



STARTING AFRESH

Actor Rhea Chakraborty took to Instagram to share a hope-filled message with her fans

LEISURE | P2



UP GOVT TO CREATE JOBS

The Yogi government plans to provide employment opportunities to youth in fish farming

TWO STATES | P7



WINNING START

KKR begin their IPL-14 campaign on a winning note beating SRH by 10 runs

SPORTS | P12

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IRREGULAR by MANJUL



Once elected, I will maintain complete social distancing from them!

SHORT TAKES

Minor among five ultras killed in J&K

Srinagar: Five terrorists were killed during two separate operations by the security forces in Jammu and Kashmir Sunday. Two security forces have also been injured, police said. A teenager, who had gone missing less than a week ago and was believed to have joined a local terrorist group, was among three suspected terrorist killed in the operation at Hadipora village in Shopian district. In another operation in Anantnag, police said two terrorists were killed. According to police the killed terrorists were involved into the killing a Territorial Army soldier Mohammad Saleem Friday. In last three days 12 terrorists have been killed by security forces in four separate encounters in Kashmir. **P9**

Two children die in Noida fire

New Delhi: A massive fire broke out near Noida's Sector 63 Sunday, after which the police and fire officials rushed to the spot. Two 3-year-old children have been killed in the fire and their bodies have been recovered, a police official said. Several huts caught fire due to "unknown reasons" in the Bahlolpur village area in Noida, the official Twitter account of Police Commissionerate Gautam Buddh Nagar (Noida Police) posted. "The slums/huts located in Bahlolpur village under the Noida police station 3 area caught fire due to unknown reasons. An attempt is being made by the police and fire brigade to extinguish the fire," it said.

WEATHER		
	BHUB	CTK
MAX	38.4°C	37.2°C
MIN	25.0°C	24.0°C
Humidity	85%	60%
Rainfall	Nil	Nil
Forecast		Light rain likely

Amid 'Tika Utsav', 900 vax centres shut down in state

THE INOCULATION DRIVE MAY BE HALTED IN SEVERAL DISTRICTS MONDAY OWING TO SHORTAGE OF VACCINES

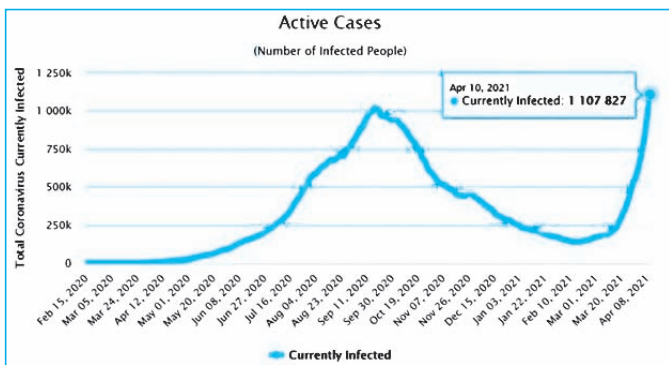
POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, April 11: Around 900 vaccination centres across the state were closed down Sunday denying citizens of the facility to get inoculated against COVID-19 even as India started its four-day special vaccination drive "Tika Utsav" announced by Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

These centres were officially closed down owing to the lack of Covidshield vaccine doses. According to reports, the state government had sought 25 lakh doses of vaccines from the Union Health Ministry, which despatched only 2.5 lakh Covidshield Saturday. As a result, many vaccination centres had to be shut down Sunday.

Bijay Panigrahi, Director, Health and Family Welfare said, "Vaccination was undertaken at 579 centres Sunday, while 900 centres were shut down owing to shortage of vaccines. In most districts of Odisha, we will run out of vaccine stocks by Monday, while only few districts can continue the vaccination drive. The inoculation drive can be continued smoothly only if we receive more vaccines from the Centre," he said.

The official said that Odisha government received 2.50 lakh doses of Covidshield from the Centre Saturday against its demand for 25 lakh doses. "We distributed the



Vaccination was undertaken at 579 centres Sunday, while 900 centres were shut down owing to shortage of vaccines

These centres were officially closed down owing to the lack of Covidshield and Covaxin doses

The state government had sought 25 lakh doses of vaccines from the Union Health Ministry, which despatched only 2.5 lakh doses of Covidshield Saturday

vaccine doses to the districts across the state. Major part of the supplies was sent to districts where the COVID-19 caseload is higher," Panigrahi clarified.

"We observed the 'Tika Utsav' Sunday to create awareness among the people on getting vaccinated. On this occasion special efforts were made to vaccinate people above 45

years and also ensure zero wastage of the vaccines. In our state we are successful in maintaining least wastage of vaccines," he said.

When asked about some vaccination centres refusing vaccinations, he said, "No vaccine centre can refuse vaccination to an eligible candidate but each centre has a fixed capacity over which they cannot vaccinate people. In fact, the COWIN website too will not accept it. So if a vaccine centre reaches that level, despite demands it can refuse to entertain vaccination on that particular day."

The Health department, till the time of writing this report, was analysing the vaccine availability data but claimed that the vaccination drive is likely to be halted completely Monday in several districts of Odisha due to shortage of vaccines.

India gears up for FATF evaluation

AGENCIES

New Delhi, April 11: The Centre has written to the police departments of three states, asking them to nominate one officer each to oversee preparations for the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) evaluation of India. India had submitted to a mutual evaluation of the country's anti-money laundering regime and legal measures to check financial crimes by the FATF.

Slated to commence in 2020, this process was delayed owing to the COVID-19 pandemic. The mutual evaluation will be conducted by the Asia Pacific Group of the FATF.

According to sources, at least three officers from different states have been selected to make preparations for the mutual evaluation for the year 2021-22. These officers are Himanshu Shukla, Deputy Inspector General of Police (ATS) from Gujarat, Ananya Gautam, Inspector General of Police (ATS) from Punjab and Mukesh Singh, IGP (Jammu). The Central government has now sought permission from the DGPs of Gujarat, Punjab and J&K to allow the three officers to assist in preparing framework for the FATF review.



In its letter to the DGPs of three states, the Centre has said that the Department of Revenue, Ministry of Finance in the Government of India is coordinating efforts ahead of India's mutual evaluation.

Sources say as a nodal agency, the Intelligence Bureau (IB) will play a key role in this regard.

The officers nominated by the states will be required to undergo training, participate in interviews, aid FATF during on-site visits and demonstrate the effectiveness of India's fight against terror: The whole process could take 14-18 months from beginning to end.

Child born with two heads, three hands

POST NEWS NETWORK

Kendrapara, April 11: Much to the shock of the parents, a child with two heads, one torso and three hands was born at a private nursing home in Kendrapara Sunday. Surprisingly enough, one hand of the new born is dangling from the back.

According to a source, family members of one Ambika Parida of Kani village under Rajnagar block admitted her to a private nursing home after she complained of labour pain Saturday night.

Leaving all, including the doctors, in shock, the woman gave birth to the child Sunday. It is worth mentioning here that the new born has been doing well de-



spite his two heads, four eyes and four ears.

The doctors have, however, referred the mother and the child to Sishu Bhawan in Cuttack for better treatment.

In medical terminology, a child born with two heads with single torso is called dicephalic parapagus. It occurs one in a million births, doctors said.

AT LORD'S SERVICE



Priests perform rituals as construction of Rukuna Rath for the annual chariot festival of Lord Lingaraj picks up in Bhubaneswar, Sunday

OP PHOTO

Police launch massive manhunt to arrest Hyder

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar/Sambalpur, April 11: Odisha Police have launched a massive manhunt to nab the dreaded gangster Suleiman Hyder who escaped from the surgery ward of SCB Medical College and Hospital Saturday. Hyder's escape has put a question mark on the lax security arrangements in place to keep vigil on one of the Odisha's most dreaded criminals.

Meanwhile, the Director General of Police Abhay Sunday held a high-level meeting at the DGP camp office at the Police Seva Bhawan here to discuss the issue. Senior police officers, including Commissioner of Police Soumendra Priyadarshi, Crime Branch ADG YK Jethwa and DIG (Central Range) JN Pankaj, were present at the meeting.



Speaking to the media, Jethwa said the state police have formed six teams to nab the absconding gangster. Police have kept close surveillance on airport, railway stations, road routes and bus stands to check any attempt by the dreaded criminal to leave the state. The officials have also questioned the security personnel present at the SCB. The CCTV footage at the hospital has been examined by cops. He expressed hope that the gangster would be arrested soon.

The state police have also contacted the police in the neighbouring states like Jharkhand and West Bengal in this connection.

Meanwhile, Odisha Police Sunday suspended six cops who were deputed to escort Hyder from VIMSAR in Burla to the SCB in Cuttack.

China's plan for mega dam in Tibet raises concern in India

THE STRUCTURE, AT AN ALTITUDE OF 4,900 FEET, WILL SPAN THE BRAHMAPUTRA RIVER BEFORE THE WATERWAY LEAVES THE HIMALAYAS AND FLOWS INTO INDIA

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

Beijing, April 11: China is planning a mega dam in Tibet able to produce triple the electricity generated by the Three Gorges - the world's largest power station - stoking fears among environmentalists in and neighbouring India.

The structure will span the Brahmaputra River before the waterway leaves the Himalayas and flows into India, straddling the world's longest and deepest canyon at an altitude of more than 1,500 metres. The project in Tibet's Medog County is expected to dwarf the record-breaking Three Gorges Dam on the Yangtze River in central China and will be able to produce 300 billion KW of electricity each year.

It is mentioned in China's strategic 14th Five-Year Plan, unveiled

in March at an annual rubber-stamp congress of the country's top lawmakers. But the plan was short on details, a timeframe or budget.

The river, known as the Yarlung Tsangpo in Tibetan, is also home to two other projects far upstream, while six others are in the works or under construction.

The "super-dam", however, is in a league of its own. Last October, the Tibet local government signed a "strategic cooperation agreement" with PowerChina, a public construction company specialising in hydroelectric projects.

A month later the head of PowerChina, Yan Zhiyong, partially unveiled the project to the Communist Youth League, the youth wing of China's ruling party.

Enthusiastic about "the world's richest region in terms of hydro-



The river, known as the Yarlung Tsangpo in Tibetan, is also home to two other projects far upstream

electric resources", Yan Zhiyong explained that the dam would draw its power from the huge drop of the river at this particular section.

Beijing may justify the massive project as an environmentally-friendly alternative to fossil fuels,

but it risks provoking strong opposition from environmentalists in the same way as the Three Gorges Dam, built between 1994 and 2012.

The Three Gorges created a reservoir and displaced 1.4 million inhabitants upstream.

"Building a dam the size of the super-dam is likely a really bad idea for many reasons," said Brian Eyler, energy, water and sustainability program director at the Stimson Center, a US think tank.

Besides being known for seismic activity, the area also contains a unique biodiversity. The dam would block the migration of fish as well as sediment flow that enriches the soil during seasonal floods downstream, said Eyler.

There are both ecological and political risks, noted Tempa Gyaltsen Zamilha, an environmental policy specialist at the Tibet Policy Institute, a think tank linked to the Tibetan government-in-exile based in Dharamshala, Himachal Pradesh.

"We have a very rich Tibetan cultural heritage in those areas, and any dam construction would cause eco-

logical destruction, submergence of parts of that region," he said.

"Many local residents would be forced to leave their ancestral homes," he said, adding that the project will encourage migration of Han Chinese workers that "gradually becomes a permanent settlement".

India is also worried by the project. The Chinese Communist Party is effectively in a position to control the origins of much of South Asia's water supply, analysts say.

"Water wars are a key component of such warfare because they allow China to leverage its upstream Tibet-centred power over the most essential natural resource," according to political scientist Brahma Chellaney. The risks of seismic activity would also make it a "ticking water bomb" for residents downstream, he warned.

of the day quote

Sanskrit is a major language of Indian culture. More and more people in China are interested in Indian culture and Sanskrit is a good way to learn more about Indian culture. While Buddhism declined in India, it became very strong in China and has become part of Chinese culture

WANG BANGWEI | CHINESE SCHOLAR
IN SANSKRIT, CHINA

We believe that through joint renewed actions we can put in place measures that respect refugee rights and lead to sustainable solutions. We look forward to continuing our dialogue and collaboration with the Kenyan authorities and partners on this important matter

FATHIAH ABDALLA |
UNHCR REPRESENTATIVE, KENYA

All measures will be insufficient if people do not become aware of the size of the problem. Speed up the rate of vaccination ... which is what matters most to me, because through vaccination, (Covid-19) becomes a bearable disease for adults, it does not end people's lives, and I am the best example of that

ALBERTO FERNANDEZ |
PRESIDENT, ARGENTINA

SHORT TAKES

21 Chinese coal miners trapped

Beijing: Rescuers Sunday were trying to reach 21 coal miners who were trapped by an underground flood in China's northwest, a state news agency reported. The mine in Hutubi County in the Xinjiang region flooded at about 6:10 pm Saturday, the Xinhua News Agency said. It said eight people were rescued. China's coal mines are among the world's deadliest, regularly suffering explosions and gas leaks despite repeated safety crackdowns.

3 children slain, mother arrested

Los Angeles: The mother of three children, all under the age of five, found slain inside a Los Angeles apartment Saturday morning has been arrested, police said. Liliana Carrillo, 30, was arrested in Tulare County, about 322 kilometers north of Los Angeles. It wasn't immediately known if she had a lawyer who could speak on her behalf. The children's grandmother returned home from work and found their bodies and the mother missing, Los Angeles police Lt Raul Jovel said.

Nepal reports 303 new Covid cases

Kathmandu: Nepal has reported 303 new cases of coronavirus in the last 24 hours, taking the total number of infections in the nation to 280,028, the health ministry said Sunday. The nation has also reported 3,040 deaths due to the contagious viral disease so far. "Nepal has been witnessing a sharp rise in COVID-19 cases in the past one week.

Quake hits Indonesia

Malang: A strong earthquake on Indonesia's main island of Java killed eight people, including a woman whose motorcycle was hit by falling rocks, and damaged more than 1,300 buildings, officials said Sunday. It didn't trigger a tsunami. The US Geological Survey said the magnitude 6.0 quake struck off the island's southern coast at 2 pm Saturday.



I feel very sorry and supportive of my mother, who's feeling it more than everybody else. The Queen, as you would expect, is an incredibly stoic person and she described his passing as a miracle, and she's contemplating

PRINCE ANDREW | DUKE OF YORK, UK

1ST ARAB WOMAN FOR ASTRONAUT TRAINING

Emirati national Nora al-Matrooshi is all set to join NASA's 2021 Astronaut Candidate Class in the United States as the United Arab Emirates has selected her as the first Arab woman to train as an astronaut



India should cherish current positive trend: Chinese military

Both the sides have agreed to jointly maintain stability on the ground, avoid any new incidents and resolve the outstanding issues in an expeditious manner, said Indian Army

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Beijing, April 11: With no forward movement at the latest round of Sino-India military talks on disengagement from the remaining areas in eastern Ladakh, the Chinese military has said that India should cherish the "current positive trend" of de-escalation and cooling down of tensions in the border area. A day after the 11th round of Corps Commander-level talks that lasted for 13 hours, the Indian Army said in a statement Saturday that both sides held a detailed deliberation on the disengagement of troops in the remaining friction points of Hot Springs, Gogra and Depsang in eastern Ladakh and agreed to jointly maintain stability on the ground, avoid any new incidents and resolve the outstanding issues in an "expeditious manner". There was no visible forward movement at the latest round of military talks between the two countries as the Chinese delegation came to the talks with a "pre-meditated mindset" and did not

LAC DISENGAGEMENT



show any flexibility in moving forward on the disengagement process at the remaining friction points in eastern Ladakh, people familiar with the negotiations said in New Delhi Saturday. In its press release on the latest round of talks between two militaries held April 9, China's People's Liberation Army (PLA) said India should cherish the de-escalation and cooling in the border area, in an apparent reference to the disengagement of troops from the most contentious area of the Pangong Lake in February. Both sides should also adhere to the consensus reached in the previous talks, the state-run China Global Television Network (CGTN) Sunday quoted the press release by a PLA spokesperson on the talks held at the Chushul border point on the Indian side of the Line of Actual Control (LAC) in eastern Ladakh. "We hope the Indian side could cherish the current positive trend of de-escalation and cooling in the

border area, adhere to the relevant agreements between the two armies and the consensus of the previous talks and move towards the same direction as the Chinese side to jointly maintain peace and tranquility in the border area," a spokesperson for the Western Theater Command of the People's Liberation Army (PLA) said in a statement. The Indian Army statement said it was highlighted at the talks that completion of disengagement in other areas would pave the way for considering "de-escalation of forces" and ensure full restoration of peace and tranquillity in the region. The Indian delegation, led by Commander of the Leh-based 14 Corps Lt Gen PGK Menon, particularly insisted on resolving outstanding issues in Hot Springs, Gogra and Depsang.

"The two sides had a detailed exchange of views for the resolution of the remaining issues related to disengagement along the LAC in eastern Ladakh," the Indian Army said. As a result of a series of military and diplomatic talks, the two sides completed withdrawal of troops and weapons from the North and South banks of Pangong lake in February in line with an agreement on disengagement. India has been insisting that a resolution of outstanding issues including in Depsang, Hot Springs and Gogra is essential for overall ties between the two countries.

MOURNING MASS



Mourners gather outside Buckingham Palace after it was announced that Britain's Prince Philip passed away

REUTERS

Electrical issue strikes Iran's N-facility

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Tehran, April 11: Iran's Natanz nuclear site suffered a problem Sunday involving its electrical distribution grid just hours after starting up new advanced centrifuges that more quickly enrich uranium, state TV reported. It was the latest incident to strike one of Tehran's most-secured sites amid negotiations over tattered atomic accord with world powers. State TV quoted Behrouz

Kamalvandi, a spokesman for Iran's civilian nuclear programme, announcing the incident. Kamalvandi said there were no injuries or pollution cause by the incident. The word state television used in its report attributed to Kamalvandi in Farsi can be used for both "accident" and "incident." It didn't immediately clarify the report, which ran at the bottom of its screen on its live broadcast. The Atomic Energy

Organisation of Iran, the civilian arm of its nuclear programme, did not immediately issue a formal statement about the incident on its website. Natanz suffered a mysterious explosion in July that authorities later described as sabotage. Israel, Iran's regional archenemy, has been suspected of carrying out an attack there, as well as launching other assaults, as world powers now negotiate with Tehran in Vienna over its nuclear deal.

MYANMAR PROTESTS

Junta kills over 80



REUTERS

Yangon, April 11: Myanmar security forces fired rifle grenades at protesters in a town near Yangon, killing more than 80 people, the Assistance Association for Political Prisoners (AAPP) monitoring group and a domestic news outlet said. Details of the death toll in the town of Bago, 90 km (55 miles) northeast of Yangon, were not initially available because security forces piled up bodies in the Zeyar Muni pagoda compound and cordoned off the area, according to witnesses and domestic media outlets. The AAPP and Myanmar Now news outlet said Saturday that 82 people were killed during the protest against the Feb 1 military coup in the country. Firing started before dawn Friday and continued into the afternoon, Myanmar Now said. "It is like genocide," the news outlet quoted a protest organiser called

Ye Htut as saying. "They are shooting at every shadow." Many residents of the town have fled, according to accounts on social media. A spokesman for Myanmar's military junta could not be reached Saturday. AAPP, which has maintained a daily tally of protesters killed and arrested by security forces, has previously said 618 people have died since the coup. That figure is disputed by the military, which says it staged the coup because a November election won by Aung San Suu Kyi's party was rigged. The election commission has dismissed the assertion. Junta spokesman Major General Zaw Min Tun told a news conference on Friday in the capital, Naypyitaw, that the military had recorded 248 civilian deaths and 16 police deaths, and said no automatic weapons had been used by security forces.

King Abdullah, Hamzah's first appearance since rift

REUTERS

Amman, April 11 : Jordan's King Abdullah appeared in public Sunday alongside his half-brother Prince Hamzah, state TV showed, their first joint appearance since a palace crisis involving the prince rocked the kingdom. The palace Twitter account published a picture of the group at a cemetery with the caption "HM King Abdullah II, HRH Crown Prince Al Hussein... (and) Hamzah bin Al Hussein... visit tomb of HM the late King Abdullah I." All were dressed in civilian clothes, apart from Hussein, the heir to the throne, who wore military dress. Jordan is marking 100 years of survival Sunday as a resource-poor country in a war-ravaged neighbourhood, but the palace crisis and the coronavirus pandemic have overshadowed celebrations. The government had accused Hamzah - a former crown prince who was sidelined as heir to the throne in favour of Abdullah's son Hussein in 2004 - of involvement in a conspiracy to "destabilise the kingdom's security". At least 16 people were arrested. But Abdullah said Wednesday that Hamzah, who has signed a letter pledging his loyalty to the king following mediation by an uncle, was safe in his palace under his "care". In an address read out in his



name on state television, the king added that "sedition has been nipped in the bud". Hamzah had been appointed crown prince and heir to the throne in 1999 in line with his father's wishes, but Abdullah stripped him of the title in 2004 and named his own eldest son Hussein in Hamzah's place. Hamzah in a video message published by the BBC April 3 claimed he had been placed under house arrest and accused Jordan's rulers of corruption and ineptitude. Foreign Minister Ayman Safadi then charged that a group of plotters had linked up with foreign parties to destabilise Jordan, but declined to identify them. After mediation talks, however, Hamzah voiced his loyalty to the king. "Prince Hamzah pledged before the family to follow in the steps of the ancestors, remain loyal to their

mission, and to put Jordan's interest, constitution and laws above all considerations," the king said Wednesday. A probe into the events continues, the king added. The crisis laid bare divisions in a pro-Western country usually seen as a bulwark of stability in the Middle East. Jordan borders Israel and the occupied West Bank, Syria, Iraq and Saudi Arabia. It hosts US troops and is home to millions of exiled Palestinians and many Syrian refugees. The king's address followed orders issued by Amman prosecutor Hassan al-Abdallat that banned the publication of any information about the alleged plot in order to keep the security services' investigation secret. The UN human rights office said Friday it was concerned about a lack of transparency surrounding the alleged plot.

S Korea to resume AstraZeneca jabs for age group: 30-60

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Seoul, April 11: South Korea says it will resume administrating AstraZeneca's coronavirus vaccine to all eligible people between the ages of 30 and 60. Last week, South Korea suspended the use of AstraZeneca vaccines for those 60 years old or younger while awaiting the outcome of the European Medicine Agency's review. The Korea Disease Control and Prevention Agency said Sunday it will restart the use of AstraZeneca vaccine beginning Monday, citing studies showing that the vaccine's benefits outweighs the risk of side effects.



Those who would get AstraZeneca vaccines from Monday include medical workers and people in long-term care facilities, those at special schools and welfare centers for disabled people and homeless people

An agency statement said those aged 30 or younger will be excluded, as UK. Authorities have recommended they take alternative vaccines. It says it's found three cases of blood clots from vaccinated people in South Korea - but none belong to the type of side effects determined by European authorities. Those who would get AstraZeneca vaccines from Monday include medical workers and people in long-term care facilities, those at special schools and welfare centers for disabled people and homeless people. In recent days, South Korea has been experiencing a steady increase in new coronavirus infections. Earlier Sunday, South Korea reported 677 new confirmed cases, raising the total to 109,559 with 1,768 deaths.

Egypt unveils 3,000-year-old 'lost' city

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

Luxor, April 11 : Archaeologists Saturday showed off their finds at what they say is the "largest" ancient city ever found in Egypt, dating to a golden age of the pharaohs 3,000 years ago. At the site near Luxor, home of the legendary Valley of the Kings, workers carefully carried ancient pots and showed human and animal remains dug up from the earth as members of the media toured around curved brick walls and rudimentary streets. "This is a large city that was lost. It was connected with the god Aton and Amenhotep III," famed Egyptologist Zahi Hawass enthusiastically told reporters Saturday. "We found three major districts: one for administration, one for workers to sleep in and another for industry," he said. Spaces include workshops for



drying meat, making clothes and sandals, and crafting amulets and small statues. Mostafa Waziri, head of the country's Supreme Council of Antiquities said the site was not limited to

buildings. "We can see... economic activity, workshops and ovens," he said. Hawass had announced earlier this week the discovery of a "lost golden city", and the archaeologi-

The find was the second most important archaeological discovery since the tomb of Tutankhamun

BETSY BRYAN | PROFESSOR OF EGYPTIAN ART AND ARCHAEOLOGY

cal team said the find was "the largest" ancient city ever uncovered in Egypt. "We found one portion of the city only," Hawass told AFP Saturday. "The city extends to the west and the north." The team began excavations in September between the temples of Ramses III and Amenhotep III near Luxor, some 500 kilometres (300 miles) south of Cairo. Amenhotep III inherited an empire that stretched from the Euphrates River in modern Iraq and Syria to Sudan and died around 1354 BC, ancient historians say.

He ruled for nearly four decades, a reign known for its opulence and the grandeur of its monuments, including the Colossi of Memnon - two massive stone statues near Luxor that represent him and his wife. Betsy Bryan, professor of Egyptian art and archaeology at Johns Hopkins University, had said in a statement this week that the find was the "second most important archaeological discovery since the tomb of Tutankhamun" nearly a century ago. "The archaeological layers have laid untouched for thousands of years, left by the ancient residents as if it were yesterday," the team's statement said. Archaeologists have unearthed items of jewellery, coloured pottery vessels, scarab beetle amulets and mud bricks bearing seals of Amenhotep III. Hawass said "a large fish covered in gold" may have been venerated.

business

of the day quote

M&M is working on developing on an EV platform by combining capabilities of its operations across the globe, including Detroit and Italy. So, for EVs we are going to invest ₹3,000 crore additional to what we have talked about

ANISH SHAH | MD & CEO, MAHINDRA GROUP

Typically, MSMEs find it difficult to enter markets like North America, UK, and rest of Europe, given the costs involved in setting up office and hiring manpower. Under this initiative, we will set up plug and play infrastructure in these targeted markets

SANDEEP NARULA | CHAIRMAN, ESC

Earlier, people never understood technology, why it is important for insurance, etc. So, we saw more payments getting online, more policies being issued online, the entire shift happened from offline to offline because of the pandemic

ANKIT AGRAWAL | CO-FOUNDER & CEO, INSURANCEDEKHO

SHORT TAKES

CAIT urges PM not to impose 'curfew'

New Delhi: Domestic traders' body CAIT Sunday urged Prime Minister Narendra Modi not to impose night curfew or lockdown amid rising Covid-19 in the country and instead adopt staggered working time for different sectors. In a communication to the prime minister, the Confederation of All India Traders (CAIT) said it would be more appropriate if alternate measures may be adopted at district levels all over the country.

Shakti Pumps plans expansion

New Delhi: Shakti Pumps (India) Sunday said it is planning business expansion next year as the company eyes a bigger share in the Centre's PM-KUSUM scheme of solar water pumps. Under the Pradhan Mantri Kisan Urja Suraksha evam Utthaan Mahabhiyan (PM-KUSUM), launched in February 2019, both Centre and states provide subsidy to farmers for installation of solar pumps. It is being implemented through tendering in phases.

'SBI collects ₹300cr in 5-yr'

New Delhi: Several banks, including State Bank of India (SBI), have been imposing excessive charges on certain services provided to poor persons having zero-balance or Basic Savings Bank Deposit Accounts (BSBDA), a study by the IIT-Bombay has revealed. The study observed that the SBI's decision to levy a charge of ₹17.70 for every debit transaction beyond four by the BSBDA account holders cannot be considered as "reasonable."

Inflow into gold ETFs climbs 4-fold

New Delhi: Heightened risk and uncertainty sparked by the Covid-19 pandemic elicited investors to rush to gold as safe haven as they infused over ₹6,900 crore in gold exchange-traded funds (ETFs) in 2020-21, more than four times from the preceding fiscal. This also marks the second consecutive year of inflow. Prior to that, gold ETFs have been witnessing outflows since 2013-14, data from the Amfi showed.



Due to pandemic, we put our capex plan on hold for setting up our third manufacturing plant. Entire new plant project cost is ₹100 crore. Early next year, construction will start for setting up the plant. We will do it in phases. It is a huge facility

SUNIL AGARWAL | CHAIRMAN, RSH GLOBAL

GLOBAL MANUFACTURING ACTIVITY EXPANDS

The global manufacturing sector expanded at a faster pace last month, according to an index published by the CFLP. The global manufacturing PMI stood at 57.8 in March, up by 2.2 percentage points from the previous month, according to the CFLP, Xinhua reported



Govt may hike pension sector FDI limit to 74%

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, April 11: The government may hike foreign direct investment (FDI) limit in the pension sector to 74% and a Bill in this regard is expected to come in the next Parliament session, according to sources.

Last month, Parliament approved a Bill to increase FDI limit in the insurance sector from 49% to 74%. The Insurance Act, 1938 was last amended in 2015 which raised FDI limit to 49%, resulting in foreign capital inflow of ₹26,000 crore in the last 5 years.

Amendment to Pension Fund Regulatory and Development Authority (PFRDA) Act, 2013 seeking to raise FDI limit in the pension sector may come in the monsoon session or winter session depending on various approvals, sources said.

Currently, the FDI in the pension fund is capped at 49%. Besides, sources said, the amendment Bill may contain separation of NPS Trust from the PFRDA.

The powers, functions and duties of the NPS Trust, which are currently laid down under the PFRDA (National Pension System Trust)



Regulations 2015, may come under a charitable trust or the Companies Act, they said.

The intent behind this is to keep NPS Trust separate from the pension regulator and managed competent board of 15 members. Out of this, the majority of members

are likely to be from the government as they, including states, are the biggest contributor to the corpus.

The PFRDA was established for promoting and ensuring the orderly growth of the pension sector with sufficient powers over pension funds, the central recordkeeping agency and other intermediaries. It also safeguards the interest of members.

The National Pension System (NPS) was introduced by the Government of India to replace the defined benefit pension system. NPS was made mandatory for all new recruits to the central

government service from January 1, 2004, (except the armed forces in the first stage) and has also been rolled out for all citizens with effect from May 1, 2009, on voluntary basis.

The government had made a conscious move to shift from the defined benefit, pay-as-you-go pension scheme to defined contribution pension scheme, NPS, due to rising and unsustainable pension bill. The transition aimed at freeing the limited resources of the government for more productive and socio-economic sectoral development.

Infy to buy back shares again soon



AGENCIES

Bangalore, April 11: Global software major Infosys announced Sunday that it is planning to buy back more shares again with a proposal in this regard on the agenda at its board meeting April 14.

"The board will consider a proposal for buyback of fully paid-up equity shares at its meeting April 14, 2021, in accordance with the Securities and Exchange Board of India (Buy-back of Securities) Regulations, 2018," said the city-based company in a regulatory filing on the BSE.

The board meets April 13-14 here to approve its financial results for the fourth quarter and fiscal year 2020-21.

The last time (the second) when the IT major bought back shares was in March 2019, buying 2.36% of the paid-up capital (108.25 million shares) worth ₹8,260 crore at ₹800 per share through the open market route.

It made a maiden buyback of 11.3 crore equity shares in December 2017 for ₹13,000 crore at ₹1,150 per share. The company's blue-chip scrip of ₹5 face value touched a 52-week high of ₹1,454 April 9 before closing at ₹1,440.75 at the end of trading Friday.

Capital-based startup Way2stara gets first fund

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, April 11: The City-based startup Way2stara Sunday announced that it has raised first phase amount in pre-seed funding from a private investor. The startup will be using the pre seed money to build the team and scale up the growth of the company.



Way2star, set up by RK Mishra in 2018, uses marketing automation to standardise the cost of customer acquisition and helps the aspiring artists to select the suitable co-curricular activity centre.

Various co-curricular activity centres face difficulties in getting enrolments, whereas aspiring artists face the problem of selecting the appropriate training institute to enhance their skills.

With the startup's iBooking Engine, the gap between the artists and centres is bridged. The search engine also acts upon customer rating, reviews and faculty standardisation.

The platform also enables the artists to connect themselves with casting directors, music directors, art directors etc, which adds a feather to the company's innovative approach.

The official said, "Happy to share that till February 24, 2021 around 44, 534 Startups have been recognised by the DPIIT, Govt. of India but the way2star's success has been able to draw attention of investor that to an entertainment venture is laudable."

'India benefitted from globalisation'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kolkata, April 11: Nobel prize winning economist Abhijit Vinayak Banerjee Sunday said India had been a beneficiary of globalisation but the country needed to develop a mechanism to deal with the associated risks. Speaking virtually at an event organised by Bandhan-Konnagar, a Bengal-based NGO, Banerjee said that risks associated with globalisation could be managed if resources came in with globalisation.

India has been a beneficiary of globalisation. Exports have grown faster than most countries from the early 1990s till today. A globalised world means a lot of risks. We can deal with these risks if resources are coming with them. These risks are not necessarily concentrated among the poorest of the poor"

He said "these risks are not necessarily concentrated among the poorest of the poor."

Banerjee, an alumnus of Kolkata's Presidency College, said "There is a need to build (measures for) mitigation. But less attention was paid towards mitigating mechanisms and was left mostly to NGOs till the time programmes like NREGA and other schemes were developed."

Many economists have pointed out in the past that among the effects of globalisation were jobless growth as manufacturing and supply chains shifted and became more automated. Speaking of India's steps to contain the pandemic, the economist said the lockdown came too early and was too rigid and consequently had a massive ripple effect on lots of people. He added that policy responses need to be calibrated properly.



India has been a beneficiary of globalisation. Exports have grown faster than most countries from the early 1990s till today. A globalised world means a lot of risks. We can deal with these risks if resources are coming with them. These risks are not necessarily concentrated among the poorest of the poor

ABHIJIT BANERJEE | ECONOMIST

Referring to the randomised control trials (RCT) which were done to generate sustainable data points in the Targeting the Hardcore Poor (THP) programme of Bandhan conducted in a village in Murshidabad in West Bengal, Banerjee said that after its conclusion after 18 months, it was found people had more incomes, were consuming more and were less likely to complain about ill health. Banerjee said to fight poverty, there is a need for sustainability of the programme period and a need for creative solutions.

The study by a group of economists led by Banerjee and his wife Esther Duflo, reported on the results of a randomised evaluation of a program designed to help extremely poor people gain a reliable stream of income through direct transfer of productive assets and training.

Korean mobile carriers tipped for robust Q1 earnings

AGENCIES

Seoul, April 11: South Korean wireless carriers are estimated to have logged robust earnings in the first quarter on the back of sharp growth in 5G users and their non-telecom businesses, a poll showed Sunday.

The combined operating profits of the country's three major mobile carriers - SK Telecom Co., KT Corp. and LG Uplus Corp. - are expected to have reached 966.5 billion won (\$863.3 million) in the January-March period, up 6.8 per cent from the previous year, according to the poll on six local brokerage houses by Yonhap Infomax, the financial arm of Yonhap News Agency.

SK Telecom, the biggest of the three in terms of mobile users, is estimated to have posted an operating profit of 339.5 billion won for the first quarter; up 12.42% on-year; while its revenue probably rose 6.57 percent on-year to 4.74 trillion won. Telecom giant KT is expected to have logged 386.3 billion won in operating profit, up 0.84 percent on-year; while the operating profit of LG Uplus is estimated to have risen 9.51% to 240.7 billion won.

BIZ BUZZ

Samsung starts 'Back to School' campaign

Bhubaneswar: Samsung announced 'Back to School' campaign that offers exciting discounts on Galaxy tablets to school and college going students. The 'Back to School' campaign will help students and educators experience innovative and education-friendly Galaxy tablets at an affordable price. The exciting offers are applicable on Galaxy Tab S6 Lite, Galaxy Tab A7, Galaxy Tab S7 and Galaxy Tab S7+. As part of the 'Back to School' campaign, students and educators can avail additional discount of up to 10% on Galaxy Tab S7+, Galaxy Tab S7, Galaxy Tab S6 Lite and Galaxy Tab A7 purchased via Samsung Student Advantage on Samsung.com. To avail the offer, students and educators can use their official school or college email address to login to Samsung Student Advantage or validate their credentials via Samsung's official student ID validation partner, Student Identify.



OnePlus unveils 9 Series for gamers

Bhubaneswar: One Plus recently unveiled the latest addition to the OnePlus 9 Series that is specially crafted for the demands of gaming enthusiasts- the OnePlus 9R 5G. The OnePlus 9R 5G reiterates the brand's goal to make the premium OnePlus smartphone experience accessible to more users at wider price points. The OnePlus 9R 5G will be available in Carbon Black and Lake Blue at ₹39,999 (8+ 128GB) and ₹43,999 (12+ 256GB). It will be available for purchase on 14th April for Amazon Prime members on Amazon.in and OnePlus Red Cable Club members on OnePlus.in and the OnePlus Store app. Open sales begin on April 15 across Amazon.in, OnePlus.in, the OnePlus Store app, OnePlus exclusive offline stores, and partner outlets.

Amazon launches mentor programme for startups

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, April 11: Amazon India Sunday announced the launch of its 'Mentor Connect' programme, which is aimed at accelerating the growth of startups and emerging brand owners enrolled under its Amazon Launchpad initiative.

Through the programme, startups and emerging brands will gain access to guidance from venture capital firms, industry veterans and Amazon leaders through expert knowledge sharing sessions, networking events and 1:1 mentorship sessions, a statement said.

Mentors from educational institutions and VC firms like Fireside Ventures, DSG Consumer Partners,

Elevation Capital, Tomorrow Capital have already signed up for the programme to contribute to the Indian startup growth story, it added.

"Startups and emerging brands enrolled in the Amazon Launchpad programme can access guidance from these mentors through various ways. This includes one-to-one mentorship with chosen mentors over a three-month period, ongoing networking opportunities with a wider pool of industry experts, or knowledge sharing sessions between these experts and other Launchpad brands," the statement said.

This offers entrepreneurs a platform to engage, learn and showcase their startups to the industry's leading subject matter experts

to help tackle strategic and functional challenges, it added.

"The Amazon Mentor Connect programme is not limited to startups and emerging brand owners enrolled in the Amazon Launchpad programme, but will also be extended to the winners of the Amazon Smbhav Entrepreneurship challenge in the upcoming Amazon Smbhav sum-



We are looking to understand grassroots level challenges, understand trends and identify ways of solving these problems for emerging brands. Not only that, VCs like us are always on the lookout for opportunities to meet new and upcoming brands

PRAYAG MOHANTY | SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT AT FIRESIDE VENTURES

mit," the statement said.

The winners will be the first cohort of startups to receive the benefits associated with the Amazon

Mentor Connect programme, it added.

Amazon Launchpad currently showcases over 2 lakh products offered by more than 800 emerging brands across 30 different product

categories. Popular sectors catered to by these brands include health and personal care, beauty and grooming, grocery and home products.

The second edition of 'Amazon Smbhav' will be hosted from April 15-18, 2021.

"India has a large startup ecosystem that is key to disruptive innovation and accelerating India's progress towards an Aatmanirbhar Bharat. Most of these startups are led by first time entrepreneurs who have the passion to drive a change, but don't have the experience to deal with the breadth of challenges they face along the way," Amazon India Director (MSME and Selling Partner Experience) Pranav Bhasin said.

SHORT TAKES

Separate hotel for virus-hit athletes

Tokyo: Athletes at the Tokyo Olympics who show minor symptoms of COVID-19 could be isolated in a hotel lined up by local organisers of the Games. Japanese news agency 'Kyodo' said Sunday organisers are working to secure 300 rooms in a hotel near the Athletes' Village. The agency cited unnamed officials with 'knowledge of the plan'. The rooms would be for athletes and staff who do not need to be hospitalised. The Olympics will open July 23 and face strong opposition from up to 80 per cent of Japanese polled. The Olympics and Paralympics will involve about 15,000 athletes from more than 200 nations.

Mbappe fashions easy PSG victory

Paris: Kylian Mbappe struck his league-leading 21st goal of the season as defending champion Paris Saint-Germain (PSG) won 4-1 at Strasbourg to stay three points behind Ligue 1 leaders Lille. Coach Mauricio Pochettino defended his decision to play Mbappe for 88 minutes even though PSG have a big game coming up Tuesday against Bayern Munich in the Champions League. Mbappe had struck two of the three goals against Bayern in the first leg encounter. The other goals for PSG were scored by Pablo Sarabia, Moise Kean and Leandro Paredes. For the losers Moise Sahi got a consolation goal in the second half of the game

Men wrestlers fare poorly at Almaty

Almaty (Kazakhstan): National champion Sandeep Singh Mann (74kg) failed to qualify for the Olympic Games at the Asian Qualifiers here Sunday, keeping veteran Sushil Kumar's Tokyo hopes alive in the weight category. Also missing out on qualification was Satywart Kadiyan (97kg) and Sumit Malik (125kg) in the three-day competition that concluded here Sunday. All those who missed out have one last chance to make the cut for the Tokyo Games at the World Olympic Qualifiers, at Sofia, May 6-9. Sandeep lost to Iran's Yones Aliakbar Emamichoghazaei by technical superiority in the semifinals. Same was the fate of Kadiyan who also lost in the semis to Iran's Askari Mohammadian. On the other hand, Sunil lost to local wrestler Yusup Batirmurzaev.

Two Indian fencers test COVID positive

New Delhi: Two Indian fencers participating in the World Junior and Cadet Championships in Cairo have tested positive for COVID-19, leading to them being quarantined there. Fencing Association of India (FAI) president Rajiv Mehta said that the infected fencers were doing fine and being looked after by the team doctor. "Yes, two fencers have tested positive and they are undergoing quarantine in Cairo," Mehta said Sunday. "Both are doing fine and they are being looked after by the doctor there," he added. India had fielded 24 fencers in the world meet.

Players root for quick vaccination

New Delhi: Top Indian athletes, including the likes of rifle shooter Sanjeev Rajput and badminton ace B.Sai Praneeth, have requested the citizens of India to become a part of the 'largest vaccine drive' initiated by the government. They said by getting vaccinated India could fight Covid-19 on a war-footing. "I request all those above 45 years of age to become a part of the Indian government's vaccination drive. Make it a grand success and safeguard yourself against the dreaded disease," Rajput said on SAI's official Twitter handle. Fellow woman rifle shooter Elavenil Valarivan said, "Go get vaccinated, stay indoors, stay safe and eat healthy." Praneeth said, "The drive can only be successful if we become part of it." AGENCIES

KKR START IPL-14 CAMPAIGN WITH 10-RUN VICTORY OVER SUNRISERS

Night belongs to Knights



WELL DONE MATE: Rahul Tripathi (R) congratulates Nitish Rana after the latter reached his half century during the game Sunday against Sunrisers Hyderabad

AGENCIES

Chennai, April 11: Fine half centuries from Nitish Rana (80, 56b, 9x4, 4x6) and Rahul Tripathi (53, 29b, 5x4, 2x6) and their 93-run second wicket stand followed by some disciplined bowling helped Kolkata Knight Riders (KKR) beat Sunrisers Hyderabad (SRH) by 10 runs in their IPL-14 encounter here Sunday. After being put in KKR scored 187 for six in their 20 overs and then restricted the op-

position to 177 for five. SRH were always under pressure when they set out for the victory target off 188 runs after losing skipper David Warner (3) and Wriddhiman Saha (7) cheaply. Even though Jonny Bairstow (55, 40b, 5x4, 3x6) and Manish Pandey (61 n o, 44b, 2x4, 3x6) tried their best it was not enough for the Hyderabad side. KKR skipper Eoin Morgan made some astute bowling changes and that always kept SRH at check. Prasidh Krishna

(2/35) was the pick of the KKR bowlers while Andre Russell, Pat Cummins and Shakib Al Hasan picked up a wicket apiece. Earlier Afghanistan spin twins Rashid Khan (2/24) and Mohammad Nabi (2/32) came good for SRH to restrict the Knights to a total below 190 when 200-plus definitely looked on the cards with Rana and Tripathi at the crease. Nabi got Rana and Morgan (2) while Khan, who had earlier dismissed Shubman Gill (15), sent

back the dangerous Andre Russell (5). However, it was yorker specialist T Natarajan (1/37) who started the fightback by having Tripathi caught behind by Saha. It was only due to the efforts of former skipper Dinesh Karthik (22n o, 9b, 2x4, 1x6) that KKR could close in on the 190-run mark. KKR were off to a flier with Gill and Rana putting up a half century stand with two balls of the power play. SRH won the toss and skipper David Warner had no hesitation in putting the opposition in. However, both Gill and Rana were out of their blocks in a flash and in no time KKR were 50 without loss

BRIEF SCORES

KKR 187 for 6 (Nitish Rana 80, Rahul Tripathi 53, Dinesh Karthik 22 n o, Rashid Khan 2/24, Mohammad Nabi 2/32) beat **SRH 177 for 5** (Manish Pandey 61 n o, Jonny Bairstow 55, Prasidh Krishna 2/35) by 10 runs.

with two ball of the power play still remaining. Khan however, had an immediate impact on the game once he came into bowl. He fooled Gill with a googly and the batsman was bowled trying to hit Khan over the top. Then came the rollicking 93-run stand for the second wicket between Rana and Tripathi that set up the game for KKR. In the end it was former skipper Dinesh Karthik's (22 n o, 9b, 2x4, 1x6) which enabled KKR post a total close to 190.

RR-PK IPL-14 ENCOUNTER

Big-hitters set to dominate match

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, April 11: Another battle of big-hitters is on the cards when KL Rahul's Punjab Kings (PKS) take on the Sanju Samson-led Rajasthan Royals (RR). Both the sides are dotted with expansive stroke-makers and both will look for a winning start to their IPL campaigns here Monday. RR will be banking heavily on their swashbuckling all-rounder Ben Stokes who will be keen to get some runs under his belt. So will be the likes of Englishman Jos Buttler and newly-appointed skipper Samson, who is a mine-field of talent.

RR may open with the highly-rated Yashasvi Jaiswal and Buttler. They will be followed by Samson and Stokes. If the four fire on all cylinders, they can pummel any

attack into submission and Punjab would be no exception on the Wankhede track, which is usually batting-friendly.

With star pacer Jofra Archer missing due to injury, the pace attack will have to be led by RR's newest recruit - South African all-rounder Chris Morris, who will

be eager to justify his huge price tag of ₹16.25 crore.

On the other hand, PKS boast of hard-hitters like Rahul (670 runs in 2020 season), Mayank Agarwal (424 runs) and Chris Gayle. Rahul and Agarwal formed

a lethal opening combination in 2020 and would continue to open. They also have the likes of Englishman Dawid Malan, one of the finest T20 batsmen currently, hard-hitting Tamil Nadu batsman M Shahrulkh Khan, and West Indian Nicholas Pooran.

United register great comeback to beat Tottenham

AGENCIES

London: April 11: Manchester United staged an excellent comeback in the second half of their Premier League match at Tottenham Hotspur to emerge victorious 3-1. Ole Gunnar Solskjaer's side bounced back from first half controversy and took all the three points. They scored through Fred, Edinson Cavani and Mason Greenwood, after Son Heung-Min had opened the scoring for Spurs.

That Son goal came minutes after Cavani had seen an effort ruled out for an apparent foul by Scott McTominay. But Manchester United picked themselves off the floor and deservedly ran out winners in the end. The victory was well deserved in the end for the Red Devils, who gained revenge for their 1-6 defeat by Jose Mourinho's side earlier in the campaign.

The three points for United leave them 11 points away from leaders Manchester City, but also boost their chances of sealing second place in the Premier League after Leicester lost to West Ham earlier in the day. Unless something extraordinary happens, Manchester United are all set to qualify for the Champions League.

RIVETING EL CLASICO ENCOUNTER BETWEEN SPANISH ARCH RIVALS

Real overcome luckless Barca

AGENCIES

Madrid, April 11: Real Madrid climbed to the top of La Liga points table Saturday after Karim Benzema's flicked finish helped them claim a thrilling 2-1 victory over Barcelona in a wild El Clasico encounter at the Valdebebas.

Benzema's superb piece of skill and a deflected Toni Kroos free-kick put Real Madrid in charge and while Oscar Mingueza pulled one back for Barca, they fell to defeat in what could be Lionel Messi's final appearance in this fixture. Victory means Real Madrid go level on points with Atletico, with the top three now separated by a single point.

The result was a riveting contest at a rain-soaked Alfredo di Stefano stadium - certainly one of the most exciting Clasicos in years - that saw both teams squander numerous chances, several efforts come back off the woodwork and Casemiro sent off in extra time. With the last play of the game, Barcelona substitute Ilaix Moriba



ON THE MONEY: Karim Benzema of Real Madrid celebrates after scoring against Barcelona in the El Clasico game played Saturday

rattled Real Madrid's crossbar. "We're still in it (title race)," said Barca coach Ronald Koeman.

"We've lost a game against a team who are also fighting for the league but we have eight games left and we

will fight to the end." Zinedine Zidane admitted after the game his players are 'physically at their limit'. "It was a difficult game, the first half was ours, but we suffered in the second," said Zidane. "We deserved the victory, because we had a lot of chances to score the third (goal)."

Madrid's opener came after a superb counter-attack from Barcelona. Messi going down too easily on the edge of the area, with Madrid pouring forward on the break.

Fede Valverde powered through midfield and fed wide to Lucas Vazquez, whose cross was expertly flicked inside the near post by an unmarked Benzema.

The goal shook Barca, who were unable to restrain the speed of Madrid and particularly Vinicius Junior on the break. Vinicius was brought down by Ronald Araujo on the edge of the area and Kroos' free-kick cannoned off the back off Sergino Dest and in, evading the efforts of Alba to head away on the line.

FIH TIE AGAINST OLYMPIC CHAMPIONS

Harman, Sreejesh get bonus point for India



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Buenos Aires, April 11: The Indian men's hockey team snatched a dramatic penalty shoot-out win over Olympic champions Argentina after Harmanpreet Singh kept the side afloat in regulation time with his two goals in the action-packed first game of their FIH Pro League tie played here Saturday.

In an engrossing contest between two evenly-matched teams, it was Harmanpreet (21st minute) who gave India a 1-0 lead with a superbly executed penalty corner early in the second quarter before a quick-fire double from Martin Ferreiro (28th, 30th) put Los Leones into a 2-1 lead at half time.

Argentina held onto their lead until the dying seconds of the match, when Harmanpreet (60th) stepped up to the mark to tie the scores with a second-phase penalty corner for the visitors, who were playing their first Pro League match after more than a year.

The draw guaranteed a point for each team, but it was the tourists

who walked away with the bonus point, thanks largely to some brilliant goalkeeping by PR Sreejesh. As per the event's rules, the team winning the shoot-out also walks away with the bonus point.

Sreejesh denied Lucas Vila, Ferreiro and Ignacio Ortiz before Dilpreet Singh sealed a 3-2 win in the one-on-ones with a cool finish against veteran Argentina goalkeeper Juan Vivaldi.

The result meant India consolidated their fifth position in the FIH Hockey Pro League standings with 12 points from seven matches. Argentina are placed sixth, with 11 points from as many games.

Harmanpreet was deservedly declared player of the match. "I think the most important thing was that we never gave up," Harmanpreet said. "We were fighting until the last minute, and that is why we got a result here," he added.

Harmanpreet was asked what his team need to improve on for the second game. "We got lots of cards today (Saturday), so I think we need to improve on that," he said.

Win over CSK 'special' for Pant



WINNING MOMENT: Rishabh Pant enjoys some banter with CSK players while walking off the field Saturday after DC's victory over CSK

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, April 11: Delhi Capitals' (DC) new skipper Rishabh Pant said walking out with Mahendra Singh Dhoni for the toss in their IPL opener here was a 'special' moment for him. Pant said the Chennai Super Kings (CSK) talisman has been his 'go-to man'. DC easily won the game by seven wickets after Shikhar Dhawan (85) and Prithvi Shaw (72) struck blistering half centuries. "Actually, it was special for me

captaining in IPL and walking out the for toss with MS (Dhoni). I have learnt from him and he's my go-to man," Pant said Saturday.

The likes of Chris Woakes and Avesh Khan ensured DC did not miss their first-choice pace duo of Kagiso Rabada and Andre Nortje who are serving their quarantine. "It was good, once you win the match everything is good. In the middle phase, I was under pressure, but good job from Avesh and the bowlers. The match proved the options we had," Pant stated.

Dhoni penalised for slow over rate

Mumbai: CSK skipper Mahendra Singh Dhoni was fined ₹12 lakh for maintaining a slow over rate during his side's IPL opener against Delhi Capitals here. "Chennai Super Kings captain MS Dhoni has been fined after his team maintained a slow over-rate during their IPL 2021 match against Delhi Capitals at Wankhede Stadium, Mumbai, April 10," the IPL said in a media statement Sunday. "As it was his team's first offence of the season under the IPL's Code of Conduct relating to minimum over-rate offences, Dhoni was fined ₹12 lakh," the statement added.

Pant also lauded the opening duo of Dhawan and Shaw. "Prithvi and Shikhar did a good job for us in the power play. They kept it simple and looked for boundaries," he said.

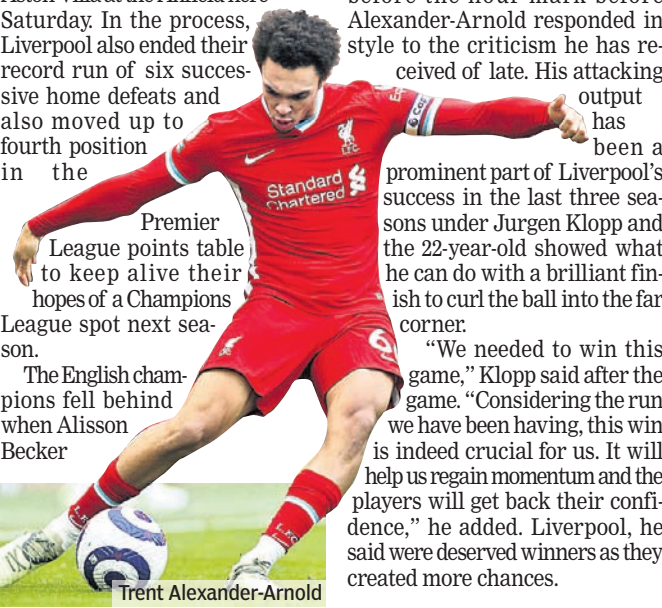
CSK captain Dhoni pulled up his bowlers after a 'poor' outing. "We could have bowled slightly better, and if batters are hitting you over the field, that's fair enough. The execution of the bowlers was poor," Dhoni pointed out. He also stated that for the side bowling second, a minimum of 200 runs are required on the board due to the dew factor.

Alexander-Arnold goal ends Reds' horror run

AGENCIES

Liverpool, April 11: Defending Premier League champions Liverpool rode on Trent Alexander-Arnold's injury time winner to beat Aston Villa at the Anfield here Saturday. In the process, Liverpool also ended their record run of six successive home defeats and also moved up to fourth position in the

Premier League points table to keep alive their hopes of a Champions League spot next season. The English champions fell behind when Alisson Becker



failed to keep out Ollie Watkins's first half strike. Liverpool were then controversially denied an equaliser as a dubious VAR review ruled out Roberto Firmino's reply.

But Mohamed Salah levelled just before the hour mark before Alexander-Arnold responded in style to the criticism he has received of late. His attacking output has been a prominent part of Liverpool's success in the last three seasons under Jurgen Klopp and the 22-year-old showed what he can do with a brilliant finish to curl the ball into the far corner.

"We needed to win this game," Klopp said after the game. "Considering the run we have been having, this win is indeed crucial for us. It will help us regain momentum and the players will get back their confidence," he added. Liverpool, he said were deserved winners as they created more chances.

FORTUNE FORECAST

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ARIES

You are in a mood to meditate or be alone. It may have arisen from some disappointment, says Ganesha, but you should honour it. It may even be a dynamic session of meditation involving painting, dancing, humming, or simply watching the world pass by.

TAURUS

In all probability, you will challenge all conventions and traditions with innovation in a successful manner, predicts Ganesha. In the afternoon, you may manage to step on the toes of your boss, so beware. The evening promises an ambience that will change your weaknesses into your strengths.

GEMINI

You will feel happy and content with your life today. However, you need to co-operate with others and help them with their troubles as well as maintain an attitude of friendliness. You need to guard against being selfish and looking after only your own interests, says Ganesha.

CANCER

Try focusing on achieving immediate goals today. Although, it is always beneficial to see the larger picture, there are days like today when working on short-term goals makes more sense. Later, you can cumulate these gains and complete the holistic picture. Once things are done to perfection, you will be filled with a sense of achievement. And, it deserved, says Ganesha. Celebrate in the evening.

LEO

You will be immersed in love and romance today. You will likely gift that special someone with something that will sweep them off their feet. Your behaviour with others will be kind and gentle, however, you may lose your temper due to some events which may occur in the later part of the day. Keep your temper in check. A day of mixed results awaits, says Ganesha.

VIRGO

Ganesha foretells that your professional life will get a boost today. There will also be some perks coming your way. You have the ability to execute your plans to perfection. Your family members will shower their unconditional love on you in the evening. All in all, says Ganesha, it is an optimistic day.

LIBRA

Ganesha says you will be more careful about your personal appearance and outward beauty. This is a good time to be cautious in maintaining and perusing personal relationships with other people.

SCORPIO

Your stars are shining bright today. Relationships prove lucky for you as you are blessed to have great family and friends. Sort out differences if any and vote for harmony. In short, you are on a winning spree today and shall glorify the path you take up.

SAGITTARIUS

Pack your travel bags; business trip on the cards. Money make the world go around and so it does for you. Consider financial matters as your priority today. In the evening, sit back, relax and bask in the glory of success, says Ganesha.

CAPRICORN

You will be in a bad state of mind today, feels Ganesha. Just when you thought you are done with all the pending work, you will have a pile of files on your table. You will handle your money matters very wisely. You will wind up the day enjoying a romantic dinner or going out for a drive, and spending good amount of time with your partner.

AQUARIUS

Time is money, and today you will understand why it is said so. You will be conscious about the fact that if you fail to plan properly, you will never achieve your goals. As a result, you will now recalculate the risks and revise your 'to-do' list, says Ganesha. Make time management a part of your routine, it will help you forever.

PISCES

Ganesha wants you to have a new beginning in our area of interest. You have to use your capability to succeed in life. Fight all your fears with decisiveness. Your confidence and concentration will help you finish everything well.



CAMERON CHERISHES HER UNION WITH BARRYMORE

Cameron Diaz said one of her greatest moments in life is the friendship she shares with Drew Barrymore. "I can't wait to grow old with you and experience life together because one of the greatest moments of my life is our friendship," Diaz added on the latter's *The Drew Barrymore Show*.

ZACHARY QUINTO HAPPY TO 'JUMP BACK' TO STAR TREK

Actor Zachary Quinto says that he as well as the rest of the cast of *Star Trek* trilogy is prepared to return for the fourth time to the franchise. "I have no real idea what's going on with *Star Trek* but I'm sure we'd be happy to jump back on board," he said.



BAFTA 2021

Ma Rainey's Black Bottom steals show

DIRECTOR CHRISTOPHER NOLAN'S *TENET* WHICH ALSO STARS ACTRESS DIMPLE KAPADIA, WON A BAFTA FOR SPECIAL VISUAL EFFECTS

LONDON: The British Academy For Films and Television arts (BAFTA) awards saw an interesting line up of awards and honour being given out on the opening night gala. Eight craft awards were handed out virtually.

The highlight of the ceremony was actor, director, writer Noel Clarke, best known for *Kidulthood* film trilogy, being honoured with outstanding British contribution to cinema.

Ma Rainey's Black Bottom won two awards in the category of Costume Design and Make-up & Hair.

The awards took place virtually from the Royal Albert Hall Saturday. Eight craft based awards were given out, with the rest of the awards taking place Sunday night.

They were given out for casting, costume, makeup and hair, production design, sound, special visual effects, British short film and British short animation.

David Fincher's directorial *Mark* was awarded in the Best Production Design category, whereas, *Rocks*,



the coming-of-age drama film by Sarah Gavron, won in the category of Best Casting.

Director Christopher Nolan's *Tenet* which also stars Indian actress Dimple Kapadia, won a BAFTA for

Special Visual Effects, whereas *Sound of Metal* won in the Best Sound category.

The Owl and The Pussycat took home the award for Best British

Short Animation, whereas *The Present* won the Best Short Film Award.

The rest of the awards will be presented on the closing night Sunday, where actress Priyanka Chopra Jonas will be one of the award presenters.



Rhea's hope-filled message for fans

MUMBAI : B-town actress Rhea Chakraborty took to Instagram to share a hope-filled message with her fans. She shared a picture of herself dressed in a yellow kurta, reading poet Rabindranath Tagore's collection of poems, *Gitanjali*.

She wrote: "The question and the cry 'Oh, where?'" melt into tears of a thousand streams and deluge the world with the flood of the assurance, "I AM!" -- Rabindranath Tagore, *Gitanjali* #keepingthefait.

Within minutes, her close friend Shibani Dandekar posted "love you" with a heart emoji. Rhea has not been very regular on social media after the death of her alleged boyfriend and B-town actor Sushant Singh Rajput.

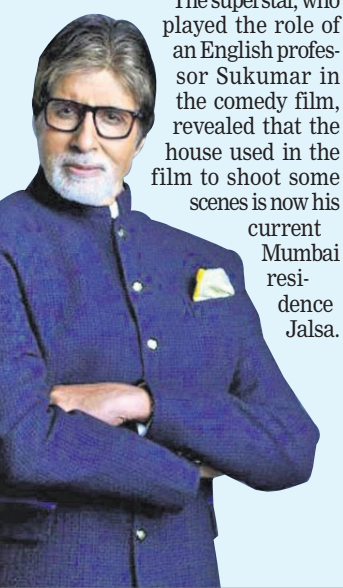
She was accused by Sushant's family for abetment to suicide and also siphoning off funds from the late actor. She was also named in the first Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB) charge sheet along with her brother Showik in a drug-related probe into Sushant's death case.



Chupke Chupke clocks 46 years

Big B goes down memory lane

MUMBAI: Actor Amitabh Bachchan posted an interesting trivia about his 1975 film *Chupke Chupke* as the film completed 46 years of release Sunday.



The superstar, who played the role of an English professor Sukumar in the comedy film, revealed that the house used in the film to shoot some scenes is now his current Mumbai residence Jalsa.



Amitabh took to Instagram Sunday as he shared a fascinating fact from the film.

He uploaded a still from the movie and captioned it as: *Chupke Chupke* our film by Hrishikesh MUKERJI.. closing today at 46 years ...!! This house you see in the picture is Producer NC Sippy's house .. we bought it, then sold it, then bought it back again .. rebuilt it .. this is our home now JALSA !!

Many films were shot here - *Anand, NamakHaram, Chupke Chupke, Satt pe Satta*, and many more .."

The film also starred Dharmendra, Sharmila Tagore, Asrani, Jaya Bachchan and Om Pakash in pivotal roles.

LISA TO WELCOME DAUGHTER



MUMBAI: Actress Lisa Haydon took to social media to post a beach picture, flaunting her baby bump, Sunday. This third time mom-

to-be posted a picture in a bikini with baby Leo in her arms.

She wrote: "Any other moms out there nervous about another baby coming along while you still have a baby in your arms? I worry about his little emotions, how

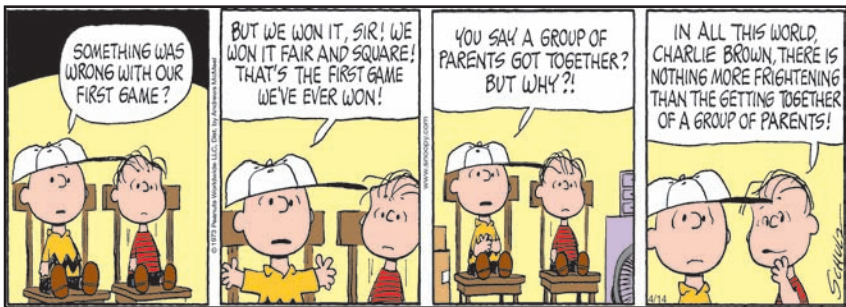
will he feel and express himself while he's yet to learn how to talk. Precious boy you are so loved and will be ever so even when your sister arrives in ten weeks."

She also posted about how she is so grateful that the beaches in Hong Kong have opened.

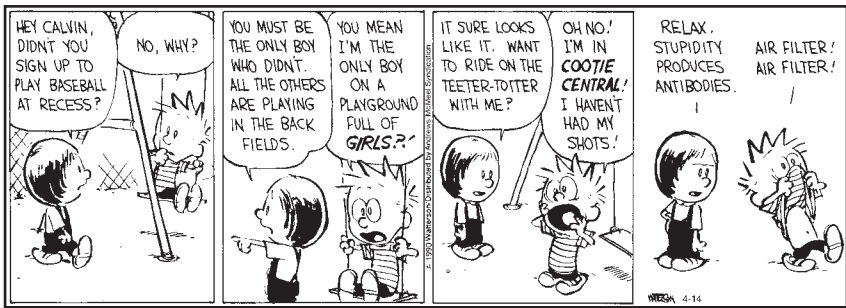
"On another note, so thankful the beaches in Hong Kong have opened after endless months of lockdowns. They are truly more magical and cleaner than I've ever seen them," she wrote.

Married to Dino Lalvani in October 2016, Lisa gave birth to her first baby Zack in 2017. The couple was blessed with their second baby, Leo, in February 2020.

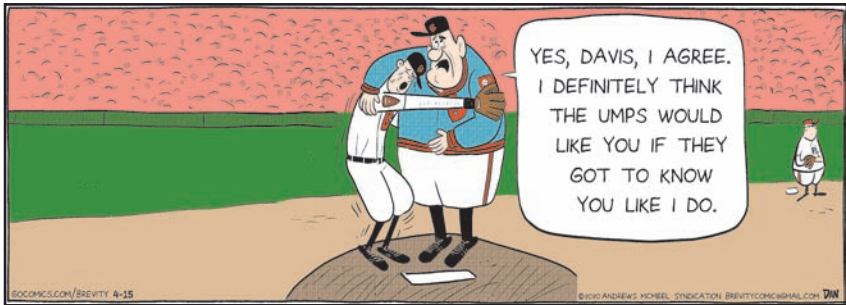
PEANUTS



CALVIN AND HOBBS

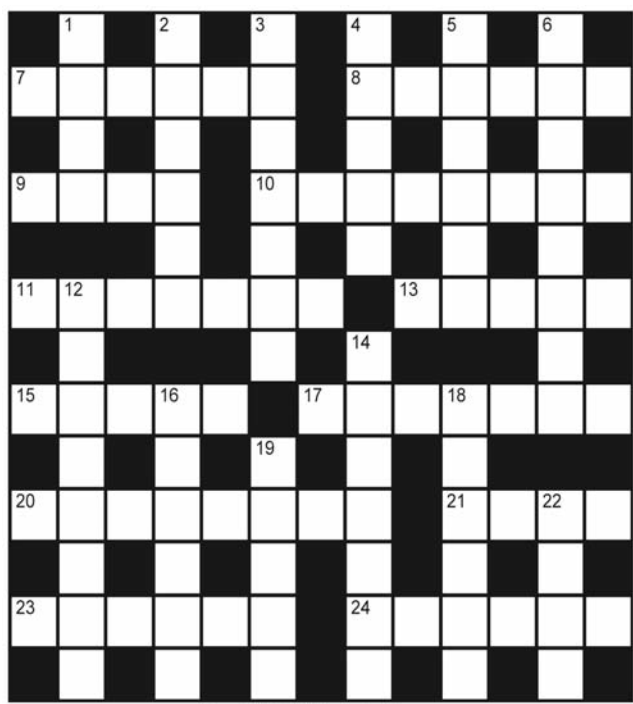


BREVITY



FUN post

CROSSWORD



Across

- 7 Comic's forte
- 8 Connected
- 9 Care for
- 10 Collector's items
- 11 Scrapes by (5,2)
- 13 Press
- 15 Wahine's welcome

- 17 Adds together
- 20 Horrendous
- 21 Commotion (2-2)
- 23 Baffles
- 24 Removed

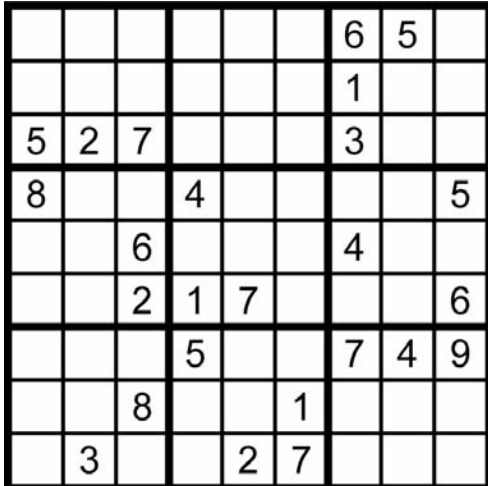
- 4 Blind parts
- 5 Rarer than rare
- 6 Largest of the Canary Islands
- 12 Diseases
- 14 Garden houses
- 16 Sheik's' cliques
- 18 Most recent
- 19 Corpulent plus
- 22 Hard to fathom

Down

- 1 Olympic sled
- 2 Cheese dish
- 3 Gofer's trips

SUDOKU

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



SOLUTIONS

CROSSWORD



SUDOKU

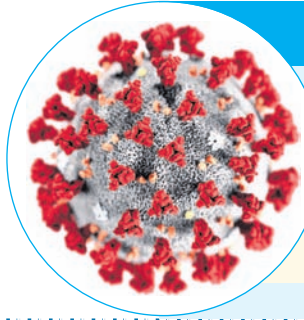


CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW



SELFIE TIME

Girls taking a selfie on Kuakhai riverbank on the outskirts of Bhubaneswar, Sunday



COVID-19 TRACKER

	INFECTED	RECOVERED	DEAD
World	13,61,55,400	10,95,32,416	29,41,443
India	1,33,58,805	1,20,81,443	1,69,275
Odisha	3,49,561	3,40,062	1,926

BJP-ruled states favoured in vaccine supply: BJD



A man gets the Covid jab at a vaccination centre in Bhubaneswar while a few others are waiting for their turn



POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, April 11: BJD leader and state Labour Minister Sushanta Singh Sunday attacked the Union government of favouring the BJP-ruled states in supply of Covid 19 vaccines and neglecting other states.

The minister in his interaction with the media claimed that these actions go against the claims of ‘Sabka Sath Sabka Vikas’ of the Union government.

“The Union government talks about ‘Sabka Sath Sabka Vikas’ but we are seeing that the BJP-ruled states are getting more assistance from the Centre when it comes to supply of Covid 19 vaccines. The duty of the ruler is to treat all equally which is not happening,” he said. He also added, “This is happening when the Covid cases in the state and the country are rising. Definitely the state is getting lesser doses than required.



The Union government talks about ‘Sabka Sath Sabka Vikas’ but we are seeing that the BJP-ruled states are getting more assistance from the Centre when it comes to supply of Covid 19 vaccines

SUSHANTA SINGH | LABOUR MINISTER

Everybody knows that.”
The Congress party also expressed concern over the shortage of vaccines in the state.

Congress leader Suresh Routray said, “On what basis the government is planning to observe the Tika Utsav when the state is badly hit in terms of getting adequate vaccination from the Centre. Most of the vaccination centres in the state have been closed. People are returning from such centres. The Centre as well as the state government talks more but fails to deliver.”

Meanwhile the BJP said that the Union government had always given priority to the state. “Odisha has always been in priority when it comes to distribution of vaccines. Whatever demand the state government makes, it will receive the stocks accordingly. The statements made by Singh despite being a minister are not good. The Union government also gives priority to Odisha,” the party said in a statement.

Workplace vaccination starts at Rail Sadan

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, April 11: Workplace vaccination facility started at Udayagiri Hall, 2nd Floor of South Block at Rail Sadan here Sunday for a minimum of 100 doses. All the employees above 45 years of age who are yet to be inoculated are advised to participate in the vaccination camp at 10.00 am at Udayagiri Hall of Rail Sadan Sunday so that the last criteria of eligibility can be fulfilled.

Rail Sadan, the headquarters of East Coast Railway, has been provisionally selected for workplace vaccination site under Bhubaneswar Municipality Corporation (BMC) 11th April, 2021 for the employees of East Coast Railway.

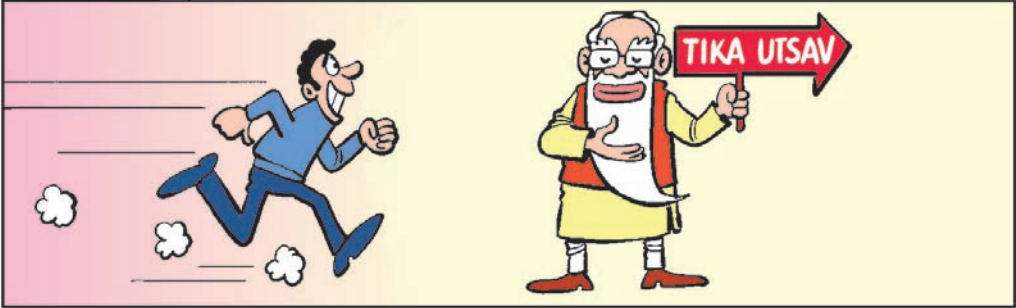
This coincides with Prime Minister’s call for nationwide Tika Utsav from 11th to 14th April, 2021. The Prime Minister had urged for Tika Utsav only two days back.

Urban Task Force of BMC have inspected the arrangements today along with two other places and provisionally approved for workplace vaccination centre at Rail Sadan. This will be the first workplace vaccination centre only for the employees.

Earlier, ECoR had stated that all Odisha bound passengers from anywhere in the country, who are boarding beginning 10th April, 2021, must have an RTPCR Negative Test Report of maximum 72 hours before the start of journey or a second dose vaccination certificate. Those without valid documents will have to undergo seven days mandatory home/institutional quarantine.

The resurgence of Covid 19 has occurred in some places of Odisha. To restrict the spread of Covid 19 and to prevent adverse impact of cross border movement and in coordination with Odisha State Government, it has been decided to impose these restrictions on passengers as above.

POLITICKLE by MANJUL



Khurda man reaps success in quail farming

POST NEWS NETWORK

Khurda, April 11: A 34-year-old farmer from Arikama village of Bolgarh block in Khurda district has set an example for many by reaping success in quail farming.

Prafulla Mahapatra of Arikama is now supplying quails and eggs to several places of Odisha including Bhubaneswar, Cuttack and Nayagarh, sources said.

“I came to know about quail farming from social media. I started quail farming with 700 chicks and an investment of Rs 2.50 lakh. Initially, I could not get much success as people were unaware of quail as a source of meat and egg,” Mahapatra said.

According to Mahapatra, a quail can grow up to 250 grams in weight and a female bird can lay around 200-250 eggs in a year. Each quail egg weighs around 8-14 grams, he said.



Many youths are now showing their interest to opt for quail farming as a source of livelihood. The demand for quail meat and eggs is gaining popularity. One can get good returns by introducing modern technology in quail farming

PRAFULLA MAHAPATRA | QUAIL FARMER

“Now, a quail is selling at around Rs 50 for meat purpose while people are paying Rs 30 for a dozen eggs. Quail meat has many beneficial effects while its eggs are rich in protein, iron and vitamins,” Mahapatra added.

The 34-year-old farmer is now imparting training on quail farming to others. “Many youths are now showing their interest to opt for quail farming as a source of livelihood. The demand for quail meat and eggs is gaining popularity. One can get good returns by introducing modern technology in quail farming,” Mahapatra said.

Notorious fraudster held from City hotel

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, April 11: The Special Squad of Commissionerate Police Sunday arrested a notorious fraudster from a hotel here. The accused was identified as Vishal Rajkumar Nilenge of Bengaluru. The 25-year-old Nilenge is an MBA graduate.

According to sources, Nilenge is a wanted criminal for police forces of Jharsuguda, Sambalpur and Puri.

The educated fraudster especially targets the jewelry shop owners. He used to buy various costly gold ornaments by impersonating Income Tax officers.

When the owners asked for money, he would tell them to make payment online. He would also show them a fake message of money debited to the accounts of the victim shop owners. Nilenge used to live a luxurious life. He traveled in flights and stayed at posh hotels in Bhubaneswar and other cities.

Acting on a tip-off, the special squad of Commissionerate Police Sunday arrested Nilenge and later handed him over to the Sambalpur Police for further probe into the cases registered under their jurisdiction.



The surroundings of Srimandir in Puri being sanitised thoroughly as part of the Covid-19 norms, Sunday

OP PHOTO

KEEPING VIRUS AT BAY

Thunderstorm, lightning warning for 4 days

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, April 11: The India Meteorological Department in its latest weather forecasting has issued warning of thunderstorm and lightning in several parts of the state during the next four days.

The department also said that light to moderate rains are likely in different parts of the state from Monday to Thursday. The department has issued Yellow Warning for thunderstorm and lightning for these four days.

While issuing the warning for Monday, the department said, “Thunderstorm with lightning and gusty surface wind speed reaching 30-40 kmph very likely to occur at one or two places over the districts of Keonjhar, Mayurbhanj, Balasore, Bhadrak, Nayagarh, Malkangiri, Koraput, Gajapati, Nuapada, Rayagada, Nabarangpur, Bargarh, Jharsuguda, Sundargarh, Sambalpur, Jajpur and Deogarh.”



The department has also predicted rains in some pockets of the state Monday. The forecasting report of the department for Monday said, “Light to moderate rain or thundershower very likely to occur at a few places over the districts of Keonjhar, Mayurbhanj, Deogarh, Malkangiri, Koraput, Gajapati, Rayagada, Nabarangpur, Nuapada, Bargarh, Sundargarh, Sambalpur, Jharsuguda and at one or two places over the rest of the districts of Odisha.”

The similar trends are likely to follow till Thursday as rains, thunderstorm and lightning are expected in several parts of the state. The department however said that changes in the maximum and minimum temperature in the state are unlikely for the next four days.

The IMD said that the state capital might see cloudy sky with the possibility of development of thunder and lightning. The maximum temperature is likely to be 37 degree Celsius while the minimum temperature of the city is likely to be around 25 degree Celsius.

Nevertheless, the maximum temperature in the state Sunday was recorded in Jharsuguda and Boudh which saw 40 degrees C temperature each while the minimum temperature was recorded in Koraput which saw 18 degree C temperature.

POST NEWS NETWORK

Khurda, April 11: With no facility to market their oilseeds, sunflower growers of Khurda district are being forced to opt for distress sale of their produce.

Sunflower farmers of Begunia, Bolgarh and Tangi blocks of Khurda have urged the state government to arrange marketing facility for their oilseeds.

“I have been cultivating sunflowers for last five years. This year also I have grown sunflower crops on an acre of land. But, lack of proper marketing facility is preventing me from getting good return,” said Bhagirathi Swain of Haja village in Begunia block.

According to Swain, over a hundred farmers of his village have also been growing sunflowers for last several years. “Sunflower farming needs a lot of care and attention. Farmers have to guard their crops for round-the-clock. Monkeys and



elephants from the nearby forests often damage our crops,” said Jayadev Routray, Kailash Chandra Chhotray, Braja Kishore Bhol, Rashmi Ranjan Pattajoshi and many other farmers of Haja.

The farmers have claimed that the state government and the district

administration are yet to arrange marketing facility for either sunflower seeds or oil. As a result, most of the sunflower growers are being forced to sell their produce to traders at low prices.

“Sunflower is considered as a

cash crop. The Agriculture department is providing high yielding seeds to the farmers. But, lack of marketing facility for sunflower seeds and oil is preventing the farmers from good returns. The state government should introduce Mandi system for the oilseed,” said Dhruba Charan Bahinipati, a social activist.

District Agriculture Officer Ganesh Das said they used to supply good quality seeds and fertilizer to sunflower growers. “We will take appropriate steps if there is any proposal from the farmers to arrange marketing facility for sunflower crops. We have recently raised the issue with the district administration,” Das added.

I have been cultivating sunflowers for last five years. But, lack of proper marketing facility is preventing me from getting good return

BHAGIRATHI SWAIN | A FARMER

State sees 1,000+ new nCoV cases for third day in a row



A healthcare worker collects swab samples from a train traveller at the City railway station, Sunday

IN A NUTSHELL

As many as 459 Covid-19 patients recovered in the past 24 hours, taking the total recoveries in the coastal state to 3,40,062

THE STATE HAS SO FAR CONDUCTED OVER 93.70 LAKH SAMPLE TESTS AND THE POSITIVITY RATE STANDS AT 3.73 PER CENT

THE DEATH TOLL REMAINED AT 1,926 AS NO FRESH FATALITY DUE TO THE INFECTION WAS REPORTED SINCE SATURDAY

Bhubaneswar, April 11: The state has been reporting more than 1,000 fresh cases of Covid-19 for three consecutive days, a senior official said Sunday.

The state registered this year's highest single-day spike of 1,379

Decision on Class IX exams after April 30

Bhubaneswar, April 11: Amid doubt over the possibility of conduct of school examinations in the state due to the Covid-19 situation, School and Mass Education (S&ME) Minister Samir Ranjan Dash Sunday said that a decision regarding the Class IX examinations will be taken after April 30.

"The final decision on Class IX examinations will be taken after reviewing the Covid-19 situation in the coastal state after April 30. The department wants to conduct the examinations as per the syllabus covered by the teachers so far," Dash said. The state has suspended physical classes of IX and XI students till April 30 owing to a surge in Covid cases.

WASSUP TODAY

BHUBANESWAR

- Death anniversary of legendary poet Gangadhar Meher, near Kalinga Hospital, 8.30am

PURI

- Demonstration against power tariff hike, Kacheri Square, 11am

Programmes/announcements for **wassup** today may be sent to opwassup@gmail.com for record, it must also carry the sender's mobile number for our verification, but not for publication.

CLASSIFIED

AFFIDAVIT

By virtue of an affidavit No.3670, Dt.7.4.21, I have changed my name from Pinky Sahu to Snehajali Padhan. Henceforth, I shall be known as Snehajali Padhan for all purposes.

Sundargarh district recorded the maximum number of fresh cases at 317, followed by Khurda (158), Nuapada (90) and Sambalpur (86).

The death toll, on the other hand, remained at 1,926 as no fresh fatality due to the infection was reported since Saturday, added the official.

The state has so far conducted over 93.70 lakh sample tests, including 31,651 Saturday, and the positivity rate stands at 3.73 per cent. The coastal state, meanwhile, saw 459 Covid-19 patients recovering in the past 24 hours. 3,40,062 persons have so far been recovered from the viral infection, the Health and Family Welfare (H&FW) department said.

"The recovered cases include 69 from Khurda, 62 from Sundargarh, 43 from Kalahandi, 38 from Nuapada, 32 from Bargarh, 29 from Jharsuguda, 24 from Angul and 22 from Cuttack," said the H&FW department in a tweet.

The state has sealed its border with Chhattisgarh, where the number of daily Covid-19 cases is on the rise, the official pointed out.

The state government has intensified checking and patrolling exercise at its border, said the official.

With Covid-19 cases across the state escalating, the airport authorities as well as the East Coast Railway (ECoR) have intensified their surveillance to counter the increase of cases in the state.

In view of the surge in cases, the state government has appointed a few senior bureaucrats as observers in some districts to monitor the Covid management there.

State women SHGs running Aahar centres with success

Bhubaneswar, April 11: The SHGs under Mission Shakti are doing wonderful work in managing the Aahar centres in the state. The Housing and Urban Development department has partnered with Mission Shakti to run 167 Aahar centres through women self-help groups (SHGs) and since November 2020 the women SHGs in Odisha have provided more meals to the needy and helpless people during the lockdown to contain the spread of the novel coronavirus, officials said.

As a part of the effort to provide food security to the helpless people, more than 2000 members of 157 SHGs are providing food at 167 Aahar centres in the state. According to sources, the members of women Self Help Groups (SHG) in Odisha have provided more than 1.5 crore meals to the needy and helpless people during the lockdown to contain the spread of the novel coronavirus.

The state government had provided Rs 1.15 crore to the 157 SHGs for the sunning this Aahar centre, official sources said.

Aahar is a food programme run by the state government and aims at providing cooked hot meals-steamed rice and dalma-to people at an affordable cost of Rs 5/- at

places of public congregation in urban areas. Mission Shakti Women SHGs are engaged in managing the Aahar programme in many districts of the state including capital city Bhubaneswar.

After looking at their success in running the Aahar centres, the Housing and Urban Development department has also roped in SHGs to run the three 'Shelter for Urban Homeless' (SUHs). Presently they were given the job of managing the SUH in Balasore, Nabarangpur and Rayagada districts.

Apart from this, Mission Shakti has also taken up a training programme of SHGs on commercial vegetable production including mushroom cultivation in partnership with Directorate of Horticulture. Currently, 3000 groups are involved in mushroom cultivation, leading to a production of around 2500 tonnes and an impressive turnover of Rs 35.34 cr.

Mission Shakti SHGs have been entrusted with the role of site supervisors for creation of farm ponds. As site supervisors, group members mobilise job card holders to enhance participation and to increase man-days. As of now, 12321 groups are engaged as site supervisors on worksites and have created 64 lakh man-days, with accrued supervision charges of Rs 5.2 crore.



SUMMER BLUES
Girls use stoles to protect themselves from the scorching heat in Bhubaneswar, Sunday



Rotary Club of Bhubaneswar Central launches a Covid-19 awareness vehicle at Buddha Mandir in the Capital city, Sunday

3 GOVT STAFF DUPE PEOPLE OF ₹3.16CR

Bhubaneswar, April 11: Three government employees, including an army jawan, have allegedly duped several persons of crores of rupees on the pretext of offering tour packages through a fake travel website.

Ajaya Kumar Nayak of Dumduma in the city here has lodged a complaint with the Kharavela Nagar police in this regard.

According to the complaint, two officials of Indian Railways and one army jawan had jointly created a website to offer tour packages. The website was offering lucrative tour packages to various places across the country.

The trio urged people to register themselves at the website to avail the benefit. The fraudsters allegedly had promised the registered members of their website to provide financial reward if they



click on the advertisements of hotel rooms.

The fraudsters also promised to give commission to the members if they managed to bring new members to the website.

The trio had allegedly collected Rs 12,000 each from around 3,000 people from across the state as membership fee. The fraudsters had managed to collect Rs 3.16 crores, said the complaint.

Initially, the fraudsters paid the commission and other benefits to the members but they stopped paying money to their members in February 2019, added the complaint. The Kharavela Nagar police have initiated a probe into the incident after registering a case in this regard.

BJP moves CEO accusing BJD of attacking partymen



Bhubaneswar, April 11: A delegation of Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) Sunday moved the office of the Chief Electoral Officer (CEO) accusing the BJD of attacking some of its party workers in Sahajpur panchayat in Pipli.

The delegation led by BJP leader Nauri Nayak alleged that the police did not book the culprits in the poll-related violence.

"BJP workers Saroj Sethi and Laksmi Rekha Das were threatened and misbehaved by the BJD workers at Sahajpur panchayat during the campaign for Pipili by-poll," Nayak said.

He also added, "We had also filed an FIR at Pipili police station. The

cops had assured us to take action against the culprits but nothing has happened till now. We came to the CEO to raise the issue."

The BJP leader alleged that the police have been siding with the BJD activists. "When we are making allegations against some persons indulged in illegal activities, the police are trying to protect the culprits," he said. "In many cases, the cops are favoring the BJD workers. We want a free and fair byelection in Pipli. Adequate steps must be taken to ensure smooth polling at each and every booth in the Pipli Assembly segment," he added.

The BJP leader said they will hold a dharna in front of the CEO office if the police fail to give justice to their workers.

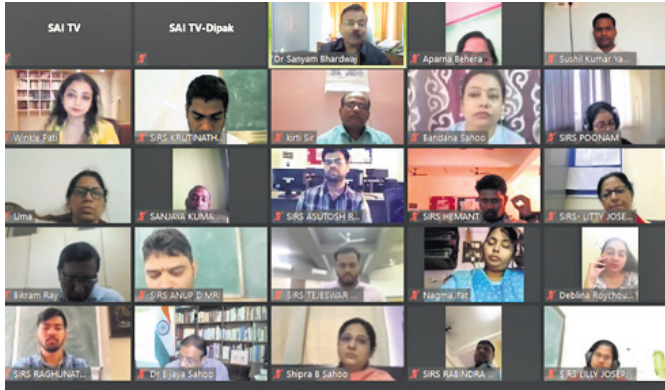
'CBSE will be with students throughout the examination'

THE BOARD HAS INCREASED THE NUMBER OF EXAMINATION CENTERS FROM 5000 TO 7000 AND STRICT COVID PROTOCOLS WILL BE MAINTAINED AT ALL CENTRES, SAID THE CONTROLLER OF EXAMINATION

Bhubaneswar, April 11: Sanyam Bhardwaj, controller of examinations, Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) attended the second chapter of SAI Thought Leadership, a series of discussion sessions with a focus on development of the nation organised by SAI International School here. He highlighted all the measures taken by the CBSE board in conducting the upcoming board exams.

Special emphasis has been given to students' safety; thus the board has increased the number of examination centers from 5000 to 7000 and strict Covid protocols will be maintained at all centres.

Speaking on the session Bhardwaj remarked, "First of all, I request everyone who is eligible for vaccination to please get vaccinated. That way when the examination does happen you can do the duties



of appearing and invigilating properly during exams. I would request the parents to keep an eye on the status of corona virus and the status of their child's preparation. We will start taking the advice of the doctors into making a proper plan for conducting the examination safely. I believe the students of this batch will perform much better than the previous batch because they have gotten a lot of time for self-study. You must work hard and take responsibility to perform well. Your school, the chairman, principal and the entire nation is with you. We should be able to work and perform well for the future of the youth..."

Highlighting the role of the students, parents and teachers, Bhardwaj said, "First of all, we will not leave any stone unturned for the students. Students are advised not to listen to any rumor or false pretense. Concentrate on your studies only and be prepared. When you are coming to examination

centre, check the details beforehand and bring only the identified things and don't get in touch with anyone else and carry sanitizers..."

Addressing the question on the pattern of the question papers in the exam, Bhardwaj said, "We are actually very transparent from the exam point of view, and it comes from the curriculum hosted in the website. We have also uploaded sample question papers. The design of the question paper will be same as the sample question paper only. Additionally, we have also introduced competency-based questions. If the students are cautious about the surroundings, they will be able to answer."

Any candidate (children with special need) coming for examination will be provided with a single room which can accommodate two children and they will also be given assistive devices and they can carry the same to the examination hall as well, said Dr Bhardwaj.

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Farmers decry ‘scam’ in subsidised urea

FRAUD WAS COMMITTED AFTER FARMERS LINKED THEIR AADHAAR TO GET FERTILISER

POST NEWS NETWORK

Nayagarh, April 10: Linking their Aadhaar numbers to get urea has proved costly for the farmers in Nayagarh district, as over 1,634 sacks of fertilizers were allegedly siphoned off in the name of 86 farmers, a report said. This fraud has been reported from Kaima village under Similisahi panchayat of Daspalla block in this district.

The matter came to fore after farmers of Kaima village lodged a complaint with the district collector and submitted copies of it to the agriculture officer and tehsildar of Daspalla block. The fraud has drawn flak from various quarters prompting the Agriculture and



Affected farmers



Farmers demanded that the district Agriculture department should take remedial steps to mitigate their sufferings

Revenue departments to launch a joint probe into the matter.

Farmers alleged that this fraud was committed after they linked their Aadhaar numbers to get urea at subsidised price for their crops. According to the complaint, a staffer of Mahavir Krushi Pratisthan in Nayagarh took the name of the local sarpanch's husband and asked the farmers of Kaima village in Similisahi panchayat to link their Aadhaar numbers to get urea at half the price of a packet. The staffer noted down their Aadhaar numbers in a register (317172) to help them get urea.

The farmers were even warned that those who will not link their Aadhaar numbers will not be able to avail of the benefit. Keeping this in mind, 86 of the 185 families in the village linked their Aadhaar numbers to get urea at subsidised rates.

They were expecting to get a call soon to receive their quota. However, they were left stunned when they found that urea has been lifted from the godown in the name of the farmers who had given their Aadhaar numbers.

After reports surfaced, complaints of similar nature started pouring with the agriculture officers and tehsildars of various blocks and tehsils in the district.

Narrating their ordeal, farmers Trilochan Pradhan, Lakshmidhar Pradhan, Bideshi Mallick said that the government has launched various schemes for the benefit of farmers. However, the farmers are easily getting tricked as no awareness drive is being undertaken to sensitise them on the schemes.

They demanded that the district Agriculture department should take remedial steps to mitigate the sufferings of the farmers.

When contacted, district Agriculture officer Bijay Pradhan confirmed that farmers have been duped. He said similar complaints have been reported from various parts of the district. After getting to know about the incident, the additional district magistrate (ADM) has ordered the DAO and tehsildar to conduct a probe into the charges and submit a report to him. Action will be taken after receipt of the report, he added.

Farmer Ranjit Dalabehera of Balugaon village said that stringent action should be taken against the persons involved in the fraud. He said prompt disciplinary action will deter others from committing such types of fraud in the future.

Couple killed in Jajpur road mishap

POST NEWS NETWORK

Jajpur, April 11: In a tragic road mishap, a couple was killed and their minor daughter suffered critical injuries after a speeding truck hit the motorcycle they were riding on near Neulpur area on National Highway-16 in Jajpur district Sunday.

The deceased have been identified as Laxmikanta Matia and Manjulata from Badadehuri village under Karanjia block in Mayurbhanj district. Their injured daughter has been identified as Gayatri. Locals rushed to the spot immediately after the incident, rescued the trio and took them to Dharmasala community health centre (CHC). However, the doctors there declared the couple as dead on arrival. Gayatri is currently undergoing treatment.

Soon after the incident, irate people gathered at the spot and staged a roadblock paralysing traffic on the highway. They demanded immediate arrest of the errant driver and adequate compensation to the bereaved family.

On being informed, police reached the hospital and sent the bodies for post-mortem. After getting assurance from police officials that their demands would be considered, the roadblock was lifted. According to a source, the couple along with their daughter was heading towards their village from Bhubaneswar on a motorcycle. As they were nearing Neulpur, a speeding truck hit their motorcycle and sped away from the spot.

Initiating a probe, the police have launched a manhunt for the driver.

POST NEWS NETWORK

Baliapal, April 11: The delay in land acquisition and opposition from locals has allegedly resulted in affected the ambitious river-based Subarnarekha port project in Balasore district. However, the administration has initiated steps to remove bottlenecks by organising public hearings.

It may be noted here that some local outfits have been opposing the development of the port project. They have voiced concern over loss of livelihood in fishing and agriculture in the coastal pockets.

The administration conducted a public hearing in Baliapal where people from various panchayats were present Saturday. The next hearing will be in Choumukh panchayat in the coming days.

Locals expressed their opinions on the benefits and disadvantages of the port in Baliapal area.

Chief project manager of the Subarnarekha project Abanikant Singh allayed fears of the people, stating that the port will be set up in the sea, about one-and-half-km from the coast. Livelihood of the people will not be affected while only some people will be displaced, he informed.

Singh also stated that after setting up of the port, there would be a lot of change in the road and transport system. The standard of living for people in Baliapal area will also improve, he added.

Collector K Sudarshan Chakravarty said, "The displaced people will be adequately compensated while the port will create scope of ample employment for local people." Local people were told that the port will have no impact on paddy and betel farming and fishing.

Notably, Odisha state government had announced setting up of the port about 15 years ago. Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik had laid foundation stone for the port in 2019. At a public rally in Bhogra in December 2006, the Chief Minister had announced the port project at an estimated cost of Rs 5,000 crore at Kirtania. However, just two days after this announcement, the location of the port was changed. The state government signed an agree-

SUMMER WOES



As water scarcity hits many pockets in Odisha, a woman is seen collecting water from a hilly spring in Chandrapur area of Rayagada district

OP PHOTO

Sundargarh: Woman kills husband, surrenders

POST NEWS NETWORK

Balishankara, April 11: In a shocking incident, a woman beat her husband to death at Dunguri Pada village under Sukhamahadev Pada area in Talsara police limits of Sundargarh district late Saturday night. She then surrendered before the police and confessed to her crime.

The deceased has been identified as Prakash Kujur (45) and the accused woman as Sushama Kujur.

According to police, the couple had a fight over some issue Saturday night. They then went to sleep. However, Sushama who was severely rebuked by Prakash, hatched a plan to eliminate him. After verifying that Prakash was sleeping, she hit him on his head with a piece

of iron pipe, causing his death on the spot.

Sushama, sources said, wept continuously en route to the police station. On basis of her confession, the police registered a case, went to the crime scene and sent the body for post-mortem. A detailed investigation into the incident is underway and Sushama was interrogated for a lengthy period Sunday.

Admin initiates steps to remove hurdles



SUBARNAREKHA PORT PROJECT

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LOCAL PEOPLE WERE TOLD THAT THE PORT WILL HAVE NO IMPACT ON PADDY AND BETEL FARMING AND FISHING

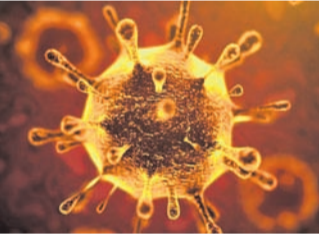
COLLECTOR K SUDARSHAN CHAKRAVARTHY SAID, "THE DISPLACED PEOPLE WILL BE ADEQUATELY COMPENSATED WHILE THE PORT WILL CREATE SCOPE OF AMPLE EMPLOYMENT FOR LOCAL PEOPLE"

ment with the Chennai-based Creative Port Development Limited to set up this port at Choumukh. The state has already handed over 692.68 acres of land to the port developers. A total of 961.18 acres is required for the port, it is said.

Chennai-based Creative Port Private Ltd (CPPL) proposes to build an all-weather deep-draft commercial port with an initial capacity of 10 million tonne per annum.

Tata Steel has signed an agreement with CPPL for 51 per cent equity in the project. Locals affiliated to the Bhitamati Surakhya Committee fear that the project would displace a large number of people. Their livelihood depends on paddy farming, fishing, betel and betel nut farming will be impacted.

Mineral trade with Ch'garh sparks Covid fear



POST NEWS NETWORK

Joda, April 11: The Covid-19 pandemic has been playing havoc in neighbouring Chhattisgarh. In the process the fringe areas in Keonjhar districts have also become vulnerable to the disease. To prevent the spread of the pandemic the district administration sealed Sunday all the entry points on the borders. Bus services from the neighbouring state have also been suspended.

The administration had made RT-PCR tests mandatory for people coming from Chhattisgarh into Odisha.

However, mineral transportation to the neighbouring state is continuing. It has been alleged that traders, truck drivers and their helpers are entering Odisha with the help of vehicles used in mineral transportation.

According to a report, nearly 100 trucks engaged in the transportation have been operating from Joda mining circle to Chhattisgarh.

As people and staff of other states are visiting the mining companies in Joda, the administration has asked them to go through RT-PCR tests or carry with them vaccination certificates.

The rate of Covid-19 infection in Keonjhar district has been steadily rising. The district recorded 30 more cases Sunday.

Reports said that Nabarangpur district administration official have sealed Umerkote-Chhattisgarh border points in a bid to ward off Covid infection from the state. Only vehicles carrying essentials and other items have been allowed.

The administration has also intensified checking in the fringe areas like Umekote. People coming from Chhattisgarh have been asked to come with Covid negative reports.

Police flout protocols in Sambalpur

Sambalpur: With COVID-19 cases rising across Odisha, Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik launched Thursday a 14-day-long 'mission mask' and social distancing programme to curb the spread of the deadly virus.

People flouting COVID-19 safety protocols are being heavily fined under this programme. However, it was seen here that some police officials not adhering to these guidelines. Their failure to maintain social distancing norms have attracted attention. A video that has now gone viral on social media in Sambalpur district shows the lackadaisical attitude of cops towards

following COVID-19 guidelines implemented by the Odisha government. On being contacted, Superintendent of Police Sambalpur Battula Gangadhar said, "Police must wear face mask even while on duty. Then only will they be considered as law-abiding and role models for others. Strict instructions will be issued to all police stations in the district asking officials and personnel to be more careful in this regard."

Notably, Sambalpur district registered 86 new COVID-19 cases in the last 24 hours. Odisha recorded a spike of 1,379 infections.

Nine prisoners test positive in Gajapati

PARALAKHEMUNDI: Nine inmates of two jails in Gajapati district tested positive for Covid-19, official said Sunday.

Reports said that three prisoners of Paralakhemundi sub-jail and six from R Udayagiri sub jail have tested positive for the deadly disease. All the affected inmates have been kept in isolations in separate cells. Persons who had come in contact with infected inmates will soon undergo tests.

Earlier this week, following a surge in Covid-19 cases across the state, the Directorate of Prisons and Correctional Services was forced to switch back to its previous Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) to prevent the outbreak of virus inside the jails.

As per the SOP, anybody (both inmates and employees) if found positive for Covid-19, should be sent to the 'dedicated Covid Care Centre, Covid Health Centre or Covid Hospital' by the concerned remanding agencies.

Fake ID card-making racket unearthed

POST NEWS NETWORK

Talcher, April 11: Police here busted a fake ID card manufacturing racket as it arrested four persons and seized a huge consignment of fake identity cards, Saturday.

The four accused are from three cyber and photocopy making shops in the town. The incident has spread shockwaves in the area. The accused persons were engaged in manufacturing of fake transit pass, seals, signed weigh bridge bill, dispatch in-charge seals of MCL mines, driving licenses, PAN cards, Aadhar cards to illegally transport coals from various mines of Mahanadi Coalfields Ltd (MCL).

The accused Sushil Kumar Sahu, Chandan Kumar Behera, Pradip Kumar Pattnaik and Sudhir Kumar Patnaik are owners and staffer of Sushil Communications, Chandan Xerox and Classic Communications in the town. A case was registered in this connection and the accused produced in the court. Police were tipped off about some miscreants using fake transit passes, seals, signed weigh-bridge bill and dispatch in-charge seal to commit the frauds.

2 killed, 10 injured in accident



POST NEWS NETWORK

Sanakhemundi, April 11: Two people were killed and 10 others injured after the tractor they were travelling in, overturned at Pachamba village under Jarada police limits in Ganjam district, Sunday.

The toll from the accident may rise as conditions of some of the injured are stated to be critical.

The deceased have been identified as Mangala Pradhan and Sita, residents of Chana village under Tumbagada gram panchayat.

According to a source, the tractor carrying 20 persons from Chana village was heading towards a fair

price shop. The villagers were on the way to collect PDS rice. As the vehicle was nearing Pachamba village, the driver lost control over the vehicle and it turned turtle, killing two people on the spot. After the mishap, the driver fled from the scene.

Local people rescued the injured ones and rushed them to Jarada government hospital.

On getting information from the villagers, police reached the spot, seized the vehicle. They also sent the bodies of the deceased for post-mortem. A probe has been launched to ascertain the exact cause of the accident.

ROAD BARRICADES



As a preventive measure against Covid-19, the administration set up bamboo barricades Sunday to regulate crowds and vehicular movements in Angul town, Sunday

OP PHOTO

Sambalpur Varsity's 'ragi' cake gets 20-yr patent

POST NEWS NETWORK

Sambalpur, April 11 : Sambalpur University has been granted a patent for an interesting innovation – a 'ragi' cake.

Indian Patent Office of Government of India has granted this patent to the university for 20 years. No one can use the patented process of preparing the 'ragi' cake during the said duration. The process of making the cake has been developed jointly by PG Department of Home Science and the School of Chemistry.

Informing about the achievement, Vice-Chancellor of Sambalpur University, Sanjeev Mittal said if any organisation or company wants to manufacture the cake, they have to



■ Vice-Chancellor of Sambalpur University, Sanjeev Mittal said if any organisation or company wants to manufacture the cake, they have to secure prior permission

■ HoD of Home Science Chandrasekhar Lenka, School of Chemistry's professors Pramila Kumari Mishra, Achyuta Kumar Biswal, Trupti Pradhan and Trupti Kumari were given credit for the innovation

secure prior permission from the university. At the same time, Mittal did not forget to give credit to HoD of Home Science Chandrasekhar Lenka, School of Chemistry's professors Pramila Kumari Mishra, Achyuta Kumar


Biswal, Trupti Pradhan and Trupti Kumari for the innovation. Lenka described in detail how they came across the idea about making the 'ragi' cake. "Despite being a nutritious food item, both children and adults have a dislike for 'ragi' be-

cause of its taste. Brains were put into finding out a process to prepare a cake so that it will be tasty and will be loved by all age groups," Lenka said. "The virtue of the cake lies in its process. Proper care has been given to minimise the fat content and make it palatable. And it has also passed through certain tests. It will act as an immunity booster against several diseases found in children and others," Lenka added.

Lenka while asserting that the cake is cheaper than any other product of the same type, said it is the cheapest too. "One piece of cake will cost rupees two. We have plans to supply this cake to Anganwadi and PDS centres. We will soon approach the government for permission," the HoD added.

When Reason died, then
Wisdom was born.

SRI AUROBINDO



FALL OF INSTITUTIONS

The cryptic comment Trinamool Congress chief and West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee made after four people were killed and seven injured in firing by Central Industrial Security Force (CISF) personnel at Sitalkuchi in Cooch Behar during polling on 10 April was simply “shame on democracy”.

The ruling Trinamool has demanded Union Home Minister Amit Shah’s resignation and the BJP in turn accused Mamata Banerjee of instigating violence.

It seems as if primarily the Election Commission of India (EC) and both the Trinamool and the BJP are responsible for the farce that is being enacted in Bengal now in the name of eight-phase Assembly polls. The Election Commission (EC) cannot escape the major share of blame for its contribution to the mayhem through its numerous acts of omission and commission.

The EC purposefully messed up the whole process from the beginning by announcing an eight-phase poll schedule in an unprecedented manner holding elections to different parts of the same districts in different phases, instead of in one phase. This has seemingly been done enable the PM - the BJP’s mascot - to campaign in parts of the same districts where polling is in progress in adjacent areas virtually violating the EC norms of stopping election campaign 48 hours before polling yet being technically correct. It’s anybody’s guess how voters going to exercise their franchise can be influenced by campaigns taking place in areas close to their homes. The EC’s role as an independent body has become suspect and the non-BJP parties’ charge that the poll-schedule has been chalked out to give advantage to the BJP appears to be valid.

The very fact that polling could be stretched to eight phases in neighbouring West Bengal itself speaks poorly of the EC. All those who have contested elections or have been involved in that process directly would be able to vouch that the Central forces do not, ever, bring in any impartiality. Usually the officers handling the constituencies or zones are handpicked or very properly briefed by the party in power at the Center. This is especially visible when the elections are to state assemblies and the government in Delhi has a longer term, beyond that particular election. On the other hand Central forces, wherever deployed during general election to Parliament, can be noticed to be roaming around listlessly and without an obvious mandate.

Whatever spin the political parties try to give to this particular incident, there is no denying the fact that the provocative speeches by top leaders of both the BJP and the Trinamool during electioneering have made tempers of their followers rise to boiling point. The Prime Minister keeps taunting Mamata Banerjee in rally after rally and the latter appropriately responds charging up their respective cadres. This seems to have been the pattern for the first four phases of the polling.

The tragedy that happened in Cooch Behar seems to be the result of the cynical game being played by political parties desperate to hang on to power or wrest power: Unfortunately, the EC seems to be too eager to dance to the tune of the dispensation in Delhi. It is not acting when it is needed most and overacting when it suits the plans of the ruling party at the Centre. The poll panel that earned international accolade for conducting free and fair poll for years since its inception now appears to be a shadow of its old stature.

When institutions of such stature fall not only democracy, but society at large gets hurt.

WISDOM CORNER

Sometimes life hits you in the head with a brick. Don't lose faith.

STEVE JOBS

In the end, we will remember not the words of our enemies, but the silence of our friends.

MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.

Failure is simply the opportunity to begin again, this time more intelligently.

HENRY FORD

WORDSWORTH

Moletronics

This is an abbreviation for molecular electronics, the idea that individual elements of computer circuits could be formed using single molecules of substances. This would permit huge increases in the density of circuits on a chip and allow them to run much faster and cooler. Actually, the idea – and the term molecular electronics as well as an older version of the abbreviation, moletronics – go back at least as far as a US Air Force project in association with Westinghouse in 1959, before even the integrated circuit had gone into production. That project came to nothing in a couple of years, because they couldn't work out how to achieve their goal. This time around, prospects are more hopeful, as researchers from Hewlett-Packard and the University of California, Los Angeles, announced in July 1999 that they've actually made logic circuits that use molecular level chemical processes. These rely on a network of weird organic molecules called rotaxanes that contain a ring of atoms threaded on a central molecule, like a bead on a wire, with blocking elements at each end to keep it on. Reports have claimed that we shall soon have “computers the size of grains of sand”, which common sense suggests we should take with a different sort of grain altogether.

Mollycoddling

Let’s take it in its two parts. The second comes from the verb to coddle, meaning to treat somebody in an overprotective way, as though he or she were an invalid. The verb in this sense is not recorded before the early part of the nineteenth century – its first appearance is in Jane Austen’s Emma: “Be satisfied with doctoring and coddling yourself”. It looks very much as though it comes from an older sense of the verb meaning to boil gently, to parboil. That sense is linked to caudle, an old word for a warm drink of thin gruel mixed with sweetened and spiced wine or ale, which was given chiefly to sick people. Hence, by association of ideas, coddle took on its modern sense. The first bit is on the face of it easy enough, since it is from the pet form of the given name Mary (as in Sweet Molly Malone of Dublin’s fair city). But Molly has also had a long history in several different but related senses associated with low living. (The name was popularised by Middleton and Dekker’s play The Roaring Girl of 1611, which featured a criminal called Moll Cut-purse.) As either molly or moll, from the early seventeenth century on it was often used to describe a prostitute, hence, much later, the American gangster’s moll. As molly it was also a common eighteenth-century name for a homosexual man, often in the form Miss Molly, and a molly house was a male brothel (as in Mark Ravenhill’s new play at the National Theatre in London, Mother Clap’s Molly House). It’s sometimes said that the molly in mollycoddle comes from the sense of a prostitute, but the usage evidence shows that it was really linked to the gay associations. As a noun, it was used particularly of a man who had been over-protected in childhood and so considered to have been made into a milkop or effeminate. For example, William Makepeace Thackeray wrote in Pendennis in 1849: “You have been bred up as a molly-coddle, Pen, and spoilt by the women”.

LOL

Give me ‘my money’

Late one night a mugger wearing a ski mask jumped into the path of a well-dressed man and stuck a gun in his ribs. “Give me your money,” he

demanded. Indignant, the affluent man replied, “You can’t do this – I’m a US Congressman!” “In that case,” replied the robber, “Give me MY money!”



FOCUS ECONOMY

LOW INTEREST RATES NO PANACEA



This is not the time to make merry today by pawing our already difficult future by lowering the interest rates and maintaining already unsustainable levels of government consumption



Bharat Jhunjunwala

THE PRESENT APPROACH IS DESTINED TO FAIL AS THE CONTINUOUS LOWERING OF INTEREST RATES HAVE FAILED IN THE LAST SIX YEARS

SPECTRUM USA

Biden’s gun control policy

Gun control is one of the most divisive issues in American politics. With each mass shooting – defined as four or more victims having been killed indiscriminately – antagonism grows between both sides of the gun control argument.

Proponents of stricter gun regulations fear for their safety in a country where there is an average of 88 guns per 100 people, according to the 2011 Small Arms Survey. The Brady Campaign to Prevent Gun Violence estimates that around 114,994 people are shot each year in the US. This includes murders, assaults, accidents, police intervention, suicide attempts and suicides.

Opponents of regulatory arguments, however, also fear a loss of safety. They argue that restricting the right to bear arms would leave citizens unable to protect themselves in their daily lives or, in a worst-case scenario, from a government turned against the people.

Thirty-one states out of fifty states of the USA allow the open carrying of a handgun without any license or permit, although in some cases the gun must be unloaded. Fifteen states require some form of license or permit to openly carry a handgun. See the summary on Carrying Concealed Weapons for details about these licenses and per-

mits. California generally prohibits a person from carrying a concealed handgun in a motor vehicle, unless the handgun is in a locked container or the vehicle’s trunk, or the person has a valid concealed weapons license. (Firearms carried openly in belt holsters are not considered “concealed”).

States which can allow carrying a gun without a permit are Alabama, Alaska, Arizona, Arkansas, Delaware, Idaho, Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maine, Michigan, Mississippi, Montana, Nevada, New Hampshire, New Mexico, North Carolina, Northern Mariana Islands, Ohio, South Dakota, Vermont, Virginia, Washington, West Virginia, Wisconsin, Wyoming. Generally, foreigners are not allowed to buy guns in the United States. For example, a foreigner who manages to obtain a state hunting license and can show proof of residency in that state can legally buy a gun. An Asylee is not a non-immigrant thus the federal law permits the purchasing and owning of a gun.

President Biden on April 8, 2021 announced a series of executive actions to curb gun violence, and he pledged to push for sweeping changes to the country’s firearms laws – his first substantive response to a pair of mass shootings last month that left 18 dead.

“Gun violence in this country is an epidemic, and it’s an international embarrassment,” President Biden said in the White House Rose Garden.

“The idea that we have so many people dying every single day from gun violence in America is a blemish on our character as nation.” The president unveiled new rules on “ghost guns” – firearms that are assembled at home, which lack serial numbers and are harder to track – among other moves designed to make it harder for unqualified people to obtain dangerous weapons.

President Biden also announced David Chipman as his pick to run the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives, although it is unclear how the nominee will fare in an evenly divided Senate. David Chipman is a former ATF agent and now a senior adviser to a gun-control group founded by former congresswoman Gabrielle Giffords (D-Ariz.), who was severely injured in a mass shooting in 2011.

President Biden urged lawmakers to take up gun-control legislation, including measures already passed by the House that would require more gun buyers to undergo background checks. Vice President Harris, a former prosecutor, also urged the Congress to pass long-

put up a bike factory. The RBI policy is like offering low interest rates to a farmer during a severe drought. We should remember that banks in a number of countries like Japan have been offering loans to businesspersons at zero interest rates yet businesspersons do not borrow because there is no demand in the market. The present approach is destined to fail as the continuous lowering of interest rates have failed in the last six years.

The government should instead use the fiscal instruments to jumpstart growth at present. It should reduce unproductive government consumption. A reduction in salaries of the government servants will not lead to much reduction in demand in the market because the government servants use much of their income for buying gold and making other unproductive expenditures. It should increase productive investments such as in water harvesting structures. It should increase taxes on imported goods so that more production and job creation takes place within the country. It should make cash transfers to the people to create demand in the market. The cash transfers will create a huge demand because these people are craving for consumption. The businesspersons will take loans at a higher interest rate and establish a bike factory because demand for bikes will be generated in the market by these measures.

The present time is of crisis. We do not know how the Covid pandemic will play out. This is not the time to make merry today by pawing our already difficult future by lowering the interest rates and maintaining already unsustainable levels of government consumption. This is the time to cut corners in the already difficult times and ensure a better future by cutting government consumption, increasing taxes on imports and on petroleum.

The writer is a former Professor of Economics at IIM Bangalore.

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Letters

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

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

Night curfews serve no purpose

Sir, Apropos the news report “India records highest ever single-day Covid caseload” Orissa POST, April 11, many states including Karnataka have imposed night curfew in the wake of surge in cases and some states mull the option to control the rapid transmission of the deadly virus. The pertinent question is - does the coronavirus strike only during the night? It is illogical, unscientific and not backed by any empirical evidence that the virus is nocturnal and remains muted during the day. Night curfews have been imposed previously, too, each time there has been surge in infections, but to no effect. Yet, the authorities resort to the same trick again. This is only an eyewash, aimed at convincing people into believing that the government is doing something to contain the pandemic, given the states’ failure to meet the vaccination targets. It is irrational to believe that late-night movie-goers or those eating out after 10 pm would cause the virus to surge while many other activities, including political rallies and religious events, can be allowed to take place without any consequences. Instead of indulging in gimmickry, the states should strictly promote Covid-appropriate behaviour and come down heavily on violations, especially large gatherings. But it should first ramp up vaccination coverage as even nearly three months since vaccination started, a minuscule percentage of the population has been inoculated. Unfortunately, a clear vision has been lacking on decisions regarding Covid right from the start, and the virus is having a field day while the governments continue to flounder with one capricious directive after another.

N Sadhasiva Reddy, BANGALORE

Vaccine goof-up

Sir, The bewildering incident of three senior citizens getting administered with anti-rabies vaccine instead of Covid-19 vaccine in Uttar Pradesh’s Shamli is shocking. The incident is a consequence of sheer negligence and carelessness on the part of the health department personnel. Three old women had gone to the health centre to get vaccinated. One of the women became sick after the wrong vaccine shot and her condition worsened leading her to be taken to a private clinic from where the matter regarding the mistake got exposed. It has also come to the notice of the authority that the health workers in the facility were unable to understand the difference between the Covid-19 and rabies vaccines. The Centre and the states must keep an eye on vaccine centres and hospitals where Covid jabs are given and those at the helm in the medical department must be extra vigilant.

M Pradyu, Kannur (Kerala)

YOGI EYES FISH FARMING TO CREATE JOBS IN STATE

AGENCIES

Lucknow, April 11: The Yogi Adityanath government in Uttar Pradesh is planning to provide employment opportunities to the youth in fish farming. The state government sees considerable employment potential in this sector and believes that it can play an important role in rural development and the economy. This easy-to-start business can be started with low capital.

According to the government spokesman, the chief minister plans to launch many beneficial schemes through the Department of Fisheries, which will not only promote fisheries business but will also provide jobs to the needy that will help them become self-reliant once again.

This will also help in increasing the income of the village panchayat from the ponds built on the barren Panchayati land in the village.

"Along with imparting training on fisheries, efforts are being made by the government to expand this business on a larger scale. Now farmers can increase their income by farming as well as fisheries," the spokesman said.

It may be recalled that the state government has already increased the duration of fishery reservoirs from 3 years to 10 years. This is



The UP government has already increased the duration of fishery reservoirs from 3 years to 10 years, which is the reason, the state has produced 26.44 lakh MT of fish during the last four years

the reason that the state has produced 26.44 lakh MT of fish during the last four years.

As many as 1,191.27 crore fishery seeds were produced in four years and 5,902 fish farmers were provided Kisan Credit Cards.

The state government has also provided the benefit of free fishermen accident insurance scheme to the farmers by implementing the 'Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojana' under the Atmanirbhar campaign.

The state government has also al-

lotted 2,215 fishermen, houses in the state in the last four years.

Along with this, the facilities for fishermen of Uttar Pradesh are now available through the fish farmer app.

Farmers are directly being benefited from the construction of 57 fish seed hatcheries and 385 fish seed rearing units in the state.

Recently, Uttar Pradesh has also received the first prize of the best state of inland fisheries under the leadership of the chief minister Yogi Adityanath.

IIT-M to launch fellowship in AI for social good

AGENCIES

Chennai, April 11: The Indian Institute of Technology - Madras (IIT-M) in association with Robert Bosch Centre for Data Science and Narayanan family foundation are jointly bringing out a fellowship in Artificial Intelligence for Social good.

In a press release, B Raveendran, the head of the centre at IIT-M said, "The project is designed to establish an independent research profile and to contribute significantly to socially relevant research in Artificial Intelligence (AI)".



Interested scholars and students can apply via <https://rb-scdsai.iitm.ac.in/nf3/>. The RBCD-SAI works with Central, state and local governments and in several sectors for insights into the latest developments in social sector research.

PhD graduates who have recently completed the course or researchers in computer science, computational and data sciences, biomedical sciences, management, finance and other branches can apply for the fellowship.

TN's info body seeks retirement of 9 IAS

Recently, the Tamil Nadu Information Commission had recommended to the state Chief Secretary to take legal action to compulsorily retire nine IAS officers

AGENCIES

Chennai, April 11: Even as the legal validity of Tamil Nadu State Information Commissioner S Muthuraj's recommendation - to send nine IAS officers on compulsory retirement for dereliction of duty - is questioned, it will surely sound alarm bells ringing in the minds of all public information officials (PIO) who dilly-dally on details sought under the Right to Information Act, said activists.

"The recommendation is appreciated. It is an eye opener as to whether an Information Commissioner can make such a recommendation," Senthil Arumugham, General Secretary, Satta Panchayat Iyyakkam said.

Recently, the Tamil Nadu Information Commission had recommended to the state Chief Secretary to take legal action to compulsorily retire nine IAS officers - Surjith K Chaudry, Vibhu Nayar, Kakarla Usha, D Jagannathan, K Srinivasan, K Nandakumar, S Jayandhi, N Venkatesh and G Latha for dereliction of duty while heading the Teachers Recruitment Board as its Chairman between June 2011



and October 2020.

"The order is a warning to all the PIOs and others that if they don't respond to RTI queries properly then there will be disciplinary action," Jayaram Venkatasam, Convenor, Arappor Iyyakam said.

Citing various provisions of the Right to Information (RTI) Act, Muthuraj, the State Information Commissioner had also recommended to the state Chief Secretary to register in the annual confidential reports of the nine IAS officers that they failed in ensuring transparency and accountability during their tenure at the Teachers Recruitment Board.

Candidates who had appeared

in the competitive exam held for recruiting the teachers had approached the Commission stating that despite marking the right answers for the questions, they were marked wrong, thereby, they failed to get the job.

In his order Muthuraj said despite various orders issued earlier by the Commission on such complaints the issue of publication of 'Wrong Key' for questions continues which shows that the senior officials of Teachers Recruitment Board had functioned irresponsibly.

The Tamil Nadu Information Commission ordered: (a) appointment of Chairman, Teachers Recruitment Board as the Public Information Officer and provide all details sought by the applicants within 20 days of the order and (b) take action against those who had prepared the questions and the answer key for the competitive exam.

While appreciating the Tamil Nadu Information Commission for its order, Arumugam of Satta Panchayat urged the former to ensure that all public offices voluntarily declare various details on their own as per Section 4 of the RTI Act.

Industrialists fear another exodus of migrant workers



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Coimbatore, April 11: With the second wave of Covid-19 sweeping across various parts of Tamil Nadu, some of the industrialists in the state are apprehensive of migrant workers leaving for their hometowns considering the health conditions.

The industries recovered from the jolt of the first wave of coronavirus when over one lakh migrant workers from both Coimbatore and Tirupur industries rushed back to their home towns in Bihar, Uttar Pradesh and Odisha by special trains. Even as the business started picking up, the 30 per cent increase in the raw materials has affected the industries, sources from different in-

dustrial associations said.

A few workers reportedly left for their natives early last week as they feared the availability of transport like trains to reach their towns. However, there was no major exodus from the industries as the workers working on weekly payment basis had taken their wages Saturday last, the sources said.

Coimbatore and Tirupur reported increased infection cases and a correct picture of workers returning would emerge only after another week, they said.

No worker left the city till Saturday from nearby Tirupur, a major hub of knitwear garments where 80% of over three lakh workers hailed from the North, said sources in the Tirupur Exporters Association.

Akhilesh to set up 'Baba Saheb Vahini' to challenge BSP

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Lucknow, April 11: Continuing its efforts to win over Dalits for the upcoming Uttar Pradesh Assembly elections in 2022, the Samajwadi Party has now decided to constitute a Baba Saheb Vahini named after Dalit icon Dr BR Ambedkar. Samajwadi Party President Akhilesh Yadav had earlier announced that his party would celebrate 'Dalit Diwali' on the Ambedkar Jayanti April 14.

Dalit organisations supported by the BJP and the Congress had raised objections to this.

Responding to the objections to celebrate Ambedkar's birth anniversary as 'Dalit Diwali', Yadav said there could be reservations over the name but there could not be any dispute over celebrating Ambedkar and his birth anniversary.

"One may call it 'Samvidhan Raksha Diwas' or 'Ambedkar Diwali' but no one can question



To further the idea of equality and justice to all sections of the society that was mooted by Baba Saheb Ambedkar, Samajwadi Party pledges to float a separate frontal organisation by the name of Baba Saheb Vahini at the national level on his birth anniversary

AKHILESH YADAV | PRESIDENT, SAMAJWADI PARTY

the desire to celebrate Ambedkar and his birth anniversary," he said.

"To further the idea of equality and justice to all sections of the society that was mooted by Baba Saheb Ambedkar, Samajwadi Party

at bringing Dalits into the Samajwadi fold and assuring them protection against social exploitation.

Socialist ideologue Ram Manohar Lohia and Ambedkar had planned to work together for the upliftment of the society and the fact is a part of our history, he added.

The Samajwadi Party's decision to go big in celebrating Ambedkar and his ideology is being seen as a direct jolt to the Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) that prides itself as the sole custodian of the Ambedkar philosophy.

The Samajwadi Party and BSP were allies in the 2019 Lok Sabha elections and the two parties had vowed to work together for the weaker and downtrodden sections of society.

However, immediately after the Lok Sabha elections, BSP president Mayawati snapped ties with SP and announced that her party would never ally with SP again.

Chennai beaches to stay shut on weekends till further notice

AGENCIES

Chennai, April 11: In wake of the surging Covid cases, the Tamil Nadu government said that beaches of Chennai, Chengalpattu and Kanchipuram will be out of bounds for public on all weekends from Sunday onwards, as well as on government holidays.



A government order also said that religious places can stay open till 10 pm on all days but no religious congregations or group prayer meetings will be allowed

A government order also said that religious places can stay open till 10 pm on all days but no religious congregations or group prayer meetings will be allowed.

Cinema halls and multiplexes will be allowed to conduct one more show in addition to the four shows at present but viewers will be limited to 50% of the total capacity.

Greater Chennai Development Corporation Commissioner G Prakash, said: "We are able to manage the crowd at the vegetable and fruit markets, apart from the wholesale Koyambedu market, to 80 per cent but regulating the crowd at Kasimedu fishing harbour is a big challenge.

"We have to manage the balance between livelihood and public health... 24,000 fishermen are there in the market and we cannot take a unilateral decision affecting their livelihood."

Gyanvapi petitioner gets threat call, given security



INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Varanasi, April 11: Harihar Pandey, the petitioner in the Gyanvapi mosque case on behalf of Swayambhu Jyotirlinga Bhagwan Vishweshwar, has received a life threat on his phone after a local court pronounced the verdict directing the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) to conduct an archaeological survey of the Gyanvapi compound to ascertain if a temple existed at the spot earlier.

The police officials have deputed two constables at Pandey's residence for his security.

Pandey informed that he received a phone call from an unknown number on the day of the

verdict. The caller threatened Pandey that he would be killed. Pandey called senior police officials and informed them about the threat following which ACP Avadhesh Pandey met him and collected all the details.

The ACP said the phone number is being traced and investigation is on. Harihar Pandey, Pandit Somnath Vyas and Ramrang Sharma had filed the first petition in the case on behalf of Swayambhu Jyotirlinga Bhagwan Vishweshwar at a civil court in 1991. Pandey is now the only surviving petitioner among the three.

Advocate Vijay Shankar Rastogi as the 'next friend' of Swayambhu Jyotirlinga Bhagwan Vishweshwar had filed an application in the court of civil judge in December 2019, requesting for the survey of the entire Gyanvapi compound by ASI.

After hearing the case, the court of civil judge (senior division) Fast Track, Ashutosh Tiwari gave verdict April 8 and asked the DG of ASI to conduct a comprehensive physical survey of the entire plot.



Sengar, the wife of former BJP MLA Kuldeep Singh Sengar, who is a convict in the 2018 Unnao rape case, has been cancelled," State BJP chief Swatantra Dev Singh said.

Singh said the Unnao party president has now been asked to submit three fresh names for finalising a candidate.

He, however, exuded confidence that the BJP will emerge victorious in the four-phase panchayat elections, beginning April 15. Unnao will go to the polls April 26.

Kuldeep Sengar was awarded life sentence by a Delhi court on December 20, 2019 for raping a 17-year-old girl in Unnao.

Varanasi to be known as 'Sanskrit city'

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Lucknow, April 11: Varanasi, the parliamentary constituency of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, will now be known as the Sanskrit city in the world.

Varanasi has the maximum number of Sanskrit schools as well as the highest number of students studying Sanskrit. There are more than 110 Sanskrit schools that are functional in Varanasi.

Two more will be added to this tally by the new session while 13 new Sanskrit schools are also going to be opened across the state by the Yogi Adityanath government.

According to the government spokesman, the Yogi Adityanath government is going to set up Sanskrit Directorate on the lines of Directorates of Secondary and Basic Education.

After the creation of the



Directorate, Sanskrit language will get a new identity.

Apart from this, for the first time in Uttar Pradesh, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath started releasing government press notes in Sanskrit. He also tweeted in Sanskrit from his official Twitter account.

After the Chief Minister's initiative, the Sanskrit Board has also started promoting Sanskrit lan-

guage in the state in a big way.

According to the officials, the state will get 13 new Sanskrit schools and these schools have already met their prescribed standards. Out of these, two will be opened in Kashi and one in Jaunpur. A total of 1,164 Sanskrit schools are being run by the Uttar Pradesh Secondary Sanskrit Education Council, of which 971 schools are aided schools.

Shooting champion to contest Panchayat polls

Neha has filed nomination papers for the post of chief in the Makhiyaali village of Muzaffarnagar



INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Muzaffarnagar, April 11: From the hall of fame to the dust and grime of the Panchayat elections; she has come a long way. Neha Tomar, the 21-year-old shooter, who has represented the country in several international events and clinched a silver medal in junior shooting world championship held in Germany two years ago, is now trying her luck in the Panchayat elections.

Neha has filed nomination papers for the post of village head in the Makhiyaali village of Muzaffarnagar.

"I want development in my vil-

lage. And I also want to promote sports among the youths of my region. The post of village head will empower me to do a lot of things," said Neha, who had also won a team gold in the 50m free pistol category in the world shooting event in 2018.

Neha had won a silver medal in Asian air gun Championship held in Kuwait in the same year.

"If I win, I will try to build a small stadium and an inter college in my area. A large number of girls and women from my village go for work in cloth factories miles away from here. I want to set a training centre and workplace for such

women and girls," she said.

A stadium and a college in the village will help youths take up sports. It will also help them in getting government jobs, she added.

Neha is presently pursuing graduation from the DAV College in Muzaffarnagar. The village's pradhan seat is reserved for OBC women candidates.

Her mother, Renu Chaudhary, said, "I wanted to contest this election. But when we saw her affection towards the villagers, we decided that Neha should contest the Panchayat elections. She wants to do something for the youths and women of this village."

of the day quote

The second wave of Covid is likely to peak by May first week in the state and slow down by May-end



K SUDHAKAR | KARNATAKA HEALTH MINISTER

In place of lockdown, the state will opt for self-imposed "corona curfew" to effectively control the pandemic



ANANDIBEN PATEL | MADHYA PRADESH GOVERNOR

I am appealing to all the BJP workers who were with former Goa chief minister Manohar Parrikar to join us and we will fulfil his dream. We (AAP) have the power to fulfil the dream of Parrikar. The vision of Parrikar need to be realized



MANISH SISODIA | DELHI DEPUTY CHIEF MINISTER

SHORT TAKES

UP schools shut till Apr 30

Lucknow: The Uttar Pradesh government Sunday ordered the closure of all schools till April 30, on a day the state reported its highest single-day spike of coronavirus cases since the outbreak of the pandemic last year.

Covid -ve report mandatory

Shimla: The Himachal Pradesh government on Sunday made it mandatory for people coming from seven states which have witnessed a spike in coronavirus cases to show a COVID-19 negative test report on entering the state. Chief Minister Jai Ram Thakur said people coming from Punjab, Delhi, Maharashtra, Gujarat, Karnataka, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh need to carry a negative RT-PCR report not earlier than 72 hours while visiting Himachal Pradesh from April 16.

4 cops injured

Patna: A day after a senior Bihar police official was allegedly lynched by a mob in West Bengal's North Dinajpur district, a video of local goons attacking a police team in Katihar district, went viral on Sunday. SHO of Barsoi police station, Sunil Kumar, has said that the gruesome incident took place on April 7 and two people were arrested in connection with the case, that had left four cops injured.

Sushil Chandra set to be next CEC

New Delhi: Election Commissioner Sushil Chandra is set to become the next chief election commissioner, sources said Sunday. Going by the convention of appointing the senior-most election commissioner as the CEC, the government is learnt to have cleared his name for the top post at Nirvachan Sadan. The order of his elevation maybe issued anytime, the sources said. Chandra will assume charge April 13, a day after incumbent Sunil Arora demits office. Chandra was appointed as an election commissioner February 14, 2019 ahead of the Lok Sabha elections. He would demit office May 14, 2022. Under him, the Election Commission would hold assembly polls in Goa, Manipur, Uttarakhand, Punjab and Uttar Pradesh. The term of the assemblies of Goa, Manipur, Uttarakhand and Punjab ends on various dates in March next year.



In the light of the devastating Corona second wave, conducting #CBSE exams must be reconsidered. All stakeholders must be consulted before making sweeping decisions

RAHUL GANDHI | CONGRESS LEADER

3 states have faulty Covid measures: Govt



AGENCIES

New Delhi, April 11: Central teams have reported non-adherence of COVID-19 appropriate behaviour in almost all of the 50 most-affected districts in Maharashtra, Chhattisgarh and Punjab, the Union health ministry said, advising the states to more strictly enforce norms to prevent spread of the coronavirus.

On the basis of feedback from the teams, the ministry has written to the states highlighting the areas of concern, including sub-optimal containment operations and contact tracing, skewed testing and shortage of health workers. Authorities need to work in these areas, it said. Of the 50 districts most affected by COVID-19, 30 are in Maharashtra, 11 in Chhattisgarh and nine in Punjab, it said. In a letter to the states, Union Health Secretary Rajesh Bhushan said the Centre has also taken note of issues related to vaccine availability, and required action to augment supplies will be taken based on available stock.

He said a brief summary of key performance indicators related to testing, hospital infrastructure and vaccination, as reported by the teams, has been shared for suitable corrective actions by state or district administrations. Thirty central teams have been deployed for the most-affected districts in Maharashtra, Bhushan said.

The ministry has written to the state highlighting that containment operations were found to be sub-optimal in Satara, Sangli and Aurangabad districts, with less

than satisfactory perimeter control and lack of active surveillance for influenza like illness cases. Surveillance and contact tracing were sub-optimal in Buldhana, Satara, Aurgangabad and Nanded, mostly due to limited manpower, Bhushan said in a letter to the Maharashtra health secretary Saturday.

In Bhandara district most cases are being reported from outside containment zones. This requires increasing the area of such zones or notifying new ones, the letter said. Testing capacity in Satara, Bhandara, Palghar, Amravati, Jalna and Latur is already overwhelmed, resulting in delay in test results, it said.

Teams from Nanded and Buldana have reported very skewed RT-PCR and rapid antigen testing ratio. Community resistance to COVID testing has been reported from Bhandara, the letter said. It said a large percentage of COVID-19 patients are under home isolation in Bhandara and Satara. This requires rigorous follow up to minimise mortality and it is not happening, the letter said.

"It was observed that delayed reporting by patients to definitive treatment centres in Satara is leading to large number of deaths within first 72 hours of hospital admission," it said. Occupancy rates of available hospital bed capacity are very high in Ahmednagar, Aurangabad, Nagpur and Nandurbar while medical oxygen supply was found to be an issue in Bhandara, Palghar, Osmanabad and Pune.

nCoV patient's death triggers violence

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Darbhangha, April 11: Angry over death of a virus infested person allegedly due to medical negligence, his kins vandalised state-run Darbhanga Medical College and Hospital (DMCH) Sunday forcing the hospital staff run for safety, hospital sources said.

The incident followed death of a man who was undergoing treatment for coronavirus at DMCH. The family members of the deceased alleged he died due to negligence by the hospital staff. DMCH Superintendent Mani Bhushan Sharma, however, denied negligence and said he was stable and was found dead in the hospital toilet. When the victim's father visited him this morning, he was told about the death. Complaining that the death happened on account of lack of proper care by the attending hospital staff, the deceased kins ransacked the hospital forcing nurses and other medical staff to run for cover.

The situation was brought under control after Sub Divisional Officer came to hospital after coming to know about the violence.

Covid wreaking havoc due to BJP's policies: Cong

THE OPPOSITION PARTY ALSO ALLEGED THAT EVERY SECTION OF THE SOCIETY WAS TROUBLED DUE TO THE POLICIES OF THE GOVERNMENT

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, April 11: The Congress Sunday attacked the Centre over its handling of the coronavirus pandemic, alleging that COVID-19 continues to wreak havoc on Indian lives and economy due to the Modi government's "arrogance and incompetence".

The Opposition party also alleged that every section of the society was troubled due to the policies of the government. In an apparent dig at Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Congress leader Rahul Gandhi tweeted in Hindi, "No control over coronavirus, not enough vaccines, no employment, labourers and farmers not being given a hearing, no protection for MSMEs, nor the middle class is satisfied. It was okay to eat 'aam' (mango), but should have at least spared 'aam

RAGING INFERNO



Major fire breaks out at Real Tech Park Tower near Vashi Railway Station, in Navi Mumbai

PTI PHOTO



Representative image

aadmi (common person)!"

The Congress, from its official Twitter handle, also slammed the

government over the situation in the country. "One year on, COVID-19 continues to wreak havoc upon

Indian lives & the Indian Economy, all thanks to Modi govt and its arrogance & incompetence," the party lashed out in a tweet.

In another tweet in Hindi, the party claimed that every section of the society in the country is troubled due to the policies of the government.

"Coronavirus is spreading unchecked, there is shortage of vaccines, farmers-labourers are troubled, economy is collapsing, small businesses are closing down and the middle class is also a worried lot," the party said.

The Congress-led opposition has been criticising the government over its handling of the COVID-19 pandemic and the vaccination drive, while the Centre has maintained that its timely steps have been instrumental in effectively dealing with the pandemic.

COOCH BEHAR KILLINGS

TMC workers stage demonstrations

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kolkata, April 11: The Trinamool Congress Sunday said its workers staged thousands of demonstrations across West Bengal in protest against the killing of four people in firing by CISF personnel during polling in the fourth phase.

At least 11,700 demonstrations were held in south and north Bengal where TMC activists wore black badges and demanded the resignation of Home Minister Shah, naming him as the conspirator of the incident, senior party leader Sukhendu Sekhar Roy said here. Four persons died on Saturday in Sitalkuchi area of Cooch Behar when CISF per-

sonnel opened fire allegedly after coming under attack from locals, who "attempted to snatch their rifles", the police had said.

In Kolkata, TMC leader and minister Sashi Panja led protest rallies in Esplanade area, as participants lit candles and converged in front of Mahatma Gandhi's statue. Similar demonstrations were also held in Taldangra in Bankura, Canning in South 24 Parganas and in Hooghly district, TMC sources said. The deaths have set off a political firestorm in West Bengal, with the ruling TMC and challenger BJP blaming each other for the violence, Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee has said a CID probe will

be instituted into the incident.

"READY TO RESIGN": Amit Shah Sunday said that he is ready to resign from his post only if the people of West Bengal ask him to do so. The senior BJP leader, however, asserted that Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee will have to quit May 2 as the Trinamool Congress will lose the ongoing assembly elections. "Didi has been asking for my resignation. If the people of West Bengal demand that I put down my papers, I am ready to do so with my head bowed. But Mamata will have to quit the CM's post May 2," Shah said, while addressing a rally in Basirhat in North 24 Parganas district.

Tea company rejects terror threats

AGENCIES



Guwahati, April 11: The Kolkata based Amalgamated Plantation Private Limited (APPL) company, which has 21 tea estates and operating units across Assam, rejected terror threats and said that it was committed to the state and its people.

The outlawed outfit -- United Liberation Front of Asom - Independent (ULFA-I) - last week asked the APPL to relocate its administrative offices to Assam from Kolkata and recruit only indigenous people of the state in various positions, otherwise it would take action.

The APPL in a statement on Sunday said that the company continues to maintain their main op-

erating office in Guwahati and have 21 tea estates and operating units across Assam, employing almost 50,000 people, including seasonal workers. "We have invested substantially in two tea processing units at Hattigor and Lattakoojan tea estates and in a spice processing centre near Misa. In addition to business investments and employment opportunities, we run various community welfare initiatives for livelihood, education, skill

development and healthcare, that have positively impacted the lives of about 2.5 lakh people in Assam over the last 5 years," the APPL said.

The statement further said: "We are saddened by the recent allegations and their tonality, based on a misplaced understanding of our efforts in the state. We will seek intervention of the appropriate authorities to protect the interests of our employees and facilities in Assam."

The outlawed ULFA-I, headed by self-styled commander-in-chief Paresh Barua, in a statement, threatened that the company would not be allowed to do business in Assam and no personnel of the company would be allowed to travel in the state for work purposes.

New vax to be launched soon to protect pigs, sheep

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, April 11: A vaccine has been prepared to protect pigs from classical swine fever for which rabbits would no longer be slaughtered because a vaccine developed by indigenous technology is going to hit the market very soon. Developed by cell culture method, this vaccine would also be much cheaper. An Ahmedabad-based company has recently got the rights to commercially produce classical swine fever vaccine developed by scientists in the country as well as Sheep pox vaccine.

These two vaccines have been developed by scientists from Indian Veterinary Research Institute (IVRI), Izatnagar under the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR).

Deputy Director General (Animal Sciences), ICAR, Bhopendra Nath Tripathi said that the country needs an annual doses of 1.8 crore of classical swine fever vaccine, which

was not enough to meet the requirements of earlier vaccines and had low immunity, but the immunity of the new vaccine is also higher and is quite cheap. He said after the commencement of commercial production, it will not be too late to prepare adequate vaccines to meet the present requirements as all the requirements of the vaccine would be met in just four flasks.

Tripathi told IANS that earlier a dose of vaccine used to cost Rs 20 to Rs 25, the new vaccine would cost just Rs 2. Describing the classical swine fever vaccine developed by cell culture method as an achievement, he said, "The important thing is that it will no longer require sacrificing of a huge number of rabbits for preparing vaccine. Only a single dose of the new vaccine will be enough as its immunity lasts for two years."

Currently a lapinized CSF vaccine (Weybridge, UK) is being used in India since 1964 for controlling the



Representative image

disease which requires sacrificing of a huge number of rabbits.

Scientists point out that the new vaccine provides safe, powerful and 100 per cent protection and maintains immunity in the animal's

body for 24 months and 14 days since the day of vaccination.

Classical Swine Fever is a viral-borne disease in pigs characterized by high fever, haemorrhages over skin, cyanosis in the extrem-

ities of ear, limbs and abdomen and finally leading to loss of coordination of movement and paralysis of the hind quarters. The mortality rate of this disease is 100 per cent that results into huge economic losses.

Scientists point out that 50 doses of this vaccine are prepared from one rabbit which was very expensive as well as inadequate.

As much as 1.8 crore vaccines are required annually to vaccinate 90.6 lakh pigs in the country. Scientists point out that the new vaccine developed from cell culture method would easily meet the needs of the country.

Sheep pox is a contagious viral disease in sheep, with a serious socio-economic impact in terms of high morbidity (up to 100 per cent) and mortality (up to 50 per cent). The disease is characterized by fever, muco-purulent nasal discharge, papules and nodules all over the body.

Experts point out that the annual loss due to sheep pox in the country is estimated nearly Rs 125 crore and the only way to avoid this loss is the vaccination of sheep.

Therefore, IVRI has developed a live attenuated sheep vaccine using sheep indigenous isolate (SPPV Srin 38/00 strain). The vaccine has proved to be safe and effective in the test. Scientists point out that a single dose of this vaccine protects sheep for 48 months. Both these vaccines have been commercialised through the agri innovation of Department of Agricultural Research and Education (DARE) under the Union Ministry of Agriculture.

ICAR-IVRI signed two MoUs with Ahmedabad-based company Hester Biosciences' last week for commercial production of classical swine fever and sheep pox vaccines. Director General, ICAR and Secretary, DARE, Trilochan Mohapatra was also present.

Vaccine is the biggest weapon available to us in this battle against Covid-19. I urge all eligible citizens to get vaccinated and also encourage people around you to get vaccinated



B S YEDIYURAPPA | KARNATAKA CHIEF MINISTER

We are not against Baba Saheb's statue, we are against Khattar. Samyukta Kisan Morcha has decided that as long as our protest is on we are against Manohar Lal Khattar



RAKESH TIKAIT | FARMER LEADER

I wish to ask Government of India as to what its priority is – the people of Delhi or of Dominican Republic? The people of Maharashtra or of Mauritius? The people of Bengal or Bangladesh? Gujarat or Guyana? Odisha or Oman? Uttar Pradesh or United Kingdom? Kerala or Kenya



RAGHAV CHADHA | AAP LEADER

SHORT TAKES

Civilian shot dead by militants

Srinagar: Militants shot at and killed a civilian Sunday in Jammu and Kashmir's Budgam district. Police said militants fired at a civilian identified as 35-year old Nasir Ahmad Khan of the Buchipora village in Magam tehsil of Budgam district. "He was shifted to hospital where doctors declared him brought dead", police said in a statement.

5 rescued from blaze

New Delhi: Five people were rescued from a house fire in south Delhi's Greater Kailash locality early Sunday, the Delhi Fire Services (DFS) said. A DFS official said information regarding the blaze was received at 4.18 am and four fire tenders were rushed to the spot. The fire originated on the first floor of the building in Greater Kailash and trapped those living above.

3 killed in car crash

Azamgarh (UP): Three people were killed when the speeding car by which they were travelling fell into a 10-foot-deep ditch here, police said Sunday. The accident took place Saturday night in the Jyianpur police station area. Police said the victims were going to the Vinধ্যavasini temple in Vinধ্যachal. They have been identified as Ravi (30) and Rahul Chauhan, both residents of Deoria; and Anupam Singh (50), a resident of Basti district, Sagri Circle Officer Rajesh Tiwari said.

Farmer hangs self

Banda (UP): Faced with financial woes, a 52-year-old farmer in Parsahar village of the district allegedly hanged himself from a tree in his field, police said Sunday. The body of the farmer identified as Chanda alias Chandrabhan (52) was found Saturday. The farmer's son told police that his father was disturbed due to financial issues, and there were frequent disputes in the family over household expenditure.

KMP expressway opened

Ghaziabad: The Kundli-Manesar-Palwal (KMP) expressway, which was blocked by the Samyukt Kisan Morcha (SKM) Saturday for 24 hours, has finally been opened at 8 a.m. Sunday.



There is no lockdown in Madhya Pradesh. Nor will it be imposed state-wide

SHIVRAJ SINGH CHOUHAN | MP CHIEF MINISTER

INDIA BANS EXPORT OF REMDESIVIR

AGENCIES

New Delhi, April 11: In wake of the recent surge in Covid-19 cases, India Sunday prohibited the exports of remdesivir injections and active pharmaceutical ingredients (API) till the situation improves. The decision was taken considering a sudden spike in demand for remdesivir, which is used in treatment of Covid-19 patients, a Health and Family Welfare Ministry statement said.

Noting India has 11.08 lakh active Covid cases as Sunday amid an increasing trend, the Ministry said: "There is a potential of further increase in demand of injection remdesivir and remdesivir active pharmaceutical ingredients (API) in the coming days."

"In light of the above increasing Covid cases, Government of India has prohibited the exports of injection remdesivir and remdesivir active pharmaceutical ingredients (API) till the situation improves."

Seven Indian companies are producing injection remdesivir under voluntary licensing agreement with Gilead Sciences, US. They have an installed capacity of about 38.80 lakh units per month.

In addition, the Central government has taken several steps to ensure easy access of hospital and patients to remdesivir.

As part of its effort, it has advised all domestic manufactures of remdesivir to display details of their stockists or distributors on their websites to facilitate access to the drug.

"Drugs inspectors and other officers have been directed to verify stocks and check malpractices and also take other effective actions to curb hoarding and black marketing," the Ministry said.

"The state Health Secretaries will review this with the Drug Inspectors of the respective states



Surat BJP distributes 1,000 free jabs

SURAT: Amid massive shortage of remdesivir injections across the state, the city unit of Surat BJP Saturday was seen distributing 1,000 vials of the much-needed Covid-19 treatment drug for free to citizens when the state-run New Civil Hospital and SMIMER Hospital had a day earlier declared they had run out of stock.

and Union Territories (UTs). The Department of Pharmaceuticals has been in contact with the domestic manufacturers to ramp up the production of remdesivir."

The Centre has also advised states that the "National Clinical Management Protocol for Covid-19", developed after many interactions by Committee of Experts, is the guiding document for treatment of Covid-19 patients and lists remdesivir as an investigational therapy, where informed and shared decision making is essential, besides taking note of contra indications mentioned in the detailed guidelines.

The states and UTs have been advised that these steps should again be communicated to all hospitals, both in public and private sector, and compliance monitored.

5 terrorists killed in Kashmir encounter

AGENCIES

Srinagar, April 11: Five terrorists were killed during two separate operations by the security forces in Jammu and Kashmir Sunday. Two security forces have also been injured, police said.

A teenager, who had gone missing less than a week ago and was believed to have joined a local terrorist group, was among three suspected terrorist killed in the operation at Hadipora village in Shopian district.

Police said during the operation they offered him a chance to surrender but it seemed his accomplice prevented from doing so. "We brought his parents to the encounter site and they appealed to him to surrender. He wanted to surrender but his accomplice stopped him from doing so," said Vijay Kumar, Inspector General police.

Police said the operation was launched yesterday evening at Hadipora village after they received a specific information about the presence of terrorists. The operation was jointly carried by the Army, police and CRPF. "The teenager



Representative image

called his parents on phone after they were cornered yesterday evening. He's telling them that one of the terrorist has been killed and asks them to save his life. We tried to save his life but another terrorist Asif didn't allow him to come out and surrender," Kumar said.

On Friday, parents of the minor had said that their 14 year old son has gone missing. They made a

public appeal requesting everyone to help them to get their son back. The body of the teenager will not be handed over to his family for burial. As per security protocol in Kashmir, bodies of killed terrorists are being buried at nondescript burial grounds by the police. Mr Kumar said they are ascertaining the exact age of the minor. "I have asked Superintendent of

police in Shopian to ascertain the exact age of minor," he said. Arms and ammunition, including two AK series rifles, were recovered from the site. The IGP said one of the slain militants in the Shopian encounter was newly recruited into the militant ranks and security forces made sincere efforts to persuade him to surrender, but the other militants did not allow him.

He identified the slain militants as Aasif Ahmad Ganai and Faisal Gulzar Ganai -- both residents of Chitragam Kalan. The identity of the third militant is yet to be ascertained. Police sources said Faisal was a minor and had recently joined the militant ranks.

Giving details of the operation, the police official said security forces launched the cordon and search operation in the orchards of Reban Bandpawa area after receiving specific input about the presence of militants there. The forces exercised maximum restraint and facilitated the presence of family members of a holed-up militant Faisal Gulzar to the encounter site to persuade him to surrender, the IGP said.

FROLICKING



A pair of Royal Bengal Tiger relaxing at TATA Steel Zoological Park (TSZP) in Jamshedpur Sunday

UNI PHOTO

NIA arrests Vaze's associate

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, April 11: The NIA Sunday arrested police officer Riyaz Kazi, an associate of suspended cop Sachin Vaze, in connection with the case of an explosives-laden SUV found near industrialist Mukesh Ambani's residence, a police official said.

After his arrest, Kazi was produced before a holiday court here which remanded him in the National Investigation Agency's (NIA) custody till April 16 for further probe into the case.

"Assistant police inspector (API) Kazi was called for questioning again by the NIA Sunday and later placed under arrest," the police official said.

He was previously also questioned multiple times by the NIA in connection with the case of the SUV with explosives found near Ambani's multi-storey residence 'Antilia' in south Mumbai February 25 and the subsequent death of Thane businessman Mansukh Hiran. Kazi was shunted out of the Mumbai Crime Branch last month, the official said. After Kazi

Sachin Vaze has already been sent to judicial custody till April 23 by an NIA court in Mumbai in connection with the case relating to explosive-laden SUV's recovery from near Mukesh Ambani's residence and the death of businessman Mansukh Hiren

was presented in the court Sunday, the NIA told the court that he was arrested for destroying evidences and that he is involved in the conspiracy of the case along with Vaze, the main accused in the case. While seeking his remand for 10 days, the prosecution said that when the NIA started conducting a parallel probe soon after explosives-laden vehicle was found, the accused allegedly killed Hiran fearing that he will disclose their

plan. The prosecution also submitted that Kazi was well aware of the crime.

After the case was transferred to the central agency, the accused started destroying evidences like CPU and DVR and others, the NIA told the court.

Kazi's custody is required to confront him with every recovered article, documents, witnesses. Vaze has given half the facts and Kazi's interrogation is required to find out under whose guidance he destroyed the evidence, it said.

He also needs to be interrogated about the source of the gelatin sticks (found in the SUV). Opposing the remand plea, Kazi's lawyer, Hasnain Kazi, argued that his client was not involved in the destruction of evidence.

The accused has been going to the NIA office for interrogation since the last 20 days and co-operating with the investigation, hence his custody was not required, the lawyer said. After hearing both the sides, the judge remanded the accused to NIA's custody till April 16.

'Over 33% ICS computers faced cyberattacks in 2020'

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, April 11: Globally, the percentage of attacked ICS (industrial control system) computers in the second half of 2020 was 33.4 per cent, said a new report from cybersecurity firm Kaspersky.

The percentage of ICS computers attacked in the engineering and ICS integration sector grew by nearly 8 percentage points, said the report.

The building automation and oil & gas sectors also saw considerable spike. Overall, the percentage of ICS computers attacked increased in 62 per cent of the countries examined by Kaspersky researchers and across all five industries studied. The research suggests that while the percentage of ICS computers on which malicious objects were blocked had declined since the second half of 2019, this number again started to rise in the second half of 2020. "We typically see



a decline in the percentage of ICS computers attacked in the summer months and December as people go on holiday. However, with borders closed and countries on lockdown, it's likely many didn't take their vacation, and we did not see any noticeable decrease," Evgeny Goncharov, Head of ICS CERT at Kaspersky, said in a statement.

Attacks against industrial organisations always carry the potential to be particularly devastating, both in terms of disruption to production and financial losses.



February 16 – to an exploding pandemic, a grim reminder that the virus is continuing to extract its toll.

Kejriwal said the current fourth wave of the pandemic in the city is "very dangerous" and is spreading at such a rapid rate that it has left many people baffled. "Cases have escalated in a big way in the last 10-15 days. And, in the past 24 hours, the city has recorded 10,732 cases. The situation is very serious."

This is the highest single-day spike in Delhi since the outbreak of the pandemic.

The CM said his government does not want to impose lockdown in Delhi but such a situation may arise if there is a rush to the hospitals and beds are unavailable for serious patients. "We need your cooperation. If your cooperation is received and situation of hospitals is under control, there will be no need to impose lockdown in Delhi."

complexes in a big way. Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium is on the top of the list besides Indira Gandhi Sports Complex, Major Dhyan Chand National Stadium, Dr Shyama Prasad Mukherjee Swimming Pool Complex and Dr Karni Singh Shooting Range. The Ministry of Sports & Youth Affairs has said that these complexes are under-utilised and drain on the exchequer and leasing out to private companies will help infra-building. "Majority of these stadiums are either lying vacant for the majority of the year or in poor state", said an official. Similarly, the Environment & Forest Ministry is chalking out plans for national parks across the country. These stadiums could be leased out for a period of 30 years under the "OM" route (Operate & Maintain) after an upfront initial payment.



Pawar's huge political dilemma

NCP supremo Sharad Pawar is facing a huge dilemma in his political career for some time now. Though he is virtually running the Maharashtra government with a remote-control button, he remains a dissatisfied person. It is a coalition government of three parties-Congress-NCP-Shiv Sena. But Sharad Pawar is calling the

shots. The Left will not agree to Pawar's leadership and it all depends on the outcome of the West Bengal polls. But Pawar has another problem. He also wants his political legacy to be transferred to his daughter and Lok Sabha MP Supriya Sule in Maharashtra. This may, however, bring him in conflict with his nephew Ajit Pawar who has been working on the ground in the state for decades. Supriya Sule may find it difficult to make inroads into Ajit Pawar's citadel. Secondly, Sonia Gandhi is not in a mood of quitting the post of UPA chairperson despite a considerably weakened Congress & the UPA. Will Pawar achieve these objectives if he remains in the Opposition? No one is sure. Pawar's problem is even if he joins hands with the BJP, his daughter will not be his heir-apparent in Maharashtra.

UK PM's trip in jeopardy again

The sudden spike in Covid cases in Delhi & Maharashtra and high positivity rate of more than 14% has put British Prime Minister Boris Johnson's visit to Pune and Mumbai in jeopardy. Night curfew has been imposed in both the states. Johnson is slated to visit New Delhi sometime April 26-27 and as part of his itinerary was contemplating visiting Pune, Mumbai, Bangalore and Chennai also. Johnson is eager to visit Pune which has the world's largest vaccine manufacture facility, Serum Institute of India (SII). SII has been producing Oxford Astrazeneca's vaccine Covishield, which has been exported to many countries from there. British officials are struggling to take a call on Pune visit and in touch with

Indian counterparts. This is the second time the British Prime Minister is contemplating visiting India. He was to be country's Chief Guest during the Republic Day celebrations January 26. But Britain was hit hard by another Covid wave and lockdown was declared forcing cancellation of his trip.

Stadiums, monuments, parks up for the grab

The Modi government is finalising an ambitious plan to raise at least Rs 25,000 crore by monetising sports stadiums, national parks & monuments. The ministries of Sports, Culture and Environment & Forest are giving final touches to give these assets on long-term leases. If highly placed sources in the government

are to be believed, as many as 100 historical monuments across the country have been identified including iconic Taj Mahal, Kangra Fort in Himachal Pradesh, Buddhist Kaneri caves in Mumbai and others to be given on long-term lease. The historic Red Fort in Delhi was the first to be leased out under the 'Adopt a heritage' scheme. The government mopped up Rs 25 crores from a private cement company over a five year period. The NDMC under the Union Home Ministry has been toying with the idea of leasing out Lodhi Gardens which has several monuments including the 11th Century Lodhi tomb. Encouraged by response and feelers from various international enterprises, sports and event management companies, the government has now decided to lease out sports stadiums and