



STARTLING CLAIM

Actor and MP Nusrat Jahan says her marriage was not valid in India and it was only a live-in relationship

LEISURE P2



SHOW CAUSE ISSUED

Nepal's Supreme Court show causes President, PM on dissolution of House of Representatives

INTERNATIONAL P10



TSITSIPAS IN SEMIS

Stefanos Tsitsipas sees off Daniil Medvedev to set up semifinal clash with Alexander Zverev at French Open

SPORTS P12

₹400Cr for Biju Expressway

174.5KM EXPANSION PROJECT BETWEEN KALAHANDI AND NUAPADA DISTRICTS WITH NEW BRIDGES APPROVED

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, June 9: The Odisha Cabinet decided Wednesday to expand the Biju Expressway by constructing roads and bridges in Kalahandi and Nuapada districts.

Briefing about the Cabinet decisions, Chief Secretary Suresh Chandra Mahapatra said, "The Cabinet took 11 major decisions today (Tuesday) out of which four are related to construction and widening of the 'Biju Expressway' for enhanced connectivity in western Odisha. This will also provide impetus to the industrial growth and overall economic development in the region."

The Cabinet has approved a tender worth ₹448.02 crore for construction of the road of 174.5 km length, passing through the two districts, Mahapatra informed.

The total length of the expressway (Ghatipada-Sinapali) in Nuapada district will be 104.65km including six small and six major bridges. In Kalahandi district ((Sinapali-Dharmagarh-Ampani) a 69.85-km stretch will be constructed with 11 small and two major bridges.

As per plan, the four-lane express highway will connect Sundargarh, Jharsuguda, Sambalpur, Bargarh, Nuapada, Kalahandi, Nabarangpur and Koraput districts.

The Cabinet has also approved tender for construction of box shape drain in Cuttack city under JICA assisted Odisha Integrated Sanitation Improvement Project (OISIP).

Frequent flooding and inundation during monsoons are perennial problems faced by Cuttack residents. So a drain will be constructed between



IDCOL GETS A NEW DEPARTMENT

BHUBANESWAR: The State Cabinet decided Wednesday to transfer PSU Industrial Development Corporation of Odisha Limited (IDCOL) from the Industries department to the Steel and Mines department. Since the primary objective of IDCOL has now shifted towards the mining sector from industrial activities, the Cabinet decided to transfer the PSU by amending the Odisha Government Rules of Business. The PSU was set up in 1962 to promote, establish and manage industries for initiating industrialisation in the state and creation of employment. However, it has been involved only in operation of lime stone, iron ore, manganese and chromite mines for the past several years.

Patapola to Matrubhawan in Cuttack at a cost of ₹450.44 crore. Construction will start from July and is expected to be completed by December, 2022.

The Cabinet has also decided to

create 220 new Odisha Administrative Service (OAS) posts in order to augment the existing promotional facilities in the mid and senior-level posts. With the addition of the new posts, the

total strength of OAS has increased to 2,123 posts.

The panel has also said yes to the amendment of Odisha Government Servants' Conduct Rules, 1959 to execute one of its earlier decisions. All government employees will have to submit their annual property returns to the government.

The Cabinet also decided to amend the Odisha Town Planning & Improvement Trust (OTPIIT) Act, 1956. The amendment will follow the guidelines of Business Reform Action Plan (BRAP) devised by the Department of Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT), Government of India.

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Monsoon set to hit Odisha hard

Heavy rainfall expected in state over next 2-3 days

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, June 9: The India Meteorological Department (IMD) said Wednesday that the southwest monsoon is likely to make its presence felt across entire Odisha in the next 2-3 days.

A cyclonic circulation has formed over eastcentral and adjoining northeast Bay of Bengal between 4.5 and 5.8km above mean sea level. Under its influence, a low pressure area is likely to form over North Bay of Bengal around June 11. The low pressure area will trigger heavy to very heavy and extremely heavy rainfall in many parts of Odisha during the period June 10 to 14.

Heavy to very heavy rainfall is very likely to occur at a few places over the districts of Kendrapara, Jagatsinghpur, Cuttack, Dhenkanal, Angul, Sambalpur, Balasore, Bhadrak, Jajpur, Sundargarh, Jharsuguda,

Bargarh, Deogarh, Keonjhar, Mayurbhanj, Malkangiri, Koraput, Kalahandi, Kandhamal, Boudh, Sonepur and Nabarangpur districts Thursday. It will continue in many coastal, and other districts till June 14.

Special Relief Commissioner (SRC) PK Jena has asked all collectors and municipal commissioners to start preparations for tackling the situations after heavy rains.

"During such heavy rainfall, flash floods/flood like situation may occur in different rivers, and water bodies. In hilly areas landslides may occur. Waterlogging may happen in different parts including urban and low lying areas," the SRC said in the letter to the district collectors.

They have been asked to take measures to prevent damage to life and property. Authorities have been advised to keep all flood shelters ready to evacuate people, if needed, the letter said.

IRREGULAR by MANJUL



Before I welcome you to our party dear, show me your covid test result!

PANDEY APPOINTED ECI'S 3RD MEMBER

NEW DELHI: President Ram Nath Kovind has appointed retired IAS officer Anup Chandra Pandey as the Election Commissioner. The appointment restores the three-member Election Commission of India (ECI) to its full strength. It will now oversee the next set of Assembly elections in UP, Punjab, Goa, Manipur and Uttarakhand next year. Pandey is a 1984-batch UP cadre officer. He has been appointed to the post with effect from the date he assumes the office. A notification in this regard was issued by the Ministry of Law and Justice late Tuesday night.

MARKET WATCH

INDEX	SENSX	51941.64	↓	333.93
BOURSES	NIFTY	15635.40	↓	104.70
CURRENCY	DOLLAR	73.34	↑	₹0.08
	EURO	88.94	↑	₹0.15
BULLION	GOLD	₹49,121	↓	₹6
	SILVER	₹71,791	↑	₹560

WEATHER

	BHUB	CTK
TEMP	MAX 32.8°C	33.2°C
	MIN 24.8°C	24.0°C
Humidity	91%	82%
Rainfall	Nil	6.2mm
Forecast	Generally cloudy sky	

TMC SEEKING PLATFORM FOR PAN-INDIA PRESENCE

Mamata promises to join farmers' agitation

AGENCIES

Kolkata, June 9: In what can be a major headache for the BJP-led government at the Centre, the farmers' stir against the three new agri laws is all set to gain momentum with West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee assuring the movement all support. Banerjee met farmer leaders Rakesh Tikait and Yudhvir Singh here Wednesday and had a detailed discussion on how to take forward the agitation. The Trinamool Congress (TMC) supremo said there should be a platform where states could converse on policy issues. "Bulldozing states is not good for the federal structure," Banerjee said after the meeting.

Banerjee's support for the north India-based farmers' unions comes within days of TMC's announcement that the party would spread its footprints outside West Bengal's geo-

graphical boundaries.

The Bhartiya Kisan Union (BKU) led by Tikait and Singh had supported the 'No vote for BJP' campaign ahead of the West Bengal Assembly elections and have plans to extend that in other upcoming state elections as well.

Banerjee announced that her 'support for the farmers' movement will be there' and added in an obvious jibe at the Centre that 'India is hungrily waiting for policies which help in fighting Covid-19, assist farmers and industry'. The chief minister rhetorically asked, "...Why is it so difficult to talk to the farmers?"

The chief minister said that the agriculturist leaders have requested her to talk to other state leaders on the farmers' issue and organise a dialogue with the different unions. "The farmers' movement is not just for Punjab, Haryana or UP. It is for the whole country," asserted Mamata.

NATURE'S 'BEAUTIFUL' FURY



Dense smoke and flames from a wildfire behind the village of Abu Gosh near Jerusalem

PTI PHOTO

Gender disparity mars India's vax drive

More men receiving Covid vaccine jabs in comparison to women

AGENCIES

New Delhi, June 9: It seems that the vaccination drive against Covid-19 is beset with one problem or the other in the country. Recent stats show that more men in India are receiving Covid-19 injections than women. This highlights the gender disparity in India's immunisation drive which is also a huge disadvantage to the rural population.

India has partly or fully vaccinated a little over 23 crore people. As per data available from various sources, men account for 54 per cent of the total number of people inoculated. India, with a population of over 1.3 billion, has about six per cent more men than women.

Many states and Union Territories including Uttar Pradesh and Delhi

have seen some of the worst inequities in vaccination. Only two states, Kerala and Chhattisgarh have vaccinated more women than men.

"We are noticing that men, especially in towns and villages, prefer to take the vaccine before women as they have to travel for work, while women are relegated to domestic chores," Prashant Pandya, a superintendent of a government hospital in Gujarat, has been quoted as saying by 'Reuters'.

Health officials have said rumours about vaccines disrupting women's menstruation cycle and reducing fertility have also contributed to the skewed data. The government has rejected the concerns.

"The government will have to ramp up awareness programmes in rural India to ensure women

STARK FACTS



ONLY KERALA AND CHHATTISGARH HAVE ADMINISTERED VACCINES TO MORE WOMEN THAN MEN

RUMOURS LIKE REDUCED FERTILITY ARE LEADING TO WOMEN AVOIDING VACCINATION

WOMEN IN RURAL AREAS DEPRIVED OF THE CHANCE TO VISIT VACCINATION CENTRES

understand the importance of vaccines and prioritise themselves in this race to secure the two shots," said a former bureaucrat of the Health Ministry here. "Women will have to step forward to get vaccinated or the divide will rap-

idly widen," she added.

Kerala however, has so far vaccinated 48 per cent men and 52% of the fairer sex while for Chhattisgarh the figure stands at 49% (men) and 51% (women). However, in some of the major states women lag far be-

hind in comparison to the number of men vaccinated. Among the states, where the gap is quite large regarding vaccination of men and women, are Odisha (53% men, 47% women), Maharashtra (54%, 46%), Gujarat (54%, 46%), Rajasthan (52%, 48%), Tamil Nadu (55%, 45%), West Bengal and Punjab (56%, 44%).

Some women in the rural parts of Gujarat and Rajasthan have urged the authorities to deliver vaccines at their doorsteps. They stated that they are unable to travel to hospitals leaving their children behind.

"I don't know how to read and write... how will I register for the vaccine," asked Laxmiben Suthar, a mother of four in the town of Vadnagar in Gujarat. "The government must send the medicine to us," she pleaded.

FUEL PRICES HIKED AFTER ONE-DAY GAP

AGENCIES

New Delhi, June 9: Fuel prices were hiked yet again Wednesday reaching new record highs. Petrol and diesel prices were increased by 25 paise each per litre according

CITY FUEL PRICES

PETROL ₹96.36 (+0.36)

DIESEL ₹94.29 (+0.28)

to a price notification of state-owned fuel retailers. In Delhi, petrol hit an all-time high of ₹95.31 a litre, while diesel is now priced at ₹86.22 per litre. The hike is the 22nd since May 4 and fifth time in the month of June. It took fuel

prices across India to a historic high. Petrol is now above ₹100 per litre mark in six states and Union Territories. They are Rajasthan, MP, Maharashtra, AP, Telangana and Ladakh. The hike in petrol and diesel prices has been deemed alarming by many, as the petrol rate in a major financial hub - Mumbai - had already crossed ₹100 per litre earlier this week, and experienced a further increase in price Wednesday.

Petrol and diesel prices in India are unlikely to come down anytime soon Union Minister for Petroleum and Natural Gas, Dharmendra Pradhan had said earlier this week.

leisure



TOM HIDDLESTON ALWAYS FEELS AFFECTION FOR 'LOKI'

Actor Tom Hiddleston has opened up about what makes his character, 'Loki', the God of Mischief, the most fun character to portray in the productions of Marvel Cinematic Universe. Hiddleston also shared that he always felt affection for 'Loki' and for his vulnerability.

DERULO OPENS UP ON HIS FRIENDSHIP WITH SMITH

American singer-songwriter Jason Derulo opened up on his friendship with Hollywood star Will Smith. "When Will Smith says something, you want to make sure that you're listening. He gives life advice. I take that and put it right," said Derulo.



FORTUNE FORECAST

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ARIES
You are very apprehensive about your possessions today, and will not like to share them. This mood may be because of someone particular. Affairs regarding love, Ganesh says, are progressing fine, and your married life will bloom.

TAURUS
A short trip could be in the offing today, says Ganesh. Before proceeding, you may, however, be compelled to make changes in your itinerary. If you are not too happy with the new schedules and decide to stick to your original plans, you are likely to feel disturbed, uneasy at the end of the day.

GEMINI
You will find yourself caught in two minds repeatedly, owing to your unpredictable mood swings. This will be the cause of a lot of mental stress. You can reduce your anxiety by talking out your issues with family members and experts.

CANCER
A day to indulge in fantasy. Your ideas will be fantastic. Your status and prestige go up. People will praise your efforts. (Your efforts will be appreciated). A day of creativity and success, with Ganesh's blessings in tow.

LEO
A challenging day awaits you. You will face some tensions and problems, however this doesn't mean you will not be able to complete all your work successfully. Your personal life will proceed as usual, however expectations from you at the work-front will increase.

VIRGO
Children will be a source of a lot of appreciation today, in and out of the classroom. Your logical abilities will become stronger. Ganesh advises you to stay peaceful, flow with the tide and enjoy yourself, regardless of what happens in the day.

LIBRA
Ganesh says today is a fortunate day for starting new work. You will win the hearts of everyone with your amazing charm. Your house and its arty interior decoration will impress people

SCORPIO
Do your deeds and don't expect returns is what Indian mythology has taught us since time immemorial. Now, it's time to implement it, especially at work. You may have to wait a little longer in terms of your business and joint venture. However, don't lose hope as the fruits of patience are sweet.

SAGITTARIUS
The cloud of worries is likely to keep you gloomy today. Try to burst that cloud, and take a decision that would help you to solve your troubles. There may be some delay, if you want the situation to get back to normal. However, as Ganesh says, you would be the one who would benefit at the end of the day!

CAPRICORN
If you are planning to fly to foreign shores for further studies, start documentation and other preparations today, says Ganesh. Whether you are a student or not, on this favourable day, all you need to do is to make a priority list, follow it and finish off your work one by one.

AQUARIUS
Are you facing a roadblock in your path? Make a minor change in your route, you will find a smooth and clear road once again, advises Ganesh. The efforts you have made in the past will come to fruition, today. Don't get satisfied with your current achievements, you still have a long way to keep working hard.

PISCES
Do not commit yourself to any large investments today. It is best to avoid speculative activities. For those who have a job, the co-operation of your colleagues will help you progress, says Ganesh.

My marriage was not valid: Nusrat

Kolkata: In a surprise development, Trinamool Congress MP and actress Nusrat Jahan claimed Wednesday that her marriage to Nikhil Jain was not valid in India and it was only a live-in relationship, adding that their separation happened long back.

Nusrat had reportedly got married to businessman Nikhil Jain in Turkey in 2019. A reception was also held in Kolkata that was attended by celebrities and leading politicians.

In a detailed statement, the Basirhat MP said, "Being on foreign land, as per Turkish Marriage Regulation, the ceremony is invalid. Moreover, since it was an inter-faith marriage, it required validation under the Special Marriage Act in India, which did not happen. As per the court of law, it is not a marriage, but a relationship or a live-in relationship. Thus, the question of divorce does not

arise." The statement, however, has raised eyebrows because Nusrat had declared in her affidavit submitted to the Election Commission before the 2019 Lok Sabha polls that she was married. "She is a people's representative and she cannot make this kind of a wrong statement. This will raise questions and she will have to answer them," said a senior lawyer of Calcutta High Court.



Nusrat Jahan

Raashii wants people to 'be the miracle'



Mumbai: Actress Raashii Khanna is trying to help the poor, who are the worst affected by the pandemic and its ensuing lockdown, and she requests all to donate towards helping the needy. "It's really bad out there for a lot of families, and some of them are literally on the brink of starvation. I would really want people to open their hearts and donate because literally, every bit counts. It doesn't have to be an exorbitant amount. We have to realise that we are all in this together and only together can we overcome these difficult times. And together we can be a miracle in someone's life," says Raashii, who runs an initiative called #BeTheMiracle that aims at helping the needy. "The ground reality of people suffering through the pandemic is heartbreaking. #BeTheMiracle is my way of doing as much as I can for them," she says. Raashii is associating with organisations like Roti Bank and other volunteers who are also helping old age homes, besides animals that have been left out with no food or water during lockdown.

Rashmika's pearls of wisdom for fans

Hyderabad: Actress Rashmika Mandanna, who rose to fame with her work in Telugu films and will soon make her Hindi film debut with *Mission Majnu*, shared a beautiful thought on Twitter Wednesday to cheer up her followers.



The actress has lately been posting positive messages to cheer up her fans in the tough times of the pandemic. Rashmika, who will also be seen with Amitabh Bachchan in the Hindi film *Goodbye*, wrote on Twitter: "Something a friend of mine told me.. and I think I need to tell you all too.. Spend your time on something that gives you either pleasure (happiness- something that makes you smile and feel happy) or money or knowledge.. nothing else!" Recently she also launched an initiative called 'Spreading Hopes' to celebrate the Good Samaritans from all across the country, who have gone out of their way to help others during the devastating second wave of the pandemic. She aims to encourage people to value these superheroes, and get inspired by their work.

'Revenge travel' is the new buzzword

WITH VACCINE ROLL-OUT IN PLACE, ITINERANTS NOW HOPE FOR SOME RELAXATIONS IN RESTRICTIONS IN REGARDS TO TRAVEL BY THE END OF THIS YEAR

With trains and flights suspended, all those struck with wanderlust could do is dive into good old travel memories. But thanks to vaccine roll-out at the start of 2021, there's optimism among travel enthusiasts towards the prospect of travelling to their desired destinations again.

Post-pandemic travel could revive the travel industry with a whopping surge in bookings in the latter part of the year. After being advised not to step out of the confines of homes for over a year, stepping out into the world could be vengeance for those 'lost' days. This is where the concept of 'Revenge Travel' sprouted from.

Defining 'Revenge Travel'
After the dreadful hiatus of



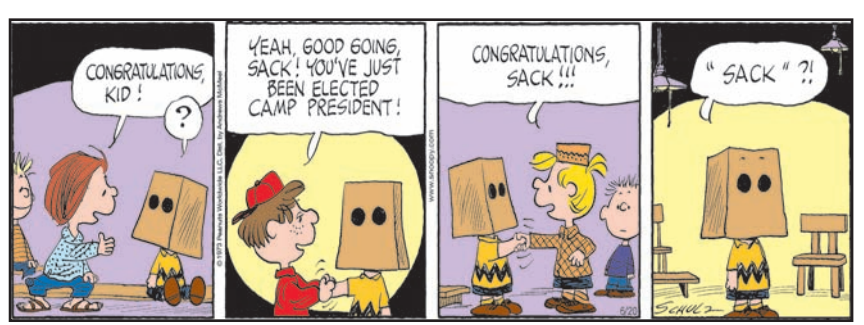
staying at home, travel enthusiasts are planning longer and more luxurious vacations. Thus, 'revenge travel' is all set to become a phenomenon, says Dinesh Kumar Kotha, Co-Founder and CEO, Confirmtkt, an online destination to get confirmed train tickets.

Boom in the offing
Experts feel that travellers, all across the world, laying out their plans for 'revenge travel' would stimulate a massive boom in the travel industry. However, post-pandemic travel might be costly due to the rising air/train and

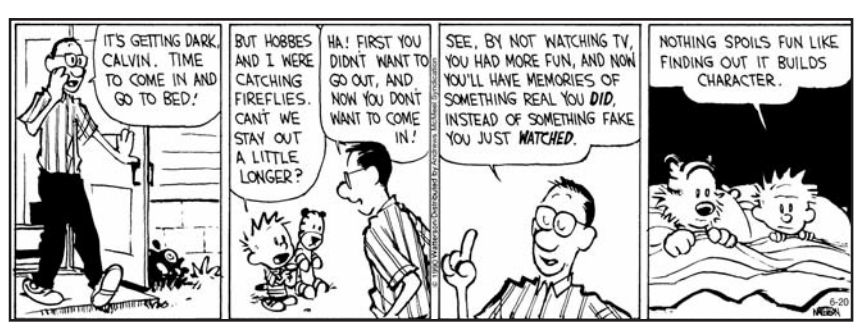
hotel fares. The increasing cost is due to the additional safety gears and accessories while travelling such as the cost of PPE kits for air travel and sanitisation of the hotel.

Guidelines and safety standards
With the beginning of these efforts to sustain the new normal, the certification of the vaccination status of the travellers is important. Besides, the passenger would also need to show an RT-PCR test negative report and undergo health screening at the airport/railway station. Another notable change would be the absence of meal services on flights/trains, which only means that one must plan a trip taking into account such aspects.

PEANUTS



CALVIN AND HOBBS

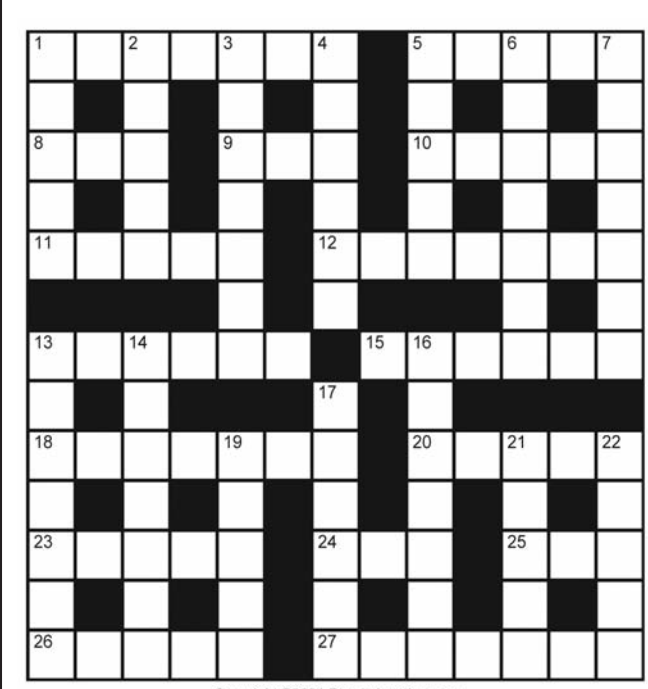


BREVITY



FUN post

CROSSWORD



- Across**
- 1 Lennon's lady (4,3)
 - 5 Zoo climber
 - 8 Ventilate
 - 9 Golfer's gadget
 - 10 Scotch musician
 - 11 Barter
 - 12 Sea rovers
 - 13 Commendation
 - 15 Divulge
 - 18 Knight in shining armor
 - 20 Knock over
 - 23 Watchful
 - 24 Gallivant
 - 25 Sinuous swimmer
 - 26 Pear-shaped instruments
 - 27 Dangerous situations
 - 4 Ukrainian port
 - 5 Bay of Naples isle
 - 6 Get better
 - 7 Lady's sunshade
 - 13 Hair style
 - 14 Physical disorder
 - 16 South American country
 - 17 Proverbs
 - 19 Abominates
 - 21 Flock members
 - 22 Stories
- Down**
- 1 Brewer's need
 - 2 Destiny
 - 3 Wall plugs

SUDOKU

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



SOLUTIONS



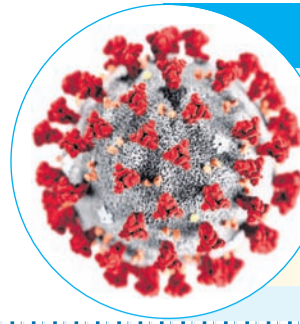
CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW

downtown



VENDORS' PLEA

Fish and meat vendors of Jobra in Cuttack hold a demonstration seeking a permanent place for their business, Wednesday



COVID-19 TRACKER

	INFECTED	RECOVERED	DEAD
World	17,49,29,866	15,84,36,474	37,70,945
India	2,90,89,069	2,75,04,126	3,53,528
Odisha	8,31,129	7,64,673	3,123

Judges' strength in HC to dip below 50% in July

THE ORISSA HIGH COURT ALREADY HAS A BACKLOG OF OVER 1.75 LAKH CASES

KULDEEP SINGH, OP

New Delhi, June 9: The Orissa High Court is heading towards an unprecedented situation wherein justice delivery would receive a major jolt as the working strength of judges in the HC will be less than 50 per cent by mid-July this year.

The HC, which is currently functioning with only 15 out of sanctioned strength of 27 judges, will bid adieu to two more judges within a month. As per sources, Justice Pramath Patnaik would retire by June 11 while Justice Sanju Panda will bid adieu to the apex court of the state by July 10, 2021 after attaining the retirement age of 62. Following the retirement of these two judges, the HC's working strength will come down to 13, which is less than 50 per cent of its sanctioned strength of 27.

The court already has huge backlog of cases - over 1.75 lakh. With the scarcity of judges, the backlog of cases would pile up further resulting in delay in providing justice to the people of the state.



Earlier, the HC Registrar had stated in the Supreme Court that the vacancies in the High Court are to be filled from two sources - 18 from the Bar and nine from the Higher Judicial Service of the state. By mid-July, the vacancy position from the Bar segment will be 10 and from service segment will be four. In order to address the emerg-

ing situation, the High Court collegium, sources said, has sent a batch of names as recommendation to the government and the Supreme Court Collegium for appointment as judges in the HC. However, how much time the entire process will take is anyone's guess. Earlier, it has been noticed that the entire process of appointment used to take more than six months.

CRIPPLING CRUNCH!

Justice Pramath Patnaik would retire by June 11 while Justice Sanju Panda will bid adieu to the High Court by July 10, 2021

Following the retirement of these two judges, the HC's working strength will come down to 13, which is less than 50 per cent of its sanctioned strength of 27

The SC had ruled that to mitigate the high pendency of cases, the high courts should consider appointing retired judges as ad hoc judges for the tenure of around two years

Ad hoc judges as alternatives

The Supreme Court had in April this year activated the provision of the Constitution, Article 224-A that deals with the appointment of ad hoc judges. The apex court ruled that to mitigate the high pendency of cases, the high courts should consider appointing retired judges as ad hoc judges for the tenure of around two years

to clear the backlog of cases.

The Article 224-A says, "If by reason of any temporary increase in the business of High Court or by reason of arrears of work therein, the Chief Justice of the High Court, with the previous consent of the President, can request duly qualified persons to be additional Judges of the court for such period not exceeding two years as he may specify."

The apex court has also issued certain guidelines for the appointment of ad hoc judges. The top court held that the trigger point for activation of Article 224-A can arise when the vacancies are more than 20 per cent of sanctioned strength and more than 10 per cent of backlog of pending cases are over five years old.

Significantly, in the case of Orissa High court, the vacancies will be more than 50 per cent in July.

Similarly, 25.14 per cent (44,215) of backlog of pending cases in the HC are over five years old. The apex court also ruled that the process of recommendation of ad hoc judges should be completed in three months.

60% nCoV-infected kids asymptomatic: Expert

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, June 9: A paediatrician in a government sponsored health bulletin Wednesday said that around 60 per cent of Covid-infected kids are asymptomatic.

Dr Sebaranjan Biswal, a paediatrician at Kalinga Institute of Medical Sciences (KIMS), Bhubaneswar said, "In the first wave, we saw the kids least infected by the novel coronavirus. However, the third wave could pose a big threat to them. For, the infectivity rate of the virus could see escalation with more mutations."

He also said that the kids unlike others are yet to be inoculated and thus remain vulnerable to the killer virus. The physician said that while the incubation period among adults and kids were almost same, some kids developed unique health ailments like multisystem inflammatory syndrome (MIS) which were not seen in Covid-infected kids.

"Most of the symptoms in adults and kids are the same. However, in kids diarrhoea and gastritis are also seen. In some kids, after two

to four weeks of infection, MIS is also seen which is peculiar to kids, Dr Biswal said.

He, however, said that unlike adults, youths are better protected. "In most of the kids, severity is not seen as they hardly have any co-morbidity. They also do not damage their lungs with bad habits like smoking. Meanwhile, the aceto receptors, to which the virus binds, are also negligible as compared to adults," he added. According to Biswal, 50-60 per cent of Covid-infected kids are often asymptomatic who do not require any treatment while in kids with mild symptoms paracetamol and common cold drugs could be used.

Dr Aditya Kumar Mohapatra, a paediatrician from National Health Mission (NHM), said, "There are concerns regarding pregnant women due to Covid. However, there should not be any worries as transmission of the disease from pregnant women to the unborn does not happen normally. Post delivery, as the disease is airborne, proper safety measures can prevent the transmission of the virus from mother to kid," he said.

CM lays stones for oxygen plants in seven districts



POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, June 9: In an aim to ensure adequate availability of medical oxygen for treatment of Covid-19 patients, Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik Wednesday laid the foundation stones for seven Liquid Medical Oxygen (LMO) plants and as many Pressure Swing Adsorption (PSA) systems in seven districts of the state. The plants would be set up at

medical colleges in Balasore, Koraput, Bolangir, Burla and Cuttack and Capital Hospital, Bhubaneswar & district headquarters hospital at Nabarangpur.

The Chief Minister also inaugurated an additional health facility centre, dengue and diarrhoea ward, blood grouping unit at Balasore, Excellence Centre for treatment of lungs diseases at Cuttack and a RT-PCR test laboratory at Nabarangpur. The total

The plants would be set up in medical colleges at Balasore, Koraput, Bolangir, Burla and Cuttack and Capital Hospital, Bhubaneswar & district headquarters hospital at Nabarangpur

With the inauguration of the RT-PCR testing laboratory in Nabarangpur, now 17 districts of the state have the testing facility

cost of these projects is estimated to be Rs 29.41 crore.

Patnaik said that the demand for medical oxygen has substantially been increased during the second wave of Covid-19. However, the state has not faced any problem with the supply of oxygen. In addition to meeting its own demand, Odisha has saved valuable lives by supplying oxygen to 17 states, he said.

With the inauguration of the RT-PCR testing laboratory in Nabarangpur, now 17 districts have the testing facility. RT-PCR laboratories would be set up in all remaining districts soon, said Additional Chief Secretary, Health, PK Mohapatra said.

IN MEMORIAM



Orissa POST and Dharitri Editor Tathagata Satpathy and Chief Executive Adyasha Satpathy, Odisha Sahitya Akademi President Hrushikesh Mallick and activists of Utkal Sammilani among others pay floral tributes to former Chief Minister Nandini Satpathy on her 90th birth anniversary in Bhubaneswar, Wednesday

Plea to name Utkal ladies' hostel after ex-CM Nandini

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, June 9: Former students of Utkal University have urged the varsity authorities to name one ladies' hostel of the institution after Odisha's only woman Chief Minister Nandini Satpathy on her 90th birth anniversary Wednesday.

Former students Raghunath Prusti, Prabir Kumar Das, Pradeep Rath, Birakishore Das, Priyabrata Mohanty, Gadadhar Rath, Manoj Kumar Deo, Bibhudutta Pradhan, Bishwa Bhusan Suar, Sangram Patnaik, Pranab Kumar Das, Bishnu



Prasad Dash, Harekrushna Siala and Umashankar Satpathy claimed that the varsity has a tradition to name its hostels after eminent per-

sonalities of Odisha. Now, the university has seven boys' hostels and as many women's hostels in its campus. Many of

these hostels have been named after eminent personalities like Gopabandhu, Madhusudan, Fakirmohan, Godabarisha, Nilakatha, Kuntalalokumari, Rama Devi, Sarala Devi and Malati Devi.

However, the varsity authorities are yet to name one ladies' hostel after former Chief Minister and noted writer Nandini Satpathy.

The former students urged Utkal University Vice-Chancellor Sabita Acharya to take the necessary steps to name one ladies' hostel after Nandini Devi, who is an epitome of women empowerment.

₹20Cr for Covid mgmt in City

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, June 9: Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik Wednesday granted an additional Rs 20 crore to Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC) for the smooth management of Covid-19 pandemic. The fund was sanctioned from the

Chief Minister's Relief Fund (CMRF), said a statement issued by the Chief Minister's Office. It can be mentioned here that earlier the civic body had received Rs 77 crore for efficient Covid management in the state capital. With this, the BMC has now received the highest amount from state government.

"Bhubaneswar houses the highest number of Covid Hospitals in the state and the number of patients being treated here is also the highest. Patients from different parts of the state come to Bhubaneswar for treatment. Therefore, the fund has been sanctioned keeping in view the needs," the CMO statement said.

FESTIVAL AHEAD



Puri SP Kanwar Vishal Singh (R) reviews security arrangements for upcoming Snana Purnima ritual of Srimandir deities in Puri, Wednesday

Mangroves key to reduce wrath of cyclones

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, June 9: Many environmentalists have urged the state government to take measures for creation of mangrove forests on Odisha coast to protect the coastal regions from natural calamities like cyclones and tidal surges.

In a letter to the state government, the environmentalists said that Odisha has a long history of facing natural disasters. The memory of the colossal devastations caused by the Super Cyclone of 1999 is still fresh in the minds of many. However, the Super Cyclone had forced the government as well as the people to think of the natural calamities seriously and take appropriate steps to deal with them.

Environmentalist and president of Odisha Environmental Society (OES), Sundara Narayan Patro, said the state government has apply formulated a well-thought-out disaster management policy in the aftermath of 1999 Super Cyclone. The



state government has effectively managed several natural calamities in recent years by adopting advanced technological measures. "Now, we are facing a challenge of reducing the impacts of cyclones and tidal surges in the coastal regions of Odisha. A protective

wall in the form of mangrove forests would be able to reduce the intensity and severity of the cyclonic storms. Kendrapara district had witnessed less damage as compared to Jagatsinghpur during the Super Cyclone. This proved that mangrove forests of Bhitarkanika

A protective wall in the form of mangrove forests would be able to reduce the intensity and severity of the cyclonic storms. Kendrapara district had witnessed less damage in comparison with Jagatsinghpur during the super cyclone of 1999. This had proved that mangrove forests of Bhitarkanika played a significant role in resisting the intensity and severity of the cyclonic storm

SUNDARA NARAYAN PATRO | ENVIRONMENTALIST

played a significant role in resisting the intensity and severity of the cyclonic storm," Patro added.

The mangroves can also act as a good repository of aquatic and terrestrial wildlife, apart from playing an important role in soil conservation, flood control and providing livelihood to the local population, he opined.

Another environmentalist Jaya Krushna Panigrahi said Odisha has around 220 sq km of mangrove forests. Out of this, 192 sq km of forests exist in Kendrapara district only. Bhadrak has 19 sq km mangroves while Balasore has 3 sq km and Jagatsinghpur has 5 sq km. "Taking into account all these is-

sues, government should conduct a survey by a committee of experts on the 480-km coastline of Odisha and identify potential areas for creation of saline or mangrove forests," Panigrahi said.

He said that the government can opt for the creation of casuarina forests in sandy areas of the Odisha coast to protect the regions from cyclonic storms.

"The state government should take immediate steps to create mangroves on the coastal areas as we all know that more such disasters are likely to occur in the future due to the impact of global warming and climate change," Panigrahi said.

Armed Striking Force to check minor mineral smuggling in Jajpur



FILE PHOTO

POST NEWS NETWORK

Jajpur, June 9: Jajpur Collector Chakravarti Singh Rathore has announced the formation of Armed Striking Force (ASF), a special armed force, to contain smuggling of minor minerals in the district. The special force has been formed on the direction of Additional Director General (ADG-Law and Order) of Police. Jajpur sub-collector, Dharmasala and Darpan tehsildars, the regional officer of the state pollution control board (SPCB) in Kalinganagar, the deputy director of mines (DDM) in Jajpur Road, the range officer of Dalijoda forest range and the police IICs of Dharmasala, Jenapur and Barchana are members of the ASF. DSP Prafulla Kumar Mishra has been appointed as the nodal officer of the force by the SP. The special force will help and cooperate with

revenue officials to check smuggling of minor minerals and their transportation. However, people have raised doubts on the success of the new armed force in curbing smuggling of minor minerals. They alleged that several taskforces have been constituted in the past to check smuggling of granites, sand, murram and laterite stones as well as to raid illegal crusher units operating in Dharmasala, Darpan, and Vysanagar tehsils. However, these taskforces have failed to make any impact due to lack of proper implementation, they alleged. The smuggling of minor minerals goes on unabated in the district as some unscrupulous officers and officials are hand in gloves with the stone mafia. The smugglers carry out their business with impunity after greasing the palms of dishonest officials. Reports said the then revenue sec-

retary in 2018 directed the formation of a special task force in every district comprising the Collectors and SPs to check and take appropriate steps on smuggling of minor minerals. The then Jajpur Collector and SP displayed promptitude for some time in taking action against the stone smugglers. The duo conducted midnight raids in various sand ghats and sand lease area in the district. However, smuggling continued unabated in Dharmasala and Darpan tehsils despite the raids. Former Collector Ranjan Kumar Das also formed several taskforces. However, with passage of time these taskforces became dormant and redundant. Collector Rathore issued an order for immediate closure of crusher units which are illegally operating in violation of norms, June 2, 2021. The sanctioned crusher units will have to install CCTV cameras on their premises. The crusher units will also have to maintain a register to keep record of raw materials coming to the premises and materials transported outside. The concerned tehsildar of the area will check the CCTV footage and registers every fortnight and submit a report to the district administration. Any discrepancy observed in the register and CCTV footage will be strictly dealt with. The Collector has issued around 10 orders to streamline the business of minor minerals in the district.



Farmers preparing the land for cultivation ahead of the arrival of monsoon at Kenghati area in Sambalpur district, Wednesday

OP PHOTO

HC stays holding tax hike in Berhampur

POST NEWS NETWORK

Berhampur, June 9: The Orissa High Court has ordered the Berhampur Municipal Corporation (BeMC) not to collect hiked holding tax from the denizens. The high court has issued the interim order after hearing a petition filed by Congress leader Pitabas Panda against holding tax hike in the city. The high court while issuing the order has asked the civic body to collect holding tax from the denizens as per previous rate. Notably, the civic body without conducting a public hearing as per rule hurriedly made a cent per cent hike in holding tax in 2020-21. Protesting the order, Panda first staged an agitation but later filed



FILE PHOTO

a petition in the high court after the civic body did not take any steps in this regard. In his petition, Panda stated that it is illegal for the civic body to increase the holding tax without the consent of the municipal council and its collection from the house owners is totally il-

legal. He prayed before the high court to direct the civic body to stop collecting the hiked holding tax from the denizens. Panda also opposed the collection of user fees from various parks in the city. The high court in its ruling has issued notices to the state

government and the BeMC to explain and cite the reason why user fees are being collected in the city. After receiving a copy of the order Wednesday, Panda said that the term of the elected municipal council has expired two and a half years ago and the management of the civic body is vested with the state government. He said the financial status of people in the city has gone down due to the pandemic. He alleged that the civic body has hiked the holding tax when the people are in trouble due to Covid-induced lockdowns and shutdowns. Panda welcomed the high court decision saying it was a victory of the Silk City residents. Advocate Siddharth Das pleaded the matter on behalf of the petitioner.

Master plan ready for development projects in Angul



POST NEWS NETWORK

Angul, June 9: The district administration of Angul has prepared a master plan with the purpose to take up massive development and beautification under different projects, a source said Tuesday. According to a senior administrative official of Angul, the ambitious development and beautification projects include health and heritage corridors, an ultramodern stadium, renovation of Prajamandal Bhawan, protection of Rani Park and construction of a coal museum. The district administration has planned to issue a tender notice soon and complete the projects within one year. The Palace Road here will be restored and get converted into a health and heritage corridor; the senior official added.

Taking to his official Twitter handle, Collector and District Magistrate Siddharth Shankar Swain wrote, "Under the 5T Initiatives for Talcher, 5 Transformative Projects of Urban Landscape are being undertaken for this Financial Year: 1. Health and Heritage Corridor 2. Library, Coal Museum and Smart Park 3. Talcher Stadium. 4. Protection of Rani Park. 5. Renovation of Prajamandal Campus." Moreover, a large gate will be constructed at the main approach road to the palace. A coal museum which was previously proposed to be constructed at Angul headquarters will now be done in Talcher. It will also consist of a library and a smart park. After completion, the new museum will be the first of its kind in India, the official stated.

Oxygen tanker in train leaks in Kalahandi

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhawanipatna, June 9: A liquid oxygen-laden tanker attached to a special train to Chennai developed a leakage in Kalahandi district Wednesday, a railway official said. The train with 10 oxygen-filled tankers was going to the inland container depot at Tondiarpet in Chennai from Jharsuguda in Odisha, the official said. The station master of Kesinga railway station detected the leakage at around 4 am and the train was stopped. He informed the fire brigade and its personnel tried to plug the leakage but failed, the official said. Engineers from Rourkela reached the spot in the afternoon and rectified the snag. However, by that time the container was almost empty. The train left for Chennai at around 5 pm, the official added. The oxygen was to be used for medical purposes.

2 minor girls drown in pond

BASUDEVPUR: In a tragic incident, two minor girls drowned in a pond in Brajanandpur village under Nayakanihi police limits in Boudh district Wednesday. Reports said that the two minor girls who were cousins had gone to take bath in the pond. Locals rescued the girls and rushed them to the community health centre (CHC) at Basudevpur where they were pronounced dead by a doctor. The deceased were identified as a 12-year-old Laxmipriya Ghadei of Brajanandpur village and 9-year-old Ballabhi Barik of Ghanteswar who had come on a visit to her maternal uncle's house.

Man, wife killed in road mishap; 3 relatives critical

POST NEWS NETWORK

Boudh, June 9: In a fatal road mishap that took place in wee hours of Wednesday, a man and his wife were killed on the spot in Boudh. Surendra, his wife and three relatives were on their way from Berhampur to Rourkela when the driver lost control over the car. The vehicle rammed into a roadside tree at around 3.00am, a



Surendra, his wife and three relatives were on their way from Berhampur to Rourkela when the driver lost control over the car and rammed into a roadside tree

According to a source, the ill-fated car in which five persons were travelling met with an accident after the vehicle rammed into a roadside tree at Chari Chhak under Purunakatak police limits in the district. The deceased were identified as Surendra Nayak and his wife Namita, residents of Mandar village under Belaguntha block in Ganjam district. Three relatives of the couple also sustained grievous injuries in the inci-

dent, an eyewitness said. The injured were rescued by locals and rushed to Purunakatak hospital in critical condition. Later, they were shifted to Boudh district headquarters hospital as their condition deteriorated. Purunakatak police sent the bodies for postmortem. Police registered a case and launched a probe. The driver might have dozed off leading to the accident, an officer said.

Women's SHG scripts success story in mango processing

POST NEWS NETWORK

Sambalpur, June 9: The establishment of a mango processing unit by the district administration has helped women self-help groups battling the Covid-induced lockdown earn a livelihood and become self-reliant. The Odisha Livelihoods Mission (OLM) and the Odisha Rural Development and Marketing Society (ORMAS) and the Integrated Tribal Development Agency (ITDA) are aiding the district administration in this initiative. As a result, a women's self-help group in this district, which is involved in mango processing, has set a successful example for others. The members of Maa Parbati Producer Group (SHG) of Tainsar panchayat under Kuchinda block have come forward to produce various mango-based products through mango processing. The women are producing mango pickle, dried mango pulp called 'Ambasadha', dried mango powder called 'Amchur', and dried salty mangoes called 'Ambula' in this unit.



A pickle firm in Berhampur has been roped in to provide necessary training to the women in mango processing. It is expected that they will reap the benefits of their efforts in three phases. Reports said the state government is laying stress on women empowerment and has established a separate department for the purpose. The state government, with

an aim to make the women self-reliant, is providing them vocational training and financial assistance under the Mission Shakti Programme. When contacted, Srimant Hota, district coordinator of ORMAS, said the district has witnessed a bumper harvest of mangoes this year but it is very difficult to sell the mangoes due to the lockdown imposed in the

The Odisha Livelihoods Mission (OLM) and the Odisha Rural Development and Marketing Society (ORMAS) and the Integrated Tribal Development Agency (ITDA) are aiding the district administration in this initiative. The state government, with an aim to make the women self-reliant, is providing them vocational training and financial assistance under the Mission Shakti Programme. A pickle firm in Berhampur has been roped in to provide necessary training to the women in mango processing. It is expected that they will reap the benefits of their efforts in three phases. Therefore efforts are being made to process the mangoes and sell them in the market by involving women's self-help groups. The move has helped in making the women self-reliant as it has provided them with an earning opportunity.

In the first phase, the Kuchinda based-Maa Parbati Producer Group having strength of 35 members has been roped in for this programme. The women are selling mangoes cultivated in their orchards and also purchasing from other farmers to run the business in the mango processing unit. The processing work is being done in utmost hygienic conditions, observing all safety norms and precautions. The products are packed in hygienic packs and pasted with labels carrying the logo of the district administration and ORMAS for sale in the market. Hota said priority will be given for sale of pickle in the Aahaar Kendras in the urban areas. Later, efforts will be made to sell the other products in the market on the basis of their demand. In coming days, efforts will be made to involve other women self-help groups in the district in this business and increase the production of mango-based products. Moreover, plans are afoot to prepare pickles from chilli, ginger, lemon and garlic, he said.

OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER, P.H. DIVISION, BERHAMPUR
Mail ID: eephbam@gmail.com/eephbam@nic.in
Government of Odisha "e" Procurement Notice
NATIONAL COMPETITIVE BIDDING
Bid Identification No. EEPHAM-10/2021-22 to EEPHAM-13/2021-22 Dt.01.06.2021

No. C-378:-

1. Name of work	: Replacement of age old pipes and Metering in households at different ULB's under PH Division, Berhampur (04 nos. of works)
2. Estimated cost	: Ranging from Rs. 58.78 lakh (approx.) to Rs. 83.51 lakh (approx.)
3. Period of completion	: 06 (six) months for each work.
4. Date & Time of availability of bid document in the Portal	: From 11.00 hrs. of Dt.16.06.2021 to 17.30 hrs. of Dt.01.07.2021
5. Last date/Time for Bidding in the Portal	: 17.30 hrs. of Dt.01.07.2021
6. Date of opening of Tender	: On Dt. 02.07.2021 at 11.00 hrs.
7. Name and address of the Officer inviting tender	: Executive Engineer, P.H. Division, Berhampur.

Further details can be seen from the e-procurement Portal: <https://tendersodisha.gov.in>
Sd./- Superintending Engineer, P.H. Division, Berhampur
OIPR-13020/11/0002/2122

Government of Odisha "e" Procurement Notice
Bid Identification No. 03 of 2021-22

No. O-311:-

1. Number of Works:	7 Nos. of Roads
2. Estimated Cost (Approx):	₹ 3.22 lakh & ₹ 35.55 lakh (Approx.)
3. Period of Completion:	2 Calendar months
4. Date & Time of availability of Bid documents in the Portal:	21.06.2021 at 11.00 hrs
5. Last date & time for receipt of Bids in the Portal:	28.06.2021 at 17.00 hrs
6. Date of Opening of Tender:	29.06.2021 at 11.00 hrs
7. Name and address of the Officer Inviting Bid:	Executive Engineer, Rural Works Division, Jagatsinghpur

Further details can be seen from the Government website: www.tendersorissa.gov.in
Sd./- Executive Engineer, Rural Works Division, Jagatsinghpur
OIPR-25056/11/0003/2122

'e' PROCUREMENT NOTICE
Tender Reference No. BNJNAC_1/2021_22
Tender Call Notice No.1118/2021 Dt.07.06.2021

Bid documents consisting of the schedule of quantities and the set of terms and conditions of contract and other necessary documents can be seen in the Govt. website i.e. www.tendersorissa.gov.in

- Name of the work: Civil works as mentioned in website.
- No. of works: 12 Nos.
- Bid value: Rs.2.00 Lakhs to 17.82 Lakhs.
- Period of completion : 90 days to 180 days.
- Date and time of availability of the bid documents in the portal: 10.06.2021 at 10.00 A.M. to 5.00 P.M. of dt.21.06.2021.
- Last date of / Time for receipt of bids in the portal: 21.06.2021 upto 5.00 P.M.
- Bids received online shall be opened on 25.06.2021 at 8.00 A.M.
- Name and address of the officer inviting bid: Executive Officer, N.A.C., Bhanjanagar.

Further details can be seen from the procurement portal: www.tendersorissa.gov.in.
Sd./- Executive Officer N.A.C., Bhanjanagar

of the day quote

The government is examining the viability of implementing the unlock process in 4 to 5 phases since opening up everything at one go may again aggravate the situation.

The Modi government is determined to double the income of farmers. Today, in this direction, under the leadership of Prime Minister Shri @narendramodiji, the Union Cabinet approved an increase in the minimum support price (MSP) of kharif crops, giving another gift to our farmer brothers

The Election Commission has imposed a fungus government (Nitish Kumar government) on Bihar and now people of the state are paying price for it



I won't resign from the Parliament. We will continue to fight for the rights of the people in the Parliament till we are alive

FAROOQ ABDULLAH | FORMER J&K CM

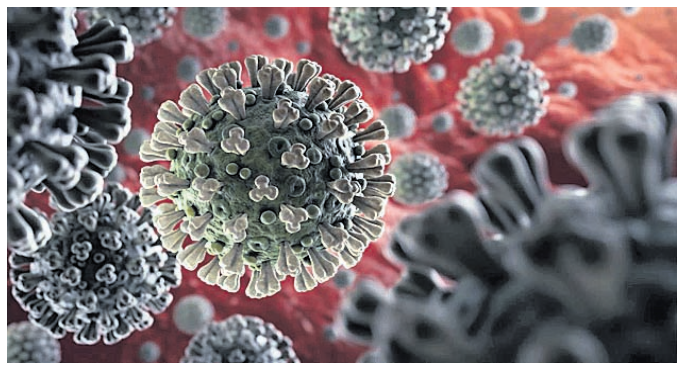
ANIMAL LOVE

The Madras High Court Wednesday directed the Animal Husbandry department to vaccinate stray dogs and cats in the state



'DELTA VARIANT CAN INFECT EVEN AFTER VACCINATION'

Data from the AIIMS and NCDC studies indicated the 'alpha' variant is also proving resistant to Covishield and Covaxin, but not as significantly as the 'delta' version



New Delhi, June 9: The 'delta' variant of COVID-19 - the version first detected in India in October last year - is capable of infecting people even after they have received both doses of the Covaxin or Covishield vaccines, according to separate studies by AIIMS (Delhi) and the National Centre for Disease Control (NCDC).

It is important to note that neither study has been peer-reviewed as yet. The AIIMS study suggests the 'delta' variant - which others, including one by British health authorities, say is between 40 and 50 per cent more infectious than the

'alpha' version first reported from the UK - is likely behind the majority of breakthrough infections in India. The AIIMS-IGIB (Institute of Genomics and Integrative Biology) study was based on an analysis of 63 symptomatic patients who reported to the hospital's emergency ward complaining of high fever persisting for five to seven days. Of these 63 people, 53 had been given at least one dose of Covaxin and the rest at least one dose of Covishield. Thirty-six had received both doses of one of these vaccines. 76.9 per cent of infections by the 'delta'

variant were recorded in people who had received a single dose, and 60 per cent in people who had received both doses.

Data from the NCDC-IGIB study indicated that breakthrough infections due to the 'delta' variant seemed to affect people who took Covishield. This study showed 'delta' breakthrough infections in 27 patients who had taken that vaccine, with the infection rate at 70.3 per cent. Data from both studies indicated the 'alpha' variant is also proving resistant to Covishield and Covaxin, but not as significantly as the version first reported from India.

Both studies also indicated that while the vaccine's protection against the 'delta', and even 'alpha', variants may be reduced, severity of infection in each case appeared to be unaffected as a result. This is in line with scientists' views that there is, as yet, no evidence the 'delta' variant is causing a greater number of Covid-linked deaths or more severe infections.

BHARAT BIOTECH TO CONDUCT COVAXIN PHASE-4 TRIALS

Hyderabad: Bharat Biotech will be conducting phase-4 clinical trials of indigenously developed Covaxin to check its real-world effectiveness. It will also apply for full licensure for Covaxin only after it gets final analysis data of phase-3 studies, the company said on Wednesday.

'Forced to chant Jai Shri Ram inside jail'

The accused, Rashid Zafar, was arrested in 2018 on the allegations of being member of an ISIS-inspired group who were planning suicide attacks and serial blasts

come up for hearing Thursday that the incident was disclosed by the accused to his father telephonically from Tihar Jail. "The accused was beaten up and forced to chant religious slogans like 'Jai Shri Ram' by his inmates," the application said.

The plea, moved by advocate Qausar Khan, requested that "appropriate directions may be passed to the Jail Superintendent to look into the matter".

The accused were arrested along with nine others in December 2018 after NIA carried out searches, in coordination with Special cell of Delhi Police and Anti-Terrorism Squad of Uttar Pradesh Police, at six places in Jafrabad, Seelampur in Delhi, and 11 places in Uttar Pradesh - six in Amroha, two in Lucknow, two in Hapur and two in Meerut. The searches and the arrests came a month before the Republic Day celebrations January 26.

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, June 9: An alleged ISIS member arrested for planning suicide attacks and serial blasts across the country, approached a Delhi court Wednesday claiming that he was beaten up by other inmates in Tihar jail and forced to chant 'Jai Shri Ram'.

Advocate M S Khan claimed in the application, which is likely to



INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Kolkata, June 9: For the first time, 4,000 kg kilogram mangoes, spanning 16 varieties from West Bengal and Bihar, will be exported to Bahrain and will be displayed in different stalls there for eight days.

The process is a part of the effort to promote the local and lesser-known mangoes internationally.

To promote the lesser-known mangoes of the state and Bihar, the Agricultural & Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEEDA) has organised the event for the promotion of these kinds of mangoes so that these can develop an international acceptance which eventually will enhance production. The exported mangoes will be showcased at 13 stores in Bahrain from June 11. Other than a few commercial



kinds, most of these varieties are indigenous, lesser-known and confined to the local areas only.

"One of the APEEDA registered exporters from Kolkata is hosting the programme at Bahrain along with their importer client," a senior state Horticulture Department official, who did not want to be identified, told IANS.

All these varieties have been chosen based on their characteristics of being extremely delicious and unique in their own way. The first consignment was shipped Tuesday. The second consignment would be shipped on June 10, depending upon the flight availability. The Horticulture Department

Mehul Choksi's bail hearing adjourned

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, June 9: The Dominica High Court has adjourned the bail hearing of fugitive diamond merchant Mehul Choksi till June 11, local media reports stated.

Choksi had approached the high court after the magistrate rejected his bail petition. The bail hearing took place before high court judge Wynante Adrien-Roberts through video-conferencing on the plea of Choksi's local legal team comprising Julien Prevost, Wayne Norde, Wayne Marsh and Cara Shillingford-Marsh.

The government side represented by Director of Public Prosecution (DPP) Sherma Dalrymple "strongly objected" to Choksi's plea calling him a flight risk, Dominica News Online reported. The judge adjourned the matter till June 11, it said. The high court is also hearing a separate matter of habeas corpus filed by Choksi's team in which the hearing has also been adjourned.



Choksi had mysteriously gone missing May 23 from Antigua and Barbuda, where he has been staying since 2018 as a citizen. He was detained in neighbouring island country Dominica for illegal entry after a possible romantic escapade with his rumoured girlfriend.

His lawyers alleged that he was kidnapped from Jolly Harbour in Antigua by policemen looking like Antiguan and Indian and brought to Dominica on a boat.

Cong continues to lose stalwarts

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, June 9: The saga of defections in the Congress which began ahead of the 2014 Lok Sabha elections continues unabated with 47-year-old former Union minister Jitin Prasada jumping ship Wednesday, triggering speculation of further exits.

Prasada follows in the footsteps of his former Congress colleague Jyotiraditya Scindia who quit the party to join the BJP in March last year. Both the young leaders leave behind a major vacuum in the Congress, having served as ministers in the erstwhile UPA government and having been part of the inner circle of former Congress president Rahul Gandhi.

However, Scindia, the scion of the Gwalior royal family and once the youth face of the Congress party from Madhya Pradesh, is yet to get a cabinet berth or a position of power in the saffron party even after 15 months of his joining.

Asked about Prasada quitting the party, Congress spokesperson Surpriya Shrinete said it is unfortunate and it pains her to know that he has joined those who are responsible for the death of lakhs of people during the coronavirus pandemic. "Is it politics of convenience or was it any ideological commitment towards the idea of India that the Congress stood for," she asked Prasada. The story of senior leaders leaving the Congress for the BJP began ahead of the 2014 Lok Sabha elections when the party lost Haryana heavyweights

Birender Singh and Rao Inderjit Singh. Both went on to become ministers in Prime Minister Narendra Modi's first cabinet.

Rao Inderjit, who was Textile Minister in the UPA government, continues to be the Minister of State for Statistics and Programme Implementation in the present dispensation.

After the Lok Sabha elections, the then Assam Congress stalwart Himanta Biswa Sarma left for the BJP in 2015 and rose up the saffron ladder to become the chief minister of Assam last month.

Some other prominent Congress leaders and former union ministers in UPA rule who quit the party and joined the BJP include S M Krishna and Jayanti Natarajan. Krishna has also been the former chief minister of Karnataka and Natarajan was the Union environment minister in UPA.

The Congress also lost once Gandhi family loyalist and former scion of the former Amethi royal family Sanjay Singh to the BJP last year. It had suffered a jolt in 2019 in Assam when its chief whip in Rajya Sabha Bhubaneswar Kalita suddenly quit and joined the BJP. He is now a BJP Rajya Sabha member from Assam.

In the Northeast too, the Congress suffered some setbacks when its former chief minister in Manipur N Biren Singh joined the BJP in 2016, citing differences with then incumbent Ibobi Singh.

In Arunachal Pradesh, present Chief Minister Pema Khandu also left the Congress in 2016 before the assembly elections.

UNCERTAIN JOURNEY



Nomads with their animals walk on a road near Belagavi

UNI PHOTO

Govt issues guidelines on Covid among kids

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, June 9: The government has come out with comprehensive guidelines for the management of Covid-19 among children in which Remdesivir has not been recommended and rational use of HRCT imaging has been suggested.

The guidelines issued by the Directorate General of Health

Services (DGHS) under the health ministry also said that steroids are harmful in asymptomatic and mild cases of infection. The DGHS recommended steroids only in hospitalised moderately severe and critically ill Covid-19 cases under strict supervision. "Steroids should be used at the right time, in the right dose and for the right duration. Self-medication of steroids must be avoided," it said. The guide-

lines also said Remdesivir (an emergency use authorization drug) is not recommended in children. "There is lack of sufficient safety and efficacy data with respect to Remdesivir in children below 18 years of age," the guidelines said.

The guidelines suggested rational use of High-resolution CT (HRCT) for seeing the extent and nature of lung involvement in patients with Covid-19.

DELHI COURT DENIES SPECIAL FOOD TO SUSHIL KUMAR

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, June 9: Noting that everyone is equal in the eyes of law, a Delhi court Wednesday dismissed an application filed by Olympic medallist wrestler Sushil Kumar, an accused in a murder case, seeking special food and supplements in the prison.

Kumar had approached the Rohini court with the demands claiming that they are extremely necessary for him to maintain his health and performance as he wishes to continue his career in wrestling.

He sought supplements like isolate whey protein, omega 3 capsules, jointment capsules, pre-workout C4 and hyde, multivitamin GNC and exercise bands in the prison to maintain his physique and physical strength.

Junking his plea, Chief Metropolitan Magistrate Satvir Singh Lamba said that special foods and supplements appear to be only the desires and wishes of the accused and are not in any manner the essential need or necessity.

"It is well settled law that all the persons, whether natural or juristic are equal in eyes of law irrespective of caste, religion, sex, class. It also implies absence of any special privilege in any person due to his rank, status, whether rich or poor," he stated in the order.

Mango varieties from WB, Bihar to be showcased in Bahrain

GREAT INITIATIVE

For the first time, 4,000 kg mangoes, spanning 16 varieties from West Bengal and Bihar, will be exported to Bahrain and will be displayed in different stalls there for eight days

The process is a part of the effort to promote the local and lesser-known mangoes internationally

by the exporters and importers themselves.

"We are only working as facilitators. The importer and the exporter have jointly have done all the necessary arrangements to organise the show at their stores which includes live streaming through WEBEX at 5 of its stores, attractive display of the mangoes, preparation and putting up of banners/posters, inviting the local government officials and customers from other Gulf countries for the launch of the show," an official said.

"Such export promotion activity may open new horizons for the farmers and exporters to start sending overseas the indigenous and unique varieties of mangoes and thus help in the mandate of the state government to raise the farmers' income," the official said.

national

of the day quote

At the time of the oxygen crisis, the Uttar Pradesh government repeatedly claimed that there was no shortage of oxygen. Across the state number of people died. In Agra also administration is claiming that there was no shortage of oxygen. Will Uttar Pradesh government bring the reality of Agra medical mock drill and punishment them?

PRİYAMVA GANDHI | CONGRESS GENERAL SECRETARY

It is shocking that the NDA government is effectively telling farmers that there is no space for discussion in a democracy

SUKHBIR SINGH BADAL | SHIROMANI AKALI DAL PRESIDENT

The Centre has said that it will directly provide 25 per cent of vaccines to private hospitals. Why by the Centre? The state implements the policy of the Centre in a federal set-up

MAMATA BANERJEE | WEST BENGAL CHIEF MINISTER

SHORT TAKES

TN runs out of vaccine stock

Chennai: Vaccination in Tamil Nadu has come to a grinding halt as several districts have fallen short of the required doses in the state. 39 out of the 45 health units of the state reported a shortage of vaccines. The state is expecting 63,370 doses of Covaxin Wednesday and another 40,000 doses Thursday. A quantity of 3.6 lakh doses of Covishield vaccine is to be received by the state Friday and health experts feel only after these arrivals would things get back on track.

Jharkhand extends lockdown-like curbs

Ranchi: The Jharkhand government Wednesday extended Covid-related lockdown-like restrictions till June 16 with some relaxations, an official said. This is the fifth time that the curbs, first imposed in the state April 22 for a week, were extended. The ongoing measures were scheduled to end June 10. The decision was made at a meeting of the state disaster management authority chaired by Chief Minister Hemant Soren.

Four kids drown in brick kiln pit

Bettiah: Four children died while bathing in a pit filled with water in Bihar's West Champaran district in the Matoriya police station area. The children had gone to bathe in the water accumulated in the pit. A brick kiln located in Hardi Dalhwa village had dug a pit for brick manufacturing which was filled with water, a police official said Wednesday. On Tuesday evening the four children went for a bath in the water of the pit and drowned while playing in it.

2 gangsters shot dead

Chandigarh: Punjab police gunned down two gangsters, who were involved in killing policemen, in an operation in Kolkata, a senior police officer said Wednesday. Gangsters Jaipal Singh Bhullar and Jaspreet Singh, who were wanted in the murder of two Assistant Sub Inspectors in Punjab, were killed by the police force in an operation in Kolkata, the officer said. Acting on a tip-off, the Punjab police team with help from the Kolkata police shot dead Bhullar and Singh.



We are thinking of starting Tika Utsav 3.0 for the age groups of 18 to 44 years at the gram panchayat level. If everyone co-operates, we will be able to vaccinate everyone

PRAMOD SAWANT | GOA CHIEF MINISTER

HEAT WAVE LIKELY OVER NORTHWEST RAJASTHAN

Heat wave condition is expected over isolated pockets of northwest Rajasthan, India Meteorological Department (IMD) said Wednesday



First monsoon rains disrupt life in Mumbai

The first rains of this year's monsoon season in Mumbai caused water-logging in various parts of the city, prompting the traffic police to shut four subways and forcing motorists to abandon their vehicles on roads



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, June 9: The south-west monsoon set in over Mumbai and its neighbouring areas Wednesday, the MeT department said, as heavy rains lashed the city and suburbs since early morning, causing water-logging at many places and disrupting local train services.

The India Meteorological Department (IMD) issued a 'red alert' for Mumbai, and neighbouring Thane, Palghar and Raigad districts, warning of very heavy to extremely heavy rainfall at isolated places there. The heavy downpour also disrupted local train services, which are running only for personnel engaged in health and other essential services, and are out of bound for general commuters in view of the Covid-19 pandemic. While there were fewer vehicles on the city roads amid the downpour, motorists and other two-wheeler riders were unable to manoeuvre their

vehicles at some of the flooded places. The traffic police closed Milan, Khar, Andheri and Malad subways for motorists due to water-logging at these places. "We have closed the subways due to water-logging of up to two feet at these junctions. However, traffic is smooth on the SV Road, Linking Road and the Western Express Highway. So far, no traffic congestion has been reported," Deputy Commissioner of Police (Traffic), Western Suburbs, Somnath Gharge told PTI. Heavy rains caused low visibility and increased the risk of accidents, hence the traffic police personnel are on roads to prevent such incidents, the official said. Cranes were used to clear roads on which motorists had abandoned their vehicles due to water-logging, he added. The city police appealed to Mumbaiers not to step out of their homes unnecessarily and cautioned them against travelling to some of the inundated areas. Mumbai and its

suburbs experienced thunderstorms along with moderate to intense spells of rainfall during the day, it added. Suburban train services from Mumbai's Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Terminus (CSMT) to neighbouring Thane and Vashi in Navi Mumbai were suspended due to water-logging on tracks, officials said. Routes of some BEST buses, run by the city civic body's transport wing, were diverted to avoid flooded streets, they said. According to the IMD, the western suburb of Santacruz recorded 164.8 mm rain in six hours from 8.30 am to 2.30 pm, while Colaba in south Mumbai) recorded 32.2 mm rain during the same period. "It's monsoon arrival in Mumbai today," Dr Jayanta Sarkar, head of the India Meteorological Department's (IMD) Mumbai office, said in the morning. The IMD said conditions are favourable for onset of the monsoon in remaining parts of Maharashtra in next two to three days.

CBI carries out searches

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, June 9: The CBI has carried out searches at 14 locations in Delhi-NCR and three other cities after registering an FIR against Oyster Buildwell Private Ltd, Avantha group promoter Gautam Thapar and others for alleged diversion of over ₹466 crore in Yes Bank during 2017-19, officials said.

Thapar is already being probed in another case related to diversion of public money in Yes Bank allegedly involving the bank's former chief Rana Kapoor, they said.

In the present case, the CBI has also booked directors of Oyster Buildwell Pvt Ltd - Raghuraj Kumar Sharma, Rajendra Kumar Mangal and Tapsi Mahajan - as well as unidentified executives of Avantha Realty Pvt Ltd and Jhabua Power Ltd. Oyster Buildwell Pvt Ltd (OBPL) is part of Avantha group with over 97 percent stake held by Avantha



Realty and the remaining by Thapar and Vani agencies, the CBI alleged.

The case has been registered on a complaint, dated May 27, 2021, from Chief Vigilance Officer of the Bank Ashish Vinod Joshi.

The CBI has alleged that the accused have indulged in a criminal conspiracy, criminal breach of trust, cheating and forgery for diversion of public money to the tune of ₹466.15 crore, they said.

After registering the case, the CBI team searched at 14 locations in Delhi and NCR, Lucknow (Uttar Pradesh), Secunderabad (Telangana) and Kolkata (West Bengal) including the premises of

the accused, they said.

The complaint by Yes Bank, now a part of the FIR, has alleged that Jhabua Power Limited (JPL), a group concern of OBPL, entered in a operations and maintenance contract for its 600 MW power plant with its holding company Jhabua Power Investment Ltd for 10 years.

OBPL was required to pay an interest-free refundable security deposit of ₹515 crore to JPIL for which Yes Bank had sanctioned a long-term loan of ₹515 crore for 10 years. The company defaulted on payments with the account turning into a non-performing asset October 30, 2019.

The total outstanding principal dues stand at ₹466.15 crore, it alleged. During its forensic audit, the bank found that only ₹14.16 crore of the total ₹514.27 crore disbursed by the bank were transferred to JPIL in its IndusInd bank account and "ultimate end use of ₹500.11 crore loan fund could not be ascertained", the complaint alleged.

WATER, WATER EVERYWHERE



Girls wade through a waterlogged street at Hindmata in Mumbai

PTI PHOTO

Delhi receives more doses, vaccination to start again



INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, June 9: Delhiites in the 18-44 age group waiting to get an anti-Covid jab can now book their slot through 'CoWIN' app as the free vaccination for youth will start again after suspension for the last two weeks.

After the two week-long break with no vaccination, Delhi has received 1.25 lakh doses of Covishield and 20,000 doses of Covaxin, said Kalkaji MLA Atishi on Wednesday while presenting the daily vaccine bulletin of the Delhi government.

"Free-of-cost vaccination for youth will kick start again after two weeks. We have also received 30,000 doses of Covaxin for 45 and above age groups which are being distributed to different centres."

"Covaxin's stock for 18-44 age groups is available for the second dose. For 45+, we have two days of Covaxin and 27 days of Covishield available," Atishi added.

A total of 48,411 doses of the vaccine were administered on Tuesday. Out of these 25,847 were first doses and 22,564 were second doses. Along with this, the total tally of vaccines administered in Delhi has reached 57,81,988 and 13,40,000 people have been administered both the doses.

"From tomorrow onwards, doses of Covaxin will be available for those above the age of 45 years. Whichever government centres where Covaxin was being administered to the 45+, there the second dose will be made available. Right now, we are administering Covaxin only to those who are to be given the second dose, amongst the 45+," she concluded.

RAJE GOES MISSING FROM BJP POSTERS



INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Jaipur, June 9: In a recent development in Rajasthan politics, former Chief Minister Vasundhara Rajee's posters have been removed from the BJP state headquarters. The present posters have Prime Minister Narendra Modi and party national chief J.P. Nadda on one side and Satish Poonia and Gulab Chand Kataria on the other side but no picture of Rajee anywhere.

In other posters, they have brought veteran leaders Deendayal Upadhyay and Syama Prasad

and Nadda's while in states where BJP is in opposition, there shall be picture of state BJP president and leader of opposition with Modi and Nadda and hence comes this change.

In last few months, Rajee has been seen maintaining distance and difference from state party office and state party leaders and has been seen promoting 'Brand Rajee' keeping herself aloof from all state BJP activities.

She has been seen engaged in promoting 'Vasundhara Rajee Raso' when the party is running 'Sewa hi Sangathan' campaign. Also her followers have been running a Team Vasundhara Rajee 2023 campaign on social media projecting her as next CM face of Rajasthan for BJP.

Also, she has been running 'Office of Vasundhara Rajee' handle on Twitter to help needy during pandemic when BJP was running its own handle to help those who wanted medicines, oxygen, beds etc.

Girl refuses to marry as groom chews 'gutka'



INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Ballia (UP), June 9: After a bride in Pratapgarh district turned away the groom because he came drunk, another bride in Ballia district refused to marry the groom because he chewed 'gutka'.

Last week, a bride in Pratapgarh district had refused to get married after the groom arrived drunk and started forcing her to dance with him

Maniyar police station official, Shailendra Singh, said that the bride, hailing from Mishrauli village, was to get married to the man from Khejuri village June 5.

However, when the groom arrived with the marriage procession, the bride saw that he was chewing 'gutka'. She then refused to get married and the wedding was called off.

After hours of persuasion, when the bride refused to relent, the wedding was called off and the families decided to return the gifts they had earlier received from each other. This is the second such incident within one week in Uttar Pradesh. Last week, a bride in Pratapgarh district had refused to get married after the groom arrived drunk and started forcing her to dance with him. As the situation took an ugly turn, the police was called in and it was on their intervention that the groom's family agreed to return the dowry gifts.

Only in India we are liberal with health concerns: SC

THE CASE PERTAINS TO THE SEIZURE OF 1,20,620 KG OF 'SUB-STANDARD AND MISBRANDED POLISHED WHEAT' VALUED AT ₹27.74 LAKH

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, June 9: "Only in India we are liberal with the health concerns," the Supreme Court observed while refusing to entertain pre-arrest bail pleas of two Madhya Pradesh-based businessmen who are accused in a food adulteration case.

A vacation bench comprising Justices Indira Banerjee and M R Shah was hearing the anticipatory bail applications of Prawer Goyal and Vineet Goyal of Neemuch district in Madhya Pradesh. Hearing appeals against dismissal of their pre-arrest bail pleas by the Madhya Pradesh High Court at Indore, the



bench was told by lawyer Puneet Jain that penal provisions relating to offence of food adulteration

are bailable ones and hence, they deserved anticipatory bail. "Only in India we are liberal

with health concerns," Justice Shah said, adding, "Mr Jain, answer this. Will you eat this adulterated wheat". As the bench was disinclined to consider the anticipatory bail plea, the lawyer decided to withdraw the same. "On the prayer of Christy Jain, the Special Leave Petition is dismissed as withdrawn," the bench noted in its order Tuesday.

Besides the offence of cheating, the accused have been booked under section 272 (adulteration of food or drink intended for sale) and 273 (sale of noxious food or drink) of the IPC which provides for maximum jail term of six months or maximum fine

of ₹1,000 or both.

As per the FIR lodged by the Food Safety department, the businessmen have been accused of using of "non-edible golden offset colour" for polishing wheat at the premises of Darshil Agro Industries situated in Village Kanawati at Neemuch. In the raid conducted on December 3, 2020, the Food Safety Officer of Neemuch seized a 1,20,620 kg of "sub-standard and misbranded polished wheat" valued at ₹27.74 lakh. The high court had March 12 rejected the pre-arrest bail plea of the accused saying that the allegations were serious in nature.

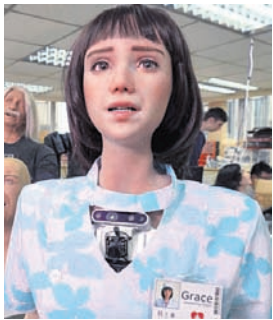
international



Their lives were taken in a brutal, cowardly and brazen act of violence. This killing was no accident. ... Canadians are outraged by what happened on Sunday. And many Muslim Canadians are scared
JUSTIN TRUDEAU | PM, CANADA

MEET GRACE, THE HEALTHCARE ROBOT COVID-19 CREATED

The Hong Kong team behind celebrity humanoid robot Sophia is launching a new prototype, Grace, targeted at the healthcare market and designed to interact with the elderly and those isolated by the Covid-19 pandemic



of the day quote

It (China) is the single nation state that militarily, economically, diplomatically, and politically has the ability to try to disturb the rules-based order that we strongly defend because it's advanced our own security and prosperity for so many years

ANTHONY BLINKEN | US SECRETARY OF STATE

In my discussions with many leaders, I've taken great encouragement from the support shown for Australia's preparedness to withstand economic coercion in recent times

SCOTT MORRISON | PM, AUSTRALIA

Congratulations to the country of Nigeria, who just banned Twitter because they banned their President. More COUNTRIES should ban Twitter and Facebook for not allowing free and open speech - all voices should be heard

DONALD TRUMP | FORMER US PRESIDENT

SHORT TAKES

17th Tibetan Parl in exile takes oath

Dharamshala: Newly elected members of Dharamshala-based 17th Tibetan parliament-in-exile conducted oath taking ceremony Wednesday. One of the senior-most members, Dawa Tsering first took oath as Protom/Interim Speaker in front of the Chief Justice Commissioner, Sonam Dago and then other MPs followed. All the proceedings were kept indoors and they did not allow any media to cover the oath ceremony due to Covid-19 protocol.

SA's health min on leave over contract

Johannesburg: South Africa's health minister was placed on special leave Tuesday over a corruption scandal involving an irregular government contract where USD 11 million was paid to a company connected to two people who used to work for him. Zweli Mkhize has been spearheading the Covid-19 response in South Africa, which has the most cases and deaths in Africa. The move was announced by President Cyril Ramaphosa in a statement from his office.

Probe into VW in Dieselgate scandal

Paris: France has launched a judicial investigation into German car giant Volkswagen for allegations of fraud relating to the emissions by its diesel cars, the latest legal action to be taken in the global Dieselgate scandal. The proceedings were initiated May 6, judicial sources said Wednesday. Late Tuesday, it was announced that France's judiciary was investigating Renault on similar charges, dpa reported. French authorities accuse Volkswagen of fraud concerning essential characteristics of a product, leading to a health risk for humans and animals.

3 dead in hosp fire in Russia

Moscow: Three people died and at least eight injured after a fire broke out in the intensive care unit of a hospital in western Russia Wednesday. The fire at the clinical hospital named after NA Semashko in the city of Ryazan, about 190 km southeast of Moscow, covered an area of 15 square meters and was later extinguished, according to the regional department of the Ministry of Emergency Situations.

BUTCHER OF THE BALKANS

Mladic gets life sentence for Srebrenica genocide

The Srebrenica massacre, determined to have been genocide by the UN International Court of Justice in 2007, is regarded as the worst atrocity in Europe since the Holocaust

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Amsterdam, June 9: Almost 26 years after the Srebrenica genocide, the UN War Crimes Tribunal has confirmed the sentence of life imprisonment handed down to former Bosnian Serb general Ratko Mladic for the Srebrenica genocide, among other crimes.

The confirmation was in the last instance and upheld an earlier verdict, meaning Mladic has lost his final appeal against his conviction for genocide.

In the first instance, the now 78-year-old accused was sentenced to life imprisonment. Mladic, who became known as the "Butcher of the Balkans" during the 1992-95 Bosnian

War, wanted to be acquitted.

Mladic, who was captured and handed over to the tribunal in 2011, remained motionless during the reading of the verdict and only shook his head from time to time. He remained silent afterwards, DPA reported.

Chief prosecutor Serge Brammertz welcomed the verdict and told Mladic's supporters that "it's time to accept the truth."

Mladic, he said, was one of the most notorious war criminals in modern history. However, while the verdict marks the end of the last major international Srebrenica trials, the perpetrators are still glorified, said Brammertz, calling for international condemnation.



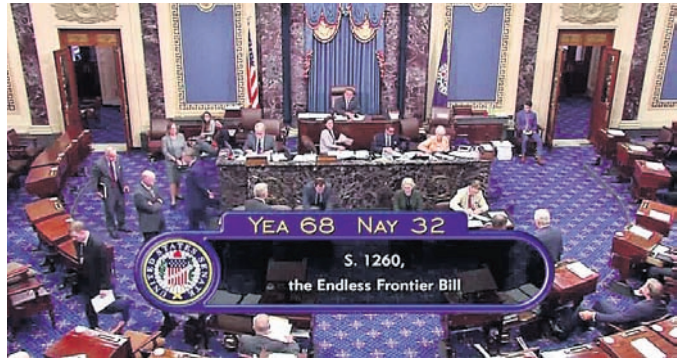
Stacks of unidentified corpses line the walls of an underground shelter at a Bosnian morgue in Tuzla March 28, 1997

Under Mladic's leadership, Serbian troops had overrun the UN protected zone of Srebrenica in 1995 and subsequently murdered more than 8,000 Bosnian Muslim men and boys.

In 2017, Mladic had been sentenced to life imprisonment for war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide, including the years-long siege of Sarajevo with over 10,000 deaths, the persecution and expulsion of Bosnian Muslims and Croats and the Srebrenica genocide.

Demonstrators had gathered in the square in front of the court hours before the verdict was announced. "Justice for Bosnia" was written on some placards.

US Senate approves Bill to counter China tech threat



AGENCIES

Washington, June 9: The US Senate voted 68-32 Tuesday to approve a sweeping package of legislation intended to boost the country's ability to compete with Chinese technology.

The desire for a hard line in dealings with China is one of the few bipartisan sentiments in the deeply divided US Congress, which is narrowly controlled by President Joe Biden's fellow Democrats.

The measure authorises about \$190 billion for provisions to strengthen US technology and research and would separately approve spending \$54 billion to increase US production and research into semiconductors and telecommunications equipment, including \$2 billion dedicated to chips used by automakers that have seen massive shortages and made significant production cuts.

The bill must pass the House of Representatives to be sent to the White House for Biden to sign into law. It is not clear what legislation

MEASURES AUTHORISED

- \$190 billion for provisions to strengthen US technology and research
- \$54 billion to increase US production and research into semiconductors
- \$2 billion dedicated to chips used by automakers

in the House will look like or when it might take it up.

The bill has a number of other China-related provisions including prohibiting the social media app TikTok from being downloaded on government devices, and would block the purchase of drones manufactured and sold by companies backed by the Chinese government. It would also allow diplomats and Taiwanese military to display their flag and wear their uniforms while in the United States on official businesses.

It would also create broad new mandatory sanctions on Chinese entities engaged in US cyberattacks or theft of US intellectual property from US firms, and provides for a review of export controls on items that could be used to support human rights abuses.

Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer, a co-sponsor of the measure, warned of the dire consequences of not funding research to keep up with China.

"If we do nothing, our days as the dominant superpower may be ending. We don't mean to let those days end on our watch. We don't mean to see America become a middling nation in this century," Schumer said.

Biden praised the bill: "We are in a competition to win the 21st century, and the starting gun has gone off ... We cannot risk falling behind."

China denounces US bill

Beijing has denounced the US bill aimed at boosting US technology to improve American competitiveness, calling it a thinly veiled attack on China's political system and an attempt to hinder its development. The Foreign Affairs Committee of China's ceremonial legislature, the National People's Congress, issued a scathing statement on Wednesday said, "This bill seeks to exaggerate and spread the so-called China threat" to maintain global American hegemony, using human rights and religion as excuses to interfere in China's domestic politics, and deprive China of its legitimate development rights," the statement said.

NEPAL HOUSE DISSOLUTION

SC issues show cause notice to Prez, PM

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kathmandu, June 9: Nepal's Supreme Court Wednesday issued a show cause notice to the Office of the President, the Office of the Prime Minister and the Council of Ministers on the dissolution of the House of Representatives and sought a reply within 15 days.

President Bidya Devi Bhandari, at the recommendation of Prime Minister K P Sharma Oli, had dissolved the House for the second time in five months May 22 and announced snap elections November 12 and November 19.

The five member constitutional bench, headed by Chief Justice Cholendra Shumsher Rana, has sought clarification from the defendants, according to sources in the Supreme Court.

The proceedings of the politically significant case, which had been disrupted since Sunday, finally resumed Wednesday.

It has been learnt that regular hearings on the case will resume from June 23 after the completion



of 15-day deadline provided by the court to the defendants to submit their clarification.

A report said that the apex court has decided to seek the help of two senior advocates each from Nepal Bar Association and Supreme Court Bar Association as amicus curiae to decide the case related to the dissolution.

As many as 30 writ petitions, including by the Opposition alliance, have been filed in the Supreme Court against the dissolution of the House, which they said was "unconstitutional".

Oli repeatedly defended his move to dissolve the House of Representatives, saying some leaders of his party were attempting to form a "parallel government".

UK, EU seek to avert 'sausage war'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

London, June 9: A senior European Union official expressed frustration Wednesday after talks with the UK broke up without resolving differences over the implementation of their post-Brexit trade deal in Northern Ireland.

Maros Sefcovic, the EU's chief negotiator in the talks, said the bloc had reached a "crossroads" in its relationship with the UK. After the British government threatened to take further unilateral action

POST-BREXIT TALKS

to delay living up to its obligations under the Brexit agreement.

"Trust, which should be at the heart of every partnership, needs to be restored," Sefcovic told reporters after the talks.

The EU earlier this year threatened to take legal action against Britain when it delayed implementing some parts of the accord. The British government is now considering further unilateral action as new deadlines approach.

Albanian Parliament impeaches President

TIRANA: The Albanian Parliament Wednesday impeached President Ilir Meta for violating the constitution and discharged him from the post. In an extraordinary session, the parliament voted 104-7 to discharge the president. A report of a parliamentary investigation concluded that Meta had violated the constitution with his biased approach against the ruling Socialists during the April 25 parliamentary electoral campaign. The report said Meta violated 16 articles and also incited violence.

Pandemic shakes up rankings of world's most liveable cities

AUCKLAND TOPS ANNUAL SURVEY OF THE WORLD'S MOST LIVEABLE CITIES IN 2021 FOLLOWED BY OSAKA, TOKYO, ADELAIDE AND WELLINGTON - ALL OF WHICH HAD A SWIFT RESPONSE TO THE COVID PANDEMIC

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

London, June 9: The pandemic has shaken up the rankings of the world's most liveable cities, a study released Wednesday showed, with metropolises in Australia, Japan and New Zealand leaping ahead of those in Europe.

Auckland tops The Economist's annual survey of the world's most liveable cities in 2021 followed by Osaka and Tokyo in Japan, Adelaide in Australia and Wellington in New Zealand, all of which had a swift response to the Covid pandemic.

The Austrian capital had led the list since 2018 and for years ran



neck and neck with Melbourne at the top of the survey of 140 urban centres. New Zealand's elimination of Covid-19 within its borders, through lockdown measures helped by its geographic isolation, gave its cities a big boost.

The Economist stated its rationale in gentler terms. "New Zealand's tough lockdown allowed their society to reopen and enabled citizens of cities like Auckland and Wellington to enjoy a lifestyle that looked similar to pre-pandemic life," the Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU) said in a statement. In contrast, "European cities fared particularly poorly in this year's edition."

"Vienna, previously the world's most liveable city between 2018-20, fell to 12th. Eight of the top ten biggest falls in the rankings are European cities," according to the study.

The biggest fall overall among the European cities was the port city of Hamburg in northern Germany, which fell 34 places to 47th.

The trend was motivated by a "stress on hospital resources" which the study said increased for most German and French cities and resulted in a "deteriorated healthcare score".

Pressure on European health systems also had a knock-on effect on culture and overall live-

ability because of restrictions on movement, the Economist said.

The most notable rise was recorded by Honolulu, Hawaii, in the United States, which came 14th in the ranking and moved up 46 places because of its containment of the pandemic and fast vaccination programme.

Damascus remains the city where life is most difficult because of Syria's ongoing civil war.

The EIU generally does not make the full ranking public. The last time Auckland was in the top 10 was in 2017, when it came 8th, a position Melbourne shared with Geneva this year.

MARINE MUCILAGE



An aerial photo of the sea at the Caddebostan shore, in Asian side of Istanbul with a huge mass of 'sea snot', a thick, slimy substance made up of compounds released by marine organisms, in Turkey's Marmara Sea

business



In recent times, the importance of technology in maintaining social connect and aiding in positive mental health has become paramount. Gaming has emerged as a wholesome activity that the entire family can participate and connect with friends
VICKRAM BEDI | SENIOR DIRECTOR (PERSONAL SYSTEMS), HP INDIA MARKET

SBI TO WITHDRAW FRAUD TAG

In a strange turn of events, the State Bank of India (SBI) Wednesday chose to withdraw the fraud tag against RComs tower and fibre company Reliance Infracore Ltd by filing an affidavit in NCLT Mumbai, stating that it wanted to remove the fraud tag on the company



of the day quote

The efforts of Confederation of Hospitality, Technology and Tourism Industry (CHATT) are highly inclusive and once the impact of second wave subsides, a group like CHATT will present greater economic impact



ARVIND SINGH | TOURISM SECRETARY

The pandemic has devastated the hospitality sector, businesses are steadily closing and NPAs are rising. In our meeting with the ministers, we recommended a well-made sector specific stimulus package that addresses the most critical aspects of reducing financial loss, mobilising loans and retention of employment



GURBAXISH SINGH KOHLI | VICE-PRESIDENT, FHRAI

Sidbi is closely monitoring development in the upcoming sectors like pharma and defence, and developed attractive products for MSMEs. The MSME clusters are getting created in aerospace, defence and pharma. This is something that we are closely tracking



S RAMANN | CHAIRMAN AND MD, SIDBI

SHORT TAKES

Chopra elevated as co-founder

New Delhi: Online food delivery platform Zomato has elevated its Chief People Officer Akriti Chopra as a co-founder, as the company plans a \$1.1 billion IPO later this year. In an internal email sent to employees and seen by IANS, Zomato Founder and CEO Deepinder Goyal said that Chopra has "mostly been behind the scenes all these years, working hard and building an impeccable finance team which keeps our engines running flawlessly".

'NZ wholesale trade sales rise'

Wellington: New Zealand's wholesale trade sales rose 3.7% or 1.1 billion NZ dollars (\$US 790 million), in the March 2021 quarter, the statistics department Stats NZ said Wednesday. The increases in the March quarter followed a 1.7% fall in the December 2020 quarter, business insights manager Sue Chapman said in a statement, Xinhua reported. Leading the rise in wholesale trade sales in the March 2021 quarter was the motor vehicles and motor vehicle parts industry, Chapman said.

Vietnam's steel import rises

Hanoi: Vietnam spent over 4.6 billion US dollars importing more than 6 million tons of steel and iron in the first five months of this year, up 37.9% in value and 9.2% in volume against the same period last year, according to the country's General Statistics Office Wednesday. China was the largest supplier, followed by Japan, South Korea and India, the office said.

GAIL net profit jumps 28% in Q4

New Delhi: State-owned gas utility GAIL (India) Wednesday reported 28% jump in March quarter net profit as petrochemical margins soared and gas marketing business turned around on rise in international prices. Net profit in January-March at ₹1,907.67 crore is compared with ₹1,487.33 crore net profit in the same period a year ago, GAIL Chairman and MD Manoj Jain said. Higher profitability was mainly due to improved performance of the petrochemical business as well as natural gas marketing and LPG segment, he said.

Money printing should be last option: Ex-RBI Guv

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, June 9: The central bank can directly print money and finance the government, but it should avoid doing so unless there is absolutely no alternative. For sure, there are times when monetisation - despite its costs - becomes inevitable such as when the government cannot finance its deficit at reasonable rates. "We are nowhere near such a scenario," he said. India's economy contracted by less-than-expected 7.3% in the fiscal ended March 2021. For 2021-22, the deficit has been put at 6.8% of the GDP, which will be further lowered to 4.5% by 2025-26. The Reserve Bank has lowered the country's growth projection for the current financial year to

"It (RBI) can (print money) but, it should avoid doing so unless there is absolutely no alternative. For sure, there are times when monetisation - despite its costs - becomes inevitable such as when the government cannot finance its deficit at reasonable rates. "We are nowhere near such a scenario," he said. India's economy contracted by less-than-expected 7.3% in the fiscal ended March 2021. For 2021-22, the deficit has been put at 6.8% of the GDP, which will be further lowered to 4.5% by 2025-26. The Reserve Bank has lowered the country's growth projection for the current financial year to



9.5% from 10.5% estimated earlier, amid the uncertainties created by the second wave of the coronavirus pandemic, while the World Bank Tuesday projected India's

Subbarao suggested that to deal with the second wave of Covid-19 induced slowdown in the economy, the government can consider Covid bonds as an option to raise borrowing

economy to grow at 8.3% in 2021. According to Subbarao, when people say the RBI should print money to finance the government's deficit, they don't realise that the

central bank is printing money even now to finance the deficit, but it is doing so indirectly. For example, he said, when the RBI buys bonds under its open market operations (OMOs) or buys dollars under its forex operations, it is printing money to pay for those purchases, and that money indirectly goes to finance the government's borrowing. "The important difference though is this when RBI is printing money as part of its liquidity operations, it is in the driver's seat, deciding how much money to print and how to channel it into the system," the former governor noted.

'Quickening vax coverage critical for regaining growth momentum'

The report said that with state-level lockdown restrictions being more adaptive to learnings from the first wave, manufacturing and construction are expected to experience a softer economic shock in the current quarter

AGENCIES

New Delhi, June 9: Quickening the pace and coverage of vaccination of people against Covid is critical for regaining growth momentum as economic activities are inextricably linked to the path of the pandemic, the finance ministry said in its monthly economic report Wednesday.

"As we cautiously recuperate from the second wave, rapidly improving vaccination delivery and frontloading the fiscal measures planned in the Union Budget hold key to invigorating the investment cycle in the coming quarters," it said. Regarding the impact of the second Covid wave, the report said that with state-level lockdown restrictions being more adaptive to learnings from the first wave, manufacturing and construction are expected to experience a softer economic shock in the current quarter. The report emphasised that



quicken the pace and coverage of vaccination is critical to help India heal and regain the momentum of economic recovery. Continued vigilance in terms of pandemic preparedness, up-scaling health spending and health infrastructure, faster rollout of vaccines and vaccination, investing in research and development to guard against possible mutants of the virus, prudent and pre-emptive restrictions, and strict obser-

vanage of COVID-appropriate behaviour are essential to maintain the delicate balance of lives and livelihoods, it said. India's second Covid wave situation has been improving lately with a continuous decline in 7-day average of active cases since May 13, 2021. Data showed that the second wave reached its peak of 7-day average of daily new cases around May 8, with the pace of decline being as fast as the rise. The daily case positivity rate has plummeted sharply from 24.9 per cent in early May to reach 3.6 per cent as on June 2. Concomitantly, the report said that high frequency indicators in real and financial sectors like power consumption, E-way bills and foreign portfolio investment flows witnessed slight uptick in the second half of May 2021 after enduring the second wave-driven contraction during April and the first half of May.

BIZ BUZZ

IMFA launches vax drive

Bhubaneswar: IMFA, India's leading fully-integrated producer of ferro alloys, launched a vaccination drive Wednesday against Covid-19 at its Corporate Headquarters in city, in partnership with Apollo Hospitals and FICCI. Aashish Mishra, Vice President & Head - HR said, "We are committed to protecting our workforce, and shall cover employees and their dependents at all locations at the earliest possible. Vaccination is the best protection against Covid-19, and we urge everyone to get vaccinated whenever possible; however, it is also important to follow Covid appropriate behaviour thereafter."



AM/NS aims to vaccinate 3K in state

Bhubaneswar: ArcelorMittal Nippon Steel India (AM/NS India) has privately procured 33,000 doses of Covid-19 vaccines. The ordered vaccines were from Serum Institute of India (SII), the manufacturer of Covishield, and will be administered to those in the age group of 18 years and above. The pan-India vaccination drive also kicked off from May 8 at AM/NS India's Pellet Plant in Paradip. The vaccination programme at the Odisha facility began in the presence of PK Mohanty, Head HR and Durlav Singh, Chief Security Officer AM/NS India, Odisha Facility with an aim to vaccinate around 3,000 people. Suresha G, Executive Director, AM/NS India- Odisha Operations, said, "Our main priority is to ensure the safety and health of our employees, their dear ones and our business associates, aiming for 100% vaccination for all."



DISASTER RESILIENT HOUSING

'COASTAL ODISHA NEEDS LONG-TERM SOLUTION'

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, June 9: As long-term measure in disaster prone areas, building a disaster resilient housing is the need of the hour, said PK Jena, Development Commissioner and Special Relief Commissioner. In a webinar organised by Indian Chamber of Commerce (ICC) on 'Post Disaster: Cyclone Resilient House Construction in Coastal Odisha - Focusing on Affordable Housing', Jena said, "We need long-term solutions. I ask people to build their houses keeping safety and resilient aspects in mind. All government assisted housing programmes



and public buildings need to focus on disaster resilient aspects." He urged the need for a 'housing support service hub in all the disaster affected blocks of the state. "The hub can provide technical assistance, ensure credit linkage from the banks and microfinance institutions and undertake re-skilling of the construction work-

ers and experts such as masons and engineering professionals," he added. Principal Secretary, state finance department Ashok K Meena said, "Interest subvention could be an incentive for government to consider for constructing a disaster resilient house. He called upon the financial institutions including the Microfinance sector to play a major role through innovative products for the affordable housing." Jagadananda, Convener CSR & Sustainability Committee, ICC Odisha State Council, stressed the need for a social movement on 'Kucha to Pucca' housing.

SIMPLICITY OF HEALTH REIMBURSEMENT CLAIMS

Covid-19 has changed our lives, one way or another most of us have been impacted by the pandemic. It has once again exposed the fragility of our system and has shown us that calamities can hit us anywhere, anytime. While there is not much that we can do to avert the unforeseen itself, but we can definitely seek cover against the unexpected. Covid 19 has underlined, yet again the importance of health insurance and has increased the level of awareness for a health cover amongst masses. People between the age group of 25-45 are particularly showing heightened level of interest in health insurance and are looking for right product to cover themselves and their families. The increased level of enquiry for health insurance is a good trend, and I realised there are few myths surrounding the product. One such misinformation is regarding claims settlement process. There are two ways to settle a health claim, cashless and reim-

bursment. In cashless settlement, as the name suggests the payment is made directly to the hospital by the insurance company. However, cashless facility is only available in certain network hospitals, as per the provider's agreement with the insurer. Whilst the majority of network hospitals are present in metros and tier-I cities; tier-II and rural locations have scarce cashless tie ups and reimbursement becomes a preferred mode of claims settlement. The general perception is claim reimbursement is a tedious, tiresome and complicated process. Many people believe that health insurance is a product better suited for metros and bigger towns simply because smaller towns have fewer network hospitals. Nothing can be farther from the truth. A reimbursement claim is not as complex as people perceive it. Health reimbursement claim can be filed in just few simple steps. Next few points will give you an overview of how to file a reim-

- bursment claim-
1. To begin with, the initial payment has to be made by you (the insured)
 2. Make sure to collect all the original documents, hospital bills, discharge summary and reports. Please note that original bills are mandatory for claim settlement. Also, it is advisable to keep a copy of all the original documents for future reference
 3. To initiate the process, you have to fill

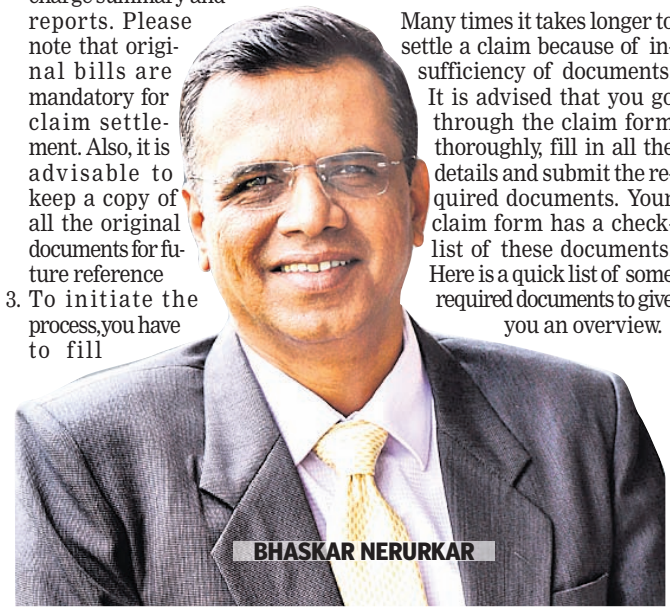
the health reimbursement claim form along with bank account and NEFT details

4. Submit these documents to the nearest branch office of the insurance company

Many times it takes longer to settle a claim because of insufficiency of documents. It is advised that you go through the claim form thoroughly, fill in all the details and submit the required documents. Your claim form has a checklist of these documents. Here is a quick list of some required documents to give you an overview.

- Duly filled and signed claim form, this is easily available on website of the insurer
 - Original discharge summary
 - Original hospital bill with detailed break-up
 - Original payment receipts
 - Lab and test reports (MRI/CT scan/EKG)
 - First consultation letter from doctor
 - Bank details
 - Photocopy of ID (PAN card / Aadhaar card / Passport)
 - Internal case papers, if available
- Make sure to give your correct mobile number and email ID so that the insurer can easily communicate with you, if required. It is prudent to keep a track of all communications with the insurer; hence it is better to send the documents via registered post or courier. Today, most of the insurers have their apps where you can upload your reimbursement document to initiate the process and courier the original documents

later. This is especially helpful during Covid when it is taking longer to courier the documents. Once you submit the claim form along with the bills, insurer verifies the claim at their end to access the validity of the same. After the claim is verified, it is processed quite smoothly and the payment is made to your registered bank account. To conclude, there is nothing complicated about a reimbursement claim, and one should avoid hearsay. I suggest that you take health cover without worrying about the claim, so long the claim is admissible under your policy and is held valid the claim will be paid. As the insurance companies are reaching out to the furthest corner of the country the number of cashless tieups is only going to increase. Till such time one should not wait to buy an insurance cover



BHASKAR NERURKAR

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BRAZIL WIN, MESSI & CO SPLIT POINTS

Tsitsipas, Nadal in last four stage



Neymar celebrates his goal against Paraguay with a teammate, Tuesday

Friday's win over Ecuador. Players did not speak publicly amid a possible revolt against Copa America in their home nation. And coach Tite didn't answer questions as to whether he would remain in the job despite tensions with the management of the Brazilian football confederation.

The president of the confederation, Rogerio Caboclo, was suspended from office Sunday after an accusation of sexual harassment emerged. But none of that affected with the team's mentality for the match against Paraguay.

Neymar opened the scoring in the fourth minute after a cross from Gabriel Jesus. And Paqueta closed the deal in added time with a classy touch that hit the right post before finding the back of the net.

Lionel Messi's Argentina line-up scored twice in the first eight minutes. Cristian Romero headed past David Ospina in the third minute and Leandro Paredes doubled the lead in the eighth after dribbling through the middle of Colombia's defense and gently sliding a shot into the back of the net.

But Colombia lifted in the second half, as Argentina were either failing at the finishing or being stopped by Ospina. Argentina's Nicolas Otamendi conceded a penalty and Luis Muriel scored from the spot at the 51st. But just when it appeared Argentina would take another step closer to the World Cup with an away win, Borja's header triggered wild celebrations for the hosts.

Chile could jump into one of the top positions if they beat Bolivia at home later Tuesday. Peru won their first match in this edition of World Cup qualifiers. Gonzalo Plata scored Ecuador's only goal in added time. Uruguay drew 0-0 at ninth-place Venezuela in a match with few exciting moments.

Argentina in one of the best matches yet in South American qualifying.

The game at the Metropolitan stadium in Barranquilla was attended by 10,000 fans despite the region's alarming COVID-19 figures.

The top four teams in South American qualifiers will advance automatically to Qatar 2022. The fifth-place team will go into an inter-continental playoff. The current standings show Brazil leading the 10-team competition with 18 points, followed by Argentina (12), Ecuador (9) Uruguay and Colombia (8).

The atmosphere in the Brazil camp has been heavy ever since last

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Paris, June 9: Rafa Nadal dropped a set for the first time at this year's French Open but ultimately advanced to the semifinals for a record-extending 14th time.

The 13-time Roland Garros champion faced a stiff challenge from gritty 10th-seeded Diego Schwartzman and prevailed 6-3, 4-6, 6-4, 6-0 on Court Philippe Chatrier Wednesday. Schwartzman has put an end to Nadal's 36-set winning streak at Roland Garros.

Nadal was down 4-3 in the third set but won nine games in a row to seal the match. Nadal will be up against either top-ranked Novak Djokovic or ninth-seeded Matteo Berrettini in the semifinals.

Stefanos Tsitsipas and Alexander Zverev will meet each other for a berth in the French Open final after straight-set quarterfinal victories Tuesday. It will be the youngest matchup in the men's semifinals at Roland Garros since a couple of guys named Rafa Nadal and Novak Djokovic met in 2008.

The No. 5-seeded Tsitsipas reached his fourth major semifinal — and third in a row — by upend-



No. 2 Daniil Medvedev 6-3, 7-6(7-3), 7-5 at Court Philippe Chatrier in the last no-spectator night session of this year's tournament. Tsitsipas is a 22-year-old from

Greece. Zverev is a 24-year-old from Germany. Both have won Masters 1000 titles on red clay this year. Both have won the season-ending ATP Finals. Both intend to — and, truth-

fully, are expected to — claim one of the four biggest prizes in their sport.

GS AWAITS NEW CHAMP

Greece's Maria Sakkari beat defending champion Iga Swiatek to reach her maiden Grand Slam semifinal at Roland Garros. She will face Czech Barbora Krejickova, who won against American teenager Coco Gauff 7-6(8-6), 6-3.

Sakkari, the 17th seed, is now the highest-ranked woman in the draw after seeing off Swiatek 6-4, 6-4.

Krejickova, meanwhile, saved five set points from 17-year-old Gauff in the opener before the World No.33 went on to seal victory on her sixth match point.

Tuesday, No.31 seed Anastasia Pavlyuchenkova of Russia and 85th-ranked Tamara Zidansek of Slovenia each earned her first berth in a major semifinal.

Pavlyuchenkova entered the day with an 0-6 record in Slam quarterfinals but edged her doubles partner Elena Rybakina 6-7(2-7), 6-2, 9-7. Zidansek got past No.33 seed Paula Badosa 7-5, 4-6, 6-6.

It means all four semifinalists in Paris are into the last four at a Grand Slam for the first time.

Viru walks down memory lane

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, June 9: Former India opener Virender Sehwag Wednesday recollected how he copied legendary batsman and his longtime opening partner Sachin Tendulkar after watching him bat for the first time on TV during the 1992 World Cup.

"Cricket is played on the ground but a lot can be learned. If I give my own example, I started watching cricket from the 1992 World Cup and at that time used to watch (Sachin) Tendulkar and copy him.

"How he plays the straight drives, how he plays the back-foot punch. In 1992, if I could watch TV and learn a bit, why not," said Sehwag, who is also the founder of 'Cricuru' app.

Sehwag, who was joined by former India opener and co-founder Sanjay Bangar at the app's launch, also stressed on the importance of learning cricket from watching videos shared by great players.

"But in today's time if you have videos of these cricketers whom you admire — AB de Villiers, Brian Lara, Chris Gayle or Virender Sehwag, or other players, then their videos are available. In our time, such videos were not available.

"If in my time such facilities were there like I could speak to someone online or subscribe the videos with ease, then I would have done that and could have learned better and early and could have played for India early," said Sehwag. Stressing the importance of both mental and skill aspects in the

game, Sehwag maintained that Bangar told him how even international cricketers are finding it difficult to find their mistakes.

The curriculum in the 'Cricuru' app for each player has been developed by Sehwag along with Bangar.

"The country's first AI-enabled coaching website aims to offer a personalised learning experience for the younger players and help youngsters learn playing cricket through master classes of 30 player coaches from across the globe with about four hours of curated video content with each coach," a released stated.

The coaches include the likes of De Villiers, Brett Lee, Lara, Gayle, Dwayne Bravo, Harbhajan Singh, Jonty Rhodes among others.

Rohit, Pant share 6th spot in Tests

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Dubai, June 9: India captain Virat Kohli retained his fifth spot while teammates Rohit Sharma and Rishabh Pant were joint sixth in the latest ICC Test rankings for batsmen.

New Zealand's double centurion Test debutant Devon Conway entered the Test batting rankings at 77th position in the list headed by his captain Kane Williamson on 895 rating points.

Kohli has 814 points behind England skipper Joe Root (836) in the list headed by his captain Kane Williamson on 895 rating points. Pant and Rohit, who gained one spot, have 747 rating points each.

ONLY A DAY 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 day's time, the long-awaited, month-long 24-team extravaganza will finally get underway. Orissa POST takes a look at the groups...



GROUP D: Spain, Poland, Sweden, Slovakia

SPAIN (ESP)

FIFA ranking: 6 Euro appearances: 11 times Best result: Champions (1964, 2008, 2012)

Back-to-back Euro winners in 2008 and 2012 with a World Cup triumph sandwiched in between, Spain haven't been able to sustain their success on the biggest stages. A group stage exit in the 2014 World Cup was followed by Round of 16 eliminations in the previous Euro and the 2018 World Cup, as the giants of Europe continued to falter despite boasting some of the best players in the world. There has been some progress made of late though. Indeed La Roja steamrolled through their qualifiers, going unbeaten in the group with eight wins in 10 to book a place in the Euros while they have also made it to the Nations League finals as well. Nevertheless, consistency is something that has evaded Spain of late, something that will need to be addressed at the earliest. Indeed, four wins in their last 12 games is not good enough a record for a team boasting of the quality that this Spanish side does. On their day they can blow away the best of teams, as was seen in their 6-0 thrashing of Germany.

Coach: Luis Enrique



KEY PLAYER Gerard Moreno

GROUP E FIXTURES				
Date		Match		Time (IST)
June 14	POL	v	SVK	09:30 pm
June 15	ESP	v	SWE	12:30 am
June 18	SWE	v	SVK	06:30 pm
June 20	POL	v	ESP	12:30 am
June 23	SWE	v	POL	09:30 pm
June 23	ESP	v	SVK	09:30 pm

Telecast: SONY TEN Network

POLAND (POL)

FIFA ranking: 21 Euro appearances: 3 Best result: Quarterfinals (2016)

led by one of the best strikers in the world in Robert Lewandowski, Poland might not be a team that many might fancy. The presence of the Bayern Munich superstar alone is enough to cause some concern within the opposition camp but the White and Reds have a support squad that can create problems for opponents. Competitive in the last Euro, Poland were disappointing in Russia in 2018, winning just one of their three games and finishing bottom of a group they had expected to challenge for. They did cruise through the Euro qualifiers, losing just one of their 10 games (win: 8; draw: 1), to finish atop Group G to achieve a fourth consecutive qualification for the tournament. Their form, since, however, has been a bit up and down. In fact, they have picked up just one win in their last six games, which will be a concern heading into the tournament. However, with Lewandowski by their side, they would sure give some hardtime to opposition sides.



KEY PLAYER Robert Lewandowski

Coach: Paulo Sousa

SLOVAKIA (SVK)

FIFA ranking: 36 Euro appearances: Once Best result: Round of 16 (2016)

Slovakia had surprised all in 2016 when they made it to the round of 16 after gritty displays against Russia and England in the group stages, only to fall to Germany. Having not qualified for the 2018 FIFA World Cup, Slovakia had to make it to Euros the hard way as well, as they finished third in their group and had to make their way through the playoffs based on their UEFA Nations League 2018-19 position. The Sokoli had to see off the challenge from the Republic of Ireland (shootouts), and Northern Ireland (extra-time win) to book a place in the final tournament. Three wins in twelve games since September 2020 is hardly the kind of form that manager Stefan Tarkovic would be relishing. But Slovakia haven't lost any of their last four games. Squad-wise, Marek Hamsik may have somewhat slipped off the radar since he left Napoli, but the 33-year-old midfielder remains a pivotal figure for Slovakia. Milan Skriniar, fresh after helping Inter Milan to the Serie A crown, will be pivotal in holding the defence together.



KEY PLAYER Marek Hamsik

Coach: Stefan Tarkovic

SWEDEN (SWE)

FIFA ranking: 18 Euro appearances: 6 times Best result: Semifinals (1992)

Sweden's support was just starting to dream a little bigger ahead of the Euros after Zlatan Ibrahimovic ended his five-year international retirement in March. A knee injury will keep the 39-year-old out of the tournament, meaning coach Janne Andersson must revert to type, and the entertainment factor for neutrals drops down a notch. However, it may be a blessing in disguise for Sweden. Their form and togetherness without Ibrahimovic was noticeable, and Sweden remain in a good place heading into the tournament. An ever-present in the European Championships since 2000, Sweden have gone past the group stages just once in the last five editions of the tournament and never in the last three. However, their quarterfinal run in the last World Cup showed that they are more than capable of springing a surprise or two. After a disappointing UEFA Nations League campaign, things have picked up this year for them, with four wins in four games in 2021, which does set them up in good stead heading into the European Championship finals.



KEY PLAYER Alexander Isak

Coach: Jan Andersson