



JACK OF ALL TRADES

Actor Lauren Gottlieb says she is becoming a better director and producer while creating digital content

LEISURE P2



CURBS RELAXED IN UP

The UP government extended relaxation in Covid restrictions in all 75 districts of the state

TWO STATES P7



GLOBAL STING

Criminal gangs divulged plans for moving drug shipments and carrying out killings on a messaging app secretly run by the FBI

INTERNATIONAL P10

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State to boost paediatric care

ONE ATTENDANT MAY BE ALLOWED TO STAY IN THE HOSPITAL CONSIDERING REQUIREMENTS

Bhubaneswar, June 8: The state government has decided to strengthen its medical infrastructure to tackle the possible third wave of Covid-19 that may hit the children hard.

Accepting the recommendations of the Technical Committee headed by Director, Medical Education & Training (DMET), CBK Mohanty, the Health and Family Welfare department has asked all Collectors, municipal commissioners and heads of healthcare institutions to start preparing to strengthen childcare in the hospitals in their respective areas.

The government has decided to create a designated wing for paediatric cases in the existing Covid hospitals for better and safe management of cases as strict isolation of Covid-19 positive paediatric cases may not be possible in general wards, as it may lead to transmission of infection to non-Covid children.

As per the plan, 357 beds will be created in seven state-run medical colleges and hospitals for the treatment of coronavirus-infected children. In all, 155 isolation beds, 44 HDU (High Dependency Unit), 94 Paediatric Intensive Care Unit (PICU)/ Special Newborn Care Units (SNCU) and 64 Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) will be created in the medical colleges at Burla, Cuttack, Balasore, Koraput, Berhampur, Baripada and Bolangir.

Similarly, 15 per cent of the total beds in Covid hospitals would be reserved for the paediatric patients. As many as 10,736 general beds and 4,072 ICU like beds are there in the existing Covid hospitals across the state. Hereafter, 1,455 general beds and 408 ICU beds will be dedicated to the children.

All the district and sub-divisional hospitals have been directed to reserve at least 10 beds for isolation of the suspected cases and transfer the symptomatic patients to the appropriate Covid hospitals. About two to four beds will be reserved in the community health centres for such patients, the government said. If a child found Covid positive, he/she will be transferred to appropriate Covid hospital.

The superintendents of government medical colleges and chief district medical officers (CDMOs) have been asked to keep sufficient stocks of the required medicines, consumables and medical oxygen for the treatment of children.

In the areas where the caseload is expected to be high, the government will set up standalone paediatric Covid Care facilities.

To start with, the facilities created will be managed by the available manpower, while trained manpower will be deployed in later stage.

Online capacity building training will be provided after identifying trained doctors and paramedics from the peripheral hospitals and they will be deputed to the nearest medical college in a phased manner.

As per the suggestions made by the committee headed by head of the paediatric department of SCB Medical College and Hospital, the government has initiated the process for procurement of required list of equipment consumables & medicines through Odisha State Medical Corporation Ltd (OSMCL).

The Health department has also planned to set up a dedicated Covid Block in the Sishu Bhawan, Cuttack.

One attendant may be allowed to stay in the hospital considering requirements. Breast-feeding corners will be opened in all the dedicated Covid

beds to be created for paediatric patients in Covid hospitals, medical colleges

general beds, 408 ICU beds to be ensured in Covid hospitals

357 beds including NICU, PICU & HDU to be created in 7 medical colleges

10 beds in DHH, SDH; 2-4 beds in CHCs to be reserved for such patients

15% beds in all Covid Care Centres to be earmarked for pediatric patients



REPRESENTATIVE PHOTO

BRACING FOR THIRD WAVE

2,220

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15% beds in all Covid Care Centres to be earmarked for pediatric patients

State likely to start unlock process

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, June 8: With the decline in daily Covid cases during the past few days, Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik Tuesday indicated that the state will begin the unlock process in phases.

Chairing the weekly Covid review meeting, Naveen said that the government is considering relaxing the restrictions in districts where test positivity rate has declined considerably.

Lockdown restrictions are in force in the state since May 5 following the outbreak of the second wave of Covid-19. The ongoing restrictions are to continue in the state till June 17.

The Chief Minister expressed relief as the test positivity rate (TPR) is declining in the state and hoped that the rate will come down further in the coming weeks. As some districts still report high TPR, he asked the officials to focus on those areas.

Naveen instructed the concerned officials to expand the Covid-19 vaccination programme from 1.5 lakh doses per day to 3 lakh doses per day. At the same time, he expressed concern over the rising incidents of black fungus infections in the state and suggested them to stock required drugs. The supply of oxygen in the state was satisfactory and availability of cylinders has improved, he said.

Chief Secretary Suresh Chandra Mohapatra said that it is a matter of relief that there was no increase in Covid infections in the cyclone Yaas-affected areas. As the TPR has come down, pressure on ICU and oxygen-coupled beds has reduced. Mohapatra hoped that the infection rate will drop to 5 per cent soon.

leges at Burla, Cuttack, Balasore, Koraput, Berhampur, Baripada and Bolangir.

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The superintendents of government medical colleges and chief district medical officers (CDMOs) have been asked to keep sufficient stocks of the required medicines, consumables and medical oxygen for the treatment of children.

Doses on basis of population

AGENCIES

New Delhi, June 8: A day after Prime Minister Narendra Modi tweaked his government's Covid-19 vaccination policy and announced that states will receive free doses for inoculation of all above 18, revised guidelines for the same were released Tuesday.

As per the revised guidelines, the Centre will buy 75 per cent of doses from vaccine makers, including 25 per cent of the state quota, and give it for free to state governments and Union Territories. As the Prime Minister said in his Monday address, no state government will have to spend on vaccine procurement.

However, the Centre has made it clear that the allocation of doses will depend on factors including the population of states and vaccine wastage. "Vaccine doses provided free of cost by the Government of India will be allocated to states/UTs based on criteria such as population, disease burden and the progress of vaccination. Wastage of vaccine will affect the allocation negatively," a notification read.

Domestic vaccine manufacturers will be given the option to provide vaccines directly to private hospitals. And private hospitals will be allowed to levy a maximum of ₹150 as service charge.

Also, states/UTs will be notified in advance of how many doses will



NEW GUIDELINES

- Domestic vaccine manufacturers will be given the option to provide vaccines directly to private hospitals
- Private hospitals will be allowed to levy a maximum of ₹150 as service charge
- States/UTs will be notified in advance of how many doses will be supplied to them

be supplied to them. The government has said that the states should similarly allocate doses well in advance for districts and vaccination centers.

FREE VAX, FOOD TO COST ₹1.45L CR

NEW DELHI: India will need to spend an additional ₹1.45 lakh crore (\$11 billion) to provide free vaccine and food to millions of people devastated by a deadly wave of coronavirus infections, Bloomberg News said Tuesday. The government of the world's second most populous nation will earmark an additional between ₹1.1 lakh crore and ₹1.3 lakh crore to provide food until November to the poor and other eligible groups, it said, citing people familiar with the matter. The government may not have to tap the bond market for the funds, the sources said, citing a dividend of ₹99,122 crore it received from the central bank and inflows expected from asset sales.

"They should also put in the public domain the information about the above availability at district and vaccination center level, and widely disseminate it among the local population, maximizing the visibility and convenience of citizens," the guidelines read.

The guidelines state that the vaccination will be prioritised and will be administered to healthcare workers first followed by frontline workers, citizens more than 45 years of age, citizens whose second dose is due, and then to those above 18 years of age.

Govt sets vax prices for private hosps

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, June 8: The government Tuesday set the maximum price private hospitals can charge for the three Covid-19 vaccines currently available in the country – Covishield ₹780 per dose, Covaxin ₹1,410 and Sputnik V ₹1,145.

In a letter to all states and Union Territories, the Health Ministry suggested that appropriate strict action be taken against private vaccination centres for overcharging.

The maximum price of Covishield for private Covid-19 Vaccination Centres (CVCs) has been fixed at ₹780 per dose, while that of Covaxin is ₹1,410 per dose and Sputnik V ₹1,145 per dose, it said. The Health Ministry has asked states to ensure that the prices declared by various private CVCs do not exceed the ceiling.

The Serum Institute of India sells its Covishield to private hospitals at ₹600 per dose (excluding GST). Bharat Biotech has set the cost of its Covaxin at ₹1,200 a dose for private establishments. Both vaccines are supplied to the Central government at a cost of ₹150 a dose. Sputnik-V is supplied to private hospitals at ₹948 per dose.

"The private hospitals may charge up to a maximum of ₹150 per dose as service charges. State governments may monitor the price being so charged," the ministry said.

RAINY DAYS AHEAD



Workers put sandbags on the bank of the River Brahmaputra to control soil erosion ahead of the monsoon season in Guwahati, Tuesday

PTI PHOTO

Man slaps French Prez Macron in the face

REUTERS

Paris, June 8: French President Emmanuel Macron was slapped in the face Tuesday by a man in a crowd of onlookers while on a walkabout in southern France, video of the incident showed.

Macron's security entourage quickly intervened to pull the man to the ground and move Macron away from him. Two people were arrested in connection with the incident, broadcasters BFM TV and RMC radio reported. French Prime Minister Jean Castex said the incident was an affront to democracy.

The incident took place while Macron was on a visit to the Drome region in south-eastern France, where he met restaurateurs and students to talk about how



life is returning to normal after the Covid-19 epidemic. In video circulating on social media, Macron, dressed in shirt sleeves, could be seen walking towards a crowd of well-wishers who were behind a metal barrier.

Two of Macron's security detail tackled the man in the green T-shirt, while another ushered Macron away. But Macron remained in the vicinity of the crowd for a few more seconds, and appeared to be talking to someone on the other side of the barriers.

Swaths of internet go down after cloud outage

MULTIPLE WEBSITES WENT OFFLINE BRIEFLY TUESDAY AFTER AN OUTAGE AT THE CLOUD SERVICE COMPANY FASTLY

ASSOCIATED PRESS

London, June 8: Multiple websites went offline briefly across the globe Tuesday after an outage at the cloud service company Fastly, revealing how critical a handful of companies running the internet's plumbing have become.

Dozens of sites including the New York Times, CNN, some Amazon sites, Twitch, Reddit, the Guardian, and the UK government's home page, could not be reached.

In Asia, cities like Hong Kong and Singapore were also affected, with users unable to access the CNN website. In China, where most foreign media websites are blocked, there was little discussion on the outage on social media platforms such as Weibo.



San Francisco-based Fastly acknowledged a problem just before 6 a.m. Eastern. It said in repeated updates on its website that it was "continuing to investigate the issue." About an hour later, the company said: "The issue has been identified and a fix has been applied. Customers may experience increased origin load as global services return." A number of sites that were hit early appeared to be coming back online.

MARKET WATCH

INDEX	VAIATION
SENSEX	52275.57 ↓ 52.94
NIFTY	15740.10 ↓ 11.60
DOLLAR	73.26 ↑ ₹0.05
EURO	88.89 ↑ ₹0.17
GOLD	₹49,150 ↑ ₹7
SILVER	₹71,595 ↓ ₹222

WEATHER

	BHUB	CTK
TEMP	MAX 36.7°C	37.0°C
	MIN 25.6°C	27.5°C
Humidity	88%	83%
Rainfall	Trace	4mm
		Partly cloudy sky



VIN DIESEL-STARRER F9 TO BE SCREENED AT CANNES IN JULY

The upcoming Vin Diesel-starrer *F9*, latest release in the *Fast & Furious* franchise, is the Hollywood 'blockbuster' that Cannes Film Festival authorities promised to screen at the gala, to be held from July 6 to 17 this year.

PROUD OF EVERYTHING I HAVE EARNED: MIRREN

English actress Helen Mirren says she takes pride and pleasure in knowing she has earned everything she has in her life. "I come from not a working-class situation, but certainly a financially impoverished one. The one thing my parents taught me 'you must become financially independent,'" she said.



FORTUNE FORECAST

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FOR ASTROLOGY DIAL 55181

ARIES
Now at last you have realised that you have been preoccupied with work at the cost of your family life. Making up to them now is going to take a lot more effort. Ganesh says be ready to open your purse strings for either eating out, going out for a movie or shopping at the best places.

TAURUS
This day has been earmarked for beautification, a makeover, says Ganesh. You are likely to remain preoccupied with ways to enhance your looks and appearance. A new, stylish hair do, face packs and massages, trendy outfits and accessories could be in store. You will, subconsciously, be doing all that you can do, to get noticed by others.

GEMINI
You will feel lonely and unwanted today. You will feel the need for someone who can calm your troubled mind. Meditation and yoga will help you calm yourself. It is a good day to receive love from that someone special, says Ganesh.

CANCER
You will succeed in a new venture and will brim with radiance and energy. Ganesh says this is the best time for get-together and kindle contact with friends and relatives.

LEO
You will look to give your house a new appearance by decorating it or undertaking some renovation projects. You will make the best out of waste and produce some truly marvellous pieces of art for improving the ambience of your nest. You will be able to save up on some money. Laudable, says Ganesh.

VIRGO
You will excel remarkably in whatever work you prefer to engage yourself in today. Ganesh says your aspiration to start a business endeavour in a foreign country will bear fruit. To considerably enhance your self-image, it is necessary to make required improvements in your personal appearance.

LIBRA
Ganesh says that on the work front you may be in the midst of meetings or negotiations, which will work out favorably for you. This will help ease your tension and you will feel mentally free. Today you will feel more vibrant and active too and hence will be able to get more done.

SCORPIO
According to Ganesh, your new business venture is likely to keep you on toes today. You may even neglect your personal life to meet expectations at work. A feeling of disappointment may surround you as things do not go according to planning and your efforts may go in vain. No pains, no gains reminds Ganesh.

SAGITTARIUS
Good Samaritans around you may give unsolicited, but valuable advice. Take it as a hint, and consider it for your betterment. Take your decision after following the advice, and this may definitely yield benefits, says Ganesh.

CAPRICORN
You want to enhance your knowledge by exploring foreign shores, but luck hasn't favoured you yet. Ganesh predicts today to be a favourable day for you to try again for higher studies. If associated with the Stock Market or speculation, you are likely to make profits. You will come across many opportunities, but you need to identify and explore them to the fullest.

AQUARIUS
There are no short-cuts to success. You know this very well and work you socks off to get what you want. Colleagues, friends and family – all of them will acknowledge and appreciate your efforts and achievements. Though you will be apprehensive about it, you will have to take some risks to bring the desired change in your life, says Ganesh.

PISCES
Interactions with those of the opposite sex will mark your day. It is also a good day to strike up friendship with those of the opposite sex. For those in love, today is a good day to spend time with your partner. For those looking for love, now is the best time to pop the question to that special someone you've secretly admired for long, says Ganesh.

Lauren donning multiple hats

Mumbai: Dancer and actress Lauren Gottlieb has been keeping her fans entertained with her social media content. She finds creating digital content explorative, fun and challenging.

"Digital creation is super fun, explorative and challenging because you end up wearing lots of hats. Coming up with concepts, casting, producing, choreography, set and costume design, editing – the list can be endless," said the ABCD 2 actress.

"These are all parts of the filmmaking process that I love. Through creating digital content, I am becoming a better director, producer, and choreographer," added the actress.

Among Lauren's several collaborations, the leading ones include the Madhuri Dixit-Nene tribute with choreographer Joya Nandy Kazi, her Kamariya Lachke Re reel with digital creator Ruhee Dosani, and those with King Bach, Matt Steffanina, Phillip Chbeeb, Montana Tucker, Crissa

Jackson, Tanishq Joshi and Yai Ariza.

Lauren said, "Being able to collaborate with established as well as new artistes in Bollywood and Hollywood has been creatively fulfilling."

NROs demand Padma Shri for late actor Atal Bihari

Several members of Western Odisha Community of the UAE paid rich tributes to the 'Sala Budha' actor in Dubai

POST NEWS NETWORK

BHUBANESWAR: Members of the Western Odisha Community of the United Arab Emirates (UAE) paid rich tributes to eminent Odia actor and playwright Atal Bihari Panda in Dubai at a condolence meet held recently in Dubai.

Atal Babu, at the age of 88, spellbound the audience with his energy and enthusiasm when he had been on a trip to the UAE during Nuakhai Bhetghat celebration in 2017, recalled senior member Rajesh Tripathy.

His dance with the kids to the tune of a song from *Sala Budha* was one of the enduring memories of that event, said another member.

Video clippings from his Dubai visit were played out on



Members of Western Odisha Community at the meeting

the occasion while Priyadarshree Panigrahi, a senior member of the community, made an appeal to the Government of India seeking prestigious Padma Shri award for the *Sala Budha* actor: Atal Bihari has performed in nearly 100 plays and worked in more than 60 dramas as playwright, both in Odia and Koshali languages. This would be a befitting tribute to his legacy, Panigrahi

added. A resolution was passed in the meeting to launch a campaign to petition the government on the issue. Pritish R Dash, another active member of the community seconded the proposal. The members felt that such commemorations on foreign soil are important to promote, preserve and appreciate Odisha's cultural heritage and honour the eminent personalities.

TRAILER OF ANTHOLOGY RAY UNVEILED

Mumbai: The trailer of the upcoming OTT anthology *Ray*, featuring four stories by the late maestro Satyajit Ray, dropped Tuesday. The anthology is slated to release June 25.

The stories are titled *Hungama Hai Kyon Barpa*, *Forget Me Not*, *Bahrupiya* and *Spotlight*. Two of the stories are directed by Srijit Mukherji, with Abhishek Chaubey and Vasana Bala calling the shots on one each. The ensemble cast includes Manoj Bajpayee, Gajraj Rao, Shweta Basu Prasad, Ali Fazal, Anindita Bose, Kay Kay Menon, Bidita Bag, Dibyendu Bhattacharya, Chandan Kapoor, Radhika Madan and Akansha Ranjan Kapoor.

Talking about his segment Abhishek said: "I'm drawn to stories that twist with whimsy and humour. Hardly anyone crafts those better than Satyajit Ray and a chance to tell this story is a great opportunity for me and can't wait for people to watch it!"

Srijit said, "Satyajit Ray has been a big inspiration in my life. After faithfully bringing two stories of Ray to life in *Feluda Pherot*, it is an honour and fulfillment to reinterpret two more stories of Ray in a decidedly darker space."



25 JUNE NETFLIX

When Sunny forgot her lines

Mumbai: When it comes to packing an action punch and mouthing her lines all at once, Sunny Leone was literally left dangling midway at a shoot.

In an Instagram video clip that she posted Tuesday, Sunny is seen strapped to cable and attempting a stunt that requires her to fall vertically on a co-actor lying on the ground. The cable-aided drop just stops short of Sunny crashing into the man, at which point Sunny is supposed to say her lines.

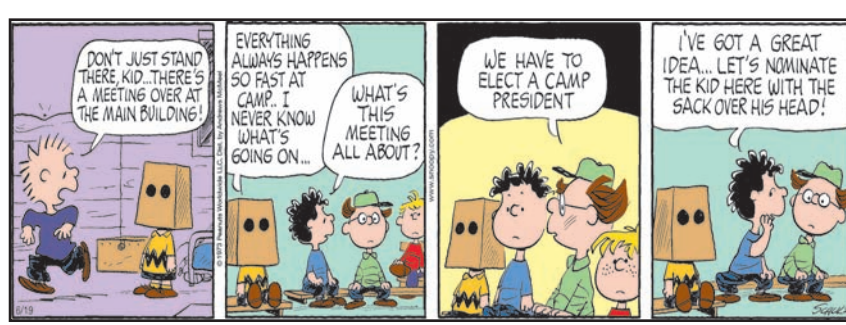
In the clip, she is seen suspended in the air rather indecisively, when the director prompts her to say her dialogue. She starts off

mouthing her lines, only to forget them midway.

"Aata majhi saktaki..." Sunny wrote as caption with the tags #SunnyLeone, #bts and #OnSets, though she did not share what project she was shooting for.



PEANUTS



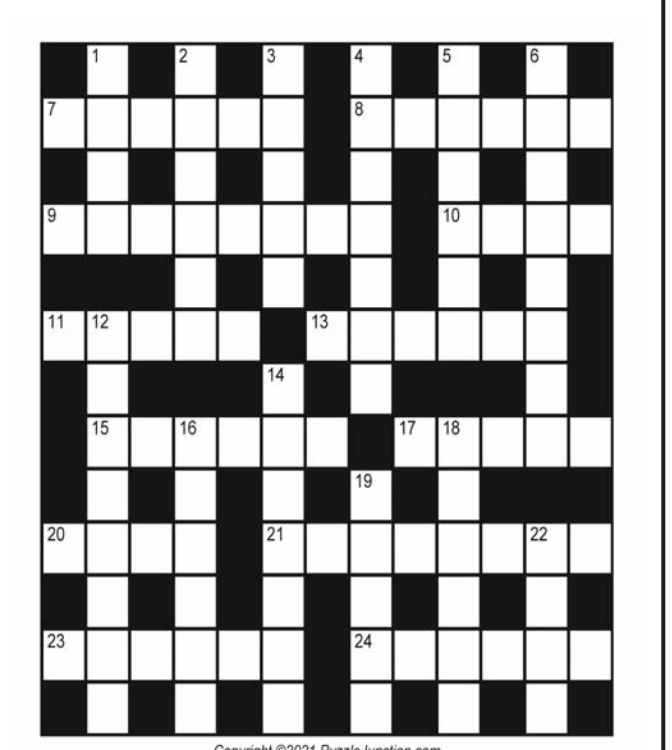
CALVIN AND HOBBS



BREVITY



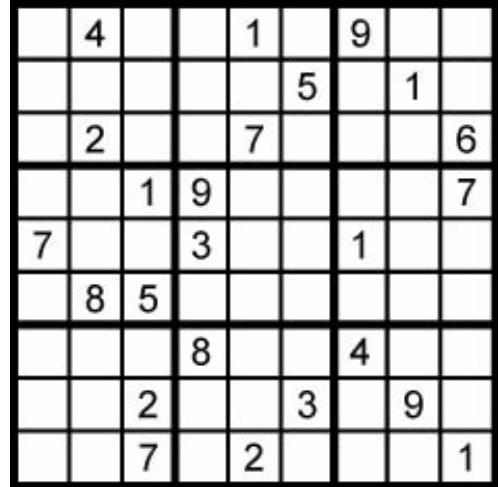
FUN post CROSSWORD



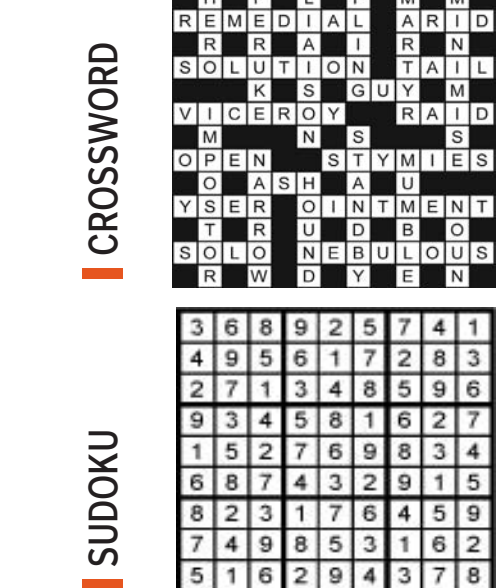
- Across**
- 7 Armagnac, e.g.
 - 8 Igloo dweller
 - 9 Napoleon's undoing
 - 10 Mountain pool
 - 11 Old hat
 - 13 Deadly
 - 15 Juries
 - 17 Nagoya locale
 - 20 Assistant
 - 21 Big mouth sea birds
 - 23 Horse's pace
 - 24 Fractures
- Down**
- 1 Killer whale
 - 2 Earwig
 - 3 African antelope
 - 4 Kicked downstairs
 - 5 Draw
 - 6 Rainy day defense
 - 12 Copies
 - 14 Miscues (4-3)
 - 16 Tease
 - 18 Robin Hood was one
 - 19 Excuse
 - 22 Certain W.M.D.

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

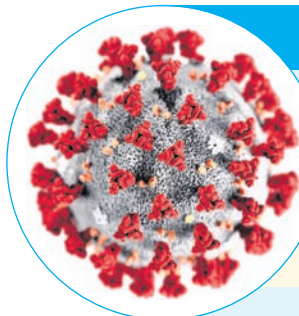


CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW



SUMMER TREAT

Jackfruits being unloaded from a truck at Chhatra Bazar in Cuttack ahead of Savitri festival, Tuesday

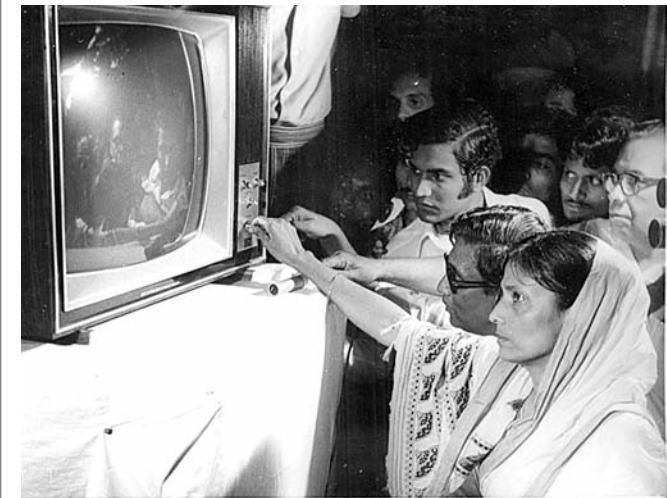


COVID-19 TRACKER

	INFECTED	RECOVERED	DEAD
World	17,45,42,663	15,78,73,581	37,56,237
India	2,89,96,473	2,73,41,462	3,51,309
Odisha	8,25,110	7,56,641	3,080

90th NANDINI: A ROLE MODEL

BIRTH ANNIVERSARY **Nandini Satpathy**, the only woman Chief Minister of Odisha, is lovingly remembered on her 90th birth anniversary. Born June 9, 1931, Nandini had cut her teeth in politics at a very young age. Nandini was one of the pioneering female politicians of Independent India. During her stint as the Chief Minister, she had taken remarkable steps in areas like women empowerment, rural economy, art & culture and education which stay etched in the memories of people till today. She made the best contribution to the economy of the state by bringing in Land Reforms Act that freed lands from the clutches of a few. **Orissa POST** tries to recapture a few moments of her illustrious life...



State to start antibody cocktail treatment

POST NEWS NETWORK

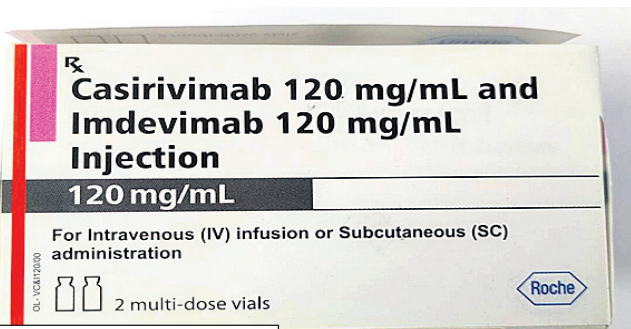
Bhubaneswar, June 8: The state government has decided to make available a cocktail of antibody drugs for treatment of Covid-19 patients.

Following permission of Drugs Controller General of India (DCGI), the government has decided to make available the Pegylated Interferon alpha-2b (PegIFN) & casirivimab and imdevimab (antibody cocktail) drugs for the use by the prescribing physicians strictly complying with the indication and requirement under EUA (Emergency Use Authorization) regulations.

Additional Chief Secretary, Health, PK Mohapatra has written to heads of all medical institutions in this regard, Tuesday.

The drugs will be kept in stock at Odisha State Medical Corporation Ltd (OSMCL) and other selected distribution sites. The drugs will be issued against the requisition by the prescribing physician through superintendent and chief district medical officers (CDMOs), he said.

The drug is a cocktail of two antibodies, casirivimab and imdevimab, which is used for the treatment of mild to moderate Covid-19 in adults and paediatric patients (12 or older) who are at high risk of developing severe disease.



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The antibody cocktail shot into the limelight after it was used to treat former United States President Donald Trump last year.

The drugs will be kept in stock at Odisha State Medical Corporation Ltd and other selected distribution sites.

The antibody cocktail shot into the limelight after it was used to treat former United States President Donald Trump last year. The therapy is said to reduce the chance of hospitalisation by 70 per cent in patients with mild to moderate Covid-19 symptoms.

This comes a day after the Union Health Ministry dropped the use of Ivermectin, Doxycycline and Hydroxychloroquine from its Covid-19 treatment guidelines.

The revised guidelines have also dropped zinc and multivitamins that were earlier prescribed by doctors to treat asymptomatic or mildly symptomatic Covid-19 patients.

The new guidelines stressed on the importance of abiding by Covid-19 appropriate behaviour such as mask, strict hand hygiene, and physical distancing. The ministry further advised people who experience Covid symptoms to seek teleconsultations and to consume a healthy balanced diet with proper hydration.

Youth attacked in Capital city dies at SCB

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, June 8: A 20-year-old youth, who was brutally assaulted by miscreants Monday night, died while undergoing treatment at SCB Medical College and Hospital (SCBMCH) in Cuttack Tuesday.

The incident took place at Budhanagar under Laxmisagar police limits here. The deceased was identified as Kartik Sahoo, a resident of a slum in the same area.

Sources said Kartik had a verbal duel with the prime accused, Chandra Reddy over a minor road mishap Monday morning. Though Reddy left the place immediately for some reason, he came later along with some of his henchmen to assault Kartik over the issue.

They engaged in a heated argument with Kartik and his friends that soon turned violent as both the groups started exchanging blows. Members of both the groups were injured in the skirmish.

Meanwhile, the deceased's friends fled the spot leaving him alone as Chandra and his friends had come prepared with sharp weapons and wooden stumps to attack Kartik.

The deceased reportedly sustained severe injuries in the murderous attack. Kartik's parents also sustained severe injuries while trying to save their son from the clutches of the attackers.

Later, locals rushed Kartik to the Capital hospital but the doctors shifted him to SCB Medical College and Hospital for advanced treatment. The doctors at SCBMH Tuesday morning declared Kartik dead.

His death news stoked anger among the relatives and other slum dwellers who gheraoed the Laxmisagar police station demanding stringent action against the culprits.

Subsequently, police registered two cases (189/21 and 190/21) on the basis of the complaints of both the parties. The cops swung into action and arrested Reddy and four of his friends and three members from Kartik's group.

All the accused were sent to judicial custody after rejection of their bail pleas by court.



File photo of Kartik Sahoo

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Cong sit-ins at petrol pumps June 11

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, June 8: The Congress party Tuesday threatened to stage sit-ins outside petrol pumps in Odisha to protest against the frequent rise in petrol and diesel prices.

The party will hold sit-in protests for four hours in front of all petrol pumps in the state June 11 seeking a rollback of petrol and diesel price hike. Odisha Pradesh Congress Committee (OPCC) President Niranjan Patnaik said the Modi government at the Centre



has been raising the petrol and diesel prices consistently amid the Covid-19 pandemic.

Patnaik claimed that petrol prices have crossed ₹100 per litre in many parts of the state. This price hike has added to the woes of the middle class and the poor.

The party will hold sit-in protests for four hours in front of all petrol pumps in the state seeking a rollback of petrol and diesel price hike

price hike has added to the woes of the middle class and the poor. "Keeping the sufferings of people in mind, the Congress party has decided to hold a statewide protest on the issue June 11," Patnaik said.

Aid announced for roadside vendors

BHUBANESWAR: Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik Tuesday announced a package for roadside vendors who suffered losses to their livelihoods due to the lockdown imposed in the state amid the rising Covid-19 cases. Patnaik announced a financial package of ₹29.29 crore for 87,657 vendors across 114 municipal areas in the state. The assistance will be provided from the Chief Minister's Relief Fund, as per an official statement. Each registered vendor will get an amount of ₹3,000 as assistance, sources said.

SJTA seeks Covid warrior tag for its staff

SJTA chief Krishan Kumar urged the additional chief secretary to provide financial assistance to the family members of two Jagannath Temple Police personnel who succumbed to Covid-19

AGENCIES

Puri, June 8: The Shree Jagannath Temple Administration (SJTA) has urged the state government to declare its employees as Covid-19 warriors for they are exposed to risk while performing their duties inside and outside the shrine.

In a letter to Health and Family Welfare department additional chief secretary PK Mohapatra, SJTA chief administrator Krishan Kumar said that the temple employees 'deserve' the Covid-19 warrior status.

"I am to bring to your kind notice that the employees of SJTA, Puri are involved in discharging various duties during this COVID pandemic. This includes taking care of the COVID positive persons in the



Carpenters shaping logs for chariot construction in Puri, Tuesday

institutional isolation facility at Nilachal Bhakta Nivas and assisting the medical teams in vaccination of sevayats and employees (sic)," Kumar said.

Besides, they are continuously exposed to members of public while assisting performance of the rituals inside and outside the temple and looking after the boarding, lodging

and accommodation of Rath Yard servitors, he said in the letter.

"In this context, I request that all such officials of Shree Jagannath Temple Administration, Puri may be declared as COVID warriors for extension of benefits as decided by the state government from time to time," the 12th century shrine's chief administrator urged.

Kumar also mentioned the names of two personnel of Jagannath Temple Police (JTP)—Pruthimanyu Dash, 58, and Pramod Kumar Dash, 59,—who succumbed to Covid-19 in April and requested the additional chief secretary for financial assistance to their family members as per the same norms as being provided to other officials in similar circumstances.

POLITICKLE by MANJUL



State pitches for disaster-resilient infra

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, June 8: The state government once again placed its demand before the Central team for building disaster-resilient infrastructure in coastal area to deal with cyclones and high tides.

The state has raised this issue during the meeting with the Central team that was in Odisha to assess the damage caused by Cyclone Yaas.

The Central team headed by joint secretary of Ministry of Home Affairs Sunil Kumar Barnwal held a meeting with Chief Secretary Suresh Chandra Mahapatra, Special Relief Commissioner (SRC) PK Jena and other senior officers here Tuesday.

“Our Chief Minister has already stated that we don’t need fund for the restoration work. We can meet the requirement from funds available with us. The state has only two major requirements. One is disaster resilient power infrastructure and second is construction of high-embankment in coastal area to deal with high tide surges,” Mahapatra said after the meeting. He said the state government is preparing a detail project report (DPR) in this regard while the



The Central team assesses damage at a farmland in cyclone-affected Bahanaga block of Balasore district
OP PHOTO

Centre is also preparing guidelines for use of disaster mitigation fund for this purpose.

After the Centre issues the guidelines, the state will submit its DPR to the Centre and try to create disaster resilient power network and embankments in the coastal areas during next few years, he said, adding, “This will minimise the loss, if any cyclone hits Odisha in future.”

As for damage is concerned, the Chief Secretary said, the state gov-

ernment is preparing a memorandum, which will be submitted to the Centre in next three to four days.

The Central team visited cyclone-affected Balasore, Bhadrak, Kendrapara and Mayurbhanj districts during Monday and Tuesday.

Notably, the tropical storm Yaas hit north Odisha coast May 26 morning.

The state government has pegged the post-cyclone damage at ₹610 crore. Of this, ₹520 crore is damage

ASSESSING YAAS FURY

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caused to government infrastructure and ₹90 crore is damage to private properties. After undertaking an aerial survey of the cyclone-hit areas of the state, Prime Minister Narendra Modi had announced ₹500-crore financial assistance for Odisha.

FESTIVE SHOPPING AMID LOCKDOWN



The areas adjoining Unit-I market in Bhubaneswar witness an usual vehicular traffic ahead of ‘Savitri’ even as a lockdown is in place, Tuesday
OP PHOTO

STF’s narcotics control unit to deal with drug menace

POST NEWS NETWORK

Cuttack/Bhubaneswar, June 8: Drug peddlers, better take note! The Special Task Force (STF) of the state Crime Branch (CB) will soon have a dedicated narcotics control unit to deal with the drug menace.

Addressing media at the state police headquarters in Cuttack, director general of police (DGP) Abhay said that the state police, especially the STF, has been playing a crucial role in combating the drug menace in the coastal state. The state police had sent a set of proposals to the state government for strengthening the STF.

“The government has approved our proposals. Accordingly, a dedicated narcotics control unit will come up under the STF. This apart, 27 new posts including a superintendent of police (SP) and three deputy superintendents of police (DSPs) have been sanctioned for the

27 new posts including a superintendent of police (SP) and three DSPs have been sanctioned for the STF

The STF, that started functioning under the CB in February 2012, aims at investigating cases relating to organised crimes like extortion, kidnapping, drug trafficking and left-wing extremism

STF. The fight against drug mafia will be intensified in days to come,” the police top brass said, thanking Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik and the state government for creation of the posts and establishment of a new unit.

The STF, that started functioning under the CB in February 2012, aims at investigating cases relating to organised crimes like extortion, kidnapping and drug trafficking.

The quantity of drug seizure in 2020 was around 17 times more than the amount seized in 2019.

Of the total 35,600 kg of brown sugar that was seized last year, the STF seized over 32 kg alone whereas the remaining substances were seized by the police in different districts.

The agency also seized around 66 quintal of ganja during the period. Over 100 drug dealers and peddlers were arrested by the STF in the last one year.

A nationwide survey ‘Magnitude of Substance Use in India’ by the National Drug Dependence Treatment Centre and All India Institute of Medical Sciences-New Delhi in 2019 had revealed that Odisha was among the top 10 states in the country with a maximum number of people requiring help for opioids-related issues. The survey found around three lakh people in Odisha were addicted to some form of the opioids.

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Allow malls to reopen, SCAI urges Naveen

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, June 8: The Shopping Centres Association of India (SCAI) has urged Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik to allow functioning of malls as per regular operational hours, an official said Tuesday.

The official highlighted that the Covid-induced lockdowns and shutdowns have dealt a blow to the shopping centres and malls. And if the situation continues, it could lead to large scale job losses.

“The organised retail sector has suffered heavily due to the pandemic and it needs support from the government. With strict Covid protocols, trained workforce and resources to restrict crowding on the premises, malls are probably the only space that can ensure a safe and hygienic environment to the consumers,” said SCAI chairman Mukesh Kumar.

Malls were also ensuring inoculation of all retailers and staffers before resuming operations. “We have also recommended that mall infrastructure be used to vaccinate the neighbourhood. Taking advantage of it, many states have already set up vaccination centres in the mall. We urge the government to allow malls to restart operations as the financial burden faced by them has been multiplying with each passing day,” Kumar pointed out.

It added that the SOP formulated and submitted by SCAI to the authorities emphasises hygiene and safety of consumers.

Record 45 nCoV deaths in 24 hrs

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, June 8: Odisha Tuesday registered 5,896 new Covid-19 cases, pushing the caseload to 8,25,110, while 45 fatalities, the highest so far in a single day, raised the toll to 3,080, a health department official said.

The case fatality ratio (CFR) stands at 0.37 per cent, which is one of the lowest in the country, he said.

Of the 5,896 new cases, 3,332 were recorded in quarantine centres, and the rest were detected during contact tracing, the official said.

The state currently has 65,336 active cases, he said.

Khurda district, of which the state capital Bhubaneswar is a part, reported the maximum number of new cases at 853, followed by Jajpur at 413, Angul at 385, Balasore

at 373, Bhadrak at 370 and Cuttack at 349.

As many as 12 districts reported less than 100 cases, each, the lowest being 22 in Deogarh.

Districts bordering Chhattisgarh, which had emerged as the hotspot during the initial phase of the pandemic, has witnessed a considerable decline in caseload - some of them being Bargarh (99), Sambalpur (92), Bolangir and Sonepur (77 each), Boudh (73), Kandhamal (65), Jharsuguda (54).

Khurda district accounted for six fresh fatalities, followed by Cuttack and Kahalandi at five casualties each, and Angul, Dhenkanal, and Sundargarh at four each.

As many as 7,47,805 people, including 8,429 Monday, have recuperated from the disease.

The state’s positivity has touched 6.3 per cent, the official said.

Meet on UG, PG exams June 12

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, June 8: The Higher Education department will hold a meeting of the vice-chancellors of state-run universities June 12 to discuss the modalities for the conduct of undergraduate (UG) and postgraduate (PG) exams.

The VCs will have their opinions in the meeting, Higher Education Minister Arun Kumar Sahoo said Tuesday.

This will be followed by another meeting with the principals of degree colleges to seek their opinions in this regard, the minister added.

The department will take necessary steps after reviewing the opinions of the vice-chancellors and principals, Sahoo said.

Min launches STEM to hone skills of schoolchildren

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, June 8: School and Mass Education Minister Samir Ranjan Dash launched the state-led model of the IBM - STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) for girls Tuesday.

The programme was launched at 258 schools across 30 districts of the state in presence of S&ME principal secretary Satyabrata Sahu, OSEPA state project director Bupendra Singh Poonia, and other dignitaries to help in building ca-

capacity of girls in digital fluency, career choice, STEM mindset, life skills among others.

The inauguration ceremony followed by four days of training on virtual facilitation and 21st century skills will be attended by 516 teachers, 258 headmasters and DEOs from 30 districts. The training will help teachers gain skills for virtual facilitation and understanding 21st-century teaching skills.

As the schools continue to remain closed due to Covid-19, the teachers will also be developing

The programme will help in building capacity of girls in digital fluency, career choice, STEM mindset, life skills among others

plans for engaging students through virtual mode on the curriculum of self, gender, career and computational thinking. These will help learners build skills of critical

thinking, problem-solving, decision making, creativity, innovativeness to name a few. It will also encourage more girls to opt for STEM pathways as they move towards continuing their education and taking up a career. It will give them the digital fluency needed for a clearer career choice in future.

Dash expressed his happiness over performance of state in education as the PGI (Performance Grading Index) score of Odisha has increased from 749 in 2018-19 to 838 in 2019-20 raising the status

from ‘Yellow’ to ‘Green’. There has been notable improvement in the domain of infrastructure, governance and equity. This could only be possible under the visionary leadership and guidance of Chief Minister, Odisha. By the end of this training, the teachers will be able to understand about online and remote learning platforms/apps and processes, understand basic etiquettes and norms of online teaching, develop knowledge and skills to curate and develop content for facilitating virtual sessions.

Vig dir airlifted to Kolkata for ECMO

AGENCIES

Cuttack, June 8: The state Vigilance, Debasis Panigrahi, has been airlifted to Kolkata for better treatment Tuesday.

A green corridor was created from Ashwini Hospital to Biju Patnaik International Airport in the Capital city to shift Panigrahi with the help of an ambulance. He was then carried in air ambulance to Kolkata. Panigrahi was on ventilator support at Ashwini Hospital here after being infected with Covid-19.

NOBLE GESTURE



Biju Yuva Janata Dal members distribute dry ration among artistes on YMCA premises at Unit-VIII in Bhubaneswar, Tuesday

CLASS XII EVALUATION

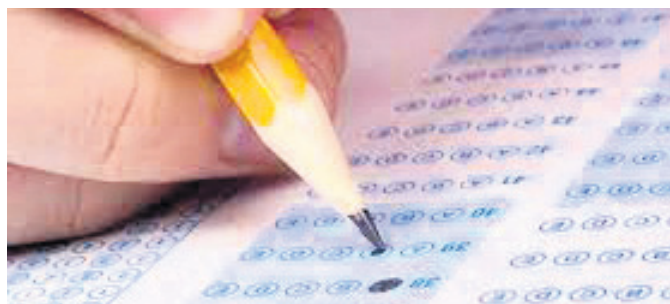
Experts bat for instant, online tests

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, June 8: Several educationists have suggested alternative methods for evaluation of Plus II students whose exams have been cancelled in the wake of Covid-19 pandemic.

Educationalists GC Nanda, RN Panda, Pritish Acharya, Satyakam Mishra, Basudev Chhatoi, Bijay Kumar Sahoo, Golak Nayak and Pabitra Mahal sent their suggestions to Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik, sources said.

The state government had earlier decided to cancel this year’s Plus II exams, conducted by the Council of Higher Secondary Education (CHSE), in view of the pandemic. It has formed a 14-member expert committee to suggest alternative evaluation criteria for Plus II students. Pritish Acharya suggested that an instant examination in condensed form seems to be the only option before the state government.



“The instant exam can give proper justice to the students. The examination can be held in one sitting with MCQ and OMR mode,” he added. The evaluation could be made quickly. All care may be taken to prevent copying in the exam. Questions based on understanding and application skills should be the focus area in the instant exam. The National Testing Agency (NTS) may be contacted for the required number of multiple choice questions (MCQs), Acharya said.

According to him, colleges can

consider the marks in the instant exam for admitting students in degree courses. Otherwise, each college would have to conduct entrance test for admitting students. Such multiple entrance tests would make the examinees more vulnerable to the virus infection, Acharya added.

“Making Class X marks as the basis for evaluating Class XII students does not seem to be objective,” he said. In his suggestion, Gouranga Charan Nanda said online examination is also possible in

this critical situation. The government should arrange tablets or laptops for students for the online examinations, he added.

“There shall be multiple objective questions (1-2 marks) with three papers in three hours. HSC mark and subject-wise attendance of students may be taken into account during the evaluation. We should conduct internal examinations regularly to avoid such situation in future,” Nanda suggested. Raghunath Panda said the state government can go for examinations based on MCQs when there is improvement in the pandemic situation. The government should not go for physical or online examination now.

However, Basudev Chhatoi said HSC mark is the only option for the government under the prevailing situation. The highest marks of individual subjects in HSC exams or the average marks of two-three papers can be taken into consideration for assessing the Plus II students.

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NGT lashes out at panel examining illegal sand mining in Subarnarekha

THE PANEL COMPRISED BALASORE DM, SPCB, CPCB AND SEIAA

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, June 8: The National Green Tribunal (NGT) has now lashed out at Balasore Collector and others who were part of a special committee formed by the tribunal to examine the allegations of illegal sand mining along the Subarnarekha river for their alleged lax attitude in complying with its earlier order.

The tribunal bench comprising Justice B Amit Shalekar and Saibal Dasgupta as expert member in their court order hinted that there had been some deliberate concealment of facts. It also granted the committee one last opportunity and threatened the panel with criminal action if the earlier order of the tribunal was not complied with.



The tribunal also expressed its displeasure over the non determination of the monetary value of the damage caused to the environment due to the alleged illegal sand mining.

The case was related to allegations of illegal sand mining at Jaleshwar area in the district along the Subarnarekha river. The NGT in its earlier order January 21 had directed for formation of a four-member committee comprising members from the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB), State Pollution Control Board (SPCB) and State Environment Impact Assessment Authority (SEIAA) and the District Magistrate of Balasore.

The case was related to allegations of illegal sand mining at Jaleshwar area in the district along the Subarnarekha river. The NGT in its earlier order January 21 had directed for formation of a four-member committee comprising members from the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB), State Pollution Control Board (SPCB) and State Environment Impact Assessment Authority (SEIAA) and the District Magistrate of Balasore.

"We have seen the report of the joint committee starting from page 224 of the paper book. We find the report to be very sketchy and devoid of facts at a number of places...We are of the view that there is some deliberate concealment of facts..." the NGT

displeasure against the panel over the non determination of the monetary value of the damage caused to the environment due to the alleged illegal sand mining. It also attacked the panel for not collecting the royalty despite a report of the tehsildar on the matter.

The NGT in its written order has also warned the panel of criminal action in case of defiance and gave the panel one more chance to work on their report.

"We, therefore, grant the committee one more opportunity to submit a fresh comprehensive report to avoid any criminal action being initiated by the tribunal. This fresh comprehensive report shall be filed positively by the next date of listing," the NGT order said.

The NGT earlier in another case had also warned the Khurda Collector of criminal proceedings for his alleged non-compliance of tribunal orders.

Leopard hide seized

POST NEWS NETWORK

Langaleswar, June 8: Forest officials seized a leopard hide during patrolling from the Madhupura coast canal road under Baliapal police limits in Balasore district, Tuesday.

The accused however, managed to escape by jumping into the coast canal and swimming to other part of the water body. Forest officials seized a bag containing the hide and launched an investigation.

The incident occurred when a team of forest officials of Langaleswar forest department were patrolling on the canal road.

Reports said that a person who was roaming there suspiciously dropped a bag and jumped into the canal after noticing a woman forest official Sujata Ojha in uniform.

Ojha tried her best to nab the accused but he managed to slip and escaped. The hide will be sent to Chandipur forest range office for further investigation, forester Prakash Chandra Mohanty said.

SALVAGING ACT



Farmers harvesting leftover paddy crops from their farmlands after cyclonic storm Yaas wreaked havoc in the area and damaged the crops in Mahakalapara block of Kendrapara district

NIT Rourkela ranks 26 among varsities

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Rourkela, June 8: National Institute of Technology (NIT), Rourkela has been ranked 26th in the overall category among Indian universities by the Times Higher Education Asia University Rankings 2021.

In the general engineering (overall category), NIT Rourkela has been ranked 12th position in the country, a statement issued by the institute said Tuesday.

The Times Higher Education Asia University Rankings 2021 judge universities across all core areas of teaching, research, cita-



tions, knowledge transfers, and international outlook.

According to the rankings, NIT Rourkela is number 1 in the overall category among all the NITs in the country, the statement said.

It has also topped the list in the teaching and research category among the NITs.

Speaking about the achievement, Prof Animesh Biswas, director of the educational institute said, "NIT Rourkela has a strong platform for collaborative research and knowledge sharing among the different research groups scattered over several major departments facilitating faster developments and nurturing new ideas."

This ranking is the outcome of the hard work of the whole NIT Rourkela fraternity, he said.

Highlighting that research is an important component for the de-

velopment of scientific thinking, Biswas said, "I am glad to see that our efforts on various innovative researches are internationally acclaimed."

"We already have 11 different centres of research for carrying out multidisciplinary research activity. Presently in collaboration with ISRO, NIT Rourkela is setting up Space Technology Incubation Centre (S-TIC) in its campus, which will augment research in the area of space science technology. The Times Higher Education World University Rankings in 2021 included 551 universities from 30 territories.

Auto-rickshaw driver praised for returning bag of gold ornaments

POST NEWS NETWORK

Sambalpur, June 8: Mohammed Azim, an auto-rickshaw driver of Khetrajpur area in Sambalpur city, is receiving praise from all quarters for returning a bag containing gold ornaments worth around Rs6 lakh to a passenger Tuesday.

The passenger had forgotten this bag in Azim's auto.

According to a source, Azim picked up a couple who was later identified as Yuvraj Behera and Chandrakanti Behera from Khetrajpur Railway Station yesterday.

They travelled in Azim's auto-rickshaw to their home from the railway station yesterday. The woman was carrying the gold

jewellery in a bag. After reaching her home, she paid the fare and got off the vehicle but left her bag behind in Azim's auto.

Later, Azim noticed the bag in the back seat of his auto.

Realising that the lady who had boarded the rickshaw must have left it behind, he thought of returning the bag to its rightful owner but he didn't know the proper address of the said passenger.

Chandrakanti however managed to trace Azim at Khetrajpur area and the latter returned the bag to the woman after proper verification.

Meanwhile, the auto-rickshaw driver has garnered a lot of appreciation for his exemplary honesty.

Now, a 'selfie corner' to woo people for Covid vaccination

POST NEWS NETWORK

Chhatrapur, June 8: Ever seen or heard of 'selfie corner' at a vaccination centre? Well if you haven't, get ready to hear about one in the age of innovations. A 'selfie corner' has been set up at the vaccination centre in Hinjili municipality campus in Ganjam district. People are enthusiastically flocking to the corner to click a picture after vaccination.

The Ganjam district administration is laying special emphasis on vaccination as it is the only way to fight Covid-19.

The vaccination drive for the 18-44 years age group was launched in Berhampur and Chhatrapur towns



Monday and it was inaugurated by District Collector Vijay Amruta Kulange and Chhatrapur MLA Subash Chandra Behera.

At the same time, people in 45-plus age group in both rural and urban areas are also getting inoculated. It is for this age category that a centre has been set up in the Hinjili municipality office campus.

What sets this centre apart from others is that the administration has erected a platform here, naming it 'selfie corner'. It was introduced only to attract people. And the response has been quite good. Virtually none are leaving the centre without a visit to the 'selfie corner'.

Notably, Ganjam district is in green zone with 755 current active cases. The district Tuesday reported 35 fresh cases, taking the tally to 32,371. So far 31,316 patients have recovered from the disease.

Hooch-making unit busted, 1 held

POST NEWS NETWORK

Baripada, June 8: Excise department officials Tuesday busted a spurious foreign liquor manufacturing unit in Bangra area under Khunta police limits in Mayurbhanj district. A person identified as Santosh Kumar Mahanta was arrested during the raid.

The unit was illegally branding and supplying foreign liquor bottles. Stickers of reputed com-

panies were fixed to the bottles filled with spurious liquor and then sold to the unsuspecting buyers. During lockdown, the sales had multiplied substantially.

Acting on a tip off, a team of Excise department officials conducted raids in the locality and seized spurious foreign liquor worth lakhs of rupees from the spot. They also seized empty bottles, fake stickers of reputed brands and materials used for making

spurious liquor.

According to the officials, the accused will be produced in the court later in the day.

Notably a fake foreign liquor bottling plant was busted in Khunta area June 2 night. On being tipped off, Baripada town police had conducted a raid on a building in Khunta area and seized a huge cache of spurious products. Two persons were arrested in this connection.

Man found hanging from tree

POST NEWS NETWORK

Khairata, June 8: Mystery shrouded the death of a man whose body was found hanging from a tree at Raigadga village under Khairata police limits of Balasore district Tuesday.

The deceased was identified as Biswanath Das of Dapa under Thidhi police limits of Bhadrak district.

Sources said that Das after his marriage was staying at his in-law's place at Raigadga village. He however, had gone missing since

Monday. Family members searched for him in all possible locations, but in vain.

The matter came to fore after some locals spotted Das hanging from a tree and informed the local police. Police rushed to the spot, recovered the body and sent it for post-mortem.

Police and locals suspect that he might have committed suicide out of frustration while the exact reason behind taking the extreme step is yet to be ascertained.

Mangroves saved Bhitarkanika island from Yaas fury

POST NEWS NETWORK

Kendrapara, June 8: While the severe cyclonic storm Yaas caused much destruction in this district as it blew away thatched houses, uprooted trees, utility poles, telephone towers and destroyed paddy crops, it has failed to cause any visible destruction in Kalibhanjadiha island inside the Bhitarkanika National Park due to the presence of mangrove forests, a report said.



This has once again proved that mangroves can save the coastal regions from the impact of such calamities. Kalibhanjadiha island has set an example and shown the way regarding how to protect the coastline.

The utility of mangroves in protecting the coastline from the impact of the cyclonic storms and tsunami has been realised well by the state government, local residents and environmentalists.

The district has so far faced six cyclonic storms, including the Super Cyclone-1999, while floods have become a regular feature every year.

However, the presence of mangroves helped protect Bhitarkanika during such calamities where the total loss is much less compared to the losses suffered in other parts of the district.

During the Super Cyclone-1999, tidal waves crossed the coast like tsunamis. The calamity then snatched away 10,000 lives across the state, while 397 persons died in the district.

Yaas also left a trail of destruction in the state and affected over 150 villages in Balasore, Bhadrak and Kendrapara districts. The total losses in Bhitarkanika were estimated at Rs 48.37 lakh while the Kalibhanjadiha island within it faced negligible destruction.

Mangroves cover over 70 per cent of the 8.5 sq km of the island but not a single tree was uprooted during the cyclone Yaas, they said.

Mangroves are the only means to save the coastal region from natural calamities like floods, cyclonic storms, storm surges and tsunamis as they act as a protective wall against the onslaught of nature, they said.

When contacted, Susant Nanda, director of the Odisha Forest, Environment and Climate Change department, said that checking coastal erosion has become our priority for which stress is being laid on removing the prawn gheries as they are harming the environment. The space created by removing the gheries could be utilised for creating mangrove forests. The department is already growing new mangrove saplings.

Youth kills self by jumping in front of train

POST NEWS NETWORK

Saintala, June 8: A youth committed suicide by jumping before a train at Kandhakela gaon railway gate under Saintala police limits in Bolangir district, Tuesday.

The deceased was identified as Himanshu Rana, 19, son of Sitakanta Rana of Remenda Mahulapada in Budhabahal panchayat. Preliminary inquiries suggested it to be a case of suicide. Family members said that he left home Tuesday morning but never returned. They learnt about his suicide this morning.

ASIs Niren Pani and Kamal Lochan Sahu of government Railway Police Station in Bolangir said, the body has been sent for post-mortem and the actual reason behind the mishap is yet to be ascertained.

EAST COAST RAILWAY	
Tender Notice No. MSM-HYDNE-CRANE-KBJ-6-21	
NAME OF THE WORK: ANNUAL MAINTENANCE CONTRACT FOR MAINTENANCE OF HYDRAULIC AND PNEUMATIC SYSTEMS (ALL SYSTEMS EXCEPT MAIN ENGINE AND SLI SYSTEM) OF 140 T CRANE AT KANTABANJI FOR THREE YEARS.	
Approx Cost of the work (₹)	19,24,860.00, Cost of tender document : 2,360.00, Completion period of the Work : 36 (Thirty Six) Months from the date of issue of Letter of Acceptance.
Tender Closing Date and Time : At 11:00 Hrs. of 28.06.2021	
No manual offers sent by Post / Courier / Fax or in person accepted against such e-tenders even if these are submitted on firm's letter head and received in time. All such manual offers shall be considered invalid and shall be rejected summarily without any consideration. Complete information including e-tender documents of the above e-tender is available in website: http://www.irps.gov.in	
Sr. Divisional Mechanical Engineer, Sambalpur PR-143/M/21-22	

INTEGRATED TRIBAL DEVELOPMENT AGENCY, KORAPUT, DIST.: KORAPUT			
TENDER CALL NOTICE			
Bid Identification No.: PA (ITDA)-KPT-1/21-22			
Letter No. 1768/Dated: 4.6.2021			
No. CAD-413:-			
Sl. No.	Particulars	Date	Time
01	Date of Publication	08.06.2021	10.00 AM
02	Last date for Online submission	25.06.2021	5.00 PM
03	Date of Online Opening of Bid	25.06.2021	5.30 PM
04	Last date for receipt of Hard Copies (Only Bid Security (EMD), Paper Cost (DD) & Affidavit)	29.06.2021	5.30 PM
05	Date of Offline Opening of Bid (Hard Copies) & Finalization/Selection of Bidder	30.06.2021	11.00 AM
1. The Project Administrator, ITDA, KORAPUT on behalf of Governor of Odisha invites Online Percentage rate tenders through e-procurement for execution of work as detailed in the DTCN from the eligible class of contractors. 2. The bidders have to participate in ONLINE bidding only. Further details can be seen from the website www.tendersorissa.gov.in . 3. Any corrigendum/addendum will be displayed in the website www.tendersorissa.gov.in only. 4. The Bidder must submit all the Documents through Online Mode & Offline Mode as per the Checklist. If the Online mode Documents submitted through Hard Copies will not be taken into consideration. 5. The Bidder or Authorized representative must attend this Office on 30.06.2021 as the Bid will be finalized on the same day. 6. The undersigned reserves all the right to reject/cancel any or all of the Bids without assigning any reason thereof.			
Sd./- Project Administrator, I.T.D.A., Koraput OIPR-19070/11/0002/2122			

OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER	
BALASORE (ROADS & BUILDINGS) DIVISION-I	
AT/PO- PADHUANPADA, BALASORE	
CONTACT NO.: 06782262045, E-MAIL ID: ee_blsrb@yahoo.co.in	
No. B-136	BID INVITATION NO. EE (R and B) BLS-Divn-1-07/2021-22
Letter No. 5104/WE	Date: 07.06.21
1. The Executive Engineer, Balasore (R&B) Division-I, Balasore on behalf of the Governor of Odisha invites Percentage rate bids to be received in ONLINE MODE only for road and building works.	
2. No. of Work	3 Nos.
3. Nature of Work	Electrical works of Balasore (R&B) Division-I
4. Class of Contractor	"MV/HT" Electrical contractors
5. Approx. value of work	₹ 17.80 Lakhs to 44.63 Lakhs
6. Tender Cost	₹ 6,000/-
7. Availability of Bid Documents in the website	From 10.00 hours of dt.11.06.2021 to 16.00 hours of dt.22.06.2021
8. Date of Opening of Bid	Dt. 25.06.2021 at 11.00 hours
9. Other details can be seen in the Bidding documents from the website: https://tendersorissa.gov.in	
Sd./- Er. R.C. Sethi, Executive Engineer, Balasore (R&B) Division-I OIPR-34078/11/0007/2122	

FOCUS CYBERSECURITY

WAR ON RANSOMWARE



The intensifying mayhem caused by ransomware gangs raises an obvious question: Why has the United States, believed to have the world's greatest cyber capabilities, looked so powerless to protect its citizens from these kinds of criminals operating with near impunity out of Russia and allied countries?

that harbor ransomware gangs. Pugnacious ransomware requires the nonlethal equivalent of the "global war on terrorism" launched after the September 11 attacks, said John Riggi, a former FBI agent and senior adviser for cybersecurity and risk for the America Hospital Association. Its members have been hard hit by ransomware gangs during the coronavirus pandemic. "It should include a combination of diplomatic, financial, law enforcement, intelligence operations, of course, and military operations," Riggi said. A public-private task force including Microsoft and Amazon made similar suggestions in an 81-page report that called for intelligence agencies and the Pentagon's US Cyber Command to work with other agencies to "prioritise ransomware disruption operations." "Take their infrastructure away, go after their wallets, their ability to cash out," said Philip Reiner, a lead author of the report. He worked at the National Security Council during the Obama presidency and is now CEO at The Institute for Security and Technology.

off the table," but she did not elaborate. Her comments followed a ransomware attack by a Russian gang that caused outages at Brazil's JBS SA, the second-largest producer of beef, pork and chicken in the United States.

Gen. Paul Nakasone, who leads US Cyber Command and the National Security Agency, said at a recent symposium that he believes the US will be "bringing the weight of our nation," including the Defense Department, "to take down this (ransomware) infrastructure outside the United States."

Sen. Angus King, an independent from Maine who is a legislative leader on cybersecurity issues, said the debate in the Congress over how aggressive the US needs to be against ransomware gangs, as well as state adversaries, will be "front and center of the next month or two." "To be honest, it's complicated because you're talking about using government agencies, government capabilities to go after private citizens in another country," he said.

The US is widely believed to have the best offensive cyber capabilities in the world, though details about such highly classified activities are scant. Documents leaked by former NSA contractor Edward Snowden show the US conducted 231 offensive cyber operations in 2011. More than a decade ago a virus called Stuxnet attacked control units for centrifuges in an underground site in Iran, causing the sensitive devices to spin out of control and destroy themselves. The cyberattack was attributed to America and Israel.

Biden promised that his administration was committed to bringing foreign cybercriminals to justice. Yet even as he was speaking from the White House, a different Russian-linked ransomware gang was leaking thousands of highly sensitive internal files — including deeply personal background checks — belonging to the police department in the nation's capital. Experts believe it's the worst ransomware attack against a US-based law enforcement agency.

The writer is Head, North America, BIPM Practice, A leading IT Company, and Trustee, Shree Jagannath Chetna & Chintana World Wide.



Bighneswar Swain

RANSOMWARE GANGS CAN MOVE AROUND, DO NOT NEED MUCH INFRASTRUCTURE TO OPERATE AND CAN SHIELD THEIR IDENTITIES

Ransomware is a type of malicious software cyber criminals use to block you from accessing your own data. The digital extortionists encrypt the files on your system and add extensions to the attacked data and hold it 'hostage' until the demanded ransom is paid. Ransomware is often spread through phishing emails that contain malicious attachments or through drive-by downloading.

These are the different types of ransomware: i) CryptoWall - is responsible for a high percentage of ransomware attacks. Typically, CryptoWall attacks its target through phishing emails; ii) Locky - as the name implies, it locks you out of files and replaces the files with the extension .lockey; iii) Crysis - takes data attacks to a new level - actually kidnapping your data and moving it to a new virtual location; iv) Samsam - attacks unpatched WildFly application servers in the internet-facing portion of their network. Once inside the network, the ransomware looks for other systems to attack; v) Cerber - attacks the database server processes to gain access instead of going straight after the files; vi) Maze - is a variant of ransomware representing the trend in what is called 'leakware.'

Foreign cybercriminals with scant dread of upshots have paralysed US schools and hospitals, leaked highly sensitive police files, triggered fuel shortages and, most recently, threatened global food supply chains.

The intensifying mayhem caused by ransomware gangs raises an obvious question: Why has the United States, believed to have the world's greatest cyber capabilities, looked so powerless to protect its citizens from these kinds of criminals operating with near impunity out of Russia and allied countries? Until recently, it just hasn't been a high priority for the US government.

President Joe Biden anticipates confronting Russia's leader, Vladimir Putin, about Moscow's concealing of ransomware criminals when the two men meet in Europe later this month. The Biden administration has also promised to boost defenses against attacks, improve efforts to prosecute those responsible and build diplomatic alliances to pressure countries

Reverse Vaccination

India, like the rest of the world, is in the grip of a once in a century pandemic snuffing out tens of thousands of lives, inflicting excruciating pain and trauma on millions and ruining countless families. It has been passing through a colossal tragedy with the Centre and the states miserably failing to provide adequate vaccines, oxygen and immunity-inducing drugs to the people, while in some states, bodies of coronavirus victims have been dumped into the rivers for lack of facilities and manpower at crematoriums.

In such a situation it does not behove the ruling party's national president to try to score political brownie points when the Centre is more responsible for the scandalously inept handling of the pandemic than the states.

From the beginning, the Centre took the matter casually while exhorting people to use horrible and unscientific methods, including clapping and banging thalis, to ward off the lethal virus. Then it tried to claim all the credits for vaccination by monopolising procurement and distribution of vaccines to the states. Even the executive director of the Serum Institute of India (SII) producing 90 per cent of the vaccines - Covishield - in the country rued that the Centre had announced the first vaccination programme for inoculating people of the age group of 45 years and above when the arithmetic of available doses was still being worked out and there was massive shortage. This was followed by complaints by Opposition-ruled states that the Centre was making partisan distribution of the vaccines favouring BJP-ruled states. There was no transparency in the vaccination policy. This made the states raise a chorus of demand for decentralising procurement of vaccines. The BJP-led NDA government generally never relents in the face of Opposition criticism of its functioning and policies, the most glaring case being the controversial farm laws which are yet to be rolled back despite the farmers' continuing agitation. But, surprisingly it caved in and allowed the states and private hospitals to buy 50 per cent of vaccines from the producers retaining 50 per cent for itself.

Soon, the reasons for the Centre's uncharacteristic capitulation to Opposition attack became clear: The states, to their utter dismay and consternation, found they could not get supplies from the local producers and their efforts to float global tenders for buying the doses from the international market met with a roadblock. The foreign vaccine producers flatly said they would negotiate only with the Centre and won't be able to make the vaccines available to the Centre any time soon for their prior commitment and deals with other countries.

The Supreme Court, luckily for the common citizen, did not remain a passive spectator and in a suo motu hearing tore into the Centre's vaccination policy riddled with holes. After asking tough questions for many discrepancies in its policy, the apex court directed the Union government to submit a report within two weeks on details of procurement, availability, rationale of distribution and pricing of the vaccines in the open market. In the first place, the Centre turned on its head the country's time tested policy of free universal vaccination being followed since Independence. It forced people in the age group of 18 to 44 to pay for the jabs and then let the market forces determine the prices that ranged from ₹900 to ₹1500 per shot on an average. The SC termed such a policy 'arbitrary and irrational.'

Caught in this vicious circle, the states approached the Centre to take back the responsibility of procurement and distribution of vaccines and arrange for free inoculation for all age groups. More than the pressure by the states, it is the prospect of facing the apex court in the next few days that forced the Centre to yield to this demand. The whole country and the rest of the world have seen how the Centre abdicated its responsibility first of saving the people from the deadly pandemic and then change stand as an afterthought.

Going by the Central statistics, a total of over 23 crore doses have been administered so far. But the number is too small considering the need for vaccinating at least 70 per cent of a population of 135 crore to achieve herd immunity. The toll taken by the second wave has been stupendous and the third wave is threatening to wreak further havoc when even babies in the cradle won't be spared. Over 2 billion vaccines, enough to cover the entire adult population, it is said, may be available by the end of 2021. But, for this a massive ramping up of production capacities is needed. The Union government does not seem to have any such plans as of now. It needs to make genuine efforts to achieve the target at the correct time. This is no time for self-congratulation and blatant propaganda but for atonement for the wrongs done to the people. This is time for tangible action to protect citizens from the catastrophe now onwards.

WISDOM CORNER

- Immorality: the morality of those who are having a better time. - HL MENCKEN
- Love is a fruit in season at all times, and within reach of every hand. - MOTHER TERESA
- If the path be beautiful, let us not ask where it leads. - ANATOLE FRANCE

WORDSWORTH

Nihilartikel

If you have a copy of the New Oxford American Dictionary, please disregard the entry for esquivallence, which is supposedly the wilful avoidance of one's official responsibilities or the shirking of duties. It has been discovered to be a fake entry. Compilers of reference works sometimes include them to reveal copyright infringements by competitors. Map makers might include a fictitious location, for example, or the compilers of wine encyclopaedias add entries for non-existent beverages (such as that for Via Gra in one of Robert Parker's recent wine guides). The 1980 edition of the New Grove Dictionary of Music had a spoof entry for the composer Esum-Hellerup. Since nobody consulting such works would ever have cause to look them up, they do no harm (unless you're one of that vanishingly rare breed that reads such works cover to cover and commits the whole to memory). Since we have no English word for deliberately invalid entries, some academics have used the German Nihilartikel. This is formed from the Latin nihil, nothing, plus German Artikel, so "nothing article". In the past, we weren't sure whether this was a real German word or one that had been invented as a joke by some English writer. However, half a dozen appearances in German sources since 2000, more than in English, suggest that it is a real, albeit rare, native German word. The first so far found is this: *Dass jedes Lexikon im Fachjargon „Nihilartikel“ genannte Stichwörter enthält. [That every dictionary contains terms which are called "Nihilartikel" in technical jargon.] -- Der Orthodidakt by Katharina Hein, in the Berliner Morgenpost, 16 Jul. 2000. This is another example: Der Artikel „Apopudobalia“ is schon jetzt berühmt: er suggeriert, es habe in der Antike eine Vorfall des Fußballs gegeben. Er gehört in die Tradition der sog. Nemo- oder Nihilartikel: dabei werden erfundene Artikel oder Fußnoten in ernste Werke eingeschleust. [The article on "apopudobalia" is already famous: it suggests that a precursor of football existed in antiquity. It belongs in the tradition of the so-called Nemo- or Nihilartikel, in which invented articles or footnotes were smuggled into serious works.] -- Das Studium der Kunstgeschichte, by Rente Prochno, 2003. Nemo is another Latin word, meaning "nobody", so Nemoartikel is presumably a false article about a person. The word has made only very rare appearances in non-specialist English-language works. This is one of them: There is considerable distrust among the community that the PostZon database is "clean" — that is, contains no intentionally wrong entries that Royal Mail could use to identify unlicensed use. Such an intentional mistake — known as a Mountweazel or Nihilartikel — effectively poisons the database to unlicensed users, because its presence prevents that the data was copied rather than created from scratch. -- Guardian, 24 Sep. 2009. The other term in this quotation, Mountweazel, derives from the fake entry for Lillian Virginia Mountweazel that was inserted by its editors into the 1975 edition of the New Columbia Encyclopedia.*

IN JEST THIS

Don't minimise the talent of memorising



Melvin Durai

NEITHER THE INTERNET, NOR TWITTER, EXISTED DURING MY CHILDHOOD, WHICH MEANT THAT MY MOTHER COULD NOT BRAG ABOUT MY MEMORY

Priyanka Shukla, an IAS officer from Chhattisgarh, recently shared a video of a smart 2-year-old named Praneena, who is the daughter of Shukla's colleague Pradeep Tandan. In the video, Praneena is asked to name the capital cities of a few dozen countries and does so correctly. This is amazing to me because when I was 2 years old, I didn't even know that the world was divided into countries.

"At the age of just 2 years, she has memorised the names of the capitals of 205 countries," Shukla tweeted. "Pradeep says that Praneena's memory has been extraordinary from the very beginning."

From the very beginning? Even as a baby, she apparently surprised everyone with her memory. Perhaps she remembered to scream in excitement every time Chhota Bheem appeared on TV.

As you can imagine, many Twitter users were impressed with Praneena's memory. Calling her a "wonder kid," a man named Vinit

Parashar wrote: "Her talent needs to be honed properly. Kudos to the parents."

I'm not sure what he means by "honed properly," but maybe he believes that with the right training, she'll be able to name not just the capital cities of 205 countries, but also their currencies, chief exports, and gross domestic product (GDP). By age 5, she'll be able to make recommendations to help them diversify their economies.

Parashar added that he was "very happy that these videos were not there during my time of growing up."

I'm happy about that, too. Neither the internet, nor Twitter, existed during my childhood, which meant that my mother could not brag about my memory: "Here's a video of my brilliant son. He has memorised the names of all 50 of his cousins."

While Parashar complimented Praneena's parents, a few Twitter users were not so positive. "I never understood this fascination of parents to force a child of this age to

wards rote learning," a man named Jitendra Sahu tweeted. "It would have been better if parents start inculcating logical thinking in their children specially of this age which will help them in future."

His criticism would be valid if Praneena's parents were actually forcing their daughter to memorise capital cities. But here's how her father, Pradeep Tandan, responded to Sahu's tweet: "These are her extra learnings with her interest in a playful way. She plucks best coriander leaves everyday morning from our kitchen garden. Take your time to meet her, you will be very much pleased by her logical thinking."

If she enjoys memorising capital cities, what's the harm? Thanks to her, many people on Twitter learned the capitals of countries they had never heard of, such as Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan.

I understand Sahu's concern about rote learning. Memorising facts is not always the most effective or enjoyable way to learn,

but it's often the easiest way. It's how many of us learned the alphabet, numbers and multiplication tables, not to mention numerous other facts that we would be tested on.

If you were lucky enough to go to a well-funded school, your biology teacher might have used a replica of a human skeleton to help you learn the names of all the bones. You'd have touched them all and seen exactly how they fit together. But you'd still have to do quite a bit of memorising.

Memorising is a talent in itself. Not every kid can do it as well as Praneena. And no one in the world can memorise digits of pi as well as Suresh Kumar Sharma, who set a world record in 2015 by reciting 70,030 digits. That's unfathomable to me. I can barely remember the digits in my wife's phone number.

Praneena's talent for memorisation will serve her well in life, especially if she combines it with logical thinking. She'll not only pluck the best coriander leaves, she'll also pluck the best jobs.

Gods dressed as humans

Sir, Recently, several instances of doctors and healthcare workers being assaulted were reported across the nation. It's a shame that during such a critical phase, people are not recognising the Gods dressed as humans: the healthcare workers. On one hand, doctors and healthcare workers are trekking mountains and crossing rivers to reach rural areas to help the vulnerable. And on the dismal side, some morally bankrupt persons are paying them back for their selfless services by assaulting them. In the last 10 days, at least 4-5 cases, if not more, pertaining to violence against healthcare workers were reported. Recently, a video went viral on social media platforms where a junior doctor at a Covid care centre in Assam, Dr Seuj Kumar Senapati, was mercilessly beaten up with utensils and crockery by a mob of 12-15, who were the outraged relatives of a deceased COVID patient. The mob, not only assaulted the doctor, but also rendered heavy damage to the centre. At least 28 people have been arrested by the police so far, including the main accused. NHRC has been strictly scrutinising the matter and has sought an action taken report from the DG of Police, Assam within four weeks. For these strings of cases occurring lately, I firmly support that doctors have every right to protest, which they did, but to no avail. As per IMA, 748 doctors across India succumbed to COVID in the first wave last year, whereas in this short period of second wave, the death toll of doctors is 642. It's high time everyone understands the worth of healthcare workers. We must praise them for facing the storm in order to keep us safe.

N Soumik, BHUBANESWAR

Cricket world shocked

Sir, English bowler Ollie Robinson has been suspended indefinitely by the England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB) due to the pending investigation on Robinson for the sexist and racist tweets he made back in 2012 and 2013. The 27-year-old fast bowler had a memorable debut against New Zealand in the ongoing series, picking up 7 wickets. Although Robinson has already apologised for the reckless mistakes he made in his teenage, the ECB chose to take the harsh decision to suspend him and this news has taken the cricketing world by a storm. Media and various personalities are criticising this decision to be an over the top one and it could possibly destroy the career of a young aspiring cricketer.

Shrey Siddharth, CUTTACK

Letters

TO THE EDITOR

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

OrissaPOST
B-15, Rasulgarh Industrial Estate, Bhubaneswar-751010

Door-to-door vax impossible: Centre to HC UP relaxes Covid lockdown

AGENCIES

Mumbai, June 8: The Centre told the Bombay High Court Tuesday that a door-to-door Covid-19 vaccination programme for senior citizens, specially-abled, bed-ridden and wheelchair-bound people is currently not possible, but it has decided to start "near-to-door" inoculation centres.

The Union government in its affidavit filed in the HC said the National Expert Group on Vaccine Administration (NEG-VAC) has considered the issue of door-to-door vaccination and opined that "near-to-door" vaccination would be an appropriate solution, and not door-to-door vaccination. The court noted that almost 25 crore people have been vaccinated in India.

"Which other country has been able to do so with so much population. The government can do this (door-to-door vaccination) too. You (government) need to find your own way," Chief Justice Dipankar Datta said. A division bench of Chief Justice Datta and Justice G S Kulkarni last month directed the NEG-VAC to consider if door-to-door vaccination programmes can be started for senior citizens, specially-abled people and those who are wheelchair-bound or bed-ridden. The order was passed in a public interest litigation filed by two



Thackeray leads delegation to PM for Maha issues

Mumbai: Maharashtra Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray Tuesday led a delegation to meet Prime Minister Narendra Modi in New Delhi to discuss around a dozen pending issues of the state, officials said here. At the meeting, in which Deputy Chief Minister Ajit Pawar and PWD Minister Ashok Chavan were also present, Thackeray took up issues of Maratha quotas, the GST dues to the state, Mumbai Metro carshed, damage due to the recent Cyclone Tauktae, crop insurance scheme for farmers, etc.

lawyers Dhruvi Kapadia and Kunal Tiwari raising concerns over how several people would not be able to travel to the vaccination centres. The Centre in its affidavit filed Tuesday said the issue was discussed by the NEG-VAC in its meeting May 25. "All the members/experts, who participated in the

meeting, unanimously agreed that the Covid-19 vaccine cannot be given at home due to issues and risks cited by the expert committee," it said. However, the NEG-VAC agreed that since the elderly and specially-abled people have limited mobility, there is a need to increase access

by bringing the vaccination services closer to such communities while maintaining all necessary precautions and safety measures. The affidavit said the Union Ministry of Health and Family Welfare formulated standard operating procedures (SOPs) related to the 'Near to Home Vaccination Centres' May 27.

These vaccination sessions can be conducted in non-health facilities and will be linked to an existing Covid-19 vaccination centre, it said. The HC noted that while it appreciates the efforts taken by the committee and the Union government, the concerns raised by the panel on why door-to-door vaccines cannot be started do not seem to be very serious.

"The concerns raised by the expert committee on why door-to-door vaccination cannot be started are not very serious. These can be overcome if the government wishes to," it said. The court noted that the risks the committee mentioned for door-to-door vaccination will be there at the inoculation centres as well. The Centre's affidavit claimed that till May, 25,309 cases of adverse reaction after vaccination were reported out of which 1,186 were serious. "475 deaths were reported following Covid-19 vaccination till May 28, 2021," it said. The court will continue hearing the matter Wednesday.

Lucknow, June 8: The Uttar Pradesh government Tuesday extended relaxation in Covid restrictions to all 75 districts of the state, with the active cases coming down the 600-mark in each of these districts.

The night curfew from 7 pm to 7 am and weekend curfew (for the entire day) will, however, continue throughout the state, an official spokesman said.

By Monday, the relaxation was extended to 72 districts barring Meerut, Lucknow and Gorakhpur. In a high-level meeting convened through virtual medium Tuesday, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath reviewed the Covid-19 situation and decided to give the relaxations in the Covid curfew.

The spokesman said in view of the decreasing infection rate, a standard of 600 active cases was set for having coronavirus curfew effective in the districts.

In an order issued in this regard by Additional Chief Secretary, Home, Awanish Kumar Awasthi said the curfew will be relaxed as per the conditions mentioned in the government order issued May 30 by Chief Secretary R K Tiwari.

According to the order issued by Tiwari, shops and markets outside containment zones would be allowed to open for five days (Monday to Friday). Instructions were issued that over the weekend, cleanliness, sanitisation and fogging



PTI file photo

While there would be full attendance for frontline workers, for the rest of the government employees, there would be 50 per cent attendance on rotation

densely-populated areas will function in open places.

At railway stations, airports and bus stands, all Covid protocols have to be followed. Screening of passengers and antigen tests have to be conducted. The roadways buses have been allowed to operate within the state. Schools, colleges and educational institutes will remain closed while teachers and other staff have been allowed to come to school for administrative work.

Not more than five devotees will be allowed inside a religious place at a time. Coaching centres, cinema halls, gymnasiums, swimming pools, clubs and shopping malls will remain closed, it said. A maximum of 20 people will be allowed at a funeral procession, it added.

COVID-19 CRISIS

1,504 kids in Marathwada lost one or both parents

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Aurangabad, June 8: At least 1,504 children have lost one or both their parents to Covid-19 so far in Marathwada region of Maharashtra, an official said Tuesday. The state government had ordered a survey to trace children orphaned in the pandemic. The survey was undertaken through Asha

Harsha Deshmukh, divisional deputy commissioner of Woman and Child Development department.

At least 27 children have lost both parents in the pandemic, she said, urging citizens to call 1098 helpline number to intimate the authorities about such cases.

As many as 339 children have lost one or both their parents to the disease in Aurangabad district,



Representative image

workers, local governing bodies, health department and other government agencies, which had the data of Covid-19 cases, the official said. "As on June 7, 1,504 children up to the age of 18 have lost one or both their parents to the disease in Marathwada. Of these, 181 children have lost their mothers, while 1,296 have lost their fathers," said

which is the highest in the region, the official said.

"At least 1,358 children will need care and protection in the future. We will include these children in different government schemes. Some of them might have to be housed in our facilities and some families may get aid to raise such children," the official said.

'Asthi Visarjan' through speed post now

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Varanasi, June 8: The postal department and a socio-religious platform, Om Divya Darshan, have come together to offer services for 'asthi visarjan' (immersion of ashes) in Ganga and 'shraddh' rituals in Varanasi, Prayagraj, Haridwar and Gaya.

This service is especially for those who could not perform the post-death rituals including Asthi Visarjan and 'shraddh' of their loved ones who died during the pandemic.

Those who avail the new facility will also be able to view the rituals live. Postmaster general of Varanasi region, Krishna Kumar Yadav, said: "Many lost their dear ones to Covid, but could not perform their last rites. Now, ashes can be sent through speed post to these holy cities by intimating the postal department."

He said that people will need to register themselves on the portal of Om Divya Darshan for 'asthi visarjan' or 'shraddh' ceremony



on the portal. The ashes can be placed in a packet and sent by speed post to Varanasi, Prayagraj, Haridwar and Gaya.

The 'asthi' packet should be neatly packed and 'Om Divya Darshan' inscribed in bold along with details. The speed post charges will be borne by the sender. He said after the booking, the sender should update details, including speed post barcode number on the portal of Om Divya Darshan. Once the packet is received at post office, it will be delivered to the portal's address.

LIVING THE NEW 'NORMAL'



People holding umbrella cross the road during rain at CST in Mumbai

Monsoon may arrive in Mumbai today

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, June 8: The southwest monsoon is likely to set in over Mumbai Wednesday, a senior official of the India Meteorological Department (IMD) said here.

Rains lashed the city Tuesday morning but the Met department termed them as pre-monsoon showers. "There are indications of southwest monsoon's arrival in Mumbai Wednesday," said Shubhangi Bhute, director of the Regional Meteorological Centre here, in the evening. "The current favourable conditions have brought showers in various parts of Mumbai today," she said in a video message.



The IMD Saturday had confirmed the arrival of the southwest monsoon in Maharashtra as it reached Harnai in coastal Ratnagiri district. But, despite favourable conditions, the monsoon's further

progress seemed to be slow.

The Maharashtra capital Tuesday received showers ranging between 20 mm to 40 mm in Colaba, Mahalaxmi and parts of Dadar area, while some weather stations in north Mumbai including Chincholi, Borivali and Dahisar received around 60 mm of rainfall in the first half of the day.

The IMD said in an afternoon forecast that thunderstorms accompanied with lightening or gusty winds and very heavy rain were very likely at isolated places in Mumbai, Raigad, Thane, Palghar, Pune, Nashik and some parts of Marathwada in central Maharashtra.

Ayodhya to get Ram Dwars, Ramayana gardens

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Ayodhya, June 8: Grand entry gates called 'Ram Dwars', flanked by gardens, will come up at all the entry points in Ayodhya soon.

The gardens flanking the 'Ram Dwars' will be called 'Ramayan Vatika'.

Vice chairman of Ayodhya Development Authority, Vishal Singh, said, "There are six entry points in Ayodhya. Grand gates or Ram Dwars will be constructed at all entry points to give a grand religious look to Ayodhya town. Gardens based on Ramayana stories will also be developed."

The initiative is a part of a plan to transform the holy city from a small town to a new city, equipped with modern facilities that are befitting a seat of culture.

Principal Secretary Housing and Urban Development Deepak Kumar, who reviewed the devel-



opment work in Ayodhya on Monday, told reporters that an exercise on war-footing is on to meet

the target of Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath's vision document on Ayodhya on time. Various de-



partments are involved in executing the vision on ground for increasing infrastructure and mak-

ing Ayodhya a world-class city. The target is to develop international tourism in Ayodhya.

Meanwhile, the stone work at the Ram temple in Ayodhya is expected to start in December after the laying of compressed concrete base for the temple's foundation which is likely to be completed by October.

According to Anil Mishra, trustee of Ram temple trust, "Work on the base plinth of the temple will start as part of the second phase of construction in December for which pink stones from Mirzapur would be used. Development work is on in Ayodhya and this includes widening of roads, river front, restoration of river banks, bus stand and parking facilities.

The state government also plans to connect villages in neighbouring districts such as Basti and Gonda.

national

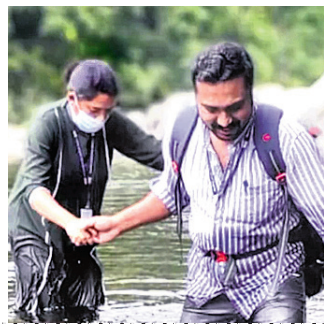


The government is only concerned about the headline and not the deadline. To complete vaccination by December, 80 lakh vaccinations per day is required but the question is from where the vaccines will come in order to do that

JAIRAM RAMESH | CONGRESS LEADER

INTERNET HAILS COVID WARRIORS CROSSING A LADAKH RIVER

At great personal risk, doctors, nurses, and allied service workers at hospitals and clinics have put up a brave fight against the pandemic. A recent example -- caught on camera -- was that of one such team being carried across a Ladakh river in the loader of an earth mover



of the day quote

The economy of J&K, it goes without saying, is at the brink of collapse. There is no sector of its economy -- be it tourism, horticulture, transport, or trade -- that hasn't suffered losses in the past two years

OMAR ABDULLAH | VICE PRESIDENT, NC

A coordinated effort with the support of various sectors is needed to make this a reality. Our aim is to avoid giving any kind of burden to students and ensure their hassle-free environs for their online studies

PINARAYI VIJAYAN | CM, KERALA

We can't keep Goa's tourism industry shut forever, as it is an important backbone of our state's economy. Once tourism resumes in Goa fully, the state will take up an intensive media campaign, inviting domestic tourists here

MANOHAAR AJGAONKAR | TOURISM MINISTER, GOA

Daily count dips 1st time below 1L



INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, June 8: India Tuesday logged 86,498 new Covid infections in 24 hours, less than one lakh cases for the first time in past 66 days, the Union Health and Family Welfare Ministry said.

It is also the lowest number of cases since April 2 when the country logged 89,129 new cases.

In the past 24-hour, 2,123 more people succumbed to the pandemic.

Monday, India had reported 1,00,636 cases, lowest spike since April 6. India's overall tally of Covid-19 cases now stands at 2,89,96,554 with 13,03,702 active cases and 3,51,309 deaths so far.

Over the last few days, India's fresh Covid cases have seen downward trend, maintaining over one lakh infections every 24 hours, while the deaths have also remained below the 3,000 mark. After battling a brutal second wave for weeks, fresh Covid cases came down below the three lakh-mark for the first time May 17 after touching record high of 4,14,188 May 7.

In the last three weeks, India has recorded over 90,000 deaths.

In the past 24-hour, 2,123 more people succumbed to the pandemic

India registered record fatalities due to Covid-19 May 21 with 4,529 deaths -- the highest from Covid infection in any country in a day since the coronavirus outbreak was reported in China's Wuhan in December 2019. It surpassed 4,468 deaths in the US January 12, 2021, and 4,211 in Brazil April 6, 2021.

According to the Health Ministry a total of 1,82,282 people have been discharged in the last 24 hours, taking the total discharge to 2,73,41,462 till date.

The Health Ministry said that a total of 23,61,98,726 people have been vaccinated so far in the country, including 33,64,476 who were administered vaccines in the last 24 hours.

According to the Indian Council of Medical Research, 36,82,07,596 samples have been tested up to June 7 for Covid-19. Of these 18,73,485 samples were tested Monday.

Cumulative vax coverage reaches 23.88Cr

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, June 8: The cumulative number of Covid-19 vaccine doses administered in the country has reached 23.88 crore, the Union health ministry said Tuesday.

It said 13,32,471 beneficiaries in the age group of 18-44 years received their first dose and 76,723 beneficiaries of the same age group received their second dose of Covid-19 vaccine during the day.

Cumulatively, 3,17,37,869 people in the same age group across states and union territories have received their first dose and 3,16,134 their second dose since the start of Phase-3 of the vaccination drive.

Bihar, Delhi, Gujarat, Haryana, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal have administered more than 10 lakh beneficiaries of the



age group 18-44 years for the first dose of Covid-19 vaccine, the ministry said.

This total of 23,88,40,635 beneficiaries include 99,95,552 healthcare workers who have taken the first dose and 68,91,662 such workers

who have taken the second dose. As many as 1,63,80,521 frontline workers have received the first dose and 87,26,071 such workers have taken the second dose.

Also 3,17,37,869 and 3,16,134 individuals in the 18-44 age group

have received the first and second dose respectively.

Besides, 7,25,46,765 and 1,15,34,478 beneficiaries aged over 45 to 60 years old have been administered the first and second dose respectively while, 6,12,75,505 and 1,94,36,078 beneficiaries aged above 60 years have taken the first and second dose.

The ministry said 22,67,842 beneficiaries were vaccinated for the first dose and 2,90,810 beneficiaries received the second dose of vaccine, according to the provisional report till 7 PM.

The vaccination exercise as a tool to protect the most vulnerable population groups in the country from Covid-19 continues to be regularly reviewed and monitored at the highest level, the ministry underlined. As on the 144th day of the vaccination drive, 25,58,652 doses were given.

SHORT TAKES

BJP MLA Udasí passes away

Bengaluru: Bharatiya Janata Party's senior Karnataka legislator and former minister CM Udasí passed away at a private hospital here due to age-related issues, a party official said Tuesday. He was 85. "Udasí died around 2.50 pm at Narayana Health hospital where he was under treatment for age-related symptoms over the last 15 days," his secretary Govinda Raju told IANS. He is survived by wife Neelambika, son and sitting MP Shivakumar Chanabasappa and daughter Jayashree.

Cong gets new chief in Kerala

Thiruvananthapuram: The Congress appointed party MP K Sudhakaran as the president of its Kerala unit Tuesday. The party also appointed three working presidents -- K Suresh, P T Thomas and T Siddique -- in the revamped Kerala Pradesh Congress Committee (KPCC). "The Congress president has appointed K Sudhakaran, MP, as the president of the Kerala Pradesh Congress Committee with immediate effect," a statement issued by the party said.

BJP replaces all 3 mayors in Delhi

New Delhi: In a surprise move ahead of next year's civic polls in the national capital, the BJP Tuesday replaced all the three mayors in the three party-ruled municipal corporations. Civic polls in Delhi will be held in April next year. The BJP also replaced leaders in key positions in the three Municipal Corporations in Delhi. Tuesday is the last day of filing of nomination for June 18 Mayor polls in the North, South and East Delhi Municipal Corporations.

B'deshi gang with fake money busted

New Delhi: The Border Security Force (BSF) has unearthed a gang operating from both sides of India-Bangladesh border by nabbing two of its members while smuggling Fake Indian Currency Notes (FICN) into Indian territory. The racket was busted after the troops of 67 Battalion of BSF Guwahati Frontier apprehended the smugglers with FICN having face value of Rs 2 lakh. The smugglers were held in a special operation conducted by the BSF troops along the border Monday, the BSF said in a statement, adding the two smugglers are Indians.

COASTAL CONSERVATION



Activists of The Emerging Coast (TEC) stage a protest at Poonthura coast, demanding sustainable measures for conservation of coasts as part of the World Oceans Day observance, in Thiruvananthapuram, Tuesday

No evidence on 3rd wave affecting kids: AIIMS chief

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, June 8: There is no data, either from India or globally, to show that children will be seriously infected in any subsequent Covid-19 waves, AIIMS, Delhi, Director Dr Randeep Guleria said Tuesday.

Addressing a media briefing here, he said that "it is a piece of misinformation that subsequent waves of the Covid-19 pandemic are going to cause severe illness in children". Noting that 60 per cent to 70 per cent of the children who got infected and got admitted in hospitals during the second wave in India, had either comorbidities or low immunity, the All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) Director said that healthy children recovered with mild illness without need for hospitalisation.

Explaining why pandemics return again, the AIIMS Director said "waves normally occur in pandemics caused due to respiratory viruses; the 1918 Spanish Flu, H1N1



(swine) flu are examples". "The second wave of 1918 Spanish Flu was the biggest, after which there was a smaller third wave," said Guleria. "And as we know, SARS-Cov-2 is a respiratory virus."

Multiple waves occur when there is a susceptible population and when a large part of the population acquires immunity against the infection, "the virus becomes endemic and infection becomes seasonal like that of H1N1 that commonly spreads during monsoon or winters", he said.

"Waves can occur due to change in the virus (such as new variants).

Since new mutations become more infectious, there is a higher chance for the virus to spread."

Guleria said that one of the reasons behind a wave can be human behaviour and cautioned that "whenever cases increase, there is a fear in people and human behaviour changes. People strictly follow Covid appropriate behaviours and non-pharmaceutical interventions help breaks the chain of transmission. But when unlocking resumes, people tend to think that not much infection will happen and tend to not follow Covid appropriate behavior".

Bihar town rocked by explosion inside desolate madrasa

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Patna, June 8: A desolate seminary attached to a Mosque in south Bihar district of Banka was shattered by a huge explosion Tuesday, though there were no casualties, police said.

According to Banka Superintendent of Police Arvind Kumar Gupta, the blast took place around 8 am at the complex situated in Nautolia locality, pulling down a major portion of the seminary. "The compound's front portion comprises a Madrasa. It was locked from outside. There is a pathway inside which leads to the mosque, the gates of which were found open.

The explosion has caused extensive damage to the seminary building," Gupta told PTI-Bhasha over phone from Banka.

He said "not a single man, including the Imam of the mosque" could be traced when a police party reached the spot.

"We are trying to get details from residents of the neighbourhood. A team of forensic experts has been called to inspect the site.

PILOTS' BODY MOVES HC, SEEKS AID FOR COVID DEATH

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, June 8: An association of Indian pilots has approached the Bombay High Court seeking schemes for adequate compensation for pilots who died of Covid-19 or got infected by it, priority in vaccination against the disease and insurance coverage for those working during the pandemic.

The petition, filed by the 'Federation of Indian Pilots' June 7, said pilots are providing essential services, and sought a direction to the Union government to provide an ex-gratia amount of Rs 10 crore to the families of pilots who died due to Covid-19.

As per the public interest litigation (PIL), since February 2021, 13 pilots have succumbed to Covid-19. The petition said since March 2020, all airlines and pilots are diligently working to operate the 'Vande Bharat' and other flights for evacuating Indian citizens stranded in other countries and also for the air transportation of medical supplies during the second wave of the pandemic this year.

"In such times, several pilots have been infected by the coronavirus



The PIL said pilots have operated flights during the pandemic with substantial risk to their personal and family safety

and many have lost their lives. Several pilots also face the risk of permanent or temporary disability due to the after-effects of Covid-19, like mucormycosis," it said. "Despite this, several pilots have been subjected to massive pay cuts since the beginning of 2020," it said.

As per the PIL, the petitioner and the Indian Pilots Guild had made a representation to the Centre, seeking that they be declared as frontline workers and given priority in vaccination against Covid-19.

Climate crisis will have catastrophic impact: Study

THE STUDY FOUND THAT INDIA'S GDP WOULD BE AROUND 25 PER CENT HIGHER TODAY, WERE IT NOT FOR THE CURRENT COSTS OF GLOBAL WARMING. LOOKING FORWARD, THE NUMBERS ARE EVEN MORE GRIM

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, June 8: The climate emergency will have a catastrophic human and economic impact in India. Different threats will interact to devastating effect, as exem-

plified by cyclones Tauktae and Yaas during the second wave of the Covid-19 pandemic. A new review by the global think tank, ODI, The costs of climate change in India, released Tuesday, laid out how rising temperatures will jeopardise India's economic development through different channels, including falling agriculture productivity, impact to public health, reduced labour productivity and sea level rise.

The study is a first-ever literature review on the economic costs of climate inaction in India. At one degree Celsius of global warming, the country is already experiencing damages. Flooding in India over the last decade caused \$3 billion in economic damage -- accounting for 10 per cent of global economic losses from flooding.

Angela Picciarliello, Senior Research Officer at ODI, said, "India



is already feeling the costs of climate change, with many cities reporting temperatures above 48 degrees in 2020 and a billion people facing severe water scarcity for at least a month of the year."

"If action is not taken to cut emissions enough to limit the global temperature rise to 1.5 degrees

Celsius, the human and economic toll will rise even higher."

The total cost of heat waves, flooding, water scarcity, cyclones, sea-level rise and other climate-related hazards will be determined by the direction and level of economic development; the choices made in spatial planning

and infrastructure investment; and the way different hazards intersect.

Amir Bazaz, Senior Lead-Practice at the Indian Institute for Human Settlements, said: "As we are seeing now with Cyclones Tauktae and Yaas, low-income and other marginalised groups are most vulnerable to the impacts of climate change. They often live in dense settlements that lack basic services and infrastructure that could reduce risk."

"Many households also live on hazardous sites such as steep slopes and floodplains. It is therefore crucial to bring climate and development goals together."

Rathin Roy, Managing Director (Research and Policy) at ODI, said "Pursuing a cleaner, more resource-efficient path to development could stimulate a faster, fairer economic recovery for India and help secure

India's prosperity and competitiveness in the long term."

"Lower-carbon options are more efficient and less polluting, producing immediate benefits such as cleaner air, greater energy security and rapid job creation."

Much depends on India's policy, investment and diplomatic choices over the next decade.

As the only country in the G20 that currently has a 'two degrees Celsius compatible' Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC), India is already doing its fair share for climate mitigation.

However, pursuing a more carbon-efficient and resilient pathway would enable India to climate-proof its development gains.

Given India's low per capita emissions and lower-middle income country status, it may need international support to make it happen.

of the day quote

During my 3,648 km 'padayatra' I saw the circumstances these vendors battle with on a daily basis, I'm grateful for this opportunity to change that with this scheme

YS JAGAN MOHAN REDDY
CM, ANDHRA PRADESH

The wood cutter Hamza who had felled the trees, has spoken about the high connections the people who took away the trees have, and the poor hapless tribals in the area were cheated

PT THOMAS | CONGRESS LEGISLATOR

Five to six per cent unemployment rate overall can be there and that too includes factors impacted by Covid situation. But figures which are given like 30 per cent, 35 per cent, 40 per cent... which means more than one-third are unemployed, are not correct

MANOHAR LAL KHATTAR | CM, HARYANA

SHORT TAKES

HC cancels MP's caste certificate

Nagpur: In a huge jolt, the Bombay High Court, Nagpur Bench Tuesday struck down the caste certificate issued to Amravati Lok Sabha MP and ex-filmstar Navneet Kaur Rana on the grounds that it was obtained fraudulently using fabricated documents. A division bench comprising Justice RD Dhanuka and Justice VG Bisht ordered her to surrender it within 6 weeks and imposed a fine of ₹200,000 to be paid to the Maharashtra Legal Services Authority within a fortnight.

Unlock process to begin from June 14

Patna: Bihar will start the process of partially easing its lockdown measures from June 14 onwards, allowing markets to remain open till 5 pm. The decision was taken after a drop in Covid cases across the state. Relaxation has been given to the retail, private and government sectors. The government and private offices will be allowed to open with 50 per cent occupancy till 4 pm on every working day.

CBI books FCI official in DA case

New Delhi: The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) Tuesday said that it has registered a case of disproportionate assets against Kishor Meena, Assistant Grade-I officer of FCI posted at Divisional Office in Madhya Pradesh's Bhopal and carried out searches at 13 locations. A CBI official said that the agency registered a case against Meena on the allegations of illicit enrichment to the tune of ₹2.93 crore during December 2, 2016 to May 29, 2021.

25 zoo animals adopted in a day

Lucknow: As many as 25 animals in the Lucknow zoo were adopted by people from different walks of life Tuesday. The initiative was taken by the Additional Deputy Commissioner of Police (ADCP) Chiranjeev Nath Sinha, who is also the brand ambassador of the zoo. Sinha had won the PETA award for feeding stray animals during lockdown and named the first brand ambassador of the Lucknow zoo.

Fire breaks out at Vaishno Devi shrine

Jammu: A fire broke out at the Mata Vaishno Devi shrine complex in Katra Tuesday in which one building of the complex was completely gutted, though no casualty occurred during the blaze.



They made two cardinal mistakes and made effort to correct those mistakes, but as usual bluff and bluster, the Prime Minister blames the Opposition for the mistakes he committed

P CHIDAMBARAM
CONGRESS LEADER

ASSAM TO HOLD X, XII BOARD EXAMS WITH REDUCED SUBJECTS

Unlike many other states in the country, the Assam government Tuesday announced that it would hold the secondary (Class X) and higher secondary (Class XII) board examinations with reduced number of subjects in August



HEAT WAVE



A crow drinks water from a tap to quench its thirst on a hot day, during Covid-induced lockdown in Coimbatore, Tuesday

PTI PHOTO

Check illegal adoption of Covid orphans: SC



POST NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi, June 8: Taking cognisance on the issue of illegal adoption raised by National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR), the Supreme Court has directed the state governments and Union territories to take stringent action against the NGOs or individuals who are indulged in the practices of illegal adoption of orphan children.

A two-judge bench of the apex court comprising Justice L Nageswara Rao and Justice Aniruddha Bose asked the state governments to prevent any NGO from collecting funds in the names of the affected children by disclosing their identity and inviting interested persons to adopt them. "No adoption of affected children should be permitted contrary to the provisions of the Juvenile Justice Act 2015. Invitation to persons for adoption of orphans is

ORDER HIGHLIGHTS

- States/UTs to take action against NGOs indulged in illegal adoption
- States to continue identification of orphans or who have lost one parent
- States to make provisions for continuation of education of affected children
- Financial assistance to be provided to affected children

contrary to law as no adoption of a child can be permitted without the involvement of Central Adoption Resource Authority (CARA)," the bench said. During the hearing, ASG KM Nataraj, appearing for NCPCR, expressed his anguish about certain NGOs collecting funds in the names of the affected children. The ASG submitted that the identity of the affected children is being disclosed in public announcements by certain unscrupulous agencies and individ-

uals who are inviting interested persons to adopt the affected children.

"It has been brought to the notice of the NCPCR that illegal adoptions contrary to the provisions of the Juvenile Justice Act, 2015 are also resorted to, which should be prevented," the ASG submitted in the court.

Significantly, the apex court directed all the state governments to continue identifying the children who have become orphans or lost one parent after March 2020. The apex court held that it is concerned with the implementation of schemes launched for the affected children. The bench emphasised upon the continuous monitoring of the implementation of the schemes in favour of the affected children.

"Financial assistance to which the disconsolate child is entitled to under the prevailing schemes by the Central and the state governments should be provided without any delay," the court ruled.

Adhikari in Delhi to save skin: TMC

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kolkata, June 8: The TMC Tuesday made light of the meeting between Leader of Opposition in Bengal Suwendu Adhikari and Union Home Minister Amit Shah, and said that the BJP MLA rushed to Delhi to "save his skin" from CBI prosecution in the Narada sting tapes case.

TMC state general secretary and party spokesman Kunal Ghosh, while talking to reporters, said Adhikari's meeting with Shah over the post-poll situation in Bengal was nothing short of a "drama", and people would continue to support Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee, notwithstanding

the allegations levelled by the saffron camp against the ruling party Adhikari, a former minister in the last Mamata Banerjee-led government, had joined the BJP just before the 2021 assembly elections.

The state unit of the BJP had been claiming that its workers, across the state, were being attacked and forced out of their homes by "goons bearing allegiance to the TMC", post the declaration of assembly poll results in the state.

"Adhikari is staging a drama before public; he will have to parrot what his party is saying. He met Shah as he wanted to save his skin from prosecution in the Narada sting case," Ghosh claimed.

Echoing him, TMC MP Kakoli Ghosh Dastidar said BJP leaders such as Adhikari are yet to come to terms with their party's drubbing in the hustings. "We don't attach much importance to these meetings. People of this state happen to stand firmly behind the TMC. They will not take it lying down if there is any attempt to disturb the government," Ghosh Dastidar added.

Adhikari had defeated Banerjee in a closely fought battle in Nandigram during the assembly polls held in March-April this year. Shah's office tweeted his picture with the BJP MLA earlier in the day, and said "Shri @SuwenduWB ji called on Union Home Minister Shri @AmitShah ji."

Swedish defence majors urged to manufacture arms in India

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, June 8: Defence Minister Rajnath Singh Tuesday invited leading Swedish defence majors to set up manufacturing bases in India as he showcased the country as an attractive destination for investment to produce military equipment and platforms.

In an address at a conference on India-Sweden defence industry cooperation, he said the government has rolled out a series of reforms to help the defence industries serve not only Indian requirements but also meet global demands.

The defence minister also mentioned allowing up to 74 per cent foreign direct investment (FDI) through automatic route and up to 100 per cent through government



route in the defence manufacturing sector.

He said the technology-centric FDI policy will enable Indian industries to collaborate with Swedish industries in the field of niche and proven military technologies.

"Over the past few years, the

Indian defence industry has been galvanised through progressive policy and procedural reforms which have catapulted the industry to serve not only Indian requirements but also meet global demand," Singh said at the virtual conference.

He said that the foreign OEMs (Original Equipment Manufacturers) can set up manufacturing facilities individually or in partnership with Indian companies through joint ventures or technology agreement to capitalise on the 'Make in India' initiative.

"Swedish firms such as SAAB already have a major presence in India and I am confident that other Swedish firms will find India as a major investment destination for defence manufacturing," he said.

PLASTIC HACKATHON 2021

'Taking all steps to eliminate single-use plastic by 2022'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, June 8: India is taking all steps to ensure that the country becomes free of single-use plastic by 2022 as envisioned by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Union Environment Minister Prakash Javadekar said Tuesday while launching 'Plastic Hackathon 2021' campaign.

Kick-starting the two-month long awareness campaign on single-use plastics (SUPs), Javadekar, in an audio message, said the Environment Ministry has taken several steps towards eliminating

single-use plastic from the country.

"Prime Minister Modi pledged to make the country free of single use plastic. We took several steps in that direction. The import of plastic waste has been banned. The states have been directed to ensure no use of SUP. Several states have already stopped using SUP," he said.

"We have notified plastic waste management rules under which plastic below 40 microns thickness cannot be used. We have also directed states to take action against companies producing plastic carry bags under 40-micron thickness,"



the minister added.

Announcing the campaign, he said it will help finding suitable alternatives to SUP and identify new ways of plastic waste management.

"We are organising a Plastic Hackathon 2021. It will deliberate on plastic waste management, its

collection and what new products can be made out of it. Suitable alternative to SUP will also be discussed in this hackathon. Essay competitions will be organised for school kids. Till the time online classes are going on for schools and colleges, such activities will be enjoyed by students and they can

participate with full enthusiasm," Javadekar said.

Before the minister's message, a virtual event was organised by FICCI where Environment Secretary RP Gupta said the campaign is an effort to raise the capacity of various stakeholders with respect to plastic pollution.

"It will be a two-month long campaign with a series of events on reducing plastic waste generation, recognising the need of effective plastic waste management, increasing the awareness of suitable alternatives, sustainable consumption and production and extended producer responsibility (EPR)," Gupta said.

The campaign is being organised by the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI), United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and GIZ

(Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit), a German organisation working jointly with partners in India for sustainable economic, ecological, and social development.

Gupta said intensive efforts have been put in by the ministry to raise awareness and sensitise citizens on the environmental impact of SUP.

"The government is providing support to states for developing adequate waste management infrastructure for solid and plastic waste management through flagship Swachh Bharat Mission scheme," he said.

Considering the adverse impacts of littered plastic waste on both terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems, the prime minister gave a clarion call in 2019 to phase out single-use plastics by 2022.

The government is providing support to states for developing adequate waste management infrastructure for solid and plastic waste management through flagship Swachh Bharat Mission scheme

R P GUPTA | ENVIRONMENT SECRETARY

of the day quote

We are ravaging the very ecosystems that underpin our societies. We still have time to reverse the damage we have done

ANTONIO GUTERRES | UN SECRETARY GENERAL

When President Biden returns to Washington next week, we believe that we will be in a materially stronger position to manage the major threats and challenges this country faces

JAKE SULLIVAN | BIDEN'S NATIONAL SECURITY ADVISOR

Nigeria's decision to suspend Twitter is in the interest of national security and peace

GEORGE ONYEAMA | NIGERIAN MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS

SHORT TAKES

UK lockdown end may be delayed

London: The UK government is said to be weighing up a delay of around a fortnight beyond the June 21 timeline set for the final stage of a roadmap to end all legal lockdown restrictions, amid a continuing rise in the cases of the Delta variant of Covid in parts of the country. The delay being considered is to enable all over-50s to be fully vaccinated with both doses of a vaccine, found to be most effective against the highly transmissible variant of concern (VOC) first identified in India, and also to leave sufficient time for the jabs to take effect.

IS militants abduct five people in Sinai

El-Arish (Egypt): At least five Egyptians were abducted by Islamic State militants Tuesday in the restive northern part of the Sinai Peninsula, security officials said. The five were driving to their workplace in the small town of Bir al-Abed when the militants from the Islamic State group stopped their vehicle and took them to an unknown place. The five include three engineers, a labourer and their driver, said the officials. They all work at the el-Salam canal project that moves the Nile Delta drainage water to be reused in agriculture in the peninsula.

Pak train mishap toll rises to 65

Karachi: The death toll in Monday's train collision in Pakistan's Sindh province rose to 65 Tuesday, according to an official, even as the Opposition parties demanded an immediate probe into the reasons for one of the country's worst train accidents. At least 65 people were killed and over 100 others injured in the twin accidents between Reti and Daharki railway stations where eight carriages of Millat Express derailed just before Sir Syed Express rumbled into them near Dharki, a city located in the Ghotki district of upper Sindh early Monday morning.

Van falls into river; 17 killed

Islamabad: All 17 people on a van, including 16 members of a family, were killed when their vehicle plunged into the Indus River in Pakistan's mountainous Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa province, according to a media report Tuesday. The vehicle was heading from Chilas to Rawalpindi when it fell into the Indus River in the Panjaba area of Kohistan district Monday, Dawn News reported.

China's wandering elephants becoming int'l stars

Beijing, June 8: Already famous at home, China's wandering elephants are now becoming international stars. Major global media are chronicling the herd's more than yearlong, 500-kilometer (300-mile) trek from their home in a wildlife reserve in mountainous southwest Yunnan province to the outskirts of the provincial capital of Kunming.

Twitter and YouTube are full of clips of their various antics, particularly those of two calves who slipped into an irrigation ditch and had to be helped out by older members of the group.

"We should be more like the elephant and be more family oriented, take family vacations and



help and care for and protect each other," read one comment on YouTube signed Mr.Deterministicchaos. The elephants have been trending for days on China's Weibo microblogging service with photos of the group sleeping attracting 25,000 posts and 200 million views Monday night. The 15-member herd has been

caught at night trotting down urban streets by security cameras, filmed constantly from the air by more than a dozen drones and followed by those seeking to minimize damage and keep both pachyderms and people out of harm's way.

They've raided farms for food and water, visited a car dealership and even showed up at a retirement home, where they poked their trunks into some of the rooms, prompting one elderly man to hide under his bed. While no animals or people have been hurt, reports put damage to crops at more than \$1 million. Sixteen animals were originally in the group, but the government says two returned home and a baby was born during the walk. The herd is now composed of six female and three male

adults, three juveniles and three calves, according to official reports.

What exactly motivated them to make the epic journey remains a mystery, although they appear to be especially attracted to corn, tropical fruit and other crops that are tasty, plentiful and easy to obtain in the lush tropical region that is home to about 300 of the animals. Others have speculated their leader may be simply lost.

Asian elephants are loyal to their home ranges unless there have been disturbances, loss of resources or development, in which case they may move out, according to Nilanga Jayasinghe, manager for Asian species conservation at the World Wildlife Fund.

FBI-run messaging app tricks organised crime



A large amount of cash is displayed during a police raid as part of Operation Trojan

The Hague, June 8: Criminal gangs divulged plans for moving drug shipments and carrying out killings on a messaging app secretly run by the FBI, law enforcement agencies said Tuesday, as they unveiled a global sting operation they said dealt an "unprecedented blow" to organised crime in countries around the world.

The operation known as Trojan Shield led to police raids in 16 nations. More than 800 suspects were arrested and more than 32 tons of drugs — including cocaine, cannabis, amphetamines and

methamphetamines — were seized along with 250 firearms, 55 luxury cars and more than USD 148 million in cash and cryptocurrencies.

The seeds of the sting were sown when law enforcement agencies earlier took down two encrypted platforms, EncroChat and Sky ECC, that had been used by criminal gangs to organize drug trafficking and underworld hits.

With the gangs in the market for a new means of communication, the FBI stepped in with a covertly developed app called ANOM that was installed on modified mobile phones. Over the past 18 months, the FBI provided phones via unsuspecting middlemen to more

than 300 gangs operating in more than 100 countries. Intelligence gathered and analyzed "enabled us to prevent murders. It led to the seizure of drugs that led to the seizure of weapons. And it helped prevent a number of crimes," Calvin Shivers, assistant director of the FBI's Criminal Investigative Division, told a news conference in The Hague, Netherlands. The operation — led by the FBI with the involvement of the US Drug Enforcement Administration, the European Union police agency Europol and law enforcement agencies in several countries — dealt "an unprecedented blow to criminal networks, and this is worldwide," said Dutch National Police Chief Constable Jannine van den Berg.

Australian Federal Police Commander Jennifer Hearst called it "a watershed moment in global law enforcement history."

The ANOM app became popular in criminal circles as users told one another it was a safe platform. All the time, police were looking over the shoulders of criminals as they discussed hits, drug shipments and other crimes.

WHO warns against overpriced Covid vax

So far, eight Covid-19 vaccines were approved by the WHO for emergency use

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Geneva, June 8: The World Health Organization (WHO) warned against the danger of buying overpriced Covid-19 vaccines from intermediaries, reminding countries to buy jabs certified by the WHO and make sure to identify the origin of the product.



"We have received concerns regarding other vaccines with intermediaries selling it (one vaccine) at a much higher price than what has been actually sold by the manufacturers," said Mariangela Batista Galvao Simao, WHO Assistant Director-General for Access to Medicines and Health Products, during a press conference here on Monday. The issue of the role of intermediaries for buying vaccines was raised recently as a middleman, located in the United Arab Emirates, was caught selling Sputnik vaccines to Ghana and Pakistan at double the original price, reports Xinhua news agency.

Simao said that countries should either buy directly from the manufacturer or "contact the manu-

Israeli Parl to vote on new govt on Sunday

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Jerusalem, June 8: Israel's parliament speaker has scheduled a vote for Sunday on a new government that would end Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's 12-year rule, the longest in the country's history.

Parliament speaker Yariv Levin, a Netanyahu ally, announced the timing of the vote Tuesday, a day after acknowledging that a coalition had been formed.

The fragile coalition consists of eight parties spanning Israel's political spectrum, with only a narrow majority in the 120-member Knesset, or parliament. But it appears to have held together despite a furious campaign by Netanyahu supporters that has included death threats and protests outside lawmakers' homes.

Netanyahu has accused his erstwhile right-wing allies of betrayal

for allying with leftists and a small Arab party that he had also courted. Naftali Bennett, an ultranationalist former Netanyahu ally, would serve as Prime Minister for two years, followed by the centrist Yair Lapid, the driving force behind the coalition, who thanked the speaker for scheduling the vote.

"The unity government is on the way and ready to work on behalf of all the people of Israel," Lapid said. Israel held four elections in less than two years, the most recent in March.

Each time, voters were deeply polarised over whether Netanyahu should remain in office while facing allegations of corruption, for which he is now on trial. An emergency government formed last year to address the coronavirus pandemic was mired in political infighting and collapsed in December.

FOR A CAUSE



An activist pauses during a march and rally to demand the end of solitary confinement in New York

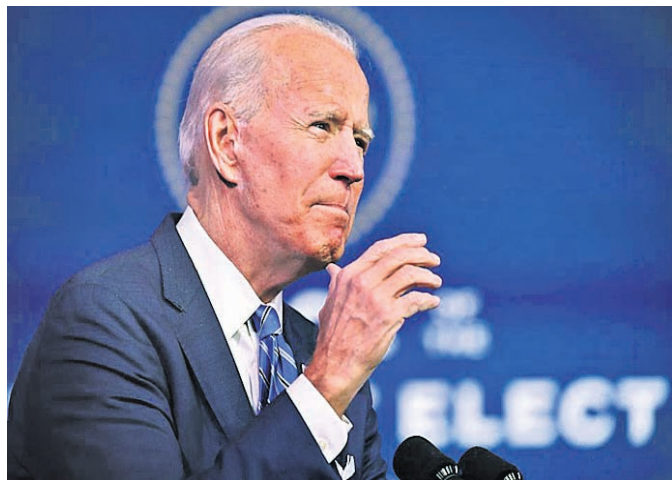
'A lot of anxiety' for Dems as Biden agenda stalls

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Washington, June 8: Hopes for a big infrastructure investment are teetering. An ambitious elections and voting bill is all but dead. Legislation on police brutality, gun control and immigration has stalled out.

Nearly six months of Democratic control in Washington, the party's progressive wing is growing increasingly restless as campaign promises go undone — blocked not only by Republican obstruction, but also by Democrats' own inability to unite fully around priorities.

The time ahead is pivotal for President Joe Biden and his allies in Congress to seize what some view as a transformative moment to rebuild the economy and re-



shape the country. "There's a lot of anxiety," said Rep. Ro Khanna, D-Cal., who had been a co-chair of Bernie Sanders' presidential bid. "It's a question really for President Biden: What

kind of president does he want to be?"

The summer work period is traditionally among the busiest for Congress, but especially sharpened this year as Democrats strain to deliver on Biden's agenda. Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer warned colleagues that June will "test our resolve." Infrastructure talks are dragging, though Biden is expected to talk again Tuesday with Sen. Shelley Moore Capito, the lead Republican negotiator. But the limits of bipartisanship in the 50-50 Senate are increasingly clear.

The party suffered a debilitating blow over the weekend when Sen. Joe Manchin, D-W.Va., announced his opposition to the voting bill, titled S.1 because it is a top party priority. Many Democrats view it

as crucial to protecting democracy and a direct response to restrictive new voting laws being passed in Republican-led states egged on by Donald Trump, the former president.

"Do I feel discouraged? Yes," said Rep. Pramila Jayapal, D-Wash., chairwoman of the Congressional Progressive Caucus, warning of a failure to deliver on the promises. "We will lose voters for a generation."

Schumer, in setting the agenda, is challenging senators to prepare to make tough choices. But he is also facing a test of his own ability to lead the big-tent party through a volatile period of shifting priorities and tactics in the aftermath of the Trump era and the Capitol insurrection.

While Democratic senators have

Oz state finds source of Covid-19 variant

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Melbourne, June 8: Health authorities in the Australian state of Victoria, which is battling to contain the highly contagious B.1.617.2 or the Delta Covid-19 variant, have found a genomic link to one of the positive cases.

The health authorities, who have been investigating the Delta cases in Victoria since last week, have yet to find a link with any other cases across Australia, reports Xinhua news agency.

Victoria's Acting Premier James Merlino said Tuesday that a match had been made with a returned traveller who had entered hotel quarantine in the state capital of Melbourne May 8.

"While we have a genomic link, we do not currently have an epidemiological link," Merlino said. "There's currently no definitive understanding of where a transmission event may have occurred."

Investigations are continuing as to whether there was any contact between the returned traveller and those other Delta cases.

As of Tuesday, the state recorded two locally-acquired Covid cases of from 22,814 test results in the past 24 hours, both of which were linked to existing outbreaks, according to Merlino. Overall there are now 92 active cases in the state, with 83 are locally acquired.

Merlino said the tracking down and isolating of cases meant that the lockdown was likely to be lifted Thursday.

"We remain on track to later in this week announce further easing of restrictions in regional Victoria and careful easing of restrictions in Melbourne," he said.

UNSC recommends Guterres for 2nd term as UN chief

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

United Nations, June 8: The UN Security Council Tuesday recommended Secretary General Antonio Guterres for a second five-year term as chief of the world organisation beginning January 1, 2022.

The 15-nation Council held a closed meeting where it unanimously adopted a resolution recommending Guterres' name to the 193-member General Assembly for a second term as Secretary General.

"India welcomes the adoption of @UN #SecurityCouncil resolution recommending a second term to #UnitedNationsSecretary-General @antonioguterres," India's Permanent Representative to the UN Ambassador T S Tirumurti tweeted. Last month, India had conveyed its support to Guterres for his candidature as chief of the world body for a second term beginning January 2022.

External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar had met Guterres at the United Nations headquarters and expressed New Delhi's support to him for his second term as the world's top diplomat.

"India values UNSG's leadership of the UN, especially in these challenging times. Conveyed our support for his candidature for a second term," Jaishankar said in a tweet after the meeting. Later a press release issued by the Permanent Mission of the India to the UN also stated that Jaishankar "conveyed that India values Secretary General's leadership of the United Nations, especially in these challenging times."

AFGHAN HIT BY BLACKOUT

Several Afghanistan provinces were hit by a blackout as a power pylon was destroyed in an explosion, Breshna Sherkat, the national power company, confirmed Tuesday



Several Afghanistan provinces were hit by a blackout as a power pylon was destroyed in an explosion, Breshna Sherkat, the national power company, confirmed Tuesday

business

of the day quote

Even though conditions will remain unpredictable and we will be living with the effects of COVID-19 for some time, we remain confident of the medium to long-term growth prospects of the FMCG sector



SANJIV MEHTA | HUL CMD

Modern, cost efficient storage infrastructure at grass roots level and at block level is great way to increase farmers income



PIYUSH GOVAL | UNION FOOD MINISTER

At this time when India is fighting the second wave of COVID we aim to support the medical fraternity with our new offering of Skyline ambulances. The ambulance is a consequence of rigorous research and collaboration with industry leaders and are ideal for intensive medical care



VINOD AGGARWAL | VECV MANAGING DIRECTOR & CEO

SHORT TAKES

Favipiravir effective: Glenmark cites study

New Delhi: Drug firm Glenmark Pharmaceuticals Tuesday said interim data from its post marketing surveillance study on antiviral drug favipiravir in India supports its safety and effectiveness in real world settings with no new safety concerns for COVID-19 patients. The study commenced in July 2020, aimed to evaluate safety and efficacy of favipiravir in mild to moderate COVID-19 patients. As on date, a total of 1,083 patients have been enrolled in the prospective, open label, multicenter, single arm study. Glenmark said in a regulatory filing. Interim data presented by the company to the regulator reveals no new safety signals or concerns with the use of favipiravir and already-known side effects which were found to be mild in nature, the filing said.

Whatfix raises \$90mn in funding

New Delhi: Whatfix, a digital adoption solutions provider, Tuesday said it has raised USD 90 million (about ₹656 crore) in funding led by SoftBank Vision Fund 2. The Series D funding also saw participation from Eight Roads Ventures, Sequoia Capital India, Dragoneer Investment Group, F-Prime Capital and Cisco Investments, a statement said. Whatfix has now raised USD 139.8 million till date, and its valuation has increased three times in the past 15 months, it added. "The company plans to use the funding to continue growing its stronghold in the US market while accelerating global expansion into new markets such as Asia Pacific and Europe," it said. Whatfix will also invest the funds in product innovation focusing on artificial intelligence (AI), enterprise solutions, and providing personalised experiences, it added.

CCI nod for Byju's buyout of Aakash

New Delhi: The Competition Commission has approved ed-tech startup Byju's proposed acquisition of Aakash Educational Services Ltd (AESL). The deal, estimated to be worth around USD 1 billion, which will bolster Byju's presence in the test preparation segment in the country, was announced in April this year. Tuesday, Competition Commission of India (CCI) said it has approved the proposed combination relating to Think & Learn Pvt Ltd (Byju's) acquisition of certain stake of AESL and thereafter their merger.



While there are welcome signs of global recovery, the pandemic continues to inflict poverty and inequality on people in developing countries around the world

DAVID MALPASS | WORLD BANK GROUP PRESIDENT

APPLE PREVIEWS NEW SOFTWARE

Apple kicked off its second annual all-virtual developer conference with a keynote that outlined new updates to its software for iPhones and other devices. The presentation highlighted more privacy options for paid iCloud accounts and a "Find My" service that helps find errant AirPods



SBI union, others urge RBI to scrap digital payments plan



REUTERS

Mumbai, June 8: A union representing India's largest state-run bank and a global alliance have asked the central bank to bar large companies from setting up payment networks, saying in a letter seen by Reuters Tuesday that privatisation could compromise data safety.

In a bid to reduce concentration risks in the payments sector, RBI last year invited companies to forge so-called New Umbrella Entities (NUEs) to create a payments network that would rival the country's flagship processor, the National

Payments Council of India (NPCI). The NUE will be allowed to operate new payment systems including digital and ATM transactions. Amazon, Google, Facebook, and others have applied for such licences in partnership with Indian companies such as Reliance and ICICI Bank.

Involvement of big multi-national companies raises fears of abuse of user data and India's digital payment networks should continue to operate on a non-profit basis, the All India State Bank of India (SBI) Staff Federation and the UNI Global Union, a vocal critic of tech giants, wrote in the letter.

The letter urged the central bank to scrap the "whole process of NUE licensing" and focus on strengthening the domestic payments group, NPCI, which operates as a non-profit.

The RBI did not immediately respond to a request for comment on the letter, which has previously not been reported.

While state-backed NPCI forms the backbone of the country's digital payments system, India is an increasingly attractive digital payments market for everyone from Amazon to Google. An ASSOCHAM-PWC India study in 2019 said digital payments in India could rise to \$135 billion (roughly ₹9,84,250 crores) in 2023 from \$65 billion (roughly ₹4,73,900 crores) in 2019.

In the letter, groups including the SBI union, which represents 100,000 of its nearly 250,000 employees, and UNI Global Union, that represents about 20 million workers globally, specifically raised concerns about the NUE application by a consortium led by Amazon. It highlighted the US company was facing several investigations into its business practices in India and abroad.

Don't let taxpayers down: FM to Infosys on ITR portal glitches



INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, June 8: Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman Monday called out Infosys and its Co-Founder Nandan Nilekani for the problems faced by taxpayers while using the newly launched ITR e-filing portal. Citing complaints on her Twitter timeline the Minister said ease of compliance for the taxpayer should be of higher priority.

"The much awaited e-filing portal 2.0 was launched last night 20:45hrs. I see in my TL grievances and glitches," she said in a tweet. "Hope @Infosys & @NandanNilekani will not let down our taxpayers in the quality of service being provided. Ease in compliance for the taxpayer should be our priority."

Infosys has developed the next-

generation income tax filing system to reduce processing time for returns from 63 days to one day and expedite refunds. The software major had also developed the government's GST Network (GSTN) portal, used for GST payment and return filing, which also had faced initial over glitches on the website.

In a late evening reply to Sitharaman's tweet, Nilekani said some technical issues were observed on day one, and Infosys is working to resolve them.

"The new e-filing portal will ease the filing process and enhance end user experience. @nsitharaman ji, we have observed some technical issues on day one, and are working to resolve them. @Infosys regrets these initial glitches and expects the system to stabilise during the week," Nilekani tweeted.

Pradhan inaugurates 11 CNG stations in state



POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, June 8: Minister for Petroleum & Natural Gas and Steel Dharmendra Pradhan Tuesday dedicated to the nation GAIL group's 201 CNG stations across the country including 11 CNG stations for Odisha.

Pradhan inaugurated four CNG stations in Cuttack and seven in Khurda. Earlier, the state had 11 CNG stations. Pradhan said the CGD sector has emerged as a major sector for natural gas consumption. "The demand is only going to increase as more GAs become operational. With the inauguration of 201 CNG stations today the country will have about 3100 stations. The CGD entities to keep working hard to reach 10,000 CNG stations and 5 crore PNG connections in coming 7-8 years," the minister said.

He said that there is a need for conversion of diesel/petrol vehicles

to CNG/LNG for ensuring lesser emissions and cleaner environment. "In that direction, Mobile Refueling Unit (MRU) will help achieve supply of CNG in areas not yet connected through pipelines or at places where there is scarcity of land parcels to set up conventional CNG stations. It can store up to 1,500 kg CNG and can fill 150 to 200 vehicles per day." He stressed upon the need to expedite commissioning of more MRUs in the country to increase mobility of fuel availability through their deployment at various locations like housing societies, offices.

Pradhan said the push on CNG/LNG infrastructure will enhance investment in OEM sector, CGD equipment manufacture, transport sector and will lead to creation of employment. Increasing usage of LNG in steel, transport and mining sector, inland waterways, will also lead to reduction in dependence on crude oil and increase self-reliance in energy sector.

'Burden of taxes impeding household consumption'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, June 8: The burden of taxation, particularly indirect taxes, on households has worsened lately and is preventing them from spending more on consumption, a domestic rating agency said Tuesday.

Unlike the corporates who are enjoying a rationalisation in income tax, no such move has been introduced for the households who continue paying elevated taxes, it said.

Burden on households tax could delay consumption recovery, India Ratings and Research warned, stating that the increase in indirect taxes through the excise duty hike in fuels just before the pandemic and the second wave of infections have had an impact. The share of total tax burden on house-



holds has risen to 75 per cent from 60 per cent in FY10, it said, explaining that this was largely due to the combination of a higher excise duty on fuel and a reduction in corporate tax.

It said corporation tax has been rationalised to augment job creation and attracting direct foreign investments, and also backed the move calling it a legitimate change because it made our exports uncompetitive. "The burden of taxes, particularly of in-

direct taxes, on households has worsened lately," it said, adding that the excise hike has led to retail prices of petrol and diesel hitting record levels and impacting household budgets both directly and indirectly.

Indirect taxes are not progressive by nature and lead to a disproportionately higher welfare loss to households that are at the lower end of the pyramid, it said, stressing that unlike the corporates who benefitted through tax rationalization, no such measure has been given to the end-consumers.

Consumption had been going down before the COVID hit us as well, it said, adding that the job or salary losses, coupled with increased expenditure for COVID illness came as a double whammy for households during the pandemic.

CCI nod for acquisition of 3 power utilities by TPCL

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, June 8: The Competition Commission of India (CCI) approved acquisition of 51% of the equity share capital in each of the three electricity supply companies of Odisha—Western Electricity Supply Company of Odisha (WESCO Utility), Southern Electricity Supply Company of Odisha Limited (SOUTHCO Utility) and Central Electricity Supply Company of Odisha Limited (CESCO Utility) by the Tata Power Company Limited (TPCL), under

Section 31(1) of the Competition Act, 2002, Tuesday.

According to the report, proposed combinations relate to acquisition of 51% of equity share capital in each utility by the TPCL from Grid Corporation of Odisha Limited (GRIDCO) pursuant to separate competitive bidding processes initiated by the Odisha Electricity Regulatory Commission (OERC) under Section 20 of the Electricity Act, 2003.

WESCO Utility is engaged in the business of distribution and retail supply of power in five western

districts of Odisha namely Rourkela, Burla (Sambalpur), Bhawanipatna (Kalahandi), Bolangir, and Bargarh. SOUTHCO Utility is engaged in the business of distribution and retail supply of power in six southern districts of Odisha namely, certain areas in Ganjam district, Berhampur, Aska, Bhanjanagar, Jeypore and Rayagada.

CESCO Utility is engaged in the business of distribution and retail supply of power in four central districts of Odisha namely Bhubaneswar (1 and 2), Cuttack, Paradip and Dhenkanal.

Biden admin's 'strike force' to go after China on trade

REUTERS

Washington, June 8: The United States will target China with a new "strike force" to combat unfair trade practices, the Biden administration said Tuesday, as it rolled out findings of a review of U.S. access to critical products, from semiconductors to electric-vehicle batteries.

The "supply chain trade strike force," led by the U.S. trade representative, will look for specific violations that have contributed to a "hollowing out" of supply chains that could be addressed with trade remedies, including toward China, senior administration officials told reporters.

Officials also said the Department of Commerce was considering initiating a Section 232 investigation into the national security impact of neodymium magnet imports used in motors and other industrial applications, which the United States largely sources from China.

President Joe Biden ordered the review of critical supply chains in February, requiring executive agencies to report back within 100 days on risks to U.S. access to critical goods like those used in pharmaceuticals as well as rare earth minerals, for which the United States is dependent on overseas sources.

Though not explicitly directed at China, the review is part of a broader Biden administration strategy to shore up U.S. competitiveness in the face of economic challenges posed by the world's second largest economy.

"Semiconductors are the building blocks that underpin so much of our economy, and are essential to our national security, our economic competitiveness, and our daily lives," U.S. Commerce Secretary Gina Raimondo said in a statement. Other top U.S. economic officials are scheduled to address reporters at the White



House at 1 p.m. (1700 GMT).

The United States faced serious challenges getting medical equipment during the COVID-19 epidemic and now faces severe bottlenecks in a number of areas, including computer chips, stalling production of goods such as cars.

U.S. agencies are required to issue more complete reports a year after Biden's order, identifying gaps

in domestic manufacturing capabilities and policies to address them. A senior official said the United States had faced unfair trade practices from "a number of foreign governments" across all four of the supply chains covered in the initial review, including government subsidies and forced intellectual property transfers.

"Obviously, a number of Chinese

industrial policies have contributed to vulnerable U.S. supply chains," the official said. "I think you are going to see this strike force focusing in feeding into some of our China policy developments."

The United States was not looking to "wage trade wars with our allies and partners," the official added, noting the strike force would be focused on "very targeted products." But the senior officials offered little in the way of new measures to immediately ease chip supply shortages, noting in a fact sheet that the Commerce Department would work to "facilitate information flow" between chip makers and end users and increase transparency, a step Reuters previously reported.

In medicine, the administration will use the Defense Production Act to accelerate efforts to manufacture 50 to 100 critical drugs domestically rather than relying on imports. And to address supply bottlenecks from lumber to steel that

have raised fears of inflation, the administration is starting a task force focused on "homebuilding and construction, semiconductors, transportation, and agriculture and food."

Semiconductors are a central focus in sprawling legislation currently before Congress, which would pump billions of dollars into creating domestic production capacity for the chips used in everything from consumer electronics to military equipment.

Biden has said China will not surpass the United States as a global leader on his watch, and confronting Beijing is one of the few bipartisan issues in an otherwise deeply divided Congress.

But some lawmakers have expressed concerns that a package of China-related bills includes huge taxpayer-funded outlays for companies without safeguards to prevent them from sending related production or research to China.

'We'll talk about my goals in 10 yrs' time'



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Doha, June 8: Sunil Chhetri has never liked counting his goals and he prefers to keep it that way even after surpassing the great Lionel Messi as the second highest scorer in international football.

The 36-year-old Chhetri achieved his 74th strike with his brace against Bangladesh in the joint preliminary qualifying round match for 2022 FIFA World Cup and 2023 AFC Asian Cup here on Monday night. Messi has 73 so far.

The skipper said he will get down to counting his goals probably 10 years down the line. "I do not count the number of goals. 10 years later, we will sit together, have a chat and then count," the 36-year-old said.

The seasoned striker, who helped India register their first win in six years in World Cup qualifiers, now stands only behind Portugal's Cristiano Ronaldo (103) in the active international goal-scorers' list.

Instead of his goals, Chhetri focussed on the many lessons his team will take home from Monday's game. "We were guilty of missing a lot of chances. We could have done better. It has been a topsy-turvy qualifying campaign. Looking back, we understand that we could

have done a lot better. "We will talk about it but I am happy that we got three points," Chhetri said.

When queries veered towards his goals again, Chhetri brushed them aside as a thing of past for him now. "You know what. All of this is past. We play Afghanistan, and we have to be at our best. It will be a new day, a new canvas. And it is up to us to paint it the manner we want to," he asserted.

The India captain is just a goal away from entering world football's all-time top-10. He is behind Hungary's Sandor Kocsis, Japan's Kunishige Kamamoto, and Kuwait's Bashar Abdullah, who all have 75 goals.

"Congratulations to @chhetrisunil11 for overtaking Messi to become 2nd highest active international Goal-scorer! I enjoyed his brilliant 2 goals against Bangladesh which secured a win for India and put him on to 74 international goals," tweeted sports minister Kiren Rijiju Tuesday.

Indian football team head coach Igor Stimac says his 36-year-old goal-machine Sunil Chhetri plays and scores like a 25-year-old.

"Many people keep on asking as to when Sunil is going to retire. He works so hard on the pitch, and in

every training session, he is by far the best," Stimac said after the match.

"He is in such good shape and is working with such professionalism. He is working as if he is 25, playing as if he is 25, and scoring goals like he is 25," Stimac added.

"Many people were asking last year or so, 'when is Sunil going to retire?' (If Chhetri retires) what are we going to do then? By far, in every training, he is our best player," Stimac said.

Centre back Sandesh Jhingan felt that Chhetri's name will be remembered even after 100 years. "Some 100 or 200 years down the line, people will still talk about Sunil Chhetri. As long as there is Indian football, people will remember his name. It's for everyone to see what he does on the field. Hence, I would rather like to mention that off the field he is the perfect example for all to follow."

Goalkeeper Gurpreet Singh Sandhu expressed, "I will keep on mentioning that there's one guy floating in between Cristiano Ronaldo and Lionel Messi - and that's my teammate, my captain Sunil Chhetri. It shows his commitment and how consistent he has been scoring goals - one after the other. It's simply remarkable," he added.

SWIATEK SETS UP SAKKARI DATE

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Paris, June 8: After her fourth-round victory extended her winning streak to 10 matches in French Open as well as this season, eighth seed Iga Swiatek is gearing up to face giant-killer Maria Sakkari with 'patience' as a weapon.

Eighth seed Swiatek beat Marta Kostyuk in straight sets, 6-3, 6-4, to enter quarterfinals of French Open late Monday night. The 20-year-old Swiatek proved to be the superior player although her 18-year-old opponent stretched her.

Swiatek won 74 per cent first serve points as against 57 percent by her opponent. She also converted four out of the 12 break-points she got. Kostyuk could convert only two out of seven break-points.

Sakkari, who became the first Greek woman to enter quarterfinals, had scalped World No.5 Sofia Kenin 6-1, 6-3 Monday.

Swiatek's match Wednesday will be preceded by the third women's singles quarter-finals between American Coco Gauff and Czech



IGA SWIATEK

Republic's Barbora Krejčíková. "I have not played her, so it is hard to say I played many practices with her, and she is really cool girl. Our teams, we like each other," Swiatek

said after the match. "Hopefully, it is going to be good. She is the kind of player who likes to play defence as well, as my opponent today. I am just going to be

ready. I am going to be patient and hopefully it is going to get results," added Swiatek.

"It is never easy to play with one of the nicest girls on tour. Tactically, I am going to for sure be prepared. Right now I am not thinking about it, because still I have doubles (Tuesday). So I just want to focus on getting my body back to being fresh," said Swiatek further.

The Polish Swiatek struggled against her unfancied opponent in a night session match before sealing the tie. She said that playing a night game brings its own challenges as she struggled to get into rhythm.

"I like (being tested) because it keeps me constantly on my toes. It just keeps you focused all the time, because you don't have that flow, so... you have to work all the time," Swiatek said.

"With that flow, you sometimes can seem surprised that, 'Hey, something is not good,' and then you are going to panic. But right now I am getting tested, as you said. Still I am moving forward, so that is even better for me," she added.

Bhagat's 'focus on Paralympics gold'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, June 8: Three Indian para shuttlers, including World No.1 Pramod Bhagat, Tuesday qualified for the Paralympics, scheduled to be held from August 25 to September 5.

Besides Bhagat, Tarun Tarun and Krishna Nagar too received invitations to participate in the Paralympics. Bhagat, who had claimed two gold medals and a bronze at the recently-concluded Dubai Para Tournament, was on cloud nine after receiving the invitation from BWF.

"I am very excited to be invited, every athlete dreams of participating in the Olympics and it is the same for me. I am very focused and winning a gold at the Paralympics is my dream and I have been training very hard to achieve this," said the Odisha star.

Odisha rope in Lalruatthara

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, June 8: Odisha FC have signed 26-year-old Indian defender Lalruatthara ahead of the eighth season of the Indian Super League (ISL). He has penned a two-year deal with the Bhubaneswar-based side with an option to extend for a third.

The announcement was made by social worker Abhimanyu Das on Odisha FC's social media handles as a part of the club's initiative to honour the services of the frontline warriors of the state during this tough pandemic situation.

Lalruatthara started his professional career with Aizawl FC in 2015 and was a part of their I-League title-winning side. He then signed for the Kerala Blasters in 2017 and was awarded the ISL Emerging



Player of the Season in his maiden appearance in the League.

A very promising defender from his teenage, Lalruatthara, has represented India at the senior and U-23 levels as well.

Expressing his delight, Lalruatthara stated, "I am very happy and grateful to wear the Odisha FC jersey in the upcoming season. I look forward to representing the club by giving my best. I am thrilled to play under a new system, coach, staff and am excited to learn new things to improve my game.

"I am looking forward to playing with some familiar faces and as a team, to take Odisha FC to new heights. I thank everyone at the club for the trust and for giving me this opportunity," he further added.

2 MORE DAYS TO GO...

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





GROUP D: England, Croatia, Czech Republic, Scotland

ENGLAND (ENG)

FIFA ranking: 4 **Euro appearances:** 9 times **Best results:** Semifinals (1996)

'Perennial underachievers' is a tag that has hauntingly followed England whenever they have entered a major tournament. That is for good reason, though, as the Three Lions have often flattered to deceive despite boasting some of the best players in the game in their teams over the years. The 2018 FIFA World Cup, though, indicated a possible upswing for England, who went right till the semifinals. However, the resolve that they showed throughout the tournament suggests that things are moving in the right direction. The UEFA Euro 2020 Qualifiers, meanwhile, was a breeze, with England winning seven of their eight games. What was especially pleasing was the fact that they only conceded a mere six goals while scoring a whopping 37 times. Finding a balance will be the key for Southgate. He is blessed with the most talented crop of young attacking players, yet concerns at the back surrounding the fitness of Harry Maguire have exposed the lack of depth in key defensive areas. They will miss the services of Liverpool star Trent Alexander-Arnold, who was ruled out of the competition following an injury.

Coach: Gareth Southgate



KEY PLAYER
Harry Kane

CROATIA (CRO)

FIFA ranking: 14 **Euro appearances:** 5 **Best results:** Quarterfinals (1996, 2008)

The 2018 World Cup runners-up saw off Wales, Slovakia and Hungary to top the most competitive group in qualifying. Their 17 points was the lowest of the 10 group winners. Of greater concern is that they have been poor travellers, winning just one away game and were the only team to drop points against Azerbaijan. What also poses a concern for Dalic is the fact that the squad he now has in front of him is ageing, with the key players no spring chickens anymore. Croatia have also slipped up early on in the 2022 FIFA World Cup Qualifiers, so the odds do seem to be stacked against them heading into UEFA Euro 2020. Croatia, though, still have the inspirational Luka Modric leading by example, while out in front, there have been some positive but key changes. Defence, however, might pose a bit of a concern for the Balkan side, which then brings Scotland and Czech Republic into the picture.



KEY PLAYER
Luka Modric

Coach: Zlatko Dalic

CZECH REPUBLIC (CZE)

FIFA ranking: 40 **Euro appearances:** 6 times **Best results:** Runners-up (1996)

Czech Republic already had to sweat a lot in order to book their place at the Euro, with Kosovo, who finished third in their group, coming extremely close to usurping them to the second automatic qualification spot. Czech Republic come into the Euros on the back of four points from three matches in their 2022 World Cup qualifying group. This may not be as talented as the golden generation of around 20 years ago, but they will be dangerous opponents in Group D. Tomas Soucek and Patrik Schick will hold the key for them. Shortlisted for Premier League player of the season, look no further than Soucek for the Czech's chief threat. Not only has he demonstrated for West Ham his ability to provide a solid defensive presence at the back during corners and free-kicks, Soucek has been a revelation in attack, his goals helping the Hammers seal European qualification. Schick, on the other hand, will need to be more clinical in front of opposition goal to find their side in the knockouts.



KEY PLAYER
Tomas Soucek

Coach: Jaroslav Silhavy

SCOTLAND (SCO)

FIFA ranking: 44 **Euro appearances:** 2 times **Best results:** Group Stage (1992, 1996)

UEFA Euro 2020 is only going to be the third ever instance that Scotland will be taking part in the quadrennial continental tournament, with their previous two campaigns ending at the very first hurdle. The qualifying campaign did not really go smoothly either, as they finished third in Group I behind Belgium and Russia to miss out on automatic qualification. Clarke's men won two penalty shoot-outs in Euro 2020 qualifying: the play-off semi-final against Israel, and the play-off final against Serbia, scoring all 10 spot-kicks. Having finally made it to UEFA Euro 2020 via the scenic route, Scotland are definitely going to be the dark horses in Group D, wherein they ought to put up some spirited performances. The eyes will be on two of the best left-backs in the Premier League - Liverpool's Andrew Robertson and Arsenal's Kieran Tierney, box-to-box Aston Villa midfielder John McGinn, who scored seven in eight qualifying appearances, and Manchester United midfielder Scott McTominay.



KEY PLAYER
Andrew Robertson

Coach: Steve Clarke

GROUP D FIXTURES

Date	Match	Time (IST)
June 13	ENG v CRO	06:30 pm
June 14	CZE v SCO	06:30 pm
June 18	CRO v CZE	09:30 pm
June 19	SCO v ENG	12:30 am
June 23	CRO v SCO	12:30 am
June 23	ENG v CZE	12:30 am

Telecast: SONY TEN Network