



COURAGE AND CONFIDENCE

Actor Elli AvrRam says that she has never feared being stereotyped in the film industry

LEISURE P2



PAK RETAINED

The Asia Pacific Group on Money Laundering has retained Pakistan on "enhanced follow-up" status

INTERNATIONAL P10



BRAZIL SCRIPT WIN

Brazil beat Ecuador 2-0 to win their fifth consecutive match in South American World Cup qualifying

SPORTS P12

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IRREGULAR by MANJUL



Sir, the private jet to Dominica is back without that VVIP fugitive. People would've lauded us money-wise if you had boarded that flight!

Facebook suspends Trump until 2023

CALIFORNIA: Facebook Inc Friday suspended former US President Donald Trump until at least January 2023 and announced changes to how it will treat world leaders who break the rules on its site. Facebook had suspended Trump's account the day after the deadly January 6 Capitol Hill riot, determining he had incited violence. That suspension will last at least two years from the date of the initial block and would only be lifted if the risk to public safety has receded, Facebook said Friday.

Maha to ease Covid curbs from June 7

MUMBAI: The Maharashtra government has announced a five-level plan to relax the coronavirus-induced restrictions in the state, based on the weekly positivity rate and the occupancy of oxygen beds. A notification to this effect was issued late Friday night. The order will come into effect from June 7 based on the positivity rate and the oxygen bed occupancy level of June 3, it said.

WEATHER		
	BHUB	CTK
TEMP MAX	38.2°C	37.6°C
TEMP MIN	28.2°C	27.2°C
Humidity	75%	83%
Rainfall	Nil	9mm
	Partly cloudy sky	

Govt 'ultimatum' to Twitter

CENTRE WARNS TWITTER OF PENAL ACTION IF IT DOESN'T COMPLY WITH IT RULES

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, June 5: The government Saturday issued a notice to Twitter giving it one last chance to "immediately" comply with the new IT rules and warned that failure to adhere to the norms will lead to the platform losing exemption from liability under the IT Act.

The Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) said that Twitter's refusal to comply with the rules demonstrated the microblogging site's "lack of commitment and efforts towards providing a safe experience for the people of India on its platform".

"Despite being operational in India for more than a decade, it is beyond belief that Twitter Inc has doggedly refused to create mechanism that will enable the people of India to resolve their issues on the platform in a timely and transparent manner and through fair processes, by India based, clearly identified resources," the IT Ministry said.

The ministry said that though with effect from May 26, 2021, "consequences follow" given Twitter's non-compliance with rules "however, as a gesture of goodwill, Twitter Inc is hereby given one last notice to immediately comply with the rules, failing which the exemption from liability available...shall stand withdrawn and Twitter shall be liable for consequences as per the IT Act and other penal laws of India".

The notice, however, did not mention a specific date to comply with the rules.



The IT Ministry in its notice observed that the world's largest democracy had been among the first countries in the world, outside the parent country of Twitter Inc, to enthusiastically adopt the microblogging platform.

"Users who are abused on the platform or are harassed or are subject to defamation or sexual abuse or become victims or a whole range of other abusive content must get a redressal mechanism that the same people of India have created through a due process of law," the IT Ministry asserted.

The people of India, who use Twitter, "deserve and demand" a fair mechanism to address their grievances and resolve their disputes, it said. "Leave alone proactively creating such a mechanism, Twitter Inc is in the inglorious bracket of refusing to do so even when mandated by law," the ministry said in its notice to the company.

Twitter declined to comment to an e-mail sent by PTI on the issue.

Center said that Twitter's refusal to comply with the IT rules demonstrated its "lack of commitment and efforts towards providing a safe experience for the people of India on its platform"

It further said that Twitter Inc is hereby given one last notice to immediately comply with the rules though they came into effect May 26, 2021

MeitY further confronted Twitter saying it was dismayed to note that the platform's responses to its letters neither address the clarifications sought, nor indicate full compliance with the rules. "It is clear from your responses that till date Twitter has not informed about the details of the Chief Compliance Officer as required under the Rules," it said.

Also, resident grievance officer

TWITTER RESTORES VP'S VERIFIED BLUE TICK

NEW DELHI: Microblogging social media site Twitter Saturday removed the blue verified tick badge from the personal handle of Vice President M Venkaiah Naidu for a few hours. The blue tick badge was later restored after a few hours. However, the official handle of the Vice President of India @VPSecretariat, which was run by the Vice President's Secretariat, continues to have the blue badge. "The personal Twitter handle of the Vice President was not being used for some time because his tweets were being posted from his official account. It came to our notice Saturday that the blue tick has been removed from Vice President's personal Twitter account." "Subsequently, we talked to Twitter over the issue and they informed us that the algorithm had been removed automatically as the account was not active for long," a source said.

and the nodal contact person nominated by the company is not an employee of Twitter Inc in India as prescribed in the rules, the ministry said and added that office address of Twitter Inc as mentioned by the company "is that of a law firm in India, which is not as per the rules".

The ministry has made it clear to Twitter that such non-compliance will lead to "unintended consequences" including Twitter losing exemption from liability as intermediary under the IT Act.

RT-PCR TESTS ONLINE REPORTS ONLY FOR FORTUNATE FEW

MANISH KUMAR, OP

Bhubaneswar, June 5: The state government's claims to provide Covid-19 test reports online through a Covid dashboard seems to be more on paper than on the ground, escalating the woes of coronavirus-infected patients and their families.

Several persons who gave their samples to the state-run testing labs for RT-PCR tests in Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC) and Cuttack Municipal Corporation (CMC) areas are yet to receive their test reports on the website. When they contacted the civic authorities, they were told to personally visit the Capital Hospital in Bhubaneswar to get the physical copy of their reports.

"I gave my sample May 29 and received a call from the BMC May 31 saying that some of my family members had tested Covid positive. But we did not get the report online even after eight days after the phone call. When I asked for a report, the BMC told me



to visit Capital Hospital to get a physical copy of the report," Dipesh Patel told Orissa POST.

He even posted the matter on Twitter and approached the BMC and other officials with his SRF ID and other details but no one responded. Similar is the fate of people of CMC area in Cuttack. A resident of Cuttack who submitted his sample May 21 did not receive the report even after 10 days.

According to several aggrieved citizens who have faced such problems,

in many cases, the government labs and civic bodies inform the Covid positive patients about the result of their tests over phone but do not provide them with a physical copy.

People who test Covid negative suffer the most as in many cases they receive the result via SMS more than a couple of weeks later. Many of them even do not receive their reports online. Thus, such apathy of the authorities forces many to look for private players for fast testing and reports.

This reporter verified the claims of the aggrieved a few people with their SRF IDs on the system, but didn't find their report online.

When contacted, IT Secretary Manoj Mishra said, "To my knowledge, this is not true as I too get a lot of feedback. Data comes from all private and government setups and they get uploaded as they come." Health department additional chief secretary PK Mohapatra said, "All is well and the system is in place. People can access their reports online."



Weaver birds busy making their nests before the onset of monsoon on the outskirts of Bhubaneswar, Saturday

Did US fund coronavirus research in Wuhan?

A US virologist Dr Ralph Baric has been collaborating with Dr Shi Zhengli of the Wuhan Virology Institute, sharing his discoveries about how to create super viruses: Senator Rand Paul

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New York, June 5: Amid the leaked Anthony S Fauci emails and independent investigations into the Wuhan lab secrets, reports have emerged again that the Wuhan Institute of Virology in China was funded by the US government and the virology lab, headed by Shi Zhengli, received nearly \$600,000 in 'gain-of-function' research.

At a US Senate hearing May 11, Senator Rand Paul said that scientists in the US have long known how to mutate animal viruses to infect humans. "For years, Dr Ralph Baric, a virologist in the US, has been collaborating with Dr Shi Zhengli of the Wuhan Virology Institute, sharing his discoveries about how to create super viruses. This gain-of-function research has been funded by the NIH. Dr Fauci, do you still support fund-



ing of the NIH funding of the lab in Wuhan?" he told the hearing.

Fauci, director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, replied: "Senator Paul, with

all due respect, you are entirely and completely incorrect that the NIH has never and does not now fund gain-of-function research in the Wuhan Institute of Virology." However, ac-

ording to documents obtained by Daily Mail last year, the controversial Wuhan Institute of Virology in China undertook coronavirus experiments on bats and other wild animals which were funded by a \$3.4 million grant from the US government.

Zhengli, also known as the "Bat Women," is back in limelight as the conversation around the 'gain-of-function' research has once again started to dominate the headlines.

In 2014, the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, the NIH arm which Fauci heads, awarded a \$3.4 million grant to the New York-based EcoHealth Alliance, which aims to protect people from viruses that jump from species to species.

The group hired the virology lab in Wuhan to conduct genetic analyses of bat coronaviruses collected in

Yunnan province, about 800 miles southwest of Wuhan, Tampa Bay Times reported last month.

"The research was considered crucial in part because coronaviruses had previously emerged in China and begun to spread among humans. EcoHealth Alliance paid the lab \$58,500 over five years. The lab had secured approval from both the US State Department and the NIH," the report mentioned. All parties involved in the grant to the Wuhan Institute of Virology have denied that it involved gain-of-function research.

In Wuhan, China, where the first cases of the coronavirus emerged in late 2019, at least two labs studied coronaviruses that originate in bats — the Wuhan Institute of Virology (WIV) and the Wuhan Center for Disease Control and Prevention (WHCDC).

Expert panel to decide Plus II evaluation criteria

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, June 5: The state government Saturday formed a committee of experts to decide on the evaluation criteria of marks for Plus II students who were scheduled to appear for the CHSE-conducted board examinations 2021.

This was necessitated following the cancellation of the annual Plus II examinations for this year, after Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik took a final call.

"An expert committee comprising of senior educationists and CHSE officials will be formed within 15 days to place an objective criterion for assessment of marks as asked by the Chief Minister," School and Mass Education (S&ME) Minister Samir Ranjan Dash said Saturday. "Our expert panel will go through the evaluation policy of CBSE and CISCE and decide criteria for assessment of marks," Dash added.

The Chief Minister made an announcement in this regard following a meeting held with key officials of education department Friday. "Lives of our people are more precious than the examinations. All the stakeholders including students and parents across the state would have faced utter difficulties, had the examinations been conducted this year. The decision has been taken keeping in view the larger interest and well-being of students and teachers."

leisure

FORTUNE FORECAST

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ARIES
Today, you will show everyone what you're capable of. You are likely to come up with great ideas and work strategies, which will prove productive. However, if appreciation doesn't come your way, Ganesh says you must learn to take disappointment in your stride.

TAURUS
You will be feeling listless, lazy and out of sorts today, and will tend to ignore and neglect important tasks scheduled for the day. Ganesh urges you to guard against this tendency as you could miss out on opportunities that others could then benefit from.

GEMINI
A crucial social event at home is on the anvil, and it will demand most of your attention. Intense business negotiations, which were going on for a long time, will come to a logical conclusion. The results are likely to be stacked in your favour.

CANCER
You will make new friends. You will have a jolly time with them, but some worry or tension will nag you. But Ganesh says that all worries will go away by evening, when you relax with friends.

LEO
You will be seized by a desire to do something new for a change today. Your mood will be bright throughout the day. You will be able to achieve success owing to your energy and enthusiasm. The planets are in your favour, hence you can accept the challenges coming your way and prevail over them, says Ganesh.

VIRGO
Ganesh predicts that you will be rewarded today for all the good work done earlier. You will prefer to manage things in your own way, rather than taking orders from others. However, Ganesh advises you not to throw your weight around, but to stay calm and composed.

LIBRA
Ganesh says today is the right day to get closer to your loved one. You will spend the evening with your beloved. Today you will be mentally very energetic too. Make the most of the day.

SCORPIO
Yet another mundane day in your life, as nothing exciting is on the cards. However, be cheerful and keep trying hard to bring in some spice in life. You never know when the planets change their mood and make an exciting future. Keep the hope alive, says Ganesh.

SAGITTARIUS
Your leadership qualities are likely to bag compliments today. As you follow law and order and also make others follow it. You leave no stone unturned to get the work done, and that too systematically. However, make sure you also give them space and freedom to express themselves. It would earn you brownie points, says Ganesh.

CAPRICORN
If at first you don't succeed, try again. Many people underestimate the power of perseverance and patience. But, these qualities will lead you success. Rather than exploding with anger and anxiety, keep your faith in your plans intact, especially when the results are not as per your plans, advises Ganesh. If you fail to do as per the advice, you may spoil your image in the society.

AQUARIUS
You are in for a challenging day today. But, luck is by your side and you will be able to come out of the storm hale and hearty, assures Ganesh. If you are a businessman, you may enter into some major business venture, sign important contracts and take up new projects.

PISCES
Your patience and capabilities will be on trial today and will be put to test with every work you undertake. Even simple tasks and common goals will seem hard to achieve and will require a considerable amount of effort to complete.



WHY LISA WAS NERVOUS ON FRIENDS: THE REUNION SET

Actress Lisa Kudrow, popular as Phoebe in *Friends*, revealed that she was really nervous as she forgot the chords of the hit song *Smelly Cat*, before shooting her duet with Lady Gaga in *Friends: The Reunion*.

KARDASHIAN'S HOUSE WAS ALMOST STOLEN!

Reality TV personality Khloe Kardashian said that her house was almost stolen from her as the builder took her deeds when they stopped working together. Khloe said she and her mother Kris Jenner had purchased houses from the same builder when this happened.



'FILM SETS ARE THE BEST CLASSROOMS'

Mumbai: Actor Arjun Kapoor calls the film set the best classroom, and shares that he loves to make as many movies as he can and keep improvising by being on the sets. Arjun posted his views with a video collage on Instagram Saturday, featuring clips from all his films, from *Ishaqzaade* to *Sandeep Aur Pinky Faraar*.
"I have grown up over this last decade on film sets. I feel strange not being there. It's my life, passion and hobby! I'd love to make as many movies as I can and keep improvising by being on the sets," he wrote.
"They are the best classrooms. When it comes to films, I'm like any other child in a candy store. I'm in awe of what our work can do to engage and entertain people. Can't wait for that to happen again!" he added.



Ayushmann recalls his 'eye-opener trip'

Mumbai: On World Environment Day Saturday, actor Ayushmann Khurrana reminisced about his trip to the Northeast to shoot for Anubhav Sinha's *Anek*, directed by Anubhav Sinha.
"I will never ever forget the beauty of nature in its full glory that I witnessed at the Kaziranga National Park and Shillong when I was shooting for *Anek*. As a lover of nature, I was bewildered to see the beauty that exists in our country. It was breathtakingly beautiful," Ayushmann said.
The *Bala* star added: "My trip to Northeast was an eye-opener of what can be achieved by being in harmony with nature, and as a wildlife enthusiast it was a dream come true for me."

Elli never fears of being stereotyped

Mumbai: Actress Elli AvrRam says that she has never feared of being stereotyped in the film industry, although people often tell her to beware of this aspect.
"Never did I fear it from my heart because in my heart I know my passion, my talent and what I have to offer to this world of art, and it's got no limits," she said.
The actress says she refuses a project only if she doesn't feel connected to it.
"I've refused many songs because I follow one simple rule - if it makes my heart smile of excitement, I'll do it. If not, then I won't be able to give justice to the song or project because I can't do anything half-heartedly and it's not fair to the filmmakers either," she says.
Elli's last Hindi film was last year's *Malang*. Earlier this year she was seen in the dance number *Har funn maula* with Aamir Khan in the film *Koi Jaane Na*.



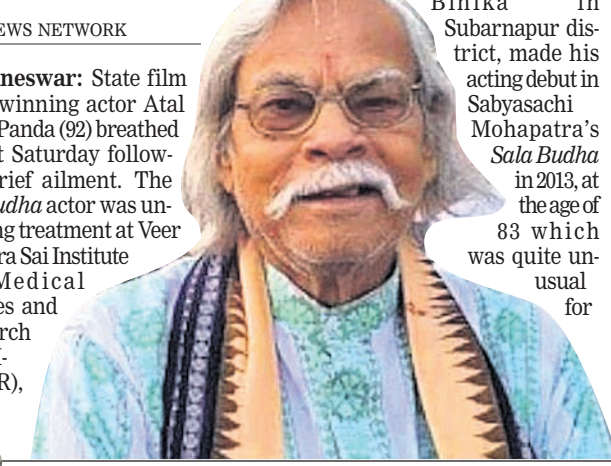
Actor Atal Bihari Panda no more

Panda had made his acting debut in *'Sala Budha'* at the age of 83 and was adjudged Best Actor at Odisha State Film Awards for the same

Burla, for septicemia, family sources said.
Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik, offering condolences to the veteran actor's bereaved family, in his tweet said, "He will be remembered forever for brilliant acting in films like *Sala Budha* and *Aadim Vichar*. His demise is an irreparable loss for the Odisha art world."



Panda, born at Binika in Subarnapur district, made his acting debut in Sabyasachi Mohapatra's *Sala Budha* in 2013, at the age of 83 which was quite unusual for an actor. He was adjudged Best Actor at Odisha State Film Awards for the same. He also played the leading role in Sabyasachi's *Aadim Vichar*; a sequel to *Sala Budha* and went on to bag the Best Actor award again. Sabyasachi repeated the nonagenarian actor in *Sala Budha Badla*, the third movie of *Sala Budha* trilogy. These movies were made in Koshali language and Panda was the soul in all three.
Sala Budha was premiered and appreciated at several international film festivals also.
Before making his acting debut, Panda had acted in nearly 100 plays and worked in more than 60 dramas as playwright, both in Odia and Koshali languages.



WINDOW TO INDIAN MODERNISM

100 works by 100 painters to feature at virtual show

Apart from the high-quality works of MF Husain, Jamini Roy, Nandalal Bose, the event also brings together creations of lesser-known greats like Gogi Saroj Pal, K Laxma Goud, Prokash Karmakar and many others

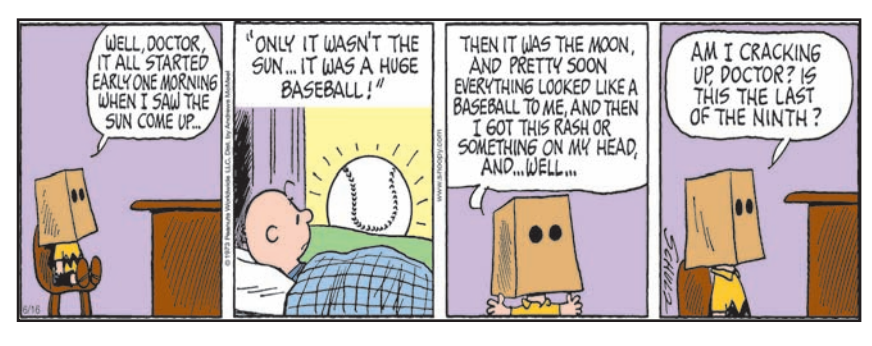


A curated collection of Indian art will feature a hundred works by a hundred artists in the second edition of 'The Centum Series' by DAG.
Opening for a week June 11, on the gallery website - www.dag-world.com - The Centum Series - Edition 2 ex-

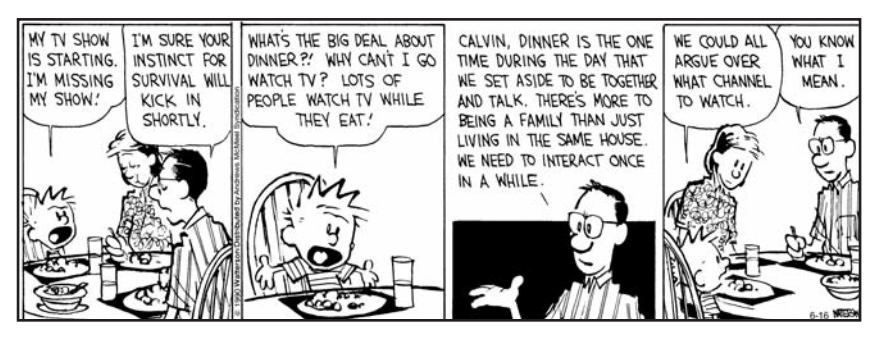
plores a rich diversity in Indian modernism with a dizzying succession of artists who have each carved a niche for themselves in the rich firmament of art practice in the country.
Consisting of high-quality works by MF Husain, Jamini Roy, Nandalal Bose, Ram Kumar, FN Souza, Bikash Bhattacharjee, the show also brings together works by the lesser-known greats who have remained shy of the marquee that is lit up with very few names including those who broke the mould like Gogi Saroj Pal, K Laxma Goud, Prokash Karmakar;

Paritosh Sen, Rabin Mondal; the alternate modernists such as Satish Gujral, Bikash Bhattacharjee, AA Raiba, PT Reddy; the avant-garde Prabhakar Barve, Jyoti Bhatt, Eric Bowen, Shobha Broto, Jagmohan Chopra, Amitava, Bimal Dasgupta, G R Santosh and many others.
Since 1996, DAG has been credited with bringing to the forefront lesser-known masters through its exhibitions and books at its galleries in New Delhi, Mumbai and New York.
"Round numbers are attractive, so we picked one hundred as our choice for this medley of artists and artworks that offer you a unique opportunity to acquire Indian modern art at attractive prices specially tailored for this sale," stated Ashish Anand, CEO and MD at DAG. AGENCIES

PEANUTS



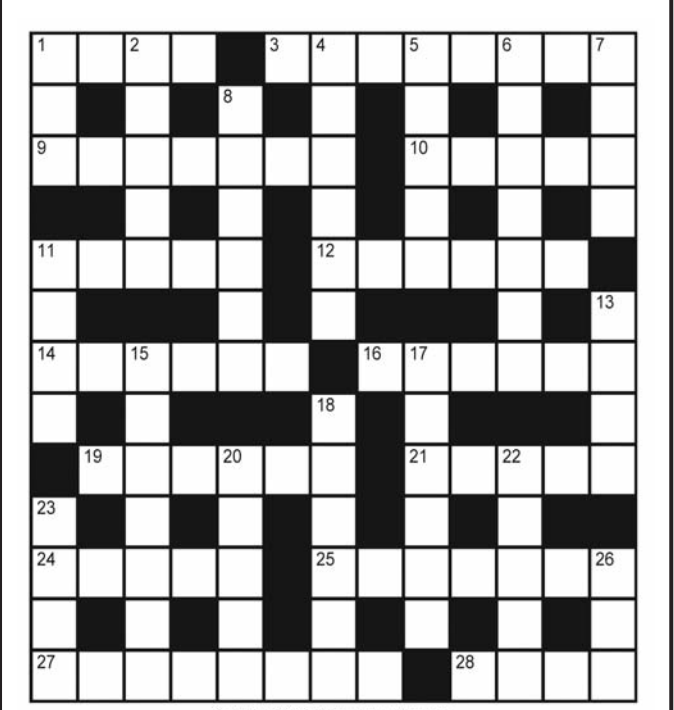
CALVIN AND HOBBS



BREVITY



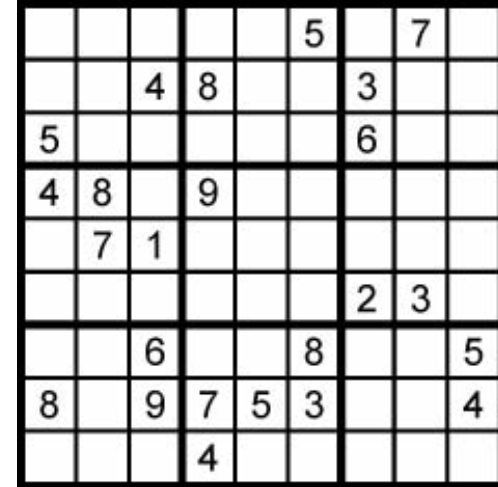
FUN post CROSSWORD



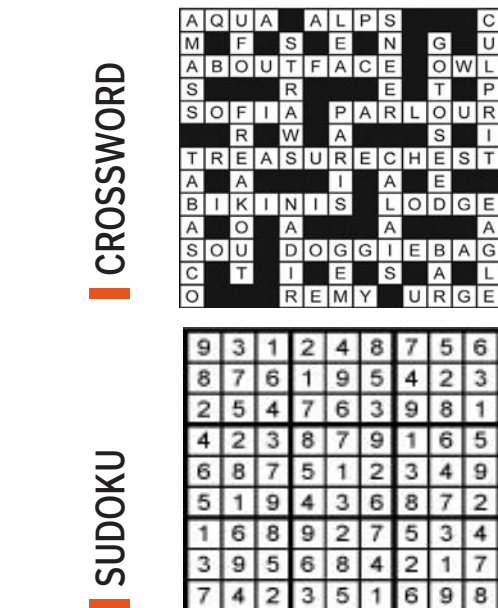
- Across
- 1 Have the blues
 - 3 Aromatic bark used as a spice
 - 9 Israeli city (3,4)
 - 10 Lakes, in Dundee
 - 11 ___ New Guinea
 - 12 Ballerina
 - 14 Minded
 - 16 Bear witness
 - 19 Vocation
 - 21 Hazardous
 - 24 Fast
 - 25 Hostile
 - 27 Sign at an airport (4-1-3)
 - 28 Milky gem
 - 6 Panga
 - 7 It smells
 - 8 Fly
 - 11 Conspiracy
 - 13 Dog command
 - 15 Jubilance
 - 17 Flourish
 - 18 Naval unit
 - 20 Bonus
 - 22 Pancake topper
 - 23 Consumer
 - 26 Aquatic shocker
- Down
- 1 Encountered
 - 2 Small vascular growth
 - 4 Encroach upon
 - 5 Parachute material

SUDOKU

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



SOLUTIONS



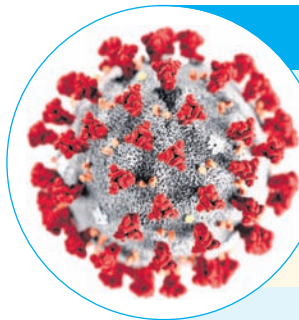
CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW

downtown



FOR A LIVING

Fishermen busy weaving fishing nets alongside the Ring Road near Jobra in Cuttack, Saturday



COVID-19 TRACKER

	INFECTED	RECOVERED	DEAD
World	17,34,14,908	15,61,92,211	37,29,657
India	2,86,94,879	2,67,95,549	3,44,082
Odisha	8,06,094	7,32,018	2,952

Doorstep O₂ for home isolation patients in City

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, June 5: In what would bring relief to home isolation Covid-19 patients in the Capital city, the Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC) Saturday said that it would provide oxygen cylinders at the patients' doorsteps.

Addressing the media, BMC Commissioner Sanjay Singh said that the state government has provided 100 oxygen concentrators to the BMC which will be provided to the patients who have opted for home isolation. The much-awaited service would begin, Monday.

"We have developed an App for Covid-infected people who are under home treatment. They can book oxygen concentrators through the app and the BMC will provide the oxygen concentrators at their homes. People can also call 1929 crew who can assist the patients regarding the process to avail the facility," Singh said.



Meanwhile, clearing the air on availability of vaccines, the BMC Commissioner said that a blueprint is being prepared for inoculation of 18-44 age group and that

the vaccination drive for first and second dose to the beneficiaries will be intensified, Jun 8.

"Around 8, 57, 300 doses have been administered during the ongoing Covid-19 vaccination drive till

June 4. Of this, 35, 400 doses have been administered to healthcare workers. Meanwhile, 48,410 front-line workers have been administered with the first dose and 28, 853 have received their second dose," Singh added.

BMC ACTION PLAN

The state govt has provided 100 oxygen concentrators to the BMC which will be provided to the patients who have opted for home isolation

People can book oxygen concentrators through the app developed by BMC and the latter will provide the oxygen concentrators at their homes

1, 70, 140 vax doses have been administered to the beneficiaries belonging to 18-44 age group

The civic body has decided to take up vaccination drive for students who want to pursue higher studies abroad

Moreover, he also stated that most people in the age group of 45 years (and above) have been covered with the first dose while 1, 70, 140 doses have been administered to the beneficiaries belonging to 18-44 age group.

This apart, the civic body has also decided to take up vaccination drive for students who want to pursue higher studies abroad. The registration process for such students will start, Sunday.

The BMC Commissioner further stated that daily Covid-19 cases are registering a decline in Bhubaneswar. Similarly, the pressure on ICU and other beds in hospitals is also reducing considerably.

COVID & JOBLESSNESS

Plea in NHRC for ₹7K per month to all poor families

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, June 5: At a time when Covid-induced restrictions have resulted in cessation of livelihood sources, a city-based trade union leader and rights activist moved the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) seeking a direction to the Centre to provide ₹7,000 per month to the non-income tax payer families for six months.

The petitioner also urged the commission to direct the Union government to provide free ration of 10 kg per head per month up to 6 months to the needy families without any ration card.

The activist cited a report of the International Labour Organisation (ILO) that recently highlighted

Activist cited ILO report about 10 crore people in India losing their jobs and livelihoods due to Covid-19 pandemic

about 10 crore working class people losing their jobs and livelihoods in India due to Covid-19 pandemic.

He said that lockdowns and shutdowns imposed by state and Union governments since March 2020 has pushed many into abject poverty.

"A study report by Ajim Premji University has revealed that around 23 crore people in India have become unemployed and jobless during the pandemic," claimed the activist.

Oppn slams govt over SDG report as BJD sees diversionary tactic

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, June 5: The Opposition BJP and Congress Saturday came down heavily on the state government for its poor ranking in Niti Aayog's Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) Index for 2020-21. However, BJD said that the data provided by the state has not been taken into account in the SDG report.

About 1 crore people in the state are still living in kutcha houses while in West Bengal the figure is only 6 per cent and in Andhra Pradesh it's 3.2 per cent, the BJP leader stated hinting at the findings of the Niti Aayog report.

"The Union government has sanctioned lakhs of pucca houses to Odisha. Where are these dwellings," she asked.

Saranghi further said that Odisha

Mahanadi water."

The government should make a detail analysis of the Niti Aayog report and note down the loopholes for action in future, he added.

Reacting to the opposition, BJD leader and MP Amar Patnaik said, "It seems there were discrepancies during preparation of the report. While enough marks have been given to Central schemes, successful state schemes like Mamata, Mission Shakti, Biju Swasthya Kalyan Yojna and others have been ignored

It is a shame and very unfortunate for us. Even after 21 years of BJD rule, 33 per cent of the population is still below the poverty line

APARAJITA SARANGI | BJP MP



While enough marks have been given to Central schemes, successful state schemes like Mamata, Mission Shakti, Biju Swasthya Kalyan Yojna and others have been ignored

AMAR PATNAIK | BJD MP

Addressing a press conference here, BJP MP Aparajita Sarangi said, "Odisha figures in the list of bottom five states among 28 states of the SDG Index report of Niti Aayog. It is a shame and very unfortunate for us. Even after 21 years of BJD rule, 33 per cent of the population is still below the poverty line."

During the past one year, there is no change in the poverty scenario in the state while neighbouring Andhra Pradesh has only 9.2 per cent BPL population, she said.

Odisha secures the third position from bottom in poverty alleviation.

is ranked sixth from the bottom in the category of zero hunger in SDG. About 29 per cent of children below 5 years are malnourished in the state, she stated.

Similarly, crimes against women have increased in the state. At least 103 women in 1 lakh are exploited in the state, Sarangi said. When it comes to economic growth, Odisha is ranked second from the bottom among 28 states, she added.

Joining Sarangi, senior Congress leader Suresh Routray said, "We have scored so low in irrigation sector! During past 21 years, the BJD government has failed to construct a single dam on Mahanadi. Chhattisgarh has stopped

Mamata, Mission Shakti, Biju Swasthya Kalyan Yojna and others have been ignored."

While 92 per cent marks have been given to Odisha on industrialisation in 2019, no mark has been awarded this year, he said.

However, state got 99 per cent in the banking service even though the service has not been reached to all rural areas of the state, the BJD leader pointed out.

The data provided by the state has not been taken into account in the SDG report. To divert the attention of people from the vaccine shortage issue, the BJP is doing politics even not going through the report thoroughly, Patnaik said.

Audio-visual way to spread nCoV awareness

POST NEWS NETWORK

Cuttack, June 5: The district administration Saturday launched an awareness vehicle on Covid-19 pandemic and the precautionary measures to fight it off.

Collector Bhabani Shankar Chayani flagged off the vehicle in the presence of DRDA project di-

rector Ambar Kumar Kar, district nodal officer for Covid Umesh Ray, district information and public relations officer Ashok Kumar Sarangi and other senior officials.

"The awareness vehicle will cover 14 blocks of Cuttack district by June 18. The vehicle is equipped with audio-visual system to disseminate information on novel coronavirus

and the precautionary measures against it," said an official of the district administration.

Notably, the Information and Public Relations and Odia Language Literature and Culture departments, in association with the Unicef, have decided to opt for the audio-visual mode to create awareness on the Covid-19 pandemic.

END OF SUMMER RITUAL



Servitors carrying back a silver throne to Srimandir office after completion of the Chandan Yatra ritual at Narendrapond in Puri, Saturday

SHIELD AGAINST THE SUN



Newly-built chariot wheels covered with coconut leaf mats at Rath Yard in Puri to prevent cracks due to the scorching sun, Saturday

OP PHOTO

Covid-19 spawns misery for weavers, artisans

THE SKILLED WORKFORCE HAS BEEN DEPRIVED OF HEALTH INSURANCE FOR THE LAST 5-6 YEARS



POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, June 5: The Covid-19 pandemic has taken a heavy toll on artisans and weavers of the state who have now accused both the Union and state governments of not caring a fig about their well-being.

According to sources, the state is home to as many as 5 lakh weavers and a few of them have succumbed to the deadly Covid-19 this year. In the month of May, the state lost eminent sculptor and Padma Shri awardee Raghunath Mohapatra, artisan Akash Maharana, sculptor Abhaya Kumar

Mohanty, Pattachitra artist Pranab Narayan Das and tribal artist Udaya Murmu. While some of them lost the battle against the novel coronavirus, others died due to lack of proper treatment.

This apart, the pandemic has left many of them unemployed, but the state government is yet to pay heed to their plight.

Earlier, the Centre had launched Aam Admi Bima Yojana for artisans and Mahatma Gandhi Bunakar Bima Yojana for weavers. Both the schemes have become dysfunctional now.

Moreover, artisans and weavers have been deprived of health in-

Ever since the lockdown has been imposed, there has been no orders and hence no production or sale

This has pushed them into financial misery. The artisans and weavers are in utter penury even as they don't have money to meet their healthcare expenses

insurance for the past five-six years. Ever since the lockdown has been imposed, there has been no orders and hence no production or sale. This

has pushed them into financial misery. The artisans and weavers are in utter penury even as they don't have money to meet their healthcare expenses. They have urged the government to provide health and life insurance for artisans and sculptors without fail.

It is learnt that Raghurajpur Artist Village has witnessed no footfall of tourists in last few months. The lockdowns and shutdowns have literally forced many buyers, especially tourists to postpone their visits to the village. Similarly, exhibitions at Konark, Nimapada, Puri, Pipili Haat and Ekamra Haat are not being held.



WHAT THEY SAY...

In 2018, Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik had launched the Odisha Handloom and Handicrafts Development and Promotion Council for all-round growth and welfare of the artisan and weaving communities of Odisha during the inauguration of Kala Bhoomi Odisha Crafts Museum and allotted ₹20 crore for the purpose. However, the fund is yet to be utilised at a time when artisans and weavers are struggling hard to make a square meal a day. Execution of life insurance for them is need of the hour.

PRIYA RANJAN KAR | SECRETARY OF ODISHA ARTISTS' ASSOCIATION

We don't have yarn to weave cloths. Besides, Boyanika is not purchasing our products. Provision of providing spectacles to weavers is not being executed. To avert this crisis, the government should provide interest-free loans to weavers

JAMBESWAR BEHERA | A WEAVER

Utkalika is assigned to ensure marketing of the products of artisans. Due to Covid-19, Utkalika has failed to organise exhibitions. We would conduct indoor exhibition as soon as the situation improves. There is no insurance scheme operational now for the artisan and weaver communities in the country and we have written to the Centre in this regard.

SANATAN NAYAK | DIRECTOR OF HANDLOOM AND TEXTILE DEPARTMENT

Covid tally breaches 8L mark; 40 fresh fatalities take toll to 2,952



Of the 7,395 cases, 4,169 were detected from quarantine centres, and the rest during contact tracing

Six deaths were reported from Khurda, four each from Cuttack, Mayurbhanj and Sundargarh, three each from Angul, Boudh, Jharsuguda and Kalahandi, and two each from Balangir, Bargarh and Deogarh

Over 1.21 crore samples have been tested for Covid-19 thus far, including 70,313 Friday

The number of red zones - having more than 1,000 active cases each - has fallen to 13 from 25 in May. Taking to Twitter, the Health department said, "Regret to inform about the demise of forty Covid positive patients while under treatment in hospitals."

Six deaths were reported from Khurda, four each from Cuttack, Mayurbhanj and Sundargarh, three each from Angul, Boudh, Jharsuguda and Kalahandi, and two each from Balangir, Bargarh and Deogarh. One patient each succumbed to the infection in Ganjam, Kandhamal, Nayagarh and Sambalpur.

This apart, 53 other Covid-19 patients in the state have died due to comorbidities, the official said. Odisha's positivity rate stands at 6.66 per cent.

Over 1.21 crore samples have been tested for Covid-19 thus far, including 70,313 Friday.

As many as 7,24,402 patients have recovered from the highly infectious disease, including 11,347 Friday.

Khurda district, of which the state capital Bhubaneswar is a part, reported the maximum number of new cases at 1,069, followed by Cuttack at 868, Jajpur at 561 and Angul at 443.

At least nine of the state's 30 districts reported less than 100 cases each - Bolangir (81), Nuapada (22), Sonepur (91), Deogarh (57), Dhenkanal (81), Gajapati (52), Ganjam (69), Jharsuguda (66) and Kandhamal (76).

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, June 5: Odisha's Covid-19 tally Saturday breached the eight-lakh mark after 7,395 more people tested positive for the infection, while 40 fresh fatalities pushed the toll to 2,952, a Health department official said.

The coastal state's caseload has now risen to 8,06,094, the official said.

Of the 7,395 cases, 4,169 were detected from quarantine centres, and the rest during contact tracing.

Accordingly, the number of active cases climbed to 78,687, the Health department official said.

80,783 more inoculated



POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, June 5: The Health department said that a total of 80,783 persons were vaccinated against Covid-19, Saturday.

The vaccination drive was conducted at 736 active sites. The beneficiaries also included persons in the age group of 18 to 44 years who received their second dose.

The department claimed that altogether 81,84,334 persons have been vaccinated till now.

The department has planned a total of 654 sessions Sunday for the drive.

Ganja worth ₹80L seized, 2 held

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, June 5: Two persons have been arrested and over 800 kg of ganja seized from their possession in Koraput district on Saturday, police said.



The accused, hailing from Uttar Pradesh, were smuggling the cannabis worth ₹80 lakh to Chhattisgarh after procuring it from Machhkund area of the district, Superintendent of Police Varun Gunthapally said.

Acting on a tip-off, police intercepted a truck in Lamataput police area and seized the contraband concealed inside a special chamber in the container, he said.

The accused have been booked under NDPS Act and investigation is underway to find out the locals involved in the crime, the officer added.

PLANTATION DRIVE



Members of 'Odisha Mo Parivar' plant saplings at Capital Hospital in Bhubaneswar to mark World Environment Day, Saturday

OP PHOTO

Power abuse charge against cops

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, June 5: Police officials often indulge in the misuse of the power, if a recent incident of a man from the Capital city becoming the soft target of the cops is any indication.

In an appalling example of such blatant power abuse, the family members of a youth, Mathuri Parida, have accused Airfield police officials of implicating him in several false cases.

If sources are to be believed, the investigating officer, who misbehaved with the victim's elder brother at the police station, was immediately shifted from the Airfield police station as soon as Bhubaneswar Deputy Commissioner of Police (DCP) Umashankar Dash learnt about the issue.

Mathuri, a resident of Airfield area, had a tiff with one of his friends, Ashis Kumar Mishra, in September 2020. Mishra had lodged a complaint with Airfield police who registered a case under different sections of IPC including 307. However, both the parties arrived at an amicable settlement after the villagers' intervention and requested the police to with-



draw the complaint. This reportedly irked the then IIC of Airfield police station, Deepak Kumar Mishra, who chided both the parties for wasting the time of police.

Mathuri's advocate alleged that the IIC, who was acquiesced to release Mathuri following the compromise, later instructed the staff to file a false case against Mathuri accusing him of fleeing police custody. The IIC also allegedly filed another case on the basis of the complaint filed by Mishra.

Subsequently, when both the parties learnt about the filing of a false case, they moved SDJM court to carry out a legal compromise agreement in the presence of the Judge February 4, 2021.

Meanwhile, in another incident one Silu Rout of the same village who had gone to a betel shop near Mathuri's residence was allegedly

Mathuri, a resident of Airfield area, had a tiff with one of his friends, Ashis Kumar Mishra, in September 2020

Mishra had lodged a complaint with Airfield police who registered a case under different sections of IPC including 307

However, both the parties arrived at an amicable settlement after the villagers' intervention and approached the police for withdrawal of the complaint

This reportedly irked the then IIC of Airfield police station, Deepak Kumar Mishra, who chided both the parties for wasting the time of police

assaulted by the betel shop owner and his friends under the influence of alcohol November 8, 2020.

Mathuri's elder brother Bidyadhar saved Silu from the clutches of the attackers and took him to the police station. The police asked him to take Silu to Capital hospital for treatment and he could file a complaint later.

Bidyadhar alleged that some of

the attackers have a close relationship with another staff of the same police station as they arranged a plot for the official near their village.

He also claimed that the police officials informed the attackers and advised them to file a complaint against Silu and Bidyadhar before they did so. Silu also lodged a complaint against the attackers later during the night.

However, instead of taking any action against the attackers, police arrested Silu and Bidyadhar.

Upon release from jail, Silu lodged petitions before the Odisha Human Rights Commission, Commissioner of Police, and DCP Bhubaneswar over the alleged injustice by the Airfield police.

This further infuriated the police, who, in order to teach Bidyadhar a lesson, arrested Mathuri June 2 night. The cops also allegedly misbehaved with Bidyadhar when he informed them about the compromise in the court.

Speaking to **Orissa POST**, the incumbent IIC, Radhakanta Sahu, denied the allegations and said, "A couple of cases are pending against Mathuri and we are unaware of any compromise between the parties."

SHUTDOWN AND CITIES



Bellview Square in Cuttack and AG Square-Rajmahal road in Bhubaneswar (Bottom) are bereft of vehicular traffic due to the Covid-induced weekend shutdown, Saturday

OP PHOTO

Lockdown curbs may be eased if TPR dips

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, June 5: Director of state Health department Bijay Mohapatra Saturday said that the lockdown restrictions could be eased in the days to come gradually if the test positivity rate (TPR) continues to decline.

The official said that currently the state is having around 10 per cent positivity rate of Covid-19 cases and if the trend continues, more relaxations could be allowed.

The government had earlier eased the lockdown norms in five districts where the positivity rate was below 5 per cent. While testing has been increased, positivity rates are declining which is a good sign, the government claimed.

Mohapatra also said that the process of global bidding for vaccines is on and the technical feasibility of the process would be examined after the last date of the

The government had earlier eased the lockdown norms in five districts where the positivity rate was below 5%

tender is over. He also said that other tenders like for the procurement of alternative drugs for black fungus would also be considered in the next few days.

These tenders are done online and these would be opened on the date of bidding. Till now, two players are said to have evinced their interest for the global tender.

The government would come out with more information on the players and quantum of the vaccines to be procured after conduct of a scrutiny and other processes for the bidding.



Closed shops at Chhatrabazar fruits market in Cuttack

OP PHOTO

Fugitive accused of gangrape held after 7 yrs

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, June 5: The special squad of Commissionerate Police Saturday arrested a fugitive accused involved in a gang rape case after seven years of his escape from police custody.

The accused was identified as Bhaskar Sahoo of Odagaon in Nayagarh district.

According to sources, the accused Sahoo along with three others had kidnapped the victim near the Sai Temple at Tankapani area of the city February 13, 2014. They had taken her to Kalapathara in Nayagarh district where they raped the victim.

Later, a case was registered with the Bhubaneswar Mahila Police station here on the basis of the complaint lodged by the victim. Police swung into action and arrested all the four accused persons including Sahoo the next day. All the four accused were later sent to Jharpada special jail under judicial custody.

Meanwhile, Sahoo managed to escape from the jail while being taken to court for hearing December 9, 2014. Sahoo later moved outside the state to avoid arrest.

However, he recently returned to his village after he lost his job due to the Covid induced lockdown.

The police arrested Sahoo under a special operation 'Wild escape', recently launched by the city police to nab wanted and fugitive accused persons.

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Jajpur turns emerging hub for illegal furnace oil trade



Spurious furnace oil is being transported by hundreds of tankers from Paradip area to different places in the state like Kalinganagar, Keonjhar, Rourkela, Angul and Jharsuguda via Jajpur. Traders involved in this illegal sale of furnace oil are earning handsome profits. The total turnover of this trade is over rupees one crore. The stolen furnace oil is then loaded onto separate tankers earlier parked by the illegal traders on the national highway. They are then sent to various locations and industrial units in the state.

POST NEWS NETWORK

Jajpur, June 5: National Highway-53 in Jajpur district has turned out to be a hub for illegal transportation as well as black marketing of furnace oil, a report said. The illegal business is operated by a well-oiled racket and goes on unabated in the district due to lack of stringent action on part of the law enforcement agencies. Spurious furnace oil is being transported by hundreds of tankers from Paradip area to different places in the state like Kalinganagar, Keonjhar, Rourkela, Angul and Jharsuguda via Jajpur, sources said. The sources said furnace oil is being adulterated at PPL Road, Bauria Palanda, Balijhara and Kali temple

locality, which are located within 5km radius of the port town and are under the Paradip police limits. The traders involved in this illegal sale of furnace oil are earning handsome profits. The total turnover of this trade is over rupees one crore, the sources said. They also informed that these traders work hand in glove with the police to carry out this illegal trade. At times, the police do conduct raids on oil depots. However, the raids are mere eyewash to avoid public scrutiny. The persons involved in the management of these depots are allegedly informed ahead of the raids so that they get sufficient time to shift the furnace oil in containers to safer places. In return, the police

allegedly get a hefty commission from these unscrupulous traders. The valuable furnace oil which is transported by tankers from IOCL oil refinery in Paradip to different industrial units in the state are often halted midway where the henchmen of these traders remove some amount of pure furnace oil from the tankers and then fill the tankers with spurious substitutes of the oil. The stolen furnace oil is then loaded onto separate tankers earlier parked by the illegal traders on the national highway. They are then sent to various locations and industrial units in the state. The sources said that each tanker of furnace oil fetches approximately Rs 10 lakh in the open market.



Members of Krushak Sangharsha Samanwaya Samiti staging a demonstration against the Centre's farm laws in Jaleswar, Saturday

OP PHOTO

Salon, parlour owners in despair amid pandemic

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhuban, June 5: The pandemic has affected all forms of businesses and means of livelihood. Salons and beauty parlours are no exception. The condition of salon and parlour owners in this town of Dhenkanal district is precarious as they now find it very difficult to earn a livelihood. The continuous lockdown and weekend shutdowns have had a tremendous impact on their business. There are over 20 shops in this



REPRESENTATIVE PIX

town offering haircuts and other beauty related services. With the savings they had, the owners and their employees managed to survive the first wave of Covid-19.

However, when things started returning to normal another jolt came in the form of the second wave, leaving them stranded. Since May 5 this year when the lockdown restrictions were put in place again, they are struggling to make both ends meet. Some of the barbers have been forced to make door-to-door visits to offer their services. In the process, they are putting their lives at risk as they do not know from where the virus may hit them. "We don't want to put our lives in danger to earn a livelihood.

However, we have no option but to look after our families. So we have to take all precautions. We sanitise all our equipment and we wear gloves, masks and headgears. Since we have to buy these items on our own, our profits are severely curtailed," a barber said. Most of them stated that they have been forced to take loans to run their families and that they are at a loss as to how they will repay the amount. "People are also apprehensive about the services we offer, they said.

Ex-MLA BK Barma dies of Covid

AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, June 5: A close associate of former Chief Minister Biju Patnaik and former BJD MLA Bikram Keshari Barma died at a private Covid-19 hospital here Saturday. He was 81. Barma was admitted to the hospital after he tested positive for the virus May 26. However, his condition deteriorated Friday night and he passed away Saturday morning, his son-in-law Niranjana Bhuyan said. He said the last rites of the ex-MLA from Mahanga in Cuttack district, will be held at Satya Nagar crematorium.



Barma was elected from Mahanga constituency in 2004 as a BJD candidate by defeating the Congress candidate and former minister, SK Matlub Ali, by around 9,000 votes. Barma had served as the chairman of the Odisha State Cashew Development Corporation Limited. Chief Minister and BJD president Naveen Patnaik condoled Barma's demise. Panchayati Raj Minister and now representing Mahanga in the Assembly, Pratap Jena also expressed his grief over the demise and said Barma was a simple and soft-spoken person. He will always be remembered for his developmental works in Mahanga Constituency. Taking to twitter, Union Minister Dharmendra Pradhan said: "I am saddened to hear about the demise of former MLA Bikram Keshari Barma of Mahanga constituency in Cuttack district. Condolences to the bereaved family."

State to build panchayat bhawans to give jobs to returnee migrants

AGENCIES

Sambalpur, June 5: In an effort to provide employment to migrant workers who returned to Odisha due to lockdown in their working places, the state government has decided to build new Panchayat Bhawans in around 60 villages in Sambalpur district within a year, officials said Friday. The objective of the initiative is to provide employment to the returnee migrant labourers and rural labourers during the coronavirus pandemic and strengthen their livelihood, they said. The buildings will be constructed under the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural

Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS). There are 138 gram Panchayats in the district. Majority of returnee migrants have the skills relating to construction industry and, hence, the government has decided to construct panchayat bhawans, an official said. Sobhit Bishi, the Sambalpur coordinator of the MGNREGS, said many villages do not have their own buildings and such bhawans are lying in dilapidated condition in several panchayats. In many villages, the panchayat offices are operating from the Bharat Nirman Rajiv Gandhi Seva Kendras, which had been constructed as annex buildings of panchayat offices and for

multiple purposes, Bishi said. The work of the panchayats have increased manifold in the last few years and they require spacious buildings for their works. Hence, the new bhawans, which will be permanent assets, will be constructed and it will also generate employment for rural dwellers, according to the official. Each panchayat bhawan will be constructed at a cost of Rs 20 lakh and 50 per cent of it will be met through the finance commission fund, while the remaining cost will be sourced from the MGNREGA fund, the official said. Work on the project has already begun in some villages and a target has been set to complete the work within a year, he added.

Yaas victims protest over delay in aid

POST NEWS NETWORK

Balasure, June 5: Protesting against administrative apathy, cyclone Yaas victims from Gandibeda village under Khairata tehsil of Balasure district Saturday locked the RI office gate and detained four revenue inspectors. The villagers alleged that they are yet to receive any cyclone assistance from the government. "Ten days have passed since cyclone Yaas rampaged the district. But, we are yet to receive any cyclone assistance," a local man alleged. The irate villagers thronged the RI office Saturday morning and locked the gate and detained four revenue inspectors. They then staged a demonstration. They said they are still struggling to restart life afresh. With



monsoon being round the corner, they are worried about their families and children. They demanded government assistance and cyclone aid. On being informed, additional tehsildar and Khairata police reached the spot and pacified the villagers. They called off their demonstration after being assured that the cyclone assistance will be provided within two days.

Hilsa back in Gobari after 30 yrs, thanks to Yaas



POST NEWS NETWORK

Mahakalapara, June 5: In what is sure to bring smiles on the faces of fishermen and fish lovers the Hilsa fish was caught from the Gobari river in Kendrapara district after a long hiatus of 30 years, courtesy the cyclonic storm Yaas which recently hit the state. Hilsa is known as 'Ilishi' in the local parlance and is a delicacy in almost every Odia household for its incredibly soft meat. The fish is rich in Omega-3 fatty acid that prevents coronary heart diseases in humans. The cyclonic storm Yaas might have caused much devastation in Kendrapara district but it also brought cheers to fishermen and fish lovers as the high tidal waves during the calamity pushed the Hilsa fish from the sea into the Gobari river. During the storm, tidal waves rose above 10 feet and crossed the coast at many places. As a result, the fish entered into various rivers near the coastline of the state. The availability of Hilsa in Gobari brought windfall gains for small and marginal fishermen as they had a good catch. The villagers living near the river were also seen spreading out their nets to catch the fish. The sudden availability of Hilsa pushed its price in the market as fish-

ermen sold the fish at over Rs 1,500 per kg to local traders. The traders then packed it in containers and transported it to Paradip and other parts of the state as well as Kolkata. The local fishermen, who were struggling to earn their livelihood due to Covid induced lockdown and shutdown in the state, earned handsome profits. However, the high price made it difficult for locals to buy the fish for their households. Thirty years back Hilsa was available in the Gobari river. However, with passage of time the availability of the fish in the river became a dream for fishermen. The fish generally lives in groups in deep sea but enters the rivers whenever floodwater in Mahanadi flows into the sea through the river mouth.

Woman's body recovered in Mayurbhanj

POST NEWS NETWORK

Baripada, June 5: A woman's body was found lying under mysterious circumstances on National Highway-18 near Krushnachandrapur village under Betnoti police limits in Mayurbhanj district Saturday. The deceased was yet to be identified. According to a source, some local residents were the first ones to spot the body Saturday morning. They immediately alerted the villagers who then informed the police. On getting information, a team from Betnoti police station reached

the spot, recovered the body and sent it for post-mortem. During preliminary investigation, the police noticed some injury marks on the body. Locals suspect the woman might have been murdered elsewhere and the body was dumped on the NH with an intention to pass it off as an accident and divert police investigation. The police said they are on the job of ascertaining the identity of the deceased woman. They are waiting for the postmortem report to reach at a conclusion about the cause of the death. A detailed investigation is under way.

ORGANIC MANURE



NAC executive officer Rashmi Ranjan Dash flagging off a vehicle for sale of organic manure prepared from wastes collected from the houses of denizens at Buguda in Ganjam district, Saturday

OP PHOTO

UTKAL GRAMEEN BANK (Sponsored by State Bank of India)			
HEAD OFFICE, Club Para, Bolangir, PO/Dist- Bolangir, PIN-767001			
AUDITED FINANCIAL RESULTS FOR THE YEAR 2020-21			
BALANCE SHEET AS ON 31/03/2021			
		(Rs. In thousand)	
	Schedule	As on 31.03.2021 (Current Year)	As on 31.03.2020 (Previous Year)
CAPITAL & LIABILITIES			
Capital	1	9703731	7022131
Perpetual Bond	1(A)	81383	81383
Share Capital Deposit	1(B)	NIL	2279360
Reserves & Surplus	2	NIL	NIL
Deposits	3	74872500	70470647
Borrowings	4	3530296	2705
Other Liabilities & Provisions	5	3684777	3371424
TOTAL		91872687	83227650
ASSETS			
Cash and Balances with Reserve Bank of India	6	3091187	2433284
Balances with Banks and Money at Call and Short Notice	7	6272909	9144247
Investments	8	41954003	36295684
Loans & Advances	9	24185410	23931935
Fixed Assets	10	61017	76318
Other Assets	11	16308161	11346182
TOTAL		91872687	83227650
Contingent Liabilities	12	541701	509654
Bills for Collection		NIL	NIL
Principal Accounting Policies and Notes on Accounts	17 & 18		
PROFIT & LOSS ACCOUNT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31st March, 2021			
	Schedule	As on 31.03.2021 (Current Year)	As on 31.03.2020 (Previous Year)
I. INCOME			
Interest earned	13	4746110	5116834
Other income	14	709910	619604
TOTAL		5456020	5736438
II. EXPENDITURE			
Interest expended	15	3198963	3379159
Operating expenses	16(A)	1605867	1787324
Provisions & contingencies	16(B)	4767469	1964881
TOTAL		9572299	7131364
III. PROFIT & LOSS			
Profit before tax		-4116179	-1394926
Less : Tax Provision			
Provision for Income Tax For the Financial Year		NIL	NIL
Profit after Tax		-4116279	-1394926
Loss brought forward	(*)	-9634668	-8239742
TOTAL		-13750947	-9634668
Balance carried over to Balance Sheet		-13750947	-9634668
TOTAL		-13750947	-9634668
(1) Above financial results have been audited by the Statutory Central Auditors M/s Agasti & Associates, BBSR in line with the guidelines issued by NABARD and signed by the SCA on 17.05.2021 and approved by the Board of Directors of the Bank			
(2) The Financial results have been arrived at as per the standard accounting principles and after considering provisions for Non Performing Assets/Standard Assets as per prudential norms issued by NABARD and other required provisions.			
Place: Bolangir	(Manmohan Sahoo)	(Alekhya Chandra Beura)	
Date: 17/05/2021	(General Manager I)	(Chairman)	



Witness and stand back from Nature, that is the first step to the soul's freedom.

SRI AUROBINDO



7 years of 'feats'

The National Democratic Alliance government marked its seventh anniversary at the end of last month. Celebrations were muted because of the sickness and death that the pandemic has brought to us. But the prime minister did put out a document on the achievements of the seven years. It was called Vikas Yatra and has 15 points.

The first point was 'Ease of doing business.' In the World Bank's report, India has risen from 142 to 63 in 'doing business'. This is indeed commendable. What does it mean? It is a survey of limited firms of a particular size and how easily they are able to obtain permits in two cities (Mumbai and Delhi). The Vikas Yatra document does not refer to what the result of India climbing on the index was. Presumably making doing business easier would result in more businesses investing.

But India's investment rate has fallen from 38 per cent of GDP before Modi to 28 per cent now.

The second point is called 'Ease of living'. This is not an index the world measures and it is not clear what is meant by it so I will leave it alone. The third one is 'Eliminating corruption' and says that 'PM Narendra Modi has led a historic battle against corruption. Now, honesty is honoured and transparency is the norm.'

In Transparency International's Global Corruption Perceptions Index, India has fallen from 76th in the world in 2015 to 86th this year.

The fourth point is called 'Empowering youth opportunities'. It says "the last 7 years of Modi government have focused on clearing the path of India's youth as they navigate through opportunities across fields."

The latest Periodic Labour Force Survey conducted by the Modi government says that youth unemployment in urban India is 23 per cent. Meaning one in four young people looking for work cannot find it. This is the highest rate India has ever had.

The fifth point is 'Health for all'. Here we need not look beyond what is going on around us at this very time. India's government is unique in the world in several ways. First because it has the highest cost of vaccination in the world. Second because there are three different vaccination procurements: the Centre, states and private companies. And third because India has defaulted on its commitments to vaccinate the world. We need not go into details of this today. So far as health for all is concerned only a few days ago oxygen was being sold for Rs 60,000 a cylinder lasting a few hours in Delhi and there was (and there is) no national helpline for finding oxygen and essential drugs.

The sixth point is called 'Infra for growth'. India's GDP growth has been falling since January 2018, according to the government's figures. It fell from 8 per cent to 7 per cent to 6 per cent to 5 per cent to 4 per cent to 3 per cent before the pandemic. Last year the economy contracted in its biggest fall in history.

The seventh point is called 'Mobility for the middle class' and says 'no other government has done more for them as the Modi government'. Last month a report by the Azim Premji University showed that during the pandemic 27 crore Indians were pushed into poverty. Meaning that they were not poor according to the government poverty line before but have become now.

Vikas Yatra point number 8 is called 'Nari Shakti for new India'. The participation of women in India's labour force is around 10 per cent today, the lowest in history. In a 2018 study by Thomson Reuters, India was found to be the most dangerous place for women in the world. In the 2020 Georgetown Institute's Women, Peace and Security Index, India ranked 133, having fallen two places since 2017.

Point 9 says 'Prosperous farmers for prosperous India'. It claims 'farmer welfare is a top priority for the Modi government.' The tens of thousands of farmers currently on protest outside Delhi who have been vilified as terrorists, khalistanis and anti-nationals will disagree.

Number 10 is 'Putting India first'. The claim here is on national security. We have not been told yet what the status of our patrolling in Depsang is by the government but if experts are to be believed we have given away space to China.

Number 11, 12 and 14 are called 'Renewed focus on Northeast' and 'Social empowerment' and 'Taking development to the poorest' and 'Transformative economic growth'. These are generic terms but we can accept that work has been done on them. The final point is 'India fights Corona'. It would be interesting to see what the world thinks of that statement. Even with its underreporting of numbers on infections and deaths India has the second highest number of cases in the world and the third highest number of deaths. Estimates say that in reality it is the leader in both and that the number of deaths just in the second wave were over 10 lakh across India.

This then is the state of the government of India and of our country as we enter the eighth year of the Modi government.

WISDOM CORNER

- Principles have no real force except when one is well-fed. **MARK TWAIN**
- Because things are the way they are, things will not stay the way they are. **BERTOLT BRECHT**
- Success is getting what you want. Happiness is wanting what you get. **DALE CARNEGIE**

WORDSWORTH

Nick of time

This is definitely one of the stranger idioms in the language. The language experts are sure that nick here is the same word as that for a small cut or notch. Sometime round about the 1580s the phrase in the nick or in the very nick began to be used for the critical moment, the exact instant at which something has to take place. The idea seems to have been that a nick was a narrow and precise marker, so that if something was in the nick it was precisely where it should be. It seems that users of the expression pretty soon afterwards found this association of ideas needed some elaboration, so started to add of time to the expression, and that's the way it has stayed ever since. These days, the phrase more usually refers to something that only just happens in time, at the last possible moment. There are a number of other expressions involving nick, as in yet another name for the devil (this time from the personal name Nicholas). There are the British slang terms for theft ("my car's been nicked!") or for a police station ("the nick"), or the act of being arrested ("you're nicked!"). There's also the American sense of defrauding a person of money, and the Australian ideas of moving quickly or furtively, or of being in the nude ("in the nick"). Most of these, except perhaps the last, come from senses of nick that may derive from an old and defunct colloquial sense of seizing an advantage or grabbing an opportunity, which isn't far from the idea of being in the nick of time. But the history of the word is confused and complicated (there's also the animal breeders' sense of a mating that has had excellent results, for example, as well as the old sporting sense of a winning throw at dice) to the extent that you'd need half a book to explain them all.

FOCUS CHINA

UNDENIABLE GENOCIDE

Parliaments around the world are increasingly declaring that the mass atrocities against the Uyghur people in China's Xinjiang region constitute genocide – a determination resoundingly supported by an overwhelming body of evidence and international law. Absent a competent international body, state parties to the 1948 United Nations Genocide Convention have a responsibility to prevent and hold China accountable for this crime of crimes, securing justice for the victims and ending impunity for the violators.

The Genocide Convention defines genocide as any one of five acts "committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a [protected group], as such." In addition to killing, these acts include causing serious bodily or mental harm, deliberately inflicting conditions of life calculated to bring about the group's physical destruction in whole or in part, imposing birth-prevention measures, or forcibly transferring children of the group to another group.

China has committed every one of these acts in its state-orchestrated campaign against the Uyghurs – most of them on a systematic and widespread basis. As a result of the mass internment and imprisonment on catchall charges such as being "untrustworthy," a large number of Uyghurs have died in detention. The Chinese government does not even spare lifelong Uyghur members of the Communist Party of China (CPC) or intellectuals whom it praised in the past, thus debunking any notion that their detention is about re-education or instilling loyalty to the regime in Beijing.

Uyghurs suffer unlivable conditions, torture, and sexual violence inside the camps, and are subjected to institutionalised enslavement across China. Since 2017, the government has forcibly transferred Uyghur children – many of them "orphaned" as a result of losing both parents to internment or forced labour – to a network of state-run facilities in Han Chinese settings.

The government is simultaneously subjecting Uyghurs to systematic mass forced sterilisation



The Chinese state's atrocities against the Uyghur people of Xinjiang province are a clear violation of the 1948 United Nations Genocide Convention. With all other paths to justice foreclosed, the responsibility falls on national governments to speak up for the victims and fulfill their obligations under international law

and coercive birth-prevention policies, destroying the group's reproductive capacity. In 2018, 80 per cent of all net IUD placements in China (calculated as placements minus removals) were fitted in Xinjiang, a region with 1.8 per cent of China's total population. Between 2017 and 2019, the birth rate in Xinjiang declined by nearly half – the most extreme such drop anywhere since the UN began recording these statistics. More disturbing still, Xinjiang's 2020 statistical yearbook contains no birth-rate data.

The Chinese government has eliminated Uyghur education and demolished most of Xinjiang's sacred sites. Senior officials have issued orders to "eradicate tumors," "round up everyone," "wipe them out completely," and "break their lineage, break their roots, break their connections, and break their origins." As the Supreme Court of Canada held, incitement to genocide is a breach of the Genocide Convention in and of itself. The rhetoric of combating "extremists" is simply code for persecuting Uyghurs, as China's ruthless policies target southern Xinjiang, where Uyghurs constitute about 90 per cent of the population. In fact, the government publicly admitted that the sharp

decline in the Uyghur birth rate is directly linked to the official policy of "eradicating extremism," which had "emancipated" Uyghur women, who are "no longer baby-making machines."

The world must view these policies in their totality, as amounting to an intent to destroy the Uyghurs as a group, in whole or in part. Survivors have even recounted camp guards saying that they were acting in accordance with an immutable document from the CPC Central Committee stipulating that the policies would remain in place until Uyghurs "would disappear [...] until all Muslim nationalities would be extinct."

The mounting evidence supporting the genocide determination is not limited to highly detailed firsthand accounts. It also consists of satellite imagery of over 380 Xinjiang detention sites newly built or expanded since 2017, including forced labour factories covering over 21 million square feet (195.1 hectares). Other satellite images track the destruction of and damage to the majority of Xinjiang's sacred sites, including 16,000 mosques.

Then there are the unprecedented leaks of Chinese government documents, containing the mass-internment blueprint, records

of mass detention and forced labour transfers, and other high-level directives. The fact that high-ranking officials risked their lives to disclose these classified documents indicates how severe the atrocities have become. Countless others have testified at extreme risk to themselves and their families to record their accounts with the Xinjiang Victims Database, which is expanding by the day.

The only international courts that can hear genocide cases – the International Court of Justice and the International Criminal Court – cannot realistically exercise jurisdiction anytime soon. China does not recognise the ICJ's authority over questions of genocide and is not a party to the ICC. Moreover, as a permanent member of the UN Security Council, China can block any attempt at an ICC referral.

While a UN fact-finding mission may fill this impunity gap, China has denied foreign observers unfettered access to Xinjiang for years, and is now aggressively denying the existence of any atrocities. Over the last year, it has expelled foreign journalists, scrubbed the internet of evidence, sanctioned and smeared parliamentarians and experts, and lectured other countries on mass atrocities and genocide. China's Foreign Ministry even called camp survivors of rape and forced sterilisation "actresses," and questioned their character.

In March, following an independent examination of the situation in Xinjiang, more than 50 experts on international law, genocide, and the region agreed that the Chinese state's atrocities rise to the level of genocide. With all other paths to justice foreclosed, the responsibility falls on national governments to speak up for the victims and fulfill their obligations under the 1948 Convention to prevent and end complicity in the genocide.

Irwin Cotler is a former minister of justice and attorney general of Canada. Yonah Diamond is Legal Counsel at the Raoul Wallenberg Centre for Human Rights.

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SPECTRUM HEALTHCARE

Equalising the fight against cancer

Informing someone that they have cancer is indescribably difficult. It is all the more heart-wrenching when we know that their disease possibly could have been detected and treated earlier, thus increasing their survival chances, or even prevented entirely.

Ten million people died prematurely from cancer in 2020. Half of these deaths could have been prevented by greater awareness of risk factors and early warning signs, earlier consultations, and easier and more timely access to health services and high-performance testing equipment. Moving swiftly toward universal health coverage (UHC) can help to achieve this goal.

There are several reasons why we currently are not all equal before cancer. These "social determinants of health" – such as where we are born and grow up, where we currently live and work, and our income level – influence our perceptions and understanding of cancer and the risks that contribute to its development.

Crucially, these factors also help to determine the quality of care we can access, which depends on the robustness of our local health system, the number of available health facilities or specialised doctors, the ease of travelling to a facility and staying for care, and the cost of the care itself. A range of personal, social, cultural, and religious influences also play a role. Stigma and discrimination related to age, sexual orientation, and ethnicity, for example, create real barriers that prevent people from receiving the level of healthcare they need.

Extending health coverage to everyone can help to overcome socioeconomic inequities in healthcare access, thereby preventing millions of cancer-related deaths. At the same time, resource-efficient measures that all countries can take to reduce the cancer burden – developed and implemented via national cancer control planning – can facilitate the move to UHC. In this sense, cancer control and UHC go hand in hand.

For example, most people do not think of cancers as being preventable through vaccination, because they are non-communicable diseases that arise due to changes or mutations in the body's cells rather than from transmissible pathogens. But 70 per cent of cervical cancer cases are caused by the

human papillomavirus (HPV), which is contagious through sexual contact and can be contained, if not eliminated, through vaccination. Furthermore, the earlier cervical cancer is detected, the higher the survival rate. The international community has thus committed to vaccinating 90 per cent of girls aged 9-15 against HPV by 2030, and to screening 70 per cent of women between the ages of 35 and 45 for cervical cancer. Achieving these targets would save millions of lives over the coming decades. HPV is also responsible for causing several other genital cancers, as well as for the dramatic rise in oropharyngeal cancers (affecting the tonsils and the base of the tongue) in the West over the last decade.

Early detection is also vital to treating other cancers. The five-year survival rate for breast cancer can be above 90 per cent in well-resourced countries such as the United States, where women have greater access to health information and services. But in countries where cancers are often detected later and are thus harder to treat, the five-year survival rates are much lower – 66 per cent in India and 40 per cent in South Africa, for example. UHC not only saves lives

and upholds people's fundamental right to health and human dignity, but also contributes to social and political stability and yields valuable economic benefits. After all, the healthier a population is overall, the more resilient and productive it tends to be. For example, in my home country, India, a majority of the population lacks health insurance. The federal government's National Health Protection Scheme (NHPS), or Ayushman Bharat, popularly known as Modicare) is a welcome first step toward making health services more accessible and affordable, particularly for the poor and in rural areas where such services are most needed.

The pandemic has highlighted the need for stronger health systems and universal health coverage in order to prevent further avoidable deaths. Taking the same approach to controlling cancer can help to ensure that five million people a year do not die prematurely – and that no doctor needs to tell another cancer patient that their illness could have been prevented.

The writer is President of the Union for International Cancer Control.

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Anil D'Cruz

TEN MILLION PEOPLE DIED PREMATURELY FROM CANCER IN 2020

Living in denial

Sir, In Odisha, despite repeated counselling by contact tracers, those in isolation still do not understand the gravity of the situation and believe they can go out to dispense money from ATMs or for some such errands. Even before receiving the test reports many returnees are already in contact with family, friends and neighbours, thereby allowing the virus a free rein. But perhaps this is also a learning curve. The Health Department has done a commendable job by analysing the Covid deaths and consequently finding out the close correlations between vaccination and a life saved. What's also true in Bhubaneswar is public hesitancy to be randomly tested for fear of being tested Covid positive. People prefer to live in denial. Even when they do fall sick and develop symptoms, many prefer to self medicate, telling themselves and others that it's a common cold or influenza that will heal itself. Perhaps the number of deaths could have been prevented through timely healthcare and hospital admission. The district administrations through ASHAs have tried their utmost to reach out to people with the right messages, calling them for random testing and trying to convince especially the elderly to vaccinate themselves, but to no avail. The problem is compounded by social media, particularly WhatsApp where conspiracy theories on Covid vaccination go viral.

K Ravi, BHUBANESWAR

Scarcity at core

Sir, Apropos the news report 'Rethink vaccination policy', ORISSA POST, June 4, India's vaccination policy is under severe public scrutiny. Scarcity is the root of all questions being asked of the vaccination policy. The Centre's 'liberalised' policy of allowing vaccine companies to strike deals with states and private hospitals has borne limited fruit. While the age group of 18-44 years accounts for the bulk of vaccines being administered, attempts by states to negotiate deals with international vaccine companies have come to naught. The Supreme Court too has expressed its dissatisfaction over the existing system that puts states in competition with each other and the Centre, almost like another competitor, for vaccine supplies. The Centre has tried to project that it was the clamour from states that forced it to abstain from being the sole purchaser of vaccines, but it was the Centre's miscalculation that there would not be frantic public demand this calendar year and that the output from the Serum Institute of India and Bharat Biotech would be sufficient for India.

N Sathisiva Reddy, BANGALORE

Letters

TO THE EDITOR

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

OrissaPOST

B-15, Rasulgari Industrial Estate, Bhubaneswar-751010

Now, Mamata's photo on vaccine certificates

Amidst state polls, the Trinamool Congress had moved Election Commission of India (ECI) on the issue, stating that the PM's photograph on vax certificates was violating the model code of conduct

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kolkata, June 5: The West Bengal government is issuing certificates of Covid-19 vaccination to the people in the age group of 18-44 sponsored by the state with the photograph of Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee.

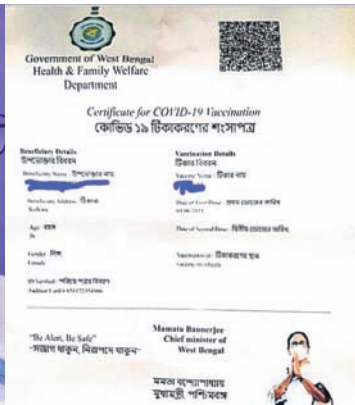
An official said Saturday this is being done since the state government has been procuring vaccines directly from the manufacturers from its own resources.

While beneficiaries of 45 plus are getting certificates of vaccination with the photograph of Prime Minister Narendra Modi as in other parts of the country, but those falling in the 18-44 age bracket have photographs of Mamata Banerjee.

The government has started procuring vaccines directly from the manufacturers and arranging for inoculating the population. That is the reason it has been decided to use photograph of the CM on the certificates, a senior state official told PTI on condition of anonymity.

When contacted, state minister for Housing and outgoing Mayor of the city Firhad Hakim, who is also the chairman of the Kolkata Municipal Corporation board of administrators, justified the practice, saying since the Centre was not vaccinating 18-44 years of the population and the state is spending money for it, then there will be photograph of the CM.

All information regarding inoculation is there on the certifi-



cate. Starting from the batch number of the vaccine, there is also CoWIN Registration number. Besides, a special message of the CM, Hakim said.

Hakim said there is nothing unusual about this as the state governments of Punjab, Chhattisgarh and neighbouring Jharkhand have already started issuing similar vaccination certificates to people in the 18-44 years with photographs of their respective Chief Ministers.

But, the move has created confusion among some recipients of the jobs as whether they will be getting another certificate issued by the Central government through CoWIN having photographs of PM Narendra Modi, officials admitted.

Till Friday, the state government has spent nearly Rs 150 crore to procure vaccines to inoculate population in the 18-44 age group, an official said, adding that so far around 29 lakh people of this cat-

egory have been vaccinated.

Earlier controversy had erupted in Bengal after the Centre had started issuing certificates to people administered shots through CoWIN with Modi's photograph since the inoculation drive began January 16.

Amidst state polls, the Trinamool Congress had moved Election Commission of India (ECI) on the issue, stating that the PM's photograph on such certificates was violating the model code of conduct.

Following this, the PM's photograph was removed from the certificates and soon after the results of the elections were out, the images started resurfacing on the certificates of people getting inoculated.

Reacting to issuance of certificates with Banerjee's photo, BJP MP from Bankura Dr Subhas Sarkar, when contacted said it is petty politics of the TMC.

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Chandigarh, June 5: Farmers burnt copies of the Centre's three farm laws near residences of BJP leaders and at other places in Punjab Saturday as they observed 'Sampoorna Kranti Diwas' to mark the day when these legislations were promulgated as ordinances last year.

Farmers carrying black flags raised slogans against the BJP-led central government for not scrapping the legislations which, they said, will "destroy" the farming community.

Police personnel were deployed and barricades put up near the protest sites to maintain law and order. The call for observing

The call for observing 'Sampoorna Kranti Diwas' was given by the Samyukta Kisan Morcha, an umbrella body of protesting farmer unions spearheading the agitation against the farm laws

'Sampoorna Kranti Diwas' was given by the Samyukta Kisan Morcha, an umbrella body of protesting farmer unions spearheading the agitation against the farm laws.

Protests were held at many places including Amritsar, Jalandhar, Mohali, Abohar, Hoshiarpur, Barnala, Nawanshahr, Patiala, Chandigarh, Sirsa, Jind, Karnal, Panipat and Ambala. In Phagwara, farmers burnt

SAMPOORNA KRANTI DIWAS

Farmers burn copies of farm laws



Members of various farmers' organisations take part in protest against the Central government over three farm reform laws, near the residence of BJP leader Bhupesh Aggarwal, in Patiala, Saturday

PTI PHOTO

copies of the farm laws near the residence of Union minister Som Parkash at Urban Estate. The protesters assembled near the GT Road and marched towards his residence.

Police put up barricades on the road leading to Prakash's house to prevent protesters from reaching there, officials said.

The Union minister was not at home at the time of the protest.

The agitating farmers also held a protest near Prakash's residence in Mohali district. Police were deployed and barricades erected outside the minister's house to prevent any untoward incident.

In Chandigarh, a protest was held against the Centre for not repealing the farm laws, the main demand of the agitating farmers.

After being promulgated as ordinances on this day last year, the farm legislations were passed by Parliament in September. The president gave his assent to the bills later that month.

Scopes of farmers have been camping at Delhi's borders since November last year demanding that the Farmers' Produce Trade and Commerce (Promotion and Facilitation) Act, 2020; Farmers' (Empowerment and Protection) Agreement on Price Assurance

and Farm Services Act, 2020; and the Essential Commodities (Amendment) Act, 2020 be rolled back and a new law made to guarantee minimum support price (MSP) for their crops.

However, the government has maintained the laws are pro-farmer. Several rounds of talks between the farmers and the government have failed to break the deadlock over these contentious laws.

The government last held talks with farmer leaders January 22. The talks between the two sides came to a halt after a January 26 tractor parade by farmers in Delhi turned violent.

Punjab to launch use of emissions trading scheme

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Chandigarh, June 5: In a bid to address the problem of growing industrial air pollution, the Punjab government Saturday announced partnership with the Abdul Latif Jameel Poverty Action Lab (J-PAL) South Asia and the Energy Policy Institute at the University of Chicago (EPIC India) to launch the use of an emissions trading scheme (ETS).

The state's Industry and Commerce and the Science, Technology and Environment Departments would work with them to design and establish pollution markets in Punjab.

The partnership includes providing technical assistance and capacity building to public officials to effectively use data and research evidence from established and functioning emissions trading market in Surat in Gujarat.

As a first step in this partnership, the state government and the Punjab Pollution Control Board would also launch an ETS to regulate emissions from 200 dyeing industries in Ludhiana besides reducing particulate and greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions in the state.

Elaborating on the partnership, Principal Secretary Industries and Commerce Alok Shekhar said, "The state government is keen to combat environmental pollution through regulation that promises a win-win situation of cleaner production, coupled with lower compliance costs for industries."

ETS is one such initiative that can help regulate critically and severely polluted industrial belts in Punjab. In his address, Michael Greenstone, the Milton Friedman Distinguished Service Professor in Economics, Director of EPIC

and Co-Chair of Energy, Environment and Climate Change of J-PAL, said, Pollution reductions can be delivered - the world's first ETS for particulate pollution in Gujarat has already shown this.

Punjab is now becoming the second Indian state to adopt this pioneering vision. For various other Indian cities battling polluted air and expensive regulations, ETS has the potential to improve air quality and health, reduce the regulatory burden on industries, and decrease government enforcement expenditures.

Notably, this initiative is part of an ongoing partnership between the state government and J-PAL South Asia, wherein since 2017 J-PAL South Asia has worked with state departments to facilitate rigorous, policy-relevant research and the scale-up of successful programmes.

ETS offers a market-based approach to reduce air pollution in which governments set a cap on emission levels and distribute emissions permits among firms.

The approach involves using continuous emissions monitoring systems to send real-time and continuous readings of particulate emissions and enable better and more targeted regulatory oversight standards.

A randomised evaluation conducted by J-PAL South Asia of the world's first ever ETS for particulate matter across 350 highly polluting industries in Surat found evidence that the scheme offers a mechanism for improving air quality that is transparent and predictable.

Moreover, it also has the potential to transform the trade-off between environmental regulation and economic growth by lowering compliance costs for firms.



Crane operators busy at a garbage dumping ground on World Environment Day, in Amritsar, Saturday

PTI PHOTO

Owners happy as restaurants permitted to open for 3 hours

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kolkata, June 5: Owners of restaurants and cafes are happy with West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee's decision to allow restaurants to open for three hours and are waiting for the official notification to start business even for limited hours amid Covid-19 restrictions.

The owner of iconic Peter Cat and Mocambo in Park Street area, Nitin Kothari told PTI he is happy with the announcement and ready to open the premises of Mocambo from where both the restaurants can function.

As the window of three hours is a bit small, we have decided to only open Mocambo where both the platter of Peter Cat and Mocambo will be served in separate enclosures of the same property, Kothari said.

This means the unique Chello Kebab delicacy of Peter Cat will be served in the premises of Mocambo famed for Mixed Meat Rissoto, Chicken Pavlograd and Lamb meat preparations.

However we are happy with the announcement as it will mark a new beginning after closure of the restaurants for over a month since May 1, he said.

Kothari said the restaurant staff of two outlets situated on two sides of the road will be put up for work at the Mocambo outlet and all were being vaccinated.

Hotel and Restaurant Association of Eastern India President Sudesh Poddar said, "We are happy with



Kolkata is the first city in the country where the state government is allowing the restaurants to function in restricted capacity even for three hours. If the coronavirus cases substantially go down, we hope the government will allow us to open for more hours

SUDESH PODDAR | PRESIDENT, HOTEL AND RESTAURANT ASSN OF EASTERN INDIA

the three hour window from 5pm to 8pm and all the fine dining restaurants and bars will open following the norms once the state issues the formal notification in this regard."

"We will be opening with 50 per cent of the seating capacity adhering to all Covid-19 safety protocols once the notification comes," Poddar, also the owner of Manthan Restaurant, said.

Asked if the three hour window is not short, he said Kolkata is the first city in the country where the state government allowing the restaurants to function in restricted capacity even for three hours. If the coronavirus cases substan-

tially go down we hope the government will allow us to open for more hours.

The owner of Chowman, Oudh 1590 and Chapter 2 restaurant chains Debaditya Chaudhury said it is great news for the food and beverages industry but I personally don't think there will be much sale since the dine-in timing is only from 5pm - 8pm which is not the appropriate time for dinner.

We will still keep our restaurants open and maintain all the necessary protocols starting from QR code menu to staff hygiene etc, he said, adding they were waiting for the official notification from the government to open.

Expert body against holding board exams

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Kolkata, June 5: The expert committee formed by the Mamata Banerjee government to assess the possibility of conducting the board exams, is likely to give their opinion against any kind of exam during the pandemic situation.

The six-member committee that has already submitted the report to state Education Secretary Manish Jain has opined strongly against taking the examination of 12 lakh Madhyamik (Class 10) students but suggested that the government

may evaluate the 7.5 lakh Higher Secondary students through assessment, assignments and examinations from home.

The expert committee has suggested examinations from home for the Higher Secondary students. The board can send assignments to the students asking them to submit it within a scheduled time.

The board can only look for on-line examinations that are being taken by several schools and colleges all around the country but it is strictly against any kind of examination where the students will have to appear physically for giving the exam, a senior board member close to the expert committee told IANS on the condition of anonymity.

The West Bengal Council of Higher Secondary Education (WBCHSE) is in favour of conducting examinations for HS students. Sources said that the proposal of conducting HS board Exams 2021 at home instead of exam centres had come up in the meetings of the expert committee.

In the meeting, Mahua Das, president of WBCHSE said that if col-

lege/university students can take their exams from their homes, why is it not possible to hold board examinations from home

Higher Secondary is a gateway to higher education and so the committee is of the opinion that an examination in any form should be taken. It will not only help the students to evaluate themselves but at the same time it will allow the students to get prepared for the All-India exams, the member said.

Sources familiar with the matter said that the expert committee's report has been submitted to School Education Secretary Manish Jain, who will send the report to the Chief Minister's Office (CMO) soon.

The six members of the committee have separately expressed their views on the examinations.

The committee has strongly given its verdict against any kind of examinations for the Madhyamik students.

There are more than 12 lakh students across Bengal and it would be difficult to conduct any kind of examination for them in this pandemic situation, the official said.

Instead, the expert committee suggested evaluating the students on the basis of their exam in Class 11 and internal assessment. This assessment should be based on the students' overall performance all through the year, the expert committee suggested.

The state government formed an expert committee to review the entire situation and submit a report within 72 hours on the possibility and mechanism of conducting the exams amid the coronavirus outbreak. The 72 hours deadline ends Saturday.





The government seemed much keener on ensuring credit for what it was doing rather than ensuring that pandemics do not spread in India. The result was a certain amount of schizophrenia
AMARTYA SEN | NOBEL LAUREATE

ASSAM GETS 6TH NATIONAL PARK ON WORLD ENVIRONMENT DAY

Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma Saturday announced that the Raimona reserve forest in Kokrajhar under the Bodoland Territorial Region (BTR), bordering Bhutan, has been upgraded as the sixth national park of the state



of the day quote

In these troubled times, corona warriors are working day and night. Therefore, the state government has decided that doctors and medical workers employed in Covid-related works will be paid one month of their salary as incentive

HEMANT SOREN | CHIEF MINISTER, JHARKHAND

The BJP government runs tree plantation campaigns every year. But to date, it has not been able to give details about where and how many trees have been planted. In fact, the environment has suffered the most ever since BJP came to power

AKHILESH YADAV | SAMAJWADI PARTY PRESIDENT

In MP, building permission will be given on the mandatory clause that a tree be planted, even for constructing a house. This clause will be mandatory even if a house is being built under the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana

SHIVRAJ SINGH CHOUBHAN | CHIEF MINISTER, MP

Southwest monsoon advances into many coastal states: IMD



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, June 5: The southwest monsoon is likely to advance into Odisha, Jharkhand, parts of West Bengal and Bihar, the India Meteorological Department said Saturday, hinting at its good progress in the next 10 days.

The India Meteorological Department (IMD) said the southwest monsoon has further advanced into more parts of central Arabian Sea, entire coastal Karnataka, Goa, some parts of Maharashtra, most parts north interior Karnataka, some parts of Telangana and Andhra Pradesh, more parts of Tamil Nadu and central Bay of Bengal, and some parts of northeast Bay of Bengal.

However, a lull is expected in the rainfall activity June 7-8, Rajendra Jenamani of the National Weather Forecasting Centre of the IMD, said.

“But a low pressure area is expected to form in the Bay of Bengal by June 11. This will help in the progress of the monsoon and it is likely to advance into Odisha, Jharkhand, parts of West Bengal

The IMD has also made a forecast of a normal rainfall in June. It said no heatwave conditions are likely in the country over the next five days

and Bihar,” he said.

The monsoon set over Kerala on June 3, two days after its normal onset date. The IMD said maximum temperatures of more than 40 degrees Celsius were recorded at many places over west Rajasthan and at isolated places over Uttar Pradesh, Haryana, Saurashtra and Kutch in Gujarat and Odisha.

The highest maximum temperature of 43.2 degrees Celsius was recorded at Banda in east Uttar Pradesh Friday.

“No heatwave conditions are likely in the country over the next five days,” the IMD said.

Meanwhile, several parts of the country, including north India, are witnessing rainfall activity.

States ease lockdowns as Covid cases decline

Overall, India saw 120,529 new coronavirus infections emerge over the last 24 hours, while deaths rose by 3,380. The country's total case tally stands at 28.69 million while 344,082 people have died.

AGENCIES

New Delhi, June 5: Some of India's states are easing lockdown restrictions as coronavirus infections subside, with the world's second most-populous nation Saturday logging its lowest daily case count in nearly two months.

The national capital territory of Delhi, the seat of India's federal government, was among those relaxing restrictions and will allow shops to open on alternate days. Shops with even numbers will open on one day while those with odd numbers will open the next day. Private offices will also now be allowed to operate at 50% of normal staffing levels.

“The coronavirus situation in Delhi is slowly getting better,” Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal said in an online news conference as he announced that the state will build oxygen storage capacity of 420 tonnes.

Hospitals in Delhi had struggled to provide oxygen cylinders and beds to patients as infections surged but that wave began subsiding from the middle of last month.

Kejriwal said the state would in future be prepared to deal with 37,000 new cases a day. Its peak thus far was 28,395 new infections April 20.

In northern Uttar Pradesh, the country's most populous state, only night curfew restrictions remain for 55 of its 75 districts.



TN EXTENDS LOCKDOWN TILL JUNE 14

Announcing relaxations such as allowing shops selling essential commodities to reopen and government offices to resume work, Chief Minister M K Stalin Saturday announced extension of lockdown by one week till June 14 to combat Covid-19. Overall, though the spread of coronavirus has come under control in Tamil Nadu, it continued to be on the rise in 11 districts including Coimbatore and the Nilgiris, he said. Hence, such regions would have lesser relaxations and the rest of the state, relatively more, according to an official release.

“Districts which have positive cases under 600 have been given permission to open but with restrictions, while cities with over 600 positive cases will be under lockdown till the next order,” a local government spokesperson said.

In the industrialised western state of Maharashtra, the local government will allow malls, movie theatres, restaurants and offices to open regularly in districts where the positivity rate has fallen

below 5% from June 7.

In Prime Minister Narendra Modi's home state of Gujarat, also in the west, all government and private offices will be allowed to operate fully staffed from June 7, instead of the current restriction of 50%.

The Gujarat government has also eased restrictions on commercial activities, allowing shops in 36 cities to remain open for longer.

CIVILIAN'S DEATH

Tribesmen torch Assam Rifles post

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Kolkata, June 5: Angry Kuki tribesmen torched an Assam Rifles outpost in Manipur and burnt down two vehicles Saturday after a local man was allegedly killed by the troops Friday night.

The police said that tension prevailed in the Twilang area of Manipur's Kangpokpi district after the angry mob stormed the Gelnel outpost of the 44th Battalion of Assam Rifles.

One Gypsy and one Tata pick-up vehicle of the force were burnt down by the mob, which demanded the arrest of Major Alok Sathe, the Post Commander of F Company of the 44th Assam Rifles.

The mob alleged that Sathe along with a rifleman named Amar and two others in civil dress were responsible for shooting dead one Mangboulal Lhouvum at around 9 pm Friday.



Kuki Inpi leaders said the villagers in Gelnel (Banglabung) are convinced that Lhouvum, a truck helper, was killed without any provocation by Sathe and his accomplices at Chalwa village.

They said the villagers were enraged when the local police said that they could not arrest the Major and his men because they are covered by the Armed Forces Special Powers Act (AFSPA).

SHORT TAKES

BJP MLA Narinder Bragta dies of Covid

Shimla: Chief whip in the Himachal Pradesh Assembly and BJP MLA Narinder Bragta died due to Covid-19 at PGI Chandigarh Saturday morning, his son Chetan Bragta tweeted. Chetan Bragta, in a tweet, said his father succumbed to the virus after a long struggle against it. Chief Minister Jai Ram Thakur had visited PGI Chandigarh Friday evening to enquire about his health. Thakur termed his demise an irreparable loss for Himachal Pradesh, especially for Jubbal-Kotkhai.

Mamata's nephew TMC general secy

Kolkata: TMC supremo Mamata Banerjee Saturday elevated MP Abhishek Banerjee as the party's all India general secretary, a senior leader here said. Addressing a press meet, TMC leader Partha Chatterjee also said that the working committee has decided that one person will be allowed to hold just one post in the party, and the core committee has duly given its approval. “Our party chief Mamata Banerjee has nominated MP Abhishek Banerjee as the all India general secretary of the TMC,” Chatterjee said, following two crucial meetings earlier in the day.

TV actor gets judicial custody

Palghar: A Vasai Court Saturday sent arrested television actor Pearl V Puri to 14 days judicial custody, officials said. Puri, who was nabbed late Friday night on alleged charges of molesting and raping a five-year old girl two years ago, was produced before the Vasai Sessions Court Judge Aditi Kadam who granted Puri judicial custody for 14 days.

Plastic waste used to build roads in HP

Shimla: As part of Himachal Pradesh's initiative to use plastic waste to build roads, every year, about 60 tonnes of plastic waste are being collected to melt 190 km of roads, an official said Saturday. Speaking at the state-level virtual World Environment Day function, Principal Secretary KK Pant, said the state has taken many steps for environment protection, pollution control and climate change adaptation.

PAINT IT GREEN



Volunteers paint their bodies to spread social awareness on World Environment Day, in Bikaner, Saturday PTI PHOTO

Pak PM ready for talks if given Kashmir roadmap

AGENCIES

New Delhi, June 5: Prime Minister Imran Khan said Friday that Pakistan is ready to restart talks with arch-rival India if Delhi provides a roadmap towards restoring the previous status of the disputed Himalayan region of Kashmir.

The two nuclear-armed neighbours both control parts of Kashmir but claim it in full. In 2019, India withdrew Indian-ruled Kashmir's

autonomy in order to tighten its grip over the territory, sparking outrage in Pakistan, the downgrading of diplomatic ties and a suspension of bilateral trade.

“If there is a roadmap, then, yes, we will talk,” said Khan at his official residence in Islamabad.

Previously, Khan and his government have held that India would have to first reverse its 2019 steps for any normalisation process to begin. “Even if they give us a

roadmap, that these are the steps that we will take to basically undo what they did, which is illegal, against international law and United Nations resolutions... then that is acceptable,” Khan said.

Kashmir has been a flashpoint since India and Pakistan gained independence from British rule in 1947, and they have fought two wars over the region. Khan said he has always wanted a “civilized” and “open” relationship with India.

HC bans illegal use of 'Khadi' brand for business

So far, the KVIC has issued legal notices to over 1,000 private firms, including Fabindia, for misusing its brand name and selling products under the name of Khadi

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, June 5: Private entities involved in organising beauty pageants and other business activities by illegally using the brand name “Khadi” of Khadi and Village Industries Commission (KVIC) have been restrained by the Delhi High Court from carrying out any “misleading” activities in the name of Khadi.

The Noida-based 'Khadi Design Council of India' (KDCI) and 'Miss India Khadi Foundation' (MIKF) were accused by the KVIC of fraudulently using the brand name and

deceiving people.

The high court said the names of the two entities were “deceptively similar” to the KVIC's trademark ‘Khadi’ which amounted to violation of the trademark.

The high court also directed the defendants - 'Khadi Design Council of India', 'Miss India Khadi Foundation' and its self-proclaimed CEO Ankush Anami - to take down all their social media accounts on Instagram, YouTube and Facebook under the tradename 'Khadi Design Council of India' and 'Miss India Khadi'.

The high court accepted the ar-

guments of the KVIC that the defendants' websites and social media pages have been scripted and structured in a manner that gives the impression that they are the same as the KVIC or they are part of a government body providing the same services as the Khadi India.

“The same demonstrates the serious bad faith on part of the defendants and their intention to mislead the consumers and ride on the plaintiff's goodwill,” the KVIC alleged.

The KVIC alleged that the private entities were planning and advertising two events titled 'Miss India



Khadi' and 'National Khadi Designers Awards, 2019' in Goa from December 19 to 22, 2020, and thus creating a false impression

that the events are organized by the KVIC. Further, the defendant KDCI was duping people by promising 'Khadi Certification' to fash-

OXYGEN EXPRESS

Rlys crosses milestone of delivering 25K tonne of oxygen to states/UTs

The railways' special Oxygen Express trains started their deliveries April 24 in Maharashtra with a load of 126 tonnes of oxygen

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, June 5: The railways 'Oxygen Express' trains have crossed the milestone of delivering 25,000 tonnes of liquid medical oxygen across 39 cities in 15 states/UTs amid the Covid-19 outbreak, the national transporter said Saturday.

The Indian Railways has so far delivered more than 25,629 tonnes of liquid medical oxygen (LMO), in more than 1,503 tankers, to various states and Union territories (UTs) across the country.

While 368 Oxygen Express trains have completed their journey so far and brought relief to various states/UTs, seven loaded trains with more than 482 tonnes of LMO in 30 tankers are on their way.

Assam received its fifth Oxygen Express with 80 tonnes of LMO in four tankers from Jharkhand, whereas 3,000 tonnes oxygen was offloaded in Karnataka.

The railways' special Oxygen Express trains started their deliveries April 24 in Maharashtra with a load of 126 tonnes of oxygen.

The oxygen relief by Oxygen Express so far reached 15 states/UT, namely Uttarakhand, Karnataka,



Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu, Haryana, Telangana, Punjab, Kerala, Delhi, Uttar Pradesh, Jharkhand and Assam.

So far, 614 tonnes of oxygen has been offloaded in Maharashtra, nearly 3,797 tonnes in Uttar Pradesh, 656 tonnes in Madhya Pradesh, 5,790 tonnes in Delhi, 2,212 tonnes in Haryana, 98 tonnes in Rajasthan, 3,097 tonnes in Karnataka, 320 tonnes in Uttarakhand, 2,787 tonnes in Tamil Nadu, 2,602 tonnes in Andhra Pradesh, 225 tonnes in Punjab, 513

tonnes in Kerala, 2,474 tonnes in Telangana, 38 tonnes in Jharkhand and 400 tonnes in Assam.

Criss-crossing the country, the Indian Railways is picking up oxygen from places like Hapa, Baroda, Mundra in the west, and Rourkela, Durgapur, Tatanagar, Angul in the east, and then delivering it to Uttarakhand, Karnataka, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu, Haryana, Telangana, Punjab, Kerala, Delhi, Uttar Pradesh and Assam, in complex operational route planning scenarios.

national

of the day quote

People were charged ₹1,560 for a single dose of Covishield which was bought for ₹309 by the Punjab government and sold to the private hospitals for ₹1,000

The state government has decided not to allow new thermal power plants, and has instead realised the effort of green-clean energy by generating 9,000 MW of wind and 5,000 MW of solar energy

Today we transferred ₹749.55 crore to the Karnataka Building and Other Construction Workers Welfare Board. This will benefit 25 lakh registered workers who will get ₹3,000

SHORT TAKES

646 docs died of Covid in 2nd wave

New Delhi: As many as 646 doctors lost their lives in the fight against Covid-19 during the second wave of the pandemic, the Indian Medical Association (IMA) said Saturday. Delhi reported the maximum number of fatalities among doctors at 109, followed by Bihar (97), Uttar Pradesh (79), Rajasthan (43), Jharkhand (39), Gujarat (37), Andhra Pradesh (35), Telangana (34), Tamil Nadu (32), West Bengal (30), and Maharashtra and Odisha (23).

HP govt cancels XII board examinations

Shimla: The Himachal Pradesh government Saturday cancelled the class 12 board examinations for the year 2020-21 and also extended the ongoing 'Corona curfew' till June 14, Education Minister Govind Singh Thakur said. He said the decisions were taken at a cabinet meeting chaired by Chief Minister Jai Ram Thakur here. On cancelling the 10+2 board exams, he said the HP Board of School Education would devise a formula for calculating the awards for students keeping in view the formula being devised by the CBSE.

Chunks of raw meat found in temple

Dhubri: Five persons were arrested Saturday for allegedly placing chunks of raw meat inside a temple in Assam's Dhubri district, a police officer said. Tension had gripped Jinkata Part-II village in Golakgunj police station area Friday after pieces of meat were found in the Kali temple, he said. Locals took to the streets, seeking immediate arrest of the culprits, Additional Superintendent of Police (ASP) Rosyrani Sarma said.

All felines in Ranchi zoo put to Covid test

Ranchi: All 21 felines in Jharkhand's Ranchi zoo - right from 1.3 years tiger cubs to 14-year-old are undergoing Covid-19 test to rule out chances of infection in the wake of death of tiger Shiva down with fever for three days, an official said Saturday. The decision for mandatory Covid test of felines was taken amid coronavirus scare though 10-year old tiger Shiva, who died Thursday night tested negative in RAT but results of RT-PCR are awaited.



Despite having a year's time to prepare for Covid, why government announced a false victory over the pandemic and decreased the number of hospital beds instead of increasing it?

TWITTER RESTORES VERIFIED BLUE TICK OF VICE PREZ'S PERSONAL HANDLE
Microblogging social media site Twitter on removed the blue verified tick badge from the personal handle of India's Vice President M Venkaiah Naidu for a few hours. The blue tick badge was however later restored after a few hours



Vax inequity worsens as countryside languishes

VACCINATION RATES IN RURAL AREAS HAVE ALSO BEEN DEPRESSED BECAUSE OF PATCHIER INTERNET ACCESS TO USE THE COMPLEX ONLINE SYSTEM FOR SIGNING UP FOR SHOTS

AGENCIES

New Delhi, June 5: Urban Indians are getting Covid-19 shots much faster than the hundreds of millions of people living in the countryside, government data shows, reflecting rising inequity in the nation's immunisation drive.

In 114 of India's least developed districts - collectively home to about 176 million people - authorities have administered just 23 million doses in total.

That's the same number of doses as have been administered across nine major cities - New Delhi, Mumbai, Kolkata, Chennai,



Bengaluru, Hyderabad, Pune, Thane and Nagpur - which com-

bined have half the population.

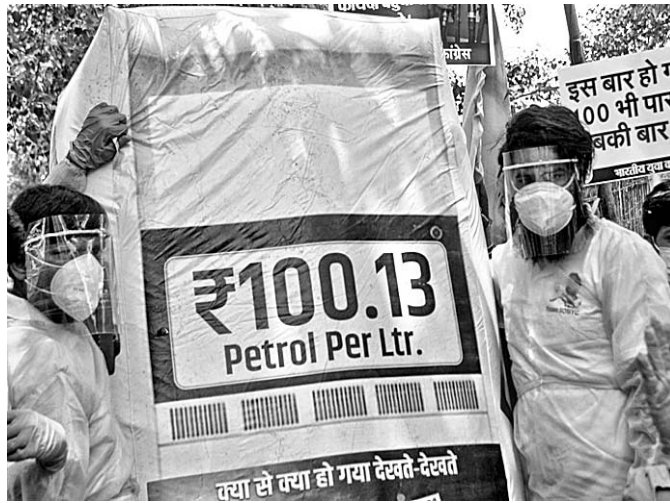
The disparity was even stronger last month, after the government allowed private sales of vaccines for adults aged under 45 years, an offer which favoured residents of cities with larger private hospital networks. For the first four weeks of May, those nine cities gave 16% more doses than the combined rural districts, data from the government's Co-WIN vaccination portal shows.

India has administered more than 222 million doses since starting its campaign in mid-January - only China and the United States have administered more - but it

LUCRATIVE DEALS

India's Supreme Court criticised the government's handling of the vaccination programme and ordered it to provide a breakdown of shots given in rural and urban areas. "Private hospitals are not equally spread out" across the country and "are often limited to bigger cities with large populations", the top court said in its order dated May 31. "As such, a larger quantity will be available in such cities, as opposed to the rural areas," it said. Private hospitals may prefer to sell doses "for lucrative deals directly to private corporations who wish to vaccinate their employees". Dr Rajib Dasgupta, head of the Centre of Social Medicine and Community Health at New Delhi's Jawaharlal Nehru University, said the risk of inequity was that parts of India would build up immunity disproportionately. "It can leave the rural population relatively more vulnerable."

IYC stages protest over rising petrol, diesel prices



INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, June 5: The Indian Youth Congress (IYC) Saturday staged a protest over the rising prices of petrol and diesel, saying the government has thrown the country's economy into disaster.

Hundreds of IYC activists along with its national President Srinivas BV staged protest outside Petroleum Ministry here and raised slogans against the government.

Srinivas accused the BJP government of constantly giving a blow to the people who have been stricken by its policies.

Launching attack on the government, Srinivas said that the government, which seeks 'opportunity in disaster', has thrown the country's economy into disaster.

He said, "On the one hand the economy is crumbling, on the other, the prices of petrol and diesel are skyrocketing."

He also said that when the BJP was in opposition, it demonstrated on the streets against the increase of ₹5 per litre in the price of petrol and diesel, but today when there is all-round inflation, everyone is silent.

He said that today the Youth Congress tried to wake up the government from its slumber.

He also said that in many parts of the country, petrol has crossed ₹100 per litre mark while diesel has crossed ₹90 per litre.

The IYC leader said that the prices are increasing day by day, the shameful thing is that despite doing such open loot, the BJP government is busy blaming the Congress.

"The Narendra Modi government has made such a dent in the budget of the common man, who is unable to cope with, is at the mercy of the government that is setting a new record in

Inflation is already on the rise. The fire that is raging in the prices of petrol and diesel will increase the inflation. We demand that the increased prices should be withdrawn with immediate effect

RAHUL RAO | IYC NATIONAL MEDIA IN-CHARGE

petrol, diesel price every day," Srinivas said.

IYC National General Secretary and Delhi In-charge Bhajya Pawar said that farmers, youth, labourers, traders, women are suffering due to rising inflation, the anti-people face of the RSS and BJP has been exposed.

IYC National media in-charge Rahul Rao said that this government and its ministers have no understanding of the economy.

"Inflation is already on the rise. The fire that is raging in the prices of petrol and diesel will increase the inflation. We demand that the increased prices should be withdrawn with immediate effect and relief should be given to the people suffering from inflation and recession by returning the hike in excise duty," Rao said, adding that when the BJP was in opposition, it used to protest on the road with a gas cylinder at a slight increase, but today all the BJP leaders are silent, the people of the country will never forgive this behaviour.

Climate change, toxic air remain issues of deep concern

AS PER THE 'STATE OF INDIA'S ENVIRONMENT 2021' REPORT, POOR AIR QUALITY WAS THE FOURTH LEADING RISK FACTOR FOR EARLY DEATH WORLDWIDE IN 2019, SURPASSED ONLY BY HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE, TOBACCO USE, AND POOR DIET

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, June 5: As the world celebrated Environment Day Saturday, climate change and toxic smog remained issues of deep concern for India with environmental experts emphasising that clean air must not be considered "a luxury but a basic human right".

Experts said while air pollution was a leading cause of asthma, stroke, lung cancer and premature deaths, climate change has a sizable impact on health too as it acts as a driver of disease migration affecting the lives of many.

"Let's not make clean air a luxury. It's a basic human right. People are being forced to breathe in polluted air and are faced with a terrible health crisis. We have wit-

nessed how air pollution and climate crisis continues impacting human lives even in this Covid pandemic," said Avinash Chanchal, Senior Climate Campaigner, Greenpeace India.

While climate change displaced as many as 50 lakh people in India in 2019, air pollution took 16.7 lakh lives the same year, the report said.

Speaking about the impact of air pollution, Chanchal said it was a serious health hazard and needs immediate attention and implementation of a comprehensive clean air action plan.

"We need to tackle air pollution because it's a serious public health hazard and a leading cause of asthma, stroke, lung cancer and premature deaths.



"The air pollution crisis became a key concern for the people across the country. We are witnessing its impact in our everyday lives. There are many cities across the countries that are just as polluted as Delhi.

This indicates that air pollution is a regional issue and the solution to this crisis also needs immediate attention and implementation of a comprehensive clean air action plan at regional levels

AIIMS Divyang Federation demands vax, compensation

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, June 5: The Divyang Federation of the All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) in Delhi demanded immediate attention on some important issues, including vaccination for all dependants of staff in the 18-44 age group, and compensation of ₹50 lakh for the families of those who fell prey to Covid-19 while serving in the hospital during the second wave of the pandemic.

In a letter to AIIMS Director, SD Chauhan, the President of the Divyang Federation at AIIMS, said, "While employees are doing their best to serve the nation during the pandemic, certain facilities are required to be made available for the employees to boost their morale."

Seeking immediate attention of the authority, Chauhan further stated that though many employees have been vaccinated as per the guidelines of the government, many of EHS dependants (18-44 age groups) could not get the job due to the rush for registration and shortage of vaccine doses. "We request you to get them



While employees are doing their best to serve the nation during the pandemic, certain facilities are required to be made available for the employees to boost their morale

SD CHAUHAN | PRESIDENT OF THE DIVYANG FEDERATION AT AIIMS

vaccinated at AIIMS itself with immediate effect," the letter said. It also demanded additional compensation for its employees.

"We demand that an immediate compensation of ₹50 lakh is given to the families of the deceased persons by AIIMS under the special budget and a policy be made to provide them with a job," the letter said.

MIGRANTS' MISERY



Migrants with their family members board on a tempo to reach their native place, during second wave of Covid-19 pandemic, at NH-33 in Barhi, in Hazaribagh district, Saturday

CVC tightens rules for retired govt officials

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Kolkata, June 5: Central Vigilance Commission (CVC) has directed the secretaries of all the Central government ministries and departments, chief executives and chief vigilance officers of all public sector undertakings to get vigilance clearance before employing a retired official on contractual or consultancy basis.

Interestingly enough, the letter came only a few days after the West Bengal government engaged former Chief Secretary Alapan Bandyopadhyay as the chief advisor to Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee. In a surprise development last

AFTER ALAPAN SAGA

Monday, Bandyopadhyay, who was given an extension of three months, opted for his normal superannuation scheduled May 31.

Alleging that the decision for Central deputation was fallout of the Centre's vendetta politics, Banerjee appointed Bandyopadhyay as the Chief Political Advisor to the CM.

Thursday evening, Bandyopadhyay replied to a show-cause letter sent to him on the ground that he refused to comply with the lawful directions of the Central government, violating Section 51 (b) of the Disaster Management Act, 2005.

2 institutes sign MoU to boost medicinal plants production

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, June 5: The National Medicinal Plant Board (NMPB) and the National Botanical Research Institute (CSIR-NBRI) have signed an MoU for extending joint collaborative efforts to boost the cultivation and production of medicinal plants and herbs in India.

The MoU will facilitate development of Quality Planting Material (QPM) of medicinal plants and herbs identified by NMPB, help in establishment of their nurseries for QPM, development, promotion, conservation and cultivation of the appropriate medicinal plants in different agro-climatic zones, including the threatened medicinal plant species and plants for the high-altitude regions.

Through this collaboration, NMPB will support CSIR-NBRI in carrying out the potential medicinal plant species with high commercial value for the germplasm collection or conservation and establishment of nursery seed banks, and gene banks. The MoU was signed Friday.

NBRI while undertaking the survey of medicinal plants will work in coherence with NMPB in the desired direction.

The outreaches of NMPB and its implementing agencies like State Medicinal Plants Boards (SMPBs), Regional-cum-facilitation centres will work together under the ambit of this MoU. Working under the Ministry of Ayush, NMPB is mandated to coordinate all matters relating to medicinal plants and support policies and programmes for growth of trade, export, conservation and cultivation of medicinal plants.



Our government is ready to support the Iraqi parliamentary elections slated for October 10, according to an official statement issued in Baghdad
EMMANUEL MACRON | PRESIDENT, FRANCE

MEXICO TO HOLD LARGEST EVER POLLS

Mexico is gearing up for the largest ever mid-term elections in the country's history Sunday, with thousands of candidates vying to fill more than 20,000 public posts, according to authorities



of the day quote

The focus was on the most pressing problem our region faces, getting people vaccinated against Covid-19 as quickly as possible



DAMIEN O'CONNOR | TRADE AND EXPORT GROWTH MINISTER, NEW ZEALAND

I have urged the G7 wealthy democracies and other countries to keep up fiscal support for their economic recoveries and to make investments to fight climate change and inequality



JANET YELLEN | TREASURY SECRETARY, US

Pakistan's contribution to global warming and climate change is minimal. Rich countries, which contribute significantly more, have a greater responsibility to provide funds to ones like ours so that we can fight climate change



IMRAN KHAN | PRIME MINISTER, PAKISTAN

SHORT TAKES

Taliban captures Doab district

Kabul: Taliban militants have captured another district in Afghanistan's eastern province of Nuristan, adding to recent military gains, officials said Saturday. Provincial councillor Saidullah Nuristani told dpa news agency that government forces have abandoned Doab district after 20 days of resistance. According to Nuristani, the militants had blocked all the supply routes to the district, forcing the government forces to evacuate the district after being unable to receive any food supplies.

Erdogan vows to save sea

Istanbul: Turkey's president promised Saturday to rescue the Marmara Sea from an outbreak of "sea snout" that is alarming marine biologists and environmentalists. A huge mass of marine mucilage, a thick, slimy substance made up of compounds released by marine organisms, has bloomed in Turkey's Marmara, as well as in the adjoining Black and Aegean Seas. President Erdogan said untreated waste dumped into the Marmara Sea and climate change had caused the sea snout bloom.

2 killed, 6 missing in coal accident

Beijing: Two persons were killed and six others went missing following a gas outburst in a coal mine in central China's Henan Province, official media reported on Saturday. The accident happened at around 5:50 pm on Friday at a coal mine operated by Hebi Coal and Electric Co Ltd in Hebi City in Henan. Two people were killed in the mishap, state-run CGTN reported. Search and rescue efforts are continuing, local officials said.

Pfizer vax jab gets approval

London: Moderna and Pfizer have released data suggesting that their vaccines are well tolerated in adolescents and highly effective in preventing COVID-19. Canada, the US and the EU have already authorised the Pfizer vaccine in children as young as 12. And the UK has just approved the use of the Pfizer vaccine in children aged 12 to 15. But there may be a case for holding out on an immediate rollout, for several reasons. Whether a vaccine is beneficial for someone depends on three things: how likely they are to become seriously ill from the infection, how effective the vaccine is, and the risks of vaccination.

FATF's regional body retains Pak on 'enhanced follow-up'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Islamabad, June 5: The Asia Pacific Group (APG) on Money Laundering, a regional affiliate of FATF, has retained Pakistan on "enhanced follow-up" status for sufficient outstanding requirements, while improving the country's rating on 21 of the 40 technical recommendations of the global watchdog against money laundering and terror financing.

Pakistan was put on the grey list by the Paris-based Financial Action Task Force (FATF) in June 2018 and the country has been struggling to come out of it.

The second Follow-Up Report (FUR) on Mutual Evaluation of Pakistan released by the APG also downgraded the country on one criteria.

The report said Pakistan was re-rated to 'compliant' status on five counts and on 15 others to 'largely compliant' and on yet another count to 'partially compliant'. Dawn newspaper reported that overall, Pakistan is now fully 'compliant' with seven recommendations and 'largely compliant' with 24 others.

The country is 'partially compliant' with seven recommendations and 'non-compliant' with two out of a total 40 recommendations.

All in all, Pakistan is now compliant or largely compliant with 31 out of 40 FATF recommenda-



Pakistan was put on the grey list by the Paris-based FATF in June 2018 and the country has been struggling to come out of it

The report said Pakistan was re-rated to 'compliant' status on five counts and on 15 others to 'largely compliant' and on yet another count to 'partially compliant'

tions. The reporting date for this evaluation was October 1, 2020, which means Islamabad may have made further progress since then that would be evaluated at a later stage.

"Pakistan will move from enhanced (expedited) to enhanced follow-up, and will continue to report back to the APG on progress to strengthen its implementation of anti-money laundering and combating financing terror (AML/CFT) measures," the APG said. Pakistan submitted its third progress report in February 2021 which is yet to be evaluated.

"Overall, Pakistan has made notable progress in addressing the technical compliance deficiencies identified in its Mutual Evaluation Report (MER) and has been re-rated on 22 recommendations," the APG added.

ENVIRONMENT DAY

'Phase out carbon or lose out on contracts'

AGENCIES

London, June 5: Boris Johnson's government told companies to publish their carbon reduction plans and commit to phasing out greenhouse gas emissions altogether by 2050, or lose out on large UK state contracts.

Firms that haven't committed to so-called net zero emissions or published a "clear and credible" carbon reduction plan by September won't be allowed to bid for contracts worth more than 5 million pounds (\$7.1 million) a year, the Cabinet Office said in an emailed statement.

Johnson is seeking to position the UK as a leader in the battle against climate change as he carves out a post-Brexit identity for the nation, and Saturday's announcement, timed for World Environment Day, means the government is using its 290 billion pounds of annual procurement to push businesses into swifter action to slash emissions.

"It's important we use this purchasing power to help transform our economy to net zero," Minister for Efficiency and Transformation Theodore Agnew said. "Requiring companies to report and commit to reducing their carbon emissions before bidding for public work is a key part of our world-leading approach."

The UK hosts a major round of United Nations climate talks in Glasgow in November, and Johnson has unveiled a succession of ever-



Johnson is seeking to position the UK as a leader in the battle against climate change as he carves out a post-Brexit identity for the nation

more ambitious targets in an effort to spur international and domestic action.

The UK has a legally-binding goal to phase out net emissions by 2050, and Johnson has announced interim plans to reduce them by 68% by 2030 and 78% by 2035, from 1990 levels - the most ambitious targets among major economies.

The announcement also adds to government efforts to spur action from business, after Chancellor of the Exchequer Rishi Sunak in November said the UK would compel large companies and financial institutions to report their climate risks by 2025.

Modi, Jinping can solve Sino-India issues: Putin

With Russia publicly critical of the Quad, Putin said that though it was not up to Moscow to assess how any nation should participate in an initiative and to what extent they should build their relations with other countries

AGENCIES

St. Petersburg, June 5: Asserting that both Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Chinese President Xi Jinping are "very responsible" leaders, Russian President Vladimir Putin Saturday said they both are capable of solving Sino-India issues, and cautioned against any interference from "extra-regional power" in the process.

With Russia publicly critical of the Quad, the four-nation grouping of India, the US, Japan and Australia, Putin said that though it was not up to Moscow to assess how any nation should participate in an initiative and to what extent they should build their relations with other countries but no partnership should be aimed at making friends against anyone.

The Russian president's remarks, in response to a question on Moscow's view on Quad as well as India's participation in the grouping, were a veiled reference to the Chinese claim that the grouping is to contain Beijing's influence in the strategic Indo-Pacific region.

He also asserted that there were no "contradictions" in Russia's partnership with India and the ties between Moscow and Beijing.

"Yes, I do know that there are some issues related to India China



The skyline with Chao Phraya River is photographed during sunset in Bangkok, Thailand

REUTERS

NIGERIA INDEFINITELY SUSPENDS TWITTER

REUTERS

Abuja, June 5: Nigeria said Friday it had indefinitely suspended Twitter's activities, two days after the social media giant removed a post from President Muhammadu Buhari that threatened to punish regional secessionists.

Information Minister Lai Mohammed said the government had acted because of "the persistent use of the platform for activities that are capable of undermining Nigeria's corporate existence". Mohammed did not spell out what form the suspension would take or give more details



on the undermining activities. His ministry also announced Twitter's suspension on Twitter

When asked about the details of the suspension, a ministerial aide told Reuters: "Wait and see how things will turn out."

As of the early hours of Saturday, Twitter's website was inaccessible in Nigeria on some mobile carriers, while its app and website

Twitter is investigating its deeply concerning suspension of operations by the Nigerian government, and will provide updates soon

worked on others, according to Reuters tests in Lagos and Abuja. Twitter is investigating its "deeply concerning" suspension of operations by the Nigerian government, and "will provide updates when we know more," the company said in a statement.

TORRENTIAL RAINS KILL SIX IN SL; FIVE OTHERS MISSING



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Colombo, June 5: Torrential rains battered Sri Lanka Saturday, resulting in flooding, mudslides, and the death of six people, while five others were reported missing, officials said.

This is the third consecutive day of heavy rains, which began to lash six districts in the country's southwest Thursday night.

On Saturday, over 20 centimetres of rain was recorded. Officials said at least 5,000 people have been displaced till now. Houses, farms and roads have been inundated. News channels showed stills of water-logged main roads.

A family of four died when a heavy mound of earth crashed into their house in Devanagala village in Kegalle district, about 85 kilometers from capital Colombo, Disaster Management officials said. "We have deployed the three armed forces and rescue officials in the badly-hit areas," said disaster management official Pradeep Kodippilly. The Navy has been conducting rescue operations in inundated areas.

D Abeywardena, a senior irrigation department official, said sluice gates of all reservoirs have been opened.

'There is stuff': Enduring mysteries trail US report on UFOs

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Washington, June 5: The blob, captured on distant, fuzzy video by Navy pilots, seems to skitter just above the ocean waves at improbable speed, with no discernible means of propulsion or lift. "Oh my gosh, man," one aviator says to another as they laugh at the oddity. "What... Is it?" "Is it a bird? A plane? Super drone? An extra-terrestrial something?"

The US government has been taking a hard look at unidentified flying objects like this one. A report summarising what the US knows about "unidentified aerial phenomena" — better known as UFOs — is expected to be made public this month.

There won't be an alien unmasking. Two officials briefed on the report say it found no extra-ter-

restrial link to the sightings reported and captured on video. The report won't rule out a link to another country, according to the officials, who spoke on condition of anonymity because they weren't authorised to discuss it.

While the broad conclusions have now been reported, the full report may still present a broader picture of what the government knows. The anticipation surrounding the report shows how a topic normally confined to science fiction and a small, often dismissed group of researchers has hit the mainstream. Worried about national security threats from adversaries, lawmakers ordered an investigation and public accounting of phenomena that the government has been loath to talk about for generations.

"There is stuff flying in our air-



space," Republican Sen. Marco Rubio of Florida, one of the senators who pressed for the probe, recently told Fox News. "We don't know what it is. We need to find out."

Congress late last year instructed the director of national intelligence to provide "a detailed analysis of unidentified aerial phenomena

data" from multiple agencies and report in 180 days. That time is about up. The intelligence office wouldn't say this past week when the full document will be out.

The bill passed by Congress asks the intelligence director for "any incidents or patterns that indicate a potential adversary may have achieved breakthrough aerospace capabilities that could put United States strategic or conventional forces at risk."

The chief concern is whether hostile countries are fielding aerial technology so advanced and weird that it befuddles and threatens the world's largest military power

achieved breakthrough aerospace capabilities that could put United States strategic or conventional forces at risk."

The chief concern is whether hostile countries are fielding aerial technology so advanced and weird that it befuddles and threatens the world's largest military power. But when lawmakers talk about it, they tend to leave them-

selves a little wiggle room in case it's something else — whether more prosaic than a military rival or, you know, more cosmic.

"Right now there are a lot of unanswered questions," Democratic Rep. Adam Schiff of California told NBC this week. "If other nations have capabilities that we don't know of, we want to find out. If there's some explanation other than that, we want to learn that, too."

Luis Elizondo, former head of the Pentagon's Advanced Aerospace Threat Identification Program, said he didn't believe that the sightings were of a foreign power's technology in part because it would have been nearly impossible to keep that secret. Elizondo has accused the Defense Department of trying to discredit him and says there's much more information that the US has kept classified.

of the day quote

The seafaring industry should not get hampered due to non-vaccination and emphasised that all efforts should be made to get seafarers vaccinated before joining their scheduled duties on board

MANSUKH MANDAVIYA | UNION MINISTER

We are excited to launch Zyp Electric's last-mile delivery services with our 100 IoT and AI-enabled e-scooters in Hyderabad. We plan to expand to a fleet of 500 EVs in the next 3-4 months in the city

AKASH GUPTA | CO-FOUNDER AND CEO, ZYPP ELECTRIC

Governments are required to deal with the pandemic and provide an effective response at policy levels, to balance business continuity, income security and above everything, well-being of all

SANTOSH GANGWAR | LABOUR MINISTER

SHORT TAKES

'Economy poised for sustained growth'

Rome: Italy's economy is poised to start a period of "sustained growth", according to the country's National Institute of Statistics (ISTAT). The institute Friday predicted that the country's economy would grow 4.7% this year and 4.4% in 2022, reports Xinhua news agency. If that proves accurate, it means the economy will have by next year more than recovered from the 8.9 per cent contraction recorded in 2020 amid the lockdowns and economic problems sparked by the coronavirus pandemic.

Paytm loss narrows to ₹1,704 cr in FY21

New Delhi: Digital payments firm Paytm has narrowed its consolidated loss to Rs 1,704 crore in 2020-21 from Rs 2,943.32 crore in 2019-20, according to the company's annual report. The company has reported narrowing of loss for the second consecutive year in FY21. Paytm slashed marketing cost by about 62% to Rs 533 crore in FY21 from Rs 1,397 crore a year ago.

I-T dept to launch new e-filing portal

New Delhi: The Income Tax Department Saturday said it will launch on June 7 a new e-filing portal which would be integrated with immediate processing of Income Tax Returns (ITRs) for quick refund issuance. The portal, www.Incometax.Gov.In, to be launched on June 7, is aimed at providing taxpayer convenience and seamless experience to taxpayers, the Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT) said in a statement.

FM meets heads of insurers

New Delhi: Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman Saturday reviewed the progress made under the Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Package (PMGKP) insurance scheme for health workers fighting COVID-19 and asked insurers to accelerate the disbursement of pending claims under the Pradhan Mantri Jeevan Jyoti Bima Yojana (PMJJBY). During a virtual meeting with the heads of insurance companies, she stressed on the importance of streamlining the process and documentation requirements under the schemes so that the claims are disbursed speedily, an official statement said.



Indusind Bank is determined to take a leadership position in mitigating the impact of climate change through committing long term targets and deploying a strategy to invest in clean energy and energy efficient projects

ROOPA SATISH | HEAD (CORPORATE & INVESTMENT BANKING), CSR & SUSTAINABLE BANKING, INDUSIND BANK

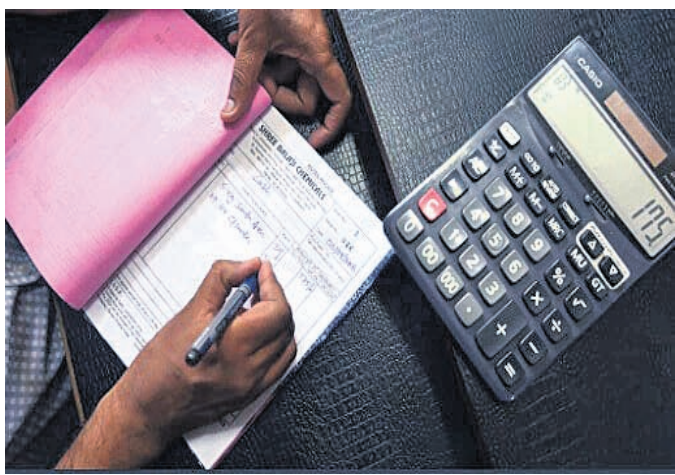
NHPC SIGNS e-MOBILITY PACT

As part of its initiative towards environment protection, NHPC Limited, has signed E-Mobility Agreements with Convergence Energy Services Limited, a wholly owned subsidiary of Energy Efficiency Services Limited for leasing of 25 EVs and supply of 3 EV fast chargers to NHPC



GST collection for May remain over ₹1L cr-mark

Though the GST revenues in May are lower than the record Rs 1.41L cr collections made in the previous month, they are still significant as most tax experts had feared that the real impact of the pandemic in different parts of the country would pull down GST collections significantly in May



"The revenues for the month of May 2021 are 65 per cent higher than the GST revenues collected in the same month last year," the Finance Ministry said in a statement.

"During the month, revenues from import of goods were 56 per cent higher, while the revenues from domestic transaction (including import of services) were 69 per cent higher than the revenues from these sources during the same month last year," it added.

According to the statement, the gross GST revenue collected in May 2021 was Rs 1,02,709 crore of which CGST was Rs 17,592 crore, SGST Rs 22,653 crore, IGST Rs 53,199 crore (including Rs 26,002 crore collected on import of goods) and Cess Rs 9,265 crore (including Rs 868 crore collected on import of goods).

The revenue figures include GST collections from domestic transactions till June 4 since the taxpayers were given various re-

lief measures in the form of waiver or reduction in interest on delayed return filing for 15 days for the return filing month of May in the wake of the second wave of the pandemic.

In May, the government settled Rs 15,014 crore to CGST and Rs 11,653 crore to SGST from IGST as regular settlement, the statement said.

With May collections staying above the Rs 1 lakh crore-mark, it is the eighth month in a row when GST revenues crossed the threshold. The collections are surprising as most of the states have been under strict lockdown due to the pandemic.

In addition, while the taxpayers with a turnover of above Rs 5 crore had to file their returns by June 4, which they would have otherwise filed by May 20, smaller taxpayers with turnover less than Rs 5 crore still have time till the first week of July to file their returns without any late fee and interest.

Hero Electric aims to sell 1 lakh 2W EVs in 2021

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, June 5: Hero Electric has targeted to sell around 1 lakh two-wheeler electric vehicles in current year, which will double in sale from previous year, said Sohinder Gill, CEO, Hero Electric. During virtual press conference, Gill said that the company is very hopeful to make double sale in current year of two-wheeler electric vehicles.

"The performance this year has been promising and we will manage to procure 10-15% growth over the last few years. Since the launch of our first e-cycles we've strived to make a difference and Hero stands by its vision of promoting electric vehicle with the no emission mission," he added.

The CEO further added, "With the electric two wheelers industry poised to grow by double digits over the next two years, all eyes are on how the policy makers and various stakeholders come together to encourage the shift. With close to 3 lakh electric two-wheelers in India, the company has been delivering sustainable travel solutions from the past 13 years."



The company now looks to expand its footprint with strategic warehouses to reach out to its vast network of over 600 dealers spread across tier 1, 2, 3 & 4 towns of the country. The company also plans to expand its manufacturing facility in Ludhiana to ramp up production from the existing 70,000 per annum to a significantly higher 2.5 lakhs per annum to further drive adoption of the green mobility solution.

G7 nations reach historic deal to tax big MNCs



REUTERS

New York, June 5: A group of the world's richest nations reached a landmark deal Saturday to close cross-border tax loopholes used by some of the world's biggest companies. The Group of Seven said it would back a minimum global corporation tax rate of at least 15%, and put in place measures to ensure taxes were paid in the countries where businesses operate.

"After years of discussion, G7 finance ministers have reached a historic agreement to reform the global tax system to make it fit for the global digital age," British finance minister Rishi Sunak told reporters.

The accord, which could form the basis of a global pact next month, is aimed at ending a decades-long "race to the bottom" in which countries have competed to attract corporate giants with ultra-low tax rates and exemptions.

That has in turn cost their public coffers hundreds of billions of dollars - a shortfall they now need to recoup all the more urgently to pay for the huge cost of propping up economies ravaged by the coronavirus crisis.

After years of discussion, G7 finance ministers have reached a historic agreement to reform the global tax system to make it fit for the global digital age

RISHI SUNAK | FINANCE MINISTER, BRITAIN

Ministers met face-to-face in London for the first time since the start of the Covid-19 pandemic.

According to a copy of the final agreement seen by Reuters, the G7 ministers said they would "commit to a global minimum tax of at least 15% on a country by country basis".

"We commit to reaching an equitable solution on the allocation of taxing rights, with market countries awarded taxing rights on at least 20% of profit exceeding a 10% margin for the largest and most profitable multinational enterprises," the text added.

The ministers also agreed to move towards making companies declare their environmental impact in a more standard way so investors can decide more easily whether to fund them, a key goal for Britain.

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, June 5: India's gross Good and Services Tax (GST) revenue collections remained above the psychological mark of Rs 1 lakh crore, clocking a high of Rs 1,02,709 crore in May 2021, beating all the expectations of lower collections in the wake of the disruptions caused by the second wave of the Covid-19 pandemic.

BIZ BUZZ

Shyam Steel donates O₂ concentrators

Bhubaneswar: Supporting Odisha's ongoing battle against Covid19, Shyam Steel India donated oxygen concentrators to the state government. The company handed over 20 number of oxygen concentrators to the Odisha State



Medical Corporation Ltd and Soubhagya Ranjan Ransingh, General Manager (Equipment) received these. "Oxygen concentrators have been found to be very effective in the treatment of covid cases. We will provide more support to the Odisha Government in the forthcoming days. We are optimistic that with the right resources and empathy for our fellow countrymen, we will not only survive this crisis but also come out stronger", said Lalit Beriwal, Director, Shyam Steel India. With the aim of saving a maximum number of lives, Shyam Steel India will provide all the support to the Odisha Government in their battle against Covid-19.

Indus Towers to restore over 3K mobile towers

Bhubaneswar: Indus Towers is in a process to restore over 3,200 mobile towers in cyclone Yaas-hit regions including the Balasore, Bhubaneswar and Jaipur Road zones. Field staff engineers and technicians have ensured connectivity restoration in over 3,200 affected sites. Odisha Circle CEO Ritesh Batsa said, "Our teams worked hard to overcome the challenges caused due to heavy rains and water logging to maintain and restore impacted mobile tower sites before any critical outage. Our preparedness is rooted in the safety-site-sustain model of disaster management which has been effective in managing disasters of this nature." The on-field team established an effective resource and fund alignment to fight against all odds.

India advances 20% ethanol blending in petrol to 2025: PM

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, June 5: India has advanced the target date for achieving 20 per cent ethanol-blending in petrol by five years to 2025, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said Saturday, as the world's third-biggest oil importer looks to cut carbon emissions and reduce reliance on foreign oil.

Ethanol extracted from sugarcane as well as damaged food grains such as wheat and broken rice and agriculture waste is less polluting and its use also provides farmers with an alternate source of income.

Speaking at the release of ethanol blending road map 2020-25 on the occasion of World Environment Day, Modi said "the target for mixing 20 per cent ethanol in petrol has been brought forward from 2030 to 2025".

Last year, the government had set a target of reaching 10 per cent ethanol blending in petrol (10 per cent of ethanol mixed with 90 per cent of petrol) by 2022 and 20 per cent doping by 2030.

Currently, about 8.5 per cent ethanol is mixed with petrol as



Ethanol extracted from sugarcane as well as damaged food grains such as wheat and broken rice and agriculture waste is less polluting and its use also provides farmers with an alternate source of income

against 1-1.5 per cent in 2014, he said adding higher blending has led to ethanol procurement jumping from 38 crore litres to 320 crore

litres.

"It will go up further when 20 per cent blending is achieved," he said.

Last year, oil companies spent Rs 21,000 crore on ethanol procurement.

Earlier this week, the Oil Ministry had issued a gazette notification mandating start of up to 20 per cent blending of ethanol in petrol from April 1, 2023. All petrol sold in the country is targeted to have 20 per cent ethanol by 2025. India is the world's third-biggest oil importer, relying on foreign suppliers to meet over 85 per cent of its demand.

Decision to keep repo rate unchanged was expected: CEO, PNB

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, June 5: The RBI has once again come out with proactive set of announcements to revive the economic growth amid surge of positive cases during the second wave of the ongoing pandemic.

The decision of keeping the repo rate unchanged along with maintenance of accommodative stance is on expected lines and necessary to mitigate the growth uncertainty and inflation concerns, said SS Mallikarjuna Rao, CEO, Punjab National Bank (PNB).

Announcement of on tap liquidity facility of Rs 15,000 crore will ensure credit flow to the contact intensive sectors and MSMEs including hotels, tourism, aviation, etc. which have been adversely impacted.

Further, resolution of stress of MSMEs has also been addressed through enhancement of exposure thresholds to Rs 50 crore under resolution framework 2.0.

Availability of NACH on all days of the week will further the financial inclusion objectives through Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT).

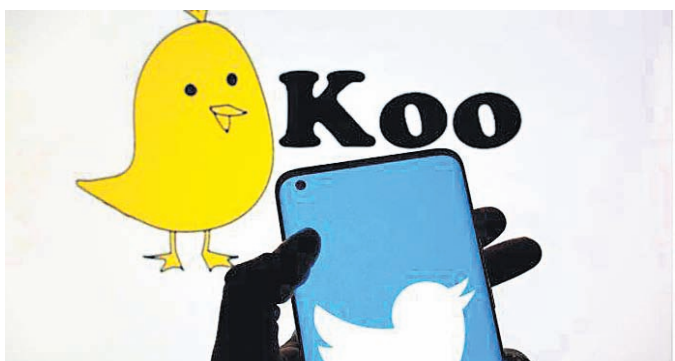
Keen on expanding in Nigerian market: Koo

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, June 5: Koo, Saturday said the Indian microblogging platform is available in Nigeria and is keen on adding new local languages for users in that country. The development comes a day after the Nigerian government announced an indefinite suspension of Koo's rival, Twitter in the country.

In a post on Koo Saturday, its co-founder and CEO Aprameya Radhakrishna said the platform is "available in Nigeria". "We're thinking of enabling the local languages there too. What say?" Radhakrishna said.

Speaking to PTI, Radhakrishna said: "Now that there is an opportunity for microblogging platforms in Nigeria...Koo is looking at introducing local Nigerian languages



in the app".

He added that the platform is keen on making inroads in the Nigerian market.

Radhakrishna said Koo will abide by the local laws of each country that it operates in.

Koo, founded by Radhakrishna

and Mayank Bidawatka, was launched last year to allow users to express themselves and engage on the platform in Indian languages. It supports multiple languages including Hindi, Telugu and Bengali, among others.

The Nigerian government Friday

The development comes a day after the Nigerian government announced an indefinite suspension of Koo's rival, Twitter in the country

said it was suspending Twitter indefinitely, a day after the company removed a contentious tweet that President Muhammadu Buhari made about a secessionist movement.

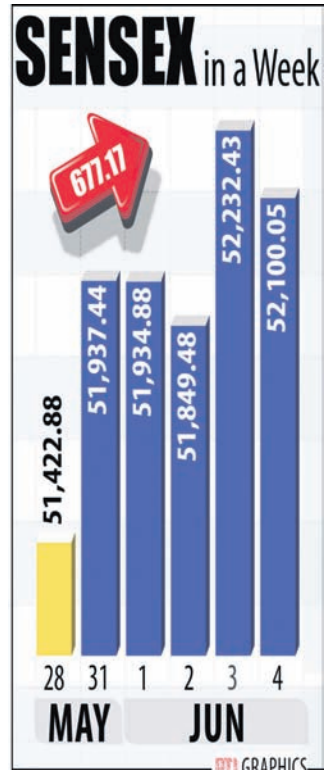
Koo has over 60 lakh users, and had recently raised USD 30 million (about Rs 218 crore) in a funding round led by Tiger Global.

Koo's popularity in India peaked amid clarion calls for expanding the ecosystem of homegrown dig-

ital platforms. The platform has seen a massive growth in its user base over the past few months after union ministers and government departments endorsed the homegrown microblogging platform, following a spat with Twitter.

Notably, Radhakrishna's post on Saturday coincides with the Indian government issuing a notice to Twitter giving it one last chance to "immediately" comply with the new IT rules. Twitter has also been warned that failure to adhere to the norms will lead to the platform losing exemption from liability under the IT Act.

Koo had earlier said it has already complied with the IT rules and has shared necessary details as sought by the government on the issue.



India shift focus to Bangladesh



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Doha, June 5: The fighting loss to Qatar done and dusted with, Indian footballers are now looking forward to their next match against Bangladesh in the 2022 World Cup and 2023 Asian Cup qualifiers.

Playing with 10 men for a major part of the match, India went down 0-1 to Asian champions and FIFA World Cup hosts Qatar in their previous outing in the joint preliminary qualification round Thursday.

Out of reckoning for next round of World Cup qualifiers but still hoping to make the continental showpiece in China in two years' time, midfielder Brandon Fernandes said the upcoming fixture is extremely crucial for the Blue Tigers, who are going through one of their longest winless streaks of all time.

"We are moving as a team and we need to back each other. We are aware that we have specific roles in the team. The next match is extremely crucial as we need to sustain the momentum gained in the first match. The first match is history," Fernandes was quoted as saying by All India Football Federation.

India are above Bangladesh in rankings but defender Subhashish Bose acknowledged their opponents' quality, having chosen to ignore the FIFA pecking order.

"We are aware of the quality of the Bangladesh team. They are a side that plays a lot of counter-attacking football, and that is very dangerous. India versus Bangladesh have always been exciting and close matches. We have huge respect for Bangladesh," Bose said.

India's match against Bangladesh is scheduled for June 7. In their previous match, Bangladesh came back from behind to hold Afghanistan 1-1 and earn a point. "I am very pleased with the performance against Afghanistan. The players worked extremely hard. It reflects the attitude which this team possesses - to come back from be-

hind and get back into the game," Bangladesh coach Jamie Day said.

Captain Jamal Bhuyan, who had played for Mohammedan Sporting in the Hero I-League, feels it's "going to be an intense match" when the two teams take the field.

"It will be intense - with a lot of battles. It's a beautiful match to be a part of. Last time in Kolkata, we were disappointed not to get the 3 points as India scored very late in the game. We have that hunger in us, and we know we can do some damage," he said.

"The confidence in our team is good at the moment. We had our chance of winning against Afghanistan. We take that confidence with us into the India game," Jamal added.

Day pointed out the difference in the ranking between the two teams. "India are a very good team. They are a much higher-ranked team than us who should be beating the likes of Bangladesh. The difference in ranking and quality is huge.

Brazil beat Ecuador in WC qualifier

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Sao Paulo, June 5: Amid a possible player revolt, Brazil beat Ecuador 2-0 to win their fifth consecutive match in South American World Cup qualifying.

They now lead the round-robin tournament with 15 points, four ahead of second-place Argentina. It appears all but certain that Brazil will qualify for four direct spots for Qatar 2022.

Richardson opened the scoring in the 65th minute Friday at the Beira-Rio stadium in Porto Alegre and Neymar added the second from the spot in added time. Both goals were celebrated with the entire team around the coach.

But a crisis looms over the team since its country was appointed as host of Copa America. Players suggested Friday that they are not willing to play the tournament at home because the COVID-19 pandemic continues to kill thousands of Brazilians per day. More than 470,000 have died so far.

Tite's post-match press conference



Goal scorers Richardson (L) and Neymar react after the former put Brazil ahead in their match against Ecuador, Friday

was one of the team's most anticipated in years after he spent the day hearing rumors he could resign before Copa America begins.

The coach admitted on Thursday his players had discussed with the president of the Brazilian soccer confederation (CBF), Rogério

Caboco, whether they should play the continental tournament. A final answer on the issue is expected for after the match against Paraguay Tuesday.

Copa America was originally scheduled to be co-hosted by Colombia and Argentina. Two weeks ago, Colombia was forced to withdraw because of social unrest. And this past week, Argentina declined to host it because of a similar worsening of the pandemic.

Midfielder Casemiro, who was prevented from speaking to media Thursday, said after Friday's win against Ecuador that "the players' position is very clear. More clear than this is impossible for now."

"We want to speak after the match against Paraguay because we don't want to lose our focus," the team captain said. "This is the World Cup for us."

The midfielder added any decision "will come from all" Brazil players. Local media said earlier that footballers of European clubs were leading the charge to not play in Copa America.

Leclerc on pole for Azerbaijan

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Baku, June 5: Charles Leclerc won his second consecutive pole position, again under the red flag because a crash stopped qualifying, to earn the top starting spot for the Azerbaijan Grand Prix.

Leclerc set his time of one minute and 41.218 seconds early in Saturday's third session. Championship leader Max Verstappen and Lewis Hamilton were among the drivers just starting their late flying laps when Yuki Tsunoda hit the wall and then Leclerc's teammate Carlos Sainz crashed right behind Tsunoda.

Hamilton was 0.232 off the pace in second - a rebound after Mercedes had struggled to match Red Bull and Ferrari in practice. Verstappen took third, 0.113 back.

Djoko through at French Open

AGENCIES

Paris, June 5: Top seed Novak Djokovic's quest for a second career Grand Slam continued with another lopsided victory as he Lithuania's Ricardas Berankis 6-1, 6-4, 6-1 on Court Philippe Chatrier to reach the French Open last 16.

The 34-year-old World No.1 Serb, aiming for a 19th Grand Slam, will next face rising Italian teenager Lorenzo Musetti, who defeated his Italian counterpart 3-6, 6-4, 6-3, 3-6, 6-3.

Later on the day, reigning Roland Garros champion Rafa Nadal overwhelmed Cameron Norrie 6-3, 6-3, 6-3 to enter last 16. Among others, fifth seed Stefanos Tsitsipas came from a set down to beat the challenge from American 31st seed John Sinner 5-7, 6-3, 7-6(7-3), 6-1. Tsitsipas will next face Spaniard 12th seed Pablo Carreno Busta in the last 16. Elsewhere, 10th seed Argentine



Diego Schwartzman won 6-4, 6-2, 6-1 against German veteran Philipp Kohlschreiber, only to set up a last 16 face-off against Jan-Lennard Struff, who knocked out Spanish teenager Carlos Alcaraz with a 6-4, 7-6(7-3), 6-2. Italy's Jannik Sinner is also through to the last 16 after winning 6-1 7-5 6-3 against Sweden's Mikail Ymer.

In the women's draw, defending champion Iga Swiatek overpowered Anett Kontaveit 7-6(7-4), 6-0. Fourth seed Sofia Kenin came from behind to beat her American counterpart Jessica Pegula 4-6, 6-1, 6-4. Another American Sloane Stephens also made it through after seeing off 18th seed Karolina Muchova 6-3, 7-5.

However, fifth seed Elina Svitolina was handed an upset defeat by Barbora Krejickova 3-6, 2-6.

5 MORE DAYS TO GO...

It has taken more than a year for the world to find any semblance of normality in the midst of COVID-19 rampage. The pandemic brought the entire world to a grinding halt last year, which forced all the major sporting events to either be cancelled or pushed forward by a few months or by one whole year, as is the case with UEFA Euro 2020. In less than a week's time, the long-awaited, month-long 24-team extravaganza will finally get underway. With **Orissa POST**, let's take a look at the groups...



GROUP A: Italy, Switzerland, Turkey, Wales

ITALY (ITA)

FIFA rank: 7 Euro appearance: 9 times Best finish: Champions (1968)

After confronting with one of their darkest days in football history, Italy finally left all the agony behind to become one of the title contenders. Under the tutelage of Roberto Mancini, the Azzurri have lost just twice in 31 games since he took charge in 2018. The same is reflected in their output in the Euro qualification campaign, as they blitzed through the Qualifiers with a perfect record, finding the back of the net at a fabulous rate of 3.7 goals per game while letting in a mere 4 goals all campaign long. So, it will hardly be a shocker if Italy do go all the way after possibly topping Group A.

Coach: Roberto Mancini



KEY PLAYER Giorgio Chiellini

SWITZERLAND (SWI)

FIFA rank: 13 Euro appearance: 4 times Best finish: Round of 16 (2016)

A team that often promise a lot but almost always end up reaching their ceiling as soon as the first knockout round is reached. The Swiss are once again in a position wherein they are very much likely to make it to the Round of 16 at best. Switzerland, though, did not really impress much during their qualifying campaign, even though they did top a tricky group that also included Denmark and the Republic of Ireland. However, it is also true that Xherdan Shaqiri was not there due to an injury. Capable of causing the big guns difficulty - such as in recent draws with Spain and Germany - the Swiss blow too hot and cold for a confident prediction of how they might fare.



KEY PLAYER Granit Xhaka

Coach: Vladimir Petkovic

WALES (WAL)

FIFA rank: 17 Euro appearance: Once Best finish: Semifinals (2016)

Wales stunned everyone when they made it into the semifinals in 2016, their first-ever appearance in UEFA Euro main draw. This time around, though, their chances of doing a repeat act appear to be slim to none, with a lot of the talk in the build-up to the tournament being centered around Ryan Giggs and the trial he is set to face for assault charges. Wales have only lost once under the tutelage of caretaker boss Robert Page while keeping clean-sheets galore. So, despite all the unnecessary background noise, there are still a lot of positives about the Dragons. Wales, which have players like Gareth Bale, Aaron Ramsey, Ben Davies and Manchester United youngster Daniel James, is definitely a team to watch out for.



KEY PLAYER Gareth Bale

Coach: Robert Page (in charge)

TURKEY (TUR)

FIFA rank: 29 Euro appearance: 4 times Best finish: Semifinals (2008)

The Crescent-Stars have the tendency of being the surprise package at a big tournament every now and then, having reached the semifinals of the 2002 FIFA World Cup while also going through to the latter stages at the Euro 2000 and Euro 2008, where they won the bronze medal. Under the tutelage of the 68-year-old Gunes, Turkey have been a solid unit that is extremely hard to beat, which is illustrated by the fact that they have been beaten just thrice in 25 games since he took charge in 2019. They even took four points from World Champions France in qualifying and recently they defeated the Netherlands 4-2 in World Cup Qualifiers.



KEY PLAYER Burak Yilmaz

Coach: Senol Gunes

GROUP A FIXTURES				
Date	Match	Time (IST)		
June 12	TUR vs ITA	12:30 am		
June 12	WAL vs SWI	06:30 pm		
June 16	TUR vs WAL	09:30 pm		
June 17	ITA vs SWI	12:30 am		
June 20	ITA vs WAL	09:30 pm		
June 20	TUR vs SWI	09:30 pm		

Telecast: SONY TEN Network