



## MOVIE ON MARTYRDOM

Ajay Devgn is set to make a film based on Galwan Valley attack on Indian soldiers

LEISURE P2



## DOG MEAT BANNED

Taking a cue from Mizoram, the Nagaland govt bans the trade and consumption of dog meat

TWO STATES P7



## HE MISSED FLIGHT

An Indian expat misses a jumbo jet flying 427 stranded Indians to Kerala after he fell asleep in Dubai Airport

INTERNATIONAL P10

# Now, WHO says China didn't alert it about corona

AGENCIES

**Geneva/London, July 4:** The World Health Organization has updated its account of the early stages of the Covid-19 crisis to say it was alerted by its own office in China, and not by China itself, to the first pneumonia cases in Wuhan.

The UN health body has been accused by US President Donald Trump of failing to provide the information needed to stem the pandemic and of being complacent towards Beijing, charges it denies. April 9, WHO published an initial timeline of its communications, partly in response to criticism of its early response to the outbreak that has now claimed more than 5,21,000 lives worldwide.

In that chronology, WHO had said only that the Wuhan municipal health commission in the province of Hubei had December 31 reported cases of pneumonia. The UN health agency did not, however, specify who had notified it.

WHO chief Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus told a news conference April 20 that the first report had come from China, without specifying whether the report had been sent by Chinese authorities or another source. But a new chronology, published this week by the Geneva-based institution, offers a more detailed version of events.

It indicates that it was the WHO office in China that December 31 notified its regional point of contact of a case of "viral pneumonia" after having

## MISINFORMATION OR DISINFORMATION



**DECEMBER 31, 2019:** WHO office in China notifies its regional office of 'viral pneumonia' case after a report on a Wuhan health commission website

**THE SAME DAY:** WHO's epidemic information service picks up another report by an international epidemiological surveillance network based in the US — about the same group of cases of pneumonia from unknown causes in Wuhan

**WHO** asks Chinese authorities on two occasions, Jan 1 and Jan 2, for information about these cases, which they provided Jan 3

**WHO** says the Chinese authorities immediately contacted the WHO as soon as the agency asked to verify the report

**BUT, APRIL 9:** WHO says Wuhan health commission Dec 31 reported pneumonia cases; WHO doesn't specify who had notified it

found a declaration for the media on a Wuhan health commission website on the issue.

The same day, WHO's epidemic information service picked up another news report transmitted by the international epidemiological surveillance network ProMed — based in the United States — about the same group of cases of pneumonia from unknown causes in Wuhan.

After which, WHO asked the Chinese authorities on two occasions, January 1 and January 2, for information about these cases, which they provided January 3.

WHO emergencies director Michael Ryan told a news conference Friday that countries have 24-48 hours to officially verify an event and provide the agency with additional information about the nature or cause of an event.

Ryan added that the Chinese authorities immediately contacted the WHO as soon as the agency asked to verify the report.

# Fuel prices remain unchanged for fifth day in a row

PNN & AGENCIES

**New Delhi/Bhubaneswar, July 4:** Petrol and diesel prices remained unchanged for the fifth straight day, Saturday, as the state-owned oil companies paused a hike in rates. As the rates remained unchanged, diesel continued to be pricier than petrol in the capital city of Delhi.

June 7, state-run oil marketing companies Indian Oil, Hindustan Petroleum and Bharat Petroleum — which account for the majority of petrol and diesel outlets in the country — restarted the normal system of daily price reviews in line with costs following an 82-day hiatus. Since then, till June 28, prices were hiked for 21 days.

The recent increase in petroleum and diesel prices has left denizens aggrieved. Experts say that this fuel hike may pave the way for an altogether change in the mode of transport but doubt that it would be radical.

Ramesh Sahu, a construction engineer in Bhubaneswar, says, "My job involves travelling places. My company provides me travelling allowance (TA) but with the pandemic affecting my firm's business and petrol prices on the rise, my TA remains stagnant." "I am thinking of replacing my diesel car with an electronic vehicle but those are too expensive." "You can't ride a bicycle in Bhubaneswar Heat, can you," he asked.



**There was a time when hike in fuel prices made headlines but as the Centre continued to milk the common man for days, a pause in hike is a news to be celebrated**

Mohan Dash, a snacks trader, says, "I am a small-time snacks trader and I keep a low margin as I just pick up the goods from a dealer and sell it to small shops. You say, how much I can earn now with this new fuel rates."

## IRREGULAR by MANJUL



**I'm not enjoying my work this time. Life's already in a standstill!**

# It will rain cats and dogs for two more days

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, July 4:** The India Meteorological Department (IMD) Saturday predicted very heavy rainfall over several parts of the state over next two days.

Very heavy rainfall is likely to occur at one or two places in Angul, Dhenkanal, Sambalpur, Deogarh, Keonjhar, Cuttack, Jajpur, Kendrapara, Mayurbhanj, Sonepur and Jagatsinghpur, said IMD in a weather bulletin.

Similarly, heavy rainfall is also likely to occur at a few places in Mayurbhanj, Keonjhar, Balasore, Sundargarh, Jharsuguda, Sambalpur and Bargarh, Monday.

In the same time, light to moderate rainfall will continue to occur in many other places, the Met department said. Thunderstorm with lightning is likely to occur at one or two places in north coastal Odisha including in Keonjhar, Mayurbhanj and Khurda.

WEATHER	
	BHUB CTK
MAX	33.2°C 34.5°C
MIN	27.2°C 25.4°C
Humidity	90% 97%
Rainfall	6.4mm 19mm
Forecast: Generally cloudy sky	

# In 24 hrs, state lost 5 lives to COVID-19

Bhubaneswar records two deaths with co-morbid conditions

AGENCIES

**Bhubaneswar, July 4:** Five more Covid-19 deaths were reported in Odisha taking the death toll to 34 in the state, informed the Health department Saturday. The casualties reported Saturday—five—was the highest in a span of 24 hours in the state. The state also reported 495 new corona positive cases in the last 24 hours.

Three fatalities were reported in Ganjam district and two in Khurda district.

A 51-year-old male from Bhubaneswar, who was suffering from Pleural Tuberculosis and a 64-year-old male from the state capital city suffering from diabetes succumbed to the virus, informed the health department.

A 50-year-old male from Ganjam, also suffering from diabetes and hypertension, 27-year-old male and 35-year-old male from the Ganjam too succumbed to the deadly virus.

Out of 495 fresh positive cases, 355 cases have been detected from different quarantine centres and 140 are local cases. Ganjam registered the highest 216 fresh cases. The total positive cases mounted to 8,601 in the state. The active cases stand at 2,624 and recoveries at 5,934.

## 2 IAS, 6 OAS officers deputed to Ganjam

**BHUBANESWAR:** The Odisha government Saturday deputed two IAS and six OAS officers to Ganjam district to manage the situation there.

The General Administration & Public Grievance department vide an order issued Saturday appointed Parul Patrawari, deputy Secretary in the Works department as spe-



## Silver City shuts down till July 8

**CUTTACK:** Keeping in mind the surging Covid-19 cases, a complete shutdown has been ordered in Cuttack city. The shutdown will remain in force till July 8 midnight as per a notification issued by Cuttack Municipal Corporation (CMC). Senior CMC Officials informed that all the non-essential shops will remain closed and non-essential travel will be completely prohibited. The order will come into force from Saturday. However, all the essential shops like grocery, vegetable and milk shops will remain open from 5am till 6pm. The essential shops will have to strictly adhere to the Covid-19 guidelines and follow requisite social distancing norms or face the imposition of heavy fines and punishment. **MORE P4**

## Administration & Public Grievance (GA & PG) department, the six OAS officials deputed to the district are—Sudhakar Nayak, Padmanav Behera, Lokanath Dalabehera, Shaktikanta Ray, Chittaranjan Mohanta and Suvendra Kumar.

The notification said the concerned OAS officers will be relieved from their offices forthwith to enable them to report before Ganjam Collector with immediate effect.

"In exercise of the powers conferred under Section 20(2) of the Code of Criminal Procedure 1973 (Act II of 1974), the State Government does hereby appoint Shri Vishal Singh, IAS as the Additional District Magistrate in the district of Ganjam," the notification read.

According to the official notification released by the General

NEW CASES	495
(down from 561 Friday)	
TOTAL CASES:	8,601
ACTIVE CASES:	2,624
RECOVERIES:	5,934
DEATHS:	34

# IMRAN KHAN VOWS COMPLETING CPEC

AGENCIES

**Islamabad, July 4:** Pakistan Prime Minister Imran Khan vowed Friday that his government would complete the ambitious China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) at "any cost" as the \$60 billion project is a manifestation of the all-weather friendship between the two countries.

Addressing a meeting held here to review progress on the CPEC projects, Khan said it is an excellent project for Pakistan's socio-economic development. The "gigantic multi-faceted initiative would guarantee a bright future for the nation," the Dawn newspaper reported him quoting. Lauding the performance of the CPEC Authority, he said measures must be taken to improve its working as well as capacity.

"The corridor is a manifestation of Pakistan-China friendship and the government will complete it at any cost and bring its fruit to every Pakistani," Khan said.

Khan's statement came a day after Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi discussed the CPEC projects with his Pakistani counterpart Shah Mahmood Qureshi during a phone conversation.

Wang called for the two countries to speed up the projects under the CPEC to help Pakistan's economic recovery. He also hoped that the Pakistani government would provide more protection for Chinese companies and citizens working in the country.

# Amid COVID, Uddhav does not mind his govt buying ritzy cars

AGENCIES

**Mumbai, July 4:** A reportedly cash-strapped Maharashtra government has cleared the purchase of six luxury cars for ministers, deputies and senior officials of the sports and education departments at a total cost of ₹1.37 crore, said a report.

Each car — a Toyota Innova Crysta — costs ₹22.8 lakh and the purchase has been cleared by both the Finance department and Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray.

This comes two days after Vijay Wadettiwar, a cabinet minister in charge of relief and rehabilitation, said the state would have to take out a loan to pay the salaries of gov-



ernment employees. "Situation of the state is such that we will have to take a loan to pay salaries of government employees next month. Except for three-four departments, expenses have been cut," he said this week. Wadettiwar blamed the Centre for the lack of funds but also said "there is no cash crunch for han-

dling Covid-19 situation in the state."

In March, the government said senior officials, including ministers and other elected representatives, would be paid only 40 per cent of their monthly salary, with the rest due over two installments. The state government's decision to spend ₹1.37 crore on luxury cars at this sensitive time has been criticised by the Opposition BJP.

"This Maharashtra government hasn't supported their people. They haven't protected the police, who are frontline warriors and they can't pay the salaries of their employees. But they have money to buy luxury cars for their ministers," BJP's Ram Kadam said.

# Uber's Mumbai office shut, Air France may lay off 7.5K

AGENCIES

**Mumbai, July 4:** While Uber is reportedly shutting down its Mumbai office, Air France is laying off more than 6,000 employees as part of cost-cutting measures due to Covid-induced economic crisis.

After laying-off almost one-fourth of its staff in India (600 employees) in May, ride-hailing firm Uber has shut down its Mumbai office, said a person aware of the development asking not to be named. Uber's Mumbai employees will continue to work from home until December, the person said. It is not clear if the employees will be moved to another office in Mumbai next year.

A spokesperson for Uber

declined to comment on the development but added that it will continue to provide "a high level of service to all its riders in Mumbai."

Uber's Mumbai office closure comes almost a month after the ride-hailing firm announced a global downsizing exercise that affected around 6,700 employees worldwide.

Air France-KLM plans to cut more than 7,500 jobs at its French arm as the airline industry reels from the coronavirus crisis.

Europe's second-biggest airline will cut 6,560 staff at Air France, with its regional French carrier, Hop!, losing 1,020 jobs, the company said Friday. In a statement, the firm said: "Recovery looks set to be very slow" due to uncertainties around Covid-19.

# Weeks ago, the same cops brutalised another man

*The victim, a daily wager, was apprehended by SI Raghuganesh-led team without a warrant, beaten up till brain damage leading to his death in two weeks*

AGENCIES

**Chennai, July 4:** Media reports have surfaced which say that the cops who were involved in custodial killings of the father-sun duo — Jayaraj and Benix — are also linked to another case of police brutality in Tuticorin.

A 28-year-old man named Mahendran was forcefully taken

by Sathankulam SI Raghuganesh and his team from the residence of his maternal grandmother in the wee hours of May 23.

Guess, what could have been his mistake?

Mahendran's elder brother Durai, 35, was one of the nine suspects in a murder case and was untraceable. Raghu Ganesh and his team took Mahendran into custody to get to Durai.

**NO WARRANT** Perumal, Mahendran's maternal uncle said, "They had removed the number plate in the front and back of the car they came in, Raghu Ganesh had a gun with him and was in mufti. They released him only the following night. When Mahendran came home he was re-



ally weak and was not able to move one side was his body."

Vadivu, Mahendran's mother, a differently-abled woman, said, "He was not able to move his hand and leg on one side, and I kept asking him what happened to him. He kept asking me to keep quiet." "I saw that he was very unwell and

not even able to drink water, then I took him to the hospital in Tuticorin and there they scanned his head and said there were sudden infractions in the head. I admitted him to the hospital Thursday and Saturday he died."

**BRAIN DAMAGE** Mahendran was a daily wager

and with the pandemic putting them out of work the family was struggling to make ends meet. After two weeks of suffering at home and three more days in the hospital, the 28-year-old man lost the battle. The MRI report of the youngster showed that he had suffered acute left MCA territory infarct and thrombosis (meaning clotting) in the brain.

**COVID EXCUSE** The family recalls how the hospital denied performing a post-mortem on Mahendran's body. "We wanted a post-mortem to be done but they said there are coronavirus cases and asked us to take him away," said the family.

June 20, Vadivu accompanied by the sarpanch had approached the Tuticorin SP but the SP refused to listen.



## CLAIRE HOLT OPENS UP ON POSTPARTUM ANXIETY

The Vampire Diaries fame actress Claire Holt has revealed that she suffered with postpartum anxiety after the birth of her son James. In an Instagram post, Claire opened up about her battle with postpartum anxiety, reports [dailymail.co.uk](http://dailymail.co.uk)

## MONAE SLAMS MISOGYNY IN MUSIC INDUSTRY

Actress-musician Janelle Monae has called out the prevalent misogyny in the music industry, saying she wants to 'hear women rapping'. "The amount of misogyny from most of men in rap and music is infuriating," she wrote in her Twitter account.



### FORTUNE FORECAST

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FOR ASTROLOGY DIAL 55181

**ARIES**  
Today, you will turn an attentive ear to your inner voice. As a result, you will be able to execute all your plans with precision. Besides being cheerful, you will even take disappointments with a pinch of salt. Why just today, says Ganesh, you can have this rare quality for keeps.

**TAURUS**  
The competitive streak in you might relent today as you look for a lifestyle that is more relaxed and laid-back. The rat race is tiring and you will feel the urge to get away, far from the maddening crowd and the never-ending routine.

**GEMINI**  
Today, you will realise that close relationships need care and concern to grow, predicts Ganesh. You will have new responsibilities and achieve huge profits in all your dealings. Pay special attention to your personal health.

**CANCER**  
You will be quite sharp at work, and equally penetrating in the matters of the heart. Though, you may temporarily lose focus, your mind will bring you back to the real world. You will work at a break-neck speed, only to be able to spend as much time as possible with your sweetheart.

**LEO**  
Few and rare are the days when creativity takes flight. After all, even Picasso couldn't make a masterpiece every day. So make the most of this auspicious day, urges Ganesh, during which your imagination peaks and touches new heights.

**VIRGO**  
It is not the time to rest on your past laurels, and you will have to carry on with your work unabated. You will have to keep your focus steady and remain organised to get the same level of success that you had in the recent past.

**LIBRA**  
Wedding bells are ringing, and you are about to get very lucky! Ganesh foresees a plethora of marriage proposals coming your way on this day full of special occasions, as you turn up your charisma and sweep the enthralled opposite sex off their feet with your charm.

**SCORPIO**  
You are in a dilemma and feel like standing at a crossroads of life. Some important decisions of life need time and that's what you want right now. However, keep personal life and work separate to avoid confusion and disturbance. As per Ganesh's advice, it's all right if decision making takes some time, but avoid taking hasty decisions.

**SAGITTARIUS**  
The pressing needs of your loved ones call for extra attention today. You may have a few family friends over for lunch or dinner, and end up chatting a good deal with them. Ganesh says an intimate tête-à-tête with your better half would fare you well.

**CAPRICORN**  
Money will flow in from various quarters today, but it will also find its way out of your pockets. Keep a tab on your income and more on your expenses, says Ganesh. Situation at work may get a little trying, but you will overcome all problems by means of your innate and acquired skills, and past experience.

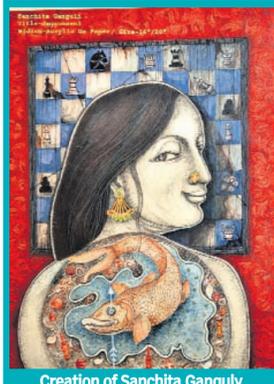
**AQUARIUS**  
There is nothing like having a good time with your brothers and sisters. Generally, you plan out your routine and activities by yourself, but it is a different day today. Your siblings will make plans for you and you will just go along with the flow, predicts Ganesh.

**PISCES**  
You will have frequent mood swings today but you will still manage to fix a work-related goal. Your mood will be better if you focus on work. You might feel stressed about some personal matter, but Ganesh says it is not a matter to worry.

## National online art exhibition comes to an end

POST NEWS NETWORK

**BHUBANESWAR:** A week-long online painting exhibition conducted by Eastern Foundation of Art and Culture (EFAC), a Balasore-based organisation that promotes and preserves traditional forms of art and culture, concluded Friday. The show was attended by as many as 120 artists from various states of the country. The participants, during the six-day-long digital interactive sessions, exchanged ideas and discussed about the future of painting in the prevailing scenario.



Creation of Sanchita Ganguly

On the first day, poet and painter Pradosh Swain shared his thoughts on modern paintings while Yathee Kasargod, an eminent painter from Kerala spoke on the contemporary style of painting on the second day. Panchanan Samal,

a renowned painter and dean of Dhauli College of Art and Craft from Bhubaneswar discussed about visual art, its aesthetic value and relevance on the third day of the webinar. The painting of Pradipta Kishore Das, another prominent artist from the state, on human thinking and it's reflection on the society in varied hues was exhibited on the concluding day of the digital seminar.

The art work of Odia painter Nikunja Bihari Das garnered appreciations from many national level artists during the event. Painters from Rajasthan, Punjab, West Bengal, Chhattisgarh, New Delhi, Odisha, Tamil Nadu, Gujarat, Jammu and Kashmir and Kerala participated in the exhibition. EFAC member Keshab Barnotri proposed the vote of thanks on the last day.

## Winget ends her social media detox

Mumbai: After almost a month of social media detox, actress Jennifer Winget has made a comeback on Instagram with a gleaming picture. "Coming up for air on popular demand. Not MIA but RIA (Resting In Action)...and lot's of it. A li'l Social media detox didn't hurt nobody! No?," Jennifer wrote on Instagram announcing her comeback.

and flaunts her glowing skin sans make-up. She is seen wearing a plain blue T-shirt. Back in May, Jennifer garnered nine million followers on Instagram. She has lately impressed fans with her performance as Maya Mehrotra in *Beyhad 2*. In fact, her role of Maya, across two seasons since 2016, has been a major reason of her soaring popularity.



## Taapsee accused of ganging up on Kangana

Mumbai: Kangana Ranaut's social media team Saturday accused Taapsee Pannu of 'reaping the fruits of' the former's struggles and 'ganging up on her'. Team Kangana made the allegation in a tweet tagging Taapsee. "Many chaploos outsiders consistently try to derail movements started by Kangana, dey want to b in movie mafia good books, dey gt movies and awards fr attacking Kangana and dey take part in open harassment of a woman, shame on u @taapsee u reap the fruits f hr

struggles bt gang up on hr," the tweet said. Taapsee did not directly respond to the allegations. Rather, she quoted motivational Tony Gaskins to point out that 'bitter people' always find 'something negative to say about anything positive'. "A couple of things have followed in my life, especially the last few months. Really helped in seeing life in a better light. Brought me a lot of peace n perspective so sharing it," tweeted the actress.



## Ajay plans movie on Galwan martyrs

Mumbai: Actor-producer Ajay Devgn is all set to announce a film based on the attack on Indian soldiers by Chinese troops in Ladakh's Galwan Valley. According to the film's description, it will narrate the "story of the sacrifice of 20 Indian army men who fought the Chinese army". It is not clear if Ajay will star in the film. The cast and other crew are under finalisation. The film will be co-produced by Ajay Devgn Films and Select Media Holdings LLP.

Twenty Indian soldiers lost their lives in a violent faceoff in Galwan Valley in eastern Ladakh with the Chinese forces June 15. The Galwan clash occurred at the south bank of the river, which flows in an east-west direction, before its confluence with Shayok river. It was the first casualties faced by the Indian Army in a clash with the Chinese People's Liberation Army since 1975, when an Indian patrol was ambushed by Chinese troops in Arunachal Pradesh.



## Flora Saini launches her app

Mumbai: Actress Flora Saini has unveiled her app. She hopes to connect with fans and 'get to know each other well' through the platform. "Absolutely delighted to launch my own app on app store and play store. Can't wait to connect with you all and get to know each other well," she posted on social media. There will be unseen photos and videos of her on the app. Fans can get personalised video messages from her, chat with her and watch her live sessions, too.



### PEANUTS



### CALVIN AND HOBBS



### BREVITY



### FUN post

#### CROSSWORD

1		2		3	4	5	6	7
			8			9		
10						11		
12				13				14
15		16				17	18	
						19		
20				21		22		23
								24
25						26		
27						28		29

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- Across**
- 1 The Bard's river
  - 3 Kind of code
  - 5 Subsidies
  - 10 Scalars
  - 11 Promised
  - 12 Motif
  - 13 Links figures
  - 15 Blue moon, e.g.
  - 17 Hematologist's study
  - 20 Scarf
  - 22 Cite
  - 25 Tolerate
  - 26 Masons' equipment
  - 27 Royal family member
  - 28 Table scrap
  - 29 Flock
- Down**
- 1 Strong point
  - 2 Martini garnish
  - 4 Bug
  - 6 Neckwear (3,4)
  - 7 Needing a lift
  - 8 Clandestine
  - 9 Gung-ho
  - 14 Health resort
  - 15 Canyon feature
  - 16 Hooligan
  - 18 Strong drink
  - 19 Cicero was one
  - 21 Prevaricates
  - 23 Way too weighty
  - 24 Op-ed piece
  - 25 Razor-billed bird

### SUDOKU

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

9	C		2			A	5	
	3	1				B		
A	1	8	E		7	3	5	6
D	6	0	7	B	4		8	
		8				E	1	2
	3				C	B	7	4
5	8	0	A			3	9	2
				1	6			4
		5	2	3	D	9	0	
0	D	B					E	C
C			7	E	A		D	
						8	5	E
8		E	9	6	A			5
9		D	3	8	7	1	6	
		9			D	4		E

### SOLUTIONS

**CROSSWORD**

C	O	M	M	A	H	S
C	A	N	O	P	I	
H	U	S	G	M		
P	U	L	S	A	T	E
S	E	T	E	I		
A	P	P	A	R	I	
E	C	L	A	T	P	I
A	D	I	T	A	I	R
O	I	N	O	U	R	
F	R	O	L	I	C	
S	A	F	E	Y	N	

**SUDOKU**

8	6	3	5	9	1	C	D	B	4	E	7	0	2	A
D	1	8	7	4	E	A	0	3	C	2	6	5	9	
A	0	5	6	C	2	9	2	1	8	7	0	4		
C	9	4	2	0	0	7	1	6	5	0	A	3	8	
2	7	A	3	0	5	4	8	9	0	1	0			
6	5	9	0	6	3	1	8	E	A	B	4	C	7	
B	4	D	9	1	5	2	G	A	E	7	0	6	0	3
1	8	E	B	A	7	0	6	9	C	2	3	4	5	D
6	3	C	0	E	2	4	5	7	D	8	1	9	A	B
7	A	2	C	4	8	D	B	3	0	5	9	6	1	E
3	2	A	1	8	B	E	4	9	D	0	C	7	5	
9	C	E	0	B	A	7	1	2	3	5	0	4	6	
5	7	6	3	D	A	9	0	C	1	4	E	8	2	
4	0	0	7	5	9	2	7	8	B	A	C	3	1	
E	1	4	2	C	3	D	7	6	8	A	9	0		

CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW

# downtown



## RAIN-SOAKED CITY

A crane roams on a road amid rain in Nuagaon area of Bhubaneswar, Saturday

## PRECIOUS DROPS

People collect drinking water from a tank near Kalpana Square in Bhubaneswar, Saturday



# Robbers cock a snook at police in Capital city

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, July 4:** Making a mockery of security arrangement by Commissionerate Police on the first day of the weekend shutdown this month, bike-borne miscreants, Saturday, targeted two commuters including a woman government official in Nayapalli area here.

According to sources, Ritarani Patnaik, an employee of Forest department, was on her way to the office at Sahid Nagar for some urgent official work as per the instructions of the District Forest Officer (DFO). The miscreants who were waiting for an opportunity on the flyover followed Patnaik after she passed by them near



**THE MISCREANTS SNATCHED AWAY THE VANITY BAG OF THE LADY AFTER HITTING HER NEAR JAYADEV VIHAR SQUARE**

**THE BAG CONTAINED HER MOBILE PHONE WORTH OVER ₹20,000, ₹5,000 IN CASH AND SOME IMPORTANT OFFICIAL DOCUMENTS**

Baramunda bust stand.

The miscreants snatched away the vanity bag of Patnaik after hitting her near Jayadev Vihar Square. However, she managed to keep her balance on the two-wheeler after she was hit by the miscreants.

The bag contained her mobile phone worth over ₹20,000, ₹5,000 in cash and some important official documents. On being informed, the cops on duty at Jaydev Vihar took a scared Patnaik to Nayapalli police station where she lodged a

complaint in this regard.

In another incident, Nayapalli police managed to capture two other snatchers from Salia Sahi under the police station after a long chase. Sources claimed that some alert locals called the police when two bike-borne miscreants were trying to snatch the gold chain of a lady near Hotel Mayfair.

Cops from Nayapalli police station in three PCR vans soon rushed to the spot but they succeeded in giving police a slip. However, the police officials arrested the snatchers after chasing them at Nialchakra Nagar slum in Salia Sahi area.

**History-sheeters nabbed**  
On the other hand, Commissionerate Police, Saturday,

arrested three members of a looters' gang who were involved in several incidents of snatching and burglary at Mancheswar, Laxmisagar and Badagada area in the city.

The accused have also confessed to have committed 11 burglaries that include seven in Mancheswar, two each in Laxmisagar and Badagada areas.

Besides, they were involved in more than 20 cases earlier.

The cops seized a gold bracelet weighing 20.60 gm, six gold chains, 2 pairs of gold earrings, three gold rings, two pair of silver anklets, other valuable ornaments used by Odissi dancers from their possession.

## PANDEMIC BLOW

# No Bol Bom in state this year



File photo of Bol Bom devotees in Odisha

PNN/AGENCIES

**Bhubaneswar, July 4:** The state government Saturday decided not to allow 'Bol Bom' devotees, also known as 'Kanwariyas', to offer prayers at Shiva temples across the state, to contain the spread of novel coronavirus.

**No 'Bol Bom' devotee will be allowed to congregate, carry water from water bodies and walk on roads to pour water on Shiva lingas**

Special Relief Commissioner (SRC) Pradeep Kumar Jena said no 'Bol Bom' devotees or 'Kanwariyas' will be allowed to congregate, carry water from water bodies and walk on public roads to pour water on Shiva lingas.

In the month of Shravan (July/August), people carry water from rivers, walk barefoot for several miles and pour the water on Shiva lingas at several shrines on each Monday of the holy month.

The 'Bol Bom' devotees usually start their journey on Saturday/Sunday/Monday by col-

lecting water from one religious place and walk till next Monday morning and pour the collected water on a Shiva linga, said the SRC.

"We believe that everyone will cooperate with the administration in this regard," Jena added.

Similarly, the district administrations are also required to take concrete steps to enforce the order and ensure that no 'Bol Bam yatra' takes place this time, Jena said.

The government's decision to prohibit the yatra comes as the public health crisis continues to mount alarmingly not only in the state but also across the country.

Odisha has so far reported 8,601 Covid-19 cases and 34 fatalities. As many as 1,536 novel coronavirus cases have been reported in the state since July 1 alone.

Earlier, the Dhenkanal administration had clamped Section 144 at 14 major Shiva temples in the district to prevent congregation of 'Bol Bom' devotees on every Shravan Monday in view of COVID-19 pandemic.

Notably, the state government has ordered that all religious places or places of worship will continue to remain closed for the public and all social, political and religious functions and congregations are prohibited till July 31.

# Now, doctorate in pulmonary medicine at SCB

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, July 4:** The Medical Council of India (MCI) has allowed opening of new DM (doctorate) in pulmonary medicine course in SCB Medical College and Hospitals, Cuttack from 2020-21 academic session.

The course will be imparted in super specialty department of pulmonary medicine in the college from the current session. SCB would be the first state-run medical college in eastern India and 10th medical institute in the country to offer the course, Health department sources said here, Saturday.



**SCB would be the first govt-run medical college in eastern India and 10th in the country to offer this course**

DM Pulmonary Medicine is the course of topmost level in the field of respiratory medicine. Two seats in the course will be managed by the Centre of Excellence, SCB. This will cater to state-of-the-art healthcare and quality research in the field of respiratory medicine for the people of eastern India, the source said.

High-end sophisticated instruments for diagnosis and treatment of respiratory disease will be available for this course as per the MCI guidelines. In future, paramedical course will also be started under the Centre of Excellence, they stated.

# 2020 adds a new chapter in temple history



Lord Balabhadra, Devi Subhadra and Lord Jagannath being taken to the sanctum sanctorum of Srimandir from their respective chariots through Goti Pahandi on the occasion of Niladribije, Saturday



POST NEWS NETWORK

**Puri, July 4:** This year's Rath Yatra came to an end Saturday with the reinstallation of Lord Jagannath and his siblings Lord Balabhadra and Devi Subhadra at the sanctum sanctorum of Srimandir in the Holy City.

## FEST SANS DEVOTEES

The presiding deities of Srimandir had been shifted out of the shrine several times in the past due to frequent attack from hostile elements

Consequently, the annual Car Festival of the deities could not be held for several years

For the first time, Rath Yatra, Bahuda Yatra, Suna Besha and Adharapana rituals were held without the congregation of devotees

Road without the congregation of devotees. Devotees as well as the people of Odisha would remember this year's Rath Yatra forever," said a researcher.

Srimandir, the abode of Lord Jagannath, was shut for people towards the end of March this year due to the outbreak of novel coronavirus. The 'Rath Anukula' ritual was performed on Srimandir precincts on the occasion of Akshaya Trutiya April 26. However, the chariot construction work could not be carried out due to the lockdown.

After much hiccups, the chariot construction work started May 5, at least 12 days behind the schedule. The Centre had given conditional approval for chariot construction at Rath Yard. But, it had authorised the state government to take

a call on holding the mega festival by assessing the Covid-19 situation.

The Orissa High Court also put the ball at the state government's court while disposing some petitions seeking cancellation of Rath Yatra.

In the meantime, the Shree Jagannath Temple Managing Committee and many servitors' associations of Srimandir pleaded for the organisation of Rath Yatra without the presence of devotees on the Grand Road.

However, the Supreme Court ordered for the cancellation of Car Festival due to Covid-19 while hearing a petition June 18. The Apex Court's order created a lot of resentment among the devotees and Srimandir servitors.

Gajapati king Dibyasingha Deb,

Puri Shankaracharya Nischalananda Saraswati and many Srimandir servitors demanded organisation of Rath Yatra with Covid-19 restrictions. Several petitions were filed with the Supreme Court seeking modifications to the Apex Court's June 18 order on Rath Yatra. The state government also filed an affidavit in the SC and supported Rath Yatra with restrictions in place. Finally, a three member bench of the SC at 4 pm June 22 allowed conduct of Car Festival in Puri.

With just a few hours in hand for the mega festival, the state government pulled out all the stops to hold the festival amid the pandemic June 23. At least three ministers, the Chief Secretary and the Director General of Police reached the Holy City to supervise the arrangements.



A servitor carries a pot of syropy rasagollas to the deities ahead of the Niladribije ritual in Puri, Saturday

# Senior IPS officer duped of ₹2.10L

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, July 4:** A senior IPS officer on state government's duty in New Delhi has fallen prey to the fraudsters.

A case has been lodged at Chandrasekharpur police station on the basis of a complaint filed by the victim, Ravi Kant.

According to sources, Delhi-based Rajesh Ambwani, the fraudster, came in contact with Kant, who is currently deployed as the resident commissioner at the Chief Resident Commissioner's (CRC) office in New Delhi. Ambwani along with his aides has allegedly duped Kant of

₹2,10,000 on the pretext of providing a flat/plot in Bhubaneswar.

Ambwani, who identified himself as a real estate developer, had told Kant that his firm was undertaking several real estate projects in Bhubaneswar and that many such projects were completed.

Kant had given Ambwani two cheques of ₹1, 18,900 and ₹91,000 October 25, 2017.

The fraudsters withdrew the amount from a New Delhi branch of a nationalised bank February 1 and March 8, 2018 respectively.

However, Ambwani and aides started avoiding Kant after re-

ceiving the amount. They neither availed the flat or land nor responded to Kant's phone calls. They even reportedly threatened Kant of dire consequences if he asks for the refund of the amount.

Kant lodged a complaint with the Chandrasekharpur police June 2, 2020.

When contacted, Kant refused to comment on the issue.

The IIC of Chandrasekharpur police station, Biswaranjan Nayak said, "We have registered a case on the basis of the complaint filed by Ravi Kant. However, both the parties are trying to settle the issue amicably."

# Young numismatist Debarchan aspires to set milestones



Numismatist Debarchan Dibyang

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Cuttack, July 4:** His passion for collecting foreign as well as Indian currencies has led 17-year-old Debarchan Dibyang here to have an enviable pool of coins from 160 countries and notes from 140 countries.

Debarchan belongs to Sikharpur area of Silver city. He started his collection in a coin-album that he named as 'My Mini Museum'. He aspires to collect currencies of all countries of the world. Along with studies, Debarchan



**My father had once taken us to Nepal and I got some currencies from there. That was the beginning of my journey**

DEBARCHAN DIBYANG

has created his own identity as a young collector of currencies in the state.

"I started collecting notes and coins at the age of just seven. The desire to collect coins aroused in me as my family members go for outing to foreign countries every year.

My father had once taken us to Nepal and I got some currencies from there. That was the beginning of my journey. Later, I added some old coins of India to my collection which were then possessed by my grandfather", Debarchan expressed.

"Usually, I ask my friends and relatives to bring currencies for me, whenever they go out to foreign countries on a tour. I also place orders for notes and coins through different websites. As of date, I have managed to collect some rare currencies belonging to Mughal era," Debarchan adds.

Debarchan has been felicitated by different organisations and at several exhibitions for his hobby. He aspires to be placed in Limca Book of Records and Guinness World Records as well, in future.

# Pradipta Mohapatra posted as OSD to CM

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, July 4:** The state government has appointed retired IAS officer Pradipta Kumar Mohapatra as officer on special duty (OSD) to Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik for a period of one year.

"In pursuance of the provision contained in Para-4 of the General Administration department Resolution No.23750/Gen dated 27.8.2014, Pradipta Kumar

Mohapatra, IAS (Retd), ex-additional secretary to the Chief Minister is re-engaged as officer on special duty in the rank of special secretary in the residence office of Chief Minister for a period of one year with immediate effect," read an order issued by the GA department.

According to sources, Mohapatra has retired from the services June 30 this year and was re-engaged by government from July 1.



# CMC CLAMPS SHUTDOWN TILL JULY 8

## TIGHT MONITORING

# 8 babus deputed to Ganjam for nCoV

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, July 4:** With COVID-19 situation deteriorating in Ganjam district with each passing day, the state government Saturday deputed two IAS and six OAS officers to the district to manage the situation there.

The General Administration & Public Grievance Department vide its order issued Saturday appointed Parul Patrawari, deputy secretary in the works department as special ADM, Ganjam in-charge of Chatrapur subdivision for the management of COVID-19.

Similarly, Vishal Singh, PD, DRDA, Puri was appointed as special ADM, Ganjam in charge of Bhanjanagar subdivision for the management of COVID-19. "In exercise of the powers conferred under section 20(2) of the Code of Criminal Procedure 1973 (Act II of 1974), the state government do hereby appoint Vishal Singh, IAS as the Additional District Magistrate in the district of Ganjam," the notification read.

According to the official noti-



Two more IAS and six OAS officers will manage the deteriorating situation in the district, worst hit by COVID-19

The OAS officials are Sudhakar Nayak, Padmanav Behera, Lokanath Dalabehera, Shaktikanta Ray, Chittaranjan Mohanta and Suvedra Kumar

fication released by the General Administration & Public Grievance (GA & PG) department, the six OAS officials deputed to the district are Sudhakar Nayak, Padmanav Behera, Lokanath Dalabehera, Shaktikanta Ray, Chittaranjan Mohanta and Suvedra Kumar.

The notification said the concerned OAS officers will be relieved from their offices forthwith to enable them to report before Ganjam Collector with immediate effect.



(Clockwise from left) Sanitisation work under way at CDA Sector-6 in Cuttack, Saturday; police checking vehicles at Badambadi Square; shops remain closed at Malgodown while Ranihaat Malisahi area has been declared as a containment zone

Malisahi in Ranihat (Ward-31) which is a densely populated area. Hence, the locality requires detailed measures for active contact tracing. To facilitate this, it is necessary to declare the area as containment zone and

restrict the movement of people in and out of the zone," read a notification from the CMC. Dedicated officials have been entrusted with the task of ensuring availability of essentials in the containment

zone, said the civic body.

The civic body meanwhile, carried out sanitisation activities at several market places including Chhatra Bazar and Malgodown area.

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Cuttack, July 4:** Amid rising coronavirus cases in Cuttack Municipal Corporation (CMC) area here, the civic body Saturday declared shutdown in its jurisdiction till July 8 midnight as it would help curb the spread of COVID-19.

According to the civic body, all non-essential shops will remain closed and non-essential travel is strictly prohibited in its jurisdiction.

"However, all essential shops like those of grocery, vegetable and milk will remain open from 5 am to 6 pm. Medicine shops are allowed to open at regular hours. This apart, online delivery of essential items is also allowed during the shutdown," an order from the civic body said, adding that emergency services like electricity and water supply will function as usual.

Meanwhile, the Cuttack deputy commissioner of police (DCP) took to the Twitter to call for cooperation from the people.

"We urge our citizens to please cooperate & support our stand in these difficult times. Let's come together to fight & break the chain of #COVID19. Violation to this will invite stringent lawful action (sic)," the DCP tweeted.

**MALISAH DECLARED CONTAINMENT ZONE**

A few hours after detection of multiple COVID-19 cases at Malisahi in Ranihat area (Ward no. 31) in the Silver City here, the CMC Saturday declared the locality as containment zone.

"Some COVID-19 cases were detected at

# Govt aims to make pension work paperless

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, July 4:** The Department of Social Security and Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (SSEPD), which recently made the pension system online, is planning to ensure minimum human involvement during COVID 19 threat.

It has asked Collectors to make people aware of the facility of online services for pension disbursement. The department has now made its pensions schemes, its applications, tracking and others online to reduce paper work and corruption.

This has been planned to avoid unnecessary visits of people from rural areas to cities. The online system has gained importance in the light of the expanding COVID 19 threat.

In a communication to Collectors,



Collectors have been asked to make people aware of the facility of online services for pension disbursement

The SSEPD department has made its pensions schemes, its applications, tracking and others online in order to reduce paperwork and corruption

the department has asked officials to disseminate information about the transition to online system to more people.

"Anyone today can apply for social security pension under the National Social Assistance Programme (NSAP) and Madhu Babu Pension Scheme (MSBY). The

entire process starting from submission of applications by a person to sanction by competent authorities has been made online and the applicant can get updated status of his/her application," the department said.

It also added, "This online system is an essential safety requirement

in view of the current pandemic. Printing of application forms under both NSAP and MBPY will now be unnecessary."

In a letter to the Collectors, the department said, "You were therefore requested to switch to online sanction of pension. You are now requested to take necessary steps for wide publication and awareness generation among the beneficiaries and also for imparting training to officials concerned at all levels.

"Under this system, the application is faster and the applicant can track the development of his plea in real time. Within a month, the fate of the application is decided and uploading of documents is done. The nodal officials are bound to pass the applications in the prescribed timeframe," a senior official from the SSEPD department told this correspondent.

# ECoR handles 45.80 MT of freight during lockdown

UNITED NEWS OF INDIA

**Bhubaneswar, July 4:** The East Coast Railway (ECoR) has carried 45.80 million tonnes of freight in 12,680 trains during the lockdown. The ECoR carried 27.06 million tonnes of coal in 7,100 trains from its jurisdiction between March 22 and June 30.

Out of this, 16.14 million tonnes of indigenous coal from Talcher area in 4,157 trains and 10.92 million tonnes of imported coal from different ports under ECoR jurisdiction were transported to various power houses and industries across the country. During this period, ECoR carried 0.95 million tonnes of food grains, especially rice to different states like Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Bihar and Jharkhand in 333 trains.

# Rare gynaecological surgery at Apollo Hospitals

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, July 4:** The O&G Department of Apollo Hospitals here has added another feather to its cap by performing a rare gynaecological surgery and saving the lives of both mother and the baby. A healthy baby was delivered from a patient with issues of rare urogenital & congenital abnormalities.

The 30-year old patient came to OPD with continuous vaginal bleeding with severe pain abdomen. After all investigations, USG abdomen and pelvis it was found that the young lady is suffering from Ohvira Syndrome. "Since they have already consulted many surgeons in Odisha, they asked me for diagnostic laparoscopic surgery, but I denied, said Dr Sarojini Joshi, Sr consultant of O&G at Apollo Hospitals.

First operation was done in Apollo Hospitals by excision of the



vaginal septum and drainage of 500 ml of blood with clots. Then the vaginoplasty was done by Dr Laxmikant Mishra, Sr consultant 7978116618, Subam Sai Books Store-8895550649, Swain Graphics- 9337121249, Jagannath Mobile Point- Janpath Road, Ram Mandir- 9938475415, Kanan Vihar-Auro Electronics-8260697560, Khandagiri- Swosti Mobile Centre- 7992914045, World Solution- 9938317559, KIIT Road-Jugad Jn-9338545031, Laxmi Sagar-Aditya Mobile-9438191836, Lewis Road-Spider Web-7809186415, Metro Satellite City-Arogya Mitra Medicine Store-9853621640, Madhusudan Nagar-Mohapatra Communication-9124446664, Maa Santoshi travels- Gajapati Nagar- 9777675867, Nayapalli- The Cake Room- 7873660137, Near Mayfair Lagoon-Cookieman-9439491273, Nigamananda-Omm Sai Travels-9668284823, Nr Cosmopolis Main Gate- Shreeram Medical Store- 8763711714, Net Square- Niladri Vihar (C.S. Pur)- 7205634821, Priyadarshini Market-Astro Point-9938134346, R.N. General Store-Nilakantha Nagar-9438642501, Sahid Nagar- Maa Communication- 9437353424, Sahini General Store- Near Patia Railway Station, Mahavir Vihar- 9937586626, Satya Nagar-Baishnavi Mixture & Sweets-7894821764, Samantapur- Download Point-7504557743, Sailashree Vihar-Harsha Book Store-8093449515, Saheed Nagar-Jagannath Graphics-7978652670, Photo World-7978468191, Sainath Photo Studio-8984436129, Shanti & Co-9937071063, Siripur-Omm Maa Sarala Communication-9777682449, Sushree fashion- Jagmara-9938714347, Shree Vision- Sailashree Vihar-9861476678, Unit-3-LIC of India Premium Point-9337787080, Unit-7- LIC Premium Point- 9338227422, VSS Nagar-Friends Cake & Bake-8658200930, Jeet Infoworld-7205195782, XIMB Square-LD Books-9658061373.

The first USG was normal at eight weeks of gestation. But there was appearance of a fibroid in the

same gravid uterus which was the added challenge. Then all the prenatal assessment was done within 20 weeks and a tumour was found growing. Pregnancy was continuing with close vigilance. The patient was booked for LSCS on 38+ gestations but she was admitted with labor pain and rupture of membrane one day earlier in emergency, said Dr Joshi.

After initial measures, LSCS was done and a term live male baby was born. Myomectomy was not considered in the same sitting, added Dr Joshi.

It is a rare case where a baby with a big uterine fibroid in HHWS (Herlyn Werner Wunderlich Syndrome) was delivered without any complication to both mother and baby in spite of so many challenges. Dr Bikash Agarwal, sr radiologist, Dr Sipra Lenka, sr registrar O&G and Dr Debabrath Dash, sr anaesthesiologist of Apollo Hospitals assisted Dr Joshi in this case.

# OPPN RAPS GOVT OVER COVID

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, July 4:** The BJP and the Congress Saturday criticized the state government over what they called mismanagement of COVID-19 pandemic in the state and raised questions on the testing strategy as cases continued to rise in the state.

Speaking to reporters here, state BJP general secretary Prithviraj Harichandan said, "The Chief Minister has appealed to people to remain cautious as COVID-19 cases are expected to rise in July. However, it seems that the state government is not taking proactive measures to contain the virus."

Referring to removal of nine

IAS officers from special duties for COVID-19, he said, "Though the ruling party spokesperson had claimed that new officers will be appointed for COVID-19, none has been given charge." Congress MLA Santosh Singh Saluja said the situation in Odisha is getting worse like Mumbai. Raising questions on the testing strategy of the government, he said the actual COVID-19 count would be over 1 lakh in the state.

"The government is testing persons, who have symptoms and other health complications. The state government should immediately ramp up COVID-19 testing to include those in quarantine and temporary medical camps," he demanded.

MANISH KUMAR, OP

**Bhubaneswar, July 4:** With the emergence of COVID 19 outbreak, several companies are now allowing their employees to work from home for hassle free workflow and reduce the chances of infection.

Health professionals claim that in the light of more people working from home than normal, they need to take special care to thwart chances of impact on their overall bone health. Orthopedic doctors claim that long hours of sitting in unsuitable furniture and bad postures can scale up orthopedic patients

among the employees working from home.

"Many people, while working from home, sometimes sit in a position which compels them to bend their neck to see their computer screen due to either small chair or more than longer chain. This puts extra pressure on the neck and can spike neck and back pain," said Dr Satya Ranjan Patra, an orthopedic surgeon from the city.

He said the height of chair and table should be such that the screen should be in front of the face. He also advised people not to use recycling chair when working for long on

## SHUTDOWN IN MANY FRAMES



1 Bulls have a free run at Rajmahal Square in Bhubaneswar during the shutdown over novel coronavirus

2 A man plucks blackberries during the shutdown in Kharavel Nagar area of the Capital city

3 A man pulls a cycle-load of firewood home in Dhauli area of Bhubaneswar, Saturday



# Work from home needs special ortho care: Experts

### KEEPING FIT

Take breaks in between to avoid strain on muscles and joints

Don't use recycling chair for long working hours

Maintain right posture for working on computers

Straight chairs with arm rests are best for computer works

Take morning sunlight to keep bone health at par

computer. "While working from home, many people tend to use recycling chair for work. The best idea is to use straight chairs so

that the posture of the person remains straight to avoid strain on their backbone. Moreover, chairs with hand rest are preferred for

long hours of work otherwise the hand and shoulder will feel the strain," he added.

Other doctors also advised people to take a break between their moves to relax their body. "Longer sittings at chair for work can add strain to your body and eyes. One should often try to take a break every 1-2 hours. One can walk a little bit and relax themselves and their muscles," said Dr Pooja Sah, another doctor.

Sah also advised people to take morning sunlight to keep their bone healthy and avoid chances of Vitamin D deficiency.

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# 4 VSSUT staff test Covid +ve, varsity shut till July 11

# Rebels threaten locals to pay ₹10L or leave village

POST NEWS NETWORK



BATTLE AGAINST PANDEMIC

**Sambalpur, July 4:** Even as Covid infection cases are on the rise in Sambalpur, four more staff of Veer Surendra Sai University of Technology (VSSUT) in Burla in Sambalpur district tested positive for COVID-19.

Given the situation, section 144 has been imposed at three places in Burla town for five days. The district was shut down for Sunday. This was informed by Collector Subham Saxena Saturday.

The four employees of VSSUT are male and asymptomatic. All of them have been shifted to the dedicated COVID facility and further contact tracing is underway, said a senior official.

Earlier, a lady lecturer of VSSUT had tested positive for COVID-19. The concerned lecturer's husband, who was a senior official of NALCO, had died of COVID-19.

The concerned lecturer is now undergoing treatment at COVID hospital in Cuttack. Following the detection of the positive case, a massive contact tracing was undertaken and the varsity was sanitised.

With detection of four new COVID-19 cases, VSSUT authorities have decided to close the var-

sity till July 11 so as to prevent the spread of the virus.

The VSSUT notification further stated that in pursuance to COVID-19 rules, the university will remain closed till July 11 for evolved COVID contamination situation.

"Further, all are instructed to remain in the headquarters, failing which disciplinary proceedings as per OCS (CC&A) rules 1962 will be initiated and penalty will be imposed," it added.

The VSSUT employees have been directed to remain in headquarters. Similarly, the employees, who are currently outside headquarters, have been directed to report to the registrar about their arrival and stay in self-quarantine for a period of 14 days, it was stated in the notification.

## Local infections on rise in Mayurbhanj

**BARIPADA:** As COVID-19 infections are on the rise in Mayurbhanj, emergence of local cases in some pockets of the district has left people and the administration worried, a report said. 28 new cases of COVID were detected in Mayurbhanj Saturday, taking the tally to 253. Of 28 fresh cases, two are Covid warriors, 14 cases were detected from quarantine centres while 12 were found at the local level. Fresh cases were reported from areas including Badashi, Kaptipada, Gopabandhanagar, Baripada, Shymakhunta, Betanoti, Jashipur, Khunta, Kusuma and Karanjia.

## Returnees trigger panic in Nuapada

**NUAPADA:** Nuapada is known for migration of labourers. Owing to the Covid situation, the district is witnessing a reverse migration of workers from other states since Unlock-1 came into force.

Reports said, 65,344 migrant labourers, who were stranded in other states, have come back to the district till date. The mandatory quarantine period for 63,988 of them has ended. They are supposed to remain in home quarantine for a week, but most of them violate the guideline and are found moving freely in villages, causing panic among people when the Covid infection cases are increasing in the district. The administration should restrict them from venturing out of their houses, or else others will face the consequences, locals observed.

Almost all migrant returnees have no work at hand to lead their lives at this crisis time. When asked about it, some lamented that as they have nothing to eat and drink,



they feel compelled to venture out with hopes of getting work and food. The influx of migrants has thrown a challenge to the administration when it comes to providing livelihood and income-generation activities to daily wagers and returnees. The state government laid stress on creating a scope of income generation for workers.

Now, officials are not checking their health status of migrants at regular interval, it was alleged. Swab tests of 4043 people were conducted while 82 cases come positive. CDMO Kalicharan Behera said the situation is being monitored.

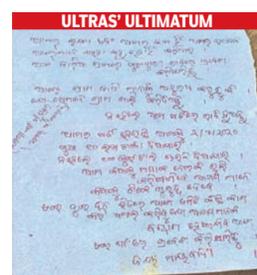
POST NEWS NETWORK

**Baripada, July 4:** Raruan police recovered a Maoist poster from Baria village under Sukruli block in Mayurbhanj district Friday afternoon. The villagers are in panic as Maoists have demanded Rs 10 lakh from them failing which they have asked all villagers to vacate their houses.

Local police have started investigation to ascertain if the poster was made by Maoists. The poster is written in red ink on a white paper which was affixed on a private wall here two days ago.

The poster read, "Our target and our work is our god. We always stick to our words. We have already entered into Baria village. Our condition is that the villagers would have to either pay us extortion money or vacate their respective houses."

"Moreover, villagers may give us 100 quintals of rice instead by July 2. If they forget to do so, we will create havoc in Baria very soon,"



ULTRAS' ULTIMATUM

the suspected Maoist poster read. "As two days have already passed, we apprehend danger at any time. We appeal to Mayurbhanj district administration for immediate help as lives and properties of our family members are at stake," Baria villagers expressed with tears in their eyes.

Reacting to this, Raruan police station IIC Dibyakanti Lakra said, "We have already started investigation into this. Presence of Maoists in Baria village has not yet been ascertained."

## 8-day shutdown in Buguda from July 7

**BUGUDA:** With COVID-19 positive cases recording a steady rise in Buguda block of Ganjam district and the fear of community transmission looming large, the district administration has announced an eight-day-long shutdown from Tuesday - July 7.

As of Saturday, there are 24 COVID-19 positive cases in the block including 22 policemen (OSAP) and a couple from Kanasuka village in Goudiaborada



panchayat. All the patients have been shifted to COVID-19 hospitals, a district administration official said.

To find a way out to make the fight against the invisible enemy more effective, Buguda block development officer (BDO) convened a meeting at Dak Bungalow Friday. Among others, tehsildar, IIC, NAC executive office, CHC officer, journalists, advocates and members of market associations took part in the meeting. It was decided in the meeting that there would be an eight-day long shutdown starting Tuesday in the Buguda town.

## COVID WARRIOR DIES IN DUTY IN GANJAM

**GANJAM:** A COVID-19 warrior died in line of duty at Buguda in this district Saturday. The deceased has been identified as an Anganwadi worker, posted at Kholakhali Anganwadi centre and was working at a quarantine centre. She had been suffering from cold and cough for a week. Yet, she was coming to the centre and discharging her duty diligently.

Like any other day, she was working at the quarantine centre Saturday when she suddenly fell ill. Other staff at the centre immediately rushed her to Buguda government hospital. But it was too

late. The doctors there declared her brought dead.

Alleging that the administration is not taking steps for the betterment of COVID-19 warriors as it should, family members and local residents staged a road blockade putting the body on Buguda main road. They demanded compensation for the bereaved family. However, they withdrew the blockade after the local administration interfered.

Notably, Ganjam reported 216 new COVID-19 cases and three deaths Saturday. With this, the tally and toll in the district has gone up to 2066 and 20 respectively.

## Man hangs self after son dies of Covid

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Kabisuryanagar, July 4:** A man hanged himself after he heard the news of his only son due to coronavirus Friday evening.

The shocking incident was reported from Kabisuryanagar area in Ganjam district, the worst Covid-hit district in Odisha.

The deceased was identified as 55-year-old Rajkishore Satpathy. He worked as a tax collector at Kabisuryanagar NAC.

According to sources, Seemanchal, 27, was a teacher at Sunarijhola Panchayat School.

After complaining of breathing problems, he was admitted to SUM COVID-19 hospital in Bhubaneswar July 1. His swab samples were collected before he was tested positive for COVID-19 Thursday. He passed away the next day.

Even as the deceased's friends and relatives knew about the incident, but they kept it a secret from Rajkishore and his wife. However, he came to know about the incident Friday afternoon and was deeply shocked. He quietly went out of the house in the evening. Local people spotted his body hanging from a tree in Sapuabasa jungle.

# Tension mounts as workers protest in front of JUSCO



Locals staging protests

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Jajpur, July 4:** Tension mounted in Kalinganagar area of Jajpur district Friday after local workers staged a demonstration in front of JUSCO office, citing delay in payment of arrears and lack of jobs for the local people.

Jamshedpur Utility and Services Company (JUSCO), a Tata group

company, has its unit at Kalinganagar area. Local workers alleged that JUSCO authorities are not paying monthly salaries and exploiting them. Hundreds of local workers Friday gathered in front of the company gate and demanded immediate disbursement of their arrears.

"If the demands of the workers are not met immediately, we would take to the streets. We will also take

the matter to the court," said Satyabrata Das - a worker in the company. Several other employees including Hemananda Rout, Trilochan Mohapatra and Purna Chandra Rout said the company owes them more than Rs 25 lakh in outstanding and that JUSCO authorities have been dilly-dallying in making the payment.

On being contacted, JUSCO project head Soumitra Sarkar said, "The allegations made by workers will be investigated. Necessary steps will be taken in this regard after discussing with the company higher-ups".

JUSCO has been associated with several other industrial ventures of Tata group since 2015. This Jamshedpur-based company was later renamed as Tata Steel Utility and Infrastructure Services Limited (TSUIS) in 2019.

## AWARENESS DRIVE



Artists are busy doing a wall painting as part of an awareness campaign on environment protection in Baripada

# Jumbos on rampage in Dhenkanal, Keonjhar

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Dhenkanal/Champua, July 4:** Herds of elephants have been causing havoc in some villages of Dhenkanal and Keonjhar districts over several days, reports said.

Reports from Dhenkanal said, people in Sadangi range were panicked as a herd of elephants has been on a rampage in forested areas like Rupabalia under Joranda section for the last five days.

The animals have damaged crops, leaving the farmers worried. Locals said, in the last five days, elephants have caused loss to crops and vegetables at Mahapada.

Vegetables grown on an acre of



land of Himadri Nath were completely damaged. Meanwhile, forest officials have launched a drive to flush out the animals.

Ranger Goutam Pradhan said if the affected farmers come out with complaints at the forest division office, their loss will be compen-

sated on the basis of the assessment report by the department officials. Similarly, Telkoi areas in Keonjhar district has been witnessing elephant menace over past few days. The animals have damaged houses and destroyed crops.

People in several villages under this tribal-dominated block have been spending sleepless nights as elephants keep frequenting these villages creating a havoc, a local forest official said.

The jumbos have pulled down their mud-made houses and destroyed their recently sowed paddy crops, the official said. They destroyed acres of vegetables and damaged houses in Padanga village.

## Lady IIC of Balasore town PS missing

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Balasore, July 4:** Balasore town police station inspector-in-charge Sarojini Nayak has gone mysteriously missing since July 1.

Her disappearance has now been a talk of the town here.

The cop was last seen at the police station from 1 pm to 7 pm Friday. She had disappeared after 7 pm and none of the cops or staff knew anything about her whereabouts. Assuming her disappearance as normal, they did not attach much importance to it.



It was at 8 pm when a vigilance team reached the police station searching for the IIC, the police station staff grew suspicious.

The Balasore vigilance SP said that her mobile phone was switched

off most of the time. At times, though the calls were possible but there was none from the other end to answer them.

The IIC's disappearance has now been the fevered gossip across the town. Notably, vigilance sleuths caught Balasore town police station sub inspector Bimal Kar red handed while accepting Rs 25,000 from a middleman to settle a land dispute July 1. Both were arrested and have been lodged in jail.

A theory is going around that the holed up cop may have a role in the above mentioned case.

# DONGRIA KONDHS TAKE TO MASK STITCHING FOR A LIVING

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Rayagada, July 4:** After the craze for Dongria shawls, the demand for Dongria masks has caught up with people due to its beautiful design patterns and stitching by the women of the primitive Dongria Kondh community, a report said.

This is an effort to supplement their income amid the Covid-19 pandemic when people of all sections in society have been severely hit by the coronavirus induced lockdown. Many people have lost their livelihood and work hard to earn a living. The primitive Dongrias living in the Niyamgiri hills are no less good as they have been equally hit by the Covid-19 induced lockdown.

However, the Dongrias making the most of their skills and with the support of the state government have been able to earn livelihood during these difficult times. The masks

with traditional Dongria Kondh motifs have the scope to be marketed as style statements. Red, yellow, green and brown threads are used to embroider the traditional designs.

The Dongria women were sitting idle when the Dongria Kondh Development Agency (DKDA) came to their rescue and showed them a new road for survival. The DKDA taught them to stitch masks with their traditional designs as the face wear has become a must for every person in view of the rapid spread of the pandemic.

The Dongria women started stitching the masks with assistance from the state government and within a short time their masks became a hit. Stitching of masks has helped them earn a living during this lockdown

Sources said over 40 Dongria women of Khambesi, Khajuri, Kurli and Hundijali villages of Kurli pan-



chayat under Bissam Cuttack block in Rayagada district are engaged in mask stitching and weaving during this lockdown from May 21.

The women, all members of the self-help groups, stitch the masks and earn Rs 7 per piece. Later, the women make embroideries of traditional

designs for which they are paid Rs 50 per mask by the DKDA. The DKDA provides cloth, needles and thread for embroidery works.

A mask is sold at Rs 100 while a sum of Rs 95 is spent on raw materials and wages. The women

## NAVIGATING THRU CRISIS

Over 40 Dongria women of Khambesi, Khajuri, Kurli and Hundijali villages of Kurli panchayat are engaged in mask stitching

A mask is sold at ₹100 while ₹95 is spent on raw materials and wages. The women have stitched over 750 masks while receiving fresh orders for supply

The masks are marketed by TDCC in Bhubaneswar and have been sold in KISS, Bhubaneswar, Rayagada, Ganjam, Kalahandi and Bolangir districts

and Bolangir districts.

The women of the Dongria community were known for their beautiful artworks and traditional pattern of designs on clothes. The shawls made by the Dongria women have high demand in national and international markets. However, their business has come down due to the lockdown.

Sukri Kadra, a Dongria woman, said stitching of masks and weaving designs on the masks has helped them manage their household. This has also made them feel happy as the masks woven by them helps in checking the spread of the pandemic.

When contacted, Sudarshan Padhi, project manager, DKDA said they have plans to market the masks in the national and international markets which has become a source of livelihood for the primitive community.

## Woman bludgeons hubby to death

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Champua, July 4:** In a shocking incident, a woman allegedly bludgeoned her husband to death in a fit of rage during a feud at Dhaladihi under Champua police limits in Keonjhar, Saturday. Champua IIC Manoranjan Pradhan said Bishal Munda and his wife Chand Munda had a tiff Friday night over some family matter. Bishl went to sleep after his dinner

Since the quarrel broke out, Chand was seething with anger. At dead of night, she attacked her husband with a stone. Bishal was grievously wounded and died later, the IIC added. Police started an investigation and arrested the accused. The stone was seized while the body was sent for post mortem.

Pain is the hammer of the Gods to break a dead resistance in the mortal's heart.  
SRI AUROBINDO



# THREE-PRONGED THREAT

For writers it has become difficult to pick which disaster to write about this week. There are so many. An embarrassment of riches, or actually whatever the opposite of it is.

Let us start with health. On Friday, 22,000 Indians tested Covid positive and over 440 died of the plague. We are registering 10 per cent of global cases now and will be third highest in terms of number of cases by Monday. By the end of July we will have 50,000 cases a day, the same number as the United States now does and 1,000 daily deaths. By the end of August, it will be a lakh cases a day. At that point, how many doctors and workers will show up for work and how many will be able to do something to consider.

There is no point in thinking about September and October but consider that the places that are going through the peaks now are Delhi, Mumbai and Chennai which have the best health facilities in India. When the disease spreads rapidly in places without urban health-care, what will come is not difficult to imagine.

Let us turn to the economy. India has a few high frequency indicators that can tell us the current state of the economy and the change. The best such indicator we have is automobile sales because at the beginning of each month manufacturers put out the number of units they have sold to dealers. We can compare the number to the same month last year to see how things are going.

Passenger vehicle sales in January 2020 dropped to 2.6 lakh from 2.8 lakh in January 2019. This is before Covid, and two months before the lockdown. Commercial vehicle sales, meaning truck and other transport and cargo vehicles that industry requires, fell from 87,000 units in January 2019 to 75,000 in January this year.

Two wheeler sales fell from 15 lakh to 13 lakh. Across the middle class, the lower middle class and industry there is decline. In February, commercial vehicle sales fell by 32 per cent, passenger vehicle sales by 7 per cent.

After zero sales in April, we should have had a huge bump in May and June but both months are negative in substantial terms. There is something that is hurting the Indian economy and this pain began before the lockdown. The government has not admitted it, though the data is clear, and therefore the government is not doing anything to correct it. The pain will continue and our economy will continue to suffer.

As if these two problems were not substantial enough we face the gravest strategic threat of the last two decades. China is bullying us and occupying parts of Ladakh that we used to patrol till March. We do not know why China is doing this and we do not know what it wants. This government has a former spy as its national security advisor, a position that is usually taken by scholars. We have a chief of defence staff whose focus has been on counter insurgency in Kashmir and who was confident that the LAC with China was settled. He was wrong. Now we are moving troops to the area from the Pakistan front and rushing to buy new warplanes.

Strategic affairs analyst Pravin Sawhney has reported the reason the talks with China are taking so long and not progressing. It is that the Chinese want India to acknowledge the current positions their army is occupying, meaning a shift in the LAC. Of course this cannot be conceded by us, but it cannot even be discussed properly because the prime minister has said there is no intrusion while the defence minister and the foreign minister have conceded that China has violated the LAC and its army is on our side.

Modi's visit to Ladakh on Friday was to correct that confusion. His warlike speech is to confirm that the threat is real and the Chinese need to go back. He has still refused to name China but perhaps that will come soon as it becomes obvious that we have a long and difficult road ahead to get the Chinese to vacate.

One must say here that we have lost valuable time because of our refusal to accept the reality for whatever reason, whether it is embarrassment or the PM's image. We could have mobilised support around the world if we had said openly and clearly that China was violating the LAC, but there's no point in crying over spilt milk. We still have the opportunity when Modi goes to the G7 in a few months though it is not clear if China will have cemented its intrusion by then.

So we have a full blown epidemic, an economic recession with the highest unemployment in Indian history, and a powerful enemy whose aggressive and offensive actions we did not anticipate.

At the beginning of the year I would have said that the biggest problem in our nation was the fact that the ruling party was trying to divide Indians. For long term that remains our primary self-induced worry. But for now we have to unite to combat the immediate threat to our people and our nation.

## WISDOM CORNER

All the world's a stage, and all the men and women merely players: they have their exits and their entrances; and one man in his time plays many parts, his acts being seven ages. WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

In the long run, we shape our lives, and we shape ourselves. The process never ends until we die. And the choices we make are ultimately our own responsibility. ELEANOR ROOSEVELT

We cannot solve our problems with the same thinking we used when we created them. ALBERT EINSTEIN

## WORDSWORTH

### Stotting

You've probably seen nature films in which antelope or gazelle are suddenly surprised by a cheetah. Before they run away, and also while they are running, the animals do a weird pouncing prance, in which they leap into the air, all four legs stiff and back arched. This is stotting. Quite why they do it isn't understood, though it may be a form of alarm signal, or a good way to get a better view of the ground ahead, or they may have been bribed by the producer to make the pictures more interesting. The word comes from Scots, where it means to bounce, or to make something bounce against a surface.

## LOL

### FISHING ON THE LAKE

A famous admiral and an equally famous general were fishing together when a sudden squall came up. When it died down both eminent warriors were struggling helplessly in the water.

The admiral floundered his way back to the boat and pulled himself painfully in. Then he fished out the



general, using an oar.

Catching his breath, he puffed:

"Please don't say a word about this to anyone. If the Navy found I can't swim I'd be disgraced."

"Don't worry," the general said. "Your secret is safe. I'd hate to have my men find out I can't walk on water."

# FOR CONTROL OF NARRATIVE

FOCUS CREDIBILITY

In a very well known social science experiment, a sample of randomly selected people is asked whether they understand how a bicycle worked. As would be expected, an overwhelming majority would say they do! Yet on asking to draw a rough sketch of the bicycle, most would get it remarkably wrong! This phenomenon seems to apply equally well to most subjects and most groups of people irrespective of their background, education, social status, race, gender or nationality.



Dhanada K Mishra

**THE COGNITIVE BIAS IN MOST OF US TO HAVE AN OVERESTIMATION OF OUR ABILITY TO UNDERSTAND ISSUES AND THEREBY UNDERESTIMATE VOICES OF SANITY AND REASON, GOADED BY POPULIST LEADERS, IS TURNING OUT TO BE A DEADLY COCKTAIL**

The well-known theory in social psychology known as the Dunning-Kruger effect was first introduced in 1999. It relates to the phenomenon of the human tendency to overestimate our own knowledge or competence. It is known as a cognitive bias which is generally corrected as we learn more about the subject over a period of time. This theory was further generalised into what was later termed as the Illusion of Explanatory Depth or IoED by psychologists Leonid Rozenblit and Frank Keil in 2002. As per this theory, most people feel they understand the world with far greater detail, coherence, and depth than they really do. This to me goes a long way in explaining the predicament we face with the avalanche of information we encounter all the time which makes us feel as if we know a lot of things in great depth contrary to reality.

Such a cognitive bias leads to most of the uninformed, fruitless, and rancorous debates online on most subjects. The sooner more of us realise the truth about the shallowness of our knowledge on most subjects, it would help make us humbler and more open to ideas of others. It would help us better appreciate the opinion of those on subjects they have spent a considerable amount of time and effort in mastering.

One of the fastest-growing challenges today is carrying out a civilized discussion on any topic - particularly on social media without degenerating into partisan



**Ironically, powerful persons like Donald Trump take a lead in destroying the reputation of all mainstream media that are traditionally respected for their long-standing credibility by labelling them as fake news, particularly as they try to hold him accountable for his actions**

bickering. The world is more divided than ever before with leaders like Trump, Bolsonaro, Duterte, Putin, Johnson, Modi, and the like both helping to create and also taking advantage of those divisions for partisan and populist political interests. Such tendencies are clearly visible most prominently on social media platforms like Twitter and Facebook. What makes it really dangerous is the avalanche of fake information mostly in the guise of legitimate news. Such misinformation can range from innocent pranks to deliberate campaigns that are politically motivated with nefarious ends in mind. The emergence of paid troll armies has made it easy for political parties and other entities to control the narrative however incredible it might be. Unfortunately, the impact of these trends is no longer limited to online conversations only but frequently spills over to real-life with deadly consequences. Whether in the case of recent communal riots in Delhi or the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic, the threat of fake news and misinformation campaigns has proven to be most lethal. Even national elections as important as that for the President of USA have become subject to manipulation by

third party actors with a vested interest. Left unchecked this trend will have catastrophic results for mankind.

In this context, the traditional sources of authentic information have come under deadly fire as they are the biggest threat to those who stand to benefit from the spread of fake news. Ironically, powerful persons like Donald Trump take a lead in destroying the reputation of all mainstream media that are traditionally respected for their long-standing credibility by labelling them as fake news, particularly as they try to hold him accountable for his actions. Such examples can be also found closer home in India where intellectuals and media not towing the official line on any issue and asking uncomfortable questions are labelled anti-national. A recent report suggested that more than 50 journalists have been booked by Indian police on one pretext or the other just in the past few months since the start of the Covid-19 outbreak. Prime Minister Modi has not helped the cause by denigrating institutions and intellectuals of proven caliber and reputation. Allowing the system to prosecute important voices that stand up for human rights, for the environment, for

probity in public life has had a chilling effect on civil society. Numerous non-profits have been harassed to the extent of being forced to close operations often in the name of national interest which often turns out to be corporate interest. The war between truth and falsehood seems to be razing and the outcome will have a decisive impact on our future as a society.

The cognitive bias in most of us to have an overestimation of our ability to understand issues and thereby underestimate voices of sanity and reason, goaded by populist leaders is turning out to be a deadly cocktail. Understanding this conundrum, explaining complex ideas in simple terms without loss of their essence will be a crucial skill in the future in order for the wise to be heard over the cacophony of the ongoing discourse. One of the redeeming features of a genuine expert or an intellectual (as opposed to one who pretends to be one) with a certain depth of expertise in any field is the evident humility. As the Sanskrit saying goes - 'Namranti Falina Vrikhshya', which means 'trees full of fruits tend to bend down'. Such humility comes with the knowledge that 'the more you know, the more you realise how much more there is to know!' It's an easy and almost certain measure of the value of a person's opinion especially in his/her area of expertise.

Long before the ideas of Dunning-Kruger or IoED were introduced, the famed philosopher Bertrand Russell had captured the essence almost perfectly in simple words as follows: "The whole problem with the world is that fools and fanatics are always so certain of themselves, and wiser people so full of doubts."

And there lies the source of most of our current troubles!

*The author is an academician currently visiting Hong Kong University of Science and Technology as a Research Scholar. He can be reached by email at dhanadam@gmail.com*

## SPECTRUM RESILIENCE MANAGEMENT

# Taking climate risk seriously

Hauke Engel and Mekala Krishnan

**CLIMATE CHANGE COULD AFFECT THE MOST VULNERABLE POPULATIONS DISPROPORTIONATELY, AND COULD FOSTER INEQUALITY BY SIMULTANEOUSLY BENEFITING SOME REGIONS WHILE HARMING OTHERS**

COVID-19 has shown how a long-recognised but under-appreciated global risk can suddenly materialise and wreak social and economic devastation in a matter of weeks. The implication is clear: While the world is focused on battling the pandemic, firms and governments must also recognise and plan for other risks, particularly climate change, which, like a pandemic, could upend the economy if not managed properly.

That is not a conclusion we arrive at lightly. At the McKinsey Global Institute, we spent a year assessing the possible socioeconomic impacts of climate change over the coming three decades. What we found is these effects already exist and are increasing, often in non-linear ways.

As part of our analysis, we conducted nine case studies across regions to gauge potential effects, linking climate models with economic projections in each case. We estimated inherent physical risk, absent climate adaptation and mitigation, to assess the size of the challenge and highlight the case for action.

Climate researchers frequently use Representative Concentration Pathway (RCP) scenarios, ranging from lower (RCP 2.6) to higher (RCP

8.5) atmospheric carbon dioxide concentrations. We adopted the higher-emission RCP 8.5 scenario in order to assess inherent physical risk in absence of further decarbonisation. Our studies produced several key findings. First, the most at-risk societies and systems are already close to physical and biological thresholds. Moreover, increasing climate hazards may make such systems vulnerable when they reach such thresholds, often resulting in non-linear intensification of effects.

For example, increasing heat and humidity in India mean that by 2030, and under an RCP 8.5 scenario, between 160-200 million people could live in regions with a 5 per cent average annual probability of lethal heatwaves. As heat and humidity levels rise, outdoor work could become extremely challenging. We estimate that by 2030, the average number of effective working hours lost in India could place 2.5-4.5 per cent of GDP at risk annually.

Second, economic and financial systems have been designed and optimised for a certain level of risk. For example, many global supply chains and food-production systems prioritise efficiency over resilience, making them vulnerable

to failure if intensifying climate hazards affect critical production hubs.

Furthermore, whereas property insurance is generally repriced annually, homeowners often have longer-term time horizons of 30 years or more on their real-estate investments. This mismatch exposes homeowners to the risk of higher costs, including rising premiums or reduced insurance coverage.

Third, financial markets could pull forward risks in affected regions, potentially triggering capital reallocation and asset repricing, as well as changes to cost and availability of insurance. In Florida, for example, estimates based on past trends suggest increased risk of tidal flooding alone could devalue exposed homes by \$30-80 billion, or 15-35 per cent, by 2050, other things being equal.

Fourth, while the direct impact of climate change is local, it can have knock-on effects across regions and sectors as a result of interconnected socioeconomic and financial systems (as is case with COVID-19). For example, we estimate that the direct damage to infrastructure assets from a 100-year flood in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam could increase from about \$300 million today to as much as \$1 billion by 2050, while knock-on costs to the

economy could rise from \$100-400 million to between \$1.5-8.5 billion.

Finally, climate change could affect the most vulnerable populations disproportionately, and could foster inequality by simultaneously benefiting some regions while harming others. Climate events could double the likelihood of harvest failure in agricultural bread-baskets by 2030. This could lead to higher food prices, hitting the poorest communities the hardest.

To mitigate the risk that ongoing climate change will jeopardise more communities and economies, businesses and governments must adapt to the inevitable global warming that will occur over the next decade as a consequence of past emissions. There is a range of actions to consider. Businesses could weigh climate considerations in their capital allocation, product and service development, and supply-chain management. Cities could put climate risk at the center of their urban-planning decisions, while financial institutions could do the same when managing investment portfolios.

*Hauke Engel is a partner at McKinsey & Company. Mekala Krishnan is a senior fellow at the McKinsey Global Institute.*  
@ PROJECT SYNDICATE

## Letters

### TO THE EDITOR

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

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

### Masks as medical waste

Sir, it is very disheartening to see used masks being thrown on streets and footpaths in Bhubaneswar. Generally, people who go for a morning walk or engage in any physical activity in the morning are considered to be most disciplined and health conscious but the reckless dumping of used masks can cause major damage to the health of others. Used face masks may carry the coronavirus or other viruses, which can survive for one or two days in these humid conditions. It may also cause potential danger to garbage collectors when they use hands to pick up the masks. Thus, it is important for the government to treat masks as medical waste and encourage people to use reusable masks over single use surgical masks and also ensure that used masks are safely recycled and disposed of. As responsible citizens, it is our duty to ensure that we spray disinfectant on both sides of our used masks and fold them up before putting them into a sealed plastic bag and in the dustbin. For the safety of others and ourselves, let's take care of our used masks. Disinfecting them will help ensure the used masks do not become a second source of coronavirus or any other virus. Face masks can save us from this pandemic but negligent and careless disposal of masks can cause equal trouble.  
K. Ravi, BHUBANESWAR

### Ayurveda for COVID

Sir, 'Ayurveda' is the renowned name of the Indian system of alternative medicines and notable personalities from our country's past such as Sushruta, Charaka and Patanjali have popularised Ayurveda over the ages. In allopathic medicine all the possible drugs are under trial for COVID-19 and Hydroxychloroquine (HCQ) is given only to the affected patients. In Homoeopathy people are familiar with the names of Arsenic Alb and Bacillinum used as preventive medicines for the coronavirus and almost everyone has taken the doses as these names are widely spread throughout our country and there is high demand of these homoeopathic medicines. But the AYUSH Ministry, Government of India, is still maintaining silence and not naming common Ayurvedic medicines which could be used as prevention for coronavirus. The COVID-19 outbreak started in our country in the month of February but the Ministry of AYUSH has not yet disclosed the names of preventive Ayurvedic medicines. The nation is still waiting to know the names of possible preventive Ayurvedic medicines for COVID-19 and expects them to be distributed to the public free of cost or at bare minimum price without any further delay.  
Ramdas Ray, BHUBANESWAR

# After hullabaloo, Nagaland bans dog meat trade, consumption

Mizoram had also recently taken steps to check open slaughtering of dogs and in March its Assembly unanimously passed the Animal Slaughter Bill 2020

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**Kohima/Aizawl/Agartala, July 4:** Taking a cue from Mizoram, the Nagaland government has banned the trade and consumption of dog meat. State Chief Secretary Temjen Toy in a tweet Friday said: "The State Government has decided to ban commercial import and trading of dogs and dog markets and also the sale of dog meat, both cooked and uncooked. Appreciate the wise decision taken by the State's Cabinet (on Thursday)." The Chief Secretary tagged his tweet with former union minister and well known animal rights activist Maneka Gandhi, who is currently a BJP MP. Journalist and former parliamentarian Prithvi Nandy urging his followers to join a movement to ban the sale and consumption of dog meat in Nagaland markets, Wednesday said in a tweet: "This is urgent. You can help make history by sending an email tonight to Nagaland Chief Secretary saying



**A**round 30 million dogs and 10 million cats are killed across Asia for human consumption annually, with the trade most widespread in China, South Korea, Indonesia, Cambodia, Laos, Vietnam and several parts of northeast India. However, Hong Kong, the Philippines, Taiwan, Thailand and Singapore have banned dog meat trade and consumption

Nagaland must stop dog markets, dog restaurants, and smuggling of dogs into the state. Eating dog meat is inhuman, not just illegal." The Mizoram government had

## ANIMAL RIGHTS

Frequent media reports said dogs were transported from neighbouring northeastern states and adjoining countries including Myanmar and Bangladesh and traded in Mizoram, Nagaland and other northeastern states

Nagaland and Mizoram-bound vehicles carrying dogs tied in gunny bags with their heads sticking out are frequently caught in Assam and Tripura. But a lot of such vehicles slip through the security barricades

Animal rights activists said the cruel transport and slaughter of dogs violates several provisions of the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act, 1960, the IPC, and Food Safety and Standards Authority of India regulations

trade, by amending the law to remove dogs from the definition of animals suitable for slaughter.

The HIS/INDIA statement, issued in Aizawl recently, said that the consumption of dogs is prohibited under India's food safety regulations. "However, the regulations not enforced properly and thousands of dogs each year are cruelly and illegally captured from the streets or stolen from their homes, packed into plastic and jute bags with their mouth stitched or tied, and transported over many days to Mizoram," HIS/INDIA said.

According to the Federation of Indian Animal Protection Organisations, thousands of dogs are smuggled regularly to Nagaland and Mizoram from Assam, West Bengal and other states. A healthy big dog, caught in Assam for ₹50, is sold for ₹1,000 in Nagaland's wholesale market. Dog meat sells for ₹200 per kg in Nagaland, said FIAPPO, which works with over 160 organisations across 70 cities in India.

# Amid row over MSME Ordinance, Assam denies selling resources

The Ordinance, when promulgated, would allow investors to set up MSMEs without any hurdle and without the need for multiple clearances of land from different authorities

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**Guwahati, July 4:** Amidst widespread protests against a proposed ordinance to allow conversion of land without multiple clearances from authorities for setting up Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs), the Assam government Friday denied allegations that it was planning to 'sell off' the state's land resources.

Various political parties, tribal and social organisations, and students' bodies, including the influential All Assam Students Union (AASU), launched agitations after the cabinet, chaired by Chief Minister Sarbananda Sonowal, June 29 approved the "MSME Ordinance". The ordinance, when promulgated, would allow investors to set up MSMEs without any hurdle and without multiple clearances of land from different authorities.

Industry and Commerce Minister Chandra Mohan Patowary Friday said that the reactions on the proposed ordinance might be because no one has seen its proposals, which, he sought to clarify, did not touch tribal blocks and areas, reserve forests and eco-sensitive regions. "Hazardous units would not be allowed to be set up. The ordinance was aimed to facilitate generation of jobs to the state's 20 lakh registered unemployed as well as some 3.5 lakh people who have been jobless since returning from other parts of India before and during the Covid-19 lockdown," he clarified.

Patowary said under the proposed MSME Ordinance, maxi-



mum quantum of investment would be ₹50 crore for medium, ₹10 crore for small and ₹one crore for micro industrial units. He said only few states like Gujarat, Rajasthan and Karnataka have brought out such ordinance and acts to facilitate setting up of MSMEs. "This Ordinance will not affect the land rights of indigenous people of Assam as protected by the Assam Agricultural Land (Regulation of Re-classifications and Transfer for Non-Agricultural Purpose) Act 2015," he said.

Noting that due to the pandemic, the state's economy has been adversely affected and business environment depressed, the Minister said that in such situations, the ordinance would create a conducive environment, drive domestic growth, attract investment and accelerate industrial development in the state. The opposition Congress, however, said that they were not convinced by the government clarifications. State Congress President Ripun Bora said the easy transfer

of land for industrial purposes would effortlessly allow major investors. "The ordinance would go against the very interest of the indigenous people," he argued.

The All India United Democratic Front President and Lok Sabha Member Maulana Badruddin Ajmal also criticised the ordinance as a ploy to sell off large areas of Assam's land resources to corporate houses posing as MSME aspirants.

Agitators from the AASU Thursday as part of their state-wide agitations burnt copies of the ordinance, which await Governor Jagdish Mukhi's assent. The AASU protestors called the "MSME Ordinance" as a "betrayal of trust" by the Bharatiya Janata Party-led state government that had come to power in 2016 promising to protect 'jati' (race), 'matil' (land) and 'b'hetil' (hearth).

The Delhi-based Rights and Risks Analysis Group has urged the Governor not to give his assent to the "disastrous MSME Ordinance" in the veil of promoting MSMEs.

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**Bangalore, July 4:** Karnataka High Court Justice Krishna Dixit expunged the controversial remarks he made against a rape victim in an order granting anticipatory bail to the accused, an official said Saturday. "On an application by the state government, the judge expunged the controversial remarks made against the rape victim, while granting anticipatory bail on June 22 to the accused, as they were also objected to by lawyers and civil activists across the country," the state legal department official said here.

In the revised order, the judge said he deemed it appropriate to expunge the last four lines in para



number 3 (c) at page 4 of the June 22 judgement, as sought in the state government application.

Granting anticipatory bail to the accused, an employee in a private firm owned by the victim, Justice

Dixit had made the remarks in the judgement.

"Taking note of the contents of the respondent (state's application)... and no objection by the petitioner-accused, I deem it appro-

priate to expunge the last four lines in the para of the subject judgment dated 22.06.2020, as sought for by government pleader Nageshwarappa," said the revised order.

The judge clarified that his observations shall not influence the investigation in the case and its likely trial.

Voicing concern over the controversial remarks, lawyers and civic groups, advocate Aparna Bhat last week wrote to Supreme Court Chief Justice SA Bobde and Justices R Banumathi, Indu Malhotra and Indira Banerjee of the apex court to issue an advisory to all courts to refrain from commenting on the conduct of victims of sexual offence.

# Karna mulls online betting for horse racing

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**Bangalore, July 4:** With the COVID-19 induced lockdown stalling horse races since March 25, the Karnataka government is in favour of allowing punters betting on their favourite stallions online, a top official said Saturday.

"The state government has positively responded to our request to allow betting online, as punters and fans are banned from attending horse races if resumed as per the lockdown guidelines in the race course grounds in the city centre," Bangalore Turf Club (BTC) Chairman D Vinod Shivappa told IANS here.

Admitting that suspension of horse racing over the last three months had badly disrupted the peak turf season for stallions and stakeholders, Shivappa said the state government had agreed in principle to permit racing without the presence of punters and spectators in the stands to prevent the virus spread.



"As we have already lost one racing season during the summer vacation and in the process of losing race events in the monsoon period, with no let-up in the virus spread, legalising online betting will enable us to resume races sans punters and spectators," asserted Shivappa.

"We will soon submit a proposal to the state government on how

betting can be legally conducted as in other countries so that we can soon resume horse racing, with punters and fans participating online to revive the exciting sport and make up for losing crores in rupees to the ban," said Shivappa.

"With the state government approval, we will develop a smartphone application (app) for downloading it by our members, punters

## RACING IN COVID TIMES

A ban on all sport activities, including horse racing has disrupted normal life and livelihood of all stakeholders since the lockdown was suddenly enforced and extended, with restrictions on many outdoor sports

The 150-year-old Bangalore Turf Club has about 350 members and hundreds of affiliated members from other turf clubs across the country, participating in various races throughout the year, with home grown studs riding in Mysuru and Ooty races during their seasons

The online betting on a seamless platform will also ensure transparency, removing bookmakers and illegal betting that thrive offline otherwise

and spectators to bet their money on a winning horse and yet watch the show live or later," said Shivappa.

# Eyeing promotion, 55-yr-old cop writes Class-X exam

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**Bangalore, July 4:** A 55-year-old Karnataka police constable is writing the Secondary School Leaving Certificate (SSLC) board exam at Kolar to get promotion before his retirement in 2025.

"Karnataka State Reserve Police (KSRP) constable KR Manjunath is appearing for the SSLC board exams as an external candidate at the Government Girls' Junior College at Kolar, which is an enrollment centre," district nodal officer Nagendra Prasad told IANS.

Kolar is about 100km east of Bangalore. The SSLC board exams are being held across the state since June 25 as per the lockdown guidelines, which makes wearing mask, washing hands with sanitiser and maintaining social distancing mandatory. Manjunath appeared for the 6th and last exam in third language Friday after completing papers in five subjects so far.

"Manjunath is attempting to pass in all 6 subjects for the second time, as he failed in 2 subjects in the first attempt 4 years ago. He will get promotion and become head constable if he passes this time," said Prasad.

Though Manjunath studied up to Class VII in the town over four decades ago, he secured a job in the state police department in D group and was promoted as a constable over a decade ago on service



Constable KR Manjunath

record. "As Manjunath wants to retire as head constable, he has to pass the Class-X exam, which is a minimum for the promotion. He is confident of passing in all subjects this time as he claims to have done well," said Prasad.

The constable has opted to write the exam in his home town (Kolar) though he is posted in Bangalore.

"On learning that a senior policeman was writing the Class-X board exam, state Education Minister S. Suresh Kumar enquired about him during his official visit to Kolar June 29," Prasad recalled.

# Political problem in Manipur will settle down soon: CM

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Imphal, July 4:** On returning from Delhi where he met Union Home Minister Amit Shah and BJP president J P Nadda, Manipur Chief Minister N Biren Singh has said the political crisis which recently engulfed the state will settle down soon.

This was Biren's first visit to the national capital after braving resignations by four ministers from ally National People's Party (NPP) and their subsequent return to the NDA fold following intervention of Shah and Nadda. On arrival from Delhi Friday evening, the chief minister underwent a coronavirus test at Imphal airport itself and left for home only after the sample tested negative for the virus.

"Delhi visit was quite well and central leaders were very happy about the crucial victory in the Rajya Sabha election in Manipur," he told reporters at the airport.

In the June 19 election for the lone Rajya Sabha seat from Manipur that took place in the background of the political crisis triggered by resignations of nine ruling coalition members, BJP's candidate Leishemba Sanajaoba had defeated the Congress rival.

Besides the four NPP ministers, three BJP rebels, the lone All India Trinamool Congress legislator and an Independent MLA had quit the BJP-led coalition in Manipur on



## NUMBER GAME

While the four NPP legislators are all set to regain their position in the cabinet, the chief minister has to deal with the heightened aspirations of some BJP legislators to become ministers, besides those of the former Congress legislators who had defected to the saffron party shortly after the last state election in 2017

Out of the seven defecting Congress MLAs whose cases under the anti-defection law were heard by the Manipur High Court and the Speaker's Tribunal, the membership of four has been restored and they even voted in the Rajya Sabha election for the lone Manipur seat

June 17. After deft handling of the situation by BJP's key leader in the Northeast Himanta Biswa Sarma and Meghalaya Chief Minister and NPP national president Conrad Sangma in close cooperation with the central leader-

ship, the four NPP legislators later submitted letter of support in favour of Biren Singh to Governor Najma Heptullah. Responding to queries about the portfolios which are yet to be announced for NPP ministers, Biren said, "Central leadership doesn't interfere much. Ours is a national party. It is my duty to seek the advice and suggestions of the national leaders."

Distribution of portfolios in the cabinet was one of the important reasons cited by the NPP ministers while walking out of the government. "I think, at the earliest, there will be a solution for everything with the blessings of the central leaders for the convenience of all," he said. On being allotted Z security cover, he said he had no knowledge and came to know about it after meeting the Union Home Minister July 1.

"I myself did not have any knowledge of it and I was surprised," he said, adding that it must be based on the inputs of intelligence agencies.

Days after overcoming the political crisis, Biren Singh had gone to Delhi Tuesday to meet NDA's central leadership to discuss allocation of portfolios to his ministers.

After end of the political trouble, Biren Singh is facing another challenge in meeting ministerial aspirations of his own party MLAs and also allies for which he is likely to seek guidance from the central leaders.

# 'Women leading fight against COVID in NE'



AGENCIES

**New Delhi, July 4:** Union Minister Jitendra Singh Saturday said the women in the northeast are taking the lead in the fight against the coronavirus pandemic and helping the region emerge as a model for COVID-19 management.

Interacting with various self-help groups associated with the North Eastern Region Community Resource and Management Programme (NERCORMP) through a webinar, Singh said the women power ('matrashakti') of the northeastern region is also taking the lead in all spheres of economic activity after a successful management of the coronavirus pandemic. "Women have excelled in the

Women have excelled in the fight against the pandemic and helped the northeastern region emerge as a model of coronavirus management with very limited number of cases and just 17 deaths in all the eight states so far

fight against the pandemic and helped the northeastern region emerge as a model of coronavirus management with very limited number of cases and just 17 deaths in all the eight states so far," he said.

Singh, the Union Minister for Development of North Eastern Region (DoNER), said the region has also emerged as a model of development in the last six years under the Narendra Modi government at the Centre.

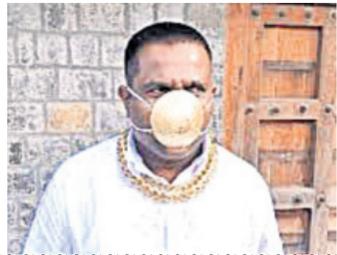
He said the northeastern region will take the lead for India to emerge as an economic power with the support of its huge natural and human skill resources in the post-COVID-19 era.



Rules that help Chinese companies are outdated and should be reviewed in national interest and for the interest of Indian firms  
NITIN GADKARI | UNION MINISTER

PUNE MAN WEARS GOLD MASK WORTH ₹2.89 LAKH

Shankar Kurade, a resident of Pimpri-Chinchwad in Pune, has got himself a mask made of gold with minute holes worth ₹2.89 Lakh



## of the day quote

The way the then Commerce Minister (Kamal Nath) gave relaxation to China in imports, it appears it was done in lieu of granting assistance to the foundation



KAMAL PATEL | MADHYA PRADESH MINISTER

Patriotic Ladakhis are raising their voice against Chinese intrusion. They are screaming a warning. Ignoring their warning will cost India dearly



RAHUL GANDHI | CONGRESS LEADER

Now the government is in a desperate mood to sell a great chunk of one of our largest national assets - the Indian railways



ADHIR RANJAN CHOWDHURY | LEADER OF CONG IN LS

# Pro-Khalistan SFJ begins voter registration for 'Referendum'

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, July 4: Banned pro-Khalistan group Sikhs For Justice (SFJ) Saturday launched its much-publicised online voter registration for 'Referendum 2020' for people in Punjab through a Russian portal.

The Ministry of Home Affairs had in July last year banned the SFJ for advocating Referendum 2020, an online campaign to demand Khalistan, which seeks a separate homeland for the Sikhs.

As per the inputs, the SFJ launched the Referendum 2020 voter registration through the Russian website www.punjabfree.ru, appealing to the people in Punjab and aged 18 or above from any religion as well as the Sikhs living anywhere else in India to register their votes for participation in the non-governmental Punjab Independence Referendum.

Detailed information regarding the registration process was put up in English and Punjabi languages on the Russia-based website, which mentions three steps for registration of votes and the sign-up to receive updates about the Referendum 2020.

The SFJ has a ground-level plan to ensure that voter registration form for Referendum 2020 reaches every household in Punjab, despite the Indian government's crackdown on the pro-Khalistan activists.

**Banned pro-Khalistan group Sikhs For Justice (SFJ) launched online voter registration for 'Referendum 2020' for people in Punjab through a Russian portal**

Detailed information regarding the registration mentions three steps for registration of votes and the sign-up to receive updates about the Referendum 2020

The Ministry of Home Affairs had in July last year banned the SFJ for advocating Referendum 2020, an online campaign to demand Khalistan

Designated US-based terrorist Gurpatwant Singh Pannun made the voter registration announcement through a video, putting Punjab Police as well as Central security agencies in a tizzy.

The Indian government has since been in touch with the authorities concerned as to how the SFJ used Russian cyberspace to launch the voter registration for Referendum 2020.

In the backdrop of July 1 commitment of Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Russian President Vladimir Putin to further strengthen the "special and privileged strategic partnership between the two countries in all spheres", use of a Russian portal by the anti-India

campaign is a matter of concern. The development has also raised questions on the India-Russian historical ties. As Russia has one of the most stringent legal frameworks for web portals to operate from its soil, the matter has been taken up through diplomatic channels as to how SFJ managed to use the cyberspace of that country to fulfil its agenda against India.

Meanwhile, Punjab Police cordoned off the area around the Golden Temple complex in Amritsar city apart from the deployment of a posse of policemen around the shrine and barricades at vulnerable spots.

The sources said July 4 was cho-

sen by the SFJ for voter registration for Referendum 2020 as the government had "ordered the police to enter the Golden Temple precincts to disperse assembled separatist Sikh volunteers on this day in 1955".

The radical group SFJ is supported by Pakistan-based handlers to provide money and logistical support to radical Sikh elements in Punjab to carry out subversive activities.

The SFJ is headed by Avtar Singh Pannun and Gurpatwant Singh Pannun, who have started advocating Khalistan as well as the on-line secessionist campaign for Referendum 2020.

SFJ's key member Pannun is among nine individuals who were designated terrorists by the Ministry of Home Affairs July 1, 2020, for trying to revive militancy in Punjab through anti-national activities and involvement in the Khalistan movement.

Punjab Police booked Pannun and SFJ in April for seditious automated calls aimed at instigating the people, particularly the youth, against the state government during the COVID-19 curfew.

Cases have been registered against Pannun and US-based SFJ under Section 124A of IPC, and Sections 10 (A) and 13 (1) of the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, 1967, at the State Special Operations Cell in Mohali. The Punjab police has registered 10 cases against the SFJ and its members.

# TikTok distances from Beijing after app ban

REUTERS

New Delhi, July 4: Social media app TikTok distanced itself from Beijing after India banned 59 Chinese apps in the country, according to a correspondence seen by this news agency.

In a letter to the Indian government dated June 28th, TikTok Chief Executive Kevin Mayer said the Chinese government has never requested user data, nor would the company turn it over if asked.

TikTok, which is not available in China, is owned by China's ByteDance but has sought to distance itself from its Chinese roots to appeal to a global audience. Along with 58 other Chinese apps, including Tencent Holdings Ltd's WeChat and Alibaba Group Holding Ltd's UC Browser, it was banned in India this week following a border clash with China.

"I can confirm that the Chinese government has never made a request to us for the TikTok data of Indian users," Mayer wrote, adding that data for Indian users is stored in servers in Singapore. "If we do ever receive such a request in the future, we would not comply."

The letter was sent ahead of a likely meeting next week between the company and the government, one source familiar with the matter said. One Indian government source told Reuters this week the ban was unlikely to be revoked soon. Lawyers have said a legal challenge was unlikely to be successful, given India has cited national security con-

**In a letter to the Indian government, TikTok Chief Executive Kevin Mayer said the Chinese government has never requested user data, nor would the company turn it over if asked**

cerns for the ban. The ban, which upset India's growing legion of TikTok stars, has also given a lift to local rivals such as Roposo, which added 22 million new users in the 48 hours after the ban took effect.

TikTok has committed to spend \$1 billion in the region. Since its launch in 2017, it has become one of the fastest-growing social media apps. India is its largest market by user, followed by the United States.

In the letter, Mayer played up the company's investment in the region, highlighting more than 3,500 direct and indirect employees and content available in 14 languages. "The privacy of our users, and the security and sovereignty of India, is of utmost importance to us," Mayer wrote.

## SHORT TAKES

### Naxal commander gunned down

**Gadchiroli:** A Naxal who was gunned down by the police in Maharashtra's Gadchiroli district has been identified as a commander of a unit, who had Rs 8 lakh reward on his head. The personnel from C-60, a specialised combat unit of the district police, were on an operation in a jungle under Hedri police help centre in Mauza Yeldami Friday when an exchange of fire took place with Maoist ultras. The police have identified the deceased as Permil Dalam commander Kote Abhilash alias Chander.

### Terrorist hideout busted in J&K

**Jammu:** A terrorist hideout was busted in a remote village in Rajouri district of Jammu and Kashmir Saturday, leading to the recovery of a huge cache of arms and ammunition, officials said. The hideout was unearthed during the course of a joint search operation by police and the Rashtriya Rifles in Dardasan village of the Thanamandi area, the officials said. They said the recoveries made from the hideout included two Chinese pistols with two magazines, an Under Barrel Grenade Launcher (UBGL) with 11 rifle grenades, 14 magazines of AK assault rifle with 920 rounds and a Chinese hand grenade.

### Two cousins electrocuted

**Raisen:** Two cousin sisters, aged 18 and 20 years, died of electrocution after they came in contact with a barbed wire fence at a farm in Raisen district of Madhya Pradesh while working in a paddy field, police said Saturday. The incident occurred in Sultanpur, about 40-kms from the district headquarters, Friday evening, Sultanpur police station in-charge Amrish Bohre said.

### Two killed in bomb explosion

**Kolkata:** Two people were killed and around four injured when the bombs they were allegedly manufacturing went off inside a house in Murshidabad district, a senior police officer said Saturday. Their identities were yet to be established as the condition of those injured and undergoing treatment at a hospital was still "critical", he said. The thatched roof of the house, where they were allegedly making bombs, also blew off in the explosion, which occurred at Suti town in Jangipur.

## DHARMA CHAKRA



A monk of Mahabodhi Temple offers flowers to Bodhi tree on the occasion of Dharma Chakra Diwas in Bodhi Gaya, Saturday

## RS gets ready for Monsoon session

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, July 4: The Rajya Sabha Secretariat is exploring seating members of the upper house in the House's chamber as well as the galleries in conformity with the norm of physical distancing and to enable virtual participation of other members from either the Central Hall or Balayogi Auditorium in the Parliament premises for the monsoon session.

As the Lok Sabha Secretariat came out with new rules for reconvening parliamentary panel meetings, Rajya Sabha Chairman

Venkaiah Naidu too held detailed discussions on various options for conducting the proceedings of the Upper House during the ensuing Monsoon Session of the Parliament. The Secretary General and other senior officials of the Rajya Sabha Secretariat were present in the hour-long discussions.

However, virtual participation is considered to be limited, in view of the capacity constraints of NIC at present to enable such virtual participation of all MPs. But, Naidu said that there is a need to scale up capacities for larger virtual Parliament in due course.

The chamber and the galleries of the Rajya Sabha can accommodate 127 members while adhering to the physical distancing norms. Sources said that all the galleries, except the media gallery, would be utilised for seating the members.

But given the limited seating capacity in the chamber and the galleries of the House, Naidu asked the officials to draw up appropriate plans for seating based on the strength of various parties in the House or any other effective criteria like preparing a list of the participants in the proceedings of the House for the day who would be accommodated accordingly.

# 'It takes 18 months to develop a vaccine'

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, July 4: A good vaccine usually takes at least 18 months, before it could be rolled out for production after fast-tracking all the mandatory regulatory approvals, said NK Ganguly, former director general of Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR).

It is expected that India's first indigenous COVID-19 vaccine, Covaxin may be released August 15 under a fast-track mechanism. According to the government's top medical research body, a dozen institutes have been selected for clinical trials of the indigenous COVID-19 vaccine (BBV152 COVID vaccine). Ganguly said the strain of the virus was given to BBIL in May end, and in July, human trials have been scheduled.

Elaborating on the lengthy process involved in vaccine development, he insisted that after spending many months and infusing a lot of funds, the uncertainty continues to linger. "It may be difficult to say whether the vaccine is successful or not", he added. The ICMR in a letter said, "It is envisaged to launch the vaccine for public health use latest by August 15, after completion of all clinical trials. BBIL (Bharat Biotech International Limited) is working expeditiously to meet the target, however the final outcome will depend on the cooperation of all clinical

trial sites involved in this project."

Before the vaccine is tested on humans, challenge studies are done on mice and monkey, then a toxicology report is prepared, to check if the developed vaccine produces harm to cells, and it takes at least three to four months to finalize this report, said Ganguly. After this phase, the vaccine is tested on two rodents and a large animal and after successful completion of this stage the vaccine is ready for human trials.

"In Phase 1, the age group profiling is done (wherein vaccine study is done on people in different age groups). In Phase 2, nearly 600 to 700 people are vaccinated, and if the vaccine performs successfully in this phase then it progresses into Phase 3, which is called the efficacy study (in this phase, thousands of people are enrolled). Even after fast tracking regulatory ap-

provals, it will take at least 18 months to develop a good vaccine", said Ganguly.

He insisted that the vaccine being developed by Moderna (RNA vaccine is set to begin Phase 3 trials later this month and targets a vaccine by 2021) and BioNTech-Pfizer (Phase 3 trial is expected to begin in July). Gennova biopharmaceutical is also working on a vaccine and it looks positive, Ganguly added.



# Chinese hand in ISI's Gilgit-Baltistan move hits separatists

The developments in Pakistan related to Gilgit-Baltistan and diminishing role of terrorist leaders and separatists operating against India is not just accidental

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, July 4: The controversial proposal to annex Gilgit-Baltistan region of Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK), which is to change the semi-autonomous status of the region, is being pushed by Pakistan to help China secure the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), security agencies have told the government.

The developments in Pakistan related to Gilgit-Baltistan and diminishing role of terrorist leaders and separatists operating against India is not just accidental. It has massive strategic depth and the security perimeter around it with China playing a major role.

Arguably the most important factor, top security officials said,

is increasing interference of China in Pakistani affairs.

The 3,218-kilometre CPEC, a dream project of Chinese President Xi Jinping, in which China has sunk about \$19 billion, runs along the disputed area.

Last August Prime Minister Narendra Modi scrapped special status of Jammu & Kashmir bringing it under federal control. Statements reiterating India's claim over the Gilgit-Baltistan are believed to have sparked further apprehension about Gilgit-Baltistan. There were three meetings in Islamabad to end the autonomous status of Gilgit-Baltistan. As the meetings were happening in Pakistan, the security agencies underline Chinese started incursions in eastern Ladakh region.



Sources detailing the manoeuvres said that the first meeting was held last year in Islamabad and it was presided over by Pakistan's top army officers. In the meeting,

This irked the Pakistan Army and Inter-Services Intelligence. Subsequently, the third meeting was held in February 2020 and it was presided over by another top Pakistan army officer. The meeting was also attended by Pakistan's law minister, PoK law minister, PoK Prime Minister, Gilgit-Baltistan Chief Minister, both factions of Hurriyat and Jammu Kashmir Liberation Front representatives. In the meeting, a detailed presentation by Pakistan army on the history of Gilgit-Baltistan was made wherein it was stated it was never part of Jammu & Kashmir and was forcibly annexed by Dogra Maharaja and British. The Hurriyat leaders supported the idea. However, JKLF nominee and Kashmir-based SAS Geelani's representative remained quiet.

Explaining the shadowy war, sources said that those militants who had gone to PoK and stayed there since 1990s are not a fighting force anymore. "They are seeking a role in political affairs. Hurriyat leadership is not allowing them, since they have developed vested interests. They are not vacating their positions," said sources adding that Geelani has been backing the former Hizbul cadre, who want a political space within Hurriyat.

"The old hawks occupying the top positions are not allowing the younger lot to join. Also, in PoK, many separatists' leaders are living a luxurious life, which is also being resisted by the younger lot. They had even complained to Geelani against the old Hurriyat leaders based in PoK," sources further added.

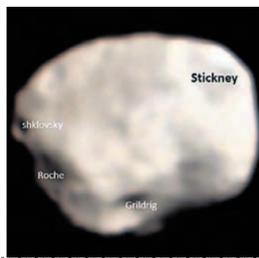


The world has suffered much this year, and I sincerely wish that this sacred day heralds a new ray of hope and grants a glimpse of happiness

**RAM NATH KOVIND | PRESIDENT**

## MARS ORBITER PHOTOS OF RED PLANET'S BIGGEST MOON RELEASED

Indian space agency Friday released an image of Phobos, the closest and biggest moon of Mars clicked July 1 by the Mars Colour Camera on board the Mars Orbiter Mission (MOM)



## of the day quote

For the third time in a week, the PM did not name China as the aggressor. Why? What is the purpose of talking about an unnamed 'enemy' to the people of India and the jawans in Ladakh?

**P CHIDAMBARAM | FORMER UNION MINISTER**

We want permanent solutions to the perennial flood problem in areas like that of Bihar, Uttar Pradesh and North Eastern states

**AMIT SHAH | UNION HOME MINISTER**

The (state) government has purchased corona related equipment (medical), worth more than ₹3,000 crore. Prima facie it looks the government has paid more price than the market price

**SIDDARAMIAH | K'TAKA LEADER OF OPPN**

# COVID cases hit record high amid monsoon rains

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, July 4:** With 22,771 people testing positive for coronavirus in a single day, the highest so far, India's COVID-19 tally climbed to 6,48,315 Saturday, while the death toll rose to 18,655 with 442 new fatalities, according to the Union Health Ministry data.

With a steady rise, the number of recoveries stands at 3,94,226 and one patient has migrated. There are 2,35,433 active cases of coronavirus presently in the country, the updated data at 8 am showed. "Thus, around 60.80 per cent of patients have recovered so far," an official said.

The total number of confirmed cases also includes foreigners.

According to ICMR, a cumulative total of 95,40,132 samples have been tested up to July 3 with 2,42,383 samples being tested on Friday.

This is the second consecutive day when coronavirus cases have increased by more than 20,000. There has been a surge of 4,57,780 COVID-19 cases from June 1 till date.

Of the 442 deaths reported in the last 24 hours, 198 are from Maharashtra, 64 from Tamil Nadu, 59 from Delhi, 21 from Karnataka, 18 each from Gujarat and West Bengal, 14 from Uttar Pradesh, 10 from Rajasthan, eight each from Andhra Pradesh and Telangana, five from Punjab, four each from Haryana, Madhya Pradesh and Jammu and Kashmir, three from

Bihar, and two each from Assam and Odisha.

Of the total 18,655 deaths reported so far, Maharashtra accounted for the highest 8,376 fatalities, followed by Delhi with 2,923 deaths, Gujarat with 1,904, Tamil Nadu with 1,385, Uttar Pradesh with 749, West Bengal with 717, Madhya Pradesh with 593, Rajasthan with 440 and Karnataka with 293.

The COVID-19 death toll reached 283 in Telangana, 255 in Haryana, 206 in Andhra Pradesh, 157 in Punjab, 119 in Jammu and Kashmir, 80 in Bihar, 42 in Uttarakhand, 29 in Odisha and 25 in Kerala.

Jharkhand has registered 15 deaths, Chhattisgarh and Assam 14 each, Puducherry 12, Himachal Pradesh 10, Chandigarh six, Goa four and Meghalaya, Tripura, Ladakh and Arunachal Pradesh have reported one fatality each, according to the Health Ministry.

More than 70 per cent deaths took place due to comorbidities, it said.

Maharashtra has reported the highest number of cases at 1,92,990 followed by Tamil Nadu at 1,02,721, Delhi at 94,695, Gujarat at 34,600, Uttar Pradesh at 25,797, West Bengal at 20,488 and Telangana at 20,462, according to the ministry data.

The number of COVID-19 cases has gone up to 19,710 in Karnataka, 19,062 in Rajasthan, 16,994 in Andhra Pradesh, 16,003 in Haryana and 14,297 in Madhya Pradesh.

## COVID-19 TRACKER

**TOTAL CASES**  
6,48,315

**NEW CASES**  
22,771

**DEATHS**  
18,655



## SHORT TAKES

### New tourist permits proposed

**New Delhi:** The Ministry of Road Transport and Highways (MORTH) has proposed to amend the National Permit regime under the Central Motor Vehicles Rules 1989 in a bid to promote tourism across the country. The Ministry is looking to provide seamless movement to the tourist passenger vehicles after the success of goods carriage vehicle under National Permit Regime. The "All India Tourist Vehicles Authorization and Permit Rules, 2020" has been already documented and published vide GSR 425(E) dated 01 July 2020 for public and stakeholders consultation.

### Seven held for theft of holy book

**Chandigarh:** In a five-year old heinous crime of the Sikh holy book - Guru Granth Sahib, a Special Investigation Team led by Jalandhar Range Deputy Inspector General Ranbir Singh Khatra arrested seven Dera Sacha Sauda followers from Punjab's Faridkot district early Saturday. They were arrested for stealing a 'bir' of the Guru Granth Sahib from Burj Jawahar Singh Wala village. Among the arrested accused are Sukhjinder Singh, Neela, Ranjit Bhola, Nishan, Baljit and Narinder Sharma, all residents of Faridkot district.

### UP minister, wife test COVID +ve

**Lucknow:** Uttar Pradesh Rural Development Minister Rajendra Pratap Singh (Moti Singh) and his wife have been admitted to the Sanjay Gandhi Post Graduate Institute of Medical Sciences here after they tested positive for COVID-19. Asked about his health, Singh said Saturday, "I am fine." Asked how long he is expected to stay in the hospital, he said, "I came here only on Friday. I will follow the doctors' advice."

### High tide hits Mumbai

**New Delhi:** The weather office has issued a red alert for Mumbai, Raigad and Ratnagiri in Maharashtra, forecasting "extremely heavy rainfall" over the next 24 hours in many places in Palghar, Mumbai, Thane and Raigad districts. Earlier, the India Meteorological Department (IMD) had said the metropolises and surrounding areas could get intermittent moderate to heavy rain with "the possibility of very heavy to extremely heavy rainfall at isolated places" Saturday.

## RAISING VOICE



NSUI activists arrive via cycles from Jabalpur during a protest against the hike in fuel price in Bhopal, Saturday

# India to focus on connectivity to Buddhist sites, says PM

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**New Delhi, July 4:** Prime Minister Narendra Modi on the occasion of Asaadh Purnima and the inauguration of the Dharma Chakra Day, Saturday, said India wants to focus on connectivity to Buddhist sites to improve tourism.

The Prime Minister's remark came at a time when the country is passing through its worst economic phase and needs improvement in all sectors including tourism to attract revenue. "We want to focus on connectivity to Buddhist sites. A few days back the Indian Cabinet announced that Kushinagar airport will be an international one. This will bring people, pilgrims and tourists," Modi said.

Addressing through video conferencing, Modi said he is very hopeful about the 21st century and this hope comes from young friends. He lauded the efforts of youths in start-up sectors saying, "If you want to see a great example of how hope, innovation and compassion can remove suffering, it is our start-up sector led by our youths." Noting that bright young minds are finding solutions to



global problems, the Prime Minister said India has one of the largest start-up eco-systems and I would urge my young friends to also stay connected with the thoughts of Lord Buddha so that they could be motivated and find the way ahead.

The Prime Minister said that the event is also known as Guru Purnima. "This is a day to remember our gurus who gave us knowledge. In that spirit, we pay homage to Lord Buddha," PM said. "The eight-fold path of Lord Buddha shows the way towards the well-being of many societies

and nations. It highlights the importance of compassion and kindness. The teachings of Lord Buddha celebrate simplicity both in thought and action," he said.

Buddhism teaches respect for people, the poor and women, for peace and non-violence. "Therefore, the teachings of Buddhism are the means to a sustainable planet." "In his very first sermon in Sarnath, and his teachings after that, Lord Buddha spoke on two things - hope and purpose. He saw a strong link between them. From hope comes a spirit of purpose," the Prime Minister said.

# Andhra NRIs show solidarity with Amaravati movement

An estimated one lakh Telugu NRIs staged protests in more than 300 cities across the world, expressing solidarity with the farmers and other people of Amaravati

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**Amaravati, July 4:** Telugus from Andhra Pradesh settled in various parts of the world have expressed solidarity with the people of Amaravati, whose protests against the state government's decision to trifurcate the state capital entered 200th day Saturday.

Holding placards and candles and raising slogans, NRIs staged protests in major cities across the world, urging YSR Congress Party (YSRCP) government to withdraw the move and continue developing Amaravati as the only state capital.

An estimated one lakh Telugu NRIs staged protests in more than 300 cities across the world, expressing solidarity with the farmers and other people of Amaravati opposing the government's move.

In response to the call by Jayaram Komati, a prominent NRI in the US,



An artist's impression of the proposed Amaravati city, which was to become Andhra Pradesh's only capital

Telugus in various countries staged protests. Telugu NRIs from the United States Ireland, Kuwait, South Africa, France, Germany, Austria, Canada, Saudi Arabia, and other countries have come forward to voice their solidarity with the slogan 'Don't Kill

Amaravati, Build Amaravati'.

According to leaders of the opposition Telugu Desam Party (TDP), the idea was to express solidarity in 200 cities all over the world to mark the 200th day of the movement but in the US itself, NRIs have joined the solidarity event from more than 230 cities and the global number went up to 300. Women, men, children, elderly all expressed their support to the cause. The rulers were stunned to see such a massive support to Amaravati cause, said Jayaram Komati.

This event was conducted across the world in full adherence to COVID rules. NRIs from different countries joined the Amaravati solidarity event as per the rules of the local governments. Due to COVID-19 concerns, they participated in the event in small groups of 15-20 people. Many more participated in the event from their homes in virtual mode.

## Kanpur killings: Chaubepur Station Officer suspended

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**Kanpur, July 4:** A day after eight Uttar Pradesh Police personnel were shot dead and six others seriously injured in Bikru village under Chaubepur police circle in Kanpur, IGP (Kanpur Range) Mohit Aggarwal Saturday suspended Station Officer Vinay Tiwari on the charge of laxity in duty.

Tiwari was taken into custody by the Special Task Force (STF), which is presently questioning him. The charge of the police station has since been handed over to Pushpraj Singh.

Tiwari was suspended for alleged laxity in the police raid at the gangster's house in the wee hours of Friday. It was learnt that a case would be registered against Tiwari in case his role in the whole affair is found suspicious.

History-sheeter Vikas Dubey and his gang had fired at a police party that had gone to the village to arrest him. The deceased included Bilhaur Circle Officer Devendra Kumar, who

was leading the team, three sub-inspectors and four constables.

Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath had directed the STF to take over investigations and ensure arrest of the criminals.

Inspector General of Police Aggarwal said that those found complicit in the case would not only be dismissed from service but also arrested and prosecuted.

As for the demolition of the Bikru village house of Vikas Dubey, the police officer said that villagers had told authorities that the gangster had built the house after illegally occupying the piece of land, about which the villagers were angry. Meanwhile, sources said that Station Officer Vinay Tiwari had gone to Vikas Dubey's house Wednesday following a complaint by Rahul Tiwari, who was beaten up by the gangster in the presence of the police officer.

When the SO tried to intervene, Dubey allegedly snatched the mobile phone of Vinay Tiwari and behaved rudely with him.

# Geelani quitting politics exposes myth of 'peaceful resistance'

Geelani's disenchantment with the separatist politics marks a watershed moment which will weigh heavily on all those who chose to follow his footsteps

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**Srinagar, July 4:** The resignation of hardline separatist leader, Syed Ali Shah Geelani from the all-party Hurriyat conference has exposed the myth of 'peaceful resistance' against Indian rule in Kashmir.

Geelani's disenchantment with the separatist politics marks a watershed moment which will weigh heavily on all those who chose to fol-

low his footsteps.

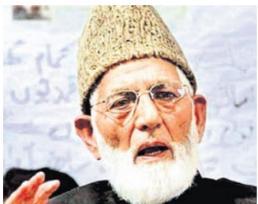
Serious allegations have been levelled by Geelani against those he claims to have hijacked the separatist movement against the "Indian rule in Kashmir". In his letter of despair, Geelani has blamed the constituents of the separatist conglomerate to have brazenly used it for accumulating wealth and using their clout for personal aggrandisement.

Despite feeling bad about the allegations levelled against them by Geelani, his erstwhile comrades cannot publicly criticise him.

The reason is simple, they have glorified Geelani as the "Amir-e-Karwan", (Leader of the movement) for over 30 years and speaking against him now will only result in deeper chinks in the separatist armour.

"Thou can do no wrong": This is how Geelani was seen in Kashmir's separatist camp and finally discovering that he had feet of clay is definitely going to force a re-thinking on whether the path chosen by the separatist leaders is still the right thing to do, feels many.

The fact that Geelani's supremacy



in all party Hurriyat conference has been challenged by its new convener, Mohammad Hussain Khatib, who belongs to Doda district of J&K and is now based in Muzaffarabad, has sent a clear message to Kashmiri separatist leaders.

Pakistan has decided to give up proxies in Kashmir and handle the separatist politics directly from across the border. The creation of 'The Resistance Front' (TRF) has preceded Geelani's ouster from the Hurriyat. It is believed that while the TRF would coordinate and represent all terror outfits to coordinate attacks against the security forces in Kashmir; the takeover of Hurriyat by Muzaffarabad-based Khatib signals the takeover of separatist politics by Islamabad.

This new development leaves very little to look for in the separatist camp for the so-called moderates or those who claim to be fighting for

an independent Kashmir. Street violence had its heroes like Geelani's man Friday, Masarat Alam who is in detention under the public safety act (PSA).

Despite precious lives lost during those orchestrated violent protests, instead of gaining ground against India, the separatists are faced with abrogation of article 370 and the loss of statehood for J&K.

Geelani's disgruntlement with his cherished idea to give an over-ground political platform to the underground armed separatism has failed.

Those who control the gun will also control the separatist politics.

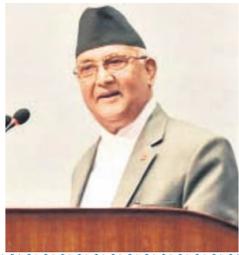
# international



Iranians who do not wear masks will be denied state services and workplaces that fail to comply with health protocols will be shut for a week  
HASSAN ROUHANI | IRAN PRESIDENT

## MEET DEFERRED

A crucial meeting of Nepal's ruling communist party to decide the political future of embattled PM KP Sharma Oli was postponed until Monday to allow more time for the top leadership to iron out their differences



## of the day quote

I'm worried about a generation that is scarred by coronavirus — we don't want to lose that generation. There's no reason for that to happen if we can get these next few bits right. For me this is really about social justice. I look at the situation, and I'm desperate for all those people to go back to the jobs that they had at the beginning of all of this



RISHI SUNAK | UK CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER

North Korea has no plans to resume nuclear negotiations with the United States unless Washington discards what it describes as "hostile" policies toward Pyongyang



CHOE SON HUI | NORTH KOREAN FIRST VICE FOREIGN MINISTER

Canada is suspending its extradition treaty with Hong Kong as part of a package of responses to the new security law China has imposed on the city



JUSTIN TRUDEAU | CANADA PM

## SHORT TAKES

### Qureshi tests Covid positive

Islamabad: Pakistan Foreign Minister Shah Mehmood Qureshi confirmed that he has tested positive for the novel coronavirus, but was feeling "strong and energetic". In a tweet on Friday, Qureshi said that he had a slight fever earlier on Friday and had immediately quarantined himself at home, reports Dawn news. "I have now tested positive for COVID-19... I feel strong and energetic. I will continue to carry on my duties from home..." Several politicians, including members of the ruling Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI), have been diagnosed with the virus over the past few months as it continues to spread in Pakistan.

### Many evacuated

Tokyo: Japan asked thousands of people to evacuate their homes on its southern island of Kyushu, media said Saturday, following unprecedented torrential rains in which 15 people are feared dead and nine missing. With the region facing the risk of further floods and landslides, authorities told 92,200 households in the prefectures of Kumamoto and Kagoshima to vacate their homes, the Kyodo news agency said.

### Officer killed

Toledo: An officer who was responding to a disturbance call in a store parking lot was shot and killed early Saturday morning by an intoxicated man holding a beer, police said. Toledo Officer Anthony Dia was shot in the chest just after midnight in the parking lot of a Home Depot, and later pronounced dead at a hospital, Police Chief George Kral said at a news conference.

### Seven cops hurt

London: Seven police officers were injured in violence at an unlicensed musical event in the British capital as they sought to break up a crowd that posed a risk to public health during the coronavirus pandemic, police said Saturday. Those at Friday's event became violent and threw projectiles at police as they entered an estate at Havelock Close in West London, the police said in a statement.

# Trump blasts 'left-wing cultural revolution'

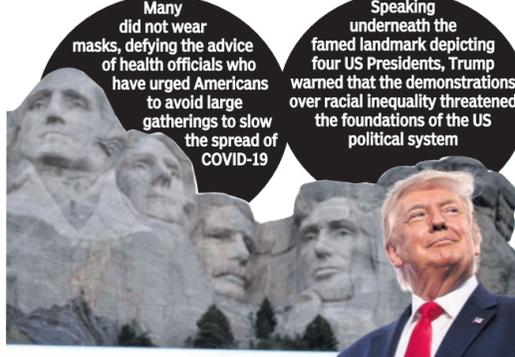
REUTERS

South Dakota, July 4: President Donald Trump on Friday accused "angry mobs" of trying to erase history with efforts to remove or re-think monuments to U.S. historical figures and used a speech at Mount Rushmore to paint himself as a bulwark against left-wing extremism.

The pre-July 4 holiday event drew 7,500 people, packed into an outdoor amphitheater. Many did not wear masks, defying the advice of health officials who have urged Americans to avoid large gatherings to slow the spread of COVID-19. Trump has not worn a mask in public and made only limited reference to the pandemic in his remarks.

Speaking underneath the famed landmark depicting four U.S. presidents, Trump warned that the demonstrations over racial inequality threatened the foundations of the U.S. political system. "Make no mistake, this left wing cultural revolution is designed to overthrow the American revolution," Trump said. "Our children are taught in school to hate their own country."

In the nationwide unrest following the death of George Floyd, a Black man who died in police custody in Minneapolis, protesters in several cities have vandalized



President Donald Trump smiles at Mount Rushmore National Memorial, near Keystone, S.D. PTI PHOTO

the statues of leaders, including Confederate generals who led a rebellion against the U.S. government during the 1861-65 U.S. civil war.

Protesters in one instance unsuccessfully tried to pull down a statue of U.S. President Andrew Jackson outside the White House. Jackson, known for his populist policies, owned slaves and forced thousands of Native Americans from their homes. "Angry mobs are trying to tear down statues of our founders, deface our most sacred memorials, and unleash a wave of violent crime in our cities," Trump said. Trump, a Republican who has

emphasized a "law and order" approach to the demonstrations, has opposed proposals to rename U.S. military bases that are named after Confederate generals. The program was not an official campaign event, but Trump touched on key themes meant to energize his base ahead of the Nov. 3 election. Many in the crowd wore Trump memorabilia and chanted "Four More Years" before the program began. Trump trails presumptive Democratic presidential nominee Joe Biden in opinion polls in key states and is eager to boost his campaign through a tough response to social unrest.

## KHASHOGGI MURDER CASE

# Trial told oven was lit after killing



REUTERS

Istanbul, July 4: A Saudi consulate worker in Istanbul told a Turkish court Friday he had been asked to light a tandoor oven less than an hour after Saudi journal-

ist Jamal Khashoggi entered the building where he was killed.

Turkish officials have said one theory police pursued was that Khashoggi's killers may have tried to dispose of his body by burning it after suffocating him and cutting up his corpse. The indictment accuses two top Saudi officials, former deputy head of Saudi Arabia's general intelligence Ahmed al-Asiri and former royal court adviser Saud al-Qahtani, of instigating "premeditated murder with monstrous intent".

It says 18 other defendants were flown to Turkey to kill Khashoggi, a prominent and well-connected journalist who had grown increasingly critical of the crown prince. The defendants are being tried in absentia and are unlikely ever to be handed over by Saudi Arabia, which has accused Turkey of failing to cooperate with a separate, largely secretive, trial in Riyadh last year.

In December a Saudi court sentenced five people to death and three to jail for the killing, but Khashoggi's family later said they forgave his murderers, effectively granting them a formal reprieve under Saudi law. A Saudi prosecutor said at the time there was no evidence connecting Qahtani to the killing and dismissed charges against Asiri.

Zeki Demir, a local technician who worked for the consulate, was giving evidence on the first day of the trial in absentia of 20 Saudi officials over Khashoggi's killing, which sparked global outrage and tarnished the image of Saudi Arabia's de facto ruler. Khashoggi disappeared after going to the consulate to get papers for his marriage in October 2018.

## 'BOYCOTT CHINA'



Members of the Indian-American community stage a demonstration against China, demanding to boycott Chinese products at Times Square in New York, Saturday PTI PHOTO

## Indian dozes off at airport, misses flight

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Dubai, July 4: An Indian expat worker, who was eagerly waiting to be repatriated after cancelling his visa, missed a jumbo jet flying 427 stranded Indians to Kerala after he fell asleep in the Dubai International Airport, the media reported.

P. Shajahan, 53, who worked as a storekeeper with a company in Musaffah in Abu Dhabi, told Gulf News Friday that he had fallen asleep as he had not slept on Wednesday night waiting for confirmation about the flight and had caught an early morning taxi to reach Dubai.

He was supposed to fly on the Emirates jumbo jet to Thiruvananthapuram in Kerala,



He was supposed to fly to Thiruvananthapuram in Kerala

which was chartered by the Kerala Muslim Cultural Centre (KMCC) Dubai. After finishing the check-in procedures and rapid test, he reached the waiting area of the boarding gate at Terminal 3 in the afternoon.

"I sat away from most of the others. But I fell asleep," he said.

## UNAMBIGUOUS SIGNAL

# Big message to China as US sends carriers

China and the United States have accused each other of stoking tension in the strategic waterway at a time of strained relations over everything from the new coronavirus to trade to Hong Kong

REUTERS

Washington, July 4: Two U.S. aircraft carriers were conducting exercises in the disputed South China Sea Saturday, the U.S. navy said, as China also carried out military drills that have been criticised by the Pentagon and neighbouring states.

China and the United States have accused each other of stoking tension in the strategic waterway at a time of strained relations over everything from the new coronavirus to trade to Hong Kong.

The USS Nimitz and USS Ronald Reagan were carrying out operations and exercises in the South China Sea "to support a free and open Indo-Pacific," the navy said in a statement. It did not say exactly where the exercises were being conducted in the South China Sea, which extends for some 1,500 km (900 miles) and 90% of which is claimed by China despite the protests of its neighbours.

"The purpose is to show an unambiguous signal to our partners and allies that we are committed to regional security and stability," Rear Admiral George M. Wikoff



was quoted as saying by the Wall Street Journal, which first reported the exercises.

Wikoff, commander of the strike group led by the Ronald Reagan, said the exercises were not a response to those being conducted by China, which the Pentagon criticised this week as "counter-productive to efforts at easing tensions and maintaining stability".

China dismissed the U.S. criticism of its drills on Friday and suggested the United States was to blame for increasing tensions. U.S. carriers have long carried out exercises in the Western Pacific, including in the South China Sea, according to the U.S. navy. At one point recently, the United States had three carriers in the region.

## US COPS FIRED FOR MOCKING MAN'S DEATH

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Washington, July 4: Three police officers in the US state of Colorado have been sacked after they shared photos re-enacting a chokehold used on a black man last year who later died.

Elijah McClain, a 23-year-old African-American in Aurora, Colorado, was killed last August after an encounter with police while walking home. The officers who were fired were identified as Jason Rosenblatt, Erica Marrero and Kyle Dittrich. The fourth, Jaron Jones, has earlier resigned on Tuesday.

Vanessa Wilson, the acting police chief in the Denver suburb of Aurora, where the McClain incident took place, called the images a crime against humanity and decency. "We are ashamed, we are sickened, and we are angry about what I have to share," the BBC quoted Wilson as saying at a news conference on Friday.

"While the allegations of this internal affairs case are not criminal, they are a crime against humanity and decency. To even think about doing such a thing is reprehensible."

One of the pictures shows Dittrich and Jones imitating a neck hold, while Marrero smiles to their left. Rosenblatt was sent the photos by text and responded "ha ha".

Chief Wilson said she held off releasing the photos until she could share them with McClain's family. McClain's case attracted renewed focus in the wake of the death of George Floyd, another unarmed African-American who died in police custody on May 25 in Minneapolis.

# G4 swine flu virus doesn't infect humans easily: China

THE AUTHORS OF THE PUBLISHED STUDY AGREED THAT THE G4 VIRUS DOES NOT EFFECTIVELY REPLICATE IN THE HUMAN BODY AND CAUSE DISEASE

REUTERS

Shanghai/Beijing, July 4: China's Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs said Saturday that the so-called "G4" strain of swine flu virus is not new and does not infect or sicken humans and animals easily, rebuffing a study published earlier this week.

That study, by a team of Chinese scientists and published by the U.S. journal Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences (PNAS), warned that a new swine flu virus,

named G4, has become more infectious to humans and could become a potential "pandemic virus".

However, China's agriculture ministry said in a statement that the study has been interpreted by the media "in an exaggerated and non-factual way".

An analysis by the ministry concluded that sampling of the published study is too small to be representative, while the article lacks adequate evidence to show the G4 virus has become the dominant strain among pigs.



The ministry said it drew its conclusions after holding a seminar on the G4 virus's impact on the hog industry and public health. Participants included Chinese veterinarians and anti-virus experts, as well as the leading authors of the PNAS study.

The participants concurred that the G4 virus is not new, the statement said. Furthermore, such a strain has been monitored continuously by the World Health Organization (WHO) and related agencies in China since 2011, the

statement said, citing a senior WHO official.

In addition, the authors of the published study agreed that the G4 virus does not effectively replicate in the human body and cause disease, according to the statement.

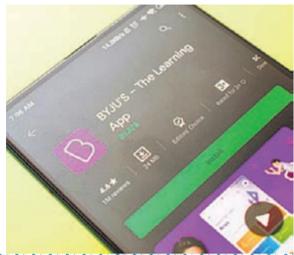
The ministry's statement was authored by Yang Hanchun, a swine viral disease scientist at China Agricultural University who also serves the role of expert on a ministry anti-epidemic committee.



**Commercialisation of coal mining in India is the need of the hour to enhance production to meet the growing energy requirement. No government company had shown interest to take up the offered coal blocks since they are very difficult to mine**  
BN SHUKLA | CHAIRMAN-CUM-MD, MCL

## BYJU'S IN TALKS TO BUY WHITEHAT JR

Bangalore-based edtech unicorn BYJU'S, is in talks to acquire Mumbai-based startup WhiteHat Jr in a \$300mn deal, media reports said. WhiteHat Jr was founded by former Discovery Networks India CEO Karan Bajaj in November 2018 and is backed by Nexus Venture Partners, Omidyar Network India and Owl Ventures



## of the day quote

**We've implemented a robust economic strategy to tackle COVID-19 and the devastation caused by Amphan. Proof lies in Bengal's unemployment rate for the month of June which stands at 6.5%, far better than that of India at 11%**  
MAMATA BANERJEE | CM, WEST BENGAL

**One big issue faced by the industry is liquidity challenge for quite some time. Many stalled projects do not qualify for getting last mile funding from the ₹25,000 crore special window created by the government**  
RAJIVE KUMAR | CHAIRMAN, RERA (UTTAR PRADESH)

**The changes in payment challan by the I-T dept will now enable the payment of equalisation levy by foreign companies. However, the industry was expecting its deferral considering the lack of clarification on few issues**  
AMIT SINGHANIA | PARTNER, SHARDUL AMARCHAND MANGALDAS & CO

# WhatsApp rolls out brand promotion in India

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, July 4:** WhatsApp Saturday said it is launching its 'It's Between You' brand campaign in the country showcasing stories about how Indians are using the Facebook-owned platform to communicate in a secure manner.

WhatsApp collaborated with Bollywood director Gauri Shinde along with BBDO India to create two ads that highlight how its features like texts, video calls or even a voice message (which is end-to-end encrypted) help replicate in-person conversations, it said in a statement. With over 400 million users, India is among the biggest markets for WhatsApp.



"The campaign narrates real stories about how Indians communicate daily on WhatsApp with their closest relationships... When privacy is deeply felt, relationships feel more intimate and real... WhatsApp continues to serve

as a crucial lifeline for people relying on the platform to intimately communicate with their friends and family while separated across long distances." Facebook India's Director, Marketing Avinash Pant told PTI. One of the ads features an elderly

## IT'S BETWEEN YOU

WhatsApp collaborated with Bollywood director Gauri Shinde along with BBDO India to create two ads that highlight how its features help replicate in-person conversations

The campaign narrates real stories about how Indians communicate daily on WhatsApp with their closest relationships

gional television channels and digital platforms.

"Throughout this year, the campaign will see multiple creative executions land in high profile cultural moments across the year from festivals to cricket (IPL). Over the course of the campaign, these films will be available in English and seven regional languages that include Hindi, Bengali, Assamese, Odia, Gujarati, Marathi and Kannada," he added. Pant said shooting these films remotely was a "new and a challenging experience" for everyone involved. The campaign was shot in the early days of lockdown, and the production happened remotely following utmost standards of safety and precaution, he added.

## Paradip Port handles highest volume of cargo in Q1



POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, July 4:** As the COVID-19 pandemic continues to stifle the global supply chain, the maritime industry is facing a daunting task to function smoothly. In spite of all the obstacles, the Paradip Port Trust (PPT) has come out with flying colours and has clocked a remarkable 25.73 million metric tonnes cargo handling mark in the first quarter (April-June) of current financial year.

With this achievement, it became the no. 1 port among major ports in the country. PPT Chairman Rinkesh Roy and deputy chairman AK Bose have conveyed their gratitude to all employees, unions, state government, district administration, importers, exporters, stevedores, steamer agents, port users and other stakeholders.

Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik and Union Petroleum and Steel Minister Dharmendra Pradhan have also congratulated the Paradip port authorities for handling the highest volume of cargo in the country.

Last fiscal during April to June, Paradip had handled a total cargo of 28,205 Million Metric Tonnes.

# June GST adds up to ₹759cr

**THIS YEAR'S GST COLLECTION IS ₹45 CR (-) 5.6% LESS THAN THE CORRESPONDING PERIOD LAST YEAR**

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, July 4:** With the number of relaxations granted by the GST Council, June witnessed a marked improvement in GST collections in the state. The OGST collection for June 2020 is marked ₹759.17 crore. Commissioner (CT & GST) SK Lohani reviewed the tax collections.

The OGST collected ₹759.17 crore against the collection of ₹804.49 crore during the corresponding period last year which is less by ₹45 crore (-) 5.6%. However, the OGST collection of the 1st quarter of 2020-21 (Apr-June) registered a negative growth of 32.79% as the total collection could be ₹1560.20 crore as against ₹2321.39 crore collected during the same period in the preceding year.

Similarly, the Gross GST Collection (CGST, IGST, SGST & Cess) in the first quarter of 2020-21 (Apr-June) is ₹5192.30 cr as against ₹8019.44 cr during the preceding quarter of 2019-20 registering a negative growth rate of (-) 35.25%. However, the situation has improved in June, 2020 which registered a collection of ₹2693.75 cr as against ₹2923.47 Cr achieved during last June. Thus, the shortfall was



only by (-) 7.86% during June 2020.

Further, imposition of nationwide lockdown to contain COVID-19 adversely affected timely filing of returns for the tax periods of February, March and April 2020 also. Realising the difficulties of the taxpayers, the government waived the late fee for the delay in return filing and also allowed late payment of tax due without interest/reduced interest @ 9%.

Similarly, taxpayers having turnover up to ₹5 crore were required to file returns for March tax period by July 5, 2020 and for April tax period by July 9, 2020 with no interest. Failure to file GSTR 3B by the above mentioned dates will attract interest @9% im-

mediately after the due dates. All taxpayers are hereby, advised to file returns by the due date to avoid payment of interest.

In a major relief to GST taxpayers, the government has further decided to cap the maximum late fee for Form GSTR-3B at ₹500 per return for the tax period July 2017 to July 2020. The reduced fee will be levied only if returns are filed before September 30, 2020.

It has also notified that there will be NIL late fees if there is no tax liability. In order to further simplify the process of returns filing, GSTN has already introduced filing of monthly and quarterly sales statements (GSTR 1) and tax return (GSTR 3B) through SMS for those tax payers having NIL liability.

## ATMANIRBHAR BHARAT APP

# Modi unleashes innovation challenge

AGENCIES

**New Delhi, July 4:** Days after the government banned 59 Chinese apps, Prime Minister Narendra Modi Saturday invited the startup and tech community to participate in the 'Atmanirbhar Bharat App Innovation Challenge'.

In a tweet, Electronics and Information Technology (IT) Minister Ravi Shankar Prasad said that the prime minister has launched the challenge to encourage Indian application developers and innovators.

Prime Minister Modi also said that it will help create an "Atmanirbhar App Ecosystem". "Who knows, I may also use some of these apps made by you," he said in a write-up on LinkedIn.

Today there is immense enthusiasm among the tech and start-up community to create world class "Made in India Apps", Modi said.

"To facilitate their ideas and products, the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology along with the Atal Innovation Mission are launching the 'Atmanirbhar Bharat App Innovation Challenge'," the prime



minister tweeted sharing the link to the LinkedIn post.

Modi had given a call for an "Atmanirbhar Bharat (a self-reliant India) and had urged people to be "vocal for local" products.

He said the app innovation challenge is for those who have such a working product or if they feel they have the vision and expertise to create such products.

"I urge all my friends in the tech community to participate," he said while sharing the write-up "Let us Code for an Atmanirbhar Bharat".

India has a very vibrant tech and start-up ecosystem, which has done India proud nationally as well as globally, Modi said.

The country's youth have excelled in providing tech solutions across sectors, he said.

## SHORT TAKES

### Magic Bus, Maha govt join hands

**Mumbai:** Non-profit organisation Magic Bus Saturday said it has joined hands with the Maharashtra government to provide relief to vulnerable families across Mumbai amid the coronavirus outbreak and the ongoing lockdown. Magic Bus India Foundation has partnered with both private and government organisations to ensure that the ongoing city-wide food and hygiene relief distribution efforts remain data-led, aligned and focused, it said in a statement. The initiative will enable concerned Mumbaiers to support food and hygiene relief efforts.

### Coal strike enters 3rd day

**New Delhi:** The three-day nationwide strike by coal workers, which entered the third day Saturday, has been "100% peaceful", a trade union leader said. Five trade unions, including RSS-affiliated Bharatiya Mazdoor Sangh (BMS), of Coal India (CIL) have been on strike since Thursday to protest against the government's decision to start commercial coal mining. The five unions have a virtual meeting scheduled on Saturday to decide the next course of action.

### PGCIL gets new Dir (Finance)

**New Delhi:** State-owned Power Grid Corporation Saturday said M Taj Mukarrum has assumed charge as its Director (Finance). Prior to taking up this assignment, he was working as Executive Director (Finance) in Power Grid Corporation, the company said in a statement. "M Taj Mukarrum has assumed the charge of Director (Finance) of Power Grid Corporation (PGCIL) on 4 July, 2020," the statement said.

### Dapagliflozin gets DCGI nod

**New Delhi:** Drug firm AstraZeneca Pharma India Saturday said it has received approval from Drugs Controller General of India (DCGI) for Dapagliflozin tablets for treatment of patients suffering from heart failure with reduced ejection fraction. The company has received import and market permission from DCGI in Form CT-20 (Marketing Authorisation-Additional Indication).

## BIZ BUZZ

### Mumbai monorail: 3 Indian cos interested

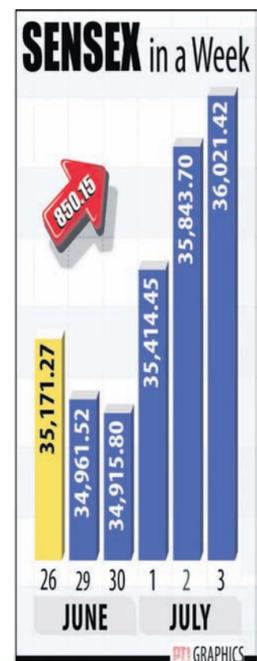
**Mumbai:** As many as three Indian companies have shown interest in manufacturing rakes for the monorail projects, weeks after town planning authority MMRDA scrapped the bids by two Chinese firms. Last month, the Mumbai Metropolitan Region Development Authority (MMRDA) scrapped the ₹500 crore contract for sourcing 10 rakes for the Jacob Circle-Wadala-Chembur monorail project wherein two Chinese firms had



expressed their interest to supply the rakes, stating that the companies were "dictating" terms. "3 Indian firms have shown interest in designing and developing Mono rail rolling stock," the authority tweeted. MMRDA Commissioner RA Rajeev had earlier said that the authority was in talks with BHEL and BEML for the contract. Another private sector player Titagarh has also expressed interest.

### Ambani's RIL rolls out JioMeet

**New Delhi:** After raising billions of dollars from the likes of Facebook and Intel for its digital business, billionaire Mukesh Ambani's Reliance Industries has launched JioMeet video conferencing app with unlimited free calling that is being seen as rate war on rival Zoom. The JioMeet video conferencing app is available across Android, iOS, Windows, macOS and web since Thursday evening after beta testing. According to the company website, JioMeet supports HD audio and video call quality with up to 100 participants and offers features like screen sharing, meeting schedule feature and more. But unlike Zoom, it does not impose a 40-minute time limit. Calls can go on as long as 24 hours, and all meetings are encrypted and password-protected, the company said.



# State claims to cut interest rate of liquidity infusion

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, July 4:** State MSME and Energy minister Dibya Shankar Mishra has urged the central government to reduce the interest rate of liquidity infusion funding by REC and PFC.

The Energy minister asked for reduction from 9.5% to 6% and to extend the said assistance for the revenue shortfall due to less demand of power in FY'2020-21.

Mishra was speaking at the Power Ministers' conference held Friday via a video conferencing chaired by Union Power Minister RK Singh. The benefit of the reform based distribution scheme applicable for the states having done Purchasing power parity (PPP) in their states for better services to the consumers.

He emphasised that the proposed scheme should be such that the tribal children who have been left neglected for long, get access to education, telemedicine and in-



formation similar to their urban counterpart. Mishra stated that this can be achieved if a stable and quality power is facilitated to them in the far and isolated regions.

The Minister also stated that the consumption/demand from the commercial and industrial consumers continues to be very low and about 25% lower than the expected levels. Therefore, the discoms are unable to schedule the power of central Gencos like NTPC. He requested to provide the rebate of the fixed charges component of unscheduled power for full year 2020-21 as the impact will continue.

# A COMPLETE GUIDE TO HEALTH INSURANCE CLAIMS

**O**wing to the rising medicare costs in recent years, the gap between healthcare costs and its affordability has also proportionately increased. An adequate Health Insurance is hence becoming crucial for bridging this gap. Due to significant rise in lifestyle diseases, health insurance is now seeing a gradual uptake among customers. However, many still remain unaware of availing insurance benefits during a claims scenario. This last minute hustle can easily be resolved if you are well versed with the process and methods of filing health insurance claims.

Most of the indemnity products, pay claim up to the treatment expenses after deducting non-medical charges and other deductions as per policy terms and conditions. The

claim will be reimbursed by the insurer known as reimbursement claims or customer can opt for cashless facility at designated hospitals.

**Cashless claims:** Usually the cashless claims facility is provided for medical treatment in one of the network hospitals of your

insurer. The insured is not required to shell out any sum for the treatment except for the non-medical items. The insurance company settles the payment directly with the hospital depending on the insurance policy terms and conditions and the sum insured that the customer has opted for. One can avail the benefits of cashless claim facility for both planned

medical treatment/surgeries and unplanned medical expenses.

Post sharing these documents and medical details with the insurer through insurance desk, it evaluates the treatment details as per policy terms and conditions and informs the concerned hospital and insured.

**In order to avail the cashless claims benefit, a customer needs to follow below mentioned procedure:-**

- In case the hospital admission is planned, customer should approach insurance desk of the hospital which guides them on cashless facility. The insurance desk forwards entire case with pre-authorization application form to insurer. Basis the case details and policy T&C, insurer approves the cashless facility. Generally, this approval should be taken 4-7 days prior to the treatment.
- Once you connect with your insurance company, they will inform you about the documents that may be required.

**Reimbursement health insurance claims:** Another process that one can opt

for settling a health insurance claim is the reimbursement mode. This situation mostly arises when a patient chooses the hospital as per his choice and convenience and the hospital is not empanelled with the insurer. In such scenarios, a policy holder has to make the payment for all the medical bills that are related to the said treatment and later on file the claim for reimbursement.

A health insurance is a stitch in time. However to ensure that it is a backstitch, it is highly advised to be aware of what your policy offers at the time of purchase itself. A detailed understanding of what's covered and what's not helps you to avoid any last minute ordeal.

*(The writer is Head-Health Claims, Bajaj Allianz General Insurance)*



BHASKAR NERURKAR

# XAVI TO REPLACE SETIEN: REPORTS

AGENCIES

**Barcelona, July 4:** Former Barcelona great Xavi has reportedly agreed to replace Quique Setien at the end of this season.

The 61-year-old Setien has endured a tough tenure at the helm of the Catalan giants since replacing Ernesto Valverde in January, and speculation has mounted that the club's board are tempted to wield the axe already.

And according to 'Mundo Deportivo', a 'firm agreement' has been finalised which would see Xavi take up the reins at the end of the season.

It is believed that talisman Lionel Messi - who has reportedly been considering his future at the club - and his teammates are satisfied with what would be a sensational appointment.

Xavi, who current manages Al-Sadd in Qatar, has been touted to earn 5.4million pound per year from his new bumper contract.

He had taken over at Al-Sadd last summer after bringing an end to his trophy-laden time on the field with the same club.

However, Barcelona appear to have come knocking once again



after being rejected originally when searching for Valverde's successor at the beginning of the year. The midfield maestro made 767

first-team appearances for the La Liga giants, and joined the club aged 11 before progressing through their world-renowned La Masia

academy system.

Xavi himself admitted last month that he and his coaching staff are preparing to take charge of Barcelona in the future.

The four-time Champions League winner told a video conference: "The biggest hope I have now is to be Barca coach and get Barca back to winning ways. Not me but these players and Barca triumphing. And as a consequence, our technical staff, who are preparing for it a lot and it makes us really excited."

Despite turning down the role due to his perceived lack of experience coaching at the highest level, Xavi appears to have been tempted to accept the offer this time round.

The 40-year-old is unlikely to have enjoyed watching the top-flight title challengers' struggles to retain their crown this season - with a mixed string of results having handed rivals Real Madrid the advantage.

Setien is now fighting for his future, with many expecting him to be sacked at the end of the campaign. The board harbour concerns over recent performances, and players have also reportedly turned against the tactician due to confusion over his instructions.

# 'Agents already dreaming about Messi-Ronaldo double at Juve'



AGENCIES

**London, July 4:** Lionel Messi could end up making a sensational move to Juventus to play alongside old rival Cristiano Ronaldo next summer, according to Barcelona icon Rivaldo, amid reports that the Argentine is deeply unhappy at the Nou Camp.

With the Catalan giants in turmoil, Spanish radio station 'Cadena SER' reported that Messi would see out his 500,000 pound-per-week contract at the club before moving on next summer.

Messi is deeply unhappy with the club's current hierarchy, following the sale of Arthur and the club's half-baked attempt to re-sign Neymar from PSG.

And Rivaldo claims a move to Turin is already being dreamed up, creating one of the most star-studded attacks in footballing history.

"With all this speculation, I believe that some agents are already dreaming about a Messi-Ronaldo double at Juventus and how big it will be around the globe," Rivaldo told 'Betfair'.

"If that happened there would be a world 'boom', and I believe Juventus would quickly recover

any investment on the Argentinian thanks to the boost they would get from visibility and marketing.

"It would be historical to see both playing together and I'm sure many Juve sponsors would love to help financially, so, it's also a possibility for Messi.



"If there are rumours about his exit, then of course every club will be thinking about how they can sign him. That said, the two best players in the world for the past 10 years playing at the same club would be massive."

Should Messi decide to leave the Nou Camp, another potential destination would be Etihad - a move that would see Messi reunite with

former boss Pep Guardiola.

"If he is considering leaving the club, then something mustn't be good in the Barcelona dressing room and perhaps he is tired with all the constant problems that have surrounded the club in the last few months," Rivaldo added.

"When Messi's contract ends, he will be 34, but with his class I think he could still easily play in Premier League. It will be sad to see him leaving Barcelona once his contract ends eventually, but I still hope that he can stay for now.

"Despite his connection to the club, he has the right to move if he wants and reuniting with Pep Guardiola at City will be tempting for him, as the two of them formed a great coach and player partnership at Barca."

While Messi is fed up with how the Catalan club is currently run, there are huge doubts that he's already decided what he will do in 12 months' time.

If the club are unable to persuade Messi over their new winning 'project' before his contract is up, then it would signal an end of an era for the Argentine in Catalonia. However, a move away from the Nou Camp is very unlikely.

# Martinelli pens long-term deal with Gunners

REUTERS

**London, July 4:** Arsenal's Brazil U-23 striker Gabriel Martinelli has signed a new long-term contract at the Premier League club. The news comes 48 hours after fellow teenager Bukayo Saka, 18, also agreed a new long-term deal with the Gunners.

The 19-year-old Martinelli - who penned his new contract exactly a year after joining Arsenal - has scored 10 goals in 26 games for the club since moving from Brazilian side Ituano last year.

He has been sidelined for the rest of the season after suffering a knee injury in training which required surgery.

"He is a very talented young player and he has impressed us with his performances, attitude and work-rate. We are looking forward to getting him back to full fitness and to watching his development at our club," manager Mikel Arteta told the club website.

But Atletico is one of the hottest teams as La Liga ticks down before it shifts focus to the Champions League final eight to be played in Portugal next month.

In March when the league was halted, Atletico was struggling to secure a Champions League berth for next season. It is now well on course to finishing third.

# Morata double props Atletico



Alvaro Morata (L), with teammates, celebrates one of his goals against Real Mallorca, Friday

ASSOCIATED PRESS

**Barcelona, July 4:** Alvaro Morata scored twice to lead Atletico Madrid to a 3-0 win over Mallorca and extend its strong finish to the Spanish league.

Diego Simeone's team has long been out of the title race being displaced by leader Real Madrid and second-placed Barcelona, which they trail by eight points.

But Atletico is one of the hottest teams as La Liga ticks down before it shifts focus to the Champions League final eight to be played in Portugal next month.

In March when the league was halted, Atletico was struggling to secure a Champions League berth for next season. It is now well on course to finishing third.

Atletico has remained undefeated in seven matches since the Spanish league resumed following a three-month stoppage for the COVID-19 pandemic.

"We were in a complicated situation before the stoppage, but we have been playing well since we got back to playing and have been playing with a great attitude," Morata said.

Simeone's side dominated the relegation-threatened Mallorca from kickoff. Morata earned a penalty when he was pulled down by Aleksandar Sedlar in the area. Goalkeeper Manuel Reina blocked his strike, but a video review helped the referee order a redo of the spot kick after Sedlar entered the area too early.

Morata stepped back up and on a second try rifled the ball into the top corner in the 29th minute. "Missing and then getting back up and trying again is part of football," Morata said about the penalty.

The former Chelsea and Real Madrid striker was back on the scoreboard in first-half injury time when Koke stole the ball and played Marcos Llorente clear to reach the end line, where he found Morata at the far post to tap home.

The goals were Morata's 10th and 11th of the season in league play. Mallorca could not muster a come-back and Renan Lodi hit the crossbar for Atletico before Koke scored in the 79th.

His shot deflected off a defender to give Reina no chance to save. Mallorca was left five points from safety with four games left.

# Bairstow, Moeen ignored for 1st Test

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Manchester, July 4:** Wicket-keeper Jonny Bairstow and spin bowling all-rounder Moeen Ali were Saturday left out of England's 13-man squad for the first 'bio-secure' Test against West Indies, starting July 8.

Ben Stokes will lead the side as England's regular captain Root will miss the game to be with his wife for the birth of their second child.

The squad features pacers James Anderson, Stuart Broad, Jofra Archer and Mark Wood in addition to all-rounders Stokes and Chris Woakes. In the spin department, England have gone with Dominic Bess. Jack Leach has been left out of the main squad and is among reserves.

The most notable omissions from the 30-man training squad include Bairstow and Moeen. Bairstow's position in the side had first be-



come uncertain in 2019 after a prolonged run of low scores. He was initially left out of England's squad for their tour of New Zealand but was able to find a spot due to injury to Joe Denly.

Bairstow then got a spot on the tour of South Africa but scored only 10 runs in two innings of the one Test he played. That left him with a tally of only 334 runs in 2019 at an average of 18.55.

Moeen took a break from red-

ball cricket after being dropped from England's set up mid-way through the Ashes. He went wicketless in his first bowling innings in the warm-up match and picked up two wickets in the second, but Bess and Leach both got more wickets.

**THE SQUAD:** Ben Stokes (C), James Anderson, Jofra Archer, Dominic Bess, Stuart Broad, Rory Burns, Jos Buttler (wk), Zak Crawley, Joe Denly, Ollie Pope, Dom Sibley, Chris Woakes and Mark Wood.

# Nasser recalls waiting for Sourav at toss

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**Mumbai, July 4:** Former India skipper Sourav Ganguly and former England skipper Nasser Hussain have had quite a few epic battles on the cricket pitch and while they are both good friends off it, the former English captain has admitted that he hated the Indian skipper for making him wait at the toss. But with time Nasser has realised that the current BCCI President is a lovely person.

Speaking on Star Sports show 'Cricket Connected', Hussain spoke about his Team India counterpart back then. "I have always said, and this is a generalisation, but I have always said about Ganguly, that he made India a tougher side.

"So, before Ganguly, there were very talented side, but you felt they were also a nice side, very down to earth, would meet you with morning greetings, morning Nasser, it was a very pleasant experience.

"Playing against a Ganguly side, you knew you were in a battle, you knew that Ganguly understood the passion of Indian cricket fans and it wasn't just a game of cricket. It was more important than a game of cricket.

"He was feisty and he picked feisty cricketers whether it would be Harbhajan or Yuvraj or whoever feisty in your face that when you met him away from the game, were lovely, nice. Sourav's like that.

"When I played against Sourav, I hated him, he used to make me wait for the toss every single time and I'll be like, Ganguly, its 10.30, we have to toss. But now I work with him for the last decade on commentary he's such a nice, calm, he's still late for his commentary stints, but he is a lovely bloke.

"And that's the way cricketers should be. When you play with him or against him, you don't like him and when you meet up with him later in life, they're nice people."

# Red Bull loses appeal against Mercedes' DAS



ASSOCIATED PRESS

**Spielberg (Austria), July 4:** Red Bull has lost an appeal it lodged against the dual assistant steering system unveiled by Formula One (F1) rival Mercedes during winter testing in February.

The DAS helps the Mercedes car's cornering and reduces its tire wear. On-board footage from testing in Spain showed Lewis Hamilton pulling the steering wheel back and forth on the front straight, apparently changing the angle of the front tires.

Other teams were caught cold by the innovation, with Red Bull claim-

ing in its protest that the DAS is both an aerodynamic and a suspension device. But stewards said it was part of the steering system alone and cleared Mercedes late Friday night following a hearing.

"DAS is part of the steering system, albeit not a conventional one," the FIA said in a statement. "The key challenges to the legality of the DAS rely on it not being part of the steering system. If this were indeed the case, then it would be breaching (regulations)."

The system will be banned as from 2021 but can be used by Mercedes and other teams this season.

# LIN DAN HANGS UP HIS RACQUET

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Beijing, July 4:** Legendary Chinese shuttler Lin Dan, the first men's singles player to retain the Olympic title, Saturday announced his retirement, bringing down curtains on a two-decade long illustrious career.

Considered as one of the greatest players in history, the two-time Olympic champion, popularly known as 'Super Dan', announced his retirement on China's twitter-like social media 'Weibo'.

"From 2000 to 2020, after 20 years, I have to say goodbye to the national team. It is very difficult to say it out loud," the 36-year-old, who had claimed gold medals at the 2008 and 2012 Olympics, wrote.

"Being a 37-year-old, my physical condition and injuries no longer allow me to fight alongside my teammates. There is gratitude, reluctance and frustration. In the days to come, I hope to spend more time with my family, and I will also look



for a new 'competition,'" he said, according to 'Xinhua'.

He said he dedicated everything to the sport he loved. "After going through four Olympic cycles, I have never thought about leaving, nor

would I want to think about it. 'Persistence' is the word I told myself in every suffering moment in order to keep my career longer.

"Rather than simply pursuing rankings as a young shuttler, I'm

challenging my physical limits as an 'old' athlete under the sports spirit of never giving up."

During his glorious career, Lin Dan has also won five World Championship title and six All England champion crowns. He ended with 666 singles titles, besides numerous medals for his country. "My thanks also go to my excellent 'opponents' who inspired me," he said.

Malaysian legend Lee Chong Wei, who had retired just over a year ago, paid glowing tribute to Lin Dan, against whom he had waged many epic battles with the two dominating the international stage for more than a decade.

"We knew this day would arrive, Heavy moment of our lives; You pulled down the curtain gracefully. You were king where we fought so proudly; Your final wave all four disappear. Within the hush of silent tear. #lindan," Chong Wei wrote on his twitter handle.