



## NUSHRRAT'S TROUBLES

Actor Nushrrat Bharuccha says she was earlier rejected by many filmmakers for not 'looking good' on posters

LEISURE P2



## ELECTIONS IN TURKEY

Turks vote in one of the most consequential elections in the country's 100-year history that could end Erdogan's 20-year rule

INTERNATIONAL P10



## WRESTLERS LAUD IOA

Agitating wrestlers demanding the ouster of Brij Bhushan praise the IOA for stepping in

SPORTS P12

## K'TAKA DGP SOOD NEXT CBI DIRECTOR

AGENCIES

New Delhi, May 14: Praveen Sood, an IPS officer from the 1986 batch of the Karnataka cadre, has been appointed as the Director of the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) by a high-level selection committee.

Currently serving as the Director General of Police (DGP) in Karnataka, Sood brings a wealth of experience and expertise to his new role.

The selection committee, comprising Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Chief Justice of India DY Chandrachud, and the leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha, Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury, unanimously agreed on Sood's appointment as the next CBI Director.

The decision was made during a meeting held Saturday evening. The appointment comes as the tenure of the current CBI Director Subodh Kumar Jaiswal is set to conclude May 25.



Praveen Sood's impressive career spans several decades, during which he has served in various key positions within the police force. His appointment as the CBI Director is a testament to his dedication, professionalism, and track record in maintaining law and order. With his extensive experience in the IPS and his deep understanding of the intricacies of the Indian legal system, Sood is well-equipped to lead the country's premier investigative agency.

## IRREGULAR by MANJUL



Nobody died. This mourning has been declared by news anchors after Karnataka election results

WEATHER		BHUB	CTK
TEMP	MAX	39.4°C	38.5°C
	MIN	26.2°C	27.0°C
	Humidity	74%	74%
	Rainfall	Nil	Nil
	Forecast	Light to moderate rain	

## SHORT TAKES

### BSF diffuses IED planted by Maoists

**Malkangiri:** Hard on the heels of a major operation against the Maoists in Kalahandi, Border Security Force (BSF) personnel Sunday diffused an IED at Sudhakanda forest in Malkangiri district and foiled another bid of the red rebels to target the jawans. A major tragedy was averted as the security personnel detected the explosives planted by the ultras. The explosives were planted near a culvert and the jawans of 142 battalion of the BSF successfully diffused three kilograms of IED after getting information. Recently the Special Intelligence Wing (SIW) had conducted a successful operation in Kalahandi by killing three Maoists after an encounter recently.



**WARTIME BONHOMIE:** Germany's Chancellor Olaf Scholz (second left) and Ukraine's President Volodymyr Zelenskyy (centre) walk past soldiers during an official reception with military honours at the chancellery in Berlin, Germany, Sunday. Zelenskyy arrived in Berlin early Sunday for talks with German leaders about further arms deliveries to help his country fend off the Russian invasion and rebuild what's been destroyed by more than a year of devastating conflict

## STF nabs 3 for sharing OTPs with Pak agents

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, May 14:** The Special Task Force (STF) of state Crime Branch has unearthed a racket involved in sharing one-time passwords (OTPs) and selling mule bank accounts created using SIM cards registered with fake names to Pakistani intelligence operatives and other cyber criminals in exchange for financial favours.

In this connection, the STF has arrested three persons identified as Soumya Pattanaik, 19, of Sujapur in Jajpur, Pathani Samant Lenka, 35, of Itamati area and Saroj Kumar Nayak alias Amit, 26, of Dasapalla area in Nayagarh. The accused Pathani Samant works as a faculty in an ITI college, sources said.

Following a tip-off, an STF team Friday conducted separate raids at different locations in Jajpur and Nayagarh districts and arrested the trio on the charges of selling OTPs and mule accounts to the anti-national elements in Pakistan and India.

There is an illegal market for illegal SIMs and mule bank accounts which mainly operate through different groups on WhatsApp and Telegram. The accused persons came into contact with the Pakistani agents through these WhatsApp and Telegram groups.

"The accused used to procure huge numbers of SIMs in others' name and later sell the OTPs



(linked/generated using the SIMs) to various clients including some Pakistani Intelligence Operatives (PIO)/ISI agents in Pakistan as well as in India," revealed STF in a press note Sunday.

They were paid by the Indian agents of clients based in Pakistan through UPI payments mode. The OTPs were used to create fake accounts on social media like WhatsApp, Facebook, and Instagram, and also for opening email accounts with an Indian identity for pursuing anti-India activities, STF IG JN Pankaj said.

Gullible people will think that such accounts are owned by an Indian but are actually operated from Pakistan. The accused persons were also in touch with a woman PIO agent who was arrested in Rajasthan last year. "These social media platforms then will be used for various kinds of anti-India activities like spying, communication with terrorists, radicalisation, running anti-India propaganda, fuelling

anti-India/divisive sentiments on social media, sextortion, honey-trapping etc. As these accounts are registered/linked on Indian mobile numbers, people find it trustworthy," STF IG Pankaj added.

The anti-national elements also open accounts on online shopping sites like Amazon, Flipkart etc which are used to supply items to terrorists and anti-India elements in Kashmir and other areas of the country.

The cyber criminals also use the mule accounts sold through these illegal groups to commit different cyber, financial and other crimes. The STF arrested the accused persons by registering a case (10/23) under various sections of the IPC and IT act. The STF seized 19 costly mobile phones (including Apple iPhone), 47 SIM cards, 47 SIM cards, 61 ATM cards and 23 SIM covers. They were produced before the SDJM court, Bhubaneswar that sent the accused to judicial custody Saturday.

## KHARGE TO PICK K'TAKA CM

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Bangalore, May 14:** Newly elected Congress MLAs in Karnataka Sunday authorised party president Mallikarjun Kharge to pick the next chief minister, party sources said.

The Congress Legislature Party, which met at a private hotel here Sunday evening, passed a unanimous resolution authorising the party chief to pick its leader. Earlier, the Congress central observers, along with AICC General

Secretary (Organisation) KC Venugopal held a meeting with Leader of Opposition in the outgoing Assembly Siddaramaiah and Karnataka Pradesh Congress Committee president DK Shivakumar.

Congress president Kharge had deputed former Maharashtra chief minister Sushil Kumar Shinde, AICC general secretary Jitendra Singh and former AICC general secretary Deepak Babaria as observers for the election of the CLP leader.

## Cyclone Mocha makes landfall

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Dhaka, May 14:** Super cyclone Mocha made landfall along the Myanmar-Bangladesh coasts Sunday after intensifying into the equivalent of a category-five storm, causing extensive damage to the southeastern coastlines and forcing the evacuation of over five lakh people in low lying areas.

The Cyclone Mocha, one of the most powerful cyclones seen in the country in nearly two decades - made landfall shortly after midday on the Teknaf shorelines before making its way through the Naf River that divides Bangladesh and Myanmar.

The powerful wind uprooted trees and damaged roofs of several houses in Teknaf and Saint Martin's Island, which is situated about 9-km south of the tip of Cox's Bazar-Teknaf peninsula. There was heavy rain along with strong winds in St. Martin's, an eight-



square-kilometre coral-rich island located in the Bay of Bengal.

The 'eye' or the center point of the cyclone made its landfall shortly after midday Sunday on the Teknaf shorelines, coming through the Naf river, ahead of its anticipated time," Bangladesh Met office spokesman AKM Nazmul Huda told PTI.

He said the tail or the rest of the severe storm, which was categorised as a very dangerous category-five cyclone, might take more time to cross the coastlines.

Citing sources, the Dhaka Tribune newspaper reported that St Martin's Island, Teknaf Sadar and several other coastal areas have been affected by strong winds which uprooted trees, and blown away roofs of houses.

Administrative chief of Teknaf sub-district of Cox's Bazar Mohammad Quamruzzaman said the wind was blowing at a speed of over 200 kilometres per hour in Teknaf and its southernmost part Shahpori Dip along the Bay of Bengal.

## Tracking lost cell phones soon to be hassle-free

GOVT TO ROLL OUT PAN-INDIA LOST MOBILE BLOCKING, TRACKING SYSTEM MAY 17

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, May 14:** Losing your mobile can give you a harrowing time in today's digitised and data-driven world. Once misplaced, as we all know, the chance of retrieval of the essential gadget is very slim. More than the lost handset, the precious data within, if not backed up, seems impossible to recover.

However, the government has rolled up its sleeve to come to the rescue of the unfortunate lot who misplace their mobiles.

Now, people will be able to block and track their lost or stolen mobile phones across India with the

rollout of a tracking system by the government this week, a senior government official said.

Technology development body Centre for Department of Telematics (CDoT) has been running the pilot of the Central Equipment Identity Register (CEIR) system in some of the telecom circles, including Delhi, Maharashtra, Karnataka, and North East region, and the system is now ready for pan-India deployment, a DoT official, who did not wish to be identified, told PTI.

CEIR system is scheduled for pan-India launch May 17, the official said. When contacted, CEO and Chairman Project Board at CDoT



Apple already has a system to track lost mobile phones with the help of Apple ID but major issues have been around Android mobile phones

With the new system in place, it will be futile to use stolen mobile phones

Rajkumar Upadhyay said, "The system is ready and now it will be deployed across India in this quarter. This will enable people to block and track their lost mobile phones. CDoT has been able to add features to check the use of cloned mobile phones across all telecom networks. The government has made it mandatory to disclose IMEI - a

15-digit unique numeric identifier - of mobile devices before their sale in India. The mobile networks will have access to the list of approved IMEI numbers which will check the entry of any unauthorised mobile phones on their network.

Telecom operators and CEIR system will have visibility into IMEI number of the device and

mobile number linked to it, and the information is being used in some states to track your lost or stolen mobiles through CEIR.

One of the common practices is that miscreants change IMEI number of stolen mobile phones which prevents tracking and blocking of such handsets. It was a national security issue. The CEIR will be able to block any cloned mobile phones on the network with the help of various databases, Upadhyay said.

The basic purpose of CEIR is to ease reporting of stolen and lost mobiles and block the use of mobiles all over the country. Recently, Karnataka Police recovered and handed over more than 2,500 lost mobile phones to their owners using the CEIR system.



# leisure



## IGLESIAS CANCELS GIG FOR PNEUMONIA

Singing sensation Enrique Iglesias, cancelled his performance at the Tecate Emblema festival due to pneumonia, as doctors advised him to rest, disappointing fans who were expecting him to close the first night in Mexico City, reports *Deadline*.

## BAILEY SHARES BEYONCE'S ADVICE ON ANTI-RACISM

Rising Hollywood star Halle Bailey appreciates Beyoncé's backing as she ventures through the entertainment industry. Beyoncé, an esteemed figure, advises her to ignore social media comments, promoting mental well-being. Bailey, a 23-year-old artist, is ready to mesmerise viewers as Ariel in Disney's *The Little Mermaid* revival, reports *mirror.co.uk*.



### FORTUNE FORECAST

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

**ARIES**  
You may be alone, but not necessarily lonely. You may want to listen to your inner voice, and express your true self creatively. Spend the evening with a loved one who can hear the music in your silence too, suggests Ganesha.

**TAURUS**  
Today, you may experience the juxtaposition of pleasure and pain. Household tasks may weigh you down around afternoon. Later in the day, you will be able to achieve whatever you desire solely on account of your determination and mental strength. Pleasure awaits in the warmth and company of your soul mate, says Ganesha.

**GEMINI**  
If you are into retail business, planetary positions indicate today is a day for bumper sales. You will set records in making profits. After work, you may want to take your beloved out shopping. Though it may burn a hole in your pocket, the returns you get once you reach home will be worth every penny!

**CANCER**  
Ganesha says that you will carve out your path for progress. You will get respect and recognition from people. Business rivals and illness may bother you. Beware of enemies' actions. Your alertness will thwart their designs.

**LEO**  
You will get good co-operation from your colleagues and subordinates. In your personal life also you will gain the support of your spouse and your friends. Other people will be accommodating of your problems and will try to solve them for you. Your expenses may increase, leading to some financial worries, says Ganesha.

**VIRGO**  
An easy-going day full of fun and light moments will help you vent all that pressure built up inside you. Ganesha predicts a progressive and profitable day for you. Expect to honour invitations to social events or even parties.

**LIBRA**  
Ganesha says that you will try to enhance your skill regarding new technological inventions and will want to learn about the same in your spare time. Ganesha says that if you wish to gain success you need to first leave your ego behind. Only then will you be able to stride ahead on the path to progress.

**SCORPIO**  
Don't put off cultivating healthy eating habits, says Ganesha. You should do better to control over-indulging in food as it may lead to obesity. Ganesha advises you to stick to a healthy lifestyle, especially when it comes to meals.

**SAGITTARIUS**  
Life is bubbling within you and you shall be in a hyper-elevated state of bliss today. Your high-spirits and energy will inspire you to perform at your best. Moreover, your inner voice will be loud and bellowing. Make the most of this super day, says Ganesha.

**CAPRICORN**  
Things may just fall in to your lap today. You will help those in need but will get extremely upset when the outcome is not as per your expectations, feels Ganesha. It is not an encouraging sight and it will affect your confidence adversely. But, you are over-reacting, as these disappointments are not as big as they seem. Keep your chin up and get ready for a new tomorrow.

**AQUARIUS**  
You want to spread peace and joy all around, and today you may achieve that. You, however, may have to sacrifice your own preferences and interests to ensure that the problems get solved. It is a noble thing to play the role of peace maker, but people may take you for granted, feels Ganesha. You may feel that you are leading by example, but turn back, probably nobody is following you.

**PISCES**  
Take one cautious step at a time today, says Ganesha. You will discuss intimate matters at home and official matters at work but be careful about whom you trust and deception from someone close might lead to worry and stress in the future. Even though you are an emotional person, lay onus on working with your head over your heart today as people might try to take advantage of your nature and step on your shoulder, feels Ganesha.

## Loyola shines at ICSE, ISC exams

**Bhubaneswar:** The City-based Loyola School achieved almost 100 per cent success rate in the ICSE and ISC examinations results that were announced Sunday. School's Ayush Nanda and Preetika Mishra scored 99.2 per cent and are school topper in the ICSE exam. In ISC Bio-Science, Aadyasha Panigrahi secured 95.75%, while Sumanta Kumar Dutta scored 96.75 per cent in ISC Pure Science. In ISC Arts,



Archita Sarangi scored 96.5 per cent while in ISC Commerce Komal Periwai went home with 89.5 per cent marks. According to the information, 213 students from the school appeared for the ICSE exam and 212 passed the exam. Similarly, in ISC 72 students appeared and all passed. School Principal Fr. Victor F Misquith, SJ congratulated all the students for the stupendous success.

## Nushrrat opens up on 'No.1' concept

**Mumbai:** Nushrrat Bharucha, who gained recognition with her debut in *Pyaar Ka PUNCHAMA*, has been cast in the recently released pan-India film *Chatrapathi* alongside Bellamkonda Sreenivas. She mentioned that over the past few years, she has been exposed to a lot of content from the south and was captivated by the world of cinema.

backed by good work. She said, "I have been told that 'you won't look good on posters'. Imagine, are they making films or just posters? You can never sell a film only on poster value. So yes, I do hear a lot of these lingos and languages and this is why maybe I like working with new people." Meanwhile, Nushrrat was recently seen in a cameo in *Tu Jhoothi hai Makkar*. Apart from *Chatrapathi*, she also has *Akelli* and *Chorri 2* in the pipeline.

The *Dream Girl* actress, when asked whether she believes in fighting for the top slot, said, "You are asking about being number one, there are also terms like Top 5 and Top 10. I don't understand what does that even mean. An actor either fits a part or doesn't. You have these girls and you check who works better. You can't go to these top 5 and cast among them. Honestly, I am not in any race, nor want to be on any list."

She believed a film's success is not just about posters but



## Sara's Kedarnath visit makes her nostalgic

**Mumbai:** Sara Ali Khan is a well-known and talented young actress in the Indian film sector. In addition to her acting profession, she is a passionate traveller and has journeyed to several places across the globe. Nevertheless, Kedarnath, Uttarakhand, has a unique significance for her. Recently, the actress posted another post from Kedarnath on her social media account. Sunday, Sara took to her Instagram account and shared the clip from her Kedarnath visit. In the video, she is seen saying, "I shot right here, and I sat here, and I was eating Maggi, and I looked there and said 'Sharam nahi aati tumhe,' and I shot a song right here." After that, she proceeded to another spot and exclaimed, "This is the same aunty I took a photo with."

The *Atrangi Re* actress then proceeds to display her lodging and indulges in paratha and rajma. It appears that she is having a great time! In the caption, she expressed, "Some days I wish I could go back in life. Not to change anything, but to feel a few things twice... But I guess today's moments are tomorrow's memories."

Several fans remembered Sushant Singh Rajput in the comments section. For the unversed, Sara acted in *Kedarnath* alongside late actor Sushant Singh Rajput. The Abhishek Kapoor film was released in 2018.



## LIFE IS MEANT TO BE LEARNED: KALKI

**Mumbai:** Actress Kalki Koechlin, known for her unconventional acting roles, possesses a unique ability to instill each character with her own touch, emphasizes the importance of maintaining a harmonious work-life balance.

Kalki is currently residing in Goa with her daughter Sappho and partner Guy Hershberg. She shares insights into her life in Goa and reflects on the joys and challenges of motherhood.

The *Gully Boy* actress says, "I don't think money and career are everything. Life is meant to be learned. When you don't learn, you stagnate. My work pace has slowed down a bit since I now have a daughter and we live in Goa. It's a choice I have made. I don't want to be as busy as I used to be. I want to strike a healthy work-life balance. I am doing a lot of writing, theater, and other performances that keep me active and satiate my creative needs. It's important for me to be creative in some form or another."

Kalki will be seen next in *Goldfish* with Deepti Naval and *Kho Gaye Hum Kahan* with Siddhant Chaturvedi.

### FUN post

#### PEANUTS



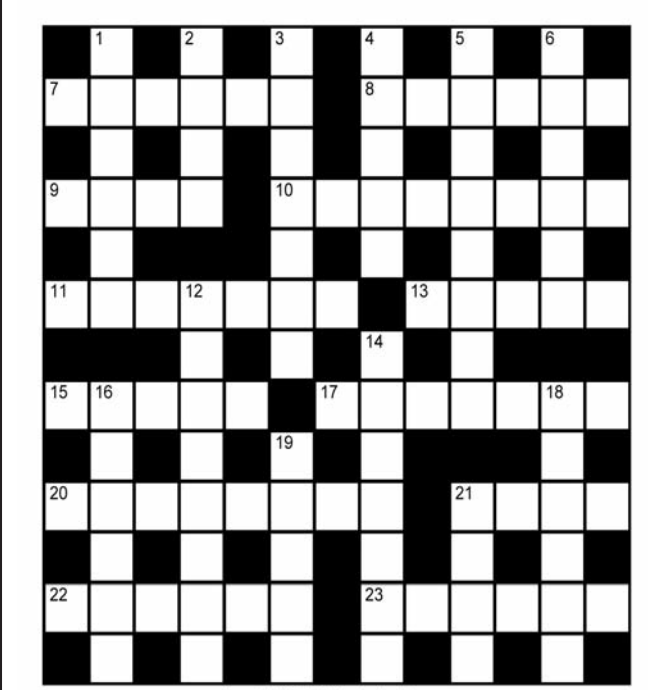
#### CALVIN AND HOBBS



#### BREVITY



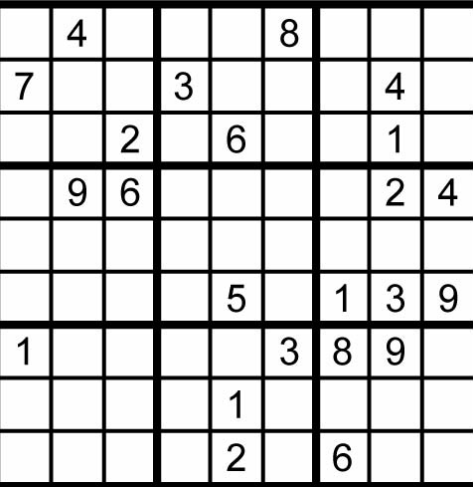
#### CROSSWORD



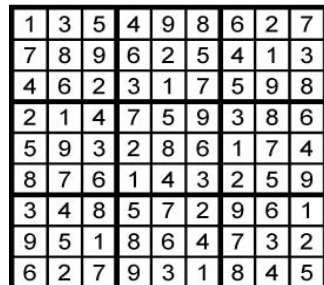
- Across**
- 7 Dense
  - 8 Ancient Egyptian city
  - 9 Ivory source
  - 10 Pitiful
  - 11 Ship's officer
  - 13 Taste or touch, e.g.
  - 15 Sherlock's word
  - 17 Locksmith's request
  - 20 Sticky insect trap
  - 21 Cast a ballot
  - 22 Alpine abode
  - 23 Summer drink (3,3)
- Down**
- 1 Sudden
  - 2 Pochard or eider, e.g.
  - 3 Evening worship service
  - 4 Articulate
  - 5 Final resting place
  - 6 Einstein, for one
  - 12 Paper starter (4,4)
  - 14 Enlistee
  - 16 Unclean
  - 18 Stretcher, of sorts
  - 19 Ill will
  - 21 Aspect

#### SUDOKU

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



#### SOLUTIONS



CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW

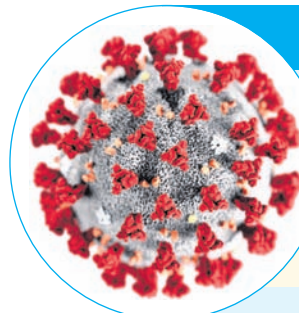


# downtown



## BUDDING ARTISTE

A girl performs during a dance competition at Souchana Bhawan in Bhubaneswar, Sunday



## COVID-19 TRACKER

	INFECTED	RECOVERED	DEAD
World	68,81,88,997	66,05,85,929	68,73,799
India	4,49,78,478	4,44,28,427	5,31,753
Odisha	13,36,304	13,26,915	9,204



CM Naveen Patnaik, ST & SC Development, Minorities & Backward Classes Welfare Minister Jagannath Saraka, department's commissioner-cum-secretary Roopa Roshan Sahoo, Chief Secretary PK Jena, ST Secretary VK Pandian, Development Commissioner Anu Garg and Special Development Council (SDC) advisor Pradeep Majhi during the announcement of new SDCs in Bhubaneswar, Sunday

# State gets 14 more SDCs

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, May 14:** In a bid to preserve and propagate tribal culture and protect the unique identity of tribal groups, Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik announced creation of 14 Special Development Councils (SDCs) during an event in Unit I area here, Sunday.

The SDCs will be created for Angul, Bolangir, Balasore, Bargarh, Boudh, Deogarh, Dhenkanal, Ganjam, Jajpur, Jharsuguda, Kalahandi, Nuapada, Nayagarh and Sambalpur districts, the CM said. With this, the total SDCs in Odisha will reach 23. SDCs were first created in 2017-18 for the preservation of tribal art, culture, and literature.

Earlier, 64 lakh people in 117 blocks of nine districts were involved in the SDCs and now it will be implemented in 172 blocks of 23 districts, said the chief minister. For this, the state government will

**WITH THIS, THE TOTAL SPECIAL DEVELOPMENT COUNCILS IN ODISHA WILL REACH 23. SDCS WERE FIRST CREATED IN 2017-18 FOR THE PRESERVATION OF TRIBAL ART, CULTURE, AND LITERATURE**

**EARLIER, 64 LAKH PEOPLE IN 117 BLOCKS OF NINE DISTRICTS WERE INVOLVED IN THE SDCS AND NOW IT WILL BE IMPLEMENTED IN 172 BLOCKS OF 23 DISTRICTS**

**THE STATE GOVERNMENT WILL SPEND ₹223 CRORE IN THE FINANCIAL YEAR 2023-24**

spend ₹223 crore in the financial year 2023-24. The chief minister announced that more than 80 lakh tribal people will participate in this programme and work for the protection and development of their art and culture.

On the occasion, the chief minister said that tribal culture has a deep connection with Jagannath Culture and emphasises the protection of nature and environment. The chief minister said that worship of nature and brotherhood are the basis of tribal culture.

Highlighting that art and culture have an important role in the

definition of development, the chief minister said that the SDCs have been formed for the preservation of tribal art and culture. From politics to literature, tribal people have contributed in all fields. They have glorified Odisha's culture. "I am proud of them," said the chief minister.

The chief minister said that with the formation of the new councils, all the tribal groups can fully contribute to the protection of their art and heritage.

Stating that people are interested in tribal art and culture, the chief minister said that the Tribal

Museum in Bhubaneswar has now become an attraction for tourists.

It is worth noting that in 2017, Odisha was the only state in India to protect the unique culture of tribals creating the SDCs. Many programmes have been adopted in this regard. They include the preservation of sacred trees of the tribals, formation of cultural clubs and organisation of cultural programmes. More than 60,000 projects have been implemented under this programme.

Out of 4,599 identified sacred trees, 4,496 trees have been preserved and 1,592 clubs have been formed.

Speaking on the occasion, ST & SC Development, Minorities & Backward Classes Welfare Minister Jagannath Saraka said that the chief minister has taken a host of initiatives to improve the standard of living of the tribals. He said that the SDCs will create a new trend of development for the tribals.

## Siblings nabbed for duping techie of ₹14L

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, May 14:** The Commissionerate Police here Sunday arrested siblings on charges of duping an engineer of ₹14 lakh under various pretexts in the last three years. The accused, Trupti Ranjan Jena, 35, and his younger brother Deepti Ranjan Jena, 32, have been identified as the residents of Khantapada in Balasore district.

The siblings were staying at Gitanjali Apartment, near Santoshi Maa Mandir in BJB Nagar under Badagada police limits in Capital city.

The Chandrasekharpur police arrested the duo after registering a case (227/23) on the basis of a complaint lodged by the victim Abhas Kumar Samal May 8, 2023.

According to sources, Abhas and accused Deepti knew each other as they were pursuing engineering at a private college in the City in 2010.

In 2021, the complainant got appointed in Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) but Dipti failed to secure a job after completion of studies. Dipti later asked financial help from the complainant for some medical and other emergencies. Subsequently, Abhas paid Dipti and his relatives around ₹14 lakh starting from 2021.

"The accused purchased a four-wheeler vehicle taking a loan of ₹12.55 lakh in the name of Abhas in October 2021. But, they did not repay the EMIs of the loan as promised to Abhas," told Ramesh Chandra Bishoi, ACP Zone VI.

Sources claimed that Dipti and Trupti had taken ₹9.43 lakh and ₹6.77 lakh respectively from the complainant in installments. Some of Dipti's friends and relatives had also taken money from Abhas.

## Cabinet reshuffle likely soon

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Bhubaneswar, May 14:** With three vacancies in the Naveen Patnaik Cabinet in Odisha following the resignation of two ministers of state, ruling Biju Janata Dal (BJD) MLAs have started lobbying to become a minister ahead of the general elections next year.

The Odisha Council of Ministers can have 22 ministers including the chief minister but now has 19 ministers. While one post was lying vacant after the assassination of Health minister Naba Kishore Das in January this year, two ministers of state - Samir Ranjan Dash (School and Mass Education) and Srikanta Sahu (Labour) resigned from their posts Friday.

Patnaik may fill up the three vacancies soon, a senior party leader said, adding that the chief minister may also go for a mini-reshuffle of his Cabinet to fill up the vacancies.

A section of ministers are also in the grip of fear that the chief minister may ask them to resign. "Many ministers have switched off their mobile phones fearing a possible call from Naveen Niwas, the chief minister's residence," the party leader said.

This apart, some senior and experienced leaders, who want to vacate their seats for their sons in the coming elections, are also lobbying to become the Speaker of the Odisha Assembly as BK Arukha resigned from the post Friday.

The probable names for Speaker's posts making the rounds are:

Prafulla Samal, Debi Prasad Mishra, Amar Prasad Satpathy and Badri Narayan Patra.

Similarly, for the ministerial berth some names are also making the rounds. While a section of leaders believe that Patnaik may induct six-time MLA BK Arukha who resigned as Speaker Friday in the Cabinet, other probable names are - Susanta Singh and Sarada Nayak from western region and Umakanta Samantray from Puri district.

Some party leaders did not rule out the possibility of Dipali Das, who won the Jharsuguda by-poll Saturday, becoming a minister as her late father Naba Kishore Das was the Health minister when he was assassinated.

The three vacancies are created from different regions like Western Odisha (Naba Kishore Das - Jharsuguda), Southern Odisha (Srikanta Sahu - Ganjam) and Coastal Odisha (Samir Ranjan Dash - Puri)

Meanwhile, Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik has given charge of the two departments - School and Mass Education, and Labour and Employees' State Insurance, to Revenue and Disaster Management Minister Pramila Mallik. She was given the additional charge of the two departments, official sources said.

However, no BJD leaders could say about the date of possible reshuffle in the Naveen Patnaik ministry as Odisha Governor Ganeshi Lal is on a visit to his home state Haryana and is scheduled to return to Bhubaneswar May 22.

# Digitally-signed High Court judgments now a click away

While the system for uploading orders and judgments on the HC website has already been there, every order or judgment is now required to be digitally signed by the respective secretarial staff of the judges before being uploaded

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Cuttack, May 14:** Taking a significant step towards making justice more accessible, the Orissa High Court has taken the initiative of uploading digitally signed orders and judgments on its website and keeping online system of certified copies.

Creation of paperless working regime in the state judiciary has been the vision of Justice S Muralidhar ever since he has assumed the office of the Chief Justice of High Court of Orissa. Digitisation and e-filing have, therefore, been prioritized by the High Court since 2021.

"While legacy records are being digitised in RRDC, digitization of pending records is complete and every new case, if filed physically, is being immediately digitised. Simultaneously, e-filing is being promoted by conducting hands-on training of lawyers and their clerks. Digitization of records has helped in introducing new system of online certified copies free of cost," informed a High Court official.

Notably, a digital platform has



been created through which lawyers or litigants can apply for certified copies of orders, judgments, pleadings and documents and get the copies online, without physically having to come to the High Court and pay any cost. The online process is simpler and less time-consuming than the physical system.

For introduction of these new systems, the High Court had amended its rules with effect from May 1 this year.

While the system for uploading

orders and judgments on the HC website has already been there, every order or judgment is now required to be digitally signed by the respective secretarial staff of the judges before being uploaded on the website. All the orders and judgments of the High Court from May 1, 2023, are now available on the website with digital signatures which functions as evidence of their authenticity.

"Digital signature is the digital equivalent of a handwritten signature and it bears the date and exact time of signature along with the designation of the signatory. The staff of the copying department will append their digital signatures on the documents while delivering certified copies online," explained the official.

The lawyers and litigants and the authorities before whom the copies are produced can verify the authenticity of the document from the website. A short instructive video about the procedure of verification will be soon uploaded on the High Court's website.

"The new system is in addition to the existing system of delivery of physical copies. While online application is now optional for the private parties, it has been made mandatory for the central government, state government, public sector undertakings and urban and rural local bodies in the amended rules," said the court official.



DISMANTLING ACT: Artisans dismantle decorative items after Chandan Yatra in Puri, Sunday

OP PHOTO

## INTENSE HEATWAVE LIKELY FROM MONDAY

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, May 14:** Heatwave conditions are likely to worsen in several districts of the state from Monday, the regional office of the India Meteorological Department (IMD) here forecasted Sunday.

According to the IMD, under the

influence of dry westerly/north-westerly winds and high solar insolation, the maximum temperature (day temperature) is likely to rise by 3°C to 5°C during the next two days at many places in Odisha. As a result, heat wave condition is likely in some districts of interior Odisha from May

15 and the maximum temperature (day temperature) is likely to be more than 40°C and above normal by 3°C to 5°C at a few places of the state.

The IMD has advised people to take precautionary measures while going outside during the daytime between 11.00 am and 3.00 pm.

## ₹2.8 crore ganja seized in Boudh

AGENCIES

**Boudh, May 14:** A huge quantity of ganja valued at over ₹ 2.8 crore was seized from a forest area of Boudh district.

Ganja weighing around 28 quintal was hidden by smugglers inside Matagadu Dulkan forest area under the jurisdiction of Boudh Sadar police station.

Acting on an information, a team of police personnel carried out a search operation and seized the ganja packed in large sacks with plans to smuggle it to some other state, sources said.

A country-made rifle was also seized from the site. The estimated value of the seized cannabis was put at over ₹2.8 crore.

The smugglers, however, managed to escape and efforts are on to nab them. A case has been registered and an investigation is in progress.



# Saturn beats other planets with most number of moons in solar system

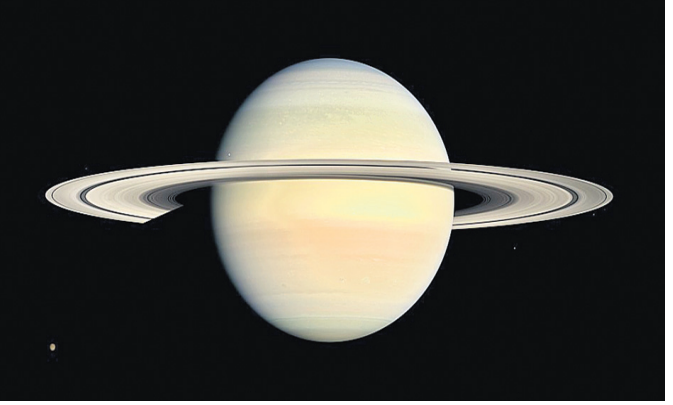
Saturn's new moons, which have been assigned strings of numbers and letters for now, will eventually be given names based on Gallic, Norse and Canadian Inuit gods, in keeping with convention for naming of moons

after being briefly overtaken by gas giant Jupiter.

The new discoveries mean that Saturn has not only regained its crown for having the most known moons (overtaking Jupiter with 95 recognised moons), but it's also the first planet to have over 100 discovered moons, said researchers at the University of British Columbia (UBC).

Jupiter, which added 12 moons to its tally in February, has 95 moons that have been formally designated by the International Astronomical Union (IAU).

"Saturn not only has nearly doubled its number of moons, it now has more moons than all the rest of the planets in the solar system combined," said Prof Brett Gladman, an astronomer at the



UBC, the Guardian reported.

The new moons, which have been assigned strings of numbers and letters for now, will eventually be given names based on Gallic,

Norse and Canadian Inuit gods, in keeping with convention for Saturn's moons.

All of the new moons are in the class of irregular moons, thought

to be initially captured by their host planet long ago. Irregular moons are characterised by their large, elliptical, and inclined orbits compared to regular moons.

The number of known saturnian irregular moons has more than doubled to 121, with 58 previously known before the search began. Including the 24 regular moons, there is now a total of 145 recognised by the IAU.

The irregular moons tend to clump together into orbital groups based on the tilt of their orbits.

The team, led by Dr. Edward Ashton, who started the research project at UBC, and currently a postdoctoral fellow at Taiwan's Academia Sinica Institute of Astronomy and Astrophysics, used data taken using the Canada-France-

Hawaii Telescope (CFHT) on top of Mauna Kea, Hawaii between 2019 and 2021.

By shifting and stacking many sequential images taken during three hour spans, they were able to detect moons orbiting Saturn down to about 2.5 kilometres in diameter.

The original discovery search was done in 2019, uncovering the moons in a meticulous search of the deep CFHT imaging acquired that year.

To be absolutely sure, objects must be tracked for several years before they can be designated as certainly orbiting the planet. After painstakingly matching objects detected on different nights over two years, the team managed to track 62 objects, confirming them as new moons.



# 5-DAY TRAINING PROGRAMME FOR VOCATIONAL TEACHERS



POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, May 14:** A five-day training programme was organised by Directorate of Higher Secondary Education here at the Regional Institute of Education (RIE) for 193 junior lecturers from May 9 to 13 as a part of the initiative to revamp 174 Government Vocational Higher Secondary Schools (GVHSS) according to National Skill Qualification Framework (NSQF) under the STARS programme.

The faculties from Pandit Sundarlal Sharma Central Institute of Vocational Education (PSSCIVE), Bhopal, imparted the training to update the skills of these lecturers, help them disseminate information on educational and employment opportunities among

students, understand the existing scheme of vocational programme in the state and outline transition from current programme to NSQF aligned courses. NSQF is a competency-based framework that organises all qualifications according to a series of levels of knowledge, skills, and aptitude.

The training sessions were conducted in two simultaneous batches of around 100 participants each. Along with the presentations and discussions, exposure visits to the World Skill Centre, Mancheswar, and Central Tool Room and Training Centre, Chandaka, Industrial Area, Bhubaneswar (CTTC), were organised to impart practical knowledge. Participants spent almost half a day in each of the campuses, visiting facilities available both in its academic, pro-

duction and training departments.

School & Mass Education special secretary Subhashree Nanda and Deepak Palliwar, joint director, PSSCIVE, attended the valedictory session. While welcoming the participants Raghuram R Iyer, Director, DHSE, highlighted, Odisha being the first state to collaborate with PSSCIVE, Bhopal, to host such kind of programme.

In her address, Nanda focused on education that makes one more confident in their respective occupations. Vocational education trains students in a specific skill and the experience is directly linked to their futures. Such training is useful because there are practical programmes designed to help the students be accustomed to a professional setup. Vocational education is the need of the hour because the practical learning experience boosts confidence, generates employability, and makes better professionals.

Palliwar, who was highly impressed to listen to the feedback from participants, expressed his thanks to S&ME Department commissioner-cum-secretary for organising this programme with PSSCIVE and encouraged use of e-learning resources developed by the institute by regular trainings in small batches of 40-50.



DISPLAYING ILL EFFECT: 'No Mobile Day' art exhibition organised on the premises of JN Indoor Stadium in Cuttack, Sunday

OP PHOTO

## Annual conference of TODACON-2023 held



POST NEWS NETWORK

**Hyderabad/Bhubaneswar, May 14:** The Telangana Odisha Doctors Association organised the first annual conference of TODACON-2023 in the conference hall of AIG Hospital, Hyderabad in the presence of Food Supply & Consumer Welfare and Cooperation Minister Atanu Sabyasachi Nayak.

Speaking on the occasion, Nayak said that there is a need for solidarity among the people of Odisha, specially the doctors from the state who are residing in Hyderabad. It is good that the association provides a common forum for Odia doctors and their families to socialize and encourage the rich Odia culture and its age-old traditions.

He further said that the conference would bring together a multispecialty academic sojourn to share the recent advances in the field of medical sciences in the larger interest of the people specially the poor patients.

Nayak hoped and expected the conference, with the participation and deliberation of prominent medics, will help in taking forward the latest development in medical science for better treatment.

Sweta Mohanty, Commissioner Health & FW, Mission Director National Health Mission Telangana graced the occasion as guest of honour. Among others present were Nageswar Reddy, Chairman AIG Hospital, PV Raju, Vice Chairmam AIG Hospital and GV Rao Director AIG Hospital and Sunil Swain, President TODACON.

## Mother's Day celebrated in City with fervour

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, May 14:** On the occasion of Mother's Day, Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik saluted the mothers of the state and said they are epitome of love, strength and sacrifice who shape our lives through teachings and nurturing. In his Twitter account, CM said let's salute these incredible women and reaffirm commitment to do every bit to utilise their leadership for an inclusive society.

"Mother's love and affection is the lifeline for every child. A mother sacrifices everything for her child, faces all the difficulties of life and in return shapes the child as one of the best human beings in the world," said KIIT & KISS founder Achyuta Samanta speaking at the celebration of Mother's Day at Kalinga Institute of Medical Sciences (KIMS) here Sunday.

Paying floral tributes near the "My Mother My Hero" statue at the KIMS campus, Samanta spoke about the life and struggles of his beloved mother Nilimarani Samanta. He spoke about her contributions towards shaping the life and fate of all the siblings.



Achyuta Samanta paying tribute to his mother at KIIT campus

Samanta regretted that he could not spare quality time with his mother while struggling hard to see KIIT and KISS stand as unique and world-class institutions of repute and distinction. He also urged all to be caring, loving and mindful of their mothers. He also narrated how the non-descript Kalarabanka village could become the first smart village in Odisha due to his mother's constant persuasion.

Samanta expressed his happiness over the popularity of the book "My Mother My Hero" and said that people of over 100 nations in the world have got the opportunity to go through the book and students are getting inspired while going through the publication.

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, May 14:** As a part of the second G20 Culture Working Group meeting, an exhibition titled 'Sustain: The Craft Idiom' will be organised at Kala Bhoomi - Odisha Crafts Museum here in City with a focus on the second priority 'harnessing living heritage for a sustainable future'.

Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik will inaugurate the exhibition May 15 in the presence of Union Culture Minister G Kishan Reddy, Minister of State for Culture Arjun Ram Meghwal and Minister of State for Home Affairs Nityanand Rai. The exhibition will be open to the public from May 16 to May 22.

At a press meet held Sunday, Reddy said that Bhubaneswar is hosting the second G20 Culture Working Group meeting till May 17. The second CWG meeting will build on the momentum gained from the first meeting held in Khajuraho, Madhya Pradesh, which was followed by in depth expert-driven global thematic webinars held over the past two months.

He said Bhubaneswar is a cultural city and is perfect city to hosts the cultural group meet. Minister said that the meetings will focus on four key priority areas articulated under Culture Track of India's G20 Presidency. The areas are: Protection and restitution of



cultural property; harnessing living heritage for a sustainable future; promotion of cultural and creative industries and creative economy; and leveraging digital technologies for the protection and promotion of culture.

"India's G20 Culture Working Group's 'Culture Unites All' is a campaign to highlight the country's unwavering belief in multilateralism based on peaceful co-existence among diverse cultures and communities. The theme recognises that by embracing cultural exchange and understanding, we can transcend boundaries, foster con-

nections, and inspire meaningful dialogue among individuals, communities, and nations," said Minister. Meghwal said that the protection and restitution of cultural property; harnessing living heritage for a sustainable future are important issues, future; promotion of cultural and creative industries and creative economy; and leveraging digital technologies for the protection and promotion of culture will be discussed in the meet.

Reddy said that culture ministry is preparing a website with detailed information to include and enlist all the monuments in-

cluding state based monuments for promotion and CSR activities where we are working towards preservation and restoration of monuments.

A set of cultural experiences have been curated for the delegates through the course of their visit. These include a visit to heritage sites like the the Konark Sun Temple, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, and the Udayagiri Caves. The delegates will also experience special dance performances native to the Odisha such as Singari, Sambalpur, Odissi and Gotipua.

## CLASSIFIED AFFIDAVIT

By affidavit before the Notary Public, Pattamundai, CF No.-60AA 894395 Dtd-12.05.2023, I Kiran Biswal, S/o- Kapilendra Biswal, Vill- Nahiadia, P.O.- Dandisahi, P.S.- Pattamundai, Dist.- Kendrapada that my father Kapilendra Biswal & Kapil Biswal is same person, he has been recognized, identified & known as Kapilendra Biswal for all purposes.



STAGE CRAFT: Artistes of Khariar Sanskritika Anusthan of Nuapada perform a play 'Sahara Sedina Andhar Thila' organised under Natyadhara at Rabindra Mandap in Bhubaneswar, Sunday

OP PHOTO

## Diesel pollution bad for health

Prolonged exposure to diesel pollution, which includes a complex mixture of pollutants, can have serious health effects on humans, said experts here even as the government contemplates a ban on diesel vehicles.

A government panel formed by the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas has recommended banning the use of diesel-based four-wheelers by 2027 in cities with a population of over 10 lakh people.

Pollution from diesel exhaust mainly includes soot or particulate matter (PM), oxides of nitrogen (NOx) which contribute to the production of ground-level ozone (smog) and acid rain, hydrocarbons (HC), carbon dioxide (CO2), and carbon monoxide (CO).

Short-term exposure to diesel exhaust can cause irritation of the nose and eyes, changes in lung function, respiratory changes, headache, fatigue, and nausea. Long-term exposure has been shown to result in prolonged cough, sputum production and poor lung function.

"One common contributor to air pollution is vehicular smoke, with diesel exhaust particles accounting for a significant percentage of the particles emitted in many towns



and cities," Vivek Nangia, Principal Director and Head-Pulmonology, Max Super Speciality Hospital, Saket, told IANS.

"Exposure to fumes causes significant inflammatory changes in the airways, which may be even more detrimental in people with chronic lung diseases such as bronchial asthma, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), interstitial lung disease, etc. It is also postulated that diesel exhaust particles are an important factor contributing to the allergy pandemic as they act as adjuvants to allergens and increase the sensitisation response," he added. A recent study by the

Universities of British Columbia and Victoria in Canada showed that common levels of traffic pollution are capable of impairing brain function in a matter of hours.

Another study of 1.4 million kids aged under 10 by Universities of Manchester in the UK and Aarhus in Denmark showed that exposure to high levels of nitrogen dioxide and PM2.5 increased their odds of self harm in adulthood by 50 per cent. These two pollutants are also among the most commonly linked with heart and lung diseases, as they get into the bloodstream and cause inflammation.

Air pollution contributes to about 6 million preterm births each year globally. Exhausts emitted by diesel engines have also been linked to increased rates of neuro-developmental disorders, such as schizophrenia and autism.

"Diesel engines emit a complex mixture of pollutants. Obviously, those are very small carbon particles which are known as diesel particulate matter. So if their sizes are small, they will enter deep into our organs, especially lungs," said Kuldip Kumar Grover, Head of Critical Care & Pulmonology, C.K. Birla Hospital, Gurugram. IANS

### FOR CLASSIFIED ADVERTISEMENTS CONTACT OUR BOOKING STATIONS

Acharya Vihar-Dayal Agency-9437135727, A.P. Tours and Travel, Maitri Vihar, C.S. Pur- 9861301598, Aurobindo Market-Sai Audio & Electronics-9438304668, Airport Road-Sai Baba Variety Store-9090071530, Anish Infotech-Tankapani Road-9861341488, Bapuji Nagar- Dreamland Studio- 9777517314, Baramunda Rental Colony-Maa Ramchandi Communication-9658821469, Baramunda Housing Board Colony-Pappu Variety Store-9040500106, Cuttack Road-Alishan Snacks-8984236754, District Center (Chandrasekharpur)-Sai Google Mart-9776056507, Forest Park-DTDC Couriers & Services (HB Services)-7381024156, IRC Village-Bapi Xerox-9090090404, Gift Hut(Antriksh Gifts & Decors Pvt. Ltd.)-9954781084, Pruthvi Medicine-9853314816, Janpur-Krupajal Book Store-7978646669, Jaydev Vihar-AK Enterprises-7978116618, Subam Sai Books Store-8895550649, Swain Graphics- 9337121249, Jagannath Mobile Point- Janpath Road, Ram Mandir- 9938475415, Kanan Vihar-Auro Electronics-8260697560, Khandagiri- Swosti Mobile Centre- 7992914045, World Solution- 9938317559, KIIT Road-Jugad Jn-9338545031, Laxmi Sagar-Aditya Mobile-9438191836, Lewis Road-Spider Web-7809186415, Metro Satellite City-Arogya Mitra Medicine Store-9853621640, Madhusudan Nagar-Mohapatra Communication-9124446664, Maa Santoshi travels- Gajapati Nagar- 9777675867, Nayapalli- The Cake Room- 7873660137, Near Mayfair Lagoon-Cookieman-9439491273, Nigamananda-Omm Sai Travels-9668284823, Nr Cosmopolis Main Gate- Shreeram Medical Store- 8763711714, Net Square- Niladri Vihar (C.S. Pur)- 7205634821, Priyadarshini Market-Astro Point-9938134346, R.N. General Store-Nilakantha Nagar-9438642501, Sahid Nagar- Maa Communication- 9437353424, Sahini General Store- Near Patia Railway Station, Mahavir Vihar- 9937586626, Satya Nagar-Baishnavi Mixture & Sweets-7894821764, Samantapur- Download Point-7504557743, Sailashree Vihar-Harsha Book Store-8093449515, Saheed Nagar-Jagannath Graphics-7978652670, Photo World-7978468191, Sainath Photo Studio-8984436129, Shanti & Co-9937071063, Siripur-Omm Maa Sarala Communication-9777682449, Sushree fashion- Jagmara-9938714347, Shree Vision- Sailashree Vihar-9861476678, Unit-3-LIC of India Premium Point-9337787080, Unit-7- LIC Premium Point- 9338227422, VSS Nagar-Friends Cake & Bake-8658200930, Jeet Infoworld-7205195782, XIMB Square-LD Books-9658061373.



# UTP dies by suicide in Sambalpur jail



POST NEWS NETWORK

**Sambalpur, May 14:** An under-trial prisoner (UTP) in Sambalpur Circle jail died by suicide Sunday by hanging himself. The deceased was identified as Dharanidhar Mahananda (45), a resident of an area under the Sadar police station limits in this district. He was arrested in a case related to domestic violence and remanded to jail custody Saturday.

Sources said that Mahananda allegedly tied a cloth napkin to his neck and hanged himself from the skylight of the jail toilet. The matter came to the fore after another prisoner went to the toilet and found him hanging. He informed the jail officials following which they rushed Mahananda to the district headquarters hospital (DHH) where doctors pronounced him dead on arrival. Notably, Mahananda was an alcoholic and not on good terms with his wife. He used to regularly demand money from his wife. Recently he had attacked her with an axe

after she refused to give him money. His wife had to be hospitalised as she suffered grievous injuries. Following her recovery, Mahananda's wife lodged a complaint with the police. He was arrested and later on sent to prison by the court. When contacted prison superintendent Santosh Kumar Barik said that primary investigation hints at suicide. "However, we can only know the precise reason after the post-mortem report comes in," Barik said. He also informed that after Mahananda's arrival in prison, he was housed in a hall with 29 other inmates. "He appeared normal all through Saturday," Barik said. Meanwhile, Dhanupali police have launched an investigation into the incident after registration of a case.



**TRADITIONAL DANCE:** Durua tribals perform a traditional dance at a talent hunt competition held at Sorishpadar village under Boipariguda block in Koraput district

# Brahmani river pollution sparks concern

People in Dhenkanal district are the worst hit as they are deprived of drinking water as well as its use for agriculture purposes

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Dhenkanal, May 14:** Brahmani, the second largest river in Odisha is termed as the 'lifeline' of undivided Dhenkanal district. However, the river is now battling with alarming levels of pollution due to the discharge of toxic and industrial effluents into it, sources informed Sunday. Such is the situation that the river water can neither be used for consumption nor for agriculture. A large number of industrial units have come up close to the banks of the Brahmani. They are continuously discharging toxic and waste materials into the river, sources pointed out. However, both the district administration and the Odisha government have turned a blind eye to the blatant polluting act. They are not taking any action against the indus-

trial units, alleged locals. Environmentalists have warned that the situation is turning critical and the day is not far away when the residents of the district will have to pay a heavy price for the pollution-hit river. The Brahmani is a major seasonal river in Odisha and is formed by the confluence of the Sankh and South Koel rivers at Vedavyas near Rourkela in Sundargarh district. The Sankh and Koel rivers originate from Chhotanagpur plateau in Jharkhand. The Brahmani river flows through Sundargarh, Deogarh, Angul, Dhenkanal, Jajpur and Kendrapara districts and plays an important role in irrigating thousands of hectares of farmlands. It is also the main source of drinking water in many of the above mentioned districts.



The worst polluted stretch of 80 kilometres of the 541-km long river lies in Dhenkanal district. The river divides Dhenkanal district into two parts. Odapada, Hindol, Sadar and Gondia blocks lie on one side while Parjang, Kamakhyanager, Kankadahada and Bhuban blocks are on the other side. A barrage has been constructed at Samal in Angul district for conservation of the river water so that

it can be used to irrigate farmlands in Dhenkanal, Angul, Jajpur and Cuttack districts through the establishment of Rengali irrigation project. The Rengali irrigation project has been divided into two canals - left and right. While the left canal is used to irrigate 1,14,300 hectares of farmland, the right one is for 1,21,200 hectares. However, farmers are now apprehensive about the water because of the presence of toxic ef-

fluents. They pointed out it has happened due to the negligence of the State Pollution Control Board (SPCB). The industrial plants that have come up in Odapada and Parjang blocks are discharging toxic waste into the river. As a result, people of the riparian villages are being deprived of clean drinking water. The river water pollution has also affected the fish population and hundreds of fishermen have lost their livelihood. The turtle population which resides at Rankia of Kamakhyanager block and Budhibili river islet in the river is also facing extinction due to pollution. Several outfits have time and again raised the demand in cleaning the river and making it free from pollution. However, their demands seem to have fallen on deaf ears. When contacted, SPCB's regional officer Anup Kumar Mallick said that the office in Bhubaneswar is in charge of preventing pollution in the Brahmani. Hence he will not be able to say anything.

# Efforts on to revive Siddhamatha forest

MANY MEDICINAL PLANTS ARE AVAILABLE IN THE DENSE FOLIAGE THEREBY MAKING IT UNIQUE



POST NEWS NETWORK

**Keonjhar, May 14:** The Forest department has launched efforts for the revival of the historical Siddhamatha medicinal forest in this town, officials informed Sunday. The forest which is located in Ward No-1 of Keonjhar Municipal Corporation on the foothills of Chulia is facing extinction due to large scale felling of medicinal trees, theft of precious timber and lack of proper upkeep. The forest also has religious importance as it lies in close proximity to the Siddhamatha religious shrine which houses various temples. The matter came to the fore after a team of officials accompanied by local councillor Sarat Sahu and residents recently visited the forest and took stock of the situation. The forest spread over a large area of land had plenty of sandalwood trees. However, much to their surprise, they found that a number of trees had been cut and

the timber stolen. Everyone knows how expensive sandalwood is and taking advantage of the lack of maintenance, the miscreants have destroyed a larger number of such trees. The department launched the efforts for the restoration of the forest following a vociferous campaign by the local councillor and some senior citizens in the area. Despite losing some of its precious possession, the forest still has many precious medicinal plants. Sahu pointed out that Siddhamatha can once again turn into a dense forest if a compound wall is erected on all four sides. When contacted, ranger Bijay Kumar Mohanta said that the area will be cleaned first before erecting fences on all the four sides. Moreover, efforts will be made for soil conservation in the forest. He informed that a gate will be constructed to prevent entry of unwanted elements. Only nature lovers will be allowed inside the forest, Mohanta added.

# Woman killed as car rams into house

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Boudh, May 14:** Tension prevailed at Luhuragadia Square on National Highway-57 in Radhanagar panchayat of Boudh district after a speeding car rammed into a roadside house, killing a woman on the spot in the wee hours of Sunday. The deceased was identified as Paneswari Dhal. She was sleeping in her house when the mishap occurred. Police said that the car was speeding towards this town and the driver lost control over the wheels. The vehicle skidded off the road (NH-57) and crashed into the house leading to the instant demise of the woman. After the crash, the car turned turtle. Officials added that the car was coming from Charichhak locality. The driver fled the scene after the accident. Angered over the woman's death, locals staged a road block on Khurda-Bolangir NH-57 for a lengthy period. The villagers staged demonstration and demanded compensation for the family of the deceased. They also demanded stringent action against the guilty driver.



**BLISTERING HEATWAVE:** Youths cover their heads due to heatwave as they cycle back home after taking bath in Mahanadi river in Sambalpur, Sunday

# Manipur residents hit by skyrocketing prices



INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**Imphal, May 14:** People in ethnic violence-hit Manipur are now experiencing a double whammy as not only prices of essential commodities have skyrocketed in the state, but banking facilities remain affected due to the suspension of internet services, making life more miserable for them. In most of the 16 districts, internet services continue to remain suspended for 12 days, rendering financial institutions like banks and ATM booths without money. The suspension of mobile internet services also badly affected the important government and non-government services since

every day in the daytime allowing the people to procure food and various other essential items. Officials here said that sporadic incidents of violence and attacks are taking place in certain districts almost every day. Few vacant houses were burnt down by the suspected Kuki militants in Churachandpur district Saturday night. Residents of these houses are now living in relief camps. Defence sources said that a joint Army and Assam Rifles area domination patrol party was fired upon by a group of unidentified armed miscreants at forest area near Lailampat in Churachandpur district Saturday. Two Assam Rifles personnel, who sustained gunshot wounds, were immediately taken to hospitals. When the security personnel retaliated, the armed miscreants fled from the area. In another incident at Sipijang under Senapati district Saturday, a patrol team of Assam Rifles were fired upon by a group of unidentified armed miscreants from the jungle. Following an effective retaliation, the miscreants ran away

and two rifles and some ammunition were recovered from the area. Meanwhile, Manipur government's security advisor Kuldeep Singh said that during an inspection, some cadres and arms were found missing in some camps, where the Kuki militants under the 'Suspension of Operation' agreement have been staying. Singh said that since May 3, 71 people have died, among which 41 fell prey to the ethnic violence, while others died due to various other causes, including drug overdoses. He said a total of 339 cases of attack and arsoning have been registered. After the ethnic violence broke out May 3, the miscreants and the agitators snatched 1,041 arms and 7,460 pieces of ammunition from the security forces. So far, 423 arms and 6,697 ammunitions have been recovered from them, Singh said. The central forces including the Army also undertook round-the-clock aerial surveillance using drones and military choppers. The Army's three-pronged domination strategy in Manipur is helping the state return to normalcy, Singh said.

Manipur residents are hit by skyrocketing prices of essential commodities. The situation is worsening as the state government has suspended internet services in most districts, affecting banking and other services. The price of essential commodities has risen sharply, making life difficult for the people. The government has taken some steps to address the issue, but the situation remains tense.

# Man held for rape attempt

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Balikuda, May 14:** A person was arrested Sunday for trying to rape a minor in Kusupur locality under Balikuda block in Jagatsinghpur district. The accused has been identified as Saroj. Sources said that the minor girl along with two of her friends was returning home from tuition at around 9.30am Sunday morning. When the three were close to the Hanuman temple in the locality, Saroj appeared out of nowhere and dragged the victim to a secluded place with the intention of raping her. The girl resisted with all her might and suffered injuries in the process. Meanwhile both her friends ran to a local market nearby and alerted the people. They arrived at the spot and caught hold of Saroj. Some of them accompanied the victim and her two friends back to their residences. When the police arrived at the spot, the locals handed over Saroj to the police. Later, Saroj was taken to the Balikuda police station and subsequently arrested. He was forwarded to the court later in the day.

# 3 hurt in cylinder blast



POST NEWS NETWORK

**Barbil, May 14:** Three workers of Ariya Iron and Steel Company Private Ltd (AISCO) suffered critical injuries after an oxygen cylinder exploded Sunday afternoon. The company is situated at Matkambada on Barbil-Bolani road in Keonjhar district. The injured have been identified as Prem Shankar Sharma, Krishna Das and Karan Mohanta of Sadhusingh locality in this town. All the three were rushed to the Keonjhar district headquarters hospital (DHH) where they are undergoing treatment. Doctors said that their condition is critical. Initially, the three were taken to the Barbil community health, but were later shifted to the DHH as their condition deteriorated. Sources said an agency has received the contract to supply oxygen cylinders to the plant. The incident occurred when a vehicle of the agency arrived with oxygen cylinders at the plant premises. The three were unloading the

cylinders when one of those accidentally fell on the ground and exploded. Praveesh Pandey, an official of the company said all necessary steps have been taken for the treatment of the three injured persons. Explaining the reason behind the explosion, Pandey said that the front nozzle of the cylinder hit the ground hard, leading to the blast. The incident sparked tension among other workers of the plant. They demanded an inquiry into the incident. They also demanded better safety measures inside the plant. Earlier the plant had hit the headlines for allegedly increasing air and water pollution in the locality. Sources alleged that many times the effluents of the plant were directly discharged into the Karrow river resulting in its pollution. Similarly due to careless transportation of pellets, many of those fall on the road from the trucks leading to frequent accidents.



My God is love and sweetly suffers all.

SRI AUROBINDO



## Karnataka Indications

The Karnataka Assembly poll results are a resounding defeat for the BJP. This should come as a surprise because most people thought the brand of politics that thrives on injecting communal passion to the exclusion of all other issues, including economy and the question of livelihood for millions of people would continue in India. Whenever the questions of corruption and economic distress are raised, the BJP and its social media army steer the political discourse to a narrative of religious divide or point a finger at what had happened earlier in history. Added to this is the aggressive campaign on “freeing the country of the Congress” (Congress-mukt Bharat) and demonizing dynastic rule. When it seemed that the country would find it very difficult to free itself from this vicious grip, the Karnataka verdict came, giving not only the Congress more than double the seats the BJP has won but also rekindling hope that the Indian voter is still very aware. This victory has, of course, put the Congress firmly in the saddle of power denying the opportunity to the BJP to try its trick of horse-trading of MLAs. That was how the BJP captured power in Maharashtra, MP and Karnataka too in 2019 by toppling the Congress-JD(S) coalition government through defection of 17 MLAs that came to be known as “operation Lotus.”

The known tactics that have yielded good returns to the party in the past in the Hindi belt were also tried out in Karnataka this time around. The BJP pitched in with its best resources. Money was never a problem for the party. The party’s top campaigners, PM Modi and Home Minister Amit Shah, spent days on end in Karnataka and tried their utmost to swing the voters towards them. While Modi spent more than 10 days on the campaign trail, Amit Shah spent over a month, on & off, and went to the Taluka level to address small gatherings. Now it seems as if all that these two did was talk to thin air. The hot air balloon that was floated by many BJP followers that Modi’s charisma would swing people at the final moment has been proven to be a fraud claim. It has to be remembered that no matter how strong one may pose to be, every politician has a certain life span—limited shelf life—in India. Modi’s may not be ending but it surely is not going to go for long anymore. He himself proved it by going on such an intense campaign trail and losing most of the seats he had personally touched, including Jayanagar. Karnataka results proved that voters of India have their own minds and no one is blind. Now when Modi supporters have started claiming after his intensive campaigning that the fault lies with the local leadership and the defeat was because of them, one can be sure the BJP is unable to understand the situation facing it. Either Modi had no system of gathering correct feedback from the ground or his ego made him think people would vote for him because they adore him as a person regardless of how others behaved. That is precisely what a true democrat never thinks.

Similarly, Amit Shah had been anointed as the greatest Chanakya by his own party people. First of all, the real Chanakya never fought any election. As a strategist Amit Shah has had no opportunity to prove his mettle under adverse conditions. A true leader with brilliant ideas can only be measured when put under terrible duress. When good times roll any Amit Shah would shine and seem the best. In reality any joker in that position would have been considered the best in the crowd. This reminds of a similar situation in Orissa. When Janaki Ballav Patnaik (JB) was leading the Congress in this state, he was considered a master strategist by his family and those that benefitted from him. He was rumoured to have held the Congress High Command under his grip and he could predict and pre-empt all political hurdles well in time. Those were obviously his good times rolling. After some time people got tired with his debauchery and corruption. Season changed. Come election, he went ahead and contested from Athgarh thinking he would sweep the votes. His opponent was a lightweight Ranendra Pratap Swain of Janata Dal. JB lost that election by a huge margin of 42,000 votes while being projected as the Chief Ministerial candidate. That was proof enough that it was not acumen of JB but just that time favored him for a certain period and that situation changed.

In reality, time and tide always change. The glory attributed to Amit Shah is very similar to the type of praise that was heaped on people like Janaki Ballav. Amit Shah was plain simple lucky to be at a spot where, whatever he touched, turned to gold. Karnataka proved that Amit Shah is no master planner or strategist. His claim, in an interview to an English daily, days before results were declared showed he is a complete novice in reading people’s mind. He had said Karnataka would give results which could not be understood by conventional calculations. So very true! Shah’s calculations were either conventional and went awry or completely unfounded. For, had he been truly aware that Modi’s acceptability has sunk then he surely would have advised the PM to spend less time campaigning. That the Prime Minister spent so much time in Karnataka proves that both of these two top BJP leaders have somehow been distanced from actual voters and are not in touch with reality.

Now with the complete South of India BJP mukt, the leadership has to do hard thinking on how to regain voter confidence.

### WISDOM CORNER

Opinion is the medium between knowledge and ignorance. PLATO

That best portion of a man’s life, his little, nameless, unremembered acts of kindness and love. WILLIAM WORDSWORTH

Die to everything of yesterday so that your mind is always fresh, always young, innocent, full of vigor and passion. JIDDU KRISHNAMURTI

### WORDSWORTH

#### Hue and cry

This idiom, meaning a loud clamour or public outcry, contains the obsolete word hue, which people these days know only as a slightly formal or technical word for a colour or shade. As a result, you sometimes see the phrase written as hew and cry. Our modern meaning goes back to part of English common law in the centuries after the Norman Conquest. There wasn’t an organised police force and the job of fighting crime fell mostly on ordinary people. If somebody robbed you, or you saw a murder or other crime of violence, it was up to you to raise the alarm, the hue and cry. Everybody in the neighbourhood was then obliged to drop what they were doing and help pursue and capture the supposed criminal. If the criminal was caught with stolen goods on him, he was summarily convicted (he wasn’t allowed to say anything in his defence, for example), while if he resisted arrest he could be killed. The same term was used for a proclamation relating to the capture of a criminal or the finding of stolen goods. The laws relating to hue and cry were repealed in Britain in 1827. This mysterious word hue is from the first part of the Anglo-Norman French legal phrase hue e cri. This came from the Old French hue for an outcry, in turn from huer, to shout. It seems that hue could mean any cry, or even the sound of a horn or trumpet – the phrase hue e cri had a Latin equivalent, hutesium et clamor, “with horn and with voice”. As an etymological footnote, the Old French huer survived in Cornwall right down to the early twentieth century. At that time an important part of local livelihoods in coastal communities came from the seasonal catch of fish called pilchards, which migrated past the coast in great shoals in early autumn. To be sure of not missing their arrival, fishermen posted lookouts on the cliffs. They were called huers, since they commonly alerted the waiting fishermen by shouting through speaking trumpets.

### FOCUS MULTILATERALISM

## A BRICS REVIVAL?

There was a time when everyone was talking about a group of fast-growing emerging economies with huge potential. But the BRICS – Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa – struggled to transform themselves from a promising asset class into a unified real-world diplomatic and financial player. Is this finally changing?



Though the group’s institutional framework remains underdeveloped, the motivations that led to its creation have not diminished – and are unlikely to any time soon. In fact, the BRICS and their supplicants appear to be both united and driven by one thing: grievance



Ana Palacio

DEVELOPING ECONOMIES ARE ANGRY ABOUT THE BURDENSOME CONDITIONALITY THAT HAS BEEN IMPOSED ON THEM BY WESTERN-DOMINATED INSTITUTIONS

The story of the BRICS begins with a November 2001 paper by Jim O’Neill, then the head of global economic research at Goldman Sachs Asset Management, called “The World Needs Better Economic BRICS” (the original grouping did not include South Africa). At a time when the world was dealing with the fallout of the dot-com bust and the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks, O’Neill highlighted the BRICS’ vast potential, noting that their GDP growth was likely to accelerate considerably in the ensuing decades.

At the time, China and India were experiencing rapid economic growth, and Russia, aided by booming commodity prices, was recovering from the post-Soviet meltdown of the 1990s. Growth in the BRICS was outpacing that of the advanced economies so significantly that O’Neill predicted in 2003 that their collective GDP could overtake the then-Group of 6 largest developed economies by 2040.

While the world expected the BRICS to thrive economically, few expected them to form a united grouping. After all, they represent a mix of unsteady democracies and outright autocracies, each with its own distinctive economic structure. And two of them – China and India – have long been locked in a border dispute, with no sign of resolution.

But the BRICS saw their economic alignment as an opportunity to expand their global influence by creating an alternative to Western international institutions. And, for a while, they seemed to be making progress. The addition of South Africa – then Africa’s largest economy – in 2010 lent the grouping greater heft. By 2014, the BRICS

Development Bank – now the New Development Bank – was formed as an alternative to the World Bank. The next year, the BRICS created the Contingent Reserve Arrangement, in order to support members experiencing short-term balance-of-payments pressures.

Economically, the BRICS continued to thrive, at least in the aggregate. Though China is the only BRICS economy that has sustained solid growth, the group has surpassed the G7 in terms of relative contribution to global GDP (based on purchasing power parity). Moreover, bilateral trade among its members is rising rapidly. But progress toward the BRICS’ broader ambitions seemed to stall.

Recent developments suggest renewed momentum. Lately, members have been talking of “de-dollarizing” trade, with some raising the prospect of a new shared BRICS currency. While calls for de-dollarization are nothing new, some experts believe that a BRICS currency “has the potential to usurp” the US dollar, or at least “shake [its] place on the throne.”

Moreover, the BRICS seem to be making a comeback as a platform for cooperation on a range of issues, including climate change, global governance, and development. In fact, 19 countries, in-

cluding Argentina, Turkey, and Saudi Arabia, have expressed interest in joining the BRICS – bids that will be discussed at the group’s August summit in South Africa.

Though the group’s institutional framework remains underdeveloped, the motivations that led to its creation have not diminished – and are unlikely to any time soon. In fact, the BRICS and their supplicants appear to be both united and driven by one thing: grievance.

Developing economies are angry about the burdensome conditionality that has been imposed on them by Western-dominated institutions. They are sick of what they perceive as double standards on vital policy matters, such as the green transition. They are unwilling to tolerate efforts to “constrain” their economies through conservation demands or limits on technology sharing. Perhaps most important, they regard Western norms and values with suspicion as a fig leaf for Western countries’ self-interested behaviour.

The West’s inability – or unwillingness – to reform global governance so that emerging economies like China and India have greater influence has compounded these grievances. Calls for reform have, after all, been growing louder for decades – since around 1999, when

the G20 was formed. In the aftermath of the 1997-98 Asian financial crisis, finance ministers and central-bank governors began holding regular high-level meetings, and non-Western representatives wanted to be heard.

With the West’s pledges to pursue reform having come to nothing, potential alternatives – from development banks to currencies – look increasingly attractive to those who feel left out. The BRICS are attempting to build a new world order, “bric by bric,” and the appeal of their cause among other disgruntled countries is growing.

One must wonder what would happen if countries like Argentina or Saudi Arabia joined this project. Even the “BRICS-Plus” embraced by China could go a long way toward advancing an alternative worldview and institutional system – goals that China is also pursuing with its massive transnational Belt and Road Initiative (BRI). To be sure, the BRICS’ ability to realise its ambitions remains far from certain. None of its members is going to stop putting national interests first, though that is precisely what has long held the BRICS back. Even China’s BRI has been likened to a “new form of imperialism” – hardly the best way to win long-term friends.

But the resurgence of the BRICS is disquieting, not least because the grouping has not demonstrated a capacity for genuine global leadership. Shared grievances about the West – legitimate or not – cannot support a rules-based world order. A coherent narrative for global governance, underpinned by clearly articulated values, is essential. And the BRICS have offered no such thing.

For the West, the BRICS’ growing influence holds an important lesson. If the current international order is to remain relevant, the institutions that comprise it will have to change.

The writer, a former minister of foreign affairs of Spain, is a visiting lecturer at Georgetown University.

PROJECT SYNDICATE

### SPECTRUM NATION

## When courts have to step in

The Supreme Court ruling on the Eknath Shinde case has given rise to a discussion on a serious threat looming large. Does it open a Pandora’s box if a repeat of Maharashtra happens at the Centre. The change of government in Maharashtra saw sudden resumption of big projects that were stalled by the previous MVA government. The court said the splinter Shiv Sena group and Eknath Shinde’s appointment as legislature party leader was illegal, slammed Governor BS Koshiyari for committing blunders, including the directive to then Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray to take the floor test, and found the process lacking legality. But it refused to sack the Shinde government on the plea that Thackeray had resigned.

Sadly, it slipped away from the court’s mind that when the Uddhav group had approached it for a stay on the Governor seeking immediate trust vote, it had rejected the plea. Then, Uddhav resigned. Now, the blame is being put on him for tendering his resignation. Technically, the court can absolve itself. People give a mandate for certain welfare and economic goals. The naivety of the court ruling may have changed that. Instead, it should have protected it. The court must look beyond the obvious, the serious, moral, ethical, financial and perceived threats to the nation. That is where Rashtra and Maharashtra matter.

The simplistic issue of majority has more to it than meets the eye. The court can aver that finances are not its concern, as RBI lawyer Jaideep Gupta put before it against the 58 petitions on demonetisation of 6 November 2016. He said, “Judicial review cannot be countenanced in economic policy measure unless found to be unconstitutional. Economically relevant factors in economic policy making are best left to experts.”

Thankfully, the court did not agree on 6 December 2022 and said limited scope of a judicial review in economic policy matters does not mean that court will fold its hands and sit back, observing that the manner in which a decision is taken by the government can always be examined. Yes, Uddhav was at fault for resigning. But did he have much of an option? Had he not resigned he could have been dismissed by the same Governor. Hypothetically, if a similar coup happens say at the behest of some, may be a motley group or select business cartel, at the Rashtra, Delhi as per the Shinde

precedent, would the court again take a view to allow fait accompli of justice. It may even be a threat to the nation’s security and sovereignty.

Soon after such a formation of government, the new group of defectors, can act to change the Union budget, many defence projects, and other decisions through money bills, which literally are fait accompli. The provision of money bill is debatable. Many non-financial issues have come up as money bills for the purpose of getting these passed without parliamentary sanction. Parliament must mull over such provisions. These can be used for nefarious purposes. Courts can’t ignore these.

And, if the political class ignores correction and the Constitution remains vague, the interpretation would have to be done by the courts. Allowing fait accompli on the plea that there has to be a government that could deliver is faulted.

Sometimes to have an apolitical face, courts avoid a decision. The Uddhav Thackeray case may have been one. It is a lesson, that the court even unwittingly, should not become party to destabilising force.

“The court needs to avoid that particular outcome which has a potential to create an adverse effect on employment, growth of infrastructure or economy, or the revenue of the state.” Supreme Court Justices AK Sikri and AM Sapre, said in a May 2017 ruling overturning a high court decision that shut down a sugar factory because it was too close to another.

This ruling has played a significant role. The top court’s judgment sets precedent as projects worth billions of rupees remain stuck for years in a judicial system that has over 24 million pending cases, including commercial and criminal. India is ranked 130 out of 190 in ease of doing business by the World Bank and 172 in enforcing contracts. The NGT’s mindless ruling on scrapping 10-year-old vehicles is wrecking individuals and the transport industry.

The Shinde or the Thackeray case is landmark and needs extreme caution. These can make or mar a nation. The court has to restore the rule of law.

The writer is Professor, Indian Institute of Mass Communication.

INFIA



Shivaji Sarkar

IF THE POLITICAL CLASS IGNORES CORRECTION AND THE CONSTITUTION REMAINS VAGUE, THE INTERPRETATION WOULD HAVE TO BE DONE BY THE COURTS

## Letters

### TO THE EDITOR

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

Orissa POST

B-15, Rasulgah Industrial Estate, Bhubaneswar-751010

### Vote against hubris

Sir, This refers to “Karnataka: BJP trounced,” Orissa POST, May 14. The Congress’ handsome victory in Karnataka breaks the party’s losing streak and this vote of confidence in a state where it boasts of a distinctive leadership and robust organisation, and a broad social coalition will deservedly lift its sagging spirits. It was also at the right place at the right time – anti-incumbency had mounted against the unremovable Basavaraj Bommai government and all of the BJP’s last-minute Hindutva overlay and Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s electioneering blitzkrieg could not make it go away. In Karnataka, anti-incumbency was made of issues that were real and throbbing. The Bommai government was seen to have taken corruption to new levels, and it was perceived as a non-starter on other issues of public concern such as price rise and creation of jobs. PM Modi only seemed to help strengthen the BJP where it was already strong – in other areas, he was not enough. The Karnataka verdict is a vote against hubris and complacency. The BJP must look again at its template, its fit or lack of it with local topographies. But, for the Congress, the Karnataka outcome drives home an important message: The onus of victory is on it and it should deliver the promises it has made to the voters. It must also know that the Karnataka victory need not mean that the tide has turned – it needs to build on the work it has done.

N Sathasiva Reddy, WASHINGTON

### Tough, not impossible

Sir, Globally, in 2020, there was one maternal death every two minutes. Most of the deaths were in low and lower middle income countries. In 2020, there were 223 maternal deaths per 1,00,000 live births, and one of United Nations’ (UN) lofted Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) – achieving less than seventy maternal deaths per one lakh live births by 2030 – looks tough though not impossible. A latest report of the UN has said that India leads the countries that have the highest number of maternal deaths, stillbirths, and neonatal (new born) casualties. Severe bleeding, uncontrolled blood pressure and infections during pregnancy, unsafe abortions during earlier pregnancies may lead to disastrous consequences following childbirth. It is incumbent upon the Centre to upgrade India’s primary health centres. The WHO mandate of 8 antenatal checks of a pregnant woman has to be adhered to. Potable water and uninterrupted supply of electricity are essential.

Ganapathi Bhat, AKOLA



## of the day quote

The Haryana government has decided to open drug de-addiction centres across the state

MANOHAR LAL KHATTAR | HARYANA CM

The BJP lost miserably in seats located just outside city limits despite adopting every trick in the Uttar Pradesh urban local body elections

AKHILESH YADAV | SP CHIEF

The people of Karnataka took a decision... (they) gave power to Congress. We expect them (Congress) to fulfill the promises they made to the people

ASADUDDIN OWAIISI | AIMIM PRESIDENT

## SHORT TAKES

### Five killed

**Dharamshala:** Five people, three of them members of a family, were killed Sunday when the truck they were travelling in rolled down a 100-metre-deep gorge near Dharamshala in Himachal Pradesh's Kangra district, officials said. The accident took place in the Rasehar village in the afternoon, they said. Four people died on the spot while one succumbed to injuries on the way to hospital. A team of personnel from the district administration, State Disaster Response Force (SDRF) and police has arrived at the scene, according to a release issued by the Kangra District Public Relations Officer (DPRO).

### Exercise begins

**New Delhi:** The navies of India and Indonesia Sunday began a six-day maritime exercise in sync with their overall efforts to expand bilateral military engagement. The Indian Navy has deployed its indigenously built anti-submarine warfare corvette INS Kavaratti, a Dornier maritime patrol aircraft and a Chetak chopper for the Samudra Shakti exercise, officials said. Earlier, the Navy said the ship arrived at Batam Port in Indonesia for the exercise. The Indonesian Navy is being represented at the exercise by warship KRI Sultan Iskandar Muda, CN 235 maritime patrol aircraft and AS565 Panther helicopter, they said.

### Pistols recovered

**New Delhi:** A 23-year-old interstate arms trafficker was arrested for supplying illegal weapons to criminals in Delhi and surrounding areas, a Delhi Police official said Sunday, adding that 10 pistols were recovered from his possession. The accused was identified as Shivam Prajapati, a resident of district Satna in Madhya Pradesh.

### Six injured

**Palghar:** At least six persons were seriously injured following a collision between a two-wheeler and an autorickshaw in Maharashtra's Palghar district, an official said Sunday. The incident took place at Pali village on the Wada-Manor road on the intervening night of Saturday and Sunday, said the official from Wada police station.

### Man arrested

**New Delhi:** Delhi Police has nabbed a man, who had been evading his arrest for past 13 years in connection with a rash and negligent driving case, from Mehrauli area of South District. Chandan Chaudhary, DCP South Delhi, said that the accused was identified as Baldev Singh (46), a resident of Rajasthan. He was held from nearby area of Mehrauli bus terminal.



The BJP should be taught the Karnataka lesson in Madhya Pradesh where the Assembly polls are due by the year-end  
DIGVIJAYA SINGH | CONGRESS RAJYA SABHA MEMBER

## MANIPUR CM TO MEET PM

Manipur Chief Minister N Biren Singh and four members of his cabinet have gone to Delhi to meet Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Union Home Minister Amit Shah Sunday to discuss the situation in the northeastern state shaken by violence for the past several days, a source said



# Gujarat's 'Sweet Tooth' fuels alarming rise in diabetes cases

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**Ahmedabad, May 14:** Gujaratis, renowned for their love of food, have a distinctive habit of adding sugar to various culinary delights. However, this age-old tradition is now giving rise to an alarming health crisis.

The prevalence of diabetes is skyrocketing at an alarming pace in the state. Recent data from the National Family Health Survey (NFHS-5) conducted in 2022 sheds light on the severity of the issue.

The survey reveals alarming statistics on high random blood glucose (RBG) levels, surpassing the threshold of 141 mg/dl. Among women in Gujarat, the prevalence stands at a staggering 14.8 per cent, while for men, it reaches 16.1 per cent. Comparatively, the previous

NFHS-4 report released in 2015-16 reported significantly lower figures of 5.8 per cent for women and 7.6 per cent for men.

These figures paint a troubling picture, as Gujarat surpasses the national average of 12.4 per cent for women and 14.4 per cent for men in terms of high RBG levels. Among major states with populations exceeding three crore, Gujarat ranks fourth, highlighting the pressing need for immediate intervention and widespread awareness campaigns.

The situation has taken a turn for the worse, as the state faces the consequences of its sugary indulgences. The growing prevalence of diabetes demands urgent action to curb its alarming rise. Rucha J. Mehta, a Gujarat-based endocrinologist with over 16 years



of experience told IANS: "By 2030, one in six Indians will be diabetic. One of the major reasons for diabetes is obesity and currently, 7 out of 10 adults and 4 out of 11 children are obese in India. The scenario in Gujarat is even worse. 150-170 minutes of cardio per week

is a must to maintain a healthy body."

She also spoke about Gujarati diet, saying: "The Gujarati diet has maximum carbs, oil and sugar. Due to such poor lifestyle habits, Type 2 diabetes is on the rise. We have more patients now, than we

ever had." Epidemiologist Kaumudi Joshipura, who has been appointed the Dean of the newly opened Ahmedabad University's School of Public Health, also said: "In terms of lifestyle, ours is the only state where we put sugar in almost everything we cook, a lot of fried stuff, refined carbs diet. I was surprised to see that although alcohol is banned in Gujarat, a lot of people get addicted to alcohol more than in other states."

Chairman and Chief Diabetologist Swasthya Diabetes Care & All India Institute of Diabetes & Research, Dr. Mayur Patel said: "Cases of diabetes are rapidly increasing in Gujarat because of both overeating and under-eating. There is nothing like work-life balance and our food habits make the scenario worse. Weight

gain is a major problem for Gujaratis."

The semi-arid climate of Gujarat, characterised by scorching temperatures reaching up to 45 degrees Celsius during summer, along with irregular rainfall patterns, has resulted in water scarcity. Groundwater, the primary source of drinking water, is naturally salty and contains high levels of fluoride due to its proximity to the coast. Locally referred to as "khaara pani," this salty water profoundly affects the taste of food prepared with it.

To counterbalance the excessive saltiness, Gujarat's ancestors began adding an element of sweetness, typically jaggery, to their dishes. Over time, this practice became ingrained in the culture, and the people of Gujarat developed a preference for sugary foods.

# 1 killed, 8 injured in Akola violence

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Akola, May 14:** One person was killed and eight others, including two policemen, were injured after a clash broke out between members of two communities in Maharashtra's Akola city over a social media post, officials said Sunday.

The police have detained 26 people in connection with the incident which took place at around 11.30 pm on Saturday in the sensitive Old City area, they said.

District Magistrate Neema Arora ordered the imposition of Section 144 of the Criminal Procedure Code (CrPC), which prohibits unlawful assembly of people, in four police station areas in the city to maintain law and order.

The violence took place after a religious post went viral on a social media platform, Superintendent of Police (SP) Sandip Ghuge said. Members of the two groups pelted



stones at each other. Some vehicles were also damaged in the incident, Additional Superintendent of Police (ASP) Monika Raut said.

"One person was killed and eight others were injured. Those injured included two policemen who were hurt when the rioters pelted stones," Ghuge said. Police used

tear gas to disperse the rioters and the situation was now under control, Raut said.

The police have registered two cases and detained 26 people in connection with the incident, SP Ghuge said.

According to local administration, state Deputy State Deputy

THE VIOLENCE TOOK PLACE AFTER A RELIGIOUS POST WENT VIRAL ON A SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORM, SUPERINTENDENT OF POLICE SANDIP GHUGE SAID

MEMBERS OF THE TWO GROUPS PELTED STONES AT EACH OTHER. SOME VEHICLES WERE ALSO DAMAGED IN THE INCIDENT, ADDITIONAL SUPERINTENDENT OF POLICE, MONIKA RAUT SAID

Chief Minister Devendra Fadnis, who is also the guardian minister of Akola district, was monitoring the situation and appealed to people to maintain peace.

Heavy security was deployed in the city following the incident, ASP Raut said. One thousand personnel of the State Reserve Police from Amravati have been deployed in Akola city, she said. The police appealed to citizens not to panic and not to believe in any rumour.



Students celebrate their success after the announcement of ICSE Board results at a school in Lucknow

PTI PHOTO

# Scientists alarmed after Alligator Gar fish found in Dal Lake

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Srinagar, May 14:** The discovery of a carnivorous Alligator Gar fish in Kashmir's famous Dal Lake has set the alarm bells ringing among scientists and authorities as its presence poses a great threat to the native fish species.

The ray-finned euryhaline fish having a mouth like that of an alligator was caught during a de-weeding operation in the famous lake. "This is an Alligator Gar fish which is normally found in North America and some parts of India like Bhopal upper lake and Kerala backwaters. Being a predator fish and a carnivore, it poses a threat to native species of Dal Lake," Dr Shafeeqa Peer, a scientist at the Lake Conservation and Management Authority

(LCMA) said.

Peer said it was a matter of concern as to how this fish has invaded the water system of Kashmir. "What will be the fate of our native fishes? In certain places like Bhopal, it has been banned as it thrives on other small fishes. It poses a threat to other species and we have not yet come across this type of species here," she added.

Peer said the LCMA has now collaborated with the Department of Fisheries and Fisheries division of Sher-e-Kashmir University of Agricultural Sciences and Technology (SKUAST) to look for any other Alligator Gar fish in the lake.

"We will launch a massive hunt to ascertain whether it is just one fish, is it accidental or somebody has played mischief? There are a



lot of questions, especially from the ecology and biodiversity point of view," Peer said.

Attaulah Khan, senior project officer at the fisheries department, said as of now, two Alligator Gar fishes have been caught. "These

fishes are native to America but Aquarium keepers somehow get these fishes for their Aquarium and when they overgrow they take these fishes and put them in nearest water bodies," Khan said.

The officer said there was noth-

ing to panic about as every step will be taken to safeguard the water bodies. "We are taking custody of the fishes for a study in collaboration with the Fisheries department of SKUAST and accordingly we will take necessary measures," Khan said.

He said the Biological Diversity Act 2002 prohibits the presence of any kind of invasive fish species that can be hazardous to natural fish fauna. "This is a carnivorous fish, this is an apex predator, very predatory in nature. Whatever comes in its way, it can kill that (fishes). Whenever any species of any fish is introduced which have predatory nature, it is detrimental for the local fish fauna of that area, same is with our fish fauna of Kashmir," he added. Khan said there can be some more such fish.

## Three drown in TN

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**Chennai, May 14:** In a tragic incident, three students of a Veda Padashalai were washed away when they went to take a bath in the Kollidam river at Srirangam in Tamil Nadu's Tiruchi district Sunday morning, police said.

The deceased were identified as S. Vishnu Prasath, 14, and S. Hari Prasath, 15, both from Mamargudi in Tiruvallur district, S. Abhiram, 15, of Guntur district in Andhra Pradesh. Fellow student A. Gopalakrishnan, 16, of Villarasampathi in Erode district, was also in the group that went to take a bath. However, the students lost control due to the high flow of water and slipped into the deep side of the river.

## REMARKS ON JUDICIARY

# SC to hear BLA plea against VP, Rijiju



The lawyers' body has moved the top court challenging the Bombay High Court's February 9 order dismissing its plea on the ground that it was not a fit case to invoke the writ jurisdiction under Article 226 of the Constitution

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, May 14:** The Supreme Court is scheduled to hear Monday a plea of Bombay Lawyers Association (BLA) against Union Law Minister Kiren Rijiju and Vice President Jagdeep Dhankhar over their remarks on judiciary and the collegium system for appointment of judges.

The lawyers' body has moved the top court challenging the Bombay High Court's February 9 order dismissing its plea on the ground that it was not a fit case to invoke the writ jurisdiction under Article 226 of the Constitution.

As per the apex court web-site, the appeal of the BLA is listed for hearing before a bench comprising Justices Sanjay Kishan Kaul and Ahsanuddin Amanullah. The Bombay Lawyers Association (BLA) had claimed that Rijiju and Dhankhar showed lack of faith in the Constitution with their remarks and conduct. It had sought orders to restrain Dhankhar from discharging duty

as the vice president, and Rijiju as the cabinet minister for the central government.

In an appeal, the lawyers' body said the "frontal attack not just on the judiciary but the Constitution" by the two executive officials has lowered the prestige of the Supreme Court in public.

Rijiju had said the collegium system of appointing judges was "opaque and not transparent". Vice President Jagdeep Dhankhar had questioned the landmark 1973 Kesavananda Bharati judgement that gave the basic structure doctrine.

Dhankhar had said the verdict set a bad precedent and, if any authority questions Parliament's power to amend the Constitution, it would be difficult to say "we are a democratic nation". "It is submitted that the Petitioner herein filed the PIL before the High Court of Judicature at Bombay praying therein to declare the Respondent no 1 and 2 as disqualified candidates to hold any constitutional posts of Vice President and Minister of the Union Cabinet, respectively, based on their behaviour, conduct and utterances made in public," the petition has said.

The two constitutional functionaries, it said, showed lack of faith in the Constitution by their conduct and utterances made in public and by attacking its institutions, including the Supreme Court, and showing scant regard for the law laid down by the Supreme Court. "The conduct of Respondent Nos 1 and 2 appeared to have shaken public faith in the Supreme Court and the Constitution," it said.



SAIF ALI KHAN 2012 ASSAULT CASE

Trial likely to begin from next month

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, May 14: Eleven years after actor Saif Ali Khan and two others allegedly assaulted a South African businessman and his father-in-law at a hotel in Mumbai, the trial in the case is likely to begin from next month.

The additional chief metropolitan magistrate, Esplanade court, April 24 read out charges against Khan and his two friends—Shakeel Ladak and Bilal Amrohi.

It also issued summons to witnesses for the recording of evidence, paving the way for the trial which is likely to begin from June 15, the next date of hearing in the case.

The accused were arrested following a complaint filed by businessman Iqbal Mir Sharma after an alleged fight at the Wasabi restaurant inside the Taj Hotel on February 22, 2012. The three accused was later released on bail.

Saif Ali Khan was accompanied by his wife and actor Kareena Kapoor Khan, her sister Karisma Kapoor, actors Malaika Arora Khan, Amrita Arora and some male friends at the time.



According to police, when Sharma protested the raucous chatter of the actor and his friends, Saif Ali Khan allegedly threatened them and subsequently punched him in the nose, fracturing it. The NRI businessman had also accused Saif and his friends of hitting his father-in-law Raman Patel. On the other hand, Saif Ali Khan said Sharma made provocative statements and used abusive language against the women accompanying him, which led to the ruckus. The police filed the charge sheet December 21, 2012. Saif Ali Khan and his two friends have been charged under Indian Penal Code Sections 325 (voluntarily causing grievous hurt) and 34 (common intention).

Milton Friedman Professor in Economics and Director of the Energy Policy Institute at the University of Chicago, said, "Delhi's challenges with air pollution attract the spotlight. But what also needs to be highlighted is the Delhi government's desire to test and develop inventive solutions."

Additionally, this partnership will also enable researchers from the University of Chicago to work closely with government officials to enable knowledge exchange through seminars, workshops, or training sessions and carry out policy evaluation.

also assist the transport department to leverage insights from advanced statistics, machine learning, artificial intelligence, data visualization, use of satellite data, and econometrics, among others, to improve the effectiveness of its existing programs, and design changes to improve them.

Apart from driving research that is evidence-based for policy innovation, evaluation, and capacity building, the cooperation will also facilitate knowledge exchange and high-quality data analysis.

Sharing his thoughts about the alliance, Michael Greenstone,

■ The strategic partnership will enable the establishment of a research unit that will design innovative policy interventions for pilot and evaluation

■ The MoU is a step ahead in augmenting the Transport Department's ongoing programs to reduce air pollution in Delhi



REPRESENTATIONAL IMAGE

programs to reduce air pollution in Delhi.

Highlighting the aim of this collaboration, Ashish Kundra, Principal Secretary, said, "We are excited to work closely with the re-

searchers from the Energy Policy Institute at the University of Chicago Trust in India (EPIC India) and incorporate the application of research and policy expertise with the foresight to gen-

erate new policy initiatives and solutions, alongside a rigorous evaluation of the transport department's existing programs."

Under this partnership, the researchers from EPIC India will

Pact to reduce vehicular pollution in Delhi

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, May 14: The Transport Department of Delhi government and the University of Chicago Trust (UC Trust) have signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) to facilitate an evidence-based approach to reducing vehicular pollution in the national capital.

The strategic partnership will enable the establishment of a research unit that will design innovative policy interventions for pilot and evaluation. The MoU is a step ahead in augmenting the Transport Department's ongoing

Lok Adalats in Delhi try over 2.32L cases



REPRESENTATIONAL IMAGE

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, May 14: More than 2.32 lakh cases were tried in Lok Adalats organised in all district court complexes, Delhi High Court and tribunals here Saturday as part of the second National Lok Adalat of 2023, the Delhi State Legal Services Authority said.

Mukesh Kumar Gupta, Member Secretary, DSLSA, stated that cases such as cheque bounce, civil cases, motor accident claim tribunal matters, bank recovery, matrimonial disputes (except divorce cases), land acquisition and those involving labour disputes were taken up for disposal.

Compoundable traffic challans were also taken up for disposal, he said. In the seven District Court Complexes, 351 Lok Adalat Benches were constituted to deal with all

types of civil and criminal compoundable cases, he said.

"This is the highest referral figure till date. These include 1,55,000 traffic challans; 14,912 traffic challans which were pending in courts; 38,111 pending cases; and 23,586 pre-litigative cases," he said, adding that in one such case, an insurance company was directed to pay Rs 1.24 crore to the dependants of a motor accident victim. During the day, DSLSA's Executive Chairperson and Delhi High Court judge, Justice Sirdharth Mridul, visited the Saket Court Complex to oversee the arrangements for Lok Adalat.

Gupta said the DSLSA engaged transgressors, senior citizens and acid attack victims, in decision making process by deputing them as associate members in Lok Adalat benches at different court complexes.

Scorching heat makes Maha sweat

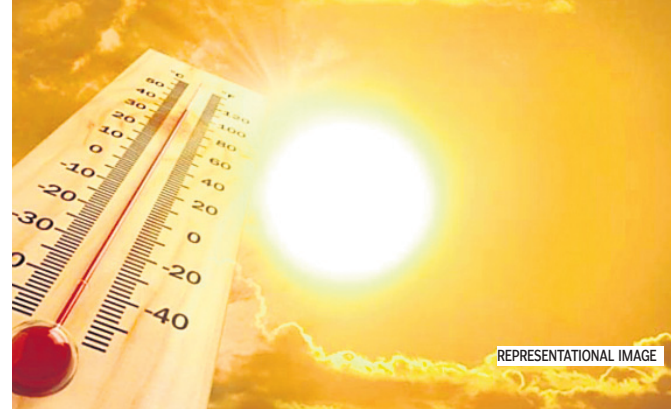
INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Mumbai, May 14: A whopping 26 of Maharashtra's 36 districts are reeling under heatwave conditions with average temperatures of 40 degrees Celsius and higher in the past two-three days, as people braced and experts sounded warnings.

According to the IMD's latest data, the readings recorded Saturday are: Ahmednagar (40.0C), Satara (40.4C), Buldhana (40.6C), Pune (40.8C), Washim, Beed and Latur (41.0C each), Osmanabad (41.1C), Solapur and Aurangabad (41.4C each), Chandrapur (41.6C), Jalna, Hingoli, Yavatmal, Gadchiroli and Nagpur (42.0C each), Amravati (42.6C), Nanded (42.8C), Parbhani, Gondia, Bhandara and Dhule (43.0C each), Wardha (43.4C), Parbhani (43.6C), Akola (44.5C), Jalgaon (44.9C).

In the lower, 35C-plus range, the districts are: Sindhudurg (33.0C), Mumbai City (34.4C), Ratnagiri (35.0C), Mumbai Suburban (35.2C), Kolhapur (35.6C), Thane (36.0C), Palghar (36.7C), Raigad (37.0C), Nandurbar (38.0C), Sangli (38.1C), Nashik (39.7C).

"The IMD has declared heat-wave conditions in different parts, including the entire coastal Konkan, Vidarbha, Marathwada, western and northern Maharashtra. This is the fourth heat-wave alert in the current season for the coastal Konkan, and the first for May, while the other re-



REPRESENTATIONAL IMAGE

The rising temperature is fraught with risks to public health and the concerned authorities as well as the people are advised to take immediate measures to ensure safety of the masses

gions are already reeling under above-normal temperatures since nearly mid-April," said an expert body, Asar Social Impact Advisors Pvt. Ltd. (ASIAPL).

This is fraught with significant risks to public health and the concerned authorities as well as the people are advised to take immediate preventive measures to ensure safety of the masses, averred ASIAPL.

Ex-Secretary of Ministry of Earth Sciences Madhavan Nair Rajeevan says the latest data clearly indicates that the intensity and frequency of heatwaves have increased across India, and are projected to increase further in the

coming years. "This year in April and early-May, there was considerable rainfall in northern, north-western parts due to western disturbances, and many heat waves occurred in Central and east India indicating climate anomalies. As Cyclone Mocha moves through the Bay of Bengal towards Bangladesh-Myanmar, it will influence the westerlies and cause more heat waves in north, central and coastal regions, as witnessed in the Konkan coast," said Rajeevan.

Dr Anjal Prakash of Indian School of Business and Lead Author of two IPCC Reports, said the IPCC has indicated significant

seasonal variability as temperatures rise.

"The planet has already warmed by 1.16 C degrees since the pre-industrial era and this will continue at an unprecedented rate, and is anticipated to warm by 1.5C by the middle of the century," said Dr Prakash.

Each fraction of warming has major implications for the seasons, chief being wet areas shall be wetter and dry areas shall have more dry spells, rainfall unpredictability with long spells of constant rain and protracted dry spells, he said.

Co-Author of IPCC Reports Aditya Pillai of Centre for Policy Research said Maharashtra's Konkan is witnessing extreme heat waves for the second time this year and multiple warnings for Vidarbha and Marathwada regions.

The ASIAPL experts are unanimous that the planet's seasons have been thrown off-gear with huge implications across sectors, including agriculture and human health.

They urged the government and local authorities to supplement heatwave warnings with clear directives to people not to step out between 11.30 a.m -3.30 p.m., health advisories for children-senior citizens, all people must stay hydrated and take other basic precautions, increasing the amount of shade in our cities, access to water and other forms of cooling.

National capital to get more EV charging stations

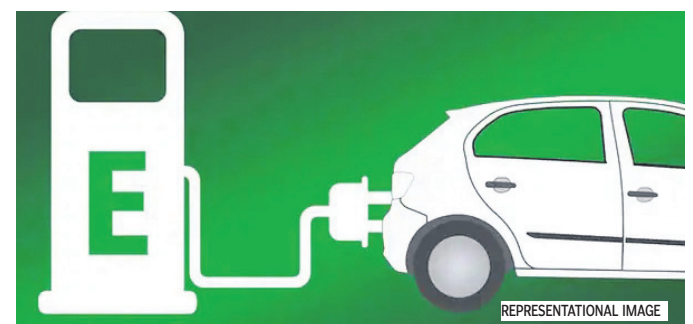
"The aim is to provide easy accessibility to charging stations and to save time by providing swapping facilities," an official said

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, May 14: The NDMC is planning to increase the number of EV charging stations in Lutyens' Delhi and even provide battery swapping facilities at some of these points, a senior official said.

With Delhi being among the most polluted capitals in the world, the New Delhi Municipal Council (NDMC) has been making a push for electric vehicles to nudge residents to opt for cleaner vehicle options.

There are around 100 electric vehicle (EV) charging stations



REPRESENTATIONAL IMAGE

across the national capital at present and this would be the first time that some of them would have battery swapping facilities, which is quite prominent in Western countries, he said.

The official said the aim is to provide easy accessibility to charging stations and to save time by providing swapping facilities.

This will give a major push to EVs in the city. Various PSUs, including the Rajasthan Electronics

and Instruments Limited (REIL) and the Kerala State Electronics Development Corporation Limited (KELTRON), have approached the NDMC for setting up public charging stations, the official said.

NDMC Vice Chairman Satish Upadhyay said the demand for electric vehicles is expected to rise with increasing prices of petrol and diesel.

"Moreover, there is an urgent need to give a push to EVs to pro-

vide the city more green alternatives. Also, several app-based aggregators are moving to e-bikes. Once there is a web of such stations, people will not worry about the issue of charging and then there will be more such vehicles," said Upadhyay.

"The plan to add more EV charging stations is under process, but we are also planning to install battery swapping facilities at some of the prominent stations," Upadhyay added.

Battery swapping is an alternative that involves exchanging discharged batteries for charged ones. Battery swapping de-links the vehicle and fuel (in this case, the battery) and thereby leads to a reduction in the upfront cost of the vehicles.

Upadhyay said a policy will be prepared for the location of charging stations, and their total number and mode of allotment.

DRI seizes foreign cigarettes worth ₹24 crore; five held

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, May 14: The Directorate of Revenue Intelligence, Mumbai, has seized 1.2 crore sticks of foreign origin cigarettes with an estimated market value of Rs 24 crore and arrested five persons including an importer for allegedly trying to smuggle them, the DRI said Sunday.

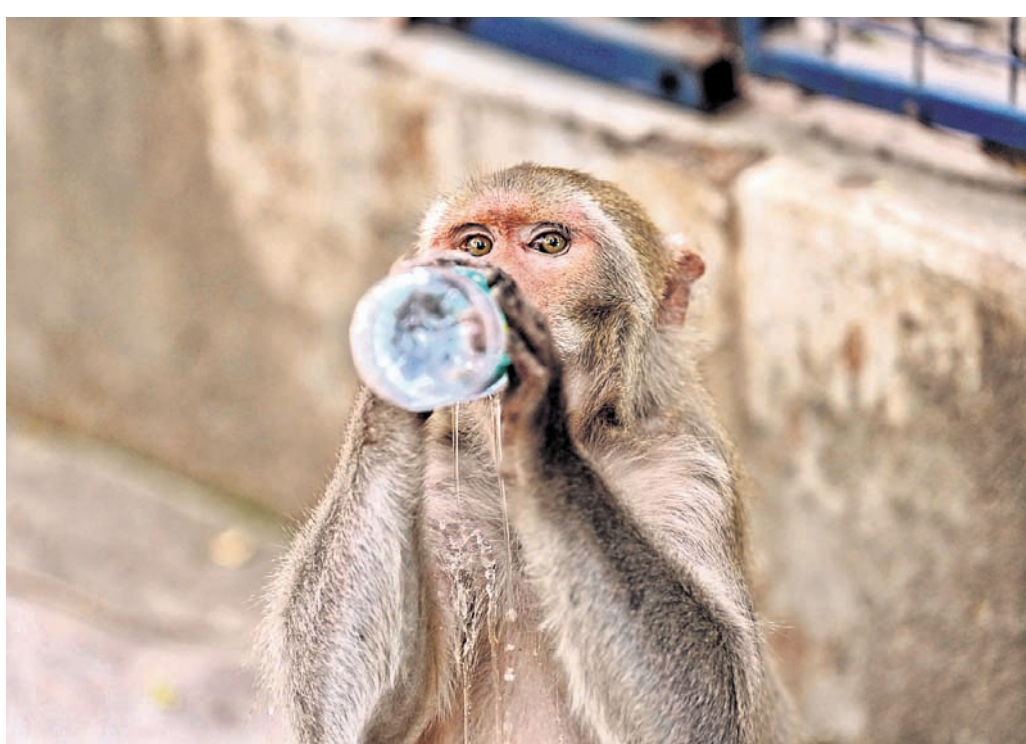
Based on specific intelligence, the contraband was seized from a container which was supposed to be trans-shipped to Arshiya Free Trade Warehousing Zone (FTWZ) for further clearance, it said.

The DRI officials maintained a discrete vigil on the container's movement.

It was found that after the container left the Nhava Sheva Port in Navi Mumbai, instead of reaching its destination, the same was diverted to a private godown while it



was enroute to Arshiya FTWZ. The DRI officials then intercepted the container at the godown, the release said. The entire 40-foot container was found to be stuffed with foreign-origin cigarettes which are banned for import into India due to their non compliance with Indian standards, it said. The syndicate had planned to smuggle the cigarettes by removing them out of the container and replacing the same with goods declared in import documents in order to hoodwink customs authorities, the release said.



BEATING THE HEAT: A monkey drinks water to quench his thirst on a hot summer afternoon in New Delhi. PTI PHOTO

DELHI BOATING SITES' NEW LOOK

Soon, boats shaped like cars, crocodiles to enthrall visitors

According to officials, the "new and attractive" boats will give a push to tourism in the city as it gears up to host the G20 Summit in September

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, May 14: Delhi's three boating facilities will soon have boats shaped like cars, aeroplanes, and even crocodiles to catch the fancy of visitors, officials said Friday.

According to officials, the "new and attractive" boats will give a push to tourism in the city as it gears up to host the G20 Summit in September.

The Delhi government is also planning to acquire motor boats for joy rides at the three facilities - Boat Club at Krishi Bhawan-Rafi Marg near Rajpath, Boat Club at Maan Sing Road, India Gate, and Bhalswa Lake, Near Mukarba Chowk. "At present, we have around

80 boats at these facilities, but several of them are old. We are buying 10 new and attractive boats shaped like ducks, planes, crocodiles, and cars," an official said. "This will boost the revenues of the boating facilities as they will attract more visitors," the official said.

It will also give a push to tourism in the city ahead of the G20 Summit, he added. The department plans to replace its existing fleet of old boats with new ones in a gradual manner. "This month, 10 boats will come. Slowly, we will replace all the boats. All the new boats are pedal boats. We will also introduce motor boats shortly," the official added.

Asked if there would be any



REPRESENTATIONAL IMAGE

change in the charges for boating at all three sites, the official said: "As of now, there are no such plans." The Delhi government had recently urged the Archaeological

Survey of India to allow the "restart" of boating in the lake at Purana Qila as it would "add attraction" to the national capital during the visit of G20 delegates.



## of the day quote

We don't live close to Australia, America or Japan which are members of G-20. We are living in this region and the SAARC caters to the problems of this region and if the government takes the initiative and has a summit of SAARC countries and addresses the problems that are being faced by this region including what is happening in Pakistan that will help India to be the leader in the region and the world

MEHBOOBA MUFTI | PDP CHIEF

To develop Himachal Pradesh as a favourite investment destination of the country, several new policies have been adopted by the state government, such as providing various incentives like cheaper power, easier credit facilities through the State Finance Corporation and the nationalised banks for establishing new industries

SUKHVINDER SINGH SUKHU | HIMACHAL CM

The government has proposed the setting up of a mechanism to oversee the nurturing and progress of startups as their numbers have risen to more than a lakh

JITENDRA SINGH | SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY MINISTER

## SHORT TAKES

### Terrorist hideout busted in J&K

**Srinagar:** Security forces Sunday busted a terrorist hideout after a brief exchange of fire with the ultras in Jammu and Kashmir's Anantnag district, police said. The security forces had launched a cordon and search operation in Andan in the district's Sangam area following information about the presence of terrorists there, a police officer said. The officer said the militants opened fire on the security forces and a gunfight ensued.

### Six women dead

**Rajamahendravaram (AP):** Six women died on the spot after an autorickshaw in which they were travelling in collided head-on with a private bus in Kakinada district of Andhra Pradesh Sunday afternoon, police said. They said the private bus rammed into the vehicle near Tallarevu bypass road. All the deceased were identified as labourers employed in a nearby shrimp farm, according to police.

### Leopard kills boy

**Amreli:** A 2-year-old boy was mauled to death by a leopard in Gujarat's Amreli district, a forest official said Sunday. This is the third incident in one week of children being attacked by felines in Amreli. The latest incident took place late Saturday night when the toddler was sleeping with his family members in a hut at Katar village under Rajula range forest. The leopard caught the boy by his neck and dragged him away to the nearby bushes. When the child's family members raised an alarm, the feline dropped the boy and escaped, the official said.

### Three booked

**Shahjahanpur (UP):** A computer instructor at a government school here allegedly molested 12 girls including some Dalit students, police officials said Sunday. The accused computer instructor Mohammad Ali, headmaster Anil Kumar and assistant teacher Sajia have been booked in this connection, they said. Around 12 girl students, including Dalits, studying in a junior government school in Tilhar police station area, were allegedly molested by computer instructor Mohammad Ali, Circle Officer (Tilhar) Priyank Jain said.



I became chief minister in 1998. I had brought 156 seats but I never said that I brought. It was Sonia Gandhi and the high command that brought the seats. It was the victory of our policies and principles

ASHOK GEHLOT | RAJASTHAN CM

## FRESH SNOWFALL IN KEDARNATH

Fresh snowfall hit Uttarakhand's Kedarnath Sunday with police appealing to pilgrims coming to visit the temple to plan their journeys in accordance with weather forecasts. The police also advised the devotees to carry umbrellas, raincoats and essential medicines



## 5 dead in TN hooch tragedy

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Villupuram (TN) May 14:** Five persons, including a woman, died after allegedly consuming spurious liquor in the district, police said Sunday.

Four police personnel were suspended in connection with the incident, Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M K Stalin said. All the five were admitted to a government hospital late on Saturday where three of them died initially. Two others, including the woman, died Sunday without responding to treatment, police said.

One person has been arrested in connection with the incident and the police are on the lookout for some more individuals. The incident occurred at Ekkiyarkuppam at Marakanam near here on Saturday night.

Underlining his government's resolve to eradicate the menace of hooch and drugs, chief minister Stalin said four police personnel, including two inspectors, have been suspended in connection with the incident. He had announced



Rs 10 lakh as relief to each of the families of the three men who died earlier.

AIADMK general secretary and Leader of Opposition, K Palaniswami, said during his party-led 10 year rule (2011-21), there was no place for illicit liquor in the state and blamed the ruling DMK's 'inefficiency' for the deaths. "Steps should be at least taken now against illicit liquor" he said in a social media post.

PMK founder Dr S Ramadoss sought against officials concerned over the sale of hooch and reiterated his party's demand for ending nationalisation of liquor sales in the State as well as implementation of prohibition.



Women labourers work at a brick kiln factory on Mother's Day, in Nadia district, West Bengal

PTI PHOTO

## KERALA WOMAN MEDICO MURDER

# Accused has no mental issues: Docs

# SC to hear appeal against acquittal

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, May 14:** The Supreme Court has agreed to hear May 17 an appeal by some of the family members of those killed in the 2008 Jaipur serial blasts challenging the Rajasthan High Court verdict acquitting four men, who were handed down death penalty by a trial court in the case.

Jaipur was rocked by a series of blasts on May 13, 2008 when bombs went off one after another at Manak Chawk Khanda, Chandpole Gate, Badi Chaupad, Chhoti Chaupad, Tripolia Gate, Johri Bazar and Sanganer Gate. The explosions left 71 people dead and 185 injured.

A bench of Justices Abhay S Oka and Rajesh Bindal considered the submissions of senior advocate Mukul Rohatgi, appearing for some of the families of the victims of the blasts. The senior lawyer also sought a stay on the high court's judgement.

The Rajasthan government had on April 25 filed an appeal challenging the high court verdict in the case. The top court on May 12 permitted family members of the victims of the blast to file an appeal against the verdict and listed the petition with that of the state government for hearing on Wednesday.

"Diary No....Is taken on board. Permission to file SLPs (Special Leave Petition) is granted. Leave granted. Liberty is granted to file an application for early hearing after respondents are duly served.



SANDEEP, ACCORDING TO DOCTORS, SAID THAT HE GOT PROVOKED BY THE PRESENCE OF DOCTORS AND POLICEMEN IN THE HOSPITAL AND HENCE, HE HAD A MENTAL OUTBURST

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**Thiruvananthapuram, May 14:** Doctors at a government medical health centre in Thiruvananthapuram have held that the accused in the murder of Kerala woman doctor, Dr Vandana Das, has no mental issues.

The doctors, after conducting a medical examination of Sandeep, said that he did not have any mental issues. Police had brought Sandeep for a mental health check as they were planning to house him in mental health institution if the doctors confirmed mental disorders for him.

Sandeep, according to doctors, said that he got provoked by the presence of doctors and policemen in the hospital and hence, he had a mental outburst.

According to Jail Superintendent,

Police had brought Sandeep for a mental health check as they were planning to house him in mental health institution if the doctors confirmed mental disorders for him

Sandeep has told the authorities that his outburst was due to the fear that the doctors and cops would harm him. The superintendent also said that the accused Sandeep had confessed that his prime target was the male doctor present in the hospital.

Sandeep, who is an upper primary school teacher in Kottarakara in Kerala's Kollam district, is now jailed in the high security cell at the Poojapura central jail in Thiruvananthapuram.

Das, a house surgeon, was stabbed fatally by Sandeep who was brought by police for a medical examination and treatment of a wound on his leg on May 10.

Protests had erupted across the state following the attack and murder of Das and doctors, nurses, paramedics, students, and house surgeons had participated in the agitations held across the state.

## JAIPUR SERIAL BLASTS



List on May 17...Along with SLP(Cr)...(of Rajasthan government), the bench ordered on Friday.

The Rajasthan High Court March 29 had set aside the lower court verdict awarding death penalty to four accused in the case and slammed the probe agencies over their "shoddy investigation".

It had lambasted the investigating agencies for doing a shoddy investigation in connecting the

chain of evidence and also directed Rajasthan's director general of police to take action against the officers involved in the investigation.

"We hold the investigating agency in the given case should be made responsible/accountable for their negligent, cursory, and inefficient actions," the high court had in its verdict. "In spite of the case being of heinous nature, 71 persons losing their lives and 185 persons sustaining injuries, causing unrest in the lives of every citizen, not

The Rajasthan High Court March 29 had set aside the lower court verdict awarding death penalty to four accused in the case and slammed the probe agencies over their 'shoddy investigation'

Jaipur was rocked by a series of blasts on May 13, 2008 when bombs went off one after another at Manak Chawk Khanda, Chandpole Gate, Badi Chaupad, Chhoti Chaupad, Tripolia Gate, Johri Bazar and Sanganer Gate. The explosions left 71 people dead and 185 injured

just in the city of Jaipur, but all across the country, we deem it appropriate to direct the Director General of Rajasthan Police to initiate appropriate Enquiry/Disciplinary Proceedings against the erring officers of the investigating team," it had said.

The high court had said that it is difficult to hold that the prosecution had proved the guilt of the accused by adducing cogent and clinching evidence. "The circumstantial evidence must be complete and incapable of explanation of any other hypothesis than that of the guilt of the accused and such evidence should not only be consistent with the guilt of the accused but should be inconsistent with his innocence. In the present case(s), the prosecution has failed to do so, resultantly, the Court is left with no alternative but to acquit the accused," the order said.

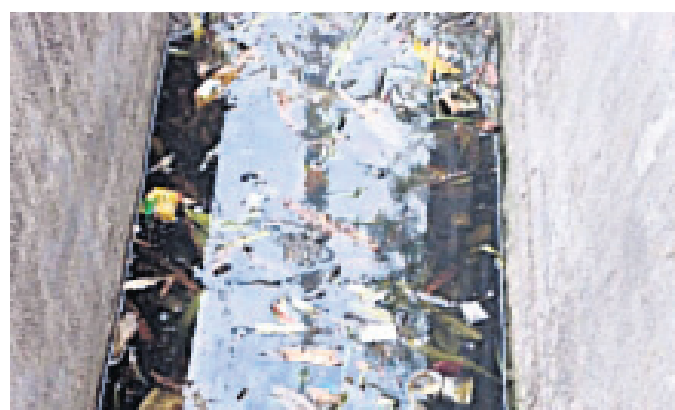
# DELHI GIRL FOUND DEAD IN DRAIN

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**New Delhi, May 14:** The body of a Class 12 student, who was missing after her exam result, was found in a drain in Aman Vihar area, police said Sunday.

The girl had failed in one of the subjects and left the home leaving behind a suicide note on May 12. On Sunday, her body was found. A senior police official said that the family of the girl lodged a complaint of her missing with the Aman Vihar Police Station at 9:30 p.m. on May 12.

The father of the girl told the police that she had been missing since 3:30 p.m. "He told the police that his daughter failed in one of the subjects in class XII. Since then,



she was depressed and left the home leaving a suicide note," said the police. The police lodged the complainant and a team was formed to

trace the girl. The police also started an extensive search operation.

"Also, all the other legal steps were taken without delay in order

to trace her by informing the Police Control Room. Wireless Messages were flashed to all the SHOs in Delhi and all the DCPs/SSPs in India by giving the description of this missing girl," said the police official.

On Sunday, the police received a PCR call regarding the body of a girl lying in a drain. The local police staff immediately reached the spot, the body was found partly submerged in the drain.

Immediately the body was taken out from the drain with the help of locals and shifted to Sanjay Gandhi Hospital. Later, the girl was identified as the missing girl. Her father identified the body. The police said that after conducting the post-mortem, her body was handed over to the family members.

## Bihar native lynched in Kerala, 8 held

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Malappuram, May 14:** Kerala police Sunday arrested eight persons in connection with the alleged murder of a 36-year-old man from Bihar on suspicion of theft. Police said Rajesh Manji was lynched by locals who caught him after he fell from the sunshade of a house near Kondotty.

"The locals claim that he fell from the sunshade of a house at around 12:30 am on Saturday. He was caught and tied up by the locals who assaulted him," police said.

Police have arrested eight local residents in connection with the lynching. Malappuram police chief Sujith Das told the media that there is evidence of assault of the victim.

"The accused have attempted to



destroy the evidence. They had tried to erase CCTV visuals. We are recovering everything. Currently, eight people have been arrested and one person was taken into custody for attempting to destroy the evidence," Das said. He also said that as per the preliminary investigation, the victim was in the locality intending to commit theft. A special Investigation Team has been formed to probe the case, in which murder charges and section 342 (wrongful restraint) of the Indian Penal Code has been invoked.



## Social media war

For the first time in many years, the Congress was able to give back to the BJP in social media warfare in the

Karnataka Assembly polls. Normally, the BJP's social media cell headed by Amit Malviya is miles ahead of the Congress on social media. The BJP cell used to set the agenda and the Congress was always on the defensive. With the advent of the Modi era in 2014, the digital space has mostly been dominated by the BJP. But it met its match for the first time in Karnataka as Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge picked up a team for social media composed of Gourav Vallabh and Supriya Shrinat while other heavyweights were kept at arms length.

## The faceless revolution

One are the days when posting in the Income-Tax department was

considered most lucrative by those selected in central services exams. It was so lucrative that even IITians and IIM toppers used to opt for the Indian Revenue Services (IRS) and posting in the Income-Tax department. There are numerous cases when those selected in the IAS or IPS, used to go in for the IRS. But not anymore as times have changed. But lately, a new trend is emerging. A number of officers have quit as I-T is "no more lucrative". They have decided to go back to the private sector for greener pastures. Ever since PM Modi set up the National e-Assessment Center (NEC) in October 2019, the I-T department has lost its sheen and glory. The NEC has completely eliminated the physical

interface between an assessing officer and an assessee. A silent revolution has taken place as these minuscule numbers of officers had hurt the image of the department immensely. Since there is no physical interaction with the assessee or even the CAs, the avenues have dried up.

## Kishore advising Pilot?

Prashant Kishore who played a key role in ensuring the victory of many of his clients including Prime Minister Narendra Modi in 2014 and several regional parties, may have been busy with his 'Jan Suraj Yatra' in Bihar to test his own political career. But his poll company, I-pack, has got a new client in Sachin Pilot. As the

grapevine has it, I-pack teams are undertaking extensive surveys to gauge the mood of the people in Rajasthan. These surveys are being done as part of designing a strategy for Sachin Pilot for the Rajasthan Assembly polls later this year. This survey has nothing to do with the Congress and evolving a winning strategy for Sachin Pilot. The former PCC chief and former Deputy Chief Minister Sachin Pilot is desperate to find his feet after his failed coup attempt in 2020 against Ashok Gehlot. The party high command has promised to protect the interests of the young Gujarat leader. But given the prevailing political situation, the high command may find it difficult to remove Gehlot. Therefore, Pilot wants to chart out his own course and wants a winning strategy.



# international

## of the day quote

Wide ranging discussions with FM @TobiasBillstrom as India and Sweden mark 75 years of diplomatic ties. Committed to taking bilateral cooperation to a higher level. Exchanged views on Indo-Pacific, European global situation and de-risking the global economy

S JAISHANKAR | EXTERNAL AFFAIRS MINISTER

The European Union needs to be prepared for the fallout from a potential deterioration in relations with China, such as might happen if conflict were to erupt over Taiwan

GABRIELIUS LANDSBERGIS | LITHUANIA'S FOREIGN MINISTER

In addition, China and Russia are strengthening their military collaboration, including joint flights of their bombers and joint naval exercises in the vicinity of Japan

YOSHIMASA HAYASHI | JAPANESE FOREIGN MINISTER

## SHORT TAKES

### 6 terrorists killed in military operations

**Karachi:** Six terrorists were gunned down and an equal number of soldiers lost their lives in an operation to clear a building complex from the grip of militants in Pakistan's Balochistan province Saturday, according to an official statement. The complex was cleared a day after the terrorists attacked a Frontier Constabulary camp in Muslim Bagh and when forces retaliated they holed up in the complex, the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) said.

### 24 killed in road crash in Zambia

**Lusaka:** Twenty-four people died and 12 others sustained serious injuries when a bus they were travelling in hit a truck in southern Zambia, the police said. Zambia Police Deputy Public Relations Officer Danny Mwale said on Saturday that preliminary investigations indicated that the bus with 35 passengers on board overturned, falling on the left side of the road into a ditch after the bus hit behind the truck. The bus driver is among the injured.

### Security tightened in Lanka's capital

**Colombo:** Security in Colombo and around Prime Minister Dinesh Gunawardena's house has been tightened following intelligence reports over another people's protest or 'Aragalaya' in Sri Lanka, a police officer said. The military, police, Special Task Force and Riot police had been summoned to the capital following unspecified intelligence information that a group of more than 750 people is getting to resort to public protest as happened during last year. Police media spokesperson SSP Nihal Thalduwa said that the security has been beefed up due to an intelligence information.

### Six lions killed

**Nairobi:** Six lions have been killed in a national park in southern Kenya, in a blow to conservation efforts and the tourism industry that is a key pillar of the nation's economy. The Kenya Wildlife Service (KWS) said its officials met with the local community to try to find a solution to recurring conflicts between the animals and community members, but did not say what had been agreed.



There is now a tendency to impose sanctions, and sanctions on those by whom we contain terrorism. We have made a decision. I have said that I will not buy anything from those who will impose sanctions

SHEIKH HASINA | BANGLADESH PM

## GRIM SITUATION

At least 135 people died and one more is still missing following recent flooding and landslides in parts of Rwanda, the government said



# Erdogan's rival says 'we are leading'

**Istanbul, May 14:** Turkey's opposition leader Kemal Kilicdaroglu said he was leading against President Tayyip Erdogan in Sunday's presidential election despite state media putting Erdogan ahead in early results.

Sources from both camps said that based on partial results, the presidential election is likely heading for a runoff vote May 28, with neither of the two main candidates reaching the 50% threshold needed for an outright win.

Citing manipulation in the reporting of early results in previous elections, Istanbul's opposition mayor Ekrem Imamoglu said on TV that no one should heed early results shared by state-owned Anadolu Agency.

Fresh results from Anadolu broadcast by Turkish media showed Erdogan ahead with 51.84% of votes compared to Kilicdaroglu with 42.53%, with 59.44% of ballot boxes counted.

Kilicdaroglu said on Twitter: "We are leading." "We can say this comfortably: Mr. Kilicdaroglu will be announced as the 13th president of our country today," Imamoglu said in a news conference. Sunday's vote is one of the most consequential elections in the country's 100-year history, a contest that could end Erdogan's imperious 20-year rule and reverberate well beyond Turkey's borders.



The Presidential vote will decide not only who leads Turkey, a NATO-member country of 85 million, but also how it is governed, where its economy is headed amid a deep cost of living crisis, and the shape of its foreign policy

Opinion polls before the election had given Kilicdaroglu, who heads a six-party alliance, a slight lead, with two polls Friday showing him above the 50% threshold.

A defeat for Erdogan, one of President Vladimir Putin's most important allies, will likely unnerve the Kremlin but comfort the Biden administration, as well as many European and Middle Eastern leaders who had troubled relations with Erdogan. Turkey's longest-

serving leader has turned the NATO member and Europe's second largest country into a global player, modernized it through megaprojects such as new bridges, hospitals and airports, and built a military industry sought by foreign states.

But his volatile economic policy of low interest rates, which set off a spiralling cost of living crisis and inflation, left him prey to voters' anger. His government's slow response to a devastating

Opinion surveys indicated the increasingly authoritarian leader entered the election trailing a challenger for the first time

Erdogan has ruled Turkey as Prime Minister or President since 2003

Erdogan votes in Istanbul, rival Kilicdaroglu in Ankara

earthquake in southeast Turkey that killed 50,000 people added to voters' dismay

Kilicdaroglu has pledged to set Turkey on a new course by reviving democracy after years of state repression, returning to orthodox economic policies, empowering institutions who lost autonomy under Erdogan's tight grasp and rebuilding frail ties with the West.

Thousands of political prisoners and activists, including high level names such as Kurdish leader Selahattin Demirtas and philanthropist Osman Kavala, could be released if the opposition prevails.

**POLARISED POLITICS** Erdogan, 69, is a veteran of a dozen election victories, and says he respects democracy and denies being a dictator. Illustrating how the president still commands support, Mehmet Akif Kahrman, also voting in Istanbul, said Erdogan still represented the future even after two decades in power. "God willing, Turkey will be a world leader," he said.

The parliamentary vote is a race between the People's Alliance com-

prising Erdogan's Islamist-rooted AK Party (AKP) and the nationalist MHP and others, and Kilicdaroglu's Nation Alliance formed of six opposition parties, including his secularist Republican People's Party (CHP), established by Turkey's founder Mustafa Kemal Ataturk. With 40.95% of ballot boxes counted, HaberTurk put Erdogan's alliance on 54.22% and the opposition alliance on 31.83% in the parliamentary vote. **CHANGE OR CONTINUITY** Erdogan, a powerful orator and master campaigner, has pulled out all the stops on the campaign trail. He commands fierce loyalty from pious Turks who once felt disenfranchised in secular Turkey and his political career has survived an attempted coup in 2016, and numerous corruption scandals.

However, if Turks do oust Erdogan it will be largely because they saw their prosperity and ability to meet basic needs decline, with inflation that topped 85% in October 2022 and a collapse in the lira currency. Erdogan has taken tight control of most of Turkey's institutions and sidelined liberals and critics. Human Rights Watch, in its World Report 2022, said Erdogan's government has set back Turkey's human rights record by decades. Kurdish voters, who account for 15-20% of the electorate, will play a vital role, with the Nation Alliance unlikely to attain a parliamentary majority by itself.

## Thailand's Oppn takes early lead in vote count



ASSOCIATED PRESS

**Bangkok, May 14:** Thailand's main opposition party took an early lead in a vote count from Sunday's general election, touted as a pivotal chance for change nine years after incumbent Prime Minister Prayuth Chan-ocha first came to power in a 2014 coup.

With 20 per cent of the vote counted, Pheu Thai Party was leading with 22 per cent in the direct race for the House of Representatives, and a 21 per cent share of seats in a separate nationwide ballot for the 100 members elected by proportional representation.

The junior opposition Move Forward Party was running second. Prayuth's United Thai Nation Party held the fifth spot in the constituency vote with 7 per cent of the total, but third in the party preference total with 8 per cent.

Pheu Thai, headed by Paetongtarn Shinawatra, had been widely predicted to win at least a healthy plurality of the seats in the 500-member lower House, where 400 lawmakers are elected directly. But who heads the next government won't be decided by Sunday's vote alone.

## Zelensky in Berlin to discuss arms deliveries



ASSOCIATED PRESS

The Ukrainian president is visiting allies in search of further arms to help his country fend off the Russian invasion, as well as funds to rebuild what's been destroyed by more than a year of devastating conflict

**Berlin, May 14:** German President Frank-Walter Steinmeier has welcomed Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky to Berlin on his first visit to the country since Russia invaded Ukraine.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky arrived in Berlin early on Sunday for talks with German leaders about further arms deliveries to help his country fend off the Russian invasion and rebuild what's been destroyed by more than a year of devastating conflict.

A Luftwaffe jet flew Zelensky to the German capital from Rome, where he had met Saturday with Pope Francis and Italian Premier Giorgia Meloni.

On the eve of his arrival — which is taking place amid tight security — the German government announced a new package of military aid for Ukraine worth more than 2.7 billion euros (USD 3 billion), including tanks, anti-aircraft systems and ammunition.

"Already in Berlin. Weapons. Powerful package. Air defense. Reconstruction. EU. NATO.

Security," Zelensky tweeted Sunday, in an apparent reference to the key priorities of his trip.

After initially hesitating to provide Ukraine with lethal weapons, Germany has become one of the biggest suppliers of arms to Ukraine, including Leopard 1 and 2 battle tanks, and the sophisticated IRIS-T SLM air-defense system.

Modern Western hardware is considered crucial if Ukraine is to succeed in its planned counteroffensive against Russian troops.

Zelensky is first expected to meet President Frank-Walter Steinmeier, Germany's head of state, who was snubbed by Kyiv last year, apparently over his previous close ties to Russia, causing a chill in diplomatic relations between Ukraine and Germany.

After meeting Scholz and other senior officials at the chancellery, the two leaders are expected to fly to the western city of Aachen for Zelensky to receive the International Charlemagne Prize awarded to him and the people of Ukraine.



ON THE BOIL: Supporters of Palestine Foundation Pakistan burn representations of Israel, UK and US flags during a rally to show solidarity with Palestine in Lahore

## Palestinians, Israelis resume normal life

REUTERS

**Gaza/Jerusalem May 14:** Life on both sides of the Gaza Strip border began returning to normal Sunday after an Egyptian-mediated ceasefire halted five days of fighting between Israel and Islamic Jihad, which killed 34 Palestinians and an Israeli.

Leaders from both sides of the conflict confirmed their commitment to the truce, but gave different interpretations of the terms, such as whether Israel would end targeted killings of Palestinian militant leaders.

The latest fighting, the longest bout since a 10-day war in 2021,



ISRAELI ARMY

Israel reopened its goods and commercial border crossings, allowing fuel to flow to the lone power plant in the blockaded coastal enclave

Shops and public offices reopened and crowds returned to streets that had been deserted for days

ern Israel around Gaza, schools were still closed on Sunday and many of the thousands of residents who had been evacuated had yet to return.

Palestinian health officials said 33 people, including women and children as well as Islamic Jihad fighters, were killed in Gaza.

## IMRAN SLAMS PAKISTAN ARMY

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Lahore, May 14:** Pakistan's former prime minister Imran Khan hit out at the country's powerful army in his first address after an Islamabad court set him free, saying it should be ashamed of jumping into politics and could form its own political party.

Addressing the nation from his Lahore home Saturday, Khan took strong exception to the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) allegations against him and said the spokesperson of the army's military wing was not even born when he represented Pakistan in the world.

"I kept Pakistan's flag high world over. Never has ISPR made such a statement. You should be ashamed of yourself. You have jumped into politics. Why don't you make a political party?" Khan said in an hour-long maiden speech after the Islamabad High Court gave him blanket relief in all 145 cases registered against him.

His remarks came in response to ISPR Director-General Major General Ahmed Sharif Chaudhry's statement in which he called Khan a "hypocrite".

A triumphant Khan returned to his Zaman Park home in Lahore on Saturday after having locked himself in the Islamabad High Court (IHC) premises for hours for fear of re-arrest despite being granted bail Friday.

The 70-year-old Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) chief also tore into Pakistan's Army chief General Asim Munir and blamed him for his "abduction" after a court set him free.

## Sherpa guide climbs Mount Everest for 26th time

Pasang Dawa Sherpa, 46, reached the summit (8,849 m peak) Sunday morning along with a Hungarian climber, according to expedition organiser Imagine Nepal Treks

AGENCIES

**Kathmandu, May 14:** A Sherpa guide scaled the summit of Mount Everest Sunday for the 26th time, equalling the record set by a Nepalese guide for the most ascents of the world's highest peak.

Pasang Dawa Sherpa, 46, reached the summit (8,849 m peak) Sunday morning along with a Hungarian climber, according to expedition



organiser Imagine Nepal Treks. Dawa, who made his first successful climb in 1998, matched the record number of summits with Kami Rita Sherpa. Meanwhile, Rita is currently stationed at the

Everest base camp and is planning to scale for a record 27th time.

Interestingly, Dawa equalled Rita's record in the year that also marks the 70th anniversary of the first ascent of Mount Everest in 1953 by New

Nepal has issued a record of 466 permits this year for foreign climbers seeking to reach the summit of Everest

Nepal is home to eight of the world's 10 highest peaks

In April, three Nepali climbers went missing on Mount Everest after an avalanche buried them in a crevasse

Zealander Edmund Hillary and his Sherpa guide Tenzing Norgay

Nineteen mountaineers, including five foreigners, reached the summit of the world's highest peak this weekend. Sherpa guides fixed ropes and made paths for the hundreds of climbers who will attempt to scale the peak over the next few weeks.

"On Saturday a team of nine rope-fixing climbers from Nepal

reached the summit," said Yuvaraj Khatiwada, director at the Department of Tourism, Nepal.

On Sunday, five foreigners climbed the summit of Mount Everest. They include Naila Kiani and Nadia Liakhosova from Pakistan, Jessica Rai Wadel from the USA, Marton Ceterper from Hungary, and Liansu Cui from China. Kiani became the second woman from Pakistan to raise the country's flag at the world's highest peak. Samina Baig was the first woman mountaineer from Pakistan to scale the mighty Everest in 2013. Nepal has issued a record 466 permits to climb Mount Everest this spring, officials said.

Nepal is home to eight of the world's 10 highest peaks. In April, three Nepali climbers went missing on Mount Everest after an avalanche buried them in a crevasse.



## of the day quote

We'll have product launches every quarter of this fiscal year. Probably this fiscal, we'll see the maximum number of launches ever seen in the company's history

**NIRANJAN GUPTA** | CEO, HERO MOTOCORP

We are very excited after seeing the 5G roll-out globally, including in India. We're very excited about 6G too

**MARIA MARTINEZ** | COO, CISCO

India's residential real estate segment continues to show boundless forward momentum, and is setting unprecedented benchmarks

**ANU PURI** | CHAIRMAN, ANAROCK GROUP

## SHORT TAKES

### ONGC scraps bids for Daman gas field

**New Delhi:** State-owned Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC) has cancelled the bids received for its Daman upside gas development project off the western coast due to high price quotes, sources said. The project is crucial to ONGC's strategy of ramping up gas production from its shallow-water fields off India's west coast. Once completed, the project would lead to nearly doubling of current gas production of 4-5 million standard cubic metres per day. Sources aware of the matter said the bids ONGC received for the project were way higher than the company's internal estimates and so the tender has been cancelled. The tender would now be divided into separate packages and rebid.

### Upstox breaks even

**Mumbai:** Ratan Tata-backed discount broking company Upstox achieved break-even in FY2022-23 with the overall revenue crossing Rs 1,000 crore, a top official has said. The company, which also counts Tiger Global among its external investors, is aiming for a 10-times jump in its customer base to 10 crore in the next five-six years, its co-founder and chief executive Ravi Kumar told PTI. Its operating revenue grew 40 per cent to Rs 1,000 crore, he said, adding that it also generated a positive net cash flow of approximately Rs 130 crore in the last quarter of FY2022-23. The company's CEO said it has cash reserves of over Rs 1,000 crore now, and is looking for both organic and inorganic growth opportunities.

## NPCI plans to make RuPay at par with Visa, Mastercard



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, May 14:** National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) is exploring options for further tie-ups to strengthen the global acceptability of RuPay debit cards. Currently, RuPay cards are accepted at the points of sale (PoS) machine powered by Discover of the US, Diners Club, JCB of Japan, Pulse and Union Pay of China. This needs to be strengthened, and NPCI is working in this direction so that users of RuPay cards are at par with those using Visa or Mastercard, sources said. In March 2012, RuPay went global by tying up with Discover Financial Services to bring international services to Indians. It has strengthened its network

# Trade with Netherlands soars

THE NETHERLANDS IS A GATEWAY TO EUROPE AS THEIR PORTS ARE VERY EFFICIENT HENCE CHEAPER THAN OTHER EUROPEAN PORTS FOR SHIPPING OPERATIONS

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, May 14:** The Netherlands has emerged as India's third largest exports destination after the US and UAE during 2022-23 on account of a surge in shipment of goods such as petroleum products, electronic items, chemicals, and aluminium goods, according to the data of the commerce ministry.

India's trade surplus with the Netherlands has also increased from \$8 billion in 2021-22 to \$13 billion in 2022-23.

The Netherlands has taken over major destinations such as the UK, Hong Kong, Bangladesh and Germany, the data showed.

India's exports to the Netherlands rose by about 48 per cent to \$18.52 billion during 2022-23 as against \$12.5 billion in 2021-22.

In 2021-22 and 2020-21, the outbound shipments to the European country stood at \$12.55 billion and \$6.5 billion, respectively. The exports are registering healthy growth continuously since 2000-01, when India's exports to that nation was \$880 million.

Further, in 2021-22, the Netherlands was the fifth largest destination for Indian exports as against ninth in 2020-21.

In the calendar year, India's exports to the country increased



The Netherlands is among top trading partners of India in Europe, after Germany, Switzerland, the UK and Belgium. It is also a major investor in India. During April-September this fiscal, India received \$1.76 billion in foreign direct investment from the Netherlands. It was \$4.6 billion in 2021-22

to \$18.1 billion in 2022 from \$5.5 billion in 2017. According to economic think tank GTRI (Global Trade Research Initiative), ATF (aviation turbine fuel) and diesel were the key petroleum products exported from India to that country. Telecom equipment and

**NETHERLANDS NOW INDIA'S THIRD LARGEST EXPORTS DESTINATION AFTER US, UAE**

**IN 2021-22, NETHERLANDS WAS THE FIFTH LARGEST DESTINATION FOR INDIAN EXPORTS AS AGAINST NINTH IN 2020-21**

**IN 2022-23, BILATERAL TRADE INCREASED TO \$24BN AS AGAINST \$17BN IN 2021-22 AND ABOUT \$10BN IN 2020-21**

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

economic and commercial relations. In 2022-23, the bilateral trade between the two countries increased to \$24 billion as against \$17 billion in 2021-22 and about \$10 billion in 2020-21.

The Netherlands is among top trading partners of India in Europe, after Germany, Switzerland, the UK and Belgium. It is also a major investor in India. During April-September this fiscal, India received \$1.76 billion in foreign direct investment from the Netherlands. It was \$4.6 billion in 2021-22.

There are over 200 Dutch companies present in India, including Philips, Akzo Nobel, DSM, KLM and Rabobank. Similarly, there are over 200 Indian companies operating in the Netherlands, including all the major IT firms such as TCS, HCL, Wipro, Infosys, Tech Mahindra as well as Sun Pharmaceuticals and Tata Steel.

## FPIs invest ₹23,152cr

STRONG MACRO OUTLOOK, GOOD EARNING SEASON BRING FOREIGN INVESTORS TO INDIAN SHORES IN MAY

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, May 14:** Foreign investors have shown strong buying interest in Indian equities in May and invested more than Rs 23,152 crore in the first fortnight due to lower chances of further rate hikes by the US Federal Reserve, a strong domestic macro outlook and a good earning season.

With this, now Foreign Portfolio Investors (FPIs) have become net buyers of equities in 2023 so far by attracting Rs 8,572 crore, data available with the depositories showed.

According to data from the depositories, FPIs invested a net sum of Rs 23,152 crore in Indian equities in the first fortnight during May 2-12.

This came following a net infusion of Rs 11,630 crore in equities in April and Rs 7,936 crore in March. The March investment was mainly driven by bulk investment in the

Adani Group companies by the US-based GQG Partners. However, if one adjusts for the investments of GQG in Adani Group, the net flow is negative.

Moreover, in the first two months of the year, FPIs pulled out over Rs 34,000 crore.

Apart from equities, FPIs have invested Rs 68 crore in the debt market in the first fortnight of May.

In terms of sector, financials continue to be the favourite sector of FPIs. Besides, they were buyers of capital goods and autos too.

Going forward, FPI flows should remain robust for the rest of the month as the global risk on the environment continues for some more time given that major macro data like the US non-farm payroll numbers and CPI numbers have been mostly in line with market estimates, Manish Jeloka, Co-head of Products & Solutions, Sanctum Wealth, said.

"Since the rupee is strong and the dollar is expected to decline in the near term, FPIs are likely to continue buying in India. The improvement in India's macros also favours continued inflows into India," VK Vijayakumar, Chief Investment Strategist at Geojit Financial Services, said.

## 8 of top 10 firms market valuation surges ₹1.26L-cr

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, May 14:** Eight of the top 10 valued firms together added Rs 1,26,579.48 crore in market valuation last week, with Reliance Industries and Hindustan Unilever Ltd emerging as the biggest gainers. Last week, the BSE benchmark jumped 973.61 points or 1.59 per cent.

Only ITC and Infosys faced erosion in their valuation, while Reliance Industries, Tata Consultancy Services (TCS), HDFC Bank, ICICI Bank, Hindustan Unilever, State Bank of India, HDFC and Bharti Airtel were the gainers.

The market valuation of Reliance Industries jumped Rs 28,956.79 crore to Rs 16,80,644.12 crore. Hindustan Unilever's valuation rallied Rs 28,759 crore to Rs 6,16,391.77 crore.

The market capitalisation (mcap) of HDFC Bank climbed Rs 23,590.05 crore to Rs 9,31,095.12 crore and that of TCS zoomed Rs 15,697.33 crore to Rs 11,97,881.94 crore.

However, the mcap of ITC tumbled Rs 10,439.53 crore to Rs 5,22,536.01 crore and that of Infosys dived Rs 5,600.92 crore to Rs 5,16,757.92 crore.

In the ranking of top 10 firms, Reliance Industries remained the number one firm, followed by TCS, HDFC Bank, ICICI Bank, Hindustan Unilever, ITC, Infosys, State Bank of India, HDFC and Bharti Airtel.

# Mutual funds' NFO mop-up decreases 42% in FY23 YoY

In the past fiscal year, fund managers focused on passive funds and fixed income categories like fixed maturity plans

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, May 14:** Hit by markets regulator Sebi's ban on the launch of new fund offerings, mutual funds' collection through fresh schemes remained subdued at Rs 62,342 crore in 2022-23, which was 42 per cent lower than in the preceding fiscal.

However, a higher number of NFOs were launched in 2022-23 (FY23) compared to the preceding year.

A total of 253 new schemes were floated in FY23, which was way higher than 176 new fund offers (NFOs) launched in 2021-22, according to the data compiled by Morningstar India.

Moreover, in the current fiscal so far, asset management companies (AMCs) have floated 12 NFOs in different categories, the industry data stated.

As per the data, a total of 182 open-end funds and 71 closed-end funds were launched in the financial year 2022-23, and cumulatively, these funds garnered Rs 62,342 crore. In comparison, 176 NFOs were

## FINANCIAL HEADWINDS

# ₹300cr lifeline for Alliance Air

Govt to make ₹300 crore equity infusion in Alliance Air

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, May 14:** The government is set to make an equity infusion of Rs 300 crore in regional carrier Alliance Air, which is facing financial headwinds, according to a senior official.

Alliance Air, earlier part of Air India, is now owned by AI Assets Holding Ltd (AI AHL), a special-purpose vehicle formed by the central government.

The disinvestment-bound Alliance Air operates around 130 flights daily. In recent months, there have been instances of strikes by pilots to protest against non-restoration of salaries to the pre-Covid level and non-payment of allowance, among other issues.

The finance ministry has approved an equity infusion of Rs 300 crore into Alliance Air, the senior civil aviation ministry official told PTI. Specific details could not be immediately ascertained.

Flights under Alliance Air's brand are operated by Airline Allied Services, which changed its name to Alliance Air Aviation Ltd.



The company's authorised capital is Rs 2,000 crore and the paid-up capital is Rs 402.25 crore, as per the latest data available with the corporate affairs ministry.

Alliance Air, which saw its net loss widen to Rs 447.76 crore in fiscal 2021-22, has been grappling with financial woes. The carrier's cash loss widened to Rs 224.18 crore in the financial year ended March 2022.

Four companies that were earlier part of Air India are now under AI AHL. These are Air India Air Transport Services Ltd, Air India Engineering Services Ltd, Airline Allied Services Ltd and Hotel Corporation of India Ltd.

All the four companies are proposed to be divested by the government in due course.

The Expression of Interest (EoI) for Air India Air Transport Services and Air India Engineering Services are likely to be floated soon.

Loss-making Air India along with Air India Express was taken over by Tata Group in January 2022.



**253 NFOs WERE FLOATED IN FY23 WHICH GARNERED ₹62,342 CRORE**

**176 SCHEMES WERE FLOATED IN FY22 WHICH MOBILISED ₹1,07,896 CRORE**

**84 SCHEMES WERE LAUNCHED IN 2020-21 RAISING ₹42,038 CRORE**

imposed by Sebi on launching new schemes, highly volatile markets, FPI outflows and global factors, experts believe.

Generally, an AMC launches a new mutual fund scheme - NFO - to bridge the gap in its product portfolio. Post the categorisation and rationalisation of mutual fund schemes by Sebi in 2017, many AMCs merged existing mutual fund (MF) schemes and launched NFOs.

Kaustubh Belapurkar, Director - Manager Research at Morningstar Investment Adviser India, advised investors to invest in NFOs only if they offer something unique and bridge a gap in their existing portfolios. Most investors are best served by continuing to invest in similar existing funds with well-established track records.

In 2022-23, AMCs were focused on floating NFOs in other schemes categories, especially index funds, and debt-oriented schemes segment, mainly fixed-term plans.

The maximum number of funds (84) was launched in the index fund segment, which amassed Rs 6,004 crore, followed by fixed-term plans (71), which mobilised Rs 16,356 crore, and other ETFs (36), which collected Rs 3,216 crore.

Further, in the equity category, 32 NFOs were launched, while six new fund offerings were floated in the hybrid category.

## COAL BED METHANE RESERVES

# 'India can save over \$2bn on energy bills'

HARNESSING 10% OF COAL BED METHANE RESERVES CAN CUT INDIA'S ENERGY IMPORT BILL BY \$2 BILLION, SAID EXPERTS

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, May 14:** India can cut its energy imports bill by \$2 billion if the nation harnesses 10 per cent of the coal bed methane reserves of 2,600 billion cubic meters, said experts.

This assumes significance in view of India's coal production clocking record high during the last fiscal year and plans afoot to increase it further.

The experts believe that the industry's collective efforts in utilising Coal Bed Methane (CBM) can help the country save over \$2 billion on imports bill in near future. India has an estimated Coal Bed Methane Reserve of 2600 billion cubic meters, they say.

"India touched a record-high growth in coal production of more than 778.19 million tonne, posting record growth in coal production in the year 2022-23. Plan is to increase the production to over one



billion tonne by 2025-26. Therefore, we collectively must tap and utilise Coal Bed Methane which in turn would help reduce emissions and also boost India's energy security. Even if the industry can tap about 10 per cent of the reserves we can save over \$2 billion by cutting on oil imports," JS Sharma, Head of International Centre for Climate and Sustainability Action Foundation (ICCSA), told PTI. Sharma said the savings would

be more if we are able to tap more CBM reserves. Through ICCSA we have been making attempts in creating awareness about the potential of Methane and have conducted workshops for Oil & Gas, Agriculture & Livestock sectors.

Going forward the plan is to connect companies related to Coal, Transport and Waste management in order to share knowhow on Methane capture, he added. Talking to PTI, Rakesh Kumar,

Prognosticated CBM resources in India are about 2600 billion cubic meters in 12 states

To capitalise on CBM potential, the govt enacted a CBM policy in 1997, which mandates the exploration and utilisation of CBM

Utilisation of coal mine methane has the potential to benefit India by reducing emissions and increasing domestic energy security

of CMM could be one of the potential energy source and also has climate mitigation co-benefit."

Methane is the primary component of natural gas, which is responsible for the Earth's warming. Methane (CH4) concentrations in the atmosphere have more than doubled since pre-industrial times. CH4 is the second-leading cause of climate change after carbon dioxide, rising to 1.5 degrees Celsius or likely 2 degrees Celsius.

Alternative fuels like Coal Bed Methane, Coal Mine Methane and alternative use of coal such as Coal to Chemicals are the thrust area of the Government.

Government efforts to reduce fossil fuel dependence and promote clean energy led to this growth in coal bed methane production. The government's push for renewable energy, as well as initiatives like the National Clean Energy Fund, can help India achieve its carbon neutrality goal, said Kumar.



# Rajasthan get Royal hiding

RCB BACK IN PLAY-OFF CONTENTION WITH THUMPING 112-RUN VICTORY OVER RR



RCB players celebrate after their thumping win over Rajasthan Royals in their IPL game at Jaipur, Sunday PFI PHOTO

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Jaipur, May 14:** Rajasthan Royals (RR) dished out one of the most inexplicable batting performances of the IPL as they were dismissed for just 59 to go down by a massive margin of 112 runs to Royal Challengers Bangalore (RCB) here Sunday.

Chasing 172 for a win, RR were bundled out in just 10.3 overs for the third lowest total in IPL history with only Shimron Hetmyer (35) and Joe Root (10) scoring in dou-

ble-digit figures. It was RR's second lowest total as they just about managed to go past their earlier lowest of 58 against the same opponents in 2009 by one run.

RCB bowlers exploited the lack of application by RR batters and game sense as all of them returned with wickets. Wayne Parnell (3/10) was the pick of the bowlers while Michael Bracewell (2/16) and Karn Sharma (2/19) shared four wickets. Mohammed Siraj (1/10) and Glenn Maxwell (1/3) supported them well.

With the win, RCB jumped to

the fifth spot with 12 points from 12 matches to be in contention for a play-off berth while RR slipped to sixth with 12 points having played a game more than their rivals.

The Royals lost five wickets for 25 runs in the power play with Parnell taking two, including that of Jos Buttler (0) and captain Sanju Samson (4). But it was Siraj, who had opened the floodgates by getting the wicket of in-form Yashasvi Jaiswal (0). Root's first IPL with the bat also turned out to be a nightmare as he was trapped leg before,

59 - 3RD LOWEST TOTAL IN IPL HISTORY, AFTER RCB'S 49 AND RR'S 58

5TH - RCB'S CURRENT STANDING IN THE POINTS TABLE

becoming Parnell's third victim. Earlier, captain Faf du Plessis (55, 44b, 3x4, 2x6) and Maxwell (54, 33b, 5x4, 3x6) struck half centuries as RCB posted a challenging 171 for five opting to bat. However, the real impetus was given to the innings by Anuj Rawat (29 n o, 11b, 3x4, 2x6). It was his knock that enabled RCB to go past the 170-run mark, which at one point looked doubtful.

Australian left-arm spinner Adam Zampa (2/25) and pacer KM Asif (2/42) were the most successful bowlers for RR while Sandeep Sharma got one wicket. Kohli punished Sandeep for a boundary in the first over for bowling a short and wide ball, but he and du Plessis could not get too many boundaries after the introduction of spinners.

RCB were unable to step up the gas as they were 78 for one at the halfway mark. But by then Maxwell had settled down and he began to impose himself on the RR bowlers. He and du Plessis put on 69 runs for the second wicket to put RCB on a good platform. However, RCB then suffered a batting collapse before Rawat came to their rescue.

**Brief scores:** RCB 171 for 5 (Faf du Plessis 55, Glenn Maxwell 54, Adam Zampa 2/25) beat RR 59 in 10.3 overs (Wayne Parnell 3/10, Michael Bracewell 2/16, Karn Sharma 2/19) by 112 runs.

# Wrestlers praise IOA's decision

GRAPPLERS FEEL THAT THE TAKEOVER OF THE WFI BY THE OLYMPIC BODY IS THE FIRST STEP IN GETTING 'JUSTICE'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, May 14:** The protesting wrestlers Sunday termed the Indian Olympic Association's (IOA) decision to take charge of all the activities of the Wrestling Federation of India (WFI) as the 'first step' in their fight against Brij Bhushan Sharan Singh, the former chief. Top Indian wrestlers, including Bajrang Punia, Sakshi Malik and Vinesh Phogat among others, have been protesting at the Jantar Mantar here for the last 22 days demanding the arrest of Brij Bhushan for his alleged sexual harassment of women wrestlers.

The IOA, through a letter dated May 12, asked the secretary general of WFI to hand over the official documents including financial instruments to its ad-hoc panel, making it clear the outgoing office-

bearers shall have no role in the running of the federation. The WFI said it has no issues in obeying the IOA order since they are already co-operating with the authorities.

"This (the dissolution of the current WFI) is the first step in our fight for justice. Our fight has begun in right earnest; it's a victory for us. We will continue or fight until we get justice," said Bajrang, the Tokyo Olympics bronze medalist.

Asian Games gold medalist Vinesh Phogat rued that not a single ruling party's (BJP) Parliamentarian had met the wrestlers 'to extend support in our fight for the dignity of women'. She informed that from Monday onwards the wrestlers will give letters by hand or via e-mail to all women Parliamentarians of the ruling party to come and support them.

**Women Parliamentarians talk about the safety of women in India. If they really mean it, they should come out in our support**

VINESH PHOGAT

"When they talk about the safety of women in the country, then we too are their daughters and they should come out and support us," Vinesh stated.

The IOA's three-member ad-hoc committee has made it clear that the process to elect new WFI office-bearers will be completed within the 45-day time frame and that the charge will be handed back to the elected body.



(From left): Vinesh Phogat talks to the media as Bajrang Punia and Sakshi Malik look on at Jantar Mantar, Sunday PFI PHOTO

## SHORT TAKES

### Double gold medal for Odisha's Pramod



**New Delhi:** Tokyo Paralympic champion Pramod Bhagat capped off his impressive run with two gold medals at the Thailand Para Badminton International tournament which concluded Sunday at Bangkok. Pramod emerged winner in the men's singles SL3 final after England's Daniel Bethell retired after the first game due to an injury. Pramod had won the first game 21-18 after which Bethell announced he was unable to continue. Pramod then teamed up with Sukant Kadam to claim the yellow metal in men's doubles SL3-SL4 category defeating compatriots Nitesh Kumar and Tarun 18-21, 21-14, 21-19.

### PSG close in on record title haul

**Paris:** Paris Saint-Germain (PSG) closed in on a record 11th French league title with a 5-0 home win over Ajaccio here Saturday as Lionel Messi was jeered after taking the field for the first time since he was suspended by the club. Fabian Ruiz opened the scoring on 22 minutes at the Parc des Princes here and Achraf Hakimi added a second goal before Kylian Mbappe struck twice shortly after half time. Mohamed Youssef compounded a miserable night for the Corsicans with an own goal for PSG's fifth. However, whenever Messi touched the ball, he was at the receiving end of catcalls and whistles.

### Streak has cancer

**New Delhi:** Former Zimbabwe all-rounder and captain Heath Streak has been diagnosed with cancer and is undergoing treatment in South Africa. The 49-year-old played 65 Tests and 189 ODIs for Zimbabwe between 1993-2005, scoring a total of 4,933 runs and claiming 455 wickets across the two formats. "Heath has cancer and is undergoing treatment under one of the most respected oncologists in South Africa," his family said in a statement. "Heath remains in good spirits and will continue to fight this disease as best as he can," the statement further said.

# KKR keep play-off hopes alive with win

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Chennai, May 14:** Skipper Nitish Rana (57 n o, 44b, 6x4, 1x6) and Rinku Singh (54, 43b, 4x4, 3x6) slammed half centuries en route to a 99-run match-winning stand to guide Kolkata Knight Riders (KKR) to a comfortable six-wicket win over Chennai Super Kings in an IPL here Sunday.

Rana and Rinku rescued the Knights and helped the side reach the victory target of 145 after they were reduced to 33 for three inside the fifth over. KKR finished at 147 for four in 18.3 overs with Rana leading from the front after making the most of a dropped chance. The match-winning partnership between Rana and Rinku ended when the latter was run out by a direct hit from Moeen Ali.

KKR's cause was helped to a large extent by a superb bowling effort earlier by the spin duo of Varun Chakravarty (2/36) and Sunil Narine (2/15).

The defeat also puts on hold CSK's chances of sealing a play-off berth as the home side is in second spot with 15 points. KKR, on the other hand, moved to 12 points with a match to play but their hopes rest on other results.

CSK spinners - Ravindra Jadeja, Maheesh Theekshana and Moeen - could not do any damage after Deepak Chahar (3/27) had provided the initial breakthroughs.



Nitish Rana (left) and Rinku Singh played match-winning knocks

Rana got a life on 18 when Matheesha Pathirana dropped a catch running in from the boundary off Moeen. In the 13th over bowled by Moeen, Rana played two superb shots on the off-side to pick up boundaries and followed it up with a few more cracking strikes in the 15th over against Theekshana.

Earlier, the talismanic Mahendra Singh Dhoni's decision to drop down the order backfired as CSK lost wickets at regular intervals to be restricted to the modest score. Dhoni, who came out to bat No.7, remained unbeaten on two off three balls.

**Brief scores:** CSK 144 for 6 (Shivam Dube 48 n o, Sunil Narine 2/15, Varun Chakravarty 2/36) lost to KKR 147 for 4 in 18.3 overs (Nitish Rana 57 n o, Rinku Singh 54 n o) by six wickets.

# Embarrassing loss for shuttlers

BAD START FOR TEAM INDIA IN SUDIRMAN CUP AS THEY LOSE OPENING TIE AGAINST CHINESE TAIPEI

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Suzhou, May 14:** Double Olympic medalist PV Sindhu's gallant fight ended in agony as India made a dismal start to their Sudirman Cup campaign, going down to the formidable Chinese Taipei 1-4 in their Group C opening round tie here Sunday. However, in most of the matches, the Indians put up a spirited fight, but were up against a much superior team.

Tanisha Crasto and K Sai Prateek started on a positive note in the mixed doubles contest but they ran out of steam in the end, losing 21-18, 24-26, 6-21 to World No. 30 Yang Po-Hsuan and Hu Ling Fang. However, World No. 9, HS Prannoy couldn't find his best game and went down tamely 19-21, 15-21 to World No. 5 Chou Tien Chen as India fell behind 0-2.

Sindhu was then handed the responsibility to bring India back into the tie but it was always going to be a tough task with her nemesis and former World No. 1 Tai Tzu Ying standing across the net.

The 27-year-old from Hyderabad, who hasn't been in the best of form lately, produced a gritty performance after the opening game reversal but couldn't go the distance with Tai Tzu managing a 21-14, 18-21, 21-17 win in 64 minutes. The last time Sindhu had beaten Tai was way back in 2019 and this



Despite putting up a gritty fight, PV Sindhu could not beat her nemesis Tai Tzu Ying

was her 18th loss to her Chinese Taipei opponent.

If allowed Chinese Taipei take an unassailable 3-0 lead in the five-match tie.

Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty then fought hard before losing 13-21, 21-17, 18-21 to Lee Yang and Ye Hong Wei in the men's doubles match in a little over an hour as India further slumped to 0-4.

World No. 17 Treasa Jolly and P Gayatri Gopichand then showed

tremendous grit as they recovered from an opening game loss to eke out a 15-21, 21-18, 21-13 win over Lee Chia Hsin and Teng Chun Hsun in the final women's doubles tie to help India avoid a clean sweep by Taipei.

India will next face Commonwealth Games mixed team champions Malaysia in their second Group C match Monday. Malaysia beat Australia 5-0 to top the group Sunday.

# DEPLETED MADRID SCRAPE PAST GETAFE

ASSOCIATED PRESS

**Barcelona, May 14:** Real Madrid's second string squad squeezed past Getafe 1-0 as most of the front-line players were rested for next week's Champions League semifinal decider at Manchester City. Marco Asensio scored the game's only goal in the 70th minute.

Madrid have for several weeks given up on defending the domestic title and instead are focused on winning the Champions League and Copa del Rey. Madrid and City play the second leg poised at 1-1.

Barcelona can clinch the domestic title Sunday if they win at cross-town rival Espanyol. They need only two of the remaining 15 points in play to win their first league since 2019, and their first major title since Lionel Messi left two seasons ago.

Karim Benzema, Rodrygo, and David Alaba were left off the squad to ensure they fully recover from minor fitness issues, coach Carlo Ancelotti said. Vinicius Junior, Luka Modric, Toni Kroos were used as second half substitutes. Real started with only four first team players in goalkeeper Thibaut Courtois, Federico Valverde, Eduardo Camavinga and Eder Militao against relegation-threatened Getafe.

Now however, a much more arduous task awaits Real Madrid when they travel to Manchester for the Champions League game.

# ALCARAZ REGAINS NO. 1 SPOT

SPANIARD CELEBRATES WITH EASY WIN AS HE SEEKS 3RD TITLE IN A ROW AT ROME

AGENCIES

**Rome, May 14:** Carlos Alcaraz marked his return to the World No. 1 spot by comfortably seeing off fellow Spaniard Albert Ramos-Vinolas in his first ever match at the Italian Open here Saturday, as play was cut short by the miserable wet weather.

In-form Alcaraz ensured top spot just by taking to the court to play his second round match here as he seeks a third straight tournament win. The 20-year-old, who saw off Ramos-Vinolas 6-4, 6-1, will overtake Novak Djokovic as World No.1 when the rankings are announced Monday.

Alcaraz came through in a match which started several hours late due to the pelting rain which drenched the Italian capital.

"The conditions here weren't easy, the rain, the waiting all day, not knowing if I was going to play or not. It was tough," said Alcaraz after his match. "For me it doesn't change too much to be No.1



or No. 2 seed. I just focus on the tournament and on my game," Alcaraz added.

The Spaniard became the youngest ever World No.1 thanks to his US Open triumph last September, with Djokovic denied entry to the United States because of his Covid-19 vaccination status.

The second seed arrived in the Italian capital on a fine run after back-to-back clay court titles in Barcelona and Madrid, and he made short work of Ramos-Vinolas.

Caroline Garcia became the fourth top 10 player to be dumped out of the women's tournament after the World No. 4 lost 4-6, 4-6,

# Oz tennis legend breathes his last

**Melbourne:** Australian tennis player Owen Davidson, who won 13 Grand Slam doubles titles, has died, the International Tennis Hall of Fame announced Sunday. He was 79. Officials informed that Davidson died in Texas in the US. He won 11 major titles in mixed doubles and two in men's doubles. Davidson teamed with Billie Jean King to win eight of his Grand Slam trophies in a career that spanned from the early 1960s to mid-1970s.

4 to qualifier Camila Osorio.

In a match played Sunday, Djokovic overcame some concentration lapses to beat Grigor Dimitrov 6-3, 4-6, 6-1 and enter the fourth round. Also advancing was two-time defending champion Iga Swiatek who beat Lesia Tsurenko 6-2, 6-0.

# CONVINCING VICTORY FOR MANCHESTER CITY

AGENCIES

**Manchester, May 14:** Ilay Gundogan scored two brilliant goals and teed up Erling Haaland for another to inspire Manchester City to a 3-0 win Sunday at Everton as they moved four points clear of Arsenal atop the Premier League table with an 11th consecutive victory.

With three games remaining, Pep Guardiola's treble-chasing side have 85 points, four more than Arsenal who play Brighton & Hove Albion later. And if Man City win the next two games the title will be more or less theirs only.

Gundogan netted in the 37th minute when he brought down Riyad Mahrez's cross in a crowd of Everton defenders and with his back to goal flicked a blind shot past keeper Jordan Pickford. Haaland headed in Gundogan's cross two minutes later to extend his single-season Premier League scoring record to 36 goals. Gundogan extended City's lead



Ilay Gundogan (left) and Erling Haaland got the goals for Manchester City

soon after half time with a curling free-kick that sailed over Everton's wall into the net.

Sean Dyche's Everton remained teetering just above the relegation zone in 17th place with 32 points, one ahead of Leeds United.

Man City again played their brand of high-pressing football never really allowing the opposition to have a clear look at their goal. If Haaland had utilised the two other chances that he got in the second half, the margin of victory would have been far more emphatic.