



HONING SKILLS

Actor Malvika Raaj says she is utilising the lockdown period to hone her dancing skills

LEISURE P2



ARTIFICIAL SUN

China's 'artificial sun' recently broke the world record with plasma temperature of 120 million Celsius for 101 seconds

INTERNATIONAL P10



DINGKO NO MORE

Asian Games gold medal-winning former boxer Dingko Singh passes away after a long battle with liver cancer

SPORTS P12

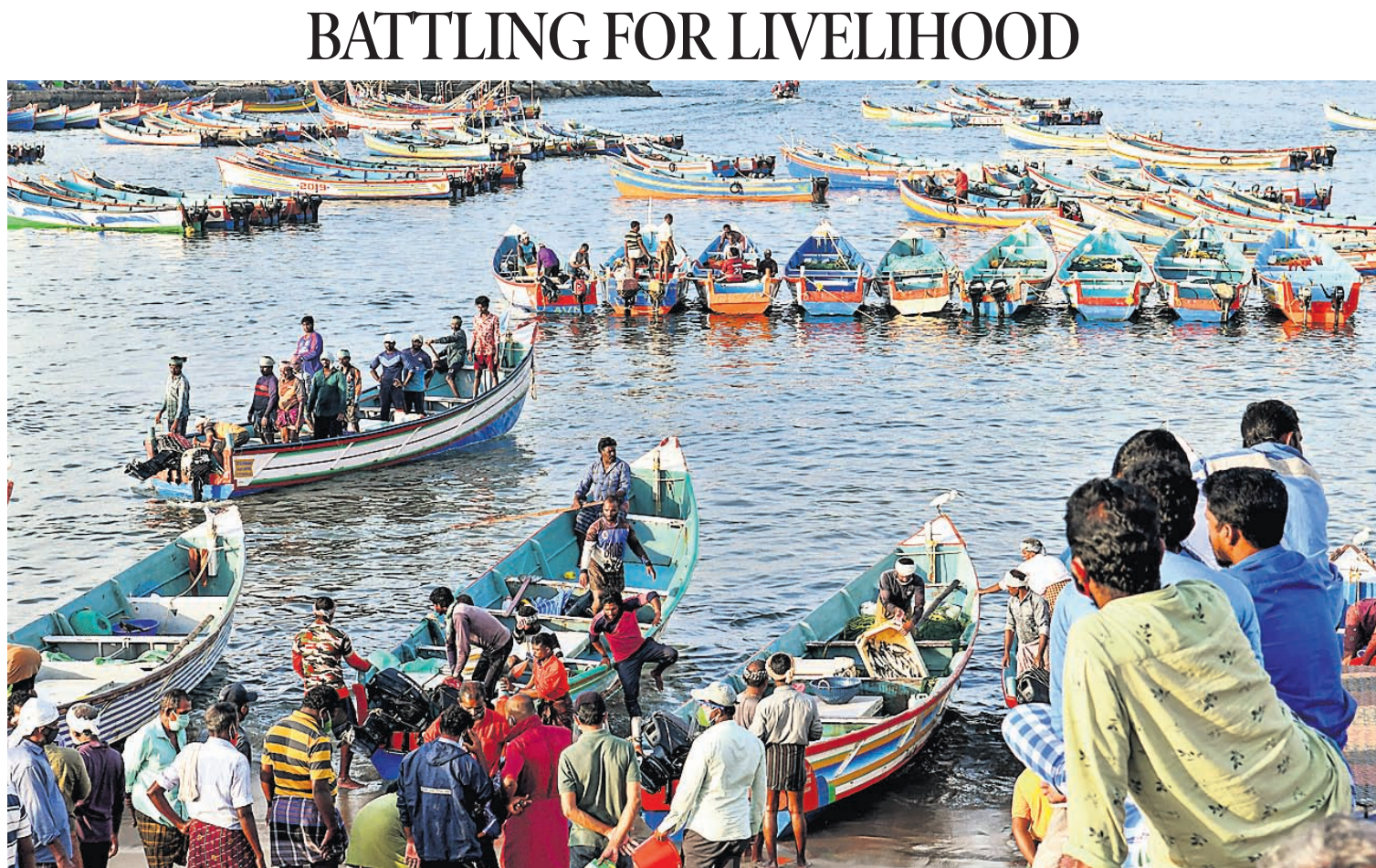
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IRREGULAR by MANJUL

Believe me, even I'm waiting for party high command to fulfil promises to me!



Fishermen in Thiruvananthapuram forget social distancing as they venture out to the for their catch with the relaxation of lockdown rules for a few hours Thursday PTI PHOTO

BATTLING FOR LIVELIHOOD

RELIEF PACKAGE FOR 'YAAS' ANNOUNCED

Farmers, fishermen, artisans brought under various compensation packages

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, June 10: Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik announced Thursday a relief package for persons affected due to cyclone Yaas which hit hard the north Odisha coast May 26 morning. The government is attempting to compensate the loss suffered by farmers, fishermen, artisans and people from all other segments of life. The government said it will provide agriculture input subsidy to small and marginal farmers who have sustained crop losses of 33 per cent and above.

Also farm machinery subsidy of ₹20 crores to the farmers of affected districts will be provided through direct benefit transfer (DBT) mode. House building and other assistances will be provided to the eligible beneficiaries as per state government norms.

Agricultural input subsidy of ₹6,000 per hectare will be provided to farmers with land in non-irrigated areas, ₹13,500 per hectare in areas under assured irrigation and ₹18,000 per hectare for all types of perennial crops. All the assistance will be provided to actual cultivators, the Chief Minister's Office (CMO) is in a statement. Agricultural input subsidy to any affected farmer will not be less than Rs 2,000 for perennial crops and Rs 1,000 for other crops, it added.

The short-term Kharif loans advanced in the cyclone affected areas hav-

₹20 crore allocated for farmers who have suffered losses to their farming machinery

- Fishermen to get compensation for partially or fully damaged boats and nets
- Agricultural subsidy for farmers who have suffered crop losses of 33% and above
- House building assistance to cyclone affected people as per government rules

ing crop losses of 33 per cent and above will be converted into medium term (conversion) loans, it said.

Similarly, 2,000 pump sets will be distributed with 50 per cent (maximum of Rs15,000 per set) subsidy and 3,000 sprayers will be made available to the affected farmers at a subsidy of 50 per cent limited to maximum of ₹3,800 for power sprayers and ₹750 for hand operated sprayers. Affected farmers in saline-inundated areas will be given assistance of ₹750 per hectare for soil nutrient management and soil ameliorants.

The statement also said an incentive of ₹15,000 per person will be provided to 125 affected farmers for repair and renovation of betel vine cultivation. Also more than 10,000 free vegetable mini-kits (₹150/

kit) will be distributed in the cyclone-affected areas.

The Chief Minister's Office has also announced compensation towards loss of animals. People who have lost milch cows and buffalos will get ₹25,000 per animal. Similarly ₹3,000 will be given for loss of a goat, ₹16,000 for the death of a cow or buffalo calf and ₹50 per poultry bird. Compensation of ₹2,100 will be provided towards construction/renovation of damaged cattle shed.

Relief has also been provided for mushroom farmers in the package announced. Cyclone-hit farmers involved in mushroom farming will each get Rs 40,000.

Aid for fishermen who have suffered losses due to the cyclone was also announced. Assistance of ₹4,100 will be given for repair of partially damaged boats and 9,600 for replacement of fully damaged boat. Similarly ₹2,100 will be provided for repair of partially damaged nets, and ₹2,600 for replacement of fully damaged nets.

Further, financial aid of ₹12,200 per hectare will be distributed to the affected fish farmers while input subsidy of ₹8,200 per hectare will be provided for damaged fish seed farms. Under handicrafts and handloom sector, assistance of ₹4,100 per artisan.

Sericulture farmers would get subsidy of ₹4,800 per hectare for Eri, Mulberry, Tusser and ₹6,000 for Muga, the CMO statement said.

₹8L refunded by police to victims of cyber fraud

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, June 10: Odisha Police have recovered and refunded a total of ₹8,73,580 in the last 10 days to victims of cyber frauds, ADGP Crime Branch, YK Jethwa told reporters Thursday in a press release. He also warned people about the rising incidents of cyber frauds during lockdown and urged victims to immediately contact the cyber cell of Crime Branch through a dedicated toll free number 155260. By immediately reporting the matter, the victims can help police block transactions and also recover the amount fraudulently withdrawn by the cyber criminals, Jethwa informed during a virtual press conference.

Recently, the cyber cell has succeeded in retrieving ₹33,990 of a victim from Jagatsinghpur who lost ₹6,26,000 in three installments to cyber fraudsters. The portion of the money was retrieved from account of the accused from the Canara Bank branch at Gomti Nagar in Lucknow, Jethwa informed.

The ADGP Crime Branch also said Odisha Police have so far collected more than ₹14 crore in fines from approximately 5,00,000 persons for flouting various Covid-related norms across in the state in the last two months. Jethwa revealed that 4.76 lakh persons have been pulled up for violating Covid-19 guidelines in April and May. Approximately 3,500 shops, markets and other institutes that were found flouting Covid guidelines have been sealed by the local police during the same period. The police have arrested 1,332 Covid-19 violators and have seized 29,000 vehicles in the last two months.

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Rath Yatra to be held only in Puri

DEVOTEES CAN'T ATTEND FOR SECOND YEAR IN SUCCESSION

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, June 10: In view of the prevailing Covid-19 situation, the Odisha government announced Thursday that the Rath Yatra festival will only be conducted in Puri and not in any other part of the state. The festival is scheduled to start July 12.

"In larger interests of public health, the annual Rath Yatra will only be conducted at the Jagannath Temple, Puri. It will be sans devotees and curfew will be imposed in the city during the period of the festival as decided by the local authorities," Special Relief Commissioner (SRC), PK Jena said. No other temple in Odisha can organise the festival this year. The festival will be conducted following all Covid-19 norms and Supreme Court guidelines," he added.

Jena also ruled out the participation of devotees and said only Sevayats with RT-PCR negative reports or those who have got both doses of vaccine can participate in the festival.

As per the Supreme Court's guidelines, a maximum of 500 persons will be allowed to pull each chariot. Those will be pulled by sevayats, police personnel or others permitted by the Jagannath Temple administration. Those who will take part must have tested RT-PCR negative 48 hours before the event or have received both doses of Covid-19 vaccine, Jena informed.

Jena also stated that there will be sufficient gaps between the chariots and social distancing will be implemented strictly. All entry points in Puri town including railway station, bus stand, roads and sea routes will be closed during the festival, the SEC said.

In other temples, rituals relating to Rath Yatra can be performed within its premises. The Information and Public Relation (I&PR) Department will arrange live telecast of the festival for media houses, informed Jena.

This is the second year in succession that the festival will be conducted in Puri only.

US vax aid for India

AGENCIES

Washington, June 10: India will be receiving a share of the 80 million (eight crore) unused Covid-19 vaccines through the UN-backed COVAX global vaccine sharing programme that President Joe Biden has announced, a senior State Department official said here Wednesday.

Biden had announced June 2 that the US will allocate 75 per cent - 1.9 crore of the first tranche of 2.5 crore doses - unused Covid-19 vaccines from its stockpile to countries in South and Southeast Asia as well as Africa.

According to a White House fact sheet, nearly 19 million vaccines will be

shared through COVAX. "I don't have the specific details on when the shipment of vaccines will be arriving in India. All I know that India will be in receipt of a share of those eight crore vaccines," State Department spokesperson Ned Price told reporters at a news conference here Wednesday.

"We know that India has suffered tremendously with this pandemic. As we have done in the case of these vaccines, and even prior to this sharing announcement, we have demonstrated our commitment to work closely with our partners in India to help them see the way out of this epidemic. India is an important ally," Price added.

MARKET WATCH

INDEX	VALUE	VARIATION
SENSEX	52300.47	↑ 358.83
NIFTY	15737.80	↑ 102.40
DOLLAR	73.20	↑ ₹0.11
EURO	88.97	↑ ₹0.09
GOLD	₹49,100	↓ ₹24
SILVER	₹71,875	↓ ₹9

WEATHER

	BHUB	CTK
MAX	32.2°C	33.5°C
MIN	25.5°C	24.6°C
Humidity	88%	81%
Rainfall	Nil	Nil
Forecast	Generally cloudy sky	

Fudged Bihar figures behind record Covid fatalities

AGENCIES

New Delhi/Patna, June 10: India recorded 6,148 deaths in the last 24 hours - the highest since the pandemic hit last year - according to data released Thursday by the Union Health Ministry. This record spike happened as Bihar sharply revised its toll upwards. Bihar's previously unaccounted 3,951 deaths, which has sent its toll soaring above 9,000, is behind this spike. If the state's revised tally is reduced, then the death toll stands at 2,197 across India in the last 24 hours.

The Bihar Health department reported 9,429 deaths due to coronavirus Wednesday evening. It is

a jump of 3,951 more deaths compared to a day before. The total deaths in Bihar due to Covid-19 were 5,458 as on Tuesday.

Except for Munger district all the other 37 districts in Bihar revised their death toll. In some of the districts, the figures rose by close to 200 per cent. Patna has registered 2,303 deaths which is the highest in Bihar followed by Muzaffarpur (609) and Begusarai (316).

The Bihar government undertook a 20-day exercise to audit Covid-19 deaths after the Patna High Court flagged irregularities in death figures in Buxar district May 17. After verification, the state's Covid-19 cumulative toll

37 OUT OF THE 38 DISTRICTS SHOW INCREASE IN DEATH TOLL, FOUR RECORD ABOVE 200% RISE

- Kaimur, Saharsa, Begusarai and East Champaran districts register over 200% rise in death toll
- Bihar govt forced to conduct audit after Patna High Court order May 17

Toll went up to 9,429 after revision as against 5,458 earlier reported

jumped to 9,375 June 8, as against 5,424 reported a day earlier.

After the mismatch, a senior state Health Department official said that the matter is under investigation. "These deaths occurred 15 days ago and were only uploaded now in the government portal. Action will be taken against some of the private hospitals," a Health department official was quoted as saying by 'Reuters'. The official attributed these fatalities to private hospitals and homes.

Bihar Health Minister Mangal Pandey said Thursday the government has been working on revising the Covid-19 death toll for the past few weeks after it came

to know from various sources that the death toll due to Covid-19 could be more in number.

It is not just that the Bihar government has mismatched data about the fatalities. It reported 7,01,234 recoveries from Covid-19 infection Tuesday while it published 6,98,397 recoveries a day later. The recovery rate Tuesday was shown at 98.7 per cent while Wednesday it was 97.65 per cent.

The revision exercise has resulted in a 72.8 per cent increase in the Bihar's Covid-19 toll. The fatalities have been attributed to private hospitals and homes. Following the revision, Bihar's Covid-19 death toll almost doubled from 5,458 to 9,429.

leisure



IT'S SO HARD TO TOUR: GOMEZ

Singer Selena Gomez has revealed that she finds touring hard. "It's so hard to tour, and when you're a female, because you have all of this pressure to add multiple looks throughout the show," the singer added.

BLAKE LIVELY BEREAVED

Hollywood actress Blake Lively's father and actor Ernie Lively, who worked in films such as *The Sisterhood Of The Traveling Pants* and *Turner & Hooch*, passed away aged 74. A representative for Ernie Lively confirmed his death to *variety.com*.



FORTUNE FORECAST

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ARIES

Today, you will appreciate beautiful things and exotic artefacts. You may even seriously think of pursuing a business related to such commodities. However, you may not be able to make up your mind, says Ganesh. However, you will decide to keep an open mind about it.

TAURUS

You may find it hard to stop the impending outflow of cash while shopping today, says Ganesh. You aren't the one to be dominated and God help anyone who tries to dictate terms to you today.

GEMINI

Today, you are likely to get encouragement and support for your endeavours from all quarters. You have a gift of gab and your ability to dispel tension with even the simplest of your remarks will be put to test. Still, you will rise to the occasion and prove your mettle.

CANCER

Today is a good day for you. However, don't expect a windfall. It is just one of those days when you will be in a good mood, irrespective of your problems, if any. You will treat your subordinates well, and they will show their appreciation. But if you think the atmosphere at your workplace is good, wait till you reach home.

LEO

Everyone wants to be different. But little do they realise that they already are unique, says Ganesh. Today, you may meet a lot of such different people at work, some of whom may even test your patience. Always remember that working in a team means balancing a variety of egos and opinions.

VIRGO

In all likelihood, you will be eager to grab the monetary challenges that come your way, as they only enhance your desire for success. You will bring up new ideas and better methods of tackling the challenges on hand. Ganesh gives you an assurance that your present business views will do you a world of good.

LIBRA

Being in charge was never easy, but it's not for nothing that leaders are made of sterner stuff. As a person in charge, you are expected to give directions in a manner that gets the best efforts out of your juniors. Move away from traditional dictatorial style, and build a consensus that enables you to pull off the spectacular, says Ganesh.

SCORPIO

You shall be completely immersed in your routine today. It's the same old humbug of a day for you, says Ganesh. But this exhausting day may transform into an exciting evening – so be prepared to get surprised.

SAGITTARIUS

Your ship may be rocked by stormy controversies today. Ganesh advises you to steer clear of people looking to give you a piece of their mind. The storm looks to ease away if you lend a patient ear to all such elements, and try and accommodate their views.

CAPRICORN

It's a lucky day for your sweetheart! Wonder why it's written in your horoscope? You will pamper him/her to the hilt, take them out on a shopping spree and buy whatever they lay their eyes on, even if it's way beyond reasonable, says Ganesh. You will go overboard to make your love feel that nothing else matters, and although this lavish outing will serve the purpose, you may later regret not keeping a count of your cash.

AQUARIUS

You find solace in travel today. But if you plan to include others, beware, as you may end up doing all their dirty work too. But, you will find fulfillment even in that, which, says Ganesh, is your strong point. You know how to turn a weakness into strength.

PISCES

Today just might be the day when you invent a better mousetrap. However, your ideas have a propensity to wane and wax at the same speed, says Ganesh. Hence, keep a notebook handy to jot down all your earth-shattering revolutionary ideas.

Malvika honing her dancing skills

Mumbai: Actress Malvika Raaj, who played the young Poo in *Kabhi Khushi Kabhi Gham*, is all set to make her Hindi film debut with the action film *Squad*. As shoots remain stalled owing to lockdown, she is utilising the time to hone her dancing skills. "Dancing has made me happy ever since I was a kid. It's been a long lockdown in different parts. I switch on YouTube and take to any of the dance sessions there. It's a goldmine of content there. Dance helps build rhythm and synchronises our body other than being a great form of working out as well," Malvika said. She added: "I think it's a great time to experiment with a dance routine and everyone should give it a try. The pandemic is not over yet. We should try and stay within the guidelines. Get vaccinated whenever the opportunity arises."

Malvika's upcoming debut film *Squad* marks the debut of veteran actor Danny Denzongpa's son Rinzing. Seventy per cent of the film has been shot in Belarus.



Kiara misses the sunshine and tan

Mumbai: Actress Kiara Advani Thursday shared a throwback picture from her Maldivian holiday and said that she misses the sunshine and the tan.

The actress posted a video collage on Instagram featuring her in a bikini, holidaying in the picturesque tourist locale. "Missing the sunshine & tan," she wrote as caption, with a sun emoji.



Kiara, who was last seen in *Indoo Ki Jawaani*, will be next seen in *Shershaah* opposite Sidharth Malhotra, and in the Kartik Aaryan-starrer *Bhool Bhulaiyaa 2*, besides *Jug Jugg Jeeyo* co-starring Anil Kapoor, Neetu Kapoor and Varun Dhawan.

Buddhadeb Dasgupta no more

The prolific filmmaker was honoured with the National Award for Best Direction for his films 'Uttara' and 'Swapner Din', while 'Bagh Bahadur', 'Charachar', 'Lal Darja', 'Mondo Meyer Upakhyan' and 'Kaalpurush' won him Best Film awards

Kolkata: Multiple National Award-winning Bengali filmmaker and renowned poet Buddhadeb Dasgupta passed away peacefully in his sleep Thursday around 6 am at his South Kolkata residence. He was 77.

Dasgupta was battling kidney and age-related ailments for quite some time and undergoing treatment for the same.

He was honoured with the National Film Award for Best Direction for his films *Uttara* and *Swapner Din*, while his films *Bagh Bahadur*, *Charachar*, *Lal Darja*, *Mondo Meyer Upakhyan* and *Kaalpurush* were honoured

with the National Awards for Best Film.

Apart from this, two of his films, *Dooratwa* and *Tahader Katha*, received the National Film Award for Best Feature Film in Bengali.

Dasgupta also made significant contribution to the world of Bengali poetry. His notable works include *Gobhir Araley*, *Himjog*, *Chhaata Kahini*, *Roboter Gaan*, and *Coffin Kimba Suitcase* among others.

The demise has left the film industry, his friends, followers and cinema lovers in shock.

Apart from Prime Minister Narendra Modi and West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee, several personalities from Hindi and Bengal film industries expressed condolence on social media.



International film, poetry festivals to kick off Jun 27

BHUBANESWAR: Three online international film festivals and a poetry festival will be held here over 25 days starting June 27 to promote universal brotherhood and offer platforms to the promising filmmakers of the state.

Organised by JBS Education & Entertainment Corporation in collaboration with Orifarming, the festivals - Covid-19 International Film Festival (CIFF), Covid-19 International Tribal Film Festival (CITFF), Covid-19 International Tourism Film Festival (CITFF) and Batayan International Poetry Festival (BIPF) - will have participants from 40 countries while juries from 10 countries will evaluate their works, said Satyabrata Jena, the chairman of the festivals.

Last year, the festivals had participants from 25 countries who were judged by 20 juries from 10 countries, added Jena. CIFF, CITFF, CITFF and BIPF will be inaugurated June 27, July 19, July 20 and July 21 respectively, it was learnt.

The participants can send their short films and poems by logging into the festival website www.jbseec.com.

Jagannath Pani, the head of the events said, "The programmes aim at spreading positivity during these difficult hours and helping art-lovers remain stress-free. It will also offer platforms to the promising directors."

Speaking on the awards, Bibhas Bandhopadhyaya, head of media operations, said, "Three awards - Gold-Kalinga, Silver-Kalinga and Bronze-Kalinga will be given away to the top three films of the festivals carrying a cash prize of Rs 10,000, Rs 5,000 and Rs 3,000 respectively."

Festival director Maheswar Rao from Hyderabad said, the events will promote universal brotherhood and the culture of different countries.

Mural arts camp begins at Raghurajpur



Bhubaneswar: A five-day traditional mural arts camp was launched Thursday at heritage crafts village Raghurajpur in Puri district. The camp is being organised by Odisha Lalit Kala Akademi in collaboration with Odisha Mining Corporation Limited.

More than 150 artists of the village are participating in the camp following the covid guidelines. They will use the walls of their houses as platforms to showcase their skill. Many of the artists, who are participating in the camp, have already made their marks at national and international levels. Each artist will be given a cash prize of Rs 10,000 while the best five of them will be selected by the Akademi to be felicitated after lifting of the

lockdown.

Akademi president Sudarsan Pattnaik, while inaugurating the camp, said that it is an opportunity for the painters to display their talent and uphold the artistic tradition of the craft village.

Odia Language, Literature and Culture Minister Jyoti Prakash Panigrahi attended the camp virtually and wished success of the camp and safety of the participants.

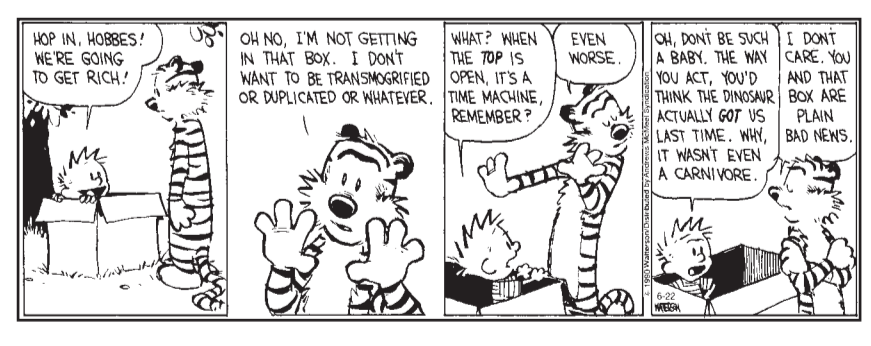
Among others, Principal Secretary of the department Bishnupada Sethi and Akademi Secretary Panchanan Samal were present virtually.

The mural paintings are expected to draw tourists to the village once normalcy returns, say the officials.

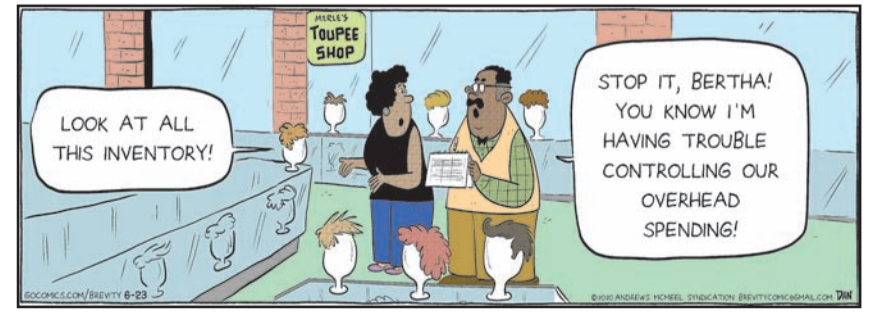
PEANUTS



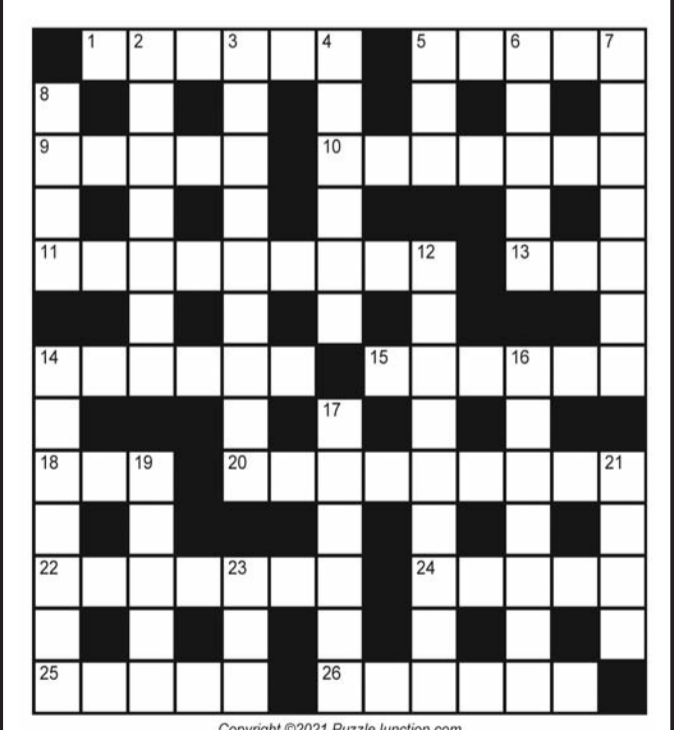
CALVIN AND HOBBS



BREVITY



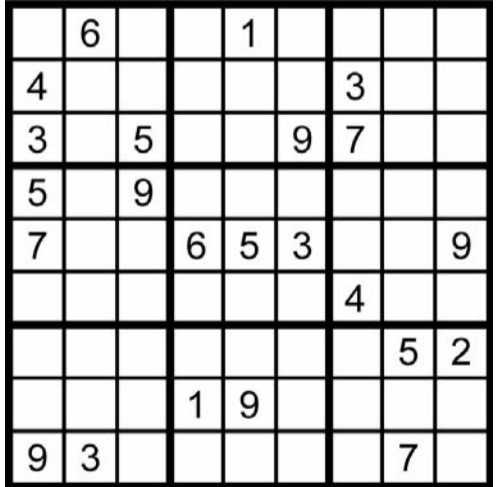
FUN post CROSSWORD



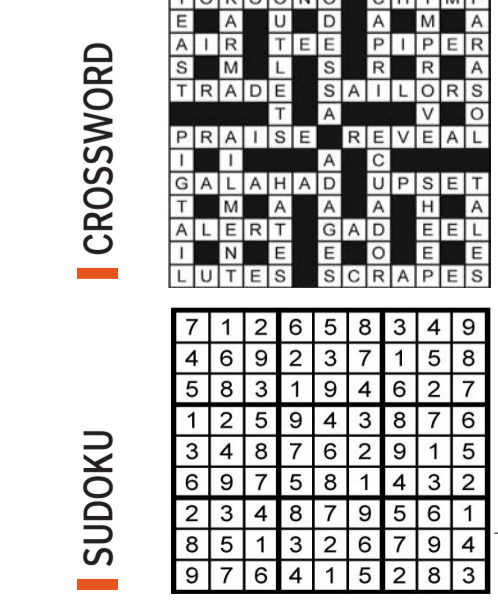
- Across
- 1 Homes with domes
 - 5 Honkers
 - 9 Reserved
 - 10 Fencing cry (2,5)
 - 11 Theatre attraction (5,4)
 - 13 Swedish shag rug
 - 14 Drops by
 - 15 Unusual
 - 18 Séance sound
 - 20 Worm gatherer (5,4)
 - 22 Health profession
 - 24 Burger topper
 - 25 Greek Titan
 - 26 Cunning
 - 5 Harpoon
 - 6 Miscue
 - 7 Raise up
 - 8 Unguent
 - 12 Cold symptom (5,4)
 - 14 Lanai, in Hawaii
 - 16 Tonic water
 - 17 Calamitous
 - 19 Jeopardy
 - 21 Musty
 - 23 Psyches
- Down
- 2 Furrows
 - 3 Lopsided (3-6)
 - 4 Sylphlike

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



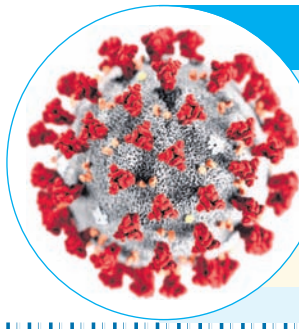
CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW

downtown



FRESH & JUICY

Workers stacking freshly-brought mangoes at Chhatra Bazar fruit market in Cuttack, Thursday



COVID-19 TRACKER

	INFECTED	RECOVERED	DEAD
World	17,53,39,769	15,88,92,491	37,80,398
India	2,91,83,121	2,76,55,493	3,59,676
Odisha	8,37,226	7,72,972	3,167

State has 24 colleges per 1L youths

POST NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi, June 10: The All-India Survey on Higher Education (AISHE) 2019-20 revealed that the college density (colleges per one lakh eligible population in the age group of 18-23 years) in Odisha is 24, which is lower than the national average of 30.

According to the survey, Karnataka tops the list with maximum 59 colleges per one lakh population while Bihar was placed at the bottom with the density of seven.

Odisha has a total of 1,087 colleges as per the survey and it was placed below 20 among 39 states and Union territories in terms of college density survey.

The average enrolment per college in Odisha is 659. As many as 4.40 lakh students are enrolled in private colleges while 2.68 lakh students are enrolled in government colleges in the state. Similarly,



0.92 lakh of students in Odisha are enrolled in polytechnics.

Significantly, female students have outnumbered male students in M.Phil and postgraduate courses. There are 584 females as compared to 419 male students in M.Phil and 50,717 females as compared to 47,838 male students at postgraduate level. In total, 5.29 lakh male and 4.65 lakh female students are enrolled at various levels in the state.

Odisha has a total of 32 universities comprising 16 state public universities, six private universities, five institutes of national importance, three deemed universities (private), one central university and one state open university.

The survey states that there are 1,043 universities in the country, out of which 396 are privately managed and 420 universities are located in rural areas. There are 17 uni-

AISHE 2019-20

Karnataka tops the chart with maximum 59 colleges per 1 lakh population while Bihar was placed at the bottom with a density of seven

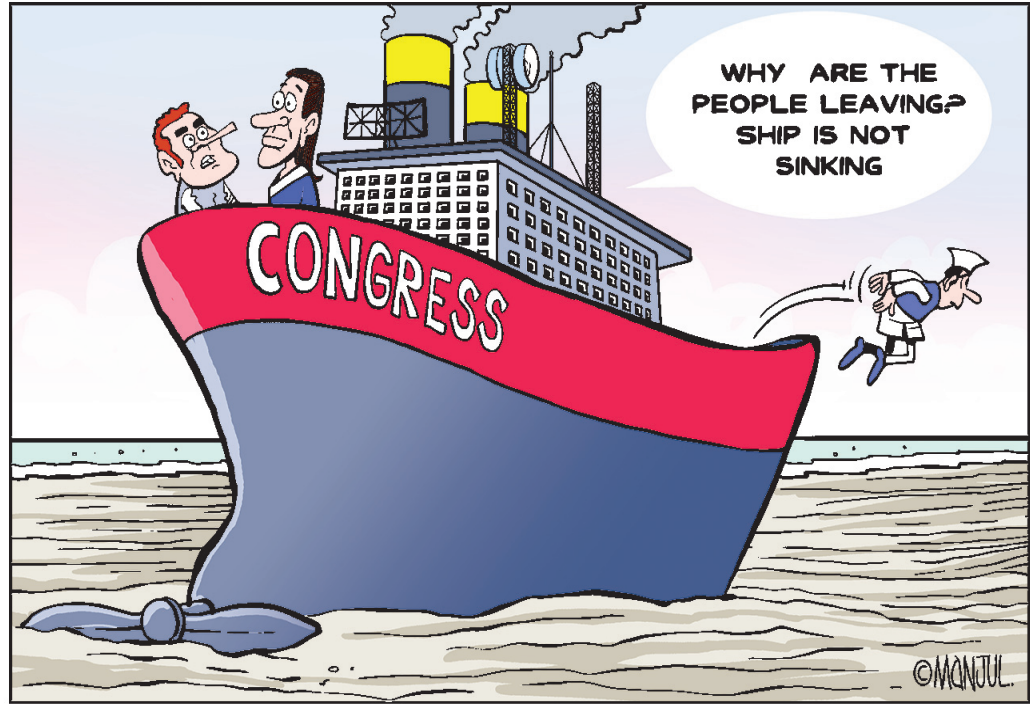
Odisha has 1,087 colleges and 32 universities. The average enrolment per college in Odisha is 659

Female students have outnumbered male students in M.Phil and postgraduate courses in Odisha. There are 584 females as compared to 419 male students in M.Phil and 50,717 females as compared to 47,838 male students at postgraduate level

versities exclusively for women across the country including one in Odisha.

Odisha also has two dual mode universities, which provide education through both regular and distance mode.

POLITICKLE by MANJUL



2 ECMO machines at AIIMS soon

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, June 10: The All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS), Bhubaneswar is all set to get two Extracorporeal Membrane Oxygenation (ECMO) machines to further bolster the healthcare system to treat critically-ill Covid-19 patients.

AIIMS Medical Superintendent Sachchidananda Mohanty said it has already placed the orders for two such machines which are used as artificial support for oxygenation when the heart and lungs are compromised. The machine is also used in severe pneumonia cases in critical Covid-19 patients.

Mohanty said that the machines are likely to be installed at the health centre within a month and the assurance had been given by the supplier. "AIIMS, Bhubaneswar presently has some faculty members trained in handling ECMO machines, and the institute is hir-



ing more technicians to operate the same, which will help people, especially those referred to outside treatment," a statement issued by Mohanty from AIIMS, Bhubaneswar said.

ing more technicians to operate the same, which will help people, especially those referred to outside treatment," a statement issued by Mohanty from AIIMS, Bhubaneswar said.

21 patients in City get O₂ concentrators at doorsteps

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, June 10: Taking a leaf from the state's leadership role in supplying medical oxygen to various corners of the nation, the Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC) Thursday started supplying oxygen concentrators to the doorsteps of the people suffering from Covid-19.

Twenty-one concentrators were delivered Thursday which were pre-booked by the citizens through a dedicated mobile app. The app has been developed by Bhubaneswar Smart City Limited.

Srimanta Suar, 44, from Satya Nagar who received the concentrator Thursday is very happy that he received the machine at home only two days of booking for the same.

"I'm really thankful to the state government and the BMC for the great help as I have been experiencing breathlessness for past several days. Just after logging into the website, I got a prompt call and today I am really happy that the system is really working," he added.

Suar has also requested one of his friends, currently under treatment at Kalinga Hospital and likely to be discharged very soon, to apply for a concentrator as he is having



some breathing issues.

Family members of Krushna Jena, 54, from Bapuji Nagar got the machine around 2.30 pm Thursday. Talking on behalf of her wife, Jena's husband said, "After release from the Covid hospital Krushna's oxygen saturation was 93 and even lower. However, after getting the concentrator the saturation has improved a lot and now it is 97-98."

"To book an oxygen concentrator one has to register using his/her name and mobile number and validate his/her phone number using the OTP. After that he/she has to enter necessary details in booking form and click on the button 'Book Now'. After entering the de-

3 new drive-in vaccination sites

The BMC has opened three more sites for wider coverage of vaccination to both the groups - 18 to 44 years and above 45 years. Two vaccination sites were opened by the civic body at Silicon Institute of Technology, Bhubaneswar Thursday. The huge campus is well-organised in its Skylab area. Arrangements of entry and exit have been designed by the institute authorities where citizens came to the vaccination point in a hassle free environment and got vaccinated with a rest place nearby. Likewise, in South West Zone two different points served for hassle free vaccination today. Pokhariput Kendriya Vidyalaya No. 6 and Community Centre at Khandagiri Bari area served as vaccination centres today.

tails, the applicant will receive a confirmation via SMS when the booking is received.

Once the booking is accepted, the concentrator will be delivered to the applicant's address on verification of provided ID proof.

Adarsha Vidyalaya at Andharua by next year

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, June 10: If things go as per plan, the proposed Adarsha Vidyalaya (model school) at Andharua here would be completed by 2022.

This was revealed at a review meeting chaired by School and Mass Education (S&ME) department Principal Secretary Satyabrata Sahoo, Thursday.

The meeting revealed that the construction of the boundary wall of the proposed Adarsha Vidyalaya at Andharua has already started and the work for the entire project will be completed by 2022. The meeting also reviewed the ongoing civil works relating to all Odisha Adarsha Vidyalayas (OAVs).

It was decided that about 500 meritorious students from OAVs across the state will be imparted coaching for medical, engineering and other entrance examinations. State-of-the-art facilities will be provided at the model schools. The S&ME principal secretary stated that the model school is a dream project of late OAV advisor Bijaya Kumar Sahoo and that commencement of classes from the next academic year will be a befitting tribute to the late advisor.

The ongoing building construction works being undertaken by Works department, RD depart-



ment and TATA Steel were reviewed. The agencies were asked to complete the works as per stipulated time. The Collectors of Jagatsinghpur, Khurda, Puri and Bargarh were requested to address the land related issues and hand over land to the executive engineers concerned.

Moreover, construction of hostels, boundary walls, cycle stands, approach roads and other infrastructure facilities for OAVs in Keonjhar, Jajpur, Mayurbhanj and Sundargarh districts being funded through Odisha Mineral Bearing Areas Development Corporation (OMBADC) were also reviewed.

All the executive engineers were requested to complete the projects as per timelines.

The meeting was attended by OAV Sangathan state project director Lingaraj Panda, Works department engineer-in-chief, RD department chief engineer, RWSS chief engineer, representatives of TATA Steel Ltd, all executive engineers concerned and section heads of OAVs.

Pradipta Naik to be out of ICU soon

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, June 10: Leader of Opposition (BJP) Pradipta Naik is likely to be moved out of intensive care unit (ICU) and shifted to a private ward, senior officials at the All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS), Bhubaneswar said.

According to sources at city AIIMS, Naik was taken out of ventilator support a few days back but he is still in ICU. He would be shifted to a private ward in the coming few days.

Naik had contracted Covid-19 and was admitted to the premier hospital after his health condition deteriorated.

FAITH PREVAILS OVER PANDEMIC



(1) Women offer diyas outside Chintamaniswar temple in Bhubaneswar on the occasion of Sabitri Brata, Thursday (2) Women offer puja indoors in Puri as temples remained out of bounds for people due to Covid-19 pandemic (3) A group of women performs the ritual near basil plant in CDA area of Cuttack

ILS develops models of nCoV infection using local virus

PNN/AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, June 10: Researchers at the Institute of Life Sciences (ILS) here have recently established and characterised hamster models of SARS-CoV-2 infection by using a local virus.

The proteomic studies carried out at ILS show the similarities between SARS-CoV-2 infection in humans and hamsters. This along with analysis of clinical parameters it has been observed that tissue samples show the pathophysiological manifestation of SARS-CoV-2 infection similar to that reported earlier in Covid 19 patients.

Among different available animal models, hamsters have so far been widely utilised in SARS-CoV-2 infection studies. The Hamster model of Covid-19 mimics a mild pattern of human disease with full recovery. Realising the importance of these requirements for developing antiviral and vaccine candidates for SARS-CoV-2, scientists at ILS Bhubaneswar have established these animal models and a ABSL3 laboratory.

This platform at ILS has been established with the support of the Biotechnology Industry Research Assistance Council (BIRAC) under Mission COVID Suraksha.

ILS Director Ajay Parida believes that this animal model and the ABSL3 facility of the institute will contribute to a major role in providing services for the testing and evaluation of drugs and vaccine candidates for SARS-CoV-2. ILS has also established K18-h



Among different available animal models, hamsters have so far been widely utilised in SARS-CoV-2 infection studies

The Hamster model of Covid-19 mimics a mild pattern of human disease with full recovery

ACE2 Transgenic mice colonies which will be complementary to the evaluation efforts, said Dr Parida.

This facility will be operating on a fee-for-service mode or a partnership mode and will be available for use by researchers from academics, industry and start-ups from India and abroad.

The Covid-19 research team of ILS, an autonomous research institute of the Department of Biotechnology, of the Union government provided strong molecular evidence that supports the clinical relevance of this model in

Covid-19 research. The findings of this study have recently been published in a prestigious journal, Federation of American Societies for Experimental Biology (FASEB) Journal. The current and prospective users of the ILS platform included NIRRH, Mumbai, IIT Indore, NCBS-InStem, Bangalore, NCL, Pune, CIAB, Mohali and others.

The study was carried out by a team led by Dr Shantibhusan Senapati and Dr Gulam Syed.

Animal models that closely resemble the pathogenesis of SARS-CoV-2-induced disease in humans are essential for research on disease mechanisms and the evaluation of potential vaccines and antiviral drugs, the study says.

Small animals like mice and Syrian hamsters are advantageous to study SARS-CoV-2, as they reproduce faster and faithfully reproduce Covid-19 pathology in humans.

State logs 44 more Covid deaths, 6,097 fresh cases

NINE DISTRICTS ARE IN THE GREEN ZONE WHERE THE TEST POSITIVITY RATE REMAINED BELOW FIVE PER CENT JUNE 9



IN A NUTSHELL

Of the fresh fatalities, Khurda reported five, followed by Angul, Bargarh, Cuttack and Jharsuguda (four each) and Kalahandi, Puri Sundargarh and Rayagada (three each)

Two patients each succumbed to the disease in Bolangir, Boudh and Mayurbhanj and one each in Deogarh, Dhenkanal, Jajpur, Kendrapara and Sambalpur

The state has conducted over 1.24 crore sample tests for Covid-19, including 69,638 Wednesday, and the positivity rate stands at 6.71 per cent

PNN/AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, June 10: Odisha's Covid-19 caseload mounted to 8,37,226 Thursday as 6,097 more people tested positive for the infection, a Health and Family Welfare (H&FW) department official said.

Forty-four fresh fatalities pushed the coronavirus death toll in the state to 3,167, he said.

Of the new cases, 3,446 were reported from quarantine centres and 2,651 were detected during contact tracing.

Khurda district, which comprises the state capital Bhubaneswar, reported the highest number of fresh cases at 1,017, followed by Cuttack (647) and Jajpur (434).

The remaining cases were reg-

istered in several other districts.

Taking to Twitter, the H&FW department said, "Regret to inform the demise of forty-four COVID patients, while under treatment in hospitals."

Of the fresh fatalities, Khurda reported five, followed by Angul, Bargarh, Cuttack and Jharsuguda (four each) and Kalahandi, Puri Sundargarh and Rayagada (three each). Two patients each succumbed to the disease in Bolangir, Boudh and Mayurbhanj and one each in Deogarh, Dhenkanal, Jajpur, Kendrapara and Sambalpur, the official said.

Fifty-three other Covid-19 patients have died due to comorbidities, he said. At least 8,032 people were cured of the disease

Sero-survey of medicine traders

BHUBANESWAR: The Regional Medical Research Centre (RMRC), Bhubaneswar, a unit of ICMR, Thursday launched a two-day sero-survey among medicine traders here to assess the prevalence of Sars-CoV-2, the virus that causes Covid disease. RMRC director Dr Sanghamitra Pati said the authorities have set up a camp on the premises of Utkal Chemists and Druggist Association in the Unit IV area here to conduct the survey.

Wednesday, taking the total number of recoveries to 7,64,673.

Odisha now has 69,333 active cases, he said. The state has conducted over 1.24 crore sample tests for Covid-19, including 69,638 Wednesday, and the positivity rate stands at 6.71 per cent.

Nine districts were in the green zone where the test positivity rate remained below five per cent June 9.

Altogether, 86,45,298 doses of vaccines have been administered to people in the state, the official said.

Meanwhile, the government has decided to vaccinate medicine shop owners and staffers, who have been working during the lockdown.

H&FW department Additional Chief Secretary PK Mohapatra asked district Collectors, municipal commissioners and others of officers to ensure that employees of medicine shops receive vaccine shots on a priority basis.

Assault on vendor: NHRC seeks report

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, June 10: The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) has directed the Jharsuguda Collector to take action against the erring lady additional tehsildar in Jharsuguda for assaulting an elderly vendor and his son June 2.

NHRC while hearing a plea directed the district administration to submit an action-taken report (ATR) on the issue within eight weeks.

According to sources, another petition has also been filed against the lady officer, Jogita Tirkey, currently holds the post of additional tehsildar of Jharsuguda.

The tehsildar June 2 thrashed the old man and his minor grandson, who were running a watermelon shop in Jharsuguda town in full public view.

The only 'crime' of the elderly victim was that he made a few minutes' delay in closing his makeshift shop during the lockdown that day.

The additional tehsildar later received flak from several quarters after the video of her beating the duo went viral on social media within a few hours.

BeMC helps 7 women sanitation workers become entrepreneurs

AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, June 10: The Berhampur Municipal Corporation (BeMC) in Ganjam district has helped seven women sanitation workers become entrepreneurs by giving them loan benefits to buy sewer tank-cleaning machines.

The Ministry of Housing Affairs said that Berhampur became the first urban local body in the country to give loan benefits to women under the Rehabilitation of Manual Scavengers Scheme, which provides financial benefits to sanitation workers for their rehabilitation in alternative occupations.

"In doing so they have transformed 7 Women Safaimitras into 'Berhampur Swachhta Bahini' Entrepreneurs, who now own sewer/septic tank cleaning machines," the ministry tweeted Wednesday. The Odisha Housing and Urban Development department congratulated the corporation for making the seven women entrepreneurs.

It said the group of women,



The life-changing initiative of the civic body for women sanitation workers would pave way for many more to get inspired and follow this model

KEERTHI VASAN | BERHAMPUR SUB-COLLECTOR

called the 'Berhampur Swachhata Bahini', would own, operate and manage the cleaning machines for liquid waste management in the city, 168 km south of Bhubaneswar.

The loan benefits were facilitated in collaboration with the National Safai Karamcharis Finance and Development Corporation. These women sani-

tation workers also belong to different Mission Shakti self-help groups, the department said.

Berhampur Sub-Collector Keerthi Vasan said that the life-changing initiative of the civic body for women sanitation workers would pave way for many more to get inspired and follow this model.

RUSH FOR MAHAPRASAD AMID LOCKDOWN



Large number of people gather outside Srimandir in Puri for availing Mahaprasad, Thursday

OP PHOTO

CP's special cell to trace missing kids

Bhubaneswar: The Commissionerate Police has set up a special cell to deal with pending cases pertaining to missing children reported at different police stations here during the last couple of years. DCP Umashankar Dash said the cell would try to find out the missing children. Sources also said that the officers have been instructed to look into the missing cases registered at various police stations in which chargesheets or final reports are yet to be submitted before the court after the completion of the investigations. In many cases the children might have been found. However, the investigating officers who have no knowledge about the minors' return failed to submit the final report in the case during the last of couple of years.

Covid rule violators to face music

Bhubaneswar: Twin city Police Commissioner Saumendra Priyadarshi Thursday warned of stringent action against the shop owners and other Covid violators ahead of the Raja festivities. Addressing a virtual presser, Priyadarshi said that the CP witnessed huge gatherings at market places on the eve of Savitri Brata. The police also took actions against many who were seen openly flouting Covid guidelines at the market places. He warned the shop owners that their establishments will be sealed and fine would be imposed if the cops find any violation of Covid guidelines near the shops.

HDFC Bank's pledge for fight against Covid-19



POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, June 10: In the fight against Covid-19, HDFC Bank has joined hands with the state government in its efforts to provide improved healthcare facility by setting up an oxygen plant at Capital Hospital here.

Deepak Singh, senior vice president & circle head of HDFC Bank, said, "Extra ordinary situation needs extraordinary solutions. The way the state government, under able guidance of Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik, has tackled the pandemic is unique and source of inspiration for others. At HDFC Bank, we have always worked in close coordination with the state government and supported its endeavours for public good through our social initiative Parivartan."

Min concern over exclusion of Odia from SWAYAM portal

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, June 10: The Minister of Electronics, Information and Technology, Tusharkanti Behera, Thursday expressed concern over omission of Odia language from Swayam online education portal under the Union Ministry of Education.

Behera said that the issue will be brought to the knowledge of the Union Ministry of Education. "Under no circumstances, the future of Odia students will be compromised," Behera said.

Children are relying heavily on online education during Covid-19 pandemic. The state government is focusing on strengthening the network system in many interior areas of Odisha like Malkangiri district. The SWAYAM online education portal itself is a good system. The study material on science, Engineering and Technology, Pharmacy, Humanities and Social Sciences, Law and Management are being prepared by experienced professors from IITs, Central Universities and IIS and would be available in major regional languages.

The Union Ministry of Education had announced the availability of study material on online portal in 10 languages, including Odia, to ensure that language is never a barrier for learning. This was definitely a welcome move by the Centre. Now, it is ascertained that during the translation of study material by the AICTE, Odia language has been dropped.

Odias have proven their position in the country and abroad in various fields, said Behera.

This platform would help students of rural areas to access higher education in Odia language from Swayam portal, but in vein. Odia language should be in the scheme as maintained by Union Education minister.

Behera appealed for reconsideration of the decision of MoE to include the Odia as language for the platform Swayam for the interest of the Odia students.

BJD, Cong seek more attention to farmers

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, June 10: The Biju Janata Dal (BJD) and Congress in the state Thursday asked the Centre to give more attention to the farmers of the country after the latter announced a hike in the Minimum Support Price (MSP) for paddy.

The BJD termed the MSP hike for paddy a welcome step but asked the Centre to pay attention to the frequent rise in fuel prices. "The Centre has decided to effect a minor hike in the MSP for paddy recently. This is a welcome step and the decision is likely to benefit the farmers of state," said BJD leader PK Deb.

He added, "However, the frequent rise in fuel prices is a matter of concern. The rise in petrol and diesel prices directly affects the farmers. On this front, the Centre needs to take special initiative."

The Congress party, meanwhile, said there are many things to be done for the farmers. "The

announcement of the Centre to raise the MSP is like rubbing salt on the wounds of the farmers. The farmers spend a lot on growing paddy but they are still deprived of a fair MSP," said Congress leader Narasingha Mishra.

He added, "Under such conditions, the farmers are bound to opt for distress sale. During the 2014 elections, the BJP had talked about implementing the MS Swaminathan Commission's report on MSP.

But, the BJP government at the Centre is yet to implement the commission report."

The BJP, on the other hand, attacked both the Congress and the BJD on the MSP issue. BJD leader Pradeep Purohit said, "The Congress party which ruled the country for many years failed to give justice to the farmers. Many were deprived of their rights under the Congress governments at the Centre. The BJD government in the state should implement the MSP hike immediately."

Monsoon covers 8 districts

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, June 10: The south-west monsoon that arrived in Odisha Thursday has fully covered eight districts and partially eight other districts.

The monsoon has fully covered Malkangiri, Koraput, Nabarangpur, Rayagada, Kalahandi, Nuapada, Gajapati, Ganjam districts and parts of Bargarh, Bolangir, Sonepur, Boudh, Kandhamal, Nayagarh, Khurda and Puri districts, Bhubaneswar Met Centre said in a bulletin. Conditions are favorable for further advancement of the monsoon into remaining parts of the state during next 48 hours, it said.

The cyclonic circulation over northwest Bay of Bengal is likely

to transform into a low pressure area during next 24 hours. It is likely to become more marked during subsequent 24 hours and move west-northwestwards across Odisha. Under its impact, heavy to very heavy rainfall has occurred at some places and is likely to continue till June 14.

The Met centre said heavy to very heavy rainfall with extremely heavy falls at one or two places is very likely to occur over the districts of Kandhamal, Boudh, Kalahandi, Bolangir, Nayagarh, Sonepur, Khurda, Puri, Jagatsinghpur, Ganjam, Cuttack, Angul, Sambalpur, Bargarh, Nawarangpur, Nuapada, Malkangiri, Koraput and Kendrapara, Friday.

Districts like Nuapada, Bolangir,

SOP FOR ULBS TO TACKLE URBAN FLOODING

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, June 10: In a bid to manage urban flooding during the monsoon, the state government Thursday issued a 19-point mandatory checklist containing instructions and SOPs to all Urban Local Bodies (ULBs) of Odisha.

The Housing and Urban Development (H&UD) department has asked the ULBs to follow the SOPs and instructions in the checklist. The department also asked the Collectors and Municipal Commissioners to review the implementation of the SOPs.

"Proper management of urban

flooding will boost the image of urban governance. Thus the authorities concerned are to ensure that all the items in the checklist must be implemented," said a letter issued by the H&UD department. The 19-point checklist emphasised on setting up of a control room and formation of dedicated teams for tackling urban flooding. The ULBs are to coordinate with other departments for timely implementation of the instructions.

The ULBs are also told to desilt the drains and repair the manholes to check waterlogging.

BMC on high alert
The Bhubaneswar Municipal

Corporation (BMC) Thursday instructed its engineering department to maintain high alert amid prediction for heavy rain in the next few days.

Acting upon the instructions, city engineer Arun Kumar Nayak has made field visits to several vulnerable sites. It is instructed that cleaning, clearing, pumping and restoring for all natural drains in the BMC shall be undertaken immediately. The BMC also deployed teams in all its three zones. Water pumps are kept ready at Gayatri Vihar, Laxmisagar, Hanspal, Nayapalli Behera Sahi and some other areas of the city.

OPF threatens stir over school fee issue

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, June 10: Odisha Parents' Federation Thursday threatened to launch a hunger strike June 18 and demanded modification of a notification issued by School and Mass Education (S&ME) department dated June 3, 2021.

OPF president Basudev Bhatt Thursday told the media that the S&ME department, based on the order of Supreme Court, had directed the schools for 15 per cent deduction in annual school fees, which will create a big confusion among the parents.

He said that the schools will take advantage of this confusion as golden liberty to collect fee with 15 per cent deduction of total annual

fee including use and un-used fees. The department should clearly mention on the deduction of 15 per cent from the tuition fee only excluding of all ancillary fees like readmission, annual fee, session fee which are not utilised by the students during the Covid-19 period, Bhatt said.

We request Principal Secretary to Dept. of School & Mass Education to respond and modify this faulty notification, which will support private schools directly to collect different fee without any restrictions of Govt.

"We will start hunger strike beginning June 18 in front of official residence of S&ME minister and the department principal secretary, if the notification is not modified," Bhatt said.

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Kendu leaf plucking provides livelihood to 8 lakh jobless

Prohibitory orders imposed to prevent illegal mining

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Jajpur, June 10: In a bid to prevent illegal stone quarrying and mining activities, the Jajpur district administration Thursday imposed prohibitory orders under Section 144 of CrPC in black granite quarries at Aruha hillock under Dharmasala tehsil, officials said.

The district administration clamped the restrictions after allegations surfaced on operation of mines in Dharmasala tehsil jurisdiction without valid documents and environmental clearance.

The district authorities have also restricted the unauthorised movement of vehicles and entry of individuals to the Aruha hillock area without the permission of the concerned authorities. Similarly, extraction of block stones, loading from the quarry has also been banned, officials said.

"We have directed the crusher owners to maintain a register of the vehicles engaged in the transportation of minor minerals. They have also been asked to install CCTV cameras on their unit premises so that the movement of vehicles can be monitored smoothly,"

said Jajpur Collector Chakravarti Sing Rathore.

The lessees have been also directed to give prior intimation regarding the vehicles to be engaged in their respective units for transportation works, the Collector said.

Earlier the district administration had sealed around 200 illegal crusher units running illegally in Dharmasala tehsil area, he added.

Many black stone quarries in the Dharmasala area are allegedly operating without the consent of the Forest Department and district authorities.

Earlier, several quarries were also sealed by the administration as the lessees had resorted to mining activities without obtaining green certificates.

The illegal quarries used to plunder natural resources and cause serious environmental pollution by unauthorised deep-hole blasting in black granite quarries for exploration. The illegal mining activities also lead to depletion of groundwater level in many nearby villages, causing risk to the human settlement in them, officials said.



SUCCOUR DURING PANDEMIC

Jobless people have been able to earn their livelihood without the state government having to spend a pie to provide them with alternative employment. This has spread cheers among the residents as the minor forest produce has proved to be succour at the time of their distress.

Reports said that Kendu leaf is non-timber forest product and provides livelihood opportunities throughout the year to forest dwellers as well as people living on the fringes of forests. In fact, the government has framed special rules for collection of kendu leaves and providing benefits to those plucking/collecting them.

It has become difficult for people to earn their livelihood after the outbreak of Covid pandemic. Things have come to such a pass that people are facing acute financial problems due to job loss

Realising the gravity of the problem, the government has started providing free rations to the households and spending crores under Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS) to provide livelihood to the people

lems due to job loss and are finding it difficult to earn two square meals a day for their family.

Realising the gravity of the problem, the government has started pro-

viding free rations to the households and spending crores in the rural job scheme Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS) to provide livelihood to the people.

However, the poverty alleviation scheme is not free from controversy as large scale irregularities like people being deprived of work have been alleged in the implementation of the scheme.

In present times, the collection of the minor forest produce or the 'green diamond' has provided livelihood to over 8 lakh people who had lost their jobs due to the pandemic.

Reports said that the target for kendu leaf collection in the state was 250,000 quintals and over 91 per cent of the target has been achieved so far. Bijay Mohanty, president of Odisha Kendu Leaf Workers' Association, said kendu leaf is collected from various parts of the state but the minor forest produce collected from Western Odisha is of better quality.

The target is to collect 250,000 quintals of kendu leaves every year but last year the target was not fulfilled due to erratic climatic conditions and Covid-related lockdowns and shutdowns. The pluck-

ers managed to collect the leaves worth ₹119 crore.

However, the target has been achieved in 2020-21 fiscal and transactions of ₹166.50 crore has been recorded so far. This is ₹47.50 crore in excess compared to the total transactions made last year. The increase in kendu leaf business has directly benefited over 8 lakh pluckers in the state.

The pluckers engage themselves in kendu leaf collection from April 20 till May end. They work for three to four hours every day and earn around ₹3,000-4,000 per month. They will also receive 50 per cent bonus in the coming days. The money they have earned from kendu leaf collection has come as succour for their family during this pandemic for which the government does not have to spend a pie.

Moreover, over 20,000 skilled labourers and 18,000 kendu leaf binders will be able to get work in coming days as kendu leaf collection and binding goes on till October. He, however, lamented the imposition of 28 per cent GST on kendu leaves and 28 per cent GST on bidi (locally made cigars) is adversely affecting the bidi business as well as the workers in the state.

INCLEMENT WEATHER



Tidal waves lashing the coast at Udaipur-Talasari beach in Balasore district ahead of the formation of a low pressure over Bay of Bengal, Thursday

OP PHOTO

Poacher held for killing leopard, hiding body parts

POST NEWS NETWORK

Phulbani, June 10: Forest department officials in Kandhamal district Thursday arrested a poacher for killing a leopard and possessing the animal's body parts.

The animal's hide, nails and bones were recovered from a tree in Sudrukumpa range under Phulbani forest division. The accused has been identified as Kabi Chandra Kanhar of Kutibari village.

According to sources, Kanhar had killed a leopard in the nearby forest some days back. After skinning the animal, he hid the animal's hide, nails and bones on a tree in the forest. He had been in search for a buyer. Meanwhile, the Forest department officials were tipped off about the leopard body parts being hidden in the jungle.



Taking the matter seriously, the officers raided the area and arrested Kanhar. He led them to the tree where he had hidden the animal's body parts. The officers also seized a gun, nine live bullets, gun powder and an axe from his possession.

Ganjam admin begins screening of children for Covid-19 pandemic

POST NEWS NETWORK

Buguda, June 10: With several reports suggesting Covid-19 third wave is likely to affect youngsters hard, the Ganjam administration has launched a health screening drive to monitor the health of the children in the district.

Following the direction of Collector Vijay Amruta Kulange, Anganwadi workers, health workers and ASHA workers are making door-to-door visits in Buguda block and taking readings of oxygen level of children, their temperature and recording whether they have Covid symptoms.

The grassroots workers covered Arakhpur, Balipadar and Pangidi panchayats of Buguda block Thursday. The door-to-door visits are being carried out with



strict adherence to Covid-19 protocols issued by the government.

According to sources, the drive will continue for next three months. Collector Kulange has directed the officials to take special care of symptomatic children and to en-

sure that such children are not deprived of wholesome diet.

The drive in the district is being managed by Berhampur Municipal Commissioner (BeMC) in areas under its jurisdiction and the BDOs in block levels.

In case of children with mild symptoms such as cough, sore throat and breathing issues, the teams visiting door-to-door are advising their parents and guardians to start their treatment while keeping them in isolation. The parents and guardians are asked to keep in touch with doctors and concerned officers and take care of their children as advised.

Meanwhile, Kulange has asked the concerned officials to shift symptomatic children to nearby hospitals.

4 held for theft from Covid-19 deceased

POST NEWS NETWORK

Jharsuguda, June 10: Four miscreants were arrested by the local police and later produced in court Wednesday evening in connection with stealing a gold chain and cash worth ₹10,000 from a Covid-19 deceased man in Jharsuguda.

The arrested were all contractual labourers and have been identified as Jagun Bagh from Thekuli area, Tarjan Ghasi from Bhuianpada area, Dohit Sindhria from Mangalbar area and Kamal Kishore Suna, who bought the gold chain. According to a police source, a Covid-infected elderly man named Nandalal Biswal from Kanaktora village was admitted to a health facility. Later, he succumbed to the viral infection May 30.

Later, Nandalal's son Prashant lodged an FIR with the local police alleging theft. Acting on the FIR, Jharsuguda town police registered a case (No. 273/21) and launched a probe leading to the arrests.

Three of the accused were engaged at a Covid-19 health facility in Jharsuguda district. Police have seized the stolen gold chain from the possession of Kamal who had bought the jewellery.

During inquiry, it was ascertained that the contractual labourers had stolen the valuables from the deceased while packing his body before it was carried for cremation.

Girl attacked by jilted lover; hospitalised



POST NEWS NETWORK

Khaira, June 10: A girl student of Class IX was seriously injured after a jilted lover attacked her with a sharp weapon at Tuto village under Khaira police limits in Balasore district, Thursday.

The police have detained the accused, identified as Rashmi Ranjan Das (24), son of Rabindra Das of the same village.

According to sources, Rashmi had been in a one-sided love affair with the minor girl. He even went on to express his love for her while she was on her way to attend tuition classes several days back.

Family members of the girl took up the matter with the seniors and a village meeting was held where Rashmi was made to tender an apology and pledge that he would not harass the girl anymore.

Rashmi had become vengeful after this incident. He attacked the girl with a sharp weapon when she and her friends were on their way to Sampei village to attend their tuition classes Thursday morning.

members about the incident. Seeing the villagers coming, Rashmi and his friends managed to flee the spot, leaving the profusely bleeding minor writhing in pain.

By the time the locals rescued the girl, she had sustained sharp cuts on her face and others parts of her body from the attack. The family members of the girl along with the villagers rushed her to Khaira government hospital and then to Bhadrak district headquarters hospital as her condition deteriorated.

On being informed, police reached the spot and detained Rashmi. A detailed investigation is underway, it was learnt.

Rashmi has been in a one-sided love affair with the minor girl. He even went on to express his love for her while she was on her way to attend tuition classes several days back

Family members of the girl took up the matter with the seniors and a village meeting was held where Rashmi was made to tender an apology and pledge that he would not harass the girl anymore

Rashmi had become vengeful after this incident. He attacked the girl with a sharp weapon when she and her friends were on their way to Sampei village to attend their tuition classes Thursday morning

LIVELIHOOD OPPORTUNITIES



Women farmhands harvesting Japanese Mint (Pudina) leaves for an aromatic oil processing unit established in Nabarangpur district to provide livelihood opportunities to people

OP PHOTO

REGIONAL OFFICE: 108 - B, Unit-VII, Surya Nagar, Gopabandhu Square, Bhubaneswar-751003, Ph. No.: 0674-2397551, 2397199

INVITATION OF BIDS/OFFERS FOR PREMISES ON LEASE

Central Bank of India requires premises admeasuring 92.90 to 139.35 Sq. m. (1000-1500 sqft.) carpet area in ready possession / ready for possession within 3 months at Chandrasekharpur preferably on the ground floor with adequate parking space & approach road for their Chandrasekharpur Branch, Bhubaneswar. There should be a provision for an on site ATM with an area of 5.94 to 9.29 Sq.m. (64 to 100 Sq.ft.). The premises should be located on the Main Road in between Kalinga Hospital Square to District Centre, Bharat Petroleum Petrol Pump. No brokers or intermediaries please. Priority will be accorded to Government / Semi Govt. bodies or public sector undertakings. Kindly download the formats/terms and conditions from the website <http://www.centralbankofindia.co.in> or collect the same from Central Bank of India, Chandrasekharpur Branch / Regional Office at 108-B, 1st Floor, Unit - VII, Surya Nagar, Gopabandhu Square, Bhubaneswar - 751003 during office hours. Interested owners should send their proposals in prescribed formats in two separate and sealed covers superscribed as Technical Bid (cover-I) and Financial Bid (Cover-II). The last date for submission of offers is 25.06.2021 upto 4p.m. The authority reserves the right to accept or reject any or all the proposals without assigning any reason thereof.

Date: 10.06.2021 **Sd/- Chief Manager**

FOCUS BUDGETARY FORECAST

UNREALISTIC, CHAOS FEARED



The government's budgetary projections are far off the mark and soberly being called conservative. If Comptroller and Auditor General's provisional deficit estimates are taken into account at ₹18.21 lakh crore, the GDP projection may come to 9.3 per cent

Consumer confidence is at all time low, says the Reserve Bank of India, amid slumping of Indian growth to minus 7.3 per cent in 2020-21, highest jobless rate at 18 per cent and impoverisation of 97 per cent of the population. In its monetary policy meet, the Central bank also lowered 2021-22 growth forecast by 1 per cent to 9.5 per cent from earlier assessments of 10.5 per cent due to Covid-19 virulent second phase. This one per cent in real terms downsizes a number of activities.

The government's budgetary projections are far off the mark and soberly being called conservative. If Comptroller and Auditor General's (CAG) provisional deficit estimates are taken into account at ₹18.21 lakh crore, the GDP projection may come to 9.3 per cent.

The impact is reflected in high joblessness at 17.88 per cent, according to Centre for Monitoring Indian Economy (CMIE) May 30. It has risen by three per cent from 14.71 per cent a fortnight earlier. Urban labour force participation also came down to 35.69 per cent from 37 per cent and rural around 5 per cent during the fortnight.

The lockdowns causing closure of activities are being stated as prime reasons for the grim situation. The unemployment situation may remain high for about six months amid policy uncertainties and knee-jerk localised lockdowns and administrative high-handedness. Employment situation remains critical almost in all industries FMCG, automobile, informal sectors, hospitality and tourism. In Noida, close to Delhi, eateries and restaurant have shut shops permanently as the owners have lost their reserves.

Thus, the RBI outlook on consumer confidence is a mere indicator of the stark reality. In gross terms it means consumers do not have cash to buy products even if they are in dire need. The indices touching record lows may indicate a graver situation. Both the Current Situation Index (CSI) and the Future Expectation Index fell to an all-time low of 48.5 and 96.4 in the latest RBI consumer survey. The figures a year ago were CSI 63.7 and FEI 97.9, when the lockdown was more severe. These are the lowest since 2012. The wariness is because of the feeling of uncertainty about the future. Whether this would mean grim

mer future or not is not easy to say. The GDP had contracted 24.4 per cent and 7.4 per cent in the first and second quarters of 2020-21 and grew by 0.5 per cent in the third quarter. But the second wave of LD has hampered recovery. The eight core sector industries in April 2021 slumped to 126.7 (IIP), the lowest since November 2020. It rose to 149.2 in March 2021 as activities started in construction (14.5 per cent) and manufacturing (6.9 per cent). Most others like labour-intensive activities like hotels, transport, entertainment and communication contracted. The Nomura India Business Index fell to 60 on May 23 from 99.3 on February 21.

The RBI report notes that the values of other indices on non-essential items have worsened and are in the negative. In the prevailing situation RBI has drastically cut quarterly projections. Its revised projections are - 18.5 per cent, 7.9 per cent, 7.2 per cent and 6.6 per cent against those expressed in RBI annual statement - 26.2 per cent, 8.3 per cent, 5.4 per cent and 6.2 per cent. This cuts growth to 9.5 per cent. The situation remains fluid, the numbers have come down but the threat of disruption to normal work remains.

Another aspect has been the large unemployment of the tiny daily use goods market reeling under a cash crisis. A large population still is getting food doles

though all beneficiaries of last LD are not included. Large numbers of people lost jobs, including in the IT sector, in the first phase of LD, are still without jobs. Many revivals owing to dwindling of savings may not be easy though the government has announced special loan packages of ₹15000 crore for MSMEs; it is not certain how many would be in a position to avail it.

Another critical aspect has been the repeated displacement of labour. As uncertainties about Covid-19 may continue, the industry may continue to have labour shortage. It would affect production.

It is also linked to global situation. Union Trade Minister Piyush Goyal has put a target of \$400 billion export target this year against \$290 billion last year. But India's trade deficit touched an eight-month low in May at \$6.3 billion because of fall in imports due to lack of domestic demand. The May exports remained at \$32.2 billion but imports contracted to \$38.5 billion. One reason for import slump is due to rising global prices. The WTO last month said that merchandise trade would continue to increase by 8 per cent, considered a bit more optimistic. The world uncertainty may dent India's trade.

In this situation the rising forex kitty to \$590 billion may not be as rosy as it looks. The RBI does it by various gold and foreign currency management much to the chagrin of the US as it feels that

dollar prices are suppressed. It also needs to be assessed against total external debt, and corporate external commercial borrowings (ECB) and repatriation costs.

The rising figures of FDI, not all, are suspect. The IMF says it is being used for routing black money. According to RBI, large percentage of the FDI \$ 20110 million came from Mauritius and Singapore and a mere \$3,401 million from the US. It is to be noted that Singapore comprised a mere 0.42 per cent of world economy and the US 24.42 per cent. This is not considered a quality FDI but projects a larger than life picture through virtual inbreeding. It calls for a proper scrutiny of large net-worth groups.

Globally, phantom FDI investments amount to an astonishing \$5 trillion. India is also a part of it. Such siphoning and rerouting of investments affect the basic economic conditions and increases disparity. Whether this should be linked to increasing hunger and poverty in the country or not is a moot question. It is sometimes believed that 80 crore people are on food dole for this kind of inversion.

The lack of consumer confidence and purchasing power emanates from such operations. Ignoring it for long is never desirable. It is a bubble but if it bursts there could be social trouble. Cosmetic promises and doles cannot contain it for long.

INFA



Shivaji Sarkar

CONSUMER CONFIDENCE IS AT ALL TIME LOW, SAYS THE RESERVE BANK OF INDIA, AMID SLUMPING OF INDIAN GROWTH TO MINUS 7.3 PER CENT IN 2020-21, HIGHEST JOBLESS RATE AT 18 PER CENT AND IMPOVERISATION OF 97 PER CENT OF THE POPULATION



Dani Rodrik

The G7 agreement has two planks. First, it proposes a global minimum tax of 15% on the largest corporations. Second, a portion of these corporations' global profits will be clawed back to countries where they do business

In fact, if one reads attentively what Sri Aurobindo has written, all that he has written, one would have the answer to every question.

THE MOTHER



G7 Tax Clampdown

On June 5, the world's leading economies announced an agreement that will bolster their ability to raise taxes on global corporations. The agreement still needs formal approval from a wider set of countries, and there remain many details to be worked out for it to be effective. Nonetheless, it would not be farfetched to describe the deal as historic.

The G7 agreement has two planks. First, it proposes a global minimum tax of 15% on the largest corporations. Second, a portion of these corporations' global profits will be clawed back to countries where they do business, regardless of the location of their physical headquarters.

These objectives are as clear an indication as any that hyper-globalisation's rules - under which countries must compete to offer global corporations ever-sweeter deals - are being re-written. Until very recently, it was opposition by the United States that stalled global tax harmonisation. Now, by contrast, it was President Joe Biden's administration that pushed the deal.

Since the race to the bottom in corporate taxation began in the 1980s, the average statutory rate has come down from nearly 50% to around 24% in 2020. Many countries have generous loopholes and exemptions that reduce the effective tax rate to single digits. Even more damaging, global corporations have been able to shift profits to pure tax havens such as the British Virgin Islands, the Cayman Islands, or Bermuda, without having to move any of their actual operations there. Estimates by Gabriel Zucman of the University of California, Berkeley, reveal that an inordinate share of US corporations' foreign profits are booked in such tax havens, where they employ only a few people.

Leaving questions about administrative feasibility aside, the new agreement might face two opposing objections. Tax-justice advocates will criticize the global minimum of 15% as too low, while many developing countries will decry the global minimum as an unwarranted restriction that will impede their ability to attract investment. The deal struck by the G7 appears to reflect both sets of concerns: the low threshold could assuage developing countries' concerns, while the global apportionment of profits will enable high-tax jurisdictions to recoup some of their lost revenues.

Among developed countries, only Ireland, with a 12.5% statutory rate, falls below the proposed minimum. But there are small countries such as Moldova (12%), Paraguay (10%), and Uzbekistan (7.5%) that have set their rates particularly low to attract foreign investors, whom they see as a source of quality jobs and advanced technologies. In inhospitable investment environments, lower taxes are one of the few immediate ways in which governments can compensate companies for the many disadvantages they face. And effective tax rates in some Asian countries, such as Singapore (where the statutory rate is 17% but lower rates apply to some businesses), may end up on the wrong side of the minimum as well.

The argument for enforcing a common floor on corporate taxation is strongest when countries have similar preferences and want to avoid a prisoner's dilemma in which their only reason to lower taxes is to prevent capital from going elsewhere. This may apply to most developed countries, but certainly not all, as the examples of Ireland, the Netherlands, and Singapore indicate. But when countries greatly differ in terms of levels of development and other characteristics, what is appropriate in one can be an obstacle to growth in another.

The US and high-tax European countries might complain about losing tax revenues when poorer countries maintain lower rates. But there is nothing to prevent such countries from taxing their home companies unilaterally at higher rates: they can simply apply the tax to domestic companies' global profits, apportioned by the share of revenues they derive from the domestic market. As Zucman has argued, each country can do this on its own, without global harmonization or even coordination.

That is precisely what the second plank of the G7 agreement envisages (although it goes only part of the way). Under the agreement, the largest multinational companies with profit margins of at least 10% would have to allocate 20% of their global profits to countries where they sell their products and services.

The reason that the US prefers a global minimum, in addition to national apportionment, is that it does not want to put its corporations at a disadvantage relative to other countries' firms by taxing them at significantly higher rates. But this competitive motive is no different from poor countries' desire to attract investment. If the US prevails and the latter lose out, it will be because of relative power, not economic logic.

The Biden administration initially wanted the global minimum tax set at 21%. The eventual compromise of 15% may be sufficiently low to minimize tensions with poorer countries and to allow the latter to sign on. The balance between global rules and national sovereignty may have been struck appropriately in this instance.

But for countries like the US, this comes at the cost of lower tax revenues, unless the second plank of apportionment is strengthened. Ultimately, a global regime that enhances the ability of individual countries to design and administer their own tax systems in light of their own needs and preferences is likely to prove more robust and durable than attempts at international tax harmonisation.

What is now clear is that countries that operate as pure tax havens - interested merely in shifting paper profits without bringing in new capital - have little to complain about. They have been doing global corporations a great service by facilitating tax avoidance, at considerable costs to other countries' treasuries. Global rules are fully justified to prevent such blatant beggar-thy-neighbor action. The G7 agreement is an important step in the right direction.

The writer, Professor of International Political Economy at Harvard University's John F. Kennedy School of Government, is the author of Straight Talk on Trade: Ideas for a Sane World Economy.

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SPECTRUM ENVIRONMENT

Disaster on Sri Lankan coast



Nikunja Bihari Sahu

AN ENVIRONMENTAL DISASTER IS LOOMING LARGE ON THE SRI LANKAN COAST AS A CHEMICAL-LADEN CARGO SHIP, RAVAGED BY FIRE, IS SINKING IN SEA WATERS

An environmental disaster is looming large on the Sri Lankan coast as a chemical-laden cargo ship, ravaged by fire, is sinking in sea waters not far from the Colombo coast in a worst ever marine mishap threatening the country. The ship was carrying 1,500 containers filled with chemicals, including 25 metric tons of nitric acid. Waves of plastic wastes are washing up on the shore and navy sailors were deployed to clean the beaches of the plastic pellets as smoke billowed out from the burning and the sinking ship. There is also a danger of oil leak into the sea from the tank of the ship containing 350 metric tons of oil threatening an oil spill. Sri Lanka's Marine Environment Protection Authority (MEPA) said in a statement that the micro-plastic pollution of the containers could cause years of untold ecological damage to the fragile ecosystem of the island nation.

The environmental impacts of the disaster are terrible! The effect of oil spill on the environment and biological habitats is catastrophic as it can kill plants and animals and also disturb the various parameters of the sea waters including salinity and pH levels and altering the food chain of the marine ecosystem. When an oil slick from a large spill reaches a beach, the oil coats and clings to every surface of the beach including rocks and grains of sand. If the oil washes away into the coastal marshes and wetlands like the mangrove forests, fibrous plants and grasses absorb oil which can damage their cells and make the area unsuitable as a wildlife habitat.

The greatest victims of the oil slick are, however, the aquatic birds, marine mammals and fishes. Oil coats the feathers of the aquatic birds reducing their ability to fly and get air-borne escaping from the predators. Oil spills also kill mammals such as whales, dolphins, seals, and sea otters. Oil can clog blow-holes of whales and dolphins

making it impossible for them to breathe properly and disrupting their ability to communicate. Oil coats furs of otters and seals leaving them vulnerable to hypothermia. Oil spills often take a deadly toll on fish, shellfish, and other marine life population particularly if many fish eggs or larvae are exposed to oil.

Apart from the environmental impacts, the economic impacts of the oil spill are also immense. The impact has started to be felt in the lives and livelihoods of the fishing community of coastal Sri Lanka and the fishing industry of the country. The ship is sinking in a rich fishing area prompting the government to suspend the fishing activity along a 50-mile stretch of the coastline. Fishing, which is the primary source of livelihood in coastal towns of the island nation, has been hit harder as a result of the incident with people refusing to buy chemical coated fish.

The severity of the oil spill to the marine ecosystem can be appreciated from the fact that the Exxon Valdez oil spill incident in Alaska on March 29, 1989 killed as many as 250,000 sea birds, 2,800 sea otters, 300 harbour seals and up to 22 killer whales. In the years that followed, scientists noted higher death rates among sea otters and other species affected by the spill and stunted growth or other biological damages among additional species. The spill destroyed billions of salmon and herring eggs. Fisheries impacted by the Exxon Valdez were so huge that it took over three decades to recover.

The greatest concern of the Sri Lankan disaster is, however, the fact that while the environment impacts of the oil spill on the ecosystem has been fairly studied, the chemical pollution, resulting out of that, has hardly been evaluated and documented.

The writer is Education Officer at Regional Science Centre, Bhopal.

WORDSWORTH

■ Café Scientifique

It sounds a dauntingly highbrow term, but the intention is just the opposite - to demystify science and help people engage with it. The technique is based on the discussion of topical scientific ideas with interested people in determinedly non-academic surroundings. The Cafés sum up their intentions with a maxim, too long to be considered a slogan, "We want people to be as opinionated about science as they are about football". Informal meetings are usually held in cafés or bars; a guest speaker talks briefly on a topic and then leads a discussion. The first Café Scientifique was held in Leeds in 1998, with its name invented by the man who started it, Duncan Dallas. "I was reading the paper's obituary of Marc Sautet, the man who founded the cafés philosophiques in France," he recalls, "and I thought 'I'd like to do that'. But the British don't think philosophy is a real subject, so I opted for science instead." The scheme has extended with the help of funding from the Wellcome Trust from 2001 onwards. Most Cafés are in university towns and cities - the fifteenth, in Bristol, was inaugurated in April 2003.

Letters

TO THE EDITOR

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

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

Odia language neglected

Sir, The national online education platform Swayam, set up by the Ministry of Education, has dropped Odia language from its study materials, especially while translating subjects from other languages. The scheme aims to provide online education to all the students across the states. It is also designed to convert the study materials into every regional language for better transparency. The Union Education Minister had also addressed that UG and PG level courses will also be translated into regional languages. But the regional language Odia was dropped out by All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE). The Central government should re-evaluate their process. As in Odisha, a decent number of students reside in the rural and tribal areas. This scheme of the Central government would help them profoundly, but dropping Odia language will affect their future as Swayam could have been the only medium to help them to study further. Therefore, the Centre should consider the issue and give equal importance to Odia language, which has been a part of the country's history like other regional languages.
Manoj Kumar Jena, CUTTACK

Exodus from Congress

Sir, Defections from the Congress to the BJP is increasing relentlessly. Former Union minister Jitin Prasad from Uttar Pradesh is the latest entrant to the list after Himanta Biswa Sarma, Jyotiraditya Scindia and some others key figures. The Congress' problems are well-known. Those who belong to Rahul Gandhi's generation linked their political fortunes to his rise. But they now stare at an uncertain future. The party's leadership structure is unclear and internal conflict resolution mechanisms are weak. There are serious doubts over the electoral appeal and leadership capabilities of Rahul Gandhi. The prospect of Congress returning to power at the Centre is bleak and the BJP remains the favourite for 2024 elections despite lapses in Covid-19 management. In UP, the best case scenario for the Congress is reaching a respectable fourth. As individual leaders are getting restless, the BJP is providing the pull factor. Conscious that these new entrants reinforce the optics of a strong BJP and a weak Congress, the party is more than open to outsiders. Induction of Prasad is a signal to Brahmins in Uttar Pradesh that the party is sensitive to their aspirations for representation in the run-up to the polls. At a time when the BJP is defensive about its governance, the entry of Prasad also helps shift the narrative back to its political appeal.
N Sadhasiva Reddy, BANGALORE

'Yediyurappa doing good job, will continue as CM'

Speculations have been rife for some time now that efforts were on, by a section of the ruling BJP to exert pressure for unseating Yediyurappa

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bangalore, June 10: Amid speculations of leadership change in Karnataka, BJP National General Secretary in-charge of the state, Arun Singh Thursday ruled out replacing the Chief Minister and asserted that BS Yediyurappa will continue in the top post.

Yediyurappa is the Chief Minister; he is doing a good job and will remain the Chief Minister. He has done a good job during the Covid situation, all the ministers and the party- everyone has done a good job, Singh said.

Addressing reporters in Delhi, he said no discussions have happened at the high command level regarding seeking resignation from the Chief Minister.

Yediyurappa is doing a good job as the Chief Minister, he is working hard along with ministers and legislators, and the organisation is also functioning well. He will continue as Chief Minister, he said as he termed talks about replacing Chief Minister, also state party president Nalin Kumar Kateel as rumour and imaginary.

Speculations have been rife for some time now that efforts were on, by a section of the ruling BJP to exert pressure for unseating Yediyurappa.

Amid reports, Yediyurappa Sunday said he will continue in the top post as long as the BJP high command has confidence in him, and he has no confusion about it.

Responding to a question on Yediyurappa's statement, Singh said, the Chief Minister as a loyal party worker has expressed his faith in the leadership.



Our high command is such that everyone, whether it is state presidents, Chief Ministers and leaders, all have faith in the high command.

On open statements being made by some MLAs and leaders against the state leadership and the CM, Singh said no one should make such public statements, and explanations will be sought from those who have indulged in such activities.

If one has any issues, they can talk to me when I go there, but no one should make a public statement, he said.

Leaders like MLA Basanagouda Patil Yatnal and MLC AH Vishwanath, have been embarrassing the government with their statements, Tourism Minister CP Yogeshwar recently got added to the list.

To a query on MLAs indulging in signature campaigns, Singh said the legislators should work for the welfare of the people of their constituency.

If any legislator has any griev-

ances, I'm visiting the state and will hear them, he said.

Following a series of political statements regarding attempts to replace Yediyurappa, his political secretary and MLA MP Renukacharya had claimed of having a letter signed by more than 65 legislators in favour of the Chief Minister.

However, Yediyurappa and state leadership had asked MLAs not to indulge in signature campaigns and instead focus on Covid management in their respective constituencies.

Singh said he is likely to visit Karnataka for three days sometime next week, while giving no clarity whether a legislature meeting will be convened during the visit.

This is even as some BJP legislators are said to be pushing for convening a legislature party meeting, pointing at certain decisions taken by the government, its functioning, handling of the Covid crisis and alleged instances of corruption, among others.

DBT mobile app launched

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bangalore, June 10: Karnataka Chief Minister BS Yediyurappa Thursday launched a DBT mobile application that will help transfer funds directly to beneficiaries of various government welfare schemes.

According to a statement from the Chief Minister's office, 120 schemes in the state have been included in this platform.

For the past two years more than 12,000 crore has been directly transferred to the Aadhaar linked bank accounts of beneficiaries, the statement quoted Yediyurappa as saying.

The CM expressed happiness that the system has eliminated misappropriation of funds, middlemen and loopholes.

All packages announced by the state government during Covid-19 first and second waves have been paid through this platform, it added.



Schemes announced in the budget, which provide financial assistance in the state, will be brought under the DBT platform, the CMO said.

This platform will identify the beneficiary through his or her Aadhaar number and consider the details provided in the card as financial address and will directly transfer the amount to the Aadhaar linked bank account.

The intention of the government to bring in transparency will be achieved only when citizens use this application.

Suvendu Adhikari is BJP's response to 'Pishi-Bhaipo'

Top party sources say, this is a conscious departure from the BJP-RSS line of having a 'swayamsevak' from the RSS stable for the key position like CM or LoP in a state

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Kolkata, June 10: The BJP high command is looking to build up Suvendu Adhikari as the party's answer to the 'Pishi-Bhaipo' (aunt-nephew) leadership in West Bengal, top party sources said.

They say this is a conscious departure from the BJP-RSS line of having a 'swayamsevak' from the RSS stable for the key position like Chief Minister or Leader of Opposition in a state.

Himanta Biswa Sarma's emergence as Assam Chief Minister and Suvendu Adhikari's as Leader of Opposition marks this new line that defectors who have proved their loyalty and competence must be given the top jobs, said a top BJP leader but he preferred anonymity.

Adhikari's victory in Nandigram has boosted his stock and his attack on Mamata Banerjee's behaviour during Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to Bengal has further endeared him to Modi-Shah-Nadda triumvirate, he said.

That BJP state unit chief Dilip Ghosh had no idea of Adhikari's visit to Delhi, where he got personal audience from Modi and all BJP seniors, points to the new clout of Adhikari.

Even BJP dissidents like former Governor Pathanga Roy, so critical of the 'KDSA Gang of Four' (Kailash-Dilip-Shiv-Arvind), have not been critical of Suvendu Adhikari, despite their pitch for restoring BJP 'old timers' to position of importance.

Roy also met BJP party chief Nadda Wednesday night. He said he has come to Delhi on



PM Narendra Modi meets Leader of the Opposition in the West Bengal Assembly Suvendu Adhikari in New Delhi

The strategy of fighting in West Bengal by projecting the central leadership was a huge mistake. You have to project a CM face here, said the top BJP leader

the request of the party top brass but state BJP sources were not aware of either his or Adhikari's Delhi visit.

His victory over Mamata in Nandigram with 34 per cent Muslim electorate has really boosted his credentials, the leader said.

He said the BJP is looking at 2024 Lok Sabha and 2026 state assembly polls in West Bengal and they want Suvendu to lead the charge against the Trinamool.

The BJP top leader said Dilip Ghosh will remain state party chief to maintain organisation stability, but Suvendu Adhikari will be projected as the future CM.

The strategy of fighting in Bengal by projecting the central leadership was a huge mistake. You have to project a CM face here, said the BJP leader.

Adhikari's age, his GenNext connect, his understanding of Trinamool all work in his favour, he said. Suvendu's pitch for implementing the CAA has been accepted by the BJP.

HC takes note of delay in investigation of criminal cases

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kolkata, June 10: Taking a serious note of the delay in criminal investigations in West Bengal, the Calcutta High Court has sought information on all such cases in which charge sheets have not been filed before it within the time permissible in law.

The Acting Chief Justice, after having perused information provided by the state Criminal Investigation Department (CID) in reference to an order of the Jalpaiguri Circuit Bench, stated that the matter be taken on judicial side as a PIL.

The court further noted that as per the information received from the CID, there are 999 cases where charge-sheets had not been filed within the time permitted in different statutes, with some of being more than a decade old.

the cases in which the charge sheets have not been filed in court within the time permissible in law, the bench ordered Wednesday.

The information be placed before the court before the next date of hearing in a tabulated form, district wise, the bench said, fixing the PIL for further hearing June 28.

The Registrar General of this Court is being directed to collect information from all the courts in the state of West Bengal as regards



IISc lauded for being ranked world's top research varsity

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bangalore, June 10: Karnataka Chief Minister BS Yediyurappa Thursday congratulated the Indian Institute of Science (IISc) here for being ranked the world's top research university by an international agency.

In a tweet, he said, "Congratulations to @iiscbangalore on being ranked the world's top research university in the QS World University Rankings. Imparting world-class education and facilitating cutting-edge research in science, technology, and engineering, IISc makes every Indian proud."

According to the coveted QS World University Rankings, the Indian Institute of Science was rated the world's top research university as per the citations per faculty indicator.

The IISc secured a perfect score of 100 out of 100 for the citations per faculty (CPF) metric in the analysis by London-based Quacquarelli Symonds (QS).

For the QS World University Rankings, institutions and universities were judged on six indicators- academic reputation, em-



Congratulations to @iiscbangalore on being ranked the world's top research university in the QS World University Rankings. Imparting world-class education and facilitating cutting-edge research in science, technology, and engineering, IISc makes every Indian proud

BS YEDIYURAPPA | K'TAKA CHIEF MINISTER

ployer reputation, citations per faculty, faculty-student ratio, international faculty ratio and international student ratio.

This year, rankings listed the world's top 1,300 universities - 145 more than in the last year's edition, which can be found in 97 locations.

Of 13,000 institutions, 6,415 were found eligible for the survey analysis, and 1,705 were assessed for the final table.

The results accounted for the distribution and performance of 14.7 million academic papers published between 2015 and 2019, and the 96 million citations received by those papers.

They also accounted for the expert opinions of over 1,30,000 academic faculty and over 75,000 employers.

Record litchi production of 15K MT in Malda this yr

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Malda (WB), June 10: Litchi farmers in West Bengal's Malda district are set to witness a record production of about 15,000 metric tonne this year due to favourable weather condition and adequate rainfall, an official said Thursday.

Last year, the production of the summer fruit was around 12,000 metric tonne, the district horticulture department's deputy director Krishnendu Nandan said.

Litchi has been cultivated around 1,420 hectare of land this year, up from the coverage of 1,380 hectare in 2020, he said, adding that no major damage to the fruit due to nor'wester or hailstorms and pest attack was reported this season.

We see the area under litchi cultivation in Malda is growing by around 40-50 hectare every year. The summer fruit is mostly produced in Kaliachak and Ratua areas. Farmers have started harvesting the fruit and are expected to get a better price this time, Nandan told PTI.

However, farmers are apprehensive of making good profits as Covid-related restrictions in several states, could affect the transport of



the summer crop to other parts of West Bengal and neighbouring states such as Bihar and Jharkhand.

Last year, we had a bumper production, but could not fetch a remunerative price due to the coronavirus pandemic. This time too, Covid-restrictions are there. Big traders are not able to visit us, and there could be transport issues, a litchi farmer said.

Countering the farmers' apprehension, the official said litchi is being sold around ₹70-80 a kg in Malda markets, while the same is available at ₹120-150 in South Bengal districts.

According to market estimates, Malda's litchi growers could fetch a margin of around ₹10-20 per kg more than last year, Nandan said.

Century old seaside Sunderban retreat lost to Yaas

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Fraserganj (WB), June 10: More than a century-old seaside retreat on the southern edge of the tiger-infested Sunderbans, where India's colonial rulers once wined and dined to the sound of orchestra music, has been swallowed by the hungry waves which lashed onto the beaches and forests when cyclone Yaas hit last month.

A few broken portions of brick walls defended by Mangrove roots which desperately cling to it are all that remain of the Frasersganj residence- a spacious bungalow built by Sir Andrew Fraser, lieutenant governor of Bengal between 1903 and 1908- where India's high society including the likes of Viceroy, Lord George Curzon once danced away their nights to the sound of laughter of their ladies and tinkling of wine glasses, as live orchestras shipped down from Kolkata played in attendance.

The historical bungalow which

served as a retreat where the rulers of Bengal entertained the high and mighty, could not withstand the might of the storm surge the cyclone brought May 26, Namkhana Block Development Officer (BDO) Santanu Singha Thakur said.

Sir Andrew Fraser had finished part of his planned retreat which boasted of a ballroom and a bar for the entertainment of the then capital of India's high society, said Debisankar Middya, an archaeologist specialising in coastal Bengal.

Fraser, born in the then Bombay Presidency in 1848 had joined the Indian Civil Service in 1871. He spotted the beach at Narayantala, and decided it was the ideal location for his retreat and probably started building the bungalow before he became the lieutenant governor; the top job in Bengal province, which then included Bihar, Odisha, modern Bangladesh, Assam and Meghalaya, besides West Bengal.

Middya told PTI that a golf course had also been laid out by Fraser



close to the bungalow. I had seen a remnant of the golf course during a visit, he said.

The sea and the weather over the years, had already started eroding parts of the historical residence probably built in 1901-02 on the highest dune in the area. The twin blows from Cyclone Amphan

museum in which stuffed carcasses of hunted animals were probably on display Middya said.

The archeologist said that Fraser had a larger plan to develop the area, referred to as Mecklenberg Island in contemporary Admiralty charts, and had cleared jungles in most parts of it, constructed roads and embankments, besides trying to set up a post-office and a school there.

There was also a plan to develop the area as a health resort for the English elite who ruled India.

However, the administration had to abandon the idea due to the huge cost involved in the project, failure to get farmers to settle in the locality and resistance by a small community of local fishermen.

The area later came to be known as Frasersganj after the lieutenant governor, but with the sea and high tides lapping hungrily at it, it is difficult to predict for how long even the remains of Fraser's dream retreat will stand.

The bungalow once also had a

'Muzrai dept grants only for Hindu institutions, temples'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bangalore, June 10: Karnataka Muzrai Minister Kota Sreenivasa Poojary has instructed the Hindu Religious Institutions and Charitable Endowments Department not to allocate its tasdik grants to non-Hindu religious institutions.

The Minister said the grants from the endowments department will only be spent on Hindu temples and institutions, and appropriate instructions have been given in this regard.

This was following concerns expressed by a section of the religious leaders that the funds under the department were being diverted to non-Hindu institutions.

I hereby clarify that out of 34,500 Hindu temples in Karnataka, 27,000 temples are released ₹48,000 (each) annually, totalling up to about ₹133 crore as tasdik grants. Other than this, religious centres that have

lost land during land reforms are released other allowances, Poojary said in a video statement.

He said, on getting to know about widespread criticism, he got a report from the commissioner of the department, according to which out of 27,000 temples, 764 non-Hindu religious institutions and temples were receiving tasdik annually and 111 of them are also getting other allowance.

As per law, the grant given by the endowment department can only be spent on Hindu religious institutions. So I have instructed the officials that, here on, the grants from the department should only be spent for Hindu temples, Poojary said.

The Endowment Commissioner, following his instructions, has written to the Chief Secretary and an order will be issued in a couple of days, he further said, adding that non-Hindu religious institutions can obtain grants from other departments like the Minorities Welfare.

of the day quote

Children in poor and disadvantaged households in India are now at a greater risk of negative coping mechanisms such as dropping out of school and being forced into labour, marriage, and even falling victim to trafficking

DR YASMIN ALI HAQUE | UNICEF INDIA REPRESENTATIVE

The BJP government in MP handled the second wave of the pandemic well and preparations are on to combat a possible third wave

JYOTIRADITYA SCINDIA | BJP LEADER

Tomar Ji has clearly said the doors for talks are open. The government never closed its doors. There have already been 11-12 rounds of talks earlier

ANIL VUJ | HARYANA HOME MINISTER

SHORT TAKES

Yogi meets Amit Shah

New Delhi: Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath Thursday met senior BJP leader and Union minister Amit Shah here, and is also likely to call on Prime Minister Narendra Modi during his two-day visit, sources said. Adityanath's visit to the national capital to meet the BJP top brass, including its president J P Nadda, comes close on the heels of the party holding a series of review meetings in Lucknow, which had fuelled speculation that there could be a ministerial reshuffle in the state government.

Fresh FIR against ex-Arunachal CM

New Delhi: The CBI has registered a fresh FIR against former Arunachal Pradesh chief minister Nabam Tuki for alleged nepotism and corruption related to a ₹14.71-lakh contract for the construction of a Kendriya Vidyalaya school boundary wall in the Salt Lake area of Kolkata 16 years ago, officials said. The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI), after conducting a preliminary enquiry, has alleged that officials of the Public Works Department, Arunachal Pradesh awarded the tender to firms controlled by the family members of Tuki, the then PWD minister of the state, at his behest and without inviting tenders, which caused wrongful loss to the state government and "wrongful" gain to the minister and his relatives.

Army buys farmer's watermelon harvest

Ramgarh/Bokaro (Jharkhand): Unable to sell his watermelon harvest due to the coronavirus-induced lockdown, a 25-year-old Jharkhand farmer offered five tonnes of his produce to soldiers of the Sikh Regimental Centre (SRC) at Ramgarh, who instead bought it at the market price. Touched by the gesture of Ranjan Kumar Mahto, a Ranchi University graduate who chose farming as a profession, SRC officers including commandant Brigadier M Sri Kumar visited his farm in adjoining Bokaro district and bought the produce.

Rahul bats for walk-in vaccination

New Delhi: Congress leader Rahul Gandhi Thursday demanded that every person walking into a Covid-19 vaccination centre should get the jab, drawing a sharp retort from Union minister Smriti Irani who said the government has already allowed it.



When the country was facing a disaster, people were grappling with an economic crisis, then the government earned ₹2.5 lakh crore through taxation on petrol and diesel

PRIYANKA GANDHI VADRA | CONGRESS LEADER

125-YEAR-OLD MAN TAKES JOB IN VARANASI

Setting aside all vaccine hesitancy talks, a 125-year-old man had got himself inoculated against Covid-19 in Varanasi



COVID WOES

India's vax policy leading to avertable deaths: Experts

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi/London, June 10: The Indian government's Covid-19 vaccination approach has inappropriately prioritised people and is thus causing huge numbers of avertable deaths, warn a team of nine experts from research institutes in the UK and India.

The government's current approach to vaccination - focusing on younger age groups - "is causing huge numbers of avertable deaths and is deeply inequitable, both between age groups and within them", argue doctors and researchers in a commentary published in British medical journal *BMJ* Wednesday.

From May 3 to June 5, 2021, more first doses were administered to people under 45 than over 60, even though at least 77 million people aged



60 remain unvaccinated, they wrote.

They urged the government to take a more targeted approach and reallocate available doses to older people, especially in more deprived areas. India's vaccination programme began, in January 2021, with health professionals and "frontline workers." In March, it was ex-

tended to people aged 60 or over and those aged 45 or over with comorbidities, and in April to anyone aged 45 or over. From May 1, vaccine entitlement was extended to all people aged 18 or over, although people under 45 had to pay.

Earlier this week, Prime Minister Narendra announced that vaccines

would now also be free for people aged 18-45. But, authors suggest it is likely to increase the focus of vaccination on people in this young age group, rather than those aged 45 or over.

"In practice, access to Covid-19 vaccination is mainly determined by socioeconomic status, with very low coverage in rural areas and among disadvantaged urban populations," they wrote. "As a result, Indians of all ages are increasingly resorting to private purchases, and the country's minimal pension system makes this especially unaffordable for older people," they added.

There is also no special provision to facilitate vaccine access for adults with impaired mobility, they said, adding that older people are less familiar with the digital tech-

nology that is required to make a booking for taking the jab. The concern was also voiced by World Health Organisation Director General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus. "There is a disturbing narrative in some countries that it's OK if older people die. It's not OK."

"It is important that everywhere older people are prioritised for vaccination. Those most at risk of severe disease and death from Covid-19, including health workers and older people, must come first. And they must come first everywhere," he added, in a recent statement.

While some Indian states have reallocated available doses to older people, the researchers urged the Central government to do the same until all elderly people in India receive at least one dose.

PM to attend outreach sessions of G7 summit

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, June 10: Prime Minister Narendra Modi will participate virtually in the outreach sessions of the G7 summit June 12 and 13, the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) said Thursday.

This is the second time Modi will participate in a G7 meeting. India was invited by France in its capacity as G7 presidency to the Biarritz summit in 2019 as a 'Goodwill Partner' and he participated in the sessions on 'Climate, Biodiversity and Oceans' and 'Digital Transformation'.

Last month, the MEA said Modi will not travel to the UK to attend the summit of the G7 grouping in view of the prevailing coronavirus situation in the country.

The Group of Seven (G7) comprises the UK, Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan and the US. As chair of G7, the UK has invited India, Australia, South Korea, South Africa to the summit as Guest countries.

"At the invitation of UK Prime Minister Boris Johnson, Prime Minister Narendra Modi will participate in the outreach sessions of the G7 summit June 12 and 13 in virtual format," MEA spokesperson Arindam Bagchi said.



He said the theme for the summit is 'Build Back Better' and the UK has outlined four priority areas for its presidency of the powerful grouping. "These are leading the global recovery from coronavirus while strengthening resilience against future pandemics; promoting future prosperity by championing free and fair trade; tackling climate change and preserving the planet's biodiversity; and championing shared values and open societies," Bagchi said.

He said the leaders are expected to exchange views on the way forward on global recovery from the pandemic with a focus on health and climate change.

Last month, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar travelled to London to participate in the G7 foreign ministers' meeting. However, he could not attend the meeting in person after two members of his delegation tested positive for Covid-19. The external affairs minister attended the meeting in virtual format.

LAC ROW India pushes for complete disengagement

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, June 10: India Thursday once again called for completion of the disengagement process at the remaining friction points in eastern Ladakh to pave the way for both the Indian and Chinese troops to consider de-escalation and ensure full restoration of peace and tranquillity in border areas.

At a media briefing, External Affairs Ministry spokesperson Arindam Bagchi, referring to the last rounds of military and diplomatic talks, said both sides agreed on the need to resolve the outstanding issues in an expeditious manner in accordance with the existing agreements and protocols. "We have repeatedly stressed that completion of disengagement in other areas would pave the way for the two sides to consider de-escalation of forces and ensure full restoration of peace and tranquillity and enable progress in bilateral relations," he said. Bagchi was replying to a question on the status of the talks between the two sides on the border standoff.

The 11th round of Corps Commander-level talks was held on April 9 while the last edition of diplomatic negotiations under the framework of the Working



Mechanism for Consultation and Coordination (WMCC) on border affairs took place March 12.

"During these meetings, both sides agreed on the need to resolve the outstanding issues in an expeditious manner in accordance with the existing agreements and protocols," Bagchi said.

India and China are locked in a military standoff at multiple friction points in eastern Ladakh since early May last year. However, the two sides completed the withdrawal of troops and weapons from the North and South banks of Pangong lake in February following a series of military and diplomatic talks. The two sides are now engaged in talks to extend the disengagement process to the remaining friction points.

There was no visible forward

movement in disengagement of troops at the remaining friction points as the Chinese side did not show flexibility in their approach towards this end at the 11th round of military talks. Last month, Army Chief Gen MM Naravane said there can be no de-escalation without complete disengagement at all friction points in eastern Ladakh and that the Indian Army is prepared for all contingencies in the region.

Gen Naravane also said that India is dealing with China in a "firm" and "non-escalatory" manner to ensure the sanctity of its claims in eastern Ladakh, and that it was even open to initiating confidence-building measures. India has been insisting on complete disengagement at the remaining friction points to de-escalate the situation in eastern Ladakh.

Woman, 5 daughters jump to death before speeding train

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Raipur, June 10: A woman and her five daughters allegedly committed suicide by jumping in front of a moving train apparently after a domestic dispute in Chhattisgarh's Mahasamund district, police said Thursday.

Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel has directed the district administration to conduct a probe into the incident, that took place late Wednesday night, and take necessary action. The bodies were recovered Thursday morning from the railway tracks near Imlibhata canal bridge between Mahasamund and Belsonda, around 55 km from the state capital, police said.

As per preliminary information, Uma Sahu (45), a native of Bemcha village, had a quarrel with her husband Wednesday. After the tiff, the woman along with her daughters - Annapurna (18), Yashoda (16), Bhumika (14), Kunkum (12) and Tulsi (10) - rushed to the railway tracks, located around 1.5 km from their village, and took the extreme step, Mahasamund's Additional Superintendent of Police Megha Tembhurkar Sahu told PTI.

Ramdev will take Covid jab

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Dehradun, June 10: Yoga guru Ramdev, who had said he does not need the Covid vaccine as he has protection of yoga and ayurveda, Thursday did a summersault, saying he will soon get the jab and described doctors as "God's envoys on earth".

Ramdev had earlier stirred a controversy with his comments on the efficacy of allopathic drugs against Covid-19, drawing the ire of the medical fraternity. Now, welcoming Prime Minister Narendra Modi's announcement about free vaccine to all from June 21, Ramdev described it as a "historic" step and appealed to all to get themselves vaccinated.

"Get both doses of the vaccine and the double protection of yoga and ayurveda. They will combine to give you such a robust shield of protection that not a single person will die from Covid," he told reporters in Haridwar. Asked when he will get the vaccine shot, the yoga guru said, "Very soon."

ASARAM BAPU RAPE CASE

Victim's father moves Top Court

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, June 10: Apprehending threat to the life of family members, father of the child rape-victim has moved the Supreme Court Thursday opposing the bail plea of self-styled godman Asharam Bapu.

The application for intervention has been filed in the pending petition of Asharam in which he has sought suspension of his sentence and interim bail to undergo treatment for various ailments at an ayurvedic centre near Haridwar in Uttarakhand.

A Jodhpur court, April 25, 2018, had sentenced Asharam to life in prison after finding him guilty of raping a teenage girl in his ashram in 2013. "It is humbly submitted that the petitioner (Asharam) is highly influential and politically

connected and has a force of millions of blind followers around the country and also a hired killer Kartik Haldar who killed and attacked eyewitnesses confessed to the Police that Petitioner ordered the killings," the father of rape survivor said in the application.

He said that till now 10 eyewitnesses have been attacked and in all likelihood if Asharam is granted bail he may organise revenge killing of the child rape victim and her family and eyewitnesses of case pending at Surat, Gujarat.

"Recently also, the applicant herein has been threatened by the followers/ henchmen of the petitioner (Asharam) and shockingly the State of Uttar Pradesh has reduced the security of the applicant and his family and they are again very vulnerable to murder-

ous attacks by the followers/henchmen of the petitioner," the application said.

The plea filed through advocate Utsav Bains said that in case Asharam is admitted to interim bail, there is likelihood that out of vengeance, he may get the applicant, his daughter and his family members killed. "The petitioner (Asharam) herein has no regard to the rule of law and indulged in getting the prosecution witnesses threatened or eliminated who stood against him. And the Petitioner in all likelihood would do the same and with greater impunity and ease when granted bail and is out of Jail. It is humbly submitted that the petitioner herein does not deserve any leniency and his bail application is liable to be dismissed," the plea said.

BEATING THE HEAT



A child takes bath under a leaking pipe to get respite from the scorching heat in New Delhi

PTI PHOTO

Muslim man conceals and takes care of Hindu wife for 10 yrs

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Thiruvananthapuram, June 10: "Love is blind" goes the old saying and it happened in Kerala's sleepy village in Palakkad, where a Muslim man looked after and concealed his Hindu wife for a decade.

She was tucked away inside his room for 10 years, without getting noticed by anyone including the latter's parents and his mentally challenged sister.

Speaking to IANS, Deepukumar, SHO, Nenmara Police station, the investigating officer in the case, said that nobody at first believed what happened in that village, but that was the truth.

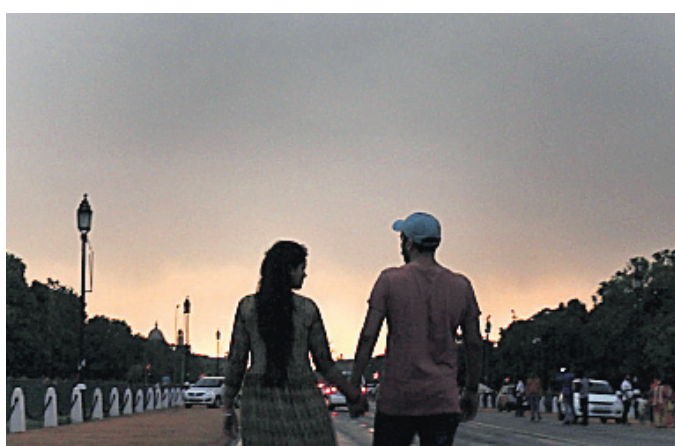
"There were two 'missing' cases

registered in this police station. One was registered 10 years back, when 18-year-old Sajitha was reported missing and the other was in March this year, when 34-year-old Rahman had gone missing," said Deepukumar.

Things began to unfurl when Rahman was spotted by his brother on Tuesday and soon he alerted the police, and later the mystery was unravelled.

The police have also found that the couple had shifted from his house to a rented house in another place, three months back and were living alone.

"Rahman was in love with Sajitha and 10 years back she came to his room. It's a tiled three-room house,



where Rahman was living with his parents and mentally chal-

lenged sister. During the day, Rahman's parents used to go out for

work, and he used to keep his room locked.

"After we took both of them to his house where they had lived for 10 years, they told us how they had used the window of the house as a door to go out of the room in the night to buy essentials for the woman," added Deepukumar.

"Later, we took them before the Magistrate and the woman said that she wants to live with her husband to which the court agreed and she was allowed to go with him. We have now closed the cases," said the SHO. Rahman told the media that he feared his parents might not like his relation with Sajitha, so he had to resort to this. "On and off I used to go for work, but I always made it

a point to return by early evening. I am engaged in electrical work," added Rahman.

Expressing happiness, Sajitha said now she feels her ordeal is over. "When he used to go out for work, I spent my time watching TV using headphones. When he went for work, he used to keep food for me in the room. Now after the intervention of the police, I feel I am free. My parents are also happy," said Sajitha. Sajitha's father said they are extremely happy that they have found their daughter.

"We felt she had died. We never would have had any problem if she wanted to live with him. Now everything is over and we are all happy," said her father.

of the day quote

Telangana attracted major investments from companies such as MassMutual, Laxai Life Sciences, Agasthya Foods, Trow Nutrition, Ester Filmtech and others despite the pandemic induced slowdown

KT RAMA RAO | TELANGANA INDUSTRY MINISTER

Drugs are mostly smuggled from Myanmar and these are being traded making Assam as a transit route

HIMANTA BISWA SARMA | ASSAM CM

The central government has ensured that all essential commodities including ration items, petroleum products, gas, etc, are made available to the people at right places

KIREN RIJUJU | UNION MINISTER

SHORT TAKES

Covid TPR in Ker comes down

Thiruvananthapuram: Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan said Thursday that another 14,424 people tested Covid positive out of the 1,07,250 samples sent for testing in the past 24 hours. But while the test positivity rate (TPR) came down from 13.45 per cent from 14.09 per cent Wednesday, the number of deaths rose to 194, against 156 Wednesday, taking the toll to 10,631.

Heavy rains lash Lucknow

Lucknow: Lucknow and some other districts in Uttar Pradesh witnessed heavy rainfall Thursday. In the state capital, several main roads, including the one leading to the Vidhan Sabha, were water logged. Power disruptions were reported from parts of the state capital and trees were also uprooted. Telecom services were also disrupted and traffic jams were reported from parts of the state capital.

₹1.19 Cr looted from bank

Hajipur (Bihar): Armed robbers looted ₹1.19 crore from a private bank branch in Bihar's Vaishali district Thursday, police said. The incident took place in Jarua Bazar in Ganga Bridge police station area in the morning. Hajipur Sadar Sub-Divisional Police Officer (SDPO) Raghav Dayal said. He said four armed robbers were involved in the incident and they had come to the bank branch on motorcycles.

Man given 2 vax doses in 5 mnts

Lalitpur (UP): In a case of shocking negligence, a man in Lalitpur district was given both doses of the Covid vaccine within five minutes. This incident took place at a vaccination centre in Ravarpura locality. According to reports, the man who went there to take the jab on Wednesday has alleged that the nursing staff was so busy talking among themselves that they administered both the doses of vaccine to him within five minutes.

Missing posters of Raje in Jhalawad

Jaipur: A day after posters of former Chief Minister Vasundhara Raje were removed from the state BJP headquarters, several posters of "Searching for missing" have been seen in different parts of Jhalawad districts. The message in these posters claim that the Raje, the BJP MLA from Jhalawad along with her son Dushyant Singh, MP from Jhalawar-Baran have been "missing" amid the coronavirus pandemic outbreak and those finding the two shall be rewarded.



An amount of ₹1,563 crore for 2017-20 was still pending with the Union Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment for release as Central share under the scheme

AMARINDER SINGH | PUNJAB CM

LIQUOR SMUGGLING ON THE RISE IN TN

Indian-Made Foreign Liquor (IMFL) smuggling has been witnessing a rapid rise in Tamil Nadu since the closure of TASMAL outlets due to the enforcement of the Covid-induced lockdown



BUNDLES OF HOPE



Women labourers plant paddy saplings in the fields at Sivian village in Bathinda

PTI PHOTO

HC refuses to stay release of films on SSR's life

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, June 10: The Delhi High Court Thursday refused to stay the release of several movies, purportedly based on the life of late Hindi film industry's actor Sushant Singh Rajput, including 'Nyay: The Justice' which is scheduled to be released Friday, saying these films are neither portrayed as biopic nor factual narration of what transpired in his life.

"Posthumous privacy right is not permissible", the high court said in its interim order on a plea by Rajput's father to restrain such films.

The court said it found merit in the submissions of producers and directors that if information of events which have occurred is already in the public domain, one cannot plead any violation of right to privacy on a movie inspired from such events.

12 killed in building collapse

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, June 10: At least 12 people, including eight children, were killed and seven others injured after two floors of a three-storey residential building collapsed on an adjoining single-storey house in Malwani in suburban Mumbai, officials said Thursday.

One person died in a separate incident of house crash at Dahisar, a western suburb of Mumbai, Thursday evening, civic officials said. Nine members of a family were among the deceased in the first incident which took place around 11.15 pm Wednesday, when Mumbai experienced heavy rains throughout the day, at the New Collector Compound on Abdul Hamid Road in the Malwani area of suburban Malad, the officials said.

The ill-fated building was constructed illegally and had suffered damage in cyclone Tauktae, which passed close to the Mumbai coast



Rescue operation underway

PTI PHOTO

last month, police said, adding its contractor has been arrested on culpable homicide charge.

The Maharashtra government announced an ex-gratia of Rs five lakh each to the kin of those who lost their lives in the house col-

lapse at Malwani, while the Centre will give an additional Rs 2 lakh ex-gratia to them. While earlier civic officials said a single-storey house had collapsed, they later clarified it was a three-storey building. The second and third floors of the three-

storey building collapsed on the adjoining single-storey house, said Santosh Dhonde, acting ward officer of the city's P-North ward.

Fire brigade and other agencies immediately rushed to the spot and started a search and rescue operation, the official from the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) said. Eight children and four adults, including a 60-year-old man, died, he said, adding that most of the deceased were from two families. Seven others were injured and the condition of one of them was critical, he said.

People rescued from under the debris were taken to nearby hospitals, he added. The civic body said of the 12 people who died, nine were from a single family. As per the BMC, the collapsed building was located on collector's land and its owner got permission from the collector's office while constructing a permanent structure.

Cong disconnected from people: Jitin

PRASADA DIDN'T PUT BLAME ON ANY INDIVIDUAL WITHIN THE CONGRESS FOR HIS DEPARTURE

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, June 10: A day after switching over to the BJP, Jitin Prasada Thursday said he left the Congress not because of any individual or for any post, but due to its shrinking vote base and the "rising disconnect" between the party and the people of Uttar Pradesh.

Prasada, whose family had been associated with the party for three generations and who himself had served as a Union minister in the Congress-led UPA government, joined the BJP Wednesday, terming it the "only true national party" in the country.



"I left the Congress not due to any individual or for any post. The reason I left the Congress was because there is a rising disconnect between the party and the people. And that is the reason, its vote share is shrinking in Uttar Pradesh and there is no plan to revive the party," Prasada said. He was among the group of 23 Congress leaders who had written

to party president Sonia Gandhi last October seeking an organisational overhaul, triggering a storm within the party. Claiming that he could not protect his people's interests while being in the Congress, Prasada said, he will achieve this in the BJP, which he described as the only institutionalised national party in the country.

"It (joining the BJP) was not a sudden decision," he said. "I have taken this decision after long discussions and deliberations. I want to serve people, work for them and in the BJP, under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, I would be able to do that." Talking about his future plans, Prasada said he will work to strengthen the BJP and for

the welfare of his state. "Whatever I do, wherever I will be, I will work for my people, for my state Uttar Pradesh and for my country," he said. The 47-year-old former Union minister, who comes from a well-known Brahmin family of Uttar Pradesh, has refrained from attacking the Congress leadership. Jitin is son of Jitendra Prasada, a key Congress leader before his fortunes plunged following his decision to contest against Sonia Gandhi for the post of party president in 2000. His joining the BJP may help him politically at a time when the saffron party is working overtime to boost its ranks in preparation for the assembly polls.

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, June 10: A plea has been filed in the Supreme Court, challenging the Delhi High Court's judgement declining to stop the construction activity at the Central Vista Redevelopment project amid the second wave of Covid-19 pandemic, and imposing ₹1 lakh cost on the petitioners.

Petitioners Anya Malhotra, a translator, and Sohail Hashmi, a historian and documentary filmmaker, claimed the High Court judgment, apart from misconstruing their bonafide intentions, without cause, cast them in negative light, as it dis-

missed their plea on the face value without any inquiry. The petitioners have argued that their plea was a purely public health and safety issue during the catastrophic Covid second wave, which ravaged the capital and exposed its crumbling health infrastructure. But the High Court construed it as an attack on the project.

The plea argued that the ongoing construction activity has the potential of being a super spreader activity, on the account of to-and-fro movement of the workers from the site to their accommodation, located in various parts of the city, poses a grave risk to the health and safety of workers and the residents of Delhi.

Chinese hackers luring Indians into Tata Motors scam

If any user opens the link from a device like smartphones where WhatsApp application is installed, the sharing features on the site will open the WhatsApp application on the device to share the link

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, June 10: Cyber-security researchers in India Thursday said they have discovered a malicious free gift campaign pretending to be an offer from Tata Motors that is collecting users' data, and the campaign has been traced to China-based hackers.

The research wing of New Delhi-based CyberPeace Foundation received some links via WhatsApp, related to a free gift offer from Tata Motors, collecting browser and system information as well as the cookie data from the users.

"The campaign is pretended to be an offer from Tata Motors but hosted on the third-party domain

instead of the official website of Tata Motors which makes it more suspicious," the research team said in a statement.

If any user opens the link from a device like smartphones where WhatsApp application is installed, the sharing features on the site will open the WhatsApp application on the device to share the link.

"The prizes are kept really attractive to lure the laymen," the team said. The title of the fake website is "Tata Motors Cars, Celebrates sales exceeding 30 million." On the landing page, a congratulations message appears with an attractive photo of a Tata Safari car and asks users to participate in a quick survey to get a free TATA



Safari vehicle. "Also, at the bottom of this page, a section comes up which seems to be a Facebook comment section where many users have commented about how the offer is beneficial,"

the research revealed. After Clicking the OK button, users are given three attempts to win the prize. After completing all the attempts, it says that the user has won "TATA SAFARI".

"Congratulations! You did it! You won the TATA SAFARI!" Clicking on the "OK" button, it then instructs users to share the campaign on WhatsApp.

The user then has to click the WhatsApp button in order to complete the progress bar. After clicking on the green 'Complete registration' button, it redirects the user to multiple advertisements web-pages, and it varies each time the user clicks on the button.

According to the researchers, cybercriminals used Cloudflare technologies to mask the real IP addresses of the front-end domain names used in the free gifts from Tata Motors campaign. "But during the phases of investigation, we

have identified a domain name that was requested in the background and has been traced as belonging to China," the researchers revealed.

CyberPeace Foundation, a think tank and grassroots NGO of cyber security and policy experts, along with Autobot Infocore Private Limited looked into this matter to realise that these websites are online fraud. "The campaign is pretended to be an offer from Tata Motors but hosted on the third-party domain instead of the official website of Tata Motors which makes it more suspicious," the Foundation said. The Foundation recommended that people avoid opening such messages sent via social platforms.

international



That's the worse famine problem the world has seen for a decade, since a quarter of a million Somalis lost their lives in the famine there in 2011. This now has horrible echoes of the colossal tragedy in Ethiopia in 1984
MARK LOWCOCK | UN HUMANITARIAN CHIEF

PRINCE PHILIP'S 100TH BIRTHDAY

Britain's Queen Elizabeth has been given a rose named after her late husband Prince Philip to mark what would have been his 100th birthday Thursday, Buckingham Palace said



of the day quote

The cardinal thing is that Twitter must be licensed in Nigeria and Twitter must stop using its platform for activities that are inimical to the growth of Nigeria or to its corporate existence
LAI MOHAMMED | INFORMATION AND CULTURE MINISTER, NIGERIA

The US side should earnestly respect principles of market economy, international economic and trade rules, stop overstretching the concept of national security, stop abusing state power to Chinese high tech companies
WANG WENBIN | FOREIGN MINISTRY SPOKESMAN, CHINA

It's not just the sanctions, the unilateral coercive measures. Let's see this as a comprehensive assault, a political and diplomatic assault, definitely an economic assault, a communicational and ideological assault
JORGE ARREAZA | FOREIGN AFFAIRS MINISTER, VENEZUELA

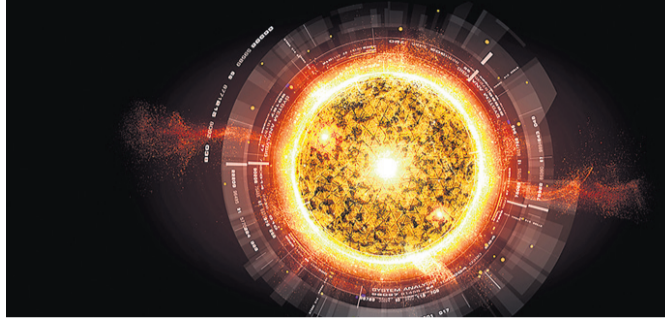
China sustains 'artificial sun' at record 120mn C

The temperature at the core of the sun is widely believed to be 15 million degrees Celsius, meaning that the plasma at the device's core will be seven times hotter than that of the sun

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Beijing, June 10: China's "artificial sun" recently broke the world record as achieved a plasma temperature of 120 million Celsius for 101 seconds and 160 million Celsius for 20 seconds, setting new records in the field of nuclear fusion, media reports said. The experiment was achieved by Experimental Advanced Superconducting Tokamak (EAST) device, or the "Chinese artificial sun", located at the Hefei Institutes of Physical Science of the Chinese

Academy of Sciences, the Global Times reported. EAST is part of the International Thermonuclear Experimental Reactor (ITER) facility -- a collaboration of 35 nations, also comprising India. EAST is designed to replicate the nuclear fusion process that occurs naturally in the sun and stars to provide almost infinite clean energy through controlled nuclear fusion, which is often dubbed the "artificial sun." Previously, the plasma could be maintained up to a temperature of 100 million Celsius for 100 sec-



onds. "The breakthrough is significant progress, and the ultimate goal should be keeping the temperature at a stable level for a long time," Li Miao, director of the Physics Department of the

Southern University of Science and Technology in Shenzhen, was quoted as saying. The next milestone might be to maintain the stability for a week or more, Li added. India is one of the seven partners (China, India, Japan, South Korea, Russia, the US, and Europe) both in-kind and in-cash, in a first-of-a-kind global collaboration. The project aims to complete through first plasma in 2025, a key milestone toward full fusion power by 2035.

US to give 500M Pfizer vaccine to 100 poor nations

The shots, which will be produced at Pfizer's US sites, will be supplied at a not-for-profit price



AGENCIES

Biden meets Johnson

President Joe Biden and British Prime Minister Boris Johnson met for the first time Thursday, looking to highlight their nations' famed "special relationship" but doing so against a backdrop of differences both political and personal. The President staunchly opposed the Brexit movement, the British exodus from the EU that Johnson championed, and has expressed great concern with the future of Northern Ireland. The leaders were expected to announce a new US-UK task force to work on resuming travel between the two nations, according to a White House official. Both sides have stressed publicly that the meeting would be about reaffirming ties between longtime allies in a week in which Biden will look to rally the West to rebuff Russian meddling and publicly demonstrate it can compete economically with China.

Carbis Bay, June 10: The United States will spend \$3.5 billion to buy and donate 500 million doses of the Pfizer coronavirus vaccine to some of the world's poorest countries, it said Thursday, urging other G7 nations to follow suit. The vaccine donation - the largest ever by a single country - was announced before US President Joe Biden meets leaders of the Group of Seven advanced economies in western England. The 500 million doses are destined for the world's 100 poorest countries. A senior Biden administration official described the gesture as a "major step forward that will surpass the global effort" with the aim of "bringing hope to every corner of the world."

"We really want to underscore that this is fundamentally about a singular objective of saving lives," the official said, adding that Washington was not seeking favours in exchange for the doses. The Biden administration expects other G7 members to come up with contributions as part of a comprehensive road map to end a pandemic that has killed more than 3.9 million people, the official added. US drugmaker Pfizer and its German partner BioNTech had earlier said they would provide 200 million doses in 2021 and 300 million doses in the first half of 2022.

MOUNT RECYCLEMORE



A sculpture depicting the G7 leaders looking towards Carbis Bay, made from electronic waste by Joe Rush and Alex Wreckage, ahead of the G7 summit at Hayle Towns in Cornwall, Britain

China passes Anti-Foreign Sanctions Law

The law was passed in the backdrop of the US and EU countries slapping sanctions against a number of Chinese entities and officials over allegations of human rights violations

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Beijing, June 10: China's Parliament Thursday passed the Anti-Foreign Sanctions Law, providing a comprehensive legal cover for blocking foreign sanctions against Chinese officials and entities and protecting them against the long-arm jurisdiction, especially from the US.

The law was passed by the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress (NPC), China's national legislature.

The law was passed in the backdrop of the US and EU countries slapping sanctions against a number of Chinese entities and officials over allegations of human rights violations against Muslim Uyghurs in Xinjiang and the imposition of China's national security law in Hong Kong. The sanctions were introduced as a coordinated effort by the European Union, UK, US and Canada. China responded with its own sanctions on European officials. Defending the law, Chinese



Foreign Ministry spokesman Wang Wenbin told a media briefing here Thursday that to safeguard China's national sovereignty, dignity, and core interests and oppose western hegemonism and power politics, the Chinese government has announced counter measures against relevant individuals and entities of

certain countries. "Meanwhile, we believe it is necessary for the country to have specific laws to counter foreign sanctions so that we have legal basis and guarantee for such countermeasures," he said, ruling out that the law will affect China's relations with other countries.

'Delta variant taking hold in Europe'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Geneva, June 10: The World Health Organisation's Europe director warned that the highly transmissible Covid-19 variant first identified in India is "poised to take hold in the region", as many countries prepare to ease restrictions and allow more social gatherings and travel across borders.

During a press briefing Thursday, WHO's Dr Hans Kluge said the variant also known as the delta variant, has shown signs of being able to evade some vaccines and warned that many vulnerable populations, particularly those over



age 60, remain unprotected. "We have been here before," warned Kluge, WHO's European regional director. "Over the course of

last summer, cases gradually rose in younger age groups and then moved into older age groups, contributing to a devastating resurgence," he said.

Kluge said spike in Covid-19 ultimately led to more lockdowns and deaths in the fall and winter of 2020. "Let's not make that mistake again."

Kluge didn't say people shouldn't travel, but urged any travellers to do so wisely: He also called for vaccination and other public health measures to be stepped up across the continent, saying even immunisation coverage "is far from sufficient to protect the region".

Navalny called US 'agent' after extremism ruling

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

Moscow, June 10: Russia Thursday suggested that Washington was quick to condemn the designation of Alexei Navalny's groups as extremist because the jailed Kremlin critic was in fact working for the United States.

A Moscow court late Wednesday ruled to designate Navalny's regional offices and his Anti-Corruption Foundation (FBK) as "extremist", barring them from working in Russia.

The US State Department called the action "particularly disturbing" and said it was part of a pattern



of restricting fundamental rights in Russia.

In a radio interview Thursday morning, Russian Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Maria Zakharova said the response showed the extent of US interference in Russia's affairs.

Can you imagine seeing such an instant reaction from the State Department to a domestic or some other internal decision in another country? This means that they are politically involved in the story

MARIA ZAKHAROVA | FOREIGN MINISTRY SPOKESWOMAN, RUSSIA

Ahead of parliamentary elections in September -- in which the deeply unpopular ruling United Russia party is expected to struggle -- lawmakers passed legislation that bans members and sponsors of "extremist" groups from running in the polls.

'Half of all Indian-Americans subjected to discrimination'

The report further showed that Indian-Americans, especially members of the first generation, tend to socialise with other Indian-Americans

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Washington, June 10: A new study has revealed that one in two Indian-Americans have reported being discriminated against in the past one year.

The study titled, 'Social Realities of Indian Americans: Results from the 2020 Indian American Attitudes Survey', was conducted jointly by the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, Johns Hopkins SAIS, and the University of Pennsylvania.

Released Wednesday, it is the third in a series on the social, political, and foreign policy attitudes of Indian-Americans.

"One in two Indian Americans reports being discriminated against in the past one year, with discrimination based on skin colour identified as the most common form of bias. Somewhat surprisingly, Indian Americans born in the US are much more likely to report being victims of discrimination than their foreign-born counterparts," the study says.

The findings of the study were based on a nationally representative online survey of 1,200 Indian-American residents in the US. It was conducted between September 1 and September 20, 2020, in partnership with the research and analytics firm YouGov.

The report also found that Indian-Americans exhibit very high rates of marriage within their community. "While eight out of 10 respondents have a spouse or partner of Indian origin, US-born Indian-Americans are four times more likely to have a spouse or partner who is of Indian origin but was born in the US," it said.

The study also revealed that roughly half of all Hindu Indian-Americans identify with a caste group.

"The overwhelming majority of Hindus with a caste identity, more than eight in 10, self-identify as belonging to the category of General or upper caste."



Meanwhile, partisan polarisation, linked to political preferences both in India and the US, is rife,

within the community. "However, this polarisation is asymmetric: Democrats are much

less comfortable having close friends who are Republicans than the converse. The same is true of Congress Party supporters vis-a-vis supporters of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP)," says the study.

"Internally, the social networks of Indian-Americans are more homogenous in terms of religion than either Indian region (state) of origin or caste."

The study goes on to say that while only a minority of the respondents were concerned about the importation of political divisions from India to the US. Indian-Americans currently account for the second-largest immigrant group in the US.

Former Asiad gold winner Dingko dies



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, June 10: Asian Games gold medal-winning former boxer Dingko Singh, who inspired a generation of Indian pugilists with his swashbuckling ring craft and flamboyant personality, died Thursday after a long battle with liver cancer.

He was 42 and had been fighting the disease since 2017. He is survived by his wife Babai Ngangom, a son and a daughter.

During his battle with cancer, the former bantamweight (54kg) boxer's health woes were compounded by a bout of jaundice and COVID-19 last year. "We lost a legend," Olympic-bound boxer Vikas Krishan said summing up what it means to Indian boxing.

Sports Minister Kiren Rijiju also offered condolences on the demise. "I'm deeply saddened by the demise of Shri Dingko Singh. One of the finest boxers India has ever produced, Dinko's gold medal at 1998 Bangkok Asian Games sparked the Boxing chain reaction in India," Rijiju said.

The Manipuri superstar, who won his maiden national title (sub-junior) as a 10-year-old, was among the first modern stars of Indian boxing with his Asian Games gold and inspired the likes of six-time World Champion MC Mary Kom among others.

"He was a rockstar, a legend, a rage. I remember I used to queue up to watch him fight in Manipur. He inspired me. He was my hero. It is a huge loss. He has gone too

soon," Mary Kom told this agency recalling the iconic boxer who faded from the scene after cancer took its toll on his body. "Life is so unpredictable," she said.

A fearless competitor in the ring, Dingko beat two Olympic medalists - Sontaya Wonggrates of Thailand and Timur Tulyakov of Uzbekistan - en route to the Asian Games gold medal in Bangkok, which was a remarkable feat for an Indian boxer at that time.

Ironically, he wasn't the original pick for the Games and made the cut after registering his protest. "May his life's journey & struggle forever remain a source of inspiration for the upcoming generations. I pray that the bereaved family finds the strength to overcome this period of grief & mourning #dinkosingh," tweeted India's first Olympic medalist in boxing Vijender Singh.

Dingko was bestowed the Arjuna award the same year. In 2013, he was honoured with the Padma Shri for his contribution to the sport.

An employee of Indian Navy, Dingko had taken to coaching at Imphal's Sports Authority of India Centre after hanging up his gloves but illnesses came in the way of his progress and he was mostly confined to his home in the later part of his life.

He was airlifted to Delhi last year after it came to light that the COVID-19 lockdown had prevented him from getting crucial radiation therapy for his cancer.

Upon landing here, a bout of jaundice did not allow for the therapy to be carried out. He went back to Imphal in an ambulance and contracted COVID-19 on reaching back home.

He went on to spend a month in hospital to recover from the infection. "It was not easy but I told myself 'ladna hai toh ladna hai'. I was not prepared to give up, no one should," he had said in his last interaction with this agency after recovering.

India undergo first group training

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Southampton, June 10: India carried out their first group practice session at a ground adjacent to Ageas Bowl here Thursday, five days after being allowed staggered training in the run-up to the World Test Championship final against New Zealand. The WTC final is scheduled to be played June 18-22.

It was the first time the players mixed with their teammates on the ground after being allowed to run in the gymnasium and the main playing field at different time slots on completion of the third day of their hard quarantine in the UK.

"We have had our first group training session and the intensity was high. #TeamIndia's preparations are on in full swing for the #WTC21 Final," the BCCI wrote in a twitter post along with a short video of the training session.



(From L): Virat Kohli is doing image training; Cheteshwar Pujara looks at his bat while batting at nets; Mohammed Shami bowls during India's first group training session Thursday ahead of WTC final, starting June 18 in Southampton

The players had a full net session, where the likes of skipper Virat Kohli, Rohit Sharma, Cheteshwar Pujara, Rishabh Pant batted for a considerable amount of time and faced throw-downs as well.

The bowlers too had an intense session with all the main players -

Ishant Sharma, Mohammed Shami, Jasprit Bumrah, Mohammed Siraj and Ravi Ashwin - participating in the practice session.

The nets were followed by a fielding session under fielding coach R Sridhar, which mostly focussed on catching in the slip cordon.

Earlier, the players were allowed to come out of their Hilton Hotel rooms, a Hampshire Bowl property, on the third day, following which they started their individual training. The players were also provided basic equipments in their rooms for exercise purposes.

Anastasia enters French Open final



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Paris, June 10: Anastasia Pavlyuchenkova will play her first Grand Slam final at Roland Garros. The 31st-seeded player defeated unseeded Tamara Zidanksek 7-5, 6-3 to become the first Russian woman to reach a final at a major since Maria Sharapova at the 2015 Australian Open.

Both players struggled with their serves on Court Philippe Chatrier but Pavlyuchenkova managed to hold her nerves better on important points. Zidanksek, who had never been beyond second round at a major before, made 33 unforced errors.

Special ICC Hall of Fame induction to mark WTC

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Dubai, June 10: The ICC will induct 10 legends of the game into its illustrious Hall of Fame, with two players each from five eras, dating back to cricket's early days, joining an existing list of 93 of the world's greatest.

The global cricket body on Thursday announced a special edition of the ICC Hall of Fame to coincide with the first-ever World Test Championship final, to be contested between India and New Zealand, from June 18 in Southampton.

As many as 10 legends of the game who have made a significant contribution to the history of Test cricket will be inducted to join the 93 players, who are already in the illustrious list, taking the total to 103.

"It is an honour for us to announce a one-time induction of ten cricketing greats into the ICC Hall of Fame to coincide with the



ICC CRICKET HALL OF FAME IN ASSOCIATION WITH FICA

first-ever final of the World Test Championship in Southampton," ICC acting chief executive Geoff Allardice said in a release.

"We are celebrating the history of the game and what better way than to honour some of the greats that founded and played the game across different eras. These are all players with a legacy that will continue to inspire future generations for years to come."

The special intake will see two players from each of the following five eras join the ranks of the world's greatest players: Early Cricket Era (pre-1918), Inter-War Cricket Era (1918-1945), Post-War Cricket Era (1946-1970), ODI Era (1971-1995), Modern Cricket Era (1996-2016).

The 10 legends inducted as part of the special edition have been voted by the ICC Hall of Fame Voting Academy, comprising living Hall of Fame members, a FICA (Federation of International Cricketer Association) representative, prominent cricket journalists and senior ICC figures.

The announcement will be made during a live show streamed via ICC's digital media channels. The special edition ICC Hall of Fame show will be hosted by Alan Wilkins and streamed live on all ICC digital channels, including Facebook and YouTube June 13.

TIME FOR KICK-OFF

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. After a few hours, the long-awaited, month-long 24-team extravaganza will finally get underway. **Orissa POST** takes a look at the groups...



GROUP F (GROUP OF DEATH): France, Germany, Portugal, Hungary

FRANCE (FRA)

FIFA ranking: 2 Euro appearances: 9 times Best result: Champions (1984, 2016)

For a footballing giants like France who have produced many top quality players over the years, it is not easy to be deemed the golden generation. However, the current contingent of Les Bleus might just qualify as one, having enjoyed stellar success under the tutelage of Didier Deschamps. Euro finalists in 2016 and 2018 World Cup champions, France, are heading into this tournament as the undisputed favourites. They have the most balanced side in the competition, led by experienced figures like Hugo Lloris, Antoine Griezmann, N'Golo Kante and Raphael Varane among others. In addition to experience and quality, they have the youthful exuberance and the talent of Kylian Mbappe, Jules Kounde and Ousmane Dembele - making them the most complete side in the tournament. France have shown good form as well, topping the group H of the Euro 2020 Qualifiers with eight wins in ten matches while securing two wins in three in the 2022 World Cup qualifiers. That said, being drawn in a group consisting of Germany and Portugal means France are not guaranteed to qualify for the knockout stage, although they are certainly expected to top the group given the quality of their side.

Coach: Didier Deschamps



KEY PLAYER
Kylian Mbappe

GROUP F FIXTURES				
Date	Match	Time (IST)		
June 15	HUN v POR	09:30 pm		
June 16	FRA v GER	12:30 am		
June 19	HUN v FRA	06:30 pm		
June 19	GER v POR	09:30 pm		
June 24	POR v FRA	12:30 am		
June 24	GER v HUN	12:30 am		

Telecast: SONY TEN Network

GERMANY (GER)

FIFA ranking: 12 Euro appearances: 12 Best result: Champions (1972, 1980, 1996)

Germany are the fallen giants hoping to rekindle their spark after a couple of disappointing performances in major tournaments, in the 2018 World Cup and the 2016 Euro. Loew's gamble with a new, young core of the German team did not work out at all, especially in the UEFA Nations League as well as the early stages of the European qualifiers for the 2022 World Cup. Die Mannschaft notably lost 1-2 to North Macedonia, not long after being humiliated 0-6 by Spain in the Nations League. Loew, however, has called up a couple of experienced players in Mats Hummels and Thomas Muller after being heavily criticised for his gamble with youngsters. The Germans do lack the services of a proper goalscorer. While the creative and midfield department is solid, there are also question marks over Germany's defence, especially in the full-back department.



KEY PLAYER
Joshua Kimmich

Coach: Joachim Loew

PORTUGAL (POR)

FIFA ranking: 7 Euro appearances: 7 times Best result: Champions (2016)

Managed by the only coach in this tournament who has actually won the European Championship in his career, Portugal side are heading into the competition as one of the favourites, with a team led by the evergreen Cristiano Ronaldo. In 2016, the nation won its first major international competition by beating France to lift the Euros. They were knocked out of the Round of 16 in the subsequent 2018 World Cup but have constantly improved in regards to the overall quality of the side. Portugal were outperformed by Ukraine in the qualifiers for Euro 2020, though, finishing second in their group. Santos, nonetheless, boasts a team that has an excellent balance of youth and experience. The likes of Ronaldo, Pepe and Jose Fonte are automatic leaders in this group, with their years of experience at the highest level while Ruben Dias, Joao Felix, Pedro Goncalves and Nuno Mendes will be desperate to make their mark in the competition. Portugal have many versatile players in their ranks, including Manchester City duo Joao Cancelo and Bernardo Silva. Fans will be hoping for nothing less than a top-two finish in the Group of death.



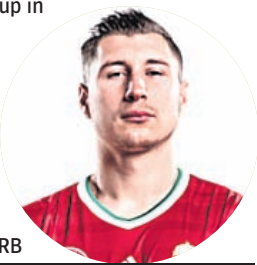
KEY PLAYER
Cristiano Ronaldo

Coach: Fernando Santos

HUNGARY (HUN)

FIFA ranking: 37 Euro appearances: 3 times Best result: 3rd Place (1964)

Hungary's qualification to the European Championship was quite an impressive feat by Marco Rossi and his men. Although the nation did play in the 2016 Euro, even reaching the Round of 16, they weren't expected to secure qualification this time around after finishing fourth in the qualifying group. However, in the qualification playoff, they beat Bulgaria 3-1 before facing Iceland in the final, where a very late goal from Dominik Szoboszlai earned them a ticket to Euro 2020. After their unexpected qualification, though, Hungary will now have to pay the price as they are now the minnows of the most difficult group in the competition. The Magyars aren't expected to go through to the knockout rounds. They will also miss the services of star player Szoboszlai due to injury. In his absence, the onus will be on SC Freiburg's Roland Sallai to offer that spark going forward. They do have a solid defence, though, led valiantly by RB Leipzig duo Willi Orban and goalkeeper Peter Gulacsi.



KEY PLAYER
Willi Orban

Coach: Marco Rossi