



## SPICY DISCLOSURE

Actor Priyanka Chopra, on a late night show, asserts that it's okay to have sex on the first date itself

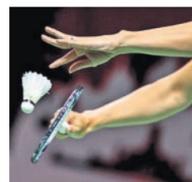
LEISURE P2



## RELIEF FOR IMRAN

The Islamabad High Court provides 2-week bail relief for former PM Imran Khan in a corruption case

INTERNATIONAL P10



## 'SPIN SERVE' BANNED

BWF puts an interim ban on the use of the new experimental 'spin serve' immediately till May 29

SPORTS P12



SKY IS THE LIMIT: Successful Class XII students of SAI International School and Class X students of ODM School celebrate after the announcement of the CBSE results Friday



PHOTO: BIKASH NAYAK

## SC slams Guj govt over promotion of judicial officers

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, May 12: The Supreme Court stayed Friday the promotion of 68 Gujarat lower judicial officers, including Surat Chief Judicial Magistrate Harish Hasmukhbhai Varma, who had convicted Congress leader Rahul Gandhi in a defamation case.

The Supreme Court bench also criticised the Gujarat government for the haste it showed in promotion of the judicial officers. "We do not appreciate the haste and hurry in which the state has approved and passed the promotion order," it said.

A bench comprising Justices MR Shah and CT Ravikumar said the promotion of the judicial officers was in violation of the Gujarat State Judicial Service Rules 2005, amended in 2011, which states that promotions must be made on principle of merit-cum-seniority and on passing a suitability test.

"We are more than satisfied that the impugned list issued by the high court and the subsequent order issued by the state government granting promotion to district judges are illegal and contrary to the decision of this court. The same are, therefore, not sustainable," the apex court bench said.

"We stay the implementation of the promotion list. Respective promotees are sent to their original post which they were holding prior to their promotions," the bench added.

The top court was hearing a plea of senior civil judge cadre officers, Ravikumar Maheta and Sachin Prataprai Mehta, challenging the selection of the 68 judicial officers to the higher cadre of district judges. The two are presently working as undersecretary in the legal department of the Gujarat Government.

The SC observed that the two complainants had secured 135.5 and 148.5 marks respectively out of 200. Yet, they were not promoted while other aspirants with lesser marks than the two were elevated. "We do not appreciate the hasty way in which the promotions were carried out," the bench observed.

## Nabaneet, Swati are state CBSE toppers

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, May 12: The Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) declared Friday the Class X and XII examination results. In the Class X examinations, Bhubaneswar with a pass percentage of 93.94 was placed eighth among all the regions while in the Class XII segment it was 11th with a pass percentage of 83.39.

Several city schools performed exceptionally in the examinations with two students, (one boy and one girl), scoring 99.2% in the Class X exams to jointly emerge Odisha toppers. They are Nabaneet Priyadarshi of DAV Unit-VIII School and Swati Sucharita Sahu of ODM School.

Talking to Orissa POST, Nabaneet said that even though he is happy with his results, he expected a higher percentage. "I was very focused with my studies and that helped. Now my aim is to study in the science stream and prepare for IIT," he said.

Swati who got 100 in science and 99 in maths said that she was hoping to max both the papers. "I got tremen-



Nabaneet and Swati Sucharita

dous support from my family and now I will prepare for NEET as I want to become a doctor," Swati said.

This year 21,65,805 students appeared for the Class X CBSE exams with 20,16,779 passing. Officials said that among the 16,80,511 students who appeared for the Class XII exams, more than 87 per cent were successful.

CBSE officials said that 3.08 lakh students have scored above 90 per cent in the CBSE Class X and Class XII exams while over 66,000 secured scores above 95 per cent.

In Class XII exams, 1,12,838 students have scored above 90 per cent and 22,622 candidates secured above 95 per cent. Similarly in Class X, 1,95,799 candidates have scored above 90 per cent while 44,297 have acquired marks above 95%. P3

## Arukh, 2 Ministers resign

With both the ministers embroiled in controversies, Patnaik wanted a clean image for the party and did not want to take a chance with the Lok Sabha and Assembly elections scheduled for next year

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, May 12: Ahead of Assembly and Lok Sabha polls, Speaker Bikram Keshari Arukh along with two state ministers, Samir Ranjan Dash and Srikanta Sahu resigned from their positions Friday. The sudden resignation of the Speaker and two ministers, at a time when Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik is away in New Delhi and Governor Ganeshi Lal is out of station, shocked the entire political fraternity.

Arukh however, later told mediapersons Friday evening that he has resigned on personal grounds. "I have submitted my resignation to Deputy Speaker Rajanikant Singh," he said. He was asked whether he will be re-introduced in the Cabinet of Naveen Patnaik government. "I will discharge every responsibility

assigned to me by the party or in the government," Arukh said.

Soon after the resignation of the Speaker, School & Mass Education Minister Dash and Labour Minister Sahu quit their positions. Sahu said he has quit so that he can give more time to the BJD. It should be stated here that a few days back, a BJD woman worker had brought allegations of 'sexual harassment' against Sahu. Sources said that she even visited a police station demanding action against the minister. "In politics, a lot of allegations are made. I don't want to comment on those. I have resigned so that I can carry out my organisational responsibilities properly," Sahu said.

Dash, was also dragged into controversy over the alleged suicide of BJD zilla parishad member Dharmendra Sahoo. However, he also



Bikram Keshari Arukh

said that he has resigned from the Cabinet to give full time to the party.

Political observers however said that both were asked to resign be-

cause of their controversial images. They also said, that with the Lok Sabha and the Assembly elections slated for next year, Patnaik wants to clean the image of the BJD which led to the resignation of the two ministers.

Sahu is an MLA from Polasara Assembly segment in CM's home district Ganjam. So, in his place, Arukh is likely to be inducted in the state Cabinet. Sources also said that in case Deepali Das wins from Jharsuguda, she may be inducted as a minister of state (MoS) in the government as her father Naba Das was a former Health Minister in the Patnaik-led government.

Patnaik had reshuffled his Cabinet in June 2022. So, another reshuffle is on the cards. It will be done once Governor Lal returns to the city, sources said.

## City student dies by suicide

IN THE FIRST 5 MONTHS OF THE YEAR, 8 STUDENTS HAVE ENDED THEIR LIVES, INCLUDING 3 IN BHUBANESWAR

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, May 12: Cases of students dying by suicide continue to haunt the capital city. In the latest such incident, an ITI student of a prominent engineering college here died by suicide in his hostel room at Mancheswar late Thursday evening, police said Friday. The deceased, Rudra Madhaba Rana was a native of Nandipada area in Keonjhar district and was a first-year electrical trade student.



This is the second case of a student committing suicide in the city in May. Earlier May 1, Atul Sia, a third-year student of Ekamra College had died by suicide.

Rana had returned to his hostel room after attending classes, Thursday afternoon. He looked for his cousin, but the latter had left for his native village. When Rana's friends came looking for him after dinner, they found his room locked from inside. Getting no response, his friends checked through the window only to find

Rana hanging from the ceiling fan.

College authorities immediately informed the Mancheswar police station. Police reached the spot and sent the body for post-mortem.

Police have started investigations into the incident after registering a case (No 200/23) as per allegations of Niranjana Rana, the deceased's father. He alleged that his son was thrashed by a teacher of the college following which the deceased took the drastic step.

Sources claimed that Rana was severely rebuked by a teacher who spotted the latter smoking in the college campus. Police have already interrogated the teacher.

## 4 TUSKERS DIE CLOSE TO ODISHA-ANDHRA BORDER

POST NEWS NETWORK

Paralakhemundi, May 12: Four elephants were electrocuted after coming in contact with an electric transformer near a farmland close to the Odisha-Andhra Pradesh border Friday morning, officials said. They informed that a herd comprising six elephants from Odisha had just crossed over into Andhra when some of the animals came in contact with the live wire of a transformer in Kadragada village of Parvathipuram district in Andhra Pradesh bordering Gajapati district, leading to their deaths. The electric transformer was not protected by a boundary wall, locals informed.

## Elephant tramples woman to death

Angul: In yet another incident of man-animal conflict, a 65-year-old woman identified as Baidehi Pradhan, a resident of Jamunda village was trampled to death by an elephant in the Bantala forest range in this district Friday morning. Officials said Baidehi had gone to a nearby mango orchard when the elephant attacked and killed her. The elephant had reportedly entered the village in search of food.

On being informed, police and Forest department personnel reached the spot and started an investigation into the incident.

## IRREGULAR by MANJUL



We don't need morality. We have the majority.

## SHORT TAKES

### Yaccarino named new Twitter CEO

San Francisco: Elon Musk confirmed Friday that the new CEO for Twitter will be NBCUniversal's Linda Yaccarino, an executive with deep ties to the advertising industry. "I am excited to welcome Linda Yaccarino as the new CEO of Twitter!" Musk wrote in a Friday tweet. He added that Yaccarino "will focus primarily on business operations" while Musk will stay closely connected to product design and new technology. Before that announcement, NBCUniversal said that Yaccarino would step down immediately as chairwoman for global advertising. However, few expect Musk to remove himself from the decision making process at Twitter and leave the running of the organisation to Yaccarino. P11

### Jharsuguda bypoll results today

Bhubaneswar: Counting of votes for the byelection to Jharsuguda Assembly seat will begin at 8.00am Saturday, chief electoral officer (CEO) of Odisha, Nikunjia Bihari Dhal said here Friday. Though there are nine candidates, the contest is mainly restricted to three candidates - Deepali Das of the ruling BJD, Tarun Pandey of the Congress and Tankadhar Tripathy of BJP. "All arrangements are in place for the counting of votes at the Engineering School premises in Jharsuguda. There will be 18 complete rounds and one partial round. Postal ballots will be counted first," the CEO said. P3

## Indian lady on cusp of global nursing glory

Shanti has been working for the backward tribes in Andaman and Nicobar Islands for close to two decades bringing them relief during disasters and more recently during the Covid-19 pandemic

Jarawa tribe to save them from being wiped out by the disease in 2021. Now at the age of 51, she is being considered for the prestigious 'Global Nursing Award 2023'. Two years back, while travelling through the choppy seas, Shanti, who was leading a small medical team, had once thought that they would not be able to make it when their dinghy was caught in a storm in the Andaman sea.

"The sea was extraordinarily rough and we thought were all going to drown. However, God willed otherwise and we managed to reach and vaccinate the Jarawas successfully. We also managed to explain to them the precautionary measures they have to take during the pandemic,"



Shanti said Friday from London where she has been invited to the award ceremony.

The Jarawas have minimal contact with outsiders. They were considered particularly vulnerable to the disease as the tribe has little medical help available to it at the best of times. Also many medical

IF I WIN THE AWARD, I WOULD LIKE TO DEDICATE THE REST OF MY LIFE FOR THE WELFARE OF THE VULNERABLE TRIBAL GROUPS IN THE ANDAMANS SHANTI TERESA LAKRA

teams were reluctant to visit the place where the Jarawas resided, but Shanti volunteered to go.

Over the years, Shanti's dedicated service to the primitive tribes of Andaman and Nicobar Islands has paid off as she was selected for the top 10 finalists for the 'Aster Guardians Global Nursing Award 2023', which honours nursing staff worldwide.

Shanti came into limelight in 2004, when after a devastating Tsunami, she went out to work among the Onge tribals to bring them relief and succor after the death and destruction wrought by nature.

She received May 3 a call from the management of 'Aster Guardians Global Nursing' to tell her that she had been shortlisted as one of the top 10 finalists for the prestigious award. Shanti was selected from among 52,000 entries sent by 202 countries, including 13,156 from India. The first prize carries a reward of more than ₹2 crore.

In 2011, Shanti was awarded the Padma Shri for her outstanding service to the tribal community of Andaman and Nicobar islands.

MARKET WATCH	
INDEX	VARIATION
SENSEX	62027.90 ↑ 123.38
NIFTY	18314.80 ↑ 17.80
DOLLAR	81.99 ↓ ₹0.03
EURO	89.27 ↓ ₹0.32
GOLD	₹60,780 ↓ ₹112
SILVER	₹72,982 ↓ ₹826

WEATHER		
	BHUB	CTK
TEMP	MAX 37.2°C	37.0°C
	MIN 26.8°C	27.0°C
Humidity	77%	69%
Rainfall	Nil	Nil
Forecast	Light to moderate rain	

# leisure

## FORTUNE FORECAST

GaneshSpeaks.com  
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FOR ASTROLOGY DIAL 55181

**ARIES**  
Today you will feel like going green, and Ganesh approves. You could plant a sapling, or organise some dustbins to keep the neighbourhood clean. If you wish to make the world a better place to live in, do it but take it step by step.

**TAURUS**  
You are likely to become too ambitious today and strive to outdo others. So says Ganesh. You will be over eager to do some thing big, lay your hands on something precious and valuable. Though you are quite likely to succeed to some extent you over enthusiasm may land you in serious problems that may affect your persona; and private life.

**GEMINI**  
Putting things in order will be your top priority, says Ganesh. You will possibly have a romantic dinner with your sweetheart. Seductive conversations may culminate in sensuous consumption. Your personal feelings will stir up your partner's private thoughts.

**CANCER**  
It is high time you paid attention to your family. You have been so lost in work and in making money that you have almost forgotten the very people you have been slogging for. Your spouse has been trying hard to improve the relationship. Ganesh feels it is time you respond to your partner's needs.

**LEO**  
You will leave no stone unturned to satisfy and please your partner today. So your chances of slipping up are very slight. You will be able to impress your partner today. You need to be careful in all your financial dealings today, says Ganesh.

**VIRGO**  
Your communication and creative abilities are your best weapons. You will be overflowing with zest for life and will exude cheerfulness. However, Ganesh warns that your creativity will bloom fully only in situations where there is no pressure or strain.

**LIBRA**  
Ganesh says that you will be full of joy, enthusiasm and vigor today. Your knowledge will improve by being in the company of intelligent people. Anything that you take up today will have your luck or destiny supporting you. Ganesh wishes you success in all your undertakings.

**SCORPIO**  
Focus is the buzzword for you; your eyes should be set on the things you aim, advises Ganesh. You may even indulge into some kind of research work. Today, you may bump into an old pal with whom you relive those good old school days and rejuvenate yourself.

**SAGITTARIUS**  
Benevolence will be your middle name today. Being frank and open-minded will have its own advantages. You might just give your life partner a patient ear. This will make them feel treated well, says Ganesh.

**CAPRICORN**  
You have been waiting to hear some good news for long, and today is the day when the wait will be finally over. With your eyes firmly set on your goal, you will develop likings for your work. This will help you make plans and take decisions for the future, feels Ganesh. You wished to change your current job, but with some good news coming in you may not wish for the same any more.

**AQUARIUS**  
Today, you will want to expand your horizon of knowledge. You will give a tough fight to your opponents and come out triumphant, feels Ganesh. Troubles will not be able trouble you as you will be able to turn them into your advantage. You are clever, talented and have all that it takes to fly high. Just believe in the strength of your wings.

**PISCES**  
Today you will feel generous and calm. You will shower those in the family who are younger than you with this generosity and as a result be the object of their fondness. With a clear perspective you will be able to see things for what they are. The only downside of the day is that your expenses might take a toll on your wallet, says Ganesh.



## FANNING LOST ROLE OVER INSTAGRAM FOLLOWERS

Actor Elle Fanning has revealed she was rejected for a role in a major film franchise because movie bosses thought her Instagram followers count was too low. Elle, who has 6.2 million followers on Instagram, previously revealed that she has mixed feelings about being on Instagram.

## PORTMAN HASN'T BOUGHT A SINGLE ANIMAL PRODUCT IN 20 YEARS

Actress Natalie Portman hasn't purchased any animal products in 20 years. The *Star Wars* actress is passionate about a vegan lifestyle and is a prominent animal rights campaigner and as well as spurning garments created from animal products. She no longer buys new clothes unless absolutely necessary, reports *aceshowbiz.com*.



# PeeCee indulges in saucy revelations

**Los Angeles:** Priyanka Chopra has been busy promoting her movie *Love Again*, co-starring Sam Heughan. As part of the campaign, she recently played the BFF test with her co-star on a late night show where the duo answered some spicy, saucy questions about love in general.

When asked whether it is okay to have sex on the first date or not, both the actors agreed that it is fine provided you are responsible. They also agreed that it is okay to give out a fake phone number on the date if you are not romantically attracted to that person.

The duo was also asked if

they would give on oral sex or cheese for the rest of their lives. Hearing this, the *The White Tiger* actress couldn't stop laughing at the idea of putting the two together. Blushing, she agreed with Sam that she would give up on cheese rather than oral sex.

Priyanka has been talking a lot on her personal of 'late'. The actor recently appeared on an International show and spoke at length about her daughter's first visit to India and how she loved everything about it.

AGENCIES



# We have to be truthful to real incidents: Manoj

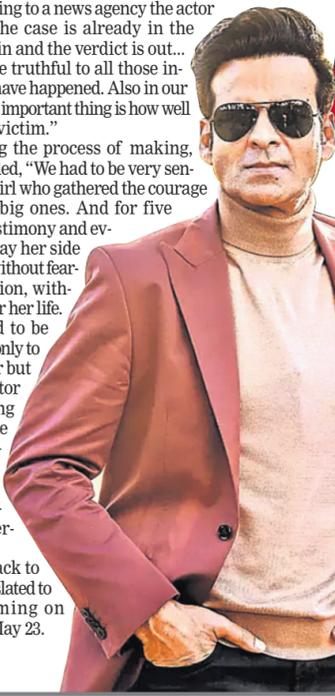
**Mumbai:** The charitable trust of the rape convict Asaram recently sent a legal notice to the makers of *Sirf Ek Bandaa Kaafi Hai* and its lead actor Manoj Bajpayee or allegedly modelling the character of the villain in the movie on the convict. Now, the *Satya* actor has reacted to the same and expressed his views on the matter.

While talking to a news agency the actor asserted, "The case is already in the public domain and the verdict is out... We have to be truthful to all those incidents that have happened. Also in our film, the most important thing is how well we treat the victim."

Explaining the process of making, Bajpayee added, "We had to be very sensitive to the girl who gathered the courage to fight the big ones. And for five years give testimony and evidence, and say her side of the story without fearing humiliation, without fearing for her life. Also, we had to be sensitive not only to the character but also to the actor who is playing the role. She herself is 15-16 years old, and she has given a remarkable performance."

Coming back to the film, it is slated to start streaming on ZEE5 from May 23.

AGENCIES



# Phalguna Chaitra: A heady mix of memories and music

The way the landscapes, the streets, the interiors of the house and the conversations have been shot, cut and stitched together reflect how much attention has been poured into each scene

ATRI PRASAD ROUT, OP

Some twenty minutes into Peenakee Singh and Sisir Kumar Sahu's *Phalguna Chaitra*, Chaudhury Jayprakash Das' Jeje (grandpa), an ageing patriarch with a handlebar moustache, gives a tour of his ancestral home, an old magisterial building aching in absence of maintenance, to Smruti (BM Baishali), his granddaughter, and Kabya (Partha Ray), who is there to renovate the ancient house.

Reminiscing about his father and his childhood, Das asks him to be kind and considerate towards all the people who have called the building their home over the years, by remodelling it in a way that doesn't destroy the marks of the old memories it harbours.

Memories, one realises, are both at the front and centre of *Phalguna Chaitra*. How these memories form, what triggers their recall, what remains when they fade away, and how our lives become miserably without them, these are what motivate the characters in this film and drive the plot.

As Kabya and Smruti (a name that incidentally translates in English to memory) spend more time together, they start to fall in love. The love grows and finds expression in the early mornings, lonely evenings and crowded markets as their hands touch and as Kabya buys her flower garlands. Everything feels like a blooming sweet romance until, again, the memories kick back, in flashbacks, to shake off that sweetness, just to avoid any spoilers.

Though the great reveal of the film may seem to some people a tad familiar, the Odia audience, and the non-Odia too as there is English subtitle, should visit the theatre to savour the beauty of Odisha on screen and immerse themselves in the story as its execution and visualisation have sim-



**Directors:** Peenakee Singh and Sisir Kumar Sahu  
**Cast:** Chaudhury Jayprakash Das, Parthasarathi Ray, BM Baishali, Ananya Mishra, Bhaswati Basu & others

ply been extraordinary.

The way the landscapes, the streets, the interiors of the house and the conversations have been shot, cut and stitched together reflect how much attention and love the DOP Rudrakant Singh and the director duo have poured into each scene. The rhythmic editing, to the tunes of music voiced by

artists like Gourav Anand, makes the second half no-less than a mesmerising musical, with the potential to make some eyes jerk tears seeing Jayprakash Das and Bhaswati Basu grieving under the burden of memories. But this over-reliance on music can also be seen as a weakness, an under-deployment of plot devices.

However, as Martin Scorsese once said, "Cinema is a matter of what's in the frame and what's out." Films like *Phalguna Chaitra* are revolutionising Odia cinema one frame at a time by making the choice to keep in the frame the 'chakuli pitha' of Odia kitchens and the 'sanja balita' from Odia evenings.

## FILM REVIEW

# 'Can go to any extent for my daughters'

**Mumbai:** Ahead of Mother's Day Sunday, actress and former beauty queen Sushmita Sen has drawn parallels between her real self and her reel character *Aarya*.

Sushmita represents strong women and especially mothers who could kill or die for their children in any circumstances.

Talking about motherhood and her character of *Aarya*, Sushmita said: "Aarya is synonymous with motherhood. She is the epitome of grace and strength. I am elated to be associated with her

story and her journey of motherhood. I admire *Aarya* for being a warrior and surpassing every hurdle that comes her way." Sushmita describes *Aarya* as "bold and has emerged as a fierce lioness who wants to protect her children at any cost."

"I have raised my two daughters single-handedly and I know I can go to any extent for them just like *Aarya* does in the series. I thoroughly resonate with her zeal to move ahead, no matter what and prevail through every hindrance." She added: "Motherhood is the most beautiful thing in the world and I absolutely enjoy playing such a strong mother, on-screen as well. Moreover, I hope audiences are looking forward to *Aarya* season 3." Sushmita is currently shooting for *Aarya* season 3. The show will stream on Disney+ Hotstar. IANS

## FUN post

### PEANUTS



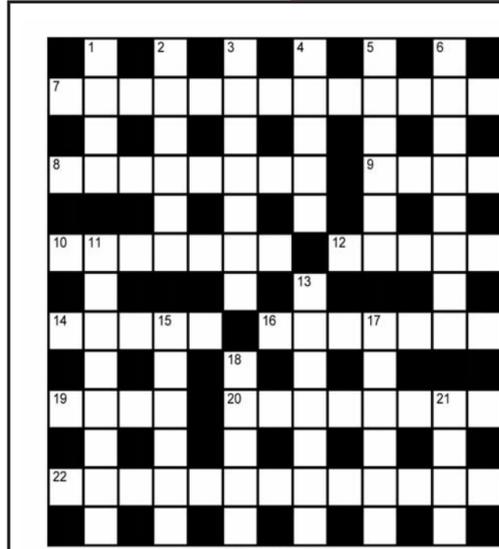
### CALVIN AND HOBBS



### BREVITY



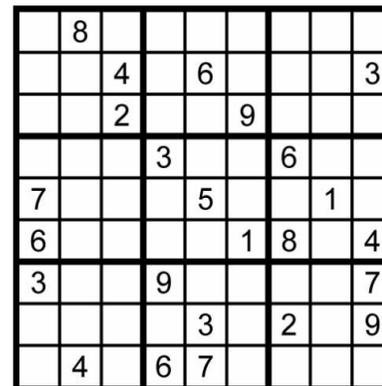
### CROSSWORD



- Across**
- 7 Poised or all-in-one unit (4-9)
  - 8 Tunnel
  - 9 Fashion
  - 10 Orange red
  - 12 Fortified
  - 14 Mild and pleasant weather
  - 16 Gauge
  - 19 Russian monarch
  - 20 Writer's send-off to a publisher
  - 22 Music genre (4,9)
- Down**
- 1 Second letter of the Greek alphabet
  - 2 Social function
  - 3 Light hollow toasted muffin
  - 4 Uses a knife illegally
  - 5 Boil slowly
  - 6 Cap or hat, for instance
  - 11 Kinship group member
  - 13 Lofiness
  - 15 Sufferer
  - 17 Period of play
  - 18 Computer communication (1-4)
  - 21 Reasonable

### SUDOKU

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

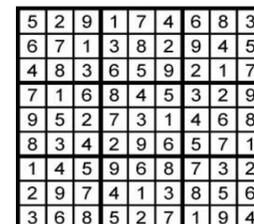


### SOLUTIONS

#### CROSSWORD



#### SUDOKU

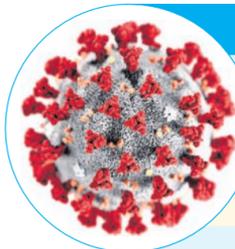


CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW



## STAGE CRAFT

Artistes perform a play as part of 'Shabda Ranga Natak Utsav 2023' at Rabindra Mandap in Bhubaneswar, Friday



## COVID-19 TRACKER

	INFECTED	RECOVERED	DEAD
World	68,81,88,987	66,05,85,919	68,73,799
India	4,49,78,179	4,44,28,417	5,31,753
Odisha	13,36,304	13,26,915	9,204

# CBSE CLASS X, XII RESULTS OUT JUBILANT CITY SCHOOL STUDENTS REJOICE SUCCESS



POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, May 12:** Students of many schools here came out with flying colours in the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) Class X and XII examinations 2023, the results of which were announced Friday.

At SAI International School, Pakshalika Routray topped the institution by scoring 98.2 per cent in the Class X examination, followed by Anannya Padhy with 98 per cent. Priyanshi Behera and Sonali Rath stood third in the school by scoring 97.8 per cent in the Class X examination.

In Class X examination, 47.28 per cent students of the school scored above 90 per cent and 19.57 per cent above 95 per cent, taking the overall average of the

school to 88.8 per cent.

SAI International School's Pratistha Pal, who scored 99.6 per cent, topped the state in Class XII Science. Divyaa Majhi from Humanities and Adarsh Agarwall from Commerce topped the school in respective streams of Class XII by scoring 98 per cent and 97.2 per cent respectively. SAI International Education Group chairperson Silpi Sahoo congratulated the students for their dedication and determination which brought laurels to the school.

At ODM Public School, Swati Sucharita Sahoo, who topped the CBSE Class X examination in Odisha by securing 99.2 per cent, is also the school topper; followed by Shriman Suvrans Jyoti Behera with 99 per cent and Shriman Aditya Kiran

Bal with 98.8 per cent. Of the 274 successful Class X examinees, nine have scored over 98 per cent, 44 over 95 per cent and 107 over 90 per cent.

ODM's Arorshish Pradhan and Soumyakanta Panda topped the school by securing 98.2 per cent in Class XII Science examination.

Ayush Mohanty, Kumari P Amrita, Pratik Kumar Mohanty, Pratyush Das, Sankalp Tattwadharshi Swain and Shrimay Sarangi stood second in the school by scoring 97 per cent in Class XII Science exam. Similarly, Kumari Ankita Dash, Sriman Tanmaya Mohapatra, Kumari Aliva Acharya and Sriman Spandan Bharadwaj stood third in ODM Public School by scoring 96.8 per cent in Class XII Science. ODM Educational

Group chairman Satyabrata Minaketan congratulated the students, teachers and parents for the feat.

At DAV Public School Unit-VIII, Nabaneet Priyadarshi, who topped the CBSE Class X examination in Odisha by scoring 99.2 per cent, is also the school topper. Ekta Mohanty stood second in the school with 98.8 per cent. Anshuman Ranasingh and Smarak Das jointly bagged the third position in the school with 98.4 per cent.

136 students of the school have secured more than 90 per cent and 211 have got more than 80 per cent in the Class X examination.

In Class XII Science, DAV Public School Unit-VIII's Rohit Kumar Mishra topped the school by scoring 98.20 per cent. Ruhika Das and Varun Mishra stood second and third in the school by securing 98 per cent and 97.80 per cent respectively in the Class XII Science examination. 29 students secured more than 95 per cent and 80 got over 90 per cent in the Class XII examination.

Around 57 per cent students of Mother's Public School, Bhubaneswar scored 90 per cent and above in the Class X examination. Amaan Kumar Nayak scored 98.8 per cent, while Subhrashree Kar scored 98.4 per cent. Adyasha Rath and Vivekananda Rath scored 98.2 per cent. In Class XII Science, Sitanshu Mohapatra topped the school with 98 per cent, followed by Suryajyoti Mohapatra with 97 per cent and Arnab Jena with 96.6 per cent.

Mother's Public School chairman and principal Poly Patnaik congratulated the students and teachers for their wonderful performance.

At Buxi Jagabandhu English Medium (BJEM) School, Kanchi Bhoomika topped the institution with 97.8 per cent in Class X. In Class XII Science, Aakash Kumar Singh topped the school with 97.4 per cent.



ODM PUBLIC SCHOOL



MOTHER'S PUBLIC SCHOOL



BJEM SCHOOL

## JHARSUGUDA BYELECTION

# STAGE SET FOR VOTE COUNTING TODAY

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, May 12:** Counting of votes for the byelection to Jharsuguda Assembly seat will begin at 8am Saturday, Chief Electoral Officer (CEO) Nikunjia Bihari Dhal said here Friday.

The CEO said the result of the bypoll to crucial Jharsuguda Assembly seat will be declared following counting of votes Saturday.

"All arrangements are in place for the counting of votes on the premises of Jharsuguda Engineering School. There will be 18 complete rounds and one partial round. Postal ballots will be counted first. EVM vote counting will start at 8:30am," the CEO said.

As Jharsuguda has been witnessing a rise in temperature for a few days now, the counting hall has been made air-conditioned. All other arrangements have been made for smooth counting of the votes, he said.

The CEO said that a three-layer security arrangement has been put in place in and around the counting centre. Central armed police force, state armed police force and state police will provide the security during the counting.

Collector and returning officers will announce the round-wise results



A three-layer security arrangement has been put in place in and around the counting centre

As Jharsuguda has been witnessing a rise in temperature for a few days now, the counting hall has been made air-conditioned

after counting of each round. It is expected that the counting would complete between 4pm and 6pm, he added.

Jharsuguda Collector Aboli Sunil Naravane and Superintendent of Police (SP) Parmar Smit Parshottamdas said arrangements have been made for smooth conduct of counting and maintenance of law and order.

The bypoll was held following the assassination of health minister Naba Kisore Das January 29 allegedly by a police officer.

Though there are nine candidates, the contest was restricted to three candidates - Deepali Das of the ruling BJD, Tarun Pandey of the Congress and Tankadhar Tripathy of the BJP.

Now, all eyes are on the outcome of the bypoll as it will show the strength of the three major political parties in the state ahead of the upcoming Assembly and Lok Sabha polls.

Altogether 79.21 per cent of the 2.21 lakh voters exercised their franchise May 10.

In the 147-member Assembly, BJD now has 113 members, the opposition BJP and Congress have 22 and nine MLAs respectively. The CPI(M) has one member and there is one independent legislator.

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

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

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

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

## OSOP outlets at 31 stations in Odisha

**New Delhi:** In a bid to promote indigenous products and create additional income opportunities for marginalised sections, outlets have been allotted at 31 railway stations in Odisha under the 'One Station One Product' (OSOP) scheme, the Ministry of Railways said Friday. OSOP outlets have been allotted at stations including Bhubaneswar, Puri, Cuttack, Sambalpur, Angul, Bolangir, Balasore, Dhenkanal, Rourkela, Rayagada, Khurda Road, Jharsuguda, Hirakud and Bargarh Road.

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## CBSE ANNOUNCED THE RESULTS OF BOTH CLASS X & XII ON 12TH MAY, 2023

**Swati Sucharita Sahoo of ODM Public School has made the school and the entire state proud by securing 99.2%. She has secured 496 out of 500, in 5 subjects. She has also bagged the 2nd rank in the entire region.**

"Without the care and support of teachers of ODM and the blessings of my parents, this would not have been possible. I was very focused and I read and practiced on a daily basis. I never thought to achieve this position and I am very happy to know this", said Swati.

Swati is the daughter of Ramesh Chandra Sahoo & Swapna Sahoo. Swati's father works in Indian Army and she is a resident of Patia, Bhubaneswar.

Swati's preparation strategy was very simple. She used to study for 8-10 hours and she used to study every subject every day. She wants to pursue NEET and become a successful doctor and serve the society. She will be

studying at ODM, to fulfill this dream of hers. Swati's teachers were always confident of her securing good marks

and becoming a topper. ODM's Vice-Principal, Mrs. Sandhya Rani Swain mentioned that "Swati has been a very sincere student and she has always been great at studies. Her discipline, focus and hardwork has helped her achieve this. I wish her all the best for her

future. I am sure, she would do very well."

The students of ODM Public school, once again produced brilliant

results in the board this year. Apart from Swati, 8 other students secured above 98% and Suvrans Jyoti Behera secured the second position with 99%.

ODM's Chairman Dr. S. Minaketan, congratulated every child and was very happy to see the successful result of the student. He thanked all the teachers for their dedication towards the students and also congratulated all the students for their hard work. He wished the students all the best for the future endeavors and also motivated them to stay focused and achieve greater goals in life.



## Astronomers detect largest cosmic explosion

The explosion is more than 10 times brighter than any known supernova or exploding star and three times brighter than the brightest tidal disruption event, where a star falls into a supermassive black hole



supernovae, which are only visibly bright for a few months, according to the researchers.

"We came upon this by chance, as it was flagged by our search algorithm when we were searching for a type of supernova," said Philip Wiseman, Research Fellow at the University of Southampton, who led the research published in the journal Monthly Notices of the Royal Astronomical Society.

"Most supernovae and tidal disruption events only last for a couple of months before fading away. For something to be bright for two plus years was immediately very unusual," Wiseman said in a state-

ment. The team believes that the explosion is a result of a vast cloud of gas possibly thousands of times larger than the Sun that has been violently disrupted by a supermassive black hole.

Fragments of the cloud would be swallowed up, sending shockwaves through its remnants, as well as into a large dusty 'doughnut' surrounding the black hole. Such events are very rare and nothing on this scale has been witnessed before.

Last year, astronomers witnessed the brightest explosion on record—a gamma-ray burst known as GRB 221009A. While this was brighter

than AT2021lwx, it lasted for just a fraction of the time, meaning the overall energy released by the AT2021lwx explosion is far greater.

AT2021lwx was first detected in 2020 by the Zwicky Transient Facility in California, US, and subsequently picked up by the Asteroid Terrestrial-impact Last Alert System (ATLAS) based in Hawaii.

These facilities survey the night sky to detect transient objects that rapidly change in brightness indicating cosmic events such as supernovae, as well as finding asteroids and comets.

However, the scale of the explosion has been unknown until now. There are different theories as to what could have caused such an explosion, but the team believes the most feasible explanation is an extremely large cloud of gas (mostly hydrogen) or dust that has come off course from its orbit around the black hole and been sent flying in.

The researchers are now setting out to collect more data on the explosion—measuring different wavelengths, including X-rays which could reveal the object's surface and temperature, and what underlying processes are taking place.

# Mental health training for college students

Through training sessions, students from colleges and universities will be trained to handle stress, create awareness, reduce stigma and identify warning signs of suicide

tention, like, increasing suicidal tendency, stigma among parents leading to gaps in treatment, reduced self-help skills, poor coping style, and strained interpersonal relationships.

“Through training sessions, students from various colleges and universities will be trained to identify mental health issues, handle stress, create awareness, reduce stigma and to identify warning signs of suicide as well as to build resilience and other supportive methods,” said the official.

During the event, Dasnayak said, “These days, students are getting mentally pressurized for several reasons: let it be social media, online gambling, expectations of family members and relatives and the peer pressure of establishing themselves well in society.”

“When things don't go accordingly, suicidal tendencies occur, so mental health awareness is need of the moment,” he added.

In the first phase, awareness campaigns will be held in 100 colleges, he informed.

On the other hand, Pattojoshi said, “The main motive of this MoU is to empower youngsters and students as well as to create awareness. Mental wellbeing includes emotional, psychological, and social well-being. Mental Health affects how one thinks, feels, and acts. It also helps determine how one can handle stress, relate to others, and make healthy choices.”

Executive member of Indian Psychiatric Society Professor Subhendu Mishra and Shri Aditya Choudhury of ‘Mo College’ were also present during the entire event.



**PRESSING CONCERNS:** Members of United Elementary Teachers' Federation demonstrate near Lower PMG seeking job regularisation among other things on their five-point charter-of-demands in Bhubaneswar, Friday



POST NEWS NETWORK

**These days, students are getting mentally pressurized for many reasons: let it be social media, online gambling, expectations of family members and relatives, and the peer pressure for establishing themselves well in society**

**AKASH DASNAYAK | MO COLLEGE CHAIRPERSON**

**Bhubaneswar, May 12:** A memorandum of understanding (MoU) was signed Friday between ‘Mo College’ and Indian Psychiatric Society (Odisha branch) to create awareness about different methods of dealing with mental health issues among students of various government, government-aided colleges, and state-run universities.

Mo College chairperson Akash Dasnayak president Amrit Pattojoshi and secretary Ashrumochan Sahoo were present during the signing of the MoU.

The state has witnessed several incidents of suicide in the last year, which is one among the many rapidly increasing mental health issues among students that has become a major concern of society.

“In the competitive and academic rat-race, without being aware of negative impacts, stu-

dents have to bear the brunt throughout their lives. As ‘India Psychiatric Society’ is one of the oldest professional bodies working for improvement of mental health in society and to reduce the stigma regarding mental illness, this partnership will help spread awareness among students,” said an official.

With the help of experienced psychiatrists, the Society will work with students on major mental health issues that need urgent at-

# Lords’ 21-day summer festival concludes

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Puri, May 12:** Chandan Yatra, the twenty one day summer festival of Lords which began on Akshaya Tritiya, concluded Friday

Every day, Madanmohan the representing idol of Lord Jagannath along with Bhu devi and Sridevi, besides Panch mahadevas were brought on decorated palanquins carried by servitors on their shoulders in ceremonial procession to Narendra tank situated about one and half kilometre from the Srimandir.

While Madanmohan, in his famous ‘Maniviman,’ led the procession, the others deities followed. Students of various Jaga ghars



(traditional schools of martial arts) became an integral part of the procession, displaying along the way their skills. The Odissi dancers and music concerts also played a vital part in the procession.

On arrival at Narendra tank, the deities were given sandalwood and aromatic water bath and offered ‘bhog’ and then were taken on a ride on swan shaped ‘Nanda’ and ‘Bhadra’, the two boats which

go round the huge Narendra tank. The tank arena and the boats were illuminated. A large number of devotees witnessed the ritual every day. Many youths also enjoy bathing in the tank during the festival.

On the concluding day, which is known as ‘Bhauri’, the fireworks began after the ‘rati chapa’ was over. After observance of a complex set of rituals by priests and offering of ‘Mandua bhog’ in the late evening the deities return to their abode in ceremonial procession.

Adequate security arrangements were made along the route of the procession and around the Narendra tank for the 21 days summer festival of the lords.

# Naveen reviews projects pending with Centre

**New Delhi:** Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik Friday held a meeting with the officials of Resident Commissioner's office and reviewed several projects of Odisha pending with the various Union ministries. According to sources from the resident commissioner's office, the Chief Minister reviewed projects pending with the Finance ministry, Ministry of Communications, Road Transport and Highways, Civil Aviation and several other ministries. The chief minister, who reached Delhi Wednesday, met Prime Minister Narendra Modi Thursday.

# FICCI president leads delegation to Canada



POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, May 12:** FICCI president and IMFA managing director Subhrakant Panda led a business delegation accompanying Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal who was in Canada for ‘Ministerial Dialogue on Trade & Investment.’

Panda participated in the CEOs Roundtable organised by FICCI and the Business Council of Canada (BCC) May 9. He set the tone for the discussion with his opening remark along with the president and CEO of BCC Goldy Hyder.

“There is a lot more potential to bilateral trade than where we stand today, and the positive vibes in the room during the meeting bodes well,” he said. Mary Ng, Minister of International Trade, Export Promotion, Small Business and Economic Development of Canada, also participated in the Roundtable.

Panda participated May 10 in a Financial Sector Roundtable organised by FICCI and Canada-India Business Council where Goyal highlighted the wide range of investment opportunities across industry sectors in India.



**CARING FOR CAREGIVERS:** Health and Family Welfare commissioner-cum-secretary Shalini Pandit releasing the ‘Midwifery vision document’ as part of International Nurses Day celebration at Directorate of Health in Bhubaneswar, Friday

# Nurses’ role in pandemic remembered

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, May 12:** Nurses of the IMS and SUM Hospital here played a vital role in the battle against Covid-19 after five ‘Covid Hospitals’ were set up in collaboration with the Odisha government at different places. Siksha ‘O’ Anusandhan (SOA) vice-president Saswati Das said Friday.

The dedicated service of the nurses, at a time when the pandemic had triggered panic situation, had enabled thousands of patients to recover from infection and return home. Das said while addressing a programme at the IMS and SUM Hospital organised to mark the International Nurses Day.

Bharati Kar, former principal of the IGH Nursing School at Rourkela, who attended the programme as the professional expert, underlined the need for advanced nursing education. Nurses needed advanced training and should have greater understanding to serve the patients better, she said.



Pusparaj Samantashinhar, Medical Superintendent of IMS and SUM Hospital said the hospital had 1600 nurses who worked with dedication. They constituted the backbone of the hospital, he said.

The gathering was also addressed by Rajesh Lenka, hospital's additional medical superintendent and Minati Mishra, nursing superintendent. Senior nursing educator Nibedita Rout elaborated on the theme of this year's International Nurses Day while deputy nursing superintendent Nirupama Dagar administered the Florence Nightingale oath to the nurses.

Nursing educator Renulata Das presented the annual report.

A separate programme was organised at SUM Nursing College to mark the day where Amrita Lenka, secretary of the Odisha branch of Society of Midwives India (SOMI), attended as the chief guest. Samantashinhar graced the occasion as guest of honour.

Pravati Tripathy, dean, SUM Nursing College, Tapati Saha, additional dean and Sasmita Das, associate dean, were present. A newsletter of the institute was published on the occasion while four Auxiliary Nurse Midwives were felicitated.

# South Asia home to 63% of world’s babies born too small: Lancet

**S**outhern Asia accounts for nearly two-thirds of the world's small for gestational age (SGA) newborns - babies born too small, according to a paper published in the Lancet.

The paper said the region has higher rates of preterm birth than the global average and very high rates of SGA and accounts for 26.8 per cent of global live births, but 63 per cent of all small vulnerable newborns (SVNs).

This high number of SGA newborns is multifactorial, including intergenerational, said the paper titled ‘Small Babies, big risks: global estimates of prevalence and mortality for vulnerable newborns to accelerate change and improve counting’.

It is part of the four-paper Lancet Series on SVN which was launched on Tuesday at the ‘International Maternal Newborn Health Conference’ (IMNHC 2023) held here from May 8-11.

The four-day conference was hosted by the Government of South Africa and AlignMNH - a global initiative funded by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation in collaboration with the United States Agency for International Development (USAID).

The paper highlighted that preterm birth rates have not changed measurably in the past decade, and low birth weight (LBW) targets are off track.

One in ten live births (13.4 million) were preterm (known as born too soon) and one in five (23.4 million) were small for gestational age (SGA; known as born too small) in 2020.

“Nearly two-thirds (63 per cent) of the world's SGA newborns are in southern Asia (14.8 million, 40.9 per cent of live births). Preterm birth rates have less regional variation but are also highest in southern Asia (13.2 per cent),” the paper said.

The Lancet paper was released just a day before the launch of the



‘Born Too Soon: Decade of Action on Preterm Birth’ report put together by the World Health Organisation, United Nations Children's Fund and the Partnership for Maternal, Newborn & Child Health - the world's largest alliance for women, children, and adolescents.

The Born Too Soon report stated that an estimated 13.4 million babies were born preterm in 2020, with 45 per cent of them being born

in just five countries, including India, China and Pakistan.

According to the paper, the highest rates of SVN types are in southern Asia, where more than half of all newborns are affected, and in sub-Saharan Africa, where 19.9 per cent of all newborns are affected.

The lowest rates of SVN newborns were in countries and areas with low neonatal mortality, such as in the SDG region of North America, Australia, New Zealand,

The paper highlighted that preterm birth rates have not changed measurably in the past decade, and low birth weight (LBW) targets are off track

One in ten live births (13.4 million) were preterm (known as born too soon) and one in five (23.4 million) were small for gestational age in 2020

Central Asia, and Europe. Evidence regarding preterm births, SGA, and stillbirths are impeded by gaps in data availability and quality, the Lancet paper pointed out

“However, there have been improvements in data availability and some low-income and middle-income countries have achieved remarkable shifts in the past two decades within routine national data systems, notably for measuring LBW,” Eric O Ohuma, professor at the London School of Hygiene

and Tropical Medicine and one of the authors of the paper said.

Preterm birth-rate estimates are based on aggregate national data, often from facility-based routine health information systems. National routine data gaps are most notable across southern and southeast Asia and sub-Saharan Africa, Ohuma pointed out.

The authors pointed out that at the individual level, more investment is needed in closing major survival gaps for newborns in low-income settings.

Most of the progress in reducing neonatal deaths in middle-income and high-income settings can be attributed to improved neonatal care, and there is potential to save an estimated 742 700 lives per year in low-income and middle-income countries and areas with more investment in the care of small and sick newborns, including respiratory support and other neonatal care.

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# Duruas swing between hope, despair in Koraput, Malkangiri

People of the community residing in Malkangiri have been able to get caste certificates with scheduled tribe (ST) status while their counterparts in Koraput district are not so fortunate



POST NEWS NETWORK

**Boipariguda, May 12:** People of Durua community residing in tribal dominated Koraput district have been demanding scheduled tribe status for their community for a long time, a report said Friday.

However, they are being viewed differently by two different district administrations in the state. People of the community residing in Malkangiri district have been able to get a caste certificate while their counterparts in Koraput district are not so fortunate as they are deprived of a caste certificate.

Observers alleged that there is no unanimity among the officials of the two district administrations.

Sources said that the people of Durua community reside along Kolab river basin spread over Odisha and Chhattisgarh. People of the community live in Gupteshwar panchayat of Boipariguda block, Aasana, Bagderi areas of Kundura block, Tatarla, Kerimti and Kotpad of Kotpad block in Koraput district. They also reside on the fringes of Mathili block in Malkangiri district.

In neighbouring Chhattisgarh, they are known as Duruva tribe and have received the scheduled tribe status. However, they have been deprived of the benefit in Koraput district due to difference in pronunciation of the name of the community. They have distinct language, culture and traditions like all other tribes.

The state government has accorded tribal status to their culture with the community mem-



bers being involved in various tribal fairs (Adivasi Melas) organised in the state.

However, the Koraput district administration hesitates when it comes to provide them with a caste certificate. The then District Collector Usha Padhi first initiated the step to accord scheduled tribe status to the community. During her tenure, the members of the community were provided tribal certificates and land pattas under Forest Rights Act (FRA). Restrictions were even imposed on transfer of land of the Durua community to the members of general castes. The subsequent district administration stopped issuing them caste certificates stating that Duruas do not come in the list of scheduled tribes.

The handwritten caste certificates which the members of the community had received no longer cater to their needs. As a result, they have been deprived of the benefits accruing to the scheduled tribes.

Reports said that over 90 per cent of the population in Gupteshwar panchayat of Boipariguda block is from Durua

In neighbouring Chhattisgarh, they are known as Duruva tribe and have received the scheduled tribe status

However, they have been deprived of the benefit in Koraput district due to difference in pronunciation of the name of the community

community. However, their children have been deprived of studying in a residential school due to absence of a caste certificate. Lack of a caste certificate has also deprived the community's women in getting as small as a service like an Anganwadi worker. Moreover, their lands are being grabbed and encroached by the members of general community.

When contacted and asked about according scheduled tribe status to Durua community, Boipariguda tehsildar Snigdha Choudhury said that Duruas are not included in the list of scheduled tribes. They do not have any documentary evidence to substantiate their claims, for which providing them caste certificates is not possible.

On the other hand, Mathili tehsildar Chandan Bhoi in Malkangiri district said there is no problem in providing scheduled tribe certificates to the members of Durua community as the surname has no relation with the tribe. Many of them do not have land pattas but are being issued a scheduled tribe certificate on the basis of their tradition and culture, Bhoi added.

Koraput Durua community president Mira Chalan said they have submitted memorandums in this regard to the state government and the Centre at various points of time. The National Commission of Scheduled Tribe (NCST) member Ananta Nayak visited them in 2021 and collected various evidences and data to forward those to the Union government. However, nothing has been done so far. Chalan warned of a major agitation in the coming days if their demands are not addressed soon.



GEARING UP: A worker sets up equipment of a Meena Bazaar (amusement fair) ahead of Sital Sashti festival in Sambalpur, Friday

OP PHOTO

## NHRC seeks ATR on Koraput migrant workers

PNN & AGENCIES

**Kendrapara, May 12:** The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) has sought an Action Taken Report (ATR) from the Koraput district Collector on the issue of migrant workers who had to walk from Bangalore to Koraput after being refused their wages.

Acting on the petition filed by rights activist Radhakanta Tripathy, the apex right body May 10 sought a detailed reply within four weeks.

The petitioner stated that the distress migration is a chronic problem and cited that workers who were not paid wages were forced to migrate to their native place and walk from Bangalore to Koraput.

He alleged that there was gross negligence on the part of the Odisha government to protect the rights of these workers and narrated the accounts of three different migrant families who were subjected to the barbaric acts.

Citing the case wherein justice still eludes for a 60-year-old migrant worker Chamru Paharia of Nuapada district, who had left for Maharashtra with two middlemen, Tripathy narrated the ordeal of this construction worker.

He said when Paharia asked



for his wages, the agents chopped five of his toes and three of his fingers.

During Rath Yatra in the year 2019, Paharia had left for Nagpur with the two middlemen, Dolamani Satnami and Bidesi Sunani, who belonged to his native Tikrapara village.

The duo who took Paharia to Maharashtra refused to give him wages and cut eight of his fingers following a heated argument over payment of wages.

Paharia lost consciousness at that point and woke up to find himself admitted at Nagpur city hos-

pital by the RPF.

Scared of running into the agents, he ran away from the hospital. At the station, he was helped by strangers and was able to travel to Bolangir where he was spotted by a familiar villager who brought him back to his village.

The victim, Tripathy said, is yet to get justice and the real criminals are yet to be tried under law.

In 2013, the right hands of two migrant labourers from Odisha were chopped off by a labour contractor and his accomplices in Kalahandi district. In this case at least the conviction order of the

**ACTING ON THE PETITION FILED BY RIGHTS ACTIVIST RADHAKANTA TRIPATHY, THE APEX RIGHT BODY HAS SOUGHT A DETAILED REPLY WITHIN FOUR WEEKS**

criminal contractors has been passed by the district court.

In Gajapati district hand and leg injury of the migrant worker Sanka Murmu has been coloured as a railway accident, the petitioner said.

These are the ground realities of the poor migrant workers in the state, Tripathy alleged.

He further stated that these facts and circumstances revealed the naked truth of a defective society, economy, politics, and governance in Koraput-Bolangir-Kalahandi districts in Odisha.

He requested the NHRC for a permanent solution of the issue and suggested certain short term and long term measures to check the plight of distress migration.

## Locals panic as bears stray into town in Keonjhar dist



POST NEWS NETWORK

**Keonjhar, May 12:** Two bears strayed into Gobardhan area in Padmapur town in Keonjhar district Thursday night creating panic among the local residents.

According to reports, locals spotted the bears, one male and another female, while they were wandering in search of food. However, one of them was seen entering a nursery at Banajodi Chhak Friday morning. The bear possibly lost its way and made its way through the Gobardhan cashew forest and

Jogimath field. Panic gripped the villagers leading to a huge gathering after the bear entered the nursery. Informed, Palaspanga forester Krushna Chandra Das, Padmapur Mega Nursery forester Jyotsnarani Behera and other personnel from Keonjhar forest department arrived at the spot.

While they spread awareness among the panic-stricken villagers and cautioned them to ensure their safety, efforts to rescue the bear from the nursery were still underway while reports last came in.

## 2 electrocuted to death in Jajpur

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Jajpur, May 12:** Two persons, including the headmistress of a primary school, died Friday after allegedly coming in contact with a live wire in Jajpur district, police said.

The incident took place at Janindapal village under Tomka police limits.

The deceased have been identified as Shyamsundar Marandi (45) and Nitu Marandi (33), police said.

As per reports, Nitu belonged to Tangriapala within Daitari police limits of Keonjhar but was working as headmistress of Raighati Primary School and living in Janindapal. Similarly, Shyamsundar hailed from Chakradharpur of Mayurbhanj but was posted here as Railway Police constable.

According to preliminary investigation, they came in contact with the live wire while drying clothes on it Friday morning, a police officer said.

A case of unnatural death has been registered at Tomka police station in connection with the incident. The bodies have been sent for post-mortem examination, he said.

## Infant fights for life after being given expired medicine at AWC



POST NEWS NETWORK

**Paralakhemundi, May 12:** In an untoward incident that cropped up due to negligence of ASHA and Anganwadi workers, an infant has been left fighting for life after he was administered expired medicine. The incident has been reported from Jajapur village under Parala town in Gajapati district.

As per reports, the 11-month-old baby, son of one Susmita Swain, was

given expired Vitamin-C supplement at Anganwadi centre of the village, April 7. After returning home, the child experienced loose motion and vomiting. Sumitra immediately informed the ASHA worker in this regard but after hearing her ordeal, she suddenly burnt the medicine packet.

Upon verification, it was found that the medicines had already expired before 16 months. The child was then immediately admitted to Paralakhemundi district headquarters hospital and then transferred to a hospital in Andhra. But his condition deteriorated.

The critical child was then taken to Bhubaneswar and then to Cuttack Sishu Bhawan. On Wednesday the family members along with other villagers lodged a complaint against the ASHA and Anganwadi worker in the local police station. The police are investigating the matter after registering the complaint.



**MAHUA MAGIC:** A tusker rolls in a mud pool after drinking country liquor made from Mahua flowers in Pokatunga area under Bantala range of Angul forest division, Friday

## Ganja laden auto seized; one held

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Berhampur, May 12:** The intelligence wing of the Excise department Friday seized an auto-rickshaw loaded with cannabis near Kalasandhapur Chowk in Aska.

A person identified as Pramod Kumar Nayak (34) has been arrested in this connection by the Excise sleuths headed by Sub-Inspector Kuber Sethi during a routine check.

According to the Excise team, the three wheeler bearing registration number OD 32 C 9639 was carrying 150 kg of cannabis smuggled from Phulbani area.

The value of the contraband and the vehicle would be worth ₹16,50,000, said Sethi. A case has been registered and the accused forwarded to court, Friday.

**GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA** No.O-133  
**OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER**  
**RURAL WORKS DIVISION, JAJPUR**  
 jajpurrdw@yahoo.com  
**'E' PROCUREMENT NOTICE NO. Tender Online 02 JJPT of 2023-24**

- Name of work : Road Works.
- Total No. of Work : 04 Nos. of Road Works.
- Estimated Cost (Approx.) : Rs.19.30 Lakhs to 20.98 Lakhs
- Period of completion : 03 Months
- Class of contractors : B, C & D Class

Other details as follows:

- Procurement Officer : Executive Engineer, Rural Works Division, Jajpur
- Availability of tender online & submission of bid : 15.05.2023 at 10.00 AM to 24.05.2023 upto 5.00 PM
- Last date & time of seeking of tender clarification : 23.05.2023 upto 5.00 PM
- Opening of Technical bid : 25.05.2023 at 11.30 AM

Further details can be seen from the Govt. website [www.tendersodisha.gov.in](http://www.tendersodisha.gov.in)  
 Sd./- Executive Engineer,  
 Rural Works Division, Jajpur  
 OIPR-25047/11/0003/2324

**GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA** No.A-127  
**DEPARTMENT OF WATER RESOURCES**  
**Office of the Superintending Engineer,**  
**Minor Irrigation Division, Balasore**  
**'e' Procurement Notice**  
**BID IDENTIFICATION No. SEMIDBLs-01/2023-24**

- Name of the work: Work under M.I.Division, Balasore in Balasore.
- Total No. of Works: 06 (Six) Nos.
- Estimated Cost: Varies from 8.47 to 21.19 Lakhs (Approximate).
- Class of Contractor: D, 'C' & 'B'.
- Period of Completion: 02(Two) to 04(Four) Calendar months
- Availability of Bid Documents: From 11.00 A.M. of 15.05.2023 to 1.00 P.M. of 24.05.2023 in website ([www.tendersodisha.gov.in](http://www.tendersodisha.gov.in))
- Time of receipt of bid through online: From 11.00 A.M. of 15.05.2023 to 1.00 P.M. of 24.05.2023 through online.
- Date & Time of opening of Technical Bid: 28.05.2023 at 11.00 A.M. at office of the S.E., M.I.D., Balasore.
- Date & Time of Transparent Lottery if necessary: 06.06.2023 at 11.00 A.M. onwards as mentioned in DTCN
- Digital Signature Certificate: The bidder must possess compatible Digital Signature Certificate (DSC) of Class-II or Class-III
- Name & Address of the Officer Inviting the Bid: Superintending Engineer, M.I.Division, Balasore. e-mail ID:- [mibalasore@yahoo.co.in](mailto:mibalasore@yahoo.co.in)

Further details can be seen from the Govt. website [www.tendersodisha.gov.in/District NIC Portal \(baleswar.nic.in\)](http://www.tendersodisha.gov.in/District NIC Portal (baleswar.nic.in))  
 Note: Corrigendum / Addendum/Modifications/ Additions if any can be seen through on-line only.  
 Superintending Engineer, Minor Irrigation Division, Balasore.  
 OIPR-32014/11/0001/2324

FOCUS SUSTAINABILITY

# HIMALAYAN HOTSPOT



The Himalayas are both majestic and fragile, eroding and growing as the tectonic plate on which the Indian subcontinent sits pushes under the softer Asian continent. The mountains interact with the sky above and the rivers below, and any changes to this delicate balance could affect the lives and livelihoods of billions of people

effits in the short term but is destructive in the medium and long term.

This January, our two NYUAD undergraduate classes travelled to Kathmandu to learn about the geopolitical and ecological implications of these melting mountains. The students participated in a conference where experts from a variety of fields addressed a broad range of issues, from seismic activity and water agreements to public policies and the disposition of cultural artefacts. The key takeaway was that the multifaceted nature of the challenge in the region should not impede action, but instead spur the development of a holistic approach.

Whenever the smog cleared and the peaks revealed themselves, we felt a renewed sense of awe. The Himalayas are both majestic and fragile, eroding and growing as the tectonic plate on which the Indian subcontinent sits pushes under the softer Asian continent. The mountains interact with the sky above and the rivers below, and any changes to this delicate balance could affect the lives and livelihoods of billions of people.

Yet the glaciers are rapidly melting – this couldn't be clearer. Members of our research team who went up to 5,800 metres below Mount Everest in mid-January saw bare rock instead of snow, and melt pools where there used to be moving ice towers.

Climate change is accelerating, and we need policies that will help the countries of the Himalayan watershed adapt. The current reshuffling of the global order ignores one of the most critical threats to stability. The so-called great powers must comprehend what is at stake and act decisively, or else stop pretending to be leaders on global climate issues.

*Sophia Kalantzakos is Professor of Environmental Studies and Public Policy at New York University Abu Dhabi. Kunda Dixit is a visiting faculty member at New York University Abu Dhabi.*

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Sophia Kalantzakos & Kunda Dixit

MORE THAN A TOURIST ATTRACTION OR A PLACE FOR HIGH ADVENTURE, THE HIMALAYAS PLAY A CRUCIAL ROLE IN REGULATING THE PLANET'S CLIMATE

In our collective imagination, the Himalayas – the roof of the world – are an archetype: glistening white, distant, even otherworldly. Climbing them is proof of humanity's daring, courage, and drive – a spirit recently captured in 14 Peaks: Nothing Is Impossible, a Netflix documentary chronicling one mountaineer's attempt to summit the world's highest peaks in seven months. And yet, despite rising 6,993 metres (nearly 23,000 feet) above sea level, the summit of Mount Machapuchare in central Nepal resembled a black rock pyramid this winter: devoid of ice and snow. Glaciers near Mount Everest have turned into large lakes.

More than a tourist attraction or a place for high adventure, the Himalayas play a crucial role in regulating the planet's climate. They are also the source of fresh water for billions of people and for the region's rich (though increasingly degraded) ecosystems. As a result, rising temperatures and glacial melt are having far-reaching consequences that already pose grave risks to humanity.

The Tibetan Plateau is at the centre of High Mountain Asia, an area known as the Third Pole because it is Earth's third largest store of frozen water, after Antarctica and the Arctic. The region has about 15,000 glaciers that cover almost 100,000 square kilometres of High Mountain Asia, containing 3,000-4,700 cubic kilometres of ice. The glaciers supply the Amu Darya, Brahmaputra, Ganges, Indus, Irrawaddy, Mekong, Salween, Tarim, Yangtze, and Yellow river basins.

The Hindu Kush Himalayas stretch across 3,500 kilometres and span India, Nepal, China, Bhutan, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Bangladesh, and Myanmar, all of which have sought to subject the mountains, including their water, air, and ecosystems, to their sovereign control. As the climate crisis makes monsoons more erratic, dries springs, lowers the water table, and threatens the food supply, the lack of cooperation and coordination among these states au-

gurs trouble – and represents a global policy failure that starkly demonstrates the absence of credible international leadership.

In 2020, a group of professors, researchers, students, and alumni of New York University Abu Dhabi (NYUAD) and other universities launched the Himalayan Water Project to highlight the urgency of the crisis and the paucity of interdisciplinary approaches needed to help countries prepare for the worst. But encouraging cooperation has not been easy in a region where intense rivalries, territorial disputes, and suspicion are rife, and China's growing economic and political clout has stoked hostility.

Calls for the resurrection of a bipolar world order, in which democracies are decoupled from autocracies, further undermine the cooperation that interdependence demands. To the extent that this mindset prevails, it will be impossible for policymakers to understand and address the multifaceted climate-related hazards stemming from the crisis in the Himalayas.

The International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development

in Kathmandu, which includes eight Himalayan countries, is currently the only regional organisation trying to grapple with the complexity of the crisis. But the initiative focuses heavily on the exchange of data, as if only scientific knowledge were "neutral" enough to flow between member states. Yet even this type of exchange can be thwarted by regional disputes. It is, moreover, unimaginative to constrain policy to the scientific realm, especially in an era when so many governments and international organisations are touting their commitment to inclusion, equity, and different forms of knowledge production.

With the exception of the Indus Waters Treaty between India and Pakistan, there are no genuine regional efforts to cooperate in the management of riparian resources. In fact, states continue to invest in waterway infrastructure that obstructs and redirects the natural flow of rivers that gives life to ecosystems and people. Engineers shape policy in the belief that humans can dominate and control the environment, an outlook that may seem to produce quantifiable ben-

SPECTRUM DIPLOMACY

# Strained Indo-Pak ties to stay

India taking down Pakistan at the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) meet is indicative of changing diplomatic might of India. India will not stick to fake goody words any longer. It signals Pakistan about the need to do more to shed the tag of being a global headache on terrorism. Coming soon after the recent SCO's Defence Ministers' Summit in New Delhi, India last week hosted the Foreign Ministers of the SCO at Goa. The common thread between these two summits was the tough posturing by India against its two neighbours Pakistan and China.

At the Goa meeting, EAM S Jaishankar revealed that India had twice called out China and Pakistan at the summit for violating India's sovereignty through their connectivity projects. The statement was made in response to a question on the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), which runs through Indian territory currently under Pakistan's illegal occupation. Earlier, India had sort of reprimanded Chinese Defence Minister Li Shangfu at the New Delhi meeting, on the issue of the stalled talks over the LAC.

Pakistan's Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari was in Goa to represent Pakistan at the SCO-CFM. The last Pakistani Foreign Minister to visit India was Hina

Rabbani Khar, when she had met her Indian counterpart SM Krishna in Delhi in 2011. However, what soured the atmosphere this time in Goa was references made by Zardari over Kashmir and Pakistan being a victim of terrorism itself. Though he also called for reviving the stalled talks.

India, in a strongly worded response to Pakistan's overtures for talks, said victims of terrorism do not sit together with perpetrators of terrorism to discuss terror. Rebutting each of the points made by Zardari, Jaishankar said he (Zardari) was "a promoter, justifier and spokesperson for a terrorism industry which is the mainstay of Pakistan."

Jaishankar had a similar position on China whose readout on the bilateral between him and its Foreign Minister Qin Gang described the situation on the boundary as stable. Jaishankar said that there is an abnormal position in the border areas. "We have to take the disengagement process forward. I have made it very clear. India-China relations will not be normal if peace and tranquillity in the border areas is disturbed."

Responding to Zardari's diatribe, Jaishankar said Pakistan's opposition to a G-20 meeting to be held

in Kashmir had no basis since Pakistan was not even a member of that grouping.

On Bilawal's opening address at the SCO conference where he said the issue of terrorism should not be used to score diplomatic points, the EAM said: "We are not scoring diplomatic points. We are exposing Pakistan. As a victim of terrorism, we are authorised to do so. We have put up with it. It speaks so much about the mindset of that country."

He asked Pakistan to "smell the coffee" regarding its grouse about the abrogation of Article 370 as a violation of international agreements. "370 is history. Sooner the people realise it, the better," Jaishankar said.

EAM Jaishankar also took an exception at the mention of CPEC at the SCO meeting, both by Pakistan and China. And rightly so, as SCO is a multilateral forum, not a bilateral one and further India's adversarial stand on the CPEC has been very clear from the beginning, as it passed through the PoK. India has consistently opposed the Belt and Road Initiative and CPEC, as these projects violate India's territorial integrity and sovereignty.

On his part, Zardari blamed India's Kashmir policy for the "frozen peace" between India and Pakistan. The India-Pakistan relationship soured significantly after

India announced the withdrawal of special powers from Jammu and Kashmir and the division of the state into two Union territories in August 2019. India has always maintained that it wants regular neighbourly ties with Pakistan while emphasising that the onus is on Islamabad to create a safe environment for such an engagement.

The tough Indian response to both Pakistan and China, mainly stems from its exhaustion with its neighbours, who in spite of several Indian initiatives to better relations, prefer to stick to their age-old stands on the contentious issues, preferring not to respond positively to any Indian efforts.

The SCO meet also showed yet again that body language speaks volumes in geopolitics and diplomacy. The distance between the two foreign ministers while posing for photographs was noticeably gaping. However, the cold Indian

demeanour, a departure from customary diplomatic niceties, and continuing with its old parroting by the Pakistani Minister were more targeted at their respective domestic audiences. But overall this posturing does not augur well for friendly relations between the neighbours in the foreseeable future.

The writer is a senior political commentator based in New Delhi. ©IANS

# Kishor's Next Move

What are retired IAS and IPS officers doing with ace poll strategist-turned-neta Prashant Kishor? Given the man's track record of working with some of India's biggest political parties, including the BJP, the Congress and the TMC, it is not surprising that there is speculation about his next move, after his year-long padyatra through seven districts of Bihar under his Jan Suraj Abhiyan.

Some observers believe that he may be waiting for the right opportunity to present itself before jumping back into the fray. Another possibility is that Kishor may be exploring new avenues for political engagement through activism or advocacy work. The news of six retired IAS officers – RK Mishra, Ajay Kumar Dwivedi, Arwind Kumar Singh, Lalan Yadav, Tulsii Hajara, Suresh Kumar and Gopal Narayan Singh – has ensured that Kishor continues to draw attention with his padyatra, which is still underway. Kishor has now got a major boost, with 12 retired IPS officers taking membership of the Jan Suraj Abhiyan. They include ex-DG Home Guards RK Mishra, retired DG Jails SK Paswan, KK Verma and KB Singh, among others.

The question is: will Kishor emerge as a serious rival to Chief Minister Nitish Kumar's JD(U), and the other two major political parties, the RJD and the BJP? Whatever he may be up to, his next moves in Bihar will be watched closely by politicians and the public alike.

## Manipur babu repatriated to state as CS

The Manipur government has appointed 1992-batch IAS officer Vineet Joshi as the new Chief Secretary of the state, which has been engulfed in ethnic arson and violence in recent days. In view of the fraught situation, the state government has cut short the extended tenure of Dr Rajesh Kumar, who was given a second extension as Chief Secretary in January this year. Joshi has superseded three other IAS officers, MH Khan, A Moses Challa and V Vaiphei for the post.

Sources have informed DKB that Deepthi Umashankar, secretary of the Appointments Committee of the Cabinet, said the committee had approved the repatriation of Joshi, who was heading the National Testing Agency (NTA) on Central deputation, to his parent cadre at the request of Chief Minister N Biren Singh. Before going on Central deputation, Joshi had served as principal secretary to the Chief Minister. Earlier, he was commissioner of planning and power and resident commissioner in the Manipur government.

While the exact reasons for Joshi's recall are yet to be made public, it is evident that the state government has found it necessary to bring the experienced babu back to deal with the fragile situation in Manipur given the political and social complexities of the state because of his deep understanding of the local context. Joshi is expected to douse the fires lit by politicians and bring an end to the confrontation between the state's rival tribal groups.

As for his predecessor, sources say that it may be difficult for the state government to justify Rajesh Kumar's extended service and it could be terminated seven months ahead of his retirement. Some however believe that the 'double engine' BJP sarkar may find ways to use his services after retirement, but that could be subject to other considerations.

## Gujarat IPS officers hastening to join R&AW

It's not just Gujarat IAS officers who have it good in the Modi sarkar. Given Prime Minister Narendra Modi's 'natural' affinity for his home state, officers from other services too have an edge over their compatriots in other states when it comes to serving in the national capital on Central deputation.

Recently, three Gujarat cadre IPS officers joined R&AW on deputation, and sources have informed DKB that two more officers are awaiting government approval. They trace the advent of IPS officers from Gujarat into R&AW to March 2020 when a 2010-batch IPS officer chose to work with the intelligence agency and was sent to the Cabinet Secretariat. He was followed by Sandeep Chaudhary in December 2020. Two years later, one of the state's most decorated IPS officers Himanshu Shukla was sent to R&AW as Director of the Cabinet Secretariat. Now, we learn, that two more IPS officers from the state are waiting in the wings. Deepan Bhadrans and Saurabh Singh are likely to get the nod for R&AW posting.

There may be several reasons for this trend, including the undoubted appeal of working for a prestigious agency and the potential for career growth, but it is fairly well known that Modi and Home Minister Shah have always preferred to work with officers from their state. One concern however remains. With several high-performing officers being sent out on deputation, there is a risk that the Gujarat government could be left short-handed in terms of top-tier police talent.

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

## WISDOM CORNER

- Progress lies not in enhancing what is, but in advancing toward what will be. **KAHLIL GIBRAN**
- Let come what comes, let go what goes. See what remains. **RAMANA MAHARSHI**
- Have a heart that never hardens, and a temper that never tires, and a touch that never hurts. **CHARLES DICKENS**

## WORDSWORTH

### Hornswoggle

In 1913, a character in Jack London's *The Valley of the Moon* bitterly complains, "We're hornswoggled. We're backed to a standstill. We're double-crossed to a fare-you-well". Seven years later the young P G Wodehouse employed it in *Little Warrior*: "Would she have the generosity to realize that a man ought not to be held accountable for what he says in the moment when he discovers that he has been cheated, deceived, robbed – in a word, hornswoggled?" By then, the word had been in the language with that meaning for more than half a century, and even then it had been around for some decades with an older sense of "embarrass, disconcert or confuse". People had long since turned it into an exclamation of surprise or amazement: "Well, I'll be hornswoggled!" Peter Watts argues in *A Dictionary of the Old West* that it comes from cowpunching. A steer that has been lassoed around the neck will "hornswoggle", wag and twist its head around frantically to try to slip free of the rope. A cowboy who lets the animal get away with this is said to have been "hornswoggled". A nice idea, but nobody seems to have heard of hornswoggle in the cattle sense, and it may be a guess based on horn. Nobody else has much idea either, though it's often assumed to be one of those highfalutin words like *absquatulate* and *rambunctious* that frontier Americans were so fond of creating. It's sad to have to tag a word as "origin unknown" yet again, but that's the long and the short of it.

## LOL

### An extremely loyal fan

There was a Packers fan with a really crappy seat at Lambeau. Looking with his binoculars, he spotted an empty seat on the 50-yard line. Thinking to himself "what a waste" he made his way down to the empty seat. When he arrived at the seat, he asked the man sitting next to it, "Is this seat taken?" The man replied, "This was my wife's seat. She passed away. She was a big Packers fan." The other man replied, "I'm so sorry to hear of your loss. May I ask why you didn't give the ticket to a friend or a relative?" The man replied, "They're all at the funeral."



Asad Mirza

THE SCO MEET SHOWED YET AGAIN THAT BODY LANGUAGE SPEAKS VOLUMES IN GEOPOLITICS AND DIPLOMACY

# Letters

TO THE EDITOR

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

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

### United we stand

Sir, Unity is strength. United we stand and divided we fall. The Opposition parties should give constructive criticism of the ruling government. Instead, they are acting as non-entity. Whether the Kotia or the Mahanadi issue, the Opposition's stand is unclear and ambivalent. When Odisha's prestige is at stake, such mudslinging by the Opposition parties is difficult to understand. Soil is greater than the party. Odisha belongs to all. One should rise above party considerations to give respect to the motherland. Let us be united for a vibrant and powerful Odisha. A strong political will is the need of the hour.

Prabhudutt Dash, BHUBANESWAR

### Harsh rules

Sir, The National Eligibility cum Entrance Test (NEET UG) that was held across the country last Sunday has evoked justifiable uproar and outrage among students and parents. The National Testing Agency (NTA) that's in charge of conducting NEET has shown it can go to any extreme while imposing strange dress codes for both boys and girls who were subjected to the highest degree of frisking when they arrived at the exam centre to take the test that could make or break their careers. Most of the students must have been a perturbed lot after being subjected to a harrowing examination of a different kind even before taking the actual test. One may add that the staff was not adequately sensitised to deal with the students, especially girls, who require that extra care. It is also obvious that the same rules are yet to sink into the psyche of students. They also prove that the NTA is evading responsibility through harsh rules.

Ganapathi Bhat, AKOLA

### Reprieve for Imran

Sir, In a fresh twist to the Imran Khan arrest saga, the Pakistan Supreme Court has declared his detainment illegal and ordered his immediate release. The reprieve for the former Prime Minister and Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) chief comes on the back of the military's media wing, the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR), criticising the May 9 violence and calling it a "dark chapter." The ISPR claimed that Khan's arrest led to an organised attack on army properties and installations. Khan's arrest set off violent protests leading to the death of forty-seven people, prompting the government to deploy the army.

NJ Ravi Chander, BANGALORE

# national

## of the day quote

The matter of disqualification of 16 MLAs following the upheaval in the undivided Shiv Sena last year could have been effectively dealt with had the Maha Vikas Aghadi moved swiftly after the resignation of Nana Patole as the Speaker of Maharashtra Assembly

AJIT PAWAR | NCP LEADER

The Congress does not have trust in its own members. I have been saying one thing from the beginning. We will get a clear majority. We believe a comfortable victory will be achieved, and we will cross the limit of seats required for majority

BASAVARAJ BOMMAI | KARNATAKA CM

There is a dire need to inculcate values-based education in younger generation in order to stop people from being abandoned who are then forced to live in the streets

PRAMOD SAWANT | GOA CM

## SHORT TAKES

### Over ₹91 lakh cash seized

**New Delhi:** The Enforcement Directorate (ED) Friday seized more than Rs 91 lakh cash following raids on half-a-dozen premises in Madhya Pradesh and Mumbai in a money laundering investigation linked to alleged illegal sale of cooperative society lands worth over Rs 1,000 crore. Five residential locations in Indore, Madhya Pradesh, and one of a shell entity in Mumbai were covered during the searches in a case against Deepak Jain Mada and others, the agency said in a statement.

### Heroin worth ₹217 crore seized

**Ahmedabad:** The Gujarat Anti-Terrorist Squad (ATS) has seized heroin worth Rs 217 crore from Rajkot district and arrested a Nigerian national for alleged smuggling, an official said Friday. The ATS had detained the man a few days ago on suspicion that he had recently smuggled heroin into the state through sea route, the official said.

### Soldier injured

**Imphal:** A soldier from the Assam Rifles was injured while diffusing an improvised bomb in Saitan village in Manipur's Bishnupur district Friday morning, about 60 km south of Imphal, officials said. A defence spokesman said that the crude bomb was locally fabricated and the soldier who was trying to diffuse it did not suffer major injuries. A day before, a policeman was killed and four others injured when suspected militants opened fire at them near Tera Khongfangbi also in Bishnupur district.

# K'taka polls: BJP, Cong strategise on keeping flock together

A majority of exit polls have given an edge to the Congress over the ruling BJP, while indicating the possibility of a hung Assembly

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Bangalore, May 12:** A day before counting of votes polled in the Karnataka Assembly elections, both the ruling BJP and the Congress Friday went into huddles and held strategy sessions on ways to keep the flock together. They also considered reaching out to independent candidates who are likely to win, as most exit polls predicted a tight contest between the two parties.

## CBSE CLASS 10, 12 RESULTS DECLARED

### Girls outshine boys

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, May 12:** Girls continued to outshine boys in CBSE Class 10 and 12 exams while the pass percentage and the number of students scoring above 90 and 95 per cent marks dipped compared to last year.

CBSE officials said a comparison cannot be drawn with last year's statistics as the academic session then was split into two terms because of the Covid pandemic. School principals, however, claimed the decline was due to the introduction of the Common University Entrance Test (CUET) for undergraduate admissions.

The pass percentage in class 10 stood at 93.12 per cent, a dip of 1.28 percentage points from last year. The pass percentage in 2019 (pre-pandemic year) was 91.10 per cent. Similarly, the pass percentage in the CBSE class 12 exam has gone down by 5.38 percentage points and stands at 87.33 per cent as against 92.71 per cent last year. In 2019 (the pre-pandemic academic session), the pass percentage was 83.40 per cent.

A similar trend was witnessed in the number of students who scored above 90 per cent and 95 per cent marks. In Class 12, as many as 1.12 lakh students scored above 90 per cent and 22,622 candidates secured above 95 per cent marks. Among those who scored above 90 per cent, 271 are from Children With Special Needs

(CSWN) category. As many as 44 CSWN students scored above 95 per cent.

Last year, 1,34,797 candidates scored above 90 per cent in Class 12, while 33,432 candidates scored above 95 per cent. However, in 2019 (pre-pandemic academic session), the number of students scoring above 90 per cent and 95 per cent was 94,299 and 17,693, respectively.

In the last academic session, the exams were conducted in two parts and the syllabus was split into two terms as a one-time measure in view of the pandemic. "This year, the board resumed the annual one-term practice like pre-pandemic years wherein students had to give exams of the entire syllabus at once," a senior board official said.

"Therefore, a valid comparison can only be drawn with pre-pandemic years and the pass percentage has increased from pre-pandemic year 2019," the official added. In Class 10, as many as 1.95 lakh candidates have scored above 90 per cent while 44,297 scored above 95 per cent. Among those who scored above 90 per cent, 278 are from the CSWN category while 58 students of that group scored above 95 per cent.

Last year, 2,36,993 candidates scored above 90 per cent in Class 10, while 64,908 candidates scored above 95 per cent. However, in 2019, the number of students scoring above 90 per cent and 95 per cent was 2,25,143 and 57,256, respectively.

Students celebrate their success after announcement of Class 12 results by Central Board of Secondary Education, in New Delhi



Students celebrate their success after announcement of Class 12 results by Central Board of Secondary Education, in New Delhi

## HC orders scientific survey of 'shivling'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Prayagraj (UP), May 12:** The Allahabad High Court Friday ordered determination of the age of the structure claimed to be a shivling in the Gyanvapi mosque in Varanasi using modern technology.

It set aside an October 14 order of the Varanasi District Court that rejected a plea for scientific investigation, including carbon dating, of the structure found in May 2022 during a court-mandated survey of the Gyanvapi mosque located next to the Kashi Vishwanath temple.

The high court directed the Varanasi district judge to proceed, in accordance with law, on the application by the Hindu worshippers for conducting a scientific probe of the 'shivling', paving the way for determining the age of the structure.

The order said no harm should



be done to the structure, which the Hindu petitioners claim is a shivling. However, the mosque authorities say it is part of a fountain in the 'wazu khana', where ablutions are performed before namaz.

Justice Arvind Kumar Mishra passed the order on a revision petition filed by Laxmi Devi and three others challenging the Varanasi court order. The high court had obtained a report from various institutions, including the IITs in Kanpur and Roorkee and Birbal Sahni Institute of Lucknow, be-

# ED arrests Chhattisgarh spl secretary in liquor scam

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Raipur, May 12:** The Enforcement Directorate Friday arrested the special secretary of the Chhattisgarh Excise Department in a money laundering case linked to the alleged Rs 2,000 crore liquor syndicate scam in the state.

Arunpatri Tripathi was arrested around 4:10 pm in Raipur, said the ED's lawyer Saurabh Pandey. Tripathi is the first government official to be arrested in the case. He was produced before a special Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) court which remanded him in the agency's custody for three days, the lawyer said. Tripathi, an Indian Telecom Service officer, is posted in the excise department on deputation.

He is also the Managing Director of the Chhattisgarh State Marketing



Assembly: "We will be careful this time," Parameshwara told reporters in response to a question on whether the Congress faced the threat of



Veterinary mobile ambulances during their flag off ceremony at the Gau Raksha Sankalp Sammelan at Lal Parade Ground in Bhopal

# ARYAN KHAN CASE: CBI BOOKS WANKHEDE

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, May 12:** The CBI has filed an FIR against former Narcotics Control Bureau officer Sameer Wankhede for allegedly seeking Rs 25 crore bribe for not framing Shah Rukh Khan's son Aryan Khan in the drugs-on-cruise case, officials said Friday.

Aryan Khan was arrested in the alleged drug bust case on the Cordelia cruise ship on October 2, 2021, they said. A coordinated search operation was launched on Friday at 29 locations in Mumbai, Delhi, Ranchi, Lucknow, Guwahati and Chennai after filing the FIR against the 2008-batch IRS officer Wankhede and four others - then NCB Superintendent Vishwa Vijay Singh, Intelligence Officer Ashish Ranjan and two private persons K P Gosavi and Sanvile D'Souza - in the case, they said.

The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) booked Wankhede and others for alleged criminal conspiracy (120-B IPC), and threat of extortion (388 IPC) besides provisions pertaining to bribery under the Prevention of Corruption Act on a complaint from the Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB).

"It has been alleged that the said officials of the Narcotics Control Bureau of Mumbai Zone, in order



to obtain undue advantage from the persons and others in the Case No. 94/2021... Registered and investigated under the supervision of then Zonal Director of Mumbai Zone of NCB, had entered into criminal conspiracy with others and allegedly obtained undue advantage in the form of bribes from the alleged accused...", a CBI spokesperson said.

The probe agency alleged the NCB, Mumbai Zone had received information during October, 2021 related to the consumption and possession of narcotics substances by various individuals on a private cruise ship. "It has also been alleged that the said persons entered into conspiracy

in order to extort an amount of Rs 25 crore (approx) from family members of the alleged accused of the case No. 94/2021 of NCB, Mumbai, by threatening them of the accusation of offences of possession of narcotics substances as per the alleged directions of then zonal director (Wankhede) being the supervisory officer," he said.

A token amount of Rs 50 lakh as bribe was allegedly obtained in furtherance of this conspiracy by the said persons, he said. Wankhede and other officers through "improper and dishonest performance" of duty, by "corrupt and illegal means" and "exercise of personal influence" de-

manded bribe from the suspect in the case registered by the NCB, the CBI FIR was alleged. The accused officer was at the helm of the Cordelia ship probe till November, 2021 when a Special Investigation Team of the NCB took over the investigation.

Aryan Khan, who was formally arrested by the NCB on October 3, 2021, was granted bail by the Bombay High Court on October 28, 2021 after spending 25 days in jail. The NCB on May 27, 2022 also filed a 6,000-page charge sheet against 14 accused, giving a clean chit to Aryan Khan.

NCB officials said Aryan Khan and five others were not named in the agency's charge sheet due to "lack of sufficient evidence". Besides the NCB SIT found "grave irregularities" and gaps in the probe, the officials said, adding that the central agency's first team that arrested Aryan did not follow rules like mandatory medical test of accused, video recording of the raids and corroborate evidence for WhatsApp chats.

NCB Director General S N Pradhan had told reporters in Delhi that there were "shortcomings" in the investigation and WhatsApp chat of the accused had no "physical corroborative evidence" as required to prove the charges in the court.

## Delhi govt moves SC

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, May 12:** A day after the Supreme Court held it has legislative and executive powers over all but three services, the Delhi government moved the apex court Friday alleging the Centre was not implementing the decision to transfer its services secretary, a potential flashpoint in the running feud between the two.

The city's AAP government said the Centre may be held liable for contempt of court. In a major victory for the AAP dispensation in its protracted battle with the Centre, the apex court had ruled on Thursday the Delhi government has legislative and executive powers over the administration of all services, except for public order, police and land.

Senior advocate A M Singhvi, appearing for the Delhi government, mentioned the matter before a bench of Chief Justice D Y Chandrachud and Justice P S Narasimha, saying the top court delivered the judgment just yesterday and now there can be contempt. Under Article 141 of the Constitution, there can be contempt of this court's order and a bench needs to hear this urgently, Singhvi said.

"They are saying we will not transfer anybody. I can file contempt in view of judgement passed yesterday. But it will take time. So kindly list the matter," he said. Chief Justice Chandrachud said he will constitute a bench to hear the matter next week.

Ashish More, Secretary of the Delhi government's Services Department, was removed from his post on Thursday, hours after the Supreme Court gave the AAP dispensation control over the transfer and posting of officers in the city. Former Delhi Jal Board CEO A K Singh, a 1995-batch (AGMUT cadre) IAS officer, will replace More.

being treated by doctors, was in touch with the party leaders from his residence. In the BJP camp, Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai met veteran leader B S Yediyurappa along with other party leaders, including ministers Murugesu Nirani, Byrathi Basavaraj, party MP Lehar Singh Siroya and A T Ramaswamy, at the former chief minister's residence.

Bommai expressed confidence about the BJP crossing the "magic figure" with a clear majority, and said the question of coalition talks with other political parties does not arise now. BJP leaders too are said to have planned a strategy to keep its newly-elected legislators together, and are making attempts to contact independents, mostly BJP rebels, as well as "winning" candidates of smaller parties.

JD(S) too is expecting a hung verdict, which would enable it to play a role in government formation, and is making all efforts to keep its MLAs together. In the absence of JD(S) leader H D Kumaraswamy, who is in Singapore for a health checkup and is expected to return tomorrow morning, party patriarch and former Prime Minister H D Deve Gowda has reportedly contacted party leaders and candidates who may win, over the phone and asked them to stay loyal to the party and its leadership, and to not to fall prey to allurements by other parties.

The three parties are also said to have contacted some independents who have chances of winning the polls, to get them on their side, keeping in mind the possibility of a fractured verdict.

# GSI plans to launch landslide warning system in 2026

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Kolkata, May 12:** Geological Survey of India (GSI) plans to launch an early warning system for possible landslides across the nation in 2026, an official of the organisation said.

The Kolkata-headquartered scientific body, the nodal agency on landslide hazards, has already started disseminating such warnings on an experimental basis to Darjeeling and Kalimpong districts of West Bengal and Nilgiris in Tamil Nadu, GSI Deputy Director General (Policy Support System - Planning and Monitoring) Asit Saha said.

"GSI is in the process of developing and validating a regional landslide early warning system and efforts are on to make it operational in different states in phases from 2026 onwards," Saha said.

It has already carried out a nationwide landslide susceptibility mapping on a 1:50,000 scale for the hilly and mountainous areas of the country prone to landslides. In terms of area it covers about 43 lakh sq km, which is 12.6 per cent of the country's landmass and is spread over 19 states and union territories, he said.

India is prone to landslides and according to GSI the mountainous region of the north-western Himalayas (Jammu & Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand), the sub-Himalayan terrain of the north-east



(Sikkim, West Bengal-Darjeeling, Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Tripura), the Western Ghat areas (Maharashtra, Goa, Karnataka, Kerala) and the Eastern Ghat areas (Araku area of Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu) are prone to it. "The landslide susceptibility mapping categorises areas where the landslide susceptibility is high. We have prepared the map and identified zones in the Himalayan states, including the northeastern ones, as well as in the Western Ghats region which are prone to this natural calamity. We are now involved in nationwide study on 1:10,000 scale for landslide sus-

**The Kolkata-headquartered scientific body, the nodal agency on landslide hazards, has already started disseminating such warnings on an experimental basis to Darjeeling and Kalimpong districts of West Bengal and Nilgiris in Tamil Nadu**

**ASIT SAHA | GSI DEPUTY DIRECTOR GENERAL (POLICY SUPPORT SYSTEM - PLANNING AND MONITORING)**

ceptibility zonation in critically-identified sectors, mostly in the Himalayas," Saha said. GSI, founded in 1851 and one of the oldest survey organisations

in the world, also carries out site-specific detailed landslide mapping on 1:1,000 scale for specific areas affected by such events, he said. "We have completed such a study at Kinnair in Himachal Pradesh," he said. On the landslide warning mechanism, he said, "GSI is establishing the system for rainfall-induced landslides. We have already started disseminating such warnings on an experimental basis in Darjeeling and Kalimpong districts of West Bengal and Nilgiris in Tamil Nadu. "We also carry out specialised investigation on active fault mapping, seismic micro-zonation and neotectonic studies in various se-

lected parts of the country, including the Himalayan region," he said.

The survey organisation has been working with a regional landslide early warning system for which it has collaborated with British Geological Survey. He said geochemical and geophysical mapping are part of GSI's baseline data generation process that helps in identifying areas where mineral exploration can be conducted.

"Geochemical mapping covering the entire country, except Thar desert and Indo-Gangetic Plains will be completed this year and geophysical mapping will take another three to four years," Saha said. Geophysical mapping deals with physical parameters of the earth such as magnetic and gravity anomalies, while geochemical mapping gives information about the dispersion patterns of different elements on the earth's surface.

Asked about the National Geoscience Data Repository (NGDR) project taken up by GSI under an MoU with BISAG-N, Gandhinagar, Gujarat, Saha said, "The portal is expected to go live by August-September this year". The programme is aimed at promoting mineral exploration. "Data collected by GSI and other agencies will be put on the portal so that entities which are keen to take up mineral explorations can access the digital repository," he added.

## SALE OF SIM CARDS THROUGH ILLEGAL MEANS

# Bihar cops launch massive crackdown

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Patna, May 12:** Bihar Police have intensified crackdown on sale of SIM cards through unethical and illegal means in the state following the blacklisting of 2,387 selling points on the instructions of the Department of Telecommunications (DoT), an official said.

The DoT has also deactivated more than 5,000 mobile phone numbers in Bihar and Jharkhand in the last one week as majority of the SIM cards were allegedly procured through illegal means. A statement issued by the Special Director General Telecom, DoT (Licensed Service Areas-LSA-Bihar) here on Thursday said, "In the past one week, more than 5,000 mobile numbers have been deactivated in Bihar and Jharkhand. The majority of the SIM cards were procured through illegal/unethical means.

"Besides, 2,387 Point of Sales (PoS) of SIM cards have been blacklisted by the telecom service providers on the instructions of the DoT in the last one week as they were found to be involved in unethical and illegal practices while issuing SIM cards. The Telecom Service Providers are further initiating legal proceedings against the fraudulent PoS as well as subscribers".

Jharkhand also comes under the jurisdiction of DoT's LSA (Bihar). Additional Director General (ADG) of the Economic Offences Unit (EOU) of the Bihar Police, Nayyar Hasnain Khan, on Thursday said the latest action taken reports of the DoT are being analyzed by the EOU for further initiating legal action against the violators.

Bihar Police have already given instructions to Superintendents of Police (SP) of all districts to ensure strict enforcement of 'mandatory SIM-card registration' rules by retail dealers and telecommunications companies in their respective areas of jurisdiction.

Now the police action has been intensified to check use of SIM cards, procured through fake documents, by cyber criminals, he said. "The SPs have also been asked to monitor and inspect documents used for procuring SIM cards in their respective districts on a regular basis. Strict action will be initiated by police against those who are found violating rules and guidelines", said the ADG. "We are also in touch with po-



■ The DoT has deactivated more than 5,000 mobile phone numbers in Bihar and Jharkhand in the last one week as majority of the SIM cards were allegedly procured through illegal means

■ As per the latest reports received, FIRs in several districts of Bihar, including Patna and Gaya, as well as in Jharkhand have been lodged by the Telecom Service Providers with the respective police

lice of the neighbouring states as a considerable number of such SIM cards were issued by the PoS located outside Bihar", said the ADG. Prior to this, the DoT deactivated more than 2.25 lakh mobile phone numbers in Bihar and Jharkhand in the month of April as majority of the SIM cards were allegedly procured through forged documents. Besides, telecom service providers also blacklisted 517 PoS, who were found to be involved in unethical and illegal practices while issuing SIM cards, in the month of April.

As per the latest reports received, FIRs in several districts of Bihar, including Patna and Gaya, as well as in Jharkhand have been lodged by the Telecom Service Providers with the respective police. The EOU (Bihar) and district police in Patna and Gaya are analysing DoT's reports, said a senior official of the DoT's LSA (Bihar).

"The DoT (New Delhi) taking the lead and to curb cyber menace has carried out facial analysis of more than 87 crore SIM subscribers across India. The analysis has been carried out using artificial intelligence and facial recognition powered solutions for telecom SIM Subscriber Verification (ASTR) analysis in collaboration with the Centre for Development of Advanced Computing. "The result of analysis has been shared with Department of Telecommunication field units to ensure action against SIM fraudsters with the help of Telecom Service Providers and state police. Approximately seven crore SIM subscribers' facial data of Bihar and Jharkhand were analysed and actionable intelligence was compiled", said the DoT statement.

## Shah likely to visit Bengal in June

During his visit to Kolkata during the current week, the Union Home Minister, despite his busy schedule, had a brief interaction with the top state leaders

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**Kolkata, May 12:** Union Home Minister Amit Shah has given indications to the state BJP leadership in West Bengal of visiting the state again in June, sources from the party's state committee said.

Shah gave this assurance to the party's state leadership during his one-day visit to the state this week on the occasion of the birth anniversary celebration of Gurudev Rabindranath Tagore. He also attended a function of Border Security Force (BSF) at the latter's outpost at the Benapole-Petrapole Border in North 24 Parganas district.

However, a member of the state committee said that the likely visit of Shah next month is aimed at reviewing the party's organisational structure in the state and identify the lapses there in the backdrop of the panchayat polls scheduled for this year.



However, he added, all attempts will be made by the party's state unit to arrange for a public meeting to be addressed by Shah, as he did at Suri in Birbhum district in April, where he said that if BJP wins 35 out of 32 Lok Sabha seats from West Bengal in 2024, then the Trinamool Congress state government might collapse even before 2025.

During his visit to Kolkata during the current week, the Union Home Minister, despite his busy schedule, had a brief interaction with the top state leaders and advised them to make extensive district tours in the interim period encouraging the grassroots level party workers to concentrate on strengthening of the booth-level organisation for the forthcoming rural civic body polls.

"The Union home minister has specially emphasised that the leadership should take the rural civic body polls with equal seriousness like that of Lok Sabha and Assembly polls, since the party's results in the panchayat polls will show the direction for the strategies to be adopted for the big battle of 2024 Lok Sabha polls," the state committee member said.



Doctors and nurses shout slogans during a protest against West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee's proposal for 3-year diploma in medicine, outside the Medical College & Hospital in Kolkata

## Bihar earns highest-ever revenue through sand mining

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Patna, May 12:** The Bihar government has earned all-time high revenue of Rs 1384.46 crore from sand mining during 2022-23, an increase of nearly 54 per cent compared to the previous fiscal, a top official said.

The revenue collection from sand mining in 2021-22 was Rs. 745.44 crore, Harjot Kaur Bamnrah, Additional Chief Secretary-cum-Mines Commissioner (Bihar), said. "There is an increase of 53.84 per cent in revenue collection from sand mining in the just concluded fiscal year compared to 2021-22," the official said.

Noting that the revenue collection from mines and minerals has increased substantially over the years, Bamnrah said, "The overall revenue collection from mines and



minerals has increased from Rs 1082.72 crore in 2017-18 to around Rs 3000 crore in 2022-23.

"The revenue collection from sand mining has increased from Rs 836.57 crore in 2018-19 to Rs 1384.46 crore in the last fiscal". The official noted that improved revenue collection from sand mining has spurred overall revenue from mines and minerals of the state.

The revenue collected from brick-kiln owners was Rs 77.93 crore in 2022-23 whereas the collection was Rs 71 crore in 2021-22, she said.

## CBI conducts manpower review in Bengal

Sources said that during the recent visit of CBI's additional director Ajay Bhatnagar to Kolkata, the agency's officials highlighted the problem of manpower crunch at its Kolkata offices, especially in ACB in the backdrop of the rising number of cases

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**Kolkata, May 12:** In the backdrop of increasing cases in West Bengal, the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) was conducting a review of its manpower in the state and identify areas where additional staff is required.

Sources said that currently two units of CBI are operational in West Bengal, the first being the anti-corruption wing (ACB), which is conducting the probes in different alleged financial scams in areas of recruitment in state-run schools, cattle smuggling and coal

smuggling, among others. The ACB operates from CBI's Nizam Palace in central Kolkata.

The second unit of CBI is that of the special crime branch (SCB), which is handling the post-poll violence cases in West Bengal, and it operates from the agency's office at Central Government Office (CGO) complex at Salt Lake in the northern outskirts of Kolkata.

Sources said that during the recent visit of CBI's additional director Ajay Bhatnagar to Kolkata, the agency's officials highlighted the problem of manpower crunch at its Kolkata offices, especially in



ACB in the backdrop of the rising number of cases.

Sources said that Bhatnagar at that point of time assured that officers from other states will be deputed to West Bengal shortly to speed the process of investigation. In view of that the current manpower review is on to identify the areas where additional manpower

is required and also the rank-basis requirements in those areas.

Preliminary estimates in the review suggest that the requirement of additional manpower is about 100 in the ranks of deputy superintendent, inspector and sub-inspectors. It is learnt that Bhatnagar has assured his junior colleagues with some immediate reinforcements and the remaining will be done on the basis of the requirements as per the manpower review.

Recently, CBI had faced the wrath of the judges in a number of cases over their slow pace investigation in different cases, especially the one related to a scam on recruitment of teaching and non-teaching staff. In fact, the CBI teams investigating the scam had also been insisting on addition in manpower considering that the names of more influential persons are surfacing during the course of investigation.

## Models of Prithvi, other missiles on display in Science City

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Kolkata, May 12:** Life-size replicas of Brahmos, Prithvi and four other missiles are on display for the public at the Missile Park in Science City, Kolkata, which was opened on the National Technology Day on Thursday.

The Missile Park has been developed jointly by the Centre for Millimeter-wave Semiconductor Devices and Systems (CMSDS), Kolkata, a unit of DRDO, and Science City, Kolkata, a unit of the National Council of Science Museums (NCSM) to showcase the missile development programme of India through the life-size replica of missiles.

This enables visitors to have a breath-taking view of the life-size models of six flagship missiles of India, namely BrahMos, Prithvi, Mission Shakti, Akash, Astra and Nag.

A statue of India's Missile Man, former Indian President A P J Abdul Kalam, has found pride of place in the park. An audio commentary automatically starts to give an overview of the Indian Missile Programme the moment the visitor stands in front of his statue.

Director, Science City, Kolkata, Anurag Kumar said, "What the people usually see on their TV sets on the occasion of the Republic Day parade, can now be seen live during their visit to Science City



We have set up a Missile Park with life-size replicas of missiles to enthuse the visitors about the great strides India has made in the field

of missile technology. We expect that the missile park would be able to encourage young minds to take up science and technology as their career."

Director, CMSDS, a unit of DRDO, Madhumita Chakravarti said "it is a matter of pride that India had developed the technology required for the propulsion, navigation control, guidance, avionics and advanced materials for the missiles indigenously. India's fleet contains missiles of every type and is thus ready to face any external threat. India is a country to reckon with in all the advanced fields of missile technology, thanks to the vision of our leaders and the hardware of our scientists in DRDO".

India's Missile development programme had started in the 1960s through Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO). Later, the 'Integrated Guided Missile Development Programme' (IGMDP) commenced under the leadership of APJ Abdul Kalam at DRDL, Hyderabad in 1983 which gave a boost to the missiles programme.

Surface-to-surface strategic missiles Prithvi and Agni, surface-to-air missile Akash and anti-tank guided missile Nag were developed under this programme. The development of BrahMos, the Supersonic Cruise Missile and Mission Shakti, the anti-satellite weapon has made India a world leader in missile technology.

# national

## of the day quote

G20 presidency goes to one of the 20 countries every year. This is not something new. The benefit of the G20 is that 20 countries present their problems, look for their solutions, and try to move forward in a friendly environment

**FAROOQ ABDULLAH** | NATIONAL CONFERENCE PRESIDENT

The Kerala government must appoint a nodal officer to ensure that the benefits of central government schemes reach tribal people

**ARJUN MUNDA** | UNION TRIBAL AFFAIRS MINISTER

Mumbai is the safest among metropolises in the country

**DEVENDRA FADNAVIS** | MAHARASHTRA DEPUTY CM



**Ashok Gehlot has never got a majority since 2003. That's why he considers me his biggest enemy and a thorn in his path. That's why there is no goodwill for me in his praise, there is only malice**

**VASUNDHARA RAJE** | BJP LEADER

## AAP FOR CBI PROBE

The Aam Aadmi Party will now demand a CBI probe into the missing names in the voters' list in Uttar Pradesh. AAP spokesperson Vaibhav Maheshwari said that after the second phase of polling in the municipal elections, it had been found that lakhs of names were missing from the voters' list



# SC seeks response from TN, Bengal

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, May 12:** The Supreme Court Friday sought replies of the West Bengal and Tamil Nadu governments on a plea of the producers of "The Kerala Story" that the movie is not being shown in theatres in these two states.

While West Bengal has banned the movie after three days of its screening in theatres, Tamil Nadu has not banned the film but the exhibitors have withdrawn from cinema halls owing to security concerns. A bench of Chief Justice DY Chandrachud and Justice PS Narasimha questioned the West Bengal government saying the film is being screened in the rest of the country without any problem and there appears to be no reason for the ban.

"Movie is running in the rest of the country including in states having similar demographic composition and nothing has happened. This has nothing to do with the

## NON-SCREENING OF 'THE KERALA STORY'



artistic value of the film. If people do not like the movie, they will not watch the movie," the bench told senior advocate Abhishek Singhvi, appearing for the West Bengal government.

Singhvi said according to intelligence inputs, there may be a sit-

uation of law-and-order problem and peace among different communities may be breached. He said that the state has the power under section 6 of the West Bengal Cinemas (Regulation) Act, 1954 and opposed the grant of the stay of the order.

"This court has asked petitioners who filed petitions on the movie to approach the high court for relief. Now, this petitioner has approached this court, kindly direct them to approach the High Court. Also, we have received several intelligence inputs indicating breach of public order", he said, adding that no stay be granted without giving an opportunity to the state to file its reply.

Senior advocate Harish Salve, appearing for producers of the movie, said that in West Bengal the movie was screened for three days before it was banned. The bench told Singhvi that it is issuing notice to the West Bengal government and will not stay the order (banning screening of the movie), without giving an opportunity to the state.

The bench also asked the Tamil Nadu government to specify measures taken to provide adequate security to theatres screening the film.

# Ensure formation of committees to probe sexual harassment: SC



*A bench of justices A S Bopanna and Hima Kohli said an improperly constituted sexual harassment panel would be an impediment in conducting an inquiry at the workplace, as envisaged under the statute and the rules*

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, May 12:** Expressing concern over the lack of committees in government departments to probe sexual harassment allegations at the workplace, the Supreme Court Friday directed the Centre and the state governments to undertake a time-bound exercise to verify whether panels have been constituted in all ministries and the departments.

The top court said it is "disquieting" to note there are serious lapses in the enforcement of the 2013 Prevention of Sexual Harassment (PoSH) Act even after such a long time and termed it as a "sorry state of affairs" which reflects poorly on all the state functionaries, public authorities and private undertakings.

A bench of justices A S Bopanna and Hima Kohli said an improperly constituted sexual harassment panel would be an impediment in conducting an inquiry at the workplace, as envisaged under the statute and the rules.

The apex court said it will be equally counterproductive to have

an ill-prepared committee conduct a half-baked inquiry that can lead to serious consequences like the imposition of major penalties on a delinquent employee.

"The Union of India, all state governments and Union territories are directed to undertake a time-bound exercise to verify as to whether all the concerned ministries, departments, government organizations, authorities, public sector undertakings, institutions, bodies, etc. Have constituted ICCs/LCs/ICs, as the case may be and that the composition of the said committees are strictly in terms of the provisions of the PoSH Act.

"It shall be ensured that necessary information regarding the constitution and composition of the committees, details of the e-mail IDs and contact numbers of the designated persons, the procedure prescribed for submitting an online complaint, as also the relevant rules, regulations and internal policies are made readily available on the website of the concerned authority/functionary/organisation/institution/body, as the case may be," the bench said, adding the information furnished shall also be updated from time to time.

Observing that an improperly constituted committee would be an impediment in conducting an inquiry into a complaint of sexual harassment at the workplace, the top court said it will be equally counterproductive to have an ill-prepared committee conduct a "half-baked inquiry" that can lead to serious consequences, namely, imposition of major penalties on the delinquent employee, to the point of termination of service.

## Maha exonerates Param Bir Singh, revokes suspension

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Mumbai, May 12:** The Maharashtra government has dropped all charges against former Mumbai Police Commissioner Param Bir Singh brought during a departmental enquiry, and also revoked his suspension order issued in December 2021, an official said on Friday. However, the CBI will continue to investigate five cases filed by it against Singh, he said.

The retired IPS officer is facing multiple cases of extortion, corruption and misconduct.

The order revoking the suspension of Singh and withdrawing all charges against him related to the departmental enquiry initiated in 2021 were issued by the state home department on Wednesday, he said.

According to the order, the period of the former IPS officer's suspension should be treated as he was on duty.

At least four cases of extortion were registered against Singh in Mumbai and adjoining Thane. During his long police career, he served as commissioner of Mumbai and also Thane.

Singh was transferred from the post of Mumbai Police Commissioner in March 2021 after the arrest of Assistant Police Inspector Sachin Waze by the National Investigation Agency (NIA) in connection with the seizure of an explosives-laden SUV from near industrialist Mukesh Ambani's residence 'Antilia' in South Mumbai in February that year.

The 1988-batch IPS officer had written an explosive letter to then-Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray, alleging home minister Anil Deshmukh of the NCP had asked police officers to collect Rs 100 crore a month from hotels in Mumbai. Deshmukh has denied the charge.

The then-Maharashtra Vikas Aghadi (MVA) government placed Singh under suspension and put his salary on hold.

The government had initiated a departmental enquiry against the senior police officer and eight serious charges were applied against him during the proceedings, the order mentioned.



Youngsters doing exercises for recruitment rallies of various forces near the International Border in Ranbir Singh Pura, Jammu

# Pilot's yatra 'personal' one: Randhawa

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, May 12:** Sachin Pilot's 'Jan Sangharsh Yatra' is a "personal" one and the party "is keeping an eye on" it, Congress Rajasthan in-charge Sukhjinder Singh Randhawa said Friday.

He said a discussion on all issues would be held when Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge returns from Karnataka. Randhawa made the remarks after a meeting with state unit chief Govind Singh Dotasra and co-in-charges Qazi Muhammad Nizamuddin, Amrita Dhawan and Virendra Rathore, among others, at the party's Gurdwara Rakab Ganj Road office where Pilot's march, organisational issues and preparations for the assembly polls this year were discussed.

"I met the three secretaries attached to me and the Pradesh Congress Committee chief here. This was our first meeting together as we were busy with the elections in Karnataka and the Jalandhar bypoll. The strengthening of the



Pilot and Gehlot have been engaged in a power tussle since the Congress formed government in the state in 2018

In 2020, Pilot led a failed revolt against the Gehlot government after which he was removed from the posts of party state unit president and deputy chief minister

organisation and appointments for the front organisations in the state were discussed," Randhawa told reporters after the meeting.

Asked about Pilot's yatra, he said, "It his personal yatra, he is taking out the yatra on his own, we are keeping an eye on that and when Kharge ji comes back from Karnataka, all issues would be discussed."

Pressed further and asked if ac-

tion would be taken against Pilot, Randhawa said, "I have said in one line (that) we are keeping an eye on it. I will convey my views to the Congress president." Pilot on Thursday launched a 125-kilometre 'Jan Sangharsh Yatra' from Ajmer to Jaipur to raise the issue of corruption during the previous BJP regime led by Vasundhara Raje and cases of paper leaks in government recruitment exams.

He has said his march is not

against anyone but over issues of corruption. Pilot claimed that he has been writing to Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot for a year and a half for action on corruption but nothing has been forthcoming.

The five-day yatra mounts pressure on the Congress leadership ahead of the Rajasthan assembly elections slated for later this year with the party also facing anti-incumbency, apart from fighting in the state unit.

Pilot and Gehlot have been engaged in a power tussle since the Congress formed government in the state in 2018. In 2020, Pilot led a failed revolt against the Gehlot government after which he was removed from the posts of party state unit president and deputy chief minister.

The former Rajasthan deputy chief minister had last month defied a warning from the party and went ahead with a day-long fast targeting Gehlot over his "inaction" on alleged corruption during the Raje government.

## AI FINED 30 LAKHS, PILOT SUSPENDED

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**New Delhi, May 12:** The Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) has suspended the licence of an Air India pilot for three months. The suspension comes after the pilot allowed a woman friend to enter the cockpit mid-air during a Dubai to Delhi flight.

The aviation regulator has also imposed a fine of Rs 30 lakh on Air India for failing to address the safety-sensitive issue in a prompt and effective manner. Additionally, the co-pilot has been cautioned for not being assertive enough to prevent the unauthorized entry.

The Air India pilot was under investigation for violating safety norms by allowing a friend into the cockpit during a flight from Dubai to Delhi on February 27, violating DGCA safety norms. In April, a senior DGCA official had said that this act is unacceptable and could have put the passengers' safety at risk.

# PoK on other side, Kashmir bridge gives Uri tourism potential

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Uri (J&K), May 12:** Like a bridge over troubled water, the Kaman Sethu stretches from India to Pakistan occupied Kashmir (PoK), giving the town of Uri tourism potential and offering visitors a chance to come face to face with contemporary history and the heroes who made it happen.

The small town of Uri, about 70 km from Srinagar, has long been in the line of enemy fire with soldiers controlling access to the 220-ft Kaman Bridge that connects Kashmir Valley to PoK, just across the small river treated as the Line of Control between India and Pakistan.

But with tourists being able to walk up to the bridge, also called Aman Sethu (Bridge of Peace),

things have changed. Tourists, say locals, started coming to the town after the Bollywood film "Uri", based on India's surgical strike after an attack by four Jaish-e-Mohammed terrorists in September 2018 left 18 soldiers dead. The situation was tense at the time and the film was shot in Serbia.

The change since is visible. The number of visitors has been steadily rising since the bridge opened for tourists end of March. About 3,000 people visit each day and there is a view from the other side too.

Civilians on the other side can be seen taking selfies against the bridge under the strict vigil of Pakistani army snipers. The gates were locked after India suspended the bus service between Kashmir and PoK in February 2019 when 40



Tourists and local people wait for a visit to the Kaman Post in Uri Sector of Baramulla district in north Kashmir

CRPF jawans were killed in a suicide attack by JeM in Pulwama.

Locals employed at the tourist facilitation centre, set up with the help of the army, greet tourists eager to visit the Kaman post, about 18 km from the main town.

"There are many scenic spots on the way with breathtaking landscapes that enthrall tourists. We hope the move by the Indian Army to open the bridge will go a long way in boosting the economy of this area," said Imran Ashraf, who mans the facilitation centre.

After checking for documents, including a pass from the local police station, visitors head to the Khalin-Da-Khas Nalla, the river flowing between the two sides of Kashmir. "We inform tourists about the dos and don'ts before they embark on their jour-

ney to the famous bridge. Many Uri residents also make the trip because they haven't seen it."

According to Lt Gen Amardeep Singh Aujla, who heads the Army's XV Corps, the decision to give the general public access to the bridge was taken so "people should know where our heroes gave their today for our tomorrow".

Aujla was the one who opened the lock and walked on the bridge, from end to end. A path near the bridge, named Veerpath, has busts of Indian war heroes. "After all, I have every right to walk on every inch of my territory," Aujla said after his walk on the bridge. It had been damaged during an earthquake in 2005 when a mountain on the Pakistani side caved in and rebuilt by engineers of the Indian Army.

# international

## of the day quote

The sides needed to develop understanding and dialogue and I've said we'll co-operate with China where we can, we'll disagree where we must and we'll engage in a national interest

I would hope that the next Turkish government would overall reconsider its approach towards the West, not just towards Greece, towards Europe, towards NATO, and towards the United States

We very much look forward to hosting Prime Minister Modi and members of the Indian government at this next upcoming state visit

### SHORT TAKES

**Palestinian death toll surges to 31**

**Gaza City:** The most violent confrontation in months between Israel and Palestinian militants continued for a third straight day Friday, as Israeli warplanes struck targets in the Gaza Strip and militants fired more rockets at Israel. The past few days of fighting have killed 31 Palestinians in Gaza and a 70-year-old man in central Israel. The Israeli military said its warplanes struck Islamic Jihad rocket launchers. Gaza residents reported explosions in farms near the southern city of Rafah.

**China to send envoy to Ukraine, Russia**

**Beijing:** China is sending a special envoy to Ukraine and Russia starting next week in an effort to help reach a political settlement of the Ukrainian crisis, its Foreign Ministry said Friday. Li Hui, who is China's special representative for Eurasian affairs and a former ambassador to Moscow, will also visit Poland, France and Germany, Foreign Ministry spokesperson Wang Wenbin said. China says it remains neutral over Russia's war in Ukraine but has declared it has "no limits" relationship with Moscow and blames the US and NATO for provoking the conflict.

**Civilians get safe passage in Sudan**

**Cairo:** The UN envoy for Sudan Friday welcomed a deal between the country's warring generals promising safe passage to civilians fleeing the conflict in the East African nation and protection for humanitarian operations. The envoy, Volker Perthes, said the agreement was an important first step toward a cease-fire to the fighting which is about to enter its fourth week. The Sudanese military and the country's paramilitary, the Rapid Support Forces, or RSF, signed a pact late Thursday vowing to alleviate humanitarian suffering across the country, although a truce remains elusive. Both sides also agreed to refrain from attacks likely to harm civilians.

**Germany to see biggest rail strike**

**Berlin:** A labour union representing over 200,000 railway workers said that it was going ahead with a planned strike next week after its demands for better pay were rejected by employers. The EVG union said its members will walk out for 50 hours from late Sunday until late Tuesday. The strike will likely be one of the biggest in recent years, following a previous large-scale walkout in April.



Starting a family in Italy is becoming a titanic effort that only the rich can afford

POPE FRANCIS | CATHOLIC CHURCH LEADER

### UK'S FIRST DRIVERLESS BUS

The UK will roll out its first driverless bus network in Scotland next week with drivers on standby behind the steering wheel, ready to take control should an emergency arise. The service, which aims to carry 10,000 passengers a week over a 14-mile route on five single-deck buses, will be the world's first automated local bus service, its operator said



## Mpox no longer a global emergency: WHO

AFTER THE EMERGENCY STATUS WAS LIFTED FOR COVID-19 AND MPOX, THERE IS NOW JUST ONE WHO-DECLARED PHEIC -- FOR POLIOVIRUS, WHICH WAS DECLARED IN MAY 2014

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

**Geneva, May 12:** The World Health Organization declared that mpox no longer constitutes a global health emergency Thursday, almost exactly a year after the disease formerly known as monkeypox started spreading globally.

WHO chief Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus said the decision was prompted by falling case numbers worldwide, but emphasised that the disease remains a threat, particularly in areas of Africa where it has long been present.

The announcement comes just a week after the UN agency also declared that Covid-19 no longer constitutes a public health emergency of international concern (PHEIC), its highest level of alarm. Though long present in parts of



While the emergencies of mpox and Covid-19 are both over, the threat of resurgent waves remains for both. Both viruses continue to circulate and both continue to kill

TEDROS ADHANOM GHEBREYESUS | CHIEF, WHO

Central and West Africa, in May last year cases of the disease started emerging in Europe, North America then elsewhere, mostly among men who have sex with men.

The WHO declared mpox was a PHEIC in July. But the number of people infected with the disease -- which causes fever, muscular aches and large boil-like skin lesions -- has consistently fallen since.

More than 87,000 cases and 140 deaths have been reported from

111 countries during the global outbreak, according to a WHO count.

Almost 90 percent fewer cases were recorded over the last three months compared to the previous three-month period, Tedros said. "Downward trend"

"While we welcome the downward trend of mpox cases globally, the virus continues to affect communities in all regions, including in Africa, where trans-

mission is still not well understood," he said. He added that cases related to travel also represented an ongoing threat.

"Mpox continues to pose significant public health challenges that needs a robust, proactive and sustainable response," he added, calling on countries to maintain surveillance and access to tests and vaccines.

The monkeypox virus -- which causes mpox disease -- is transmitted through close contact with infected humans or animals, as well as via materials such as contaminated sheets. It was first discovered in humans in 1970 in the Democratic Republic of Congo. Until May last year, its spread among humans had been mainly limited to certain West and Central African nations.

### AMERICAN DREAM OVER

## US tweaks migrant rules overnight; hundreds in limbo



White House warned that beginning Friday, anyone entering the US illicitly will face a lengthy ban and possible criminal charges

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

**Washington, May 12:** Pandemic-era controls barring migrants from claiming US asylum expire Thursday night amid fears of chaos at the Mexican border, with a tough new policy spelling uncertainty for thousands seeking refuge in America.

Migrants, mostly from the Americas but some from as far away as Asia, were present on both sides of the frontier as US troops arrived to handle an expected surge of people seeking to cross over. "Our borders are not open," said Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas.

For more than three years the 2,000-mile frontier with Mexico has been regulated by Title 42 -- a health provision designed to keep Covid infections at bay by turning people away before they made a claim for asylum.

With the formal ending of the Covid emergency, that rule will be lifted when midnight strikes in the US capital -- with new restrictions taking its place.

Those new regulations, crafted by the administration of President Joe Biden as it seeks to alleviate pressure at the border, require asylum-seekers and other migrants

Five-year bans or criminal charges will be levied against those who try to cross illegally

Thousands show up each month from Russia, India, China and Brazil to enter US soil

to request entry from outside the country.

The US has pledged to set up processing centers in other countries, and is creating special refugee programs for some places like Haiti as well as expanding temporary work permits.

But how things will play out in practice remains unclear, and the situation has already inflamed America's heated immigration debate. Asylum-seekers are required to seek interviews via a smartphone app -- though users report it is glitchy and presents a hurdle for those without working phones or Wi-Fi.

US cities along the border girded for the policy shift, still unsure what it would mean for them after seeing thousands of migrants appear on their streets monthly over the past three years.

Biden continued to be pelted with criticism from the left for making it harder for asylum petitioners to enter the country, and from the right for not maintaining Title 42 to keep migration under control. Former president Donald Trump -- Biden's leading Republican challenger for the White House in 2024 -- suggested Wednesday that the coming change would be a "day of infamy."

"You're going to have millions of people pouring into our country," he claimed in a town hall on CNN.

### KHAN OUT ON BAIL

## SC keeps favouring Imran, says Pak PM

Khan's arrest Tuesday sparked widespread protests across Pakistan, prompting the government to deploy the army in various provinces and left at least eight dead

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Islamabad, May 12:** In a temporary relief to Imran Khan, a special bench of the Islamabad High Court Friday granted him protective bail for two weeks in a corruption case and ordered that the former Pakistan prime minister should not be arrested till May 17 in any case registered after Tuesday.

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif questioned the Supreme Court's granting of relief to its "ladla" Imran Khan, saying its "double standards" have led to the death of justice in Pakistan.

In a major relief for Khan, Pakistan's Supreme Court Thursday declared his dramatic arrest "unlawful" and "invalid" and ordered his immediate release after he was produced before a bench on its orders.

Khan, 70, was arrested Tuesday outside the Islamabad High Court (IHC) and an accountability court



Such double standards have caused the death of justice in Pakistan

SHEHBAZ SHARIF | PM, PAKISTAN

KHAN IS FACING OVER 120 CASES, INCLUDING FOR ALLEGEDLY COMMITTING TREASON AND BLASPHEMY; INCITING VIOLENCE AND TERRORISM

HE IS THE ONLY PAKISTANI PM TO BE HOUSTED IN A NO-CONFIDENCE VOTE

on Wednesday handed him over to the National Accountability Bureau (NAB) for eight days' remand in connection with the Al-Qadir Trust corruption case.

Responding to the Supreme Court's relief to Pakistan Threek-e-Insaf chief Khan, Sharif said it was nothing but an NRO.

"When he (Imran) was presented in court yesterday, the CJJ said it is good to see you. And, he said this in a case of corruption," he said.

"If you want to keep favouring this ladla (pampered), then you should also release all the dacoits behind bars in the country. Let this be free for all," he said while addressing the federal Cabinet Friday.

He asked why such leniencies were not given to his brother and former prime minister Nawaz Sharif and other members of the federal coalition who were arrested when Khan was the prime minister.

The Islamabad High Court (IHC) Friday granted bail to PTI Chairman Khan in the Al-Qadir Trust case for two weeks.

On Thursday, a three-member apex court bench, comprising Chief Justice Umar Ata Bandial, Justice

Muhammad Ali Mazhar and Justice Athar Minallah, ordered his immediate release.

Khan was ousted from power in April after losing a no-confidence vote in his leadership, which he alleged was part of a US-led conspiracy targeting him because of his independent foreign policy decisions on Russia, China and Afghanistan.

### SHEHBAZ BLASTS OPPOSITION

Describing former premier Khan and his party as "liars", Pakistan Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif Friday slammed the Opposition for pushing the cash-strapped country towards "destruction".

Sharif questioned the courts' silence over the jailing of leaders of his Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) party during Khan's tenure. "Did they [the courts] ever take notice when we were being sent to jail?" he asked.

He lamented the violent protests and said that such scenes had not been witnessed since the fall of Dhaka decades ago. Sharif said the PTI protesters disrespected the martyrs of the country in a way that was not even done by "our enemies".

### US court junks law barring handgun sales to under 21

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

**Washington, May 12:** A US District Court judge has declared unconstitutional federal laws banning handgun sales by licensed dealers to people under 21 years of age, saying anyone over 18 should have that right.

Judge Robert Payne of the Eastern District of Virginia issued the ruling in a case filed by four men who were over the age of 18 but under the age of 21 when they wanted to buy handguns.

Federal law prohibits licensed gun dealers from selling handguns to persons under the age of 21, although parents can buy them for their children or they can purchase them themselves in private sales or at gun shows.

In his opinion Wednesday, Payne cited a recent Supreme Court decision that expanded the rights of gun owners and the Second Amendment to the US Constitution, which states that "the right of the people to keep and bear arms, shall not be infringed."

In 2021, more than 47,000 people were killed by guns in the United States, including suicides, according to the Gun Violence Archive and the toll is expected to climb much higher this year.

## Russia interfering in Turkey election

Erdogan's rival says he has evidence of Russia's online campaign ahead of Turkey election Sunday

REUTERS

**Ankara, May 12:** Kemal Kilicdaroglu, main challenger of Turkish President Tayyip Erdogan, said Friday his party has concrete evidence of Russia's responsibility for the release of "deep fake" online content ahead of Sunday's presidential elections.

Kilicdaroglu, who has a slight poll lead over Erdogan two days ahead of the election, told Reuters in an interview it was unacceptable for Russia to interfere in Turkey's internal affairs, but added that should



he become president he would maintain Ankara's good ties with Moscow.

NATO-member Turkey depends heavily on energy imports and Russia is its largest supplier. This week, two sources told Reuters that Ankara has deferred payment to Russia of a \$600 million natural gas bill to 2024, underlining the extent of strengthened relations under Erdogan and Russian President Vladimir Putin.

Asked why he tweeted on Thursday that Russia was re-

sponsible for fake online content, a bold move, Kilicdaroglu said: "If we did not have it (concrete evidence), I wouldn't have tweeted." His party did not contact the Russian embassy over the issue, he added. He did not elaborate on what the online content was.

One presidential candidate from a small party, Muharrem Ince, withdrew Thursday citing a faked "character assassination" carried out online.

Russia has been accused in the past of meddling in foreign elections including in the United States, which Moscow denies.

Turkey's vote Sunday shapes up as the most consequential in its modern history, with huge implications for Ankara's global standing, strategic alliances and economic direction.

### HISTORIC MOVE

## California State Senate passes caste discrimination bill

This landmark bill comes just weeks after the California Senate Judiciary Committee unanimously passed SB403 in April

AGENCIES

**Washington, May 12:** The California Senate has overwhelmingly passed a legislation seeking to explicitly ban caste discrimination, in a historic move that would make America's most populous State also the country's first to outlaw caste-based bias.

State Senator Aisha Wahab, the first Muslim and Afghan American elected to the state legislature, introduced the bill last month. Passed by 34-1 vote, the bill -- SB

403, would make California the first US State to add caste as a protected category in its anti-discrimination laws.

Promoters of the bill, being led by non-profit Equality Lab, said that a similar bill is being introduced in the State House of Representatives, before it can be sent to the Governor to be signed into a law.

The bill adds caste as a protected category to an existing law, the Unruh Civil Rights Act, which provides that all people in California are entitled to the full and equal accommodations, advantages, facilities, privileges, or services in all business establishments.

The bill provides explicit protections to those who have been systemically harmed due to caste bias and prejudice. It also provides firm legal consequences for those seeking to avoid responsibility or



We know that we have a long journey ahead of us with this bill, but we have made history with this vote and are proud to look forward to working with the California Assembly on this historic bill!

THEENMOZHI SOUNDARRAJAN | EQUALITY LABS EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR AND AUTHOR OF THE TRAUMA OF CASTE

ramifications for permitting or participating in caste discrimination and caste-based violence.

Earlier this year, Seattle became the first US city to outlaw caste discrimination after its local coun-

Over the last three years, ten Hindu temples and five statues, including those of Mahatma Gandhi and Maratha emperor Shivaji, have been vandalised across the US as an intimidation tactic against the Hindu community

cil passed a resolution moved by an Indian-American politician and economist. The resolution, moved by Kshama Sawant, an upper-caste Hindu, was approved by the Seattle City Council by six to one vote.

It also follows the resolutions to designate caste as a protected category passed by the California

Democratic Party, the California State University system, the Alphabet Workers Union, tech giants like Apple and Cisco, and others.

California, a western US state located along the Pacific Coast with nearly 39.2 million residents, is the most populous US state and the third-largest by area.

Many Indian Americans fear that codifying caste in public policy will further fuel instances of Hinduphobia in the US.

Indian Americans are the second-largest immigrant group in the US. According to data from the 2018 American Community Survey (ACS), which is conducted by the US Census Bureau, there are 4.2 million people of Indian origin residing in the United States. India banned caste discrimination in 1948 and enshrined that policy in the Constitution in 1950.

## of the day quote

There is a need for going beyond GDP numbers and empowering people by improving digital connectivity in developing nations.

**NIRMALA SITHARAMAN** | FINANCE MINISTER

Within the first four weeks of joining ONDC, magicip scaled from 100 to 10,000 orders a day. In the fifth week, we saw a massive leap to 20,000 daily orders. This represents a 200-fold growth in ONDC's daily orders through magicip

**ANSHOO SHARMA** | CEO AND CO-FOUNDER, MAGICIPIN

The demand in the real estate sector continues to be positive. We are confident of continuing our growth trajectory in FY24. Our growth will continue to be driven by expansion in Tier III and IV towns this year

**LAKSHMINARAYANAN DURAISWAMY** | MD, SUNDARAM HOME FINANCE

## Q4 RESULTS

### HAL posts 1st net dip in 10 quarters

**Bangalore:** Hindustan Aeronautics Ltd Friday reported its first decline in profit in 10 quarters, hurt by higher input costs and tax expenses. HAL's consolidated net profit fell nearly 9% to Rs 28.31 billion in the fourth quarter ended March 31. While revenue from operations rose 8% to 124.95 billion rupees, that was offset by a 9.2% jump in expenses, led by a nearly 39% spike in cost of materials, HAL said in an exchange filing. The company also said it incurred tax expenses of Rs 124.7 million in the quarter, against a gain of Rs 5.28 billion from tax refunds a year ago.

### Tata Motors back in black

**New Delhi:** Fuelled by rising domestic demand, pricing actions and easing supply chain issues, Tata Motors reported a consolidated net profit of Rs 5,408 crore in the March quarter and aims to improve the profit margins this fiscal despite headwinds. The company had posted a consolidated net loss of Rs 1,033 crore in the January-March quarter of 2021-22 fiscal, Tata Motors said in a regulatory filing. Total revenue from operations stood at Rs 1,05,932 crore in the fourth quarter as against Rs 78,439 crore in the year-ago period, it added.

### Vedanta falls 57%

**New Delhi:** Mining giant Vedanta Friday reported 57 per cent drop in March quarter net profit on weakness in aluminium business and write-offs. Consolidated net profit of Rs 3,132 crore in January-March is compared with Rs 7,261 crore net earnings in the same period a year back, according to a stock exchange filing by the company. On a sequential basis, net profit was up 1 per cent from Rs 3,092 crore in October-December.

### HPCL jumps 79%

**New Delhi:** Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Ltd (HPCL) Friday reported a 79 per cent jump in its March quarter net profit on the back of a recovery in fuel marketing margins and better refining margins. Consolidated net profit was at Rs 3,608.32 crore in January-March compared with Rs 2,018.45 crore in the same period a year back, according to a company's stock exchange filing.



**The crisis at Go First will not change the trajectory of the Indian civil aviation market in terms of growth and macro trends**

**SAIL GUPTA** | PRESIDENT, BOEING INDIA

### E-TAILERS ORDERED TO DELIST CAR SEAT BELT ALARM STOPPER CLIPS

Consumer protection regulator CCPA has directed 5 e-commerce companies, Amazon, Flipkart, Snapdeal, Shopclues and Meesho to permanently delist all car seat belt alarm stopper clips as the product stops the alarm beep when not wearing seat belts, thus compromising passengers' safety



## 18-MONTH LOW INFLATION SLIPS TO 4.7%

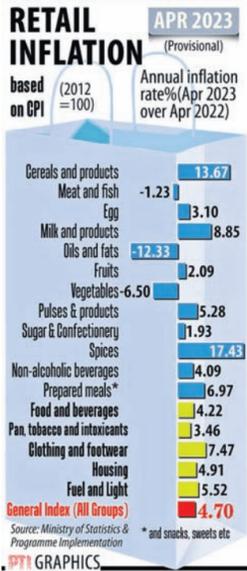
RBI increased the benchmark lending rate by 250 basis points in six tranches since May 2022 in a bid to tame high inflation in the wake of the Russia-Ukraine war. However, it went for a pause in its rate hike spree in April

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, May 12:** Retail inflation declined to an 18-month low of 4.7 per cent in April mainly due to falling prices of vegetables, oils and fats, and came closer to Reserve Bank's target of 4 per cent, showed government data released Friday. It was for the second month in a row that Consumer Price Index (CPI) based inflation remained within the RBI's comfort zone of below 6 per cent. The government has tasked the central bank to ensure retail inflation remains at 4 per cent with a margin of 2 per cent on either side.

According to the National Statistical Office, the inflation in the food basket was 3.84 per cent in April, as against 4.79 per cent in March and 8.31 per cent in the year-ago period. The food basket accounts for nearly half of the CPI. Retail inflation rose from 5.7 per cent in December 2022 to 6.4 per cent in February 2023 on the back of higher prices of cereals, milk and fruits and slower deflation in vegetable prices.

As per the latest NSO data, prices of 'oil and fats' declined by 12.33 per cent, followed by vegetables (6.5 per cent), and 'meat and fish' (1.23 per cent) during April on an annual basis. On the other hand, spices, cereals and products, and 'milk and milk products' became dearer. Commenting on the data, Aditi Nayar, Chief Economist, Head-Research & Outreach, ICRA said the April 2023 CPI inflation eased to an 18-month low, benefitting from the high base as well as cooler than normal temperatures, which delayed the seasonal rise in prices of perishable items.



"Although the impact of a favourable base effect related to escalation of geopolitical conflict is likely to have peaked in April 2023, ICRA foresees the CPI inflation to remain range-bound at 4.7-5 per cent in May-June 2023," she said. However, a pivot to rate cuts by the RBI appears quite distant, Nayar added.

Narinder Wadhwa, National President, CPAI (Commodity Participants Association of India) said a lower CPI inflation rate is seen as positive for consumers, as it in-

The cooling off in headline inflation to 4.7 per cent during April is very satisfying. This gives confidence that the monetary policy is on the right track

**SHAKTIKANTA DAS** | GOVERNOR, RBI

dicates that the cost of living has increased at a slower pace and indicates that inflation is not a significant concern.

"This, in turn, can make borrowing cheaper, increasing the demand for loans and potentially leading to increased investment and economic activity. Good news for capital markets," he said.

The RBI primarily factors in the CPI data while arriving at its bi-monthly monetary policy. RBI increased the benchmark lending rate by 250 basis points in six tranches since May 2022 in a bid to tame high inflation in the wake of the Russia-Ukraine war.

However, it went for a pause in its rate hike spree in April.

The NSO data further showed the retail inflation in the rural areas during April was 4.68 per cent and 4.85 per cent in urban areas. The price data were collected from selected 1,114 urban markets and 1,181 villages covering all states/UTs through personal visits by field staff of Field Operations Division of NSO, an official release said.

**APRIL'S INFLATION IS LOWEST READING SINCE OCTOBER 2021, WHEN IT STOOD AT 4.48%**

**RETAIL INFLATION WAS 5.66% IN MARCH 2023 AND 7.79% IN THE YEAR-AGO PERIOD**

**A PIVOT TO RATE CUTS BY THE RESERVE BANK APPEARS QUITE DISTANT, SAY EXPERTS**

## IIP growth slides to 5-month low of 1.1%

The previous lowest level of growth was recorded in October 2022 at a contraction of 4.1%



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, May 12:** India's industrial production growth slipped to five-month low of 1.1 per cent in March from 5.8 per cent in February 2023, mainly due to poor performance of power and manufacturing sectors, according to official data released Friday.

The factory output growth measured in terms of the Index of Industrial Production (IIP) stood at 2.2 per cent in March 2023.

As per the IIP data released by the National Statistical Office (NSO), the manufacturing sector's output grew 0.5 per cent in March 2023 as against 1.4 per cent a year ago.

Power generation declined by 1.6 per cent in March 2023 against a growth of 6.1 per cent.

Mining output rose by 6.8 per cent during the month under review compared to a growth of 3.9 in the year-ago period.

As per use-based classification, the capital goods segment recorded a growth of 8.1 per cent in March against a growth of 2.4 per cent a year ago.

Consumer durables output during the month declined by 8.4 per cent against a contraction of 3.1 per cent a year ago.

Consumer non-durable goods output too declined by 3.1 per cent against a contraction of 4.4 per cent earlier.

Infrastructure/construction goods posted a growth of 5.4 per cent compared to a 6.7 per cent expansion in the same period a year ago.

The data also showed that the output of primary goods logged 3.3 per cent growth in the month against 5.7 per cent in the year-ago period.

The intermediate goods output in March grew by 1 per cent compared to a growth of 1.8 per cent during the corresponding month last year.

For fiscal 2022-23, the growth in IIP works out to be 5.1 per cent, down from 11.4 per cent in the preceding year.

## PV despatches surge 13% in April

THE SALES OF PASSENGER VEHICLES LAST MONTH WERE THE HIGHEST EVER IN APRIL

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, May 12:** Domestic passenger vehicle despatches witnessed a 13 per cent year-on-year rise in April as demand remained robust across segments, industry body SIAM said Friday.

The total passenger vehicle despatches from companies to dealers rose to 3,31,278 units last month compared to 2,93,303 units in April 2022.

Market leader Maruti Suzuki India despatched 1,37,320 units to dealers last month against 1,21,995 units in April last year. Hyundai Motor India, on the other hand, sold 49,701 units in April compared to 44,001 units in the year-ago period.

Similarly, two-wheeler despatches last month increased by 15 per cent



to 13,38,588 units from 11,62,582 units a year ago. Motorcycle wholesales rose to 8,39,274 units last month from 7,35,360 units in April 2022. Similarly, scooter despatches rose to 4,64,389 units in April against

3,88,442 units in the year-ago period. The total three-wheeler sales rose to 42,885 units last month from 20,997 units in April 2022.

"All the segments, passenger vehicles, two-wheelers and three-

wheelers have posted growth in April 2023, compared to April 2022, which clearly indicates that the industry has been able to transit very smoothly to BSVI Phase 2 emission norms from April 1 2023," Society of Indian Automobile Manufacturers (SIAM) President Vinod Aggarwal stated.

As the industry gradually gets into the monsoon season, among other factors, good rainfall can also help the sector sustain its growth, he added.

SIAM Director General Rajesh Menon said the sales of passenger vehicles last month were the highest ever in April. Two-wheelers also posted a growth of 15 per cent in April 2023 compared to last year, while the domestic sales of three-wheelers have reached nearer to the pre-Covid-19 levels in April, he added.

## Canara Bank launches mobile ATM van service

**Bhubaneswar:** Canara Bank Bhubaneswar has taken the initiative to provide mobile ATM van facility at major housing societies in the City for the benefit of all, especially senior citizens. The mobile ATM van was made available at Utkal Royal Residency from 9 am to 12 am today. Many residents including senior citizens availed the facility and withdrew cash for themselves and were very happy that they did not have to step out in this heat. Jagdish Chander, Head & General Manager, Canara Bank Bhubaneswar Circle was present to greet the senior citizens.



## BIZ BUZZ

## BSE, NSE remove 3 Adani Group stocks from ASM

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, May 12:** Leading bourses BSE and NSE Friday said that three Adani group companies -- Adani Total Gas, Adani Transmission and Adani Green Energy -- will move out of the ASM framework from May 15.

On March 24, both the bourses had moved Adani Total Gas and Adani Transmission from second to the first stage of the long-term Additional Surveillance Measure (ASM) framework. Last month, the exchanges had also moved Adani Green Energy to first stage of long-term ASM framework.

The stocks will be excluded from ASM framework effective May 15, according to two separate circulars available on the BSE and NSE websites.

US short-seller Hindenburg Research in its January 24 report levelled allegations of fraud and stock manipulation against the Adani group, however, the conglomerate has repeatedly denied all allegations.

## Linda Yaccarino replaces Musk as Twitter CEO

Musk, the CEO of Tesla, completed his purchase of Twitter in Oct for \$44bn. He said in Dec that he would step aside as CEO once he found "someone foolish enough to take the job"

REUTERS

**Washington, May 12:** Former NBCUniversal advertising chief Linda Yaccarino will become Twitter's new CEO, current chief executive Elon Musk said Friday in a tweet.

"I am excited to welcome Linda Yaccarino as the new CEO of Twitter!" Musk said. "@LindaYacc will focus primarily on business operations, while I focus on product design & new technology."

Yaccarino modernised the Comcast Corp entertainment and



media division's advertising business and had been in talks for the

job before NBC announced her departure Friday morning.

Since Musk acquired Twitter in October, advertisers have fled the platform, worried that their ads could appear next to inappropriate content after the company lost nearly 80% of staff. Musk earlier this year acknowledged that Twitter suffered a massive decline in ad revenue.

Musk axed thousands of employees, rushed the launch of a subscription product that allowed scammers to impersonate major

brands and suspended users with whom he disagreed.

On Thursday, Musk tweeted that he had found a CEO without naming Yaccarino. One person close to Yaccarino said Musk's tweet may well have accelerated the timetable for her to join Twitter, which would be a balm to Tesla shareholders.

Shares of Tesla were down 1.3% Friday, as analysts commented that a CEO hire would allow Musk to concentrate on the EV business.

# Sunrisers batters gear up for Lucknow spin test

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Hyderabad, May 12: Lucknow Super Giants will be itching to get back to winning ways against a buoyant Sunrisers Hyderabad with young wrist-spinner Ravi Bishnoi holding the key in a must-win IPL game here, Saturday.

LSG, having lost two of their last three matches, will take a huge step forward if they happen to get past Aiden Markram's team, which is languishing in ninth place in the 10-team table. The Krunal Pandya-led team are currently fifth with 11 points and are very much there in the playoff mix.

However, on an Uppal track that has produced middling team-to-



tals, the role of spinners will be paramount, and that's where Bishnoi, veteran Amit Mishra and



skipper Krunal himself come into the picture. The spin troika will have its task

cut out against a Hyderabad lineup whose batting will be dependent on their three overseas recruits - Markram, Heinrich Klaasen and Glenn Phillips.

In Hyderabad, the track is a bit on the slower side and the spinners, who bowl at a higher speed, will certainly have an advantage over others.

If one compares man to man, LSG's spinners are better placed since SRH already are hamstrung by Washington Sundar's pull out from the tournament. The only spinner doing well for them consistently is Mayank Markande.

SRH have suffered on many counts but primarily due to the loss of form of two premier Indian

batters Mayank Agarwal and Rahul Tripathi. In fact, except Klaasen (185.34), the only other top order batter with a 150 plus strike-rate is southpaw opener Abhishek Sharma (152.63).

As far as LSG's batting is concerned, regular skipper KL Rahul's injury has proved to be a blessing in disguise with both Quinton de Kock and Kyle Mayers attacking from the word go.

However, down the order Marcus Stoinis and Nicholas Pooran, despite having the odd good knocks under their belt, need to do more. Ayush Badoni has also been very effective, but it is the slow tracks of Lucknow that has been an impediment to the team's success with the bat.

# LAGGARDS DC FACE DESPERATE KINGS



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA



New Delhi, May 11: All but out of playoff reckoning, Delhi Capitals will expect a more purposeful approach from their Indian batting unit as they play for pride against Punjab Kings in an IPL match here, Saturday.

With four wins in 11 games, DC are staring at an unceremonious exit as winning the next three matches will only take them to 14 points, which might not be enough to earn them a place in the top four, leaving their fate in the hands of other teams.

The specialist Indian batters have hardly contributed and it has all been about either skipper David Warner, keeper-batter Phil Salt or all-rounder Mitchell Marsh, who have given the team some momentum with willow.

The likes of Manish Pandey, Rupal Patel and Aman Hakim Khan have lacked the killer punch as they have not been able to change their game according to the match situation.

The inability of the middle-order to rotate the strike or find big hits has put paid to their hopes. As a result, once the top order caves in, they lack the wherewithal to finish a chase, something which was on display against CSK, the other day.

The bowlers have fared better with spin duo of Axar Patel and Kuldeep Yadav bowling a good line, while pacers Ishant Sharma and Khaleel Ahmed getting wickets most times.

Kings, with 10 points from 11 games, too are looking at a must-win game, following back-to-back

defeats against MI and KKR, respectively. PBKS have blown hot and cold this season. In the last two matches, their bowlers have failed to defend totals as MI and KKR out-batted them.

PBKS had a chance to get into top 3 in their last game but it was Rinku Singh, who slammed a four in the last delivery to dent Punjab's hopes as they entered the must-win zone with three games to go.

Shikhar Dhawan remains their best batter and has done the job at the top but the same can't be said about his opening partner Prabhsimran Singh.

Bhanuka Rajapaksa's return from injury was marked by a three-ball duck and his form will be important. The ever-improving Jitesh Sharma and all-rounder Liam Livingstone produced some sensational hitting to get them to good scores.

In the bowling attack, Arshdeep Singh has been their key bowler but he along with Nathan Ellis and Sam Curran have leaked runs off late. The absence of a quality off-spinner has hurt their cause as leg-spinner Rahul Chahar and Harpreet Brar have lacked consistency.

03:30 pm SRH VS LSG

07:30 pm DC VS PBKS

Telecast: Star Sports channels

# SKY OVERSHADOWS RASHID SHOW



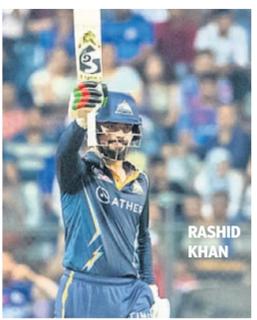
PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, May 12: Suryakumar Yadav (103 n o, 49b, 11x4, 6x6) played some outrageous shots en route his maiden IPL hundred as his stunning knock outshone a superlative all-round show from Rashid Khan (4/30; 79 n o, 32b, 3x4, 10x6) to set up Mumbai Indians' 27-run win over Gujarat Titans here Friday.

Invited to bat, MI posted 218/5 on the back of Suryakumar's knock and then restricted GT to 191/8 to notch up their seventh win this season. This was MI's fourth consecutive 200-plus score on their home ground. While Suryakumar played a blinder of an innings, Rohit Sharma (29), Ishan Kishan (31) and Vishnu Vinod (30) chipped in for the home side.

Chasing 219, GT were in danger of being bowled out for a low total, but a brutal knock from Rashid reduced the margin of the defeat drastically. For Mumbai, Akash Madhwal (3/31), Kumar Kartikeya (2/37) and veteran Piyush Chawla (2/36) produced a superb show with the ball.

But the indomitable Rashid was simply unstoppable. He followed his superb bowling effort during the MI innings with a stunning show with the bat as he added 88 runs from just 40 balls for the unconquered ninth



wicket with Alzarri Joseph (7 n o), but his effort was just not enough.

GT's fourth loss in 12 matches was their first in away games this season. With eight wins and 16 points, they remained at the top of the table. MI's seventh win in 12 matches thus took them back to third spot with 14 points and a net run rate of -0.117.

Titans made the worst possible start as they last half of their side in 7.1 overs with 55 runs on the board. David Miller (41, 26b, 4x4, 2x6) added 45 runs for the sixth wicket with Rahul Tewatia (14) to help GT stabilise, but could not lead a comeback for his side. GT were reduced from 100/5 to 103/8. Then it was all Rashid.

Earlier, India and MI skipper Rohit could not convert his start but appeared to be getting back to his usual self at the crease in his 61-run opening stand in the powerplay with Kishan to lay the platform for a big total.

However, Rashid struck thrice in to reduce MI to 88/3 inside 9 overs.

Surya and Vinod then stabilized the MI essay. Vinod perished in the 16th over, having put on a 42-ball 65 for the fourth wicket with Suryakumar Rashid, however, kept chipping away as he snapped the key wicket of Tim David (5) in the 17th over.

But Suryakumar continued with his barrage of shots from the other end, hitting Mohit for 20 runs in the 18th over and brought up his first century of IPL career with a six off the last ball of the innings. In the process, Suryakumar also put on another 54 runs for the sixth wicket with Cameron Green (3 n o), which came off only 18 balls.

**BRIEF SCORES:** MI 218/5 (Suryakumar Yadav 103 n o, Ishan Kishan 31, Vishnu Vinod 30, Rohit Sharma 29; Rashid Khan 4/30) beat GT 191/8 (Rashid Khan 79 n o, David Miller 41, Akash Madhwal 3/31, Piyush Chawla 2/36, Kumar Kartikeya 2/37) by 27 runs.

# Juventus salvage 1-1 draw against Sevilla

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Turin, May 12: Substitute Federico Gatti scored deep into stoppage time to salvage a 1-1 draw for Juventus against six-time champion Sevilla in the first leg of the Europa League semifinals.

Gatti headed in the equaliser in the seventh minute of added time here to keep alive the Italian team's hopes for a European trophy after a long drought.

Juventus won the competition when it was known as the UEFA Cup three times, most recently in 1993. The team will have to win in the second leg next week to get a chance to claim a first European title since winning the Champions League in 1996. Sevilla have won the trophy six times and the Spanish squad again proved they are title contenders.

Youssef En-Nesyri scored in the 26th minute to finish a lethal counterattack for Sevilla, which eliminated Manchester United in the quarterfinals. It was the forward's 18th goal in all competitions.

The visitors suffered a setback when Lucas Ocampos, who had several attempts on goal, had to be substituted in the 34th due to an injury. Sevilla had another good chance but goalkeeper Wojciech Szczesny tipped Ivan Rakitic's shot over the bar.

Earlier, Angel Di Maria helped Juventus create some pressure but it was the visitors who struck first. Sevilla have never lost a semifinal in this competition.

Roma stayed on course to claim back-to-back European titles by beating Bayer Leverkusen 1-0 in the first leg of their semifinal. Jose Mourinho's team won the inaugural edition of the third-tier Europa Conference League last year. Edoardo Bove scored the decider in the 63rd.

## CONFERENCE LEAGUE

Said Benrahma and Michael Antonio led West Ham's second-half rally to beat AZ Alkmaar 2-1 at London Stadium. Benrahma converted from the spot to erase the Dutch team's lead before Antonio scored from close range.

Tijjani Reijnders put the visitors ahead four minutes before half-time with a strike from outside the area. It was a rare chance for the Dutch at this stage. The Hammers have been waiting for a European trophy since the 1965 title in the European Cup Winners' Cup.

In Florence, Zeki Amdouni scored in stoppage time as Basel came from a goal down to stun Fiorentina 2-1. Andy Diouf had equalized in the 71st minute. Arthur Cabral headed in the opening goal for the hosts following a corner kick in the 25th.



**SAVING THE DAY:** Federico Gatti reacts after scoring the equaliser for Juventus against Sevilla in Turin, Thursday

# BWF HANDS INTERIM BAN ON 'SPIN SERVE'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, May 12: With the new 'spin serve' creating a flutter in international badminton, world governing body BWF has decided to put an interim ban on the use of the experimental serve effective immediately until May 29, 2023.

"BWF Council has approved a proposal for an 'experimental variation' to the Laws of Badminton to forbid the use of the new 'spin serve' effective immediately until 29 May 2023," BWF said in a statement.

"The interim ban takes effect at all BWF sanctioned international tournaments including the BWF Sudirman Cup Finals 2023 starting Sunday 14 May 2023 and the Malaysia Masters 2023, the following week."

A new "nonreturnable" spin-serve had caught the attention of the world's top badminton players with even the Indian doubles shut-



tlers putting in the hard yards to master this latest skill, which many believe can give "unfair" advantage to the players.

It was first started by Danish doubles player Marcus Rindshoj, who accumulated a bunch of points with this innovative spin serve at the Polish Open last month.

This is a kind of serve where the shuttle holds the cork of the shuttlecock in between his or her thumb and middle finger and tries to put a spin to it with a carrom strike motion before sending it across the net with the racket.

This spin serve has proved to be a handful for the opposition

players, who have struggled to send it back as the shuttle twists and falls across the net.

"The amendment to 9.1.5 of Section 4.1 of the BWF Laws of Badminton now states that the server shall release the shuttle without adding spin, and the server's racket shall initially hit the base of the shuttle. Any failure to adhere to the experimental variation to the law will result in a fault being called."

BWF President Poul-Erik Hoyer said: "BWF welcomes players creating innovation in our game and experimenting with techniques to create competitive advantage on court."

"However, we have received several points of feedback from within the badminton community, including the BWF Athletes' Commission, expressing that this 'spin serve' could have a negative impact on the game.

"It's also been observed internally that this 'spin serve' has many similar characteristics to the 'Sidek serve' (named after Rashid Sidek), which is not allowed.

"An expert panel, therefore, recommended to disallow the 'spin serve' until further consultation could take place with the membership at the upcoming BWF AGM 27 May 2023."

The apex body said it wanted to "avoid a scenario where the upcoming TotalEnergies BWF Sudirman Cup Finals 2023, and other international tournaments, could be platforms to test the new 'spin serve' and ultimately disrupt the competitions.

"As such, BWF Council felt it best to impose this experimental variation to disallow the 'spin serve' until BWF Council convenes again 29 May for further discussion and deliberation."

# NEWS IN BRIEF

## INDIAN TROIKA SIGNS OFF WITH BRONZE

**TASHKENT:** Deepak Bhorla (51kg), Mohammad Hussamudin (57kg) and Nishant Dev (71kg) signed off with bronze medals at the World Boxing Championships, wrapping up India's best-ever show at the marquee event here Friday. It was heartbreak for Hussamudin as the Nizamabad boxer was forced to withdraw due to a knee injury about an hour before his semifinal bout. On the other hand, Deepak's memorable campaign came to end as he went down fighting to two-time World Championships bronze medallist France's Bilal Bennama 3-4 in a close contest which went into bout review. Nishant's semifinal also went to bout review with the judges ruling in favour of the 2022 Asian champion and 2018 Asian Games silver medallist Aslanbek Shymbergenov of Kazakhstan.

## Hriday, Nancy bag silvers at ISSF WC

**BAKU:** Former junior world champion Hriday Hazarika and Haryana's Nancy won their first individual senior World Cup medals, shooting down silver in the men's and women's 10m air rifle competitions here Friday. The Assam marksman shot brilliantly in the final, where his lowest score of 10.1 came in the very first of the 24-shot contest. Nancy was even better, recording a lowest of 10.2 in her final. However, both went down to more accurate shooters on the day. Hriday lost to Hungary's Zalan Pekler who shot 252.4 to the Indian's 251.9, while Nancy, after going into the final two shots with a 0.1 lead over China's Han Jiayu, could not hold on to the cushion to finish with 253.3 to her opponents' 254.0. Both the finals were of very high quality, with China's Sheng Lihao recording a score of 9.9 in his 21st shot. The latest results left China and India locked in a battle for supremacy with two more days to go. China led the medal tally with two gold, one silver and two bronze while India have one gold, two silver and one bronze.

## ODISHA FC EXTEND AMRINDER'S CONTRACT

**BHUBANESWAR:** Indian Super League franchise Odisha FC Friday said that their goalkeeper Amrinder Singh has signed a new contract, extending his stay at the club until 2026. The announcement comes after a successful season for OFC in the ISL and becoming the Super Cup champions. Amrinder played a massive part in the club winning their first silverware. He was awarded the 'Goalkeeper of the Tournament' in the Super Cup. His performances were also recognized in the Tri-Nation Tournament, where he was adjudged the 'Best Goalkeeper' along with Gurpreet Singh Sandhu.



## INTERCONTINENTAL CUP AT KALINGA STADIUM

# India play Mongolia in campaign opener

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, May 12: The Indian men's football team will take on Mongolia on the opening day of the upcoming Intercontinental Cup, which kicks off at Bhubaneswar's Kalinga Stadium, June 9.

The other two teams in the competition, Lebanon and Vanuatu, will clash on the same day, which will be the tournament opener.

The event is part of India's preparations for the 2023 AFC Asian Cup in Qatar. Immediately after the Intercontinental Cup, India will play the SAFF Championship, to be played in Bangalore, June 21-July 3.

The national team, under head coach Igor Stimac, will be camping in Bhubaneswar to prepare for the tournament from May 15.

This will be the third edition of the Intercontinental Cup, with the previous two being held in Mumbai



**THE FIXTURES**

**JUNE 9:** Lebanon vs Vanuatu, 16:30 IST

**JUNE 9:** India vs Mongolia, 19:30 IST

**JUNE 12:** Mongolia vs Lebanon, 16:30 IST

**JUNE 12:** Vanuatu vs India, 19:30 IST

**JUNE 15:** Vanuatu vs Mongolia, 16:30 IST

**JUNE 15:** India vs Lebanon, 19:30 IST

**JUNE 18:** Final, 19:30 IST

(2018) and Ahmedabad (2019). All four teams will play against each other once before the top two sides compete in the final June 18.