

NAVEEN GUARANTEE

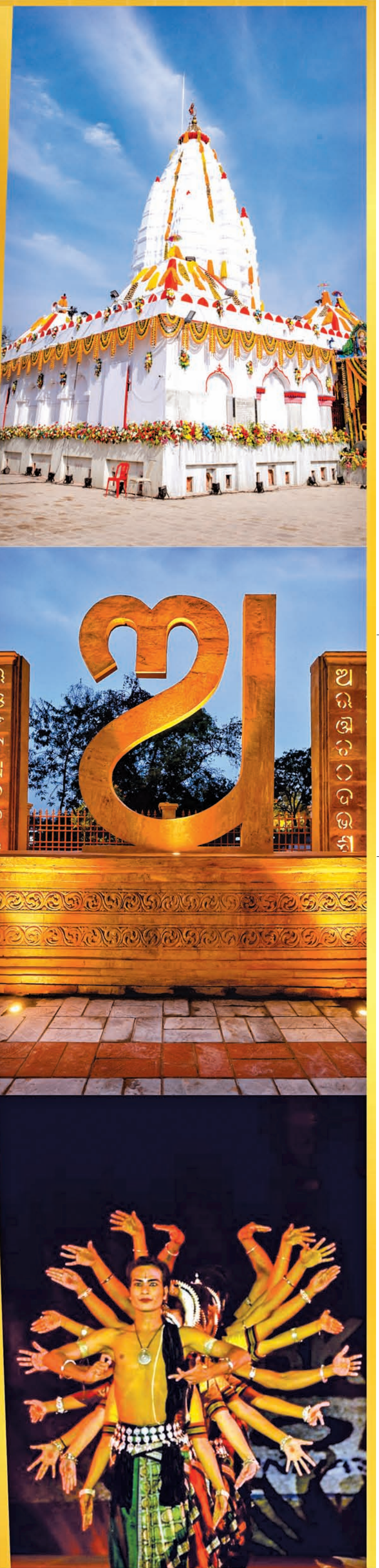
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FORTUNE FORECAST

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ARIES



Today, a romantic link-up is about to be delivered at your doorstep, all wrapped in silver and tinsel! So, Ganesha hopes you are prepared. Don your best attire, check your breath and practice some sweet-talking. After all, who knows what the evening will lead to? Only Ganesha, and he's smiling an impish grin! Need more clue?

TAURUS



Chaos will reign supreme as unexpected things occur and expected ones are missed out on, says Ganesha. Luck will favour you and nothing is powerful enough to hamper you other than you own thoughts. You will dodge any trouble that is headed your way and escape easily, much to the embarrassment of others.

GEMINI




Today is an important day to completely immerse yourself in your favourite activities, says Ganesha. But don't forget that loved ones come first as lack of warmth may affect family life. Show your family members that you care. New relationships are also on the anvil.

CANCER



At work, your ability to forge great partnerships will see to the success of one of your ambitious projects. However, you need to be careful before signing the contract. It's always important to go through the finer details of a deal before closing it.

LEO




Reinvention and rejuvenation – these are the two words that shall dictate your philosophy for the day. Refurbishing oneself does not always have to be in accordance with something new; taking a look back can be equally enlightening. In any case, it's a small world, and, hence, chances are that you shall revive most of your old contacts either in a social occasion or an official meeting.

VIRGO



Achievement and accomplishment will be the highlights of the day, notes Ganesha. You will be recognised for your devotion to work and determination to succeed at your workplace. Much awaited promotions may come and financial arrears may also reach your hands.

LIBRA



You will be very active today, especially when it comes to finishing tasks in office. Your thoughts will reach new heights and you will be able to motivate and stimulate others to perform. Your motto for the day is 'Arise, awake and sleep not till the goal is reached'.

SCORPIO




Your close friends and loved ones seem to be on the menu today, predicts Ganesha. Romantic brilliance will usher in happiness and favourable business prospects will be the icing on the cake. Your charm will peak and you will enjoy the attention you get out of it.

SAGITTARIUS




Be ready with you bags packed as you may decide to undertake an impromptu trip today. It could be a business trip or simply travel in pursuit of pleasure. Nostalgia will grip you as you run into an old childhood friend today.

CAPRICORN




That you are affectionate towards your loved ones will be more noticeable today than ever before, says Ganesha. In fact, you will enjoy their company and will do everything in your capacity to make them feel wanted. Long-term relationships will also thrive.

AQUARIUS

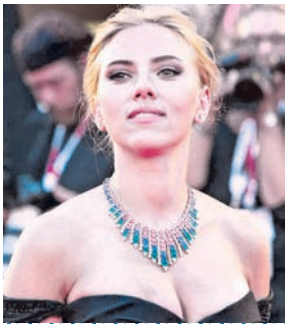


Fortune favours the brave, and who knows it better than you? Your performance may come under scrutiny, but your bosses will come away pleased as punch. Want to make some money? Ganesha points to real estate and the construction business.

PISCES



Your expenses are likely to soar and you will need to draw a line between your needs and your desires if you are to keep them in check. There is a strong possibility that you will undergo a spiritual experience today. You may also pursue meditative techniques for your peace of mind, says Ganesha.



SCARLETT ANGRY OVER COPYING OF HER VOICE BY CHATGPT

Actress Scarlett Johansson shared that she turned down OpenAI's request to lend her voice to ChatGPT system, and added that she was shocked and angered that the company went ahead and used a voice that sounded very similar to hers anyway.

JASON MOMOA CONFIRMS DATING ACTRESS ARJONA

Actor Jason Momoa, who was previously married to Lisa Bonet, has confirmed that he is dating actress Adria Arjona. The 44-year-old actor shared photos from a trip to Japan where he can be seen cuddling up to the actress.



Anupria champions sustainable fashion

Mumbai: Actress Anupria Goenka, who was recently in Gurgaon to walk the ramp at *Times Lifestyle Week*, shared how sustainability takes centre stage in her life choices - be it fashion, home decor or everyday life.

Talking about it, the actress said, "I have always been someone who has believed in green living and sustainable fashion. I still have clothes from when I was in Class X. Trust me, those clothes have lasted longer than the ones I got recently because of their quality. Fashion trends keep coming back, so I don't believe in discarding clothes."

"I love to reuse and upcycle clothes. It breaks my heart sometimes that I can't continue to wear a sari but upcycling gives it a new life. I even got clothes from my childhood upcycled as curtains. They lend a beautiful feeling to the bedroom and remind me of my childhood," she shared.

Talking about the other green choices, she said, "I make sure not to waste water, paper or food. It is important to cook how much you need and order how much you want. These small changes really have a big impact."

AGENCIES

ROHIT'S IDEA OF IDEAL LOVE

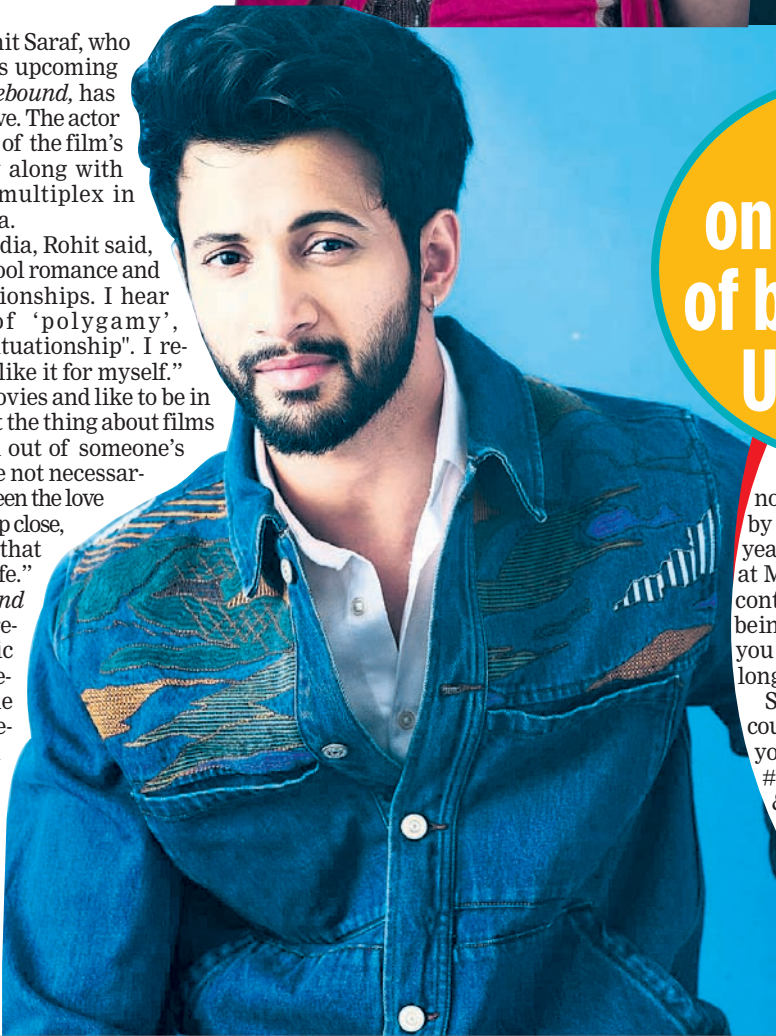
Mumbai: Actor Rohit Saraf, who is gearing up for his upcoming movie *Ishq Vishk Rebound*, has shared his idea of love. The actor attended the launch of the film's title track Tuesday along with his co-actors at a multiplex in Mumbai's Juhu area.

Talking to the media, Rohit said, "I believe in old-school romance and monogamous relationships. I hear the new lingo of 'polygamy', 'polyamory', or a'situationship". I respect it, but I won't like it for myself."

He said, "I love movies and like to be in them; I'm in one, but the thing about films is that they're born out of someone's imagination and are not necessarily real. But, having seen the love story of my parents up close, I would like to have that kind of love in my life."

Ishq Vishk Rebound also marks Rohit's return to the romantic genre. The actor previously rose to fame with his popular series *Mismatched*, in which he played Rishi Shekhawat. The film, directed by Nipun Avinash Dharmadhikari, is produced by Ramesh Taurani and Jaya Taurani.

IAN S



Sush on 30 years of being Miss Universe

Mumbai: Actress Sushmita Sen, who was last seen in the streaming series *Aarya*, is celebrating 30 years of her victory at the Miss Universe pageant.

She took to her Instagram Tuesday and shared a throwback picture of herself holding a baby girl. She also penned a long note in her caption.

She wrote: "This little girl, who I met in an orphanage, taught an 18-year-old me life's most innocent yet profound lessons, ones that I live by to this day. This captured moment is 30 years old today as is India's first ever Victory at Miss Universe!! What a journey it's been & continues to be....Thank you India for always being my greatest identity & strength!! Thank you Philippines for the unending love & belonging."

She further mentioned: "Three decades & counting!! #mahalkita I remember & celebrate your grace my beautiful @carogomezfilm #teamo To all my loved fans, friends, family & well wishers around the world...know that each one of you has made a difference to my life & inspired me in ways you may never know!! I feel the love!!! Thank you!!! WHAT AN HONOUR!!! Here's to the next #30 #Happy30years #yourstruly #MissUniverse1994 #INDIA I love you guys!!! #dugadugga." IAN S



Janhvi reflects on red flag in life

New Delhi: Actress Janhvi Kapoor strongly believes that having someone in life who doesn't encourage an individual to follow their dreams is a red flag. She shared that there was a phase in which she felt she deserved to be surrounded by those who questioned and doubted her.

Talking to *IAN S*, the *Mili* actress said, "I definitely think when you have anyone in your life that doesn't encourage you to follow your dreams, that is a red flag."

The actress recalled, "I remember there was a phase where I felt like I deserved to be surrounded by people who constantly questioned me and doubted me. Once around the people who think the best of you, who say no, 'you can do it', 'you have no idea what you are capable of....' That forces you to look at yourself in a better light."

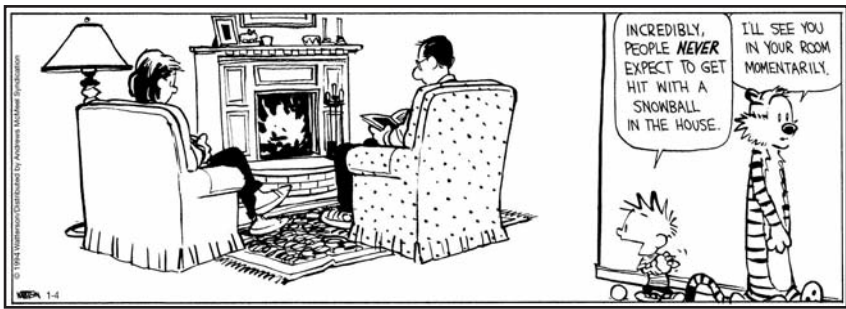
Janhvi also talked about common perceptions about women in Indian society. "Women aren't encouraged enough to be ambitious. We are expected to be sacrificial, maternal, and nurturing figures all the time, which is very important for me too, and I aspire for that, but ambition is equally important for me. So, I hope we get to a point where a woman isn't judged for her ambition or her choice to just nurture," explained the *Dhadak* actress while ending the conversation.

IAN S

PEANUTS



CALVIN AND HOBBS

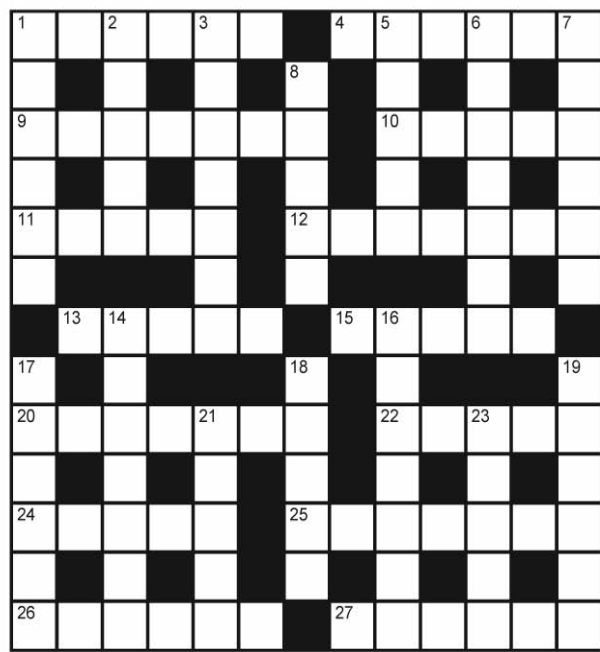


BREVITY



FUN post

CROSSWORD



- Across

1 Exccrate

4 Type of seas, at times

9 Timeless, as of quality

10 Scene of the action

11 Lassitude

12 Stand of fruit trees

13 Desert sight

15 Major artery

20 Parachute part

22 Musical time

24 Parish priest

25 First

26 Wine bottle sizes

27 Himalayan kingdom

Down

1 Formal order

2 Retinue

3 Japanese raw deal?

5 Mayhem

6 Signal flag

7 Concedes

8 Young haddock

14 Brandy flavour

16 Flightless bird

17 Garden tool

18 Old Roman port

19 Common allergen

21 Like ghost stories

23 Damp

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.

6			5		3	9	4	
						3		
			8		7	9		6
2		6			7	8		4
			3		6			2
			9					
1				9		4		
3		5	4		8			
							8	

SOLUTIONS

E	M	P	E	R	O	R	J	A	U
A	K	E	E	A	L	U			
S	K	I	M	P	V	A	C	A	T
E	N	R	I	K	R	C			
D	I	F	F	E	R	E	N	A	N
U	H	W	H						
C	A	L	V	E	S	D	E	P	U
U	N	G	R						
S	E	C		S	T	A	B	I	L
T	L	T	U	P	C	W			
A	C	E	R	B	I	C	P	R	O
R	A	L	H	E	R	R			
D	A	N	C	E					

7	2	6	9	3	5	1	4	8
3	4	8	6	1	2	9	7	5
5	1	9	4	7	8	6	3	2
4	6	7	1	8	9	2	5	3
9	5	2	3	6	7	4	8	1
1	8	3	5	2	4	7	9	6
8	7	5	2	9	6	3	1	4
6	3	4	7	5	1	8	2	9
2	9	1	8	4	3	5	6	7

CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW

73.50% TURNOUT IN PHASE II ELECTIONS

AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, May 21: A voter turnout of 73.50 per cent was recorded in five Lok Sabha and 35 Assembly seats in Odisha where polling was held Monday, according to the Election Commission (EC), Tuesday.

The second round of simultaneous elections were held in Aska, Bolangir, Kandhamal, Sundargarh and Bargarh Lok Sabha constituencies and 35 Assembly segments under these seats.

Bargarh Lok Sabha constituency recorded the highest turnout at 79.78 per cent, followed by Bolangir (77.52 per cent), Kandhamal (74.13 per cent), Sundargarh (73.02 per cent) and Aska (62.67 per cent).

Among Assembly seats, Bhatli in Bargarh district recorded the maximum polling at 84.11 per cent, while Hinjili in Ganjam registered the lowest at 59.05 per cent, according to EC's voter turnout app.

The voting percentage could be a little higher after the addition of postal votes, which will be opened at the counting cen-



tre June 4, officials said.

Barring some sporadic incidents, polling was peaceful for the five Lok Sabha constituencies and 35 Assembly segments in the state, Chief Electoral Officer (CEO) Nikunjia Bihari Dhal said.

Forty candidates are in fray in the five Lok Sabha constituencies, while 265 contestants, including Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik, are trying their luck in 35 Assembly segments during the second phase of simultaneous elections.

Apart from Patnaik, the prominent candidates whose fate was sealed in the EVM include six ministers, BJP's two sitting MP Sangeeta Singh Deo, Jual Oram, BJD MP Achyuta Samanta, former Union minister Dilip Ray

Re-polling at 2 booths May 23

Re-polling has been ordered at two booths in the state where voting was disrupted May 20, a statement issued by the Chief Electoral Officer said Tuesday. Re-polling will be held at booth numbers 26 and 28 in Kantamal Assembly segment of Kandhamal Lok Sabha seat from 7am to 4pm May 23, it said. Polling was held in these two booths in Kantamal Assembly seat along with 34 other Assembly segments and five Lok Sabha seats May 20. The polling process was disrupted in the two booths due to some incidents, sources said.

and others.

Odisha has 21 Lok Sabha constituencies and 147 Assembly seats.

Of them, polling has so far been completed for nine Parliamentary seats and 63 Assembly segments.

The next two phases of Lok Sabha and Assembly polls in the state will be held May 25 and June 1.



SEASONAL FRUIT: A roadside vendor sells Lychee on a makeshift stall near Jobra Anicut in Cuttack, Tuesday

OP PHOTO

Govil, Adiyannath, Nadda to address poll rallies



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, May 21: Senior BJP leader Arun Govil, who is best known for playing Lord Ram in the TV series 'Ramayana', will address public meetings in Champua, Telkol, Bhubaneswar and Dhenkanal May 22, a senior party leader said Tuesday.

Besides, BJP president JP Nadda and Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath and his Assam counterpart Himanta Biswa Sarma will address election rallies in the state May 23, BJP's state unit vice-president Golak Mohapatra said.

While Nadda will address four meetings at Karanjia, Dhamnagar, Barchana and Balikuda, Adityanath, who will campaign for the first time in the state for the ongoing election, will address rallies at Chilika and Kulia, he said.

Sarma, on the other hand, will address rallies in Deogarh, Barbil, Choudwar and Baramba, he added.

Elections will be held in Sambalpur, Keonjhar, Dhenkanal, Cuttack, Puri and Bhubaneswar Lok Sabha seats and 42 assembly segments falling under their parliamentary constituencies May 25.

CLASSIFIED AFFIDAVIT

I, Sumitra Sahoo, C/o-Mani Sahoo, my DOB-05.02.1984, my Residence Address At/PO- Rudrapur, Ps/ Via- Brahmabara, Dist- Jajpur, Pin- 755005. I Change my name Sumitra Sahoo to Sumitra Biswal proposed of spouse service. Above statements are true and correct to best of my knowledge. Kindly accept my new name in Govt. & Non-Govt. Sectors.

EOW arrests man for duping 53 investors of ₹1.2 crore

PNN& AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, May 21: The Economic Offences Wing (EOW) of the state Crime Branch has arrested a man for cheating 53 investors of ₹1.2 crore on the pretext of supplying LED monitors for advertisement, official sources said Tuesday.

According to EOW sources, Bimalananda Bhuyan was arrested May 18 last under Section 406, 420, 467, 468, 471 and 120B of the IPC and was produced before the Court of ACJM-II, Lucknow and brought to the City here on the strength of tran-

sit remand.

The accused was produced before the designated court under OPID Act, Cuttack Tuesday.

A case has been registered on the allegation of Bikash Podar of Sambalpur against Bhuyan and his wife Rammi Bhuyan for cheating 53 investors of ₹1.2 crore on the pretext of supplying LED monitors for advertisements through their LLP 'Quick Click Ad Media' during 2017-18.

"They were inducing the general public to invest with them in order to get lucrative profit from the advertisements. Both



Bhuyan and his wife' being the partners of 'Quick Click Ad Media', during the period 2017-

18, induced the general public to invest through two of their schemes to purchase LED monitors to be placed at the prominent places for advertisements given by different agencies," EOW said, adding that the couple misappropriated the money.

The LLP had its activities mainly in Khurda, Koraput, Nayagarh, Mayurbhanj, Balasore, Rourkela, Sambalpur, and Ganjam, the EOW said.

In order to evade police arrest, the couple was absconding for years.

Bhuyan was hiding himself separately from his wife and

working with a snacks company at Lucknow from where he was arrested.

During the absconding period, Bhuyan had been to Dubai where he stayed for 1.5 years and also formed a company 'Empire Global Capital'.

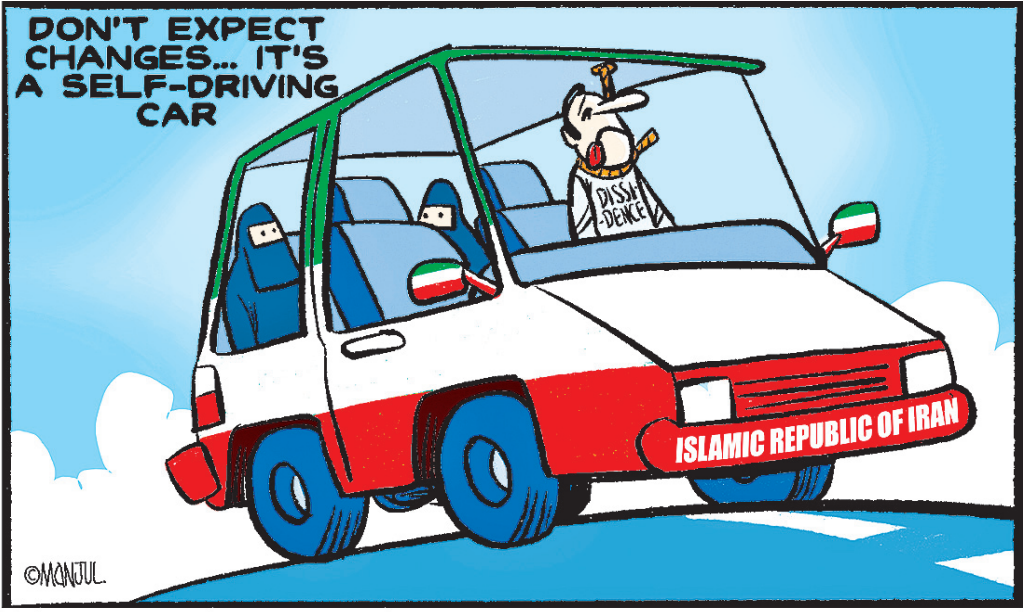
EOW said the accused Rammi was arrested in connection with the case a few days ago. "She was working with a real estate company at Mumbai by changing her Aadhaar," the agency said.

The EOW has seized a lot of incriminating materials from the accused.

Showcause notice to four BJD MLAs

Bhubaneswar: The Assembly Tuesday issued showcause notices to four MLAs of the ruling BJD, seeking explanation as to why they should not be disqualified on grounds of defection. Assembly Secretary Dasarathi Satapathy issued notices to Nimapada MLA Samir Ranjan Dash, Hindol legislator Simarani Nayak, Athamallik MLA Ramesh Sai and Soro legislator Parshuram Dhada. All the sitting MLAs have been asked to reply by May 27. The four legislators had resigned from the Biju Janata Dal (BJD) after the party denied tickets to them in the ensuing elections and joined opposition BJP.

POLITICKLE by MANJUL



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, May 21: Embroiled in a controversy over his 'slip of the tongue' on Lord Jagannath, BJP leader and party's Puri Lok Sabha candidate Sambit Patra apologised and announced he will undertake penance by observing fast for three days from Tuesday after being criticised from different quarters.

Patra while speaking to reporters had said that the state's most revered deity "Lord Jagannath is a devotee of Prime Minister Narendra Modi". Patra, however, later clarified that it was a slip of the tongue and he wanted to mean that the PM was an ardent 'bhakt' (devotee) of Lord Jagannath and not the other. Taking to X, Patra said:

Will observe fast as penance: Patra

".....For this mistake, I apologise at the feet of Lord Sri Jagannath. I will fast for the next three days to atone for this mistake."

Patra also said that on the occasion of Modi's roadshow in Puri, Monday. He had conversations with many media. While talking to media, instead of saying 'Maha Prabhu Sri Jagannath's Bhakt Modi', he mistakenly pronounced 'Modi's Bhakt Jagannath'.

The issue was aggravated when Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik strongly condemned Patra's statement and appealed to the BJP to keep Lord Jagannath above the political discourse.

Patnaik, in an X post, criticised Patra for hurting Odia 'asmita' (pride). "Mahaprabhu Shree Jagannatha is the Lord

of the Universe. Calling Mahaprabhu a 'bhakt' of another human being is an insult to the Lord... it is totally condemnable. This has hurt the sentiments and demeaned the faith of crores of Jagannatha bhaktas and Odias across the world.

"The Lord is the greatest symbol of Odia asmita. I strongly denounce the statement... and I appeal to the BJP to keep the Lord above any political discourse. By this, you have deeply hurt Odia asmita and this will be remembered and condemned by people of Odisha for a very long time," Patnaik said.

Meanwhile, Congress candidate from Puri Lok Sabha seat Jayanarayan Patnaik also lodged a complaint against Patra with the Town police station in Puri.

City's natural green spaces shrink due to rapid urbanisation

ARINDAM GANGULY, OP

Bhubaneswar, May 21: The Capital City has lost a substantial portion of its natural green spaces, wetlands and vacant lots in the last three decades owing to rapid urbanisation and population growth which has deprived the biodiversity of its natural habitats, said noted environmentalist and secretary of Orissa Environmental Society, Jaya Krushna Panigrahi.

Speaking to **OrissaPOST** on the eve of the 'International Day for Biodiversity', Panigrahi said not just Bhubaneswar, but other cities of the world were also bountiful in diverse species of indigenous flora and fauna, half a century back which enriched the urban biodiversity.

He said the Capital City at the time of its establishment in 1948 was beset with natural settings, such as lush green Chandaka forest, many green patches within City and flowing rivers of Kuakhai and Daya.

"However, in all sorts of developmental processes over the decades, the first casualty has been the trees. And along with their destruction, the resident birds, arboreal and aquatic animals, insects and many other species became threatened and their populations faced decline," he said.

"Being converted into a concrete jungle, the City is presently bereft of its wilderness and is confronting many environmental challenges which aggravate further in the scenario of climate



change," he added.

Panigrahi said the recent initiative of creating 'Nagar Vans' within the city has kindled a ray of hope for replenishing the

threatened flora and fauna in the City. "The Anandbana being the first of its kind, should be at the top of the urban agenda that will bring back some natural-

The International Day for Biodiversity is celebrated every year May 22. This year, the theme of the International Day for Biological Diversity is 'Be Part of the Plan.' This theme calls on governments, indigenous peoples and local communities, non-governmental organizations, lawmakers, businesses, and individuals to showcase their efforts in supporting the implementation of the Biodiversity Plan.

ness into the city environ and help in tackling problems of pollution, heat island effect, and above all, get back some aesthetic appeal to the City," he said.

Strategic measures need to be undertaken with the assis-

stance of some institutions and communities for reinforcing the conservation of the urban biodiversity and enhancing its ecological health, he added.

Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik had recently inaugurated Anandabana at Shankarpur, here. The park aims to establish green infrastructure in the urban landscape to enhance the overall air quality index in the city. Spread over 89.05 acres, it also offers a range of amenities to visitors. However, beyond its recreational offerings, Anandabana also serves as a platform for nurturing future environmental leaders. The site features 550 metres of rock trails, 32,750 square feet of water bodies, enhancing the serene ambience and providing habitat for various aquatic species.

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Cousins drown in Jajpur pond

POST NEWS NETWORK

Biniharpur, May 21: Two minor girls, who were also cousins, met their watery grave while bathing in a pond at Guhali village under Alakunda police limits in this block of Jajpur district Tuesday. The deceased were identified as Mohini Mallik, 12, daughter of Gopa Mallik and Swarnaprava Mallik, 11, daughter of Prasanta Mallik, residents of the same village.

Locals said that Mohini and Swarnaprava had gone to the pond to take a bath. While bathing, they lost their footing and slipped into deep waters. Others were also bathing in the pond, but before they could rush to the rescue of the girls, both drowned. Even though they were brought out immediately and rushed to community health centre (CHC) here, doctors declared them dead on arrival.

After being informed, police arrived at the CHC and sent the bodies for post-mortem. A case of unnatural death has also been registered. A pall of gloom descended on the village as news of the demise of the two minor girls spread.

Polling officer injured in vicious knife attack

POST NEWS NETWORK

Berhampur, May 21: A polling officer was injured in a knife attack by three unidentified bike-born miscreants when he was returning home after finishing his assignment at Bhanjanagar in Ganjam district Tuesday. A complaint has been lodged in this regard at the Baidyanathpur police station. The injured person was identified as Tukuna Baliyarsingh. He is working as a technical assistant at a textile company here.

According to reports, Tukuna was returning home when he was attacked. He was calling the night watchman in front of his office when the miscreants accosted him. They tried to snatch his wallet and watch. When Tukuna resisted, one of them slashed him with a knife and fled from the spot.

EAST COAST RAILWAY

Tender No. ELOP-T-03-2024

Name of Work: MAINTENANCE OF 15 BEDDED RUNNING ROOM AT CHATRAPUR (CAP) INCLUDING PROVISION OF SUBSIDIZED MEALS THROUGH OUTSIDE AGENCY FOR A PERIOD OF 02 (TWO) YEARS.

Advised Value: ₹75,68,388.49, EMD: ₹1,51,400/-, Cost of Tender Document: ₹5,900/-, Period of Completion: 730 Days.

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Manual offers are not allowed against this tender, and any such manual offer received shall be ignored.

Complete information including e-Tender documents of the above e-Tenders is available in website <http://www.ireps.gov.in>

Sr. Divisional Electrical Engineer (OPV) PR-141/P/24-25 Khurda Road

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apna ka bank

RBL BANK LIMITED

IMPORTANT NOTICE

RBL Bank Ltd, HIG-16, Jaydev Vihar, Bhubaneswar-751013 branch will be relocating to RBL Bank, Unit No. 16, N-5/101, Ground and First floor, Jaydev Vihar, IRC Village, Nayapalli, Bhubaneshwar-751015 w.e.f. July 15, 2024. We request all locker holders to vacate the contents of your locker on or before 4 p.m. on July 12, 2024.

EAST COAST RAILWAY

e-Tender Notice No. 07-SBP-TRD-OT-2024-25, Dt. 14.05.2024

Name of the work: AUGMENTATION OF TRACTION DISTRIBUTION SYSTEM BY PROVIDING 2ND BAY EQUIPMENTS AT MANESWAR TRACTION SUB-STATIONS (EXCLUDING THE SUPPLY OF POWER TRANSFORMER) OF SAMBALPUR DIVISION.

Approx cost of the work: ₹72,32,486.07, EMD: ₹1,44,700/-, Completion Period of the work: 08 Months.

Date & time of Tender Closing: 05.06.2024 at 1530 hrs.

No manual offers sent by Post/Courier/ Fax or in person shall be accepted against such e-Tenders, even if these are submitted on firm's letter head and received in time. All such manual offers shall be considered invalid and shall be rejected summarily without any consideration.

Complete information including e-tender documents of the above e-Tenders is available in website <http://www.ireps.gov.in>

The tenderers/bidders must have Class-III Digital Signature Certificate and must be registered or IREPS portal. Only registered tenderer/bidder can participate on e-tendering. All relevant papers must have to be uploaded at the time of participating on e-tendering as per instruction.

Note: The prospective tenderers are advised to revisit the website fifteen days before the date of closing of tender to note any changes/ corrigendum issued for this tender.

Sr. Divisional Electrical Engineer (TRD)/ PR-140/P/24-25 Sambalpur

Lack of jobs forcing Joda people to migrate

UNEMPLOYMENT FORCES MALES TO FALL PREY TO UNSCRUPULOUS TOUTS

POST NEWS NETWORK

Joda, May 21: Abject poverty has prompted rampant migration of people living in many parts of the mineral rich district of Keonjhar. However, after they migrate to other parts of India to earn a livelihood, they are often subjected to torture and are not even paid proper salaries.

Residents of this bustling town are no exception to this development. They migrate elsewhere in search of jobs. Locals alleged that despite Joda mining division contributing ₹21,000 crore to the state exchequer nothing has been done to solve the unemployment problem in this town. They added ₹1,500 crore is collected from district mineral foundation (DMF) annually by the government, but even that is not used properly to provide relief to the people.

If one traverses through this district, the plight of migrant labourers can be heard in every nook and corner. Sources said that some residents of this town had migrated to Chennai for work. However, now they are being held hostage at a cement factory, given food only once a day and are being brutally assaulted by their employers if they protest. They are also forced to work more than 14 hours a day, the sources added.



Sources said that the majority of men living in the tribal villages on Suna river basin near this town have migrated for work to Chennai. However, most of them have remained incommunicado since their departure. Two tribal women, identified as Manasi Nag and Chandu Karua, residents of 'Camp Hutting' said that they do not even remember the last time they talked to their respective husbands who are supposedly in Chennai. They do not even know when their husbands will return.

"I met the middleman who had provided my husband a job. I tried to find my husband's whereabouts. However, he abused me and sent me back home," informed Chandu.

Similar is the story of another tribal woman Saraswati, whose minor son Kalathakur Karua has not returned home for more than

a year now. Her co-villager, Sunita Naik is ailing and bed-ridden, but has no information about her son George, who is working in Chennai. Unable to get any help from the touts, they lodged a 'missing' complaint at the Rugudi police station. However, it did not yield any positive result.

Many other families alleged that if jobs had been available at the various mines and quarries in Keonjhar district, the male members wouldn't have been forced to seek livelihood elsewhere. "We have found in most cases that employers take away the mobile phones. As a result our family members lose touch with us. They cannot even tell us the exact locations," said a woman. The residents of 'Camp Hutting' appealed to the district administration to arrange for the safe return of their near and dear ones.

Maoist camps busted

Voter turnout increases in Naxalite-hit areas

POST NEWS NETWORK

Nuapada, May 21: Jawans of the Special Operations Group (SOG) seized Tuesday huge quantities of arms, ammunitions, other incriminating materials and Maoist literature while conducting searches near Sibanarayanpur village inside Sunabeda Wildlife Sanctuary under Komana police limits in this district.

Nuapada SP Gundala Reddy Raghavendra stated in a press release. Officials said that the search is still continuing in various parts of Sunabeda forest.

Among the items seized were 10 IEDs, cash amounting to rupees four lakh, five revolvers and bullets, a radio, two cordex wires, 30 batteries, a mobile charger, a manpack charger, five torches, eight knives, bows and arrows, screwdrivers, seven haversacks, nine plastic sheets, 17 rucksacks, a wire cutter, a solar panel, a number of dry food



products, large quantities of medicines and books on Maoist literature.

Officials said that earlier in the day a shootout between the Maoists and SOG jawans took place close to Sibanarayanpur village. During the encounter, another team of SOG personnel conducted search operations in and around the area. They busted two Maoist hideouts from which the above mentioned items were recovered.

Raghavendra informed that exchange of fire was on till late into the evening. He added that combing operations have also been launched and along with the SOG forces, COBRA, CRPF and DVF personnel have also been pressed into service.

The Nuapada SP added that during the shootout, one SOG jawan, identified as Prakash Sahi, suffered a bullet injury on his back and is currently undergoing treatment at a hospital in Raipur.

Lady with brown sugar arrested

POST NEWS NETWORK

Jajpur Road, May 21: Officials of the Excise department arrested here Tuesday a woman who had 36gm of brown sugar in her possession. The woman was intercepted by sleuths near Ganesh Bazaar Chowk locality in this town who recovered the contraband from her possession. The woman has been identified as Jhumuri Patra, a resident of Byasanagar locality.

Officials said that an Excise department team led by senior official Amarendra Kumar Jena was conducting raids at Ganesh Bazaar Chowk when they found the woman moving around suspiciously. The contraband was found in her possession when lady officials frisked her. She confessed that she had come there to sell brown sugar. A case (No-42/24) was registered in this regard and the arrested woman was forwarded to court Tuesday.

Meanwhile officials said that they are trying to ascertain the buyer of the contraband and are questioning the woman. They are trying to find out about the others who are involved in selling and buying of heroin in this town. Sub-inspector Srikanta Kumar Panda, Kshirod Kumar Sahu, Subhasmita Pradhan, Malati Majhi and Suchitra Nayak were part of the team that conducted the raids.

Helper mowed down by truck

POST NEWS NETWORK

Keonjhar, May 21: The helper of a truck was killed when he jumped from it and was run over by the same vehicle close to Palaspanga overbridge on National Highway-20 under Sadar police station in this district Tuesday.

Eye-witnesses said that the driver of the truck involved in the accident had dozed off. The vehicle rammed into another stationary truck on the highway. As a result of the collision, the windscreens of the truck was



shattered. Immediately after the collision, the helper jumped off the vehicle. While landing, he slipped and came under the rear wheels of the truck which was still moving and died on the spot. However, the driver who had dozed off, escaped unhurt.

On being informed, cops from the Palaspanga police outpost reached the spot. They sent the helper's body for post-mortem. The cops have also seized the truck and have detained the driver. Investigation to ascertain the cause of the accident is on, police said.

RSP wins legal battle against Adarsha Pathagar



POST NEWS NETWORK

Rourkela, May 21: Rourkela Steel Plant (RSP) has won the first round of its legal battle with Adarsha Pathagar over the possession of 'Bhanja Bhawan' and its periphery areas at the District Court of Sundargarh. The judge hearing the case has directed Adarsha Pathagar to vacate 'Bhanja Bhawan' and hand over the building and areas around it by June 30, 2024.

According to information available, RSP had moved court against Adarsha Pathagar for unauthorised occupation of three acres and 19 decimals of land surrounded by a boundary wall in Sector V. Within it were the 'Bhanja Bhawan' and other vacant land.

In 2020, RSP initiated proceedings before the estate officer for eviction. Challenging the said proceedings, Adarsha

Pathagar filed a writ petition before the Hon'ble High Court of Orissa. However, the high court quashed the petition by an order dated April 2, 2023 and upheld the eviction proceedings as legal.

The estate officer, after completing proceedings (PP Case No 300001/2020), by its eviction order dated 27.09.2023 directed Adarsha Pathagar to vacate the 'Bhanja Bhawan' premises within 15 days from the date of order. However, Adarsha Pathagar challenged the eviction order and filed an appeal (FAO No. 30/2023) in the District Court of Sundargarh.

However, the judge after hearing, dismissed the appeal and announced the verdict April 30, 2024. In the order, the judge directed Adarsha Pathagar to give vacant possession of 'Bhanja Bhawan' and its periphery areas to RSP within a period of two months from the date of order.



Manko, Tulsikani and Bhalulata gram panchayats. "We informed the voters that their safety is assured and it worked. A record number of youths turned up in these booths. This is indeed a very positive development," informed a CRPF officer.

Despite putting up posters and banners at various places, Maoists have been on the backfoot since the deployment of security forces well ahead of the elections. People now want

the forces to stay on even after the results are announced fearing repercussions.

"Previously many of these places had dismal turnouts less than 30-35%. However, this time, the turnout was more than 60% in the Maoist-hit areas despite polling ending at 4.00pm. This has been due to the positive attitude of the voters. They were very enthusiastic to vote," said an officer who was present at a booth in Bisra. Another officer

from the Bonai region added that the turnout was definitely more than 50 per cent in most of the booths.

There were plenty of pictures on various social media platforms of first time voters. "It just goes to prove that the youths are ready to vote and are not afraid to hide their feelings. Displaying their pictures on social media platforms is indeed an encouraging sign. It proves that people are not interested in the philosophy of the Naxalites," stated a social media user.

It should also be stated here that all the officials who had been deputed from this city to booths in various Naxalite-affected areas returned safely Tuesday. They all said that they were very happy with the security arrangements.

In Memoriam

DR BANSIDHAR PANDA

(26.11.1931- 22.05.2018)

imfa

Baijayant 'Jay', Paramita, Nivedita, Subhrakant Jagi, Braja, KG, Shaifalika Raie, Reva, Anuva, Aditya, Raisah, Raemana Relatives, Members & Associates of IMFA Group

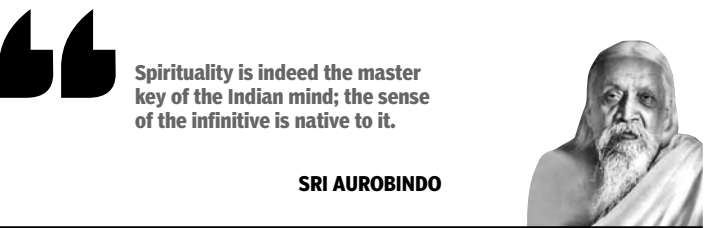
Tel: +91 674 2611000 | Email: memoriam@imfa.in

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Wheels of Justice

The great thing that the chief prosecutor of the International Criminal Court (ICC) Karim Khan has done by seeking arrest warrants for Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, his Defence Minister Yoav Gallant and senior Hamas officials is that he has shown the guts to charge both Israel and Hamas with committing war crimes and crimes against humanity. The ICC accusation is a blow to both Hamas as well as Israel's policy of wanton killings and inhuman acts. At the same time the ICC prosecutor has called a spade a spade by pronouncing that Hamas had no justification for the inhuman killing and abduction of innocent people in southern Israel when they were enjoying a musical programme.

Karim Khan said his office had applied to the world court's pre-trial chamber for arrest warrants for the military and political leaders on both sides for crimes committed during Hamas' 7 October attack and the war in Gaza that followed. He named Yahya Sinwar, the Hamas chief in Gaza, and Mohammed Deif, the commander of its military wing, believed to be the masterminds of the 7 October assault, and Ismail Haniyeh, the leader of the group's political bureau, who is based in Qatar, as wanted for crimes of extermination, murder, hostage-taking, rape, sexual assault and torture.

The ICC accused Netanyahu and Gallant of carrying out extermination, causing starvation as a method of war and denial of humanitarian relief supplies deliberately targeting civilians. The ICC prosecutor has relied on facts and his own findings during his visit to the affected zone. Interestingly, the ICC statement does not include any Israel Defence Forces (IDF) officials, such as its chief of staff, Lt Gen Herzi Halevi. Instead, it took on the political decision-making apparatus, holding it responsible for crimes against humanity.

The ICC does not have a police force of its own to execute its arrest warrants. It previously issued warrants for Russia's Vladimir Putin, Muammar Gaddafi of Libya, the Ugandan warlord Joseph Kony and the former President of Sudan Omar al-Bashir, but none of the "guilty" was arrested. Nonetheless, it is for the first time that leaders of a "western-style" democracy have now been issued a warrant. However, there is no imminent possibility of prosecution, since Israel is not a member of the court. But, the step may have a sobering effect as ICC warrants could put Israeli officials at risk of arrest abroad. This may further deepen Israel's growing international isolation over its conduct in the war in Gaza.

This appears to have rattled both Israeli and US leadership. While the entire political establishment of Israel, including Netanyahu's adversaries, has closed ranks in condemning the ICC action, the US President has termed it outrageous. It is only natural that those against whom a legal order goes plead innocence and not guilty. Both Israel and Hamas have behaved in a similar manner, each claiming to be innocent and holding the other guilty.

Neutral observers' groups have hailed the ICC action and rightly said that at last an international body has shown the courage to speak up against the warring factions and take steps to make them accountable. In fact, Khan suggested heavily in his statement that Israel's judicial system "shields suspects". Last year's conviction rate for Palestinians tried in Israeli military courts was 96%, while fewer than 1% of complaints against Israeli soldiers ended in a conviction, according to the US Department of State's annual human rights report.

The actions being taken by the ICC prosecutor and his team are, indeed, welcome on a global perspective. Not much will be achieved for sure but the message goes out loud that all human rights violations, no matter which nation commits it, shall be made visible to all on the world theatre.

WISDOM CORNER

A thousand words will not leave so deep an impression as one deed.
HENRIK IBSEN

Ignorance is the curse of God; knowledge is the wing wherewith we fly to heaven.
WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

A man must commit a crime at least once in his life-time.
GIRISH KARNAD

THIS DAY IN HISTORY

■ **337:** Roman Emperor Constantine I, who had practiced Christianity since his youth and sparked its growth into a world religion, became on his deathbed the first Roman emperor to be baptized in the Christian church.

■ **1849:** Future US President Abraham Lincoln was granted a patent for a boat-lifting device; he was the only US President to have a patent.

■ **1939:** Adolf Hitler of Germany and Benito Mussolini of Italy signed the Pact of Steel, a full military and political alliance between their countries.

■ **1942:** Mexico entered World War II by declaring war on Germany, Italy, and Japan.

■ **1960:** One of the largest earthquakes on record struck the southern coast of Chile, killing about 5,700 people and creating seismic sea waves that caused death and destruction in distant Pacific coastal areas, notably Japan and Hawaii.

■ **1992:** American comedian Johnny Carson, considered by many to be the king of late-night television, made his final appearance as host of The Tonight Show.

LOL

Help the 'lonely' child

Sandy began a job as an elementary school counselor and she was eager to help. One day during recess she noticed a girl standing by herself on one side of a playing field while the rest of the kids enjoyed a game of soccer at the other. Sandy approached and asked if she was all right. The girl said she was. A little while later, however, Sandy noticed the girl was in the same spot, still by herself. Approaching again, Sandy offered, "Would you like me to be your



friend?" The girl hesitated, then said, 'Okay,' looking at the woman suspiciously. Feeling she was making progress, Sandy then asked, "Why are you standing here all alone?" "Because," the little girl said with great exasperation, "I'm the goalie!"

IN JEST THIS

Need an affordable doctor? Head to Indonesia



Melvin Durai

AFTER SUSTAINING A WOUND TO HIS FACE, ORANGUTAN RAKUS TREATED IT HIMSELF WITHOUT CONDUCTING A SINGLE GOOGLE SEARCH

Medical tourism is an attractive option for people in western countries who don't have health insurance or face long waiting times for certain procedures. They can get affordable treatment in India and other countries while enjoying all the tourist attractions.

Perhaps the most efficient medical tourism is the type you can get in Sumatra, an island in western Indonesia. You can visit the rainforest on the island, get a close-up view of the Sumatran orangutans, and while you are there, receive medical treatment from one of them.

No need to book an appointment with a human doctor. They're too expensive. Orangutans accept payment in fruits. Any fruit will do, though jackfruit is the highest "fructocurrency."

If you're unsure which orangutan to see, I have a recommendation: Dr. Rakus, who is currently the world's most renowned medical practitioner of orangutan origin.

You may have already heard of Rakus. He recently appeared in a scientific study published in the journal Scientific Reports. Rakus

was featured for something he did in 2022 that scientists found remarkable. After sustaining a wound to his face, perhaps while fighting other male orangutans, Rakus treated the wound himself and -- here's the truly amazing part -- he did it without conducting a single Google search. (Yes, he relied completely on Yahoo.)

Three days after his injury, Rakus took the leaves of a liana vine, which are used in traditional medicine in Southeast Asia, "chewed on them, and then repeatedly applied the resulting juice onto the facial wound," the scientists reported. And if that isn't impressive enough, he completed this self-treatment by applying an orange-toned Band-Aid to the wound.

No, not an actual Band-Aid, but close enough. According to the scientists, Rakus "fully covered the wound with the chewed leaves." And after a month or so, his facial wound was fully healed, and he was strutting around with medical credentials that made him the world's most eligible bachelor ape.

"This is the first time that we have observed a wild animal ap-

plying a quite potent medicinal plant directly to a wound," Isabelle Laumer, a co-author and biologist at the Max Planck Institute of Animal Behavior in Konstanz, Germany, told the Associated Press.

While this is the first observed case of a wild animal's wound treatment with a medicinal plant, scientists have observed self-treatment among apes and other animals many times before. Chimpanzees have been seen chewing the bitter piths of a medicinal shrub to treat worm infections. Orangutans have been seen taking leaves from a plant with anti-inflammatory properties, mixing it with saliva and rubbing the mixture onto their bodies. Males of another Great Apes species have been seen swallowing blue pills to enhance their performance in bed.

Yes, humans are part of the sub-group of primates known as Great Apes, along with orangutans, gorillas and chimpanzees. One of the distinguishing features of Great Apes is a larger, more complex brain. This means, of course, that you shouldn't un-

derestimate the brain power of Dr. Rakus.

Here are just a few of the benefits of visiting him for treatment:

1. No waiting room, no appointment. Just show up for your treatment and Dr. Rakus will swing by.
2. No forms to fill out. Dr. Rakus does not care about your medical history or your allergies, as long as you aren't allergic to hairy apes.
3. Always open. Dr. Rakus does not take weekends off, nor does he take time off for Christmas, Diwali, Yom Kippur or Eid. He does take July 4 off, not to celebrate America's independence, but to observe World Jackfruit Day.
4. Flexible payment. Dr. Rakus accepts a variety of fruits, including durians, lychees and figs. He also accepts VISA (various insects, scrumptious ants).
5. Wide range of treatments. Many doctors will not take chances with experimental treatments, but Dr. Rakus is always willing to go out on a limb.

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Make UAVs affordable

Sir, Drones, or unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) are becoming increasingly popular in India's agricultural sector. Using them for fertiliser spraying is now a no-brainer agritech solution for many Indian farmers, as they offer a range of benefits like improved efficiency, and enhanced crop yields. A segment of farmers has also started using UAVs as part of climate-smart farming. However, there are challenges as well that may hinder the adoption of drone technology such as fear of job loss, lack of knowledge and training, and regulatory barriers. Drones can capture high-resolution images and provide information on crop health, growth, and yield. This can help farmers identify issues early and take corrective measures to optimise their inputs and outputs. But drones are expensive, and many farmers may not have the financial resources to invest in this technology. Hence, there is a need for more subsidies and incentives, and economical financing options to make drones more affordable and attractive to farmers. It requires a coordinated effort from the government, industry, farmers, and civil society to create a conducive and supportive environment for the use of drones in agriculture.

Ranganathan Sivakumar, CHENNAI

An amoeba attack

Sir, Strange are the ways of meeting death for a young soul. A five-year-old girl has died of brain-eating amoeba after taking a bath in a pond in Malappuram district of Kerala. She was undergoing treatment at the Kozhikode Medical College of Institute of Maternal and Child Health. She had taken a dip in the pond May 1 and started showing symptoms of fever, headache and vomiting May 10. The girl, afflicted by amoebic Meningoencephalitis, a rare brain infection caused by a free-living amoeba found in contaminated waters. Still waters are dangerous. Don't let go. This is not the first case reported. Amebiasis is an intestinal illness caused by a microscopic parasite called Entamoeba histolytica, which is spread through human feces. Often there are no symptoms, but sometimes it causes diarrhoea, nausea, and weight loss. The main symptoms of the disease are fever, headache, vomiting, and seizures. All infected patients have lost their lives due to the disease so far, as the mortality rate for this rare brain infection is 100 percent.

Jayanthi Subramaniam, NAVI MUMBAI

Letters

TO THE EDITOR

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

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

FOCUS NATION

NARROW VISION



It is amazing that after more than two decades in high office collectively, in Gujarat as Chief Minister and now as Prime Minister, Narendra Modi appears not sensitised to the basics of development

not paid heed to, or in this bitter election season, he is blinded in his hatred for the Congress which brought the Karnataka scheme. The government of India, even under the BJP government, runs a plethora of welfare schemes and if the same thinking were to be applied, then conceptually this has to be a government that rejects all welfare, and not just free transport in Karnataka, which actually is an ingenious way of giving freedom to women and is also a scheme in place in the non-BJP-ruled states of Delhi, Tamil Nadu, Telangana and Punjab.

It will take time for the full impact of the Shakti scheme to flow and be documented. But the idea that the scheme takes ridership away from the metro beats all logic. At its core, the Prime Minister is saying this: get the poor to pay and make them ride the metro lines, where fares are much higher in general, so that the metro becomes viable and investment is recouped and thus development is taken to have occurred. This is a frightfully narrow vision of what development means for the government led by him, and without probably knowing it, the Prime Minister has accepted the charge of the Congress party that this is a government of the rich, by

the rich and for the rich. The lens with which the entire way of working is the lens of the financier, not the lens of the women and girls who are travelling where they clearly were not earlier. It harks back to Narendra Modi's equally remarkable lack of understanding shown before he became the Prime Minister when he said at a public meeting in Mumbai that the bullet train was meant to show the world that India is developed, even if no one would use it. Even if that could be dismissed as an immature comment in the heat of the moment, just as he was preparing to lead the campaign, the remarks now on the Shakti scheme (as also his remarks on another question on the rise in inequality in India) show some fundamental problems in the very idea and understanding of issues of growth and development.

The obvious questions that arise in the case of the Karnataka scheme are simple ones, like a) Why were the women not traveling the way they are now? b) What does this huge growth in travel mean for the grassroots economy? c) What do the complaints being heard now, that buses are crowded, and not often on time, mean for a grassroots demand for a higher quality of public

service, d) how will the government respond to this, and will it be forced to invest more in public transport, e) What will be the spinoff effects on the women labour force participation and on the economy as a whole? f) Can you have a right to work but not the right to get to work by safe and decent travel to work that job? These and a host of other questions beckon as the scheme plays out, but none of these are on the radar of the Prime Minister and his flat line counter on helping metros take off, even if this means by implication keeping women from travelling the way they are now.

It was almost four years ago that Luxembourg, one of the richest economies, declared all travel to be free for all people, not just residents. Here is François Bausch of The Greens, Luxembourg's former Deputy Prime Minister, as quoted by EuroNews: "(The scheme) is a considerable cost, but... it's paid by all taxpayers... There's more equity there because obviously those who pay little taxes pay nothing or very little in this system. And those who pay more taxes... have a price tag that may be a little bit higher." The spinoffs: "investment in the country's transport system has not slowed. The new tram system is regular and reliable, unhindered by traffic. The country has made record investments in improving its rail network."

In the end, the question before the nation is not on whether we need development but what kind of development must India have. The comments of the Prime Minister referenced here seem to suggest that the bug of "India shining" is embedded deep within. India can be forced to shine but whether the people of India will shine -- remains the question and that remains the ground on which the Congress is making huge strides in its fight against the BJP in this election.

The writer is a journalist and faculty member at SPJIMR. Views are personal
@THEBILLIONPRESS



BJP will win only one seat in UP: Akhilesh

AGENCIES

Azamgarh (UP), May 21: Samajwadi Party chief Akhilesh Yadav Tuesday said the INDIA bloc is getting huge support in Uttar Pradesh and claimed that the BJP will lose all Lok Sabha seats except Varanasi.

Addressing a rally in support of SP's Lalgarh candidate Daroga Prasad Saroj, Yadav said, "This time, whatever strategy they (BJP) have made, the people of Uttar Pradesh have made up their mind to wipe them out."

Describing Prime Minister Narendra Modi's constituency Varanasi as "Kyoto", the former chief minister said, "In the figures and information coming in now, the BJP is in fight in only one seat, that is 'Kyoto', and in all the rest seats the BJP has lost."

Prime Minister Modi had assured to make Varanasi like Kyoto city of Japan known for tourism.

Earlier, as Yadav arrived at the venue, the crowd tried to reach near the dais, forcing police personnel to lathicharge to control them even as the SP leaders on the stage appealed to the gathering to maintain peace.

There was a ruckus in Yadav's rally in Sant Kabir Nagar Monday. Before this, in a joint rally at Phulpur (Pragagraj) with Congress leader Rahul Gandhi, the two leaders had to leave with-



Addressing a rally in support of SP's Lalgarh candidate Daroga Prasad Saroj, Yadav said, "This time, whatever strategy they (BJP) have made, the people of Uttar Pradesh have made up their mind to wipe them out"

INDIA bloc wants to loot country, says Adityanath

Balrampur (UP): Uttar Pradesh CM Yogi Adityanath here Tuesday alleged that the INDIA alliance is planning to loot the country by dividing the people on the basis of caste and religion. Adityanath's statement came during a rally in Gaisdi where he was seeking votes for the BJP's Lok Sabha candidate from Shravasti constituency Saket Mishra and the party's nominee for by-elections in Gaisdi Assembly seat Shailesh Kumar Singh Shailu.

out addressing the gathering after a huge crowd gathered near the dais.

Addressing the rally Tuesday, the SP chief said when the elections started, the BJP gave "400 paar" slogan, but now the people

are raising slogan of "400 haar". He said this time 140 crore people of the country will ensure that the BJP does not get even 140 seats.

"You must have heard their (BJP leaders) speeches. They are telling the same old story. No one wants to listen to them. The people have made up their mind and our PDA (backward, Dalit, minority) families will defeat the NDA," Yadav said.

Accusing the BJP of lying, he claimed that every promise made by the BJP has turned out to be false. He also attacked the BJP on Covid vaccine and said that the vaccine has posed a life threat to the people. "They (BJP) even recovered money from the vaccine company that administered the doses to us."

Lalgarh and Azamgarh seats will go to polls May 25 in the sixth phase of the ongoing Lok Sabha elections.

MOLESTATION CHARGE AGAINST BENGAL GUV

3 Raj Bhavan employees get anticipatory bail

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Kolkata, May 21: Three employees of the Raj Bhavan in Kolkata, who were booked on the charges of allegedly confining a woman contractual employee to stop her from filing an outrage of modesty complaint against West Bengal Governor CV Ananda Bose, Tuesday secured bail.

A lower court in Kolkata granted anticipatory bail against personal bond.

The employees who have secured bail are Kusum Chhetri, SS Rajput and Sant Lal.

The FIR was registered against the three employees, including a woman, based on an in-camera statement given by the complainant to a judicial magistrate where she had accused three Raj Bhavan employees of illegally detaining her within the Raj Bhavan.

Kolkata Police had summoned these three employees twice before. All three of them, besides demanding copies of FIRs, sought time from the police to appear.

However, the police refused to grant them the time and instead cautioned them of direct arrest if they did not answer the third summons.

Thereafter, the three employees approached a lower court in Kolkata for anticipatory bail, which was granted Tuesday.



TMC General Secretary Abhishek Banerjee with party candidate Arup Chakraborty during a public meeting for Lok Sabha elections in Bankura, West Bengal

ILLEGAL CONSTRUCTION

Greater Noida authority issues notice , threatens demolition

IN THE NOTICES, THE GNIDA HAS ASKED THE ENCROACHERS TO REMOVE ILLEGAL CONSTRUCTIONS OR FACE DEMOLITION ACTION, ACCORDING TO AN OFFICIAL STATEMENT

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Noida, May 21: The Greater Noida Industrial Development Authority said it has intensified its action on encroachers in its notified areas and issued notices to about 350 people for carrying out illegal constructions.

In the notices, the GNIDA has asked the encroachers to remove illegal constructions or face demolition action, according to an official statement.

These notices have been issued to 250 encroachers, including 176 people for illegal construction in Haibatpur in the submergence area along the banks of the Hindon River, while



the remaining notices are for Sumpura village, it stated.

The GNIDA, which functions under the Uttar Pradesh government, said construction cannot be done in its notified areas without its permission and information in this regard has been regularly spread.

"But, due to the attraction of owning their own houses" some people are falling into the trap of illegal colonisers who are taking away their hard-earned money. They try to build houses by purchasing land in illegal colonies. As soon as it comes to notice, the authority takes action to demolish these illegal constructions," the GNIDA said.

"To take effective action against encroachment, Greater

Noida Authority CEO NG Ravi Kumar has launched a campaign and given instructions to demolish such constructions. Before the demolition, Greater Noida Authority has issued notice to 350 people doing illegal construction, in which instructions have been given to remove the illegal construction immediately," it added. Greater Noida Authority's Additional CEO Annapurna Garg cautioned that no one is allowed to undertake construction in the notified areas and strict action will be taken against those who do so.

"In the past also, action has been taken by the authority by issuing notices against illegal construction in many villages," Garg said.

ECI bars Abhijit from campaigning for 24 hrs



AGENCIES

Kolkata, May 21: The Election Commission of India (ECI), Tuesday barred former judge of Calcutta High Court and BJP candidate for the Lok Sabha polls, Abhijit Gangopadhyay from campaigning for 24 hours,

barred from campaigning for a period starting from 5 pm Tuesday till 5 pm Wednesday.

At a public meeting in Haldia May 15, Abhijit Gangopadhyay said in Bengali, "Mamata Banerjee, how much are you being sold for? Your rate is ₹10 lakh, why? Because you're getting your make-up done by Keya Seth? Mamata Banerjee, is she even a woman? I keep wondering sometimes."

The ECI slapped a show-case notice on Abhijit Gangopadhyay May 17 acting on a complaint from the Trinamool Congress accusing him of making derogatory comments about Mamata Banerjee.

Accordingly Abhijit Gangopadhyay replied to the show-case notice within the stipulated time-frame May 20.

After reviewing his reply, said insiders from the office of the Chief Electoral Officer (CEO), West Bengal, the commission decided to bar him from campaigning for 24 hours.

The demeaning remarks by Abhijit Gangopadhyay went viral after a video emerged online a day later in which he could be heard wondering about the amount at which CM Banerjee was getting sold. Polling for Tamluk along with seven other Lok Sabha constituencies is scheduled in the sixth phase May 25.

DEMEANING REMARKS AGAINST MAMATA

Noida plans structural audit of unipoles, hoardings

THE DIRECTIONS COME IN THE WAKE OF SAFETY CONCERNS RAISED BY NOIDA RESIDENTS WHO HIGHLIGHTED THE ISSUE AFTER THE CITY FACED MULTIPLE STORMS IN RECENT WEEKS, SOME OF WHICH EVEN UPROOTED TREES ALONG ROADS

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Noida, May 21: The Noida Authority ordered structural audit of outdoor publicity installations at foot overbridges, hoardings, etc. in view of public safety concerns and "to prevent any untoward incident" in future.

Senior IAS officer and Noida Authority's CEO Lokesh M issued an order in this regard, directing departments concerned to ensure structural audit of all such installations which are used for publicity in the city.

The directions come in the



A huge billboard collapsed in Mumbai's Ghatkopar area recently, leading to the death of 16 people and injuries to around 70 others

wake of safety concerns raised by Noida residents who highlighted the issue after the city

faced multiple storms in recent weeks, some of which even uprooted trees along roads.

"As it is known that under various projects in Noida, foot overbridges, unipoles, hoardings, electric poles and gantries etc. are installed, which are maintained by various departments of Noida Authority. It is very important to protect the people from any untoward incident happening in the future due to strong winds and storms because of sudden change in climate conditions," Lokesh noted in the order.

"Therefore, the departments concerned should ensure that all the structures (foot overbridges, unipoles, hoardings, electric

poles and gantry etc.) installed in their jurisdiction are structurally audited by a valid and certified technical institution and action is taken accordingly," the officer stated.

According to authority officials, agencies engaged in outdoor publicity are annually asked for structural stability reports to ensure safety concerns are fulfilled.

Several city residents had raised this concern after a huge billboard collapsed in Mumbai's Ghatkopar area recently, leading to the death of 16 people and injuries to around 70 others.

Kolkata Metro to offer UPI payments for tickets

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kolkata, May 21: People travelling on the Kolkata Metro's North-South Line will soon be able to buy tickets or recharge smart cards using UPI, an official said Tuesday.

The facility, which is at present available on the Sector V-Sealdah section of the East-West Line, will also be made available on the Howrah Maidan-Esplanade section of the corridor, he said.

"We will soon introduce the same facility at all metro stations of the North-South and the East-West Lines," the

official said.

The facility will be available at the New Garia-Ruby section of the Orange Line and Joka-Taratala section of the Purple Line in the future, he said. The UPI-based ticketing system was first introduced at the Sealdah station of the East-West Line May 7.

To pay through UPI, commuters will have to scan the QR code on the dual display board at the ticket counters after the ticketing officer enters the name of the destination station, the official said.



ATTACK ON MITHUN CHAKRABORTY'S ROADSHOW

Tension grips Medinipur

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kolkata, May 21: Tension gripped the Medinipur Lok Sabha constituency in West Bengal Tuesday after an attack on a roadshow by BJP leader and actor Mithun Chakraborty in support of party candidate and fashion designer turned-politician, Agnimitra Paul.

The local BJP leadership alleged that the roadshow was going smoothly before a group of people started throwing bricks, water bottles, and shoes targeting the gathering.

While Chakraborty and




Paul did not receive any injury, the incident triggered tension in the area as BJP supporters engaged in a heated exchange of words that led to a minor scuffle with those who attacked the roadshow.

However, the large contingent of police deployed for the event took prompt action by separating the two groups to bring the situation under control.

The BJP alleged that those who attacked the roadshow were affiliated to the ruling Trinamool Congress. It also alleged that the police acted only after the BJP supporters resisted the attackers.

Polling in Medinipur, where Paul is up against Trinamool's actress-turned-politician June Malia and CPI's Biplab Bhatta, is scheduled in the sixth phase May 25.

 <div>बैंक ऑफ बड़ोदा Bank of Baroda</div>		Regional Office : Sambalpur Region, 1st Floor, At: Christianpada, G.M. College Chowk, Dist.: Sambalpur, Odisha, PIN-768001		DEMAND NOTICE (For Immovable Property)	
Demand Notice u/s. 13(2) of the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 is issued by Bank of Boroda as Secured Creditor against the following Borrower of the Branch.					
Branch Name / Name of the A/c.	Name & Address of Borrower(s) / Co-Borrower(s) / A/c. No.	NPA Date / 13(2) Date / Reason for Return of Notice	Nature / Limit (in ₹)	Rate of Interest	Total Dues as on 06.05.2024
GUNUPUR BRANCH / Mrs. Rambha Senapati	Borrower: Mrs. Rambha Senapati / Co-Borrowers: 1) Mr. Jogeswar Purusottam, 2) Mr. Basudev Purusottam, All are at Nilachakra Nagar, Gunupur, Rayagada, Odisha, PIN-765022/ A/c.No.: 46590600000786	29.04.2024 / 07.05.2024 / Addressee Left	Term Loan (Housing Loan) ₹ 12,50,000/-	9.80%	₹ 11,85,321.92 as on 06.05.2024 with further interest thereon at the contractual rate plus all cost, charges & expenses till date of payment
Description of Mortgaged property: Equitable mortgage of Land and Building admeasuring Area: Ac.0.053dec., Kisan: Gharbari situated at Khata No.: 47/1343, Plot No.: 141/724/1509/1667, Mouza: Ramanaguda, Tahasil: Ramanaguda, PS: Ramanaguda, Dist.: Rayagada, Owner of the Property: 1) Mr. Jogeswar Purusottam, S/o- Mr. Syam Rao, 2) Mr. Basudev Purusottam, S/o- Mr. Syam Rao, 3) Mrs. Rambha Senapati, W/o- Sri Syam Rao, Bounded by- East: Balance Self Site of Vendor, West: Site of Arun Kumar Sahu, North: Land of Mukund Patika, South: PWD Road.					
You have committed default in repayment of loan mentioned above with further interest at the agreed rate availed from our Gunupur Branch as mentioned above. The Bank has issued notice under the said Act to you to repay the outstanding amount in the above mentioned table. The Demand Notice sent to you by registered post but it has been returned with the reason mentioned above. Again you have committed default in payment. You are called upon to pay the dues together with interest within 60 days from the date of this notice failing which Bank will be constrained to exercise Right to Enforcement of Security Interest as against the secured asset given in the schedule of Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of security Interest Act, 2002. We hereby give you a notice that in terms of sub-section 13 of the said Act, you are barred from transferring the secured asset mentioned above by way of sale, lease or otherwise other than in the ordinary course of business without prior written consent of the Bank. We further invite your attention to sub section (8) of section 13 of the said Act in terms of which you may redeem the secured assets. If the amount of dues together with all costs, charges and expenses incurred by the Bank is tendered by you, at any time before the date of publication of notice for public auction / inviting quotations / tender / private treaty. Please nothe that after publication of the notice as above, your right to redeem the secured assets will not be available. This Notice is without prejudice to any other right, remedy available to the Bank including initiation of legal action.					
Date: 21.05.2024 Place: Sambalpur		Authorised Officer, Bank of Baroda			

of the day quote

I am sorry for whatever has happened to the women of Sandeshkhali and the way they have been humiliated. I express my sadness from the core of my heart. Nobody should dare to play with the dignity of women

MAMATA BANERJEE | WB CHIEF MINISTER

If the Congress had sincerely fulfilled its responsibility in the beginning, we would not have needed to form the BSP

MAWATYATI | BSP PRESIDENT

Prime Ministers of the Congress had promised to eradicate poverty and failed but under Modi rule, 25 crore people have been brought out of poverty

RAJNATH SINGH | DEFENCE MINISTER

POST OF THE DAY

Telangana's achievement of SAVING 100% of habitations from Fluoride contamination between 1 April 2015 to 1

August 2020 is UNPRECEDENTED in the history of India because some districts in the state have one of the highest concentrations of Fluoride (mg/L) in Ground Water

SHORT TAKES

Jaishankar visits Iranian embassy

New Delhi: External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar Tuesday visited the Iranian embassy in Delhi and conveyed India's deepest condolences on the death of President Ebrahim Raisi and Foreign Minister Hossein Amir-Abdollahian in a helicopter crash over the weekend. A one-day state mourning is being observed across India Tuesday as a mark of respect for Raisi. Meanwhile, Vice President Jagdeep Dhankhar will fly to Iran Wednesday to attend an official ceremony to pay condolences Raisi and Hossein.

Flight strikes flock of flamingos

Mumbai: An Emirates flight from Dubai struck a flock of flamingos, resulting in the death of around 40 birds in Mumbai, an official said Tuesday. The aircraft was also damaged in the incident Monday night and, as a result, the return flight EK509 scheduled to depart to Dubai Monday night was cancelled, the spokesperson said in a statement. All passengers and crew were accommodated overnight and a replacement aircraft is being arranged for all passengers, Emirates said. The flight is scheduled to depart Mumbai Tuesday night, the airline added.

Bus falls from flyover, 2 killed

Rajgarh (MP): Two persons were killed and 40 injured when a private bus fell from a flyover in Madhya Pradesh's Rajgarh district in the wee hours of Tuesday, police said. The accident occurred near Pachore town around 1.30 am when the bus, carrying 55 passengers, was crossing the flyover, an official said. The bus driver lost control of the vehicle, causing it to plummet to the ground below, Pachore police station in-charge Akansha Sharma said. Two passengers died on the spot, and 40 were injured, she said.

NIA chargesheet against Arshdeep Singh, three aides

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, May 21: The National Investigation Agency (NIA) has filed charge sheet against Canada-based pro-Khalistani terrorist Arshdeep Singh and three of his aides for being part of a conspiracy to unleash terror attacks in various parts of Punjab and Delhi, the agency Tuesday said.

The action marks a big leap in NIA's efforts to destroy sleeper cells operated by Singh alias Arsh Dala to unleash terrorist attacks in various parts of Punjab and Delhi, it said.

"Canada-based Arshdeep Singh alias Arsh Dala and his Indian agents Harjeet Singh alias Harry Maur, Ravinder Singh alias Rajvinder Singh alias Harry Rajpura, and Rajeev Kumar alias Sheela have been charge sheeted before the NIA Special Court, New Delhi (Monday)," said the statement issued by the anti-terror agency. Accused Maur and Rajpura were operating as sleeper cells and were being harboured by Rajeev Kumar, and the trio had planned to carry out a series of terror attacks on Dala's directions and with funds received from him, the NIA said.

While Maur and Rajpura were the gang's shooters and had the mandate of executing targeted killings, Rajeev Kumar alias Sheela was receiving funding from Arsh Dala for harbouring Harry Maur and Harry Rajpura, the statement said.

RAMESHWARAM CAFE BLAST NIA raids 11 places in four states

The NIA had arrested two key accused -- mastermind Abdul Matheen Ahmed Taahaa and Mussavir Hussain Shazib (perpetrator of the attack) -- April 12 from their hideout in Kolkata



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, May 21: The National Investigation Agency (NIA) Tuesday carried out multi-state raids as part of its efforts to uncover the entire conspiracy behind the Bangalore's Rameshwaram Cafe blast and to identify other conspirators involved in "handling the accused from abroad".

In a coordinated action, NIA teams searched 11 locations in Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Telangana, and Andhra Pradesh in connection with the case, an official statement said.

Extensive searches were conducted at the premises linked with 11 suspects in the case, in which an improvised explosive device (IED) explosion at the cafe on ITPL Road, Brookefield in Bangalore, Karnataka had left several customers and staff members injured, it said.

EXCISE SCAM

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, May 21: In a major setback to former Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia, the Delhi High Court Tuesday dismissed his bail pleas in cases lodged by the ED and CBI in connection with the alleged liquor scam, saying the matter involved grave misuse of power and breach of public interest by him.

Justice Swarana Kanta Sharma said Sisodia allegedly indulged in destruction of crucial evidence, including electronic evidence. The high court said he was a very powerful and influential person within the power corridors of the Delhi government as he had the responsibility of 18 portfolios in the city dispensation.

"The case at hand is a grave misuse of power and breach of public trust by the applicant who was serving as Deputy Chief Minister of Delhi at the relevant point," it said. While pronouncing the order, the high court said as a minister having 18 portfolios, including the Department of Excise, Sisodia was entrusted with the formulation of a new liquor policy for Delhi.

However, the material collected during the investigation showed that the applicant "subverted" the process of making the policy by "fabricating" public feedback to suit his "predetermined goal", it said. On an application by the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) leader seeking interim relief, the court said he will continue to be permitted to meet, in custody, his ailing wife every week on the same terms

HC dismisses bail pleas of Sisodia



Sisodia has challenged a trial court's April 30 order by which his bail pleas were rejected

The ED arrested him in the money laundering case stemming from the CBI FIR March 9, 2023

Sisodia resigned from the Delhi cabinet February 28, 2023

The trial court had dismissed Sisodia's bail pleas in the corruption and money laundering cases lodged by the CBI and ED respectively in connection with alleged irregularities in the formulation and execution of the now-scrapped Delhi excise policy for 2021-22

In its order Tuesday, the high court said it was of the opinion that Sisodia has not been able to make out a case for grant of bail

and conditions as provided by the trial court. The high court had May 14 reserved its order on the pleas after hearing arguments on behalf of the AAP leader, CBI and ED. Also Tuesday, Special Judge Kaveri Baweja of the trial court extended till May 31 the judicial custody of Sisodia in the money laundering case.

Sisodia was arrested by the CBI February 26, 2023, for his alleged role in the liquor "scam".

It added that the Enforcement Directorate (ED) has made out a prima facie case of commission of money laundering under the provisions of the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) against Sisodia. The court said rather than genuinely taking the opinion of the common cit-

izens of Delhi, pre-drafted emails containing specific suggestions aligning with his own interest were sent to the designated feedback email address of the Excise Department.

"These emails were sent under the guise of public feedback or opinion by individuals who were instructed to do so by the applicant Manish Sisodia himself.

"In this court's opinion, this deceptive act was a calculated move to create an illusion that the excise policy was formed after careful consideration of feedback received from the public. "But in reality, the feedback was manufactured to justify the applicant's decision to formulate excise policy in defiance of the expert committee report,"

COVID SCARE

As many as 290 cases of KP.2 and 34 cases of KP.1, both sub-lineages of COVID-19 that are responsible for surge in cases in Singapore, have been found in India, according to official data



PUNE CAR ACCIDENT

Teen driver's father, four others arrested

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Pune, May 21: Police Tuesday arrested the father of a 17-year-old boy, who in an inebriated state allegedly crashed his speeding high-end car into a motorcycle killing two software engineers in Pune, and four executives of restaurants for serving liquor to the minor, officials said.

The car, a Porsche, allegedly driven by the boy, who the police claim was drunk at the time of the accident, fatally knocked down two motorbike-borne IT engineers in Kalyani Nagar in the early hours of Sunday.

The minor was granted bail by the Juvenile Justice Board hours after the crash. As the horrific crash caused a nationwide outrage, Maharashtra Deputy Chief Minister Devendra Fadnis, who holds the home portfolio, expressed shock and surprise over the JJ Board (JJB) taking a "lenient view" of the fatal car accident and granting bail to the accused, and pushed for trying the teenager as an adult.

"The father of the teenager boy was placed under arrest on Tuesday evening hours after he was detained from Maharashtra's Chhatrapati Sambhajanagar," said Amitesh Kumar, Commissioner of Police. The man, a real estate developer, will be produced before a court Wednesday, he said.

The police had registered a case against the teenager's father under sections 75 and 77 of the Juvenile Justice Act and relevant sections of the Indian Penal Code (IPC).



GARDEN TO CUP: Women collect tea leaves on the eve of 'International Tea Day', at the Kondoli Tea Estate in Nagaon, Assam

PTI

Army exploring military heritage

New Delhi: The Army has explored the epic battles of the Mahabharata, heroic exploits of eminent military figures and India's rich heritage in statecraft under a project that aims to enrich the nation's outlook in the defence domain, Army Chief Gen Manoj Pande said Tuesday. The project 'Udbhav', launched last year, delved deep into ancient texts such as Vedas, Puranas, Upanishads and Arthashastra, and it has revealed substantial intellectual convergences between eminent Indian and Western scholars, he said. The Army chief made the remarks at a conference titled 'Historical Patterns in Indian Strategic Culture'. The project 'Udbhav' aims to promote indigenous discourse in the Army by integrating India's ancient strategic acumen into contemporary military domain with a focus on making the force "future-ready".

One killed in post-poll violence

Saran (Bihar): One person was killed and three others injured in post-poll violence in Bihar's Saran district Tuesday morning, police said. The incident happened in the Bada Telma area near Bhikhari Thakur Chowk, they said. An altercation broke out between two groups, said to be supporters of the BJP and RJD, over allegations of irregularities during polling that happened Monday in the area, amid which shots were fired. One person was killed on the spot, and three others were injured, a police officer said.

Bibhav taken to Mumbai for retrieval of phone data

New Delhi: Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal's aide Bibhav Kumar, arrested for allegedly assaulting AAP MP Swati Maliwal, was taken to Mumbai to retrieve data from his allegedly formatted phone, police said Tuesday. Kumar is in a five-day police custody in connection with the alleged assault on Maliwal, a Rajya Sabha MP, at the Delhi CM's residence. Police said Kumar had formatted his phone after transferring its data to some person or device in Mumbai. His mobile phone was seized following his arrest but it was found to have been formatted, they said.

Northwest braces for more heatwaves amid polls

AGENCIES

New Delhi, May 21: As India's northwest braces for more heatwave days this summer, capital Delhi has ordered the closure of all schools as temperatures surge as high as 47 degrees Celsius ahead of voting in the final two phases of national elections.

The India Meteorological Department said a confluence of weather patterns was driving up temperatures in the breadbasket region.

Summer temperatures often peak during May in India, but IMD scientist Soma Sen Roy said the department was predicting 7-10 heatwave days in north-western regions this month, compared to the usual 2-3 days. This was largely due to fewer

non-monsoon thundershowers and an active but weakening El Nino, she said, referring to a climate pattern that typically leads to hot and dry weather in Asia and heavier rains in parts of the Americas.

Warm, westerly winds blowing in from Pakistan also contributed to the heat, she said.

Other parts of India have already seen summer temperatures climbing to record peaks, including eastern and southern India, where temperatures in April were among the highest on record.

The weather department also declared a rare heatwave in the southwestern coastal state of Kerala last month.

EXTREME HEAT AND POLLS

Najafgarh area Sunday in southwest Delhi recorded a



SUMMER TEMPERATURES OFTEN PEAK DURING MAY IN INDIA, BUT IMD SCIENTIST SOMA SEN ROY SAID THE DEPARTMENT WAS PREDICTING 7-10 HEATWAVE DAYS IN NORTHWESTERN REGIONS THIS MONTH, COMPARED TO THE USUAL 2-3 DAYS

maximum temperature of 47.8 degrees Celsius (118.04°F), the highest this summer.

The IMD threshold for a heatwave is when the maximum temperature reaches 40C in the plains, 30C in hilly areas, 37C

in coastal areas and when the departure from the normal maximum temperatures is at least 4.5 degrees.

Delhi will vote Saturday, along with the nearby states of Haryana and Uttar Pradesh,

Power demand all-time high in national capital

New Delhi: Delhi's peak power demand reached an all-time high of 7,717 MW Tuesday afternoon amid intense summer heat, Discom officials said. According to the State Load Dispatch Centre (SLDC), Delhi, real-time data, the peak demand of the city broke all previous records. It reached 7,717 MW at 3.33 pm, they said. Delhi's previous all-time high peak power demand was recorded at 7,695 MW June 29, 2022, officials said.

among others, in the penultimate phase of a seven-phase general election.

The IMD has declared a red-alert for a heatwave this week in

Delhi, indicating a likelihood of searing temperatures that could cause heat-related illness for those exposed.

WHAT IS THE WEATHER DEPT FORECASTING?

The IMD has said heatwave to severe-heatwave conditions are very likely this week in many parts of grain-producing states like Punjab, and Haryana in the northwest, along with parts of Delhi and nearby Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh.

The meteorological department is also forecasting "extremely" heavy rainfall over the southern state of Kerala this week and in neighbouring Tamil Nadu state, due to cyclonic circulation - referring to a particular wind circulation pattern - over Kerala.

international

of the day quote

Although military trials for civilians are a no-no under international law, sadly it has happened throughout Pakistan's political history ... (and) is not a novelty

AGNES CALLAMARD | SECRETARY GENERAL, AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL

The first country we would be talking to is India and seeks India's support for us to reach to the BRICS

ALI SABRY | FOREIGN MINISTER, SRI LANKA

States parties to the convention have the specific obligations to take all necessary measures to prevent, reduce and control marine pollution from anthropogenic (greenhouse gas) emissions

ALBERT HOFFMANN | JUDGE, UN TRIBUNAL ON MARITIME LAW

SHORT TAKES

Lankans held in India: SL launches probe

Colombo: Sri Lanka has launched an investigation to obtain information on four of its citizens with links to the banned Islamic State, who were arrested in India when on an alleged mission to carry out terror activities in the country, a media report said Tuesday. Acting on a tip-off, the Gujarat Anti-Terrorist Squad (ATS) Sunday apprehended four Sri Lankan nationals at the Sardar Vallabhai Patel airport in Ahmedabad after they travelled from Colombo via Chennai. The men travelled to India to carry out terror activities at the behest of the banned terror outfit Islamic State (IS) and are members of IS radicalised by a leader from Sri Lanka who is living in Pakistan, according to the Indian police.

Drug tests in schools

Karachi: The provincial Sindh government Tuesday announced that it will start random drug tests in all private and government schools after observing the rising cases of students using the highly addictive ice/crystal meth drugs. Sindh Information Minister Sharjeel Memon told journalists here that the government had recently arrested a high-profile drug supplier in the posh area of Clifton. "We have got some startling information from him about how the use of ice/crystal is being spread in educational institutions," Memon said, adding that anyone using these drugs was a potential danger and a walking time bomb for society. "These drugs are so addictive and harmful to human beings that you never know what they might do next even in public places," he added.

China rebukes SK, Japan mins visiting Taiwan

REUTERS

Beijing, May 21: China Tuesday scolded South Korean and Japanese lawmakers for visiting Taiwan despite its strong opposition, chiding both neighbours for attending Taiwan's "so-called inauguration ceremony of the leader".

Taiwan's President Lai Ching-te, regarded by China as a "separatist", was officially sworn in Monday after winning a January election.

China, claiming Taiwan as part of its territory, resolutely opposes the visits, its embassies in South Korea and Japan said, and has lodged solemn representations with the two northeast Asian countries.

A spokesperson for the embassy in South Korea said the move runs counter to the China-

WAR CRIMES

Israel, Hamas reject ICC move

ICC prosecutor applies for arrest warrants for Netanyahu and Hamas leaders

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

Rafah, May 21: Israel and Hamas, engaged in heavy fighting in the Gaza Strip, both angrily rejected Monday moves to arrest their leaders for war crimes made before an international court.

The International Criminal Court's prosecutor Karim Khan said he had applied for arrest warrants for top Israeli and Hamas leaders over the conflict.

Israel slammed as a "historical disgrace" the demand targeting Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Defence Minister Yoav Gallant, while the Palestinian militant group Hamas said it "strongly condemns" the move.

Netanyahu said he rejected "with disgust The Hague prosecutor's comparison between democratic Israel and the mass murderers of Hamas".

Khan said in a statement that he was seeking warrants against the Israeli leaders for crimes including "wilful killing", "extermination and/or murder", and "starvation".

He said Israel had committed "crimes against humanity" during the war, started by Hamas's unprecedented October 7 attack, as part "of a widespread and systematic attack against the Palestinian civilian population".

Hamas denounced the ICC's decision, with a spokesperson stating, "We strongly condemn this move," highlighting the group's denial of the allegations and its



France and Belgium support ICC request for arrest warrants of Israel and Hamas leaders

I reject with disgust The Hague prosecutor's comparison between democratic Israel and the mass murderers of Hamas

BENJAMIN NETANYAHU | PM, ISRAEL

What's happening is not genocide. Whatever these warrants may imply, there is no equivalence between Israel and Hamas

JOE BIDEN | PRESIDENT, US

commitment to the Palestinian cause.

Khan also said the leaders of Hamas, including Qatar-based Ismail Haniyeh and Gaza chief Yahya Sinwar, "bear criminal responsibility" for actions committed during the October 7 attack.

These included "taking hostages", "rape and other acts of sexual violence", and "torture", he said.

"International law and the laws of armed conflict apply to all," Khan said. "No foot soldier, no commander, no civilian leader - no one - can act with impunity."

The warrants, if granted by the ICC judges, would mean that any of the 124 ICC member states would technically be obliged to arrest Netanyahu and the others if they travelled there. The court has no mechanism to enforce

its warrants.

The United States, Israel's top ally, also rejected the ICC bid, with President Joe Biden denouncing it as "outrageous" and saying "there is no equivalence -- none -- between Israel and Hamas".

The war ground on unabated, with Israeli forces battling Hamas in Gaza's far-southern city of Rafah, as well as in other flash-points in central and northern areas.

Netanyahu has vowed to keep fighting Hamas in Gaza until the Iran-backed Islamist group is defeated and all remaining hostages are released.

The United Nations said more than 812,000 Palestinians had fled Rafah, near the Egyptian border.

The war broke out after

SNIPPETS

Vatican makes fresh overture to China

Rome: The Vatican made another big overture to China Tuesday, reaffirming it poses no threat to Beijing's sovereignty and admitting that Catholic Western missionaries had made "errors" in past centuries in their zeal to convert the Chinese faithful. The Vatican hosted the head of China's bishops conference to an unprecedented, high-level commemoration of a landmark 1924 meeting that affirmed the need for foreign missionaries in China to give way to local leaders of the Catholic Church. The presence of Shanghai Bishop Joseph Shen Bin alongside the Vatican secretary of state, Cardinal Pietro Parolin, at the Pontifical Urbaniana University was in itself noteworthy. It marked the first time in memory that a mainland bishop has been allowed by Beijing to participate in a public Vatican event as the keynote speaker. Francis opened the conference with a video message in which he made no mention of recent troubles but instead pointed to the 1924 meeting in Shanghai as a turning point for Vatican-China relations. The first and only Chinese church council, he said, recognised that the church in China must "increasingly have a Chinese face". "But the Council of Shanghai did not only serve to forget the erroneous approaches that had prevailed in previous times," Francis said. "The participants of the first Chinese Council looked to the future. And their future is our present." It was a reference to the French, Italian and other Western missionary religious orders that evangelised China over the centuries but refused to cede leadership authority to local Chinese clergy. Their attitudes helped fuel the anti-Western and anti-Christian sentiment behind the Boxer Rebellion, which aimed to rid China of foreign influences.



EU to use frozen Russian assets for Ukraine

Brussels: EU countries have formally adopted a plan to use windfall profits from Russian central bank assets frozen in the EU for Ukraine's defence, the Belgian government said Tuesday. The text only needed a rubber stamp by ministers after EU ambassadors reached the agreement in early May. Under the agreement, 90% of the proceeds will go into an EU-run fund for military aid for Ukraine, with the other 10% going to support Kyiv in other ways. The EU expects the assets to yield about 15-20 billion euros (\$16.30-\$21.70 billion) in profits by 2027. Ukraine is expected to receive the first tranche in July, EU diplomats said. The Group of Seven countries (G7) froze around \$300 billion worth of Russian financial assets soon after Moscow's invasion of Ukraine in 2022.



Compensation for UK blood scandal victims

London: Britain said Tuesday it would begin making further interim compensation payments to the victims of the contaminated blood and blood products scandal. "The government will be making further interim payments ahead of the establishment of the full scheme," minister John Glen told parliament, a day after a damning report blamed successive governments, officials and doctors for failures that resulted in more than 3,000 deaths. "Payments of 210,000 pounds will be made to living infected beneficiaries," he added. Prime Minister Rishi Sunak made a "wholehearted unequivocal apology for this terrible injustice" Monday.



BUILT OVER A CENTURY AGO

Put into service in 1914, the original streetcars have undergone regular touch-ups, without ever betraying their historical look

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

Istanbul, May 21: Istanbul's emblematic red and white trams, built over 100 years ago and loved by both locals and tourists, are about to give way to a more modern streetcar.

The tramway has become a symbol of Istanbul's most popular shopping street, Istiklal Avenue, which runs for 1.4 kilometres (0.9 miles) on the European side of the city.

The new battery-powered trams, from their wooden floor to their

HAITI AIRPORT REOPENS

Haiti's main international airport reopened Monday for the first time in nearly three months after relentless gang violence forced authorities to close it. The reopening of the Toussaint-Louverture airport in the capital of Port-au-Prince is expected to help ease a critical shortage of medications and other basic supplies. The country's main seaport remains badly affected. Gangs control 80% of the capital



Man killed, 30 hurt as flight hits turbulence



Singapore flight hit by turbulence dropped 6,000 feet in just 5 minutes

REUTERS

Bangkok, May 21: One passenger was killed and 30 injured after a Singapore Airlines flight from London hit severe turbulence en route Tuesday, forcing it to make an emergency landing in Bangkok, officials and the airline said.

"Singapore Airlines offers its deepest condolences to the family of the deceased. We deeply apologise for the traumatic experience that our passengers and crew members suffered on this flight," the airline said, adding it was working with Thai authorities to provide all necessary assistance.

One male passenger died, Kittipong Kittikachorn, Director of Bangkok's Suvarnabhumi airport, told Reuters. Eighteen people have been hospitalised and 12 are being treated in hospitals, Singapore Airlines said.

It was not immediately possible to reconstruct the incident from publicly available tracking data, but a spokesperson for

Flightradar24 said it was analysing data at around 07:49 GMT which shows the plane tilting upwards and returns to its cruising altitude over the space of a minute.

PASSENGERS RECOUNT HORROR

A passenger who was on the flight told Reuters that the incident involved the sensation of rising then falling.

"Suddenly the aircraft starts tilting up and there was shaking so I started bracing for what was happening, and very suddenly there was a very dramatic drop so everyone seated and not wearing a seatbelt was launched immediately into the ceiling," Dzafran Azmir, a 28-year-old student on board the flight told Reuters.

"Some people hit their heads on the baggage cabins overhead and dented it, they hit the places where lights and masks are and broke straight through it," he said.

The spokesperson for Flightradar24 said with regard to data showing a drop in height, "our initial thinking is the turbulence event is prior to the standard descent from 37,000 to 31,000 feet. That appears to just be a flight level change in preparation for landing."

Macron heads to New Caledonia as Oz, NZ send evacuation flights

REUTERS

Sydney, May 21: French President Emmanuel Macron will travel to the Pacific island of New Caledonia Tuesday, a government spokesperson said, just over a week after riots erupted in the French overseas territory, leaving six dead.

The riots over electoral reform have left a trail of destruction with shops looted, cars burnt and road barricades restricting access to medicine and food. The island's business chamber said 150 companies had been looted and burnt.

Speaking after a cabinet meeting, French government spokesman Prisca Thevenot said Macron would travel to "set up a mission," without saying what it could entail.

Some politicians have called for veteran politicians to be named as mediators, but Thevenot did not say if this was what Macron had in mind.

"Our priority is the return to calm and order," Thevenot said, noting the situation on the ground was improving but more needed to be done.

RAISI HAS BLOOD ON HIS HANDS: US

US unable to assist in probing Iranian President Raisi's chopper crash due to 'logistical reasons', says State Dept

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Washington, May 21: The Iranian government has requested the US to assist in probing the deadly helicopter crash that killed President Ebrahim Raisi, his foreign minister, and six others but Washington won't assist Tehran largely due to "logistical reasons", according to a senior American diplomat.

Raisi, 63, a possible successor for Iran's supreme leader, the 85-year-old Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, his foreign minister Hossein Amir-Abdollahian, and six others were found dead Monday hours after their helicopter crashed in fog, leaving the Islamic Republic without two key leaders as extraordinary tensions grip the wider Middle East.



US State Department Spokesperson Matthew Miller at a press briefing Monday said the US when asked for assistance by the Iranian government made it clear that it was ready to offer assistance, as it would do in response to any request by a foreign government

in this sort of situation, but was not able to provide any help.

"I'm not going to get into the details, but we were asked by the Iranian government for assistance. We said that we would be willing to assist. It's something that we would do with respect to any government in this situation. Ultimately, largely for logistical reasons, we weren't able to provide that assistance," Miller told reporters.

"We regret any loss of life. We don't want to see anyone die in a helicopter crash. But that doesn't change the reality of his record both as a judge and as the president of Iran and the fact that he has blood on his hands," Miller said.

Istanbul's Iconic trams to get makeovers



reversible seats, stay faithful to the look of their predecessors.

Two cameras on either side of the vehicles replace the old rear-view mirrors, giving drivers better visibility and enabling them to drive seated.

"It's a very good thing that they are modernising the tram. The new one hasn't changed the nostalgic aspect of the old one," said local Gonul Murtekin, who

travels with her grandson.

Nostalgia and energy-saving Istanbul's mayoral office says it plans to retire all the old trams and put them in a transport museum which is still in the planning stage.

In the meantime, the newest streetcar will be co-habiting with its century-old ancestors while it undergoes testing.

The city authorities hope to dis-

mantle the overhead power lines on Istiklal Avenue within a year.

Mayor Ekrem Imamoglu has committed to reduce energy consumption.

"With the battery system, we save a lot of energy," said Ali Tugrul Kucukalioglu, Istanbul's director of electric transport.

He pointed out that a tram can "run for two days on a single battery".

The batteries will enable the city to get rid of the trams' overhead power lines.

"During national holidays, the tram had difficulty running because of the flags hanging from the lines," said Kucukalioglu.

More importantly, the streetcar has been stripped of its external sidebars, which passengers would cling on as it travelled up and down Istiklal Avenue.

of the day quote

India's digital economy is growing at 2.8 per cent per annum and is expected to reach \$1 trillion by 2027-28

RAJEEV CHANDRASEKHAR | MINISTER OF STATE FOR ELECTRONICS AND IT

Unpredictability in ease of doing business arising out of some actions of enforcement agencies needs to be checked. We need to build an environment of trust between enforcement agencies and the industry

PANKAJ MOHINDROO | CHAIRMAN, ICEA

We are at the cusp of that (revival in private investment). Private sector capex I do expect to pick up but largely from second half (October-March) onwards

UPASNA BHARDWAJ | CHIEF ECONOMIST, KOTAK MAHINDRA BANK

Q4 RESULTS

ONGC profit jumps

New Delhi: State-owned Oil and Natural Gas Corporation's (ONGC) March quarter net profit soared 19 times as the year-ago period had a one-time exceptional provision, while it posted a record earnings for the full fiscal. The company's standalone net profit of ₹9,869 crore in January-March - the fourth quarter of fiscal year 2023-24 - compared with a profit of ₹528 crore in the same period of the previous financial year, according to a company statement. India's top oil and gas producer had made a provision of ₹9,235 crore in the January-March 2023 quarter towards disputed taxes for the period from April 1, 2016, to March 31, 2022.

Welspun Ent drops

New Delhi: Welspun Enterprises Tuesday reported a 45.4 per cent decline in consolidated profit to ₹77.67 crore for the quarter ended March 31, 2024. The company posted a consolidated profit of ₹142.41 crore in the year-ago period. The consolidated income dropped to ₹866.70 crore in the January-March quarter from ₹916.46 crore in the year-ago period, according to an exchange filing by the company.

Muthoot FinCorp up

New Delhi: Muthoot FinCorp Tuesday said it has recorded highest-ever loan disbursements in FY24 that rose 18.6 per cent to ₹61,703.26 crore on a consolidated basis. The asset under management (AUM) stood at ₹33,359.30 crore. The consolidated net profit rose 62 per cent to ₹1,047.98 crore in FY24, Muthoot FinCorp said in a statement. "Muthoot FinCorp Ltd, the flagship company of 137-year-old Muthoot Pappachan Group, reports highest-ever loan disbursements in FY24 with consolidated disbursement at ₹61,703.26 crore, up 18.60 per cent," the statement said.

BHEL net profit falls

New Delhi: State-owned Bharat Heavy Electrical Ltd (BHEL) Tuesday reported an over 25 per cent decline in its consolidated net profit to ₹489.62 crore in the March quarter, mainly due to higher expenses. Its consolidated net profit stood at ₹658.02 crore in the quarter ended March 31, 2023, according to a regulatory filing. Total expenses of the firm rose to ₹7,794.11 crore in the quarter from ₹7,411.64 crore in the same period a year ago. Total income in the quarter rose marginally to ₹8,416.84 crore in the quarter from ₹8,338.61 crore in the year-ago period.



By joining ONDC Network, we are taking a significant step towards supporting the digital transformation of commerce in India. This collaboration aligns with our vision of being a nation-first company, contributing to the growth and development of India's digital economy

RIKANT PITTIE | CO-FOUNDER, EASEMYTRIP

GDP to grow by 7.5% in Q1: RBI Bulletin

The Indian economy has demonstrated marked resilience in the face of geopolitical headwinds impacting the supply chain, said an article on the state of the economy

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, May 21: India is likely to grow by 7.5 per cent in the first quarter of the current financial year, driven by rising aggregate demand and non-food spending in the rural economy, according to an article in the RBI's May Bulletin released Tuesday.

"According to the economic activity index (EAI), activity rebounded in April, and early estimates suggest that GDP growth for Q1:2024-25 is likely to remain close to 7.5 per cent," it said.

The economic activity index (EAI) was constructed by extracting the common trend underlying twenty-seven high-frequency indicators of economic activity, using a Dynamic Factor Model. EAI was scaled to 100 in February 2020 and 0 in April 2020, the worst affected month due to mobility restrictions.

Meanwhile, the government will be releasing the quarterly GDP estimates for January-March, 2024 (Q4 2023-24), and provisional estimates of National Income for the year 2023-24 on May 31.

The Indian economy grew 8.2 per cent in the June quarter, 8.1 per cent in the September quarter and 8.4 per cent in the December quarter of 2023-24.

The article noted that high-frequency indicators point towards sustained momentum in domestic demand conditions in April 2024.

Toll collections increased by 8.6 per cent (y-o-y) in April 2024. Automobile sales increased by 25.4 per cent (y-o-y) in April 2024, led by strong growth in the two-wheelers and three-wheelers segment, while passenger vehicles recorded the highest-ever monthly sales.

"There is a growing optimism that India is on the cusp of a long-awaited economic take-off. Recent indicators are pointing to a quickening of the



momentum of aggregate demand," said the article, prepared by a team led by Reserve Bank Deputy Governor Michael Debabrata Patra.

Non-food spending is being pushed up by the green shoots of rural spending recovery. A modest easing of headline inflation in the reading for April 2024 confirms the expectation that an uneven and lagged pace of alignment with the target is underway.

It also noted that for the first time in at least two years, rural demand for fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG) has outpaced urban markets in the quarter just gone by. FMCG volume growth of 6.5 per cent was driven by rural growth of 7.6 per cent relative to urban growth of 5.7 per cent on the back of robust demand for home and personal care products.

Turning to private investment, for listed private manufacturing companies, earnings remained the major source of funds during the second half of 2023-24, it said.

Results that have been declared by listed corporates so far indicate that they closed the financial year 2023-24 with the highest growth in quarterly revenues registered in January-March 2024.

"A modest easing of headline inflation in the reading for April 2024 confirmed our expectation that an uneven pace of alignment with the target is underway," the authors said.

The prices of vegetables, ce-

ICRA pegs Q4 GDP growth at 6.7%, FY24 rise at 7.8%

New Delhi: Domestic rating agency ICRA Tuesday projected India's GDP growth to moderate to a four quarter low of 6.7 per cent in March quarter of 2023-24 fiscal. For the full 2023-24 fiscal, ICRA estimates GDP growth to come in at 7.8 per cent. The Indian economy grew 8.2 per cent in the June quarter, 8.1 per cent in the September quarter and 8.4 per cent in the December quarter of 2023-24. ICRA Chief Economist, Head-Research & Outreach Aditi Nayar said the lower volume growth coupled with diminishing gains from commodity prices dampening the profitability of some of the industrial sectors is expected to dampen India's GVA growth in Q4 FY2024. India's GDP expanded 6.1 per cent in the March quarter of 2022-23 fiscal, as per May 31, 2023 estimates. The growth for full fiscal 2022-23 was 7 per cent.

reals, pulses, meat and fish in the food category may keep the headline elevated and closer to 5 per cent in the near term, in line with projections set out in the April Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) resolution in spite of deflation in fuel prices and further softening of core inflation to a new historic low, they said.

The central bank, however, said the views expressed in the Bulletin article are of the authors and do not represent the views of the Reserve Bank of India.

FinMin may raise FY25 CPSE dividend target in full Budget

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, May 21: The finance ministry is likely to raise the CPSE dividend estimates by ₹5,000 crore to around ₹53,000 crore for the current fiscal in the full Budget to be presented in July.

In the interim budget 2024-25, the government had pegged dividend estimates from non-financial central public sector enterprises (CPSEs) at ₹48,000 crore for the current fiscal.

The estimates may go up by about ₹5,000 crore in the final Budget to be presented in July, an official told PTI.

The interim Budget estimates were based on the estimates in December 2023, and January 2024, and the estimates in the full budget will be higher as we have a better picture of the dividend now, the official added.



The dividend receipts of the government in a particular fiscal include interim dividends announced by state-owned companies during the fiscal, as well as final dividends for the previous fiscal. So far in the current financial year, the government has obtained ₹ 4,837.25 crore as dividends from the CPSEs.

This includes ₹3,443 crore as a special dividend from Telecommunications Consultants India Limited (TCIL), a public sector enterprise under the Ministry of Telecom.

The dividend receipts in the 2023-24 fiscal stood at ₹63,000 crore, up from ₹59,953 crore in the 2022-23 fiscal.

NEW RULE TO DETERMINE M-CAP OF LISTED FIRMS

Markets regulator Sebi has revamped the method for calculating the market capitalisation of listed companies under the Listing Obligations and Disclosure Requirements rules. Instead of using the market capitalisation of a single day (currently March 31), listed firms will now use the "average market capitalisation" for a six-month period



MILESTONE MOMENT

M-cap of BSE-listed firms hits \$5tn feat



INDIA BECOMES THE FIFTH LARGEST MARKET CAPITALISATION COUNTRY AFTER THE US, CHINA, JAPAN, AND HONG KONG

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, May 21: The combined market capitalisation of BSE-listed companies hit the \$5-trillion milestone for the first time Tuesday.

At the close of trade, the total valuation of the exchange-listed companies stood at an all-time high of ₹4,14,62,306.56 crore (\$4.97 trillion), the BSE data showed. The 30-share Sensex declined 52.63 points, or 0.07 per cent, to settle at 73,953.31. However, during the day, it hit a high of 74,189.19, rallying 183.25 points, or 0.24 per cent.

"The market capitalisation of companies listed on the BSE has crossed a record \$5 trillion for the first time - hitting a fresh high on May 21. India became the fifth largest market cap country after the US, China, Japan, and Hong Kong," said Deepak Jasani, Head of Retail Research, HDFC Securities.

The combined market valuation of all listed companies on the BSE reached the \$4-trillion milestone for the first time ever November 29 last year.

The m-cap of all listed companies on the BSE touched the \$3-trillion mark May 24, 2021.

The total valuation of exchange-listed companies went

past the \$1 trillion level May 28, 2007. The journey from \$1 trillion to \$1.5 trillion was covered in 2,566 days, or just over seven years June 6, 2014.

The m-cap of listed companies reached \$2 trillion July 10, 2017 - taking 1,130 days from the \$1.5 trillion level. It took ten years for the exchange to reach from \$1 trillion level to \$2 trillion in market capitalisation.

From there, it took 1,255 days to go past the \$2.5-trillion mark December 16, 2020.

So far this year, the BSE benchmark has climbed 1,713.05 points, or 2.37 per cent. It hit the all-time peak of 75,124.28 April 9 this year.

In Tuesday's trade, among the Sensex components, Nestle, Maruti, IndusInd Bank, ICICI Bank, Hindustan Unilever, Larsen & Toubro, Tata Consultancy Services, Infosys, HDFC Bank, and Axis Bank were the major laggards.

Tata Steel, JSW Steel, Power Grid, Tech Mahindra and State Bank of India were among the gainers.

In the broader market, the BSE midcap gauge climbed 0.34 per cent while smallcap index declined 0.18 per cent.

The midcap gauge hit its lifetime peak of 43,223.69 and the smallcap index reached the record high of 48,099.29 during the day.

Among the indices, metal rallied 4.08 per cent, utilities (1.99 per cent), power (1.96 per cent), commodities (1.79 per cent) and energy (1.01 per cent).

Last week, the BSE benchmark climbed 1,341.47 points, or 1.84 per cent.

India's Russian oil imports rise to nine-month high in April

India, the world's third-biggest oil importer and consumer, is the top client for Russian seaborne oil

REUTERS



New Delhi, May 21: India's Russian oil imports rose a nine-month high in April after shipments on non-sanctioned tankers operated by Russia's largest shipping company Sovcomflot resumed, tanker data obtained from shipping and trade sources showed.

Refiners in India briefly stopped importing Russian oil in tankers belonging to Sovcomflot after the company's ships, along with its 14 tankers, were designated by Washington in February as being in breach of Western sanctions.

The West has imposed the sanctions against Russia since it invaded Ukraine in 2022 and has enacted price caps on oil and oil products loaded at Russian ports aimed at cutting Moscow's oil revenue that funds the war.

In April, the first month of the fiscal year 2024/25, Indian refiners shipped in nearly 1.8 million barrels per day (bpd) of Russian oil, up about 8.2 per cent over the previous month, expanding Russia's share in India to about 38 per cent from 32 per cent in the previous month, the data showed.

Tata Motors' arms join hands with Bajaj Finance

Mumbai: In a bid to improve options and ease of financing for the dealers, Tata Motors Passenger Vehicles (TMPV) and Tata Passenger Electric Mobility (TPEM) - subsidiaries of Tata Motors, India's leading automotive manufacturer, have joined hands with Bajaj Finance, part of Bajaj Finserv Ltd, one of India's leading and most diversified financial services groups, to extend supply chain finance solutions to its passenger and electric vehicle dealers. Through this memorandum of understanding (MoU), the participating companies will come together to leverage Bajaj Finance's wide reach to help dealers of TMPV and TPEM access funding with minimal collateral. The MoU for this partnership was signed by Dhiman Gupta, Chief Financial Officer, Tata Passenger Electric Mobility Ltd and Director, Tata Motors Passenger Vehicles Ltd and Siddhartha Bhatt, Chief Business Officer, Bajaj Finance Ltd. Commenting on the partnership, Dhiman Gupta, Chief Financial Officer, Tata Passenger Electric Mobility Ltd and Director, Tata Motors Passenger Vehicles Ltd, said, "Our dealer partners are integral to our business, and we are happy to actively work towards solutions to help them in ease of doing business. Together, we aim to further grow the market and offer our New Forever portfolio to an increasing set of customers. To that effect, we are excited to partner with Bajaj Finance for this financing program, which will further strengthen the access of our dealer partners to increased working capital."



BIZ BUZZ

SBI opens new branch at Deuli

Bhubaneswar: A new branch of State Bank of India (SBI) has been inaugurated at, Deuli under Begunia block of Khurda district. The branch was inaugurated by the Chief General Manager of Bhubaneswar Circle Dinesh Pruthi in the presence of the General Manager (NW-1) Ponnambalam M, the Deputy General Manager (B&O) Bhubaneswar Zone Prasanta Kumar, the Regional Manager RBO Khurda Narendra Kumar Jena and the Branch Manager Abhishek Behera. Among others, Zilla Parishad member Tanuja Patasahani, Sarpanch of Deuli GP Akshay Kumar Routray and customers of nearby villages were also present on this occasion. The Chief General Manager addressed the gathering about various products and services offered by State Bank of India. The local people of Deuli expressed their gratitude and happiness for opening a branch of State Bank of India in their village.

India's global travel & tourism index rank improves

While the US topped the list, India is ranked highest in South Asia and among the lower-middle-income economies

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, May 21: India's rank on the World Economic Forum's Travel & Tourism Development Index 2024 has risen to 39th place, with global tourism activities returning to pre-pandemic levels, the annual report showed Tuesday.

While the US topped the list, India is ranked highest in South Asia and among the lower-middle-income economies, the WEF said.

India was ranked 54th in the previously published index in 2021, though changes made to the index parameters limit its comparability to earlier years.

After the US, Spain, Japan, France and Australia figure among the top five in the 2024 list.

The index, prepared in collaboration with the University of Surrey, showed India is highly price-competitive (18th) and boasts competitive Air Transport (26th) and Ground and Port (25th) infrastructure.

In particular, India's strong Natural (6th), Cultural (9th) and Non-Leisure (9th) Resources help drive travel, and the country is only one of three to score in the top 10 for all the resource pillars, the WEF said.

Moreover, despite a decline



compared to 2019, the country still scores well for travel and tourism demand sustainability, especially thanks to more sustainable long stays among inbound visitors.

It further said that as with many economies, travel and tourism enabling conditions in India have been impacted by global inflationary supply-side

trends for the sector, with price competitiveness declining, while air transport and tourist services infrastructure are yet to recover to the 2019 level.

As a result, the country's overall TTDI (Travel and Tourism Development Index) score is 2.1 per cent below its 2019 level.

High-income economies in Europe and Asia-Pacific continued to lead the index.

"International tourist arrivals and the travel and tourism sector's contribution to global GDP are expected to return to pre-pandemic levels this year, driven by the lifting of Covid-19-related travel restrictions and strong pent-up demand," the WEF said.

The Middle East had the highest recovery rates in international tourist arrivals (20 per

cent above the 2019 level), while Europe, Africa and the Americas all showed a strong recovery of around 90 per cent in 2023.

The biennial index analysed the travel and tourism sectors of 119 countries around a range of factors and policies.

Germany was ranked 6th, followed by the UK, China, Italy and Switzerland in the top ten.

The results highlighted that high-income economies generally continue to have more favourable conditions for travel and tourism development.

This was helped by conducive business environments, dynamic labour markets, open travel policies, strong transport and tourism infrastructure, and well-developed natural, cultural and non-leisure attractions.

Knights charge into title clash

Starc reality hits Sunrisers Hyderabad before Venkatesh and Shreyas comfortably guide Kolkata into IPL 2024 final

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Ahmedabad, May 21: Mitchell Starc-powered Kolkata Knight Riders' juggernaut rolled into the IPL final as the two-time champions produced a ruthless performance against Sunrisers Hyderabad for an eight-wicket win in Qualifier 1 here Tuesday.

Starc (3/34) produced a stunning opening burst of three wickets in the powerplay to break the back of SRH's dangerous batting. They were eventually shot out for a mere 159 in 19.3 overs with Rahul Tripathi scoring a vital 55 (35b, 7x4, 1x6) while Heinrich Klaasen (32) and Pat Cummins (30) also fought hard.

On a benign wicket in steaming hot conditions, SRH's fight petered out as KKR knocked off the innocuous 160-run target in a mere 13.4 overs with skipper Shreyas Iyer (58 n o, 24b, 5x4, 4x6) and Venkatesh Iyer (51 n o, 28b, 5x4, 4x6) taking them over the line. KKR will play their fourth IPL final in Chennai, Sunday.

SRH, who had pipped Rajasthan Royals on the final day of the league stage to finish second in the points table, will now proceed to Chennai to have another crack at making the summit clash with the Qualifier 2 to be played, May 24.

The Cummins-led side will face the winner of the Eliminator between Rajasthan Royals and Royal Challengers Bengaluru here, Wednesday.

In his first game this season, Rahmanullah Gurbaz (23) played



The Iyers – Venkatesh (L) and Shreyas – punch gloves following a boundary during their partnership against SRH, Tuesday

his role to perfection with two crucial grabs behind the wicket. Chasing a below-par target, KKR raised their fifty in no time. Sunil Narine (21) perished shortly after the powerplay which brought the Iyers together. They put on 97 runs for the third wicket to complete a comprehensive victory.

Earlier, the lanky Australian speedster Starc reaped benefits of utilising his core skill of bowling quick and swinging the ball. He rattled the stumps of SRH marauder Head on the second ball of the contest to set the tone in KKR's favour.

IPL's third highest run-getter Head was all over the place when he went for a wild heave against his compatriot, who got the ball nipping slightly away after pitching and knocking down the off and middle stumps to dismiss the batter for his second consecutive duck.

Starc also bounced out Nitish Reddy (9) and had Shahbaz Ahmed (0) chopping one onto his wickets to put KKR in firm control inside the powerplay. With Head removed from the equation early, SRH pinned their hopes on Abhishek Sharma but the left-hander too was confined



Mitchell Starc reacts after dismissing a Sunrisers Hyderabad batter

to having an unsuccessful outing. Abhishek, who has immaculately picked gaps and unleashed spectacular shots more often than not this season, played one meekly towards cover where Andre Russell timed his leap to perfection and used both his hands to complete the dismissal, off Vaibhav Arora.

BRIEF SCORES: SRH 159 (Rahul Tripathi 55, Heinrich Klaasen 32, Pat Cummins 30; Mitchell Starc 3/34, Varun Chakravarthy 2/26) lost to KKR 164/2 (Shreyas Iyer 58 n o, Venkatesh Iyer 51 n o; T Natarajan 1/22) by 8 wickets.

Eliminator set for Royal faceoff

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Ahmedabad, May 21: Sanju Samson's Rajasthan Royals will face a stern test of character as they look to arrest a shocking slide in a do-or-die IPL Eliminator against an in-form Royal Challengers Bengaluru, here Wednesday.

The Royals, at one stage, had looked set for a top-place finish in the league stage before a string of four defeats and a washout in the last game against KKR resulted in Sanju Samson's side finishing third behind Sunrisers Hyderabad.

On the other hand, RCB have sensationally fought their way back from the brink of elimination. After losing seven of their first eight games this season, the team led by Faf du Plessis hit a dream run and finally knocked out defending champions Chennai Super Kings a few nights ago to seal a play-offs berth.

If Rajasthan Royals are coming off four losses and a rained-off game, RCB have notched up six consecutive wins to sound a warning to their rivals that they mean business in the playoffs.

RR, the 2008 IPL winners, suddenly find themselves as the underdogs, when a couple of weeks ago they were red-hot favourites. When on song, Rajasthan Royals have shown they are unbeatable, but the last four games have exposed frailties in their batting and bowling.

The exit of Jos Buttler has taken a lot of firepower out of their batting and a lot will depend on Yashasvi Jaiswal (348 runs), skipper Samson (504) and Riyan Parag (531) to halt the slide.

Samson and Parag will once



again be expected to deliver the goods for RR, with England's Tom Kohler-Cadmore expected to partner Jaiswal in what seems like a frail opening pair going by form and experience.

Shimon Hetmyer is expected to be available for the contest giving Rajasthan solidity in the lower order, which has not made a big contribution with the bat this season.

RRs strong bowling lineup could come in handy given the venue for the Eliminator has not been a batting paradise like the other grounds, where shorter boundaries and docile tracks have made the bowlers' job tougher.

The 200-run mark has been breached only twice in 12 innings this season at the Narendra Modi Stadium, which means the team having a disciplined bowling attack and a strong batting lineup is more likely to win here.

On the other hand, RCB's Virat Kohli continues to be the highest run-getter this season with 708 runs from 14 matches and could make the difference in the contest.

MATCHDAY
IPL Qualifier 1
RR vs RCB
Time: 07:30 pm
Telecast: Star Sports Network
Stream: Jio Cinema

After initial struggles, RCB skipper Faf du Plessis has also found form with the bat to forge a dominating partnership at the top with Kohli, while Rajat Patidar (five half-centuries this season) has also given solidity at the top.

RCB have not been impacted much by the exit of England's Will Jacks, while veteran Dinesh Karthik is firing on all cylinders with a strike rate in excess of 195 lower down the order.

In their last match, left-arm seamer Yash Dayal turned around his fortunes to dish out a splendid final over against CSK to deny them a win and lead RCB into the playoffs.

For a bowler who was devastated after conceding five consecutive sixes in an over last year, Dayal has proved his mettle this year.

Jyothi takes India to 2nd spot in qualifying round



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Yecheon (South Korea), May 21: Reigning Asian Games champion Jyothi Surekha Vennam's fourth place finish lifted compound women's team to second spot in the qualifying rankings of the Archery World Cup Stage 2 that got underway here Tuesday.

Fresh from winning a hat-trick of gold medals at the season-opening Shanghai leg of the World Cup last month, Jyothi missed the top-three spot in the rankings by just three points, finishing behind South Korea's Oh Yoohyun, who shot 707. Han Seunghyun took the pole position at 711, followed by Luxembourg's Mariya Shkolna one point adrift.

At eighth and 15th places re-

spectively, Parneet Kaur (704) and world champion Aditi Swami (702) were the next best Indians as overall as a team India grabbed the second seed behind South Korea.

The Indian women's team will get a bye into the quarters where they will face seventh seeded Italy. It was a forgettable outing for the compound men archers and Priyansh at 16th place in the leaderboard was the best among the Indians.

Prathamesh Fuge and multiple World Cup gold medalist Abhishek Verma, who seemed to have past his prime, were the next best Indians finishing lowly at 20th and 24th places.

It impacted the team ranking as they slipped to fourth place. Priyansh and Jyothi combined to get a fourth spot in the mixed team ranking as well. The qualifiers for the recurve archers will begin Wednesday.

Indian men's recurve team are coming back after upsetting South Korea for the first time in a World Cup final in the Shanghai leg in April.

India topped the medal standings at the Stage 1 World Cup with five gold medals, two silver and one bronze, pushing South Korea to second spot (two gold, three silver and two bronze medals).

Sumit defends Para Worlds title

Mariyappan and Ekta too shine claiming gold in their respective events



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kobe (Japan), May 21: Reigning Paralympics champion Sumit Antil Tuesday defended his F64 javelin throw world title while Thangavelu Mariyappan and Ekta Bhyan also grabbed gold medals in their respective events as India jumped to third place in the World Para Athletics Championships here.

With five medals won on a productive fifth day, India's tally swelled to 10 (4 gold, 4 silver, 2 bronze) and the country is currently placed below China (15 gold, 13 silver, 13 bronze) and Brazil (14 gold, 6 silver, 5 bronze).

Antil, who had won gold medals in the Tokyo Paralympics and 2023 World Para Athletics Championships, sent his spear to a distance of 69.50m to stand on top of the podium.

The 25-year-old Haryana athlete



thus continued his global domination in the F64 javelin event. He is the current world record holder also, courtesy his massive 73.29m throw while winning gold in the Para Asian Games in Hangzhou, China last year.

He also holds the World Para Athletics Championships record of 70.83m which he had produced while winning the gold in the last edition in Paris in 2023. Compatriot Sandeep won the bronze medal in the same event with a throw of 60.41m. Sri Lanka's Dulan Kodithuwakku took the silver with a throw of 66.49m. Antil was the leader all through the event in the nine-man field as he opened with a 68.17m effort before coming up with his day's best jump of 69.50m in the second attempt. His next four attempts read 64.04m, 65.58m, 69.03m and 68.08m.

Tokyo Paralympics silver winner Mariyappan also grabbed a



gold in T63 high jump with a championship record of 1.88m. This was his first gold in a major event in eight years.

The 28-year-old Mariyappan won gold in T42 high jump in the 2016 Rio Paralympics and a silver in the Tokyo edition in 2021 in T63. He also won a silver in the T63 class in the Hangzhou Para Asian Games last year.

The T63 classification is for athletes with single through knee or above knee limb deficiency competing with a prosthesis. Americans Ezra Frech and Sam Grewe won silver and bronze with jumps of 1.85m and 1.82m respectively.

Earlier in the day, Ekta secured the gold medal with a season's best throw of 20.12m in the women's F51 club throw competition. Another Indian Kashish Lakra took the silver with an effort of 14.56m in the same event.

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bangkok, May 21: Fielding under-strength teams after having qualified for the Paris Olympics, both the men's and women's 4x400m quartets finished second at the inaugural Asian Relay Championships here Tuesday.

The women's team of Vithya Ramraj, MR Poovamma, Prachi Choudhary and Rupal Chaudhary clocked 3 minutes 33.55 seconds to finish behind Vietnam (3:30.81) in the women's 4x400m relay final, which was conducted amid thundershowers at the Suphachalasai National Stadium. Japan won the bronze medal with 3:35.45. Vietnam runners were ahead all through the race.

Vithya and Prachi were not part of the Indian quartet that clocked 3 minutes and 29.35 seconds to book a Paris Olympics quota during the World Athletics Relays in Nassau, Bahamas earlier this month. Jyothika Sri Dandi and Subha Venkatesan had teamed up with Poovamma and Rupal on that occasion.

The men's quartet of Muhammed Anas Yahiya, Santosh Kumar, Mijo Chacko Kurian and Arokia Rajiv also failed to stand on top of the podium as they clocked 3:05.76 to finish second behind Sri Lanka

(3:04.48). Vietnam was third with 3:07.37.

The Sri Lankan team was ahead after the first leg but Santosh put India in the lead in the second. Chacko kept India in the lead after the third leg but Sri Lanka's anchor runner Hewa Kalinga Kumarge overtook Arokia at the final stretch.

Santosh and Chacko were not part of the Indian quartet that clocked 3 minutes and 3.23 seconds to book a Paris Olympics quota during the World Athletics Relays in Bahamas earlier this month. Muhammed Ajmal and Amoj Jacob had teamed up with Muhammed Anas Yahiya and Arokia Rajiv on that occasion.

Monday, the Indian mixed 4x400 relay team set a national record while winning the gold medal but missed the target of entering the Paris Olympics qualification bracket.

The quartet of Muhammed Ajmal, Jyothika Sri Dandi, Amoj Jacob and Subha Venkatesan clocked 3 minutes 14.12 seconds to win the race. The earlier national record of 3:14.34 was clocked by the Indian team while winning silver medal at the Hangzhou Asian Games last year. India thus, is in a difficult position to make the Olympics cut as only sixteen teams will compete in the mixed 4x400m relay event in Paris.

Satwik-Chirag pair regains top spot in BWF world ranking

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, May 21: Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty Tuesday regained the No.1 spot in the men's doubles world rankings following their triumph at the Thailand Open.

The Indian duo had slipped to No.3 after the second round loss at the All England Championships and then gave a walkover in the Asia Championships in China due to an injury to Satwik. In the BWF rankings released Tuesday, they climbed two places with 99670 points to reclaim the top spot after five weeks.

Double Olympic medalist PV Sindhu dropped one place to No.15 in the women's singles rankings, while HS Prannoy retained his No.9 ranking and was the only Indian inside top 10 of the men's singles. Lakshya Sen dropped three places to 14th. In the women's doubles, Tanisha Crasto and Ashwini Ponnappa were the best ranked Indians at No 19, having climbed two spots.

Paris-bound wrestlers exempted from trials

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, May 21: The Wrestling Federation of India (WFI) Tuesday decided to exempt all six Olympic quota winners from selection trials but their form and fitness will be assessed at the upcoming Ranking Series event and the subsequent training camp in Hungary.

The WFI said the decision to not hold trials has been taken under peculiar circumstances and should not be used as a precedent in future.

The WFI also made it clear that if any wrestler is found to be lacking in fitness, the federation would consider a replacement through trials before July 8, the deadline for sending entries.

India have got six quotas for the Paris Games where Aman Sehrawat (57kg) will be the lone male wrestler in fray from the country. Vinesh Phogat (50kg), Antim Panghal (53kg), Anshu Malik (57kg), Nisha Dahiya (68kg) and Reetika Hooda (76kg) are

the women wrestlers who have qualified.

The wrestlers had requested the WFI not to hold trials, arguing that it could lead to injuries and the selection committee, led by President Sanjay Singh, accepted the plea.

The quota winners will compete in a UWW Ranking Series in Budapest from June 6-9 and will also participate in a training camp after the conclusion of the tournament from June 10-21.

The WFI decision has shut the Paris Olympic door on Tokyo Games silver medalist Ravi Dahiya (men's 57kg) and World Championship bronze winner Sarita Mor in women's (57kg), who were preparing for trials.

It also means that Vinesh Phogat will now have to compete in women's 50kg event only. She had the chance to compete in 53kg also if she defeated Antim in trials.

The WFI has also made it clear that the exemption from trials is a one-off thing and should not be used as a precedent in future.

Dhoni opens up on fitness challenge

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, May 21: Nearing 43, MS Dhoni's six-hitting ability and fitness remains as good as anyone and the former India skipper says he has no option but to keep working hard and stay fit since "nobody gives you a discount for age".

Dhoni, who handed Chennai Super Kings' captaincy to Ruturaj Gaikwad at the start of the 2024 IPL season, played all 14 league stage games, batted way down the order and yet made a huge impact.

The World Cup-winning captain scored 161 runs at an incredible strike rate of 220.55, forcing many to believe that he can play for two more years in the IPL. The iconic cricketer admitted that it is tough for him to perform after he comes straight to the IPL without playing any cricket prior to the league.

"The toughest thing is, I am not playing cricket throughout the year. So I have to be fit. Once I come, you are competing against youngsters who are fit and play-



You cannot command or demand respect. I may have a position in an institution, and yes, that position needs to be respected. But me as an individual sitting on the chair, I need to earn that respect. I cannot just say 'respect me'! If you have the respect of the people around you, they give 10 to 15 percent more

MS DHONI

ing international cricket. Professional sport is not easy, nobody gives you a discount for age," Dhoni said in a video that is doing the rounds on social media.

"If you want to play, you have to be as fit as the other guy. Age does not really give that grace to you. So, eating habits, a bit of training and all those things are there. Social media, thankfully, I am not on social media, so there's less distraction," Dhoni said in the video posted by Dubai Eye 103.8 YouTube channel.

For the legendary cricketer from Jharkhand, things like farming, riding bikes and vintage cars work as stress buster for him. "Once I quit international cricket, I wanted to spend a bit more time with my family. But, at that same time, to be mentally active, to have that passion to stay focussed — for me, I love farming, for me it is the motorbikes, I have started getting into vintage cars.

"These things de-stress me. If am stressed, I would maybe go to the garage, spend a couple of hours over there and I will just be fine, I would come back," he said.