


WISE WORDS
Sobhita Dhulipala believes identity of a person is malleable as we are products of our experiences

LEISURE **P2**



RISK RISES AT N-PLANT
Head of the UN's nuclear watchdog expresses growing anxiety about the safety of the Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant

INTERNATIONAL **P10**



REAL REIGN SUPREME
Rodrigo's brace helps Real Madrid to their first Copa del Rey title in nearly a decade

SPORTS **P12**

SHORTS

9 die in Texas mall shooting

Allen (US): A gunman killed eight people and wounded seven others – three critically – in a shooting at a Dallas-area mall before being fatally shot by a police officer who happened to be nearby, authorities said Saturday. Authorities did not immediately provide details about the victims, but witnesses reported seeing children among them. Some said they also saw what appeared to be a police officer and a mall security guard unconscious on the ground. The shooting was the latest episode of gun violence to strike the country. It sent hundreds of shoppers fleeing in panic.

Odia students return to state

Bhubaneswar: 10 Odia students stuck in conflict-hit Manipur at the Central Agricultural University, Imphal, were Sunday brought back safely after the state government made special arrangements for their evacuation. The students, after returning to Odisha, met Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik at Naveen Niwas here.

P4

Security lapses galore during President visit

POST NEWS NETWORK

Baripada, May 7: After the power outage embarrassment, yet another security lapse during President Droupadi Murmu's 3-day visit to Odisha has come to light. According to sources, when Murmu visited the Similipal Tiger Reserve (STR) in Mayurbhanj district Friday, a chemist identified as Jaswant Behera, who was on duty at the helipad, allegedly took pictures with the First Citizen of India's helicopter and shared them on social media. Behera allegedly deleted the tweet after his post triggered concerns about the President's security as it went viral on the on-line social media platforms. As per reports, Murmu had arrived at the Chheliagodhuli helipad

near Jashipur and travelled from there by car. Ahead of her arrival, the park was out of bound for visitors May 4 and 5. Security experts had earlier questioned why Murmu was not taken away to a safer location during the power outage at Maharaja Sriram Chandra Bhanja Deo University's convocation. The hiccup occurred only a few minutes into the President's speech, but she went on with her speech because the venue's microphone equipment remained unaffected. The university administration suspended electrician Jayant Tripathy and a three-member team, comprising the registrar, the PG council chairman, and the development officer, has been tasked with looking into errors and probe the incident.



WRESTLERS VS WFI CHIEF

10-day ultimatum to Centre

■ **Farmer unions including SKM and Khap panchayat representatives Sunday joined the wrestlers' protest against WFI chief Brij Bhushan Sharan Singh. The grapplers have been staging a sit-in at Jantar Mantar demanding action against Singh for the alleged sexual harassment of seven female wrestlers, one of whom is a minor**

AGENCIES

New Delhi, May 7: A number of khap panchayats and the protesting wrestlers Sunday issued a 10-day ultimatum to the Central government, demanding action be taken against Wrestling Federation of India (WFI) chief Brij Bhushan Sharan Singh regarding the allegations of sexual harassment against him. Representatives of around 250 khaps from Haryana, Rajasthan, and western Uttar Pradesh, along with hundreds of farmers, gathered at Jantar Mantar in support of the protesting wrestlers. "In today's (Sunday's) meeting between khaps, wrestlers and farm-



ers unions, we have given 10 days time to take action against Singh and if this does not happen, then we will meet again and the protest will be on a higher scale," said Surendra Solanki, the President of Palam khap in Delhi. The wrestlers will spearhead the protest while receiving support from the khaps and farmers' unions, he said. Every day, one khap and its members will participate in a peaceful sit-in protest at Jantar Mantar. The course of action will be determined

by the wrestlers, and we will follow their instructions, said Solanki. Meanwhile, top Indian wrestlers like Bajrang Punia, Sakshi Malik, and Vinesh Phogat will be taking out the candle march at 7pm to further strengthen their protest. The ongoing protest of wrestlers comes after no action on their grievances following an initial protest in January this year to press on for action against Singh. Last week, the Delhi Police filed two FIRs after the Supreme Court took up the issue.

Will hang myself if allegations proved, says Brij Bhushan

Lucknow: Wrestling Federation of India (WFI) chief Brij Bhushan Singh, accused of sexual harassment and intimidation by women wrestlers, has said that he would "hang himself if even a single allegation against him was proved". In a video message released Sunday, Singh said, "I will hang myself even if a single allegation against me is proved. The matter is with the Delhi Police, so I won't be able to speak much in detail on the matter. I have been saying this from the first day if these wrestlers have any video evidence against me. You should ask anyone who is associated with wrestling. Is Brij Bhushan Ravana?" Singh said that he was recording the video message on the way to his home in Gonda from Delhi.



Left women's associations for nationwide protests SEE P9



3rd Phase



High School Transformation

4 Districts

335 Transformed High Schools

Cuttack District

98 Transformed High Schools

Kalahandi District

115 Transformed High Schools

Malkangiri District

49 Transformed High Schools

Jajpur District

73 Transformed High Schools



Dedication by
Shri Naveen Patnaik
Hon'ble Chief Minister, Odisha
8th May 2023



School & Mass Education Department

DSPL-23

OIPR-27045/13/0016/2324

FORTUNE FORECAST

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

ARIES
Today, the stars put you on high alert... and not for nothing. You will save yourself from being swindled. Though you will easily manage to stay ahead of others, you may make a few enemies on your way. It's not a good day if you're looking to buy a house or vehicle, says Ganesha.

TAURUS
Your enthusiasm will be as contagious as your smile today, predicts Ganesha. People will stand charmed by your high spirits. There will be stressful moments, but things will look up later in the day. Take some time off if things get too hectic for you.

GEMINI
Today, you are likely to be rather emotional and sentimental, says Ganesha. Your love for performing arts may make you take up lessons in classical music or traditional dance. And much to your delight, your sweetheart will treat you to a surprise candlelit dinner.

CANCER
You are likely start the day in the best of spirits today. Your enthusiasm and cheerfulness will be infectious, and you will be able to lift the mood wherever you go. However, your enthusiasm can be short-lived and pummelled under the weight of some bad news, leaving you distraught. Take a break in case you feel stressed out, advises Ganesha.

LEO
If one were to put an earnest spirit and a frank attitude together, the result would be a Leo; it's like your hallmark. And with qualities like these in your kitty, don't be surprised if you happen to reach a milestone or two today. Will it be marital bliss or career success?

VIRGO
The booster rockets of your ambitions and spirit to work will kick in at the maximum today. Seek recreation after a hard day's work and look to relax at private parties, social-dos and even weddings, says Ganesha.

LIBRA
"Every man has specific natural abilities", said Aristotle. This seems to be true for you today. Your natural talents will be acknowledged and documented at work. This might prompt your equals to hold you up above the rest, and for your seniors to positively encourage you to scale greater heights. But as always, be careful to make sure that success does not make you heady with arrogance, cautions Ganesha.

SCORPIO
You will find yourself thinking with your heart rather than your head today, says Ganesha. You may not be able to repress your feelings, and you should not even try. But you should be careful about how you express them, particularly in public as people may judge you wrongly on the basis of it, advises Ganesha.

SAGITTARIUS
Today, your superiors at work are going to trust you with many complicated assignments. But, after exerting yourself, you are sure to come out with flying colors and have your work appreciated. Do not be surprised if cash incentives come your way. Such may indeed be your fortune, says Ganesha.

CAPRICORN
During the wisest with your extraordinary power of convincing may have been your forte, but you may have to prove yourself all over again, for Ganesha says you will be tested today. This apart, you are likely to find answers to questions lingering in your subconscious mind for long.

AQUARIUS
For a moment, it seems that you're swamped with problems. But you are brave enough to deal with any ugly issue that crops up suddenly. Ganesha hints at a romantic evening, which may just be time together in a jacuzzi, or simply preparing a meal together. Pure ecstasy!

PISCES
All the dieting that you have been undergoing will finally begin to show results, with compliments galore coming your way from your friends. Your energy and enthusiasm levels are likely to be high. A bright and beautiful day waits, says Ganesha.



JUNGKOOK CLOCKS 1BN STREAMS ON SPOTIFY

BTS' youngest star, Jungkook's latest feat, has once again set him apart from the rest. The 25-year-old has now set the record for the fastest K-pop soloist to reach 1 billion streams on Spotify, doing so in 409 days, as revealed by Guinness World Records.

RUTH SAYS THAT ACTRESSES ARE NOT ALLOWED TO 'AGE ON SCREEN'

Actress Ruth Wilson claims Hollywood puts pressure on actresses to have cosmetic procedures. Although Ruth, 41, hasn't had any enhancements, she admits that she is afraid that not having any treatments could leave her looking older than her peers, reports *aceshowbiz.com*.



Identity is porous: Sobhita

Mumbai: *Ponniyin Selvan* actress Sobhita Dhulipala, who hails from Andhra Pradesh, was recently asked if she's trying to find representation for her identity and her culture in the roles she does. Explaining her stand on representation, the actress revealed that she was in Vizag during her growing-up years and moved to Mumbai only 13-14 years ago. She used to speak Telugu and now speaks Hindi, and for now she doesn't know where home is. She states, "We are all products

of the experiences we've had, but we're also products of the experiences that we aspire to have. So I don't think any person represents one fixed thing. So I just feel that identity is porous. There are no boundaries; it's not defined. Who I was a couple of years ago is very different from the person I am now. And I would be fortunate if I am a different person to some extent in some time to come. And it means that I'm interacting with life with an open heart and absorbing whatever's good. And I'm changing with the times."

The actress will be next seen in the second season of *The Night Manager*, which is set to release June 30 on Disney+ Hotstar.

AGENCIES



PeeCee recalls her rough days filming Love Again

Los Angeles: Actress Priyanka Chopra Jonas, who is currently basking in the success of her spy thriller *Citadel*, recently shared her struggles from filming of her upcoming romantic comedy movie, *Love Again*, during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Sharing her experience from the film, she said, "It was nuts at that time. It was tough, but it was a scary time in the world. As actors, we're the ones that have to take off our masks on set. I was terrified, honestly, in the beginning. It was a very scary, daunting atmosphere, and we were doing a romantic comedy, so we had to bring lightness and fun to this daunting atmosphere. We really leaned on each other to create a fun environment on set with each other and tried to find the joy so that we could inspire and infuse ourselves as well."

Love Again, which is set for its global premiere May 12, stars Priyanka Chopra Jonas alongside Sam Heughan and Celine Dion. Priyanka will be playing the character of Mira Ray, a woman struggling to cope with the loss of her fiancé who sends romantic messages to his old phone number that has been re-assigned to journalist Rob Burns, played by Heughan.

IAN S

Citadel's Indian version is not a remake: Samantha

Mumbai: Actress Samantha Ruth Prabhu, who will be seen next in the Indian adaptation of the Priyanka Chopra-Jonas-starrer spy thriller *Citadel*, has cleared the air, saying that the Indian version is not a remake. Samantha took to social media to reply to a user who, in the comment section of her recent birthday post, inquired about the same.

The user wrote on her profile, "@samantharuthprabhuoffl, I have one question: are Priyanka's *Citadel* and your *Citadel* the same story?? Why I am asking is Priyanka dubbed in all Indian languages. So, if you are doing the same story for Indian audiences, then many would have already watched it. I am a bit confused. Can you clarify if it's the same or different? By the way, happy birthday, dear: God bless you!" Replying to the user, the Shaakuntalam actress said, "It is not a REMAKE!!"

Helmed by *The Family Man* creators Raj

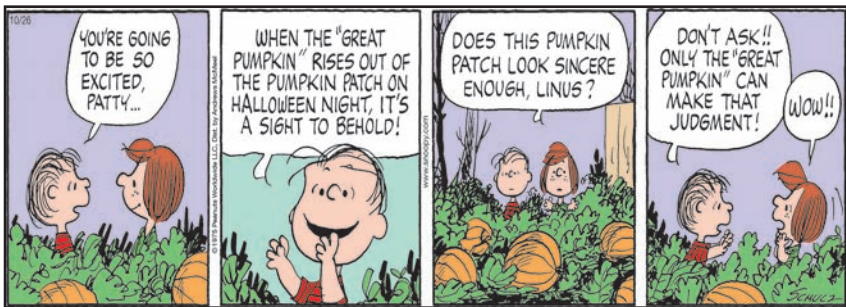
and DK, *Citadel* is the Indian counterpart of the larger international series of the same name, which was originally cre-

ated by the director duo, the Russo Brothers. The global version of the series stars Priyanka Chopra Jonas and Richard Madden.

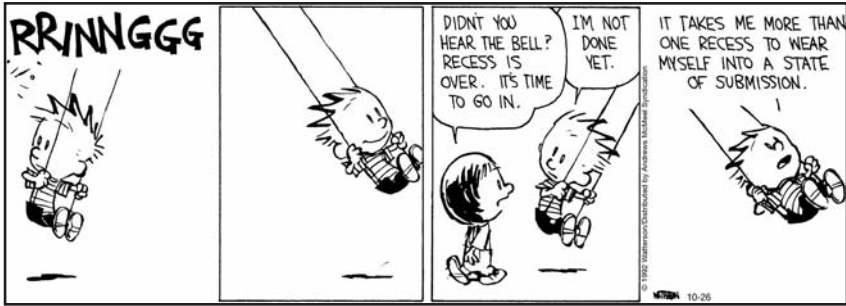
AGENCIES



PEANUTS



CALVIN AND HOBBS

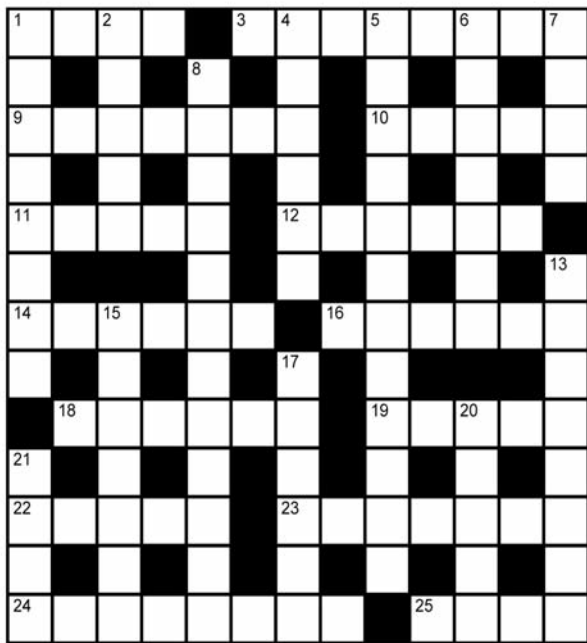


BREVITY



FUN post

CROSSWORD



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Across

- 1 Blackthorn fruit
3 Tailor's tool
9 Cheesecloth
10 Outmoded
11 Jellied garnish
12 Overseas
14 Retreats
16 Movie house
18 Web page action

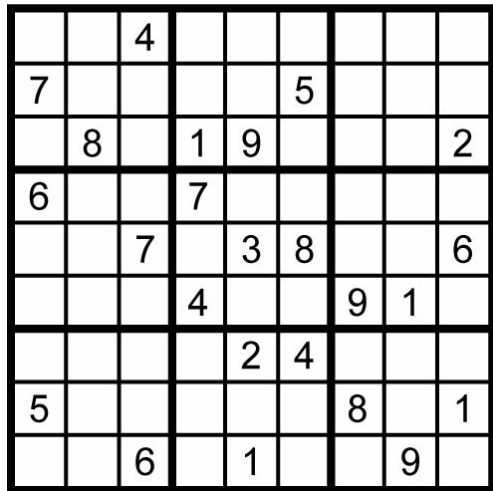
Down

- 19 Irritated
22 Island nation east of Fiji
23 Indifferent
24 Remittances
25 Farm building
1 Hit the beach (2,3)
4 French brandy

- 5 Disdainful
6 Performing in a play (2,5)
7 Flower holder
8 Inconsolable
13 Instrument related to the lute
15 Hotel sign
17 Mercury, for one
20 Destiny
21 Desist

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.

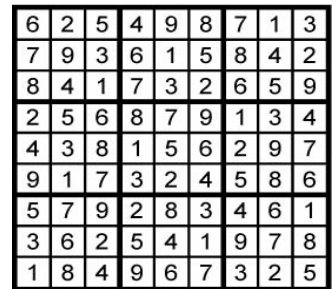


SOLUTIONS



CROSSWORD

SUDOKU

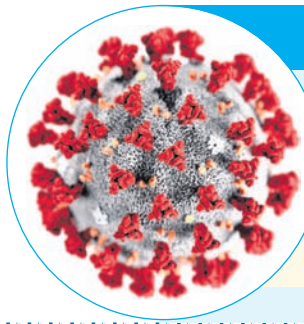


CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW



CARTOONIST DAY

Twin city police commissioner Saumendra Priyadarshi during National Cartoonist Day celebration at Buddha Jayanti Park in Bhubaneswar, Sunday



COVID-19 TRACKER

	INFECTED	RECOVERED	DEAD
World	68,77,53,620	66,02,16,553	68,70,990
India	4,49,69,630	4,44,10,738	5,31,680
Odisha	13,36,304	13,26,915	9,204

‘Student Police Cadet’ remains non-starter

GYAN RANJAN MOHAPATRA, OP

Bhubaneswar, May 7: The Student Police Cadet (SPC) scheme launched by Odisha Police in January 2019 to inculcate moral values, ethics and discipline in students and make them responsible citizens remains a non-starter.

Inspired by SPC’s success in Kerala, where it was introduced in 2010, the Centre rolled out the scheme nationally July 21, 2018.

In Odisha, the much talked about scheme was launched by the then Development Commissioner-cum-Additional Chief Secretary of Home department Asit Tripathy at an event organised by the Odisha Police at Capital High School here January 24, 2019.

According to Odisha Police, the programme was initially introduced in 40 schools across the state where 1,652 cadets were enrolled. Each school had a contingent of 44 cadets, including 22 girls. Students of Class VIII and IX were eligible to be a part of the two-year SPC scheme. The selected cadets were also given khaki uniforms on the inaugural occasion.



SPCs at the launching event January 24, 2019

We have been writing to district police and school authorities at regular intervals on implementation of the scheme. However, the authorities are showing almost no interest in it

SURESH CHANDRA JENA | SPC STATE NODAL OFFICER

As part of the scheme, specially-trained police officials were to impart lessons prepared by the Bureau of Police Research and Development (BPRD) on policing, ethics and moral values twice a week to the cadets so that they become law

abiding citizens. Plans were also on to take the cadets on exposure visits to police stations and other vital installations.

According to sources, the School and Mass Education department had identified 765 schools across the

state for the scheme. Steering committees were also constituted in 34 police districts for smooth implementation of the programme.

Official sources said Odisha Police received Rs 1,84,73,000 and Rs 1,78,17,000 during the financial years 2017-18 and 2018-19 respectively from the Centre for the programme. Of this Rs 3,62,90,000 allocation, the state police reportedly spent Rs 1,84,50,000 on the scheme.

Requesting anonymity, an official of Capital High School here, where the programme was launched, said that the scheme did not proceed beyond the distribution of uniforms January 24, 2019.

“No police official visited our school after the launch event, which was more of a photo op session,” the official pointed out.

Sources said that the situation is no different in the remaining 39 schools across the state.

“We have been writing to district police and school authorities at regular intervals on implementation of the scheme. However, the authorities are showing almost no interest in it,” said SPC’s state nodal officer Suresh Chandra Jena.

POLITICKLE by **MANJUL**



Low-pressure area likely to form over southeast BoB today: IMD

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, May 7: A cyclonic circulation lies over the southeast Bay of Bengal (BoB) and adjoining south Andaman Sea and under its influence, a low-pressure area is likely to form over the region Monday, the regional centre of India Meteorology Department (IMD) here said, Sunday.

The details of its path and intensification will be provided after the formation of the low-pressure area, it said. Fishermen and small ship, boat and trawler operators are advised not to venture into the southeast Bay of Bengal and adjoining areas of Andaman Sea from Sunday onwards and into southeast and adjoining central Bay of Bengal and Andaman Sea from May 9, it said.

Under the influence of the cyclonic circulation, the IMD said, “A low-pressure area is likely to form over the region May 8 and it is likely to intensify into a depression over the southeast Bay of Bengal and adjoining south Andaman Sea around May 9.”

“Thereafter, it is likely to intensify into a cyclonic storm while moving nearly northwards towards



the central Bay of Bengal and adjoining north Andaman Sea,” the IMD bulletin said. “The details of its (possible cyclone) path and intensification will be provided after the formation of the low-pressure area. The system is under constant watch and being monitored regularly.” IMD Director General G Mrutyunjay Mohapatra said. The weather office also said that the sea condition is likely to be ‘very rough to high’ over the southeast and adjoining central Bay of Bengal and Andaman Sea from May 10 onwards to May 12.

“Those who are over southeast Bay of Bengal and adjoining south Andaman Sea are advised to return to safer places and those over central Bay of Bengal and north Andaman Sea are advised to re-

turn before May 9,” the IMD bulletin said. It also suggested regulation of tourism and offshore activities and shipping near Andaman and Nicobar Islands during the May 8-12 period.

The IMD said moderate rainfall is expected at most places between May 8 and 12 with scattered heavy to very heavy precipitation.

Squally weather with wind speed reaching 40-50 kmph gusting to 60 kmph is likely to prevail over the southeast Bay of Bengal, Andaman & Nicobar Islands and adjoining Andaman Sea on May 7 and 8.

Meanwhile, the Odisha government has put 18 coastal and adjoining districts on alert in view of the IMD forecast. Collectors of the districts concerned were told to remain watchful of the IMD’s forecasts.

100 more paperless courts soon



POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, May 7: The two-day National Conference on Digitization, Paperless Courts and e-Initiatives organised by the Orissa High Court, which was inaugurated by the Chief Justice of India Dhananjaya Y Chandrachud May 6, at the Odisha Judicial Academy in Cuttack concluded Sunday.

Addressing the participants on the benefits of paperless courts, Orissa High Court Chief Justice S Muralidhar announced that in coming three months 100 more courts in different districts of the state

will soon become paperless.

In this national conference, judges and judicial officers from all the High Courts of the country discussed the e-initiatives taken by their courts, the challenges they are facing and the steps they have taken to overcome those challenges.

Justice Muralidhar further said that the conference has served as a forum for sharing of experiences and best practices. Stressing upon the importance of paperless courts, Justice Muralidhar said the paperless regime has had a positive impact on the courts’ architecture. Discussed the impact of social

media on the working of judicial officers, he said that there is need to think as to how to deal with the new trend. He emphasized building a self-reliant judiciary.

Summing up the key takeaways of the conference, Muralidhar mentioned that the judicial system needs to be more citizen-centric; lawyers have to be brought on board to implement complete transformation of the system; security of data and its retrievability has to be ensured; paperless functioning of courts has to be ensured; judiciary has to become self-reliant instead of depending on external agencies for ICT enabled functioning; and simplification of procedures and process reengineering has to be focused on.

The members of the Supreme Court of India e-Committee presented the action plan for Implementation of the Phase-III of e-Courts Project. The Secretary, Department of Justice, Government of India, put forth the government’s budgetary plan for the Phase-III of e-Courts Project.

Class X result by May 3rd week: S&ME Min

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, May 7: School and Mass Education Minister Samir Ranjan Dash Sunday said that the result of Class X examination will be out most likely by the third week of May.

The minister further informed that processes are already underway for the publication of Plus II results as well.

According to Dash, the Plus II Science and Commerce streams results will likely be announced by May last week. The exact dates for the publication of Class X and Plus II results will be announced shortly, the minister said.

“So far, no dates have been fixed. We are hopeful to announce the results of Plus II Science and Commerce streams by end of May,” said Dash.

According to the minister, the evaluation of Plus II answer sheets is underway and the council is expected to announce the result publication date soon.

5T secy visits Hinjili, Sheragada in Ganjam

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, May 7: On the instructions of Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik, secretary to CM (5T), VK Pandian visited Ganjam’s Hinjili and Sheragada Sunday.

During his visit that started early morning, Pandian reviewed a number of development works and projects and is scheduled to review many more projects till the evening.

The 5T secretary visited a number of places in Hinjili and Sheragada blocks of Hinjili Constituency. Among others, he visited temples, interacted with school and college students, reviewed the working of Mission Shakti SHGs and held discussions with the members.

Early 6.35am, he started from the Shyamalai temple at Burupada on the outskirts of Hinjili. From there, he went to the Uttareswar Shiva Mandir in Pitala Panchayata in Sheragada Block.

He interacted with the students of Pitala College, Sheragada Degree College and took note of the various issues. He also held discussions with the committee members of the Sheragada Jagannath Temple, Karadakana Jagannath Temple, Alarigada Jagannath Temple, regarding their development.

He assured for the development of the Panchuani Taratarini pitha and Karanji Pitha near Pitala. The 5T Secretary met common people, PRI members along with Mission Shakti Members and discussed in detail about the development of the area at Pitala, Karadakana and Alarigada.

He asked the officials present to ensure that the benefits of the various welfare schemes of the Government of Odisha are reaching the people.

He stressed on the development of the technical and educational institutions in Seragada and Hinjili.



EXAM TIME: NEET aspirants make a beeline for the exam at Mother's Public School in Bhubaneswar, Sunday

OP PHOTO

NEXT R-DAY PARADE COULD SEE ALL-WOMEN CONTINGENTS

AGENCIES

New Delhi, May 7: In a drastic shift that is bound to make a statement, next year’s Republic Day Parade here could see all-women marching and band contingents with authorities working on such a proposal for the ceremonial event to be held at Kartavya Path, defence sources said.

The Defence Ministry, in March, had circulated an office memorandum to the three services and various ministries and departments on the planning for the 2024 parade, they said.

The memorandum mentioned such a proposal being considered and added that a de-briefing meeting was held under the chairmanship of the defence secretary in early February, the sources said.

After deliberations, it has been

decided that the Republic Day Parade 2024 will have only women participants in the contingents (marching and band), tableaux and other performances during the parade at the Kartavya Path, says the memorandum.

A few all-women contingents, and women officers, including those leading military contingents comprising men, have taken part in the annual parade on Rajpath (now Kartavya Path) in the last few years.

India showcased its military might and vibrant cultural heritage during the 74th Republic Day Parade held January 26 this year, with ‘Nari Shakti’ being a dominant theme. The Indian Air Force marching contingent of 144 air warriors was led by a woman officer, with three supernumerary male officers in the 2023 parade, which was the first Republic Day



celebration held at the ceremonial boulevard since the revamping of the Central Vista and re-naming of Rajpath last year.

The first Republic Day celebrations were held in 1950 at the Irwin Stadium (renamed Major Dhyan Chand National Stadium),

■ The letter comes as a surprise for several senior military officers and has also created confusion

■ Many believe that there aren’t enough women available in forces for this

■ The current situation is that some marching contingents consist of men only

and since 1951, the ceremonial parade has been taking place on Rajpath.

Various states and Union

Territories, besides several departments and ministries every year showcase culture and heritage, among other themes, through colourful tableaux.

In the 2023 parade, ‘Nari Shakti’ was the dominant theme in the tableaux of Kerala, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Maharashtra and Tripura. The government in recent years has been pushing for a larger role for women in the armed forces.

In a historic first, the Indian Army recently inducted five women officers into its Regiment of Artillery.

The letter comes as a surprise for several senior military officers and has also created confusion. Many believe that there aren’t enough women available in forces for this. The current situation is that some marching contingents consist of men only.

Odia students return safely from Manipur

The students, after returning to Odisha, met Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik at Naveen Niwas to express their gratitude for bringing them back safely



POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, May 7: The state government Sunday brought back safely 10 Odia students stuck in the conflict-hit Manipur at the Central Agricultural University, Imphal, by making special arrange-

ments for their transport and accommodation. Odisha Paribar director Dilip Routray received the students, who had reached Kolkata from Manipur Saturday night, here at the Biju Patnaik International Airport. The students, after returning to

Odisha, met Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik at Naveen Niwas to express their gratitude for bringing them back safely. As per sources, the Chief Minister asked them about their studies and assured them the situation will soon be better in Manipur. Patnaik also presented these students hockey jerseys with the state logo. A large number of people, including students, who are reported to have gathered at Imphal airport, are trying to get a flight out of the troubled state. Ethnic violence, which was brewing for some time due to the long history of mutual disagreements between ethnic groups in the Imphal valley and its surrounding hills, has turned into a simmering conflict after the BJP-led Manipur government started a drive to evict tribal villagers from reserved forests. The violence has engulfed Manipur for the last few days.



WELCOME HOME: Odia students stuck in conflict-hit Manipur arrive at Biju Patnaik International Airport in Bhubaneswar, Sunday OP PHOTO

CLASSIFIED

AFFIDAVIT

I Sk Abdul Jabbar@Sekh Abadul Jabwar@Sek Abdul Zabar At Kunjakanta, Ward No-2, PO/PS-Dhenkanal Town, Dist.-Dhenkanal, by sworn of an affidavit before Notary, Dhenkanal change my n<None>ame as Abdul Jabbar Sheikh. Henceforth I shall be known as Abdul Jabbar Sheikh, S/o. Sk. Javed for all purposes.

I Amina Bibi, W/o. Sk. Abdul Jabbar, D/o. Amiruddin Dutta at Kunjakanta, Ward No-2, PO/PS-Dhenkanal Town, Dist-Dhenkanal, by sworn of an affidavit before Notary, Dhenkanal change my name as Amina Sheikh. Henceforth I shall be known as Amina Sheikh, W/o. Abdul Jabbar Sheikh for all purposes.

I Sk Abdul Jabbar at Kunjakanta, Ward No-2, PO/PS-Dhenkanal Town, Dist-Dhenkanal by sworn of an affidavit before Notary, Dhenkanal my daughter's name has changed from Ladeeda Zainab to Ladeeda Sheikh. Henceforth she shall be known as Ladeeda Sheikh, D/o. Abdul Jabbar Sheikh for all purposes.

I Sk Abdul Jabbar, At Kunjakanta, Ward No-2, PO/PS-Dhenkanal Town, Dist-Dhenkanal by sworn of an affidavit before Notary Dhenkanal my Son's name has changed from Sk. Ayaz Alli to Ayaz Ali Sheikh. Henceforth he shall known as Ayaz Ali Sheikh, S/o. Abdul Jabbar Sheikh for all purposes.

I Sk Abdul Jabbar, at Kunjakanta, Ward No-2, PO/PS-Dhenkanal Town, Dist-Dhenkanal by sworn of an affidavit before Notary, Dhenkanal my Son's name has changed from Sk Jishan Alli to Zeeshan Ali Sheikh. Henceforth he shall be known as Zeeshan Ali Sheikh, S/o. Abdul Jabbar Sheikh for all purposes.

Govt should increase seed kits supply: Experts

THE GOVERNMENT HAS BEEN URGED TO INCREASE THE NUMBER OF SEEDS IN THE KITS AND PROVIDE SEPARATE WINTER-SEASON VEGETABLE SEEDS BY MAY SO THE HOUSEHOLDS CAN GROW THEM BEFORE THE MONSOON

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, May 7: The 'Nutrition at Doorstep' scheme of the Odisha government, which promotes kitchen gardens and poultry in every household, has successfully promoted food security and addressed malnutrition in rural households, a recent survey by civil society organizations (CSOs) revealed. Odisha Shramajeebee Mancha and Mahila Shramajeebee Mancha, two CSOs active in the state, conducted the survey in 650 villages of Kandhamal district which revealed that 96 per cent of households had used vegetable seeds provided by the government to grow nutritional kitchen gardens. There is growing demand in



The 'Nutrition at Doorstep' scheme has successfully promoted food security and addressed malnutrition in rural households. However, the scheme must be expanded to at least 15 lakh households, as it has proved itself successful in promoting food security and addressing malnutrition in rural households, suggest experts

communities to receive this support. "The government has taken steps to address malnutrition by providing fruit and vegetable saplings as well as a vegetable mini-kit to 8 lakh identified malnourished families last year. The nutrition budget has also increased

from 19.31 per cent in 2020-21 to 23.03 per cent in 2023-24," said Anjan Pradhan, Convener of Odisha Shramajeebee Mancha. However, this scheme must be expanded to at least 15 lakh households, as it has proved itself successful in promoting food security

and addressing malnutrition in rural households. Pradhan also urged the government to increase the number of seeds in the kit and provide separate winter-season vegetable seeds by May so the households can grow them before the monsoon. Recently, a delegation of CSOs submitted a memorandum to the Agriculture and Farmers' Empowerment Minister Ranendra Pratap Swain urging the renewal of this program. According to a government report, 4, 93,941 households with children have been identified with stunted growth, with 1, 31,099 households having wasted children, 2, 69,784 underweight children, and 4, 53,883 anemic pregnant women as of last year.

CM pays tribute to Tagore

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, May 7: Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik paid rich tributes to the composer of the National Anthem, legendary poet, philosopher & Nobel laureate Gurudev Rabindranath Tagore on his birth anniversary Sunday. The Chief Minister said that his writings and philosophy surpass boundaries of language, culture and region and will continue to inspire future generations. Born May 7, 1861 Rabindranath Tagore also called Gurudev, Kobiguru, Biswokobi, worked as a poet, writer, playwright, composer, philosopher, social reformer and painter. He reshaped Bengali literature and music as well as Indian art with contextual modernism in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. He is the author of the profoundly sensitive, fresh and beautiful poetry Gitanjali.

Three poachers arrested from Debrigarh Sanctuary

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar/Sambalpur, May 7: Hiraakud Wildlife Division patrolling team arrested three poachers from Debrigarh Sanctuary in the wee hours of Sunday. The team headed by forester, lady forest guard and 10 squads while patrolling at periphery areas of Debrigarh sanctuary, near Rengali Beat (western part of the sanctuary in Bargarh district) nabbed 3 poachers with one country-made gun, knife, axe and match-stick. Since December last, after entry of tiger to Debrigarh, the forest teams had put up posters in 100 villages surrounding the sanctuary, seeking information about poachers. Being informed about the movement of poaching team from Kuketira & Rengali side to sanctuary, patrolling was intensified in that zone. In the wee hours of Sunday, we chased the poachers. They fired at us but we managed to arrest 3 persons before they

could commit any crime, said a forest official. Regularly patrolling is done by 6 troops in periphery areas of sanctuary and two troops cover the border of sanctuary while 12 teams patrol inside the sanctuary. Sharing of information is done by 5 control rooms operated by trained VHF operators. From preliminary investigation, it was revealed that country-made guns are procured by the accused from village Megpal & Basupali (near Kisinga area of Sambalpur district). The poachers kill animals primarily for selling their skins and horns as well as meat. The accused were identified as Subhas Gardia, 47years, village Kuketira, Bargarh district, Raghupati Dharua, 52years, Rengali village, Bargarh district and Digambar Sahu, 46years, Rengali village. After arresting them, the accused were forwarded to Attabira court Sunday.



Arrested poachers with the Hiraakud Wildlife Division patrolling team OP PHOTO

Indians fond of snacking the most during parties...

Snacking has become a significant part of every occasion in India. Eating is a major component of all festivals, parties, celebrations, and other get-togethers since it is a method to exhibit hospitality and forge relationships. Godrej Yummiez, a well-known manufacturer of frozen ready-to-cook foods, delved deeply into the topic of snacking in India to create the "STTEM -- Safety, Technology, Taste, Ease & Mood Uplifter"-- The India Snacking Report (Volume I). Weekends and Parties/guest visits/celebrations were the two major occasions for snacking that tied for first place. An average of 45 per cent of Indians has personal memories of these two events.

The Godrej Yummiez survey shows that when regions are compared, 47 per cent of Northern and Eastern India's population snacks when hosting parties or having visitors over with the same time, snacking was about equally prevalent in South and West India, with 44 per cent and 43 per cent, respectively. The survey also finds that weekend snacking is preferred by 46 per cent of South Indians and 45 per cent of each of North, West, and East Indians. Speaking on the insights and the report, Abhay Parnerkar, Chief Executive Officer (CEO), Godrej Tyson Foods Limited (GTFL), said, "As a category thought leader, Godrej Yummiez understands consumers well and shaped trends re-



Amongst cities that prefer snacking more during parties and guest visits - Lucknow tops the list with 54%, followed by Jaipur at the second place with 50% and Kolkata with 47% secures third place

defining the frozen ready-to-cook segment. The India Snacking Report is one such initiative by Godrej Yummiez to analyze and predict snacking trends. Snacking remains an integral part of various occa-

sions for people and this is evident from the insight we received from the report. Going forward, the dynamics that will shape India's snacking habits will be based on the acronym STTEM -- Safety,

Technology, Taste, Ease & Mood Uplifter -- the five pillars." Amongst cities that prefer snacking more during parties and guest visits - Lucknow tops the list with 54 per cent, followed by Jaipur at the second place with 50 per cent and Kolkata with 47 per cent secures third place. A total of 46 per cent and 45 per cent of people in Pune and Chennai enjoy snacking during parties. Followed by 43 per cent from Mumbai, 41 per cent from Ahmedabad and 44 per cent each from Delhi, Hyderabad and Bengaluru prefer snacking during parties and occasions. For the second occasion, weekend snacking, Delhi and Lucknow come in third with a 46 per cent score, Pune comes in second with

a 47 per cent score, and Chennai comes in first with a 49 per cent score. Mumbai, Bengaluru, and Kolkata are the next three cities, each with a 45 per cent average score. On weekends, 44 per cent of people from Ahmedabad and Jaipur and 43 per cent of people from Hyderabad like to snack. "STTEM -- Safety, Technology, Taste, Ease & Mood Uplifter"-- The India Snacking Report (Volume I) was undertaken by InQognito Insights on behalf of Godrej Yummiez. The survey was carried out in 10 cities, including Mumbai, Pune, Ahmedabad, Delhi, Jaipur, Lucknow, Kolkata, Chennai, Hyderabad, and Bengaluru. It also included the North, South, West, and East areas. IANS

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Brutal killing of bus hawker

POST NEWS NETWORK

Berhampur, May 7: In a shocking incident, a bus hawker was brutally killed Saturday night at Acharya Vihar, near Pastgate Duduma Colony under Badabazar police limits in Ganjam district.

According to reports, the deceased identified as Sanatan Chowdhury , had left his home at 4.30 pm Saturday for some personal work. He was returning home around 9.30 pm on his scooter when some miscreants assaulted him with sharp-edged weapons all of a sudden leading to his death.

Based on a complaint lodged by his wife Sumitra Chowdhury, police registered a case and started investigation.

A scientific team and a dog squad were pressed into service to nab the culprits, said IIC Prashant Bhupati of Badabazar police station, adding, the police managed to get some clues about the killers.

It is also being investigated whether the deceased had any disturbances in his family or previous enmity with anyone, Bhupati further said.

Meanwhile, the body was handed over to the family after post-mortem.

Jharsuguda villagers warn to boycott upcoming elections

POST NEWS NETWORK

Sambalpur/Kolabira, May 7: Residents of Samasingha panchayat under Kolabira block in Jharsuguda district, at a meeting, Sunday decided to boycott the upcoming by-election over a defunct irrigation project, a report said.

Soon, two state ministers – Tukuni Sahu and Niranjan Pujari who were campaigning in the area - arrived at the village and pacified the angry residents. Appropriate measures will be taken to resolve the issue once the elections are over, they said.



After the election, a village team will be invited to Bhubaneswar to discuss the issue, promised the ministers.

On the other hand, the villagers demanded immediate repair of the irrigation project and construction of a barrage on the river, it was learnt.

Though the farmers dropped their current boycott plan on the assurance of the ministers, they threatened to boycott the 2024 state elections if their demands were not met.

According to them, the mega irrigation project set up on the river Veden in Sodamal village has been defunct for a long time. The site selected for the project is a low lying land, for which it has failed to work in the summer, they alleged.

Locals have been complaining about their plight for years, but to no avail. Left with no choice, the villagers decided to boycott the elections, they said.

Anandapur: 20 hurt in honeybee attack

POST NEWS NETWORK

Anandapur, May 7: As many as 20 persons were injured including one of them critical after honeybees attacked them at Suanpada haat ground under Ramachandrapur police limits here in Keonjhar district, Sunday.



Among them, a youth Debashis Jena was rendered critical and shifted to Cuttack for advanced treatment.

A trader Madhabananda Sahu said that the incident occurred when honeybees from a beehive on an overhead water tank suddenly attacked the people assembled at the haat when it opened for trading. People ran helter-skelter to save their lives as honeybees chased and stung them. The haat ground was vacated within few minutes, he added.

Elderly tribal woman gangraped by youths

POST NEWS NETWORK

Dhenkikote, May 7: A 60-year-old tribal woman was gangraped by two youths at a forested area while returning home from a weekly haat under Harichandanpur police limits in Keonjhar district, police said Sunday.

The matter came to the fore after the survivor lodged a complaint at Harichandanpur police station, Saturday. Police registered a case and launched a manhunt to nab the accused youths who are absconding.

The accused were identified as Uttam Lohar, 30, and Mangala Soren, 32, from the same area. A medical examination was conducted on the survivor while the Harichandanpur IIC Prafulla Kumar Barla and SDPO Sushil Kumar Mishra visited the spot and took stock of the situation.

Police said that the incident occurred when the elderly woman was returning home from Baghamunda weekly haat, Wednesday. She felt tired on the way and took rest in a deserted forest area. The woman was resting when two local youths Lohar and Soren picked her up and took her inside the jungle where they took turns to rape her. While leaving they threatened to kill her if she discloses the matter before others.

The survivor managed to reach home and narrated her ordeal before her family members. Family members informed the kin of the accused and village elders and sought justice from them. After the news spread, the accused fled the village and are at large.

Later, the woman visited the Harichandanpur police station and lodged a complaint. Further investigations were on, Harichandanpur IIC said.

Merger of 57 Athagarh villages with CDA opposed

POST NEWS NETWORK

Athagarh, May 7: The state government's notification regarding the merger of 57 villages under this block in Cuttack district with Cuttack Development Authority (CDA) has heat up politics in the area, a report said.

The matter came to the fore after public representatives, political party leaders, lawyers and members of voluntary outfit opposed the notification and demanded its withdrawal, Saturday.

Sarpanchs of various panchayats under zone no-3 of Athagarh block led by Zilla Parishad member Balabhadra Bagh and Subhash Mallick submitted a memorandum to the Athagarh Sub-Collector Hemant Kumar Swain and demanded scrapping of the notification.

The members of a voluntary



outfit Athagarh Surakshya Manch also submitted a memorandum demanding to conduct a fresh public hearing in the concerned villages identified for merger with the CDA.

Similarly, lawyers Shankarshan Mohanty, Prakash Kumar Sethi, Srinivas Das, Pradip Kumar Mohapatra, Debaraj Swain and Gulu Sahu led by their bar president Jagadananda Tripathy also submitted a memorandum to the Sub-Collector in this regard.

Athagarh BJP unit termed the decision as against public interest and drew the attention of the Chief Minister. The party lead-



REDUCING MOSITURE CONTENT: Farmers drying up harvested paddy on a service road along a National Highway in Attabira of Bargarh district Sunday as mandi is yet to be opened in the area

OP PHOTO



FISHING TIME: Two men walk into Mahanadi river in Sambalpur to catch fish braving heatwave condition, Sunday

OP PHOTO

Drying Nagavali sparks alarm

EXPERTS BELIEVE THAT ILLEGAL SAND MINING AND SMUGGLING TO ANDHRA PRADESH ALONG THE RIVER IS ONE OF THE FEW REASONS BEHIND THE FAST DECLINE IN WATER LEVEL IN THE RIVER

POST NEWS NETWORK

Rayagada, May 7: The Nagavali river, one of the main rivers in southern Odisha and north Andhra Pradesh, is known as the lifeline of this district.

However, the river is drying up fast with a decline in water level, which has sparked concern among the residents, a report said.

The river, originating from a hill under Thuamula Rampur block in Kalahandi district, has been serving the residents of the district for a long time in irrigating their farmlands as well as a source for drinking water.

However, the river has come under serious threat, with water level coming down fast. Earlier, the river used to hold over three feet of water during the summer season. But now it has come down, with the river holding only less than a foot of water during the same period. The river can now be seen lying dry as far as Macchlipatnam in Andhra Pradesh.

It is apprehended that if the situation persists, things may worsen in the coming days. A drop of water will not be available to drink, not to mention the availability of water in the river to irrigate the farmlands.

The drop in water level has impacted agriculture in rabi season as the LI points are non-operational due to a lack of water in the river. Reports said that over 90 per cent of farmlands are lying unirrigated, while the residents in riparian villages have started feeling the pinch of drinking water scarcity. Even the drinking water supply to Rayagada town has been affected.

Observers alleged that lack of awareness, changing the course of river to some extent on the pretext of various government projects, and illegal sand mining and smug-



gling to Andhra Pradesh all along the river are a few reasons behind the fast decline in water level.

The river is the source of drinking water supply to the villages under Kalyansinghpur, Kolnara and Rayagada blocks as well as Rayagada town. Even residents in some parts of Andhra Pradesh depend on this river.

However, illegal sand and stone mining with the use of heavy earth moving equipment has seriously affected the river. The illegal mining and smuggling at Kumutipentha, Kotapeta, Maligaon, JKPur, Rayagada town, Partapur, Sheshkhal and Kereda is a case in point.

The sand extracted here is smuggled to Andhra Pradesh in trucks. This has been continuing due to lack of stringent action by the Revenue officials. It is alleged that the Revenue officials ignore this illegal sand mining in exchange of bribes, for which sand mining is flourishing day by day.

Moreover, the construction of two major irrigation projects down-

stream of the river by Andhra Pradesh has also affected Nagavali's water flow. It is alleged that the Totapalli project is using the most water from the river. The neighbouring state is conserving the river water during the rainy and winter seasons and using it for cultivation purposes during the summer season. This apart, it is also constructing several small and minor projects on the river, which is hindering the water flow and drying up the river.

The illegal sand mining is also resulting in landslides during the rainy season, during which the width of the river is expanding and changing its course.

Experts have warned that if immediate measures are not taken, things might slip out of hand. Illegal sand and stone mining has to stop first to save the river, said environmentalist Nihar Ranjan.

He also advised stopping the felling of trees for house construction on the river bank to prevent the river from overflowing during the rainy season.

NAYAGARH JAGGERY

Sugarcane farmer rues lack of sponsorship

POST NEWS NETWORK

Nayagarh, May 7: Demand for jaggery produced in Nayagarh district in traditional methods is rising day by day as the sugarcane here has a higher sucrose (sweetness) percentage and is more fibrous than the crops produced in other parts of the country and the state, a report said.

However, a lack of government sponsorship, price fixation and closure of Nayagarh Sugar Mill have hit sugarcane cultivation and the preparation of jaggery in the district.

Nevertheless, some farmers are still into sugarcane cultivation and continue producing jaggery using traditional methods without the use of chemicals. This gives it its unique taste and flavour and has made it a much sought after sweetener in various households.

Despite a slump in sugarcane cultivation, the demand for jaggery among people instead of sugar has increased due to its use in the preparation of cakes and various eatables. The molasses produced in Nayagarh is not confined within its limits but has crossed its boundaries and is now being sold in Dhenkanal,

Angul, Cuttack, Bhubaneswar and Ganjam and other states.

Meanwhile, the sugarcane research centre at Panipola in Nayagarh has initiated a move to get a GI tag for the molasses produced in the district, which if achieved will certainly give a big boost to sugarcane cultivation and jaggery production in the district.

A farmer Duryodhan Pradhan of Nua Kantabania village under Balugaon panchayat of Nayagarh block said he has been in sugarcane cultivation since he was only 6. He and his elder brother used to assist their father in the cultivation and produce jaggery out of it. He, with the help of his elder brother, has been independently cultivating sugarcane for the last 35 years.

He admitted that the cultivation has declined since the closure of the sugar mill. However, that has failed to deter him, as every year he cultivates sugarcane on 5 acre of land and earns a minimum of ₹2 lakh from the production of molasses.

He lamented that lack of price fixation has hit the jaggery business as traders buy it at ₹33 per kg from him and sell it at a much higher price in Dhenkanal, Angul, Talcher, Bhubaneswar and Cuttack towns.



A kilogram of molasses is even sold at ₹45 per kg in the village, he added.

Another farmer, Gulubas Pradhan of Similisahi village under Nuagaon block, said he is farming when he was only 6 years old and has spent over 60 years in the farming on his one acre of land. He also expressed his displeasure over the lack of price fixation.

A farmer, Pramod Kumar Kunda of Panipola, said that the sugarcane cultivated in Nayagarh is

much better in quality produced in other district and states. Around one tonne of sugarcane, when crushed in a sugar mill produces 1.5 quintal of sugar, while sugarcane produced in other districts gives only 85 kg.

The cultivation is undertaken mostly in Nayagarh, Ranpur, Odagaon, and Nuagaon blocks.

Sources said the climate and soil of Nayagarh being conducive to sugarcane crops, farmers used to cultivate it on large tracts of land and prepare jaggery from it

in traditional methods. Traders from different parts of the state and outside flocked to Nayagarh to take truckloads of 'gur' and molasses in earthen pots.

A farmer, Ranjit Dalabehera said, all those who are into jaggery production do not get any government assistance and the GI tag, when available, will help them benefit more from the business.

A trader of Barabati village said that the jaggery produced in Nayagarh is marketed under the name Maa Jaggery in other districts and sold at ₹80 per kg. He said that he earns around ₹2 lakh every year.

Scientist Pramod Kumar Nayak of the sugarcane research centre said that efforts have been launched to obtain a GI tag for Nayagarh jaggery, which is indigenous to the district.

Additional Chief District Agriculture Officer Lalatendu Mohapatra admitted that sugarcane cultivation has declined after the closure of the sugar mill. Over the years, the cultivation of the water-guzzling crop has come down from 6,000 hectares (ha) to less than 1,205 ha. It is now on the verge of extinction, he added.

Youth's body recovered; murder suspected

POST NEWS NETWORK

Dabugaon, May 7: The body of a young man was recovered along a road near the Mission Shakti office functioning on the Panchayat office premises of this block in Nabarangpur district, Sunday.

The deceased was identified as Bishnu Harijan, 28, son of Krushna Harijan of Jayanti Nagar village of Dangariguda panchayat of this block.




According to family sources, Bishnu left his home Saturday night but didn't return. In the morning, some villagers identified the body and informed them.

Later, based on a complaint lodged by Bishnu's mother Jamuna Harijan, police registered a case and started a probe with the help of a forensic team and sniffer dogs, IIC Sunil Kumar Pradhan said.

Sub-Inspector Chandan Sahoo and ASI Sishirkanta Ghosh were also part of the police team, it was learnt. After the postmortem, the body was handed over to his family and further investigation was on, police said.

“It is the Divine Presence that gives value to life. This Presence is the source of all peace, all joy, all security. Find this Presence in yourself and all your difficulties will disappear.”



THE MOTHER

Judgement Day

Law’s delay”, as Shakespeare famously put in one of his plays on the dysfunction of the system of governance, is proverbial. Those who want to dodge the operation of the law try every possible and impossible way to delay the process of law so as to defeat justice. This is a stark reality. But, it becomes even more disturbing when a judge of the Supreme Court lashes out at governments – State and Centre – for adopting a dilatory tactic so that he is forced not to be able to give his verdict on a momentous issue. The case sends shock waves to people who have faith in the country’s system of democracy where the judiciary is expected to act as a check on the executive to prevent the latter from exercising unbridled power to advance its own agenda and deny justice to people belonging to the minority group. It also reflects the helplessness of even the apex court to rein in the executive out to save convicts in a heinous crime perpetrated by criminals backed by the party in power using distorted religious ideology.

Justice KM Joseph of the Supreme Court came to the conclusion last week that the Gujarat government and the Centre were making every effort to avoid his Bench in the Bilkis Bano case for which they were using technicalities so that the convicts did not have to face him.

The Bench comprising Justices Joseph and BV Nagarantha was hearing Bilkis Bano’s plea challenging the decision of the Gujarat state government concerning the release of 11 men convicted for her rape and the murder of her family during the 2002 Gujarat riots. After objections raised by the counsel, the case was adjourned and re-scheduled. The hearing will take place after the vacations. It will hear it again on May 9, but that would be a mere exercise in completing the formalities in the hearing. It would next be listed after the holidays in front of a new bench.

The case, which was expected to come to a finality, is thus kept hanging fire seemingly to help the accused not to face a judge known for defending justice with exemplary courage. The counsel for some of the convicts raised procedural issues with the case. They pleaded they were yet to be served notice in the matter, pointing out the notice could not be completed as two of the respondents were out of station at the time. They requested the Bench to adjourn the case. Though convicts do have the right to be informed of hearings through proper serving of notices, the Judge had no doubt that the request was made with an oblique motive. In the end, the Bench had to adjourn the hearing to July, long after Justice Joseph’s last working day May 19. Quite rightly, did Justice Joseph express his anguish at the adjournment, noting that it was obvious that “they do not want us to hear the matter”. That it was no mere conjecture became clear when the judge pointed out he was retiring on June 16. Effectively, May 19 will be his last working day. He was prepared to hear the case even when on vacation. But, that too was objected to by the counsel of the convicts. This made the judge’s conclusion that they did not want him to hear the case inescapable.

The release of the 11 convicts, who were serving life terms for multiple murders and the gang-rape of some women during the Gujarat pogrom of 2002, had raised questions about the remission process. It became known later that the Union government had consented to their release. Justice Joseph had, at an earlier hearing, wanted to see the relevant files to ascertain whether the decision to release them was based on relevant considerations. The files were not produced on the stipulated day, but counsel for the Centre indicated that both governments may seek a review of the order to produce the files. Only in the latest hearing, the Solicitor General agreed to produce the records.

One may argue that the change of the Bench would make no difference in the outcome. But that may sound too naive as the judiciary has in many recent cases given orders that suited the current dispensation’s interests.

This makes the whole exercise suspect and the possibility of miscarriage of justice cannot be ruled out. That would be a big blow to the victim of rape and murder of a large number of her family members that was part of an orgy of communal violence.

WISDOM CORNER

- “Most people do not really want freedom, because freedom involves responsibility, and most people are frightened of responsibility.”

SIGMUND FREUD
- “Strength does not come from winning. Your struggles develop your strengths. When you go through hardships and decide not to surrender, that is strength.”

ARNOLD SCHWARZENEGGER
- “Faith is taking the first step even when you don’t see the whole staircase.”

MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.

WORDSWORTH

Hodmandod

A traditional English riddle runs: *Though not a cow I have horns; Though not an ass I carry a pack-saddle; And wherever I go I leave silver behind me.* The answer, in a curious little southern English dialect word, sadly long since defunct, is *hodmandod* – in everyday language, a snail. Before a snail was a *hodmandod*, it was a *dodman*, whose origin is puzzling, but may be related to the rare word *dod* for a rounded, bare hilltop; this comes from the Middle English *dodden*, to make the top of something bare, an activity you will agree definitely needs its own verb. The snail’s shell might have been fancifully compared to a bare hilltop. *Dodman* became extended through what Malcolm Jones described in *Dialect in Wiltshire* as a “childish, part-rhyming reduplication” to make *hoddy-doddy* and *hodmandod*. But *dodman* has outlived its extended relative and is still to be found in Norfolk dialect. The earliest example of *hodmandod* on record is in a work by the famously arrogant and pedantic Elizabethan lawyer and writer Gabriel Harvey. When he moved to London from his home town of Saffron Walden (where saffron was once widely cultivated), he managed to get involved in an interminable series of controversial exchanges with some of the best pamphleteers of his time, including John Lyly and Thomas Nashe. Gabriel Harvey responded to a scornful putdown of his brother Thomas by Nashe, describing the latter in crude insults as... *the son of a mule, a raw grammarian, a brabbling sophister, a counterfeit crank, a stale rake-hell, a piperly rimer, a stump-worn railer, a dodkin author, whose two swords are like the horns of a hodmandod; whose courage [is] like the fury of a gad-bee; and whose surmounting bravery, like the wings of a butterfly (Pierce’s Supererogation, or a New Praise of the Old Ass, by Gabriel Harvey, 1593).* Somehow, perhaps through a mental association with a hunchback, the word also came to mean a deformed person: *His head was thrice broader than his body, which fortunate accident had made such a hodmandod one of the greatest philosophers of this age; but it had also given the appearance of one of those rude and grotesque figures which German wit carves out for a humorous pair of nutcrackers (The Spirit of the Public Journals, 1807).* Alfred Watkins’ famous book of 1925, *The Old Straight Track*, was about the ancient tracks or ley lines that he believed criss-cross the British Isles. He argued that the original *dodman* was a surveyor with two poles for establishing sightlines from one hilltop to another. This might suggest that the snail was named after the surveyor through a visual link between its horns and his poles. It seems extremely unlikely and indeed Watkins derived the word – mistakenly – from the Welsh *dodi*, to lay or place, and from *dodging*, associating it with the actions of a surveyor moving his surveying rod back and forth until it accurately lined up with another one. Some writers have confused *dodman* with *dudman*, a scarecrow. The latter looks like a mere variation but its senses show that it must have a different origin, though nobody knows what it is. We do know that it comes from *dudsin* the sense of clothing, which came particularly to refer to rags and tatters. *Duds* is also the source of *dud* in the sense of something counterfeit, useless or broken.

FOCUS CLIMATE ACTION

REDUCED TO A FOOTNOTE



The IPCC’s reports remain an indispensable resource for informing people about the impact of climate change. But readers seeking a clear assessment of the current efforts to reduce global emissions and ensure that we cap global warming at 1.5 degree C should skip the summary and read the full report instead

In March, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) published its so-called “synthesis report,” the final section of its sixth assessment report (AR6). Based on thousands of peer-reviewed articles by hundreds of scientists from around the world, the report provides a comprehensive review of the impact of climate change and what the world must do to limit global warming to 1.5 degree Celsius.

The good news is that, according to the IPCC, “feasible, effective, and low-cost options for mitigation and adaptation are already available.” But ensuring a “livable and sustainable future for all” also requires a far-reaching transformation and the political will to take bold action.

IPCC reports are invaluable. By bringing science to climate negotiations that are otherwise dominated by political and economic considerations, the reports both inform and promote accountability. Often totalling over 1,000 pages, each report includes a shorter summary for policymakers that member states must officially approve. This process enables government representatives and observers to comment on incoming drafts while still allowing scientists to refuse suggestions that challenge the integrity of their research. During the approval process, however, sentences may be strengthened, softened, or even removed from the final draft.

The latest report warns that extreme weather events are becoming more frequent and intense than previously predicted, while global action has been far slower than expected. Every fraction of a degree matters, and, at the current rate of greenhouse-gas emissions, the world is barreling toward a 3.5 degree C increase by 2100 – with devastating consequences for humanity and the planet.

Barring urgent action to halve current greenhouse-gas emissions by 2030, global warming is “more likely than not” to reach 1.5 degree C above pre-industrial levels within the next decade, the report warns. But if policymakers act immediately, they could still prevent ice sheets from melting, permafrost from thawing, and ecosystems from collapsing, thereby saving countless lives.

To change course, we must address the root cause of climate change: “unsustainable energy use, land use and land-use change, lifestyles and patterns of consumption and production across regions, between and within countries, and among individuals.” Governments could choose many feasible and cost-effective steps to reduce emissions. The most promising are those that integrate rights-based approaches that embody meaningful public participation in decision-making, gender equity, biodiversity protection, human rights, and the rights of indigenous peoples. The IPCC report finds that policies that promote equity, fairness, and climate justice “lead to more sustainable outcomes” and “reduce trade-offs, support transformative change, and advance climate-resilient development.” Simply put, fairer climate policies receive greater support and are therefore more effective.

The most effective way to reduce emissions is to phase out fossil fuels and rapidly shift to renewable energies, particularly solar and wind energy. But the report also identifies important economy-wide and demand-side measures, such as “sufficiency” approaches, circular material flows, energy efficiency, sustainable consumption and production, widespread public transportation, and agricultural practices grounded in “sustainable land-management approaches.”

Behavioural changes, such as adopting a “sustainable healthy diet,” reducing the use of appliances, and forgoing private cars in favour of walking and cycling, could also help reduce emissions. As the IPCC report notes, the top 10% of households with the highest per capita emissions account for 34-45% of consumption-based global household emissions, whereas the bottom 50% contribute just 13-15%.

Curiously, despite the documented environmental benefits of reducing meat consumption in favour of healthier diets, both the summary and the full report include no mention of meat or dairy and relegate the phrase “plant-based” to a footnote.

Likewise, the report dropped a hopeful and high-confidence sentence relating to urgent, rapid, feasible, and equitable near-term policies to address climate change and improve human well-being that are already available to scale. This caused an outcry among many observers and a range of states seeking to retain the scientific finding. However, after hours of discussion, the sentence remained out; the words “ur-

gent,” “rapid,” and “available to scale” appeared too sensitive for universal approval, highlighting the tension between science and political will.

This tension was evident at the three sessions that preceded the approval of the sixth assessment report. Developing countries expressed anger at developed countries for not doing enough, despite their historical responsibility for climate change – and despite their promises to provide financing and technology transfers to facilitate adaptation efforts. Meanwhile, the language referring to fossil-fuel reduction, renewable-energy cost-efficiency, and equitable renewable-energy ownership was weakened, reflecting advocacy by those seeking to maintain fossil-fuel extraction.

As a result of insufficient global political will, the summary emphasises net-zero terminology over the need for a rapid and real reduction of greenhouse-gas emissions. This could lead less-informed policymakers to conclude that we can just magically plant trees and carry on as we have so far. Moreover, geoengineering solutions such as carbon dioxide removal and carbon capture and storage (CCS) have been given more space than renewable energies, despite research showing that deploying these technologies carries enormous environmental risks. In addition, compared to rapid renewable-energy transitions, CCS maintains fossil-fuel dependence, is more expensive, not available to scale, and less effective in reducing emissions. While the summary mentions some of these risks, it buries them in a footnote.

The IPCC’s reports remain an indispensable resource for informing people about the impact of climate change. But readers seeking a clear assessment of the current efforts to reduce global emissions and ensure that we cap global warming at 1.5 degree C should skip the summary and read the full report instead.

The writer is Representative for the Human Impacts of Climate Change at the Quaker United Nations Office in Geneva.

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SPECTRUM ELECTIONS

Why voters choose differently



Brij Bhardwaj

IN INDIA, POWER FLOWS FROM STATES TO THE CENTRE AND NOT VICE-VERSA

Political observers have been pre-occupied with attempts by Opposition leaders to unite and form a common front to take on the ruling BJP in 2024 Lok Sabha elections by putting up a common candidate. Hence they have missed the significance of the important message being sent out by the Indian electorate by voting differently in elections for state Assemblies and for the Lok Sabha.

This trend shows that the Indian electorate is selective while voting in elections and cannot be taken for granted. All those who ignore this trend will be making a big mistake as this is the pattern by which the stranglehold of the Congress was broken. State units of political parties are like branches of a tree, if a branch starts falling, the tree will not be able to survive for long. This trend started when Central leaders of the Congress started ignoring state units and felt that they could impose their will and put in place men of their choice as Chief Ministers, ignoring local claims and preferences. The BJP has now adopted the same trend. If this continues it will not be long before the hold of the party weakens. If power goes to Opposition parties in important states, the ability of the Centre to rule and implement its policies will become difficult. Poll watchers have started speaking regularly about this trend. In the current scenario it was noticed in West Bengal Assembly elections. This was reversed in Gujarat because Prime Minister Narendra Modi enjoys a unique position in that state. It, however, did not work in Himachal Pradesh.

Now it is on test in Karnataka. The troubles for BJP have been partly of its own making – frequent changes of Chief Ministers, ignoring claims of leaders who built the state unit from scratch. For a progressive state like Karnataka, the Gujarat model holds no attraction. It has been a base for new age revolution like artificial intelligence. It has a high degree of education and better standard of living. It has suffered from bad governance. The state rulers have been guilty of ignoring wide-spread corruption. The city of Bangalore, once a choice of all those who wanted good life after retirement and a favourite of new age industries is now a sick city. Its roads are in bad state, lakes overflow because of pollution and all natural outlets for water have been blocked by illegal construction. Under the circumstances, if people show anger when asked to vote it should not surprise anyone.

Even in the past, Karnataka has voted differently in elections to Assembly and Lok Sabha. It was a complete sweep for the BJP in Lok Sabha, but it was denied a majority in Assembly election. The lesson is clear – no election in India can be won without a strong leadership in the state. The BJP has been aware of the importance of state elections. Its formidable election machinery is deployed and popular Prime Minister Modi campaigns extensively. The results, however, differ depending on local conditions. In Uttar Pradesh, the BJP scores because its CM Yogi Adityanath has built his own brand image. In the North East it has prevailed as Assam CM Himanta Biswa Sarma is an astute politician. The magic cannot work everywhere.

In India, power flows from states to the Centre and not vice-versa. All empires which became indifferent to the aspirations of states have suffered. We have too many languages and too many aspirations, which have to be met. They need local leaders to understand and meet local aspirations. Strong Centre may prevail for some time, but cannot continue for long. What is happening in state elections cannot be ignored and anyone who does it will have to pay a price for it.

The next test of the theory that the voters have decided to make different choices while voting for the Assembly and the Lok Sabha is on the cards. The states which will be going to the polls next are Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh and Haryana. In all three states there will be a direct contest between the Congress and the BJP. In last elections, the BJP lost Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan, while in Haryana it failed to get a majority. Out of them BJP is in power in Madhya Pradesh because of a faction of Congress led by Jyotiraditya Scindia left the Congress and joined the BJP. While in Haryana it made a pact with a faction of Lok Dal to get a majority. In Rajasthan, Congress continues to be in power. In all these states, the BJP was in trouble and failed to get a majority. But in Lok Sabha polls it swept these three states. Will this be repeated again this time, or will it change if the Opposition parties are able to reach an agreement to put up a united front.

The writer is a Delhi-based journalist. ©INFA

NJ Ravi Chander, BANGALORE

Letters

TO THE EDITOR

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

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

Bizarre action

Sir, This refers to the news report “Students face music for skipping Mann Ki Baat” (Orissa POST, May 6). I must comment that the bizarre incident speaks volumes how democracy functions in BJP-ruled states. How dare the management of GRD Niranjapur collect a fine of ₹100 from each student for skipping PM Modi’s radio show ‘Mann Ki Baat’? The police should suo motu take action against the school authority. If the BJP thinks that the country can be ruled in Hitler style of leadership, it is digging its own grave. I am at a loss why students should be forced to listen to Modi’s ‘Mann Ki Baat’ radio show. Orissa POST deserves to be praised for publishing this news.

Arun Gupta, KOLKATA

Bleak future

Sir, GoFirst is not the first airline to go bankrupt, neither will it be the last one. Excessive reliance on the US-based Pratt & Whitney (PW) engines that power its A320 airbus Neo aircrafts seems to have done the airline in. Although held highly in its initial days, the PW engines have increasingly gained notoriety for their technical flaws. Owing a liability of ₹9000 crore, of which ₹3800 crore is meant for aircraft lessors and vendors GoAir has grounded nearly 50 aircraft, has no money to buy spare parts, and the fuel companies may not agree to the “cash-carry” method anymore. So, a bleak future awaits it even as the owners of GoFirst are also expected to request banks to thrash out a settlement with creditors so that the latter agree for a reduced amount from the airline. Amidst all this, thousands of passengers stand to be affected as all GoFirst flights are cancelled till May 12.

Ganapathi Bhat, AKOLA

of the day quote

The BJP does not have a vision. While unemployment and inflation are at their peak, its leaders are busy talking about religion. They got votes in the name of religion and came to power

BHUPESH BAGHEL | CHHATTISGARH CM

A special flight will be arranged for students from the state currently stuck in the riot-hit Manipur

EKNATH SHINDE | MAHARASHTRA CM

Non-BJP state governments are not exercising accountability and allowing pilferage and wastage of central funds

JITENDRA SINGH | UNION MINISTER

SHORT TAKES

Several injured

Chandigarh: Several people were injured in a blast at a restaurant in the Heritage Street near the Golden Temple in Punjab's holy city of Amritsar. The police, however, said it was not a terror attack, but an accident. Panic gripped as the blast took place at busy Heritage Street near Darbar Sahib on Saturday night. Many devotees and locals present at the spot presumed the blast a terror act. Appealing to maintain peace, police officials said the situation was under control and there was no need to be panic.

Eight killed

Moradabad: Eight people, including two teenagers, were killed and more than a dozen injured when a speeding truck hit the pickup van they were travelling in, police here said Sunday. The accident took place near the Khairkhata village on the Dalpatpur Road in the district's Bhagatpur area, they said.

11 dead in Kerala

Malappuram (Kerala): At least 11 people, most of them children, died when a houseboat with around 30 passengers aboard it overturned and sank near Tuvalthirum beach at Tanur area of Malappuram district in Kerala Sunday evening. Kerala Sports Minister V Abdurahiman, who is coordinating the rescue operations along with Tourism Minister P A Mohamed Riyas, said over 11 people died in the accident and most of them were children who had come for a ride amid ongoing school vacations.

Unseasonal rains hit sales of cooling appliances in Rajasthan

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Jaipur, May 7: While a relatively cool start to the summer season in Rajasthan due to unseasonal rains has most people thanking the weather gods, traders selling air conditioners and coolers are feeling the heat due to weak sales. Large parts of Rajasthan witnessed below-normal temperatures over the last two months due to rains and thunderstorms triggered by back-to-back western disturbances, weather systems that originate in the Mediterranean region and bring unseasonal rainfall to northwest India. The unseasonably cool weather has affected the sale of cooling appliances. According to Sachin Gupta, president of Jayanti Market here, the sale of air conditioners has dropped 40 per cent compared to last year and that of coolers has seen a 60 per cent decline. "The start of the season was

Manipur violence: Army tightens vigil

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Imphal, May 7: Army drones and helicopters kept a close watch on Manipur Sunday as curfew was relaxed in some parts of the Northeastern state, which was rocked by ethnic violence over the last few days, officials said.

So far, 23,000 people have been rescued from the violence-hit areas and were moved to military garrisons, they said. Personnel of the Army and Assam Rifles held flag marches as life started crawling back to somewhat normal, but the tension was palpable. Sources said around 10,000 security personnel have been deployed in the state, which has been on the boil since Wednesday.

Governor Anusuiya Uike chaired a meeting with Security Advisor Kuldip Singh and Operational Commander Ashutosh Sinha. At the meeting, the two officers shared their suggestions with the governor

to resolve the crisis, said a statement issued by the Raj Bhavan.

Uike advised the officers that arrangements be made for the safe return of the people who are in relief camps at present, it said. The clashes broke out after a 'Tribal Solidarity March' was organised in the ten hill districts of the state to protest against the Meitei community's demand for Scheduled Tribe (ST) status, leading to the deaths of at least 54 people.

Meiteis account for about 53 per cent of Manipur's population and live mostly in the Imphal valley. Tribals - Nagas and Kukis - constitute another 40 per cent of the population and live in the hill districts. In Hyderabad, Union Minister for the Development of North Eastern Region G Kishan Reddy said that the Centre was ready for talks with the warring groups in Manipur and resolve their issues.

"Please come forward to solve the issues in a peaceful manner. The government is ready. You have seen the farmers' issue. When it was peaceful, we tried to convince them. As the issue was not resolved, we agreed to their demand, and those bills (three farm laws) were withdrawn. So, the government is not

adamant," he said.

He stressed that people's welfare was the government's main agenda, urging the different groups to come forward for talks. Reddy said the government will take care of those who suffered losses due to violence, and order a comprehensive inquiry into the incident.

"If they have any problem, it is the responsibility of the state and central governments to resolve it. We should all maintain restraint. We should resolve the issues through discussions, and not through violence. Nothing can be achieved through violence," he added.

As the situation was improving, the state Home Department directed the district magistrates and deputy commissioners to relax the curfew in parts of their districts from 1 pm to 3 pm every day, according to a notification. The restrictions were relaxed in

Churachandpur, which was the epicentre of the violence, from 7 am to 10 am on Sunday to allow people buy essential items such as food and medicines. On Monday, the curfew will be relaxed in Imphal West district from 5 am to 8 pm.

"Imphal City is area where major markets, shops, godown, business entities, etc. Are located which provides various essential items which will not only cater to the needs of the District population but also to the needs of the entire State (sic)," said the notification, reasoning the relaxation. Over the last 24 hours, the Army significantly enhanced surveillance efforts through unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) and helicopters within the Imphal Valley, a defence statement said in the morning.

Meanwhile, the Airports Authority of India (AAI) took various measures to help passengers at the Imphal airport, while the airlines have waived rescheduling and cancellation charges for flights operating here. A total of 10,531 passengers have travelled via the Imphal airport, which handled 108 flights in the last few days. Different states also continued rescuing their people from the state.



People of violence-hit areas of Manipur at a relief camp set up by the Assam government

PTI PHOTO

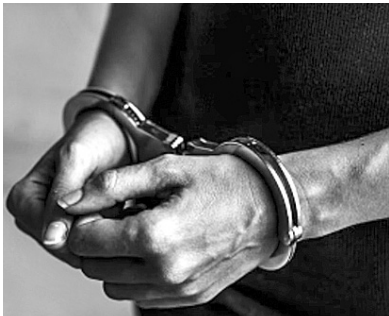


The country belongs to the youth and they must be provided with opportunities to prove themselves. There is a need to give a chance to the youth and we need to trust them

SACHIN PILOT | CONGRESS LEADER

TERROR ASSOCIATE ARRESTED

A terror associate was arrested from Jammu and Kashmir's Pulwama district and an Improvised Explosive Device was recovered from his possession, police said Sunday



BJP workers raise slogans during a protest against the film 'The Kerala Story' in Bhopal

PTI PHOTO

Gehlot credits Raje for saving his govt in 2020

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

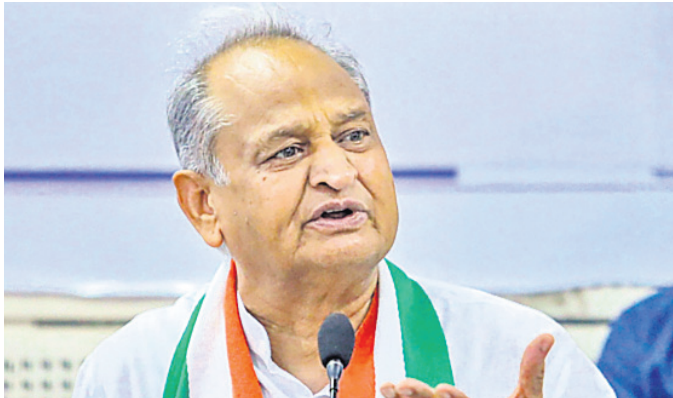
Dholpur (Rajasthan), May 7: Rajasthan Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot Sunday claimed Vasundhara Raje and two other BJP leaders had helped save his government during the 2020 revolt by his party MLAs.

He also took potshots at the rebel Congress MLAs saying they should return the money they had taken from the BJP so that they can carry out their duty without any pressure. Gehlot's then deputy Sachin Pilot and 18 other Congress MLAs had revolted against his leadership in July 2020. The month-long crisis ended after the intervention of the party high command. Pilot was then removed as the deputy chief minister and state Congress president.

Addressing a programme in Dholpur, Gehlot said his government could be saved because of the support of three BJP leaders - former chief minister Vasundhara Raje, former assembly speaker Kailash Meghwal and MLA Shobharani Kushwah.

"(Union ministers) Amit Shah, Gajendra Singh Shekhawat and Dharmendra Pradhan conspired together to topple my government. They distributed money in Rajasthan and they are not taking the money back now. I am surprised why they are not demanding the money back from them (the MLAs)," he claimed.

"I have even told the MLAs that whatever money they have taken, ₹10 crore or ₹20 crore, if you have spent anything, I will give that part or I will get it from AICC (All India



Congress Committee)," he said. Gehlot alleged that if the MLAs did not return the money, they will always be under pressure from Amit Shah. "He is the Union home minister, he will intimidate... In Maharashtra he divided Shiv Sena," Gehlot alleged.

He said that he was made the chief minister by the party for a third time and it was his duty to take all along and forget past happenings and ensure the return of the party to power in the assembly elections, slated for later this year.

Gehlot said he, as the state party chief, did not support the toppling of the BJP government led by Bhairon Singh Shekhawat as it was unfair, in the same manner, Raje and Meghwal did not support the toppling of the Congress government in 2020.

He said that BJP MLA Shobharani Kushwah also listened to them and did not support the party. Gehlot and Raje have often been accused by their detractors in their own parties of "going soft" on each other, especially

when it came to allegations of corruption.

The two leaders have denied any such understanding. A few days ago, Raje had rejected allegations of collusion with Gehlot as lie, saying milk and lemon juice never mix. Dholpur MLA Kushwah had cross-voted in favour of the Congress candidate in Rajya Sabha elections last year and was suspended from the party subsequently.

The Congress leader was addressing the programme in the home turf of former chief minister Raje.

Gehlot also praised Congress MLAs Rohit Bohra, Chetan Dudi and Danish Abrar for alerting him about the revolt against his government in 2020.

He said that these three MLAs, BSP-turned-Congress MLAs and independent MLAs who had supported him and saved his government during the political crisis in 2020 deserved to be made ministers in his government but he could not do so due to political reasons and was sad about it.

Women officers of Territorial Army to be posted along LoC

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, May 7: Defence Minister Rajnath Singh has approved the posting of women officers of the Territorial Army (TA) with its engineer regiments along the Line of Control (LoC).

He has also cleared appointment of the women officers as staff officers at TA group headquarters and directorate general of TA at New Delhi according to organisational requirement, the defence ministry said in a statement Sunday.

The Territorial Army had commenced commissioning of women officers since 2019 in ecological task force units, TA oil sector units and TA railway engineer regiment. "Based on the experience gained during this period, it has been decided to extend the scope of further employment for women officers in TA," the defence ministry said.



The TA operates based on a citizen-soldiers' army concept and officers undergo annual training on basic military skills while remaining gainfully employed in civilian life. "Defence Minister Rajnath Singh has approved the posting of women officers of the Territorial Army with engineer regiments of the TA along the Line of Control and as staff officers at TA group headquarters/ directorate general of Territorial Army at New Delhi, as per organisational requirement," the ministry said.



Women perform yoga during 'Yoga Conclave', a programme organised by Patanjali University and Bharat Swabhimani (Women Wing) in New Delhi

PTI PHOTO

THE FIRST SEMI-FINAL

K'taka polls sets the tone for 2024 LS elections

The national parties, BJP and Congress are trying to send a message to the nation with these results. Karnataka is the only link for both the parties to south India



INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Bangalore, May 7: The Karnataka elections are considered as semi-finals for the 2024 Lok Sabha elections. The national parties, BJP and Congress are trying to send a message to the nation with these results. Karnataka state is the only link for both the parties to south India.

After Rajasthan and Chhattisgarh, Congress wants to win Karnataka and make it a launchpad to set the tone for the Lok Sabha elections. It also wants to galvanise the cadres and party workers.

Though the state Congress leadership is formidable, Rahul Gandhi has put in his efforts and tried to send a message to the nation.

For the BJP, it is all about proving Prime Minister Narendra Modi's wave in the country by beating the anti-incumbency factor. The Karnataka elections have become all about PM Modi now. Union Minister for Home Amit Shah, Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, BJP National President J.P. Nadda, Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai himself are seeking votes in the name of PM Modi.

On top of it, PM Modi himself is seeking votes for himself through personal appeals. The victory will be considered as PM Modi's victory and defeat will also be attributed to him.

they are of national importance.

PM Modi is claiming that the election results will decide the fate of Karnataka state. He says the victory in Karnataka is crucial for making his dream of taking the Indian economy to the third place from the fifth place.

Telangana Chief Minister K. Chandrashekar Rao visited Bengaluru to meet Deve Gowda and family on multiple occasions. Deve Gowda's son, former CM H.D. Kumaraswamy has met West Bengal CM Mamata Banerjee in Kolkata and held talks on the third front.

Senior political analyst C. Rudrappa, talking to IANS explained, BJP has left its horse for Ashwamedha Yaga (ritual used by ancient Indian kings to prove their imperial sovereignty. A horse accompanied by the king's warriors would be released to wander for a year. Whoever tames the horse would be fought by them) in Karnataka.

"Their aim is to stop Congress in Karnataka and register victory on the lines of Uttar Pradesh. BJP, which is on a winning spree except for a few occasions, wants to consolidate its position. If BJP fails to make it in Karnataka it indicates an end of euphoria and a taken for granted attitude of BJP," he explained.

"BJP does not fit in with the people and states which have distinct cultures and don't get carried away by proposed nationalism by BJP such as Odisha, West Bengal, Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Telangana, Andhra Pradesh. They won't come into BJP's format. The setback in Karnataka either for the Congress or BJP will give indications for the national level," he said.

Rahul Gandhi and AICC President Mallikarjun Kharge are maintaining that Karnataka elections are not just elections to elect the government to the state but they are of national importance. PM Modi is claiming that the election results will decide the fate of Karnataka

The third front is hoping to make a comeback at the national stage through the success of JD(S) in Karnataka. Former PM H.D. Deve Gowda headed JD(S) is brimming with confidence on its chances of emerging victorious in the elections. Experts maintain that there is a conducive atmosphere in the state for it to become a kingmaker.

The party leadership is claiming that after the rebellion episodes in both Congress and BJP and emotional issues involving 89-year-old Deve Gowda, the party is standing better chances rather than being just a kingmaker.

Deve Gowda is touring the state and going to the people on a wheelchair, delivering speeches and making appeals to make his son the CM. He is still the unquestionable leader of Vokkaliga community, which decides the fate of political parties in south Karnataka region which has more than 80 seats, including Bangalore.

Rahul Gandhi and AICC President Mallikarjun Kharge are maintaining that Karnataka elections are not just elections to elect the government to the state but

TN govt to begin coconut oil supply through ration shops



INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Chennai, May 7: The Tamil Nadu government is planning to distribute coconut oil and groundnut oil through ration shops.

As a pilot project, coconut oil and groundnut oil will be distributed from ration shops in Coimbatore, Nilgiris, Tenkasi and Kanniyakumari districts of the state.

The state government had earlier announced distribution of cooking gas through ration shops. Meanwhile, Tamil Nadu Civil Supplies Minister, R. Sakkarapani, told IANS that the government was taking steps to buy 15,000 tonnes of wheat.

He said, "The central government reduced the monthly allotment from 23,000 tonnes to 8,000 tonnes and hence we are in shortage of wheat. Our Officials will be meeting higher officials in Delhi on Tuesday and seek permission from them for procuring wheat through National Cooperative Consumer Federation of India Ltd (NCCF)."

He said that there has been a huge demand from the people of Tamil Nadu even in rural areas for wheat and added that this might be due to the changed eating habits of the people.

'THE KERALA STORY' GETS POOR RECEPTION IN TN

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Chennai, May 7: Amid stinging reviews, allegedly poor box office collections as well as protests, theatres in Tamil Nadu stopped the screening of "The Kerala Story" in the State from May 7 onwards.

When this writer tried to book via online platforms for a Sunday afternoon show, it was not possible anymore.

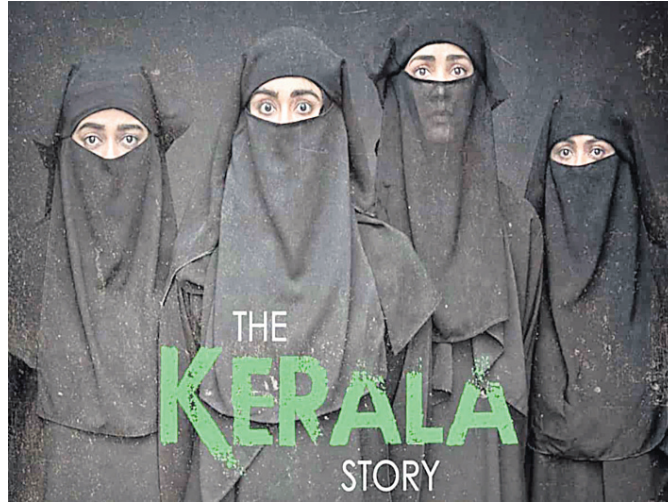
President of Tamil Nadu Theatre and Multiplex Owners Association, M Subramaniam, popularly known as Tiruppur Subramaniam, confirmed the news that the few multiplexes that had shown the film had decided to withdraw it.

"The film was only shown in a few multiplexes owned by pan-India groups, mostly PVR. Locally-owned multiplexes had already decided not to show the film, as it did not have any popular stars. In Coimbatore for instance, there were two shows so far - one Friday and one Saturday.

Even those did not do well. Given that, theatres decided that it was not worth going through the threat of protests and such," added Subramaniam.

On April 6, Naam Tamilar Katchi (NTK) staged a protest against the release of the film in Chennai. Seeman, the party's coordinator, who is also actor and director, along with NTK cadres, had protested near Anna Nagar Arch.

Film industry tracker Sreedhar



THEATRE OWNERS IN TAMIL NADU HAVE DECIDED NOT TO SCREEN THE CONTROVERSIAL MOVIE "THE KERALA STORY" AMID OPPOSITION TO ITS RELEASE

THE MOVIE HAD RELEASED IN VERY FEW THEATRES BUT IS NOW NOT AVAILABLE FOR BOOKING IN ANY THEATRES IN TAMIL NADU. ON APRIL 6, NAAM TAMILAR KATCHI (NTK) STAGED A PROTEST AGAINST THE RELEASE OF THE FILM IN CHENNAI

Pillai, who said he was planning to watch the film on Sunday, only to find out it was no longer shown, had also tweeted that the film multiplexes will stop screening "The Kerala Story".

"The multiplex owners have cited potential law and order issues and lack of interest as reasons for the move," said Pillai.

Meanwhile in Kerala, according to the distributors, E4 Entertainment, 22 screens across the State are screening the films. Although the theatre owners in Kerala had told Press Trust of India before the release of the film that they were not worried about the adverse publicity, on the day of release, May 5, a few theatres, including PVR Cinemas at Lulu Mall and Oberon Mall in Kochi, decided not to screen the film. When contacted, a spokesperson for PVR Cinemas had declined to comment.

DMK slams Centre over use of name 'Akashvani'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Chennai, May 7: The ruling DMK in Tamil Nadu Sunday hit out at the Centre for what it called replacing the national broadcaster's name 'All India Radio' with 'Akashvani' and demanded that the Union government restore the name AIR.

Writing to Union Minister of Information and Broadcasting Anurag Singh Thakur, DMK Parliamentarian T R Baalu referred to media reports on Prasara



Bharati's "direction" to stop using the words All India Radio and instead use the word Akashvani and said the "sudden decision is un-

warranted."

Blaming the Centre, Baalu said his party was fully against the decision to "jettison" the popular name All India Radio. "In the circumstances, I request you to kindly intervene in the matter and advise Prasara Bharati suitably so that the earlier practice is restored by it immediately."

Though Prasara Bharati claimed that this was an old decision and AIR stations have been advised to implement it, Baalu, also leader

of the DMK Parliamentary party, said the move was "not proper and is not acceptable at all".

"Already, people in Tamil Nadu and elsewhere have started protesting the action of Prasara Bharati."

Several political parties in Tamil Nadu have condemned the action "to deny the rightful place of Tamil in All India Radio and impose Hindi" in its place. Radio stations in Tamil Nadu have been using the name 'Vaanoli', the Tamil equivalent of Akashvani, he said.

IIITDM signs joint research agreement with Norwegian varsity

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Chennai, May 7: The Indian Institute of Information Technology (Design and Manufacturing) Kancheepuram Sunday announced signing agreements with the Norway-based University of Agder to take up joint academic and research collaboration.

The joint exercise would be carried out initially in the information and communication technology, mechatronics verticals and later expanded to other streams.

The two institutions have also agreed on a faculty exchange program in areas of mutual interest.

The agreement provides students to pursue their course at the University of Agder, Norway for a maximum period of 12 months and the credits earned would be transferred to IIITDM for awarding the degree.

In a press release, IIITDM Kancheepuram, Director Professor M V Kartikeyan expressed hope that such international exposure would enhance the skill set of the students.



Congress leader Rahul Gandhi rides a scooter with a food delivery man in Bangalore, Karnataka

PTI PHOTO

Arikomban goes on rampage again



INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Chennai, May 7: The rogue elephant 'Arikomban', relocated from Chinnakanal in Idukki district to the Mangaladevi forests in Periyar Tiger Reserve (PTR) around 110 km away, has entered the human habitations in Tamil Nadu creating scare among the people.

The elephant, which has killed around six people and destroyed more than 300 houses in the Chinnakanal area, was relocated exactly a week ago April 29.

It was captured after being tranquilized by the Kerala forest department team and later pushed into an animal ambulance with the support of four Kumki elephants.

'Arikomban' was fitted with a radio collar after he was tranquilized and the Kerala forest department was monitoring the signals that were being received from the animal. The Kerala forest de-

partment has warned the Tamil Nadu counterparts that the elephant was roaming in Tamil Nadu forest areas and was reaching areas close to human habitations.

The wild elephant, according to local people, entered the human settlements late on Friday night and early Saturday morning and tried to destroy crops. Forest guards and local farmers drove the animal away.

According to Tamil Nadu forest department officials, the animal had tried to enter human settlements in Meghamala, Iravangal and Manamalar areas.

M. Chinnathambi, a farmer while speaking to IANS said, "We have heard enough of this rogue elephant. We don't know when he will trample us and destroy our crops. We are afraid of even going out in the evenings and nights as the presence of the elephant cannot be detected and one might unknowingly land in front of it."

The Tamil Nadu forest department has constituted a 120 strong force to keep vigil on the entry of the rogue elephant in the human settlements and to wage away the animal using gun shots and throwing country made firearms.

MES to play spoilsport for BJP in Belagavi



INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Hubbali, May 7: The Maharashtra Ekkikaran Samiti (MES), which is trying hard to keep the border issue with Maharashtra alive in Belagavi area, is likely to play spoilsport to the fortunes of BJP in four assembly seats in the district.

It may be noted that Belagavi was part of the erstwhile Bombay Presidency and constitutes 40 per cent of Marathi speaking people.

The MES has fielded Ramakant Konduskar from Belagavi (South), and he is up against BJP's three-term MLA, Abhay Patil. Konduskar, who is also the President of Sri Ram Sena Hindustan, could attract a large number of BJP votes.

The party has fielded RM Chougale from Belagavi (Rural) and is expected to give a tough fight to Laxmi Hebbalkar of the Congress party and BJP's Nagesh Mannolkar. Mannolkar was expected to wrest the seat this time from Laxmi but it is tough with the presence of Chougale.

Advocate Amar Yallurkar is contesting on MES ticket from Belagavi (North) and Muralidhar Patil, a highly influential local businessman, is its candidate from Khanapur constituency. The party is focusing on three seats, Belagavi (South), Belagavi (Rural) and Khanapur.

The BJP failed to renominate Anil Benake who is a Maratha leader from Belagavi (North) and this has led to the Maratha-speaking people to unite under the banner of MES. This is likely to impact the BJP's prospects in all the four seats.

In Belagavi (North), the BJP nominated Ravi Patil, a Panchanamasali Lingayat in place of Anil Benake and the MES candidate Amar Yallurkar is a Maratha.

OPS becomes an poll issue after Cong promises to deliver it

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Bangalore, May 7: Political parties in Karnataka are all set to cash in on the exasperation and disappointment of the government employees demanding the scrapping of National Pension Scheme (NPS) and re-introduction of the Old Pension Scheme (OPS) ahead of the May 10 Assembly polls.

The ruling BJP formed a committee on reintroducing OPS by studying states that have scrapped the market-linked NPS. It assured of a suitable action after the report gets submitted to the government.

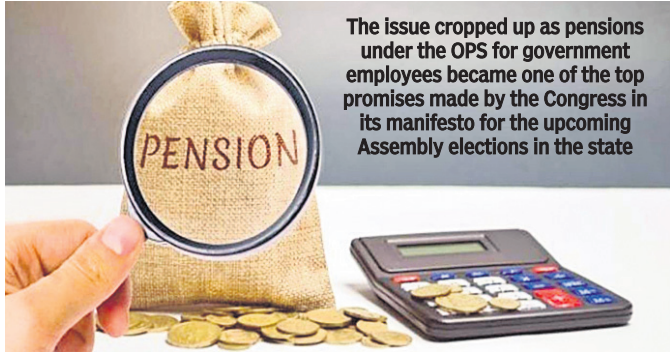
Understandably, the party took the step at the fag end of its tenure to avoid inviting any wrath of government employees during elections. The government employees

and pensioners form a large group of voters in the state. The protests have been staged for the re-introduction of the OPS.

"To sympathetically consider extension of OPS to the pensionable government employees who joined service since 2006," the manifesto reads. It is one of top promises made in the beginning of the Congress manifesto after the five guarantees.

State Congress President D.K. Shivakumar stated that his party is sympathetic towards those who want to join the OPS. The Congress has given the commitment and it would implement it without fail.

Meanwhile, JD(S) has promised in its election manifesto that the New Pension Scheme (NPS) will be reviewed. The party has proposed a new pension scheme which will



The issue cropped up as pensions under the OPS for government employees became one of the top promises made by the Congress in its manifesto for the upcoming Assembly elections in the state

comprise the good aspects of both NPS and OPS schemes. Government sources claim that of the 7.41 lakh government employees in the state, 2.97 lakh are covered under NPS.

The NPS was introduced to all government employees who were

recruited to the government services after April 1, 2006. These employees are not happy with the NPS which is a market linked retired pension scheme. Mohan Dasari explained that these people were getting a bulk amount at the time of retirement. Since it is a market linked

scheme, they don't get a big amount at the time of retirement. Normally, all middle class government employees wait for their retirement to build the house, get the children married. They literally waited.

Now with the market scheme, how are they going to wait for anything? It also means that the government employees are not even going to get a good pension. This is a survival thing for middle class government employees. They struggle their entire life to get that amount, he explained.

"This is purely to help the corporates, this is what BJP and Congress governments are doing. We are completely against it and are determined to bring back the OPS," Mohan Dasari stated. Asked about the declaration in the manifesto by the Congress, Mohan Dasari questioned

why the Congress government did not bring the OPS in Rajasthan and Chhattisgarh, where it is ruling? Why are they not doing it now? If Congress has a vision for OPS, it should have done it in both the states. Since they have not done it there, they will not do it here either.

Notably, BJP legislators had staged a walkout in the session demanding scrapping of NPS. Minister for Law and Parliamentary Affairs J. Madhu Swamy had stated that under the OPS there was a huge financial burden of salaries and pensions. The salary outgo exceeds Rs 90,000 crore, while it was Rs 20,000 to Rs 24,000 crore for pensions.

The BJP government even stated that it had informed in advance about NPS to all those who were recruited post 2006 and they can't demand OPS.

of the day quote

For the sake of democracy and the future of Karnataka, we must stop the BJP from winning in Karnataka

P CHIDAMBARAM | CONGRESS LEADER

As the Manipur violence persists, all right-thinking Indians must ask themselves what happened to the much-vaunted good governance we had been promised. The voters of Manipur are feeling grossly betrayed just a year after putting the BJP in power in their state. It's time for President's Rule

SHASHI THAROOR | CONGRESS LEADER

EC: Seeks proof from Congress for graft claims against BJP. What about: Seeking proof from PM when he accused Congress of backdoor political negotiations with those linked to terrorism!

KAPIL SIBAL | RAJYA SABHA MP

SHORT TAKES

NEET aspirant commits suicide

Bhilai: A 21-year-old student preparing for the National Eligibility-cum-Entrance Test (NEET) committed suicide by hanging himself in his rented room a day before the examination in Chhattisgarh's Bhilai city, police said Sunday. The incident took place at the victim's rented accommodation in Pragati Nagar area under Newai police station limits on Saturday, an official said.

Dog killed

Durg: A security guard of a residential building was arrested for allegedly tying a stray dog with wires and dragging it to death in Chhattisgarh's Durg city, police said Sunday. The accused was arrested on Saturday under section 429 (killing or maiming animals) of the Indian Penal Code (IPC) and relevant provisions of the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act, an official said.

Man arrested

Surat: Police arrested a man Sunday for allegedly cheating a diamond trader in Gujarat's Surat city by replacing the precious stones worth ₹32 lakh kept in parcels with gutka packets, an official said. Trader Rushabh Vora in his police complaint said the accused, Raheel Manjani, worked as a diamond broker and took him into confidence to obtain polished, round and natural quality diamonds worth ₹32, 04,442 from his office under the pretext of selling them to another trader.

Four held

Raisen: Police have arrested three men and a woman for allegedly selling a 17-year-old-girl for ₹50,000 to a person in Madhya Pradesh's Raisen district, an official said Sunday. The girl, resident of Ghughri police station limits in Mandla district, met two of the accused - Pahalwati Bai and Sunil Kushwaha - while working at a dairy in Jabalpur. Additional Superintendent of Police Amrit Meena said. The two accused lured her under the pretext of getting her a better job in Mumbai, he said.

Drugs seized

Thane: Police have seized drugs worth ₹8.40 lakh in Maharashtra's Thane city and arrested a man and a woman in this connection, an official said Sunday. Acting on a tip-off, officials of the Mira Bhayander-Vasai Virar police on Saturday raided a room at a chawl (row tenement) in Retibunder area on Ghodbunder Road.



I am not so sure of the Opposition's unity but as far as Lok Sabha elections are concerned I think the states matter now and all the opposition parties must realise that

FAROOQ ABDULLAH | FORMER UNION MINISTER

MEGA DRIVE

One lakh saplings, 90 per cent of them are of willow and poplar species, will be planted in the arid Ladakh region May 17 with an aim to achieve its 85-90 per cent survival rate, volunteers of the plantation drive said Sunday



42 MPs lost membership since 1988

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, May 7: The recent disqualification of Rahul Gandhi from Lok Sabha has put the spotlight on provisions of an Act which has been used to removed 42 members from Parliament since 1988, with the 14th Lok Sabha witnessing the ouster of 19 lawmakers in connection with the cash-for-query scam and cross-voting.

The disqualification of these lawmakers have been on various grounds like changing political allegiances, for conduct unbecoming of a parliamentarian and after being convicted by a court for crimes that have a jail term of two years or more.

The latest round of disqualification of Congress leader Rahul Gandhi, NCP leader Mohammad Faizal P P, and BSP leader Afzal Ansari came after their conviction by courts with jail terms of more than two year; invoked the provisions of the Representation of the People Act.

The Act deals with automatic disqualification of MPs and state legislators upon being convicted and sentenced for two years or more in a criminal case. The disqualification of Faizal, who represents Lakshadweep in the Lok Sabha, was revoked after he obtained a stay over his conviction and sentence, in an attempt to murder case, from the Kerala High Court. Rahul Gandhi has moved the



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The latest round of disqualification of Congress leader Rahul Gandhi, NCP leader Mohammad Faizal P P, and BSP leader Afzal Ansari came after their conviction by courts with jail terms of more than two year, invoked the provisions of the Representation of the People Act

Gujarat High Court to seek relief in the criminal defamation case involving the 'Modi surname' in which a Surat court had sentenced him to two years in jail.

The first disqualification of a Lok Sabha member after the anti-defection law was enacted in 1985 was that of Laldulhoma, a Congress member, who filed his nomination papers for the Mizoram Assembly elections as a candidate of the Mizo National Union, a party founded by him.

The ninth Lok Sabha, when the then Janata Dal leader V P Singh formed a coalition government, saw nine Lok Sabha members fall foul of the anti-defection law, which led to their disqualification. However, it was the 14th Lok Sabha which saw ouster of maximum members from the House - 10 for unbecoming conduct as member for accepting bribe for raising questions in Parliament and nine for cross-voting during the Vote of Confidence sought by the UPA-I government in July 2008

WRESTLERS' STIR DRAWS MORE SUPPORT

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, May 7: Four national Left wing women's organisations have given a joint call to hold nationwide protests for the immediate arrest of BJP MP Brij Bhushan Sharan Singh and Haryana minister Sandeep Singh over allegations of sexual harassment made by wrestlers.

In a statement, the All India Democratic Women's Association (AIDWA), National Federation of Indian Women (NFIW), Coordination POW-PMS-IJM All India Mahila Sanskritik Sanghatan (AIMSS) and the All India Agragami Mahila Sanghatan (AIAMS), expressed solidarity with the protesting wrestlers.

"Hundreds of protests will be held in different parts of the country. Women will hold meetings in villages, bastis and mohallahs to expose the 'anti-women' face of the BJP. Lakhs of signatures will be collected which will be sent to the prime minister through district collectors," the statement said.

The top grapplers of the country have been protesting at Jantar Mantar here since April 23, demanding that the government make public the findings of an oversight panel that investigated the sexual harassment charges against BJP MP and Wrestling Federation of India (WFI) chief Brij Bhushan Sharan Singh.

On April 28, the Delhi Police had registered two FIRs in connection with the allegations. Meanwhile, the police earlier in the day stepped up security at Jantar Mantar and in border areas of the city as hundreds of farmers reached the protest site to extend support to the grapplers.



A vendor puts earthen clay waterpots with a tap fitting for sale at a roadside stall in Nadia

PTI PHOTO

₹171 cr spent on Kejriwal's 'palace': Cong

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, May 7: The Congress Sunday alleged that the amount spent on Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal's residence was Rs 171 crore and not ₹45 crore reported earlier as his government had to buy additional flats for officers whose houses had to be either demolished or vacated for the expansion of the CM's residential complex.

Accusing Kejriwal of faking a simple lifestyle and instead spending crores on his residence, Congress spokesperson Ajay Maken said that in contrast to this, the epitome of simplicity in Delhi was his party leader and former chief minister Sheila Dikshit.



"The amount spent by the whole cabinet of Sheila Dikshit on their homes in 15 years of its rule is no match to the amount spent by Arvind Kejriwal on the renovation of his palace," Maken alleged. He alleged the amount spent on Kejriwal's residence was not ₹45 crore but ₹171 crore

The amount spent by the whole cabinet of Sheila Dikshit on their homes in 15 years of its rule is no match to the amount spent by Arvind Kejriwal on the renovation of his palace

AJAY MAKEN | CONGRESS SPOKESPERSON

and that too during the time of the Covid pandemic when people were running around for hospital beds and for the lack of oxygen.

"I will explain how ₹171 crore was spent. There are four residence complexes next to Kejriwal's official residence — 6, Flagstaff Road, Civil Lines. Together these four residence complexes have 22

officers' flats. Out of those 22, 15 were either gotten vacated or demolished and for the rest seven, it was instructed that they will not be re-allotted," Maken said.

To compensate for these flats, the Kejriwal government has bought 21 Type-5 flats worth ₹126 crore in the Commonwealth Games Village, he alleged. "So the price of these 21 flats also has to be included in the total cost spent on Kejriwal's residence as it was necessitated due to the expansion of his residence," the Congress leader said.

Maken also contended that this was an issue of breach of privilege as the government got the budget passed but made no mention of the renovation of Kejriwal's residence.

meeting were not put on Twitter. However, his failed attempt to woo China in maintaining peace and tranquility in Eastern Ladakh led Modi to publicly extend greetings to the Dalai Lama over the phone on his birthdays for the last two years. Yet, the Dalai Lama was not invited to the Global Buddhist Summit on the first day of inauguration by Modi. Interestingly, the Dalai Lama was invited on the second day of the conference to address the gathering.

PM's delicate handling of the Dalai Lama

Prime Minister Narendra Modi devised a unique strategy to handle the sensitive issue relating to the Dalai Lama when a two-day Global Buddhist Summit was held in the Capital recently. Obviously, Modi had to maintain a delicate balance between the Dalai Lama and the Chinese leadership. The Chinese defence minister was also due to visit India. Strange it may sound but Modi has been trying hard to handle the Dalai Lama issue since 2014. For example, he met the spiritual leader August 20, 2014, several months after assuming office. But he did not acknowledge it officially as photos of the

Shah, Mann chemistry raises eyebrows

Bhagwant Singh Mann has come a long way within 13 months of taking over the reins of Punjab as Chief Minister. He called Modi an illiterate person who doesn't read the files and signs them and the one who wants to see his own photographs everywhere. This is a psychological disorder, he said at a public

rally on March 24, 2023. But a lot of water has gone down in the Sutlej river since then. It is said that Mann was upset with the PM as he did not help the border state of Punjab. After being elected as Chief Minister, he called on the Prime Minister seeking ₹1 lakh crore financial package and cooperation. This was Mann's first meeting with Modi after taking oath as the Chief Minister of Punjab as nothing happened for a full one year and hence this outbursts. Interestingly, Mann was successful in establishing a wonderful chemistry with the Union Home Minister, Amit Shah when he sought his help in preventing supply of drugs and arms from Pakistan. He also assured the Home Minister that the Punjab government has put its entire might in arresting hardliner preacher Amritpal Singh and sought full support of central agencies in this operation. Without blinking, Amit Shah provided all the help and directed the party cadre to be careful on the Amritpal issue.

Truck driver killed by BSF in Meghalaya

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Shillong, May 7: A 32-year-old truck driver allegedly transporting cattle was shot dead by BSF personnel in Meghalaya's East Khasi Hills, prompting the force to order a court of inquiry, officials said Sunday.

The incident took place at Mawshun village when BSF personnel guarding a check post opened fire on the truck and killed driver Roning Nongkynrih on the spot on Saturday. Mawshun is around 17 km from the India-Bangladesh border.

The Border Security Force (BSF) has ordered a court of inquiry. The accused personnel, however, claimed that they feared they would be run over by the truck and acted in self-defence. The deceased's cousin brother Ribalskhem Nongkynrih, who was also in the truck, however, alleged that the BSF personnel opened fire from point-blank range.

East Khasi Hills district Superintendent of Police S Nongtinger said a team from Pynursla Police Station was sent to the spot and a magistrate com-



The accused personnel, however, claimed that they feared they would be run over by the truck and acted in self-defence

pleted the legal formalities. "It is an unfortunate incident. We have taken up the matter with utmost seriousness. A case under Section 302 (murder) of the Indian Penal Code was registered with Pynursla Police Station and further investigation is underway," he said, adding no arrest has been made so far.

Meghalaya Frontier BSF Inspector General Pradip Kumar, while condoling the death, said that immediate action has been initiated. "I have ordered a court of inquiry which will be headed by a DIG rank officer. We will ascertain the facts of the case. The three personnel involved in the incident have been withdrawn from the location and are on their way back to the frontier headquarters in Shillong," he said.

ED alleges ₹2,000-cr liquor scam in C'garh

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, May 7: Money was "illegally" collected from "every bottle" of liquor sold in Chhattisgarh and evidence of "unprecedented" corruption and laundering of ₹2,000 crore generated by an alcohol syndicate led by Anwar Dhebar, the elder brother of Raipur Mayor Aijaz Dhebar, has been collected, the ED said Sunday.

Anwar Dhebar was arrested by the federal agency under the criminal sections of the Prevention of Money Laundering Act in the early hours of Saturday from a hotel in Raipur while he was trying "to run from the back door", it said in a statement. He was remanded to four-day ED custody by a special PMLA court even as his lawyer said the arrest seemed to be "politically motivated" and that they would move the Supreme Court.

The agency said Anwar Dhebar did not join the probe in the case despite being summoned seven times and charged that he was "continuously using benami SIM cards and internet dongles, and was changing locations". When he was zeroed in at the Raipur hotel, he tried to run away from the back door instead of accepting the summons but was subsequently caught by the ED team, it said. Aijaz Dhebar is known to be an influential leader of the ruling Congress in Chhattisgarh. "Investigation found that an organised criminal syndicate led by Anwar Dhebar was operating in Chhattisgarh. Anwar Dhebar, though a private citizen, was backed by and was working for illegal gratification of high-level political executives and senior bureaucrats. "He weaved an elaborate conspiracy and stitched a wide network of persons/entities to execute the scam so that money was illegally collected from every bottle of liquor sold in Chhattisgarh," the ED alleged.

international

of the day quote

India takes its position on global affairs on its own understanding, for its own welfare and world peace. India is emerging as a superpower

JAGDEEP DHANKHAR | VICE-PRESIDENT OF INDIA

The proscribed Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) is still using Afghan soil to launch attacks against Pakistan, especially in Khyber-Paktunkhwa (K-P)

KHAWAJA ASIF | PAKISTAN DEFENCE MINISTER

I am optimistic that one of Northern Ireland's main political parties would soon end a boycott that has kept the regional government on ice for more than a year

BILL CLINTON | FORMER US PRESIDENT

SHORT TAKES

Turkey: 12 killed in multi-vehicle crash

Istanbul: A multi-vehicle crash in southern Turkey's Hatay province killed at least 12 people and injured 31 others, including three seriously, officials said. A truck crossed into opposite lanes after the driver lost control late Saturday, colliding with nine cars and two minibuses, the state-run Anadolu news agency reported. Many of the vehicles were parked by the roadside near a gas station as friends and relatives said goodbye to men leaving to carry out mandatory military service.

Three killed in Nepal avalanche

Kathmandu: At least three people were killed and nine others were injured in an avalanche in Nepal's Karnali province, a media report said. The incident occurred Saturday morning at Chyarkhu pass of Mugu district of the province, the Kathmandu Post reported. Officials said that fourteen people from Patarasi municipality in the district had gone Chyarkhu to collect Yarshagumba (caterpillar fungus). Of them three passed away and nine others sustained minor injuries in the avalanche.

Protest staged in Aussie coastal town

Sydney: More than a thousand people rallied in Port Kembla in Australia's state of New South Wales to protest plans to establish a local base for nuclear submarines at the heart of the AUKUS agreement. Members from the local activist group Wollongong Against War and Nukes (WAWAN) carried a banner that read "No war no nukes". Union representatives and members of the Australian Labor Party also joined the rally, some other banners read "No to AUKUS," "No nuclear submarine," and "No place for a nuclear base".

Sikh community member shot dead

Lahore: A person belonging to the Sikh community was killed by unknown assailants in a drive-by shooting in Lahore's Nawab Town neighbourhood, state media reported. The man, identified as Paramjit Singh Panjwar, 50, was shot by gunmen riding a motorcycle. When the attack happened, he was on a morning walk at around 6:30 a.m., accompanied by his bodyguard near his residence in the Sunflower Housing Society Saturday, police said. Panjwar received a fatal gunshot to the head, a police official said. The bodyguard was also wounded in the attack and shifted to a local hospital, where his condition was said to be critical.

Nuclear watchdog's worries grow over Ukraine plant safety

■ Russia's Wagner mercenary group appeared Sunday to ditch plans to withdraw from Bakhmut in eastern Ukraine, saying they had been promised more arms by Moscow and suggesting they may keep up their assault on what Russia sees as a stepping stone to other cities in the Donbas region

AGENCIES

Kyiv, May 7: The head of the United Nations nuclear watchdog is expressing growing anxiety about the safety of the Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant, after the governor of the Russia-occupied area ordered the evacuation of a town where most plant staff live amid ongoing attacks in the area.

The plant is near the front lines of fighting in the war, and Ukrainian authorities Sunday said that a 72-year-old woman was killed and three others were wounded when Russian forces fired more than 30 shells at Nikopol, a Ukrainian-held town neighbouring the plant. Ukraine has also been regularly attacking the Russian side of the lines. "The general situation in the area near the Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant is becoming increasingly unpredictable and potentially dangerous," International Atomic Energy Agency head Rafael Grossi said in a warning that came Saturday before the latest report of attacks.

Grossi's comments were prompted by an announcement Friday by Yevgeny Balitsky, the Russia-installed governor of the partially-occupied Zaporizhzhia province, that he had ordered the evacuation of civilians from 18 settlements in the area, including Enerhodar, which is located next

to the power plant, which is Europe's largest. The settlements affected are about 50 to 70 kilometres (30 to 40 miles) from the front line of fighting between Ukraine and Russia, and Balitsky said that Ukraine had intensified attacks on the area in the past several days.

Analysts have for months pointed to the southern Zaporizhzhia region as one of the possible targets of Ukraine's expected spring counteroffensive, speculating that Kyiv's forces might try to choke off Russia's "land corridor" to the Crimean Peninsula and split Russian forces in two by pressing on to the Azov Sea coast.

Some of the fiercest ongoing fighting is in the eastern city of Bakhmut, where Ukrainian forces are still clinging to a position on the western outskirts despite Russia trying to take the city for more than nine months.

Russian Defence Ministry spokesman Igor Konashenkov said Sunday that Moscow's forces had captured two more districts in the city's west and northwest, but provided no further details.

Ukraine's Special Operations Forces Saturday accused Russia of using phosphorous in the city and Sunday released a new video showing the telltale white fire from such munitions. Russian forces haven't commented on the claim, but have rejected previous accusations from Ukraine that they had used phosphorous munitions.

In the south, the exiled Ukrainian mayor of the Russia-occupied coastal city of Mariupol said in a Telegram post Sunday that there was evidence that Moscow's forces had intensified their transfer of tracked vehicles through the city and into the front-line Zaporizhzhia region.



South Korean, Japanese leaders meet to boost ties

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Seoul, May 7: The leaders of South Korea and Japan met Sunday for their second summit in less than two months, as they push to mend long-running historical grievances and boost ties in the face of North Korea's nuclear programme and other regional challenges.

Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida arrived in South Korea earlier Sunday for a two-day visit, which reciprocates a mid-March



trip to Tokyo by South Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol. It was the first exchange of visits between the leaders of the Asian



Rich nations need to understand that they have a debt to pay for emitting carbon dioxide, that's why they should pay this debt by advancing (financial) resources, so we can preserve our forests

LUIZ INACIO LULA DA SILVA | BRAZILIAN PRESIDENT

SHOCKING REVELATION

In the past two decades, children have become more obese and have developed obesity at a younger age. A 2020 report found that 14.7 million children and adolescents in the US live with obesity



Prime Minister Rishi Sunak, with his children Krishna and Anoushka, and wife Akshata Murty attend the Big Lunch party at Downing Street in London Sunday. The Big Lunch is part of the weekend of celebrations for the coronation of King Charles III. Guests at the big lunch include community heroes and Ukrainians displaced by the war and youth groups

PTI PHOTO

Janet Yellen warns of 'constitutional crisis'



REUTERS

Washington, May 7: US Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen Sunday issued a stark warning that a failure by Congress to act on the debt ceiling could trigger a "constitutional crisis" that also would call into question the federal government's creditworthiness.

Yellen sounded the alarm over possible financial market consequences if the debt ceiling is not raised by early June, when she has said the federal government could run short of cash to pay its bills.

The negotiations on the issue should not take place "with a gun to the head of the American people", Yellen told the ABC program "This Week."

Biden has asked Congress to raise the debt ceiling with no conditions. The Republican-led House of Representatives last month passed a bill that would raise the government's \$31.4 trillion debt ceiling, but the measure included sweeping spending cuts over the next decade that Biden and his fellow Democrats oppose.

Anti-monarchists criticise arrests at Charles' coronation

REUTERS

London, May 7: Anti-monarchists Sunday criticised the policing of the coronation of King Charles as heavy-handed, saying there was no longer a right to peaceful protest in Britain after dozens of protesters were arrested and detained into the night.

Police arrested Graham Smith, leader of the Republic group, and 51 others in central London as thousands of royal fans gathered in the capital for the event on Saturday, saying their duty to prevent disruption outweighed the right to protest. Republic said that members began to be released late Saturday evening after nearly 16 hours in custody. "This was a heavy-handed action which had the appearance of a pre-determined arrest that would have occurred regardless of the evidence or our actions. The right to protest peacefully in the UK no longer exists," Smith said in a statement.

The police said Saturday that they understood public concern following the arrests, but said they acted after receiving information that protesters were determined to disrupt the coronation procession.

- Protesters released after coronation
- Arrest were to save royal embarrassment, Republic says
- Police vowed low tolerance for disruption
- UK minister says police operation struck right balance

London police chief Mark Rowley warned Friday that police would take action if protesters tried to "obstruct the enjoyment and celebration" of people, saying there would be a "very low tolerance" for disruption. Police have gained further powers to curtail protests under a new policing law passed last year, and a public order act which came into force May 3.

In a separate incident, there was a dispute after police arrested three people Saturday morning and seized a number of rape alarms. The police cited intelligence that there were plans to disrupt the procession with the alarms, but the local Westminster Council expressed concern that trained volunteers for a night safety scheme had been detained.

PAK, CHINA AND AFGHAN AGREE TO COMBAT TERRORISM



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Islamabad, May 7: Pakistan, China and Afghanistan have agreed to combat terrorism and enhance cooperation in different economic fields, the foreign office here said Sunday.

The foreign ministers of the three countries participated in the 5th China-Pakistan-Afghanistan Trilateral Foreign Ministers' Dialogue held in Islamabad Saturday, it said.

"The three sides agreed to advance political engagement, counterterrorism cooperation and enhance trade, investments and connectivity under the trilateral framework," it said.

No further details about the three-way interaction were provided for which Acting Afghan Foreign Minister Amir Khan Muttaqi was specially allowed by the UN to travel to Pakistan.

Chinese foreign minister Qin Gang flew from Goa, where he attended the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) meeting, to Islamabad to participate in the trilateral.

Separately, Muttaqi met Pakistan foreign minister Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari Sunday and held "a candid and in-depth exchange" on key issues of mutual concern, including peace and security, as well as trade and connectivity.

The two foreign ministers reaffirmed their desire to pursue continuous and practical engagement. On peace and security, they emphasised the need for enhanced coordination to counter-terrorism and deepen bilateral cooperation.

Millions of jobs lost in Pak amid economic crisis

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Karachi, May 7: Millions of jobs in formal and informal sectors of the economy across Pakistan have been lost due to a massive decline in industrial production so far this fiscal year, state media reported.

However, an official from the Sindh government's Directorate of Manpower Labour Human Resource, who requested anonymity, said that the businessmen are exaggerating the figures.

Site Association of Industry (SAI) President Riazuddin said except for the food sector, around 100,000 people out of the 500,000 in the Site area had lost their livelihood in different categories of industries, mainly from October 2022 till date, Dawn reported.

He added that industrial activities in the area had dropped

by 30-40 per cent with some industries either closed or suspending their one shift during the current fiscal year.

"I think 50 per cent more industries will close down after the withdrawal of the Rs 19.99 power tariff and \$9 per mmBtu gas tariff," he feared.

Riazuddin said that the federal government's departments, like the Sindh Bureau of Statistics (SBS) and various departments of the Sindh government, have become active since July 2022 in seeking unemployment data from industries. Businessmen are reluctant to provide any job loss data fearing any harassment from these departments, while listed firms might be presenting their workers' data every month.

North Karachi Association of Trade and Industry (NKATI)

neighbours in 12 years.

South Korean media attention on the summit is focused on whether Kishida will make a more direct apology over Japan's 1910-45 colonial rule of the Korean Peninsula. Such comments by Kishida would likely help Yoon win greater support for his push to build stronger ties with Japan and ease domestic criticism that he's preemptively made concessions to Tokyo without receiving corresponding steps in return.

"It took 12 years to restore the shuttle diplomacy" but our exchange of visits took less than two months," Yoon said. "I think this confirms that South Korean-Japan relations, which have started fresh, are moving forward with a speed."

Yoon said cooperation between Seoul and Tokyo is essential considering "the current grave international political situation and the global polycrisis". He didn't elaborate, but has previously cited North Korea's advancing nuclear

programme, the intensifying US-China strategic rivalry and global supply chain problems as reasons for greater cooperation with Japan.

Kishida said he and Yoon plan to exchange views to further develop bilateral relations. Kishida said that "a series of dialogues has dynamically started moving" since his summit with Yoon in March, during which he said the two leaders "wiped out somewhat shrunk mood to strengthen our dialogue and cooperation."

GRIM SITUATION



Chairman Faisal Moiz Khan said the area comprises nearly 5,000-6,000 small and medium-sized units, of which 60 per cent are ex-

port-oriented, providing working opportunities to five to six million workers.

Amid an unfavourable economic

- The ongoing restrictions on the import of raw materials, the foreign exchange crisis and rising costs caused by surging power and gas bills have severely hampered production activities
- In four industrial sectors of Karachi and the countrywide auto vending units, stakeholders claimed that "over 500,000 people have faced joblessness"

situation, around 25 per cent of the industries have shut down their units rendering more than 100,000 contractual employees unemployed while 75 per cent of the industries scaled back their production, he

said, Dawn reported.

"Nearly 30-50 per cent of the textile industry in Sindh have partially shut down and their numbers will increase," he added. Korangi Association of Trade and Industry (KATI) President, Faraz Ur Rahman said, "Over 50,000 workers have lost their jobs directly and indirectly of which 10,000 are only in pharmaceutical sectors in the Korangi industrial area due to raw material shortage as a result of import restrictions."

Senior Vice-President of the Pakistan Association of Auto Parts Accessories (PAAPAM), Usman Aslam Malik, said that the countrywide vending industry has experienced the loss of around 250,000-300,000 direct and indirect jobs due to frequent auto plant shutdowns since August 2022, Dawn reported.

of the day quote

The international business or export segment has faced a little bit of headwinds because of global issues, whether it is the (Russia-Ukraine) war, whether it is currency devaluation of a lot of developing countries

ANANT GOENKA | VC, CEAT

We have set a target of ₹14,000 crore worth of sale bookings for now. We will hopefully do better than our annual sales guidance

PIROJSHA GODREJ | EXECUTIVE CHAIRMAN, GODREJ

This week, participants will be eyeing macroeconomic data viz. IIP and CPI for cues on May 12. Besides, the US inflation, which is scheduled on May 10, will also be on their radar

AJIT MISHRA | VP (TECHNICAL RESEARCH), RELIGARE BROKING LTD

SHORT TAKES

FSDC meet today

New Delhi: Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman Monday is likely to hold a meeting to review the status of the economy, sources in the know of things said Sunday. She is expected to hold a meeting of the financial stability and development council (FSDC), which is likely to be attended by regulators of the financial institutions, namely the chiefs of RBI, IRDA and SEBI, among others. The meeting will review the current global and domestic economic situation and financial stability issues, sources said. This will be the first meeting of the FSDC after the presentation of the union budget for 2023-24. FSDC is headed by the Finance Minister and is an organisation of financial sector regulators. The last meeting of FSDC was held in September 2022.

AC sales dip 15%

New Delhi: Unseasonal rains in north India during April-end and May beginning have put brakes on sales of cooling products such as air conditioners, refrigerators and coolers, according to industry players. Customers have delayed the purchase of air conditioners in April and May, which are considered to be the peak season for the industry. In April, some makers reported around a 15 per cent decline in sales in comparison to the same period a year ago. However, manufacturers including Panasonic, Godrej and Daikin are hoping that sales for the industry will be back on track as normal summer resumes.



The status quo can't continue. Those assets will either have to be shut down or we have to transition into a new process route, so there are some calls that need to be taken in the UK in the next year or two

TV NARENDHAN | CEO AND MD, TATA STEEL

MARKET SHIFT

Oil from OPEC at new low

INDIA'S THIRST FOR CHEAP RUSSIAN OIL HAS ONCE AGAIN PUSHED THE WAR-TORN COUNTRY'S IMPORTS TO RECORD HIGH FOR SEVENTH STRAIGHT MONTH IN APRIL

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, May 7: Oil producers cartel OPEC's share in India's oil imports fell to an all-time low of 46 per cent in April as purchases of cheaper Russian oil peaked, industry data showed.

Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) nations, mainly in the Middle East and Africa, had a 72 per cent share of all crude oil India imported in April 2022. This share slid to 46 per cent in April 2023, according to energy cargo tracker Vortexa.

OPEC made up for as much as 90 per cent of all crude oil India imported at one point of time but this has been sliding since Russian oil became available at discount in the aftermath of Moscow's invasion of Ukraine in February last year.

Russia continued to be the single largest supplier of crude oil, which is converted into petrol and diesel at refineries, for a seventh straight month by supplying more than one-third of all oil India imported.

From a market share of less than 1 per cent in India's import bas-



The imports from Russia are now more than combined purchases from Iraq and Saudi Arabia - India's biggest suppliers in the last decade

ket before the start of the Russia-Ukraine conflict in February 2022, Russia's share of India's imports rose to 1.67 million barrels per day in April, taking a 36 per cent share.

OPEC supplied 2.1 million barrels per day out of 4.6 million bpd oil India imported in April. This gave it a 46 per cent share, according to Vortexa.

Indian refiners in the past rarely bought Russian oil due to high freight costs but now they are snapping up plentiful Russian cargo available at a discount to other grades as some Western nations rejected it because of Moscow's invasion of Ukraine.

The purchases from Russia in March were double of 0.81 million barrels per day (bpd) of oil bought

OPEC SHARE IN INDIAN OIL BASKET SLID TO 46% FROM 72% YOY

RUSSIAN SHARE UP FROM LESS THAN 1% TO 36% SINCE THE WAR

from Iraq, which had been India's top oil supplier since 2017-18. Saudi Arabia has been pushed down to third spot with 0.67 million bpd supplies.

Month-on-month, purchases from Russia rose marginally from 1.64 million bpd of oil imported from the country in March. The UAE, which in March overtook the US to become the fourth largest supplier, sold 185,000 bpd, higher than 119,000 bpd oil sourced from the US.

"India's imports of Russian crude in April have set a new record

Sugar prices rise as output likely to decrease 9% YoY

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, May 7: With sugar production expected to be 9 per cent lesser than last year, prices of the sweetener have already started rising, as they have gone up by ₹1.25 per kg in the last one month in the retail market.

From ₹41.05 per kg April 2, the retail price of sugar rose to ₹42.30 per kg May 2.

Similarly, wholesale prices too have risen by ₹124 per quintal during the past one month.

From ₹3,805 per quintal April 2, wholesale prices of sugar have risen to ₹3,929 per quintal as May 2.

Last year sugar production was 357 lakh tonne and the government had exported 100 lakh tonne, sources said. This year too, the production

was expected to be high, however, suddenly production estimates fell and now it is expected that this year's output could be around 9 per cent lesser than last year and may be around 327 lakh tonne.

Sources informed that due to fall in estimated output, sugar prices are rising. They added that in order to provide relief to consumers, the Food and Consumer Affairs department is expected to release extra quota of sugar in the coming days.



CIL Q4 profit drops 18%; record net in FY23



New Delhi: Coal India Ltd, the world's largest coal miner, Sunday reported 17.7 per cent drop in its March quarter net profit on higher provision made for wage revision of employees. Consolidated net profit of ₹5,527.62 crore, or ₹8.98 per share, in January-March is compared with ₹6,715 crore, or ₹10.86 a share earning in the same period a year back, according to the company's filing.

The decline in profit in the fourth quarter of 2022-23 (April 2022 to March 2023) was despite coal production and dispatches to users. This is compared with ₹475.28 crore provision in January-March 2022. For the full 2022-23 fiscal, Coal India made a provision of ₹8,152.75 crore as against ₹1,080.97 crore provided in the previous 2021-22 financial year. Coal production rose 7 per cent to 224.16 million tonne in the quarter ended March 31. This is also the company's highest ever net profit, beating the previous best of ₹17,464 crore in 2018-19. The net profit in Q4 shrunk "primarily due to increased provision towards the wages," it said. "PAT would have been the highest ever profit in any quarter had the provision not been made."

Daikin India becomes billion-dollar firm

Daikin India is now the second company operating in the cooling space to cross the \$1 billion-feat after the Tata group firm Voltas

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, May 7: Air conditioner maker Daikin India expects to become a \$2-billion company in the next three years, having crossed the milestone of \$1 billion in FY23, said Chairman and Managing Director Kanwaljeet Jawa.

Daikin India has a turnover of ₹8,860 crore for the financial year ended March 31, 2023.

When asked about this Jawa said: "Yes, we are a billion-dollar company now. Now we have top shares in every segment which we operate - VRV, chillers and room air conditioners."

The company, a wholly-owned subsidiary of Japan's Daikin



Industries, a leading global manufacturer of commercial and residential air conditioning systems, has so far invested ₹2,300 crore in India.

"We are looking at India in the long term. We have expansion plans here to make India a manufacturing hub for Daikin for Middle East and Africa markets," said Jawa.

Over Daikin India's contribution to the parent global company, Jawa said it is still very small and still in the single digits. "I would say

India is a future treasure for Daikin. We may be small but the kind of expansion plan which we have ..." he said, adding, "we are now aligning our growth strategy with our global strategy."

Presently, Daikin India gets 70 per cent of its revenue from residential (room AC), 20 per cent from VRV (variable refrigerant volume AC systems) used for large offices, and the rest 10 per cent from commercial businesses such as projects etc.

Jawa expects good growth in the cooling space from all segments

In last 13 years, from ₹292 crore, we have become a ₹8,860 crore company. We see a good future for our India business. We are aiming to cross \$2 billion in the next three years

KANWALJEET JAWA | CHAIRMAN AND MD, DAIKIN

- residential to commercial and projects business - as the penetration level is very low. "Now India is at the explosion stage and the roadmap of the entire AC industry is quite bullish. Component manufacturing has started in India in a big way," said Jawa.

Daikin is the largest investor under the government's Production Linked Incentive (PLI) Scheme for the promotion of domestic manufacturing of air conditioners. It is setting up its third unit in India at Sri City, Andhra Pradesh where it would manufacture air-conditioners and crucial components such as compressors.

GOVT TO SELL 26% IN BEML SOON

The government may soon invite financial bids for strategic sale of its 26% stake in defence PSU BEML after its non-core business got listed on the bourses last month. The government currently holds 54.03% stake in BEML. At the current market price, sale of 26% stake in BEML will fetch around ₹1,500 crore to the exchequer



Gold imports dip 24 pc in 2022-23

Last year, the Centre hiked gold import duty to 15% from 10.75% to check the CAD resulting in drop

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, May 7: India's gold imports, which have a bearing on the current account deficit, dipped 24.15 per cent to \$35 billion in 2022-23 due to global economic uncertainties, according to data from the commerce ministry.

Imports of the yellow metal stood at \$46.2 billion in 2021-22.

The growth rate in the imports was in the negative zone during August 2022 to February this year. It jumped to \$3.3 billion in March 2023 as against \$1 billion in the year-ago month, the data showed.

The significant fall in gold imports though has not helped in narrowing the country's current account deficit - the difference between imports and exports. The merchandise trade deficit in 2022-23 was estimated at \$267 billion against \$191 billion in the year-ago period.

According to industry experts, high import duty on gold and global economic uncertainties have led to the dip in imports of the precious metal.

"India imported about 600 tonne of gold during April-January 2023, and it is down because of high import duty. The government should



SILVER IMPORTS ROSE 6.12% TO \$5.29BN DURING LAST FISCAL

GEMS AND JEWELLERY EXPORTS DECLINED BY 3% TO \$38BN

take a view on the duty part to help the domestic industry and push exports," an expert said.

India is the largest importer of gold, which mainly caters to the demand of the jewellery industry. In volume terms, the country imports 800-900 tonne of gold annually.

Former GJEPC chairman and managing director of Kama Jewellery Colin Shah said that it will be challenging for the sector due to inflation in the USA, high interest rates, Russia-Ukraine crisis, and China not making a complete economic revival.

"Besides that the advent of lab grown and high gold pricing is affecting exports in value terms. To increase exports in a challenging year india must spend internationally to build the make in india brand and FTA with countries where import tariffs are high will help," he said.

Mcap of four of top 10 valued firms fall by ₹56,006 crore

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, May 7: Four of the top 10 valued firms together lost ₹56,006.15 crore in market valuation last week, with HDFC twins taking the biggest hit.

Last week, the 30-share BSE benchmark fell by 58.15 points or 0.09 per cent.

While HDFC Bank, State Bank of India, HDFC and Bharti Airtel faced erosion in their valuation, Reliance Industries, Tata Consultancy Services (TCS), ICICI Bank, Hindustan Unilever Limited, ITC and Infosys were the gainers, with a combined addition of ₹44,540.05 crore in their market capitalisation (mcap).

Shares of HDFC twins fell sharply Friday amid reports that the merged HDFC entity could see significant fund outflow.

The valuation of HDFC Bank tumbled ₹34,547.61 crore to ₹9,07,505.07 crore, the most among the top 10 firms. HDFC's mcap eroded by ₹13,584.9 crore to ₹4,95,541.41 crore and that of Bharti Airtel fell by ₹6,356.46 crore to ₹4,39,153.22 crore.

In the ranking of top 10 firms, Reliance Industries retained the tag of the most valued company, followed by TCS, HDFC Bank, ICICI Bank, Hindustan Unilever, ITC, Infosys, State Bank of India, HDFC and Bharti Airtel.

Silver ETFs gaining traction

Higher demand for silver from new-age industries, like EVs, solar, and 5G, also seems to have created more consciousness among investors about the impact of investing in silver

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, May 7: Silver exchange-traded funds (ETFs) are becoming popular among investors as the newly-created investment class has attained an asset base of nearly ₹1,800 crore till March 2023 within one and half years of the introduction of the product by market regulator Sebi.

Silver ETFs are following the trajectory of Gold ETFs as the ETF route offers the assurance of metal purity, no storage hassles of the physical metal, and ease of buying, Hemen Bhatia, Head - ETF, Nippon Life India Asset Management Ltd, said.

According to data from the Association of Mutual Funds in India (Amfi), the industry has seven silver ETFs - Nippon India Silver ETF, ICICI Prudential Silver ETF, Aditya Birla Sun Life Silver ETF, HDFC Silver ETF, Axis Silver ETF, Kotak Silver ETF, and DSP Silver ETF - with an asset under management of ₹1,792 crore as of March 2023. All these funds were launched in 2022.

In addition to these, UTI Silver Exchange Traded Fund was launched in April this year.

Of these ₹1,792 crore asset bases, Nippon India Silver ETF and ICICI Prudential Silver ETF contributed 80 per cent of the total AUM.

Till March 2022, there were only three silver ETFs - Nippon India



Silver ETF, ICICI Prudential Silver ETF, and Aditya Birla Sun Life Silver ETF - with an asset base of ₹777 crore.

Kaustubh Belapurkar, Director-Manager-Research at Morningstar India, said that silver prices were volatile in the first half of 2022 on the back of rising interest rates. More recently, silver prices have witnessed significant appreciation over the last six months. "Investors have been adding positions in Silver ETFs over the past year given its additional sheen of increasing demand from industrial uses," he added.

The Securities and Exchange Board India (Sebi) allowed asset management companies to launch silver funds in November 2021.

A Silver ETF scheme means a mutual fund scheme that invests primarily in silver-related

instruments.

Before the introduction of silver ETFs, physical silver and silver futures were the available investment avenues for those looking to take exposure to this asset class.

However, physical silver comes with new drawbacks such as purity concerns and price, inefficiencies. Futures, on the other hand, were not suitable for retail investors.

Before the introduction of Silver ETFs, Indian mutual funds were allowed to launch ETFs tracking gold. Gold ETFs have assets under the management of ₹22,737 crore at the end of March 2023.

Overall, India is the third largest silver physical investment market in the world after Germany and the US. The size of the silver physical investment market in India is roughly \$1 billion per year.

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, May 7: Foreign portfolio investors (FPIs) continue to be buyers of Indian equities in May and invested ₹10,850 crore in the last four trading sessions due to the country's stable macroeconomic environment, robust GST collection and better-than-expected corporate quarterly earnings.

This came following a net infusion of ₹11,630 crore in equities in April and ₹7,936 crore in March, data available with the depositories showed.

The March investment was mainly driven by bulk investment in the Adani Group companies by the US-based GQG Partners. However, if one adjusts for the investments of GQG in Adani Group, the net flow is negative.

According to data from the depositories, FPIs invested a net sum of ₹10,850 crore in Indian equities in the last four trading sessions during May 2-5.

"FPIs would have been drawn to



Foreign investors pumped in ₹10,850cr in just four sessions

Indian stocks by the country's stable macroeconomic climate, strong GST collection figures, and better-than-expected corporate results," Himanshu Srivastava, Associate Director - Manager Research, Morningstar India, said.

In addition, recent market volatility and sporadic corrections, as well as the stability of the global financial system, improved investor mood, thereby triggering inflows, he added.

Geojit's Vijayakumar said India outperformed most markets in

April. The principal reason for the outperformance is the sustained buying by FPIs.

On the other hand, FPIs pulled out ₹2,460 crore from the debt market during the period under review.

In terms of sectors, FPIs made large purchases in financial services and continued buying capital goods in the second half of April. However, they were big sellers in IT.

So far this year, FPIs have taken out ₹3,430 crore from equities and invested ₹1,808 crore in the debt market.

Titans crush Super Giants

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Ahmedabad, May 7: Gujarat Titans' juggernaut continued in the IPL as the defending champions crushed Lucknow Super Giants by 56 runs here Sunday to remain perched on the top of the table. This was their eighth win in 11 matches, taking their tally to 16 points and closer to the play-offs.

Titans, propelled to their highest-ever total of 227/2 courtesy a franchise record 142-run partnership between Shubman Gill (94 n o, 51b, 2x4, 7x6) and Wriddhiman Saha (81, 43b, 10x4, 4x6), came back strongly in the second half of LSG's chase to emerge winners in a comprehensive manner.

Chasing 228, LSG stroked their way to a strong 102/1 at the halfway mark but the wheels came off eventually, with GT tying down their batters with tight overs.

Despite Quinton de Kock's brilliant 70 (41b, 7x4, 3x6) in his first game this season and Kyle Mayers' brisk 48 (32b, 7x4, 2x6) at the top, LSG middle-order crumbled against a mountainous chase to concede the contest, finishing at 171/7 in 20 overs.

Lucknow knocked off 50 runs from the target in only four overs with both Mayers and De Kock finding momentum. LSG reached 72 for no loss after the powerplay. However, a brilliant catch from Rashid Khan in the ninth over broke LSG's opening stand at 88.

The Afghan player covered a distance of 26 metres from deep



SHUBMAN GILL



WRIDDHIMAN SAHA

square leg and managed to hold on to the ball while diving to his right, getting rid of Mayers off Mohit Sharma (4/29).

But De Kock continued to flourish, taking LSG to 102/1 halfway through. The horror run this IPL, meanwhile, continued for Deepak Hooda (11). LSG failed to hit even a single four in overs 11-14 as Gujarat seized control. Marcus Stoinis (4) succumbed with Mohit getting him caught at short third



Mohit Sharma (R)

Contrasting fortune for Jeremy at Asian Weightlifting C'ships

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Jinju (Korea), May 7: Indian weightlifter Jeremy Lalrinnunga won a silver in snatch but could not register an overall total as he failed to lift the weight in any of his three clean and jerk attempts in a disappointing show at the Asian Championships here Sunday.

Competing in his first tournament since winning the gold at the 2022 Commonwealth Games, Jeremy was the only one in the 12-lifter field who did not finish (DNF) his event. The 20-year-old, however, won a silver medal in the snatch event with a personal best-equaling lift of 141kg in the non-Olympic 67kg weight class.

Jeremy failed to lift 165kg in his first two clean and jerk attempts. He then increased the weight to 168kg, which would have been 2kg more than his personal best and also a national record, but he faltered again. In fact, out of six attempts – three each in snatch and clean and jerk – Jeremy could lift the barbell only twice.

China's He Yueji 320kg (147kg+173kg) finished with the gold, while Lee Sangyeon 314kg (139kg+175kg) and Uzbek lifter Ergashev Adkhajon 312kg (138kg+174kg) took home the silver and bronze medals respectively.

Salah scores again as Liverpool win 6 on trot

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Liverpool, May 7: Mohamed Salah's 100th goal at Anfield underpinned Liverpool's 1-0 win against Brentford in the English Premier League. Salah's 13th-minute strike was far from his best as he bundled the ball over the line, but he became the first Liverpool player to score in nine successive home matches in all competitions.

More importantly, the Merseyside club's sixth straight win moved it to within a point of fourth-placed Manchester United and still in with a shot of qualifying for the Champions League.

On the day of the coronation of Charles III, fans jeered the national

anthem, 'God Save the King', because of what is perceived to be a long-held opposition toward the establishment.

But Salah gave the home fans something to cheer when he scored. He has 30 goals for a third successive season, and fourth in six. It put him level with Steven Gerrard in fifth place on the club's all-time goal-scoring list with 186.

Much has been made of Trent Alexander-Arnold's passing from a new hybrid midfield position but it was Fabinho, in his more traditional holding role, who set up the winner. His chip over a crowded penalty area picked out Virgil van Dijk, who headed to the far post where Salah pounced.



many of his teammates, has completed their collection of club titles after having already won the Champions League, Spanish league, Club World Cup, UEFA Super Cup and Spanish Super Cup.

Captain Karim Benzema received the cup from Spain's King Felipe VI, who attended the coronation of King Charles III.

Rodrygo was key to Madrid's run to their record-extending 14th-European Cup last season. And against Osasuna he proved clutch in yet another big match,

especially when cued by countryman Vinicius.

Vinicius dribbled past both Jon Moncayola and Ruben Pena before slipping the ball past three other defenders to find Rodrygo in the middle of the area to score the early opener. The action didn't stop as David Alaba surprised with a long free kick that rattled the crossbar in the 28th.

Osasuna started better in the second half and their insistence paid off when a cross from Abde was deflected by Carvajal and fell

Odisha FC thrash Lords FA Kochi



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Ahmedabad, May 7: Odisha FC put up a commanding performance against debutant Lords FA Kochi in their group B clash of the Indian Women's League here, Sunday.

A brace by Faustina Worwornyo

Akpo, and a goal each by Cynthia Marcondes Dos Santos, Malati Munda and Anju Tamang were enough to give them a convincing win and put them at second place in the group.

Sethu Madurai FC, on the other hand, maintained their perfect

SRH pull off a dramatic win



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Jaipur, May 7: Abdul Samad (17 n o) hit a six off the final delivery, re-bowled after a no-ball call, as Sunrisers Hyderabad stunned Rajasthan Royals by four wickets in a dramatic match in the IPL here Sunday.

Chasing a target of 215, SRH needed 17 runs off the final over bowled by Sandeep Sharma with Samad and Marco Jansen at the crease. Samad hit a six off the second ball to leave the equation to five runs from the last delivery when the drama unfolded.

Everybody thought Samad was out with Jos Buttler taking a catch near the boundary but the umpire called for a ball and the last ball was re-bowled. SRH needed four runs for a win, but Samad then despatched Sharma's delivery for a six to reach 217/6 and notch up one of the most improbable wins in the IPL, leaving RR players shell-shocked.

The No.6 batter Glenn Phillips (7-ball 25) also played his part in the turnaround of SRH's fortunes as they needed 69 off the last five overs though with eight wickets in hand.

Ultimately RR spinner Yuzvendra Chahal's (4/29) fine effort went in vain, though at one stage it looked like a comfortable win for RR.

SRH began the run chase on a cautious note as they lacked in fireworks in the powerplay overs at the end of which they were 52/1 with impact player Anmolpreet Singh (33) becoming the first victim of Chahal. Ravichandran Ashwin (1/35) also kept things tight and the SRH batters found it difficult to get the boundaries.

At the halfway mark, SRH were 87/1, needing another 128 from the back end and asking rate nearing 13 in an over. Abhishek Sharma (55, 34b, 5x4, 2x6) fell after hitting Ashwin for a six for the second time in the 13th over with the premier India spinner having the last laugh.

In the next over, Rahul Tripathi (47, 29b, 2x4, 3x6) struck a four and two sixes to collect 19 runs from Murugan Ashwin. Heinrich Klaasen gave some anxiety to the RR camp with a six and four off Chahal in the 16th over before he fell in the fifth ball of that over.

Earlier, the Royals piled up 214/2, thanks a crafty 95 (59b, 10x4, 4x6) from Buttler and an

unbeaten 66 (38b, 4x4, 5x6) from captain Sanju Samson.

After a 54-run opening stand with Yashasvi Jaiswal (35, 18b, 5x4, 2x6), Buttler stitched another 138 runs with Samson in 13.3 overs to steer the Royals to a big total after opting to bat. Buttler missed a well-deserved century as he got out in the penultimate over with five runs short.

The SRH bowlers looked clueless throughout the innings with all of them bleeding runs. The Royals made a rollicking start, reaching 61/1 at the end of powerplay, thanks to Jaiswal, who continued his fine form this season to reach 1000 IPL runs.

Then, the Buttler-Samson duo kept the run-rate above 10 run an over all the time, reaching 150 in the 15th over as the SRH bowlers became increasingly clueless on how to break the partnership. The Royals added 60 runs off the last five overs.

BRIEF SCORES: RR 214/2 (Jos Buttler 95, Sanju Samson 66 n o, Yashasvi Jaiswal 35) lost to SRH 217/6 (Abhishek Sharma 55, Rahul Tripathi 47, Anmolpreet Singh 33, Yuzvendra Chahal 4/29) by 4 wickets.

All eyes on Narine as Knights take on Kings



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kolkata, May 7: A 'Go To' man in Kolkata Knight Riders for more than a decade, Sunil Narine will have to play out of his skin to justify his place in the playing eleven when his team face Punjab Kings in a must-win IPL game, here Monday.

The Trinidad man, who has played 158 games spread across 12 seasons, including the current one, has 159 wickets along with 1039 runs with four half-centuries after he worked on his batting once his action was deemed suspect and he lost fizz of the pitch.

Narine hasn't been the same 'mystery bowler', who burst into the T20 franchise scene, for many seasons but he would be first one to admit he has been insanely lucky.

The architect of 2012 and 2014 IPL wins with 24 and 21 wickets in those two seasons, has struggled for at least two of his last three seasons but KKR management (the principal decision makers CEO Venky Mysore and assistant coach Abhishek Nayar) has stuck with him.

However with KKR staring at another round robin exit with only four wins in 10 games, there is no room for error in next four games.

The question is whether KKR can still afford to still play the man, who only has seven scalps from 10 games with an economy rate of 8.76 and aggregate of 14 runs from 8 batting innings with a strike-rate of less than 80.

While KKR do need to take some tough selection calls, Punjab Kings are also in a spot of bother and the match is of

equal importance for them.

Having been out-batted by Mumbai Indians in their last outing, the Shikhar Dhawan-led side may be a spot ahead of the eighth-placed KKR with a two-point lead but both the teams are staring at elimination. More so in the case of the Nitish Rana-captained home side who face a do-or-die situation in their last four matches this season.

Their think-tank led by an astute domestic tactician in Chandrakant Pandit also must think beyond their two Caribbean stars – Narine and Andre Russell.

With Narine being a regular, one overseas quota is blocked as KKR are missing out on the options of pace gun Lockie Ferguson and David Wiese, a genuine seam-bowling all-rounder who also can make good cameos with the bat.

That Varun Chakravarthy has become their premier spinner – 14 wickets at 20.14 – makes it a stronger case that KKR must think beyond Narine, if not Russell. With three home matches left, and a tough away tie at Chennai Super Kings, KKR must exploit the conditions at Eden Gardens so as to keep their chances alive.

