



IN ELITE CLUB

Actor Deepika Padukone features on the cover of *TIME* magazine for 'bringing the world to Bollywood'

LEISURE | P2



UK AID FOR UKRAINE

British government is supplying long-range cruise missiles to Ukraine to drive out Russian forces on foreign land

INTERNATIONAL | P10



3RD TIME LUCKY

Divya and Sarabjot emerge 3rd-time lucky by winning gold in the 10m air pistol mixed team event of ISSF WC

SPORTS | P12

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BHUBANESWAR | FRIDAY MAY 12 | 2023

12 PAGES | ₹5.00

SHORT TAKES

CBSE results may come today

Bhubaneswar: The Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) is expected to announce the results of Class-X and Class-XII board examinations shortly. In fact, some sources said Thursday that the results will be declared Friday. CBSE will upload the results on its official websites cbse.gov.in and results.cbse.gov.in. Other than the official website, the students can also access their results through the 'UMANG App' and 'Digilocker'. Officials said a total 1.17 lakh students from the three states of Odisha, Jharkhand and Chhattisgarh had appeared for the Class-X exams while 93,726 students had registered for Class-XII exams this year.

Maoists murder former sarpanch in Kandhamal

Phulbani: A tribal leader was shot dead allegedly late Wednesday night by Maoists in Kandhamal district, police said Thursday. The murder happened in Saulipada village, they informed. The deceased, identified as Subal Kanhar, was a former sarpanch, said Tapan Kumar Nahak, the IIC of Phiringia police station. A group of 10 armed Maoists stormed the village and barged into Kanhar's house. They dragged Kanhar to the outskirts of the village where they shot him dead, police sources said. The Maoists suspected that Kanhar was working as a police informer, they added.

Defamation case against former CJI

Guwahati: A ₹1 crore defamation case and a petition seeking an injunction to restrain his autobiography has been filed against Rajya Sabha MP and former Chief Justice of India (CJI) Ranjan Gogoi by Assam Public Works (APW) president Aabhiheet Sharma at a local court here. Sharma filed the case against Gogoi and 'Rupa Publications', the publisher of his autobiography *Justice for a Judge*, for alleged misleading and defamatory statements against him in the book. The matter has been posted for hearing June 3. Sharma has also filed a petition seeking an ad-interim injunction restraining Gogoi and his publisher from further publishing, distributing or selling any book which has defamatory statements and imputations against him.

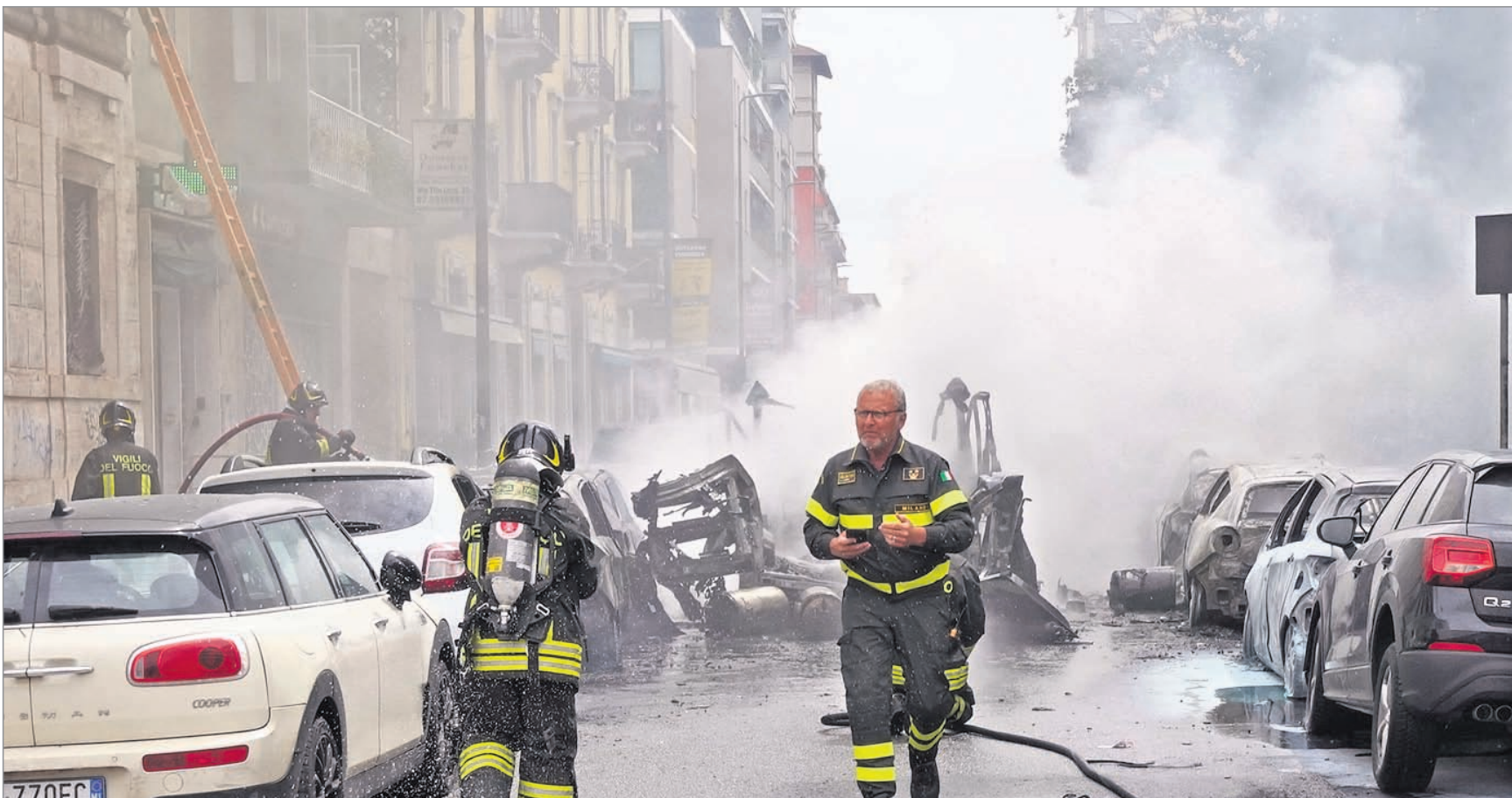
IRREGULAR by MANJUL



The court has severely criticised your role as a governor... I guess, the party will reward you soon

MARKET WATCH			
INDEX			VARIATION
SENSEX	61904.52	↓	35.68
NIFTY	18297	↓	18.10
DOLLAR	82.13	↑	₹0.21
EURO	89.63	↓	₹0.29
GOLD	₹60,949	↓	₹321
SILVER	₹73,975	↓	₹2713

WEATHER			
	BHUB	CTK	
MAX	37.7°C	38.5°C	
MIN	27.2°C	27.5°C	
Humidity	78%	73%	Forecast
Rainfall	Nil	Nil	Light to moderate rain



RISKY BUSINESS: Firefighters try to extinguish flames after an explosion rocked the city of Milan in Italy damaging a large number of cars and buildings, Thursday

PTI PHOTO

HEATWAVE TO LAST ANOTHER 4-5 DAYS

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, May 11: Heatwave conditions continued to prevail across Odisha with mercury breaching the 40°C mark at 16 places Thursday. According to the India Meteorological Department (IMD), Boudh and Jharsuguda were the hottest places in the state and recorded the day's maximum temperature of 43.4°C. The searing heat may continue for another four-five days, IMD said.

Among other cities that recorded temperatures of 40°C or more are Sambalpur (43.3°C), Hirakud (42.3°C), Sundargarh (42.1°C), Rourkela (42°C), Angul (41.7°C), Sonepur (41.3°C), Bolangir (41.2°C), Titlagarh, Talcher and Nuapada (41°C each), Baripada (40.6°C), Bargarh (40.2°C), Nayagarh (40.2°C) and Malkangiri (40°C).

While Cuttack recorded a maximum day temperature of 38.5°C, capital city Bhubaneswar remained a little cooler at 37.7°C. However, the relative humidity in the state capital was at 95 per cent, causing huge discomfort to residents.

P3

Shinde wins Sena battle

Despite asking his *bête noire* Shinde to resign on moral grounds, it is the second bitter blow for Uddhav Thackeray and his faction having lost the Sena bow and arrow symbol earlier.

AGENCIES

New Delhi, May 11: What started as an intense political fight between Shiv Sena patriarch Uddhav Thackeray and his former party colleague Eknath Shinde ended in a victory of sorts for the latter Thursday. The Supreme Court said Shinde will continue as the Chief Minister of Maharashtra and added that it cannot restore the then Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA) government led by Uddhav as he resigned without facing a floor test in June last year.

Yes, the court did pull up former Maharashtra Governor Bhagat Singh Koshyari and said he did not have reasons based on objective material before him to arrive at the conclusion that former chief minister Thackeray had lost the confidence of the House. However, it did not matter much to Shinde or to his deputy Devendra Fadnavis, both of who expressed 'satisfaction' at the apex court's decision. In a unanimous verdict on a batch of pleas related to the political crisis that led to the fall of the three-party MVA government following a revolt by the Shinde faction in the Shiv Sena, a five-judge Constitution bench headed by Chief Justice DY Chandrachud held that the then Speaker's decision to appoint Bharat Gogawale of the Shinde faction as the Whip of the



Devendra Fadnavis (left) and Eknath Shinde talk to the media Thursday in Mumbai after the Supreme Court verdict

PTI PHOTO

Shiv Sena in the Maharashtra Assembly was 'contrary to law'. However, all those observations were overshadowed as the Supreme Court allowed the Shinde-led government to continue.

The bench said, "The governor was not justified in calling upon Mr Thackeray to prove his majority on the floor of the House because he did not have reasons based on objective material before him to reach the conclusion that Mr Thackeray had lost the confidence of the House. However, the status quo ante cannot be restored because Mr Thackeray did not face the floor test and tendered his resignation."

The bench, also comprising Justices MR Shah, Krishna Murari, Hima Kohli and PS Narasimha, said, "The political imbroglio in Maharashtra arose as a result of party differences within the Shiv Sena. However, the floor test cannot be used as a medium to resolve internal party disputes or intra-party disputes. Also neither the Constitution nor the laws enacted by Parliament empower the governor to enter the political arena and play a role (however minute) either in inter-party disputes or in intra-party disputes."

However, Justice Chandrachud, who wrote the 141-page verdict on

Delhi govt triumphs in fight with Centre

NEW DELHI: In a major win for the AAP government, the Supreme Court in a unanimous verdict ruled Thursday that the Delhi government has legislative and executive powers over services except for public order, police and land. Asserting that an elected government needs to have control over the administration, a five-judge constitution bench, headed by Chief Justice DY Chandrachud, said the Union Territory of Delhi has 'sui generis' (unique) character and refused to agree with the 2019 judgement of Justice Ashok Bhushan that the Delhi government has no power over the issue of services.

P7

behalf of the bench, said the governor was justified in inviting Shinde to form the government.

"The post of Chief Minister of the state of Maharashtra fell vacant after the resignation of Mr Thackeray June 29, 2022. The leader (Devendra Fadnavis) of the party (BJP) that had returned the highest number of candidates to the state Assembly extended support on behalf of the party to Mr Shinde. Thus, the decision of the governor dated June 30, 2022, inviting Mr Shinde to form the government was justified," the bench said.

P7

Patnaik evades query on same-sex marriage

■ Odisha is among one of the states which is yet to reply to Solicitor General Tushar Mehta's letter seeking opinion on the same subject

KULDEEP SINGH, OP

New Delhi, May 11: Amidst the clamour for legal recognition of same-sex marriages in the country, Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik evaded questions when asked about Biju Janata Dal's (BJD) stand on the issue. Patnaik, who was addressing the media after meeting with Prime Minister Narendra Modi here, was asked by Orissa POST about his party's stand on the much debated issue. Patnaik, however, skirted the question. "I haven't discussed this matter with the Prime Minister," the Chief Minister replied.

During the hearing on this issue Wednesday, Solicitor General Tushar Mehta had informed the Supreme Court that he has written to all the states seeking their views on the issue since marriage is on the concurrent list. However, there has been no response from Odisha, he said.

Meanwhile, advocate Sasmit Patra, who is also BJD Rajya Sabha MP, while appearing for two organisations in the Supreme Court, had requested Wednesday that the matter should be sent to the Parliament. Patra had submitted before the court that without per-



sonal laws in ambit, the issue of same sex marriage cannot be taken up. He had also argued on the impact on public policy.

Patnaik during his meeting with the PM raised several demands pertaining to Odisha, including the setting up of the Shree Jagannath International Airport at Puri. Patnaik informed Modi that the site clearance for Puri airport from the Ministry of Civil Aviation is pending since September, 2022 and requested that the same may be expedited.

"I have just met the PM. The topic of discussion was mainly about Odisha's demands which include an international airport in Puri. We have already outlined the boundary of the proposed airport in Puri," the CM said.

During the meeting which lasted 15 minutes, Patnaik requested for the completion of eight national highway projects which were started in 2017-18 in Odisha. He also demanded opening of more bank branches in around 3,954 gram panchayats of the state.

Imran's arrest illegal, release immediately, says Pakistan SC

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Islamabad, May 11: In a major relief for Imran Khan, Pakistan's Supreme Court declared Thursday the former prime minister's arrest 'illegal' and ordered his immediate release after he was produced before a bench on its orders. A three-member bench, comprising Chief Justice Umar Ata Bandial, Justice Muhammad Ali Mazhar and Justice Athar Minallah, issued the verdict while hearing a petition against his arrest from the Islamabad High Court premises Tuesday.

The bench, while hearing the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf chairman's plea against his arrest in the Al-Qadir Trust case, expressed anger at the way he was taken into custody by paramilitary Rangers and ordered the National Accountability Bureau (NAB) to produce him before it at 4.30pm (local time).

Khan was brought to the court in heavy security. As he entered the courtroom, it was closed, and subsequently, the bench resumed the hearing of the case. "It is good to see you," Chief Justice Bandial told Khan. After a brief hearing, the court declared that Khan's arrest was 'illegal' and of no consequence and ordered that he should be set free immediately.

The court also directed him to go to the Islamabad High Court (IHC) and seek further legal recourse Friday. "You will have to accept whatever the high court decides," the top judge said.

During the hearing, Khan told the court that he was 'kidnapped from the court' when he was preparing for the biometric attendance before filing an appeal in a case. Khan claimed he was subjected to violence, saying that he had been beaten with clubs.

Breaking gender rules in their own way

■ Two women create history in Kerala's male-dominated priest community by performing tantric rituals in a temple

AGENCIES

Thrissur (Kerala), May 11: A woman who has yearned to conduct pujas at her ancestral temple since childhood and a homemaker-mother who has knowingly or unknowingly learnt the basics of tantric lessons through her daughter. This is the story of 24-year-old Jyotsna Padmanabhan and her mother Archana Kumari. The duo is silently creating history by shattering the glass shields of centuries-old male dominance in priest-hood and tantric rituals in Kerala.

Both the women have been donning the role of priests at a temple



I have not entered the world of pujas and mantras with the intention to prove anything as I am a woman, but because of my intense devotion and passion

JYOTSNA PADMANABHAN

in this central Kerala district and performing tantric rituals at neighbouring shrines which is normally considered a male bastion. However, the 47-year-old mom and her daughter are not out to break the gender equality in the profession of the priesthood. On the contrary, they

are just following their passion.

A double post-graduate in Vedanta and Sahitya (Sanskrit), Jyotsna said she started learning tantra since she was seven years old and the dream to don the role of a priest began even before that. "I have grown up seeing my fa-

ther Padmanabhan Namboothiripad conduct pujas and tantric rituals. So, a dream to learn this has been with me since I was very young," Jyotsna said. "When I expressed my wish to my father, he did not oppose. As he felt it was genuine, he extended all the support," the doting daughter added.

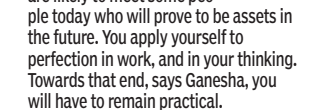
Jyotsna held the tantric installation of Goddess Bhadrakali at the Painkannykavu Sree Krishna Temple, the ancestral shrine of their family where her father is the chief priest. She has been serving at the shrine and performing daily rituals. She performs rituals in other temples too. "Pujas in other temples are not done just for the sake of it. I am doing whenever my father asks me to do," Jyotsna said.

Archana meanwhile said she has learned all about tantra from her daughter. "I learnt all the mantras by hearing her," she said.

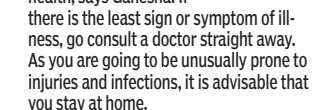
FORTUNE FORECAST

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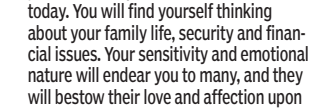
ARIES
Ganesh anticipates some exciting times for you. You are likely to meet some people today who will prove to be assets in the future. You apply yourself to perfection in work, and in your thinking. Towards that end, says Ganesh, you will have to remain practical.



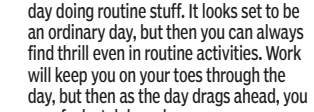
TAURUS
This day, you can't afford to take chances with your health, says Ganesh. If there is the least sign or symptom of illness, go consult a doctor straight away. As you are going to be unusually prone to injuries and infections, it is advisable that you stay at home.



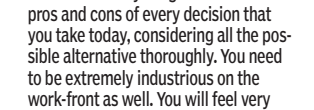
GEMINI
Analysing other people's minds and thoughts will be your favourite pastime today. You will find yourself thinking about your family life, security and financial issues. Your sensitivity and emotional nature will endear you to many, and they will bestow their love and affection upon you, says Ganesh.



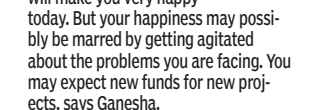
CANCER
The mundane will bring contentment to you today, and you will rather spend the day doing routine stuff. It looks set to be an ordinary day, but then you can always find thrill even in routine activities. Work will keep you on your toes through the day, but then as the day drags ahead, you may feel a tad bored.



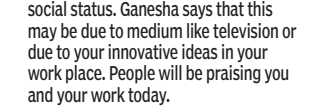
LEO
Decisions taken in haste will prove to be harmful. You need to carefully weigh the pros and cons of every decision that you take today, considering all the possible alternative thoroughly. You need to be extremely industrious on the work-front as well. You will feel very energetic and raring to go.



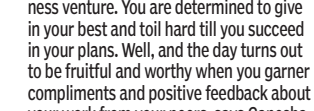
VIRGO
Something you achieve in a most unexpected manner will make you very happy today. But your happiness may possibly be marred by getting agitated about the problems you are facing. You may expect new funds for new projects, says Ganesh.



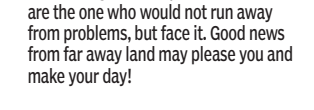
LIBRA
Ganesh says that you will be able to see a huge change in your personal and social status. Ganesh says that this may be due to medium like television or due to your innovative ideas in your work place. People will be praising you and your work today.



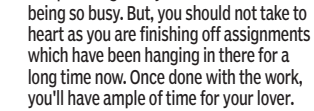
SCORPIO
Your energy levels are on an all time high today, as you plan to begin a new business venture. You are determined to give in your best and toil hard till you succeed in your plans. Well, and the day turns out to be fruitful and worthy when you garner compliments and positive feedback about your work from your peers, says Ganesh.



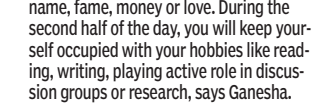
SAGITTARIUS
You have the knack of cut those troubles into small slices and gobble it up. You are the one who would not run away from problems, but face it. Good news from far away land may please you and make your day!



CAPRICORN
You have become workaholic and others may have complains against you for being so busy. But, you should not take to heart as you are finishing off assignments which have been hanging in there for a long time now. Once done with the work, you'll have ample of time for your lover. You'll make up for not taking time out for him/her during the first half of the day, feels Ganesh.



AQUARIUS
It is your lucky day today! Whatever you will wish for, it will fall into your lap, be it name, fame, money or love. During the second half of the day, you will keep yourself occupied with your hobbies like reading, writing, playing active role in discussion groups or research, says Ganesh.



PISCES
You will find yourself ecstatic now that certain important projects you have been slaving over are nearing completion. You will implement new strategies and will hope that everything goes according to plan.



SHAKIRA'S THUMBS DOWN TO ROMANCE WITH TOM CRUISE

Shakira and Tom Cruise created sensational news after getting spotted at Miami's Formula 1 Grand Prix. A source claimed that Tom was extremely interested in pursuing the *Waka Waka* singer. But a source close to her revealed that she isn't focused on dating him or anybody else at the moment.

SIA SECRETLY GETS HITCHED TO BOYFRIEND IN ITALY

Australian singer and songwriter Sia secretly tied the knot with her partner Dan Bernard in an intimate candlelit wedding in Portofino, Italy. With just four attendees, they exchanged vows under a beautifully adorned flower-covered gazebo, reports *sun.com*.



MANUSHI TO MAKE HER DEBUT AT CANNES

Mumbai: Former Miss World and actress Manushi Chhillar is all set to make her debut on the red carpet of the prestigious 2023 Cannes Film Festival.

The 76th edition will be held from May 16 to May 27 in France. She will be joining actress Anushka Sharma at the prestigious celebration.

Several top celebrities such as Aishwarya Rai Bachchan, Vidya Balan, Sharmila Tagore, and Deepika Padukone, among others, have been part of the jury for the French festival.

Priyanka Chopra, Sonam Kapoor, Mallika Sherawat, Pooja Hegde, Hina Khan, Tamannaah Bhatia, and Aditi Rao Hydari have also walked the red carpet.

Meanwhile, on the work front, Manushi will be seen in Tehran next to John Abraham and Operation Valentine with Varun Tej, among many others.

IAN S



Deepika features on TIME cover



Mumbai: Top actress Deepika Padukone has featured on the cover of TIME Magazine.

With this, Deepika joins the elite club of global figures like Barack Obama, Oprah Winfrey and several other personalities who've featured on the noted magazine.

She is credited with 'bringing the world to Bollywood' with her work. In 2018, she was among the 100 people honoured by the magazine on their 100 Most Influential list while it was in 2022, when Deepika was named in 'The Time100 Impact Award' for her achievements in cinema and work in mental health advocacy.

In her corresponding interview, Deepika is called 'the most popular actress in the world's most populous country'. On the cover, she is seen wearing a beige oversized suit and no shoes.

On the acting front, Deepika's latest release *Pathaan* with Shah Rukh Khan turned out to be a blockbuster. She is now gearing up for her next *Fighter*, where she will be seen starring alongside Hrithik Roshan and Anil Kapoor.

IAN S



Malaika sets hearts aflame in fiery cut-out maxi

Mumbai: Malaika Arora is a beautiful example of grace, style, and empowerment in the Hindi film industry, where skill and glitz mingle. She has established herself as a model of adaptability and inspiration thanks to her well-known dancing routines and age-defying beauty. The *Kaante* actress is a master at dressing up for the occasion and makes sure the red carpet is her own runway no matter what, even if she has to walk it. She wore a daringly stylish red maxi dress to a recent red-carpet event, setting the bar high for others to follow. Despite how colourful the dress was, the cuts that ran through its daring neckline were what really caught people's attention. A crisscross tie-up collar that flows all the way down adds a striking touch to the sleeveless Alberta Ferretti maxi dress.

To up the glam factor of the outfit, Malaika added several rings, a golden clutch, and silver earrings. Her red carpet appearance was finished off with minimal dewy makeup and plenty of sass. AGENCIES

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Alia becomes Gucci's 1st Indian global face

Mumbai: Alia Bhatt recently garnered a lot of attention for his elegant appearance at the prestigious MET Gala, the high-profile fundraising event in New York, USA. With her global image reaching places, especially after she announced her Hollywood debut with Gal Gadot as well as a brief but powerful appearance as the love interest of Ram Charan in the globally acclaimed *RRR*, the actress has now added another feather to her cap in the world of international achievements by becoming the brand face of Gucci. The *Sadak 2* actress will be seen in the role of the brand face of Gucci at its upcoming fashion show in Seoul this month.

She will now be joining the likes of Kpop New Jeans' fame Hanni, Dakota Johnson, and Harry Styles. Besides her, only a handful of Bollywood actresses have been a part of major international brand faces which includes actresses like Priyanka Chopra Jonas and Deepika Padukone.

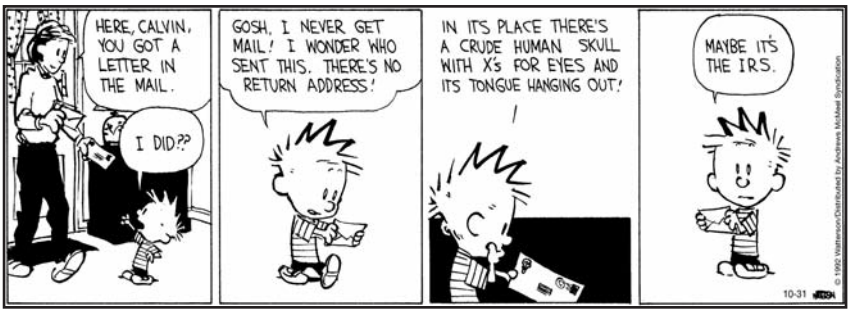
On the work front, she will also appear in the Karan Johar directorial *Rocky Aur Rani Ki Prem Kahani* alongside Ranveer Singh, Jaya Bachchan, Dharmendra, and Shabana Azmi.

AGENCIES

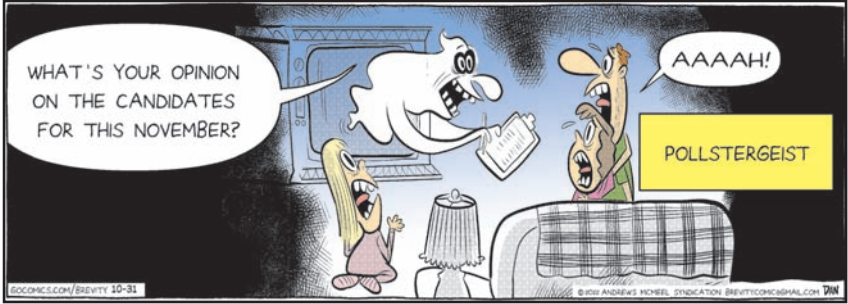
PEANUTS



CALVIN AND HOBES

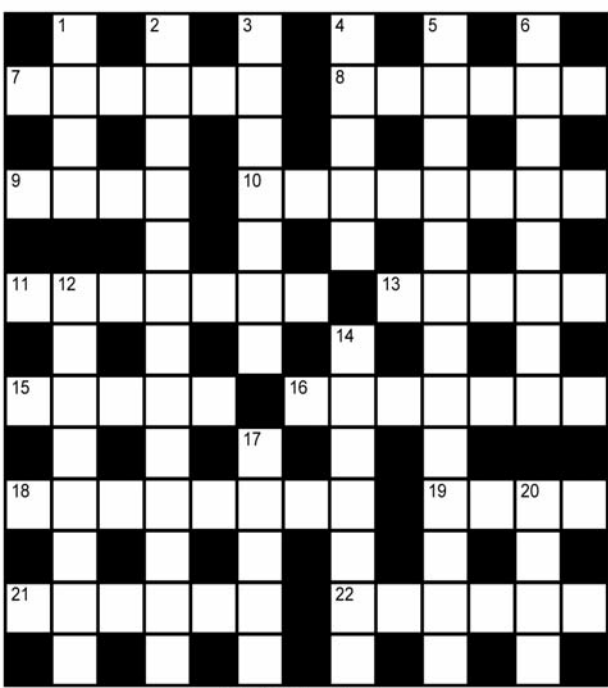


BREVITY



FUN post

CROSSWORD

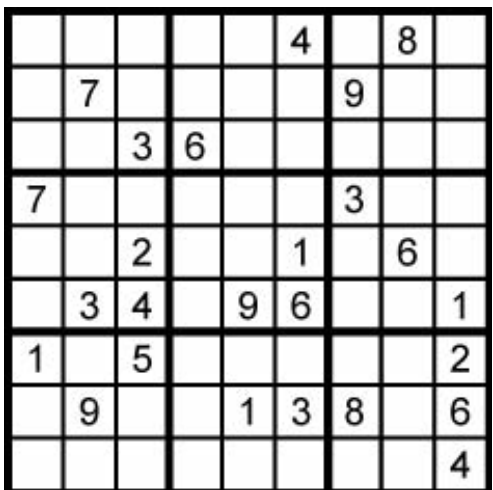


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- Across**
- 7 Chest of drawers
 - 8 Voucher, of sorts
 - 9 Leg hinge joint
 - 10 Prematurely
 - 11 Disrespectful
 - 13 Orange yellow
 - 15 Pricked
 - 16 Braided
 - 18 Fertile
 - 19 Jumpy
 - 21 Distinctive flag
 - 22 Once used to whiten laundry
 - Down**
 - 1 Destroy
 - 2 Window covering (8,5)
 - 3 Type of cloud
 - 4 Sharp as a tack
 - 5 Automatic firearm (10,3)
 - 6 Some highways (4-4)
 - 12 Another name for an automobile
 - 14 Sugar pill
 - 17 Blazing
 - 20 Male 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.

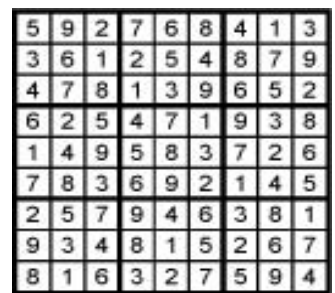


SOLUTIONS

CROSSWORD



SUDOKU



CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW

downtown

State swelters as mercury crosses 40°C at 16 places



PNN & AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, May 11: Odisha continued to reel under intense heat as at least 16 stations recorded temperatures above 40 degrees Celsius, and of those places, six saw temperatures above 42 degrees Celsius Thursday.

With the India Meteorological Department (IMD) predicting a further rise in temperature in 23 of the 30 districts in the state, Special Relief Commissioner (SRC) Satyabrata Sahu reviewed the situation and asked the authorities to remain prepared.

Jharsuguda and Boudh were the hottest at 43.4 degrees Celsius, closely followed by Sambalpur (43.3), Hirkud (42.3), Sundargarh (42.1) and Rourkela (42).

Places that recorded temperatures above 40 degrees Celsius include Angul (41.7), Sonepur (41.3), Bolangir (41.2), Titilagarh, Talcher and Nuapada (41), Baripada (40.6), Nayagarh and Bargarh (40.2) and Malkangiri (40).

The twin cities of Bhubaneswar and Cuttack recorded 37.7 degrees Celsius and 38.5 degrees Celsius respectively. However, the relative humidity in the state capital was

Journalist bereaved

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, May 11: Senior journalist of **Orissa POST** Ratan Kumar Pradhan's mother Tulasi Pradhan died Thursday due to protracted illness. She was 75.

A native of Orali village in Keonjhar district, Tulasi was a religious and benevolent woman who always helped people in need.

A pall of gloom descended on Orali village when her death news spread in the locality. Hundreds of people visited the Orali residence to pay tributes to the departed soul.

Tulasi's elder son Ranjan Kumar Pradhan is the headmaster of Nasirpur Primary School, while her younger son Rajat Kumar Pradhan is a Reader in Physics in Bhadrak College.

Tulasi was admitted to SCB Medical College and Hospital in Cuttack Monday due to severe renal ailments and a stone in gall bladder. Although dialysis was done, she could not recover and passed away around 10am Thursday.

57% of all fraud incidents in India are 'platform' frauds

More than half of all fraud incidents in India were 'platform' fraud, a novel form of economic crime that involves fraudulent activities associated with social media, e-commerce, enterprise and finTech platforms, said a PwC India report Thursday.

The onset of the pandemic has led to an increase in platform fraud, said the second edition of PwC's Global Economic Crime and Fraud Survey 2022 India Insights, titled 'Platforms The new frontier of fraud in India'.

The surge in remote work, e-commerce, delivery applications and contactless payments has further contributed to the rise of this type of fraud. 57 per cent of all fraud incidents in India were platform fraud, it said.

It further said more than 26 per cent of Indian organisations lost over USD 1 million due to platform fraud, and 44 per cent of the perpetrators were found to commit fraud for financial gain.

PwC said it surveyed 111 organisations across India from diverse industries such as technology, financial services, banking and capital markets, consumer products and retail, education, and healthcare.

Puneet Garkhel, Partner and Leader, Forensics Services, PwC India, said Indian consumers and organisations have been rapidly

embracing new platforms over the past few years.

On average, an Indian company operates with five different platforms as part of its regular business activities today. The emergence of and surge in e-commerce, contactless payments, home delivery models, remote working, etc., have not only led to various platform-based innovations but also opened avenues of entry for fraudsters, he said.

Organisations need to be cognizant of these evolving threats and adequately invest in fraud prevention and detection strategies to safeguard themselves, Garkhel added.

The report said four out of every 10 platform frauds in India were conducted by internal perpetrators.

Moreover, 26 per cent of platform frauds involved collusion between internal actors and external perpetrators, it said, and added that this implies that if companies have stronger internal controls in place, over two-thirds of all platform frauds can be mitigated.

As per the report, financial frauds on transactions made to or from platforms accounted for 89 per cent of all platform frauds. These frauds vary from basic unauthorised digital purchases to more complex identity theft and triangulation fraud.



DEFT HANDS

An artisan shapes bangles ahead of 'Sabitri Brata' in Choudhury Bazar area of Cuttack, Thursday

Odisha Bigyan Academy to award scientists

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, May 11: Odisha Bigyan Academy (OBA), with approval of state's Science and Technology department, Thursday announced names of the scientists to be awarded in several categories for the year 2020.

Former director of National Institute of Science Education and Research (NISER), Sudhakar Panda will receive 'Biju Patnaik Award for Scientific Excellence', which carries a cash award of Rs 2 lakh along with a citation and memento.

Luna Samanta of Ravenshaw University, CSIR-IMMT, Bhubaneswar chief scientist Danda Srinivas Rao, NIT-Rourkela's Anup Kumar Panda and National Botanical Research Institute of Lucknow's director Saroj Kanta Barik will receive 'Samanta Chandra Sekhar Award'. The award carries a cash award of Rs 1 lakh and a citation with memento.

Former director of NISER Sudhakar Panda will receive 'Biju Patnaik Award for Scientific Excellence', which carries a cash award of Rs 2 lakh along with a citation and memento

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Shasank Sekhar Swain of ICMR-RMRC, Bhubaneswar, Nibedita Dash of NISER, Jnana Ranjan Senapati of NIT-Rourkela and Satyaprasad P Senanayak of NISER will be awarded in the 'Young Scientists' category, while Sangeeta Rath and Himansu Sekahar Fatesingh will receive 'Prana Krushna Parija Popular Science Book Award'.

The young scientists-cum-authors will receive a cash award of Rs 25,000 with citation and memento. These apart, Bhaskar Dash, Sanjukta Dash, Satyananda Swain and Ajay Kumar Patra have been nominated to be felicitated as senior scientists.

The awards will be conferred during a ceremony to be held soon, it was learnt.

Odisha prohibits use of crates in pig farming

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, May 11: The State Animal Welfare Board (SAWB) has asked the chief district veterinary officers (CDVOs) to ensure that no pig farms use gestation and farrowing crates in farming.

Following an appeal by People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA), India, and other rights groups to prohibit the manufacture, sale, and use of these restrictive crates in pig farming, the SAWB joint director has asked all CDVOs to prohibit the sale and use of crates in pig farms in compliance with the Prevention of Cruelty to

Animals Act, 1960.

According to the SAWB, stringent action will be taken against any pig farm using crates through an action-taken report (ATR) submitted to the director of Animal Husbandry and Veterinary Services-cum-member secretary of the SAWB.

The circular cites Section 11(1)(e) of The Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act, 1960, which prohibits the confinement of any animal to a receptacle that fails to offer a reasonable opportunity for movement, such as gestation and farrowing crates.

"Confining animals in this way

is illegal, a position that has been confirmed by the Indian Council of Agricultural Research's National Research Centre on Pig, which is reiterated here in the circular," said a government official.

Odisha is the latest of 21 states and union territories to issue directions against keeping pigs in these contraptions. Other governments that have issued circulars include Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Chhattisgarh, Delhi, Goa, Gujarat, Himachal Pradesh, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Punjab, Rajasthan, Sikkim, Telangana, Uttarakhand, Uttar

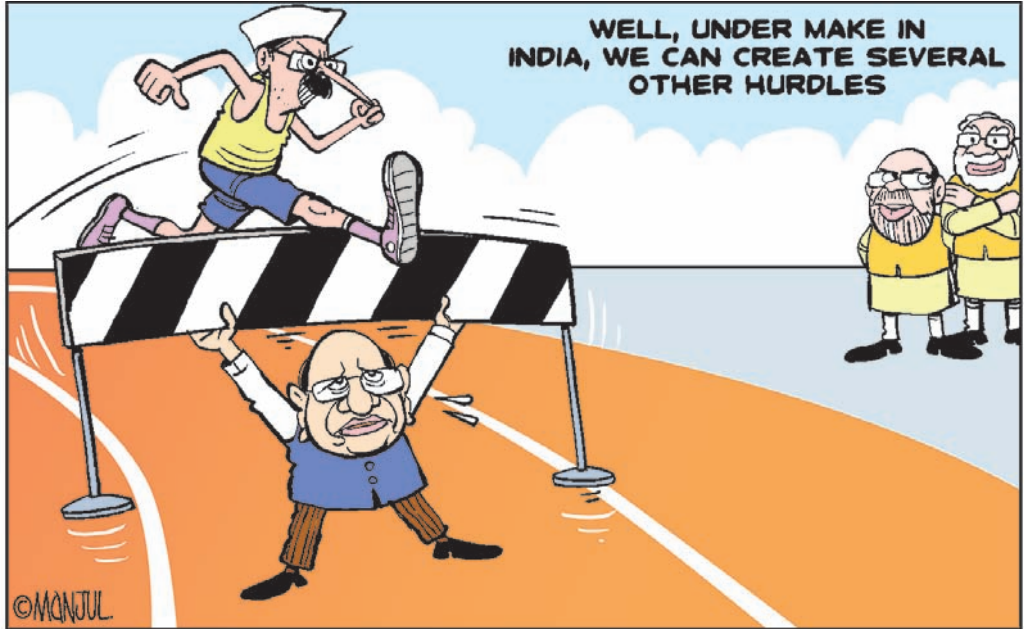
Pradesh, and West Bengal.

"PETA India commends Odisha for standing up for countless pigs and vowing to take action against violators who subject mother pigs to the severe cruelty of crates," says PETA India advocacy officer Farhat Ul Ain.

Gestation crates (aka 'sow stalls') are metal cages, essentially the size of a pig, with concrete or slatted floors. These devices confine pregnant sows, who are typically transferred to farrowing crates to give birth and are kept in them until their piglets are taken away. These crates suffocate the animals and are often described as inhumane.

COVID-19 TRACKER			
	INFECTED	RECOVERED	DEAD
World	68,81,15,265	66,05,13,359	68,73,356
India	4,49,76,599	4,44,25,250	5,31,736
Odisha	13,36,304	13,26,915	9,204

POLITICKLE by MANJUL



79.21% VOTER TURNOUT IN JHARSUGUDA BYPOLL

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, May 11: A total of 79.21 per cent of 2.21 lakh voters exercised their franchise in the bypoll held for the Jharsuguda Assembly segment Wednesday, an election official said here Thursday.

The voting percentage (79.21%) this time was more than the previous polling of 75.62 per cent in 2019, Chief Electoral Officer (CEO) Nikunja Bihari Dhal said.

The CEO said that the voting was by and large peaceful barring a few instances of violence outside polling stations. The voting was smooth in all the 253 polling stations where the webcasting facility was in place.

Meanwhile, the Electronic Voting Machines (EVMs) used in the polling have been sealed and stored in the strong rooms set up on the premises of Jharsuguda Engineering School in Jharsuguda town.

The strong room has three-tier security with personnel of the central paramilitary forces guarding the EVMs in the inner circle, police said, adding that state armed police were also deployed around the strong room. The strong rooms are also under CCTV surveillance.

Jharsuguda sub-collector Kishore

THE VOTING PERCENTAGE (79.21%) THIS TIME WAS MORE THAN THE PREVIOUS POLLING OF 75.62 PER CENT IN 2019

ELECTRONIC VOTING MACHINES (EVMs) USED IN THE POLLING HAVE BEEN SEALED AND STORED IN THE STRONG ROOMS SET UP ON THE PREMISES OF JHARSUGUDA ENGINEERING SCHOOL

THE STRONG ROOM HAS THREE-TIER SECURITY WITH PERSONNEL OF THE CENTRAL PARAMILITARY FORCES GUARDING THE EVMs IN THE INNER CIRCLE

Chandra Swain said that there will be a rehearsal of officials to be engaged in the counting procedure. The counting will be held May 13 and all necessary arrangements have been made, he said.

The byelection was necessitated following the murder of sitting MLA and the then Health Minister Naba Kishore Das January 29 this year.

Though there are nine candidates in the fray in the bypoll, the contest is mainly between the BJD, BJP and the Congress.

The BJD has fielded Das's daughter Deepali, while the BJP has nominated Tankadhar Tripathy. The

Congress has fielded Tarun Pandey.

The outcome of the Jharsuguda Assembly by poll will indicate the strength of all three major political parties in the state.

BJD senior vice president Pramila Mallick was very confident that the party will retain the seat with a record margin of votes. On the other hand, both the BJP and Congress were also optimistic of their candidate winning the bypoll.

"We (BJD) will win the byelection with a margin of over 50,000 votes as people have shown their support to BJD candidate Deepali Das," Mallick said.

BJP leader and Sundargarh MLA Kusum Tete said the vote share of her party will definitely increase in the bypoll. "We may win the bypoll or remain in second position. In 2019, we got about 52,000 votes, while this time, we will get 60,000 to 70,000 votes," claimed Tete.

On the other hand, Pradesh Congress Committee (PCC) president Sarat Pattanayak said the bypoll witnessed a triangular fight between BJD, BJP and Congress. "The vote margin between BJD and Congress will remain minimal," he said, adding, "Our vote share will definitely increase in this bypoll."

DSPL-33

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Ahead of monsoon, H&UD dept prepares action plan

Management of flood and water logging in urban areas is in focus this year



POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, May 11: The Housing and Urban Development department (H&UD) Thursday prepared an action plan for management of flood and water logging in urban areas during the ensuing monsoon.

In a letter to all the Municipal Commissioners, Municipal Corporations and Executive Officers of all Municipalities, Municipal Administration director Sangramjit Nayak said that in order to avert any flood-like situation and water logging during rainy season and also at the time of excessive and heavy rain, flood and cyclone , measures need to be taken with immediacy.

All urban local bodies (ULBs) have been requested to form Unified Command and Control Centre headed by the Commissioner /EO with members

from other line departments/agencies including Fire Services to manage the flood-like situation within their jurisdiction.

Explaining the measures he said, “Like previous years, ULBs have to take up joint verification with respective drainage division/ M.I division of Water Resources department to ensure desilting and repair of all clogged/ choked drain channels before the onset of monsoon.”

Due to excessive rainfall, roads, pedestrian footpaths and drains get covered with rain water, as a result of which holes or damage on them become invisible which leads to people falling into the drain causing accidents.

“In order to avoid such accidents, actions need to be taken well ahead of onset of monsoon with 100 per cent verification of all drains and machine holes (both open and closed) within the ULB

All urban local bodies (ULBs) have been requested to form Unified Command and Control Centre to manage the flood-like situation within their jurisdiction

Agencies have been instructed to check the cover of holes on covered drains and inspect whether those have been damaged posing any chance of accident

Among other measures, there is control of vector-borne diseases as in the rainy season flood-like situation can lead to outbreak of malaria, dengue and Japanese encephalitis

limit. In case of closed drains and machine holes, it is required to check the cover and see whether those have been damaged and there is any chance of accident,” instructed the official.

It was also instructed to identify vulnerable water logging area/ low lying areas and take appropriate steps for discharge of water expeditiously at the time of emergency by pre-positioning pump sets.

Among other measures, there is control of vector-borne diseases as in the rainy season flood like situation can lead to outbreak of malaria, dengue, Japanese encephalitis and water borne diseases like diarrhoea and jaundice.

“Water logging in habitation areas may completely be avoided. Proper sanitation measures are to be taken with utmost care to avert these eventualities,” advised the official.

The above instructions should be carried out and followed meticulously so as to prevent & manage water logging / flood-like situation.



EVICITION DRIVE: An excavator engaged by BDA knocking down an illegally constructed boundary wall at Sundarpada in Bhubaneswar, Thursday

‘State at forefront in WASH services’

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, May 11: A one-day workshop on water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) was organized by the Panchayati Raj & Drinking Water department in collaboration with Unicef and local and national development partners here Thursday.

Speaking on this occasion, Panchayati Raj & Drinking Water Principal Secretary Sushil Kumar Lohani said, “More than 30 per cent of villages have been declared as open defecation free (ODF) plus village. We are focussing on urban-rural convergence between Panchayati Raj and Drinking Water (PR&DW) and Housing and Urban Development (H&UD) departments to cater to the gram panchayats / villages beyond a 20 km radius of urban faecal sludge treatment plants (FSTPs) to meet their desludge



ing requirements.”

“The need of the hour is to adopt a multidimensional approach for converting the existing single pit toilets into twin-pit toilets and faecal sludge management (FSM). I am delighted that Odisha is leading these innovative approaches in the country,” he added.

Director, Drinking Water Department B Parmeswaran said,

water connection at the doorstep has a far-reaching socio-economic impact on rural livelihood systems.”

WASH-CCES Specialist, Unicef Shipra Saxena said, “Children and their families in poor and rural communities are most at risk of being left behind. Governments must invest in their communities if we are to bridge these economic and geographic divides and realise this important human right.”

The participants focused on the sustainability of the WASH service and emphasized systems strengthening, developing tools and frameworks, and identifying locations for qualitative data collection and convergence of partners.

Development partners including Water Aid, Water For People, SuSanA and IRC were present in the workshop.

Min reviews rural development works

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, May 11: Rural Development Minister Pritiranjan Gharai, in a meeting attended by engineers, reviewed various schemes under the department Thursday.

Presiding over the meeting held at Bhubaneswar, Gharai said that construction of roads, bridges and buildings is the responsibility of the department and these must be completed within stipulated timeframe.

Saying that departmental engineers are accountable for delay in the completion of the projects and on the quality of the works, Gharai indicated that strict action will be taken against the contractor or the implementing farms in this regard. The departmental engineers were advised to expedite incomplete construction works under Biju Setu Yojana, Mukhyamantri Sadak yojana and Gramya Sadak Yojana.

Similarly, chief engineers and senior engineers were directed to prepare a list of all the ongoing projects and submit them to the department for regular monitoring.

Earlier, Rural Development Principal Secretary Sanjay Kumar Singh informed that 80 per cent budget allocation was spent on the completion of the schemes implemented last year.



PROTECTING DIVERSITY: Dignitaries including Padma Shri awardee conservationist Sabarmatee attend a workshop on Protection of Plant Varieties and Farmers' Rights Act, 2001 organised at the National Rice Research Institute near Bidyadharpur in Cuttack, Thursday

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, May 11: As part of state government’s ongoing initiatives for providing better healthcare to the people, medical officers’ recruitment is being conducted on regular basis through the Odisha Public Service Commission (OPSC).

As per Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik’s instructions, 1181 medical officers under Odisha Medical and Health Services (OMHS) cadre will be recruited with their allotted districts selected through online-counselling conducted by NIC, Bhubaneswar.

Earlier, the Health & Family Welfare department had informed the Orissa High Court that 5,000 doctors will be recruited in the state in the next six months.

In an affidavit, Health & Family Welfare Commissioner-cum-



The OPSC had selected and recommended a list of 1,205 candidates November 23, 2022

Secretary Shalini Pandit said government orders have been obtained for creation of 5,000 posts of Group A (JB) medical officers.

She said requisites were sent to OPSC for recruitment of 3,481 medical officers for filling up vacancies in the OMHS cadre. The OPSC had selected and recommended a list of 1,205 candidates November 23, 2022.

“After obtaining government order, they will be posted in various health institutions of the state.”

The state government recently has made changes in the dynamic assured career progression (DACP) scheme, assuring four career progressions/financial upgradations in the service period of a medical officer. The upgradations will take place on the completion of six, 12, 18, and 24 years. Earlier, three career progressions were allowed under the DACP on completion of seven, 14, and 21 years.

Sleep apnoea linked to deteriorating brain health

Having sleep apnoea and spending less time in deep sleep has been linked to developing brain biomarkers associated with an increased risk of stroke, Alzheimer’s disease and cognitive decline, according to a new research.

Researchers involved in the study said that it did not prove these sleep disturbances to cause the changes in the brain, or vice versa, but only that there was an association.

They have published their study in the journal Neurology.

The study looked at sleep factors and biomarkers measuring of the health of the brain’s white matter, which is important to connect different parts of the brain.

One of the biomarkers, white matter hyperintensities, is tiny lesions visible on brain scans. White matter hyperintensities become more common with age or with

uncontrolled high blood pressure.

The other biomarker measures the integrity of the axons, which form the nerve fibers that connect nerve cells.

“These biomarkers are sensitive signs of early cerebrovascular disease,” said study author Diego Z. Carvalho, of the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minnesota, and a member of the American Academy of Neurology.

“Finding that severe sleep apnea and a reduction in slow-wave sleep are associated with these biomarkers is important since there is no treatment for these changes in the brain, so we need to find ways to prevent them from happening or getting worse,” said Carvalho.

The researchers studied 140 people with obstructive sleep apnea with an average age of 73 who had a brain scan and also an overnight study in a sleep lab. The participants



did not have cognitive issues at the start of the study and had not developed dementia by the end of the study, they said.

A total of 34 per cent had mild, 32 per cent had moderate and 34 per

cent had severe sleep apnea.

The sleep study examined the time people spent in slow-wave sleep, which is also called non-REM stage 3, or deep sleep, and considered one of the best mark-

ers of sleep quality. The researchers found that for every 10-point decrease in the percentage of slow-wave sleep, there was an increase in the amount of white matter hyperintensities similar to the effect of being 2.3 years older.

The same decrease was also associated with reduced axonal integrity similar to the effect of being three years older.

People with severe sleep apnea had a higher volume of white matter hyperintensities than those with mild or moderate sleep apnea. They also had reduced axonal integrity in the brain.

“More research is needed to determine whether sleep issues affect these brain biomarkers or vice versa,” Carvalho said. “We also need to look at whether strategies to improve sleep quality or treatment of sleep apnea can affect the trajectory of these biomarkers.”

Cracker explosion sparks fire at govt quarter in City

Bhubaneswar: A fire broke out at a government quarter in Unit-II area here following explosion of crackers kept in the house during the wee hours of Thursday. Sources claimed that the type-2 quarter (13/2) is allotted in the name of one Chittaranjan Lenka who works in the state secretariat. Upon informed, the Fire Services personnel along with a fire tender reached the spot immediately and brought the fire under control within 15 minutes. No casualties were reported in the incident. Lenka reportedly informed officials of the Fire Services department that the family was sleeping in adjacent room while they heard explosion sound. Fire sparks due to a shot circuit in an electric board fell on the bag carrying fire crackers which later went off causing the fire. Lenka allegedly claimed that he had bought the fire crackers for his daughter’s marriage. Meanwhile, some locals said that fire crackers were manufactured illegally in the government quarter. The Capital police have launched a probe into the matter registering a suo moto case (302/23) in this regard.

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Former MLA under I-T scanner



POST NEWS NETWORK

Keonjhar, May 11: The Income Tax department conducted raids on the residence and offices of ex-MLA of Champua Assembly constituency and mines leaseholder Sanatan Mahakud, Thursday morning. Raids are being carried out at his residences situated at different locations in Keonjhar district as well as in Bhubaneswar. Even the residence of his personal assistant is also being searched by the I-T department. Total 10 I-T department teams are conducting these raids

since Thursday morning under police security. These raids include his residences situated in Keonjhar, Bhubaneswar and his paternal residence situated at Nambira.

Although the exact reason has not been confirmed, it is said that the raids are due to tax fraud and income loopholes. The departmental officials are not disclosing anything in this regard and no statement has been received from Sanatan either.

The Jagatjanani Trust managed by Sanatan, different mines and mineral transport companies owned by him were raided Thursday.

The independent MLA elected from Champua constituency had given his indirect support to BJD in the last election. Even two of his selected candidates had won the Champua Assembly constituency and Keonjhar Lok Sabha constituency seats through BJD tickets in the last election. It is said that they both won the election because of his support.

4 nabbed for bus hawker’s murder

POST NEWS NETWORK

Berhampur, May 11: Badabazar Police in Silk City arrested four persons in connection with the sensational murder of a bus hawker in its area, Thursday.

Police recovered the weapons used in that killing from their possession. However, the main accused is still at large. Police said he has been identified and very soon will be arrested.

Due to past enmity, the hawker was killed, police said. The accused had prepared a blueprint to kill him one day before the murder, Berhampur SP Saravana Vivek M said and added that four accused had been arrested while a



manhunt is on to nab the main accused.

Police said that Sanatan Chowdhury was working as a bus hawker in the new bus stand and was living with his third wife, Sumitra Chowdhury at Acharya Vihar, near Fastgate Duduma Colony under Badabazar police limits.

He was returning home on his scooter after finishing his work May 6 night. He was brutally attacked and killed by four to five persons in a deserted place a little distance from his home. Police recovered the body and started an investigation in this regard after tracking the mobile and investigating the CCTV footage.

Fake hair oil racket busted; 2 arrested



POST NEWS NETWORK

Rourkela, May 11: Plantsite police busted a fake hair oil manufacturing and trading racket as it arrested two persons in this connection from Islam Nagar in AB Lane under the police limits in Steel City, police said Thursday.

The accused were identified as Md. Zakir Hussain, 43, and his accomplice Syed Akhtar, 41, of the area. Police during their arrest had seized huge cache of adulterated coconut oil, fake ‘Bajaj Almond Drops’ oil, aromatic liquid used in oil preparation, oil bottles, caps, fake labels, packaging materials and a machine from the residence Hussain in Islam Nagar. This was stated here by additional superintendent of police (ASP) Bikaram Keshari Bhoi at a press conference held, Thursday.

A case has been registered against them under Sections 420, 482, 483, 486, 471 and 34 of the IPC,



FUN TIME: Children catch fish from a canal with the help of a mosquito net at Jhankarpali under Maneswar block in Sambalpur district, Thursday

OP PHOTO

DEPRIVED OF BASIC FACILITIES

Tribal kids suffering from malnutrition in Keonjhar

POST NEWS NETWORK

Joda, May 11: A tribal village under this village identified as Pidhapokhari under Kalimati panchayat of the block. It is alleged that the village has been missing the development goals due to government apathy and neglect. In this village, the majority of the residents live below the poverty line despite being placed at only 25 km distance from the block headquarters and eight km from the panchayat headquarters.

The incident came to light after reports highlighted the plight of malnourished children in another village under Joda Mining area. The district administration had intervened then and admitted the children in nutrition resources centre (NRC) at Barbil in Keonjhar district.

Reports suggest that a nutritious diet is a dream for the villagers and the only thing they get to eat is rice, wild greens and wild roots. As a result, most of the children here suffer from malnutrition. There are two mines near the village but the villagers have failed to get direct or indirect employment in the mines and do odd jobs to earn a living.

The district mineral foundation (DMF) has recently sanctioned funds for construction of a road to the village after reports regarding people suffering from abject poverty came out in various media.



The village is still deprived of basic healthcare facilities while children don’t get basic education. The only succor for them is the rice they get under the government scheme which helps them

get food for half of the month. As the women do not get proper food, the children they deliver are born weak and feeble and suffer from malnutrition. Nutrition deficiencies inflict long-term damage on them and make them less productive and prone to various diseases. Most of the children fail to achieve proper physical and mental growth due to lack of proper and nutritious foods.

When contacted, child development project officer (CDPO) Sukanti Patra of Joda block said that she will visit the area soon and take stock of the situation. The children affected by malnutrition will be identified and proper measures will be taken for their rehabilitation and recovery, she added.

4 arrested for murder bid

POST NEWS NETWORK

Berhampur, May 11: Police arrested four history-sheeters including the mastermind of a murder bid on the proprietor of a travel agency near Hilpatna Ganesh temple under Gosani Nuagaon police limits, late Wednesday night

The accused were identified as Mukesh Sahu and his three associates. A sword, iron rod and bike used in this crime were seized from their possession. Later, they were produced in the court Thursday, said Berhampur SP Dr Saravana Vivek M.

Police said that the four accused attacked the proprietor of a travel agency Kumud Ranjan Brahma, driver Sudarshan Dash and manager Harihar Panigrahi. They were seriously injured in the attack and admitted to MKCG Medical College and Hospital in Berhampur for treatment. Acting on a tip-off, police arrested the prime accused Sahu along with three of his associates.

They are all professional criminals and have earlier been to jail in previous criminal cases, police said.



HOLY LOGS: Timber logs collected from Gajalbadi forests under South Ghumusar forest division in Ganjam district being transported in a truck to Puri for chariot making works ahead of Rath Yatra

OP PHOTO

Five held in Australian coal smuggling racket

PNN & AGENCIES

Kendrapara, May 11: Aul police have arrested five persons for their involvement in smuggling Australian coal.

The police also seized a car, one sharp-edged weapon, seven mobile phones from their possession. ASP of Kendrapada Haresh Chandra Pandey said Thursday. The arrested included the driver of Australian coal loaded truck Abul Alam from Jharkhand.

However, the police are yet to nab the mastermind of the Australian coal smuggling racket.

Pandey said acting on a tip off from a reliable source, Aul police conducted a raid at Aul-based Coal depot and managed to seize two Australian coal laden trucks, one bullet and a scooter along with the

driver of a seized truck.

The ASP said since last some months the Australian coal theft has been going on at a Niala-based coal depot. He said when the Aul police conducted raids Sunday midnight, about 15/20 persons, who were on the spot, managed to flee from the spot by taking advantage of darkness.

However, during the raid, the driver of the coal-laden truck made an attempt to kill the police team by running the truck over them.

The police later seized the two coal laden trucks and also eight trips of coal from the spot and brought it to Aul police station.

Meanwhile, four police teams were formed to conduct raids to nab the mastermind of the Australian coal smuggling racket.

NHRC seeks ATR on death of pregnant minor girl student

PNN & AGENCIES

Kendrapara, May 11: The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) has sought for an Action Taken Report from Gajapati District Collector and the Superintendent of Police on the death of a pregnant minor student in the district.

The apex rights body sought the ATR May 9 after human rights activist Radhakant Tripathy moved the NHRC alleging that one minor Dalit girl, studying in Class VIII of Jhirjira Ashram School run by the ST/SC Development department in Gajapati district, died due to medical negligence May 6 last while undergoing treatment at the District Headquarter Hospital. Tripathy said the victim girl



The NHRC sought for the reports within four weeks and forwarded the copy of the petition to the Odisha Chief Secretary and the DGP for information and further action

was found four months pregnant.

It is alleged that the school authorities did not inform the parents about

her pregnancy earlier. Tripathy contended that the death of a pregnant student in the present case poses serious questions of violation of human rights. He sought intervention of the Commission inter-alia for legal action against the wrong doers, compensation to the bereaved family and proper counselling, mental care, and regular medical checkups.

The NHRC sought for the reports within four weeks and forwarded the copy of the petition to the Odisha Chief Secretary and the DGP for information and further action.

The petitioner requested the NHRC to investigate the case and ensure legal action against the wrong doers, compensation to the bereaved family and proper counselling.

GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA
DEPARTMENT OF WATER RESOURCES
OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER
BARGARH IRRIGATION DIVISION, BARGARH
No.A-119: email Id : eebargarh-eicwr.od@nic.in / eecanalbgh11@gmail.com
BID IDENTIFICATION NO. CDT-02/2023-24 (ON-LINE). DATED.08.05.2023

1. Nature of work	: Improvement of Canal
2. Nos. of works	: 08 (Eight) Nos.
3. Estimated Cost	: Rs. 7.89 lakhs to Rs. 15.44 lakhs
4. Period of completion	: As per D.T.C.N.
5. Date & Time of available of Bid Document in the portal	: Dt.12.05.2023 at 10.00 A.M to Dt.22.05.2023 upto 05.00 P.M.
6. Last date / Time for receipt of Bids in the portal	: Dt.22.05.2023 upto 05.00 P.M.
7. Date of opening of Bid	: Dt.23.05.2023 at 10.00 A.M.
8. Name and Address of the Officer Inviting bid	: Superintending Engineer, Bargarh Irrigation Division, Bargarh At- Canal Colony, PO/Dist- Bargarh email Id : eecanalbgh11@gmail.com eebargarh-eicwr.od@nic.in

Procurement Officer	Name of the Division	Bid Identification No.	Availability of tender online for bidding	Last date & time of seeking of clarification	Date & Time of opening of tender	Date, Time & place of lottery if required
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Superintending Engineer, Bargarh Irrigation Division, Bargarh	Bargarh Irrigation Division, Bargarh	CDT-02/2023-24 (online)	Dt.12.05.2023 at 10.00 A.M.	Dt.22.05.2023 upto 05.00 P.M.	Dt.20.05.2023 upto 01.00 P.M.	Dt.23.05.2023 at 10.00 AM in the O/o the S.E., Bargarh Irrigation Division, Bargarh

Further details can be seen from the e-procurement portal <http://tendersorissa.gov.in>

Sd./- Superintending Engineer, Bargarh Irrigation Division, Bargarh
OIPR-32461/11/0002/2324

EAST COAST RAILWAY

(1) e-Tender Notice No. e-Tender-Elect-G-09-23
DESCRIPTION OF WORK :
REPLACEMENT OF ISOLATION SWITCH FOR STARTING BATTERY IN 1850 POWER CARS (PB ITEM NO. 1273/2022-23) (WALTAIR-28 & KHURDA ROAD-64 POWER CARS).
Approx. Cost of Work ₹ 37,32,095.92, EMD: ₹ 74,700/-

(2) e-Tender Notice No. e-Tender-Elect-G-10-23
DESCRIPTION OF WORK :
DEVELOPMENT AND PROVISION OF OVER VOLTAGE PROTECTION SCHEME FOR HOG SUPPLY IN 1850 POWER CARS (PB ITEM NO. 1279/2022-23) (WALTAIR-30 & KHURDA ROAD-62 POWER CARS).
Approx. Cost of Work ₹ 31,64,524.00, EMD: ₹ 63,300/-

(3) e-Tender Notice No. e-Tender-Elect-G-11-23
DESCRIPTION OF WORK :
RENOVATION OF 33 KV RECEIVING SUBSTATION AT RAIL SADAN AND RETANG COLONY OF KHURDA ROAD DIVISION.
Approx. Cost of Work ₹ 1,05,40,372.83, EMD: ₹ 2,02,700/-

(4) e-Tender Notice No. e-Tender-Elect-G-12-23
DESCRIPTION OF WORK: PROVISION OF LIGHTENING PROTECTION SYSTEM IN DIVISIONAL RAILWAY HOSPITAL AT KHURDA ROAD AND CENTRAL HOSPITAL, MANCHESWAR OFFICE ROAD, KHURDA ROAD.
Approx. Cost of Work ₹ 88,69,661.20, EMD: ₹ 1,77,400/-


(5) e-Tender Notice No. e-Tender-Elect-G-13-23
DESCRIPTION OF WORK: ARRANGEMENT FOR RELIABILITY OF FREIGHT MAINTENANCE FACILITIES AT PARADEEP.
Approx. Cost of Work ₹ 1,77,25,420.43, EMD: ₹ 2,38,600/-

(6) e-Tender Notice No. e-Tender-Elect-G-14-23
DESCRIPTION OF WORK : COMPREHENSIVE MAINTENANCE OF WATER PURIFIERS, WATER COOLER CUM PURIFIERS, WATER COOLERS AND REFRIGERATORS / DEEP FREEZERS OVER KHURDA ROAD DIVISION FOR TWO YEARS.
Approx. Cost of Work ₹ 47,56,490.50, EMD: ₹ 95,100/-

(7) e-Tender Notice No. e-Tender-Elect-G-15-23
DESCRIPTION OF WORK : UP-GRADATION OF ELECTRICAL DISASTER MANAGEMENT IN SPART AND SPARME AT DIFFERENT YARDS OVER KHURDA ROAD DIVISION.
Approx. Cost of Work ₹ 1,99,70,869.80, EMD: ₹ 2,94,900/-
Completion Period : 12 Months (for Sl. No. 1, 2), 6 Months (for Sl. No. 3, 4, 5, 7) & 24 Months (for Sl. No. 6).
Tender Closing Date and Time At 1500 hrs. of 24.05.2023 (for all the Tenders).
No manual offers sent by Post / Courier/ Fax or in person shall be accepted against such e-tenders even if these are submitted on firm's letter head and received in time. All such manual offers shall be considered invalid and shall be rejected summarily without any consideration.
Complete information including e-tender documents of the above e-tender is available in website : <http://www.ireps.gov.in>
Note : The prospective tenderers are advised to revisit the website ten (10) days before the date of closing of tender to note any changes/ corrigendum issued for this tender. The tenderers / bidders must have Class-II Digital Signature Certificate and must be registered on IREPS Portal. Only registered tenderer/ bidder can participate on e-tendering.
Sr. Divisional Electrical Engineer (G)/ PR-156/O/23-24 Khurda Road

“Whatsoever has courage can give courage to others just as the flame of the candle can light up another.”

THE MOTHER



Authoritarian Hangover

This month’s presidential election in Turkey, followed by October’s parliamentary vote in Poland, could continue a trend that began in 2020 with Joe Biden’s victory over Donald Trump in the United States and continued last year with Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva’s triumph over Jair Bolsonaro in Brazil. Both elections provided a powerful sense that the tide was turning against populist authoritarians.

For democratic forces, however, electoral success is only the first step. After all, it is only when an authoritarian government is toppled that the hard work of institutional reconstruction begins.

But how can those spearheading that process possibly succeed, when major political forces refuse to accept the fundamentals of a competitive electoral system? This is largely uncharted territory. The late-twentieth-century “third wave” of democratisation comprised almost exclusively what we can call “cooperative” transitions. Whether the political forces behind the falling regime negotiated the transition, or were routed from power, they acquiesced to – and sometimes came to support – a new democratic order.

In Poland, for example, General Wojciech Jaruzelski, the de facto leader of the Polish People’s Republic, accepted the role of president in 1989, as part of a deal with the Solidarity movement. In Chile, General Augusto Pinochet took a lifetime seat in the senate after stepping down in 1990. By the middle of that decade, former communist figures were winning free and fair elections in Central European countries – and accepting the outcome when they lost.

Unfortunately, modern autocrats like Trump and Bolsonaro have adhered to a very different, “non-cooperative” model. While both eventually ceded power (if sullenly and with some violence), neither they nor their supporters have given up on the goal of entrenching authoritarian rule.

Nearly three years after Trump’s decisive electoral defeat, many of his supporters still insist that the vote was “stolen.” Trump, the frontrunner to win the Republican Party presidential primary, setting up a rematch with Biden next year, has vowed to purge “demonic forces” from US democratic institutions. “Either the deep state destroys America, or we destroy the deep state,” he declared before a cheering crowd last month at a rally in Waco, Texas.

The United States is not alone. The coming clash between Poland’s ruling Law and Justice (PiS) party and liberal opposition forces will be the third since 2007. The first ended in the opposition’s favour, as the PiS government collapsed due to infighting.

The victorious coalition, led by Donald Tusk (who would go on to become president of the European Council), then faced a dilemma: pursue retribution for PiS wrongdoing, such as well documented abuse of power by PiS’ infamous Minister of Justice Zbigniew Ziobro, or opt for a light-touch approach in the interest of political harmony. Tusk’s administration chose the latter option, and PiS leaders were never held accountable.

This enabled PiS to dedicate itself to cultivating a robust grassroots movement deeply hostile to the democratic order. Like Trump, PiS mobilised its supporters around a “Big Lie,” but not about election rigging. Instead, PiS claimed that the plane crash that killed former PiS leader Lech Kaczyński in 2010 was no accident, but rather an assassination orchestrated by Russian President Vladimir Putin, Tusk, or both.

The details of the PiS Big Lie – again, much like the Trumpian one – change constantly. But the point is not to convince people, least of all skeptics. Repetition of any variant of the story is a performative act, intended to erode the legitimacy of liberal opponents and democratic institutions. And the plan worked: the conspiracy theory about the crash became a staple of the voting bloc that brought PiS back to power in 2015. Having faced no accountability for their first stint in power, PiS reappointed Ziobro as minister of justice.

Tusk pledges to adopt a tougher stance if the opposition wins in October – an uphill fight, given the uneven playing field PiS has created. In a playful reference to PiS’s 500+ programme – which provided cash transfers to parents – Tusk promises to pursue the so-called Cell+ programme, aimed at purging Polish politics of those who have deceived or stolen from the public.

It is easy to see why Tusk would advocate such an approach. But as the University of Chicago’s Monika Nalepa and others have warned, blanket purges of former authoritarian apparatchiks can exacerbate social cleavages, increasing the risk of reprisal and escalation. This is precisely why Tusk took a softer line last time.

Because non-cooperative transitions leave democrats with no good options, an alternative path is needed. In Poland, we advocate deep political reform, based on the principle of power-sharing between progressive and conservative forces. The non-partisan initiative we co-founded, including more than 100 Polish intellectuals from across the political spectrum, has now released a detailed proposal to guide such efforts.

Far from giving progressives everything they want, the proposal aims to offer everybody, including conservatives who currently see authoritarian populism as their only path to policy influence, a stake in Poland’s future. It remains to be seen how PiS and the democratic opposition will respond.

The idea of fundamentally reforming democratic governance in response to conservative grievances tends to trigger resistance, and not just in Poland. In the US, progressives fear a new constitutional convention. But unless we give our conservative compatriots reasons to support the democratic order, our countries will remain unstable. Here and there, progressive mobilisation may succeed in halting democratic backsliding. But, in the long run, strong democracies will always require committed, majority support from voters and parties across the political spectrum.



Maciej Kisilowski & Anna Wojciuk

Here and there, progressive mobilisation may succeed in halting democratic backsliding. But, in the long run, strong democracies will always require committed, majority support from voters and parties across the political spectrum

Maciej Kisilowski is Associate Professor of Law and Public Management at Central European University. Anna Wojciuk is Associate Professor of Political Science at the University of Warsaw.

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WISDOM CORNER

- “The whole problem with the world is that fools and fanatics are always so certain of themselves, and wiser people so full of doubts.”
- BERTRAND RUSSELL
- “There is only one way to happiness and that is to cease worrying about things which are beyond the power of our will.”
- EPICETUS
- “I have been impressed with the urgency of doing. Knowing is not enough; we must apply. Being willing is not enough; we must do.”
- LEONARDO DA VINCI

FOCUS NATION

OF HAPPINESS & HUNGER



Capitalism may never be able to come up with full employment or zero poverty. Keeping this in view, there is need to evolve a strategy free from the clutches of vested interests who are keen to sustain poverty and inequality in society

It was more than surprising to hear Anurag Thakur, the Union Minister for Information and Broadcasting, stating a few days back that “we are on a par with any developed nation.” He further observed that “India has everything that any developed nation in the world has.” Perhaps this is the best comfort he can provide to the poor and the impoverished, the unemployed and the unhappy millions, who have to struggle for an existence. Not just Thakur but even Prime Minister Modi has been lauding the country’s achievements by failing to accept the ground reality of not just poverty but social discord, violence and hatred that has permeated the country in recent times.

Very close to Thakur’s statement was the release (on March 20) of the World Happiness Report which ranked India at a low of 126 out of 137 countries. As per the report, a publication of the UN Sustainable Development Solutions Network, based on global survey data from people in over 150 countries, India is far unhappy than terribly strife-ridden or nearly bankrupt countries such as Ukraine, Iraq, Palestine, Myanmar, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and Pakistan. It may be mentioned here that last year a Global Hunger Index ranked India at 107 out of 121 countries behind North Korea, Ethiopia, Sudan, Rwanda, Nigeria, and Congo. These are no indicators of a developed State, and that development has reached to the lowest tiers of society.

Another very startling finding that goes counter to Thakur’s observation is that nearly two among 10 infants or toddlers in India face the risk of not receiving any food whatsoever for a full day, according to a study that also revealed virtually no change in this measure of food deprivation. It found that

the proportion of children between six months and 23 months who hadn’t eaten any food with substantial caloric content increased from 17.2% in 2016 to 17.8% in 2021. Researchers, who extracted data from the government’s own family health surveys, stated that they generated the country’s first estimates for the prevalence of ‘zero food’ children that underline the need to redesign food practices to reach some of the most vulnerable households. It may be mentioned here that UP had the highest prevalence (27.4%) of ‘zero food’ children followed by Chhattisgarh (24.6%), Jharkhand (21%), Rajasthan (19.8%) and Assam (19.4%).

These have not come to light as health experts have conveniently measured malnutrition only through reductions in stunting and wasting levels among children. “The data contained some-

thing unusual and unexpected — we don’t expect young children between six months and 23 months to go entirely unfed for a whole 24 hours,” said SV Subramanian, a professor of population health at Harvard School of Public Health, who led the study.

Added to all this, one cannot brush aside the recent tweet of Congress leader Rahul Gandhi that “income of the poor is down by 50%, middle class down by 10% and rich increased by 10%.” Reports have suggested that over 80% of Indians suffered a loss of income since COVID-19 broke out.

As I have mentioned in several of my articles, the understanding of development by the planners is flawed as, in any particular case, the number of beneficiaries of a project are rarely taken into consideration. The much-hyped rural employment programme is not being expanded on the one

hand, and on the other the Union Budget has been curtailed and it is not possible to provide employment for more than 35 days a year.

It may be pertinent here to refer to the well-known economist, Meghnad Desai’s recent book titled ‘The Politics of Political Economy: How Economics Abandoned the Poor’, wherein he concludes the need for promoting a more humane economy. He talks about the provision of a basic income for all and provides some ideas on how to make it feasible. The now well-known universal basic income is opposed on two grounds – fiscal difficulty in raising resources for distribution and the possibility of people losing the incentive to work. It needs to be mentioned here that capitalism may never be able to come up with full employment or zero poverty. Keeping this in view, there is need to evolve a strategy free from the clutches of vested interests who are keen to sustain poverty and inequality in society.

At such a juncture, the future looks grim and dark. Liberal democracy is completely paralysed as social structure is controlled by half-educated sycophants and the economy controlled by a coterie of rich corporations, who are allegedly corrupt but loyal to the party in power. The socio-economic parameters are on decline, while history is being rewritten by ignorant sycophants. The prevailing system of garnering votes by hook or by crook without bothering to understand the real future of the country is a big mistake by whichever government is in power. The question arises where will this lead us to?

The writer is Sr. Consultant & Guest Faculty at Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, Kolkata.

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SPECTRUM INEQUALITY

The SDG that India does not care enough

The Goal 10 of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) which aimed at reducing income inequalities (10.1), promoting socioeconomic inclusion (10.2), ensuring equal opportunity (10.3), and adopting fiscal and social policies that promote equality (10.4), clearly irked right-leaning economists, who believe in the power of the market to maximise wealth creation through economic efficiency rather than economic equity and socio-economic inclusion, championed by left-leaning academia.

Marx was the first to make a clarion call for a classless society as he had noticed how the capitalist economy was exploitative of labour and contained the seeds of its own destruction. The Russian Revolution of 1917 and the disintegration of the USSR in 1991 prompted Fukuyama to conclude in his book ‘End of History’ that liberal democracy and free market have ended the binary debate of capitalism vs socialism. It was the seminal work of Thomas Piketty ‘Capital in the 21st Century’ (2013) that clearly demonstrated how the hypothesis that increasing prosperity will lead to a reduction of income inequality is not borne out by facts. SDG 10 carries in its womb the angst of Piketty and Nobel laureates like Krugman, Stiglitz and Abhijit Banerjee and hopes of a more egalitarian world.

The World Inequality Report (WIR), 2022 has brought out how the bottom 50% of the world share 8.5% of total income while the top 10% have the lion’s share of 52%. In terms of wealth distribution, the asymmetry is even more stark, with the bottom 50% owning 2% of immovable assets while the top 10% own 76%. In the case of India, the bottom 50% used to own 21% of total income in 1990, which has come down to 12% in 2022. The share of the top 10% has gone up from 32% (1990) to 58% in 2020.

Both Banerjee and Piketty in their editorial remarks to WIR implore all countries, including India, to increase the tax rate on the super-rich and impose a suitable wealth tax.

While there is unanimity among countries to achieve all the SDGs there is an ideological divide as to whether the State should adopt a fiscal policy to decrease income inequality. The pro-market lobby believes that inequality is inevitable and may even be beneficial. They believe that social leveling adds to economic stagnation as it caps aspiration and removes incentives for hard work and excellence. Milton Friedman believes that equality is less important than economic freedom. On the other hand, left-leaning analysts believe that inequality breeds resentment, hostility, and strife. The poor feel disempowered and marginalised. Richard

Wilkinson, in a lovely book ‘The Spirit Level,’ (2009) brings out how developed countries like the USA with income inequality (41%) are afflicted with a higher level of health and social problems compared to countries like Sweden with lower inequality (31%).

Walter Scheidel in a perceptive book ‘The Great Leveler’ (2017) brings out how the average tax rate on the top 1% of households has come down from 42% to 27% during 1980-2013. This was the time when Reaganomics ruled the roost, with the tax rate at the top coming down drastically. In the Indian context, land reform measures like land ceiling and consolidation of holding have come as a cropper due to inept implementation and vested interests stymieing implementation. Further tax rates at the top income bracket have come down from 60% in 1980 to 30% by 2003. Wealth tax was abolished by Arun Jaitley in the 2016-17 Budget. Quite clearly, India has been following Reaganomics and not Piketty. An increase in income inequality in India is not an accident of history but a feature of market economics, which benefits the rich corporates and neglects the bottom 50%.

Piketty’s call for a drastic increase in the tax rate on the super-rich has no takers. It also militates against the animal spirit of the entrepreneurs and their zest for

risk-taking. The long-term solution seems to be to adopt the capability approach of Amartya Sen which aims at removing barriers to equal opportunity. While universal access to school education has been achieved, quality education remains dodgy as brought out by successive ASER surveys on the impact of the RTE Act 2009. Piketty in his recent book ‘Capital & Ideology’ rightly argues that early intervention in primary education is “the best way to correct scholastic inequality between students from different social backgrounds.”

Goal 10 of SDG harps on a combination of equal opportunity, inclusive policy, and fiscal policy as the critical kingpins for minimising inequality. India’s record in terms of ensuring equal access, and having programmes like ICDS, and SSA are edifying. However, the quality dimension is severely lacking as the State does not invest enough in education and health as is being recommended by various committees and evidenced in best global practices. It is only through robust political will and a collaborative approach of government, corporates and local community, a more equitable and just society can be a reality.

The writer teaches Marco Economics.

Letters

TO THE EDITOR

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

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

Political churn

Sir, This refers to “Ahead of Bihar CM’s Maha visit, MVA sees fresh war of words,” **Orissa POST**, May 11. Politics in Maharashtra is in an intense churn. Key actors are trying to figure out their most advantageous positioning ahead of the Lok Sabha and Assembly elections that are scheduled for next year. Sharad Pawar’s dramatic announcement that he was quitting the post of president of the Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) had the intended effect of defusing a brewing rebellion led by his nephew Ajit Pawar, while Pawar wants to bequeath his political legacy to his daughter, Supriya Sule. He is also plotting the national terrain for his own potential role in the run-up to 2024. The BJP, having benefited from the split in the Shiv Sena, is now plotting its next move to dominate state politics on its own. Thackeray too has a battle at hand to keep his flock together while wanting to have his hold on Hindutva lineage and retain the upper hand in the state. On the other hand, the Congress has to engage in a balancing act and is also marred by its own internal battles of egos and divergent viewpoints among its leaders. Thus, the rumblings among the MVA partners and the bickering inside its constituents can’t yield the desired results for Nitish Kumar who is championing for Opposition unity against the BJP.

N Sadhasiva Reddy, BANGALORE

Roiling in crisis

Sir, The arrest of Imran Khan, who was ousted in a no-confidence vote in April last year in an ignominious manner, represents the latest confrontation to roil Pakistan, which has seen former Prime Ministers arrested over the years and interventions by its powerful military. A wily cricket captain during his international playing days, Imran Khan was always on a sticky wicket on the political field. The arrest should foment Khan to introspect, to understand the mistakes he committed and to take corrective measures. The story of Imran Khan teaches an important lesson to political leaders world over that charisma and popularity alone will not be enough to govern a country. Rather it underscores the need for efficiency, transparency, accountability and a sense of responsibility. Blame-shifting only serves to erode public trust, and that a leader must always be ready and willing to face the music.

Ranganathan Sivakumar, CHENNAI

of the day quote

It has now been proven that Panneerselvam is DMK's B-team. The cricket match was just OPS' pretext, he claimed. Whatever we have been saying (on OPS) is true. The cat is out of the bag

I do not know what is happening in West Bengal but banning the film will not serve any purpose

No entry poll or exit poll...see people's poll and on the basis of public poll, I am confident that BJP will form the government in Karnataka

SHORT TAKES

4 dead, five hurt in road mishap
Bahraich (UP): Four people died and five more were injured in a collision between a car and a motorcycle here Thursday, police said. The accident took place near Churai Purwa village under the Jarwal Road police station area, they said. After hitting the two-wheeler, the car collided with a roadside tree, police added. According to police, five other occupants of the car also sustained injuries.

SIT to investigate Kaliaganj girl's death
Kolkata: The Calcutta High Court Thursday ordered the formation of a special investigation team (SIT) to probe the unnatural death of a minor girl at Kaliaganj in West Bengal's Uttar Dinajpur district, whose dead body was found April 21. The girl's father moved the high court seeking transfer of the investigation into her death to the CBI, claiming that he does not have faith in the probe being done by the state police.

TN coastal police on alert
Chennai: The Tamil Nadu Coastal Police have been maintaining vigilance after a Panchayat president and his son were arrested for links with international drug cartels, an official said Thursday. The father-son duo was arrested Tuesday after the Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB) had intercepted a vehicle Monday night and found drugs in it. When the person in the vehicle was questioned, he said that the drug was to be delivered to N Mahalingam (60), who is the president of Vizhunthamavadi panchayath in Keellaiuor block, and his son Alex (32), a ward councillor.

WhatsApp curbs international spam calls in India

The platform, which has over 500 million users in the country, said it has ramped up its artificial intelligence (AI) and machine learning (ML) systems to bring down such incidents significantly

Shinde, Fadnavis must quit post-SC ruling: Uddhav

Mumbai, May 11: Shiv Sena (UBT) president Uddhav Thackeray sought the resignation of Maharashtra Chief Minister Eknath Shinde and his deputy Devendra Fadnavis on moral grounds following the Supreme Court ruling on the 2022 political crisis in the state Thursday, a demand swiftly rejected by top ruling coalition leaders, as rival camps claimed vindication of their positions after the much-awaited verdict. The judgment reinstates trust in democracy, said Thackeray, who was the Chief Minister of the Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA) government, comprising his group, the Nationalist Congress Party and the Congress, and resigned in June 2022 after a rebellion in the undivided Shiv Sena, triggering a political crisis in the state. On the other hand, Shinde said he staked claim to form the government within the legal and constitutional framework and it has

now got the stamp of the Supreme Court. Addressing a news conference here, Thackeray lambasted the role of the then-Governor Bhagat Singh Koshyari who had called upon him to face a trust vote following the rebellion by a section of Shiv Sena MLAs. Thackeray quit without facing a trust vote in the Assembly, paving the way for Shinde to take over as CM June 29, 2022, with support from the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and Fadnavis as his deputy. Responding to a question on whether he had erred by resigning, Thackeray said, "I could be wrong in tendering the resignation, but if you look at the morality, those who got everything from my party... why should I show my trust or distrust to them. They don't have the right to question me. Those who betrayed me bring a trust a vote against me... how will that happen?" "They (Shinde faction MLAs) betrayed my party and the legacy of my father. My resignation as the CM then may have been legally wrong, but I did it on moral grounds," he



said. "How was I supposed to run a government with backstabbers," he said, lashing out at the Shinde-led Sena. After the SC verdict, a relieved Shinde asserted his 11-month-old government was legal and formed within constitutional framework. Speaking jointly to reporters after the top court judgment, the CM and his deputy Fadnavis welcomed the ruling. Shinde said, "The government we formed was within the legal and constitutional framework. The Supreme Court has now put its stamp on it. Earlier, people used to derive pseudo-pleasure by calling

top court has observed that Sunil Prabhu of the Thackeray faction of the Sena remains the official whip, then as per its observation, 16 rebel MLAs, including Chief Minister Shinde, stand disqualified from Assembly. Reacting to the ruling, Narwekar asserted the SC has upheld his stand on the disqualification of MLAs in its verdict on the political crisis. Narwekar, currently in London, told a regional news channel, "The Supreme Court in its order stated that it would be the Speaker's prerogative to take a call on the disqualification plea submitted against the 16 MLAs, including Chief Minister Shinde. I have been consistently saying that it would be the speaker of the assembly who will decide (on this matter)." The Shinde government may have survived after the Supreme Court verdict but it has lost the moral right to continue in office, NCP leader and former minister Jayant Patil said in Sangli.

Doc's killing outcome of systemic failure: HC

Kochi, May 11: The Kerala High Court Thursday said the killing of a 23-year-old doctor at a taluk hospital in Kollam district of the state a day ago by a man she was treating was the outcome of a "systemic failure" and "cannot be brushed aside as an isolated incident". A special bench of Justices Devan Ramachandran and Kauser Edappagath directed the state police chief to "ensure that security is provided to all hospitals in the manner as is legally possible so as to prevent any further incidents of attack".



Doctors meet with Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan over the killing of the surgeon

The court said as far as the incident in question was concerned, "there was little doubt that the killing of a doctor by a person who was in custody or police - be that as an accused or in any other capacity - points strongly at systemic failure". "This is a gruesome incident which should never have happened," it added. The bench further said that as matters stand now, lack of protocols or their insufficiency cannot be used as a reason to justify another attack. The court observed that the manner in which the accused - G Sandeep, a school teacher by profession - was produced in the taluk hospital for treatment "was a recipe for disaster" and it was a "miracle" the nurses attending to him were not attacked. "We therefore, direct that every protocol that is applicable for production of an accused or persons in custody before magistrates shall apply to presentation of such persons before doctors, health-care professionals or hospitals concerned," it said. The bench also noted that it was informed that even the protocols regarding producing accused before magistrates are "extremely wanting" and it was only due to "providential grace" that any judicial officers have not been attacked.



FEAST TIME: A monkey eats 'chapati' near Jantar Mantar in New Delhi

CENTRE-DELHI ROW
AAP hails top court verdict

AGENCIES

New Delhi, May 11: Delhi Chief Minister and Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) leader Arvind Kejriwal Thursday thanked the Supreme Court for doing justice to the people of the national capital and said that the pace of development will increase manifold. In a tweet in Hindi, Kejriwal said, "Heartfelt thanks to the Supreme Court for doing justice to the people of Delhi. With this decision, the pace of development of Delhi will increase manifold. Democracy won." His remarks came after the Supreme Court Thursday ruled in favour of the Delhi government in a case between the state government and Centre in connection with the administrative control over transfers and postings of civil



AAP leaders and supporters celebrate at the party office after the ruling

servants. The apex court held that the Delhi government must have control over bureaucrats in administration of services except in areas outside the legislative powers of NCT. The top court said the Lt Governor is bound by aid and advice of the NCT government except the matters relating to land, public order & police. A five-judge bench headed by

Chief Justice of India D.Y. Chandrachud said the principle of democracy and federalism form a part of basic structure and federalism ensures survival of diverse interests and accommodates diverse needs. Following the Supreme Court orders, AAP Minister Gopal Rai said that the chief minister will hold a meeting with the ministers of the Delhi government at 2 p.m. to discuss future strategy. Meanwhile, AAP Minister Saurabh Bharadwaj said that the top court has slapped the central government for taking away the rights of the people of Delhi. Even Atishi, who is also a minister in the Delhi government said, "If the powers of the elected government are taken away, then the vote of the people has no meaning. Today the Supreme Court has slapped the BJP government."

SC reserves judgment on same-sex marriage

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, May 11: The Supreme Court Thursday reserved its verdict on a batch of pleas seeking legal validation for same-sex marriage after a marathon hearing of 10 days. A five-judge constitution bench headed by Chief Justice D Y Chandrachud observed it cannot give a declaration on the anticipation as to how Parliament is likely to respond to it. The observation by the bench came after one of the advocates appearing for the petitioners referred to the verdicts, including in the Triple Talaq case, and said once the top court gave a declaration to pass a law penalising this, it was a matter for "fairly easy legislative consensus". "That is not something which the court can presume that we will decide whether to give a declaration or not on how we anticipate the Parliament... Is likely to respond" said the CJI, who was heading the bench, which also comprised Justices S K Kaul, S R Bhat, Hima Kohli and P S Narasimha. During the hearing, the bench heard the rejoinder submissions advanced by senior advocates, including A M Singhvi, Raju Ramachandran, K V Viswanathan,

Anand Grover; Saurabh Kirpal and other lawyers who represented the petitioners. The bench observed there is one constitutional doctrine which has remained steadfast and constant, that is, the court can't direct framing of a policy and can't enter into the realm of policy making or legislation. At the outset, the CJI said from last evening, the court has been getting huge flow of material in electronic form. "Now we are in rejoinder and in rejoinder, we get 500 pages of materials," the CJI said. During the hearing on Wednesday, the Centre had told the apex court that any constitutional declaration made by it on pleas seeking legal validation for same-sex marriage may not be a "correct course of action" as the court will not be able to foresee, envisage, comprehend and deal with its fallout. The Centre had also told the court it had received responses from seven states on the issue of same-sex marriage and the governments of Rajasthan, Andhra Pradesh and Assam had opposed the petitioners' contention seeking legal validation for such wedlock. On April 18, the apex court had commenced hearing arguments in the matter.



INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, May 11: Meta-owned WhatsApp Thursday said it has taken stern action on the growing menace of International scam calls in India, after the government took cognisance of the issue and an-

WhatsApp on the issue of spam calls from unknown international numbers, stressing that social media platforms are responsible for ensuring the safety and trust of users. These spam calls with interna-

tional numbers, mostly from African and Southeast Asian countries, along with fake messages from unknown users, flooded WhatsApp users in India. The spam calls showed country

codes of Indonesia, Vietnam, Malaysia, and Ethiopia, among others. Most of these calls started with +251 (Ethiopia), +62 (Indonesia), +254 (Kenya), +84 (Vietnam) and other countries. WhatsApp said that international scam calls are a new way that bad actors have recently adopted. By giving a missed call, they lead curious users to call or message back only to get scammed. "We continue to provide several safety tools within WhatsApp like Block and Report, consistently build user safety education and awareness, as well as, proactively weed out bad-actors from our platform. However, bad actors find different ways to scam users," the company spokesperson noted.

Assam scheme to benefit 26L families

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Guwahati, May 11: The Assam government launched a health-care scheme, offering cashless medical treatment up to Rs 5 lakh per family per year.

The scheme is aimed at promoting accessible and affordable healthcare, and will initially cover around 26 lakh families, an official statement said. Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma launched the 'Ayushman Asom' - Mukhya Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana' on Wednesday, coinciding with the completion of two years of his government.

Beneficiaries of the 'Ayushman Asom' scheme will be those who are listed under the National Food Security Act (NFSA), the statement said. The scheme will cover 1,578 healthcare procedures in more than 300 empanelled hospitals within the state and all Ayushman Bharat-listed health facilities across the country.

The cashless medical treatment scheme will "initially cover approximately 26 lakh families and the number will be increased to 32 lakhs in a phased manner", the



Farmers, entrepreneurs authorised to use GI tag for 13 NE products

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Guwahati, May 11: A central government agency has authorised 800 farmers and entrepreneurs to use the Geographical Indication (GI) tag for 13 agricultural products of the northeastern region, an official said.

The 13 produces are Arunachal Orange, Tezpur Litchi and Karbi Anglong Ginger of Assam, Kachai Lemon and 'Chak-Hao' Black Rice of Manipur, Khasi Mandarin orange and Memang Narang orange of Meghalaya, Mizo Chilli of Mizoram, Naga Tree Tomato and Naga Sweet Cucumber of Nagaland, Queen Pineapple of Tripura and Sikkim Large Cardamom and Dalle Khursani chilli of Sikkim.

The North Eastern Regional Agricultural Marketing Corporation (NERAMAC), under the DoNER Ministry, will forward the 800 user authorisation applications for usage of these products from the eight NE states to the Geographical Indication Registry, Chennai.

NERAMAC Managing Director Commodore Rajiv Ashok (Retd) said on Thursday that the initiative is a significant step towards promoting and protecting the traditional agricultural practices and products of the NER region.

"The initiative will provide recognition to the unique qualities and reputation of NER agricultural products and protect them from misuse and imitation," he said. The authorisation process of farmers will enhance the competitiveness of the farmers in domestic and international markets and create opportunities for increased income and livelihood, he said.

Renowned GI expert Dr Rajni Kant Dwivedi has also pointed out the importance of Northeastern Region (NER) specific GI products and emphasised the need for a comprehensive approach to promote these.

The GI-specific products not only protect the unique identity and quality of these products but also create employment opportunities for local communities, he said.

statement said.

Addressing a programme on the occasion, Sarma said Prime Minister Narendra Modi's relentless pursuit of 'Antyodaya' to ensure the rise and development of the last person in society was the motivating factor behind the Mukhya Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana'. Owing to certain limitations, many families belonging to the economically weaker sections were left out of the 'Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana', which also offers cashless healthcare treatment, he said. The new scheme will ensure similar cashless healthcare benefits for the families which were left out, he said. The Atal Amrit Abhiyan Society would be responsible for the day-to-day operations of the new scheme, Sarma mentioned.

The chief minister also asserted that the improvement of the health-care sector is one of the priorities of his government. Sarma announced the rollout of 'Mukhya Mantri Lok Seva Arogya Yojana', a healthcare scheme for employees of the Assam government from August 15. This would do away with the cumbersome process of reimbursement for medical treatment expenses borne by them.

The chief minister also asserted that the improvement of the health-care sector is one of the priorities of his government. Sarma announced the rollout of 'Mukhya Mantri Lok Seva Arogya Yojana', a healthcare scheme for employees of the Assam government from August 15. This would do away with the cumbersome process of reimbursement for medical treatment expenses borne by them.



Ayodhya to be painted with spiritual themes

The Ayodhya Development Authority has floated a competition for students and other individuals interested in providing the designs, art works and concepts for the major streets of the temple town

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Ayodhya, May 11: The identity of Ayodhya as a spiritual city will be further reinforced when the facade, flyovers and walls of private and government buildings get painted with spiritual themes.

The Ayodhya Development Authority (ADA) has floated a competition for students and other individuals interested in providing the designs, art works and concepts for the major streets of the temple town.

Officials said that once the entries are received, the process to short-list and select the best design and art works will commence.

"While maintaining the overall theme of Ramayana, life of Lord Ram and history of Ayodhya (UP), the murals, sculptures, facade art and other elements being planned

Varanasi airport gets India's first reading lounge

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Varanasi (UP), May 11: The Lal Bahadur Shastri International (LBSI) Airport here has become the first in India to have a reading lounge.

Apart from books on Kashi, the lounge's library has a collection of literature and books in many international languages besides books of youth authors published under the Prime Minister Yuva Yojana.

LBSI airport director Aryama Sanyal said, "The Varanasi airport has become the first airport in the country to have a free reading lounge. The lounge has been established with the assistance of National Book Trust (NBT), an Indian publishing house and autonomous body under the ministry of education of the Union government. The NBT



Dry land surfaces from the receding water level of the river Ganga during summer in Prayagraj

PTI PHOTO

833 held for conversion in UP

In terms of arrests, Prayagraj zone tops with 163 arrests followed by Bareilly (137), Lucknow (124), Varanasi (101), Gorakhpur (81), Meerut (65), Agra (37) and Kanpur (21)

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Lucknow, May 11: A total of 833 persons have been arrested in 427 cases registered in the past two years under the Prohibition of Unlawful Conversion of Religion Act, 2020 that is now back in focus with the release of the movie 'The Kerala Story' that highlights the same issue.

The Act came into effect in Uttar Pradesh on November 27, 2020. According to a government spokesperson, at least 427 cases related to conversion were reported in the state between January 1, 2021, and April 30, 2023, in which 833 arrests were also made.



"So far, 65 cases of conversion of minors have been registered, of which 12 were registered in Meerut zone, 10 in Gorakhpur, nine in Bareilly, five in Agra, four cases each in Lucknow and Prayagraj, and two cases in Varanasi. In 185 of these cases, the victims con-

fessed before the court that they were forcibly converted," the spokesman said.

According to records, Bareilly police zone reported maximum 86 cases followed by Gorakhpur (59), Lucknow (53), Meerut (47), Prayagraj (46), and Varanasi (39). In police commissionerates, maximum 20 cases were registered in Lucknow, followed by 19 in Kanpur, 13 in Prayagraj, and 10 in Noida.

In terms of arrests, Prayagraj zone tops with 163 arrests followed by Bareilly (137), Lucknow (124), Varanasi (101), Gorakhpur (81), Meerut (65), Agra (37) and Kanpur (21), the spokesman added.

ners. The authority wants to give a complete makeover to enhance the experience of the pedestrians and commuters who take the four key arterial roads of the city once the Ram temple gets ready next year.

The four roads where facade control guidelines are also being implemented, will give a similar look and feel to the external walls of the buildings, shops and other structures include Ram Path, Jannabhoomi Path, Bhakti Path and Dharam Path. The minimum width of the four roads would be 12 metres.

The four routes are expected to witness major movement of the tourists and pilgrims in the years to come and facade lighting and decorative elements are also going to be installed once the wall murals and art works are complete. The murals will be in 3D form.

NFR takes precautions ahead of monsoon



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Guwahati, May 11: The Northeast Frontier Railway (NFR) has initiated precautionary measures ahead of monsoon as heavy rain annually causes damage to tracks and raises safety issues for trains and passengers.

A detailed strategy has been formulated especially for the safety of the tracks, an NFR spokesperson said. "As part of preparations before monsoon, collection of materials at sensitive places, cleaning of drainage systems and waterways, and marking danger levels in bridges have been completed," NFR CPRO Sabyasachi De said in a statement here.

He said patrolling teams have been deployed to monitor more than 6,400 km of tracks under the jurisdiction of NFR for any defect that may arise due to heavy rainfall.

"These teams are patrolling the tracks on the basis of rainfall alert issued by the Meteorological department. The patrolmen are equipped with the latest equipment including GPS tracker, luminous jacket, raincoat and separate waterproof trousers, safety helmet, safety shoe high and powerful flashlights," De said.

The CPRO said the teams are on full track patrol round-the-clock and mobile phones have been provided to each team to provide information to the nearest station

about any situation that may affect the normal movement of trains.

In addition to patrols, stationary watchmen have also been appointed in sensitive areas such as sites prone to landslides and bridges where water is flowing near danger levels, he added.

"Despite precautions, there are occasions when bridges are washed out, embankments are breached and landslides occur. To carry out restoration within minimum possible time, materials such as boulders, sandbags and various pre-fabricated components of bridges are kept loaded in wagons and placed at strategic locations," the spokesperson said.

Boulders have been kept loaded in wagons at various locations to meet any emergency requirement. De said the mobilisation was carried out in the last few months over the entire jurisdiction of NFR, spread over parts of West Bengal, Bihar and northeastern states such as Assam, Tripura and Manipur.

"The monsoon season is quite challenging for NFR as it serves a difficult terrain close to foothills of Lower Himalayan ranges, carved by turbulent streams, fed by heaviest rainfall reaching up to about 7,000 mm in a year." A detailed strategy is adopted to ensure that the tracks are protected and kept in good condition so that safety of passengers is not compromised," the CPRO added.

Aadhaar cards to be authenticated for UP students from this yr

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Prayagraj, May 11: The Aadhaar cards of students of Classes 10 and 12 in Uttar Pradesh for the ongoing academic session of 2023-24 will be authenticated.

Meanwhile, the Aadhaar cards of students taking admission in Classes 9 and 11 will also be certified. This is being done so that the Aadhaar number can be made mandatory for students when they fill the examination forms of high school and intermediate next year, said board officials.

The process for authenticating the Aadhaar number follows the approval of the state government to the Uttar Pradesh Board. This process will put an effective check on the cases of impersonation which the Board faces while conducting exams for Classes 10 and 12 each year. A total of 133 cases of impersonation were caught during the high school and intermediate exams of 2023. These impersonators were caught despite the Board matching the Aadhaar cards of registered candidates with the ones appearing in the exams.

Changing rooms on floating jetty in Ganga in Varanasi

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Varanasi (UP), May 11: Those wanting to take a holy dip in the Ganga river here will soon get the facility to a changing room on the floating jetty.

The foundation stone of the floating jetty equipped with changing rooms, was laid by the Prime Minister Narendra Modi in March this year and the project is likely to complete by the month end.

The facility will be available on the 34 meters long and 8 meters wide floating jetty that is being developed at a cost of Rs 99 lakhs. Devotees, particularly women, will no longer feel uncomfortable while changing clothes at the ghats in the open. The changing rooms along with lockers are being built on the floating jetty.

The chief general manager of the Varanasi Smart City Mission, D Vasudevan said that the devotees will also have the facility of lockers on the floating jetty. "A total of 30 changing rooms, including 15 for women and 15 for men, are being built on the 34 meters long and 8

The chief general manager of the Varanasi Smart City Mission, D Vasudevan said that the devotees will also have the facility of lockers on the floating jetty



meters wide floating jetty," he said.

The Prime Minister had laid the foundation stone and dedicated development projects worth more than Rs 1,780 crores in Varanasi on March 24. Apart from the floating jetty, these development projects include the passenger ropeway from Varanasi Cant station to Godowlia, a 55 MLD sewage treatment plant at Bhagwanpur under Namami Ganga Scheme, Phases 2 and 3 of the redevelopment works of Sriga

The foundation stone of the floating jetty equipped with changing rooms, was laid by the Prime Minister Narendra Modi in March this year

Stadium, an LPG bottling plant at Isarwar village, Sewapuri to be built by Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Ltd, and a primary health centre in Bharthara village, among others.

The PM had also dedicated 19 drinking water schemes under the Jal Jeevan Mission, which will benefit more than 3 lakh people of 63 gram panchayats. He also laid the foundation stone of 59 drinking water schemes under the mission.



In a democracy, those who take everyone along become successful and those who create factions can never become successful
ASHOK GEHLOT | RAJASTHAN CM

AIMING HIGH

The Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) and the AYUSH ministry have signed an agreement for collaboration and cooperation for research in the field of integrated medicine. Integrated medicine refers to using alternative medicine systems such as ayurveda, yoga, naturopathy, unani, siddha and homeopathy with orthodox systems as part of a treatment plan



of the day **quote**

Time and again the present state government has given a lot of emphasis on strengthening the health care system



MANOHAR LAL KHATTAR | HARYANA CM

Minister Thennarasu and the Industries department officials had visited several states in India and various countries to fetch investment to Tamil Nadu. I appreciate them for their efforts. I am sure Rajaa, who has taken charge as the new Industries Minister, will perform well to attract more investment to the state and my best wishes to him



M K STALIN | TAMIL NADU CM

Whatever is happening in Pakistan, unfortunately, is nothing new. Right from Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, whenever a government comes, the opposition is jailed. It will have an effect on us. The instability and uncertainty there will impact us but this disease has somehow infected our country also



MEHBOOBA MUFTI | PDP PRESIDENT

SHORT TAKES

ED summons Maha NCP president

Mumbai: The Enforcement Directorate (ED) has summoned Maharashtra NCP president and MLA Jayant Patil for questioning in a money laundering case linked to alleged financial irregularities in the now bankrupt IL&FS, official sources said Friday. The 61-year-old MLA from Islampur seat of Maharashtra has been asked to depose before the federal agency here Friday.

India marks Pokhran nuclear tests anniv

New Delhi: The 1998 Pokhran nuclear tests sent a message to the world that although India is a peace-loving nation, it would not let anyone to harm its sovereignty, integrity and unity, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh said Thursday on the 25th anniversary of the tests. India conducted five nuclear tests of advanced weapon designs between May 11 and 13 at Rajasthan's Pokhran desert that propelled the country into a select group of nations having capabilities to develop nuclear weapons.

Commando killed in militant attack

Imphal: A Manipur Police commando was killed and four other policemen were injured when Kuki militants attacked a police patrol party at Tronglaobi in the state's Bishnupur district Thursday, police said. A police official in Imphal said commando Heisnam Jiten was killed and four other policemen sustained bullet injuries during an operation against Kuki militants.

Over100 fall ill due to food poisoning

Goalpara: More than 100 people fell ill after participating in a ritual feast in Assam's Goalpara district, a senior health department official said Thursday. A prayer meeting was organised in the house of a member of the Garo community in Mariampur village bordering Meghalaya Wednesday followed by a feast.

Protests in Tripura

Agartala: Various organisations and student bodies in Tripura organised protests Thursday against the kidnap and gang-rape of a college student here. The condition of the girl, who is undergoing treatment at the government-run Govind Ballabh Pant Medical College and Hospital, is stated to "very critical".

KARNATAKA ELECTION

Exit polls give jitters to Cong, BJP leaders

MOST POLLSTERS, HOWEVER, HAVE ALSO GIVEN AN EDGE TO THE CONGRESS OVER THE RULING BJP



AGENCIES

Bangalore, May 11: With most exit polls predicting a tight contest between the Congress and BJP in the Assembly polls in Karnataka, leaders of the two parties seem "jittery" over the outcome, while the Janata Dal (Secular) appears to be expecting a hung verdict, which would enable it to play a role in government formation. Most pollsters have given an edge to the Congress over the ruling BJP, while indicating the possibility of a hung Assembly in the state.

Counting of votes is May 13. Union Minister Shobha Karandlaje Thursday ruled out the possibility of an 'Operation Lotus', saying the BJP would get 120 to 125 seats and return to power.

The term 'Operation Lotus' was coined several years ago by the opposition Congress and the JD(S) in the state referring to some alleged attempts by the BJP earlier to "poach opposition MLAs" when it failed to get a majority on its own. Karandlaje said the "primary reports" obtained post elections suggest that the party was getting 120 to 125 seats. Asked whether the BJP would need to resort to 'Operation Lotus', she said, "Absolutely not. Have faith. No situation will arise for any sort of 'Operation Lotus'. This time the people of the state will vote for the development of the state and will give a majority government."

Though they exude confidence about their party winning comfortably in the polls to the 224-member Assembly, the exit polls - most of which did not predict a clear winner - have certainly made them anxious to an extent, sources in both national parties said. No one wants a 2018-like scenario to unfold this time too, they said.

The JD(S) will be the key factor in case of a hung verdict, and may emerge as 'king' or 'kingmaker', as in 2018. Party leader H D

Kumaraswamy, the man who holds the key to the formation of a coalition government, in case of a fractured mandate, has left for Singapore for a health checkup, and would be back on counting day, sources said. The JD(S) leader was hospitalised during campaigning for exhaustion and weakness.

In the previous Assembly elections in 2018, the BJP emerged as the single largest party by winning 104 seats, followed by Congress with 80 seats and JD(S) 37. There was also one independent member, while the BSP and Karnataka Pragnyavantha Janatha Party (KPJP) got one legislator each elected.

With no party getting a clear majority then, and as seats and return to power.

Yediyurappa of the BJP, which was the single largest party, staked a claim and formed the government. However, the government was dissolved within three days ahead of a trust vote, as Yediyurappa was unable to muster the required numbers.

Subsequently, the Congress-JD(S) alliance formed the government with Kumaraswamy as Chief Minister, but the wobbly dispensation collapsed in 14 months, as 17 legislators resigned and came out of the ruling coalition. They defected to the BJP and facilitated the party's return to power.

On Thursday, AICC general secretary in-charge of Karnataka Randeep Singh Surjewala met Congress Legislature Party leader Siddaramaiah at the latter's residence here and held discussions. Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai seemed confident Thursday about BJP's comfortable win, rejecting the exit polls.

Modi's campaign was a big plus for the BJP and it had a huge impact among youth and women voters, Bommai said in response to a question on whether the party would achieve its target of winning 150 seats.

Pawar, Nitish plan joint Oppn fight against BJP

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, May 11: Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar and NCP president Sharad Pawar Thursday discussed efforts to strengthen opposition unity ahead of next year's Lok Sabha elections, the two leaders said.

Kumar, who visited Pawar at the latter's residence in south Mumbai along with deputy CM Tejashwi Yadav, told reporters that what the ruling BJP is doing is not in the interest of the country. Earlier, he met Uddhav Thackeray at the Shiv Sena (UBT) leader's Bandra home. "What BJP is doing nowadays is not in the interest of

the country. In such a situation, if more and more opposition parties unite, it would be better for the country," he said. Kumar said many parties have got in touch with them. "All I can say now is that it is happening in the interest of the country," he said. Pawar said these discussions are part of the United Progressive Alliance (UPA). "We all have been together and we are bringing in more parties and groups," he said.

Kumar said they are trying hard to form a larger coalition in the country. "We will discuss it with all the stakeholders and can give it a new name," he said. Asked if Pawar will be the main face of the oppo-



sition alliance, Kumar said, "There will be nothing more delightful than that. I have told him that he has to work with more vigour not only for his party but for the entire country." The more opposition parties come together, the better it is in the interest of the country, Kumar said.



SEEKING SHELTER: A family caught amid rainfall at Charminar in the old city of Hyderabad

PTI PHOTO

3rd blast near Golden Temple in a week, 5 held

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Amritsar, May 11: Five persons were arrested Thursday in connection with the low-intensity blast incidents near the Golden Temple here, hours after another explosion took place in the area, police said.

► A low-intensity explosion had taken place on a heritage street near the shrine May 6

► The second one occurred in the area in less than 30 hours after the first blast

► A special investigation team will be formed to further investigate the matter

In less than a week, three explosions have taken place in the city. A low-intensity explosion had taken place on a heritage street near the shrine May 6. The second one occurred in the area in less than 30 hours after the first blast.

A special investigation team will be formed to further investigate the matter, said Punjab Director



PTI PHOTO

People arrested in connection with the low-intensity blast incidents near the Golden Temple, being produced in court under heavy security in Amritsar

General of Police (DGP) Gauarv Yadav while addressing the media here. The motive behind the explosions is yet to be ascertained, Yadav said, adding whether the arrested five persons were a self-radicalized module or worked at the direction of some other persons will also be investigated. Police identified the accused as Azadvir Singh, Amrik Singh, Sahib Singh, Harjit Singh and Dharminder Singh.

Azadvir, resident of Amritsar and Amrik, resident of Gurdaspur, were the main perpetrators while Sahib, Harjit and Dharminder, residents of Amritsar, were the persons who sourced and supplied the explosives, the DGP said.

Yadav further said police also recovered 1.10 kg low-intensity explosive, which is normally used in firecrackers. "We will investigate the entire deep-rooted conspiracy

behind this and examine all the associates of the arrested people, in India and abroad. We will get to the bottom of it," said the DGP who was accompanied by special DGP R N Dhole and other officers.

Amrik's wife was also being questioned and her role was being examined, said the DGP. A case has been registered under relevant sections of the Explosives Act, the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA) and under section 120B of the Indian Penal Code.

The DGP also appreciated and thanked the Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee (SGPC) for their cooperation in nabbing the accused. SGPC chief Harjinder Singh Dharmi earlier in the day had said that it was the SGPC employees who first noticed the blast in the 'Galiara' and also pinpointed the place from where the explosive material was thrown. Dharmi said the SGPC employees traced a suspect through CCTV footage installed in the Guru Ramdas Ji Niwas (inn) building and later they handed him over to police.

Pilot steps up pressure on Congress leadership

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Jaipur, May 11: Dissident Congress leader Sachin Pilot began a 125-km foot march from Ajmer to Jaipur Thursday, challenging Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot and the party's top brass as assembly elections in Rajasthan approach.

A month back, the former deputy chief minister had defied a warning from the party to hold a daylong fast targeting Gehlot on "inaction" over alleged corruption when the BJP was previously in power.

The just-begun five-day yatra mounts further pressure on the party leadership as it hopes to retain the state in the elections at the end of the year.

"I am taking out this yatra to raise my voice, to hear your voice, and to become the voice of the people," Pilot, who was sacked as the state Congress chief in 2020 when he led a revolt against the CM, said at the start of the "padyatra".

Referring to the scorching heat as "aag ka dariya", he told his supporters, "This is a river of fire, we have to swim across it."

The Tonk MLA was welcomed



by them when he reached Ajmer by train. He addressed a gathering on the Jaipur highway.

Thousands of party workers followed him as the yatra set off. Some held the tricolour and shouted slogans supporting him. Former minister Rajendra Chaudhary and local leader Mahendra Ralwata were present. But known dissident MLA kept away from Ajmer.

The 'Jan Sangharsh Yatra' posters, displayed on some vehicles, had a picture of Pilot with a clenched fist, as well as photos of Congress leaders Sonia Gandhi, Indira Gandhi and Jawaharlal Nehru. Mahatma Gandhi, Bhimrao Ambedkar and Bhagat Singh also featured there.

Apart from corruption, the yatra focuses on cases of paper leaks in government recruitment exams.

'Blood delivery by drones will be reality soon'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, May 11: Blood delivery through drones can soon be expanded to the whole country, a senior official said after the Indian Council of Medical Research successfully conducted a trial run of blood bag delivery by drones under its iDrone initiative Thursday.

The initiative was in continuance with the national mission of expanding the drone ecosystem in India. The 'i-DRONE' was first used by ICMR during the Covid-19 pandemic for distributing vaccines to hard-to-reach areas.

"Today, we are transporting blood and blood-related products which are supposed to be kept at a low temperature. After the experiment, we found that not only can we maintain the temperature but there was also no damage to the products transported."

"We sent another sample through an ambulance and if there are no differences in the samples sent using the two modes then drones will be used all over India," said Dr Rajiv Bahl, the director general of ICMR.

He also said that "clarity on challenge mapping and identifying the



GREAT INITIATIVE

THE INITIATIVE WAS IN CONTINUANCE WITH THE NATIONAL MISSION OF EXPANDING THE DRONE ECOSYSTEM IN INDIA

THE 'I-DRONE' WAS FIRST USED BY ICMR DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC FOR DISTRIBUTING VACCINES TO HARD-TO-REACH AREAS

possible solutions can be achieved by developing indigenous capacities in research and introduction of innovations and technologies in the mainstream".

"With digitisation, efficient manufacturing of vaccines and development of a rapid delivery mechanism, India achieved 90 per cent

coverage within a year. The boost of technology is an accelerator which is gradually pushing India towards achieving the status of being a developed nation," he added.

The trial run as part of a path-breaking validation study has been undertaken for the first time in the country by the collaborative

efforts of ICMR, Lady Hardinge Medical College, New Delhi, Government Institute of Medical Sciences, Greater Noida, and Jaypee Institute of Information Technology, Noida.

The inaugural trial flight carried 10 units of whole blood samples between the Government Institute of Medical Sciences, Greater Noida, and Lady Hardinge Medical College, New Delhi, in visual line of sight, according to an official statement.

Some countries are already using drones to deliver blood products, vaccines, pharmaceuticals, medical supplies, and even organs to remote, rural areas or areas with poor infrastructure.

In Ghana, drone delivery of blood - both as laboratory samples and as emergency blood and blood product delivery - is now available for thousands of health facilities serving millions of people.

In the US, where whole blood and blood products are often sparse in rural areas, drones are more highly regulated and air traffic is more congested, the feasibility of drone delivery of blood and blood products is still being assessed.

international

of the day quote

It is worrying that the conflict in Ukraine has diminished world attention from challenges in Africa and left the marginalised even more vulnerable to the dangers of terrorism, food insecurity, climate change, and instability

NALEDI PANDOR | SOUTH AFRICAN MINISTER OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS AND COOPERATION

Imran Khan's party must not make matters worse and end its violent protest against his arrest

BILAWAL BHUTTO-ZARDARI | PAKISTAN FOREIGN MINISTER

We're concerned by reports of the spread of mass DNA collection to Tibet as an additional form of control and surveillance over the Tibetan population

ANTONY BLINKEN | US SECRETARY OF STATE

SHORT TAKES

Attack averted

Karachi: A suspected suicide bomber was killed and a deadly attack on the Chinese nationals working in a shipyard in the port city of Pakistan's Karachi was foiled by the security forces, police said Thursday. The incident happened Wednesday when security officials discovered that a suspect was planning to carry out a suicide attack on the Chinese nationals at the shipyard in Karachi's Port Qasim. Senior Superintendent Police Hasan Sardar said they killed a suspected terrorist who was planning to carry out a suicide attack against Chinese nationals working at the shipyard in Port Qasim. "The terrorist was shot dead after the police increased the security for the foreign workers after an intelligence tipoff that a banned outfit had planned a terror attack on Tuesday," he said.

Peace activist wins World Food Prize

Des Moines (US): A California peace activist who has worked to remove land mines from war-torn regions and replace them with grape vines, fruit trees and vegetables was named the 2023 World Food Prize laureate Thursday at a ceremony in Washington. The Des Moines, Iowa-based foundation awarded its annual prize to Heidi Kühn, founder of Roots of Peace. Since founding her nonprofit in the basement of her San Rafael, California, home in 1997, Kühn's organization has helped remove thousands of mines and assist farmers in more than a half-dozen countries.

24 injured in bridge collapse

Helsinki: Two dozen people, many of them schoolchildren, were injured when a temporary pedestrian bridge collapsed in the southern Finnish city of Espoo on Thursday, police and media said. Police said the bridge crossing a construction site in Espoo's Tapiola region collapsed mid-morning. No one was killed, but 24 people were injured, 10 of them seriously.

Soldier killed in clashes

Yerevan (Armenia): Armenian and Azerbaijani troops exchanged artillery fire Thursday along their tense border, leaving at least one soldier dead and several others wounded in the latest bout of escalation between the longtime adversaries that threatened to derail their latest attempts at peace talks. The two countries' authorities traded blame for triggering the clashes and accused each other of trying to undermine negotiations on a prospective peace deal.



Modi's forthcoming official state visit to the US, at the invitation of President Biden, is historic. The visit will be an opportunity for the two leaders to spend time together, take stock of the progress achieved and provide guidance on the future limitless possibilities

TARANJIT SINGH SANDHU | INDIA'S AMBASSADOR TO THE US

MATTER OF CONCERN

The UN food agency is warning that a widespread locust infestation in several Afghan provinces is of 'huge concern' and could possibly decimate a quarter of the wheat crop



UK gives missiles; Kyiv delays counteroffensive

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Kyiv, May 11: The British government announced Thursday it was giving long-range cruise missiles to Ukraine to help drive out Russia's occupying forces, just as Kyiv delayed a possible counteroffensive more than 14 months after the Kremlin's full-scale invasion as it awaits the delivery of more Western weapons.

UK Defence Secretary Ben Wallace told lawmakers in the House of Commons that Britain is donating Storm Shadow missiles, a conventionally-armed deep-strike weapon with a range of more than 250 kilometres (150 miles).

That means it can hit targets deep behind the front line, including in Russia-occupied Crimea. UK media reported that Ukraine has pledged not to use the missiles to attack Russia itself. Wallace said the missiles "are now going into or are in the country itself."

Ben Hodges, a former US Army Europe Commanding General, tweeted: "Well done UK!" "This will give Ukraine capability to make Crimea untenable for Russian forces" and would force a Russian rethink of where to position its Black Sea fleet, he added.

The British move gives another boost to the Ukrainian military after it received other advanced



■ **Ukraine's Western allies have sent the country 65 billion euros in military aid to help thwart the Kremlin's ambitions and with no peace negotiations on the horizon the alliance is gearing up to send more**

■ **UK Defence Secretary Ben Wallace told lawmakers in the House of Commons that Britain is donating Storm Shadow missiles, a conventionally-armed deep-strike weapon with a range of more than 250 kilometres**

Western weapons including tanks and long-range precision artillery. The announcement came shortly after Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said his country's military needs more time to prepare an anticipated counteroffensive aimed at pushing back Russian occupying forces and opening a new chapter in the war more than 14 months after the Kremlin's full-scale invasion.

Zelenskyy said in an interview broadcast Thursday by the BBC that it would be "unacceptable" to

launch the assault now because too many lives would be lost.

"With (what we have) we can go forward and be successful," Zelenskyy said in the interview, according to the BBC. "But we'd lose a lot of people. I think that's unacceptable," he was quoted as saying. The interview was reportedly carried out in Kyiv with public service broadcasters who are members of Eurovision News, including the BBC. "So we need to wait. We still need a bit more time," Zelenskyy was quoted as saying.

Turkish presidential candidate withdraws

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Ankara, May 11: A candidate in Türkiye's presidential election announced Thursday that he was withdrawing from the race, a move that's likely to bolster President Recep Tayyip Erdogan's main challenger.

Muharrem Ince, the leader of the centre-left Homeland Party, was one of four contenders running for president in the May 14 election. Türkiye will also be holding a parliamentary election at the same time. Ince had come under intense criticism for splintering the votes of the six-party Nation Alliance, which has united behind the candidacy of main opposition party leader Kemal Kilicdaroglu, and of possibly forcing the presidential race into a second-round.

"I am withdrawing from the race," Ince told reporters in front of his party's headquarters. "I am doing this for my country," Erdogan, who has led Turkey as prime minister and president since 2003, is facing the most challenging election of his 20-year rule.

Polls had given Kilicdaroglu a slight lead over Erdogan, although neither candidate was expected to garner more than 50 per cent of the votes required to be elected in the first round. Ince had polled around 8% of the votes when his candidacy was first announced, but his popularity ratings have since dropped to around 2 per cent, according to opinion surveys.

The firebrand politician didn't say he was dropping out in favor of Kilicdaroglu, but analysts say his withdrawal is likely to benefit the Nation Alliance. Nation Alliance members welcomed Ince's decision to step down. "God willing, our nation will take the necessary step in the days ahead so that we will (succeed) in the first round," said Gultekin Uysal, leader of the center-right Democrat Party. Ince, however, said the Homeland Party, which he formed in 2021, would still run in the parliamentary elections, and he called for votes for the party "from each household."



Police officers and firefighters stand in front of a residential building in Ratingen, Germany. Several people were injured in an explosion Thursday at a residential building in the western town of Ratingen, German police said

Shooting in Germany kills two; man arrested

REUTERS

Berlin, May 11: A shooting at a Mercedes-Benz (MBGn.DE) plant in southwestern Germany left two men dead Thursday, and police have detained a suspect, mounting pressure on Berlin to tighten the country's already-strict gun laws.

The suspect, 53, opened fire on the victims before security workers at the site in the southern German city of Sindelfingen held him down and handed him over to police, police and the local prosecutor's office said in a statement.

The suspect did not resist arrest, they said, and the victims, both aged 44, died of their injuries. The incident was the latest of a number of mass shootings in Germany in recent years, many of which had a connection with extremism. Investigators have yet to establish a motive for Thursday's shooting. The German government had



53-YEAR-OLD CONTRACTOR IN CUSTODY

SHOTS FIRED AT ONE OF COMPANY'S BIGGEST SITES

GOVT UNDER PRESSURE TO TIGHTEN GUN LAWS

vowed to tighten its gun laws further after a gunman opened fire on people gathered in a Jehovah's Witnesses hall in Hamburg in March, killing six. Interior Minister Nancy Faeser had said after that attack that the government would revisit its arms laws. The Social Democrats, her party and that of Chancellor Olaf Scholz, have been

pushing for tougher restrictions, and Germany's police union also called for a swift legislative response to restrict the number of guns available.

Mercedes-Benz produces its flagship S-Class luxury sedan at the Sindelfingen plant, located some 17 km (10.6 miles) southwest of Stuttgart. The company said the gunman and the two victims belonged to an external services provider.

"We are deeply shocked and saddened by the tragic news," Mercedes said in a statement, adding that there was no longer any danger to the local population or workers at the plant.

The production site - with a workforce of 35,000 - was evacuated following the shooting, which took place after the suspect entered the site at 7:45 a.m. (0545 GMT), police and the Stuttgart prosecutor said.

'NOW OR NEVER'

Migrants rush to US border as Title 42 ends



ASSOCIATED PRESS

Matamoros (Mexico), May 11: Migrants rushed across the border hours before pandemic-related asylum restrictions were to expire Thursday, fearing that new policies would make it far more difficult to gain entry into the United States.

In a move to clear out overwhelmed holding facilities, Border Patrol agents were told Wednesday to begin releasing some migrants with instructions to appear at an immigration office in the United States within 60 days, according to a US official. The official was not authorised to speak publicly about the matter and provided information to The Associated Press on condition of anonymity.

The Biden administration has been unveiling measures to replace Title 42, which suspended rights to seek asylum since March 2020 on grounds of preventing the spread of Covid-19. The Biden administration has been unveiling measures to replace Title 42, which suspended rights to seek asylum since March 2020 on grounds of preventing the spread of Covid-19.

In Matamoros, across from Brownsville, Texas, migrants arrived steadily on Wednesday, stripping down before descending a steep bank clutching plastic bags filled with clothes. They slowly waded into the river; one man holding a baby in an open suitcase on his head.

On the US side, they put on dry clothing and picked their way

through concertina wire. Many surrendered to authorities, hoping to be released to stay legally while pursuing their cases in backlogged immigration courts, which takes years.

William Contreras of Venezuela said Title 42 was favourable to people of his wracked South American country, having heard that many before him were released in the United States. "What we understand is that they won't be letting anyone else in," said Contreras' friend, Pablo, who declined to give his last name because he planned to cross the border illegally. "That's the reason for our urgency to cross through the border today." The Border Patrol stopped about 10,000 migrants Tuesday, one of its busiest days ever, according to a US official who spoke on condition of anonymity because he was not authorised to speak publicly.

That's nearly double the daily average of about 5,200 in March, the latest publicly available data, and close to the 11,000 that US officials have predicted is the upper limit of a surge they anticipate after Title 42. More than 27,000 people were in US Customs and Border Protection custody, the official said, well above capacity. In March 8,600 were in custody. Border Patrol agents were ordered Wednesday to begin releasing migrants in any border sector that reached 125 per cent of its holding capacity with instructions to report to an immigration office within 60 days. They were also told to start the releases if the average time in custody exceeded 60 hours or if 7,000 migrants were taken into custody across the entire border in any one day.

Israel kills two militants in Gaza

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Gaza City, May 11: Israeli airstrikes in the Gaza Strip killed two militant commanders Thursday, the army said, as the Palestinian death toll from the latest burst of fighting rose to 26.

Rocket fire toward southern Israel continued even as Egypt pressed on with attempts to broker a cease-fire.

It has been the worst bout of fighting between Israel and Palestinian militants in Gaza in months, and among the dead were also women and children.

The conflagration, now in its third day, comes at a time of soaring tensions and spiking violence

over the past year in the occupied West Bank. Early on Thursday, the Israeli military carried out strikes against the Islamic Jihad militant group and said a senior commander in charge of the group's rocket launching force, Ali Ghali, was killed when his apartment was hit.

Later in the day, Israel said it killed another Islamic Jihad commander who was meant to replace Ghali in southern Gaza.

Islamic Jihad confirmed the man, Ahmed Abu Daqqa, was one of its commanders.

The Health Ministry in Gaza said 26 people — including at least 10 civilians — have been killed since the fighting erupted.

War, natural disasters left record 71.1 mn internally displaced: Report

The number of people displaced inside their country at the end of the year because of disasters like floods and famine reached 8.7 million, up by 45 per cent from 2021



ASSOCIATED PRESS

Oslo, May 11: The war in Ukraine helped push the global total of people left internally displaced by conflict or natural disasters to a record high of 71.1 million last year, according to a report released Thursday by the Norwegian Refugee Council's Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre.

By the end of 2022, 5.9 million people had been forced to move inside Ukraine because of Russia's invasion, bringing the global total of people internally displaced by conflict and violence to more than 62 million, an increase of 17 per cent

since 2021. Syria had 6.8 million displaced by conflict after more than a decade of civil war.

The number of people displaced inside their country at the end of the year because of disasters like floods and famine reached 8.7 million, up by 45 per cent from 2021.

The total of 71.1 million internally displaced worldwide was a 20 per cent increase since 2021.

Internal displacement refers to people forced to move inside their own borders and the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre's report didn't take into account those who left for different countries. Following a year when conflict

Internal displacement refers to people forced to move inside their own borders and the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre's report didn't take into account those who left for different countries

raged in Ukraine, Syria, Ethiopia and elsewhere, there has been no respite in 2023.

The United Nations migration agency said this week that 700,000 people have already been internally displaced in a matter of weeks by the conflict in Sudan between the army and a rival paramilitary group.

The Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre cited the La Nina weather phenomenon, which continued for a third consecutive year in 2022, as a major factor in disaster displacements.

It contributed to record levels of flood displacement in Pakistan, Nigeria and Brazil and to the worst drought on record in Somalia, Kenya and Ethiopia, the report said.

of the day quote

We are holding discussions to harmonise e-commerce policy and e-commerce rules under the consumer protection act...While doing so, we will try to ensure that whether a regulator or some other way...Rules that will ensure that the customer is the king

RAJESH KUMAR SINGH | SECY, DPIIT

The major impact of the scrappage policy is expected in the CV segment, especially passenger carriers, as the usage of other vehicles such as two-wheelers, passenger vehicles, etc beyond 15 years would be limited

KINJAL SHAH | VP & CO GROUP HEAD, ICRA CORPORATE RATINGS

2022 was a historic year as we celebrated 100 years of Bosch in India and at the same time it was a year replete with challenges in the market. Despite all odds, we concluded the year with strong performance and positive revenue growth

SOUMITRA BHATTACHARYA | MD, BOSCH LTD

SHORT TAKES

Colliers India to hire about 400 workers

New Delhi: Real estate consultant Colliers India said it will hire around 400 employees this year and is looking to add new services as well as enter into more tier II cities as part of its growth strategy. At present, Colliers India has 3,000 employees. "Colliers India is now one of the top three largest Colliers businesses in the Asia Pacific region," the company said in a statement. Earlier this week, Colliers' global leadership, led by Chief Executive Officer of Real Estate Services Global Chris McLernon, and Chief Executive Officer Asia Pacific John Kenny, visited India. The visit reflects their trust in India's growth story and potential, Colliers India said.

Hindustan Copper plans to raise ₹548cr

New Delhi: State-owned Hindustan Copper Thursday said it plans to raise around ₹548 crore through various financial routes. A proposal in this regard will be taken up at the company's board meeting next week on May 19, 2023. In a regulatory filing, the company said its board will consider the "recommendation for seeking approval of shareholders to raise funds by issue of equity shares through qualified institutional placement method to the extent of 9,69,76,680 equity shares of face value of ₹5 each of the company in one or more tranches".

Siemens net profit up 62% in Mar qtr

New Delhi: Siemens Thursday posted a 61.9 per cent rise in its consolidated net profit from continuing operation to ₹516 crore in the March quarter, mainly on the back of higher revenues. The company follows October to September financial year. "Profit after Tax (consolidated net profit) from continuing operations was at ₹516 crore, an increase of 61.9 per cent over the same period (January to March 2022) last year," a company statement said.

Innokaiz India listed on BSE SME Platform

New Delhi: Leading bourse BSE's small and medium enterprises (SMEs) platform Thursday announced the listing of Innokaiz India, taking the tally of such listed companies on the exchange to 435. Innokaiz India Ltd became the 435th company to get listed on the BSE SME Platform May 11, 2023.



There is absolutely no question of filing for insolvency. Any rumour regarding the same is completely baseless. We have a great relationship with all our partners

AJAY SINGH | CMD, SPICEJET

OIL, GAS DISCOVERED IN 2 ARABIAN SEA BLOCKS

State-owned Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC) has discovered crude oil and natural gas in two blocks in Mumbai offshore, the company said Thursday without giving details of reserves found. The discoveries, which have been named 'Amrit' and 'Moonga', were made in the blocks that the company won in recent open acreage licensing rounds.



RISKY JURISDICTION

Aircraft lessors raise alarm

Lessors and international aircraft owners see India as a risky jurisdiction for aircraft leasing, after the failures of Jet and Kingfisher: SMBC Aviation Capital

REUTERS

New Delhi, May 11: The world's second largest aircraft lessor, SMBC Aviation Capital, has warned that India's decision to block leasing firms from reclaiming Go First planes will jolt the market and spark a confidence crisis, legal papers show.

SMBC, along with firms such as Jackson Square Aviation and Bank of China Aviation, raised the alarm after India's National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT) gave Go Airlines (India) Ltd bankruptcy protection to allow it to revive itself, but barred lessors from repossessing planes.

A boom in traffic in the world's third-biggest aviation market prompted record jet orders but two major airline failures, of Kingfisher Airlines in 2012 and Jet Airways in 2019, have taken some of the shine off the market.

"Lessors and international aircraft owners see India as a risky jurisdiction for aircraft leasing, after the failures of Jet and Kingfisher," SMBC told the tribunal ahead of a hearing Friday where it seeks to quash Go First's bankruptcy protection.

"The admission of the petition (seeking protection) will further shake confidence of the international aviation industry," it added in a filing to the tribunal that has not been made public but was reviewed by Reuters.

India is a critical market for lessors, in which sale-and-lease-back deals accounted for 75% of plane deliveries from 2018 to 2022, compared with a global average of 35%, data from aviation ana-



2 more lessors move NCLAT against Go First's insolvency

New Delhi: Two more aircraft lessors -- GY Aviation and SFV Aircraft Holding -- Thursday moved National Company Law Appellate Tribunal (NCLAT) against the order passed by the NCLT allowing Go First's voluntary plea to initiate insolvency proceedings. SMBC Aviation Capital has already moved NCLAT Wednesday, hours after the Delhi-based Principal bench of the National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT) admitted Go First's plea to initiate the insolvency resolution process against the airline. Ireland-based GY Aviation is the largest lessor of Go First with 9 aircraft, while SFV Aircraft Holdings has leased out one aircraft to the Wadia group-owned company. SMBC Aviation Capital has 5 aircraft on lease with Go First. Now the total number of lessors before the NCLAT against Go First's insolvency has become three.

lytics firm Cirium shows.

Go First and SMBC, which also called the Indian airline's insolvency filing a "smokescreen" to defraud creditors and lessors, did not respond to a request for comment.

The lessors' anger comes as Prime Minister Narendra Modi touts India's emergence as an aviation powerhouse.

New airports are springing up rapidly nationwide, and airlines such as IndiGo and Tata Group's Air India are expanding aggressively with new, record plane orders.

The moratorium on the Go First planes will also weigh on new deals, forcing domestic carriers to shell out higher deposits for leased planes, or higher monthly rents, an

BIZ BUZZ

Indian Bank Cuttack Zonal Office launches new premises

Cuttack: The new premises of Indian Bank Cuttack Zonal Office was inaugurated by Ashwani Kumar, Executive Director of the bank in the presence of M Aruna, FGM and Parikhit Dasmohapatra, Zonal Head, Cuttack Zone. The officers and employees of Zonal Office of the bank were present on this occasion. Indian Bank has a network of 66 branches covering 6 districts namely Cuttack, Dhenkanal, Jajpur, Bhadrak, Balasore and Kendrapara under this zone.



Businesses having turnover of over ₹5cr to generate e-invoice

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, May 11: Businesses with turnover of over ₹5 crore will have to generate electronic or e-invoice for B2B transactions with effect from August 1.

Currently, businesses with turnover of ₹10 crore and above are required to generate e-invoice for all B2B transactions.

The finance ministry through a notification dated May 10 has notified a reduction in threshold for e-invoicing. Effective August 1, any taxpayer with turnover ex-

ceeding ₹5 crore should raise e-invoices for B2B supplies.

Deloitte India Partner Leader Indirect Tax Mahesh Jaising said with this announcement, scope of MSMEs under e-invoicing will be expanded and they will need to implement e-invoicing.

For companies e-invoicing is a boon rather than a bane as suppliers who are e-invoicing compliant result in proper flow of input tax credit and reduce the churn around credit issues, Jaising added. AMRG & Associates Senior Partner Rajat Mohan said

phased implementation of e-invoicing has resulted in reduced disruptions, improved compliance and increased revenue.

E-invoicing was initially implemented for large companies with turnover of more than ₹500 crore, and within 3 years the threshold has now been lowered to ₹5 crore.

Inclusion of MSME sector in the e-invoicing regime would benefit the overall business ecosystem by reducing costs, rationalising errors, ensuring faster invoice processing, and also limiting commercial disputes in the long term, Mohan added.

First exclusive egg store in Odisha KENKO Agstra by OVO Farm opens

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, May 11: With a vision of catering high quality nutritious eggs to the egg lovers of Bhubaneswar under one roof, OVO Farm has launched its flagship egg retail store, KENKO Agstra at IRC Village, Bhubaneswar which is Odisha's first exclusive egg retail store. The 1,000 sq ft unique egg store will cater high quality eggs such as high protein eggs, brown eggs, and selenium rich eggs which are directly sourced fresh from the advanced and fully-automated technology facility of OVO Farm where not only the quality but the hygiene of the eggs are also ensured. The company also introduced its Blockchain technology which will allow customers to trace the products through QR code on the pack ensuring the right product is delivered to them.

The store was inaugurated by Chief Guest Asit Tripathy, Chairman, WODC and Dr Yeddula Vijay, Director, AH & VS in the presence of Soumendra Mishra and Samarendra Mishra, Founders of OVO Farm.

KENKO Agstra is going to cater products of 6 categories including Hi Pro, Brown, Immuno, MoreOVor and On-Day which will be available in packs of 6, 10 and 20 eggs. This store would serve customers directly, providing them with a range of nutritious and fresh egg options straight from the farm. All

Wheat output may cross govt estimate of 112.18mn tonne



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, May 11: India's wheat production may surpass the government's estimate of record 112.18 million tonnes in the 2022-23 crop year (July-June) on a likely jump in crop yields in major growing states despite inclement weather affecting the grain quality in some parts, Agriculture Commissioner PK Singh said Thursday.

Weeks before the untimely rains, the government in its second estimate released in February projected wheat output at 112.18 million tonnes for the 2022-23 crop year.

The previous record in wheat production was 109.59 million tonnes in 2020-21 crop year.

"Overall, the wheat production is likely to surpass the estimate of 112.18 million tonne on account of better crop yields," Singh told PTI.

The crop yields have improved in Punjab, Haryana and Uttar Pradesh even as the untimely rainfall during the harvesting stage in

the March-April period has caused damage to the grain in terms of lustre loss and high moisture, he said.

The yields have improved on account of climate resistance wheat varieties, which the government has been promoting in the last five years, he added.

Singh said although unseasonal rains have caused damage to the crop in some parts of the wheat-growing states leading to quality loss, the rains have boosted the prospects in areas where late-sown varieties were planted.

Wheat production had declined marginally to 107.74 million tonnes in the previous year because of heatwave in some states.

Wheat was sown in 343.23 lakh hectares in the rabi season of the 2022-23 crop year (July-June).

For the country's food security purpose, the government has procured 25.2 million tonnes of wheat directly from the farmers so far in the ongoing 2023-24 marketing year (April-March).

Duty waived on imports of sunoil, soyoil until June

REUTERS

Mumbai, May 11: India Thursday clarified that duty-free imports of soyoil and sunflower oil shipped before March 31 would be allowed until the end of June, after hundreds of thousands of cargoes were stuck at ports over confusion over import rules.

Earlier this year, the world's biggest importer of vegetable oils scrapped a duty-free imports quota of 2 million tonnes of crude sunflower oil and soyoil for this fiscal which started April 1.

But the move stuck cargoes of around 90,000 tonnes at Indian ports and another 180,000 tonnes in transit that were loaded before the government deadline of March 31, dealers said.

"A few shipments were stuck at ports for the past few weeks could now enter in to the country after this clarification," said Sandeep Bajoria, CEO Sunvin Group, a vegetable oil brokerage and consultancy firm.

India imports soyoil mainly from Argentina, Brazil and the United States and sunoil from Russia and Ukraine. The government notification would provide relief to importers, but the imports would dampen local oilseed prices and squeeze farmer income, said BV Mehta, executive director of Solvent Extractors' Association of India.



eggs sold in the store would be sourced directly from OVO Farm's own facilities, ensuring that customers receive the highest quality products.

Speaking about the future plans of KENKO Agstra Soumendra Mishra, Founder of OVO Farm said, "Kenko Agstra is our flagship store. With our exclusive outlet we want more people to have access to fresh, high-quality eggs directly from the farm, produced using innovative and sustainable farming practices. In the future, we look forward to open up stores in every locality of Bhubaneswar and also are planning to expand the operations to Kolkata and other cities in India in the near future."

‘India will soon have 85K talent pool in semiconductor space’

SEMICONDUCTOR MARKET IN INDIA IS PROJECTED TO REACH \$64 BILLION BY 2026

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, May 11: Minister of State for Electronics and IT Rajeev Chandrasekhar Thursday said that in the semiconductor space, the country will soon have a talent pool of 85,000 who will not only create innovative designs and solutions for the country but also for the world.

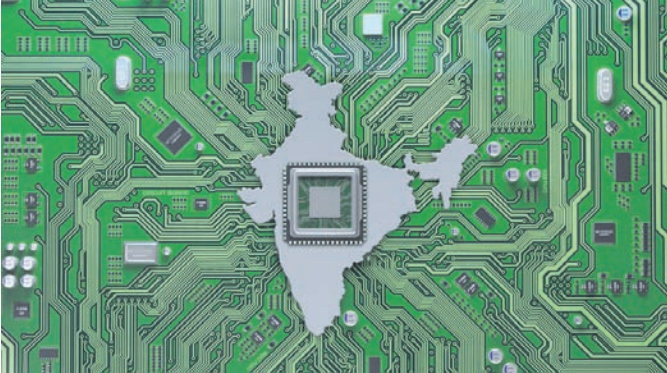
Addressing an event organised by the non-profit Public Affairs Forum of India (PAFI), the minister said that India's 'Techade' is changing the narrative of the country being an IT & ITES hub.

"Our digital economy pie has

transitioned from a unipolar prism of IT & ITES to one that consists of almost every activity in the digital economy space that the world is pursuing," he told the audience.

The minister also said that in the space of semiconductor, in just 14 months, the country has not only created opportunities in manufacturing and design but with brand new curriculum in place, we will soon deliver a brand new 85,000 talent pool not only for India but also for the world.

"What China took 30 years to achieve, our government and country want to implement in one decade. The focus has been on mov-



ing 'New India' from being an outlier on the fringe in the Global Value Chains of electronics to be-

coming a serious player," Chandrasekhar emphasised.

On the Digital India Act (DIA),

Our digital economy pie has transitioned from a unipolar prism of IT & ITES to one that consists of almost every activity in the digital economy space that the world is pursuing

RAJEEV CHANDRASEKHAR | MOS, ELECTRONICS AND IT

the minister said it is going to supersede the IT Act, which has gone into the pre-consultation phase.

"We have already had some fruitful discussions. We want to be transparent and collaborative about

it," he told the audience.

"The laws and framework of policies we are creating are not just for today but for the next decade. And for that we want consultations with everybody, from consumers to companies, to anyone who has a point of view," the minister added.

India's semiconductor market is projected to reach \$64 billion by 2026 and Chandrasekhar will meet and encourage startups, next-generation innovators, chip designers and business leaders to invest in the semiconductor sector at an event as part of a series at IIT Delhi May 12.

Royals ride on Y2 royalty

YUZVENDRA CHAHAL (187 WICKETS) ECLIPSES DWAYNE BRAVO (183) TO BECOME THE ALL-TIME LEADING WICKET-TAKER IN THE IPL

YASHASVI JAISWAL HITS FASTEST FIFTY (13 BALLS) IN THE HISTORY OF IPL, BETTERING THE PREVIOUS BEST OF KL RAHUL & PAT CUMMINS (14 BALLS EACH)

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kolkata, May 11: Yashasvi Jaiswal (98 n o, 47b, 12x4, 5x6) continued his sensational run in the IPL by smashing the fastest fifty – 13 balls – in tournament history after Yuzvendra Chahal became the all-time leading wicket-taker as Rajasthan Royals cruised to a nine-wicket win over Kolkata Knight Riders to resurrect their playoff hopes here Thursday.



Chahal became IPL's leading wicket-taker before completing a brilliant 4/25 as RR restricted KKR to a below-par 149/8 at the Eden Gardens

On a day KKR batters struggled to time the ball, 21-year-old Jaiswal showed the way by bringing up fastest fifty in the history of IPL. With the modest chase, Jaiswal remained two runs shy of a century as RR cantered to victory 13.1 overs. Skipper Sanju Samson (48 n o, 29b, 2x4, 5x6) gave fine support to the southpaw as the duo shared an unbroken match-winning partnership of 121 runs off just 69 balls.

The win with 41 balls to spare also took them to third spot (12 points from 12 matches), giving a massive boost to their net run-rate (0.633) as the playoff race heats up. It is all but over for KKR who slipped to seventh place (10 points, 12 matches).

Jaiswal made his intention clear in the first over itself when KKR skipper Nitish Rana made a bold move to bowl himself. Jaiswal 26



runs from the over which set the tone for their chase as RR virtually sealed the issue scoring 78/1 inside powerplay.

To pile on the KKR misery Sunil Narine dropped an easy catch when Samson was on 16. From then on, the duo took their side home with much ease.

On a day RR dished out an eye-grabbing fielding display, Chahal (187 wickets) became the all-time leading wicket-taker of the IPL when he struck off his second ball to dismiss KKR skipper Rana (22) in the 11th over.

Chahal's breakthrough came just when KKR looked to step up after a pathetic start when two astonishing catches of Shimron Hetmyer and Sandeep Sharma set the tone.

Both came in Trent Boult's successive overs as the Kiwi leftarm pacer returned with 2/15 from his three overs on his return.

After an expensive second over when he leaked 15 runs, Chahal came back in the death overs and dismissed KKR top scorer Venkatesh Iyer (57, 42b, 2x4, 4x6) and Shardul Thakur (1) in four balls. He ended his spell dismissing the Rinku Singh (16) in the penultimate over to also become the lead-

ing wicket-taker this season (21).

Put in on a dry Eden wicket, KKR frontline batters came a cropper, as Iyer held the fort and returned to form with a fighting fifty. Andre Russell (10) failed to make it big after he was promoted to No 5 and fell to KM Asif (1/34).

KKR, who were 58/2 after nine overs, looked to seize the momentum after taking a strategic time out in the 10th over. KKR looked on course for a decent total before Chahal triggered a mid-innings collapse.

BRIEF SCORES: KKR 149/8 (Venkatesh Iyer 57, Nitish Rana 22; Yuzvendra Chahal 4/25, Trent Boult 2/15) lost to RR 151/1 (Yashasvi Jaiswal 98 n o, Sanju Samson 48 n o) by 9 wickets.



Divya-Sarabjot pair bags gold at ISSF WC

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Baku (Azerbaijan), May 11: India's Divya TS and Sarabjot Singh emerged third-time lucky as a pair, winning gold in the 10m air pistol mixed team event of the ISSF World Cup here Thursday.

Shooting on competition day two, the Indian pair who had finished fifth in two earlier World Cup stages in Cairo and Bhopal respectively, broke through with a fine 581 to top the 55-team qualification, assuring them of a medal and a spot in the gold medal match.

Up against Serbian legends Damir Mikec and Zorana Arunovic in the most important match, the



Indians held their own to pull off a nerve-racking 16-14 win and finish top of the podium.

It was a second ISSF World Cup gold for Sarabjot in back-to-back tournaments, having won the individual air pistol in Bhopal in March, while for Divya it was a first senior medal at this level. Ismail Keles and Simal Yilmaz of Turkey won bronze.

INDIA SECOND

India are placed second in the medal tally with one gold and a bronze medal as China move to the top with one gold and a silver to their name so far. There are six more gold medals to be decided over the next three days of competition.

PCB threatens to move out of Asian sports body

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Karachi, May 11: In a desperate bid to host some matches of the Asia Cup in Pakistan, the PCB is now trying to convince the Asian Cricket Council to allocate just four first round games in Pakistan or else they would have no option but to pull-out of continental body.

PCB chairman Najam Sethi's 'Hybrid Model' of Pakistan playing its home games apart from India encounter, in their own country, has been rejected by other member nations. PCB, in turn, has rejected the idea of hosting Asia Cup games in Sri Lanka.

"Yes, Najam Sethi as part of the plan B of the hybrid model proposed by us for the Asia Cup has informed the ACC this week in Dubai that PCB would be satisfied hosting four games at home," a reliable source close to the cricket board said.

He said Sethi had also conveyed to the ACC in Dubai that if even this plan B of the PCB was rejected by ACC members then Pakistan would not play in the Asia Cup and also withdraw from the ACC.

Sethi, according to the source, has proposed a Pakistan versus Nepal match and Afghanistan versus Bangladesh, Afghanistan vs Sri Lanka and Sri Lanka v Bangladesh matches in Pakistan.

Inter beat Milan 2-0, inch closer to final



ASSOCIATED PRESS

Milan, May 11: Inter Milan overpowered AC Milan early and held on to win the first leg of their Champions League semifinal derby 2-0, leaving the Nerazzurri on the brink of a return to European football's showpiece event for the first time since 2010.

Edin Dzeko and Henrikh Mkhitaryan scored two goals in three minutes to put Inter firmly in command and the visitors could have added more in a dominant first-half performance.

The second leg is Tuesday, in what will surely be another special European night at San Siro. The winner will face either Real Madrid or Manchester City, who drew their first leg 1-1.

There was an electric atmosphere at San Siro for the semifinal

that had been dubbed the "Euroderby" in Italy. The two clubs met in the Champions League last four stage 20 years ago — with Milan winning on away goals and going on to beat Juventus in the final for their sixth of seven titles.

The match was expected to be cagey and tight but Inter got off to the perfect start as they took the lead in the eighth minute. Hakan Calhanoglu whipped in a corner from the left and Dzeko managed to get in front of Davide Calabria to hook a volley into the top right corner.

And Inter doubled their lead just three minutes later. Federico Dimarco's low pass was wisely left by Lautaro Martinez for Mkhitaryan to lift over Mike Maigian. Milan had only conceded one goal in their past six Champions League matches.

India clubbed with Australia, Uzbek, Syria

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Doha, May 11: India were Thursday drawn in a tough Group B of the 2023 AFC Asian Cup alongside the continent's heavyweights Australia, Syria and Uzbekistan here. The draw was conducted at the Qatar Opera House in the Qatari capital.

The Blue Tigers, who are placed at 101 in the FIFA rankings, will be playing the Asian Cup for the fifth time. India's opponents in the tournament proper, Australia are ranked 29th in the world, Uzbekistan are 74th, and Syria occupy the 90th position.

The top two teams from each group will directly qualify for the Round of 16, while the four best third-placed teams will join them in the knockouts to make up the numbers.

India were eliminated in the groups stage in the last edition, despite kicking off their campaign with a win against Thailand.

Groupings

Group A: Qatar, China PR, Tajikistan, Lebanon; **Group B:** Australia, Uzbekistan, Syria, India; **Group C:** IR Iran, United Arab Emirates, Hong Kong, Palestine; **Group D:** Japan, Indonesia, Iraq, Vietnam; **Group E:** Korea Republic, Malaysia, Jordan, Bahrain; **Group F:** Saudi Arabia, Thailand, Kyrgyz Republic, Oman.

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