



**NATASHA ROCKS AT MET GALA**  
Natalia Poonawalla looked drop-dead gorgeous as she showcased Indian fashion on the Met Gala 2022 red carpet

LEISURE P2



**CALL FOR CEASEFIRE**  
PM Narendra Modi appeals for an immediate ceasefire in Ukraine and return to the path of dialogue and diplomacy

INTERNATIONAL P10



**CSK FACE RCB TODAY**  
Chennai Super Kings look to keep the winning momentum going when they face Royal Challengers Bangalore

SPORTS P12



**Curfew in Jodhpur after communal tension**  
Jodhpur/Jaipur: Communal tensions gripped Rajasthan Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot's hometown Jodhpur hours before Eid Tuesday, prompting the authorities to suspend mobile internet services and impose a curfew in 10 police stations areas of the city. The chief minister has appealed to people to maintain peace and harmony. The Jodhpur deputy commissioner of police issued orders imposing a curfew till May 4 midnight besides suspending mobile internet services to check the spread of rumours. Tensions broke out past midnight over putting up of Islamic flags on the Jalori gate circle, which led to stone pelting in which five policemen were injured. P7



**Don't feel for me, pray for Twitter: Parag**  
New Delhi: As Elon Musk prepares to hire a new CEO for Twitter once he takes over, current CEO Parag Agrawal is worried about the future of the micro-blogging platform, not his job. Amid multiple reports that Musk has lined up a new CEO to replace him, Agrawal has already said that he took the job to change Twitter for the better, course correct where we need to, and strengthen the service. "I feel for the current CEO of Twitter (@paraga) - he had all these plans and now lives with the same uncertainty of his whole team," posted a Twitter user. Agrawal replied, "Thank you but don't feel for me. What matters most is the service and the people improving it."

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## AHEAD OF PM'S VISIT

# France pulls out of submarine project



File photo of INS Vagsheer, the last of the six Scorpene class submarines, built by the Naval Group under P-75 and launched in April 2022

■ Naval Group, a major French submarine maker, has pulled out of India's P-75 ahead of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to France

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, May 3: French company Naval Group Tuesday said it is unable to participate in Centre's P-75 project, under which six conventional submarines are to be domestically built for the Indian Navy, due to conditions mentioned in the request for proposal (RFP) related to air independent propulsion (AIP) system. Naval Group's announcement comes a day before Prime Minister

Narendra Modi's visit to Paris where he is scheduled to meet recently re-elected French President Emmanuel Macron. AIP system allows a conventional submarine to stay submerged in water at higher speeds for a longer period. In June last year, the Defence Ministry had cleared the P-75 project and subsequently, RFPs were issued to two shortlisted Indian companies - private company Larsen and Toubro and state-run Mazagon Docks Limited. The two Indian companies (called strategic partners) have to tie up with one of the five shortlisted foreign companies - ThyssenKrupp Marine Systems (Germany), Navantia (Spain) and Naval Group (France), Daewoo (South Korea) and Rosoboronexport (Russia) - and then respond to the RFP, as

per the Defence Ministry. The ₹43,000 crore contract will be awarded by the Defence Ministry following a detailed evaluation of the responses sent by the two strategic partners. In a statement Tuesday, Laurent Videau, Country and Managing Director, Naval Group India, said, "Due to certain conditions in the RFP, the two strategic partners could not forward the request to us and few other FOEMs (foreign original equipment manufacturers) and thus we have not been able to place an official bid for the project."

Naval Group has always been ready to offer the best in class and adapted solution for Indian Navy's P-75 project, being fully in line with Aatmanirbhar Bharat principle, he said. "However, the present RFP requires that the fuel cell AIP (air independent propulsion) be sea proven, which is not the case for us yet since the French Navy does not use such propulsion system," he said.

Nevertheless, Naval Group strengthens its existing commitments and look forward for closer association with India, he said. Notably, the P-75 is the second project to build submarines in India. The Naval Group just completed building six Scorpene class submarines under the P-75 in partnership with the Mazagon Dockyard Shipbuilding Limited (MDL) in India. The sixth in the class was launched last month and is expected to be commissioned next year.



**LORD'S SUMMER RITUAL**  
The Chandan Yatra of Srimandir devotees commenced at Narendra pond in Puri on the occasion of Akshaya Tritiya, Tuesday. The summer ritual is being organised with participation of devotees after two years

PHOTO: YAGNESWAR MOHANTY

## CM distributes ₹800cr KALIA aid

Around 40 lakh small & marginal farmers and landless farm workers, except those in Jharsuguda, received the benefit

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, May 3:** Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik Tuesday disbursed around ₹800 crore to farmers under the state's flagship KALIA (Krushak Assistance for Livelihood and Income Augmentation) scheme on the occasion of agrarian festival Akshaya Tritiya. Through Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) mode, Patnaik disbursed the amount to 40 lakh small and marginal farmers, and landless farm workers, barring the peasants in Jharsuguda district where the Model Code of Conduct (MCC) is enforced for the May 31 by-election to Brajaraj Nagar Assembly seat, it was learnt. Each registered farmer will get ₹2,000 for Kharif crop. Under the KALIA scheme, the state government provides ₹4,000 to farmers in two phases - once during Kharif and another in Rabi

**Naveen greets people on Akshaya Tritiya**  
Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik Tuesday greeted the people on the occasion of Akshaya Tritiya, Eid Ul Fitr and World Press Freedom Day. "Seek blessings of Lord Jagannath on the occasion of Akshaya Tritiya and wish happiness and prosperity of farmers. I greet all the cultivators of Odisha on the auspicious Day (sic)," he said in a tweet. In another tweet, he said, "Warm greets on the auspicious occasion of #EidUlFitr. May the spirit of #Eid bring happiness, peace, prosperity and lead us in the path of compassion and love."

season. Patnaik highlighted farmers' contribution to ensuring food security. He also launched eight new programmes for agricultural development, including Panasa (jackfruit) Mission and Rejuvenating

Watershed for Agricultural Resilience through Innovative Development (Reward) programme. Patnaik said the state government has allocated more than ₹20,000 crore under the agriculture budget for 2022-23 fiscal. He said that ₹500 crore has been allocated under Reward project to improve the productivity of cultivable land through equitable distribution of irrigation. A total of ₹2,308 crore has been allocated under Millet Mission for farmers in 182 blocks in 19 districts, ₹97 crore under Jackfruit Mission, and ₹239 crore to include 1.8 lakh farmers in eight districts under special programme for promotion of integrated farming, he said. Patnaik also launched 'Krushak Odisha' portal, where farmers can update their data to get necessary services and advices. Similarly, 'Go-Sugam' portal was launched for livestock farmers.

## Fake loan app: EOW freezes ₹6.57 crore

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, May 3:** The Economic Offences Wing (EOW) of the state Crime Branch has frozen ₹6.57 crore bank deposits of Mahagram Payments Private Limited, a Mumbai-based firm which was not registered with Reserve Bank of India, for duping several persons through fake loan applications like KOKO and JOJO, an official said Tuesday. The EOW crackdown came while investigating a case (9/22) registered on the allegations of Bikash Kumar Sahu, one of the victims, of Turumunga area in Keonjhar. "Ram Shriam Pathade and Sudhir Shiram Pathade through their company, Mahagram Payments Pvt Ltd, cheated several people across the country, including in Odisha, through loan applications like KOKO and JOJO," said an official, adding that KOKO has been downloaded by around 1.5 lakh people. The accused used to offer small loans ranging between ₹3,000 and 5,000 to the persons who approach them after downloading the apps from Playstore. Later, the accused would demand excessively high rate of interest on the principal. "The accused company through its recovery agents placed WhatsApp and live calls to the victims humiliating/abusing them to return the money with upto 5 times rate of interest within a week. They would also collect the contact list of the loanee and send obscene pictures and messages to them," said an official. The EOW was yet to arrest accused Ram, Sudhir of Mahagram Payments, it was learnt.

## IRREGULAR by MANJUL



India is full of anti-nationals and urban naxals. See, how much NRIs love me... and they never complain about anything!

## 2 hockey players electrocuted

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Sundargarh, May 3:** In a shocking incident, two young hockey players died due to electrocution at Gariamal village of Alanda panchayat under Rajgangpur block in Sundargarh district Tuesday. The deceased were identified as Birendra Kujur, 20, of Jahagadpur and Sujal Ekka, 19, of Pandaratoli village. Sources said the two, along with a few others, had gone to practise hockey at Gariamal village ground.

While returning from the ground at 8 am, they found a utility pole near a hockey coach's house leaning on the road under the impact of a hail-storm. The wires had snapped and fallen on the road, it was learnt. The hockey players tried to straighten the pole by using an iron pipe which came in contact with an 11KV live wire. Four of them got the shock and were rescued by locals before being rushed to Rajgangpur Hospital, where the doctors declared two of them dead.



## Boudh sizzles at 44.5°C, 2nd-highest in India

AGENCIES

**Bhubaneswar, May 3:** Boudh recorded the second-highest temperature in the country Tuesday as parts of Odisha boiled in the blazing sun, with 18 weather stations recording a maximum of 40 degrees Celsius or more, the Met ofice said. Rain along with thunderstorms occurred in several places including Bhubaneswar and Cuttack. The maximum temperature rose by around 1-2 degrees Celsius in some places and was above normal in several towns, the Bhubaneswar Meteorological Centre said. The temperature soared to 44.5 degrees Celsius in Boudh, the second-highest along with two other weather stations in the country.

■ Bhubaneswar and Cuttack received the season's first thunderstorm as squally winds and light rain brought much-needed relief to the people of the twin cities

■ Chandrapur in Maharashtra saw the day's highest maximum temperature at 45.2 degrees Celsius



Chandrapur in Maharashtra saw the day's highest maximum temperature at 45.2 degrees Celsius, the Met said. The mercury was at 43.5 degrees Celsius in Angul and Subarnapur, and 43 in Sundargarh, Jharsuguda and Bolangir. It rose to 39 degrees Celsius in Bhubaneswar, three notches above average, it said. Baripada in Mayurbhanj district

received 27.6 mm of rainfall till 5.30 pm, bringing the maximum temperature down to 30.2 degrees Celsius. There was moderate downpour in Rayagada, Kalahandi, Bolangir and Gajapati districts over a 24-hour period till 8.30 am, it said. Bhubaneswar and Cuttack received the season's first thunderstorm as squally winds and light rain brought much-needed relief to the people of the twin cities. There was heavy downpour in Balasore town, and moderate rainfall in other parts of coastal Odisha. Under the influence of the south-westerly winds from the Bay of Bengal, scattered or widespread rainfall with thunderstorm, lightning and gusty winds of around 40-50 kmph can occur across the state during the next three-four days.

## LADY VARSITY STAFFER'S BF SPENT ₹50L ON GAMBLING

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, May 3:** The twin city Commissionerate Police probing the misappropriation of funds of a university by one of its lady employees here, Tuesday said that the woman's boyfriend had squandered ₹50 lakh out of the ₹97.54 lakh on online gambling. The twin city police has arrested Bikas Kumar, the boyfriend of Payal Mohapatra, in Jharkhand and brought him to the City on a transit remand. "Bikas is being interrogated by the Tamando police. He has confessed to having received around

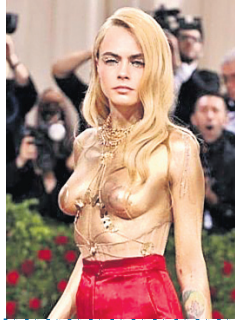
₹97.54 lakh from the woman and spent ₹50 lakh of it on online gambling," said an official. Mohapatra, a resident of Cuttack, was working as an office assistant in the accounts department of a university here since 2017. The accused used to collect hostel and tuition fees from students at the university counter. During a recent financial audit, the university authorities came to know that Mohapatra had not deposited the collected amount in the institution's bank account. The authorities lodged a complaint with the Tamando police, who arrested Mohapatra last month.



BIKAS KUMAR

WEATHER		BHUB	CTK
TEMP		39.0°C	38.0°C
	MAX	39.0°C	38.0°C
	MIN	27.9°C	27.0°C
Humidity		66%	77%
Rainfall		Nil	2.2mm
			cloudy sky

# leisure



## CARA STRIPS OFF TO SHOW GOLD-PAINTED BODY ON MET GALA RED CARPET

Model-actress Cara Delevingne stepped out in a red Dior Haute Couture suit complete with a walking stick and platform heels in matching colour. She then took everyone by surprise as she took off the jacket and revealed her naked chest covered in shimmering gold body paint, reports *aceshowbiz.com*.

## TOBIAS, JULIA LOUIS-DREYFUS JOIN THE CAST OF BETH & DON

Tobias Menzies, who is known for his work as Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh in the third and fourth seasons of *The Crown* has been signed for *Beth & Don* along with Julia Louis-Dreyfus. The feature is to be directed by Nicole Holofcener, who has also written the script.



### FORTUNE FORECAST

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**ARIES**  
Business affairs and love will flourish today. You can expect some monetary benefits and even some loans to be sanctioned. In love, you anticipate a romantic evening, where you will confide your deepest feelings to your beloved. Ganesh says you couldn't possibly ask for more.

**TAURUS**  
Today, your passion for punctuality, for insistence on maintaining schedules is in for real appreciation. But, warns Ganesh, it could also create immediate and unexpected problems for some. You are like to become exceedingly impatient restless as the day progresses.

**GEMINI**  
The first half of the day may see you in a foul mood, and the reason for it is likely to be some mental worry that has been bothering you for quite some time now. If things worsen, it is best to see a doctor.

**CANCER**  
You have a gift. You come across as a very approachable and dependable person. It's this attribute that makes people want to work with you and trust you, says Ganesh. But today is another day, and you may want a break from helping people fight their daily battles and spending some quality time with your family members.

**LEO**  
Rise and shine, says Ganesh, as today will be a sunny day. You will start the day on a very positive note filled with unwavering optimism. Look forward to expressing your views clearly. In fact, the honest opinions you will give at official meetings may push you into the limelight.

**VIRGO**  
In all probability, you would want to quarantine yourself today - mentally and physically. It's all got to do with the way you can challenge yourself and pool your own resources together to make the best of unpleasant conditions.

**LIBRA**  
Today promises to be an action-packed day for you at work. So, get ready to take the bull by its horns, says Ganesh. Expect to handle a lot of unknown people and unfamiliar situations at work. Evening might find you making a few trips to the market to buy some provisions. Also, love is in the air, and you are in demand. So, the opposite sex will be queuing up to catch a glimpse of you.

**SCORPIO**  
Business will keep you on your toes and make you dance around, says Ganesh. Success is likely to intoxicate you. Ganesh advises you not to let emotions influence your plans and strategies in any way.

**SAGITTARIUS**  
Today you shall remain deep in thought. You may have plans to change the look of your home and a romantic evening with your sweetheart is on the cards, says Ganesh. Fine gourmet and a nice ambience will arouse those senses more, informs Ganesh.

**CAPRICORN**  
A memorable time with like-minded people is on the cards today, says Ganesh. At work, you may try everything in your capacity to attain perfection, but perfection will remain restricted to your thinking. None of the innovative ideas striking your mind will actually come into force. But this will not deter you in any way, and you will continue to remain optimistic and move ahead with equal enthusiasm.

**AQUARIUS**  
Metaphysics and philosophy have aroused your interest. Instead of spending a huge amount on books on these subjects, Ganesh suggests that you keep a balanced approach and practice spiritual discipline. It's also high time you changed your dietary habits.

**PISCES**  
Today is a day when the focus is solely on achieving your career goals. A joint venture you have been hankering after for quite some time ought to fall into place today. A tour for business purposes is also indicated. On the domestic front, all should be well, says Ganesh.

## NATASHA nails Met Gala 2022 look

The entrepreneur nailed the 'Gilded Glamour' theme for the night while also bringing in a touch of Indian elegance by wearing a saree designed by Sabyasachi Mukherjee



**Mumbai:** Indian socialite and businesswoman Natasha Poonawalla looked drop-dead gorgeous as she showcased Indian fashion on the Met Gala 2022 red carpet.

Natasha nailed the 'Gilded Glamour' theme for the night. She looked every-inch gorgeous in a fashion designer Sabyasachi Mukherjee's golden saree and jewels, whereas the bustier came from the house of Schiaparelli. The infusion of desi glamour and the American-inspired theme instantly made Natasha one of the best-dressed celebrities of the night.

Pictures of Natasha's look for the event were posted by the official Instagram account of Sabyasachi. Sabyasachi captioned the image: "For me the sari is a truly unique and versatile garment that owns its identity even as it transcends boundaries and geographies."

"Back when I was a young fashion student, I often wondered when I would see the sari at big global fashion events like the Met Gala. For the 2022 Met Gala, themed 'In America: An Anthology of Fashion', Natasha Poonawalla's vision was to interpret the dress code 'gilded glamour' with an Indian gaze that revels in its multi-culturalism and authenticity." Natasha wore a "Schiaparelli hand-forged metal bustier paired with a custom Sabyasachi couture sari and trail."

Sabyasachi contributed to Natasha's vision by celebrating Indian craftsmanship with a gold handcrafted printed tulle sari and trail embroidered with silk floss thread and embellished with bevel beads, semi-precious stones, crystals, sequins and appliqued printed velvet.



## Tara opens up about her Hollywood plans

**Mumbai:** Tara Sutaria's recent release *Heropanti 2* opened to mixed reviews from the audience. The actress has been promoting the flick on various platforms. And during a recent interview, she opened up about her Hollywood plans.

During the conversation, Tara expressed that she aims to work in Hollywood as well. Talking about the same, the actress shared that the representation of Indians in Hollywood is less. She further added that she doesn't intend to stick to a bunch of Hindi flicks. However, she feels that it would be great to approach that as soon as possible because she doesn't want to regret it later. The actress went ahead to share that her current focus is Bollywood.

Meanwhile, *Heropanti 2* features Tiger Shroff as the male lead and Nawazuddin Siddiqui as the antagonist. Helmed by Ahmed Khan, the film hit the theatres April 29.

On the work front, Tara will next star in *Ek Villain Returns* co-starring John Abraham, Disha Patani, Arjun Kapoor and Aditya Roy Kapur.

## Alia shares her life through selfies on Insta

**Mumbai:** Alia Bhatt, fresh from her dreamy wedding with Ranbir Kapoor, shared her life through four selfies where she posted her pictures from the first four months of 2022.

Sharing instances from her life occasionally, Alia often leaves her fans in awe of her beauty with the pictures she shares on her Instagram handle.

Similarly, Alia has taken the Internet by storm when she posted four pictures that give us a glimpse of the actor at different times from January to April. In the first selfie, the actor is seen basking in the sun.

The second one shows a delighted Alia upon receiving a handwritten letter from Amitabh Bachchan praising her performance in *Gangubai Kathiawadi*.

Her third photo is a cute selfie from the sets of Ayan Mukherji's *Brahmastra*, with her hair covered in yellow petals.

Meanwhile, in her last photo, the actress enjoyed is seen spending some quality time in the pool.

Meanwhile, the newly-wed couple Alia and Ranbir will be seen in Ayan Mukherji's fantasy drama *Brahmastra* which is slated to release September 9, 2022.

Besides, Alia is also working on the next schedule of her upcoming film *Rocky Aur Rani KPrem Kahani* directed by Karan Johar, which also stars Ranveer Singh.



## Kartik to tour four cities for promoting title song of Bhool Bhulaiyaa 2

**Mumbai:** Kartik Aaryan-starrer *Bhool Bhulaiyaa 2*'s title track is set to be released during a one-of-a-kind multi-city tour. The actor, who seems to be unstoppable, is leaving no stone unturned to make his first theatrical release in post-lockdown times a memorable one. And it is perhaps the first time that a song launch has been planned at a massive scale like this.

The heartthrob will be promoting the song with a four-city tour starting from Chandigarh to Lucknow, Delhi to Gurugram. The actor has a strong mass appeal, and he loves to connect with his fans personally.

With Covid-19 situation under control, he is making sure to make the most of it. The film's team has chalked out an extensive promotional plan with Aaryan to launch the much-awaited track, which is one of the most important assets for the film. He will be visiting colleges, malls and theatres in these cities and launching the song with a live audience in a single day.

The teaser of the song was released Saturday and went on to get millions of views in just a couple of hours. Aaryan's catchy new hook step in the teaser has already gone viral with fans and admirers.

The song is composed by Pritam, recreated by Tanishk Bagchi for *Bhool Bhulaiyaa 2*, and the vocals are by Neeraj Shridhar. In the number, which has been choreographed by Bosco Caesar, Aaryan is setting the dance floor on fire. The trailer for the movie was recently launched in Mumbai amid much fanfare.

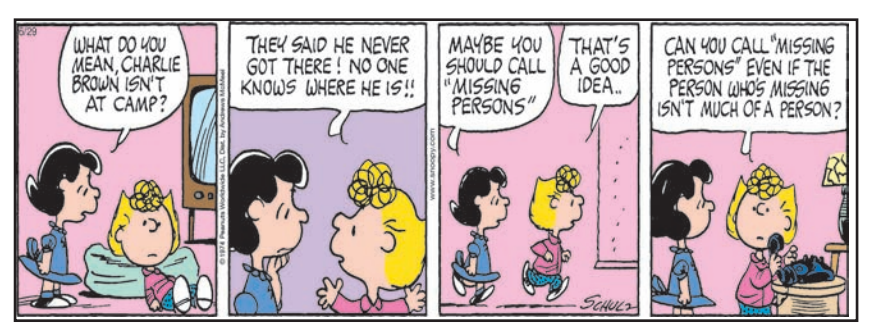
The trailer, which blew everyone's mind, is still trending on YouTube.

*Bhool Bhulaiyaa 2*, directed by Anesh Bazmee, also features actors Tabu, Kiara Advani and Rajpal Yadav in key roles. The film has been produced by Bhushan Kumar, Krishan Kumar, Murad Khetani and Anjum Khetani.

The film will release in cinemas May 20.



### PEANUTS



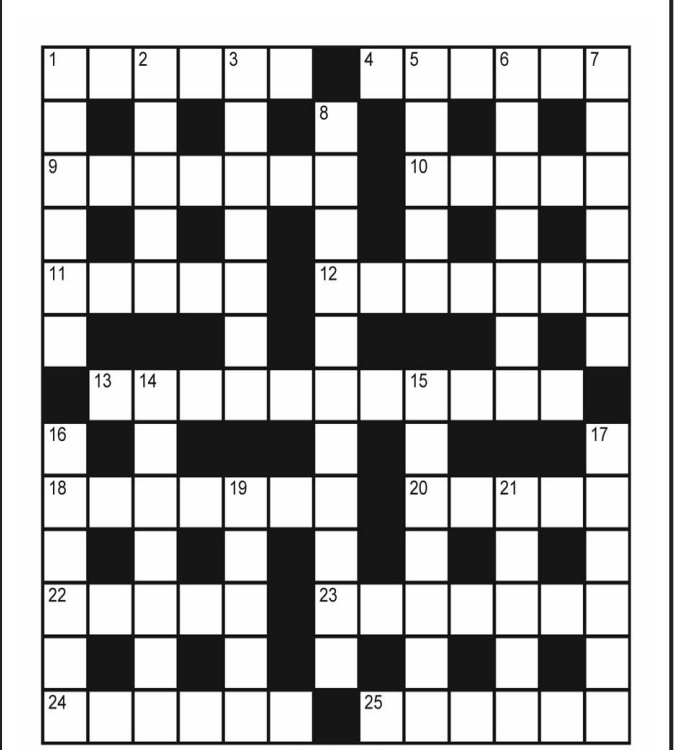
### CALVIN AND HOBBS



### BREVITY

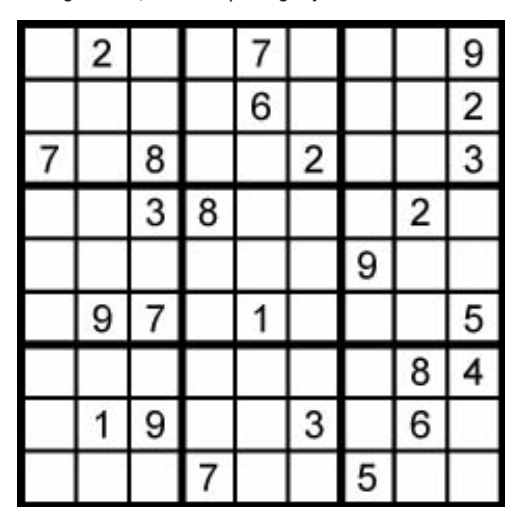


### FUN post CROSSWORD

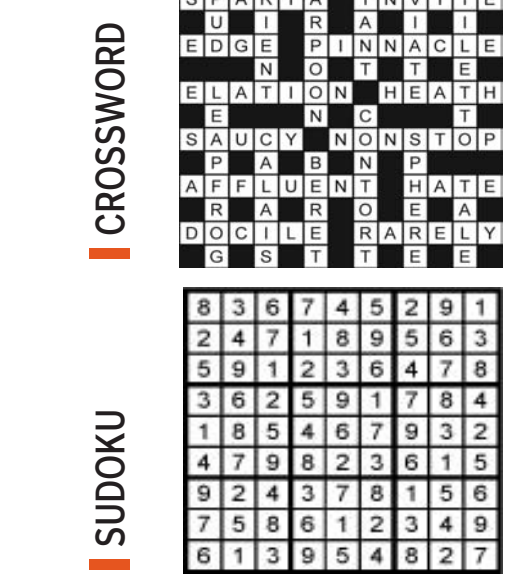


- Across
- 1 Snare
  - 4 Sanctuary
  - 9 Portable grill
  - 10 Body part
  - 11 Long-necked wading bird
  - 12 Lift
  - 13 Storm type
  - 18 Liberate (3,4)
  - 20 Arrive at
  - 22 Synthetic resin
  - 23 Feeling
  - 24 Less of a mess
  - 25 Salad green
- Down
- 1 Moral principle
  - 2 Part of the leg
  - 3 Antediluvian
  - 5 Rock
  - 6 Suitcases
  - 7 Chopped
  - 8 Military vessel
  - 14 Not silently (3,4)
  - 15 Steak cut
  - 16 Appearance
  - 17 Type of encounter
  - 19 Limerick
  - 21 Excuse

### SUDOKU



### SOLUTIONS



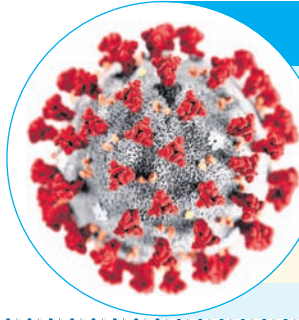
CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW

# downtown



## RICH TRADITION

Chandan Yatra of Lord Lingaraj being organised at Bindusagar tank in Bhubaneswar, Tuesday



## COVID-19 TRACKER

	INFECTED	RECOVERED	DEAD
World	51,40,41,109	46,88,33,325	62,63,628
India	4,30,84,913	4,25,41,887	5,23,889
Odisha	12,88,075	12,78,806	9,126

# Don't avail loans from illegal apps: EOW

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, May 3:** The Economic Offences Wing (EOW) of state Crime Branch Tuesday issued an advisory alerting people not to avail loans from unregistered and illegal loan applications available on internet and play store.

The people must not try to avail loans from illegal apps like INS loan, Beloon App, flipcash, Go cash, loan India, loan loan, Palm tree, cash cola, kreditee, Asan loan, Rupee Wallet, fast Rupee, easy credit loan App, sunshine loan and Rupeeking loan App etc, said the EOW in its advisory.

The cyber criminals used to offer small amounts of loans ranging between ₹3,000 and ₹5,000 to the people who download these illegal apps from internet and play store. The accused also credit money to the accounts of many people without any formal requests in this regard, EOW sources said.

Sandeep Nayak, a resident of



On the pretext of advancing loans, the cyber criminals access/ hack all information from the customers' phones, which may later be used by the company to perpetrate some other financial crimes

Such loan apps also harass the customer by charging high rate of interest. The cyber criminals also send obscene and indecent photos to the victims' contacts

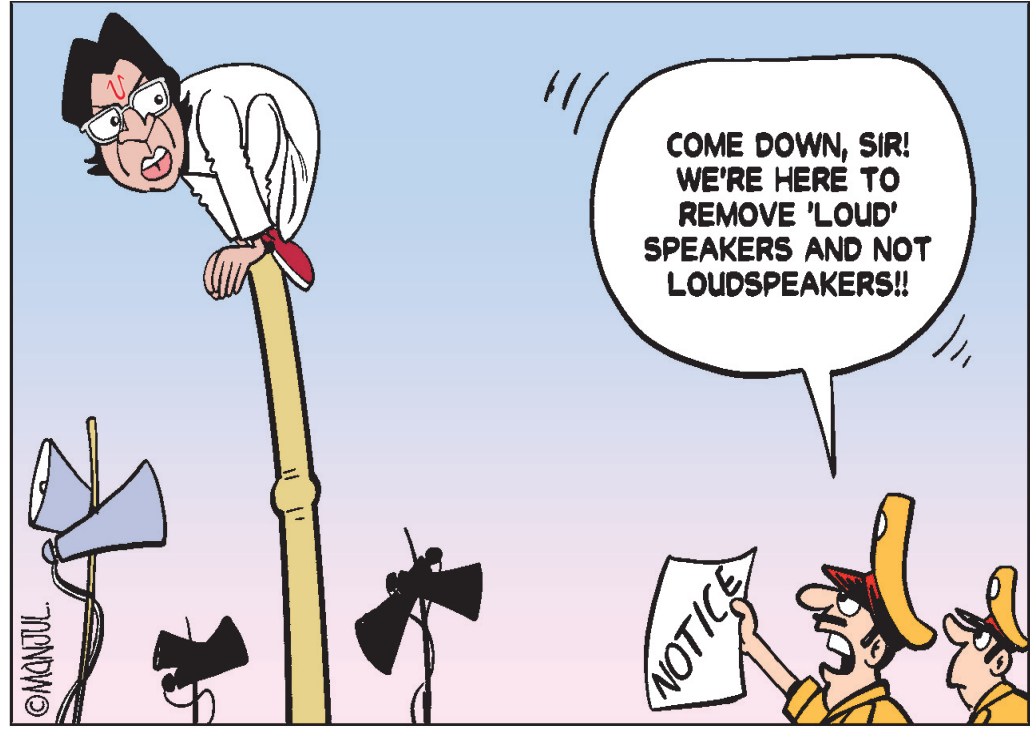
may later be used by the company to perpetrate some other financial crimes. Such loan apps also harass the customer by charging high rate of interest. The cyber criminals also send obscene and indecent photos to the victims' contacts," said the EOW in its advisory.

This apart, the agents of the loan applications also constantly humiliate the victims and their family members before their contacts.

"In some states, many people have committed suicide after facing blackmail and humiliation from the recovery agents of these illegal loan apps. Not only the borrowers but their family members also faced harassment. The people should avoid downloading/ using these illegal loan apps," added the EOW in its advisory.

The EOW has advised people, who have already downloaded the apps and taken loans through them, to inform the police regarding any harassment meted out to them by the recovery agents.

## POLITICKLE by MANJUL



# New courts open in three districts

COURTS ARE INSTITUTIONS FUNDED BY PEOPLE AND ARE MEANT TO CATER TO THEIR NEEDS: CJ

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, May 3:** New courts of civil judge (junior division)-cum judicial magistrate first class were opened at Kanas in Puri, Hemgiri and Hiramitrapar in Sundargarh and Thuamul-Rampur in Kalahandi in the presence of Orissa High Court Chief Justice S Muralidhar, Tuesday.

The district judges, judicial officers, office bearers of the bar associations and the Collectors and Superintendents of Police of the three districts attended the event through virtual mode. Congratulating the people and the advocates of the four places, Chief Justice S Muralidhar said, "Courts are institutions funded by people and are meant to cater to their needs, and the bar should not hesitate attending the court to work under any difficulty. Chief Justice expressed concern over the recent practice of some bar associations in not attending regular court work in the pretext of scorching heat during summer,

and urged the legal fraternity to be sensitive to the plight of under trials and other litigant public who look up to the courts for justice. He also assured that all the infrastructural support would be provided to the bar. The chief justice called for the need of judicial system to work like the public health system which remains alert to serve the people day and night. He called upon the lawyers and judges to strive to deliver the constitutional promise of equal and fair justice.

Speaking on the occasion Justice Biswajit Mohanty, the administrative judge for Puri said it has been constant endeavour of the High Court to bring people closer to justice and new courts are being established for ensuring speedy access to justice for people living in far flung areas.

Justice KR Mohapatra, the administrative judge for Sundargarh said opening of the new courts in remote areas is meant to achieve the goal of access to justice and timely dispensation of justice for all.



Inauguration of a new court at Kanas in Puri district

# BJP urges Gov for withdrawal of 'false case' against MLA



POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, May 3:** A delegation of Odisha unit of BJP, led by party chief whip in Assembly Mohan Majhi, Tuesday met Governor Ganeshi Lal and sought his intervention in connection with the arrest of party MLA Subash Chandra Panigrahi recently.

The BJP delegation alleged that the police had falsely implicated Panigrahi and requested the Governor for withdrawal of the case against the legislator.

Panigrahi, the legislator from Deogarh Assembly segment, was arrested Sunday for allegedly assaulting Tileibani BDO Krushna Chandra Dalapati.

"It is unfortunate that Opposition MLAs neither get respect nor feel safe under Naveen Patnaik government," said Majhi to media persons after meeting the Governor.

The BDO had misbehaved with Panigrahi. The police did not take any action even though the MLA had lodged an FIR in this connection. However, the police arrested

Subash Chandra Panigrahi, the legislator from Deogarh Assembly segment, was arrested Sunday for allegedly assaulting Tileibani BDO Krushna Chandra Dalapati

The BJP delegation alleged that the police had falsely implicated Panigrahi and requested the Governor for withdrawal of the case against the legislator

Panigrahi acting on the BDO's FIR filed at least three hours later, Majhi alleged.

According to Majhi, Panigrahi had contacted the Tileibani BDO April 30 to discuss some important issues. The BDO first told Panigrahi to meet him at the block office and subsequently he changed the venue of the meeting to four different places one after another.

Finally, the MLA met the BDO at Bhaliagudi village. Upon seeing the MLA, the BDO scolded him and threatened him to life, the BJP leaders alleged in the memorandum

submitted to the Governor. Though several incidents of attack on BJP legislators have been reported in the recent past, no action has been taken against the culprits. However, Panigrahi, who had not assaulted the BDO, was arrested without proper investigation, alleged Majhi and sought the arrest of the BDO for violating Book Circular 47, a circular issued by the state government on observance of relationship between MP/MLAs and government servants.

"The Book Circular 47 is not being implemented properly and the officers are very carelessly dealing with the MPs and MLAs. It is seen that some officers are daring to ignore the Book circular-47 at large for which the MPs and MLAs are feeling humiliated," said the BJP leaders in the memorandum.

The BJP leaders requested the Governor to instruct the state government to direct all the public servants to follow the Book Circular-47 properly for a conducive and congenial atmosphere between public servants and MPs /MLAs.

# Cong MLAs summoned to meet Rahul May 9

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, May 3:** The Congress MLAs from the state have been summoned to New Delhi for a discussion with former AICC president Rahul Gandhi May 9.

Gandhi will hold discussions with the MLAs regarding the appointment of next president of Pradesh Congress Committee (PCC), said party legislator Suresh Kumar Routray here Tuesday.

"We all nine Congress MLAs will meet soon and deliberate upon the issues to be raised before the high command," said Congress MLA Taraprasad Bahinipati.

Bahinipati, however, reiterated his demand for appointment of an MLA as the next OPCC president.

AICC in-charge for Odisha, A Chellakumar, had recently held discussions with the party MLAs and other senior leaders for the appointment of next OPCC president. According to sources, Gandhi may hold discussions with the Congress MLAs regarding the organisational changes in the party ahead of the 2024 Assembly election in state.



Gandhi will hold discussions with the MLAs regarding the appointment of next Pradesh Congress Committee (PCC) president, said party legislator Suresh Kumar Routray

Gandhi may hold discussions with the Congress MLAs regarding the organisational changes in the party ahead of the 2024 Assembly election in state, sources said

Incumbent OPCC president Niranjan Patnaik had offered to resign from his post following party's debacle in the general and Assembly elections in 2019. But, he was asked by the party high command to continue with his post. Patnaik had recently said that the AICC should appoint a new president as early as possible to take the party forward.

# Lopar likely over South Andaman Sea

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Bhubaneswar, May 3:** A low-pressure area (Lopar) is likely to be formed over the South Andaman Sea by the end of this week, the weather office said Tuesday.

In its tropical weather outlook, the weather office said that a cyclonic circulation is likely to form over South Andaman Sea and its

adjoining areas around May 4. Under its influence, a low-pressure area is likely over the region around May 6.

"Probability of cyclogenesis during next 120 hours high," the weather office said, even as it refrained from making any forecast on the path of the low-pressure system. "It is likely to become more marked during subsequent 24 hours," it said.

## PREP FOR RATH YATRA



Carpenters began chariot construction work for this year's Rath Yatra in Puri on the occasion of Akshaya Tritiya, Tuesday

OP PHOTO

# Brisk walking may make you look younger: Study

Forget botox, just doing brisk walking daily may shave off 16 years from your biological age by midlife, finds a study.

Researchers from the University of Leicester in the UK in a new study of genetic data of more than 400,000 adults revealed a clear link between walking pace and a genetic marker of biological age.

In the paper published in the journal Communications Biology, they confirmed a causal link between walking pace and leukocyte telomere length (LTL), an indicator of biological age; and found that a faster walking pace, independent of the amount of physical activity, was associated with longer telomere.

The team estimated that a lifetime of brisk walking could lead to the equivalent of 16 years younger biological age by midlife.

Telomeres are the acaps' at the end of each chromosome, and hold repetitive sequences of non-coding DNA that protect the chromosome from damage, similar to the way the cap at the end of a shoelace stops it from unravelling.

Each time a cell divides, these telomeres become shorter - until a



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point where they become so short that the cell can no longer divide, known as 'replicative senescence'. Therefore, scientists consider LTL a strong marker for 'biological age', independent from when an individual was born.

Although the relationship between telomere length and disease is not fully understood, the building up of these senescent cells is believed to contribute to a range of symptoms we associate with ageing, such as frailty and age-related diseases.

Data from wrist-worn wearable activity tracking devices

used to measure habitual physical activity also supported a stronger role of habitual activity intensity (e.g. faster walking) in relation to telomere length.

The study "suggests measures such as a habitually slower walking speed are a simple way of identifying people at greater risk of chronic disease or unhealthy ageing, and that activity intensity may play an important role in optimising interventions", said Dr Paddy Dempsey, Lecturer and Research Fellow at the University.



SHORT TAKES

SEXUAL EXPLOITATION CHARGE

TRYING THE LUCK

Bear kills woman in Boinda

Boinda: A woman was mauled to death by a bear in Takba jungle under Handapa police limits and Kishorenagar block of Angul district, Monday afternoon.

Jharigaon MLA in soup

POST NEWS NETWORK

Nabarangpur/Umerkote, May 3: Jharigaon MLA Prakash Majhi Tuesday landed in the soup after a woman lodged a complaint at Khandagiri police station in Bhubaneswar alleging sexual exploitation and murder threat by the former.

The Opposition alleged that the MLA, after having physical relationship with the woman for three years, has threatened to kill her

Four boats seized for illegal fishing

Basudevpur: Four illegal fishing boats were seized in Padhuan and Kasia areas of Bhubaneswar, as the government has imposed restrictions on fishing along the coast to ensure safe breeding of marine species.



BJP workers led by Umerkote MLA Nityananda Gond staged a demonstration outside Umerkote block office. Both the parties addressing separate press meets warned to intensify their agitation if suitable action is not taken against the accused MLA.

her. However, police are not registering the complaint against the MLA of the ruling party,” district Congress president Muna Tripathy said. BJP has questioned as to whose behest the police are trying to protect the legislator.



A tribal boy angling at Badaghagara waterfall in Keonjhar district

OP PHOTO

3 killed as bikes collide head-on

POST NEWS NETWORK

Patana, May 3: At least three persons were killed and another was rendered critical after two bikes had a head-on collision on National Highway-220 near Patana-Dhenkikote-Kianali electric structure in Keonjhar district, late Monday night.

Fresh pitch for port at Bahuda river mouth

POST NEWS NETWORK

Berhampur, May 3: Various outfits have revived the demand for a riverine small port at Bahuda river mouth in Ganjam district as the state government, which had mooted a proposal to this effect 10 years ago, is not taking any step in this direction, said a report.

Man kills self hours before daughter's marriage in Angul

POST NEWS NETWORK

Boinda, May 3: A man jumped before the Sambalpur-Puri Inter City Express and committed suicide allegedly over domestic dispute just a few hours before her daughter's marriage, Tuesday.



alleged. A bout 10 years ago, a proposal was forwarded to the UPA government at the Centre to set up a small port at Bahuda river mouth, the area mostly populated by fishermen community. At that time, Paradip Port authorities were keen to execute the project and even proposed to sign an agreement with the state government in this regard.

The deceased was identified as Surath Behera of Parsumal village in Angul district. Locals spotted his mutilated body on the tracks of Talcher-Sambalpur route and informed Boinda Railway outpost police. The Government Railway Police (GRP) registered a case and sent the body to Talcher hospital for post-mortem.

2-time former sarpanch killed

Angul: Husband of a samiti member candidate Tuesday hacked a former two-time sarpanch to death over his wife's defeat during the recently-concluded panchayat election at Balaramprasad under Nalco police limits in Angul district. The deceased has been identified as Sibaram Sahu, 62, former two-time sarpanch, a zilla parishad member of Balaramprasad panchayat and a contractor by profession.

60 nabbed for attack on IIC

POST NEWS NETWORK

Lamtapat, May 3: At least 60 villagers of Kumar Gandhana under Lamtapat block in Koraput district were arrested Tuesday for attacking the inspector-in-charge (IIC) of Nandapur police station Praful Lakra Monday.

mobile phone went in vain as his phone was found switched off.

Meanwhile, Khandagiri police denied lodging of any complaint by the victim. "No complaint has been lodged at Khandagiri police station in this regard. We will take action only after the alleged victim files a plaint," said Padmanav Pradhan, IIC of Khandagiri police station.

the motorcycle of Sunil and Ramakant, who were on the way to Patana, collided with the bike of Trilochan and Kamalakat coming from opposite direction.

Paradip and Visakhapatnam ports has to be transformed into a major port. Gopalpur Port lying between Paradip and Visakhapatnam ports has to be transformed into a major port. Gopalpur Port had its humble beginning as a small port in 1980s with an investment of ₹140 crore. In the 90s' marine trade through this port increased manifold. However, the 1999 Super Cyclone dealt a fatal blow to the port, leaving it in bad shape.

Police said marriage of Behera's daughter was scheduled for Tuesday. He had purchased the necessary articles for his daughter's marriage and also availed a loan for the purpose. The reason behind his extreme step is stated to be a fight which he had with his family members on availing the loan, late Monday night. This pushed him into distress as he lost his mental balance and decided to end his life.

9 held for 2 BJD leaders' murder

POST NEWS NETWORK

Berhampur, May 3: Eleven days after the murder of two BJD leaders - Sudarshan Suar and Sudhir Kant Patra - in Paljhadi village under Digapahandi police limits in Ganjam district, police Tuesday arrested nine persons including the mastermind Prashant Kumar Gouda and three supari killers.

The murder deal over political rivalry was struck by the mastermind, a ganja trader, at ₹50, 000

given ₹30,000 as advance to the killers, Berhampur SP Pinak Mishra revealed at a presser here.

Gouda's wife. Though Prashant had spent ₹40 lakh, his wife suffered defeat.

On the other hand, both the deceased had campaigned for Rabi Gouda's wife. Infuriated over this, Prashant hatched a plan to eliminate the two and hired the supari killers Kuna Gouda, Budu Das and B Debaraj Reddy. He was also helped by Sumant Kumar Nahak, Santosh Kumar Pradhan, Basant Kumar Gouda, Krushna Chandra Gouda and Sidhant Gouda.

REGIONAL OFFICE: SAMBALPUR 1st Floor, Balaji Midtown, Budharaja, Sambalpur - 768004 POSSESSION NOTICE [RULE 8(1) OF SECURITY INTEREST (ENFORCEMENT) RULES - 2002] Whereas, the undersigned being the Authorised Officer of Union Bank of India, Deogarh Branch under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest (Second) Act, 2002 (Act No. 54 of 2002) and in exercise of powers conferred under section 13(12) read with Rule 3 of the Security interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 issued a Demand Notice calling upon the Borrower/Guarantor in loan A/c mentioned below to repay the amount mentioned in the notice plus interest thereon within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said notice.

Substandard work alleged in Sanaghagara facelift

POST NEWS NETWORK

Keonjhar, May 3: While the state Tourism department is spending a whopping ₹4.26 crore for the renovation of famous Sanaghagara waterfall in Keonjhar district, locals have raised questions over the quality of the ongoing work. They accused the officials of not monitoring the work of the contractor.



However, it was observed that the paver blocks used to make pavements had not been placed with appropriate mixture of concrete. Moreover, the quality of the paver blocks has not been tested. Worse, the paver blocks are being placed without levelling the surface of the under-construction road, many locals raved. In addition, the existing dilapidated entry gate is being renovated instead of constructing a new one. Similarly, concrete guard wall of National Highway-49 is being fenced with wires, instead of proposed compound wall.

On the other hand, environmentalists have raised concerns over felling of trees for the development works. Rubbishing the allegations, assistant engineer and project in-charge Sridhar Mahala said, "The development and beautification works are going on properly. Quality monitoring and supervision of every work is being done through WhatsApp. No question of irregularity arises at all." It is pertinent to mention here that the state government has decided to transform the Sanaghagara waterfall into a world-class tourist site.

BUREAU OF ENERGY EFFICIENCY (A Statutory body under Ministry of Power, Government of India) 4th Floor, Sewa Bhawan, R. K. Puram, New Delhi - 110066 Website: www.beeindia.gov.in, Ph: 011-26766700 EMPANELMENT/RE-EMPANELMENT OF ESCO Applications are invited from eligible organizations for empanelment/re-empanelment as Energy Service Company (ESCO) with Bureau of Energy Efficiency with effect from the date of publication of this advertisement.

भारतीय प्रौद्योगिकी संस्थान भुवनेश्वर INDIAN INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY BHUBANESWAR ADVERTISEMENT No. 05/02 Non-Teaching / 2022 dt. 02/05/2022 Indian Institute of Technology, Bhubaneswar invites online applications from the interested/eligible candidates for the following position to be engaged through OUTSOURCING AGENCY. The position is purely temporary in nature.

भारतीय प्रौद्योगिकी संस्थान भुवनेश्वर INDIAN INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY BHUBANESWAR विज्ञापन संख्या Rectt./01/गैर-शिक्षण / 2022 dt. 04.05.2022 ADVERTISEMENT No. Rectt./01/Non-Teaching/2022 dt. 04-05-2022 भारतीय प्रौद्योगिकी संस्थान भुवनेश्वर निम्नलिखित गैर-शिक्षण पदों को प्रत्यक्ष / प्रतिनियुक्ति के आधार पर भरने के लिए योग्य भारतीय नागरिकों से ऑनलाइन आवेदन आमंत्रित करता है।

Table with 5 columns: Sr. No., Name of the Post, No. of Vacancies, Nature of Engagement, Consolidated Remuneration. Contains 23 job listings for various engineering, technical, and administrative positions.



of the day quote

Punjabis would never tolerate an outsider like Arvind Kejriwal running the government from Delhi

The need of the hour is to oust the anti-people BJP government and for that, all the small and big political parties should unite and come on to a common platform

The situation in the country is not fine. The policy of divide and rule and politics of isolation going on in the country are not correct. Do not be scared and keep on fighting

SHORT TAKES

XE variant detected in India

New Delhi: One confirmed case of the XE Covid variant has been detected in India, according to the latest bulletin of the Indian SARS-CoV2 Genomics Sequencing Consortium (INSACOG). However, the location of this variant was not identified in the bulletin for April 25 released Tuesday.

Major fire in scrap godown

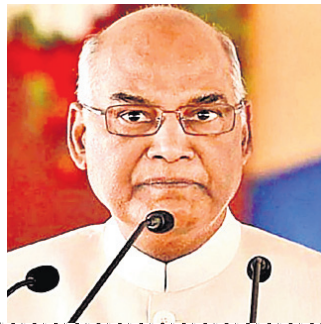
New Delhi: A major fire broke out in the scrap godown of MCD office in northwest Delhi's Keshav Puram Tuesday evening, officials said. No casualty was reported in the incident, they said.

Masked youth beat students

Gurugram: In a daring incident, three masked youth barged into the government senior secondary school at Abhaypur village in Sohna block and beat up several Class XII students with sticks.

WB: 3 of family found murdered

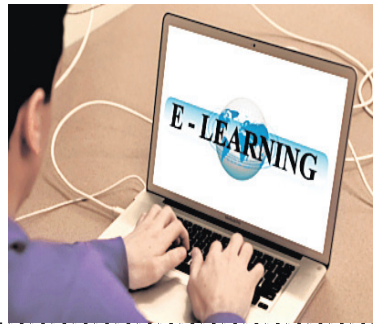
Palashipara (WB): A 28-year-old woman and her parents were found dead with their throats slit in West Bengal's Nadia district Tuesday, police said.



Jain saints understood the importance of masks centuries ago. By covering their mouth and nose, they were not only able to avoid killing living beings but they were also able to prevent the entry of microorganisms into their body

BOOST TO E-LEARNING

Modern teaching is no longer limited to the classrooms, blackboard or green board, now education in Haryana schools is being imparted through digital platforms.



LOUDSPEAKER ROW

Raj Thackeray booked, MNS fears arrest

Aurangabad/Mumbai, May 3: The political temperature in Maharashtra soared as Aurangabad police on Tuesday filed a FIR against Maharashtra Navnirman Sena President Raj Thackeray for alleged violations of police conditions at his mega-rally held in that city late Sunday.



'Play Hanuman Chalisa if you hear azaans'

MUMBAI: Setting the stage for a possible confrontation as he urged people to show the "strength of a Hindu now or never", Maharashtra Navnirman Sena President Raj Thackeray late Tuesday called upon the people to play "Hanuman Chalisa" outside those mosques where "azaans" (prayer calls) are sounded from Wednesday.

Simultaneously, a Mumbai Police team is likely to go and serve a prohibitory notice under CrPC's Section 149 on Raj Thackeray, even as senior MNS leaders expressed apprehensions of his possible arrest in the case.

as all major parties like the ruling MVA (Shiv Sena-Nationalist Congress Party-Congress), the Samajwadi Party, the Sambhaji Brigade, the Bhim Sena, the Swabhimani Shekari Sanghatana, the Vanchit Bahujan Aghadi, and others demanded stringent action against him, including arrest.

other top officials, followed by a meeting with Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray and Sena MP Sanjay Raut. DGP Seth had said before that the Maharashtra Police would initiate action against Raj Thackeray "today itself" - a day ahead of his 'Now OR Never' ultimatum to the state government to remove loudspeakers from all mosques by Wednesday (May 4) failing which his workers would blare Hanuman Chalisa at double volumes.

Two tribal men beaten to death on suspicion of cow slaughter

Seoni (MP), May 3: Two tribal men died after they were allegedly assaulted by a group of 15-20 people over suspicion of cow slaughter in Madhya Pradesh's Seoni district, police said Tuesday.

India's press freedom ranking falls to 150 from 142 last year

New Delhi, May 3: Indian media continues to remain in a state of "crisis" as the world's largest democracy slipped eight places to 150th position in the 2022 World Press Freedom Index of 180 countries, as per the media watchdog Reporters Without Borders (Reporters Sans Frontieres) report. Last year, India was at 142nd position.



RSF stated that the Indian authorities should respect the right to freedom of expression and release any journalists detained on trumped-up or politically motivated charges for their critical reporting and stop targeting journalists and muzzling independent media. According to the report, the central government and its supporters "waged a guerrilla war

of lawsuits against media outlets whose coverage of the pandemic contradicted official statements". "Indian law is protective in theory but charges of defamation, sedition, contempt of court and endangering national security are increasingly used against journalists critical of the government, who are branded as 'anti-national'", the report added.

RSF also pointed out in its report that, "scribes who try to cover anti-government strikes and protests are often arrested and sometimes detained arbitrarily". As per the report, authorities in BJP-led Uttar Pradesh have repeatedly filed false charges against journalists for publishing content and social media posts critical of the government.

Another person was injured in the incident, they said. The complainant in the case and the opposition Congress in the BJP-ruled state have alleged the attackers belong to the Bajrang Dal. Some 20 people have been booked in connection with the incident, which took place at Simaria under Kurai police station limits between 2:30 am and 3 am Monday, including six on charges of murder, an official said.

After the incident, a group led by Congress legislator Arjun Singh Kakodia started a protest on the Jabalpur-Nagpur highway. The Seoni Superintendent of Police and other officials visited the protest site. "Two tribal men have died. It was alleged a group of 15-20 people went to the victims' house, accused them of killing a cow and assaulted them. The two men died while being taken to hospital and another sustained minor injuries. A postmortem is yet to be conducted," Additional Superintendent of Police SK Maravi told PTL. "A case of murder has been registered at the Kuarai police station and police teams are searching for the accused. Some of the accused are named (in the complaint) and others are unidentified. We have taken 2-3 suspects into custody. Some 12 kilograms of meat has been found in the victims' house," Maravi said.

Heatwave abates from all parts of country: IMD

New Delhi, May 3: Heatwave has abated from all parts of the country and the maximum temperature has further fallen by two to four degrees Celsius over Rajasthan, Punjab, Delhi and Haryana, the India Meteorological Department said Tuesday.

Under the influence of a Western Disturbance, isolated light rainfall, dust storm, and thunderstorm with winds gusting up to 50 kmph is very likely over Punjab, Haryana, Uttar Pradesh and Rajasthan during the next two days. Banda in east Uttar Pradesh had logged a record high of 47.4 degrees Celsius for April on Friday.



SEVERAL PLACES IN THE COUNTRY HAD LOGGED ALL-TIME HIGH TEMPERATURES FOR APRIL WITH THE MERCURY LEAPING TO 46-47 DEGREES CELSIUS UNDER THE IMPACT OF THE TORRID HEATWAVE

grees Celsius, 45.1 degrees Celsius, 45.9 degrees Celsius and 45.3 degrees Celsius, respectively on Friday. At 43.5 degrees Celsius, Delhi saw its highest maximum temperature for a day in April in 12 years on Thursday and Friday. On Saturday, Delhi's Sports Complex weather station recorded a maximum temperature of 47.1 degrees Celsius. Amid the intense heatwave, India's peak power demand reached an all-time high of 207.11 GW Friday. A heatwave is declared when the maximum temperature is over 40 degrees Celsius and at least 4.5 notches above normal.

INFLATION BITES

PVT SCHOOL ASPIRATION INCREASINGLY OUT OF REACH

New Delhi, May 3: Indian financial consultant Waqar Khan has seen his income drop by about a fifth since the coronavirus pandemic began. When his younger son's private school raised fees by 10% this year, he had no choice but to move him to the state system.

under the sort of pressure to make cuts in household budgets not seen in years. Khan is among millions of parents who have moved children from private to state education since 2020, or from elite schools to cheaper ones. In 2021, four million children switched from private to state, more than 4% of all children in school.



services lower- and middle-income families as well as the wealthy. On top of fees, transport companies that take children to school have raised prices by more than 15% this month in Delhi and some other places to cover higher wages and fuel, parents' associations said. Arjun Singh, 47, who drives a

Four million children left private system schools in 2021. Indian households hit by pandemic and rising costs. Reverses a trend that saw private education expand rapidly. Schools say they have to raise fees to meet higher costs.

70% of private schools raised fees by up to 20% last month, and some parents have asked authorities to press schools to soften the blow. As parents defaulted, some schools cut teachers' pay and thousands of schools, particularly those catering to lower-income families, closed, according to school associations and state authorities. Enrolment in private schools has skyrocketed to more than 35% of students from about 9% in 1993, and nearly 50% of households spend nearly 20% of their earnings on children's education, according to government and industry estimates.

bank's target, and economists say that households are bracing for worse as companies pass on the costs. Many private schools have raised fees and other charges by more than 15% this year, said Aparajita Gautam, president of the Delhi Parents Association, although some had delayed doing so during the pandemic. In the city of Kolkata, nearly

A family with monthly income of 20,000-50,000 rupees (\$260-\$650) might pay 2,000-10,000 rupees a month on tuition and another 1,500-5,000 rupees on transport. There are about 90 million Indian children in private schools in total.



## Nitish keeps silence on Kishor's announcement

PRASHANT KISHOR'S HINT AT LAUNCHING A POLITICAL PARTY FROM BIHAR EVOKED SHARP REACTIONS FROM RJD AND BJP, BUT JD-U CHOSE NOT TO REACT



INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Patna, May 3: A day after political strategist Prashant Kishor hinted about launching a political party, Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar maintained a studied silence on the development. While interacting with media on the occasion of Eid Tuesday, the Chief Minister initially ducked the question, but on being asked repeatedly, he stated that he has nothing to do with it. On Monday, Prashant Kishor hinted at launching a political party from Bihar. Taking to his official Twitter handle, he tweeted, "My quest to be a meaningful participation in democracy and help shape pro people policy led to a 10 years rollercoaster ride." "As I turn this page, time to go to the Real Masters. The people to better understand the issues and to path to Jan Suraj - People good governance starting from Bihar," he tweeted. His tweets evoked sharp reactions by RJD and BJP, but JD-U chose not to react. It is well known that Nitish Kumar has good relations with Prashant Kishor, which the for-

mer has admitted several times on public platforms. Several, however, see it a political ploy of Nitish Kumar to indirectly promote PK in the state so that the parties can be merged. Currently, JD-U is undergoing a deep crisis especially after the second expansion of the Narendra Modi government. In that expansion, RCP Singh was given the charge to bargain with BJP but he opted otherwise and secured the cabinet berth for himself. This led to other prominent leader Rajiv Ranjan Singh alias Lalan Singh being upset with him. Nitish Kumar realised it and made him the party's national president. At present, there is a RCP Singh group, Lalan Singh group, Upendra Kushwaha group, active in JD-U. Taking this in view, the JD-U has issued an official notification directing that every poster and advertisement will have Kumar's photograph only. No other leaders are entitled to promote themselves through poster politics in Bihar. It is well known that except Nitish Kumar, there is no political successor in JD-U who could hold the party together at present.

### No future for any more parties, says Sushil Modi

In a veiled attack on political strategist Prashant Kishor over his rumoured entry in Bihar politics, as well as other smaller outfits, BJP leader Sushil Kumar Modi Monday said there are only four mainstream political parties in the state "Apart from these four political parties, there is no future for other political parties. In democracy, anyone has the right to do political experiments or make political parties. There are hundreds of political parties in the country. If anyone wants to make a new canal, it would not affect evergreen rivers," he said. The statement of Sushil Kumar Modi, the former Deputy Chief Minister, may not be taken kindly by smaller parties, especially Jitan Ram Manjhi-led HAM. It has 4 MLAs in Bihar and he is playing a role of king maker in the current NDA government led by Nitish Kumar. Still, Sushil Modi has not given any weightage to it. It will be interesting to see what would be the reaction of HAM. Manjhi is critical of the BJP's stand on several issues.

Neither RCP Singh, nor Lalan Singh or Upendra Kushwaha. In that context, the political capability of PK is well established across the country. Hence, Nitish Kumar could give ideal play ground in Bihar to grow as a party and then merge into JD-U so that it would be easy for Nitish Kumar to hand over the responsibility to hold his legacy. Though, this is just an assumption of political analysts in Bihar; they also believe that no one, including his closest allies, know Kumar's take on it.

## Devotees throng mosques on Eid



Muslims offer prayers at the Jama Masjid on the occasion of Eid-ul-Fitr, in old Delhi, Tuesday

PTI PHOTO

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, May 3: After a gap of two years, the Namaz of Eid was performed in mosques across Delhi, including at the historic Jama Masjid and Fatehpuri Masjid, as COVID-19 restrictions remain suspended due to a dip in cases. On Tuesday morning, several mosques shifted the Namaz timings, keeping in mind the summer heat. Some others held special prayers in two shifts to accommodate scores of devotees. Tight security arrangements were put in place at major religious places and also in different parts of the city for peaceful progression of the Namaz. Festivities broke out with people greeting and hugging each other after the Namaz and shopping their favourite delicacies

and other items. The Namaz of Eid is performed after sunrise and it used to be carried out around 8-9 am earlier. But this time, we preponed it keeping in mind the scorching heat these days, Shahi Imam of Jama Masjid Syed Ahmed Bukhari said. The Namaz was performed at 6 am at the Jama Masjid. Many other mosques, including Fatehpuri, Sunehri Masjid, Shahjahan Masjid, Bhoori Bhatiyari and Dhaka Masjid, too held the Namaz between 6 am and 7 am. Junglewali Masjid in Azad Market and a few other mosques held prayers in two shifts to accommodate the people. In the last couple of years, people were forced to offer the Namaz of Eid at their homes as religious places remained closed as Covid-induced restrictions were in place.

## HINDUS, MUSLIMS CELEBRATE EID TOGETHER IN JAHANGIRPURI

New Delhi: Hindu and Muslim communities together celebrated Eid Tuesday at Jahangirpuri's Kushal Chowk by exchanging sweets and hugs, giving a message of peace and harmony in the area that witnessed communal violence last month. The locals also treated the security personnel deployed there to sweets. "Last month was quite tough for the people of Jahangirpuri. Today, on the occasion of Eid, we gathered at Kushal Chowk. We exchanged sweets and hugged each other and sent a message of harmony and peace. This shows people in Jahangirpuri live in harmony and respect each other's religions," a representative from the Muslim community Tabrez Khan said. Khan expressed hope that full normalcy will return in the area soon. The situation is improving. Normalcy has returned to a large extent and we are expecting complete normalcy in the coming days, he said. Police said they have ensured adequate security arrangements on the occasion of Eid. Meanwhile, shops in and around Kushal Chowk--except for the main lane in Block C where a mosque is located-- have reopened. Hawkers and customers have also returned for business. Indramani Tiwari, the president of the Residents' Welfare Association, who represented the Hindu community, said Eid is being celebrated in a peaceful manner. "We are celebrating Eid together and expecting this harmony to remain among the people. There is peace in the area and we expect complete normalcy soon," Tiwari said.

## Revise school timings or advance summer holidays, demand parents in Delhi

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, May 3: Worried about their children's health due to extreme heat, parents here have asked the Delhi government to either revise the school timings or advance the summer holidays. Several schools have already announced reduction in outdoor activities in view of the sweltering heat coupled with the ongoing spike in the number of Covid cases. However, parents claim the school timings are not feasible for students to step out in this extreme heat. The Haryana government Monday announced that due to intense heatwave prevalent throughout the state, the timings of all schools-- government and private--will be from 7 am to 12 pm for Classes 1 to 12 with effect from May 4. However, no such measures have been announced in Delhi yet. On one side, the Centre advised not to go out in the sun, especially between 12 noon and 3 pm. But in Delhi, most of the schools timings are between 8 am-2 pm. "Students reach home by 3 pm. That means during peak summer hours, students are out in the sun, which is really dangerous. We request Delhi government to either revise the school timings like other states are doing or pre-pon summer holidays," said Aparajitha Gautam, President, Delhi Parents' Association. Amid the intense heatwave across the country, the Centre had last week urged states and Union Territories to review their health facility preparedness for availability of adequate quantities of essential medicines and necessary

equipments while ensuring sufficient drinking water and continued functioning of cooling appliances in critical areas. The Centre had also advised people to avoid getting out in the sun, especially between 12 noon and 3 pm, avoid strenuous activities when outside in the afternoon, avoid alcohol, tea, coffee, or drinks with large amount of sugar, stating these may lead to loss of more body fluid or cause stomach cramps. The Centre had also advised people to avoid high protein food and stale food and not leave children or pets in parked vehicle. During previous years, whenever the temperature used to rise, the schools used to pre-pon summer vacations but that is not an option this year considering schools have reopened after a long period due to Covid. However, the heat is extreme this year and at least the schools can revise the timings for children to be less exposed, said Nidhi Vaishnav, a parent. Another parent Sunil Joshi, said, "My child's school is offering flexibility in attendance but we don't want to restrict children from going to school again as they are just getting into the groove. So, revision of school timings is the best solution in this case." A torrid heatwave has sent the mercury soaring across large swathes of the country with the temperature in Delhi rising up to 46 degrees Celsius. Delhi also recorded its second hottest April in 72 years with a monthly average maximum temperature of 40.2 degrees Celsius. Despite Covid cases rising in Delhi, I was sending both my kids to school because there has been lot of learning loss already.



Women buy jewellery at a showroom on the occasion of Akshay Tritiya, in New Delhi

PTI PHOTO

## Bihar Police crackdown on fake SIMs to stop spurt in sextortion

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Patna, May 3: The Bihar Police has ordered a crackdown on SIM cards procured through fake documents amidst a spurt in online sexual blackmailing cases. The police have asked telecom companies to book customers with SIM cards issued on fake documents. Cases of sextortion are increasing in the state. The Economic and Cyber Crimes Division (ECCD) of Bihar Police has registered around 15 such cases in the last three-four months. It has taken the shape of an organized crime,

Additional Director General of Police (Economic Offences Unit), Nayar Hasnain Khan told PTI. There are several gangs based in Rajasthan, Delhi, Jharkhand, and West Bengal that are extorting money from people by blackmailing them with WhatsApp video callings through their associates in Bihar; the ADGP said. These criminals use mobile SIM cards issued on fake and forged documents, this is the reason that we have asked telecom service providers to book customers with SIMs issued on fake documents, Khan said. "We are in constant touch with

senior officials of Delhi, Rajasthan, Jharkhand, and West Bengal Police to identify and arrest cyber criminals operating from there," he said. In most cases, cybercriminals mainly target men through WhatsApp chats from fake accounts. After sending some messages, the woman, a part of the gang, video calls the man after getting numbers during their conversation and starts stripping during the call. Then, with their naked video recordings as evidence, the criminals begin blackmailing the victim, threatening to upload their photos on social media.

## After a gap of 2 years, Bihar celebrates Eid with abandon

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Patna, May 3: The festive ambience of Eid ul Fitr was back in Bihar Tuesday when the believers came out of their homes to celebrate the victory of faith over the gloomy spectre that the global pandemic had brought in its wake. Chief Minister Nitish Kumar was back in the sprawling Gandhi Maidan in Patna, a practice he has followed all through his 16-year-long tenure, to join the namaz in the thanksgiving prayer that marks the conclusion of the gruelling austerities during the holy month of Ramadan. "I have been coming here on Eid since 2016. For the last two years, the ceremony could not be held because of coronavirus. The festival teaches us the importance of mutual respect among people of different affiliations which is essential for the harmonious growth of a society, Kumar, who donned a skullcap offered by one of the clerics present on the occasion," told reporters. It was a busy day for the septuagenarian whose mettle stood proven this Ramadan as the state, where his ally BJP is the numero uno party in terms of numerical strength, remained relatively free of the communal conflagrations and controversies around relay of azaan through loudspeakers. After being through with the Gandhi Maidan function, Kumar, whose reverence for Sufi saints is well known, travelled to Phulwarisharif in another corner of the city and paid his homage at



CM Nitish Kumar was back in the sprawling Gandhi Maidan in Patna, a practice he has followed all through his 16-year-long tenure, to join the namaz in the thanksgiving prayer

Khanqah Mujibia, a shrine built in the memory of 18th century saint Hazrat Mujibullah Qadri. Elsewhere in the state, it was time for men, women and children to get dressed in all their finery to greet each other Eid Mubarak. Shrieks of joy were heard from the little ones for whom the opportunity to amble around outdoors, receiving 'Eidi' offered by their elders, came after two years. Shopkeepers dealing in vermicelli, milk and ghee were having a field day as householders kept pouring in to collect the essential ingredients for 'sevai' delicacy, considered a must-have for guests who come visiting on the day.

## Loco pilot stops passenger train midway for a drink!

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Patna, May 3: In a state where liquor is completely banned, a loco pilot stopped a passenger train for an hour at the Hasanpur railway station in Bihar's Samastipur district for the 'forbidden' drink. The train, which normally has a two-minute halt in Hasanpur, Monday evening remained stationed for an hour. It was only after the passengers protested that the railway officials came to know about the pilot's act. The passenger train number

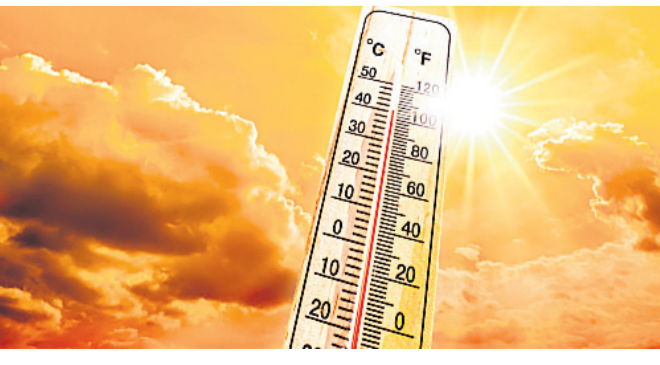
05278 started its journey from Samastipur railway station Monday at 4.05 pm and reached Hasanpur at 5.45 pm. The last destination of the train is Saharsa where normally it reaches by 8.30 pm. "As the passengers were protesting at the railway station, we went to the driver's cabin. The co-pilot Karamveer Yadav alias Munna was missing from the engine room," said Manoj Kumar Chaudhary, stationmaster of Hasanpur Railway Station. "We received information that a person was creating ruckus in the Hasanpur market in a



drunken state. When we reached there, we arrested him. He was identified as Karamveer Yadav,

loco pilot of the train stationed at Hasanpur. We also recovered half a bottle of liquor from his posses-

sion. Accordingly, we have arrested him and informed senior officials about it," he said. Following the incident, Alok Agrawal, the Divisional Railway Manager (DRM) of Samastipur zone, called a high-level meeting with the senior officials. After Karamveer Yadav was found in a drunken state, a loco pilot VC Rajkumar, who was on leave but was travelling in the same train and going to Saharsa was given the charge. The train finally left Hasanpur railway station at 6.45 pm.







# international

## of the day quote

**We're building a world-class Canadian auto industry for generations to come, an innovative economy, and a clean, strong future for everyone. This is what a healthy environment and a healthy economy looks like**

**Russia has already made the decision to pull out of the International Space Station, likely in about two years time**

**Of course, it would be necessary for the leader of the Kremlin to make available some window of opportunity. But we still have not had a response and we are still pushing, even if I fear that Putin cannot and does not want to have this meeting at this moment**

**JUSTIN TRUDEAU | CANADIAN PM**

**DMITRY ROGOZIN | CHIEF OF ROSCOSMOS**

**POPE FRANCIS**



**RUSSIA STORMS MARIUPOL PLANT**

**Ukrainian woman Alyona, 20, holds her son Sergei, 1, as they wait for boarding during an evacuation of civilians in Kramatorsk, Ukraine**

**AP/PTI**

**AP/PTI**

**ASSOCIATED PRESS**

**Zaporizhzhia, Ukraine, May 3:** Russian forces Tuesday began storming the steel mill that represented the last pocket of resistance in Mariupol, Ukrainian defenders said, just as a convoy carrying scores of civilians evacuated from the plant over the weekend reached the relative safety of a Ukrainian-controlled city.

Osnat Lubrani, the UN humanitarian coordinator for Ukraine, said that thanks to the evacuation effort, "101 women, men, children and older persons could finally leave the bunkers below the Azovstal steelworks and see the daylight after two months."

The news for those left behind was more grim. Ukrainian fighters said Russian forces started storming the sprawling plant, which includes a maze of tunnels and bunkers. Sviatoslav Palamar, deputy commander of Ukraine's Azov Regiment, said the Russians were mounting a heavy assault with "the support of armoured vehicles and tanks, with attempts to land troops from boats and a large number of infantry".

The number of Ukrainian fighters holed up inside was unclear, but the Russians estimated the number at 2,000 weeks ago, and there were reports that 500 were wounded. A few hundred civilians also re-

**2 more survivors found in China**

**Beijing:** Rescuers have found two more survivors in the rubble of a building in central China that collapsed more than three days ago, state media reported Tuesday. The official Xinhua News Agency said a man and a woman were pulled out on Monday afternoon and early Tuesday morning. The woman, whose rescue came after being buried for 88 hours, alerted workers using life detection equipment to her presence by knocking on objects.

**South Korea, US to begin air drills**

**Seoul:** South Korea and the US plan to kick off regular combined air force drills next week, in yet another move to highlight their defence posture especially against North Korea's evolving missile threats, informed sources said Tuesday. The allies are set to begin the two-week Korea Flying Training on May 9, the eve of the inauguration of President-elect Yoon Suk-yeol, who has vowed to bolster the Seoul-Washington security alliance under his slogan of "peace through strength".

**Nuke envoys hold talks on Pyongyang**

**Seoul:** The top nuclear envoys of South Korea and China met here Tuesday to discuss security situations on the Korean Peninsula amid concerns about North Korea's growing nuclear and missile threats. Liu Xiaoming, Beijing's special representative on Korean Peninsula affairs, is on his first visit to Seoul since assuming the post in April 2021 at a time of heightened tensions over Pyongyang's recent spate of missile launches and reported signs of preparations for another nuclear test, reports Yonhap News Agency. In his first public activity here, he had a meeting with his South Korean counterpart, Noh Kyu-duk, at the foreign ministry building, apparently to share their assessments of the regional security situation.

**7 killed in Brazil**

**Sao Paulo:** At least seven people were killed and another 15 were injured Monday in an accident involving a minibus transporting elderly patients in southern Brazil's Parana state, regional authorities said. According to preliminary reports from the Health Consortium of Western Parana Municipalities, the vehicle belongs to the Health Secretariat of Pato Bragado, a city in the interior of the state, and was taking hospital patients to other cities for consultation with specialists, Xinhua news agency reported.

# RUSSIA STORMS MARIUPOL PLANT



Ukrainian woman Alyona, 20, holds her son Sergei, 1, as they wait for boarding during an evacuation of civilians in Kramatorsk, Ukraine

**Russian rockets pound parts of eastern and southern Ukraine**

**Western powers pledge heavier weapons to boost Ukraine defences**

**'This is Ukraine's finest hour,' UK's Johnson says, echoing Churchill**

**RUSSIAN ROCKETS POUND PARTS OF EASTERN AND SOUTHERN UKRAINE**

Western powers pledge heavier weapons to boost Ukraine defences. "This is Ukraine's finest hour," UK's Johnson says, echoing Churchill.

mained there, Ukrainian Deputy Prime Minister Iryna Vereshchuk said.

"We'll do everything that's possible to repel the assault, but we're calling for urgent measures to evacuate the civilians that remain inside the plant and to bring them safely," Palamar said on the messaging app Telegram. He added that throughout the night, the plant was hit with naval artillery fire and airstrikes. Two civilian women were killed and 10 civilians were wounded, he said.

The assault began almost two weeks after Russian President Vladimir Putin ordered his military not to storm the plant to finish off the defenders but to seal it off.

It came as the first convoy of evacuees from the plant arrived in the Ukrainian-controlled city of Zaporizhzhia, some 140 miles (230 km) northwest of Mariupol. They were allowed to leave the steel mill during a brief ceasefire over the weekend, in an operation overseen by the UN and the Red Cross.

# SJB submits no-trust motions

**Colombo, May 3:** Sri Lanka's main Opposition party SJB Tuesday handed over to the parliamentary Speaker motions of no-confidence against the SLPP coalition government and embattled President Gotabaya Rajapaksa, even as the government announced the appointment of a Cabinet sub-committee to look into the proposal for a new Constitution.

"We met the Speaker at his residence and handed over two no-trust motions, the first one against the President under Article 42 of the Constitution and the other against the government," Samagi Jana Balawegaya (SJB) General Secretary Ranjith Madduma Bandara said. Article 42 stipulates that the President is responsible to Parliament for the exercise, performance and discharge of his

**We met the Speaker at his residence and handed over two no-trust motions**

**RANJITH MADUMMA BANDARA | SJB'S GENERAL SECRETARY**

functions. Madduma Bandara said the party wants the motion to be taken quickly. The Parliament meets tomorrow for the first of eight sittings this month. The SJB said they would field a

# Deforestation slowing, but tropical rainforests under threat: FAO

**THE LOSS OF TROPICAL FORESTS ACCOUNTED FOR MORE THAN 90 PER CENT OF THE GLOBAL DEFORESTATION FROM 2000 TO 2018, AT 157 MILLION HECTARES -- THAT'S ROUGHLY THE SIZE OF WESTERN EUROPE**

**Net forest area losses have more than halved during the survey period, decreasing from 6.8 million hectares per year in 2000-2010 to 3.1 million hectares per year in 2010-2018. Looking it by region, the highest deforestation in 2000-2018 occurred in South America (68 million hectares deforested), followed by Africa (49 million hectares).**

That's despite the fact that the rate of deforestation in fact slowed down in South America as it did in South and Southeast Asia between 2000-2010 and 2010-2018. The loss of tropical forests accounted for more than 90 per cent of the global deforestation from 2000 to 2018, at 157 million hectares -- that's roughly the size of Western Europe. Yet annual deforestation in the Tropical domain actually slowed significantly from 10.1 million hectares per year in 2000-2010

# Modi calls for ceasefire in Ukraine

**PRRESS TRUST OF INDIA**

**Copenhagen, May 3:** Prime Minister Narendra Modi Tuesday appealed for an immediate ceasefire in Ukraine and return to the path of dialogue and diplomacy to resolve the crisis, even as his Danish counterpart Mette Frederiksen hoped that India will use its influence over Russia to end the war.

The two leaders discussed the Ukraine crisis and several regional and global issues including increasing trade relations and co-operation in the field of mitigating the impact of climate change during their bilateral talks at the Danish Prime Minister's official residence in Mareinborg near here. "We appeal for an immediate ceasefire in Ukraine and return to the path of dialogue and diplomacy for resolving the crisis," Modi told reporters here. Frederiksen hoped that India will influence Russia on Ukraine and asked Russian President Vladimir Putin to "stop this war and end the killings".

"My message is very clear that Putin has got to stop this war and

to end the killings. I, of course, hope that India will influence Russia also in this discussion," she said. In a joint statement issued after the talks, the two Prime Ministers expressed se-

# NATURE'S SPECTACLE



Wild bluebells turn the forest floor blue in the Hallerbos, also known as the 'Blue Forest', in Halle, near Brussels, Belgium

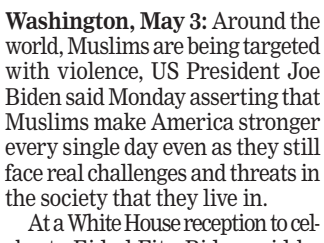
# Muslims targeted with violence worldwide: Biden

**PRRESS TRUST OF INDIA**

**Washington, May 3:** Around the world, Muslims are being targeted with violence, US President Joe Biden said Monday asserting that Muslims make America stronger every single day even as they still face real challenges and threats in the society that they live in.

At a White House reception to celebrate Eid al-Fitr, Biden said he has appointed the first Muslim to serve as Ambassador-at-Large for International Religious Freedom.

"It's especially important because today, around the world, we're seeing so many Muslims being targeted with violence. No one, no one should discriminate against oppressed or be oppressed for their religious beliefs," he said to applause from the select gathering at the White House.



**Arooj Aftab, a Pakistani vocalist and composer, was one of the speakers at the event along with First Lady Jill Biden and Dr. Talib M. Shareef, Imam of Masjid Muhammad, known as 'The Nation's Mosque' in Washington, DC.**

"Today, we also remember all those who are not able to celebrate this holy day including Uyghurs and Rohingya and all those who are facing famine, violence, conflict, and disease," Biden said.

# SHANGHAI HORROR

**Declared dead, man found to be alive!**

**INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE**

**Taipei, May 3:** Six people are under investigation in Shanghai after an elderly nursing home resident was mistakenly declared dead, put in a body bag and taken by coroners to a waiting van before mortuary workers noticed he was still alive, The Guardian reported.

The incident, which took place on Sunday afternoon, was filmed by onlookers and the footage quickly spread online, sparking a furious backlash in the city which has been under a gruelling lockdown for five weeks. It also prompted concerns over the city's overwhelmed medical system.

In the footage, workers wearing protective clothing are seen pulling a body bag out of the mortuary van to a trolley.

**Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky does not need a peace treaty as he will continue to beg for money and weapons from the West and will also continue to appear unshaven on camera**

**DMITRY MEDVEDEV | FORMER RUSSIAN PRESIDENT**

# HALTING THE EXTINCTION CRISIS

Scientists from the University of Queensland (UQ) have developed an app that provides users with information on endangered species in their local areas and ways for everyday Australians to take action



Scientists from the University of Queensland (UQ) have developed an app that provides users with information on endangered species in their local areas and ways for everyday Australians to take action

# PUTIN PUTS WEST ON NOTICE

**LONDON:** Russian President Vladimir Putin put the West on notice Tuesday that he could terminate exports and deals, the Kremlin's toughest response yet to the sanctions burden imposed by the United States and allies over the Russian invasion of Ukraine. Putin, Russia's paramount leader since 1999, signed a broad decree on Tuesday which forbade the export of products and raw materials to people and entities on a sanctions list that he instructed the government to draw up within 10 days.

cessation of hostilities. They emphasised that the contemporary global order has been built on the UN Charter, international law and respect for sovereignty and the territorial integrity of states," it said.

The two leaders also discussed the destabilising effect of the conflict in Ukraine and its broader regional and global implications and agreed to remain closely engaged on the issue.

# business

## of the day quote

FY22 was a remarkable year, not only from the perspective of numbers, but in terms of building a strong foundation on which the business can continue to grow for the foreseeable future.

With the international expansion in GCC markets and the first Tanishq store coming up in the US, we are gearing up to touch new horizons in FY23

The real estate sector has strengthened during FY22 and we expect strong growth for the sector over the next few years

### SHORT TAKES

#### AC sales hit record high

**New Delhi:** Driven by the early arrival of summer and intense heatwave, residential air conditioner makers are looking forward to record sales of around 90 lakh units this year, said Consumer Electronics and Appliances Manufacturers Association Tuesday. Already, in April the industry has clocked the sale of around 17.5 lakh units, which is also an all-time high for the month. However, the availability of certain products could be an issue in the next couple of months as manufacturers may not be in a position to supply their entire range of models to meet market demand, especially the energy-efficient 5-star range, due to high demand and supply constraints of components such as controllers and compressors, said Eric Braganza, president of CEAMA (Consumer Electronics and Appliances Manufacturers Association).

#### Adani Wilmar on buying spree

**Mumbai:** Adani Wilmar Ltd (AWL) Tuesday announced the acquisition of several brands, including the renowned 'Kohinoor' brand from McCormick Switzerland GMBH to strengthen its leadership in food business. The deal size was not disclosed. The acquisition would give AWL exclusive rights over the brand 'Kohinoor' basmati rice along with 'Ready to Cook', 'Ready to Eat' curries and meals portfolio under the Kohinoor brand umbrella in India, the company said in a statement. The addition of Kohinoor's domestic brand portfolio strengthens AWL's leadership position in the food FMCG category by augmenting a strong product basket with premium brands along with potential to scale value added products. The acquisition will fuel the next level of growth for AWL and widen the portfolio to cater to premium customer segments across rice and other value-added food businesses, it added.

#### Tata Steel Q4 net jumps 37%

**New Delhi:** Tata Steel Tuesday posted a 37 per cent jump in consolidated net profit at ₹9,835.12 crore for the quarter ended March 2022, mainly on account of higher income. The steel major had reported a net profit of ₹7,161.91 crore in the year-ago quarter, it said in a BSE filing. During January-March 2022, Tata Steel's total income jumped to ₹69,615.70 crore from ₹50,300.55 crore earlier. Total expenses rose to ₹57,635.79 crore from ₹40,102.97 crore in the January-March period of 2020-21.



We will manufacture green hydrogen at the most competitive prices  
R.K. SINGH | UNION POWER MINISTER

### HYUNDAI DRIVES IN CRETA KNIGHT EDITION

Hyundai Motor India Tuesday said it has launched a new variant of its popular SUV Creta priced between ₹13.51-18.18 lakh (ex-showroom). With the launch of the new Creta Knight Edition, the automaker is once again offering customers an exciting choice of SUV that matches their aspirations with bold and sporty design enhancements, the company said.



# LIC raises ₹5,627cr from anchor investors

**PRESS TRUST OF INDIA**  
**New Delhi, May 3:** Insurance behemoth LIC Tuesday said it has garnered a little over ₹5,627 crore from anchor investors led primarily by domestic institutions ahead of its mega initial public offering (IPO).  
Anchor Investors' (AIs) portion (5,92,96,853 equity shares) was subscribed at ₹949 per equity share, the insurer said in an early morning filing to exchanges.  
Out of the allocation of about 5.9 crore shares to AIs, 4.2 crore shares (71.12 per cent) were allocated to 15 domestic mutual funds through 99 schemes, the filing said.  
Besides, investment was made by some domestic insurance companies and pension funds. Some of the prominent names in this category included ICICI Prudential Life Insurance, SBI Life Insurance, Kotak Mahindra Life Insurance, PNB MetLife Insurance, SBI Pension Fund and UTI Retirement Solutions Pension Fund Scheme.  
Foreign participation included Government of Singapore, Monetary Authority of Singapore, Government Pension Fund Global and BNP Investment LLP.  
As per the prospectus, out of the 22.13 crore shares offered for sale, 5.93 crore shares were reserved for



anchor investors.  
The government by diluting 3.5 per cent stake in LIC would raise ₹21,000 crore, the biggest ever IPO in the Indian market. The previous such high fundraising was seen in the IPO of Paytm in 2021 at ₹18,300 crore and Coal India in 2010 at ₹15,200 crore.  
The price band for LIC IPO is ₹902-949 per equity share. Policyholders will get a discount of ₹60 per equity share, while retail investors and employees will get a discount of ₹45 on each share.  
Of the total shares on offer, over 9.88 crore shares are reserved for qualified institutional buyers and over 2.96 crore shares for non-institutional buyers. Up to 15,81,249

**IPO OPENS TODAY**  
**A**s per the prospectus, out of the 22.13 crore shares offered for sale, 5.93 crore shares were reserved for anchor investors  
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**B**esides, investment was made by some domestic insurance companies and pension funds. Some of the prominent names in this category included ICICI Prudential Life Insurance, SBI Life Insurance, Kotak Mahindra Life Insurance, PNB MetLife Insurance, SBI Pension Fund and UTI Retirement Solutions Pension Fund Scheme

shares and 2.21,37,492 shares are reserved for employees and policyholders. LIC would get listed and start trading on the stock exchanges on May 17.  
LIC's embedded value, which is a measure of the consolidated shareholders' value in an insurance company, was pegged at about ₹5.4 lakh crore as of September 30, 2021, by international actuarial firm Milliman Advisors.  
Based on investor feedback, the market value of government-owned LIC has been pegged at 1.1 times its embedded value or ₹6 lakh crore.  
LIC was formed by merging and nationalizing as many as 245 private life insurance companies September 1, 1956, with an initial capital of ₹5 crore.  
Its product portfolio comprises 32 individual products (16 participating products and 16 non-participating products) and seven individual optional rider benefits. The insurer's group product portfolio comprises 11 group products.  
As of December 2021, LIC had a market share of 61.6 per cent in terms of premiums or GWP, 61.4 per cent in terms of new business premium, 71.8 per cent in terms of the number of individual policies issued, and 88.8 per cent in terms of the number of group policies issued.

# Modi invites Danish cos to invest in India

**PRESS TRUST OF INDIA**  
**Copenhagen, May 3:** Prime Minister Narendra Modi Tuesday invited Danish companies and pension funds to invest in India's infrastructure sector and green industries. Addressing media after his talks with Danish counterpart Mette Frederiksen, Modi said that over 200 Danish companies are already present in India and benefiting from the 'ease of doing business' initiative of the government.  
"There are huge investment opportunities for Danish Companies and Danish Pension Funds in India's Infrastructure Sector and Green Industries," the Prime Minister said in a tweet. Danish companies are operating in various sectors like wind power, shipping, consultancy, food processing and engineering.  
Prime Minister of Denmark Mette Frederiksen hosted Modi during his official visit to Denmark.  
Meanwhile, an India-Denmark Joint Statement issued during the visit of Modi said the two Prime Ministers underlined the importance of bilateral trade and investments and stressed the need to maximise the potential of economic ties between the two coun-



tries. "They affirmed that robust bilateral investments and trade flows through diversified, resilient, transparent, open, secure and predictable global supply chains would ensure economic security and prosperity of their peoples," it said.  
The two leaders, it added, also welcomed Danish investments in India especially in the renewable energy, water, terminals and port modernisation and expansion, food processing and engineering sectors and India's investments in Denmark especially in the Information Technology sector.  
"They noted that such investments have made India the country where Danish companies have the largest number of employees outside of Denmark," the statement said.

# Exports up 24% in Apr; trade deficit widens

**PRESS TRUST OF INDIA**  
**New Delhi, May 3:** Exports rose by 24.22 per cent to a monthly record high of USD 38.19 billion in April on account of healthy performance by sectors like petroleum products, electronic goods and chemicals, even as trade deficit widened to USD 20 billion during the month, the commerce ministry said Tuesday.  
Imports during the month under review grew by 26.55 per cent to USD 58.26 billion. The trade deficit in April 2021 was at USD 15.29 billion. Oil imports during the month rose by 81.21 per cent to USD 19.5 billion. Coal, Coke and Briquettes imports jumped to USD 4.8 billion as against USD 2 billion in April 2021.  
Gold imports, however, dipped to

USD 1.68 billion during the month under review from USD 6.23 billion in April 2021.  
Engineering goods exports increased by 15.38 per cent to USD 9.2 billion while petroleum products exports soared 113.21 per cent to USD 7.73 billion.  
However, gems and jewellery exports dipped by 2.11 per cent to USD 3.3 billion.  
Commenting on exports, FIEO President A Sakthivel said that the "highest-ever exports" of over USD 38 billion, during the first month of the fiscal, shows the continuous impressive performance of the exports sector.  
"The benefits of the newly signed FTAs and the PLI Scheme will further help us in building on the milestones achieved during the previous fiscal," he said.

### BIZ BUZZ



**GLITTERING SALES:** Customers buying jewellery items at a Khimji store on Cantonment Road in Cuttack on the occasion of Akshaya Tritiya, Tuesday.

### UAIL's UANAT transforming lives of farmers

**BHUBANESWAR:** Aditya Birla Group's Utkal Alumina International Limited's (UAIL) project 'UANAT (Utkal's Action for Agricultural Transformation)' launched in collaboration with Bharat Rural Livelihood Foundation (BRLF), is making a transformative change to the lives of more than 15,000 rural households of Kashiपुर Block in Rayagada district and Thuamal Rampur Block of Kalahandi district in Odisha through farm-based livelihood interventions. Launched in 2021, UANAT has so far impacted 5000 households of small and marginal farmers through farm intensive interventions. In Kashiपुर and Thuamal Rampur blocks, 44 Producer Groups (PGs) have been formed with 5,257 farmers as members. This helps forge community ownership. UANAT programme converges with potential Government programmes like MGNREGA, Odisha Livelihood Mission, Integrated



Tribal Development Agency, National Horticulture Mission, Watershed Development Programs, Odisha Lift Irrigation Corporation and Odisha Agro-Industry Corporation. These are in sync with the UN Sustainable Development Goals. No poverty, zero hunger and self-reliance are the final goals. Briefing on its economic benefits, Mazhar Beig, the Unit Head of Utkal Alumina shares that, "Since its implementation, UANAT has enabled generate an average additional annual income of ₹31,700 per farmer. The earnings from potato cultivation are recorded at ₹16000 for every farmer for every season while that of mushroom is Rs.3000 every month. In the last year itself ₹324.50 lakh have been garnered from various Government schemes and programs at both these blocks. These encouraging results have instilled confidence among the stakeholders."

### Coal output rises 28% in April on power demand

**PRESS TRUST OF INDIA**  
**New Delhi, May 3:** India's coal output soared by 28 per cent to 66.1 million tonnes in April amid high demand from thermal power plants as several parts of the country grappled with power shortage.  
The overall coal production was at 51.6 million tonnes (MT) in April 2021. "During the month of April, 2022 India's total coal production stood at 66.154 lakh tonnes (66.1 MT)," the coal ministry said in a statement.

While Coal India Ltd (CIL) and its subsidiaries produced 53.4 MT of coal, production by Singareni Collieries Company Ltd (SCCL) stood at 5.3 MT and by captive mines at 7.3 MT during the last month.  
According to the provisional data of the Ministry of Coal, while the total offtake of the coal sector was 70.8 MT during the month, the power sector offtake touched 61.7 MT in April. At the same time, coal supplies to the power sector from Coal India alone stood at 49.7 MT. Coal supplies to the power sector by CIL were 15.6 per cent higher in the last month on yearly basis in the wake of high demand of the dry fuel from electricity generating plants. The coal ministry stressed that it is planning to augment its dispatches further, especially to power plants in the coming months.  
With higher output, CIL is aiming to increase its dispatches further, especially to power plants in the coming months. Coal India, which accounts for over 80 per cent of domestic coal output, is one of the major suppliers of fossil fuel to the power sector. On an average, the PSU supplied 1.66 MT of coal per day to power utilities in April which increased to 1.73 MT during last week. Average supply per day is at par with what was programmed by CIL for this sector during the first quarter of FY23.

# VENTURE CAPITALISTS CATCH THE CRYPTO FEVER

THE VC CRYPTO CRAZE IN 2022 HAS ALSO COINCIDED WITH A SLUMP IN THE TECH-HEAVY NASDAQ BENCHMARK, WHICH IS DOWN 21%

**REUTERS**  
**New York, May 3:** Venture capital is making a big move on crypto in 2022. Scared of being left in the digital dust, private equity investors are stampeding towards crypto projects - blockchain-based apps and platforms fuelled by cryptocurrencies that are native to the virtual economies of the metaverse and Web3.  
VC investment in such projects totalled \$10 billion globally in the first quarter of this year, the largest quarterly sum ever and more than double the level seen in the same period a year ago, according to data from Pitchbook.  
A trickle has become a torrent: the full-year totals for 2019, 2020 and 2021 were \$3.7 billion, \$5.5 bil-

lion and \$28 billion. "You're seeing a lot of VC investment into a lot of protocols because they all believe, as we do, that some of these protocols are the infrastructure of the future," said Steve Ehrlich, CEO of crypto brokerage firm Voyager Digital. Such projects, which can range from crypto and NFT exchanges to decentralized finance applications and token issuers, are often known as protocols in reference to the rules embedded in their computer code.  
The recent action is different from the past when venture investment trends tended to track the price of bitcoin, albeit with a short delay, according to Alex Thorn, head of firmwide research at blockchain-focused bank Galaxy Digital in New York.



Investment levels in crypto have continued to grow during a bitcoin price slump this year - it's down about 16% - as well as during another decline last summer, Thorn notes. "This decoupling is demon-

strative of investors' disbelief that a prolonged bear market in digital assets is forthcoming, as well as the significant amount of dry powder held by funds seeking to allocate to the sector," he wrote last week.  
The VC crypto craze in 2022 has also coincided with a slump in the tech-heavy Nasdaq benchmark, which is down 21%.  
The number of M&A deals involving crypto target companies is also ballooning globally as the buzz grows around the metaverse of virtual worlds and the Web3 decentralized online utopia.  
There have been 73 deals sealed so far in 2022 with a combined deal value of \$8.8 billion, according to Dealogic, versus 51 deals worth \$6.8 billion for the whole of last year. The funding rush means crypto firms can afford to be picky, said Mildred Idada, founding partner at blockchain venture fund and accelerator Open Web Collective. "Founders are saying, 'There's five funds that want to in-

vest in us, which one is going to bring the most value?'," she said.  
In many cases, blockchain tech firms are interested in the brand value of backing from established players and increasing integration with the financial system, Idada added.  
Some firms have been creative in how they raise money. For example Polygon, a platform for developing and scaling applications on the Ethereum blockchain, raised \$450 million in February through a private sale of its cryptocurrency to investors including SoftBank's Vision Fund 2.  
"The larger reason for that raise was to get the institutions on our side and increase the visibility of Polygon," said co-founder Sandeep Nailwal.

# KINGS OVERPOWER TITANS

# CSK take on RCB in battle of weaklings

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Navi Mumbai, May 3: Shikhar Dhawan struck a fine half century (62 n o, 53b, 8x4, 1x6) as error-prone Punjab Kings finally produced a clinical performance to beat Gujarat Titans by eight wickets and end the IPL table leaders' five-match winning streak here on Tuesday.

Pacer Kagiso Rabada (4/33) snared four wickets as Punjab Kings restricted formidable Gujarat Titans to a below-par 143/8 after Hardik Pandya opted to bat first.

Punjab, who made a mess of what should have been a straight-forward chase in their last game, learned from their mistakes to pace the innings much better and overcome the target in 16 overs.

Dhawan scored his third half century of the season and got good support from Sri Lankan Bhanuka Rajapaksa (40, 28b, 5x4, 1x6). As one of the senior batters in the team, Dhawan took the responsibility of finishing the game for his team and he did that with elan.

Skipper Mayank Agarwal dropped himself down the order to accommodate Jonny Bairstow (1) at the top of the order but the move did not work. However, the 87-run stand between the left-handers, Dhawan and Rajapaksa, ensured Punjab got home comfortably.

Liam Livingstone (30 n o, 10b, 2x4, 3x6) displayed some brutal hitting towards the end of the chase and smashed premier India pacer Mohammad Shami for four sixes including a monstrous 117m hit over deep square leg. The 16th over going for 30 runs also gave a big boost to PBKS' net run rate.

It was a much-needed win for Punjab, who have struggled for consistency this season with five wins and as many losses.

For Gujarat, who are set to make the playoffs, it was a timely wake-up call to fix their batting issues, especially at the top of the order. They have had somebody or the other to bail them out of tough situations but it was not the case Tuesday.

Earlier, Sai Sudharsan's unbeaten 65 (50b, 5x4, 1x6) was the saving grace in Gujarat's innings



Shikhar Dhawan (L) & Bhanuka Rajapaksa

as Punjab bowlers conceded only 11 runs and two sixes. Sudharsan ran out of partners as Gujarat skipper Hardik Pandya's decision to elect to bat backfired.

They lost openers Shubman Gill (9) and Wriddhiman Saha (21) cheaply. Gill, who had struck two boundaries, was dismissed courtesy a direct hit from Rishi Dhawan from cover, in the third over.

In the next over Saha, who started aggressively, gave a sitter to rival captain Mayank at mid-off, giving Rabada his first wicket. Saha, who had hit three boundaries and a six, was undone by the extra bounce, as he tried to play a lofted shot, but mistimed it and paid the price.

Gujarat further slipped to 44/3 as pacer Rishi (1/26) removed Hardik (1) early. Hardik tried to drive an outside the off length ball, but ended it nicking to wicket-keeper Jitesh Sharma leaving his team in all sorts of trouble.

Then Sudharsan and David Miller (11) tried to rally the innings but managed to add only 23

runs in 30 balls. It became 67/4 after Livingstone (1/15) dismissed Miller, who miscued a lofted drive to be caught by Rabada at long-off.

Sudharsan tried to change gears from the 11th over, when he pulled Livingstone for his first boundary, but was unable to free his arms frequently.

Rabada further pegged back Gujarat by removing Rahul Tewatia (11) and Rashid Khan (0) in successive deliveries in the 17th over, with GT reeling at 112/6. Rabada capped off a memorable spell by dismissing Ferguson (5).

For Punjab, Sandeep Sharma (0/17), Arshdeep Singh (1/35), Rahul Chahar (0/11) and Livingstone also played their parts to perfection.



KAGISO RABADA

## IPL FINAL IN AHMEDABAD

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, May 3: The IPL final will be played in Ahmedabad May 29 while the Women's T20 Challenge exhibition event will be played in Pune from May 23-May 28, the BCCI confirmed Tuesday.

As PTI reported last month, the IPL Qualifier 1 and Eliminator will be played in Kolkata May 24 and 25 respectively while Qualifier 2 and final will be played in Ahmedabad May 27 and May 29 in front of a capacity crowd.

"Qualifier 1 will be held in Eden Gardens, Kolkata on 24th



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Pune, May 3: Chennai Super Kings' fragile bowling vis-a-vis Royal Challengers Bengaluru's struggling batting line-up put the sides on an even keel as the two heavyweights face-off in an important mid-table clash of the IPL here Wednesday.

In cricket, when two strong and equally performing teams have a match-up, it promises a great contest but when two sides with specific weak-links are pitted against each other it makes the contest all the more exhilarating.

Sample this. In 10 games that RCB has played so far, only six half centuries have been recorded and out of them two belongs to skipper Faf du Plessis, which is a testimony to below-par batting show in the tourney.

In nine games that CSK have played so far, there hasn't been a single bowler (pacers and spinners), who has bowled at an economy rate of less than 7.50 runs an over. The best economy rate is of Mahesh Theekasana (7.54) while Dwayne Bravo (14 wickets) and Mukesh Choudhary (11 wickets) have had poor economy rates of 8.73 and 9.82 runs per over average.

The match also becomes an enticing one as Virat Kohli has finally found some form going his way and MS Dhoni is back in the saddle and would do everything under his control to plot the downfall of India's best batter.

Dhoni's return as CSK skipper replacing an out-of-sorts and more so bereft of ideas Ravindra Jadeja, proved beneficial as they outscored



a formidable Sunrisers Hyderabad, keeping their campaign alive with six points from nine games.

While RCB are still on fifth place with 10 points from as many games, they seemed to have lost a bit of momentum with three back-to-back defeats primarily due to shoddy batting shows.

They have been all-out for season's lowest score - 68 - and have also failed to chase a modest target of 145 in another game.

Young Rajat Patidar, after a below-par last season, has shown some spark but the likes of Dinesh Karthik (218 from 10 games) and Glenn Maxwell (157 from 7 games) perhaps will need to do more than what they are currently contributing.

Wednesday, RCB will face a bowling line-up which isn't an intimidating one with rookie Mukesh Choudhary or Simarjeet Singh, still trying to find feet in an elite league and the most experienced spinner Jadeja having completely lost form due to leadership burden, which he was forced to relinquish.

In such a backdrop, whoever wins will only add to the 'mid-table muddle' as most teams between six to 10 points are clubbed together making it an interesting next four weeks.

**TODAY'S MATCH**

CSK vs RCB

Time: 07:30 pm

TELECAST

Star Sports channels & Hotstar

# Chaos breaks out at KIUG closing ceremony

championship title after finishing on top of the standings with 32 medals, including 20 gold.

"Whatever I have learnt is that the directive was from police, from security point of view as Home Minister Amit Shah was in attendance. The directive was for general public in attendance not for media. But later on it was resolved and everyone was allowed to enter," a source aware of the development said.

Before the situation was brought under control by the organisers, there was chaos while entering the venue because of security protocols as Shah was in attendance.

New Delhi, May 3: Chaos broke out at the closing ceremony of the Khelo India University Games (KIUG) after a scribe was told to remove his black coloured face mask owing to a directive asking people to not wear black on the occasion.

Hosts Jain University claimed the Khelo India University Games



# Shreyas heaps praise on Rinku

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, May 3: Kolkata Knight Riders skipper Shreyas Iyer Monday lavished praise on Rinku Singh for showing "outstanding" calmness under pressure, calling him an "asset" for the team.

Singh smashed an unbeaten 23-ball 42 studded with six boundaries and a six as he and Nitish Rana (48 not out) chased down a 153-run target with ease for a seven-wicket victory over Rajasthan Royals.

"I was talking to my teammates in the dressing room and was calm, the way he's maintaining his calm even in such pressure situations

playing his second or third game, it's outstanding," Iyer said during the post-match presentation ceremony.

"Building that partnership with Nitish Rana in that situation, it's something we have to praise about and he's a great asset for the future in the franchise. The way he has given starts right from the first game, he doesn't look like a newcomer in the team."

Iyer also praised his bowlers, especially veteran Umesh Yadav (1/24) and Sunil Narine (0/19) for consistently producing the goods for KKR. "Right from the powerplay when our bowlers conceded just 36 runs and took a wicket, it was just

the start we needed," he said.

"We have been talking about Umesh right from the start. He has increased his pace, bowls those hard lengths and as a captain you just have to give him the ball to deliver. Whenever I give Sunil Narine the ball, he gets me wickets, but the batsmen don't take chances against him. He is very economical, but when he gets a wicket, he gets a big one."

One area where KKR has struggled is the opening slot and Iyer said they will have to address the issue. "We are looking for a good start. I love pressure, but it sweats a lot of me to build the innings in every game."

# An upgraded event for football eves

SHAMBHU DATTA MISHRA, OP

Bhubaneswar, May 3: Indian Women's League is a blessing in disguise for the Indian women footballers since its inception in 2016. And gradually, the event is gaining more attention as well as developing to an extent what could change the face of Indian women's football.

After missing out on 2020-21 edition due to Covid-19 pandemic following four successive seasons, IWL returned for 2021-22 season as an upgraded version. The event kicked off April 15 at the Kalinga Stadium here and will conclude May 26.

All India Football Federation (AIFF) is planning to find out talents through the event and groom them. To do so, in the first step they have changed the format and increased the number of matches compared to previous editions.

"IWL is being conducted to find hidden talents in the country. This year, we have changed the format and have kept a longer season with more number of matches," said AIFF Spokesperson Sunando Dhar.

"The players can get the game time and also it's a process of nurturing them for the selection for the national team. IWL is a platform where players from different states and regions participate which also helps in the overall growth, I believe. They get the experience of playing longer season which helps to groom them for their upcoming duties," Dhar added.

Even the situation has changed a lot compared to 2020 or 2021, the



Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik poses alongside IWL's winners' trophy and the captains of participating teams during the inauguration at the Kalinga Stadium in Bhubaneswar, April 15

fear is still there for everyone for the virus. So organise such an event in itself was a challenge.

"Initially, due to the adverse effect of Covid-19 period on the sporting calendar, we had postponed the dates twice to host the league. Thereafter the state implemented strict guidelines to cope with the situation," stated R Vineel Krishna, secretary of sports, Govt of Odisha when asked about the challenges.

"Prior to the ongoing IWL, we had also successfully organised the Odisha Women's League (OWL) and the FIH Pro League 2021-22 at the Kalinga Stadium and all our system and processes related to the virus were in place.

"IWL which involved around

500 people, safety of the players and all involved was our top priority. The event is being conducted in a bio bubble. All players, coaching staff and organisers have undergone mandatory testing prior to the start of the event. Additionally, periodic or scheduled testing is also done to ensure the safe and smooth conduct of the event," added Krishna.

Women's football is yet to attract a fanbase in the state. Speaking of this issue, Krishna said that OWL was a splendid initiative to get going in this matter: "Football, is amongst our priority sports. And in association with AIFF and Football Association of Odisha (FAO) we have been conducting many programs and events those are im-

proving the football ecosystem in Odisha, particularly women's football," he explained.

"The recently concluded OWL was very well received by the players and supporters and now with the IWL, we have given an opportunity to our players to play with India's best women footballers. These inspire and attract budding players," an optimistic Krishna added.

In October, Bhubaneswar is co-hosting the FIFA U-17 Women's World Cup 2022 for which "four new football training centres have been developed" and these are in addition to those within the Kalinga Stadium. "Collectively, these will play a significant role in the development of football in the state and its popularity," Krishna signed off.

# Gyaneshwari bags silver, Rithika wins bronze in Jr WWC

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, May 3: Gyaneshwari Yadav clinched the silver medal while compatriot V Rithika finished third to give India a double podium finish in the women's 49kg category at the IWF Junior World Weightlifting Championships in Heraklion, Greece.

Chattisgarh lifter Gyaneshwari produced a total effort of 156kg (73kg+83kg) to take home the silver metal Monday night. The 18-year-old Rithika, on the other hand, heaved 6 kgs less than her compatriot - 150kg (69kg+81kg) to bag the bronze medal in a depleted 10-lifter field.

Tokyo Olympics bronze medalist and strong favourite Windy Cantika Aisah of Indonesia was crowned the champion in the category thanks to her total effort of 185kg (83kg+102kg).

The gulf between the Indonesian lifter, who won the Asian and world junior titles last year, and the 19-year-old Gyaneshwari was a whopping 29kg with Aisah even declined to take her final attempt.

The field was missing lifters from powerhouses China, North Korea and Thailand. The junior world record for the category sits at 206kg (92kg+114kg) in China's Jiang Huihua's name.

The podium finishes take India's medal haul to three in the ongoing event. Athletes from Russia and Belarus are banned from competing in IWF events.

# Ronaldo on target in Man United victory

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Manchester, May 3: Cristiano Ronaldo continues to be the shining light in an otherwise disappointing season for Manchester United.

Make that 18 goals in the English Premier League for the Portugal superstar after he converted a penalty that he earned himself in a 3-0 victory over Brentford Monday.

Ronaldo also had a goal disallowed at Old Trafford for a narrow offside as United saved one of its best performances of the season for its final home game. Bruno Fernandes and Raphael Varane - with his first in English football - were the other scorers.

The victory kept alive - at least mathematically - sixth - placed United's chance of finishing in the top four and qualifying for next season's Champions League.

United, though, has only two games remaining and is five points behind fourth-placed Arsenal and three behind Tottenham, with both rivals still having four to play.

Ronaldo, who has netted in each of his last four games, is third on the league's list of top scorers behind Liverpool's Mohamed Salah (22) and Tottenham's Son Heung-min (19). And he'll be back again next season, unlike some of the other players in United's team.

United fans gave standing ovations to departing veterans Nemanja Matic and Juan Mata as they were



substituted on their final Old Trafford appearances. It was also the last home game in charge for interim manager Ralf Rangnick, who will be replaced by Erik ten Hag during the off-season.

Monday marked a year since the postponement of United's home match against Liverpool, when fans made clear their anger at the ownership of the Glazer family in the wake of the European Super League debacle.

It was the first match that Brentford had lost with Christian Eriksen in the team and he pulled the strings in the London club's first competitive match at Old Trafford since 1975.