



## RK FANGIRL

Actor Asha Negi says she would like to go on a road trip with actor Ranbir Kapoor

LEISURE P2



## NATO SUMMIT ENDS

The in-person NATO summit has concluded with leaders of the alliance agreeing on a new agenda

INTERNATIONAL P10



## EVES FACE ENGLAND

Indian women's team return to Test cricket after nearly seven years as they take on hosts England starting today

SPORTS P12

# Centre confirms first death due to Covid vax

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, June 15: A government panel studying Covid-19 vaccine side effects has confirmed the first death due to anaphylaxis following vaccination.

The causality assessment of 31 reported Serious Adverse Events Following Immunisation (AEFI) cases following Covid-19 vaccination was carried out by the panel. According to a report by the National AEFI Committee, a 68-year-old man died due to anaphylaxis (severe allergic reaction) after being vaccinated March 8, 2021.

"It is the first death linked to Covid-19 vaccination due to anaphylaxis. It re-emphasises the need to wait for 30 minutes at the inoculation centre after receiving the jab. Most of the anaphylactic reactions occur during this period and prompt treatment prevents deaths," Dr NK Arora, chairperson, National AEFI committee, told PTI.

The Committee examined five such cases that took place February 5, eight cases March 9 and 18 cases March 31. As per data in the first week of April, the reporting rate is 2.7 deaths per million vaccine doses administered and 4.8 hospitalisations per million vaccine doses administered, the report stated.

The panel said mere reporting of deaths and hospitalisations as serious adverse events does not automatically imply that the events were caused due to vaccines.

**A 68-year-old man, fully vaccinated, died March 31 and it has been labelled as "vaccine product related reaction" in a report assessing 31 severe cases**

Only properly conducted investigations and causality assessments can help in understanding if any causal relationship exists between the event and the vaccine, the report said, adding for causality assessments, priority has been given to death cases.

Of the 31 causally assessed cases, 18 were classified as having inconsistent causal association to vaccination (coincidental - not linked to vaccination), 7 were classified as indeterminate, 3 cases were found to be vaccine product related, one was anxiety-related reaction and two cases were found to be unclassifiable, the government panel report said. Vaccine product-related reactions are expected reactions that can be attributed to vaccination based on current scientific evidence, it said.

Examples of such reactions are allergic reactions and anaphylaxis, etc. Indeterminate reactions are reactions which have occurred soon after vaccination.

# TORMENTING TEACHERS



Police personnel trying to stop the members of ETT TET Qualified Unemployed Teachers' Union protesting against the Punjab government near Chief Minister Capt Amarinder Singh's residence in Patiala, Tuesday

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# Armed youth holds family hostage

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bolangir, June 15:** High drama unfolded at Shantipada area here Tuesday as an armed youth barged into a house in the locality and allegedly held the family members hostage after locking the doors from inside.

The drama came to an end after the armed youth was nabbed following a five-hour-long operation, Bolangir SP Nitin Kusalkar said. The youth, identified as Bikram Panda, 35, a resident of Talpalipada in the town, is accused of having fired two rounds during the operation.

The youth reportedly committed the act over one-sided love affair with a female kin of the family, the SP said. The incident oc-

curred when Bikram barged into the house of Dibyalochan Hota, a resident of Shantipada Tuesday morning. Before the family members could understand what was happening, the youth locked the house from inside and held the family members hostage. He asked them to call their niece and threatened to kill all of them.

Panicked, the family members managed to lock themselves inside, while Dibyalochan alerted the PCR. Soon, a team from Bolangir Town police station and fire personnel rushed to the spot. Fire department personnel entered the building and rescued the family members through a rear window. Thereafter, the police nabbed Bikram.

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IRREGULAR by MANJUL

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### MARKET WATCH

INDEX	VAIATION
SENSEX	52773.05 ↑ 221.52
NIFTY	15869.30 ↑ 57.40
DOLLAR	73.95 ↑ ₹0.10
EURO	88.96 ↑ ₹0.08
GOLD	₹48,513 ↓ ₹10
SILVER	₹71,285 ↓ ₹594

### WEATHER

	BHUB	CTK
MAX	31.0°C	31.6°C
MIN	25.4°C	25.0°C
Humidity	87%	85%
Rainfall	Nil	Nil

Forecast: Generally cloudy sky

# HC TEARS INTO CHARGE SHEET

STATE HAS BLURRED THE RIGHT TO PROTEST AND TERROR ACT LINE: DELHI HIGH COURT

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, June 15: In its anxiety to suppress dissent the State has blurred the line between right to protest and terrorist activity and if such a mindset gains traction, it would be a "sad day for democracy", the Delhi High Court said Tuesday while granting bail to three students from JNU and Jamia Millia Islamia (JMI) in a north-east Delhi riots case.

Terming as "somewhat vague" the definition of 'terrorist act' under the stringent UAPA laws and warning against its use in a "cavalier manner", the high court set aside the trial court orders denying bail to JNU students Natasha Narwal and Devangana Kalita and JMI's Asif Iqbal Tanha, allowing their appeals and admitting them to regular bail.

"We are of the view that the foundations of our nation stand on surer footing than to be likely to be shaken by a protest, however vicious, organised by a tribe of college students or other persons, operating as a coordination committee from the confines of a University situated in the heart of Delhi," a bench of Justices Siddharth Mridul and Anup Jairam



## DELHI RIOTS

■ The HC termed as "somewhat vague" the definition of 'terrorist act' under the stringent UAPA laws and warned against its use in a "cavalier manner"

■ The order of release from jail of Devangana and Natasha has been deferred since the high court has sought verification report by Wednesday

Bhambhani said. In three separate judgements of 113, 83 and 72 pages, the high court said that although the definition of 'terrorist act' in Section 15 of the stringent Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA) is wide and

somewhat vague, it must partake the essential character of terrorism and the phrase 'terrorist act' cannot be permitted to be applied in a "cavalier manner" to criminal acts that squarely fall under the IPC. "We are constrained to express,

that it seems, that in its anxiety to suppress dissent, in the mind of the State, the line between the constitutionally guaranteed right to protest and terrorist activity seems to be getting somewhat blurred. If this mindset gains traction, it would be a sad day for democracy" which would be in peril, the bench said, adding there was nothing to show the possible commission of a terrorist act. The high court directed Pinjra

Tod activists Narwal and Kalita and Tanha, who were arrested in May last year in connection with alleged larger conspiracy in the riots, to surrender their passports and not to offer any inducement to prosecution witnesses or tamper with the evidence in the case. The order of release from jail of Devangana and Natasha, in the meantime, has been deferred since the High Court has sought verification report by Wednesday. The three accused shall not indulge in any unlawful activities and shall reside at the address as mentioned in records, the high court said.

Kalita, Narwal and Tanha are accused in four, three and two cases respectively relating to communal riots that broke out February 24 last year and will be released from jail now as they have already secured bail in other matters.

The bench said there is absolutely nothing in the charge sheet, by way of any specific allegation to show the possible commission of a 'terrorist act' within Section 15 UAPA, an act of 'raising funds' to commit a terrorist act under Section 17 and an act of 'conspiracy' to commit or an 'act preparatory' to commit, a terrorist act within Section 18 UAPA.

# PANCHAYAT POLLS LIKELY TO BE DELAYED

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, June 15:** Panchayat election in the state, which is due in February next year, are likely to be delayed in view of the Covid-19 pandemic as well as the government's unpreparedness to hold the polls. In fact, the government is yet to complete the delimitation of wards and announce the reservation of seats for the rural bodies.

The government is yet to hold the elections to the Urban Local Bodies (ULBs), which are pending for two-and-a-half years back as the government is yet to amend the existing laws to determine the reservation and delimitation of seats.

The State Election Commission (SEC), which is responsible for organising the rural polls, had written to the Panchayati Raj department in January and March asking the latter to complete the delimitation of wards and announce the reservation of seats by April 2021. However, the department has not obliged so far.

"Unless necessary instructions are issued by the government to district Collectors, it may not be possible to complete the delimitation of wards and reservation of seats within the deadline fixed by the Commission," SEC secretary RN Sahu said in a letter to the department.

# Amid unlock, doctors say brace for Covid-19 'explosion'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Jun 15: With close gathering of shoppers in markets and restaurants resuming business amid phased unlock in the national capital, doctors Tuesday cautioned that Delhi could face a "worse than second wave situation" of Covid-19 if people do not adhere to safety norms or lower their guards.

The remarks from many doctors at leading government or private facilities here come after visuals of various crowded markets surfaced in reports and on social media, showing Covid-appropriate behaviour not being followed by



many people, like wearing of masks or maintaining social distance. Dr Suranjit Chatterjee, a senior consultant at Apollo Hospitals here, warned that if safety norms

are not followed by people and if there is no strict enforcement in case of violations, then "we are in for a trouble again". "The way cases have come down from over 28,000

at peak in April to 131 cases reported yesterday, it is such a dramatic fall in numbers. And, if lockdown was the primary reason for it, then we have to tread very cautiously now with the restrictions being slowly eased," he said.

"But, if people show laxity by not wearing masks or wearing it inappropriately or violate social distancing norms, and if law enforcement agencies do not penalise and ensure violations do not increase in quantum, then we are certainly in for a trouble. And, the next wave could be worse than the second wave situation," he said. Medical experts in mid-May had

concluded that it was lockdown majorly that had brought down the count of daily cases, while cautioning that the severity of cases was still the same.

Dr Richa Sareen, consultant of pulmonology at Fortis hospital here, who recently lost her immediate family member to Covid, said, "The threat of the third wave hitting is quite real and not a hypothesis." "And, we had similar threat in February when everyone had started going on a vacation or doing house parties or socialising in public places. Now, that the second wave has done so much damage and claimed so many lives, we

need to realise that we have to be disciplined and tread with caution," she said.

The pulmonologist emphasised that in the second wave, at least one member in every household here was either infected by Covid, or the families knew of someone who had been. "We hoped that people will learn lessons from the second wave, but seems we are not being wise as common people. Situation will be worse than during the second wave if we do not wise up. A government cannot keep a lockdown forever, but, we can choose to be disciplined and go out only when needed," she said.

# leisure



## SPICE GIRLS TO CELEBRATE 25 YEARS OF WANNABE

The British girl group *Spice Girls* will release a new song digitally July 9 this year, to celebrate 25 years of their debut single *Wannabe*. The group also plans to release vinyl and cassette versions July 23. This is their first new release since 2007.

## ROGER WATERS SNUBS LUCRATIVE FB OFFER

Rock legend and *Pink Floyd* co-founder Roger Waters has revealed that he has snubbed a lucrative Facebook offer to use the band's iconic 1979 hit *Another brick in the wall, part 2* in an upcoming commercial for Instagram.



### FORTUNE FORECAST

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**ARIES**  
You are likely to give in to the demands of your children today. Ganesh says it is for times like this that you labour so hard. You will finish the tasks that you have been postponing for a long time. It is a good day for people in the medical field and in the public sector.

**TAURUS**  
Today, you will be as creative and competent as you can get. Your work style, the deft way you handle things will awe and amaze your colleagues and superiors. Your subordinates will be highly impressed and motivated. They will be eager and compliant and will support and assist you to the utmost.

**GEMINI**  
You will listen to your heart over your head, swept away as you will be in a flood of emotions today. This could mean that you will be unable to distinguish between good and bad. However, looking back upon your day in the evening, you are unlikely to regret any of the decisions you made, says Ganesh.

**CANCER**  
You will begin the day with a definite plan for a bright future. You will resolutely implement plans that you have made thoughtfully. Such methodical decisions will save you a lot of time in the future. Ganesh says that you will succeed in every endeavour today.

**LEO**  
You will see some change in your daily schedule today. It is a good day to start a new job or business activity. You will focus more attention on your personality today. You will try to improve yourself and bring your hidden talents to the fore. Make the most of this opportunity to implement your plans, says Ganesh.

**VIRGO**  
An unusual dose of creativity will motivate you to make a trip to some exotic place and mingle with new people. You will have some experiences that will enrich you mentally and emotionally. But don't unpack yet, there may be another adventure on the cards. Ganesh says you will be very flexible and adaptable today.

**LIBRA**  
Ganesh says you will be getting good news from abroad, which will make you happy. Those of you who are searching for jobs will get good news coming your way. Ganesh says that you should not expect too much or you would feel dejected and disappointed when it is not met.

**SCORPIO**  
Today, you are like a balloon that may burst any time. You may vent out all the sweet and bitter experiences and feel much lighter. Or it may have adverse effects on your health, says Ganesh. You prefer to stay in your cocoon, in the warmth of your near and dear ones.

**SAGITTARIUS**  
Keeping all the work aside, you may be painting the town red today. Falling in love is exciting, isn't it? However, for all those who are already in a relationship, Ganesh shows a red signal. Avoid arguments with your loved one, He suggests. Impress 'the special one' with a bouquet of red roses and make up for all the petty fights during the day.

**CAPRICORN**  
You firmly believe in the concept of 'health is wealth'. You have maintained a very good health so far and it will not be an issue today, also. Successful completion of current projects seem to be a distant target, however, you will finish them off.

**AQUARIUS**  
You are disappointed and you seek solace in spirituality. Don't run away from the problems; rather face them with strength and confidence, advises Ganesh, to bring your life back on track. With patience and belief in the Almighty, you will be sail through the storm. Understand that challenges are a part of everyone's life.

**PISCES**  
You will display kindness and generosity today and will do your best to help anyone in need. At work you will receive praise for the efforts that you've put in and your dedication will be validated. Even though you intend to give utmost importance to your family, this intention will trail in the shadow of pending work which will require long hours.

## ART to organise props, mask making workshop



POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar:** Eastern Zonal Cultural Centre, Ministry of Culture, Govt of India in association with Alternative Rhythm Theatre (ART), a prominent theatre troupe from Dhenkanal, will organise a national level theatre props and mask making e-workshop from June 17 to 27. More than 25 theatre practitioners from Odisha, West Bengal, Jharkhand and Haryana will be participating in the event. "Though props and masks are integral parts of any theatrical productions, artistes don't get too many opportunities to get trained on making these items," said workshop director Dinesh Das, who is also the founder of ART. The main objective of this workshop is to train the participants on how to create props and masks at low cost and in less time, added Das. ART has carved a space for itself at national level by staging plays throughout the year and helping orphan kids join the mainstream of the society.



## Kiara flaunts her action-packed avatar

**Mumbai:** Actress Kiara Advani flaunts an action-packed avatar in her Tuesday Instagram post.

In the video, Kiara performs a stunt under the guidance of her trainer. She twists and kicks the cap off the trainer's head. "Hats off to him for trusting my kicks back with @mma.lalit after a year and a half," Kiara captioned her video.

Commenting on her post, fans called the actress a 'fitness freak' and 'inspiration'. Kiara was last seen in the comedy film *Indoo Ki Jawaani* where she features alongside Aditya Seal and Mallika Dua. The actress has her kitty full with upcoming films like *Sherashaah* opposite Sidharth Malhotra, the Kartik Aaryan-starrer *Bhool Bhulaiyaa 2* and *Jug Jugg Jeeyo* co-starring Anil Kapoor, Neetu Kapoor and Varun Dhawan.

IAN S

# Asha Negi's wishful thinking

**Mumbai:** Actress Asha Negi says she would like to go on a road trip with top star Ranbir Kapoor, just as he did with actress Deepika Padukone in the 2015 film *Tamasha*. "I am a mountain-person. So, my next trip will be to a place where there's a lot of nature, mountains and a place that I'd be able to trek. I'd actually love to go on a road trip with Ranbir Kapoor, just like he did with

Deepika in the film *Tamasha*," Asha said. "Being a true fangirl of Ranbir, getting to explore new places and cities with him would be an experience of a lifetime. We'd rent a caravan just like we did in *Khwabon Ke Parindey* and keep exploring places!" Asha reveals her wishful thinking.

Web series *Khwabon Ke Parindey* is set in the scenic landscapes of Australia, and is about three friends and a stranger who embark on a road trip from Melbourne to Perth.

IAN S

## SPIC MACAY's week-long event to begin June 21

The interactive series has been exclusively designed for school and college students to get them involved in creative arts and crafts from the comfort of their homes owing to the pandemic

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar:** In an effort to connect youths with the living legends of classical music, dance, and other folk art forms online, Society for the Promotion of Indian Classical Music And Culture Amongst Youth (SPIC MACAY) is organising Anubhav 2021, a week-long event, beginning June 21. The event, with more than two lakhs registrations, had witnessed a wide participation from students across the globe last year. The society is geared up for a second edition following a successful Anubhav series in 2020. The event will be streamed live on society's YouTube channel <https://www.youtube.com/user/spicmacay>.



ANUBHAV 2021

File photo of a SPIC MACAY event

The series has been exclusively designed for school and college students to engage them in creative arts and crafts from the comfort of their homes owing to the pandemic situation. The event also aims at helping students ease their stress and giving them a creative outlet, informed the organisers.

The participants will get opportunities to connect with some

of the greatest Gurus through various activities like classical music and dance concerts, lecture demonstrations, intensive workshops, talks, Naad Yoga, Hatha Yoga, viewing of

theatre and classic movies and environmental interactions.

Registrations are now open at: [spicmacay.org/convention/anubhav2021/registration](http://spicmacay.org/convention/anubhav2021/registration).

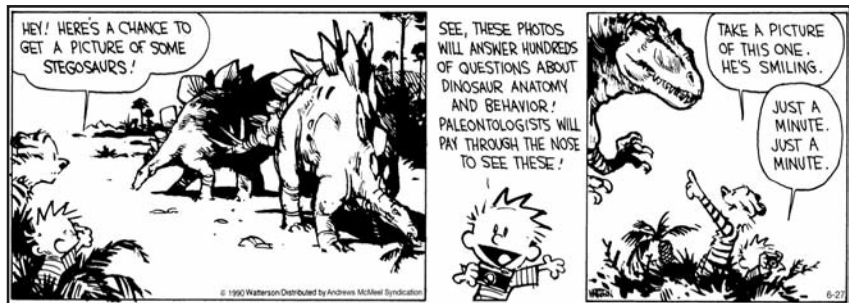
Last year more than 1,000 students from Odisha took part in the event while many institutions namely Kendriya Vidyalayas, AIIMS-Bhubaneswar, IISER, DAVs, Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalayas, Saraswati Shishu Vidya Mandirs will be participating in Anubhav-2021, it was learnt.

### FUN post

### PEANUTS



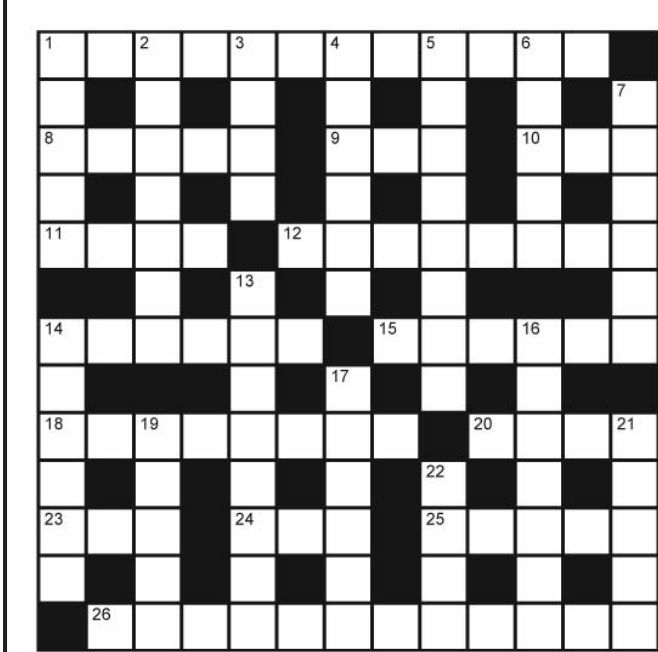
### CALVIN AND HOBBS



### BREVITY



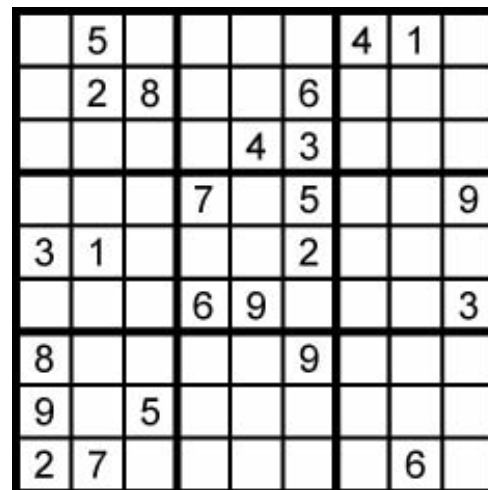
### CROSSWORD



- Across**
- 1 One of a kind
  - 8 Door part
  - 9 Hawaiian garland
  - 10 Toothpaste type
  - 11 Defeat decisively
  - 12 Initiate, as a conversation (6,2)
  - 14 Arabian Nights hero
  - 15 Wheat product
  - 18 Not a copy
  - 20 Lowly worker
  - 23 Beer barrel
  - 24 Convent dweller
  - 25 Acquired relative (2-3)
  - 26 Document holders (7,5)
  - Down**
  - 1 Wedding helper
  - 2 Antarctic denizen
  - 3 Rod attachment
  - 4 Sue Lyon title role
  - 5 Qualified
  - 6 Dangerous wave
  - 7 Loafer, e.g. (4-2)
  - 13 Mexican estate
  - 14 Strange and frightening
  - 16 Vine holder
  - 17 Potbelly
  - 19 Bullion unit
  - 21 Babes in the woods
  - 22 Brass component

### 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



CROSSWORD

SUDOKU

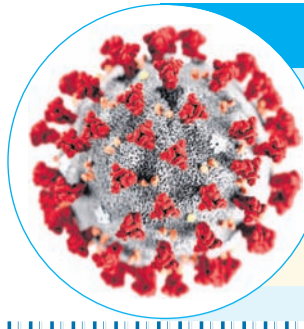


CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW



## ETERNAL BONDING

The wedding of Hara-Parvati being held at Gadagadeswar temple in Cuttack, Tuesday



## COVID-19 TRACKER

	INFECTED	RECOVERED	DEAD
World	17,71,73,540	16,13,97,504	38,29,564
India	2,95,70,881	2,82,80,472	3,77,031
Odisha	8,59,526	8,11,780	3,388

## Man hacked to death

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Khurda, June 15:** A 35-year-old man was hacked to death by some unidentified miscreants at Thakurpada under Khurda Town police limits here Tuesday.

The victim has been identified as Umakanta Sahu of the village.

According to sources, some miscreants picked up a quarrel with Sahu near his residence in the evening. Soon, they attacked Sahu with sharp weapons.

Sahu sustained several grievous injuries and was rushed to a hospital in a critical condition. However, he was declared dead-on-arrival. On being informed, police reached the hospital and sent the body for postmortem. The incident could be the fallout of a past enmity, police said.

## Srimandir to be lit up

**Puri:** If things go well, Srimandir will be illuminated with colourful lights as a five-member technical team of the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) has visited the 12th century shrine for the purpose Tuesday. The work will begin July 4 or 5 and will be completed by Rath Yatra. "Around Rs 1.5 crore will be spent on the project. Along with the outer portion of the shrine, Nata Mandap, Bhoga Mandap, Jagamohan, Beherana Dwar, Sata Pahacha, Ghanti Dwar and a few other places will be decorated with colourful lights," an ASI official said.

# Dependence on Centre for black fungus drugs reduces

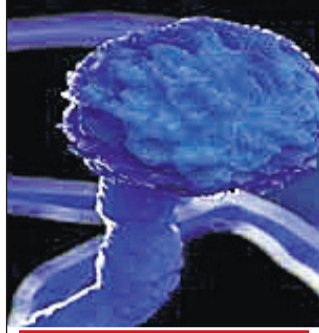
POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, June 15:** The absolute dependence on the Union government for supply of mucormycosis (black fungus) drugs has ended as the state government is now directly procuring some of these drugs from the manufacturers.

However, major drugs for treatment of black fungus, like Amphotericin B injections, are still being procured through the Ministry of Chemicals and Fertilizers which is allocating the same to the states from time to time.

The Health department Tuesday said that the availability of mucormycosis drugs in the state has improved as the state has started procuring the scarce life-saving drugs from the manufacturers directly which was done after the government had issued tenders for the same.

"The availability of black fungus drugs has improved in the state. While we are still receiving the drugs from the Centre, we have been able to get more supplies through other suppliers although in limited amount," said state



## SUPPLY CONSTRAINTS

■ Availability of mucormycosis drugs in the state has improved as the state has started procuring the scarce life-saving drugs from the manufacturers directly which was done after the government had issued tenders for the same

■ State has reported a total of 82 black fungus cases while 7 persons have succumbed to the ailment

Health Services director Bijay Mohapatra.

He also added, "Mucormycosis cases are declining and the state

health institutions have been specially focusing on catering to the needs of the patients."

The Health department has dedicated 30-bed wards for black fungus patients at SCB Medical College and VIMSAR each. Every district headquarters hospital (DHH) has also reserved four beds for treatment of the fungal disease.

According to Health department data, the state has reported a total of 82 black fungus cases while seven persons succumbed to the fungal ailment. The department, however, attributed these deaths to reasons other than mucormycosis.

The department claimed that one infected person has been cured of the disease. Government statistics claim that most of the mucormycosis patients visit the All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS), Bhubaneswar, SCB Medical College and Hospital in Cuttack and MKCG Medical College and Hospital at Berhampur.

Besides Amphotericin B, the state government has procured some alternate medicines used for the treatment of black fungus like Posaconazole, said sources.

## POLITICKLE by MANJUL



## Quarrying on Srimandir land under NGT lens

The NGT termed the committee's report as absolutely slipshod and observed that the committee has failed to identify the persons who have carried out the illegal mining

POST NEWS NETWORK

**New Delhi, June 15:** Expressing disappointment at the report submitted by a four-member committee regarding illegal mining of laterite stone in Khurda, the National Green Tribunal (NGT) questioned as to how Shree Jagannath Temple Administration (SJTA) could be permitted to extract minerals without obtaining environment clearance.

The NGT observed that the SJTA in its affidavit clearly stated that 26 laterite stone quarries have been detected by the temple administration on the Srimandir land in Khurda district and notice was duly published for auction of these quarries. The green body observed it has been established that it would be SJTA which had auctioned the mines and the mining has also been carried out in an extensive area.

"We find this affidavit silent on the question as to whether any environment clearance, consent to establish and consent to operate were obtained from the Odisha State Pollution Control Board or State Environmental Impact Assessment Authority, Odisha," the tribunal observed.

Significantly, a bench of Judicial Member B Amit Sthalekar and Expert Member Saibal Dasgupta termed the four-member committee report as absolutely slipshod and observed that the committee has failed to identify the persons who have carried out the illegal mining of laterite stone.

The NGT was also dissatisfied



with the action plan submitted by the SJTA for restoration and restitution of land damaged by excessive mining.

The tribunal stated that the action plan does not even mention about the quantity of pulverized fly ash being used to fill the mining voids or the action being taken for afforestation, and for renovation of the deep sites for transformation into small water bodies.

The tribunal asked the committee to submit its fresh report by July 22.

Earlier, the NGT had constituted a four-member committee comprising a senior scientist from Central Pollution Control Board, Khurda DM, SEIAA member secretary and a member of OSPCB to investigate the allegations related to illegal mining of laterite stone in Khurda district.

A petition had been filed in the tribunal alleging illegal mining of laterite stone through rat hole mining method without following the SOP and other Environment Laws.

## Over 10L vax doses administered in City

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, June 15:** The Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC) in association with the Health and Family Welfare (H&FW) department has administered more than 10 lakh doses of Covid vaccine to the people in the Capital city here.

As many as 6,30,191 people have taken their first dose while 3,79,505 of them have been administered both the doses at government as well as private vaccination centres in the city, said sources at BMC.

"We have adopted a very elaborate and inclusive plan to vaccinate the people in the Capital city as part of our fight against the Covid-19 pandemic. However, we all should continue to follow Covid appropriate behaviour to defeat the deadly virus," said BMC Commissioner Sanjay Kumar Singh.

A total of 3,45,342 people above 45 years have taken their first dose from January to June 14. Out of them, 2,27,995 have been completely vaccinated in government and private centres, BMC sources said.

Under 18-44 age bracket, the cumulative number of beneficiaries vaccinated with the first dose till June 14 is 1,90,439. On the other hand, the number of beneficiaries in the 18-44 age group who have received both the doses is 81,645, BMC sources added.

Under healthcare workers category, a total of 34,040 beneficiaries have been administered with both doses of the vaccine.

While 51,713 people coming under the frontline workers category have been administered with the first dose of vaccine, at least 32,939 have been given both the doses to make them build a protective shield to fight against the Covid-19 pandemic.

## CAR FEST AHEAD



Chariot construction work in full swing ahead of Rath Yatra in Puri, Tuesday

OP PHOTO

# Routapada weavers' unique service to the Lord

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Khurda, June 15:** The weavers of Routapada in Begunia block of Khurda district have created an identity for themselves by supplying cotton and silk garments for Rath Yatra and other rituals of Srimandir deities.

The families of weaver Gopinath Das and a few of his relatives have been supplying cotton and silk garments for Srimandir deities for last 27 years.

This year too, Gopinath and his relatives have started supplying garments for Lord Jagannath, Lord Balabhadra, Devi Subhadra and other subsidiary deities of Srimandir ahead of the Snana Yatra and Rath Yatra in Puri, sources said.

"My father Madhusudan Das had got an opportunity to weave clothes for Srimandir deities in 1993. Since then, my family and a few of our relatives have been supplying cotton and silk garments for Lord Jagannath and his siblings. We had prepared garments for the deities during the Nabakalebara rituals in 1996 and 2015. We had also supplied clothes during the Nagarjuna Besha of the Trinity last year," said Gopinath.



Weaver Gopinath Das and his family at Routapada

**My father Madhusudan Das had got an opportunity to weave clothes for Srimandir deities in 1993. Since then, my family and a few of our relatives have been supplying cotton and silk garments for Lord Jagannath and his siblings. We had prepared garments for the deities during the Nabakalebara rituals in 1996 and 2015.**

GOPINATH DAS I  
A WEAVER OF ROUTAPADA

The second wave of Covid-19 pandemic and the subsequent lockdowns have created hindrances in getting raw materials. Despite the obstacles, the weavers of

Routapada have managed to continue their service to Lord Jagannath. "With the blessings of the Lord, we have started delivering garments to Srimandir amid the pandemic. We will complete the task within a few days," Gopinath said.

The weavers usually start weaving

clothes for Srimandir deities on the occasion of Akshaya Trutiya ever year. The Shree Jagannath Temple Administration (SJTA) in Puri invariably sends a complete list of garments required for Snana Yatra, Rath Yatra and other rituals, sources said.

The weavers of Routapada have made garments like Cheheli Pata, Geetagovinda Pata, Khandua Pata and Gamuchha for this year's Snana Yatra and Rath Yatra, scheduled to be held June 24 and July 12 respectively.

"We usually weave around 30 varieties of cotton and silk clothes including Netaphuta, Boirani, Patani, Tanakhosa, Malamala, Srimukha Ota and Gadiphuta for Lord Jagannath and other deities of Srimandir. Around 25 weavers' families of Routapada

have been providing service to the Lord," Gopinath said.

Gopinath's nephew Kartikeswar Patra, a differently-abled, is also weaving clothes for Srimandir deities.

"I had started serving the Lord around 20 years ago after finishing my school education. I had never visited Srimandir in Puri but I always feel the presence of Lord Jagannath near me while weaving Geetagovinda Pata. I will continue this service till the last breath," said Kartikeswar.

Gopinath's mother Aseli, an octogenarian woman, braves the age constraints to help her family in weaving the clothes. "My mother has engaged herself to the service of Lord Jagannath for last 27 years," revealed Gopinath.

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# 3,405 fresh nCoV cases, 42 fatalities in 24 hours

## ODISHA'S POSITIVITY RATE STANDS AT 6.72 PER CENT

AGENCIES

**Bhubaneswar, June 15:** Odisha Tuesday registered 3,405 new Covid-19 cases, pushing the tally to 8,59,526, while 42 fresh fatalities raised the toll to 3,388, a Health department official said.

This apart, 53 Covid-19 patients in the state have died due to co-morbidities.

Of the 3,405 new cases, 1,942 were recorded in quarantine centres, and the remaining during contact tracing.

Khurda district, of which the state capital Bhubaneswar is a part, reported the maximum number of new cases at 500, followed by Jajpur at 391, Balasore at 296 and Cuttack at 230.

As many as 21 districts reported below 100 cases each, the lowest being nine in the Jharsuguda.

As many as 14 districts in the state registered a positivity rate below 5 per cent while eight districts recorded between 5 and 7.5 per cent and the rest eight districts reported over 7.5 per cent.

Accordingly, the number of active cases in the coastal state climbed to 51,104.

The coastal state reported 42 deaths in the past 24 hours of which Khurda, Puri, Jharsuguda and Cuttack districts have accounted for four deaths each. Three each died in four districts, two each in another



**K**hurda, Puri, Jharsuguda and Cuttack districts have accounted for four deaths each

**T**hree each died in four districts, two each in another four districts and one each succumbed to the virus in six districts

**A**s many as 21 districts reported below 100 cases each, the lowest being nine in the Jharsuguda

four districts and one each succumbed to the virus in six districts.

At least 8,182 more people recuperated from the disease Monday, which took the total number of recoveries to 8,04,981, the official said.

Odisha's positivity rate stands at 6.72 per cent.

Over 1.27 crore samples were tested in the state thus far, including 56,807 Monday, he added.

Meanwhile, the state government has asked the district administrations of Ganjam, Rayagada and Koraput to provide all logistics and extend necessary cooperation to an Indian Council of Medical

Research (ICMR) team, which is scheduled to undertake its fourth serological survey.

The ICMR's Regional Medical Research Centre (RMRC) here will conduct the survey in these districts as part of its nationwide initiative to ascertain if people have developed antibodies against Covid-19.

Additional Chief Secretary, Health and Family Welfare department, PK Mohapatra, pointed out that the team will conduct sero-survey in 10 clusters in each district.

RMRC director Sanghamitra Pati said that children below 14 years of age will also be made a part of the survey.



Seized vehicles parked near Badambadi police station in Cuttack being relocated, Tuesday, to make the road congestion free

OP PHOTO

# Heavy rainfall warning for 8 districts

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, June 15:** The India Meteorological Department (IMD) Tuesday said heavy rainfall is likely to occur at a few places in eight coastal and north Odisha districts Wednesday.

Issuing yellow warning, the IMD said some places of Balasore, Bhadrak, Jajpur, Kendrapara, Cuttack, Jagatsinghpur, Keonjhar and Mayurbhanj districts are likely

**Some places of Balasore, Bhadrak, Jajpur, Kendrapara, Cuttack, Jagatsinghpur, Keonjhar and Mayurbhanj districts are likely to receive heavy rain today**

to receive heavy rain Wednesday. Similarly, light to moderate rain

or thundershower is very likely to occur at many places in the districts of north Odisha and at a few places of the districts of south Odisha in next 24 hours.

Similar weather condition would prevail at a few places of Balasore, Bhadrak, Jajpur, Kendrapara, Cuttack, Jagatsinghpur, Keonjhar, Mayurbhanj, Dhenkanal and Angul June 17 and Sundargarh, Keonjhar, Deogarh, Angul,

Sambalpur, Jharsuguda & Bargarh districts the next day. During past 24 hours, light to moderate rainfall has occurred at most places in the districts of north interior Odisha, north coastal Odisha, south interior Odisha and south coastal Odisha.

As the sea condition would be rough, the Met department advised fishermen not to venture into deep sea of north Bay of Bengal and adjoining central Bay of Bengal till June 17.

# CB forms team to probe spurious anti-Covid drug

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, June 15:** The Crime Branch (CB) Tuesday constituted a team of officials under the Special Task Force (STF) to investigate the alleged trade of spurious anti-Covid medicines in the state.

The move comes a day after Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik ordered a CB probe into the issue.

Sources said that the team, which will work under the supervision of STF DIG Jay Narayan Pankaj, Tuesday held discussions with a few officials of the Directorate of Drugs Control on the issue.

According to sources, a special team comprising officials of the Health department and police has raided various places in 14 districts and recovered a large number of medicines used in treating Covid-19, which are suspected to be spurious.

State Drugs Controller Ananda Prasad Das said that they have seized nine drugs from a medicine store in Cuttack. While the

Favipiravir tablets were found to be fake, reports on the other medicines are awaited.

Following the recovery of the drugs from the Cuttack drug shop June 10, seizures were also made in places such as Bolangir, Jharsuguda, Sambalpur, Rourkela, Kalahandi and Bhubaneswar, a senior official said.

The Odisha government launched the raids following a tip-off from the Food and Drugs Administration, Maharashtra, on spurious Favipiravir tablets allegedly manufactured by a company in Himachal Pradesh. However, a probe has revealed that the company does not exist in the north Indian state.

Earlier, Health and Family Welfare department's Additional Chief Secretary PK Mohapatra issued a direction to the Odisha State Medical Corporation Limited and the police to launch a joint inquiry into the seizure of alleged spurious drugs.

# POLICE RELEASE POSTERS TO CRACK 9-YR-OLD MURDER CASE

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, June 15:** The Commissionerate Police Tuesday released the images of a lady whose body was found in Chandaka forest near Ghangapatna under Chandaka police station in 2012. The Chandaka police which has been clueless for nine years Tuesday reopened the case (12/2015).

Notably, the locals of Ghangapatna area spotted the mutilated body of the woman, believed

to be around 25-30 years, in the forest May 27, 2012. Later, police rescued the body and registered an unnatural death case. However, the post-mortem report and a blood-soaked stone found near the body revealed that the lady was bludgeoned to death by unknown miscreants who later threw her body in the forests. Subsequently, police transformed the UD case into murder.

Though police failed to get the identity of the deceased, the poly

bag carrying her clothes had the address of the cloth store at Kamakshya Nagar College Square in Dhenkanal district. Police suspect the deceased might be a native of Dhenkanal district.

However, the police officials have been sitting silent on the case for the last nine years. Recently, DCP Umashankar Dash directed the Chandaka police to release the images of the lady in the hope to get some clues to crack the pending murder case. The Commissionerate

Police pasted the posters at various public spaces and vehicles urging the citizens to share information about the deceased lady through cell-phone nos 8280338323, 9438849959 and 8280338296 belonging to Chandaka PS.

Earlier, the CP managed to crack a gory murder incident in which the killers had thrown away the headless torso of the woman victim in Chandaka forest near Andharua village on the outskirts of the city in February this year.

# Special train between Hatia, Bangalore



POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, June 15:** The Ministry of Railways has decided to run special trains between Hatia and Bangalore Cant from June 19.

As per Railways sources, 08637/08638 Hatia-Bangalore Cant-Hatia Special from Hatia will leave at 18:25 hrs June 19 and 26, 2021 and leave Bangalore Cant at 00:20 hrs (midnight of Monday) June 22 and 29.

This train will have stoppages at Rourkela, Jharsuguda, Sambalpur, Bargarh Road, Bolangir, Titilagarh, Kesinga, Muniguda, Rayagada, Parvatipuram and other important stations between Hatia and Bangalore Cant from both the directions.

The Railways has decided to cancel the Visakhapatnam-Mumbai LIT-Visakhapatnam Special from Visakhapatnam between June 15 and 30 and from LIT from June 18 to July 2 temporarily for safety related modernisation work in Central Railway jurisdiction.

# AIIMS PG entrance test postponed

AGENCIES

**Bhubaneswar, June 15:** All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) Post Graduate Entrance Examination, which was scheduled to begin June 16 has been postponed in view of the prevailing Covid-19 pandemic.



Details regarding the rescheduled dates for the exam will be shared in due course of time, informed AIIMS Registrar. The common entrance examination was scheduled to be held from June 16 to 21.

# Mission Jeevika brings 120% more land under cultivation

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, June 15:** Mission Jeevika launched by ST & SC Development, Minorities and Backward Classes Welfare department two years ago has resulted in 120 per cent increase in land under cultivation as compared to 2020 Rabi season.

The programme launched for promotion of a scalable and replicable livelihood cluster model suitable to local conditions of tribal communities has also resulted in 83 per cent increase in area under irrigation during 2019 Rabi season as compared to the previous Rabi season, according to the internal impact assessment study by the department.

Under this mission, more than 1.50 lakh tribal households have been supported through 969 farm-based and off-farm clusters by ensuring timely access to quality inputs, introduction of better production practices, training and capacity building support and marketing assistance on convergence mode. The objective of the mission was to ensure sustainable livelihood for ST families through land and non-land based activities for income generation and better living standard of the tribals.

"The convergence of Mission Jeevika with the Agriculture Production Cluster project aims at creating vibrant farming clusters among the marginal farmer communities who are now reaping rich dividends. The new technologies introduced in the clusters have augmented productivity manifold and made harvesting easier," said Ranjana Chopra, principal secretary of the department.

Meanwhile, Mission Jeevika-II guidelines have been framed to



## LIVELIHOOD MATTERS

strengthen its activities by creating necessary infrastructure to ensure sustainability of the clusters.

Further, Mission Jeevika has entered into a partnership with Agriculture Production Clusters (APCs) of Agriculture and Farmers' Empowerment department to enhance the income of small and marginal tribal farmers of 27 tribal dominated blocks in seven districts by facilitating them to practice market linked production clusters

"During Covid-19 pandemic, our aim has been to create employment in tribal areas through various initiatives like providing technical inputs, seed support and fertilizers under Mission Jeevika for sustenance of livelihoods. Further, we have revised scheme guidelines to enhance irrigation coverage and emphasise mixed farming strategies," said Guha Poonam Tapas Kumar, IAS, Director ST cum CEO, OTDs.

Mission Jeevika is sustaining livelihoods of tribals through timely supply of inputs and technical assistance clubbed up with tremendous efforts and willingness of

Over 1.50 lakh tribal households have been supported through 969 farm-based and off-farm clusters by ensuring timely access to quality inputs, introduction of better production practices, training and capacity building support and marketing assistance on convergence mode

beneficiaries at Sunakhandi and Krushapatraguda village in Kalyansinghpur block of Rayagada.

Now, the beneficiaries have started yielding good results with production and sale of 3 tonne bitter gourd in several districts. The vegetable is being marketed through Farmer Producers' Group of ORMAS on an average of Rs 30 per kg yielding returns to the tune of Rs 25,000 to Rs 35,000 per beneficiary.

## IN MEMORIAM



Members of Utkal Sammilani pay floral tribute to poet Fakir Mohan Senapati on his death anniversary near Utkal University in Bhubaneswar, Tuesday

OP PHOTO

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# Farmers deprived as Sambalpur excluded from Yaas-affected districts



Ashok Pradhan, convener of Paschim Odisha Krushak Sangathan said, "The farmers faced problems during harvesting of rabi crops as labourers failed to come over here due to Covid restrictions imposed in the district and other parts of Western Odisha. The unseasonal rainfall and the cyclonic storm Yaas played havoc with the yield of farmers. The harvested paddy got wet in the rainfall and has sprouted.

Farmers tried to harvest their crops with machines but failed to do so as the farmlands became waterlogged during the rainfall. As a result, paddy crops on hectares and hectares of farmlands were destroyed. The farmers' outfit had gheraoed the district collectorate recently in this regard.

The additional district magistrate (ADM) Umakant Raj had met the farmers and assured them that a report on the loss would be prepared and submitted to the state government within two days. Since then, 10 days have passed but the district administration is yet to prepare a report and submit it to the state government.

He alleged that farmers are facing various problems due to the administrative apathy for which farmers will be soon staging an agitation.

When contacted, SK Ray, chief agriculture officer in the district said farmers will not be getting compensation as the name of Sambalpur district does not find any mention in the list of 10 Yaas affected districts. However, a report on crop loss is being prepared which will be soon submitted to the state government. Various aspects regarding crop loss will be reviewed as per rules laid out by SRC.

occurred in May destroyed the paddy crops grown by the farmers in Sambalpur district. However, their bad days were not yet over. Whatever they had managed to save was destroyed in the cyclonic storm Yaas which struck the state, May 25.

The paddy crops on their farmland, farmyard and harvested paddy in sacks were destroyed after getting wet in the rainfall caused by the calamity.

Farmers' outfits and various political parties staged protests demanding compensation for the former. Bowing to the demands, the officials of agriculture and revenue department undertook surveys to make an assessment of the loss incurred by the farmers during the calamity. However, according to the agriculture department officials, they are yet to submit the report.

Farmers apprehend that they will be deprived of receiving compensation if the administration makes delay in submitting primary report.

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Sambalpur, June 15:** The Chief Minister had announced a compensation package for farmers and other people affected by the cyclonic storm Yaas June 10. However, the exclusion of Sambalpur district from the list of Yaas affected districts has left the farmers deprived of compensation. As a result, the fate of the farmers now hinges with the Special Relief Commissioner (SRC). The farmers will be able to get some relief if the SRC announces some compensation or financial assistance for them.

Notably, farmers in Sambalpur district cultivate rabi crops with water available for irrigation from Hirakud dam and the lift irrigation points in Kuchinda. The farmers here cultivate paddy as well as pulses, oilseeds and vegetables during the rabi seasons. However, the unseasonal rainfall has destroyed crops grown on 8000 hectares of farmlands.

Reports said that the unseasonal rainfall and thunderstorm which



A bullet ambulance launched in Jeypore Tuesday will be ferrying pregnant women and patients in remote areas of Koraput district to hospitals

# Odia jawan Sanjay cremated with full state honours in Kandhamal

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Raikia, June 15:** The last rites of Indian Army soldier Sanjay Kumar Pradhan were performed with full state honours Tuesday. Sanjay hailed from Bagharama village under Raikia block in Kandhamal district and was working in Bihar regiment of Indian Army. He suffered a heart attack and breathed his last in the line of duty at Srinagar. His last rites were performed at his native place only.

The body of the deceased reached the Biju Patnaik International Airport (BPIA) at around 9.00pm



Monday. Then it was taken to the Bagharama village Tuesday morning. The local administration had

already made elaborate arrangements to receive the body in a proper manner.

At the village cremation ground, hundreds of people from different walks of life paid floral tributes to Pradhan and offered their condolences to the bereaved family members.

Pradhan was given a gun salute and the rites were performed amidst chanting of 'Sanjay Kumar Amar Rahe' and 'Bharat Mata ki Jay'. A pall of gloom had descended on the entire village since the news of Pradhan's demise was conveyed to his family members.

# Man strangulates wife with electric wire over tiff

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Kantabani, June 15:** A family feud turned tragic after a man allegedly strangulated his wife with an electric wire at Sadar village under Dhamandanga panchayat of Kantabani police limits in Bolangir district late Monday night.

The accused was identified as Jayaram Majhi while the deceased was his wife Urmila Majhi. Police sent the body for post-mortem and detained Jayaram for interrogation.

Reports said that the couple was not on good terms with each other and they used to fight over trivial issues frequently. The incident occurred after a fight broke out between them over some petty issue again late Monday. Enraged, Jayaram strangled his wife with the help of an electric wire which resulted in her death.

Urmila's body was found lying inside the house with blood stains on her neck. Jayaram, after committing the crime, informed the village guard who in turn informed the police. Neighbours also informed the parents of the deceased.

Urmila's father rushed to the spot and lodged a complaint with police alleging that his daughter has been murdered by the son-in-law. A case was registered in this connection and further investigations are on, police said.

Jayaram had married Urmila five years ago and have two sons and a daughter, reports added.

# Lightning claims 2 lives, injures one



POST NEWS NETWORK

**Sonepur, June 15:** Two persons were killed and one was severely burned after lightning struck them at Bhaluchuan village under Biramaharajpur police limits in Subarnapur district, police said Tuesday.

The deceased have been identified as Trilochan Pradhan of Bahalpadar village and Basanti Munda of Bhaluchuan village. Sambaru Munda is the other person who has suffered burn injuries.

According to a source, the victims were working at a kendu leaf farm in Badarakata village under Biramaharajpur police limits when lightning struck them Monday evening. Trilochan and Basanti died on the spot while Sambaru luckily survived. However, he is in critical condition and is currently undergoing treatment at the Subarnapur district headquarters hospital (DHH).

The senseless trio was immediately rushed to a nearby government hospital where doctors declared Trilochan and Basanti as brought dead. Sambaru was later shifted to the Subarnapur DHH as his condition deteriorated.

While police have launched an investigation registering a case, local people demanded compensation for the bereaved families.

# Santhal women script success story in finger millet cultivation



POST NEWS NETWORK

**Keonjhar, June 15:** Tribal women farmers from Santhal community have managed to become self-reliant by taking up finger millet cultivation through integrated farming methods as part of a livelihood initiative at Guhaldih village under Sadar block in Keonjhar district.

The women, all members of a Budhabudhi women self-help group (SHG), have set an example for others to emulate by taking up the cultivation for the first time on seven acre of fallow land. The women have achieved the feat during the lockdown which was once thought to be impossible for other farmers.

The women have garnered success with the help and assistance provided by a voluntary outfit IDA and funds available from the district

**The women, all members of a Budhabudhi women self-help group (SHG), have set an example for others to emulate by taking up the cultivation for the first time on seven acre of fallow land**

mineral foundation. They have also made best use of the technical assistance provided by the agriculture department to reap the harvest. Reports said that finger millet is much in demand as it is beneficial for health due to presence of calcium, iron and fibre in the food grain. It is also free from gluten. The women were drawn towards

this cultivation after their president Hemant Majhi persuaded them to take up cultivation.

The persuasion worked following which the women farmers Saraswati Majhi, Marnabati Majhi, Jashobanti Majhi, Sagi Munda, Nimanti Majhi, Mama Hembram, Phulamani Majhi, Sita Munda and Hemanti Majhi prepared seven acre of fallow land for the cultivation.

The voluntary outfit has supplied them with 4.200kg of seeds for the cultivation. They expect that they will harvest around 49 quintals of finger millet which they will sell at Rs3,377 per quintal to the state government.

When contacted, Debashis Das, coordinator of the outfit said that the women will get ₹200 per acre from the state government after their harvest.

# 'Duped' allegedly in love, Bhadrak woman kills self

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhadrak, June 15:** Police recovered the hanging body of a young woman from her rented accommodation opposite Januganj Durga Mandap under Bhadrak town police limits Monday night. The deceased has been identified as Sangeeta Prusty, a native of Sindol village under Tihidi block. The body has been sent for post-mortem.

During preliminary investigation, police found an abandoned motorcycle a few metres away from the deceased's rented accommodation.

Sangeeta's family members alleged that she ended her life due to mental stress after being dumped by the person she was in love with.

On the basis of this allegation, the police are now trying to ascertain the real reason behind Sangeeta's suicide. They suspect that the two-wheeler may belong to the person that the deceased was having an affair with. They have got information that the person visited Sangeeta on the first day of the Raja festival. Police said they have identified the owner of the motorcycle from its registration number and have launched a manhunt for him.

Sources said that Sangeeta and three others had been sharing the rented accommodation for a long time. She was alone Monday as



**Sangeeta's family members alleged that she ended her life due to mental stress after being dumped by the person she was in love with**

her roommates had gone to their respective homes for Raja. She was working in a private firm and also preparing for competitive exams.

Sangeeta had lunch Monday afternoon and locked herself from inside. She did not come out even in the evening. Suspecting if something was wrong, the house owner knocked repeatedly on the door. On not getting any reply, he pried open the window only to find Sangeeta hanging from the ceiling.

The house owner immediately informed the police who promptly arrived. They brought the body down and sent it for post-mortem.

# Anganwadi worker attempts self-immolation

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Kamakhyanagar, June 15:** An Anganwadi worker sustained critical burn injuries after she attempted self-immolation over an alleged family dispute at Jirala village here in Dhenkanal district Sunday.

The Anganwadi worker has been identified as Samita Mishra, of Jirala village under Kamakhyanagar police limits. Sources said, Samita attempted to commit suicide after she had a fight with her daughter in the afternoon.

Local residents immediately rushed her to Jirala community health centre (CHC) in a critical condition from where she was shifted to the district headquarters hospital (DHH) in Dhenkanal.

# NOBLE INITIATIVE



People feeding stray monkeys in Koksara of Kalahandi district starving for food during the lockdown

# 7-yr-old orphaned girl nurses newborn brother

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhograi, June 15:** At times desperate situations give kids a wise head on their young and fragile shoulders. Same is the case with seven-year-old Krishna, the daughter of late Kamalesh and Smita Panda of Nimatpur village under Bhograi block in Balasore district. Krishna and her one-and-a-half-month-old brother have suddenly become orphans losing both their parents to the dreaded Covid-19 virus.

Krishna is yet to realise the gravity of their loss. However, she has understood that there is no one to look after her brother. So she has donned her mother's coat, taking care of the newborn.

"She feeds her brother, and then puts him to sleep singing lullabies. She has forgotten her own pain to care for her brother. The way she looks after the toddler is enough to bring tears to anyone's eyes. We wonder why the almighty was so



cruel to her," lamented the other villagers.

Even though Krishna is yet to understand the harsh realities of the world, she has vowed that she will take care of her brother's education.

The two are now staying at their paternal uncle's house.

Krishna's relatives said that she turns sad and tears roll down her cheeks whenever she sees the pictures of her parents or even when

Krishna is yet to realise the gravity of their loss. However, she has understood that there is no one to look after her brother. So she has donned her mother's coat, taking care of the newborn

someone discusses them. But then, she quickly wipes them off to take care of her brother. It is as if she is forgetting her losses by looking after the needs of her brother who is too small to even realise that the world has changed for him.

Villagers are hoping that the state government will provide some assistance to Krishna and her brother. They said without government assistance the future of the two orphaned kids looks bleak.

FOCUS PRIVATE FINANCE

# FICKLE GLOBAL CAPITAL



Despite all the hype, greater access to private global finance has not been much use to most emerging and developing economies over the past two decades, much less during the pandemic. The record suggests that solutions to current macroeconomic dilemmas that still rely on net private capital inflows could end up merely intensifying the problem

On the other hand, emerging-market economies' greater engagement with and exposure to global financial markets does not really enable them to undertake such spending. In fact, it can actually act as a damper on necessary fiscal expansion, owing to policymakers' constant (and realistic) fear of credit-rating downgrades and capital flight. Even the need to spend more on mounting climate-change threats, for which current adaptation efforts are completely inadequate, is ignored because of such pressures.

The pandemic and the current revival of capital inflows into emerging markets are intensifying the contradictions. Many emerging markets and developing countries already face looming debt problems, which will only worsen as they borrow more during the pandemic. The private sector in lower-income countries has contracted much more debt than the public sector has, but governments rightly worry that they will have to step in and guarantee those loans when the going gets tough. Even when debt held by foreigners is denominated in domestic currency, this does not guarantee stability, because sell-offs and capital-flow reversals driven by changing investor perceptions can lead to currency devaluations and domestic banking crises.

Despite all the hype, greater access to private global finance has not been much use to most emerging and developing economies over the past two decades, much less during the pandemic. The record suggests that solutions to current macroeconomic dilemmas that still rely on net private capital inflows could end up merely intensifying the problem.

The writer, Executive Secretary of International Development Economics Associates, is Professor of Economics at the University of Massachusetts Amherst and a member of the Independent Commission for the Reform of International Corporate Taxation.

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reserves, increasingly means that even net recipients of foreign capital don't really dare to spend it. India, for example, has significantly boosted its forex reserves during the COVID-19 crisis - the volume recently exceeded \$600 billion - in the mistaken belief that this is an indication of economic strength.

Large forex reserves are extremely expensive, because countries typically park them in safe assets like US Treasury bills, which provide low rates of return. This adds to the more general problem of significant wealth transfers between emerging and advanced economies. Moreover, the yield differentials between emerging economies' gross external assets and their higher-yielding external liabilities often generate large outward income transfers. Turkish economist Yilmaz Akyüz, formerly of the UN Conference on Trade and Development, has estimated that in 2000-16, such inadvertent transfers to advanced economies amounted to 2.3 per cent of the combined GDP of the G20 emerging economies each year.

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Once again, emerging markets are on the capital-flows roller coaster - one no less dizzying for being so familiar. And once again, the highs and lows of financial-market swings in these economies are mostly generated by external forces, not national policies. But the possibility that even the smallest domestic mistake could send them into a tailspin still looms large.

The past 18 months have provided ample evidence of this. According to the Institute of International Finance, total capital flows to emerging markets fell by 13 per cent in 2020, to \$313 billion. But this headline figure conceals sharp changes, from a dramatic decline in March 2020 to a recovery in the following month and significant volatility thereafter.

These flows have remained strong so far in 2021, at \$45.5 billion in April and \$13.8 billion in May, mostly to finance the purchase of emerging-market debt securities. While total global debt fell by \$1.7 trillion, to \$289 trillion, in the first quarter of 2021, emerging-market economies' debt increased by \$600 billion, to \$86 trillion.

So, the good times are back for such economies, right? Well, not really. True, rich countries' rapid and massive monetary-policy response to the pandemic-induced downturn certainly played a role in reviving capital flows to the developing world. But as the equally huge fiscal expansion in some advanced economies (especially the United States) takes hold and bolsters the economic recovery, fickle global capital may well look for greener pastures there. That will once again result in financial rationing that penalises economies with higher perceived risk.

Of course, it is misleading to talk of emerging markets as a homogenous group. China is now such an outlier - not only because of its economic size and strength, but also because of its effective control of the pandemic - that it really should be treated separately. While some countries, like Poland and the Philippines, have used their greater fiscal space and stronger balance-of-payments po-



Jayati Ghosh

MANY EMERGING MARKETS AND DEVELOPING COUNTRIES ALREADY FACE LOOMING DEBT PROBLEMS, WHICH WILL ONLY WORSEN AS THEY BORROW MORE DURING THE PANDEMIC

## Free Speech in Peril

After the Supreme Court iterated in its ruling June 3 that sedition charges can't be slapped on citizens to muzzle free speech that is not intended to incite violence or disrupt public order, it was expected the Centre would exercise utmost caution in applying the British era, anti-democratic, colonial law. But it seems not to have paid heed to anything. Journalists and citizens hailed the apex court verdict quashing sedition charges against journalist Vinod Dua by a BJP leader from Himachal Pradesh for making comments critical of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and the Central government. A three-judge Bench gave its ruling in the light of a verdict by a five-judge Bench of the apex court nearly 60 years ago in the Kedar Nath Singh case that "allegedly seditious speech and expression may be punished only if the speech is an incitement to violence or public disorder."

In 1953 Kedar Nath Singh, a member of the Forward Communist Party from Bihar, got into trouble after he took on the ruling Congress during a rally at Begusarai, where he said, "Today the dogs of CBI are loitering around Barauni [in Begusarai]. Many official dogs are sitting even in this meeting. The people of India drove out the British from the country and elected these Congress goondas to the gaddi. As we drove out the British, we shall strike and drive out these Congress goondas as well." For this he was charged with sedition. However, in 1962 the Supreme Court five-judge bench gave the ruling vindicating the right to criticise government actions for public good.

Instead of cautiously weighing the merit of the case, the Lakshadweep Police booked filmmaker Aisha Sulthana under the sedition law following a complaint by the BJP Lakshadweep unit president C Abdul Khader over her remarks in a television debate against the administrator of the smallest Union Territory. Aisha had criticised the controversial decisions of the administration, cleared at the behest of its acting administrator, Praful Khoda Patel, a former minister of the Narendra Modi cabinet of Gujarat.

She termed Khoda the BJP's 'bio-weapon' to articulate what she said was the anger of the people of the islands at the measures that threaten to undermine their socio-cultural fabric.

The Editors' Guild expressed concern June 14 over the alarming tendency of the Centre and state governments to target journalists critical of government actions and charge them with sedition cases. The Guild expressed shock over the Uttar Pradesh Police's approach in handling the case of TV journalist Sulabh Srivastava who was mysteriously killed after his expose of local liquor mafia. He had informed the administration of his fears of being shadowed by criminals. But, the police did nothing to protect him and passed off his death as the result of an accident. Of course, it is pointless talking about UP Police after what it has done in the case of Kerala journalist Kappan Siddiqui who has been charged and imprisoned since long for his efforts to report on the brutal Hathras rape and murder case.

Time and again the country is witnessing how the dispensation at the Centre and some BJP-ruled states have been framing charges under draconian laws, including the Unlawful Activities Prevention Act (UAPA), against people raising their voices against repressive actions by the government. Unfortunately, in such cases the lower courts are quickly giving orders that the government desires. Many of these decisions of the subordinate judiciary are subsequently getting dismissed by the higher courts as bad in law or not sustainable. Coincidentally, the Delhi High Court granted bail June 15 to student activists Devangana Kalita, Natasha Narwal and Asif Iqbal Tanha in the main northeast Delhi riots conspiracy case filed under the stringent provisions of the UAPA. The order of release from jail of Devangana and Natasha, in the meantime, has been deferred since the High Court has sought verification report by Wednesday. The observation, however, of the Bench of Justices Siddharth Mridul and AJ Bhambhani while granting bail brings out eloquently the shameful and pernicious application of harsh legal provisions by different government agencies. The judges said: "We are constrained to express, that it seems that, in its anxiety to suppress dissent, in the mind of the State, the line between the constitutionally guaranteed right to protest and terrorist activity seems to be getting somewhat blurred. If this mindset gains traction, it would be a sad day for democracy." The Court further stated: "The right to protest is not outlawed and cannot be termed as a 'terrorist act' within the meaning of the UAPA"

Jamia Millia Islamia University student Asif Iqbal Tanha had challenged a trial court's October 26, 2020 order dismissing his bail application on the ground that he allegedly played an active role in the entire conspiracy with reasonable grounds for believing the allegations to be prima facie true. Tanha's lawyers argued in the High Court he had not even been present in Delhi during the riots and hadn't visited any of the protest sites where rioting and violence occurred. There was no physical evidence connecting Tanha to the riots or to allegations of any funds being received by him for terrorist activities.

Lakshadweep, on the other hand, is in turmoil with protests by the people under the banner of Save Lakshadweep Forum (SLF) observing 'Black Day' June 14 when the administrator arrived there. A group of 93 former civil servants wrote to the Prime Minister urging him not to give effect to the administrator's skewed and communally sensitive plans that will hurt the interests of the islands' population of over 64,000. Nearly, 96 per cent of the people are Muslims and one of the controversial fiat targets eating of beef. The acting administrator's plan of introducing the Lakshadweep Development Authority Regulation (LDAR), the Lakshadweep Prevention of Anti-Social Activities Regulation (commonly known as PASA or the Goonda Act elsewhere), and the Lakshadweep Animal Preservation Regulation (LAPR) and an amendment to the Lakshadweep Panchayat Regulations have generated widespread anxiety on the island.

The Centre is maintaining a studied silence on these controversial measures lending credence to the suspicion that those peaceful islands are being transformed into a laboratory of looting of their natural resources by business interests in the name of development.

### WISDOM CORNER

- The man who has no imagination has no wings. MUHAMMAD ALI
- Childhood is a short season. HELEN HAYES
- Great things are done when men and mountains meet. WILLIAM BLAKE

### WORDSWORTH

#### Nipcheese

Nipcheese is a penny-pincher or skinflint, all three suggesting a sordidly covetous or penurious person who cuts the cost or quantity of everything to the minimum, often to his own benefit. Nip here is in the sense you might use when speaking of nipping off the heads of dead flowers or of nipping some enterprise in the bud, stopping it before it gets fully underway. Cheese features in the word because it's a staple food whose portions can easily be reduced by trimming them, an idea that we also have in cheeseparing. Nipcheese began life as a seafaring term, a nickname for a ship's purser, the officer responsible for provisioning and keeping the accounts. Pursers were a notoriously hard-hearted and tight-fisted breed of men, as Francis Grose explained in an entry for nipcheese in his Classical Dictionary of the Vulgar Tongue in 1788: "A nick name for the parser of a ship: from those gentlemen being supposed sometimes to nip, or diminish, the allowance of the seamen, in that and every other article." They were often suspected of keeping the savings for themselves: There's Nipcheese, the purser, by grinding and squeezing, First plund'ring, then leaving, the ship like a rat (A Collection of Songs, Selected from the Works of Mr Dibdin, 1796). Charles Dibdin was a famous actor, composer, and writer of the period, whose songs included Tom Bowling.

### IN JEST THIS

## Tracking a tiger: Almost like tracking humans



Melvin Durai

TIGERS HAVE NO TROUBLE CROSSING THE BORDER

It takes five to seven days and costs ₹1,299 for an Indian to get a tourist visa for Bangladesh. But if you don't have the money or you're in a big hurry, there is another option: wear a tiger costume.

Tigers have no trouble crossing the border, as Indian Forestry Services officer Parveen Kaswan noted recently when he shared a photo of a tiger that had crossed the border in the Sunderbans.

"This tiger covered 100 km and reached Bangladesh from India. Without visa though. Crossed creeks, islands & ocean," he tweeted.

Forestry officials and wildlife experts in West Bengal had been monitoring the tiger since late December. That's when they captured the tiger in the Sunderban Tiger Reserve, fitted it with a radio collar, and released it, hoping to study its movements and interactions with humans. They wanted to answer questions such as: How far does a tiger travel in a day? Does it follow a particular path? Does it prefer Uber or Ola?

Using satellite data, officials were able to monitor the tiger as it travelled 100 km in four months, a journey that included crossing several rivers and three islands. No

ride-hailing services were involved, as far as officials could tell.

"After initial movements for a few days on the Indian side, it started venturing into the Talpatti island in Bangladesh Sunderbans and crossed rivers such as Choto, Harikhali, Boro Harikhali and even the Raimangal," West Bengal's chief wildlife warden VK Yadav told Times of India.

He added that the tiger may have originally travelled from Bangladesh to India. That may explain why it was able to enter Bangladesh without a visa.

Officials were able to track the tiger only until May 11. The radio collar suddenly stopped producing signals. The tiger was last tracked on Talpatti island in Bangladesh.

According to Yadav, the radio collar has a mortality sensor: It sends a special signal if the tiger has died. Yadav believes that the tiger is safe and that the collar merely slipped off its neck. But perhaps a human was involved. Perhaps the tiger came across a young woman, unbeknownst to forestry officials.

Woman: "Help! Help! Someone save me!"



Tiger: "Don't worry—I am not a man-eater."

Woman: "But are you a woman-eater?"

Tiger: "No, not yet."

Woman: "Not yet? Help! Help! Someone save me!"

Tiger: "Stop screaming. I have never tried a woman before. What do you taste like?"

Woman: "Horrible. Worse than anything you've ever tasted."

Tiger: "Worse than fish curry?"

Woman: "You've tried fish curry?"

Tiger: "Yes, I visited a village once and ate some fish curry. It was in a pot outside a hut. It almost killed me."

Woman: "I love fish curry. My stomach is full of fish curry. In fact, my whole body is full of fish curry."

Tiger: "Really? It's a good thing I didn't plan to eat you. But can you come a little closer please?"

Woman: "A little closer? Help! Help! Someone save me!"

Tiger: "Stop screaming. I just want you to take this collar off me. Some other humans put it on me. They're trying to track me. If I do something bad, they'll know about it. I have no privacy anymore. Do you know what that's like?"

Woman: "Yes, I have Facebook and Google. They're always tracking me."

Tiger: "I hate Google. I tried to google myself once and they had the wrong picture. I'm a Bengal tiger and they had a picture of an Indochinese tiger."

Woman: "They should know better. The CEO of Google is Sundar Pichai. He's from India."

Tiger: "Do you know where he lives? I'd like to pay him a visit."

Woman: "He lives in the United States now. You'll need a visa."

Tiger: "I'm a tiger. No visas needed."

#### Funds needed

Sir, For treatment of very critical Covid patients, ECMO treatment seems to be one of the fruitful exercises at the moment, considering the gravity of such patients' conditions. Since it is an expensive treatment running into expenses to the tune of one crore or so, common people in our state hardly have the resources to go for it. The family members are making arrangements to treat their near and dear ones in specialty hospitals outside the state with their limited savings and are also making appeals to the general public for generous donations. Though the response in individual cases is encouraging, it may not be possible on the part of the public to rise to the occasion every time an appeal is made. According to information available, the facilities in government hospitals are yet to commence. It is also learnt that the required technical hands and dedicated experienced support services are not available at this hour of the pandemic. Therefore, it would be a great help to the individuals undergoing the stages of trauma if the state government comes forward to help them by bearing the maximum amount possible. This amount can be sent by the concerned department directly to the hospitals where the patients are receiving treatments. This gesture of our popular government would add another feather to the state's image of taking due care of the persons suffering from the dreaded disease.

Sanjib Kumar Das, CUTTACK

#### Tennis GOAT

Sir, The most consistent tennis player since 2011, Novak Djokovic has rekindled the 'GOAT, who' theory. Roger Federer, Rafael Nadal or Djokovic, who among these is the greatest tennis player of all time? A few past stalwarts believe none can beat Rod Laver, the inimitable Australian. Be that as it may, Djokovic has always been the most underrated champion among the big three who have dominated the world men's tennis for such a long time. When Djokovic beat Greece's Stefanos Tsitsipas in a five-set cliff-hanger, after being down by two sets, to lift his second French open title at the Roland Garros, the world number one rewrote many records. He now has 19 grand slams; Federer and Nadal have 20 each. But Djokovic has the age advantage. 34, and roaring to go, the Serb displayed exemplary staying prowess while nipping Nadal in the semis. Among the three, only he looks like the man to beat; Nadal appears vulnerable when tested and Federer is hardly playing nowadays. Nine Australian open titles, five Wimbledon wins, and three US open championships and, of course, two French titles - Djokovic's greatness cannot be measured in words.

Ganapathi Bhat, AKOLA

## 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

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# Ministers to camp in districts in damage control exercise

THE DIRECTIVES WERE COMMUNICATED TO THEM AT A MEETING OF THE COUNCIL OF MINISTERS, CHAIRED BY CM YOGI ADITYANATH

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**Lucknow, June 15:** In a major damage control exercise, all ministers in the Yogi Adityanath government in Uttar Pradesh have been asked to reach out to people ahead of the 2022 assembly elections in the state.

The ministers have been asked to camp in development blocks in districts under their charge in June and July 2021, connect with party workers at the grassroots level, obtain feedback about government schemes, attend International Yoga Day programmes there June 21 and join the booth level workers in listening to Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Maan Ki Baat programme at booths June 27.

The directives were communicated to them at a meeting of the council of ministers, chaired by Yogi Adityanath. UP BJP president Swatantra Dev Singh, who was present at the meeting, briefed the ministers about the details of the outreach programme.

The ministers have also been asked to review the preparations for the speculated third wave and visit the families of those who may have died of Covid-19. He said ministers would take feedback whether the government relief had reached them.

The exercise is also being seen as a move to muster support for the BJP in the upcoming zila panchayat elections.

According to UP minister Siddhartha Nath Singh, Minister in charges will camp at the blocks in districts under their charge in June and July 2021. The ministers will try to cover most of the blocks



## DESPERATE DIRECTIVES

Camp in development blocks in districts under charge	Review the preparations for the speculated third wave
Connect with party workers at the grassroots level	Visit the families of those who may have died of Covid
Obtain feedback about government schemes	Visit ration shops, PHCs, CHCs and hospitals

ATTEND PLANTATION DRIVES, ALONG WITH MAKING SPOT VISITS, REVIEWING IMPLEMENTATION OF DEVELOPMENT SCHEMES

in the districts under their charge and will cover about two blocks every day. The ministers will visit ration shops, PHCs (primary health centres), CHCs (community health centres) and hospitals, attend plantation drives, along with making spot visits, and reviewing implementation of development schemes.

Singh said ministers have been asked to hold organisational meetings in smaller groups, keeping in view the Covid protocol. He said

there would also be programmes, especially plantation drives from June 23 to July 6.

During the meeting, minister for medical education Suresh Khanna and minister for health Jai Pratap Singh made a presentation on the state government's Covid management.

Animal husbandry minister Chaudhary Laxmi Narain spoke about the arrangements made at the cow shelters in the state.

# 'Covid deaths largely underreported in TN'

Approximating the underreporting factor of 8.4 to 9.8 times for the entire state, the likely number of deaths due to Covid in Tamil Nadu may be between 108,721 and 126,841 against the reported number of 12,943

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**Chennai, June 15:** Arappor Iyakkam, a non-governmental organisation (NGO), Tuesday alleged huge under-reporting of Covid fatalities, urged the Tamil Nadu government to audit and correctly report the death numbers.

The NGO in its report also called for issue/reissue of medical certificates for cause of death as per the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) guidelines.

Arappor Iyakkam came out with



its study report based on the data released by six government hospitals - Government Rajaji Hospital, Madurai, Coimbatore Medical College Hospital, Mahatma Gandhi Memorial Medical College and Hospital, Trichy, Vellore Medical College, Karur Medical College and Tirupur Government Headquarters Hospital in Tamil Nadu. These hospitals geographically cover the northern, western, central and southern parts of Tamil Nadu.

Data for the number of death certificates issued for male and fe-

male were collected for each day of the months of January to May 2021 for each of these six hospitals for the years 2019, 2020 and 2021. The data collected is as of June 13 from the website.

According to Arappor Iyakkam, an analysis of death data of six hospitals that is available online revealed that the total number of deaths for which death certificates have been issued in the months of April and May together stand at 4,437 and 3,261 for 2019 and 2020 respectively.

The number has shot up to 11,699 in April and May months of the year 2021.

On the other hand, the Arappor Iyakkam's report finds that the total death of patients declared as Covid deaths in the months of April and May 2021 by the media bulletin of the Department of Health and Family Welfare is only 863 in these 6 hospitals, Arappor Iyakkam said.

In its report, the NGO said there is likely underreporting of Covid deaths in these six hospitals is at least 8.4 to 9.8 times more than the declared fatalities in the media bulletin for the months of April and May 2021. As per the report, the pattern of death data is similar in the six hospitals.

Approximating the same underreporting factor of 8.4 to 9.8 times for the entire state, the likely number of deaths due to Covid in Tamil Nadu may be between 108,721 and 126,841 against the reported number of 12,943, the Arappor Iyakkam's report states.

# IICF to get foreign donations for Ayodhya mosque

The IICF will not be crowdfunding for the entire project, but will gather funds from identified donors

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**Lucknow, June 15:** The Indo-Islamic Cultural Foundation (IICF) Trust, which is overseeing the construction of the Mosque in Ayodhya, has submitted its application for Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Act (FCRA) account at State Bank of India (SBI) in Delhi.

Once approved, the account will pave the way for foreign funding for the entire project, but will gather funds from identified donors.

IICF spokesperson Athar Husain said, "The 300-bed hospital is IICF's main goal and while we had envi-



sioned the need for it back in 2020 itself, the pandemic has made our resolve stronger. Almost 95 per cent of our project cost and infrastructure paraphernalia is for the hospital alone."

After the FCRA account is registered in IICF's name, the Trust will then move ahead to get clearances from the Ministry of Home Affairs, as is the norm, before the project can begin on ground.

However, officials said that the project will kick off on ground by year end.

The hospital will also come up with a community kitchen to feed around 1,000 people every day, a green patch with exotic trees on the verge of extinction from around the world in Ayodhya, and a museum-library highlighting the shared Hindu-Muslim struggle of 1857 in Awadh against the British.

Subsequently, the Mosque that will come up in Dhannipur village as part of the complex, will be almost the same size as that of the Babri Masjid. IICF spokesman further said that, "There will be no crowdfunding. We have donors already waiting."

# Ram Mandir Trust issues another clarification



INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**Ayodhya, June 15:** Champat Rai, the general secretary of the Shri Ram Janambhoomi Teerth Kshetra Trust, has issued another statement amid the allegations of corruption in the purchase of Ram temple land.

He said that the trust is working to provide the Shri Ram Janambhoomi temple a grand look according to Vastu Shastra, to make the complex safe in all respects and convenient for the visitors.

He said that important temples or places falling within the boundary of the construction wall and retaining wall in the east and west parts of this temple have been purchased with mutual consent.

It has been the decision of the pilgrimage area that every institution or person displaced in this process will be rehabilitated.

The selection of land for rehabilitation is being done with the consent of the concerned institutions or individuals.

Under this process 1.20 hectares of land located at Bagh Bijesi, Ayodhya has been purchased with complete transparency and with the consent of important temples like Kaushalya Sadan etc.

It is worth noting that the above-mentioned land is on a prime location situated on the route near Ayodhya Railway Station, the statement said.

In relation to this land, from the year 2011, the contract was executed in favour of the present vendors at different times (2011, 2017 and 2019).

On investigation, these plots were found suitable for use, after which the concerned persons were contacted. The value sought for the land was compared with the current market price and the final due amount was fixed at about Rs 1,423 per square feet, which is much less than the present market value of the nearby area.

He said that after agreeing on the price, the concerned persons were required to complete their earlier contracts, only then the respective land which was in the pilgrimage area, could have been achieved.

As soon as the deed of land was done in favour of the persons contracting with the pilgrimage area, the deal was signed and registered with full readiness and transparency.

It has been the decision of the trust from day one that all payments will be made directly from the bank to the account. The same decision has been followed in the purchase process of the concerned land.

It is also ensured that all the taxes imposed by the government are paid.

The persons who made allegation did not inquire about the facts from any official of the pilgrimage area before making the allegation. This has created confusion in the society. All Shri Ram devotees are requested not to believe in any such propaganda so that the ongoing construction work of Shri Ram Janambhoomi temple is completed with transparency and without any hindrance, the statement said.

# Microplastics in aquifers near dumpyards of Chennai Corp

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**Chennai, June 15:** A study conducted by a team of researchers from Anna University and St Joseph's College of Engineering in Chennai have detected the presence of microplastics in water bodies near waste dumping yards of Chennai Corporation.

The microplastics measuring less than 5 mm were found in water sources near the Corporation dumping yards of Perungudi and Kodungaiyur.

The study found that in every litre of the water source within 1 to 2 km of these two dump yards there was the presence of 2 to 80 microplastic particles detected. These microplastics, according to the research team would have made their way into the groundwater after major plastics were broken down due to weathering and would have entered into the aquifers through the waste in the dumping yards.

The microplastics could cause health problems to those who drink water from these aquifers and it will



also make its way to the sea along with the groundwater harming the marine ecosystem and ecology. K Manikanda Bharath, who was the corresponding author of the study, speaking to IANS said, "The maximum microplastic samples we found in 1 litre water in Kodungaiyur was 23 but in Perungudi it was 80. This is owing to the fact that Perungudi yard is on marshland and water is available through the year and these microplastics go down into the groundwater along with the water in the marshland."

He said, "With houses across the city using single use surgical

masks and N95 masks, the proportion of these microplastics entering the water bodies could be much higher in the days to come."

Doctors also warned that drinking water contaminated with microplastics could lead to skin ailments, ulcers, and serious respiratory illness in some people.

Ramesh Chandradas, a gastroenterologist with a leading private hospital in Chennai, speaking to IANS said, "Regular usage of water with microplastics would lead to the formation of ulcers as well as intestinal issues and can also become cancerous in the long run."

# UP to opt for cluster approach in vax drive

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**Lucknow, June 15:** The Uttar Pradesh government will be launching its cluster approach strategy to ensure that maximum persons in the target age group are covered.

To scale up vaccination drive against the pandemic virus in July, public mobilisation and vaccine facilitation activity will be intensified in small geographical areas which may be as small as 10-12 villages.

The purpose is to go in phases and saturate the selected area to ensure that no one is missed out.

Developed with the help of partners, including UNICEF, UPTSU, WHO, Rotary, CSOs and NGOs for the state government, the strategy was formalized through an official order issued by additional chief secretary, health and family welfare, Amit Mohan Prasad.

A dry run of the strategy will begin June 17.

This aims to augment and accelerate the existing recommendations made by the Union ministry of health and family welfare besides promising to give the much-needed



shot in the arm to that pace of Covid vaccination in the state.

According to experts, if UP wants to vaccinate its entire eligible population of 13.6 crore by the end of the year, then it needs to increase its daily capacity by nine times.

The strategy comes in wake of huge targets set by chief minister Yogi Adityanath under 'Mission June' and 'three-months-10 crore vaccinations from July'.

# Fishing ban ends, but fewer boats to venture into sea

**MOST OF THE FISHERMEN WHO FREQUENT KASIMEDU MARKET ARE FROM ANDHRA PRADESH AND ODISHA AND A LARGE NUMBER OF THESE FISHERMEN HAVE LEFT FOR THEIR HOME STATES FOLLOWING LOCKDOWN AND LACK OF JOBS**

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**Chennai, June 15:** Even as the fishing ban in Tamil Nadu ended Monday midnight, less fishing boats are likely to venture into the sea for deep-sea fishing. Around 1,200 fishing boats are attached to the Kasimedu fishing harbour and



only about 350 of these are likely to venture into the sea Tuesday.

Officials with the fishing harbour said that most of the fishing boats require maintenance and repair and hence these cannot go

into the sea. Most of the boats will complete the maintenance work and take to the sea in a fortnight, officials said.

Another issue faced by the fishing harbour and fishermen is that

there is no money for maintenance as most of the fishermen have not been working since lockdown commenced.

Most of the fishermen who frequent Kasimedu market are

from Andhra Pradesh and Odisha and a large number of these fishermen have left for their home states following lockdown and lack of jobs.

At present the wholesale fish stalls of the Kasimedu market are functioning and with the lockdown getting lifted the retail market will also be opened as the fishermen community is expecting a government announcement on the opening of the retail market soon.

Rajesh Thomas, a software engineer with an MNC while speaking to IANS said, "We were regulars at the Kasimedu market where most of the Chennai populace go to purchase fish. However, the market was shut down and fish was a rarity and we expect things to be normal, maybe in a week's time."

The market will be abuzz once the number of fishing boats ventures into the sea increases and even if a boat goes into the deep sea, it will return back in more than a week's time and only then the market will normalise.

## of the day quote

Yoga is proven to be scientific and helps in battling respiratory diseases which have become a cause of concern these days and it provides holistic health by enhancing the fitness of both body and the mind

C N ASHWATH NARAYAN | KARNATAKA DEPUTY CHIEF MINISTER

Today marks the completion of a year since the clash with China in the Galwan Valley. Salute to the immortal martyrdom of all those soldiers of the country who fought till their last breath to defend the country. The country will always remain indebted to the soldiers for their immortal sacrifice

ARVIND KEJRIWAL | DELHI CHIEF MINISTER

We have a target of 100 per cent coverage of the first vaccination dose by July 30. Vaccination is the only option to defeat corona

PRAMOD SAWANT | GOA CHIEF MINISTER

## SHORT TAKES

### Novavax efficacy data encouraging

**New Delhi:** The government Tuesday said the efficacy data of Novavax vaccine against COVID-19 is promising and encouraging and its clinical trials are in an advanced stage of completion in India. Addressing a press conference, NITI Aayog Member (Health) V K Paul said the data available in public domain also indicates the vaccine is safe and highly effective. "What we are learning from the available data is that this vaccine is very safe and it is highly effective but what makes this vaccine relevant for today is the fact that this vaccine will be produced in India by Serum Institute," he said.

### Taj to reopen from today

**Agra:** At the Taj Mahal, which will reopen for visitors from Wednesday, only 650 people will be allowed to enter the premises at a time, officials said Tuesday. All the centrally protected monuments, museums and sites closed for around two months due to the Covid pandemic will reopen June 16, an Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) order issued Monday said. While 650 tourists will be allowed inside the Taj Mahal premises at one point of time so that Covid-19 protocols are followed, such restrictions will not be in place for other monuments, District Magistrate, Agra Prabhu N Singh said.

### Punjab eases Covid curbs

**Chandigarh:** With the state's Covid positivity rate dropping to 2 per cent, Punjab Chief Minister Amarinder Singh Tuesday announced easing of restrictions, allowing restaurants and other eateries, as well as cinemas and gyms, to open with 50 per cent capacity starting Wednesday.

### 5 Naxals held

**Bijapur:** Five Naxals, including four who were involved in two attacks on security personnel in 2019, were arrested from separate places in Chhattisgarh's Bijapur district, police said Tuesday. While four ultras were apprehended from Udatamalla forest under Pamed police station limits, the fifth was nabbed near Berudi river in Naimeid, they said. "The arrests were made June 13 by teams comprising CRPF, CoBRA and district police personnel that returned to their base Tuesday after an anti-Naxal operation," an official said.



Staff in hospitality industry, parlours, service outlets, including shops, restaurants, gyms, etc, should also be vaccinated at the earliest

AMARINDER SINGH | PUNJAB CHIEF MINISTER

### BLACK FUNGUS DECLARED EPIDEMIC IN JHARKHAND

The Jharkhand government Tuesday declared mucormycosis an epidemic amid the rising number of cases in the state. There are 130 suspected cases of mucormycosis, commonly known as black fungus, in the state. Of them, 79 cases have been confirmed, said a senior official at the Chief Minister's Office



## LJP FIGHT

# 'SACKED' CHIRAG EXPELS 5 REBEL MPs

EARLIER IN THE DAY, CHIRAG PASWAN LIKENED THE PARTY TO A MOTHER WHO SHOULD NOT BE 'BETRAYED'

AGENCIES

**New Delhi, June 15:** Hours after Chirag Paswan, son of late Union Minister and party founder Ram Vilas Paswan, was removed as LJP President in an emergency meeting Tuesday by the five rebel MPs, he held a parallel executive committee meeting virtually where it was decided to expel the five MPs for anti-party activities.

Earlier in the day, Chirag Paswan was removed from the post of LJP President in an emergency meeting, party sources said.

The principle of "One Man, One Post" was invoked by the rebels, led by his uncle Pashupati Kumar Paras, to remove him from the post, the sources said.

The removal of Chirag Paswan from the top party post came a day after five of six party MPs - Paras, Chandan Singh, Chaudhury Mehboob Ali Kaiser, Beena Devi, and Prince Raj - undertook a coup and removed him as the LJP leader in the Lok Sabha.

Sources said that Suraj Bhan will function as working President until a new President is elected in a national executive meeting, which is expected soon in the coming days.



The parallel executive, chaired by Chirag Paswan, passed a resolution expelling the five MPs. "The National Executive Committee has unanimously decided to remove Pashupati Kumar Paras, Beena Devi, Chandan Singh, Chaudhury Mehboob Ali Kaiser and Prince Raj from the primary membership of LJP with immediate effect," said the resolution, according to a release by LJP General Secretary Abdul Khaliq said. "The National Oresident of LJP Chirag Paswan is authorised

to take all decisions in the coming assembly elections on behalf of the party," it said. Earlier in the day, Chirag Paswan likened the party to a mother who should not be "betrayed".

In an emotional tweet in Hindi, he said, "I made efforts to keep the party founded by my father Ram Vilas Paswan and my family together but failed. People are above all else in a democracy. I thank those who had faith in the party." Paswan also shared a six page letter he had written to Paras,

## LJP MP in 'sex scandal'

The Lok Janshakti Party (LJP) MP from Samastipur in Bihar, Prince Raj, landed in an alleged sex scandal Tuesday after his cousin brother and ousted LJP chief Chirag Paswan revealed a letter dated March 29 mentioning the involvement of the former in a sexual act with a woman leader of the party. Chirag Paswan revealed that Prince Raj was involved in a sexual act with a woman leader of the party who was later blackmailing him.

the youngest brother of his father, on March 29 in which he had highlighted his uncle's unhappiness over a number of issues, including his elevation as the party President. He also discussed how Paras did not attend the party functions despite being invited and was not available for any suggestions. The LJP was founded by Chirag Paswan's father Ram Vilas Paswan, who passed away in October last year.

## ITALIAN MARINES CASE

# SC CLOSES ALL PROCEEDINGS

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**New Delhi, June 15:** The Supreme Court Tuesday closed all criminal proceedings pending in India against two Italian marines, accused of killing of two Indian fishermen off Kerala coast in 2012, after payment of Rs 10 crore compensation by Italy.

A bench comprising Justices Indira Banerjee and M.R. Shah said considering the international tribunal order, India has agreed to the compensation of Rs 10 crore and Republic of Italy has deposited it, which has been transferred to the top court's registry. "We are satisfied with the compensation and the ex-gratia paid over and above earlier. This is a fit case to close all proceedings in India under Article 142 of the Constitution," said the bench.

The bench noted as per the tribunal order, Italy will resume the criminal proceedings against the marines. The top court ordered transfer of Rs 10 crore to Kerala High Court registry out of which Rs 4 crore each should be paid to the two victims' families and Rs 2 crore to the boat owner. The bench added the High Court should appoint a judge to ensure the compensation is paid to the victims' legal heirs.



point a judge to ensure the compensation is paid to the victims' legal heirs.

Citing the tribunal order, the top court noted that Italy can begin criminal proceedings against the two marines, and case details along with evidence will be provided by the Centre and the Kerala government to it.

In February 2012, India had accused two Italian marines, Salvatore Giron and Massimiliano Latorre, on board the MV Enrica Lexie - an Italian flagged oil tanker - of killing two Indian fishermen who were on a fishing vessel in India's Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ). The top court in August last year had told the Centre that it would not pass any on closure of cases against the two marines without hearing the victims' families.

# '₹150 per Covaxin dose unsustainable'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, June 15:** The supply price of Covaxin to the government of India at Rs 150 a dose is a non-competitive price and clearly not sustainable in the long run. Hence a higher price in private markets is required to offset part of the costs, Bharat Biotech said Tuesday.

It said there are live examples of such pricing policies where Human Papilloma virus vaccine is priced for GAVI supplies at \$4.5/dose (Rs 320), but is also available in the private market at Rs 3,500.

Rotavirus vaccines are supplied to the Govt of India at Rs 60/dose, but is also available in the private market at Rs 1,700/dose. The prices for COVID-19 vaccines internationally have varied between \$10 to \$37/dose, (Rs 730 - Rs 2,700/dose).

On why Coaxin is more expensive for the private sector, Bharat Biotech said another key point of discussion has been about pricing our vaccines for private sector players which is significantly higher than that given to governments and large procurement agencies.

Unlike most medicines and therapeutics, vax are provided free of cost by the Govt of India to all eligible Indian citizens

This is purely due to fundamental business reasons, ranging from low procurement volumes, high distribution costs and retail margins among few others.

As directed by the Govt of India, less than 10% of our total production of Covaxin to date has been supplied to private hospitals, while most of the remaining quantity was supplied to State and Central Governments. In such a scenario the weighted average price of Covaxin for all supplies realized by Bharat Biotech is less than Rs 250/dose. Going forward, 75% of the capacity will be supplied to State and Central Governments with only 25% going to private hospitals.

Unlike most medicines and therapeutics, vaccines are provided free of cost by the Govt of India to all eligible Indian citizens.



# 'Imaging objects through fog may now be more clear'

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**New Delhi, June 15:** Imaging of objects in foggy weather conditions may now be clearer as researchers have now found a method that can improve the images captured on such days.

The technique involves modulating the light source and demodulating them at the observer's end. Research by a team has offered a solution for improving the image quality without heavy computations.

The team from the Raman Research Institute (RRI), Bangalore, an autonomous institute of the Department of Science and Technology; Space Applications Centre, Indian Space Research Organisation, Ahmedabad; Shiv Nadar University, Gautam Buddha Nagar; and Universite Rennes and Universite Paris-Saclay, CNRS, France, modulated the light source and demodulated it at the observer's

end to achieve sharper images.

The research was published in the journal 'OSA Continuum', said the Ministry of Science and Technology in a statement. The researchers have demonstrated the technique by conducting extensive experiments on foggy winter mornings at Shiv Nadar University. They chose ten red LED lights as the source of light. Then, they modulated this source of light by varying the current flowing through the LEDs at a rate of about 15 cycles per second.

The researchers kept a camera at a distance of 150 metres from the LEDs. The camera captured the image and transmitted it to a desktop computer. Then, computer algorithms used the knowledge of the modulation frequency to extract the characteristics of the source.

"This process is called 'demodulation'. The demodulation of the image had to be done at a rate that

## STEPS TOWARDS HEALTHY LIFE



People walk inside Sanjay Gandhi National Park after its gates opened for morning walkers in Mumbai

PTI PHOTO

# Kashmiri political activist held

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Ganderbal (J&K), June 15:** A political activist has been jailed after he told an advisor of the Lt governor that he has hopes from a Kashmiri official like him rather than bureaucrats from outside, remarks which offended the Ganderbal deputy commissioner who is an IAS officer from Uttar Pradesh.

After being arrested under Section 153 (promoting enmity between different groups) of the Indian Penal Code, Sajad Sofi (50), a resident of Wani Mohalla in Safapora area of Ganderbal district, was granted bail by a court.

However, he was kept under preventive detention for allegedly being a "threat to peace".

CPI(M) leader Mohammad Yousof Tarigami on Tuesday termed Sofi's arrest "unwarranted" and "a brazen violation of fundamental rights". Sofi made the remarks at a Janta Darbar of LG advisor Baseer Khan at Mansbal on June 10.

Speaking about the problems faced by the people of his area, Sofi told Khan that he can understand the issues better as compared to officers from outside the union territory because he is a local, according to the police report. He said, "I can have expecta-

tions from you because you are a Kashmiri and you can understand us. I can grab you by the collar and seek answers. But what expectations can I have from officers who are outsiders?"

This comment did not go down well with Ganderbal Deputy Commissioner Kritika Jyotsna, a 2014 IAS officer and wife of Rahul Pandey who is posted with the Raj Bhavan as the director of information. Jyotsna and Pandey came to Jammu and Kashmir in February this year on inter-cadre deputation. The police report said that Jyotsna stood up from her seat and "strongly objected" to Sofi's comments.



"Hence it has been decided by the Haj Committee of India that all the applications for Haj-2021 stands cancelled," the circular signed by Haj Committee of India's Chief Executive Officer Maqsood Ahmed Khan read. Lauding Saudi Arabia's decision in the wake of the Covid-19 pandemic, Minority Affairs Minister Mukhtar Abbas Naqvi told reporters, "We had made all the preparations for Haj. However, Saudi Arabia has not allowed people from outside the country to perform Haj in view of the coronavirus pandemic. This is a good decision."

In a circular, the committee said that the Ministry of Haj and Umrah, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, has issued a statement informing that due to coronavirus pandemic conditions it has decided to allow citizens and residents inside the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia only to attend Haj this year in limited numbers and international Haj has been cancelled.

each time. Once, when the fog varied in intensity during the observation, they did not record a marked improvement in the image quality. In this case, there was a strong wind, and they observed fog trails across the scene. The density of the water droplets in the air changed as time passed, which rendered the modulation-demodulation technique less effective. Next, the researchers changed the experimental setup. They made an external material, a piece of cardboard kept at a distance of 20 centimetres from the LEDs, to reflect the light to the camera. The distance between the cardboard and the camera was 75 metres. The modulated light reflected from the cardboard travelled through the fog and was then captured by the camera. They demonstrated how their technique still significantly improved the quality of the resulting image.

Repeating the experiment under sunny conditions, they found that after performing the demodulation of the source, the image quality was high enough to distinguish the LEDs from the strongly reflected sunlight.

The study was partially funded by the Ministry of Science and Technology, Government of India. The cost of the technique is low, requiring only a few LEDs and an ordinary desktop computer, which can execute the technique within a second.

The method can improve the landing techniques of aeroplanes by providing the pilot with a good view of beacons on the runway, significantly better than relying only on reflected radio waves as is presently the case. The technique can help reveal obstacles in the path that would otherwise be hidden by fog in rail, sea, and road transportation and would also help spotting lighthouse beacons.



# national

## of the day quote

I consider Sachin Pilot as my leader. Ashok Gehlot is above him. He is the chief minister so he will have to be considered as the leader, even Sachin will also have to consider him as the leader

BHANWARLAL SHARMA | CONGRESS MLA

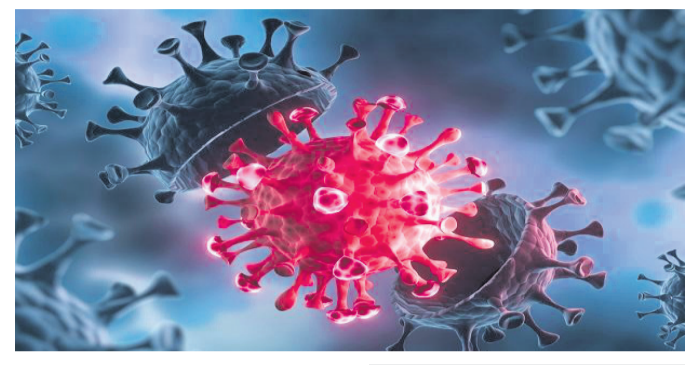
Arun Singh is Karnataka in-charge, he is coming to the state, he will talk to all legislators and Members of Parliament, there are no confusions, he has said anyone can meet him. He will gather all the information in detail. He will be there for a couple of days. I will also be with him and give all required cooperation

B S YEDIYURAPPA | KARNATAKA CHIEF MINISTER

Thank you all for your good wishes. Prayers. Jokes. Words of encouragement. Truly appreciate it. The human race is indeed a single tribe. Our bonding makes us stronger take care n stay well

DR SANGITA REDDY | APOLLO HOSPITALS GROUP JOINT MANAGING DIRECTOR

## 'Delta Plus not yet variant of concern'



AGENCIES

New Delhi, June 15: The Delta plus variant of Covid is not yet a 'variant of concern', the Union health ministry said Tuesday, noting that its presence has to be assessed and tracked in the country. At a press conference, NITI Aayog Member (Health) V K Paul said a new mutation has been detected called Delta plus variant and it has been there since March in Europe. This was brought into the public domain just a few days ago, he said.

"This is a variant of interest that has not yet been classified as a variant of concern. A variant of concern is in which we have understood that there are adverse consequences to humanity by increase in transmissibility and severity. This is not known yet about the Delta plus variant," Paul said. "But scientifically the effect and change of Delta plus has to be watched through our INSACOG system. This has to be detected and we have to see its presence in the country," he said.

The Indian SARS-CoV-2 Genetics Consortium (INSACOG) was set up by the government on December 25 last year to study and monitor genome sequencing and virus variation of circulating strains of COVID-19 in India. Paul said that in the public domain it has come that the Delta plus variant can nullify the usage of monoclonal antibodies.

"What we need to do is to focus on our own behaviour, not give opportunities for the virus to spread, prevent crowding and parties, and wear masks. If we break the chain of transmission, then less variants will be formed," he said. "The root cause has to be dealt with and that is breaking the chain of transmission. We are concerned about it (Delta plus variant) keeping a track on how it progresses in other

## 60,471 fresh Covid cases

India saw a single-day rise of 60,471 new coronavirus infections, the lowest after 75 days, taking the total tally of COVID-19 cases to 2,95,70,881, while the daily positivity rate declined to 3.45 per cent, according to the Union Health Ministry data updated Tuesday. The COVID-19 death toll climbed to 3,77,031 with 2,726 fresh deaths, the data updated at 8 am showed. The active cases further declined to 9,13,378 comprising 3.09 per cent of the total infections, while the national COVID-19 recovery rate has improved to 95.64 per cent. A net decline of 59,780 cases has been recorded in the COVID-19 caseload in a span of 24 hours.

countries, and if it is present in India, then where all it is there," Paul said. On the Novavax vaccine, he said its efficacy data is promising and the data available in public domain also indicates that it is safe and highly effective.

"What we are learning from the available data that this vaccine is very safe and it is highly effective but what makes this vaccine relevant for today is the fact that this vaccine will be produced in India by the Serum Institute of India," Paul said.

The preparatory work has already been accomplished by the Serum Institute and it is also conducting a bridging trial, which is in advanced stages of completion, he said. Paul said the efficacy and positive results of this study will mean very well for the nation.

"I am also hoping that they will also start trials on children which is of a special interest to all of us. The pace of vaccination should see a renewed energy from next week onwards when we will realign our and states' efforts," he said.



There are many questions that remain unanswered of Galwan incident and many explanations this government owes to our people

RAHUL GANDHI | CONGRESS LEADER

## CHOKSI TRIAL ADJOURNED

The trial of the fugitive businessman Mehul Choksi, who is wanted in India in the ₹13,500 crore Punjab National Bank (PNB) fraud case has been adjourned to June 25 due to decline in his health condition, local media reported



## Galwan heroes remembered

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, June 15: Chief of Army Staff Gen MM Naravane Tuesday led the force in hailing the valour of the 20 soldiers who laid down their lives while defending the country's territorial integrity in the face of "unprecedented" Chinese aggression at the Galwan Valley in eastern Ladakh a year ago.

On the first anniversary of the deadly clashes, the Army said the supreme sacrifice of the soldiers while fighting the adversary in the "most difficult" high altitude terrain will be "eternally etched" in the memory of the nation.

"General MM Naravane #COAS & All Ranks of #IndianArmy pay homage to the #Bravehearts who made supreme sacrifice in Galwan Valley #Ladakh while defending the territorial integrity and sovereignty of the country. Their valour will be eternally etched in the memory of the #Nation," the Army tweeted. In the first deadly clash in the border area in nearly five decades, 20 Indian soldiers were killed June 15 last year in the Galwan Valley in fierce hand-to-hand combat with Chinese troops, triggering a large deployment of troops and heavy weaponry by both armies at the friction points in eastern Ladakh. In February, China officially acknowledged that five Chinese military officers and soldiers were killed in the clashes with the Indian



Army though it is widely believed that the death toll was higher. The Army's Leh-based 14 Corps, popularly known as Fire and Fury Corps, also paid homage to the "Galwan Bravehearts" on the first anniversary of the violent clashes. "In the face of unprecedented Chinese aggression, 20 Indian soldiers laid down their lives defending our land and inflicted heavy casualties on the PLA (People's Liberation Army)," the Army said.

Major Gen Akash Kaushik, the officiating General Officer Commanding of the Fire and Fury Corps laid a wreath at the iconic Leh war memorial while paying homage to the fallen heroes. The 14 Corps takes care of guarding the Line of Actual Control (LAC) with China in the Ladakh region.

"The nation will remain eternally grateful to these gallant soldiers who fought in the most difficult high altitude terrain and

made the supreme sacrifice in service of the nation," the Army said in a statement.

Colonel Bikumalla Santosh Babu, the commanding officer of the 16 Bihar regiment, had led from the front against the Chinese aggression near Patrolling Point 14 in Galwan Valley. In January, he was posthumously awarded Mahavir Chakra, the second-highest military award for acts of gallantry in the presence of the enemy.

Four other soldiers, Naib Subedar Nuduram Soren, Havildar (Gunner) K Palani, Naik Deepak Singh and Sepoy Gurtej Singh, were also awarded the Vir Chakra posthumously.

"Colonel Bikumalla Santosh Babu displayed conspicuous #gallantry, exemplary #leadership and firm determination in the face of the enemy in the best traditions of the #IndianArmy," the Army tweeted.

## Twitter appoints interim Chief Compliance Officer for India

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, June 15: Twitter Tuesday said it has appointed an interim Chief Compliance Officer and the details of the official will be shared directly with the IT Ministry soon.

The move came after the government had given one last chance to Twitter to comply with the new IT rules, as the microblogging platform had not made immediate appointments of key personnel, mandated under the new guidelines



that came into effect May 26. Following this, the US-based company had assured the Indian government last week that it is in advanced stages of finalising the appointment of chief compliance officer; and that it would submit additional details within a week. A Twitter spokesperson Tuesday said the company continues to make every effort to comply with the new guidelines, and is keeping the IT Ministry apprised of progress at every step of the process.

An interim Chief Compliance Officer has been retained and details will be shared with the Ministry directly soon, the spokesperson added. Twitter has had several faceoffs with the Indian government over the past months, including during the farmers' protest and later when it tagged political posts of several leaders of the ruling party BJP as "manipulated media", triggering a sharp rebuke from the Centre.

## '28 seaplane routes, 14 water aerodromes under development'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, June 15: A total of 28 seaplane routes and 14 water aerodromes across the country are in various stages of development at a cost of ₹450 crore, Civil Aviation Minister Hardeep Singh Puri said Tuesday.

In order to develop seaplane flight services in India, the Ministry of Civil Aviation (MoCA) and the Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways (MoPSW) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) this afternoon. At the event, Puri said: "Twenty-eight seaplane routes under the regional connectivity scheme and 14 water aerodromes in Gujarat, Assam, Telangana, Andhra Pradesh, Andaman and Nicobar islands and Lakshadweep are at various stages of development at the cost of ₹450 crore."

Under the regional connectivity scheme UDAN, financial incentives from the Centre, state governments and airport operators are extended to selected airlines to encourage operations from unserved and underserved airports, and keep airfares affordable. Puri said the MoU is a formalisation and the beginning of an institutional process to develop seaplane services in India.

## SHORT TAKES

### Smog tower misses deadline

New Delhi: The Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) has sought three more months to complete the construction of a smog tower at Anand Vihar here, officials said. Though the agencies had sought special permission to continue the construction work during the lockdown, the restriction on the movement of manpower and material led to some delay, a senior CPCB official said.

### SUV case: NIA nabs 2 residents

Mumbai: The National Investigation Agency has arrested two more persons in connection with the probe into the sensational case of a SUV planted with gelatin sticks near Antilia building and the murder of its owner, officials said here Tuesday. The duo has been identified as Santosh Atmaram Shelar and Anand Pandurang Jadhav, both residents of the Kurar village, a slum pocket in Malad east suburb.

### Nine IPS officers transferred in UP

Lucknow: In another administrative reshuffle, nine IPS officers including six district police chiefs were shifted by the Uttar Pradesh government late Monday night. According to an official release, SSP Meerut, Ajay Sahni has been shifted to Jaunpur in the same capacity, while SP, Jaunpur, Raj Karan Nayyar, was shifted in the same capacity to GGP headquarters. Similarly, Moradabad SSP Prabhakar Chaudhary was given the charge of Meerut SSP while Pawan Kumar who was on waiting list, has been posted as new Moradabad SSP.

### Man shot dead

Ambala: A 34-year-old man was allegedly shot dead by unidentified assailants in Haryana's Ambala district Tuesday, police said. The deceased was identified as Jeetu, a milkman from Kumar Mandi area, they said. Jeetu was shot at by two persons from close range when he stepped out of his cowshed near Hathikhana Mandir. He was shot eight times, the police said. The victim sustained serious injuries on his head and other body parts. He was rushed to the local civil hospital where he was declared dead, they said.

## PROTEST TURNS UGLY



Police personnel try to stop SAD & BSP workers during their protest demanding arrest of Health Minister Balbir Singh for alleged vaccine & Fateh kit scams, near CM Capt. Amarinder Singh's farmhouse in Mohali

## FB expands fast internet access in India

DURING THE CURRENT COVID CRISIS IN INDIA, FACEBOOK ALSO LEVERAGED THE EXPRESS WI-FI PARTNER NETWORKS TO SHARE COVID-RELATED INFORMATION FROM CREDIBLE SOURCES WITH MICRO COMMUNITIES AND TOWNS ACROSS THE COUNTRY

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, June 15: In a bid to expand affordable internet access for the public, Facebook India Tuesday announced new partnerships with internet service providers (ISPs) D-Vois and Netplus.

The ISPs will use Facebook Connectivity's Express Wi-Fi platform to launch public Wi-Fi hotspots across Bengaluru and several cities in Punjab.

"From Dharavi in Mumbai to Shillong, Aizawl, Vadodara, Rajkot, and many other towns and cities, the Express Wi-Fi platform is helping expand internet connectivity in

the country, enabling economic opportunities, innovation, and expression for people, businesses, and communities alike," said Manish Chopra, Director and Head of Partnerships, Facebook India. Express Wi-Fi is a software platform that enables mobile operators, satellite operators, and ISPs to build, grow, and monetise their Wi-Fi businesses in a sustainable and scalable way.

The platform is used by partners in more than 30



countries, connecting millions of people around the world.

In India, the platform has already been deployed by eight partners, providing public Wi-Fi options to people across 12 states. D-Vois has a presence in 60 cities and operates its broadband services under the brand ION.

"ION plans

to expand public Wi-Fi to thousands of hotspots at restaurants, bus stands, malls, cafes, hospitals, and other public spaces," said Ramesh Sathyanarayana, Founder, D-vois Communications. Netplus Broadband, the internet arm of Fastway Group, is another leading ISP in the country.

"The Express Wi-Fi services will be available at several high footfall public areas such as malls, hospitals, bus stands, and market complexes across the cities of Amritsar, Ludhiana, Jalandar, Patiala, and Bhatinda," informed Prem Ojha, Fastway Group CEO.

## COVID VACCINATION COVERAGE

# Tribal districts performing better than national average

AGENCIES

New Delhi, June 15: Covid-19 vaccination per million population in tribal districts is higher than the national average, with 128 out of 176 tribal districts performing better than all India vaccination coverage and also witnessing more walk-ins, the Union Health Ministry said Tuesday.

The government said more walk-in vaccinations are being witnessed in tribal districts as compared to the national average. While the Walk-in:Online vaccination ratio nationally is 81:19, it is 88:12 for tribal districts. These statistics bust miscon-

ception about the rural-urban divide as the Co-WIN system offers a flexible and inclusive framework for facilitating vaccination recording in rural areas, and especially in remote parts of the country, the ministry underlined.

Out of the total 69,995 vaccination centres so far classified by states on Co-WIN as rural or urban, 49,883 vaccination centres or 71 per cent are located in rural areas, the ministry said.

Making it clear that pre-registration for vaccination through online registration and prior booking of appointment is not mandatory to avail Covid-19 vaccination services, it said anyone



aged 18 and above can directly go to the nearest vaccination centre where the vaccinator performs the on-site registration and provides vaccination at the same visit.

The facilitated registration through the Common Service Centres (CSCs) on Co-WIN, is just one of the many modes of registration on Co-WIN, it said.

## EMERGING TRIBAL SCENARIO

AS PER THE DATA AVAILABLE ON CO-WIN, THE GENDER RATIO FOR PEOPLE VACCINATED IS ALSO BETTER IN TRIBAL DISTRICTS

THE VACCINATION PER MILLION POPULATION (10 LAKH) IN TRIBAL DISTRICTS IS 1,73,875, WHICH IS HIGHER THAN THE NATIONAL AVERAGE OF 1,68,951

directly at the nearest vaccination centres. The facility for assisted registrations through the 1075 helpline has also been operationalised, the statement said.

As June 13, out of the 28.36 crore beneficiaries registered on Co-WIN, 16.45 crore or 58 per cent beneficiaries have been registered in the on-site mode, the ministry said.

Out of the total 24.84 crore vaccine doses recorded on Co-WIN as June 13, 19.84 crore doses or nearly 80 per cent of all vaccine doses have been administered through onsite or walk-in vaccination, the ministry said.

# international

## of the day quote

This inaugural hui (meeting) brings together community, civil society, academia, the private sector and government to listen, share and learn - both knowledge and experiences

What is needed from the new Israeli government is to start acting on ending the occupation and settlement in Palestine. Organising the flag march in East Jerusalem is a provocation to the Palestinian people and aggression on the city and our holy places

I want to stress that the Taishan Nuclear Power Plant meets the requirements of the technical specifications and there is no abnormal environmental radioactive level in areas surrounding the power plant, so safety is guaranteed

## SHORT TAKES

### UK, Oz sign free trade agreement

London: British Prime Minister Boris Johnson and his Australian counterpart Scott Morrison have agreed on a historic free trade agreement (FTA) that will make it cheaper for the UK to sell its cars and Scotch whisky

### Attacks on polio teams in Afghan

Kabul: Gunmen Tuesday targeted an anti-polio drive in eastern Afghanistan, killing at least five members of two vaccination teams in separate attacks, officials said

### Japan PM wins no-trust motion

Tokyo: Japan's lower house of Parliament Tuesday voted down a no-confidence motion against Prime Minister Yoshihide Suga's Cabinet

### Suicide bomber at military site

Mogadishu: Police in Somalia say at least 15 people were killed and more than 20 others wounded when a suicide bomber attacked a military training center in the capital, Mogadishu, Tuesday



We have passed 300 million vaccinations in the EU. Every day, we get closer to our goal: to have enough doses delivered to vaccinate 70 per cent of adults in the EU next month

URSULA VON DER LEYEN | PRESIDENT, EUROPEAN COMMISSION

## VACANCIES FOR NEPALI WOMEN IN MILITARY POLICE

The Indian Army has opened vacancies for Nepali women in the Corps of Military Police. The news comes at a time when there are calls to abrogate the recruitment of Nepali youths in the Indian Army



# 'Pak boosting plutonium capacity for use in nukes'

PAKISTAN HAS MAINLY RELIED ON HIGHLY ENRICHED URANIUM FOR ITS STOCKPILE OF AROUND 165 NUCLEAR WEAPONS AS PER THE LATEST ESTIMATES

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, June 15: Pakistan is increasing its capacity to produce plutonium for use in nuclear weapons in tune with an increase in global stockpiles of atomic weapons, missiles and aircraft delivery systems, led by the United



States and Russia who appear locked in competition to modernise their nuclear warheads.

The raw material for nuclear weapons is fissile material, either highly enriched uranium (HEU) or separated plutonium. China, France, Russia, the United Kingdom

and the USA have produced both HEU and plutonium for use in their nuclear weapons. The Indian and Israeli arsenal is mainly plutonium based.

So far, Pakistan has mainly relied on HEU for its stockpile of around 165 nuclear weapons as

per the latest estimates. But Islamabad appears to be diversifying, by enhancing its ability to produce weapon-grade plutonium, according to the findings of the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI).

Released Monday, the SIPRI Yearbook 2021 assesses the current state of armaments, disarmament and international security. A key finding is that despite an overall decrease in the number of nuclear warheads in 2020, more have been deployed with operational forces.

While the US and Russia continued to reduce their overall nuclear weapon inventories by dismantling retired warheads in 2020, both are estimated to have had around 50 more nuclear warheads in operational deployment at the

start of 2021 than a year earlier, says the report.

The report said that at the start of 2021, the United States, Russia, the United Kingdom, France, China, India, Pakistan, Israel and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK, or North Korea) possessed approximately 13,080 nuclear weapons, of which 3825 were deployed with operational forces. Approximately 2000 of these are kept in a state of high operational alert.

Uncertainty about Pakistan's uranium resources, and the operating history and enrichment capacity of its centrifuge plant at Kahuta and a possible second plant at Gadwal (which may be dedicated to HEU production) limits the reliability of the estimate, the panel says in its country report on Pakistan.

## Tensions raised before Israeli nationalist march

AGENCIES

Jerusalem, June 15: Far-right Israeli groups plan to march in East Jerusalem Tuesday in a flag-waving procession that risks reigniting tensions with Palestinians and poses an early test for Israel's new government.



Several hours before the event was due to start, incendiary balloons launched from Gaza caused several fires in fields in Israeli communities near the border with the Palestinian enclave, witnesses and the Israeli fire brigade said.

Such incidents had stopped with a ceasefire that ended 11 days of cross-border fighting last month between Palestinian militants in Hamas-ruled Gaza and the Israeli military.

The marchers hope to pass through Jerusalem's walled Old City, which is home to shrines sacred to Judaism, Islam and Christianity and is the most sensitive site in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

Assailing the march as a "provocation", Palestinians called for "Day of Rage" protests in Gaza and the Israeli-occupied West Bank, with memories still fresh of confrontations between Israeli police and Palestinians during the Muslim holy month of Ramadan.

The march was originally scheduled for May 10 as part of "Jerusalem Day" festivities that celebrate Israel's capture of East Jerusalem in the 1967 Middle East war.

# Anger, backlash in UK as govt extends curbs

Protesters marched around the city and held signs that read, "Freedom is not negotiable" and "Open the UK for business now," while the opposition blamed the conservative government for "incompetence" and "slow decision-making"

AGENCIES

London, June 15: People took to streets as UK Prime Minister Boris Johnson Monday announced a four-week delay in the final stage of easing lockdown restrictions in England until July 19, citing fears that the link between Coronavirus infections and hospitalisations remains at concerning levels due to the more transmissible Delta variant.

The footage of BBC journalist Nick Watt, which was circulated widely on Twitter showing him being chased and verbally abused at an anti-shutdown protest revealed how divided the country is and how some people are reacting to the restrictions sparked by pandemic. The group hounded him, calling "traitor" as he ran toward police for safety. The incident also showed the helplessness and dangers faced by frontline workers, reporters and scientists while working amid negativities that a global health crisis brings.



The protesters marched around the city and held signs that read, "Freedom is not negotiable" and "Open the UK for business now," while the opposition blamed the conservative government for "incompetence" and "slow decision-making".

Labour shadow home secretary Nick Thomas-Symonds dubbed it the "Johnson variant" as he accused the British prime minister of "unbelievably reckless" actions by not adding India to the "red list" of countries from where travel

is effectively banned, with British residents able to return only under compulsory hotel quarantine.

UK Cabinet Office minister Michael Gove dismissed the allegations as "rubbish" and defended Johnson, saying the government would never put public lives at risk.

"The PM would never put the health of the country at risk in that way and people who are peddling this line are a) trying to make a political point and b) aren't looking at the facts and the timeline that we've been discussing," he told the BBC.

# NATO summit ends with new agenda to mark future threats

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Brussels, June 15: The in-person NATO summit has concluded with leaders of the 30-member alliance agreeing on a new agenda to address future challenges.

The gathering was part of Biden's first foreign trip since he took office, as he aimed to rebuild the transatlantic relations after the Trump era.

A communique issued Monday following the conclusion of the summit said leaders agreed on the "NATO 2030" agenda, a comprehensive initiative about making sure the alliance remains ready today to face tomorrow's challenges.

According to the agenda, NATO will strengthen political consultation and the resilience of society, reinforce defence and deterrence, sharpen the technological edge, and develop its next Strategic Concept in time for the summit in 2022, said the communique.

The leaders also took decisions on the newest operational domains: cyber and space. The bloc agreed on a new cyber defence policy, which



recognizes that cyberspace is contested at all times and ensures that the bloc has strong technical capabilities, political consultations, and military planning in place to "keep our systems secure".

In terms of Russia, NATO leaders said that they were open to a political dialogue but remained "clear-eyed" about the challenges it allegedly poses, the communique added. Also for the first time, NATO had placed China at the centre of its agenda.

According to the communique, China's "stated ambitions and assertive behaviour present systemic challenges to the rules-based international order and to areas relevant to Alliance security", the BBC reported.

# CHINA SENDS 28 FIGHTER JETS TOWARD TAIWAN

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Taipei, June 15: China flew a record 28 fighter jets toward the self-ruled island of Taiwan Tuesday, the island's defense ministry said, the largest such display of force since Beijing began sending planes on a near daily basis last year.

Taiwan's air force deployed its combat air patrol forces in response and monitored the situation in the southwestern part of the island's air defense identification zone with its air defense systems, the Ministry of National Defense said.

The planes included various types of fighter jets including 14 J-16 and six J-11 planes, as well as bombers, the ministry said.

China's show of force comes after leaders of the Group of Seven industrialized nations issued a statement Sunday calling for a peaceful resolution of cross-Taiwan

## LARGEST INCURSION



Strait issues and underscored the importance of peace and stability.

Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Zhao Lijian Tuesday said the G-7 was deliberately "interfering in China's internal affairs." "China's determination to safeguard national sovereignty, security and development interests is unwavering," he said.

Since the election of President Tsai Ing-wen in 2016, China has increased diplomatic and military pressure on the government over her refusal to agree to China's insistence that the island be considered part of Chinese territory.

## FIGHT FOR LAND



Debora Pataxo, of the Pataxo tribe, during a protest for land demarcation and against President Jair Bolsonaro's government, in front of the Planalto Palace in Brasilia, Brazil

# Irish scientists find why Covid patients develop blood clots

THE STUDY FOUND THAT THE BALANCE BETWEEN A MOLECULE THAT CAUSES CLOTTING, CALLED VON WILLEBRAND FACTOR (VWF), AND ITS REGULATOR CALLED ADAMTS13, IS SEVERELY DISRUPTED IN PATIENTS WITH SEVERE COVID-19

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

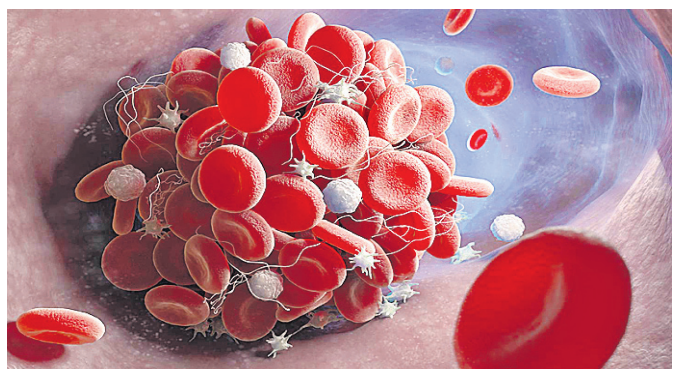
London, June 15: Scientists in Ireland have identified how and why some Covid-19 patients can develop life-threatening clots, which could lead to targeted therapies that prevent this from happening.

The study, led by researchers from Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland (RCSI) University of Medicine and Health Sciences and published in the 'Journal of Thrombosis and Haemostasis', found that the balance between a molecule that causes clotting, called Von Willebrand Factor (VWF), and

its regulator called ADAMTS13, is severely disrupted in patients with severe Covid-19.

Previous research has established that blood clotting is a significant cause of death in patients with Covid-19.

"Our research helps provide insights into the mechanisms that cause severe blood clots in patients with Covid-19, which is critical to developing more effective treatments," said Dr Jamie O'Sullivan, the study's corresponding author and research lecturer within the Irish Centre for Vascular Biology at RCSI.



"While more research is needed to determine whether targets aimed

at correcting the levels of ADAMTS13 and VWF may be a

successful therapeutic intervention, it is important that we continue to develop therapies for patients with Covid-19. Covid-19 vaccines will continue to be unavailable to many people throughout the world, and it is important that we provide effective treatments to them and to those with breakthrough infections," he said.

To understand why that clotting happens, the researchers analysed blood samples that were taken from patients with Covid-19 in the Beaumont Hospital Intensive Care Unit in Dublin.

When compared to control

groups, the blood of Covid-19 patients had higher levels of the pro-clotting VWF molecules and lower levels of the anti-clotting ADAMTS13. Furthermore, the researchers identified other changes in proteins that caused the reduction of ADAMTS13.

The study was funded by Irish Covid-19 Vasculopathy Study (ICVS) through the Health Research Board Covid-19 Rapid Response award as well as a philanthropic grant from the 3M Foundation to RCSI University of Medicine and Health Sciences in support of Covid-19 research.

# business

## of the day quote

Twenty-eight seaplane routes under the regional connectivity scheme and 14 water aerodromes in Gujarat, Assam, Telangana, Andhra Pradesh, Andaman and Nicobar islands and Lakshadweep are at various stages of development at the cost of ₹450 crore

**HARDEEP SINGH PURI** | CIVIL AVIATION MINISTER

With the government and organisations across the board working on an aggressive vaccination programme, we are hopeful for quicker restoration of normalcy and accelerated hiring scenario.

**SEKHAR GARISA** | MONSTER.COM CEO

We are committed to drive the energy transition to enable more sustainable, reliable and productive ecosystems through our technologies

**GERD DEUSSER** | HEAD, ENERGY, SIEMENS LIMITED

## SHORT TAKES

### Accenture to acquire umlaut

**Bangalore:** Global professional services company Accenture will acquire umlaut, an engineering consulting and services firm headquartered in Aachen, Germany for an undisclosed amount. The acquisition will scale Accenture's deep engineering capabilities to help companies use digital technologies like cloud, artificial intelligence, and 5G to transform how they design, engineer and manufacture their products as well as embed sustainability. The acquisition of umlaut will add more than 4,200 industry-leading engineers and consultants across 17 countries to Accenture's Industry X services, and expand the company's capabilities across a range of industries, including automotive, aerospace & defense, telecommunications, energy and utilities, Accenture said in a statement.

### Tesla's new electric motor

**San Francisco:** Elon Musk has elaborated on details of Tesla's new electric motor -- the Plaid carbon-wrapped motor -- and even teased an even crazier higher RPM version coming to the new Roadster. The CEO mentioned a brand-new battery pack without going into new details. However, he did unveil Tesla's new Plaid carbon-wrapped motor and discussed a few details about the new technology, which allows for smaller, more powerful and efficient motors. During the presentation, Musk briefly touched on the fact that this new motor is only possible thanks to a new machine that Tesla developed to be able to build it.

### Website for trusted telecom products

**New Delhi:** The government Tuesday launched a website for giving clearance to trusted products that telecom operators can install in their network under the National Security Directive on telecommunication sector, according to a note issued by the National Security Council Secretariat. Telecom operators are required to access the website, www.Trustedtelecom.Gov.In, to indicate the telecom products and the vendor from whom they intend to procure the products. The access will also be given to the respective vendors named by the telecom operators.



The freedom to overfly states is something that we have perhaps taken for granted for the last 70-80 years. We must restore it as quickly as possible

**MICHAEL O'LEARY** | RYANAIR CHIEF

## EXPORTS JUMP 69.35% IN MAY

India's exports rose by 69.35 per cent to USD 32.27 billion in May, driven by healthy growth in sectors such as engineering, petroleum products and gems and jewellery, even as trade deficit widened to USD 6.28 billion, according to government data released Tuesday.



## Central bank to focus on growth even as inflation breaches comfort level

REUTERS

**Mumbai, June 15:** The Reserve Bank of India is unlikely to react yet to multi-month high retail prices as economic recovery remains its prime focus amid the deadly second wave of the pandemic, according to two senior sources aware of the central bank's thinking.

The annual retail inflation rate rose 6.30% year-on-year in May, up from 4.29% in April and sharply above analysts' estimate of 5.30%. The wholesale price inflation rate rose 12.94%, its highest in at least two decades. "There is a broad-based increase in CPI inflation but it still is not driven by demand and that gives the RBI some leeway. They will continue to wait and watch as a rate hike is out of question for now," the first source said.

India's economy grew 1.6% in the March quarter compared with the same period a year earlier, but that was before a massive second wave of infections hit the country which prompted fairly stringent lockdowns across most states causing another round of job losses and a significant dent to demand.

Asia's third-largest economy has now reported 29.57 million COVID-19 cases and 377,031 deaths, though some experts believe the actual numbers are far higher.

The central bank earlier this month reiterated its commitment to keeping monetary policy accommodative as long as necessary to revive and sustain growth on a durable basis. "There is no way RBI can react to inflation at this stage," a second source said.

"The maximum push is coming



from margins, from supply disruptions, from cost push pressures...but if there is demand, (RBI) will have to react. But till now, we don't see evidence of demand pressures," he added. The RBI did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

At its last policy review, the RBI warned that high energy prices could stoke inflation. It also cut its GDP growth forecast to 9.5% from 10.5% for the current fiscal year. "CPI inflation at 6.30% is way above the general expectations and falsifies the claim that higher WPI does not imply higher CPI," said Rupa Rege Nitsure, chief economist at L&T Financial Holdings.

India's benchmark 10-year bond yield rose to an over six-week high of 6.04% following the CPI data as traders worry the RBI will need to react to inflation sooner rather than later after it breached the RBI's 2%-6% mandated band.

"This outcome complicates the direction of monetary policy, however, the RBI is likely to stick with the US Fed's playbook on opting to pin this spurt on transient cost-push pressures and stay focused on the negative output gap," said Radhika Rao, economist at DBS Bank.

## India to expedite Amazon, Flipkart antitrust probe

REUTERS

**Mumbai, June 15:** India's antitrust watchdog plans to expedite a restarted probe into allegations of anti-competitive behaviour at Amazon.com Inc and Walmart Inc's Flipkart, as it intensifies scrutiny of big-tech firms, two people close to the matter said.

The comments come as major U.S. technology firms including Twitter Inc and Facebook Inc are at loggerheads with the government over issues such as data privacy bills and policies some industry executives have called protectionist.

The Competition Commission of India (CCI) initiated a probe in January last year on the basis of a complaint alleging Amazon and Flipkart promoted select sellers on their e-commerce platforms and that deep discounts stifled competition. The companies have denied wrongdoing.

Near-immediate legal challenges from the pair stalled the probe for over a year until a court last week allowed it to resume, having dismissed arguments that the CCI lacked evi-



dence. Though Amazon and Flipkart are likely to appeal, the CCI plans to demand information from them related to the allegations "as quickly as possible", said one of the people, who declined to be identified due to the sensitivity of the matter.

The investigation "will be expedited", the person said. Such investigations in India typically take months to complete. Amazon declined to comment. Flipkart and the CCI did not respond to requests for comment.

### PRIORITY

The CCI is speeding up all cases involving big technology firms, including by deploying additional of-

ficers for some cases and working to more stringent internal deadlines, said the two people, who are familiar with the watchdog's thinking.

"Cases involving digital firms are getting a priority at CCI as they can have significant impact on the economy and Indian startups," said one of the people.

Last year, the CCI began reviewing allegations of Google abusing the position of its Android operating system in the smart TV market, and is likely to soon order a comprehensive antitrust investigation, the people said.

Google declined to comment. Such a probe would be the third against Google, with the Alphabet

Inc unit already battling cases relating to Android as well as its payment app. The CCI is also investigating practices at MakeMyTrip Ltd and privacy policy changes at Facebook's WhatsApp.

### PREFERENTIAL TREATMENT

The probe into Amazon and Flipkart is restarting at a time when both are battling accusations from offline retailers that their complex business structures allow them to circumvent foreign investment rules for e-commerce.

In February, a Reuters investigation based on Amazon documents showed the e-tailer for years gave preferential treatment to a small group of sellers on its Indian platform. While arguing to restart the probe, the CCI told a court in Karnataka state that the Reuters report corroborated evidence.

Amazon, which has said it "does not give preferential treatment to any seller", told the court it disagreed with the Reuters report.

The antitrust body will examine the Reuters report and could use it as part of its investigation, one of the people said.

## INDUSTRY MINISTER LAUNCHES 'WESHARE'

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, June 15:** Odisha is the best place for investors as it has everything that an investor requires, said Diba Shankar Mishra, state MSME and Industry Minister.

Mishra Tuesday launched WeShare, a vocal for local initiative of the Indian Chamber of Commerce's Women Entrepreneurship Committee (IWEC) in a virtual meet. During the launching ceremony, he said, "Odisha has everything what an investor looks for. If an investor from any corner of the globe seeks



to invest in minerals and metals he simply cannot ignore Odisha."

The minister encouraged local entrepreneurs and women workforce and appreciated their contribution to the state's economy.

WeShare is a complete digital initiative that is reaching out to business owners and small enterprises facing challenges of decreasing revenues and mounting liabilities during the pandemic.

According to IWEC members, "WeShare campaign has different aspects like offers and discounts, prepaid campaign and I-pledge campaign. Businesses offer discounts to customers. Businesses offer the best deals for prepaid customers. Customers

pay for products/services by July 15, 2021 and can avail benefits of the lucrative offers till March 31, 2022. This campaign improves the cash flow for small entrepreneurs to stay afloat and survive the pandemic. Customers get value deals that can be availed at any time during the financial year of 2021-2022."

Also, I-pledge Campaign was started to encourage individuals and businesses to commit to sourcing their purchasing needs from local businesses. Individuals and businesses commit to fixed amounts starting from ₹2,000 based on their comfort and sourcing needs.

## Adani stocks characterised by similar set of FPIs

INSTITUTIONAL AND MUTUAL FUNDS HOLDINGS DECREASE IN MARCH 2021 QUARTER

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**New Delhi, June 15:** Adani Group stocks may have been on fire in recent months adding to Gautam Adani's wealth but an analysis of shareholdings reveals similar set of top FPI holdings across the stocks.

In addition, in many cases, institutional and mutual funds holdings have decreased in the March 2021 quarter. In addition, mutual fund holdings in the stocks are very low. The Adani Group stocks also have the same set of foreign portfolio investors among the big shareholders in that category. Albulu Investment Fund, Cresta Fund and APMS Investment Fund holding shares in Adani Group Companies were in a controversy Monday on reports that their share accounts were frozen but was later clarified that they are active.

As per Trendlyne data, for Adani Green Energy, institutional investors have decreased holdings from 23.09% to 21.77% in March 2021 quarter. Mutual Funds have decreased holdings from 0.13% to 0.12% in March 2021 quarter. The top FPs are Asia Investment Corporation (Mauritius), APMS Investment Fund, Elara India Opportunities Fund, LTS Investment Fund, Marshal Global Capital Fund and Polus Global



Fund are not found among top FPI holders in other Adani Group stocks. The others are Vespera Fund, Albula Investment Fund, New Leania Investments is also not among the similar funds list for other stocks.

For Adani Ports, institutional investors have decreased holdings from 33.5% to 32.8% in the quarter. Mutual Funds have decreased holdings from 3.95% to 3.55% in March

2021 quarter. Camas Investments is the top FPI while LIC holds 10.77 per cent in the domestic category.

For Adani Enterprises, institutional investors have decreased holdings from 21.5% to 21.35% in the said quarter. Mutual Funds have decreased holdings from 1.09% to 0.73% in the quarter. The top FPIs are Elara India Opportunities Fund, Cresta Fund, Albula Investment Fund, Vespera

Fund, LTS Investment Fund, APMS Fund. Apart from these funds which are similar to other Adani Group stocks, the new addition is Nomura Singapore.

In the case of Adani Power, institutional investors have decreased holdings from 18.88% to 18.61% in March 2021 quarter. Mutual Funds holding remains unchanged at 0.0% in the quarter. The top FPI holders are Elara India Opportunities Fund and Asia Investment Corporation (Mauritius).

For Adani Transmission, the story is different with institutional investors have increased holdings from 22.47% to 22.84% in March 2021 quarter. Mutual Funds have decreased holdings from 0.14% to 0.12% in the quarter. The same funds are top shareholders in the institutional category and only Asia Investment Corporation (Mauritius) is added in the category.

In the case of Adani Total Gas, institutional investors have increased holdings from 21.05% to 21.27% in the quarter. Mutual Funds holding remains unchanged at 0.02% in March 2021 quarter. The major FPIs are Elara India Opportunities Fund, APMS Investment, Albula Investment, LTS Investment, Vespera Fund, Cresta Fund, as per Trendlyne data.

## Bharti Airtel strengthens mobile network in Odisha



POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, June 15:** Bharti Airtel Tuesday said the company has upgraded its mobile network in Odisha to deliver the best network experience for its customers.

Siddharth Sharma, CEO of (West Bengal & Odisha) Bharti Airtel said, "Airtel has deployed an additional 5 Mhz spectrum in the superior 900 Mhz band along with advance network software tools across its network in the state to significantly bolster indoor network coverage and ensure seamless high speed data experience. It has also begun deploying additional 10 MHz spectrum in the 2300 MHz band to enhance network capacity."

Airtel had acquired the 16.4 Mhz spectrum for Odisha during the recent auctions conducted by the Government of India. With this

fresh spectrum, Airtel has the largest spectrum bank of 63.8 Mhz in Odisha. With its diverse spectrum holdings across 2300/2100/1800/900 bands, the company is well positioned to serve the growing demand for high speed data services and its network is fully ready for 5G.

Airtel has also deployed advanced network technologies and tools such as pre-5G Massive MIMO, 4G Advanced and Carrier Aggregation to step up high speed network capacity and coverage.

Soumendra Sahu, COO - Odisha, Bharti Airtel said, "Airtel now has the largest spectrum bank in Odisha and the additional deployment of LTE 900 will further boost the network with enhanced indoor coverage in urban towns and over 8,800 villages across all 30 districts in Odisha."

## Big Tech faces EU blow in national data watchdogs ruling

REUTERS

**Brussels, June 15:** Facebook and other Silicon Valley giants could face more scrutiny and sanctions in the European Union after the bloc's top court backed national privacy watchdogs to pursue them, even when they are not their lead regulators. Consumer lobbying group BEUC welcomed Tuesday's ruling by the EU Court of Justice (CJEU), which backed the right of national agencies to act, citing enforcement bottlenecks.

Along with Google, Twitter and Apple, Facebook has its EU headquarters in Ireland, putting it under the oversight of the Irish data protection regulator under privacy rules known as GDPR, which allow

for fines of up to 4% of a company's global turnover for breaches. The CJEU got involved after a Belgian court sought guidance on Facebook's challenge to the territorial competence of the Belgian data watchdog, which was trying to stop it from tracking users in Belgium through cookies stored in the company's social plug-ins, regardless of whether they have an account or not.

"Most Big Tech companies are based in Ireland, and it should not be up to that country's authority alone to protect 500 million consumers in the EU, especially if it does not rise to the challenge," BEUC Director General Monique Goyens said. Several national watchdogs in the 27-member EU have long complained about their Irish



counterpart, saying that it takes too long to decide on cases. Ireland has dismissed this, saying it has to be extra meticulous in dealing with powerful and well-funded tech gi-

ants. Ireland's cases in the pipeline include Facebook-owned Instagram and WhatsApp as well as Twitter, Apple, Verizon Media, Microsoft-owned LinkedIn and U.S. digital

advertiser Quantcast. "Under certain conditions, a national supervisory authority may exercise its power to bring any alleged infringement of the GDPR before a court of a member state, even though that authority is not the lead supervisory authority," the CJEU said.

Judges said these conditions include regulators following cooperation and consistency procedures set out in the GDPR and that the violations occurred in the relevant EU country. "We are pleased that the CJEU has upheld the value and principles of the one-stop-shop mechanism, and highlighted its importance in ensuring the efficient and consistent application of GDPR across the EU," Jack Gilbert, Facebook's associate gen-

eral counsel, said. Tech lobbying group CCIA said the ruling could lead to inconsistent and uncertain enforcement and jack up costs. "It has also opened the back door for all national data protection enforcers to start multiple proceedings against companies," CCIA Europe senior policy manager Alex Roure said.

"Data protection compliance in the EU risks becoming more inconsistent, fragmented, and uncertain. We urge national authorities to be cautious about launching multiple proceedings that would weaken legal certainty and further complicate data protection compliance in the EU," he said. The case is C-645/19 Facebook Ireland & Others.

# CR7'S NIGHT OUT



Records for Ronaldo as Portugal score thrice in eight minutes against Hungary to begin their title defense at Euro with win

**Budapest, June 15:** Cristiano Ronaldo scripted a few records to his name at European Championships as he now stands alone as the all-time record goal scorer in the competition's history as well as becoming the first player to feature at five finals tournaments in Portugal's 3-0 win over Hungary here in front of more than 60,000 fans, Tuesday. Ronaldo converted an 87th-minute penalty for his 10th goal in the competition, overtaking France's Michel Platini's nine goals. His 11th came only a few minutes

later when he took the ball around goalkeeper Peter Gulacsi for Portugal's third. At 36 years, 130 days, Ronaldo became oldest player to score for Portugal at a major tournament, breaking the record set by Pepe at World Cup 2018 (35 years, 124 days). The Juventus star also became the oldest player to score at least two goals in a European Championship match, breaking the record set by Andriy Shevchenko when he was 35 years, 256 days. Hungary had looked on course for an unlikely draw until they conceded three times late on - in eight minutes. The deadlock was

broken in the 84th minute when Raphael Guerreiro's shot with the outside of the foot took a massive deflection off defender Willi Orban to break Hungary's brave resistance. The result looked comprehensive, but Portugal had to work hard to defeat their opponents in front of the biggest attendance of the tournament so far. Hungary were mostly restricted to long-range shots straight at goalkeeper Rui Patricio. However, home substitute Szabolcs Schon thought he had scored when he squeezed a shot in at the near post, but the goal was correctly ruled out for offside.

Portugal got their fortunate opener soon afterwards before Ronaldo's penalty after Orban had fouled Rafa Silva. Ronaldo then had the final say in injury time as he showed great skill to round Gulacsi for his second and Portugal's third.

# Resilient Sweden hold misfiring Spain at Euro



Robin Olsen safely holds the ball denying Spain a goal during their match

**Seville, June 15:** The chances came and went but neither Spain nor Sweden managed to put any of them in the net. Spain dominated possession and kept the pressure on the opposing area for most of the match but the Swedes held on for a 0-0 draw Monday at the UEFA Euro 2020. Sweden managed only a few chances at La Cartuja Stadium, but they were some of the most dangerous ones. Alexander Isak, who plays for Spanish club Real Sociedad, had a shot from inside the area hit the post after deflecting off Spain defender Marcos Llorente in front of the goal line. Early in the second half, Marcus Berg was inside the area with the ball coming his way, but he mis-hit his shot. Alvaro Morata had Spain's best chance just a few minutes before Isak but his shot missed wide with goalkeeper Robin Olsen the only opponent to beat. Morata had already missed some chances and been jeered in Spain's final warm-up match against Portugal, also a 0-0 draw. Spain pressed until the end Monday but kept misfiring. Olsen made a 90th-minute save off a header by substitute Gerard Moreno, and he had already stopped another close-range header by Dani Olmo in the first half. Spain ended with 75 per cent of possession and had 17 total attempts, with five on target. Sweden missed the target on their four attempts. Spain had failed to score in only one of their last 14 group matches at Euro. Sweden hadn't drawn any of their last 17 international matches, since a tie against Spain in qualifying for Euro 2020. The entire Spanish team was vaccinated just days before its opening match. Luis Enrique started with Rodri in Busquets' position, with youngster Pedri and Koke alongside him in the midfield. The 18-year-old Pedri became Spain's youngest ever player at the meet.

TODAY'S MATCHES		
FIN	v	RUS
Time: 06:30 pm		
TUR	v	WAL
Time: 09:30 pm		
ITA	v	SUI
Time: 12:30 am (June 17)		
Telecast: Sony TEN Network		

## NEWS IN BRIEF

### WTC FINAL: INDIA SQUAD ANNOUNCED

**SOUTHAMPTON:** Veteran speedster Umesh Yadav pipped Brisbane Test hero Shardul Thakur as the 15th member of the Indian squad that will take on New Zealand in the World Test Championship (WTC) final starting here June 18. Umesh, along with Mohammed Shami, and Hanuma Vihari all of whom got injured during the Australia tour, were back in the 15 that needed to be announced as per ICC squad protocol. Apart from Shardul, the notable names to miss out were KL Rahul, Mayank Agarwal, Washington Sundar and Axar Patel. In case of Wriddhiman Saha, the ICC rule of being able to replace a wicketkeeper with a substitute keeper was reason for a look-in. India: Virat Kohli (C) Shubman Gill, Rohit Sharma, Cheteshwar Pujara, Ajinkya Rahane, Rishabh Pant (wk), Ravichandran Ashwin, Ravindra Jadeja, Md Shami Jasprit Bumrah, Ishant Sharma, Mohammed Siraj, Wriddhiman Saha (wk), Umesh Yadav & Hanuma Vihari.

### 2022 CWG: EVES' T20 EVENT JULY 29-AUG 7

**NEW DELHI:** The Commonwealth Games' (CWG) women's T20 competition, which will make its debut at the quadrennial showpiece next year, will be played from July 29 to August 7 at the Edgbaston Stadium, the organisers announced Tuesday. The group stage matches of the eight-team competition are slated to be held till August 4 and the semifinals are scheduled for August 6. The bronze medal match will be played August 7 followed by the summit clash on the same day. "With 11 days of swimming and diving, 8 days of cricket, 8 days of gymnastics and 7 days of athletics, including the marathon, the summer of 2022 is set for a spectacular home Games," the official website stated. It will only be the second time that cricket will feature in the event after a men's 50-over competition was part of the Games in Kuala Lumpur in 1998.

# Messi brilliance goes in vain against Chile at Copa America SLOPPY ARGENTINA SPLIT POINTS



Lionel Messi celebrates his goal against Chile with his teammates, Monday night

**Rio de Janeiro, June 15:** Lionel Messi scored a stunning free-kick, repeatedly dribbled through the Chilean defense and created opportunities regularly for his Argentina teammates. Despite Messi's intense performance, Argentina was held 1-1 by Chile in their Copa America opener. The game at the Nilton Santos stadium here was also marked by a tribute to Argentine football great Diego Maradona, who died in November at age 60. Messi, who turns 34 this month, might have one of his final chances of winning a title with Argentina at the Copa America. He said ahead of opening game that winning with his national team is "the biggest dream" of

his decorated career, despite all the individual success and club titles with Barcelona. Argentina appeared to be ready to start giving Messi what he craves. Coach Lionel Scaloni's line-up wasted three clear opportunities between the 16th and 18th minutes, one from Lautaro Martinez and two for Nicolas Gonzalez. And then Messi opened the scoring in the 33rd after a free-kick that Chilean goalkeeper Claudio Bravo couldn't stop despite getting a touch on the ball to his left. Argentina continued to pressure Chile, which was missing injured striker Alexis Sanchez. But Chile transformed into a more attacking team in the second half and earned a penalty after video review. Arturo Vidal's shot from the spot was stopped, but Eduardo Vargas

noddled into the empty goal to level the scoring in the 57th. Messi continued to create opportunities until the end of the match, but his teammates showed the same difficulty to deliver goals as they did in the 2-2 draw at Colombia in a World Cup qualifier in Barranquilla last week. The superstar also complained about the apparently irregular pitch at the stadium. "This match got complicated to us," an exhausted Messi said after the draw. "We needed to be calm, have the control of the possession and play more quickly. The penalty changed the match, too." Paraguay lead group A after a 3-1 win over Bolivia at the Olimpico stadium in Goiania. Bolivia scored first via Erwin Saavedra's first-half penalty, but Paraguay changed their fortunes after the break with goals by Alejandro Romero and a brace by Angel Romero. Argentina's next match is against Uruguay Friday. Chile will face Bolivia on the same day. Paraguay return to action next Monday against Messi's team.

## TRIBUTE TO DIEGO MARADONA

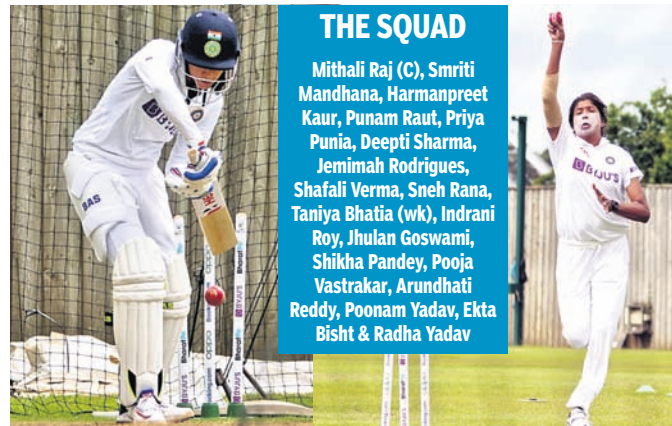
**RIO DE JANEIRO:** Diego Maradona's life was honored in a tribute featuring lights and projections onto the pitch before Argentina's Copa America opener against Chile. No fans were present at the Nilton Santos stadium for the latest tribute to the Argentine football great, this one organized by South American football body CONMEBOL. Maradona died at age 60 last November. The 3-minute video, which was shared by CONMEBOL's social media channels, had "Live is Life" by Opus as its soundtrack. It's the same song that was on as Maradona famously warmed up with Napoli ahead of a UEFA Cup semifinal against Bayern Munich in 1989. The tribute video featured a holographic of Maradona doing kick-ups while his shirt changed colors to represent all the teams he played for: Argentinos Juniors, Boca Juniors, Barcelona, Napoli, Sevilla, Newell's Old Boys and Argentina. It also featured images of some of Maradona's most representative moments; as a kid talking about his desire to play in the World Cup; receiving the trophy from Mexico's president in 1986; and his goals against England in that World Cup. The tribute ends with Maradona's speech during his goodbye to Boca Juniors in 2001 at the La Bombonera stadium. "May this party never end. May this love you have for me never end," Maradona said then. The projection ends with his year of birth and the infinity symbol.

# India eves in 7th heaven ahead of return to Tests

## MITHALI & CO BACK IN WHITES AFTER NEARLY SEVEN YEARS AS THEY FACE ENGLAND TODAY

**Bristol, June 15:** A favourable record in England and 'positive mindset' despite inadequate preparation time will spur the Indian women's cricket team when they take on the seasoned hosts in their first Test engagement in nearly seven years here from Wednesday. After multiple quarantines in India and UK, the Mithali Raj-led squad got little over a week to prepare for their first red ball game since November 2014. Mithali was among the seven current players, who were a part of that victorious eleven against South Africa in Mysuru. While experienced players like the skipper, her deputy Harmanpreet Kaur, Smriti Mandhana and Jhulan Goswami have not played red ball cricket at all in recent times, it will be an even tougher test for the younger lot who don't get to play first-class matches in domestic cricket. The women prepared only in the nets, which might hurt them in the four-day game. Harmanpreet has already conceded they got limited time to get ready for the one-off

Test but said India go into the game 'mentally prepared', having got some valuable advice from men's team vice-captain Ajinkya Rahane. There is a good chance that 17-year-old batting sensation Shafali Verma opens in the game alongside Mandhana. The experienced trio of Mithali, Harmanpreet and Punam Raut will be expected to do the job in what will be challenging conditions for them also. There could be some respite in store for the batters with England choosing Kookaburra over Dukas ball, which does more, for the game as the home team builds up to the Ashes Test against Australia later in the year. It also remains to be seen if veteran pacers Jhulan Goswami and Shikha Pandey would be able to bowl long spells, having not done so for a long time. The spinners, who had a forgettable time at home in the limited overs series against South Africa, would be itching to make amends. The visitors can surely take heart from their past record in England where they have not lost in eight games, having won two out of them.



GETTING BATTLE READY: Smriti Mandhana (L) looks at the ball closely while playing a defensive shot at the nets; Jhulan Goswami bowls during India's practice

THE SQUAD	
Mithali Raj (C), Smriti Mandhana, Harmanpreet Kaur, Punam Raut, Priya Punia, Deepti Sharma, Jemimah Rodrigues, Shafali Verma, Sneha Rana, Taniya Bhatia (wk), Indrani Roy, Jhulan Goswami, Shikha Pandey, Pooja Vastrakar, Arundhati Reddy, Poonam Yadav, Ekta Bisht & Radha Yadav	