



## SHIFTING GEARS

Sonakshi Sinha feels confident donning the cop coat, which has been donned by men in the past

LEISURE P2



## POVERTY STRIKES

More than a quarter-billion people faced acute food insecurity last year due to various reasons including the Ukraine war

INTERNATIONAL P10



## SRH FACE KKR TODAY

Sunrisers Hyderabad will expect more consistency from their batters when they host Kolkata Knight Riders today

SPORTS P12



STARS ARRIVE: (From right) Nick Carter, Kevin Richardson and Howie Dorough, members of the iconic American band 'Backstreet Boys' greet fans upon their arrival at the Mumbai airport Wednesday

## Speculation grows over Nitish-Naveen meeting

The Bihar CM has already met a number of his counterparts from other states to form an anti-BJP alliance for 2024 polls

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, May 3: Speculation is rife about the likely meeting between Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar and his Odisha counterpart, Naveen Patnaik scheduled to take place here Friday as per reports in some sections of the national media.

Sources said that Kumar will meet the BJD supremo at the Naveen Niwas here in a bid to bring the opposition under one roof against the BJP. Kumar had earlier held meetings on this issue with CMs Mamata Banerjee, Arvind Kejriwal and K Chandrasekhar Rao in the not too distant past. Kumar also has held discussions on this issue with Samajwadi Party (SP) president Akhilesh Yadav in Lucknow.

It should however, be stated here that the BJD has always maintained equidistance with the BJP as well as other opposition parties including the Congress. Sources also pointed out that the BJP has taken the help of the BJD to pass certain bills in the Parliament. They said that it proves the good rapport Patnaik shares with some of the top BJP leaders including



Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar

Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

In such a situation, political analysts are certain the Kumar will not be able to woo Patnaik to join the anti-BJP alliance for the 2024 elections. Last month, Nitish met Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge, senior Congress leader Rahul Gandhi and Left leaders Sitaram Yechury and D Raja. However, during discussions many regional parties have voiced for an anti-BJP alliance sans the Congress.

However, there has not been any confirmation from Naveen's side regarding the upcoming meeting. BJD leaders are downplaying the development stating that nothing should be speculated, as many leaders from various parts of the country meet Patnaik as the latter is a very senior political veteran.

**IRREGULAR by MANJUL**  
24x7 NEWS CHANNEL

Got this congratulatory note from the govt as soon as the press freedom rankings were out

## No 'Cyclone Mocha' threat to Odisha: IMD

SINCE 2018, ODISHA HAS BEEN RAVAGED IN THE MONTH OF MAY BY 3 CYCLONES, THE WORST AMONG THEM BEING 'FANI' IN 2019

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, May 3: Like an annual event that occurs every year, a summer cyclone is likely to take place in the Bay of Bengal around May 9 though details of its path and intensification has not been assessed yet, the IMD said Wednesday. Since 2018, Odisha has been ravaged by cyclones on a regular basis. In 2018, Cyclone Titli struck suddenly changing its course and entering Gajapati district catching the administration by surprise.

Then in May 2019, Cyclone Fani caused extensive damage to the state, followed a few months later in November by Cyclone Bulbul. Even before Odisha had recovered from the damages, Cyclone Amphan once again ravaged parts of Odisha in 2020. The following year, Odisha again had to bear the brunt of Cyclones Yaas and Gulab that caused extensive damages to some parts of the state. However, IMD Director General Mrutunjay Mohapatra said that once formed Cyclone Mocha (as it will be titled) is in all likelihood to spare Odisha. The name has been suggested by Yemen after its Red Sea port city. "The guidance of numerical mod-



FILE PHOTO

els indicates formation of a cyclonic storm around May 9, but its movement and intensification may be determined after the low pressure area forms May 7. However, there is no forecast so far regarding landfall over India. But fishermen are advised against venturing into the sea from May 7," Mohapatra informed.

Asked about the likely impact on Odisha coast once the cyclone takes shape, Mohapatra said no alert has been issued for it or any other place in eastern India. He also urged people not to panic. "The system is unlikely to affect Odisha. IMD is constantly monitoring the low pressure area which is likely to concentrate into a depression over southeast Bay of Bengal, May 8. So there's no need to panic," Mohapatra stated.

However, keeping in view the weather development, the Odisha government has already put collectors of 18 coastal and adjoining districts and officials of 11 departments on alert, special relief commissioner, (SRC) Satyabrata Sahu said Wednesday. A statement by SRC's office said: "As per the tropical weather outlook dated May 3, 2023, issued by IMD, the development of cyclonic circulation around May 6 is under constant watch. IMD will communicate details of its path and intensity. No warning has been issued by IMD for Odisha coast." The statement added, "However all cyclone prone districts are kept in a state of readiness. Districts and line departments along with the NDRE, ODRAF and others are in readiness for any possible eventuality."

## Man-animal conflict: Ex-gratia rates hiked

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, May 3: The state government Wednesday enhanced the ex-gratia amount for people who got killed, suffered grievous and minor injuries due to attacks by wild animal.

Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik approved Wednesday a proposal in this regard. As per the decision, the compensation amount for the loss of life due to human-animal conflict has been enhanced to ₹6 lakh from ₹4 lakh.

Similarly, persons who will suffer disability of more than 60 per cent in wild animal attacks will get a compensation of ₹2.5 lakh. On the other hand, persons who will suffer incapacitation of less than 60 per cent will be provided with ex-gratia of ₹1.5 lakh, which was ₹1 lakh earlier.

People with minor injuries will be provided compensation of ₹5,000, with free treatment in government facilities. If the duration of treatment required is more than a week, the victim will be given an assistance of ₹10,000 while free treatment will continue.

The compensation for the deaths of livestock has also been increased. The amount for the death of a cow or buffalo in a wild animal attack has been increased to ₹37,500 and for an ox to ₹32,000 against the earlier assistance of ₹5,000. Moreover, the



Compensation rate

Loss of life	₹6 lakh
Serious injuries	₹2.5 lakh
Crop loss (Cereal)	₹20,000 (per acre)
Loss of cow, ox	₹37,500

ex-gratia for the death of a calf, goat/sheep and lamb has been doubled from ₹2,500, ₹2,000 and ₹1,500, respectively.

For damage to cereal crops, the compensation amount has been enhanced from ₹10,000 to ₹20,000 per acre. For commercial crops, the compensation was hiked from ₹12,000 to ₹25,000. The government also increased the amount of compensation from earlier ₹2,000 to ₹10,000 for partially damaged houses.

As per data, 925 persons died and 212 persons were physically disabled in elephant attacks in Odisha during the last 10 years, between 2012-13 and 2021-22.

## Teenager kills 9 including 8 kids in Serbia school

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Belgrade, May 3: In a first of its kind mass shooting in Serbia, a teenage boy opened fire inside a school here Wednesday, killing eight children and a school guard, police said. Six more children and a teacher were injured and hospitalised.

Police identified the shooter by his initials, KK and said he had opened fire with his father's gun. The accused was arrested in the school yard, police said. A statement identified him as a student at the school in central Belgrade who was born in 2009.

Police said they received a call about the shooting at the Vladislav Ribnikar Primary School around 8.40am. Primary schools in Serbia have eight grades, starting with first grade. "I was able to hear the shooting. It was non-stop," a student who was in a sports class downstairs when the gunfire erupted, said. "I didn't know what was happening. We were receiving some messages on the phone," she added.

Unlike in the United States, mass shootings in Serbia and in the wider Balkan region are extremely rare. None have been reported at schools in recent years. In the last mass shooting, a Balkan war veteran in 2013 killed 13 people in a central Serbian village. However, since it was a sporadic incident, police in this city were caught by surprise. **Contd...P4**

## SHORT TAKES

### Assassination bid on Putin foiled: Kremlin

Moscow: Russian authorities accused Wednesday that Ukraine has made an attempt to attack Kremlin with two drones overnight in an effort to assassinate President Vladimir Putin. The Kremlin denied the alleged attack attempt as a 'terrorist act' and said Russian military and security forces 'disabled' the drones before they could strike. **P10**

### 3 senior IPS officers promoted to DGP rank

Bhubaneswar: Three senior IPS officers, Sudhanshu Sarangi, Arun Kumar Sarangi and YB Khurania of 1990 batch have been promoted to Director General of Police (DGP) rank. The General Administration & Public Grievance department issued a notification to this effect Wednesday and said that the three will continue in the position till further notification.

### ASTRAZENECA CANCER DRUG GETS DCGI NOD

New Delhi: AstraZeneca Pharma India Ltd said Wednesday it has received an approval from the Drug Controller General of India (DCGI) for the cancer drug 'trastuzumab deruxtecan' for treatment of metastatic breast cancer. The company said it has been granted approval to import and market 'trastuzumab deruxtecan' used in the treatment of select 'HER-2 positive' breast cancer. "The India approval is based on a global, head-to-head, randomised, open label, registrational Phase III trial," the company said.

## Indian touch constant at UK royal functions

THE ASSOCIATION DATES BACK TO QUEEN VICTORIA WHO ALWAYS HAD AN INDIAN ESCORT ACCOMPANYING HER FOR ALL OFFICIAL FUNCTIONS

AGENCIES

London, May 3: The crown has been resized. The troops are prepared for the biggest military procession in 70 years. The Gold State Coach is ready to roll. Now it's time for the show. King Charles III will be crowned Saturday at Westminster Abbey in an event full of all the pageantry Britain can muster.

Enrobed clergymen will hand over the medieval symbols of power – the rod, the sceptre and the orb. Brass bands and soldiers in bearskin hats will troop through the streets. And the new king and queen will presumably end the day on the balcony of

Buckingham Palace to wave to the cheering crowds.

And amid all the dignitaries attending the function, there will be quite a few Indians too. More than 100 Heads of States have been invited for the event. Also attending the ceremony will be a number of Indian student achievers and Mumbai's famous 'Dabbawalas' who are ready with their gifts for the new UK monarch.

However, this is not the first time that Indians will be present at a British royal ceremony. Queen Victoria, who was the Empress of India during the Raj, was the first British monarch to include an Indian escort at all her major royal ceremonies and 200 years on at



King Charles III's coronation this weekend that history will be reflected in the Commonwealth symbolism, according to a British-Indian historian and author. Shrabani Basu, the London-

based author of *Victoria and Abdul: The Extraordinary True Story of the Queen's Closest Confidant* – adapted into an Oscar-nominated film starring Dame Judi Dench as 'Victoria', believes the trappings around the

ceremony Saturday at the Westminster Abbey will hark back to much of Queen Victoria's love for India.

"It is with Victoria that we have such a link with India, because of her connection with Abdul Karim from whom she learnt Urdu; she was so fond of India, though she never visited due to old age," said Basu. "She (Victoria) yearned to visit India and in every ceremony that she had, she would make sure there was an Indian escort that led the procession out of Buckingham Palace towards Westminster Abbey," Basu added.

There can be no doubt that the Dabbawalas are excited. They were seen purchasing gifts Tuesday for King Charles. **Contd...P4**



# leisure



## EMMA ON TAKING ACTING BREAK: I FELT A BIT CAGED

Actress Emma Watson opened up about the reasons why she is taking an acting break. The 33-year-old, who rose to fame starring in the *Harry Potter* franchise as Hermione Granger, said to the Financial Times in a recent interview that she wasn't very happy and felt a bit caged.

## DOJA BLASTED AFTER VAPING AT MET GALA

Singer Doja Cat broke an important rule at the Met Gala while attending the event. Doja, who literally turned into a cat in honour of Karl Lagerfeld's beloved pet Choupette, was caught vaping on the red carpet at Vogue's prestigious ball despite the strict rule against smoking, reports *aceshowbiz.com*.



### FORTUNE FORECAST

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FOR ASTROLOGY DIAL 55181

**ARIES**  
Okay, so the plans you chalked out have not delivered any results. Today, you may want to do a rethink. By noon, you may put things in place, and this will fire your confidence. Ganesha says this is what life is about — try, try, try, until you succeed.

**TAURUS**  
This day you will be thinking of pleasant outings, picnics and pleasure trips. The morning could be spent with your friends and family members, finalising plans and programmes. But, warns Ganesha, you could lose track of things later in the day and, unfortunately, change your plans and end up by spoiling a lovely, enjoyable day and turning it into a drab and dull affair.

**GEMINI**  
A hectic and busy day awaits you. You will be busy trying to complete your pending projects and in trying to figure out a way to beat your deadlines. However, the workload should ease a bit post-noon. You are likely to make plans to go watch a movie or to go out to dinner with friends and family, says Ganesha.

**CANCER**  
The day proceeds lazily. But your work will pick up pace later in the day. Ganesha cautions about your health. As chance of stomach upset is likely, be careful of what you eat or drink. Do not neglect any ailment and contact doctor promptly.

**LEO**  
The day may start off on a sour note. You will want to accomplish a lot of things, however, you will not achieve desired results. The later half of the day is better suited for all your work-related pursuits, and you will be able to make much better progress, says Ganesha.

**VIRGO**  
Today it is time to enjoy all the rewards that you have reaped in your life. It may appear to you that you have reached your wits' end. However, Ganesha foretells that all the jigsaw pieces will fall into place when you sit down with your spouse to sort things out.

**LIBRA**  
Ganesha says you will think twice before spending today. You shall try to save your money by bargaining too. The afternoon is an auspicious time to propose to your loved one for marriage. Today is the day you shall experience love and closeness with your partner. Ganesha sends you his best wishes

**SCORPIO**  
A one to one conversation with your partner or spouse may leave you happy. In short, marital bliss is on the cards today. To come closer to each other, you may even think of a getaway or plan a long vacation with each other. Your cheerful nature would keep you going throughout the day and even help you to sort out small issues.

**SAGITTARIUS**  
Ganesha has to offer too many things on the platter today. Don't get confused if things don't appear as expected. Unexpected things may yield better results. There's lots more at the end of tiresome day. Let your hair down and hit the dance floor.

**CAPRICORN**  
You have pulled up your socks and geared up to finish off all pending work. You'll want to do proper planning and go through the right route to minimise the chances of errors and wastage of time, even if it means spending the whole day for it, predicts Ganesha. Physical intimacy will give boost to your love life.

**AQUARIUS**  
Financially, you are on a stable ground today, so make the most of it. You will give a tough fight to your competitors, and leave them far behind in the race as not many can beat you in your own game. Beware of those green-eyed people around, alerts Ganesha, as they are waiting for you to make a mistake and get off the track.

**PISCES**  
Do not make or take any decision or activity lightly today, says Ganesha. For decisions taken today could have far-reaching consequences. You will be forced to compromise on certain issues today. But owing to your adaptability, the day should pass by peacefully enough, says Ganesha.

# SONAKSHI KEEN TO PLAY REAL WOMEN

**Mumbai:** Actress Sonakshi Sinha will soon be donning the role of a cop in her upcoming series *Dahaad*, where she tries to solve the peculiar case of a middle-aged serial killer who is on the run. Recently, she spoke about the female-centric role of a cop and how it is different from Chulbul Pandey's from *Dabangg*.

Narrating the gist of the character, she said, "Why should guys have all the fun? I think it is about time that we started representing real women, strong women, honestly: There are so many stories to be told, and this was just one such story that came to me and I think I got really lucky with this one. As an actor, very rarely do you

get roles that just hit you bang in the face and you are like, you have to do it."

Describing the difference between her role and the character of Chulbul Pandey, she adds, "As a cop, I think it is very different from a Chulbul Pandey type of cop. Like ma'am (Ex-IPS Officer Dr Meeran Chadha Borwarkar) said, her character is very real. She is very raw. She knows what she's doing and she knows what she wants—to get justice, no matter what it is."



## BUXI COMES ALIVE ON STAGE



Artistes of Satabdira Kalakar, one of the oldest theatre troupes of Bhubaneswar, presented Odia play *Maha Sangramara Mahanayak* showcasing the valour of freedom fighter Buxi Jagabandhu Bidyadhar Mahapatra at Rabindra Mandap, Wednesday. Written by Chhattisgarh Governor Biswa Bhusan Harichandan, the drama was directed by troupe's founder Dhirra Mallick. The event was part of the celebration of Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav. PIC: OP PHOTO



## Nawaz criticises big budget films

**Mumbai:** Ever since theatres fully reopened in India, it has been a forgetful journey for the industry, with only a handful of films doing well. Nawazuddin Siddiqui has once again minced no words, saying that it is the big films that are harming the industry the most.

While talking to a news portal, the *Manto* actor said, "The big films are causing the biggest loss to the industry. In a rare case, something works at the box office for whatever reason. But mostly, if you leave three films, 97 percent of the films are flopping. And these are all big films. These are the films that are actually bringing the industry down."

Nawazuddin is probably speaking about masala films that have big stars and lots of action. Questioning the contribution of directors and actors in these films, he added, "These films don't have any stories or performances. They just have five songs designed by the choreographer and if there is action, that's done by the action designer. What's the director doing in that? What's the actor doing in that?"

The actor will next be seen in *Jogira Sara Ra Ra Ra* opposite Neha Sharma, which is set to release May 12. AGENCIES

## She's the only 'millennium' Miss World, claims Priyanka

**Los Angeles:** At the Miss World 2000 beauty pageant, now-global star Priyanka Chopra Jonas, who was then 18, was crowned the winner. The actor recalled her Miss India days and also reflected on her Miss World title as she spoke about the pageant that was held at the Millennium Dome in London, United Kingdom. In a new interview, Priyanka said she was the 'millennium Miss World'.

When asked if beauty pageants were a 'whole industry' in India, like they are in the US, Priyanka said on *The Howard Stern Show*, "No, they (Miss India pageant runners) gave us 30 days for prep. Now, I am a competitive girl, and I am very prep-oriented. Except for me, everyone else at the pageant was a model. They made us meet experts for hair and makeup, elocution, speaking, talking and walking; all of that happened over 30 days. I just observed, learned, and absorbed as much as I could. I was like, the one thing I can do is be smart up there (on stage during the pageant), and I know that in India, they look for that. You want the person representing the country to be well-spoken, presentable, traditional and a good ambassador for your country."



### PEANUTS



### CALVIN AND HOBBS

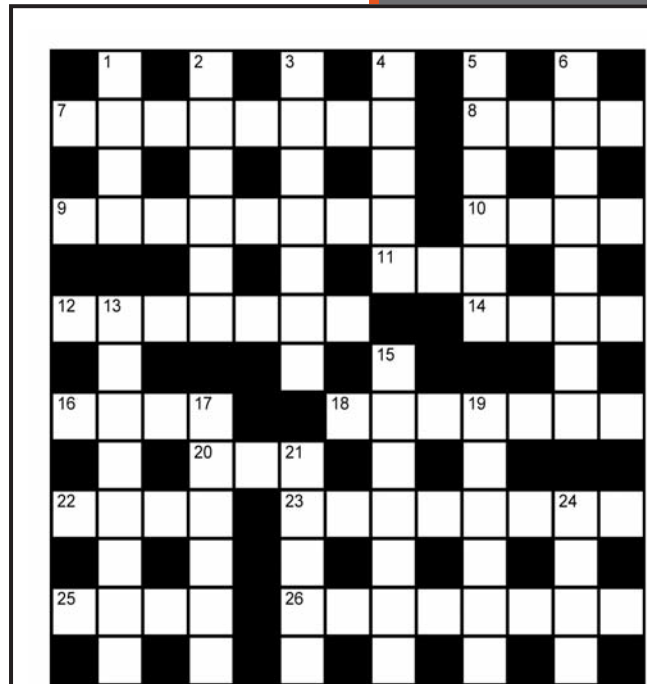


### BREVITY



### FUN post

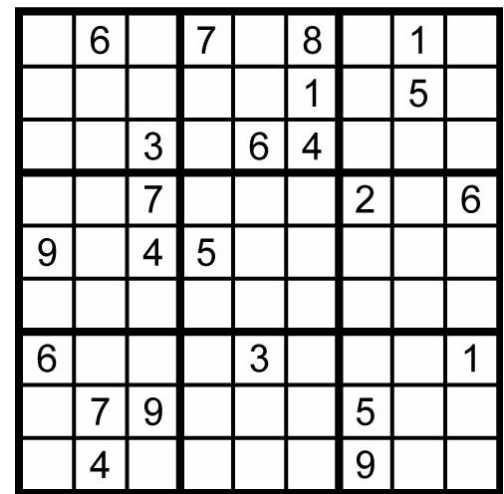
### CROSSWORD



- Across**
- 7 Manitoba, Canada city
  - 8 Devilish
  - 9 Abandoned ship
  - 10 Upside-down sleepers
  - 11 Tokyo, once
  - 12 Navigational device
  - 14 *Iliad* warrior
  - 16 Laser light
  - 18 Cockatoos
  - 20 Psyches
  - 22 Cicatrix
  - 23 Armoire
  - 25 Kon-Tiki Museum site
  - 26 Mythical Greek monster
  - 3 Choices
  - 4 Banded stone
  - 5 Asian desert rodent
  - 6 Balm
  - 13 Isometrics, e.g.
  - 15 Vagabond
  - 17 Bathroom item
  - 19 Oddity
  - 21 Wetland
  - 24 Very dry, as wine
- Down**
- 1 Assistant
  - 2 Consume

### SUDOKU

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



### SOLUTIONS

#### CROSSWORD



#### SUDOKU



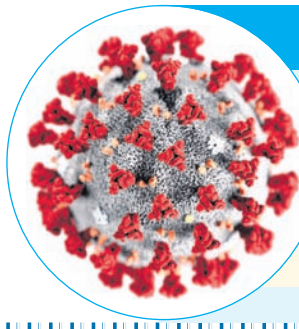
CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW





## PRESS FREEDOM

World Press Freedom Day was celebrated by Odisha Journalists' Union at Soochana Bhawan in Bhubaneswar, Wednesday



## COVID-19 TRACKER

	INFECTED	RECOVERED	DEAD
World	68,73,77,023	65,98,54,953	68,67,879
India	4,49,56,716	4,43,84,955	5,31,584
Odisha	13,36,304	13,26,915	9,204



**RAIN PAIN:** As rain lashed the City, road users negotiate a waterlogged stretch in front of ISKCON temple in Jayadev Vihar area of Bhubaneswar, Wednesday

# Rain deluge back to haunt denizens

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, May 3:** Commuters in the Capital city had a harrowing time Wednesday when a sudden downpour resulted in large-scale waterlogging and traffic snarls on busy streets, indicating little improvement in stormwater drainage system.

Disruption in vehicular movement was witnessed in several areas of Bhubaneswar after a moderate rainfall lashed the City for around an hour Wednesday evening.

The India Meteorological Department (IMD), in a Nowcast

*Disruption in vehicular movement was witnessed in several areas of Bhubaneswar after a moderate rainfall lashed the City for around an hour Wednesday evening*

Warning, has forecast rain along with thunderstorm and lightning for Bhubaneswar and Cuttack by 7pm.

Low-lying areas in several parts of the City were submerged with rainwater. The deluge was severe in areas like Nayapalli, Acharya Vihar, Jayadev Vihar, Baramunda, Behera Sahi, Rasulgarh, Bomikhal and Jagamara, sources said.

Apart from traffic congestions and waterlogging, some parts of

the state capital also faced disruptions in supply of essentials. Many vehicles were seen stranded on both sides of the service roads under several flyovers in the City. Several vehicles were seen submerged in rainwater accumulated on the roads facing ISKCON temple in Nayapalli area and other locations.

Earlier, the Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC) had asked officials at ward and zone lev-

els to conduct regular field visits and report status of drains and areas vulnerable to waterlogging and urban deluge.

An order to this effect was issued by Mayor Sulochana Das following the monthly corporation meeting.

BMC commissioner Vijay Amruta Kulange had reportedly asked zonal deputy commissioners of the three zones to hold regular meetings at their level to review the status of drainage renovation and rectification to check flooding. They have also been asked to work in coordination with the drainage division of the civic body.

# CM launches air tickets to Singapore, Bangkok

*The CM hopes that these international flights would provide tourists more convenience and affordable travel options while promoting trade and tourism*

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, May 3:** In a major boost to international air connectivity, Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik Wednesday opened the air ticketing to Singapore and Bangkok facilitating people of Odisha travelling to these southeast Asian cities at a 'fair price'.

According to sources, Indigo airlines will commence direct international flights to Singapore as well as Bangkok June 3, 2023.

The introductory offer for the round trip is kept at ₹15,000.

The flight from Bhubaneswar to Singapore will depart at 6:25am and reach Singapore at 1:05pm.

It will leave Singapore at 2:10pm and arrive in Bhubaneswar at 3:50pm.

Similarly, the flight from Bhubaneswar to Bangkok will depart at 4:50pm and land in Bangkok at 9:10pm.

In return journey, the flight will leave Bangkok at 10:10pm and reach Bhubaneswar at 11:15pm.

Earlier, sale of tickets for direct flights to Dubai was launched by the Chief Minister the services of which will start May 15.

With this, Odisha has become the pioneer and first state in the country to support and commence international air connectivity in the interest of the public.

Speaking on the occasion, Patnaik said the initiative will generate job opportunities for the youths of Odisha, open up tourism



**Indigo airlines will commence direct international flights to Singapore and Bangkok June 3, 2023**

Though domestic flight connectivity has seen a noticeable improvement, the state government has come forward to make sizeable contributions to ensure direct international flight connectivity between Bhubaneswar and world-class destinations to meet the people's aspirations, he added.

Patnaik hoped that these international flights would provide tourists more convenience and affordable travel options while also promoting trade and tourism.

He thanked the Ministry of Civil Aviation and Indigo Airlines for their support.

Notably, in the current year Budget, the state government has made a provision of ₹100 crore to support the viability gap funding.

Due to this, international travelling has become affordable for every passenger travelling from Odisha.

# BJP Jharsuguda dist president joins BJD

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, May 3:** BJP's Jharsuguda district president Mangal Sahoo joined BJD Wednesday, giving a blow to the saffron party ahead of the May 10 bypoll.

After joining the ruling party in presence of Rajya Sabha MP Manas Mangaraj at Sankha Bhavan here, Sahoo met BJD supremo and Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik. Speaking to media-persons, Sahoo said, "I worked diligently to strengthen the BJP organisation in Jharsuguda. It pained me when some BJP leaders engaged in petty pol-

itics by giving up the ideology and principles of the party. Thus, I left BJP and joined BJD."

Sahoo said he joined BJD as he was immensely inspired by the ideals of the Chief Minister and party president Naveen Patnaik.

He claimed that many BJP leaders are now unhappy as the party is indulging in cheap politics over the murder of minister Naba Kishore Das instead of highlighting other important issues.

Mangaraj said Sahoo's entry into BJD will further

strengthen the party's base in Jharsuguda and boost its prospects in the forthcoming bypoll. Sahoo was among the star campaigners of BJP for Jharsuguda Assembly by-

election to be held May 10. His move to join the BJD is seen as a setback for BJP at a time when campaigning is gaining momentum for the bypoll.

The BJP, however, claimed that Sahoo joining the ruling party will not have any impact on the saffron party's poll prospects. BJP state pres-

ident Manmohan Samal, in his reaction, said, "BJP contests elections on the basis of a particular ideology. It is not dependent on any one individual." Notably, the Jharsuguda Assembly segment will go for byelection May 10 while the result will be declared May 13. The bypoll is necessitated due to the murder of sitting MLA Naba Kishore Das January 29.

The BJD has fielded Das' daughter Dipali in the bypoll while BJP has given ticket to its youth leader Tankadhar Tripathy. The Congress has picked former MLA Biren Pandey's son Tarun Pandey.



# CUO students excel in exams, land jobs

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, May 3:** Six students from the Journalism and Mass Communication department of Central University of Odisha (CUO), Koraput, made a mark in academics and job sector recently.

Three students cracked the All-India NTA UGC NET examination. They include Joydev Mazumdar of the 2017-19 batch who cracked NTA NET-JRF, Sanat Padhi of the 2018-20 batch, and Mousami Jena of the 2020-22 batch, both of whom cracked NTA NET.

Three students of the department also got selected for the posts of State Digital Information and Public Relations Officer (SDIPRO).

The examination was conducted by Odisha Public Services Commission in 2023. They include Tanuja Mohanty of 2010-12 batch, Prahallad Kashala of 2011-13 batch and Abinash Pani of 2017-19 batch.

CUO Vice-Chancellor Chakradhar Tripathi expressed great satisfaction and congratulated the departments achievers and teachers.

Currently, the department of Journalism and Mass Communication of the university offers a two-year MA and Ph.D. programmes in Journalism & Mass Communication.



## MAHANADI WATER DISPUTES

# 'Ch'garh infra violation of 1947 arrangement'

POST NEWS NETWORK

**New Delhi, May 3:** As the Mahanadi Water Disputes Tribunal (MWDT) team concluded its second phase visit of Mahanadi basin in Chhattisgarh Wednesday, Odisha alleged that the neighbouring state has developed infrastructure for about 11 million acre feet (MAF) water, which is in excess of its equitable share and in violation of the arrangement in 1947.

Sources said a senior advocate, leading a 20-member team from Odisha comprising engineers, technical experts and lawyers, submitted before the MWDT that the state would suffer immensely even during monsoon if Chhattisgarh is allowed to develop future projects for 16 MAF water as disclosed in its letter in 2017.

Odisha has claimed that as per the DPR of Hirakud project of 1947, the equitable share of Chhattisgarh is 8.33 MAF water.

The MWDT Wednesday concluded its second phase visit of Mahanadi basin in Chhattisgarh. During the



nine days of visit, the tribunal judges along with the teams from Odisha and Chhattisgarh inspected several projects being executed by the upper riparian state in Mahanadi basin.

"Chhattisgarh has been using around 13 to 14 MAF water from illegally expanded infrastructure of 11 MAF. It has been causing injury to Odisha in non-monsoon months by excessive storage and utilisation of Mahanadi water," sources said, quoting the senior counsel's submission before the MWDT.

Reservoirs in Chhattisgarh like Ravi Shankar Shukla, Murumsilli dam and Minimata dam have been holding water about 50 to 60 per cent of their live capacity (around 2.2 MAF) unnecessarily, the MMDT was informed. "The excessive storage

in these reservoirs is the reason behind shortage of water in Hirakud dam," Odisha said, adding that only 0.9 MAF water has been delivered at border against 1.72 MAF during non-monsoon months.

It was further argued that six industrial barrages, including Rajiv Samoda, Basantpur and Kalma, on Mahanadi river are directly causing immediate 'injury' in non-monsoon months to Odisha as they are constructed in a manner to create a column of storage in the river for 84 km as FRL of downstream barrage is the level of foot of upstream barrage.

Significantly, the tribunal commenced the visit of Mahanadi basin in Chhattisgarh from April 19. On the first day, the tribunal visited Farsiya village, the origin point of Mahanadi. During the first phase visit, which concluded April 23, the tribunal along with the teams from Odisha and Chhattisgarh inspected projects in upper Mahanadi sub-basin and Shivnath sub-basin in Chhattisgarh.

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Cooling Capacity(50%)	: NA
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Compressor Type	: Fixed Speed
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# Homoeopathy to be part of City AIIMS

MoU between City AIIMS and CCRH will reduce the over usage of modern medicines in tertiary healthcare facilities



POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, May 3:** In a bid to integrate homoeopathy into the existing healthcare system and to provide a productive synergy for cooperation in research and education, AIIMS Bhubaneswar and Central Council for Research in Homoeopathy (CCRH) entered into an MoU Wednesday.

The MoU between two premier institutes will provide a compact platform for research on the basis of scientific evidence.

Signing of the agreement also aims to reduce the over usage of modern medicine drugs in the tertiary healthcare facilities. AIIMS Bhubaneswar and CCRH under the Ministry of Ayush (Govt. of India) have initiated working to-

tegrative medicine, bearing in mind the government of India's adage, "One Nation, One Health". The outcome of this MoU will certainly boost the healthcare system and benefit the masses, said Kaushik. During Covid pandemic, homoeopathy proved a precedent of adjunctive care to standard therapy. Integrative homoeopathic care has provided varied successful integration and outcomes for Covid-19, dengue, acute encephalitis syndrome, post covid illness, cancer care, acute otitis media, mental diseases in Councils research centers and tertiary healthcare setups, informed Kaushik.

The wider popularity and the cost-effectiveness of homoeopathy make it a sustainable system for integration in the modern healthcare system. Integrating homoeopathy in healthcare will help to achieve the Universal Health Coverage (UHC) as advocated by the World Health Organization (WHO), stressed experts on the occasion.

It may be noted here that homoeopathy has been used as a therapeutic measure over the years in different diseased condition such as musculoskeletal disorders, paediatrics complaints, chronic dermatological problems, autoimmune disease conditions, psychosomatic disorders, life style disorders and allergic conditions.

gether to set up a Department of Integrative Medicine at AIIMS.

The MoU will provide the scope to explore and establish the scientific evidence of homoeopathy, said AIIMS Bhubaneswar Executive Director Ashutosh Biswas. Through the MoU, the two national institutes will have the scope of collaborative research for therapeutic response of the medicine in homoeopathy and protocol of treatment, added Biswas.

Delighted with the MoU, Director General (DG) of CCRH Subhash Kaushik has said that homoeopathy has a wide potential as an integrative system to current healthcare in the realm of public health platforms owing to its scientific evidence. The MoU has been signed with AIIMS Bhubaneswar on in-



**HANDLOOM EXHIBITION:** Visitors checking out a saree at a Special Handloom Expo organised by Sambalpuri Bastralaya at Ekamra Haat in Bhubaneswar, Wednesday

## Special handloom expo-2023 inaugurated

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, May 3:** As per the revised annual calendar approved by the State Handlooms, Textiles & Handicrafts Department, a Special Handloom Expo-2023 is being organized by Sambalpuri Bastralaya under Promotion of Handloom Industries (POHI)-2023-24 funds at Ekamra Haat,

Bhubaneswar to boost up the sales and provide regular employment to the weaver members of the PWCS/SHGs.

The Special Handloom Expo was inaugurated Wednesday by Director of Textiles and Handloom Sovan Krishna Sahu. Those present on the occasion were Sambit Kumar Acharya, President, Sambalpuri Bastralaya, Saroj Kumar Patel,

MD, SERIFED, Sisir Kumar Nag, Managing Director, Sambalpuri Bastralaya, Debjit Nandy, Joint Director of Textiles, Bhubaneswar and Hemanta Kumar Mishra, Marketing Officer, Sambalpuri Bastralaya.

The Special Expo will continue till May 21. A total of 34 stalls have been put up in the expo in which PWCS/ SHG of Baragrh, Cuttack,

Sonepur, Athagarh, Baripada, Balasore, Patanagarh, Nayagarh, Khurda and Boudh Zone including Sambalpuri Bastralaya are participating for showcasing and sell their products. The stalls are allotted to the participant free of cost.

This is a common platform where customers will get handloom products from all over the state with 10 per cent rebate.

### CONTINUED FROM P1

#### Indian touch...

The Dabbawalas have bought 'Puneri Pagadi' and a shawl of the Warkari community 'Puner Pagadi' is a unique style of turban and is considered a symbol of pride and honour in Pune. It was granted the Geographical Indication (GI) status in the year 2009. The Dabbawalas said that the invitations to attend the coronation ceremony have been sent by the British Consulate in Mumbai. They informed that their clan will be represented by four people. For the first time, religious leaders representing Buddhist, Hindu, Jewish, Muslim and Sikh (mostly from India) traditions will play an active role in the ceremony. The music will feature pieces written and performed by artists from

each of the UK's four nations and throughout the Commonwealth.

#### Teenager kills...

Experts, however, have repeatedly warned of the number of weapons left over in the country after the wars of the 1990s. They also note that decades-long instability stemming from the conflicts as well as the ongoing economic hardship could trigger such outbursts. Local media footage from the scene showed commotion outside the school as police removed the suspect, whose head was covered as officers led him to a car parked in the street.

The student who heard the shooting described the accused as a 'quiet guy' who 'looked nice'.

## President to lay stone for Skill Training Hub

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, May 3:** Elaborate arrangements have been made as President Droupadi Murmu will begin her three-day Odisha visit from May 4 when she will lay the foundation stone for Skill Training Hub and Community Centre at Pahadpur.

According to sources, Murmu is scheduled to visit Rairangpur, Pahadpur and Baripada in Mayurbhanj district during the three-day visit.

May 4, 2023, the President will lay the foundation stones for the Skill Training Hub and Community

Centre at Pahadpur. Subsequently, she will visit Brahma Kumaris Centre, Hatbadra where she will launch the 'Addiction Free Odisha' campaign of Brahma Kumaris Centre. In the evening, Murmu will attend a civic reception to be hosted in her honour by Rairangpur Municipality at Rairangpur Stadium.

May 5, 2023, the President will pay tributes to Pt Raghunath Murmu on his birth anniversary. Later, she will visit Simlipal Wildlife Sanctuary. May 6, 2023, the President will grace the 12th convocation of Maharaja Sriram Chandra Bhanja Deo University at Baripada.

#### Tourist, minor son drown in Puri sea

**Puri:** A tourist and his minor son from West Bengal drowned while bathing in the sea here Wednesday. The deceased have been identified as Ranjan Das, 50, and his son Rishav, 16. According to Sea Beach police, five tourists from West Bengal's Howrah were bathing in the sea near Swargadwar in the afternoon when the mishap took place.

"They did not seek the help of lifeguards and were bathing when a huge wave washed three of them deep into the sea. Although lifeguards present at the spot managed to rescue one, the father-son could not be saved," an official of Sea Beach police said. The official added that a case of unnatural death has been registered and the bodies were sent for autopsy to the district headquarters hospital (DHH) here.

## Minerals key to country's economic devt: Panda

POST NEWS NETWORK

**New Delhi, May 3:** New age energy minerals are important for India's economic development and building a sustainable future. "India must leverage its mining expertise and strategic relationships to access and extract these resources," said Subhrakant Panda, President, FICCI and MD, IMFA during the launch of a Report on "New Age Energy Minerals," prepared by FICCI.

The Report was launched by Vivek Bhadraj, Secretary of the Ministry of Mines, Government of India, at New Delhi Tuesday. FICCI report on New Age Energy Minerals gives an overview of geographical and geological

data, value chains, end-use sectors, market outlook and long-term demand for each mineral, along with challenges and opportunities, and key recommendations.

During his keynote address Panda highlighted the importance of mining for India's GDP. He emphasized on ongoing exploration, enhanced technology adoption and increased efficiencies to augment production of new age energy minerals. He also urged for building integrated supply chains to achieve the vision of Atmanirbhar Bharat.

Pankaj Satija, Co-Chair, FICCI Mining Committee, FICCI Secretary General, Shailesh Pathak and other industry leaders were present on the occasion.

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#### AFFIDAVIT

I, Sri Abhimanyu Sahoo, S/o. Late Arjun Sahoo, Village- Talagarh, P.O./P.S.-Balianta, Dist.-Khordha declare by this affidavit dated 15.02.2011 that, my good name is Abhimanyu Sahoo and locally am known as Abhina Sahoo. Now onwards Abhimanyu Sahoo and Abhina Sahoo, S/o- Late Arjun Sahoo is one and same person for all future purposes.

#### LOST

Myself Daku Pradhan, aged about 65 years, S/o- Late Anand Pradhan resident of Village-Keshkera, Po- Ambapada, PS- Puri Sadar, Dist.- Puri notified that my Sale Deed destroyed in the Super Cyclone "Fani" due to wind and water. That Sale Deed No. 4155 and land property situates in Mouza- Keshkera, Khata No.- 177, Plot No.-436, Area Ac 0.16 decs. That the facts stated above are all true to the best of my knowledge and belief. Daku Pradhan Mob-8327789895

## Govt enters into 5-yr partnership with UCT

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, May 3:** The state government rolled out a five-year strategic partnership with the University of Chicago Trust (UCT) for using data to advance innovations and drive policy decisions. It was announced in an agreement event at Data, Policy and Innovation Centre (DPIC) in Bhubaneswar Wednesday.

Talking about the collaboration, Electronics and Information Technology Minister, Tusharkanti Behera said, "The establishment of the DPIC is a testament to the government's commitment to the state's development across various sectors." He expressed satisfaction that scholars from around the world are conducting research in Odisha



and taking their findings to the rest of the world, adding that evidence and data-driven policies would benefit the state tremendously.

DPIC aims to enable rigorous, evidence-based governance while using new advances in econometrics, data science and machine learning and act as a centre of excellence for collecting big data from

many sources. The UCT through the Energy Policy Institute at the University of Chicago (EPIC India) and its other research centers are supporting the government in operationalizing DPIC.

"Five years ago, we worked with the government of Odisha to launch a one of its kind data-driven transparency program for industries. So, in a way, it's a homecoming for

us and we are excited to work closely with the state government in further advancing data and evidence-driven policymaking," said Michael Greenstone, Milton Friedman Professor in Economics and Director of the Energy Policy Institute at the University of Chicago.

Researchers from the University of Chicago will provide support to the government by offering insights into the efficacy of ongoing programs, proposing modifications to accomplish government objectives, and creating and assessing innovative large scale research field pilots. Additionally, the team will use the knowledge gained from research in Odisha to expand operations not only within the state but also in other parts of India.

## BJP for CAPF deployment in Jharsuguda byelection

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Bhubaneswar, May 3:** The opposition BJP Wednesday submitted a memorandum to the Chief Electoral Officer (CEO) seeking deployment of central armed police force (CAPF) personnel during the bypoll to the Jharsuguda assembly segment May 10.

A BJP delegation, led by the party's state media cell chief Dilip Mallick, submitted the memorandum to the CEO alleging that the law and order situation in the state, particularly in Jharsuguda,

has 'deteriorated'.

The BJP delegation claimed that 71 of the 253 polling booths of the Jharsuguda assembly constituency are highly sensitive. "Therefore, steps should be taken to ensure extensive security arrangements in these booths," Mallick said.

This apart, they demanded CCTV camera arrangement, drone cameras should also be deployed in and around these booths, he said, adding that CAPF personnel must be deployed in Jharsuguda to ensure free, fair and impartial bypoll.

## Special event 'Kalika' held for young migrants

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, May 3:** A special event 'Kalika' for children of migrant workers was held Wednesday in Bhangarpur GP of Khurda district.

Aide et Action and Commissionerate Police Bhubaneswar- Cuttack jointly organised this programme for young migrant living with their families in various brick kilns close to Bhubaneswar & Cuttack city.

'Kalika' is an annual sports and cultural event for children where they participate in various games, singing, dancing and drawing competitions. The young migrants display their inherent talents during



the event.

Saumendra Priyadarshi, the Police Commissioner of Bhubaneswar- Cuttack inaugurating the event said that commissionerate police is committed to protect all the workers and their children within its jurisdiction. The children have immense talent which should be nurtured and Kalika gives these children a plat-

form to recognise it, he added. He also distributed appreciation certificates to the government frontline workers who have contributed towards the welfare of the children in providing nutrition, education, health services and ration.

Umi Daniel, Director of migration and Education, Aide et Action presiding over the meeting said that every year Aide et Action organise the annual event 'Kalika'. With the collaboration of Commissionerate Police the welfare of migrant children has been strengthened.

Speaking on the occasion, District Child Protection Officers of Khurda Balanshree Patnaik and Cuttack

Pragati Mohanty, Balianta CDPO Fulna Sahu assured that no children will be left behind in accessing government programmes.

Balianta IIC Yuvraj Swain and Bhangarpur Sarpanch Harishikesh Behera commended the program and promised full cooperation to the initiative.

Mahesh Chandra Rai on behalf of the Brick Kiln owner's association said that safety of all children will be ensured at the workplace.

During the ceremony children performed plays, dances and songs on social issues such as child labour and child marriage. Prizes were distributed by the guests to the winners of various competitions.

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## SURYA HARIJAN RERUN 80-yr-old woman walks 5 km to get pension in Kalahandi

**A video of the Pitabati Pali, 80, a native of Kulerguda village under Koksara block, walking to the bank went viral on social media platforms**

while shooting a video. In her reply she says that she is walking to the Temera mini bank to withdraw her pension money of ₹500.

She said previously the pension money was paid to them through the local panchayat office. However, it has become an arduous task for pensioners like her to get the money after the state government started paying it online through banks. Left with no option, she is on her way to the bank to withdraw the pension, she added.

Recently, a video showing Surya Harijan of Jharigaon in Nabarangpur struggling to reach her bank barefoot with the support of a broken plastic chair went viral on social media. The video attracted the notice of Finance Minister Sitharaman who immediately directed the SBI to provide her with all help. Following the condemnation of Sitharaman, the SBI authorities scurried to provide all help to the old lady. It remains to be seen if this similar case attracts the attention of the higher-ups and makes Pitabati's life any easier.

block, walking to the bank went viral on social media platforms.

In the video, the woman was seen walking with the help of a stick to withdraw ₹500 pension money to Temera mini bank which is about five kilometre from her village. She was seen walking on the hot rocky road braving the blistering summer heat.

Passersby grew curious seeing the elderly woman walking, stopped her and asked her a few questions



**RAIN CHEERS:** Farmers plough their farmlands ahead of Kharif cultivation, Wednesday after unseasonal rainfall lashed Phiringia block in Kandhamal district this week

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhawanipatna, May 3:** In a shocking incident, an 80-year-old frail looking woman had to walk for over five kilometre to get ₹500 old-age pension in this grueling summer due to lack of banking facilities at her village in Kalahandi district, Wednesday.

A video of the woman identified as Pitabati Pali, a native of Kulerguda village under Koksara

# Fate of Deepak Fertilisers mired in uncertainty

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Paradip, May 3:** The establishment of Deepak Fertilisers plant here in Jagatsinghpur district has been pushed into uncertainty with its office lying closed for last two years and the company showing no sign of any headway in its project, a report said Wednesday.

Paradip is termed as the gateway of development for eastern India. This was announced by Prime Minister Narendra Modi during his visit to this port town, February 7, 2016. Meanwhile, both the state government and Centre have announced to spend ₹1 lakh crore for the development of Paradip.

This has come at a time when the state government is organising business conclaves to attract industrialists to invest in the state and establish their units. Locals have demanded to find out as to why the firms that had expressed their interest for investment have gone back on their projects. Reports said that five companies in Paradip have been sold off to other firms after becoming bankrupt during last five years.

Among these announcements, a fertiliser plant by Deepak Fertilisers and Petrochemical Corporation Ltd (DFPCL) was one of the major industries scheduled for establishment in the port town.



**THE COMPANY HAD ANNOUNCED TO ANNUALLY PRODUCE 3,040 MT CHEMICALS AND TO GIVE DIRECT AND INDIRECT EMPLOYMENT TO OVER 1,900 YOUTHS**

**THE DISTRICT ADMINISTRATION HAD EVEN CONDUCTED PUBLIC HEARING FOR THE PROJECT SEPTEMBER 15, 2017**

**LOCALS HAVE DEMANDED TO FIND OUT AS TO WHY THE FIRMS THAT HAD EXPRESSED THEIR INTEREST FOR INVESTMENT HAVE GONE BACK ON THEIR PROJECTS**

Furthermore, the district administration had conducted public hearing for the project and sought the opinions of affected villagers on its establishment, September 15, 2017. The company had then said that its construction will be completed within 36 months and announced to produce nitric acid, ammonium nitrate solutions, technical prill, maleate and ammonia.

The company had announced to annually produce 3,040 MT chemicals and to give direct and indirect employment to over 1,900 youths. Meanwhile, six years have passed after the public hearing but the site acquired by the company is lying abandoned and the company

is yet to start work on its project.

When contacted, three senior officials who were then heading the company said that they have left the company two years back. Currently, the company has no employee in its Paradip office at Dochhaki here which is lying closed for last two years, said a former employee Ranjan Behera. After the company left Paradip, he has opened a betel shop at Nuagad Square on Cuttack-Paradip road and earning his livelihood.

The materials which were imported for construction are lying abandoned inside a shed and gathering dust. Meanwhile, the company has no presence in this port town while efforts to contact its headquarters in Mumbai failed to yield any result as the calls went unanswered.

Reliable sources said that the company is planning to establish a similar plant at Gopalpur which it had announced in 2021.

When contacted, IDCO's land acquisition officer KC Das said that they acquired land and provided it to the company for establishment of its plant but have no knowledge as to why the company did not commence work on the plant. He advised this correspondent to rather ask the company officials about the establishment of its plant.

# Youth gets 20-yr RI for sexual torture of minor

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Balasure, May 3:** A special POCSCO court Wednesday sentenced a youth to 20 years of rigorous imprisonment (RI) after convicting him for the abduction and sexual torture of a minor.

The convict was identified as Akash Mallick, 21, a resident of Basta block. The additional district and sessions judge-cum-special POCSCO judge Ranjan Kumar Sutar also slapped a penalty of ₹4,000 on the convict, apart from the punishment.

In default, Mallick has to undergo additional two years of imprisonment while delivering the order, special public prosecutor Pranab Kumar Panda appearing for the state government said.

The judge passed the order after examining statements recorded by 11 witnesses and 21 documents relating to the case. The judge also asked the District Legal Services Authority (DLSA) to give away ₹4 lakh financial assistance to the survivor, Panda said.

According to reports, the survivor a native of Basta block was studying in Plus II Arts in a local college. She left home to appear her test at the examination centre in Fakir Mohan College in Balasure but did not return home, May 23, 2022.



Family members lodged a complaint at Sahadevkhunta police station after they failed to trace her despite their best possible efforts. In their complaint, the survivor's father alleged that a village youth Akash Mallick used to call his daughter on her mobile phone and threaten her using slangs. He even threatened to hurl acid on her if she did not marry her. Acting on the complaint, police arrested Mallick and produced him in the court.

## Elderly man crushed under speeding truck

**Berhampur:** An elderly scooter rider was crushed under the wheels of an over-speeding truck at Aska Road Police Colony Square on National Highway-59 passing through this town, Wednesday. The deceased was identified as Y Mohan Rao, 62, a resident of Panbika Sahi near Bhapur Bazaar under Town police limits here. The body was identified by his son Y Santosh Kumar Rao. On being informed, traffic police reached the spot and sent the body for post-mortem and registered a case in this connection. Preliminary inquiries suggested that Rao died due to negligence and rash driving of the truck driver. Police said Rao was on his way towards Fastgate area when a truck coming from the opposite direction hit his scooter at Aska Road Police Colony Square on the highway. After Rao was thrown off his scooter on the road, the truck ran over his head killing him on the spot, police added.

## KALAHANDI GANGRAPE NHRC seeks ATR

PNN & AGENCIES

**Kendrapara, May 3:** The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) has sought for an Action Taken Report (ATR) from the Kalahandi SP on the alleged gangrape of two minor girls by four men at Bongaon village under Lanjigarh police limits.

The SP was directed to get the allegations made in the complaint, looked into and to submit the ATR within four weeks.

The NHRC passed the order Monday while acting on the petition filed by Rights Activist Radhakanta Tripathy. The petitioner alleged that on the intervening night of 24 April 2023, two minor girls were allegedly gangraped by four men at Bongaon village under Kalahandi's Lanjigarh police limits.

As per reports, the minor girls were returning home, after watching a play in the night when the accused attacked them midway.

Though the identity of the accused is yet to be ascertained, it is suspected that they belong to the nearby Pajibahali village.

The police permission for organising Jatra and patrolling by the police in the nearby area could have prevented such an incident, the petitioner stated. He said an FIR was registered, after family members of the victims, lodged complaints at Bijepur police station.

The gangrape of the two minor tribal girls, Tripathy said, violates serious human rights of the victim girls. They have not yet been counselled nor compensated with psycho-social counselling and other rehabilitation measures, he alleged.

Tripathy requested the NHRC for Independent and impartial investigation of the incident, legal action against the accused, adequate compensation with rehabilitation to the victim with all social welfare schemes, preventive action for future.

## CM sanctions ₹3cr for Agharia Samaj Bhawan

**Bhubaneswar:** The Agharia Samaj is a major community in western Odisha. People of this society who depend on agriculture are mainly settled in Bargarh, Sambalpur, Jharsuguda, Sundergarh, Kalahandi, Balangir and Deogarh districts. Members of the community recently met Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik regarding various issues. They requested the Chief Minister to give them a place near Bhubaneswar as they were having trouble staying when they came to Bhubaneswar for various events. In view of their request and the larger interests of the Agharia community, the Chief Minister announced that half acre of land will be provided for the Agharia community near Bhubaneswar. For this, the Chief Minister has instructed the Principal Secretary to take steps towards identifying the land. Along with this, he announced that ₹3 crore will be provided from the Chief Minister's Special Assistance Fund for the construction of Agharia Samaj Bhawan.

**NOTICE**

I, Smt. Suprabha Panigrahi, W/o. Bhubaneswar Panigrahi, R/o. Rajendra Pada, PO/P.S/Dist. Balangir (Odisha) declare that the Deed of Sale relating to Mouza- Bijakhama, Khata No. 649/2304, Plot No. 255 (3094, Ac. 0.022 and Plot No. 2746/3095, Ac. 0.024, Total- 00.046 dec purchased vide Regd. Sale Deed No. 404 on dt. 06.03.2007 has been lost on dt. 12.04.2023 which is recorded in my name. I want to create mortgage of the said landed property for a loan from Bank. In the context a FIR also has been lodged at Sadar Police Station, Balangir vide GD entry No.8 dt. 12.04.2023 regarding lost of original deed of sale. Therefore I am this paper publication for any objection or claim property within 15 days of issue of this of any person on the said publication.

Sd./- Suprabha Panigrahi  
Rajendra Pada,  
Mob- 7978051200

**EAST COAST RAILWAY**

File No. DRM/Engg/KUR/23-24/  
E-Tender/22, Dt. 01.05.2023

Tender No. e-tender-South-KUR-60-2023, Dtd.: 26.04.2023

**DESCRIPTION - FORMATION TREATMENT FOR 5.10 KMS FROM KM. 622.40 TO 625.00 ON UP & DN LINE BETWEEN SURLA ROAD ICHCHAPURAN SECTION OF KHURDA ROAD DIVISION.**

Approx. Cost of the Work ₹ 587.52 Lakhs, EMD ₹ 4,43,800/-, Completion Period: 12 (Twelve) Months.

**Tender Closing Date and Time: At 1500 Hrs. of 17.05.2023.**

No manual offers sent by Post / Courier/ Fax or in person shall be accepted against such e-tenders even if these are submitted on firm's letter head and received in time. All such manual offers shall be considered invalid and shall be rejected summarily without any consideration. Complete information including e-tender documents of the above e-tender is available in website : <https://www.ireps.gov.in>

**Note :** The prospective tenderers are advised to visit the website 10 (Ten) days before the date of closing of tender to note any changes / corrigendum issued for this tender. The tenderers/bidders must have Class-III Digital Signature Certificate and must be registered on IREPS Portal. Only registered tenderer/ bidder can participate on e-tendering.

Divisional Railway Manager (Engg) / PR-125/O/23-24 / Khurda Road

**EAST COAST RAILWAY**

e-Tender Notice No. e-Tender-Elect-G-08-23  
**DESCRIPTION OF WORK: PROVISION OF TEMPORARY LIGHTING, FAN, MOBILE CHARGING POINTS, TOWER AC, ALTERNATIVE POWER SUPPLY ARRANGEMENT AND DECORATION AT IMPORTANT SERVICE BUILDINGS AND STATIONS DURING RATH YATRA - 2023 & IN SPECIAL OCCASIONS AND LIGHTING OF STATION YARDS WITH STAND BY SUPPLY IN NI WORKS OVER KHURDA ROAD DIVISION FOR ONE YEAR.**

Approx. Cost of the work (₹): 49,32,101.69, EMD (₹): 98,700.00  
Completion period : 12 Months  
**Tender Closing Date and Time : At 1500 Hrs. of 19.05.2023**

No manual offers sent by Post / Courier/ Fax or in person shall be accepted against e-tenders even if these are submitted on firm's letter head and received in time. All such manual offers shall be considered invalid and shall be rejected summarily without any consideration. Complete information including e-tender documents of the above e-tender is available in website : <http://www.ireps.gov.in>

**Note :** The prospective tenderers are advised to visit the website 10 (Ten) days before the date of closing of tender to note any changes / corrigendum issued for this tender.

Sr. Divisional Electrical Engineer (G), PR-120/O/23-24 / Khurda Road

**EAST COAST RAILWAY**

File No. DRM/Engg/KUR/23-24/E-Tender/21  
Dt. 25.04.2023

(1) Tender No. e-tender-North-56-2023, Dtd. 25.04.2023

**DESCRIPTION - PROPOSED FORMATION, EXTENSION OF MINOR BRIDGES AND OTHER PROTECTION WORKS AT BRIDGE NO. 361 (UP) AT KM. 2911/5 BETWEEN BAUDPUR - BHADRAK UNDER THE JURISDICTION OF SENIOR DIVISIONAL ENGINEER (NORTH) OF KHURDA ROAD DIVISION.**

Approx. Cost of the Work (₹) : 238.06 Lakhs, EMD (₹) : 2,69,000.00, Completion Period : 10 (Ten) Months.

(2) Tender No. e-tender-East-kur-57-2023, Dtd. 25.04.2023

**DESCRIPTION - EXECUTION OF THROUGH RAIL RENEWAL FOR A LENGTH OF 8.00 KMS IN DIFFERENT PATCHES UNDER THE JURISDICTION OF DIVISIONAL ENGINEER (EAST) OF KHURDAROAD DIVISION.**

Approx. Cost of the Work (₹) : 103.47 Lakhs, EMD (₹) : 2,01,700.00, Completion Period : 06 (Six) Months.

(3) Tender No. e-tender-East-kur-59-2023, Dtd. 25.04.2023

**DESCRIPTION - PROPOSED FORMATION, EXTENSION OF MINOR BRIDGES AND OTHER MISC. WORKS IN CONNECTION WITH RAISING OF SPEED FROM 30 KMPH TO 50 KMPH IN LOOP LINES FROM CHARBATA TO PARADEEP UNDER DIVISIONAL ENGINEER (EAST) OF KHURDA ROAD DIVISION.**

Approx. Cost of the Work (₹) : 259.37 Lakhs, EMD (₹) : 2,79,700.00, Completion Period : 08 (Eight) Months.

**Tender Closing Date and Time: At 1500 Hrs. of 17.05.2023 (For all the Tenders.)**

No manual offers sent by Post / Courier/ Fax or in person shall be accepted against such e-tenders even if these are submitted on firm's letter head and received in time. All such manual offers shall be considered invalid and shall be rejected summarily without any consideration. Complete information including e-tender documents of the above e-tender is available in website : <https://www.ireps.gov.in>

**Note :** The prospective tenderers are advised to visit the website 10 (Ten) days before the date of closing of tender to note any changes / Corrigendum issued for this tender.

Divisional Railway Manager (Engg), PR-115/O/23-24 / Khurda Road

# Modern fishing jetty soon in Gamei river

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Basudevpur, May 3:** The state government has planned for construction of a modern fishing jetty at Adhuan-Chudamani ghat of Gamei river which flows in this block of Bhadrak district at an expense of ₹60 crore.

The matter came to light after Basudevpur MLA Bishnubrata Routray undertook a field visit to the proposed site of the fishing jetty and held discussions with department officials, members of fishermen's associations and local residents, Wednesday.

Routray said that a modern fishing jetty will be constructed at Adhuan-Chudamani ghat of the river at a plan outlay of ₹60 crore. The fishing jetty will have permanent facilities for berthing and parking of fishing boats and motor launches.

It will also have a fish trading cen-



tre where fishermen can buy and sell their harvested fish. The construction of the jetty will benefit over 10,000 fishermen and the members of various fishermen's associations and help them earn a better livelihood. He said a proposal regarding construction of the fishing jetty has been sent to the Central government seeking its approval as the river flows into the sea.

Tehsildar Soubhagya Panda, district fisheries officer Prakash Nayak, block marine extension officer-cum-assistant fisheries officer Subham Ranbada, assistant fisheries officer Lakshmirani Marndi, MLA representative Asit Das and retired administrative officer Nirakar Parida accompanied the MLA during his visit.

**Regional Office: Balasure Manikhamba, OT Road, Police Line, Bhaskarganj, Dist.: Balasure, PIN-756001**

**POSSESSION NOTICE (Immovable Properties)**

[RULE 8(1) OF SECURITY INTEREST (ENFORCEMENT) RULES - 2002]

Whereas, the undersigned being the Authorised Officer of Union Bank of India under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act 2002 and in exercise of the powers conferred u/s 13(12) of the Act read with Rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules 2002 issued demand notice calling upon the borrower(s)/guarantor(s) in loan A/c mentioned below to repay the amount mentioned in the notice plus interest thereon within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said notice. The borrower(s) having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the borrower(s)/guarantor(s) in particular and the public in general that the undersigned has taken the Possession of the properties described herein below in exercise of powers conferred under Section 13(4) of the said Act read with Rule 8 of the said Rules. The borrower(s)/guarantor(s) in particular and the general public are hereby cautioned not to deal with the properties & any dealing with the properties will be subject to the charge of Union Bank of India, Bhadrak-2 Branch for the amount mentioned below & interest thereon. The borrower's attention is invited to provisions of Sub-section (8) of the Section 13 of the Act, in respect of time available to them, to redeem the secured assets.

BHADRAK-2 BRANCH / Name and Address of the Borrower(s)	Liabilities due as per Demand Notice (in ₹)	Demand Notice Date / Date of Possession	Description of Immovable properties
Borrower: Mrs. Sabitri Das, W/o- Bhagirathi Das, Plot No.: 1787, PS: Tihidi Paliabindha, Paliabandha, Dist.: Bhadrak, Odisha, PIN-756167	₹5,00,000/- + interest thereon	03.11.2022 / 01.05.2023	All that part & parcel of the property consisting of Residential Land & Building having Plot No.: 1787, Area: Ac.0.020dec. & Plot No.: 1788, Area: Ac.0.030dec., Khata No.: 1362/137, Mouza: Paliabindha, PS: Tihidi, Bhadrak-756167, Odisha, Bounded by: North: Anabadi, South: Prahallad Patra, East: Prahallad Patra, West: Society House.

Date: 03.05.2023, Place: Balasure Sd/- AUTHORISED OFFICER, Union Bank of India



FOCUS ECONOMY

# THE ALMIGHTY DOLLAR



**Calling the US currency a terrorist would be sweet music to the ears of President Putin. That's because the US unilaterally turned off the payment settlement system called SWIFT to block payments to Russia. It also blocked Russian funds lodged in US banks**

The demand for the dollar is strong. Another great anomaly is not only that many countries keep their foreign exchange assets in dollars mostly, but their trade invoicing is also in dollars. For instance, Sino-Indian trade is nearly 120 billion dollars, and is almost totally invoiced in dollars. Only 15 per cent of India's exports go to the US, but 85 per cent of the exports are invoiced in dollars. So, the US dollar enjoys hegemony not just as the dominant reserve currency, but also the invoicing currency of choice between any two random trading partners.

The reason the dollar is the currency of choice, is because of the implicit trust in its stability. A third big privilege enjoyed by the US dollar is called seigniorage. This is actually the profit made by the currency issuing authority. More than 90 per cent of the dollars in circulation as cash are in 100-dollar denominations, and the bulk of it circulates outside America. So, all those foreigners holding that currency are implicitly paying a tax to the US government even though they are not US taxpayers. This is the essence of seigniorage.

Calling the US currency a ter-

rorist would be sweet music to the ears of President Putin. That's because the US unilaterally turned off the payment settlement system called SWIFT to block payments to Russia. It also blocked Russian funds lodged in US banks. The US has been trying rather unsuccessfully to persuade other countries to stop buying Russian oil. Even friends like India and Korea are not complying. India has found a way to bypass dollar payments for Russian oil with bilateral trade arrangements denominated in rupees. The Chinese too have struck a deal whereby they can bypass dollar invoicing and clearing. India recently signed a deal with 18 countries, including six from Africa, to start rupee denominated trade, and try to diversify from the dollar route. All this points to efforts to reduce the vulnerability caused by an over-dependence on the dollar. As a former Secretary of Treasury during the Nixon administration of the 1970s, famously said: "the dollar is our currency but your headache".

Suffering a dollar driven headache or being under the hegemony of the world's dominant reserve and invoicing currency does not make it a terrorist. Kotak, as

he clarified later, was also alluding to the US power to shut down Nostro accounts. These are accounts where foreign banks hold their money in US accounts in dollars. Blocking Russian funds is one thing, but abruptly shutting down the Nostro accounts of other countries is quite another. This would amount to a breach of international conventions. The discomfort is not because of any terrorising power of the US currency, but in fact because of the increasing and voluntary migration of many countries to using the dollar as a safe option.

That the US behaves in irresponsible ways, often bordering on breaking international conventions is well known. For instance, the IMF long ago agreed to reduce the voting share of the US, which has still not been ratified by their Congress. Or the US single handedly blocked the dispute settlement mechanism at the WTO, by stonewalling appointments to the crucial panel. Under President Trump, the US resorted to tariff hikes which went counter to the principles of the WTO (market access and national treatment principles). The US walked out of the Paris accord after signing it, and also the Pacific Partnership. These are just a few examples of behaviour which shows scant regard for international conventions. But it still does not make the dollar a terrorist. Not even if that was a misplaced metaphor. The adoption of the US dollar as the preferred currency for reserves amounting to 60 per cent of all reserves, is an act of choice. The world is struggling to break away from dollar dependence. But eight countries have adopted the dollar as their de facto currency, and another 22 have pegged their currency to the dollar. Argentina may once again go to a dollar standard. Dollar addiction may be troublesome, but terrorist it is not. The decline of the dollar is still a long distance away.

*The writer is a noted economist*  
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**BLOCKING RUSSIAN FUNDS IS ONE THING, BUT ABRUPTLY SHUTTING DOWN THE NOSTRO ACCOUNTS OF OTHER COUNTRIES IS QUITE ANOTHER. THIS WOULD AMOUNT TO A BREACH OF INTERNATIONAL CONVENTIONS**



Ajit Ranade

The Chief of Kotak Bank, Uday Kotak has called the US dollar the biggest financial terrorist. Such a comment from one of Asia's pre-eminent and very successful bankers was bound to go viral, which it did. Before the bouquets and brickbats could begin, Kotak also clarified via a tweet that his language was inadvertent. It wasn't clear whether he regretted saying it. The word "terrorist" cannot and should not be used loosely, at least from the high podium. Kotak said that he meant to point out the disproportionate power enjoyed by the mighty dollar, as the world's dominant reserve currency. But that skirts the point that none of the 145 countries holding dollar reserves are under any compulsion, least of all a terrorist threat, to hoard their reserves in American dollars. They are doing it of their own volition. Sixty per cent of the nearly 13 trillion dollars in global reserves are held in dollar denominated securities. The biggest pile of dollar reserves is with China, which is engaged in a tech cold war with the US. Another twenty per cent of all global reserves is in Euros. The rest comprises British pound sterling, Japanese yen (five per cent each). A small three per cent of reserves is held in Chinese yuan, presumably by those countries involved in trade or indebted to China.

The US dollar is the strongest it has been in fifty years. So those countries whose imports are invoiced in dollars are feeling the pressure of higher import costs. That is adding to their inflation which is already high, thanks to higher commodity and oil prices, which are also denominated in US dollars. Those countries which have foreign debts in dollars, are unhappy too, since their debt servicing cost has gone up, as the dollar strengthens. The dollar is getting stronger, because all the global capital is flowing "uphill", from less developed countries into America. That is because the yield on the US government bond has gone up steeply during recessionary times, a safe place for investors to park their funds is in US bonds. Hence

## ESG Ratings Count

Morgan Stanley Capital International (MSCI), one of the most influential gatekeepers of environmental, social, and governance ratings, is about to downgrade the Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) ratings of 31,000 investment funds in one fell swoop. The dramatic move comes after MSCI decided to update its methodology to meet higher standards for AA or AAA ratings. One would expect a move with such a potentially far-reaching impact on financial markets to be scrutinized in advance by regulators. Alas, ESG ratings providers (ERPs) have so far flown under the regulatory radar.

ESG ratings are instrumental to guiding investment decisions. But, as the MSCI downgrades indicate, they are currently highly subjective and, often, inflated. In fact, as many as half of the companies included in a 2021 Bloomberg Businessweek analysis had been upgraded by MSCI as a result of methodological changes. Just two years later, a fresh round of changes is bringing mass downgrades – and even more uncertainty about what to expect.

This problem is hardly exclusive to MSCI. According to a 2022 report from the Institute for Energy Economics and Financial Analysis (IEEFA), how ERPs approach the measurement risk or impact is highly inconsistent. The lack of shared standards and transparent methodologies leads to the mispricing of stocks and bonds – and, as in the MSCI case, the funds that hold them – and undermines effective decision-making by investment managers.

Regulatory intervention is urgently needed to establish a stable and credible ESG ratings system that is both accurate and predictable. The first step is to ensure that the methodologies used by all ERPs are transparent, and independently verified from the outset. Regulators should require ERPs to provide concrete and structured evidence to support the ratings assigned and the validity of their criteria.

Moreover, any changes to an ERP's methodology or internal guidelines should be independently assessed and confirmed. And if a change in criteria or methodology is set to bring sweeping ratings adjustments, regulators must step in to evaluate and approve it, just as they would if faced with the prospect of large-scale credit-rating downgrades.

MSCI's ESG Fund Ratings are based on unregulated assessments that examine a company's financial risk according to ESG factors, an approach known as single materiality, rather than its influence on the environment or society. While some ERPs say that their ratings do account for broader effects, these claims are difficult to verify using their disclosed methodologies.

The single-materiality approach is notably inadequate for funds with exposure to fossil-fuel assets. The IEEFA's examination found that MSCI has granted top ESG ratings to funds with more than 85% exposure to fossil-fuel investments. These ratings are highly misleading, because they both underestimate the risks that such firms' activities generate and exaggerate their positive impact.

Reliance on fossil fuels exposes investors to climate risk, which, if not properly accounted for, could result in substantial losses through value destruction and high opportunity costs. Ultimately, high ESG ratings can make firms appear greener than they are, leading investors to tilt portfolios toward firms with poor sustainability performance.

ERPs should consider adopting a "double materiality" approach, which reflects the impact of a firm's activities on society and the planet. Only such an approach – as well as stringent regulatory oversight – can ensure that ESG ratings help avoid greenwashing and promote truly sustainable investments.

The scale of the problem should not be underestimated. ESG ratings influence the allocation of trillions of dollars in capital markets. Ratings that are inflated and misleading – based on arbitrary rules, opaque methodologies, and entrenched bias from input-based disclosures – could well lead to disaster, much as the flawed ratings of mortgage-backed securities enabled the 2008 global financial crisis.

Better regulation of the ESG-ratings industry is vital not only to prevent the next financial crisis, but also to deliver genuine progress toward sustainability. The good news is that the United Kingdom's Financial Conduct Authority, the Securities and Exchange Board of India, the European Commission, and Japan's Financial Services Agency are already exploring ways to tighten standards on ESG ratings. In the best interest of investors – and the planet – other market regulators should follow suit.

*The writer is an energy-finance analyst covering debt markets at the Institute for Energy Economics and Financial Analysis.*  
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### WISDOM CORNER

- I put my heart and my soul into my work, and have lost my mind in the process. **VINCENT VAN GOGH**
- They can put me in a jungle. Still, I can create. **M. F. HUSAIN**
- Hope is a good breakfast, but it is a bad supper. **FRANCIS BACON**

### WORDSWORTH

#### Austringer

An austringer is a keeper of goshawks. It's a rare word now, though some falconers keep it alive, out of historical sentiment as much as anything, I'd guess. It's in part bound up with the technical distinction between a hawk and a falcon – the true hawks (the accipiters) are in general smaller than the true falcons (in the genus Falco) and have shorter and more rounded wings; hawks usually prefer to hunt by chasing their prey at low level, while falcons stoop or plummet down on it from above. In English tradition, the two birds that exemplify the types are the goshawk and the peregrine falcon. In medieval times, falcons had higher social status than hawks (though the claim often made that your rank determined which type of bird you could fly seems to have been invented in the fifteenth-century Boke of St Albans). As a result, falconer seems to have been an upper-class word, with hawk used for the lower classes who hunted with goshawk, sparrowhawk or kestrel (confusingly, this last bird is actually a falcon, not a hawk, though it hunts differently from the other falcons and so was classed with the hawks); in time falconer has become the general term for a person who trains and hunts with any bird of prey, including buzzards, eagles and owls (the existence of another sense of hawk, for a travelling seller of goods, with a quite different origin, has probably been a factor in its decline in this sense). Quite why the keeper of just one species, the goshawk, should have been singled out by giving him yet another name isn't clear. Austringer has sometimes been written as ostringer, or astringer (this last form turns up in a stage direction in Shakespeare's Love's Labour's Lost: "Enter a gentle astringer"). All of these spellings are modified forms of the older osterger, which comes from French ostricier, ultimately from Latin accipiter, a hawk.

### SPECTRUM OBITUARY

## The doyen of subaltern studies



Bijayani Mishra

**ON THE CUSP OF TURNING 100 YEARS THIS MAY RANAJIT GUHA HAS LEFT US ON APRIL 28 WHEN THE WORLD IS GRAPPLING WITH UNCERTAINTY BUT HIS VAST EPISTEMOLOGICAL CLAIMS WILL ALWAYS ENLIGHTEN THE ACADEMIA IN YEARS TO COME**

In India subaltern studies emerged as a postcolonial theory in regards to redrafting the history of the people from below. The prime objective of the subaltern studies is to emphasise specifically the history of the downtrodden en masse as antagonistic to the elitist perspective in history that tends to ignore their significant contribution in making history. This trend embarked its journey by including writing the history of the peasant's insurgencies and tribal insurrections. This project is ascribed to Ranajit Guha and followed by a group of scholars such as; Partha Chatterjee, David Hardiman, Sahid Amin, David Arnold, Dipesh Chakrabarty, and so on.

Guha pleads nationalist movement has no substance if it neglects the contribution of the subaltern classes. Further, he adds that the elitist historiography is more into looking at the "idealist and ambiguous aspect of the indigenous elites who led people from subjugation to freedom". Such school of thought goes on emphasising the role of few individual leaders or some organisations but has failed critically to interpret and acknowledge the relentless efforts of the subaltern group who independently, on their own fought dur-

ing the freedom struggle.

In his article entitled "Some Aspects of the Historiography of Colonial India", (2013) Guha observes that the Indian freedom struggle was majorly hijacked by a group of bourgeois nationalist. The writings of this group make us aware about the impression that our nation and its consciousness of nationalism was an attainment of these bourgeois. The elitist perspective of writing portrays uprising as the "law and order problem" and Indian nationalism is the outcome of the few charismatic elite leaders. On the other hand, the subaltern project of Guha says, there was a considerable role of subaltern classes parallel to the politics of the elite classes in the Indian nationalist movement.

He proclaims that time and again the tendency of elitist historiography provides a very personalised account of the benevolence of the native elite who had strong aversion against the colonial regime. But in contrast, history has introduced us to their tendency as exploiters, collaboratorist, and oppressor having no concern to promote issues of the common mass. Their major goal was to grab power and privileges from the British Raj (2013:2). According to

Guha, "The history of Indian nationalism is a sort of spiritual biography of Indian elites".

The Subaltern project argues, the various resistance of the tribals, peasants and subaltern classes against the Britishers emerged from the people; independent of the elites. This project believes in the binary of people and elite and also mobilisation; as one of the most important aspects of politics. The mobilisation of the elite politics that the Indian freedom struggle has witnessed is the outcome of mobilisation of the subaltern politics secured from the below. And in achieving the mobilisation traditional institutions like caste, clan, family, territoriality, kinship and most importantly deprivation supported the entire process.

Ranajit Guha in one of his works "Elementary Aspects of the Peasant Insurgency in Colonial India (1983) argues that the major task of the subaltern project is to create an alternative history; i.e. "the history of the people".

Through his book *Subaltern Studies-I (1982)* he has shown concern about the initiatives taken by the subaltern class as to how this class is not powerful enough to develop the full-fledged struggle for national struggle. In the same vol-

ume he has talked about a system i.e. "new democracy". "The study of failure which constitutes the central problematic of the historiography of colonial India" – according to Guha.

Since Guha was a Subaltern historian and a Marxist Sociologist, he dexterously tries to rewrite the past in order to have change in the arena of historiography and transformation of consciousness. Subaltern class struggle should not be considered as 'objects' of history rather they should be considered as the 'makers' of their own history. Prof. Guha's indelible legacy on subaltern and post colonial studies has enlightened us to pose questions to which very often there are no apt answers. To Guha and his cohorts the etymological meaning associated with the term 'subaltern' implies anyone from the "inferior rank" explained with regard to class, gender, caste and official positions.

On the cusp of turning 100 years this May Ranajit Guha has left us on April 28 when the world is grappling with uncertainty but his vast epistemological claims will always enlighten the academia in years to come.

*The writer is Assistant Professor, Department of Sociology, Maitreyi College, University of Delhi*

#### Plight of sewage-septic tank cleaners

Sir, The sewage and septic tank cleaners suffer a miserable life and they suffer deaths when on the job at death traps within these focal points. Every year the number of deaths due to suffocation is on the increase and there should be an amicable solution to this pressing problem. The number of people who died while cleaning sewers and septic tanks in the country this year has been reported to be 22 and that is alarming. The main cause for manual scavenging was insanitary latrines that required to be cleaned by hand. This was being addressed by the Swachh Bharat Mission, through which insanitary latrines were being identified and converted to sanitary ones. Septic tank gasses contain methane, hydrogen sulfide (H<sub>2</sub>S), carbon dioxide, sulfur dioxide, ammonia, nitrogen dioxide and traces of carbon monoxide. It is a dangerous and life threatening one and unless preventive measures are taken well in advance, entering into such a septic tank, sewage outlet is most dangerous.

CK Subramaniam, NAVI MUMBAI

#### Easing process of divorce

Sir, Apropos, "SC removes 6-month waiting period for divorce," *Orissa POST*, May 3. Marriages are said to be made in heaven but consummated on earth. Although it is one of the oldest institutions of mankind, it has been undergoing challenges that may eventually destabilise it, as in some western countries. The Supreme Court has given the verdict that where a court has concluded that a marriage has irreversibly failed, there is no need to wait for any cooling off period. Until a few decades ago, marriage was easy but divorce was difficult. And if one party decided to contest the divorce application of the other, the divorce proceedings could take more than a decade. Things have changed so much that if both parties move the court mutually, divorce is possible within six months. Now, there is no need for the court to wait for even six months if it feels that there is no way the couple can remain united. It will be a misery for both if they are forced to remain man and wife when they find that their marriage has totally failed and it cannot be revived. In such circumstances, it is better to let them be freed from the yoke of marriage. Nonetheless, the verdict is intended to ease the process of divorce, which is at present so cumbersome and time-consuming that it serves little social or legal purpose.

N Sadhasiva Reddy, BANGALORE

## Letters

### TO THE EDITOR

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

### OrissaPOST

B-15, Rasulgari Industrial Estate, Bhubaneswar-751010



# national

## of the day quote

Pawar yesterday said there should be a generational change. May be he wanted a new generation to step forward. None of us knew about it beforehand

PRAFUL PATEL | SENIOR NCP LEADER

Congress is an enemy of peace and development. When Congress is there, investors will flee. Congress protects 'aakas' (boss) of terror, they encourage appeasement

NARENDRA MODI | PRIME MINISTER

We hope SEBI will use all the means at its disposal to get clarity about ultimate beneficial ownership of these funds given the serious and credible allegations of money-laundering, round-tripping and violations of securities laws against the Adani Group

JAIRAM RAMESH | CONGRESS LEADER

## SHORT TAKES

### Complaint against B S Yediyurappa

**Bangalore:** An RTI activist T.J. Abraham has lodged a complaint with the Lokayukta against former Karnataka Chief Minister and BJP leader BS Yediyurappa, sitting ministers and nine IAS officers for alleged loot and embezzlement of Rs 821.22 crore during the Covid pandemic. The complaint had been lodged against 28 persons and documents were also submitted to the Karnataka Lokayukta, pressing for investigation. During the management of Covid, through Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP), crores of rupees were misused and fraud was committed by showing purchases of ambulances.

### Woman stabbed to death by husband

**New Delhi:** A woman, aged around 30 to 32 years, was stabbed to death allegedly by her 40-year-old husband following an argument between them over going to her native village in Bihar, an official said Wednesday. The deceased has been identified as Neha. The incident occurred Wednesday in southwest Delhi's Najafgarh area.

### J'khand: Couple beaten to death

**Ranchi:** A couple was thrashed to death on the suspicion of witchcraft following the panchayat's order in Fasila village in Jharkhand's Latehar district. The couple was thrashed to death Tuesday after the panchayat claimed that the village is getting affected adversely due to their black magic. The deceased were identified as Sibal Ganju and his wife. After getting the information, police reached the spot and sent the bodies for post-mortem.

### 8 killed in two road accidents

**Ranchi:** At least eight people were killed and 30 others injured in two separate road accidents in Jharkhand's Jamtara and Gumla districts, police said Wednesday. Four members of a family including three children, who were returning from a wedding ceremony on a two-wheeler, were killed after a speeding truck ran hit their vehicle in Jharkhand's Jamtara district on Wednesday afternoon, police said. Earlier, four people were killed and 30 others injured after a vehicle on which they were travelling to a wedding ceremony overturned in Jharkhand's Gumla district, police said Wednesday.

## BEANT SINGH ASSASSINATION CASE

# SC declines to commute death penalty of Rajoana

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, May 3:** The Supreme Court Wednesday declined to commute the death penalty of Balwant Singh Rajoana, convicted in the 1995 assassination of then Punjab chief minister Beant Singh, to life imprisonment, saying "it's within the domain of the executive to take a call on such sensitive issues".

Senior advocate Mukul Rohatgi, appearing for Rajoana, argued that since the state and the Union of India have not been able to decide on the mercy petition which is pending for more than 10 years, the death penalty should be commuted to life imprisonment.

A bench comprising Justices B R Gavai, Vikram Nath and Sanjay Karol refused to accept Rohatgi's submission, saying the mercy petition of the year 2012 was filed by the Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee.

"The stand of the Ministry of Home Affairs to defer the decision on the mercy petition is also a decision for the reasons given thereunder. It actually amounts to a decision declining to grant the same for the present."

"It is, however, directed that the competent authority, in due course of time, would again as and when it is deemed necessary, may deal with the mercy petition, and take a further decision," the bench said.

The top court said the MHA, upon material consideration of various reports from its different



Balwant Singh Rajoana FILE PHOTO

branches, has concluded that the consideration may be deferred as it could have an impact on the security of the nation or law-and-order situation. His mercy plea has been pending before the government for over a decade. On October 11 last year, the top court had said that a three-judge bench would be set up to hear Rajoana's plea. Rohatgi had said that his client was in jail for 26 years and has a substantive case based on the judgements of the apex court that his right to protection of life and personal liberty under Article 21 of the Constitution has been violated.

Rajoana, a former Punjab police constable, was convicted for his involvement in an explosion outside the Punjab civil secretariat that killed Beant Singh and 16 others August 31, 1995. A special court sentenced him to death in July 2007.

## Priyank, Yatnal get EC notices

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, May 3:** The Election Commission Wednesday issued notices to Congress MLA Priyank Kharge for his "nalayak beta" remark against Prime Minister Narendra Modi and to BJP legislator Basangouda Patil Yatnal for his "vishkanya" jibe at former Congress chief Sonia Gandhi.

The separate EC notices said the two have prima facie violated provisions of the model code in Karnataka. The notices came a day after a strong advisory was issued by the poll panel asking parties and their leaders to exercise restraint in their utterances during electioneering in Karnataka. Both Kharge and Yatnal have been asked to explain by 5 PM Thursday as to why action should not be taken against them.

While Kharge is Congress' candidate from Chittapur, Yatnal is BJP's star campaigner and a candidate from Bijapur City.

In its notice to Kharge, the EC referred to a clause in the poll code which states that "Political parties and candidates shall refrain from criticism of all aspects of private life, not connected with the public activities of the leaders and workers of the other parties..."

In its notice to Yatnal, District Election Officer Koppal cited same clauses of the model code and said "a personal attack remark against a rival party leader is found to be made by you."

The BJP had moved the Commission Tuesday against Kharge for his remark while the EC had taken cognisance of Yatnal's statement through media reports.

## DA CASE

### CBI arrests ex-CMD of WAPCOS, his son

AGENCIES

**New Delhi, May 3:** The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) Wednesday arrested Rajinder Kumar Gupta, the former CMD of WAPCOS, and his son in a Disproportionate Assets case.

During the raid and search operations which got underway on Tuesday and continued till this morning, the probe agency recovered Rs 38.38 crore, one of the biggest cash recoveries by it.

Of the total recovery so far, Rs 20 crore in cash was seized Tuesday. According to a senior CBI officer, a case was registered against Gupta and his family members on charges of possessing disproportionate assets. Searches were conducted at the accused's residential and commercial premises in 19 locations of Delhi, Chandigarh, Gurugram, Sonapat and Ghaziabad.

After retirement, Gupta had set up a consultancy firm in Delhi. The alleged immovable properties belonging to the accused include flats, commercial properties and a farmhouse spread across Delhi, Gurugram, Panchkula, Sonapat and Chandigarh.



# Govt to form panel to address problems of gay community

The centre's submission came after the five-judge Constitution bench, April 27, asked the government if social benefits can be extended to same-sex couples without going into the question of legalising their marriages

AGENCIES

**New Delhi, May 3:** The Supreme Court on Wednesday said Centre's proposal to set up a committee to examine whether certain legal rights could be granted to same-sex couples without legal sanction of their relationship as a "marriage" is an incremental step and "sometimes beginnings are small, those beginning could be very substantial".

The top court stressed that if the government takes the first step forward in this matter, there will be substantial benefit and also substantial advancement in recognition of the relationship of same-sex couples, as it told the petitioners' counsel, "This is a step forward and therefore, don't have to go for all or nothing."

At the beginning of the hearing, Solicitor General Tushar Mehta submitted before a five-judge bench headed by Chief Justice of India, DY Chandrachud, that the government was agreeable to setting up a committee under the Cabinet secretary to examine what types of legal rights could be given to same-sex couples.

"The government is positive. What we have decided is that this would need coordination between more than one ministry. Therefore, a committee headed by no less than the Cabinet secretary will be constituted," Mehta said, as he sought



suggestions from the petitioners on the problems they are facing.

Mehta said the government could address these problems so far as legally permissible and requested the petitioners not to give "jurisprudential ideas" as only factual problems could be addressed by the proposed committee.

The petitioners contended that the resolution intended by the government was in the nature of administrative tweaking, and not legal.

Senior advocate Abhishek Manu Singhvi, representing one of the petitioners, said whatever is given by administrative tweaking is certainly welcomed and it should be seen as a constructive effort towards convergence, it may not be a substitute and there "won't be any

major solution". Singhvi stressed that substantive changes in the law would be required to grant legal recognition to same-sex marriage. Senior advocate Saurabh Kirpal, appearing for a petitioner, said at various seminars they have spoken to gay people and 99 per cent of them came up and said the only thing they want is to get married.

Senior advocate Menaka Guruswamy, also representing the petitioners' side, submitted before the bench also comprising justices S.K. Kaul, S.R. Bhat, Hima Kohli and PS Narasimha that "young people in our country want marriage. I don't say this as an elite lawyer. I say this as someone having met these young people. Do not let them experience what we have experienced".

At this juncture, the Chief Justice said that at the constitutional level, there is a serious problem if one goes by what young people feel, as a constitutional court then, "we would be subject to volumes of data on how people feel... Therefore, the great salutary safeguard of the constitutional adjudication is that the court is to go by what the Constitution mandates, therefore we do not go by either popular morality or segmental morality, we decide what the Constitution says."

## AIMING HIGH

The government has said that quality standards on unmanned aerial vehicles (drones) are under development, and once ready, will ensure cyber security, which is essential in drones to protect them from cyber-attacks, unauthorised access and data theft



Uttarakhand SDRF rescues trapped people after a glacier collapsed on the Kedarnath pedestrian route, in Rudraprayag district, Uttarakhand

# EAM to hold bilateral talks with Chinese, Russian counterparts

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Benaulim (Goa) May 3:** External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar is set to hold separate bilateral talks with his Chinese counterpart Qin Gang and Russia's Sergey Lavrov at a beach resort in Goa Thursday on the sidelines of a conclave of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) amid rapidly evolving regional security situation.

People familiar with preparations for the conclave said there is no plan yet for a structured bilateral meeting between Jaishankar and Pakistan Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari. But they did not rule out a pull aside between the two foreign ministers.

Qin, Lavrov, Bhutto-Zardari and foreign ministers of other SCO countries are arriving in Goa on Thursday to attend a crucial conclave of the SCO that is taking place ahead of the annual summit of the grouping in the first week of July.

India has been maintaining that Pakistan must show seriousness towards fighting terrorism and that talks and terror cannot go together. Bhutto-Zardari's trip to India will be the first visit from Islamabad since 2011. The then Pakistan foreign minister Hina Rabbani Khar had visited India that year. Khar is currently serving as the minister of state for foreign affairs.

In the talks with Qin, Jaishankar is once again expected to convey that India-China ties cannot be normal

## SCO FOREIGN MINISTERS MEET



unless there is peace in the border areas, people familiar with the matter said.

The two-day SCO foreign ministerial meeting will begin with a gala reception at a luxury beach resort in Goa on Thursday while the main deliberations will take place Friday. The people cited above said Jaishankar will hold separate bilateral talks with his counterparts from almost all SCO countries. However, there is no clarity on such a meeting between Jaishankar and Bhutto-Zardari.

The bilateral meeting between Jaishankar and Qin will be the second one in the last two months. The Chinese foreign minister visited India in March to attend a meeting of the G20 foreign ministers. On the sidelines of the meeting, Jaishankar held talks with Qin during which he conveyed to his Chinese counterpart that the state of India-China relations is "abnormal" because of the lingering border row in eastern Ladakh.

# NEW FINDING MAY IMPROVE DIABETES TREATMENT: STUDY

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, May 3:** Scientists have found genetic similarities and differences between various forms of type 2 diabetes in India and Europe, an advance that they say can be used to improve the treatment of the disease in the country. Researchers in Sweden have previously shown that diabetes can be divided into five subgroups, and that there are genetic differences between the four subgroups relating to type 2 diabetes.

The new study, published in The Lancet Regional Health—Southeast Asia journal, confirms that the classification system is applicable on a group in western India. "The study highlights genetic

similarities and differences between different forms of type 2 diabetes in India and Europe," said Rashmi Prasad, associate professor in genomics, diabetes, and endocrinology at Lund University in Sweden.

"We see this as an exciting new step towards a better understanding of the development of type 2 diabetes in India," Prasad said in a statement.



The results are based on clinical data from 2,217 patients and genome-wide associations studies (GWAS) and a genetic risk score analysis (GRS) on

821 people with type 2 diabetes from a study in western India. "The characteristics of all the subgroups reflected those seen in European people with diabetes.

We could also confirm our previous findings that have shown that a certain form of type 2 diabetes that is characterised by relatively low BMI is the most common form of the disease in India," said Prasad.

The subgroup is called severe insulin-deficient diabetes (SIDD) and this is a form of type 2 diabetes that is also characterised by early onset, low insulin secretion, and poor metabolic control, the researchers said.

Of all the participants with type 2 diabetes in the Indian study, 47 per cent were classified as belonging to the SIDD group.

Previous studies on populations in Sweden have shown that mild age-related diabetes (MARD), which is characterized by late onset, is the

most common form of diabetes among Swedish people.

"Early life undernutrition in Indians may be a major contribution to early onset of type 2 diabetes, and this may be why we see this difference in the distribution of patients between Sweden and India," Prasad said.

The second largest group in India was mild obesity-related diabetes (MOD), a group which is characterized by obesity, early onset, and a relatively mild disease progression, according to the study. The Indian participants in the MOD group were associated with genetic variants for vitamin B12 deficiency, and this was not seen in the Swedish group of people, the researchers said.



# Saffron cashes in on Cong promise to ban Bajrang Dal

BJP is pursuing an aggressive campaign in K'taka as the state inches closer to the May 10 Assembly polls, especially after the Congress in its election manifesto promised to impose a ban on the Bajrang Dal if voted to power



INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**Bangalore, May 3:** The Bajrang Dal ban assurance by Congress party has triggered a huge row in Karnataka with posters claiming 'I am Bajrang' coming up at many places challenging the authorities to "ban and arrest" them, Wednesday.

The BJP leaders are cashing in on the Congress' promise to ban the Bajrang Dal. The party leaders expressed anguish over the grand old party's manifesto, and hugely have come in support of the organisation.

The BJP national leadership, including Prime Minister Narendra Modi, are making it a point to include the Jai Bajrang Bali slogan in their public rallies. They are claiming that the Congress is insulting Lord Hanuman, revered by all Hindus.

The trend is fast catching on as the 'I am Bajrang' campaign is going viral on social media in Karnataka. Adding to it, Hindu outfits and the Bajrang Dal have given a call for reciting the Hanuman Chalisa in all temples of the state Thursday (May 4). The Hindu organisations and the Bajrang Dal have expressed outrage over comparing the Bajrang Dal to the banned Popular Front of India (PFI).

Bharatiya Janata Party Karnataka president Nalin Kumar Kateel proclaimed in the presence of PM Modi at a public rally in

Moodbidri that if the Congress has the capacity, let it ban the Bajrang Dal.

However, Karnataka Congress president DK Shivakumar, reacting to the row following the proposal to ban the Bajrang Dal in the manifesto, asked, "What is the connection between the Bajrang Dal and Bajrang Bali (Lord Hanuman)?"

Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai campaigned at Hanagal in Haveri district Tuesday late night and condemned the Congress. He waved the saffron shawl, raised the slogan of 'Jai Bajrang', and chanted the slogans of Bajrang Dal activists.

"This is the last election for the Congress party. If they are defeated, they will go straight to their houses. This is a 'do or die' situation for them. It is indeed a dying situation for Congress," he slammed.

He also stated, "The devotees of Lord Hanuman are the Bajrangis of Bajrang Dal and the Congress party has announced in its election manifesto that it will ban the Bajrang Dal organisation. If the devotees of Lord Hanuman revolt, the Congress party will be removed from the country from its roots."

Reacting strongly to the announcement of proposed banning of Bajrang Dal in the Congress manifesto, Prime Minister Narendra Modi had said Tuesday, "Congress had kept Lord

Shri Ram in captivity. Now, they are preparing to keep Lord Hanuman captive."

PM Modi further said that the Congress does not like Lord Hanuman. "I bow to the people of Vijayanagara kingdom. I am in the land of Lord Hanuman. At the same time, the Congress is claiming in its manifesto that they will lock up Bajrang Bali and impose a ban on those who raise the slogan of 'Jai Bajrang Bali'. Congress is also sensing trouble if there are people who chant Jai Bajrang Bali."

Tejasvi Surya, the BJP National Youth Wing chief and MP from Bangalore South seat, shared a poster on his social media claiming that he is a Bajrang. "I am a Bajrang. I am a Kannadiga and this is the land of Hanuman. I dare the Congress to ban me!" he challenged.

The posters claiming that "I am Bajrang", "This residence belongs to Bajrang Dal activists, Congress voters are not allowed to seek votes" have come up in coastal districts and Chikmagalur districts.

Union Minister for Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare Shobha Karandlaje stated, "Bajrang Dal is a part of RSS and has been working with the youths for the nation. It has never indulged in anti-national activities. The manifesto by Congress is released to appease Muslims. The Congress is using too much brain only to ensure its destruction."

**K'TAKA POLLS**

# It's May and snowing in Himachal heights

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**Shimla, May 3:** It's May and the high-altitude areas of Himachal Pradesh are still receiving snowfall, making the hill destinations more picturesque.

The unseasonal precipitation in the state has pushed down the mercury by several notches, weather experts said Wednesday.

Tourist spots near Shimla like Kufri and Narkanda have experienced moderate to heavy rains. However, nearby destinations of Manali and Kalpa, 250 km from the capital, witnessed mild spells of snow.

According to HP Traffic, Tourists and Railways Police, heavy snowfall in the Chanshil area blocked roads with one feet snow. Two JCBs deployed to clear snow and 30 ve-



hicles stranded. Efforts are underway to clear the snow from the road surface, it said.

High altitude areas of Lahaul-Spiti, Kullu, Kinnaur, Chamba, Sirmour and Shimla districts have been experiencing moderate snow since Sunday, a Met offi-

cial told IANS here.

Widespread rain in mid and low hills, accompanied by thunder and strong winds, along with snow in the higher reaches across the state, brought the minimum temperature several notches below normal, a weather official told IANS.

Picturesque tourist resort Dalhousie saw 80 mm rainfall, the highest in the state. Kothi saw 61 mm rainfall, while Dharamsala 51 mm and Manali 45 mm. Gondla in Lahaul-Spiti district saw 2 cm snow.

The wet conditions across the state are expected to continue at least till Sunday, owing to the influence of another western disturbance hitting the region May 5 night.

The state capital Shimla, which saw the night temperature at 8.5 degrees Celsius, recorded 8.3 mm rain.

In Keylong in Lahaul-Spiti district, a minimum temperature of 1.6 degrees Celsius was recorded, the coldest in the state. Kalpa in Kinnaur district recorded a minimum of 5.8 degrees.

# HP plans to legalise cannabis cultivation for economic spinoffs

Experts opine that selective cultivation of cannabis could annually generate a revenue of ₹800 to ₹1,000 crore

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**Shimla, May 3:** A section of growers in Himachal Pradesh has been demanding the cultivation of cannabis as an alternative crop should be legally allowed as fruit crops have been facing weather vagaries every year. Also, the stiff competition from the imported cheaper apples has severely hit their earnings.

In the 'high-pitch' demand of growers and more importantly the state reeling under the heavy financial debt trap of more than Rs 75,000 crore, the Congress government led by first-time Chief Minister Sukhvinder Sukhu is mulling to legalise the controlled cultivation of hemp for medicinal purposes to economic boom, mainly to strengthen the rural economy, besides to capture business away from illicit sellers.

Experts told IANS the selective cultivation of cannabis could annually generate a revenue of Rs 800 to Rs 1,000 crore. They say there is a huge demand for opium, an extract of the poppy, in the pharmaceutical industry. Also, the climatic condition in the state is congenial for its cultivation.

States like Uttarakhand, Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh have also allowed selective cultivation of poppy which greatly helped to strengthen the rural economy. In Himachal Pradesh, the wild poppy grows in the Alpine regions of the Himalayas along the glacial streams at altitudes of 12,000 to 18,000 feet.

"Controlled cultivation of cannabis would ensure remunerative returns for apple growers who are only depending upon them for the earnings," said Ramesh Singta, a prominent apple grower in Jubbal, Shimla's prominent apple belt. "Since most of the apple plantation needs rejuvenation, a costly proposition, the legalised cultivation of opium will reap handsome returns," he added.

Another grower Naresh Dhaulta told IANS the cultivation of opium would help check its illegal cultivation as it grows even naturally in the wild.

According to the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, Indian opium has a great advantage over Turkish and Iranian opium, in so far as Turkish opium contains less than one per cent of codeine on the average, and Iranian opium about 2.5 per cent, whereas Indian opium, apart from its high morphine content, gives an average of 3.5 per cent of codeine.

Police officials say cannabis and

opium fields are grown illegally in vast tracts of Kullu, Mandi, Shimla and Chamba districts, leading to a serious problem of drug cultivation, trafficking and its use.

In Kullu district the plantation of cannabis is more confined to the higher reaches of Malana, Kasol and other areas, while in Chamba district, bordering the Doda area of Jammu and Kashmir, it is done mainly in the remote areas of Kehar, Tissa and Bharmour.

More than 60 per cent of the poppy and cannabis produced in Himachal Pradesh is smuggled out to countries like Israel, Italy, Holland and other European countries. The remaining finds its way to Nepal or Indian states like Goa, Punjab and Delhi.

The volume of this murky trade can be gauged from a government reply in the Assembly this month that 530 cases under the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (NDPS) Act were registered and 729 arrested in just three months from December 1, 2022.

State's Anti-Narcotics Task Force this month alone registered 36 cases under the NDPS Act and seized over 10 kg charas and 460 gm heroin.

Now to battle the illicit trade, the government believes the cultivation of cannabis would play a significant role not only in generating revenue but also prove to be beneficial for patients owing to medicinal properties. Also it can be used for pharmaceutical industry.

To build political consensus, an official statement quoting Chief Minister Sukhu said the government is cautious about the potential increase in drug use and has formed a five-member committee of legislators.

The committee, led by Horticulture and Revenue Minister Jagat Singh Negi, will conduct a thorough study about each and every aspect related to cannabis cultivation. It will visit areas where illegal cultivation of cannabis takes place and submit a report. And on the basis of the report the government will take any decision.

Justifying the rationale behind this move, the Chief Minister told the media that the neighbouring state Uttarakhand has become the first state in the country to legalise cannabis cultivation in 2017, while controlled cultivation of cannabis is also being done in some districts of Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh. He said the government would consider all aspects, including regulatory measures, and will study other states that have legalised it before arriving at a final decision.



# CEC thanks 103-year-old voter for using home voting facility



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, May 3:** Chief Election Commissioner Rajiv Kumar has spoken to a 103-year-old voter in Karnataka's Belagavi district over the phone to thank him for exercising his franchise using the home voting facility, officials said.

Mahadeva Mahalinga Mali recently cast his vote from home at Chikkodi in Belagavi for the Karnataka assembly elections.

Voting for the assembly polls in Karnataka will be held May 10. Home voting takes place before the actual election date in full secrecy in presence of poll officials and representatives of political parties.

Following the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Election Commission has allowed home

voting facility to voters who are 80 years and above, and those suffering from the infection or are under quarantine.

CEC Kumar telephoned the centenarian voter Tuesday to thank him for voting in the state polls.

According to the officials, Kumar told Mahadeva that elderly voters like him are an inspiration for young and urban voters to participate in the festival of democracy.

Mahadeva, he said, thanked the CEC for the facility of voting from home. He also recalled that in the previous elections, he had gone to the polling station in a wheelchair to cast his vote. Earlier, during the Himachal Pradesh elections last year, the CEC had visited Kalpa and Kinnaur to pay his condolences to the family of Shyam Saran Negi, independent India's first voter who had participated in each and every election and also voted in the state polls using the home voting facility before his demise.

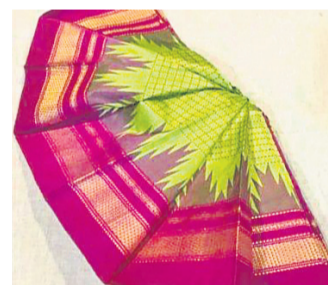
# Ilkal saree weavers' woes fall on deaf ears as AAP, Independent enter fray

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Ilkal (K'taka), May 3:** The famous Ilkal saree - which Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman had worn for her Budget Day speech in February - comes from its namesake village in Bagalkote district, where weavers' problems have fallen on deaf ears of national parties, forcing a seer of a community mutt and the AAP to enter the fray.

Ilkal village falls under the Hungund Assembly constituency and manufactures the maximum number of sarees in the entire district. Bagalkote, Badami and Terdal are other Assembly segments where the traditional sarees are also produced.

There are a total of six Assembly constituencies in Bagalkote district. In 2018, BJP won five seats, while Congress captured one in Badami where former chief minister



Siddaramaiah emerged victorious.

Interestingly this time Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) candidate Nagaraj Hongal - a 55-year-old belonging to a weavers' community and fighting for the cause of weavers since 2005 as journalist-cum activist - is contesting from the Hungund seat.

Whereas from the Terdal Assembly segment, Jagadguru Shivshankara Shivacharya Swamiji of Kuruhinashetti Peetha is in the fray as Independent candidate on weavers' request after both ruling BJP and principal

opposition Congress denied a ticket to candidates from the weavers' community.

The triangular fight is going to be interesting to watch in these two constituencies as both candidates are trying to make a mark as first-time contestants knowing well that they don't have huge funds and machinery to woo votes like leaders from the national parties. The people of the community and family members are helping the candidates in the electioneering.

Listing out the challenges of weavers in Ilkal village, the AAP candidate said an increase in the cost of production and lower returns, high power bills despite giving electricity free up to 5HP, lack of access to subsidised loan directly to individual weavers, and marketing are some of the key concerns. It is to be seen if the weavers community will unite and vote for these candidates May 10.

# Kalaripayattu takes centre stage in 'Look Back'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Bangalore, May 3:** The swirl, the pounce and the sword and shield of Kalaripayattu are not new to Indian films, particularly Malayalam films. But usually, Kalarai makes only a guest appearance - without any context and often without being acknowledged.

Perhaps, the most enduring nationwide mark it left was in Santhosh Sivan's 'Asoka'. The swordsmanship exemplified by actors Shahrukh Khan and Kareena Kapoor in the film released in 2001 is a nod to this ancient martial art from India. Sivan, it was said, had also roped in Kalarai masters to play warriors in the movie.

But for Bangalore-based Kalarai Gurukulam's Ranjan Mullaratt, who has been teaching the art form for nearly 24 years, these fleeting instances were not enough to tell the world about the benefits of Kalarai. And so, in a span of five years, he ended up making not



one, but two Kannada films on Kalaripayattu.

The audio launch of his latest film, 'Look Back', featuring the rockstar of Kalaripayattu, 81-year-old Meenakshi Raghavan, popularly known as Meenakshi amma, is scheduled for May 7.

"It had always been my dream

to make a Kalarai film like those Chinese martial art films. My father used to take me to watch them when I was a kid and I was very fascinated by them," said Mullaratt.

But his first film 'Dhehi', which was more of an arthouse ode to Kalarai, was far from the fast-paced Chinese action films. Released in

2020, the film though commercially could not make it, made an impact in the film festival circuit, garnering awards in its wake.

"We focused on telling the story of this 3,000-year-old ancient practice. Although I failed to find any financial backers, creatively I had solid support. Writer B Jeyamohan wrote the script and the film was directed by Mani Ratnam's associate Dhana," said Mullaratt.

'Look Back' will be different, said Mullaratt who has also taken charge of directing this time round.

"In 'Dhehi', we just filmed the performers, the students of gurukulam, mostly from a wide angle. The film was partly supported by the students, who wanted to show the world what it takes to learn Kalarai. The audience was taken through the 'astha vadivu' or the various animal poses, as the heroine learns Kalarai. We then show the various other techniques like using wooden sticks, swords, etc. But 'Look Back' will pack in all those punches that

are expected of a martial film," added Mullaratt.

Although Meenakshi amma has performed in front of the camera many times, a full-length feature film is her first time, she said. "When Mullaratt asked me, I said yes immediately. I think it is possible to bring Kalarai to more people with ventures like these," added Meenakshi, who has been awarded Padma Shri in 2017 for her contribution to Kalaripayattu.

She was not there only because she is synonymous with Kalarai, insisted Mullaratt. "The film needed her. It is about the journey of a woman from her childhood to old age. I needed an older woman who can do Kalarai and who is better than Meenakshi amma," beamed Mullaratt, adding that the film will be released in three months.

"Last time, because of Covid, I was unable to bring 'Dhehi' to theatres. This time, we want to see Kalaripayattu explode on the big screens," Mullaratt said.





India is the world's most vibrant democracy and its image cannot be allowed to be tainted or tarnished by anyone

HAILSTORM HITS RAJASTHAN

The MeT department Wednesday issued an orange alert in Rajasthan after severe hailstorm battered the northern parts of the state



of the day quote

They (AAP) seek votes in the name of 'aam aadmi', but there is 'loot ki khuli chhoot' (open loot) in Delhi and Punjab. Corruption is breaking records, mafia is booming... What good has happened in Punjab in the past one year

Death in Maghar used to mean going to 'nark' (hell), but saint Kabir changed that notion and it became heaven in the double-engine government. The double-engine government has set up Saint Kabir Academy to promote research on his values and ideals, including social equality and harmony

The development works whose proposals will be passed and sent by the Gram Panchayats will be completed under any circumstances

WORLD PRESS FREEDOM INDEX

India slips to 161st rank

INDIA HAS SLID FROM 11 SPOTS AND IS NOW BELOW PAKISTAN, AFGHANISTAN, SRI LANKA & NEPAL, NON-PROFIT REPORTERS WITHOUT BORDERS SAID IN THE REPORT



New Delhi, May 3: Media associations in the country have voiced concern over India slipping 11 places to 161st rank in the World Press Freedom Index, 2023, published Wednesday.

The RSF report said. "The other phenomenon that dangerously restricts the free flow of information is the acquisition of media outlets by oligarchs who maintain close ties with political leaders," the report, published on the occasion of World Press Freedom Day, added.

"Time for all of us to hang our heads in shame: India slips in World Press Freedom Index, ranks 161 out of 180 countries," he wrote on Twitter. Sri Lanka moved 11 points up and ranked 135 while junta-ruled Myanmar, moving 3 points up, was at 173, lower than India.

Apex court refuses to entertain pleas against movie 'The Kerala Story'



New Delhi, May 3: The Supreme Court on Wednesday refused to entertain a plea by Jamiat Ulama-i-Hind seeking a direction to the Centre and others not to allow the screening or release of the movie entitled 'The Kerala Story' at theatres, OTT platforms and other such avenues, and also that the trailer should be removed from the Internet.

SHORT TAKES

BJP leader's murder: Six held, 20 detained

New Delhi: In a major crackdown on criminals, the Dwarka District Police Wednesday conducted raids at multiple locations in Delhi and Haryana and arrested six people while detaining 20 persons in search of associates of gangster Kapil Sangwan alias Nandu, an official said.

30 student activists detained by police

New Delhi: Delhi Police have detained 30 activists of student outfits AISA, SFI and others from Delhi University where they were protesting in solidarity with wrestlers demonstrating at Jantar Mantar, an official said Wednesday.

25 injured after bus hits truck

Palghar: Twenty five people were injured when their bus rammied into a trailer truck after the latter's driver applied brakes suddenly in Maharashtra's Palghar district, police said.



People cover themselves with a plastic sheet during rain at Jantar Mantar in New Delhi

Police raids in Delhi, Haryana

New Delhi: Delhi Police Wednesday arrested six people and detained 20 others during multiple raids in Delhi and Haryana in search of associates of notorious gangster Kapil Sangwan, officials said.

The film on alleged radicalisation and conversion of young Hindu women to Islam in Kerala, before inducting them into terrorist outfit Islamic State (IS), is scheduled for release May 5

The film on alleged radicalisation and conversion of young Hindu women to Islam in Kerala, before inducting them into terrorist outfit Islamic State (IS), is scheduled for release May 5

DELHI HIT-AND-RUN

Victim was seen lying on roof as car drove for 3 km

New Delhi, May 3: A disturbing video of a man being driven atop a black SUV for half-a-kilometre after his scooter was hit by the four-wheeler on Kasturba Gandhi Marg in New Delhi emerged on social media Wednesday.

EXCISE POLICY SCAM

Sisodia moves HC seeking bail

New Delhi, May 3: Former Delhi deputy chief minister Manish Sisodia Wednesday approached the Delhi High Court seeking bail in a money laundering case related to the alleged excise policy scam.

OPERATION KAVERI

India brings home fresh batch of 231 stranded people

New Delhi, May 3: India Wednesday brought back home a total of 231 people under its mission to evacuate stranded Indians from strife-torn Sudan.

India will get its own index to quantify heat impact next yr: IMD

New Delhi, May 3: India will launch its own composite index next year to quantify the impact of heat on its population and generate impact-based heat wave alerts for specific locations, the India Meteorological Department (IMD) has said.

'heat hazard score'. We hope that it will be better than the others," Mrutyunjay Mohapatra, Director General of Meteorology, IMD, told PTL.



ducted a heat wave hazard analysis for the entire country last year, taking into account maximum temperature, minimum temperature, humidity, wind and the duration of heat waves. The analysis will help generate heat hazard scores which will be utilised as thresholds to issue impact-based heat wave alerts for specific locations.

The IMD has predicted above-normal maximum temperature and more heatwave days in eastern and central-eastern parts of the country in May

heat hazard score is that the latter also considers other parameters that aggravate heat situations such as minimum temperature, wind and exposure duration, he added.



# international



Taiwan has to defend itself, the people have to defend Taiwan, this country, and we are determined to defend ourselves and we are not asking other countries to fight for Taiwan

JOSEPH WU | FOREIGN MINISTER, TAIWAN

## 2,100 POLITICAL PRISONERS FREED

Myanmar's ruling military council Wednesday said it was releasing more than 2,100 political prisoners as a humanitarian gesture. Thousands more remain imprisoned on charges generally involving nonviolent protests or criticism of military rule, which began when the army seized power in February 2021 from the elected government of Aung San Suu Kyi



### of the day quote

Our message to criminals on the dark web is this: You can try to hide in the furthest reaches of the internet, but the Justice Department will find you and hold you accountable for your crimes

MERRICK GARLAND | ATTORNEY GENERAL, US

Let's give first, let's deliver first, what Ukraine needs immediately. Because again, we know exactly what's happening on the ground

THIERRY BRETON | INTERNAL MARKET COMMISSIONER, EU

The persistent intimidation, threats, and attacks on journalists are unacceptable. We urge the Taliban de facto authorities to guarantee the freedom and independence of the media, and the safety of journalists, women and men alike

ROZA OTUNBAYEVA | UN SECRETARY-GENERAL'S SPECIAL REPRESENTATIVE FOR AFGHANISTAN

# Assassination bid on Putin foiled

### Russia claims Ukraine tried to kill Putin with night-time drone attack on Kremlin

REUTERS

Moscow, May 3: Russia accused Ukraine Wednesday of attacking the Kremlin with drones overnight in a failed attempt to kill President Vladimir Putin.

A senior Ukrainian presidential official denied the accusation - the most serious that Moscow has levelled at Kyiv in more than 14 months of war - and said it indicated Moscow was preparing a major "terrorist provocation".

The Kremlin said Russia reserved the right to retaliate, and hardliners demanded swift retribution against Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy.

"Two unmanned aerial vehicles were aimed at the Kremlin. As a result of timely actions taken by the military and special services with the use of radar warfare systems, the devices were put out of action," the Kremlin said.

"We regard these actions as a planned terrorist act and an attempt on the president's life, carried out on the eve of Victory Day, the May 9 Parade, at which the presence of foreign guests is also planned."

"The Russian side reserves the right to take retaliatory measures where and when it sees fit," it



RUSSIA SAYS IT SHOT DOWN TWO DRONES OVERNIGHT

UKRAINE DENIES RESPONSIBILITY, WARNS OF 'TERRORIST PROVOCATION'

RUSSIA SAYS IT RESERVES THE RIGHT TO RETALIATE

RUSSIAN AGENCY SAYS PUTIN WAS NOT IN KREMLIN AT THE TIME

added. Baza, a Telegram channel with links to Russia's law enforcement agencies, posted a video showing a flying object approaching the dome of the Kremlin Senate building overlooking Red Square - site of the Victory Day parade - and exploding in an intense burst of light just before reaching it.

Ukrainian presidential adviser Mykhailo Podolyak said in com-

ments sent to Reuters: "Ukraine has nothing to do with drone attacks on the Kremlin. We do not attack the Kremlin because, first of all, it does not resolve any military tasks."

The powerful speaker of the lower house of Russia's parliament, Vyacheslav Volodin, issued a statement demanding the use of "weapons capable of stopping and destroying the Kyiv terrorist regime".

We didn't attack Putin or Moscow. We fight on our territory. We're defending our villages and cities

VOLODYMYR ZELENSKYI | PRESIDENT, UKRAINE

Margarita Simonyan, head of the state broadcaster RT, wrote on Telegram: "Maybe now things will get started for real?"

### PUTIN WAS NOT IN KREMLIN

The statement from the presidential administration said fragments of the drones had been scattered on the territory of the Kremlin complex but there were no casualties or material damage.

RIA said Putin had not been in the Kremlin at the time, and was working Wednesday at his Novo Ogaryovo residence outside Moscow.

Another video circulating on Russian social media appeared to show a plume of smoke over the Kremlin after the purported attack.

The video was posted in the early hours of Wednesday on a group for residents of a neighbourhood that faces the Kremlin across the Moskva River. It was picked up by Russian media, including the Telegram channel of the military

news outlet Zvezda.

Victory Day is a major public holiday commemorating the defeat of Nazi Germany in World War Two, and a chance for Putin to rally Russians behind what he calls his "special military operation" in Ukraine. Russia marks the occasion with a huge military parade on Red Square, for which seating has already been erected.

The state news agency TASS said the parade - for which the Kremlin last week announced tighter security - would still go ahead.

Moscow Mayor Sergei Sobyenin said earlier Wednesday that the city had introduced an immediate ban on unauthorised drone flights.

Russia has accused Ukraine of numerous cross-border attacks since the start of the war, including strikes in December on an air base deep inside Russian territory that houses strategic bomber planes equipped to carry nuclear weapons. In February, a drone crashed in Kolonna, about 110 km (70 miles) from the centre of Moscow.

Ukraine typically declines to claim responsibility for attacks on Russia or Russian-annexed Crimea, though Kyiv officials have frequently celebrated such attacks with cryptic or mocking remarks.

## 3 jailed Iranian female journalists win top UN award

ASSOCIATED PRESS

United Nations, May 3: The United Nations announced Tuesday night that its premier prize for press freedom has been awarded to three imprisoned Iranian female journalists "for their commitment to truth and accountability."

The winners are Niloufar Hamedei who broke the news that 22-year-old Mahsa Amini died last September while being held by the morality police for wearing her headscarf too loosely, and Elaheh Mohammadi who wrote about her funeral.

Amini's death touched off months-long protests in dozens of cities across Iran. The demonstrations posed one of the most serious challenges to the Islamic Republic since the 2009 Green Movement protests drew millions to the streets.

The third winner is Narges Mohammadi, who has worked for many years as a journalist and is one of Iran's most prominent activists.

The UN Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization World Press Freedom Prize is named for Guillermo Cano, a Colombian journalist who was assassinated in front of the offices of his newspaper El Espectador in Bogota December 17, 1986. UNESCO has awarded the prize to coincide with World Press Freedom Day May 3 since 1997.

UNESCO Director-General Audrey Azoulay announced the winners at a ceremony in New York, saying: "Now more than ever, it is important to pay tribute to all women journalists who are prevented from doing their jobs and who face threats and attacks on their personal safety."

Zainab Salbi, chair of the international jury of media professionals that chose the winners, said the brave work of the three winners "led to a historical women-led revolution."

"They paid a hefty price for their commitment to report on and convey the truth," Salbi said. "And for that, we are committed to honouring them and ensuring their voices will continue to echo worldwide until they are safe and free."

### SHORT TAKES

#### HK to cut elected council seats

Hong Kong: Hong Kong's leader Tuesday stepped up a campaign to shut down further democratic challenges by unveiling plans to eliminate most directly elected seats on local district councils, the last major political representative bodies chosen by the public. Chief Executive John Lee said the proposed overhaul will reduce the proportion of directly elected seats in the municipal-level organisation to about 20 per cent - from some 90 per cent currently. That is even lower than the level when these bodies were first set up in the 1980s, when Hong Kong was ruled by Britain. He said the rest of the 470 seats will be filled by government appointees, rural committee chairpersons and others elected by local committees that are staffed by many pro-establishment figures.

#### Political deadlock ends in Pakistan

Islamabad: Pakistan's coalition government and former prime minister Imran Khan's party made "big progress" after they agreed to hold general elections in the entire country on the same day but still differed on the date of the polls. The decision was taken in overnight parleys to end a deadlock over the timing of provincial and federal elections, an issue that has rocked the country's politics for months. The talks were being held in the backdrop of the controversy with Khan's Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) seeking early polls - particularly in Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa where assemblies were dissolved in January - and the government maintaining that provincial and federal elections across the country be held on the same day in October.

#### Turkey to block Armenian flights

Istanbul: Turkey has closed its airspace to Armenian flights heading to a third destination in response to the unveiling of a controversial monument in Yerevan last week, Turkish Foreign Minister Mevlut Cavusoglu said on Wednesday. The monument commemorates those involved in an assassination plot against Ottoman Turkish officials whom Armenia holds responsible for mass killings of ethnic Armenians during World War One. Yerevan says the killings constitute a genocide, a charge Ankara denies.

### DRUG CRACKDOWN

# Europe cops arrest more than 100 mafia suspects



Several people of 'high value' in group were arrested

Investigation stretches from Europe to South America

Chinese money brokers helped facilitate drugs trade

The raids were centered on the 'Ndrangheta gang which is the most powerful mafia group in Italy

REUTERS

Frankfurt, May 3: Police across Europe arrested more than 100 people Wednesday in a massive crackdown that targeted the Italian 'Ndrangheta mafia, with suspects accused of drugs and weapons trafficking with counterparts in Latin America.

"Today's raids are one of the largest operations carried out so far in the fight against Italian organised crime," said German Interior Minister Nancy Faeser, adding they had "dealt a serious blow to the 'Ndrangheta."

The swoop was part of an investigation spanning Italy, Germany, Belgium, Portugal, Spain, Slovenia, Romania, Brazil and Panama, according to European Union law enforcement agency Europol.

Belgian police said they had arrested 13 people. A total of 108 peo-

ple were arrested in Italy and other EU countries on the orders of police in the southern city of Reggio Calabria.

Related investigations led to the arrest of 24 people in Germany, as well as a further 53 detentions in northern Italy. The interior minister of the German state of North Rhine-Westphalia said 18 of the arrests were made there.

The network was devoted primarily to international drug trafficking from South America to both Europe and Australia, Europol said in a statement.

The network used Chinese money brokers in Italy and Colombia to arrange for funds to be moved to pay for drug deals, Italian police commander Massimiliano D'Angelantonio told a news conference.

The 'Ndrangheta clans were also involved in running weapons from Pakistan to South America, supplying Brazilian criminal group PCC (Primeiro Comando da Capital) in exchange for cocaine shipments, Europol added.

The 'Ndrangheta, which has its

roots in the southern Italian region of Calabria, has surpassed Cosa Nostra as the most powerful mafia group in the country, and one of the largest criminal networks in the world.

Some of the 'Ndrangheta families targeted have been involved in clan feuds culminating in mass shootings, including the killing of six people in the German city of Duisburg in 2007, according to Europol.

### ICE CREAM PARLOUR

Profits were recycled through real estate, restaurants, hotels, car wash companies, supermarkets, and other commercial activities.

In Germany, investigators targeted an ice cream parlour in the northwestern town of Siegen, which they suspected was being used to launder money and as a strategic hub for the 'Ndrangheta.

Investigator Oliver Huth told reporters they found Italians from Calabria there, some of whom were believed to be involved in drugs while others had links to killings or murders. The cafe has been shut down.

Assets worth 25 million euros (\$27.6 million) were seized in Italy, Germany, Portugal and France in "Operation Eureka," launched in 2019 initially to investigate drug smuggling between Calabria and the Belgian city of Genk, according to Italian police.

"We think that among the arrests were several persons of a high value who played a huge role in the organisation, not only in Belgium but in other European countries," said Belgian federal prosecutor Antoon Schotsaert.

### 'Iran seizes 2nd oil tanker in a week'

Dubai: Iran has seized a second oil tanker in a week Wednesday in Gulf waters, the US Navy said, the latest escalation in a series of seizures or attacks on commercial vessels in Gulf waters since 2019. The Bahrain-based Fifth Fleet of the US Navy said the Panama-flagged oil tanker Niovi was seized by Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps Navy while passing through the narrow Strait of Hormuz. In Iran's first response, Tehran's prosecutor announced the oil tanker was seized on a judicial order following a complaint by a plaintiff, the judiciary's Mizan news agency said. The incident comes after Iran Thursday seized a Marshall Islands-flagged oil tanker in the Gulf of Oman called the Advantage Sweet. Maritime security firm Ambrey has said it believed the Advantage Sweet's seizure by Iran was in response to a recent seizure via a court order by the United States of an oil cargo aboard the Marshall Islands tanker Suez Rajan. Since 2019, there have been a series of attacks on shipping in the strategic Gulf waters at times of tension between the United States and Iran.



Members of the Writers Guild of America (WGA) East picket outside Peacock Newfront streaming service offices, in New York City

# UN: 258mn faced acute food insecurity in '22

### SOMALIA, AFGHANISTAN, BURKINA FASO, HAITI, NIGERIA, SOUTH SUDAN AND YEMEN ARE THE SEVEN NATIONS WHERE PEOPLE FACED STARVATION AND DEATH

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Rome, May 3: More than a quarter-billion people in 58 countries faced acute food insecurity last year due to conflicts, climate change, the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic and the war in Ukraine, according to a report published Wednesday.

The Global Report on Food Crises, an alliance of humanitarian organisations founded by the UN and European Union, said people faced starvation and death in seven of those countries: Somalia, Afghanistan, Burkina Faso, Haiti, Nigeria, South Sudan and Yemen.

While the increase last year was due in part to more populations being analysed, the report also found that the severity of the problem increased as well, "highlighting a concerning trend of a deterioration."



Rein Paulsen, director of emergencies and resilience for the UN Food and Agriculture Organisation, said an interplay of causes was driving hunger.

They include conflicts, climate shocks, the impact of the pandemic and consequences of Russia's war

The number of people facing acute food insecurity and requiring urgent food aid has increased for the fourth consecutive year, a stinging indictment of humanity's failure to implement UN goals to end world hunger

ANTONIO GUTERRES | SECRETARY-GENERAL, UN

in Ukraine that has had an impact on the global trade in fertilizers, wheat, maize and sunflower oil.

The impact has been most acute on the poorest countries that are dependent on food imports. "Prices have increased (and) those countries have been adversely af-

ected," Paulsen said. He called for a "paradigm shift" so that more funding is spent investing in agricultural interventions that anticipate food crises and aim to prevent them. "The challenge that we have is the disequilibrium, the mismatch that exists between the amount of funding money that's given, what that funding is spent on, and the types of interventions that are required to make a change," he said. Acute food insecurity is when a person's inability to consume adequate food puts their lives or livelihoods in immediate danger.

### VAX RECORDS PROBE

# Bolsonaro home raided, phone seized in Brazil

REUTERS

Brasilia, May 3: Brazilian police Wednesday raided former President Jair Bolsonaro's home and seized his cell phone as part of an investigation into his Covid-19 vaccination records.

The investigation may answer questions about how Bolsonaro, a strident coronavirus skeptic who vowed never to get a Covid vaccine, was registered as vaccinated in health records made public in February.

Bolsonaro confirmed the raid on his home in Brasilia to journalists and reiterated that he had never taken a Covid vaccine. He denied any role in allegedly forging documents.

"For my part, there was nothing falsified. I didn't take the vaccine. Period," he said, adding that his



phone was seized. The vaccine probe is one of many putting the former far-right leader under pressure, including investigations into alleged voter suppression, attacks on the legitimacy of Brazilian elections and embezzlement of foreign gifts. Bolsonaro has denied any wrongdoing in those cases.



# business

## of the day quote

The future of (renewable) energy is totally dependent on innovations and storage cost coming down, less space (for energy storage), utilize high energy density, and materials (used to produce energy storage), which are available safe for us

NFDC, we feel, has been left behind now for the past 8-10 years. We need to come back again, we need to give support to young filmmakers, who don't get access otherwise in the market, and also come up with an OTT of NFDC

India is important to us because it represents a huge potential, the largest country (population) in the world, huge growing middle class, and also over the last year we've seen it to be one of our fastest growing countries

## SHORT TAKES

### JSW Steel to invest \$145mn in US plant

**Bangalore:** India's JSW Steel Ltd said Wednesday that its unit, JSW Steel USA, plans to invest \$145 million in new projects to upgrade its manufacturing operations in Ohio. "These investments & projects will help us in producing high quality 'melted and manufactured in USA' steel products required by our customers in the infrastructure and renewable energy sectors," said Parth Jindal, director of JSW Steel USA.

### SpiceJet to revive 25 grounded planes

**Mumbai:** Budget carrier SpiceJet Wednesday said it is working to revive 25 grounded planes and has so far mobilised ₹400 crore for revival of these aircraft. The announcement comes a day after competitor Go First filed for voluntary insolvency resolution proceedings and decided to cancel flights for three days starting May 3. In a statement, SpiceJet said funds for the revival of the 25 aircraft will be drawn from the government's Emergency Credit Line Guarantee Scheme (ECLGS) and better cash accruals. The airline has around 80 planes in its fleet and is looking to revive 25 grounded Boeing 737 and Q400 aircraft.

### Adani Wilmar Q4 profit down 60%

**New Delhi:** Edible oil major Adani Wilmar Wednesday reported 60 per cent decline in consolidated net profit at ₹93.61 crore for the quarter ended March 2023 on lower revenue. Its net profit stood at ₹234.29 crore in the year-ago period. Total income fell to ₹13,945.02 crore in January-March 2022-23 from ₹14,979.83 crore in the year-ago period, Adani Wilmar said. During the full last fiscal, Adani Wilmar's net profit fell to ₹582.12 crore from ₹803.73 crore in the previous year.

### Godrej Properties Q4 profit up 58%

**New Delhi:** Godrej Properties Wednesday reported 58 per cent increase in consolidated net profit at ₹412.14 crore for the quarter ended March 2023 on higher revenue driven by strong housing demand. Its net profit stood at ₹260.47 crore in the year-ago period. Total income rose to ₹1,838.82 crore in the fourth quarter of 2022-23 from ₹1,522.57 crore in the year-ago period.



We will all have to talk again (about food and fertiliser security) at the WTO with an open mind. There is better food security in the developed world compared to developing countries

NIRMALA SITHARAMAN | FINANCE MINISTER

## BANGA BECOMES FIRST INDIAN-AMERICAN TO HEAD WORLD BANK

Ajay Banga was Wednesday appointed as the next President of the World Bank, becoming the first-ever Indian-American to head the global financial institution which said it looks forward to working with him at a time when it's tackling the toughest development challenges facing developing countries



## GO FIRST BANKRUPTCY

# Owner has no plans to exit airline: CEO

Engine troubles, Covid-19 bring down India's third-largest airline

AGENCIES

**Bangalore, May 3:** Go Airlines (India) Ltd owner Wadia Group is completely committed to the airline and had no plans to exit it, the airline's chief executive told Reuters in an interview Wednesday.

His comments came a day after the cash-strapped Indian airline filed for bankruptcy, blaming "faulty" Pratt & Whitney (P&W) engines for the grounding of about half its fleet.

The insolvency proceedings were aimed at reviving the airline and not selling it, CEO Kaushik Khona said, confirming it had made all required payments to Pratt & Whitney. The airline

was also looking to dissuade lessors from taking action. "The Indian government is very keen we should not fail," Khona told Reuters.

The company, which is "continuously evaluating options", said some parties have expressed interest in the airline. It did not share further details.

Go First's lenders will most likely meet Wednesday to discuss what to do next after the bankruptcy filing Tuesday, two bankers aware of the development told Reuters.

**BOON FOR RIVALS**  
Go First's bankruptcy may boost airfares in India and give other domestic airlines a chance to grab a larger chunk of the market share, analysts said.

If the suspension is prolonged, other airlines that are adding capacity would

look to avail the slots vacated by Go First and grab onto the market share

PRATEEK KUMAR | ANALYST, JEFFERIES

Share prices of India's largest airline, IndiGo, were up 5.1% Wednesday, after rising as much as 8.2% earlier.

"Indigo is facing a similar problem with P&W engines for some of its fleet but has been able to better maneuver the crisis owing to its much larger fleet size and better negotiations with the vendor," Jefferies analyst Prateek Kumar said in a client note.

Lessors may also be eager to allocate some Go First aircraft to IndiGo, given a similar fleet type, Credit Suisse analysts wrote in a note, adding that such a development would benefit IndiGo in terms of market share and stronger yields in a capacity-strained environment.

The Wadia Group also runs bread and biscuits maker Britannia Industries and textile firm Bombay Dyeing and Manufacturing Co. Share prices of Bombay Burmah Trading, which is also owned by Wadia and has given loans to Go First in the form of inter-corporate deposits, slid 5%.

In three decades, one domestic airline on average went belly up every year. Since 1994, the year when private airlines took off in the country, at least 27 scheduled carriers have either been shuttered or merged with other carriers, according to official data



NCLT TO HEAR CRISIS HIT GO FIRST'S INSOLVENCY PLEA TODAY

AIRLINE LOOKING TO DISSUADE LESSORS FROM TAKING ACTION

## Banks, other creditors in peril

- GO FIRST OWES FINANCIAL CREDITORS ₹6,521 CRORE
- CENTRAL BANK HAS EXPOSURE OF ₹1,305 CRORE
- IDBI BANK HAS EXPOSURE OF ₹50 CRORE
- BANK OF BARODA'S TOTAL EXPOSURE ₹1,300 CRORE
- GO FIRST BORROWED ₹1,292 CRORE FROM GOVT
- TOTAL LIABILITIES STAND AT ₹11,463 CRORE

With cash-strapped budget carrier Go First filing for bankruptcy, major lenders including Bank of Baroda, IDBI Bank were trading with deep cuts on Dalal Street as experts said that the recovery may not be exceeding anywhere about 25-30% that the Wadia Group company owes.

Go First, which filed for bankruptcy Tuesday, owes financial creditors ₹6,521 crore (\$798 million), its bankruptcy filing showed. As of April 30, Go First Air had not defaulted on any of these dues,

it said in the filing.

The filing lists Central Bank of India Ltd, Bank of Baroda Ltd, IDBI Bank Ltd, Axis Bank Ltd and Deutsche Bank among Go First's financial creditors. "However, considering the present financial situation of the corporate applicant defaults to financial creditors would be imminent," the filing said.

Central Bank of India said it has an outstanding exposure of Rs 1,305 crore to cash-strapped airline Go First as March 31.

Bank of Baroda has an expo-

sure of ₹1,300 crore, under a consortium loan, while IDBI Bank has a smaller exposure of ₹50 crore, the filing showed.

On a contrary, Axis Bank issued a clarification in a statement to stock exchanges, that it has no outstanding exposure to the airline. In the case of Axis Bank, the airline has a letter of sanction of credit, the filing said, without specifying whether this credit has been availed.

Go First has also borrowed ₹1,292 crore under the government's Emergency Credit Line Guarantee Scheme (ECLGS) introduced during the Covid crisis. As part of the scheme, the government guarantees loans given out by banks to the company.

The airline's total liabilities to all creditors stand at ₹11,463 crore, the filing shows. This includes dues to banks, financial institutions, vendors and aircraft lessors.

## AIRFARES LIKELY TO RISE: TAAI

No-frills carrier Go First filing for insolvency proceedings and cancelling flights is bad for the airline industry as the move will reduce capacity and could push airfares in certain routes, travel agents' grouping TAAI said Wednesday. Battered by an acute financial crunch due to grounding of more than half of its fleet amid P&W engine supply woes, Go First has cancelled flights for three days starting May 3. "It is bad for the (airlines) industry... It is such a fragile industry... We lost crores of rupees in Kingfisher Airlines, in Jet Airways and we have another one going into insolvency (proceedings)," Travel Agents Association of India (TAAI) President Jyoti Mayal told PTI. Mayal said that right now there is demand for air travel as it is holiday time and "we do expect fares going up in sectors it (Go First) was flying. In the coming weeks, fares are likely to go up."

## P&W HITS BACK AT GO FIRST

GO FIRST HAS HISTORY OF MISSING FINANCIAL OBLIGATIONS, SAYS PRATT & WHITNEY

With the Wadia group's low cost airline squarely blaming engine supplier, the US-based Pratt & Whitney for its financial woes and taxing it to file bankruptcy petition, the latter has responded.

"Go First has a lengthy history of missing its financial obligations to Pratt," a spokesperson for the aircraft engine supplier Pratt & Whitney responded to IANS list of questions. However, the official declined to elaborate further on its allegation against Go Airline. "Pratt & Whitney is committed

to the success of our airline customers, and we continue to prioritize delivery schedules for all customers. P&W (Pratt & Whitney) is complying with the March 2023 arbitration ruling related to Go First. As this is now a matter of litigation, we will not comment further," the company spokesperson said.

## Govt aims IBT coal output in FY24

The action plan will pave the path to development and will have a positive impact on coal's growth trajectory along with a sustainable future

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, May 3:** In a first, the coal ministry has set an ambitious target of 1 billion tonne (BT) coal production during 2023-24 under its 'Action Plan' for the sector and a capex target of ₹21,030 crore for its PSUs.

In a statement, the ministry said it has conceptualized the Action Plan for FY24 with the goal of achieving Aatmanirbhar Bharat by enhancing the production, efficiency, sustainability, new technologies etc in the coal sector. "It is an ambitious, well-crafted roadmap that covers a variety of areas including a total coal production target of 1012 MT for 2023-24," it said.

The ministry has already taken various steps to increase the coal

### UNDER ACTION PLAN



production and efficiency like mining developers cum operators (MDO) for the operationalization of CIL (Coal India) mines/blocks and production in discontinued/abandoned mines on the revenue sharing basis.

The ministry has also formulated a strategy to enhance coking coal availability in the country to reduce imports. Coal companies along with the ministry has taken various measures to achieve the objective of supply of quality coal to all consumers.

"The capex target for FY24 is ₹21,030 crore with CIL ₹16,500 crore, NLCIL: ₹2,880 crore and SCCL: ₹1,650 crore) The overall projected target of assets monetization plan for FY 2023-24 is ₹50,118.61 crore,"

### Coal production up 22.6% in 5 yrs

India's coal production has registered a growth of about 23 per cent in last five years to 893.08 million tonnes (MT) in FY23, an official statement said Wednesday. India's overall coal production has seen a quantum jump to 893.08 MT in FY 2022-23 as compared to 728.72 MT in FY 2018-2019 with a growth of about 22.6 per cent, the coal ministry said. In the last five years, the production of Coal India Limited (CIL) has increased to 703.21 MT from 606.89 MT in FY19, registering a growth of 15.9 per cent. While Singareni Collieries Company Limited (SCCL) has registered a growth of 4.3 per cent at 67.14 MT in FY23 compared to 64.40 MT in FY19. Contribution from captive and other mines to the total coal output also increased to 122.72 MT in FY23, up 113.7 per cent from 57.43 MT in FY19.

the ministry said. During FY23, the ministry signed agreements for a total of 23 coal mines having cumulative PRC of 33,224 MTPA and these mines are expected to generate an annual revenue of ₹4,700.80 crore calculated at PRC (Peak Rated Capacity).

## India's green financing needs estimated at 2.5% of GDP

THE COUNTRY AIMS TO ACHIEVE NET ZERO EMISSIONS TARGET BY 2070

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Mumbai, May 3:** India's green financing requirement is estimated to be at least 2.5 per cent of GDP annually till 2030, a Reserve Bank report said Wednesday.

The Reserve Bank of India's report on Currency and Finance (RCF) for the year 2022-23 covers four major dimensions of climate change to assess future challenges to sustainable high growth in India.

The areas are the unprecedented scale and pace of climate change; its macroeconomic effects; implications for financial stability; and policy options to mitigate climate risks.

The country's goal of achieving the net zero target by 2070 would require an accelerated reduction in the energy intensity of GDP by around 5 per cent annually and a significant



improvement in its energy-mix in favour of renewables to around 80 per cent by 2070-71, it said.

"India's green financing requirement is estimated to be at least 2.5 per cent of GDP annually till 2030," the report said. It also men-

tioned about projected estimates of green finance requirements by various organisations.

Citing Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC), the report said the cumulative total expenditure for adapting to climate change in India is estimated to be ₹85.6 lakh crore (at 2011-12 prices) by the year 2030. According to the report, a balanced policy intervention with progress ensured across all policy levers will enable India to achieve its green transition targets by 2030, making the net zero goal by 2070 attainable. "Climate change is upon us". As per the World Meteorological Organisation (WMO), the 2015-22 period was the warmest on record. Despite the cooling effects of La Nina into its third year, 2022 was the eighth consecutive year in which annual global temperature reached at least 1 degree celsius above pre-Industrial Revolution levels, fuelled by ever-rising Green House Gas (GHG) concentrations and accumulated heat.

"India's diverse topography makes it highly vulnerable to climate risks, manifested in the form of sustained rise in temperature, erratic monsoon patterns, and rising frequency and intensity of extreme weather events."

"India's goal of becoming an advanced economy by 2047 and achieving the net zero target by 2070 would require accelerated efforts in terms of reducing the energy intensity of output as well as improving the energy-mix in favour of renewables," it said.

Estimates suggest that compared with a no policy action scenario that could increase India's carbon emissions to 3.9 gigatonnes by 2030 (from 2.7 gigatonnes in 2021), a balanced policy intervention can lower carbon emissions to 0.9 gigatonne by 2030, the report added.

## BIZ BUZZ

### Canon holds exhibition to display latest products

**Bhubaneswar:** Canon India Pvt Ltd, India's leading digital imaging company in collaboration with its authorized dealer Gayatree Docutechs Pvt Ltd organised 'Canon Photo Copy Model' exhibition to display its technological supremacy May 1. On this occasion, Canon displayed its wide range of printers for consumers or businesses through live product display. These include Canon's most recent photo copy model including the imageRUNNER C3226 and the imageRUNNER 2206N/2006N/2206. Talking to media persons, Harsbardhan Parida, Business Manager of Odisha, Canon India said, "The aim of this exhibition is to connect with our customers by displaying our technological supremacy in imaging and printing solutions. Our endeavour is to make superior technology accessible to our customers and offer them product experiences." Janakinath Parida, Director of Gayatree Docutechs Pvt Ltd informed, "We have dedicated ourselves to provide service after selling it with our customers face to face so that they get to truly experience the potential of our products. We have pressed trained engineers to provide the services at the doorstep." Ambikanath Parida, Managing Director of Gayatree Docutechs Pvt Ltd; Anil Kumar Panda, chief manager; engineers Prabhu Prasad Nanda, Soumayaranjan Gochyat, Gaurang Charan Sethy, Gitanjali Raj, Rekha Behera, Akash Samantray, Bibhuti Bhusan Singh, Nilamadhab Sahoo, Biswajit Rout, Anima Niyal and others interacted with customers and businessmen to create wider awareness about the brand's extensive product.



### Mishra joins as new zonal head of BoM

**Bhubaneswar:** Alok Kumar Mishra has joined as the new zonal head of Bank of Maharashtra, Bhubaneswar Zone. Prior to this, he was working as branch head in Mumbai Fort Branch. Mishra started his career in 2004 and during his successful journey of over 19 years; he has worked in different functional capacities in different places in Delhi, Kolkata, Patna, Raipur, Kanpur, Akola, Pune, Mumbai and has gained vast experience. He also has over 15 years of experience as branch head and has worked in large corporate finance of the bank. During his tenure as zonal head in Bhubaneswar Zone, he is likely to emphasise on mid-corporate, retail, MSME sector and involve the bank in socio-economic development of the state by implementing various government sponsored schemes.

## Markets pause eight-day rally

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Mumbai, May 3:** Benchmark indices ended lower Wednesday, halting their eight days of rally, ahead of the US Federal Reserve's interest rate decision and mixed global market trends.

The 30-share BSE Sensex declined 161.41 points or 0.26 per cent to settle at 61,193.30. During the day, it tumbled 330.27 points or 0.53 per cent to 61,024.44. The broader NSE Nifty fell 57.80 points or 0.32 per cent to end at 18,089.85.

India's services sector growth accelerated in April, as strong demand conditions resulted in the fastest increase in new business and output in close to 13 years, a monthly survey said Wednesday.

Rallying for the eighth straight day, the BSE benchmark had climbed 242.27 points or 0.40 per cent to settle at 61,354.71 Tuesday. The Nifty went up 82.65 points or 0.46 per cent to finish at 18,147.65.



# ISHAN, SURYA SCRIPT MI VICTORY

# SRH wary of top order's form ahead of KKR game



## RAIN PLAYS SPOILSPORT

**LUCKNOW:** Ayush Badoni stood tall amidst the ruins with a classy half century (59 n o, 33b, 2x4, 4x6) on a poor surface before a sharp downpour forced Lucknow Super Giants and Chennai Super Kings to split points as their IPL match was called off Wednesday. This is the first game in the 16th edition of IPL that had to be called off midway due to rain. Rain stopped play in the 20th over but by then Badoni, who came in at 44/5 had put his team in a position of respectability (125/7 in 19.2 overs) on a very difficult surface. With 11 points from 10 games, LSG and CSK are placed second and third on points table respectively. LSG (+0.639) have a better net run-rate compared to CSK (+0.329). Moeen Ali (2/13), Ravindra Jadeja (1/11) and Maheesh Theekshana (2/37) bowled well for CSK.



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Hyderabad, May 3:** Sunrisers Hyderabad will expect more consistency from their top-order when they host Kolkata Knight Riders in an IPL match here Thursday. Both teams are languishing at the bottom of the table and another loss will put a serious dent in their playoff qualification chances.

Getting Abhishek Sharma back to open worked in the previous game for Sunrisers and now they will be hoping their other opener, Mayank Agarwal, to find some fluency.

The batting as a whole has not clicked for Sunrisers and therefore it is not a surprise they find themselves in a desperate situation in the second half of the tournament.

While Agarwal is striking at an underwhelming 110 at the top, number three Rahul Tripathi is not faring any better either. Skipper Aiden Markram too needs to lead from the front and Harry Brook, despite scoring a hundred, has failed in majority of the games. He is back in the middle order and the management will be hoping that he finds some rhythm.

All-rounder Washington Sundar being ruled out of the IPL due to injury is a big blow to Sunrisers. Pacer Umran Malik has the worst economy rate among the bowlers and has only taken five wickets in seven games, contributing to the

team's woes. KKR too would be expecting more fluency from their batters as they look to get their campaign back on track after six defeats in nine games. They have been found wanting in all three departments of the game, something that was mentioned by skipper Nitish Rana after the loss to Gujarat Giants.

Rana has not shown the consistency that is expected of him while N Jagadeesan has struggled at the top. Both Jason Roy and Rahmanullah Gurbaz have shown good form at the top but the management can only play one of them.

The pace bowlers leaking runs has also been hurting KKR. All-rounder Andre Russell and Shardul Thakur have conceded more than 10 runs per over. Harshit Rana did well in his first game and is likely to start again.

The spin trio of Varun Chakaravathy, Sunil Narine and Suyash Sharma has been effective but need support from the fast bowlers.



Teletcast: Star Sports channels

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**Mohali, May 3:** Ishan Kishan slammed a terrific 75 (41b, 7x4, 4x6) while Suryakumar Yadav brought out his wide array of shots in a whirlwind 66 (31b, 8x4, 2x6) as the duo shared a 116-run partnership for the third wicket to help Mumbai Indians chase down 215 and beat Punjab Kings by six wickets at the IS Bindra PCA Stadium Wednesday.

Mumbai have ten points and have gone past Punjab to be at sixth position in the points table.

Mumbai were dealt with a big blow in the opening over as Rohit Sharma danced down the pitch to flay over off-side against Rishi Dhawan. But the top-edge flew to the fielder in the deep, resulting in his dismissal for a three-ball duck.

Ishan got going by hitting Arshdeep Singh (1/66) for back-to-back fours through the off-side.

After Cameron Green collected two boundaries off Sam Curran through a top-edge and swipe, Kishan smacked length balls from Rishi over long-on for two sixes.

Nathan Ellis (2/34), coming in as an impact substitute for Prabhsimran Singh found success on the last ball of powerplay as Green pulled straight to deep mid-wicket. Suryakumar, Mumbai's impact player, was off the blocks with his pull, cuts and sweep off Rahul Chahar.

From the other end, Kishan danced down the pitch to hammer a four off Harpreet Brar and then sat down to smack his over deep mid-wicket for six. After flat-batting off Chahar for four, Kishan got his fifty in 29 balls.

The Mohali crowd found its voice when Suryakumar mistimed a cut

to short third man off Ellis and Kishan hooked straight to deep fine leg off Arshdeep. David chipped in with a cheeky dab off Curran for four and sliced off Arshdeep for the same result, before Tilak finished off the chase in style with a huge straight six slammed down the ground.

Earlier, uncapped Jitesh Sharma (49 n o, 27b, 5x4, 2x6) matched senior pro Liam Livingstone (82 n o, 42b, 7x4, 4x6) with flair and flamboyance as the duo stepped up in style in the back end to propel PBKS to 214/3. The duo stitched together 119 runs for the unbeaten fourth wicket off just 56 balls.

Livingstone was at his furious

## Arsenal see off Chelsea



ON THE DOUBLE: Martin Odegaard celebrates one of his goals against Chelsea

ASSOCIATED PRESS

**London, May 3:** Arsenal kept the Premier League title fight alive by beating up on a Chelsea team that seems to be in need of life support under Frank Lampard.

Arsenal returned to the top of the standings — for a day at least — by dismantling Chelsea 3-1 at the Emirates Stadium Tuesday to end a four-game winless run that saw its control of the title race slip away.

The Gunners channelled their disappointment over last week's 1-4 loss to rival Manchester City into a dominant first-half display, going 3-0 up inside 34 minutes as Chelsea slumped to a sixth straight loss in all competitions under Lampard. Martin Odegaard scored two nearly identical goals and Gabriel Jesus added the third. The visitors offered little in response until Chukwunonso Madueke pulled one back in the 65th.

The win put Arsenal two points above Manchester City atop the standings, but given that Pep Guardiola's team have two games in hand, they may not stay there for long.

Arsenal were coming off the loss to City and a run of three straight draws before that. But Mikel Arteta's team couldn't have asked for much easier opposition as they tried to get back on track.

Granit Xhaka created the two opening goals in similar fashion, sending a low cross into the box from the left to pick out Odegaard, who beat goalkeeper Kepa Arrizabalaga with his left foot both times.

That took any remaining air out of a Chelsea team who have noth-

## Sociedad stun Real

**SAN SEBASTIAN (SPAIN):** Second-placed Real Madrid suffered a 0-2 defeat at Real Sociedad after being reduced to 10 men early in the second half in La Liga Tuesday, leaving Barcelona on the brink of the title. Runaway leaders Barca will have the chance to clinch their 27th league crown with a win in their next game at city rivals Espanyol May 14. Barca moved to 82 points from 33 matches and extended their lead to 14 points over reigning champions Real Madrid. With only five games remaining, Real would only be able to reach 83 points if they win them all. Take Kubo opened the scoring for the hosts, before Dani Carvajal was sent off to the hour mark. The hosts then extended their lead in the 84th through 21-year-old Ander Barrenetxea.

ing to play for and are languishing in 12th place under their third manager of the season in Lampard, who is set to leave at the end of the campaign. Jesus slotted in the third just three minutes after Odegaard's second following a rebound.

Lampard gave former Arsenal striker Pierre-Emerick Aubameyang a rare start, but the Gunners' early domination meant that four of the forward's first seven touches in the game were kickoffs. He was taken off at halftime.

Madueke gave Chelsea a bit of hope as he got behind Oleksandr Zinchenko to meet a ball over the top and beat Aaron Ramsdale from close range.

## Women wrestlers move Supreme Court

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, May 3:** The seven women wrestlers, who have levelled allegations of sexual harassment against Wrestling Federation of India (WFI) chief Brij Bhushan Sharan Singh, Wednesday moved the Supreme Court seeking permission to file an affidavit in sealed cover.

April 28, Delhi Police had filed two FIRs against Singh on the allegations of the wrestlers, hours after Solicitor General Tushar Mehta, appearing for Delhi Police, had told the apex court that a case will be registered Friday.

Wednesday, the counsel representing the women wrestlers mentioned the matter before a bench comprising Chief Justice DY Chandrachud and Justice PS Narasimha and said he was seeking permission to file the affidavit in sealed cover before the court, which is slated to hear the matter Thursday.

He said they don't have any problem in supplying the copy of the affidavit to the solicitor general but it should not go in public domain. The bench permitted the counsel to bring the sealed cover affidavit on Thursday with advance copy to Mehta.

Mehta told the bench that investigation is going on in the case and the petitioners' can share these



materials with the investigation officer. When Mehta asked if he can share the material with the investigation officer, the bench said, "alright". The country's top wrestlers have been on a sit-in at Jantar Mantar in Delhi demanding action against Singh.

### Usha assures support

Facing criticism from all quarters for being insensitive towards the protesting wrestlers, IOA President PT Usha Wednesday met them at Jantar Mantar and assured the grapplers of her support, saying she was first an athlete and then an administrator.

Former sprinter Usha had come down heavily on the wrestlers for resuming their protest instead of

approaching the Indian Olympic Association (IOA) for their issues.

She had said that the wrestlers should have shown some discipline and that they had tarnished the country's image by hitting the streets, a comment that brought criticism for her and the IOA.

Usha left without speaking with the media but Bajrang Punia said she has assured them help. "Initially when she said that, we had felt very bad but then she said that her comments were misinterpreted. She said that she is first an athlete and then an administrator," said Bajrang.

"We told her that we want justice. We don't have a fight with the government or opposition or anyone

## Odisha FC eves thump ESU

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, May 3:** Odisha FC came out on top of Eastern Sporting Union with a clinical 4-0 victory in an early morning kick off Wednesday at the Transstadia Stadium in Ahmedabad.

Anju Tamang opened the scoring in the 17th minute, courtesy of a delightful assist from skipper Bala Devi. Anju then returned the favour in the 25th minute with a teasing cross that Bala headed into the net to double Odisha FC's lead. OFC went into the halftime break with a comfortable 2-0 lead.

The Bhubaneswar-based side had a perfect start after the change of ends with Lalrampari Grace making an immediate impact by delivering a precise cross to Jasoda Munda who scored to make it 3-0 for Odisha FC.

Eastern Union tried to play some long balls to put pressure on OFC but the defence was unmoved.



Lynda Kom closed a perfect morning by scoring OFC's fourth goal with virtually last kick of the game. The game ended with OFC emerg-

ing victorious with a score of 4-0. Odisha FC will next face Churchill Brothers FC at the Shahibaug Police Stadium May 5.

## NEWS IN BRIEF

### Indian archers assure two more medals

**TASHKENT:** Indian archers kept themselves in line for a clean sweep in compound section, while they also confirmed two medals in the recurve section to continue their dominance in the Asia Cup Stage II World Ranking Tournament, here Wednesday. Abhishek Verma set up a gold medal clash with teammate Amit, while Kushal Dalal also remained in hunt for a bronze in the men's compound individual section. Verma defeated Sreyge Khristich of Kazakhstan 148-140, while Amit got past his teammate Dalal 146-144, en route to the final. The compound women archers also followed suit when Raginee Markoo defeated Parneet Kaur 146-141, and Pragati got the better of Adel Zhebeninova of Kazakhstan 146-141 to make it an all-Indian individual final. In the men's recurve individual section, top-seeded Mirinal Chauhan overcame Alexandr Yerenenko of Kazakhstan in the shoot-off to advance into the final. Chauhan will face Wang Baobin of China in the men's recurve individual final Friday. In the recurve women's individual section too India stormed into the final after Sangeeta got the better of Yagn Xiaolei of China 6-4.

### Indian trap shooters impress at World Cup

**CAIRO:** Three Indian shotgun shooters, Bhowneesh Mendiratta, Prithviraj Tondaiman and Rajeshwari Kumari, ended day two of the trap qualification at the ISSF World Cup here Wednesday with a fighting chance to qualify for the top eight. Mendiratta was best placed with a four-round score of 94, giving him the 11th spot among medal contenders. Prithviraj was 13th with the same score, while Rajeshwari in women's trap, shot 88 over two days to be placed 14th in the 55-shooter field. In women's trap, besides Rajeshwari, Preeti Rajak shot 85 to be in 25th position while Shreyasi Singh was at 27th spot with a total of 84.