



TOUGH TASK

Actor Anushka Sharma says it is harder for women to strike work-life balance in a male-dominated world

LEISURE

P2



SECURITY TIGHTENED

Pak beefs up security for former PM Imran Khan after he claimed that there was a plot to assassinate him

INTERNATIONAL

P10



SRH TAKE ON MI

With playoff berth at stake, Sunrisers Hyderabad face Mumbai Indians challenge in a must-win IPL game today

SPORTS

P12

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12 PAGES | ₹5.00



Corbevax price slashed to ₹250 per dose

Hyderabad: Vaccine maker Biological E Ltd (BE) Monday announced that it has reduced the price of its Covid-19 vaccine corbevax, from ₹840 to ₹250 a dose inclusive of GST, for private Covid-19 vaccination centres. For the end user, the price would be ₹400 a dose, including taxes and administration charges. The Hyderabad-based company said it has lowered the price of its vaccine with the aim of making it more affordable and help increase the reach to protect the maximum number of children against the virus.



Madras HC hears case through WhatsApp

Chennai: For the first time in the annals of the Madras High Court, a judge has conducted a case through 'WhatsApp', and on a Sunday, Justice GR Swaminathan took up the case while being stationed in Nagercoil, where he had gone to attend a marriage function Sunday, following a submission of PR Srinivasan, the hereditary trustee of Shri Abheeshta Varadaraja Swamy temple, that his village will face the 'divine wrath' if the proposed 'Rath' (Car) festival was not held Monday. "This fervent prayer of the writ petitioner made me hold an emergency sitting from Nagercoil and conduct the case through Whatsapp," the judge said in the opening sentence of his order.



Kumki elephant Nanda no more



POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, May 16: Nanda, a male Kumki (trained) elephant from the Nandankanan Zoological Park (NZP) here, breathed his last in the wee hours of Monday at around 3.00am in the Chandaka-Damapada Wildlife Sanctuary on the outskirts of the Capital city. Nanda had been brought to Godibari in Chandaka from the NZP in 2010. The pachyderm was trained to tackle stray and violent wild animals. According to a senior Forest department official, the tusker was administered a tranquiliser in order to be taken to a newly-constructed Elephant Rescue Center in the sanctuary, Saturday. However, he fell sick and fainted after receiving the dose. He was being treated by three veterinarians from the Odisha University of Agriculture and Technology (OUAT), Bhubaneswar and remained unconscious.

"Exact reason behind Nanda's death can be ascertained only after a post-mortem report comes in," an official said. It is pertinent to mention here that Nanda was born to Basanti at the NZP in November 28, 1997.

IRREGULAR by MANJUL



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MARKET WATCH			
INDEX			VARIATION
SENSEX	52973.84	▲	180.22
NIFTY	15842.30	▲	60.15
DOLLAR	77.45	▼	₹0.00
EURO	80.91	▲	₹0.26
GOLD	₹50,190	▲	₹317
SILVER	₹60,700	▲	₹1368

WEATHER			
	BHUB	CTK	
MAX	35.8°C	35.6°C	
MIN	27.6°C	27.2°C	
Humidity	84%	84%	Forecast
Rainfall	Nil	Nil	Light rain very likely

'SHIVLING FOUND' IN GYANVAPI MASJID WELL

Court orders sealing of spot

■ The local court is hearing a plea by a group of women seeking permission for daily prayers before the idols on its outer walls

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Varanasi, May 16: A local court here directed the district administration to seal a spot in the Gyanvapi Masjid complex after counsels representing the Hindu petitioners said a Shivling was found Monday during a court-mandated videography survey.

A mosque management committee spokesperson disputed the claim, telling a television channel that the object was part of a "fountain". He said lawyers representing the mosque committee were not fully heard before the sealing order was announced.

The Hindu side claimed that the "Shivling" was found close to the "wazookhana" - a small reservoir used by Muslim devotees to perform ritual ablutions before offering the namaz.

The claimed finding on the last



day of the survey reignited the mandir-masjid debate over the Gyanvapi mosque-Shringar Gauri complex located close to the iconic Kashi Vishwanath temple.

Uttar Pradesh Deputy Chief Minister Keshav Prasad Maurya expressed satisfaction over the development while AIMIM leader Asaduddin Owaisi said Muslims are not prepared to lose "another mosque" after the Babri Masjid.

Civil Judge (Senior Division) Ravi Kumar Diwakar issued directions on sealing an area of the mosque on an appeal by the lawyers representing the Hindu petitioners.

Along with the counsels representing the mosque management

committee, they had accompanied the team conducting the survey, headed by a court-appointed advocate commissioner. The judge directed the district magistrate, police commissioner and CRPF commandant in Varanasi to ensure the security of the sealed area.

The local court is hearing a plea by a group of women seeking permission for daily prayers before the idols on the mosque's outer walls. The survey was ordered during this hearing and was initially stalled by the mosque management, alleging that the commissioner assigned to the task was biased.

Monday's survey of the mosque complex started at 8am and ended

SC HEARING TODAY

New Delhi: The Supreme Court is scheduled to hear Tuesday the plea of the management of Gyanvapi mosque against the survey of the Gyanvapi-Shringar Gauri complex in Varanasi in Uttar Pradesh. The apex court will hear the matter amidst an important development with a Varanasi court Monday directed the district administration there to seal the spot of the survey inside the complex where allegedly 'Shivling' has been found by the surveying team.

around 10.15am. "All parties were satisfied with the work," Varanasi District Magistrate Kaushal Raj Sharma told reporters.

He said the next order of the court will be known only Tuesday, the deadline set by it for the advocate commissioner to submit the survey report. Till then nobody should disclose what has been found inside the court complex, the DM said.

"However, if anyone is disclosing it on his own, then its authenticity cannot be proved. Only the court is the custodian of this information," he said.



PRAYER FOR RAIN

Farmers lie on the ground with sticks as they pray for rain on the hot afternoon, during the Manda Puja festival outside a Shiva temple on the outskirts of Ranchi, Monday

PTI PHOTO

Minor siblings kill mom's paramour

POST NEWS NETWORK

Joda, May 16: In a shocking incident, two minor brothers allegedly killed a 45-year-old man over his extramarital affair with their mother at Shastri Nagar in Joda town of Keonjhar district, Sunday night.

The deceased was identified as Second Mahakur of this area. Police detained the two minor siblings and interrogated them in this connection.

Police said that the deceased was in an extramarital relationship with the minors' mother. The incident occurred when the

siblings caught the man in a compromising position with their mother in their house, Sunday night.

Enraged, the siblings dragged the deceased out of house and beat him up black and blue with iron bars. He collapsed with critical injuries when the minors rushed him to Tata Steel Hospital for treatment where doctors pronounced him dead.

Police registered a case in this connection and launched an investigation, Joda IIC Padmalaya Sahu said.

The minors' mother rejected the charges of extra-marital affair with the deceased, SDPO Himanshu Behera said.



Rlys earns ₹1,500cr by dropping elderlies' concession

The concessions, which were put on hold from March 2020 after the pandemic hit the country, have remained suspended to this day

AGENCIES

New Delhi, May 16: The Railways has generated an additional revenue of over ₹1,500 crore from senior citizen travellers in two years since March 2020 when the assistance was suspended after the onset of the coronavirus pandemic, an RTI response has found.

In its reply to a Right to Information query filed by Madhya Pradesh-based Chandra Shekhar Gaur, the Railways said that between March 20, 2020 and March 31, 2022, the Railways did not offer concessions to 7.31 crore senior citizen travellers. These included 4.46 crore males over the age of 60, 2.84 crore females over 58 and 8,310 transgender people.

The total revenue from senior cit-



izen travellers during the period is ₹3,464 crore, which includes an additional ₹1,500 crore earned due to the suspension of the conces-

sion, according to the RTI response. As for the gender-wise break-up for the overall revenue from senior citizens, the RTI reply said, it was

₹2,082 crore from male passengers, ₹1,381 crore from female travellers, and ₹45.58 lakh from transgenders.

Female senior citizen travellers are eligible for a 50 per cent concession, while male and transgenders can avail 40 per cent in all classes. The minimum age limit for a woman to avail the concession is 58, while it is 60 for a man.

The concessions, which were put on hold from March 2020 after the coronavirus pandemic hit the country, have remained suspended to this day, with senior officials indicating they might not be retained.

While train services remained suspended through most of 2020 and

parts of 2021, the demand for concessions began surfacing as services normalised.

Over the last two decades, the railways concessions have been a much-discussed topic with multiple committees recommending their withdrawal. As a result of this, in July 2016, the Railways made the concession for the elderly optional. The Railways incurs a huge burden of around ₹2,000 crore every year due to around 53 types of concessions it offers to various kinds of passengers.

The senior citizen concession amounts to around 80 per cent of the total discounts given by the national transporter.

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The senior citizen concession amounts to around 80 per cent of the total discounts given by the national transporter.

S-W monsoon debuts over Andaman & Nicobar Islands

AGENCIES

New Delhi, May 16: Southwest monsoon has advanced into the Andaman and Nicobar Islands Monday, the India Meteorological Department (IMD) said here, signalling the start of the four-month seasonal rains that are crucial to the largely agri-dependent economy.

The Andaman and Nicobar Islands and adjoining areas have been experiencing rainfall due to strengthening south-westerly winds in the lower tropospheric levels, the weather office said.

"Conditions are favourable for further advance of southwest monsoon into some more parts of south Bay of Bengal, entire Andaman Sea & Andaman Islands and some parts of east-central Bay of Bengal during next 2-3 days," the IMD said in a statement here.



The presence of cyclonic circulations over Lakshadweep and north Tamil Nadu coast are expected to bring fairly widespread rainfall with isolated thunderstorm lightning gusty winds with isolated heavy to very heavy falls over Kerala, Coastal & South Interior Karnataka during the next five days, it said.

Last week, the weather office had said that southwest monsoon was expected to reach Kerala by May 27, a good five days before the normal onset date of June 1, under the favourable weather conditions triggered by remnants of Cyclone Asani.

FORTUNE FORECAST

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ARIES
You are a touchy one. People will rub you the wrong way today. But remember that getting needlessly annoyed will bring nothing but more complications. Contemplate in seclusion about the root cause of the problem. Ganesha's hint? It is closer than you imagine.

TAURUS
Today, says Ganesha, you will be likely to encounter someone who is bent upon provoking and getting on your nerves. You are urged not to retaliate and do things unbecoming of your good nature. Keep calm and unruffled. Respond and behave in a manner befitting your better nature. Do not allow the other to spoil your composure, your graciousness.

GEMINI
You will be in an extremely emotional and romantic mood today. You may be worried about your personal relations, health, diet, career etc. You need to guard against giving into excessive stress and worry and look after your health, says Ganesha.

CANCER
You may be in one of your more frivolous moods today, foresees Ganesha. Gossip, fun, laughter and some harmless flirting shall make your day interesting, yet these are not the pastimes you usually enjoy. Hence, as the day rolls on, you shall find yourself to your reserved, reticent self concentrating hard on getting the work done to make way for the early evening gym/driving class.

LEO
To many, you will seem to have got your senses back after a long time. Reason? You will finally have a definite career plan in mind. Although, it's not really a big deal for you when your mind races and yearns to achieve in two warring directions, it may seem quite jarring and unreal to the mere mortals.

VIRGO
Leadership is your forte and you shall receive kudos for the manner in which you handle your team. Much awaited promotions will materialise and so will some extra cash in your wallet. Wisely enough, you didn't get all this by not effectively balancing home and work, says Ganesha. Don't slip on this tight-rope walk.

LIBRA
Ever heard of the phrase, "To stick one's foot in one's mouth"? Well, today you might be doing exactly the same, albeit unwittingly. You are likely to invite trouble, especially if some of those heated discussions get out of hand. A legal dispute does not seem unlikely.

SCORPIO
Your rung in the social ladder just went higher today. But be wary of green-eyed monsters and ill words. Fight tooth and nail – if necessary – to protect our reputation, says Ganesha. But also learn to find your enemies' Achilles' heel and target it ferociously.

SAGITTARIUS
No wonder, if you feel like you are stuck in a rut. Your energy level and enthusiasm has gone for a toss due to mundane routine. Unfortunately, your stars too seem to be lazy today, and there's nothing on the cards that can cheer you up. Ganesha advises to let the day pass calmly and wait for a better tomorrow.

CAPRICORN
You are armed with good communication skills, it helps you convince the most adamant of those around you. But, you'll need to hone this talent once again, says Ganesha. You'll look into heart of the matter and find the answers you have been searching for. As the day progresses, your creativity will come to the fore, impressing the people around.

AQUARIUS
The cupid may strike you today! The singles may feel the energy and excitement of budding romance. Equally blissful day for the married couples, too, as they will spend quality time with each other.

PISCES
Unexpected expenses are likely to crop up today. There are strong indications that you will set out upon a journey or a picnic to some nearby place, without too much prior planning. However, the journey will go off without a hitch. Even if you don't undertake any travel today, you will find yourself poring over the memories of your earlier sojourns, says Ganesha.



LISA PRESLEY DELIGHTED WITH NEW ELVIS BIOPIC

Lisa Marie Presley is thrilled with the new film about her late father Elvis Presley. The 54-year-old star hailed the movie about the King of Rock and Roll and reflected on how much her son Benjamin Keough, who died in 2020 aged 27, would have loved the picture.

DUA LIPA NEARLY QUIT MUSIC DUE TO TROLLS

English singer Dua Lipa, one of the biggest stars in the world of pop, has revealed that she once considered quitting music. The *One Kiss* hitmaker shared that she had doubts about succeeding in the industry because of the nasty messages she received online.



NATIONAL THEATRE FESTIVAL CONCLUDES

Sunset Guest House, a telling comment on prevailing system



BHUBANESWAR: Curtains came down on the five-day National Theatre Festival, organised by City-based theatre troupe Bidyakanak Srujanusthan, here at Rabindra Mandap, Monday.

Rourkela-based drama group Samparka presented Odia play *Sunset Guest House* on the concluding evening of the event. Written and directed by Bhaskar Chandra Mohapatra, this enter-

taining fiction took a sarcastic take on the prevailing system in the society. The director tried to highlight how people who follow a morally righteous path are often maligned by the wrong-doers but they don't make compromises with their values.

Apart from director Mohapatra, other who performed on stage included Ashok Bal, Pragyananda Mohanty, Sanjiv

Chand, Puspa Bisoi, Shreyas Vir Mohanta, Sasmita Bek, Surabhi Rana, Pralay Satpathy and Surendra Kumar Padhi.

The set was designed by Pragyaandatta Sahoo while Shakti Prasad Mishra scored the music.

Bhubaneswar(Central) MLA Ananta Narayan Jena, Rotarian Rabi Narayan Nanda, dramatist Mihir Meher, Odisha Natya Sangh president Haren Sahoo, drama director, Lalatendu Rath and Odisha Sangeet Natak Akademi secretary Prabodh Kumar Rath were among the dignitaries who attended the meeting.

PNN

Jitendra to promote Odia films at Cannes

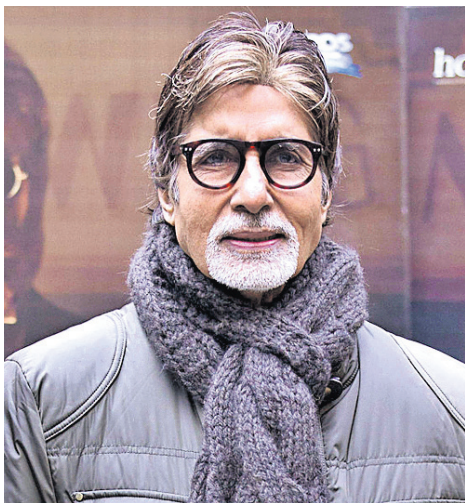
BHUBANESWAR: Jitendra Mishra, an internationally acclaimed filmmaker from Odisha who is widely known for promoting meaningful independent and regional films from India at global platforms, is going to promote ten different films from Odisha independently at the credible 'Marche du Film' during 75th Cannes film Festival scheduled from 17th May this year.

"Our state has unlimited timeless and original stories with high potentiality for the global markets. We just need to promote and present them at the right forums with the right approach. We have been putting our voluntary efforts to promote Odisha's rich art, culture, traditions, language and heritage values through timeless cinema from the state." said Jitendra on this occasion.

The films which will be part of Jitendra's CINEMA4GOOD film line-up at the Cannes Film Market include critically acclaimed *Adieu*

GODARD by Amartya Bhattacharyya, Sabyasachi Mohapatra's national and several international awards winning films *Aadim Vichar*, *Pahadara Luha* and *Sala Budha*, national award winning documentary film on Jagannath culture *The Lord Of The Universe* by Shibu Prusty, sports documentary *Mountain Hockey* by Avinash Pradhan and Debasish Mohapatra, short film *Pratha* made together by a group of students Anisha Kar, Swastik Sahu, Aryaman Padhee, Pratyasha Mohapatra from Odisha and a series of documentaries highlighting tourist destinations of Odisha.

PNN



I pray no one insults you in your old age: Amitabh to trolls

Mumbai: Amitabh Bachchan has surely learnt the art of giving befitting replies to trolls.

While fans were quick to flood the comment section of Big B's post with sweet wishes, some of the social media users also trolled the actor.

Sunday, Big B took to his Facebook account and sent morning wishes to his fans.

While fans were quick to flood the comment section of his post with sweet wishes, some users also trolled the actor for wishing late good morning. "Abey Buddha dopahar ho gaye (Old man, it's afternoon)," one of the comments read. However, Amitabh Bachchan gave a savage reply to the troll and wished that nobody call him a 'buddhe' when he gets old. "I pray to god that nobody insults you when you grow old," the actor wrote.

When another social media user sarcastically mentioned that Amitabh Bachchan has wished morning a little early, the actor wrote, "Thank you for your taunt. I was working till late hours, shooting got over early morning. Woke up late, so sent wishing right away. I apologise if you are hurt."

One of the netizens joked about how Amitabh Bachchan must have drunk country liquor late at night and therefore he woke up late. To this, the actor wrote in Hindi, "I do not drink, make others drink Madhushala."

AGENCIES

'Work-life balance is harder for women'

Mumbai: Anushka Sharma recently opened up about resuming work and striking a work-life balance as a new mother. According to her, it is harder for women in this male-dominated world.

The actress feels that people don't understand the life and emotions of a working mother, because the world is so male-dominated. Anushka revealed that even she didn't understand it till she became a mother. The NH 10 star admitted that she has so much more respect and love for women, and such a strong sense of sisterhood. According to her, she has always spoken up for women, but feeling love and compassion for the cause has made it even more powerful.

Elaborating further, Anushka added that women could do with more support from workplaces. While she admitted there are men who are kind and empathetic towards women, the actress pointed out that the work culture itself can be very tough.

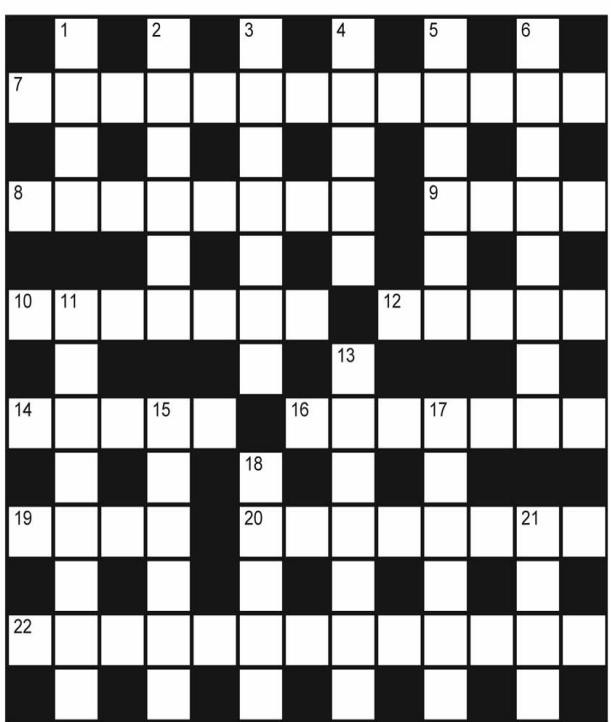
The actress concluded by wishing that we collectively pay more attention to how nurturing a child is important for the world at large.

The actress is married to cricketer Virat Kohli and is a doting mother to their child Vamika.

AGENCIES

FUN post

CROSSWORD



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Across

- 7 Boxing class
- 8 Like Connor MacLeod of Highlander
- 9 Church nook
- 10 Ali's foe
- 12 Synthetic fiber
- 14 Constraint
- 16 Recount
- 19 Engrave

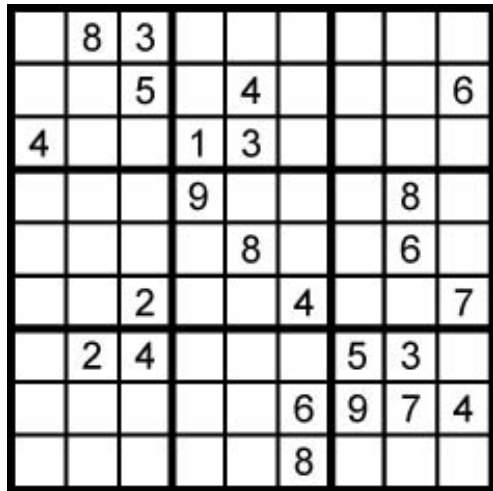
Down

- 1 Ray of light
- 2 Golf shot
- 3 Certain time zone
- 4 Expand
- 5 Wedlock no-no
- 20 Dormant
- 22 Baton twirler (4,9)

- 6 Terminate gradually (5,3)
- 11 Rescind
- 13 He waves the red flag
- 15 Connive
- 17 Decayed
- 18 Cronus or Oceanus
- 21 Distillery items

SUDOKU

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

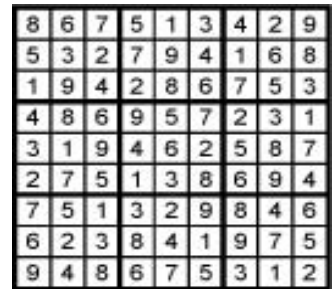


SOLUTIONS

CROSSWORD



SUDOKU



CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW

Naveen inaugurates 3 iron ore mines of OMC



POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, May 16: Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik inaugurated three iron ore mines—Banspani, Unchabali and Khandbandh—of Odisha Mining Corporation (OMC) located in Keonjhar on the state PSU's 67th foundation day celebration at Lok Seva Bhawan here Monday.

Stating that the OMC is striding as one of the largest and fastest growing mining companies in the country, the CM said it has achieved over 30 million tonne ore production in 2021-22 with a turnover of Rs 17,000 crore.

Naveen hoped the statistics would definitely go up in the current fiscal, and will set an example for other PSUs.

On the occasion, OMC inked a pact with Odisha Adarsha Vidyalaya Sangathan (OAVS) to set up five Odisha Mining Adarsha Vidyalayas (English medium) at five mining districts. Besides, a

pact was also inked with Directorate of Technical Education & Training to establish a Skill Academy at ITI-Koira in Keonjhar.

The state PSU will spend Rs 208 crore to set up the Adarsha Vidyalayas in OMC mining areas. It will also spend Rs 30 crore annually to manage these institutions. Patnaik said that the initiative will foster education and create a holistic environment for growth in Odisha.

Naveen also launched the OMC corporate anthem on the occasion. Congratulating the officers and employees on foundation day, the CM spoke high of OMC's social sector development initiatives.

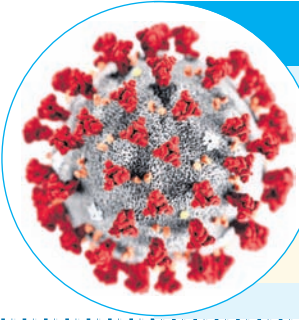
He said OMC has always pioneered many developmental initiatives steering positive changes in improving the quality of life of the people. Its effort in supporting the state in its fight against Covid-19 pandemic is highly commendable, the CM said.

"Be it sports, health, education



SUMMER RITUAL

Chandan Yatra of Lord Lingaraj in progress at Bindusagar in Old Town area of Bhubaneswar, Monday



COVID-19 TRACKER

	INFECTED	RECOVERED	DEAD
World	52,13,94,963	49,19,86,443	62,88,844
India	4,31,23,801	4,25,82,243	5,24,241
Odisha	12,88,311	12,79,017	9,126

AT A GLANCE

- OMC inked a pact with Odisha Adarsha Vidyalaya Sangathan to set up five Adarsha Vidyalayas at five mining districts
- The state PSU also inked a pact with Directorate of Technical Education & Training to establish a Skill Academy at ITI-Koira in Keonjhar
- The CM launched two IT modules of OMC—Compliance Management System and Litigation Management System

or peripheral development, OMC has always focused for excellence," said the CM.

On this occasion, Naveen also launched two IT modules of the state PSU—Compliance Management System (CMS) and Litigation Management System (LMS).

As many as 39 junior accountants, electricians received appointment letters and joined the organisation on the day.

Joining the programme, Steel and Mines Minister Prafulla Kumar Mallick appreciated the growth of OMC and outlined the state PSU's contribution in periphery development.

Among others, Chief Secretary Suresh Chandra Mahapatra, Development Commissioner PK Jena, Secretary to CM (ST) VK Pandian, OMC Chairman DK Singh and the state PSU's MD Balwant Singh attended the function.

KEEPING FRESH



A vendor splashes water on lychees in Jobra area of Cuttack, Monday

OP PHOTO

7 FRESH COVID CASES IN STATE

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, May 16: Odisha recorded seven fresh coronavirus cases Monday while there was no new fatality for the 13th consecutive day, the state Health department said in its bulletin.

Out of total seven new infections, five were reported from quarantine centres while two persons contracted the virus locally.

Ganjam and Sambalpur registered the highest number of cases at two each, followed by Balasore, Cuttack and Khurda with one new infection each.

There are 132 active Covid cases and 13 more patients have recuperated from the disease, according to the bulletin.

The coastal state's daily test positivity rate (TPR) stood at 0.06 per cent and four children were among the newly infected and 12,559 samples were tested in the past 24 hours, the Health bulletin stated.

The State Pool did not report any new case of persons coming from outside Odisha and testing positive for the disease.

The state had logged 14 infections and zero death Sunday. The toll stood at 9,126 and these are confirmed as Covid deaths after an audit. Fifty-three other coronavirus patients have died due to comorbidities so far, according to data.

The retally rose to 12,88,311 including 12,79,000 recoveries, the Health bulletin added. A total of 3,15,42,810 swab samples have been cumulatively tested so far.

Rain relief for scorched W Odisha

AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, May 16: The parched western part of Odisha got some respite from sweltering heat Monday as heavy to moderate rain lashed parts of the region overnight, the Met office said.

Ten towns recorded a maximum temperature of over 40 degrees Celsius, while the humidity was above 80 per cent at many places, according to the Bhubaneswar Meteorological Centre.

Kotpad in Koraput district received 79 mm of rainfall between Sunday evening and Monday morning. There was moderate downpour at several areas in Sambalpur, Bargarh, Jharsuguda, Kandhamal and Boudh, the department said.

Bolangir recorded 42.8 degrees Celsius, the highest in the state, followed by 42.5 degrees Celsius in Subarnapur and Boudh. The mer-



REPRESENTATIONAL IMAGE

The mercury in the state capital Bhubaneswar settled at 35.8 degrees Celsius, while it was 35.6 in Cuttack.

Kotpad in Koraput district received 79 mm of rainfall between Sunday evening and Monday morning

There was moderate downpour at several areas in Sambalpur, Bargarh, Jharsuguda, Kandhamal and Boudh

cury in the state capital Bhubaneswar settled at 35.8 degrees Celsius, while it was 35.6 in Cuttack, it said.

The Met office said that rainfall accompanied by thunderstorms

and dusty wind is likely in Odisha over the next three-four days due to strong southwesterly winds from the Bay of Bengal to northeast and eastern India.

SAFETY FIRST



A Fire Service personnel douses a blaze as part of an awareness drive at Fire Park in Baramunda area of Bhubaneswar, Monday. Shut since May 3 last year, the park will reopen for public May 21

OP PHOTO

8-yr RI for man, son in 2016 murder case

POST NEWS NETWORK

Champua, May 16: A local court Monday sentenced a man and his son to eight years of rigorous imprisonment (RI) and slapped a penalty of Rs 10,000 each after convicting them of killing a resident here in Keonjhar district in 2016.

The convicted were identified as Basant Behera and his son Banka Behera. The court ordered an additional six months of imprisonment in case of defaulting on payment of the penalty. The additional sessions judge here pro-



nounced the order after examining the statements recorded by 15 witnesses and the post-mortem report of the slain local. Advocate Madhusudan Pati pleaded the

matter on behalf of the state.

According to the case diary, Basant was playing cards with Jimmi, a local, on Diwali in October 2016 when they entered into a fight over some issue. Enraged, Basant and his son Banka hit Jimmi on his head with a spade.

A profusely bleeding Jimmi fell down when the two bludgeoned his head with stones and later burnt his body outside the Mahatab High School ground to erase the evidence. Police arrested the duo after the deceased's father lodged a complaint at Champua police station.

1 in 4 adults in India suffers from high blood pressure

HYPERTENSION AFFECTS MORE THAN 30 PER CENT OF THE ADULT POPULATION WORLDWIDE, WHICH IS MORE THAN ONE BILLION PEOPLE

High blood pressure or hypertension, which is often dismissed as a common lifestyle disease affecting scores of people across the world, can damage vital organs if not recognised and controlled at the right time, said experts Monday ahead of World Hypertension Day, observed annually May 17.

Hypertension affects more than 30 per cent of the adult population worldwide, which is more than one billion people.

According to a latest report by the India Council for Medical Research (ICMR), one in four adults in India suffers from hypertension and only 10 per cent of patients have their blood pressure under control.

Hypertension is defined as a condition where the force of the blood against the artery walls is too high. The more blood the heart pumps, the chances are higher for the arteries to become narrow, which therefore increases the blood pressure.

It is the main risk factor for cardiovascular diseases, especially coro-



WORLD HYPERTENSION DAY

- Hypertension is the main risk factor for cardiovascular diseases, especially coronary heart disease and stroke, but also for chronic kidney disease, heart failure, arrhythmia and dementia
- Besides causing heart and kidney problems, untreated high blood pressure can also affect your eyesight and lead to eye disease as well
- While hypertension generally impacts adults, it has now also started to affect even children and adolescents. It can cause cardiovascular complications in children, especially as they grow older

nary heart disease and stroke, but also for chronic kidney disease, heart failure, arrhythmia and dementia.

"Hypertension sometimes strikes without warning, which becomes life threatening. High blood pressure is frequently dismissed, as a common occurrence, and people may fail to recognise the problem until it damages vital organs," said Sanjay Gupta, Senior Consultant, Internal Medicine, Paras Hospitals, Gurugram.

"Consistent high blood pressure affects major organs such as the brain, heart and kidneys and is a major cause of premature deaths. Hypertension can be treated with common inexpensive drugs but the problem is people themselves decide

to stop the hypertension drugs thinking they are cured which can be dangerous," added Shuchin Bajaj, Founder Director, Ujala Cygnus Group of Hospitals.

Further, high blood pressure is a common risk factor in diabetes patients because of the impact of diabetes on the walls of the arteries and the fluid balance.

Both conditions often occur together and have multiple risk factors and causes in common. The risk of developing one condition also increases when a person has another.

Besides causing heart and kidney problems, untreated high blood pressure can also affect your eyesight and lead to eye disease as well.

While hypertension generally impacts adults, it has now also started to affect even children and adolescents. It can cause cardiovascular complications in children, especially as they grow older. Despite the fact that hypertension is a lifestyle disease, it is manageable, the experts said.

Maintaining an optimal weight and eating a well-balanced diet rich in fresh fruits, vegetables, whole grains, lentils, beans and taking blood pressure medicine regularly, avoiding junk food as well as food rich in salt. Cutting down stress and smoking and alcohol consumption, together with proper physical activity is very important to prevent hypertension related complications, they suggested.

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9th Anniversary of International Day of Art of Giving

Date: 17th May 2022
Venue: Swosti Premium, Bhubaneswar
Time: 04:45 pm

Chief Guest
Professor Ganeshi Lal
Hon'ble Governor of Odisha

Chief Speaker
Shri Niranjan Rath
President, Servants of the People Society (Odisha Branch) and Publisher & Printer, The Samaja

Guest of Honour
Baba Ram Narayan Das Maharaj
Founder-President, Sri Ram Mandir, Unit - 1, Bhubaneswar

Swami Sivachidananda Saraswati Maharaj
Secretary, Sivananda Centenary Boys' School, Bhubaneswar

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Fight cooperative election with all seriousness: Naveen

Election to the three-tier cooperative societies including farmers, weavers, fishermen, and milkmen societies is due in Odisha since the completion of the tenure of the elected management in 2020



POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, May 16: BJD President Naveen Patnaik Monday asked his party leaders to fight the ensuing cooperative election in the state with all seriousness.

The BJD aims to get similar results in the cooperative poll like the recently held urban and Panchayat elections.

While interacting with the party functionaries to review the preparedness made for the cooperative body election through videoconferencing mode, Naveen said that elections to more than 6,000 primary societies will be held June 19 and June 26 in the first phase and after this process is over, the election to the central and apex societies will be held.

He said the BJD has done very well in the last Urban Local Body (ULB) elections and Panchayat elections. All the party leaders and workers have put in their best efforts to ensure a landslide victory in both, he said.

POLL PREPAREDNESS

■ The party has formed district level committees in each district to monitor the elections at the primary level.

■ For better supervision and monitoring, four zonal committees for the central, north, south, and west zones have been constituted to coordinate with the district committees and observers of respective districts.

■ Similarly, for overall monitoring and supervision of the entire election process, a state level committee has been constituted that will coordinate with the districts in the smooth conduct of the elections

“The results have been satisfactory for us, and we have been able to form zilla parishads in all the 30 districts. Our party candidates have won as mayors, corporators, chairpersons, vice-chairpersons and councilors in almost all ULBs and the candidates supported by us have won as chairpersons and vice-chairpersons in most of the blocks,” he pointed out.

“From our party’s point of view, this election is very important to us and has to be fought with all seriousness,” the CM told the party leaders. Calling it a new benchmark of BJD’s political strength in the entire state, Naveen urged his party leaders to utilise this strength strategically everywhere, so that the BJD can fare much better in the cooperative elections than the last time.

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have been constituted to coordinate with the district committees and observers of respective districts. Similarly, for overall monitoring and supervision of the entire election process, a state level committee has been constituted that will coordinate with the districts in the smooth conduct of the elections.

Naveen asked the state committee to review the zonal and district committees once a week till the elections and submit their weekly observations regarding preparedness, progress and prospects.

Election to the three-tier cooperative societies including farmers, weavers, fishermen, and milkmen societies is due in Odisha since the completion of the tenure of the elected management in 2020.

AT LORD’S ABODE



Devotees congregate at Lokanath temple in Puri, Monday

OP PHOTO

Badminton HPC in Kalinga Stadium soon

THE HPC WILL OFFER WORLD-CLASS TRAINING AND COACHING FACILITIES UNDER THE DIRECT SUPERVISION AND GUIDANCE OF PULLELA GOPICHAND, WHO HAS PLAYED A KEY ROLE IN THE RISE OF INDIAN BADMINTON

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, May 16: A state-of-the-art badminton high-performance centre (HPC), under the technical and coaching supervision of Pullela Gopichand, will be operational soon at the Kalinga stadium complex here.

The construction of the Dalmia Bharat Gopichand Odisha Badminton Academy in Bhubaneswar is going on in full swing and will be completed in September. It will be operational soon thereafter, the state Sports department said Monday.

The Odisha government has provided three acres of land, where Dalmia Bharat Group is building the infrastructure at a cost of Rs



55 crore, and former chief national coach Gopichand will bring in the expertise, according to a release.

The HPC will offer world-class training and coaching facilities under the direct supervision and guidance of Gopichand, who has played a key role in the rise of

Indian badminton.

The 500-seater academy will be equipped with eight badminton courts and will have advanced sports amenities

The facility will host national and international badminton tournaments. It will have a gymna-

sium, boarding and lodging facilities for players, coaches and support staff, a sports science room and a health club.

The building is placed on a glass cylinder, giving it a floating-cork (of shuttlecock) effect. Special illumination lights will be projected from the rooftop to give it a shuttlecock effect at night. The aerodynamic circular shape will help wind to flow away and reduce the maximum wind pressure from the façade.

Odisha had signed a partnership with Dalmia Bharat and the Pullela Gopichand Badminton Foundation in 2018 to set up a world-class badminton academy in the state. The foundation stone was laid by Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik in February 2019.

State biz icons feted at Utkal Tycoons Awards

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, May 16: Noted business icons of Odisha were conferred with the Utkal Tycoons Awards at an exotic event organised by the Utkal Updates and Addiction Fashion Management at a City hotel, Monday.

As part of the award function and fashion fest ‘Utkal Tycoons Awards with Bhubaneswar Runway Week Season-6’, well known and successful faces of state business fraternity got thumping applause for their contribution to the economy of Odisha.

The programme began with lamp lighting by organisers Sushree Sangeeta Sahu, John Ajay, Gaurav, Sridhar Epari and Sunil Murarka. Odisha Assembly Speaker Surjya Narayan Patro graced the event as the Chief Guest while Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC) Mayor Sulochana Das was invited as the guest of honour.

The awards were conferred on Frozit Director Rashmi Sahoo; Gayatri Devi Group Director Nirupama Biswal; Espirit Toyota Director Kabir Taneja; real estate player Ratnamala Swain; Indulge the Saloon MD Sukirti Pattnaik; Mother’s Public School MD Sreejit Pattnaik; EeVe Scooters Co-founder and MD Harshavardhan Didwania; Rajhans Director Pradeep Pansari; Odisha Hotel MD Rajiv Swain; Embassy MD Punya Prakash Parida; and Biggies Burger founder Biraja Prasad Rout.

To uplift the fashion statement of Odisha to a higher level, the Bhubaneswar Runway Season-6 was organised at the event where eminent fashion designers showcased their creativity and gripped the audiences with their authentic designs. A total of 30 models participated in the event. Odia film celebrities Elina Samantray and Bhoomika graced the occasion as guest designers while brands like Priya Mohapatra, Sipra Das, Savitri Panigrahi, Selina Dashon and Reemly Studio participated and showcased their designs.

BUDDHA PURNIMA



Devotees light earthen lamps at Buddha temple in Bhubaneswar on the occasion of Buddha Purnima, Monday

OP PHOTO

HOW TWITTER INFLUENCES COVID VACCINATION RATES

Sentiments toward Covid-19 vaccines, whether positive or negative, previews subsequent vaccination rates, finds a study of related Twitter posts.

Vaccination can help end the continuing surges and new variants of the Covid pandemic. But vaccine hesitancy undermines the impact of vaccination individually and collectively.

Compounding this is the role of social media, which increasingly amplifies both information and misinformation regarding vaccination, raising questions about how, specifically, these platforms affect vaccination rates.

The study, conducted by researchers at New York University, showed that positive sentiment expressed on Twitter towards vaccinations was followed, a week later, by increase in vaccination rates in the same geographic area while negative sentiment was

followed in the same region by decrease in vaccination rates the following week.

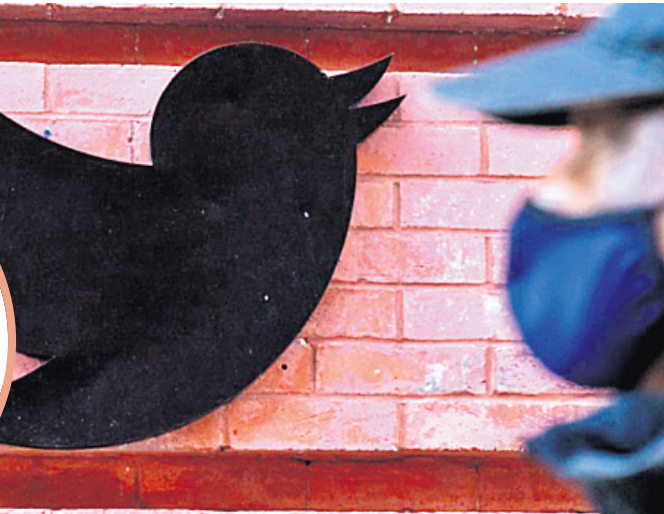
The results, which appear in the journal Clinical Infectious Diseases, offer

While the method helped identify patterns in vaccine hesitancy over time and place, it can only monitor, and not influence, vaccine hesitancy, which is constantly changing. More work is needed to build trust in life-saving vaccines and undo the influence of vaccine negativity

MEGAN COFFEE | CLINICAL ASSISTANT PROFESSOR, DIVISION OF INFECTIOUS DISEASE AND IMMUNOLOGY, DEPARTMENT OF MEDICINE, NYU GROSSMAN SCHOOL OF MEDICINE

new insights into the influence of social media on public health measures.

“We need to understand vaccine hesitancy and social media’s impact on creating and spreading it,” said Megan Coffee, clinical assistant



BY CONTRAST, AFTER THE VACCINE ROLLOUT COMMENCED, NEGATIVE SENTIMENT TWEETS EXCEEDED POSITIVE ONES

professor in the Division of Infectious Disease and Immunology within the Department of Medicine at NYU Grossman School of

Medicine.

The team deployed a real-time big data analytics framework using sentiment analysis and natural

The team of researchers deployed a real-time big data analytics framework using sentiment analysis and natural language processing (NLP) algorithms

The system takes real-time tweets and identifies tweets related to vaccines and classifies these by certain themes and provides sentiment analysis, cataloguing tweets as positive, negative, or neutral

Together they analysed 23,000 vaccine-related tweets from March 20, 2021 to July 20, 2021 and then compared them with vaccination rates in different US states

The findings showed that in the first several months of the pandemic, and before the vaccine rollout commenced at the end of 2020, positive and negative sentiment toward vaccines was similar, with slightly a higher positive sentiment

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The findings showed that in the first several months of the pandemic, and before the vaccine rollout commenced at the end of 2020, positive and negative sentiment toward vaccines was similar, with slightly a higher positive sentiment. By contrast, after the vaccine rollout commenced, negative sentiment tweets exceeded positive ones.

“While the method helped identify patterns in vaccine hesitancy over time and place, it can only monitor, and not influence, vaccine hesitancy, which is constantly changing. More work is needed to build trust in life-saving vaccines and undo the influence of vaccine negativity,” Coffee said.

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

SHORT TAKES

Ward member charred to death

Bargarh: In a tragic incident, a woman ward member was charred to death in a house fire at Bidyadharpur under Tirtol police limits in Jagatsinghpur district, Monday. The deceased was identified as Saraswati Sethi, 52, wife of Surendra Sethi and a ward member of ward no-1 in the village. However, the exact reason behind the fire is yet to be ascertained. Reports said the house caught fire around Sunday noon when Saraswati was cooking food. Soon flames engulfed the entire house. Though she tried to come out of the house, she failed to do so due to heavy smoke in the house, sarpanch Saheda Tabassum said. She was rushed to Jagatsinghpur DHH and later shifted to SCB Medical College and Hospital at Cuttack where she succumbed to the burns.

Cannabis worth ₹1.3cr seized

Baripada: Police have seized a huge cache of ganja estimated to be around Rs 1.30 crore from here in Gajapati district Monday. The raid team also arrested three peddlers. The arrested drug peddlers have been identified as Pradeep Majhi, 36, Ashok Rana, 36, of Balisahi village under R Udayagiri police limits, and Ashok Majhi, 22, of Jurapeta village. As per reports, police patrolling team intercepted a van at Dengma-Kalameri road near Dengma village under Mohana police limits while it was en route to Berhampur from R Udayagiri. Following a thorough search, the police recovered cannabis weighing over 12 quintals and seized it.

Jumbo tramples man to death

Udala: An elderly man was trampled to death by an elephant in a jungle near Betei under Kaptipada forest division in Mayurbhanj district, Sunday. The deceased was identified as Maheswar Dehuri, 61, in the village. He had been to the nearby jungle to collect leaves when an elephant picked him on its tusk and trampled him to death. Family members searched for him and found his body lying in the forest. Police registered a case and sent the body for post-mortem. Kaptipada DFO visited the spot and took stock of the situation. The DFO assured that financial assistance and ex gratia will be provided to the deceased's family members as per norms.

Woman kills self

Berhampur: A woman committed suicide by consuming poison over domestic dispute at K Samantaraypur under Kabisuryanagar police limits in Ganjam district, Monday. The deceased was identified as Geeta Bisoyi, 40, wife of Bhagaban Bisoyi. Family members rushed her to the local hospital and later shifted her to MKCG Medical College and Hospital in Berhampur where she died. The medical outpost police registered a case and sent the body for post-mortem. According to sources, Geeta had a spat with her husband over some issue. She lost her mental balance and went outside where she consumed poison to end life.

Kendu leaf collection to resume after 2 yrs

Kandhamal pluckers elated over hike in wages and bonus

POST NEWS NETWORK

Phulbani, May 16: Collection of kendu leaf that had remained suspended for the last two years in Kandhamal district due to Covid-19 pandemic will resume soon. The Forest department has decided to resume the leaf collection in the current year and set a target to collect 10,000 tonne of the minor forest produce. The decision has brought great relief for thousands of kendu leaf pluckers, who had lost their livelihood for the last two years. Reports said nearly 50,000 tribals are engaged in the kendu leaf collection in Kandhamal district. Most of the pluckers are women. Their work starts from leaf collection in forests till making bundles of the leaves. Recently, the state government

has hiked wages and bonus for the leaf collectors. There are seven forest ranges – Phulbani, Gochhapada East, Gochhapada West, Baliguda, Dasapalla, Bhanjanagar and Tumudibandh – under Phulbani kendu leaf division. Meanwhile, the divisional authorities have repaired the broken phadis (storehouses). It was learnt that in the current year, 42,000 leaf pluckers and 4,000 seasonal staffers have been engaged for the kendu leaf collection. They will also be benefitted from the hike pension and bonus hike. However, it was often alleged that leaf pluckers and seasonal staffers were not paid wages and bonus regularly. Divisional forest officer (DFO) Hemant Kumar Sahu said, “There won't be any issue in providing bonus to the pluckers. Steps are being taken to ensure availability of wages and bonus to pluckers in time.”

Absenteeism in schools alarming

A survey reveals that as many as 6,392 students are not going to school in Rayagada

POST NEWS NETWORK

Rayagada, May 16: At a time when an investigation is underway into the alleged absenteeism of students in HSC examination, attendance in schools across tribal-dominated Rayagada district has dropped to unusually low levels, though there is significant drop in Covid-19 cases. A recent survey revealed that as many as 6,392 students (both boys and girls) are not going to school. Many students are either scared of going to school or are being kept home by anxious parents due to the pandemic. The survey has revealed that at least 2,708 students of primary level are not coming to schools while 3,684 are not attending the high schools. Low attendance rates have created significant challenges for the administration to bring back the students to schools. This has affected both teaching and learning in the schools. Absenteeism is highest in



FILE PHOTO

Kashipur block and lowest in Gudari block. With the rise in student absenteeism cases, the state government has directed the teachers to visit dropout students and convince them to return back to schools. “We are trying to reach out the students and parents. But, there is a fear among the parents about the spread of the virus. They fear for their children,” Bijaylaxmi Pattnaik, headmistress of Rayagada-based Ex Board Bilingual School said adding that many boys

have reportedly travelled to other states to work as migrants. Similarly, assistant teacher Chandrasekhar Panda said that pupils are helping their parents in farming and other petty jobs. So, they prefer not to come to schools. “A special committee has been formed to attract the students back to schools. Plans are afoot to bring back the students, who have gone outside the state to work as bonded labourers. Teachers are travelling

LOW ATTENDANCE RATES HAVE CREATED SIGNIFICANT CHALLENGES FOR THE ADMINISTRATION TO BRING BACK THE STUDENTS TO SCHOOLS
THIS HAS AFFECTED BOTH TEACHING AND LEARNING IN THE SCHOOLS
ABSENTEEISM IS HIGHEST IN KASHIPUR BLOCK AND LOWEST IN GUDARI BLOCK

Raid at Machhkund village to arrest police attackers

POST NEWS NETWORK

Jeypore, May 16: Three days after a team of Malkangiri police was brutally attacked by villagers during a raid on ganja smuggling at Matikhal under Machhkund police limits in Koraput district, five platoons of police force Monday carried out a search operation in the village.



The search party led by Nandapur SDPO conducted a search in the village in presence of Machhkund tehsildar and seized various tra-

ditional weapons from the houses of the villagers. Police have failed to arrest anyone in the case as all the men have fled the village and hiding in dense forests. The raid team only seized bow and arrows, knives, axes and other old traditional weapons from the village. The raid was carried out by police personnel from Koraput, Lamtaput and Machakunda police stations. The local sarpanch was also present during the search operation. It is pertinent to mention that the villagers had attacked a team of 30 Malkangiri police in civil dress during a midnight raid on ganja smuggling May 13. The villagers had also detained one police personnel Pradip Kumar Nayak who was later rescued by Machhkund Police. The villagers have claimed that they attacked the cops as they were in civil dress and mistook them for dacoits. However, a case has been registered against a few men of the village and a manhunt has been launched to nab them.

Fakirpur CHC head ‘assaulted’

POST NEWS NETWORK

Anandapur, May 16: Tension prevailed after the medical officer (in-charge) of Fakirpur community health centre (CHC) here in Keonjhar district was allegedly thrashed by a person and hurled slangs at the residence of Anandapur MLA, in his absence, Saturday. A female staff nurse accompanying the medical officer was also not spared and abused by the accused person. The matter came to the fore after the medical officer, Dr Jayant Kumar Dash, lodged a complaint at Anandapur police station demanding stringent action against the accused person, Sunday. Police registered a case 117/2022 in this connection and began a probe. The incident has triggered an atmosphere of fear in the hospital premises. A visibly shaken Dash said that he and his staffers are feeling unsafe and threatened after the incident. According to the complaint filed



Medical officer Jayant Kumar Dash lodged a complaint at Anandapur police station seeking stringent action against the accused

by Dash he along with some staffers and the nurse visited the residence of Anandapur MLA at Fakirpur in their official vehicle to discuss about some developmental works

in the health centre. The medical officer after his arrival found some persons present at the MLA's residence and expressed his intent to meet the MLA. Suddenly, one of the persons present flew into rage and hurled abuses in slangs at the lady staffer of the hospital. Later, he hurled obscene abuses at the medical officer and pulled him by holding his shirt collar and slapped him. During the melee, the MLA was not present at his residence, the superintendent added.

CM Naveen to visit Tara Tarini temple tomorrow

POST NEWS NETWORK

Purushottampur, May 16: The temple of Maa Tara Tarini, the presiding deity of Ganjam district, is gleaming ahead of Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik's visit to the shrine Wednesday. Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik is scheduled to attend the Mahotsav May 18. The six-day 'Pratishtha Mahotsav' of the redeveloped temple complex of Tara Tarini began with great enthusiasm and religious fervour Sunday. The celebrations will continue at the Adi Shakti Peetha on Kumari hills along Rushikulya river bank near Purushottampur till May 20. Various rituals of the deity will be performed during this period. A 'jal yatra' was organised Monday. As per rituals, Ganjam Collector Vijay Amruta Kulange, along with 108 women and pundits collected water from Rushikulya river and started the 'jal yatra'. They had to climb at least 999 stairs with the holy water on their heads to reach the temple. Jajpur MLA Pranab Prakash Das,

The six-day 'Pratishtha Mahotsav' of the redeveloped temple complex with great enthusiasm and fervour Sunday
Khalikote MLA Surjyamani Baidya, Kabisuryanagar MLA Latika Pradhan, southern range DIG Satyabrata Bhoi and Ganjam SP Brijesh Kumar Rai also visited the temple and offered prayers. Purushottampur sub-collector Priyaranjan Prusty, District Information & Public Relations officer Rabinarayan Behera, Purushottampur tehsildar Nitish Kumar Tripathy, additional tehsildar Sunil Kumar Tudu, BDO Bijay Kumar Behera, SDPO Suryamani Pradhan, IIC Priyash Ranjan Chotray, NAC executive engineer Soumya Ranjan Mishra, fire brigade officer Umacharan Bhatmishra, temple executive officer TK Reddy were among the others present during the prayer meet.

Ex-OPTCL DGM gets 5 yrs in jail

Baripada: A Vigilance special court here Monday sentenced a former deputy general manager of Odisha Power Transmission Corporation Ltd (OPTCL) Division in Baripada to five years of rigorous imprisonment after convicting him of demanding ₹3,000 bribe from the owner of a four-wheeler. The special judge, Prasanna Panda, also slapped a penalty of ₹40,000 on the former DGM, Jashobant Narayan Dhar, as part from the punishment. In default, Dhar was directed to undergo an additional one year and eight months of imprisonment, government advocate Swaraj Kumar Ray said. Dhar was facing trial for demanding and accepting illegal gratification of ₹3,000 from a complainant to prepare the bill and update the log book of a vehicle which was engaged in his office on rent October 25, 2017. The judge passed the order after examining the statements recorded by the witnesses and the case diary. Dhar is currently posted as the DGM Section-1 of OPTCL at Bhubaneswar.

Chhatrapur truck terminal victim of admin negligence

HUNDREDS OF TRUCKS TRANSPORTING GOODS TO DIFFERENT INDUSTRIAL UNITS ARE SEEN HALTING ALONG THE HIGHWAY FOR HOURS TOGETHER, THEREBY CAUSING TRAFFIC JAM

POST NEWS NETWORK

Chhatrapur, May 16: A modern truck terminal project proposed to come up alongside National Highway-16 here in Ganjam district has run into troubles allegedly due to administrative negligence. The terminal with all the modern facilities like weigh bridge, fuel stations, cold storages, godowns, workshop, rest areas, police stations, RTO office, health care facilities, check posts, post offices, banks, administrative block, drinking water, electricity, toilets, shops and lodging facility was proposed to curb traffic snarls and road accidents. The project would also have provided additional health and other utility services to drivers and transporters.



As per a source, the Transport department had written a letter to the district administration December 21, 2021 to prepare a detailed project report (DPR) along with the work plan for the approval of the project. However, the ad-

ministration is yet to reply to the letter, the source said. This has resulted in delay in the execution of the ambitious project. The objectives of the proposal include easing of traffic snarls, smooth passage of vehicles including heavy ones in and out of the town and reduction of pollution level

Transport department had written a letter to the district administration December 21, 2021 to prepare a detailed project report (DPR) along with the work plan for the approval of the project. However, the administration is yet to reply to the letter. This has resulted in delay in the execution of the ambitious project. The objectives of the proposal include easing of traffic snarls, smooth passage of vehicles including heavy ones in and out of the town and reduction of pollution level. Sources said road accidents are

on the rise in the district and so also the fatalities. Hundreds of trucks transporting goods to different industrial units are seen halting along the highway for hours together, thereby causing traffic jam. In the absence of either a flyover or an underpass, the commuters face loads of difficulties. It was proposed by the Transport department to identify 10 to 20 acres of land for one or two terminals keeping in mind the requirement. Many trucks are parked alongside the NH as several units like Grasim Chemical Industries, Gopalpur Port, Titanium Plant, Indian Rare Earths (IRE) Plant, Tata Industrial Park, a cement godown at Jagannathpur, an FCI warehouse and several goods sheds are located beside the NH.

OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER
MINOR IRRIGATION DIVISION, SONEPUR
GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA, “e”-PROCUREMENT NOTICE
No. A-170 BID IDENTIFICATION No.: Online/SNPMI-01/2022-23
1. Name of the Inviting Officer : Executive Engineer, Minor Irrigation Division, Sonapur
2. Name of the Work : Improvement of M.I.Ps in different Block of Subarnapur District under RR&R Grant during the year 2022-23.
3. No. of works : 5 (Five) Nos.
4. Tender Amount : 14.09 lakhs to 46.70 lakhs
5. Date and time of availability of Bid document in the portal for online Bidding from : 10.00 hrs. Dt 18.05.2022 to 17.00 hrs. Dt 27.05.2022
6. Last date and time of receipt of Bids in the portal : 17.00 hrs. Dt 27.05.2022
7. Last date and time for clarification upto : 17.00 hrs. Dt 23.05.2022
8. Date of opening of Bid: (Technical) : 11.00 hrs. onwards Dt 28.05.2022
The details tender call notice can also be seen in the DOWR website: <https://dowrodisha.gov.in>
Name & Address of the OIT : Executive Engineer, M.I. Division, Sonapur, At/P.O./Dist.: Subarnapur, PIN - 767017, Ph.: 06654-220516, E-mail: eemispnp@yahoo.com
Further details can be seen from the e-Procurement market place: <https://tenderodisha.gov.in>
• Subsequent corrigendum/addendum if required shall be available in the above portal.
• The tender inviting authority reserves the right to reject/cancel any or all tenders without assigning any reason thereof.
Executive Engineer, M.I. Division, Sonapur
OIPR-32290/11/0002/2223

“One of the chief obstacles to the establishment of a progressive harmony is our eagerness to prove to an opponent that he is wrong and we are right.”

THE MOTHER



Shireen Abu Aqleh

Rarely does a journalist get the respect and recognition that Al Jazeera's Shireen Abu Aqleh, the 51-year-old Palestinian American journalist, got before she was gunned down allegedly by Israeli armed forces last week. Shireen had become a role model for Palestinian women for her intrepid journalism exposing brutalities on Palestinians. Her voice while signing off her reportage has become iconic in the Arab world. Journalists all over the world trooping in to cover developments in Israel-Palestine had huge respect for her stature and willingness to help them gain insight into the state of affairs in the region. The condemnation and demand for an impartial probe into her killing made by the United Nations Security Council represents a rare case of Security Council unity on an issue related to Israel. It speaks volumes for the high standards of journalism and integrity that she had shown in her work as well as for the television network that harbored her.

Israel initially denied that the perpetrators were its armed personnel, but coming under international pressure it has been forced to announce a probe. But, that does not inspire much confidence since Israel is known for enacting farces in the name of such probes. The shooting of Shireen has not only sent shockwaves among her friends and admirers, but is a deadly reminder that Press freedom in the world today is in jeopardy. She was among a group of journalists covering a raid by the Israel Defense Forces in the refugee camps in the West Bank city of Jenin last week when, according to the reporters present there, soldiers shot her in the head. She and her producer (who was shot in the back) were wearing vests marked with the word "Press". A statement issued by the military said Palestinian gunmen recklessly fired hundreds of rounds at an Israeli military vehicle, some in the direction of where Abu Aqleh was standing. It said Israeli forces returned fire and that without doing ballistic analysis, it was not possible to determine who was responsible for her death. Reporters, who were with Abu Aqleh, said there were no clashes or fighters in the immediate area when she was killed.

Israel's response, like most governments' across the globe in such situations, is following the predictable line of denial and deflection. It had first tried to pass the incident off as the work of Palestinians and circulated a doctored video to substantiate its claim. But, when Al Jazeera debunked Israel's concocted version with its own video footage showing how Shireen collapsed at the spot where no Palestinians were found, Israel offered to conduct a proper investigation. But the Israeli army investigating itself will not have the trust of Palestinians, or the wider world. At least 47 journalists have been killed by Israeli forces since 2000. The figures in countries like India are no less.

Palestinians are especially vulnerable and often treated not as impartial observers but as partisans. Shockingly, no one has been held to account or appropriately punished in Israel for deaths of journalists. After each probe, Israeli police or army personnel were let off with light reprimand.

No wonder, the Palestinian president, Mahmoud Abbas, wants to go to the International Criminal Court over Shireen's death. Before her killing, the International Federation of Journalists had already submitted claims to the court that Israel's targeting of the media amounted to war crimes. Negotiations on the Security Council statement on Shireen's killing were led by Norway, the United Arab Emirates, and the United States. Norway's UN Ambassador Mona Juul commended the "good collaboration" by UN ambassadors and termed protection of journalists a priority for her country. "We are particularly concerned about the rising trend in attacks on media workers, and on women journalists in particular," Juul said later in a statement.

What is really disconcerting is the failure of the new inclusive government of Israel, which has promised to adopt a liberal approach to Israel-Arab conflict, to rein in the armed forces and the police targeting Palestinians. For, last year the highest number of Palestinian deaths resulting from confrontations with Israelis was recorded since 2014. Not only that, Israeli police continued with impunity to launch an unprovoked attack on mourners carrying the coffin of Shireen. The funeral in Jerusalem drew thousands of people. The procession, under Palestinian flags and amid slogans, was among the largest gatherings in Jerusalem in recent memory. It also turned out to be an unusually open display of Palestinian national sentiment. But, at the start of the funeral Israeli riot police stormed into a group of mourners as they tried to carry the coffin from a hospital in East Jerusalem to a church in the Old City. The police did not seem to have learnt any lesson from the killing, fired stun grenades and used batons to beat the mourners. However, Israel's minister for regional cooperation who is a Palestinian-Israeli member of the Left-wing Meretz party, decried that the Israeli police "disgraced the memory and funeral" of Abu Aqleh.

The killings and attacks on journalists in Israel-Palestine conflict zone show mere change of government with a liberal face is not enough. The need is for the change of a mindset of different wings of the ruling establishment and tolerance for truth, however unpalatable it may be, for the rulers and the agencies they control. In India the ruling dispensation often uses its probe agencies to cow down its critics and journalists. It may not be a coincidence that the spyware used by the Indian government to access the mobile phones of journalists and civil society activists in order to track their activities in the cause of free speech was supplied by an Israeli company.

WISDOM CORNER

“The price of anything is the amount of life you exchange for it.”

HENRY DAVID THOREAU

“Keep your face to the sunshine and you cannot see a shadow.”

HELEN KELLER

“If you plan on being anything less than you are capable of being, you will probably be unhappy all the days of your life.”

ABRAHAM MASLOW

WORDSWORTH

Swamper

It seems the term was originally applied to workmen who cleared roads for the fellers of trees in a swamp or forest. The word uses swamp in its old sense from the American colonies of an area of rich soil having trees and other vegetation, but too moist for cultivation, not necessarily an area that always contains standing water. The usage goes back at least to 1857. The job was unskilled labouring and later the word moved over to refer to other jobs of similar kind — a man-of-all-work in a liquor saloon, an assistant to a cook, then an assistant to a driver of horses or mules. This dates from 1870, and seems to be the direct ancestor of the usage you describe. After this piece first appeared in the newsletter, John Wilkins wrote to say that "Swamper is also used among Colorado River whitewater guides as the name for a helper who assists the guide with meal preparation, clean up, and boat duties". Gordon Louttit remembered that "As a teenager in the suburbs of Los Angeles in the early 1960s, I worked as a boxboy (nowadays a clerk's helper) and later a grocery clerk. On the days when the delivery trucks rolled in, the more athletic of the boxboys and young clerks were designated as swampers to go help the drivers unload the trucks".

Swain

This came into English from Old Norse sveinn, a lad, but began its life in medieval England in reference specifically to a young man attending a knight, hence a fairly lowly servant. Later, still in medieval times, it broadened to take in any male servant or attendant. By the end of the sixteenth century it seems to have shifted into the countryside, because it came to mean a farm labourer, shepherd, or similar male worker. Because of these associations with rustic simplicity, poets borrowed it for a country gallant or lover, a sweetheart or wooer of a fair maid. These days, as you say, it only appears in poetic contexts or humorously. The two nautical terms are specific applications of the idea of a male servant charged with some duty or responsibility. The first is obviously from boat; the second derives from cock or cockboat, a ship's boat, a word which came into English from Old French coque, itself based on a Latin word meaning a block of wood.

FOCUS ECONOMY

CHALLENGES GALORE



Ajit Ranade

CLEARLY, WE FACE MULTIPLE CHALLENGES OF INFLATION MANAGEMENT, OF FOOD SECURITY AND OF STAVING OFF RECESSIONARY FEARS AS INVESTORS BECOME CAUTIOUS

There is a well-known debate among economic policymakers regarding a more efficient way of giving government subsidies. Should it be in-kind or in-cash? The proponents of the in-cash method prefer a direct money transfer to the poor, and then the poor are free to use that cash as they wish. When the Jan Dhan Yojana was rolled out, opening no-frills bank accounts to now nearly 450 million people, direct money transfers became easy. This was also because bank networks are electronically linked. Direct cash support rather than in-kind support is more efficient in many cases. But since March 2020, the government has been giving in-kind benefits, as food rather than cash. The Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Anna Yojana (PMGKAY) gives 5 kilos of food grain (wheat or rice) and 1 kilo of pulses free, per person per month, to every household holding a ration card. This welfare scheme is the largest food security scheme in the world, having now fed an estimated 800 million people.

Initially, the scheme was to expire in a few months in 2020 itself, but has been repeatedly extended, and is now set to be discontinued from September 2022. The point is that the subsidy is given in kind, not in cash. During the time that food prices are going up, and wheat prices have gone sky high, imagine the plight of the poor if they had got only cash and not food grain instead? The inherent weakness of in-cash subsidy schemes is that they do not protect the recipient from inflation. Of course, there could be other problems with cash deposits, like a wrong deposit in another bank account, or cyber fraud. In case of grain distribution, it is given in-kind so its value does not get eroded by inflation. There is however, a huge logistical challenge for the government to ensure that the grain and cereal reaches every nook and corner of the country, without leakage or corruption. But on this front, especially with the help of state governments the food distribution has been reasonably successful.



It is going to be a difficult year for economic policy, and all tools including fiscal, monetary and administrative controls will be needed to keep inflation low

The food entitlement in PMGKAY follows from the National Food Security Act passed in 2013. The latter envisaged in-kind benefits of grain, to be sold at prices of rupees 3, 2 and 1 a kilo for rice, wheat and coarse cereal respectively. The PMGKAY made it completely free, and to a large extent helped ensure food security during the pandemic when jobs and livelihoods were lost. It is speculated that the welfare scheme also had an impact on several state election outcomes.

The in-kind food distribution scheme is an example of an administratively complex arrangement which was most appropriate at a time of the pandemic and food inflation. It helped address food security as well as food price stability (since the recipients were protected from food inflation).

As we grapple with the severe impact of oil price inflation caused by the war in Ukraine, and high commodity inflation, at least for food inflation the government might have to extend the PMGKAY. But bear in mind that the scheme will entail a steep fiscal cost, being the difference of procuring the grain at high prices, and giving it away free, plus the cost of storage and transportation. Even then this fiscal cost and administrative measure is more effective than merely monetary measures undertaken by the Reserve Bank of India. The government also took the bold decision of an abrupt U-turn regarding wheat exports, by banning such exports to ensure domestic food security. Of course, it is awkward for India to announce to the world that it would "feed the world" and not restrict wheat exports in March, and within two months do an about turn. This was necessitated due to the realisation that there is a steep drop in wheat yields this year, and we may not have adequate surplus for exports.

For its part the RBI too did an abrupt U-turn earlier this month by suddenly raising interest rates and the cash reserve ratio (CRR). The raising of the CRR resulted in the removal of 12 per cent of liquidity i.e. nearly ₹90,000 crore of money supply. This abrupt tightening of the monetary stance was quite contrary to what the RBI has been saying for many years. It was the first tightening measure since 2018. During the pandemic period, the RBI provided plenty of liquidity estimated at 8 per cent of the GDP, kept interest rates very low, and also helped with other measures like the loan repayment moratorium.

But while the RBI's accom-

modative policies might have helped the economy, the excess liquidity did have some perverse effects. One was the funds poured into the stock market (and also housing) leading to a possible bubble. The increase in stock market wealth goes mainly to the rich, and that wealth remains untaxed since those are unrealised gains. So, it does not help the fiscal deficit. The other perverse effect was that inflation remained too high, even prior to the pandemic. For more than two years, the average inflation rate has been close to 6 per cent, which is the upper band of tolerance for the RBI's Monetary Policy Committee. The Wholesale Price Index inflation has been 14 per cent for more than a year. Why did it not tighten much earlier, by raising rates? But it chose forbearance, perhaps keeping in mind the weak economic recovery, or perhaps because it wanted to help the government's borrowing programme. The biggest borrower by far in the banking system is the government of India, and keeping interest rates low, helps it. The annual borrowing requirement is close to ₹14 trillion this year alone. The total sovereign debt has already climbed close to 90 per cent of the GDP. So even a one per cent rise in interest rates could spell an additional interest burden of close to ₹70 thousand crore. No wonder the rate hike decision has great significance. The RBI must have finally agreed to bite the bullet, for not only is inflation galloping, but the rupee dollar exchange rate is also sliding down. So, to attract more dollars into the bond market, the interest rates in India need to be higher than in the US.

Clearly, we face multiple challenges of inflation management, of food security and of staving off recessionary fears as investors become cautious. It is going to be a difficult year for economic policy, and all tools including fiscal, monetary and administrative controls will be needed to keep inflation low.

The writer is a noted economist.
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SPECTRUM HEALTHCARE

Funding the polio eradication endgame



Minda Dentler

THE PRESENCE OF POLIO ANYWHERE IS A THREAT TO CHILDREN EVERYWHERE

Growing up in India, I did not have access to the polio vaccine, and the disease paralysed my legs when I was an infant. As a result, I have undergone many surgeries and cannot walk without leg braces and crutches. My story is not unique. When the Global Polio Eradication Initiative (GPEI) was established in 1988 (I was ten at the time), the disease paralysed an estimated 350,000 children worldwide each year.

Thirty-four years later, immunisation campaigns have almost eliminated polio. But unless we fund a new vaccination push today, we risk a resurgence of the disease. The GPEI — which coordinates the efforts of frontline workers, communities, national governments, and global partners to help vaccinate children — has played a major role in reducing polio cases and is now leading the drive to eliminate the disease for good. Since 1988, the GPEI has helped to immunise three billion children against polio, and more than 20 million people who otherwise would have been paralysed are able to walk.

But the fight is not over: Pakistan and Afghanistan, the two countries where polio remains endemic, have reported only five cases of wild poliovirus in 2021 and three cases so far in 2022. That may sound

encouraging, but the presence of polio anywhere is a threat to children everywhere, and the COVID-19 pandemic has shown how quickly an infectious disease can spread around the world.

The problem is acute, because GPEI-funded polio eradication efforts were halted during the pandemic in order to shift resources to help countries respond to COVID-19. The suspension of polio vaccination campaigns and disruption of routine immunisation led to millions of children missing out. As a result, about 2,000 children in the past two years have been paralysed by circulating vaccine-derived poliovirus (cVDPV2) — a variant that can emerge in under-immunised communities — in parts of Africa, Asia, and Europe.

So, while we are close to 99% polio eradication, this final stretch to achieve zero cases may be difficult. That is why the GPEI launched an ambitious \$4.8 billion plan during the recent World Immunisation Week to help rid the world of polio by 2026.

The strategy focuses on vaccinating 370 million children annually against polio for the next five years. It envisages increasing the integration of polio immunisation with general health-related services in communities; working with com-

munity leaders, clerics, and influencers to earn trust, boost vaccine acceptance, and tackle misinformation; and improving disease surveillance and response.

Investing in polio eradication also delivers broader benefits, not least by strengthening healthcare infrastructure and providing routine immunisations and other integrated health services in underserved communities. The polio programme has kept the world safe from many emerging disease threats by detecting and responding to outbreaks of measles, yellow fever, and Ebola.

The GPEI and its partners helped to develop and implement a next-generation oral polio vaccine — nOPV2 — to help stop outbreaks of type-2 vaccine-derived polio. Most remarkably, the GPEI's strong surveillance network helped to coordinate a public-health response to COVID-19 in 50 countries in Africa, the Middle East, and Asia. This included delivering vaccines, detecting and monitoring cases, tracing contacts, and raising awareness about the virus.

This final five-year push to eradicate polio — at an estimated cost of less than \$1 billion a year — must be fully funded and executed. The US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention warns that cutting back

on eradication efforts could cause a global resurgence of polio that ten years from now could paralyse up to 200,000 children a year, thus greatly increasing the cost of controlling the disease and treating survivors. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, the WHO's director-general, notes that polio eradication is highly cost-effective and could generate more than \$33 billion in economic savings.

The world cannot afford to give up the fight to eliminate polio and squander more than three decades of progress. "It is so crucial that all stakeholders now commit to ensuring that the new eradication strategy can be implemented in full," said Niels Annen, parliamentary state secretary to Svenja Schulze, the German minister for economic cooperation and development. "We can only succeed if we make polio eradication our shared priority."

The world has an opportunity to end polio in the next five years so that no child will have to suffer as I do from a disease that is entirely preventable. But this will not happen without a fully funded endgame strategy.

The writer, a polio survivor, is a global health advocate.
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Putin's war boomerangs

Sir, This refers to the editorial 'Putin's problems,' Orissa POST, May 16. Putin's invasion of Ukraine is not only turning out to be a military blunder, but also a political disaster for Russia. It is producing strategic outcomes that Putin's war apparently aimed to prevent — the further expansion of Western military alliance, the NATO. The decisions by Finland and Sweden — two countries that steadfastly remained neutral during the Cold War between the Soviet Union and the West during the second half of the 20th century — to join NATO marks an important moment in the strategic evolution of Europe since the Ukraine crisis began. Now, the smaller countries on Moscow's western periphery are afraid of Russian military power. For them, membership of NATO is about protection from the Russian threat. Russia, with its massive army and thousands of nuclear weapons, is well positioned to deter and defend attack on its territory. Its neighbours don't have that luxury: Putin's unprovoked aggression against Ukraine has reinforced the fears of smaller countries and raised their incentives for seeking NATO membership. Equally important, Moscow might not have attacked Ukraine if it was already a member of NATO. In this backdrop, gaining membership of NATO has become a matter of greater urgency for Russia's western neighbours.

N Sadhasiva Reddy, BANGALORE

Split verdict

Sir, The split verdict of the Delhi High Court on marital rape shows that society has different views on the issue. A large number of men believe that violating a woman against her consent is their right. If other forms of violence against women are considered as crimes against women, why is marital rape given exemption? A woman's body is her valuable possession. Any attempt to harm her body must be considered a crime. Society has a misconception that when a woman is married to a man, he has the right to her body. In the past, even courts had the view that special consent was not required for a man to have conjugal relations with his wife. Over the years, that view has changed. Now the general view is that a woman's consent is a necessary corollary of conjugal relations. The Centre must formulate law against marital rape. However, outlawing marital rape without dealing with all kinds of violence against women within marriage would be useless. Instead of dealing with just marital rape, the law must take into consideration the various ways marital rape can occur. Steps must be taken to ensure that the law is not used against innocent husbands.

Venu GS, KOLLAM

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
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of the day quote

We will convene an all-party meeting where representatives can give their suggestions. It will be followed by a cabinet approval. Modalities like how many officials to deploy etc will also be worked out

Raj Thackeray must apologise for his utterances and actions allegedly against north Indians and offer assurance of not repeating them in future if he wanted the protests against his visit to be withdrawn

Why should people travel for hours to get their issues addressed by one person, why not Govt at their door steps. Saves time & energy. E-governance is an excellent solution to reduce human interface & leakages. No one can whistle a symphony, it takes an orchestra to play it

SHORT TAKES

Minor fire near Parliament House

New Delhi: A minor fire broke out in two labour containers near Parliament House Monday afternoon, a fire department official said. The official informed that they received a call about the fire at 4.16 p.m. in two containers near Parliament in central Delhi after which as many as five fire tenders were immediately pressed into service.

Live-in couple commits suicide

Gurugram: A couple in a live-in relationship allegedly committed suicide by hanging themselves from a ceiling fan in the Sushant Lok police station area Sunday, the police said Monday. The couple appeared to have killed themselves Sunday night in their rented accommodation. The incident came to light Monday morning after neighbours reported the matter to the police. The woman identified as Nancy (28) and her boyfriend Ashwani (29) were residents of a village in Delhi. However, the police did not find any suicide note at the spot.

Woman judge dies in road accident

Jaipur: A woman judge died while three others sustained serious injuries in a head-on collision between a car and a jeep in Rajasthan's Bikaner district Monday, police officials said. The accident was reported near Jalwali village on Bikaner-Khajuwala highway when the private car of Additional District Judge Saroj Chaudhary, who was posted in Anupgarh, collided head-on with the jeep of Irrigation Department Assistant Engineer, Shankar Lal.

Three bears kill villager

Bilaspur: A 40-year-old man was mauled to death by three bears in a forest in Chhattisgarh's Bilaspur district, an official said Monday. Jawahar Baiga, a native of Kurdar village, was surrounded by the bears near a hill in Kota buffer zone of Achanakmar Tiger Reserve (ATR) Sunday when he had gone to collect tendu leaves, said Satyadev Sharma, Deputy Director of ATR.

Cop stabbed

New Delhi: A Delhi Police personnel, who went to nab an accused involved in a stabbing incident, was attacked and knifed by the same accused, an official said Monday.



This is a textbook repeat of December 1949 in Babri Masjid. This order itself changes the religious nature of the Masjid. This is a violation of 1991 Act. This was my apprehension and it has come true. Gyanvapi Masjid was, and will remain a Masjid till judgement day, Inshallah

ASADUDDIN OWAISI | AIMIM LEADER

KERALA COURT SENTENCES 25 IUML WORKERS TO LIFE

A sessions court in Kerala Monday sentenced to life 25 people, all workers of IUML, for the murder of two brothers in Palakkad district of the State in 2013. Additional District and Sessions Judge Rajitha T H had May 12 held the 25 accused guilty of the murder of Nooruddin and Hamsa, who were members of the AP Sunni party, a supporter of the Left front



MAN-MADE DISASTERS

Climate change issue in India is getting worse

A day after Delhi saw temperatures of more than 49 degrees Celsius, experts analyse the incidence of extreme weather events and sound a dire warning

AGENCIES

New Delhi, May 16: The spectre of climate change is here to stay and even worsen, say climate scientists as searing winds blow across swathes of north India, including New Delhi where temperatures have crossed 49 degrees Celsius, and flash floods ravage parts of the northeast.

A day after two weather stations in Delhi saw temperatures of more than 49 degrees Celsius and neighbouring Gurgaon registered 48 degrees Celsius, the highest since May 1966, experts Monday analysed the incidence of extreme weather events and sounded a dire warning.

"With increasing temperatures as a result of global warming in South Asia and the consequent exceeding levels of heat and humidity, it is predicted that we will have more intense, longer and frequent heat waves in India," environmentalist and climate scientist Shakil Ahmad Romshoo told PTI in a phone interview from Srinagar.

According to the University of Kashmir professor, one indicator of climate change is the increasing frequency of climate extremes. A heat wave, he said, is a climate extreme and a direct indicator of climate change.



REPRESENTATIONAL IMAGE



Over the last few decades, global warming has been on an accelerated pace and its marks can be seen in any single day of global weather since the 2000s. Generation Z has never lived a day without feeling the influence of global warming

ROXY MATHEW KOLL | CLIMATE SCIENTIST

"Over the last few decades, global warming has been on an accelerated pace and its marks can be seen in any single day of global weather since the 2000s. Generation Z has never lived a day without feeling the influence of global warming," added Roxy Mathew Koll from the Indian Institute of Tropical Meteorology in Pune.

The National Capital recorded its second hottest April this year since 1951 with a monthly average maximum temperature of 40.2 degrees Celsius. Other north Indian states, including the hill areas of

Uttarakhand, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh, also recorded temperatures way above the normal level this season. While north India battled high temperatures, parts of Kerala and Lakshadweep islands saw heavy rainfall Sunday Besides, the weather office sounded a red alert across five districts in Kerala. And in the east, Assam's Dima Hasao district has been hit by flash floods and massive landslides at several places, snapping rail and road links.

According to Indian Meteorological Department data, the average maximum temperature over northwest and central India for April this year has been the highest in 122 years.

A 4.5 to 6.4-degree departure from normal is considered to declare a heat wave and over 6.4-degree departure for a severe heat wave.

Regardless of local weather interactions, Koll explained, the root cause for increase in such events in the India-Pakistan region is global warming due to human-made carbon emissions.

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, May 16: The World Health Organisation (WHO) and STOP, a global tobacco watchdog, have called on nations to ban the greenwashing activities of the tobacco industry, responsible for the release of more than 80 million tonnes of carbon dioxide (CO2) per year; and the most littered item on earth, cigarette butts.

In a last week's report they spotlight the extensive environmental damage caused by tobacco companies and how the industry "greenwashes" its products and activities to appear environmentally friendly.

The term "greenwashes" refers to a form of disinformation published by an organization to appear to be environmentally friendly and is a common practice in numerous industries.

Calling for action, the report,



"Talking Trash: Behind the Tobacco Industry's agreeen Public Relations", said the governments and the public around the world should be aware that greenwashing by the tobacco industry is increasing and needs to be countered. Despite the attempts by the industry to improve its image, tobacco use remains one of the leading causes of premature death and a major cause of environmental harm.

The governments that are Parties to the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (FCTC) also have an obligation to exclude the industry from engagement or influence over health policy, no matter how hard the industry attempts to greenwash its image.

The WHO and STOP are calling on all governments, especially ones that are Parties to the FCTC, to ban the greenwashing activities of the industry, as they are a central part of the industry's so-called CSR and marketing campaigns, aimed at industry renormalization, which tends to circumvent Article 5.3.

Ahead of World No Tobacco Day that falls May 31, the report exposes the tobacco industry's destructive practices affecting the environment as well as their greenwashing tactics, and show ways of restricting these practices through policy measures and awareness raising campaigns.

India hosts SCO-RATS meet



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, May 16: Counter-terrorism experts from India, Pakistan and other member states of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) Monday deliberated on boosting cooperation in combating various regional security challenges at a meeting hosted by New Delhi.

A major focus of the discussions was to be on the situation in Afghanistan, especially in dealing with the threat from terrorist groups active in the Taliban-ruled country, people familiar with the meeting said.

Pakistan has sent a three-member team for the meeting.

India assumed the chairmanship of the Council of Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure of SCO (RATS SCO) October 28 for a period of one year.

India has shown keen interest in deepening its security-related co-

operation with the SCO and its Regional Anti-Terrorism Structure (RATS) which specifically deals with issues relating to security and defence.

A similar conference was organised by India in December which was participated by all the member states.

"I thank India for hosting the key meeting of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation's anti-terror body Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure in New Delhi today. The security & humanitarian situation has worsened in Afghanistan over the past 9 months," Afghan envoy Farid Mamundzay tweeted.

"We expect this meeting to raise and propose solutions to all important issues related to the security situation in Afghanistan. Sincere regional security cooperation particularly from neighbouring countries is the only way forward for peace & development

The meeting is taking place under the framework of the SCO's Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure

The SCO is an influential economic and security bloc and has emerged as one of the largest transregional international organisations

The member states of the SCO are Russia, China, India, Pakistan, Kyrgyz Republic, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan. Afghanistan is among the observer states of the SCO

in Afghanistan and in the region," he added.

India has not recognised the Taliban regime in Afghanistan and has been pitching for the formation of a truly inclusive government in Kabul besides insisting that Afghan soil must not be used for any terrorist activities against any country.

India has been concerned about the developments in Afghanistan. It hosted a regional dialogue on Afghanistan in November that was attended by National Security Advisors of Russia, Iran, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan.

The participating countries vowed to work towards ensuring that Afghanistan does not become a safe haven for global terrorism and called for the formation of an "open and truly inclusive" government in Kabul with representation from all sections of Afghan society.



WATER STUNT: Participants from the Indian Navy's sailing and windsurfing teams perform during the YAI Multiclass Sailing Championship (IN-MDL Cup 2022), at Indian Naval Watermanship Training Centre (INWTC) in Mumbai PTI PHOTO

Marginal drop in mercury in north India

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, May 16: Large swathes of north India witnessed a marginal drop in maximum temperatures Monday and the weather department said thunderstorms and rain in parts of the region over the next few days are likely to bring further respite from the scorching heat.

The mercury in Delhi, which recorded its hottest day of the year so far at 45.6 degrees Celsius Sunday, came down to 42.4 degrees Celsius, according to the India Meteorological Department (IMD).



The automatic weather stations at Najafgarh, Mungeshpur; Sports Complex, Jafarpur, Ayanagar, Pitampura and Ridge recorded a maximum temperature of 44.7 degrees Celsius, 44.4 degrees Celsius, 44 degrees Celsius, 43.9 degrees Celsius, 43.4 degrees Celsius, 43.3

degrees Celsius and 43.1 degrees Celsius, respectively. On Sunday, the mercury leapt to 49.2 degrees Celsius at Mungeshpur in northwest Delhi and 49.1 degrees Celsius at Najafgarh. The IMD said a thunderstorm or a dust storm may further bring the mercury down by a few notches Tuesday.

The temperature will start rising again Wednesday and may hit the 45-degree mark Friday, it said. Maximum temperatures in Haryana and Punjab too came down by a few notches, even as they remained well above normal.

IN A FIRST, HC HEARS CASE THROUGH WHATSAPP

It was a triangular session, with the judge hearing the case from Nagercoil, petitioner's counsel at one place and Advocate-General at another place, in the city. The issue pertained to a temple in Dharmapuri district

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Chennai, May 16: For the first time in the annals of the Madras High Court, a judge has conducted a case through 'WhatsApp', and on a Sunday.

Justice G R Swaminathan took up the case while being stationed in Nagercoil, where he had gone to attend a marriage function Sunday, following a submission of P R Srinivasan, the hereditary trustee of Shri Abheeshta Varadaraja Swamy temple, that his village will face the 'divine wrath' if the proposed 'Rath' (Car) festival was not held Monday.

"This fervent prayer of the writ petitioner made me hold an emer-



Representational image

gency sitting from Nagercoil and conduct the case through Whatsapp," the judge said in the opening sentence of his order.

It was a triangular session, with the judge hearing the case from Nagercoil, petitioner's counsel V Raghavachari at one place and

Advocate-General R Shanmugasundaram, at another place, in the city. The issue pertained to a temple in Dharmapuri district.

Holding that the Inspector attached to the Hindu Religious and Charitable Ddepartment does not

have the jurisdiction to issue an order directing the temple Thakkar (Fit person) and the hereditary trustee to stop the car festival, the judge quashed the same.

Earlier, the AG told the judge that the government does not oppose the holding of the event.

Their sole concern is the safety of the members of the general public. On account of failure to adhere to safety standards, a tragedy struck in a similar procession in Thanjavur district recently, he pointed out and emphasised that such accidents should not recur.

After the defects pointed out in the impugned communication are rectified, the procession can very well be conducted and the State

may not have any objection, he added. After quashing the impugned order, the judge directed the temple authorities to strictly follow the rules and regulations stipulated by the government while holding temple festivals and the state-run discom TANGEDCO to cut power supply in the area for a few hours, from the beginning of the processions till it reaches back to its stand (Nilai).

Eleven persons were killed on the spot and 17 others injured last month near Thanjavur due to electrocution when a temple chariot came in contact with a High Tension electricity line during a procession.

MAMATA TO VISIT JUNGLEMAHAL AMID MAOIST RESURGENCE THREAT



INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Kolkata, May 16: In the backdrop of frequent recovery of Maoist posters and intelligence alerts about the resurgence of the Left-wing extremist (LWE) activities in pockets of West Bengal, Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee will be in Junglemahal for two days from Tuesday.

Although the Junglemahal area is scattered over three districts of West Midnapore, Bankura and Purulia, this time the Chief Minister will restrict her activities in West Midnapore district only. In the coming days, the chief minister will make similar visits to Purulia and Bankura as well, confirmed sources from the state secretariat of Nabanna.

Sources said that on May 17, the chief minister will first reach the

Circuit House in Midnapore town. On the same day, around 3 p.m. she will chair an administrative review meeting, which will be attended by district magistrates and district police superintendents and other senior bureaucrats and police officers from the district.

Next day, she will address a rally of the party workers and leaders in the district at the Midnapore College Grounds.

A member of the state cabinet, who did not wish to be named, said that the Chief Minister is concerned about the reports of possible resurgence of the Maoist activities in the state.

"She has got reports that a section of the people in the three districts scattered over the Junglemahal area are dissatisfied with the slow progress of the developmental projects. Complaints

Although the Junglemahal area is scattered over three districts of West Midnapore, Bankura and Purulia, this time the Chief Minister will restrict her activities in West Midnapore district only

A member of the state cabinet, who did not wish to be named, said that the Chief Minister is concerned about the reports of possible resurgence of the Maoist activities in the state

about rampant corruption have gripped a section of the political and administrative sections in the state. Even there are reports that the BJP is taking that advantage and trying to fuel the grievances of the people on this count. So, the chief minister will review the situation at the administrative review meeting and suggest corrective measures," the member of the state cabinet said.

On April 26, at a meeting of the Standing Committee of the Eastern Zonal Council that took place at the West Bengal state secretariat of Nabanna, the Union home ministry officials cautioned about the resurgence of Maoist activities in the four eastern Indian states of the West Bengal, Odisha, Jharkhand and Bihar. During the two-day West Midnapore visit, the chief minister is also expected to review the deployment of the Central Armed Forces there.

BJP IN A FIX

Lingayat community seeks OBC status

Veerashaiva-Lingayat community, considered as a dominant community in the state comprising 18 to 20 per cent of the population, is firmly standing behind the ruling BJP in Karnataka

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Bangalore, May 16: The ruling BJP is in a fix over the demand of the Veerashaiva-Lingayat community seeking its inclusion in the Other Backwards Classes (OBC) list by the Centre. The community leaders have also warned that if the demand is not fulfilled, they would start agitation on a large scale.

Sources in the BJP said that it is not good news for the party, which is preparing to face the upcoming 2023 Assembly elections. Shammur Shivashankarappa, President of the Akhila Bharatha Veerashaiva-Lingayat Mahasabha, who is also a veteran Congress leader from the state has stated that a decision in this regard has been taken in the general body meeting.

Veerashaiva-Lingayat community, considered as a dominant community in the state comprising 18 to 20 per cent of the population,



is firmly standing behind the ruling BJP in Karnataka. Former Chief Minister B.S. Yediyurappa and present Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai hail from the Lingayat community.

It would be a tricky situation for the BJP-led Central government to accord Veerashaiva-Lingayat community the OBC status. According to sources, the decision has to be taken at the national level. Vokkaliga community, another dominant community from Karnataka was accorded OBC status during the tenure of former

Prime Minister H.D. Deve Gowda.

Eshwar B. Khandre, Mahasabha General Secretary and also a senior Congress leader stated that though Veerashaiva-Lingayat community is considered as a forward caste, it is one of the most backward communities in terms of socio, economic and academic scenarios.

The share of Veerashaiva-Lingayats is negligible in terms of recruitments in the UPSC, banking sector, railway, Staff Selection Commission and Public Sector enterprises run by the Central gov-

ernment, he said.

However, sources said that the timing of the demand by the Veerashaiva-Lingayat Mahasabha is intended to put the ruling BJP in a fix. If BJP commits to the fulfillment of the demand, it will have to address such demands from across the country which will open the Pandora's box.

If the BJP doesn't commit to the fulfillment of this demand, the opposition Congress can target them, sources said. The BJP has not reacted over the issue and is treading cautiously.

Goldsmiths of Kolkata in quandary

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kolkata, May 16: Goldsmiths of Durga Pithuri Lane in Kolkata's Bowbazar - whose shops had to be shut overnight after at least 12 houses in the area developed major cracks due to tunneling work for the East-West Metro line - are staring at an uncertain future, as they run from pillar to post with jewellery-filled bags.

Ananda Maity, Sushil Roy, Foni Mahato and their fellow goldsmiths are now frantically looking for a temporary place to immediately restart work on a number of wedding jewellery orders amounting to lakhs of rupees.

"The wedding season is in full swing, and we have several orders to deliver with very little time. Now, with our shops gone, we are all at sea," said Suhas Mahato, standing close to a building with noticeable cracks. The building housed his small shop on the ground floor.

At least 12 houses suffered structural damage in Durga Pithuri Lane of Bowbazar on May 11, with more than 140 locals being shifted to hotels. Similar scenes were witnessed in the area on August 31, 2019, when a tunnel boring machine (TBM) hit an aquifer, leading to severe ground subsidence and collapse of several buildings.

A senior official of the Kolkata Municipal Corporation told PTI that some of the goldsmiths had set up shops at Durga Pithuri Lane decades ago, and they have been asked to leave with their belongings,



Calcutta Electricity Supply Corporation workers perform repair work after cracks appeared on several buildings, likely to have been caused by metro railway construction at Bowbazar area, in Kolkata

PTI PHOTO

as the "dangerous" buildings might have to be razed.

"We were working round the clock to complete the orders. And now, all of a sudden, we had to leave with jewellery and tools-loaded bags, searching for a place where we can get down to work again," Suhas Mallick said.

Ananda Maity, 65, said they have been searching for rooms on rent to resume work, but landlords are de-

manding an exorbitant amount.

"Some landlords are asking for Rs 30,000 per month, while others are demanding Rs 1-1.5 lakh in advance to give rooms on rent," Maity said. "The COVID-19 pandemic has taken a toll on our business, and we are not in a position to spend this amount of money to set up temporary shops elsewhere," he said.

Senior officials of Kolkata Metro Rail Corporation (KMRC), during

a recent meeting with city mayor Firhad Hakim, had discussed about temporary rehabilitation of these goldsmiths.

"We are very concerned about their situation and understand that they quickly need a place to set up temporary shops. KMRC will hopefully soon start the rehabilitation process," Local Trinamool Congress councillor Biswaroop Dey said.

GOLD FROM BANGLADESH

Traders taking advantage of price difference?

Friday, BSF troops of the 86 Battalion seized 8 gold biscuits that were thrown across the border fence into India by Bangladeshi smugglers

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Kolkata, May 16: Is gold smuggled into India from Bangladesh just because of the price difference of the precious metal between the two countries; or, is this a method of terror funding now, as movement of Fake Indian Currency Notes (FICN) across the Indo-Bangladesh border has come down due to greater vigil by Indian security agencies, including the Border Security Force (BSF)?

Intelligence agencies in India have unearthed how terror outfits

based in Bangladesh, with sleeper cells in India, are facilitating the smuggling of drugs like Yaba to fund their activities. The Yaba tablets enter India from Myanmar. While some are sold in India, the remaining is smuggled into Bangladesh. Could the gold being smuggled to India be a form of payment for the consignments of such drugs that manage to escape the prying eyes of the BSF and reach Bangladesh?

On Friday, BSF troops of the 86 Battalion seized 8 gold biscuits that were thrown across the border fence into India by Bangladeshi smugglers. This occurred within the jurisdiction of the Kharka Bahadur Border Outpost in the Murshidabad district of West Bengal. The value of the gold is estimated to be around Rs 49.17 lakh in India. Doesn't matter whether the biscuits were of 22 Carat or 24 Carat, the transaction, had it succeeded, would have earned a profit of nearly Rs 5 lakh. The price of gold is cheaper in



Bangladesh than in India.

"On Friday morning, our troops at Kharka Bahadur BOP received intelligence inputs of a possible attempt to smuggle gold from Bangladesh. BSF personnel got active along the border fence and spotted some activity soon. A group from Bangladesh threw a bundle across the fence and then made their getaway through the dense vegetation before they could be apprehended by our troops. That is why we are against the growing of crops like jute across the fence.

These provide shelter to criminals and block our view. Unfortunately, our concerns have not been paid heed to by the state or district administrations. A search of the area led to the seizure of the gold biscuits," a senior BSF official of the South Bengal Frontier said.

The gold has been handed over to the Karimpur Customs Office. While Surendra Kumar, CO, 86Bn BSF, commended his troops for foiling a major crime, there was some disappointment at not having been able to round up the Bangladeshi

criminals involved in this racket. Though 150 yards beyond the border fence is Indian territory, the BSF doesn't have adequate manpower to post sentries there while carrying out regular patrols along the fence. Opening fire on a group of Bangladeshis who are trying to escape after throwing something across the fence is not an option either. At least, not until the contents of the package have been verified.

"There may be the involvement of unscrupulous jewellery merchants in India who could be smuggling in this gold. However, one can't simply write off the possibility of such consignments entering India to fund terror outfits. A Yaba tablet costs Rs 500. This much gold will cover the price of only 10,000 such tablets. And 10,000 tablets aren't too difficult to smuggle across. Recently, the BSF nabbed a woman at a petrol pump in Bongaon, North 24-Parganas with over 5,000 Yaba tablets. We have been sharing all information with other agencies," another BSF official said.

Images of arms training camp by Bajrang Dal go viral

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bangalore, May 16: Photographs and videos of Bajrang Dal activists allegedly undergoing training holding air guns and 'trishul deeksha' have gone viral on social media.

According to sources, the camp was part of the 'Shaurya Prashikshana Varga' that took place from May 5 to 11 at Sai Shankar Educational Institute, at Ponnampet in Kodagu district. About 400 activists were said to have taken part in the Bajrang Dal-organised event.

A Bajrang Dal activist said, the participants were trained in self-defence, but no arms were distributed as alleged in some quarters. Authorities of the school, where the camp was held, said the premises was being used for 'Prashikshana varga' training for several years and were unaware of training with arms.

Congress leaders expressed concern over the training camp. AICC in-charge of Tamil Nadu, Puducherry & Goa and MLA Dinesh Gundu Rao in a tweet said, "Why



About 400 activists were said to have taken part in the Bajrang Dal-organised event

are BajrangDal members receiving arms training? Isn't training in firearms without a proper license an offence? Isn't this a violation of the Arms Act 1959, Arms Rules 1962? And Why are @BJP4India leaders openly attending and supporting this activity?"

Congress MLA Rizwan Arshad tweeted: "At this age, most young men set out to achieve dreams. In K'atka, Bajrang Dal is destroying young lives by training them to unleash violence in the name of religion. This needs to be stopped at any cost". Police said they have not received any complaint so far.

of the day quote

On Buddha Purnima, we recall the principles of Lord Buddha and reiterate our commitment to fulfil them. The thoughts of Lord Buddha can make our planet more peaceful, harmonious and sustainable

NARENDRA MODI | PRIME MINISTER

The Congress says that we have to move forward while connecting with all, respect and protect the culture of all. The BJP works to divide, crush and suppress. (BJP) works to remove history and culture of tribals

RAHUL GANDHI | CONGRESS LEADER

A Kashmiri Pandit was killed inside his office by terrorists. It seems it was planned. The Indian Army gunned down two terrorists in a day. But the incident has left Kashmiri Pandits scared

ARVIND KEJRIWAL | DELHI CHIEF MINISTER

SHORT TAKES

KPs continue to protest

Srinagar: Protests by Kashmiri Pandits over the killing of Rahul Bhat by militants inside his office last week continued in Ganderbal and Anantnag districts of Jammu and Kashmir Monday, officials said. Scores of Kashmiri Pandits assembled at Tulmulla in Ganderbal district to protest against the killing of their community member, the officials said. The protesters held photographs of Bhat, who was shot dead by the ultras inside his office at Chadoora in Budgam district May 12, and shouted slogans like “we want justice”, the officials said.

Four tourists killed in Himachal

Shimla: Four tourists were killed and three others injured when their vehicle fell into a gorge in Himachal Pradesh's Kullu district Monday, police said. The accident took place near the Ghiagi area on Banjar-Jalori-Jot road, they added. The three injured passengers -- two women and a man -- were admitted to a hospital, police said. Identities of the deceased tourists have not been ascertained yet, they said. The vehicle, an SUV, involved in the accident was bearing a Delhi registration number, police said.

Two quakes rock Assam, Meghalaya

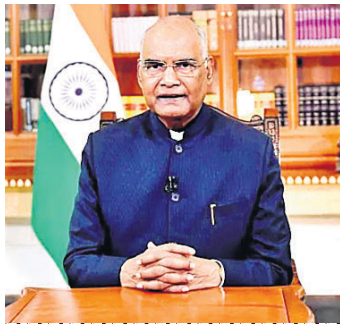
Guwahati: Two earthquakes of 3.9 magnitude each hit Meghalaya and Assam in less than 24 hours, official reports said Monday. The first quake, recorded at 9.47 pm Sunday, had its epicentre in Nongpoh area of Meghalaya at a depth of 12 km, the second in Nagaon of Assam at a depth of 55 km.

LeT terror module busted, seven held

Srinagar: A terror module of proscribed terror outfit LeT was busted in Jammu and Kashmir's Bandipora with the arrest of seven terrorists/terrorist associates, including a woman, police said Monday. Incriminating materials, including arms and ammunition, have also been recovered from their possession. Six vehicles including four two-wheelers have also been seized.

TN signs MoU with NHAI

Chennai: The Tamil Nadu government Monday signed an MoU with the National Highways Authority of India (NHAI), the Chennai Port Trust, and the Indian Navy for building a double-tiered elevated expressway connecting the Chennai Port and Madhavayal.



Greetings to the people of Sikkim on Statehood Day. Sikkim has set an example before rest of the country in organic farming and adopting the path of sustainable development. My best wishes to all the residents of Sikkim for continued growth and prosperity

RAM NATH KOVIND | PRESIDENT

GREAT INITIATIVE

To achieve the goal of eliminating tuberculosis by 2025, the government will soon launch a programme as part of which people and institutions can adopt blocks, wards, or even an individual patient, and provide nutritional, treatment and vocational support to TB patients



China building infrastructure near Arunachal border: Army

General Officer Commanding-in Chief of the Eastern command, Lt Gen RP Kalita, said the Indian side is also continuously upgrading its infrastructure and capabilities to deal with any situation which may arise along the border



AGENCIES

Guwahati, May 16: The Indian Army's Eastern Command chief Monday said China's People's Liberation Army (PLA) is engaged in infrastructure capacity enhancement across the international border in Arunachal Pradesh.

General Officer Commanding-in-Chief of the Eastern Command, Lt Gen R P Kalita, however, said the Indian side is also continuously upgrading its infrastructure and capabilities to deal with any situation that may arise along the border. “Across the Line of Actual Control (LAC) in the Tibet region, a lot of infrastructure development is going on. The other side is constantly upgrading their road, rail and air connectivity as well as 5G mobile network so that they are in a bet-

ter position to respond to a situation or mobilise forces,” he said at a press conference here.

The Chinese authorities have built border villages close to the LAC that can be used for dual purposes, Kalita said. “We are continuously monitoring the situation. We are also upgrading our infrastructure and capabilities as well as the mechanism to handle the situation. These have put us in a robust position,” he added. Kalita asserted that the Indian Army is fully ready with “high level of operational preparedness”. The Indian Army Commander acknowledged that difficult terrain and inclement weather conditions have been the biggest challenges while enhancing capabilities and infrastructure in forward locations, leading to delays in completion of the projects. When asked about the border

stand-offs between the two large armed forces at several places, he said that the actual boundary is not properly demarcated, especially along the McMahon Line.

“It has created different perceptions of the border between India and China that are not agreed upon by both sides. While most of the time, we handle the situation through existing mechanisms, at times it has led to frictions,” Kalita said. He also denied that any intrusion is taking place along the border with China and whatever is reported, that is only due to the perceptual issue.

“Once the boundary is properly demarcated, I hope there will be no problem,” he said, adding there has been no case of intrusion since the 1962 war. Asked about the Land Borders Law that China enacted from January giving more power to the PLA to protect their sovereignty and boundary, he said that the Army and other stakeholders are analysing various implications of the new laws. Kalita added, “The eastern border has numerous challenges. We have displayed exemplary professionalism and bravery. Last one year has been extremely eventful and we have been rising up to meet all challenges. We are ready to take on all challenges in future.”

He said that for the India-China border, the Indian Army has a robust mechanism in place. This includes bilateral agreements and various protocols to defuse tensions and maintain peace and tranquility.

ASSAM FLOOD

Evacuation of 2,800 passengers completed, more than 57,000 hit

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Haflong/Guwahati, May 16: The evacuation of about 2,800 passengers of two trains, which were stranded in Lumding-Badarpur hill section in Assam for two days due to massive landslides and waterlogging on the tracks caused by incessant rains, was completed Monday with help by the Air Force and other agencies, a Northeast Frontier Railway (NFR) spokesperson said.

Many passengers were airlifted by the Air Force as incessant rain impeded rescue operations which were on since Saturday, when the two trains were stranded in Lumding section of NFR in Dima Hasao district, he said.



An official bulletin said three persons have been killed in the mudslide in Haflong revenue circle and 57,119 people have been hit by the floods in seven districts of Assam Monday as incessant rains continued to lash most parts of the state.

The bulletin said 4,330 of the affected people have been lodged in 20 relief camps set up by the government. Nine relief distribution centres are operating in different affected districts.

TOUGH DAYS



Children fetch drinking water on a hot summer day in Gurugram PTI PHOTO

SPECIALY-ABLED CHILD BOARDING ROW

IndiGo staff inappropriately handled passengers: DGCA

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, May 16: Aviation regulator DGCA Monday said it has issued a showcause notice to IndiGo after a fact-finding committee found the airline staff prima facie violated regulations in denying boarding to a specially-abled child at the Ranchi airport May 7.

The airline had May 9 said the boy was denied boarding as he was “visibly in panic”.

As the boy was prohibited from boarding the Ranchi-Hyderabad flight, his parents -- who were accompanying him -- also decided not to enter the plane.

The Directorate General of Civil Aviation had constituted a fact-finding committee to probe the matter.

“The committee has submitted its report,” the DGCA said in a statement Monday. The proceedings of the committee were partly held in

the open and partly in-camera as per the request of the affected family, it said.

“The findings of the committee prima facie indicate inappropriate handling of passengers by the IndiGo staff thereby resulting in certain non-conformances with the applicable regulations,” it mentioned.

In view of this, it has been decided to issue a showcause notice to the airline through its authorised representative to explain as to why suitable enforcement action should not be taken against them for the non-conformances, it said.

“To meet the ends of justice, the airline has been provided an opportunity for personal hearing as well as for making written submissions in next ten days from today i.e. Till May 26, 2022. After hearing their submissions, appropriate action as per law would be taken,” it added.



SC stops son from handling properties of 89-yr-old mother



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, May 16: “You seem to be more interested in her properties. This is the tragedy of senior citizens in our country”, said the Supreme Court as it restrained a son from dealing with properties of her 89-year-old mother, suffering from advanced dementia and having no comprehension of either verbal or physical cues.

The top court asked the counsel appearing for the son to take instruction on the issue of whether the younger sisters residing in Noida can be allowed to take care of their mother either in the hos-

pital or at home, as advised by the doctors.

A bench of Justices DY Chandrachud and Surya Kant took serious note of the fact that the son took his mother who is also virtually immobile to a registrar's office in Motihari, Bihar to get her thumb impression to allegedly sell off her properties worth ₹2 crore.

Senior advocate Priya Hingorani and advocate Manish Kumar Saran appearing for petitioners Pushpa Tiwary and Gayatri Kumar who are daughters of Vaidehi Singh (89-year-old mother) submitted that they have looked after her until 2019 until the lockdown and even-

POLITICAL HEAT SOARING IN GUJARAT

AHMEDABAD: The searing heat is matching pace with the rising political temperature in Gujarat in the run-up to elections due seven months from now.

Three Prime Ministers including Boris Johnson of the United Kingdom, Pravind Jugnauth of Mauritius, and our own Narendra Modi have held roadshows, World Health Organisation, Secretary-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus gifted his organisation's global centre for Traditional Medicines (GCTM) to the state while Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal of the Aam Admi Party (AAP) and Rahul Gandhi of the Congress have stomped through the countryside - all within the last one month. In short, it is raining gifts and inaugurations as happened before the 2017 elections when Japanese PM Shinzo Abe visited Ahmedabad or Chinese President Xi Jinping in 2014.

Gujarat is the cradle of Prime Minister Modi and his powerful Home Minister Amit Shah. It is the citadel from which the two sallied forth in the quest for a “Congress-

mukt Bharat” in 2014 and must therefore be protected at all cost. The BJP is leaving no stone unturned to do so. The election results also have ramifications for Modi's bid for a return to power in the 2024 parliamentary elections.

In 2017, the Congress riding astride a Hardik Patel-led Patidar reservation stir, Alpesh Thakore headed OBC agitation and Jignesh Mevani's Dalit crusade formed a youth caste canvas that yielded handsome electoral dividends. The Congress secured 77 seats, its highest score in 27 years, and BJP its lowest of 99 seats in a 182-member House after Modi took over as Chief Minister in 2001. Thakore subsequently quit to join BJP, Hardik appointed Gujarat Congress working president is suspected of hobnobbing with the BJP while Mevani, though technically an independent, is now a frontline state Congress leader who will join the party nearer the elections. He was recently in the news after being arrested by the Assam Police in a midnight operation for a tweet against Prime Minister Modi and



released on bail. He is going all guns blazing against the ruling party.

Gujarat has traditionally remained a bi-polar electoral space shared by traditional rivals BJP and Congress. However, the forceful entry of AAP portends a triangular contest this time, more so after its sweeping victory in Punjab where it annihilated the Congress.

This premise has been reinforced by AAP's success in the Surat Municipal Corporation elections last where it bagged 27 seats to the BJP's 93 in a 120-member body, wiping the Congress out of existence. Subsequently in the Gandhinagar Municipal Corporation elections, BJP swept to power with 41 of the 44 seats, reducing the Opposition to less than an auto-rickshaw load (Congress 2, AAP 1). AAP picked up 21 per cent

votes and the combined vote share of the two Opposition parties was more than the BJP.

AAP's electoral debut in Gujarat in 2017 was a disaster when it lost all the 30 seats it contested and the bulk of its contestants their security deposits. AAP strategist, Sandeep Pathak is, however, hopeful that his party will bag 58 seats this time.

BJP leaders forcefully advance the Surat and Gandhinagar civic election results to point out that the two Opposition parties will end up denting each other. However, a study of the Assembly election results of previous years reveals that Congress has failed to breach the urban stronghold of the BJP though the former enjoys good support in the rural and tribal belt.

If AAP has succeeded in making inroads in cities as the civic results bring out, then it is the ruling BJP which is likely to be the loser in urban areas rather than the Congress.

BJP has ruled Gujarat for over a quarter-century and Modi for

more than 13 years becoming the longest-serving Chief Minister in the history of the state. The only record that has eluded him has been Congress Chief Minister Madhavsinh Solanki's 149 seats out of the total 182 in 1985. But the BJP has been steadily losing electoral ground. In the 2017 Assembly polls, it ended up with one less than 100. Modi's high point was 127 seats for the BJP in 2002 which came down to 117 in 2007 and 115 in 2012. His departure for Delhi has seen further erosion. He, nevertheless, rules the state with an iron grip, juggling Chief Ministers cleaning out cabinets, and changing legislators to deftly deflate anti-incumbency.

However, it is the state's tribal flank stretching from Ambaji in the north to Umbergaon in the south and running parallel to Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, and Maharashtra that is the centre of attention of all three parties. Modi held a tribal convention and inaugurated projects worth ₹22,000 crore at Dahod April 20, as part of his three-day tour of the state. A 17.98 lakh square feet

fireproof dome, said to be the biggest in Asia, was specially made for the PM's function. Then it was the turn of Kejriwal who along with the Punjab Chief Minister held a roadshow and later addressed a tribal rally in Bharuch where he announced the election tie-up with the Bhartiya Tribal Party of Chottu Vasava while Congress leader Rahul Gandhi addressed a tribal rally at Dahod May 10. Just around the same time the BJP too decided to hold a 3-day engagement of its tribal MPs gathered at the Statue of Unity (SAU).

All the three competing parties have their eyes on the tribal belt since it accounts for 14.8 per cent tribal population with 27 reserved ST seats. The Congress which has been steadily losing ground to the BJP is desperate to win back its hold while the latter wants to make up for the losses it incurs at the hands of the AAP in urban areas. AAP, in turn, wants to carve out space for itself through this foray.

With battle lines still being drawn, the Gujarat election is, at best, an evolving scenario.

international

of the day quote

I'm just being honest with people. Over the last three years, it's required a lot of strength to take Australia through (the pandemic) and we are continuing to need that strength

SCOTT MORRISON | AUSTRALIAN PM

If former Prime Minister Imran Khan is arrested, the country will turn into Sri Lanka which is currently undergoing its worst economic crisis

SHEIKH RASHEED AHMED | PAKISTAN'S FORMER INTERIOR MINISTER

Sweden and Finland proposed to work with Turkey on the "security guarantees" that Ankara has demanded over their plans to join NATO

MEVLUT CAVUSOGLU | TURKISH FOREIGN MINISTER

SHORT TAKES

2 dead, 3 injured in market shooting

Houston: Two people were killed and three more were taken to a hospital with injuries after a shooting Sunday at a bustling Houston flea market, authorities said. The shooting at the open-air market arose from an "altercation" that involved at least two guns and all five of the people, according to Harris County Sheriff Ed Gonzalez. He said no "innocent bystanders" were injured. Investigators believe one of the people hospitalised was among those who opened fire and two more suspected shooters were detained at the scene, a sheriff's deputy said.

15 killed in bus accident

Jakarta: Fifteen people were killed and 16 others injured in a bus accident in Indonesia's East Java province Monday, authorities have confirmed. The accident took place in Mojokerto district. The bus hit a pole located on the side of the road, a search and rescue official told Xinhua news agency. The police will carry out an investigation to find ascertain the exact cause of the accident.

Elisabeth Borne is France's new PM

Paris: Centrist politician Elisabeth Borne was appointed France's new Prime Minister Monday to become the second woman to hold the post in the country. Borne, 61, who was labour minister in the previous government, succeeds Jean Castex. Macron and Borne are expected to appoint the full government in the coming days. As labour minister since 2020, Borne implemented changes that made it harder for jobless people to get benefits and reduced monthly payments for some unemployed people, prompting criticism from workers unions and from the left.

1 killed at church in California

Los Angeles: One person was killed and at least four others were injured in a shooting at a church in western US state of California, authorities said. The shooting happened at the church on the 24000 block of El Toro Road in the City of Laguna Woods in Southern California's Orange County on Sunday afternoon, according to the Orange County Sheriff's Department. The sheriff's department tweeted at 2 p.m. that deputies were responding to reports of the shooting, Xinhua news agency reported. It added later that dispatch received call of a shooting inside Geneva Presbyterian Church at 1:26 pm.

India, Nepal ink key MoUs to boost ties

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Lumbini, May 16: Prime Minister Narendra Modi Monday said he had an "excellent" meeting with Nepalese counterpart Sher Bahadur Deuba in Lumbini - the birthplace of Gautam Buddha - and discussed the full range of bilateral relations as the two sides inked key MoUs to diversify and deepen cooperation.

Modi, who visited the Himalayan nation at the invitation of Deuba on a day-long visit to Lumbini on the occasion of Buddha Purnima, also discussed specific initiatives and ideas to further strengthen cooperation in various sectors, including culture, economy, trade, connectivity, energy and development partnership.

"Today's meeting with PM @SherBDeuba was excellent. We discussed the full range of relations between India and Nepal. Key MoUs were signed which will diversify and deepen cooperation," Modi tweeted. The two sides signed six Memorandum of Understandings (MoUs) on cooperation in cultural and educational sectors.

"PM @narendramodi holds bilateral talks with PM @SherBDeuba in Lumbini. Opportunity to strengthen ongoing cooperation and develop new areas in our multifaceted partnership," Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) Spokesperson Arindam Bagchi tweeted at the start of the meeting.

During the meeting, both Prime Ministers followed up on their discussions held on April 2 in New

EVER-STRENGTHENING FRIENDSHIP



- Prime Minister Deuba invited Indian companies to undertake the development of West Seti hydropower project in Nepal
- The two sides agreed in principle to establish sister city relations between Lumbini and Kushinagar, that are among the holiest sites of Buddhism

Delhi. "They discussed specific initiatives and ideas to further strengthen cooperation in various sectors, including culture, economy, trade, connectivity, energy and development partnership," the MEA said in a press release.



Egypt will not have a crisis in wheat supplies despite the repercussions of the ongoing conflict between Russia and Ukraine

MOSTAFA MADBOULY | EGYPTIAN PM

Today's meeting with PM @SherBDeuba was excellent. We discussed the full range of relations between India and Nepal. Key MoUs were signed which will diversify and deepen cooperation

NARENDRA MODI | INDIA PM

Indian developers to expeditiously explore new projects in this regard.

Both Prime Ministers agreed to further expand educational and cultural exchanges to bring the people of the two countries closer. The Indian Council of Cultural Relations (ICCR) inked separate MoUs with Lumbini Buddhist University on the establishment of Dr. Ambedkar Chair for Buddhist Studies; with Tribhuvan University on the establishment of ICCR Chair of Indian Studies and with the Kathmandu University (KU) on the establishment of the ICCR Chair of Indian Studies.

An MoU between Kathmandu University (KU) and the Indian Institute of Technology Madras (IIT-M) was also signed. A Letter of Agreement (LoA) between KU and IIT-M was signed for joint degree programme at Master's level.

An agreement between Sutlej Jala Vidyut Nigam (SJVN), a subsidiary of Himachal government, and Nepal Electricity Authority (NEA) for Development and implementation of Arun-4 Project was also inked.

OUTBREAK SURGES

KIM BLASTS PANDEMIC RESPONSE

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Seoul (South Korea), May 16: North Korean leader Kim Jong Un criticised officials over slow medicine deliveries and mobilized the military to respond to a surge in suspected COVID-19 infections, as his nation struggled to contain a fever that has reportedly killed dozens and sickened nearly a million others in a span of three days.

North Korean health authorities said Monday that eight more people died and an additional 392,920 were newly found to have feverish symptoms. That brings the death toll to 50 and illnesses to more than 1.2 million, respectively. It's a sharp jump from six dead and 350,000 sick reported last Friday, a day after the North said that it found that an unspecified number of people in capital Pyongyang tested positive for the omicron variant.

Kim has acknowledged that the fast-spreading fever, highly likely driven by COVID-19, is causing "great upheaval" in the country, and outside experts say the true scale of the outbreak is likely much bigger than what's described in the state-controlled media.

Some suspect that North Korea has understated its fatalities or illnesses to shield Kim's leadership from criticism. The North likely lacks test kits and other tools to detect virus carriers.

Imran's security beefed up

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Islamabad, May 16: The Pakistan government Monday beefed up security for former Prime Minister Imran Khan, two days after he claimed that there was a plot to assassinate him.

Khan claimed Saturday that a "conspiracy" to assassinate him was being hatched in Pakistan and abroad, warning that if anything happens to him, the people will come to know about the perpetrators through a video message he has recently recorded and placed in a safe place.

"A conspiracy is afoot to take my life. I got full knowledge of this conspiracy a few days ago. The conspiracy is being hatched here and abroad against me in closed rooms. I have recorded a video



An interior ministry spokesperson issued a statement confirming that in light of the PM's instructions, fool-proof security arrangements for Imran had been ensured

about this conspiracy, naming all those involved in it. If something happens to me then the people will come to know who were behind this conspiracy," Khan had said during a rally in Sialkot in Pakistan's Punjab province.

On Monday, Prime Minister

Shehbaz Sharif directed Interior Minister Rana Sanaullah to "provide foolproof security" to Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) chief after he was given a detailed briefing by the Interior Ministry on the security of the former premier, the official Associated Press of Pakistan news agency reported.

Next two months crucial: Lanka PM

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Colombo, May 16: Sri Lanka's newly-appointed Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe Monday warned that next two months would be the toughest and said his aim is to save the country from the ongoing economic crisis, and not a person, family or group, in an apparent reference to the Rajapaksa family and its former strongman Mahinda Rajapaksa.

In his first televised address to the nation after becoming the prime minister last week, the 73-year-old United National Party (UNP) leader also said that US dol-



For over 40 days 3 ships with crude oil and furnace oil have been anchored within the maritime zone of Sri Lanka. We are working to obtain dollars in the open market to pay for these shipments

RANIL WICKREMESINGHE | SRI LANKA PM

■ Wickremesinghe said that at present the Sri Lankan economy is extremely precarious and Colombo must obtain USD 75 million within the next couple of days to ease the current queues for essentials

lars will be sourced from open markets to pay for petrol, crude, furnace oil shipments currently in

Sri Lankan waters. Wickremesinghe was appointed as Sri Lanka's 26th prime minister

Uyghur county in China has highest prison rate

Under searing international criticism, Chinese officials announced the closure in 2019 of short-term, extrajudicial internment camps where Uyghurs were thrown in without charges

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Beijing, May 16: Nearly one in 25 people in a county in the Uyghur heartland of China has been sentenced to prison on terrorism-related charges, in what is the highest known imprisonment rate in the world, an Associated Press review of leaked data shows.

A list obtained and partially ver-

ified by the AP cites the names of more than 10,000 Uyghurs sent to prison in just Konasheher county alone, one of dozens in southern Xinjiang. In recent years, China has waged a brutal crackdown on the Uyghurs, a largely Muslim minority, which it has described as a war on terror.

The list is by far the biggest to emerge to date with the names of imprisoned Uyghurs, reflecting the sheer size of a Chinese government campaign that swept an estimated million or more people into internment camps and prisons.

It also confirms what families and rights groups have said for years: China is relying on a system of long-term incarceration to keep the Uyghurs in check, wielding the law as a weapon of repression.

Under searing international criticism, Chinese officials announced the closure in 2019 of short-term, extrajudicial internment camps



where Uyghurs were thrown in without charges. However, although attention focused on the camps, thousands of Uyghurs still languish for years or even decades in prison on what experts say are trumped-up charges of terrorism.

Uyghur farmer Rozikari Tohti was known as a soft-spoken, family-loving man with three children and

not the slightest interest in religion. So his cousin, Mührigul Musa, was shocked to discover Tohti had been thrown into prison for five years for "religious extremism".

"Never did I think he would be arrested," said Musa, who now lives in exile in Norway. "If you saw him, you would feel the same way. He is so earnest." From the

CHINA RECALLS TEACHERS

Chinese nationals teaching Mandarin in different parts of Pakistan have left for home after being called back by Beijing following the recent deadly attacks targeting them, an official of the Karachi University said



PLAGUED BY SETBACKS

In Ukraine, scenario darkens for Russia



More than three decades after it became the first American fast food restaurant to open in the Soviet Union, McDonald's said Monday that it has started the process of selling its business in Russia, another symbol of the country's increasing isolation over its war in Ukraine

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Kyiv, May 16: Europe pushed Monday to sharpen and expand its response to Russia's invasion of Ukraine, with Sweden poised to follow Finland in seeking membership of NATO and European Union officials working to rescue proposed sanctions that would target the Russian oil exports helping finance the war.

On the ground, Russia saw more setbacks in its offensive in the east, where Ukrainian defenders are fighting desperately against attempted advances and even successfully rolling back the front lines in some areas. In a small but symbolic boost for Ukrainian morale, a patrol of soldiers recorded triumphant video of their push to the Russian border in the region of Kharkiv.

Ukrainian forces have already driven Russian troops back from the region's capital, reducing their ability to hit the battered city with artillery. As fighting raged, inter-national efforts to respond to Russia's aggression continued to pick up pace.

Finland and Sweden have made a grave mistake with their intentions to join the NATO military alliance

SERGEI RYABKOV | RUSSIAN DEPUTY FOREIGN MINISTER



Sweden's government was expected to announce its intention to seek NATO membership later Monday — following a similar decision from its neighbour Finland. Those are seismic developments for the Nordic countries that have traditionally positioned themselves as militarily "nonaligned."

An enlargement of NATO to include Sweden and Finland would be a serious blow to Russian President Vladimir Putin, who sees the alliance's post-Cold War expansion in Eastern Europe as a threat.

Putin has cited it among his reasons for attacking Ukraine. His spokesman, Dmitry Peskov, said Monday that Russia "will look carefully at what the consequences will be of Finland and Sweden joining NATO." NATO's secretary-general, Jens Stoltenberg, has said the membership process for both Finland and Sweden could be very quick — though member Turkey has cast some doubt over the move.

Swedish Prime Minister Magdalena Andersson said Monday that joining the 30-member military alliance was her country's best defense in the face of Russian behaviour.

First commercial flight takes off from Sanaa

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Sanaa, May 16: The first commercial flight in six years took off from Yemen's rebel-held capital on Monday, officials said, part of a fragile truce in the county's grinding civil war.

The flight by national carrier Yemenia — also known as Yemen Airways — was bound for Jordan's capital of Amman, according to media outlets run by the Iran-backed Houthi rebels. It had 151 passengers on board.

Earlier, the plane had arrived in Sanaa from the southern port city of Aden to pick up the passengers. On touchdown, it was welcomed by a ceremonial "water salute," according to a video posted online by the national carrier.

The Houthi media office said a return flight, with 60 passengers on board, was expected back in Sanaa from Amman later Monday.

For Wednesday, Yemen Airways announced another flight from Sanaa to Amman and a return one to the Yemeni capital.

The flight is part of the U.N.-brokered, 60-day truce agreement that the internationally recognized government and the Houthi rebels struck last month. The truce, which went into effect on April 2, is the first nationwide cease-fire in Yemen in six years.

The truce accord calls for two commercial flights a week to and from Sanaa to Jordan and Egypt. The Houthi-held Sanaa is blockaded by the Saudi-led coalition, which backs the internationally recognized government.

of the day quote

At a consolidated level, we expect FY23 to be a strong year characterised by top line growth coupled with strong cash flows, ramp up of the US aluminium operations, revenue contribution from the newer verticals and a further diversified revenue mix

BN KALYANI | BHARAT FORGE CMD

We have witnessed demand recovery across all our businesses to pre-Covid levels and with our effective cost management, we have delivered the highest profitability for the quarter and the year

GAUTAM HARI SINGHANIA | RAYMOND CMD

The macro indicators are really looking good, the GST collection we have all seen is all-time high in April, the e-way bills have picked up, I would say all sectors of the economy have opened up

NIRANJAN GUPTA | HERO MOTOCORP CFO

SHORT TAKES

GSK Pharma reports net loss at ₹55 cr

New Delhi: GlaxoSmithKline Pharmaceuticals Monday reported a ₹55 crore consolidated net loss from continuing operations for the fourth quarter. The drug firm had reported a net profit of ₹4 crore for the January-March quarter of the 2020-21 fiscal. Revenue from operations rose to ₹810 crore for the fourth quarter compared to ₹744 crore in the year-ago period, GlaxoSmithKline Pharmaceuticals said in a regulatory filing. For the year ended March 31, 2022, the company posted a consolidated net profit from continuing operations at ₹381 crore against ₹287 in FY21. Revenue from operation last fiscal increased to ₹3,278 crore from ₹2,926 crore in 2020-21.

DTH players for 8% licence fee waiver

New Delhi: DTH players have approached the government to waive the 8 per cent licence fee imposed on them in line with a similar proposal for broadband services so that they remain competitive in the market, industry body DTH Association has said. The DTH body approached the Information and Broadcasting Ministry following a proposal under the consideration of the DoT to waive the licence fee on broadband services. In a letter dated May 11 sent to the Information and Broadcasting Ministry, the industry body said the direct-to-home (DTH) volumes have been declining quarter on quarter for a while now has put thousands of crores of investments and employment of over a lakh direct and indirect employees of the sector at risk.

Greenply Industries net up to ₹29cr

Kolkata: Plyboard major Greenply Industries Ltd Monday reported a marginal rise in consolidated net profit of 1.2 per cent to ₹29 crore for the fourth quarter ended March 2022 over the same quarter last year amid higher revenue. The company faced a squeeze in margin owing to inflationary pressure on the cost front that restricted profit amid a 13 per cent jump in revenue to ₹448.6 crore during the quarter under review. “We have seen an improving demand scenario in FY22 and accordingly achieved a strong financial performance. But raw material inflation and availability issues continue to constrain the growth trajectory,” Greenply Industries joint MD & CEO, Manoj Tulsian, said.



I do believe that we are now in an era of higher interest rates. This will help us in bringing down inflation, at least a part of that going forward

SANJIV BAJAJ | CII PRESIDENT

LOW CARBON-EMITTING TECHNOLOGIES CRUCIAL

Development and upscaling of ‘low carbon-emitting technologies’ in the chemical industry are crucial to address climate change but are strongly affected by the political and legal environment, a new white paper of the World Economic Forum said Monday.



India’s wheat export ban traps 1.8 MT at ports-trade

New Delhi banned wheat exports, just days after saying it was targeting record shipments of 10 MT this year, as a scorching heatwave curtailed output and domestic prices hit a record high

REUTERS



Mumbai, May 16: India’s wheat export ban has trapped some 1.8 million tonnes of grain at ports, leaving traders facing heavy losses from the prospect of selling onto a weaker domestic market, four dealers told Reuters.

New Delhi banned wheat exports Saturday, just days after saying it was targeting record shipments of 10 million tonnes this year, as a scorching heatwave curtailed output and domestic prices hit a record high.

Only exports backed by letters of credit (LCs), or payment guarantees, issued before May 13 can proceed before the ban takes effect, India has said. But of the around 2.2 million tonnes of wheat currently at ports or in transit there, traders have LCs for only 400,000 tonnes, a Mumbai-based dealer with a global trading firm said.

“Exporters don’t know what to do with the remaining 1.8 million tonnes. Nobody thought the government will outright ban the exports,” said one dealer, who declined to be named due to company policy.

One Mumbai-based trader said the ban could force it to declare force majeure on shipments to overseas customers.

“We bought wheat from traders and moved it to ports,” the trader said. “Our intention is to fulfil export commitments, but we can’t overrule government policy. Therefore, we don’t have any option but to declare force majeure.”

Global buyers were banking on supplies from the world’s second-biggest wheat producer after exports from the Black Sea region plunged following number one exporter Russia’s Feb 24 invasion of Ukraine.

Importers such as Bangladesh, Indonesia and United Arab Emirates may struggle to find alternative suppliers amid rising global prices. The abrupt ban will also make it harder for exporters to sell stocks lying at ports profitably.

They may have to re-sell those cargoes into the weaker domestic market, which has been under fresh price pressure since the export ban news emerged, a New Delhi-based trader with a global trading firm said, and will also have to pay re-loading and transport costs.

Around 1.4 million tonnes of wheat is currently stuck at west coast ports such as Mundra and Kandla or in transit there, while around another 800,000 tonnes is at the Kakinada, Tuticorin and Visakhapatnam ports on the east coast, dealers said.

“Vessel loading has stopped at a few ports. Thousands of trucks are waiting to unload at ports without any clarity,” the trader said.

Global trading houses are among those affected by the ban, as in some transactions their Indian subsidiaries had sold the wheat to their regional headquarters in Singapore before securing the necessary LCs, said an exporter.

Strong export demand and an assumption that the government would support shipments of at least 8 million-10 million tonnes encouraged exporters to move cargoes to ports after making purchases from farmers, said a New Delhi-based dealer with a global trading house.

RBI likely to raise rates again in June

REUTERS

Bangalore, May 16: The Reserve Bank of India will follow its surprise May rate rise with another hike at its meeting next month, according to a majority of analysts polled by Reuters who were exceptionally split on the size of the move.

India’s retail inflation accelerated to an eight-year high in April, remaining above the central bank’s tolerance limit for a fourth month in a row, and is likely to stay elevated. The sudden change in views on surging inflation and how to tame it means the RBI will likely take the repo rate, currently at 4.40%, back to at least its pre-pandemic level next quarter and not in 2023 as previously thought.

In the latest Reuters poll, over a quarter of economists, 14 of 53, expected the RBI to hike by 35 basis points to 4.75% next month, while 20 expected a larger move ranging from 40-75 basis points, including ten who forecast a 50 basis point hike. Twelve respondents forecast a modest rate rise (10 to 25 basis points) while seven saw no move at the June 6-8 meeting.

At the meeting, the RBI is likely to also raise its inflation projec-

tion for the current fiscal year and will consider more interest rates, a source aware of the developments told Reuters.

However, such an exceptional splintering of views on how the RBI will follow up on its unscheduled 40 basis point move May 4 shows the challenge facing forecasters who were completely taken off guard and not given clear guidance on what comes next.

“We need to really see the second action...in June to really get a grip of exactly what is the scale of policy normalisation that we can expect and the pace as well,” said Upasna Bhardwaj, senior economist at Kotak Mahindra Bank, who is predicting a 35 basis point rise to 4.75%, the median forecast for June. But she added that “markets are clear on one account, that there is going to be aggressive policy rate hikes because inflation is the biggest threat at this point in time.”

That aggressive outlook in part reflects what other central banks were forecast to do, especially the U.S. Federal Reserve, which was expected to hike rates by 50 basis points at its upcoming meetings after a similar move earlier this month.



LIC TO LIST ON BOURSES TODAY



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, May 16: The country’s largest insurer LIC will list its shares on the stock exchanges Tuesday after witnessing a good response from domestic investors in the initial share sale, which fetched ₹20,557 crore to the government.

The government had fixed the issue price of LIC shares at ₹949 apiece for allotment to investors. LIC policyholders and retail investors have got the shares at a price of ₹889 and ₹904 apiece, respectively, after taking into account the discount offered.

The Initial Public Offering (IPO) of Life Insurance Corporation (LIC) closed May 9 and shares were allocated to bidders May 12. The government sold over 22.13 crore shares or a 3.5 per cent stake in LIC through the IPO. The price band of the issue was ₹902-949 a share. However, shares were allocated to investors May 12 at the upper end of the price band.

The shares will list on the BSE and NSE May 17.

The LIC IPO – India’s largest to date – closed with nearly 3 times subscription, predominately lapped up by retail and institutional buyers, but foreign investor participation remained muted.

So far, the amount mobilised from the Paytm IPO in 2021 was the largest ever at ₹18,300 crore, followed by Coal India (2010) at nearly ₹15,500 crore and Reliance Power (2008) at ₹11,700 crore.

LIC had last month reduced its IPO size to 3.5 per cent from 5 per cent decided earlier due to the prevailing choppy market conditions. Even after the reduced size of over ₹20,557 crore, the LIC IPO is the biggest initial public offering ever in the country.

The share sale was initially planned to hit the markets in March. But the uncertainty in stock markets due to the Russia-Ukraine war pushed the issue to the current fiscal, which began in April.

Sensex, Nifty end six-day fall

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, May 16: Benchmark indices Sensex and Nifty ended their six-day losing run Monday on the back of buying in banking, auto and power stocks amid mixed trends in global equities.

The 30-share BSE Sensex rebounded by 180.22 points or 0.34 per cent to settle at 52,973.84 points in a see-saw trade.

The index opened higher and soared over 634 points to a day’s high of 53,428.28 in the first half of the trade. However, profit booking in IT and select heavyweight counters capped the gains dragging the index down by around 800 points to a low of 52,632.48 points.

The broader NSE Nifty went up by 60.15 points or 0.38 per cent to finish at 15,842.30, logging its first gain in seven sessions. Sensex and Nifty tanked over 5 per cent in the previous six sessions due to heavy selling by FPIs over inflation concerns.

“Autos & banks helped benchmark indices stay in the green as rising inflation and its impact on discretionary spending kept investors worried. The broader markets witnessed keen interest in companies likely to post good numbers during the first quarter of the current fiscal,” S Ranganathan, Head of Research at LKP securities said.

Shares of ACC and Ambuja Cements were in huge demand after Gautam Adani’s group clinched a deal to acquire a controlling stake in Holcim Ltd’s

businesses in India for USD 10.5 billion. ACC shares rallied 3.7 per cent to end at ₹2,192 while Ambuja Cements gained 2.59 per cent to close at ₹368.10.

Adani group companies also posted gains, led by Adani Enterprises which soared 2.53 per cent to ₹2,107.05. Adani Power jumped 4.99 per cent.

Broader markets outperformed the benchmark indices.

BSE MidCap rose by 1.51 per

cent to 22,145.10 while BSE SmallCap advanced 1.15 per cent to 25,605.99 points.

Among sectoral indices, BSE Telecom spurted 2.85 per cent, Auto by 2.2 per cent, Utilities by 2.17 per cent, Power by 2.1 per cent, Consumer Discretionary Goods & Services by 1.44 per cent, Finance by 1.45 and Bankex by 1.43 per cent.

On the other hand, BSE IT, Tech and FMCG lost up to 0.58 per cent.



Spiraling inflation may boost gold demand as hedge: Report

GOLD HAS GAINED IMPORTANCE AS AN INVESTMENT ASSET OVER THE YEARS, AND IS VIEWED AS A GOOD HEDGE IN THE EVENT OF THE RUPEE FALL AND AGAINST INFLATION IN THE SHORT-TERM

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, May 16: Despite the World Gold Council’s projection of a dip in consumer demand for the precious metal this fiscal on the back of rising prices and record imports last fiscal, a foreign brokerage report has suggested that the demand may rise more than generally projected as households may snap up the metal as a hedge against spiralling inflation.

Gold imports rose 33.34 per cent to USD 46.14 billion in FY22 to 837 tonnes or 1.5 times above the pandemic low in FY21 and 12 per cent more than the pre-pandemic av-

erage of FY16-20, leading to a higher current account deficit that’s seen at 3 per cent of GDP government data showed last month.

Imports were only worth USD 34.62 billion in the pandemic-hit FY21. After a record USD 54 billion worth of imports in FY13, inward gold shipments have been waning and had fallen to USD 28 billion in FY20 but then began to rise again and scaled USD 25 billion in FY21 and further to a tad over USD 46 billion FY22.

Gold imports are projected to marginally decline to USD 43 billion in FY23, according to UBS Securities India report released



Monday.

The surge in gold imports in FY22 contributed to the widening

of the trade deficit to USD 192.41 billion as against USD 102.62 billion in FY21.

India is the world’s second-biggest gold consumer after China.

The imports are largely driven by the jewellery industry. The gems & jewellery exports grew about 50 per cent to about USD 39 billion in FY22. Current account deficit widened to USD 23 billion or 2.7 per cent of GDP in the first three quarters, according to the RBI data.

“Our regression analysis suggests that a 1 per cent point increase in inflation leads to 2.6 per cent rise in gold demand. While the economic ramifications of persistently high inflation, stretched equity market valuations, recent

Pawan Hans sale put on hold



Govt legally examining an NCLT order against Almas Global, which is the biggest shareholder in the winning consortium

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, May 16: The government has put on hold the sale of Pawan Hans as it is legally examining an NCLT order against Almas Global, which is the biggest shareholder in the winning consortium, an official said Monday.

Last month, the government selected M/s Star9 Mobility Pvt Ltd, a consortium of M/s Big Charter Private Ltd, M/s Maharaja Aviation Private Ltd and M/s Almas Global Opportunity Fund SPC, as the winning bidder for Pawan Hans.

While Big Charter and Maharaja Aviation own 26 per cent and 25 per cent, respectively, in the Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV) M/s Star9 Mobility Pvt Ltd, Almas Global Opportunity Fund SPC holds 49 per cent.

The official said the letter of award to the winning consortium has not been issued as legal views are being taken.

“We will do a legal examination of the NCLT order before proceeding further. Letter of Award has not been issued,” the official said.

The National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT) had last month passed an order reportedly after Almas Global failed to make payments to creditors of a Kolkata-based company under an approved resolution plan.

This is the second strategic disinvestment that has run into rough weather: Earlier, the sale of Central Electronics Ltd (CEL) too was stalled on account of certain allegations against the winning bidder.

The government had in November last year approved the highest price bid of ₹210 crore by Delhi-based Nandal Finance and Leasing Pvt Ltd for the sale of 100 per cent equity shareholding of the government in CEL - a CPSE under the Department of Scientific and Industrial Research (DSIR).

“The Letter of Intent (LoI) has not been issued to the successful bidder and put on hold pending examination of specific allegation regarding the bidder,” Minister of State for Finance Bhagwat Kishanrao Karad had informed Parliament in February.

Pawan Hans is a 51:49 joint venture of the government and ONGC.

The government had in December last year received three bids for the Pawan Hans sale.

Star9 Mobility had quoted ₹211.14 crore for Pawan Hans, which was above the Reserve Price of ₹199.92 crore fixed by the government on the basis of valuation carried out by the transaction adviser and asset valuer.

The other two bids were for ₹181.05 crore and ₹153.15 crore.

DC inch closer to playoffs

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Navi Mumbai, May 16: Spinners Axar Patel (3/14) and Kuldeep Yadav (3/14) were inspirational in the middle overs even as Shardul Thakur (4/36) complemented the duo with a career-best IPL figures as Delhi Capitals inched closer towards playoff qualifications beating Punjab Kings by 17 runs in an IPL match Monday.

Invited to bat, DC posted 159/7 courtesy Mitchell Marsh's 48-ball 63 (4x4, 3x6) and then restricted Punjab to 142/9. Thakur, Axar and Kuldeep shared eight wickets among them while Anrich Nortje got the important wicket of Jonny Bairstow (32, 16b, 5x4, 1x6).

It was between overs 6-14 where Delhi won the game as Kuldeep and Axar cumulatively gave away only 28 runs in seven overs with four wickets between them.

With this win, DC jumped a place to fourth with 14 points from 13 matches. Royal Challengers Bangalore (14 from 13 matches) have same points as DC but they were pushed down to fifth spot as they have -0.323 NRR compared +0.255 of Delhi.

Punjab, who remained at seventh spot with 12 points from 13 matches, are virtually out of reckoning for a play-offs berth as they also have a -0.043 net run rate.

Chasing 160 for a win, Punjab suffered a batting collapse after a good start. Jitesh Sharma (44, 34b, 3x4, 2x6) and Rahul Chahar (25 n o) made a late fight back with a 41-run



AXAR PATEL

stand – highest in their run chase – for the eighth wicket but that proved to be too little too late.

Punjab were 54/3 at the end of powerplay and three balls later Axar claimed his 100th IPL wicket with a special one – that of Punjab captain Mayank Agarwal's scalp. There was no respite for Punjab as Liam Livingstone was out in the eighth over, stumped by Rishabh Pant for Kuldeep's first wicket.

Kuldeep returned for his second over to dismiss Harpreet Bar (1). It was all over for Punjab by then as they were reduced to 68/6 at the

halfway mark.

Punjab needed 39 off the final three overs but David Warner pulled off a fine catch at long off to dismiss Jitesh ended the game in favour of DC.

Earlier, Arshdeep Singh (3/37) and Liam Livingstone (3/27) snared three-wickets each as Punjab restricted Delhi to 159/7.

Marsh first added 51 runs with Sarfaraz Khan (32) and then another 47 runs with Lalit Yadav (24), after DC lost opener Warner (0) off the first ball of the innings. DC scored at a brisk pace after being



Kuldeep Yadav (L) is congratulated by Khaleel Ahmed and Mitchell Marsh

asked to bat but they suffered a middle-order collapse, losing three quick wickets.

It was Australian Marsh, who anchored the DC innings but ran out of partners. The move to open bowling with Livingstone worked as he removed Warner, who gave a sitter to Chahar at backward point.

Punjab pegged back DC, by grabbing three quick wickets and reducing the opposition to 112/5. First, Arshdeep used his slow bouncer to remove Lalit and then Livingstone sent back Rishabh Pant (7), who was stumped by Sharma.

Livingstone had his third wicket, when he removed Rovman Powell (2). Wickets kept tumbling for Delhi even as Punjab bowlers conceded 43 runs in the last five overs.

BRIEF SCORES

Delhi Capitals 159/7 (Mitchell Marsh 63, Sarfaraz Khan 32, Lalit Yadav 24; Axar Patel 17 n o; Liam Livingstone 3/27, Arshdeep Singh 3/37, Kagiso Rabada 1/24) beat Punjab Kings 142/9 (Jitesh Sharma 44, Jonny Bairstow 28, Rahul Chahar 25 n o; Shardul Thakur 4/36, Axar Patel 2/14, Kuldeep Yadav 2/14) by 17 runs.

MI test awaits SRH in must-win match



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, May 16: Their playoff chances hanging by a thread, Sunrisers Hyderabad will need to snap their five-match losing streak when they take on an already eliminated Mumbai Indians in the IPL here Tuesday.

It has been a rollercoaster ride for SRH who won five games in a row before losing the next five. SRH, if they win their two remaining games including the one against MI, will jump to 14 points and then be left hoping that the other results go their way to have an outside chance of making the playoffs.

But a loss against Mumbai at the Wankhede stadium will surely eliminate them, as there are already seven teams now with 12 or more points.

Hyderabad will need to put up a much improved show with the bat. Skipper Williamson is enduring a wretched run in this season and the Kiwi has collected just 208 runs from 12 games at an average of 18.92. He needs to find his mojo.

Head coach Tom Moody defended the move to open with an out-of-form Williamson and the New Zealander will need to prove his coach right.

His opening partner Abhishek Sharma, who chipped in with a 43 in the last game, needs to convert the starts to big scores. But the duo would have their task cut out against a formidable Mumbai attack on a track that helps pacers.

SRH have the necessary firepower in the middle-order with the likes of Rahul Tripathi, Aiden Markram and swashbuckling Nicholas Pooran, but consistency has been an issue.

Their middle-order crumbled in their last game against Kolkata Knight Riders, which they lost by 54 runs, and hence the three would need to fire in unison. Equally cru-



cial is the role of Washington Sundar and Shashank Singh as finishers.

The formidable Sunrisers pace attack includes Umran Malik, who has been a revelation, while the others like Bhuvneshwar Kumar, Marco Jansen, who can trouble Rohit with the delivery that comes in, and yorker specialist T Natarajan have fared well.

The MI batters will need to be wary of Malik, who is improving after every game and already has 18 wickets. MI will take confidence from their five-wicket win over Chennai Super Kings, whom they bundled out for 97 and probably look to dent SRH's chances.

But for Mumbai, the form of skipper Rohit Sharma and IPL's costliest buy Ishan Kishan are huge concerns. The duo needs to provide an aggressive start, especially in the absence of Suryakumar Yadav.

Tilak Varma, who has been one of the finds of the season, once again needs to shoulder responsibility in the middle-order, which lacks experience. And it wouldn't be easy for the likes of Daniel Sams, Tim David, Tristan Stubbs and Ramandeep Singh to counter the varied SRH attack.

As far as the MI bowling is concerned, pacer Sams is right on the money and can wreak havoc at the start. The ever-reliable Jasprit Bumrah and Riley Meredith have also played their parts while rookie spinner Kumar Kartikeya Singh has been providing necessary breakthroughs in the middle overs.

TODAY'S MATCH

Time: 07:30 pm

TELECAST

Star Sports channels & Hotstar

TOP-ORDER SHOULD SET UP GAMES FOR US: RAHUL

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, May 16: Lucknow Super Giants skipper KL Rahul wants his top-order batters to up their game following their second consecutive loss in the IPL.

The 24-run loss to Rajasthan Royals Sunday was LSG's first back-to-back defeat in the competition, denting their chances of finishing in the top-two. They need to win their remaining game against Kolkata Knight Riders on Wednesday to finish in the top-two and get two shots at reaching the final.

"I won't lie, yes, there is a bit of pressure. We all know in this com-

petition nothing comes easy and no point comes easy, and we've had to learn that the hard way.

"We could have so easily been sitting today and could have qualified and gone into the last game with a free mindset and try to enjoy our cricket," Rahul said at the post match press conference.

Chasing 179, LSG were reduced to 29 for three which put extra pressure on the middle order. He also explained why Marcus Stoinis is batting lower down the order.

"What we're trying to do is utilise players who will best suit the situation. And for us Marcus is one of those players. He has that brute



force and we know that he can be really dangerous at the back end. So we just tried to hold him back a little bit.

"We've given everybody different roles and it depends on which over someone gets out and who walks in. So we've kept it slightly flexible with the batting roles. This is the role we picked him to do, which is to be a finisher for us.

"But you need someone to support him at the other end. He needs and the team needs the top order to set up the game for someone like Stoinis and Jason (Holder) to come in and finish games. Which hasn't happened, unfortunately."

HETMYER RETURNS

MUMBAI: Rajasthan Royals batter Shimron Hetmyer, who had flown to Guyana for the birth of his first child, has rejoined the squad and is likely to be available for the side's final league match Friday. The big-hitting West Indian had flown to Guyana for the birth of his son May 8, missing the matches against Delhi Capitals and Lucknow Super Giants. "Hetmyer is back and is currently in quarantine," an IPL source told PTI. The Royals, who sit second on the points table, are on course for a top two finish. They take on CSK in their final league game Friday.

Late goal gives Sevilla final CL berth in Spain



JOB DONE: Sevilla players react after Youssef En-Nesyri's (L) late goal against Atletico Madrid, Sunday

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Madrid, May 16: Sevilla needed a late equaliser in a 1-1 draw at Atletico Madrid to clinch the final Champions League spot in the Spanish league.

Barcelona secured second place, and a spot in the lucrative Spanish Super Cup in Saudi Arabia, after a 0-0 draw at Getafe, which escaped relegation.

A header by Youssef En-Nesyri in the 85th minute secured the point that gave Sevilla a place in Europe's top club competition for a third straight season. Third-place Atlético, which had already qualified, opened the scoring with Jose Maria Gimenez in the first half.

A loss would have left Sevilla in a tense situation going into the final round next weekend as rival Real Betis beat Granada 2-0 to close in. The draw kept Sevilla three points ahead with a better head-to-head tiebreaker against fifth-place Betis.

Manuel Pellegrini's Betis had already secured a Europa League place by winning the Copa del Rey, and it will be joined in the second-tier competition by sixth-place Real

Sociedad, which defeated Villarreal 2-1 Sunday.

SUAREZ'S FAREWELL

Striker Luis Suarez became emotional as he received a huge ovation from Atletico Madrid fans after being substituted in the second half of what was likely his last match with the club. "Thanks for making us champions," said a banner at the Wanda Metropolitano Stadium.

Suarez was key in the team's title run last season after joining from Barcelona, but gradually lost his starting place and only played a few minutes off the bench recently.

Atletico are five points behind Barcelona, which got the result it needed against Getafe to secure the Spanish Super Cup berth in advance.

MADRID DRAWS

Focused on Liverpool, Madrid coach Carlo Ancelotti again rested some of his starters — including striker Karim Benzema, forward Vinicius Júnior, midfielder Luka Modric and goalkeeper Thibaut Courtois — in the draw at relegation-threatened Cadiz.

AC Milan on brink of Serie A title

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Milan, May 16: AC Milan's lengthy wait for the Italian league title will last another week at least. Second-half goals from Rafael Leao and Theo Hernandez saw Milan beat Atalanta 2-0 Sunday and they now only need one point from their final match to secure their first Serie A title since 2011.

The Rossoneri could even have clinched the title Sunday but defending champion and fierce rival Inter Milan won 3-1 at relegation-threatened Cagliari to keep their fading title hopes alive.

Milan were two points ahead of Inter and have the better head-to-head record, which is the first tie-breaker in Serie A. Stefano Pioli's Milan play at Sassuolo in the final round next weekend, and Inter host Sampdoria.

There was a heady atmosphere at San Siro, with Milan fans knowing their team is on the brink of ending the 11-year wait.

However, Atalanta managed to frustrate Milan and almost took the lead in the 31st minute but Rossoneri goalkeeper Mike



CRUCIAL POINTS: AC Milan players along with their manager celebrate the win over Atalanta, Sunday

Maignan pulled off a good save to keep out Luis Muriel's effort.

Milan upped the tempo in the second half and fans were on their feet nine minutes after the restart as they thought Hernandez's free-kick had gone in but it landed on

the outside of the side netting.

They only had to wait two minutes, however, before Leao used his pace to run onto a ball over the top from Junior Messias — who had only just come on — and drill it into the bottom left corner in

3 medals ensured at Women's Boxing Worlds

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, May 16: Indian boxers Nikhat Zareen (52kg), Manisha (57kg) and Parveen (63kg) continued their stellar run at the IBA Women's World Boxing Championships in Istanbul Monday by advancing to the semifinals of their respective events after thrilling victories.

Confirming their first World Championships medals with a place in the semifinals, Nikhat out-punched England's Charley-Sian Davison 5-0 while young Parveen got the better off Shoirra Zulkaynarova of Tajikistan with an identical margin.

Manisha, on the other hand, dispatched Mongolia's Namuun Monkhor in a hard-fought quarterfinal by a 4-1 split decision.

Nikhat handed India its first medal at this year's tournament

with an impressive victory.

The 25-year-old Telangana boxer was all pumped up in her highly physical bout against Davison. Both boxers were attacking each other ferociously in the first round.

However, the second round was a one way street as Nikhat pounded her opponent with terrific body shots to tire her out while also landing clean and sharp punches.

With the two rounds in the bag, Nikhat then displayed her defensive skills as she no longer felt the need to be on the offensive in the final few minutes of her quarterfinal bout.

The former junior world champion will next square off against Caroline De Almeida of Brazil, who thrashed the 2018 Commonwealth Games silver winner Carly McNaul of Ireland by unanimous decision.

The 24-year-old Manisha moved



around the ring and used her long reach to great effect as she had three clean punches in the closely fought last eight contest. Manisha will take on Italy's Irma Testa next.

In the fourth Indian bout of the day, Parveen initially seemed hesitant to attack and looked out of depth but as the seconds ticked away and coach Bhaskar Bhatt and the support staff encouraged her to go forward and attack from the sideline, the Haryana boxer gained confidence to notch up a

memorable win.

However, Nitu (48kg) ended her campaign with a 2-3 split verdict quarterfinal loss to reigning Asian champion Alua Balkibekova of Kazakhstan, while two-time Asian champion Pooja Rani's (81kg) campaign also came to an end as she went down 2-3 via a split verdict to Australia's Jessica Bagley. There was a bit of confusion with Pooja's result as the announcer mixed up the name of the two boxers.

Nitu, who is a two-time youth world champion, started the bout cautiously, enticing her opponent to come at her but struggled to land punches herself. The Indian tried hard to break Balkibekova's defences as the Kazakh boxer moved around swiftly. Nitu managed to up the ante in the final round but it was too late as the judges ruled in her opponent's favour.