

RISE IN STATUS

Singer Neha Kakkar hits 40 mn followers on Instagram leaving behind Big B, Shah Rukh Khan and Salman Khan

LEISURE P2

HUGE PENDENCY OF CASES

14.58 lakh civil and criminal cases are sub judice in the High Court and subordinate courts of Odisha

DOWNTOWN P3

VIRUS' BIGGEST THREAT

Millions of people have been pushed into hunger by the pandemic, UN World Food Programme said

INTERNATIONAL P10

SHORT TAKES

Maha lockdown extended till July 31

Mumbai: The Maharashtra government Monday announced that it has extended the lockdown till July 31 in view of the steadily increasing Covid-19 cases in the state. While all existing lockdown conditions will continue, the government will gradually ease restrictions over the next month. All visits outdoors, barring for essentials or for specified employment purposes will remain banned during this period. Since the past three days, the state has been recording 5,000-plus Covid-19 cases daily, taking its tally to 164,626, and there have been 7,429 deaths till date.

IRREGULAR by MANJUL



32 people drown

Dhaka: At least 32 people were drowned and many were missing Monday when a ferry carrying over 100 passengers capsized in Buriganga river after it was hit by a bigger vessel in the Bangladeshi capital here, officials said. "It appeared to be an accident caused by negligence of the drivers," an official of the Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Authority (BIWTA) told reporters. Rescuers feared several passengers were trapped inside the ferry which sank at around 9:30 am with nearly 100 passengers on board in the Buriganga river along the Shyambazar area of Old Dhaka.

MARKET WATCH			
INDEX		VARIATION	
CURRENCY BOURSES	SENSEX	34961.52	↓ 209.75
	NIFTY	10312.40	↓ 70.60
	DOLLAR	75.69	↓ ₹0.13
	EURO	85.40	↑ ₹0.45
	GOLD	₹48,287	↓ ₹18
BULLION	SILVER	₹48,150	↓ ₹ 215

WEATHER			
BHUB		CTK	
TEMP	32.8°C	33.8°C	
MAX	32.8°C	33.8°C	
MIN	24.1°C	23.0°C	
Humidity	90%	92%	
Rainfall	Trace	Nil	Forecast
			Generally cloudy sky

CTRL+ALT+DEL FOR 59 CHINESE APPS

AGENCIES

Delhi, June 29: The Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology Monday banned 59 mobile apps, saying they are engaged in activities which are "prejudicial to the sovereignty and integrity of India, defence of India, security of state and public order. The list of apps included TikTok, Weibo and others.

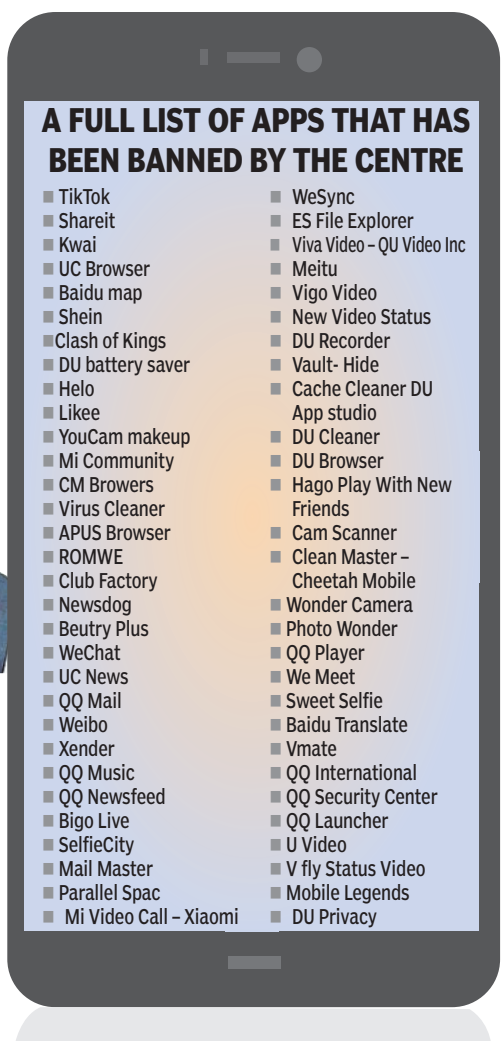
The ministry said it has received many complaints from various sources including several reports about misuse of some mobile apps available on Android and iOS platforms for stealing and surreptitiously transmitting users' data in an unauthorized manner to servers which have locations outside India.

"The compilation of these data, its mining and profiling by elements hostile to national security and defence of India, which ultimately impinges upon the sovereignty and integrity of India, is a matter of very deep and immediate concern which requires emergency measures," the ministry further said in a statement.

The statement said, it is "invoking its power under section 69A of the Information Technology Act read with the relevant provisions of the Information Technology (Procedure and Safeguards for Blocking of Access of Information by Public) Rules 2009 and in view of the emergent nature of the threats it has decided to block 59 apps since in view of information available they are engaged in activities which is prejudicial to sovereignty and integrity of India, defence of India, security of state and public order." "This decision is a targeted move to ensure safety and sovereignty of Indian cyberspace," said the ministry. This move comes amid a face-off between India and China in Ladakh's Galwan Valley.

The Indian Cyber Crime Coordination Centre, Ministry of Home Affairs, has also sent an exhaustive recommendation for blocking these malicious apps.

The ministry said it also received representations from people on "security of data and risk to privacy" regarding certain apps. "Likewise, there have been similar bipartisan concerns, flagged by various public rep-



resentatives, both outside and inside the Parliament of India. There has been a strong chorus in the public space to take strict action against Apps that harm India's sovereignty as well as the privacy of our citizens," the statement read.

First lot of Remdesivir, Favipiravir reaches state

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, June 29: The state government Monday received the first consignment of Remdesivir and Favipiravir medicines for the treatment of COVID-19 patients.

Additional Chief Secretary, Health and Family Welfare, PK Mohapatra said Remdesivir medicine will be used only in the treatment of moderate to severely ill COVID-19 patients. "The Remdesivir medicines have been sent to all COVID hospitals in the state", he said.

The drugs will help reduce fatality rate (which is 0.39 per cent in Odisha), Mahapatra said, adding that it is a nucleoside analogue pro-drug having inhibitory effects on pathogenic animal and human coronaviruses, including severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2) in vitro. Mohapatra

State Covid toll 23, fresh cases 245

BHUBANESWAR: The state's COVID-19 tally climbed to 6,859 Monday as 245 people, including two NDRF personnel, tested positive for the disease, while the toll rose to 23 with two more fatalities, a health official said. The latest fatalities were reported from the state's worst-hit Ganjam district, which alone accounts for 12 of the 23 deaths so far, a health department statement said. The deceased include two men aged 48 and 52, it said.

While Trump said no danger of arrest, the charges underscore the heightened tensions between Iran and the United States since Trump unilaterally withdrew America from Tehran's nuclear deal with world powers.

Tehran prosecutor Ali Alqasimehr said Trump and more than 30 others whom Iran accuses of involve-

Meanwhile, State Drugs Controller Mamina Patnaik said, Odisha has also received 1,200 strips (each strip containing 34 tablets) of Fabi Flu (Favipiravir) tablets to cure patients with mild to moderate coronavirus.

She explained that Remdesivir injection is meant for the moderate to severe cases, while Fabi Flu for mild to moderate patients. This apart, Patnaik said: "The state presently has a stock of two lakh tablets and two lakh injections of Dexamethasone."

Dexamethasone is used to treat conditions such as arthritis, blood/hormone/immune system disorders, allergic reactions, certain skin and eye conditions, breathing problems, certain bowel disorders, and certain cancers. It is also used as a test for an adrenal gland disorder.

Centre unveils Unlock 2.0; night curfew 10pm to 5am

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, June 29: The Centre Monday announced guidelines for 'Unlock 2' which have to be implemented till 31 July. According to the government, lockdown shall continue to remain in force in containment zones till 31 July. In containment zones, only essential activities will be allowed.

The Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) said online and distance learning will continue to be permitted. Schools, colleges, educational institutions and coaching centres, cinemas, religious shrines, gyms, international air travel and metro services will remain suspended till the end of July.

However, training institutions of the central and state governments will start functioning from July 15 for which the Department



of Personnel and Training: will issue a detailed SOP.

Social/ political/ sports/ entertainment/ academic/ cultural/ religious functions and other large congregations will be prohibited as before. Night curfew will be relaxed. The curfew will be from 10 pm to 5 am everyday throughout the

country, except for essential activities. As per the Unlock 2 guidelines, international air travel of passengers, except as permitted by the MHA will remain restricted. Dates for opening of these will be decided separately, based on an assessment of the situation. The state governments will monitor the activities in the containment zones and ensure implementation of the guidelines relating to containment measures in these zones. The state may also identify buffer zones outside the containment zones, where new cases are more likely to occur.

The states/ UTs, based on their assessment of the situation, can prohibit certain activities outside the containment zones, or impose such restrictions as deemed necessary. However, there shall be no restrictions on inter-state and intra-state movement of persons and goods.

Terrorists attack Pak bourse; 11 die

AGENCIES

Karachi, June 29: Four heavily armed militants, believed to be from a banned Baloch terror group, Monday made a brazen attempt to take over the Pakistan Stock Exchange building here, killing four security guards and a police officer before being shot dead by security forces.

The militants, who arrived in a car, opened indiscriminate fire and lobbed grenades at the main gate of the multi-storey building situated in the city's high-security commercial hub as they tried to storm it. Armed with automatic machine guns, grenades and explosives, they tried to enter into the compound leading to the Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) building through a parking lot but security forces foiled their attack within the compound itself, Deputy Superintendent of Police (South) Jamil Ahmed said. "The militants lobbed hand grenades and opened fire initially at the compound entrance to force themselves into the compound but one of them was killed immediately and that pushed them back," he said.

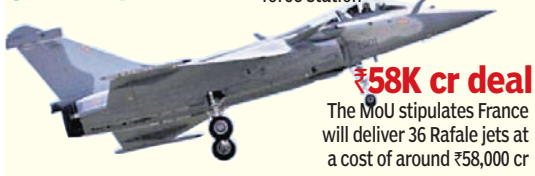
Director General Rangers Sindh Major-General Omer Ahmed Bokhari, addressing a press conference in Karachi, said the attackers intended to not only enter the building but also carry out violence and hold people hostage. "Every terrorist was armed with weapons that included AK-47s, hand grenades, rocket launchers. They were also carrying food and water," he said. He continued, "The PSX is an important symbol of economic activity hence the objective of these militants was to increase casualties here and hold hostages."

"It was an attempt to send a message to the world that Pakistan is not safe. They wanted to damage Pakistan's economic activity and harm investors' confidence," DG Rangers said. The police and Rangers' officials killed all the four terrorists near the entrance gates, he said.



6 Rafale jets to fly in by July 27

FRANCE SPEEDS UP DELIVERY



AGENCIES

New Delhi, June 29: India is likely to receive by July 27 the first batch of six Rafale fighter jets which are expected to significantly boost the combat capability of the Indian Air Force, people familiar with the development said.

The IAF has been on a high alert for the last two weeks in view of escalation in tension with China following clashes between troops of the two countries in Galwan Valley in eastern Ladakh in which 20 Indian Army personnel were killed. The two armies are locked in a bitter standoff in the region for seven weeks.

On June 2, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh held a telephonic conversation with his French counterpart Florence Parly during

which he conveyed that the Rafale jets will be delivered to India as scheduled notwithstanding the coronavirus pandemic in France.

Military officials, on the condition of anonymity, said the arrival of the Rafale jets will significantly enhance the IAF's overall combat capability and will send a clear message to India's "adversaries". When asked about the matter, the IAF did not comment. The first squadron of the aircraft will be stationed at Ambala air force station, considered one of the most strategically located bases of the IAF.

India had signed an inter-governmental agreement with France in September 2016 for procurement of 36 Rafale fighter jets at a cost of around ₹58,000 crore.

Geelani quits Hurriyat

AGENCIES

Srinagar, June 29: Senior hard-line separatist leader, Syed Ali Shah Geelani Monday said he is distancing himself from the separatist platform -- the All Party Hurriyat Conference. In a press statement the octogenarian separatist leader, Geelani said he is distancing himself completely from the All Party Hurriyat Conference.

"He has written a detailed letter to Hurriyat members in which he said, given the present situation within the Hurriyat Conference, he is completely dissociating himself from the platform", the statement said. In his detailed letter to



Mirwaiz Umer Farooq and the headline group headed by Syed Ali Shah Geelani. Not keeping good health, Geelani has mostly remained under house arrest in his Srinagar uptown of Hyderpora area residence for the last four years.

the members of the Hurriyat Conference, Geelani has said that henceforth he shall not be answerable in any manner about the future conduct of the constituent members of the platform.

Hurriyat Conference was formed March 9, 1993 as a united political platform of the separatist parties in Kashmir. Ten years after its formation, the Hurriyat Conference split into the moderate group headed by

Iran issues arrest warrant against Prez Trump

AGENCIES

Tehran, June 29: Iran has issued an arrest warrant and asked Interpol for help in detaining President Donald Trump and dozens of others it believes carried out the drone strike that killed a top Iranian general in Baghdad, a local prosecutor reportedly said Monday.

While Trump said no danger of arrest, the charges underscore the heightened tensions between Iran and the United States since Trump unilaterally withdrew America from Tehran's nuclear deal with world powers.

Tehran prosecutor Ali Alqasimehr said Trump and more than 30 others whom Iran accuses of involve-



ment in the January 3 strike that killed Gen. Qassem Soleimani in Baghdad face "murder and terrorism charges," the semiofficial ISNA news agency reported. Alqasimehr did not identify anyone else sought other than Trump, but stressed that Iran would continue to pursue his prosecution even after

UPPING THE ANTE

Trump and more than 30 others whom Iran accuses of involvement in the January 3 strike that killed Gen Qassem Soleimani face "murder and terrorism charges"

It is unlikely Interpol would grant Iran's request as its guideline for notices forbids it from "undertaking any intervention or activities of a political" nature



his presidency ends. Interpol, based in Lyon, France, did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

Alqasimehr was also quoted as saying that Iran requested a "red notice" be put out for Trump and the others, which represents the highest level arrest request issued by Interpol. Local authorities end up

making the arrests on behalf of the country that request it. The notices cannot force countries to arrest or extradite suspects, but can put government leaders on the spot and limit suspects' travel.

After receiving a request, Interpol meets by committee and discusses whether or not to share the infor-

mation with its member states. Interpol has no requirement for making any of the notices public, though some do get published on its website. It is unlikely Interpol would grant Iran's request as its guideline for notices forbids it from "undertaking any intervention or activities of a political" nature.

The US killed Soleimani, who oversaw the Revolutionary Guard's expeditionary Quds Force, and others in the January strike near Baghdad International Airport. It came after months of incidents raising tensions between the two countries and ultimately saw Iran retaliate with a ballistic missile strike targeting American troops in Iraq.



MACKIE FOR VARIETY IN MARVEL MOVIES

Actor Anthony Mackie, who essayed the role of Falcon seven times in the Marvel Cinematic Universe (MCU) starting with *Captain America...*, said lack of diversity in Marvel movies disturbed him at many levels, reports *variety.com*.

BEYONCE'S DAUGHTER WINS FIRST BET AWARD

Pop star Beyonce Knowles' eight-year-old daughter Blue Ivy Carter picked up her first-ever BET Award Sunday. She shared the honour with her mother, Wizkid and Saint Jhn for the single *Brown Skin Girl*, reports *etonline.com*



FORTUNE FORECAST

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ARIES



A romantic link is about to be presented to you as a surprise, shining and smiling. Ganesha advises you to be prepared in your best dress and to practice some romantic talking. You never know what the evening has in store for you.

TAURUS



This day you are likely to be prone to daydreaming and fantasizing. Ganesha sees you losing touch with reality and making errors in judgment, in your assessment of facts. You will, by sheer force of your tenacity and determination ensure that things work out in the end.

GEMINI



You will be in the mood to pursue your heart's many desires today. You will want to spend more time with your family and your children. You need to translate desires into action by better balancing your schedule, says Ganesha.

CANCER



You will have enthusiasm for swift action. Variety adds spice to life. So you may change job or trade. Ties with superiors will be good. Ganesha says this is the time for challenges.

LEO



It is a good day to renew old acquaintances and make new relationships. Your friends and relatives will probably visit you today. A jovial feeling will pervade your home. You may throw a grand party for your guests, says Ganesha.

VIRGO



A mixture of the desirable and undesirable is on the cards today. Sentimental people will tend to think of you as a little immature. However, your sense of humour will be as robust as ever and you will never fall short of jokes. Ganesha advises you to pursue spiritually enriching activities in order to properly channelise your abilities.

LIBRA



Ganesha advises you not to take stress about small issues or matters. To avoid tension and to gain mental peace it is advised you perform yoga or meditation. There will be pressure put on you regarding certain matters at the work-front. You should take decisions regarding critical matters only after carefully weighing the pros and cons.

SCORPIO



According to Ganesha, your family and friends top your priority list today. Life looks hunky dory on personal as well as professional front. Apart from business developments, romantic relations are on the bloom.

SAGITTARIUS



You feel like going back to carefree, childhood days. You even practice that by taking an impromptu pleasure trip, in the outskirts of the city. And bumping into an old pal, reliving your past is like an icing on the cake.

CAPRICORN



You will walk down the memory lane, cherish those lost moments and later on feel an urge to meet or contact old friends, says Ganesha. Expectations of your near and dear ones, however, may seem burdensome.

AQUARIUS



If the Almighty loads you with pain, He will also bless you with pleasure, assures Ganesha. You will begin the day with a long list of things to be done, but luckily you will be able to finish them off one by one.

PISCES



You are not by nature ill-tempered or jealous. However, you will need to be on guard against being both, today. Someone may try to sully your image or slander your name today. However, the best way to deal with provocation is not to lose your temper and to continue as usual, for things will take care of themselves soon enough, says Ganesha.

Modern Book Depot: Despite Covid the fight is on

FORMER ODISHA CHIEF MINISTERS, BIJU PATNAIK, JB PATNAIK, GIRIDHAR GAMANG, JNANPITH AWARD RECIPIENT U R ANANTHAMURTHY AND CELEBRATED COOK BOOK AUTHOR, TARLA DALAL, AMONG OTHERS, HAD VISITED MBD'S BHUBANESWAR OUTLET

DEBI MOHANTY

Fifty six years ago, in 1964 when he cleared the test for the 33rd batch of the National Defence Academy (NDA), Om Prakash thought he was about to realise his adolescent passion – of becoming a *Fauji* and donning the camouflage. However, much to everyone's surprise, he stayed back.

"For several nights, there was an intense battle between my dream and childhood love (books). Ultimately, the latter overpowered the former," Om reasons.

While many of his Bhubaneswar's Sainik School friends rose in ranks in the Army – one of them, the veteran of many wars (1971, Kargil) retired Lieutenant General KP Dhal Samanta, passed away recently. Om pursued his studies, earned a degree certificate and LLB from the Calcutta University, before setting out on a lifelong tryst with books.

Set up in 1970, his Modern Book Depot, at Bhubaneswar's Master Canteen near Railway Station Square has turned 50 this year. "It's been fascinating, I cherish each moment of the long journey," Om, 71, says. This store offered a completely new

experience to Odisha's book connoisseurs – they could step inside the 220 sq feet area, browse through the books before picking one. Though, earlier it dealt with all types of books, from early 2000, the shop rebranded into a standalone 'non-text books' outlet.

According to Om, all books sell. But, classics, biographies, political commentaries, thrillers, fictions including the sci-fi ones have more takers.

However, after the pandemic, dynamics have altered. As Om says, the global health hazard has set in a sense of insecurity. Incidentally, last month, Full Circle, the famous book store at New Delhi's classy

of smart phones and social networking sites hampered reading habits of the youths, the digital libraries impacted buying habits. Young readers found it convenient to read books available online.

And then, there's the mushrooming of e-commerce ventures which begun offering decent price discounts and delivering books at the door step. Result: the customer base shrank further and footfalls at stores lessened. Mumbai's iconic Strand Book Stall, which shut shop last year, was a casualty of these

let was the fourth in the chain. All the shops, though, carry the same name.

Om's memory is still fresh about the few years he spent in the Kolkata shop before moving to Bhubaneswar. A host of well-known personalities including noted filmmaker Satyajit Ray frequented the outlet, he recalls.

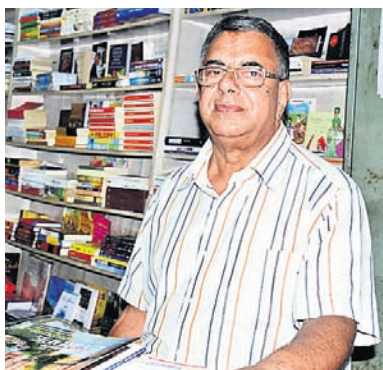
"Those days, Lighthouse screened only English movies. During the intervals of night shows people would step out, come to our shop, pick books and return for the remaining part of the movie. Vikram Seth had visited the store during the release of his classic: A suitable boy," Om's brother, Prem Prakash who manages the Kolkata shop, informs.

The Bhubaneswar shop has been patronised by, among others, the who's who of Odisha's intelligentsia – artists, writers, politicians and bureaucrats etc. Former Odisha Chief Ministers, Biju Patnaik, JB Patnaik, Giridhar Gamang, Jnanpith Award recipient U R Ananthamurthy and celebrated cook book author, Tarla Dalal had visited this counter.

"In a book store you get to meet and interact with the best of minds. I should have kept a visitors' book, which I haven't. It's my biggest regret," Om says apologetically.

Whenever he is in Bhubaneswar, Gamang, a regular at Om's shop, quietly bags his favourite copies. "I love this shop. Most of the valuable books I get there are not available elsewhere," claims Gamang.

"The feel at home ambience is always an attraction," believes former bureaucrat, Aurobindo Behera, another loyal buyer of over four decades. Incidentally, the day the COVID lockdown was relaxed last month, Behera with his daughter Ananya, 32, in tow, visited Om. Flashing one of the two purchases, a book on poetry, 'Letters to the person I was' by Sama Aduleil, Ananya intones, "There you find a rich collection of books on a range of subjects



Om Prakash at his book store

suiting every age group and taste."

An avid reader, Om says, his reading habit has helped him run the venture. Once he spots a customer is having a doubt, he pitches in with an advice. The reader is happy. The salesman too is equally elated as his effort has paid off.

"Holding a book with hands has its own charm, one can't experience the feeling from online buying," former Odisha finance minister, Panchanan Kanungo, also known as the 'intellectual politician' believes. "Om knows my taste and suggests what all should I buy, which makes my tasks a lot easier," Kanungo adds.

However, excessive exposure to tiny letters in millions of pages, has taken a toll on Om's eye sight. Today, on the arrival of new releases, enthusiastically he flips through the pages, but can't complete one. "But, I am not tired, yet," Om says.

However, with his daughters married and son, who is happy with his corporate job and lacks interest in carrying the family legacy forward, perhaps the last page of the fascinating tale of the Modern Book Depot and Om is being penned. As Om says, "With me, Modern Book Depot will live. And end, as well."

After all, everything has to end, one day.



Readers browsing through books at MBD's outlet in Bhubaneswar

PICS- BIKASH NAYAK

Khan Market, hit the headlines. Unable to cope with heavy losses and with an unsure future ahead, it downed shutters, permanently

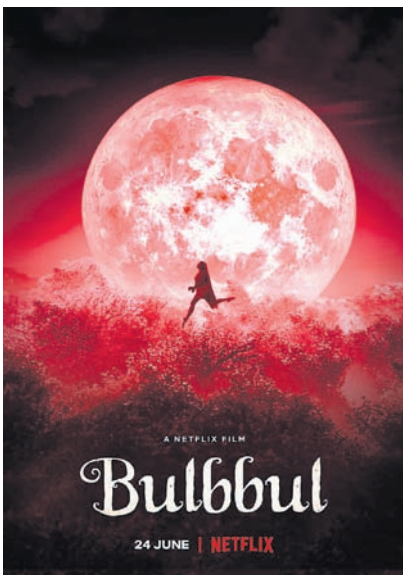
"The saddest part is that I could not deliver books to my customers who needed them the most, then (lockdown days)," rues Om. However, he promises to try his best and meet this challenge. "Hopefully, I will be able to see it through," he declares. A little streak of a fighter is still left in him.

It's not the first time that he is confronting odds. While the surge in the use

challenges. "I have survived, because of my loyal patrons," Om, the second generation book seller, concedes.

Om's father Dewan Chand, who had a brief stint with the Colonial army, and his two brothers, set up book shops on either side of the Independence, first – in the city of the magnificent Taj Mahal - Agra, in 1946. In 1949, came the other; at the most happening address of Kolkata, across the Lighthouse cinema near New Market in Chowringhee. It was followed by the one in Shillong, while the Bhubaneswar out-

ANUSHKA TROLLED FOR USING BENGALI FOLK SONG IN *BULBBUL*



Mumbai: Anushka Sharma and her new film on Netflix, *Bulbbul*, are facing social media flak over the lyrics of an age-old Bengali folk song used in the film.

The song is *Kalankini Radha*, and the words roughly translate to 'Ill-reputed Radha'. Netizens, are upset with the lyrics because they feel it depicts Radha in a negative way.

Objection has also been raised over the fact that at one point of the song, the subtitle describes Radha as 'shameless hussy'.

Netizens have alleged that Anushka Sharma is disrespecting Hindu religious sentiments by producing a film that has a song like this.

Among those who have complained is Hindustani Bhau of *Bigg Boss 13* fame. "Anushka Sharma's Bulbul web series insults Lord Krishna and Radha in nasty language. Will the government take any step against such people?" he tweeted, tagging Maharashtra Chief Minister's office. However, he has erroneously referred to *Bulbbul* the film as a web series.



Neha zooms past Big B, SRK, Salman

Mumbai: Known for belting out hits like *Manali trance*, *Garmi* and *Aankh maare* among many others, singer Neha Kakkar now has a fan following of a whopping 40 million.

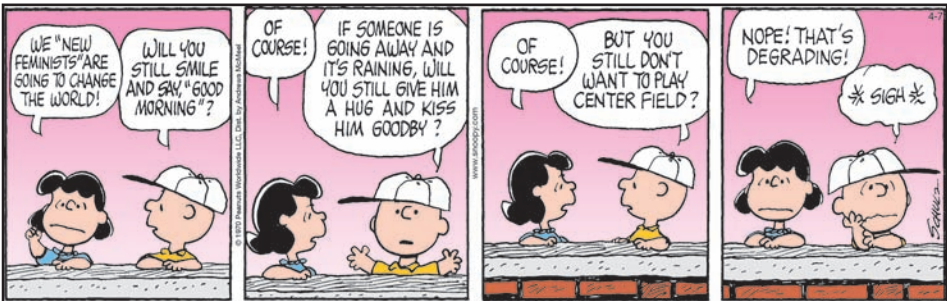
With this, Neha has zoomed past the fan followings of Anushka Sharma (38.5mn), Salman Khan (33.4mn), Shah Rukh Khan (22mn) and Amitabh Bachchan (18.9mn). Neha took to Instagram to share her joy. She posted a picture of herself sitting on a throne-like chair with a tiara on her head. A heart sticker can be seen written '40 M' in it.

"Your Nehu has a Family of #40Million Beautiful People here on #Instagram now! Thank You God.. Mata Rani And Ofcourse Each one of You!! Not to forget MY #NEHEARTS. #NehaKakkar #NehuDiaries," she captioned the image.

Last week, Neha took a temporary break from social media because she was tired of the 'hated, nepotism, jealousy, judgements and bad

Most followed Insta accounts

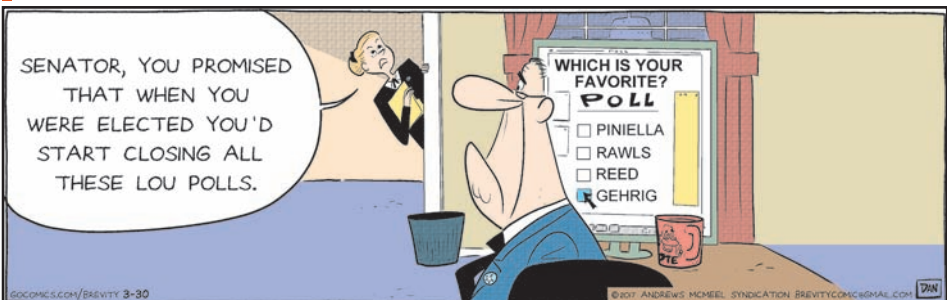
PEANUTS



CALVIN AND HOBBS

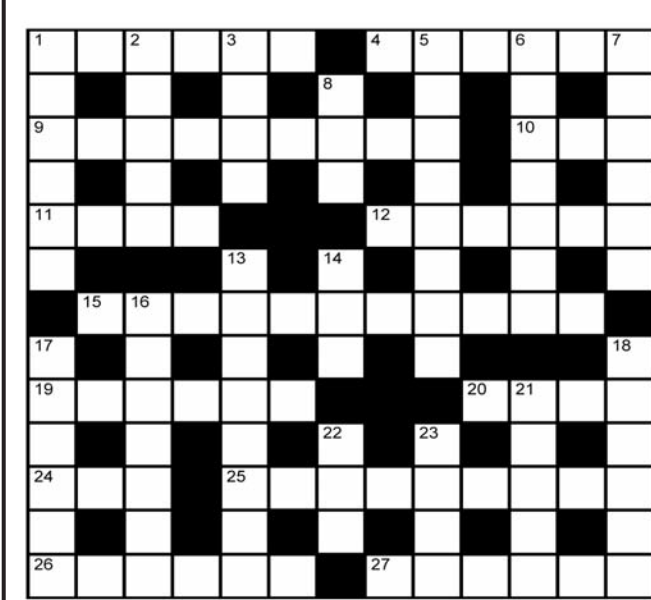


BREVITY



FUN post

CROSSWORD



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Across

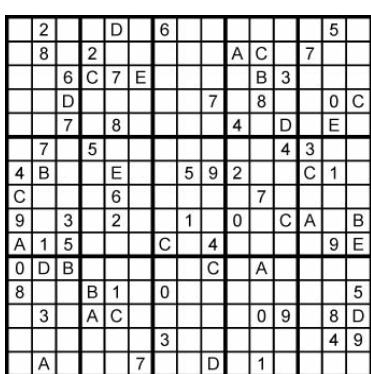
- 1 Kick the bucket
- 4 Strong-scented mat-forming Eurasian herb
- 9 Many-legged arthropod
- 10 Bright light
- 11 Ablutinary vessel
- 12 Big cat
- 15 Starring actress (7,4)
- 19 Hypothesis

Down

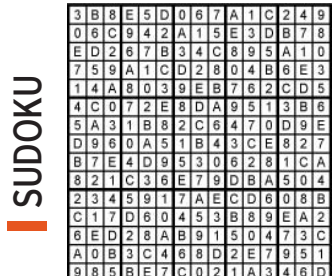
- 2 Kind of collar
- 24 Darjeeling or oolong
- 25 Mezzanine
- 26 Main course
- 27 Brooklets
- 6 Saved
- 7 Napa sight
- 8 Gunpowder holder
- 13 Lovely
- 14 Wildebeest
- 16 Deluxe
- 17 Sculpture
- 18 Elevates
- 21 River of Orleans
- 22 Antediluvian
- 23 It's usually in a jamb

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

23 new local contact cases in City

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, June 29: Bhubaneswar reported 25 fresh cases of coronavirus out of the 28 detected from Khurda Monday.

Of the 25 cases, 23 are local contacts and two have been detected from home quarantines, informed Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC).

With fresh cases, COVID-19 tally in Bhubaneswar now rose to 314, of which 135 are active cases. Four patients have succumbed to the virus in the city so far.

Meanwhile, seven patients have recovered from COVID-19 in the city taking the total count of recovered cases to 174. Further contact tracing is still continuing. Primary contacts and nearby houses are being quarantined, sanitised and will be under active surveillance, the BMC said in a tweet.

Health and Family Welfare Department sources said two COVID positive patients of Ganjam district passed away while under treatment in hospital.

With these two casualties, the Covid deaths in Ganjam district rose to 12, highest in the state followed by Khurda (five), Cuttack (four) and one each in Puri and Bargarh district.

Apart from 23 Covid deaths, seven more Covid patients have also died but the authority attributed their deaths as other than Covid.

Official sources said, out of 245 new positive cases, 214 reported from the quarantine centres, and the rest 31 are local contact cases.

Ganjam district reported the maximum of 96 Covid cases followed by Jajpur (40), Khurda (28),

6 more test +ve in AHRCC, tally reaches 9



Nurses demonstrate near the director's office of AHRCC in Cuttack, Monday

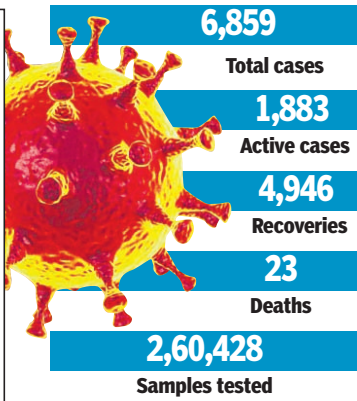
OP PHOTO

CUTTACK: Six more persons from Acharya Harihar Regional Cancer Centre (AHRCC) here have tested positive for coronavirus, informed Cuttack CDMO Satyabrata Chhotray here Monday. Of the six new cases, five are patients and another is a staff of the Aahar centre at the hospital.

With the fresh cases, the cancer hospital has so far reported nine positive cases. While a patient from Ganjam district had tested positive for the virus June 24, yesterday, reports of two staff nurses of the hospital came out positive. The two nurses had come in contact with the cancer patient. All the

patients have been shifted to COVID hospital for treatment.

As the news about detection of new Covid cases from the cancer care facility broke out, nurses of the premier cancer hospital demonstrated near the director's office of AHRCC demanding Covid test and quarantine for them.



6 cops, including DSP, infected in CDA Sector-9

CUTTACK: A deputy superintendent of police (DSP)-rank officer Monday tested positive for COVID-19 along with five other staff of a police station under Athagarh sub-division. Earlier, the inspector-in-charge of the police station in Athagarh under Cuttack Rural Police District had tested positive for COVID-19. As per sources, the IIC was not well for the last one week and was on leave. He was staying in CDA sector-9 since several days. Later his swab sample was collected and it came out positive for COVID-19. Swab samples of over 22 persons including all the staffs of the concerned police station have been collected as seven to eight staff had reportedly developed COVID-19 symptoms.

Baragarh (10) and seven each in Cuttack, Nabarangpur, Keonjhar and Gajapati district. So far, 2,60,428 samples have been tested in the state and 6,859 of them were Covid positive while with the recovery of 137 Covid patients yesterday, the total recoveries in the state has gone upto 4,743. The active cases stand at 2,086.

The Odisha government on Monday received the first consignment of Remdesivir medicine for the treatment of COVID-19 pa-

tients. Additional chief secretary in charge of Health and Family Welfare, Pradipta Mahapatra said that the medicine will be used only in case of critically-ill COVID-19 patients in the state.

The state government has also decided to conduct the serological survey in the state capital Bhubaneswar, Badamba, Narasinghpur in Cuttack district, Ganjam and Gajapati districts as these places have witnessed a sharp rise in the Covid positive cases in

the last few days. The serological test will be carried out from July 1 next. The state government has already conducted the serological survey in Puri district, also another hot spot of coronavirus.

Official sources claimed that as per the direction of Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik all persons who have successfully completed the mandatory institutional quarantine after their arrival in the state, have been paid an incentive of Rs 2,000 each.

Govt slams removal of Odia film from streaming platform

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, June 29: Minister of Electronics and Information Technology Tusharkanti Behera slammed the removal of Odia film Khyanikaa from Amazon Prime just two days after its release in OTT platforms.

"I am extremely disappointed to know that 'Khyanikaa - The Lost Idea', an artistic masterpiece and a gem of a movie from Odisha, has been removed from the Prime Video streaming portal. The government strongly condemns such discriminatory treatment of Odia cinema. We assure the makers that we will extend help to restore it in the portal and make it available for all cine-lovers across India," the minister said.

Earlier, Rajya Sabha MP Amar Patnaik also expressed dissatisfaction over the news.

Directed by Amartya Bhattacharya, the film is a fantasy driven tale of two men, a poet and a painter, claiming possession over the same Idea, in a rural village portrayed as a wonderland. Idea is personified as a beautiful young lady, free of all bondage.

The two men try to justify their claim over their Idea through their forms of art.

Professional courses' exams in online mode

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, June 29: After the cancellation of board and semester exams due to the pandemic, the Skill Development and Technical Education department Monday informed that exams for professional courses (MBA, B.Pharm and B.Tech) will be conducted online from July 9 till July 29.

Odisha Skill development and Technical Education Minister Premananda Nayak said that the exams will be held online till the situation improves. He said that the students should appear for the exam online and the duration of the same would be two hours. The MBA, B.Pharm, B.Tech and other such exams will be conducted between July 9 and July 29," he said.

It is better to conduct exams online rather than wait for the right time. We do not know when the



lockdowns will ease, he said.

In the current scenario, offline classes are not possible. We will take a decision on starting online classes by the second week of July, he added.

Earlier, the state government allowed Biju Patnaik University of Technology (BPUT) and Veer Surendra Sai University of Technology (VSSUT) to conduct final semester exams of all courses.

BPUT and VSSUT were also directed to conduct the exams during the first week of July and declare the results by the end of July 2020.



Skill Development and Technical Education Department will conduct exams for professional courses online from July 9
PREMANANDA NAYAK I
MINISTER, SKILL DEVELOPMENT AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION

SPOTTY SHOWERS



Commuters inconvenienced by scattered rainfall that lashed the Capital city, Monday

OP PHOTO

Heavy rainfall over state for next 48 hrs

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, June 29: The monsoon trough has made a southward shift towards the Bay of Bengal under its influence rainfall activity is likely to be normal, informed India Meteorological Department (IMD), Bhubaneswar Director HR Biswas said here Monday.

Heavy rainfall is likely to occur in many places in all districts across the state in the next 24 hours, he said.

The interior districts of Kalahandi, Bolangir, Bargarh, Subarnapur, Sambalpur, Deogarh, Keonjhar and Mayurbhanj will receive heavy rainfall, he warned. Heavy rainfall is also likely to occur over one or two places in Puri district, he added.

Similar weather conditions will prevail for the second consecutive day and on the third-day rainfall activity is likely to decrease, Biswas stated. He also said that rainfall will increase from July 2 or 3.

"In the twin cities of Bhubaneswar and Cuttack the sky will remain generally cloudy with chances of one-two spells of thunderstorm accompanied by rainfall and lightning," the weatherman said.

State sets ambitious plantation target

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, June 29: To enhance the green cover of the state, the government has set an ambitious target to plant trees over 1.30 lakh hectares during 2020-21.

During a high-level meeting held Monday, Chief Secretary Asit Tripathy has given all necessary approvals to start the massive plantation drive.

Around 1.30 lakh hectare of land has been identified at 2,660 locations for plantation which is almost two times more than the last year. Last year, plantation was done in 68,358 hectares, said principal chief conservator of forests (PCCF) Sandeep Tripathy.

This year, an all time high number of seedlings have been raised in about 5,222 nurseries, he said.

So far, around 13.11 crore seedlings of various varieties like medicinal plant, fruit bearing species, timber species, multi-purpose plants, aesthetic and shade bearing species have been raised. The ground work for raising another two crore seedlings has been started. The people will be given the seedling of their choice @ Re 1 per seedling, he informed.

The plantation sites with GIS co-



AUGMENTING GREEN COVER

THIS YEAR'S TARGET OF PLANTING 13.11 CR SEEDLINGS IS MORE THAN DOUBLE OF LAST YEAR'S TARGET

THE PROGRAMME WILL BE MONITORED AND SUPERVISED THROUGH A WEB-BASED PLATFORM

ordinates will be uploaded in the website for continuous monitoring through satellite applications.

Reviewing the preparedness, the Chief Secretary directed to plant the older plants and make all watch and ward arrangements for ensuring higher survival and growth rate.

He also emphasized on creation

of more employment opportunities through plantation. Various departments were asked to take up extensive greenery activities through their field level offices, NGOs, Eco Clubs, Biju Yoba Bahini, NSS, NCC and sports clubs. The plants would also be distributed to the people for planting in their private lands.

The Forest department was asked to form district level committees under chairmanship of the Collector for proper coordination and implementation at the ground level. Tripathy directed all districts to have their own micro-level work plan for plantation.

Development Commissioner Suresh Chandra Mohapatra advised to disseminate nursery-wise availability of the seedlings along with mobile number of the officer in-charge of the nursery through public domain for awareness among people.

NHRC demands compensation for victim of polio vaccination

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, June 29: The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) has issued a showcase notice to the chief secretary asking why monetary compensation should not be awarded to relatives of Kamalini Sahho, a 2-month-old child, who died few hours after polio vaccination at Balabhadrapur village in Nayagarh in 2014. The Commission has delivered the notice while hearing a complaint filed by one RTI activist.

As per the complaint, one infant was died while 11 other children at Balabhadrapur village in Ranpur Block of Nayagarh District were taken ill just few hours after being administered polio drops on July 2, 2014. The RTI activist moved the NHRC seeking monetary compensa-

tions for the deceased Kamalini Sahoo and other infants who suffered illness.

The Commission after going through the reports of the Secretary of the Health & Family Welfare Department found that the allegations about the administration of Polio vaccine as the reason behind the death and illness of the children. It opined that state government is responsible for the negligence committed by its officers.

"Show cause why a monetary compensation of Rs.4, 00,000 will not be recommended to be paid to the NOK of deceased Kamalini Sahoo and further a monetary compensation of Rs.1, 00,000 be not recommended to be paid to each of the 11 surviving victim children," the Commission mentioned in the notice to the state Chief Secretary.

FOR CLASSIFIED ADVERTISEMENTS CONTACT OUR BOOKING STATIONS

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6-DAY SHUTDOWN IN CHHATRAPUR BEGINNING TODAY

POST NEWS NETWORK

Chhatrapur, June 29: A complete shutdown for six days has been enforced in Chhatrapur NAC in Ganjam district. The shutdown will come into effect from Tuesday till July 5.

The shutdown will be implemented as there has been a sharp spike in coronavirus cases in the district. Ganjam Collector Vijay Amruta Kulange released a video message Sunday night urging the people to follow certain rules. He said that if the rules are followed people can save themselves and their dear ones from the invisible enemy.

In the message, Kulange has asked the people not to leave their houses unless there is an emergency. He has also requested people not to travel more than one km for essentials.

Kulange has advised people to keep a contact diary in which they should note all they meet. If anyone comes in contact with any suspected COVID-19 patient, people should immediately inform ASHAs of their locality.

Kulange also cautioned people against joining any public gatherings. He has warned of legal action if people flout rules. Similarly, if shop owners are found without masks and gloves and not maintaining social distancing, FIR will be registered against them. Their shops will also be closed down for seven days.

Nursing home sealed after 3 staff test Covid positive

Paralakhemundi: A private nursing home in Paralakhemundi was sealed for seven days after three of its employees tested positive for Covid-19, Monday. The nursing home was sealed following an order by Gajapati Collector Anupam Saha. Seven persons have tested positive for coronavirus in Gajapati district Monday. Among them, five are from Paralakhemundi town. A special team comprising tehsildar Achyutananda Jani, CDMO Dr PK Patra, IIC Bibekananda Swain, SI Binayak Mantri also visited other nursing homes in the town and reviewed the situation on their premises. With these fresh cases, the COVID-19 tally in Gajapati district has gone up to 435 while 133 patients have recovered from the infection so far. Meanwhile, the inspection of other health facilities is underway, said the CDMO, adding swab samples from other employees of the nursing home have been taken for COVID-19 test.

Two more people died of COVID-19 in Ganjam, the worst-hit district, which alone accounts for 12 of the 23 deaths in the state so far, a health department statement said. The district has 463 active cases of COVID-19.



People rush to buy essentials after administration announced the shutdown

POLLUTION OF RIVULET LEAVES LOCALS FUMING



POST NEWS NETWORK

Jajpur, June 29: Residents of Kalinganagar in Jajpur district have alleged that discharge of toxic materials by factories inside the Kalinganagar Industrial Complex is polluting a rivulet.

The rivulet is also connected to the Gandanala canal and in the process the latter is also getting polluted. Local inhabitants said preventive measures must be taken immediately to prevent water pollution.

Their main allegation is against the discharge of chemicals by Tata Steel. They are afraid that in the long run even the river Bhahmani will be affected by the discharge as the Gandanala canal is connected to it. Brahmani is considered the lifeline of Jajpur district.

"If the Brahmani river water is not managed properly and toxic discharge continues in this manner it could lead to terrible natural disasters and water scarcity in future. Waste water treatment and recycling

is a must for any company. Without it the entire water system in the district may be affected," local intelligentsia opined.

Kalinganagar residents alleged that Tata Steel started a hot rolling mill. "The permission to operate such a unit was not there when the company was granted environment clearance certificate. However, the mill was commissioned later without permission," they alleged.

Pramod Behera who heads the Kalinganagar unit of the Odisha State Pollution Control Board, however, rubbished the allegations. He said that tests have been conducted on the water from the rivulet. However, no trace of any toxins were found in the water. "Tests have revealed that no such toxic substances are present in samples of the rivulet water; that were collected from near Sarangpur bridge," informed Behera.

Residents however, are not ready to buy this opinion. They said that a number of people have fallen sick after consuming water from the rivulet. They opined that there must be some toxic material present in the water which is leading to the illness.

FLOODED RIVER



The Mahanadi in Sambalpur is filled to the brim with floodwater as birds wait to catch fish, Monday.

OP PHOTO

Kendu leaves rot as govt yet to issue transit permit for sale

POST NEWS NETWORK

Junagarh, June 29: The coronavirus-induced lockdown in the state has heaped lots of miseries on people coming from various walks of life.

Kendu leaf collectors of Kaliakundal and Atigaon panchayats in this block in Kalahandi district are a case in point.

Over 50 families in these two panchayats earn their livelihood from kendu leaf collection. These people collect kendu leaves from Kelia reserve forest in the month of April but they have failed to sell their stock as the state government is yet to issue them transit permits. As a result, the collected leaves are rotting in the storehouse. This has led to resentment among kendu leaf collectors.

Kelia reserve forest, a storehouse of kendu leaves lies between Kaliakundal and Atigaon panchayats. The forest dwellers and tribals living on the fringes of the jungle have been given permission for kendu leaf collection as per the provisions of



Leaf collectors have warned of resorting to agitation if their concerns are not addressed

the Forest Rights Act.

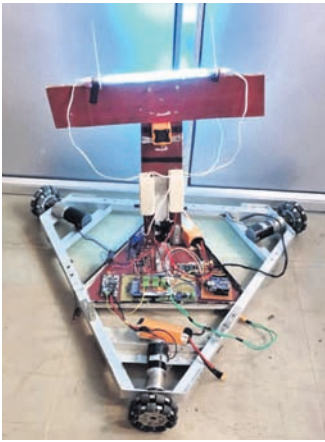
The villagers formed a committee and appointed 50 persons including women to collect kendu leaves from the jungle. The leaves were collected during the period starting from April till May first week.

The villagers have dried and bundled the leaves and stored them for sale. They were expecting the state government would issue them transit permits. However, they are losing hope as the government has not issued them transit permits till now.

Left with no options, the villagers wrote to the divisional forest officer, Kalahandi Collector, Junagarh MLA-cum-state Energy Minister Dibyashankar Mishra, PCCF, forest secretary and even to the Chief Minister. However, their pleas are yet to be addressed, lamented the villagers. They have warned of resorting to agitation if their concerns are not addressed.

Meanwhile, DFO Malaya Dash said he has no power to issue transit permits to kendu leave collectors.

VSSUT students develop contactless UV disinfectant



POST NEWS NETWORK

Sambalpur, June 29: At a time when scientists across the globe are working day in, day out to find out ways to win the battle against coronavirus, students of the Robotics Society of the Veer Surendra Sai University of Technology (VSSUT) have manufactured a contactless UV disinfectant.

This Ultra Violet Robot Assisted Sanitisation (UVRAS) machine radiates UV rays which will help dis-

infect human bodies, causing no harm at all, the students pointed out.

This machine has an advanced camera fitted in it which enables observers to go through the videos of the people while being disinfected. And it is controlled through a remote control.

The students who manufactured the device have requested the administration to install the machine on a trial basis at the quarantine centre set up in Pullah hostel. "If our invention works up to the mark, we will manufacture more of this machine provided we are given permission to do so," they added.

This apart, they have manufactured an automatic hand sanitiser as well. One can use it without touching it. The sanitiser liquid used in this dispenser has been prepared by VSSUT's Chemistry department. Paying ₹2,500, one can buy it from VSSUT.

Under the guidance of Abhishek Agrawal, secretary of Robotics Society, first year students Abhyuday Dash, Ayush Singh, Trilochan Basantia and Abhis Raj manufactured the UVRAS machine and the sanitiser dispenser.

SDCCB to give interest-free loan for migrants, landless

POST NEWS NETWORK

Sambalpur, June 29: The Sambalpur District Cooperative Central Bank (SDCCB) has launched a special drive to bring in improvement in the financial condition of returnee migrant labourers and landless people.

As part of this initiative, the bank will provide interest free loan to migrant returnees and landless people. The loanees will not be charged any interest for one year. However, they will have to pay interest after completion of one year.

The SDCCB having its headquarters at Bargarh has 46 local area multipurpose cooperative societies (LAMPS) and other cooperative societies under its jurisdiction. As part of this drive, the bank has planned to lend ₹400 crore in the current Kharif season out of which ₹50 crore has been earmarked for landless people and migrant returnees.



As per the plan, the migrant returnees and landless people have to form a five to 10 member group in order to avail the loan. Each group will be loaned ₹50,000 to take up vegetable cultivation or enter into a business.

The bank has sanctioned ₹1.15 crore to 203 joint livelihood groups in this district so far and ₹58 lakh to 131 landless people.

Lingaraj Nayak, deputy registrar, cooperative societies, said the loan scheme is part of a state government plan to rehabilitate migrant returnees and landless people. The loanes can repay the loan after improvement in their financial condition for which the moratorium period is one year.

Man found dead on wedding day

POST NEWS NETWORK

Binika, June 29: Just a few hours before he was to wear the groom's attire and go to his to-be bride's house, his body was found hanging in a jungle.

This shocking incident was reported from S Rampur under Dunguripali block in Subarnapur district Sunday.

The deceased was identified as Prasanna Meher, 41, alias Bhojraj, son of Girija Meher, a resident of Meherpada.

Prasanna's marriage with a girl of Padmapur town in Bargarh district was fixed for Sunday. His house was full of

guests and all sorts of merry making activities. He went out of his house on his bike at 4am Sunday. He had not informed anyone about where he was going. As the day proceeded, family members searched for him as the auspicious time for going to the bride's house was approaching. Despite their frantic search, he was found nowhere.

Around 10am, some locals who went to Singhijuba reserve forest to collect firewood spotted a man hanging from a branch of a eucalyptus tree. They immediately informed the villagers who in turn informed the police.

MERGER OF BRANCHES

Dear Customers,

It has been decided by the management to merge the operations of the following branches with that of Bhubaneswar branch w.e.f 30.09.2020.

Branch Name	Address
CUTTACK	Plot- 1095, Mahanadi Vihar, Near Justice Square, Nayabazar P.O., Cuttack - 753 004
PURI	Red Cross Road, (Infront of Hospital), P.O.- Station Road, Puri - 752 002

Consequently, operations of the above branches would be functioning at the following address:

Branch Name	Address
BHUBANESWAR	Veritas Finance Private Limited, Plot No. 270 & 278, Susama Complex, Rasulgarh, Bhubaneswar - 751 010

For assistance, customers are requested to contact the new address for the merged branches. We request our customers to kindly cooperate with us.

For and on behalf of the Management
Veritas Finance Pvt Ltd
D. Arulmany
Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer

Place : Chennai
Date : 29.06.2020

OFFICE OF THE DIVISIONAL FOREST OFFICER, HIRAKUD WILDLIFE DIVISION

MOTIJHARAN, SAMBALPUR, ODISHA, PIN: 768001
Phone/Fax: 0663-2548743, Email: dfohirakudwl.od@gov.in

NOTICE

No. MM-47: Debrigarh Wildlife Sanctuary will remain closed to the tourists & general public for wildlife conservation with effect from 1st July, 2020 to 30th September, 2020. As part of COVID-19 management, the booking of Eco-Tourism cottages at Debrigarh Nature Camp had been closed since 18.03.2020 as per direction of Principal Chief Conservator of Forests, Wildlife & Chief Wildlife Warden, Odisha, Bhubaneswar vide his Memo No. 2848/Eco-T-01-2019 Dt.18.03.2020. The Debrigarh Nature Camp shall remain closed until further order.

Visitors & general public are requested not to visit Debrigarh Wildlife Sanctuary during this period.

Sd./- Divisional Forest Officer
Hirakud Wildlife Division, Sambalpur
OIPR-08078/11/0002/2021

GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER, NABARANGPUR (R&B) DIVISION, NABARANGPUR

E-mail ID: eerbngpur@yahoo.com, Tel & Fax: 06858-222833 (O)

e-Procurement Notice

Bid Identification No. E.E. (R&B) - 01/2020-21/NGP

No. 2408 Date: 25.06.2020

No. B-113: Bid documents consisting of work, Estimated Cost, Cost of Tender Paper, EMD, Time of Completion, Class of Contractors and the set of terms and conditions of contract and other necessary documents can be seen in Govt. website i.e. www.tendersodisha.gov.in.

1. Name of the Work	: Civil Construction Work as mentioned in DTCN
2. No. of Work	: 08 Nos.
3. Estimated Cost	: Rs. 7.08 Lakhs to Rs.26.53 lakhs
4. Period of Completion	: 3 to 4 Calendar Months
5. Date & time of bidding	: From 11.00 hours of 06.07.2020 upto 16.00 hours of 16.07.2020
6. Last date & time for receipt of bids in portal	: 16.00 hours of 16.07.2020
7. Bids received online shall be opened on	: 11.00 hours of 17.07.2020
8. Name and address of the Officer Inviting Bid	: Executive Engineer, Nabarangpur (R&B) Division, Nabarangpur

Further details can be seen from the www.tendersodisha.gov.in.

Sd./- Executive Engineer
Nabarangpur (R&B) Division
OIPR-34143/11/0001/2021

Tribals struggle to fetch right price for mangoes

POST NEWS NETWORK

Keonjhar, June 29: Scarce availability of country grown mangoes in local forests due to a combination of climatic change and the coronavirus outbreak in the district has impacted the earnings of Keonjhar tribals.

The tribal inhabitants in Keonjhar district eke out their living by selling minor forest produce. Forest grown mangoes contribute to a large extent in strengthening their fiscal standing during the summers.

Due to the lockdown restrictions here, the farmers are neither able to go to forests to collect mangoes, nor sell them in the local markets.

"Mango is a perishable product and we have no cold storage facility in the district. We come from remote areas by public transport but do not get the right price. At times, we have to walk long distances with mango



LIVELIHOOD WORRIES

The tribal inhabitants in Keonjhar district eke out their living by selling minor forest produce

Forest grown mangoes contribute to a large extent in strengthening their fiscal standing during the summers

Due to the lockdown restrictions, farmers are neither able to go to forests to collect mangoes, nor sell them in the local markets

crates on our head," some local tribals said.

Highlighting their plight, the locals added, "In the absence of processing industries we often throw away the collected mangoes when we fail to sell

them at local markets. The state government as well as the district administration should come forward and support us."

The tribal farmers are forced to go for distress sale. They sell mangoes

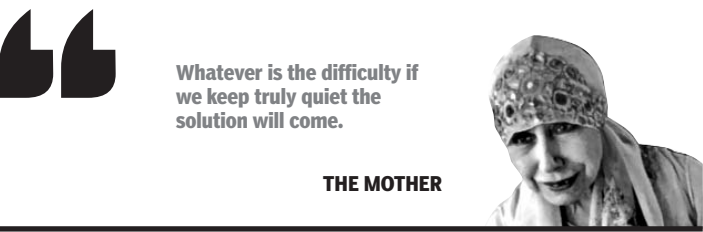
for ₹5 to ₹10 per kg whereas local traders earn handsomely by selling the same at ₹20 to ₹30. This happens due to the absence of a proper mechanism regulating the sale of country grown mangoes.

"Even if most of the hybrid mangoes available in markets these days taste sweeter, country grown mangoes are good for health," Harekrushna Mahanta, an Ayurveda expert of Belaposi, said.

Speaking on the benefits of country grown mangoes, local environmentalist Ramesh Chandra Mishra said, "The trees are found in large numbers here, which enrich the environment and purify air in a natural way along with providing shade to commuters."

Executive officer of Odisha Rural Development and Marketing Society (ORMAS) Sapan Goswami said, "Forest produced mangoes are not generally purchased at government level. We are trying to find a way out in the larger interests of tribals."

Goswami said ORMAS has been continuously imparting training to several self-help groups in the district on processing of mangoes.



“Whatever is the difficulty if we keep truly quiet the solution will come.”

THE MOTHER

Absence of Opposition

The role of the Opposition is extremely vital to create a healthy democratic system. The present situation in India, however, is building up to a point where the people in power are unwilling to accept the existence of a differing voice. Our parliamentary system has also been tailored in such a manner that the government comes up with prepared legislations that are unflinchingly set in style and content. The idea of Discuss, Debate and Decide is only a ruse to pacify a certain section that is agitated by the actions of the government. Legislations moved by the government come printed and are presented to state assemblies or to the Houses of Parliament in such a manner that no amount of amendments filed by non-government parties can be taken into consideration. That means, the Decide factor is already taken care of before any new law is brought before the legislative houses. All that is discussed and debated holds no value whatsoever. This form of governance has created an environment of complete inefficiency and total corruption at every level.

The ability or the desire to question is something inherent for a healthy democracy. In a society like the one we see in India, the desire to question needs to be protected and also nurtured. For long centuries, we have been ruled by kings and landlords whose abilities to govern should have been questioned during their lifetimes. With our feudal mindset, we not only accepted but also adored those perverted rulers and made them look attractive to the common man's eyes. This has altered the very DNA ingrained in our existence. Scores of invasions and ruthless foreign rulers followed our indigenous kings and landlords. They not only raped, pillaged and plundered us but they broke the very essence of intellectual questioning in the average Indians' mind. The effect of these long term assaults left the Indian psyche stillborn. We have become mentally poverty stricken. Following somebody or the other with the hope that an individual or a tiny group will deliver us from all our miseries has landed us in deeper miseries.

Take for instance the present situation. Whenever anyone questions the inept handling of the India-China border stand-off which has resulted in the deaths of 20 valuable young Indian soldiers, the nation's attention is immediately diverted to how Aksai-Chin was lost by Nehru to the Chinese. The desire to deny and deflect the attention of the populace eventually damages the interests of the nation. Similarly, when the problem with China is discussed, the ruling party informs the nation that a Congress led Foundation had received funds from the Chinese embassy and the government. While it is perfectly sensible to expose the wrongdoings of the previous governments, it is also equally important for the government to create an atmosphere of transparency. Had the BJP-ruled Union government wanted to be transparent, it could easily have come out open with data on how much the PM-Cares Fund has received from various sources including Chinese corporates. Had the government not taken PM-Cares out of the ambit of CAG Audit and RTI queries, needles of suspicion would never point towards that fund. This has created opportunities for the Opposition to allege that massive donations have come into the PM-Cares Fund from Chinese companies. When a modern democratic government constantly shrouds its activities under a cloak, it is but natural that questions will arise. Whenever any individual or group questions, that is being labeled as Opposition or even anti-national. Those in power must remember that the very essence of democracy is change. A Five-Year mandate presumes that no one is permanent. Keeping this in mind, the performance of political leaders needs to be such that answering questions will be an integral part of their duties.

WISDOM CORNER

- “There are three gems upon this earth: Food, Water and Pleasing words – Fools consider pieces of rocks as gems.”
CHANAKYA
- “In the absence of a magistrate (dandadharabhave), the strong will swallow the weak; but under his protection, the weak can resist the strong.”
KAUTILYA
- “Let him that would move the world, first move himself.”
SOCRATES

WORDSWORTH

Stick one's oar in

The idiom to 'stick one's oar in' means to interfere or meddle in some matter that doesn't concern one. It's a close relative of sticking one's nose into something. It's now less common in Britain than it once was, though it does turn up from time to time, as here in the Daily Mail in August 2005: "He feels he must be [there] today. Not to stick his oar in, you understand, but to offer moral support." Many Americans have told me that it is indeed known in the US, though it may be of regional distribution or used by only certain age groups. Ursula K Le Guin employed it as a neat reference back to its original context in The Dispossessed: "An old adviser, Ferdaz ... liked to stick his oar in even when it steered the boat off the course he wanted." The expression dates back to the sixteenth century and has turned up in all sorts of different formulations down the centuries. The original was to have an oar in every man's boat, meaning to be involved in every man's business or affairs. Variations include he'll have an oar in everything, he will put in his oar, and don't you put your oar in. One reason some Americans may still be familiar with it is that it appears in W S Gilbert's libretto of the Mikado: "And you're just as bad as he is with your cock-and-a-bull stories about catching his eye and his whistling an air. But that's so like you! You must put in your oar!" [To pre-empt any enquiry about cock-and-a-bull, this is the original form, dating from the eighteenth century, of the more common cock-and-bull.]

LOL

BALLOON

A man is lost in a hot air balloon. He sees a field below and descends to shout: "Hi, can you tell me where I am? I am in search of a friend, to whom I promised I would reach in 30 minutes"

The man on the ground says, "Yes, you are in the red hot air balloon, 30 feet above the ground, in the middle of this field."

"Ah.. You must be an engineer," says the man in the balloon. "I am indeed, how do you know?"

"Well, everything you said is technically right, but of no use to



anyone."

"Fine, but you must be working in management," says the man in the field.

"Yes, but how you know?"

"Well, you do not know where you are, do not know where you are heading, you made a promise that you can't keep, you expect of me to be able to help you, and after all this time, we are in the exact spot where we were before... and this is management stuff."

T Jacob John and Jagdish Rattanani

THERE IS EITHER NO TRANSPARENCY FROM OFFICIALDOM, OR THE DATA COLLECTION SYSTEM DOES NOT SEPARATE INFECTIONS FROM CASES OF DISEASE. WE CAN ONLY DEDUCE FROM THE DATA AVAILABLE

SPECTRUM ECONOMY

Diesel hike: Robbing Peter to pay Paul

Shivaji Sarkar

ACTIONS LIKE THE HIKE IN DIESEL PRICES, EVEN AS INTERNATIONAL PETRO PRICES ARE HOVERING AT ALMOST A 20-YEAR-LOW, ARE PLAYING HAVOC

Letters

TO THE EDITOR

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

OrissaPOST
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Compiling data and communicating it in a transparent manner to the public are an important part of the government's response to a pandemic, apart from refining the tactics as the disease evolves and spreads. This however is an area that reflects the failings of the government in the thick of fighting COVID-19 that will likely leave India as one of the worst-hit nations on the globe.

Take the simple case of numbers released under various heads that are not defined anywhere by the government. Every day, the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare issues numbers under three heads: active cases, cured/discharged, and deaths. We do not know how "active cases" are defined. In clinical medicine, a case is of someone with significant symptoms consulting a doctor. If this is the definition, then an "active case" would likely be a symptomatic person who has not fully recovered, has not succumbed to the disease and continues to be under the care of a physician. This is a person who has a) tested positive for SARS Cov-2 virus infection; b) has symptoms that require medical intervention; and c) continues to suffer from COVID-19. The 'D' in COVID stands for disease, not merely an infection detected through a positive test result. Many will contract the virus, become infected but not all will develop the disease. They are called infected. Those who contracted COVID-19 are a subset of the infected, and are, in medical parlance, known as cases.

Given this, there is the risk that India's Infection Fatality Rate (IFR, number of deaths divided by total number of positives, ie, those proven to be infected) is being mistaken for Case Fatality Rate (CFR, which should be number of deaths divided by total number with the disease COVID). Clearly, CFR by definition has the denominator lower than in the case of IFR, and CFR is therefore always higher than IFR.

What are these numbers in the case of India? COVID cases are subsumed within the total number of infections – but dissected data

FOCUS COVID-19

DEFICIT IN OPTIMISM



If we take a very conservative view in which, say, only 20-30 per cent of just the urban population is infected before we can expect some level of herd immunity to kick in, even then we could lose – at the current reported IFR of 3.1 per cent) – between two and 3.5 million lives. That's a bad picture

of disease cases and asymptomatic infections are just not available. So, the valid denominator for CFR is unknown. There is either no transparency from officialdom, or the data collection system does not separate infections from cases of disease. We can only deduce from the data available.

Take the data for the last Saturday of June, three months into the lockdown. The MoHFW reported a cumulative total of 1,97,387 "active cases" alongside 2,95,881 "cured/discharged" and 15,685 deaths (June 27 figures). The grand total comes to 5,08,953, which actually is the number of samples that tested positive and is officially described as "confirmed". Official accounts have it that the Case Fatality Ratio (or Rate) (CFR) is 3.1 per cent as of June 26, which is the number of deaths divided by the total number reported "confirmed". But we can see that these are not strictly cases as defined in medical parlance – they are infections. Thus, 3.1 is Infection

Fatality Ratio (or Rate) (IFR) rather than CFR. A reasonable view of CFR is to divide the number of deaths by those "cured/discharged", plus the deaths. This is because those who were cured, discharged or died clearly had the disease and their files are closed. This way CFR is 5.0 per cent, which is significantly higher than 3.1 per cent presented as CFR. We must note that in an epidemic that is prevalent, these are mere estimates because, a) the total number of the infected will inevitably be larger than those tested, and b) cases of today come from infections acquired up to 14 days (incubation period) in advance.

Currently, the MoHFW updates data once a day, at 8am. A reading of the releases from MoHFW and the optimistic analysis of numbers would indicate that India is putting up a good response to the pandemic. One of the datapoints released repeatedly and stressed again the last Saturday of June is that "recoveries fast outpace the

active COVID-19 cases" across the nation. According to the ministry statement of June 27: "While the number of active cases stands at 1,97,387, the number of cured cases is 2,95,880. With this encouraging status, the recovery rate is touching 58.13 per cent among COVID-19 patients."

The recovery rate is presumably the percentage of those who have recovered from among the total number of "confirmed" cases, but the reported number is nothing to celebrate because it is widely accepted that only a small percentage have severe symptoms and most recover. In fact, all cases minus deaths are recovered – so 100 minus CFR must be the recovery rate.

So how exactly is India coping with the challenge? And how justified is the optimism, if only to ramp up morale and keep up the fight against what still remains a potent threat?

Looking at the way the virus is spreading and numbers are growing, there is no room for complacency or optimism at this stage of the pandemic. We are staring at the spectre of a huge numbers of COVID-19 deaths – the wages of not investing in a proper health management system, and of not planning the epidemic response well. If we take a very conservative view in which, say, only 20-30 per cent of just the urban population (377 million, 2011 census) is infected before we can expect some level of herd immunity to kick in, even then we could lose (at the current reported IFR of 3.1 per cent), between two and 3.5 million lives. That's a bad picture. The number may well be different, but to map that better, India will need scientifically-led randomised sample testing for antibodies (IgG titres) to reach a fair estimate of how many were infected and didn't even know about it because they were asymptomatic and fought off the infection.

Dr T Jacob John is a retired Professor of Clinical Virology, CMC Vellore, and past president of the Indian Academy of Pediatrics. Jagdish Rattanani is a journalist and faculty member at SPJIMR

THE BILLION PRESS

fewer bags to handle, the transporter, who also gets less since he has less to carry. It is almost happening nationally as the losses are seen uniformly everywhere because of excess rainfall.

The corn is hit by low production, again owing to bad weather, and low demand as the processing factories are closed due to lockdown. The previous processed products are yet to be picked up as people are not queuing up to buy. Despite doles of millions of tonnes of food grains, direct benefit cash to some and the ₹50,000-crore for a job scheme for migrant labourers in Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Bihar and other states, the rural economy is not pepping up.

The silk hubs of Bhagalpur or carpet weaving centres at Mirzapur are crashing due to loss of export markets and low demand in domestic ones. The Trump threat of H1B visa cancellations has put IT professionals under stress.

People do not have the money because of job losses or severe wage cuts across the spectrum. The CMIE figures say that jobs have been restored almost to pre-lock-

down level. But on the ground this is not so. It is just not the industry, but even NGOs, educational institutions or private universities and schools have slyly either not paid salaries or resorted to 30 per cent or more cuts.

Across the board, a large number of employees has been thrown out or been told to wait for better days. About 12 crore workers are in distress in India, according to World Bank (WB) figures. In fact, physical distancing too has its cost and that global lost income from school closures could amount to \$13 trillion, says the Bank. McKinsey says the physical distancing is to cost ₹96 to 231 trillion for India.

The climate is changing. Many more new diseases or various mutants may emerge. The procedure for tackling such situations has to be worked out. The production lines have to remain open. Prime Minister Modi is right in his assertion that India is set to bounce back. He notes the coal block auctions are likely to generate ₹33,000 crore. There must be a discussion on this. The Supreme Court guide-

lines for Niyamgiri in Odisha provide a good base. The recent lockdown has also revealed how it has helped restoration of nature, reduction of pollution, dust and cleaning of river waters.

The UPA government committed such follies over a long period and came under severe criticism. If prices of essentials continue to rise and cash transactions are not eased, it can cause serious problems. The housing sector is facing a crisis due to job losses, pay cuts and surge in home loan defaults. The delinquencies at India Mortgage Guarantee Corporation (IMGC) have doubled in a year at ₹8500 crore and it guarantees 20 per cent of the loan amount, which covers EMIs for two years.

The excise duty was hiked in May of ₹10 per litre on petrol and ₹13 on diesel (unwise) a litre to mop up ₹1.6 lakh crore till next March. This is in addition to gains of ₹39,000 crore in March 2020. The daily hike is to add to a similar amount to the government's kitty. But, this is hitting the economy badly.

INFA

Co-op banks, RBI

Sir, Good to learn that RBI will oversee the functioning of cooperative banks to ensure the deposits of crores of Indians are safe. It is well-known that there are massive corruption and nepotism in the cooperatives sector run by politicians. In Odisha, there are 17 urban cooperative banks, of which only nine are functioning and others are on liquidity stage. Is this not quite alarming? If the state government desires, the nine cooperative banks will come under the supervision of the RBI. This will ensure transparency; and gross irregularities and corruption will be minimised. In chit fund scams, cooperative banks are on top of the list of loss-suffering entities. The statement of OSCB president, in this connection, carries no meaning at all.

Naresh Manda, BHADRAK

Patanjali, cure

Sir, India is well-known for its rich herbal Ayurveda medicines developed by our rishis and saints through generations. Patanjali has a name in the field, and when it came up with Coronil to fight coronavirus threat, questions are being raised from the government side. Patanjali has stores all over the country selling its medicines, but no Ayush minister has ever questioned about its medicines' efficacy. So, why now? At least, herbal medicines will not kill patients with side-effects, unlike what allopathic medicines do. It appears we are acting on the basis of WHO guidelines. This is a big lobby to promote their countries' pharmaceutical giants. If we buckle under such pressures, India can never be strong enough to push Make-in-India plans.

Manmad Kumar Pitta, CUTTACK

COVID's climb

Sir, The COVID-19 threats across the country are alarming with an upsurge both in the number of positive cases and mortality rates. The death toll has crossed the 15,000 mark. The administration, health workers and volunteers have not been able to put a check on the rise of the pandemic despite their best efforts. Good news is that Baba Remdev has come up with a medicine for its cure. This raises some hope. The interstate and intra-state movement of people have made the situation worse. What needs to be done are to increase the number of tests, keep a vigil on those in quarantine and home isolation, and treat the serious cases on a priority basis.

Sanjib Das, CUTTACK

As space is thrown open, this Chennai start-up is flexing muscles for 2022

LAST MONTH, THE CENTRE OPENED THE SPACE SECTOR TO PRIVATE PLAYERS ALLOWING THEM TO LAUNCH SATELLITES, START SPACE-BASED SERVICES AND EVEN EXPLORE OTHER PLANETS AND OUTER SPACE

Chennai, June 29: With the government opening up the space sector for private investments, Chennai-based rocket making start-up Agnikul Cosmos Private Ltd is expecting to have its rocket ready by 2022, said a top company official.

“We have realised the engine for the upper stage or third stage and work is on for the first and second stage engines of the rocket. We hope to have the engines in seven months’ time. Depending on how the Covid-19 lockdown progresses, we expect the rocket to be ready by later part of 2022,” Co-founder and CEO Srinath

Ravichandran told IANS.

Agnikul, he said, is developing a three-stage (three-engine) rocket, powered by kerosene or semi-cryogenic fuel with a carrying capacity of 100 kg to low earth orbit. The rocket height will be 18 metres and it would weigh about 13 ton at liftoff.

According to Ravichandran, the company will buy commercially-available navigation systems and modify them to its needs.

The company, which has 50 employees, is currently working out of the National Centre for Combustion Research and Development located at Indian Institute of Technology-Madras.

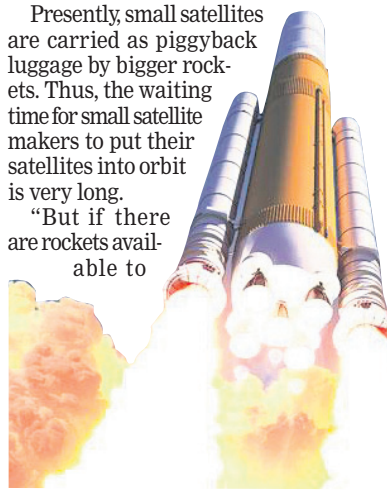
Ravichandran said that Agnikul has raised about Rs 26 crore till date from various investors and the promoters have also put in their own funds.

Agreeing that the money in rocket launch services is very low compared to that in satellite application service and ground equipment, Ravichandran said: “The estimated market for small satellite launches is about \$ 2-2.5 million per

year. This market will grow when there are rockets available for putting into orbit small satellites.”

Presently, small satellites are carried as piggyback luggage by bigger rockets. Thus, the waiting time for small satellite makers to put their satellites into orbit is very long.

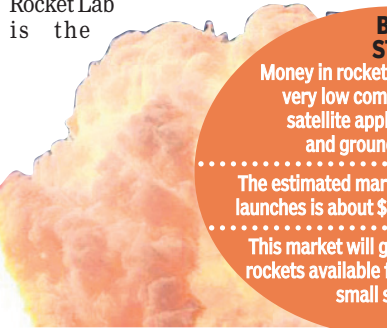
“But if there are rockets available to



launch small satellites, then the market for such satellites and also for small rockets will increase,” Ravichandran said.

While small rocket players may face competition from agencies having bigger rockets in terms of pricing, Ravichandran said the satellite players will have to look at the opportunity cost of waiting for the space in a bigger rocket whereas it may be not be so with players like Agnikul.

Currently the US-based Rocket Lab is the



into the satellite launch vehicle market,” Ravichandran said.

As regards the rocket ports, Agnikul will be looking at using the existing rocket port at Sriharikota belonging to Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) or the one that is coming up at Kulasekarapattinam in Tamil Nadu.

Happy at the Indian government’s decision to open up the space sector for private players, Ravichandran said the proposed Indian National Space Promotion and Authorisation Centre (IN-SPACe) should have technical experts so that valid proposals are taken forward as well as marketing people who understand business.

According to the Indian government, IN-SPACe will provide a level playing field for private companies to use Indian space infrastructure.

BABY STEPS

Money in rocket launch services is very low compared to that in satellite application service and ground equipment

The estimated market for small satellite launches is about \$ 2-2.5 million per year

This market will grow when there are rockets available for putting into orbit small satellites

Till July 5, intense lockdown in Chennai, Madurai



A cop, wearing a Covid-themed mask, advises commuters in Chennai

Chennai, June 29: Chennai and Madurai will continue to be under intense lockdown till July 5 and the current relaxations and curbs shall be in force till July 31 for the rest of Tamil Nadu, the government said.

Schools, colleges, malls, resorts, lodges, cinema halls, and bars would continue to be shut and religious congregations and prayers in places of worship in urban regions are banned.

Travel to tourist places like Nilgiris, Kodaikanal and Yercaud for non-residents and for tourism purposes is not allowed, an official release said. While restrictions for Chennai, Madurai and other nearby areas of these two cities would ease from July 6, in other parts of Tamil Nadu, the current relaxations and curbs shall continue to be in force till July 31. As many as 3,949 more persons tested

HC orders Revenue Dept to ‘take over’ Sathankulam PS

P Jeyaraj and J Bennicks, the father and son duo, were booked for not closing their mobile shop in time June 19 by the Sathankulam police

Chennai, June 29: The Madurai Bench of the Madras High Court Monday asked the Tuticorin district Collector to depute officials from the Revenue Department to take control of the Sathankulam police station.

The court, hearing the custodial death of father and son, also said it was for the Tamil Nadu government to transfer the case to the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI).

P. Jeyaraj and J. Bennicks, the father and son duo, had been booked for not closing their mobile shop in time June 19 by the Sathankulam police. They were remanded to judicial custody and lodged in Kovilpatti jail June 21.

Jeyaraj died June 22 night and Bennicks June 23 morning in the judicial custody, allegedly due to the police torture.


The court took suo moto cognizance of the case.

The court also asked the forensic team to collect all the materials to protect the evidence after the Principal District and Sessions Judge, Tuticorin, who was monitoring the case, submitted that the Sathankulam police were not co-operating with the probe being conducted by the Kovilpatti Judicial Magistrate.

When the government counsel asked for permission to transfer the probe to the CBI, the court said it was a policy decision and its permission was not needed.

To control the damage, Tamil Nadu Chief Minister K.

CUSTODIAL DEATHS



P. Jeyaraj and J. Bennicks

State govt counsel asked for permission to transfer the probe to the CBI

The HC said it was a policy decision and its permission was not needed

The CM Sunday announced transfer of the probe to the CBI and said the HC’s permission would be sought

Palaniswami Sunday announced transfer of the probe to the CBI and said the high court’s permission would be sought for it.

CCTV EXPOSES COPS’ LIES

The Sathankulam police’s version of events in the Jeyaraj and Bennicks custodial deaths case has been inconsistent with eyewitness accounts, sources said. And now, CCTV visuals have emerged which testify the real version of events is much closer to what eyewitnesses had said. While the police claimed that the father-son duo had ‘rolled on the ground’ causing internal injuries to themselves – no such thing happened, the footage reveals.

CCTV footage from a shop, King Electricals, next to Bennick’s mobile shop in Sathankulam, shows many discrepancies in the police’s version of events. The visuals start

at 21.33 hrs (as per the time stamp on the footage) and show a portion of the entrance to Bennick’s shop and the road in front of the shop. According to sources, the CCTV timer is 1 hour and 40 minutes fast.

According to the FIR, the police constable went on their regular patrolling in the area of Bennick’s shop around 21.15 hrs June 19. “APJ mobiles shop was open beyond the curfew time, violating the lockdown rules. In front of the shop, Jeyaraj, Bennicks and a few others were standing. We told them not to crowd and go back to their homes. Others listened to us and went home but Jeyaraj and his son Bennicks sat on the ground and refused to go home, used obscene language at us and rolled on the ground. They got internal injuries because of that,” read the FIR registered by the police June 19.

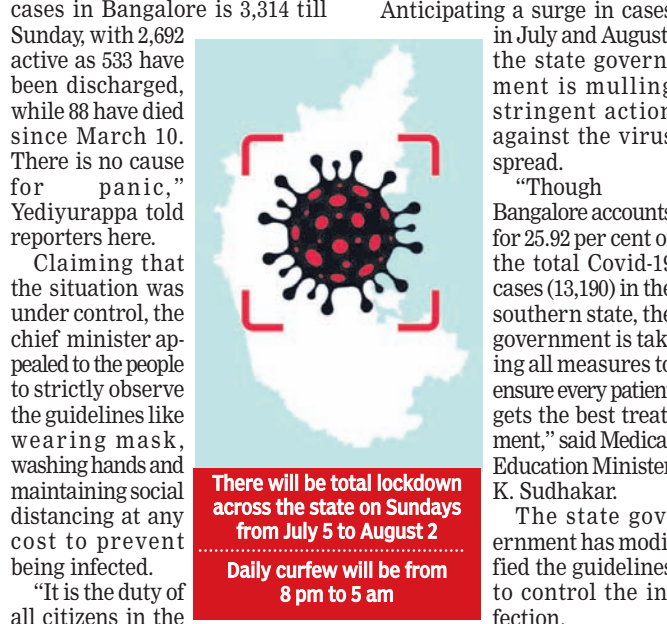
CM Yedi allays fear but asks to beware

Bangalore, June 29: Assuring the 1.2 crore denizens of providing more beds and facilities for treatment, Karnataka Chief Minister B.S. Yediyurappa Monday allayed their fears on rising Covid cases in Bangalore.

“Compared to metros like Mumbai, Delhi, Chennai and Kolkata, the total number of Covid cases in Bangalore is 3,314 till Sunday, with 2,692 active as 533 have been discharged, while 88 have died since March 10. There is no cause for panic,” Yediyurappa told reporters here.

Claiming that the situation was under control, the chief minister appealed to the people to strictly observe the guidelines like wearing mask, washing hands and maintaining social distancing at any cost to prevent being infected.

“It is the duty of all citizens in the city and the state to take care of themselves from the pandemic even as the state government is doing its best to ensure the affected people are treated and cured at the earliest,” asserted



There will be total lockdown across the state on Sundays from July 5 to August 2

Daily curfew will be from 8 pm to 5 am

Compared to metros like Mumbai, Delhi, Chennai and Kolkata, the total number of Covid cases in Bangalore is 3,314 till Sunday, with 2,692 active as 533 have been discharged, while 88 have died since March 10

BS YEDIYURAPPA | CM, KARNATAKA

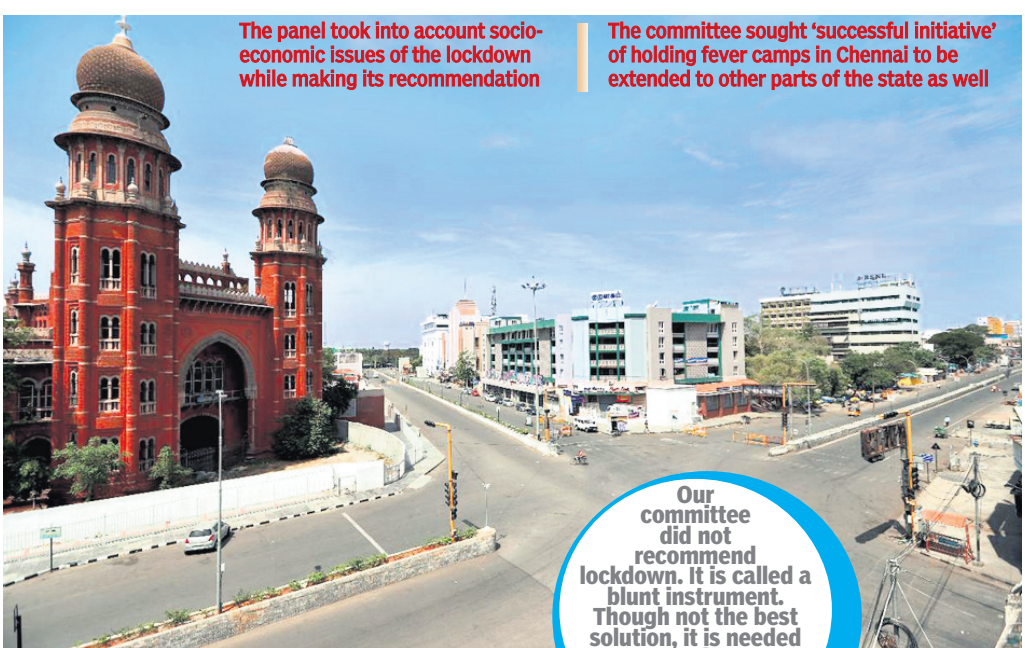
Experts say no to lockdown extension in TN

Chennai, June 29: Amid the daily coronavirus infection rate staying over 3,000 in Tamil Nadu, the expert medical committee, here Monday, said it had not recommended extension of lockdown after June 30.

The panel held a review meeting with Chief Minister K. Palaniswami.

Prabhdheep Kaur, Deputy Director, National Institute of Epidemiology (NIE) said the expert committee did not recommend lockdown extension as it was not the only way to control the virus spread.

The panel also took into account the socio-economic issues of the lockdown while making its recommendation, Kaur said. The panel has suggested tightening of restrictions in the areas where the infection rate was high.



The panel took into account socio-economic issues of the lockdown while making its recommendation

The committee sought ‘successful initiative’ of holding fever camps in Chennai to be extended to other parts of the state as well

Our committee did not recommend lockdown. It is called a blunt instrument. Though not the best solution, it is needed sometimes

PRABHDEEP KAUR | DEPUTY DIR, NIE

cases with the trend becoming favourable in the city.”

Rather than extending lockdown, restrictions may be considered after an assessment of the scenario in specific regions, she told reporters after the meeting in which World Health Organisation (WHO) chief scientist Soumya Swaminathan among other experts participated through a virtual link.

“Our committee did not recommend lockdown. It is called a blunt instrument. Though not the best solution, it is needed sometimes. In Chennai, the lockdown has helped to increase doubling time (of cases) and slowing down transmission.

But lockdown alone is not the solution for COVID-19 and we cannot be under lockdown forever,” she said.

After announcing relaxations, including partial resumption of public transport services, as part of Unlock-1 across the state from June 1, the government re-imposed intense lockdown in Chennai and parts of neighbouring Chengelpet, Tiruvallur and Kancheepuram till Tuesday from June 19.

Madurai and nearby areas are also under similar curbs from June 24 to 30 in view of high number of fresh cases.

Besides, the government has

withdrawn from Thursday inter-district public transport bus services, earlier allowed in most parts of the state, under the ‘Unlock-1’ while other relaxations such as functioning of businesses and shops are continuing. “We feel that transmission has increased in several districts due to public transport and hence this should be kept under control and gatherings should not be allowed,” she asserted.

No other tests, like the rapid antigen test, are needed in view of adequate RT-PCR testing capacity, she said answering a question.

1.6K more beds for Covid cases

Bangalore civic body revises protocol to assess patients’ medical condition to admit them in hosps

HEALTH CENTRE	BEDS ADDED
Government Ayurvedic Medical University and Hospital	200
GKVK agriculture students hostel and university campus	600
GKVK horticulture students hostel and university campus	400
City Centre International Hotel Majestic	200
Chancery Pavilion	200

The five CCCs are Government Ayurvedic Medical University and Hospital (200 beds), GKVK agriculture students hostel and university campus (600 beds), GKVK horticulture students hostel and university campus (400 beds), City Centre International Hotel Majestic (200 beds), and Chancery Pavilion (200 beds).

Meanwhile, the civic body is re-



vising the protocol to assess patients’ medical condition to admit them in hospitals.

“Officials will now visit patients’ homes and check their symptoms, and depending on the health reports, patients will be sent to CCCs or hospitals,” said the official.

Under the earlier practice, patients used to be directly taken to a hospital and accommodated in different wards after checking their health conditions, which will not be followed now. More CCCs will be set up as asymptomatic cases are higher, the official added.

IN JUST 5 DAYS, CASES DOUBLE IN BANGALORE

BANGALORE: Coronavirus cases doubled in the Karnataka capital in just five days, from 1,556 Tuesday to 3,419 by Sunday evening, said Medical Education Minister K. Sudhakar, here Monday.

Bangalore now accounts for 26 per cent of Covid-19 cases in Karnataka. It has 2,692 active cases and has reported 88 deaths, the highest in both cases.

However, Karnataka’s mortality rate was low at 1.56 per cent against 3 per cent at the national level, he said. The state’s recovery rate stood at 57 per cent with 7,507 discharges, he added.

After testing 5.95 lakh people, the state’s positivity rate stands at 2.21 per cent. Till Sunday evening, of the 13,190 Covid-19 cases in the state, 5,472 were active.



Amid coronavirus pandemic and tensions with China, the Centre has left the common man to fend for themselves
RAHUL GANDHI | CONGRESS LEADER

35-FOOT WHALE WASHES UP ON MANDARMANI BEACH

A 35-foot whale was washed up on the beach in Mandarmani in West Bengal, 150 km from Kolkata, Monday morning in what locals claim is a first such incident in the area



of the day quote

Chanakya had said only a son of the soil can protect the country. A person born to a foreign woman cannot be a patriot



Amit Shah should not worry about Congress. We had presidents after Rajiv Gandhi. Sitaram Kesri and former Prime Minister PV Narasimha Rao were party presidents. Though, it is true for a long time, the president of the party is from Gandhi family



The questions raised by Rahul Gandhi on border security are not politics, but a responsibility given by the people. We cannot compare the situation in 1962 with what is happening today



BALASAHEB THORAT | MAHARASHTRA REVENUE MINISTER

SHORT TAKES

Three Army porters detained

Jammu: Three locals working as porters for the army were detained by the security forces Monday for using WhatsApp platform in suspicious manner in J&K's Poonch district. Police sources said three men belonging to Poonch district were working as porters in an army unit in Bhimber Gali area of Poonch district. During routine monitoring these persons were found using WhatsApp in a suspicious manner. Their use of WhatsApp was treated as 'sensitive' and their numbers were also added in some WhatsApp groups which raised suspicion.

Man beaten to death in UP

Badaun: A man was beaten to death, allegedly by the members of the rival faction in the Saidpur area of Badaun district, during a fight over the sharing of offerings at a shrine between the families of two caretakers. The dispute took a bloody turn on Sunday when the incident took place. The police have registered an FIR against four persons and one of them was arrested, later on Sunday. The police said the man was hit by a cricket bat.

Bodies of 3 girls recovered

Shivpuri (MP): The bodies of three minor girls – aged between 10 to 12 years – were recovered from a pond in Shivpuri district of Madhya Pradesh Monday. According to the police, the three tribal girls from Hathigarh village under Satanwada police station went missing after they left home to collect blackberries Sunday evening. The police launched a search operation Monday. During the operation when police searched a pond in a field with the help of local divers, they found the bodies of the three minors.

Ward boy held for molesting doc

Mumbai: The Mumbai police have arrested a 45-year-old ward boy working with a state-run hospital in Mumbai for allegedly molesting and threatening a trainee doctor. The incident happened in the intervening night of Thursday and Friday when the 30-year-old victim was on the night shift and was going towards the patient's ward in the hospital. The victim was allegedly groped by the accused and forcibly held from behind who threatened her to not raise an alarm or tell anyone about the incident.

Foreign inmates of Tihar turn violent, attempt jailbreak

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, June 29: The Tihar Jail authorities have informed the Delhi High Court Monday that that "some foreign prisoners forced their way out of the ward and also damaged the locks of gates of Ward No. 9 and Chakkar."

"On 16.06.2020 morning, 15-20 foreign inmates created problem in the jail. They forced their way out of the ward and also damaged the locks of gates of Ward No. 9 and Chakkar." "Sensing trouble and having no other alternative, alarm was sounded in the jail at around 8.30 a.m., reinforcements called and these inmates were physically controlled by minimum use of force," the jail authorities said in a status report filed before a single judge bench of the high court presided by Justice C Harishankar.

This comes days after Pinjra Tod activist Natasha Narwal, who is currently in judicial custody in the Tihar Jail in a case relating to Delhi riots, told the Court that the video conferencing facility in jail was suspended after "large scale violence" took place.

"In the process, 15 inmates and 10 jail staff have suffered minor injuries. They have been given treatment in the jail dispensary by the jail doctors. Punishment as per jail rules will be made against the defaulting inmates," Tihar said in its response.

A day before the incident took place, some of foreign inmates came to the Deodhi of the jail in the morning on some pretext and refused to leave till late evening, despite repeated counseling/persuasion by the jail officers. Since the jail has to be physically removed to difference cells in the jail by the jail staff where they were locked.

The jail authorities told the



Some foreign prisoners forced their way out of the ward and also damaged the locks of gates: Tihar authorities

A day before the incident; some of foreign inmates came to the Deodhi of the jail in the morning on some pretext and refused to leave till late evening

court that foreign inmates of Cental Jail no. 6 in Tihar Complex have been agitating for some time demanding that they should also be considered for grant of interim bail. Jail Authorities have been consistently counseling them and briefing them that their cases are not falling under the prescribed criteria for consideration of grant of interim bail.

"However, they have also been told that even if their cases do not fall in the criteria, they are free to move application independently in the Hon'ble Courts for either interim bail or regular bail through DSLSA lawyers or private lawyers. However, these inmates repeatedly resorted to agitation / protest and did not seem amenable to reason," the report stated.

In response to Narwal's contention that the video conferencing facility, the jail staff said that her counsel had conducted video conferencing successfully with her on 24.06.2020 and next video conference session of Narwal with the Counsel will be conducted on 29.06.2020 in the evening.

19,459 new COVID-19 cases takes India's tally to 5,48,318

THE DEATH TOLL CLIMBED TO 16,475 WITH 380 NEW FATALITIES

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, June 29: A single-day spike of 19,459 COVID-19 cases took India's tally to 5,48,318 Monday, while the death toll climbed to 16,475 with 380 new fatalities, according to the Union Health Ministry data.

This is the sixth consecutive day that coronavirus infections have increased by more than 15,000. The country has seen a surge of 3,57,783 infections from June 1 till date.

The number of active cases stands at 2,10,120, while 3,21,722 people have recovered, and one patient has migrated, according to the updated data. "Thus, around 58.67 per cent of patients have recovered so far," an official said.

The total number of confirmed cases includes foreigners.

According to the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR), a cu-



mulative total of 83,98,362 samples have been tested up to June 28, with 1,70,560 samples tested Sunday.

Of the 380 new deaths reported, 156 are from Maharashtra, 65 from Delhi, 54 from Tamil Nadu, 19 from Gujarat, 16 from Karnataka, 12 from Andhra Pradesh, 11 from Uttar Pradesh, 10 from West Bengal, eight from Rajasthan, seven from Madhya Pradesh, five each from Haryana and Punjab, four from Telangana, three from Odisha and one fatality each was reported from Jammu and Kashmir, Assam, Goa, Uttarakhand and Bihar.

'Women under-represented or stereotyped in textbooks'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, June 29: Women and girls are under-represented in school textbooks or when included are depicted in traditional roles in many countries across the globe, according to the Global Education Monitoring Report by UNESCO.

The fourth edition of the annual report launched recently, points out that not only the number of images of female characters included in the textbooks is very less in comparison to images of males, women are also represented in "less prestigious" occupations and as introverts and passive.

While showing men as doctors and women as nurses, only portraying women in subjects pertaining to food, fashion or entertainment, showing women in voluntary roles and men in paid jobs are among the gender stereotypes pointed out in the report, it also takes note of attempts by few coun-



United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization



Global Education Monitoring Report

tries to revise the textbook images to reflect more gender balance.

"In Afghanistan, women were almost absent from Grade 1 textbooks published in the 1990s. Since 2001, they have been more present but in passive and domestic roles as mothers, caregivers, daughters and sisters. They are mostly represented as dependent, with teaching being the only career open to them," the report said.

"Similarly, a review of 95 primary

and secondary compulsory education textbooks in the Islamic Republic of Iran showed that women accounted for 37 per cent of images. About half the images showing women were related to family and education, while work environments appeared in less than 7 per cent. There were no images of women in about 60 per cent of textbooks for science and 74 per cent for social science," it added.

The report also takes note of the

revision of many textbook images to remove gender stereotypes by the Maharashtra State Bureau of Textbook Production and Curriculum Research in 2019.

"For instance, Grade 2 textbooks show men and women sharing household chores, along with a female doctor and a male chef. Students are asked to note these images and talk about them," the report said.

The Global Education Monitoring Report (GEM Report) is developed by an independent team and published by UNESCO. It has the official mandate of monitoring progress in meeting the Sustainable Development Goal on education.

The report provides an in-depth analysis of key factors for exclusion of learners in education systems worldwide, including background, identity and ability, gender, age, location, poverty, disability, ethnicity, indigeneity, language, religion, migration or displacement status, sexual orientation or gender iden-

7.97L STUDENTS FAIL IN HINDI IN UP BOARD EXAMS

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Lucknow, June 29: Nearly 7.97 lakh students in the Uttar Pradesh - known as the Hindi heartland - have failed in Hindi in the UP Secondary Board examinations for Classes 10 and 12, the results of which were announced Saturday.

According to the Board officials, around 2.70 lakh students failed to secure passing marks in Hindi in Intermediate, while 5.28 lakh students in High School failed in their Hindi paper. Around 2.39 lakh students of High School and Intermediate of the Board had skipped their Hindi papers.

A high school teacher who evaluated Hindi copies for Class 12, said on condition of anonymity, "Many of the children did not know simple words like 'atmavishwas' and wrote 'confidence', albeit with a wrong spelling. Some of them wrote 'suffer' for 'yatra'. This re-

Around 2.70 lakh students failed to secure passing marks in Intermediate, while 5.28 lakh students in High School failed in Hindi examinations

flects their level of the knowledge of the language," she said.

She further said that majority of the students tend to ignore Hindi because they feel there is no need to study the language which does not offer future prospects.

Board officials, meanwhile, said that the number of students failing in Hindi was around 10 lakh last year. Around 56 lakh students had appeared in the Board examinations of the UP Board this year.

India seeks extradition of 'project manager'

INDIA AND THE US HAVE BOTH INDICTED SAJID MIR OF PAKISTAN-BASED L&T GROUP FOR THE THREE-DAY ATTACKS ON HOTELS, A TRAIN STATION AND A JEWISH CENTRE

REUTERS

New Delhi, June 29: India is seeking the extradition of a top Pakistan militant suspected to have planned the 2008 Mumbai attacks after the United States said last week he was living freely in Pakistan, government officials said Sunday.

India and the United States have both indicted Sajid Mir of the Pakistan-based Lashkar-e-Taiba group for the three-day attacks on hotels, a train station and a Jewish centre in which 166 people were killed including six Americans.

While Pakistan took action against the Lashkar founder Hafiz Saeed last year, it continued to provide safe harbour to other top militant leaders, the US State

MUMBAI ATTACKS



Department's 2019 country report on terrorism said.

One of them was Sajid, the "project manager" of the Mumbai attack, believed to remain free in Pakistan, the US report said.

An Indian official said the government has repeatedly asked Pakistan to hand over Sajid who is charged with serving as chief planner of the attacks, directing preparations and reconnaissance and was also named as one of the Pakistan-based controllers during the attacks.

"We have asked before, and are demanding again, he needs to be handed over," the official dealing with regional security issues said.

Pakistan's foreign office did not immediately respond to a Reuters request for comment.

Pakistan has repeatedly rejected

US allegations that it is a safe haven for militants and said it has prosecuted the leadership of several proscribed groups.

Another Indian official said the lack of action against Sajid was in conflict with Pakistan's assurances to international organisations including the Financial Action Task Force, the global watchdog on terrorism financing. Pakistan is trying to get off the FATF grey list of offending nations.

The FBI has posted a reward of \$5 million for information leading to the capture of Sajid who is also wanted for a 2008/2009 plot against Denmark's Jyllands-Posten newspaper to avenge its publication of cartoons of the Prophet Mohammad that enraged many Muslims.

FLOODS IN ASSAM FORCE A MILLION FROM THEIR HOMES

AGENCIES

Guwahati, June 29: Heavy flooding triggered by monsoon rains has forced more than a million people to flee their homes in the northeast Indian state of Assam, authorities said Monday, warning that the crisis was becoming more critical by the hour.

The Brahmaputra River, one of the largest rivers in the world which flows from Tibet into India and then into Bangladesh, burst its banks in Assam over the weekend, inundating more than 2,000 villages, and it was still raining Monday. "Two people have died in separate incidents of drowning in the past 24 hours and more than one



million people have been affected, with the flood situation turning critical by the hour," a state government flood bulletin said.

Torrential rain hit at least 23 of Assam's 33 districts and the federal water resources body said water levels in the Brahmaputra were expected to rise, with more rain forecast over the next three days.

"The flood situation remains extremely grave with several embankments breached," Assam Water Resources Minister Keshab Mahanta told Reuters. Most of the Kaziranga National Park, home to the rare one-horned rhino, was under water, authorities said.

Delhi govt to set up 'plasma bank'

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, June 29: Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal Monday said that a 'plasma bank' will not be made operational in the national capital in two days to treat COVID-19 patients.

Plasma therapy involves injecting blood-component plasma extracted from a cured coronavirus patient into a positive case for treatment.

Addressing a press conference, Kejriwal said: "Plasma bank will be made operational at the Institute of Liver and Biliary Sciences in the next two days. Government or private hospitals in which the patient is being treated can prescribe plasma therapy after which ILBS can be approached."

The Chief Minister also urged cured patients to come forward to donate plasma and said that they will be provided taxi service to and from the hospital.

A contact number will also be made operational, on which people can call or message to inform the authorities that they want to donate plasma.

"People have this misconception that they will contract coronavirus again if they step into a hospital. I want to inform them that the possibility of contracting the virus again is low and, moreover, ILBS is not a COVID hospital," he emphasised.

of the day quote

The state shares more than 260 km boundary with Tibet and China and therefore, we need to be suitably prepared for any eventuality

BANDARU DATATRAYA | HIMACHAL GOVERNOR

The Modi government has increased the budget for Ladakh four-fold recently amid the India-China face-off in the region

HARDEEP SINGH PURI | UNION MINISTER FOR HOUSING AND CIVIL AVIATION

The testing capacity for COVID-19 should be increased. Available TrueNat and rapid antigen machines should be operated at full capacity for doing maximum tests in the state

YOGI ADITYANATH | UP CM

SHORT TAKES

BSF busts 'cruel' smuggling bid

Kolkata: The Border Security Force (BSF) busted a "cruel" cattle smuggling technique along the India-Bangladesh border in West Bengal after seizing a live calf tied up and concealed inside a carcass, officials said Monday. They said a river patrol of the border-guarding force noticed a floating carcass in the Mahananda river in the Malda district on Sunday, and upon probe found a live cattle inside it. "The carcass was cut open and a calf, whose legs were tied with ropes and eyes covered with a piece of cloth, was recovered," the BSF said.

Nagaland extends lockdown

Kohima: The Nagaland government Monday extended the lockdown in the state till July 15 to contain the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic, a government spokesperson said. The decision to extend the lockdown was taken during the state Cabinet meeting.

Cop injured

Pune (Maharashtra): A policeman sustained minor injuries when a pilot car in the convoy of Nationalist Congress Party president Sharad Pawar met with an accident here Monday morning, officials said. The incident occurred near the Amrutanjan Bridge on the Mumbai-Pune Expressway when Pawar was travelling from Pune to Mumbai. A police escort car behind Pawar's vehicle reportedly lost control, and overturned below the bridge, resulting in a traffic snarl.

1 killed, 10 hurt

Ramgarh: One person was killed and 10 others were injured when a bus carrying migrant workers to West Bengal from Gujarat overturned in Jharkhand's Ramgarh district, police said. The accident happened at Kenjhia valley on Gola-Ormanjhi state highway under Rajrappa police station of the district around 3.30 am, the Officer-in-Charge of the police station, Vinod Kumar Murmu, said.

Good news

Dehradun: The elephant population in Uttarakhand has increased by over 10 per cent in three years, an official statement said Monday. There were 1,839 elephants in the state in 2017, and their number has now mounted to 2,026, it said. An elephant census was carried out in the state for three days from June 6 to 8 this year.



“One cannot change one's nature, no matter how much time passes. They (Congress) try to give orders, directions on the issues of national security, economy, welfare of poor, interests of farmers based on their narrow-minded knowledge

MUKHTAR ABBAS NAQVI | UNION MINISTER

MEGHALAYA CM TESTS CORONA NEGATIVE

Meghalaya Chief Minister Conrad K. Sangma has tested negative for novel coronavirus, an official said Monday



NATIONWIDE PROTESTS

Congress ups ante over fuel price hike

Sonia Gandhi and Rahul Gandhi along with party leaders released a video message for workers, against the hike, and Congress workers adopted a unique method to protest using cycles and bullock carts



Indian Youth Congress workers stage a protest against the Central government over the hike in the prices of petrol and diesel, outside Shastri Bhawan in New Delhi, Monday

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, June 29: After a day-long protest against the fuel price hike across the country Monday, the Congress has hit out at the government for not rolling back the price hike.

Sonia Gandhi and Rahul Gandhi along with party leaders released a video message for workers and against the hike as Congress workers adopted a unique method to protest using cycles and bullock carts.

"The protests aimed at underlining the Government's extortionist looting of the common Indian during the Covid-19 crisis by profiteering at their cost," said Congress leader KC Venugopal.

In a statement, party General Secretary Venugopal said "The party thanks its volunteers and workers for making today's programme a huge success and hopes that the voice of the people will force the government to roll back its grossly anti people extortionist decision of raising prices by charging record excise duty from the people."

"The government has set a new

example of extortion from people through this unjustified increase in petrol and diesel prices. This is not only unjust but also insensitive," Congress interim President Sonia Gandhi had said, noting that it directly hurts the country's farmers, the poor, the working class, the middle class and the small businesses.

Former Congress President Rahul Gandhi said that "the government has raised prices of petrol and diesel 22 times. You will have to pay more for buying fuel. Indirectly, you suffer when inflation rises due to a hike in petrol and diesel prices," even as the prices burn a hole directly in ones pocket every time one goes to a filling station. "Price of crude oil is at an all-time low but fuel prices have touched an all-time high in India."

The Congress initiated a social media campaign "Speak Up Against Fuel Hike" in which the party claimed lakhs of messages and videos were exchanged and shared highlighting the plight of farmers, taxi and bus owners, transporters, labourers and the common people who suffer.

KEEPING WATCH ON DRAGON

VIGIL TIGHTENED IN INDIAN OCEAN

Saturday, the Indian Navy held a crucial exercise with Japanese Navy in the Indian Ocean region, an area where Chinese naval vessels and submarines are making frequent forays

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, June 29: The Navy has increased its surveillance missions and beefed up operational deployment in the Indian Ocean region in the wake of India's seven-week bitter border stand-off with China in eastern Ladakh, people familiar with the development said.

The Indian Navy is also ramping up its operational cooperation with various friendly naval forces like the US Navy and Japan Maritime Self Defense Force in view of the fast evolving regional security landscape, they said. Saturday, the Indian Navy held a crucial exercise with Japanese Navy in the Indian Ocean region, an area where Chinese naval vessels and submarines are making frequent forays, they said.

Indian Navy ships INS Rana and INS Kulish were part of the exercise while Japan Maritime Self Defense Forces deployed its two ships, JS Kashima and JS



Shimayuki, for the exercise. The exercise assumed significance as it took place amid India's border standoff with China in eastern Ladakh and Chinese Navy's aggressive posturing in South China Sea as well as in the Indo-Pacific region.

"The aim of the exercise was to enhance interoperability between the two navies," said a source. Navies from the US, India, Australia, Japan and France have been deepening their mutual co-operation in the Indo-Pacific region

in view of China's growing attempts to expand military influence in the resource-rich region.

Following an escalation in tension between India and China in eastern Ladakh after the killing of 20 Indian Army soldiers on June 15, the government put all the three forces on alert. The Indian Navy was asked to raise its alert level in the Indian Ocean Region where Chinese Navy has been making regular forays.

The people cited above said Indian Navy has increased its sur-

veillance missions and enhanced operational deployment in the Indian Ocean region in the last couple of weeks. "We are increasing surveillance to track Chinese activities in Indian Ocean region," said a military expert.

The Galwan Valley incident on June 15 was the biggest confrontation between the two militaries after their 1967 clashes in Nathu La when India lost around 80 soldiers while the death toll on the Chinese side was over 300. India and Japan are part of the influential "Quad" or Quadrilateral coalition which also comprises the United States and Australia.

In November 2017, the four countries gave shape to the long-pending "Quad" coalition to develop a new strategy to keep the critical sea routes in the Indo-Pacific free of any influence. The US has been pushing for a greater role for India in the Indo-Pacific which is seen by many countries as an effort to contain China's growing clout in the region.

They beat Covid, but not stigma

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Hyderabad, June 29: Family members or relatives of over 50 people who have recovered from COVID-19 are not willing to take their loved ones home fearing getting infected, forcing the government to keep them in state-run facilities, a senior official said Monday.

According to Dr Prabhakar Rao, nodal officer for COVID-19 at Gandhi Hospital here, about 50 such people are being kept at Nature Cure Hospital as their kin did not come forward to take them home.

"We had 60 such cases where the relatives or family members refused to take the recovered people home fearing that they and their children would also get infected. We are trying to convince them. As of now 50 such people, both men and women are being kept at the Nature Cure Hospital," Dr Prabhakar Rao said.

Some of the recovered patients are aged people, including a 93-year old woman and are still in Gandhi Hospital while the rest have been sent to different facilities. "We cannot use police force on the kin and ask them to take them back home. We are counselling them saying there is no harm due to the recovered persons. Some three or four people were taken home after we convinced them," he added. The State-run Gandhi Hospital which was declared a COVID-19 treatment facility is currently treating 723 patients, out of which over 350 are on oxygen supply.

According to him, the regular mortuary at Gandhi Hospital can accommodate 65 to 70 bodies. The hospital has set up an exclusive morgue for COVID-19 deaths with a capacity of about 20 bodies.

Prabhakar Rao said separate teams have been set up to handle the special morgue as per COVID-19 protocols.

Doda now terror-free: DGP

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Srinagar, June 29: With the killing of Hizbul Mujahideen terrorist Masood in an encounter in South Kashmir, the Doda district has become militancy free, police said Monday.

In a joint operation in the Khulchohar area of Anantnag district by the police and the Army Monday, a total of three terrorists were killed. These included two Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) terrorists, including one district commander, and one Hizbul Mujahideen commander of the name Masood.

"Doda district in Jammu Zone becomes totally militancy free once again as Masood was a last surviving terrorist of the Doda District," Director General of Jammu and



Kashmir Police Dilbag Singh said. The police said Masood was involved in a rape case and was absconding. He later joined the Hizbul Mujahideen and shifted his area of operation to Kashmir. Arms and ammunition, including an AK 47 rifle and two pistols were recovered from the slain terrorists.

"Three terrorists eliminated in the ensuing gunfight. One AK and

• In a joint operation in the Khulchohar area of Anantnag district by the police and the Army Monday, a total of three terrorists were killed

• These included two Lashkar-e-Taiba terrorists, including one district commander and one Hizbul Mujahideen commander

two Pistols recovered. Joint Operation in progress," Army said in a brief statement. According to the details, the Army and police had launched a cordon and search operation (CASO) on the basis of a specific information about the presence of terrorists. As the cordon was tightened, the hiding terrorists fired at the security forces which triggered the encounter.

EXTREME BRUTALITY

Monkey hanged to death



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Hyderabad, June 29: In a case of extreme brutality, a monkey was hanged to death from a tree by three people in a bid to scare other simians in Khammam district of Telangana, about 275 KM from here, forest department officials said Monday.

"The perpetrators, who admitted their guilt, are being booked under the Wildlife Protection Act," Sathupalli Forest Range Officer A Venkateswarlu said. The incident happened June 26 in

Vemsoor village and the video of the primate being hanged using a rope went viral, prompting the officials to investigate.

"The accused wanted to scare other monkeys by hanging the one which was caught. We found the carcass in a decomposed state. The accused are being booked under the Wildlife Protection Act," the official said. According to Venkateswarlu, people at Sathupalli and surrounding areas are suffering from monkey menace with the simians raiding the orchards giving sleepless nights to the locals. The official said as per a Telangana government directive 30 per cent of the area in Sathupalli forest range during afforestation will have edible wild fruit species to enhance the food base of monkeys and other wild animals so that when they are rehabilitated, there will be sufficient food available.

BACK TO SQUARE ONE

Hunger brought migrants home, now drives them back

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Patna, June 29: Hunger and hopelessness drove tens of thousands of migrant workers from cities of their dreams, vibrant and pulsating with life and activity, to languorous villages in Bihar during the lockdown.

It's hunger and hopelessness again that is pushing them back to the cities in Gujarat, Maharashtra, Karnataka and Telangana, and the sprawling farms of Punjab, disregarding the threat of the coronavirus disease that had brought them to their knees.

Their employers, many of whom had virtually abandoned them, are sending them train and even flight tickets to bring them back as fac-

tories whirl back to life, construction activity picks up, and the sowing season has started. Mail and express trains to places like Ahmedabad, Amritsar, Secunderabad and Bangalore, from where these workers hurried back home, walking, cycling and travelling on trucks and even the hollow of container trucks and concrete mixing plants, are running to capacity.

According to sources in the East Central Zone of the railways, the average occupancy in Muzaffarpur-Ahmedabad Special is 133 per cent, Danapur-Secunderabad special (126 per cent), Jaynagar-Amritsar special (123 per cent), Danapur-Bengaluru city special (120 per cent), Patna-Ahmedabad special



(117 per cent), Saharsa-New Delhi special (113 per cent) and Danapur-Pune special (102 per cent).

Chief Public Relations Officer (CPRO), ECR, Rajesh Kumar, said that the railways is closely monitoring the waiting lists and quickly

updating reservation status to facilitate travel. "If need arises, more trains can be run on routes witnessing heavy traffic," he said.

ECR includes Danapur, Sonapur, Deendayal Upadhyaya, Samastipur and Dhanbad railway divisions. A

report from north Bihar's Darbhanga district said luxury buses and other vehicles with Maharashtra, Punjab, Haryana and Andhra Pradesh number plates could be seen transporting migrants back to their places of work.

Several companies in the manufacturing, industrial goods and real estate sector have even chartered aircraft to bring back their skilled and semi-skilled employees. "Whatever money I had has been spent. I don't know when I will get the job card for working in MN-REGA projects. We may die of hunger staying here and protecting ourselves from coronavirus," said Kusho Mandal of Anandpur village, who worked as a farm hand in

Punjab before the lockdown began.

The fields of Punjab are beckoning Rajeev Chaupal of Ratyari-Khirikpur village, too. "I am returning to the farm of my employer in Punjab. He has promised me handsome cash," he said. They said they are being offered Rs 5,000 for planting paddy saplings on an acre of farmland instead of Rs 3,500 that was the going rate before the outbreak. Their families are also getting paid Rs 15,000-20,000 advance. People like Mandal and Chaupal are leaving for their old places of work despite the launch of Rs 50,000 crore 'Garib Kalyan Rojgar Abhiyaan' by Prime Minister Narendra Modi to give a fresh impetus to rural livelihood.

of the day quote

I am deeply concerned that even the most minimalist form of annexation would lead to increased violence and loss of life, as walls are erected, security forces deployed and the two populations brought into closer proximity

MICHELLE BACHELET | UN HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

The shooting down of a Ukrainian airliner in Iran in January was due to human error and not an order from senior military authorities, the military prosecutor for Tehran province

GHOLAM ABBAS TORKI | MILITARY PROSECUTOR FOR TEHRAN PROVINCE

I encourage the Palestinians not to lose another opportunity. They should be prepared to negotiate a historic compromise that could bring peace to Israelis and Palestinians alike

BENJAMIN NETANYAHU | ISRAELI PRIME MINISTER

SHORT TAKES

23 killed in Afghan blast

Kabul: A car bombing and mortar shells fired at a busy market in southern Afghanistan's Helmand province Monday killed 23 people, including children, a statement from a provincial governor's office said. Both the Taliban and the Afghan military blame each other for the attack in Sangin district. Details of the reported attack could not be independently confirmed as the area, which is under Taliban control, is remote and inaccessible to reporters.

Rainstorms batter southern China

Beijing: Torrential rains battered China's southwest Sichuan province, killing at least 12 people and leaving 10 missing, authorities said. The rainstorm hit Mianqing County Friday and Saturday that triggered floods in Yihai Township, killing at least 10 people and seven remain missing, the county government was quoted as saying by the state-run Xinhua news agency. Two vehicles plunged into a river in the Gaoyang sub-district after flooding damaged the highway, killing two persons, and leaving three others missing, the report said Monday.

SL lifts curfew ahead of polls

Colombo: Sri Lanka has decided to delay reopening the country to foreign tourists by at least two weeks, but lifted its nationwide curfew Monday as the island-nation prepares to hold parliamentary elections in the coming weeks. The island nation was initially planning to open its international airports to tourists on August 1, but has now decided to give priority to repatriate stranded Sri Lankans.

Kartarpur reopens

Lahore: Pakistan Monday reopened the Kartarpur Corridor more than three months after it was temporarily closed due to the COVID-19 pandemic, but no Indian pilgrim visited the Gurdwara Darbar Sahib, a top official said. India temporarily suspended the pilgrimage and registration for the Kartarpur Sahib Gurdwara in Pakistan March 16 in view of the coronavirus outbreak.



Let's not mince our words, I mean this Pandemic has been an absolute nightmare for the country and the country has gone through a profound shock

BORIS JOHNSON | UK PRIME MINISTER

SMART MRI

A type of smart MRI scan used in people with heart disease could help assess whether children's cancers are especially aggressive and spot early signs that targeted treatments are working, say researchers



PANDEMIC PUSHES MILLIONS INTO HUNGER

THE NUMBER OF HUNGRY PEOPLE ACROSS THE GLOBE COULD INCREASE TO 270MN BEFORE THE END OF 2020 , SAID WFP

AGENCIES

Johannesburg, June 29: Millions of people have been pushed into hunger by the coronavirus pandemic, the UN World Food Program said Monday as it appealed for nearly \$5 billion to help feed the growing numbers in poor and middle-income countries.

"The frontline in the battle against the coronavirus is shifting from the rich world to the poor world," said David Beasley, WFP's executive director. "Until the day we have a medical vaccine, food is the best vaccine against chaos."

He said without access to enough food, the world could see "increased social unrest and protests, a rise



WFP IS UNDERTAKING THE BIGGEST HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE IN ITS HISTORY, AIMING TO ASSIST 138 MILLION PEOPLE

The new challenge requires a big increase in the use of cash-based transfers

Coronavirus infection levels are climbing when food stocks in some parts of the world are already low

in migration, deepening conflict and widespread under-nutrition among populations that were previously immune from hunger."

To tackle the rising tide of hunger, WFP is undertaking the biggest humanitarian response in its history, aiming to assist 138 million

people, up from from a previous record of 97 million in 2019. The agency says sustained funding is needed to support its work in 83 countries, to provide food to the most vulnerable and to support governments working to curb the spread of Covid-19.

The number of hungry people in the countries where it operates could increase to 270 million before the end of 2020 — an 82% increase from before the pandemic took hold, said WFP. The fallout from the pandemic is being felt hardest in Latin America, which has seen an almost three-fold rise in the number of people requiring food assistance, and among urban communities in low- and middle-income countries, which are being dragged into destitution by job losses and a precipitous drop in remittances. At this time of year, many farmers are awaiting crops from new harvests. Hurricane and monsoon seasons are getting underway, while record locust invasions

in East Africa and outbreaks of conflict are adding to an already challenging outlook for the world's hungry. "This unprecedented crisis requires an unprecedented response. If we do not respond rapidly and effectively to this viral threat, the outcome will be measured in an unconscionable loss of life, and efforts to roll back the tide of hunger will be undone," said Beasley.

The new challenge requires a big increase in the use of cash-based transfers. Over half of WFP's new response plan will be delivered in cash and vouchers — allowing urban communities to purchase their food needs in local markets, which boosts local economies.

China to impose visa ban on Americans



ASSOCIATED PRESS

Beijing, June 29: China said Monday that it would retaliate against US moves to punish officials tied to political crackdowns in Hong Kong by imposing visa restrictions on Americans it considers to have "performed badly" on matters regarding the semi-autonomous Chinese territory.

Foreign ministry spokesman Zhao Lijian gave no details in making the announcement at a daily briefing. It wasn't clear if the measure targeted only US government officials or those in the private sector as well. It comes as China's legislature is expected to pass a national security law for Hong Kong Tuesday that critics say will severely limit opposition politics and freedom of speech in the city. The US says it will respond by ending favourable trading terms granted to the former British colony after it passed to Chinese control in 1997.

French ex-PM, wife found guilty of fraud

AGENCIES

Paris, June 29: A Paris court Monday found French former prime minister Francois Fillon guilty of having used public funds to pay his wife and children for work they never performed.

The work had brought the family more than 1 million euros (\$1.13 million) since 1998. The couple's lawyers immediately announced an appeal. Fillon, 66, was sentenced to five years in prison, three of which were suspended, and a 375,000 euro (\$423,100) fine. He is also banned from seeking elected office for 10 years. He remains free pending appeal.

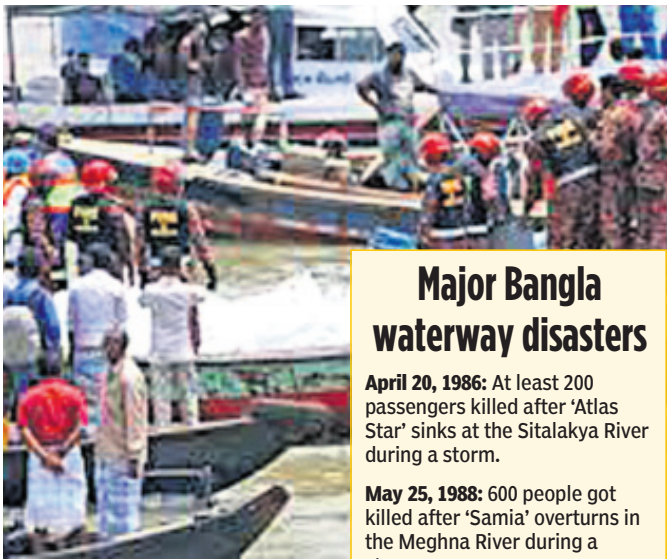


His wife, Penelope Fillon, 64, was found guilty as an accomplice. She was given a three-year suspended sentence and fined the same amount. The scandal broke in the French media just three months before the country's 2017 presidential election, as Fillon was the front-runner in the race. It cost him his reputation. Fillon sank to third place in the election, which was won by Emmanuel Macron. Fillon, who was France's prime minister from 2007 to 2012, and his wife have denied any wrongdoing and can appeal the decision. Penelope Fillon's role alongside her husband drew all the attention during the February-March trial, which focused on determining whether her activities were in the traditional role of an elected official's partner — or involved actual paid work. Prosecutors denounced "fraudulent, systematic practices." Fillon was accused of misuse of public funds, receiving money from the misuse of public funds and the misappropriation of company assets.

China to centralise command over military reserve forces

Beijing: China's military reserve forces will be formally placed under the centralised and unified command of the Communist Party of China (CPC) and Central Military Commission (CMC), both headed by President Xi Jinping, from July 1 to ensure the ruling party's "absolute leadership" over it and build a world-class army. Currently, the reserve forces are under the dual leadership of military organs and local Communist Party committees and they would be brought under the control of the ruling party and the CMC from July 1, the state-run Xinhua news agency reported.

32 killed in B'desh boat mishap, dozens missing



AGENCIES

Dhaka, June 29: At least 32 people were drowned and many were missing on Monday when a ferry carrying over 100 passengers capsized in Buriganga river after it was hit by a bigger vessel in the Bangladeshi capital here, officials said.

Following the accident, the driver and other staff of Moyur-2, which was carrying some 1,000 passengers, immediately left the scene and went into hiding, police said. Navy and coast guard divers joined the fire service rescuers while a BIWTA salvage ship was deployed to retrieve the sunken Morning Bird, described by eye witnesses as a small dilapidated vessel, which quickly capsized after being hit from behind by the bigger vessel Moyur-2.

People along the shore immediately came to the aid of the victims with country boats before the arrival of the operators with rescue equipment, eye witnesses said. It was not clear how many people swam to safety or how many are still missing. "The muddy water is disrupting the rescue operation, affecting divers' visibility," a fire service official said.

Poor safety standards of vessels and their reckless driving have been repeatedly blamed for frequent ferry accidents in riverine Bangladesh. In most of the cases, the ferries carry passengers beyond their capacity.

Major Bangla waterway disasters

April 20, 1986: At least 200 passengers killed after 'Atlas Star' sinks at the Sitalkya River during a storm.

May 25, 1988: 600 people got killed after 'Samia' overturns in the Meghna River during a storm.

December 27, 1988: At least 200 passengers die after a cargo vessel rams 'Haisal,' leading it to sink, on the Dhaleswari River.

August 20, 1994: Over 200 passengers die after an overcrowded ferry sinks in the Meghna River.

December 28, 2000: At least 158 people of MV Rajhongshi die after the launch collides with another vessel in Meghna River during Eid holidays.

May 3, 2002: Over 400 passengers killed after MV Salahuddin-2 sinks at Meghna river.

April 2003: Two launches – ML Mitali and ML Majlish – capsizes during a nor'wester instantly killing at least 300 passengers.

July 8, 2003: At least 110 people die and about 200 go missing and many others injured after MV Nasrin-1, a triple-deck ferry, sinks in the Meghna River.

May 22, 2004: At least 200 die as three ferries – MV Lighting Sun, MV Diganta, and ML Majlishpur – sinks in separate accidents in Bangladesh.

February 21, 2005: Total 118 people die after a ferry sinks close to Dhaka.

August 4, 2014: At least 49 people die and over 50 go missing after MV Pinak, carrying over 300 passengers, capsizes at Padma River.

FOR THEIR RIGHTS



A protester holds up a sign during a Black Lives Matter march in London, Britain

REUTERS

China forces birth control on Uighurs to curb population

EVEN WHILE THE USE OF IUDs (INTRAUTERINE CONTRACEPTIVE DEVICE) AND STERILIZATION HAS FALLEN NATIONWIDE, IT IS RISING SHARPLY IN XINJIANG

AGENCIES

Beijing, June 29: The Chinese government is taking draconian measures to slash birth rates among Uighurs and other minorities as part of a sweeping campaign to curb its Muslim population, even as it encourages some of the country's Han majority to have more children.

While individual women have spoken out before about forced birth control, the practice is far more widespread and systematic than previously known, according to an investigation based on government statistics, state documents and interviews with 30 ex-detainees, family members and a former detention camp instructor.

The campaign over the past four years in the far west region of Xinjiang is leading to what some experts are calling a form of "demographic genocide."



The state regularly subjects minority women to pregnancy checks, and forces intrauterine devices, sterilization and even abortion on hundreds of thousands, the interviews and data show.

The population control measures are backed by mass detention both as a threat and as a punishment for failure to comply.

Birth rates in the mostly Uighur regions of Hotan and Kashgar plunged by more than 60% from 2015 to 2018, the latest year available in government statistics.

Across the Xinjiang region, birth rates continue to plummet, falling nearly 24% last year alone — compared to just 4.2% nationwide, statistics show.

For decades, China had one of the most extensive systems of minority entitlements in the world, with Uighurs and others getting more points on college entrance exams, hiring quotas for government posts and laxer birth control restrictions.

Worst virus fears are realised in poor countries

Worldwide, there are more than 10 million confirmed cases, and over 500,000 reported deaths. But experts say these numbers are serious undercounts of the true toll of the pandemic, due to limited testing and missed mild cases

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Cape Town, June 29: For months, experts have warned of a potential nightmare scenario: After overwhelming health systems in some of the world's wealthiest regions, the coronavirus gains a foothold in



poor or war-torn countries ill-equipped to contain it and sweeps through the population.

Now some of those fears are being realised. In Sudan's war-ravaged Darfur region, where there is little testing capacity, a mysterious illness resembling COVID-19 is spreading through camps for the internally displaced. Cases are soaring in India and Pakistan, together home to more than 1.5 billion people

and where authorities say nationwide lockdowns are no longer an option because of high poverty.

In Latin America, Brazil has a confirmed caseload and death count second only to the United States, and its leader is unwilling to take steps to stem the spread of the virus. Alarming escalations are unfolding in Peru, Chile, Ecuador and Panama, even after they imposed early lockdowns.

The first reports of disarray are also emerging from hospitals in South Africa, which has its continent's most developed economy. Sick patients are lying on beds in corridors as one hospital runs out of space. At another, an emergency morgue was needed to hold more than 700 bodies.

Worldwide, there are 10.1 million confirmed cases and over 501,000 reported deaths, according to a tally by Johns Hopkins University of government reports.

Experts say both those numbers are serious undercounts of the true toll of the pandemic, due to limited testing and missed mild cases.

South Africa has more than a third of Africa's confirmed cases of COVID-19 with 138,000 as of Monday. It's ahead of other African countries in the pandemic timeline and approaching its peak. So far its facilities have managed to cope, but if they become overwhelmed, it will

be a grim forewarning because South Africa's health system is reputed to be the continent's best.

Some, like Uganda, which already had a sophisticated detection system built up during its yearslong battle with viral hemorrhagic fever, have thus far been arguably more successful than the US and other wealthy countries in battling coronavirus.

But since the beginning of the pandemic, poor and conflict-ravaged countries have been at a major disadvantage, and they remain so.

South Africa leads Africa in testing, but an initially promising program has now been overrun in Cape Town, which alone has more reported cases than any other African country except Egypt.

Critical shortages of kits have forced city officials to abandon testing for anyone under 55 unless they have a serious health condition or are in a hospital.

of the day quote

May saw a turnaround in monthly total filled jobs. The full lockdown throughout April brought reports of businesses hibernating to try to weather the storm with assistance from the wage subsidy

SUE CHAPMAN | ECONOMIC STATISTICS MANAGER, NEW ZEALAND

In order to revamp and strengthen the existing statistical system, the ministry has come up with a project called National Integrated Information Portal, which would imbibe new information technology solutions in the field of data acquisition, processing and dissemination

RAO INDERJIT SINGH | UNION MINISTER

Through our partnership (with CCD), we aim to push the frontiers of innovative food and beverage experience for momo- as well as coffee-lovers across India. CCD is an ideal fit for our brand

SAGAR DARYANI | CEO AND FOUNDER, WOW! MOMO

SHORT TAKES

Starbucks' dine-in facility to resume

New Delhi: Tata Starbucks Monday said the company will resume dine-in services in seven cities across India, with elevated cleaning and sanitising protocols. Stores will operate with 50% seating capacity to allow for social distancing between customers and employees, said Tata Starbucks in a statement. The selected Starbucks stores are in Delhi, Bangalore, Hyderabad, Kolkata, Ahmedabad, Surat and Vadodra.

China's industrial profits drop 19 pc

Beijing: The profits of China's major industrial companies dropped by 19.3% y-o-y between January and May this year due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) said. According to the NBS, industrial profits stood at 1.84 trillion yuan (\$260 billion) for the first five months of the year. The figure is less than the projections offered by analysts, who had predicted a 22% fall in profits during this period.

IOC to set up tech centre

New Delhi: Indian Oil Corp (IOC), the nation's biggest oil firm, Monday said it will set up a new technology development centre focussed on clean and alternative energy solutions. The new centre at Faridabad on the outskirts of the national capital will be the second R&D campus of IOC, the company said in a statement. Oil Minister Dharmendra Pradhan and Haryana CM Manohar Lal laid the foundation stone of the Technology Development and Development Centre.

Realtors resort to layoffs, pay cuts

Mumbai: Hit by the coronavirus pandemic, real estate developers have resorted to layoffs and pay cuts and are focusing on cost control measures as sales are likely to remain muted in the coming months, according to industry experts. The real estate sector has been facing headwinds since the past three-four years following demonetisation, RERA and GST rollout as well as delays in approvals. The COVID-19 crisis has further impacted market sentiment and sales.



I am trying to convince high-income countries to reserve vaccines not only for themselves but also for low and middle income countries. This is a stress test for solidarity

URSULA VON DER LEYEN | PRESIDENT, EUROPEAN COMMISSION

AMAZON INDIA SCRAPS SINGLE-USE PLASTIC IN PACKAGING

Amazon India has eliminated all single-use plastic in packaging originating from its 50-plus fulfillment centres in India. In September 2019, the company had pledged to meet this goal in an accelerated time frame by June this year, it said in a statement



GOVT PLANS INCENTIVES FOR AUTO FIRMS TO BOOST EXPORTS

REUTERS

New Delhi, June 29: The government is drawing up an incentive scheme for the auto-sector aimed at doubling exports of vehicles and components in the next five years, four sources with direct knowledge of the matter told Reuters.

The Department of Heavy Industries (DHI) has sought feedback from auto industry groups on the initial proposal, which suggests giving incentives over five years to increase local production and procurement for export, the sources said.

The incentives would be based on the sales value of vehicles or components and eligible companies would need to meet certain

conditions, including a minimum revenue and profit threshold and presence in at least 10 countries, two of the sources said, adding the form the incentives would take had not been decided.

DHI did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

The move is part of India's effort to create 'champion' sectors to attract investment, generate jobs and boost manufacturing, and comes amid calls by PM Narendra Modi to be self-reliant as a nation.

India wants to promote exports and has identified some sectors, including autos and textiles, for which incentive plans are being designed, said a senior government official. "For autos the government has



The incentives would be based on the sales value of vehicles or components

engaged with various stakeholders. We have to see what needs to be done in the global context," said the official, adding that even though

talks are in early stages and details have not been finalised there is a plan to give a "big push" to the sector.

India's auto sector exports touched \$27 billion in the fiscal year ending March 2019, led by companies including Ford, Hyundai, Maruti Suzuki, Volkswagen and Bosch, which analysts say stand to gain the most.

The push, however, comes at a time when auto sales globally have been battered because of the coronavirus pandemic and demand may take a while to recover.

To make it a success in the present scenario, India needs to ensure the proposal is not complicated by too many conditions and is not based on sales targets, said Vinay

Auto exports slump 73 pc in May

Mumbai: The auto exports plunged 73% last month to \$230.3 million (about ₹1,736 crore) as compared to the year-ago period with shipments to key markets like the US and Mexico registering a sharp decline owing to supply-chain issues due to lockdown, EEPIC India said Monday. The exports of auto components too suffered a major setback during the month with important markets including the US, Mexico, Germany and Japan reporting "de-growth in the range of 34-68%", the Engineering Exports Promotion Council (EEPC) India said in a release. "COVID-19 public health crisis has taken a massive toll on exports of India's automobiles in May 2020 with as much annualised erosion as 98% and 65% in shipments to key markets like the US and Mexico, respectively," it said.

Piparsania, consulting director, automotive, at Counterpoint Research.

"Having a liberal trade policy will allow companies to bring in new and global technologies which will increase their scale and India's competitiveness as an export hub,"

he said. The initial scheme has been designed to incentivise large companies and in turn benefit smaller players in the supply chain, making the auto sector more competitive overall, one of the sources said.

Airtel, Voda Idea lose race against Reliance Jio in state

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, June 29: As per the latest telecom subscriber data released by Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI), private telecom major Reliance Jio added over 2.4 lakh subscribers in Odisha in the month of February 2020. On the other hand, except state-owned telecom service provider BSNL, Bharti Airtel and Vodafone Idea lost subscribers significantly in the same month.

TRAI's report says, "BSNL added over 75,000 subscribers while Bharti Airtel lost over 83,000 subscribers followed by Vodafone Idea who lost nearly 29,000 subscribers in February, 2020."

With the new addition, Jio has crossed over 1.23 crore subscribers in Odisha as on February 29, 2020 as per the subscriber data.

The overall mobile subscribers' base in the state witnessed an increase of nearly 2.06 lakh subscribers in February, taking the total subscribers to nearly 3.34 crores. As per the data provided by TRAI for February 2020, Reliance Jio continue to lead the market in the coastal state with 1,23,25,587 subscribers.

State govt grants ₹608 cr investment proposals

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, June 29: The Government of Odisha Monday approved five investment proposals in sectors like metal, food processing, and logistics & infrastructure during the 92nd State Level Single Window Clearance Authority (SLSWCA) meeting.

The five investment proposals are worth over ₹608.79 crore and they would create employment opportunities for 1,496 people.

SLSWCA meeting was chaired by Chief Secretary Asit Kumar Tripathy at Lok Seva Bhawan, Bhubaneswar (Odisha). Principal Secretary of Industries department Hemant Sharma outlined the project proposals for consideration.

In a big boost to the state's metal downstream sector, M/s Reliable Sponge Pvt. Limited is looking at setting up Iron Ore Beneficiation plant of 2.5 MTPA and Pellet Plant of 2.0 MTPA, with an investment of ₹250 crore and with providing employment to about 250 people.



In the logistics & Infrastructure sector, M/S Sravan Shipping Services Pvt. Ltd will be setting up a logistics park at Jadupur (Mahakalapada Block) Kendrapada district. The company will invest ₹100 crore in this regard. The project will provide employment to around 250 people.

Grain-based distillery plant will be coming up in Odisha. M/s Chilika Distilleries Pvt. Ltd will set up a 110 Kilo Litre per day (KLDP) distillery plant with an investment of ₹99.97 crore. Around 170 people will be

employed through this project. Similarly, M/s SOM Distilleries & Breweries Odisha Pvt. Ltd will also set up a 120 KLDP capacity grain-based distillery unit. The plant will be established with an amount of ₹93 crore and will provide jobs to as many as 126 people. Likewise, M/s Growel Feeds Pvt. Ltd will be setting up a shrimp feed and fish feed manufacturing facility in the state. The investment proposal is estimated with an amount of ₹65.82 crore and will provide employment to 700 people.

HUDCO records 45 pc growth in net profit during FY'20

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, June 29: Housing and Urban Development Corporation (HUDCO) Monday said that it registered outstanding financial results witnessing a 45 per cent growth in net profit during the financial year 2019-20.

HUDCO CMD M Nagaraj said, "HUDCO's robust performance in 2019-2020, wherein the company has recorded outstanding financial results in its Golden Jubilee Year witnessing a 45% growth in Net Profit that has touched an all-time high. The net profit reached ₹1,708.42 crore in FY 2019-20 from ₹1,180.15 crore in 2018-2019."

Nagaraj also said that HUDCO saw 13 per cent growth in its net worth that has reached ₹12343.49



The net total income witnessed a quantum jump of 35 pc to ₹7571.64 crore in 2019-2020, from ₹5591.22 crore in 2018-2019

M NAGARAJ | CMD, HUDCO

crore in FY 2019-20, from ₹10955.77 crore in FY 2018-19. "The net total income also witnessed a quantum jump of 35% to ₹7571.64 crore in 2019-2020, from ₹5591.22 crore in 2018-2019," he added.

HUDCO Board has also approved all-time high dividend. Director (Finance) D Guhan said, "HUDCO Board has also approved an all-time high dividend of ₹3.10 per share subject to approval by

the shareholders. The above includes interim dividend of ₹0.75 per share paid in March, 2020.

Guhan also stated that the total dividend recommended by the Company is ₹620.59 crores against ₹165.16 crore in the previous year.

At present, HUDCO's net NPA is 0.19 per cent, which is among the lowest in the sector. During FY'20, HUDCO's emphasis was on sanction of projects pertaining to Housing-PMAY (U), Expressways and Water Supply projects.

BIZ BUZZ

Housing sales drop 49 pc during H1 2020

New Delhi: Impacted by the pandemic and the nationwide lockdown, housing sales across the seven major cities nearly halved during the first six months of 2020 compared to the second half of 2019, according to a report by Anarock Property Consultants. A total of 57,940 units were sold during January-June, the data showed. "Sales decreased by 49% in H1 2020 compared to H2 2019 as every city underwent contraction. The contraction was in the range of 46% to 51% across the top seven cities of India," the report said. Sales in Q2 2020 accounted only for 22% of H1 2020, which primarily led to an overall decline in half-yearly sales. Housing sales during April-June 2020 were 72% lower than the previous quarter and nearly 81% down from Q2 2019.



Bol gets new Zonal Manager

Bhubaneswar: Priyabrata Pattnaik, DGM has taken charge of Bhubaneswar Zonal Office of Bank of India (BoI) as the new Zonal Manager. Prior to this assignment he was heading the Agra Zonal Office in Uttar Pradesh. He joined BoI in the year 1977 as a clerk. Pattnaik has successfully worked in various capacities across the country in states like West Bengal, Odisha, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh. In 2017 he was promoted as the DGM and joined at the Zonal Audit Office in Bhopal and thereafter joined as the Zonal Manager of Agra Zonal Office. Pattnaik is now giving more importance to agriculture, MSME & retail borrowers as well as NPA management of the Bank.



PRIYABRATA PATTNAIK

'Global economy to witness extended span of instability'

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

London, June 29: World's top economies like the US, the UK and Germany should prepare for a long slow recovery with prolonged periods of instability in the wake on COVID-19 pandemic, a new research has warned.

The team from University of Surrey's Centre for Understanding Sustainable Prosperity (CUSP) found that even before the COVID-19 crisis, many of the world's leading economies were experiencing larger slower growth cycles (recession cycles), suggesting precisely such a period of critical slowing down in the economic system.

The team's analysis suggested that the added weight of the COVID-19 crisis may result in one of the weakest and most unstable recov-

DECELERATING GROWTH



A team from CUSP found that even before the COVID-19 crisis, many of the world's leading economies were experiencing larger recession cycles

The global economy is facing one of the largest downturns since the Great Depression in the 1930s

The IMF expects global GDP to decline by 5 pc this year alone

eries in recorded history for many economies.

The global economy is facing one of the largest downturns since the

Great Depression in the 1930s.

"Placing the economy on hold to prevent unfathomable human tragedy from the Covid-19 pandemic

was the right decision. Trying to force our way back to economic growth now would be the wrong one. A post-growth world is the new normal," said Professor Tim Jackson, Director of CUSP at the University of Surrey in a paper published by Nature.

Rates of growth across member states of Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) have been in decline since the 1970s, a phenomenon known as 'secular stagnation'.

The average growth in gross domestic product (GDP) per capita fell from over 4 per cent in the mid-1960s to little more than 1 per cent in the pre-pandemic years.

The International Monetary Fund (IMF) expects global GDP to decline by 5% this year alone with a contraction of 3% likely even in

the emerging and developing market economies.

"It's time to rethink and remake the economic models that have been failing us for decades. The challenge is enormous. But so is the prize. CSD theory suggests that a resilient, sustainable economic system which protects the health of people and planet is now within our grasp," Jackson noted.

The overall number of global COVID-19 cases crossed the 10 million mark on Sunday, with deaths nearing 500,000, according to the Johns Hopkins University.

The US accounted for the world's highest number of infections and fatalities with 2,510,323 and 125,539, respectively, according to the CSSE.

Brazil came in the second place with 1,313,667 infections and 57,070 deaths.

CIL identifies 14 addtl projects for 'first mile connectivity'

AGENCIES

New Delhi, June 29: Coal India has identified 14 additional projects involving capital expenditure of more than ₹3,400 crore under the 'first mile connectivity' initiative to upgrade transport facility at mines, the state-run miner said Monday.

The state-run miner is replacing road transport of coal from pit-heads to despatch points with mechanised systems like conveyor belts to decrease the transportation time. It had announced 35 projects under the first phase of the initiative of which two are operational.

"Four coal companies of CIL (Coal India Ltd) together will infuse a tentative capital of over ₹3,400 crore in these projects that have a total of 100.5 million tonnes/year capacity," the company said in a statement.

Of the 14 projects in the phase II, Central Coalfields Ltd (CCL) accounts for five with 62.5 million tonnes per annum capacity.

Mahanadi Coalfields Ltd with a solitary project has 20 million tonnes per annum capacity Eastern Coalfields Ltd has seven projects and South Eastern Coalfields Ltd has one project with a capacity of 14 million tonnes per annum and four million tonnes per annum, respectively, the statement said.

Tenders for these different projects will be floated beginning August this year till next two years.

Coal India aims to replace the existing road transport between pit-heads and despatch points and switch over to a seamless mechanised coal transport through conveyor belts which is a covered system for movement of coal reducing the dust pollution.



Real go 2-point clear of Barca

Brilliant Benzema no-look pass sets up Casemiro goal as Los Blancos edge past Espanyol to move ahead of their arch rivals



ASSOCIATED PRESS

Barcelona, June 29: A brilliant back-heeled pass by Karim Benzema helped Real Madrid take a step toward reclaiming the Spanish league title with a 1-0 win at Espanyol.

With Espanyol about to make it to halftime with a clean sheet, Benzema cleverly unlocked the hosts' defense Sunday. He used a no-look pass with his heel to poke the ball through the legs of defender Bernardo Espinosa and met Casemiro's move into the heart of the box.

Casemiro's resulting goal and some flawless defending were all Madrid needed to win and move ahead of Barcelona by two points at the top of the table.

Zinedine Zidane's team took advantage of Barcelona's 2-2 draw at Celta Vigo Saturday by securing a fifth straight win since the league resumed following a three-month stoppage as Spain contained its COVID-19 outbreak.

The title rivals have six games left. Madrid holds the tiebreaker on head-to-head results in the event

they finish level on points. The run-in seems tougher for defending champion Barcelona, which faces third-place Atletico Madrid Tuesday at Camp Nou.

Last-place Espanyol appears headed for the second division after falling 10 points from safety. Sunday's matches continued to be closed to fans due to the coronavirus pandemic, like all games in Spain since the competition resumed two weeks ago.

An accelerated schedule has games every three days in order to finish the season by July 19.

Espanyol hung on in the match until Benzema and Casemiro combined to decide the contest between a trophy-chasing powerhouse and a team needing a miracle to avoid the drop.

The biggest weapon of the Barcelona-based Espanyol was China forward Wu Lei, whose speed produced two promising attacks early on. Madrid defender Dani Carvajal blocked a strike by Sergi Darder three minutes into the game when Wu found him with a low cross.

But Madrid proved the more dan-

gerous side throughout. Casemiro forced goalkeeper Diego Lopez to palm his lob from Madrid's own half over the bar before Benzema tested him with a powerful shot in the 36th.

Lopez was helpless in the 45th when Benzema set up Casemiro, and the hosts never gave signs of recovering in a second half dominated by Madrid's high ball possession.

Espanyol was coached by sports director Francisco Rufete, a former player who stepped in after the club fired Abelardo Fernandez Saturday. Rufete is the team's fourth coach this season.

Paco Alcaacer and Gerard Moreno scored two superb goals to help Villarreal beat regional rival Valencia 2-0 and stay in the fight for a Champions League spot.

Moreno passed for Alcaacer to execute an excellent volley and give Villarreal the 14th-minute lead. Moreno added a second goal just before halftime off a brilliant pass from Santi Cazorla in an impressive team move. Cazorla used a subtle touch to cushion a long ball lobbed

forward by his goalkeeper and kept it aloft for Moreno to smash home.

Villarreal is one of the hottest sides in the league since play resumed in Spain. Javier Calleja's team has earned 13 of a possible 15 points since the restart and is now three points from fourth place and the last Champions League place. Villarreal has kept a clean sheet in those four wins.

Valencia is among the worst performers since the resumption of the league. Valencia has won four of 15 points, and is eight points from fourth-place Sevilla.

Coach Albert Celades, who has had run-ins with players recently, said he did not fear for his job despite the bad run of results.

Eibar's 2-1 win at Granada moved the Basque Country club further away from the drop zone and the trio of clubs staring at relegation.

Celta is the last team in safety with an eight-point advantage over the bottom three of Mallorca, Leganes and Espanyol. Levante also beat Real Betis 4-2. Both teams remained in the middle of the standings.

Setien's sacking inevitable!

AGENCIES

Barcelona, June 29: Quique Setien is on verge of losing his job at Barcelona as the Catalan giants are all prepared to sack the manager, suggests a report by 'Goal'. However, the report also says that the former Real Betis manager can save his job if the results drastically improve and they win La Liga or Champions League.

The veteran coach, who only took the Camp Nou job in January as replacement for Ernesto Valverde, has lost the confidence of the dressing room, while the club's board is also unhappy with recent performances.

Unless Barca's displays for the remainder of the 2019-20 campaign have a significant upswing, it is understood that it is inevitable Setien will leave his post in the summer.

Setien was given a two-and-a-half-year contract, however as things stand he will not be able to see out more than a few months of this deal.

Player power at Barcelona is strong - led by stars such as Lionel Messi and Gerard Pique - and the dressing room has turned against Setien due to confusion at his tactics and unhappiness at his comments in the press.

They are also unhappy with

Setien being too hands-on in training - similar to how Real Madrid's stars turned against Rafael Benitez before he was sacked and replaced by Zinedine Zidane - while the assistant manager, Eder Sarabia, is also a very unpopular figure.

Setien has also lost the confidence of the board, who hoped the coach would help smooth things over after Valverde's departure - however poor results and negative football has ensured this has not been the case.

What could save his job, however, is the fact that Barcelona could still end the season as La Liga and Champions League winners - they are only two points off league leaders Real Madrid, and have a round of 16 second-leg clash with Napoli to come in August, having drawn 1-1 in the first game before the cup was suspended due to the pandemic.

Notably, Setien was never the first choice after Valverde's sacking, with Ronald Koeman and Xavi Hernandez both turning down the job before the 61-year-old was appointed.

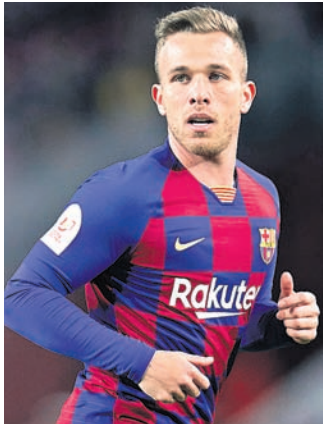
Former Barca star Xavi, now coach of Qatari club Al Sadd, has admitted he is preparing to manage his old club in the future and the Camp Nou board may try and persuade him to return this summer,



while current B team boss Xavi Garcia Pimienta is also considered an option.

For now however Setien continues - but unless he manages to guide the club to what looks like increasingly unlikely success, he is on borrowed time.

Arthur-Pjanic swap deal done



ARTHUR MELO



MIRALEM PJANIC

AGENCIES

Barcelona, June 29: Several media reports, including of 'Goal', midfielders Miralem Pjanic and Arthur Melo have signed their contracts with Barcelona and Juventus, respectively, with both teams expected to make an official announcement soon regarding the midfielders.

The two clubs agreed a deal ear-

lier this week that will see Arthur leave Camp Nou for Turin for around 70 million euro (USD 79mn), while Pjanic will move in the opposite direction for a 60mn euro (USD 67mn) fee. It's still being reported that Juve are handing over Pjanic plus 10mn euro for Arthur.

Both players underwent medicals at their respective new clubs Sunday afternoon before putting

pen-to-paper on their contracts.

The Brazilian youngster signed a five-year deal with the reigning Serie A champions having a basic salary of five million euro-per-season, going up to seven million euro with bonuses, reported 'Goal'. Pjanic, on the other hand, signed a four-year deal with the Catalans.

Though both players will remain at their current clubs for the remainder of the extended 2019-20 campaign, Barcelona wanted the deals completed by the end of June for budgetary reasons.

Given the financial uncertainty caused by the coronavirus pandemic, Juve would struggle to pull off an expensive transfer so needed to agree a swap deal that would include one of their high earners heading in the opposite direction.

The Catalans giants have been targeting Pjanic for some time, but the deal was held up as Arthur was initially reluctant to make the move to Italy. However, a breakthrough was reached Saturday evening that allowed the clubs to press ahead with the double deal.

Man City join rivals in FA Cup final four



ASSOCIATED PRESS

London, June 29: Holder Manchester City reached the FA Cup semifinals after goals from Kevin De Bruyne and Raheem Sterling secured an untroubled 2-0 win at Newcastle. Games will be held July 18-19 at Wembley with no fans present.

City conceded the Premier League title to runaway champion Liverpool this week, and must beat 13-time FA Cup winner Arsenal to reach another cup final. In Sunday's draw, Chelsea will face 12-time winner Manchester United in the other semifinal.

Earlier Sunday, Chelsea won 1-0 at Leicester and Arsenal needed an injury-time winner to edge a 2-1 win at Sheffield United. City's win was far more comfortable.

De Bruyne put City ahead from the penalty spot in the 37th minute of a dominant first half. Dwight Gayle missed a great chance to

equalize for Newcastle midway through the second half, blazing Allan Saint-Maximin's pinpoint cross over from close range.

It was a rare opportunity for Steve Bruce's side and a costly miss as Sterling scored moments later, curling a shot in from the edge of the box following a quick counterattack in the 68th.

Substitutes made the difference for Chelsea and Arsenal. Chelsea midfielder Ross Barkley turned in a cross from William in the 63rd.

Spanish midfielder Dani Ceballos netted in the 91st for Arsenal with a low shot, just four minutes after David McGoldrick had equalized from close range.

Forward Nicolas Pepe's penalty put Arsenal ahead midway through the first half, after United midfielder John Lundstram had an early header ruled out for offside. Defender John Egan's header early in the second half was also chalked off, much to the frustration of the home fans.

Unconvincing Barca host stubborn Atletico

AGENCIES

Barcelona, June 29: Barcelona will be looking to return to winning ways in La Liga when they host an in-form Atletico Madrid at Camp Nou Tuesday night.

The Spanish champions have drawn two of their last three in top flight games to hand their arch-rivals Real Madrid a two-point advantage, but Atletico are on a run of four league victories in a row.

Barca twice led at Celta Vigo Saturday afternoon, but the Spanish champions were pegged back on both occasions and had to ultimately settle for a point following an 88th-minute Iago Aspas equaliser.

There is no question that the Catalan giants would have been desperate to secure all three points, if they intend to keep pace with Real Madrid.

Quique Setien's side returned to

action earlier this month with back-to-back wins over Mallorca and Leganes, but they were held at Sevilla before only just overcoming Athletic Bilbao four days later.

The games are coming thick and fast at this stage of the season and another poor result Tuesday would only add to Real Madrid's growing confidence as the title race continues to gather pace.

According to Marca, a 'tense discussion' took place in the Barca dressing room following the draw with Celta, with a number of the club's players 'disagreeing with some of Setien's methods'.

Reports of unrest in the camp are hardly ideal ahead of a clash with an in-form Atletico side, although Barca have incredibly not lost to the capital giants in Spain's top flight since February 2010, which is quite staggering.

The fact that the reigning cham-



Antoine Griezmann would be eager to make an impact against his former side when he takes the field at Camp Nou

pions have a tough game away to Villarreal July 5 makes Tuesday's encounter even more important, particularly considering that Real Madrid appear to have the easier run-in.

Atletico, meanwhile, were actually sixth in Spain's top flight ahead of their return to action. Diego Simeone's side have been in impressive form, recording four straight wins over Osasuna, Real Valladolid, Levante and Alaves to rise up the table.

Atletico are currently third in Spain's top flight, four points ahead of fourth-placed Sevilla, while they sit seven points ahead of fifth-placed Villarreal, with all three teams on 32 matches.

It would certainly be a surprise to see Atletico fail to finish in the top four this season, but their spot was certainly in doubt due to their inconsistency prior to the lockdown period.

INDIAN BECOMES YOUNGEST UMPIRE TO ENTER ICC ELITE PANEL

Menon eclipses Llong feat

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Dubai, June 29: India's Nitin Menon Monday became the youngest ever to be included in the International Cricket Council's (ICC) Elite Panel of Umpires for the upcoming 2020-21 season, replacing England's Nigel Llong.

The 36-year-old, who has officiated in three Tests, 24 ODIs and 16 T20Is, is only the third from India to make it to the prestigious group after former captain Srinivas Venkatraghavan and Sundaram Ravi, who was axed last year.

"To be officiating regularly along with the leading umpires and referees of the world is something that I always dreamt of and the feeling has yet to sink in," Menon was quoted as saying in an ICC statement.

Menon quit playing competitive



cricket at 22 and by 23, he had become a senior umpire, officiating in BCCI accredited matches.

A selection panel comprising ICC General Manager (Cricket) Geoff Allardice (Chairman), former player and commentator Sanjay Manjrekar, and match referees Ranjan Madugalle and David Boon, picked Menon, who was earlier part of the Emirates ICC

International Panel of Umpires.

While standard of Indian umpiring has coped a lot of criticism globally, performance of Menon over the past few years has been a silver lining.

The qualification in Elite Panel makes Menon eligible to officiate in next year's Ashes in Australia in case ICC revokes the local umpires for home series policy which has been approved owing to the COVID-19 pandemic.

But Menon's elevation certainly makes him a candidate to stand for all five Test matches that India will play against England at home early next year.

Menon is confident that the rapport he has built with senior umpires over the years, having officiated in two ICC tournaments (2018 and 2020 Women's T20 World Cup), will keep him in good stead.

Odisha FC ropes in goalie Ravi Kumar



POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, June 29: Odisha FC (OFC) has roped in goalkeeper Ravi Kumar Monday ahead of the seventh edition of Indian Super League (ISL). The Uttar Pradesh-born custodian has signed a two-year deal with the Bhubaneswar-based club.

After playing for Indian Arrows and Sporting Clube de Goa, Ravi Kumar was selected for Delhi Dynamos in the second season of the ISL. He has played in the league for NorthEast United and Mumbai City FC in 2017-18 and 2018-19 seasons, respectively. The 26-year-old goalie had also represented I-League side Minerva Punjab FC earlier in his career.

"I am excited for joining Odisha FC and I hope I can help the club compete for titles and trophies and hopefully play in AFC very soon. Looking forward to joining Ama Team," said.

OFC club president Rohan Sharma, on his part, said, "I am happy to have Ravi join our squad. He is a goalkeeper with a lot of experience and can give good competition to Arsh and Kamaljit."