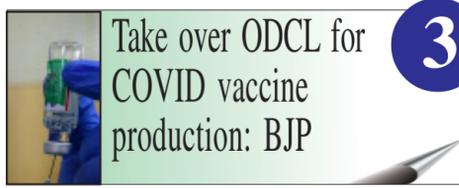




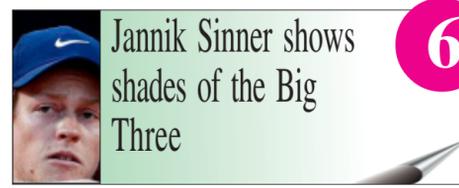
Mamata Banerjee To Contest From Bhawanipur Seat

2



Take over ODCL for COVID vaccine production: BJP

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Jannik Sinner shows shades of the Big Three

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Arjun Kapoor, Parineeti Chopra-starrer Sandeep Aur Pinky Faraar is now streaming on Amazon Prime

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CM Inaugurates 150 Bedded Dedicated Covid Hospital At Puri

Bhubaneswar, May 21: Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik today dedicated a 150 bedded District Covid Hospital in the premises of Shri Jagannath Medical College at Puri through the virtual platform. Built in collaboration with Sum Hospital Bhubaneswar,

on occasion, Chief Minister Patnaik said that the hospital will be helpful in providing better medical care to critical Covid patients of the district and they would not have to look for hospitals in Bhubaneswar or Cuttack. The entire expenditure for the opera-

with oxygen pipeline, and oxygen beds would be further increased if required. He thanked the Institute of Medical Sciences & Sum Hospital Bhubaneswar for coming forward to team up with the State Government for this Covid-care facility. Saying that

and our general wellbeing, he added. He further said that last year in the first wave, despite the economic impact, we contained the virus with greater success. This year in the second wave, we have so far been able to contain it largely. The recovery rate is also improving, he added. Chief Minister said that we have a robust Covid infrastructure and are working to improve it further. The government is making every possible effort to provide best treatment facilities and save precious lives, he informed. Appealing the people to follow all Covid norms to beat the pandemic, Patnaik said that the success in containing this pandemic lies in checking the virus and breaking its chain. The Chief Minister appreciated the people of Odisha for the cooperation in the fight against the pandemic. Joining the programme

on Video Conferencing, Health Minister Naba Das highlighted the steps taken by the government to contain the pandemic. School & Mass Education Minister Sameer Ranjan Das, Sports & Youth Services Minister Tushar Kanti Behera thanked the Chief Minister for the Covid hospital in Puri. Deputy Chairman of State Planning Board Sanjay Das Burma said people of Puri will be greatly benefited by this facility. Puri MP Pinaki Mishra spoke on the dynamic leadership of Chief Minister in providing oxygen support to different States. The function was attended by WODC Chairman Asit Tripathy, Chief Secretary Suresh Chandra Mohapatra and ACS Health PK Mohapatra, and Superintendent Sum Hospital Dr P Samantasinghar. Puri Collector gave the welcome address and ADM offered the vote of thanks.



the facility has 90 General Oxygen Beds, 40 HDU beds and 20 ICU beds. It is also equipped with a high-quality laboratory and diagnostics facility. Speaking on the

tion of the Covid hospital will be borne from Chief Minister's Relief Fund, the Chief Minister announced. He added that all the beds have been connected

this is a very challenging time for all of us in the country, the CM said that this pandemic has created a huge humanitarian crisis. It's a threat to our lives, our health,

PM Modi gets emotional as he pays tribute: 'Coronavirus snatched many loved ones from us'



New Delhi, May 21: Prime Minister Narendra Modi Friday broke down while expressing condolences to the families of those who died of Covid during the second wave of the virus. With the country grappling with the crisis, PM Modi got emotional while virtually reviewing the Covid situation in Uttar Pradesh's Kashi with doctors and frontline workers working there. "Corona has snatched many of our loved ones from us. I pay my respects to all those people, express my condolences to their families," the prime minister said, his voice choking. He added that the second wave of coronavirus has built huge pressure on the country's health system. "Kashi is the centre of healthcare in the whole

Banaras, and even some parts of Bihar. So the pressure on the health system here has come up as a great challenge," he said. Hailing the tireless job done by the health workers, he said, "We are meeting this challenge with the hard work of doctors, health workers." Remarking that the fight against the virus is still far from being over, he pointed out that the rural areas of Banaras and Purvanchal need a lot of attention. "By creating a micro-containment zone on the principle of 'where there is sick, there is treatment', the way medicines are being distributed in the cities and villages is a very good initiative. This campaign has to be further expanded," he added.

IAS Officer Venugopal Sarma Appointed As Member Of Board Of Revenue In Odisha



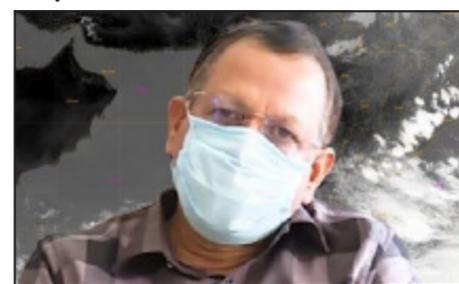
Bhubaneswar, May 21: In a bureaucratic reshuffle in Odisha, the State Government today appointed IAS Officer GV Venugopal Sarma as the Member of Board of Revenue

replacing CJ Venugopal. Further, IAS Officer CJ Venugopal has been appointed as the Chief Administrator of KBK. The 1988-batch Odisha cadre IAS Of-

ficer CJ Venugopal is allowed to remain in additional charge as the Chief Resident Commissioner, Government of Odisha, New Delhi in addition to his own duties, a release by General Administration & Public Grievance Department said today. With the new reshuffle, the additional appointment of IAS Officer Sudershan Pal Thakur (RR-1986) as Chief Administrator shall stand terminated from the date CJ Venugopal takes over.

Cyclone Yaas Likely To Make Landfall Between North Odisha, Bangladesh Coast

Bhubaneswar, May 21: The possible cyclonic storm over the Bay of Bengal is likely to make landfall in between north Odisha and Bangladesh coast on May 26, informed Special Relief Commissioner (SRC), Odisha, Pradeep Kumar Jena on Friday. Jena said that as per the latest information received from the India Meteorological Department (IMD), a Low Pressure Area is going to evolve by tomorrow in the north Andaman sea and east central Bay of



Bengal. It is likely to intensify into a depression by May 23 and into a cyclonic storm by May 24. It is expected to move northwestwards and may touch the landmass in between the north Odisha coast and Bangladesh on

May 26. Jena however said that the exact path, location of the landfall, speed, intensity, and likely impact of the cyclonic storm, including rainfall, have not yet been predicted; it is still under assessment. Stating that the National

Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) held a discussion with various states today and reviewed the preparedness, the SRC informed that Odisha has taken up several preparatory measures in association with the district Collectors and SPs, line departments, telecom operators, electricity department, distribution companies, and other stakeholders. The State Government is in touch with the Coast Guards. They are now patrolling the deep and shallow sea

areas ensuring that none of the boats remain in the sea by tomorrow evening, said Jena. All other preparatory measures required for evacuation, shelter management, post-cyclone restoration are in full swing. Odisha Disaster Rapid Action Force (ODRAF), National Disaster Response Force (NDRF), and Odisha Fire Services personnel are being mobilised and they will be deployed to vulnerable areas in the appropriate time, he added.

Odisha's Global Vaccine Tender: Cabinet Approves Changes In T&Cs

Bhubaneswar, May 21: The Odisha Cabinet in its meeting today approved the amendments made to the terms & conditions of state government's global tender for procurement of 3.80 crore doses of COVID-19 vaccine. To facilitate the participation of manufacturers of vaccines in the bidding, the storage condition has been revised up to minus 20°C, subject to the condition that the vaccines will remain stable and maintain its potency at 2°C to 8°C for at least 12 hours. The previous storage condition was 2°C to 8°C. The glo-

bal e-tender was floated on May 14 while the pre-bid meeting was held on May 19. Basing on the queries of bidders and to make the participation of bidders more flexible, amendments were incorporated as suggested by the designated committee of Odisha State Medical Corporation Limited (OSMCL). Keeping the overall view of vaccinating the targeted population within a period of 4 months and limited supply of vaccines in the world market, the bid document has been prepared in a manner which will send a

positive signal to the sellers. Relaxation in EMD, bid security and liquidated damage has been provided to attract the bid-



ders. Price bid evaluation of an item will be made by comparison of basic quoted prices of each bidder excluding GST. The lowest eligible bidder i.e. (L1) bidder will be the bid-

der who has quoted the lowest basic price in Bills Of Quantity (BOQ), out of the rest bidders for that item. Since each vaccine

is proprietary in nature and is not comparable to any other vaccine, the price evaluation mechanism will be made by comparison of basic quoted prices of each bid-

der excluding GST. All bidders will be treated independently. In terms of award of contract, it was previously stipulated that 50% of the total tender quantity shall be allocated to the L1 bidder and the balance 50% to be split among L2, L3, L4 and so on at negotiated rates. To make the participation flexible, a potential bidder will be allowed to apply for any quantity. It was provided that Performance Security of 3% of Letter Of Intent (LOI) value excluding Taxes shall be paid by the successful bidder(s).

11 Black Fungus Cases Detected In Odisha; 1 Dead

Bhubaneswar, May 21: Black fungus or mucormycosis has become another cause of concern amidst the devastating second wave of COVID-19 pandemic with 11 cases of the serious fungal infection detected in Odisha so far. As per the Health Department sources, 11 cases of black fungus have been detected in the state till date. Of the 11 patients, 10 are undergoing treatment in critical condition. However, one patient has succumbed to the disease. Although, the cases have been re-



ported from different parts of the state, all are being treated in Bhubaneswar. "The state Government has sought health documents of these patients from the concerned hospitals. Once we receive the data, we will further look into cases," the department sources added. Earlier yesterday, Odisha Government declared black

fungus as a notifiable disease under the Epidemic Diseases Act. "Mucormycosis or black fungus has been included as a notifiable disease by exercising the power conferred by Section 2 of the Epidemic Diseases Act, 1897 (3 of 1897) until further orders," said an official statement issued by the Health and Family Welfare Department.

SC grants bail to rebel YSRCP MP Raghu Ramakrishna Raju in sedition case

New Delhi, May 21: The Supreme Court Friday granted bail to rebel YSR Congress Party MP K Raghu Ramakrishna Raju in a sedition case lodged in Andhra Pradesh. Raju, who was arrested by the Andhra Pradesh Police on May 14 under sedition charges for alleged hate speeches against certain communities, had moved the top court seeking bail and terming the case against him a result of "political vendetta". He had also claimed that he was "beaten mercilessly" by the state CID, which arrested him, while in custody. A vacation bench of Justices Vineet Saran and B R Gavai, while referring to Raju's medical report received from the Army hospital at Secunderabad, said it cannot be ruled out that



the MP was "ill-treated" in custody. The apex court further imposed several bail conditions on Raju, including that he would not give any interview to the media with regard to the case. On May 17, the top court had ordered forthwith transfer of Raju to the Army hospital at Secunderabad in neighbouring Telangana for medical examination

and hospitalization till further orders. The rebel YSRCP MP from Narasapuram—known to be critical of his party president and Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister Y S Jagan Mohan Reddy—had challenged the May 15 order of the Andhra Pradesh High Court, asking him to approach the sessions court for bail. Following his arrest, the statement from

the CID said: "MP from Narasapur Raghu Rama Krishna Raju has been arrested at his residence at Hyderabad. There was information against Raju, stating that he has been indulging in hate speeches against certain communities and promoting disaffection against the government." "A preliminary enquiry has been ordered by ADG CID PV Sunil Kumar IPS. It was

found that through his speeches Raju was indulging in a systematic, schematic effort to cause tensions among the communities and by attacking various government dignitaries in a way which will cause loss of faith in the government which they represent. There is hate speech against communities and social groups also, which was used to foment social and public order disturbances in conspiracy with a few media channels," it further read. On the orders of the CID ADG, a case was registered against the MP under Sections 124A (sedition), 153A (promoting enmity between different groups), 505 (statements conducing public mischief) read with 120B (conspiracy) of the Indian Penal Code.

COVAXIN 3rd Dose Clinical Trial Started

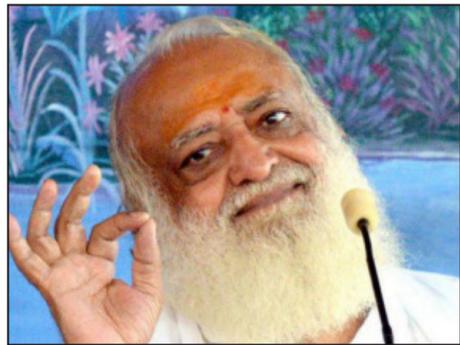
New Delhi, May 21: Big news about Bharat Biotech's Corona vaccine COVAXIN. The company is now going to do a clinical trial of the third dose of its vaccine. For this clinical trial, Bharat Biotech has received approval from the Subject Expert Committee of the Central Drug Standard Controller Organization and its clinical trial is going to start soon at AIIMS Hospital in Delhi. On this, ABP News spoke to Dr. Sanjay Rai, Principal Investigator of clinical trial of this vaccine in AIIMS. What will be gained from the third dose trial and why are these trials happening?



In the original clinical trial, phase 1, 2 and 3, two doses were given at an interval of four weeks. After that it was found that

the vaccine is safe and effective. The government also launched it. There is still a need to generate a little evidence that if after 6 months the immunity is decreasing, then by giving the third dose, it will increase. What can his protected affixes increase? For this, this process is being adopted to generate evidence. May be the immunity is good after giving the third dose, it may not have any effect. The amount of im-

No Relief For Asaram Bapu



Jaipur, May 21: The interim bail plea of Swayambhu Sant Asaram, who is serving life imprisonment in a rape case, was rejected by the Rajasthan High Court on Friday. The court instructed AIIMS to get the ulcer treated by allopathy method. If there is improvement in health, then send to jail. Asaram can be shifted to jail. The bench of High Court Justice Sandeep Mehta and Justice Devendra Kachhwah dismissed the

interim bail plea. The hearing of the case lasted for half an hour. Asaram had said in the application that Ayurveda should be allowed to be treated instead of allopathic. The court rejected the petition and ordered treatment in AIIMS itself. Asaram had filed two applications in the High Court. The first application was for interim bail. The second petition was seeking treatment with Ayurveda method. The court has rejected both the applications.

Mamata Banerjee To Contest From Bhawanipur Seat

Kolkata, May 21: Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee of the state can now contest from Bhawanipur assembly seat after losing from Nandigram seat to BJP leader Suwendu Adhikari in the West Bengal Assembly Elections. It is reported that MLA Shobhan Dev Chatterjee has resigned to contest elections from Bhawanipur assembly seat. Let me tell you that Bhawanipur has been the traditional seat of Mamata Banerjee earlier. Accord-

ing to the rules, within six months, Mamta Banerjee will have to win the elec-



tion from any place and become a member of the assembly. Before resign-

ing, Shobhan Dev said that the Chief Minister has to win from any assembly

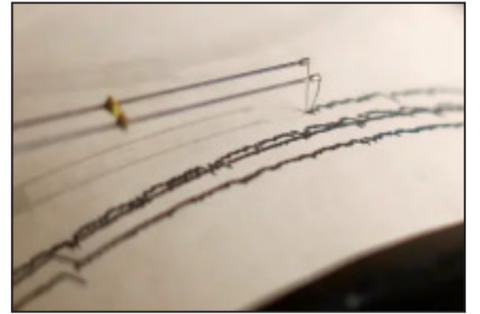
seat within six months. I stood on his seat and won. I am leaving the post

of MLA so that he can win the elections in a fair manner and remain the Chief Minister. Mamta Banerjee's victory is for all of us. Earlier in 2011, Subrata Bakshi resigned from Bhawanipur constituency after winning the election on a Trinamool ticket. Later, Mamta Banerjee won the bye-election held here. After that, he won here in 2016 too. However, this time Mamata contested Nandigram election and from there she had to face defeat.

Earthquake of 5.8 magnitude reported near Arunachal Pradesh's Changlang

New Delhi, May 21: The earthquake struck at 7.18pm on Friday evening at a depth of 100 kilometers from the surface. An earthquake of magnitude 5.8 in the Richter scale was reported near Arunachal Pradesh's

IST, Lat: 25.67 & Long: 99.96, Depth: 100 Km, Location: China," the National Center for Seismology said in a tweet. The earthquake's epicenter was reported 402 km southeast of Changlang. It struck at

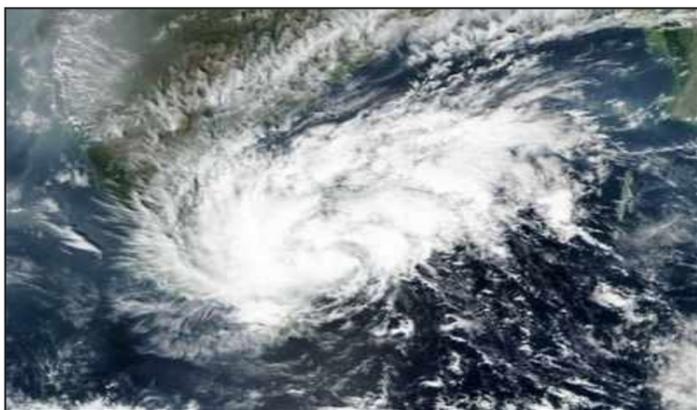


Changlang on Friday evening, according to the National Center for Seismology. "Earthquake of Magnitude: 5.8, Occurred on 21-05-2021, 19:18:41

7.18pm on Friday evening at a depth of 100 kilometers from the surface. There were no reports of casualties or injuries from the region.

Centre Asks States To Make Covid Arrangements In View Of Cyclone 'Yaas'

Kolkata, May 21: The Union Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoHFW) has written a letter to the Chief Secretaries of the all the states that are likely to be affected by the intensified cyclonic storm 'Yaas', urging the state governments to make adequate arrangements for Covid preparedness, because there is a fear that the storm might compound the public health threat posed by the Covid-19 pandemic. Cyclone Yaas is likely to make a landfall along the Bengal-Odisha coast between May 24 and May 26. In the letter, the MoHFW said, "The public health challenges already posed by the Covid-19 pandemic may be compounded due to the direct impact of the cyclone in terms of waterborne, vector-borne and airborne diseases that



may arise in the community or in the displaced population in camps and temporary shelter settings." In a series of instructions given to the state authorities, the ministry said, "Activate the health sector incident command system and the emergency operation centre/control room. Identify a nodal officer and convey his contact details to the Ministry of Health and Family Wel-

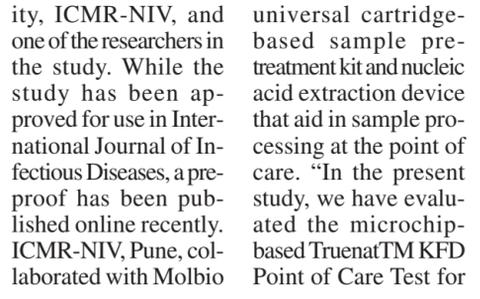
fare. Activate health sector DM plan and the hospital disaster management plan of all the coastal districts of Andhra Pradesh, Andaman Islands, Odisha, Tamil Nadu, and West Bengal." Urging the states to keep adequate stocks of ORS, Chlorine tablets, bleaching powder and specific drugs, the letter said, "There should be adequate power back-up arrange-

ments for all the hospitals, labs, vaccine cold-chains, oxygen generation units and other supportive medical facilities." The state governments have been asked to ensure water, electricity and fuel for the health facilities in the affected areas. Urging for advance planning along the path of the cyclone, the states have been requested to ensure unhindered movement of oxy-

gen tankers, especially advance movement of empty tankers by Air Force aircraft or Indian Railways. The states have also been asked to make arrangements for rapid antigen testing for the population in camps followed by RT-PCR testing for symptomatic negatives of antigen tests. "Senior citizens and those suffering from diabetes, hypertension, liver/kidney/respiratory disease, and immuno-compromised diseases need to be specifically monitored with Covid perspective as they constitute people under high risk," the letter said. Assuring all kinds of assistance to the states, the ministry asked for evacuation of the hospitals in the path of the cyclone in the concerned districts of Odisha and West Bengal.

ICMR-NIV develops new point-of-care testing for Kyasanur forest disease

Pune, May 21: A new point-of-care test has been found to be highly sensitive in the rapid diagnosis of Kyasanur forest disease (KFD), also known as monkey fever, which is an emerging public health problem in the country. Developed by ICMR-National Institute of Virology, scientists said the use of such point-of-care tests would be beneficial for the diagnosis of KFD as the outbreaks mainly happen in remote areas, where there is lack of well-equipped sample handling and laboratory testing facilities. The point-of-care test would be useful in quick patient management and controlling further spread of the virus, said Dr Pragya Yadav, head of department of maximum containment facil-



ity, ICMR-NIV, and one of the researchers in the study. While the study has been approved for use in International Journal of Infectious Diseases, a pre-proof has been published online recently. ICMR-NIV, Pune, collaborated with Molbio

Diagnosics Pvt Ltd, Goa, which has developed the microchip-based TruenatTM KFD Point of Care Test (PoCT). The point-of-care test includes a battery-operated PCR analyser, which is a portable, lightweight and the rapid diagnosis of KFD," Dr Yadav said. The study involved 145 clinical specimens, including human serum, monkey necropsy tissues and tick pool specimens to validate TruenatTM KFD PoCT for diagnosis of KFD.

Inauguration of Corona Pandemic Awareness Rath



(A.O. Bureau) Bhubaneswar, May 21: Corona Pandemic Awareness Rath, an initiative by Project HOPE and MY-HEART to broadcast information on COVID-19, in association of Department of Health and Family Welfare, Government of Odisha; Information and Public Relations Department, Government of Odisha and Department of Odia Language Literature & Culture, Gov-

ernment of Odisha has been launched today at Sanskruti Bhawan, Bhubaneswar. Shri Bishnupada Sethi, IAS, Principal Secretary, Information and Public Relations Department, Government of Odisha; Shri Ranjan Kumar Das, Director and Additional Secretary to Government, Department of Odia Language Literature & Culture, Government of Odisha; Shri Alok Chandra Mohanty,

Program Manager, Project HOPE; MY-HEART's advisor Senior journalist and literary figure Pt. Dr. Prabodh Kumar Mishra, Dr. Seba Mohapatra, Former Health Department Director; Director of MY-HEART Shri Shaktidhar Sahoo, Treasurer Shri Jayanta Samantaray, Department of Odia Language Literature & Culture State Project Coordinator Shri Basudeba Malbisoyi, Nehru Yuva

Kendra, Regional Director Shri Nabin Naya, MY-HEART Project Officer Shri Tanmay Satapathy, other state and district level officials were present in the ceremony. Project HOPE is providing financial assistance for the second wave of COVID-19 in India, with the aim of strengthening the healthcare delivery system by emergency COVID-19 equipment support & supplies, and community intervention. The main purpose of the project is to: 1. Make available necessary medical equipment and supplies in selected COVID-19 care Centres in the state. 2. Run Corona Pandemic Awareness Rath to broadcast information on COVID-19 in four districts of Odisha (Khordha,

Cuttack, Puri and Jagatsingpur). 3. To inform and educate the community on COVID-19 appropriate behaviour and practices. 4. To provide IEC materials to the grassroot level health workers on COVID-19. It is noteworthy that Project HOPE, in association with Department of Health and Family Welfare, Government of Odisha, Lifebuoy and MY-HEART, is implementing a project on handwashing with soap in Cuttack and Khordha district of India. Through this initiative, capacity building of more than 3000ASHAs is complete, and the project is able to influence more than 290000 pregnant women and mothers of children up to 5 years of age to practice handwashing with soap.

CM Hails Sacrifice And Dedication Of Anganwadi Workers Amid Covid-19 Crisis

(A.O. Bureau) Bhubaneswar, May 21: Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik today hailed the sacrifice and dutyboundness of Anganwadi workers amid Covid-19

help of technology, 70,000 ground level workers were connected during the webinar. The Government Departments stated that the webinar will be very helpful for the ground level work-



crisis in Odisha. During a webinar organised by the Women and Child Development Department, UNICEF and Mission Shakti, the CM said Anganwadi workers have contributed significantly in checking the spread of Covid infection in villages. "Protect the villages and you all stay safe along with your families," Naveen said. With the

ers before the door-to-door testing and survey begins in Odisha from May 24. "From May 24 onwards, our Anganwadi workers will go from door-to-door and help in identifying serious ailments and Covid symptoms in people. I am sure they will be successful in their efforts and make our villages infection-free," said Naveen.

Enforcement Squad Caught Organising Feast In Cuttack Throwing COVID Norms To Wind

(A.O. Bureau) Cuttack, May 21: Officials deployed to enforce the lockdown were caught flouting the COVID-19 norms. The incident has been re-

ported from Cuttack, house near Nalini Mandap under Bidanasi police limits last night throwing the COVID-

19 norms to wind. On receiving the information, Bidanasi police conducted a raid on the house and called off the feast. The cops also imposed a fine of Rs 1000 on the officials. The police also seized liquor bottles and biryani from the spot. Commenting on the matter, CMC Commissioner Ananya Das said, "As of now, I have not received any such information regarding the incident. However, strict action will be taken against the concerned officials, if the allegation is found to be true."



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Preparatory Meeting to Fight Cyclone Yash



(A.O. Bureau) Khordha, May 21: District Administration Organized a Preparatory Meeting to Readies Men and Machinery to fight Cyclone Yash. The Preparatory Meeting held in the Conference Hall of District Rural Development Agency (DRDA) Khordha.

Collector and District Magistrate Sanat Kumar Mohanty Preside Over the Meeting and Ordered all the Concerned Officers Of the District, Khordha to Make Ready Men and Machinery to Fight it. With the aim Of Zero Causality and Minimum loss to Property. Cy-

clone Yash is Expected to form in the Bay Of Bengal by May 22nd and is Likely to Hit the Indian Coast between Odisha and Bengal by 26th May. During his Interaction With the Officials Collector Mr. Mohanty has Directed them to Identify the Cyclone Shelters and

Other Facilities and Keep Ready Staffs For any Eventualities. Fires, Medical Services and Other Officials have been advised to get Prepared as early as Possible and Keep a Robust Relief and Rescue Plan in hand. In this Preparatory Meeting Additional District

Magistrate (ADM) Manoj Kumar Padhi, Additional District Magistrate (ADM, Revenue) Anuj Kumar Das Pattnaik, Project Director District Rural Development Agency (PD, DRDA) Digant Routray, Chief District Medical Officer, Dr. Viswaranjan Pati, Executive Engineer (R&B) Er. Deepak Kumar Panigrahi, Executive Engineer (RWSS) Bijayananda Sahoo, Civil Supply Officer (CSO) Chief District Veterinary Officer (CDVO) and Other District Level Officers were remain Present in this Meeting.

Odisha man kills minor, injures brother over land dispute

(A.O. Bureau) Bhubaneswar, May 21: He is a contractual labourer and has been out of work in the pandemic, police said. An eight-year-old boy was allegedly hacked to death while his elder brother was severely injured in an attack by another villager under Turekela police station lim-

its in Balangir district on Thursday. The accused, Jiten Podha (32), was arrested on Thursday and booked under IPC sections 302 (murder) and 307 (attempt to murder) based on a complaint filed by Dhanpat Gahir, the brother of the deceased. Podha, a distant cousin of the brothers, had been ask-



ing the victim's father for a piece of land to farm on and

was denied the same, police said. He is a contrac-

tual labourer and has been out of work in the pandemic, police said. "As per preliminary investigations... he (Podha) had asked for the land on three separate occasions but was refused... The victim's father had refused... They had arguments in the past," investigating officer Kamal Lochan Behera said.

Puri Ratha Jatra: Bio-Bubble Created For Servitors Engaged In Chariot Construction



(A.O. Bureau) Puri, May 21: Keeping in view the severity of the COVID-19 second wave in the state, the Shree Jagannath Temple Administration (SJTA) with the help of the district administration has decided to create a bio-bubble at Ratha Khala (place for construction of chariots for Ratha Jatra) here. A bio-bubble is a secure sanitized area sealed from the outside world and only accessible by an approved set of people. The decision on adopting the bio-bubble technique was taken after eight servitors tested positive for the virus recently. The eight infectees, (three Maharana servitors and five Bhoi servitors) have been kept under isolation at a COVID Care Centre set up by the temple administration. Collector Samarth Verma said, "the bio-bubble will keep the servitors, who are engaged in construction of chariots, safe from

COVID-19 infection as they will not come in contact with outsiders. Only those associated with the chariot construction work will be allowed to enter the bio-bubble starting today." Inside the bio-bubble, thermal screening of the servitors will be regularly conducted and they will undergo the test frequently, he said adding that even journalists will be completely restricted to enter the area. Earlier yesterday, SJTA Chief Krishan Kumar said total 88 servitors had been kept under isolation for chariot construction work. All of them had undergone COVID-19 test and results of eight came out positive. The infected servitors have been sent for treatment. Currently, 80 servitors are engaged at Ratha Khala. Construction of the chariots began on the auspicious occasion of Akshaya Tritiya on May 15. The annual car festival is scheduled to begin on July 12.

Take over ODCL for COVID vaccine production: BJP

(A.O. Bureau) Bhubaneswar, May 21: As Odisha is struggling to get its quota of Covid-19 vaccine from indigenous manufacturers, the State government could upgrade the drug manufacturing unit of Orissa Drugs and Chemicals Limited (ODCL) at Mancheswar here for vaccine production, the BJP has said. A Central public sector undertaking, ODCL, a joint venture between Indian Drugs and Pharmaceuticals Ltd (IDPL) and Industrial Promotion and Investment Corporation of Odisha Limited (IPICOL), has a ready-to-use unit for produc-

tion of vaccine. "ODCL, which was manufacturing injections, tablets, capsules, liquid orals and ORS till December 2020, requires an investment of Rs 5 crore to make the facility ready for production of vaccine in vial form," said former general manager of the company TK Pradhan. He said the existing facility has the capacity to manufacture 5 lakh doses of vaccine a day and it will be a game-changer if the government decides to invest Rs 10 crore out of which Rs 5 crore is required to buy back 51 per cent (pc) of IDPL share. Set up as joint



sector unit in May 1979 with IDPL holding 51 pc equity and IPICOL having the remaining 49 pc share, ODCL started its production in 1984. The company, however, continued to incur loss till Pradhan took over as general manager in 2010. Pradhan, who superannuated on May 10, said the company started

making profit from 2011-12 till 2016-17. As IPICOL had shown interest to buy back the 51 pc share of IDCL, the Department of Pharmaceuticals under the Ministry of Chemicals and Fertilisers sought the views of the State PSU for taking over ODCL along with its assets and liabilities. Since IPICOL is mandated for industrial

promotion and not to do business, the PSU expressed its inability to take over the company. If the State government can provide huge incentives to Bharat Biotech in the shape of land allotment, exemption of stamp duty, capital investment subsidy, interest subsidy for production of Covaxin at Andharua here, investment of Rs 10 crore for ODCL is peanuts, said State BJP vice-president Bhrugu Baxipatra. The BJP leader requested Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik for immediate takeover of ODCL which will go a long way in meeting the vaccine need of Odisha and other states.

EDITORIAL

Much ado

The Arvind Kejriwal-led Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) Government in Delhi and the Union Government once again find themselves at each other's throats, their daggers drawn. The issue pertaining to the latest round of faceoff was rather innocuous. The Delhi Government basically pointed to a new COVID strain "originating from Singapore" and shared its apprehension that it could lead to a third wave of the pandemic in India. It appealed to the Union Government to cancel air services with the city-State which, as a Union Minister pointed out, had already been suspended in the absence of any "air bubble" passage with that country. This aspect of the so-called "Singapore strain" was strongly refuted by the South-East Asian country's Government, with its Foreign Minister even saying that the allegation was "unfounded" and that the elected representatives should be serious and responsible with their statements. They even called in the Indian High Commissioner to convey strong objection to the tweet on the "Singapore variant". Not choosing to close the episode here, Singapore has since ordered social media platforms Facebook and Twitter to carry a correction notice to users in the country over the "false statement" about the new variant originating in the city-State. Soon after the news came out, the Indian Government quickly sided with the Singaporean authorities, saying that the Delhi Chief Minister "doesn't speak for India". Meanwhile, Singapore has shut down its schools as children there are getting more affected than the elders, but its Government stressed that the variant did not originate in Singapore. On the other hand, the country claims, it originated in India. Experts, however, are playing it safe as of now and saying that the infection is on "untraceable origin". The highly contagious B.1.617 variant was first detected in India and has now spread to many countries across the world. Of course, the Delhi Government has every right to protect the interests of its citizens, especially since health is a State subject. It has also every right to voice its concerns, or even take up the cudgels against the federal dispensation on issues that it may feel wronged about. However, it doesn't behove the Kejriwal Government, both in terms of constitutional propriety and the morality of the issue involved, to speak on subjects that fall outside the realm of its purview, especially influencing our country's foreign policy.

Vaccine hesitancy

Adar Poonawala has let the proverbial cat out of the bag. In the latest statement, the Serum Institute of India (SII) made certain points which need careful reading. One, that "in January 2021, we had a large stockpile of vaccine doses. ... At that stage, most people, including health experts, believed that India was turning the tide on the pandemic". Was the intention to point out that India did not place enough vaccine orders in January itself to cover at least 70 per cent of the population? Two, "around the same time, many other countries in the world were facing an acute crisis and were in desperate need of help. Our Government extended support wherever possible during this period". Is this to reveal that the SII did not export either commercially or through Covax without intimating the Government of India? Three, "the cooperation between countries... forms the basis for us getting access to technology and aid for healthcare. it is this reciprocity, where India has helped other countries with the supply of HCQ and vaccine exports, that has in turn led to support from other countries". Is this to defend the Government from criticism for exporting/donating vaccines when the second surge raged in India? Four, "as part of our global alliances, we also had commitments to Covax, so that they could distribute the vaccines globally. ...". The Covax commitments came before the Indian Government placed its order? Five, "a vaccination drive for such a large population (India) cannot be completed within 2-3 months. ... it would take 2-3 years for the entire world population to get fully vaccinated". It puts paid to the dreams of vaccinating 70 per cent of the Indian population by December. Six, "we also hope to start delivering to Covax and other countries by the end of this year". It means the committed Covax and commercial deliveries stand deferred as the SII is seized with honouring the Indian order made in May. The collaboration between the SII, Gavi and the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation firmed up an initial order of 10 crore doses in last August and subsequently revised the figure by another 10 crore doses. Seven, Adar Poonawala earlier said the vaccine shortage would continue till July, by which time the SII would augment production figures to 10 crore a month. As on May 19, 18,70,09,792 doses were given to people. That includes first and second doses of Covishield and Covaxin. Around 11.7 per cent (14,17,55,662) of the Indian population received the first dose, while 3.34 per cent (4,04,84,941) received both doses. That leaves a population of over 100 crore without any doses so far. For herd immunity to be achieved, at least 70 per cent of the non-vaccinated population, or over 70 crore people, need to receive both doses. If the entire ramped up doses of 10 crore of the SII are given to India, it will take seven months to give at least one dose to this segment. A second dose would mean double that amount of dosage.

Future depends on compassion

Human ingenuity and the sense of cooperation among all countries are needed to beat the current distressing situation. These are not the best of times. Everyone has his own version, own experience, and most of it is common: No one has ever experienced such devastating anxiety, apprehensions and uncertainty about the days ahead. There is a disturbing sense as one receives a call. Every conversation centres around the near and dear ones being under the grip of COVID, and it is no more an exception to receive the devastating news of people suddenly passing away. I received a call from a young lady, known to me ever since she was a kid, some five decades ago. She devotedly looks after her 97-year-old father, who is in comparatively good health for his age. She tells me that she is extremely disturbed after receiving a call from her close relatives, who stay in a distant city. When she received the call, and began to ask about the welfare of the family members on that side, the caller brushed it aside and came directly to the point: "All of us are in isolation having tested Corona positive. We are upset and disturbed. We don't know what will happen tomorrow. Whatever happens, we shall not inform you as it would serve no purpose. Likewise, we would request you not to inform us even if any fatality occurs on your side." This daughter, already under tremendous tension, was just dumbstruck! She always thought she could fall back upon them. As an elderly academic and family friend, I did my bit. In this instance, the old man is fine by God's grace and we hope to cel-



JS Rajput

celebrate his centenary in a couple of years; hopefully, without any COVID restrictions. But will this daughter ever forget how she was left to fend for herself? The unprecedented pandemic's onslaught has triggered numerous tragedies across the nation, with people being unable to attend even the last rites of their loved ones. An estimate suggests that 230 million Indian families became poorer during the first wave. Humanity, however, survives on Hope. Things will change, and humanity would certainly come out of the excruciating stranglehold of the pandemic. Human ingenuity would triumph once more, as it has in the past. At present, everyone seems to be impacted either directly, or indirectly. The loss of livelihood could only be called 'rampant'. In April-May of 2021, the health infrastructure stands shattered, patients are dying in front of hospital gates, in verandas, on stretchers and, shockingly, due to the non-availability of hospital beds. It is a tragic situation

that would leave permanent scars on millions of families for ever. It has challenged human sensitivity, emotionality and compassion. So much is to be rebuilt, resurrected and re-energised on every front of human existence. Its magnitude has already begun to emerge. The learned and the knowledgeable are already envisioning the shape of things in the post-COVID India and its global context. In the post-Corona era, no nation can progress in isolation. Corona knows no boundaries, no nationalities, and it could be countered only by a strategy that is global in nature, international in implementation and humane in approach. It would not be an over-stretched logic to assert that if the UN and organisations like the Unesco and the UNSC had really achieved their objectives in the initial decades of their existence, humanity would have been much better equipped, united and ready to counter problems like Corona. Sadly enough, the global urge to create a world

of peace, nonviolence and righteous conduct that led to creation of International platforms for dialogue and discussion has so far failed to achieve even basic objectives. While the Governments preferred to participate in creating more and more lethal weapons, the health sector research was mostly taken over by pharmaceutical companies that were interested only in remaining ahead of their competitors, get the patents before others, and capture the market. In India, the health infrastructure shall obviously require serious revamping. Rampant corruption in regulatory bodies impeded the expansion of the medical education for decades. Fortunately, now there are plans to have a medical college in every district, which would now materialise with greater speed, efficiency and resource inputs. There ought to be a far greater say of experts in policy formulation at the highest levels. It is generally believed that if it were so, India would not have faced a nationwide shortage of medical oxygen, a deficiency that definitely led to several most tragic and avoidable deaths. India, which was being hailed for offering vaccines to several countries, found itself in a distress situation by the second wave that necessitated helping hands from around the globe. Such inadequacies must not occur in future. The guiding principles for the post-COVID India could be extracted from the basics Swami Vivekananda had taught us: "The faith in our own selves must be reawakened and then only all the problems that face our country will be gradually solved." The mantra of success would be: "We should give positive ideas; negative thoughts only weaken men." Let us trust human compassion and ingenuity.

For the sake of Indian democracy, the UP governance model needs to be challenged

Pratap Bhanu Mehta

Uttar Pradesh has the population the size of Brazil, and 80 Lok Sabha seats. But the nature of its potential dominance in Indian politics is not simply a function of size and demography. The national influence of UP politics is magnified when it is part of the hegemonic national dispensation, as it is currently. It is no accident that fear of UP domination abated when it was governed by local parties like the SP or BSP. But beyond party alignment, the nature of the political imagination driving UP politics also matters a great deal; the demographic dominance is magnified if it is aligned to an ideological project and a governance style that seeks to be nationally dominant. We often speak loosely of the politics of the "Hindi heartland". This might make sense as a crude contrast with the "South". But this is a misnomer. There is the obvious fact that the nature of development and the social basis of politics in states like Rajasthan, UP, Bihar and MP is quite diverse. Conflating them is about as analytically useful as conflating Karnataka and Tamil Nadu. Amongst these states, what makes UP a special challenge is that its ideological influence on national politics is pervasive in a way that is not quite true of the other states. With the ascent of Yogi Adityanath in UP, this ideological configuration is coming into shape in a starkly chilling form that has great implications for national politics. UP has been critical to the public staging of the Hindutva project in a way that is not true of other states. The project of communalising all of India is central to the BJP. But the

symbolic significance of Ayodhya, Kashi, Mathura as performances of Hindu Unity and as a wedge around which to consolidate a communal consciousness, cannot be underestimated. This is a project they will not leave uncompleted. None of the other states quite has this cache. Bihar, for all its other challenges, for almost three decades, managed to avoid the allure of a hegemonic Hindutva. Uttar Pradesh now has a chief minister who is the fantasy of many rank and file votaries of the BJP. He is the kind of leader who satiates the allure for violence and aggressive fantasies much more directly. He has a commitment to a governance philosophy that is the purest distillation of the authoritarian-communal model that we have ever seen. It is a governance style that is penal at its core. It literally carpet-bombs all procedural safeguards and tolerates an unprecedented infrastructure of vigilantism. Narendra Modi and Amit Shah may share the same ideological ambitions as Adityanath. But their methods have had to deploy a bit more stealth and subterfuge. Modi's characteristic fakery was at least a tacit acknowledgement that he needed to appear in different ways to different audiences. It is worth speculating whether it is Adityanath's shadowy presence that has led Modi to drop even the occasional smattering of pretence that he was capable of mustering. Adityanath upped the stakes in the "don't just be cruel but also make sure you are seen to be cruel" game. As this column (IE, 'Yogic

Madness', March 20, 2017) had argued, Adityanath's elevation was the consolidation of extremes. Third, no politician from the Hindi heartland has had serious national ambitions, or rather ambitions to wreck the nation. For all the national significance that was foisted on heartland leaders, Mayawati or Nitish Kumar, they were essentially players more comfortable on their own turf. Adityanath has national ideological ambitions, the need to wade into every state's politics. The most recent example was using the Punjab government's decisions to create Malerkotla as a district as another occasion for a communal provocation. But hang on, you might say. The combination of an authoritarian communal chief minister who also seeks to be hegemonic is exactly what will also be the BJP's undoing in the Hindi heartland. It is hard to even fake a UP model as a successful model of development nationally. Adityanath has probably been a net liability in campaigns outside the state. The recent loss in the panchayat elections suggests cracks in his edifice. If Opposition forces were to better combine in UP, the BJP can be defeated. But this is precisely why UP might pose a special problem. The peculiar challenge for Indian democracy is that the Adityanath brand of politics could be a threat both if it succeeds and if it fails. We are reaching a stage in Indian democracy when we should not be complacent about peaceful transi-

tions of power. The BJP is attempting to subvert an overwhelming democratic mandate in West Bengal, first by trying to communalise the political violence, violence for which the TMC must bear some blame. But the attempt to use the CBI to have four ministers arrested, is a reminder that as the BJP begins to lose prestigious battles, its commitment to peaceful transitions will be tested. UP will be ground zero for testing this commitment, precisely because the stakes there are the highest. The motives are present. So are the means. The infrastructure of fomenting violence is present. UP has a long history of social violence. But a moral psychology legitimising an unprecedented ruthlessness is now becoming the default of civil society in UP, thanks to the new governance style. Perhaps, the UP government's handling of the pandemic will make its power unredeemable. The scenes of hundreds of bodies on river banks, subject to the ultimate indignity, may finally move our conscience. These have come to our consciousness largely because of the incredible reporting of reporters like Barkha Dutt, or the ground reporting and statistical forensic work of newspapers like the Dainik Bhaskar. Perhaps, the shroud of silence over UP will finally break. But we should not take this for granted. For one thing, the UP government is going to double down on its denials, perhaps also the hounding of those who report the truth. But so far, like with the central government, the response has not been compassion. It has rather been to underscore the fact that they think people are drawn to them because of an imperious cruelty.

Malkangiri Journalists' Association strongly condemns police beating of journalist in Puri



(A.O. Bureau) Malkangiri, May 21: The policeman that policies were proud of a piery of the event to attack the news of the event around the Prian Mr detatreay Nayak. Hundreds of journalists from all over the state have strongly con-

demned the incident and demanded immediate action against the police officers involved. An emergency meeting on behalf of the Malkangiri Utkal Journalists Association was held today at the union office under the chairmanship of President Duryodhana

Patra The Utkal Journalists' Association of Malkangiri is actively involved in the forthcoming agitation across the state in the coming days if action is not taken against the culprits as soon as possible, with the union strongly condemning such inhu-

mane treatment and torture of the police. It is a joke to the state government that such harsh use of Puri police by the Puri government has been a nightmare for journalists as they risk their lives and stay away from Karona during the Karona epidemic. To-

day, a delegation led by Deba Das, president of the Malkangiri Journalists' Association, through Birasen Pradhan, Additional District Magistrate of Malkangiri, filed a petition seeking immediate action on the Puri incident. The meeting, organized by Utkal journalist association, was attended by state executive member Manoj Kumar Mahanti vice-president Prabhakar Suna secretary Satyanarayana Das, joint secretary Sonu Anuru treasurer Srinivasa Patra along with Srimanchal Panigrahi, Bhagwan Sahu, Shabadar Sahu, Hrishikesh Sethi and many others.

Aditya Aluminum distributes corona materials in Jharsuguda district



(A.O. Bureau) Rengali, May 21: The district administration, in coordination with Jharsuguda, in the fight against the second phase of the corona epidemic, has sent 10 oxygen concentrators, 200 PPEs and 300 oxygen to

the district main hospital of Aditya Aluminum Company in Lapanga, Rengali block, Sambalpur district. Gave the mask. On Friday, Aditya Birla Company Chief Sameer Nayak, Human Resource Chief

Vivekananda Mishra, Employee Coordinating Officer Sanjay Prasad Das, Human Resource Manager Vijay Kumra, Environmental Development Chief Manager Shweta Upadhyay, along with the Managing Director were present. Did.

Large quantities of liquor were seized by Jarada IIC



(A.O. Bureau) Patrapur, May 21: Today is an atmosome striking traditional team of trades to the brudgers and petroling by jarada PS today. However information from a source, Jarada IIC Bhavananda Pradhan chased a car

with his team and confiscated a large quantity of liquor from it. Today at about 11AM on getting reliable information conducted raid at village Babanpur and seized 120 liters of ID liquor with one Santro car bearing Regs. No.OR-

02Z -0383. Arrested one accused namely B. Shyam Kumar (21) of Vishakpatnam. Two accused persons absconded from the spot. They are transporting the same from Kandha Bijapur side towards Andrea Pradesh area. The liquor transmission is illegally expanding its liquor business in different rural areas of Odisha from andhra side's. It is success to the police today after a corresponding quantity today. Further a high level responds and tight responds were always taken for this type of moment's by the illegal moments of liquor smuggling.

"Dry Food, Mask, Sanitizer Distributed By Smile Charitable Trust

(A.O. Bureau) Paradip, May 21: Today Smile charitable trust, Paradeep, distributed 100 nos Dry food packets, Mask & Sanitizer Distributed to physically /Mentally and poor needy peoples at Paradeep Garh area in presence of Sri Sachitra Kumar Rout -(President), Adv. Sanjay ku Behera (Adviser)



(A.O. Bureau) Sankhemundi, May 21: The administration has intervened to stop the outbreak. The family's corona negative report was requested by the family. T.Gobindpur Panchayat Daseipur under Sankhemundi Block Patpur Police Station. When the groom's report came corona positive the administration and sanakhemundi block admins, ordered the two family to en-

close the maarige function and directed groom to keep himself isolated in the homeshore. The administration has ordered the closure of an outdoor party between the two families. According to government regulations, the groom tested positive. When the groom tested himself along with family on the 17th and the report came out positive while he was out today. The local administration

Adv.Suresh ch Das (Chief Adviser) and Rashmi ranjan Sahoo (Vice President) and supported by TMILL international Logiatic.

@# crises on lock down period of 2nd wave of Covid-19

and also President-Sachitra Rout told Cooking food, Dry food, Mask and Sanitizer distribution programme will continue at Paradeep area by turst till Lock down continue and lastly Chief Advisor-Adv. Suresh ch Das told Smile charitable Trust ready to help for expected Cyclone "Yash".

PPT observed Anti-Terrorism Day



(A.O. Bureau) Paradip, May 21: Anti-Terrorism Day was observed at PPT, with the pledge being adminis-

tered by Shri Ashok Kumar Sahu, Sr. Dy. FA in the Lobby of PPT Administrative Building. Keeping in view the

safety of participants amid COVID-19 pandemic, officials/employees also took the pledge solemnly in their rooms/offices itself. The objective behind observance of this day is to wean away the youth from terrorism and the cult of violence by highlighting the sufferings of common people and showing as to how it is prejudicial to the national interest.

Central University of Odisha Observes Anti-Terrorism Day

(A.O. Bureau) Koraput, May 21: The Central University of Odisha observed Anti-terrorism day with the objective to wean away from the youth from terrorism and the cult of violence by

highlighting the sufferings of common people and showing as to how it is prejudicial to the national interest. On this occasion, a pledge on anti-terrorism was taken by all students, teaching and non-teaching

staff in English and Hindi languages through virtual mode. Prof. I. Ramabrahmam, VC of the University administered the pledge in English and Prof. K. B. Das, Pro-Vice-Chancellor adminis-

tered the pledge in Hindi. Considering the importance and solemnity of the occasion, the message of anti-terrorism was propagated through various digital and social media platforms including Uni-

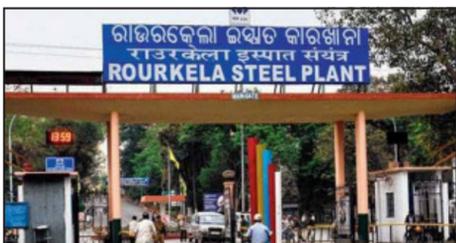
versity website. Dr. Ramendra Kumar Parhi, Dean of Student Welfare delivered the welcome address, and Dr. Ram Shankar, Controller of Examinations extended a vote of thanks.

Over 40 RSP Employees Succumb To COVID-19 In Last One Month

(A.O. Bureau) Rourkela, May 21: Amidst staggering number of COVID infections in worst-hit Sundargarh district, over 40 employees of the Rourkela Steel Plant (RSP) have died of the deadly virus in second wave in Odisha. While COVID is claiming two or three lives every day

in the district, the RSP staff are not exempted from the severity of the virus. Reports said that as many as 50 RSP employees have succumbed to COVID in past one year. Last year, eight RSP employees had died in first wave of the COVID pandemic. But, the highest number of fatalities due

to the virus is recorded in the second wave this year. According to reports, Sundargarh district had reported the first COVID deaths in second wave on April 10 when two RSP employees had succumbed to the virus. Since then, the toll is up day by day. By May 19, 42 staff including 2 in ranks of GM, 6 DGMs and 1 AGM of the RSP had died of the contagious disease under treatment, of which 34 breathed their last at Ispat General Hospital, 6 at a COVID Hospital in Rourkela, and 2 at hospitals outside the district.



Three Of Odisha Family Killed In Lightning Strike



(A.O. Bureau) Keonjhar, May 21: Three members of a family were killed in a lightning strike in Dhenkikote Koradabeda Sahi under Ghatgaon police limits in Keonjhar district today. The deceased include two women and a four-year-old girl child who were nomads and were staying in a tent which they had put at

Koradabeda Sahi near Tikira, reports said. Following sudden rain in the afternoon today, the trio had taken shelter under a nearby tree when lightning struck them leaving them dead on the spot. On being informed Dhenkikote police have seized the bodies of the deceased and sent them for post-mortem to Community Health Centre (CHC) at Ghatgaon.

Young JE Lost his life at battle against Corona

(A.O. Bureau) Kukudakhandi, May 21: It is unknown at this time what he will happen after whom will lost his life in any condition. Fifteen days after the marriage, Carona took her husband away from his wife. According to reports, a young junior engineer, Prakash Sahu, who was working in the Sankhemundi block, died at the SUM hospital in Bhubaneswar. The incident is so sensitive that Mr. Sahu was married before only couple of weeks ago. He had seems some fever after the outing and had diffi-



culty breathing for 6 days, after which his coronary test was performed and the report came out positive. He was admitted to Bhubaneswar in critical condition. On the 20th May evening Sum hospital officially intimate to

the family. In this news whole kukudakhandi area along with his village and workplace it's a moments of sorrow. In his death Sankhemundi MLA Ramesh Chandra Jena mourned the untimely death of Young JE.

Army of the Dead movie review: Dinner theatre for our sequestered times

New Delhi, May 21: Army of the Dead movie review: Given the pandemic that is raging outside, and we are the 'zombies' that are sequestered, the Zack Snyder film is imitating real on reel. A zombie tiger, with an eye gouged out. A zombie king, whose headgear and cape will not look out of place at the Colosseum, leading his all-obeying zombie army. Then, there are the ever-greedy humans, who are only looking out for themselves. These are the two broadly defined opposing groups that we meet in the latest offering from director Zack Snyder, Army of the Dead, which streams on Netflix today. The zombie-heist film has been in the making for many years, and finally gets to see the light of the day under Snyder's expert direction. The film takes us into a world where the zombie apocalypse is already upon us, and the undead have been wreaking havoc in and around Las Vegas for a while. Now, in the present, they have been sequestered in Sin City and guarded-off with iron grills and shipping



containers. There is a literal ticking time bomb, as Vegas will be flattened with a nuclear bomb to kill the remaining zombies and save humankind from the zombie apocalypse. This is where the ever-greedy humans enter, as there is a massive treasure to be salvaged from a locked safe in one of Sin City's numerous casinos. A hurriedly put-together mercenary group materialises out of the woodwork, led by a Scott Ward (Dave Bautista) — who saved the Secretary of Defence from a zombie attack — and they have to just cross the undead territory, access the billions of dollars from the safe, and make a headway from the rooftop in a helicopter, pronto. Simple,

easy, no rocket science. Right. If only. We get an emotional curve ball in the form of Geeta (Huma Qureshi) and Ella Ward, Scott's daughter, and all plans go awry. There is a dominant feeling of dread and nervous anticipation which builds up right from the tenth second of the film, and it gets magnified with every passing minute. But what's a zombie feeling without the nervous, dreary clammy feeling? Added to that is the 'heist' filter which Snyder has tried to use for good effect. The trick with using specific genres and tropes is, as there is enough material available, the audience will either immediately get your reference, or it will turn the joke on its head. Remember we have had The Walking

Dead running for 10 seasons, making zombies a household phenomenon. Same goes for the heist formula. Ocean's 11, 12, 13 and now Ocean's 8, and Money Heist on Netflix, have all given an ample taste to the global audience of what a good heist looks like. Money Heist's popularity is unprecedented, we even have a 'Dhol Tasha' version of Bella Ciao! The most fun part of a heist film or show is the planning, and recruiting the 'motley crew' who will each have their very specific set of skills, each crucial for pulling off the heist smoothly. In Army of the Dead that very process is hurried, and the planning and anticipation of pulling off an eventual heist successfully, well we never re-

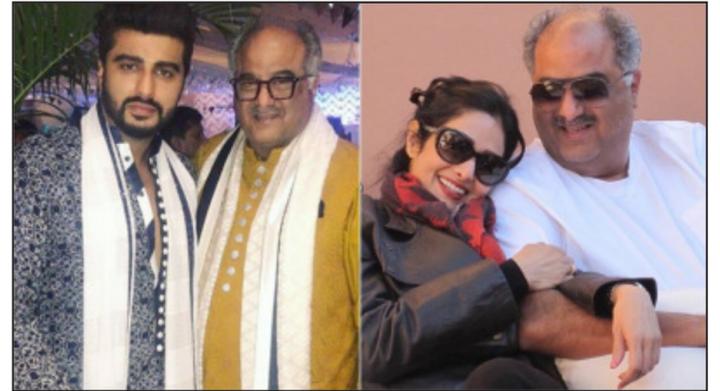
ally experience it. As for the undead bit, there is ample violence, blood, gore and brains to satisfy the zombie quotient. We see people bleeding, dying and the general sense of foreboding never leaves us. The grey, bleak vistas of Las Vegas that we see in the film is in a stark contrast with the usual glittery, bling, disco-light infested one we usually associate with Sin City. The film is small compared with the rest of Snyder's oeuvre, nothing on the scale of Justice League, and yet it feels big enough. The film is perfect 'dinner theatre', using Snyder's own words. The mindless violence, the endless gore, which we all anticipate the minute we say 'zombie film', it's all on point. Given the pandemic that is raging outside, and we are the 'zombies' that are sequestered, the film is imitating real on reel. The film with its mind-numbing approach and impact couldn't have come at a better time. Watch it for sheer entertainment, the VFX and the brilliant soundtrack that's been culled from Snyder's own master playlist.

Arjun Kapoor says 'not ok' with father Boney Kapoor leaving mom Mona to marry Sridevi: 'But I understand it'

New Delhi, May 21: Actor Arjun Kapoor has opened up about his father Boney Kapoor leaving mother Mona Shourie and tying the knot with Sridevi back in 1996. Arjun, whose latest film Sardar Ka Grandson is currently streaming on Netflix, said "love is complex." Speaking to Film Companion, Arjun got

view. He added, "I can't say I'm okay with what my father did, because as a child I felt the repercussions, but I understand it. I can't say 'theek hai, hota hai' (it's fine as such things happen), because I will always wonder. But when I rationalise it as an older person who's dealing with his own relationship highs and lows, you un-

falling in love again. Because love is complex. And we would be silly and churlish sitting here in 2021 saying that you only fall in love once. It's very Bollywood-ised. Love is complex, love is complicated, love isn't always about being in love." Arjun, who has time and again written heartfelt notes about missing his



candid about his relationship with his father, which got strained after his parents separated. "It's about compatibility, there is friendship, there is saturation. There is unfortunate frustration, people go through different phases in life. You could have been in love with somebody, and you can fall in love with somebody after that, and that has to be understood," Arjun said in the inter-

derstand." Arjun, who grabbed eyeballs when he stood like a pillar of support for Boney Kapoor after the demise of Sridevi in 2018, the actor candidly said, "My mother's upbringing came in my head. She would've told me to be by my father's side regardless of what obstacles we face, because of a choice he made where he fell in love. And I respect my father for

mother at every juncture of life, concluded, "You try and be a good son, because that's what my mother would want." Boney Kapoor has two daughters with Sridevi — actor Janhvi Kapoor and Khushi Kapoor. The two girls now share a good rapport with Arjun and his sister Anshula. Arjun's mother Mona Shourie passed away a month before the release of his debut film Ishqzaade in 2012.

Nushratt Bharuccha on 10 years of Pyaar Ka Punchnama: 'Lot of people advised me to not do the film because it had no known faces'

New Delhi, May 20: As the Luv Ranjan directorial Pyaar Ka Punchnama clocked ten years today, Nushratt Bharuccha revisited playing a manipulative and controlling girlfriend Neha to Rajat (Rajjo), essayed by Aaryan. It's been ten years of the release of the romantic comedy Pyaar Ka Punchnama. The film brought recognition to its lead cast including actors Kartik

Aaryan. She shared, "Playing the controlling and manipulative girlfriend like Neha was so not me in real life, which made it even more difficult for me to understand her and essay her right." The actor was advised by many to not take up the film since it had no popular names attached to it. "A lot of people then advised me to not do this film and wait for another better opportunity because this

Nushratt Bharuccha believes she didn't choose Pyaar Ka Punchnama but "the film chose me." She added that nobody from the Pyaar Ka Punchnama team imagined it becoming such a huge success, "When I look back to the time we were shooting for Pyaar Ka Punchnama, none of us had the faintest clue what wonders this film will do for us, or even how this film will eventually turn

Shilpa Shetty, Raj Kundra celebrate son Viaan's 9th birthday with heartfelt wishes, videos: 'Not even done hugging you'

New Delhi, May 21: Shilpa Shetty and Raj Kundra's son Viaan turned a year older today. Both Shilpa and Raj wrote emotional notes for him on Instagram. Shilpa also posted a video from his fourth birthday celebration. In her note, the actor shared how this coronavirus induced lockdown has made her son more sensible and mature. He has learnt the importance of wearing a mask and maintaining social distance and has not been fussy about not getting to celebrate his birthday for two years now. Raj, meanwhile, shared a video compiling moments from their life. "There's so much to say, So much to do... You're growing up too fast, I'm not even done hugging you?" Shetty wrote. She added, "We know



how much your birthday means to you and how you would look forward to it, but not being able to have any playdates for over a year & a half, and not being able to celebrate your birthday 2 years in a row without any fuss... makes me so proud of the sensitive, compassionate, and loving boy that you're growing up to be." The Dhadkan actor further mentioned how Viaan fought coronavirus

bravely. She also wrote about his growth into a responsible human being which makes her feel like a proud mother. "You fought Covid-19 so bravely, you are just as excited about your virtual classes as you were about going to school, you have understood how necessary it is to always wear a mask and maintain social distance with outsiders! You've not only adjusted to the new nor-

mal without any complaints or tantrums, but also taken on the role of being a doting elder brother so beautifully. Have to admire how beautifully you have done it with your sense of humour and maturity. This Lockdown has made you so responsible so soon?!?!?! Must say, I'm a proud mommy!?!?!?!?" Shetty noted. She concluded her long note

with a lovely birthday wish for her son, "Happy 9th birthday, my darling baby Viaan-Raj????????? May you always shine, the brightest star wherever you go????? Mumma and papa love youuuuu??????" Raj wrote with his video, "The Video Says it all. Happy Birthday my Son my rockstar my heartbeat." On the work front, Shilpa Shetty has taken a break from the dance reality show Super Dancer 4 as it is being shot in Daman. She has wrapped up the shoot of her next film, Hungama 2. The film is directed by Priyadarshan and also stars Paresh Rawal, Meezaan, Pranitha Rana, Manoj Joshi, Rajpal Yadav, Johnny Lever and Tiku Talsania.



Aaryan, Divyendu Sharma and Nushratt Bharuccha. When the movie hit theatres in 2011, Bharuccha didn't expect it to be a humongous success, leading to a franchise. As the Luv Ranjan directorial clocked ten years today, Bharuccha revisited playing a manipulative and controlling girlfriend Neha to Rajat (Rajjo), essayed by

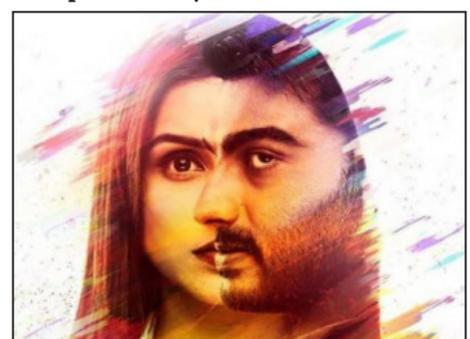
movie had no known faces, a first time director, first time producer and the whole team was new. But Pyaar Ka Punchnama opened up a world of opportunities for me, and 'Neha' literally marked me on the map of the industry and created a unique identity for the audience to remember me by," the 36-year-old actor shared.

into a power-packed franchise." Even after ten years of its release, Pyaar Ka Punchnama remains a popular film among the youth. Kartik Aaryan's monologue, on a girl's demands in a relationship, turned out to be a standout moment of the film. A sequel to the movie titled Pyaar Ka Punchnama 2 released in 2015.

Arjun Kapoor, Parineeti Chopra-starrer Sandeep Aur Pinky Faraar is now streaming on Amazon Prime

New Delhi, May 21: After releasing in theatres for a limited time, Dibakar Banerjee's social drama Sandeep and Pinky Faraar is now available to stream on Amazon Prime Video, the makers announced on Thursday. The Arjun Kapoor and Parineeti Chopra-starrer thriller is about a Haryana cop Pinky (Kapoor) and an ambitious woman with a corporate bent of mind, Sandeep (essayed by

Chopra). What happens when their worlds meet each other is the crux of the narrative. The movie has been penned and directed by Dibakar Banerjee, who has earlier helmed critically acclaimed movies like Love Sex Aur Dhoka, Bombay Talkies, Khosla Ka Ghosla, Shanghai among more. The film also features talented artistes like Neena Gupta, Raghubir Yadav and Jaideep Ahlawat in



pivotal parts. The official synopsis of the movie reads, "Sandeep aur Pinky Faraar follows the

story of two completely different individuals whose lives suddenly intertwine. Pinkesh Dahiya

or "Pinky" (essayed by Arjun Kapoor), is a Haryana Police Officer, while Sandeep Kaur (essayed by Parineeti Chopra) is an ambitious girl from the corporate world. Ironically this pair of chalk and cheese are united by their mistrust, suspicion and hatred for one another. This suspense-drama promises to keep the viewers glued to their seats as it explores the polarities of the two worlds."

BCCI has not officially sought any change in Test series schedule: ECB

New Delhi, May 21: The BCCI has not made any official request to alter the schedule for India's five-Test series against England for completing the postponed IPL, the England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB) said on Friday. British media had reported about a possible approach from the BCCI to advance the first Test, starting August 4, by a week so that the remaining 31 matches of the League could be held. However, the England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB) said they plan to follow the original schedule since their Indian counterparts have not yet made any official request for a change. "We talk to the BCCI on a regular basis about a wide range of issues especially as we address the challenges of COVID-19 but have had no official request to change dates and are con-



tinuing to plan for the five Test series as scheduled," an ECB spokesperson told PTI when asked about the possible change in the schedule. The BCCI stands to lose revenues to the tune of Rs 2500 crore if the 2021 edition of Indian Premier League (IPL) is not completed. This year's edition was postponed recently when COVID-19 cases were reported inside the bio-

bubble for the League. Former England captain and renowned cricket writer Michael Atherton wrote in his column for 'The Times' that the BCCI has enquired about the possibility of moving the final Test of the English summer to make room to complete the postponed IPL. When approached, a BCCI source said the Board is certainly exploring options but the ECB has

not been approached officially. "The situation is pretty fluid now. There are options that are being explored but no official request has yet been sent. Obviously as Atherton wrote in his column, there are some specific enquiries being made. Who said that enquiries mean official communications," a BCCI source said. The Test series as of now is scheduled to conclude at

the Old Trafford. The fifth Test will begin on September 10. The game match is expected to attract big crowd and the Lancashire county has already started selling the tickets. If India make a formal request, the ECB will have to tweak the window for their ambitious project 'The Hundred' along with limited overs series against Pakistan. Pakistan will play three ODIs and as many Twenty20 Internationals between July 8 and 20. The Hundred will be played between July 23 and August 22. However if BCCI manages to convince the ECB for advancing the dates, it will be interesting to find what kind of quid pro quo is sought -- asking participation of Indian cricketers in the 'Hundred' or hosting the remainder of the IPL in England?.

Playing India in neutral venue is exciting: Kane

London, May 21: New Zealand skipper Kane Williamson has said that the prospect of squaring off against India at a neutral venue is pretty exciting. The Black Caps have arrived in England to play a two-match Test series against the hosts before they face Virat Kohli's Team India in the final of the World Test Championship which is slated to start on June 18 in Southampton. While

here and playing against England in their own backyard," he added. The New Zealand players are currently serving the mandatory quarantine upon their arrival in England. Williamson said that team is keen to step out and start training. "Most of the team is here now. We are all pretty much on the same side (of the hotel), so we're able to catch up a little bit with one another on our dif-



Pant batted magically, Pujara batted like an Australian: Marcus Harris on Gabba chase

New Delhi, May 21: Marcus Harris, one of the Australian players looking on as India scripted a historic win in Brisbane earlier this year, said Rishabh Pant might have played the best innings on the day, but it was because of Cheteshwar Pujara's batting "like an Australian" that the win was possible. Speaking on the 'Cricket Life Stories' YouTube channel, the



Australian opener said: "The final day was amazing to watch. We were thinking the whole day if they would go for the runs or not. I think Rishabh played the best innings that day, but for Pujara to be copping an absolute barrage from everyone, it felt like he batted like an Australian, taking everything on the chest and getting on with it. The rest of the team just batted around him."

Rishabh Pant (89 not out off 138 balls) channelled his inner 'Mad Max' to scare the daylights out of the Australians with his breathtaking strokeplay in the 4th Test of the series earlier this year, ending the home team's 32-year-old unbeaten run at the 'Fortress Gabba'. A tale which will have no equal for ages to come! A story worth telling your grandchildren. Pant's whirlwind knock, with

addressing a virtual press conference on Thursday, the New Zealand skipper stated that his team is excited about facing India in the World Test Championship final. "I know the boys are really excited for the challenge and then the Test Championship final. The focus will be on one game at a time. I suppose having a different opposition, playing in a neutral country is an exciting prospect," Williamson said during the virtual presser. "It's great, and like I mentioned, it's nice always to get into the side after a break. There is a lot of excitement in the camp, and we know the challenge, like coming over

ferent balconies. For a number of guys, it's their first time in the bubble, while others have done it a few times, so that can be quite helpful," said the New Zealand captain. "The first step is getting out of the bubble, and after that, we're looking forward to starting our preparation, in terms of adjustment to conditions and catching up with the guys. It's always exciting when there has been a period of time away from the team, and I look forward to that," he added. The first England vs New Zealand Test gets underway on June 2 at Lord's while the second Test is scheduled to be played in Birmingham on June 10.

WWE releases India's Kavita Devi and other NXT superstars

New Delhi, May 21: WWE's first female Indian pro-wrestler Kavita Devi was among several WWE superstars who were released by the company this week due to budget cuts. She last wrestled for the company in July 2019. According to PWInsider.com Devi was supposed to

United States ever since. Hailing from Haryana, where she was also a police officer, Devi has trained under former WWE Champion, The Great Khali at his Punjab-based wrestling promotion and training academy. Devi was one of the 32 wrestlers chosen to compete in a tournament, named af-

wherein she caught the attention of talent scouts. In 2018, she also competed on WWE's biggest stage during the Women's Battle Royal at WrestleMania in New Orleans. Further WWE NXT star Velvet Etern Dream was released today by the company, according to multiple



wrestle earlier this year at the WWE Superstar Spectacle but was replaced by Sareena Sandhu. Devi had reportedly returned to India for a family matter but did not return to the

ter Mae Young, who used to compete in the WWE when it was called WWF. She was selected after taking part in the WWE Dubai tryout earlier this year in April 2018

sources. WWE has not publicly announced Clark's release. PWInsider.com confirmed his departure with a number of sources this afternoon, however.

Juve win Coppa Italia title

Reggio Emilia, May 21: Andrea Pirlo insisted he wanted to continue as Juventus coach after lifting his second trophy this season in the Coppa Italia final. The dethroned league champions beat Atalanta 2-1 to win the Italian Cup for the

14th time after winning the Super Cup in January. Federico Chiesa scored the winner with quarter of an hour to go after Dejan Kulusevski struck after half an hour, in a game played in front of fans for the first time in over a year. "It was a great

match, between two beautiful teams who fought to the end, a final worthy of this name, also a big celebration for the public, with everything that has happened this season," said Pirlo, who turned 42 on Wednesday.

Jannik Sinner shows shades of the Big Three

Mumbai, May 21: As Alexander Bublik approached the net, he had a smile much bigger than the opponent who had just beaten him. With a slight shake of the head, he said to Jannik Sinner, "You are not human, man. You are 15-year-old and you play like this. Good job." The vanquished Kazakh, the current World No 38 with a game very easy on the eye, had been blown away by the power and tenacity of the 19-year-old in the Miami Masters quarterfinal in early April. Bublik would later explain his comments. "He's not (human). That's a fact," he'd say. "I asked him if he's human or not, because for me, it's very surprising that the guy at his age has this mental toughness that many, many other players don't have. I called him a robot a couple of times during the match, but I do it in a very sincere way because he's a really, really great player." That's just one way to describe the young Italian who just a month back broke into the top 20 -- he's currently on No. 17. And the highlight reels second that. A YouTube compilation of his best shots (so far) did the rounds last year,



where the skinny ginger-haired teen would sprint around court and play devastatingly powerful shots -- nay, winners -- on the stretch. Naturally, the comparisons to the Big 3 of tennis -- the other often-considered super-human elements in the sport -- weren't far behind. His stoic temperament was likened to the straight-faced Roger Federer. His flexibility, balance and ability to play a winning shot from the most unlikely position drew similarities with Novak Djokovic. His topspin shots, particularly the backhand, trumped the rate of spin that Rafael Nadal puts on the ball. According to the ATP, Sinner put an average of 1858 revolutions per minute on his backhand -- more than any other player -- compared to the 1252 rpm Nadal generated.

He certainly did give Nadal an unexpected fight when they met at the French Open quarterfinal last year. It was Sinner's first experience on the fabled Parisian clay, and he became the youngest player since Djokovic in 2006 to reach that stage, and the youngest Roland Garros debutant since Nadal in 2005 to reach the final eight. That French Open run prompted Carlos Moya, Nadal's coach to contact Sinner to ask if he'd like to be Nadal's sparring partner during the 2021 Australian Open quarantine. Again, the comparisons began to build-up. But Sinner remained unbothered by them. "Breaking the top 20 at this age at the end of the day is quite good. But it's not about rushing rankings. It's about working and improving everyday," he tells. "Ev-

eryone is talking about me because I'm young, which is normal. But at the end of the day, I've only won two tournaments, okay, maybe even the Next Gen Finals. But I haven't won anything (of great significance). I'm more focused about improving now." For the record, the ATP 250 titles he won in Sofia (end of 2020) and in Melbourne (his first event of 2021) made him the youngest Tour-level winner since former World No 4 Kei Nishikori (18) in 2008, the youngest two-time champion since then 19-year-old Djokovic in 2006, and youngest to win two consecutive titles since Nadal (19) in 2005. To draw further comparisons, Federer won his first tour title in Milan, which is where Sinner announced himself by winning the ATP

Next Gen Finals in 2019. Incidentally, Federer's first title came in 2001, the year Sinner was born. Yet what makes Sinner's rapid rise all the more remarkable is that he started treating tennis as a full-time sport only five years ago. Born in San Candido, a Northern Italian village in the South Tyrol mountains near the Austrian border, his first love -- now a fond hobby -- was skiing. And he was quite good at it too. "When I was growing up in that part of Italy where there is so much snow, everyone is interested in skiing," he says. "At that age I was also interested in football, so tennis was the third sport, not even second. "But in football, I felt the difference could not be made from my side, but the entire team. So I put football away at some point. "In skiing, I was the Italian champion in 2008 and was second in 2012. You have to go down a hill for maybe 90 seconds, and if you make one mistake then it's over. In tennis, you can play two hours, make many mistakes and still win the match. When I think back about that, it's a good decision to go into tennis."

Govt objects to Twitter's 'manipulated media' tag on toolkit tweets



(A.O. Bureau) New Delhi, May 21: The government has asked Twitter to remove the 'manipulated media' tag as the matter is pending before law enforcement agency, and made it clear that the social media platform cannot

pass judgment when the issue is under investigation. The government has objected to Twitter using 'manipulated media' tag for tweets on an alleged Congress toolkit used to target the Centre over its COVID-19 handling, sources said. Investiga-

tion will determine the veracity of the content and not Twitter, it has asserted while asking the microblogging platform not to interfere in the investigation process. According to sources, the Ministry of Electronics and IT has written a strong communication to the global team of Twitter registering its objection to the 'manipulated media' tag on tweets made by some political leaders with reference to the toolkit allegedly created to undermine, derail and demean the efforts of the government against the COVID-19 pandemic.

ECoR Observed National Anti-terrorism Day

(A.O. Bureau) Bhubaneswar, May 21: East Coast Railway (ECoR) observed "Anti Terrorism Day" at its headquarters, Rail Sadan, Chandrasekharpur, Bhubaneswar and all Divisional headquarters at Khurda Road, Sambalpur and Visakhapatnam including other establishments like Construction and at Railway Stations by taking pledge today for non-violence & tolerance. Shri Vidya Bhushan, General Manager, East Coast Railway administered

the oath to all Railway officials through virtual mode to promote public awareness about the fact that terrorism has no religion and to spread the message of brotherhood, peace and harmony. It is to declare that terrorism shall never be practiced in any form. Railway Employees at headquarters & Divisions took pledge at their work stations/Office seat whereas employees at Stations took pledge at their work places observing Covid protocols.

Children's e-Summer camp by ECoR

(A.O. Bureau) Bhubaneswar, May 21: East Coast Railway has organised a Children's e-Summer Camp for the

qualified and trained instructors by virtual mode. This is the first time, such an event was conducted in virtual

group won in Dance competition. Joining in the valedictory function on the virtual mode from Rail Sadan, General



wards of Railway Employees from 12th to 21st May, 2021 under the aegis of Central Staff Benefit Fund. The purpose behind this e-Summer Camp is to raise the spirits of children this summer and engage them in constructive learning activities. This is also to create mass awareness amongst children on preventive measure of Covid-19 on the theme "let's break the chain of Covid-19 infection". Children were engaged in various activities like Yoga, Singing, Dancing, Acting, Drawing & paintings, etc., under the guidance of

mode and it became a grand success. Swarna Satarupa Dash of Jr. Red Team & Punam Dora of Sr. Pink Team were adjudged in best slogan writing; Krishna Priyadarsini Pattanayak from Junior Yellow and Priyanka Priyadarsini Swain won in Quiz Competition; Anchal Swain from Jr Team and Anwesha Piplai of Sr. Blue won prize in Drawing Competition, Ayusmati Gouda from Jr Team and Subhrajit Sahoo from Sr Group were on in Song Competition, Seya Shalini Jena from Jr Group & Payal Soren from Sr

Manager, East Coast Railway Shri Vidya Bhushan encouraged Children for their activities and advised to continue the practices to engage themselves from home and to utilise their learning from the camp in their future. Shri Sudhir Kumar, Additional General Manager of East Coast Railway along with Principal Heads of the Departments, Senior officials were also participated in the concluding ceremony in virtual mode. Principal Chief Personnel Officer Shri Tushar Kanti Mandal co-ordinated the programme.

Miyawaki changes green cover in Mine location of Tata Steel at Joda

(A.O. Bureau) Joda, May 21: Joda, located in Keonjhar district of Odisha, has a wealth of diverse flora and fauna and is a natural habitat. Tata Steel's Manganese ore mine located in Joda has contributed in preserving and enhancing the biodiversity in this region with its commitment towards sustainable mining practices and by introducing Miyawaki concept of plantation. Green cover across the Manganese Mines locations of Tata Steel at Joda has turned thicker and faster since Miyawaki was introduced to the environment department planting about tens of thousands of saplings. The size of plants has grown from mere 1.5'-3' to 5'-6' during first six months of plantation because of Miyawaki. 38,500 saplings have been planted at dump yard of Bichakundi, Bamebari

and Tiringpahar Manganese leases at Joda. As part of its sustainable journey, Tata Steel Manganese leases has plans to plant 30,000 more saplings in this Financial Year 2022 across its mining operation locations. The steel major has planted 10,000 saplings of ten different native species at its dump yard and other locations within Manganese leases in Keonjhar district of Odisha. Plantation of about 30,000 saplings over an area of 15-20 Acre is planned at the Manganese Mine dump yards and other locations at Joda. Named after Akira Miyawaki, a Japanese botanist and professor at Yokohama National University besides the recipient of the Blue Planet award in 2006, the Miyawaki method of afforestation proposes the selection of native species of a forest by planting native

- As reflected in the results, every sapling has benefited from the Miyawaki method. Despite extreme conditions in summer and monsoon, the survival rate of the forests in both plots is more than 90%.
- High rate of survival was achieved because the trees used were all native to the area. Thus, they were able to withstand the conditions more easily.
- Apart from their ability to thrive in the climate of the location, the native trees are the foundation of the Miyawaki method because they are the trees that ecologically form natural connections with each other, to create a natural ecosystem. Since they are not foreign to one another and have been co-existing in the same environment for millennia, they complement one another.
- The trees are also allowed to grow naturally, without any interference by the human beings. By the process of elimination is in agreement with natural selection. The strongest and healthiest plants overpower the weaker ones. This results in the survival of only the best and healthiest group of plants.

trees (simultaneous use of intermediate and late succession species) instead of plantation trees. The method banks on identifying potential natural vegetation of an area which is followed by planting of late succession species in a mixed manner, along with the companion species. Preparation of topsoil is done in order to ensure

soil is moist/humid, nutritious, and porous through use of cocopeat, vermicompost and rice husk respectively in the case of this plot. The strategic distribution of the saplings is the most important aspect of Miyawaki method. Darwin's law states that the organisms with heritable traits better suited to the environment will

survive. After adequately mulching the soil, the saplings are planted in a manner that would mimic the distribution of trees in a natural forest. This encourages Darwinian competition (survival of the fittest) for survival of the strongest variants of each species. In twenty to thirty years, this can give rise to a dense forest.

MCL observes Anti-Terrorism Day



(A.O. Bureau) Sambalpur, May 21, 2021: Mahanadi Coalfields Limited (MCL) today observed Anti-Terrorism Day with employees taking a pledge to

uphold & promote peace, social harmony & understanding among all fellow human beings & fight the forces of disruption threatening human lives & values. Mr PK

Sinha, CMD, MCL administered the pledge via video-conferencing. Mr OPS Singh, Director (Tech/Ops), Mr KR Vasudevan, Director (Finance), Mr Keshav Rao, Director (Personnel) and Mr Baban Singh, Director (Technical/Projects and Planning) were prominent among Area General Managers and Heads of Departments who joined for taking the pledge.

In lightning one killed and one seriously injured



(A.O. Bureau) Ganjam, May 21: Heavy to very heavy winds flow and light rains were reported in two places in Aska and Sankhemundi blocks of Ganjam dist. This afternoon due to thunderstorm along With heavy wind flow and lightning in some places. One person was killed and at one and more were injured reported severally.

Shukdev Sahu alias Shukuta came to Jagmohan village in Dharakot block for a family get together propose ritual based cause from Muniguda in Kandhamal Dist. After lightning attack him from family members help Aska sub-divisional medical was taken by ambulance this afternoon due to lightning strikes. Gopinath Sahu of Jagmohan vil-

lage in Dharakot block was pronounced dead at the scene. The second was an incident in Samantarapur village of Gobindpur panchayat in Sankhemundi block of Ganjam district. A goat herder named Jagili Gouda of the same village was admitted to the hospital in critical condition after being struck by lightning while eight of his goats were reported dead.

Vedanta supports Jharsuguda's District COVID Hospital with additional ICU beds

(A.O. Bureau) Jharsuguda, May 21: Vedanta, India's largest producer of aluminium and value-added products, is supporting the District COVID Hospital in Jharsuguda with 20 ICU beds, 20 ventilators, 200 oxygen flowmeters and 2000 N95 masks, aiding the district administration's efforts to provide proper treatment to those ailing from the disease. The company has also installed a diesel generator (DG) set at the hospital to ensure uninterrupted supply of power, and provided a 24*7 ambulance with healthcare workers for logistics support. Vedanta's aid comes as a strong support to the Jharsuguda district administration as they relentlessly battle the pandemic to safeguard communities. Speaking about the company's initiative,

Mr. CN Singh, CEO - Vedanta Ltd., Jharsuguda, said, "We stand in solidarity with the state government and the people of Odisha at the time of need like this. We are extending all support to the state administration in their efforts to keep our communities safe, as we work on all fronts to safeguard our employees and families against the disease. We are working closely with the Jharsuguda District Administration providing our full support to the District COVID Hospital as we aid in the effective management of the disease in the region." Dr. Lal Mohan Routray, Chief District Medical and Public Health Officer, Jharsuguda district appreciated the company's support saying, "Vedanta has always stood with the district administration and people of Jharsuguda in

the fight against the COVID pandemic. Their support in operating District COVID Hospital is significant and extremely crucial in saving the lives of our people. We stand together in this fight." Towards ensuring greater preparedness against

COVID at the grassroots, Vedanta had rolled out various initiatives in Jharsuguda. Last year, the company had helped set up the District COVID Hospital, by providing infrastructure and medical equipment such as beds and ICUs, ventilators, PPE and co-

operative, Vedanta's flagship women empowerment project in Jharsuguda, thus providing them with a safe means of livelihood during the lockdown. More than 3300 ration kits were distributed to daily wage earners, slum dwellers and under-served fami-



domains of quality education sustainable livelihood, women empowerment, health, water and sanitation, bio-investment and community infrastructure reach out to a total of 72 villages in Jharsuguda and nearby areas, benefiting nearly 80,000 people in a year.