



On vaccine mission in US, Jaishankar says 'there's a political effort to depict our govt a certain way'

2



Shantiraj Khosla, Odisha's Noted Music Director, Dies Of COVID-19

3



Kangana Ranaut mocks Twitter after it raises concerns of threat to freedom of speech: 'Who are they'

6



Rafael Nadal faces few obstacles in quest for record 21st major at French Open

7

Cyclone Yaas: PM Modi To Visit Odisha Tomorrow For Damage Assessment

Bhubaneswar, May 27: Prime Minister Narendra Modi is scheduled to visit Odisha tomorrow to assess the damage in the state caused by Cyclone Yaas. The PM will initially land in Bhubaneswar and hold a review meeting in the state capital. He will then proceed for an aerial survey of Cyclone Yaas-affected areas of Balasore and Bhadrak districts. Modi in New Delhi today chaired a meeting to review the impact of Cyclone Yaas. Officials made a detailed presentation on various aspects of preparedness, assessment of damages and related matters. It was discussed that



about 106 teams of NDRF were deployed with 46 teams each in West Bengal/Odisha that rescued more than 1000 persons and removed more than 2500 trees/ poles that had fallen & obstructed the roads. The Defence Forces namely Army and Coast Guard also rescued marooned persons, while Navy

& Air Force were on the alert. Though the States are engaged in the assessment of damages caused in aftermath of cyclone Yaas, from the preliminary reports available, it is seen that thanks to accurate forecasting, effectively communicating to the people in the affected areas and evacuation in a timely

manner by States and Central agencies have ensured minimal loss of human life. At the same time, due to inundation, there have been damages, which are being assessed. Power and Telecom services have been restored in most of the affected areas. Prime Minister noted the effective and proactive role played by the

Central and States agencies in responding to the challenges thrown by the cyclone and advised the agencies to ensure that normal life is restored in the affected areas at the earliest and relief is appropriately disbursed to persons affected by the cyclone. Odisha Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik today made an aerial survey of the cyclone-hit Bhadrak, Balasore, Kendrapara and other areas for damage assessment. The CM has appreciated the district administrations for early preparedness, continuous monitoring of the situation and quick restoration of water and electricity supply.

CM Naveen directs to assess damage caused by cyclone Yaas within a week

Bhubaneswar, May 27: Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik today directed to assess the damage caused by cyclone Yaas within a week. The CM while reviewing the relief and restoration measures

restoration process. He asked the authorities to keep a close watch on the possible flood situation in Baitarani river. The CM appreciated all the district administrations for early preparedness, continuous

ity supply. Earlier Patnaik has made an aerial survey of the cyclone affected areas in the State. The Chief Minister conducted the aerial survey to assess the damage caused by the cyclone in



through video conferencing asked the authorities to expedite the

monitoring of the situation, and quick restoration of water and electric-

districts of Bhadrak, Balasore, Kendrapara and other areas.

Odisha-Born IRS Appointed As Member Of Central Board Of Direct Taxes



New Delhi, May 27: The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet has appointed three Indian Revenue Service (IRS)

officers as Members of the Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT). Odisha-born IRS, Dr Jagannath Bidyadhar

Mohapatra is among the three newly-appointed Members of the CBDT. He is a 1985 batch IRS officer. As per a notification issued by the Department of Personnel and Training under the Ministry of personnel, Public Grievance and Pensions, the two other newly appointed Members of the CBDT are IRS Anu J Singh and IRS Anuja Sarangi.

More Covid-19 Vaccination Slots To Be Available For 18+

Bhubaneswar, May 27: More slots of Covid-19 vaccination will be available for persons in the 18-44 age bracket in Bhubaneswar to book for May 28 and 29. The Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC) made an announcement

in this regard today. The municipal corporation also stated new slots for booking will open for persons within the 18-44 age bracket and 45+ age groups. The slot booking will be available to receive Covid vaccine on May 31

and June 1. Those who are interested to receive the vaccine will have to book slots on <http://selfregistration.cowin.gov.in>. The slot booking will start at 7 PM today, the municipal corporation informed.

Cyclone Yaas Aftermath: No Flood Threat, Except In Baitarani River, Says SRC

Bhubaneswar, May 27: Despite heavy rainfall induced by Cyclone Yaas in the State, no flash flood is expected in any of the major riv-

Keonjhar district. Currently, water level of the river stands at 38.36 metre at Anandapur and is likely to rise further to 40.85 metre. The water

ter level is also low at Salandi river. "Had this cyclone hit the State during monsoon and the quantum of rainfall received in the State un-

pecting flood situation anywhere except for a probable medium level flood situation in Baitarani river," said Jena briefing reporters today. The SRC informed that district administration and Water Resources Department officials are working to effectively deal with it if the situation so arises. Sharing information on the evacuation of people, Jena said that according to as of now available data a total of around 7.03 lakh people have been evacuated. In view of the expected flood in the Baitarani river, from the safety point of view evacuation of few people is underway in low-lying areas of Bhadrak and Jajpur districts and additional

evacuation may be required in Kendrapara district, he added. The SRC informed that in some villages in Bhadrak and Balasore districts seawater had entered due to tidal surge and heavy rains had resulted in waterlogging and villagers in 7-8 places have dug up roads for drainage of the water. He said that roads belonging to the Works Department and RD Department will be restored by tonight. Jena informed that RO plants, mobile tankers and fixed tankers are being rushed to Balasore district by the Panchayati Raj department to augment potable drinking water supply in villages which have been marooned and restoration of electricity will take some time.



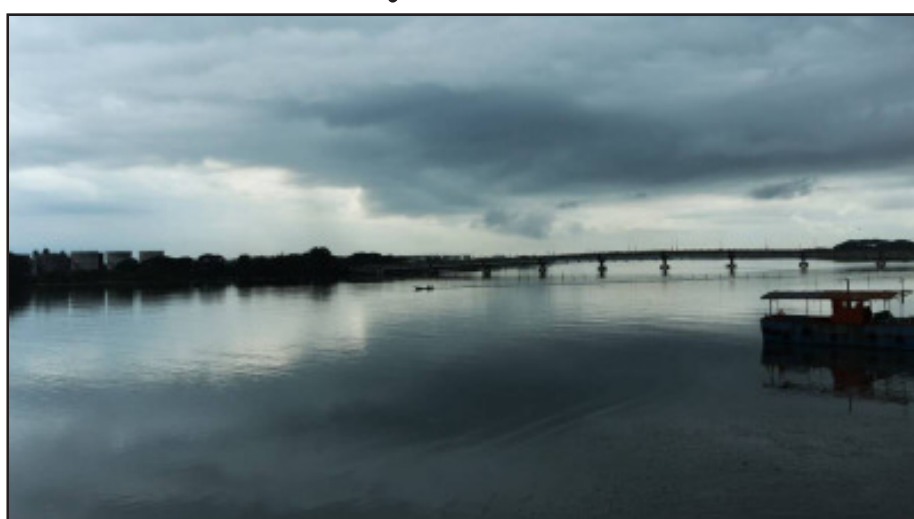
ers except Baitarani, informed Special Relief Commissioner (SRC), Pradeep Jena, today. Baitarani river is flowing above the danger mark at Anandapur in

level is also expected to rise at Akhuapada in Bhadrak district. However, Subarnarekha and Budhabalanga rivers are flowing below the danger mark while the wa-

der its influence, it would have created a dangerous flood situation in the State. But since it is summer, rivers and canals are dry and the soil is dry we are not ex-

Southwest Monsoon likely to hit Kerala on May 31: IMD

New Delhi, May 27: The Southwest Monsoon is likely to hit the Kerala coast on May 31, according to the India Meteorological Department (IMD). If realised, monsoon will arrive before time over the southern state. On Thursday, the monsoon further advanced into some more parts of Maldives-Comorin regions and covered a majority of the southeast and east-central regions of the Bay of Bengal. As favourable conditions for the monsoon are building up, many areas



in Kerala have been reporting continuous light to moderate-intensity rainfall since the beginning of this week. The 24-hour rainfall re-

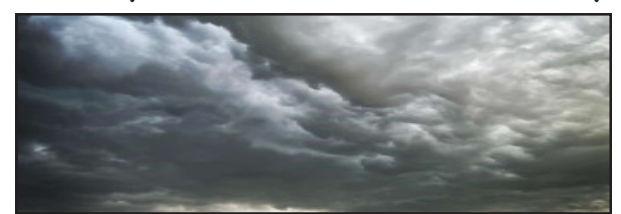
corded over districts of Ernakulam, Alappuzha, Kottayam, Idukki, Pathanamthitta and Thiruvananthapuram ranged between 19mm

and 115mm. As on Thursday, the country-wide rainfall for the March to May period stood at 15 per cent surplus. Except the north-

eastern states, Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh, all states and union territories have recorded either normal or above normal rainfall during the ongoing pre-monsoon season. The IMD declares the monsoon onset over Kerala when factors, including rainfall of 2.5 mm or more, is reported from the designated 14 weather stations for two consecutive days any time after May 10. The other factors are values of wind field and Outgoing Longwave Radiation over southeast Arabian Sea.

Odisha Weather Alert: Heavy Rain In 5 Districts Till Today

Bhubaneswar, May 27: Heavy rain accompanied with gusty wind is likely to lash several parts in five districts across the state till tomorrow morning. As per the latest bulletin issued by the India Meteorological Department (IMD) Regional Centre here, the very severe cyclonic storm Yaas has weaken into a depression over the central parts of Jharkhand and will further weaken into a well marked low pressure in the next 12 hours. Under its influence, heavy rain is very likely to occur at isolated places



over the districts of Sundargarh, Deogarh, Keonjhar, Jharsuguda and Sambalpur. Besides, light to moderate thundershower has also been predicted at many places over the districts of north interior Odisha, at a few places over the districts of north coastal Odisha and at one or two places over the districts of south Odisha. The weather condition is likely to pre-

vail in the districts till 8.30 AM tomorrow. "Squally wind speed reaching 45-55 kmph gusting to 65 kmph will prevail over Jharkhand and adjoining areas of Odisha during next 12 hours and decrease gradually thereafter. Fishermen have been advised not to venture into sea along and off Odisha coast and north Bay of Bengal during the period," the weathermen cautioned.

Govt approves ₹5 lakh assistance to families of journalists who died of Covid



New Delhi, May 27: The Centre on Thursday approved a financial assistance of ₹5 lakh to families of 26 journalists who succumbed to coronavirus disease (Covid-19). With this, the number of families of such journalists who were given assistance in this financial relief rose to 67. The Ministry of Information and Broadcasting and Press Information Bureau (PIB) compiled and collated

the details of journalists who lost their lives due to the pandemic in this financial year and started a special drive to provide assistance to their families under the Journalist Welfare Scheme. So far, families of 41 journalists killed by Covid-19 were given financial assistance by the government. The Journalist Welfare Scheme (JWS) Committee headed by Amit Khare, Secretary, Ministry of Information and

Broadcasting, expressed their deep condolences to the families of the journalists killed by Covid-19. The committee also decided to hold JWS meetings on weekly basis so that applications for financial assistance can be processed expeditiously. The committee today also considered applications of 11 families of those journalists who had passed away due to reasons other than Covid-19.

Covid-19 restrictions extended in Bengal till June 15: Mamata Banerjee

Kolkata, May 27: The West Bengal government had announced the existing restrictions for 15 days from May 16 following a huge surge in the number of coronavirus cases. The announcement for extension of the curbs came three days before they were scheduled to come to an end. "The Covid-19 restrictions in the state will



continue till June 15. This is not a lockdown or a curfew. We will strictly follow the restrictions. "It's a relief to see that the ongoing restrictions have helped in easing the situation a little,"

Banerjee told reporters at the state secretariat 'Nabanna'. She allowed the jute industry to work with 40 per cent workforce in place of the existing 30 per cent. "We will see that the state's economy is not disturbed," Banerjee said. Essential services will continue operating following protocols, the chief minister said.

Lakshadweep admin justifies reform push, says it wants to develop islands like Maldives

Kochi, May 27: The Lakshadweep administration, which is under attack from the Opposition for its reform measures, on Thursday said it was laying the foundation for the future of islands in a planned way and to develop it on the lines of Maldives in two decades. Rejecting allegations that all measures were taken without taking people of the islands into confidence, Lakshadweep District Collector S Asker Ali said those who are having vested interests and those involved in illegal business were carrying out propaganda against the administration. "Lakshadweep is very peaceful. It will remain peaceful. Now also in the islands it is very peaceful," Ali told a press conference here in Kochi. In response to charges by opposition parties that



Administrator Praful Patel unilaterally lifted restrictions on the use of alcohol in the Muslim-majority islands, he said liquor permits were given for some select tourist establishments and it was meant only for tourists. On the decision to ban cow slaughter, he said as many states in the country have enacted cow protection laws, so a law has also been introduced in Lakshadweep on the same lines. "Only those

who are associated with its illegal business and those who have personal interests are propagating against this legislation," he claimed. Asked about the decision to exclude meat products from the menu of the mid-day meal for students, Ali said this was a policy decision and in the mid-day meal menu, non-veg components like fish and eggs are kept. This decision was taken by a government committee

after consulting many people including fishermen. He said fish was included in the menu to promote local fishermen and they had pressed for that. "This is one way to promote them", Ali said. Justifying the decision to introduce the Prevention of Anti-Social Activities Act (PASA) in the islands, the official said this is to check incidents like drug abuse and increasing cases relating to sexual abuse of children.

"So when we plan to develop this island holistically we cannot compromise on the Law and Order fronts. Lakshadweep is very peaceful. But now few cases are emerging", he said, responding to queries on various regulations of the new administration. The press meet was held amid mounting protest from opposition parties against "anti-people" policies of administrator Praful Patel in the islands. The collector further said the administration wanted to develop islands like Maldives in the next 10 or 20 years. The islands are very critical from a security point of view. "So we are planning for a holistic development for these islands. From a security point of view Lakshadweep islands are very critical. So we cannot take a chance.

New Delhi, May 27: The home ministry said that despite the declining trend in daily Covid-19 cases, the number of active cases is still very high and added it is important that containment measures may continue to be implemented strictly. The Union home ministry on Thursday extended the nationwide Covid-19 restrictions, put in place after its April 29 order, till June 30. The ministry said the restrictions are necessary to keep a check on the spread of

the infection. "The strict implementation of containment and other measures has led to a declining trend in the number of new and active cases, across States & UTs, barring some areas in the Southern and North-Eastern regions," the order by Union home secretary Ajay Bhalla said. "I would like to highlight that in spite of the declining trend, the number of active cases presently is still very high. It is, therefore, important that containment mea-



asures may continue to be implemented strictly. Any relaxation by States/UTs, may be considered at an appropriate time, in a graded manner, after assessing the local situation, requirements and resources," the order

further said. The home secretary asked states to work on strategy to bring down the number of Covid-19 cases. In the April 29 order, the MHA directed the states and Union territories to go for intensive and local

containment measures in districts with a high number of Covid-19 cases to check the spread of the viral disease. It asked the states and Union territories to identify the districts Covid positivity rate was more than 10 per cent in the last one week. The MHA also asked the states to consider the containment measures, as conveyed in an advisory issued by the Union health ministry for immediate implementation based on an assessment of the situation.

Service Time At Toll Plazas Not Be Over 10 Seconds Per Vehicle: NHAI

New Delhi, May 27: In order to ensure smooth and quick passage of vehicles at the toll plazas, National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) has issued guidelines to ensure service time of not more than 10 seconds per vehicle even during peak hours at the toll plazas on the National Highways. The new guidelines will also ensure seamless flow of traffic at the toll plazas by not allowing vehicles to queue up more than 100 metres. Although at most of the toll plazas, there is no waiting time after mandatory 100% Fastag, even then if there is queue of wait-



ing vehicles of more than 100 metres due to some reason, the vehicles will be allowed to pass without paying toll till the queue comes within 100 metres from the toll booth. For this purpose, a yellow line at a distance of 100 metres from toll booth will be marked in each toll lane. This is to in-

culcate further sense of accountability in toll plaza operators. Since NHAI has successfully transitioned to 100% cashless tolling from middle of February 2021, the overall FASTag penetration at NHAI Toll Plazas has reached 96% and stands at 99% at many toll plazas. Keeping in

view the growing Electronic Toll Collection (ETC) penetration in the country, it has been emphasized to have a new design and construct the upcoming toll plazas as per traffic projections for next 10 years to have an efficient toll collection system. As social distancing has become the

new normal, more and more commuters are opting to use FASTag as it removes the chances of any direct contact between the drivers and toll operators. The constant growth and adoption of FASTag by the highway users is encouraging and has helped bringing more efficiency in toll operations.

Centre hits back, says 'Twitter needs to stop beating around bush & comply with laws'

New Delhi, May 27: Hours after Twitter expressed concerns regarding the safety of its employees and "potential threat to freedom of expression" for its users, the central government rebutted saying the statement by the social media intermediary was an attempt to dictate its terms to the world's largest democracy. In a statement, the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology said that through its actions and deliberate defiance, Twitter is seeking to undermine the country's legal system. "Twitter needs to stop beating around the bush & comply with laws of the land. Lawmaking and policy formulations is the sole prerogative of the sovereign and Twitter is just a social media platform

& it has no locus in dictating what India's legal policy framework should be," the ministry said. Assuring safety, the ministry also said that representatives of social media companies including Twitter are and will always remain

statement by Twitter as "mendacious" and "designed to impede a lawful inquiry..." "Twitter Inc. has taken upon itself, in the garb of terms of service, to adjudicate the truth or otherwise of documents in public space. Twitter Inc. is pur-



safe in India. "There is no threat to their personal safety and security," the statement said. The ministry also said that Twitter's statement was an attempt to defame India to hide its follies. The Delhi Police also reverted calling the

porting to be both an investigating authority as well as an adjudicating judicial authority. It has no legal sanction to be either. The only legal entity, so empowered by the duly laid down law, to investigate is the Police and to adjudicate is the Courts."

At the United Nations, Delhi showcases its women power

New Delhi, May 27: Several women from India have served at the UN Secretariat but none at the highest appointed position of Under-Secretary General. This is without doubt a singular achievement for Indian women in the UN system. Akanksha Arora is an Indo-Canadian auditor with the United Nations (UN) who has challenged the incumbent UN Sec-

retary General for re-election later this year. Not even having the backing of her own country, the spunky Arora is unlikely to go far in her quest for the top job at the UN. But 2021 has been an extraordinarily good year for Indian women at the UN, with the appointment of Usha Rao Monari as the Associate Administrator of the UN Development

Program in the rank of Under-Secretary General. Several women from India have served at the UN Secretariat but none at the highest appointed position of Under-Secretary General. This is without doubt a singular achievement for Indian women in the UN system. Monari was earlier with the International Finance Corporation (IFC).

On vaccine mission in US, Jaishankar says 'there's a political effort to depict our govt a certain way'

New Delhi, May 27: With India grappling with the ferocious second wave of Covid-19, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar has said that "a political effort" is being made to depict the present Indian government "in a certain way" and there is a difference between the "concocted" political imagery and the actual governance record. The minister is on a vaccine mission to

the United States as India fights shortages of doses amidst a virulent second surge. Talking to former US National Security Advisor General HR McMaster in 'Battlegrounds' session on 'India: Opportunities And Challenges For A Strategic Partnership' at Stanford University's Hoover Institution, New York, Jaishankar also mentioned that it is "a very stressful time" for In-



dia due to the pandemic. "We are actually giving free food, last year for multiple months and right now again

because of the second wave we have resumed, to as much as 800 million people. We put money

into the bank accounts of 400 million people. This is what this government did. Now, if you are feeding more than two and a half times the population of the United States and you are funding more than the population of the US and you're doing this pretty much anonymously and impersonally in the sense beyond the name and the detail, the bank account of the person.

SOANSS Volunteers Extend Statewide Help To Covid Infected

(A.O. Bureau) Bhubaneswar, May 27: Volunteers of the NSS at Siksha 'O' Anusandhan (SOA) have set up a 24-hour Covid Helpline across Odisha to extend assistance to Covid-19 patients and their families. These volunteers have been reaching out to such patients and families over telephone extending a helping hand to address their requirements or solve any problem. "Any person anywhere in the state can reach us for any pandemic related information and we are trying to help," Mr. Pratik Dash, who has been coordinating the effort. This team, with representative in every district, has been helping people with supply of oxygen cylinders, food or arrange ambulance to ferry the patients to hospital. Besides, the volunteers are also arranging blood and plasma for patients who needed the same, Mr. Dash said. Altogether 162 NSS volunteers of SOA had joined this effort who

The Buddha Purnima is celebrated in different style on behalf of the Buddha Temple



(A.O. Bureau) Bhubaneswar, May 27: The Odisha branch of the Mahabodhi Society of India has celebrated the Buddha Purnima Niara. In the wake of the outbreak and the storm, the society has distributed packets of dry food such as rice, flour, pulses, oil, potatoes and onions to the poor in Kalinga. In addition, cooked food has been distributed to three orphanages and nursing homes in Bhubaneswar and Chhattisgarh. The program was moderated by Dr. Saurendra Kumar Mohapatra, Secretary, Odisha Branch. Dr. Karunakar Pradhan, a member of the society, Namrata Chadha and Namita Mohapatra were the main contributors. Odisha Branch President Dr. Bimalendu Mohanty, Central Vice President Dr. Aryakumar Gyanendra, former Ambassador Absar Beuria and senior member Bilm Das were present on the occasion.

BMC adds 2 more drive-in vaccination locations in Bhubaneswar

(A.O. Bureau) Bhubaneswar, May 27: The Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC) BMC has added two more drive-in vaccination locations in Bhubaneswar for 45+ age groups. The locations are BDA Kalyan Mandap in Kalinganagar and For-



tune Towers in Maitree Vihar. With this addition, there are now seven drive-in vaccination locations in the city for the convenience of citizens. The booking will start today at 6pm for May 28 and 29. The intending citizens for this facility will need to drive on their vehicle to the venue mentioned above as per slot booked by them. "Without slot booking no vehicle will be allowed inside the venue for vaccination. Daily 600 slots available at all drive-in locations for May 28 and 29 except Utkal Galleria where 500 slots available," said an official.

Bhubaneswar sees a steep fall in Covid-19 cases, reports 471 fresh cases

(A.O. Bureau) Bhubaneswar, May 27: The capital city of Odisha reported 471 new Covid-19 cases during the last 24 hours, the Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC) said on Thursday. While 118 were quarantine cases, 353 were from local contacts. As many as 1062 patients recovered during this period. With this, the city has now 12,071 active cases. The total



caseload of the city reached to 72,354 with detection of the fresh cases. The city has reported 328 deaths due to the virus infection so far and 59,908 persons have recovered.

Photo Of Lord Jagannath, Siblings Inside Puri Srimandir Allegedly Goes Viral

(A.O. Bureau) Puri, May 27: A photograph of Lord Jagannath and his siblings sitting on the Ratna Singhasan (bejewelled throne) at the sanctum sanctorum of the Lord Jagannath Temple in Puri has allegedly gone viral on social media.

Despite the prohibition of taking mobile phone, camera, or any electronic gadgets inside Srimandir, one Arijit Chandra of Kolkata in West Bengal has shared the photograph on Facebook mentioning it to be of the Ratna Vedi or Ratna Singhasan.

Navy Team From INS Chilika Reaches Cyclone Yaas Affected Areas Commences Relief and Rescue Operations On 26th May Post Landfall

(A.O. Bureau) Khordha, May 27: The Indian Navy team deployed from INS Chilika under the aegis of Naval Officer-in-Charge Odisha has reached Balesore District of Odisha which saw damage and devastation due to the very severe cyclonic storm Yaas posts its Landfall on 26th May. The Indian Naval team has already commenced the relief work for the personnel in distress. The Officer-in-Charge of the



team has established communication with the District Collector Balesore and has worked out the plan to make necessary arrangements for

ate health check up. The team has distributed nearly 200 assorted relief food materials packets in the chandipur area and is planning for the distribution of same in the northern sector of Balesore District tomorrow in coordination with District authorities. The team is also geared up to set up a community kitchen for nearly thousands of people in consultation with state authorities in the primary affected areas. Four Naval

Ships of Eastern Naval Command and carrying HADR materials is also planned to enter Dhamara Port on 27th May to provide necessary relief to the affected populace of Bhadrak District. The Naval Officer-in-Charge Odisha operations room at INS Chilika has been centrally Co-ordinating the efforts of the Navy team in liaison with state government and Headquarters Eastern Naval Command at Visakhapatnam.

750 children born in Cyclone Yaas

(A.O. Bureau) Bhubaneswar, May 27: As many as 750 babies were born in 10 coastal districts of Odisha on May 25 and 26 during Cyclone Yaas, informed the Women and Child Development department. The department said that 4555 pregnant women were identified while 2107 were shifted to hospitals from May 24 prior to the landfall of the cyclone. Officials said that highest number of 166 babies were born in Kendrapara district while 98 and 95 babies

were born in Bhadrak and Khordha district respectively. The condition of mothers and babies are stable. Officials said that convincing the pregnant women to shift to hospitals was the major challenge. "Most of the expectant mothers have delivery date on the first week of June and most of them were reluctant to get shifted to hospitals. But supervisors and members of Angawadi visited them frequently and convinced them to get shifted," said an official.



MLA Suresh Kumar Routray Distributes Face Masks to the Advocates -Urges to Stay Safe



(A.O. Bureau) Khordha, May 27: Senior Congress leader and MLA, Jatni, Suresh Kumar Routray on Thursday initiated an awareness campaign and distributed Sanitisers and Face Mask's to the Advocates of Khordha District BAR, Association. In the presence of President Khordha District BAR, Association,

Ajit Pattnaik, Secretary Sanjaya Pattnaik, Former President Khordha District BAR, Association Sisir Kumar Parida, Manash Pattnaik, Pabitra Rajguru, Muna Pattnaik, Pranaya Das, Lotak Pattnaik and others, Khordha District Student Congress President Soumya Ranjan Pattnaik are remain

present. "The Advocates will also have to take some precautions for the Prevention of corona virus infection, such as maintaining social distance, Use Sanitisers, washing hands with soap /water, using face masks in congested places and if not unavoidable then live in their houses "Routray said Further.

Shantiraj Khosla, Odisha's Noted Music Director, Dies Of COVID-19

(A.O. Bureau) Cuttack, May 27: Shantiraj Khosla, renowned music director of Odisha, succumbed to COVID-19 at the SCB Medical College and Hospital (SCBMCH) here, family sources said. He was 50. Khosla had tested positive for the virus re-



cently and was admitted to the COVID Hospital at the SCBMCH. He

breathed his last while undergoing treatment at the healthcare facility.

Damages Caused By Cyclone Yaas To Low Transmission Network Minimal: Odisha Energy Secretary

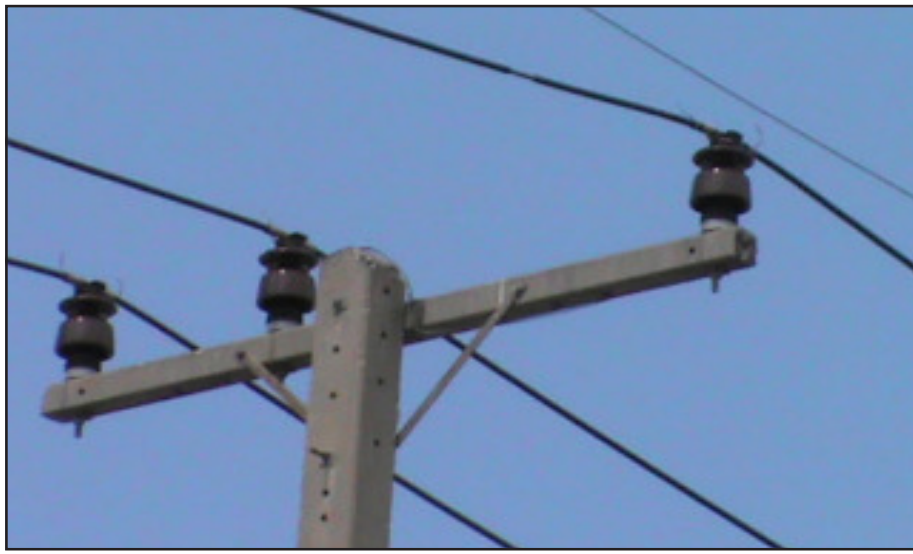
(A.O. Bureau) Bhubaneswar, May 27: While detailing out the damages caused by Cyclone Yaas and subsequent flood in some districts of Odisha, Energy Secretary Nikunja Dhal today stated damage to electricity cables and poles has been less than anticipated due to lower wind speed. Restoration work started in the affected areas immediately after the cyclone due to adequate planning and pre-positioning of men, materials and equipment at strategic locations, Dhal added. "Damages to low tension (LT) network have been minimised due to preventive maintenance,

tree pruning, etc. We have been preparing for possible May cyclone since April itself," the Energy Secretary said. The 220 and 132 kV transmission system of OPTCL remains largely unaffected. Large number of trees have been uprooted in

Bhitarkanika, Nilgiri and Betonati areas, which would pose challenges. Damages in Mayurbhanj can be assessed tomorrow as the cyclone is still active in the district. As Jaleswar, Basta and Soro areas of Balasore district, many areas of Bhadrak and

Kendrapara districts have experienced heavy rains and flooding, power restoration in these areas would take time, he informed. Supply to remaining consumers of TPCODL targeted to be restored within next 72 hours. Similarly, in TPNODL it

would take 5-6 days to restore power supply to all consumers except in those in the flooded areas. This is based on preliminary assessment of damages, the Energy Secretary said. "Hospitals, oxygen filling units, telephone exchanges and water supply systems, important public offices shall have power supply restored on priority. All COVID hospitals and oxygen filling units of TPCODL have got power supply by now. Power restoration has started in Balasore, Bhadrak, Jajpur and Kendrapara towns too. Bhubaneswar and Cuttack remained mostly unaffected," he said.



EDITORIAL

Exercise caution

Climate change is as detrimental to human life as Corona, though not as quickly. The former is more of a silent killer but its effects are far-reaching and irreversible. It is slowly, but steadily, impacting the lives of people in the hills of Uttarakhand. Its first victim, of course, is the agriculture and those involved in farming. The hill State, with an agricultural population of around 71 per cent, is going to be the worst hit in the years to come. The latest study by Germany's Potsdam Institute for Climate Impact Research and The Tata Energy and Resources Institute (TERI) has drawn a scary picture for the beautiful mountainous State. It has revealed that Uttarakhand's temperature would change as much as 1.90 by 2050. This change may look insignificant, yet it will have a major impact on the environment and the lives of people. As per the 2011 census, 40 per cent of Uttarakhand's total population has already migrated to the plains. The farmers in large number are abandoning their traditional vocation, farming. According to a 2018 survey, 734 villages in the State are uninhabited since 2011. The number of such villages, often called "ghost villages", and the rate of migration will only increase. As most people in Uttarakhand depend upon agriculture for a living, the effect on their livelihood would be severe. Climate change would dent agriculture the most. As per the study, high evaporation due to rising temperature would increase "water stress", leading to floods and changes in crop yields. The Almora, Champawat, Pauri and Tehri regions are going to be the worst hit. The rise in temperature will make various crops unviable and the farmers would have to give them up altogether. It might take a few decades, but its impact is already visible in the hills. Many farming families are finding it difficult to survive as their yield per acre is going down and the traditional crops don't grow anymore. Floods have also become frequent in the hills. Unfortunately, hardly anything is being done to arrest climate change. Steps should have been taken to stop deforestation and construction activity, besides sops given to farmers. But nothing is happening on the ground. The Government is in fact abetting the building of dams amid the fragile ecosystem, which would only add to nature's fury. It is about time that some policy changes were introduced and implemented to avert an impending disaster.

Tough decision

The CBSE class XII examinations are in an avoidable muddle. Still, there is some forward movement in the last few days, from whether to conduct the exams at all to what kind of format and duration should be adopted for the examinations. As things stand, the States are choosing between two formats. One, the standard, three-hour format conducted at designated exam centres for all major subjects; marks for the minor subjects should be given on the basis of performance in the major subjects. Two, a 90-minute examination of multiple choice questions conducted in schools where the students are enrolled. Majority of the States chose the second option; Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan opted for the first. The format is the least of the worries, considering one-fifth of the questions in the current format are multiple choice questions. There are bigger unresolved aspects to consider. The "where", for example. The CBSE prefers conducting exams at its designated centres. But they are fewer than the schools at which the examinees are enrolled. Given safe distancing, it is easier if the exams are conducted in the schools. Unless this is decided, the next issue of logistics cannot be taken up. It is about the required furniture, manpower and sanitation equipment. The "when" is equally complex. Different regions are in different stages on the pandemic curve. Some are in total lockdown, some coming out of it. After June, the monsoon begins and, till September, any two regions will always experience heavy rains. Those students planning to go abroad this fall may not be able to do so if their exams are delayed. The "how" is most crucial. If the Governments are still undecided about the exam format, how will the CBSE get the question papers ready in time? Unless, of course, they are preparing two sets. For preparing each board paper, there is an eight-tier system. The preparations begin in January, or maybe even earlier, in the normal course of time. Setting the question papers, checking and finalising them, printing them, ferrying them to the centres, all these take time. A changed format would mean doing the entire exercise all over again. These papers will have to reach the examination centres by July; that is barely two months' time. The "how" also means vaccinating the teachers and students, as the Governments have demanded. How is that possible? If they all are given their first doses in the next fortnight, they will have to wait three months for the second dose. Would a student, suffering from COVID-19 symptoms, declare that for fear of missing out on the exams? What happens if a student tests positive and is unable to take the exams? This is the bottom line: Parents have no issues if the exams are held in schools. Holding the exams is not an issue in urban areas, but what about the countryside where infrastructure, logistics and the COVID-19 protocols are poorly managed? The ball is squarely in the Government's court.

Oli, a wannabe supreme leader



Rishi Gupta

Despite the caretaker PM's shady reputation, India needs to formulate a reliable policy framework towards Nepal in tune with public mood there. The political volcano in Nepal has erupted yet again, with new vulnerabilities in its womb. Prime Minister KP Sharma Oli, heading a minority Government, recommended the dissolution of the House of Representatives and President Bidya Devi Bhandari — who adorns the top post only in name — acted upon the recommendation with alacrity. As the Himalayan country suffers from an acute shortage of medical oxygen, hospital beds and vaccines, these political developments have come at the cost of great human agony. However, this is nothing new in the context of the country's democracy. In the last 25 years, Nepal has been a theatre of civil war, democratic transition and repeated constitutional crises. When Nepal joined the world's rare group of Communist-ruled country in 2008, questions were asked whether Communism and democracy could coexist. With parties like the CPN-UML led by Oli and the Maoists in Nepal, self is always prioritised before ideology, nation and its people. The Communists have done no good compared to the erstwhile monarchy, which ruled the Hindu kingdom for more than 200 years. Meanwhile, if anyone can be held responsible for paralysing Nepal in every sphere, it's the present-day "Oli-garchy". The Supreme Court of Nepal had nullified the so-called supreme leader KP Oli's earlier attempts to dissolve Parliament. Under public pressure, ill-intended overnight ordinances on political parties were also withdrawn by the President. Oli was once again chal-

lenged to prove the majority, but he failed. Currently, unashamed, Oli continues to be the caretaker Prime Minister. Voices are emanating from the Army veterans, civil society and the democratic forces to hold Oli responsible for the current crisis. These are the same voices that fought an autocratic monarchy for more than a decade to establish an envisaged democratic order in the Himalayan country. However, in less than 15 years, leaders like Oli have fueled the ethnic divide, slowed the economy down, soured relations with India and institutionalised corruption. As the Supreme Court hears a clutch of writ petitions filed against the controversial move by Oli and Bidya Devi Bhandari, the "supreme leader" in an act to solidify his position in the party ousted the old guard of the CPN-UML and former Prime Minister Madhav Kumar Nepal and Jhal Kath Khanal at an emergency meeting of the party. The two leaders have time and again questioned Oli for his unconstitutional moves. They had also

joined Maoist party chief Pushpa Kamal Dahal 'Prachanda' to force Oli to surrender the political reigns to other leaders owing to his failure in handling the COVID-19 crisis in the country. With the President already in his pocket, Oli is making a mockery of the Prime Minister's Office. President Bhandari seems to be repaying her debt to Oli as it was he who got her into the office. Bhandari was a longtime UML comrade who credits her political career to Oli. The same office, once held in high esteem for its non-partisan actions during the tenure of Ram Baran Yadav who served as the first President of Nepal, is now a crying shame in terms of credibility. One may recall the 2008 incident where President Yadav had acted against the unconstitutional suspension of former Army Chief Rookmangud Katwal by Prime Minister Prachanda. Later, Prachanda resigned as the first PM on moral grounds. Thus, the current "Oli-garchy" has become a

moth destroying the very sacrifices of the people of Nepal who fought against the Rana oligarchs in the 1950s and the autocratic royals in 2005. Amid an unstable Nepal, India is once again caught between staunch critic Oli and a united Opposition led by the Nepali Congress. If insiders are to be believed, New Delhi has put its weight behind Oli, considering his recent mega rise in the Nepalese politics. Unlike his predecessors, Oli has stood the test of time and consolidated his position as the Prime Minister and the UML party chairman. With Oli becoming synonymous with the State, India might be unwilling to antagonise him as he may once again use the anti-India narrative to set a political tone in the next elections. However, India's bet on him might prove to be extremely risky. Once New Delhi's blue-eyed boy, Oli chose to be lured by the Chinese glitter. He has allowed Chinese high-handedness in the political affairs of the country and uses humanitarian foundations in Nepal to receive alleged political funding from the Communist Party of China. Aiming to create a Chinese-style party system in Nepal with him acting as the authoritarian Supreme Leader, New Delhi needs to chalk its future course in Nepal carefully. India is a reliable "special neighbour" despite political bad-mouthing by certain political sections in Nepal. Its humanitarian response in the aftermath of the 2015 earthquake and ongoing assistance in Nepal's fight against COVID-19 are the epitomes of a long-standing "roti-beti" relationship. Therefore, India needs to observe the public mood in Nepal and formulate a reliable policy framework towards Kathmandu as its Nepal policy has for long been the victim of ad hocism.

Restore our Earth



This year's Earth Day theme was 'restore our Earth' which involves bring back the earth to what it was before human and their harmful activities viciously took over. The challenges we know are unending and the problems are innumerable. We all know the green house effects, various forms of pollution, natural disasters, to name a few that have been discussed several times. But there is find no solutions to this issue. Now it is the time to progress on the implementation front or in practical form? This will be possible when the youth which forms the major basis of the sustainable future shoulder the responsibilities and carries forward the legacy to restore the earth. One of the most urgent needs is to put a complete hold on the use of plastics. It is a known fact that they are destroying the environment and marine life to hazardous levels. It is important to spread the word and make the young population aware and conscious of the draconian cycles in the environment. We need scientific research and recommendations to compute the damage and the statistical and scientific ways to look at things from future perspective. Incorporation of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals by the UN, that involves all the aspects that the world needs focus on, is essential. Nature

based approaches must be made for sustainable agricultural practices across the world, restoration of marine life, partnerships amongst the goals and individuals, living a poverty and hunger free life, etc. The world is looking forward to alternatives for clean and sustainable energy. The use of fossil fuels must be checked which would also directly impact the emissions and hence have a large say in pollution. Climate change is real and the fear that it might turn true in the coming years might sound more casual than alarming at this point of time. God forbid, if it strikes us humans, it would leave us without basic water and food and fresh air to breath in the near future. That is the precise reason why 'Restore the Earth' is not merely a topic but an alarm

bell for us to wake up and take action rather than just theoretically read such articles online or in books. Though the Corona virus and different natural calamities have practically made it nearly impossible globally to implement them in the actual sense of the term, we must do our bit. We must realise that this is the decade of action, it's now or never. The unprecedented opportunities must be seized and we must do our best individually and as a community to "Turn it Around", as goes the UN slogan for sustainable development. Other than the UN, there are various organisations working now-adays to wards sustainable development locally. The world very well saw how during the global lockdown due to Corona virus, the

pollution levels elevated to healthy levels, the water and air became cleaner, the earth naturally healed. That goes on the really show how terrible the impact has-been of humans on this earth, that just a little absence and mindfulness is all that is needed to solve this conundrum, being a fine testament to validate our aim and end. The biggest example here can be cited of the World's largest beach cleanup project that took place at Versova Beach, Mumbai by a young Indian Lawyer-Afroz Shah single handily. In October 2015 Shah was determined to remove the large stretches and piles of plastic and garbage from the Versova Beach and he was so successful that after a huge number of years, the hatchlings of turtles that had disappeared completely, started to take root and form a habitant. So successful was his campaign that he was awarded UN's top environmental accolade- Champions of the Earth award in 2016. Such inspiring stories by the youth across the world, not only in India, by various other unsung heroes give us huge hopes of resurrecting the wrong doing. Hope this should be sufficient enough to encourage the present youth that even a single individual can do to change the world is incredible. It is the time thus, to Restore the Earth and reclaim and reap the natural benefits of our MOTHER NATURE.



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Red Cross sends relief packet to YAAS affected people of Kendrapada

(A.O. Bureau) Kendrapara, May 27: Under the guidance of Honorary Secretary, Indian Red Cross Society Odisha State Branch CTM. Suguna a team of Red Cross members reached at shelter at Bagapatia ,Satabhaya and Rangani village of Rajanagar block , Kendrapada district with food packets containkng flattenedrice, jagery, biscuits, sattu, candle, match box, water bottle etc. In presence of Rabindra

Kumar Pradhan BDO Rajnagar and Bholanath Sethy Tahasildar Rajnagar food packets were distributed to the people who are affected due to YAAS cyclone. Junior Red Cross Officer Laxman Swain Coordinated the relief operation. Youth Red cross counsellors, volunteers, Junior Red Cross Counsellors were present during relief work. The district administration praised Red Cross for its immediate response during the cyclone YAAS.



Boat accident in Sileru river: 8 bodies recovered Each will get Rs 4 lakh compensation price



(A.O. Bureau) Malkangiri, May 27: Last Monday was the night of the 24th Who knew how long the light of life would be extinguished. A tragic boat accident took place in the river from Sileru that day! Two women and six children were killed when a boat capsized in the Sileru river in the Chitrakonda block of

Malkangiri district at around 10.30pm on Friday night. All the bodies were recovered from the bottom of the river by firefighters. There was a lot of commotion and sadness According to information received, a total of 11 people from Guntabeda and Kandhaguda villages in the Chitrakonda block of Malkangiri district

went to work in an Etawahati in Telangana while crossing the river from the river Sileru in two fishing boats due to the Covid-19 barrier. Fearing the police's red eyes, a boat collided head-on with a tree in the riverbed as it was crossing the river from Seleru. The native boat, too, could not bear the weight and sank into the

river. Three people swam to Kandhaguda village and informed the villagers about the boat sinking. Chitrakonda Tahsildar T. Padmanabh Dora, Revenue Inspector Narayan Maharana and villagers rushed to the spot. They deciesed are Lakshmi Khara (22 years), Pinky Khara (4 years), Abira Khara (1 year), Anusa Badnaik (25 years), Gayatri Badnaik (3 years), Shyamsam Belguru (5 years), Aneshwaram Belguru (one year), Rani Badnaik (6 years). All the dead However, in the village of Bandhaguda, according to government rules, if a person drowns, his or her family members are entitled to a the law of compensation of Rs 4 lakh

Review the Development projects by Sub- collector

(A.O. Bureau) Hinjilicut, May 27: Ganjam district Chhatrapur sub-collector and Hinjilicut municipal administrator Lina Kumari Khes on Thursday toured the Hinjilicut municipality to inspect the condition of the covid management and reviews various development projects. First, the sub-collector reached the municipal office and discussed various development works with the municipal executive officer, Dr. Manoranjan Sahu. From there, visited the waste management and collection center and

the land and processing center. The Deputy District Magistrate expressed satisfaction over the work and management of the members of the Mission Shakti employed in the waste management of the project. In addition to the investigation, he discussed the various steps taken in the field of coping with Dr Sahu, the municipal executive officer. Members and volunteers, transparent and the work process so clean with a broad mentality the visit and review points very positive indeed.



Natural Remedies and Yoga for Corona inaugurated at MV-37



(A.O. Bureau) Malkangiri, May 27: Today at 4:30 pm, The Local people's representative and Special Development Council Chairman Manas Kumar Madkani inaugurated the Ayurvedic Natural remedies Yoga camp at the afternoon yoga camp of * MV-37 * village in his auspicious hand The Ayurvedic steam taking event was also organized by Shri Ram

Krishna Chowdhury , Yoga Teacher Balimela (Health and recovery Center), Sadananda Mandal (MV-37 villagers), Manager Shri Laxmikant Tripathi (Social worker) and more than 25 senior citizens of the village were present .Mr Manas Madkani called on all the people present in the process to wash their hands, take social distance, and do yoga regularly. Mr Ram Krishna Babu said

that Kovid-19 is a respiratory disease that affects the respiratory tract first and then the lungs. Respiratory problems can lead to death in the future. So we can solve this easily by pranayama and yoga," said Mr. Lakshmi Kant. For the past two months, the yoga camp has been running daily in the village of MV 37 from 5 am to 6:30 am at the village playground.

Berhampur police district arrested 18 people, including four women, seized Rs 1lakhs 7 thousand 490 rupees

(A.O. Bureau) Kukudakhundi, May 27: Berhampur police district raided big gambling den and arrested 18 people, including four women, and seized Rs 1lakhs 7 thousand 490 indian rupees. A man named Pradeep Kumar Sahu of Shrikshetra Bihar area near First Gate under Sadar police station. Taking advantage of the lockdown make gambling areas at his residence for a few days, from a secret information Sadar police official However, on Wednesday evening, the Sadar police team raided the

gambling den. As a result of the raid, 18 gamblers, including four female gamblers, were arrested from them, along with 14 mobile phones and two motorcycles seized. Nimkhundi beat post incharge Jyoti Ranjan Behera and Sadar P.S. S.I. Madhusmita Behera along with a team of special squad raid the house. IIC Sadar P.S. Police Officer Mahendra Kumar Sahu informed that the case will be filed against the arrested gamblers under Sadar Thana Case No. 141/21 and will be taken to court.



Another social services by Young Binod Tawari for the Covid frontier

(A.O. Bureau) Malkangiri, May 27 / 2021 The Chalanguda and Tandaki panchayats in the Malkangiri Sadar block are bordered by Sukuma district in the state of Chhattisgarh. Relatives of the Koya tribal and Bengali community of Malkangiri district are in the state of n e i g h b o r h o o d

Chhattisgarh. The district administration has set up a checkpoint at Chalanguda as a large number of people are secretly entering Malkangiri district through these two panchayats! Here's employees employees of different departments with the policeman's Even at

the checkpoints, the staff at the running office were in a state of darkness and heat, and there was no light. Upon learning this, Binod Tawari, a young social activist from Malkangiri town, provided an electrical invator event with a high-light street light and activated it His work has been praised by various quarters



K.S.Nagar BDO highly praised by help a handicapped

(A.O. Bureau) Kabisurjanagar, May 27: Kabisurjanagar BDO's novel efforts shows the new path of humanity today. According to reports, today when BDO Sri Basudev Nayak on the way to the Block office , a dissident was seen walking on the side of the road. He stopped the man's identity. This man, Suryanarayana Nahak, a resident of Kabisuryanagar block, Sunarijholapanchayat, Pankalbadi Harijan



Sahi, will be around 42 years old. He was working for a company

in Maharashtra as a migrants for some reasons his finger was amputated

on both legs. When he returned to the village, he was unable to receive medical treatment due to lack of financial conditions. At the time, his injuries were caused by a serious infection that left him physically paralyzed and paralyzed. Kabisuryanagar BDO Sri Nayak took the man to the community health center for his primary treatment he took him to the block office after his health check-up. There he directed the Social Welfare Officer. On behalf

of the block, BDO Sri Nayak immediately presented him with a hand-operated tricycle intended for a three-wheeler. He asserted that his confession had been obtained through torture, and that his confession had been obtained through torture. Today, Suryanarayana Nahak thanked the BDO for such support. Various intellectuals and local people's highly praised Block development officers efforts in Kabisuryanagar have lauded such a humanity.

My daughter was killed by her in-laws mother alorged a case



(A.O. Bureau) Kukudakhundi, May 27: The daughter's mother alleged that Mandakini Swain of Rohigaon in Kukudakhundi block had been killed by her entire family of in-laws, including her husband Mithun Swain. According to reports, Mandakini Swain was married mithun swain of Rohingan two years ago. They also have a 10-month-old baby. However, there was always a family conflict between the husband and wife for one reason

or another. Many times the family was explained to him, and once Mandakini came to his mother's house. However, as always, Gemini's temperament did not change. Last Wednesday evening when mandakini called her mother to come to home at that time along with his son lakhmi patra comes to daughters house rohigan. Than they seen her daughter laied down and the in-laws said her daughter hanged her self. Immediately, the daughters family lodged a com-

plaint at the Sadar police station. However, Sadar Thana SI Madhusmita Behera reached the spot and sent the body for autopsy. According to Mandakini's mother, Mithun and his brother had tortured their two sisters in-laws all grouply killer her daughter mandakini. According to Sadar P.S. case no.163 / 2021, the culprit will be investigated and given appropriate steps taken after the post-mortem. Said by Sadar P.S. IIC Mahendra Sahu.

Financial Assistance from BJD to the the 8 boat sinking family

(A.O. Bureau) Malkangiri, May 27: Chitrakonda block G u n t h a w a d a p a n c h a y a t ' s Kandhaguda river ghat has been provided financial assistance by the BJD to provide cremation work to the families of the victims of the boat sinking incident.

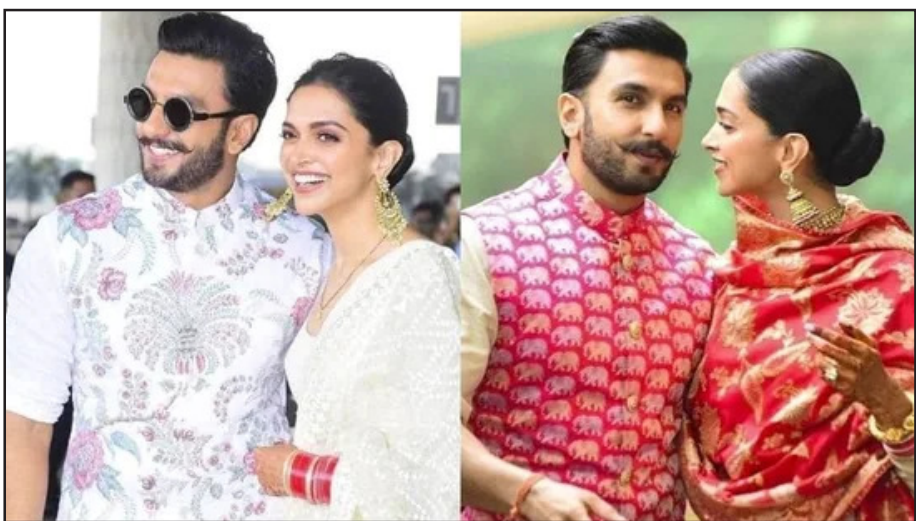
Eight people were killed in the stampede. Odisha Chief Minister was busy receiving the Cyclone Yash incident, but the boat sank. The Hon'ble Chief Minister ordered the MP Ramesh Chandra Majhi and Chitrakonda MLA to go to the spot, after which all the bodies



were recovered. The legislator Purnachandra Baka sent to offer condolences to the bereaved families, as well as to extend a hand of condolences to the families of the deceased, and to extend a grant of Rs 50,000 to all the families for the bereaved.

When Sabyasachi asked Deepika to come in burqa for bridal outfit fittings

Mumbai, May 27: Fashion designer Sabyasachi Mukherjee had once opened up on how he kept actor Deepika Padukone's wedding with actor Ranveer Singh a secret for six months. He had revealed that he asked Deepika to come in burqa for bridal outfit fittings. The couple's wedding was a private affair with only family and their close ones in attendance. The couple got married in November 2018 at Lake Como in Italy. In an interview with Business of Fashion, Sabyasachi had said, "When Deepika called, and it's not because of her, the first thing that flashed into my head was Nightmare on Elm Street part 5. I was like 'oh my god' because you see I did Anushka's wedding before that...We do a lot of ce-



lebrity weddings but in India when you are doing the wedding of a movie star you're very worried the secrets will go out and I was like when we were doing Anushka's wedding there was a month we had but with Deepika's, there was six and everybody was speculating. I mean she and Ranveer must have gotten married 50 times in the press before she was actually married." He also said,

"The first thing that I told myself that I need a code word because of the fact that I was travelling all the time and to keep a secret for six months because you see when we do a bridal outfit there are a lot of people that work...I was like 'no way could I keep this a secret'. So I said okay fine 'we have to find a name we have to find a name'...and the first name that came out of my mouth was Naomi

Campbell. I said Naomi is getting married, she's getting married to an Indian guy because I was thinking that when the measurements come who else is going to be 5'11 tall." Sabyasachi also spoke about how he kept it a secret from everybody. "A few people from the Mumbai store (knew) because that's where Deepika used to come secretly for her measurements and I was terrified that there would

be some press hanging somewhere there. We were terrified and I kept telling Deepika that 'come in a burqa' and Deepika said, 'if I come in a burqa that's when I will get spotted'. A few more people who (were) helping her with measurements and everybody knew. But most people in my factory, because there are 1,800 people at work there, thought it was Naomi Campbell getting married to an Indian prince." Meanwhile, Deepika will be seen in the upcoming sports drama '83 along with Ranveer. He will essay the role of cricketer Kapil Dev and Deepika will portray the role of his wife, Romi Bhatia. Deepika will also feature in The Intern, Fighter, Pathan, Mahabharata, Nag Ashwin's next and Shakun Batra's film.

Jennifer, David reveal being attracted to each other on FRIENDS Reunion

New Delhi, May 27: After 10 years on the air and 17 years since the final episode, Friends still has its secrets, and one of the biggest was revealed on Thursday in a reunion special airing on HBO Max. The on-again, off-again romance between characters Ross Geller and Rachel Green wasn't just for the cameras. Actors David Schwimmer and Jennifer Aniston revealed for the first time that they had major crushes on each other in the early years of the series, but the first time they kissed was when their characters did so on screen in 1995. "I just remember saying one time to David, it's gonna be such a bummer if the first time you and I actually kiss is going to be on

national television. Sure enough! First time we kissed was in that coffee shop," Aniston says in "Friends: The Reunion." "We just chan-

characters finally getting back together. Schwimmer and Aniston said the mutual attraction lasted for the first two years of the show, but



neled all of our adoration and love for each other into Ross and Rachel," she added. The passionate kiss in the Central Perk coffee shop in the Season 2 episode "The One Where Ross Finds Out" is widely considered one of the highlights of the series, which came to an end in 2004 with the two

they never got together as a couple off-screen because they were both in relationships or between relationships with other people. "We were both crushing hard on each other, but it was like two ships passing because one of us was always in a relationship. So we never crossed that boundary, you know.

Salman's father Salim says Radhe is 'not a great film at all'

Mumbai, May 27: Salman Khan's father Salim Khan has given his opinion on Radhe: Your Most Wanted Bhai. He said it is 'not a great film at all'. Radhe was released on Eid with Salman in the lead role. Salim Khan, the veteran screenwriter and father of actor

Bhaskar, when asked that reviewers are feeling the repetition of Salman's previous films in Radhe, Salim said in Hindi, "The film prior to this Dabangg 3 was different. Bajrangi Bhaijaan was good and totally different. Radhe is not a great film at all, but commercial cinema

ing and business goes on. On this basis, Salman has performed. Stakeholders of this film are in advantage. Otherwise, Radhe is not that great a film." He also spoke on writers in the film industry. "A big problem of the film industry is that there are no good writers here. The reason for this is that the writers do not read literature in Hindi or Urdu. They see anything outside and get involved in Indianising it. The film Zanjeer was a game-changer of Indian cinema. That film made Indian cinema come back on the right path. But since then, the industry has not received the replacement of Salim-Javed yet. In such a situation, what can Salman do?" he further said. Earlier this month, actor Sangay Tsheltrim had commented on the negative reaction to the film from critics.

Alisha Chinai revisits 'Kajra Re' on 16 years of Bunty Aur Babli: 'It sounded like an angel singing for Aishwarya Rai'

New Delhi, May 27: It's been 16 years since Bunty Aur Babli released. In case this makes you feel old, banish the feeling for the movie starring Abhishek Bachchan, Rani Mukerji and Amitabh Bachchan is still as fresh as the day it released. And not to forget its iconic song "Kajra Re" featuring Aishwarya Rai with Amitabh and Abhishek. "Kajra Re" features in the movie when Abhishek Bachchan and Rani Mukerji (Bunty and Babli) are on the run as they are expecting their first child together. Bunty bumps into cop Dashrath Singh, played by Amitabh Bachchan, at a bar. Little do they know that the con-artists Big B is looking for, are actually Bunty and Babli. The real father-son duo indulge in some heart-to-heart conver-



sation over drinks, where Bachchan senior shares his story of heart-break, when Aishwarya Rai walks in as a courtesan and tries to woo not Abhishek, but Amitabh. "Kajra Re" sung by Alisha Chinai, Shankar Mahadevan and Javed Ali, went on to become one of the biggest hits of Bollywood. Recalling how "Kajra Re" required her to change her style of singing, Alisha Chinai told

indianexpress.com, "The song needed reinventing my whole style and reinventing myself because everyone who said I couldn't do it, that was like telling them, 'Okay honey, that's how I do it!'" The 8-minute-long song was inspired by a semi-classical genre of singing called 'kajari', and amply used sitar to give it a localised tune. Aishwarya, in her special appearance, shook a leg with the two

Bachchans, on the unique choreography by Vaibhavi Merchant. Alisha accepted that its "modern qawwali" style of singing was indeed a challenge for her. But, she lauded the composition of music directors Shankar-Ehsaan-Loy. "I don't know how I did it, but I guess the song itself was a really fantastic composition. It pushed me beyond my limits and I'm glad that I could deliver it the way Shankar-Ehsaan-Loy

wanted me to," she added. Topping it all, according to Alisha, it was Aishwarya's "angelic" presence that made the song, an iconic item number. "It sounded so angelic. It sounded like an angel singing for Aishwarya. She looked mind blowing. "Kajra Re" became a trend-setter, a Bollywood anthem," Alisha concluded. Directed by Shaad Ali and produced by Aditya Chopra, Bunty Aur Babli released on May 27, 2005, and went on to become a huge hit. "Kajra Re" won several awards in the music category for Alisha Chinai, Shankar-Ehsaan-Loy and lyricist Javed Akhtar, apart for its choreography. A spiritual sequel titled Bunty Aur Babli 2 is awaiting a release. It stars Rani Mukerji, Saif Ali Khan, Siddhant Chaturvedi and Sharvari Wagh.

Arjun Kapoor on Sandeep Aur Pinky Faraar: 'There is definitely a scope for a sequel'

New Delhi, May 27: Bollywood actor Arjun Kapoor, who is basking in the success of Sandeep Aur Pinky Faraar, feels the climax of the film sets up the prospect of a sequel brilliantly. He is confident that director Dibakar Banerjee can easily make a broodier, edgier, and darker next chapter that brings Arjun and Parineeti Chopra together again. When asked about a potential sequel, Arjun said, "If you see the brilliant climax of the film that Dibakar has so masterfully designed, you will realise that there is definitely a scope for a sequel that can be dark, gritty, raw, and excessively thrilling." He added, "Now, with all the love and appre-



ciation that the film is getting, it is up to my masterful director and his genius mind to tell us whether or not he is seeing this happening. I can assure you that whenever he gives us the green signal, Pari and I will be on to shoot." Arjun is thankful to Dibakar for believing in him to deliver the role of a corrupt Haryanvi cop,

Pinky Dahiya, who realises that he needs to save himself first. He said, "SAPF was an extremely satiating experience for me as an actor. It really took me to places that I didn't imagine going and all the appreciation I'm getting is because Dibakar saw me as Pinky Dahiya. I'm overwhelmed because I know how much

Dibakar told me to believe in myself and submit to his process." Produced, written and directed by Dibakar, the movie also stars Neena Gupta, Raghuvir Yadav, and Jaideep Ahlawat in pivotal roles. Sandeep aur Pinky Faraar follows the story of two completely individuals, Satinder 'Pinky'

Dahiya and Sandeep 'Sandy' Walia, whose lives suddenly intertwine. 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 and is packed with great performances by the Ishaqzaade duo who are back together to reignite the silver screen. Apart from Sandeep Aur Pinky Faraar, Arjun whose last release was Sardar ka Grandson, co-starring Rakul Preet Singh, also has Ek Villain Returns, and Bhoot Police in the pipeline.

Kangana Ranaut mocks Twitter after it raises concerns of threat to freedom of speech: 'Who are they'

Mumbai, May 27: Kangana Ranaut, who was banned from Twitter earlier this month, has reacted to the social media platform's recent statement regarding their concerns over the threat to freedom of speech. The microblogging platform had issued a statement suggesting that the new IT rules have elements that inhibit free conversation. Taking to her Instagram Stories, Kangana shared Twitter's statement and said, "Poor Twitter begging for freedom of speech, twitter the great, the unelected member of parliament, supreme justice of the world, keeper of moral compass of humanity and what is their basic qualifications or credentials to ask or forcefully acquire this power? Who are they?" "Handful

of druggies who can be bought and sold easily, everything has a price tag from followers to promotional tweets, these money greedy private businessmen and capitalists want to run nations, bully and con-

the public conversation and a source of support for people during the pandemic. To keep our service available, we will strive to comply with applicable law in India. But, just as we do around the



trol the governments? Really haven't we learnt from east India company?" she added. On Thursday, Twitter had issued a statement that read: "Twitter is deeply committed to the people of India. Our service has proven vital for

world, we will continue to be strictly guided by principles of transparency, a commitment to empowering every voice on the service, and protecting freedom of expression and privacy under the rule of law."

Nagal also fails to make French Open main draw cut

Paris, May 27: India's top player Sumit Nagal could not make a hat-trick of Grand Slam main draw appearances following a straight-set defeat in the second round of the French Open Qualifying event here. The Haryana youngster crashed out of the Clay Court major with a 3-6 3-6 loss to Alejandro Tabilo from Chile, last night. In the engrossing contest that lasted one-and-a-half-hours, Nagal could break the serve of his rival, ranked 23 places below him at 146, only twice while he himself dropped his serve five



times. With the defeat of the 23-year-old from Jhajjar, India's challenge has ended in the Qualifiers. Ramkumar Ramanathan, Prajnesh

Guneswaran and Ankita Raina have already exited from the tournament. Now India will be represented through Rohan Bopanna and Divij Sharan in the men's doubles main draw. It is crucial for both of them to earn ranking points by going deep in the draw since the official rankings of June 10 will decide which players make the cut for the Tokyo Olympics. Sania Mirza has decided not to compete in this tournament as she wanted to use her 'special ranking' to enter the Wimbledon Championships.

Osaka says she won't do news conferences at French Open

Paris, May 27: Tennis star Naomi Osaka says she is not going to speak to the media during the upcoming French Open. The world's highest-earning female athlete wrote in a Twitter post Wednesday that she hopes the "considerable amount that I get fined for this will go towards a mental health charity." The French Open is scheduled to begin Sunday in Paris. Osaka heads into the clay-court tournament ranked No. 2 in the world. The 23-year-old Osaka, who was born in Japan and now is based in the United States, has won four Grand Slam titles. That includes last year's U.S. Open and the Australian Open this February. "I've often felt that people have no regard for athletes mental health and this very true whenever I see a press conference or partake in one," wrote Osaka, who was selected as the AP Female Athlete of the Year in 2020. "We're often sat there and asked questions that we've been asked multiple times before or asked questions that bring doubt into our minds and I'm just not going to subject myself



to people that doubt me." Osaka added: "I've watched many clips of athletes breaking down after a loss in the press room and I know you have as well. I believe that whole situation is kicking a person while they're down and I don't understand the reasoning behind it." She later posted a video clip of Seattle Seahawks running back Marshawn Lynch's famous "I'm just here so I don't get fined" appearance at a Super Bowl media day. Tennis players are required to attend post-match news conferences at major tournaments if members of the media ask them to.

'Rohit Sharma will get a chance soon': Kiran More says Indian team will have split captaincy

New Delhi, May 27: The Indian cricket team will have different captains for different formats soon, former Indian chief selector and wicketkeeper Kiran More predicted. "I think the vision of the board drives these things. I believe Rohit Sharma will get a chance soon. Virat Kohli is a shrewd captain who played under MS Dhoni. How long he wants to captain the ODIs and T20s, he will also think. You will learn a lot more about these decisions after the England tour," More told India TV on

Wednesday. More was the wicket-keeper for the Indian cricket team from 1984 to 1993. He took up the position of the Chairman of the BCCI Selection Committee before Dilip Vengsarkar took over the job in 2006. Many other teams in the world, like England — Joe Root and Eoin Morgan — and Australia — Tim Paine and Aaron Finch — have specialist captains for their Test teams and limited-overs teams. More thinks a similar format can work in India. "It should work in In-



dia. What the senior players think about the Indian team's future is very important. With Virat Kohli, captaining three teams isn't that easy plus he has to perform as well. And I give him the credit for it because performing in every format

he sees Rishabh Pant as the future captain of the team, saying the young wicketkeeper-batsman is someone "who can take the team forward". 100%. That's how much dedication Rohit & Kohli have for every match. Kohli has been leading the Indian side in all formats in recent years, with Rohit Sharma being his deputy in ODIs and T20Is and Ajinkya Rahane being his deputy in Tests. It was under Rahane's captaincy that India pulled off a historic series win in Australia earlier this year.

It felt like I beat the virus: Shiva Thapa talks about record 5th Asian medal

New Delhi, May 27: Shiva Thapa still can't quite believe that securing a fifth successive medal at the prestigious Asian Boxing Championships is "some sort of an unparalleled achievement". All he felt after being assured of it was a "sense of triumph over that wretched coronavirus." The 27-year-old became the most successful Indian male boxer in the history of the tournament by advancing to the semifinals of the ongoing edition in Dubai. His first was a gold in 2013, followed by a bronze in 2015, a silver in 2017 and another bronze in

thing like this. It is a good record to have against your name. Also makes me realise how time has flown. Is it that long since I first competed at Asian championship?" he wondered. So which among the five is his favourite? "Every medal has its own story, there can't be favourites. Through these medals, I have been part of different teams, worked with different coaches. I am the constant along with a handful of people who have stood by me through everything," he said. And when asked about the story of this medal, he said, "The

way into the tournament and placed in quarantine after a support staff member tested positive for COVID-19 and he was deemed a close contact. Those were "difficult" days for him. "This Asian medal was like an assertion that we won't give up. That's what it meant to me this time. It is quite overwhelming actually," said the Assamese boxer, one of the just six world championship medallists from the country. The only other pugilist with five Asian championship medals is Kazakh legend Vassiliy Levit, an Olympic silver-medallist and two-time world



2019. "Wow! I didn't really know that it would mean so much statistically," the seasoned boxer told PTI from Dubai as he geared up for the 64kg category semifinal clash against defending champion Bakhodur Usmonov of Tajikistan on Friday. "I never thought I would be the first to do some-

pandemic. This whole situation that the world is in. To be able to compete and win medals in such a time. Psychologically, it felt as if I have beaten the virus for once." He can't be faulted to have felt that. Last year, at the Cologne World Cup in Germany, Thapa was forced to withdraw mid-

bronze-winner. But even he does not have five on the trot like Thapa at the continental meet. Women's legends MC Mary Kom (7) and L Sarita Devi (8) have more Asian medals than Thapa with the latter having the distinction of claiming six successive, five of them gold, at the peak of her prowess.

Nicholls dubs Ashwin, Jadeja as real threats

New Delhi, May 27: Black Caps batsman says the spin duo has proved mettle across the world and lends quality to India's bowling attack. India's pace attack is on par with New Zealand's world class swing operators but the Black Caps batsman Henry Nicholls is more wary of the threat spinners Ravichandran Ashwin and Ravindra Jadeja may pose during the upcoming World Test Championship final. India and New Zealand will fight it out for the inaugural title at Southampton's Ageas Bowl, one of those rare English tracks known to aid the slow bowlers for a considerable period in Test matches. "India have a very good seam attack and also have the experienced spinners like Ashwin and Jadeja. They have been consistent in all parts of the world (of late) and bring quality (to attack)," Nicholls, who has



been in good form of late in Test cricket, said. If there are no injury concerns, the Indian pace troika that is expected to be in the playing XI for the clash starting June 18 would be Jasprit Bumrah, Ishant Sharma and Mohammed Shami. "Mohammed Shami along with Jasprit Bumrah and Ishant Sharma have proven their quality over the years which is similar to our seamers (Tren-

Boult, Tim Southee and Neil Wagner) on whom we really pride ourselves on. "So if you are facing that kind of a line-up, it's an exciting challenge and as a group we are expecting it to be tough but also looking forward to the challenge," the 29-year-old southpaw, who enjoys a 43 plus average over 37 Test matches, said. His teammate Devon Conway's strategy of pouring dry kitty litter

on the track in order to create rough was backed by Nicholls as they are playing at a "neutral venue" which is known to assist the spinners. "That was something that we experimented in the camp before we came over to UK. You managed to get some more turn and get some practice. So playing at a neutral venue, we need to check what the wickets will be like

there. Also the guile of Ashwin and Ravi Jadeja is something that we need to be prepared for," Nicholls said. Nicholls was a part of the New Zealand team that thrashed India inside three days in two home Tests in early 2020, something that will give them confidence going into the final. "It's an exciting challenge as finally we will be playing a Test match at a neutral venue. So that for both sides kind of levels the playing field. "We beat them 2-0 a season back (2019-20). But we know and accept that it's a different challenge but as a group we take a lot of confidence from that series win against India. Obviously, number one and two playing the final is a challenge too," he said. Nicholls' sequence of scores in the last three Tests is 174 (vs West Indies), 56, 11 and 157 (vs Pakistan).

Rafael Nadal faces few obstacles in quest for record 21st major at French Open

Madrid, May 27: Rafa Nadal has already hoisted the French Open trophy a jaw-dropping 13 times and with the tantalising prospect of increasing his Grand Slam haul to 21 — thus becoming the most successful player in men's tennis — it is difficult to see anyone stopping him in Paris. The Mallorcan will turn 35 during the tournament but shows

little sign of slowing down. By triumphing in Barcelona and Rome for a 12th and 10th time respectively, he won two of the four tournaments he had entered in the run-up to the claycourt major. Andrey Rublev and Alexander Zverev may have comfortably beaten Nadal in Monte Carlo and Madrid respectively but as anyone who has encountered



Nadal at Roland Garros knows, beating the Spaniard in a best-of-five-set claycourt match

is the ultimate challenge in tennis. Since his debut Paris appearance in 2005, it has happened only twice. Those searching for weaknesses in Nadal's armour could take heart from the Spaniard's losses to Rublev and Zverev as well as the fact he recently dropped sets on clay against Denis Shapovalov and Kei Nishikori.

Fino Payments Bank's merchant network gives push to Covid-19 vaccination drive

(A.O. Bureau)
Mumbai, May 27: In addition to providing access to banking services, Fino Payments Bank's merchant outlets across the country aim to play a critical role in pushing the Covid-19 vaccination drive by helping people register online for vaccination. The World Health Organisation (WHO) and medical experts recommend vaccination for all as it is one of the best ways to protect self and others from Covid-19. According to the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, a person can register for COVID-19 vaccination in advance by log-



ging into the Co-WIN portal (www.cowin.gov.in) or Aarogya Sethu app. While a few on-spot registrations are available, online is recommended for hassle-free experience. By helping the technologically challenged and people with no smartphones, Fino merchants join the millions of healthcare personnel and scores of volunteers in the country that are providing selfless service to the affected families. Fino merchants are in the neighbourhood and al-

ways ready to help - Hamesha! To find the nearest Fino merchant point, people can click on the URL https://fino.latlong.in/ or can scan the QR code. Atul Trivedi, Senior Divisional Head, Fino Payments Bank said, "Majority of the people in rural areas, especially senior citizens and women, are clueless about online registration leading to either delay or avoiding vaccination. They need assistance and as responsible citizens our merchants are ready to

help. People can approach Fino merchants with their Aadhaar card and get the required registration done. The prevailing humanitarian crisis warrants such small acts of support on the ground to improve the effectiveness of the vaccination drive." Fino merchants will access the Co-WIN portal from their smartphones either directly or through Fino Mitra or BPay apps. To complete the registration process in the portal, merchant will provide mobile and Aadhaar

number of the person who sought help. An OTP gets generated that needs to be filled in the required field resulting in an SMS message indicating successful registration. People have the option to choose the vaccination centre and time slot. All one needs to do is show up at the vaccination centre to get the dose. As per Health Ministry update, the total Covid vaccine doses given across India as on 23 May has crossed 21.80 crores. The list includes first and second doses to senior citizens, healthcare workers, frontline workers and those in the 45-60 years and 18-44 years age groups.

SUM Surgeons Perform Rare Surgery



(A.O. Bureau)
Bhubaneswar, May 27: Surgeons at the Institute of Medical Sciences and SUM Hospital here performed a rare surgery on a 41-year-old man on Tuesday to remove a six cm long cystic mass found on the left adrenal gland. The patient from Kharagpur in West Bengal, complaining of abdominal pain, was admitted into the hospital on Saturday while investigations revealed the tumour. Dr. Satya Mohapatra, HOD, Radiology department detected the tumor through

CT Scan. The team of surgeons, led by Dr. Jitendra Narayan Senapati, Department of General Surgery, successfully conducted the laparoscopic adrenalectomy, a complex procedure in which the abdominal cavity is approached through a small incision to extract the mass. The patient, Sanjib Kumar Singh, was recovering well and would require shorter hospital stay. The team included Dr. J.R. Pani, Dr. Binay Konar, Dr. Sunil Kar, Dr. Sonali Mohanty, Dr. Kishan Reddy and Dr. Saurabh Tripathy.

Cyclone Yaas: Water enters Aradi Akhandalamani temple premises



(A.O. Bureau)
Bhadrak, May 27: Cyclonic storm Yaas has left a trail of destruction in Balasore and Bhadrak districts where the severe cyclonic storm made landfall on Wednesday morning and continued

to wreak havoc for a few hours. Aradi in Bhadrak district is drenched in water after heavy rainfall was triggered by the cyclone. The water entered the premise of Akhandalamani temple here. Water from

nearby Baitarani and Shalandi rivers entered into the inner chamber of the temple affecting the rituals of Lord Shiva. The local administration and temple management committee drained out the water.

Podia Farmers are demanding the MSP cost of Groundnut

(A.O. Bureau)
Malkangiri, May 27: Thousands of workers have returned to their homes after the Kovid cut last year to concentrate on small businesses and farming to support their livelihoods. Hundreds of acres of Groundnut, almonds have been planted in different parts of the Padia block during the Rabi season this year. Hundreds of quintals of almonds have been found lying in farmers' farm in various villages. Although mandis were being set up by the Lamps for the sale of the Groundnuts, no



mandis have been opened by the Padia Cooperative Society this year. On the other hand, Groundnut traders have been tempted to buy cash from farmers at low prices. In some places, Groundnuts are forced to sell to traders at relatively low prices, not waiting

for government mandis, as there is a fear of ruining them if they are kept at home for a long time after harvest. Basudeb Sardar, Abhimanyu Adhikari, Hiranyam Gharami, Soumen Rai, Subrata Rai, Gopal Biswas, the main farmers, said the farmers were forced to

sell to local traders at low prices, despite fears that the mandi would be cut down. This year, about 253 people have registered in Padia, MV79 and Pushuguda Mandi under Padia Lamps. On the other hand, the almond mandi will be opened at Padia on

Monday, MV79 on Wednesday and Pushuguda on Friday from next week, said S. Rajendra Prasad, Managing Director, Padia Lamps. The administration is urging the government to take steps to protect the farmers from profitable traders by providing mandis during the Rabi season and provide them with due dues! This Demands to take action In this regard, the departmental officials are generally in favor of giving interest towards the purchase of almonds from the farmers by arranging mandis in various places under the padia block!

NTPC extends support to protect the society at large from the spread of Coronavirus

(A.O. Bureau)
New Delhi, May 27: NTPC, the largest energy conglomerate of the country has not only ensured uninterrupted power supply to the country during the second wave of COVID-19 but also has reached out to the society and has made significant effort to combat the spread of COVID-19 by enhancing medical infrastructure in different parts of the country. While there was acute shortage of Oxygen beds across the country, NTPC came forward and developed more than 600 Oxygen beds and 1200 isolation beds in its different projects and surroundings on war footing basis in a span of one week which proved to be life saviour for many including the general public. NTPC has been working in close coordination with the state and district administration and has augmented medical infrastructure even at remote locations. Amidst the surge in COVID-19 cases specially in Delhi and NCR, NTPC stepped up its efforts

and created 200 oxygen supported beds and 140 isolation beds in NCR alone which came as a big relief to Covid patients. This infrastructure



in NCR which has been set up at Dadri, Noida and Badarun has the facility of Oxygen support, COVID testing, invasive and non-invasive ventilators besides 24X7 nursing and medical care. This has been created at a cost of Rs 30 Crores. NTPC has engaged more than 40 doctors, hundreds of paramedical and supporting staff and 07 round the clock Oxygen supported Ambulances to manage this facility. A 500 bedded hospital at a cost of Rs 400 Crores, with state of the art facility con-

structed by NTPC in Sundargarh, Odisha in a record time has been converted into a COVID hospital during the pandemic which is

catering to lakhs of people of that area. Apart from providing various medical equipment, NTPC has augmented the facility by providing 20 ventilators which helped in treating numerous critical patients. Further, considering the demand of critical care, NTPC is providing additional 40 ventilators to this hospital. NTPC Darlipali is also providing assistance for setting up 30 ICU beds in Jharsuguda. NTPC has created 250 Oxygen supported beds, 20 HDUs and 10 ICUs in

District hospital of Khargone, Madhya Pradesh at a cost of Rs 2.24 Crore. This facility at remote location has come as a boon to the

public at large, saving lives of many during the unprecedented COVID-19. At Jharkhand, NTPC, Northkaranpura has provided financial assistance of 53 Lakhs to set up 15 ICU beds along with Oxygen supply system at Community Health Centre, Tandwa, Dist Chatra, Jharkhand. Apart from that, Pakri Barwadhi, a mining project of NTPC at Hazaribagh, Jharkhand has made centralised medical Gas pipeline system at RIMS, Ranchi and ITKETI, Ranchi and

Hazaribagh Medical College at a cost of Rs 1 Crore which is supplying Oxygen to more than 1000 beds. Many projects of NTPC are located in remote parts of the country and they have contributed in big way in developing and augmenting medical infrastructure in their vicinity. During the ongoing crisis, various NTPC projects has provided more than 2000 Industrial cylinders to district administrations which are being converted and used as Medical Oxygen cylinders. Sensing the expected rise in demand for oxygen, which is the only lifesaving Gas for COVID patients, NTPC is playing a major role in creating infrastructure of Oxygen generation across the country by setting up more than 2 dozens of Oxygen Generation plants with some of them having the facility of bottling and refilling Oxygen cylinders. Out of these, 09 PSA type plants and 02 bottling plants are being set up in NCR only which will start operating from this month itself in phased wise manner.

Experience Of Previous Cyclones Helped ECoR For Swift Restoration

(A.O. Bureau)
Bhubaneswar, May 27: East Coast Railway has resumed train services immediately after cyclone by transporting essential commodities. It has prepared itself to run passenger carried train services after post cyclone YAAS. This was done due to prior planning and constant touch with ground level staff deputed at different vulnerable sections over the affected areas. Apart from this, Pre-planning and experience from previous cyclones was also helped ECoR for alertness and for speed restoration work. PATROLLING OF TRACKS and BRIDGES: Patrolling of tracks was made to check for damages like submersion of tracks or breaches on Train line due to heavy rain at different sensitive locations of cyclone affected areas. After the cyclone, the Team deputed for track restoration at different places checked the track and bridge position and restored the tracks at the earliest where water was logging and clearing heaps of mud from the railway track. PLACEMENT OF TOWER WAGONS & ELECTRICITY: Tower Wagons were placed ready at different places before cyclone and inspection and minor repairing works made through Tower wagons done quickly after the cyclone where the speedy winds had their effect on overhead electrification cables. Detailed track and OHE inspection was conducted



in affected section of Jajpur Keonjhar Road-Ranital section, Bhadrak-Dhamra Port section, Cuttack-Paradip section and Haridaspur-Paradip section of the Division and no major damage to the Railway property has been reported. Over Head Electrification inspection and rectification was completed before evening. SIGNALLING & TELECOMMUNICATION: The team of Signalling & Telecommunication Staff of East Coast Railway were placed at sensitive locations before the cyclone and have checked the Signalling System and Panel Works at the earliest. Apart from this, VHF and other facilities were made available with the teams for better connectivity if existing communication system would have failed. PRIORITY FOR RAIL-PORT CONNECTIVITY: The Railway stations like Bhadrak, Jajpur Keonjhar Road, Paradeep Port and Dhamra Port etc., were put on high alert where heavy rainfall and speed wind was experienced during the cyclone.