.0% respectively in its last forecasts released in March. The global economy has now

returned to pre-pandemic activity levels, but has not yet achieved the growth expected prior to the global health crisis, the OECD said

finery products, fertilisers, steel, ce-

ment and electricity had contracted

by 37.9 per cent in April 2020 due

to lockdown restrictions imposed

to control the spread of coron-

avirus infection. In March this

year, the eight sectors had recorded

2021 is largely due to low Index

base in April 2020 consequent to the

low industrial production across all

sectors caused by nationwide lock-

down imposed to contain spread of

Covid-19 last year," the ministry

industry ministry data, produc-

tion of natural gas, refinery prod-

ucts, steel, cement and electricity

jumped by 25 per cent. 30.9 per

cent, 400 per cent, 548.8 per cent and

38.7 per cent in April, as against (-

) 19.9 per cent, (-) 24.2 per cent, (-)

82.8 per cent. (-) 85.2 per cent and

According to the commerce and

said in a statement.

This high growth rate in April

a growth rate of 11.4 per cent.

AGENCIES

showed

in its latest Economic Outlook publication.

"The world economy is currently navigating towards the recovery, with lots of frictions," OECD chief economist Laurence Boone said in an editorial to the Outlook.

"The risk that sufficient post-pandemic growth is not achieved or widely shared is elevated," she added

While vaccination campaigns were allowing advanced economies to gradually reopen for business, many emerging market economies were being held back by slow vaccination deployment and new Covid-19 outbreaks, the OECD said.

The OECD said central banks in advanced economies should keep financial conditions relaxed and tolerate inflation overshoot-

**Eight core sectors' output** 



ing their targets.

Sizeable spare capacity in the global economy would help keep a sustained increase in inflation at bay despite recent price pressures

OECD raises growth forecasts on vax rollouts

triggered by supply chain bottlenecks as economies reopen, it said. While confident that central banks would not get spooked by temporary price increases, Boone

said she was less certain about financial markets, where she saw a risk of higher market rates and volatility.

Governments should keep up income support for households and companies until vaccination is widespread enough to protect the most exposed sectors, the OECD said.

Buoyed by a multi-trillion-dollar stimulus plan, the U.S. economy was seen growing 6.9% this year, the OECD said, up from a previous forecast of 6.5%. It is expected to expand 3.6% in 2022, down from a 4.0% forecast in March.

The US stimulus plan was seen adding 3-4 percentage points to US growth and 1% to global growth while bringing the US economy back to pre-crisis levels by mid-2021.

## **OSL offers logistical** support to state against Covid–19

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, May 31: In a major step towards ensuring fully logistical support to the Odisha Government, Orissa Stevedores Limited (OSL) carried out the customs and airport clearances of a special cargo flight carrying the consignment of 1,300 medical grade oxygen cylinders as well as other medical consumables which were airlifted from China and landed at Biju Patnaik International Airport (BPIA) May 30, 2021



OSL Group extends this support by not claiming any service charges. This is for the second time in this month; OSL Group has rendered logistical support.

As part of the Corporate Social Responsibilities (CSR), OSL Group has been aiding the Government and the people of Odisha, by extending and sharing resources, helping in the vaccination process, focussing on employee welfare and many more.

Mahimananda Mishra, Managing Director, OSL Group said, "The need of the hour is to provide critical healthcare supplies and equipment to save precious lives of our fellow human beings.

This is our common fight and our contribution reaffirms our steadfast commitment to the state. I'm extending my deep gratitude to the AMNS India Limited for arranging such a huge volume of oxygen cylinders for our state."

## JB Mohapatra gets interim charge of CBDT

#### INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, May 31: Jagannath Bidyadhar Mohapatra, Member, Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT), will discharge the duties and responsibilities of the post of CBDT Chairman for a period of three months.

"Consequent upon completion f tenure of Pramod Chandra

## skyrockets by 56.1% in April New Delhi. May 31: The output of eight core sectors jumped by 56.1 per cent in April mainly due to a low base effect and uptick in production of natural gas, refinery products, steel, cement and electricity, official data released Monday The eight infrastructure sectors of coal, crude oil, natural gas, re-

As expected, the low base of the nationwide lockdown pushed

up the core sector expansion in April. The improvement was fairly broad-based, with an expected spike in the growth of cement and steel production ADITI NAYAR CHIEF ECONOMIST, ICRA

(-) 22.9 per cent in April 2020, respectively. Coal and fertiliser segments too recorded positive growth during the month under review.

However, crude oil output dipped by 2.1 per cent in April as against (-) 6.4 per cent in the same month st vear

ICRA Chief Economist Aditi Nayar said that as expected, the low base of the nationwide lockdown pushed up the core sector expansion in April 2021.

'The improvement was fairly broad-based, with an expected spike in the growth of cement and steel production, although both lagged our projections suggesting some impact of the regional lockdowns on activity," she said.

"We expect the IIP (Index of Industrial Production) to record a transient spike to a 130-150 per cent expansion in April 2021, followed by a moderation in May 2021 in line with the proliferation in statewise restrictions." she added.

The eight core Industries comprise 40.27 per cent of the weight of items included in the IIP.

# India's 2020-21 fiscal deficit at 9.3% of GDP *Releasing the*

revenue-expenditure data of the Union government for 2020-21, the CGA Monday said the revenue deficit at the end of the last fiscal was 7.42%

#### AGENCIES

New Delhi, May 31: The fiscal deficit stood at 9.3 per cent of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in the last fiscal, better than 9.5 per cent projected in the revised estimates in the Union Budget in February.

Economic activities were severely hit in the last financial year due to the coronavirus pandemic as well as subsequent lockdowns and restrictions to curb the spread of infections.

Releasing the revenue-expenditure data of the Union government for 2020-21, the Controller General of Accounts (CGA) Monday said the revenue deficit at the end of the last fiscal was 7.42 per cent.

In absolute terms, the fiscal deficit works out to be ₹18,21,461 crore (provisional).

As per the CGA data for fiscal 2020-21, the tax revenue collection was 105.9 per cent of the Revised Estimates (RE) presented in the budget. The government received

corresponding RE 2020-21 of total receipts) during 2020-21. The amount includes ₹14.24.035 crore of tax revenue (net to Centre), ₹2,08,059 crore of non-tax revenue and ₹57,626 crore of non-debt capital receipts. Non-debt capital receipts consist of recovery of loans and disinvest-

ment proceeds. A total of ₹5,94,997 crore was transferred to state governments as devolution of share of taxes by the Union government during 2020-21, which is ₹55,680 crore lower

than the previous year. Total expenditure incurred by the central government was ₹35,11,181 crore (101.76 per cent of corresponding RE 2020-21). Out of the total amount, ₹30,86,360 crore was

on revenue account and ₹4.24.821 crore was on capital account. Out of the total revenue expenditure, ₹6,82,079 crore was on account of interest payments and ₹6.89.545 crore was towards major subsidies. For 2020-21, the government had initially pegged the fiscal deficit at ₹7.96 lakh crore or 3.5 per cent of the GDP.



Mumbai: After declining for 11 consecutive weeks, an economic activity index plotted by a Japanese brokerage showed its first pick up for the week ended May 30, leading it to speculate if businesses are past the trough. The Nomura Business resumption Index, which was started since the early days of the pandemic last year, picked up to 63.6 as on May 30, from 60.3 in the previous reporting week, the brokerage said.

### **GST return filing** deadline extended

New Delhi: The entre has extended the deadline to file GST returns for May by 15 days till June 26. The development comes on the basis of the recommendations of the GST Council, which, in its 43rd meeting May 28, had decided to extend certain compliance relaxations on account of Covid-19. In a series of tweets Monday, the CBIC said that for composition taxpayers, the due date for furnishing annual return in 'Form GSTR-4' for FY 2020-21 would has been extended to July 31.

### Samsung sales drop in Q1

Seoul: Samsung Electronics maintained the second spot in the foundry market in the first quarter of the year, but its share fell slightly due to the temporary shutdown of its chip plant in the US, a report showed Monday. Samsung's foundry business logged a market share of 17 per cent in the January-March period, down from 18 per cent a quarter earlier, after its revenue dropped 2 per cent to \$4.108 billion, according to the latest report from industry tracker TrendForce.

## Sony rolls out two **SBI BHUB CIRCLE DONATES** new microphones **COVID TESTING VAN TO BMC**

#### POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, May 31: Sony India today announced two new microphones with the launch of the ECM-W2BT Multi Interface Shoe compatible wireless microphone and ECM-LV1 compact stereo lavalier microphone. Wireless highquality audio recording with lower noise and stable connection is possible with the ECM-W2BT wireless microphone, especially when paired with the ECM-LV1 stereo lavalier microphone and one of Sony's cameras with digital audio compatibility. This combination offers the perfect solution to meet



the needs of today's vloggers, YouTubers and video creators who want to capture clear, reliable audio for a wide range of environments including street performance, product reviews, food reviews travel vlogs and more. Bluetooth range of up to 200 meters/600 ft with highquality audio recording. 3 Modes (Mic, Receiver & Mix Mode) to record sound based on the desired preference

#### POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, May 31: State Bank of India, Bhubaneswar Circle and SBI Foundation donates a Covid testing van and medical equipment's like mask, hand gloves and sanitiser to Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC) for management of Covid-19 in the city. Suvendu Sahu, Deputy Commissioner, Ansuman Rath, Zonal Deputy Commissioner, other officials of BMC were present and received the ambulance and medical equipments from Ruma Dev. Chief General Manager, SBI, Bhubaneswar Circle.

CLN Charyulu, GM-I, Avay



Kishore K Pandey, Bejoy Kumar Kuzur, GM-II and the other official from SBI were present on the occasion

Sahu expressed thanks to SBI and SBI foundation for their support during the pandemic and said the ambulance will be very useful for senior citizen of BMC area in Bhubaneswar: The sample for Covid

test will be collected from homes of senior citizens.

In another function SBI Bhubaneswar Circle and SBI Ladies Club donated a school van to Society for Children (SOCH). On behalf of SOCH, Manoj Kumar Swain Secretary and Laxmi Singh received the van from Ruma Dey, Chief General Manager of SBI.

Mody, Chairman, Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT), on 31.05.2021, it has been decided with the approval of the competent authority that Jagannath Bidyadhar Mohapatra, Member, CBDT, shall discharge the duties and responsibilities of the post of Chairman, CBDT, in addition to his own duties for a period of three months or till the appointment of a regular Chairman, whichever is earlier," said an office order issued by the Revenue Department Monday.

The government in February had extended CBDT Chairman Pramod Chandra Mody's tenure for the third time by three months till May 31, 2021.

A 1982-batch Indian Revenue Service (Income Tax cadre) officer, Mody took over as the CBDT chief in February 2019. He was appointed as CBDT Chairman after Sushil Chandra, the then CBDT chief, was appointed as an Election Commissioner.

# **Forecast:** Global economy rebounding, faces multiple threats

#### AGENCIES

Frankfurt, May 31: The global economic rebound from the pandemic has picked up speed but remains uneven across countries and faces multiple headwinds. Most worrisome: the lack of vaccines in poorer nations, which could lead to new virus variants and more stop-and-

go lockdowns. Those were key points from the latest economic outlook published Monday by the Paris-based Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD).

The OECD said that relief and stimulus measures in the more developed world had done much to get the economy through the pandemic recession and back on the path of growth.

It forecast global output would

rise 5.8 per cent, raising its forecast from 4.8 per cent during its previous outlook in December.

This year's predicted rebound follows last year's contraction of 3.5 per cent, and would be the fastest since 1973.

The US Economy was expected to grow 6.9 per cent upgraded from 6.5 per cent in the previous forecast. The OECD cited wide-ranging support from government spending on additional unemployment benefits, financial assistance for local governments and support for lowincome households.

OECD chief economist Laurence Boone said that economic prospects "have improved considerably in recent months, and the outlook is brightening ... However, the health situation remains highly uncertain.

Although the OECD said most in-



dividual countries would reach pre-pandemic levels of output by the end of 2022, it cautioned that "this is far from enough. It said that the global economy

had not reached the growth level that would have been reached without a pandemic. And the report said that too many countries would not see living standards reach pre-

## **ECONOMIC OUTLOOK**

The OECD said that relief and stimulus measures in the more developed world had done much to get the economy through the pandemic recession and back on the path of growth

- The US Economy was expected to grow 6.9% upgraded from 6.5% in the previous forecast
- The Paris-based organization listed several threats to the recovery, including lack of vaccines in poorer countries that have fewer resources for relief efforts
  - As long as the vast majority of the global population is not vaccinated, most of us remain vulnerable to the emergence of new variants

pandemic levels by the end of 2022. The Paris-based organization

listed several threats to the recovery, including lack of vaccines in poorer countries that have fewer resources for relief efforts. "A renewed virus-driven weakening of growth would be harder to cushion, resulting in further increases in acute poverty' and raising the risk of financial crisis, the OECD said in its forecast report.

"This is all the more troubling because, notwithstanding the impact on lives and livelihoods, the global economic and social cost of maintaining closed borders dwarfs the costs of making vaccines, tests and health supplies more widely available to these countries."

As long as the vast majority of the global population is not vaccinated, the report said, "All of us remain vulnerable to the emergence of new variants.'



## **OrissaPOST** TUESDAY JUNE 1 2021 BHUBANESWAR

# sports

**AUSTRALIA'S INDIAN PREMIER LEAGUE CONTINGENT FINALLY MEETS WITH FAMILIES AFTER THE COMPLETION OF THEIR OUARANTINE PERIOD** 

**Reunited at long last** 





Pat Cummins hugs his wife after reuniting with her post guarantine

#### PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Sydney, May 31: Amid hugs, tears of joy and relief, Australia's jumbo IPL contingent comprising players, support staff and commentators on Monday reunited with their family members after serving a 14-day hotel quarantine here.

The 38-member Australians landed in the country two weeks ago after a stopover in Maldives due to travel ban from COVID-ravaged India. The highlight of the day was premier fast bowler Pat Cummins exiting the hotel and reuniting with his pregnant partner Becky Boston, a video of which was uploaded on Twitter by wellknown Australian sports journalist Chloe-Amanda Bailey.

"Video of the day! After eight weeks away for the IPL, Pat Cummins finally leaves hotel quarantine and reunites with his pregnant partner Becky. All the feels! Bailey tweeted alongside the video. Besides Cummins, batting maes-



Steve Smith looks on as he comes out of hotel guarantine in Sydney

tro Steve Smith, big-hitting allrounder Glenn Maxwell and the swashbuckling opener Dave Warner were among those who finally embraced their loved ones after nearly eight weeks away from home.

Most of them had not seen their families since heading into the Indian Premier League in early April. They were flown home via a charter flight after the IPL was postponed owing to the COVID-19 pandemic. The lucrative league will now resume in the UAE in the middle of September. Cricket Australia's newly-appointed chief executive officer Nick Hockley said the feeling among the players about going home to be with their families could not be understated.

"We've been texting, and I've spoken to a couple of the broader group, not just the players but there're commentators, match officials and physios," Hockley said. "They are clearly quite shaken from the experience, very appreciative to be home back here in



Glenn Maxwell bids farewell Marcus Stoinis before parting ways

Australia.'

The BCCI paid for the charter flights and accommodation of the Australians in the Maldives and Sydney, and Hockley thanked the Indian board for the manner in which it helped them after the abrupt suspension of the IPL owing to the COVID-19 pandemic.

"I would reiterate that the BCCI have been absolutely fantastic in supporting the playing group, and the entire group in terms of getting home safely and we're very grateful for that," Hockley said.

"It's a couple of weeks before the West Indies touring party regroups at the National Cricket Centre and I think that's a time to re-focus. But I know for now they're looking forward to spending some time over the next couple of weeks with family and friends.'

Fast bowler Moises Henriques was photographed leaving the Marriott hotel in Sydney. Pacer Jason Behrendorff, who plays for Chennai Super Kings in the IPL,

was among those to exit quarantine.

"It was nice to know that we were getting home that's for sure,' Behrendorff said. "It's always tough being stuck somewhere and knowing that we're able to get home was a relief and now we're out of quarantine I can't wait to get home and see my family," he added.

Maxwell was seen hugging Australian teammate Marcus Stoinis after the end of their twoweek quarantine. Many of the Australian players will not be at home for long as they have been included in a 23-man squad to tour the West Indies and Bangladesh in July and August

Five T20Is in Bangladesh were added to Australia's upcoming touring plans as part of a jampacked schedule that will now include 13 games in under a month.

The Australians will play the five games in Bangladesh immediately after their white-ball tour of the Caribbean and could complete them in under 10 days.

# AUSSIES' PARTICIPATION YET TO BE DECIDED: CA

#### PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Melbourne, May 31: Cricket Australia (CA) Monday said it's yet to start discussions on whether Australian cricketers would compete in the IPL when the T20 league re-commences in the UAE in September.

Nick Hockley, who was confirmed as CA chief executive Monday after performing the duties in an interim role, said a de-

#### **REMAINDER OF IPL IN UAE**

cision on IPL can wait as Australian players were just reunited with their families after completing a two-week hotel quarantine.

Close to 40 Australians, including players, coaches, officials and commentators were part of the IPL bandwagon before the league was halted May 4 after COVID-19 breached its bio-bubble.

"Once we get back together as a group that (IPL) is something we'll obviously need to discuss. Hockley was quoted as saying by 'ESPNCricinfo'.

"Our players returning from the IPL have only today come out of quarantine, so our first priority is to make sure they are reunited with their families. We have a tour to prepare for in the West Indies," he added.

Hockley said the players will regroup at the National Cricket Centre (in Brisbane) in a couple of weeks before the West Indies tour and that would be the time to refocus.

"They are clearly quite shaken by the experience, and are very appreciative to be back home, very much looking forward to being reunited with family and friends today.'

The IPL will resume in the UAE in mid-September when Australia

They are clearly quite shaken by the experience, and are very appreciative to be back home, very much looking forward to being reunited with family and

#### friends today **NICK HOCKLEY**

do not have any international commitment.

However, concerns have been expressed that spending time in biobubbles one after another could affect players' mental health.

As of now, the T20 World Cup is scheduled to be held in India and if the tournament is also moved to the UAE like the IPL, the chances of Australian players competing in the league will be more since then they won't have to move to a separate bio-bubble in India.

Australia are scheduled to travel to the West Indies in July and then straight to Bangladesh for a\_\_\_\_ bilateral tour.

FIRST TOP-10 IN

# Gold for Sanjeet; Amit, Shiva settle for silvers

#### PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Dubai, May 31: Sanjeet (91kg) fetched the lone gold among Indian men boxers with a stunning triumph over Kazakhstan's Olympicmedallist Vassiliy Levit even as defending champion Amit Panghal (52kg) and Shiva Thapa (64kg) settled for silver medals in the Asian Boxing Championships here Monday.

Sanieet triumphed 4-1 over Levit who was chasing his fourth gold of the tournament and is an Olympic silver-medallist.

favour. India sought a review of the second round of the bout but the protest was rejected by the jury

which stuck to the original decision. Thapa (64kg) also lost by the same margin to Mongolia's Baatarsukh Chinzorig, the reigning Asian Games silver-medallist. This was Thapa's fifth successive podium finish and second silver at the showpiece.

Monday, Pooja Rani (75kg) was the lone woman boxer to strike gold, while six-time World Champion MC Mary Kom (51kg), and fournament debutants Lalbuatsaihi (64kg) and Anupama (81+kg) ended with silver medals after close losses in the women's finals.

# Brazil to host Copa America

#### ASSOCIATED PRESS

Sao Paulo, May 31: Brazil will host Copa America for the second consecutive time after Colombia and Argentina were stripped of hosting rights for the tournament. South American football body

CONMEBOL announced the decision Monday hours after it ruled out Argentina amid an increase in COVID-19 cases in the country. Colombia was removed as co-host May 20 as street protests against president Ivan Duque rocked the

CONMEBOL said on Twitter

that the tournament is confirmed



More than 460,000 people have died of COVID-19 in Brazil, with many analysts expecting another wave of the disease to hit the country by late June. Many hospitals have more than 80 per cent of their intensive-care unit occupied by victims of the virus

Bolsonaro has challenged social distancing restrictions and called for a return to normal life despite a slow vaccine rollout. His handling of the pandemic response is under investigation by a Brazilian senate inquiry.

ifiers are starting this week. Like other continental tournaments, Copa America was initially scheduled for 2020, but the COVID-19 pandemic forced its postpone-

ment. The 2020 version of Copa America was to introduce a new format with five teams based in each of the co-hosts, Colombia and Argentina. Group A features Argentina, Bolivia, Chile, Paraguay and Uruguay while Group B includes Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru and Venezuela The four best teams in each group were to advance to the knockout stage, and the final was originally set to be played in Colombia's Barranquilla. It would have been the first Copa America hosted by two countries.





With 15 medals in this edition, India surpassed its previous bestever show at this Championship, achieved in 2019, when the country secured 13 medals in all, including two gold. This time too, the country finished with two gold medals.

Panghal lost 2-3 to known nemesis Shakhobidin Zoirov of Uzbekistan in what was a repeat of the 2019 World Championship final, which had also ended in Zoirov's

Eight other Indians - Simranjit Kaur (60kg), Vikas Krishan (69kg), and Lovlina Borgohain (69kg), and Jaismine (57kg), Sakshi Chaudhary (64kg), Monika (48kg), Saweety (81kg) and Varinder Singh (60kg) secured bronze medals after semi-

final losses

to take place between June 13 and July 10. Brazil is the defending champion, winning the competition in 2019 as hosts.

nation.

The host cities and the fixtures will be confirmed by CONMEBOL within hours. The oldest international tournament in the world will make the whole continent

cheer!" the South American body

said. "CONMEBOL thanks president Jair Bolsonaro and his team, and also the Brazilian football confederation for opening the doors of this country for the safest sporting event in the world today. South America will shine in Brazil with all its stars," the soccer body said.

Argentina is facing a surge of coronavirus infections, with strict lockdown measures imposed last weekend amid a seven-day average of 35,000 cases and 500 deaths. More than 77,000 people have died in the country due to the disease, as the virus continues to spread.

South American teams are already training for the tournament and two rounds of World Cup qual-

Qatar, the 2022 World Cup hosts. and Australia, which were to take part as guests, decided in February to withdraw due to the coronavirus pandemic.

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Forso (Denmark). May 31: Indian golfer Shubhankar Sharma registered his first top-10 finish on the European Tour in 18 months with his Tied eighth-place result at the Made in HimmerLand event here. Sharma, a two-time European Tour winner, closed his final round with birdie-birdie for an aggregate of 4-under 68.

His last top-10 on the European Tour was in November 2019, when he was T-7 place at the Turkish Airlines Open. He had a similar result at the Italian Open a month before that.

Sharma's 68 in Denmark came with four birdies, including two in last two holes, after settling for pars in his first 10 holes on the final day.

With 10 places up for grabs for the US Open in June, Sharma needs to finish in top-10 of a mini-series list to get one of the slots.

A top-5 in Porsche European Open could get him and that also propel him into contention for an Olympic berth.

Meanwhile, Austria's Bernd Wiesberger defended the title he won in 2019. He claimed his win in style as he led after every round.

He started the final day with a one-shot advantage and then dominated proceedings with eight birdies in a closing 64 to finish at 21-under and claim his eighth European Tour title.

Italy's Guido Migliozzi shot a closing 63 to finish second on 16under, with English pair Richard Bland and Jordan Smith sharing third with Australia's Jason Scrivener on 15 under.

Migliozzi's runner-up finish was his second in as many events after he also finished second to Bland at the Betfred British Masters and his third overall this season.

Vintage Roger makes winning return Aguero presented at Barca's Camp Nou

#### ASSOCIATED PRESS

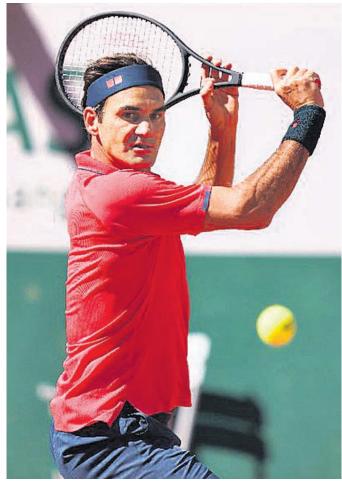
Paris, May 31: Roger Federer, Monday, has made a winning return to Grand Slam tennis after 16 months away. Federer's first match at a major tournament since the 2020 Australian Open ended with a 6-2, 6-4, 6-3 victory over qualifier Denis Istomin at the French Open.

Federer produced more than twice as many winners as unforced errors — 48 to 20 — and never faced a break point while improving to 8-0 against Istomin over their careers.

The Swiss had two operations on his right knee last year. He will turn 40 in August. Federer won the 2009 French Open for one of his 20 Grand Slam titles. He shares that men's record with rival Rafa Nadal

Novak Djokovic says he is planning to play at the Tokyo Olympics as long as local fans are allowed in stands. "As I heard, there's going to be some crowd, local crowd from Japan only," Djokovic told a news conference at Roland Garros.

Djokovic competed at three Olympic Games and won a bronze medal in singles back in 2008 in Beijing. "As I understand, 20%, 30% of the capacity. If they change something, if there's not going to be any crowd, then I'll consider if I want to go or not. Right now I am planning to go, and I'm very ex-



cited about that."

Bianca Andreescu, the 2019 US Open champion, is out of the French Open in the first round after losing a 9-7 third set. The sixth-seeded Andreescu's second appearance in the main draw at Roland Garros ended with a 6-7(1-7), 7-6(7-2), 9-7 defeat against 85thranked Tamara Zidansek of Slovenia

Andreescu withdrew before her quarterfinal last week in Strasbourg with an abdominal injury. Zidansek had been 0-2 at the French Open.

At his fifth attempt, Daniil Medvedev has finally won a match at Roland Garros. The secondseeded Russian, who lost in the first round on each of his four previous appearances on the Parisian red clay, claimed a maiden win at the Grand Slam event by defeating Alexander Bublik 6-3, 6-3, 7-5.

Medvedev has often struggled on the slow surface — he has a 12-20 record on clay — and much prefers hard courts. He holds a 148-59 record on hard and has won all his 10 titles on the fast surface.

During his on-court interview. Medvedev told the crowd he feels the balls used in Paris suit his game really well. A two-time Grand slam runner-up, Medvedev is bidding to become the third Russian man to win a major after Yevgeny Kafelnikov and Marat Safin

#### ASSOCIATED PRESS

Barcelona, May 31: Sergio Aguero ioined Barcelona on a two-year deal, the Spanish club said Monday. Barcelona said Aguero will officially join the club beginning July 1, after his contract with Manchester City expires. He signed a contract until the end of the 2022-23 season with a buyout clause set at 100 million euros (USD 122 million).

The 32-year-old Argentine, Monday, was introduced by Barcelona. Spanish media said he underwent a medical in the morning. He was plagued by fitness issues throughout his final season with City and had to undergo knee surgery last year.

Barcelona missed a true striker like Aguero after it let go Luis Suarez, who eventually helped lead Atletico Madrid to the Spanish league title.

Lionel Messi still thrived as usual, finishing as the Spanish league's top scorer with 30 goals, but he got little help from teammates Antoine Griezmann, Ousmane Dembele, Martin Braithwaite, Ansu Fati and Francisco Trincao.

Aguero played for Atletico for five seasons before moving to Man City in 2011-12, helping Barcelona's Spanish league rival win the 2010



Europa League and the 2011 UEFA Super Cup.

He spent 10 seasons in England, becoming City's record scorer with 260 goals and one of its greatest-ever players. In was at the end of his first season with City that he scored the dramatic stoppage-time winner against Queens Park Rangers in the final game of the season to clinch the title for the club.

Printed and published by Tathagata Satpathy on behalf of Navajat Printers and Media Pvt. Ltd. and printed at Navajat Printers, B-15 Industrial Estate, Rasulgarh, Bhubaneswar -751010, Odisha; Phone: 7894447142 (Marketing). Editor: Tathagata Satpathy, RNI No. ORIENG/2011/37159







