



DANCING DIVA

Actor Disha Patani says dance is the ultimate therapy for her to attain physical and mental fitness

LEISURE P2



HEAVY LOSS

Ukraine acknowledges it was taking heavy losses in Russia's assault in the east

INTERNATIONAL P10



SINDHU ENTERS SEMIS

PV Sindhu ekes out thrilling win over He Bing Jiao to enter women's singles semifinals of the Badminton Asia Championships

SPORTS P12



Lt Gen Raju next Vice Chief of Army

New Delhi: Lt Gen Baggavalli Somashekar Raju will take over as the next vice chief of the Army Staff May 1, the defence ministry said Friday. Lt Gen Raju will succeed incumbent Lt Gen Manoj Pande who will take the reins of the 1.3 million-strong Army after Army Chief Gen MM Naravane completes his term Saturday. A qualified helicopter pilot, Lt Gen Raju is currently serving as the Director General Military Operations and oversaw the Army's overall operational readiness in eastern Ladakh. An alumnus of Sainik School Bijapur and National Defence Academy, he was commissioned into the JAT Regiment on December 15, 1984.



Boris Becker gets two-and-half yrs jail term

LONDON: Tennis great Boris Becker was sentenced to two-and-half years in prison Friday for illicitly transferring large amounts of money and hiding assets after he was declared bankrupt. The three-time Wimbledon champion was convicted earlier this month on four charges under the Insolvency Act and had faced a maximum sentence of seven years in prison. The 54-year-old German was found to have transferred hundreds of thousands of pounds (dollars) after his June 2017 bankruptcy from his business account to other accounts, including those of his ex-wife Barbara and estranged wife Sharley "Lilly" Becker.

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Lady staff wires ₹97L of varsity to BF, held

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, April 29: The Commissionerate Police Friday arrested a female staff of a private university in Janla area for allegedly misappropriating around ₹97.54 lakh of varsity funds collected from students and transferring the amount to her boyfriend's account. Accused Payal Mohapatra is a resident of Cuttack district. Sources in the police revealed that Mohapatra was working as office assistant in the accounts department of the institution since 2017. The accused, who stayed on the campus, used to collect hostel and tuition fees from students at the students' counter in the university. Recently during a financial audit, the university authorities came to know that Mohapatra had not deposited the amount she collected from students in the university's bank account. Subsequently, the authorities Thursday lodged a complaint with the Tamando police

accusing Mohapatra of depositing the institution's money in her personal bank account. Acting on the complaint, Tamando police Friday arrested Mohapatra and produced her in a court that later sent her to judicial custody. Police sources claimed that during the course of the investigations it was found that Mohapatra had transferred ₹97.53,900 to the account of her boyfriend in Jharkhand through UPI and net banking over the last two years. Her boyfriend, Bikash Kumar, who was a student of the university, passed out in 2019. He used to demand money from Mohapatra regularly on various pretexts. Mohapatra has reportedly given ₹2.50 lakh to Kumar from her own account as well. The Commissionerate Police is likely to seek court's permission to take Mohapatra on remand for further probe into the fraud and the involvement of others in the case.



CLASH & CURFEW

Security personnel attempt to maintain law and order after a clash broke out between followers of Shiv Sena and pro-Khalistani Sikh organisations near Kali Mata Mandir in Patiala, Friday (CURFEW IN PATIALA P7) PTI PHOTO

MAJOR IPS REJIG

Sanjeeb Panda appointed Director, Intelligence, Arun Bothra ADG, Crime Branch, Prateek Singh Bhubaneswar DCP

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, April 29: In a major reshuffle among senior IPS officers, the state government Friday appointed additional DGP Sanjeeb Panda as Director, Intelligence. He will remain in additional charge of Odisha State Police Housing and Welfare Corporation. Special DG Manoj Kumar Chhabra has been appointed as Director, Prisons and Correctional Services, while senior IPS officer Santosh Kumar Upadhyay has been posted as DG Fire Services, Civil Defence and Home Guards. IPS officer Arun Bothra has been appointed as the new Additional Director General (ADG) of Crime Branch with additional charge of Transport Commissioner. Similarly, Gajbhaye SK Ishwardas has been posted as IGP,

Communication and Shefeen Ahamed as IGP, Human Rights Protection Cell. Umashankar Dash, the present DCP of Bhubaneswar, is promoted as Additional Commissioner, Commissionerate Police of Bhubaneswar and Cuttack. IPS officer Niti Shekhar has been appointed as DIG of Western Range in Rourkela, whereas Pinak Mishra is transferred and posted as DCP, Cuttack and Prateek Singh as DCP, Bhubaneswar. The state government has also transferred seven IPS officers in this reshuffle. IPS officer Parmar Smit Parshottamdas has been appointed as Bargharh SP, Rahul Jain as SP Jharsuguda, Sarvana Vivek M as SP Berhampur, Siddhartha Kataria as SP, Khurda, S Susree as SP Nabarangpur, Abhilas G as SP, Kalahandi and Alekha Pahi, an OPS officer, as SP Nayagarh.

42 trains cancelled for coal movement

New Delhi: The railways has cancelled 42 passenger trains so far to facilitate coal freight movement in the wake of a power crisis in various parts of the country, causing inconvenience to people travelling to and from coal producing states such as Chhattisgarh, Odisha, Madhya Pradesh and Jharkhand. The South East Central Railway (SECR) division that covers the coal producing regions has cancelled 34 passenger trains, while the Northern Railways (NR), the division that receives coal for many power stations in the north, has cancelled eight trains.



Swimming pool? This is my sweat!

Cyclonic circulation in May

Low pressure area likely to form over the Bay of Bengal around May 5 and it may convert into a cyclone

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, April 29: The India Meteorological Department Friday said a low pressure area is likely to form over South Andaman Sea and adjoining Bay of Bengal around May 5 with the possibility of further intensification. "A cyclonic circulation is likely to form over South Andaman sea and neighbouring areas around May 4. Under its influence, a low pressure area is likely to form over the same region during the next 24 hours. It is likely to become more marked during the subsequent 24 hours," the IMD said in a bulletin. However, the Met office has not issued any forecast whether the system will hit any coastal land or not. "As per our prediction so far, a



low pressure area will take shape in the Bay of Bengal around May 5 and it will further intensify into depression. However, whether it will convert into a cyclonic storm or not can be known Monday," said Bhubaneswar Met Centre Director HR Biswas. Ever since cyclone 'Fani' battered the Odisha coast May 3 of 2019, development of such systems over the Bay of Bengal in the month of May has become a matter of concern for the people of the east-coast of the country. Private weather forecasting agency, Skymet Weather, says, "A

cyclonic circulation is expected to move across the Gulf of Thailand and Malay Peninsula, around May 4. Quickly, this will make its way to the North Andaman Sea and likely to turn into a low pressure area May 5." Environmental conditions stand favorable for intensification to a depression in the subsequent 24 hours. The weather system will be placed under watch for any further intensification, it said. The Skymet further said any tropical system reaching the stage of depression, stands a fair chance of growing to a storm, at this

Heatwave sings state

Bhubaneswar: The searing heatwave enveloped parts of Odisha with Boudh town recording the season's highest 45 degrees Celsius for the second consecutive day Friday and the mercury level crossing 40 degrees C at 25 places, the meteorological department said. People sweltered under the sun with intense humidity during the day, while the minimum temperature was also above normal by 3.1 degrees or more at some places in Odisha, a bulletin said. Heatwave singer Subarnaapur, Sambalpur, Sundargarh, Boudh, Bolangir, Bargarh, Jharsuguda, Keonjhar, Mayurbhanj, Deogarh and Angul districts. MORE P3

time of the season, over the Andaman Sea. Storms during the month of May threaten Myanmar, Bangladesh, West Bengal and Odisha. Tropical cyclones are known for defying norms of track, intensity and timelines. Therefore, the entire coastline turns vulnerable till the threat recedes, it said.

EU rep takes up condition of minorities with Centre

AGENCIES

New Delhi, April 29: EU special representative for human rights Eamon Gilmore said Friday that in his meetings with the Indian government he has discussed issues such as the use of sedition and anti-terrorism laws, condition of minorities, communal violence and the situation in Jammu and Kashmir. Gilmore also said that in his meeting with members of the National Human Rights Commission during his India visit, the panel's role in relation to Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Act (FCRA), detentions, bail, sedition and anti-terrorism laws, Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA), minorities and individual cases, was discussed. An EU delegation, including Gilmore and EU Ambassador to India Ugo Astuto, called on Minority Affairs Minister Mukhtar Abbas Naqvi in Delhi Thursday, a day after it met NHRC chairperson Justice (ret'd) Arun Kumar Mishra and other members of the panel. "At meetings with Government,



including @naqvimukhtar, Minister for Minorities, I discussed FCRA, use of sedition and anti-terrorism laws, detentions, the situation of minorities, communal violence, situation in Jammu Kashmir, and individual cases," Gilmore tweeted, tagging Naqvi's tweet on their meeting. On his meeting with NHRC, he thanked the panel for the meeting, at which, he said the NHRC's role in relation to FCRA, detentions, bail, sedition and anti-terrorism laws, UAPA, minorities and individual cases, was discussed. According to sources in the Minority Affairs Ministry, Naqvi told the delegation that constitutional and religious rights of every section are absolutely safe in India but "nobody has the right to indulge in forceful and fraudulent religious conversion."

MARKET WATCH

INDEX	VALUE	VARIATION
SENSEX	57060.87	↓ 460.19
NIFTY	17102.50	↓ 142.50
DOLLAR	77.12	↓ ₹0.09
EURO	81.14	↑ ₹0.29
GOLD	₹51,616	↑ ₹354
SILVER	₹63,430	↓ ₹487

WEATHER

	BHUB	CTK
TEMP MAX	40.2°C	40.1°C
TEMP MIN	27.2°C	27.0°C
Humidity	77%	79%
Rainfall	Nil	Nil
Forecast	Thunderstorm	very likely

58-yr-old MLA among 5.8L matric examinees

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar/ Phulbani, April 29: BJD lawmaker Angada Kanhar was among the 5.8 lakh students appearing for Class 10 state board examinations in Odisha that commenced Friday amid tight security. Kanhar (58), the state's Phulbani legislator, wrote his second language paper at Rujangi High School in Pitabari village of Kandhamal district. "Some of the panchayat members and my driver encouraged me to appear for the examination. I don't know whether I will pass the test or fail. But I wrote my paper with the intention of getting a matriculation degree," he said. One of his close aides said that Kanhar had left studies way back in 1978. He took his Class 8 examination after becoming a member of the



Students entering Unit-9 Capital Girls' High School in Bhubaneswar; (Inset) MLA Angada Kanhar appears for the exam at a centre in Kandhamal, Friday. OP PHOTOS

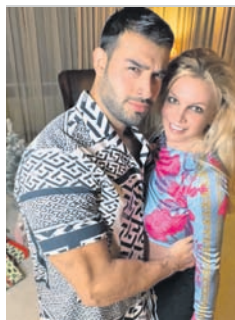
Assembly in 2019. "In 1978, I could not appear for the matriculation exam due to a variety of family problems. I came to know that people have appeared for the exam at 50-70 years' age. This created an urge within me to sit for the

exam. So, I decided to sit for the exam this year," said Kanhar. "I wrote the paper with the intention of fetching a matriculation degree," Kanhar added. Archana Basa, the superintendent of the MLA's examination centre,

said that the legislator was accorded no special treatment. "He wrote papers along with other students. He was thoroughly checked just like others before being allowed to sit for the exam," Basa said. School and Mass Education Minister Samir Ranjan Dash Friday said, "Looking at the heatwave situation we had decided to conduct the examination in one sitting which will keep the students safe from the scorching conditions. Also, all exam centres provided ORS and water bottles to the examinees." A total of 5,85,730 students are appearing for this year's Class 10 state board examinations across 3,540 centres. Over 35,000 teachers have been engaged to supervise the entire process. Special squads have been deployed by the board to check malpractices.

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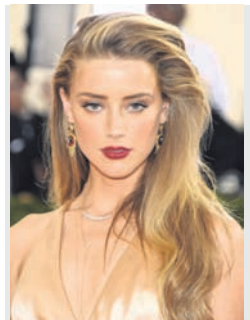


BRITNEY'S FIANCÉ WANTS BABY'S GENDER TO BE A SURPRISE

Sam Asghari is preparing to become a dad with his partner Britney Spears and he's admitted he doesn't want to know the baby's gender until the tot arrives later this year.

AMBER HEARD HASN'T PAID ACLU FULL 3.5MN

Amber Heard has given the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) just half of the promised \$3.5 million donation she pledged following her divorce from Johnny Depp. The *Aquaman* star had vowed to give the sum to the organisation and another \$3.5mn for the Children's Hospital Los Angeles.



FORTUNE FORECAST

GaneshSpeaks.com
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FOR ASTROLOGY DIAL 5181*

ARIES

You will exhibit your worth in ample measure today. You will probably chalk out great plans and ideas at work, and this will be very beneficial. But despite this, Ganesh says, if you don't get the deserved recognition, don't lose heart.

TAURUS

You may face conflicts on the personal front and find your thoughts leaning towards aggression today, says Ganesh. There is a possibility of suffering losses due to loved ones. Exercise restraint in arguments with relatives and siblings, advises Ganesh.

GEMINI

It will not be hard for you to complete your tasks successfully and without any delays or obstacles in your path, only if you first seek to fully understand and acquire the learning required to perform it. The fruits of your labour will keep you happy and satisfied, says Ganesh.

CANCER

You will take on new responsibilities, says Ganesh. So you will be busy in your task. You may feel exhausted due to hectic work. So it entails mental tension.

LEO

Guides help other people choose the right path in life and to select the correct alternatives. It is a good day for those who are in the teaching or coaching professions. It is also a progressive day for those working in MNC's. Ganesh's blessings are with you.

VIRGO

It is more than likely that you will reap financial profits from foreign contacts, predicts Ganesh. You will excel in all the activities that you undertake today. Your dream of establishing a mammoth business enterprise in a foreign country will take flight today.

LIBRA

Ganesh says today will be the start of a new love story for you and you will be able to spend time with someone very dear to you. You will be more conscious today about your appearance and may even go to the beauty parlor. Do remember the saying - beauty lies in the eye of the beholder. Ganesh says that you will be equally conscious of your dressing style and clothes and may go in for a new wardrobe today.

SCORPIO

Your energy levels are high as you gear up for new events. However, there are chances that these events may not meet your expectations. But, don't lose hope and get disappointed. Keep your spirits high. Implement the first lesson learnt in school: try & try till you succeed!

SAGITTARIUS

Ganesh foresees business expansion on your cards. Your friends, relatives and other contacts across seven seas will lend a helping hand to develop your business. And thanks to your super communication skills that make the task easier.

CAPRICORN

Some people do backbreaking work throughout their life, and still don't taste the sweet taste of success. While in your case, success will be as easy as pie. You are already loaded with work and some new projects - assignments will be added to that, today. But, you are not complaining as some recreational activities will refresh your mood and energy.

AQUARIUS

Things have become stagnant but it fails to frustrate your spirit. Slow and steady wins the race and it seems you have imbibed it very well. You will be able to seize opportunities coming your way and march ahead on your path. Financially, you will be on a stable ground, says Ganesh.

PISCES

You need to tread cautiously today when it comes to matters related to business. Do not make any decisions in haste, or it could come back to haunt you at a later date. All financial dealings will need to be carefully monitored.

Dance is Disha's ultimate therapy

Mumbai: Actor Disha Patani has successfully made her mark in the industry and in the hearts of fans. Apart from acting, she has also showcased her dancing talent in her films and her social media space. Her passion for dance is well reflected in her fabulous songs and dance performances. On the occasion of International Dance Day, Disha has expressed her love for the art.

Be it at an event, a movie, or simply when practicing and vibing in her classes, she puts in all the effort, while ensuring she has a good time doing it. Her fans always look forward to watching her dance and now on the occasion of International Dance Day, the actress expressed her love for dancing and shared, "I am a dance lover and it's the ultimate therapy for me to attain physical and mental

fitness. Moreover, whenever I dance, I feel every bit of my body is energizing. Since my childhood, I admired & loved dancing and always wanted to keep doing it throughout my life."

On the work front, Disha is on a signing spree with several renowned brands and has an interesting line-up of films. She recently wrapped up 'Ek Villain 2' which features her alongside John Abraham, Tara Sutaria and Arjun Kapoor.



AGENCIES

Rakul Preet shares fun memories with Big B



Mumbai: Ajay Devgn and Rakul Preet Singh starrer *Runway 34* released in the theatres Friday. Apart from them, the much-awaited aviation drama also features Amitabh Bachchan and Boman Irani in key roles.

In a recent interview, Rakul Preet was asked if she has any fun memories from *Runway 34* sets. Replying to this, the actress said that the experience of working with Amitabh Bachchan has been a memorable one. She recalled how one day, the senior actor brought three boxes of nuts for her keeping her diet in mind. "One day, he gave biscuits to everybody on set and he came to me saying, 'Aap toh nahi khayengi'. 'Nahi Sir'. So after a while, he comes back and he gave me boxes of nuts - three different boxes of nuts! That's so, so nice. Like he doesn't have to do it, you know," said Rakul.

Rakul further added that they have kept the boxes carefully at her house. The actress mentioned that her help who was present with her on sets that particular day said, "Yeh Bachchan Sir ne diya hai, isko sambhal ke rakhenge. (Bachchan Sir gave these. Will keep them carefully)" Rakul emphasized that she will never forget that day and shall cherish the memory forever. AGENCIES

OSNA's drama fest concludes with Odia play *Kabi Samrat*



A scene from the play

OP PHOTO

Bhubaneswar: The five-day theatre festival, organised by Odisha Sangeet Natak Akademi in collaboration with Odia Language, Literature and Culture (OLL&C) department, came to an end here at Rabindra Mandap, Friday.

Utkal Ranga Manch Trust of Bhubaneswar presented Odia drama *Kabi Samrat* on the last day of the event. Written on the life and works of 17th century poet-composer Kabi Samrat Upendra Bhanja and directed by legendary theatre director Anant Mahapatra, the 1.45hrs play managed to hold the viewers' interest till the end.

Though born in a royal family (Bhanja dynasty of princely state Ghumsar), Bhanja never eyed for

the throne. Moreover, he dedicated his entire life to poetry instead of ruling the kingdom.

The play highlighted different shades of Bhanja's life including his growth as a poet, recognition in several royal courts, death of life partners and his subsequent death at Puri.

The ensemble cast included Rabi Tripathy, Uma Saha, Nabin Kumar Parida, Mamata Mohanty, Binayak Mishra, Shankar Basumallick, Prakash Moharana and others.

Among the dignitaries, OLL&C Additional Chief Secretary Madhusudan Padhi and OTDC Chairperson Shreemayee Mishra were present on the occasion. PNN

Gripping drama makes *Runway 34* soar high

Ajay Devgn's *Runway 34*, is inspired by a real-life incident and strongly reminiscent of the 2016 released English film *Sully: Miracle on the Hudson*. Yet, it is distinct and proves to be a gripping drama pivoting around Captain Vikrant Khanna's flight from Dubai to Cochin, one rainy night, and how the skilled and experienced pilot saves 150 lives, with his maturity and foresight, preventing an impending aviation disaster; landing in Trivandrum instead, with limited fuel.

An edge-of-the-seat drama, the film keeps you hooked right from the beginning. The flight scenes displaying the fear and anxiety of the petrified passengers are real and palpable. The external flight shots of the aircraft flying amidst thunder and rain are also beautifully executed and appear real. The final landing of the plane in severe turbulence is frighteningly credible.



Director: Ajay Devgn
Cast: Amitabh Bachchan, Ajay Devgn, Rakul Preet Singh, Abhinay Raj Singh, Boman Irani, Sharik Khan,

the entry of Amitabh Bachchan as Narayan Vedant, the Investigating Officer, is equally exciting, although it is more of a courtroom drama with the inquiry committee and the pilots being interrogated.

How Captain Vikrant Khanna manages to hold his own against Narayan Vedant, convincing him of his sharp memory and flying skills through a simulated flight, thereby justifying his actions and decisions, forms the crux of this avia-

tion drama.

Ajay Devgn, as the dashing and accomplished Captain Vikrant Khanna essays his character with his characteristic restraint and minimal expressions. He emotes through his eyes, conveying myriad emotions. An astute pilot, who places his passengers' safety before everything else, a family man but with a fun side to his personality, Ajay Devgn is every bit that pilot.

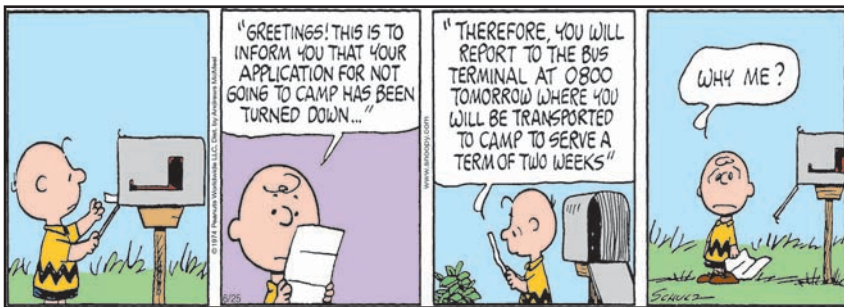
Amitabh Bachchan as Narayan Vedant expectedly takes centre stage with his flawless oratorical skills and charisma, and towers over everyone else in the inquiry scenes. As always, he is a treat to watch.

Rakul Preet Singh, as Co-pilot Tania Albuquerque delivers what is expected of her, given the limited scope of her character.

Overall, it is an interesting film which is a perfect combination of drama and good performances. UWS

FUN post

PEANUTS



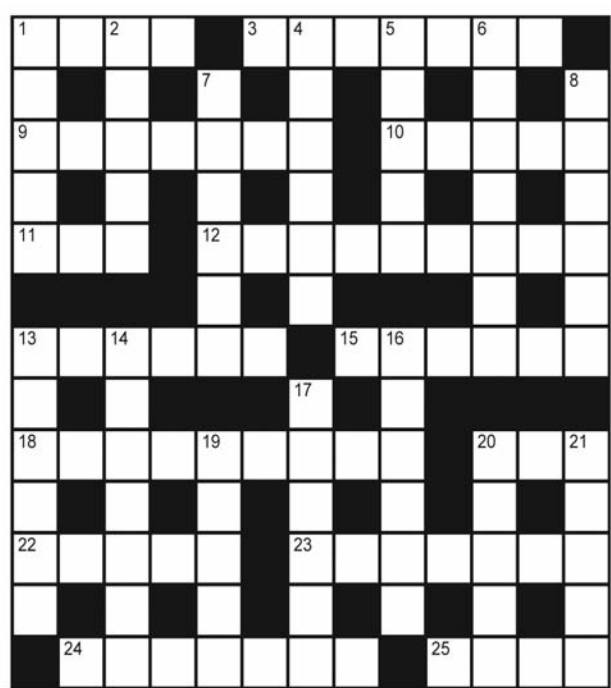
CALVIN AND HOBBS



BREVITY



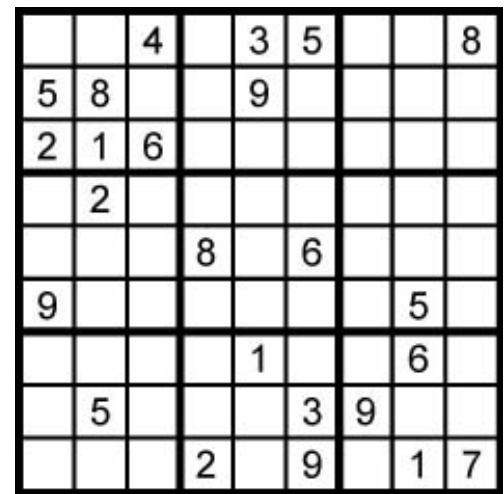
CROSSWORD



- Across**
- 1 Soupçon
 - 3 Bodily disorder
 - 9 Taps
 - 10 Restrict
 - 11 Fish eggs
 - 12 Security agreement
 - 13 Docking facility
 - 15 Proposes
 - 18 Disguised
 - 20 Blubber
 - 22 Omit
 - 23 Egg-shaped instrument
 - 24 Olga Korbut, e.g.
 - 25 Shake off
 - Down**
 - 1 Molière comedy, with "The"
 - 2 Shopworn
 - 4 Take a firm stand
 - 5 Back tooth
 - 6 Favourite son
 - 7 Aftershave
 - 8 Pressure
 - 13 Type of voyage
 - 14 Correct
 - 16 Arrangement type
 - 17 Swivels
 - 19 Collect slowly
 - 20 Metal worker
 - 21 Face fungus

SUDOKU

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

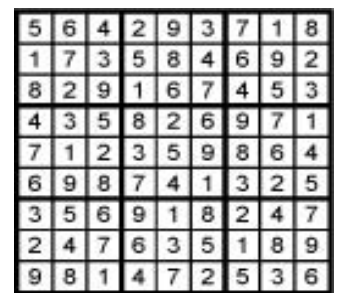


SOLUTIONS



CROSSWORD

SUDOKU



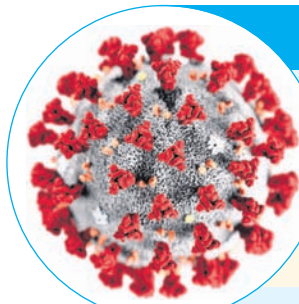
CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW

downtown



BASIC AMENITIES

The Shree Jagannath Temple Administration put up a shed at the West Gate of the shrine to protect the devotees from scorching sun



COVID-19 TRACKER

	INFECTED	RECOVERED	DEAD
World	51,23,93,276	46,62,22,176	62,57,152
India	4,30,72,176	4,25,30,622	5,23,753
Odisha	12,88,034	12,78,789	9,124

65 super specialty hosps outside state under BSKY

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, April 29: As many as 65 top super specialty hospitals in 15 states other than Odisha have been empanelled under the Biju Swasthya Kalyan Yojana (BSKY), National Health Mission (NHM) Director Shalini Pandit said in a governing body meeting of State Health Assurance Society (SHAS) here Friday.

Chairing the meeting, Chief Secretary Suresh Chandra Mahapatra advised the Health department to make the system smooth and foolproof for genuine beneficiaries.

Mahapatra said, "Since the scheme has enhanced the access of people to tertiary care in private hospitals, major empanelled hospitals should have dedicated helpdesks for patients under the scheme."

The Chief Secretary also directed the officials to ensure expeditious disposal of claims from private hospitals so that people of Odisha do not face inconveniences for getting healthcare facilities in hospitals outside the state.

The meeting also discussed issues related to due diligence of the cases for complicated and high-end surgeries, it was learnt.

Mahapatra asked the Labour Commissioner to prepare a list of states having more Odia workers so that measures could be initiated for ensuring them healthcare under the state's ambitious scheme.

According to the NHM Director,

Healthcare boost

On an average, around 40,000 patients avail super specialty and tertiary treatment in private hospitals empanelled under the scheme every month. The state government pays around Rs 90 crore per month to the hospitals towards their services

The state government has settled 1,97,355 claims of private hospitals amounting to Rs 384 crore in 2021-22

Odisha government has identified around 96.5 lakh eligible households under the Biju Swasthya Kalyan Yojana



the state government has identified around 96.5 lakh eligible households under the scheme. "Till date, around 98 per cent of the identified households have been provided smart health cards for cashless treatment in the hospitals. Card distribution is being done on campaign mode for covering all eligible families in a month," Pandit said.

Families covered under the National Food Security Act (NFSA) and SFSA were provided with the BSKY smart health card, she added.

As many as 328 private hospitals in Odisha and 65 private hospitals with super specialty facilities operating across 15 states in India have been empanelled under the BSKY, said the NHM Director.

The major empanelled hospitals include Tata Memorial Hospital in Mumbai and Kolkata, Christian Medical College (CMC) in Vellore, Narayana Hrudayalaya Group of Hospitals and Shankara Cancer

Group of Hospitals in Karnataka, Apollo Hospitals in Visakhapatnam, CARE Hospital in Visakhapatnam, Mahatma Gandhi Cancer Institute in Visakhapatnam, Seven Hills Hospital in Visakhapatnam and Hospitals under Fortis Healthcare Chain across India.

All major super specialty hospitals operating in different districts of Odisha have also been empanelled. Around 1,592 clinical packages were encompassed in the scheme, officials said.

On an average, around 40,000 patients avail super specialty and tertiary treatment in private hospitals empanelled under the scheme every month. The state government pays around Rs 90 crore per month to the hospitals towards their services, according to the Health department. The state government has settled 1,97,355 claims of private hospitals amounting to Rs 384 crore in 2021-22.

Family feud prime reason behind suicides

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, April 29: Family dispute is the prime reason behind suicide cases in Odisha, reveals an analysis of the data from the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB).

Very recently, a couple from Maharashtra killed their 15-month-old child before ending their lives in the capital city here over family dispute. The bodies of the couple and their child were found from a rented accommodation in Chintamaniswar area under Laxmisagar police limits Thursday, police said.

According to the NCRB data, Odisha topped the list of states reporting a high percentage of suicide cases due to family discords in the year 2020.

NCRB DATA



As many as 4,506 people ended their lives over family disputes in Odisha in 2020, which is around 81 per cent of the total 5,546 suicide

- According to the data, Odisha topped the list of states reporting a high percentage of suicide cases due to family discords in the year 2020
- As many as 4,506 people ended their lives over family disputes in Odisha in 2020, which is around 81 per cent of the total 5,546 suicide cases recorded in the state for the year 2020

family disturbances in Odisha in the year 2019. This is around 60 per cent of the total 4,582 suicide cases recorded in the state for the same year.

On the other hand, Odisha had witnessed 274 murder cases over family disputes in 2020. As per the NCRB data, Odisha was among the top 10 states with maximum number of murder cases due to family discords in the same year.

A few days ago, a man had reportedly killed his wife and sister-in-law over family disturbances over some issues in the capital city here. Similarly, a man had eliminated his elder brother, sister-in-law and their three children at Kusumpur village under Mahanga police limits in Cuttack over property dispute recently, sources said.

Naveen to attend CMs-CJs meet in New Delhi today

POST NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi, April 29: Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik Friday arrived at New Delhi to attend a joint conference of Chief Ministers and Chief Justices of High Courts to be held Saturday here to discuss challenges faced by the judiciary.

Naveen, while speaking to media here, said that he will also review various projects of Odisha pending with the Union government.

"Prime Minister has called a conference of Chief Ministers and Chief Justices of the High Courts, I have come for that meeting," the Chief Minister said.

Significantly, the joint conference, an event which is being held after a gap of six years, will be inaugurated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi Saturday in presence of Chief Justice of India NV Ramana.

The conference is a platform to discuss challenges being faced by the judiciary.

Meanwhile, Chief Justice NV Ramana held the 39th Chief Justices' conference at the Supreme Court premises Friday.

He said that the resolutions drawn up during the conference will be taken up with the government at the joint conference.

OrissaPOST
English daily

WANTED

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THRUST ON FIRE SAFETY



Odisha Fire Service department, in association with the Commissionerate Police, organised an orientation programme on fire safety for Police Mitras in Bhubaneswar, Friday

PROMOTION OF OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES

City school playgrounds to be accessible to locals

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, April 29: Acknowledging the dearth of open spaces in the state capital here, the Bhubaneswar Smart City Limited (BSCL) has decided to redesign and share school playgrounds with local communities to promote outdoor activities.

The BSCL, in association with Sports and Youth Services, Works, and School and Mass Education departments, will redesign and share the playgrounds of various public schools with the local communities for weekend sports activities, sources said.

"The capital city has several parks but none of them can be used as a playground for outdoor activities. In an age of rising urbanisation and dwindling open areas, the objective of this project is to provide ample possibilities to the residents to participate in outdoor activities. The development of playgrounds has always been a vital aspect of our aim to foster sports and physical fitness among youths and children," said BSCL General Manager Kamaljit Das.

According to sources, the project will be executed at an investment of Rs 80 lakh, with at least 17 schools selected for the purpose. The School



BSCL officials inspecting the playground of a school in Bhubaneswar

The capital city has several parks but none of them can be used as a playground for outdoor activities. The objective of this project is to provide ample possibilities to the residents to participate in outdoor activities

KAMALJIT DAS | BSCL GENERAL MANAGER

for the Deaf, Unit II Girls' High School, Unit IV Girls' High School, Unit VI Boys' High School, Unit VI Girls' High School, Unit IX Boys' High School, Unit IX Girls' High School, SM/BM High School, SN High School, Saheed Nagar Upper Primary School, IRC village Upper Primary School, Baramunda

Government High School, Unit VIII Girls' High School, Unit VIII Boys' High School, Jadupur Syed Mumtaz Ali High School and Patrapada Government High School have been selected for the execution of the project.

After completion of the project, the schools will have volleyball courts, badminton clay courts, football fields, Kho-Kho grounds, kabaddi courts and cricket pitches, sources said.

"The project will be completed as soon as possible. The initiative will address the need for open fields and playgrounds as well as offer resources and a safe environment for play and relaxation," said Sports and Youth Services department Commissioner-cum-secretary R. Vineel Krishna.

Mercury breaches 40° Celsius at 25 places

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, April 29: The searing heatwave enveloped parts of Odisha with Boudh town recording the season's highest 45 degrees Celsius for the second consecutive day Friday and the mercury level crossing 40 degrees Celsius at 25 places, the meteorological department said.

People sweltered under the sun with intense humidity during the day, while the minimum temperature was also above normal by 3.1 degrees or more at some places in Odisha, a bulletin said.

The heatwave singed Subarnapur, Sambalpur, Sundargarh, Boudh, Bolangir, Bargarh, Jharsuguda, Keonjhar, Mayurbhanj, Deogarh and Angul districts.

It occurs when the maximum temperature is 4.5-6.4 notches above normal and at least 40 degrees C in the plains or 37 in the coastal areas at two weather stations or more in a meteorological subdivision for two consecutive days, the department said.

Nine weather stations recorded 43 degrees or more, with Boudh town logging 45 degrees, the Bhubaneswar Meteorological Centre said.

The maximum temperature shot up to 44.7 degrees in the industrial



College girls using an umbrella to save themselves from the scorching heat in Bhubaneswar

town of Angul, followed by 44.6 in Deogarh, 44.5 in Talcher and 44 in Bolangir.

It rose by three levels above the average to settle at 40.2 degrees in the state capital and 40.1 in Cuttack, the weather office said.

There will be 'no large change in the maximum temperature' during the next two days, following which it can slightly decrease by around two degrees in the subsequent two-three days.

The mercury level is likely to be more than 40 degrees and above

normal by three-five notches in the interior parts of Odisha and by two-three levels in a few areas in the coastal region during the next couple of days.

The meteorological department issued a 'yellow' warning of a heatwave in several districts of western, north-coastal and southern Odisha for the next four days.

The alert is applicable for Sundargarh, Jharsuguda, Sambalpur, Bargarh, Subarnapur, Boudh and Bolangir on Saturday. It denotes that the heat is tolerable,

SUMMER BLUES

Boudh town recorded the season's highest 45 degrees Celsius for the second consecutive day

The heatwave singed Subarnapur, Sambalpur, Sundargarh, Boudh, Bolangir, Bargarh, Jharsuguda, Keonjhar, Mayurbhanj, Deogarh and Angul

The weatherman issued a 'yellow' warning of a heatwave in several districts of western, north-coastal and southern Odisha for the next four days

The weather office urged people to take precautionary measures while going out between 11 am and 3 pm in these areas

but there is a slight health concern for vulnerable sections like the elderly and infants.

The weather office urged people to take precautionary measures while going out between 11 am and 3 pm in these areas.

Meanwhile, a cyclonic circulation is likely to form over the South Andaman Sea around May 4. Under its influence, a low-pressure area may form over the region during the following 24 hours and become more marked in the subsequent period, the department added.

Govt invites applications for Puri Sanskrit varsity VC post

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, April 29: The Higher Education department Friday issued a notification inviting applications for the appointment of Vice Chancellor for Shri Jagannath Sanskrit Vishwavidyalaya (SJSV) in Puri.

As per notification, the candidates must be below 63 years of age as on October 1, 2022. Besides, the applicants must be distinguished academicians with proven academic and administrative excellence. They must have at least 10 years of experience as professor in a university or a reputed research institute.

The VC post at the SJSV carries a salary of Rs 2,10,000, a special allowance of Rs 11,250 and other usual allowances per month. The tenure of the Vice Chancellor will be of four years from the date

he/she assumes office or till he/she attains 67 years of age, whichever is earlier, said the notification.

The applicants are required to apply in the prescribed application format through e-Mail to hedsec.od@nic.in mentioning 'Application for the post of Vice Chancellor of Shri Jagannath Sanskrit University'.

Shortlisted candidates will be called for an interview by a three-member selection committee in Bhubaneswar. After the interview, the committee will recommend the names of three candidates to the Governor of Odisha, who is also the Chancellor of all public universities in state, for appointment of one among them as the VC of the Sanskrit varsity. Prof Harihar Hota had been appointed as the VC of SJSV by Governor Ganeshi Lal in 2019, sources said.

Omm Shanti

नेत्रं चिन्तयन् शस्त्राणि नेत्रं दहति पावकः ।
न चैवं क्लेशदयन्त्यापो न शोचयति मारुतः ॥

In Loving Memory of

Late Rabinranath Das
DOB: 17.05.1942 | DOD: 20.04.2022

We offer heartfelt homage to the departed soul. You have been the epitome of strength, courage and diligent. You will remain in our heart forever. May your soul attain Moksha.

Fondly remembered by:
Dolly, Family, Friends & relatives

CIVIC BODY MEET



Mayor Subhash Singh and the corporators participated in the second council meeting of the Cuttack Municipal Corporation, Friday

OP PHOTO

NABARD financial assistance to Odisha up by 40% in FY-22

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, April 29: The National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) said Friday that it disbursed loans of Rs 31,786 crore in Odisha during the 2021-22 fiscal, an increase of 40 per cent over the previous year.

The financial support comprised Rs 14,077 crore to banks for lending towards crop and term loans, and Rs 3,031 crore to the state government under the Rural Infrastructure Development Fund (RIDF).

NABARD has disbursed Rs 14,485 crore for supporting paddy procurement operations in the state in FY22, according to a release. The support under the RIDF to Odisha is said to be the highest in the country.

It sanctioned an assistance of Rs 4,013 crore for the construction of 243 new rural roads, 263 bridges, a medium irrigation facility, a total of 9,836 minor irrigation and six flood protection projects as well as nine initiatives which are expected to provide clean and safe drinking water to 17 lakh rural



NABARD is implementing 69 tribal development projects, supporting horticulture-based livelihoods on 46,000 acres and benefiting more than 50,000 tribal families in 24 districts at present

hoods on 46,000 acres and benefiting more than 50,000 tribal families in 24 districts at present, according to a press release.

A grant of Rs 34 crore was provided to banks to expand banking touchpoints in rural areas and for creating awareness of financial inclusion, it said.

In the current fiscal, the development bank is committed to increase its support to the state government for creation of more rural infrastructure.

It will focus on the integrated development of rural livelihoods on a large scale in Odisha, the statement said.

people across the state.

NABARD is implementing 69 tribal development projects, supporting horticulture-based liveli-

ED attaches Pathak's assets in money laundering case

THE AGENCY SAYS PATHAK INVESTED HIS 'ILL-GOTTEN' INCOME IN ACQUIRING VARIOUS IMMOVABLE PROPERTIES AND IN BANK INVESTMENTS IN HIS AND HIS FAMILY MEMBERS' NAME

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, April 29: Assets worth Rs 29.83 lakh of former Indian Forest Service (IFoS) officer of Odisha have been attached as part of a money laundering investigation against him linked to an alleged disproportionate assets case, the Enforcement Directorate (ED) said Friday.

A provisional order for attaching the properties has been issued under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) against the ex-officer Abhay Kant Pathak, it said.



Pathak served as the Additional Principal Chief Conservator of Forest (plan, programme and afforestation) in Odisha.

Pathak, a 1987-batch IFoS officer, was compulsorily retired by the Centre on the recommendation of the Odisha government following

• Abhay Kant Pathak, a 1987-batch IFoS officer, was compulsorily retired by the Centre on the recommendation of the Odisha government following the registration of a vigilance case against him in November 2020 for allegedly possessing disproportionate assets.

• The ED case stems from this Odisha Vigilance FIR that alleged that Pathak misused his official position and amassed ill-gotten wealth to an extent of Rs 9.35 crore

the registration of a vigilance case against him in November 2020 for allegedly possessing disproportionate assets.

The ED case stems from this Odisha Vigilance FIR that alleged that Pathak "misused his official position and amassed ill-gotten wealth to an extent of Rs 9.35 crore".

The ED, in a statement, said the probe found that Pathak "invested his allegedly ill-gotten income, which was over and above his known sources of income, in acquiring various immovable properties and in bank investments in his and in the name of his family members".

The federal probe agency had also conducted raids at the premises of the bureaucrat in December last year.

Make 'Jana Sunani' more effective, says Swain



Jana Sunani is a very important medium to know whether government schemes are reaching the beneficiaries properly or not. Through this, public can report their grievances online to the relevant departments

• RANENDRA PRATAP SWAIN | FOOD SUPPLIES AND CONSUMER WELFARE MINISTER

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, April 29: While the state government is focusing on immediate resolution of public grievances through the online public grievances app and website 'Jana Sunani', the Food Supplies and Consumer Welfare Minister Ranendra Pratap Swain directed departmental officials to make the public hearing programme more active.

Reviewing the programme at the Lok Seva Bhavan Friday, Swain said that Jana Sunani is a very important medium to know whether government schemes are reaching the beneficiaries properly or not. Through this, public can report their grievances online to the relevant departments.

Swain instructed departmental officials to take immediate action to address the grievances of the peo-

ple. "Public hearings can help improve the current system and meet the expectations of people," he said. He also stressed on the need to inform the complainants the verdicts.

The Jana Sunani mobile app, launched by the state government, is an online data transmission system between the departments, organisations and sub-ordinate organisations. The information and communication technology based integrated application system primarily aims at submission, monitoring and redressal of grievances irrespective of time constraints.

The app is linked to the Jana Sunani web application <https://janasunani.odisha.gov.in>.

The app is designed to mitigate the communication gap between citizens and authorities. Each grievance will be provided a unique ticket id to track progress.

No to physical parole, furlough plea

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, April 29: The state government has directed all district Collectors to immediately start e-Parole and e-Furlough systems in the jails under their jurisdiction.

The Collectors have been directed to stop physical application for parole and furlough immediately. "You are, therefore, requested to take immediate steps at your level for implementation of the e-Parole and e-Furlough systems in all jails of the state and ensure that no physical parole



or furlough application is processed after 30.04.2022," the state Home department directed.

The e-Parole and e-Furlough systems are digitised automated management information systems, which will enable the prisons, police and district administrations to grant parole and furlough to the applicants without any hassle and much faster than physical process. Also, the inmates can apply for parole and furlough online at the KISOKs in jails.

The Home department had released standard operating procedures (SOPs) in connection with the e-Parole and e-Furlough system December 30, 2021.

No Cov death for 9 days straight

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, April 29: Odisha Friday recorded 10 new Covid-19 cases, three more than the previous day, with the tally rising to 12,88,034, a Health department bulletin said.

The death toll remained at 9,124 as no new fatality due to the infection was reported for the ninth

straight day, it said. Fifty-three other coronavirus patients have died due to comorbidities so far.

Odisha now has 78 active Covid-19 cases, and 15 districts have no patients at present, the Health bulletin said. Twelve more patients recuperated from the disease in the last 24 hours, taking the total number of recoveries to 12,78,779.

State extends benefits for core sanitation workers



POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, April 29: The state government has extended the benefits of Employee's Compensation Act, 1923 and Employees' State Insurance Act, 1948 to core sanitation workers Grade I and II under the Garima scheme, Housing and Urban Development (H&UD) Minister Pratap Jena said Friday.

Launched by Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik in September 2020,

Garima scheme aims at ensuring the safety and dignity of core sanitation workers, it was learnt.

Sources said core sanitation workers are prone to mishaps as they often work in hazardous conditions.

The Employee's Compensation Act, 1923 and Employees' State Insurance Act, 1948 provide for extension of benefits in case of permanent total disablement, permanent partial disablement and temporary disablement resulting from mishaps during the employment or sickness that requires medical treatment, it was learnt.

Garima is the first-of-its-kind scheme by any state in India to provide a comprehensive package- institutionalizing and regulating the core sanitation services, providing service level benefits, social security and financial benefits to core sanitation workers and their families, it was learnt.

FOR YOUNG MINDS



The Mo College Abhiyan organised a national seminar on Mental Health Concerns in Today's Youth at the Shailabala Women's Autonomous College Auditorium in Cuttack, Friday

OP PHOTO

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SHORT TAKES

Eight Class X girls injured in mishap

Koraput/Kamakhyaganagar: At least eight girl students were critically injured after the auto-rickshaw they were traveling in to attend the annual High School Certificate (HSC) Examination overturned near Kerameti under Kundra police limits of Koraput district Friday. They were rushed to Kundra community health centre (CHC) from where one was shifted to Jeypore sub-divisional hospital after her condition worsened. In another incident in Kamakhyaganagar police limits of Dhenkanal district, at least three persons including a Class X student were injured when a speeding ambulance hit their motorcycle from the rear. They were first admitted to Kamakhyaganagar sub-divisional hospital and later shifted to Dhenkanal district headquarters hospital (DHH) for further treatment. The ambulance was en route to Bhubaneswar from Rourkela, reports said.

VSSUT student drowns in canal

Burla: A student of Veer Surendra Sai University of Technology (VSSUT) drowned while taking bath in the power canal in Sambalpur's Burla Friday. The deceased, identified as Trilochan Maharana, was a second year student of Mechanical Engineering branch. Sources said, Trilochan along with 10 of his friends had gone to take bath in the canal when he slipped into the deep waters. Fire tenders rushed to the spot and fished out the lifeless body of Trilochan after an hour of extensive search. Burla police seized the body and sent it for autopsy. A case of unnatural death has been registered in this connection.

Raging wildfires in Ghumusar div

Bhanjanagar: Wildfires are spreading in parts of north Ghumusar forest division in Ganjam district. This has led to unusual rise in atmospheric temperature in the area, locals said. Thick blankets of smoke have enveloped some areas for some days while forest officials are allegedly failing to contain inferno. Lack of coordination between forest officials and members of Vana Suraksha Samitis is stated to be the reason behind failure to douse the raging blaze. Wildfires have been raging in Daha, Soradevi and Kulad forests for the last few days. The forests are covered with smokes. Locals have demanded immediate measures to extinguish the fire and save the flora and fauna of the region.

Kendrapara youth sweats it out to pursue engineering

Mahakalpara, April 29: The adage 'where there is a will there is a way' goes well with Toofan Manna, an engineering student of Betabelari under Mahakalpara block of Kendrapara district, who has taken up farming to finance his B Tech course. Toofan's dedication and hard work to pursue B Tech degree are incomparable as penury and hardships for years have never distracted him from pursuing his goal. Toofan, being the son of a farmer who struggles to feed the family, has been fighting against all odds to fund his B Tech degree as no government help is at sight. The youth has become an example for several others who sit idle and crib about jobs. Toofan is the eldest son of Goutam Manna, who could only support his studies up to high school with much difficulty. Being a meritorious student, Toofan managed to get a seat at a private engineering college in Bhubaneswar and is a final year student now. However, it's impossible for his father to finance his studies



Being a meritorious student, Toofan managed to get a seat at a private engineering college in Bhubaneswar and is a final year student now. However, it's impossible for his father to finance his studies

father. Being the son of a farmer, he had some basic knowledge of farming. So, he took a patch of farmland just 4 km away from his house at Kiabaria on lease and started farming. He used to work throughout the day in the farmland and study at night. Even if it is a non-irrigated farmland, he has grown lady's finger, brinjal, beans, maize, sunflower, tomato, chilli and many other vegetables. He has been irrigating the crops

Being the son of a farmer, he had some basic knowledge of farming. So, he took a patch of farmland just 4 km from his house at Kiabaria on lease and started farming. Superintending engineer (SE) of Rural Works(RW) department, Baliguda in Kandhamal had written to Daringbadi tehsildar and also to Sorada tehsildar in Ganjam April 18. In a similar vein, the SE has also written letters to divisional forest officer (DFO) of Bhanjanagar and the DFO of Baliguda requesting both to expedite the project, with due intimation to Collectors of the two districts. A joint inspection by the revenue inspectors (RIs) of Sorada and Daringbadi

ANIMAL HELPLINE



Officials flagged off a van meant for providing animal helpline and ambulance service for stray animals at Baripada, Friday

BIRAJA TEMPLE MAKEOVER

₹38.14cr sanctioned for land acquisition



POST NEWS NETWORK

Jajpur, April 29: The state government has sanctioned a whopping ₹38.14 crore in the first phase for land acquisition under the ambitious development and beautification project of Maa Biraja Temple in Jajpur district, an official said Friday. The state government is all set to beautify the temple and its campus like other heritage sites of the state. The project will give a facelift to the shrine, encircling 54 Shiva temples, Mukti mandap, Dolamandap, Ananda Bazaar, bhog shops and other basements. This fund will also be utilised for temple administration building along with modern amenities for the visitors. The target is to beautify the temple on the lines of Srimandir in Puri and Lingaraj Temple in Bhubaneswar. A master plan has been prepared for the purpose, the official added. As per the approved project plan, around 6.338 acre of private land would be acquired. Earlier, ₹35.55 crore was sanctioned July 28, 2021 which the locals termed as insufficient. So, an additional fund of ₹2.59 crore was sanctioned for land acquisition. Recently, Works department special secretary wrote to the chief engineer stating that prescribed norms of the state government should be adhered to while carrying out land acquisition.

As per the approved project plan, around 6.338 acre of private land would be acquired. Earlier, ₹35.55 crore was sanctioned July 28, 2021 which the locals termed as insufficient. So, an additional fund of ₹2.59 crore was sanctioned for land acquisition

As the frontage of Biraja Temple is quite narrow, the government has decided to evict at least 50 local shopkeepers running their businesses in front of the shrine and rehabilitate them. Meanwhile, the temple administration has submitted the blue print of the upcoming temple with mock demo to the district administration. On the other hand, detailed project report (DPR) has been finalised and approved by the government. Notably, in order to carry out overall redevelopment of the shrine, 0.340 acre of land at Unit-5 of Krushnaprasad Nagar under Jajpur tehsil, 1.412 acre of land at Unit-14 of Birajakshetra, 0.287 acre of land at Unit-15 of Nabhigaya and 4.139 acre of land at Unit-5 and 0.16 acre of land at Unit-9 of Krushnaprasad Nagar have been demarcated for acquisition, the Works department letter mentioned. Worth mentioning, this iconic temple, having a great tourism potential, has immense religious and socio-cultural significance.

Action on prawn gherries falls flat

POST NEWS NETWORK

Kendrapara, April 29: Armed with a High Court order, the administration has been sporadically removing illegal prawn gherries along the coast in Kendrapara district. However, questions are now being raised on the efficacy of such demolition drives as new gherries are coming up in a few days of the action, a report said. Prawn gherries have mushroomed along the coast from Dhamra to Paradip. On an average, at least 10 new prawn gherries are being set up every day. Even parts of Bhitarkanika National Park have not been spared by the prawn mafia. What is most worrying is that toxic and chemical water used in prawn gherries continue to contaminate the sea water, endangering marine flora and fauna of the areas of the national park. Local environmentalists and conscious citizens stated that growing contamination of marine water due to mushrooming prawn gherries along the coast has become a



AREAS OF CONCERN

Every day, parts of mangrove forests are cleared and 10 to 20 prawn gherries are coming up there. The deafening sound created by the aerators and water pumps used in prawn farming has been affecting wildlife and marine creatures. Fish farmers are using 14 banned medicines for growth of prawns. The toxic water discharged from enclosures finds its way into canals and finally reaches the sea

cause of concern while the High Court order in this regard has been thrown to the winds. Environmentalists like Hemanta Kumar Rout, Dolagobinda Jena, Pratap Kumar Padhi, Sunil Gantayat and Pratap Tripathy observed that the state government has emphasised on fish farming in saline

water which has indirectly helped the prawn mafia grab government land and carry on fish farming. As a result, mushrooming prawn gherries have taken a heavy toll on biodiversity of Bhitarkanika. Some parts of mangrove areas have been occupied by the mafia. Every day, parts of mangrove

forests are cleared and 10 to 20 prawn gherries are coming up there, it was alleged. The deafening sound created by the aerators and water pumps used in prawn farming has been affecting wildlife and marine creatures, said the environmentalists. Fish farmers are using 14 banned medicines for growth of prawns. The toxic water discharged from enclosures finds its way into canals and finally reaches the sea, it was alleged. Moreover, dolphins will face disastrous consequences, if such activities are allowed for longer period, they pointed out. Besides, prawn farming has also affected paddy cultivation in the area. The High Court has time and again directed the administration to continue the demolition drive against the prawn gherries. The administration carried it for some time but later halted it. When contacted, sub-collector Niranjan Behera said, "Some farmers have been allowed for fish farming in saline water. However, the gherries of farmers, who have not taken permission, are being razed."

MYTHICAL CHARM



Artists of Dadhibaman Kala Parishad, a cultural outfit, performed Ram Lila at Loisingha block in Bolangir district

Ganjam-Kandhamal road project a non-starter

POST NEWS NETWORK

Chhatrapur, April 29: An ambitious road project of the state government aiming at connecting different blocks in Ganjam and Kandhamal districts has faltered due to unusual delay in land acquisition. According to an official, the Kerubadi-Adipanga road via Bedepanga has made a little progress so far. If completed, it would benefit hundreds of people in tribal-dominated Kandhamal as well as the residents of Ganjam district. It would be a shortcut to connect various blocks of the two districts. The tribals, who usually travel for business and other purposes, would save time and money. However, the inordinate delay in the project has dashed their hopes. According to reports, an agreement was signed March 17, 2022 for laying the road. However, it requires both forest and a few patches of government land to start the project. Delay in demarcation of the lands has halted the road project, the report added.

A joint inspection by the RIs of Sorada and Daringbadi is needed to demarcate the land required for the project

is needed to demarcate the patches of the land required for the ambitious project. The RW superintending engineer has asked to fix a date for inspection. Similarly, forest rangers of Baliguda and Bhanjanagar divisions will demarcate the forest lands, the SE's letter mentioned. Due to lack of adequate road connectivity, the tribal residents in Kandhamal have been deprived of education and healthcare. Similar is the condition of some interior villages in Ganjam district.

SAI
Sports Authority of India
(Recruitment Call)
Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium Complex (East Gate)
Lodhi Road, New Delhi- 110 003

No: SAI/Pers/2378/2021 Date: 25.04.2022

Sports Authority of India (SAI), an autonomous organization under the Ministry of Youth Affairs & Sports (MYAS) and a Registered Society under the Societies Registered under the Societies Registration Act, 1860, invites applications from eligible candidates for the appointment to the post of 02 nos. of Retd. Accounts Officers as Consultant on contract basis in SAI Head Office. The contract period will be initially for 01 year extendable up to 05 years on annual periodic review basis or till the age of 65 years, whichever is earlier for posting at SAI Head Office, Lodhi Road, New Delhi. The details and online link for application form is available on the website of the Ministry of Youth Affairs & Sports www.yas.nic.in and SAI i.e. www.sportsauthorityofindia.nic.in. The application complete in all aspects should apply through online.

The schedule for applying online application is given below:-
(i) Date of opening of online registration - 26.04.2022
(ii) Closing date for submission of online application - 11.05.2022 till 05.00 PM

Director (Recruitment)
Sports Authority of India
davp 47103/12/0002/2223

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'e' Procurement Notice No.M.I-E-02/2022- 23 dated: 25.04.2022
Email Id: mibalasore@yahoo.co.in, Phone No- 06782-262146

- Name of the work : Different Works under M.I.Division, Balasore in Balasore District.
- Total No. of Works : 02 (Two) Nos.
- Estimated Cost put to Tender : Varies from Rs.8.75 Lakhs to Rs. 18.42 lakhs.
- Class of Contractor : "D" & "C"
- Period of Completion : Varies from 02(Two) Calendar months(60 days) to 3(Three) Calendar months (90 days)
- Date & Time of availability of tender on-line for bidding and receipt of bid : From 11.00 A.M. of 04.05.2022 to 1.00 P.M. of 13.05.2022
- Date & Time of opening of Technical Bid : 17.05.2022 at 11.00 A.M. at office of the E.E.M.I.D,Balasore.
- Date & Time of Transparent Lottery if necessary : 20.05.2022 at 11.00 A.M. as mentioned in DTCN
- Name & Address of the Officer Inviting the Bid : Executive Engineer, M.I.Division,Balasore.

Further details can be seen from the Govt. website www.tendersodisha.gov.in
Note: Corrigendum / Addendum/Modifications/Cancellations if any can be seen through online only.
Sd./- Executive Engineer, Minor Irrigation Division, Balasore
OIPR-32014/11/0002/2223

OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER, RWS&S DIVISION, KENDRAPARA
At : Ichhapur, Post : Shree Baladevjee, Email: eerwsskendrapara@gmail.com
Identification No.RWS/ 108 /2021-2022
Letter No. 3201 / Dated. 27.04.2022

3rd Corrigendum

No.-O-135.- This corrigendum has been made for the NIT-108 invited online vide this office letter No. 1750 / Dated. 10.03.2022 with date for selling, closing, clarification and opening which was on dt. 28.04.2022 (selling date), 12.05.2022 (closing date), 30.04.2022 (clarification date), 13.05.2022 (opening date) as per 2nd corrigendum has been amended and to be read as 17.05.2022, 31.05.2022, 19.05.2022 and 01.06.2022 respectively as follows.

Sl. No.	Name of work	Estimated cost (Approx.) Rs. In Lakhs	EMD to be deposited online	Class of bidder	Cost of tender paper	Period of completion
1	Execution of 40 LPCD Retrofitting RPWS Scheme to Ramachandrapur under Marshghai Block in the District of Kendrapara. (J.M.Funds)	59.03	Nil	'B' and 'A'	10000	180 days

OIPR-25004/11/0019/2223 Sd./- (E. B.K. Nayak), Executive Engineer, RWS&S Division, Kendrapara

FOCUS NATIONAL POLITICS

BIHAR IN SPOTLIGHT



Nitish Kumar's participation in the Iftar Party hosted by the RJD has not only stirred the hornet's nest in Bihar's politics but also stoked fire at a time when there is a buzz of a reported rift in the NDA in Bihar

emerged as the largest party and the enthusiasm of a section of the Bihar BJP to see the party attain electoral self-sufficiency in the state, the road to such a success is prone to be a direly uphill climb for the BJP sans Nitish. These observers also argue that the BJP can ill-afford a confrontation with Nitish Kumar and the former will have to adopt an accommodative approach keeping in view the 2024 Lok Sabha polls and the 40 Lok Sabha seats in Bihar.

The JD (U) cannot be easily wished away either by the BJP or RJD because it continues to comprise the third significant axis in Bihar's triangular politics. According to some experts, Nitish's vote base is numerically significant because it comprises Extremely Backward Castes (EBCs), Mahadalits (most marginalised among Scheduled Castes), and caste-neutral women, and three sections constitute over 45 per cent of the Bihar electorate and Nitish is reported to garner the largest chunk of his votes from these sections. In Bihar's triangular politics dominated by the BJP, the JD (U), and RJD, as and when two join hands they are at the helm. Thus, Nitish is valuable for both the BJP and RJD because of his social grouping which commands over 40 per cent of votes, often determining the poll winner.

What Lies Ahead?

Uncertainty is the hallmark of politics like cricket, and anything can happen anytime in politics. The victory of the RJD at the Bochaha by-polls may be a morale booster for it where its candidate defeated the BJP candidate by a margin of over 36, 500 votes. Bochaha has proved to be a shocker for the BJP. And this defeat still continues to rile the BJP. Amidst these developments, Nitish Kumar's participation in the Iftar Party hosted by the RJD on April 22, not only stirred the hornet's nest in Bihar's politics but also stoked fire at a time when there is a buzz of a reported rift in the NDA in Bihar. What happens in the ensuing weeks in Bihar will be worth watching.

The writer is Executive Editor, India Ahead News Channel. Views are personal

You take up the spiritual path only when you feel you cannot do otherwise.

THE MOTHER



PM's Concern

The recent protests by Central Secretariat Service (CSS) officers about promotion and career prospects have prodded the government into action. And the action stems from the very top, triggered probably by Prime Minister Narendra Modi's recent interaction with Union secretaries, where he too had expressed concern over the growing number of vacancies in various ministries and departments.

Sources have informed DKB that Cabinet Secretary Rajiv Gauba has shot off letters to heads of various ministries and departments directing them to immediately fill the existing vacancies against sanctioned posts.

Apparently, hundreds of posts are currently vacant in various ministries and departments at various levels, impeding the efficient functioning of the government. Most of these posts are staffed by CSS service officers, and the vacancies have left the existing CSS officers doubling duty and working long hours. A few weeks ago, the representatives of CSS officers had met with the Minister of State for Personnel and PMO, Dr Jitendra Singh, seeking his intervention in the matter.

With the Prime Minister stepping in, it appears that there is a new urgency in the government to fill the vacancies and also take a measured look at the promotion issues of these babus.

Will Soni defy the Cassandras?

An inspiring story of struggle and hard work or the result of proximity to the reigning political ideology? The appointment of Manoj Soni as the chairperson of the Union Public Service Commission (UPSC) has cleaved opinion among the civil servants, public commentators, and the public. It matters little that Soni is not new to the institution - he has been a UPSC member since 2017 - and no rules have been bent for his appointment, as far as we know.

Yet, there are dissenting voices who fear that the former Vice-Chancellor of Vadodara's MS University and a former speechwriter for Prime Minister Narendra Modi poses a threat to the civil service system. To make him responsible for the recruitment of officers of the All-India Services, given his "saffron" background, is a recipe for trouble, they argue.

The 'liberals' may have their concerns but for the Centre, Soni seems to tick all the 'right' boxes. Humble origins like Modi's, self-made scholar-monk with ties to the hugely influential Swaminarayan sect, staunch defender of then CM Modi's government in Gujarat, etc. What's not to like? But perhaps the bigger fear that has not been voiced is that in the past UPSC chairpersons were renowned academics with excellent records, and more significantly, career babus from the IAS. Is it this last bit that perhaps rankles the most. Will Soni defy the Cassandras? We'll see.

Reshuffle sets off speculation

In a recent reshuffle of UT cadre officers, it is the appointment of former NDMC chairman Naresh Kumar as the new Chief Secretary of Delhi that has drawn the most attention. A 1987-batch IAS officer, Kumar has replaced his batchmate Vijay Kumar Dev, who is now the Chief Election Commissioner of Delhi.

Babu-watchers consider Kumar's appointment as significant in the context of the unification of Delhi's three municipal corporations that is underway. In a unified municipal corporation, the Special Officer of the civic body will have considerably more power and privileges than the chief secretary! Apparently, this is already so in Maharashtra, where the BMC Commissioner enjoys more power than the senior-most state bureaucrat in the state.

On the other hand, the present NDMC chairman Dharmendra has been posted out as Chief Secretary of Arunachal Pradesh, which many babus strangely seem to consider a demotion. But Dharmendra, sources have informed DKB, stands a good chance to hold a prime posting before retirement since age is on his side. For now, however, the big question is about the future of Satya Gopal, who Dharmendra is replacing. Will the former Arunachal chief secretary return to Delhi as NMDC chairman or get some other prime post?



Anil Singh

HAVING EMERGED AS THE SINGLE LARGEST PARTY, THE BJP LEADERSHIP IS SENDING SIGNALS TO BIHAR CM TO MOVE TO DELHI EITHER AS A CANDIDATE OF THE BJP FOR PRESIDENTIAL POLLS OR TO BE NAMED AS THE NEXT VICE-PRESIDENT OF INDIA

Two meetings between the JD (U) Supremo Nitish Kumar and the family members of Lalu Prasad Yadav within a short span of a week on the sidelines of the Iftar Party, first on April 22 and the second on April 28, also coinciding with the grant of bail to Lalu Prasad Yadav in a fodder scam case, have been instrumental in giving rise to multiple political speculations of varied types. Different political circles in and outside Bihar are decoding the message of these two meetings according to their own convenience. Given the past behaviour of over two decades of the JD (U) Supremo, it seems hard to predict which way the political wind will blow.

BJP's Stratagem

It has been a long-term strategy of the BJP to administer Bihar of its own, which till now has been part of a coalition government in partnership with JD (U) led by chief minister Nitish Kumar since 2005, with the exception of 18 months when Nitish Kumar partnered with RJD after the 2015 Bihar Assembly elections and then again joined hands with the BJP to be saddled into power. Like other BJP-ruled states, the BJP is keen to have full sway over the reins of power in Bihar to implement its agenda; nevertheless, on many occasions, Nitish Kumar has opposed some of the moves of the BJP, especially the application of Uniform Civil Code (UCC).

The JD (U) under the leadership of Nitish Kumar has been demanding a caste-based census by arguing that enumeration of the backward castes is the key to the effective implementation of welfare schemes. However, the BJP is reluctant to concede to this demand of JD (U) and the Modi government's affidavit in the Supreme Court with regard to the non-feasibility of caste census in 2021 has seemingly not gone well with the JD (U) leadership.

Recent media reports are rife with speculations with regard to the BJP strategy of exerting full control over Bihar by moving Nitish Kumar out of Patna to Delhi either as a presidential candidate of the NDA for the ensuing elec-

tion of the President of India, or for the post of Vice President of India which is also due for election, or as a Member of Rajya Sabha. Acceptance of any of the three options by Nitish Kumar entails the potential of paving way for the BJP to easily manage the affairs in Bihar according to its choice.

Despite frequent denials by JD (U) spokespersons of Nitish Kumar shifting to Delhi for a top constitutional slot, many senior BJP leaders in Patna have seemingly not stopped from quietly indulging in political posturing. The name of Union minister of state for home affairs Nityanand Rai is being touted as being the BJP's probable chief ministerial candidate in the eventuality of Nitish Kumar moving out of Bihar prior to the 2025 Assembly polls. Other potential chief ministerial faces in Bihar BJP camp are Rajya Sabha MP and former Bihar deputy CM Sushil Kumar Modi and the firebrand Union minister Giriraj Singh who has been deftly displaying his Hindutva credentials.

Nitish Kumar's Adeptness

Having emerged as the single largest party in the state of Bihar, the BJP leadership is sending signals to Nitish Kumar to be moved out of Bihar to Delhi either as a candidate of the BJP for presidential polls or to be named as the next Vice-President of India or a seat in Rajya Sabha. Nevertheless, the

BJP may not like to name Nitish Kumar as its presidential candidate because it may not suit the party to implement its agenda under the presidency of Nitish Kumar in view of the sharp differences between the BJP and Nitish Kumar on issues like Uniform Civil Code, CAA-NRC, Population Control, and the caste-based census, etc.

Even the offer of the office of vice-president may not lure Nitish Kumar because he may not like to be dictated by the terms of the ruling dispensation, and with regard to the offer of Rajya Sabha membership, one fails to understand why Nitish Kumar should feel obliged to the BJP when his own party commands enough numbers to send him to Rajya Sabha. Moreover, Nitish Kumar has recently told media persons that he had no personal interest in going to the Upper House as the people of Bihar have mandated him to power in Bihar and he had a lot of work to do in the state.

Various kinds of speculations have cropped up in the aftermath of Nitish Kumar's participation in the Iftar Party of April 22 and April 28 and his meetings with RJD leaders there; nonetheless, on his part, he has been maintaining studied silence and not reacting to comments of leaders from the BJP as well as to counter-comments from his own party leaders. Many Bihar observers feel that irrespective of having

SPECTRUM GEOPOLITICS

Macron's re-election good for India



DK Giri

UNDER MACRON'S REGIME, INDO-FRENCH RELATIONS HAVE GROWN MANIFOLD WITH FRANCE, LIKE SOVIET UNION IN THE PAST, CONSISTENTLY SUPPORTING INDIA IN INTERNATIONAL FORUMS

On the day of counting of votes for the presidential elections in France, a concerned academic asked one of us, is France staying centrist or moving right? He suggested that the result in the presidential poll will also determine the European Union's attitude to the war and its aftermath in Ukraine. We were hoping that Emmanuel Macron will pull it off as he was leading in the opinion polls, although the tension and apprehensions were quite high.

However, in the morning of April 25, in Paris, everything looked lighter after weeks and months of raging controversies, war of words, mutual threats between the extreme rightist coalitions of Marine Le Pen and Eric Zemmour on one side, and the Macron's camp on the other. In the end, it was a clear win, Macron definitely torpedoed Le Pen and crushed her ambition of becoming the next French President.

Admittedly, the stakes were very high, as Macron made it clear. Le Pen's programme encompassed huge constitutional risks, an economic disaster in view of the proposed unfunded staggering populist expenses, a revolutionary

diplomatic U-turn in France swapping its historical alliances with European partners and USA with Putin's Russia, at a time, it was bombing Ukraine, an independent and sovereign country.

One may wonder how such a radical project attracted 41 per cent of French voters on Sunday, April 24. Macron got 48 per cent. But, at no point, they seemed to threaten the whole democratic Republic of France, as it did in the last elections.

The new factors which boosted the rise of extreme rightists, both in rural as well as suburban populations, are the feelings of dependency and discrimination. They see themselves as isolated, ill-understood, threatened by globalisation, migration, foreign competition, and worse, felt discriminated and despised by fellow-French who lived well and in affluent towns and regions.

The traditional framework of the French society consisting of catholic roots, socialist culture (either Communist or Social Democratic) is waning quickly leaving large chunks of people without values and references, except as some analysts say, the super market culture where the pur-

chasing power is the ultimate social criterion. Against this backdrop, xenophobia, demagoguery, populism, and nationalism are nurturing extreme opposition based on psychology, more than ideology.

However, the French people voting for Macron were determined to arrest the downward slide of the French politics into xenophobic right-wing extremism. Even Macron recognised and acknowledged the anxiety of the people with regard to Le Pen. He told the voters in his victory speech, that many backed him 'not out of support for my ideas', but in order to block Marine Le Pen. Macron owed his re-election as President to reluctant voters who backed him to keep Marine out of power: Such was the unexpected tide towards the right-wing politics.

The re-elected President has difficult tasks ahead. The run-up to 19 June and the following months will reveal how Emmanuel Macron could reinvent himself and his party, and adopt, during his second mandate, a new approach that is able to ensure a more vibrant and participative democracy, an inclusive economic and social regime addressing the needs of the down-trodden, marginalised and dis-

criminated.

On the other hand, India's relations with France have grown manifold under Macron's regime. Since the Strategic Partnership Agreement signed in 1998, the bilateral relations have expanded to nuclear and space sector, climate change, cyber security and diplomatic relations.

To recall, France has stood by India at critical junctures. When Jammu and Kashmir was trifurcated by Government of India, and Prime Minister Narendra Modi was visiting Paris weeks after this historic decision, Macron did not mention J&K. Again, when Pakistan, at the behest of China brought it up in a closed UNSC meeting, France supported India. In fact, observers have begun to term France as the New Russia. This means that like Russia, rather Soviet Union in the past, France has been consistently supporting India in international forum.

New Delhi could count on a tested and tried friend like Macron, in order to build on Indo-Frenchties. The world needs more leaders to be on the Centre to build societies that function in cooperation and co-existence. INFA

WISDOM CORNER

- You can't cross the sea merely by standing and staring at the water. RABINDRANATH TAGORE
- Life loses half its interest if there is no struggle - if there are no risks to be taken. NETAJI SUBHAS CHANDRA BOSE
- Faith and strength, both are essential to accomplish any great work. SARDAR VALLABHBHAI PATEL

WORDSWORTH

Agelastic

You may use this, if you're unafraid of employing an unusual word, to refer to a person who rarely or never laughs (the related noun is agelast, a person who never laughs). The Oxford English Dictionary not only marks this as obsolete, but finds only two examples, from seventeenth and eighteenth century dictionaries. Searching the literature proves the word's not that rare, though most of its modern appearances are in scholarly or literary contexts. Its modern recrudescence may have been provoked through its use by George Meredith in An Essay on Comedy of 1877: "It is but one step from being agelastic to misogelastic" (miso- means hatred of something, as in misogyny, the hatred of women), though nearly all the examples that I can find are in works of the 1990s onwards. Walter Redfern uses it in his book French Laughter: Literary Humour from Diderot to Tournier (2008): "Is not sex spasmodically but regularly comic, for everyone except the most mechanical, brutal, and agelastic performers?" Its opposite, gelastic, is more common and hasn't suffered the vicissitudes of fortune of its negative partner. You will come across this most often in medical terminology, principally in gelastic seizure, a form of epilepsy in which bursts of pathological laughter are a symptom. Somebody hypergelastic laughs a lot. All three words derive ultimately from Greek gelos, laughter.

LOL

Newest son-in-law

A very successful businessman had a meeting with his new son-in-law. "To show you how much we care for you, I'm making you a 50-50 partner in my business. All you have to do is go to the factory every day and learn the operations," said the man. The son-in-law interrupted, "I hate factories. I can't stand the noise." "Well, then you'll work in the office and take charge of some of the



operations," replied the father-in-law. "I can't stand being stuck behind a desk all day," responded the son-in-law. "Wait a minute," said the father-in-law. "I just make you half-owner of a moneymaking organisation, but you don't like factories and won't work in an office. What am I going to do with you?" "Easy," said the young man. "Buy me out."

Do not hail hate speeches

Sir, Hate speeches should be condemned without any religious bias. But unfortunately, the courts are willing to tolerate such speeches of minorities and wake up only if they are given by the Hindus. How do we see the statements of the leaders, where it is claimed that if given an opportunity, they will finish off the Hindus. Why is the court silent on such speeches by the leaders of minority communities? In Tamil Nadu, day in and day out, many minority groups make hate speeches against the Hindus. So, this is enough to please the minorities. We have conveniently brushed aside the hatred speeches of the followers of other religions. It is time now to revoke the status of minorities as it is not extended to the Buddhists, Sikhs, Jains and Parsis. So far no action has been initiated against the hatemongers who target the Hindus. It is time, the courts, instead of getting biased, should have a balanced view on the issue.

MR Jayanthi, TRICHY

Virat at the receiving end

Sir, It's unfortunate that every reporter or website is going after the current form of ex-skipper Virat Kohli. A recent report has stated that he may not be considered by the selectors for the upcoming World Cup in Australia. Selector Chetan Sharma is yet to take a decision on Kohli's career, says another. On the other hand, everyone in the cricket world is aware of the form Rohit Sharma, the Indian skipper, is in. So, it is surprising that not a single scribe has come forward to discuss Rohit. There is an adage in cricket "The captain is as good as his team". This is applicable one hundred percent to Rohit Sharma and his IPL team Mumbai Indians in the ongoing IPL 2022. It appears that these journalists, commentators, reporters and selectors have been gagged by BCCI not to comment on the Indian skipper's form. Its president Saurav Ganguly, who once made a comment on Kohli's form in the past, has been mysteriously keeping mum in case of Rohit.

CK Subramaniam, NAVI MUMBAI

Letters

TO THE EDITOR

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

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

national

of the day quote

We have already done it (reduced VAT). It has been reduced by ₹7 for diesel and petrol. Karnataka and Gujarat have done it too. The PM has requested those states which have not reduced it (so far). And Delhi and Maharashtra have not done it

Hyderabad has been consolidating its position as the most dynamic scientific centres in Asia and globally

The Uttar Pradesh government is committed to making every youth of the state 'smart' by giving them free smartphones and tablets to realise the 'Digital India' dream

SHORT TAKES

One held over building collapse

New Delhi: The Delhi Police said Friday that they have arrested one person in connection with the collapse of a three-storey building in south Delhi's Satya Niketan area on April 25, in which two persons were killed while four others were injured. A senior police officer said that the accused, who has been identified as Raees, was produced before a local court which remanded him to 14-day judicial custody.

Criminal arrested

New Delhi: An encounter broke out between the Delhi Police's Crime Branch and wanted criminals in South Delhi's Chitranjan Park Friday morning. The accused identified as Sangram suffered bullet injury in his leg and was taken to hospital. Four of his associates, however, managed to flee.

3 army men hurt

Jammu: Three Indian Army personnel, including a major, were injured in a landmine blast near the Line of Control (LoC) in J&K's Poonch district Friday, police said. "During a routine patrol along the LoC in Krishna Ghati (KG) sector of Poonch district there was a landmine explosion in which three army personnel were injured. They have been shifted to command hospital in Udhampur and are being treated now," a police source said.

Three found dead

Bareilly (Uttar Pradesh): A man purportedly hanged himself after killing his wife and infant daughter in Bareilly Friday, the police said. Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Rohit Singh Sajwan said the incident came to light when the family members broke open the door when no one came out till late in the morning and found Ram Prakash was hanging with a scarf, and his daughter and wife lying dead on the bed.

Heroin recovered

Ahmedabad: In a joint operation, the Gujarat Anti-Terrorist Squad (ATS) and the DRI have recovered nearly 90 kilogram of heroin worth ₹450 crore from a shipping container that arrived at the Pipavav port in Amreli district from Iran, the state DGP said Friday. To dodge the authorities, the drug syndicate had applied a unique modus operandi in which threads were soaked in a solution containing heroin, which were then dried, made into bales and packed in bags for export, said Gujarat Director General of Police Ashish Bhatia.



Nothing has happened. The GDP has crashed, the economy is not doing well, inflation has gone up, and the prices are rising. There are only failures but to show that something is happening, there are speeches and lies

K. CHANDRASEKHAR RAO | TELANGANA CM

MONKEY MENACE

In a rare incident, authorities and residents of Karnataka's Uttara Kannada district are struggling to trap a monkey which has attacked more than 10 single women



Family that lost 8 to Covid, recounts a year of pain

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Lucknow, April 29: It has been a year that this family would like to delete from their heart, mind and soul but then memories do not have a delete button. Eight members of this Yadav family died within 24 days in April last year from Covid. The family witnessed a death and a cremation every three days.

Among the members of the family who died were two sisters, their four brothers, their mother, and paternal aunt - some of them died gasping for oxygen at a private

hospital, some at home. Seema Singh Yadav's 45-year-old husband Nirankar Singh died on April 25 last year after spending six days in a hospital.

"He was gasping for breath and he asked me to go to the doctor. I begged the doctor to increase his oxygen flow. The doctor did it once but even then, my husband could not breathe. I asked the doctor to increase it further and he said I won't even get this much. My husband died gasping for oxygen in front of me", she said, fighting back her tears.

A year on, her biggest concern



is educating her 19 and 21-year-old sons. Her elder son is a student of fashion designing in Hyderabad, and the younger one has appeared for his class 12 exams and helps

at the farm.

"It is very difficult to get through even one more day. I am alive only because of my children. I fell very ill and they used to ask what will they do if something happens to me. I am alive only because of them. I am educating my children because I feel no matter what happened to me, their lives should not be spoiled," Seema says.

Kusma Devi's 61-year-old husband Vijay Kumar Singh was also a farmer and the eldest sibling. He died after a 10-day struggle in a private hospital on May 1. Kusma Devi is now in-charge of the home

and says the government did give compensation but is worried about the future.

"I only pray to God that no one goes through what we have faced. It is okay for someone to be poor, to eat only one meal a day, but no one should have to bear this kind of sorrow. We had never seen anything like this in our lives. I am worried about how to run the house and how the kids will study. Studies are the most important. We did get compensation, we used that to pay for fees etc. but we are worried about the future," Kusma Devi says.

Bihar woman made to massage cop

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Patna, April 29: An officer in charge of a police post in Saharsa district of Bihar was suspended on the alleged charge of forcing a woman for his body massage, a police official said.

A video of this alleged incident went viral on social media and Saharsa Superintendent of Police, Lipi Singh has taken cognisance of the matter and suspended the alleged police officer with immediate effect.

The alleged officer, Shashi Bhushan Sinha was posted as Sub-Inspector and In-charge of Dagher police post under Nauhatta police station in the district.

As per the viral video, a woman came to Dagher police post and urged Sinha to release his son from the jail. Sinha took advantage of her helplessness and asked her to do mustard oil massage on his body. As per the viral video, the officer was in a semi-nude state with just a towel on his mid-part of the body. While the woman was busy doing an oil massage on his body and another woman was sitting in front of him. Sinha was talking to a lawyer and requesting him to arrange for the bail of the woman's son. During his interaction with the lawyer, Sinha is heard saying that the woman is poor and cannot pay him money.

The alleged police officer also told the lawyer that he will pay him ₹10,000, adding that he will send the two women before him with necessary documents for the bail of one of the women's son. "After a video went viral on social media, we have set up an inquiry committee headed by a SDPO rank officer. Following his recommendation, we have suspended the alleged officer with immediate effect," Lipi Singh said.

In another incident, Nawada Superintendent of Police, D.S. Savlaram suspended a Station House Officer of Mufassil police station on the alleged charge of taking bribes from truck drivers.

The alleged officer is identified as Lal Bihari Paswan. An audio clip of Paswan and a truck driver went viral on social media Wednesday.

Tharoor takes a jibe at Kejriwal's posture

Sharing the video, the BJP leaders termed Kejriwal's posture as 'rude' and 'bizarre'. The video showed Kejriwal leaning behind with his hands backwards

ministers to review the Covid situation in the country, the posture in which Kejriwal was sitting raised quite a few eyebrows.

Sharing the video, the BJP leaders termed Kejriwal's posture as 'rude' and 'bizarre'. The video showed Kejriwal leaning behind with his hands backwards.

Among the multiple comments, likes and retweets of Tharoor's poem, one user said in clear reference to the Congress leader's command over English language, "Added pandiculation ... added to my dictionary - didn't know there was one word to describe the action of stretching arms to relax brief atrophy. @elonmusk May you also ask your twitter team to add it, when typed, it shows the red underline spelling error."



INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, April 29: Senior Congress leader Shashi Tharoor Friday posted a satirical poem on Twitter taking potshots at Aam Aadmi Party convenor and Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal's sitting posture and the BJP's reaction to it.

Tharoor tweeted: "There once was a CM of Delhi Who stretched from his head to his belly; The onscreen reticulation Revealed his pandiculation So BJP frothed & quivered like jelly!"

Earlier on Wednesday, Tharoor had shared BJP IT cell chief Amit Malviya's tweet where he had slammed Kejriwal for his "uncouth mannerism".

On Wednesday, when Prime Minister Narendra Modi was holding a virtual meeting with the chief

AG upset over pendency of cases

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, April 29: Attorney General K.K. Venugopal, citing the pendency of 40 million cases in trial courts and several million cases in the high courts, Friday said that a "pall of gloom settles" and it is a "hopeless situation".

In his address at a reception held by the Supreme Court Bar Association for Chief Justices of various high courts, he said that technological advancements adopted by the judiciary have enabled it to track the pendency of cases and added that an e-committee headed by Justice D.Y. Chandrachud, is putting the entire data on the National Judicial Data Grid.

"When we see the result, a pall of gloom settles... you find that



you are in a hopeless situation, a feeling of hopelessness starts developing."

He said there are 24,000 judges at the trial court level and over 600 judges at the high court level. "The arrears in the trial courts are 40 million cases. So far as the pendency in high courts is concerned -- 4.2 million civil cases, 1.6 million criminal cases

lion criminal cases," he said.

The event was attended by Chief Justice of India N.V. Ramana, Law Minister Kiren Rijju, Solicitor General Tushar Mehta, judges of the Supreme Court and members of the Bar.

Venugopal added that in trial courts, cases are pending for 30 years, and at high court level cases are pending for 15 years, 10 years and so on. "Therefore, the question is with an average pendency of 8 years in the trial court, 8 years in the high court. How would you believe that the public has confidence in the justice delivery system," he asked.

He added that the top court judgments say access to justice is a fundamental right, but against whom the poor undertrial, who is detained for the same number of years as he would have been punished, will enforce fundamental rights. "According to me it has to be against the government of India, government of states as well as the judicial system itself," he added.

Indira asked Rahul to 'take charge' after her death: Book

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, April 29: Former Prime Minister Indira Gandhi valued Rahul Gandhi's "grit and determination" and often considered him mature enough to be taken into confidence on subjects she avoided discussing even with his parents when he was barely 14, according to a new book.

In his book "Leaders, Politicians, Citizens", in which he compiles stories of 50 personalities who influenced India's political landscape, author-journalist Rasheed Kidwai also recounts the harrowing hours after Indira Gandhi's assassination and the close bonds between the Gandhis and the Bachchans.

Soon after Indira Gandhi's assassination in October 1984, he writes, Arun Nehru, a member of the Nehru-Gandhi family, arrived at Delhi's All India Institute of

Medical Sciences (AIIMS) to see a hysterical Sonia Gandhi fearful for the lives of her children Rahul and Priyanka.

Sonia Gandhi kept telling him that Indira Gandhi had always feared a repeat of the assassination of Mujib-ur-Rahman, the towering Bangladeshi leader up to three generations of whose had been wiped out, according to the book.

Arun Nehru then took the children to the Gulmohar Park residence of Teji Bachchan, actor Amitabh Bachchan's mother. In the chapter on Indira Gandhi, Kidwai details the moments before the then prime minister was gunned down by her own Sikh security guards and how she had death on her mind just days before her assassination.

On the morning of October 31, 1984, Indira Gandhi had kissed her grandchildren Priyanka and Rahul



goodbye before they left for school. Priyanka Gandhi, who was 12 then, would later recall that her grandmother held her longer than usual. She had then turned to Rahul.

"Death was very much on Indira Gandhi's mind. Turning to Rahul, she had asked him to 'take charge' and not cry in the event of her death," writes Kidwai. This was

not the first time she had spoken about death to her grandson. A few days earlier, she had told him about funeral arrangements and that she had lived her life, according to the book.

"Indira Gandhi, considered an astute judge of personality, used to value Rahul Gandhi's grit and determination, and despite him being

barely 14 at the time, she often considered him mature enough to be taken into confidence on subjects she avoided discussing with his parents, Rajiv and Sonia Gandhi," writes Kidwai. He has penned several books, including "The House of Scindias: A Saga of Power, Politics and Intrigue", "Ballot -- Ten Episodes That Have Shaped India's Democracy" and "24, Akbar Road".

On the morning that would be her last, the book says Indira Gandhi was to begin her official engagements with an interview with Peter Ustinov. "The cameras were in place when Gandhi, in a bright saffron sari, crossed the wicket gate between her home 1 Safdarjung Road and her 1 Akbar Road office. It was 9.12 am.

"As she crossed the gate, she acknowledged the greetings of a turbaned security guard. When she

smiled back, she saw him pointing a gun at her: Constable Narain Singh, who was holding an umbrella over her, screamed for help. But before other guards of the Indo-Tibetan Border Police could reach the spot, the assassins - Beant Singh and Satwant Singh - had pumped 36 bullets into her," says the book.

Gandhi had been advised to wear a bulletproof vest and remove her Sikh security guards after Operation Blue Star, but she had refused to do either. She felt it was unnecessary to wear a heavy bulletproof jacket at home and hated the idea of 'discriminating' among her security guards. According to the book, a few weeks earlier, she had proudly pointed at Beant Singh and said: "When I have Sikhs like him around me, then I do not have to fear anything."

MARK OF DEVOTION



Devotees with hooks pierced in their backs pull a tractor to express their devotion during Karu Mariamma Jatra Mahotsava, in Chikmagalur

PTI PHOTO

Delhi to witness intense heatwave for next 2 days

DELHI RECORDED ITS SECOND HOTTEST APRIL IN 72 YEARS WITH A MONTHLY AVERAGE MAXIMUM TEMPERATURE OF 40.2 DEGREES CELSIUS, SAYS THE IMD REPORT

New Delhi, April 29: Already reeling under a deadly heatwave, a few places in Delhi are likely to see the mercury touch the 46-degree Celsius mark Friday, Saturday the India Meteorological Department (IMD) said.

The Safdarjung observatory - Delhi's base station - had recorded a maximum temperature of 43.5 degrees Celsius Thursday, the highest in April in 12 years. The national capital had recorded a maximum temperature of 43.7 degrees Celsius April 18, 2010.

The all-time high temperature for the month is 45.6 degrees Celsius, which was recorded April 29, 1941. "The temperature at the Safdarjung observatory is likely to go up by 0.5 degree Celsius to 1 degree Celsius Friday. It may even touch 46 degrees Celsius at some places," senior scientist R K Jenamani said.

The Met department uses four colour codes for weather warnings - "green" (no action needed), "yellow" (watch and stay updated), "orange" (be prepared) and "red" (take action).

Amid the rising heat and growing power demand, the Delhi gov-



ernment on Thursday warned of a possible setback in providing uninterrupted electricity supply for critical services in the capital, including Metro trains and hospitals.

Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal Friday said his government is somehow handling the power supply situation in Delhi and called for quick, concrete steps to tackle the electricity crisis facing the country.

The Delhi government has said it will supply around 1,000 million gallons of drinking water every day during the summer season as against 935 MGD earlier to meet the rising demand.

The IMD said Delhi may also see a partly cloudy sky, light rain and a dust storm with winds gusting up to 50 kilometres per hour on Friday and Sunday, which may provide temporary respite.

The heatwave is expected to abate from Monday under the influence of a western disturbance, which is likely to affect northwest India from the night of May 1, it said.

On Thursday, the mercury had leaped to 46 degrees Celsius at Sports Complex. Ridge (45.1 degrees Celsius), Mungeshpur (45.8 degrees Celsius), Najafgarh (45.4 de-

grees Celsius) and Pitampura (45.2 degrees Celsius) recorded the maximum temperature at least five notches above normal.

The city has recorded nine heatwave days in April, the highest since 11 such days witnessed in the month in 2010.

Delhi falls in the Core Heatwave Zone (CHZ), comprising the most heatwave-prone areas of the country, along with Telangana, Andhra Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Haryana, Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Bihar, Chhattisgarh and West Bengal.

Northwest India has been recording higher-than-normal temperatures since the last week of March, with weather experts attributing it to the absence of periodic light rainfall and thundershowers, which typify this time of the year, due to the lack of active western disturbances.

India saw its warmest March this year since the IMD began keeping records 122 years ago amid a 71-per cent rain deficit. Parts of the country are also seeing wheat yields drop by up to 35 per cent due to the unseasonal heat.

TEMPLE ON RAILWAY PLATFORM ROW

Hindu right wing activists threaten 'mass suicide'

AGENCIES

Agra, April 29: Hindu right wing activists Thursday threatened to commit a mass suicide to desist railways' from removing a temple located inside a railway station.

They said they will perform a mass immolation if the 250-year-old Chamunda Devi Temple, located in the premises of the Raja Ki Mandi Railway Station, is removed. The railways had issued a notice on April 20 to the temple to shift from the railway station premises.

The authorities have also issued a similar notice to the caretakers of Bhure Shah Baba dargah and a mosque built on Agra Cantt Railway Station land. "The notices to the temple, and dargah and mosque have been sent as a part of the encroachment drive in compliance with the order of the Supreme Court.



The railways had issued a notice on April 20 to the temple to shift from the railway station premises

“We had issued a notice to the temple head on April 20 and asked its administration to present their doc-uments by April 30,” Public Relation Officer and Divisional Commercial Manager (DCM)NCR Railway Prashasti Srivastav told PTI.

“We have also issued a notice to a mosque and a dargah located on the railway land in the premises of the Agra Cantt Railway Station. And they have been given time to present their documents by May 13,” she said.

Govind Parashar, national president of the Rashtriya Hindu Parishad Bharat, said his organisation will not allow shifting of the British-era temple from its current premises. He claimed that even the British left the temple untouched during laying of the tracks, evidence of which can be seen in a "curve" in the track.

“There should be an alternate solution for this issue. We will immolate ourselves at the station premises if the Indian Railways does not withdraw its decision,” Parashar said. The head priest serving at Chamunda Devi Temple claimed that he has been serving at the temple since his childhood and his forefathers had also served at the same temple. “Many devotees come here to pray. Even passengers pray when they embark on their journey,” he said.

Deoband to admit students only after police verification



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Saharanpur (UP), April 29: Islamic educational institution Darul Uloom Deoband has made this year's admission process more stringent by making police verification of the documents submitted by the applicants mandatory, the institute's management said Friday.

"Students seeking admission this year will have to submit their documents, including their Aadhaar cards, original residence certificates and an affidavit, which would be checked and verified by government agencies, including the Local Intelligence Unit (LIU) of the police," Darul Uloom's Naib Mohtamim (Deputy Vice Chancellor) Maulana Abdul Khaliq Madrasi said in a statement.

Those seeking admission will have to submit their previous madrasa certificates, the mark-sheets obtained from there and the Aadhaar cards of the applicants and their fathers including their mobile numbers, he said.

In case the IDs found wrong, the student will not only be expelled but legal action can also be taken against him. "Talking about the outstation students, Madrasi said, "No one is exempted in this regard."

"Students of Jammu and Kashmir, West Bengal, Manipur, Tripura, Assam etc. Will (also) have to bring their original residence certificates and affidavits, without which the admission process will not be completed," he added.

Those who cannot submit the required documents should not come for admission because such students will not be enrolled, Madrasi said.

AAP MLA Atishi presents 'Delhi model' at UNGA

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, April 29: AAP MLA Atishi has taken the "Kejriwal model of governance" to the United Nations as she addressed the UN General Assembly, where she emphasised that Delhi can be an example for all cities when it comes to ensuring growth, equity, ecological sustainability and fiscal prudence, according to an official statement issued Friday.

Atishi's address at the UNGA drew accolades from her party members, including Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal and his deputy Manish Sisodia.

Kejriwal praised Atishi for the feat and said the world is looking at Delhi for solutions in several areas of urban governance.

Atishi, who is an Oxford graduate, addressed the UNGA in the early hours of Friday on the achievements of the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) government in Delhi in striking the balance of egalitarian development, keeping in mind the factors of sustainability and fiscal prudence.

"In a city of 30 million (three crore) residents, we have shown that we can do both - provide high quality public services while running a fiscally responsible government. Power cuts were frequent, the government water utility was facing losses, government schools and hospitals were failing....



Atishi's address at the UNGA drew accolades from her party members, including Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal and his deputy Manish Sisodia

in her address at the UNGA.

According to the statement issued by the Delhi Legislative Assembly, the Kalkaji MLA also highlighted that government schools in the national capital have been performing better than private schools for the last five years.

She said two lakh students shifted from private schools to government schools last year and mohalla clinics are providing free healthcare services to citizens at a low cost to the government.

Atishi also highlighted the governance model of the AAP and said it has broken the myth that the government has to withdraw from providing basic services to ensure economic growth.

BITTEN SEVEN TIMES, STILL NOT SHY

Story of Mirzapur's Bablu who isn't afraid of snakes

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Mirzapur (UP), April 29: The popular proverb says, "Once bitten twice shy" but Bablu, a resident of Mirzapur district, has been bitten seven times and is still not shy.

About seven months ago, Bablu was working in the fields when he was attacked by a pair of snakes. In self-defence he attacked the snakes and killed one of them with his sickle. Since then, he has been bitten seven times by the other snake and what is more surprising is that he survived all the bites.

"Whenever I am working in the fields alone, I feel a sting and then realise that I have been bitten again by the snake. It is probably the same snake but it slith-

ers away before I can see or catch it," he said.

Ramai, a local snake catcher, said that the surviving snake is apparently seeking revenge for the death of its mate.

"The snake is seemingly old and does not have venom left in its fangs. It still wants to avenge the death of its partner," he informed.

Those who work as labourers with Bablu have now asked him to perform puja to appease the snake but Bablu said he cannot afford the cost. "If I have to die, I will. I killed the snake in self-defence and I do not regret it," he said. A district official, meanwhile, said that the snake was probably of a non-venomous species and that explains why Bablu has survived.



Representational image

COVID FRONTLINER'S KIN GET ₹1 CRORE EX GRATIA

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, April 29: The Delhi government Friday provided a financial assistance of ₹1 crore to the family of a sanitation worker who contracted Covid-19 on duty and died fighting it.

Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia met the family of Kamlesh, who sacrificed her life while serving Covid-19 patients at Lok Nayak Jai Prakash (LNJP) Hospital, and handed them a cheque of ₹1 crore, a statement said.

"The country salutes the sacrifice

Yogi govt to begin silk exchange project in Varanasi

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Lucknow, April 29: The Yogi Adityanath government in Uttar Pradesh is soon going to start its Silk Exchange project in Varanasi, the centre of a famed silk-weaving industry.

The Silk Exchange is expected to facilitate the ready availability of silk to traders and sari manufacturers at reasonable prices.

The state government is also working towards opening of the Karnataka Silk Marketing Board (KSMB) office at the Silk Exchange to make available raw silk reeled in the state to weavers making Banarasi sarees in Uttar Pradesh.

The government spokesman said that the silk exchange will check the smuggling of silk in the region and lead to lowering of costs for the silk traders and manufacturing units.

Working in the same direction, the government will also connect weavers of the area with Silk Exchange in the next six months.

The department will also work



The Silk Exchange is expected to facilitate the ready availability of silk to traders and sari manufacturers at reasonable prices

on the digitization of silk exchange under the ODOP scheme. "Once the silk exchange becomes operational, the weavers, yarn making units and silk exchange will be brought to a single platform through digitization. This will also make availability of a single platform for sale and display of finished silk products of weavers," the spokesman said.

He explained that under the Silk Exchange, the reelers of Uttar Pradesh will bring the silk produced by them to the Silk Exchange for sale. All the silk lots brought this way will be first tested for quality and then the floor price of each silk lot will be fixed based on the average silk price in the state and the quality of the particular lot. Then the silk lots are put up for auction. The exchange ensures spot payment to the reelers.

The operations of the Silk Exchange will stabilise the silk reeling industry and encourage more investment in the reeling industry by private entrepreneurs. It will also eliminate middlemen such as financiers and commission agents and establish a direct link between the producers and the consumers of silk in Uttar Pradesh.

of the day quote

We must give space to everybody. If we do not impose a language in Jammu and Kashmir, why should anybody do it? Let people choose. Why should there be a national language? I do not think a place like India needs a national language, we do not need a national religion. We need to give space to everybody



OMAR ABDULLAH | NC VICE-PRESIDENT

Beekeeping has been recognised by the government as one of the important activities for promotion and development to achieve 'Sweet Revolution' for enhancing the income of bee farmers and honey gatherers



ARJUN MUNDA | UNION TRIBAL AFFAIRS MINISTER

Providing smooth roads and safe commuting experience to Delhi residents is the priority of the Arvind Kejriwal government. New world-class roads of the national capital will reduce the travel time of our citizens and will be sustainable. Development of roads with new-age tech will not only help in improving traffic movement but also in checking pollution



MANISH SISODIA | DELHI DEPUTY CM

SHORT TAKES

Girl kills father

Hyderabad: In a shocking incident, a 17-year-old girl killed her father over property dispute in Telangana's Mahabubabad district Friday. According to police, the incident occurred in Vemunuru village of the district. Prabhavati attacked her father Venkanna (46) with a stick, resulting in his death. She was angry with her father for not giving her the property papers. An argument broke between them on the issue on Friday and the girl in a fit of rage attacked her father with a stick.

Man arrested

Jammu: A person belonging to Pakistan-occupied-Kashmir (PoK) was arrested along the Line of Control (LoC) in Jammu and Kashmir's Rajouri district Friday. Defence sources said a middle-aged man, hailing from a village in PoK, was sneaking in from across the LoC in Tarkundi sub-sector of the LoC. "The man was intercepted and apprehended. He was shifted to a nearby Army camp. He has now been handed over to Manjakote police station", the sources said.

4 criminals hurt

Gorakhpur: Four criminals were injured in an encounter with the police in Uttar Pradesh's Gorakhpur. Three police personnel have also been injured in the late night incident while a police inspector survived because of his bullet proof jacket. According to the police, they had received information about some miscreants in the Cantonment area. During checking, the four criminals opened fire at the police and tried to flee. They were injured in retaliatory firing by the policemen.

Man shot dead

Shamli (Uttar Pradesh): Two accused persons, who were arrested and later released on bail, in Uttar Pradesh's Shamli district are now charged with the alleged killing of a 25-year-old youth whom they suspected to be a police informer. The youth identified as Vikas Saini was shot dead in Jhinhana town when he was returning home from his grocery shop. He later succumbed to his injuries Thursday. The police have filed a case under IPC section 302 (murder) against the accused.



Prime Minister Narendra Modi should not "mislead" the country over the rising prices of petrol and diesel. The Union government must stop imposing cess on fuels

BHUPESH BAGHEL | CHHATTISGARH CM

BRAVING THE ODDS

Several Indo-Tibetan Border Police personnel performed yoga at a height of 15,000 feet in Uttarakhand's snow-capped Himalaya region ahead of the International Yoga Day



Maoists planning bigger attack: Intel agencies

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, April 29: Amid the tactical firing at the security forces' camps in Chhattisgarh since the last 10 days, the intelligence agencies have sounded an alert that the Maoists may execute a bigger attack in the state.

Sources quoting the intelligence inputs said that the ultras have initiated more than 10 incidents of firing and shelling at the security forces' camps, the latest being on the CRPF's Milpa and Amalgunda camps in Chhattisgarh. Sources also said that the Maoists may be planning to execute a bigger attack on the security forces in coming weeks.

"The Maoists are currently running the Tactical Counter Offensive Campaign (TCOC) in Chhattisgarh. They do it from March to June with a purpose to evaluate the strategy of the security forces and to inflict major damage to the security forces. "The security forces are fully alert in Chhattisgarh and neighbouring states and we are also aware of their TCOC. We will not let them go free once caught in an encounter," a source in the security forces deployed in the Maoist area, said.

According to the information received from the security forces in Chhattisgarh, the Maoist have fired intermittently at night with grenade launchers from a distance to make their presence felt in the area. "This way, they also want to give a message to the local population that they are still strong and can attack the security forces at



According to the information received from the security forces in Chhattisgarh, the Maoist have fired intermittently at night with grenade launchers from a distance to make their presence felt in the area

The Potakapali camp of the CRPF in Sukma (Chhattisgarh) was targeted by the Maoists last Monday. They fired at the camp but later fled when the CRPF commandos retaliated with heavy firing

The officials said that the Maoists footprint is decreasing in Chhattisgarh; however, they are still dominating in some parts of Bastar

will, this is an old mind game of these ultras," a senior officer of the Chhattisgarh Police said.

The Potakapali camp of the CRPF in Sukma (Chhattisgarh) was targeted by the Maoists last Monday. They fired at the camp but later fled when the CRPF commandos retaliated with heavy firing.

The officials deployed in the operation areas said the Maoists start firing between 8 p.m. to 10 p.m. or in the wee hours and then flee from the spot when the security forces retaliate. The operational camps of the CRPF, ITBP, BSF and SSB have been hit by firing in the last ten days, they added.

The officials said that this in-

termittent firing at the forces' camps is done to provoke them to come out of the fortified areas of the camps. But all the personnel have been directed to strictly follow the standard operative procedures during such incidents. In any case the security personnel are not allowed to go out of the base camp until they have been asked to do so by the commanders during such firing incidents.

The officials said that the Maoists footprint is decreasing in Chhattisgarh; however, they are still dominating in some parts of Bastar. The forces deployed there are fully alert and counter operations against them have been prepared, said the officials.

China to permit 'some' Indian students to return



INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, April 29: China has allowed return of Indian students to its various universities on a "need-assessed basis", according to the Indian Embassy in China.

According to the Embassy, following the meeting of External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar with his Chinese counterpart Wang Yi on March 25, the Chinese side has expressed its willingness to consider facilitating the return of Indian students to China on a need-assessed basis.

In order to facilitate this, the Indian Embassy intends to prepare a list of such students which

will be shared with the Chinese side for their consideration. The embassy has come up with a form and requested Indian students to fill out citing their necessity.

Once the collated information is shared with the Chinese side, it would consult relevant Chinese departments and varsities to verify the list and indicate whether the identified students can travel to China to complete the course.

"This coordination process would be carried out in a time-bound manner.

The Chinese side has also conveyed that eligible students should unconditionally abide by Covid-19 prevention measures, and agree to bear all expenses related to Covid-19 prevention measures by themselves.

Over 23,000 Indian students, primarily studying medicines, are stuck back home due to Covid-19 visas and flight bans by China in attempt to control spread of Covid-19.

Ruben Banerjee's book launch May 16

New Delhi, April 29: Veteran journalist Ruben Banerjee's book 'Editor Missing: The Media in Today's India' is scheduled to be launched on May 16, 2022.

The book attempts to provide clarity on the state of Indian media at a time when there is consensus only on the lack of it. As a top editor for various publications, Ruben Banerjee has had a ringside view for years of the decline in its standards, qual-

ity and objectivity. His own experiences reflect the time we live in. More pertinently, the book tells the story of India's media and the reasons for its decline - from political to financial to the lack of a collective spine.

Banerjee has observed this world as an insider for decades. In the book, he narrates his undiluted perspective on what is wrong, and right, about Indian journalism.

SUMMER JOY



A boy reacts as he cools off in the Khodashi dam, on a hot day in Karad

PTI PHOTO

Two get death for rape, murder

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Jaipur, April 29: Two men were sentenced to death Friday for raping and killing a 15-year-old girl last year.

They were convicted by a court dealing with cases of POCSO Act in Bundi, Rajasthan DGP ML Lather said in a statement. The court convicted Sultan, 27, and Chhotulal, 62, with instructions to carry out the sentence within next 11 working days.

Bundi Superintendent of Police Jay Yadav said in a statement that

on December 23, 2021, the body of a minor girl was found with no clothes on in a forest area under Basoli Police Station. He said that a team of more than 200 police personnel arrested the accused within 12 hours of the crime, got their confession, and presented the chargesheet in the POCSO court in three working days.

The third accused, a minor, was sent to the juvenile home. Lather said that the police are sensitive in crimes against girls and women. He said strong actions are being taken

to identify and arrest the culprits and bring them to justice.

In a statement, Rajasthan Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot said that his government is committed to women's safety and no guilty will be spared for committing such crimes. "Such news keep coming from every state which is a matter of concern for the entire country. Keeping this in mind, we have made many innovations in the state. Due to all these innovations, justice is being ensured to every victim in the state today," he said.

BSF SHOTS DOWN DRONE

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, April 29: The Border Security Force (BSF) said it on Friday shot down a drone, coming from the Pakistani side, in Punjab's Amritsar sector.

According to the BSF officials, the drone had entered Indian territory in the area falling near village Dhanoe Kalan in Amritsar sector at around 1.15 a.m.

The BSF personnel, deployed at the international border, heard the humming sound of a flying object and as per the standard operating procedure, fired and brought it down. The whole area was cordoned off and police and other security agencies concerned were immediately informed.

An intensive search of the area was carried out and around 6.15 a.m., the search party recovered a black-coloured, 'Made in China' quadcopter (drone), model DJI Matrice-300, near village Dhanoe Kalan. The quadcopter had no payload when it was shot down.

The BSF officials also said that the entire area was again searched to ascertain whether the drone was carrying any payload and dropped it before it was shot down by the BSF troopers.

Bihar police to use AI to bust hooch rackets

THE LIQUOR PROHIBITION LAW, ENFORCED IN APRIL 2016, BANS MANUFACTURE, SALE, AND CONSUMPTION OF LIQUOR IN THE STATE

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Patna, April 29: The Bihar Police will soon put to use Artificial intelligence (AI) technology to nab people involved in illegal liquor trade and other crimes, a senior police officer said Friday.

The AI mechanism will digitise and automate all operations, with the force no longer having to maintain data manually, he said. "Once introduced, it will help policemen nab gangs or individuals involved



in illegal liquor trade in the dry state. It will be easy to identify their area of operations with real-time analytics and automated processes.

"Law enforcement agencies are already unlocking the potential of AI in several ways across the country," Kamal Kishore Singh, the additional director general (ADG) of the State Crime Records Bureau (SCRB), said.

The liquor prohibition law, enforced in April 2016, bans manu-

facture, sale, and consumption of liquor in the state. The Bihar Police is planning to take necessary measures for the creation of a dedicated information technology (IT) cadre within the force, Singh stated.

It has recently sent a proposal in the matter to the home department. "The proposed cadre will have around 2,000 officers and personnel, including IT inspectors and IT constables. Officials of the IT cadre will handle all operations of the AI system," the ADG said.

international



The India-Bhutan relationship is based on a genuine concern for each other's welfare and interests
S JAISHANKAR | EXTERNAL AFFAIRS MINISTER

BUSHFIRES INTENSIFY

Bird populations in Australian rainforests have failed to rebound from the 'Black Summer' bushfires that tore through large swathes of the nation in 2019-20, according to a new study



of the day quote

Currently we are faced with the Omicron tsunami. This variant spread very fast, much faster than we can imagine



ZHAO LIJIAN | CHINESE FOREIGN MINISTRY SPOKESMAN

We have always been informed that when a new Covid wave comes, it will be driven by a new variant, but at this stage we have not been alerted to a definite new variant except changes in the omicron



JOE PHAHLA | SOUTH AFRICA HEALTH MINISTER

The funds of the Russian government and oligarchs will be one of the main sources for filling the Fund for the Reconstruction of our country



DENYS SHMYHAL | PRIME MINISTER OF UKRAINE

SHORT TAKES

Saudi King, Crown Prince meet Erdogan

Jeddah: Saudi Arabia's King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud and Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman met visiting Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan at the Al-Salam Palace in Jeddah, local media reported Friday. "My visit reflects our joint will to start a new era of cooperation as the two brotherly countries. We will be making efforts in order to start a new era of enhanced relations between our two countries in all respects including politics, military, economy and culture," the Saudi Press Agency quoted Erdogan as saying.

6-storey building collapses in China

Beijing: A six-storey building partially collapsed in central China Friday, trapping an unknown number of people inside. It wasn't clear if anyone was killed when the structure caved in at around noon in the city of Changsha in Hunan province. State media reported more than 130 rescuers were on the scene and work was continuing into the night.

1st human case of bird flu in US

Washington: The US has confirmed the first known human case of H5 bird flu in a person in the state of Colorado, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) announced. The person tested positive for the avian influenza A (H5) virus and was involved in the culling of poultry presumed to have had H5N1 bird flu. Xinhua news agency quoted the CDC as saying Thursday. The patient reported fatigue for a few days as the only symptom and has since recovered.

IMF chief tests positive for Covid

Washington: International Monetary Fund (IMF) Managing Director Kristalina Georgieva has tested positive for Covid-19, the IMF said. "She is experiencing mild symptoms and is working remotely while isolating at home. She is fully vaccinated and boosted," Gerry Rice, IMF spokesperson, said.

Turkey acquits Bloomberg scribes

Istanbul: A Turkish court Friday acquitted two reporters for the US-based Bloomberg news agency who were accused of trying to undermine Turkey's economic stability with a story on Turkey's currency crisis in 2018. Istanbul-based reporters Kerim Karakaya and Ferkan Yalincik had faced up to five years in prison over the article they wrote in August 2018.

Russia taking 'colossal losses' in eastern battle

AGENCIES

Kyiv, April 29: Ukraine acknowledged Friday it was taking heavy losses in Russia's assault in the east, but said Russia's losses were even worse, as US President Joe Biden called on Congress to send as much as \$33 billion to help Kyiv withstand the attack.

The body of a journalist from US-backed broadcaster Radio Liberty was found in rubble in the Ukrainian capital, killed in a Russian missile attack during a visit by the UN secretary-general.

President Volodymyr Zelenskyy praised Biden's offer of help, which amounts to nearly 10 times the aid Washington has sent so far since the war began on Feb. 24.

Having failed in an assault on Kyiv in the north of Ukraine last month, Russia is now trying to fully capture two eastern provinces known as Donbas.

Ukraine has acknowledged losing control of some towns and villages there since the assault began last week, but says Moscow's gains have come at a massive cost to a Russian force already worn down from its earlier defeat near the capital.

"We have serious losses but the Russians' losses are much bigger. They have colossal losses," presidential adviser Oleksiy Arestovych said, without elaborating. Western officials said Russia had been suffering fewer casualties after narrowing the scale of its invasion but numbers were still "quite high", Zelenskyy's office said Russia



Ukraine admits taking heavy losses but says Russia's worse

Russian missile attack kills Radio Liberty journalist in Kyiv

Moscow says missiles destroyed Kyiv rocket production plant

Missiles hit Ukrainian capital during UN chief's visit

Biden eyes \$33 billion in military, other aid to Ukraine

A former US Marine was killed fighting alongside Ukrainian forces in war with Russia, his relatives told media outlets

was pounding the entire front line in the eastern Donetsk region with rockets, artillery, mortar bombs and aircraft. The Ukrainian general staff said Russia was shelling positions along the line of contact to prevent the Ukrainians from regrouping. A US official said the Russian offensive in Donbas ap-

peared to be behind schedule.

By pledging tens of billions of dollars in aid for Ukraine, Biden has dramatically increased US involvement in the conflict. The United States and its allies are now sending heavy weapons including artillery, with what Washington says is an aim not just to repel Russia's attack but to weaken its armed forces so it cannot menace its neighbours again.

"We need this bill to support Ukraine in its fight for freedom," Biden said. "The cost of this fight - it's not cheap - but saving to be more costly."

Zelenskyy tweeted: "Thank you @POTUS and the American people for their leadership in supporting Ukraine in our fight against Russian aggression. We defend common values - democracy and freedom. We appreciate the help. Today it is needed more than ever!"

Defiant Shanghai residents break out of their own homes



INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

London, April 29: Residents of Shanghai, who were fenced into their homes by Communist officials as part of China's draconian Zero Covid policy, have staged a breakout, video posted on social media showed, Daily Mail reported. The clip shows the metal fences built along a residential street to trap homeowners indoors have been brought down.

Shared via state-approved messaging service, the video from financial district Pudong was reportedly captioned: "Actions speak louder than words".

Covid cases are still rising in China as the ruling Communist bureaucracy attempts to stick to its zero covid policy designed to eliminate the virus - despite experts' warnings that the Omicron variant makes it impossible to contain cases with lockdowns, Daily Mail reported.

Shanghai recorded about 15,000 cases Thursday accounting for the vast majority nationwide, despite weeks of the world's strictest lockdown measures.

And millions more Chinese citizens are set to be subjected to draconian Covid restrictions as the sprawling capital Beijing prepares to go into lockdown.

President Xi Jinping reaffirmed his commitment to a zero Covid policy Friday, putting China at odds with much of the world.

Lankan Prez agrees to remove brother as PM

AGENCIES

Colombo, April 29: To end the current political deadlock, Sri Lankan President Gotabaya Rajapaksa has agreed to form an interim, all-party government with a fresh cabinet, dropping his elder brother Mahinda Rajapaksa as Prime Minister, former President Maithripala Sirisena announced Friday.

Sirisena, who met President Rajapaksa, along with representatives of 11 political parties who supported Rajapaksa to come to power but decided to stand independent following the recent political crisis, informed the media of the development.

The 11 parties which had insisted on removing PM Mahinda Rajapaksa and the cabinet as a solution to the ongoing political impasse, had also demanded that Friday's meeting could only be with President Gotabaya Rajapaksa but not with anyone else.

According to Sirisena, appointment of a new PM and the Cabinet of the interim government is to be done by the national Assembly consisting of the leaders of all political parties.

"President Gotabaya Rajapaksa is ready to form an interim government, if all the political parties represented in Parliament agree to do so," he said.

At Friday's discussion, the President has also agreed to establish a National Council, which will decide on the appointment of a Prime Minister, Cabinet of Ministers, Inspector General of Police, Attorney General, and the Ministry Secretaries.

The interim cabinet of minis-



ters would be limited to 15 or 20, Sirisena told media. However, neither President Gotabaya Rajapaksa nor PM Mahinda Rajapaksa have officially announced the outcome of the meeting or what their positions are. Referring to Gotabaya Rajapaksa's invitation to political parties for an discussion to form an interim government, PM Mahinda Rajapaksa on Thursday said that his brother would never ask him to step down and insisted that whatever government would be formed, would be under his leadership.

Facing the worst-ever economic crisis in its history, the Indian Ocean island nation is suffering long hours of daily power outages, seeing long queues for gas and fuel and many essential items, including food and medicine have gone out of stock. With soaring inflation and existing dollar reserves limited to \$1 billion, the country's Central bank announced a default of external debt. Sri Lanka is facing a massive external debt of around \$51 billion with \$7 billion due in 2022. Meanwhile, India Friday responded to a Sri Lanka hospital's call for urgent medical supplies by delivering a large consignment of important drugs with the help of an Indian Navy ship, the Indian High Commission said.

Musk sells Tesla stock worth \$4bn



INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

San Francisco, April 29: Tesla CEO Elon Musk has sold around 4.4 million shares of the company worth around \$4 billion, as he prepares to take over Twitter for nearly \$44 billion.

The money could possibly go towards acquiring the micro-blogging platform, as Musk has to shell out \$21 billion in his own personal capacity. As part of the deal, Morgan Stanley and other financial institutions have committed to providing \$13 billion in financing, along with \$12.5 billion in margin

loans to Musk, against his shares in Tesla and other companies.

Musk is expected to provide equity financing of approximately \$21 billion on his own. The value of the latest Tesla stock sales by Musk, filed with the US Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC), is around \$4 billion.

Musk tweeted: "No further TSLA (Tesla) sales planned after today".

With Musk acquiring Twitter, the stock of his electric car company tanked, and at least \$125 billion were wiped out from its market value over some obvious risks.

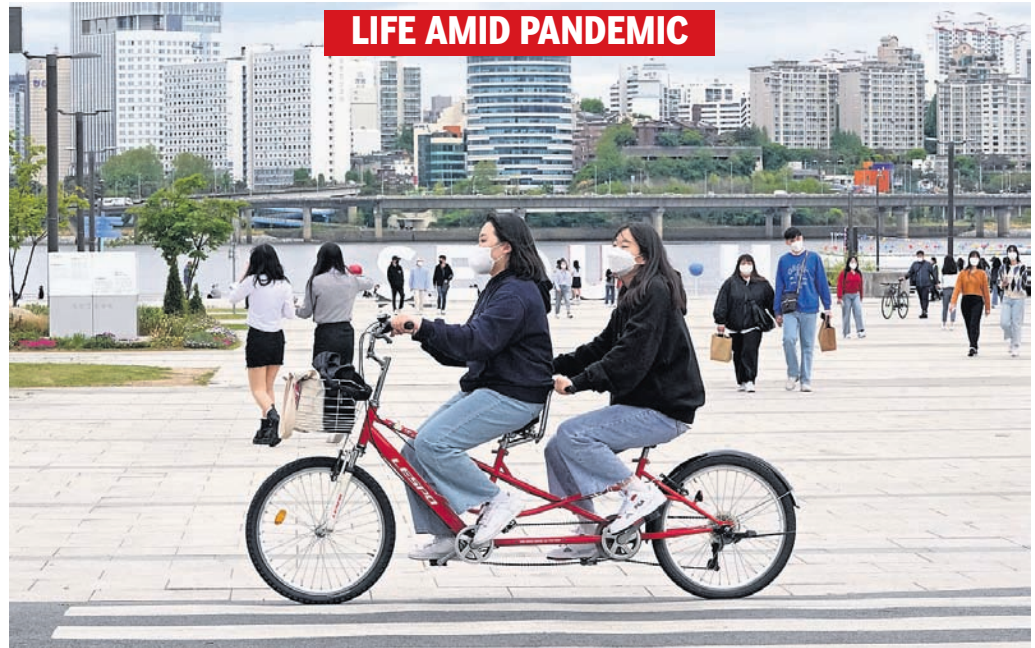
Tesla shares sank 12.2 per cent after the Twitter acquisition

news broke. The world's richest man has a net worth of \$257 billion but two-thirds of his wealth is in Tesla stock.

"If Musk does offload some of those holdings, it could drive Tesla's share price down further," according to reports.

The company warned investors about the same in its latest annual report filed with the US Securities and Exchange Commission.

"If Elon Musk were forced to sell shares of our common stock that he has pledged to secure certain personal loan obligations, such shares could cause our stock price to decline," the company said.



Women wearing face masks ride a bicycle at a park in Seoul. South Korea will ease its outdoor mask mandate starting next week as Covid-19 infections and hospitalisations continue to decline

PTI PHOTO

China to permit Indian students to return

AGENCIES

Beijing, April 29: In a relief to thousands of Indian students enrolled in Chinese universities, China Friday announced plans to allow the return of "some" of them who have been stranded in India for over two years following the visa and flight restrictions imposed by Beijing due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Zhao Lijian told a media

briefing here that "China attaches high importance to Indian students' concern for returning to China to resume their studies, and has shared with the Indian side the procedure and experience of the return of students from other countries."

The work on the return of Indian students has in fact begun and what needs to be done now is for the Indian side to submit a name list of students who have the needs to return to China, Zhao said in response to a question by the official

Chinese media. "China understands that the number of Indian students is so large that it takes some time for the Indian side to collect the information. All in all, China has been prepared for the return of some Indian students," he said.

As per earlier reports, over 23,000 Indian students, mostly studying medicine in Chinese colleges, are stuck in India after they returned home as the coronavirus broke out in the central Chinese city of Wuhan in December 2019.

In western Ukraine, displaced kids play to forget war

RUSSIA'S INVASION OF UKRAINE HAS FORCED AT LEAST TWO THIRDS OF THE COUNTRY'S 7.5 MILLION CHILDREN TO FLEE THEIR HOMES, SAVE THE CHILDREN SAYS

AGENCIES

Lviv, April 29: Inside a play tent for displaced children in western Ukraine, 12-year-old Natan said his cat Marquisa was not acting normally, sleeping all day and staying awake all night.

Maybe it was because she was so stressed after all the Russian bombs on his home city of Mariupol, he said, as his fluffy white pet snoozed curled up in her carrier box.

Leaving her to rest, he joined other children playing, some stacking cubes under dangling origami, others colouring cartoon characters with crayons.

As the war grinds on into its 10th week, organisations working with children are increasingly concerned about the mental toll it is taking on younger Ukrainians and their parents.

Outside a municipal building in the western city of Lviv, Natan waited in the tent set up by the UN children's agency for his parents to finish government paperwork.

Under the canvas, a mother steadied her wobbly toddler in an avocado-



themed jumpsuit. Natan crawled around the play mat, giving a younger child a ride on his back.

"He's always been sociable," said his mother Olena, returning hours later to retrieve him from the care-

givers. But that evening Natan and his parents were catching the train eastwards to start a new life in the capital Kyiv, and she believed that below his smily demeanour her third-born was a little worried. "He's afraid to go there. He survived the bombardment (in Mariupol), he knows what it's like," the 51-year-old medical assistant said.

'Find my mother and son'

The family arrived in Lviv in early April after escaping the besieged port city of Mariupol, braving Russian shelling to run back from a shelter into their burning flat to rescue Marquisa the cat.

But sleeping on a schoolroom floor in Lviv has been far from ideal, and it was time to try their luck in Kyiv after the Russians withdrew from its devastated sub-

urbs. Since escaping Mariupol, Olena accompanied her 16-year-old daughter all the way to a youth hostel in Germany, she said. But the mother-of-three said she had to remain in Ukraine. The Russians had taken her 28-year-old son prisoner, she said.

And she had lost all contact with her mother in Mariupol, a city now almost entirely under Russian control after weeks of brutal siege.

"I can't just leave with my children. I need to find my mother and my son," she said. As Natan and his parents walked off with Marquisa in her box, the young boy in a striped jumper turned around and waved goodbye. Just hours later, a Russian missile hurtled down onto the capital even as UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres visited, killing one person.

business

of the day quote

The Indian stainless steel industry has a bright future. Domestic demand for stainless steel will grow more in the near future

RAM CHANDRA PRASAD SINGH | STEEL MINISTER

In a challenging market environment, we recorded robust sales growth during the quarter driven by the strength of our grooming and oral care product portfolio and strong retail execution

MADHUSUDAN GOPALAN | MD, GILLETTE

Our immediate goal is to be future-ready with continued profitable growth in emerging sectors like the EV and high technology electronics. The divestment of our passenger car lighting operations in the Americas and Europe will be a win-win deal

TARANG JAIN | CHAIRMAN & MD, VEL

SHORT TAKES

Forex reserves down \$3.271bn

Mumbai: The country's foreign exchange reserves decreased by \$3.271 billion to \$600.423 billion in the week ended April 22, RBI data showed. In the previous week, the reserves had declined by \$311 million to \$603.694 billion. During the reporting week, the fall in the reserves was on the account of a decline in the Foreign Currency Assets (FCA), a major component of the overall reserves, and gold reserves. Reserve Bank of India's (RBI) weekly data released Friday showed, FCA dropped by \$2.835 billion to \$533.933 billion in the week ended April 22.

Wipro net profit rises to ₹3,092cr

New Delhi: IT company Wipro Friday posted a 4 per cent rise in consolidated profit at Rs 3,092.5 crore in the fourth quarter ended March 2022. The company had registered a profit of Rs 2,974.1 crore in the same period a year ago. "We have had an outstanding year, finishing with USD 10.4 billion in revenues, and an industry-leading growth of 27 per cent Year-on-Year (Y-o-Y). This is our sixth straight quarter of strong revenue growth at or over 3 per cent," Wipro Managing Director and CEO Thierry Delaporte said.

MGL hikes CNG price by ₹4/kg

Mumbai: Citing a steep hike of 110 per cent in the cost of natural gas supplies, city gas distributor MGL Friday increased the retail price of automobile fuel CNG by Rs 4 per kg but left the rate of cooking gas unchanged. This is the third hike in the price of Compressed Natural Gas (CNG) since April 6. MGL said CNG will now cost Rs 76 a kg in and around Mumbai effective from this midnight. However, there will be no increase in the domestic PNG price.

Hero Electric logs zero despatches

New Delhi: Electric two-wheeler maker Hero Electric Friday said it had zero despatches to dealers in April, hit by the ongoing global semiconductor shortage that led to stoppage of production. The company experienced extreme chip shortage and supply chain constraints, Hero Electric said in a statement. The automotive industry is still struggling with international chip shortage leading to loss of production. Hero Electric was hit by the same and posted zero despatches in April 2022, it added.

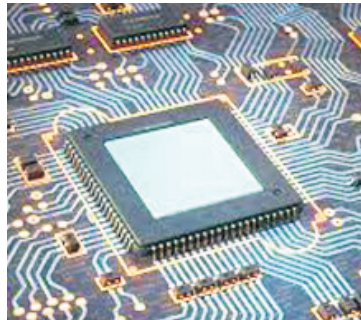


The centre's privatisation efforts on IDBI Bank is very much on and the actual quantum of government stake sale will be decided after the roadshow is complete

TUHIN KANTA PANDEY | SECRETARY, DIPAM

PUSH TO CHIP STARTUPS

With an aim to empower homegrown semiconductor startups, chipmaker Qualcomm India will collaborate with the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology's (MeitY) Centre for Development of Advanced Computing (C-DAC), a statement said Friday



Core sector growth slows down to 4.3%

THE EIGHT INFRASTRUCTURE SECTORS - COAL, CRUDE OIL, NATURAL GAS, REFINERY PRODUCTS, FERTILISER, STEEL, CEMENT AND ELECTRICITY - HAD EXPANDED BY 6 PER CENT IN FEBRUARY

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, April 29: The production growth of eight infrastructure sectors slowed down to 4.3 per cent in March due to a decline in the output of coal and crude oil, though for the full 2021-22 fiscal, the core sector recorded a 10.4 per cent expansion, according to official data released on Friday.

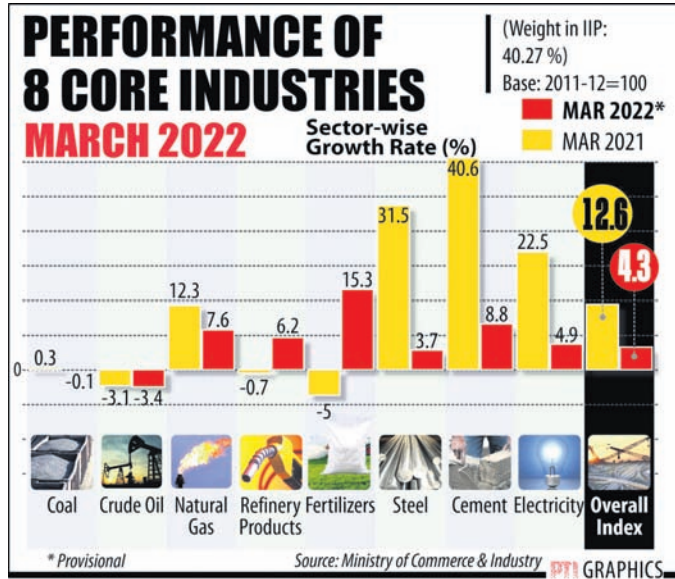
The eight infrastructure sectors - coal, crude oil, natural gas, refinery products, fertiliser, steel, cement and electricity - had expanded by 6 per cent in February. During April-March 2021-22, the eight sectors grew by 10.4 per cent compared to a contraction of 6.4 per cent in 2020-21.

The output of coal and crude oil contracted by 0.1 per cent and 3.4 per cent in March.

The growth in the production of natural gas, steel, cement and electricity slowed down to 7.6 per cent, 3.7 per cent, 8.8 per cent and 4.9 per cent during the month under review as against 12.3 per cent, 31.5 per cent, 40.6 per cent and 22.5 per cent in March 2021 respectively, the data showed.

Refinery products and fertilizers output grew by 6.2 per cent and 15.3 per cent respectively in March this year.

Commenting on the numbers,



Aditi Nayar, Chief Economist, ICRA Ltd, said that the pace of core sector growth slowed to a "se-date" 4.3 per cent in March 2022, with a slowdown in five of the eight constituents.

The double-digit growth recorded by fertiliser output in March came on the back of a very low base, she said adding in spite of the pickup in mobility, the growth in output of refinery products moderated in March.

"While the growth of the core sector output and non-oil merchandise exports slowed in March, several high-frequency indicators witnessed an improvement, based on which we expect the YoY IIP (index of industrial production) growth to rise modestly to 3-3.5 per cent in that month," Nayar added.

The eight core industries comprise 40.27 per cent of the weight of items included in the IIP.

BUMPER GROWTH

MSI profit soars 51% in Jan-Mar

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, April 29: The country's largest carmaker Maruti Suzuki India Friday reported a 51.14 per cent jump in consolidated net profit to Rs 1,875.8 crore in the fourth quarter ended March 31, 2022, despite semiconductor shortage hampering production.

The company, which had posted a consolidated net profit of Rs 1,241.1 crore in the same period of the previous fiscal, said it has earmarked a little over Rs 5,000 crore as capex for the ongoing fiscal 2022-23, including expanding the capacity of its Manesar plant.

Consolidated total revenue from operations stood at Rs 26,749.2 crore as against Rs 24,034.5 crore in the fourth quarter a year ago, the company said in a regulatory filing.

Total vehicle sales in the quarter under review stood at 4,88,830 units, lower by 0.7 per cent compared to the same period of the previous year. Domestic sales were at 4,20,376 units, a decline of 8 per cent over that in Q4 FY21, the company said, adding exports were at 68,454 units which is the highest ever in any quarter, the company said.

For the fiscal ended March 31, 2022, the company said its consolidated net profit stood at Rs 3,879.5 crore as compared to Rs 4,389.1 crore in FY21, down 11.6 per cent.

Consolidated total revenue from operations for FY22 was at Rs 88,329.8 crore as against Rs 70,372 crore in FY21, it added.

The company sold a total of 16,52,653 vehicles during the year, up 13.4 per cent over the previous year, it said, adding domestic sales were at 14,14,277 units, up 3.9 per cent over FY 2020-21. The company said it recorded its highest ever exports of 2,38,376 units in FY 2021-22 compared to 96,139 units in FY 2020-21.

AT ALL-TIME HIGH

Peak power supply touches 207GW

The demand for power is expected to rise further in coming days as the weather department has predicted that heatwave sweeping through the country will intensify

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, April 29: India's peak power demand met or the highest supply in a day touched the all-time high of 207.11 GW Friday amid ongoing heatwave sweeping through vast swathes of the country increasing demand for electricity.

"The maximum All India demand met (peak supply) touched 207111 MW at 14:50hrs today, an all time high so far," the Ministry of Power said in a tweet Friday. The peak power demand had touched



record level of 204.65 GW Thursday. The peak power shortage Thursday was 10.77 GW. Tuesday, the maximum All India power demand met or the highest supply in a day was at the record level 201.06 GW. The

Refiners seeking 6 month Russian oil import deal

REUTERS

New Delhi, April 29: Indian refiners are negotiating a six-month oil deal with Russia to import millions of barrels per month, multi-sources with knowledge of the matter said, as the world's third largest importer seeks more Russian crude despite Western sanctions.

Rosneft is in talks with Indian and Chinese companies about supply deals after the company lost Western term buyers, two sources said. India's top refiner Indian Oil Corp, Bharat Petroleum Corp and Hindustan Petroleum Corp are negotiating the deal with Russia's Rosneft (ROSN.MM), the sources added.

IOC is negotiating a deal to import 6 million barrels of oil per month with an option to buy another 3 million barrels, they said. BPCL and HPCL are looking for monthly imports of 4 million barrels

and 3 million barrels, respectively, the sources said. The companies are looking for supply from June, they said, adding Rosneft could deliver oil through non-sanctioned intermediaries and trading companies based in countries that have not announced sanctions against Moscow.

One of the sources said that the volume and tenure of the deals could change depending on the discounts offered by Rosneft and the impact of sanctions.

PAWAN HANS DISINVESTMENT

Star9 Mobility to acquire govt's 51% stake for ₹211 crore



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, April 29: The Finance Ministry Friday said Star9 Mobility Pvt Ltd will buy the government's 51 per cent stake in helicopter services provider Pawan Hans Ltd (PHL), along with the transfer of management control, for Rs 211.14 crore.

Loss-making PHL is a 51:49 joint venture of the government and ONGC. ONGC had earlier decided to offer its entire shareholding to the successful bidder identified in the government strategic disinvestment transaction, on the same price and terms as government.

The government in December last year received three financial bids for buying the company.

M/s Star9 Mobility Private Ltd, a consortium of M/s Big Charter Private Limited, M/s Maharaja Aviation Private Limited and M/s Almas Global Opportunity Fund SPC, emerged as the highest bidder quoting Rs 211.14 crore, which was above the Reserve Price. The other two bids were for Rs 181.05 crore and Rs 153.15 crore. Following due deliberations, the financial bid of M/s Star9 Mobility Private Limited has been accepted by the Government," the Ministry said in a statement.

The Alternative Mechanism, comprising Road Transport and Highways Minister Nitin Gadkari, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, and Civil Aviation Minister Jyotiraditya Scindia, has "approved the highest bid of M/s Star9 Mobility Private Ltd for sale

The reserve price for the strategic sale, which comes after three unsuccessful attempts, was fixed at Rs 199.92 crore based on the valuation carried out by the transaction adviser and asset valuer

of entire GoI's shareholding (51 per cent of shareholding) of PHL and transfer of management control," an official statement said.

"The strategic disinvestment transaction was implemented through an open, competitive bidding process supported by a multi-layered consultative decision-making mechanism involving Inter-Ministerial Group, Core Group of Secretaries on Disinvestment and the empowered Alternative Mechanism," the statement said.

The transaction now moves to the concluding stage. The next steps are issuing of the Letter of Award, signing of the Share Purchase Agreement and closing of the transaction.

Pawan Hans has been incurring losses in the last three years (FY-19, FY-20 and FY-21). It has a fleet of 42 helicopters of which 41 are owned by the company. The owned helicopters have an average age of over 20 years and three-fourths of them are presently not being manufactured by the original equipment manufacturer.

BIZ BUZZ



Maruti Suzuki India (MSI) unveiled the all-new version of its multi purpose vehicle, XL6 at Narayani Motors, NEXA Rajbhavan Road, Suryanagar Friday. The car comes in three attractive models with six colours and is priced at Rs 11 lakh to Rs 17 lakh. The launching ceremony was attended by Anand Bikram, DGM, SBI; Kartik Raja, RM, MSI; Pranay Budhraja, Director, Narayani Motors NEXA and Santanu Kumar Siya among others.

Necklace Mela at Malabar Gold & Diamonds

Bhubaneswar: Malabar Gold and Diamonds' Bhubaneswar showroom unveiled an exclusive Necklace Mela featuring the handpicked jewellery in bridal, party wear, and everyday wear collections. The show was inaugurated by Nayantra Acharya, Chairperson, DM Public School in the presence of distinguished guests and management team members. The show, scheduled from April 29th to May 08th 2022, showcases elegant and versatile pieces of jewellery crafted in gold and studded with diamonds and precious stones at VA starting from 7.9% onwards. Apart from being an opportunity to buy exquisite jewellery, the show is expected to be a visual treat for the jewellery lovers of Bhubaneswar. The show features the exclusive brands of Malabar Gold & Diamonds such as MINE - diamond jewellery, ERA - uncut diamond jewellery, PRECIA - precious gemstone jewellery, ETHNIX - handcrafted jewellery, Divine - Indian heritage jewellery and Starlet - kid's jewellery.



With new platform, Tata plans long-range, tech-enabled global EVs

Tata is striving to position itself alongside global automakers that are investing billions of dollars to build EVs that meet stricter carbon reduction goals

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, April 29: Tata Motors Friday unveiled its all new electric vehicle architecture on which it plans to introduce multiple advanced EVs starting from 2025.

The home-grown auto major, which currently leads the domestic electric passenger vehicle segment by a distance, aims to drive in multiple body styles on the AVINYA Concept, which is based on its GEN 3 architecture.

The first model based on the new architecture is expected to hit the markets in 2025. The new electric models will come with an en-

hanced range of over 500 kms and above. They will also feature new-age technologies, software and artificial intelligence.

"While making the AVINYA Concept a reality, the central idea was to offer a mobility solution like no other - a state of the art software on wheels that is well designed, sustainable and reduces the planet's carbon footprint," Tata Sons Chairman N Chandrasekaran said.

Green mobility is at the nucleus of Tata Passenger Electric Mobility (TPEM) and the AVINYA Concept is the perfect reflection of what the company stands for - a cre-



The Tata Avinya concept car is unveiled during a global launch event in Mumbai, April 29

ation that will not only accelerate the adoption of Electric Vehicles (EVs) but also lead this movement, he added.

"Furthermore, at the Tata group,

we are uniquely positioned to bring all the expertise that is necessary to build these mobility solutions and we are confident that in years to come, we will make a larger and sus-

The AVINYA Concept is the fruition of our first idea built on our Pure EV GEN 3 architecture, enabling us to produce a range of globally competitive EVs. Our vision for pure EVs is focused on delivering wellness and rejuvenation while traveling, backed by cutting-edge technologies, aimed at improving the overall quality of life

N CHANDRASEKARAN | CHAIRMAN, TATA SONS

Managing Director Shailesh Chandra said the company has taken a giant stride towards next generation of EVs with the showcasing of AVINYA Concept.

"The new pure EV architecture will be very scalable and flexible. It will also be able to spawn a range of globally competitive pure EVs with desired footprint," he added. Further, he said the new products will showcase next generation of dust protection, water proofing, connectivity, and enhanced performance and efficiency. Derived from the sanskrit language, the name AVINYA stands for Innovation, the auto major noted.

Eyes on Virat as RCB face Titans

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, April 29: Batting stalwart Virat Kohli's wretched form would once again come under scrutiny when Royal Challengers Bangalore face table-toppers Gujarat Titans in an IPL match here Saturday.

Kohli has scored a mere 128 runs in nine matches for RCB this season with 48 being his highest score. His promotion to opening slot in RCB's previous match after scoring back-to-back ducks too did not yield results as he was out for 9.

Kohli's form has been one of the reasons for the inconsistent show of RCB who are currently at fifth spot with five wins from nine matches.

The Bangalore-based team, though, is hoping that the former India captain would return to form soon with captain Faf du Plessis backing him after their last match.

On the other hand, the Titans have been the side to watch this IPL. Whatever they have touched have turned to gold with unlikely match winners emerging every time they were in trouble.

With seven wins from eight matches and on a five-match winning streak, the Titans are the clear favourites to win Saturday's match. If they do that, they will virtually book a play-off berth.

In their previous match against Sunrisers Hyderabad, the Titans were struggling in a stiff chase of 196 but Rashid Khan, known more for his leg-spin exploits, and proven finisher Rahul Tewatia struck four sixes in the last over to steal the match from their opponents.

The Titans have shown that if their top-order fails, there

is assurance that the lower order can bail the team out, though captain Hardik Pandya was hoping that his side's luck does not run out later in the tournament.

For the Titans, Pandya has been the top scorer with 305 runs from seven matches and under his relaxed approach the team seems to be flourishing. He will once again be the top man to get the runs, along with the likes of Shubman Gill, David Miller and Wriddhiman Saha.

It is not that RCB do not have the batting depth but the problem for



ROYALS TAKE ON STRUGGLING MUMBAI

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Navi Mumbai, April 29: On a three-match winning streak, Rajasthan Royals have the momentum as well as source of inspiration when they face bottom-placed and out-of-reckoning Mumbai Indians in an IPL match here Saturday.

The Royals will be celebrating the extraordinary life of their lone IPL title-winning captain Shane Warne, who died last month in Thailand, during this game. A win

Only captain Du Plessis, Dinesh Karthik and Shahbaz Ahmed have done well so far and they have to once again take the responsibility of scoring the bulk of runs against a balanced bowling attack of the Titans.

It can be an interesting match-up in the bowling front as both sides have some of the best performers this season.



would give a perfect tribute to the legendary Australian spinner under whose inspirational leadership, the Royals had won the 2008 title.

While Rajasthan, placed second in the standings, have lost only two games and won six, Mumbai are already out of contention for a play-off berth, having lost all their eight matches so far.

After mustering just 144 runs in their last game against RCB, the Royals would be hoping for an improvement from their batters.

Their openers Jos Buttler and Devdutt Padikkal have been among the runs. Buttler has already slammed three hundreds and the challenge for the MI bowlers would be to find ways to stop the marauding Englishman. He and



Padikkal would look to continue to provide an aggressive start.

Skipper Sanju Samson and Shimron Hetmyer possess the shots to hammer the Mumbai attack and there is also the firepower of Riyan Parag, who hit an unbeaten 56 in the last game, and Daryl Mitchell, as the Royals middle-order looks settled.

A consistent Samson will look to add to his runs tally of 232 from 10 matches and build the innings in case of any failure in the top-order, as had happened last time when Buttler and Padikkal were out cheaply.

The Royals' bowlers have been in top form as the pacers as well as the spin duo of Ravichandran Ashwin and Yuzvendra Chahal, the tournament's leading wicket-taker with 18 scalps, doing well so

far. Pacer Trent Boult is wreaking havoc and is ably supported by Prasadidh Krishna.

Mumbai, on the other hand, need a "collective effort". The out-of-form opening duo of Rohit and Ishan Kishan need to find ways to get going and the same holds good for the middle-order batters. Suryakumar Yadav, Tilak Varma and Dewald Brevis have had their moments of individual brilliance, but they need to fire in unison. One of the top-order batters will need to score big if Mumbai have to get a big score or chase down a stiff target.

Another concern for Mumbai is the poor run of form of all-rounder Kieron Pollard who is no longer the "finisher" that he once used to be. Mumbai's bowling has been even a bigger concern. Pace spearhead Jasprit Bumrah has been at his best but has lacked support.

TODAY'S MATCH

GT vs RCB
Time: 03:30 pm

RR vs MI
Time: 07:30 pm

TELECAST
Star Sports channels & Hotstar

BOWLERS SEAL LSG WIN



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Pune, April 29: Lucknow Super Giants pounced on the mistakes of a self-destructing Punjab Kings to record a 20-run win in the Indian Premier League here Friday.

Kagiso Rabada (4/38) struck four times as Punjab Kings upped their game in the bowling department to restrict Lucknow Super Giants to 153/8. It should have been a straight forward chase but Punjab fluffed to end at 133/8 in 20 overs.

Pacer Dushmantha Chameera (2/17) and Krunal Pandya (2/11) led LSG's spirited bowling effort but they were also aided by the

recklessness of the Punjab batters who struggled to convert starts, including skipper Mayank Agarwal (25), Liam Livingstone (18) and Jonny Bairstow (32).

Left-arm pacer Mohsin Khan (3/24) also ended with three wickets. Rishi Dhawan (21 not out) tried his best to bring back Punjab from the dead but it proved to be too much of a task.

A sixth win in nine games takes IPL debutants LSG closer to a play-off berth while the task gets tougher for Punjab who have only four wins in nine games.

Earlier, the second wicket stand of 85 runs between opener Quinton

de Kock (46, 37b, 4x4, 2x6) and Deepak Hooda (34, 28b, 1x4, 2x6) was the lone bright spot of LSG's innings.

The pace trio of Rabada, Arshdeep Singh (0/23) and Sandeep Sharma (1/18) delivered in different ways, while leg-spinner Rahul Chahar (2/30) chipped in with a couple of wickets.

Punjab pacers were impressive in the powerplay after skipper Mayank Agarwal opted to bowl, limiting LSG to 39 with the crucial wicket of in-form KL Rahul (6).

While the ever improving Arshdeep and the seasoned Sandeep got the ball to swing, it was Rabada who got rid of the opposition skip-

per. The South African speedster got one to straighten from good length proving it to be too good for Rahul, making it look like a proper Test match dismissal.

With the first four overs only fetching 16 runs, De Kock broke the shackles for LSG by smashing his fellow countryman Rabada for successive sixes, one a straight hit that landed on the boundary rope while the other maximum came via a massive hoick over midwicket.

Hooda, who struggled to rotate strike early on in his innings, got going with a straight six off Rishi Dhawan. Sandeep was brilliant in his first spell conceding only eight runs in his three overs.

With LSG 67/1 in 10 overs, Punjab were very much in control of the game. The 11th over of Liam Livingstone went for 15 runs and it seemed LSG were finally getting into the groove but the dismissals of set batters de Kock and Hooda increased their troubles.

De Kock was honest enough to walk back into the dressing room after getting a faint edge off Sandeep while Hooda paid the price for not being alert enough to get himself run out after a brilliant direct hit from the deep from Jonny Bairstow.

LSG's innings was going nowhere as they struggled to 109 for five in 15 overs. Cameos from Jason Holder (11 off 8), Dushmantha Chameera (17 off 10) and Mohsin Khan (13 not out off 6) allowed LSG to cross the 150-run mark.

BRIEF SCORES

Lucknow Super Giants 153/8 (Quinton de Kock 46, Deepak Hooda 34; Kagiso Rabada 4/38, Rahul Chahar 2/30, Sandeep Sharma 1/18) beat Punjab Kings 133/8 (Jonny Bairstow 32, Mayank Agarwal 25; Mohsin Khan 3/24, Krunal Pandya 2/11, Dushmantha Chameera 2/17) by 20 runs.

CR7 saves United the blushes

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Manchester, April 29: Cristiano Ronaldo's fifth goal in three games salvaged a point for Manchester United in a 1-1 draw against Chelsea that further damaged his team's chances of a top-four finish in the Premier League.

Ronaldo ran onto a ball over the Chelsea defense from Nemanja Matic and delivered a clinical finish in the 62nd minute, two minutes after Marcos Alonso gave the visitors the lead.

Reece James later curled a shot against the post for Chelsea, which dominated the first half but found United goalkeeper David de Gea in fine form.

With only three games left to play in the league, United stayed in sixth place — five points behind fourth-place Arsenal and having played two matches more than its rival for Champions League qualification.

Tottenham are between the two teams, in the fifth spot, with three more points than United and two games in hand. Chelsea consolidated third place and is six points above Arsenal.

Ronaldo came into the game having scored a hat-trick against Norwich and another goal against Arsenal in his previous two games. On 17 goals, Ronaldo is tied with Son Heung-min in second place in the Premier League scoring chart behind Mohamed Salah.

The buildup was dominated by reports that Rangnick was considering taking over as Austria's national team coach as well as more protests against the Glazer family's ownership.

Some protesters entered Old Trafford in the 17th minute, having missed a minute for each of the Glazers' 17 years in charge.

'Glazers out' read a banner above the tunnel before kickoff at Old Trafford, where a mixture of De Gea's saves and poor-decision mak-



CONTINUES TO DELIVER: Cristiano Ronaldo reacts after scoring the equaliser against Chelsea, Thursday

ing meant Chelsea failed to turn their 11 shots into a deserved half-time lead.

Thomas Tuchel's team finally broke the deadlock when Alonso volleyed home following Kai Havertz's flick-on but Chelsea was

unable to build on that. United defender Victor Lindelof saw a stoppage-time header denied and the highlight of the closing stages was the introduction of 17-year-old talent Alejandro Garnacho for his United debut.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Praggnanandhaa finishes fourth

OSLO: India's teenaged Grandmaster R Praggnanandhaa missed out on the top prize in the USD 210,000 Oslo Esports Cup online rapid chess tournament as he lost 0.5-2.5 to Dutch player Anish Giri in the seventh and final round to finish fourth. The 16-year old Indian, who led the field until the fifth round, could not get past the defences of Giri in the three-game final round match late Thursday. He had lost 0.5-2.5 in the sixth round to Poland's Jan-Krzysztof Duda, who went on to win the tournament. Praggnanandhaa took fourth place with 12 points behind Duda (14 points), Vietnam's Liem Quang Le (13) and World No.1 Magnus Carlsen (12) of Norway.

Pujara slams 3rd ton in County C'ship

HOVE (UK): Senior India batter Cheteshwar Pujara continued his stellar show in the English County Championship, scoring his third century in as many games for Sussex here Friday. Pujara, who was batting on 107 off 167 balls, hit 13 fours to help his side take a substantial lead against Durham, who were all out on 223 in their first innings. The out-of-favour India batter, who is in sparkling form, is making most of his county stint. He now has scored three hundreds including a double century in his five innings. Making his debut for Sussex, Pujara had scored 6 and an unbeaten 201 to help his side draw the match against Derbyshire. In the Sussex's 34-run loss to Worcestershire, he scored 109 in the first innings, followed by 12 in the second essay. The runs will keep Pujara in contention for a place in the Indian squad when India travel to England for the postponed fifth Test later this year.

Armstrong sets swimming world record

GREENSBORO (US): American Hunter Armstrong has set a swimming world record in the men's 50-meter backstroke. Armstrong posted a time of 23.71 seconds in the non-Olympic event while competing Thursday night in the International Team Trials at Greensboro, North Carolina. The meet is selecting the US team that will compete at this summer's World Championships in Budapest, Hungary. The 21-year-old Armstrong won a gold medal at the Tokyo Olympics last summer by swimming the backstroke leg in the prelims of the 4x100 medley relay. Still, he was stunned by his time in the 50 back, which eclipsed the mark of 23.80 set by Russia's Kliment Kolesnikov in 2021. Armstrong established an American record in the morning prelims — then went even faster in the evening.

Frankfurt, Leipzig take leads

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Washington, April 29: Eintracht Frankfurt are a step away from reaching their first European competition final in more than 40 years after beating West Ham 2-1 in the first leg of the Europa League (EL) semifinals.

The German team had knocked out Barcelona in the quarterfinals and quickly shocked West Ham when Ansgar Knauff scored 51 seconds after kickoff at the London Stadium.

Both clubs are bidding to reach what would be their biggest match in decades — Frankfurt's last final came when it won the Europa League predecessor UEFA Cup in 1980, and West Ham's last game of that stature was the 1976 Cup Winner's Cup final.

An all-German final in the second-tier European competition is a possibility after Leipzig scored late to defeat Rangers 1-0 at home in the other semifinal match.

Leipzig had beaten Atalanta to reach this stage and is aiming for their first-ever European final. Both second legs are next week with Frankfurt and Rangers hosting.

In the new third-tier Europa Conference League, Cyriel Dessers proved unstoppable again in scoring twice for Feyenoord in the Dutch team beat Marseille 3-2 in the



Carrying forward momentum: Eintracht Frankfurt players rejoice after a goal against West Ham, Thursday

first leg of the semifinals. Dessers tops the scoring table with 10 goals.

In the other semifinal match, Roma manager José Mourinho and his apprentice, Leicester coach Brendan Rodgers, embraced each other at the sideline after their teams finished in a 1-1 draw. Rodgers was appointed to Chelsea's academy during Mourinho's first stint with the London club.

Frankfurt had a dream start in London. The visitors got the ball for the first time with West Ham defense letting Rafael Borré in the area to cross for Knauff at the far post to stress the hosts within the opening minute.

Michael Antonio cancelled out the early lead. Kurt Zouma headed a cross off Manuel Lanzini's free-kick for diving Antonio to equalise 20 minutes after the opening goal. Frankfurt was ahead again early in the second half after West Ham goalkeeper Alphonse Areola parried Djibril Sow's shot and Daichi Kamada scored the winner on a rebound.

Leipzig had to wait till the 85th minute to break the deadlock. With its three-man attack failing to hit the target, it was its Spanish defender Angelino who volleyed home off a corner kick for Leipzig. Rangers are trying to reach their first European final since 2008.

Sindhu in BAC semifinals

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Manila (Philippines), April 29: Double Olympic medallist PV Sindhu eked out a thrilling win over China's He Bing Jiao to enter the women's singles semifinals of the Badminton Asia Championships here Friday.

With this win, Sindhu assured herself of a medal in the continental individual championships, which is making a return after a gap of two years due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The fourth-seeded Sindhu, who had claimed a bronze in the 2014 Gimcheon edition, got the better of the fifth seeded Chinese 21-9, 13-21, 21-19 in a quarterfinal match that lasted an hour and 16 minutes.

The 26-year-old from Hyderabad, who won two super 300 titles at Syed Modi International and Swiss Open, will face top seeded Japanese Akane Yamaguchi in the semifinals.

World No.7 Sindhu came into the match with a 7-9 head-to-head record against Bing Jiao, whom she had beaten twice in the last two meetings. The former world champion made her intent clear from the start as she galloped to an 11-2 lead in no time and then kept things under her firm grip to take a 1-0 lead in the match.

Bing Jiao came back strongly after the change of sides as errors flew from Sindhu's racquet. The



Chinese soon moved to a 6-4 lead before managing a slender 11-10 advantage. The world number 9 looked for angles in her returns, while Sindhu was guilty of making too many errors. After the break, the Chinese reeled off five points on the trot to grab a 19-12 lead to eventually roar back into the contest.

In the decider, it was 2-2 early on as Sindhu looked to step up the pace. Soon she unleashed her cross-court smashes to gather points, moving to a massive 11-5 lead going into the final change of ends.

Bing Jiao, however, scripted a recovery after the interval to narrow down the deficit to 15-16 as Sindhu let the momentum slip despite being 15-9 up at one stage. The Chinese saved three match points before Sindhu converted the fourth to seal the contest in her favour.