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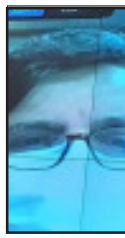
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Will continue to bat the way I love to, says RR skipper Samson

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Odisha logs record spike of 4,445 new infections, cases set to explode as R value rises further



Bhubaneswar, Apr 20: The case count surpassed the highest single day spike of 4,356 cases recorded on September 25 during the first wave of the pandemic last year. With far more infectious coronavirus sweeping the country, Odisha reported a record spike of 4,445 new cases, a jump of over 20 per cent (pc) in a day, posting an all time high single day total in last 24 hours. Four persons also succumbed to the disease during the period. The case count surpassed the highest single day spike of 4,356 cases recorded on September 25 during the first wave of the

pandemic last year. The sharpest ever growth rate this month was 38.3 times against the highest 4.7 times recorded in May last year. The test positivity rate (TPR) shot up to 12.28 pc with the test of around 36,175 samples, including 14,762 through RT-PCR. For the first time since the beginning of the pandemic, the TPR in 11 of the 30 districts is more than 10 pc and above the State average. The TPR in some of the districts is as high as that of worst hit cities like Mumbai, Pune and Delhi. The highest positivity rate of 39.68 pc was calculated in Kalahandi, 35.73 pc in Nuapada, 28.08 pc in

Sambalpur, 26.81 pc in Sundargarh, 20.89 pc in Puri, 18.81 pc in Jharsuguda, 16.47 pc in Balangir, 15.2 pc in Khurda (15.33 pc in Bhubaneswar), 14.95 pc in Nabarangpur, 14.84 pc in Bargarh and 10.61 pc in Cuttack. Not only the TPR, the effective reproduction rate (R value), considered to be an indicator of how fast Covid-19 infection would spread, is also on a consistent rise in the State and it is ahead of Delhi. The value has gone up to 2.39 from 2.14 last week against the national average of 1.3. Odisha is one of the top-eight states where the R value is above two.

Assam topped the chart with the value at three, followed by Bihar 2.84, Uttar Pradesh 2.68, Delhi 2.27, Jharkhand 2.14 and Rajasthan 2.13. If the rising R value is any indication, the coronavirus infection is set to explode in the State. Of the fresh cases, 2,574 were found among people in quarantine and 1,871 local infections. While two districts registered more than 500 cases and six districts over 200 cases each, five districts have recorded above 100 cases each. Seven districts are now categorised as Covid hotspots with more than 1,000 active cases. Districts bordering

Chhattisgarh continued to dominate the tally with the worst hit Sundargarh contributing 722 cases, followed by Nuapada (437), Kalahandi (273), Sambalpur (241), Jharsuguda (231), Bargarh (178), Balangir (168) and Nabarangpur (127). Ten border districts logged 2,407 cases accounting for 54 pc of the new infections. The Twin cities Bhubaneswar and Cuttack and Pilgrim town Puri have been witnessing a spurt in new infections. As many as 587 cases were detected in Khurda (including 468 from Bhubaneswar), 251 in Cuttack, 219 in Puri, 123 in Balasore and 100 in Mayurbhanj. Four persons, including two from Sundargarh and one each from Jharsuguda and Keonjhar succumbed to the disease pushing the cumulative death toll to 1948. Two among them in their 40s died without having any comorbidities. Of the total 3,72,703 confirmed cases, 3,47,637 patients have recovered so far. The active cases stand at 23,065.

Chief minister appeals to people for co operation and emphasizes strict observance of covid appropriate behaviour

CM directs to ramp up beds with oxygen support system



Bhubaneswar, Apr 20: Chief minister Sri Naveen patnaik today reviewed the covid situation in the state and directs to ramp up beds with oxygen system. Although there is no problem of beds and oxygen in the state currently still then we will have to remain prepared the CM said. Presiding the review meeting chief minister said that - The second wave of Covid infections has seriously affected many states. The health system in some cities is under severe strain due to rapid increase in the Covid positive patients. The cases in Odisha also have been increasing in the last few days. Due to our alert preparedness and proactive measures, we have been able to manage the situation to a large extent. However, we need to be prepared for the worst-case scenario and ensure that every patient is treated with dignity and put in best efforts to save precious lives. We have to take the following steps on priority: 1. Further increase in the number of beds in

Covid Hospitals and Covid Care Centres across the State. Special focus should be on providing maximum possible number of beds with oxygen support. The system has to work on war footing to ensure this within committed timelines. 2. Our Oxygen supply situation has to be closely monitored and ensure that all related accessories at the hospital level are available on priority. 3. Many States are facing critical medicines shortage. Even though we have sufficient medicines stock, we must ensure buffer stock to tackle higher demand in coming weeks. 4. IEC campaign has to be further ramped up. People have to be educated on the dangerous spread of the second wave and the need for active adherence to Covid protocols. The community, Mission shakti group, PRI members should be actively involved in the process. 5. The enforcement activities have to be continued strictly across the state. 6. With lockdowns in seri-

ously affected states, the Collectors should be prepared for the return of the migrants. The protocols followed earlier should be reactivated by the Collectors immediately based on the existing database. The quarantine norm and testing should be ensured for all the returnees from other states. Senior officers assigned as observer and other responsibilities to put their best effort like last year. I once again request the people of Odisha to please co-operate. We are facing grave danger and unless the people co-operate and act responsibly, it will be very difficult to tackle the situation. It is the interest of State and people that we should manage the covid situation without "lockdown". Wearing mask and maintaining social distance will help us in this. Chief secretary Sri SC mohapatra DCand SRC sri pradeep Jena ACS health sri pk mohpatra and collectors were also present. Secretary to CM ST Sri V k pandian coordinated the meeting.

BJD won't hold campaign rallies for Pipili bypoll: Naveen Patnaik

Bhubaneswar, Apr 20: Announcing the decision in a series of tweets, the Chief Minister said the BJD as a responsible party will not like to put the lives of people in danger. Setting an example in these dire Covid times, Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik on Monday announced the BJD's decision not to hold public rallies or campaign meetings for by-election to Pipili Assembly constituency scheduled on May 13. Announcing the decision in a series of tweets, the Chief Minister said the

BJD as a responsible party will not like to put the lives of people in danger. "We contest elections to serve people," he said and added, "If the campaign has potential to endanger lives, I would earnestly appeal to political parties and Election Commission of India to reconsider both the duration and method of campaigning." Stating that every life is precious and he always considered people of Odisha as his family members, the Chief Minister said, "India is a mature de-



mocracy and together we can come out with a solution." The announcement by the Chief Minister came a day after Congress leader Rahul Gandhi suspended all election campaigns in West Ben-

gal. The Pipili bypoll, which was originally scheduled to be held on April 17, was postponed to May 13 following the demise of Congress candidate Ajit Mangaraj, who succumbed to Covid-19,

on April 14. The Election Commission issued a fresh notification on Monday stating that polling will be held on May 13 between 7 am and 6 pm. The election process will be completed before May 18, it added. Meanwhile, president of Odisha Pradesh Congress Committee (OPCC) Niranjan Patnaik constituted a committee headed by working president of OPCC Pradip Majhi to recommend name of the party candidate. The committee will meet on Tuesday over the matter.

IFFCO to set up oxygen plant in Odisha, supply free of cost

Bhubaneswar, Apr 20: Several states including Maharashtra and Delhi are facing acute shortage of oxygen due to huge demand as large number of Covid patients are getting hospitalised on daily basis. Indian Farmers Fertiliser Cooperative Ltd (IFFCO) on Monday said it will set up four oxygen plants including one in Odisha. The company, which is in the process of setting up an

oxygen plant at its Kalol unit in Gujarat, has placed orders to put up three more such plants, two in Uttar Pradesh and one at Paradip in Odisha, for supply to hospitals treating Covid-19 patients free of cost. In a letter to Union Chemical and Fertiliser Minister DV Sadananda Gowda, IFFCO managing director US Awasthi said the company has taken steps to set up oxy-

gen plant at its fertiliser units to augment the supply to meet the requirement of patients affected by the pandemic. Noting that IFFCO has already placed an order for setting up an oxygen plant at its fertiliser plant in Gujarat, Awasthi said the plant will be operational within two weeks. The plant will have a capacity to produce 700 cylinders, each having a capacity of 46.7 litre, per



day with medical grade oxygen of 99.5 per cent purity. He said the plant will

cost around ₹7 crore for production of around 33,000 litre of oxygen per

day. "We would be making available oxygen free of cost to hospitals treating

Covid patients. This is a small contribution of IFFCO in service of nation during the current challenging times due to the pandemic," Awasthi said. Sources in IFFCO said it will take at least 15 days from Monday to transport, install and commission an oxygen plant. A dedicated team is working on this project. IFFCO will fill up the oxygen cylinders free of cost for hospitals, but

they need to bring their own cylinders for refill. A security deposit will be taken if cylinders are taken from IFFCO to avoid hoarding of oxygen, the sources said. Several states including Maharashtra and Delhi are facing acute shortage of oxygen due to huge demand as large number of Covid patients are getting hospitalised on daily basis.

Amid Covid surge, PM Modi's Portugal visit for India-EU summit cancelled



New Delhi, Apr 20: The last India-EU summit was also held virtually in July last year, as the summit was deferred due to the Covid-19 outbreak in March last year. A day after British Prime Minister Boris Johnson's visit was put off due to the second surge of Covid-19, Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to Portugal for the In-

dia-European Union leaders' summit on May 8 has been cancelled. Instead, the summit will now be held virtually on the same day. Announcing this on Tuesday, the Ministry of External Affairs' official spokesperson Arindam Bagchi said on Tuesday, "In view of the COVID-19 situation, it has been decided, in consultation with the EU and Portu-

guese leadership, to hold the India-EU Leaders' Meeting in a virtual format on 8 May 2021." "The India-EU Leaders' Meeting in the EU+27 format, the first time that such a meeting is being held, reflects the shared ambition of both sides to further deepen the Strategic Partnership," said Bagchi. The last India-EU summit was also held virtually in July last

year, as the summit was deferred due to the Covid-19 outbreak in March last year. The European Union (EU) has just come out with its Indo-Pacific strategy, and India and the EU are expected to restart the India-EU trade deal negotiations next month. Last year, during the India-EU summit in July, Modi had briefed the European Council president

Charles Michel and European Commission president Ursula von der Leyen on the situation along the Line of Actual Control (LAC), including the June 15 clash in Galwan Valley that killed 20 Indian soldiers. After the 15th India-EU summit over video conference last July, Michel had told reporters, "We had the occasion with the Prime Minister to have some information about this incident." On May 8, the leaders will now have the opportunity to discuss multilateral co-operation at the WHO, UNSC and G-20, on issues such as 5G and Artificial Intelligence, maritime security and naval cooperation and connectivity projects in third countries in the Indo-Pacific region. All these elements have a signal to China's presence in these areas, and indicates growing convergences between Delhi and Brussels.

Young kin of Devendra Fadnavis takes Covid-19 vaccine, triggers row

Nagpur, Apr 20: A young relative of Maharashtra BJP leader Devendra Fadnavis shared a photo of him getting COVID-19 prevention vaccine, triggering a controversy as he does not fulfil the age criteria to receive the shot. As the photo of Tanmay Fadnavis, who appears to be in his 20s, went viral on social media on Monday, Devendra Fadnavis's office here issued a statement on Tuesday, saying it was "completely improper" if the age criteria has been violated and added that all should follow rules. Tanmay is a grandson of Devendra Fadnavis's aunt Shobatai Fadnavis, a senior BJP leader and former minister. He took the vaccine dose at the National Cancer Institute in Nagpur and posted the photo on social media. As the controversy over violation

18 years can take vaccine (from May 1), all should follow the rules," the Leader of Opposition in the assembly said. At present, the vaccination is open only to those aged 45 and above. On Monday, the Centre announced that everyone above 18 years of age will be eligible to get vaccinated against COVID-19 from May 1. Meanwhile, talking to reporters in Nagpur on Tuesday, Fadnavis alleged favoritism in allotment of Remdesivir in Maharashtra and said badly-affected districts were not getting adequate stock of the COVID-19 drug which is in high demand. The Nagpur bench of the HC had on Monday directed the Maharashtra government to immediately release 10,000 vials of Remdesivir to Nagpur district. The bench had said it did not understand



PM Modi addresses the nation on India's Covid-19 situation

New Delhi, Apr 20: Ahead of the address, Prime Minister Narendra Modi held a virtual meeting with vaccine manufacturers from across the country. Prime Minister Narendra Modi is set to address the nation at

8.45pm Tuesday amid India's worsening coronavirus disease (Covid-19) crisis. The prime minister's office (PMO) shared information about PM Modi's address on the Covid-19 situation in the country. The announcement

comes hours after the prime minister held a virtual meeting with vaccine manufacturers from across the country. According to the PMO, the prime minister applauded the vaccine manufacturers for their achievements and pro-

fessionalism and urged them to continuously scale up the production capacity to vaccinate the citizens in the shortest possible time. While the health infrastructure is currently overwhelmed by the sheer number of daily Covid-

19 cases, PM Modi said that the health infrastructure of the private sector has played a "big role in the country's fight against Covid-19" and "will play an even more active role in the vaccination drive."

of age criteria for vaccination raged, Devendra Fadnavis sought to distance himself from the row. The statement from the former chief minister's office said, "The concerned person, Tanmay Fadnavis, is my distant relative and I am not aware of under which criteria he received the vaccine. If he is eligible for vaccination then I have no objection and if he is not eligible than it is completely improper." "Even, my wife and daughter have not yet received the vaccine as per the criteria. Although all above the age of

the logic behind allotting over 5,000 vials of Remdesivir for around 2,000 beds in Thane, but allocating only about 3,000 vials of the drug for 8,000 COVID-19 beds in Nagpur. Fadnavis said, "I welcome the decision of the High Court... the allotment of Remdesivir across Maharashtra was being done in wrong way by the state government." Some ministers were getting Remdesivir for their respective divisions in huge numbers, while Nagpur, which has a high number of COVID-19 patients, was not receiving the injections in proper proportion, the BJP leader said.

Leaders' consensus to maintain peace at borders cannot be 'swept under carpet', India tells China

Beijing, Apr 20: India has told China that the significance of the consensus reached between their leaders to maintain peace along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) cannot be "swept under the carpet" and called for the complete disengagement of troops in eastern Ladakh to rebuild bilateral ties strained by the "serious incidents" which has strongly impacted the public opinion. In a candid address to the ICWA (Indian Council of World

other countries, in an apparent reference to China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) and its flagship project the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor over which India has raised concerns as it is being laid through the Pakistan-occupied Kashmir. The BRI is a multi-billion-dollar initiative launched by President Xi Jinping when he came into power in 2013. It aims to link Southeast Asia, Central Asia, the Gulf region, Africa and

own interest while ignoring those raised or reflected by others," Misri said. About the consensus between the leaders of the two countries for good relations, he said, "it has often been pointed out by friends in China that we should stick to the consensus between our leaders. I have absolutely no quarrel with that". "Indeed, I agree wholeheartedly. At the same time, I should point out that equally significant consensus has been reached between our leaders in the past as well, for instance the consensus that I just referred to on the importance of maintaining peace and tranquility, and it is important to stick to that consensus as well," he said. "We have also seen a tendency in some quarters to sweep this situation under the carpet and characterize it as just a minor issue and a matter of perspective. This too is inadvisable as it can only take us further away from a sustained solution to present difficulties and deeper into an unfulfilling stalemate," he said. "In fact, it would be tantamount to running away from the problem and in a direction opposite to that where the promise of our closer development partnership lies," he said.

Europe with a network of land and sea routes. China also claims sovereignty over all of South China Sea. Vietnam, Malaysia, the Philippines, Brunei and Taiwan have counter claims. "In a multi-polar world, no country can set the agenda by itself without prior agreement and consultation, and then expect everyone else to come on board. No single country can expect a discussion to focus only on issues of its



Affairs)-CPIFA (Chinese People's Institute of Foreign Affairs) virtual dialogue on April 15, Indian Ambassador to China Vikram Misri also questioned the Chinese officials ignoring the "significant consensus" reached by the leaders of the two sides about the importance of maintaining peace along the LAC. In his lengthy speech, Misri said no country can set the agenda for itself without agreements from

Situation grim as Kerala reports highest single-day spike in Covid-19 cases

New Delhi, Apr 20: Kerala on Tuesday reported the highest single-day tally since the outbreak set in recording 19,577 virus cases with a high test positivity rate of 17. Kerala on Tuesday reported the highest single-day tally since the outbreak set in recording 19,577 virus cases with a high test positivity rate of 17.45%. The state grappled with an acute scarcity of vaccines for the second consecutive day, as per the official data. In the last 24 hours, 112,221 tests were conducted in the state and at least nine districts recorded more than 1,000 cases. Ernakulam topped the list with 3,212 cases and many areas in the district were declared containment areas. Active caseload also touched an all-time high of 1,18,673, according



to the data released by the state health ministry. With 28 fatalities, the death toll went up to 4978. Despite the grim scenario, the state health ministry claimed there were enough ICU beds and oxygen supply was satisfactory. Though many hospitals were packed to the brim, health officials said the situation was under control. Hospitals were strictly told to admit those in serious condition to ease the pressure. Amid mount-

ing cases, the state reported an acute shortage of Covid-19 vaccine forcing health authorities to shut many vaccination centres. In capital city Thiruvananthapuram, out of 150 centres, only 26 operated while in Ernakulam, one of the worst-affected districts, only two dozen centres functioned. Health authorities said the public was informed about the shortage but several beneficiaries were caught unaware and

crowded centres. The state government sent another SOS to the Union health ministry on Tuesday. Last week also it wrote to the ministry seeking 50 lakh doses of the vaccine. A senior health ministry official said by Wednesday the state will be getting 10 lakh vials that will help tide over the present shortage. Mass vaccination campaign launched by the government was also affected due to the paucity of doses.

Though a large number of vaccines were wasted by some states, Kerala reported almost nil wastage. Tamil Nadu topped the list with 12% followed by Haryana at 9.74%, as per the Union health ministry data. As Covid-19 cases galloped, the state has strengthened containment measures. Night curfew will be in force from Tuesday night for two weeks. RT-PCR test was made mandatory for all domestic travellers and those coming from abroad. On Monday, the government decided to hold Thrissur Pooram, the mother of all temple festivals, sans spectators. Meanwhile, state health minister KK Shailaja entered into quarantine after her son and daughter-in-law tested positive for the virus. She said she will remain in quarantine for the next two weeks.

Gujarat govt may not go for lockdown, indicates Nitin Patel

(A.O. Bureau) Ahmedabad, Apr 20: Hinting at no possibility of a lockdown in Gujarat, Deputy Chief Minister Nitin Patel on Monday said that there was "no scientific evidence that indicates a lockdown will definitely break the chain (of trans-

mission)". Gujarat on Monday reported 11,403 cases and 117 deaths. On April 1, the state had reported 2,410 cases and nine deaths. Responding to a question, Patel told mediapersons, "...several states, countries have seen significant reporting of

Covid-19 cases despite a lockdown... in the first wave, we could break the chain with a lockdown but in this second wave, the virus is highly infectious". Announcing a slash in rate for RT-PCR tests at 55 private laboratories across Gujarat, Patel, who also holds the

health portfolio, indicated that there is no plan for a lockdown in Gujarat that continued to report over 10,000 new Covid cases each day. Patel said, "Night curfew is in place in 20 cities. Several cities, towns, villages, municipalities, organisations and associa-

tions have decided to observe voluntary lockdown... we will inform if there is a decision from the state government... We are discussing with experts and what they are saying is to wear masks, maintain social distancing and to wash hands.

Khordha Excise Squad Conduct Raid Weekend shutdown returns to all urban areas in Odisha



(A.O. Bureau) Khordha, Apr 20: Khordha Excise Squad Conduct Raid

in different places of Khordha, detected four Excise cases and arrested four accused

persons. They are Tukuna Badhei of village -Haladia, Prafulla Swain, village - Bagheitangi, Manoj Sahu, village - Gurujanga and Pabitra Behera village - Nuapada. Registered four cases vide PR.NO-4,5,6 and 7/ 2021-22 of Khordha Excise Station and seizures of 158 ltrs ID Liquor and one TVS, Scooty bearing Registration no-OD05AX-9897, one passion pro motorcycle bearing registration no-OD02W-1524. The four accused persons were forwarded to the Judicial court of Khordha.

(A.O. Bureau) Bhubaneswar, Apr 20: Earlier on April 15, the government had imposed weekend shutdown in 10 Western Odisha districts neighbouring Chhattisgarh. As Covid-19 situation continues to worsen at an alarming pace, Odisha government on Monday announced strict measures including weekend shutdown in all urban areas of the State from April 24. Earlier on April 15, the government had imposed weekend shutdown in 10 Western Odisha districts neighbouring Chhattisgarh. Special Relief Commissioner (SRC) PK Jena announced that the weekend shutdown has been extended to Bhubaneswar, Cuttack and all urban areas in rest of the 20 districts as the situation has become serious. Night curfew will continue in urban areas of the 20 districts from 9 pm to 5 am and in 10 districts neighbouring Chhattisgarh from 6 pm to 5 am. The new guidelines issued by the government has imposed strict regulations on markets and shops. Haats and markets will

be decentralised and allowed to operate with minimum 30 feet distance from shop to shop. Number of buyers to the shop will be regulated by the market association and shop owners in such a way that physical distance of six feet is maintained between buyer to buyer and buyer to shop owner during the entire period of their stay in the establishment. Hotels and restaurants will also not allow outside persons, other than their in house resident guests, to dine inside. However, hotels and restaurants can serve take away food to customers, buyers and clients. They can also take online orders and deliver food. Besides, no street vendor can serve food to consumers at the venue. They can, however, serve take away food, it stated. The SRC maintained that Covid protocols will have to be strictly observed by organisers of such facilities. He warned that any violation of Covid-19 protocols will attract closure, sealing and cancellation of licence. The government has also prohibited jatra, opera and open air theatres as Covid

cases continued to rise rapidly across the State. However, cinema halls and theatres will be allowed to operate with up to 50 per cent (pc) of the hall capacity with strict adherence to Covid protocols during the entire period of the show. Entertainment and amusement parks,

of priests and staff adhering to safety protocols. The district magistrates may looking into the prevailing situation and in consultation with relevant stakeholders impose any further restrictions as deemed proper, he added. The SRC advised people to avoid

persons allowed in a marriage function will not be more than 50 for the entire event including hosts, guests, priests, catering and other support staff. In case of funerals and last rites, the ceiling will not exceed 20 persons. No marriage procession will be allowed. The list of par-



merry-go-around, meena bazaar and related activities will be allowed within the ceiling of 50 persons. Anganwadi centres will also remain closed and take home ration or other alternate solutions as feasible will be worked out by the Women and Child Development department, Jena said. The fresh guidelines maintained that religious rituals in temples, churches, mosques and places of worship will be permitted with limited number

other social functions including birthday, thread ceremony and anniversary. Such functions if organised will have to done inside the house with family members participating, he said and added that no outside guests will participate in any social functions. Besides, Jena said no outside venues like hotels, kalyan mandaps, resorts, clubs and association buildings will allow any social function on their premises. The guidelines reiterated that

participants in marriage, funeral and last rites should be submitted to the local authorities at least 24 hours before the event. This list will be conspicuously displayed at prominent locations of the venue which can be read from a distance of 10 feet. If persons other than those declared are found, it will be considered as violation of condition of permission and proper action will be initiated under Disaster Management Act and other relevant laws.

High Court grants more time to Odisha for status report on Sisupalgarh

(A.O. Bureau) Cuttack, Apr 20: The Orissa High Court had to yet again adjourn hearing on the PIL on conservation of Sisupalgarh as the State government could not produce its status report on the present condition of the protected monument on Monday. The State government's failure, the second time in 50 days, forced the Court to adjourn hearing on the matter to May 17. Sisupalgarh, on the out-

skirts of Bhubaneswar, was excavated in 1947 by eminent archaeologist BB Lal and is considered to be the first instance of a planned settlement after Mohenjodaro-Harappa. According to latest reports, only 0.775 acre of the entire 562.681 acre of the fortified settlement's protected land is under ASI's control. When the PIL came up on January 27, 2021 after languishing for several years, the Court

found that the petition was filed way back in 2007 and it sought a specific direction to the authorities concerned to take appropriate steps to protect Sisupalgarh from unauthorised constructions and encroachments. The Court also felt that though several affidavits had been filed in the petition and there had been some interveners as well, the present status was not clearly emerging.

ICU capacity and hospital beds doubled as COVID-19 cases grow 38 times faster in Odisha

Bhubaneswar, Apr 20: The Odisha government has ramped up health infrastructure across the state by adding twice the strength of general and ICU beds in dedicated Covid hospitals as the infection is spreading over 38 times faster during the second wave of the pandemic. As many as 11,808 beds, including 2,018 in ICUs and 782 with ventilators have been set up in over 70 dedicated Covid hospitals so far to tackle the second wave. This apart, the districts have been directed to keep 22,541 beds with oxygen supply at the Covid care centres (CCCs) and 36,387 beds with oxygen supply at temporary medical centres (TMCs) in panchayat level clusters. Making a presentation before Chief Justice of Orissa High Court S Muralidhar and other senior judges here on Monday, the Additional Chief Secretary of Health Department PK Mohapatra said a total 73,654 beds with oxygen supply are being set



up in the state. While the dedicated Covid hospitals are ready with 11,808 beds, the PSUs have been asked to make arrangements of 3,700 beds with oxygen at their facilities, he said. "In view of the rapid transmission that may put stress on the healthcare system, we have decided to add twice the strength of ICU beds and four times the last year's peak requirement of high dependency units (step down ICUs). Additional engagement of healthcare workers along with doctors is also being prioritised," he said. In addition to

the exclusively managed state-run Covid hospitals and CCCs, the government has also signed MoUs with over 60 private hospitals and set up both Covid hospitals and CCCs as per need to provide free treatment to Covid patients. Highlighting the evolved behaviour of the highly infectious virus with various mutations, the health officials advised the judges of the High Court and lower courts to strictly adhere to the SOP prescribed by the government to minimise the risk of transmission. The second wave was triggered by the mutant virus strains like UK,

South Africa and Brazil variants. The double mutant found in several states including Odisha is also attributed to the exponential surge in new Covid-19 infections. Mohapatra informed the members from the judiciary that the state government is making best possible efforts to meet the demand during the peak of the pandemic. Even as the state is oxygen surplus now, the existing capacity is being expanded 10 times the peak requirement of the first wave. Odisha State Medical Corporation has been asked to procure three lakh vials of

Remdesivir injection and 20 lakh Favipiravir tablets, he said. Meanwhile, the hospitalisation of patients is rising in the state with a substantial number of patients requiring ICU admission. Of the total 23,065 active cases, 2,000 patients have been hospitalised (1,576 in general beds, 424 in ICU and 59 on ventilators). While all 105 general beds and 45% ICU beds at Shanti Memorial Hospital in Sundargarh, all 80 ICU beds in Jay Prakash Hospital in Rourkela and 100% ICU beds at Tata Hospital in Duburi are occupied, the ICU occupancy is expected to cross last year's peak period requirement of 707 in the next few days. "In view of the rising demand, we have increased the ICU strength and ventilator availability. So far, only 21% beds in ICU and 8% ventilator beds have been occupied. On a daily basis, additional beds are being added in collaboration with the private hospitals," Mohapatra added.

RT-PCR negative report must to deboard at airport in Bhubaneswar

(A.O. Bureau) Bhubaneswar, Apr 20: AS Covid-19 cases continue to grow at an alarming rate, the Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC) on Monday made RT-PCR negative report compulsory for passengers to deboard at Biju Patnaik International Airport (BPIA), to check spread of the infection effectively. Issuing an order to this effect, the BMC stated that the guideline will come into effect from Tuesday. The report must be obtained within 72 hours of landing at the airport. Passengers, who have completed two doses of vaccination, may also produce

the vaccination certificate in lieu of the RT-PCR negative report, the order stated. The airlines concerned will have to ensure that no passengers board the flight without any of these two documents. "If a passenger lands at the airport without any of these two documents, legal action will be initiated against the airlines concerned," an officer said and added that BMC has informed the BPIA Director in this regard. The growing number of Covid-19 cases has become a major concern for the Capital city which saw 468 new cases in the last 24 hours. This includes 386 cases of local trans-

mission. The city had reported 338 cases on Sunday morning. Nayapalli reported the highest number of 27 cases, followed by 19 in Patia, 18 in Old Town, 16 in Sundarpada, 14 in Khandagiri and 13 in Chandrasekharapur. BMC officials said 123 patients recovered during the period. The city now has 2,827 active cases. Meanwhile, keeping in view the rising number of cases, the civic body has readied the Nilachal and Hi-Tech Covid Hospitals for admission of patients as and when required. Other dedicated covid hospitals including Blue Wheel, Sparsh and KIIMS will also be operationalised soon.



Yours Hope Foundation Trust Organized COVID-19 Awareness Campaign

(A.O. Bureau) Khordha, Apr 20: The leading Non Government Organization of Odisha Yours Hope Foundation Trust Organized covid-19 awareness campaign to sensitising the people about corona virus. The

programme was aimed at reaching out to community people with the message on corona virus outbreaks. Preventive measures highlighted on the importance of maintaining basic hand and respiratory hygiene, avoiding close contact etc. In this aware-

ness programmes distributed masks, sanitizer, hand wash etc. to the general public and create awareness of the people to avoid touching eye, nose and mouth, wash hands regularly, practice respiratory hygiene, maintain social distancing etc to



the peoples. In this awareness campaign founder and president of the organization Rina Rani Nayak, Dr. Biswaranjan Jena, Dr. Jagannath Behera, Sanjaya Kumar Chualsingh, BDO, Lochan Dash, Dhaneswar Swain, Po-

lice Personnel, Subash Pahadsingh and Yours Hope Foundation Trust members Bikash Paltasingh, Ranjan Nayak, Mamali, Renubala, Rojalin, Sangram Rana and others are assist the programme.

EDITORIAL

The guides

Rahul and Mamata show the way, curb election rallies in view of the explosion in COVID cases. As the number of COVID-19 cases rises exponentially, in West Bengal that is currently witnessing the Assembly elections as well as elsewhere in the country, former Congress president Rahul Gandhi and TMC supremo Mamata Banerjee have taken a major decision in the larger interest of the State's population. While the Congress scion has cancelled all his public meetings in West Bengal, the TMC chief will not campaign in Kolkata anymore. Both the leaders have reportedly taken this decision in view of the rising COVID-19 infections in the State. While voting in three of the eight-phase Assembly elections is yet to be held, the State on Saturday registered its highest single-day spike of 7,713 new COVID-19 cases, taking the tally to 6,51,508. The death toll rose to 10,540 after 34 fresh fatalities were reported. Around the same time, 2.6 lakh new COVID-19 patients were detected across India in a single day. While Mamata will hold only one "symbolic" meeting in the State capital on the last day of campaigning, which is April 26, her election rallies in all other districts of the State will not be longer than 30 minutes. For his part, Rahul — who had only recently reached the State to campaign for the Congress candidates — has suspended all his public rallies there and advised all political leaders to "think deeply about the consequences of holding large public rallies under the current circumstances", understandably inviting plaudits from senior leaders of his party. The Congress leader had earlier taken a jibe at Prime Minister Narendra Modi after the BJP's star campaigner praised the people of West Bengal for turning up in large numbers for his political rally on Saturday. Rahul's move is certain to create pressure on the other main players in the fray, most notably the BJP and the TMC. While one is free to align with any political party or ideology, nobody is entitled to put the lives of anybody else on the line simply for the sake of amassing votes, especially in these sordid times. In this light, the decision by Rahul and Mamata deserves unregulated praise as, if nothing else, it puts the lives of the people of the State at greater premium than the lust for votes to form the next Government in West Bengal. Needless to say, other leaders would do well to take a leaf out of this sensible development.

Faith put to test?

The seers' response to the PM's Kumbh appeal must not be seen as weak-willed or forced. The ongoing pandemic has ravaged everyone alike. It doesn't matter if one is a common citizen, a bureaucrat, politician or a sadhu (seer) or belongs to which gender, the Coronavirus just doesn't discriminate. The virus is spreading like a wildfire and has put to test not only the economies, Governments and the healthcare infrastructure, but also faith and religion. The Maha Kumbh Mela at Haridwar, earlier slated to close on April 30, now wears a deserted look — after Prime Minister Narendra Modi's appeal to keep the remaining part of the Mela "symbolic" in the backdrop of the surging COVID-19 cases. With the pilgrims and seers leaving Haridwar, the skeptics may view it any way they like but no one should see it as a defeat of faith. Here, the matter of faith and religiosity needs to be seen through the prism of science — the philosophy as followed and professed by the great Indian monk Swami Vivekananda. The silent exodus from Haridwar proves yet again that for the flag-bearers and followers of the world's most ancient or primordial religious order — the 'Sanatan dharma' — science is as sacrosanct as faith. This is what our seers have done and this is exactly what they have been doing since ages. We should be thankful to the seers for heeding the PM's appeal and deciding to vacate the site. For thousands of "batuiks" (new inductees) and numerous others who must have been waiting to participate in the major religious event, giving up on the Shahi Snan (royal bath) or cutting short their stay is no mean sacrifice. But they have done so willingly to serve the greater cause of humanity by helping to break the transmission chain. The Kumbh is not only about 'Snan' (holy bath); it is in fact like a universe in microcosm — representing the very idea and soul of existence. But it's always good to surrender one's interests willingly when it's a question of the greater good of humankind. This behaviour is in sharp contrast to the Tablighi Jamaat members' — spitting on policemen and volunteers, urinating/defecating openly inside their quarantine centres and abusing doctors and nurses. It's really for the reader to decide for herself/himself which behaviour is close to fundamentalism and which one is sympathetic, accommodative and humane. After the Prime Minister's appeal, Juna akhada's Acharya Mahamandaleshwar Swami Avdeshanand Giri announced the formal conclusion of the Maha Kumbh Mela for their followers, saying that the remaining Shahi Snan should be observed symbolically on April 27. Many people assert that COVID-19 is here, and maybe will stay for long, but the Kumbh — which represents the primeval culture and its ethos in a nutshell — certainly has been around much longer. It's a good time to remember the famous lines by poet Iqbal: "Kuchh baat hai ki hasti mit-ti nahi hamaari, sadiyon raha hai dushman daur-e-zamaan hamara." It doesn't matter if that dushman (enemy) be as mighty as the Coronavirus. With faith by our side, we shall surely win.

What Modi really means to people

Even before becoming the Prime Minister, and ever since, Modi has scaled newer peaks of popularity, both at home and abroad. Member of Parliament from Arunachal Pradesh Tapir Gao, speaking in Parliament on April 1, described Prime Minister (PM) Narendra Modi as an avatar of God who is taking the country in the right direction. Gao said that Modi's work for tea plantation workers in West Bengal and Assam is "like an avatar of Bhagwan". Ladakh's MP Jamyang Tsering Namgyal hailed the PM as a yug purush (man of the era) for realising BJP ideology Syama Prasad Mookerjee's dream. Mookerjee had opposed the special status to Jammu & Kashmir. An ordinary mortal, I am unable to either corroborate or contradict these opinions. All I can do is to quote from the Gita. Chapter 4 of the Bhagwad Gita, delivered by Krishna to Arjuna in the battlefield of Kurukshetra, states: "Whenever and wherever there is a decline of the practice of dharma, O Bharat (Arjuna), and a predominant rise of adharma (evil) — I incarnate Myself. To deliver the pious and annihilate the evildoers, as well as to re-establish dharma, I appear, era after era." From the time I first met Modi by chance at the Vadodara airport in 1991 and had a 15-minute chat, I feel I met someone extraordinary. He was then the general secretary of the Gujarat BJP — the party had yet to come to power in the State. We remained in touch after that and until he became the PM, when I realised that he had flown to another planet and I had remained where I was. In his first term as the Gujarat Chief Minister, his name and fame had spread



Prafull Goradia

across the State to West Bengal and as far as Assam. The Bengali elite, which generally looked down on the BJP as communal, invited Modi to the Calcutta Club for a seminar on the Uniform Civil Code. Years later, in 2006, at Mumbai's Shanmukhananda Hall, Modi addressed a packed audience, speaking about his introduction of new technologies for agriculture in Gujarat. He revealed that earlier, at a party rally in Guwahati, he had been interrupted by the audience who said they would rather hear about how he was tackling infiltrators from Bangladesh. Modi told the Mumbai audience to tumultuous applause that his reply was that in Assam, people were oppressed by Bangladeshis but, in Gujarat, it was the Bangladeshis who felt oppressed by Modi. In 2013, Modi was chosen as the BJP's prime ministerial candidate by the RSS without consulting the party's bigwigs; the ambitions of the latter would come in his way. It had never happened before. This was the measure of his popularity having spread throughout the country

while he was busy with Gujarat. I was flabbergasted when I saw him on television as the PM for an exclusive lunch with Queen Elizabeth II at the Buckingham Palace and, on the same visit, addressing the British Parliament. Such honour has not been showered on any Indian leader — not even Jawaharlal Nehru. Soon thereafter, Modi addressed the US Congress, which only PV Narasimha Rao had done before. All this for a man who only until a few years ago had been denied a visa by Washington, with London being hesitant. This denotes that Modi has a rare charisma that travels electronically, not merely electrically. The flash of his charisma has not halted here. As the PM, he made friends with President Barack Obama. The next American President, Donald Trump, went gaga over him, sumptuously demonstrated at the 'Howdy Modi' rally at Houston, Texas, in September 2020. Earlier, Modi had commanded a similar performance in London, when then British PM David Cameron was present and delighted. Modi's

charisma has not been circumscribed by the borders and shores of India. The country has risen in the eyes and minds of the world. A telling example is India's response to the latest round of Chinese revanchism, particularly the Galwan incident on the Ladakh border, wherein China's People's Liberation Army (PLA) stealthily intruded and killed 20 Indian soldiers. Not only did the Indian Army hit back to inflict 40 or more casualties on the Chinese, it also occupied several strategic peaks along the Ladakh border, signalling its intent to escalate the conflict. More importantly, Modi did not issue mere protests from Delhi, as the previous PMs had done, but landed in Ladakh at our Army's forward base, barely miles from where the PLA is stationed across the Line of Actual Control, sounding India's determination to roll back any Chinese adventurism. Beijing is now talking about the benefits of bonhomie and peace with India. Pakistan remained a bogey until Modi came to power. Educated Indians would generally caution why New Delhi couldn't be too tough with Pakistan because of the 20 crore Muslims in India! Without harming a single hair of any Indian, Modi has silenced Islamabad to the extent that General Bajwa, Pakistan's de facto ruler, has started singing paeans of peace. Prior to Modi, the behaviour of India's political class made our people equate themselves with Pakistan. India's image in the world alternated between that of a cat and a rat. Modi has made the world believe that India is truly a lion. Readers may assess what this gentleman truly is — a human being, a superhuman or an avatar.

Democracy is a puppet of Rich

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There is a famous phrase in Hindi, "Ye Public he, Sab Janti he". Is it fact? How many of you know, 'What is exact expenditure of a MP or MLA candidate in any Indian election?' Few of you may guess a figure but no one is sure including me too. Recently, Pipili by election postponed due to untimely demise of congress candidate just before two days of scheduled date. It is really heart breaking for all the local leaders but both the BJD and BJP candidates are crying since that moment they heard, even more than his families and relatives. BJD candidate is somewhat okay but BJP, last time defeated candidate Poor Pattnaik was about to fall down loosing is sense. Most pathetic part is now he has to spend few lakhs of rupees every day till the end moment of voting. On and average it's 3-4laks of rupees minimum including fuel, food and fighting etc. Whatever arranged, everything was about to exhaust in a hour or two which stretched for next 30days due to this unforeseen unfortunate act of God i.e calling back a contestant trough COVID-19. All we know that a candidate is not free to spend as much as he/she likes in the election. The law prescribes that the total election expenditure shall not exceed the maximum limit prescribed under Rule 90 of the



Conduct of Election Rules, 1961. A candidate can spend upto Rs.70 lakh, depending on the state they are contesting the LokSabha election. Expenditure limit in the Assembly Elections is Rs. 28 lacs in bigger states. India is called the largest democracy of the world. Elections in India are celebrated like a national festival. But there is a proverb for Indian election that the elections of India are based on the 5Ms i.e. Money, Mind, Muscles, Mutton and Mahuli. The total election expenditure in India is increasing in leaps and bounds. In 1952, the cost was 60 paise per elector which became Rs. 17 per elector in 2004 and declined to Rs. 12 in 2009. It is worth to mention that total government expenditure for the first three general elections was around Rs. 10 cr each. The government expenditure rose to Rs. 100 crore until the eighth general election in 1984-85. It crossed Rs. 500 crore for the first time during the 11th general election in 1996 and went beyond Rs. 1,000 crore during the 14th general election in 2004. The total

government expenditure for the last LokSabha polls in 2014 at was around Rs. 3,870 crore which was 3 times more than the expenditure incurred for the 15th general election in 2009. It does not include expenditure of political parties. In the 2009 LokSabha polls, the cost to the exchequer was Rs. 1,483. This does not include the expenses incurred for security and the amount political parties will spend. Centre for Media Studies reports that for the general elections of 2014, BJP spent more than Rs. 700 crore for campaigning and publicity. Details submitted to the Election Commission reveal that BJP had spent Rs. 17.60 billion (Rs 1,760 crore) on fighting elections in the last five years to won 22 state elections. Main components of the election fair expenditure are; a. Expenditure on vehicles during election campaign:-34%, b. Expenditure on Campaigning equipment:- 23%, c. Expenditure on Election Rallies:- 13%, d. Expenditure on electronic and print media:- 7%, e. Expenditure on Banners, hoardings and pamphlets:-

4%, f. Expenditure on field visits:- 3%. In addition to above public knows the rest all heads of account which cost much more than above. However, Candidates have to keep a separate account and file the election expenses with the Election Commission of India under the law. All registered political parties have to submit a statement of their election expenditure to the Election Commission within 90 days of the completion of the LokSabha elections. While all candidates are required to submit their expenditure statement to the poll panel within 30 days of the completion of the elections. An incorrect account or expenditure beyond the cap can lead to disqualification for up to three years under Section 10A of the Representation of the People Act, 1951. It is observed that due to higher inflation in the economy the expenditure of elections is increasing in leap and bounds of yearly basis. Now political parties have to do huge campaigning to woo the voters. Even some candidates have admitted that the EC allows a candidate to spend only Rs. 70 lakh to fight the LokSabha elections, but in reality this election costs up to Rs. 2-3 crore per candidate. Public are not at all aware of all these things, so in fact most of the public doesn't know everything. We may conclude that the increasing election expenditure made the democracy as a puppet of some rich politicians that is why some honest and poor candidates are unable to fight the elections which is a unhealthy practice in the democracy.

DM Malkangiri's press conference in the DRDA conference room



(A.O. Bureau) Malkangiri, Apr 20: A press conference was held in the conference room of the District Rural Development Agency in the Malkangiri district headquarters under the chairmanship of District Magistrate Y Vijay Kumar. The district administration explained the rules on how all the people of the district would abide by the rules of Covid-19. Four roads in Andhra Pradesh, Telangana and Chhattisgarh, three

states adjoining the district, Motu, Kamarguda, Chalanguda and Sileru, have been blocked by the administration. Only vehicles providing essential supplies to the district could pass through the Chalanguda road, and people returning from out-of-state would come in large numbers and be allowed to enter the district by being properly examined by the district medical team. The district administration has set up four teams to

monitor Karona every day. To date, 27,944 people over the age of 70 have received the first dose, while 3370 have received the second dose, while the first dose has been received by 22,350 people between the ages of 45 and 59, while 274 have received the second dose. "If any of the expatriates returning from outside the state do not have access to home isolation outside the corona positive report, the district administration has also provided them

with TMC and CLTMC facilities," he said. Two AYUSH doctors have been assigned to those who will be at home isolation. The district attorney's office said the patient can call them at call center number 7684056213 to talk about their benefits. To get rid of this key 19, all the people of the district can contact 24 * 7 toll free number 06861231372 for their convenience. Every Saturday and Sunday of the week, everyone knows how to follow

the shutdown and night curfew and cooperate with the administration. Finally, everyone in the district was asked to wear masks to protect their social distance and not to leave their homes if they did not need them. Today's press conference was attended by various electronic media and print media of the district, including Sub District Magistrate Rameshwar Pradhan, PD DRDA Bal Mukund Bhuiyan, APD Manas Mishra, Tahsildar Dr Gunanidhi Nayak, Information and Public Relations Officer Snigdha Chowdhury. He encouraged ordinary people as well to take part in solving this great task: "One of the things you and other people can do is keep up the pressure ... there are going to be some difficult decisions for government".

Huge teak logs and sal timbers are seized by Malkangiri forest Range

(A.O. Bureau) Malkangiri, Apr 20: This morning, a team from the forest department, led by forest range officer Jagannath Prasad Bishoi, on the orders of Malkangiri Divisional forest officer Pradeep devidas Mirase, raided near a river Kamaliguda village under Tumasapalli panchayat in Korukonda block

During the raid, the forest department confiscated 11 Teak wooden logs four bija/sal timber. The total size of the seized timber will be 61 cubic feet. The market value of the seized timber is estimated at Rs 250,000. It is learned that the forest department is continuing its efforts to nab the culprits while there are no suspects at the scene.

Further investigation is underway to get to the root of the incident. The Forest Service confiscated the timber and filed a criminal case. Parandripani forester Mohan Gudia, MV 17 forester Divakar Jena, Korukonda forester Rajesh Kumar Sethi and all forest guards and security squads were involved in the raid.



Silver medalist Archer in financial crisis



(A.O. Bureau) Malkangiri, Apr 20: Era Tati a Young Silver medalist archer facing financial crisis "Despite the rumors, a 15-year-old tribal youth from Malabaram village in the Kalimela block of Malkangiri district, on the outskirts of Odisha, had a silver medal in the national school-level archery. But now

he is forced to return home. Era's father went to work in Andhra Pradesh about eight years ago and is still missing, while his mother died 18 days ago. Era stayed in his village to finish her mother's last rites. With no one to look after in his family, Era's older brother Gangraj, 18, and younger sister, Vime, 12, don't have enough money to eat. Employs. Living in a tribal area, Era Tati learned to use traditional bow arrows from an early age, which helped her lead the game in archery. Talented Era has won silver medals at the district, state and national levels. However, due to the death of her mother, she has been forced to stay away from her talents and dreams of archery while standing shoulder to shoulder with her brothers and sisters to gather food. Era, along with her siblings, is desperate to help the government for its future. According to local intellectuals, the government and Era's archery with Era's family will bring more glory and fame to our state and country.

Lessons from past to help Ganjam tide over coronavirus resurgence



(A.O. Bureau) Berhampur, Apr 20: The Ganjam administration will fight the second wave by using lessons drawn from its experience in Covid management last year. District Collector Vijay Amruta Kulange on Monday said all arrangements have been put in place to accommodate mi-

grant workers returning to Ganjam during the second Covid wave. "The number of migrant returnees is likely to be less in comparison to last year as no major industries have been closed in other states. However, we are prepared to meet any exigency," he said. Kulange directed the

district officials to record the details of returnees and keep them in isolation. In view of the spurt in Covid cases, door-to-door screening of people will be carried out from Tuesday. Households will be provided with contact numbers of the district Covid management centres apart from

telemedicine service. District level Covid management centres have been opened at MKCGMCH, City hospital and offices of Sub-Collectors which will function round the clock. The staff of 'Mo Sarkar' cell will work in three shifts. Symptomatic persons in isolation will be monitored regularly and in case of any complication, immediate treatment will be provided to them. Areas in the district reporting more positive cases will be declared mini-containment zones. The Collector said the administration is also keeping a close watch on Kumbh Mela returnees to the district. The returnees have been

asked to stay in compulsory isolation for 14 days. Kulange claimed that the district has adequate stock of medicines and oxygen. "Around 1,700 beds with oxygen have been readied. Last year, we had 98 ICU beds but now 250 have been kept ready. Unlike last year, buildings of various institutions will be used in case of any exigency. As many as 24 swab testing centres have been opened in the district. Besides, five ambulances have been provided to each block of the district," he added. In the last 24 hours Ganjam reported 62 new Covid cases. So far, 372 cases are active in the district.

Civic body shifts vegetable vendors to prevent crowding in Paradip



(A.O. Bureau) Paradip, Apr 20: Meanwhile, Jagatsinghpur district reported 33 positive cases on the day. With the new cases, the tally in the district rose to 9,460 of which 217 are active. Amid a spurt in Covid cases in the port town, Paradip Municipal authorities have shifted nearly 200 vegetable vendors temporarily from Badapadia mar-

ket to Bank Street to prevent crowding in the business hub. Situated in the heart of Paradip, Badapadia market witnesses huge crowd every day. Due to its close proximity to the main road, the market is also frequented by commuters. Sources said most of the customers neither wear masks nor maintain social distance, pos-

ing risk to public health. In the last six days, Paradip has reported 34 Covid cases forcing the administration to put in place preventive measures to check the virus spread. On Monday, two cases were detected in the port town. Apart from Badapadia, Atharbaki, Nuabazaar and Tareni markets in the port town also witness blatant violation

of Covid guidelines by people. Despite repeated appeals, both customers and shopkeepers throw safety protocols to the wind. Besides, the sea beaches near Batighar and Nehrubangla are being thronged by hundreds of people in the afternoon. In view of the swelling crowd, petty shops like 'gupchup', 'chaat', tea, coffee and betel stalls have

come up near the beaches and are doing brisk business. Sources said the beach goes too openly flout the guidelines. Executive officer of Paradip Municipality Sourindra Routray said the vegetable vendors have been shifted to Bank Street to avert any possible spread of Covid-19 infection. "Shopkeepers were also shifted from Badapadia daily market after a spike in positive cases last year. The shifting is temporary. We have directed all shopkeepers to wear masks and maintain social distance for their safety," he added. Meanwhile, Jagatsinghpur district reported 33 positive cases on the day. With the new cases, the tally in the district rose to 9,460 of which 217 are active.

Daily record spike of 241 Covid positive cases in Sambalpur

(A.O. Bureau) Sambalpur, Apr 20: Sambalpur district on Monday reported the highest single day spike of 241 positive cases since the pandemic broke out last year. As many as 1,699 positive cases have been detected in the district in April so far. Sambalpur reported the first case on May 17 last year. The previous daily record spike in the district was 182 reported on August 27, 2020. With the new Covid cases, the tally in the district rose to 11,968 of which 10,480 have already recovered. Sambalpur now has 1,408 active cases. The Covid death toll stands at 80. District Collector

Subham Saxena said, "Since many people are under home isolation, we have decided to increase the number of rapid response teams (RRTs) in Sambalpur Municipal Corporation (SMC) area. The aim is to provide better health facilities and medicines at the doorsteps of patients under isolation. A call centre has also been set up to monitor the health condition of people under home isolation." Official sources said more than 40 temporary medical centres (TMCs) including nine in SMC area have been readied in the district. Besides, Covid care centres are open in Rairakhol, Kuchinda and

Burla. A screening-cum-reporting centre has also started functioning in the district from Monday. Meanwhile, the premises of Sambalpur District Bar Association has been closed for 15 days in view of the prevailing Covid crisis. President of the association Pramod Rath said, "Considering the alarming situation in the district, we have decided to close down the bar premises for 15 days. However, members having urgent work can come to the bar at their own risk. The court has been informed that lawyers will not cross-examine witnesses if they do not produce RT-PCR negative report of the same day."



Akansha Ranjan Kapoor on shoots getting stalled: My big fear is that my projects might get scrapped



New Delhi, Apr 20: Actor Akansha Ranjan Kapoor says the ongoing wave of Covid-19 crisis is very bad, and that is making her anxious about her pending work. Akansha Ranjan Kapoor had a couple of shoots lined up when the resurgence of the Covid-19 crisis in India send everything for a toss. At the moment, the actor says she is haunted by her biggest fear that her projects might e shelved. "I am being very weirdly self-ish. But my brain always goes to the most negative place, which is a terrible thing about me, but I just feel like things will get scrapped, so that is my big fear right now," she admits.. Kapoor admits being in denial about the current situation. "I am just too scared. The second wave is very bad, and

everyone has been telling me to 'brace yourself to be home for at least a month'. I'm just hoping against hope that this is the last time we have to do this." Last year, when the lockdown was imposed, she made peace with it as it happened just after her debut film, Guilty, released on an OTT platform, and she had nothing else on the horizon. "So, I was very relaxed sitting at home," she adds. "First, it was supposed to start on March 24, and then it got pushed to the first week of April, and then it got pushed to mid April, and now, it was going to happen on April 25, and I know that it is definitely not happening," she reveals. When suggested that she can use this spare time to prepare for the project, the actor says, "Vasan

Bala, who is the director of the project, doesn't like too much prep. Some time back, we started prep and rehearsal, and Vasan was like, 'Yeh bahut zyada prep ho raha hai'. So, that is one of his instruction." The actor, who will start working on the role two days before the shoot begins, quips, "But the two-three days isn't coming only." The 27-year-old feels that the ongoing crisis has "literally" made everything go haywire. "I had a couple of more shoots, which were all scheduled for April, and now everything has been pushed. It is a bummer," Kapoor says with disappointment, adding that while she understands that people are fighting bigger problems, these work woes make her "upset".

Bipasha, husband Karan get cosy as they bask in 'vitamin D plus vitamin love'

Mumbai, Apr 20: Bipasha Basu and husband Karan Singh Grover are staying at home during the lockdown but that doesn't mean they are not enjoying themselves. Actor Bipasha Basu on Tuesday took to Instagram Stories to share a video with husband Karan Singh Grover. While her larger message was to ask all her fans to stay indoors, she also mentioned how they were enjoying themselves at home. Sharing it, she wrote: "Vitamin D plus Vitamin Love. Grateful. Stay at home." The video showed the couple sitting together on a swing, enjoying the sunshine as they cuddled together. Bipasha is quite active on Instagram and keeps posting interesting up-

dates about her life. A couple of days back, she shared a clip from her first film, Ajnabee. She was paired with Bobby Deol in the film. Sharing it, she wrote:

so so special to me. Sending my love to the entire team of the film ? #throwback." It appears between February and March, Bipasha and Karan went for a holi-

shared a picture with him and had written: "My 2nd most favourite day of the year is here.. @iamksgofficial birthday I love you." The couple had later shared

The couple married in 2016. In an interview with iDiva, Bipasha had revealed that the bed-rock of their relationship was friendship: "Our relationship's key funda-



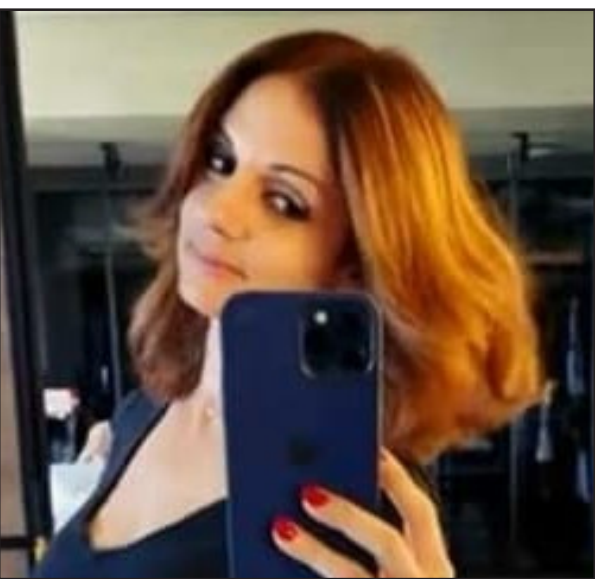
"My Debut in the world of Hindi Cinema... #ajnaabee will always be

day to the Maldives twice. On his birthday in February, Bipasha had

brehtaking pictures of the open sea and sky from the island nation.

mental foundation is friendship. It's selfless and loving."

Sussanne Khan says 'hello summer' with a new haircut



New Delhi, Apr 20: Sussanne Khan shared a video showing off her new hairstyle. Commenting on it were her industry friends Bipasha Basu, Shilpa Shetty, and producer Ekta Kapoor. Interior designer Sussanne Khan welcomed summer with a new hairstyle. She posted a video showing off her new look. Posting it, she wrote: "Hello Summer... chop chop

chop @zenobiamody @kromakaysalon." The video saw a number of her industry friends react to it. Bipasha Basu said "cute" while Shilpa Shetty wrote "love it". Ekta Kapoor also said: "Nice ! Cutting. Mine tom." Sussanne's fans too were happy to see her new look. One said: "Love it. Looks so good. You've chopped off 10 years." Another said: "So beautiful." Sussanne is an

interior designer. In January this year, she launched her online store called The Charcoal Project. In another post, she shared a throwback picture from her sons' childhood and wrote: "My Heart monsters.. who have eaten up my heart." Sharing another one featuring her father Sanjay Khan, she wrote: "Questions of science... my pa and my babyboy..

Priyanka Chopra says she taught people in West to pronounce her name: 'If you can say Oprah, you can say Chopra'

Mumbai, Apr 20: As Priyanka Chopra and Kabir Bedi sat down for a tete-a-tete as she launched his memoirs Stories I Must Tell via video conferencing, the discussion veered around what it takes to make it big in Hollywood if you are an Indian actor. Sharing his insights about attempting to break in back in the 80s, Kabir said in the conversation, "I had stardom in Europe behind me as I was a rage across the continent. I came to Hollywood as a newcomer, I thought they'd be impressed by that. But they didn't care that I lived in a house in Beverly Hills or bought myself a Mercedes." He went on to say that he had the best PR representatives and agencies working for him but nothing



made a dent. "The problem was that in those days, Hollywood just wasn't writing roles for Indians or Asians, so how do you get a role of it is not written for you? I'd protest in trade papers, that it is wrong. When they did have a role for an Asian, they didn't have a hesitation

painting a white actor brown and giving him the role. So, this was the other problem," he told Priyanka. Kabir said he then decided to work in any role that was 'foreign looking' to people in Hollywood. "In the James Bond film, I was actually cast as an Indian, but in Ashanti with

Micheal Kane, I played a Tuareg tribesmen. In Bold and the Beautiful, I played a Moroccan prince, so it is playing the foreign tag that got me the roles. In those days, Krishna Bhanji had to change his name to Ben Kingsley to get roles. Today a Priyanka Chopra does not have

to change her name to have success in America." Priyanka, however, said that she had to do "ethnically ambiguous" roles to start with. "While I didn't have to change my name, but I had to teach people how to say my name, if you can say Oprah, you can say Chopra. I had to be ethnically ambiguous to a certain extent to be able to get mainstream roles. Even Quantico, for that matter, I played a half Indian-half American. I couldn't step out there being Indian because it was too alien for Hollywood." She said that while she got the attention playing an ethnically ambiguous role, now she is getting a chance to play Indian characters, like in The White Tiger or the film with Mindy Kaling.

TN distributors hope the success of Master, Karnan will keep producers away from OTT amid fresh lockdown

Bengaluru, Apr 20: As Tamil Nadu government's new set of Covid-19 restrictions came into force on Tuesday, the members of the Tamil Nadu Exhibitors Association met virtually to discuss the situation. "In the meeting, we have decided to run theatres as per the government norms," said Tirupur Subramaniam, the presi-

a lot of energy. In the last four months, a few big films had revived the box office business in Tamil Nadu, which suffered considerably following the Covid-induced lockdown last March. It was Vijay's Master in January, which drew the crowd out of their homes in massive numbers. Theatres made up for the 50 per cent cap on the oc-

film became a top choice for the audience in Tamil Nadu, and it even made good gains in overseas markets. By the end of the first week, the film was declared a blockbuster. "Karnan did a very good business. In distribution circles, none of them incurred the loss," said Subramaniam. With new restrictions in place,



dent of the exhibitors' association. While there is no complete lockdown, the new restrictions will greatly affect the business prospects of movies. "There are no night shows on weekdays and full lockdown on Sundays. Fearing a big loss in revenue, many producers are withholding their films," Subramaniam added. The second wave has hit the country at a time when the Tamil film industry was bustling with

cupancy by running extra shows and early morning fan shows. And 10 days after its initial release, the film was already in the profit zone. The momentum at the box office was sustained by Godzilla vs. Kong, which came out in March. And Karthi's Sultan also did solid business as theatres had the permission to function with full occupancy by then. And on April 9, Dhanush's Karnan hit screens. The hard-hitting

many filmmakers have already postponed the release of their films in April. Thalaivi, starring Kangana Ranaut and Arvind Swami, was due in cinemas on April 23. However, the filmmakers withheld its release citing rising Covid-19 cases. So did the makers of MGR Magan, starring Sasikumar and Sathyaraj. And the delay in releasing new films will cause a box office draught once again.

Kangana Ranaut quashes OTT release rumours for Thalaivi, says 'movie mafia' is doing 'fake propaganda'



New Delhi, Apr 20: Much like many other upcoming Indian films, the release of Kangana Ranaut starrer Thalaivi was postponed amid the rising Covid-19 cases across the country. The film was earlier scheduled for a release on April 23. There was some speculation if the film would now release on an OTT platform but Kangana has

now quashed those rumours. Taking to Instagram, Kangana shared a story wherein she mentioned that the film will first release in theatres, and will be available on OTT platforms only after the theatrical release. Her Insta story read, "Announcement—Thalaivi digital rights are with Amazon (Tamil) and Netflix (Hindi) none of

them can individually stream the movie before theatres release, all the fake propaganda movie mafia doing please ignore." Alongside Ranaut, Thalaivi also stars Arvind Swamy, Bhayashree among many others. Based on the life of J Jayalalithaa, the biopic has been directed by AL Vijay and will be released in Hindi, Tamil and Telugu.

I don't want anyone to say I'm unfit: MS Dhoni

New Delhi, Apr 20: MS Dhoni, who retired from international cricket last year, admitted that "getting old and being fit are two difficult things". Chennai Super Kings skipper Mahendra Singh Dhoni on Monday admitted that while it is hard to "keep up" with younger players in the squad he does not want anyone



to point fingers at him over his fitness. Dhoni, 39, who retired from international cricket last year, admitted that "getting old and being fit are two difficult things". "When you are playing, you don't really want anyone to say he's unfit. I have to keep up with the younger guys, they are very fast, it's good to chal-

lenge them," Dhoni said after CSK beat Rajasthan Royals by 45 runs in their IPL match. "Performances are something that's guaranteed. I wasn't guaranteeing performances when I was 24. I can't guarantee when I am 40, but at least if people can't point finger at me that he's unfit then that will be a big positive for me." Meanwhile, speaking about the match, the CSK captain applauded his side's performance. "I felt Sam bowled really well. Deepak, there was a bit of miscalculation with the knuckle delivery. So I felt a good start was important. Even the wet ball was spinning. "I don't really mind Jos playing reverse sweep. If the wet ball was turning then the chance of the dry ball turning is high." "The way we have prepared. The bowlers have been under the pump last year also, so they're used to the conditions." "Our bowlers bowled really well, they batted too deep. 10-15 runs extra we gave down the line. We lost the match but there are a lot of positives. "The dew didn't come and the ball was still turning, so it was a bit shocking to see. "It's important to maintain good composure, this format demands us to score at a higher risk rate, so it's very normal to get out often. I keep working on the basics and giving myself some time at the centre," he concluded.

Will continue to bat the way I love to, says RR skipper Samson

Mumbai, Apr 20: Rajasthan Royals captain Sanju Samson is not bothered about failures and said he would continue to play his shots and keep on batting the way he loves to in the ongoing Indian Premier League. Samson scored a blistering ton in the first match which Royals lost narrowly to Punjab Kings but failed to come good against Delhi Capitals and against Chennai Super Kings on Monday night. "Yeah, actually it keeps on happening in this format of the game. I think IPL definitely demands a lot of risk-taking shots. And I said before when I succeeded, I took a lot of risks. That's why I scored a hundred. So, it depends actually on the day, the mindset you are coming with," Samson said at the post-match press conference after RR lost to CSK by 45 runs here on Monday night. "Ac-



tually, I don't want to restrict my shots, I want to keep on playing my shots and keep on batting the way I love to bat actually. So, I'm also accepting a lot of failures on the way. So, I am not at all worried about getting out, but at the same time, I will definitely look to keep on contributing to my team's victory in the coming matches." He

said the IPL is a long tournament and it was normal to fail in a few matches. "Pressure to perform is always there. When you play IPL, pressure is always there. Sometimes you succeed and sometimes you fail. I think IPL is a long format and you play 14 continuous matches, it is very normal to fail in a few matches. "(But) it is al-

ways crucial to remember how good a team we are...So, we'll keep on coming back and keep on trying to win the coming matches," Samson said. Samson said the chase on Monday night would have been easy if dew had come in. "Looking at the previous matches, we played here or which we watched on the TV, I think bowling

first has more advantage than bowling second. So that's why we opted to bowl first and actually restricting CSK around 180 was really good work by our bowlers. "I thought if the dew comes on and the wicket eases out a bit, it would have been an easy chase for us actually," he added. Asked about the batting order, the RR captain backed Shivam Dube, who could not get going on Monday, for the crucial No 4 position. "I think our batting order is very nicely set up. I think Shivam Dube is someone who is good at playing spin and pace. I think No 4 really suits him. It depends upon the condition actually. "I think he has definitely done really well in the domestic season and I feel he is really looking good and we expect a lot of runs from him in the coming matches. David Miller is a really great finisher and one of the greatest finishers in world cricket."

Moeen kicks Royals Out



Mumbai, Apr 20: Ali sparks Rajasthan middle-order collapse with 3/7 to help Chennai win by 45 runs. The spin duo of Ravindra Jadeja and Moeen Ali tormented the Rajasthan Royals batting line-up to ensure a second consecutive win for Chennai Super Kings in the IPL here on Monday. Cameos from Faf du Plessis (33 off 17), Dwayne Bravo (20 not out off 8), Ambati Raydu (27 off 17) and Ali (26 off 20) helped CSK post 188 for nine after being put

in to bat. Royals made a promising start in the run chase courtesy Jos Buttler (49 off 35) before the batsmen succumbed to the spinners on the Wankhede pitch which offered more turn than earlier games. CSK won the game by 45 runs after Royals' innings ended at 143 for nine. Ali (3/7 in 3 overs) picked up three wickets in quick succession to effectively seal the game for his team after Jadeja (2/28 in 4) provided the crucial breakthrough by casting Buttler with a

classical away turning delivery. One of the best fielders around, Jadeja also took four catches. It was another emphatic win for CSK after they outplayed Punjab Kings while Royals suffered their second loss in three games. Earlier, CSK lost wickets towards the end with the batsmen going for big hits and also in the face of some good bowling by Royals. Bravo smashed a huge six off the last ball of the innings from Mustafizur Rahman (1/37) to ensure the Su-

per Kings got close to 190. Du Plessis top scored with 33 as the CSK batsmen got starts but couldn't capitalise on them after. Young Chetan Sakariya (3/36 from 4) was the best bowler for Rajasthan while Chris Morris finished with 2/33 despite conceding 15 runs in his final over. MS Dhoni, in his 200th match as CSK captain, came in to bat at No.7 but could not get going as quickly as he would have liked. He, however, managed two boundaries in his 17-ball 18 before being beaten by an off-cutter by Sakariya only to give a catch to Jos Buttler. He survived a run-out chance and a few anxious moments in his brief knock. Rayudu and Suresh Raina (18, 15 balls, 1 four, 1 six) added 45 runs in quick time for the fourth wicket before the former perished going for an attacking shot on the off-side off Sakariya. Sakariya struck again a few balls later, getting Raina to hit

one straight to Morris at mid-off as CSK slipped to 125 for five in the 15th over. Rayudu hit sixes off successive deliveries in Tewatia's second over, scoring 14 runs as he and Raina attempted to take advantage of the fifth and sixth bowlers (Tewatia and Riyan Parag) employed by Royals skipper Samson. Tewatia had begun well by conceding only five runs in his opening over and got ride of Moeen Ali (26 off 20). Opener Ruturaj Gaikwad's struggles continued as his attempt to hit his way out saw him miscue a pull only to see it lob to Shivam Dube off Rahman. He fell for 10 (13 balls, 1 four) after adding 25 runs for the first wicket with fellow opener Faf du Plessis. The South African showed intent and waded into Jaydev Unadkat in the fifth over, hammering three fours and one six before an ambitious shot brought his downfall off Morris' bowling.

Asian Championship: Lifter Achinta Sheuli finishes second in men's 73kg group B



New Delhi, Apr 20: Indian weightlifter Achinta Sheuli finished second in the 73kg group B competition at the Asian Championship in Chennai on Tuesday. Indian weightlifter Achinta Sheuli finished second in the 73kg group B competition at the Asian Championship in Chennai on Tuesday. The Commonwealth Championship gold medallist lifted 309kg — 139kg in snatch followed by 170kg in clean and jerk. The Indian had the best snatch lift (139kg) in the four-man field. However, he failed to lift 174kg in his final clean and jerk attempt which would have seen him top the group. Kazakhstan's Sairamkez Akmolda 310kg (130kg+180kg) finished first in the group. Achinta's final standing will be determined after the end of the group A proceedings. India has

won two medals in the ongoing continental event. Ace weightlifter and former world champion Mirabai Chanu and Odisha's Jhilli Dalabehera bagged the bronze and gold medals respectively last week. Olympic-bound Mirabai smashed the world record in the women's 49kg clean and jerk en-route her bronze. She lifted 86kg in snatch before setting a new world mark of 119kg in clean and jerk for a total of 205kg. While Jhilli, a junior world championship bronze medallist, took home the gold in the women's 45kg event, which though is a non-Olympic category. The Asian Weightlifting Championships is a gold level qualifying event of the Tokyo Games. The points gathered from this event will come in handy when the final rankings for the Olympics are made.

FC Goa face big test against Iranian giants Persepolis in AFC Champions League

New Delhi, Apr 20: To say there is bad blood between Persepolis and Indian football would be an understatement. The Iranian club, currently in Goa for the Asian Champions League, has been on a warpath with All India Football Federation (AIFF) even before they landed in the country. This, along with a series of other incidents, has added spice to their Group E encounter against FC Goa, set to take place on Tuesday at the Fatorda Stadium. It all

started with the Persepolis website alleging that they had received information that the Dabolim Airport, in possession of the Indian Navy, was denying their entourage a flight permit. The same statement went on to accuse Indian authorities of sabotage. "Until last night, a visa to travel to India had been issued to the Iranian whites, and the Indian Football Federation had been informed of the presence of the Persepolis team a week ago and had also sent



confirmation for the arrival of the team convoy, but within a few hours everything changed. Undoubtedly, this prob-

lem has nothing to do with Persepolis Club and the Football Federation, and it seems that the Indian authori-

ties are sabotaging it," said a team statement on Persepolis' website. This was then followed by an Instagram post

that compared their match against Goa to the invasion of India by a Persian emperor. The AIFF complained to the Asian Football Confederation and Persepolis apologised for the post. Coming to the football, the matchup will see the team with the best offence in the group go up against a stingy Goan side that has not conceded in 180 minutes. The surprise of Goa doing well enough to pick up a couple of points from their first two games was echoed

by Persepolis coach Yahya Golmohammadi. "Goa have proven to be a very good side and I think they are the surprise package in the Champions League so far," said Golmohammadi. "They stopped two good teams (Al Wahda and Al Rayyan) and these draws were not lucky at all." The question of why Goa have yet to concede a goal is one whose answer lies in the way the team has been set up. A three-man midfield comprising Edu

Bedia, Glan Martins and Brandon Fernandes usually operates deep in their own half. Clogging the channels has allowed a player like Martins to eat up interceptions with ease over the two games. But it is the technical ability of these three players to hold on to the ball after winning it that is ensuring Goa has possession and their opponents don't get to play with the ball as much, and thus don't get to take as many high-quality shots as they would like.

NTPC Talcher Kaniha initiative towards providing piped drinking water



(A.O. Bureau) Talcher, Apr 20: NTPC Kaniha is committed to providing piped drinking water to its peripheral villages through a piped drinking water system and in this regard the inauguration of the laying of pipeline for Sarathipal village under CSR initiative was done this month in April. Shri Sudip Nag Chief General Manager NTPC Talcher Kaniha, Shri

Shivam Shivastava GM (O&M), Shri P.S.Ramakrishna GM (Operation), Shri S.S.Pradhan AGM (DM Plant), Shri Rafiqul Islam AGM (CSR) and President (NTPC Employees Union) Shri Jagabandhu Pradhan among others were present during the inauguration of the pipeline. A pipeline already existed for Tolakabeda village and now an ex-

tension for Sarathipal village was created. The water is sourced from the Plant and shall provide safe drinking water to Sarathipal village having a population of around 200. The station at present plans to provide piped drinking water to additional villages in future and every year provides water through tankers to nearby villages during summer to mitigate the shortage of water.

SOA Holds First International Fdp On Professional And Research Writing

(A.O. Bureau) Bhubaneswar, Apr 20: A five-day International Faculty Development Program (FDP) on Recent Trends in Professional and Research Writing, the first of its kind organised by Siksha 'O' Anusandhan (SOA) here, concluded on Monday. Resource persons at the FDP, held virtually with the focus on research methodologies, highlighted the new avenues which present day research unfolded and the scientific process of

discovering and communicating meaningful patterns of research data. The FDP, which was organised by the department of Humanities and Social Sciences, Institute of technical education and research, faculty of engineering and technology of SOA in collaboration with Interdisciplinary Journal for Humanities and Social Sciences (Scopus Indexed) and University of Arizona, was attended by around 500 participants. The participants were

told that analytics led to the uncovering of hidden patterns in the world which could transform one's view of the world for the better. The resource persons also explained how writing was an art and how it could be done in a comprehensive manner. Prof. J.P.Singh Joreel, Director, Infilbnet Centre, Gandhinagar, who was the chief guest on the inaugural day, spoke on emerging trends in research in linguistics and related areas. The other

resource persons included Prof. Albrecht Classen from University of Arizona, Prof. L.K.Jena from Xavier University, Bhubaneswar, Ms. Pratigyan Das, Senior Assistant Editor, The Times of India, New Delhi and Prof. Anand Mahanand, Head of Department, English and Foreign Languages University (EFLU), Hyderabad. Prof. Tirtha Prasad Mukhopadhyay, Professor at the University of Mexico, who addressed the valedictory

session, spoke on the subject 'Pedagogy in Research'. Dr. Swayam Prabha Satpathy, Associate Professor in the Department of Humanities, was the Convenor of the FDP while Dr. Kabita Das, Head of Department of Humanities was the Co-convenor. The coordinators were Dr. Shibani Patnaik, Dr. Malvika Mohapatra, Dr. Subismita Lenka, Dr. Moushumi Dash, Ms. Prachisri Mishra and Ms. Monalisa Mishra.

Special Train Between Yesvantpur & Howrah

(A.O. Bureau) New Delhi, Apr 20: Ministry of Railways has decided to run a pair of Special Train between Yesvantpur & Howrah from 22nd April to 29th June, 2021. 06597

Yesvantpur-Howrah Special from Yesvantpur will leave at 0955hrs on every Thursday between 22nd April to 24th June, 2021 and will arrive at Howrah at 1830hrs on next days. In the return direction,

06598 Howrah-Yesvantpur Special from Howrah will leave at 1240hrs on every Tuesday between 27th April to 29th June, 2021 and will arrive at Yesvantpur at 2040hrs on the next days. This train

has 10AC-3 Tier, 06AC-2 Tier, Two Guard cum luggage Vans in its composition having stoppages at important Stations between Yesvantpur & Howrah. This train will provide stoppages at

Bhadrak, Cuttack, Bhubaneswar, Khurda Road, Brahmapur, Palasa, Srikakulam Road, Vizianagaram, Visakhapatnam & Duvvada in East Coast Railway jurisdiction.

The main accused in abduction of former DM Vinil krishna has surrendered to Andhra police



(A.O. Bureau) Malkangiri, Apr 20: Former Malkangiri district Magistrate R.Vinil Krishna is the

main accused in the abduction. Andhra Pradesh Border Zonal Committee Maoist Secretary M.

Jalandhar Reddy alias Krishna surrendered to Andhra police today. Hundreds of cases have been regis-

tered in various police stations in Malkangiri, Koraput and Visakhapatnam districts in the name of

Naxal leader krishna. In addition, police in three states announced a bounty of Rs 3 lakh to apprehend him. Maoist leader krishna has finally surrendered to the Andhra Pradesh Police DG after repeated operations by Andhra and Odisha police in the Swabhimana area. Andhra Pradesh police have provided houses worth Rs 20 lakh to the notorious Maoists, who have left the Maoist organization and joined the mainstream of society. Malkangiri police may remand him in custody as there are already several cases pending against him in Malkangiri district.

Korean steel giant evinces fresh interest to set up plant in Odisha

(A.O. Bureau) Bhubaneswar, Apr 20: South Korea Ambassador Shin Bongkil on Monday rekindled the hope of Posco investing 12 billion US dollar (approximately Rs 90,000 crore) in a steel project in Odisha. Participating in a roundtable on 'South Korea and

the 1,880 acre of land handed over to it by Idco saying that it had no intention to use it urgently. The project ran into rough weather as the overseas company did not get a firm commitment from the State government to get a captive mines for the proposed plant following

organised in September for exploring opportunities in smart city projects. Minister of State for Industries and MSME Dibya Shankar Mishra said Odisha and Korea have many possibilities to collaborate across the identified focus sectors of the State. He said



Odisha: Promoting Bilateral Business Opportunities' organised by the Indian Chamber of Commerce (ICC) in association with Industrial Promotion and Invest Corporation of Odisha Ltd (IPICOL) through virtual mode, Bongkil said Korean steel giant Posco has plans to make one of the single largest FDI in the history of India with an investment of US \$12 billion to set up an integrated steel plant in Odisha. Such an announcement from the South Korean ambassador came after four years of scrapping the green field project. In February 2017, Posco had communicated its intention to surrender

changes in the Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulations) Act, 1957. Informing that 66 new Korean companies have entered India in the last one year, Bongkil said these companies have made an investment of US \$17 million in 2020 as compared to US \$21.15 million in the previous year which is a very good figure keeping in view the pandemic situation. Director of Korea Trade-Investment Promotion Agency Young Seaon Park said the Korean companies are very eager to work in the areas of renewable energy, water treatment and smart city projects. B2B meetings will be

Odisha is in the process of implementing a strategy document, Vision 2030, which aims to ensure that 50 per cent of the primary metals produced in the State is value added in the State. Special Secretary of Industries and Managing Director of IPICOL Nitin B Jawale showcased the strength and diversity of Odisha through an audio visual. Elaborating on Vision 2030, he said the State is expecting an investment of Rs 2 lakh crore. The session was moderated by JB Pany, Chairman of ICC Odisha State Council and Siddhant Kaul, Consul General, Republic of Korea also spoke.

Bharat Biotech to scale up Covaxin production capacity to 700 million doses a year

(A.O. Bureau) Pune, Apr 20: Bharat Biotech has announced a scaling up of its manufacturing capacity to produce 700 million doses of Covaxin annually. The vaccine has received Emergency Use Authorisations (EUA) in several countries across the globe with another 60 in process including the US. Pricing for international markets and supplies to governments under EUAs have been established between \$15 and \$20 per dose. To further increase capacities, Bharat Biotech has partnered with Indian Immunologicals (IIL) to manufacture the drug substance for Covaxin. The technology transfer process is underway and IIL has the capabilities and expertise to manufacture inactivated viral vaccines at commercial scale and under biosafety containment. The manufacturing scale-up has



been carried out in a stepwise manner across multiple facilities at Hyderabad and Bangalore. Inactivated vaccines, while highly safe, are extremely complex and expensive to manufacture, resulting in lower yields when compared to live virus vaccines. Capacity expansion in vaccines manufacturing is a long and tedious process,

requiring investments of several millions of rupees and several years. Bharat Biotech claimed it is able to expand Covaxin manufacturing capacity in a short timeline, mainly due to the availability of new specially designed BSL-3 facilities, first of its kind for manufacturing in India that have been repurposed and preexisting expertise and know-

how to manufacture, test and release highly purified inactivated viral vaccines. Manufacturing partnerships are being explored with partners in other countries, who have prior expertise with commercial-scale manufacture of inactivated viral vaccines under biosafety containment, the statement added. Bharat Biotech uses a proprietary adju-

vant Algel-IMDG, that has now proven to be a safe and effective adjuvant, especially to stimulate memory T cell responses. The synthesis and manufacture of the IMDG component has been successfully indigenized and will be manufactured at commercial scale within the country. This is the first instance where a novel adjuvant has been commercialised in India. The protocols for manufacturing, testing and release of inactivated vaccines have been tried, tested and validated across several of our vaccines, these also meet the requirements of WHO, Indian and other regulatory authorities. These protocols have delivered consistent results over a 15-year period with more than 300 million doses supplied globally, with excellent safety and performance record, an official statement issued today has said.