



RAKUL'S TAKE

Rakul Preet Singh says actors should be paid on the basis of their ability to pull crowd to the theatre, not the gender

LEISURE P2



WAGNER WARNS PULLOUT

Russia's main mercenary group Wagner announces plans to pull out of eastern Ukrainian city of Bakhmut

INTERNATIONAL P10



KL OUT OF IPL, WTC

Indian batter KL Rahul rules himself out of the IPL and the WTC final as he will undergo thigh surgery

SPORTS P12

CM nod to ₹111cr aid for kendu leaf workers

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, May 5: In what would benefit more than 8 lakh kendu leaf workers in Odisha, Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik Friday announced ₹111-crore financial assistance for them for the crop year 2022. In the first phase, the government had transferred assistance worth ₹83 crore directly in the bank accounts of the beneficiaries.

Kendu leaf is being collected in 22 districts. However, the financial assistance will not be distributed to the workers of Jharsuguda as the model code of conduct (MCC) is in force in view of ensuing bypoll. The workers of Jharsuguda will get the assistance after completion of the poll, officials said.

According to sources, over 8 lakh kendu leaf workers of Odisha will be benefited with the second phase assistance announced by the Chief Minister.

In the first phase, the government had transferred assistance worth ₹83 crore directly in the bank accounts of the beneficiaries. In total, a record amount of ₹194 crore has been sanctioned for the kendu leaf beneficiaries for the crop season 2022.

The announcement of the government will benefit 7.75 lakh kendu leaf pluckers, 40,000 binders and the remaining are seasonal staff.

More P3



IN LORD'S ABODE: Chief Justice of India DY Chandrachud visited the Srimandir in Puri, Friday, to have darshan of the sibling deities, as part of his two-day visit to the state (Report P3)

Article 355 invoked in violence-hit Manipur

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Imphal, May 5: A day after 'shoot-at-sight' order was issued by the BJP-ruled Manipur, the Centre Friday invoked Article 355 to control the situation arising out of violent protest over the Tribal Solidarity March organised by All Tribal Student Union Manipur opposing the ST status demand of non-tribal Meiteis.

Director General of Manipur Police, P Doungel while talking to the media said that after reviewing the overall situation, Article 355 has been imposed in the entire state allowing the Centre to take all necessary steps to bring the situation under control and protect the lives and properties of the people.

The police chief said that some miscreants looted arms from a police station in Bishnupur district and he urged them to return the arms and ammunition failing which stern action would be initiated against them.

"The situation in Manipur is expected to be brought under control in a day or two," the DGP said. Army and Assam Rifles continued to conduct flag marches in several trouble-prone districts of Manipur for the third day Friday even as sporadic incidents were reported from different areas. A defence spokesman Friday said that flag marches were underway in several areas specially in the most volatile Churachandpur district.

He claimed that the situation was brought under control in many areas through coordinated actions by all stakeholders.

Meanwhile, a CRPF CoBRA commando on leave was shot dead by armed assailants in his village in Manipur's Churachandpur district Friday, officials said. Constable Chonkhohlen Haokip of delta com-

What is Article 355?

Article 355 refers to the provision in the Indian Constitution which states that "It shall be the duty of the Union to protect every state against external aggression and internal disturbance and to ensure that the government of every state is carried on in accordance with the provisions of this Constitution". Article 355 is part of emergency provisions contained in Part XVIII of the Constitution of India, from Article 352 to 360.

SHAH REVIEWS SITUATION

New Delhi: Union Home Minister Amit Shah Friday reviewed the situation in Manipur with Chief Minister N Biren Singh and top officials, even as the Centre dispatched additional security forces and anti-riot vehicles to maintain peace there, sources said. Shah, who is closely monitoring the situation in Manipur and is in constant touch with top functionaries of the state and central governments throughout the day, held the review meeting through video conference. Shah is also taking regular inputs from security and intelligence agencies about the Manipur situation.

pany of the 204th CoBRA battalion was killed around 2-3 pm, they said.

The circumstances in which he was killed are not clear, but it is understood that some assailants donning police-like fatigue entered his village and killed him, said sources.

The Manipur government Thursday appointed Additional Director General of Police (Intelligence) Ashutosh Sinha as the overall Operational Commander to control the situation and bring normalcy in the state. **Contd...P4**

Five soldiers killed in Rajouri terror attack

The incident occurred during Indian Army's massive combing operation in the border districts of Rajouri and Poonch Friday, following the attack April 20

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Rajouri (J&K), May 5: Five Army personnel were killed and a major was injured Friday in an explosion triggered by terrorists in the thickly forested Kandi area in Jammu and Kashmir's Rajouri district where an operation was underway to flush out terrorists, officials said.

The operation, still underway (till 9:30pm), was launched following inputs about the presence of a group of terrorists involved in an ambush on an Army truck in Bhatta Dhurian of Poonch district last month, in which five security personnel were killed.

Before Friday's attack, the twin border districts of Poonch and Rajouri have witnessed seven major terrorist incidents since October 2021 in which 29 people, including 22 Army personnel, have been killed. As the anti-terrorist operation was underway, mobile internet facilities in the Rajouri area have been suspended.

According to a statement from the Army's Northern Command in the morning, its personnel have been conducting "relentless intelligence-based operations to flush out a group of terrorists involved in an ambush on an Army truck in the Tota Gali area of Bhatta Dhurian in Jammu region last month".

TERROR TIMELINE

APRIL 20, 2023: 5 soldiers were killed and another was injured after the terrorists attacked an Army vehicle in Bhatta Dhurian area of Poonch

JAN 1, 2023: Terrorists killed 7 civilians in twin attacks in Dhangril village in Rajouri

AUG 11, 2022: 5 soldiers were killed in a fideyean attack on a military camp in Rajouri

OCT 11, 2021: 5 soldiers were killed in Surankote terror attack

OCT 13 & 15, 2021: 3 soldiers and two jawans were killed in Dera Ki Gali

"On specific information about the presence of terrorists in Kandi Forest in Rajouri Sector, a joint operation was launched May 3. Around 7:30am Friday, a search team established contact with a group of terrorists well entrenched in a cave. The area is thickly vegetated with rocky and steep cliffs. Officials said additional troops of the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) and the Army were inducted into the area to put it in tight cordon so that terrorists do not escape from the spot.

The forces deployed drones and sniffer dogs and troops hit a cave hideout with heavy fire of mortars and grenades, they said. "The terrorists triggered an explosive de-

vice in retaliation," it said. In the morning, two Army men belonging to the Special Forces were killed and four, including the major, injured during the operation in Rajouri sector. Later in the day, three died in a hospital in Udhampur.

"There is a likelihood of casualties in the terrorist group and the operation is in progress," it said. The slain soldiers were lance naik Ruchin Singh Rawat from Gairsain in Uttarakhand, paratrooper Siddhant Chettri from Darjeeling in West Bengal, naik Arvind Kumar from Kangra district in Himachal Pradesh, havildar Neelam Singh from Jammu and paratrooper Pramod Negi from Sirmaur in Himachal Pradesh.

Meanwhile, the weatherman Friday issued yellow warning for 23 districts where thunderstorm with lightning is very likely to occur at one or two places during next 24 hours. The districts for which the yellow warning has been issued are: Balasore, Bhadrak, Jajpur, Kendrapara, Cuttack, Jagatsinghpur, Puri, Khurda, Nayagarh, Ganjam, Gajapati, Malkangiri, Koraput, Rayagada, Kandhamal, Mayurbhanj, Keonjhar, Sundargarh, Jharsuguda, Nuapada, Bolangir, Nabarangpur and Kalahandi.

RED FLAG ON PURI BEACH

PNN & AGENCIES

Puri, May 5: The district administration here Friday put Red flag in Sector 12, 13 and 14 of the sea beach here after four tourists drowned in the sea in two consecutive days.

Four tourists, two each, drowned April 3 and 4 in the sea near sector 13 of the beach close to the Swargadwar area.

The district administration has deployed more lifeguards, fire services and police personnel in Sectors 12, 13 and 14 where drowning cases were reported in the recent past. The Red flag indicating danger has been on display as a warning for the visitors. Police and Fire Services personnel were seen sensitising the tourists going for sea bath to take the help of lifeguards. Sea vessels are patrolling these sectors of the coast to prevent drowning.

STATE GETS 268% SURPLUS RAIN DURING MARCH TO MAY

PNN & AGENCIES

New Delhi, May 5: Odisha and other states in central India have recorded 268 per cent surplus rainfall - 67 mm against the normal of 18.2 mm - during the period from March 1 to May 3, as per the India Meteorological Department (IMD) data.

Meanwhile, the weatherman Friday issued yellow warning for 23 districts where thunderstorm with lightning is very likely to occur at one or two places during next 24 hours. The districts for which the

Pawar relents, to remain NCP chief

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, May 5: Sharad Pawar Friday said he has decided to rescind his decision to step down as Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) president, owing to pressure from party leaders and workers.

"I can't disrespect your sentiments. Due to your love, I am accepting the demand that was made to me to withdraw my resignation," Pawar, 82, told reporters, hours after the NCP panel selected by him to pick his successor passed a resolution that he continue as the party president. Senior NCP leader Ajit Pawar, who was seen backing his uncle's decision to step down when he made that announcement on May 2, was not seen at the NCP chief's press conference.

Asked about Ajit Pawar's absence at Friday's press briefing, Sharad Pawar told reporters, "not all people can be at all places", and asked media not to read too much in his nephew's absence. Pawar said his daughter and MP Supriya Sule declined to a suggestion by party leaders to become NCP working president.

Pawar's resignation announcement Tuesday had sent shockwaves among the party cadre. After pressure from party workers and leaders had mounted, Pawar had said he would take two-three days to rethink his decision. Pawar said he could not disrespect the sentiments of his colleagues and party workers who insisted that he withdraw his decision. **P8**

IRREGULAR by MANJUL



What do you mean you don't know him! The one crying on the mic is the most powerful leader ever

MARKET WATCH

INDEX	VAIATION
SENSEX	61054.29 ↓ 694.96
NIFTY	18069.00 ↓ 186.80
DOLLAR	81.78 ↓ ₹0.01
EURO	90.01 ↑ ₹0.04
GOLD	₹60,535 ↓ ₹958
SILVER	₹76,708 ↓ ₹1330

WEATHER

	BHUB	CTK
TEMP MAX	35.8°C	35.8°C
TEMP MIN	26.2°C	26.0°C
Humidity	90%	78%
Rainfall	38mm	Nil
Forecast	Light to moderate rain	

SHORT TAKES

WHO: Cov no longer health emergency

London: Covid-19 no longer represents a global health emergency, the World Health Organisation (WHO) said Friday, a major step towards the end of the pandemic that has killed more than 6.9 million people, disrupted the global economy and ravaged communities. "Yesterday, the Emergency Committee met for the 15th time and recommended to me that I declare an end to the public health emergency of international concern. I've accepted that advice. It's therefore with great hope that I declare Covid-19 over as a global health emergency," said WHO Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus. The death rate has slowed from 1 lakh per week in Jan 2021 to 3,500 in the last week. **P10**

Gunman kills eight in Serbia

Belgrade: A gunman apparently shooting at random killed eight people and wounded 14 in three Serbian villages, authorities said, shaking a nation still in the throes of grief over a mass shooting a day earlier. Police arrested a suspect Friday after an all-night manhunt. Serbian President Aleksandar Vucic called on Thursday's shooting an attack on the whole nation. It came a day after a 13-year-old boy used his father's guns to kill eight fellow students and a guard at a school in Belgrade, the capital. Police said a suspect, identified by the initials UB, was arrested near the central Serbian town of Kragujevac, about 100 km south of Belgrade. **P10**

Students face music for skipping 'Mann Ki Baat'

AGENCIES

Dehradun, May 5: In a bizarre incident, a school in BJP-ruled Uttarakhand has reportedly collected a fine of ₹100 from each student who didn't listen to Prime Minister Narendra Modi's monthly radio show 'Mann Ki Baat' following which the state's Education department has issued a notice to the institution seeking a reply within three days, an official said Friday.

Orders in this regard have been issued by the school management in the internal WhatsApp group of the school.

President of the National Association for Parents and Students Rights, Arif Khan, has written a letter to the chief edu-

Orders regarding collection of penalty have been issued by management of GRD Niranjanpur Academy of Dehradun in the internal WhatsApp group

President of the National Association for Parents and Students Rights, Arif Khan, has written a letter to the chief education officer, Dehradun, demanding action in this matter

The Education department has issued a notice to the school and sought a reply within three days

cation officer, Dehradun, demanding action in this matter. The Education department has issued a notice to the school and

sought a reply within three days. Arif Khan said, "GRD Niranjanpur Academy of Dehradun has issued an order to bring a fine

leisure



AMBER QUILTS HOLLYWOOD, MOVES TO MADRID WITH YOUNG DAUGHTER

Actress Amber Heard has reportedly quit Hollywood and moved to Madrid, Spain. "I can reveal that Heard has quit Hollywood and quietly relocated to Spain with her young daughter Oonagh," the *Daily Mail* claimed in an article published Thursday, reports *pagesix.com*.

JLO VOWS TO QUIT IF SHE FINDS AFFLECK CHEATING ON HER

After marrying him last year, actress-singer Jennifer Lopez has said that she would walk out on her filmmaker-actor husband Ben Affleck if she found out he had cheated. She was responding to a question when asked how would she react if she found out Ben had cheated.



FORTUNE FORECAST

GaneshSpeaks.com
accuracy • reliability • trust
FOR ASTROLOGY DIAL 55181

ARIES
You will put your eloquence to excellent use today, and it will be praised by one and all, particularly by members of the opposite sex, and you will bask in all the glory. However, Ganesh suggests that you spare some time for meditation to balance your internal and external worlds.

TAURUS
Today, you will be ruled by your heart, not your head, says Ganesh. You are likely to be driven by your feelings, emotions and sentiments. Most of the decisions taken today will be based on emotion, not reason. You need to be carefully that your sensitivity and emotionality does not expose you to hurt. Do not let anyone upset you. Stay calm and collected.

GEMINI
You will express your feeling and opinions to people close to you and earn their support and wishes. However, you will still feel the need to be in solitude and peace in the later half of the day. Spending time with friends and family will ease your troubled mind more effectively, says Ganesh.

CANCER
Your day can be full of hurdles, feels Ganesh. Be careful of womenfolk. Discard with friends on petty issue is likely. Pending work will be finished. Be optimistic, says Ganesh.

LEO
You will take some progressive decisions in the morning. However, your positivity will fade away as the day progresses and you will take a pessimistic view of things. This could affect your decisions. You will accomplish more in the later half of the day, says Ganesh.

VIRGO
As per indications you will be able to effect all the changes in your office space that you had desired. Monetary inflows will be immense, and your near and dear ones will love it. Ganesh says you will charm yourself into the hearts of the members of the opposite gender.

LIBRA
Ganesh says you will try to impress other people with your appearance and personality. Under current circumstances there are chances of you falling in love with a new person who will become your beloved. The time spent with this person will be unforgettable says Ganesh, as love is in the air. Make the most of the day.

SCORPIO
You have all the qualities of becoming a team leader. And today, you have the opportunity to showcase your skills and abilities for the same. A dynamic personality yourself, you are likely to prove that you are the sailor of stormy seas.

SAGITTARIUS
Today, you may discover your innate talents and will be recognised for that with a huge round of applause. Aiming to carve a niche for yourself, you may take up Herculean task at work under the guidance of your boss. Way to go!

CAPRICORN
You will be in chirpy mood today, want to do anything and everything. Business opportunities will grab your eye balls, and you want to go ahead with those ideas. Ganesh predicts you will succeed in these ventures as luck is by your side. Socially, you will be busy as you will meet a lot of people and impress them with your wit and humour.

AQUARIUS
You work while you work and play while you play. This approach certainly contributes a lot to your success, says Ganesh. You stay focused on your goal and make each step boldly, but wisely. Enjoy the evening in the presence of your friends and family members, and bring a joyous end to the day, says Ganesh.

PISCES
It is best that you concentrate single-mindedly on the task at hand at the workplace, rather than diverting your attention to other things, if you want to meet all your deadlines today, says Ganesh.

Rakul's take on pay parity



Mumbai: Rakul Preet Singh Friday said fee of actors should be decided on the basis of their ability to draw the audiences to the theatre and not gender. Recently actor Priyanka Chopra Jonas said Prime Video series *Citadel* was the first project in her 22-year career where she had pay parity with her male co-actor.

Referring to Priyanka's comments, Rakul said she had "a very different opinion" on the long-debated issue of equal pay for both male and female actors. "When Priyanka

Chopra said what she said... I feel she has become a global icon, she can pull crowds to theatres. What really needs to happen is that your pay needs to be decided on how much crowd you're pulling to theatres as opposed to your gender - that's more important.

"Because when we stop having these questions or conversations on pay parity based on men and women, then the scenario would change. If you're attracting an audience, you should be paid based on some proportional math, but not on gender," the actor said during a panel discussion titled Women in Cinema at FICCI Frames 2023 here.

Kangana shares common challenges of directing

Mumbai: Sharing the challenges of directing a film, actress-filmmaker Kangana Ranaut says a director is faced with a "minimum of 400-500 questions" every day. Kangana took to Instagram story, where she shared an interview of American film director Martin Scorsese who is talking about framing and blocking a scene.

The actress, who ventured into directing films in 2019 with *Manikarnika: The Queen of Jhansi* wrote alongside the post: "Most challenging things about direction is... A director is faced with minimum of 400-500 questions every day from all departments, camera, art, actors, make up, production and of course the direction department..."

She added: "Trust me what you want to do as a director is easier to do than to explain... limiting your vision to words is rather agonising that's why

best teams are those who read emotions and energy and doesn't get entangled in words... and best directors are those who let those emotions lead them not ambition."

Her next directorial is *Emergency*, where she will be seen playing the former Prime Minister Indira Gandhi. It also stars Anupam Kher, Mahima Chaudhry, Vishak Nair, Satish Kaushik, Milind Soman and Shreyas Talpade in prominent roles.



Saiyami pledges support for young female athletes

Mumbai: Actress Saiyami Kher has pledged to support young female athletes. The actress said she wants to do her bit for the girls who want to pursue sports.

The actress, who will be seen playing a para athlete in the upcoming movie *Ghoomer*, said: "I have always wished to do something for girls in sports and I am trying to do my bit. I am very glad that there is so much being done for women in sport now. At this point, even if my involvement is in a small way, I believe every

drop in the ocean counts."

"Kavita Raut (India's long distance runner) was sponsored first by an NGO started by my parents in Nasik. And I feel so proud to see all that she's achieved. Just feel that if I can contribute to helping young female athletes achieve their dreams, I would be very happy," the actress said.

She added: "The last three years I have helped a vegetable vendor's daughter to complete her engineering in electrical and telecommunications and will be helping young individual female athletes in my capacity. I hope I come to a point to start my own organisation because this is something very close to my heart."

Saas Bahu Aur Flamingo: Explosive and addictive



Set in an alternate universe where morality is skewed, and betrayal could cost you your life, a matriarch, Savitri (Dimple), runs her dystopian world fearlessly - and unapologetically. But soon Savitri's survival hangs on a thread as her rivals zero in to destroy her existence. Will her family, fractured by their greed for power, unite to fight their enemies or will they stab each other in the back?

The intriguing cliffhangers and brilliant performances are the USP of this show created by maverick filmmaker Homi Adajania, who fearlessly narrates a dystopian family drama headlined by bold, unapologetic women.

The series starts with a Deputy CM's son overdosing on a drug in a nightclub, which leads a passionate ACP to track down the

DIRECTION: Homi Adajania
CAST: Dimple Kapadia, Radhika Madan, Angira Dhar, Isha Talwar and others

drug's creator. And then, we are introduced to Savitri/Rani Ba, a tough matriarch who runs an empire in the inaccessible Borderlands with an army of women. A product of these brutal lands, Savitri (Dimple), a young pregnant gypsy woman, witnesses her husband's murder; she is raped, tortured and left to die in the middle of a desert. But instead of giving up and dying, young Savitri rises from the ashes, turns her back on the world and creates her own destiny.

We soon discover that Savitri runs a cooperative society, which produces handicrafts, but is in reality a front for the biggest cocaine manufacturing brand known as Flamingo. Her empire stretches all the way from the subcontinent to Europe.

The series is crafted amazingly well. The screenplay allows the actors to get deep under the skin of their characters and create something that's sublime, entertaining and uniquely refreshing. Radhika Madan is seen in a brand new while Isha Talwar and Angira Dhar are a revelation. Ashish Verma and Varun Mitra, are a riot to watch and infuse so much colour into the plot. Deepak Dobriyal is cold and unpredictable with an insatiable hatred for Savitri; his character will give people sleepless nights. Dimple, as Savitri, is the rockstar of the series; she owns her duality, swinging from compassionate to ruthless with the same passion.

The series is definitely an immersive family drama with a high dose of blood, sex, drugs, romance, and action. All the performances and even the supporting actors (special mention here of the effortless Monica Dogra) are brilliant. This one is a sure-shot winner.

PEANUTS



CALVIN AND HOBBS

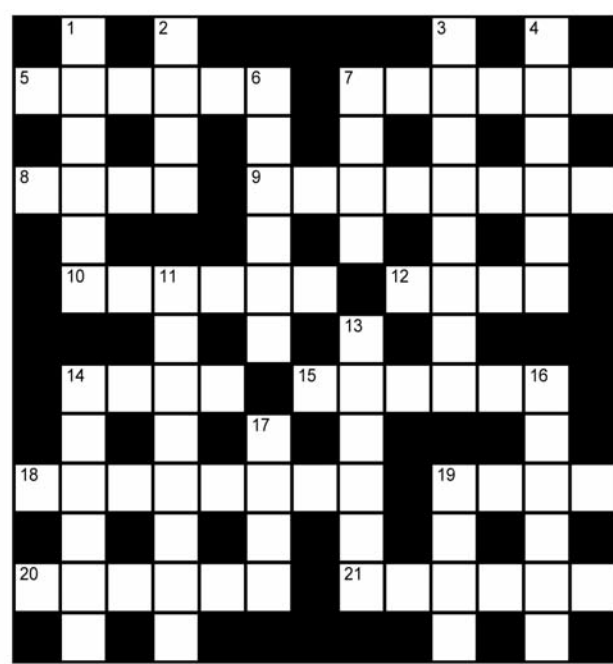


BREVITY



FUN post

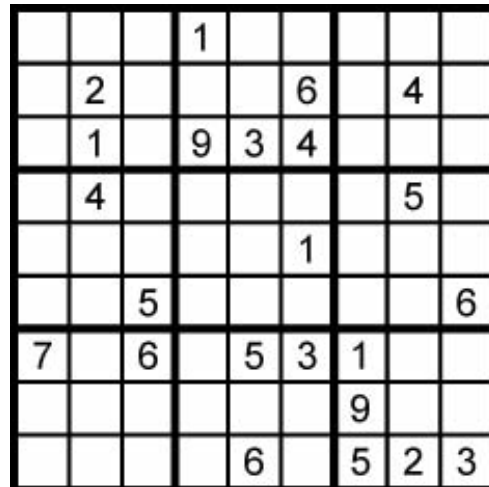
CROSSWORD



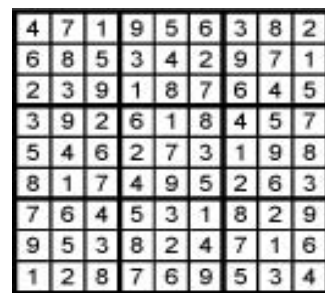
- Across**
- 5 Strong and aggressive woman
 - 7 Makes a clean breast of it (4,2)
 - 8 Begrudge
 - 9 Pilot's concern
 - 10 Lemon colour
 - 12 After-dinner candy
 - 14 Give a shove
 - 15 Crude
 - 18 Observe (4,4)
 - 19 Twilight
 - 20 Referee
 - 21 Relish
 - 6 Public speaker
 - 7 Pledge
 - 11 Eavesdrop (6,2)
 - 13 *The Fall of Man* artist
 - 14 Hospital or Red Cross supply
 - 16 Bring back from the brink
 - 17 Sulk
 - 19 Small pigeon
- Down**
- 1 Type of bean
 - 2 On one's guard
 - 3 Needlecraft
 - 4 Frequent TV personality; learned person

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



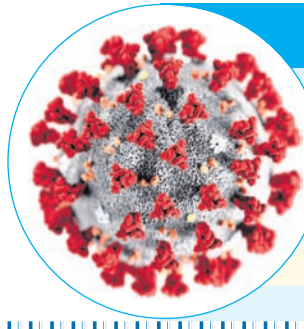
CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW

downtown



YOUNG MINDS

Students take part in a drawing competition at Hindi Teacher Training Institute in Cuttack, Friday



COVID-19 TRACKER

	INFECTED	RECOVERED	DEAD
World	68,76,00,968	66,00,33,965	68,69,839
India	4,49,64,289	4,43,99,415	5,31,642
Odisha	13,36,304	13,26,915	9,204

CM announces ₹111cr for kendu leaf pluckers



POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, May 5: Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik Friday announced a ₹111-crore financial package for 8 lakh kendu leaf pluckers and people associated with trade of the forest produce.

This is the second phase of financial assistance to be given to the people engaged in kendu leaf trade in 2022.

In the first phase, ₹83 crore was sanctioned for the benefit of kendu leaf pluckers.

Together, the financial assistance for kendu leaf pluckers and people associated with the trade has now become ₹194 crore for 2022, which is the 'highest ever' financial aid in any crop season, as per the state government

Every kendu leaf plucker and each of those associated with the trade will get financial assistance of ₹1,000 along with ₹200 and ₹160 for water bottles and sandals respectively

Similarly, ₹1,500 will be given as financial assistance to each regular and seasonal worker. The state government has been demanding the withdrawal of Goods and Services Tax (GST) on the collection of kendu leaf.

Incidentally, Odisha is the third largest producer of kendu leaf, contributing 20 per cent of the annual production in the country. At least 18 districts, including Bargarh, Bolangir, Sundargarh, Angul, Deogarh, Kalahandi, Kandhamal, Malkanagiri, Nabarangpur, Koraput and Sambalpur, have the maximum kendu leaf growing areas.

More than 8 lakh people will get the benefits, it said, adding that the assistance will be given to beneficiaries of Jharsuguda district after the May 10 bypoll there.

Kendu leaf is a non-wood forest produce and such leaves are used for rolling 'bidsis'.

Every kendu leaf plucker and each of those associated with the trade will get financial assistance of ₹1,000 along with ₹200 and ₹160 for water bottles and sandals respectively, the CMO said.

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MARK OF GRATITUDE: People from Agharia community of western Odisha pose for a photo with Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik at his residence in Bhubaneswar, Friday, as they express gratitude to the CM for providing land towards construction of Agharia Samaj Bhawan

CJI offers prayers at Srimandir

PNN & AGENCIES

Puri, May 5: Chief Justice of India (CJI) DY Chandrachud, who is on a two-day visit to Odisha, offered prayers to Lord Jagannath and His siblings, Lord Balabhadra and Devi Subhadra, at Srimandir here, Friday.

The CJI was accorded a warm welcome by Orissa High Court Chief Justice SMuralidhar, Chief Secretary PK Jena, Advocate General Ashok Kumar Parija and Shree Jagannath Temple



CJI DY Chandrachud leaving City airport for Puri, Friday

Administration (SJTA) chief administrator Ranjan Kumar Das.

Puri District Magistrate Samartha Verma and SP K Vishal Singh were

also present to receive the CJI at the Lion's Gate of the 12th century shrine.

The CJI had darshan of the deities on the Ratna Simhasan from a distance. He also offered prayers to Devi Mahalaxmi, Devi Vimala and other deities on the temple premises.

The Chief Secretary presented Khandua (the holy cloth used by the deity) and other items to the CJI.

The CJI will attend an official function at the Odisha Judicial Academy in Cuttack Saturday.

CYCLONE FEAR: STATE ASKS 18 DISTTS TO BE READY

AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, May 5: The state government Friday asked the Collectors of 18 coastal and adjoining districts to be prepared for any eventuality in view of the forecast of a cyclonic storm.

A cyclonic circulation is likely to develop over southeast Bay of Bengal Saturday. Under its influence, a low-pressure area is likely to form over the same region Sunday. It is likely to intensify into a depression over the southeast Bay of Bengal

Monday, the weather office said.

Thereafter, it is likely to further intensify into a cyclonic storm while moving nearly northwards towards the central Bay of Bengal, it said. "The path of the system's movement and other parameters could be provided after the formation of the low-pressure area Sunday," India Meteorological Department (IMD) director general Mrutyunjay Mohapatra said.

The system is under constant watch and being monitored regularly, but no advisory has been issued in regard to the cyclone,

he said.

A Yellow warning for rains along with thunderstorms has been issued for several districts of Odisha, including Balasore, Bhadrak, Jajpur, Kendrapara, Cuttack, and Puri.

In the advisory issued by the state government, Special Relief Commissioner Satyabrata Sahu advised the districts to be ready to face any eventuality.

People were told to keep watch on the weather and take safe shelter during the thunderstorm, and follow traffic advisories in urban areas.



AT LORD'S SERVICE: Bhoi servitors attach spokes to hubs for chariots at Rath Yard in Puri, Friday

OP PHOTO

NHRC seeks report on minor student's death in Sundargarh

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, May 5: The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) has sought an action taken report (ATR) from the District Magistrate (DM) of Sundargarh in connection with the death of a student after suffering burn injuries when hot dal fell on him in March this year.

While hearing a plea filed by rights activist Radhakanta Tripathy April 26, the commission asked the Sundargarh Collector to submit the report within four weeks.

The Supreme Court lawyer had informed the NHRC that a Class VIII student of Dengula High School in Sundargarh died March 12 after he suffered burn injuries when hot dal fell on him while he was helping the hostel's cook.

About the incident, the rights activist said Gelet Hanhaga, 14, had gone near the kitchen of the hostel March 6 when the cook asked the minor boy to help him shift the utensil containing the hot dal.

When Gelet was shifting the container, it slipped from his hand and the hot dal fell on his leg. Soon, he was taken to Koida community health centre and later to Rourkela Government Hospital where he died March 12.

"Alleging that students are often engaged in cooking at the school's hostel, locals demanded an investigation into the matter. Engaging the minor student in works other than studies in the school led to the tragic death. It amounts to serious violation of human rights of the minor," Tripathy further alleged.

The incident occurred at the hostel of the residential school under the ST&SC Development department in Sundargarh. As per sources, three cooks of the school were removed by the Sundargarh district administration following the tragic incident. Sources said soon after the mishap, the headmistress of the school and welfare extension officer of Koida were placed under suspension.

'Mo Bus' likely in Sambalpur

POST NEWS NETWORK

Sambalpur, May 5: If things go well, Mo Bus services will be launched here in September as the district administration has initiated process for the initiative.

According to sources, a patch of land for the bus stand has been identified along Kainsir road under Sambalpur Municipal Corporation. The land acquisition will be initiated soon, people in know of the development said Friday.

As many as 100 buses will ply in two phases, they added.

Currently city bus service is available in Sambalpur, and total 42 buses are running on different routes. However, due to traffic congestion and other issues, these buses are not running inside the City. City buses are instead plying from Sambalpur to Hirakud, Burla and neighbouring districts Jharsuguda and Bargarh.



The district administration has prepared and sent a detailed report about the number of vehicles that will run on different routes, bus stand and other related arrangements for the initiative.

The bus service will commence after getting approval from the Transport department. Northern Revenue Commissioner Suresh Chandra Dalai and SMC Commissioner Pradeep Sahu have identified the land for construction of a modern bus stand over 4.5 acre of land. Mo Buses will operate from this new bus stand after its completion, they said.

However, Sahu said that the Mo Bus service for Sambalpur has not been finalised yet and approval also has not come. Diesel-run buses are difficult to induct. Now, only the process has been started, added Sahu.

In a first, docs perform brain surgery on baby in womb

VEIN OF GALEN MALFORMATION (VOGM) IS A RARE BLOOD VESSEL ABNORMALITY IN BRAIN IN WHICH MISSHAPEN ARTERIES CONNECT DIRECTLY WITH VEINS INSTEAD OF CAPILLARIES, WHICH SLOWS BLOOD FLOW, AND HIGH-PRESSURE BLOOD CAN RUSH INTO THE BRAIN, ACCORDING TO BOSTON CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL

US doctors have saved a baby in the womb from a deadly genetic disorder with a first-of-its-kind brain surgery.

The in-utero surgery, published in the American Heart Association's journal Stroke, was performed on a foetus with a gestational age of 34 weeks and 2 days. It was done to repair a potentially deadly developmental condition by treating an aggressive vascular malformation, called vein of Galen malformation.

The baby girl Denver Coleman was born two days post-surgery with no birth defects and limited complications at 1.9kg. She is doing

well now, and is not on any medication, said the team from Boston Children's Hospital and Brigham and Women's Hospital, who performed the surgery - in-utero embolisation - as part of a clinical trial, and with oversight from the US Food and Drug Administration.

"In our ongoing clinical trial, we are using ultrasound-guided transuterine embolisation to address the vein of Galen malformation before birth, and in our first treated case, we were thrilled to see that the aggressive decline usually seen after birth simply did not appear," said lead study author Darren B Orbach, co-director of the Cerebrovascular Surgery & Interventions Centre at the Boston Children's Hospital.



who is also an associate professor of radiology at Harvard Medical School.

Due to premature rupture of membranes during the in-utero embolisation, the infant was delivered by induction of vaginal birth two days later.

Echocardiography after birth showed progressive normalisation

of cardiac output. In this case, the newborn did not require any cardiovascular support or surgery following the in-utero treatment and was watched in the neonatal intensive care unit for several weeks after birth because of prematurity before being sent home.

During that time, the newborn had a normal neurological exam and showed no strokes, fluid buildup or haemorrhage on brain MRI. It is estimated that VOGM, the most common congenital vascular brain malformation, occurs in as many as one in every 60,000 births. VOGM is most often first seen on a prenatal ultrasound and is definitively diagnosed by MRI during the late second or third trimester of pregnancy.

However, the procedure was not without its limitations, said Colin P Derdeyn, a neurointerventional radiologist at University of Iowa Health Care, who performs VOGM embolisations on neonates and who was not involved with the study.

"The key advance here is to intervene before the physiologic events of birth can cause life-threatening heart failure. There are caveats; one successful case is not enough experience for us to conclude that the risks of this procedure are worth the benefits. Safety issues may crop up in future procedures, and this approach through the veins may not be consistently successful in preventing heart failure. The procedure described here is designed to reduce the flow through the malformation and not to cure it," said Derdeyn.

"However, the positive hemodynamic changes that they observed in utero and after birth - reduction in flow, reduction in size of the draining vein, reversal of the abnormal reversed flow in the aorta - are really encouraging. These are some of the most exciting and surprising aspects of this case report," he added.

"This is pioneering work being done in a very careful and responsible way."

IAN S

CM inaugurates Concentrix Customer Experience Centre



The Customer Experience Centre, which will enable employment of 2,000 people initially, will further increase its employee pool to 5,000 in the near future

The decision to launch a new centre in Bhubaneswar was based on the City's strategic location, skilled workforce, and business-friendly environment, informed an executive

Spread over an area of 42,000 square feet, with a seating capacity of more than 1,300, the new site will support clients from across all industry verticals

Concentrix Senior Vice President Ravinder Rana said, "We are excited to bring our expertise to Bhubaneswar and tap into the local talent pool."

Expressing his gratitude to the state government for unparalleled support, Rana said the company will scale the business and generate several thousand job opportunities in next 3 to 5 years.

Patnaik assured to provide all sorts of assistance to increase the strength of the employees of the Customer Experience Centre which will enable a deployment of 2,000 employees which will further be increased to 5,000 in the near future.

On this occasion a MoU was signed between Rama Devi Women University and Concentrix to create job opportunities and empowerment of women.

out of 14 cities in the country.

Spread over 42,000 square feet area, with a seating capacity of more than 1,300, the new site will support clients across industry verticals. Located at the heart of the City, the centre is equipped with state-of-the-art infrastructure and technology to optimize operational efficiency.

"The decision to launch a new delivery centre in Bhubaneswar was based on the city's strategic location, skilled workforce, and business-friendly environment. The modern infrastructure and excellent connectivity make Bhubaneswar an ideal location for Concentrix to expand its operations," explained a company executive.

The new centre represents a significant milestone for Concentrix and is expected to create many job opportunities for local talent in Bhubaneswar and the surrounding areas.

Bhubaneswar, May 5: Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik, while inaugurating the state-of-the-art Customer Experience Centre of global customer experience solutions and technology firm Concentrix here, Friday, said that the opening of the centre in the City is a testament to his government's commitment to promote economic growth of the state.

Patnaik said, "The opening of the Concentrix customer experience centre in City is a testament to our commitment to promote economic growth and create job opportunities for the people of the state."

He further thanked Concentrix for reposing faith in 'New Odisha' by opening the centre and wished the company all the success.

With the addition of Bhubaneswar, Concentrix has further expanded its presence in India, now operating



FOUNDATION DAY: Agriculture and Farmers' Empowerment Minister Ranendra Pratap Swain inaugurates the 67th foundation day celebration of Boyanika at Boyan Bhawan in Bhubaneswar, Friday

State bags award for skill development

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, May 5: The state government has won a 'State Leadership Award' in skill development at the India Energy Storage Alliance (IESA) Industry Excellence Awards 2023. The award recognises the Odisha government's efforts towards building a skilled workforce that can drive the growth of the energy storage industry in the country.

By honouring trailblazers who have made significant contributions to the country's energy storage industry, through the Industry Excellence Awards 2023 India Energy Storage Alliance (IESA) celebrated the spirit of innovation and excellence in the industry.

Congratulating the awardees, IESA president Rahul Walawalkar said, "It was a privilege to get an opportunity to honour the tremendous



behind-the-scenes work done by various policymakers and bureaucrats from various ministries and acknowledge their achievements. I would also like to congratulate the startups, world class organisations and energy leaders on their win in this prestigious award programme."

Recently the state government

had organised first Odisha Skill Conclave at Kalinga stadium from April 20 to 22 where the state's achievements in skilling, and the vast existing and emerging opportunities across sectors were put on display. The government had signed several MoUs to promote skilling and create a robust skill ecosystem

The award recognises the state government's efforts towards building a skilled workforce that can drive the growth of the energy storage industry in the country

The state government has recently through Make in Odisha conclave prioritized training of youth in advanced technologies like cloud computing and artificial intelligence

with leading organisations and institutions in the state.

Furthermore, the state government has allocated a budget of Rs 100 crore for the 'NUA Odisha' scheme under which it plans to train 1,00,000 youth in future technologies like cloud computing, artificial intelligence, augmented reality-virtual reality, data science, 3-d printing, and other advanced knowledge.

21 more sites to soon undergo 'placemaking'

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, May 5: The Capital is set for another phase of redevelopment with 'placemaking' as 21 more sites have been selected to undergo a facelift very soon with an aim to transform public spaces of the City into vibrant, citizen-accessible areas that promote social interaction, community engagement while also adding to the aesthetic beauty.



For this purpose, a meeting was held in the new BMC ICOMC office recently under the chairmanship of Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC) commissioner Vijay Amruta Kulange.

To discuss the designs proposed for these sites, the meeting was attended by additional commissioner Mayur Suryawanshi, MUKTA deputy commissioner Manoranjan Sahu, OAS, along with MUKTA coordinators and officials of BDA's extended technical wing, Bhubaneswar

Among these 21 sites, 12 will be designed by the BUKC (Urban Knowledge Centre) team while the other 9 will be designed by the BMC.

"All these sites shall be developed under government's MUKTA (Mukhya Mantri Karma Tatpara Abhiyan) scheme. And the sites have been identified considering the accessibility, safety, legibility, environment of the area and the designs have been proposed accordingly post a perception survey conducted taking the opinions of the nearby locals," informed an official.

This survey took into consideration the opinions of the nearby locals during the planning and designing process. BUKC and BMC-PMU team presented their designs, which were then reviewed by the commissioner.

"Compared to other cities, the transformation of Bhubaneswar is a remarkable sight, and much of this change is due to the placemaking. It couldn't have been possible without the citizens of Bhubaneswar who have been actively using the installations. All due to their support and respect for the installations have made this a reality. Their cooperation has been the driving force behind the success," said the commissioner.

Millet food festival in City

Bhubaneswar: City food lovers got the chance to enjoy the delicacies made of millet at the Millet Food Festival organized by Odisha Millet Mission in association with City based Michael's Kitchen here Friday. The event celebrated millets and its various culinary possibilities. On the occasion, Arabinda Padhee principal secretary of the Agriculture department was present as chief guest. The festival will continue till May 20.



REMEMBERING GENIUS: Dignitaries, including state ST & SC Development Minister Jagannath Saraka and Odisha Sahitya Akademi president Hrusikesh Mallick, release a book on Pandit Raghunath Murmu at an event organised by the Akademi to mark his birth anniversary at Rabindra Mandap in Bhubaneswar, Friday

CONTINUED FROM P1

State gets 268% ...

East and northeast India recorded 29 per cent rain deficit - 141.5 mm against the normal of 199.9 mm - from March 1 to May 3.

Northwest India i.e. Punjab, Haryana, Delhi, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu and Kashmir, Ladakh and Uttarakhand, recorded 18 per cent more rainfall (98.3 mm against the normal of 83.4 mm), while the peninsular region received 88 per cent excess rain (102 mm against the normal of 54.2 mm) during this period.

It also said that Central India, including Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Odisha, Maharashtra, recorded 268 per cent surplus rainfall - 67 mm against the normal of 18.2 mm. Starting April 21-22, large parts of the country, barring the eastern and northeastern parts, experienced a prolonged wet spell owing to several back-to-back weather systems.

As a result, most parts of the country experienced significantly lower-than-normal day temperatures during the period. According to the IMD, not a single place

in India has reported a heatwave since April 21.

A senior IMD scientist said such a long period without heatwaves in April and May is "very rare".

May typically sees the highest number of heatwave days in India. During the month, temperatures can soar above 45 degrees Celsius, particularly in the north, northwest and central parts of the country.

A heatwave is declared if the maximum temperature of a station reaches at least 40 degree Celsius in the plains, at least 37 degrees Celsius in coastal areas and at least 30 degrees Celsius in hilly regions, and the departure from normal is at least 4.5 degrees Celsius.

Five soldiers killed...

Additional Director General of Police (ADGP) Mukesh Singh rushed to the spot and reviewed the security setup, they said.

The security forces have been engaged in a massive combing operation for the past 15 days in the twin border districts of

Rajouri and Poonch districts. The operations started after the attack on Army vehicle in Bhatta Dhurian in which five soldiers were killed and another was injured April 20.

More than 250 people were detained for questioning during combing operations. Six overground workers who extended full support to terrorists were arrested, they said. The terrorists have adopted a twin strategy of engaging troops or attacking people and then laying improvised explosive devices to trigger blast to target security forces. This also happened in Dhangri village in Rajouri where terrorists killed seven civilians in twin attacks January 1 this year.

Terrorists carried out an attack 11 October 2021 in Surankote, killing five soldiers, followed by the killing of three soldiers and two jawans in Dera ki Gali on October 13 and 15.

Art 355 in...

Sinha Friday said that 23 police stations, mostly in mountainous districts of the state, have been identified as most vulnerable

and Army and central para-military forces were deployed in these police stations. The ADGP, accompanied by senior other police officials, told the media that over 20,000 affected people of different communities have been evacuated and sheltered in safer places. "We urge the people not to fall prey to any rumour and if they need any assistance contact the nearby police stations and the government authorities," Sinha said.

Retired IPS officer Kuldiep Singh, a former CRPF Chief, has been appointed security advisor by the Manipur government. Meanwhile, more than five Deputy Inspector General (DIG) rank officers and seven senior superintendents of police (SSP) and SP-rank officers of the CRPF have been tasked to coordinate the deployment of various security forces in violence infested Manipur. A senior official of Manipur Home department said that Union Home Minister Amit Shah is closely monitoring the situation in Manipur round the clock and he is in constant touch with top functionaries of state and Centre.

The Home Minister since Thursday held two videoconference meetings with

Manipur Chief Minister N Biren Singh, State Chief Secretary, DGP, Union Home Secretary and other top officials.

Shah also spoke to Chief Ministers of several northeastern states and discussed the Manipur situation and about the well-being of the students and people living in Manipur. Various state governments of the northeastern states are in touch with the Manipur authorities on the safety and security of the students and people belonging to different northeastern states living in Manipur.

Assam, Nagaland, Tripura, Meghalaya, Mizoram governments have set up 24 X 7 help lines for the benefit of the students and people living in Manipur.

The situation turned seriously volatile after thousands turned up for the 'Tribal Solidarity March' Wednesday to oppose the demand for inclusion of the Meitei community in the Scheduled Tribe (ST) category. The valley is dominated by Meitei and they are seeking the ST category status, alleging infiltration from Bangladesh and Myanmar, destroying the demographic pattern in the state.

FEAT FOR RSP IN APRIL

AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, May 5: The Rourkela Steel Plant (RSP) has kicked off the financial year 2023-24 with its best April performance since inception in key production areas.

The steel plant produced 3,73,484 tonne of hot metal, 3,42,421 tonne of crude steel, and 3,00,616 tonne of saleable steel, which are the best for any April.

The Blast Furnace-5 registered its best April performance by producing 2,42,160 tonne of hot metal, while Steel Melting Shop-I and Steel Melting Shop-II also achieved their best April performance by producing 44,013 tonne and 2,98,408 tonne of crude steel, respectively.

The Sinter Plants contributed significantly to this performance, supplying a total of 6,05,884 tonne of sinter, which is a growth of 5.3 per cent over April 2022.

The Sinter Plant-3 also produced its best April performance by producing 312,188 tonne of sinter in the opening month of the current fiscal year.



Besides, the state-of-the-art Hot Strip Mill-2 produced a total of 1,58,321 tonne of HR Coils, which is its best April performance since inception.

The Captive Power Plant-3 of RSP generated 76.5 MW of power, achieving the best April power generation in CPP-1 & 3.

RSP director in-charge Atanu Bhowmick has congratulated the collective on this outstanding performance and emphasized upon the need to maintain this performance and strive to improve it even further throughout the rest of the financial year.

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BALANCING ACT: Inmates of Vivek Bharati Sevashram at Dagarpada under Khaira block in Balasore district display their acrobatic skills at a personality development camp held on its premises, Friday

In a first, President of India visits Similipal National Park

Murmu visited her hometown nearly after 10 months for the first time after becoming the President in July last year

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Baripada, May 5: President Droupadi Murmu Friday visited Similipal National Park and undertook a safari. Her visit to Similipal was the first by any President of India. Murmu, who stayed at her house in Rairangpur Thursday night, started the second day of her Mayurbhanj visit by paying tributes to Pandit Raghunath Murmu, the inventor of Ol Chiki script of Santali language, at his birthplace Dandabosh village on the occasion of his birth anniversary. Droupadi Murmu, the first tribal



president of the country, belongs to the Santal tribe. The Odisha government, which had supported Murmu's presidential candidature last year, has announced a ₹10 crore package for development of the Pandit Raghunath Murmu Memorial. Droupadi Murmu visited her hometown nearly after 10 months for the first time after becoming the President in July last year.

Similipal National Park authorities said elaborate arrangements have been made for the President's visit. She is scheduled to visit Chahala in the core area, where she will be served local tribal food and then taken to a guided to see deer, sambhar and elephants. Spread over 2,750 sq km area, the national park is home to Royal Bengal Tiger and Asian Elephant. The President is scheduled to visit waterfalls at Barehipani and Joranda. Barehipani is the second highest waterfall in India at 399 metres, while Joranda is 150 metre high. The national park has been made out of bounds for visitors for two days from May 4 in view of the President's visit. After her return from Similipal, she is scheduled to visit Baripada, where she will spend the night and attend the convocation of Maharaja Sriram Chandra Bhanja Deo University Saturday before flying back to Delhi.

Industry-less Kendrapara bears brunt of pollution

POST NEWS NETWORK

Kendrapara, May 5: Despite being a district devoid of industries, it still suffers from industrial pollution. Kendrapara has Bay of Bengal on one side while four districts surround it on three other sides.

The four districts – Cuttack, Jagatsinghpur, Jajpur and Bhubaneswar – surrounding Kendrapara have a number of industries. Hence the toxic pollutants released by these industries have a serious effect on this district's dwellers.

There are seven rivers and 27 channels that flow through Kendrapara. The water of all these rivers and channels has become toxic due to the emission of effluents from the industries in other districts. This not only affects the people residing in this district, but also the domestic animals, flora and fauna. No step has been taken till date by the district administration to clean the water and to prevent its pollution.

Local intellectuals and environmentalists have stated that they will soon attract the attention of the National Green Tribunal on this issue and lodge an official complaint.

Environmentalist Samarendra Mahali pointed out that 16 industries in neighbouring Jagatsinghpur district are responsible for such high-level of pollution in Kendrapara. Most of these industries emit poisonous gases like ammonia, nitrogen, hydrogen and sulphur dioxide that pollute the atmosphere to a great extent. Many waste chemicals are also released in rivers that flow through Kendrapara district. People and animals fall sick and some also die after drinking this contaminated water, stated Mahali. He added that due to this pollution people are hit



Polluted Gobari river in Kendrapara

by deadly diseases like cancer and agriculture also suffers.

Mahali said that despite repeated pleas to the district administration officials both in Jagatsinghpur and Kendrapara districts, nothing has been done to curb pollution.

Social worker Pratap Chandra Padhi said that the Central Ground Water Board had conducted a survey in 2011. He informed that large quantities of nitrates, iron and fluoride were found in the groundwater. In the report, it was clearly mentioned that if steps are not taken to check water contamination, agricultural productivity will be severely impacted. However, despite such a report, nothing has been done to prevent water contamination, he alleged.

A report was prepared by Professor BC Behera, Biotechnologist, Northern Odisha University, Professor RR Mishra, Biotechnologists, MITS, Bhubaneswar and Professor SK Dutta, IRS, Bangalore in the year 2014. In their report they had mentioned that both air and water have been contaminated severely. For

this the industries in these four districts could be responsible. Talcher and Kalinga Nagar industries are releasing their waste in Brahmani river. The water of Mahanadi is also contaminated by Cuttack, Jagatsinghpur and Dhamara port authorities. All these industries are using the roads of Kendrapara district but don't pay any urgent heed towards chemical pollution. These industrial districts are also not doing any expenditure from CSR funds in Kendrapara district, he alleged.

Social worker Subhasis Sarangi revealed that the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) had identified 112 most polluted areas across our country in the year 2021. Paradip Port was on 48th place in that list. Bhitarkanika National Park has been dropped from the world heritage list owing to pollution.

Asked in this regard, ADM Pitambar Samal said, a letter has been issued by district administration to State Pollution Control Board (SPCB) for a departmental enquiry. In the letter it has been requested to take strict action against these industries.

Girl born in Bargarh DHH toilet in critical condition



POST NEWS NETWORK

Bargarh, May 5: In a shocking incident, a woman gave birth to a girl child inside a toilet at Bargarh district headquarters hospital here. Subsequently, the child was recovered from the toilet pan in critical condition. The girl child is undergoing treatment at the hospital.

As per reports, one Bipin Mirdha of Kakrajhari village under Durguripali police limits of Subarnapur district admitted his pregnant wife Santoshini to the hospital at 11pm Thursday. However, she couldn't undergo health check-up as doctors were not available at that time. On the other hand, when Santoshini went to use the toilet Friday morning, she gave birth to a girl child inside the toilet with half of the

infant's body inside the toilet pan. After getting alerted, health workers and others recovered the child, said Santoshini. Locals said that the authorities should pay attention so that such incidents do not repeat in future.

Not more than a week ago, another pregnant woman had to rush to a private clinic owing to doctors' negligence at Bargarh district headquarters hospital. But by that time, the child had died and the child's body was recovered through a surgery.

Although government has taken many steps to prevent mother and child mortality with strict directions not to neglect in deliveries, maternity care and newborn child care, it is frequently found that these directions are not followed in the government-run hospitals.

J'khand CM Soren faces protest in Mayurbhanj

Baripada: Jharkhand Chief Minister Hemant Soren was shown black flags during his visit to the memorial of Pandit Raghunath Murmu in Mayurbhanj district Friday to pay his respects to the tribal icon who developed the Ol Chiki script for Santali language. Soren reached Dandabosh village on the outskirts of Rairangpur town after President Droupadi Murmu paid her tribute to the Santali scholar. Soon, former MP Salkhan Murmu led his supporters to the demonstration, alleging that Soren was working against the interest of tribals. They showed black flags to the Jharkhand chief minister, besides giving slogans against him. However, the police chased them away. Soren later addressed a gathering in the area.

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Leading the Power Sector

OMBADC WORKSHOP

Successful planning, implementation of projects in priority areas emphasised



POST NEWS NETWORK

Sundargarh, May 5: Various welfare programs are being implemented by the state government in target districts with the support from Odisha Mineral Bearing Areas Development Corporation (OMBADC). A district level workshop was organised by OMBADC, in collaboration with Sundargarh district administration, which emphasised on a systematic project planning and successful imple-

mentation of the flagship projects.

The orientation program was held Thursday at Sadbhavana Bhawan in Sundargarh. While attending the program, Manoj Mahajan, Chief Development Officer and Executive Officer, Zilla Parishad Sundargarh, outlined the need and impact of various welfare projects done under OMBADC funding in the district. He emphasised on a robust planning and coordinated efforts among the field

officials of concerned departments and project implementation agencies for successfully carrying out projects at the grassroots.

Jayant Kumar Das, General Manager (Operation), OMBADC, and Bhabani Prasad Das, General Manager (Finance) elaborated on preparing detailed project reports (DPR) while planning various projects. Team Leader, OMBADC Ambuj Prasad, made a presentation on various OMBADC supported projects being operational in the tribal dominated district of Sundargarh.

Various heads of departments, officials of govt line departments and field functionaries of implementing agencies participated in the workshop. Skill development and MIS experts from OMBADC also joined the program.

Sundargarh district administration with support from OMBADC is giving special attention to mega piped drinking water supply project, along with road connectivity in unconnected areas, modern Anganwadi centres for children, revamped high schools under High School Transformation programme of 5T, Bike Ambulances for healthcare in remote areas and livelihood generation programs for farmers, women and other interest groups.

Chola
Enter a better life

CHOLAMANDALAM INVESTMENT AND FINANCE COMPANY LIMITED
Corporate Office : 1st Floor, 'Dare House', No. 2, N. S. C. Bose Road, Chennai - 600 001
Regional Office : 55 & 55/1, Chowringhee Road, 5th Floor, Chowringhee Court
Opp. Nehru Children's Museum in Rabindra Sadan, Kolkata - 700 071, W.B.
Branch Address : 2nd Floor, Plot No. 394, Bomikhal, Near Santoshi Maa Temple, Cuttack Road, Rasulgurh, Bhubaneswar, Odisha, Pin - 751 010

E-AUCTION SALE NOTICE

E-auction Sale Notice for the Sale of immovable assets under Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002, read with Proviso to Rule 9(1) of Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002.

Notice is hereby given to the public in general and particular to the Borrower / Co-borrower / Mortgagee that the below described Immovable Property mortgaged to the Secured Creditor, the **Symbolic Possession** of which has been taken by the Authorised Officer of **Cholamandalam Investment and Finance Company Limited**, the same shall be referred herein after as **Cholamandalam Investment and Finance Company Limited**. The Secured Assets will be auctioned on **24.05.2023** on "AS IS WHERE IS", "AS IS WHAT IS" and "WHATEVER THERE IS" basis through E-auction.

It is hereby informed to General Public that we are going to conduct public E-Auction through website <https://bankauctions.in/>.

Sl. No.	Account No. and Name of the Borrower / Co-borrower / Mortgagee	Date & Amount as per Demand Notice U/s. 13(2)	Description of the Secured Assets (Immovable Property)	a) Reserve Price (RP) b) Earnest Money Deposit (EMD) c) Bid Increment Amt.	e) E-Auction Date and Time f) EMD Submission Last Date g) Inspection Date d) Date of Possession (Status of Possession)
1.	Loan A/c. Nos. : X0HEBHU00003323952, X0HEBHU00003397829 & HE02BHU00000001349	24.09.2021 Rs. 52,84,781.65 as on 23.09.2021	All that piece and parcel of the property situated at District - Khurda, Tahasil - Bhubaneswar S.R.O. - Bhubaneswar Sahar, under Baragarha Housing Accommodation Scheme of BDA, BDA allotted House Plot No. EB-373, Area - 805 Sq.ft. (35x23) as per Drawing No. B-342 corresponding to Revenue Khata No. 1611757, Revenue Plot No. 44027462, Area Ac. 01018 DcmI. Status - Pattadar, Kismam - Homestead, bounded on the : North by - EB 376, South by - Road, West by - EB 374, East by - EB-372.	a) Rs. 46,80,000.00 b) Rs. 4,68,000.00 c) Rs. 25,000.00	a) 24.05.2023 (11.00 A.M. to 1.00 P.M.) with unlimited extension of 5 min) b) 23.05.2023 (up to 5.00 P.M.) c) 16.05.2023 & 17.05.2023 (10.00 A.M to 1.00. P.M.) d) 13.01.2022 (Symbolic Possession)

1. All interested participants / bidders are requested to visit the website <https://bankauctions.in/>. For details, help, procedure and online training on E-auction prospective bidders may contact **M/s. 4 Closure**; Contact : U. Subbarao, Contact Number : 81420 00061, Odisha : 98365 22775, 79787 44193, E-mail ID : subbarao@bankauctions.in, bharathi@bankauctions.in

2. For further details on terms and conditions please visit <https://bankauctions.in/> to take part in E-auction.

THIS IS ALSO A STATUTORY 15 DAYS SALE NOTICE UNDER RULE 9(1) OF SECURITY INTEREST (ENFORCEMENT RULES 2002)

Date : 06.05.2023
Place : Bhubaneswar, Odisha

Cholamandalam Investment And Finance Company Limited
Authorised Officer

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CHOLAMANDALAM INVESTMENT AND FINANCE COMPANY LIMITED
Corporate Office : 1st Floor, 'Dare House', No. 2, N. S. C. Bose Road, Chennai - 600 001
Regional Office : 55 & 55/1, Chowringhee Road, 5th Floor, Chowringhee Court
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Branch Address : 2nd Floor, Plot No. 394, Bomikhal, Near Santoshi Maa Temple, Cuttack Road, Rasulgurh, Bhubaneswar, Odisha, Pin - 751 010

SYMBOLIC POSSESSION NOTICE UNDER RULE 8(1)

Whereas :

The undersigned being the Authorised Officer of **M/s. Cholamandalam Investment And Finance Company Limited**, under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 hereinafter called the Act in exercise of powers conferred under Section 13(12) read with Rules 9 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 issued a Demand Notice on the date mentioned the account calling upon the respective Borrowers, to repay the outstanding amount with interest thereon within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said notice.

The Borrowers having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the borrowers in particular and the Public in general that the undersigned has taken **Symbolic Possession** of the Property mortgaged with the Company described herein below on the date mentioned against the account in exercise of the powers conferred on him under Section 13(4) of the Act read with Rule 9 of the Rules made there under.

The Borrowers in particular and the Public in general are hereby cautioned not to deal with property mentioned herein below and any such dealings will be subject to the charge of **M/s. Cholamandalam Investment And Finance Company Limited** for an amount mentioned against the account along with interest and other charges.

Under Section 13(8) of the Securitisation Act, the borrowers can redeem the Secured Asset by payment of the entire outstanding including all costs, charges and expenses before notification of Sale.

Sl. No.	a) Loan Account Number b) Name and Address of Borrower / Co-borrower	Description of the Immovable Property	a) Date of Demand Notice b) Outstanding Amount c) Date of Symbolic Possession
1.	a) Loan Account Nos. : X0HEBHU00003323952, X0HEBHU00003397829 & HE02BHU00000001349 b) 1. Subrat Parida Flat Nos. 2A & 2C, 2nd Floor, Kream Apartment, Plot No. A/110, Saheed Nagar, Bhubaneswar, District - Khorda, Odisha, Pin - 751 007. 2. Ellora Parida Flat Nos. 2A & 2C, 2nd Floor, Kream Apartment, Plot No. A/110, Saheed Nagar, Bhubaneswar, District - Khorda, Odisha, Pin - 751 007. 3. M/s. Rajdhani Plumbing Stores Plot Nos. 88/3 & 88/4, Bapuji Nagar, Odisha, Bhubaneswar, Pin - 751 007.	District - Khurda, Tahasil - Bhubaneswar, DSRO - Bhubaneswar, P.S. - New Capital, P.S. No. 45, Mouza - Bhubaneswar Sahara Unit No. 11, Saheed Nagar, Mutation Khata No. 1032/451, Plot No. 74, Area Ac 0.133 Dec with Status - Pattadar (freehold), Kismam - Gharabari - 2, (Homestead) which corresponds to Khata No. 455, Plot No. 74, Area Ac 0.133 Dec which further corresponds to C.A. Plot No. A-110, Drawing No. 494, extent (Dimension and area) 65' X 90' = 5850 Sq.ft., Property / Premises is identified by Flat Nos. 2/A & 2/C, Type - 4 BHK in Second Floor having Super Built up Area 1509 together with proportionate undivided share of land Area Ac 0.008 dec out of Area Ac 0.133 dec in the project named and styled as "KREAM APARTMENT", Physical Bounded by : North - Road, South-Plot No. 109/A, East - Road, West - Plot No. 111/A.	a) 08.09.2022 b) Rs. 39,79,873.48 as on 06.09.2022 and interest thereon. c) 03.05.2023 (Symbolic Possession)

Date : 06.05.2023
Place : Bhubaneswar, Odisha

Cholamandalam Investment And Finance Company Limited
Authorised Officer

In each word, in each being, in each thing, in each atom is the Divine Presence and it is man's mission to manifest it

THE MOTHER



Dubious Distinction

Despite the practice being illegal across the country, eight people have died while cleaning sewers in various parts of Gujarat in March-April this year. Social activists however claim that the real number of such deaths is significantly higher. According to some reports, the state ranks second in the number of scavenger deaths in the entire country, which is a serious matter for Gujarat, which Prime Minister Narendra Modi never tires of proclaiming as the ideal model of development.

Certainly, this is embarrassing for Chief Minister Bhupendra Patel, and the opposition parties have promptly picked up the issue and sought to fix the blame on the state government, with calls for the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) to order a probe into these deaths. Since the issue is still hot, it is quite likely that finding themselves under fire a blame game could start with ministers blaming the bureaucrats. They may try to distance themselves from the issue, citing administrative failures as the root cause of the problem. On the other hand, the babus may argue that they have been hampered by a lack of resources and political support to address the issue effectively.

According to sources, the Chief Minister's Office (CMO) is aware of the issue's potential to snowball into a political crisis and is taking steps to swiftly defuse it. Some say that the Additional Chief Secretary Pankaj Joshi is likely to urge the babus to be more proactive in identifying and addressing instances of manual scavenging in their jurisdictions. There is also a suggestion for CM Bhupendra Patel to set up a task force to monitor the implementation of laws and policies related to manual scavenging and provide resources for the rehabilitation of manual scavengers. After all, the sheen of the much-vaunted 'Gujarat model' must be protected.

Not so 'Happening Haryana'

Haryana is no longer the most sought-after investment destination in India, with its share of new investment projects in the country slipping to a six-year low of 1% from almost 3% in 2021-22. Reportedly, investment plans in the state fell by a whopping 30% in 2022-23. More worrying is the news that manufacturing investments have declined by 60%. This is bad news for the Manohar Lal Khattar sarkar, which has a national election and the state Assembly elections approaching next year.



BABUDOM BYTES

Dilip Cherian

Sources have informed DKB that much of Khattar's investment woes coincide with the hasty enactment of a new law early last year that reserved 75% of private sector jobs with monthly salaries up to Rs 30,000 for locals. It came as a big jolt to the corporate sector. Though the law is currently in abeyance after being challenged judicially, the continuing suspense over its implementation may have a lot to do with investors holding tight to their purse strings.

While this local employment law was clearly brought in with political goals in mind, it has made investors jittery. It is widely believed that the legislation, if implemented, will potentially slow the post-Covid economic recovery, increase the compliance burden and usher in "inspector raj". Officially, of course, the government is going to town proclaiming that the legislation will encourage local employment, especially in unskilled jobs.

In all this, the babus are tight-lipped, of course, though sources have informed DKB that Chief Secretary Sanjeev Kaushal is discussing plans with senior colleagues to revive the state's image as one of the better states in the country for ease of business.

Strengthening governance

India's policy of strengthening relations with our neighbours has taken a new turn with the National Centre for Good Governance (NCGG) conducting capacity-building programmes for bureaucrats from neighbouring and extended countries. With the support of the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA), the NCGG is conducting these programmes as part of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's policy to strengthen India's ties with other nations in the region. The aim is to equip civil servants with the necessary skills and knowledge to govern effectively and efficiently.

The programmes focus on areas such as public administration, e-governance, digital transformation and leadership development. NCGG director general Bharat Lal roped in an impressive roster of distinguished experts, including Dinesh Dasa, former chairman of GPSC; Jishnu Barua, Chairman, Central Electricity Regulatory Commission (CERC); and Sanjay Bhattacharya, former senior diplomat, among others, to lead the sessions.

India's presidency of the G20 in 2023 provides an excellent opportunity to showcase these capacity-building programmes to the world. As the world's premier forum for international economic cooperation, the G20 provides an excellent platform for India to share its experience and best governance and capacity-building practices. Wisely, the Modi sarkar is hoping to use the G20 opportunity to promote capacity building as a key tool for achieving sustainable development goals, and to encourage other countries to adopt similar programmes.

Share a babu experience! Follow dilipthecherian@twitter.com. Let's multiply the effect

WISDOM CORNER

Who is helping you, don't forget them. Who is loving you, don't hate them. Who is trusting you, don't cheat them. SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

Share your knowledge. It is a way to achieve immortality. DALAI LAMA

Friendship is the highest form of Love where nothing is asked for, no condition, where one simply enjoys giving. OSHO

WORDSWORTH

Attercop

Many of us came across this word, meaning a spider, for the first and only time in the works of J R R Tolkien, and even perhaps suspected he had invented it. But his unfamiliar words were usually from ancient sources and attercop is a good example. Bilbo sang this in an episode in The Hobbit when he was distracting the spiders: Old fat spider spinning in a tree! Old fat spider can't see me! Attercop! Attercop! Won't you stop, Stop your spinning and look for me! It's still known — it appeared in the Yorkshire Post on 24 May in an article about Ian McMillan's work to create a modern dictionary of the Yorkshire dialect. He described it as an old-fashioned word that was still spoken in North Yorkshire, which could also mean a peevish person or a moaner. Mr McMillan provided an illustrative sentence: "Tha' won't go in cos' of an attercop? Tha's an attercop thissen!". [tha: you; thissen: yourself.] The word is Old English, from attor, poison + cop, the head. (Cop, or coppa, was also used by itself to mean a spider, so cobweb ought really to be spelled copweb.) The name was given to spiders in the mistaken belief that they were all poisonous to humans. By the sixteenth century it had begun to be applied to a cross-grained, ill-natured, figuratively venomous person.

FOCUS EASTERN EUROPE

COLONIAL TRAUMA



"Decoloniality," an intellectual framework for critiquing Western institutions, public discourse, and individual behavior, has been unable to confront Russia's genocidal war against Ukraine. That's because Western political and cultural institutions have long disregarded Eastern European perspectives in favor of the view from Moscow



Vasyl Cherepanyn

A VIABLE DECOLONIALITY REQUIRES RADICAL ENGAGEMENT. WHEN IT COMES TO BUILDING SUCH AN ANTI-IMPERIALIST DOMAIN, EUROPE'S WEST HAS A LOT TO LEARN FROM ITS EAST

After the fall of the Berlin Wall and the collapse of the USSR, it was generally believed that Eastern Europe should simply catch up with the West. Liberated from Soviet rule, these states would undergo a natural and spontaneous transformation, smoothly assimilating into the Western economic, political, and social order. But Russia's invasion of Ukraine has revealed that it is the West that must catch up with political developments in the East.

Europe's East is different from what the West expected: its colonial and Soviet legacies complicate the simplistic binary division between the Global North and the Global South. That is why Western postcolonial scholars have traditionally overlooked Eastern Europe. But Russia's war against Ukraine has thrown the legacy of brutal subjugation into sharp relief, forcing a reframing of the debates on colonialism. A proper debate begins when the colonized start talking about the colonizers, not just about themselves.

"Decoloniality," an intellectual framework for critiquing perspectives that continue to pervade institutions, public discourse, and individual behavior, has become fashionable in Western culture and politics today. But this project of resistance is, for the most part, being applied internally, where it remains firmly grounded in the history of maritime empires and focused primarily on race.

Along with its fetishization of the Global South (a stance that is devoid of any meaningful political engagement), Western decoloniality fails to recognize the colonial trauma right next door: Western political and cultural institutions have long disregarded Eastern European perspectives in favor of the view from Moscow, the other imperial metropole and the West's main point of reference.

Yet this ignores the legacy of German imperialism in Eastern Europe. In the 1930s and 1940s, Ukraine became a target of both the Soviet Union, which implemented a policy of industrial colonialism there, and the Nazis, who hoped

to exploit Ukrainian agriculture for their own imperial project.

After World War II, Western colonial attitudes resurfaced in West German Chancellor Willy Brandt's Ostpolitik. The relationship between officials in Bonn and Moscow was based on the assumption that there was no need to pay attention to Eastern Europe, including Ukraine: the Soviet state apparatus spoke for it. The colonized, by definition, lack subjectivity.

This helped shape the current political context in Eastern Europe, where armed conflict and authoritarian populism, hardened borders, and a fractured civil society underscore the need to decolonize Europe's memory politics — and its recent history. After all, Germany, the powerhouse of the European Union, assumed its present form only in 1990. Throughout the twentieth century, Ukraine's borders were more persistent and stable than Germany's.

The most recent blow to Europe's memory politics was the "denazification" discourse that the Kremlin used to justify its genocidal war against Ukraine. It's an absurd argument: Europe, and the German-speaking world in particular, is supposed to accept a fos-

sil-fuel fascist justifying his atrocities with references to the Holocaust? Unfortunately, many in the West do. But the Kremlin is merely recycling the Nazis' argument: you are not supposed to exist, but, since you do, you must be eliminated.

Europe's political apathy is deeply rooted in a colonial mindset, which is reflected in the EU's externalization of problems. This strategy of pushing conflicts beyond the bloc's borders to safeguard the interior has resulted in the EU confronting wars and authoritarian regimes to its south and east, which inevitably generate an influx of migrants fleeing violence.

Moreover, the EU's typical response to ideological polarization is to default to faux neutrality that can supposedly protect against the "extremes" that exist elsewhere. This normative neutrality also defines the approach of some Western cultural institutions and media toward Ukrainian voices speaking out against Russia's imperialist aggression.

Seemingly opposed to affective truth, they limit the expression of strong emotions, as if the conflict can be judged only from some imagined rational, objective position. In deference to the

Realpolitik approach to Russia's war, many Western cultural institutions that had previously boasted of their political engagement and radical decoloniality retreated to the supposedly context-neutral "white cube": the conventional exhibition space where art mediates reality against spotless walls under ideal lighting.

This response is, to a large extent, determined by the modus operandi of Europe's cultural field. On one end, there are large institutions that toe the government line and are afraid of independent activity. On the other, there are collectives and curatorial groups that proclaim their commitment to participatory democracy but get nowhere because they discuss every detail endlessly and can agree on nothing. Whether an institution is vertical and highly centralized, or horizontal and participatory, political engagement seems impossible.

While many Western cultural institutions willingly bury their heads in the sand, others, such as in Hungary or Poland, have been hijacked by government-appointed right-wing directors. Either way, Europe's creative institutions seem incapable of forging a new, more political path. But, as with the EU itself, simply staying within institutional borders and trying to preserve what's inside will ultimately undermine their freedom. A viable decoloniality requires radical engagement — going out on a limb and fighting for a cause. When it comes to building such an anti-imperialist domain, Europe's West has a lot to learn from its East.

Otherwise, when Realpolitik arrives next time, Western Europe shouldn't be surprised to find itself frantically seeking another Zeitenwende, or historic turning point, and saying as usual:

I cannot determine the meaning Of sorrow that fills my breast...

The writer is Head of the Visual Culture Research Center in Kyiv and organizer of the Kyiv Biennial, an international forum for art, knowledge, and politics.

PROJECT SYNDICATE

SPECTRUM GLOBAL WARMING

India needs to be more vigilant

The heat wave has started and as per predictions of the Indian Meteorological Department (IMD) this year would witness more heat in certain regions of the country, including the eastern and northwestern parts. As per its monthly outlook, above normal heatwave days are expected over most parts of Bihar, Jharkhand, Odisha, Gangetic West Bengal, east Uttar Pradesh, coastal Andhra Pradesh and some parts of north Chhattisgarh, Telangana and coastal Gujarat during May. Plus, below normal rainfall is likely in most parts of northeast India, many parts of east-central India and south peninsular India.

As it is the maximum temperatures are around or over 40°C though the real feel has been measured 3-4 degrees above the recorded temperature. Undeniably, heatwaves have increased since the past decade of the past century. The hot extremes are destined to continue, more so in the tropical regions of the world.

In India, around a billion people in the Indo-Gangetic Plain are impacted. Not just here but in other parts too, huge numbers of people work outdoors doing manual labour in agriculture, construction, forestry, fisheries, mining,

brick factories, collecting firewood etc. Estimates by Duke University researchers found that of all the labour lost to heat exposure around the world, almost half is in India.

The obvious answer lies in reducing carbon emissions to counter heat waves. While renewable sources of energy are the best option, there must be a strategic shift towards energy-efficient appliances, green buildings, electric vehicles, and the like. Though these technologies are picking up, their growth is rather slow, at least in India. Moreover, the extensive use of glass in modern buildings is not considered energy efficient.

Experts opine that if we can decarbonise the global electricity supply by 2050, there's a possibility of limiting warming by 20°C. It is thus imperative to move towards this strategy and ultimately move towards a net-zero economy in the near future.

Meanwhile, some reports reveal that India has taken major strides towards generating 500 GW of renewable energy capacity, thereby reducing the emissions intensity of its economy by over 40% and removing one billion tonnes of CO2. Though the emission intensity of the economy has no doubt been controlled, it is a fact that renew-

able power in the country costs twice as much as the best rates abroad, though India has advantages like low construction costs and ample sunshine.

Similarly, for green hydrogen, which is needed to replace carbon-intensive industries like steel and cement, the costs are quite high. Reliance Chairman Mukesh Ambani stated that he would reduce the cost of green hydrogen from \$3.5/kg to \$1/kg. But that requires cheap solar electricity, the main input for green hydrogen. Only time will tell whether renewable projects will become cheaper and whether India will have a competitive edge.

The Energy Conservation (Amendment) Bill 2022, recently passed by Parliament, provides the legal framework for incentivising actions for emission reduction and increased investments in clean energy.

While we hear a lot of the government's efforts to push renewable energy sources, there are other issues involved in controlling heat intensity. The other dimensions of global warming can't be ignored as the recently published Synthesis Report pointed out that at current levels of warming — even after various nations have taken and announced strategic action — food pro-

duction is starting to come under strain while pollution levels are on the rise. In this situation, controlling pollution remains a serious problem. Though the Union environment minister recently claimed that India has achieved close to 27% of the area under conservation with its protective area network that includes reserved forests, national parks, wildlife, sanctuaries, mangroves, Ramsar sites, and eco-sensitive zones, the path to sustainability still has a long way to go.

Research and innovation need to be explored for more efficient transport and energy policies with an eye on curbing environmental degradation. Though expertise is available, it is not being utilised so as not to disturb the cosy relationship between politicians and industrialists.

But considering the serious consequences of warming, India must be more vigilant. Thus, the Mission LIFE movement, launched by Prime Minister Modi in October last year, aiming towards an environmentally conscious lifestyle, should not be just jargon. It would be keenly watched how soon it becomes a reality if we are serious about achieving the sustainable path of growth.

INFA



Dhurjati Mukherjee

THE MISSION LIFE MOVEMENT, LAUNCHED BY PRIME MINISTER MODI IN OCTOBER LAST YEAR, AIMING TOWARDS AN ENVIRONMENTALLY CONSCIOUS LIFESTYLE, SHOULD NOT BE JUST JARGON

Manipur mayhem

Sir, The state of Manipur is in a boil as places of worship torched and shoot at sight orders have been declared. The services of the Army have been requisitioned to control large scale riots that ripped through Imphal, where multiple vehicles and several public properties were damaged. The large-scale riots are unparalleled in the history of Manipur. As a security measure 9,000 people were displaced to safer places. Both the Army and RAF are on the job to pull all the strings to bring peace. The tribal groups were protesting against the proposed survey of reserved and protected forests and wetlands by the state administration and the demolition of three unauthorised churches. Similar demonstrations in support of the march were held in numerous places throughout Manipur; many of which descended into violence. A curfew was implemented in eight districts, mobile internet was suspended and the Army along with the Assam Rifles did flag marches in several affected areas.

CK Subramaniam, NAVI MUMBAI

Blame it on West

Sir, Russia has pointed an accusing finger at the US for the drone attack on the Kremlin. The Kremlin asserted that Washington had directed Ukraine to carry out the drone attack to eliminate President Vladimir Putin. The White House has repudiated any involvement in the attack and labelled the accusation as incorrect. Throughout its long-lasting campaign in Ukraine, Moscow has claimed that Kyiv is under the direction of Washington and faulted the West for waging war against Russia indirectly.

NJ Ravi Chander, BANGALORE

Shifting responsibilities

Sir, Apathy, neglect, unaccountability and corruption have hampered infrastructural construction in the country. To the innumerable examples of buildings collapsing like packs of cards, another addition is the ten-year-old godown-cum-residential building in suburban Mumbai's Bhiwandi that gave way, claiming six precious lives. It is said the building could not withstand a mobile tower that was erected recently. Structural designs of constructions should fulfill every criterion laid down in the rule book for them to last long. Any addition should scrupulously be brought to the notice of the concerned. Many a time, the materials used for the building are substandard. Despite the death of more than 50 people due to buildings giving way in Bhiwandi in the last five years, the authorities seem to be looking the other way.

Ganapathi Bhat, AKOLA

Letters

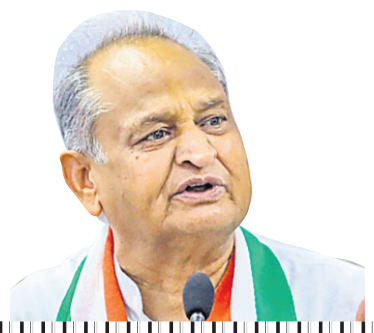
TO THE EDITOR

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

OrissaPOST

B-15, Rasulgari Industrial Estate, Bhubaneswar-751010

national



You (BJP) come up with one issue or the other to provoke people in the name of religion, caste. All are Hindus. Aren't we Hindus? Where is it written that the one who votes for the BJP is a Hindu?
ASHOK GEHLOT | RAJASTHAN CM

'OPERATION KAVERI' ENDS

India Friday wrapped up 'Operation Kaveri', launched to rescue its nationals stranded in crisis-hit Sudan, with the transport aircraft of the Indian Air Force making its final flight to bring 47 passengers home. India launched 'Operation Kaveri' April 24 to evacuate its nationals from Sudan



of the day quote

Prime Minister ji, if Kejriwal is corrupt, there is no one honest in this world. I want to tell him that the day you find corruption of a single paise against Kejriwal, hang me publicly
ARVIND KEJRIWAL | DELHI CM

All the students of the state stranded in violence-hit Manipur are safe
MANIK SAHA | TRIPURA CM

Before 2014 the perception of the world was different for India but now it has changed. People have a positive feeling about India now
YOGI ADITYANATH | UP CM

Why Manipur is in flames

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Imphal, May 5: Ethnic violence, which has engulfed Manipur over the last few days, was brewing for some time as a long history of mutual suspicion between ethnic groups in the Imphal valley and its surrounding hills turned into a simmering conflict after the BJP-led Manipur government started a drive to evict tribal villagers from reserved forests.

The spark for the raging violence was lit by demonstrations by tribal groups against a move to grant the majority Meiteis the Scheduled Tribe (ST) status, which the residents of the hills have been enjoying for decades since Independence.

The government in Manipur, regardless of which party comes to power, has always been dominated by plainsmen Meiteis, who account for about 53 per cent of the state's population and live mostly in irregular oval-shaped Imphal Valley.

Consequently, the government's actions have often been viewed through the prism of suspicion by tribals - mostly Nagas and Kukis - who make up 40 per cent of Manipur's population and live for the most part in the hills surrounding the valley.

Interestingly, the fertile Imphal valley makes up for about a tenth of the total land mass of the state while the surrounding hills, ideal for militant hide-outs and home to a long-running insurgency, account for 90 per cent of the state's lands. The eviction drive, which began in February, was seen as yet another anti-tribal move, leading to alarm and widespread discontent not only among the Kuki community which was affected by it but also other tribals who have many villages within reserved forest areas.

Ahead of Chief Minister N Biren



Charred remains of a vehicle that was set ablaze after violence broke out during the 'Tribal Solidarity March' called by All Tribal Student Union Manipur in Imphal, Thursday



People from Manipur stage a protest against the ongoing violence in Manipur, in Guwahati

Singh's visit to Churachandpur district last week, a mob vandalised and set on fire the venue in New Lamka town where he was scheduled to address a function. The mob also managed to partially torch a newly set up open gym which Singh, an ethnic Meitei, was slated to inaugurate on Friday afternoon.

The attack took place barely 11 hours prior to a 'total shutdown' called by the Indigenous Tribal Leaders Forum in the entire Churachandpur district. The Forum

claimed that despite the repeated submission of memorandums to the government protesting the ongoing eviction drive to clear reserved forests of farmers and other tribal settlers, "the government has shown no sign of willingness or sincerity in addressing the plight of people".

General secretary of the Kuki Students Organisation, Churachandpur, D J Haokip, said, "Several areas in the hill district have been declared as reserved forests, protected forests and hundreds of Kuki tribals have been



People from Manipur raise slogans during their protest against the ongoing violence in Manipur at Jantar Mantar in New Delhi



Army and Assam Rifles personnel conduct a flag march in violence-hit areas in Imphal

dislodged from their traditional settlement area." "The anguish of the Kuki people is not about the evictions but the failure to provide rehabilitation to more than hundreds of those affected," Haokip added.

The Kukis are represented by 10 legislators, including five BJP MLAs, in the 60-member Manipur Assembly. The Kuki People's Alliance (KPA), which is an ally of the ruling BJP government, has two MLAs.

"We have six MLAs from Churachandpur district and the

Indigenous Tribal Leaders Forum (ITLF) has asked them to come out and state their stance on the evictions drive. If they fail to respond, our future course of action will include socially boycotting them," Haokip said.

Earlier in March, a violent clash occurred at Thomas Ground in Kangpokpi district where protesters tried to hold a mass rally against "encroachment of tribal lands in the name of reserved forests, protected forests and wildlife sanctuary".

SHORT TAKES

Three terrorist associates held

Srinagar: Three terrorist associates were arrested by J&K Police and other security forces from Awantipora and Shopian districts and incriminating materials and arms and ammunition recovered from their possession, police said Friday. "In Awantipora, acting on specific information, Awantipora police with the assistance of Anantnag police, Army and CRPF launched a joint cordon and search operation on May 4in Tral Awantipora," police said.

CBI conducts searches in WB

New Delhi: The CBI has conducted searches in West Bengal in connection with the primary teachers recruitment scam case at the premises of aides of former education minister Partha Chatterjee, officials said Friday. "It was found that the accused were allegedly acting as conduits in collecting bribe money from candidates by promising them jobs as primary teachers," the CBI said in a statement Friday.

Rahul interacts with students

New Delhi: Congress leader Rahul Gandhi interacted with students at the Post Graduate Men's Hostel of the Delhi University here on Friday. Dressed in a white T-shirt and trouser and sporting a trimmed beard, Gandhi arrived at the hostel to interact with the students. Sources said he sought to know about the issues faced by the students and their career plans. He also had lunch with the students at the hostel.

Four drown

Amroha (UP): Four children died by drowning in a pit filled with water near a brick kiln in Gajraula area of the district. According to sources, the incident took place on Friday morning when the children playing near the pit fell into it and drowned. The pit was filled with rainwater and it was only when the children's parents started looking for them, that they realised that they may have fallen into the pit.

Module busted

Chandigarh: Punjab Police have busted a module linked with foreign-based wanted terrorists Lakhbir Singh, alias Landa, and Satbir, alias Satta, with the arrest of one of their operatives after recovering 10 pistols from his possession, Director General of Police Gaurav Yadav said here Friday. The arrested has been identified as Gurbhraj Singh of Tarn Taran. He has a criminal background and had recently been released from Goindwal Sahib Central Jail.

'The Kerala Story' brings out terror conspiracies: PM

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Ballari/New Delhi, May 5: "The Kerala Story", the hotly debated film on conversion, was at the centre of national discourse on Friday with Prime Minister Narendra Modi crediting it for bringing out terror conspiracies and using it to attack the Congress during a rally in Karnataka.

As the multilingual film premiered across theatres to mixed reviews, polarising audience reactions and protests in some places in Kerala and Tamil Nadu, the Kerala High Court refused to stay the release and said the trailer does not contain anything offensive to any particular community as a whole.

In a rally in Ballari in poll-bound Karnataka, the prime minister said, "Such a beautiful state of the country, where people are hardworking and talented. The 'Kerala Story' film brings out terror conspiracies happening in that state."

"It is unfortunate that Congress can be seen standing with this terror trend that is seeking to ruin the country. Congress is even indulging in backdoor political bargaining with people having ter-



ror inclinations. People of Karnataka should be cautious about Congress," Modi added about the opposition party in Karnataka that votes for a new assembly on May 10.

The film, which revolves around a group of women in Kerala who are forced to convert and join the ISIS, was in the news for much of the day - as it has been since its trailer released about a week ago. The film, starring Adah Sharma, written and directed by Sudipto Sen and produced by Vipul Shah, was screened in theatres across the state on the first day of its release.

The filmmakers claim it is a compilation of the true stories of three young women from the state. Kerala's ruling CPI(M) and opposition Congress have said the

film falsely claims that 32,000 women got converted and radicalised and were deployed in terror missions both in India and the world. According to the Kerala High Court, the Central Board of Film Certification (CBFC) has examined the movie and found it suitable for public exhibition.

A bench of Justices N Nagesh and Sophy Thomas noted the submission made by the producers that they do not intend to retain an "offending teaser" which contained a statement that "32,000 women" from Kerala were converted and joined a terrorist organisation.

The court also noted that the producers have published a disclaimer along with the movie that the film is a dramatised version of events and doesn't claim accuracy or factuality of historic events. Kerala Governor Arif Mohammed Khan told reporters in Ernakulam that he had not yet seen the film.

"What can be my take... I am not in a position to say anything. But if somebody has... They are saying that this is a story based on actual stories? If they are claiming that then I think it is the duty of the government to investigate into the matter," he told reporters in response to questions.

Top court to hear plea challenging promotion of 68 judicial officers

Varma, the CJM of Surat, is one of the 68 officers of the district lower judiciary whose promotion has also been challenged by Maheta and Mehta, presently working as undersecretary in the legal department of the Gujarat government

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, May 5: The Supreme Court is scheduled to hear on May 8 a plea challenging the promotion of 68 Gujarat lower judicial officers, including Surat Chief Judicial Magistrate Harish Hasmukhbhai Varma who had convicted Congress leader Rahul Gandhi in a defamation case, on the ground of allegedly disregarding the "merit-cum-seniority principle".

A bench comprising Justices M R Shah and Ahsanuddin Amanullah, on May 1, fixed the plea of senior civil judge cadre officers, Ravikumar Maheta and Sachin Prataprai Mehta, for hearing on Monday challenging the selection of the 68 judicial officers to the higher cadre of district judges.



Varma, the CJM of Surat, is one of the 68 officers of the district lower judiciary whose promotion has also been challenged by Maheta and Mehta, presently working as undersecretary in the legal department of the Gujarat government and the assistant director at the state legal services authority.

The top court, which had issued notices to the state government and the Registrar General of the Gujarat High Court on April 13 on the plea of the two judicial officers, was very critical of the decision and the order passed on April 18 to promote the 68 officers despite knowing the pendency of the case before it.

"It is very unfortunate that despite the fact that the respondents, more particularly, the state government, was aware of the present proceedings and the fact that in the present proceedings, this court made the notice returnable on April

28, 2023, the state government has issued the promotion order dated April 18, 2023 i.e. After the receipt of the notice issued by this court in the present proceedings," the top court said in its order on April 28.

In the promotion order, even the state government stated that it will be subject to the outcome of the proceedings pending in the top court, it said. "We do not appreciate the haste and hurry in which the state has approved and passed the promotion order... When this court was seized with the matter and a detailed order was passed while issuing the notice," it had said.

It is to be noted that the selection was in 2022 and hence, there was no "extraordinary urgency" in passing the promotion order, and that too when this court was seized of the matter, the order said.

"We are prima facie of the opinion that it is nothing but overreaching the court's process and the present proceedings. Let the secretary of the state government explain the extraordinary urgency shown in the matter in giving promotion and issuing the notification dated 18.04.2023 granting the promotion, subject to the ultimate outcome of the proceedings," it had said.

Atmospheric Rivers caused floods between 1985 & 2020: Study

It says severe weather events like the 2013 Uttarakhand floods and the 2018 floods in Kerala that claimed several lives were all due to severe Atmospheric Rivers

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Thiruvananthapuram, May 5: The devastating floods that occurred in the country between 1985 and 2020 during the summer monsoon season were directly associated with Atmospheric Rivers, a phenomenon of a stream of water vapour moving in the sky like a river flowing on the land, says a new study.

It says severe weather events like the 2013 Uttarakhand floods and the 2018 floods in Kerala that claimed several lives were all due to severe Atmospheric Rivers (ARs). The study, jointly conducted by climate scientists from the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Gandhinagar, the National Institute of Technology, Srinagar, and the University of Washington, says a

warming climate is increasing the moisture-holding capacity of Atmospheric Rivers, which leads to concerns about more devastating floods in the future.

"We examined landfalling ARs during the summer monsoon, which has implications for water resources and deleterious flood hazards in India since they can deliver enormous amounts of precipitation within a few hours or days," the study quoted.

The research team used the high-resolution atmospheric fields from the European Reanalysis Version, along with observed precipitation from the India Meteorological Department and a historical flood database from the Dartmouth Flood Observatory of the University of Colorado, USA, to study the impact of ARs formed during the summer



monsoon season on flooding in India, a first-of-its-kind comprehensive study in this regard in India.

The study was published in the latest issue of Communications Earth and Environment journal.

Shwarup Mahto, lead author from IIT, Gandhinagar, said. He said out of one-third of the top AR events, 54 per cent occurred in the recent three decades, ie, between 1991 and 2020, indicating a direct link between severe ARs and rising global temperatures.

"The frequency and severity of ARs show an increasing trend in India in recent decades. Daily and sub-daily precipitation extremes have increased in recent decades and are likely to rise as the climate continues to warm," the report said.

Seven out of the 10 floods with the highest mortality between 1985-2020 were associated with ARs. These floods caused the loss of more than 9,000 human lives and several billion dollars worth of damages and displacements.

"Overall, 70 per cent of India's major flood events in the summer monsoon season were directly associated with ARs during the 1985-2020 period," it says.

The report says the 2013 Uttarakhand floods, which claimed 6000 lives, the 2007 floods in South East Asia, including India, with 2000 human lives lost, the 1988 floods in Punjab, the 2018 floods in Kerala that claimed 400 lives, the 2006 floods in Gujarat, the 1993 floods in Assam, and the 2004 floods that caused extensive damage in Eastern India and Bangladesh were all due to severe ARs. "The ARs are narrower and carry more moisture. The precipitation levels of these ARs are more in Western Ghat and Eastern Ghat regions, causing extreme rain events," Mahto said.



MATTER OF FAITH: Buddhist monks clean a statue of Lord Buddha at a monastery ahead of Buddha Purnima celebrations, in Agartala

Violence-hit Manipuris throng Assam

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Guwahati, May 5: In the wake of the ongoing unrest in Manipur, several families have crossed the border into Assam's Cachar district seeking shelter, authorities said Friday.

Speaking to IANS, a Cachar district administration officer said, "Since Thursday evening, a number of people have come to take shelter. We have arranged temporary shelters at a few government schools in the Lakhipur sub-division area. Food and other necessary commodities have been provided to them."

According to the Cachar administration, at least 600 people have already crossed the border and have taken shelter.

"The people have crossed the Jiri river in Manipur and arrived in Cachar. The influx is continuing and we expect more people to arrive by today evening," the officer added.

Taking to Twitter early Friday morning, Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma said, "Several families affected by the recent incidents in Manipur have sought refuge in Assam. I have requested the district administration of Cachar to take care of these families."

Sarma also said that he was in



constant communication with his counterpart in Manipur, N Biren Singh and "have pledged the full support of the Assam government during this hour of crisis".

Meanwhile, Lakhipur MLA Kaushik Rai said, "We are taking care of all those who are seeking refuge in Cachar district from violence-hit Manipur. Many people also went to their relatives' houses in the Lakhipur area. Others are staying at camps."

Rai also mentioned that the majority people who have crossed the state border belong to the Kuki tribe.

The violence first erupted Wednesday after thousands turned up for the 'Tribal Solidarity March' which took place across 10 hill districts of Manipur to oppose the

demand for inclusion of the Meitei community in the Scheduled Tribe (ST) category.

Following the march, clashes, attacks, counter-attacks among different communities and burning of houses and shops took place in different districts, forcing authorities to suspend mobile internet services for five days, while a night curfew was also clamped in the tension-hit districts of Imphal West, Bishnupur, Jiribam, Tenugopal and Churachandpur.

In view of the prevailing violence, the Manipur government Thursday authorised all District Magistrates, Sub-Divisional Magistrates and Executive Magistrates to issue "shoot at sight orders" in extreme cases.

95 DEATHS IN 5 MONTHS

Mumbai-Nagpur Expressway turns killer

Many activists and traffic experts have questioned the wisdom of throwing open incomplete highways, expressways, roads, and other projects without providing all necessary facilities, eyeing short-term electoral gains

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Mumbai, May 5: The partly-completed Mumbai-Nagpur Super Expressway has emerged as a killer - reporting at least 195 big and small accidents that claimed 95 lives and left many more injured in less than 5 months.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi had December 11, 2022 inaugurated the 'Hindu Hridayasamrat Balasaheb Thackeray Maharashtra Samruddhi Mahamarg' Phase I, running 520 km from Nagpur to Nashik.

The total planned project, costing Rs 55,000 crore, encompasses 701 km linking the Maharashtra capital and the second capital, passing through 10 districts, halving the travel time from 16 hours to just 8 hours.

However, the Council for Protection of Rights (CPR) has said that the present stretch has already become deadly for vehicles and their occupants using it since the past nearly five months.

As per official records, at least 95 persons lost their lives and hundreds more injured in over 175

major and minor accidents that took place on it, said CPR Chairman, barrister Vinod Tiwari.

Drawing the attention of Chief Minister Eknath Shinde, the Director General of Police and the Chief Secretary, Tiwari has called for urgent remedial measures on the Super Expressway to prevent accidents and loss of lives.

An important study by the Visvesvaraya National Institute of Technology (VNIT), Nagpur has made a shocking revelation that there are absolutely no halts provided on the Super Expressway, like petrol stations, eateries, toilets, malls, amusement, etc, he said.

The VNIT report, prepared by the Traffic Engineering Department students, has claimed that after long hours of driving without break, drivers tend to develop highway hypnosis leading to such accidents.

The TED students studied a 100-km stretch of the Nagpur-Nashik section that was thrown open and in over one-third of the instances, highway hypnosis is believed to be responsible for the crashes, said



NO HALTS

■ An important study by the Visvesvaraya National Institute of Technology (VNIT), Nagpur has made a shocking revelation that there are absolutely no halts provided on the Super Expressway

■ Highway hypnosis is a condition when a driver zones out while driving for long without halt, unable to remember what occurred in that specific period, just keeping driving without absolute control over the steering, and paying no attention to anything happening around

■ It is the outcome of tiredness of the driver, long hours of driving, monotonous highways, drowsiness with inattentive brain

the Head of Department V Landge.

The Super Expressway has three lanes in each direction, so there are no head-on collisions, but more than 50 per cent of the truckers do not adhere to the no lane change rules.

The traffic on the Super Expressway comprises 30 per cent small vehicles, 20 per cent small goods carriers, and 50 per cent trucks, with the last category blatantly flouting the lane-change rules that result in big and small crashes, as per the report.

Tiwari said to the CM that in

western countries, all highways have provided convenient halts every 120-125 km to enable drivers to take short breaks after around 120-150 minutes of continuous driving.

Besides, passenger vehicles plying on expressways in developed countries are required to take a compulsory halt of 10-15 minutes after every 90-100 minutes to prevent onset of highway hypnosis, especially during night travel, he added.

He called upon the CM and DGP and CS to make immediate provisions for suitable halts at every 40-

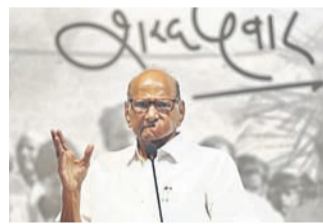
50 km on the Nagpur-Nashik (520 km) stretch, and also on the upcoming Nashik-Mumbai (181 km).

The CPR demands that the road should be closed at every 100 km for traffic and give a short break to the drivers to prevent their brain from lapsing into 'highway hypnosis' that will curb accidents not only on the Super Expressway but also all other highways in the country, he urged.

Taking cognisance of the CRP plea, the CMO has sent it to the Additional Chief Secretary, Home, for further action in the matter.

NCP committee rejects Pawar's move to resign

As the meeting was underway, several NCP workers wearing caps with the message "I am with saheb" demanded that Pawar reconsider his decision



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, May 5: A committee set up to choose the new Nationalist Congress Party chief has rejected incumbent president Sharad Pawar's decision to step down, senior party leader Praful Patel said Friday.

"The committee has unanimously passed a resolution. It unanimously rejects his decision to step down and urges him to continue as party president," Patel said after a meeting of the committee.

Pawar himself had set up the committee, including Ajit Pawar, Supriya Sule, former Union minister Praful Patel and Chhagan Bhujaal, after he announced May 2 that he would be resigning as NCP chief.

"We will meet Pawar saheb with this resolution and request him to reconsider his decision," Patel, who is also the vice president and convenor of the committee, said.

Patel said the party and the country needs a leader like Pawar. "Pawar saheb is a respected

leader in the country. There was a strong response against Pawar's decision. The emotions cannot be ignored," Patel said.

As the meeting was underway, several NCP workers wearing caps with the message "I am with saheb" demanded that Pawar reconsider his decision.

Pawar Tuesday sprang a surprise by announcing his decision to quit as president of the party he founded and headed since 1999 when he left the Congress to chart his own political course.

The announcement, made at an event, stunned leaders and workers of the 24-year-old party.

Pawar, a Rajya Sabha MP and one of the stalwarts of the Opposition, had said he was stepping down as NCP chief but was not retiring from public life.

The announcement came amid speculation that Ajit Pawar and some MLAs may join hands with the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party, though the former deputy chief minister has refuted such talk by claiming he will be with the NCP till he is alive.

Body cameras soon for railway ticket checkers

Officials say that if the pilot project in Mumbai is successful, it will be replicated across the rail network



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

enforcement agencies worldwide. Several police forces in India also use body cameras.

"The body cameras would help maintain transparency during ticket checking and prevent misbehaviour and violent acts. The initiative would also help detect any discrepancy during ticket checking, particularly in the event of complaints, and would further increase accountability, induce professionalism and protect staff from reputational damage," a spokesperson of the Central Railway said.

Recently a travelling ticket examiner was suspended after he allegedly misbehaved with a woman passenger in the Central Railway. There have also been instances of errant passengers on broad trains, officials said.

Several studies over the past decade have concluded that the body cameras did not live up to its expectations. The existing research provided mixed results as to whether the cameras reduce the use of force by police officers or increase the communities' trust in police.

In the railways' case, officials hope, that the cameras will act as a deterrent against bad behaviour and malpractice.

'Border Haats' along India-B'desh frontier to reopen after 3 yrs

THESE MARKETS, SPREAD IN AROUND 5,625 SQ. METRE AREA OF THE TWO COUNTRIES' TERRITORIES OR NO-MAN'S LAND, OPERATE ONCE A WEEK ON A FIXED DAY

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Agartala, May 5: After three years of closure, one of the two 'Border Haats' in Tripura along India-Bangladesh border will resume trading from May 9.

A top official of the Tripura Industries and Commerce Department said that after a recent meeting between the district officials of Feni (Bangladesh) and South Tripura, it was decided to resume the business of the Purba Madhugram (Bangladesh)-Srinagar (South Tripura) 'Border Haats' from May 9.

Efforts were on to restart the Kasba (Bangladesh)-Kamalgasgar (Tripura) Border Haat in Sepahijala district, the official told IANS.

The four Border Haats, two each in Tripura and Meghalaya, have remained closed since March 2020 after the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic and the consequent lockdowns, causing immense loss to the people living in the bordering villages.

Both the Tripura and Meghalaya governments have been pressing the Centre to take up the matter with the Bangladesh government to resume the Border Haats.

The two Border Haats in Meghalaya - at Balat (East Khasi Hills district) and Kalaichar (South West Garo Hills district) - were reopened last year and both are functional once a week now.

Union Minister of State for Commerce and Industry, Anupriya Patel, recently in a letter to former Tripura Chief Minister Biplab Kumar Deb, currently a Rajya Sabha member, said that the Central government has raised the issue of reopening the two 'Border Haats' in Tripura to promote local business and livelihood of the people living on either side of the frontiers with its Bangladesh counterpart.

"We are continuously raising the matter of the reopening of Border Haats at Kamalgasgar and Srinagar in the bilateral meetings with Bangladesh. We are hopeful of an early resolution of this matter," Patel had said in her letter to Deb.

Officials of the Tripura Industries and Commerce Department said that the officials in Sepahijala and South Tripura district administrations had on a number of occasions approached their Bangladesh counterparts to



reopen the Border Haats as the Covid-19 induced situation has almost been tamed now.

Jaipur-based think-tank CUTS International, which has done several studies on border trade, had also recommended to the Indian government to resume these border markets the necessary precautions against Covid-19, as these markets boost the economy, cement ties between the people of

the two countries and also check illegal trade.

These markets, spread in around 5,625 sq. metre area of the two countries' territories or no-man's land, operate once a week on a fixed day.

In the weekly market, on an average, at least 25 vendors, including women from both sides of the border, sell their products.

According to the officials, 10

more Border Haats were approved along the India-Bangladesh border at Tripura and Meghalaya. Out of them, six are in Meghalaya, and four in Tripura.

Both Indian and Bangladeshi governments are keen to reopen more Border Haats in the four northeastern states - Tripura, Meghalaya, Assam and Mizoram, which share 1,880-km border with Bangladesh.

national

of the day quote

Caste census is a demand of the country's majority. It is bound to take place
LALU PRASAD | RID PRESIDENT

Freedom of speech cannot be 'armour for abuse' and it should be used as a 'hero' of harmony to defeat hatred
MUKHTAR ABBAS NAQVI | BJP LEADER

Pawar should continue leading that party
M K STALIN | TN CM

SHORT TAKES

Student stabbed

New Delhi: A tenth standard student was stabbed by his classmates in south Delhi's Tigri area, an official said Friday. The police said the accused duo has been apprehended. According to the police, a PCR call was received on Thursday informing about a stabbing incident involving students at a government school in Tigri. The injured student was admitted to the hospital with stab injuries on his shoulder and back. "We have recorded the statement of the injured student, wherein he said that he was named the class monitor by his teacher on Thursday. When another student was causing disturbance in the class, he wrote his name on the blackboard," said Chandan Chowdhary, Deputy Commissioner of Police (South).

Boy drowns

Vijayawada: A six-year-old boy drowned after being washed away in an open drain in Vijayawada Friday, police said. The boy fell into the drain while playing near his house in Gurunanak Colony in the morning. Police, the Vijayawada Municipal Corporation (VMC) and the Disaster Response Force personnel launched a search for the missing boy. As the drain was almost full due to recent untimely rains, the rescue teams faced difficulty in tracing the boy.

Five killed in UP

Bahraich: Five persons were killed and ten others injured when a truck rammed into a three-wheeler in Uttar Pradesh's Bahraich district Friday. The victims were returning from a 'Tilak' ceremony when the accident took place in Kaiserganj police circle. Police said that the identities of the victims were yet to be ascertained. SHO, Kaiserganj, Daddan Singh, said that the injured have been admitted to the district hospital. He said efforts are on to ascertain the identity of the deceased and then contact their family members.

IED recovered

Narayanpur: An improvised explosive device (IED) allegedly planted by Naxalites was recovered in Chhattisgarh's Narayanpur district Friday, police said. The explosive, weighing 4 kg and packed in a steel container, was unearthed by a team of the police's District Reserve Guard (DRG) in a forest near Kodoli Phulmeta village under Orcha police station area, an official said.

12 injured

Rajgarh: At least 12 persons were injured when a bus overturned near a village in Madhya Pradesh's Rajgarh district Friday, police said. The bus with 50 passengers overturned near Madhopura village under Karanwas police station area around 5.30 am, a police official said.



I urge all opposition parties to unitedly fight the BJP in the 2024 elections. The BJP is using the ED and the CBI to harass opposition leaders, but agencies will not help it get votes
MAMATA BANERJEE | WEST BENGAL CM

EMERGENCY LANDING

A Biman Bangladesh Airlines flight from Dhaka to Kathmandu with 77 passengers on board made an emergency landing at Jay Prakash Narayan International Airport in Patna Friday due to a technical problem, an official said



SCO CONCLAVE

India, Pak take veiled swipe at each other

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Benaulim (Goa), May 5: In an unsparing attack, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar Friday accused his Pakistani counterpart Bilawal Bhutto Zardari of being a "promoter, justifier and a spokesperson of a terror industry" after a meeting of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) witnessed a face-off between the two sides.

Jaishankar mounted the offensive against the visiting Pakistani foreign minister after Bhutto Zardari in his address at the SCO meeting in this beach resort contended that terrorism shouldn't be "weaponised for diplomatic point-scoring", in remarks seen as directed at India.

Hours later at a press conference, Jaishankar said Bhutto Zardari's statement on the weaponisation of terrorism unconsciously revealed a mindset. "As a foreign minister of an SCO member state, Bhutto Zardari was treated accordingly. As a promoter, justifier and a spokesperson of a terrorism industry, which is the mainstay of Pakistan, his positions were called out and they were countered including at the SCO meeting itself," Jaishankar said.

On Pakistan's tackling of terrorism, Jaishankar said the country's credibility is depleting even faster than its forex reserves. "Victims of terrorism do not sit together



In 2011, Pakistan's then foreign minister Hina Rabbani Khar visited India and held talks with her counterpart SM Krishna

The SCO was founded at a summit in Shanghai in 2001 by the Presidents of Russia, China, the Kyrgyz Republic, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan. India and Pakistan became its permanent members in 2017

with the perpetrators of terrorism to discuss terrorism," Jaishankar said when asked about the possibility of India and Pakistan working towards combating the menace.

"Victims of terrorism defend themselves to counter acts of terrorism. They call it out, they delegitimise it. And that is what is happening. To come here and preach these hypocritical words as though we are on the same boat. I mean they are committing acts of terrorism," he said. In his address at the meet-

ing of the SCO foreign ministers, Jaishankar said the channel of finances for terrorist activities must be blocked without any distinction and that terrorism in all its forms including cross-border terrorism must be stopped.

Chairing the conclave, Jaishankar also said that taking the "eyes off terrorism" would be detrimental to the security interests of the grouping and that when the world was engaged in facing the Covid-19 pandemic and its conse-

CAs, cost accountants brought under PMLA

According to a notification to this effect issued by the Finance Ministry on May 3, these transactions include buying and selling of any properties and management of bank accounts

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, May 5: Chartered and cost accountants and company secretaries can now be hauled up under the anti-money laundering law for carrying out certain specified financial transactions on behalf of their clients.

According to a notification to this effect issued by the Finance Ministry on May 3, these transactions include buying and selling of any properties and management of bank accounts.

The other categories of transactions listed in the notification are managing client money, securities or other assets; organisation of contributions for the creation, operation or management of companies; and creation, operation or management of companies, limited liability partnerships or trusts, and buying and selling of business entities.

It was further observed that chartered accountants will be equally responsible in terms of penalty and prosecution under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act, 2002 (PMLA).



"The responsibility of the client and CA will be equal if the PMLA provisions are invoked. CAs can now report certain transaction to regulators if they feel that there is a violation of PMLA provision," they added.

The Institute of Chartered Accountants of India (ICAI) in a statement said that the accountants have now become reporting entity for the purposes of these specified transactions. "As a reporting entity they have to do KYC of all clients entering into above transactions and maintain record thereof," ICAI said.

It further said that ICAI will conduct an awareness programme for its members in relation to such financial transactions which are already prohibited on behalf of one's client, in the course of his or her profession.

SC rejects bail plea of former Amrapali head



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, May 5: The Supreme Court has dismissed the bail plea of jailed former CMD of Amrapali Group of Companies Anil Kumar Sharma, saying he doesn't deserve "sympathy" after having siphoned off the hard-earned money and life savings of thousands of homebuyers.

"You have cheated thousands of homebuyers. You siphoned off their hard-earned money and their life savings. You do not deserve any sympathy," a bench comprising Justices Ajay Rastogi and Bela M Trivedi said, and refused to issue notice to the prosecuting agency on the bail plea of Sharma who has been in jail for over four years in the case.

"Yours is not a case of simple cheating. See the plight of thousands of home buyers. You cannot have our sympathy. You better enjoy being in jail... This court is very aware of what you did. You created the mess and we are not able to find a way out of it. A large number of home buyers are suffering," the bench said on Thursday. The former CMD of the real estate group and other directors of the firm were arrested on the direction of the top court after a forensic audit report revealed that a large amount of home buyers' money was siphoned off by the management. It said the offence ran "very deep" and even the court was facing difficulties in tackling the problem. Earlier, the top court had granted

The former CMD of the real estate group and other directors of the firm were arrested on the direction of the top court after a forensic audit report revealed that a large amount of home buyers' money was siphoned off by the management

Sharma interim bail for a few weeks on medical grounds. Sharma and others have been in jail after their arrest in 2018 for various offences, including those of cheating, criminal breach of trust and money laundering, and have spent nearly four years in prison.

The apex court had, in a July 23, 2019 verdict, cracked down on errant builders for breaching the trust reposed by home buyers and ordered cancellation of registration of the Amrapali Group under real estate law RERA and ousted it from prime properties in the national capital region (NCR) by nixing the land leases.

The top court had ordered a probe by the Enforcement Directorate (ED) into alleged money laundering by realtors, providing relief to over 42,000 home buyers of the Amrapali Group. Besides ED, the Economic Offences Wing (EoW) of the Delhi Police and the Serious Fraud Investigation Office (SFIO) have also been investigating various cases lodged against the former officials of the real estate group.

The top court has given the task of completing the construction of 16 projects consisting of 46,575 dwellings units to the National Buildings Construction Corporation Limited (NBCC).



Artistes perform Lama Gana Cham mask dance on the auspicious occasion of Buddha Jayanti at Tupchiling Gompa, near Tandi in Lahaul-Spiti

PM to attend Bastille Day Parade

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, May 5: Prime Minister Narendra Modi will attend this year's Bastille Day Parade in Paris as the guest of honour on July 14, the Ministry of External Affairs announced Friday.

An Indian armed forces' contingent will also participate in the parade along with their French counterparts, the MEA said in a statement.

On the occasion of the 25th anniversary of the India-France Strategic Partnership, Prime Minister Modi has accepted French President Emmanuel Macron's invitation to attend this year's

Bastille Day Parade as the guest of honour; it said.

Reacting to the announcement, Macron in a tweet in French and Hindi said, "Dear Narendra, it will be my pleasure to welcome you to Paris as the guest of honour for the 14th of July parade."

The MEA said that Prime Minister Modi's visit is expected to herald the next phase of the India-France strategic partnership by setting new and ambitious goals for strategic, cultural, scientific, academic and economic cooperation, including in a wide range of industries.

India and France have a shared vision on peace and security, es-

pecially in Europe and the Indo-Pacific, and uphold the objectives and the principles of the Charter of the United Nations, which are also the basis of their cooperation in the Indo-Pacific region, it said.

"This historic visit will also deliver common initiatives in order to respond to the key challenges of our time, including climate change, biodiversity loss and the achievement of Sustainable Development Goals, and will be an opportunity for India and France to reaffirm their commitment to multilateralism, including in the context of India's G20 presidency," according to the statement.

SIX OF FAMILY SHOT DEAD

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Morena, May 5: Six members of a family, including three women, were shot dead and three others were injured on Friday in Madhya Pradesh's Morena district apparently over past enmity, said a senior police official.

The crimes were committed around 10 am at Lepa village, 50 to 60 km from the district headquarters, under the Dimani Assembly area, he said. Three of the victims died on the spot and as many succumbed to their bullet wounds while being rushed to the district hospital, Inspector General of Police (Chambal Zone) S Saxena said.

He said that the injured have been admitted to a hospital. Police have identified eight persons who were allegedly involved in the murders and a case is being registered against them, he said.

Asked about the motive behind the killings, the official said that the deceased and the accused had an old enmity. "The victims' relatives have been accused of murdering the family members of today's alleged killers," the official said.



Talking over mobile could lead to hypertension

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, May 5: Researchers have found talking on a mobile phone for 30 minutes or longer per week to be linked with a 12 per cent increased risk of developing high blood pressure or hypertension.

Almost three-quarters of the global population aged 10 and over own a mobile phone. Mobile phones emit low levels of radiofrequency energy, which has been linked with rises in blood pressure after short-term exposure, the study said.

Hypertension is a major risk factor for heart attack and stroke and a leading cause of premature death globally. "It's the number of

minutes people spend talking on a mobile that matter for heart health, with more minutes meaning greater risk," said study author Xianhui Qin of Southern Medical University, Guangzhou, China.

"Years of use or employing a hands-free set-up had no influence on the likelihood of developing high blood pressure. More studies are needed to confirm the findings," said Qin. The study is published in the European Heart Journal - Digital Health.



Hypertension is a major risk factor for heart attack and stroke and a leading cause of premature death globally

Using data from the UK Biobank to examine the relationship between talking over phone calls and new-onset hypertension, a total of 212,046 adults aged 37 to 73 years without hypertension

were engaged in this study.

Information on the use of a mobile phone to make and receive calls was collected through a self-reported touchscreen questionnaire at baseline, including

years of use, hours per week, and using a hands-free device/speakerphone.

Over a median follow up of 12 years, 13,984 (7 per cent) participants developed hypertension. Mobile phone users, who for the purposes of this study used a mobile phone at least once a week for making and taking phone calls, were found to have a 7 per cent higher risk of hypertension compared with non-users.

Those who talked on their mobile for 30 minutes or more per week had a 12 per cent greater likelihood of new-onset high blood pressure than participants who spent less than 30 minutes on phone calls. The results were similar for women and men.

international



Once again, China strongly urges the Canadian side to immediately stop this self-directed political farce, and not go further down the wrong and dangerous path

JAPAN'S FUTURE IN DANGER

Japan's estimated child population fell to a new record low of 14.35 million, down for the 42nd consecutive year, latest government data showed.



of the day quote

Granting US access to Philippine military bases is a defensive step and would be useful if China attacked Taiwan

During these troubled times, it is imperative to rise above all differences and join together in unity and service as espoused by the Buddha, to overcome the dangers in pursuing a life of normality

The challenges on the ground are indeed high as authorities in Myanmar face difficulties entering Myawaddy since rebels have taken over the region

Covid no longer global threat: WHO

After three years of painful pandemic, the announcement is a sign of the progress the world has made against the virus that triggered once-unthinkable lockdowns, but the danger is not over yet



COVID-19 HAS KILLED AT LEAST 7 MILLION PEOPLE GLOBALLY. APPROX 764 MILLION VIRUS CASES REPORTED WORLDWIDE. THOUSANDS OF PEOPLE STILL DYING EVERY WEEK: WHO. IT WAS DECLARED AN INTERNATIONAL CRISIS JANUARY 30, 2020

Geneva, May 5: The World Health Organization said Friday that Covid-19 no longer qualifies as a global emergency, marking a symbolic end to the devastating coronavirus pandemic that triggered once-unthinkable lockdowns, upended economies worldwide and killed at least 7 million people worldwide.

WHO said that even though the emergency phase was over, the pandemic hasn't come to an end, noting recent spikes in cases in Southeast Asia and the Middle East. The UN Health agency says that thousands of people are still dying from the virus every week.

More than three years later, the virus has caused an estimated 764 million cases globally and about 5 billion people have received at least one dose of vaccine. In the US, the public health emergency declaration made regarding Covid-19 is set to expire May 11, when wide-ranging measures to support the pandemic response, including vaccine mandates, will end.

When WHO Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus declared Covid-19 to be an emergency in 2020, he said his greatest fear was the virus' potential to spread in countries with weak health systems he described as "ill-prepared."

SHORT TAKES

Japan quake kills 1 Tokyo: A strong, shallow earthquake hit central Japan Friday afternoon, killing at least one person and injuring 13 others, but no tsunami warning was issued.

Wagner head vows to pull out of Bakhmut

Moscow, May 5: Russia's main mercenary group announced plans Friday to pull out of the eastern Ukrainian city of Bakhmut, but Ukraine said the group's fighters were reinforcing positions to try to seize it before Russia marks victory in World War Two day next week.



The announcement said "bureaucrats" had held back supplies despite knowing that Wagner's target date to capture the city was May 9, when Moscow holds its World War Two Victory Day. "If, because of your petty jealousy, you do not want to give the Russian people the victory of taking Bakhmut, that's your problem," Prigozhin added.

Wagner Group leader Yevgeny Prigozhin said his men had been starved of ammunition and would expect the army to take their place in Bakhmut next Wednesday, jeopardising what has long been Russia's main target in its attempt to carve up its neighbour. "My lads will not suffer useless and unjustified losses in Bakhmut without ammunition," Prigozhin said in a video accompanying a written withdrawal announcement addressed to the head of general staff, the defence ministry, and President Vladimir Putin as

Temple defaced in Oz ahead of Modi's visit

Melbourne, May 5: A prominent Hindu temple in Sydney was defaced by "anti-social elements" Friday with anti-India graffiti at the walls, in the latest incident of vandalism against Hindu temples in Australia ahead of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to the country later this month.

The incident took place at the BAPS Shri Swaminarayan Mandir in Rosehill, Sydney. However, the time is not yet known. Temple authorities also found a Khalistani flag hanging on the gate, and reported the matter to New South Wales (NSW) police, the Australia Today newspaper reported. "We are deeply saddened by the anti-India graffiti on the walls of the BAPS Shri Swaminarayan Mandir in Rosehill, Sydney by anti-social elements," the temple said.

Ukraine delegate punches Russian

A Ukrainian delegate punched a Russian delegate in the face during a gathering of Black Sea nations in the Turkish capital Thursday, after his Ukrainian flag was snatched away to stop him photobombing a video interview with Russia's lead delegate.



Olesandr Marikowski posted a video of himself thumping the Russian and retrieving the blue and yellow flag on his Facebook page. The incident took place in a hallway of the parliament building, where the Organisation of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC) assembly was being held.

SL Prez pardons 988 prisoners

Colombo: Sri Lanka will release 988 prisoners Friday on presidential amnesty to mark Vesak Day, the most important religious event for Buddhists, a senior official said. Commissioner of the Department of Prisons and spokesman Chandana Ekanayake told media that the amnesty was granted by President Ranil Wickremesinghe under powers vested on him under Article 34 of the country's Constitution, reports Xinhua news agency.

1 dead, 4 injured in chopper crash

Kathmandu: A helicopter belonging to a private Nepalese helicopter service provider crashed in eastern Nepal Friday, killing one person and leaving four others, including the pilot, injured, an official statement said. The crash happened near the Bhotekhola River in the Sankhuwasabha district while the helicopter carrying construction materials for an under-construction hydro project along with the pilot and four other passengers hit a tree near the waterway when it was landing.

UK to start free trade with NZ, Oz

Wellington: Britain's free trade agreements with New Zealand and Australia will come into force by the end of this month, the leaders from the three nations said Friday. The announcement came while the prime ministers from the two Southern Hemisphere nations are in London for the coronation of King Charles III.

Cost-of-living crisis in UK Brits question King Charles' lavish coronation

WITH THE ROYAL FAMILY SITTING ON A FORTUNE, A RECENT SURVEY INDICATED THAT MANY BRITISH PEOPLE DO NOT WANT THE CORONATION TO BE FUNDED BY TAXPAYERS

London, May 5: As the UK grapples with the cost-of-living crisis and widespread strikes over pay, some Britons are questioning why taxpayers have to foot the bill for King Charles III's lavish coronation Saturday. "They got the money, why are they taking it from me?" asks Delany Gordon, a 50-year-old building site manager. The cost of the coronation has been kept under wraps and the total sum is unlikely to be revealed until after Saturday's event.

According to some estimates, the cost will be between 50 million pounds and 100 million pound (\$63 million and \$126 million) on top of the price of a large-scale security operation. "I am spending 26p (0.33 US cents) on my lunch today," Gordon tells AFP, showing a bread roll that he just purchased in a north London supermarket. Another Londoner, Eden Eawit, says she cuts costs by cooking only two days a week and eating sandwiches the rest of the time. "We are not living the same life... People are struggling," the 38-year-old



says. "Some people are not eating at all. It is very hard." Others have turned to charitable organisations, such as The Trussell Trust, which operates a vast network of food banks across the country. The NGO said it provided nearly three million emer-

gency food parcels to people in difficulty between last April and March - a 37 percent increase compared to the previous year. "Slap in the face" King Charles in December gave an undisclosed sum, donated in memory of his late mother, Queen Elizabeth II, to a charity helping people unable to pay fuel bills and personally donated another 1 million pound to food banks. An April YouGov poll said 51 percent of respondents believe the ceremony to crown Charles and Camilla should not be paid for by the government. Buckingham Palace has said the "true figures" for the coronation "will be shared in due course". But a spokesman said a national occasion like this "does attract huge global interest that more than repays the expenditure that goes with it". The British Beer and Pub Association estimates the coronation will generate an extra 120 million pound for pubs across the country with the hospitality industry also expecting a significant boost. Government minister Oliver Dowden has previously insisted

the government and the king were "mindful of ensuring that there is value for the taxpayer" and there will not be "lavishness or excess". Compared to the over 8,000 people attending the coronation of Queen Elizabeth II in 1953, the ceremony for Charles III will be slimmed down to 2,300 guests. Buckingham Palace has also said "efficiencies" were found in key areas, such as reusing many ceremonial elements rather than commissioning new ones. But for activist Graham Smith, head of the anti-monarchy group Republic, the cost of the coronation is a "slap in the face for millions of people struggling with the cost-of-living crisis". "The coronation is a celebration of hereditary power and privilege, it has no place in modern society."

PM Sunak's Conservative party rejected by voters

London, May 5: British Prime Minister Rishi Sunak's Conservatives were facing a bleak set of local election results Friday with voters punishing his party after a year of political scandals, surging inflation and stagnant economic growth. While governing parties often struggle at mid-term elections, the council results in England will be the largest, and possibly last, test of voter sentiment before the next general election which is expected to be held next year.



Sunak came to power in October amid a cost-of-living crisis, mounting concern about healthcare, widespread industrial action that has disrupted public services, and waning enthusiasm for Britain's decision to leave the European Union. Counting has only taken place in about a quarter of the 8,000 council seats in local government authorities, which have responsibility for the day-to-day provision of services such as bin collections and schools. Results, which do not affect the government's majority in parliament, showed the Conservatives suffering a net loss of 235 seats while the main opposition Labour Party added 122 seats and the Liberal Democrats gained 63. Sunak's party suffered losses to Labour in key target seats in the north and southern England, while the Liberal Democrats were advancing

in wealthier parts of the south. The prime minister told reporters the results so far showed that people wanted his ruling party to deliver on their priorities, but that it was still too early in the process of announcing results to draw firm conclusions. John Curtice, Britain's best-known pollster, said the Conservatives were in "considerable electoral trouble" based on the results so far and could face a net loss of about 1,000 seats - in line with the party's most pessimistic forecast. "It is always disappointing to lose hardworking Conservative councillors. I'm not detecting any massive grounds well of movement towards the Labour Party" Rishi Sunak | PM, UK. "Make no mistake, we are on course for a Labour majority at the next general election. We've won the trust and confidence of voters and now we can go on and change our country" Keir Starmer | Leader, Labour Party (Opposition)

business

of the day quote

Rising hydrogen demand in the transportation industry will play a critical role in India's energy transition

AJAY MATHUR | DIRECTOR GENERAL, ISA

India is the global leader in milk production, number two in fisheries, number three in egg production, number four in buffalo meat exports etc. Yet the irony is the entire animal economy is heavily segmented and largely unorganized

KARISHMA DAGAR | CO-FOUNDER, ANIMSTOK.COM

Coupled with strong macroeconomic statistics, India remains largely resilient to global challenges while consumer confidence remains high

SHISHIR BAJAJ | CHAIRMAN AND MD, KNIGHT FRANK INDIA

SHORT TAKES

Meesho axes 251

New Delhi: E-commerce firm Meesho has laid off 251 employees constituting 15 per cent of its workforce to cut costs and as part of its efforts to achieve profitability, a top company official said Friday. Meesho Founder and CEO Vinit Aatrey in an email to employees informed about the decision and announced that all the affected employees will get one month extra severance pay beyond the notice period as well as ESOPs irrespective of the period they have been with the company. "We are reducing the size of the Meesho workforce by 15 per cent, affecting 251 employees," Aatrey said. He said that the company grew 10 times from 2020 to 2022 which was aided by Covid tailwinds and aggressive investments.

Q1 5G smartphone shipments grow 14%

New Delhi: The 5G smartphone shipments grew 14 per cent (year-on-year) in India in the first quarter (Q1) 2023, with 5G smartphone shipment share increased to 41 per cent, a new report said Friday. According to CyberMedia Research, India's 5G smartphone momentum continued through Q1 2023 with 34 new 5G launches, with Samsung leading the country's market with a 23 per cent share, followed by Apple with a 17 per cent market share. In addition, India's smartphone market shipments declined by 21 per cent (year-on-year), during Q1 2023, while the overall mobile market in the country declined by 20 per cent (YoY). Samsung (20 per cent), Vivo (17 per cent) and Xiaomi (16 per cent), captured the top three spots in the smartphone leaderboard in Q1 2023, followed by Oppo (10 per cent) and Realme (9 per cent). Around \$2 billion worth of 5G smartphones shipped in Q1 2023.



It is imperative to mitigate both the current and potential risks AI poses to individuals, society, and national security

KAMALA HARRIS | VICE PRESIDENT, US

ACCENTURE REJIGS TOP LEADER

IT services and consulting firm Accenture Friday said senior managing director and chairperson for Accenture in India Rekha Menon will retire June 30. The company also announced that it has done away with the position of chairperson and created two new roles, Ajay Vij as country MD and Sandeep Dutta as lead for India Market Unit



SEBI to tell brokers, MFs to limit use of financial influencers

Mumbai, May 5: India's market regulator will direct brokers and mutual funds to limit the use of financial influencers in advertising and marketing campaigns, according to two people with direct knowledge of the matter. A surge in retail investors in equity markets during the Covid-19 pandemic led to a proliferation of influencers pushing financial advice on social media platforms. The Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) fears they could mislead investors, according to the people, who spoke on condition of anonymity about a decision that has not been reported previously. The regulator will ask brokers, traders registered with it and mutual funds to stop associating with financial influencers who are seen to be giving misleading advice and inducing investors, said the first person, a senior regulatory official. SEBI will define what kind of advice is seen as misleading after issuing a consultation paper and seeking industry comments before finalising regulations, the person added, with rule violations attracting fines and directions including a ban from capital markets. The regulator sees promises of assured or excessively high returns, misleading or biased information and testimonials with inadequate disclosure of risks as misleading, the second person said. Curbing the spread of financial advice via social media influencers has been a challenge across a number of advanced and developing global markets. In March 2022, the Australia Securities and Investment Commission said social media influencers required a licence to give financial advice, with violators facing a jail term and stiff fines. SEBI, however, believes that regulating financial influencers is beyond its jurisdiction and the focus should be on reducing the legitimacy they get from being backed by registered market intermediaries through advertisements, events and other associations, the first person said. "Regulating financial influencers is not the correct approach...but we want regulated entities to stay away from them," the person added. SEBI's approach may not solve the problem entirely, said Sandeep Parekh, managing partner at FinSec Law Advisors, a law firm in India. "There is heavy regulatory and compliance burden on registered entities, whereas the unregistered individuals are continuing to give out financial advice with impunity," he said. "There is a need to have targeted regulations for so-called financial influencers."

INSOLVENCY PROCEEDINGS Go First, lessors lock horns as hearings begin

The cash-strapped airline wants NCLT to accept its plea and is seeking an interim moratorium to save its assets, a move the lessors oppose

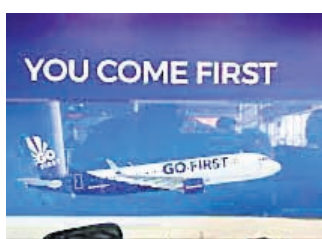
REUTERS

New Delhi, May 5: Indian airline Go First's effort to start insolvency proceedings has become ensnared in a tussle with aircraft lessors after they asked the aviation reg-

ulator to deregister some of its planes as a step towards taking them back.

India's first major airline collapse since 2019 underlines the fierce competition in a sector dominated by IndiGo and the recent merger of Air India and Vistara under the Tata conglomerate.

Some lessors opposed Go Airlines Ltd's plea at the first hearing of the National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT) Thursday after the airline had blamed faulty Pratt & Whitney engines this week for the grounding of about half of its fleet.



Go First had to ground more than half its 54 Airbus 320 neos fitted with Raytheon owned P&W engines by April, according to a filing seen by Reuters. Engine failures have cost the air-

line ₹108 billion (\$1.3 billion) in lost revenue and expenses, it said.

The company owes financial creditors ₹65.21 billion (\$798 million), its bankruptcy filing showed, and had not defaulted on any of those dues by the end of April.

FLIGHTS CANCELLED TILL MAY 12

Meanwhile Go First Friday said it has cancelled all its flights till May 12.

The Wadia group-owned carrier has filed a plea for voluntary insolvency resolution proceedings before the National Company Law

Tribunal (NCLT) and the tribunal reserved its order Thursday.

A full refund will be issued to the original mode of payment shortly, it added. Initially, the airline cancelled all the flights for three days starting from May 3 and later it was extended till May 9. Now, flights are cancelled till May 12.

As Go First awaits the NCLT ruling on its voluntary insolvency resolution plea, the tribunal is set to hear on Monday two petitions seeking insolvency proceedings against the crisis-hit airline.

GREEN ENERGY PUSH

Govt may allow foreign investment in N-power



THE AIM IS TO REDUCE CARBON EMISSIONS AND NUCLEAR IS IN FOCUS BECAUSE IT CAN SUPPLY ENERGY 24/7, UNLIKE SOLAR ENERGY

REUTERS

New Delhi, May 5: India is considering overturning a ban on foreign investment in its nuclear power industry and allowing greater participation by domestic private firms, two government sources told Reuters, as part of a push for cleaner energy.

The measures have been recommended by a government panel, set up by think-tank Niti Aayog which is headed by Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

Under India's Atomic Energy Act 1962, the government plays a central role in developing and running nuclear power stations. Domestic private companies are allowed to participate as "junior equity partners" by supplying components and helping build them.

The panel has recommended changes to the act and to India's foreign investment policies so that both domestic and foreign private companies can complement nu-

clear power generation by public companies. The Department of Atomic Energy has said previously that several foreign companies including Westinghouse Electric, GE-Hitachi, Electricite de France and Rosatom were interested in participating in the country's nuclear power projects as technology partners, suppliers, contractors and service providers. India does not allow foreign investment in the nuclear power sector.

The officials said the emphasis was on private participation through small modular reactors to fast-track nuclear energy generation, which accounts for 3% of India's total power production. Coal fires three quarters of it.

The Department of Atomic Energy, which works directly under the prime minister, and Niti Aayog did not respond to emails and messages seeking comment. Factory-built and ready-to-shift, each SMR produces up to 300 megawatts (MW) and requires less

capital, time and land than conventional reactors. They can also safely be deployed in populated areas, the officials said.

State-run Nuclear Power Corp of India Ltd and Bharatiya Nabhikiya Vidyut Nigam are the only two nuclear power generators in India. Thermal power company NTPC and oil marketing firm Indian Oil Corp, both government-controlled, have formed partnerships with NPCIL for nuclear power.

CHANGE IN POWER POLICY

The government panel has also recommended replacing old coal-based plants with SMRs, amid a proposal to amend its National Electricity Policy (NEP), to not add any new coal-fired power plants, sources said.

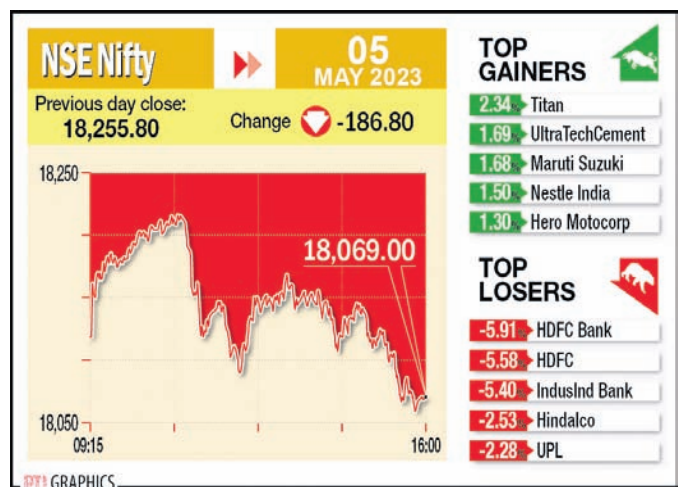
India and China account for about 80% of all active coal projects as most developing nations wind down capacity to meet climate targets. As of January 2023, only 20 countries have more than one coal project planned, according to E3G, an independent climate think tank.

"After months of deliberations, we have arrived at a conclusion that we would not need new coal additions apart from the ones already in pipeline," one of three government sources said.

India's current nuclear power capacity is 6,780 MW and it is adding 21 more units with a capacity of 7,000 MW by 2031.

The country is a signatory to international conventions on nuclear safety and will have to ensure that private companies comply with standards.

Sensex, Nifty tank over 1% on losses in HDFC twins



Markets were under a bear hug on the back of massive profit-taking amid sell-off in HDFC twins, US banking woes and weak Wall Street cues

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, May 5: Benchmark indices Sensex and Nifty declined more than 1 per cent at close Friday due to a heavy sell-off in index major HDFC twins after reports that their merger could lead to outflows of \$150-200 million.

The 30-share BSE Sensex tanked 694.96 points or 1.13 per cent to settle at 61,054.29 as 20 of its components declined and 10 advanced. During the day, it plunged 747.08 points or 1.20 per cent to 61,002.17.

The broader NSE Nifty fell 186.80 points or 1.02 per cent to end at

18,069 with 30 of its constituents declining and 19 closing with gains.

Among the Sensex firms, HDFC Bank tumbled 5.80 per cent followed by HDFC which plummeted 5.57 per cent. Both the stocks fell sharply amid reports that the merged HDFC entity could see significant outflows.

IndusInd Bank, Tata Steel, Kotak Mahindra Bank, Mahindra & Mahindra, Bajaj Finserv, HCL Technologies, Infosys, Wipro and NTPC were the other major laggers. Titan, UltraTech Cement, Maruti, Nestle, ITC and Larsen & Toubro were among the gainers.

Consumer Durables, consumer discretionary, FMCG, industrials and capital goods were the gainers.

Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) were net buyers Thursday also as they bought equities worth ₹1,414.73 crore, according to exchange data. Meanwhile, global oil benchmark Brent crude climbed 1.59 per cent to \$73.65 per barrel.

GLOBAL GOLD DEMAND IN Q1 DIPS BY 13%

Meanwhile, demand in India declined as consumption fell by 17 per cent year-on-year to 78 tonne during January-March 2023, mainly on account of sharp increase in domestic gold prices to over Rs 60,000 per 10 grams and continued volatility in price

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, May 5: Global gold demand declined by 13 per cent year-on-year to 1,080.8 tonne during the January-March quarter of this year, mainly due to outflows from European-listed exchange traded fund (ETF) products, according to the World Gold Council (WGC).

The total gold demand stood at 1,238.5 tonne during the first quarter of 2022, WGC's Gold Demand Trends Q1 2023 stated.

Holdings of global gold ETFs fell during Q1, with 29 tonnes outflows in January and February equivalent to a \$1.5 billion in outflow, the report said, adding that the majority of outflows came from the European-listed products.

However, North American-listed ETFs, as well as those listed in other regions, witnessed recovery in inflows during the first quarter of 2023, it added.

"The mixed picture for quarter one highlights how gold's diverse sources of demand underpin its



role and performance as a global asset," WGC Senior Markets Analyst Louise Street said.

"Growth in some regions offset weakness in others as different economic forces and demand drivers played out in the global gold market. One commonality was that different types of investors looked to gold as a store of value in uncertain times," Street added.

Against the backdrop of turmoil in the banking sector, ongoing geopolitical tensions and a challenging economic environment, gold's role as a safe haven asset has come to the fore

LOUISE STREET | SENIOR MARKETS ANALYST, WGC

Moreover, it is likely that investment demand will grow this year, especially with waning headwinds from the strong US dollar and interest rate hikes, she said.

She further noted that positive demand for gold ETFs has continued in the second quarter so far, and the looming threat of developed market recession may be the trigger for inflows to accelerate later in the year.

"Central bank buying is likely to remain strong and will be a cornerstone of demand throughout 2023, even if at lower levels than the record highs seen last year," she added.

Central banks have helped boost demand adding 228 tonne to global reserves, a quarter one record high in this data series, compared to 83 tonne in the same period last year, said the report.

FOREX KITTY RISES TO \$588.78BN

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, May 5: India's foreign exchange reserves jumped \$4.532 billion to \$588.78 billion for the week ended April 28, the Reserve Bank of India said Friday.

The overall reserves had dropped \$2.164 billion to \$584.248 billion in the previous reporting week.

In October 2021, the country's forex reserves had touched an all-time high of \$645 billion. The reserves had been declining as the central bank deployed the kitty to defend the rupee amid pressures caused mainly by global developments.

For the week ended April 28, foreign currency assets, a major component of the reserves, increased nearly \$5 billion to \$519.485 billion, according to the Weekly Statistical Supplement released by the RBI.

Expressed in dollar terms, the foreign currency assets include the effect of appreciation or depreciation of non-US units like the euro, pound and yen held in the foreign exchange reserves.

Gold reserves dropped \$494 million to \$45.657 billion, the RBI said. The Special Drawing Rights (SDRs) were up \$35 million to \$18.466 billion. The country's reserve position with the IMF was down \$4 million to \$5.172 billion in the reporting week.

Apple bets future on emerging mkts, starting with India

Apple reported revenue of \$94.8 billion for the March quarter and set an "all-time record" for services and a March quarter record for iPhone

REUTERS

Washington, May 5: When Apple Inc surprised investors this week with a rise in iPhone sales despite a slump in the global smartphone market, Chief Executive Tim Cook credited emerging markets like India where the company is luring away Android phone users.

Cook is betting that those markets will provide more opportunities for growth, with their youthful populations and relatively few iPhones.

Apple said iPhone sales rose 1.5% to \$51.3 billion for its fiscal sec-

ond quarter even as global smartphone shipments fell 13% in January to March, according to research firm Canals, whose data showed Apple gained market share from Android phones.

Apple said it set sales records in several countries across South Asia, Latin America and the Middle East.

"We're putting efforts in a number of these markets and really see, particularly given our low share and the dynamics of the demographics, a great opportunity for us in those markets," Cook told investors during a conference call.



India is perhaps Apple's biggest focus. The company recently opened its first two retail stores there, in Mumbai and Delhi, and while Apple does not disclose revenue for the country, Cook told investors that it set a quarterly record and percentage growth was in very strong double digits year-over-year.

Apple was the second biggest revenue generating brand in India

in 2022, second only to Samsung as it gained 18% of the total value of smartphone shipments, according to research firm Counterpoint.

For Apple, selling an iPhone in an emerging market represents more than just the sale of one device - it represents the chance to get consumers hooked on Apple devices and services over time.

Customers who start with an

There are a lot of people coming into the middle class, and I really feel that India is at a tipping point, and it's great to be there

TIM COOK | CEO, APPLE

iPhone might later add an Apple Watch or AirPods or sign up for subscription services.

Cook said he saw opportunities for Apple in India in services but said that average revenue per user - a metric known as ARPU in the subscription business - would take time to catch up to Apple's other markets.

USED IPHONE BOOM

Part of the reason that Apple has been able to gain market share in both emerging and developed

markets is the emergence of a booming market for used iPhones.

Sales of refurbished iPhones rose 16% in volume globally during 2022. India led the growth with a 19% jump, according to Counterpoint, with iPhones accounting for 11% of secondary smartphone sales in India.

In an interview with Reuters Thursday, Apple's Cook said little of Apple's direct iPhone revenue comes from refurbished devices. However he said the company has tried to bolster the used iPhone market by offering trade-in deals on its iPhones and building them sturdy enough to last several owners.

"We encourage the market and it provides us an opportunity to hit some price points that we would not otherwise play in," Cook said in the interview.

GT spinners stump Royals

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Jaipur, May 5: Gujarat Titans (GT) made light work of a 119-run target set by Rajasthan Royals (Rr) as the defending champions romped home to a commanding nine-wicket win in a one-sided IPL match here Friday.

After bundling RR out for 118 in 17.5 overs, GT reached the victory target and scored 119 for the loss of Shubman Gill (36). However, Wriddhiman Saha (41 n o, 34b, 5x4) and skipper Hardik Pandya (39 n o, 17b, 3x4, 3x6) completed the job easily. The only wicket to fall, that of Gill, was picked up by Yuzvendra Chahal.

The Pandya-led side took their tally to 14 points from 10 matches with seven wins and three losses, while Sanju Samson's RR remained fourth with five wins and as many losses in 10 games.

However, it was the Afghan spin twins Rashid Khan (3/14) and Noor Ahmad (2/25) who were instrumental in scripting a win for their side. They kept all the opposition batters in check and picked up wickets at regular intervals to bring GT back on the winning track.

Pandya was severe on RR's Adam Zampa, hitting the Australian leg-spinner for three sixes and a four to collect 24 runs in the 11th over and take his side quickly over the line.

RR's decision to bat after winning the toss backfired as their batting crumbled against Rashid and Noor who shared five wickets between themselves. The spinners were well-supported by pacers Mohammed Shami (1/27), Pandya (1/22) and Josh Little (1/24).

RR looked in control until the fifth over of the innings at 47 for one, but



DEADLY SPELL: Rashid Khan celebrates with skipper Hardik Pandya after dismissing Ravichandran Ashwin; (Inset): Noor Ahmad

the home side collapsed without any resistance to lose nine wickets for a mere 71 runs and were bowled out in only 17.5 overs.

Except for Samson (30, 20b, 3x4, 1x6) none of the other RR batters could get going against the disciplined and aggressive bowling by the bowlers of Gujarat Titans. With both Jos Buttler (8) and Yashasvi Jaiswal (14) falling cheaply, the onus was on Samson to take the battle to the opposition camp. However,

Little dismissed Samson and from then on RR never looked like taking control of the match.

Rashid then outgunned his counterpart Ravichandran Ashwin (2) for the majority of the eighth over, dismantling his off-stump on the final ball. RR's last hope was Shimron Hetmyer (7), but he too was sent packing by Rashid.

BRIEF SCORES

RR 118 in 17.5 overs (Sanju Samson



30, Rashid Khan 3/14, Noor Ahmad 2/25) lost to GT 119 for 1 in 13.5 overs (Wriddhiman Saha 41 n o, Hardik Pandya 39 n o, Shubman Gill 36) by nine wickets.

Napoli repeat Maradona act

CLUB END 33-YEAR WAIT TO WIN SERIE A CROWN, THEIR LAST TITLE COMING IN 1990 UNDER THE LEGENDARY DIEGO MARADONA

AGENCIES

Naples, May 5: Napoli finally ended their long wait to win the Serie A crown Thursday, joining late club icon Diego Maradona in the history books. It was under Maradona that Napoli had last won the Serie A title way back in 1990. They emulated the feat with a 1-1 draw at Udinese and the one point was enough for them to become Italian champions with a record-equaling five games to play.

The result sparked wild celebrations among the thousands of fans in Udine, at the Stadio Maradona here and all around southern Italy's biggest city.

Supporters streamed onto the pitch at the Dacia Arena to celebrate after a season dominated by Luciano Spalletti's side, creating moments of tension with home fans not happy at such open partying on their ground.

Victor Osimhen scored the decisive goal in the second half as Napoli's current stars came back from trailing to Sandi Lovric's opener at half time and emulated the teams led by Maradona that won the top league in Italy in 1987 and 1990.

"To be compared to him, to be the captain after Maradona to lift the 'Scudetto' (Cup), I just have no words," said skipper Giovanni Di Lorenzo. "This isn't my title; it belongs to every player and the people who worked to make our dream come true."

Spalletti and his squad will receive an emotional welcome when they return to this town, where the



Napoli fans celebrate Thursday with a poster of Diego Maradona after the crowning of their team as Serie A winners

city-wide partying is set to continue to until at least their next home fixture Sunday evening against Fiorentina.

"Seeing Neapolitans happy is enough to give you a sense of that joy they are feeling," Spalletti told 'DAZN' on the verge of tears. "These people will look to this moment when life gets hard, they have every right to celebrate like this. You feel a bit more relaxed knowing that you've given them this moment of happiness."

It was appropriate that Osimhen was the man to take Napoli over the line as the Nigeria striker has had the best season of his career and been the key to Napoli's historic charge to glory. Osimhen's title-deciding strike was his 22nd goal in 28 league appearances.

BRIGHTON EXACT SWEET REVENGE

London: Brighton gained sweet revenge Thursday for their defeat by Manchester United in the FA Cup semifinals, with Alexis Mac Allister converting a 99th-minute penalty to dent the visitors' Champions League hopes. Classy Brighton dominated possession, but lacked a cutting edge until Luke Shaw's handball deep into added on time presented them with an opportunity to take all three points. The 1-0 win completes a league double for the Seagulls against United. Man United however, remain in the fourth and final Champions League qualification spot in the Premier League, four points ahead of fifth-placed Liverpool with a game in hand, while Brighton are up to sixth.

SHORT TAKES

Indian archers shine with huge medal haul

Tashkent: India's compound archers bagged all the medals on offer to stamp their authority as the country topped the Asia Cup Stage 2 World Ranking tournament with seven gold, five silver and two bronze medals here Friday. In the hunt for all 10 gold medals, India missed complete domination with the recurve archers losing three finals, against their Chinese rivals. Overall, the recurve archers finished with two gold and three silver medals to propel India to the top spot in standings with 14 medals. The two gold medals came in the recurve segment came when Mrinal Chauhan, Tushar Shelke and Jayanta Talukdar outplayed China 5-1 (57-54, 54-54, 54-51) in the men's team final. The mixed team duo of Chauhan and Sangeeta overcame a scare from China before winning 5-4 (36-37, 39-39, 37-36, 37-20, 18) to win the second gold.

Saudi club keen to recruit Messi

Buenos Aires: Lionel Messi has received a formal offer to join Saudi Arabian club Al-Hilal next season, a source close to Argentina's World Cup-winning captain informed here Thursday. The offer from the Saudi club is the only one Messi has received so far, the source added. Argentine media have reported that the offer is worth around \$400 million a year. The 35-year-old Messi has also been linked in the media with a move back to Barcelona, with the United States' Major League Soccer club Inter Miami also being touted as a possible destination. Meanwhile in a separate development, Messi apologised Friday in a video message to PSG and his teammates for his unscheduled visit to Saudi Arabia recently for which the club has suspended him.

Chopra triumphs

Doha: Olympic champion javelin thrower Neeraj Chopra began his Diamond League title defence with a comfortable win in the season-opening leg here Friday, with a world leading and fourth career-best effort. The 25-year-old Chopra, who had pocketed in September, the 2022 Diamond League final trophy, beat a star-studded field with a best throw of 88.67m to position himself on the top of the pile. He maintained the lead till the end to win the event in his second appearance at the Qatar Sports Club here.

Double crown for Odisha's Sohini



Players pose with their trophies along with dignitaries at the tennis complex inside Kalinga Stadium, Friday

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, May 5: Sohini S Mohanty of Odisha bagged a double crown in the AITA OTA U-16 and U-12 tennis tournament which concluded at the Kalinga Stadium here Friday. In the boys' category, Shaurya S Swarup emulated Sohini in the under-16 segment.

In the under-16 girls' final Sohini defeated Avipsha Dehury, also of Odisha 6-1, 6-0 in a one-sided encounter. Then in the girls' doubles final Sohini teamed up with Adrika Patnaik and defeated their Odisha compatriots Avipsha and Prisha Das 6-1, 6-2. In both the title-round matches, Sohini dominated the show by putting up a near flawless show.

In the boys under-16 final second seed Shaurya S Swarup of West Bengal defeated third-seeded Aditya Bikram Acharya of Odisha 7-5, 1-6, 6-3. Aditya put up a good show in the second set after losing a close first set, but ran out of steam in the third. In the doubles final, Swarup and his partner Aritra Sasmal defeated Aditya and Aditey Singh Jadon of Odisha 6-3, 7-5.

The winners bagged 25 AITA points each while the runners-up had to be satisfied with 20 points. A total of 64 players from Odisha, West Bengal, Sikkim, Assam, Karnataka, Telengana, Gujarat and Maharashtra took part in the event. Prizes were distributed by Sanjeev Panda, secretary of the Odisha Tennis Association (OTA).

Wrestlers planning next move

SPORTS MINISTER ASKS AGITATORS TO CALL OFF PROTESTS PROMISING ACTION

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, May 5: The protesting wrestlers are still contemplating their next move after the Supreme Court closed proceedings on their plea even as Sports Minister Anurag Thakur requested them to have faith in the system.

"Our legal team and mentors are still discussing the next move. We will let you know once we finalise something," Olympic medalist Bajrang Punia said Friday.

The wrestlers have the option of moving to a lower court or the Delhi High Court if they are not satisfied with the police investigation into the sexual harassment charges against the outgoing Wrestling Federation of India (WFI) chief Brijbhushan Sharan Singh.

The Delhi police has registered two FIRs, including one on PCO Act, against Singh. The police have also recorded statements of five wrestlers, including the minor.

"It is my request to all sports persons who are agitating there (Jantar Mantar) that whatever their demands were, they were met. Court has also given its directions and they should let an unbiased probe be completed," Thakur said in Lucknow on the sidelines of a Khelo India



Ganguly hoping for amicable solution

New Delhi: Former BCCI president Sourav Ganguly said Friday he hopes to see the ongoing wrestling row gets 'resolved' but refused to make any further comment regarding the matter. "I hope it gets resolved. The wrestlers have won a lot of medals and brought accolades to the country. Hopefully, it will be resolved," Ganguly, also a former India captain said. "However, I can't comment on things on which I don't have complete knowledge of," he added.

Rahul out of IPL, WTC final

Batter to undergo thigh surgery after suffering injury during game against RCB

AGENCIES

New Delhi, May 5: India's top-order batter KL Rahul ruled himself out Friday of the upcoming World Test Championships (WTC) final against Australia and will undergo a thigh surgery on the advice of his medical team. Rahul, the captain of the Lucknow Super Giants (LSG) franchise, has been ruled out for an indefinite period due to the injury he sustained during an IPL game against RCB earlier this week.

The other players who are not available due to injuries for the final are Jasprit Bumrah, Shreyas Iyer and Rishabh Pant. The WTC final will be played at the Oval in London from June 7.

"Absolutely gutted that I won't be at the Oval next month with Team India. I'll do everything I can to get back in blue and help my country. That has always been my focus and priority," Rahul said in a statement on his social media handles.

"After careful consideration and consultation with the medical team, it's been concluded that I'll be undergoing a surgery on my thigh shortly. My focus will be on my rehabilitation and recovery in the coming weeks. It's a tough call to make, but I know it's the right one to ensure a full recovery," Rahul added.

Meanwhile, his IPL franchise too issued a press release saying



An injured KL Rahul being helped off the field during the game against RCB

Team India will now be without four of their key players, Bumrah, Pant, Iyer and Rahul for the WTC final in June

his tendon which will require surgery," LSG said in the release.

This development will suddenly be a huge blow to Team India as they were planning to play Rahul as a wicketkeeper-batter in the WTC final and use an extra bowler or batter in the playing squad. Now they will certainly have to look for other options. In Rahul's absence, LSG will be led in the rest of the tournament by Krunal Pandya, the franchise said.

VENKATRAM EYES SUCCESSFUL OUTING

POST NEWS NETWORK

Cuttack, May 5: V Venkatram, a former first class cricketer, who has joined as the technical director (TD) of the Odisha Cricket Academy, said special emphasis will be laid on the action of bowlers and the coaches will have to undergo a special refresher course before they take up assignments at the district level. Venkatram has been brought to the state with the plan to implement Odisha Cricket Association's 'Vision@2024' programme.

Talking to reporters at the Barabati Stadium here Thursday, the former Bihar spinner said that regular camps will be conducted for upcoming bowlers to see that they maintain proper action and don't end up 'chucking'. "The aim of the camps will be to rectify the faulty action of promising bowlers and see that they shine," Venkatram said.

The newly-appointed TD also stated that high performance skill development camps will be conducted on a regular basis for under-19 and under-16 cricketers at the district level. This will be done so that they can keep themselves with the updates of the game," Venkatram stated. Venkatram also informed that regular talent hunt camps will be conducted across the state to spot promising players and groom them accordingly.

Struff stuns Tsitsipas, seals semifinal spot

ASSOCIATED ARESS

Madrid, May 5: Jan-Lennard Struff thought he was done at the Madrid Open when he lost to Aslan Karatsev in the final round of qualifying last week. Then he got an unexpected spot in the tournament's main draw as the so-called lucky loser and has really made it count. Struff continued his dream run in the tournament Thursday, upsetting fourth-seeded Stefanos Tsitsipas 7-6 (7-5), 5-7, 6-3 to set up another shot at Karatsev - this time in the semifinals. The big-serving German is just the third lucky loser to reach the semifinals of a Masters 1000 tournament.

Women's No. 1 Iga Swiatek and No. 2 Aryna Sabalenka both won their semifinals and will meet for the title Saturday. It will be a rematch of the final in Stuttgart two weeks ago, when Swiatek won. "I really want to have this revenge," Sabalenka said.

Swiatek cruised past 12th-seeded Veronika Kudermetova 6-1, 6-1 to make it to her first final here and set up the rematch with Sabalenka, who advanced with a 6-4, 6-1 win over Maria Sakkari.

ROHAN, EBDEN IN TITLE ROUND

Madrid: Rohan Bopanna and his Australian partner Matthew Ebden came back from a set down to beat Santiago Gonzalez and Edouard Roger-Vasselin and reach the men's doubles final at the Madrid Open here Thursday. The 43-year-old Bopanna and Ebden, 35, defeated eighth seeds Gonzalez and Roger-Vasselin 5-7, 7-6 (7-3), 10-4 to reach their second ATP Masters 1000 final of the season.

Also making it to the men's last four stage was home favourite Carlos Alcaraz who beat Karen Kachanov 6-4, 7-5.

Struff had lost only five service games in the main draw en route to the quarterfinals and relinquished only one against Tsitsipas on his way to victory in the Spanish capital. "It feels amazing. It was a very hard battle," Struff said. "Very happy that I played this well today," he added.