



## PRECIOUS LESSON

Actor Urvashi Rautela says her father taught her the importance of valuing herself

LEISURE P2



## DELTA SURGE IN UK

The UK is undergoing a third wave of Covid-19 as a result of the highly transmissible Delta variant

INTERNATIONAL P10



## FRANCE SHARE SPOILS

World Champions France play out a 1-1 stalemate against an impressive Hungary in their Euro 2020 game

SPORTS P12

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## IRREGULAR by MANJUL



Congrats! The 15 lakh each we were to get once all that black money returns to India has more than doubled!!



**ON EVE OF FATHER'S DAY:** A pavement-dweller in Bhubaneswar feeds his daughter with affection, Saturday PHOTO: BIKASH NAYAK

## Bhubaneswar among 5 top most livable cities

AGENCIES

New Delhi, June 19: Bangalore, Chennai, Shimla, Bhubaneswar and Mumbai are the top five most livable cities in India, according to a study prepared by the Centre for Science and Environment (CSE).

According to the Ease of Living Index, which is a part of State of India's Environment 2021, Delhi is ranked 6th in the index.

Bhubaneswar has ranked fourth in the top 10 livable capital cities in the country. And, it topped the Citizen Perception Survey with highest score of 94.8 out of 100.

For the quality of governance rankings of the cities, five parameters were used: services, finance, technology, urban planning and overall governance. Delhi ranked high on services, finance and governance, but received very low scores between 30 and 40 in both the urban planning and the technology categories.

Bangalore was ranked as the best city overall, followed by Chennai. The CSE reports states, "Only one state capital (Bangalore) demonstrates a decent economic ability, scoring 78.8 out of 100, four other state capitals (Chennai, Mumbai, Delhi and Hyderabad) provide middling economic opportunities. This is the second edition of the index, originally launched in 2018.

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## Pendency of cases at City PSES up 128%

None of the graduate constables has shown interest in taking up investigation as announced by the government

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, June 19:** Even as investigation along with maintenance of law and order is the prime duty of police officials across the globe, accomplishing the responsibilities seems to be a Herculean task for the twin city police if data revealed through RTI is any indication.

Crippling manpower crunch and non-separation of law & order and investigation wings are stated to be working as stumbling blocks to the Commissionerate Police in ensuring speedy resolution of cases, said sources.

Data revealed through Right to Information (RTI) said that as many as 12,676 cases have been pending at various police stations in the Capital city till March 2021. According to the RTI reply, 39,692 cases have been registered at 23 police stations of the city during the last six years. The CP has failed to complete investigations into around 32 per cent of the cases registered at the police stations during the above period.

The pendency of cases is rising each passing year with gradual surge in registra-

## RTI REPLY

- **12,676 CASES** have been pending at various police stations in the Capital city till March 2021, says the RTI reply
- **39,692 CASES** have been registered at 23 police stations of the city during the last six years
- **PENDING CASES** shot up to 3,012 in 2020 as against 1,316 in 2016 registering around 128 per cent rise

tion of fresh cases during the last few years. The city also witnessed a constant increase in number of unsolved cases at all the police stations during the period.

The data revealed that the Commissionerate Police has failed to submit final reports or charge-sheets in 1,316 cases registered in 2016. The number of pending cases has increased to 3,012 in 2020 registering around 128 per cent rise as compared to 2016.

Most of the cases have been pending at Nayapalli police station while the almost defunct Special Energy police station recorded the lowest number of pending cases till March 2021.

## BABY SOLD FOR ₹10,000 RESCUED

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, June 19:** A team of the Commissionerate Police with the help of Childline Foundation members Saturday rescued a 6-day-old child sold by his parents to a couple in Kharavela Nagar here a few days ago. Earlier, the director of Childline, Benudhar Senapati had requested the chairperson of OCPDR, Child Welfare Committee (CWC), Bhubaneswar, DCPO and DCP, Bhubaneswar, to initiate a probe into the matter and rescue the child.

Childline members came to know about the matter Friday from the reports doing rounds on various social media platforms.

They constituted a team to investigate the alleged sale of a 10-day-old child in the city. After getting some clues, the team contacted DCP Umashankar Dash, who instructed the ACP Zone-1 and IIC of Kharavela Nagar police help in rescuing the child.

Subsequently, the officials Saturday rescued the baby from a couple at Malisahi under Kharavela Nagar police station. A woman involved in the business of selling and buying babies has been detained by the police. During the course of interrogation, the childless lady confessed that she had bought the baby for ₹10,000 after the child's mother approached her. The baby's mother reportedly informed the lady that her husband was unwilling to keep the baby with them due to abject poverty.

Childline officials later produced the infant before Additional CWC, who directed that the baby be kept at Subhadra Mahatab Seva Sadan, the special adoption agency for rehabilitation. A case has also been registered in this regard.

## Indian IT rules do not conform to int'l norms

AGENCIES

**New Delhi, June 19:** Experts at United Nations Office of the Human Rights Commissioner have said in a report that it is concerned that India's Information Technology (Intermediary Guidelines and Digital Media Ethics Code) Rules, 2021, in their current form, do not conform to international human rights norms.

The observations were made in Mandates of the Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of the right to freedom of opinion and expression; the Special Rapporteur on the rights to freedom of peaceful assembly and of association and the Special Rapporteur on the right to privacy.

The report is authored by Irene Khan, Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of the right to freedom of opinion and expression, Clement Nyaletsossi Voule, Special Rapporteur on the rights to freedom of peaceful assembly and of association and Joseph Cannataci, Special Rapporteur on the right to privacy.

"As noted in previous communications sent to your Excellency's Government, we are concerned that these new rules come at a time of a global pandemic and of large-scale farmer protests in the country, where the enjoyment of the freedom of opinion and expression, including the right to receive information, and the



## UN SPECIAL RAPPORTEURS

- The observations were made in Mandates of the Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of the right to freedom of opinion and expression; the Special Rapporteur on the rights to freedom of peaceful assembly and of association and the Special Rapporteur on the right to privacy

- The report said as a global leader in technology innovation, India has the potential to develop a legislation that can place it at the forefront of efforts to protect digital rights. However, the substantially broadened scope of the Rules is likely to do just the opposite

right to privacy, is particularly important for the realisation of several other civil, cultural, economic, political and social rights," the report said.

"We would like to recall that re-

strictions to freedom of expression must never be invoked as a justification for the muzzling of any advocacy of multiparty democracy, democratic tenets and human rights," the report said.

The report said as a global leader in technology innovation, India has the potential to develop a legislation that can place it at the forefront of efforts to protect digital rights. However, the substantially broadened scope of the Rules is likely to do just the opposite.

"We would therefore encourage the Government to take all necessary steps to carry out a detailed review of the Rules and to consult with all relevant stakeholders, including civil society dealing with human rights, freedom of expression, privacy rights and digital rights," the report said.

"We understand the new Rules were issued under the Information Technology Act of 2000 and, therefore, were not subject to parliamentary review or opened for consultation with stakeholders. We believe such consultations with relevant stakeholders are essential in order to ensure the final text is compatible with India's international legal obligations, in particular with Articles 17 and 19 of the ICCPR," it added.

This observation along with India's comment will also subsequently be made available in the usual report to be presented to the Human Rights Council, it added.



## Singer Tapu Mishra succumbs to Covid

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, June 19:** Popular Odia playback singer Tapu Mishra lost her battle to Covid-19 at a private hospital here, Saturday.

The 36-year-old vocalist breathed her last at around 11 pm. She was put on ventilator support as saturation (SPO2) level was fluctuating. The saturation level dropped drastically for the last two days. According to hospital sources, her lungs had suffered 75 per cent damage.

The singer's fans, fellow singers, music directors, actors and other persons associated with the Odia film industry expressed profound grief over her demise.

During her career as a playback singer for 20 long years, Mishra had lent her voice to more than 150 Odia movies. 'I Love You', 'Chocolate', 'Kula Nandana', 'Pagala Premi', 'Matru Shakti', 'Tu Mo Manara Mita' and 'Subha Vivah' and others.

**WEATHER**

	BHUB	CTK
TEMP MAX	30.7°C	30.6°C
TEMP MIN	25.8°C	25.0°C
Humidity	95%	89%
Rainfall	0.1mm	Nil

Forecast: Generally cloudy sky

## Kim Jong-un admits NK facing acute food crisis

A KG OF BANANAS AT ₹3,336, BLACK TEA AT ₹5,167, A KG OF CORN SELLING AT ₹204.81

AGENCIES

**Seoul, June 19:** North Korea's supreme leader Kim Jong-un has accepted that it's a "tense" food situation in the country and blamed the typhoon and floods that hit the nation last year for crop failure, according to the official Korean Central News Agency.

"The people's food situation is now getting tense," Kim Jong-un said during a recent meeting with the central committee of the ruling Workers' Party. He directed party leaders to concentrate on resolving food shortages saying the "agricultural sector failed to fulfil its grain production plan," according to the state-media re-

port. The development comes two months after Kim Jong-un was reported to have asked officials and people to "wage another, more difficult Arduous March".

The use of 'Arduous March' caught worldwide attention as it was last used by North Korean officials to refer to the period of devastating famine in the early 1990s. In the 1990s, the country suffered mass starvation as the collapse of the USSR left Pyongyang without crucial aid.

According to an estimate, about three million North Koreans starved to death during the period.

Now in 2021, a massive shortage of food has led to a dramatic rise in



the prices of commodities. A kg of bananas costs ₹3,336, according to NK News, which gathers information from contacts within North Korea.

Similarly, the price of a packet of black tea has shot up to ₹5,167 and that of coffee to more than over 7,381, approximately.

A kg of corn is said to be selling at ₹204.81 in the country.

The major causes behind this acute food shortage are the closing of borders in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, international sanctions, and extensive flooding.

The country relies on China for food, fertiliser, and fuel but its imports have come down to \$500 mil-

lion from \$2.5 billion, according to Chinese official customs data. In fact, the situation is so grim that North Korean farmers were reportedly asked to contribute 2 litres of their urine every day to help produce fertilizer.

Besides, the Covid-19 restrictions have also made it difficult for food aid organisations to operate in the country. The sealed borders are another impediment to food aid from donor nations. Earlier this year, United Nations' Food and Agriculture Organisation had estimated North Korea is short of about 8,60,000 tonnes of food.

Meanwhile, North Korea has claimed that its industrial output has grown by 25 per cent this year.

## INDIANS' FUNDS IN SWISS BANKS

### Centre seeks details from Swiss authorities

PREST TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, June 19:** The Finance Ministry Saturday asserted that Indian customer deposits in Swiss banks have fallen since 2019, but said it is seeking details from Swiss authorities on the relevant facts along with their view on possible reasons for changes in the funds parked by individuals and entities in 2020.

In a statement, the ministry said the deposits have halved but did not give numbers.

Quoting data from Switzerland's central bank, PTI had reported June 17 that funds parked by Indian individuals and firms in Swiss banks, including through India-based branches and other financial institutions, jumped to a 13-year high of 2.55 billion Swiss francs (over ₹20,700 crore) in 2020 on a sharp surge in holdings via securities and similar instruments, though customer deposits fell.

In its statement, the ministry said the figures "do not indicate the quantum of much debated alleged black money held by Indians in Switzerland. Further,

these statistics do not include the money that Indians, NRIs or others might have in Swiss banks in the names of third-country entities."

The ministry noted that customer deposits have actually fallen from the end of 2019. The funds held through fiduciaries have also more than halved from 2019-end.

"The biggest increase is in 'Other amounts due from customers'. These are in form of bonds, securities and various other financial instruments," the ministry added.

It also listed out the reasons that could have led to the increase in deposits including rising business transactions by Indian companies, rise in deposits owing to the business of Swiss bank branches located in India and increase in inter-bank transactions between Swiss and Indian banks.

Besides, capital increase for a subsidiary of a Swiss company in India and increase in the liabilities connected with the outstanding derivative financial instruments could be the other potential reasons for this jump in deposits, the ministry explained.



## KOURTNEY TOUGHEST AMONG THE SISTERS TO MANAGE: KRIS

Television personality Kris Jenner, who is also the manager of her children's career, says her eldest daughter Kourtney Kardashian, is the toughest to manage. She could be stubborn and difficult to deal with, adds Kris during the the show *Keeping Up With the Kardashians*.

## OPRAH WINFREY APPEARS AS GUEST FOR A CHANGE

Celebrated talk show host-philanthropist Oprah Winfrey found herself on the other side of the mic for a change when she appeared as a guest on Hollywood star Drew Barrymore's chat show recently.



### FORTUNE FORECAST

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#### ARIES

You realise it's a good thing to share the secrets of your success. Whatever you give, says Ganesh, will come back to you multiplied by nine. Now that you seek to be open and accommodating, more respect will come your way.

#### TAURUS

In all probability, today you will discover that your family is the foundation of your success, predicts Ganesh. Your dearly loved spouse may try to spice up the relationship in the afternoon and you will be more than willing to reciprocate, expects Ganesh.

#### GEMINI

You may meet with stiff resistance in all your efforts. You should not let it bother you; just keep moving forward. This will help you maintain a good rapport with your bosses. You are likely to taste success in your interim objectives.

#### CANCER

This is a favourable day for you. Ganesh sees the chance of a gain from womenfolk. Surprisingly, your work will be finished without any pre-planning. Ties with bosses and colleagues will be steady without any ups and downs. Some of your dreams may be realised.

#### LEO

You will be serious about your work today. You will organise your schedule for the day in the morning itself. You will take up tasks that are dear to you and will analyse the results of your labours in the past.

#### VIRGO

Today it will be family responsibilities that will dominate the day. Juniors will offer you a lot of help, but you must remember that what you seek is valuable and that it will demand a lot of effort from you. Ganesh advises you to be careful of people in general.

#### LIBRA

Ganesh says that a person of the opposite sex will be attracted to you and this may lead to a romantic relationship in the near future. This is a good time for you to clear any doubts that your life partner may have with regards to you.

#### SCORPIO

You take the adage 'slow and steady wins the race' as your life's mantra and act accordingly. It not only makes you stronger, but also takes you higher gradually. Home front too will be quite harmonious and peaceful as you enjoy the family unity.

#### SAGITTARIUS

You are so energetic today that your feet are bouncing, literally, says Ganesh. Your dynamic ways at work will keep the work milieu full of enthusiasm and excitement. Work can also be fun is what you team mates learn from you.

#### CAPRICORN

Excitement is in the air, especially in your personal life. You will receive some extremely positive news, it may be related to one of your family members or to all of them. With encouraging remarks and rewards for your efforts, professional life seems good, too. But, don't let your confidence turn into over-confidence as you may commit an irreversible mistake, warns Ganesh.

#### AQUARIUS

Pleasing your boss is more difficult than completing your assignments on time. But, to your surprise, your boss will give you a pat on your back for your efforts and sincerity. It is also a favourable day to begin anything new, be it in personal life or professional front. You are skilful and intelligent, but don't boast about your talents, rather put them across subtly.

#### PISCES

While your day at work ought to begin with a whirlwind of creative ideas and suggestions from your side, you will run out of juice by mid-day, says Ganesh. Perhaps, it is time to take a short break over the weekend from work to recharge your batteries.



## Dad taught me to value myself: Urvashi

**Mumbai:** Actress Urvashi Rautela says her father Manvar Singh taught her the importance of valuing oneself. On the occasion of Father's Day, Urvashi also talks about the bond she shares with her dad. "When I'm at my best, I am my father's daughter. It was my father who taught me to value myself. He told me that I was uncommonly beautiful and that I was the most precious thing in his life," says the actress. On celebrating Father's Day, she says: "I will be celebrating Father's Day with close ones only. It will be a memorable day for him. I am a daughter of a proud father; my father taught me to value myself." On the work front, Urvashi Rautela will be making her Tamil debut with a sci-fi film that casts her as a microbiologist and an ITian. She is also going to appear in a bilingual thriller *Black Rose* along with the Hindi remake of *Thiruttu Payale 2*.



Milka Singh with some of the top stars of Indian film industry

## B-Town mourns Milkha's exit

**Mumbai:** Several film personalities took to social media Saturday to express shock and grief over the demise of legendary sprinter Milkha Singh. **Amithabh Bachchan:** "In grief .. Milkha Singh passes away .. the pride of India .. a great athlete .. a greater human .. Waheguru di Mehr .. prayers." **Anil Kapoor:** "He truly was an incredible sportsman, phenomenal host and above all an amazing human being... will be truly & deeply missed." **Divya Dutta:** "RIP #milkhasingh ji! This has been an end of an era with you!!" **John Abraham:** "A true sporting icon and an inspiration to generations. Rest in peace The Flying Sikh! #milkhasingh". **Sonam Kapoor:** "Rest in peace sir!" **Mahesh Babu:** "Rest in peace Legend." Several other film celebrities also condoled the death. Singh passed away in a local hospital in Chandigarh at 11.30pm Friday, read a statement from the Post Graduate Institute of Medical Education & Research (PGIMER), where he was being treated for Covid-related complications.

## Hardware designed by Odia students in NASA project

THE NUTS AND BOLTS WILL BE SENT VIA NASA'S SR-7 ROCKET FROM VIRGINIA JUNE 24 TO ASSESS THEIR VIABILITY IN SPACE

**Bhubaneswar:** Seven school students of Odisha have brought laurels to the state by developing fasteners or nuts and bolts which will be sent via NASA's SR-7 Rocket from Virginia, USA June 24 to assess their viability in space. The team comprises Rishab Mishra, Aryan Patnaik, Dwipayan Jena, M Sai Krishna, Satwik Parasar, Shibam Sundar Mahakud and Sriya Sahoo. The nuts and bolts, made from metals of different grades, have been developed by Young Thinker Academy (YTA) of



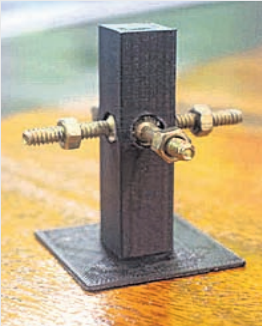
Mentors unveiling the fasteners

**Bhubaneswar:** Launched by educationist-cum-scientist Anil Pradhan and his associates Sunil Pradhan and Vaishali Sharma, YTA was formed to impart live online hands-on learning to the students during the pandemic.

Anil, who mentored the seven-member team, says, "Whenever spacecrafts, rovers, orbiters, landers or fly-by missions are launched, fasteners are required to fasten things. To design different types of fasteners, the team used AISI 304 Stainless Steel, AISI 316 Stainless Steel, A286 Superalloy and Inconel 718 Super Alloy during its four-month long experiment period to design the fasteners." He goes on to add: "The data obtained from this experiment will help us to develop the right kind of fasteners in future. These results will not only be useful for NASA but also for the space organisations across the globe including ISRO,

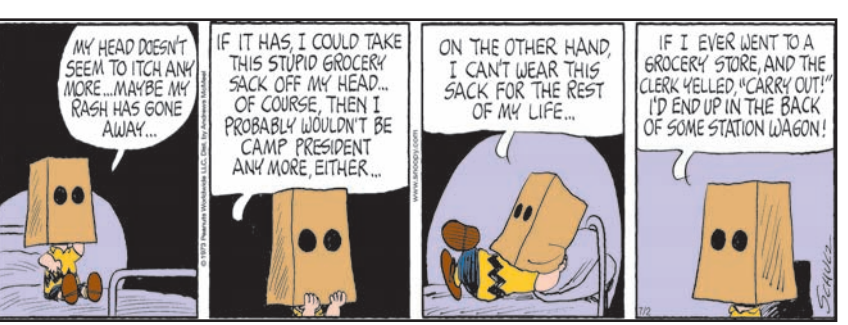
### Components of fasteners

- A 7mm x 7mm x 30mm Aluminium 6061 pole for support.
- An M4 fastener is 14mm long with a flat-shaped bolt head made out of AISI stainless steel 304.
- An M4 fastener is 14mm long with a flat-shaped bolt head made out of AISI stainless steel 316.
- An M4 fastener is 14mm long with a flat-shaped bolt head made out of A286 superalloy.
- An M4 fastener is 14mm long with a flat-shaped bolt head made out of Inconel 718 superalloy.



SpaceX, ESA and other space agencies. Our team showcased their skills among participants from 73 countries for NASA's 'Cubes in Space' project and NASA selected fasteners designed by us." PNN

### PEANUTS



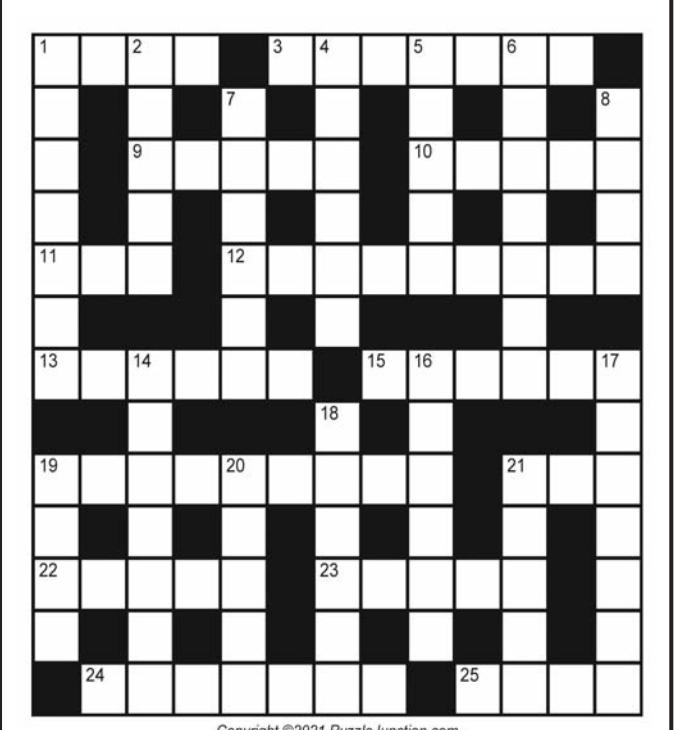
### CALVIN AND HOBBS



### BREVITY



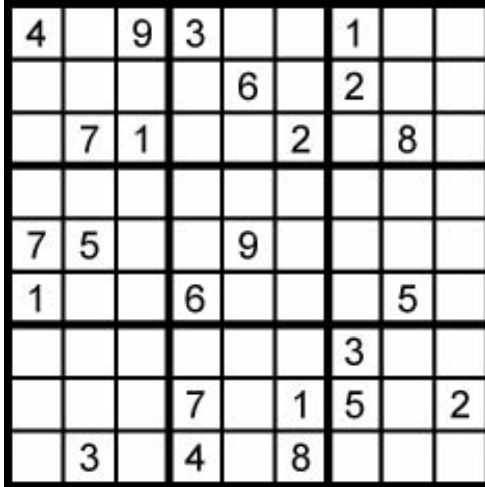
### FUN post CROSSWORD



- Copyright ©2021 PuzzleJunction.com
- Across**
- 1 Taurus
  - 3 Normally
  - 9 Family girl
  - 10 Abominable snowmen
  - 11 Paddle
  - 12 Take back
  - 13 Lacking companions
  - 15 Obliterates
  - 19 Editor's chores
  - 21 Quilting party
  - 22 Untrue
  - 23 Kind of test
  - 24 Grazing land
  - 25 Playlet
  - Down**
  - 1 Port in SW England
  - 2 Kind of cabinet
  - 4 One of the Seven Dwarfs
  - 5 Chasm
  - 6 Missives
  - 7 Auto mover
  - 8 Calls upon
  - 14 Short work of fiction
  - 16 Withstand
  - 17 Go on a date (4,3)
  - 18 Straw hat
  - 19 Flat floater
  - 20 Lilac, e.g.
  - 21 Cheerless

### SUDOKU

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



### SOLUTIONS

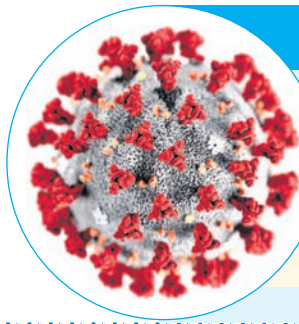


CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW



## NOBLE GESTURE

Authorities of Ramkrishna Mission distribute grocery items among the poor people in Puri, Saturday



## COVID-19 TRACKER

	INFECTED	RECOVERED	DEAD
World	17,87,36,849	16,32,77,279	38,69,663
India	2,98,23,546	2,86,78,390	3,85,137
Odisha	8,73,925	8,35,132	3,550

# THIRD WAVE INEVITABLE: GULERIA

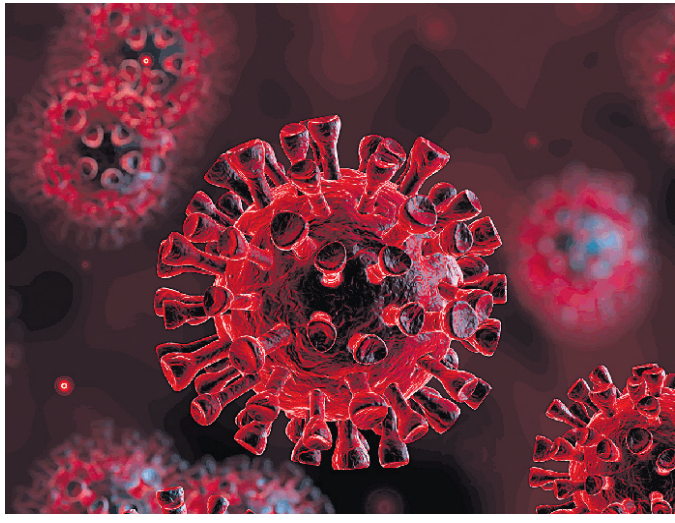
AIIMS CHIEF RANDEEP GULERIA SAYS THE NEXT COVID WAVE COULD HIT INDIA IN SIX TO EIGHT WEEKS

AGENCIES

New Delhi, June 19: A third Covid wave in India is "inevitable", and it could hit the country in the next six to eight weeks, AIIMS chief Randeep Guleria told the media Saturday morning amid unlocking in parts of the country after weeks of strict restrictions. The country's main challenge is vaccinating a huge population and the increase in dose gaps for Covishield "may not be a bad" approach to provide protection to cover more people, he explained.

A new frontier will have to be developed in India's fight against Covid to further study the mutation of the virus, Guleria stressed as he talked about the new Delta-Plus variant, which has evolved from the Delta variant of Covid-19, triggering fresh concerns about monoclonal antibody treatment.

"As we have started unlocking, there is again a lack of Covid-appropriate behaviour. We don't seem to have learnt from what happened between the first and the second wave. Again crowds are building up... people are gathering. It will take some time for the number of cases to start rising at the national level. Third wave is inevitable and



**Mini-lockdown in any part of the country, which witnesses a surge and a rise in positivity rate beyond 5 per cent, will be required. Unless we're vaccinated, we're vulnerable in the coming months**

DR RANDEEP GULERIA | AIIMS CHIEF

it could hit the country within the next six to eight weeks... may be a little longer," Guleria said. "It all depends on how we go ahead in terms of Covid-appropriate behaviour and

preventing crowds," he added.

Nearly 5 per cent of the country's population has so far been vaccinated with two doses. The government aims to vaccinate 108

Guleria talked about the new Delta-Plus variant, which has evolved from the Delta variant of Covid-19, triggering fresh concerns about monoclonal antibody treatment

Nearly 5 per cent of the country's population has so far been vaccinated with two doses. The government aims to vaccinate 108 crore people in the country by the end of this year

crore of over 130 crore people in the country by the end of this year.

"That (vaccination) is the main challenge. A new wave can usually take up to three months but it can also take much lesser time, depending on various factors. Apart from Covid-appropriate behaviour, we need to ensure strict surveillance. Last time, we saw a new variant - which came from outside and developed here - led to the huge surge in the number of cases. We know the virus will continue to mutate. Aggressive surveillance in hotspots is required," the AIIMS chief said.

"Mini-lockdown in any part of the country, which witnesses a

surge and a rise in positivity rate beyond 5 per cent, will be required. Unless we're vaccinated, we're vulnerable in the coming months," he underlined, stressing that "testing, tracking, and treating" should be the focus in hotspots.

"We have to factor in human behaviour while unlocking, which needs to be done in a graded manner," Dr Guleria stressed. On the spread of the Delta variant in the United Kingdom, which is now facing a third wave, he said, "Virus is still mutating, we need to be careful". The highly transmissible variant first identified in India is now making up 99 per cent of fresh Covid-19 cases in the UK.

The gap between the new waves is shortening and it's "worrying", Dr Guleria said. "During the first wave (in India), the virus was not spreading that rapidly... all that changed during the second wave, and the virus became much more infectious. Now the Delta variant that's spreading is much more infectious. Faster spread is likely," said the AIIMS chief.

"When there is a huge increase in the number of cases, shortage of (hospital) beds follows. The strategy should be multi-pronged - we have to make sure fresh cases don't rise."

# CM dedicates 200-bed nCoV hosp to Kalahandi

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, June 19: Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik Saturday inaugurated a 200-bed Covid Hospital at Bhawanipatna in Kalahandi district through video-conferencing. The hospital will be managed by Vedanta Group.

The hospital has all kinds of state-of-the-art medical equipment. It has a special paediatric ward with 16 ICUs and as many HDU beds. The ward has recreation facility for children too. The facility will provide high quality Covid treatment to the people of Kalahandi and surrounding areas on free of cost, the Chief Minister said.

In this 21st century, Kalahandi has gone far beyond what it was in the 20th century. There has been significant development occurred in the district during past two decades, he said. Stating that Kalahandi is now supplying food to the entire country, Patnaik said this transformation of Kalahandi has been made possible due to the efforts of farmers, youth and women of the district.

Highlighting the steps taken by the state government in the fight against Covid-19, he said that work has been started for establishment of 15 oxy-

The hospital has all kinds of state-of-the-art medical equipment

It has a special paediatric ward with 16 ICUs and as many HDU beds

The ward has recreation facility for children too

gen plants in the state in the last few days. These plants will start production in the next two months.

In the second wave of Covid, reduction in oxygen saturation in patients has put a lot of pressure on the oxygen supply across the country. At the same time, Odisha has saved precious lives by supplying oxygen to 18 states, he mentioned.

It is a matter of great honour for the people of Odisha to have the opportunity to serve humanity in such a crisis, he stated.

During the event, the Chief Minister once again advised the people to be prepared for the third wave and urged everyone to wear a double mask and get vaccinated.

"Whether it's an epidemic or a natural disaster, we can win the fight if we are prepared well in advance," he added.

# BJP seeks white paper on Covid-19 deaths in Odisha

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, June 19: The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) Saturday urged the state government to issue a white paper on actual number of Covid-19 deaths in the state.

Saffron party leader Mohan Majhi Saturday held a presser here and urged the government not to deprive the families of Covid-19 victims of any financial assistance.

"The media in the last few months have exposed discrepancies between the real Covid deaths and the government data. I myself have seen concocted data given by the government relating to Covid deaths in Keonjhar," he said.

Majhi said that such instances have come to the fore in several states which have also accepted the facts. "Many people in the state would be deprived of financial assistance if the real Covid deaths are concealed. We demand that the state government must bring forth a white paper on the matter."

He said that if the correct picture regarding the kids who have lost their parents (either one or both) was not given, many such children would be deprived of the financial aid.

"The government order from the revenue department had declared Covid as a disaster. Those who die due to the virus get ex gra-



BJP leader Mohan Majhi urged the state govt to roll out Ayushman Bharat scheme

tia in other states." We also demanded that the same compensation rules should be implemented by Odisha government.

Majhi urged the government to roll out Ayushman Bharat scheme in the state. "People of the state know how successful the Biju Swasthya Yojana has been in the state. I want the state government to roll out the central health insurance scheme to ensure better relief to the people during the pandemic," he said.

## ALL FOR THE LORD



While the carpenters and blacksmiths are engaged in chariot construction work in Puri, a review meeting underway for security arrangement for the upcoming Snana Yatra of Srimandir deities, Saturday



OP PHOTOS

# Heavy rain likely from June 23

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, June 19: The regional meteorological department Saturday predicted rain for the next few days while issuing warning for heavy rains from June 23.

While the weatherman did not issue warning for Sunday, it has issued yellow warning (to be updated) for Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday relating to thunderstorm, lightning and heavy rains.

The department said that light to moderate rains could be witnessed in different parts of the state Sunday while thunderstorms could also occur in other parts. However, special warning of thunderstorm and lightning has been issued for Monday.

The department, while issuing warning for Monday, said, "Thunderstorm with lightning is very likely to occur at one or two places of Koraput, Rayagada, Gajapati, Ganjam, Kandhamal, Boudh, Bolangir, Bargarh, Jharsuguda, Sundargarh, Deogarh, Angul, Keonjhar and Mayurbhanj districts."

The department said, "Heavy rainfall is very likely to occur at one or two places in Sundargarh, Deogarh, Sambalpur and Angul." Many areas are also expected to see thunderstorms and lightning during the day. Sundargarh district reported the highest 59 mm of rainfall in the last 24 hours followed by Sambalpur with 28.8 mm rain.

The highest temperature was recorded in Chhatrapur in Ganjam which saw 33 degrees Celsius while Phulbani saw the lowest temperature of 17.5 degrees C.

# 1.36L healthcare workers in state yet to take vaccines

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, June 19: As many as 1.36 lakh healthcare workers registered for vaccination in the state have not taken vaccines so far.

It was revealed from a letter sent by Health department to district Collectors, commissioners of municipal corporations and chief district medical and public health officers.

According to the letter, a total of 1,97,217 registered healthcare and frontline workers have not taken vaccines so far. It includes 1,36,170 healthcare workers and 61,047 frontline workers.

The highest 17,407 healthcare and frontline workers have not taken the vaccine shots in Bhubaneswar followed by Sundargarh (14,856), Ganjam (13,613), Bhubaneswar (11,892) and Khurda (11,858).

Three other districts which have more than 10,000 such unvaccinated health and frontline workers



The highest 17,407 healthcare and frontline workers have not taken the vaccine shots in Bhubaneswar followed by Sundargarh (14,856) and Ganjam (13,613)

not vaccinated yet within June 20.

Through the healthcare workers and frontline workers have been accorded the status of Covid warriors, the non-vaccination of the priority group has raised many questions.

The district Collectors and municipal authorities have been asked to correct the data, if there is any mismatch, by June 20. The officials were directed to carry out vaccine utilisation report (VUR) correction before June 18.

# Panel to collect data on vax after-effects

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, June 19: The technical team constituted by the Health and Family Welfare department to study the vaccine breakthrough cases and after-effects of inoculation sat for the first time Saturday.

The meeting was held under the chairmanship of Institute of Life Sciences director Ajay Parida while other team members deliberated on the issues for which the team was formed.

As per the records from the ICMR after the first dose of vaccination, a total of 0.04 per cent got infected with Covid-19 while after getting the second dose 0.03 per cent of the vaccinated persons got infected with the disease

AJAY PARIDA | INSTITUTE OF LIFE SCIENCES DIRECTOR

Parida in his address to the media said that the team would collect data on Covid vaccine after-effects and look on other related is-



He also said that the Covid vaccines in the country had been highly effective and safe to use.

He said, "As per the records from the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) after the first dose of vaccination, a total of 0.04 per cent got infected with Covid-19 while after getting the second dose 0.03 per cent of the vaccinated persons got infected with the disease."

He also added, "These data are almost concurrent to the reports of vaccination in the United States.

These are rarest of rare cases. But the good news is that even if a vaccinated person gets infected, 75 per cent of them would not need hospitalisation"

Parida said that those who were vaccinated showed lesser symptoms as compared to those who have not received the job. He also said that in the maiden meeting of the technical committee ideas on data collection and other issues were discussed.

"In the maiden meeting, we planned to collect data on the vac-

cine breakthrough cases and suggest next line of actions. There are several experts in the team. If we need more experts we can get more teams. We will be doing genome sequencing of the selected samples to know about the types of virus prevalent in the state," he said.

The formation of the committee started after several states decided to form teams and find cases of deaths post vaccination and cases of infection after getting vaccination among others.

# Advocate's clerk cannot swear affidavits: HC

POST NEWS NETWORK

**New Delhi, June 19:** The Orissa High Court has deprecated the practice of an advocate's clerk, who has filed an affidavit on behalf of the client.

Noting the invaluable services rendered by a clerk in the advocate's office, a bench of Justice SK Panigrahi held that "nothing entitles or enables an advocate's clerk to appear before a court on behalf of the advocate."

"An advocate's clerk cannot swear affidavits in a perfunctory manner for petitions/applications on behalf of a party before the court, especially those which include facts beyond his personal knowledge or where he cannot completely explain how he derived knowledge of the facts he has affirmed," Justice Panigrahi said.

The court termed the act of the clerk as flagrant violation of rule of law to execute an affidavit without having any knowledge of the averments made therein. The bench observed that the courts rely heavily on affidavits and their ensuing probative value for smooth administration of justice.



Justice Panigrahi noted that there has been a growing trend of advocates' clerks signing affidavits for applications/petitions/counter affidavits imperiously and obliviously of the contents therein. The bench said that the advocate-client relationship is quite clearly accepted as a fiduciary relationship and the communication is privileged and confidential. "It is strictly between the client and the advocate. Neither the brief nor is the permission to represent a party to be shared by the advocate with his clerk," the bench held.

Citing the observations of the Supreme Court and various high courts, Justice Panigrahi observed that the courts have always come down heavily on the practice by initiating contempt proceedings where they have discovered that an advocate's clerk has falsely signed an affidavit. The bench noted that recently Orissa HC has also initiated a show-cause contempt notice on the advocate's clerk who had sworn an affidavit in a bail application.

However, the bench ruled that if a petition is filed from the judgement or order of a subordinate court,

**An advocate's clerk cannot swear affidavits in a perfunctory manner for petitions/applications on behalf of a party before the court, especially those which include facts beyond his personal knowledge or where he cannot completely explain how he derived knowledge of the facts he has affirmed**

JUSTICE SK PANIGRAHI

where the facts are borne out by the records of the court, an affidavit signed and dated by the advocate's clerk may be accepted as per rules.

**What is an affidavit?**

An affidavit is an affirmation of truth. It is a willing declaration made in writing, signed by a deponent and accompanied by an oath to prove the veracity of its contents. In India, the law on affidavits is governed by order of the Coder of Civil Procedure, 1908. Further, every High Court, as per its own requirements from an affidavit, has framed its own rules.

## ESI REGIONAL DIR REVIEWS COVID RELIEF SCHEME

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, June 19:** ESI Regional Director (in-charge) has conducted a review meeting with branch managers through videoconferencing for implementation of ESIC Covid-19 Relief Scheme in Odisha.

The Regional Director has directed the branch managers to expedite the process for disposing the claims related to ESIC Covid-19 Relief Scheme in a time-bound manner.

In the wake of the outbreak of novel coronavirus, the Employees' State Insurance Corporation (ESIC) has announced the ESIC Covid-19 Relief Scheme for the family members of the insured persons, who have succumbed to the virus. The scheme will be valid for a period of two years with retrospective effect from March 24, 2020.

The scheme aims at providing periodic payments to eligible dependent family members of the insured person upon the latter's death due to Covid-19. The scheme guarantees a minimum relief of ₹1,800 per month to the beneficiaries.

As per the eligibility criteria, the deceased insured person should have been registered on ESIC's online portal at least three months prior to the date of diagnosis of Covid-19. Further, he/she should have been in job on the date of such diagnosis and should have paid contributions for at least 70 days in the course of up to one year immediately preceding the date of diagnosis of the disease.

The scheme also allows relief in cases where the insured person died after recovering from Covid-19 infections within 30 days of recovery. The insured person's spouse, a legitimate or adopted son who has not attained 21 years of age, an unmarried legitimate or adopted daughter and the widowed mother can seek benefits under the scheme.

Upon meeting the above-mentioned criteria, the eligible dependants shall be entitled to receive 90 per cent of the deceased person's average daily wages.

## 3,427 new infections, 42 fatalities in 24 hrs

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Bhubaneswar, June 19:** Odisha's Covid-19 tally rose to 8,73,925 Saturday as 3,427 more people tested positive for the infection, while 42 fresh fatalities pushed the state's coronavirus death toll to 3,550, a Health department official said.

As many as 1,954 new cases were reported in quarantine centres, while 1,473 infections were detected during contact tracing, he said. Khurda district, under which Bhubaneswar falls, registered the highest number of new cases at 553, followed by Cuttack (396) and Jajpur (285).

Khurda also recorded the highest number of fresh fatalities at six, followed by four each in Cuttack, Jharsuguda, Sundargarh and Puri and three each in Balasore, Kendrapara and Koraput districts.

Odisha now has 40,471 active cases, while 8,29,851 people have recovered from the disease so far, including 6,252 Friday.

Fifty-three other patients have

### LONG-DRAWN BATTLE

As many as 1,954 new cases were reported in quarantine centres, while 1,473 infections were detected during contact tracing

Khurda also recorded the highest number of fresh fatalities at six, followed by four each in Cuttack, Jharsuguda, Sundargarh and Puri and three each in Balasore, Kendrapara and Koraput districts

The state has thus far tested over 1.30 crore samples for Covid-19, including 64,112 in the last 24 hours

died due to comorbidities to date.

The state has thus far tested over 1.30 crore samples for Covid-19, including 64,112 in the last 24 hours, he said, adding Odisha's positivity rate stands at 6.71 per cent.

## 12K street vendors to receive Covid aid

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, June 19:** The Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC) has initiated the process to provide financial relief worth Rs 3.57 crore to around 12,000 to street vendors whose livelihood has been affected by lockdowns and shutdowns.

As per the directions received from Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik, as many as 11,922 roadside vendors under BMC jurisdiction have been enlisted for a payment Rs 3,000 each. The beneficiaries will receive the one-time monetary award through Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) mode.

"To maintain transparency in

the distribution of monetary assistance, the BMC has adopted the DBT mode so that none of the deserving beneficiaries is deprived of the relief. The financial assistance is being met from Chief Minister's Relief Fund," said BMC Commissioner, Sanjay Kumar Singh.

Sources at the BMC also mentioned that due to some discrepancies in bank accounts about 2,830 street vendors will be paid the relief later after rectification of their bank details. "As many as 14,752 street vendors are registered with the BMC as per the latest data compiled by the municipal corporation," said BMC Deputy Commissioner, Pramod Kumar Prusty.

## Odia bureaucrat Mohapatra loses battle to virus



POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, June 19:** Odisha-born bureaucrat and Secretary of Union Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) Guruprasad Mohapatra died of Covid-19 related complications Saturday.

Mohapatra passed away early in the morning while undergoing treatment at AIIMS in New Delhi. He was admitted to the hospital a few days ago after testing positive for the virus, an official source said.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi condoled Mohapatra's demise and tweeted, "Saddened by the demise of Dr Guruprasad Mohapatra, DPIIT Secretary. I had worked with him extensively in Gujarat and at the Centre. He had a great understanding of administrative issues and was known for his innovative zeal. Condolences to his family and friends. Om Shanti."

Union Minister Piyush Goyal also expressed his grief and tweeted, "Extremely saddened to hear about the loss of Dr Guruprasad Mohapatra, Secretary DPIIT. His long-standing service and dedication to the Nation have left a lasting impact. I convey my deepest sympathies to his family and friends."

Mohapatra, a 1986-batch Gujarat cadre IAS officer, was the youngest son of renowned Odia litterateur Mohapatra Nilamani Sahoo.

Prior to his appointment as the DPIIT Secretary in 2019, Mohapatra served as the Chairman of Airports Authority of India (AAI).

## A SHOT IN THE ARM



A girl takes the anti-Covid vaccine at a vaccination centre in Bhubaneswar while others wait for their turns, Saturday

## Debasis Panigrahi's last rites performed at Khannagar



Police Commissioner Soumendra Priyadarshi pays homage to Debasis Panigrahi

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Cuttack, June 19:** The last rites of senior IPS officer and Vigilance Director Debasis Panigrahi were performed at Khannagar cremation ground here Saturday.

Panigrahi had succumbed to Covid-19 infection at a private hospital in Kolkata Friday, sources said. Panigrahi's body was brought to his official residence at Cantonment Road here from Kolkata around the noon.

Home department secretary Sanjay Chopra, Director General of Police (DGP) Abhay, Odisha Public Service Commission (OPSC) chairman Satyajit Mohanty, Odisha Police Housing and Welfare Corporation chairman-cum-man-

aging director Sudhanshu Sarangi, Twin City Police Commissioner Soumendra Priyadarshi, Cuttack Deputy Commissioner of Police Prateek Singh and Cuttack Rural SP Jugal Kishore Kumar Banoth among others paid their last respect to the departed soul. Panigrahi's last rites were performed with strict adherence to Covid-19 protocol.

"Debasis babu was an efficient officer and a good human being. He was well-known for his simplicity. His death has created a vacuum in the Odisha Police," said the Twin City Police Commissioner.

Panigrahi was initially admitted to Ashwini Covid Hospital in the city here May 29. He was airlifted to Kolkata June 8 as his condition deteriorated.

## ECoR cancels trains to curb infection

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, June 19:** In a bid to break Covid-19 chain of infections, East Coast Railway (ECoR) Saturday announced that it has cancelled seven pairs of daily special trains up to June 30, 2021. Also, three pairs of daily special trains will remain cancelled on weekend.

ECoR also mentioned that six trains will remain cancelled from June 21-30 and six from June 22 to July 1, 2021. And one pair of special train will remain cancelled partially. In addition, PRS counters will remain open till 8 pm.

The trains which are cancelled from June 21-30 are—Puri-Cuttack-Puri special, Bhubaneswar-Bolangir-Bhubaneswar special, Bhubaneswar-Kendujhargarh-Bhubaneswar special, Bhubaneswar-Bhadrak-Bhubaneswar special, Cuttack-Bhadrak-Cuttack special, Cuttack-Paradip-Cuttack special and Cuttack-Bhadrak-Cuttack special.

Weekend cancelled trains (June 26-27) are: Puri-Angul-Puri special, Bhubaneswar-Palasa-Bhubaneswar special and Bhubaneswar-Bangiriposi-Bhubaneswar special.

The trains which are partially cancelled are: Puri-Angul-Puri Special from both the directions on June 21 and June 25 and from June 28 to June 30, 2021 will run between Puri and Talcher and will remain cancelled between Talcher and Angul.

# Norms issued for promotion of officials facing proceedings

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, June 19:** The state government has recently issued a set of procedures for promotion of public servants on an ad hoc basis if disciplinary proceedings are pending against them.

In a communiqué issued to different departments, the General Administration and Public Grievances department said that disciplinary proceedings are pending against some government employees for the last many days. Thus, these employees have been deprived of promotions.

"In these cases, certain procedures should be followed for the promotion of employees on ad hoc basis," said the communiqué.

The appointing authority should consider the promotion of an employee on ad hoc basis if disciplinary proceedings against the latter have not been completed within 2 years of their initiation

However, the employee concerned must not be under suspension, said the instructions

As per the instructions, the appointing authority should consider the promotion of an employee on ad hoc basis if disciplinary proceedings against the latter have not been completed within two years of their initiation. However, the employee concerned must not



be under suspension, said the instructions.

"The appointing authority must also consider whether the promotion is against public interest or the

charges against the employee are grave enough to warrant a continued denial of promotion or whether there is a possibility that the case against the employee will

conclude in near future," stated the instructions.

As per the instructions, the appointing authority should also keep in view that whether there is a likelihood of misuse of official position that the employee may occupy after promotion which may affect the case against him.

If the concerned authority considers the employee fit for promotion, then the latter's name should be placed before the Departmental Promotion Committee, said the instructions.

"The ad hoc promotion may be issued in the employee's favour from the due date. Financial benefits shall be granted from the actual date of joining to the promotional post," read the

instructions.

Meanwhile, the GA department stated that ad hoc promotions should be granted to ensure that the officers concerned do not suffer due to lingering of disciplinary proceedings against them. Until disciplinary proceedings are continued against the employees, the ad hoc promotion will not confer any right for regular promotion, said the GA department.

"The government reserves the right to cancel any ad hoc promotion and revert the employee to his/her earlier position. The name of the officer promoted on ad hoc basis shall not be placed in graduation list which is meant for regular employees," the department said.

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# 11,700 trees felled for NH-55 expansion

COMPENSATORY AFFORESTATION HITS ROADBLOCK

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Dhenkanal, June 19:** As many as 11,700 trees were felled for the widening of the National Highway-55, which passes through this district, over the last five years. But what irks environmentalists is that not a single sapling has been planted under the compensatory afforestation programme.

There was a time when trees like sal, piasal, sisham, teak, banyan, mango, neem used to form a canopy over the 60-kilometre-long stretch of the NH-55 from Badaladiabandh under Sadar police limits to Meramandali under Odapada block. The canopy of these umbrageous trees was so dense that even sun rays could hardly pass through it. The commuters would take rest in the shade.

With these roadside trees being cut down to pave the way for the NH widening project, the entire stretch bears a deserted look. The commuters are experiencing problems as the canopy is no longer there to protect them from the blistering sun. "Thousands of old, precious



trees were sacrificed at the altar of development, taking a heavy toll on the environment. With the trees, the shade has also been lost, making journey on this stretch a difficult one. The transplantation of sapling has not been carried out for five years now," locals said.

As per the guidelines, in case of forested land and non-forested land, two times and 10 times the trees cut down for a project have to be transplanted respectively. Since

11,700 trees were felled for the NH widening project, 1,70,000 saplings should have been transplanted. For this, the NHAI has already deposited the required funds with the forest department.

But the transplantation programme has hit a roadblock for the NH widening project is yet to be completed.

Notably, the project was supposed to be completed by 2020 end. The project could not be completed

by the set deadline due to the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic. The authorities then set September, 2021 as the second deadline for completion of the project.

But the second wave of the pandemic and the onset of monsoon have cast a shadow on its completion in time.

Keeping this in view, environmentalists have urged the forest department to start plantation at least by the sides of the portion completed.

"Sites for sapling transplantation have already been identified. But not a single sapling has so far been planted. Monsoon has already set in and it being the best time for transplantation, the drive should have been started by now," observed Pradyumna Rath, an environmentalist.

Prakash Chand Gogineni, DFO, Dhenkanal said, "The NHAI has already deposited the funds required for carrying out the compensatory afforestation. Once the road widening project completes, the forest department will start the plantation."

## WATERLOGGED HIGHWAY



Motorists negotiating a flooded National Highway-49 at Bombay Square in Saraskana of Mayurbhanj district which was waterlogged due to lack of drainage facilities

## Bridge to come up across Ong river



POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bargarh, June 19:** The state government has announced the construction of a bridge across Ong river which flows through Lakhamura and Chardapali villages under Padampur sub-division of Bargarh district.

The decision was taken by the government after local social activist Deepa Barik of Temri village under Paikamal block in the district tweeted to Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik and Chief Secretary Suresh Chandra Mahapatra describing the bare necessity of a bridge in the area.

Seeking a reply over the most needed local issue, the activist had tweeted June 17: "Kindly request to inform us about the progress made on Lakhamura-Chardapali Bridge under Padampur sub-division of Bargarh district. The public is anxious for this."

Taking to its official Twitter handle, the state rural development department replied saying: "The proposal for Construction of Bridge over 'Ong' river at 1st kilometre on Lakhamura to Chhatishgarh Border via

**Locals in the absence of adequate road connectivity in Padampur subdivision have been forced to cross the Ong river by putting their lives and properties at risk**

Chardapali road has been approved on 21st May 2021 and RFP for preparation of DPR including Alignment finalisation has been floated. EE RW Division, Padampur."

Notably, locals have been deprived of essential services of the state government in the absence of adequate road connectivity in Padampur subdivision and they have been forced to cross the Ong river by putting their lives and properties at risk.

In emergent situations, the local villagers depend on Chhattisgarh. Earlier, the locals had staged agitations several times and had warned to join the neighbouring state if their demand was not addressed.

## GANJAM DISTRICT

# Mega plantation drive offers livelihood to migrant returnees

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Chhatrapur, June 19:** The Ganjam administration has launched a mega plantation programme in the district as part of an initiative to provide livelihood to migrant returnees and villagers battling job loss due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

The district administration through the programme aims at providing livelihood to 1,25,750 lakh migrant returnees and rural people. It aims at a plantation of 12.50 lakh coconut saplings in this coastal district.

A sum of Rs 2,143 has been sanctioned for plantation of each coconut sapling. This will lead to recovery and strengthening of the rural economy during the Covid pandemic. Collector Vijaya Amruta Kulange said.

"The programme to be expedited in this monsoon season will not only provide livelihood but also lead to a healthy environment in this coastal district. The programme aims at creation of 1 crore man days through the rural job scheme," said Sindh Dattatreya Bhausaheb, project director of the District Rural Development Agency (DRDA). On a daily basis, the district administration targets to create 2 lakh man days.

The programme is being implemented under the poverty alleviation and rural job scheme Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS). The programme is being implemented with the funds



The district administration through the programme aims at providing livelihood to 1,25,750 lakh migrant returnees and rural people

The programme will not only help people financially but also reduce the dependency of the district on other states for coconuts and also help people of the district get coconuts at a reasonable price

The panchayati raj, soil conservation, and horticulture departments and the Odisha Livelihood Mission are monitoring the implementation of the programme at the grassroots level

available under MGNREGS and in active participation of the panchayati raj, soil conservation, and horticulture departments and the Odisha Livelihood Mission.

The concerned departments are monitoring the implementation of the programme at the grassroots level. Notably, Ganjam district has achieved number one position after creating more than one crore man days within a short span of two months under

the MGNREGS.

Stress is being laid on plantation of coconut saplings while plantation of other saplings is not ruled out.

The programme will not only help people financially but also reduce the dependency of the district on other states for coconuts, sources in the district administration said. This will also help people of the district get coconuts at a reasonable price.

## Tehsildar suspended for flouting Covid protocols

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Jajpur, June 19:** The state government Friday suspended Sukinda tehsildar Bulbul Behera for allegedly dancing in her brother's wedding procession in violation of Covid-19 safety protocols, Jajpur Collector Chakravarti Singh Rathore Saturday said.

According to a source, a video had emerged showing the tehsildar dancing at the wedding procession in Jagatsinghpur May 21. The incident had then drawn the ire of many across the state.

The video, which went viral soon

after, showed Behera dancing without wearing a mask in a group and throwing social distancing norms to the wind. Besides, the 25-person limit imposed on wedding ceremonies at that time was also violated.

Acting on an FIR lodged by local sarpanch Silarani Khandual, Tirtol police in Jagatsinghpur district had registered a case in this connection. The Jajpur district administration also submitted a report to the state government following an inquiry after which departmental action was taken against the tehsildar.



## Fake Covid drugs: CB team holds talks with Mumbai counterparts

**Bhubaneswar:** The STF team from Odisha Saturday held discussions with the officials of Mumbai police and the Maharashtra Food and Drugs Administration over the spurious anti-covid drugs case. The accused involved in the racket are currently under custody of Mumbai police. The team Saturday collected the interrogation report and other related documents from the officials in Mumbai. Sources revealed that the team will prepare remand papers on the basis of the reports fetched from the Maharashtra FDA and Mumbai police. They might also interrogate the accused including the kingpin in the case, Sudeep Mukherjee, before seeking court's permission to bring them in remand. The STF team is likely to approach the local court in Mumbai for remand Sunday.

## This Jharsuguda village still remains Covid-free



POST NEWS NETWORK

**Jharsuguda, June 19:** Koet, a sleepy village in Malda panchayat in Jharsuguda district has been the envy of nearby villages. Reason is that the village has not reported even a single case of Covid-19 since the outbreak of the pandemic.

This correspondent visited the village and interacted with some locals to find out how the villagers have so far been able to keep the killer disease at bay.

During the interaction, Suresh Bisi said the villagers have been able to keep Covid-19 at the border of the village

for their unity and awareness.

"From the day one we used to keep ourselves informed about the disease. Our district also started reporting cases of Covid-19. We saw this coming. In order to protect our village from the pandemic, we the members of Jaydeva Club stepped forward. We made people aware of the symptoms of the disease, how it gets transmitted and how it is claiming lives," he narrated.

Besides the club members, Anganwadi workers and ASHAs also visited door-to-door, making the people aware of the disease.

The villagers made it a principle to

wash their hands regularly, wear masks whenever they needed to go out and maintain social distancing among them. And they are still following these norms religiously.

Informing about the honour the village received, block development officer (BDO) Prasanna Pandey said that the villagers' swab samples had been collected twice and the reports had come out to be negative for the infection.

"Most villagers belong to the fishing community. And it has proved to be a boon for them during this pandemic. For livelihood, they don't need to go outside searching for work. They

Villagers made it a principle to wash their hands regularly, wear masks whenever they needed to go out and maintain social distancing among them. And they are still following these norms religiously

catch fish from the river to make both ends meet. Those who go to nearby markets to sell the catch have to obey the villagers' decision of wearing masks, maintaining social distancing and using sanitiser after each transaction. Because of these efforts the village is still Covid-19-free," Pandey said.

The village is situated on the confluence of Bheden and Ib rivers, bordering Sambalpur district and is around 30 kilometres away from Dhenkanal district headquarters. While the village's population is around 300, 80 per cent of the total population belongs to the fishing community. The villagers said their unity is their strength. In case anyone falls ill and they can't avail treatment due to financial crisis, the villagers come forward to help them out.

"The disease has affected all the nations across the globe. To win the battle against this invisible enemy, all of us must fight united," they observed.

## || Sradhanjali ||



26. 07. 1945 - 17. 06. 2021

With fathomless grief and a heavy heart, we convey the heartbreaking message of sudden demise of our mother **Smt. Nirmala Dhir** (spouse of Sri Nrusingha Charan Dhir), who left for her heavenly abode, on Thursday, 17 June 2021 (Time : 7.36PM).

Aggrieved  
Satyabrata Dhir, Debabrata Dhir, Priyabrata Dhir,  
Nibedita Dhir & Madhusmita Dhir & Family

FOCUS ECONOMY

# TAXING POOR TO FILL COFFERS



The bitter truth is that the inability of the government to tax the rich, the corporates and its failure to curb tax evasion have reduced its resources generation capacity

failure to curb tax evasion have reduced its resources generation capacity. So, it is finding it easy and convenient to raise resources by increasing taxes on petroleum products being oblivious of the sufferings of the masses.

It is argued that states get benefits from rising fuel prices due to sharing in a divisible pool. Actually as part of our federalism, the Centre has to provide resources to states as the latter spend more. It is argued that states should reduce VAT. But states cannot reduce VAT because they have limited scope to raise resources, while the Centre has unlimited avenues to raise resources.

Some argue that fuel prices should come under the purview of GST with a maximum rate of 28 per cent so that fuel price can be reduced. But without including it in GST, both the Centre and states can reduce oil prices by reducing taxes. It may be noted that when GST was implemented states were reluctant to accept it. They agreed on the condition that petrol and diesel be kept away from the purview of GST. So, now the Centre is advocating inclusion of petrol and diesel under GST just to blame states.

It is not only fuel prices that have escalated, the price of cooking gas/LPG have also doubled in seven years and subsidy has been eroded. An LPG refill which cost ₹410.50/cylinder March 1, 2014, cost ₹819 in March 2021. The fuel subsidy given in the Budget has been reduced drastically too. It has been slashed to ₹14,073 crore in the current fiscal from last year's budgeted ₹40,915 crore.

In 2020-21, the combined net profit of listed companies was up 57.6 per cent to ₹5.31 lakh crore. As a result, the corporate profit share in India's GDP hit a 10-year high of 2.63 per cent in last fiscal. The number of billionaires and their wealth is increasing every year. It is high time to reduce taxes on petroleum products and impose wealth taxes on the rich, corporates.

The writer is an Odisha-based economist and columnist.

Fuel prices which have witnessed sporadic rise recently have surpassed the inglorious landmark of ₹100 per litre in some cities. When the pandemic has been devastating lives and livelihoods, eroding purchasing power of people, dampening demand, the reluctance of the government to reduce oil prices reflects its cruelty towards the masses. The government is blaming it on rising international crude prices which are complete eyewash. The main villain is taxes imposed by both the Centre and states.

It is argued that since oil prices are deregulated, retail prices are increasing in tandem with the surge in international prices and the government cannot regulate it. However, during the election, the government regulates prices, stops raising it not to antagonise voters but after election, it allows the market to determine the prices. Fuel prices are primarily dependent on international crude oil prices, rupee-dollar exchange rate, excise duty levied by the Centre, VAT/Sales Tax by states. Dealer's commission and freight charges are also added to the fuel price.

The main reason behind oil price hike is the increase in excise taxes from March 2020 to May 2020 when international oil price per barrel had crumbled below \$20. For example, in 2014, the excise duty on diesel was ₹3.56 and that on petrol was ₹9.40. Now, the Centre's tax (basic excise, surcharge, agriculture, infrastructure and development cess) is currently ₹31.83/litre for diesel and ₹32.98/litre for petrol. Combined with VAT, which differs from state to state, they bring Indians among the world's most taxed fuel consumers.

Taxes for fuel are considerably higher in India than in other countries. According to CARE Ratings, as of 6 May 2020, the government was able to collect around 260 per cent of taxes, (Excise Duty and VAT) on the base price of petrol and 256 per cent in the case of diesel. Till 2019, taxes accounted for 50 per cent of the retail price of the

two fuels in India. As of 6 May 2020, taxes had comprised over 69 per cent of the retail price of the two fuels, which is the highest in the world. Taxes account for 63 per cent of the retail price of fuels in France and Germany, 64 per cent in Italy, 62 per cent in Britain, 53 per cent in Spain, 47 per cent in Japan, 33 per cent in Canada and just 19 per cent in the US. Central levies account for 71.8 per cent of total taxes on diesel and 60.1 per cent of total taxes on petrol in the national capital now. This shows that the Centre taxes more than states.

As compared to India, petrol is cheaper in neighbouring countries. As of February 2021, the retail price of petrol per litre in Pakistan was ₹51.14, Sri Lanka ₹60.26, Bangladesh ₹76.41, Nepal ₹68.98, and Bhutan ₹49.56. Even in the USA it was at ₹54.65 per litre. The average world price of gasoline is ₹78.71, which is at least 20 per cent cheaper than India's average.

In 2014-15, the Centre collected revenues worth ₹99,068 crore by way of excise duty on petroleum products, while all states together collected ₹137,157 crore by way of Sales Tax/ VAT. In 2019-20, the

Centre collected ₹2.67 lakh crore, while all states together collected ₹200,439 crore.

The Centre is expected to collect ₹3.9 lakh crore in 2020-21 despite the contraction in petrol and diesel consumption. Centre has earned around ₹1,80,788 crore due to gigantic excise duty hikes in 2020-21. The Central excise duties on petroleum products which accounted for 8 per cent of gross tax revenue in 2014-15, increased to 11 per cent in 2019-20. These account for a fifth of India's ₹20 lakh crore gross tax revenue in 2020-21.

It is argued that resources generated from fuels are spent on welfare schemes. But resources generated by any means can be spent on welfare schemes. It is just like taxing the poor to fill the coffers. The countries having much less tax on petroleum products have also a much higher tax-GDP ratio and colossal developmental expenditure. Raising prices of fuel not only leads to inflation, erosion of purchasing power but also has a cascading effect on the economy.

The bitter truth is that the inability of the government to tax the rich, the corporates and its



Santosh Kumar Mohapatra

## RAISING PRICES OF FUEL NOT ONLY LEADS TO INFLATION, EROSION OF PURCHASING POWER BUT ALSO HAS A CASCADING EFFECT ON THE ECONOMY

When Modi took over in 2014 he said MGNREGA was a monument to the failure of the Manmohan Singh government. He would give people real jobs and not MGNREGA jobs. The size of the MGNREGA programme last year was three times what it was under the UPA because crores of people have lost their jobs and fallen into poverty and now depend on MGNREGA and free foodgrain. The Gujarat government put out a statement last week which said MGNREGA was a lifesaver.

Elsewhere, it has been a year since the clash in Ladakh. China has stopped its disengagement. This means India has to keep tens of thousands of troops in that area permanently. China has also told us it is demoting the level of talks, and now only area commanders will discuss specific issues rather than general disagreement. Our soldiers still cannot patrol in Depsang but the government has not acknowledged that or held a single press briefing on Ladakh since the crisis began. Opacity is the hallmark of dictatorships and not democracies but this is the status of our national security.

India was supposed to be the Vaccine Guru and Vaccine Factory for the world. Instead, India has wrecked the world's vaccination programme by stopping delivery of vaccines others already paid for in advance and which were manufactured in India. Our government has begun taking over those stocks while the world waits. Even with that, India has only managed to fully vaccinate 3 per cent of its population against the world's average of 9 per cent. Why? We have not been told.

Every day there is a report of excess deaths from states being between four and 10 times the official Covid toll. India appears to lead the world by far in both cases and deaths. There has not been a government initiative to find out the true number of cases and deaths and the media continues to parrot the official numbers and at the same time publishing reports on the excess deaths. Mass faking of tests at the Kumbh has been reported and this is also par for the course.

At the G7 meeting this month in UK the prime minister signed a document called the Open Societies Statement in which he pledged India would practice and promote human rights and civil liberties. At home, those who ask for these he has locked up under UAPA. The farmers protest continues with tens of thousands living on the highway outside Delhi. The laws have been suspended but not withdrawn. Why? We do not know because Modi has not spoken about the laws since they were suspended by the Supreme Court six months ago.

It doesn't matter whether you are a supporter of Modi or an opponent or a neutral. Anyone looking around the state that India finds itself in will find it hard to extract any good news and find it difficult to be optimistic.

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# State urges Centre to set up NIMHANS like hosp in Chandpur



POST NEWS NETWORK

**Nayagarh, June 19:** Odisha government has recommended to the Centre to upgrade the Basant Manjari Swasthya Kendra in this district into a National Mental Health Centre on the lines of NIMHANS (National Institute of Mental Health and Neuro-Sciences).

The Basant Manjari Swasthya Kendra is at Chandpur under Ranpur block in this district. It will undergo a facelift after the Centre gives its approval to the recommendation, reports said.

Reports said that Basant Manjari Swasthya Kendra, which is now a general hospital, was earlier functioning as a hospital for tuberculosis (TB) patients.

Earlier, Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik attending a meeting at Chandpur had announced to upgrade the hospital into a 300-bed general hospital. A letter (letter no-10517, dated-March 25, 2013) issued by the state government also confirmed the development.

Later, the Union government proposed for establishment of a mental health centre in the state on the lines of NIMHANS in 2012. On being apprised about the Centre's proposal, Ranpur MLA Satya Narayan Pradhan demanded to establish the mental health centre at Chandpur.

**BASANT MANJARI SWASTHYA KENDRA, WHICH IS NOW A GENERAL HOSPITAL, WAS EARLIER FUNCTIONING AS A HOSPITAL FOR TUBERCULOSIS (TB) PATIENTS**

**UNION GOVERNMENT PROPOSED FOR ESTABLISHMENT OF A MENTAL HEALTH CENTRE IN THE STATE ON THE LINES OF NIMHANS IN 2012**

**THE STATE GOVERNMENT ISSUED A LETTER RECOMMENDING THE CENTRE FOR ESTABLISHMENT OF THE MENTAL HEALTH CENTRE AT CHANDPUR**

The proposal was not implemented for which the state government announced to upgrade the TB hospital to a general hospital and sanctioned Rs 5 crore for infrastructural development.

Going by his words, the Chief Minister laid the foundation stone for the general hospital in 2013. The building for the hospital was constructed but it failed to become operational as no notification was issued in time.

The issue again came up for discussion after the then health minister convened a meeting in his chamber November 4, 2019. The chief district medical officer, hospital superintendent and senior of-

officials of Health department attended the meeting and decided to immediately issue a notification in this regard.

However, fate again played truant as the notification could not be issued in time due to outbreak of first wave of Covid pandemic in the country. The local MLA again launched efforts following which the health department in a letter-9283, dated-March 25, 2021 called a meeting to discuss the issue March 26, 2021.

Principal Secretary (health) presided in the meeting which was attended by the health minister, Ranpur MLA, Nayagarh Collector, CDMO, Health Director and the superintendent of the Chandpur hospital.

In the meeting, the Principal Secretary revealed that the Centre has again given a proposal for establishment of a National Institute of Mental Health and Neuro-Sciences in the state.

He said that the state government is actively considering for establishment of the centre in the state and has identified Chandpur and two other places as proposed site of the institution. The Ranpur MLA demanded that Chandpur will be an ideal place for establishment of the centre instead of other places and put forward his arguments.

The health minister agreed to the MLA's proposal and directed the Principal Secretary (Health) to a letter to the centre recommending for establishment of the institute. As per the decision, the state government issued a letter (letter no-12696, dated-April 28, 2021) recommending the Centre for establishment of the mental health centre at Chandpur.

When contacted, the Ranpur MLA confirmed the development stating that the state government in its reply has recommended the Centre for establishment of a mental health centre at Chandpur. Meanwhile, Puri MP Pinaki Mishra has also urged the Union Additional Secretary (Health) for immediate implementation of the state government's recommendation.



Revenue Divisional Commissioner (South) T Apang Ao conducting a review of the development works of the Jeypore airstrip, Saturday OP PHOTO

# Probe begins into Kharasrota illegal sand mining case

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Jajpur/Korei/Panikoili, June 19:** As per the direction of National Green Tribunal (NGT), a probe into the alleged illegal sand mining at Kharasrota river bank at Masudpur mouza under Vyasanager tehsil started Friday.

According to a source, the probe was conducted with the participation of Jajpur District Collector Chakraborty Singh Rathore, environmental scientist M R Prasad; deputy director of mines B K Sahu and OSPCB's regional officer, Kalanga nagar, Pramod Behera.

Notably, a division bench comprising Justice B Amit Shalekar and judicial member Saibal Dasgupta had passed an order in this regard April 15, directing to submit a report on loss arising out of the illegal sand mining, damages caused to the environment and riverbed.

The direction had also mentioned that the committee would comprise the district collector, deputy director of mines (DDM), a senior scientist from the Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change department and from the State Pollution Control Board (SPCB).

The petition was filed by advocate Shankar Prasad Pani on behalf



of Pinak Ranjan Das, a resident of Masudpur village adjoining the river in Vyasanager tehsil.

He alleged in the petition that the illegal sand mining has resulted in the river changing its course, threat to Kharasrota bridge, local markets, school and health centre being affected adversely and the state exchequer losing revenue to the tune of crores.

Prior to this, the villagers had taken the matter up with the district Collector and tehsildar, but to no avail. With no option left, Das had knocked on the door of the NGT. Subsequently, a fine of Rs20,000 was imposed on Laxmidhar Mohanty on charges of lifting sand illegally from the riverbed. And Vyasanager tehsil, after an assessment of piled up sand, had levied a fine of Rs 1,88,237. But, another petition was filed at the NGT alleging

the fines were fixed after mutual understanding, the petitioner not being involved during the investigation and huge revenue loss. In this regard, Jajpur district Collector Rathore said action will be taken after a review following the measurement of sand illegally lifted.

Local residents alleged illegal sand mining is going on rampantly "Illegal sand mining is going on with impunity from Baitrani River at 'bali ghats' like Lingeswar, Nishankhapur, Nayahatapatna, Sathipur, Dosiamuhan, Gahmaria, Sahadashuni, Kantabania, Mukundpur, Mathurapur, Mulapal, Sanal and Salba under Vyasanager tehsil. Ten times of the fixed sand volume is being mined engaging more than one machine," the villagers said, adding that, if the illegal sand mining is not stopped they will resort to legal options.

# Close shave for boy as mobile phone explodes

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Phulbani, June 19:** In a shocking incident, a minor boy had a close shave as a mobile phone exploded as soon as he finished attending his online class, Saturday.

The boy was identified as Satwik Pattnaik, a student of Class-IX of Phulbani Public School.

Reports said that Satwik attended his online class on a mobile phone at his home in Phulbani, Saturday. He finished the online class and was doing his homework by placing the mobile phone on the study table when it exploded.



Family members rushed near Satwik after hearing the explosion sound. However, he had a close shave and did not sustain any major injuries in the blast.

Notably, students are attending their classes through online mode from their respective homes as schools have been closed down due to outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic. Most of the students are attending their online classes on their own or their parents' mobile phones while some of the students are using a PC or laptop for the purpose.

# Thief falls asleep while stealing, held

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Keonjhar, June 19:** In a curious case, a thief who had entered a house in Uchabali village under Tamaka police limits of Keonjhar district to steal valuables fell asleep during his misadventure. The accused was arrested along with another man Saturday.



# Woman, minor daughter molested, beaten up

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Digapahandi, June 19:** A woman and her minor daughter were allegedly molested and beaten up black and blue being dragged on the road by a youth at a village under this block in Ganjam district, Saturday.

The accused, identified as Akash Goud, fled the scene after some villagers rushed to the spot and intervened. Digapahandi IIC Basant Kumar Sethi registered a case against Akash under various sections of Indian Penal Code and POCSO Act after a complaint was filed in the police station. Fearing arrest, the accused is absconding after the incident.

The incident occurred when the woman and her daughter were on their way to attend a feast in the



village. Akash waylaid them on the road and passed lewd comments at them. Akash pushed the two on the ground and beat them up black and blue when the woman objected at his gesture. Meanwhile, investigating officer Swarnalata Patra has started a probe into the incident.

# Dacoit gang busted in Kalahandi, 9 held

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhawaniapatna, June 19:** Police Saturday busted a gang of dacoits and nabbed nine of its members in connection with an incident that had taken place under Jaipatna block in Kalahandi district June 10.

According to sources, the dacoity gang had decamped with several gold ornaments including Rs 5.85 lakh in cash from the house of a school teacher in the incident. The nine armed persons had



barged into the house of Bhaktaram Gontia at Nuaguda village under Pratappur panchayat in the district. The dacoits had

looted the gold ornaments and cash by attacking the family with sharp weapons. Later, the teacher lodged an FIR

with Jaipatna police. A joint team of police officials from Jaipatna and Dharamgarh launched a probe leading to the arrests. One member of the gang hails from Kalahandi and the others are from Koraput and Nabarangpur districts, an official of the Jaipatna police station said.

Five more members of the gang including the mastermind are absconding. The others will also be arrested soon, IIC Rasmita Pradhan said.

# THE MISCREANTS TOOK ADVANTAGE OF THE FAMILY'S ABSENCE AND TARGETED THE HOUSE

According to a police official, the accused men were identified as 30-year-old Prashant Prusty from Uchabali village and 20-year-old Satyananda Das alias Chagulu from Dhinkia village under Ghasjipura police limits of Keonjhar district.

The house owner Suresh Kumar Sahu is an official of state Steel and Mines department. He is presently serving in Bhubaneswar and resides with his family at Nuasahi locality of Uchabali. Sahu and his family members were away from home for the last few days, the police official added.

The miscreants took advantage of the family's absence and targeted the house.

After being informed by a neighbour, Sahu immediately returned home and informed the Tamaka police. When Sahu and police reached the house, they found intoxicated Chagulu was sleeping on the floor inside the house.

Police have registered a theft case under Sections 380, 34 of IPC and launched a probe in this connection.

# DEMO OVER DEMANDS



Pharmacists wearing black badges staging a protest over their various demands in Dhenkanal, Saturday OP PHOTO

# 2 NACs IN BOLANGIR TO GET INDOOR STADIUMS

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bolangir, June 19:** Two stadiums are coming up in Kantabanji and Tushra NACs of Bolangir district. This was decided at a virtual meeting held at OSWAN hall on the premises of the district Collector's office Friday.

Informing about the outcome of the meeting, Women and Child Welfare minister Tukuni Sahu, who attended the meeting along with ST Secretary VK Pandian and others, said, "Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik has been laying emphasis on the development of sports infrastructure. With respect to this, a decision has been taken to construct indoor stadiums at several places in the state. On behalf of the people, a letter of demand has been sent to the CM, demanding one indoor stadium each at Tushra and Kantabanji NACs. Each stadium will be constructed at a cost of Rs3,50,00,000."

The meeting was held in two phases. In the first phase, Kantabanji NAC representatives,



minister Sahu, ex-MLA Ayub Khan and Ajay Das, Kishore Machhkhanda, sports organiser Bijay Bansal and female cricketer Mushkan Suna took part in the meeting. The letter of demand was presented by Bansal.

Similarly, in the second phase, representatives from Tushra participated. Among others, ex-NAC chairperson Bhagyashree Nag and ex-vic chairman Dindayal Sharma were present. Young or-

ganiser Dindayal Kedia handed the letter of demand over to minister Sahu.

Informing about the CM's plans for all round development of sports, the ST Secretary said the state's progress largely hinges on the development of sports in grass root level. He urged the people to select the sites for indoor stadium carefully so that it can be easily accessed by both women and men sport practitioners.

# I don't have any mafia links, Vijayan has, says Sudhakaran

AGENCIES

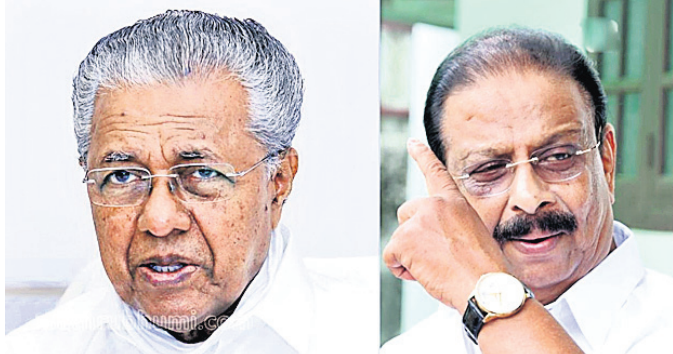
**Kochi, June 19:** A day after Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan went hammer and tongs against new Congress chief K Sudhakaran, the latter responded with equal fire and termed the left leader as "a mafia", saying it suits him better than anyone. Addressing the media for an hour here Saturday, Sudhakaran challenged Vijayan to look into his mafia links, since he has spoken out.

"Vijayan says I am a smuggler and have links with the sand mafia. All of you know the recent gold and dollar smuggling cases which happened with the knowledge of Vijayan. The prime accused in these cases - Swapna Suresh for the past few years has been part and parcel of Vijayan's coterie.

She travelled with him, she stayed in the same place where he stayed and was moving together. But after the cases surfaced, when the media asked Vijayan about Swapna - he said he doesn't know. Will any child in Kerala believe this," asked Sudhakaran.

"I challenge Vijayan to order a probe into my mafia links and if he can find any links, I will quit as president of the party. Also none should forget, bullets were recovered from his baggage. Why should he carry bullets, which means, he has a gun. I do not have any gun," added Sudhakaran.

Incidentally, it was Vijayan who opened this fresh round of debate



PINARAYI VIJAYAN

K SUDHAKARAN

## BJP demands 'attempt to murder' case against Vijayan

**Thiruvananthapuram:** Joining issue in the ongoing war of words between chief minister Pinarayi Vijayan and new Congress president K Sudhakaran, Saturday, Union Minister of State for External Affairs V. Muraleedharan demanded that an attempt to murder case against Vijayan be lodged. On Saturday, at Sudhakaran's press conference, his party colleague K Gopi, who hails from Vijayan's village in Kannur, recalled an old incident, that in 1977 when 26 beedi workers were terminated from a society, they led a protest. "I was leading the protest and then Vijayan with a sword led a group of people and he brandished his sword and it hit my hand and the injury mark is still there," said Gopi showing his hand and adding that despite his complaint to the local police then, there was no further action in the case. Muraleedharan told the media in the state capital that if the Congress party is serious in the allegation, they should register a police complaint. "There is no time limit to an attempt to murder case and hence, Sudhakaran should ask Gopi to go forward and register a fresh complaint," said Muraleedharan.

on issues related to Government Brennen College, where both Vijayan and Sudhakaran studied and he also spoke about an incident

that a friend and financier of Sudhakaran came and told him that his two children will be kidnapped by Sudhakaran.

# 'No proof of mock drill leading to death of 22 patients in hosp'



AGENCIES

**Agra, June 19:** A team of doctors investigating an alleged 'mock drill' by a private hospital here has given a clean chit to the facility, saying it found no proof of an exercise during which oxygen supply was cut off and 22 patients reportedly died.

The enquiry had been ordered by the Agra administration last week after a video clip surfaced on social media in which the owner of the city's Shri Paras Hospital was purportedly heard saying that he conducted a 'mock drill' in which oxygen supply was cut off for Covid-19 patients for five minutes.

In the video, the hospital's owner, Dr Arinjay Jain, was purportedly also heard saying that after the oxygen supply was shut off, bodies

of 22 patients started turning blue.

The enquiry report submitted by the panel of doctors to the district authorities said there was no proof of a 'mock drill' during which oxygen supply was cut off for five minutes due to which 22 patients allegedly died at the hospital.

The panel, however, mentioned that 16 patients died at the facility during April 26-27 due to co-morbidities and other issues.

"Out of the 16 patients, who died in that period of 26th and 27th April, 14 had co-morbidities, while two had other issues," the report stated.

After the video clip was shared widely on social media, the hospital was sealed and a case was registered against the owner under the Epidemic Diseases Act.

# Jobs to wives of 'murder accused' trigger row in Kerala

AGENCIES

**Thiruvananthapuram, June 19:** Congress workers staged a protest in front of the Kanhangad district hospital in Kasaragod Saturday against the manner in which the wives of three CPI-M supporters, presently jailed for the murder of two Youth Congress workers, were given temporary jobs by the district authorities.

As many as 100 people had appeared for the interview for four sweeper's posts in the district hospital. Of the four persons who have been appointed, three are the wives of the accused persons who are presently in jail.

The gruesome murders took place in Periyar February 17, 2019, when two Youth Congress workers, Krupesh (19) and Sharath Lal aka Joshy (24), were attacked by three motorcycle-borne men while they were returning from an event.

While Krupesh died at the Kasaragod district hospital, Joshy



succumbed to his injuries on his way to a medical facility in Mangaluru, Karnataka. It has been alleged that the Pinarayi Vijayan-led government tried to shield the accused persons, especially after it went to the apex court, which upheld the verdict of a division bench of the Kerala High Court that ruled to handover the case to the CBI.

The central probe agency is presently investigating the case. Senior Congress leader and Lok Sabha MP from Kasaragod, Rajmohan Unnithan, said that this is the way the CPI-M operates, by protecting the criminals, adding that the jobs should have been given to the victims' family members.

# KTDC rolls out 'in-car dining' to serve food in parked vehicles

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Thiruvananthapuram, June 19:** The Kerala Tourism Development Corporation (KTDC) is launching a facility that serves travellers food inside their vehicles, thus allaying health risks while eating in public spaces amid Covid-19.

'In-Car Dining' will help customers remain in their parked vehicles, to where orders placed at KTDC's Aahar Restaurants will reach, according to Tourism Minister PA Mohamed Riyas.

The scheme is being implemented considering public safety hazards even as a slide in the second wave of the pandemic is expected to help the tourism industry pick up, the Minister said.

Breakfast, lunch and dinner besides snacks, will be served under 'In-Car Dining', adhering to Covid-19 protocol. To begin with, select KTDC restaurants will carry out the scheme, he added.

"In the process, 'In-Car Dining' seeks to provide our customers with a new experience," Riyas said here Friday evening after reviewing a set of ongoing tourism projects and the activities of KTDC.

"We plan to reach out to the people with safe and tasty food. KTDC hotel chains will be renovated under the project 'Mission Paceliff' after classifying them on a priority basis," he revealed, announcing major projects under the tourism corporation. Floating restaurants will be set up in select destinations across the state on the lines of the one at Veli in Thiruvananthapuram, the first of which will come up at Kadalundi, he added.

# Prasada meets Yogi, seeks his 'blessings'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Lucknow, June 19:** Former union minister Jitin Prasada, who recently switched from the Congress to the BJP, Saturday met Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath here and said they discussed issues related to strengthening the organisation. "I met the chief minister and sought his blessings," said Prasada who arrived in his home state Uttar Pradesh for the first time after joining the BJP June 9.

A UP government official termed it as a "courtesy meeting".

Prasada said they discussed ways to ensure that the welfare schemes reach the public more effectively and the party organisation is strengthened further "so that the state and the country can be served". On the decision to join the BJP, Prasada said it is the only party where the people are rewarded for their hard work.

"There is high enthusiasm among my supporters, and this decision was taken keeping in mind public sentiments.

"There is a strong leadership,



organisation and a clear-cut direction in the party. The BJP is the only party where policy decisions are made keeping in mind the views and sentiments of the workers and the organisation. It is the only party where on the basis of hardwork people are rewarded," he said.

Congress leader Jitin Prasada, June 9 joined the BJP, seen as an attempt by the ruling party to shore up its caste arithmetic for assembly elections in Uttar Pradesh scheduled for early next year.

The 47-year-old Prasada, who

was a minister in the previous UPA government, comes from a well-known Brahmin family of Uttar Pradesh and was serving as the Congress leader in-charge of West Bengal before joining the BJP.

His father Jitendra Prasada was a key Congress leader whose fortunes plunged following his decision to contest against Sonia Gandhi for the post of party president in 2000.

According to BJP sources, Jitin Prasada's joining would help the BJP keep Brahmins, a section of whom are said to be unhappy with

Prasada said they discussed ways to ensure that the welfare schemes reach the public more effectively and the party organisation is strengthened further "so that the state and the country can be served"

the party in Uttar Pradesh, in good humour in the politically most important state of India.

Jitin Prasada was part of the group of 23 leaders who had written to Congress chief Sonia Gandhi last October seeking organisational overhaul and elections at all levels, triggering a storm in the party.

Speculation was rife even during the 2019 Lok Sabha elections of Prasada joining the BJP, but it is believed that the Congress leadership had then managed to persuade him against quitting the party.

# UP TO CONNECT ALL HEALTH CENTRES WITH MAIN ROADS

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**Lucknow, June 19:** In a bid to provide easy access to better health and medical facilities to the people in Uttar Pradesh, the Yogi Adityanath government has given instructions to connect all the community health centres (CHCs) and primary health centres (PHCs) in urban and rural areas with the main roads.

In order to provide relief to the patients, the process of strengthening all the CHC and PHC-connected roads in the state is underway in full swing.

There are 3,011 PHCs and 855 CHCs in the state while the number of urban PHCs is 52. There are nine CHCs, 28 PHCs, 52 health post centres and eight urban PHCs in the state capital Lucknow alone.

Following the instructions of Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, the campaign to make the roads leading to CHCs and PHCs in all districts pothole-free has been intensified. The repair work of dilapidated



roads is being done at a rapid pace.

To complete this work, responsibility has been entrusted to the Urban Development Department, Municipal Corporations, Public Works Departments (PWD), gram panchayats, urban and rural bodies.

With the onset of the rainy season adequate arrangements have been made for treatment of patients in the hospitals. The process of repairing the roads is also being undertaken expeditiously so that the patients do not face any problem in reaching the hospital. The government believes that

once the CHCs and PHCs are connected to the main roads, it will take less time for ambulances to take patients for treatment. It will be possible for critical patients to get treatment quickly.

After assuming charge of Uttar Pradesh, Yogi Adityanath has launched various schemes to provide better road connectivity. The Purvanchal Expressway Project, Gorakhpur Link Expressway Project, Bundelkhand Expressway Project, Ganga Expressway Project have been fast-tracked. A campaign has been launched across the state to make the roads pothole-free.

## MONSOON MAYHEM



Boats anchored along the banks of Ganga river during heavy rain in Varanasi, Saturday

PTI photo

# 'Will continue fight till Lakshadweep gets justice'

IN A RELIEF TO SULTHANA, THE KERALA HIGH COURT HAD THURSDAY GRANTED HER INTERIM ANTICIPATORY BAIL FOR A WEEK, WHILE RESERVING ORDERS ON HER ANTICIPATORY BAIL APPLICATION

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Thiruvananthapuram, June 19:** Filmmaker Ayesha Sulthana, who was booked for sedition in Lakshadweep, Saturday said she has not done anything against the country so far and would continue her fight till the islanders get justice.

She was talking to the media at the airport in Kochi before leaving to the archipelago to appear before the Kavaratti police for questioning on Sunday in connection with the case.

She said her advocate was also accompanying her and she would cooperate with the police.

"I believe that I will get justice as I have not done anything



wrong. My words were wrongly interpreted and I have already mentioned everything in detail

in my recent Facebook post," Sulthana said. On her controversial usage of

'biological weapon' during a television discussion, she said all these controversies had happened based on that particular word.

"I have not done

**I believe that I will get justice as I have not done anything wrong. My words were wrongly interpreted and I have already mentioned everything in detail in my recent Facebook post**

AYESHA SULTHANA | FILMMAKER

anything against the country. All these have happened over a word I uttered. So, it is my responsibility to prove

that I have not done anything wrong. I will continue my fight till my land and people get justice," she added. In a relief to Sulthana, the Kerala High Court had Thursday granted her interim anticipatory bail for a week, while reserving orders on her anticipatory bail application.

It had directed her to comply with the notice issued by Kavaratti police to appear before it for interrogation on June 20 in connection with the sedition case.

The allegation is that the filmmaker, while participating in a debate telecast by a Malayalam news channel on June 7, made an assertion that the Centre used 'biological weapon' against the people of Lakshadweep.



## of the day quote

If Modi Sahib has taken an initiative, both he and the participants, should sit on the table with an open heart and away from the static position. In such a situation, there is a possibility that something which is far better than the previous arrangement can emerge

GA MIR | J&K CONG PRESIDENT

Two made-in-India coronavirus vaccines are the result of the hardwork of our scientists and it has been proved scientifically that these vaccines are absolutely safe and are an effective weapon in the fight against coronavirus

MUKHTAR ABBAS NAQVI | UNION MINISTER

Although loss of a soldier is irreparable, the Kejriwal government after coming to power launched the scheme to provide ex gratia to families of such personnel so it could become a source for them to live with dignity

MANISH SISODIA | DELHI DY CM

## SHORT TAKES

### 5th tremor hits Assam in 24 hrs

**Guwahati:** A 4.2-magnitude earthquake struck Assam in the early hours of Saturday, the fifth such tremor to hit the northeastern region during the past 24 hours, officials said. A National Center for Seismology report said the latest quake was recorded at 1.07 am, with its epicentre near Tezpur, the headquarter of Sonitpur district, at a depth of 30 kms. There was no immediate report of injury or damage to property.

### 4 lions diagnosed with Delta variant

**Chennai:** Four lions at Arignar Anna Zoological Park or popularly known as Vandalar Zoo are suffering from the contagious Delta variant of coronavirus, the Zoo said. According to Vandalar Zoo officials, the Zoo had sent samples of 11 lions to the ICAR-National Institute of High Security Animal Diseases (NIHSAD), Bhopal. On its part, NIHSAD had said nine lions tested positive for SARS CoV-2. The animals were under active treatment.

### Saradha scam accused gets bail

**Kolkata:** The Calcutta High Court Saturday granted bail to Debjani Mukherjee, an accused in the multi-crore Saradha chit fund scam, in one of the several criminal cases against her. A division bench comprising Acting Chief Justice Rajesh Bindal and Justice Arijit Banerjee ordered bail to Mukherjee on furnishing a bond of Rs 2 lakh with two sureties of Rs 1 lakh each, one of whom must be local. Mukherjee will, however, continue to remain behind bars since she is yet to obtain bail in cases pending against her in other states.

### Youth held for killing, burying kin in house

**Malda (WB):** A 19-year-old man was arrested in West Bengal's Malda district Saturday for allegedly killing four family members and burying them in a room of their house four months ago, police said. The incident took place in Gurutola village in Kaliachak police station area, a senior officer said. The bodies of accused Asif Mohammad's father (50), mother (45), sister (17) and grandmother (75) were exhumed and sent for post-mortem examination, Superintendent of Police Alok Rajoria said.



Look at the irony: According to media reports, a hospital in Agra carried out a 'mock drill' by cutting off the oxygen supply of patients and the BJP government conducted a mock drill of inquiry by giving a clean chit

PRIYANKA GANDHI VADRA | CONGRESS LEADER

## SPL CANCELLATION STAMP TO MARK YOGA DAY 2021

India Post is coming out with a special cancellation stamp to capture the essence of International Day of Yoga June 21 -- one among the largest such simultaneous philatelic commemorations ever



# All eyes on J&K all-party meet as PM calls 14 leaders

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Srinagar/Jammu, June 19:** All eyes are on the Jammu and Kashmir all-party meeting as the National Conference, PDP and the Congress Saturday said they will take a call on attending a meeting with the prime minister in Delhi after deliberations within their respective parties, while the BJP expressed hope that all invitees will take part in the all-party deliberations.

Fourteen leaders of eight political parties in Jammu and Kashmir have been invited to the meeting that will be chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi in New Delhi June 24 to discuss the future course of

action for the union territory. The BJP and the Altaf Bukhari-led Jammu and Kashmir Apni Party have confirmed their participation in the meeting, while five - NC, PDP, Congress, Peoples Conference and CPI(M) - will take

action for the union territory.

The BJP and the Altaf Bukhari-led Jammu and Kashmir Apni Party have confirmed their participation in the meeting, while five - NC, PDP, Congress, Peoples Conference and CPI(M) - will take



a call after intra-party deliberations. There was no immediate reaction available from Bhim Singh of the Jammu & Kashmir National

Panthers Party.

The meeting - the first such exercise since the Centre announced the abrogation of Jammu and

Kashmir's special status and its bifurcation into union territories in August 2019 - is likely to be attended by Union Home Minister Amit Shah and other central leaders.

National Conference President and former chief minister Farooq Abdullah said that he had received a phone call inviting him the all-party meeting. "It is welcome step and I will be consulting senior party leaders in next few days to discuss the future course of action," he told PTI in Srinagar. The PDP will hold a meeting Sunday to discuss the invitation of the Centre to political parties of Jammu and Kashmir for talks, party president Mehbooba Mufti said Saturday.

## Indian-American wins European Inventor Award



INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**New Delhi, June 19:** Indian-American chemist Sumita Mitra has won the European Inventor Award 2021, one of Europe's most prestigious innovation prizes, in the 'Non-European Patent Office countries' category for her application of nanotechnology in dentistry. Mitra was the first to successfully integrate nanoparticles into dental materials to produce stronger, durable and more aesthetically pleasing fillings. Her innovation has been successfully commercialised and used in more than 1 billion tooth restorations by dentists around the world.

"Sumita Mitra took an entirely new path in her field, and demonstrated how technological innovation, protected by patents, can transform a sector, and in this case bring benefits to millions of dental patients," said Antonio Campinos, President at the European Patent Office (EPO), Thursday.

"Her invention remains commercially successful nearly 20 years after its launch - another reason why she is an inspiration to the next generation of scientists," he added.

The 2021 European Inventor Award ceremony was held digitally and, for the first time, was open to the public who tuned in to the event from around the world.

## 'FIRs against those assaulting doctors'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, June 19:** The Centre Saturday asked state governments to register cases and invoke the stringent Epidemic Diseases (Amendment) Act, 2020 against those who indulge in assault on doctors and healthcare professionals.

Union Home Secretary Ajay Bhalla's letter to States and Union Territories came following several incidents of attack on doctors and healthcare professionals in different parts of the country amid the Covid-19 pandemic.

You will agree that any incident of threat or assault on doctors or healthcare professionals may dampen their morale and create a sense of insecurity amongst them. This may adversely affect the healthcare response system, Bhalla wrote.

The home secretary said in the present circumstances, it has become imperative that strict action be taken against those who assault healthcare professionals.

Institutional FIRs should be registered against assaulters and such cases should be fast-tracked. You may also like to invoke provisions of the Epidemic Diseases (Amendment) Act, 2020, where applicable, he said. According to this law, anyone involved in the assault on doctors and healthcare professionals are liable to be punished with imprisonment up to five years, and a fine up to Rs two lakh.

# Carefully calibrate easing of curbs: Centre to states

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, June 19:** The Centre Saturday asked states and union territories to step up vaccination and open up activities in a carefully calibrated manner, as it expressed concern about crowding in markets and other places following the easing of curbs and an expert warned that the third wave can hit India in six to eight weeks if Covid-appropriate behaviour is not followed.

States and UTs have also been urged to ensure the extremely important five-fold strategy of Covid-appropriate behaviour; test-track-treat and vaccination is followed to prevent a relapse.

India was hit by a brutal second wave of the Covid-19 pandemic in April and May, claiming a large number of lives and forcing almost all states and UTs to imposed lockdown or other curbs.

With a decline in the number of active cases, many states and UTs have started relaxing restrictions... However, easing of restrictions in some states, has led to resumption of crowding of people in markets etc., without adherence to the norms of Covid-appropriate behaviour, Union Home Secretary Ajay Bhalla said in a communi-

## 3RD WAVE APPROACHING



cation to all states and Union Territories (UTs). Bhalla said while the opening up of activities after decline in cases is essential, states and UTs must ensure that the whole process is carefully calibrated.

It is, therefore essential to ensure that complacency does not set in, and there is no let-up in adhering to Covid-appropriate behaviour, while opening up activities, the home secretary said.

If Covid-appropriate behaviour is not followed, the third wave can happen in six to eight weeks. We need to work aggressively to prevent another large wave till vaccination kicks in, AIIMS Director Randeep Guleria told PTI.

## Telangana to relax curbs completely

**HYDERABAD:** The Telangana government has decided to totally lift the lockdown in the state. At its meeting held Saturday, the state cabinet discussed the matter and decided on total removal of the lockdown which was imposed to control the spread of Covid in the state. With the latest instalment of lockdown set to end Saturday, the state cabinet had been convened for an emergency meeting to decide the future course of action.

# Induction of Rafales by 2022: IAF Chief

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Hyderabad, June 19:** IAF Chief RKS Bhadauria Saturday said the induction of 36 Rafale aircrafts into the Indian Air Force would take place by 2022.

"The IAF is absolutely on target with respect to the Rafale induction plan," he said, "while responding to a reporters' query on the timeline for receiving all the 36 fighter jets from France."

The target is 2022. It is absolutely on target. I mentioned earlier. Except for one or two aircraft, minor delays because of Covid related issues, but, in fact, some deliveries have been ahead of time.

So, broadly, we are absolutely on target on the Rafale induction plan.

"On the operationalisation plan, you are aware, we are fully operational. So, in terms of time, we will be absolutely on time," he told

reporters after reviewing the Combined Graduation Parade (CGP) at the Air Force Academy in Dundigal here.

In 2016, India had signed an inter-governmental agreement with France to procure 36-Rafale jets at a cost Rs 59,000 crore.

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh had in February said the country would have the entire fleet of the fighter aircraft by April 2022.

Asked for his assessment on the situation in eastern Ladakh on the Indo-China border, the IAF Chief said talks are on between the two sides and the first attempt is to continue with the parleys and carry out the disengagement at the balance friction points.

According to the IAF chief, so far 11 rounds of talks have been held between the Indian and Chinese commanders and the grounds are being prepared for another one.

## TOUCH THE SKY



Sarang Helicopter Display team perform during the Combined Graduation Parade (CGP) to mark the successful completion of pre-commissioning training of Flight Cadets of various branches of Indian Air Force at Air Force Academy in Hyderabad, Saturday

# Govt guidelines for parents on children's home-learning

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, June 19:** The Union Education Ministry Saturday released guidelines for parents and caregivers on how to provide support to children and facilitate their home-based learning at a time when schools are closed due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

The guidelines emphasised the need for parents to create a safe, engaging and positive learning environment for children, have realistic expectations from them, take care of their health and ensure a healthy diet, and also have fun, a statement from the ministry said.

In a tweet, Union Education Minister Ramesh Pokhriyal 'Nishank' said the 'Guidelines for



parent participation in home-based learning during school closure and beyond' have been drafted for par-

ents and caregivers to provide information on the 'why', 'what' and 'how-to' of participation in sup-

porting children during school closure, irrespective of literacy levels.

I strongly feel that a home is the first school and parents are the first teachers. In this pandemic, the role of parents is pivotal in the growth and learning of children, he tweeted.

These guidelines are meant not only for parents but also for caregivers, other family members, grandparents, community members and older siblings engaged in promoting the welfare of children.

The activities suggested in the guidelines are in accordance with the various stages of school education under National Education Policy 2020, the statement by the ministry said.

Age-appropriate art activities

have been categorized on basis of 5+3+3+4 system such as Foundation Stage (age 3 to 8 years); Preparatory Stage (age 8 to 11 years); Middle Stage (age 11 to 14 years); and secondary stage From Adolescent to Adult (age 14-18 years).

The activities are simple and suggestive, which can be adapted and adopted to local needs and contexts. The guidelines appreciate the role of art as a therapy for children under stress or trauma, the statement said.

They (guidelines) also lay significance on improving children's learning by monitoring and addressing their learning gaps.

Collaboration of parents with teachers in documenting and reflecting on the progress of chil-

dren in their learning is important for both teachers and parents, the statement by the Education Ministry said.

The guidelines also advise schools to involve parents by providing information and ideas on helping students with homework and other curriculum-related activities, decisions, planning and involving them in school decisions, it said.

Resources have been made available for children with special needs which may be explored by parents. A separate chapter has been included in the guidelines for supporting parents with low or no literacy. Schools, teachers and volunteers may take suggestive steps to provide support to parents who are not quite literate, the statement said.

# international



**We are getting faster, better and smarter at fighting Ebola. But while this outbreak is over, we must stay alert for a possible resurgence and ensure the expertise in Ebola expands to other health threats such as Covid-19**  
**DR MATSHIDISO MOETI |**  
WHO REGIONAL DIRECTOR FOR AFRICA

## PALESTINE CANCELS PFIZER VAX EXCHANGE DEAL WITH ISRAEL

Palestinian authorities have announced the cancellation of an agreement with Israel and the Pfizer company on exchanging Covid-19 vaccines with the Jewish state as it did not match the specifications



### of the day quote

Limiting global warming to 1.5 to 2 degrees will require emissions to be cut by a quarter to a half by 2030, and this is unlikely to happen without measures equivalent to a global carbon price of around \$75 per ton by the end of this decade

**KRISTALINA GEORGIEVA |**  
MANAGING DIRECTOR, IMF

Mexico's economy is recovering very well and it did not cost us much in material terms. It cost us a lot in human terms, but in economic terms we are recovering, without having indebted the country

**ANDRES MANUEL LOPEZ OBRADOR |**  
PRESIDENT, MEXICO

With a focus on moonshot sectors in pharma such as vaccines, orphan drugs, biosimilars and complex generics, India is looking at ways to incentivise research, encourage industry academia collaboration and attract global scientific talent to strengthen its R&D ecosystem

**AMITABH KANT |** CEO, NITI AAYOG

### SHORT TAKES

#### 3 Sikhs appointed Mins in Ontario

**Toronto:** Three Punjabis were appointed as Ministers in a Cabinet reshuffle in Canada's Ontario province. Moga-born Parm Gill, 47, was Friday appointed as Ontario's new Minister of Citizenship and Multiculturalism. Prabmeet Sakaria, was appointed Associate Minister of Small Business and Red Tape Reduction. Nina Tangri, whose family comes from Bilga near Jalandhar, has been made Associate Minister of Small Business and Red Tape Reduction.

#### Teen charged over Arizona shooting

**Phoenix:** Authorities US state of Arizona said that a 19-year-old teenager was charged over a shooting spree that left one dead and 12 others injured in the Phoenix metropolitan area. Ashin Tricarico, 19, was charged Friday with one count of first-degree murder, multiple counts of aggravated assault and drive-by shooting, and endangerment, according to the Peoria Police Department that led the investigation. The suspect was booked into the Maricopa County Jail, Xinhua news agency quoted the Department as saying in a statement.

#### 7 dead after plane crash lands in Russia

**Moscow:** Seven people were killed after a plane made an emergency landing in Russia's Kemerovo Oblast in Siberia, an emergency services official said Saturday. "According to the latest data, 17 people were injured, seven others were killed," TASS News Agency quoted the official as saying. The plane was carrying a total of 20 people. "There were 17 parachutists and two crew members on board," the official said.

#### Storm brings rain, floods to Gulf Coast

**New Orleans:** Tropical Storm Claudette dumped heavy rain across coastal areas of Louisiana, Mississippi and Alabama as it chugged inland Saturday, threatening flash floods and possibly tornadoes along its soggy course across the Southeast. The National Hurricane Center declared Claudette organised enough to qualify as a named storm at 4 am Saturday, well after the storm's center of circulation had come ashore southwest of New Orleans.

## '3rd wave definitely underway in UK'

**THE LATEST R NUMBER - OR RATE OF INFECTION - IS BETWEEN 1.2 AND 1.4, WHICH MEANS ON AVERAGE EVERY 10 PEOPLE INFECTED WILL INFECT BETWEEN 12 AND 14 OTHER PEOPLE**

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**London, June 19:** The UK is undergoing a third wave of coronavirus infections as a result of the highly transmissible Delta variant, an expert who advises the government on its vaccination programme said Saturday.

Professor Adam Finn, who advises on the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI), told the BBC that the country is now in a firm race between the vaccines and the Delta variant - first identified in India.

"It's going up, perhaps we can be a little bit optimistic it's not going up any faster, but nevertheless it's going up, so this third wave is definitely underway," said Prof Finn.

"We can conclude that the race is firmly on between the vaccine programme, particularly getting older people's second doses done, and the Delta variant third wave," he said.

He was asked about how confident he was that the UK's vaccination programme can outpace the Delta variant with the current rate of jabs, which have now opened up to all adults.

"No, I don't feel confident, but I think there's some grounds for optimism. The latest ONS [Office for



National Statistics] figures continue to show a rise, but that rise has not accelerated quite as much as I'd feared over the last week," he said.

"So, the race is on. The sooner we can get, particularly second doses, into older people, the less of a hospitalisation wave we'll see this time around. That's the critical thing, that's what's grounded us all in the past, and if we've managed to protect enough older people that we can avoid a great big surge of hospitalisations and deaths, then things will be able to move back towards normal," he said.

According to the latest data from Public Health England (PHE), a single dose of vaccine reduces a person's chances of catching Coronavirus and needing hospital treatment by about 75 per cent, even with the Delta variant.

And among people who had received the recommended two doses, the chances of catching and being hospitalised by Coronavirus was reduced by more than 90 per cent.

The UK recorded a further 10,476 cases of Covid-19 Friday showing a steady rise in the number over the past few weeks.

### Delta likely to become dominant strain in US: CDC

The Delta coronavirus variant is expected to become the dominant strain in America, Director of the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), Rochelle Walensky said. "As worrisome as this Delta strain is with regard to its hyper transmissibility, our vaccines work. Right now, they are working and they require actually two doses to be fully vaccinated, to work well. So I would encourage all Americans, get your first shot and when you're due for your second, get your second shot and you'll be protected against this Delta variant," she added in the interview. The CDC has elevated the Delta strain from "variant of interest" to "variant of concern", which means the agency officially recognises that it may carry a risk of more severe illness and transmissibility.

It had led UK Prime Minister Boris Johnson to delay a planned end to all lockdown measures Monday by four weeks, with July 19 now the expected timeline.

### Putin names Lavrov, Shoigu to United Russia elections list

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Moscow, June 19:** Russian President Vladimir Putin Saturday said his foreign minister and his defense minister will head the candidates' list for the dominant United Russia party in September's parliamentary election.

By placing Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov and Defense Minister Sergei Shoigu on the list, Putin aims to increase voter enthusiasm for the party whose support has been waning.

Both Shoigu and Lavrov have substantial popularity for their firm positions on the military and challenges to the West. Being on the party list does not oblige them to take parliament seats if elected.

Notably absent from the list announced at a party convention was Dmitry Medvedev, the former president and prime minister who is United Russia's chairman. Medvedev left the premiership in January 2020 and took the less-visible post of deputy chairman of the national security council.

Although United Russia dominates the country's politics and is Putin's power base, its support is dipping. A survey in April by the independent pollster Levada Center found only 42% of voters would vote for the party in the parliamentary election September 19.



### Election Prep



Ethiopian police march during a parade to display new police uniforms and instruct them to maintain impartiality and respect the law during the upcoming election, in Meskel Square in downtown Addis Ababa, Ethiopia Saturday PTI PHOTO

### Pak warns against any move to divide Kashmir

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Islamabad, June 19:** Pakistan said Saturday that it would oppose any move by India to divide Kashmir and change its demography.

Pakistan's Foreign Office said in a statement that Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi has stated that India must refrain from taking any further illegal steps in Kashmir after its actions of August 5, 2019.

Qureshi underlined that peace in South Asia can only be achieved by peacefully resolving the J&K dispute in accordance with the rel-

**The statement came on a day when the Indian government invited 14 political leaders from J&K to participate in a high-level meeting to be chaired by PM**

evant UNSC resolutions. India has categorically told the international community that the scrapping of the Article 370 was its internal matter.

### India abstains on UNGA resolution on Myanmar

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**United Nations, June 19:** India has abstained on a UN General Assembly resolution on Myanmar, saying its views have not been reflected in the draft and New Delhi does not believe the resolution, tabled hastily, is conducive to "aiding our joint efforts towards strengthening democratic process" in the country.

The UN General Assembly adopted the draft resolution "The situation in Myanmar" Friday with 119 Member States voting in favour, including Myanmar while 36 nations abstained, including Myanmar's neighbours - India, Bangladesh, Bhutan, China, Laos,

## Praise, disdain for Iran's new Prez

AGENCIES

**Dubai, June 19:** Iran's hard-line judiciary chief won the country's presidential election in a landslide victory Saturday, propelling the supreme leader's protegee into Tehran's highest civilian position in a vote that appeared to see the lowest turnout in the Islamic Republic's history.

Initial results showed Ebrahim Raisi won 17.8 million votes in the contest, dwarfing those of the race's sole moderate candidate. However, Raisi dominated the election only after a panel under the watch of Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei disqualified his strongest competition.

In initial results, former



Revolutionary Guard commander Mohsen Rezaei won 3.3 million votes and moderate Abdolnasser Hemmati got 2.4 million, said Jamal Orf, the head of Iran's Interior Ministry election headquarters. The race's fourth candidate, Amirhossein Ghazizadeh Hashemi, had around 1 million votes, Orf said.

**We respect the choice of the Iranian people. We are ready to consistently strengthen cooperation with the Islamic Republic on all directions, as we did under previous Iran's presidents**

**RUSSIAN EMBASSY IN TEHRAN**

**I extend my sincere congratulations and blessings on the occasion of your election as President of the Islamic Republic of Iran ... We in Iraq look forward to strengthening our solid relations with our neighbour Iran and its people**

**BARHAM SALIH | IRAQ PRESIDENT**

**Once again the people of Iran have reiterated their commitment to the path of revolution and its regime. We congratulate the Islamic Republic and the people of Iran on this great achievement**

**YOUSSEF AL-HASSAYNA | ISLAMIC JIHAD OFFICIAL IN GAZA**

**We congratulate the Islamic Republic of Iran for the success of the democratic process, the holding of the presidential election and the victory of Ebrahim Raisi as Iran's President. We wish the Islamic Republic of Iran progress and prosperity. Iran has always been a fundamental and a real supporter of the Palestinian cause and the Palestinian resistance**

**HAZEM QASSEM | HAMAS SPOKESMAN IN GAZA**

**That Ebrahim Raisi has risen to the presidency instead of being investigated for the crimes against humanity of murder, enforced disappearance and torture, is a grim reminder that impunity reigns supreme in Iran. We continue to call for Ebrahim Raisi to be investigated for his involvement in past and ongoing crimes under international law, including by states that exercise universal jurisdiction**

**AGNES CALLAMARD | SECRETARY GENERAL AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL**

## Earth's energy imbalance doubled in 14 years: NASA

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**Washington, June 19:** Raising an alarm over human-caused climate change, NASA-led research has revealed that the amount of heat trapped by Earth's land, ocean and atmosphere has doubled over the course of only 14 years.

Scientists at NASA and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) in the US found that Earth's energy imbalance approximately doubled during the 14-year period from 2005 to 2019.

To reach this conclusion, scientists compared data from two independent measurements - NASA's Clouds and the Earth's Radiant Energy System (CERES) and data from a global array of ocean floats called Argo that enable an accurate estimate of the

rate at which the world's oceans are heating up.

"The two very independent ways of looking at changes in Earth's energy imbalance are in reality, really good agreement, and they're both showing this very large trend, which gives us a lot of confidence that what we're seeing is a real phenomenon and not just an instrumental artifact," said Norman Loeb, lead author and principal investigator for CERES at NASA.

"The trends we found were quite alarming in a sense," he said in a study published in the journal Geophysical Research Letters.

Increase in emissions of greenhouse gases such as carbon dioxide and methane due to human activity trap heat in the atmosphere, capturing outgoing radiation that



would otherwise escape into space. The warming drives other changes, such as snow and ice melt, and increased water vapour and

cloud changes that can further enhance the warming. "Earth's energy imbalance is the net effect of all these factors,"

**The study found that the doubling of the imbalance is partially the result of an increase in greenhouse gases due to human activity, also known as anthropogenic forcing**

the findings showed.

The study found that the doubling of the imbalance is partially the result of an increase in greenhouse gases due to human activity, also known as anthropogenic forcing, along with increases in water vapour, are trapping more outgoing longwave

radiation, further contributing to Earth's energy imbalance. Additionally, the related decrease in clouds and sea ice lead to more absorption of solar energy.

"It's likely a mix of anthropogenic forcing and internal variability, and over this period, they're both causing warming, which leads to a fairly large change in Earth's energy imbalance. The magnitude of the increase is unprecedented," Loeb warned.

Unless the rate of heat uptake subsides, greater changes in climate than are already occurring should be expected.

"Observing the magnitude and variations of this energy imbalance are vital to understanding Earth's changing climate," said Gregory Johnson, physical oceanographer at NOAA.

# business

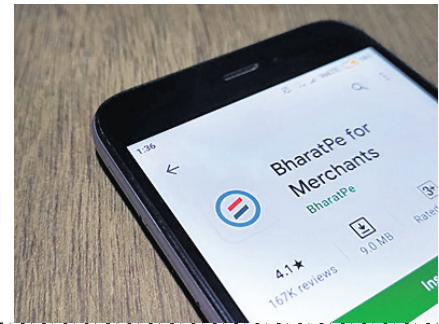


**A 3-5 per cent correction will be healthy in the near time and investors can use the dip to invest and bring down their average cost price**

**NIRALI SHAH | HEAD, EQUITY RESEARCH, SAMCO SECURITIES**

## BHARATPE IN TALKS TO RAISE \$250mn

Fintech major BharatPe, that hit a new high with 106 million monthly transactions in UPI in March this year, is reportedly raising nearly \$250 million in its next funding round led by Tiger Global



## of the day quote

By tapping into, and leveraging OPPO's R&D capabilities, it will be better positioned for market success with its recent focus on horizontally-differentiated product offerings across price-segments

**PRABHU RAM | HEAD-INDUSTRY INTELLIGENCE GROUP, CMR**

The exports programme has played a key role in helping thousands of exporters from across India sustain and grow their business while serving people globally during the last 18 months of the pandemic,

**ABHIJIT KAMRA | DIRECTOR- GLOBAL TRADE, AMAZON INDIA**

The Centre releases funds prior to grain procurement season which has been delayed this year, leading to farmers not receiving the funds

**KONA SASIDHAR | CIVIL SUPPLIES COMMISSIONER, ANDHRA PRADESH**

# IMF proposes setting up of an int'l carbon price floor

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Washington, June 19: The International Monetary Fund (IMF) has proposed to set up an international carbon price floor to help limit global warming and achieve the transition toward low carbon growth over this decade. "Gradually increasing price on carbon encourages innovation and transition to renewable energy, clean mobility, and low carbon technologies," IMF Managing Director Kristalina Georgieva said Friday. "Limiting global warming to 1.5 to 2 degrees will require emissions to be cut by a quarter to a half by 2030, and this is unlikely to happen without measures equivalent to a global carbon price of around \$75



per ton by the end of this decade," she said, noting that the current global average emissions price is only \$3 per ton. Noting that there has been

progress, with over 60 national and subnational carbon pricing schemes around the world, Georgieva said "we have long way to go", reports Xinhua news agency.

Gradually increasing price on carbon encourages innovation and transition to renewable energy, clean mobility, and low carbon technologies

**KRISTALINA GEORGIEVA | MANAGING DIRECTOR, IMF**

Georgieva said IMF staff is publishing a proposal on Friday that sets out how an international carbon price floor can help achieve the goal of accelerating the transition to low carbon growth over the course of this decade.

She highlighted three crucial elements of such a price floor: it would focus on a small number of large emitters, such as some or all

G20 countries; the agreement would be anchored on a minimum carbon price - a single, efficient parameter - that would allow "simultaneous action" across different countries; a carbon price floor agreement would be "flexible, pragmatic, and equitable" and account for different responsibilities across countries with different pricing based on different development levels and historical emissions.

The IMF chief noted that a carbon price floor arrangement does not mean carbon taxes per se.

"While taxes are an efficient mechanism, a price floor can work through other policy measures - such as regulation or emissions trading - that achieve equivalent outcomes," she said.

# India's FY22 GDP expected to grow by 8.7%: MOFSL



AGENCIES

New Delhi, June 19: India's FY22 GDP is expected to grow by 8.7 per cent said Motilal Oswal Financial Services (MOFSL) in a report. "Due to the ferocious second Covid wave, we have revised down our real GDP growth forecasts. Compared with our Mar'21 forecast of 30 per cent YoY, we now expect real GDP growth of 21 per cent Y-o-Y in 1QFY22, with some downward revision in 2QFY22 as well,"

"However, as COVID cases have dropped sharply in Jun'21, some pent-up demand may be visible in 2HFY22 and 1HFY23."

Consequently, MOFSL now project real GDP growth of 8.7 per cent in FY22, down from 11.1 per cent expected earlier. Nonetheless, it revised upwards its FY23 forecasts to 5.4 per cent now from an earlier 4 per cent.

"Although we have revised down our real growth forecasts, it is interesting to note that our nominal GDP growth forecast has actually been raised moderately for FY22 and FY23."

"This is primarily because the GDP deflator - linked more with WPI over CPI - has been revised up to 6.5 per cent or 4.5 per cent for FY22 or FY23." Resultantly, it said that nominal GDP growth is now projected at 15.6 per cent for FY22 vis-a-vis 15.1 per cent earlier and 10 per cent for FY23.

# Repo rate expected to remain unchanged in FY'22: Report

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, June 19: Reserve Bank of India's repo rate is expected to remain unchanged during FY22, said Emkay Global in a report. A lower repo rate, or short-term lending rate for commercial banks, will reduce the interest cost on automobile and home loans, thereby ushering in growth. However, lower repo rate might trigger inflation as well.

Earlier this month, the Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) of the central bank voted to maintain the repo rate, or short-term lending rate, for commercial banks, at 4 per cent.

Likewise, the reverse repo rate was kept unchanged at 3.35 per cent, and the marginal standing facility (MSF) rate and the 'Bank Rate' at 4.25 per cent. The MPC outcome was widely expected as India suffers from a massive spike in Covid-19 infections.

"We do not see any rate actions in FY22. We reckon RBI's focus on keeping the term premia low will gather pace as global financial conditions might start to tighten gradually through the year," said Madhavi Arora, Lead Economist, Global



We do not see any rate actions in FY'22. We reckon RBI's focus on keeping the term premia low will gather pace as global financial conditions might start to tighten gradually through the year

**MADHAVI ARORA | LEAD ECONOMIST, GLOBAL FINANCIAL SERVICE**

Financial Service in the report.

"We also expect core inflation to remain high, outdo headline and average comfortably above 6 per cent in FY22. That said, RBI may

still take solace in the fact that headline inflation may still average sub 6 per cent in FY22 and thus could justify their policy accommodation."

On bond yields, she cited that in the near term, "we are neutral on bonds amid the central bank's active support anchored at the benchmark 10-year paper." "However, we do see yields inching up in an orderly and gradual fashion in H2FY22."

"We expect the yield curve to bear-flatten and see benchmark 10-yr yield in the range of 6.6-40 per cent for the remainder of FY22."

# Maha govt urged to re-open restaurants

AGENCIES

Mumbai, June 19: Apex industry body Federation of Hotel & Restaurant Associations of India (FHRAI) Saturday urged the Maharashtra government to allow restaurants in the city to operate as per permissible guidelines.

"The Maharashtra government has done a great job in restricting the spread and taking care of its citizens in the second wave of the dreaded Covid-19 pandemic. We also understand that the government and the Bombay Municipal Corporation (BMC) want to be careful and take precautions to mitigate the crisis. We understand this can put a lot of pressure on the authorities and even an innocent slip-up can lead to backlash from all quarters," FHRAI vice president Gurbaxish Singh Kohli said in a statement.

However, he stated that this overly cautious approach is resulting in extremely serious damage to businesses, especially to restaurants in Mumbai.

"In cities falling under Level 2 including Thane, Navi Mumbai and Pune, restaurants and bars are operating till 11 pm even on weekends but only Mumbai remains an exception. Now Mumbai is in level 1 and it is extremely unfair to restaurants in the city to be not



In cities falling under Level 2 including Thane, Navi Mumbai and Pune, restaurants and bars are operating till 11 pm even on weekends but only Mumbai remains an exception

allowed to operate as per the permitted relaxations. The cure is turning out to be worse than the disease," Kohli lamented.

Over the last 15 months, India's hospitality industry is burdened with negative cash flows, huge capital expenditure and is under massive debt, the industry body said. "Since March 2020, restaurants in Mumbai have remained closed and were allowed to reopen briefly for 4-5 months with several restrictions.

## SHORT TAKES

### Hike in cement prices protested

Chennai: A section of workers from the construction industry staged a protest here on Saturday against the steep increase of cement price though there was no building work on due to Covid-19. The South Indian Cement Manufacturers' Association said the industry was going through trying times during the second wave of Covid-19 and that the price increase of cement was inevitable. According to some protesting workers, there was no need to sell the cement at higher rates when there was no construction activity.

### KVB donates 10 ambulances

Chennai: Private sector Karur Vysya Bank (KVB) Saturday handed over 10 ambulances, costing ₹1.77 crore, to the Tamil Nadu government in its fight against the Covid-19 pandemic. The ambulances, with two to be used in the plains and eight in hilly areas, were formally flagged off by Chief Minister MK Stalin at the Secretariat, a bank statement said. The total corporate social responsibility initiative, including the rollout of new ambulances, undertaken by the bank during the Covid-19 second wave has reached ₹4.61 crore, it said.

### Govt amends rules related to Ind AS

New Delhi: The government has amended rules pertaining to various Indian Accounting Standards (Ind AS), including those related to interest rate benchmark reform. Ind AS are converged with the International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS). On Friday, the corporate affairs ministry notified the Companies (Indian Accounting Standards) Rules, 2021. The changes have been made after consultations with the National Financial Reporting Authority (NFRA).

### Labour Bureau conducts training

New Delhi: The labour ministry Saturday said that the Labour Bureau conducted a three-day training programme from June 16-18 for master trainers and the second level supervisors nominated by state/ UT Directorate of Economics and Statistics (DES), an effort towards developing focused policies for the workers in the country.

## BIZ BUZZ

### Microsoft Dynamics empowers City's SMBs

Bhubaneswar: Microsoft Dynamics 365 Business Central, a comprehensive business management solution, is enabling small and medium businesses (SMBs) in Bhubaneswar to improve their operational and business efficiency. This cloud platform ensures business continuity by connecting sales, service, finance, and operations teams to help SMBs transform faster and deliver better results. It comprises of over 500 pre-configured use cases and business scenarios for GST, TDS and Tax Collected at Source (TCS). The solution aims to address these with new modular applications, expanded analytics, and software improvements. It brings the rich functionality and full flexibility of Microsoft Dynamics Navision, the company's enterprise resource planning (ERP) app, to deploy in the cloud or on-premises.



### Truecaller rolls out new features

Bhubaneswar: Truecaller is rolling out new features to further augment the user experience. These new features include Group Voice Calling, Smart SMS and Inbox Cleaner. With Group Voice Calls, consumers can make cross-border voice calls with up to eight people simultaneously. Finally, Inbox Cleaner lets consumers free up space on their phone by removing unused messages. Truecaller uses the same powerful algorithms used to identify spam callers in SMS as well. The SMS intelligence is built into the app itself and it can work offline - nothing leaves your device, including all OTPs, bank SMSes and financial information. Smart SMS is a powerful evolution to the SMS engine that has become even better at filtering out spam, categorizing useful information, reminding you of payments and in general making your SMS inbox a more organised place.



# NTPC reports highest ever profit at 13.8K cr

AGENCIES

New Delhi, June 19: The country's largest power generator NTPC Ltd. Saturday reported highest ever net profit of ₹13,769.52 crore for fiscal year 2020-21 ending March 31 beating the pandemic through increased generation and sale of power. The net profit of the company for FY21 grew 36.16 per cent over ₹10,112.81 crore profit reported in FY20.

NTPC's total income for 2020-21 stood at ₹103,552.71 crore as against ₹100,478.41 crore in FY20, registering an increase of 3.06 per cent.

In FY21, NTPC group recorded the highest ever gross generation of 314.07 billion units as against 290.19 billion units during the previous year.

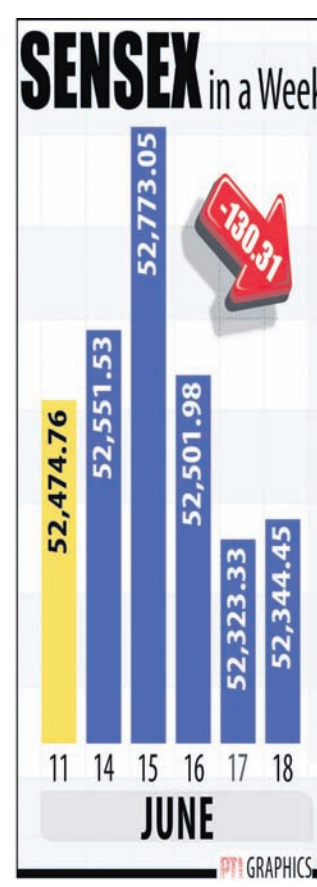
On Standalone basis, the gross generation of NTPC for FY21 was 270.91 billion units as against 259.62 billion units in the previous year. Coal stations achieved a Plant Load



Factor of 66.00 per cent as against National Average of 54.56 per cent with an availability factor of 91.43 per cent.

NTPC has realised more than 100 per cent of the billed amount during the year crossing rupees one lakh crore, which is the highest ever realization.

The Board of Directors of NTPC Ltd. have recommended a final dividend of 31.5 per cent of paid-up share capital i.e. ₹3.15 per equity share of the face value of ₹10 each for FY21, subject to the approval of shareholders in the Annual General Meeting.



# '41% of global supply chain workforce comprises of women'

AGENCIES

New Delhi, June 19: Women comprise 41 per cent of the supply chain workforce globally in 2021, up from 39 per cent last year, according to a new survey. However, 54 per cent of survey respondents said that retaining mid-career women is an increasing challenge.

"Lack of career opportunities is the top reason that mid-career women left a supply chain organisation or provider. The second-most selected option was development opportunities," according to "The Women in Supply Chain Survey 2021" by Gartner.

Every leadership level saw an increase in representation, except

the executive level where there has been a slight decline. In 2021, women account for 15 per cent of executive level roles in supply chain, down from 17 per cent in 2020.

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"Contrary to other industries, supply chain's mission-criticality during the COVID-19 pandemic has meant that many sectors did not reduce their

workforce, but rather continued to hire and even faced talent shortages, especially in the product supply chains," said Dana Stiffler, vice president analyst with the

Contrary to other industries, supply chain's mission-criticality during the Covid-19 pandemic has meant that many sectors did not reduce their workforce, but rather continued to hire and even faced talent shortages, especially in the product supply chains

**DANA STIFFLER | ANALYST, GARTNER SUPPLY CHAIN**

Gartner Supply Chain practice.

"This resulted in many women not only standing their ground in supply chain organisations but increasing their representation in

organisations," she said in a statement.

The findings, however, showed the highest percentage of women in the supply chain workforce since the first edition of the survey in 2016.

The pandemic does not appear to have disrupted supply chain gender equality efforts.

Eighty-four percent of responding organisations stated that COVID-19 had no discernible impact on their ability to retain and advance women. "Supply chain leaders who are serious about their gender equality efforts must create tailored leadership development programmes and explore flexible work policies that cater to the needs of mid-career women," Stiffler said.

# Germany beat Portugal

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Munich, June 19: Germany, who lost to France in their first match, made a strong comeback keeping their knockout hopes alive as they outclassed defending champions Portugal 4-2 in their Euro 2020 game here, Saturday.

However, it was Portugal who took the lead in the 15th minute through a superb counter attack. Liverpool winger Diogo Jota received a long-ball from Bernardo Silva from the right attracting Germany goalie Manuel Neuer towards him before setting up for an unmarked Cristiano Ronaldo, who tapped it into an empty net.

However, Germany continuously pressured Portugal which eventually led to a couple of own goals by Ruben Dias and Raphael Guerreiro as Germany led 2-1 at the halftime.

Soon after the break, Kai Havertz extended the lead to 3-1 in the 51st minute before Robin Gosens making it 4-1 with a header in the 60th minute to dash all the hopes of a comeback.

However, Havertz turned culprit for Germany to concede a free-kick which led to Portugal's second goal in the 67th. Joao Moutinho sent a cross from the free-kick which Ronaldo managed to send it across the Germans' goal-post as Jota was at the right place to finish off the hardwork by the Juventus superstar.

Earlier on the day, France needed



Kai Havertz taps in from close range for Germany's third goal against Portugal

a second-half equaliser from Antoine Griezmann to avoid the biggest upset of the tournament. Hungary, playing in front of a raucous crowd yet again at the Euro 2020, held the World Champions to a 1-1 draw in Budapest.

Griezmann scored in the 66th minute to dampen the spirit of the crowd. It was Griezmann's 38th goal for France. It was after Attila Fiola gave the home team the lead. Latching onto the ball after Roland Sallai won a header down the left

flank, Fiola burst into the penalty area and held off defender Raphael Varane before clipping the ball into the bottom corner.

With the win, Germany moved to second in Group F behind table-toppers France, who have four points. Germany have three points, same as Portugal, but their head-to-head record placed them above the defending champions. Hungary are at the bottom with one point. Germany will next play Hungary, while Portugal face France.

# Argentina beat Uruguay 1-0 in Copa America

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Sao Paulo, June 19: Argentina beat Uruguay 1-0 in their second match at Copa America, making Lionel Messi's team co-leaders of Group A with Chile having four points each. Earlier Chile beat Bolivia 1-0 on a goal by English-Chilean striker Ben Brereton.

Midfielder Guido Rodriguez scored the only goal at the Mane Garrincha stadium in Brasilia with a header in the 13th minute after Messi crossed from the left. The ball hit goalkeeper Fernando Muslera's right post before going in.

Argentina controlled nearly all of the game against an Uruguayan team that included the powerful offensive duo of Luis Suarez and Edinson Cavani.

Seeking some defensive solidity, Argentina changed nearly all of back four; sans Nicolas Otamendi, after the 1-1 draw with Chile.

Argentina's next match will be against Paraguay Monday, the same day that Uruguay will play their second match in the tournament against Chile.

The result also provided some relief for Argentina coach Lionel Scaloni, who was criticised after his team's opening 1-1 draw against Chile Monday. The top four teams of each group will advance to the knockout stage.

# Openers, Kohli propel India

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Southampton, June 19: Virat Kohli's watchful effort (44 batting, 124b, 1x4) in challenging conditions helped India reach 146/3 before the play was halted due to bad light, which eventually led to stumps on day two of the World Test Championship (WTC) final here, Saturday.

India, who had reached 69/2 at lunch, were only able to add 51 runs in the afternoon, reaching 120/3 with the loss of Cheteshwar Pujara (8, 54b). Kohli had the company of his deputy Ajinkya Rahane (29 batting, 79b, 4x4) when play was halted due to bad light. The duo had added 58 runs for the fourth wicket.

Compared to the morning session, New Zealand's all pace attack showed much more discipline to not allow the batsmen any easy runs.

With the Dukes ball moving around, Kohli paid due respect to the bowlers including Colin de Grandhomme, who bowled three successive maidens to the India skipper.

He was happy leaving anything outside the off stump and was quick to pick up runs when bowled into the pads. Such was Kohli's intent that he did not hit a single boundary in the session.

Pujara at the other end took 36 balls to open his account, a cut shot off Neil Wagner (1/28) that went for a boundary like Shubman Gill (28, 64b, 3x4) earlier in the day, Pujara too was hit on the helmet but the blow from Wagner did not seem



Virat Kohli batting during the match.

to bother him much. Soon after the gritty batsman was trapped in front by another left-armer, Trent Boult (1/29), who swung it back enough sharply to beat the batsman.

Earlier, Rohit Sharma (34, 68b, 6x4), who got out off a Kyle Jamieson (1/14) delivery, and Gill staved off the initial swing threat posed by the opposition pace attack with disciplined batting before New Zealand fought back to leave India at 69/2 at lunch.

After day one was rained out, cool and overcast conditions at the

# Sneh, Taniya help India script draw

BRISTOL: Debutants Sneh Rana (80 n o, 154b, 13x4) and Taniya Bhatia (44 n o, 88b, 6x4) shared an unbeaten 104-run stand for the ninth wicket to secure a memorable draw for India in the one-off women's Test against England here, Saturday. If Deepti Sharma (54, 168b, 8x4) produced a dogged resistance, Rana frustrated the England bowlers with two crucial partnerships down the order with Shikha Pandey (18) and Bhatia respectively. The 27-year-old Rana had taken four wickets in the first innings with her off spin. The two teams eventually decided to shake hands after 121.2 overs as India finished at 344/8 in their second innings. Shafali Verma, who scored 96 and 63 in the match, was adjudged 'Player of the Match'. For England, Sophie Ecclestone (4/118) was the best bowler.

Hampshire Bowl on day two made it a no-brainer to bowl first and Kane Williamson did just that.

**BRIEF SCORES**  
INDIA 146/3  
(Virat Kohli 44 batting, Rohit Sharma 34, Ajinkya Rahane 29 batting, Shubman Gill 28; Kyle Jamieson 1/28, Neil Wagner 1/28, Trent Boult 1/32) vs NEW ZEALAND.  
Match to continue.

# REST IN PEACE 'FLYING SIKH'



Milkha sprints towards India's first gold at Commonwealth Games in 1958

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, June 19: The track, to him, was like an open book in which Milkha Singh found the "meaning and purpose of life". And what a life he made for himself.

Before his 91-year-old body lost to COVID-19 Friday after fighting it for a month, Milkha won the kind of battles that not many would have survived, forget about living long enough to tell the world about them.

One of independent India's biggest sporting icons was a tormented man but refused to let that come in the way of accomplishments which were unheard of in his era.

- Milkha was a four-time Asian Games gold-medallist
- He put Indian athletics on the world map by winning the gold in the then 440 yards race of the 1958 British and Commonwealth Games
- He became the first Indian athlete to win an individual gold in a CWG, which led to then Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru declaring a national holiday on his request
- However, his greatest performance was a near miss (by 0.1 second), the fourth place finish in the 400m final of the 1960 Rome Olympics. His timing at the Italian capital remained the national record for 38 years
- He was bestowed Padma Shri in 1959
- Milkha put his career record at 77 wins out of 80 races. He also claimed to have bettered the 'Olympics record' of that time in a race in France, but with sketchy records available, it is difficult to confirm
- At the 1960 Indo-Pak sports meet, he outran Pakistani Abdul Khaliq, who was then considered as the fastest man in Asia. After winning 400m gold in the same Games, Milkha had also beaten Khaliq in the 200m final, which led then Pakistani PM General Ayub Khan to christen the Indian with the nickname of 'The Flying Sikh'

He saw his parents being butchered during partition, indulged in petty crimes to survive in refugee camps of Delhi, went to jail for those and failed three attempts at joining the Army.

Who could have thought a man like that would get the sobriquet of 'The Flying Sikh'? But Milkha earned it and earned it with a master-class on how to be bigger and better than one's circumstances.

He "revered" the track like "the sanctum sanctorum in a temple where the deity resided." To him running was both his God and beloved as he created his own little fairytale out of what could have easily been a tale of horrors.

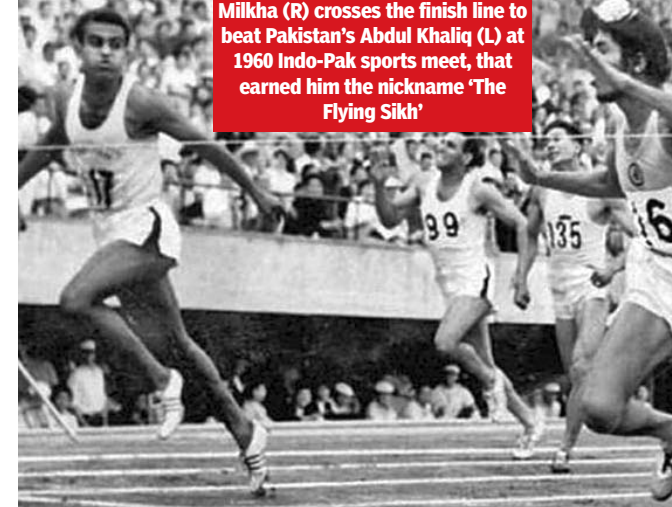
He lost the race of his life in the Rome Olympics, finishing the 400m final in 45.6 seconds, 0.1 second short of the bronze medal mark. He had slowed down in a colossal error of judgement as he wanted to preserve himself for

the final 150m.

He remained tormented by that miss, one of the only two incidents in his life, which he described as unforgettable - the other being the killing of his parents in Pakistan. "The one medal I had yearned for throughout my career had just slipped through my fingers because of one small error of judgement," Milkha wrote in his 160-page autobiography.

However, his timing at the Italian capital remained a national record for 38 years till Paramjeet Singh broke it in 1998 at a national meet in Kolkata.

Milkha had promised to give a cash prize of ₹2 lakh to the one who breaks his record, he eventually did not because he believed that Paramjeet's feat would have counted for something only if he had achieved it in a foreign meet.



Milkha (R) crosses the finish line to beat Pakistan's Abdul Khaliq (L) at 1960 Indo-Pak sports meet, that earned him the nickname 'The Flying Sikh'

## Famous quotes

The track, to me, was like an open book, in which I could read the meaning and purpose of life. I revered it like I would the sanctum sanctorum in a temple, where the deity resided and before whom I would humbly prostrate myself as a devotee. To keep myself steadfast to my goal, I renounced all pleasures and distractions, to keep myself fit and healthy, and dedicated my life to the ground where I could practice and run. Running had thus become my God, my religion and my beloved

I would not stop till I had filled up a bucket with my sweat. I would push myself so much that in the end I would collapse and I would have to be admitted to hospital, I would pray to God to save me, promise that I would be more careful in future. And then I would do it all over again

When I reflect upon my life, I can clearly see how my passion for running has dominated my life. The images that flash through my mind are those running... running... running...

"Mera record todne wala India mein paida nahi hua (the one who can break my record is not born yet in India)," he had said in 1991 and he hung on to that belief even when that record was shattered. Another one of his unfulfilled dream was to see another Indian do what he couldn't, bring home a track-and-field Olympics medal. He was independent India's first

love affair with the track, the one that this country can never get over.

Milkha retired from athletics after the 1964 Olympics, two years after winning the gold in 400m and 4x400m relay events at the Jakarta Asian Games

He got married to Nirmal Kaur, captain of the Indian volleyball team, in 1963. They met for the first time in 1956 in Sri Lanka during their national duties

The couple was blessed with three daughters and a son, golfer Jeev Milkha Singh

It was quite stunning that an athlete of Milkha's stature was offered the Arjuna award, instituted in 1961, only in 2001. He famously turned it down, saying the honour was not of the "stature of the services he rendered to the nation"



Milkha poses with his wax statue, created by sculptors of Madame Tussauds in London, during its unveiling in Chandigarh in September, 2017

## NATION MOURNS...

**NARENDRA MODI:** In the passing away of Shri Milkha Singh Ji, we have lost a colossal sportsperson, who captured the nation's imagination and had a special place in the hearts of countless Indians. His inspiring personality endeared himself to millions. Anguished by his passing away

**NEERAJ CHOPRA:** We lost a Gem. He will always remain as an inspiration for every Indian. May his soul Rest in peace

**SPORTS AUTHORITY OF INDIA:** A gold medalist at the CWG & Asian Games, he held the 400m National record for 38 years. Condolences to his family & the millions whom he inspired

**ADILLE SUMARIWALLA:** A Titan who lifted the profile of athletics in a young nation. His sharp observations on Indian sport will be missed. His towering legacy will continue to inspire generations of young Indians. Rest in peace legend

**ANJU BOBBY GEORGE:** A huge loss for the sport of athletics today. Rest well Milkha Singh ji

**MOHAMMAD ANAS YAHIYA:** Really shocked by the demise of the legend Milkha sir. You will forever have a very special place in my heart. The Flying Sikh will live forever. RIP

**SACHIN TENDULKAR:** Rest in Peace our very own 'Flying Sikh' Milkha Singh ji. Your demise has left a deep void in every Indian's heart today, but you shall keep inspiring several generations to come

**VIRAT KOHLI:** A legacy that inspired a whole nation to aim for excellence. To never give up and chase your dreams. Rest in Peace Milkha Singh ji Folded hands. You will never be forgotten

**HARBHAJAN SINGH:** Very sad, heartbreaking to hear flying sikh Sardar Milkha Singh ji is no more. Waheguru RIP Milkha Singh ji

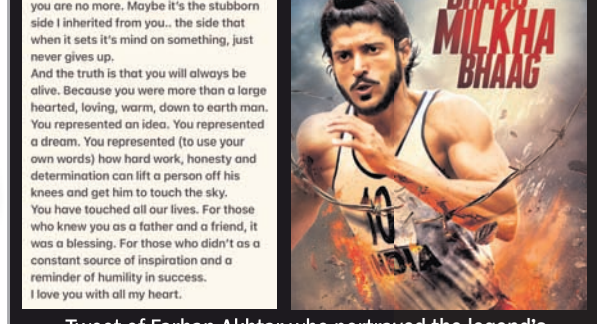
**SANIA MIRZA:** Had the honour of meeting you and you blessed me so many times. The kindest and warmest Palms up together RIP Milkha Singh sir. The world will miss a legend like you

**DEVENDRA JHAJHARIA:** Really shocked and sad to learn about the passing away of the legend Milkha Singh ji. Om Shanti

**JWALA GUTTA:** What an inspiration you were to the millions like us. There will be none like you sir Rest in peace legend Milkha Singh

**INDIAN FOOTBALL TEAM:** We join the nation in mourning the loss of the iconic 'Flying Sikh' Milkha Singh. His incredible achievements will continue to inspire future generations. May his soul rest in peace RIP

**SHAH RUKH KHAN:** The Flying Sikh may no longer be with us in person but his presence will always be felt and his legacy will remain unmatched. An inspiration to me. An inspiration to millions. Rest in Peace Milkha Singh sir



Tweet of Farhan Akhtar who portrayed the legend's character in the movie (Bhaag Milkha Bhaag)