



## NOSTALGIC SANYA

Actor Sanya Malhotra goes down memory lane to reminisce about her *Dangal* days in a throwback video

LEISURE P2



## FRESH N-ARMS TALKS

American and Russian negotiators conclude a round of nuclear arms control talks in Vienna

INTERNATIONAL P10



## DJOKO TESTS POSITIVE

Novak Djokovic and his wife Jelena test positive for coronavirus after taking part in an exhibition series

SPORTS P12

# Chariots reach Srigundicha

PNN/ AGENCIES

**Puri, June 23:** For the first time in the history of Puri Rath Yatra, the chariots of Lord Jagannath and His siblings were pulled on the Grand Road here without the congregation of devotees Tuesday.

The festival was organised amid tight security in view of the Covid-19 pandemic, less than 24 hours after the Supreme Court modified its earlier order thereby clearing the decks for the annual mega festival. In order to prevent any congregation on the Grand Road, a curfew-like shutdown was imposed across Puri district from 9 pm Monday till 2 pm Wednesday, Director General of Police (DGP) Abhay said.

Priests and police personnel, who were supposed to pull the three chariots, underwent mandatory Covid-19 testing Monday night and only those whose reports came out negative were allowed to participate in the festival, said an official of the Shree Jagannath Temple Administration (SJTA).

A number of customary rituals like Mangala Arati and Mailam were held before the presiding deities set out from the sanctum sanctorum of the temple.

The three deities were taken out of the temple down the 22



**DEVOID OF DEVOTEES:** The three chariots parked at Saradhali in front of Srigundicha temple in Puri, Tuesday (PHOTO FEATURE ON P6 & 7)

steps known as Baisi Pahacha through the Lions' Gate in an elaborate procession called Pahandi. "The Pahandi procession of the deities started at 7.25 am after the completion of rituals like Sakala Dhooa and Mangalarpan," said the temple official. At first, Sudarshana, the celestial wheel of Krishna-Vishnu, was taken out and placed in the Darpadalan chariot followed

by Lord Balabhadra, Devi Subhadra and finally Lord Jagannath. "All the three deities were placed inside their respective chariots through a Pahandi procession by 9.10 am," added the official.

Soon after the completion of Pahandi procession, Puri Shankaracharya Nischalananda Saraswati along with his disciples visited the chariots and paid obeisance to the deities.

Subsequently, Gajapati Dibyasingha Deb performed the Chhera Panhara with a golden broom on the three chariots. "Servitors started pulling the Taladhwaia chariot of Lord Balabhadra at 11.55 am after the completion of Chhera Panhara ritual," said the official.

The pulling of the Darpadalan chariot of Devi Subhadra and Nandighosa char-

iot of Lord Jagannath started at 12.55 pm and 1.55 pm respectively. "One hour gap was mandatory between the pulling of chariots as per the apex court order," said Srimandir sources.

The three chariots were pulled to Saradhali in front of Srigundicha temple here by 5.10 pm. "Taladhwaia chariot reached Saradhali around 3.50 pm while Darpadalan reached the place at 4.10 pm.

## CURFEW ON GRAND ROAD

- The festival was organised without devotees in view of Covid-19 pandemic
- Fest held less than 24 hours after Supreme Court modified its earlier order
- Curfew was imposed on Puri district from 9 pm Monday to 2 pm Wednesday
- All three chariots reached Saradhali in front of Srigundicha temple by 5.10 pm

Nandighosa reached its destination at 5.10 pm," said a servitor. The deities will spend a night on their respective chariots at Saradhali. They will be taken to the Adapa Mandap of Srigundicha temple through Pahandi procession Wednesday afternoon, added the servitor.

Disallowed to physically participate in the grand festival, lakhs of devotees got a chance to witness the Rath Yatra live on television.

Over 50 platoons of police force (one platoon has 30 personnel) have been deployed and CCTVs installed at various locations as part of the security arrangement for the nine-day festival, officials said.



## India pushes Russia to fast-track defence deals

AGENCIES

**New Delhi, June 23:** Defence Minister Rajnath Singh and his team are in Russia's capital Moscow to attend World War II Victory Day celebrations as well as speed up various defence contracts, including the S-400 missile defence system as ties with China deteriorate. After reaching Russia, Singh Tuesday laid a wreath at the statue of Mahatma Gandhi at the Indian Embassy. He is on a three-day visit to Russia.

Earlier in the day, Defence Secretary Ajay Kumar met with Russia Deputy Defence Minister Col General A V Fomin in Moscow to work on the modalities of speed up various defence contracts. "The partners agreed to strengthen multifaceted ties between the two countries," the Indian mission stated Tuesday.

Also India and China's foreign ministers met face-to-face for the first time since the barbaric attack was carried out in Galwan valley in eastern Ladakh region across Line of Actual Control between the two countries' troops in which 20 Indian soldiers and an unknown number of Chinese troops were killed.

Both the countries have agreed to deescalate the situation along their boundary, Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Zhao Lijian said at a regular news briefing Tuesday in Beijing.

Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov hosted the virtual trilateral meeting with China's Wang Yi and India's S. Jaishankar. After the meeting he said, "I don't think that India and China need



any help."

On defence contracts, India and Russia have inked deals worth \$16 billion. Moscow has stated that they are committed to the timely implementation of contracts, including the supply of S-400 air defence systems and production of Kalashnikov rifles and Kamov helicopters.

Singh will seek the advanced delivery of the Russian S-400 anti-aircraft missile defence system and the purchase of Russian-made Su-30MKI jet fighters and MiG-29.

India and Russia signed the S-400 deal worth more than \$5 billion in 2018 and is currently due in December 2021.

The two countries signed 14 memorandums of understanding (MoUs) during Defexpo 2020 in Lucknow in February this year that covered development and production of land, air and naval systems and hi-tech civilian products.

A separate MoU was signed by Russian Helicopters and Indo-Russian Helicopters Ltd for localisation of components to be used in Kamov Ka-226 helicopters. India has plans to buy 200 Ka-226 helicopters.

Indian Air Force (IAF) signed a ₹1,500 crore deal with Russia for buying R-27 air-to-air missiles. The missiles will be fitted on the IAF's multi-role Su-30MKI fighter jets. The missiles will further boost the air-to-air combat capability of the Indian Air Force.

## Sino-India consensus to disengage

**NEW DELHI:** After 11 hours long Corps Commander level talks between India and China, government sources Tuesday said that the dialogue was held in a cordial, positive and constructive atmosphere and there was a "mutual consensus to disengage". "Modalities for disengagement from all friction areas in Eastern Ladakh were discussed," government sources added. The corps commanders of two countries' military met at Moldo on Monday to resolve the border issue and ease tensions in Eastern Ladakh. This is the second such meeting after the first one on June 6 to defuse the tensions in Eastern Ladakh.

## Fracas over leadership of state youth Congress

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, June 23:** Tension flared up at the Congress Bhawan here Tuesday when two factions of the political party clashed over the selection of the president of the Odisha Pradesh Youth Congress.

While one group of the Youth Congress supported the appointment of Smrutii Ranjan Lenka as president of OPYC, the other group was seen opposing his selection.

Smrutii decided to take over the charge Tuesday after his selection Friday. After he and other youth

leaders reached the office, they found the main gate locked. Besides, there were nearly 200 people inside the campus who resisted Smrutii and his team's entry to the office. This subsequently led to a group clash between the two factions.

Police were called in. The crowd dispersed after a mild baton-charge. The cops have detained one person.

Speaking to Orissa POST, Youth Congress leader Itish Pradhan said he suspected foul play by some senior leaders including OPCC chairman Niranjan Patnaik in the entire incident.

## Trump suspends H-1B, other visas till yr-end

AGENCIES

**Washington, June 23:** US President Donald Trump has issued a proclamation to suspend issuing of H-1B visas, which is popular among Indian IT professionals, along with other foreign work visas for the rest of the year. Trump said the step was essential to help millions of Americans who have lost their jobs due to the current economic crisis.

Issuing the proclamation ahead of the November presidential elections, Trump has ignored the mounting opposition to the order by various business organisations, lawmakers and human rights bodies. The proclamation that comes into effect on June 24, is expected to impact a large number of Indian IT professionals and several American and Indian companies who were issued H-1B visas by the US government for the fiscal year 2021 beginning October 1.

They would now have to wait at least till the end of the current year before approaching the US diplomatic missions to get stamping. It would also impact a large number of Indian IT professionals who are seeking renewal of their H-1B visas.

"In the administration of our Nation's immigration system, we must remain mindful of the impact of foreign workers on the United States labour market, particularly in the current extraordinary en-



vironment of high domestic unemployment and depressed demand for labour," said the proclamation issued by Trump.

In his proclamation, Trump said that the overall unemployment rate in the United States nearly quadrupled between February and May of 2020 - producing some of the most extreme unemployment rates ever recorded by the Bureau of Labor Statistics. While the May rate of 13.3 per cent reflects a marked decline from April, millions of Americans remain out of work. The proclamation also extends till the end of the year his previous executive order that had banned issuing of new green cards of lawful permanent residency.

Green card holders, once admitted pursuant to immigrant visas, are granted "open-market" employment authorisation documents, allowing them immediate eligibility to compete for almost any job, in any sector of the economy, he said.

## 'Origin' tag must on goods in GeM

AGENCIES

**New Delhi, June 23:** The government procurement portal GeM made it mandatory for sellers to mention 'country of origin' on products they wish to sell through the platform, a move aimed at promoting Aatma Nirbhar Bharat (Self-reliant India), a senior official said Tuesday.

Government e-Marketplace (GeM) has also enabled a provision for indication of the percentage of local content in products with a view to promoting Make in India. GeM has taken a significant step towards Aatma Nirbhar Bharat and has made it mandatory for sellers to enter the country of origin while registering all new products on GeM, CEO Talleen Kumar said.

Sellers, who had already uploaded their products before the introduction of this new feature on GeM, are being reminded regularly to update the country of origin, with a warning that their products will be removed from the platform if they fail to update the same, he said. With this new feature, now, the country of origin as well as the local content percentage are visible in the marketplace for all items. Departments, agencies and PSUs can now procure products made by tribal communities from the GeM portal.

## IRREGULAR by MANJUL



I too am at a loss. Media here keep criticising you while that in our enemy country is full of praise for you

## ADANI POWER TO BAG 49 PC STAKE IN OPGC

AGENCIES

**Bhubaneswar, June 23:** Adani Power Ltd (APL) has signed a definitive agreement to acquire 49 per cent stake in the Odisha Power Generation Corporation (OPGC) from the affiliates of the US-based global energy company, the AES Corporation (AES), a statement said Tuesday. The state government holds the balance 51 per cent stake in the OPGC.

The OPGC operates 1,740 MW capacity thermal power plant at Banharipalli in Jharsuguda district. Supercritical capacity of 1,320 MW with low carbon footprint was recently commissioned at the plant, which is the mainstay of Odisha for base load power supply and amongst the lowest cost power generator in the state.

The plant has a long-term power purchase agreement valid for 25 years with the state-owned GRIDCO and sources fuel from a nearby captive mine, it said.

The acquisition also marks APL's foray into Odisha, and it demonstrates the Adani Group's long-term commitment to develop and operate high quality infrastructure in the state, it added.

Adani group is committed for successful and mutually beneficial long-term partnership with the state government and the people of this progressive state, the statement said.

# Ayush ministry frowns on Ramdev's 'Covid cure'

AGENCIES

**Haridwar/New Delhi, June 23:** Yoga guru Ramdev's herbal medicine company Patanjali Ayurved Tuesday claimed to have discovered a medicine that could cure coronavirus in just seven days - a claim that the Ayush Ministry scoffed at by seeking stopping of advertisements for the drug.

While Ramdev claimed that Ayurved-based 'Coronil and Swasari' medicines have shown 100 per cent favourable results during clinical trials on COVID-19 infected patients except those on a life support system, the Ayush Ministry sought from the company detailed report on composition, testing and other data of the drugs.

The ministry also used powers under a 1954 law to ask the firm to

"stop advertising/publicizing" claims of corona cure drug until the issue is examined by it. A government notification bars companies from advertising a cure without government approval. But it wasn't immediately clear if the drug can still be sold.

Talking to PTI, Ramdev said the medicines have been developed by Patanjali Research Center, Haridwar and privately-owned National Institute of Medical Science, Jaipur following all protocols with clinically controlled trial-based evidence.

"Patanjali first conducted a clinical case study and conducted clinical control trials following all protocols of drug discovery," he said.

Reacting to the announcement, the Ministry of Ayush issued a statement saying, "Facts of the claim and details of the stated sci-



entific study are not known" to it.

"Patanjali Ayurved Ltd has been asked to provide at the earliest details of the name and composition of the medicines being claimed for COVID treatment; site(s)/hospital(s), where the research study

## BLOW TO PATANJALI

The ministry used a 1954 law asking the firm to "stop advertising/publicizing" claims of corona cure drug

The ministry sought from the firm detailed report on composition, testing and other data of the drugs

was conducted for COVID-19; protocol, sample size, Institutional Ethics Committee clearance, CTRI registration and results data of the study (ies) and stop advertising/publicizing such claims till the issue is duly examined," the ministry statement said.

The ministry also asked the concerned State Licensing Authority of Uttarakhand government to provide copies of license and product approval details of the Ayurvedic

medicines being claimed for the treatment of COVID -19.

The Corona kit, priced at ₹545, would be available pan India within a week. The kit will have medicines for 30 days. Ramdev said the medicines can be ordered online through a mobile app from next Monday.

Ramdev said the medicines can be ordered online through a mobile app from next Monday. The COVID-19 therapy suggested by Patanjali is applicable for adults ranging between 15-90 years of age whereas children are advised to take half the dosage prescribed for adults.

Patanjali's anti-COVID tablet, Divya Coronil Tablet consists of Giloy, Tulsi and Ashwagandha and is prescribed to be taken thrice a day with hot water 30 minutes after breakfast, lunch and dinner.

MARKET WATCH	
INDEX	VARIATION
SENSEX	35,430.43 ↑ 519.11
NIFTY	10,471 ↑ 159.80
DOLLAR	75.77 ↓ ₹0.32
EURO	85.36 ↑ ₹0.12
GOLD	₹48,160 ↑ ₹216
SILVER	₹48,674 ↑ ₹174

WEATHER		
	BHUB	CTK
TEMP: MAX	35.4°C	34.5°C
MIN	27.5°C	25.6°C
Humidity	91%	82%
Rainfall	2.2mm	Nil
Forecast: Generally cloudy sky		



### SPEARS GOES ON BEACH DATE

Singer Britney Spears paired her bikini with a face mask for a beach date with her boyfriend Sam Asghari. Amid the ongoing coronavirus pandemic and preventive protocols in place, Spears and Asghari stepped out for a beach outing with all the precautions, reports *people.com*.

### NO NUDE SCENES PLEASE: HOULT

Actor Nicholas Hoult who stripped on camera for the first time when he was just 17 in the TV show *Skins* doesn't want to shoot nude scenes anymore. In an interview with *GQ Hype* magazine, the actor said he would like to stop getting naked at work, reports *femalefirst.co.uk*.



### FORTUNE FORECAST

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**ARIES**  
With your substantial inter-personal abilities, you will accomplish a great deal today, says Ganesh. Your power of expression will impress many people. Financial rewards are on the cards, but be cautious about minor accidents and illnesses.

**TAURUS**  
You have a very pleasant day ahead. Though you are, by nature, restless and excited you will be very steady and focused in whatever you do today. So says Ganesh. Later you will desire to enjoy the company of your friends and will call them over to chat and gossip with them.

**GEMINI**  
There is a possibility of conflicts brewing at your home today. The demands made by your family members will increase and you may struggle to cope to meet them. This could make you ill-tempered. You will encounter large expenses in meeting these demands.

**CANCER**  
You can improve your finances with you mental capabilities. Ganesh says that you will get success in both private life and career. You will be entrusted many tasks and responsibilities. Yet by evening, you will spend time in your pursuits.

**LEO**  
A lot of people will sing your praises, however you will not be satisfied with whatever is occurring. The answers to some questions that have been bothering you will remain elusive. You may become emotional owing to feelings of personal loss.

**VIRGO**  
You will be in a very ambitious and conscientious mood today. Your actions will speak louder than words. You set the pace with your meticulous planning and careful execution. Ganesh says you may expect a lot of appreciation and recognition for your work coming from your boss and your colleagues.

**LIBRA**  
Ganesh says you shall pay more attention to your family and family issues. You will want to renovate and change the interior of your house or go in for purchasing new gadgets and décor for the home.

**SCORPIO**  
It's time to influence people and win their hearts whether it's your crush, love or your boss. You may be eager to express your feelings for them. At work, you are likely to work actively and kick start the projects in the pipeline. Ganesh, advises you to keep your eyes and ears open.

**SAGITTARIUS**  
Variety is the spice of life. Add variety of activities to your daily schedule and nothing would seem boring any more, foretells Ganesh. Indulge in creative activities like writing, cooking, gardening or even reading.

**CAPRICORN**  
The hassle and bustle around you will not disturb you today. You've been holding your emotions in your heart and they have started suffocating you. Such an uncomfortable situation may hamper your logical reasoning power and make you feel trapped. But, this too shall pass.

**AQUARIUS**  
You will be able to strike a balance between the emotional and rational side of your personality. You will find pleasure in your work and may successfully mix your personal life into your professional life. Financially, there are no major issues, but negligible matters may keep your mind occupied, feels Ganesh.

**PISCES**  
There is a thick chance that your day will be profitable on the monetary front. Money may pour in from business or even through overseas investments. Your knack for good public relations and networking will work to your benefit and good deals will come from far and unexpected sources as well.

## Facelift on cards for Odisha State Archives

An audio visual studio using state of the art technology will be in place soon to make OSA as one of the best in its category, informs Superintendent Sheikh Soleman Ali



POST NEWS NETWORK

**BHUBANESWAR:** In a bid to preserve non-current records of enduring value for administrative use as well as for historical research purpose, the state government had established Odisha State Archives (OSA) June 1, 1960. The organisation, over the last seven decades, has turned out to be one of the reliable sources of primary information about the economic, political and social development of the country connecting the past and present.

Archives are believed to be nothing more than the instruments of administration that preserve records for the smooth functioning of administrative bodies. However, OSA has gone on to become one of the most sought-after destinations for historians, economists, sociologists and genealogists. Needless to say, the organisation has a lot to offer at the moment than just being a centre of collection, preservation and management of records.

Speaking about the additional facilities it offers, Superintendent Sheikh Soleman Ali says, "OSA is equipped with facilities such as CCTV, smoke detectors to prevent fire mishap and digitisation of more than 10 lakh records."

This apart, an audio visual studio using state of the art technology will be in place soon to make the organisation one of the best in its category. It will also introduce cloud storage facility so that users can freely access information using the Internet, added Ali.

OSA has been organising *Sanskriti Charcha*, a monthly seminar with the participation of eminent personalities from the fields of art and culture to discuss state's rich traditions and heritage. The programme is generally held on the last week of every month. OSA has so far conducted 42 sessions of *Sanskriti Charcha* which have offered great insights to the culture department.

Rabindra Narayan Behera, a former director of National Informatics centre, said that OSA's move to preserve archival documents through digitisation is a step in right direction. However, it should also use artificial intelligence to carry out the task. Besides, smart technologies such as deep learning, Internet of Things (IoT), IIOT (Industrial Internet of Thing) and edge computing should also be put into use to preserve the valuable manuscripts. The department should follow a foolproof cyber security system too to protect its valuable digital records, he added.

## Sanya reminisces Dangal days

Mumbai: Actress Sanya Malhotra has gone down memory lane and reminisced about her *Dangal* days in a throwback video on social media.

Sanya took to Instagram, where she shared a string of videos of her practicing wrestling for the film, where she essayed the role of Babita Phogat. "Zor se throwbacks #dangal," she captioned the clips.

*Dangal* is directed by Nitesh Tiwari. The film was based on the Phogat family of wrestlers. Superstar Aamir Khan played Mahavir Singh Phogat, who trains his daughters Geeta Phogat and Babita Kumari to become India's first world-class female wrestlers.

The film also stars Fatima Sana Shaikh, Zaira Wasim, Sakshi Tanwar and Aparshakti Khurana.



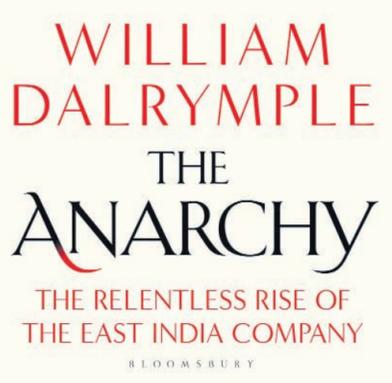
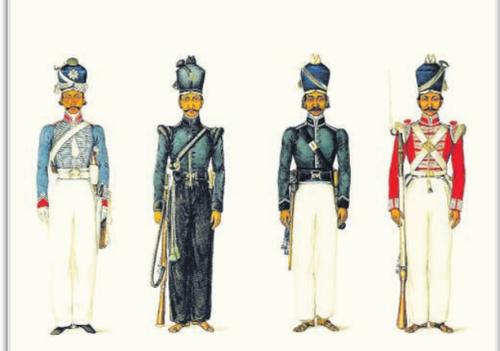
## Dalrymple's bestseller to be adapted into TV series

New Delhi: Producer Siddharth Roy Kapur has acquired rights to William Dalrymple's historical bestseller, *The Anarchy: The Relentless Rise Of The East India Company*, to adapt it into a global series.

Kapur intends to put together a diverse international team of writers and showrunners to create the series. "I believe that

the book provides a window into "how a provincial trading start-up, run by thirty people from an office only five windows wide in a nondescript London building, became rulers of an entire sub-continent; in the process establishing the richest and most powerful empire in the history of the world". The book was listed by former US President

Barack Obama as amongst his Top 10 Recommended Books of 2019.



stories that are compelling, relevant and authentic have the potential to resonate with audiences across all nationalities and cultures. William Dalrymple's epic tale of *The East India Company* is one such story," Kapur said.

Released in 2019, the book encompasses more than 200 years, covering how East India Company rose to prominence against the de-

Barack Obama as amongst his Top 10 Recommended Books of 2019.

For the series, Dalrymple is also on board as a consultant. "I don't think I have ever written a book more obviously crying out to be adapted than *The Anarchy* and I can't think of anyone in India better to adapt it than Kapur," said the historian and award-winning author.

## Natasa yearns for 'vitamin sea'

Mumbai: Serbian dancer-actress Natasa Stankovic says she needs a good dose of 'vitamin sea'.

In an Instagram photo she has shared, Natasa lies on the beach in a black bikini.

"All I need is a good dose of vitamin sea," captioned Natasa, who is expecting her first child with her fiancé and Indian all-rounder Hardik Pandya.

Natasa, who made her film debut with a dance number in the 2013 film *Satyaagraha* and was later seen in films like *Action Jackson* (2014)

and *Fukrey Returns* (2017), recently shared a beautiful surprise she received from Pandya.

He presented her two big bouquets of roses, with a mushy note to boot.

On the career front, Natasa also appeared in the season eight of *Bigg Boss*, and was seen in the video of rapper Badshah's blockbuster track *DJ waley babu*.



### PEANUTS



### CALVIN AND HOBBS

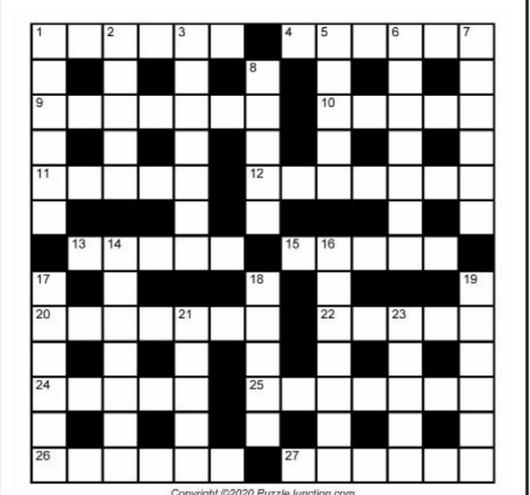


### BREVITY



### FUN post

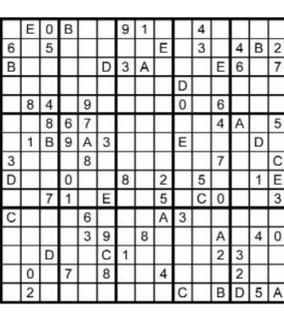
### CROSSWORD



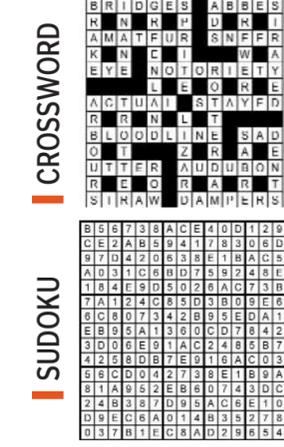
- Across**
- 1 Nauseous
  - 4 Ocean menaces
  - 9 Circus performer
  - 10 Place to lounge
  - 11 Boat driver
  - 12 Hot spot
  - 13 Reef material
  - 15 Vantage point
  - 20 Collector's find
  - 22 Swamp plants
  - 24 Pizzeria order
  - 25 Supervise
  - 26 Gets a whiff
  - 27 Fire-breathing dragon
  - 6 Grenadier fish
  - 7 Griddlecakes
  - 8 Shepherd's crook
  - 14 Novel starter
  - 16 Baby's room
  - 17 Elevates
  - 18 Sri Lanka export
  - 19 To the rear, at sea
  - 21 Squelch
  - 23 Come to pass
- Down**
- 1 Misgivings
  - 2 "Snowy" bird
  - 3 Lena River locale
  - 5 Keyed up

### SUDOKU

To solve the Sudoku puzzle, each row, column and box must contain the numbers 0 to 9 and the letters A to E.



### SOLUTIONS



CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW



**IN MEMORIAM**

BJP leaders pay tributes to Shyama Prasad Mookherjee on his death anniversary near Vani Vihar Square in Bhubaneswar, Tuesday

**GREEN BRIGADE**

Members of All Odisha Photographers' Association in Cuttack carry out a plantation drive in Barabati area, Tuesday



**PREZ, VP, CM PRAY FOR VICTORY OVER CORONA**



Chariots ready to roll on Grand Road in Puri, Tuesday

**Naveen watches live telecast of Rath Yatra**

Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik Tuesday watched the live telecast of the Rath Yatra and paid obeisance to Lord Jagannath from his office at Lok Seva Bhawan here. Usually, Naveen, a devotee of Lord Jagannath, always makes it a point to be in Puri during the Car Festival to have darshan of the deities. However, this time, due to restrictions put by the Supreme Court in view of Covid-19, he decided to watch live telecast of the festival from his office. Chief Minister offered his prayer when the Nandighosha chariot started rolling on the Grand Road. He said the bewitching scene of the deities on the chariots make the hearts thrilled with reverence. This difficult time shall go away and welfare of the people will prevail. Not a single leaf moves without his will, he observed. As the sibling deities reached Gundicha temple in the evening, the Chief Minister expressed happiness over the timely completion of the chariot pulling ritual in Puri. He thanked the servants, temple administration, district administration and the police for ensuring smooth conduct of the festival despite the restrictions. Naveen also lauded the Puri denizens for their co-operation with the administration for adhering to the Supreme Court's directive. Union Ministers Dharmendra Pradhan and Pratap Sarangi also watched live telecast of the festival on TV and paid obeisance to the deities.



The historic Rath Yatra of Lord Jagannath commenced Tuesday in the pilgrim town of Puri without the usual sea of devotees, and amid tight security in view of the COVID-19 pandemic, less than 24 hours after the Supreme Court modified its earlier order to clear the decks for the annual festival. The historic Rath Yatra of Lord Jagannath commenced Tuesday in the pilgrim town of Puri without the usual sea of devotees, and amid tight security in view of the COVID-19 pandemic, less than 24 hours after the Supreme Court modified its earlier order to clear the decks for the annual festival.

**MeT predicts reduced rainfall activity in state**

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, June 23:** The India Meteorological Department (IMD) Tuesday said rainfall activity will reduce in the state during the next few days. However, some places will continue to receive light to moderate rain or thunderstorm, it said.

"There is no heavy rainfall warning for any part of the state for next four to five days. However, light to moderate rainfall will continue to occur at many places while some places may witness thunderstorm with lightning," said Bhubaneswar Met Centre director HR Biswas.

Light to moderate rain or thundershower is likely to occur at many places over north interior Odisha and a few places over the remaining parts, Wednesday.

Thunderstorm with lightning is very likely to occur at one or two places over the districts of Nabarangpur, Koraput, Kalahandi, Kandhamal, Rayagada, Deogarh, Sundargarh, Mayurbhanj, Keonjhar and Angul June 25.

Similarly, the IMD said, a few places of Sundargarh, Jharsuguda, Bargarh, Bolangir, Sonepur, Boudh, Sambalpur, Deogarh, Keonjhar, Mayurbhanj, Gajapati, Ganjam, Nayagarh and Khurda districts will witness thunderstorm, June 26.

In between 8.30 am and 5.30 pm Tuesday, the highest 17mm rainfall was recorded at Balasore while Nayagarh town received 13 mm rainfall. Similarly, Chandbali received 9mm, Baripada 7.8mm,

**10 more places to get weather details**

Very soon, people will come to know about the weather details of 10 new places of Odisha. The IMD and state government have signed a memorandum in this regard. The places are— Jagatsinghpur, Dhenkanal, Kendrapara, Nabarangpur, Nuapada, Jajpur, Khurda, Bargarh, Deogarh and Bhadrak towns, said Bhubaneswar Met Centre director HR Biswas. With the installation of weather observatory at additional 10 places, the IMD will be able to get weather details of all 30 district headquarters of the state, he said. Though the MoU was signed earlier, it was delayed due to Covid pandemic. But, the machines have been installed and now we are able to get weather details of the five places—Nayagarh, Boudh, Chhatrapur, Paralakhemundi and Rayagada," said Biswas. After the installation of weather observatories at additional five places, the IMD is providing temperature and rainfall details of 28 places of the state.



Bhubaneswar 2.2mm and Sambalpur 1mm, said the MeT sources.

PNN/AGENCIES

**Bhubaneswar, June 23:** President Ram Nath Kovind, Vice President M Venkaiah Naidu, Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik and a host of other ministers and dignitaries greeted people Tuesday on the occasion of Rath Yatra, and prayed for their well-being, amid the Covid-19 crisis.

In his message on Twitter, the President prayed for courage and determination to fight the pandemic.

"Greetings to everyone on the auspicious occasion of Rath Yatra, especially to the devotees of Lord Jagannath in Odisha. May the Lord bless us with courage and determination in our fight against COVID-19 and bring us good health and joy," read a tweet from the official Twitter account of the Rashtrapati Bhavan.

Naidu also took to the microblogging site to wish people on the occasion.

"I convey my heartiest greetings and good wishes to the people of our country on the auspicious occasion of Rath Yatra. Jagannath Puri Rath Yatra is the most revered and much awaited festival of Odisha," the vice president said. Governor Ganeshi Lal greeted people and sought the Lord's blessings for peace, brotherhood, and victory over the coronavirus pandemic.

Chief Minister Patnaik, in a message, called upon all to witness the live telecast of

the Rath Yatra on TV.

Union Petroleum and Steel Minister Dharmendra Pradhan prayed for health, happiness and prosperity of one and all.

"Along with family sought blessings of Mahaprabhu Jagannath at the Sri Jagannath Mandir in Hauz Khas. May Mahaprabhu bless everyone with health, happiness, vitality and prosperity. Jai Jagannath," Pradhan posted on Twitter.

Among others, Union Minister Pratap Chandra Sarangi and BJP's National Vice President Baijayant Panda greeted people on the occasion.

**Tough for Lord to join fest sans devotees: Gajapati**



"Immensely gratifying to see #RathJatra of Mahaprabhu #Jagannath happening, as it has for untold centuries, today with social distancing. Do read about the egalitarian Lord of the Universe & the many legends surrounding the deities, inc leg. Colours. Jai Jagannath!" Panda tweeted.

**PURI:** Puri Gajapati Dibyasingha Deb said Tuesday that he can't express his 'chherra panhara' (sweeping ritual at the chariots) experience in words. When asked about his experience of Rath Yatra sans devotees he said, "It is very difficult for Lord Jagannath to celebrate his grand Rath Yatra festival without his beloved devotees."

Deb thanked all the devotees within and outside the state for abiding by the Odisha government's directive of not congregating at the 'Bada Danda' in view of the risks posed by the pandemic.

"The past events related to Rath Yatra were a test for the devotees of Lord Jagannath.

We devotees passed the test for which we are being blessed with the opportunity to witness the three deities on chariots," said Deb.

The Supreme Court had issued a stay order on Rath Yatra June 18. But after considering various PILs filed by several individuals and organisations, the top court bench said Monday that the annual Puri Rath Yatra could be conducted but with certain restrictions. A three-judge bench headed by Chief Justice SA Bobde gave the order.

Accordingly the Odisha government took measures to conduct the Rath Yatra festival sans devotees.

**2 more deaths take Covid toll to 17**

167 fresh cases were detected in the state, taking the infection tally to 5,470

PNN/AGENCIES

**Bhubaneswar, June 23:** Two more people succumbed to Covid-19 in the state, taking the death toll due to the contagion to 17, while 167 fresh cases increased the infection tally to 5,470, a Health department official said Tuesday.

The two deaths were reported from Cuttack district. "Regret to report the demise of two COVID positive cases of Cuttack while under treatment in hospitals. Both were males. One was 71-year-old and the age of the other was 53 years," the official said. Both suffered from pre-existing ailments.

Meanwhile, an 80-year-old Covid-19 patient from Cuttack, who was suffering from "intestinal obstruction with sepsis and multiple organ dysfunction syndrome," also died in a hospital. "The reason of his death was non-COVID," the official said.

**PURI SERVITOR TESTS POSITIVE VIRUS**

**PURI:** One of the Srimandir servitors here tested positive for novel coronavirus during mandatory testing of priests and police personnel ahead of the annual Rath Yatra Tuesday, a senior official said. The servitor will not be part of any ritual related to the Rath Yatra, he said. Samples of 1,143 servitors were tested Monday night, as per directives of the Supreme Court. "Except one, reports of all the others came out negative. The servitor who tested positive has been shifted to a Covid-19 hospital," the official said, adding that contact tracing has been initiated.

**Two new cases in Capital city**

**T**wo new Covid-19 positive cases surfaced Tuesday in the state capital, the BMC said in a Tweet.

Of the two, one is a 39-year-old resident of Jayadev Vihar area near Hotel Mayfair. He had a travel history to Mumbai. The other one is from Saranapalli area under Ward No-26. He contracted the virus from an earlier

patient who worked as a service provider of a private hospital. These two patients have been shifted to the dedicated hospitals here.

At the same time, five male patients have recovered in the city and have been discharged. These cured patients include a 36-year-old railway staffer and a resident of HB Colony in Dumduma area aged 37 years. The others who have recovered are a 22-year-old male from

Nirankari Nagar in Salia Sahi, a Nayapalli area resident aged 30 years and a 27-year-old resident of Bhimpur area residing near the BPIA.

With the detection of two fresh cases, the tally in the city has gone up to 198. While the number of active cases stands at 96, a total of 98 patients have so far been discharged from hospitals after their recovery. The disease has so far claimed three lives in the city.

Of the fresh cases, 150 are from different quarantine centres where returnees are lodged for preliminary observation, while 17 others were detected with the infection during the contact-tracing exercises, he said. Gajapati district topped the list of new infections with 41 cases, followed by Ganjam at 30.

The number of active Covid-19 cases in the state now stands at 1,583, while 3,863 patients have recovered from the disease. The Health department Monday conducted 3,496 tests, the official said.

Of the fresh cases, 150 are from different quarantine centres where returnees are lodged for preliminary observation, while 17 others were detected with the infection during the contact-tracing exercises, he said. Gajapati district topped the list of new infections with 41 cases, followed by Ganjam at 30.

**BMC plans 2 incinerators for City**

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, June 23:** Keeping in view the paucity of space and environmental concerns over unclaimed animal carcasses in the Capital city, the Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC) has invited Expression of Interest (EoI) for establishment of two LPG-based animal carcass incinerators.

Issuing the EoI, the BMC stated that it's looking for interested parties for establishing, operating and maintaining two incinerators of 50 kg/hr and 350 kg/hr capacities. Sources at the BMC said that the plants are part of Smart City projects and aimed at improvement in Swachh Bharat rankings. "Tenders for the same will be

finalised once the interested parties are finalised. This is done in view of rising cases of animal deaths in the city. Until now we bury the carcasses near the Temporary Transit Stop (TTS) at Sainik School but observing the shortage of space we have decided to construct incinerators," said a senior vet officer at the BMC.

As per the sources, the BMC's health wing collects around 400 carcasses every month. Out of these, 230 are that of the dogs while the others were of bigger animals like stray bulls. Moreover, a steep increase in number of stray dogs and their deaths have also aggravated the problem.

"Once established, the incinerators will reduce the time, space

**ANIMAL DEATHS**

Two incinerators of 50 kg/hr and 350 kg/hr capacities will come up in Capital city

Tenders for the same will be floated once the interested parties are finalised

Once established, the incinerators will reduce the time, space and manpower needed to bury the animal carcasses

and manpower needed to bury the animal carcasses. While the carcasses of dogs and cats are easy to be disposed of, the issue largely

arises in doing away with larger animals such as bulls and cows. The plants, however, will incinerate animals in accordance with the guidelines issued by the State Pollution Control Board and Central Pollution Control Board," the officer added.

It is worth mentioning here that Bhubaneswar, which ranked Number 1 in smart cities list in the country in 2016, has slipped to 311 and 166 spots in terms of cleanliness in the first and second quarters of Swachh Survekshan League 2020. The Swachh Survekshan parameters include wastewater treatment and reuse, solid waste management and faecal sludge management as key components for judging a city's cleanliness.

**AIDSO demands reduction in fees**

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, June 23:** All India Democratic Students Organisation (AIDSO) Tuesday wrote to Union HRD ministry and the Prime Minister's Office seeking discussions with the outfit regarding decisions on education issues.

Their other demands include fee reduction and maintaining the charges keeping in view the ability to pay of parents, extending the fellowship for research students to six months, special package for the education sector and students etc. They said examinations should not start until the Covid situation improves.

**Female Himalayan black bear dies at Nandankanan**

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Barang, June 23:** A 25-year-old Himalayan black bear, Kulu, died at enclosure 15 of Nandankanan Zoological Park (NZP) here Tuesday, an official said.

According to the official, the female bear was undergoing treatment at the enclosure's feeding chamber soon after it developed health complications May 17.

"It was later diagnosed with tuberculosis. Accordingly, a team of experts from Odisha University of Agriculture and Technology in Bhubaneswar coordinated with NZP veterinarians to treat the bear. However, it did not respond to the



medications and died at 3.03pm," NZP deputy director Jayant Das said.

Born December 26, 1995, Kulu has four offsprings. With this death, Nandankanan is left with five bears—two males and three females.



As the chariot of Lord Balabhadra rolled out on Grand Road of Puri, Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik released the special Rath Yatra issue of Utkal Prasanga and Odisha Review at Lok Seva Bhavan in Bhubaneswar, Tuesday. The editor of the twin magazines, Lenin Mohanty, was also present on the occasion



In concentration and silence we must gather strength for the right action.

THE MOTHER



## Defence Takes A Beating

Prevention is better than cure. Prevention involves advance preparations. With defence minister Rajnath Singh reaching Russia Tuesday, his aim is two-fold. One, to attend the 75th anniversary of Soviet Union's victory over Nazi Germany in World War II and second is reportedly to expedite supply of defence wares including delivery of Sukhoi and MiG 29 fighter jets under an emergency arrangement. In other words, when enemy is knocking at the door, we are scurrying around to fetch weapons for our protection.

It is well-known that India's military might is far less compared to China's in most terms, including in critical airpower. The energy and zeal of our soldiers seem to be our only treasured strength. But wars are fought mainly in the skies in this new age. India has a moderate number of fighter jets, minimum nuclear arsenal that can never be used against an enemy like China, and an ill equipped ground fighting force. Fact is that India and China were on equal footing in military strengths at the turn of the century 20 years ago. With massive economic growth, China's resources increased, which it used for beefing up its military. India sat blinking through.

An errant neighbour's growing strength should be a matter of worry. China attacked India in 1962 and India lost a large tract of land. Simple logic suggests that this could happen again unless India is prepared. The Galwan incident is a pre-cursor to more bad times. China has been observed to be taking special interest in courting all nations in India's neighbourhood with great frenzy, its obvious aim also being to isolate India with a necklace of nations with ports and roads strategically encircling India. The signals were all too clear. Sadly, India failed to read these signals.

India must blame itself for many of its follies. No single weapons acquisition by the Indian defence ministry has been above board. Starting from the publication of intent to purchase, the bidding and evaluation process all take incredibly long periods of time, which often make the to-be-acquired weaponry obsolete. From Bofors to Rafale, every government has mud on its face. Even after the Modi government came to power in 2014, India has been unable to acquire any single new piece of weapon or defence system during the past six years. While much political talk veered around the soldier standing at Siachen glacier, the government has not bothered to acquire high altitude garments and shoes for the army.

In the past, Bofors became subject for a political tumult for a couple of decades, and nothing came of the investigations. Also, Indian soldiers are still making do with Bofors guns, which have become antiquated, and replacements have not come in. The Rafale deal went through another season of slugfest, and reached court, further delaying acquisition.

Lack of transparency in defence deals is a big problem. The UPA periods saw a criminal holiday for defence acquisitions. Defence minister AK Antony did too little on this. He and his political bosses failed to see the need for building India's military might. That was a period of complacency. While there was palpable disinterest on the part of former Prime Minister Manmohan Singh in strengthening India's defence forces, present Prime Minister Modi also has largely trusted his individual access to leaders like Xi Jinping of China rather than building the nation's capabilities.

Question will arise as to how much has Modi as PM done in the last six years to strengthen the defence force other than earmarking moderate sums in annual budgets.

To come back to Rajnath's trip to Russia, the message is loud and clear that Indian forces still consider Russian made weaponry to be viable defence equipment. Interestingly, while the defence minister has travelled to Moscow to hasten purchase of aircrafts, recent past events show that this deal was most likely languishing buried in some files in New Delhi. Probably, the Modi government was disinterested in the Russian made equipment since no private corporate would take interest in building those aircrafts in India unlike the Rafale. When such considerations become top most, defence of the nation takes a beating.

# NATION, ITS BUSINESS

FOCUS ECONOMY

The Centre is on a privatization spree despite the hits the economy has taken in the context of the COVID-linked lockdown. The stress is on shaping a "morecoherent" Public Sector Enterprises (CPSEs) Policy. It is a moot point whether the nation will benefit from this kind of a push.

Unbridled privatization of the public sector goes against the concept of mixed economy adopted by India after Independence, wherein both public sector and private sector played important roles, which were supplementary and complementary to each other. Now, however, the wind is blowing against the public sector, mainly on the ground that many of them are loss-making and causing a strain on the national economy.

Notably, a study by the Indian Institute of Management-Ahmedabad (IIM-A), titled, "Heightened uncertainty in product markets, business operations, and financing plans" of Indian firms during the COVID-19 crisis, argued that government-owned firms have outperformed the private sector in several respects. However, proponents of market economy and privatization keep arguing that the government has no business being in business and it should retreat from the interventionist policy. The government's role is to facilitate a healthy business environment and maintain law and order. Criticism on this count is that the government is abdicating its responsibility of helping people in the vulnerable segments and, via its interventions, giving enormous concessions to the rich, corporate behemoths.

Crony capitalism is so pervasive in India all along since Independence that owners of private sectors are allowed to twist rules and regulations in their favour and extort various concessions unethically from the government. The public sector managements have some limitations in these respects. The recent concessions worth ₹1.45 lakh crore, through corporate tax cuts, and systematic decimation of the Bharat Sanchar Nigam (BSNL), so as to pave the way for private telecom companies to step in and take control, are cited as examples of these. The votaries of privatization



**Uninhibited privatisation will do more harm than good. Worse, attempt is also to create private sector monopoly in certain sectors. This is seen by many as more dangerous than public sector monopoly. Private firms become more predatory, exploitative and profit-mongering in the absence of fair competition**

argue that private managements will effect significant improvements in efficiency and output. There, they say, will be accountability leading to more transparency. But critics of privatization note that private ownership does not necessarily translate into improved efficiency. Some say there is no clear evidence the private sector is more efficient than the public sector. Fact remains that both have their strengths and weaknesses. It is often noted that the private sector, in its greed for more profits, lacks a human face while the public sector units often adopt a humanitarian attitude.

It must be admitted that a large number of private sector firms too are incurring losses. Even some such units were rescued by the public sector, like the Oriental Bank of Commerce, the Global Trust Banks etc. Private enterprise is also draining the national exchequer in the new situations of NPAs or bad loans, wherein businessmen take huge loans from public sector banks and scoot from the scene, as in the case of Nirav Modi. Private entities also use political influence to extort huge tax cuts and concessions as also gain more than required access to natural and mineral resources for use as raw materials in their factories and to even to export these.

They manage to get these at cheaper prices.

The public sector is recording profit in several cases. The Public Enterprises Survey-2018-19 tabled in Parliament in February 2020 highlights the scenario vis-à-vis the total 348 CPSEs as on March-end. Of these, 249 were operational, while 86 were under construction and 13 under liquidation. Significantly, the numbers of profit-making and loss-making companies were lower during the fiscal under review, than of the previous fiscal. While 178 of these units have made profit in 2018-19 fiscal, 70 have incurred losses.

The net profit of operating central public sector enterprises (CPSEs) rose to 15.52 per cent a year to ₹1.43 lakh crore in 2018-19, whereas 70 loss making CPSEs reduced their overall losses by a meagre 1.69 per cent in the same period - to ₹31,635 crore. These CPSEs employed over 15 lakh people and paid the government ₹3.69 lakh crore by way of levies in 2018-19 - which was higher by nearly ₹1,010 crore compared to the previous fiscal.

It is alleged by those opposing privatization that the real purpose of unfettered disinvestment and privatization is to raise resources to bridge the fiscal deficit. Instead, why not tax the rich, the corporates etc and also better

check tax evasions, is a question. They also argue that this is tantamount to selling family silver to pay the grocers' bill. Such privatization policy is getting support from corporate honchos and the media "they control" are backing the government policy. In the process, national assets are transferred to corporate, rich, wealthy people at throwaway prices, say those opposing privatisation.

Politicians and bureaucrats favour privatization because they are in the payrolls of the entrepreneurs. Private companies contribute hugely to the election funds of political parties and fill the pockets of politicians and bureaucrats, sacrificing moral and ethical values. This, the public sector cannot do.

By resorting to privatization with frenzy, the government would lose the future stream of dividends and other revenues received from public sector. It is not only privatizing or disinvesting the public sector but also relinquishing its responsibility of providing public services like health and education, which are increasingly getting controlled by the private sector. As a result of this, health and education have become unaffordable for the ordinary families. On the other side, it is natural that a profit-seeking operation may not want to provide health care free or in subsidized form to the impoverished, or extend education to such sections.

It is argued that privatization of public sector can do away with unnecessary governmental intervention and the bureaucratic shackles that affect performance of the public sector adversely. But, in the absence of effective and independent regulatory bodies, this will prove detrimental. Even the regulatory bodies are not independent. Their chairmen and other members are appointed by the government.

Uninhibited privatization will do more harm than good. Worse, attempt is also to create private sector monopoly in certain sectors. This is seen by many as more dangerous than public sector monopoly. Private firms become more predatory, exploitative and profit-mongering in the absence of fair competition.

The writer is an Odisha-based economist.

### WISDOM CORNER

When you are courting a nice girl an hour seems like a second. When you sit on a red-hot cinder a second seems like an hour. That's relativity.

ALBERT EINSTEIN

The statistics on sanity are that one out of every four people is suffering from a mental illness. Look at your 3 best friends. If they're ok, then it's you.

RITA MAE BROWN

The world's biggest power is the youth and beauty of a woman.

ARTHASASTRA

### WORDSWORTH

#### Staycation

A staycation is a stay-at-home vacation. It has been said that it was invented by the writers of the Canadian TV comedy show Corner Gas in an episode broadcast in October 2005. However, the word appeared in print a little earlier, in an article in the Washington Post on 4 August 2005: "The city empties out. The commute becomes bearable. It's the perfect time for a 'staycation,' to dig in those heels and enjoy the comforts of home: 300-thread-count sheets, stainless outdoor fire pit, well-stocked fridge." Staycation is a blend of stay-at-home and vacation. It was probably generated from the rather older daycation for a one-day vacation, a day-trip, which is recorded in that sense from 1986; that word has also appeared, usually as day-cation, in the sense of a one-day special educational event (in which the second element is instead a truncation of education). After a couple of appearances in 2007, the word became significantly more visible from March 2008 onwards, largely because of financial concerns as the economy weakened and fuel prices increased. Other reasons were given in the Washington Times on 23 March: "Increasing concerns over the environment as well as the desire for more family time add to the staycation's popularity." The word has since become established enough to be added to Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary in July 2009. It has become known in other countries, too, including the UK. This is mildly surprising, because vacation in British English is a formal term used mainly for institutional breaks between terms by universities and the legal profession. People take holidays. However, the term is understood and exposure to the American sense through films and television has clearly helped staycation to be accepted.

### LOL

Reporter: "Excuse me, may I interview you?"



camel." Reporter: "Holy cow!"

Man: "Yes!"  
Reporter: "Name?"  
Man: "Abdul Al-Rhazim."  
Reporter: "Sex?"  
Man: "Three to five times a week."  
Reporter: "No no! I mean male or female?"  
Man: "Yes, male, female... sometimes

Man: "Yes, cow, sheep... animals in general."  
Reporter: "But isn't that hostile?"  
Man: "Yes, horse style, dog style, any style."  
Reporter: "Oh dear!"  
Man: "No, no deer. Deer run too fast. Hard to catch."

### IN JEST THIS

## Hmm ... illegal and getting caught on camera

Security cameras have always bothered me. I don't like to be watched. I like my privacy, even when I'm out in public. I don't like the idea of someone sitting in the security office of a grocery store, watching me through a camera and saying something like this: "There he is again, the guy who can't find anything. I bet he's searching for the baking powder in the baking section. What an idiot! Doesn't he know that we keep baking powder in the powder section?"

Despite my misgivings, I'm beginning to see the benefits of hidden cameras. In fact, I want to install them all over my home. Not to protect me from outsiders, but to protect me from insiders. By "insiders," I'm speaking mainly about my wife. She sometimes misunderstands me.

Malathi: "Melvin! Wake up! Didn't you promise to wash my car while I was cooking dinner?"

Me: "No, you must have heard it wrong. I promised to watch your car. I just checked and it's still out there. No one has stolen it."

Malathi: "Stop lying! You're nap-



ping on the couch. How could you be watching my car?"

Me: "You don't believe me? Well, it's a good thing I installed the hidden camera. I've always wanted to say this: Let's go to the replay. The camera doesn't lie. ...

Look! I'm telling the truth! I said 'watch,' not 'wash.' And look again! I'm getting up from the couch. I'm looking at your car. Then I'm going back to sleep."

Instant replay works well in sports, so why not in everyday life? Whenever there's a disagreement, we can just review the tape. It would keep many couples from fighting.

Malathi: "Who finished the ice cream? Was it you again?"

Me: "No, in case you didn't notice, I'm on a very strict diet. And if you don't believe me, let's go to the re-

play. ... Ah, just as I suspected. We had an intruder. And he ate all our ice cream."

Malathi: "Oh my God! That's scary. Especially since the intruder looks so much like you. Do you have a twin?"

Hidden cameras—and even visible cameras—are everywhere these days, and it turns out that they're quite useful, especially when they capture people doing bad deeds. Many people have been caught committing crimes on camera—and some of them have even been caught while wearing police uniforms. Impersonating a police officer is a crime, of course, but so is impersonating criminals.

If not for cameras, often on cell-phones of brave bystanders, many incidents of police brutality (and murder) in America and elsewhere would have remained hidden. Instead, the videos of these terrible deeds have gone viral, allowing the public to protest vociferously and the justice system to punish bad cops.

The "Black Lives Matter" movement grew out of the persistent

police brutality against African-American men and women, but many white Americans—including the president and vice-president—don't even want to utter the words "Black Lives Matter." It would be easier to get them to say, "I'm the world's biggest moron."

Even the abbreviation "BLM" drives them nuts, as evidenced recently in the city of Thousands Oaks, California. After 19-year-old Maxwell Myers hung a "BLM" sign from the fence of his father's property, three people were caught trying to damage the sign. Two of them worked for the criminal justice system: one in the sheriff's office, the other in the district attorney's office.

Darrin Stone, an employee of the Ventura County Sheriff's Office since 2005, allegedly slashed the sign with a knife on two separate occasions.

Stone is 60 years old, works in law enforcement, and somehow didn't know that he was being captured on camera. Black Lives Matter—and so does having a little grey matter.



Melvin Durai

**DESPITE MY MISGIVINGS, I'M BEGINNING TO SEE THE BENEFITS OF HIDDEN CAMERAS**

## Letters

### TO THE EDITOR

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

OrissaPOST

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#### Hail the Lord

Sir, Lord Jagannath is the eternal well-wisher of the mankind. The suspense over the Rath Yatra has come to an end on Monday after the pious festival was given the green signal by the Supreme Court, after it urged all stakeholders to abide by the COVID-19 guidelines. This is an unprecedented situation and a victory of Odia pride and brotherhood. Yet, why has the state government shown such urgency and pro-activeness before the apex court, for conducting the chariot festival sans devotees on June 18? This is a big question. In Odisha, only Lord Jagannath is the ruler, all others are His followers. A non-conduct of the Rath Yatra would have been written as the darkest chapter in the annals of the Sri Mandir Temple and an attack on our religious sentiments. Finally, we have been saved from the morass by the Lord's Grace. Rath Yatra is a festival of universal friendship, brotherhood and amity. This is a world-famous carnival. It would have been improper on our part to refrain from seeking the Lord's grace and blessings on this auspicious occasion. May, Lord Bless Us All.

Prabhudutt Dash, BHUBANESWAR

#### India at UNSC

Sir, The ten-member United Nations Security Council (UNSC) is the principal international body which oversees global peace and security. Largely, the five permanent members among them have been controlling its functioning. The 'veto' power that vests a member with the power of rejecting proposals and resolutions of the UNSC has placed the 'top five'—US, UK, France, Russia and China—in an unassailable position. The ten nations are expected to play a vital role in global diplomacy but the non-permanent five have been overshadowed by the 'top five'. The last time India was a non-permanent member was in 2011-12. The resistance from China and complex diplomatic matters left a large democratic country in the wilderness despite it being backed by the other four permanent members. Notwithstanding the long wait, India's name in the non-permanent members' list means a lot. Meanwhile, Indian leaders cannot lose sight of their main objective—permanent membership. India's ability to take responsibility will send subtle messages to those who matter.

Ganapathi Bhat, EMAIL

## 6 Covid warriors test corona +ve in Ganjam dist

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Berhampur, June 23:** As many as 30 new Covid-19 cases were reported from Ganjam district, Tuesday. Out of these, six corona warriors have been tested positive for the deadly virus.

Reports shared by the district administration said six corona warriors, nine with travel history and 15 active contacts of positive cases have tested positive.

Meanwhile, in view of increase of Covid cases in the district, the



administration has decided to open a Covid hospital in Purussotampur NAC area. Chattarpur sub-collector Priya Ranjan Prusty took stock of the situation in the area Tuesday.

A step was taken to put in place hospital facility at Taratarini Kalyan mandap.

Necessary work will be completed, said the sub-collector.

## Chikiti NAC fearing community spread

TWO SIBLINGS, A TRADER DUO, HAVE TESTED POSITIVE FOR THE VIRUS



The district administration has sealed a road leading to five wards under the NAC

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Chikiti, June 23:** As Covid-19 infection cases are on the rise in Chikiti area of Ganjam, people and the administration are worried over possibility of community spread of the virus. Two locals cases have appeared, a report said.

The district administration has sealed a road leading to five wards under the NAC. Five wards from 1 to 5 were declared as containment zones, Tuesday.

Similarly, villages like Jenapur,

Loknathpur, Karbalua, Dhanaghara, K Gopinathpur, Muktapur, Jagada and T. Kulamanipur were declared as buffer zones.

Two siblings in Chikiti bazaar have tested positive for Covid-19. As both of them are traders, many people must have come in contact with them, locals fear.

The administration and a medical team from Berhampur have started contact tracing in the NAC area. Collector Vijay Amruta Kulange has asked the BDO and the CDPO to monitor the situation.

## Baitarani river ghat under NGT lens again

THE GREEN BODY DIRECTS THE STATE GOVT FOR A SPECIAL TEAM TO PROBE INTO THE CHARGES OF FRESH CASE OF ILLEGAL SAND MINING

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Jajpur, June 23:** A division bench of NGT has directed the state government to form a special team and probe into the charges of illegal sand mining from Baitarani riverbed at Sanla sand ghat under Korei block in this district in violation of lease norms, a report said.

The National Green Tribunal passed the order over a fresh petition filed before it on use of heavy machines in sand mining from the river ghat in violation of lease norm, Friday. The petitioners are Sarat Chandra Mohapatra, Manas Mohapatra and some locals of Sanla village on the bank of Baitarani river in Korei block. The next date of hearing is scheduled for August 10.

The division bench comprising Justice SP Wangdi and technical member Siddhant Das has asked the state government to form a probe team comprising the district Collector, members of state environment impact assessment authority (SEIAA) and state pollution control board (SPCB) and submit the probe report before it within a period of six weeks. The SPCB will act as a nodal agency.



WHEN THE LOOT IS WITHOUT FEAR: Sand mining underway at the river ghat. The lessee has been lifting sand of 200 cusec metre daily while the lease order is for 6.12 cusec metre, sources said

The NGT was also asked to cancel the lease order and seize all the heavy machines and vehicles if the charges are proved true.

Earlier, the green body in its April 28, 2017 order had banned use of machines in sand mining and directed to seize such machines if found being used during work. However, the administration allegedly did not act on the order, sources said.

The petitioners alleged that the administration has granted manual mining lease to one Debendra

Ghadei. However, Ghadei has been carrying out sand mining by using heavy machines in complete violation of pollution, environment norms and other conditions as mentioned in the lease deed. The petitioners had also alleged that the earlier order of NGT has not been implemented.

The lessee has been lifting sand of 200 cusec meter daily while the lease order is for 6.12 cusec meter. The lessee has encroached upon other areas and added them to his lease areas for sand mining with-

The order was passed over a fresh petition filed before the NGT on use of heavy machines in sand mining from the river ghat

The petitioners are Sarat Chandra Mohapatra, Manas Mohapatra and some locals of Sanla on the bank of Baitarani in Korei

The next date of hearing is scheduled for August 10

THE GREEN BODY IN ITS APRIL 28, 2017 ORDER HAD BANNED USE OF MACHINES IN SAND MINING

out permission. Moreover, sand is being overloaded in trucks and transported to various locations through the river embankments, crowded places, school areas and on PMGSY roads which has posed serious threat to the general public.

The lessee has also not planted trees for environment protection in the mining areas and roadsides as laid out in the lease deed.

When contacted, Pramod Kumar Behera, regional officer of SPCB in Kalinganagar said that a probe team will be formed and report will be submitted before NGT in time.

## Couple ties nuptial knot inside a Kalahandi quarantine centre

SOURCES SAY OUTSIDERS WERE ALLOWED INSIDE THE QUARANTINE CENTRE FOR THE EVENT



The couple exchanged wedding vows inside the quarantine centre in Banjibahal village under Jaypatna block in Kalahandi district

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Koksara, June 23:** They say love knows no bounds and no hindrances. The fairytale ending in the case of Rajaram Thakur and Dutia Harijan bears ample testimony to this fact. The two recently exchanged wedding vows inside the quarantine centre in Banjibahal village under Jaypatna block in Kalahandi district. Both are from

the same village.

Sources said that Rajaram and Dutia knew each other for a long time and were in love. In 2019, they left together for Bangalore without informing their respective families. Rajaram started working at a garment company in Bangalore. However, he lost his job when the nationwide lockdown was implemented to prevent the spread of the pandemic

coronavirus.

Without income, the couple decided to return to their native village. When restrictions were eased they returned to Banjibahal village and spent 14 days at the quarantine centre set up at Kaudola Panchayat High School under Koksara block.

After their arrival both decided to meet their families. When they did so after the 14-day isolation period, they asked for forgiveness. They also expressed their desire to tie the nuptial knot. Sarpanch Jambubati Sahu played an important role in the whole process. He held discussions with both families. As the two belonged to the same caste, the families did not object to the marriage between Rajaram and Dutia.

Accordingly the date was fixed for Monday and Rajaram and Dutia exchanged wedding vows inside the quarantine centre in the presence of the village sarpanch and family members and other inmates of the centre.



Tribal women being trained by Odisha Livelihood Mission members on raising 'Nutrition Garden' which is useful for expectant mothers, at Goudagunda panchayat in Malkangiri, Tuesday

## YOUTH KILLED OVER PAST ENMITY

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Mammunda, June 23:** A youth was killed in an attack over past enmity at Dapala village under Manamunda police limits in Boudh district Tuesday.

The deceased was identified as Digambar Sahu, 35 son of Sambaru Sahu in the village.

According to police, Bablu Dehuri and Sana Dehuri, Manoj Sahu of Dapala and other accomplices attacked Digambar. The victim was rushed to the Sonepur hospital in a critical condition where he succumbed to his injuries during treatment. The police registered a case and arrested one of the miscreants Manoj Sahu in this connection.

## THE 3-INCH-HIGH GRAND CHARIOTS

A MINIATURE ARTIST OF GOPINATHPUR CONSTRUCTS THE THREE CHARIOTS OF LORD JAGANNATH AND HIS SIBLINGS WITH 350 MATCHSTICKS



The deities have been carved out from tamarind seeds

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Khurda, June 23:** Miniature artist L Eswar Rao of Gopinathpur under Jatni municipality in Khurda district has crafted miniature models of three chariots of Lord Jagannath, Goddess Subhadra and Lord Balabhadra.

The striking feature of these models is that they are made of matchsticks and are standing three inches high.

As his accomplishment coincides with Rath Yatra, devotees from nearby areas thronged to have a look at the chariots. Whoever is visiting him is getting over-

I have also seated Lord Balabhadra, Devi Subhadra, Lord Jagannath and Lord Sudarshan on their respective chariots

L ESWAR RAO | MINIATURE ARTIST

wheels have also been carved out of these seeds," he added.

"In no way are these three chariots looking different from the original ones in Puri. I have also attached ropes to the chariots," he added.

He said he makes it a point to visit Puri and have a darshan of the deities once a month. "But like others, I have not been able to visit the Holy City thanks to the coronavirus-induced lockdown restrictions. The apex court's June 18 decision had left me dejected. I felt sad for not being able to witness Rath Yatra. And to console my saddened heart I decided to construct these miniature chariots," he concluded.

## DESPERATE TIMES, DESPERATE MEASURES

## When a drummer turned a green grocer

From a health crisis to an economic debacle, the Covid-19 pandemic effects have metamorphosed to the worst just like the virus— Take for instance, this Bolangir lad who used to be a drummer is now selling veggies

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Lathore, June 23:** Until about three months ago, Binod Suna, a drummer by profession living in Jalpankol village of Khaprakhol block in Bolangir district, used to start his days by preparing his drums.

Now he is selling vegetables to keep the pot boiling back home, thanks to the coronavirus outbreak and its subsequent restrictions.

Binod said that when he was 15 years old he had to leave his education midway due to his family's poor financial condition. His father then used to run the family by beating 'Ganda' drum. 'Ganda' drum is a traditional percussion instrument and the drummer is sought during any auspicious occasion like 21st day ceremony, birthday celebration, marriages etc. In fact, beating the 'Ganda' drum is passed down generations.

After leaving school, Binod started



Binod (L) sells his veggies

assisting his father and became a Ganda drummer himself. People would call him in case they have any family function and this would keep his hands full of orders all year round.

But the coronavirus outbreak and the subsequent lockdown restrictions rendered him jobless and

moneyless. It was when his meager savings exhausted that he started looking out for alternative ways to run his family. His family comprises of his wife Koushalya and two daughters - Nilima and Devika. Then the idea of selling vegetables came to his mind. Now he moves from villages to villages carrying

I am receiving a ration of 20 kilogram rice from the panchayat. Since I don't know anything else other than beating drums, I find selling vegetables suitable. Now, I am earning ₹150 to 200 daily as profit

BINOD SUNA | DRUMMER

vegetable bags on his bicycle.

"I am receiving a ration of 20 kilogram rice from the panchayat. But the government did not declare any package for drummers. Since I don't know anything else other than beating drums, I find selling vegetable suitable for me. Now I am earning Rs 150 to 200 daily as profit and thankful to the God for showing me a path to get out of the difficult phase," he added.

## Jail inmate dies during treatment in Balasore

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Balasore/Sajanagad, June 23:** A jail inmate, lodged at Nilagiri sub-jail in Balasore, died while undergoing treatment at the district headquarters hospital, Tuesday. The deceased was identified as Maga Singh (26), a resident of Pratappur under Ajothya police outpost.

Police had arrested Maga on a charge of burgling June 20.

Maga felt indisposed at night the same day and was admitted to Nilagiri hospital. As his condition grew critical, he was shifted to the district headquarters hospital where he died, said IIC Sarojini Nayak.

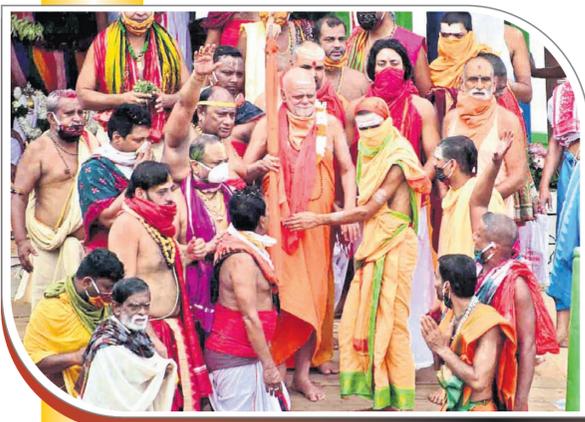
The IIC said that the body was handed over to the bereaved family after the autopsy.

## LOST DECLARATION

This is to inform that I Nityananda Bala, S/O Late Udayanath Bala have lost Original Sale Deed bearing Document No.- 8689, dtd: 08/12/1976, executed by Chaturbhuj Bala, S/O- Madan Bala in favour of Prafulla Kumar Srichandan, S/O- Nilamani Srichandan and Original Sale Deed bearing Document No.- 3948, dtd: 28/05/1980, executed by Prafulla Kumar Srichandan, S/O- Nilamani Srichandan in favour of Gagan Chandra Kar, S/O- Gokul Chandra Kar, registered before the District Sub-Registrar, Khurda, at Bhubaneswar, which were handed over to me by Sri. Gagan Chandra Kar at the time of execution & registration of the Sale Deed bearing Document No.- 1859, dtd: 28/06/1995 in favour of me. But in the course of time those two sale deeds as stated above were some where lost by me and in spite of my several sincere attempts, I couldn't trace out those documents. As I was not aware of the provisions of law required to be followed for the lost of original title deeds, I had not made any declaration as required. Further, I do hereby declare that I have not created any mortgage / charge / lien against those two sale deeds nor I have taken any loan against the same from any Nationalised / Private Bank, financial institution or private individual. If in future, any defect is found in the title of the said property arising out of these sale deeds then I shall be personally held liable for any loss or damage.



Gajapati King Dibyasingha Deb performs Chihra Panhara ritual



Puri Shankaracharya Nischalananda Saraswati on a chariot



Fire brigade personnel spray water on the Grand Road to cool it off



Devotees witness the Car Festival from a distance



# A FESTIVAL LIKE NEVER BEFORE

History unfolded on the Grand Road in Puri when the Lord of the Universe and His siblings set off for their annual sojourn. In a first, the world famous Rath Yatra commenced without devotees in view of the coronavirus pandemic. Orissa POST captures glimpses of the mega event



LORD BALABHADRA, DEVI SUBHADRA AND LORD JAGANNATH BEING TAKEN ON A GRAND PROCESSION TO THEIR RESPECTIVE CHARIOTS WAITING OUTSIDE SRIMANDIR IN PURI, TUESDAY



PHCS: YAGNESWAR MOHANTY & ANIL KUMAR SAHOO



The surroundings of the chariots being sanitised



Servitors undergo thermal screening during the festival



The three chariots reflect in water near Srigundicha temple



Servitors pull the Nandighosa chariot adhering to social distancing norms



Servitors fix 'Kalash' atop a chariot



**We stand united against the Chinese invasion. Has China occupied Indian land?**  
RAHUL GANDHI | CONGRESS LEADER

## NIA UNEARTHS SFJ'S RECRUITMENT MODULE IN PUNJAB

The National Investigation Agency has made a breakthrough with the arrest of one of Sikhs For Justice's (SFJ) key conspirators in Punjab, said to be a member of the banned outfit's recruitment module



## of the day quote

Without giving funds to contain coronavirus and treat the patients, the Centre is washing its hands off by asking people to clap and light lamps

Many from Kerala are waiting to get back to work in Dubai and other Gulf regions. Considering this, a direction may be issued to the Civil Aviation Ministry to resume the flight services to Dubai

It is the demand of the BSP that the UP government should not cover up the incident of Kanpur shelter home but take strict action against the culprits by conducting a high-level and fair investigation

# LAC crisis due to Centre's wrong policies: Sonia

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, Jun 23:** Congress president Sonia Gandhi Tuesday said the current crisis on the border with China is attributable to the "mismanagement" of the BJP-led government and the "wrong policies" pursued by it.

The crisis on the border, if not tackled firmly, can lead to a serious situation, former Prime Minister Manmohan Singh said at a meeting of the Congress Working Committee (CWC) on the situation along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) — the 3,500-km de-facto border with China.

Addressing the meeting, Gandhi also hit out at the government for "mercilessly" raising petrol and diesel prices for 17 consecutive days, even when global prices of crude oil were falling.

She also noted that the "mismanagement" of the COVID-19 pandemic will be recorded as one of "most disastrous failures" of the Narendra Modi government.

"Misfortunes do not come singly



Congress president Sonia Gandhi Tuesday said the current crisis on the border with China is attributable to the "mismanagement" of the BJP-led government

The crisis on the border, if not tackled firmly, can lead to a serious situation: Former PM Manmohan Singh

India has been hit by a terrible economic crisis, a pandemic of huge proportions and, now, by a full-blown crisis on the borders with China. Much of each crisis is attributable to the mismanagement of the BJP-led NDA government and the wrong policies pursued by it," she said.

On the LAC crisis, Gandhi said, "The future is yet to unfold but we hope that mature diplomacy and decisive leadership will inform the government's actions in protecting our territorial integrity."

"...undeniable fact is that since

April-May, 2020 till date, Chinese troops have committed brazen transgressions into our territory in Pangong Tso area and the Galwan Valley, Ladakh. True to its character, the government is in denial. The intrusion was detected and reported May 5, 2020. Instead of a resolution, the situation deteriorated rapidly and there were violent clashes June 15-16," she said.

Indian and Chinese armies have been on a six-week standoff in several areas of eastern Ladakh. The ties between the two countries came under severe strain after Chinese

military killed 20 Indian Army personnel and injured around 76 in a violent clash in Galwan Valley June 15.

She said though the Congress party was the first to offer its total support to the armed forces and the government, there is "a growing feeling among the people that the government has gravely mismanaged the situation".

"We urge upon the government that peace, calm and the restoration of the status quo ante along the LAC be the only guiding principles in our national interest. We will continue to closely watch the situation," she said. On the COVID-19 pandemic, Gandhi said, "The grave deficiencies in the health infrastructure have been exposed. The promised 'peak' is nowhere in sight. The Centre has passed the buck to the state governments, but given them zero extra finances. Actually, the people have been left to protect themselves as best as possible."

Despite assurances of "the Prime Minister, who centralised all authority in his hands", she alleged.

# RJD suffers split in Bihar Upper House

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Patna, June 23:** In a huge setback for the RJD in the election year, five of its MLCs Tuesday resigned from the party, forced a split in its legislature group in the Bihar legislative council, and joined the ruling JD(U) headed by Chief Minister Nitish Kumar.

The development came on a day when former Union minister Raghuvansh Prasad Singh, one of the founding members of the RJD and a staunch supporter of its jailed supremo Lalu Prasad, stepped down as national vice-president in protest against the proposed induction of one of his rivals.

The five MLCs — SM Qamar Alam, Sanjay Prasad, Radha Charan Seth, Ranvijay Kumar Singh and Dilip Rai met Vidhan Parishad Acting Chairman Awadhesh Narain Singh in his chamber and personally handed over their resignation letters, officials of the Upper House of the bicameral legislature said.

They also requested Singh that they be recognised as a separate group and allowed to merge with the JD(U). The JD(U) chief whip in the Upper House Reena Yadav arrived with the party's letter of consent and the Acting Chairman gave his prompt approval.

The development, which blindsided the RJD, reduced the party's strength in the 75-member Vidhan Parishad to just three.

Sources in the ruling NDA were hopeful that Rabri Devi, the wife of RJD supremo Lalu Prasad and a national vice-president herself, may lose her position as the leader of the opposition in the House.

Under the rules, the main opposition party must have at least 10 per cent of the total seats in the House for its leader to qualify for the post of the Leader of the Opposition, a Cabinet minister rank position.

Meanwhile, Raghuvansh Prasad Singh, who has stood with the party through thick and thin, shot off a



THE DEVELOPMENT CAME ON A DAY WHEN FORMER UNION MINISTER RAGHUVANSH PRASAD SINGH STEPPED DOWN AS NATIONAL VICE-PRESIDENT IN PROTEST AGAINST THE PROPOSED INDUCTION OF ONE OF HIS RIVALS

THE DEVELOPMENT REDUCED THE PARTY'S STRENGTH IN THE 75-MEMBER VIDHAN PARISHAD TO JUST THREE

letter announcing his resignation from the post expressing strong displeasure over the state of affairs in the RJD.

Singh, who is currently admitted to AIIMS, Patna, undergoing treatment for COVID-19, made it clear that he was not quitting the party but added he was extremely unhappy over the type of people the RJD was planning to induct.

Sources close to the RJD veteran, a former Union minister, confirmed that his displeasure stemmed from reports that Rama Singh, a mafia don-turned-politician to whom he lost his Vaishali Lok Sabha seat in the 2014 Lok Sabha polls, may join the party.

Rama Singh has severed his ties with Ram Vilas Paswan's LJP, which had fielded him in the 2014 poll but refused to grant him a ticket five years later.

JD(U) national general secretary and leader in the Lok Sabha Rajiv Ranjan Singh alias Lalan Singh held out an olive branch to Raghuvansh Prasad Singh, saying the RJD has never respected those who have built the organisation.

## MANIPUR CRISIS

### 4 NPP MLAs leave Ibobi camp after Himanta steps in

AGENCIES

**Imphal, June 23:** Manipur political crisis took a fresh turn Tuesday with four National People's Party (NPP) MLAs, who had withdrawn support to the N Biren Singh government of the BJP, are understood to have left Okram Ibobi Singh camp.

All the four NPP MLAs were part of the Biren Singh government when they switched sides to join hands with former Manipur Chief Minister and Congress leader Ibobi Singh, who later staked claim to form the new government in the state.

The Opposition has alleged that the four NPP MLAs were "taken away" by Assam minister and BJP's crisis manager Himanta Biswa Sarma to Delhi.

Earlier Monday, Himanta Biswa, who has stepped into save the BJP government in Manipur, said the political situation in Manipur was in control for the BJP. He expressed confidence that the BJP and allies would show "good result" over next two to three days in Manipur to resolve the political crisis.

Nine MLAs supporting the Biren Singh government had parted ways with the ruling alliance. Three of these MLAs were from the BJP who had defected to the Congress just ahead of the Rajya Sabha election for the lone seat in Manipur.

Among others, one TMC and an Independent MLA too had withdrawn support to the BJP-led government. The BJP won the Rajya Sabha seat despite the setback.

In an effort to resolve the crisis in Manipur, Himanta Biswa and Meghalaya Chief Minister Conrad Sangma, who is also the NPP chief, visited Imphal on a special chartered flight Sunday. The two leaders held a flurry of meetings.

## POLITICKLE by MANJUL



SOME GOOD NEWS, SIR. CHINA HAS AGREED TO WITHDRAW ITS ARMY FROM PLACES IT NEVER INTRUDED.

## PREGNANT JAMIA STUDENT SAFOORA ZARGAR GETS BAIL

AGENCIES

**New Delhi, June 23:** Safoora Zargar, a pregnant Jamia Millia University student arrested under an anti-terror law in a case related to the Delhi violence, was granted bail today by the High Court after the police did not oppose it on "humanitarian grounds".

Safoora Zargar, 27, was arrested April 10 on conspiracy charges over the riots that broke out in February during protests against the Citizenship Amendment Act. She was granted bail but rearrested on more severe charges under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act. Her arrest and incarceration provoked strong condemnation from students and activists and sharply divided social media.

### DELHI RIOTS CASE

The Delhi High Court Tuesday directed Safoora Zargar to not get involved in activities that may hamper the investigation. She also cannot leave Delhi without permission. Zargar has to stay in touch with an Investigating Officer on the phone at least once in 15 days and also furnish a personal bond of ₹10,000.

The student of MPhil at Jamia University is five months pregnant. Solicitor General Tushar Mehta, representing the police, did not oppose her bail on humanitarian grounds. Mehta said she can be released on regular bail on humanitarian grounds but a decision had not been taken on the merits of the case and should not be made a precedent.

## AYUSHMAN BHARAT

# 51% decline in weekly claims: Report

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, June 23:** There was a 51 per cent decline in the average weekly claims under the Ayushman Bharat health insurance scheme during the coronavirus-triggered lockdown, according to an analysis done by a group of researchers.

Also, there was a steeper decline in utilisation of services in public hospitals than private hospitals during the lockdown, from March 25 to June 2, stated the National Health Authority (NHA) publication titled 'PM-JAY Under Lockdown: Evidence on Utilization Trends PM-JAY'.

The NHA is the apex body responsible for the implementation of health insurance scheme — Ayushman Bharat-Pradhan Mantri Jan Aarogya Yojna (AB PM-JAY).

Among procedures, planned surgeries such as cataract operations and joint replacements suffered a de-



cline of over 90 per cent, while hemodialysis declined by only 6 per cent.

There was also a sharp fall in cardiovascular surgeries. Of particular concern are significant decline in admissions for child delivery and oncology, the report stated.

Overall, claims per week on an average for surgical procedures fell down to 27,167 during the lockdown from 62,630 being recorded before the lockdown started, registering 57 per cent decline.

There was a larger decline in utilisation of surgical procedures (57 per cent) than medical cases

(46 per cent).

This is to be expected, since surgeries are more commonly planned in advance, whereas medical cases are not, the researchers said.

Another area where the trend in claim volumes raises some concerns is child delivery. Across PMJAY, there was a 26 per cent decline in child deliveries during the lockdown and this applied almost equally to both normal deliveries and caesarian sections and was also quite consistent across both public and private hospitals, the report stated.

Among demographic groups, women, younger and older populations (under 20 and over 60) reduced their utilisation more than men, young adults or the middle-aged.

According to the report, the weekly nationwide PMJAY claim volume during the first week of the lockdown was 64 per cent lower than just two weeks earlier, the analysis showed.

# Fighting the elements, not the enemy, on India's China border

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

**New Delhi, June 23:** "We get more than 100 casualties every year just due to terrain, weather conditions, avalanches... There is constant danger," said retired Lt. General DS Hooda, who until 2016 headed the country's Northern Command.

"You're talking about 14-15,000 feet (4,300-4,600 metres). It takes a huge toll on your physical and mental condition," Hooda told this news agency after Monday's brutal hand-

to-hand battle with fists, rocks and clubs which saw the first Indian combat deaths with China in over four decades.

In the "cold desert" of the Galwan river valley in the Ladakh region, where the fighting took place, winter temperatures can plunge below minus 30°C, cracking gun barrels and seizing up machinery.

There are few roads so troops — who are fed a special high-protein diet — must slog through the thin air themselves, carrying their own

equipment as they navigate treacherous terrain.

For those who get injured or fall sick "evacuation becomes an enormous challenge," Hooda said. Getting them to a helipad "can take hours", and as soon as night falls, it's too dangerous for helicopters to fly. This may be why the initial death toll of three shot up to 20 late Tuesday.

Seventeen other troops critically injured in the clashes, which lasted until after midnight, were "exposed to sub-zero temperatures in the high

altitude terrain" and succumbed to their injuries, the army said.

### Cold and confused

The terrain is so high that soldiers need time to acclimatise to their new posting or they run the risk of serious altitude sickness that can kill even a healthy young person in hours.

"For an average human being who is not a resident of that place, survival in itself is a huge challenge," said Colonel S Dinny, who until 2017 commanded an Indian

battalion in the region, told AFP.

"It is one of the toughest places to serve as a soldier," he said.

Normally soldiers do a two-year posting there, broken up by periods of leave. Those who smoke quickly kick the habit.

"With such low oxygen plus the weather plus the smoking, the chances of getting a heart attack shoot up," Dinny added.

The cold and the high altitude affect eyesight, adding to troops' disorientation. Weather, which can

change quickly with little warning and the hilly terrain, can impair radio communication. Adding to the confusion is the fact that the "Line of Actual Control" (LAC) isn't properly demarcated, meaning that Indian and Chinese troops can bump into each other and believe the other side has trespassed.

"The maps have not even been exchanged so that the other person knows what someone is claiming. There are no boundary markers," said Dinny.

## CLASSIFIED

### LOST

Original Old Patta of Land Belonging to Jaya Prakash Biswal & Jyoti Prakash Biswal, S/o Jayaram Biswal, at Mouza: Malipada, Tehsil: Bhubaneswar, Dist: Khordha, Khata No-528, Plot No 956 is lost by us. FIR has been lodged at Chandrasekharpur Police Station, Bhubaneswar vide FIR no: SQE No. -10 Dated: 16.06.2020. Founder Inform- 8637262656.

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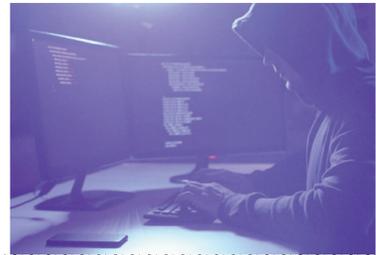
Acharya Vihar-Dayal Agency-9437135727, A.P. Tours and Travel, Maitri Vihar, C.S. Pur- 9861301598, Aurobindo Market-Sai Audio & Electronics-9438304668, Airport Road-Sai Baba Variety Store-9090071530, Anish Infotech- Tankapani Road-9861341488, Bapuji Nagar- Dreamland Studio- 9777517314, Baramunda Rental Colony-Maa Ramchandi Communication-9658821469, Baramunda Housing Board Colony-Pappu Variety Store-9040500106, Cuttack Road-Alishan Snacks-8984236754, District Center (Chandrasekharpur)-Sai Google Mart-9776056507, Forest Park-DTDC Couriers & Services (HB Services)-7381024156, IRC Village-Bapi Xerox-9090090404, Gift Hut(Antriksh Gifts & Decors Pvt. Ltd.)-9954781084, Pruthvi Medicine-9853314816, Janpath-Krupajal Book Store-7978646669, Jaydev Vihar-AK Enterprises-7978116618, Subam Sai Books Store-8895550649, Swain Graphics- 9337121249, Jagannath Mobile Point- Janpath Road, Ram Mandir- 9938475415, Kanan Vihar-Auro Electronics-8260697560, Khandagiri- Swosti Mobile Centre- 7992914045, World Solution- 9938317559, KIIT Road-Jugad Jn-9338545031, Laxmi Sagar-Aditya Mobile-9438191836, Lewis Road-Spider Web-7809186415, Metro Satellite City-Arogya Mitra Medicine Store-9853621640, Madhusudan Nagar-Mohapatra Communication-9124446664, Maa Santoshi travels- Gajapati Nagar- 9777675867, Nayapalli- The Cake Room- 7873660137, Near Mayfair Lagoon-Cookiemann-9439491273, Nigamananda-Omm Sai Travels-9668284823, Nr Cosmopolis Main Gate- Shreeram Medical Store- 8763711714, Net Square- Niladri Vihar (C.S. Pur)- 7205634821, Priyadarshini Market-Astro Point-9938134346, R.N. General Store-Nilakantha Nagar-9438642501, Sahid Nagar- Maa Communication- 9437353424, Sahini General Store- Near Patia Railway Station, Mahavir Vihar- 9937586626, Satya Nagar-Baishnavi Mixture & Sweets-7894821764, Samantapur- Download Point-7504557743, Sailashree Vihar-Harsha Book Store-8093449515, Saheed Nagar-Jagannath Graphics-7978652670, Photo World-7978468191, Sainath Photo Studio-8984436129, Shanti & Co-9937071063, Siripur-Omm Maa Sarala Communication-9777682449, Sushree fashion- Jagmara-9938714347, Shree Vision- Sailashree Vihar-9861476678, Unit-3-LIC of India Premium Point-9337787080, Unit-7- LIC Premium Point- 9338227422, VSS Nagar-Friends Cake & Bake-8658200930, Jeet Infoworld-7205195782, XIMB Square-LD Books-9658061373.



The special ₹20 lakh crore relief package announced last month by the Centre to bring back on track the economy hit by coronavirus lockdown is not helping the poor much

CHENNAI WORST-HIT BY CYBER ATTACKS

Chennai recorded the highest number of cyber attacks in the country during the January-March quarter of this year as threat actors targeted the city with a variety of attacks aimed at exploiting user trust and enterprise vulnerabilities, said a report Tuesday



of the day quote

Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath should clarify within 48 hours who was responsible for pushing people into these adverse circumstances

We had previously decided on extending the suspension of academic activities in higher educational institutions till June 30. However, in view of the prevailing situation (due to coronavirus outbreak) we have decided to extend the period till July 31.

The crisis in the BJP-led Manipur government will be resolved in the next two to three days in the spirit of the NEDA's and the NDA's principles

SHORT TAKES

Woman raped

New Delhi: A woman in her late thirties was allegedly raped inside a room of Delhi's Special CBI Court at Rouse Avenue, the police said Tuesday.

Jawan injured

Raipur: A Chhattisgarh Armed Force (CAF) jawan was injured Tuesday in an IED blast triggered by Naxals in Narayanpur district, police said.

Man killed

New Delhi: A 44-year-old man was killed after a light mast allegedly fell on him while he was working at a metro construction site in north Delhi's Jagatpur area Tuesday, officials said.

UP leader tests Covid positive

Lucknow: Leader of Opposition in Uttar Pradesh Assembly and senior Samajwadi Party leader Ram Govind Chaudhary has tested positive for coronavirus. Chaudhary (67) is the second SP leader to test coronavirus positive.

Himachal CM greets Virbhadra

Shimla: Himachal Pradesh Chief Minister Jai Ram Thakur Tuesday greeted six-time Chief Minister Virbhadra Singh on his 87th birthday.

SWIFT MOVE

India launches diplomatic offensive against Pakistan

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, June 23: In a strong diplomatic offensive, the government Tuesday decided to reduce the staff of Pakistan's High Commission in India by 50 per cent, in view of their espionage activities and links with terror groups.

India will reciprocally reduce its own presence in Islamabad to the same proportion. The decision is to be implemented in seven days.

The move comes after two Indian High Commission officials in Islamabad were abducted on gun-point and tortured by Pakistani security agencies. A statement from the Ministry of External Affairs said that the government summoned the Charge d' Affaires (CDA) of Pakistan and informed him about its decision related to the Pakistan High Commission.

India has repeatedly expressed concern about Pakistan High Commission officials indulging in espionage activities and maintaining dealings with terror outfits. The government recalled the recent case where two Pakistani visa officials were caught red-handed and expelled for spying last



The government pointed out the recent case of the two Indian High Commission officials in Islamabad, who were kidnapped and subjected to torture

month. The statement said that while the Pakistani officials indulged in actions that were not in conformity with their privileged status in the High Commission, Pakistan has in parallel engaged in a sustained campaign to intimidate the officials of the Indian High Commission in Islamabad from carrying out their legitimate diplomatic functions.

The government pointed out the recent case of the two Indian High Commission officials in Islamabad, who were kidnapped and subjected to torture. "Their severe ill treatment underlines the extent to which Pakistan has gone in that direc-

tion," the government told the Pakistani CDA.

The officials returned to India on Monday and have now provided "graphic details of the barbaric treatment that they experienced at the hands of Pakistani agencies," the statement said. The behaviour of Pakistan and its officials is not in conformity with the Vienna Convention and the bilateral agreements on the treatment of diplomatic and consular officials, the government said.

"On the contrary, it is an intrinsic element of a larger policy of supporting cross-border violence and terrorism," it said.

Respect international law, says Jaishankar

Jaishankar's remarks in presence of Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi at an online conference of Russia-India-China trilateral came in the midst of an escalating border row between India and China

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, June 23: External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar Tuesday said leading voices of the world must be exemplars in "every way" and they need to respect international law while recognising the interests of partners, in comments seen as a veiled criticism of China.

Jaishankar's remarks in presence of Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi at an online conference of Russia-India-China trilateral came in the midst of an escalating border row between India and China following killing of 20 Indian soldiers in the Galwan Valley clash.

Last week, India termed the killing of Indian soldiers a "premeditated and planned action" by the Chinese troops. "This special meeting reiterates our belief in the time-tested principles of international relations. But the challenge today is not just one of concepts and norms, but equally of their practice," Jaishankar said.

"The leading voices of the world must be exemplars in every way. Respecting international law, recognising the legitimate interests of partners, supporting multilateralism and promoting common good are the only way of building a durable world order," he added.

The external affairs minister's comments are seen as an indirect message to China which



has been adopting an aggressive posturing along its land boundary with India besides increasing its activities in the Indian Ocean region.

In his initial remarks, Jaishankar also said that India did not get its due recognition in the global order post World War II and that the historical injustice remained "uncorrected" for the last 75 years.

"When the victors met to fashion the ensuing global order, the political circumstances of that era did not give India due recognition. This historical injustice has stood uncorrected for the last 75 years, even as the world has changed," he said.

Therefore, he said, it was important for the world to realise both the contribution that India made and the need to rectify the past.

The external affairs minister also spoke about the need for reforming the United Nations so that it can represent the current reality of the globe.

CBI SUMMONS IBOBI SINGH

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, June 23: The CBI has summoned Congress leader and former Manipur Chief Minister O Ibobi Singh for questioning Wednesday in Rs 332 crore alleged misappropriation of development funds between 2009 and 2017, when he was the chairman of the Manipur Development Society, official said.

A CBI team has reached Imphal for questioning Singh and other accused, who will be quizzed at the agency office on Wednesday, they said.

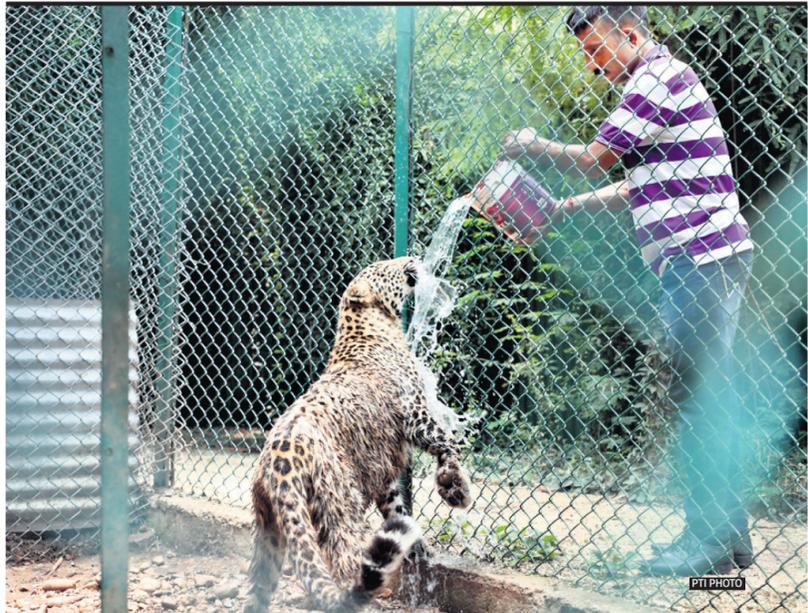
The CBI had taken over the case on November 20 last year on the request of the state's BJP government.

It is alleged that Singh conspired with others during his tenure as the chairman of the Manipur Development Society (MDS) from June 2009-July 2017, and misappropriated government funds worth approximately Rs 332 crore out of Rs 518 crore that was entrusted to them for the purpose of executing development work, according to the officials.

Along with Singh, the CBI has also named three former MDS chairmen - D S Poonia, PC Lawmuknga, O Nabakishore Singh - all retired IAS officers. Y Ningthem Singh, the former project director of the society and S Ranjit Singh, its administrative officer have also been named in the FIR.

Other accused will also be called for questioning soon. The CBI had registered the case on the Manipur government's request, which was routed through the Centre.

WATER THERAPY



A caretaker pours water on a leopard to keep it cool on a hot day at Manda Wildlife Century Park in Jammu, Tuesday

INTERNAL BICKERING

Rift in Rajasthan Congress out in open

Ashok Gehlot, in the run-up to the Rajya Sabha polls, accused the BJP of indulging in horse-trading and luring Congress MLAs by allegedly offering them ₹25-35 crore

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Jaipur, June 23: The rift between Congress factions in Rajasthan came out into the open on Tuesday when Deputy Chief Minister Sachin Pilot, without naming Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot, said that all claims made by his party leaders before the Rajya Sabha polls have been proved baseless.

"Both our candidates have received cent per cent votes from our MLAs who stood together during polls. I have been claiming that both our candidates shall win and what we claimed has turned out true. Any kind of doubts and suspicions spread around earlier were baseless," he added.

Gehlot, in the run-up to the Rajya Sabha polls, accused the BJP of indulging in horse-trading and luring Congress MLAs by allegedly offering them Rs 25-35 crore. He also took the party MLAs and independents to a plush resort to prevent their alleged poaching by the BJP Party whip Mahesh Joshi further filed a complaint with the SOG and



the ACB that unaccounted money has reached Rajasthan during lockdown days. However, Pilot dismissed all these claims as groundless. Addressing the media in the state Congress office after paying tributes to Sanjay Gandhi on his birth anniversary, he also said that as the state party chief, he owes a lot to grassroots workers who have worked hard for the last five years and hence, he shall look to ensure they get the respect and rewards they deserve.

Pilot's statements also seems to be a warning for Gehlot, who, sources said, is all out to dole out push political rewards to his favourites, independent MLAs and BSP MLAs who supported the Congress in the elections to the state's Rajya Sabha seats.

Bicycle theft cases rise in Kolkata

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kolkata, June 23: Incidents of bicycle theft are on the rise in the city amid burgeoning demand for the environment-friendly two-wheeler as an alternative to public transport in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, police said Tuesday.

Since early June, complaints about bicycles going missing from owners' residence have been received from different areas of the metropolis, including Behala, New Alipore, Jadavpur, Garia, Muddiali, Manicktala, Sinthee and Sealdah, they said.

Just last week, an FIR was lodged at the Sinthee Police Station after a mountain bike was stolen from inside a housing complex in Roypara area, a senior police officer said. "The owner, a woman, had parked the bicycle inside the premises of her apartment after locking it. But, the two-wheeler was gone the next morning," he said.

Behala resident Sumit Chakraborty said his brand new bicycle, which he had recently bought to commute to office in Jadavpur area, was stolen from his house, where it was parked. Around 87 such complaints have been received, the police officer said.

"Most of these incidents are taking place at night... We are trying to ascertain whether specific groups of bicycle thieves are in operation to cash in on the surging demand for the two-wheelers," another senior police officer said.

Man kills wife over a cup of tea

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Lakhimpur (UP), June 23: In a shocking incident in Uttar Pradesh, a 40-year-old man brutally killed his pregnant wife, following a tiff over a cup of tea in Barbar area of Lakhimpur district.

The incident took place Monday when the man, Babloo Kumar, lost his temper because the tea served to him by his wife had less sugar. He beat his wife Renu, 35, and slit her throat.

The couple's three children woke up on hearing their father

UP SHOCKER



shout at their mother but when they entered the kitchen, they found their mother lying in a pool of blood, gasping for breath.

Babloo had married Renu about 12 years ago and the couple had three children. An FIR has been

registered under IPC section 302 (murder) against Babloo on the complaint of Renu's father, Badri Prasad.

SHO of Pasgawa police station, Rakesh Kumar, said, "The couple fought because there was less sugar in the tea and the husband killed his wife with a sharp knife. We have recovered the murder weapon and the accused will be arrested soon. We are conducting raids to arrest him."

The children are witness to the murder and we have taken their statement," the police official added.

ITBP scales up LAC presence amid COVID precautions

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, June 23: The Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP) has begun deployment of 40 fresh companies across various locations along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) with China in view of the ongoing standoff and violent clashes between the armies of the two countries, officials said Tuesday.

The border guarding force is also moving its mechanised column assets like SUVs, all-terrain vehicles, snow scooters and trucks to forward locations in the midst of the projected increase in the number of troops at border units and fresh directives to undertake "additional" patrols.

They said all these units, with an operational strength of about 4,000 mountain-warfare trained troops, are being withdrawn from internal security duties from various parts of the country.

About 40 ITBP companies are being withdrawn and are being mobilised to various locations along the LAC in various sectors including Ladakh and Arunachal Pradesh, official sources said.

They said the frontier formations of the force have been asked to prepare quarantine facilities for these new units as they are coming from the mainland and their exposure to the coronavirus pandemic cannot be ignored.

These troops, during their two-

week quarantine, will also have the opportunity to prepare and acclimatize for high-altitude deployment along LAC that is marked by freezing temperatures and thin oxygen levels, they said.

A "good number" of officers who command companies and battalions are also being posted at the two newly operationalised commands of the force - western headquartered at Chandigarh and eastern at Guwahati, they said.

An Inspector General (IG) was given the charge of the command in Chandigarh recently while the one at Guwahati is being looked after by an IG based in Delhi. The commands are supposed to be headed by Additional Director General

BOOSTING SECURITY



(ADG) rank officers but the nearly-90,000 personnel strong force, at present, has none.

It is understood that the force has sought the Union home ministry's in-

tervention in filling up vacant posts at the senior level. Sources said while 15 ITBP companies were recently withdrawn from various locations of the country including Jammu, the rest

are being pulled out from Delhi, Chandigarh, Chhattisgarh and few other locations.

Apart from these 40, it is expected that 20 more such units could be withdrawn over a period of time so that an "optimum" presence of the force is maintained across 180 border posts and over 50 'staging camps' or temporary bases along the 3,488 km LAC that stretches from Karakoram Pass in Ladakh to Jachep La in Arunachal Pradesh.

ITBP Director General (DG) S S Deswal also reviewed the deployment of the force in the Ladakh area after he visited the north-west frontier based in Leh along with senior army commanders on Saturday.

# international



It's not a choice between lives and livelihoods. Countries can do both  
TEDROS ADHANOM GHEBREYESUS | WHO DIRECTOR-GENERAL

## SHOCKING REVELATION

According to an interesting research, females have an innate ability to increase levels of anti-inflammatory T-cells to keep their blood pressure down



## of the day quote

We must make the Caesar Act an opportunity to advance our national economy, achieve self-sufficiency, deepen cooperation with friends and allies in various fields, and our fight against terrorism will not stop  
WALID MUALLEM | SYRIAN DIPLOMAT

As for Indian media reports that cite Indian officials as saying at least 40 Chinese soldiers were killed, I can tell you responsibly that this is false information.  
ZHAO LIJIAN | CHINESE FOREIGN MINISTRY SPOKESMAN

Afghan government has always been committed to supporting the freedom of speech and enhancing the media activities and that fortunately, we have no one in custody on charges of violating freedom of speech  
ASHRAF GHANI | AFGHAN PRESIDENT

## SHORT TAKES

### PIA plane crashed due to human error

Islamabad: The Pakistan International Airlines (PIA) plane crash last month was caused by the negligence of the cockpit crew and the air control tower and not due to any technical fault, according to a preliminary investigation report on the tragedy that killed 97 people onboard. The domestic flight from Lahore to Karachi crashed in a residential area near the Jinnah International Airport in Karachi May 22. The Airbus A320 aircraft of the national carrier had 91 passengers and a crew of eight when it crashed into the Jinnah Garden area near Model Colony in Malir on Friday, minutes before its landing. One girl died on the ground after suffering burn injuries. Two passengers miraculously survived the crash.

### Sunder Pichai disappointed

Washington: Google CEO Sunder Pichai has expressed disappointment over the proclamation issued by President Donald Trump that temporary suspends foreign work visas including H-1B. "Immigration has contributed immensely to America's economic success, making it a global leader in tech, and also Google the company it is today," Pichai said in a tweet hours after Trump issued his proclamation in this regard.

### nCoV outbreak in UK biscuit factory

London: A factory in the UK which supplies the McVities brand of biscuits has reported a coronavirus outbreak, according to an employee. The employee claimed five staff from one team at the Pladis factory in South Wigston, Leicester, had tested positive for COVID-19 this week, the Metro newspaper reported Tuesday.

### Trump rally size raises question

Washington: President Donald Trump's paltry crowd for his weekend campaign rally in Oklahama raises new questions about politics in the age of coronavirus: Maybe pandemic-scarred Americans just aren't ready to risk exposure for close-up engagement in the 2020 presidential election. Only about a third of seats in the 19,000-seat BOK Center were filled for the rally, despite boasts by Trump and his campaign team that they had received more than 1 million ticket requests.

# US, RUSSIA HOLD N-ARMS TALKS WITHOUT CHINA

AGENCIES

Berlin, June 23: American and Russian negotiators have concluded a round of nuclear arms control talks in Vienna, aimed at producing a new agreement to replace the New START treaty that expires in February — the last remaining pact constraining the arsenals of the world's two major nuclear powers. US negotiator Marshall Billingslea told reporters Tuesday that a day of high-level "marathon discussions" ended late Monday night and had been productive enough to conclude with the establishment of several technical working groups to delve deeper into the issues with the idea of paving the way for a second round of talks by late July or early August. "We both agreed at the termination of our talks that the strategic environment has changed significantly since the New START treaty was signed," he told reporters. "We can all remember back 10 years ago, the world is, in fact, a radically different place." New START, signed in 2010, imposes limits on the number of US and Russian long-range nuclear warheads and launchers. It became the last nuclear arms pact between the two nations after the US last year scrapped the Intermediate-range Nuclear Forces treaty with Russia, a Cold War-era agreement that both sides had repeatedly accused the other of violating. The INF treaty was also criticized because it did not cover China or missile technology that did not exist a generation ago.



Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Sergei Ryabkov (front) arrives for a meeting with US special envoy Marshall Billingslea

New START can be extended by five years by mutual consent. Sergei Ryabkov, the Russian deputy foreign minister who led his country's delegation in Vienna, told reporters in Moscow that he had reiterated the position that it should be. "We presented our view and will keep doing so," Ryabkov said. "We are running out of time." He added, however, that the establishment of working groups was "a significant step forward" and said the talks were conducted in a positive atmosphere and reflected a shared desire to move forward. US President Donald Trump has called New START "just another bad deal" made by the Obama administration, and it was not clear whether he would agree to an extension. Billingslea told reporters at a press conference held by the American delegation that any new

agreement must include all nuclear weapons and not just strategic nuclear weapons, and also subject China to restrictions. All options, he said are "definitely on the table." "Our ultimate decision, which is in the hands of the president, whether he decides to extend the New START treaty or allow it to run its course, is going to be very much driven by the extent to which we have made progress, not just with our Russian colleagues but with our Chinese counterparts," he said. The US attempt to bring China on board got off to an awkward start when Billingslea Monday tweeted a photo of the negotiating table set up with Chinese flags in front of vacant seats, saying "China is a no-show." Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Zhao Lijian lashed out, saying it was "neither serious nor professional for the United States to attract attention in this way."

## PUBS, RESTAURANTS AND HOTELS TO REOPEN IN ENGLAND

REUTERS

London, June 23: Prime Minister Boris Johnson said Tuesday pubs, restaurants and hotels could reopen in England early next month when the social distancing rule is relaxed, easing the coronavirus lockdown that has all but shut the economy.

Johnson has been under pressure from businesses, especially in the hospitality sector, and from members of his governing Conservative Party to relax the lockdown, but until now he had resisted for fear of prompting a second wave.

On Tuesday, he said that with infections rates falling and because of a belief that there was little threat now of a second wave of COVID-19 cases, he could reopen swathes of the economy and try to get life in England back to something like normal.

By relaxing the rule on social distancing from two metres to one metre, with mitigation such as wearing of masks and the use of protective screens, Johnson said many businesses could reopen from July 4.

"Today we can say that our long, national hibernation is beginning to come to an end," he told parliament. "All hospitality indoors will be limited to table service and our guidance will encourage minimal staff and customer contact." The changes will allow two households to meet in any setting and all schools will reopen in September, he said.

# China occupies Nepal village, land

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Beijing/New Delhi, June 23: China has occupied a village of Nepal and allegedly removed the boundary pillars to legitimise its annexation, top government sources said Tuesday. It has also learnt that China has gradually made inroads into several Nepalese territories with an ulterior aim to seize complete control.

The latest in the line is Rui village in Gorkha district, which is now in total control of China. "In a massive departure from its diplomatic stand of non-interference, the Chinese have completely occupied Rui Village and the residents comprising around 72 houses are fighting for their original identity. This also shows how Nepal's current regime has surrendered to China and is now making anti-India statements and resorting to anti-India activities," as per the top sources.

Apart from Rui village, China has also occupied strategic lands at 11 places across Nepal. Around 36 hectares of land in four districts of Nepal, which border China, have been illegally occupied by China, but so far Nepalese government is tightlipped about it. The occupation of Rui village has been done systematically by China in the last two years.

Since the village figures in the map of Nepal and is part of the Himalayan nation, the residents have always been associated with the country's identity. But the Nepal government, at the behest of China, is more engaged in creating artificial disputes with India over



China has occupied a village of Nepal and allegedly removed the boundary pillars to legitimise its annexation, top government sources said Tuesday

It has also been learnt that China has gradually made inroads into several Nepalese territories with an ulterior aim to seize complete control

boundaries and three villages that belong to India.

Nepal has recently come out with a new map that claims parts of Indian territory in Pithoragarh district. India has rejected this new map of Nepal saying it is not based on historical facts or evidence. The new political map of the country features parts of Lipulekh, Kalapani and Limpiyadhura areas which are in Indian territory.

The new political map was authenticated by Nepal President Bidya Devi Bhandari last week. India-Nepal relationship came under strain after Defence Minister Rajnath Singh inaugurated an 80-km-long strategically crucial road connecting the Lipulekh pass with Dharchula in Uttarakhand May 8. Nepal immediately protested, saying the road violated the status quo of the region, which it described as "unresolved".

## S'pore PM calls for election amid nCoV

AGENCIES

Singapore, June 23: Singapore Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong said on Tuesday that he has decided to call for general elections to "clear the decks" and give the new government a fresh five-year mandate, amid the coronavirus pandemic that has battered the city-state's economy.

In a televised address to the nation, Lee said that he has advised President Halimah Yacob Tuesday to dissolve Parliament and issue the writ for election. He said that holding an election now will clear the decks and give the new Government a fresh five-year mandate to focus on the national agenda and the difficult decisions it will have to make.



Elections must be held by April 2021 at the latest. Lee's ruling People's Action Party holds a majority in the current Parliament. Lee pointed out that his government has worked hard to contain the coronavirus spread since it was first detected in January 2020 with four fiscal budgets of 100 billion Singapore dollars to manage through the COVID-19 pandemic.

## BOOSTING TECHNOLOGY



A rocket carrying the last satellite of the Beidou navigation satellite system blasts off from the Xichang Satellite Launch Center in southwest China's Sichuan Province, Tuesday

## India, China don't need help: Russia

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Moscow, June 23: Russia Tuesday ruled out mediating between India and China following the violent clashes in Galwan Valley, saying the two nations do not need any kind of assistance to resolve their disputes.

Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov's remarks came after a virtual conference of the foreign ministers of Russia, India and China. External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar and Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi also attended the

conference. The conference was held amid escalating tension between India and China following the violent clashes in Galwan Valley on June 15 that left 20 Indian Army personnel dead, significantly escalating the already volatile situation in the region.

"I do not think that India and China need any help, any kind of assistance specifically aimed at helping them to resolve disputes," Lavrov said. "As soon as the border incidents took place, meetings were held and contact was established between

the military command on the ground and the foreign ministers," Sputnik News quoted Lavrov as saying.

"As I understand, these contacts are ongoing, and neither party has made any statement indicating a lack of willingness to negotiate based on generally acceptable approaches. We naturally expect it to continue that way," Lavrov said.

India and China have rejected any role for other parties in finding a peaceful resolution to their boundary issue. Russia has maintained close ties with both China and India.

## Early COVID cases 80 times higher in US than first reported

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New York, June 23: The number of early COVID-19 cases in the US may have been more than 80 times greater, and doubled nearly twice as fast as originally believed, said a new study. "At first I couldn't believe our estimates were correct," said Justin Silverman, Assistant Professor at the Pennsylvania State University.

"But we realised that deaths across the US had been doubling every three days and that our estimate of the infection rate was consistent with three-day doubling since the first observed case was reported in Washington state on January 15," Silverman added.

In a paper published in the journal 'Science Translational Medicine', the researchers estimated the detection rate of symptomatic COVID-19 cases using the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's influenza-like illnesses (ILI) surveillance data over a three-week period in March 2020.

"We analysed each state's ILI cases to estimate the numbers that could not be attributed to influenza and were in excess of seasonal baseline levels," said Silverman.

"When you subtract these out, you're left with what we're call-



ing excess influenza-like illnesses - cases that can't be explained by either influenza or the typical seasonal variation of respiratory pathogens," he said. The researchers found that the excess influenza-like illnesses showed a nearly perfect correlation with the spread of COVID-19 around the country.

Remarkably, the size of the observed surge of excess influenza-like illnesses corresponds to more than 8.7 million new cases during the last three weeks of March, compared to the roughly 100,000 cases that were officially reported during the same time period. The researchers also used this process to estimate infection rates for each state, noting that states showing higher per capita rates of infection also had higher per capita rates of a surge in excess influenza-like illnesses.

Their estimates showed rates much higher than initially reported, but closer to those found once states began completing antibody testing.

# Muslims to wait a year for Hajj as virus prompts Saudi curbs

SAUDI DECIDES TO BAR ALL NON-RESIDENT MUSLIMS FROM TRAVELLING TO PERFORM THE ANNUAL PILGRIMAGE TO CURB COVID-19 SPREAD

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Dubai, June 23: A Saudi official said Tuesday that the Hajj pilgrimage, which usually draws up to 2.5 million Muslims from all over the world, will only see at the most a few thousand pilgrims next month due to concerns over the spread of the coronavirus.

The kingdom's Hajj Minister Muhammad Benteen said a "small and very limited" number of people — even as low as just 1,000 from inside the kingdom — will be allowed to perform the pilgrimage to ensure social distancing and crowd control amid the global virus outbreak. "The number, God willing, may be in the thousands. We are in the process of reviewing so it could be 1,000 or less, or a little more," Benteen said in a virtual press con-

ference. While the decision to drastically curb this year's Hajj was largely expected, it remains unprecedented in Saudi Arabia's nearly 90-year history and effectively bars all Muslims from outside the kingdom from travelling there to performing the pilgrimage. The Saudi government waited until just five weeks before the Hajj to announce its decision. The timing indicates the sensitivity around major decisions concerning the hajj that affect Muslims around the world. "This is a very sensitive operation and we are working with experts at the Health Ministry," Benteen said, stressing the importance of protecting the lives and health of pilgrims.

As part of the curbs, Saudi officials said that no one over the age of 65 will be allowed to perform the hajj and that all pilgrims and



those serving the pilgrims this year will be quarantined both before and after the pilgrimage. Saudi Arabia first announced late on Monday that only a very limited number of pilgrims would be allowed to perform the hajj in Mecca from among residents of various na-

tionalities already inside the kingdom. It's a blow to those who've saved money for years to afford the journey — the hajj is not only a once-in-a-lifetime requirement for all Muslims but also a chance to wipe away past sins and connect with Muslims from all walks of life.

"It is a wish of every Muslim to perform hajj, but because of COVID-19, it will not be possible this year," Chairman of the Islamic Centre of India Maulana Khalid Rashid said.

Each country is allocated a specific quota of hajj visas according to its population of Muslims, with Indonesia having the largest, close to 221,000. In countries like Egypt, Pakistan and India, securing a slot can require hefty fees, a connection to a local official or simply years of patience. Pakistan, which usually sends around 180,000 pilgrims, said Saudi authorities had been in touch to inform them about the decision to limit this year's hajj. Instead, Pakistani diplomats already in Saudi Arabia will represent the country this year at the hajj, which begins at the end of July. The president of an association of

hajj tour operators in Bangladesh, Shahadat Hossain Taslim, praised the decision to essentially hold the hajj with just a symbolic numbers of pilgrims. "It has a great symbolic value," he said. Around 137,000 Bangladeshis typically travel to Mecca each year for the hajj.

Saudi Arabia's borders have been shut to foreigners since late February in attempts to slow down the spread of the virus. The government suspended the smaller year-round umrah pilgrimage earlier this year, imposed a nearly three-month-long 24-hour curfew in Mecca, shuttered mosques during the holy month of Ramadan and restricted businesses. Still, the kingdom has one of the highest infection rates in the Middle East, with more than 161,000 confirmed cases so far, including 1,307 deaths.



**Promoters of Reliance Power plan to raise their shareholding in the company over time in line with the regulatory guidelines**  
ANIL AMBANI | CHAIRMAN, RELIANCE POWER

## INDIA REMAINS 3RD-LARGEST ECONOMY ON PPP BASIS

India has retained and consolidated its position as the third-largest economy after China and the US in terms of purchasing power parity (PPP) for 2017, said the government Tuesday quoting the World Bank data



## of the day quote

Our mission has always been to make the world a better place. And we're committed to being a force for change. We hope to build a future that lives up to our ideals of equality



Indian Bank's business grew at eight per cent to touch ₹4.66 trillion-mark on the back of credit growth of 10 per cent and deposits growth of seven per cent



For many reasons, a great deal of Tesla execution worldwide is packed into the final week of the quarter. It is very important that we go all out through end of June 30 to ensure a good outcome



ELON MUSK | CEO, TESLA

# India mulls 'bilateral bubbles' In a first, diesel to beat petrol prices

Pressure mounts on India to allow schedule passenger flights from US, UK, Germany and France

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, June 23:** India is considering establishing "individual bilateral bubbles" with the US, the UK, Germany and France allowing airlines of each country in the pact to operate international passenger flights, said the Aviation Ministry Tuesday.

The ministry's statement has come after the US Department of Transportation announced on Monday that it has barred Air India from operating chartered flights between India and the United States from July 22 without its prior approval, in an apparent retaliation for the Indian government not allowing American carriers to operate between the two countries.

The Aviation Ministry said, "As we contemplate further opening up in response to demands, we are looking at the prospect of establishing individual bilateral bubbles, India-US, India-France, India-Germany, India-UK. These are all destinations where demand for travel has not diminished. Final decisions pursuant to negotiations are expected to be taken soon."

"We have received requests from



■ Schedule international flights to and from India are suspended till June-end. Air India is operating repatriation flights under Vande Bharat Mission (VBM) to fly back Indians stranded abroad

■ AI is taking eligible people on flights to places like North America, Europe and Singapore that are allowing certain categories of non-citizens to fly back

concerned authorities in several countries including the US, France, Germany among others requesting that their air carriers be allowed to participate in the transportation of passengers along the line being conducted by Air India under Vande Bharat Mission (VBM). These requests are being examined. We have had one round of negotiations with US on June 15, 2020, with representatives of US department of transportation (DoT) and US Embassy on this issue. They were invited to submit precise proposals in this respect. A communication has now been received on

June 19, 2020, detailing these requests," the aviation ministry said on Tuesday.

"As we move from controlled and managed aviation evacuation of our citizens in different parts of

the world and foreign nationals from India, we are now looking at the possibility of establishing bilateral arrangements. These evacuation flights which were primarily meant for evacuation of our citizens from all over the world are now increasingly carrying Indians and citizens of other countries out bound to countries where they are normally resident. As we contemplate further opening up in response to demands, we are looking at the prospect of establishing individual bilateral bubbles, India-US, India-France, India-Germany, India-UK. These are all destinations where demand for travel has not diminished. Final decisions pursuant to negotiations are expected to be taken soon," the ministry statement added.

Schedule international flights to and from India are suspended till June-end. As of now, Air India is operating repatriation flights under Vande Bharat Mission (VBM) to fly back Indians stranded abroad. AI is taking eligible people on flights to places like North America, Europe and Singapore that are allowing certain categories of non-citizens to fly back.

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**New Delhi, June 23:** In an unexpected development, the pump price of diesel is all set to surpass the petrol price in the capital, making it the most expensive transport fuel for the first time in a long time.

Globally, diesel is priced slightly above petrol prices due to the very nature of the product that has a higher cost of production. But in India, due to the lopsided taxation structure, diesel attracts lesser of the tax between the two auto fuels keeping its prices lower than petrol for last several years.

Diesel is currently priced at ₹79.40 a litre in the Capital, just 36 paise short of petrol price that is being retailed at ₹79.76 a litre. Going by the trend of price movement in the two products for the last few days where diesel prices have consistently increased by 50-60 paise per litre while the daily increase in petrol prices have fallen to just 20 paise on Tuesday, it is set to surpass petrol prices in next few days.

"Diesel price movement is sharper in international market and if oil companies follow the



global price trend, diesel prices will surpass that of petrol later this week. It will be after many years that this would happen and is expected to sustain for some time unless government changes the tax structure of the petroleum products again," said an oil sector expert from one of the big four audit and advisory firms asking not to be named.

Interestingly, even in India the base price of diesel is expensive than petrol. According to the Indian Oil Corporation (IOC), while the base price of petrol in Delhi currently comes to ₹22.11 per litre, the same for diesel is higher at ₹22.93 per litre (effective from June 16, 2020). This has been the case for a long time, but retail price of petrol can be higher than diesel due to central and state taxes.

## SHORT TAKES

### Anti-dumping probe begins

**New Delhi:** India has initiated a probe into the alleged dumping of aluminium foil from China, Indonesia, Malaysia and Thailand following a complaint by domestic manufacturers. Hindalco Industries, Raviraj Foils and Jindal India have filed an application before the commerce ministry's investigation arm Directorate General of Trade Remedies (DGTR), seeking initiation of anti-dumping investigation on imports of 'Aluminium foil 80 micron and below' from these countries. The applicants have alleged that dumping has impacted the industry and has requested for imposition of the anti-dumping duty on the imports.

### Federal Bank to raise ₹12k crore

**New Delhi:** Federal Bank Tuesday said it plans to raise up to ₹12,000 crore, majority of which is targeted to come through borrowing instruments. The board of directors in its meeting on June 19, 2020, cleared proposals to raise up to ₹8,000 crore through various debt instruments in Indian/foreign currency and ₹4,000 crore through a mix of debt and issue of equity shares. Federal Bank said in a regulatory filing. The Kerala-based lender said it will seek shareholders nod.

### Crude steel output falls

**New Delhi:** Declining for the third straight month, the country's crude steel output fell 39 per cent to 5.76 million tonne (MT) in May, according to World Steel Association (worldsteel). India observed a nationwide lockdown from March 25 onwards, which impacted production, demand and supplies of steel in the country. The country had produced 9.46 MT of crude steel during the same month a year ago, worldsteel said in its latest report. At 5.76 MT in May, India's output was down for the third straight month since March.

### Sebi relaxes rules for listed firms

**New Delhi:** To ease fundraising for companies with stressed assets, market regulator Sebi Tuesday decided to relax pricing framework under the preferential route and exempted allottees of preferential issues from open offer obligations in such cases with immediate effect. Typically, listed companies having "stressed assets" experience progressive fall in their share price.

## Govt, RBI's timely measures revived economy: FinMin



AGENCIES

**New Delhi, June 23:** The Finance Ministry Tuesday cited green shoots of recovery in agriculture, manufacturing and services sectors, and said the prompt policy measures taken by the government and RBI have helped reinvigorate the economy with minimal damage.

Stating that agricultural sector remains the foundation of the Indian economy, the ministry said that a normal monsoon, as has been forecast, should support the

rebooting of economy. Though the GDP contribution of the sector may not be very large (in relation to industry and services), its growth has a very positive impact on the large population dependent on agriculture.

"Further, the recent landmark reforms announced in the sector will go a long way in building efficient value chains and ensuring better returns for farmers, the ministry said in a statement.

Early green shoots of economic revival have also emerged in May and June with real activity indicators like electricity and fuel con-

sumption, inter and intra-state movement of goods, retail financial transactions witnessing pick up, it said, adding India becoming the world's second largest manufacturer of personal protective equipment (PPE) within two months shows the resilience of the manufacturing sector.

The Government and the RBI have taken prompt policy measures - both short term and long term - in a calibrated manner to reinvigorate the economy at the earliest with minimal damage.... The

commitment of the Government towards both structural reforms and supportive social welfare measures will help build on these 'green shoots', the ministry said.

To contain the spread of coronavirus the government had imposed nationwide lockdown from March 25. From June 1, India has started phased resumption of services and businesses.

Due to timely tracing, treatment and reporting, the number of people recovering from the virus is continuously rising and the active cases, as on date, are 41 per cent of the total cases in the country.

*The resolve for 'Atma Nirbhar Bharat' will be strengthened with the collective effort of all stakeholders, the ministry said*

## BIZ BUZZ

### Apple ditches Intel, first ARM-run Mac in the offing



**Cupertino:** Apple has confirmed its break up with Intel x86 architecture for Advanced RISC Machines (ARM) chips in its Mac desktops, announcing it will transition the Mac to its world-class custom silicon to deliver industry-leading performance and powerful new technologies. Developers can now get started updating their apps to take advantage of the advanced capabilities of Apple silicon in the Mac. "From the beginning, the Mac has always embraced big changes to stay at the forefront of personal computing. Today we're announcing our transition to Apple silicon, making this a historic day for the Mac," said Apple CEO Tim Cook. Apple plans to ship the first Mac with Apple silicon by the end of the year and complete the transition in about two years.



### Tech Mahindra, Lucideus partner to offer cybersecurity

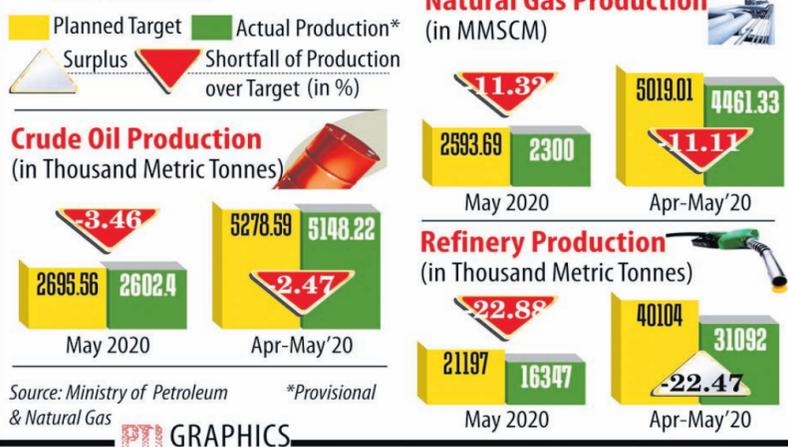
**New Delhi:** IT services major Tech Mahindra Tuesday said it has partnered with Lucideus to offer annual cybersecurity risk assessment to global organisations. The initiative will help global corporations measure and mitigate prevailing cyber risks in real-time through a complimentary online assessment, a statement said. This will be an ongoing annual assessment aimed at bringing the most advanced cyber risk quantification solutions to customers globally, and transform the way businesses monitor cybersecurity currently. The program will play a pivotal role to ensure proactive identification and minimization of these susceptibilities" it said.

### Centre hikes MSP of dehusked coconut by 5.02%

**New Delhi:** The centre Wednesday announced 5.02 per cent increase in the minimum support price (MSP) of matured dehusked coconut to ₹2,700 per quintal for the 2020 season in a bid to protect the interest of small farmers. The MSP of dehusked coconut was ₹2,571 per quintal during the last season. "The hike in the MSP for mature dehusked coconut facilitates procurement of fresh coconut thereby ensuring that the benefit of MSP reaches the millions of smallholder coconut farmers," Agriculture Minister Narendra Singh Tomar said in a statement. Even though MSP for milling copra is ₹9,960 per quintal for 2020 crop season, declaration of higher MSP for dehusked coconut ensures immediate cash to the small farmers, he said.



## Production of Crude Oil and Natural Gas in MAY 2020



## Cybercriminals from China attack defence ministry, pvt entities

AGENCIES

**New Delhi, June 23:** After the recent border clash, Chinese hackers have pumped-up their attempts to hack many Indian entities, says India Today. Several Indian businesses, government ministries, and media organisations were targeted by hacker groups linked to China, according to the report.

A Singapore-based cyber threat intelligence firm Cyfirma Research said Chinese hacker groups are targeting entities like the Defence Ministry, Reliance Jio, Airtel, BSNL, Micromax, Cipla, Sun Pharma, MRF, and L&T, according to the report.

The sectors that were targeted were telecom, pharma, media companies, smartphone makers, construction, and tyre firms. The hacking could be an attempt to 'tarnish' the reputation of the entities by spying on sensitive information, including trade secrets, said Cyfirma Research.



The hackers targeted three central government ministries including the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Defence, and the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, said the research firm.

A note released by the firm said: "In the hackers' conversations, IP [Internet protocol] addresses were shared and discussed. Our analysis of these IP addresses attributed Gothic Panda and Stone Panda to be behind these potential hacking campaigns."

## 'US proclamation to suspend work visas misguided'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

### HARMING THE ECONOMY

■ The comments came after US President Donald Trump issued a proclamation to suspend issuing of H-1B visas - popular among Indian IT professionals

■ Nasscom added that those on H-1B and L-1 visas pay taxes and contribute to their communities and to local economies in many ways as well

**New Delhi, June 23:** Industry body Nasscom Tuesday termed the work visa suspension proclamation as misguided and said this could be harmful to the US economy, possibly forcing more work to be performed offshore since the local talent is not available in the country.

The comments came after US President Donald Trump issued a proclamation to suspend issuing of H-1B visas - popular among Indian IT professionals - along with other foreign work visas for the rest of the year, aimed at helping millions of Americans who have lost their jobs due to the current economic crisis.

The proclamation that comes into effect on June 24 is expected to impact a large number of Indian IT professionals and several American and



members provide essential services to hospitals, pharmaceutical and biotech companies, state and local government agencies, financial institutions, technology and communications firms, grocers, manufacturers, and thousands of other businesses across the US.

Highly skilled non-immigrants are playing critical roles in the delivery of these services and the development of these services and products.

"Without their continued contributions to the US economy, the economic pain would worsen, industry would slow, and the timeline for a treatment and cure of COVID-19 would lengthen, Nasscom said.

It added that those on H-1B and L-1 visas pay taxes and contribute to their communities and to local economies in many ways as well. Nasscom urged the US adminis-

tration to shorten the duration of these restrictions to 90 days, saying lengthening these burdensome restrictions on US companies that are trying to recover from the economic fallout of the COVID-19 pandemic will only serve to harm the economy.

We hope that the administration will rethink its stated plans to move forward on a series of regulatory changes that would place additional restrictions and costs on visa programs while doing little more than amplifying the harm already being done to the US economy, it added.

Nasscom noted that many US corporations, universities, medical facilities, research institutions, directly and through their associations, have asked the President not to take such action because of the harm it would do as the country reopens and recovers.

# DJOKOVIC, WIFE JELENA TEST POSITIVE FOR CORONAVIRUS

ASSOCIATED PRESS

**Belgrade, June 23:** Novak Djokovic tested positive for the coronavirus Tuesday after taking part in a tennis exhibition series he organized in Serbia and Croatia.

The top-ranked Serb is the fourth player to test positive for the virus after first playing in Belgrade and then again last weekend in Zadar, Croatia. His wife also tested positive. "The moment we arrived in Belgrade we went to be tested. My re-

sult is positive, just as Jelena's, while the results of our children are negative," Djokovic said in a statement.

Djokovic has been criticized for organizing the tournament and bringing in players from other countries amid the coronavirus pandemic.

Viktor Troicki said Tuesday that he and his pregnant wife have both been diagnosed with the virus, while Grigor Dimitrov, a three-time Grand Slam semifinalist from Bulgaria, said Sunday he tested positive. Borna

Coric played Dimitrov Saturday in Zadar and said Monday he has also tested positive.

There were no social distancing measures observed at the matches in either country. "Everything we did in the past month, we did with a pure heart and sincere intentions," Djokovic said. "Our tournament meant to unite and share a message of solidarity and compassion throughout the region."

Djokovic, who has previously said he was against taking a vaccine



for the virus even if it became mandatory to travel, was the face behind the Adria Tour, a series of exhibition events that started in the Serbian capital and then moved to Zadar.

He left Croatia after the final was canceled and was tested in Belgrade. Despite the positive test, he defended the exhibition series.

"It was all born with a philanthropic idea, to direct all raised funds towards people in need and it warmed my heart to see how

everybody strongly responded to this," Djokovic said.

"We organized the tournament at the moment when the virus has weakened, believing that the conditions for hosting the Tour had been met. Unfortunately, this virus is still present, and it is a new reality that we are still learning to cope and live with."

Djokovic said he will remain in self-isolation for 14 days and also apologized to anyone who became infected as a result of the series.

## Dybala still dangerous for Juventus!



ASSOCIATED PRESS

**Rome, June 23:** Paulo Dybala remains as dangerous as ever despite nearly 50 days with the coronavirus. Cristiano Ronaldo had already given Juventus an early advantage by converting a penalty when Dybala doubled the lead with a splendid, curving effort in a 2-0 win at Bologna in the Serie A restart for both clubs Monday.

Resuming their chase for a record-extending ninth straight Italian league title, Juventus moved four points clear of Lazio.

It was a welcome complete performance for Juventus after being held scoreless over two Italian Cup matches and losing the final to Napoli last week — when Dybala's saved kick in the penalty shootout proved key.

Dybala was isolated for 46 days starting in March when he continued to test positive for the virus week after week — even though he was reportedly without symptoms. Dybala's girlfriend also tested positive.

"To tell you the truth, I didn't really feel that great today," Dybala said. "But I'm happy that I played a great match. During the time when I was idle I tried to stay in form by eating nutritiously."

Ronaldo, meanwhile, continued to struggle from missed chances. Matthijs de Ligt earned the penalty that Ronaldo converted then also started the play that led to Dybala's goal, which was set up by a backheel

pass from Federico Bernardeschi. From just beyond the area, Dybala bent in a left-footed shot inside the left post.

After the break, Bernardeschi hit the post from the edge of the area and Ronaldo was unable to finish on the follow up. Dybala also had another chance with his right foot but just missed the target.

Juventus finished with 10 men when second-half substitute Danilo

*Serie A: Virus-hit Argentine scores in Juventus' 2-0 victory at Bologna*

picked up his second yellow card.

AC Milan had no problem producing goals without the injured Zlatan Ibrahimovic in beating relegation-threatened Lecce 4-1. Samu Castillejo, Giacomo Bonaventura, Ante Rebic and Rafael Leao scored for the Rossoneri, who were eliminated by Juventus in the Italian Cup semifinals following a scoreless draw 10 days ago.

The victory boosted Milan's chances of qualifying for Europe, moving level on points with sixth-placed Napoli, which visits Hellas Verona Tuesday.

Lecce captain Marco Mancosu equalized temporarily by converting a penalty early in the second half but Bonaventura and Rebic quickly restored the visitors' advantage in a span of three goals in four minutes.

Ibrahimovic, who injured his calf in training last month, is expected back soon. But his contract, which expires at the end of the season, is a source of debate.

Before kickoff, Milan director of football Frederic Massara said 'there will always be space for champions like (Ibrahimovic)' but then added the club 'needs to contain costs' amid the coronavirus pandemic.

## YET ANOTHER CR7 RECORD

**Bologna:** Juventus forward Cristiano Ronaldo overtook Rui Costa to become the leading Portuguese scorer in Serie A history Monday. Ronaldo slotted a first-half penalty down the middle in Juve's 2-0 win over Bologna, a result that saw the Bianconeri move four points clear at the top of the table. The goal was Ronaldo's 22nd in Serie A this season, one more than the 21 he managed in his debut campaign in Turin following his move from Real Madrid in 2018. In reaching 43 goals, the 35-year-old also moved beyond Costa as the Portuguese player with the most goals in Italy's top flight. Costa spent eight years in Serie A, playing for Fiorentina and then Milan between 1994 and 2006. Former Manchester United star Ronaldo remains the top Portuguese scorer in Premier League history having scored 84 times in 196 appearances. He is also the leading Portuguese scorer in La Liga history having registered 311 goals in 292 appearances for Real Madrid, where he is the all-time leading scorer.



## Eves to play group games in Guwahati

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, June 23:** India will have the football-crazy northeast crowd behind them as they play all their group matches of the women's U-17 FIFA World Cup at Guwahati's Indira Gandhi Athletic Stadium.

World football governing body FIFA Tuesday released the revised schedule for the tournament, which is to take place from February 17 to March 7 next year.

**BHUBANESWAR TO HOST A QUARTERFINAL, SEMIFINAL BESIDES GROUP B GAMES**

The tournament, which was earlier scheduled to take place in November 2020, was pushed back due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The quarterfinals will take place in Ahmedabad, Navi Mumbai, Bhubaneswar and Kolkata February 27 and 28 respectively. The two semifinals will be played simultaneously March 3 in Navi Mumbai and Bhubaneswar.

While Navi Mumbai has also been given the grand finale besides the third-place classification game, the tournament will open with double headers in Guwahati and Bhubaneswar's Kalinga Stadium.

India hold the 'A1' position in the draw by virtue of being the hosts and will begin their campaign February 17. Both Group B matches will take place on the same day in Bhubaneswar: Group C and D matches will take place at the Salt Lake Stadium in Kolkata and TransStadia Arena in Ahmedabad, respectively February 18.

## Fakhar, Hafeez test COVID-19 positive

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**Lahore, June 23:** Following Monday's announcement that three players had tested positive for COVID-19, the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) Tuesday confirmed that a further seven players and a player support personnel from a total of 35 have tested positive for Covid-19. The PCB had organised these 35 tests in Karachi, Lahore and Peshawar Monday.

Players who have tested positive are Fakhar Zaman, Imran Khan, Kashif Bhatti, Mohammad Hafeez, Mohammad Hasnain, Mohammad Rizwan and Wahab Riaz.

The players who have tested negative are: Abid Ali, Asad Shafiq, Azhar Ali, Babar Azam, Faheem Ashraf, Fawad Alam, Iftikhar Ahmad, Imam-ul-Haq, Khushdil Shah, Mohammad Abbas, Naseem Shah, Sarfaraz Ahmed, Shaheen

**Fakhar Zaman, Imran Khan, Kashif Bhatti, Mohammad Hafeez, Mohammad Hasnain, Mohammad Rizwan and Wahab Riaz have tested positive**

Shah Afridi, Shan Masood, Sohail Khan and Yasir Shah.

Player Support Personnel, who has tested positive, is Malang Ali (masseur). Player Support Personnel who have tested negative are Mansoor Rana (manager), Misbah-ul-Haq (head coach), Shahid Aslam (assistant to head coach), Younis Khan (batting coach), Mushtaq Ahmed (spin bowling coach), Abdul Majeed (fielding coach), Talha Butt (team analyst), Yasir Malik (strength

and conditioning coach), Dr Sohail Saleem (team doctor), Lt Col (ret'd) Usman Riffat (security manager) and Raza Kitchlew (media and digital content manager).

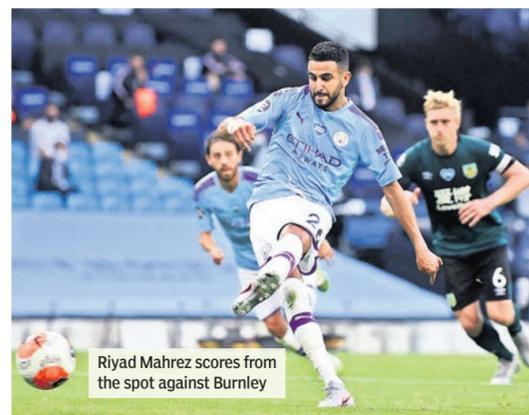
Shoaib Malik, Cliffe Deacon and Waqar Younis are yet to be tested. Imad Wasim and Usman Shinwari had tested negative Monday, while the results of Haider Ali, Harris Rauf and Shadab Khan were positive.

Like Haider, Harris and Shadab none of the seven players and masseur had reported any prior symptoms of COVID-19 until they underwent first round of testing Monday ahead of the side's departure for Manchester.

The PCB medical panel is already in contact with these players and the masseur, who have been instructed to observe strict quarantine at their homes for their and their families' wellbeing.

*Aguero gives Manchester City injury scare during their 5-0 rout of Burnley*

# City light dims after beaming



ASSOCIATED PRESS

**Manchester, June 23:** Sergio Aguero gave Manchester City a big injury worry inside the first week of the English Premier League's resumption by hobbling off with a right knee problem during the 5-0 win over Burnley.

"It doesn't look good," City manager Pep Guardiola said of the injury to the club's all-time top scorer. "We will see tomorrow. He felt something in his knee. He was struggling in the last month about some pain in his knee."

The Argentina striker already appeared in discomfort after having a blocked shot midway through the first half, when he was fouled by Burnley defender Ben Mee in the area in stoppage time to earn a penalty.

Aguero stayed down, clutching his knee, and soon left the field. As he walked past Guardiola in the technical area, Aguero pointed to an area behind his right knee and the coach reacted by shaking his head.

Any lengthy absence would leave City with just one recognized striker, Gabriel Jesus, as the team works to negotiate its way through a hectic schedule since the resumption of soccer after the coronavirus outbreak.

City has eight more league games to play before July 26 and is also in the FA Cup, which resumes at the quarterfinal stage next weekend. City is also still involved in the Champions League, which will restart at the last-16 stage in August.

In the match, Phil Foden and Riyad Mahrez helped themselves to two goals apiece while David Silva was the other player to hit the tar-

get. Sean Dyche only being able to name seven substitutes — including two goalkeepers — suggested his team were ill-equipped for the task at hand, and so it proved.

There was little doubt over the outcome from the moment Foden produced a sweetly struck opener in the 22nd minute. Mahrez and Silva scored beautifully constructed goals either side of the former slotting home a penalty in first-half stoppage time.

Foden, who also completed the scoring in last Wednesday's 3-0 victory over Arsenal, was on target again in the 63rd minute and City's win means Liverpool's title wait will go on a little longer.

Jürgen Klopp's men cannot mathematically be confirmed as champions when they host Crystal Palace this week, with their mammoth lead trimmed to 20 points.

City initially lacked tempo and struggled to get in behind a deepening Burnley defence, something Foden took out of the equation by arrowing a stunning 25-yard strike into the bottom-right corner.

A glorious raking pass from Ferdinandinho was met with a deft first touch from Mahrez that allowed him to torment Charlie Taylor before firing home across Nick Pope right footed.

The Burnley goalkeeper guessed correctly but could not prevent the Algeria international from making it 3-0 from the spot, after a VAR review showed Ben Mee was fractionally late into his challenge on Aguero.

Aguero

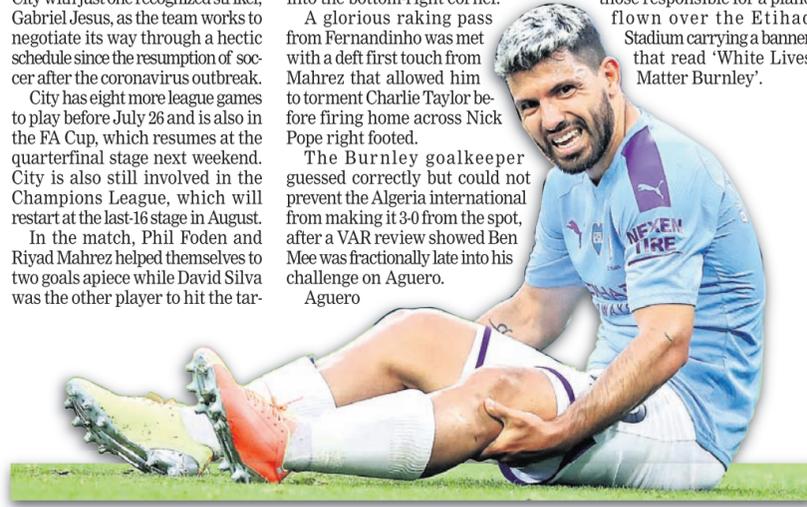


ASSOCIATED PRESS

hobbled out of the action as a result of that incident but it did nothing to check City's momentum, with Foden once again instrumental in the 51st minute — releasing Bernardo Silva with a delicious reverse pass. David Silva was the beneficiary among those queuing up to score.

Kevin De Bruyne's introduction in place of Mahrez with an hour played was a sorry sight for the beleaguered visitors and the Belgium star scythed through midfield in his typical manner, feeding Bernardo Silva whose low cross was touched towards Foden by Gabriel Jesus for another fine finish.

During the match, Burnley issued a statement to strongly condemn those responsible for a plane flown over the Etihad Stadium carrying a banner that read 'White Lives Matter Burnley'.



# Boosted by Faf's 'mantra', Baxter targets play-offs

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Kolkata, June 23:** Embarking on a new journey in an unknown territory, Odisha FC head coach Stuart Baxter is boosted by a tried-and-tested 'mantra' given by former South Africa cricket skipper Faf du Plessis who has advised him to be on the 'front foot' to be successful in India.

The former South African national football team coach, who has worked in eight different countries, will be at the helm of the Bhubaneswar-based franchise in the upcoming Indian Super League.

"I had an interesting conversation with Faf du Plessis who said Indian cricketers (sportsmen) are fantastic when on front foot, when they go

on back foot, they have too much to do. If they don't do that they will be totally unplayable," said Baxter.

"My job is to make sure that my Odisha players feel like mentally on the front foot in any case and I think all of those things will go together into a style. We will bring in together the works that have been done until now and new stuff that we want to do and describe it in a way that the players feel 'Yeah! Let's go on the front foot,'" he said.

The 66-year-old, under whom South Africa beat Mohammed Salah's Egypt en route to the last-eight of African Cup of Nations last year, said his primary target is to make the play-offs.

"If you are asking me as a professional, I want to take the team to



the play-offs definitely because sixth, seventh, eighth, ninth, tenth is all the same really. We want to play the play-offs and after that, let's see if we can win it," the former England U-19 coach said.

"But at the same time, I don't want to make rash predictions because I haven't seen the group, I don't know their mental strength, I don't know how they would react. So, until then I just want to say, as a professional, the best that we want to do and that's top four to start with and then I wanna see how the group reacts to my work."

The English-born Scot, who will replace former Spanish manager Josep Gombau, said he would not like to break the team's playing style.

"The Spanish coaches before me must have given the players a certain flavour and I don't believe in this breaking everything down and rebuilding it because there's obviously some good work done," the former Bafana Bafana coach said.

"So, I will retain that good work and hopefully, I will build upon it and find a way of playing which we all will enjoy and give us some result. I don't have expectations. The people I have spoken to say that the Indian players are ambitious," he signed off.

Baxter has a rich experience of more than 25 years of coaching in Europe, Africa and Asia. He has won Premier Soccer League twice with South African outfit Kaizer Chiefs.