RAKUL ON WEIGHT LOSS

In a chat show, Rakul Preet Singh says for appearing alongside Ajay Devgn in De De Pyar De, she lost 10kg in 50 days LEISURE



NEW TALIBAN DECREE

Afghanistan's Taliban rulers order all Afghan women to wear head-to-toe clothing in public

INTERNATIONAL P10

**BHUBANESWAR | SUNDAY, MAY 8 | 2022** 

#### RR BEAT PBKS

Rajasthan Royals return to winning ways in style as they secure a six-wicket victory over

Punjab Kings in an IPL-15 tie

SPORTS P1

12 PAGES + SUNDAY POST | ₹5.00



#### **Bagga faces another arrest**

VOLUME 12, ISSUE 37 | www.orissapost.com

Chandigarh: A day after he was arrested by Punjab Police and released within hours, BJP leader Tajinder Pal Singh Bagga faces another arrest as a court in Mohali Saturday issued a warrant against him in connection with a case registered last month. The arrest warrant was issued by the court of Judicial Magistrate Ravtesh Inderjit Singh. "Whereas Tajinder Pal Singh Bagga, s/o Pritpal Singh, r/o B-1/170, Janak Puri New Delhi stands charged with the offence punishable U/Sec 153-A, 505, 505 (2), 506 IPC. You are hereby directed to arrest the said Tajinder Pal Singh Bagga and to produce him before me," the judge said in the order.



#### **Deogarh MLA gets conditional bail**

Deogarh: BJP's Deogarh MLA Subash Chandra Panigrahi, who was arrested on charges of assaulting Tileibani BDO, was granted conditional bail, Saturday. The court directed two guarantors to deposit a bail bond of ₹50,000 along with a personal surety from another person. The legislator has been asked to cooperate with the investigation and not influence or intimidate witnesses. Panigrahi and his aides had allegedly assaulted Tileibani BDO Krushnachandra Dalapati at Chhepalipali village April 30. Police arrested Panigrahi from his MLA quarters May 1 after the BDO lodged a complaint. The legislator was sent to judicial custody after his bail was rejected.



#### Fire started by iilted lover in MP kills 7, injures 9

Indore, May 7: A devastating fire, allegedly caused by a jilted lover, in a residential building in Vijay Nagar locality of Indore city early Saturday morning killed seven persons and injured nine others, police said.

Eyewitnesses alleged that the fire brigade personnel arrived late at the spot to rescue the people trapped inside the building, and added that some residents even jumped off the balconies of their flats and managed to save themselves, although they received injuries in the process. Expressing grief over the inci-

dent, Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan ordered a probe into it and announced an ex gratia of ₹4 lakh to the next kin of each deceased.

The blaze erupted between 3am and 4am following a short circuit in the electricity meter box on the ground floor of the building located



Bagh Colony area having narrow approach lanes, officials said.

Deputy Commissioner of Police (DCP) Sampat Upadhyay said Ishwar Singh Sisodia and his wife Neetu Sisodia were among the seven killed in the fire. The couple lived in a rented flat in the building since their new house was being constructed nearby,

The deceased included one more woman, who has been identified as Akanksha, Upadhyay said, adding that nine persons were injured in the incident. The deceased as well as the injured were in the age group of 25 to 45 years.

An onlooker, Akshay Solanki, said, "After the fire, two to three bodies were brought out of the build ing. These bodies were charred beyond recognition. Some other people died due to asphyxiation.

# FOR LORDS' JOURNEY



Maharana servitors started construction of a hub for a chariot wheel ahead of Rath Yatra in Puri, Saturday

# LPG scalds common man

The second hike in LPG prices by ₹50 within a gap of six weeks pushes the rates of a 14.2kg cylinder in Bhubaneswar to ₹1,026 and in Malkangiri to ₹1,049.50

AGENCIES

New Delhi, May 7: Cooking gas per cylinder, the second increase in rates in just over six weeks following the firming up of international energy rates Non-subsidised LPG now costs

₹999.50 per 14.2kg cylinder in the national capital, up from ₹949.50 previously, according to a price notification of state-owned fuel retailers. This is the second increase in

LPG rates in just over six weeks. Prices were hiked by ₹50 per cylinder March 22. Since April 2021, prices have

risen by ₹190 per cylinder. Petrol and diesel prices, however, continue to be on freeze for over a month now. The pause followed



hike in Kolkata, Saturday

rates being hiked by a record ₹10 per litre in a matter of 16 days beginning March 22.

The Union government must immediately stop tormenting the people of India! By repeatedly increasing fuel prices, LPG prices & prices of essential commodities, @BJP4India is actually conducting a 'GreatIndianLoot'. People are being fooled

MAMATA BANERJEE | BENGAL CHIEF MINISTER



Non-subsidised cooking gas is the one that consumers buy after exhausting their quota of 12 cylinders at subsidised or below-market rates.

However, the government pays no subsidy on LPG in most cities and the price of the refill that consumers, including the poor women who got free connection under the much-talked Ujjwala scheme, is the same as non-subsidised or market price LPG.

Non-subsidised LPG costs ₹999.50 per 14.2kg cylinder in Mumbai tle in Chennai and ₹1,026 in Bhubaneswar and Kolkata.

Rates differ from state to state depending on the incidence of local taxes such as VAT. Prices are higher in states with higher taxes.

Earlier this month, the price of commercial LPG cylinders - the one used by establishments like hotels and restaurants - was increased. On May 1, the price of a 19-kg commercial LPG cylinder was increased by ₹102.50 to ₹2,355.50.

International oil prices have been on the rise this year. They jumped to a 13-year high of USD 140 per barrel in March before shedding some of the gains. Brent was trading at USD 109.77 per barrel Saturday.

To compound things, the Indian rupee tumbled to a near ₹77 to a dollar. India relies on overseas purchases to meet about 85 per cent of its oil requirement, making it one of the most vulnerable in Asia to higher oil prices.

# IMD: Cyclone won't make landfall in state

The system will recurve north-northeastwards and move towards northwest Bay of Bengal, says the Met dept

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, May 7: In a big relief to the people as well as the state administration, the India Meteorological Department (IMD) Saturday said that the cyclonic storm brewing in the Bay of Bengal will not make landfall either in Odisha or in Andhra Pradesh, but will move parallel to the coast. The well-marked low pressure

area intensified into a depression and is now moving towards the coast in northwestwards direction. It will continue to move in that direction till May 10 evening and reach west-central and adjoining Northwest Bay of Bengal off north Andhra Pradesh and Odisha coasts. Thereafter, it is very likely to

of Bengal off Odisha coast, said IMD Director General Mrutyunjay The Met department further said sea condition near Odisha coast will be rough from May 9 to

re-curve north-north-eastwards

and move towards Northwest Bay

10. The wind speed in the sea will increase to 80-90 kmph May 10. "In coastal areas of Odisha, the wind speed will be around 40-50 kmph, gusting up to 60 kmph. The maximum wind speed will be 50-60

kmph. The windy conditions will

prevail till May 11 and reduce there-



after," it said.

Under its impact, coastal districts like Ganjam, Gajapati, Khurda, Jagatsinghpur and Puri will receive light to moderate rainfall after May 10 evening.

According to IMD's special bulletin, light to moderate rain is very likely to occur at many places in coastal Odisha May 10 evening. Heavy rainfall (7-11 cm) is very likely to occur at one or two places in Gajapati, Ganjam, and Puri. The next day, heavy rain will lash one or two places in Ganjam, Khurda, Puri, Jagatsinghpur and Cuttack.

However, the state government is not taking any chance as far as preparedness is concerned. Special Relief Commissioner (SRC) PK Jena said, "As it is a natural phenomenon, it may change at any point of time."

Arrangements have been made\_ to evacuate altogether 7.5 lakh people in 18 districts if any such emergency situation arises out of the impending cyclonic storm, he said.

### UNABLE TO REPAY LOAN WOMAN, SON END LIVES

POST NEWS NETWORK

Rayagada, May 7: A woman and her son committed suicide by consuming pesticide after reportedly being unable to repay the loan they had taken from the moneylenders at Jemadeipentha under Seshkhal police limits in Rayagada, Friday night.

The deceased were identified as Rajani Gudla, 55, and her son Shyam Gudla, 22. Locals rushed them to Jemadeipentha CHC and later to Rayagada DHH where Shyam succumbed Friday night and Rajani died Saturday morning. Police registered a case and sent the bodies for post-mortem. It is also alleged Shyam lost some money to IPL betting.

Reports said Rajani was run-

ning a hotel near Jemadeipentha but the hotel was shut down during Covid-19 pandemic. She reopened the hotel after restrictions were lifted but borrowed over ₹15 lakh to run the business.

She even borrowed for her daughter's marriage but the lenders soon started pestering her for payback.

A few days back, lenders allegedly locked their house and drove them out. Later, police intervened and reopened their house. Rajani repaid some money after borrowing gold ornaments from her daughter and son-in-law. This pushed her into distress.

Police said Rajani was not having food for the last three-four days over the issue.

### **IRREGULAR** by MANJUL



We don't require a good lawyer. What we require is a good political party!

			.hv
WEAT	HER		
	BHUB	CTK	
MAX	36.0°€	36.6°	
≅ MIN	24.9°(	24.0°	Forecast
Humidity	84%	82%	
Rainfall	Nil	Nil	Partly cloudy sky

# State hikes cash rewards for skill heroes

■ World Skills Competition gold medallists will now get ₹1cr, silver medallists ₹50 lakh and bronze medallists ₹25 lakh each

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, May 7: In an attempt to encourage skilled youths of Odisha to compete globally, Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik Saturday announced enhancement of cash rewards under Biju Patnaik Dakhyata Award for the winners of World

Skills Competition (WSC). He announced that from this edition onwards, a gold medal winner in WSC will get an award of ₹1 crore while a silver medallist will get ₹50

lakh and bronze medallist ₹25 lakh. The institutions which nurture the gold medal winners will get ₹5 crore for setting up of Biju Patnaik Centre of Excellence, said the Chief Minister.

"Winning is a habit; so is excellence. I believe our children have now formed the habit to excel, to compete with the best in the world and win," Patnaik said while felicitating the winners of India Skills Competition (ISC).

"We have kept the goal of 2-3-4, bringing 2 golds, 3 silvers and 4 bronzes for the country from the vouth of Odisha at WSC, Shanghai," he further said. The state government will put the best resources available towards training the winners of ISC for the WSC, he stated. Odisha students have bagged as many as 59 medals at ISC-2021 which was held in New Delhi in January 2022. These winners will go through the gruelling preparations for the World Skills Competition scheduled to be held at Shanghai, China in October 2022.

Wishing the competitors at WSC, he said, "From now onwards, may people would ask "our boys, girls



CM Naveen Patnaik felicitates Santosh Ojha, a gold medallist in Cabinet Making

all of you have 'Shanghai on my mind, India in my heart', as you work towards making this dream a reality." In standing with our commitment to promoting girls in technical education, they have brought Odisha national honours in areas that are traditionally male dominated, he pointed out. Patnaik said that Odisha worked for a time when

whether they are just skilled or skilled-in-Odisha"

Chairman of OSDA Subroto Bagchi said what the Chief Minister has done for Hockey will also be done in skills too.

Skill Development and Technical Education Minister Premananda Nayak outlined the efforts of his department for realising the dreams of Odisha in skills.





# eisure



#### **ANN DOWD JOINS THRILLER** THE UNDERTAKER'S CHILDREN

Actress Ann Dowd will be starring in the upcoming thriller *The* Undertaker's Children, which is currently in pre-production. The movie will be helmed by Alex Gayner, making his directorial debut.

#### FRED SAVAGE FIRED FROM DIRECTING, PRODUCING THE WONDER YEARS

Fred Savage, who serves as a director and executive producer on The Wonder Years, has been fired due to the findings of an investigation about his conduct on set. Multiple employees complained about fred's behavior while working on The Wonder Years.



Mumbai: Starting this

Prabhu, will be the cover girl for a

leading maga-

zine's May-June

2022 issue. The Ye Maya Chesave ac-

tress on the cover

of the magazine is

as gorgeous as ever, as

month,



accuracy • reliability • trust 🚵

Today will be an industrious day. The stars foretell that you may visit a historical place, or perhaps a museum. However, Ganesha says, you may need to pay a little attention to your health. If such is the case, it would be better to take the evening off for yourself

#### **TAURUS**

You have a very pleasant day ahead. Though you are, by nature, restless and excitable you will be very steady and focused in whatever you do today. So says Ganesha. Later you will desire to enjoy the company of your friends and will call them over to chat and gossip with them. The evening will provide you lots of fun and laughter.

#### **GEMINI**

Today, you will have the courage to propose your sweetheart. You will be dressed to kill, or rather to marry. You will make a favourable impression with the way you'l look tonight. You will be an open book to your future partner, which is likely to work in your favour.

#### **CANCER**

You can improve your finances with you mental capabilities. Ganesha says that you will get success in both private tasks and responsibilities. Yet by evening you will spend time in your pursuits.

#### LEO

You may have arguments with your family members today. You need to adopt an accomodating attitude today, since it is not a very promising day for you. Otherwise nothing may go in your favour You will have to work harder than usual in

Family matters will matter today. They hold more weight in your thoughts than everything else, says Ganesha. Business will be good today. Spend the evening relaxing and chilling out. On the cards is a visit to a place of worship

Ganesha says today is a day where you will spend happy moments with your family members. You will feel happy and will get to spend some romantic time with your showcased in the internal thoughts of your life partner and both of you will be in tandem with each other today.

#### **SCORPIO**

You nearly emerge as a superhero today, as you have the knack of balancing home and work just perfectly. Intellectual discussions and brainstorming with neers would provide food for thought today. You may look forward to merry-making and soiree with family and friends in the evening.

#### **SAGITTARIUS**

The way you keep your interests alive will keep your mind occupied, Leisure activities and by-lines will by-pass the mundane routine today, foretells Ganesha. Pamper yourself by doing what you like, be it gardening, cooking or even plain old reading. Ganesha also sees a heavy meal with friends late in the day today.

#### CAPRICORN

You will feel little lost in the maze of problems and tricky situations. You will, however, find a way out, feels Ganesha. You like to be in a commanding position at work where you guide others and call the shots. But, it has a flip side, too. While you will be appreciated for the achievements, you will also have to bear the brunt if anything goes wrong.

#### AQUARIUS

You will be able to strike a balance between the emotional and rational side of your personality. You will find pleasure in your work and may successfully mix your personal life into your professional life. Financially, there are no major issues, but negligible matters may keep your mind occupied, feels Ganesha.

#### PISCES

You will be inspired to travel to a far off place or to a foreign land because of a verv warm invitation. Some old friend or relative residing in a foreign land will get in touch and please you today. Ganesha says that today is a good day for those wishing to go abroad for some specialized study or work

# 'Had to lose 10 kg for *De De Pyaar De*'

Mumbai: Actress Rakul Preet Singh has had an illustrious career down South and having made a mark in Hindi film industry, she also has a slew of Hindi films in her kitty. Last seen in Runway 34 with Ajay Devgn, Rakul is earning praises from all quarters for her performance in the thriller. The actress recently made an ap-

show Shape of You where she opened up on how she had to work hard on her body weight to enter Hindi filmdom. Recalling being called 'too skinny' in South and being asked to lose more weight in Hindi filmdom, the actress told Shilpa, "When I debuted, Samantha (Ruth Prabhu) and Kajal (Aggarwal) were already stars, and they were fit. I think people became conscious about how they look on the screen because the content was being consumed everywhere. But when I debuted, I was told I am too thin. People would call me 'stick

pearance on Shilpa Shetty's chat

say 'no'. But after two-three years I gave in also. 'When I came to Mumbai and

I started auditioning at the age of 20, I was told that I will have to lose weight because that was the standard of Bombay. But I didn't have access or understanding since I was a kid. I lost 10 kg in 50 days, and I didn't think I was 10 kg overweight, but I was," Rakul added recalling how she transformed herself for her role in Luv Ranjan's De De Pyaar De also starring Ajay Devgn and Tabu.

Rakul will be soon seen in a comedy film titled Chhatriwali wherein she plays the quality control head of a condom factory. She also has Doctor G with Ayushmann Khurrana. Thank God with Sidharth Malhotra, and *Mission* Cinderella with Akshay Kumar. In South, she has Tamil films Avalaan, Indian 2, and 31 October Ladies Night.

#### Farhan to star in Disney Plus series Ms Marvel

Mumbai: Actor-filmmaker and singer Farhan Akhtar has joined the Marvel family with *Ms Marvel*, Disney Plus's upcoming series. The multi-hyphenate will be a part of the series which

introduces Iman Vellani and also includes names like Aramis Knight, Saagar Shaikh, Rish Shah, Zenobia Shroff, Mohan Kapur, Matt Lintz, Yasmeen Fletcher, Laith Nakli, Azhar Usman, Travina Springer and Nimra Bucha.

While details of Farhan's role on the series are under wraps at the moment, it is said that the star will be making guestappearances on the show that promise to be just as impactful.

Recently, the actor took to social media and dropped a post, sharing the update with his fans. He wrote in the caption, "Grateful that the universe gifts these opportunities to grow, learn and in this case have a ton of fun while doing it." Several celerities from the B-Town reacted to his post. Vidya Balan wrote, "Woohoo. Thats awesome." Karan Johar wrote, "Amazing."

Arjun Rampla wrote, "Amazing". *Ms. Marvel* is set to premiere June and introduces Iman Vellani as Kamala Khan, aka the titular character, who is a Muslim American teenager growing up in Jersey City. An avid gamer and a voracious fanfiction scribe, Kamala is superhero mega-fan with an oversized imagination – particularly when it comes to Captain Marvel



vibrant ensembles. Samantha, who spoke about her acting career, shared that there was a time she did not feel comfortable in her own skin.

"I believe after working on so many projects, I can say that I'm a lot more confident, and it also comes with age and maturity", Samantha wrote, as she shared a stunning picture from her cover shoot. "It took a while for me to get comfortable in my own skin and now I'm much more confident about trying on different roles whether it's a sexy song or hardcore action, which I probably would never have had the courage to do in the

past", the actress stated. On work front, Samantha will appear in *Shakuntalam*, Yashoda, and a couple of other interesting projects in the near future.

### Bhool Bhulaiyaa was the first horror film Kiara Advani watched in cinema

Mumbai: Spilling some beans on her upcoming film Bhool Bhulaiyaa 2, Kiara Advani has said that they have retained the essence of the original and some elements like Manjulika's name, but as a storyline, the film is completely new. The actress also stated that Bhool Bhulaiyaa was a cult film, and when you make the second part, you can only get inspired. According to her, the second part is not a psychological

**CROSSWORD** 

thriller, but a h ror-comedy. There is a laver of black magic. The bubbly actress further revealed that Bhool Bhulaiyaa was the first-ever horror movie she watched on the big screen when she was merely 14 or 15. Kiara still remembers how it felt to watch the film with a group of friends. She further admitted that she is not a big fan of horror movies because she gets spooked out easily. So, she only goes to watch a horror film, if it has horror and comedy at the same time.

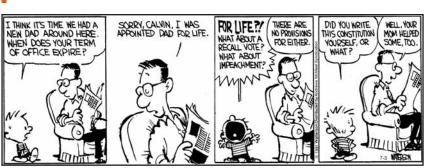
The actress also feels that Bhool Bhulaiyaa became a cult film because even today when anyone watches it the story seems so fresh and taking this franchise forward it was quite challenging. Giving a peek into her character, Kiara further added that she is not playing Vidya

Balan's character from the first instalment. As 'Bhool Bhulaiyaa 2 is not a remake, she is not stepping into someone's shoes.

#### **PEANUTS**



#### **CALVIN AND HOBBES**



#### **BREVITY**



#### 

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12	Esteem		admiration	17	Scale reading

society

2 Work fabric

13 Angle (5,2,4)

18 Consultant

CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW

19 Scrooge's look

21 Excuse

#### SUDOKU

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

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#### SOLUTIONS



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# downtown



#### FUELLING DISCONTENT

FUELLING DISCONTENT	22 23	COV	/ID-19 '	TRACK	ER
			INFECTED	RECOVERED	DEAD
SUCI (C) activists staged a demonstration at College		World	51,67,74,896	47,14,18,076	62,75,273
Square in Cuttack to protest against the hike in cooking		India	4,30,98,743	4,25,54,416	5,24,024
gas price, Saturday		Odisha	12,88,131	12,78,849	9,126
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#### **ROAD FATALITY A BIG CONCERN**

# **RTOs told to conduct special** drive against helmetless riders

THE REGIONAL TRANSPORT OFFICERS HAVE BEEN ASKED TO CONDUCT THE DRIVE FROM MAY 15 TO MAY 21



POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, May 7: Transport Commissioner Arun Bothra Saturday directed the Regional Transport Officers (RTOs) to conduct a special drive against people riding two-wheelers without wearing helmets on the highways.

The RTOs have been asked to conduct the special drive from May 15 to May 21, sources said.

As many as 1,308 people, including 868 riders and 440 pillion riders, were killed in road accidents in the state in 2021. Most of the road mishap victims were without helmets, Bothra said.

"In most of the cases, the bikers are facing mishaps on the national and state highways. Due to continuous enforcement activities, people are using helmets in the urban areas but they avoid doing the same on highways," he pointed out.

The RTOs were asked to conduct the special drive with more focus on national and state highways to check helmetless bike riding. They were also told to take ac-

venile driving. Driving licences of helmet-less riders will be suspended for a period of three months in accordance with the direction of the Supreme Court committee on road safety. The RTOs have been asked to submit compliance reports on the special drive on daily basis.

The state government has reconstituted the District Road Safety Committes (DRSCs) by involving more stakeholders and expanding their role and responsibilities.

As per the notification, the district collector will remain as the chairman of the committee while the administrator of state highways and major district roads (MDRs) will be the member secretary of the panel

The government has also decided to include one civil society organisation or any NGO working on improving road safety in the state as a member of the panel

Further, the collector will nominate a member from bus owners' association and another from truck AS MANY AS 1,308 PEOPLE, INCLUDING 868 RIDERS AND 440 PILLION RIDERS, WERE KILLED IN ROAD ACCIDENTS IN THE STATE IN 2021. MOST OF THE ROAD MISHAP VICTIMS WERE WITHOUT HELMETS

HE RTOS WERE ASKED TO CONDUCT THE SPECIAL DRIVE WITH MORE FOCUS ON NATIONAL AND STATE HIGHWAYS TO CHECK HELMETLESS BIKE RIDING. THEY WERE ALSO TOLD TO TAKE ACTION AGAINST TRIPLE RIDING AND JUVENILE DRIVING

N MOST OF THE CASES, THE BIKERS ARE FACING MISHAPS ON THE NATIONAL AND STATE HIGHWAYS. DUE TO CONTINUOUS ENFORCEMENT ACTIVITIES, PEOPLE ARE USING HELMETS IN THE URBAN AREAS BUT THEY AVOID DOING THE SAME ON HIGHWAYS

owners' association of the district and two accredited journalists to the committee.

The committee will meet at least once in a fortnight on a virtual platform and once in a month physically to look into the road safety

The committee will conduct periodic review of the road accidents in the district and monitor implementation of the road safety policy of the government.

The panel will also publish the road accident data on the district website once in a month. The committee is also responsible to develop a district road safety plan and ensure forensic crash investigation for all mass fatality crashes in the district.

The committee will also prepare an emergency medical plan for mass fatality accidents in the district and ensure linkage between hospitals and ambulances through setting up a prior notification system.

#### **SUMMER RITUAL**



People congregated at the Narendra pond in Puri to witness the Chandan Yatra of Srimandir deities, Saturday

### **CYCLONE BREWING OVER ANDAMAN SEA**

### FIREMEN READY FOR RESCUE WORK

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, May 7: The Directorate of Fire Service is fully prepared to carry out rescue, relief and restoration operation in case of a cyclone hitting the state in the next few days.

"We have taken all precautionary steps to meet any eventuality. Our officials and employees, in coordination with the local block office staff, have checked all equipment including generators and lights at the cyclone shelters. This exercise was completed yesterday (Friday)," said Director General of Fire Services, SK Upadhyay, to media persons here Saturday.

As per the directive of the Special Relief Commissioner (SRC), as many as 175 specialised teams have been formed for deployment in the affected areas if there is cyclone in the next few days. The special teams have been provided with power saws, combi tools, tower lights and other rescue equipment,



Rescue equipment have been kept ready at the Odisha Fire and Disaster Response Academy at Baramunda in Bhubaneswar, Saturday

informed the DG.

"The fire service personnel would be deployed in the affected areas as per the requirements of the district administrations," said Fire Services DG. He asked the fire service personnel to follow Covid guidelines during the rescue and relief op

It has been decided to deploy high-power pumps at the low-lying areas of different towns in the coastal Odisha, including Cuttack, Bhubaneswar and Puri, to tackle waterlogging during the cyclone. At least 32 pumps have been placed in 18 locations of Bhubaneswar

been provided with modern equip-

for this purpose, he said. All 339 fire stations of Odisha have been put on high alert to meet any eventuality. The stations have

ment for rescue and relief work, said the Fire Services DG.

"Vehicles have been kept ready for mobilising fire service units from the non-affected districts to cyclone-hit areas. The Fire Service department is committed towards the Zero Causality policy of the state government," Upadhyay said.

Fire safety audit conducted As per the direction of Fire Services DG, all fire stations across Odisha have conducted fire safety audit at in most of LPG godowns, filling stations, malls and multiplexes under their respective jurisdictions.

The fire service officials have intimated the deficiencies in the fire safety measures to the concerned people and issued fire safety guidelines to them, sources said ..

The fire services personnel reportedly issued notices to several filling stations in the capital city and instructed them to address the shortcomings found in the fire\_\_\_ safety measures.

#### **MOTHER'S DAY 2022**

# 'Being mother is always the toughest task'

A MOTHER ALWAYS HAS A UNIQUE BONDING WITH HER CHILD WHICH LAYS THE FOUNDATION FOR THE LATTER'S PHYSICAL, EMOTIONAL AND SOCIAL GROWTH



ARINDAM GANGULY, OP

Bhubaneswar, May 7: Mother's day is here and on this day we celebrate the mother's love for her child which is most selfless and purest form of love. The day also celebrates motherhood and the contribution of mothers to the society.

A mother always has a unique bonding with her child which lays the foundation for the latter's physical, emotional and social growth. Our mothers are our first teachers and their teachings guide us throughout

On this occasion, **Orissa POST** talks to a few new generation mothers and tries to collect their views regarding what changes they are noticing in the roles and responsibilities of a present-day mother in comparison to her counterpart in the past.



Priyanka Singhdeo, a fitness trainer and mother of a six-year-old son, said most of the mothers in the past were housewives, but today many women are doing jobs in various fields. These working women very often feel guilty about not spending enough time with their children.

"Earlier, the upbringing of a child was solely entrusted upon her mother. But, now both the parents are taking equal responsibility for upbringing of their child. Despite this, being a mother is the toughest task in every generation. We should always thankful to our mothers," she added.



Riya Nanda, an actress and mother of a two-and-a-half-year-old son, said nowadays mothers are not reluctant to communicate with their children regarding various issues. "Now, mothers are confident enough to communicate with their children on various aspects of our day-to-day life. This is a good thing," she added.



Smita Kanungo, a fashion designer-cum-soft skill trainer and mother of two, said today's mothers are fortunate enough to get an opportunity to follow their passion. They are truly enjoying their life by shouldering the family responsibilities as well as managing things at their workplaces. This was not possible earlier, she added.



Monica Sharma, a housewife and mother of a seven-month-old child, said the new generation mothers do not face much difficulty in nurturing their kids due to availability of baby care tips from doctors and health workers. "Nowadays mothers have a say in matters related to their kids. Earlier, the male members and the elderly people in the family used to ignore a mother's views and suggestions regarding the wellbeing of her child," she said.



Atashi Banerjee, a school teacher and mother of a one-year-old daughter, said many working women are depending upon maids to bring up their kids. Earlier, women were giving full attention to their children. Besides, the joint family system has some positive impact on the children. Now, most of the families are nuclear in nature. That is why our children do not find much opportunity to get social values, she said.



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# 378 held across state for drunken driving



Bhubaneswar, May 7: In a joint drive against drunken driving, carried out by the Odisha Police and Transport department officials, a total of 378 drivers were arrested across state Friday night.

Around 3,000 drivers were subjected to breath analyzer tests during the drive, out of which 466 drivers were found driving under the influence of alcohol.

In accordance with the direc-

tives of the Supreme Court Committee on Road Safety, a total of 179 driving licenses (DLs) were suspended.

While the Police and RTO staff arrested 378 drivers, about 377 vehicles of the offenders were detained. Meanwhile licenses of 179 drivers were suspended. A total of 144 drivers were arrested from the Northern zone, while 138 were arrested from the Central Zone and 96 from the Southern zone. Cuttack reported the maximum of 63 arrests.

he September, 2019, Amendment of the Motor Vehicles Act, 1988, mentions that in case of drunken driving, first-time offenders will face imprisonment up to six months and/or fine up to ₹10, 000.

The second offence, if within two years, can lead to up to two years jail term and/or fine

The September, 2019, Amendment of the Motor Vehicles Act, 1988 mentions that in the case of drunken driving, first-time offenders will face imprisonment up to six months and/or fine up to ₹10,000. The second offence, if within two years, can lead to up to two years jail term and/or fine of ₹15,000.

After having to go easy on drunken driving during the pandemic keeping in view the health hazards associated with breath analyser test, the enforcement squads have been directed to conduct such drives at regular

#### SIGH OF RELIEF



Girls coming out of Ravenshaw Collegiate School in Cuttack after writing the last paper of this year's Matriculation exam, Saturday

#### Stop Heritage Corridor project, set up risk evaluation panel: SMSA

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, May 7: Claiming that the Shree Jagannath Heritage Corridor project in Odisha was "a grave threat" to the structural stability of the ancient temple, a VHPbacked organisation Saturday demanded that all construction activities at the site be "immediately" stopped and an expert panel be set up for its scientific evaluation.

The Sri Mandira Suraksha Abhiyana (SMSA), which has support of the Vishva Hindu Parishad (VHP) and other organisations, also urged the Union government to intervene, alleging that the state government was implementing the project in violation of the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Sites and Remains Act (AMASRA).

"Implementation of the Shree Jagannath Heritage Corridor project in Odisha is posing a grave threat to the structural stability of the ancient temple. We demand that all the ongoing activities be immediately stopped at the site and an expert committee be set up to evaluate the risks that the project poses to the ancient temple," SMSA spokesperson Anil Dhir told PTI.

He said a five-member delegation of the SMSA had on Friday called on Union Culture Minister G Krishna Reddy and gave a memorandum, apprising him about the "irregularities" in the execution of the Shree Jagannath Heritage Corridor project in Puri.

### Gajapati, Kandhamal DMs told to find alternate use of MDCs



POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, May 7: The Higher Education (HE) department Saturday directed the Collectors of Gajapati and Kandhamal districts to use the Model Degree College (MDC) buildings newly constructed under RUSA 2.0.

Higher Education Secretary Saswat Mishra said in a letter to the Collectors that the two MDC buildings have been constructed at Tamayapeta in Kashinagar tehsil in Gajapati district and K Nuagaon in Kandhamal district with approved cost of ₹12 crore each under Rashtriva Uchchattar Shiksha Abhiyan (RUSA 2.0).

The said buildings are expected to be completed by May 2022. But

since a couple of general degree colleges are located nearby, it is not desirable to open another general degree college in shape of this MDC. The local public of both areas have also submitted a representation to the government requesting to use the MDC building for imparting skill development courses instead of general degree courses.

"In view of the above, you are requested to explore possibilities of alternative use of aforesaid MDCs such as vocational or skill development centre, school/college hostel, Adarsha Vidyalaya, housing and any other government or public office, and submit your proposal to the department at earliest for further action,"

# Matric evaluation may start May 20

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, May 7: The High School Certificate (HSC) exam. also known as the Matriculation exam conducted by the Board of Secondary Education (BSE) Odisha, concluded Saturday while the examination for Madhyama and State Open School Certificate Examination (SOSC) will conclude May 10, said board president Ramashish Hazra.

The exam had begun April 29, for which 5,71,909 students had registered themselves. While 9,378 students had registered for SOSC exam, 4,443 students had applied for the Madhyama exam.



students will be brought from the nodal centres for evaluation. "We hope to start the evaluation process from May 20 or May 21." he said.

Speaking on the allegations that questions of a few subjects came out of syllabus, Hazra said, "No questions were out of syllabus. But we will conduct a review and take an appropriate decision."

# Prez Poll: BJP banking on Naveen, Jagan

New Delhi/Bhubaneswar, May 7: The BJP strategists are first trying to get support from Odisha Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik's Biju Janata Dal (BJD) and his Andhra Pradesh counterpart YS Jagan Mohan Reddy's YSR Congress Party (YSRCP) ahead of the Presidential Election to be held in July this year.

Despite losing few states and alliance partners in the last five years, the BJP is comfortably placed to get its candidate elected as the President of India. However, the current status of the Electoral College for the presidential poll has given a slight edge to the Opposition over the BJP led NDA.

'BJD and YSRCP have extended issue-based support to us in the past. With the support from both BJD and YSRCP, the NDA presidential candidate will easily manage to win the election. Both the party reportedly did not show interest in Congress' call for support in the presidential election, a senior BJP leader said.

The BJP strategists have two simple tasks to do to ensure the victory of the NDA candidate in the presidential election in July; first keep their votes intact and secondly win support of smaller or regional parties to fill the marginal gap in the Electoral College.

Currently, Opposition par collectively have 51.1 per cent share of the Electoral College while the BJP and its alliance partners have 48.9 per cent. The mere two per cent difference can be easily managed by attaining the support of Opposition parties which are not comfortable in standing with the Congress.

A BJP insider said that responsibility to fill the gap in the Electoral College will be given to senior leaders which include party chief JP Nadda, Union Ministers Amit Shah, Rajnath Singh and Nitin Gadkari. Union Ministers Bhupender Yaday and Dhramendra Pradhan may also be roped in to reach out to the Opposition camp for support.

The party insider said that the victory in all four states it ruled in recent assembly elections has ensured that the BJP candidate would not face much difficulty in the presidential election.

"Currently, the NDA needs only 1.2 per cent to cross the halfway mark and it is not difficult to

**S&ME** minister unveils KL

achieve with the support of a likeminded party," he said.

Meanwhile, it has been learnt that the BJP will try to build consensus to avoid a contest by talking to key Opposition parties. "We believe that the President should be elected by consensus and the contest must be avoided. Our leadership may reach out to key Opposition parties to build a consensus over the choice of candidate. We will try to avoid a contest but if the Opposition parties do not agree to our request, we will fight the presidential election and ensure victory of the NDA candidate," another insider said.

In the last presidential election in 2017, NDA candidate Ram Nath Kovind won with 65.65 per cent votes of the Electoral College. In 2017, the NDA was in power in 21 states, however, in 2022, as many as 18 states are being governed by the BJP or its alliance partners.

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#### **HOPES, WISHES AND PRAYERS**



Devotees conducted a ritual at the Ashtashambhu Temple in Chandini Chowk area in Cuttack, Saturday

Bhubaneswar, May 7: Minister of School and Mass Education, Samir Ranjan Dash Saturday inaugurated the regional office of KL Deemedto-be University in the presence of the university officials here.

Located at Satya Nagar, the office has been established to augment the university's commitment to nourish talented students, with access to information on career opportunities, programs offered, educational curriculum, in-demand skill sets and extensive information on growing sectors.

While taking a tour of the office, the Minister was seen speaking on the need for such a committed education system in the country. With the information detonation on the internet, students are often misled on educational programs and course curriculum. The need for a dedicated committee of experts is therefore needed to tend to seeking parents and students.

Dash, along with the Director of Admissions at KL University J Srinivasa Rao, announced the scholarships and dates for the upcoming KL Engineering Entrance Exam-



students. The exams will be held online May 21-24 while ensuring safety protocols prescribed by the authorities from time to time.

Announcing the details of the entrance exam and scholarships, Rao said, "As a deeply valued tradition at our university, we have once again allocated ₹100 crore for scholarships, as part of our joint vision to provide a platform to all the talented students. Last year, we had awarded scholarships to numerous deserving students from Bhubaneswar: Our aim is to deliver the finest education to deserving students. We are confident that the talented students of Odisha would take the benefit of these scholarships and ensure a bright career.'

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#### SHORT **TAKES**

#### Ex-sarpanch held for booth rigging

Dhamnagar: Police arrested a former sarpanch on charge of capturing a polling booth and rigging votes in the recently concluded panchayat elections in Padhani nanchavat under this block in Bhadrak district, Friday. The accused identified as Khirod Kumar Jena, a former sarnanch of Padhani panchayat was produced in the court. Later, he was released on personal bail bond. He is accused of capturing booth no-6 at Dasapari in the panchayat and forcibly casting votes on the ballot papers by threatening the voters when the polling was in progress. The matter came to the fore after videos of booth capturing and rigging by Jena went viral in social media platforms. The State **Election Commission took** note of the fact and a case was registered against five persons including Jena in Dhamnagar police station.

#### **Vig starts probe** into pension scam

Kesinga: The Vigilance department has started an investigation into an alleged misappropriation of over Rs 35 lakh under social security scheme - pension for differently-abled, elderly people and widows - in . Kesinga block of Kalahandi district. Meanwhile, the Vigilance has sought reports from eight officials of the block. Reports said the panchayat executive officer (PEO) of Sirjapalli GP had withdrawn Rs 35, 22, 200 from the block office for disbursement of pensions in 2019-20 financial year. Three years have passed, but the PEO is unable to give an account of how he utilised the fund, said the audit report. Moreover, the report has found embezzlement of official funds by 44 staffers of the block. Officials responsible for pension disbursal are unable to give accounts of Rs 2, 84, 36, 800 meant for social security

#### **BBMCH MEDICO'S DEATH**

### Family seeks CBI probe

Bolangir, May 7: Family members of Nishant Kumar, a first year MBBS student who died after allegedly falling off the hostel rooftop, have demanded a probe by the CBI Saturday.

Alleging suicide due to excess ragging, mental and physical torture by seniors and professors, Nishant's father Krishan Kumar sought the intervention of the central agency in a letter to Prime Minister Narendra Modi and the NHRC.

In the letter. Nishant's father revealed how juniors are tortured in the prestigious institute by seniors and professors. The lecturers here force juniors to write the laboratory manuals of senior students. Furthermore, the juniors who have good handwriting are

of the seniors. Instead of taking action on ragging, the professors take the side of the seniors and make fun of juniors, he alleged.

The seniors have created WhatsApp groups and call the juniors for ragging late in the night. The students are sexually harassed and threatened with dire consequences if they dare to report the Juniors are assaulted if they

are made to clean the college stadium for hours, but not allowed to play. They are verbally abused with filthy language. Nishant's father has sent a copy

see the seniors eye to eye. They

of his WhatsApp chats revealing about the torture to the PMO and the NHRC. He had earlier sought intervention of Bolangir SP.



Members of Talcher Government Medical College Action Committee called for Talcher bandh May 13, demanding that the government make it functional under its management

# 2K drop out of Matric exam in Nabarangpur

POST NEWS NETWORK

Nabarangpur, May 7: The ongoing matriculation examination has been marked by serious absenteeism with over 2,000 candidates in the district were found to have not turned during the examination, a report said.

These students were found absent not in one or two subjects but every subject since the start of the examination, the report said.

Over 13 per cent of the candidates who received admit cards were found absent in every subject of the examination. This has happened as several students have gone outside with their family members to attend marriage celebrations or some function while many have migrated outside to

A senior official of the education department said that many students have dropped out of schools due to poverty to work as casual

#### **SERIOUS ABSENTEEISM**



tion will continue as long as parents do not understand the importance of education and students are not inclined towards studies.

Reports said that over 15,536 students filled up their forms for the HSC examination. Among them, 13,402 candidates have received admit cards to appear the examination out of which 2.134 students have not turned up to appear the examination in the examination

Sources from the District Education Office (DEO) said that 2,102 candidates were absent on the first day of the examination Over 13 per cent of the candidates who received admit cards were found absent in every subject of the examination

April 29, 2,104 students May 2, 2,057 students May 4, 2,155 students May 5 and 2, 134 students May 6.

The state government has launched various schemes and providing several benefits to attract the students to the schools. It has been providing free stipends, free textbooks, free bicycles, provision of free form fill-up, free accommodation in hostels for students of backwards and marginalised sections of the society and various other benefits to attract the students towards studies in the school. However, this has failed to have any impact on the students and their guardians in drawing

#### JE death: Family alleges foul play

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bolangir, May 7: Mystery shrouds the death of a junior engineer in Patnagarh block of this district whose body was recovered by police from a cotton field near Bankabira village about 12 km from the town. Friday.

The deceased was identified as Suresh Chandra Sahu, 55, a junior engineer posted in Patnagarh block and a native of Gopalnagar village under Gobindpur police limits in Cuttack district. Family members cried foul over the death and submitted a memorandum to Bolangir SP Nitin Kushalkar in the presence of Patnagarh SDPO Jyotirmaya Bhukta demanding a proper inquiry into the death and action against the guilty. The SP said that the case is being probed from all aspects and proper action will be taken in this regard

Family members termed the death as a pre-planned murder over preparation of false bills of contractual work. The block junior engineers' association also joined them while submitting the memorandum to the SP. A case was registered after a complaint was filed by his brother. The post-mortem of the body was conducted.

### Guardians thrash 'strict' exam superintendent

POST NEWS NETWORK

Patana, May 7: In a bizarre incident, two guardians of Class X students, who were appearing the annual High School Certificate (HSC) exam, brutally attacked an exam superintendent for being too strict and not allowing the students to copy. The incident has been reported from Ramchandrapur Government High School exam centre under Turumunga police limits in Keonjhar district.

The exam superintendent

Chittaranjan Sahu sustained severe injuries on his head and eyes. Two guardians intercented him near the gate of the exam centre and brutally thrashed him while he was on his way home after the exam duty Saturday. He is now under treatment at Karanjia sub-divisional hospital in Mayurbhanj district.

The guardians have also allegedly manhandled female exam superintendent Jyotshnarani Singh.

A case has been registered in this connection, police said.

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Zonal Manager, Bhubaneswar Zone

# Baripada: 400 more rainwater harvesting projects in making

Baripada, May 7: Overexploitation of depletion in most parts of Mayurbhani district. To keep the groundwater recharged, the state government is already executing scores of rainwater harvesting projects by spending crores of rupees in Baripada town. Over 400 rainwater harvesting projects are already being executed.

The state government has planned to execute 400 more such projects in fiscal 2022-23. Reports said, groundwater level is

gradually plummeting every year. In summer, people have to suffer acute water crisis in most parts of the district. It is said that low-lying areas are being filled up to lay roads and houses due to which rainwater fails to permeate into the ground.

Budhabalanga river that flows on the

Keonjhar chariot finds its

#### **DEPLETING GROUNDWATER**



outskirts of Baripada town and several ponds in the area dry up in summer every year, leading to severe water woes.

Keeping this in view, the civic body authorities have emphasized on rainwater harvesting projects in 28 wards of the town for the last two years, "Committees have been formed in every ward to identify spots to set up rainwater harvesting projects," said Krushnananda Mohanty, chairperson of the civic body.

Cost of each project has been esti-

mated at Rs 30,000. The project entails construction of water outlet and soak pit.

Besides, Rs 38,000 will be allocated for ainwater harvesting systems on the government buildings so as to facilitate rainwater recharge Meanwhile some selfhelp groups (SHGs) have been entrusted with watershed construction

However, locals have alleged that works of most of the rainwater harvesting projects have been compromised with quality to mint money. Their durability is in question as officials looking after the project execution are not monitoring the construction work.

"In a year or two, many projects fell into ruins or became defunct. About 280 rainwater projects set up in 2020-22 are now in bad shape," locals lamented.

Contacted, Sachidananda Satpathy, the executive engineer of Baripada municipality said that project work is being monitored, but some projects have been vandalised by people.

### **BRAJARAJNAGAR BYPOLL**

#### **Cong names Kishore** Patel as its MLA pick

POST NEWS NETWORK

Jharsuguda, May 7: With the political atmosphere in Brajarajnagar Assembly constituency segment gathering momentum for the upcoming bypoll, the Congress Friday afternoon fielded the party's senior leader and former speaker Kishore Patel as its MLA candidate.

A five-member selection committee of the party has named Patel, chair person of the committee and OPCC vice-president Jagneswar Babu stated. "Patel was a unanimous choice," Babu added

In order to decide the party candidate for the bypoll, Babu and other members of the committee including Jharsuguda district unit president Bharat Abasti, Sambalpur district unit president Aswini Guru and Sundargarh unit president Radhamadhav Tripathy had visited Jharsuguda Friday. Jharsuguda district committee, town committee and block committee of Congress welcomed the decision and extended their support for selection of Patel as the party candidate. It was decided at a meeting held on the premises of a temple here.

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### place in Guinness Book POST NEWS NETWORK Keonjhar, May 7: The 72-foot-high

chariot of Lord Jagannath in Keonjhar

town has been placed in the 'Guinness Book of World Records' as the largest chariot drawn during Rath Yatra (divine sojourn of the Holy Trinity), the district Collector Ashish Thakare informed Friday evening on the sidelines of a religious function. "The largest Ratha Yatra chariot is

22 m (72 ft) x 14 m (45 ft) x 14 m (45 ft) and was achieved by the Executive Officer, Debottar, Keonjhar (India), in Keonjhar, India, on 2 August 2019," a certificate issued by the 'Guinness Book of World Records' read. It is pertinent to mention that the

chariot of Lord Jagannath in Keonjhar

has been adjudged as the tallest char-

iot by India Book of Records, Asia

Pacific Records, Global Records and Wonder Book of Records, so far. The wooden outsized Ratha Yatra chariot is reconstructed every year. It is an age-old tradition spanning more than 300 years. The Odisha government

has decided for development and beau-



Puri. Development work on the temple



tification of Puruna Bazaar, Sri Sri Baladeview temple and Old Town here in line with the initiatives taken up in premises is underway. The government announced development work for Badadanda, Gundicha temple and its adjacent areas Friday. Beautification of the 540 metre-long Badadanda will be carried out along with seating facility and provision of drinking water for devotees. Small shops and kiosks will be erected alongside the grand road and Hadabandha pond of the Vaishnavite shrine will be renovated.

√hroughout the Cold War,

"non-aligned in peace,

neutral in wartime" was



Man's freedom is relative and it cannot be held solely responsible for the imperfection of his nature.

**SRI AUROBINDO** 



# **Keep Going Down**

n July 2020, the government announced it would monitor India's performance of 29 select global indices. A meeting with 47 Central ministries and departments was held to work out how to improve the ranking. Let us see

On the United Nations Human Development Index, we have fallen by one place. This is because of a decline in average income and disinvestment in girls' education and health. The United Nations World Happiness Report does not measure happiness. It measures GDP per capita, life expectancy, freedom and perceptions of corruption. India has fallen 19 places here.

On the Global Hunger Index, which measures hunger, stunting in children and undernourishment, India has fallen 46 places and is today behind Pakistan, Nepal and Bangladesh.

Conservative (meaning right-wing) bodies in the United States have long been monitoring the world from their point of view on freedom. On the Cato Human Freedom Index, India has fallen 44 places because of a decline in rule of law, religious freedom and freedom to trade. The World Economic Forum (popularly known as Davos) issues the Global Gender Gap Index which monitors progress on gender parity. India has fallen 26 places. The World Bank through its Women, Business and the Law Index monitors women's economic opportunities. India has fallen 13 places.

On the Smart Cities Index which looks at health, safety, mobility, activities and opportunities for citizens, Delhi has fallen 18 places, Bangalore has fallen 16 places, Hyderabad 18 places and Mumbai 15 places. The Access Now Tracker looks at internet shutdowns around the world. India is by far the global leader here. India had 6 shutdowns in 2014, 14 in 2015, 31 in 2016, 79 in 2017, 134 in 2018, 121 in 2019 and 109 in 2020. In 2021, there were 106, Of 213 total global shutdowns in 2019, India accounted for 56 per cent (12 times more than the next nation, Venezuela). Of 155 global shutdowns in 2020, India accounted for 70 per cent, denying people — including patients, students - access even during a pandemic.

On the global RTI ratings, India has fallen four places as it has become more opaque. India has fallen on indices that monitor democracy, and this has already been widely reported. On the University of Gothenburg's Varieties of Democracy, India lost its status as a democracy and was classified as an 'electoral autocracy', joining nations like Hungary and Turkey. On freedom of expression, media and civil society, India was 'as autocratic as is Pakistan, and worse than both Bangladesh and Nepal'.

On Freedom House's Freedom in the World Index, India has gone from 'free' to 'partly free'

and Kashmir, which is ranked separately, gone from 'partly free' to 'not free'. The Civicus Monitor's National Civic Space rankings look at freedoms of association, peaceful assembly and expression (which are fundamental rights in India under Article 19). India has gone from 'obstructed'

On the Economist Intelligence Unit's Democracy Index, India has fallen 19 places. India has lost hard power, meaning military ability and the power to influence the world, and on the Lowy Institute's Asia Power Index, India lost its 'major power' status in 2020 after events in Ladakh. The World Justice Project monitors rule of law in nations. India has fallen 13 places here. On the World Press Freedom Index, India has fallen 10 places. Bloomberg's Covid Resilience Ranking put India fourth from the bottom in the world, behind Pakistan and Bangladesh

On the World Air Quality Index, India had 22 of the 30 most polluted cities in the world, adding 11 after 2017. On the Yale Environmental Performance Index which looks at protection of ecosystems, India fell 13 places and went behind Bangladesh, Pakistan and Nepal. Similarly, on the Climate Risk Index it fell 11 places to be behind Pakistan and Bangladesh again. India fell 10 places in the Sustainable Development Index.

In August of 2020, it was reported that the "Modi govt plans media blitz for 'image correction' to boost India rank on global lists." This would involve "large-scale media blitzkrieg will involve multimedia campaigns and microsites (sites within websites) created by different ministries." This publicity, the report said, would "shape India's perception for the domestic and global audience and publicise the problems, parameters and data sources of global indices." How publicity would change India's ranking was not explained.

After August 2020, as India kept declining, the government decided that it would not engage with the indices. Instead it would say that they were incorrect and biased. It was like the boy who doesn't want to play and decides to take his stumps home.

The indices will keep getting published however, and India will keep falling. To correct a problem, one has to first acknowledge a problem. Only then can one think about what is wrong and what can be fixed. Since we have already moved into our Amritkaal phase, there is nothing wrong here and we will keep going down this path to wherever it leads.

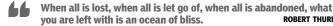
#### WISDOM CORNER



It is through gratitude for the present moment that the spiritual



Your whole idea about yourself is borrowed – borrowed from those who have no idea of who they are themselves.



WORDS**WORTH** 

### Struthonian

■his is a modern weird word, used a few times after the late Arthur Koestler invented it in 1963, but now extremely rare. His aim, in an article he wrote in Encounter magazine in that year, was to describe pundits who prefer honest self-deception to ignoble truths. It figuratively refers to individuals who hide their head in the sand. You may recall one animal that's famous for its in-sand head-burying, at least in legend, so you won't be surprised to learn that struthonian is from the Latin struthio, an ostrich. Related to it is the standard - albeit technical - English struthious, of or like an ostrich. An ancient, rare and defunct name for the bird, by the way, was struthiocamel, from Latin struthiocamelus. The Romans took it wrongly from Greek strouthokamelos, literally "sparrow camel" or, more loosely, "camel-bird" (the scientific name of the ostrich to this day is Struthio camelus). Another Greek name for the ostrich was megas strouthos, big sparrow or big bird. In later Latin its name became avis struthio, the struthio bird. Incidentally, ostrich also ultimately comes from avis struthio, since the v changed later to a vowel and was further mangled in its passage through Old French (much the same thing happened with French oiseau, bird, also from avis via the late Latin aucellus). The only recent example of struthonian we can turn up is in the journal of the Royal United Services Institute dated July 2007: "Even if looking into the future can be demonstrated usually to be futile, you still need to practise; you might get better, and one day you strike lucky and you hit a tipping point. As the wisdom of snooker players informs us: 'The more I practise, the luckier I become'. Being struthonian is not an option."



Aakar Patel

To correct

has to first

problem.

a problem, one

acknowledge a

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### FOCUS GEOPOLITICS

# **NORDIC NEUTRALITY ENDS**

not only Sweden's security doctrine, but also helped shape the national identity and self-understanding of the Swedes. But Russia's invasion of Ukraine may soon upend the country's traditional non-aligned stance, by likely triggering both countries to apply for NATO membership. As recently as March 8, two weeks after Russian President

Vladimir Putin launched his war on Ukraine, Swedish Prime Minister Magdalena Andersson of the Social Democrats said that applying to join NATO "in the current situation [...] would further destabilize this area of Europe and increase tensions." Many centerright commentators immediately accused her of accepting Putin's view that a sovereign state's choice to join NATO can be considered a provocation against Russia.

But strong signals from within the Social Democrats now indicate that Sweden may apply for NATO membership as early as the Alliance's Madrid summit in June. The country's security stance has already changed radically. The government has sent weapons to Ukraine, and the Swedish public has begun googling about bomb shelters and iodine tablets

Pro-NATO developments in neighbouring Finland are also influencing Sweden's security debate. Finland's vulnerability visà-vis the Soviet Union and then Russia was long an important reason for Swedish non-alignment, as policymakers assumed that Finland would fall under the Kremlin's control if Sweden joined NATO. In recent years, Sweden has invested heavily in security cooperation with Finland.

When Andersson met Finnish Prime Minister Sanna Marin in Stockholm in April, the two leaders emphasised that although each country will reach an independent decision on NATO membership, they will do so in close dialogue with each other. Marin promised a Finnish decision within weeks, while the Swedish parliament will publish a report in mid-May presenting its position on the country's



Neutrality backed by informal cooperation with NATO long served Sweden's security interests well. But Russia's war against Ukraine has upended old assumptions, and the resulting shift in Swedish public opinion, together with pro-NATO developments in neighbouring Finland, points to an imminent application to join the Alliance

membership. No one should be surprised if the two Nordic states act in tandem.

For Sweden, non-alignment and neutrality are not only established virtues; there is also a sense that these policies served the country well during the wars of the twentieth and early twenty-first centuries. Of course, reality did not always match rhetoric. During World War II, Sweden was not really neutral, but made significant concessions to Nazi Germany. Shortly after the war, it acceded to the Kremlin's demands by – among other shameful acts of appeasement-extraditing soldiers from the Baltic states to the Soviet Union.

During the Cold War, however, Sweden maintained a "hidden alliance" with NATO through extensive covert cooperation. This policy contrasted sharply with official rhetoric, which portrayed the country as taking a middle position between two equally reprehensible powers – the Soviet Union and the United States. Under Olof Palme, who led the Social Democrats from 1969 until his assassination in 1986 and twice served as prime minister, NATO was dismissed as a menacing "nuclear alliance." But, while publicly anti-American, Palme emphasised privately that cooperation with NATO

Palme's official security doctrine attained a kind of sacred status in Sweden upon his death, and his spirit has long influenced the country's foreign service. In the 2010 election campaign, the Social Democrats, playing on the old threat of the "nuclear alliance," demanded that "the US dismantle its nuclear weapons and military bases outside the country's borders.

But, in practice, Sweden has abandoned neutrality and taken ever-greater steps away from nonalignment, As a European Union member since 1995, the country has close political and economic links to other member states. Since 2009, it has been bound by the EU solidarity clause, which obliges members to assist other EU countries – although not necessarily by military means – in the event of an armed attack. Sweden has also gradually deepened its cooperation with NATO, and is now (like Finland) a so-called Enhanced Opportunity Partner. It is in the Partnership for Peace, has contributed troops to international operations under the NATO flag, and participates in the Alliance's military exercises. Most importantly, Swedish defence planning relies heavily on outside help in the event of war.

Sweden's Cold War policy of neutrality required strong defence forces, and military expenditure of

maintained the world's fourthlargest air force, and had the ability to mobilise almost its entire military-age male population within a few days. Although Sweden has kept its edge in terms of military technology since the end of the Cold War, the de facto abolition of conscription and the shift in the military's focus to foreign missions have weakened its defence capabilities. Conscription has recently been revived, and the Home Guard was flooded with applications following Russia's invasion.

But Sweden's defence spending currently amounts to only 1.3% of GDP. In 2013, the then-supreme military commander, Sverker Göranson, publicly admitted that Sweden could withstand an attack "for about a week. Then we have to get help from other countries. Only after the Ukraine war began did Andersson announce that Swedish defence expenditure would increase to 2% of GDP. While Sweden's defence plans rely significantly on assistance from others, the country does not benefit from the collective-security guarantee enshrined in Article 5 of the North Atlantic Treaty. And Russian aggression seems to stop only at the borders of full NATO members, not partners of the Alliance like

Ukraine and Georgia. The Swedish public thinks partnership with NATO is no longer good enough. When asked January 1, 2022, whether Sweden should apply for NATO membership, 34% of Swedes agreed and 37% disagreed. By mid-April, 47% were in favour, and only 28% were opposed. And 59% thought Sweden should join NATO if Finland does, with only 17% opposed. At the beginning of May, an opinion poll for the first time showed a majority (51%) in favour of NATO membership. Given this shift in public sentiment, we can expect Sweden to end its charade of neutrality and non-alignment once and for all.

The writer is an editorial writer for the Swedish newspaper Svenska Dagbladet and a columnist for the Danish newspaper Berlingske.

#### SPECTRUM SCIENCE

Paulina Neuding

YEARS, SWEDEN

**HAS INVESTED** 

**COOPERATION** 

**WITH FINLAND** 

**IN RECENT** 

**HEAVILY IN** 

**SECURITY** 

# Plasma gasification for waste treatment



Sanjib Kumar Karmee

**PLASMA TECHNOLOGY CAN BE ECONOMICALLY VIABLE FOR WASTE DESTRUCTION IF** THE COST OF **REMOVING THE HAZARD POSED BY** THE WASTE IS **VERY HIGH** 

creased significantly in the recent decades. According to a report by the World Bank, global waste could grow 70 per cent by 2050 under a businessas-usual scenario. A major portion of the municipal solid waste (MSW) is currently incinerated or dumped in landfills. Furthermore, MSW is a highly variable feedstock. The composition of MSW changes depending upon the place and time of collection. Thus, technical valorisation of MSW is often challenging and would require a sorting/pretreatment process. In this context, an advanced technology for valorisation of MSW without sorting and pulverization would be beneficial. Along this line, plasma gasification is a potential technology for waste disposal.

The concept of treating MSW using plasma technology was first introduced by Dr SL Camacho through his 1973 patent. In the patent, it was disclosed that plasma torches would operate in a refractory lined furnace to pyrolyze household and industrial wastes. Plasma gasification involves high temperature decomposition of wastes. It does not combust the waste like in an incinerator. the reactor under limited oxygen at around 3500-6500 °C using the thermal energy of plasma. The reaction takes place very quickly to disintegrate wastes into basic elements. The resulting products are a glass like substance (slag) and syngas. Syngas can be used for heat and electricity generation. Additionally, syngas can also be converted into liquid fuels; whereas, resulting slag can be used for building aggregates, tiles, and bricks.

Plasma gasification technology is used commercially in several countries for converting waste-toenergy. The Canadian plasma gasification firm Alter NRG commissioned a biomass fired demonstration unit in Wuhan, China. The facility is developed to process around 100 tonnes of biomass waste per day into syngas. Subsequently, the obtained syngas is used for the production of liquid transportation fuels at the Kaidi facility. In Japan, a small plant at Mihama and Mikata started operating in 2002. It can process ~ 24 tonnes per day of MSW and four tonnes per day of sludge. The Plasma Energy Applied Technology (PEAT). International, USA built a waste disposal facility at National Cheng Kung University, Tainan, Taiwan.

at National Cheng Kung University and processing different wastes such as fly ash, medical waste, industrial waste and hazardous waste. PyroGenesis Canada Inc, an environmental solutions company installed a plasma waste-to-energy system for the United States Navv aircraft carrier (USS Gerald R. Ford, CVN-78) to treat shipboard waste. The system is smaller than a conventional marine incinerator and employed for rapid gasification of combustible waste.

Plasma gasification technology is nascent in India. In Pune, a 72 tonne per day plasma waste treatment plant was commissioned in 2008. It is reported that the syngas utilisation was never successful and due to technical reasons the plant was unable to generate power. The GIFT city located in Gujarat has already planned to treat all wastes through plasma gasification. According to news reports, a Swedenbased company has proposed to use plasma technology for Chandigarh's waste processing plant.

Plasma technology has several advantages. For instance, it can gasify hazardous and non-hazardous waste rapidly. During COVID-19 pandemic, huge quantities of medical wastes,

Management of medical wastes via traditional treatment methods is risky and difficult because of its infectious nature. These wastes can be easily managed through plasma technology. Other advantages of the technology include: i) pulverization of feedstock is not required: ii) high conversion of feedstock into syngas; iii) no tar in syngas; iv) no residual carbon formation; and v) low carbon dioxide emission.

Plasma gasification of MSW is expensive. Nevertheless, in India intervention by different government and private R&D organisations is necessary to make it viable and effective for appropriation. The technology can be made costeffective by generating revenue in the form of syngas or liquid fuels from MSW. Furthermore, plasma technology can be an economically viable option of waste destruction if the cost of removing the hazard posed by the waste is very high. Along this line, application of plasma gasification for handling medical waste, refinery waste, and construction materials can be explored because traditional treatment of these wastes is risky and requires high disposal fees.

The writer is a scientist.

# etters

TO THE EDITOR

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

OrissaPOST

B-15, Rasulgarh Industrial Estate, Bhubaneswar-751010

#### An unstoppable force

Sir, World Red Cross Day has evolved into a significant historical event over the years. The 8th of May is World Red Cross and Red Crescent Day, a global day to honour the solidarity of international Red Cross and Red Crescent movements, as well as the bravery and accomplishments of volunteers and employees around the world, whose life-saving and life-challenging services ensure that we uphold our promise to humanity every day. The International Committee of the Red Cross founder Jean Henry Dunant's birthday is commemorated on this day. The Red Cross is involved in several initiatives and services. The Red Cross Society's principal goal is to inspire, initiate, and support all types of humanitarian operations at all times and in all circumstances, based on seven principles: humanity, impartiality, neutrality, independence, volunteer service, unity, and universality. Each year, disasters and crises devastate millions of people. As part of the world's largest humanitarian network, the Red Cross and Red Crescent provide assistance and hope in virtually every corner of the globe. They are on the front lines of every crisis, frequently in perilous situations and at tremendous personal risk. The main goals of World Red Cross Day are to provide relief and comfort to people who have been injured and to prevent disaster deaths. The day is commemorated to encourage and aid those who have been affected by natural disasters, wars, and other comparable situations. The Red Cross has been awarded the Nobel Peace Prize three times

Krishna Kumar Vepakomma, HYDERABAD

#### Politics of revenge

Sir, Politics is the administration of the affairs of the state. It is a noble way of serving people with a touch of care and affection. Politics instead of uniting the mass, is nowadays dividing people. Slapping sedition charges against Amaravati MP and her MLA husband for mass reading of Hanuman Chalisa is a miscarriage of justice. It is a wrong use of the law. Similarly, arresting a BJP supporter by Punjab police for writing against the AAP government is a clear indication of political intolerance and deep rooted antipathy to other's  $\rightarrow$ views and ideas. In a democracy, dissenting voice is a natural thing. Revenge has not won anything worthwhile in life and in politics. It is a deadly enemy. In politics one should love one's opponents and pray for the well-being of adversaries. Forgiveness as a virtue is a reward in itself. A wide open heart is the blessing of God.

Prabhudutt Dash, BHUBANESWAR

# national



**Education of good** quality must become accessible to all, be affordable and should lead to a positive transformation in an individual's outlook, societal cohesion and inclusive national development M VENKAIAH NAIDU | VICE PRESIDENT

#### **ON CARDS**

The Delhi government is in preparation to allow bars in the capital city to serve liquor till 3 am. However, the government is yet to issue an official notification in this regard





In every sector - education, arts, defence you name it, India has made great strides in the past 75 years. It has gained respect internationally as a great power ... when the country reaches 100th year of Independence, India will occupy the top position in the world

AMIT SHAH UNION HOME MINISTER

We do not want the Congress party to completely disappear. We need an opposition. If we have an opposition, it is for the opposition to decide whether it should be led by Rahul Gandhi, Mamata Banerjee or Arvind

HARDEEP SINGH PURI UNION MINISTER

Kejriwal or Sharad Pawar

Our focus is to integrate the works with the help of various agencies cost of the projects

which will reduce the and save the time taken for

MANISH SISODIA DELHI DEPUTY CM

#### **SHORT TAKES**

#### Girl murdered

Gurugram: In a shocking

incident, a six-year-old girl

was brutally killed in Manesar area in Gurugram, the police said Saturday. The police also suspect rape, but are waiting the autopsy report. The police have detained one suspect from the same neighbourhood. According to the police, after committing the crime, the accused left the deceased's body in a pool of blood and ran away. The complainant's father, a native of Uttar Pradesh, told the police that he works as a helper and stays in a village in the Manesar area along with his family.

#### **ED arrests CA**

New Delhi/Ranchi: The ED Saturday arrested a chartered accountant under the antimoney laundering law in a case linked to alleged embezzlement of MGNREGA funds in Jharkhand's Khunti district as part of which state mining secretary and IAS officer Pooja Singhal and others were raided, officials said. CA Suman Kumar was taken into custody under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) around 5 pm in Ranchi and he would be produced before a local court where the **Enforcement Directorate** would seek his further custody, they said.

#### One arrested

Ranchi: One more person was arrested in connection with the lynching of a village forest protection committee chief for protesting against illegal tree felling in Jharkhand's Gumla district, police said Saturday. This takes the number of arrests in the case to five and all of them were forwarded to jail. Altogether 35 people were named as accused in the FIR and they are absconding, police said.

#### **Woman robbed**

Thane: Four unidentified persons posing as policemen robbed a 60-year-old woman of her ornaments worth Rs 1.2 lakh in Maharashtra's Thane district, police said Saturday. The incident took place around 11 am Friday when the victim, a resident of neighbouring Mumbai, was travelling towards Thane on Nashik highway, an official of Kongaon police station said. The unidentified accused riding sports bikes intercepted the victim's autorickshaw at Dongrali and flashed an identity card and identified themselves as policemen, he said. The men allegedly asked the woman to keep her ornaments safely in a nacket before proceeding further and offered to help her pack, the official said.

# Tap tech for border roads: Rajnath to BRO

New Delhi, May 7: Defence Minister Rajnath Singh Saturday asked the Border Roads Organisation (BRO) to develop infrastructure at a faster pace through the use of technology, citing how the Chinese side has increased its presence in the Northern sector by carrying out construction activities in mountainous areas.

Singh also said that the development of border areas is a major part of the government's "comprehensive defence strategy", noting that it will bolster the overall security apparatus of the country.

In an address at an event to celebrate the 63rd Raising Day of the BRO, he also said that providing maximum facilities to those guarding India's borders is the top priority of the government. "The Chinese presence has increased in the Northern sector in the recent past. Due to their proficiency in construction in mountainous areas, they manage to reach different places very quickly," the defence minister said.

"The BRO must continue to work in parallel and focus on increasing their capability with full use of technology," he said adding the government is making all efforts to provide the required support to the BRO. After the eastern Ladakh face-off began in May 2020, India has been focusing on improving infrastructure along the over 3,400 km-long Line of Actual Control (LAC). In his re-



Defence Minister Rajnath Singh with MoS of Defence Ajay Bhatt and Director General of Border Roads Organisation (BRO) Lt Gen Rajeev Chaudhary during the celebrations of the 63rd Raising Day of Border Roads Organisation, at Seema Sadak Bhawan, in New Delhi

marks, Singh mentioned the recent announcement to an increase of the capital budget of BRO by 40 per cent to Rs 3,500 crore in the financial year 2022 23, reiterating the government's commitment to the country's security and development of border areas.

He assured the BRO of not just budgetary, but all possible support. "The more empowered the people of border areas become, the more aware and concerned

Chinese presence has increased in the **Northern sector in the** recent past. Due to their proficiency in construction in mountainous areas, they manage to reach different places very quickly imes, we are RAJNATH SINGH | DEFENCE committed to move for-

curity," he said.

they will be about the security of those areas. Citizens are the greatest power of a nation,' Singh said. "Therefore. with changing

> ward for the development of our border areas. It is our top priority to provide maximum facilities to those who work round-the-clock for our se-

The defence minister also com-

After the eastern Ladakh face-off began in May 2020, India has been focusing on improving infrastructure along the over 3,400 km-long Line of Actual Control

he defence minister complimented the BRO for opening "new doors of security and prosperity" not just in the areas, but for the entire country

plimented the BRO for opening "new doors of security and prosperity" not just in the areas, but for the entire country. He described BRO as not just a construction organisation, but a shining example of unity, discipline, dedication and devotion to duty.

Underlining the importance of roads, bridges and tunnels in the progress of a nation, he said the projects completed by the BRO have enhanced the operational preparedness of the armed forces and improved the socio-economic conditions of the people living in far-flung areas.

"Infrastructure development in border areas is an indicator of the Government's unwavering commitment to building a strong, secure and self-reliant 'New India' as envisioned by Prime Minister Narendra Modi." Singh said.

He said border areas have emerged as "new centres of development" and the regions like the Northeast are not only developing themselves but have also become a "gateway" for the all-around progress of the country.

# Protest, slugfest after Bagga's arrest

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi/Chandigarh, May 7: The controversy surrounding BJP leader Taiinder Pal Singh Bagga's dramatic arrest by the Punjab Police and subsequent release played out in courts and in the political arena Saturday, as a fresh warrant was issued against him and the slugfest between the AAP and the BJP escalated into protests and name-calling.

Back home in the early hours of Saturday, Bagga, surrounded by family members and friends at his Janakpuri residence, tore into the Aam Aadmi Party and its chief Arvind Kejriwal over his arrest, accusing him of pursuing political vendetta through police in Punjab. "No matter one or 100 FIRs are registered against me, I will keep raising issues of dishonouring of the Guru Granth Sahib and Kejriwal's insult to Kashmiri Pandits," he said.

"They (the AAP) are attacking me because I am raising my voice against the AAP and its chief Kejriwal," BJP leaders also protested outside the residence of the Delhi Chief Minister, calling him a "dictator'

The AAP accused the BJP and its governments of protecting its "goon" who incited riots in Punjab. Bagga's arrest in the case filed by AAP leader Sunny Ahluwalia at Mohali on April 1 witnessed the Punjab Police pitted against their

counterparts from Haryana and Delhi. The Delhi Police has filed a case of kidnapping over his arrest. As Puniah Police was taking him to AAP-ruled state, they were stopped by their Haryana counterparts. Bagga was later brought to the national capital by the Delhi Police, taken to the DDU hospital as a Medico-Legal-Case (MLC) before being produced in front of a Dwarka court magistrate.

"The medical examination revealed injury marks on his body," the Delhi Police said on Saturday. "Bagga expressed apprehension over his safety and security. We will do necessary security arrangements," a senior officer said.

Bagga claimed that while he was being taken to Punjab after his arrest, the police tried to persuade him not to raise issues pertaining to dishonouring of Guru Granth Sahib and 'The Kashmir Files' movie. "They told me why I was getting myself involved with matters of other state when I lived in Delhi "

Delhi BJP chief Adesh Gupta alleged that with Bagga's arrest, it was clear that the Aam Aadmi Party's national convener had "misused" the Punjab Police for personal benefit."Kejriwal is a dictator. What was Bagga's crime? He just asked for Kejriwal's clarification on his remarks on '(The) Kashmir Files'. He was not allowed to wear a turban during the arrest," he said.

# **SC GETS TWO**



New Delhi, May 7: The Supreme Court is set to regain its full strength of 34 judges with two fresh appointments to the top court

Two days after the Supreme Court Collegium headed by CJI N V Ramana recommended the names of Gauhati High Court Chief Justice Sudhanshu Dhulia and Justice Jamshed B Pardiwala of the Gujarat High Court for elevation to the apex court, the Union Law Ministry announced their appointments Saturday in separate notifications

Once they take oath early next week, the Supreme Court will regain its sanctioned strength of 34 judges. Justice Pardiwala will go on to serve as the CJI for over two vears, sources aware of the procedure to appoint members of the higher judiciary said.

Justice Dhulia, who will be the second judge to be elevated from Uttarakhand, is the sibling of national award-winning film director and actor Tigmanshu Dhulia. He will have tenure of a little over three years. Justice Pardiwala will be the

fourth judge from the Parsi community to adorn the top court bench and the first high court judge from the minority community who has been elevated in the last five years, after Justice S Abdul Nazeer. Justice Nazeer was elevated to Supreme Court in February 2017.

With the retirement of Justice R Subhash Reddy on January 4 this year, the total strength of apex court judges had come down to 32 against the sanctioned strength of 34. Justice Dhulia, born on August 10, 1960, is from Madanpur, a remote village located in Pauri Garhwal district of Uttarakhand. He joined the Bar at Allahabad High Court in 1986.



A man plucks litchis at an orchard in Nadia

#### 7 killed in accident

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, May 7: At least seven people were killed when a car collided with an unidentified vehicle on the Yamuna Expressway in Uttar Pradesh's Mathura district Saturday.

The victims, including a child, died on the spot, while two people suffered serious injuries in the accident that occurred in the Naujhil area at Milestone 68. A police team rescued the injured and shifted them to a hospital.

The bodies have been sent for post-mortem and their families informed. Expressing grief over the incident, Prime Minister Narendra Modi tweeted in Hindi: "The road accident in Littar Pradesh's Mathura is heart-wrenching. My deepest condolences to those who have lost their loved ones. I wish speedy recovery to the injured.



# CBI conducts raids against Punjab AAP MLA

During the searches, conducted after an FIR was filed in the ₹40.92-crore alleged loan fraud in Bank of India, the CBI is understood to have recovered 94 blank cheques carrying signatures of different persons, with enclosed Aadhaar cards, sources claimed

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, May 7: The CBI Saturday conducted searches at three Sangrur-located properties of Punjab AAP MLA Jaswant

Singh Gajjan Majra in a bank

fraud case of over Rs 40 crore, officials said

During the searches, conducted after an FIR was filed in the Rs 40.92-crore alleged loan fraud in Bank of India, the CBI is understood to have recovered 94



blank cheques carrying signatures of different persons, with enclosed Aadhar cards, sources

CBI spokesperson RC Joshi said, "Cash worth Rs 16.57 lakh (approx), around 88 foreign currency notes, some property documents, several bank accounts and other incriminating documents were found and recovered during searches.

Officials said the CBI has registered the case on a complaint form Bank of India, Ludhiana, against Singh, Tara Corporation Ltd (renamed as Malaudh Agro Ltd.) based at Gaunspura, Tehsil-Malerkotla (Punjab), and others. Singh, the Amargarh MLA, was

a Director and Guarantor in the company, they said.

Singh's brothers Balwant Singh and Kulwant Singh and nephew Tejinder Singh, all directors and guarantors, have also been booked, they said. Tara Health Foods Ltd, another company, is also named as accused in the FIR, they said.

It was alleged the firm based at Gaunspura, Malerkotla, was engaged in trading of DOC Rice Bran, DOC Mustard Cake, Cottonseed Cake, Maize, Bajra and other food grains.

# Xiaomi accuses ED of 'physical violence' threats during probe

*After the Reuters story* was published, the ED issued a statement saying Xiaomi's allegations were "untrue and baseless" and company executives had deposed "voluntarily in

REUTERS

New Delhi, May 7: Chinese smartphone maker Xiaomi Corp 1810.HK has alleged its top executives faced

the most conducive

environment"

threats of "physical violence" and coercion during questioning by India's financial crime fighting agency, according to a court filing seen by Reuters.

Officials from the Enforcement Directorate warned the company's former India managing director, Manu Kumar Jain, current Chief Financial Officer Sameer B.S. Rao, and their families of "dire consequences" if they did not submit statements as desired by the agency,

Xiaomi's filing dated May 4 stated. After the Reuters story was published, the Enforcement Directorate issued a statement saying Xiaomi's allegations were "untrue and baseless" and company executives had



The logo of Xiaomi is seen inside the company's office in Bangalore REUTERS

conducive environment". Xiaomi has been under investigation since February and last were legitimate. week the Indian agency seized \$725 million in the company's

Xiaomi has denied any wrongdoing, saying its royalty payments

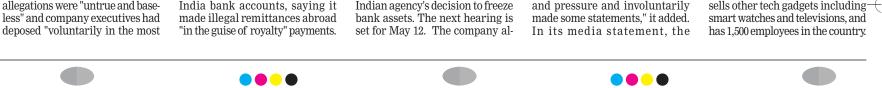
On Thursday, a judge heard Xiaomi lawyers and put on hold the Indian agency's decision to freeze leges intimidation by the enforcement agency when executives appeared for questioning multiple times in April.

Jain and Rao were on certain occasions "threatened ... with dire consequences including arrest, damage to the career prospects, criminal liability and physical violence if they did not give statements as per the dictates of" the agency, according to the filing in the High Court of southern Karnataka state.

The executives "were able to resist the pressure for some time, (but) they ultimately relented under such extreme and hostile abuse Enforcement Directorate said it is a "professional agency with strong work ethics and there was no coercion or threat to the officers of the company at any point of time".

Xiaomi declined to comment citing pending legal proceedings. Jain and Rao did not respond to Reuters queries. Jain is now Xiaomi's global vice president based in Dubai and is credited with Xiaomi's rise in India, where its smartphones are hugely popular.

Xiaomi was the leading smartphone seller in 2021 with a 24% market share in India, according to Counterpoint Research. It also





# TWO STATES





# Has Maha 'conquered' Omicron?

THE STATE HAD LAST REPORTED 61 OMICRON CASES 60 DAYS AGO MARCH 6 - NEARLY THREE MONTHS AFTER THE FIRST ONE WAS CONFIRMED DECEMBER 4. 2021. SENDING SHOCKWAVES AMONG THE HEALTH CIRCLES

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Mumbai, May 7: In a relief of sorts, Maharashtra has not recorded a single case of the Omicron variant for the past two months, although Covid-19 infections are rising again gradually, state health

The state had last reported 61 Omicron cases 60 days ago March 6 - nearly three months after the first one was confirmed December 4 2021, sending shockwaves among

The first victim was a 33-year-old marine engineer of Thane, who came to Mumbai from South Africa November 23 via New Delhi, and tested positive November 27, while his Omicron positive report came December 4. He was admitted to a hospital in Kalyan-Dombivali and discharged after 11 days of treatment for Omicron



Since then, the state continued to notch regular incidence of Omicron cases with the final tally standing at 5,726, the highest in India. Not willing to take chances, the state government kept a hawk's

eye vigil at the international airports in Mumbai, Pune and Nagpur and other airports for domestic passengers, and carried out random checks on lakhs of arrivals to weed out the potential infected ones.

Hospitals in Mumbai, Thane, Pune and certain other areas from where a large number of Omicron cases were reported were on high-alert and the situation was finally brought under

control after three months.

However, the state had another scare April 6 with a suspected Omicron XE variant infected - a 50year-old South African films costume designer - but it was later denied by the Centre.

Subsequently April 9, the first and till date the only case of Omicron XE was confirmed in a 67-year-old Mumbaikar who tested positive on a visit to Vadodara. Barring the sole case of Omicron XE April 9, the state has remained Omicronfree for the past two months now.

Meanwhile, Covid-19 cases have again shown an upward trend, crossing the 200-mark during the week for the first time since mid-March.

Till date, the state has notched 78,78,801 total infections and 1,47,845 deaths since the pandemic started in March 2020, while another 1,161 'active cases' are under treatment

# Likely shift in Goa mining sector may kick-start industry



INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Panaji, May 7: The contours of Goa's legacy industry, iron ore mining, is set for a tectonic change, with the BJP-led coalition government in the state poised to repossess 88 mining tracts' leases to wealthy mining barons for generations, some of which were also transferred to multinational companies like Vedanta Resources

Most mining tracts in the

state, located in the hinin the mining belt terland away from the have been waiting for golden shoreline. years for mining to resume. were given as con-This process should be cessions to bidders by the Portuguese completed as soon as possible so that mining activity begins government during the colonial era, at the earliest but a series of ille-PUTI GAONKAR | CONVENOR, GOA galities, including a ₹35,000 crore illegal mining scam as well as irregularities in the lease renewal

try, which has been shut down to a large extent since 2018. The attempt to repossess 88 mining leases with to hand them over to the recently formed state government's mining corporation has signalled yet another attempt by successive state governments to restart the mining industry in the

processes, had forced the Supreme

Court to crack down on the indus-

for nearly 30 percent of Goa's GDP. Last week, the state government issued notices to lease holders of the

state, which at its peak accounted

in 2018, directing them to comply with the Rule 12 (1) (hh) of the Minerals (other than Atomic and Hydrocarbons Energy Minerals) Concession Rules, 2016, and vacate leases "within a period of one calendar month w.e.f. May 6 to June 6, 2022, failing which further action will be initiated as deemed appropriate in terms of the MMDR Act and the

Rules made thereunder". The notice also directed leaseholders to clear ore, en-**People** gines, machinery, plants, buildings, structures and tramways from the mining

receipt of the notices, the lobby group has said that the mat-

sites. While the

Goa Mineral

Ore Exporters

Association, a

collective of iron

ter is still pending in the High Court. When mining extraction was at its peak between 2009 and 2011, nearly 13,000 trucks and dozens of river barges ferried iron ore from the mining sites to the state's major port in South Goa for export to China and Japan. Nearly all the machinery, barge and truck owners now await the resumption of mining activity through the e-auctioning route, which according to CM Sawant is expected to be conducted

by the newly formed Goa Mineral

Development Corporation.

### Haj '22 prioritises pilgrims' health & well-being: Naqvi



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, May 7: Union Minister for Minority Affairs Mukhtar Abbas Naqvi Saturday said that Haj 2022 was taking place with significant reforms, giving utmost priority to the health and well-being of pilgrims.

Inaugurating a two-day training camp of 'Khadim Ul Hujjaj' at Haj House here, Naqvi said a total of 79,237 Indian Muslims will go for Haj 2022, of whom 50 per cent are women.

The entire process of Haj 2022 has been chalked out with necessary guidelines of the governments of India and Saudi Arabia, which include eligibility criteria, age limit, health-related requirements among others. The pilgrimage could not take place for the last two years due to the pandemic.

"We are making all efforts to ensure that there is no additional financial burden on the pilgrims, as they will perform Haj without any subsidy. The process is on to provide accommodation, transportation and other necessary facilities in Saudi Arabia at affordable prices,' the Union minister said. The selection process of Hai pilgrims has been done considering the completion of Covid-19 vaccination and fulfilling the necessary norms decided by the governments.

Naqvi further said that making the entire Haj 2022 process 100 per cent digital has been extremely beneficial to ensure health and well-

being of pilgrims, besides making the pilgrimage transparent, accessible, affordable and convenient.

At least 56,601 Indian Muslims will go for Haj 2022 through Haj Committee of India and 22,636 will go through Haj Group Organisers (HGOs), he said. More than 1,800 Muslim women will go for Haj 2022 without 'Mehram' (male companion) and they will go to Haj without a lottery system, the minister said, adding that a total of 83,140 applications had been received.

 $The pilgrims \, will \, go \, through \, Haj$ Committee of India from 10 embarkation points namely Ahmedabad, Bengaluru, Cochin, Delhi, Guwahati, Hyderabad, Kolkata, Lucknow, Mumbai and Srinagar. The Ahmedabad embarkation point will cover Gujarat, while the Bengaluru embarkation point will cover Karnataka and Chittoor district of Andhra Pradesh, and the Cochin embarkation point will include Kerala, Lakshadweep, Puducherry, Tamil Nadu and Andaman & Nicobar.

The Delhi embarkation point will cover Delhi, Punjab, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Chandigarh, Uttarakhand, Rajasthan, western districts of Uttar Pradesh, while the Guwahati embarkation point will cover Assam, Meghalava, Manipur. Arunachal Pradesh, Sikkim and Nagaland. The Hyderabad embarkation point will be for Andhra Pradesh and Telangana, the Kolkata embarkation point will cover West Bengal, Odisha, Tripura, Jharkhand and Bihar and the Lucknow embarkation point will cover all parts of Uttar Pradesh except western parts, he said. The Mumbai embarkation point will be for Maharashtra, Goa, Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Daman & Diu, Dadra & Nagar Haveli and Srinagar embarkation point will cover Jammu-Kashmir, Leh-Ladakh-Kargil.



# Goa to bring 500 e-buses in KTCL fleet

CM Pramod Sawant had recently said to promote

Monsoon tourism, hinterland tourism and wildlife sanctuaries of the state, paid public transport on weekends will be started

INDO-ASOAN NEWS SERVICE

Panaji, May 7: Aiming to use green technology to help tourists travel around Goa, the state government has sent a proposal to the central government to procure 500 electric buses to improve the bus transport network in coastal state.

The move comes in the wake of

facilitating travel of tourist and people of the state.

Goa Chief Minister Pramod Sawant had recently said that to promote Monsoon tourism, hinterland tourism and wildlife sanctuaries of the state, paid public transport on weekends will be started. Goa government's Kadamba Transport Corporation Limited (KTCL) chairman and Navelim MLA Ulhas Tuenkar told IANS that the buses will be procured under the FAME India (Faster Adoption and Manufacturing of Hybrid and Electric Vehicles in India) scheme.

Theses buses will be maintained by a private company and it (the company) will also provide us with a driver. We only have to recruit conductors on these buses. We will pay ₹76 per kilometer to this



company for the services they offer us," Tuenkar said.

Presently, KTCL has a fleet of 50 electric (air conditioned) buses and more 100 will be added into it after they are delivered towards the second order. "Our third pro-

posal is for 500 e-buses. Once these buses are delivered to us, we will be able to expand our transport route," Tuenkar added.

"There is a request from the medical fraternity to start a bus service for them, which would take

them back home. Similarly schools also have asked for our service. Besides. many MLAs have asked to start the KTCL service in remote areas of the constituency they represent. We are working on these as pects," MLA Tuenkar said. He said that KTCL presently has

them to their workplace and bring

350 odd diesel buses, hence new procurement (of e-buses) will help widen the scope of services and routes. "we have not procured new diesel buses since the last eight vears and there will be no need in future as we have the option of ebuses now," he said.

Tuenkar said that apart from giving services to the people of the state, KTCL is also trying to give good facilities to tourists visiting here. This will help to promote tourism

## 'Loudspeaker closed chapter, talk about inflation & unemployment'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, May 7: Calling the issue of loudspeakers a closed chapter. Shiv Sena leader Sanjay Raut Saturday said instead of speaking on that topic, the BJP should talk about rising inflation and unemployment as these are the challenges being faced by people.

"Prime Minister (Narendra Modi), Finance Minister (Nirmala Sitharaman) and top BJP leaders don't speak of the issue of inflation and unemployment. Their issues are different. They only speak on what police in Punjab and Maharashtra are doing, Raut told reporters here. The issue of loudspeakers is a closed chapter as attempts to create Hindu-Muslim divide over it have failed, he said.

It is the Hindu community that has faced the biggest setback as far as the issue of loudspeakers is concerned, the Sena MP added.

"Attempts were made to incite tension between Hindus and Muslims by raising the demand to ban loudspeakers on mosques. But people are wise. The Supreme Court's directives on loudspeakers are being implemented. There should be a national policy on loudspeakers," Raut said.



### MBVV police signs loudspeaker permits to 218 places of worship

Thane: The Mira Bhayandar Vasai Virar (MBVV) police Saturday said they have issued over 200 licences for loudspeakers to places of worship within the commissionerate that covers parts of Thane and Palghar districts in Maharashtra. The commissionerate covers Mira-Bhayander in Thane and Vasai-Virar in Palghar, and there are 999 places of worship in its jurisdiction. Of the 722 temples, permits have been issued to 22 and licences have been issued to 64 out of 75 mosques, while 132 madarsas have been given permission out of 202, an official said. In all, the police have issued 218 licences to places of worships, he said. Notices under section 149 of the CRPC (prevent cognisable offence) has been issued to 105 persons, he said, adding that no preventive action has been taken with respect to the Hanuman Chalisa row.

No one is ready to speak on inflation. People of the country are grappling with issues like price rise and unemployment. But no BJP leader is speaking on it, the

Sena's chief spokesperson said. Ever since Maharashtra

Navnirman Sena (MNS) chief Raj Thackeray demanded the removal of loudspeakers from mosques in his rallies last month, it has become a hot button issue in the state and other parts of the country. The BJP has supported his demand.

#### **Pune MNS demands** maulavis' word

Pune: If the police don't intervene and get an assurance from maulavis of all mosques in Pune about not using loudspeakers for Azaan, MNS workers will recite Hanuman Chalisa in front of police chowkies in city, a local leader has said. The Pune unit of the MNS has sent a letter to the police demanding a written assurance from maulavis that loudspeak ers will not be used to recite Azaan at mosques in city, local leader Hemant Sambhus said Friday. "We are not objecting to Azaan, but are opposing the use of loudspeakers. These loudspeakers create problems and we will continue our agitation against their use. We want the police to intervene and take assurance from maulavis of all mosques in the city. By doing this, there won't be any issue related to law and order." Sambhus said. If the police don't take an assurance, party workers will recite Hanuman Chalisa in front of police chowkies as a next stage of protest, he added. Earlier this week, MNS chief Raj Thackeray had asked his supporters to play Hanuman Chalisa where the loudspeakers let out Azaan, keeping the state police on alert to prevent a lawand-order situation.

# No need to worry: Goa CM's wife on LPG, fuel price hike

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Panaji, May 7: Sulakshana Sawant, wife of Goa Chief Minister Pramod Sawant, borrowed her husband's pet phrase 'Bhivpachi garaz na' (there's no need to worry), when she was asked to comment on the rising prices of fuel, domestic gas cylinders and milk in the state, Saturday.

Sawant said that the price rise will have to be "tolerated" for some time, adding that a solution for rising inflation would emerge for sure. "The prices have not just increased in the state alone, but across the globe. To curtail the impact. the government has laid stress on social schemes. I feel that we do not have to worry. We will have to tolerate it for some time. But something will work out for sure," she told reporters, when asked to comment on rising prices of essential commodities.

Chief Minister Pramod Sawant's repeated use of the phrase 'Bhivpachi garaz na' during the Covid pandemic became popular on social media with several memes



While Goa Dairy, a major milk producing co-operative, hiked milk prices by ₹4 per litre last week, domestic LPG gas cylinder price was increased by ₹50 Saturday, taking its price to nearly ₹1,000

dedicated to it. The opposition has also used the phrase often to sarcastically target the Sawant ad-

ministration While Goa Dairy, a major milk producing co-operative, hiked milk prices by ₹4 per litre last week, domestic LPG gas cylinder price wasincreased by ₹50 Saturday, taking its price to nearly ₹1,000.

# national



**Economic development** of the northeast region contributes to overall development of the nation

NITYANAND RAI | MINISTER OF STATE

#### **FOCUS ON CYBER SAFETY**

Cyber safety would now form a part of the new school curriculum in Kerala, with focus on its effective usage in academic and administrative areas, state Minister for General **Education V.Sivan Kutty said Saturday** 





Minister should meetings of the law and order situation as well as ensure those responsible for flaring communal tensions in the recent Patiala clash are brought to task instead of keeping himself busy by deputing Punjab Police teams to Delhi to arrest opponents of AAP

SUKHBIR SINGH BADAL | SAD PRESIDENT

The Left

government gives an impression that they consider all sections of the society and that they are neutral.

But they are encouraging Islamic terrorism. The Islamic terrorism is getting patronage of the CPI(M) government and Kerala has become the breeding centre for Islamic

J P NADDA BJP NATIONAL PRESIDENT

We have achieved the historical milestone of 50,726 projects within a year, which is five

2018 figures of 9,229 projects. Speedy economic reforms and focused attention on infrastructure development have infused new energy right across the economy, which have directly resulted in reviving investment activity and

MANOJ SINHA JAMMU AND KASHMIR

SHORT **TAKES** 

**Drone movement** 

Jammu: A drone movement

was detected and effectively

repulsed by the BSF in the

officials said Saturday. "A

Hardly had it crossed the

the drone due to which it

area is being searched.

Cop dies

drone from Pakistan side was

observed coming towards the

Indian side in the Arnia area at

19:25 hours with blinking light.

International Border (IB), alert

BSF troops fired six rounds at

returned back immediately,"

Srinagar: A local policeman,

who was critically wounded in

a militant attack in Srinagar,

succumbed to his injuries at a

hospital here Saturday. Police

sources said that Ghulam

Hassan Dar from Danwar

Bridge on Ali Jan road in

**Elephant killed** 

Giridih: A wild elephant was

killed after being hit by a

goods train in Jharkhand's

Giridih district, police said

Saturday. The incident took

place between Chichaki and

Garia Bihar station on the

Dhanbad-Gaya route on the

railway tracks, a senior officer

intervening night of Friday and Saturday when a herd of 26 elephants was crossing the

2 fishermen die

Medininagar: Two fishermen

died after inhaling toxic gas inside a well in Jharkhand's Palamu district, police said

Saturday. The incident took

Giridih (Jharkhand): Three

been killed and one person

motorcycles in Jharkhand's

collision between two

has been injured in a head-on

people, including a child, have

to catch fish.

Three killed

place at Bhusahi village when

two fishermen entered the 30

feet deep and 10 feet wide well

said.

suspected militants at Aiwa

Srinagar when he was on the

Eidgah was shot at by

way to join duty.

the BSF said. The BSF said the

Arnia sector in Jammu,

detected in Jammu

# **State health ministers slam WHO Covid report**

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kevadia (Guiarat), May 7: Health ministers of different states who attended the 14th conference of the Central Council of Health and Family Welfare (CCHFW) have slammed WHO for its estimate of 4.7 million Covid-related deaths in India, saying it is "baseless" and "intended to show the country in a poor light".

They said India has a robust, efficient and comprehensive system for registering deaths and all Covid fatalities are systematically recorded transparently following a legal process. Friday, a resolution was passed at the conference strongly objecting to WHO's estimates of Covid deaths in India.

It stated the WHO estimate is "unacceptable" to India and the modelling methodology used by the global health body to reach the figure was "flawed".

The three-day conference of the CCHFW, an apex advisory body of the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, began in Gujarat's Kevadia Thursday. It was chaired by Union Health Minister Mansukh Mandaviya.

Karnataka Health Minister K Sudhakar questioned the modelling methodology used by WHO to arrive at the death estimate, alleging that it was an attempt to "tarnish" India's reputation.

"There is no rationale behind the modelling methodology used by



Karnataka Health Minister K Sudhakar questioned the modelling methodology used by WHO to arrive at the death estimate, alleging that it was an attempt to "tarnish" India's reputation

WHO to arrive at the estimate.

All health ministers at the con-

ference here have condemned the

report and passed a resolution

against it. We have urged Union

Health Minister Mansukh

Mandaviya to convey India's dis-

appointment to WHO and raise

it at higher international forums,'

cause there is a robust, legal and

transparent system for data col-

lection and Covid mortality sur-

veillance. It's a sheer attempt to ma-

lign India which has done good

work on Covid management. There

seems to be a malafide intention

"We stand by our numbers be-

he said.

Punjab Health Minister Vijay Singla alleged that WHO's death estimate was "fabricated" and it has not made a proper calculation to arrive at the figure of 47.4 lakh Covid-related deaths

behind the report," Sudhakar said. Punjab Health Minister Vijay Singla alleged that WHO's death estimate was "fabricated" and it has not made a proper calculation to arrive at the figure of 47.4 lakh Covid-related deaths."India has a strong data collection system and there is no reason to doubt its authenticity. The modelling methodology used by the

entific," he said. Madhya Pradesh Minister of Medical Education Vishwas Sarang alleged there was a conspiracy to belittle India's achievements on the COVID-19 front start-

global health body was not sci-

the high vaccination coverage.

'The figures by WHO are erroneous and not based on sound mathematics. All health ministers at the conference rejected the WHO report saying it was not founded on facts," he said. Sarang said that "20 to 22 health ministers, including those from states not ruled by the BJP, unanimously rejected the WHO report".

Echoing similar sentiments, Health Minister of Sikkim M K Sharma and his Bihar counterpart Mangal Pandey alleged that the WHO report was "devoid of facts" and its modelling methodology was "not scientific"

It's a deliberate attempt to portray India in a poor light, they claimed, adding registration of births and deaths in the country is extremely robust and is governed by the decades-old statutory legal framework the Births and Deaths Registration Act, 1969.

The Union Health Ministry Thursday strongly objected to the mathematical models used by WHO for projecting excess mortality estimates linked to the pandemic given the availability of authentic data, saying the validity and robustness of the models used and methodology of data collection were questionable. India is likely to raise the issue at the World Health Assembly and other multilateral forums, sources in the ministry said.



A monkey drinks water from a tap on a hot day, at Mahamaya temple, on the

# Centre defends TN acts tough on custodial death sedition law in SC



New Delhi, May 7: The Centre Saturday defended in the Supreme Court the penal law on sedition and the 1962 verdict of a constitution bench upholding its validity, saying they have withstood "the test of time" about six decades and the instances of its abuse would never be a justification of reconsideration.

A bench of three judges comprising Chief Justice N V Ramana and Justices Surya Kant and Hima Kohli, on May 5, said that it would hear arguments on May 10 on the legal question of whether the pleas challenging the colonialera penal law on sedition be referred to a larger bench for reconsidering the 1962 verdict of a five-judge constitution bench in the Kedar Nath Singh case.

"Instances of the abuse of provision would never be a justification to reconsider a binding judgment of the constitution bench. The remedy would lie in preventing such abuse on a case-to-case basis rather than doubting a long-standing settled law declared by a constitution bench for about six decades.'

said the 38-page written submission filed through Solicitor General Tushar Mehta. The reply also raised the issue

of corum and opposed the submissions of senior advocate Kapil Sibal that in a changed fact situation a bench of three judges can also test the validity of the sedition law, saving "no reference, therefore, would be necessary nor can the three-judge bench once again examine the constitutional validity of the very same provision". The top court, in 1962, had upheld the validity of the sedition law while attempting to restrict its scope for misuse.

It had held that unless accompanied by incitement or a call for violence, the criticism of the government cannot be construed as a seditious offence.

The Centre's view incidentally matched with the submissions of Attorney General K K Venugopal, who on Thursday had strongly batted for the retention of the provision in the IPC, saying "referring the Kedar Nath (judgement) to a larger bench is not necessary. It is a well-considered judgement.

#### INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Chennai, May 7: The Tamil Nadu Police has arrested two cops in connection with one of the two back-to-back custodial deaths following heavy criticism from the general public.

The arrests on late Friday night were made in connection to the death of Vignesh, a Dalit who was taken into custody in Chennai April 18 night and died the next morning. Relatives of Vignesh have alleged that he died due to police torture and the post-mortem report has revealed that there were 13 injuries on his body, including a broken tibial bone on his right leg.

Vignesh and his friend Suresh, both habitual offenders, were taken into custody by the Secretariat police in Chennai April 18. The following morning, the police said he developed seizures and was taken to the Kilpauak government hospital where he was brought dead.

After his death, Vignesh's family staged protests and the state police had to suspend Sub-Inspector Pugazham Perumal, Constable Ponraj, and Home Guard Deepak of the Secretariat

THE ARRESTS ON LATE FRIDAY NIGHT WFRF MADE IN CONNECTION TO THE DEATH OF VIGNESH, A **DALIT WHO** WAS TAKEN INTO CUSTODY IN CHENNAI APRIL 18

AND DIED THE

NIGHT

colony police station. The Tamil Nadu CB-CID on late night arrested Ponraj and writer Manaf in connection to Vignesh's death. The CB-CID questioned nine police personnel, including

Perumal, sub-inspector Constable Anandhi.

old man Thangamani was taken

RELATIVES OF VIGNESH HAVE ALLEGED THAT HE DIED DUE TO POLICE TORTURE AND THE POST-MORTEM REPORT HAS **REVEALED THAT THERE WERE 13 INJURIES ON HIS BODY** 

Ganapathy, armed reserve police constable Karthik, Munaf, head constable Kumar,

In another incident, a 43-year-

into custody by Tiruvannamalai police April 26 alleging that he was into illicit brewing of liquor. The next day, he developed seizures at the Sub Jail where was remanded and

Thangamani's relatives complained that the police tried to influence them by paying a bribe but they did not accept and wanted an impartial inquiry into

breathed his last.

# 20-year-old man lynched, nine held INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, May 7: In a horrifying incident, a 20-year-old youth was beaten to death in South-West Delhi. The police have so far arrested nine persons in connection with the case. Krishna, a resident of Uttam

Nagar, was thrashed on April 24. He succumbed to his injuries on May 5. A senior police officer said that the incident was reported on April 24 from Bindapur. Komal, the sister of the deceased, had called the PCR saying few boys from another colony thrashed her brother before taking him away.

After inquiry, the police found that Krishna had a tiff with a youth named Suraj on the day of Holi. To settle the score, Suraj reached Krishna's house along with his friends and thrashed him. The victim was then taken to Bhagwati Vihar. Krishna was admitted to the DDU Hospital from where he was transferred to the Safdarjung Hospital after his condition deteriorated. He later succumbed to his injuries during the course of treatment.

# Three injured in blast at Tata Steel plant

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Jamshedpur (Jharkhand), May 7: Three people sustained minor injuries in an explosion in a gas pipeline in Tata Steel plant here Saturday, a company official said.

The blast occurred around 10.20 am, and the injured employees were taken to Tata Main Hospital and administered first aid, he said."This morning, we reported an incident of blasting sound in a coke plant unit.



which was non-operational and is undergoing a dismantling process, at our Jamshedpur Works. Our emergency response team immediately reached the incident site; the area was cordoned off and the situation brought under control," the steelmaker said in a statement.

Two of the injured people have been discharged and one is under observation, it said, adding there has been no impact on production. As per the standard safety protocol, the incident was immediately reported to authorities concerned, and further investigation to ascertain the cause of the explosion is underway, it said.

Jharkhand Chief Minister Hemant Soren tweeted: "We have received information of blast at Tata Steel plant. The district administration in coordination with the Tata Steel management is taking action for speedy treatment of

# Only 1% of women in India drink alcohol: NFHS-5

THE NFHS-5 SURVEY HAS BEEN CONDUCTED IN AROUND 6.37 LAKH SAMPLE HOUSEHOLDS IN 707 DISTRICTS IN 28 STATES AND EIGHT UNION TERRITORIES, COVERING 7,24,115 WOMEN AND 1.01.839 MEN TO PROVIDE DIS-AGGREGATED ESTIMATES UP TO DISTRICT LEVEL

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, May 7: Only one per cent of women in India drink alcohol compared with 22 per cent of men, while 39 per cent of men and 4 per cent of women aged between 15 and 49 years use some form of tobacco, according to the latest National Family Health Survey (NFHS) report.

Among the women who consume alcohol, 17 per cent drink almost every day and 37 per cent about once a week. Among the men who drink alcohol, 15 per cent

The NFHS-5 survey has been conducted in around 6.37 lakh sample households in 707 districts in 28 states and eight Union Territories, covering 7,24,115 women and 1.01.839 men to provide disaggregated estimates up to district level.

The percentage of women age 15-49 who drink alcohol is by far the highest among women in Arunachal Pradesh (18 per cent) and Sikkim (15 per cent). Alcohol use among men is the highest in Goa (59 per cent), followed by Arunachal Pradesh (57 per cent) and Telangana Lakshadweep (1 per cent).



cohol decreased from 29 per cent to 22 per cent between NFHS-4 in 2015-16 and NFHS-5 in 2019-21. During that period, the proportion of women who drink remained

Tribes (4 per cent) than from any other caste/tribe group. "Drinking is most common among Christian men (36 per cent) and men belonging to other religions (49 per

cent)," it stated.

The report also found that use of any kind of tobacco decreased from 45 per cent and 7 per cent among men and women in 2015-16 to 39 per cent and 4 per cent among men and women, respectively, in 2019-21

"Thirty-nine per cent of men and 4 per cent of women age 15-49 use some form of tobacco. The most common form of tobacco consumption among men is chewing paan masala or gutkha (15 per cent), followed closely by smoking cigarettes (13 per cent), using khaini 5 or more cigarettes or bidis each day on average. Among women, the most common form of tobacco used is chewing paan masala or gutkha, chewing paan with tobacco, and using khaini (1 per cent).

Among men as well as women the use of any form of tobacco is higher in rural areas than in urban areas. Among men, in urban areas cigarettes are more popular than any other form of tobacco. it said.

"More than six in 10 men and about one-tenth of women with no schooling or less than 5 years of schooling use some form of to-

Giridih district, police said drink alcohol almost every day, 43 (50 per cent), and is the lowest in unchanged. cent), men with less than 5 years (12 per cent), and smoking bidis bacco. Tobacco use shows a sub-Saturday. The accident took The report found that drinkstantial decrease with increasingper cent about once a week, and 42 of schooling (33 per cent), men (7 per cent). place near Chirikiva Dam in The NFHS-5 showed that the ing alcohol is more common from Scheduled Tribes (34 per Among men who smoke ciga-Pirtand Police Station area per cent less than once a week, the levels of education among both late on Friday evening. report said. proportion of men who drink alamong women from Scheduled cent), and men aged 35-49 (30 per rettes or bidis, 46 per cent smoke men and women," it said.

# international



The current government has failed. The 40 MPs who crossed the floor also have accepted that this government failed. They were part of the government. They must step aside and give it to the opposition to run the government

MA SUMANTHIRAN MP, TAMIL NATIONAL ALLIANCE, SRI LANKA

#### **MACRON INAUGURATED FOR SECOND 5-YR TERM**

**President Emmanuel Macron** was inaugurated for a second term Saturday, vowing to first take action to avoid any further escalation of Russia's war in Ukraine



Australia has consistent and clear in stating our respect for Solomon Islands' sovereign decision-making

however we have reiterated our deep concerns about the security agreement with China, including the lack of transparency

MARISE PAYNE FOREIGN MINISTER, AUSTRALIA

We have been gathering data have a difference of a few hundred but it can't be in hundreds

of thousands. This is completely

ABDUL QADIR PATEL | HEALTH MINISTER,



prosperity and opportunity for all. The SOE (state of emergency) won't help do that

JULIE CHUNG US AMBASSADOR TO SRI LANKA

#### SHORT **TAKES**

#### NK fires missile from submarine

Seoul: North Korea fired a submarine-launched ballistic missile Saturday, Seoul said, its second missile launch in three days after the United States warned Pyongyang could be preparing for a nuclear test. North Korea has dramatically ramped up its sanctions-busting missile launches this year, conducting 15 weapons tests including firing an intercontinental ballistic missile at full range for the first time since 2017. The Saturday launch comes two days before South Korea swears in a new, hawkish President Yoon Suk-yeol.

#### CDC probing liver disease in US kids

New York: US health officials are looking into more than 100 possible cases of a mysterious and severe liver disease in children, including five deaths. About two dozen states reported suspected cases after the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention put out a call for doctors to be on the lookout for surprising cases of hepatitis. The cases date back to late October in children under 10. So far, only nine cases in Alabama have been confirmed.

#### Italian rescuers save 100 migrants

Rome: The Italian Coast Guard has rescued more than 100 migrants and recovered two bodies after a sailboat ran aground near a jetty in southern Italy. A pair of rescue divers had to coax one survivor, who was clinging to a metal pylon jutting up from the water, to jump into the sea so they could bring him to safety. He was taken by motorboat to Siderno, a town on the west coast of Calabria, the region that forms the "toe" of the Italian bootshaped peninsula.

#### Pak: 8 held over religious killing

Lahore: Pakistani police say they arrested eight men of the Ahmadi sect of Islam Saturday who had opened fire on a group of Sunni Muslims the night prior, killing one and wounding another. Senior officer Faisal Mukhtar said the Ahmadis shot at the Sunnis while they were chanting religious poems in the village of Bahuman, near Lahore in the eastern province of Punjab. One minor suspect was still missing. The killing was a rare case of violence exercised by Ahmadis.

# Taliban order women to cover up head to toe

Kabul, May 7: Afghanistan's Taliban rulers Saturday ordered all Afghan women to wear head-totoe clothing in public, a sharp hardline pivot that confirmed the worst fears of rights activists and was bound to further complicate Taliban dealings with an already distrustful international community.

The decree, which calls for women to only show their eyes and recommends they wear the head-to-toe burga, evoked similar restrictions on women during the Taliban's previous rule between 1996 and 2001.

"We want our sisters to live with dignity and safety," said Khalid Hanafi, acting minister for the Taliban's vice and virtue ministry.

The Taliban previously decided against reopening schools to girls above grade six, reneging on an earlier promise and opting to appease their hard-line base at the expense of further alienating the international community.

That decision disrupted efforts by the Taliban to win recognition from potential international donors at a time when the country is mired in a worsening humanitarian crisis.

"For all dignified Afghan women wearing Hijab is necessary and the best Hijab is chadori (the headto-toe burqa) which is part of our tradition and is respectful," said Shir Mohammad, an official from the vice and virtue ministry in a statement.

'Those women who are not too old or young must cover their face, except the eyes," he said.

The decree added that if women had no important work outside it is better for them to stay at home. "Islamic principles and Islamic ideology are more important to us than anything else," Hanafi said.

The Taliban were ousted in 2001 by a US-led coalition for harbouring al-Qaida leader Osama bin

Laden and returned to power after America's chaotic departure last year. Since taking power last August, the Taliban leadership has been squabbling among themselves as they struggle to transition from war to governing. It has pit hardliners against the more pragmatic

Infuriating many Afghans is the knowledge that many of the Taliban of the younger generation, like

Sirajuddin Haqqani, are educating their girls in Pakistan, while in Afghanistan women and girls have been targeted by their repressive edicts since taking power.

Girls have been banned from school beyond grade six in most of the country since Taliban's return.

Universities opened earlier this year in much of the country, but since taking power the Taliban

wearing Hijab is necessary and the best Hijab is chadori (the head-to-toe burga) which is part of our tradition and is respectful. Those women who are not too old or young must cover their face, except the eyes SHIR MOHAMMAD | VICE AND VIRTUE MINISTRY OFFICIAL

edicts have been erratic. While a handful of provinces continued to provide education to all, most provinces closed educational institutions for girls and women.

The religiously driven Taliban administration fears that going forward with enrolling girls beyond the the sixth grade could alienate their rural base, Hashmi said.

In the capital of Kabul, private schools and universities have operated uninterrupted.

#### Al-Qaeda chief blames US for Ukraine war in new video

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Baghdad, May 7: Al-Qaeda leader Ayman al-Zawahri made an appearance in a pre-recorded video to mark the 11th anniversary of the death of his predecessor Osama bin Laden.

Al-Zawahri says in the video that "US weakness" was the reason that its ally Ukraine became "prey" for the Russian invasion.

The 27-minute speech was released Friday according to the SITE Intelligence group, which monitors militant activity. The leader appears sitting at a desk with books



The 27-minute speech was released Friday according to the SITE Intelligence group

Urging Muslim unity, al-Zawahri said the US was in a state of weakness and decline and cited the impact of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan launched after the 9/11 terrorist attacks. Bin Laden was the mastermind and financier behind the attacks

"Here (the US) is after its defeat in Iraq and Afghanistan, after the economic disasters caused by the 9/11 invasions, after the Corona pandemic, and after it left its ally Ukraine as prev for the Russians, he said. Bin Laden was killed in a 2011 raid by US forces on his compound hideout in Pakistan.

Al-Zawahri's whereabouts are unknown. He is wanted by the FBI and there is a \$25 million reward for information leading to his capture.

# On Victory Day, Putin to send 'doomsday' warning to West

Russia's World War II Victory Day celebrations Monday will include the Il-80 doomsday command plane, which would carry Russia's top brass in the event of a nuclear war

London, May 7: Russian President Vladimir Putin will send a doomsday warning to the West when he leads celebrations Monday marking the 77th anniversary of the Soviet Union's victory over Nazi Germany, brandishing Russia's vast firepower while its forces fight on in Ukraine.

Defiant in the face of deep Western isolation since he ordered the invasion of Russia's neighbour, Putin will speak on Red Square before a parade of troops, tanks, rockets and intercontinental ballistic missiles. A fly-past over St Basil's Cathedral will include supersonic fighters, Tu-160 strategic bombers and, for the first time since 2010, the Il-80 doomsday command plane, which would carry Russia's top brass in the event of a nuclear war. the Defence Ministry said.

In that scenario, the Il-80 is designed to become the roaming command centre for the Russian president. It is packed with technology but specific details are Russian state secrets.

The 69-year-old Kremlin leader has repeatedly likened the war in



#### Ukraine braces for escalated attacks

Ukrainian troops solidified their positions around the nation's second-largest city Saturday as Russian forces delivered more punishing attacks on an embattled steelworks in a bid to complete their conquest of the southern port of Mariupol in time for Victory Day celebrations. As Monday approached, cities across Ukraine prepared for an expected increase in Russian attacks. Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy urged residents numbed by more than 10 weeks of war to heed air raid warnings, "These symbolic dates are to the Russian aggressor like red to a bull," Ukraine's first deputy interior minister, Yevhen Yenin, said, Ukraine's deputy Prime Minister Iryna Veheshchuk said all women, children and older adults have been evacuated from a Mariupol steel mill long besieged by Russian forces.

Union faced when Adolf Hitler's Nazis invaded in 1941.

"The attempt to appease the aggressor on the eve of the Great Patriotic War turned out to be a mistake that cost our people dearly," Putin had said February 24, when he announced what he called a special military operation in Ukraine.

"We will not make such a mistake a second time, we have no right,' he had mentioned.

Putin casts the war in Ukraine as a battle to protect Russian speakers there from persecution by Nazis and to guard against what he terms the US threat to Russia posed by

the West dismiss the fascism claim as nonsense and say Putin is waging an unprovoked war of ag gression. The Soviet Union lost 27 million people in World War II, more than any other country, and Putin has railed in recent years at what Moscow sees as attempts in the West to revise the history of the war to belittle the Soviet victory.

Ahead of May 9, speculation swirled across Moscow and Western capitals that Putin was preparing some sort of special announcement on Ukraine, perhaps an outright declaration of war or even a national mobilisation.

### Rescue ops on at Cuba hotel after blast kills 26

Havana, May 7: Rescuers in Cuba's capital searched Saturday to find survivors of an explosion that killed at least 26 people and devastated a luxury hotel that once hosted dignitaries and celebrities, including Beyonce and Jay-Z. A natural gas leak was the ap-

parent cause of Friday's blast at Havana's 96-room Hotel Saratoga. The 19th-century structure in the city's Old Havana neighborhood did not have any guests at the time because it was undergoing renovations ahead of a planned Tuesday reopening after being closed.

The death toll rose to 26 Saturday, according to Orestes Llánez, coordinator of the Havana city government, according to the official Cubadebate news site. He said 22 had been identified, 18 residents of the capital and four from elsewhere in Cuba.

He said searchers have managed to reach the hotel's basement in the hunt for possible survivors.

At least one survivor was found

early Saturday in the shattered ruins of the hotel, and rescuers using search dogs clambered over huge chunks of concrete looking for more. Relatives of missing people remained at the site overnight. Others gathered at hospitals where the injured were being treated. Although no tourists were re-

ported injured, the explosion is another blow to the country's crucial tourism industry.

Even before the coronavirus pandemic kept tourists away from Cuba, the country was struggling with tightened sanctions imposed by former US President Donald Trump and kept in place the Biden administration.

#### N IRELAND ELECTION

# Sinn Fein set for historic win

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Belfast, May 7: The Irish nationalist party Sinn Fein was poised to become the largest group in the Northern Ireland Assembly for the first time, giving it the right to the post of first minister in Belfast. according to vote counting results Saturday from this week's local

A Sinn Fein win would be historic because Unionist parties have led the legislature since Northern Ireland was formed as a Protestant majority state in 1921.



An election victory would bring the party's ultimate goal of a united Ireland a step closer. It's a milestone for a party long linked to the Irish Republican Army, a paramilitary group that used bombs

and bullets to try to take Northern Ireland out of UK rule during decades of violence involving Irish republican militants, Protestant Loyalist paramilitaries and the UK army and police.

But Sinn Fein has kept unification out of the spotlight this year during a campaign that has been dominated by the skyrocketing cost of living. Party leaders have indicated there will be no immediate moves for a referendum on a united Ireland, and no constitutional change would take place until voters decide on it.

#### **VIEW FROM THE CHATHAM HOUSE TOP TABLE**

### 'WHEELS ARE COMING OFF RULES-BASED ORDER'

Putin's war has tossed a grenade into geopolitics, says the institute's departing director

7 hen Robin Niblett became director of Chatham House he never contemplated that his parting thoughts would be that "the wheels are coming off" the rules-based international order

The world in 2007 had yet to experience the financial crash or Brexit or Donald Trump. But mankind is now entering a "time of great division", the retiring think tank chief told 'The National'. The war in Ukraine has served

merely to accelerate the descent. leading the global population to a "very, very unpredictable moment".

The real prospect of nuclear strike in addition to a pandemic, financial crisis and runaway climate change has left the internationally respected academic confounded, struggling to articulate a diagnosis for a planet gone awry.

"Liberal democracies have realised that they don't dominate any more, that they are not top of the hierarchy and that they have to come together. Putin has absolutely accelerated that process. Everyone's stepping up now. Everyone's realised the threat is as big as it is." **Putin's grenade** 

Dr Niblett's office in central London has hosted presidents, prime ministers and a galaxy of foreign dignitaries. Books on world politics and thinkers dominate, but it feels none has yet quite explained where global politics is today or might be tomorrow.

'What Putin has done is that he has really driven the proverbial grenade into the middle of the table. He's exacerbated what were already rising food insecurities, he has forced China to show its hand even more than Xi Jinping had already done because they can't abandon Russia.'

After five decades of witness-

ing world events, writing count-

less books, articles and giving ev-

idence to the UK Parliament, the

only label he can find for the myr-

iad problems created by Putin's actions is "this crazy phase". **Nuclear contagion** Putin might not have used nu-

CHATHAM

HOUSE

clear weapons but he has unleashed a new existential terror previously uncontemplated. Days after his invasion, the Russian president was direct: if NATO attempted to intervene transparently in Ukraine he threatened nuclear weapons. It worked. America and the rest were rattled enough not to directly oppose it. "People look at the way Russia has used the nuclear threat to give itself room for conventional military action. That lesson has now been sent to many other people that your real security potentially comes from owning a nuclear weapon. With Iran on the threshold of

nuclear bomb viability, Mr Putin's actions may well "provide the excuse for other countries" to seek a nuclear arsenal to prevent conventional attack, he said, listing Turkey, Japan, South Korea and Saudi Arabia as potential nuclear

Three alliances

Dr Niblett said it was likely that there would now be three global camps: the West, Russia and China, then the rest. Areas such as the Gulf region, could "play it both ways", continuing their economic relationship with China while remaining on

A mark of Chatham House's influence 100 years on since its founding was Moscow's formal declaration last month that it was an "undesirable organisation"

good terms with the West.

There was also doubt over the future of the G20, which will hold a summit in Indonesia this November. "The G20 was meant to be the proof that the world could come together," he said. "But I just don't even know if it's going to meet properly in Indonesia. If Putin is there I don't see Biden or Johnson or Macron present." The summit could turn into a "G20 minus six or seven" **Rule of law** 

The rules-based system has largely kept the world in relative peace since the Second World War. Did it still apply?

'The global world hierarchy is

now being rewritten," he said, "We were born to the idea that it should be a world led by the rule of law, not the rule of force," he added, quoting Lionel Curtis who helped found Chatham House in 1923.

There was also a need to "stand up for those values and not compromise on them". "We need to stand for the side of the rule of law over the rule of force, even if that means countries having to fight for that." To avert disaster the global community had to "keep avenues

open for dialogue wherever possible". Was there any hope for the world? Frowning, Dr Niblett paused for a moment. "I want to find an optimistic line. We can be optimistic about the technology because I think the technological advances we're seeing today will probably help us deal with the climate chal-

lenge. It'll help create new work." It is a flicker of hope before reality returns. "What technology can't do is answer that humans need for identity and purpose, which is what drives Putin. He doesn't care about people being happy or better off.

THE NATIONAL

# business



My aim is to develop a vehicle scrapping centre within the reach of 150 km from all the city centres NITIN GADKARI | UNION MINISTER

#### **NVIDIA TO PAY \$5.5 MILLION PENALTY**

Nvidia Corporation has agreed to pay \$5.5 million to settle civil charges that the firm did not properly disclose the impact of cryptomining on its gaming business, US Securities and Exchange Commission said. In fiscal 2018, Nvidia failed to disclose that cryptomining was a 'significant element' of its revenue growth from sales of chips designed for gaming, the SEC said.





We believe that electrification is beginning to take off. There are faster electrification would be to

VIKRAM GULATI TKM EXECUTIVE VICE

Extractable reserve in the closed/discontinued coal mines is around 380 million tonnes... 30-40 million tonnes of coal can be easily extracted

PRALHAD JOSHI | COAL MINISTER

from the mines

Our company has shown in FY '22, and we have come out stronger than ever



GAUTAM SARAOGI GO FASHION CEO

#### SHORT **TAKES**

#### DCB Bank Q4 net profit up

New Delhi: Private sector lender DCB Bank Saturday posted a 44.87 per cent rise in its net profit at Rs 113 crore for the quarter ended March 2022. The bank had registered a net profit of Rs 78 crore in the same quarter a year ago. Total income in the March quarter of fiscal year 2021-22 increased to Rs 1,035 crore, as against Rs 967 crore in the same quarter of 2020-21, DCB Bank said in a regulatory filing. Net interest income during the quarter rose to Rs 380 crore, from Rs 311 crore. Bank's asset quality, however, showed a slight impairment from the year-ago period at 4.32 per cent of the gross advances as of March 31, 2022, as against 4.13 per cent by March 2021. However, it improved sequentially from 4.78 per cent at the end of December 2021.

#### Paper consumption to see 6% growth

New Delhi: Paper consumption in India is likely to witness 6 to 7 per cent annual growth and will reach 30 million tonnes by FY 2026-27, largely driven by emphasis on education and literacy coupled with growth in organised retail, according to industry body IPMA. The paper industry holds immense potential for growth in India as the per capita consumption globally is one of the lowest, the Indian Paper Manufacturers Association (IPMA) said in a statement. "Around 15 per cent of the world population stays in India but consumes only 5 per cent of the total paper produced in the world," the statement said. The emphasis on education and literacy coupled with growth in organised retail and demand for better quality paper are the major drivers of growth.

#### SJVN bags solar project worth ₹585cr

New Delhi: State-run SJVN Ltd has bagged a 90 MW floating solar project worth Rs 585 crore at Omkareshwar, in Madhya Pradesh. SJVN has bagged 90 MW Floating Solar Project at the rate of Rs 3.26/Unit on **Build Own and Operate basis** in a tender floated by REWA Ultra Mega Solar Ltd (RUMSL), Nand Lal Sharma, Chairman & Managing Director, SJVN said in a statement. SJVN will develop this project in the country's largest floating solar park at Omkareshwar in Khandwa District of Madhya Pradesh. According to the statement, the cost of developing this project will be approximately Rs 585 crore.

# FM flags anonymity as 'risk' in blockchain use

The minister's remarks come ahead of the launch of the budgetary announcement of central bank digital currency which is based on the blockchain technology itself and is billed as being similar to the paper currency carried in our wallets

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, May 7: Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman Saturday flagged anonymity as an 'inherent risk' in blockchain technology and called for taking precaution in future with a rise in the use of this technology.

The finance minister made it clear that using the distributed ledger technology (DLT), which is also called as blockchain, is "absolutely imperative" and the government also supports the use of

The minister's remarks come ahead of the launch of the budgetary announcement of central bank digital currency (CBDC) which is based on the blockchain technology itself and is billed as being similar to the paper currency carried in our wallets. "...the anonymity is what ... One unknown element in this whole thing. The anonymity of the person or who-



ever or the robot is the one which we have to be absolutely readying ourselves as ... a future challenge," Sitharaman said, addressing an NSDL event here

Sitharaman said the DLT is a beautiful technology which will help in democratisation but flagged anonymity as an "inherent risk" which we need to guard ourselves from.

Terming anonymity as a "powerful imponderable" in the whole equation, Sitharaman said, "unless we are able to guard ourselves against that anonymous element which can itself pose an inherent risk, we probably will be exposing ourselves much more than ever we would have imagined.

Sitharaman commended capital markets regulator Sebi chief Madhabi Puri Buch, who spoke before her at the same event, for "rightly warning" us about the risk of anonymity, and also for advocating DLTs.

Buch said we do not wish to have anonymity in the CBDC. which is supposed to be introduced during the fiscal by banking regulator RBI.

As per the central bank, considerable progress has been made regarding the introduction of the CBDC. Meanwhile, Sitharaman said private cryptocurrency assets like Bitcoins are "fairly well spread" in India.

Buch said strengths of DLTs include transparency, real time, infinite divisibility and it being a cost effective medium

Sitharaman said the retail investment journey has transformed in the last two or three years, with new demat account opening zooming to 26 lakh per month in FY22 from 12 lakh in FY21 and just 4 lakh a month in FY20.

She said the retail investors act as "shock absorbers" as the foreign portfolio investors have come in and gone as per the global cues.

#### **L&T to own 68.73% in** combined entity after Mindtree, LTI merger

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, May 7: Larsen & Toubro Limited as the promoter will own 68.73 per cent stake in the combined entity created by the merger of Mindtree and L&T Infotech (LTI).

Mindtree, a leading digital transformation partner with market cap of Rs 578.4 billion will merge into LTI, a global technology consulting and digital solutions company with market cap of Rs 836.2

Subsidiaries and associates of Mindtree will become subsidiaries and associates of LTI.

Closing is expected to be achieved within 9 to 12 months, subject to completion of shareholder and regulatory approvals.

The shareholders of Mindtree as on record date will receive 73 shares of LTI (face value of Re 1 each) for 100 shares of Mindtree (face value of Rs 10 each).



Larsen & Toubro Limited (the promoter) will own 68.73 per cent stake in the combined entity.

The Boards of Directors of Mindtree and LTI at their respective meetings held on Friday approved a composite scheme of amalgamation of both these independently listed IT services companies under the Larsen &

FPI selling extends to

8th straight month

THE RECENT PULLOUT likely to remain volatile in the **WAS TRIGGERED DUE TO AN AGGRESSIVE** inflation. **RATE HIKE BY THE US FEDERAL RESERVE** WHICH IS A NEGATIVE

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**FOR INDIAN** 

**INVESTORS** 

New Delhi, May 7: Continuing its selling spree for the seventh consecutive month, foreign portfolio investors have pulled out Rs 17,144 crore from the Indian equity market in April. In May too, the trend remained the same

The recent pullout was triggered due to an aggressive rate hike by the US Federal Reserve, which is a negative for Indian

Analysts say foreign flows are

near term amid the high prospect of aggressive rate hikes globally and the headwinds in terms of higher crude prices, and rising

FPIs remained net sellers for seven months to March 2022, withdrawing a massive net amount of Rs 1.65 lakh crore from equities.

The ongoing geopolitical envi-

ronment following Russia's invasion of Ukraine also weighed on FPIs' buying sentiment. "FPIs continued selling in the early days of May also with a net

sell figure of Rs 6723.59 cr through May 6," said VK Vijayakumar. Chief Investment Strategist at Geojit Financial Services. Since markets have turned very

weak globally FPIs may continue to sell perhaps with reduced volume. "Even after the recent correction

in the market, valuations are not cheap. Perhaps, if Nifty corrects another 5 per cent from the current levels, FPIs are likely to turn buvers.

#### LIC IPO

### Non-institutional investors' portion fully subscribed



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, May 7: The portion of LIC's initial public offering earmarked for non-institutional investors, including high networth individuals, has been subscribed fully on the fourth day on Saturday

Against the total 2,96,48,427 shares reserved for Non-Institutional Investors (NII), 3,06,73,020 bids were received resulting in subscription of 1.03 times, according to data posted on stock exchanges at 4:36 pm.

The overall issue was subscribed 1.59 times. However, the Qualified Institutional Buyer (QIB) portion is vet to be fully subscribed. It is still 0.67 per cent of shares earmarked for the QIB.

Retail individual investors bid for 9.57 crore shares as against 6.9 crore set aside for this segment, translating into an oversubscription of 1.38 times

Of the total, the policyholders' portion was subscribed 4.4 times, while that for employees was subscribed 3.4 times

State-owned LIC's IPO will close  ${\it May\,9.}\ {\it The\,country's\,biggest\,ever}$ public offer is open for subscription on Saturday and Sunday

# HDFC hikes lending rate by 30 bps

**THE MOVE COMES JUST DAYS AFTER SEVERAL LENDERS. INCLUDING ICICI BANK, BANK OF BARODA AND BANK** OF INDIA, RAISED **INTEREST RATES FOLLOWING THE INDIA'S SURPRISE REPO RATE HIKE** WEDNESDAY

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, May 7: Mortgage lender HDFC Ltd Saturday announced an increase in its benchmark lending rate by 30 basis points (bps), a move that will make loans dearer for both existing and new

The move comes just days after several lenders, including ICICI Bank, Bank of Baroda and Bank of India, raised interest rates following the Reserve Bank of India's surprise reporate hike Wednesday.

"HDFC increases its Retail Prime Lending Rate (RPLR) on housing loans, on which its Adjustable Rate



marked, by 30 basis points, with effect from May 9, 2022," the housing finance company said in a statement.

The revised rates for new borrowers range between 7 per cent and 7.45 per cent, depending on credit and loan amount. The existing range is 6.70 per cent to 7.15 per cent.

For existing customers, the rates would rise by 30 basis points or (0.3 per cent).

Earlier this month, HDFC had increased its benchmark lending rate by 5 basis points making EMI

for existing borrowers expensive. HDFC follows a 3-month cycle for repricing its loans to existing cus-

tomers. So, the loans will be re-

vised in sync with increased lending rate based on the date of the first disbursement.

Financial institutions are on an interest rate hike spree following increase in repo rate and cash reserve ratio (percentage of total deposit of the banks kept with RBI) by 40 basis points and 50 basis points respectively announced by the RBI earlier this week.

After an out-of-turn Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) meeting, the Reserve Bank Wednesday hiked the benchmark repo rate -- the short-term lending rate it charges to banks -- by 0.40 per cent to 4.40 per cent with immediate effect, aimed at taming soaring inflation.

#### **Indian Bank** unveils digital broking solution

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Chennai, May 7: Public sector Indian Bank has unveiled digital broking solution -- E-Broking -- allowing customers to open a demat and trading account facility, in line with the digitalisation mission of the bank, an official said Saturday

The launch of digital broking solution 'E-Broking' was a strategic step towards complete digitalisation of its offerings to customers, a bank statement said.

"E-Broking, an instant and paperless demat and trading account opening is integrated in the bank's mobile banking application,"

IndOASIS, the bank's mobile banking application, would offer customers, a seamless experience from demat and trading account opening to discounted broking services backed by research based investment in the secondary market starting from equity, futures, options, and initial public offerings in a single

platform, it said. "This is a key initiative in line with our digitalisation mission to provide all financial products and services to our customers in an affordable manner under one roof," the bank's executive director, Ashwani Kumar said.

# Musk's \$44 bn Twitter deal faces first legal hurdle in US

THE ORLANDO POLICE PENSION FUND HAS SUED ELON MUSK AND HIS \$44 BILLION BUYOUT OF TWITTER, CLAIMING THAT THE DEAL CANNOT CLOSE TILL 2025 OWING TO TESLA CEO'S STAKE IN THE MICRO-BLOGGING PLATFORM

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

San Francisco, May 7: The Orlando Police Pension Fund has sued Elon Musk and his \$44 billion buyout of Twitter, claiming that the deal cannot close till 2025 owing to Tesla CEO's stake in the microblogging platform.

The proposed class-action lawsuit, filed by the Orlando Police Pension Fund in the Delaware Chancery court, alleged that since Musk was an "interested stockholder" before the merger agreement was approved by Twitter's board, "the proposed takeover may not lawfully close until 2025 absent approval by the affirmative vote of over 66 per cent of Twitter's voting stock not owned by Musk within the meaning of Section 203."

The lawsuit also named former Twitter CEO Jack Dorsey, current CEO Parag Agrawal and the company's board as defendants.

Under Section 203, shareholders who own more than 15 per cent of the company can't enter a merger without two-thirds of the remaining shares granting approval.

Musk began acquiring Twitter shares in January 2022 and owned approximately 9.6 per cent of Twitter's outstanding voting stock when the Board approved the Proposed Takeover In connection with his efforts to acquire Twitter, Musk also had

an "agreement, arrangement or un-

derstanding" within the meaning

of Section 203 with at least two

other significant beneficial own-

ing stock, read the lawsuit. They were Morgan Stanley which beneficially owns approximately 8.8 per cent of Twitter's outstanding voting stock and serves



as Musk's financial adviser, and Twitter co-founder Dorsey who beneficially owns approximately 2.4 per cent of Twitter's voting stock and encouraged Musk to

take Twitter private.

"Additionally, according to public reporting, it appears likely Musk also had and has additional agreement, arrangement or understanding with other significant holders of Twitter common stock whose support for the Proposed Takeover Musk secured prior to the Twitter Board's approval of the deal," the lawsuit read.

Musk, therefore, was an interested stockholder within the meaning of Section 203 before the Board approved the proposed takeover, it

The proposed class-action lawsuit said that since Musk is an "interested stockholder" within the meaning of Section 203, the \$44 billion takeover of Twitter may not lawfully close within three years of the time that Musk became an

"interested stockholder", unless the Proposed Takeover is approved by the affirmative vote of at least more than 66 per cent of Twitter's outstanding voting stock not "owned" by Musk.

Musk, who has to pay \$21 billion from his pocket for the deal, is likely to take over as a temporary CEO of Twitter when the takeover

deal is through. A fresh US SEC filing this week revealed that Musk has secured nearly \$7.14 billion in equity commitments from friends and other

investors to acquire Twitter. Musk received \$1 billion from

Oracle co-founder Larry Ellison and \$5 million from Honeycomb Asset Management, which invested in his SpaceX, the report



# Royals show outwits Kings

# JAISWAL, CHAHAL HELP THEIR SIDE BEAT PUNJAB KINGS, ENSURING MUMBAI INDIANS BECOME FIRST SIDE TO BE ELIMINATED IN IPL 2022



Mumbai, May 7: Promising opener

Yashasvi Jaiswal made a dream

comeback with a career-best 68

(41b, 9x4, 2x6) as Rajasthan Royals

well and truly remained in hunt for

a play-off berth beating Puniab

Kings by six wickets, which also

happened to be their first while

Drafted in place of Karun Nair,

the 20-year-old showed superb game

awareness and picked the gaps at

ease to brilliantly set it up for the

Royals in their tall 190-run chase

at the Wankhede which was com-

chasing in this edition of IPL.

OrissaPOST



With its first successful runchase. Royals team are now on 14 points from 11 matches in third place and one more win will firmly put them in contention for a top-four

The win also meant that the fivetime champions Mumbai Indians became the first team to be eliminated from the IPL-15 season. The loss meant a big blow to Punjab playoff hopes as they now have 10 points from 11 matches.

The young gun, who was retained among the three players by the franchise, was playing only in

his fourth match this season, came into his element after Orange Cap holder Jos Buttler (30, 16b, 5x4, 1x6) departed inside the power-

play after a flying start. Skipper Sanju Samson (23) was dismissed cheaply and there was a sense of concern in the Rajasthan camp when Jaiswal showed what he's capable of with his clean hitting all over the park.

Jaiswal looked in total control in a 37-ball 56-run partnership with Devdutt Padikkal. He finally departed after miscuing one to Arshdeep Singh giving a sigh of relief to Punjab but the equation was

then reduced to an easy 49 off 35 balls. There was a bit of drama towards the end after tournament's best death overs seamer Arshdeep Singh (2/29) bowling a brilliant penultimate over giving just three runs and taking the wicket of Padikkal (31). Needing eight runs from the last over, Hetmyer struck a six to seal the chase with two

balls to spare. It was in fact the experienced leg-spinner Yuzvendra Chahal (3/28) who earlier brilliantly set it up for Punjab bowling a tidy spell. Chahal, who had just two wickets from the last four matches, started to look threatening again.

He dismissed the duo of Mayank Agarwal (15) and their top rungetter Jonny Bairstow (56, 40b, 8x4, 1x6) off three balls to derail them in the middle overs (10-15) where they made just 34 runs and lost three wickets.

Earlier, Bairstow signalled his return to form with a fine half century before Jitesh Sharma's cameo (38 n o, 18b, 4x4, 2x6) propelled Punjab Kings to challenging 189/5.

On a day when their leading run-getter Shikhar Dhawan (12) struggled to get going, Bairstow looked effortless once he had settled down and reached his first IPL fifty this season, eighth overall, in 34 balls.

Bairstow however failed to convert it into a big one as Punjab lost three wickets for 30 runs with current 'Purple Cap' holder Chahal denting their progress with his triple-strike.

But it was little known Jitesh who came up with his career-best IPL score and lit the stage on fire with his clean-hitting skills as Punjab scored 67 runs in the last five overs to prop up their total. Liam Livingstone (22) too played a valuable knock.

#### **BRIEF SCORES**

Punjab Kings 189/5 (Jonny Bairstow 56, Jitesh Sharma 38 n o; Yuzvendra Chahal 3/28, R Ashwin 1/32) lost to Rajasthan Royals 190/4 (Yashasvi Jaiswal 68, Shimron Hetmyer 31 n o, Devdutt Padikkal 31, Jos Buttler 30; Arshdeep Singh 2/29) by 6 wickets.

# DE KOCK, BOWLERS LIFT LSG

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Pune, May 7: Quinton de Kock (50, 29b, 4x4, 3x6) laid the platform with a commanding fifty and his pacers then terrorised Kolkata Knight Riders to record a crushing 75-run victory for Lucknow Super Giants which put them on top of the table with an IPL playoff berth being a formality now.

For KKR, eight points from 11 games with a deflating negative run-rate now puts them closer to the exit door with lacklustre performance and unimaginative captaincy combining for what has turned out to be a disastrous season so far.

Invited to bat, Lucknow almost frittered away a solid start before some lusty hitting in a 30-run penultimate over took them to 176/7.

The LSG bowlers then raised to the occasion to bundle out KKR for 101 in 14.3 overs, despite the heroics of Andre Russell (45, 19b, 3x4, 5x6) to gather two crucial points and take their overall total to 16 points in the IPL standing.

Defending 177, LSG left KKR tot tering at 25/4 with four bowlers picking up their first wickets. Russell then used his brute force to take KKR past 50 before his West

Indian teammate Sunil Narine (22) guided KKR past 100.

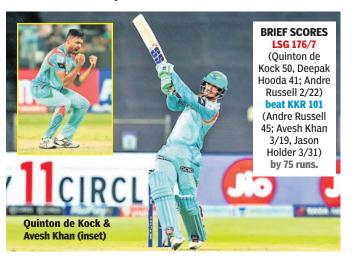
For LSG, Avesh Khan () and Jason Holder () shared six wickets between them, while Mohsin Khan (1/6 in 3 overs), Dushmantha Chameera (1/14 in 3 overs) and Ravi Bishnoi

(1/30) bagged a wicket each. Earlier, De Kock, who was involved in a terrible mix up with skipper KL Rahul, who got a 'Diamond Duck' (out for 0 without facing a ball), redeemed himself with a

splendid knock. He added 71 with Deepak Hooda (41, 27b, 4x4, 2x6) to give LSG a good start after being invited to bat. The duo took LSG to their best score in the powerplays this season -66/1.

De Kock, however, couldn't stay much longer as he was holed out in deep only two balls after completing his fifty. Hooda guided LSG past 100-run mark before falling to a Russell delivery.

Later, Marcus Stoinis (28) changed things with some power hits and so did new man Jason Holder (13) as the 19th over yielded 30 runs for LSG.



# Faltering SRH take on RCB

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, May 7: Two of world crickets batting stalwarts Virat Kohli and Kane Williamson's woeful form will be in focus when Royal Challengers Bangalore and Sunrisers Hvderabad take on each other in a return IPL fixture here Sunday.

Both Kohli and Williamson have struggled for runs in the ongoing season. Both the batting stars have failed to live up to the high standards they have set for themselves and the two teams will be hoping their star batters can snap the wretched run and provide more decisive contributions.

Kohli showed glimpses of returning to form in his fifty against Gujarat Titans. But he had a howler in the win against Chennai Super Kings in the previous game.

Williamson has been a consistent run-scorer, relying on timing and placement of the ball. However, he has failed to convert starts into big scores. The Kiwi's strike rate

Alcaraz overpowers Nadal at Madrid Open

**TODAY'S MATCHES** 🤎 SRH 🛾 RCB (🎳

has been a dismal 96.13.

After a five match winning streak, the Sunrisers have slumped to three losses on the trot due to a variety of reasons, including injuries to their frontline bowlers. They sit sixth on the points table.

**TELECAST** 

Star Sports channels & Hotstar

SRH's main spinner Washington Sundar has injured his bowling hand again, while death over specialist T Natarajan, the side's highest wicket-taker, also picked up a niggle in the loss against CSK. The duo subsequently missed the match against Delhi Capitals and the bowling unit struggled in its absence, going for over 200 runs. It is to be seen if the two return for the game Sunday.

Marco Jansen was dropped from the side but Tom Moody will be tempted to bring back the South African given that he was the wreckerin-chief against RCB last time.

Umran Malik was pummelled into submission by the Delhi batters and the youngster might want to work on developing some variations rather than cranking up the pace every time he is hit for runs.

With the bat, Abhishek Sharma has given SRH solid starts but the youngster needs to take his innings deep rather than playing a flash in the pan sort of knocks. Nicholas Pooran has been brilliant in the past couple of games, showing that he can finish off matches with a little assistance from the top order.

Incidentally, SRH's last win came against RCB when they bundled out the Faf du Plessis led side for 68 and the Orange Army will hope the

### Lautaro keeps Inter in title fight, Juve stunned



SAVING THE DAY: Lautaro Martinez (L) celebrates after scoring against Empoli

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Milan, May 7: Lautaro Martinez may have saved Inter Milan's title challenge. Martinez scored twice to help the defending champion recover from two goals down to beat Empoli 4-2 and move to the top of Serie A Friday — for 48 hours at least.

Inter were a point above city rival AC Milan, which plays at Hellas Verona Sunday. There are two rounds remaining after this weekend.

Inter knew it was the start of a week that could make or break its season. They next have the Italian Cup final Wednesday against Juventus, which surprisingly lost at relegation-threatened Genoa 1-2 after two very late goals from the home team.

Inter started poorly when Empoli took the lead less than five minutes in. Szymon Zurkowski raced down the right and crossed for Andrea Pinamonti — who is on loan from Inter and a Nerazzurri fan — to slide in and slot into the far bottom corner.

Pinamonti, who didn't celebrate, almost set up a second five minutes later. However, he was offside in the buildup before his cross for Zurkowski, and the goal was ruled out.

Inter were awarded a penalty in

the 22nd for a challenge by Fabiano Parisi on Nicolò Barella but it was revoked by referee Gianluca Manganiello after a video review.

Empoli got the second shortly after when Kristjan Asllani got between two Inter defenders to control a long ball and fired an angled shot past the onrushing Samir Handanovic to stun San Siro into silence.

Inter pulled one back five minutes from the break after Empoli defender Simone Romagnoli attempted to intercept a cross but turned it into his own net.

The home side levelled on the stroke of halftime. Barella won the ball off Asllani and threaded it through to Hakan Calhanoglu, who cut it back for Martínez to drill it into the back of the net.

Inter laid siege to the Empoli goal but it was kept at bay by fine saves from Guglielmo Vicario. However, he could do nothing to keep out Martínez's volley in the 64th. Edin Dzeko hit the post in stoppage time then Alexis Sánchez sealed the result.

At Genoa, Domenico Criscito stepped up and drove home the winner against Juve with the last kick of the match. Albert Gudmundsson levelled three minutes from time to cancel out Paulo Dybala's opener for Juventus.

Madrid, May 7: This time, the Spanish player being celebrated on center court wasn't Rafael Nadal. The loud cheers from spectators at the Caja Mágica in Madrid were, instead, directed at the teenage sensation considered the Spanish successor to the all-time great Nadal.

In a clash of generations, 19year-old Carlos Alcaraz overcame an injury to defeat his idol 6-2, 1-6, 6-3 in the Madrid Open quarterfinals Friday.

The teen recovered from a bad ankle twist early in the second set to earn his first victory against Nadal, marking what could be the beginning of a change of guard in Spanish tennis.

"It's obvious there's (a change in guard)," Nadal said. "He turned 19 yesterday, I'm almost 36 years old. If (the change) begins today or not, we will find out in the next months. I'm happy for him. He was better than

me in several aspects of the game." Nadal also was loudly supported throughout the match, and the five-



beat the best player in the history on clay," he said. "This is the result of all the hard work I've done."

It was Nadal's first loss to a

Spaniard in six years, since to Fernando Verdasco at the 2016 Australian Open. He had a 138-21 record against his countrymen be-

The ninth-ranked Alcaraz is the youngest ever semifinalist in Madrid. He will next face topranked Novak Djokovic. The other semifinal will be be-

tween Stefanos Tsitsipas and defending champion Alexander Zverev. The fourth-seeded Tsitsipas defeated Andrey Rublev 6-3, 2-6, 6-4, while the second-seeded Zverev beat Felix Auger-Aliassime 6-3, 7-5.

Still far from his best form after a six-week injury layoff, Nadal predicted a hard time keeping up with the energy of Alcaraz. He was right early on, as the youngster overpowered him to easily win the first set with three breaks.

But Alcaraz lost momentum after needing medical attention for his right ankle, losing 20 of the next 22 points as Nadal cruised through the second set.

The match also was interrupted in the second set after a fan became ill in the stands. Both players got off to a great start this season; both have a tour-leading three titles already.

Nadal's run was hampered by a rib stress fracture he sustained in his semifinal win against Alcaraz in Indian Wells. Nadal saved four match points to get past David Goffin in a third-round match that lasted more than three hours Thursday.

Djokovic praised Alcaraz after arriving in Madrid this week, and said his son had already replaced Nadal with the young Spaniard as his favorite player.

# Chelsea being sold for USD 3bn

ASSOCIATED PRESS

London, May 7: Chelsea is being sold to a consortium fronted by American sports investor Todd Boehly, ending 19 years of ownership and lavish investment by Roman Abramovich until the Russian oligarch was sanctioned and forced to offload the Premier League club.

The sale price of 2.5 billion pounds (USD 3.1 billion) is the most lucrative-ever for a sports team worldwide but Abramovich cannot receive the proceeds, which he hopes will go to a foundation for the victims of the war in Ukraine. A further 1.75 billion pounds (USD 2.2billion) is committed to be invested in the reigning FIFA Club World Cup winners.

Chelsea said Saturday that terms for the buyout had been agreed with a consortium also features Mark Walter, who is also part of the Dodgers group, Swiss billionaire



Hansjorg Wyss and funding from pri-

vate equity firm Clearlake Capital. The Premier League must approve them as the new ownership and the government has to sign off the new under the terms of the license that allows Chelsea to continue operating as a business through May 31 while one of

Abramovich's frozen assets. Chelsea expects the deal to be completed by late May. "Proceeds will be deposited into a frozen UK bank account with the intention to donate

100% to charitable causes as confirmed by Roman Abramovich, Chelsea said in a statement.

Boehly is already in London was expected to attend Chelsea's Premier League match against Wolves at Stamford Bridge Saturday. Thomas Tuchel's side is third in the standings with four games remaining.

Chelsea has the smallest and most dated stadium of the EPL's most successful clubs, with plans for a rebuild of the 41,000-capacity venue put on hold by Abramovich in 2018 as British-Russian diplomatic tensions deepened.

Chelsea said the 1.75 billion pound committed will be in funding investments in Stamford Bridge, the academy and the women's team, which can win its league title Sunday.

Boehly is part owner of the Los Angeles Dodgers MLB franchise and he also has minority stakes in the NBA's Los Angeles Lakers and WNBA's Los Angeles Sparks.

# to change IWL Rd 7 fixture

Cyclone forces organisers



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, May 7: With Odisha on high alert for a cyclone that is estimated to hit the state May 10, the Indian Women's League round 7 fixtures will now be played May 8 and 9 respectively.

The change in dates have been agreed upon after discussions between the Local Organising Committee (LOC) and representatives of the 12 clubs involved.

"As the entire eastern coast of the country is preparing for the cyclone. we have decided to take a safety-first approach to reschedule the matches that were to take place in Round 7 of the IWL," the All India Football Federation said in a statement.

"While we want to move forward with the league at all times, the safety of the teams and of those working around them comes first in our view."

**RESCHEDULED FIXTURES** 

May 8: Mata Rukmani FC vs ARA FC; PIFA Sports FC vs Sethu FC; Sports Odisha vs Odisha Police. May 9: Gokulam Kerala FC vs Indian Arrows; Sirvodem SC vs SSB Women FC; Hans Women FC vs Kickstart FC.

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