



COOLING OFF: A boy jumps off a boat into the Ganges to cool off on a hot summer day in Kolkata, Thursday

Oppn: Govt trying to create communal divide

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, May 9: Opposition leaders Thursday accused the BJP of trying to create communal divide over a report that claimed the share of Hindu population in the country decreased between 1950 and 2015.

According to the working paper 'Share of Religious Minorities: A Cross-Country Analysis (1950-2015)' by the Economic Advisory Council to the Prime Minister (EAC-PM), share of the Hindu population decreased by 7.82 per cent between 1950 and 2015 (from 84.68 per cent to 78.06 per cent). The share of Muslim population in 1950 was 9.84 per cent and increased to 14.09 per cent in 2015, a 43.15 per cent rise, it claimed.

EAC-PM PAPER ON POPULATION

CPI general secretary D Raja and RJD leader Tejashwi Yadav slammed the Union government for not conducting the Census, and called the working paper by the EAC-PM an attempt to get votes by creating strife.

Asked about the report, Yadav said the BJP is trying to spread hatred. Raja questioned the timing of the report and said, "Why has the PM's Economic Advisory Council come out with this report at a time when the country is going for elections? The PM is already trying to polarise people in the name of Muslims, talking about handing over keys of Ram Mandir to Muslims... he is taking up all such issues. That means there is an attempt to polarise people by bringing out such data. People should be cautious of such reports."

Youth thrust in BJD manifesto

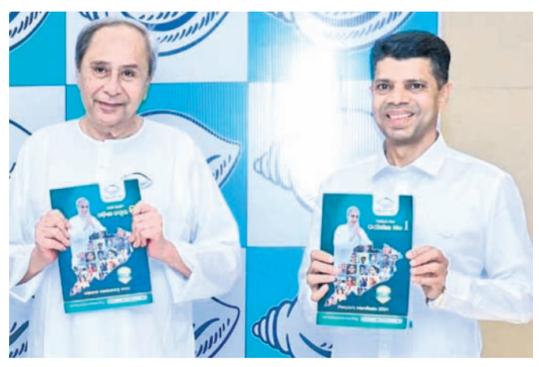
POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, May 9: Aiming at transforming Odisha into the No. 1 state in the country by 2034, Biju Janata Dal (BJD) president and Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik Thursday released the party's election manifesto 'Odisha No. 1' with focus on a special Budget of ₹1 lakh crore for 10 years for the youths who, he said, would be the drivers of state's socio-economic prosperity.

Naveen expressed confidence that the manifesto, once implemented through the 5T governance model, would transform Odisha into a modern and identity-based state of growth and pride two years before the centenary of its formation.

"Youth empowerment is a key aspect of the manifesto, with a separate Budget of ₹1 lakh crore earmarked for the youth of the state over the next decade," he said. Additionally, the party pledged to increase scholarships for girls and boys under 'NUA-O' and create two lakh government jobs in the next five years. Naveen also announced plans for a new skill and entrepreneurship university, state institute of fashion technology, and artificial intelligence (AI) university.

In terms of industry, the focus will be on attracting investment in new technologies like semiconductors, IT, and AI, alongside promoting eco-friendly tourism. The manifesto also



promises free electricity for households using up to 100 units and subsidised electricity for those using 100 to 150 units.

Middleclass families will benefit from initiatives like Biju Swasthya Kalyan Yojana (BSKY) whose coverage will be enhanced up to ₹20 lakh, interest subvention on home loans, and scholarships for children's education, the manifesto said. Additionally, the manifesto outlines plans to empower women, tribal, OBC, and minority communities through interest-free loans, financial linkages for self-help groups (SHGs), and pension schemes.

"SHGs will be provided government business worth ₹20,000 crore in the next 10 years. Individual women entrepreneurs will be assisted with a corpus fund of ₹100 crore to provide subsidised loans up to ₹10 lakh to start and

grow their business. Pension will be facilitated under Mission Shakti. All grassroots women workers, community support workers, Anganwadi workers, and ASHAs will also receive BSKY coverage and social security pensions," the BJD supremo said.

Food security, agricultural support, heritage preservation and language development are also key components of the manifesto. The party plans to continue and expand initiatives like the KALIA scheme for farmers and provide financial assistance for dependant girl marriages and crop loans. Fishermen will get ₹15,000 per annum during lean period.

Patnaik promised to introduce Kalinga Shree and Kalinga Bhushan awards annually, akin to Padma Shri and Padma Bhushan awards, to celebrate state's rich culture and heritage.

Modi roadshow in Bhubaneswar today

Bhubaneswar: Prime Minister Narendra Modi is set to hold a roadshow here Friday, official sources said Thursday. The security arrangements have been beefed up for PM's event. "Prime Minister Narendra Modi will be in Bhubaneswar May 10 and he will hold a roadshow on Janpath. The roadshow is planned for the night hours," City DCP Prateek Singh said. The PM will also take part in poll rallies in the state May 11.

Jharsuguda man kills wife, daughter before ending life

POST NEWS NETWORK

Brajarajnar, May 9: A man shot his wife and 12-year-old daughter dead before ending his life after incurring losses in online gambling in Jharsuguda district Thursday morning.

The deceased were identified as Sujit Ray, 37, his wife Khusbu Ray, 28, and their daughter Arpita of Kalinagar under Brajarajnar police limits in the district. Their bodies, bearing gunshot wounds, were discovered inside a car parked at a playground near Banipahada under Lakhanpur police limits in the district," SP Parmar Smit Parshottamdas said.

"Preliminary investigations suggest that the man first shot his wife and daughter before turning the gun on himself, driven by the strain of overwhelming financial losses from online gambling," the SP pointed out. He said a complaint was filed



at Orient police station around 10.30pm Wednesday reporting the family's disappearance.

"Using their mobile phone signals, we located the bodies inside the car, which had its engine running and air conditioning on. The woman and her daughter had cloth tied over their eyes, while the man was on the driver's seat," the SP added.

Upon inspecting the man's mobile phone, investigators discovered his involvement in various online gambling platforms. He had incurred losses exceeding ₹4.25 lakh on a single app and had availed loans from multiple sources to fuel his gambling habit, the SP said, adding the gun has been confiscated.

IRREGULAR by MANJUL



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leisure



BRITNEY ADMITS SHE ISN'T A GOOD AUTHOR

Britney Spears doesn't consider herself a good writer. The 42-year-old pop superstar - who released her bombshell memoir *The Woman in Me* last year admitted that she struggles to put pen to paper herself but is a big fan of best-selling authors like Danielle Steel.

ZAYN: ONE DIRECTION RESENTED EACH OTHER

Singer Zayn Malik has claimed the members of *One Direction* including him 'resented each other', instead of looking out for one another. Malik said, "We resented each other because we were solo artistes that were put in a band, and we should have never felt that way."



FORTUNE FORECAST

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ARIES
So, busy bee, you finally realise you've been ignoring your near and dear. And now, it's going to cost you a lot of effort to make it up to them. Dinner at the finest restaurant, a trip to the theatre, shopping at a posh boutique... be ready to splurge, says Ganesh!

TAURUS
Your vision today will have a hue of green as you will draw to money like a fly to sweets. Taste the power of money with fortune as the monkey on your back. You may buy a pendant or a necklace today and your haggling skills will save you from being swindled, says Ganesh.

GEMINI
You will spend the day safeguarding sentiments of others and it is in your own interest. For most part of the day, probably the entire day, you will be away from your family, mostly on a trip for business or leisure purposes. Today, having a successful career will be only thing on your mind.

CANCER
You are a master of deception, and your sugar-coated comments play a pivotal role in your methods. Today, you will be able to smell trouble from a distance, and will know when to take a U-turn. Your methods may not make you very popular with the so-called moral brigade working with you, but you may think that this is the easiest way to the top.

LEO
Ever been surprised at your own abilities? Today you shall be, says Ganesh. With the perfect blend of amicable gestures and lack of inimical actions, you are poised to become the cynosure of all occasions. The day will bring to the fore your flexible nature, moderate views, and your mature mannerisms in a cocktail that is as heady as the best blend.

VIRGO
Children will ring in applause and praises - in the classroom and off it too! Processing logic and reasoning will improve too. Ganesh asks you to keep calm and enjoy the joy ride, irrespective of anything that happens during the day.

LIBRA
Some days are full of new ideas. Today is one such day as you radiate diligence and intelligence. Consider it an auspicious moment to begin new business schemes, especially if you happen to be self-employed. Today, you will be able to think at a level higher and clearer than the rest.

SCORPIO
Dig in deep and keep yourself in the hunt, says Ganesh. Karma matters, but don't give much thought to the outcome. In matters of joint ventures, adopt a wait-and-watch approach today.

SAGITTARIUS
Be ready to receive advice - unasked and unwarranted. Don't overlook it either, as these suggestions can be worthy of consideration. But let the last word rest in your hands and look deep inside for the right verdict.

CAPRICORN
The most intimidating of ventures can prove successful if fortune favours you; you will be fortunate today, says Ganesh. Those of you dealing in stocks and shares can expect a profitable day ahead, but don't forget to give credit to your spouse; it will be their luck working wonders for you.

AQUARIUS
Bursting with new ideas, you want to make the world a better place! You will give your best in a team and will come up with great schemes and solutions. At gatherings and social dos, says Ganesh, you will remain your charming self, impressing people with an amazing social grace.

PISCES
Home is where the hearth is, in which the troubles you need to deal with today are smouldering. Running away from your problems will simply have you out of breath; it would be wiser to take a stand and find solutions to petty conflicts without losing your perspective. Make no mountains out of mole hills, says Ganesh.

Richa's take on feminism

Mumbai: Actress Richa Chadha talked about feminism and gave her opinion on the recent comment made by Nora Fatehi that women should be nurturers. In a recent interview, when Richa was asked about Nora's comment, she said, "The cute thing about feminism is that it accepts those who seek the benefits of feminism but deny being a feminist. The reason why someone is able to have a career, choose what she wants to wear or wants to be independent, because of feminism and because of predecessors who decided that women need to be out there doing jobs and not just being at home. So I think it's a misguided reaction to the visual of some misinformed chaos from the late '60s." She went on to add, "All roles are defined, not as gender roles, but as people who are sharing the responsibility of bringing a child into the world. And I don't fully agree with 'this women should be this way, and not this

way'. I'm surprised it was said at all, actually," she said. It all started when Nora said on *The Ranveer Show*, "I don't believe in feminism. In fact, I think, feminism messed-up our society completely. A lot of men now have also been brain-washed by feminism era. If a man can work on being more of a provider, and protector, the woman can then focus on being more of a nurturer."

AGENCIES

Rashmika joins cast of Sikandar

Mumbai: Actress Rashmika Mandanna, who is currently experiencing a dream run in the movies, will be portraying the female lead in the upcoming Salman Khan-starrer *Sikandar*. This marks the first collaboration between Salman and Rashmika. *Sikandar* is directed by AR Murugadoss, who is known for films like *Ghajini* and *Holiday: A Soldier Is Never Off Duty*. The makers of the film made the announcement about Rashmika joining the cast, Thursday. They posted on X: "Welcoming the fabulous @rashmika_mandanna to star opposite @beingsalmankhan in #Sikandar! Can't wait for their on-screen magic to unfold on EID 2025! #SajidNadiadwala's #Sikandar Directed by @a.r.murugadoss Releasing in cinemas EID 2025." The film is produced by Sajid Nadiadwala of Nadiadwala Grandson Entertainment, marking the reunion of Salman with Sajid after *Kick*, which was released in 2014. Meanwhile, Rashmika, who last appeared in the blockbuster *Animal* alongside Ranbir Kapoor, also has the Allu Arjun-starrer *Pushpa 2: The Rule* in which she will reprise her role of Srivalli.

Mumbai: Actress Rashmika Mandanna, who is currently experiencing a dream run in the movies, will be portraying the female lead in the upcoming Salman Khan-starrer *Sikandar*. This marks the first collaboration between Salman and Rashmika.



Ash, Aditi to represent India at Cannes



Mumbai: Actresses Ashwarya Rai and Aditi Rao Hydari are all set to jet off to the upcoming edition of Cannes Film Festival, and represent India. They will be making their much-anticipated return to the international film festival as ambassadors for L'Oreal.

Cannes, Aditi made her debut at the festival in 2022. The 77th edition of the Cannes Film Festival is scheduled to take place from May 14 to 25. They are expected to highlight the growing influence of Indian cinema around the world. Sharing her happiness, Aditi said in a statement, "I am thrilled

to embark on this journey to the esteemed Festival de Cannes as the spokesperson for the brand. I strongly advocate that women should confidently embrace their unique selves and I truly resonate with the theme of this year 'Many ways to be an icon'." From India, two films have been selected for screening at Cannes Film Festival 2024. Sandhya Suri's *Santosh* is in the Un Certain Regard section, while Payal Kapadia's *All We Imagine As Light* will be screened in the Competition section.

AGENCIES

Jyotika on her absence from Hindi films

Mumbai: Actress Jyotika, who made her acting debut in a Hindi film titled *Doli Saja Ke Rakhna* 27 years ago, will be starring alongside Rajkumar Rao in his upcoming film *Srikanth*. The actress recently clarified about her absence from Hindi cinema. Jyotika, who made her comeback in Hindi films with the psychological-horror movie *Shaitaan*, said, "I didn't receive an offer from Hindi films ever since. I drifted into south films 27 years ago and have only worked in south films ever since. My first Hindi film didn't run well in theatres. It's all very formula-based. Your first film needs to run for you to get more offers." Talking about the scenario down south, she added, "That stark difference between both industries was definitely there. People in Bollywood also thought that I was a south Indian and they assumed that I didn't want to do Hindi films anymore. It's not like I refrained from doing a Hindi film. It's just that I wasn't offered any script in so many years."

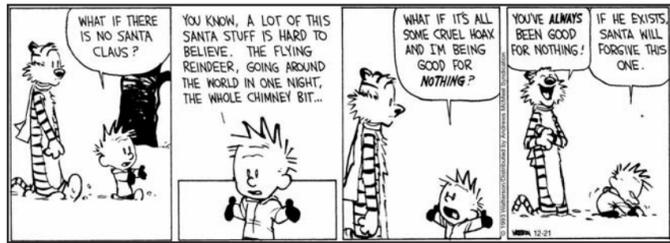
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PEANUTS



CALVIN AND HOBBS

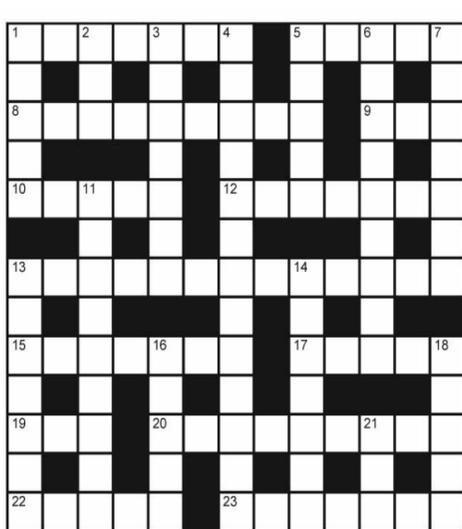


BREVITY



FUN post

CROSSWORD



- Across
1 Supper club
5 Lay to rest
8 Fencing, e.g.
9 Silent assent
10 Part of a TV feed
12 Black gold gusher (3,4)
13 Being the ham
15 Flying Dutchman, for one (4,2,3,4)
17 Swamp plants
19 Cuckoo bird
- Down
20 Immunise
22 Book parts
23 Razed
- 6 Mandarin orange type
7 Danger sign (3-4)
11 Earsplitting
13 London illumination, once (3,4)
14 Take under one's wing
16 Gemini the
18 Go on a buying spree
21 Cobbler's tool

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.

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

SOLUTIONS

CROSSWORD

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

SUDOKU

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

CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW



CHOCK-A-BLOCK: Massive traffic congestion on the stretch between Vani Vihar square and Acharya Vihar square in Bhubaneswar, Thursday morning. Such snarls have become a regular feature on the Capital City's arterial roads during peak office hours. OP PHOTO

Naveen urges people to vote for good candidates

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, May 9: Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik Thursday urged voters not to support dishonest and unscrupulous candidates in the upcoming Lok Sabha and Assembly elections in the state.

Addressing three election rallies in Gopalpur, Aska, and Phulbani under Berhampur, Aska, and Kandhamal Lok Sabha seats, where polling is scheduled for May 13, Patnaik interacted with the public to gather feedback on his government's welfare initiatives.

Patnaik, also the president of the BJD, gauged public opinion on himself, asking the gathering, "Is Naveen Patnaik a good man?" to which the crowd responded affirmatively.

"Please bless me and vote in favour of the conch symbol of BJD. Do not vote for thieves," Patnaik emphatically said, urging people to support the Lok Sabha and Assembly candidates of the ruling party.

While addressing an election meeting at Gopalpur in Ganjam district, Patnaik appealed to people to vote for candidates with integrity. Although he did not mention BJD candidate Pradeep Panigrahi by name, Patnaik had previously expelled the Gopalpur MLA from the regional party.

Patnaik also criticised rival parties in the other two meetings,



alleging that Opposition parties were spreading misinformation and shedding crocodile tears during elections.

During the rallies, Patnaik received an overwhelming response from the crowds. If re-elected in 2024, he would become the longest-serving chief minister in the country, a BJD leader said.

Accompanying Patnaik, bureaucrat-turned-politician VK Pandian also addressed election rallies in three locations.

At the Phulbani rally, Pandian highlighted the Chief Minister's commitment to tribal welfare by instructing authorities to withdraw 50,000 cases under forest and excise policies against tribals.

Pandian claimed that the BJD's success rate in the first phase of elections, covering four Lok Sabha seats and 28 Assembly segments, stood at 90 per cent. He

urged people to ensure the BJD's performance reached 100 per cent.

In the previous elections, the BJD won three out of four Lok Sabha constituencies and secured victory in 20 out of 28 Assembly segments.

Pandian criticised the BJP, saying the party failed to name a chief ministerial candidate for Odisha while Naveen Patnaik has held office consecutively for five terms.

Responding to Pandian's remarks, senior BJP leader and Union minister Dharmendra Pradhan, who is also a Lok Sabha candidate from Sambalpur, said the BJD should announce its prime ministerial candidate before criticising others. He emphasised that the BJP is a party of workers, and any worker could be appointed as chief minister.

Modi to address 3 rallies Saturday

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, May 9: Prime Minister Narendra Modi will address three election rallies in the state Saturday, a state BJP leader said.

Modi will also take part in a roadshow in Bhubaneswar, Friday, Odisha BJP vice-president Golak Mohapatra said.

"On May 11, he will address three public rallies - the first in Kandhamal at 9.30am, the second in Bolangir at 11.30am and another in Bargarh at 1pm," he said.

"The PM will also hold a roadshow in Bhubaneswar from 8pm, Friday. He will stay the night at the Raj Bhavan," Mohapatra said.

The roadshow will start from BJP's state headquarters near Sri Ram Mandir and end at Vani Vihar Square.

Tight security arrangements have been made for the roadshow and the poll rallies, police said.

Modi had last visited Odisha May 6 when he addressed two public meetings in Berhampur and Nabarangpur.

Simultaneous Lok Sabha and Assembly elections will be held in Odisha in four phases, starting May 13.

Doctors' group urges govt to review all Covid vaccines

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, May 9: In the wake of pharmaceutical giant AstraZeneca admitting in a UK court that its Covid vaccine can cause blood clots in rare cases, a group of doctors Thursday expressed deep concern over the safety of the Covishield vaccine manufactured by the Serum Institute of India.

At a press conference, the doctors, under the banner of the Awaken India Movement (AIM), urged the government to review the science behind all Covid vaccines and audit their commercialisation as well as implementation of active surveillance and monitoring mechanism to ensure vaccine adverse events are identified as early as possible.

"The government has wholly ignored the rising number of cases of tragic deaths post-Covid vaccination all the while and continues to promote Covid vaccines as 'safe and effective', without scientific investigation and invoking epidemiology," Dr Tarun Kothari, a radiologist and an activist, said at the press conference.



The world is learning about a side effect of the Covid vaccine called Thrombosis with Thrombocytopenia Syndrome (TTS), he said.

When the COVID-19 vaccines were being administered, not many people were aware that it was being done without the completion of phase-3 trials. Administration of COVID-19 vaccines was started without the manufacturers having complete information and data on the possible short-term or long-term side effects, or fatalities, said Dr Sujata Mittal, a gynaecologist and oncologist.

There is an already low awareness around vaccine injuries, especially in India, she said.

Thousands of women reported abnormalities in their menstrual

cycles, which was confirmed much later as a side effect of the vaccine in a study published in September 2022, she added.

"The Awaken India Movement (AIM) has been collecting details of Covid Vaccine deaths covered by media/social media in India and sharing them with various high authorities of the

country since 2021, when the vaccination began. The government has failed to respond to our repeated requests to investigate deaths and debilitation from adverse effects of vaccination," Dr Kothari said.

LOK SABHA ELECTIONS

First-timer challenges Cuttack veteran

ARINDAM GANGULY

Bhubaneswar, May 9: The first phase of the Lok Sabha and Assembly elections in the state is going to be held May 13. The Cuttack Lok Sabha seat, one of the 21 parliamentary constituencies in the state, will go for voting in the third phase, May 25.

This Lok Sabha seat holds a special significance as the historic Silver City was the Capital of Odisha for nearly 900 years before Bhubaneswar took over the tag.

The constituency consists of seven Assembly segments: Baramba, Banki, Athagarh, Barabati Cuttack, Choudwar Cuttack, Cuttack Sadar, and Khandapara.

The contest this time is primarily between BJD turncoat and BJP candidate Bhartruhari Mahtab, the outgoing MP, and Santruip Misra, a former HR head of the Aditya Birla Group, who the BJD has pitted. With declared assets of approximately Rs 461 crore, Misra is the richest candidate among the Lok Sabha aspirants in the fray this time.

Senior Congress leader Suresh Mohapatra is also trying his luck from the constituency. In 2019 elections, Mahtab had trounced BJP candidate and former IPS officer Prakash Mishra by a margin of 1,21,201 votes to win the seat for the sixth consecutive times.

OrissaPOST spoke to poll watchers and a cross-section of resident of Cuttack city to gauge the undercurrents and winning chances of the main candidates in the fray, and also the issues confronting the voters.

Cuttack resident Pradip Kumar Das, who is also a senior journalist and political analyst, said candidates from all the three big parties have their



strength and weakness so far as the election is concerned. "Mahtab, a veteran leader and winner of the best Parliamentarian award, got closer to BJP after he went vocal about BJD supremo and Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik in the last few years. The saffron party gave him a ticket and may consider a ministerial berth for him in the event he wins. However, Mahtab could not build his own base in the constituency despite being an MP for six times. He largely banked on the support of BJD MLA candidates for his victories," Das said.

BJD candidate Santruip Misra, on the other hand, is a newbie in politics and the electorates know little about him, Das said, adding that his (Misra's) resourcefulness and BJD's organizational base will come to his aid.

Das said Congress candidate Suresh Mohapatra is a veteran leader and has some influence in the constituency. "He is trying to cash in on the BJD-BJP alliance rumours which made people little inclined towards Congress party. Given the background, we may expect a triangular contest," he said.

Political analyst Sudarshan Chhotoray said BJD candidate Santruip Misra is largely banking on Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik's image, clean administration and support from thousands of party cadres.

On the other hand, he said, Mahtab, son of former Odisha chief minister

and former governor of Maharashtra Harekrushna Mahtab, was a strong BJD loyalist and recently shifted to BJP. This happened after he was informed by party decision makers about the internal assessments through surveys which suggested change of the candidate.

Jagannath Mohanty, a city based lawyer said, "The battle will be between BJD and BJP as the Congress doesn't have that much influence at present. Their present candidate Suresh Mohapatra had earlier lost in the Assembly election. Moreover, the local Congress organisation is divided due to internal conflicts. This makes it difficult for the party to win."

Mohanty said although some development work has been carried out in the city in recent times, Cuttack residents still face multiple problems on a daily basis, such as mosquito menace, water logging, dug up roads etc.

Social activist and Cuttack resident Prakash Panda said the developmental works carried out during Mahtab may go in his favour in spite of changing party. The image and support of Modi will also come in his favour. Though BJD's Misra has no dearth of funding, he will have a tough battle ahead as a newcomer in politics.

Panda said the digging of roads at several places in the city under Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA)-funded Odisha Integrated Sanitation Improvement Project (OISIP), has aggravated the woes of the commuters since long. "This must be stopped," he added.

Dr Subasish Behera another resident said that city infra projects is a big problem for locals as it creates traffic and other issues. "These issues must be taken up seriously by the MP candidates," he added.

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- M.Sc. Applied Microbiology (2 years)
- M. Arch (2 years)
- Int. M.Tech & Ph.D (5 years)
- Master of Communication & Journalism (2 years)
- Master in Yoga and Naturopathy (2 years)
- Master of Hospital Administration (2 years)
- Master of Public Health (2 years)
- MBA (2 years)
- MBA in Business Analytics (2 years)
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- MBA in Rural Management (2 years)

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- MBA in Agribusiness Management (2 years)
- M. Design (Interior Design)(2 Years)
- M.Sc. Computer Science (2 years)
- MA in Economics (2 years)
- MA in Sociology (2 years)
- MA in English (2 years)
- MA in Psychology (2 years)
- MA in Public Policy (2 years)
- M.Com (2 years)
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- M.Sc. Nursing (2 years)
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KIIT (Deemed to be University) has only one permanent campus in Bhubaneswar, Odisha. It has no other campus / off campus anywhere else in the country and globe.

Prez confers Padma awards

BINOD MAHARANA AND BHAGABAT PADHAN FROM ODISHA WERE AMONG THE RECIPIENTS

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, May 9: Yesteryear actor Vyjayanthimala Bali, Telugu star Konidela Chiranjeevi, the first woman judge of the Supreme Court late M Fathima Beevi and 'Bombay Samachar' owner Hormusji N Cama were among the eminent persons conferred Padma awards by President Droupadi Murmu Thursday.

BJP leader O Rajagopal, Ladakh's spiritual leader Togdan Rinpochey, Tamil actor late 'Captain' Vijayakant (both posthumous) and Kundan Vyas, group editor and CEO of Gujarati newspaper 'Janmabhoomi', were also conferred Padma awards at a civil investiture ceremony held at the Rashtrapati Bhavan.

While 90-year-old Bali and 68-year-old Chiranjeevi were given Padma Vibhushan, Beevi, Cama, Rajagopal, Vijayakant, Rinpochey



Binod Maharana



Bhagabat Padhan

and Vyas were conferred Padma Bhushan. Family members of Beevi, Vijayakant and Rinpochey received the awards.

Vice President Jagdeep Dhankhar, Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Union Home Minister Amit Shah were among the dignitaries present on the occasion.

Among those who were given Padma Bhushan included eminent cardiologist Ashwin Balachand Mehta and former

Union minister and Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) leader late Satyabrata Mookherjee.

The Padma Shri awardees included unsung heroes like India's first woman elephant mahout Parbati Baruah, who is known as 'Hasti Kanya', sculptor from Telangana Velu Anandachari, eminent weaver from Tripura Smriti Rekha Chakma, K Chellammal from the Andaman and Nicobar Islands, who pioneered in organic coconut plan-

Binod Maharana is widely recognised for his great fine art and traditional 'Patta painting'. Maharana has also been preparing the next generation of artists by providing them training in palm leaf carving and Patta painting

Bhagabat Padhan is a guru of 'Sabda Nrutya', a unique mythological dance form. Padhan has been actively encouraging and training other artists in this folk art form

tation, and squash player Joshna Chinappa.

The award ceremony witnessed some heartwarming moments too.

There was a huge round of applause when KS Rajanna, a 'divyang' from Karnataka, who lost both his hands and feet in his childhood, came to receive Padma Shri. He is known for his welfare work for differently-abled persons.



POLL AWARENESS: Khurda Collector Chanchal Rana takes part in 'Cyclotron' in Capital city, Thursday, as part of voter's awareness campaign organised by district administration

Need for 'double-engine' BJP govt in state: CM Sai

Koraput: Chhattisgarh CM Vishnu Deo Sai Thursday said there is a need for the BJP's 'double-engine' government in Odisha to accelerate the pace of development. Addressing an election rally at Laxmipur in Koraput Lok Sabha constituency, he said, "Odisha is rich in mineral resources, and has forests, fertile land and water resources. Still, the BJD government has failed to develop the state despite ruling it for 24 years." "So, there is a need for a double-engine government of the BJP here for speedy development," Sai said. Referring to Chhattisgarh, he said that the BJP ruled the state for 15 years, but when the Congress came to power for five years, development activities stopped and corruption became rampant. "With the formation of the BJP government four months ago, once again development works have resumed," he said. "We are procuring paddy at ₹3,100 per quintal. Many other schemes for women and youths have also been launched," he added. Sai said if the BJP forms a government in Odisha, all schemes and programmes of the Centre would be implemented here as well.

CUO observes Tagore's 163rd birth anniversary

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, May 9: The Central University of Odisha (CUO), Koraput observed the 163rd birth anniversary of Nobel laureate and cultural luminary Rabindranath Tagore recently.

CUO VC Chakradhar Tripathi presided over the ceremony. Other dignitaries on the dais were dean of the School of Biodiversity and Conservation of Natural Resources Sharat Kumar Palita, associate professor and head of the department of Sociology Kapila Khemundu and assistant professor in the department of Biodiversity and Conservation of Natural Resources Kakoli Banerjee.

On the occasion, Tripathi shed light on Tagore's vision, philosophy and educational endeavours which aimed at fos-



tering a sustainable development of the nation.

Quoting from Tagore's renowned work, Gitanjali, he remarked, "The whole world was astonished upon witnessing Tagore's writings in Gitanjali. The Vishwaguru illuminated the essence of our society and the image of the nation through poetry."

Tripathi also told about Visva

Bharati, an institute of national importance founded by Tagore in Shantiniketan, West Bengal.

Palita highlighted Tagore's profound contributions to India and the world, particularly through Visva Bharati, a distinguished institution of higher education. He also underscored Tagore's significant connection with Odisha.

Former accountant held for ₹2.63cr fraud

DEBADURLLAV HARICHANDAN, OP

Bhubaneswar, May 9: The Economic Offences Wing (EOW) has arrested a former accountant of a company for ₹2.63 crore alleged fraud.

The accused has been identified as Saroj Kumar Mohanty of Kaliabara in Jagatsinghpur district. EOW sleuths arrested him from City May 8 on the basis of a complaint lodged by managing director of Sealcoat Structural Works Private Limited Biswajit Bhujan.

He had defrauded the company by making using forged documents, an EOW official said.

According to EOW sources, Saroj worked at the company

as an accountant from 2006 to 2008. During the period, he managed the finances and accounts of the company. Later, he was assigned to look after the financial deals with banks apart from overseeing balance sheets and tax-filings.

As per the complaint, from FY 2015-16 to FY 2017-18, he siphoned off ₹2.63 crore through forged documents such as request letter to bank and putting false signatures. The accused even misappropriated the bank cheques which was issued for parties, and instead transferred money into his account. Besides, in several cases, he withdrew funds stored in company accounts for parties,

through deceitful means.

"He illegally transferred the amounts to several accounts, including to his own. In some cases, he withdrew payments due to the parties, using the bank instrument and subsequently, deposited lesser amount from the cash deposit machine in their accounts," he added.

The sleuths seized several incriminating documents forged by Saroj during investigation.

The accused has been booked under Sections 420, 408 and 467 IPC, along with various provisions under Odisha Protection of Interests of Depositors (in Financial Establishments) Act. He was produced before a special court in Cuttack Thursday.

Avoid protein supplements for building body mass: ICMR

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, May 9: The Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) has urged people to avoid protein supplements for building body mass and has recommended restricting salt intake, minimising sugar and ultra-processed foods and reading information on food labels to make informed and healthy food choices.

The Hyderabad-based National Institute of Nutrition (NIN) under the apex health research body Wednesday released revised 'Dietary Guidelines for Indians (DGIs)' to meet the requirements of essential nutrients and prevent non-communicable diseases (NCDs).

The DGIs have been drafted by a multi-disciplinary committee of experts led by ICMR-NIN director Hemalatha R, and have undergone several scientific reviews. Seventeen guidelines have been listed in it.

In the DGIs, the NIN stated that prolonged intake of large amounts of protein powders or consumption of high protein concentrate has been associated with potential dangers such as bone mineral loss and kidney damage.

It also stated that sugar should be less than 5 per cent of total energy intake and a balanced diet should provide not more than 45 per cent calories from cereals and millets and up to 15 per cent of calories from pulses, beans and



In the Dietary Guidelines for Indians, the NIN stated that prolonged intake of large amounts of protein powders or consumption of high protein concentrate has been associated with potential dangers such as bone mineral loss and kidney damage

meat. The rest of the calories should come from nuts, vegetables, fruits and milk. Total fat intake should be less than or equal to 30 per cent energy, the guidelines said.

Due to the limited availability and high cost of pulses and meat, a significant proportion of the Indian population relies heavily on cereals, resulting in poor intake of essential macronutrients (essential amino acids and essential fatty acids) and micronutrients, it stated.

Low intake of essential nutrients can disrupt metabolism and increase the risk of insulin resistance and associated disorders from a young age.

Estimates show that 56.4 per cent of the total disease burden in India is due to unhealthy diets, it said. Healthy diets and physical activity can reduce a substantial proportion of coronary heart disease (CHD) and hypertension (HTN) and prevent up to 80 per cent of type 2 diabetes.

"A significant proportion of premature deaths can be averted by following a healthy lifestyle," it said, adding that the upsurge in the consumption of highly processed foods laden with sugars and fats, coupled with reduced physical activity and limited access to diverse foods, aggravated micronutrient deficiencies and obesity.

MARKET WATCH		
INDEX		VARIATION
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DOLLAR	83.53	↓ ₹0.47
EURO	89.94	↑ ₹0.25
GOLD	₹71,580	↑ ₹453
SILVER	₹ 84,340	↑ ₹1,346

WEATHER		
	BBSR	CTC
Max Temp	35.5°C	36°C
Min Temp	23.3°C	23°C
Humidity	71%	66%
Rainfall	15mm	1.4mm
FORECAST		
PARTLY CLOUDY SKY		

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AI could be hurdle in making contact with aliens

Some scientists are now looking towards the development of artificial superintelligence (ASI) — a form of AI that would not only surpass human intelligence but would not be bound by the learning speeds of humans.

But what if this milestone represents a formidable bottleneck in the development of all civilisations, one so challenging that it thwarts their long-term survival?

This idea is at the heart of a research paper published in Acta Astronautica. Could AI be the universe's 'great filter' — a threshold so hard to overcome that it prevents most life from evolving into space-faring civilisations?

This is a concept that might explain why the search for extraterrestrial intelligence (Seti) has yet to detect the signatures of advanced technical civilisations elsewhere in the galaxy.

The great filter hypothesis is ultimately a proposed solution to the Fermi Paradox. This questions why, in a universe vast and ancient enough to host billions of potentially habitable planets, we have not detected any signs of alien civilisations.

The emergence of ASI could intersect with a critical phase in a civilisation's development — the transition from a single-planet species to a multiplanetary one.

This is where many civilisations could falter, with AI making much more rapid progress than our ability either to control it or sustainably explore and populate our Solar System.

The challenge with AI, and specifically ASI, lies in its autonomous, self-amplifying and improving nature. It possesses the potential to enhance its own capabilities at a speed that outpaces our own evolutionary timelines without AI.



The potential for something to go badly wrong is enormous, leading to the downfall of both biological and AI civilisations before they ever get the chance to become multiplanetary.

For example, if nations increasingly rely on and cede power to autonomous AI systems that compete against each other, military capabilities could be used to kill and destroy on an unprecedented scale. This could potentially lead to the destruction of

■ Could AI be the universe's 'great filter' — a threshold so hard to overcome that it prevents most life from evolving into space-faring civilisations?

■ This is a concept that might explain why the search for extraterrestrial intelligence (Seti) has yet to detect the signatures of advanced technical civilisations elsewhere in the galaxy

our entire civilisation, including the AI systems themselves.

In this scenario, the typical longevity of a technological civilisation might be less than 100 years. That's roughly the time between being able to receive and broadcast signals between the stars (1960), and the estimated emergence of ASI (2040) on Earth. This is alarmingly short when set against the cosmic timescale of billions of years.

This estimate, when plugged

into optimistic versions of the Drake equation — which attempts to estimate the number of active, communicative extraterrestrial civilisations in the Milky Way — suggests that, at any given time, there are only a handful of intelligent civilisations out there. Moreover, like us, their relatively modest technological activities could make them quite challenging to detect.

The research is not simply a cautionary tale of potential doom. It serves as a wake-up call for humanity to establish robust regulatory frameworks to guide the development of AI, including military systems.

It suggests we need to put more resources into becoming a multiplanetary society as soon as possible — a goal that has lain dormant since the heady days of the Apollo project, but has lately been reignited by advances made by private companies.

Nine arrested for gambling in City

DEBADURLLAV HARICHANDAN, OP

Bhubaneswar, May 9: Macheswar police Wednesday evening arrested nine miscreants, who were allegedly involved in gambling in Pandara area here. The police seized ₹29,000 cash, four two-wheelers, playing cards and 11 smartphones from their possession.

Investigating officer (IO) Subhendu Sahu said though the police were tipped off about the illegal activity 15 days ago, the anti-socials continued to give them a slip. The accused were identified as Ranjan Behera, 32, Akshay Kumar Gochhi, 36, Manoj Kumar Parida, 36, S.Jaydev Rao, 41, Ganesh Nayak, 31, Niranjan Patra, 44, Dilu Nahak, 40, Ashray Reddy, 28, and Ritesh Sahoo, 20. They are all slum dwellers in the City the IO added.

The hoodlums have been booked under Sections 294, 323, 353, 506 and 34 of IPC, before they were produced before a local court.

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POLITICKLE by MANJUL



Cops dismantle Andhra health camp in Pottangi

POST NEWS NETWORK

Pottangi, May 9: The efforts of the Andhra Pradesh government to induct villages under the Kotia panchayat in Koraput district continue. The Andhra government in the past had attempted to do so by offering lucrative sops to residents of various villages in Koraput district. Despite being thwarted on a number of occasions, the Andhra government has persisted with its attempts.

The matter came to the fore again when the Andhra government in association with a private firm organised a health camp at Laudi village in Sunki panchayat under this block, Wednesday. With officials busy preparing for the first phase of polls in Odisha next week, the Andhra government used it as an opportune moment to attract the attention of residents who legally belong to Odisha.

However, the plan failed as locals informed the officials of this block. They rushed to the village along with personnel from



the Sunki police station and closed down the camp. Andhra officials then played the victim card. They told the crowd which had gathered at the camp that they were being prevented from carrying out a 'humanitarian' duty. They told the villagers that had they been a part of Andhra Pradesh, they would get such benefits on a regular basis.

Sources informed Thursday that officials frequently visit villages under Kotia panchayat to lure residents with welfare and development schemes if they become a part of Andhra Pradesh. They added that many



private organisations are aiding the Andhra government in this regard. However, till date, their efforts have failed. In the latest case, healthcare officials arrived at Laudi village in an ambulance (AP-39NP-3546). They set up base inside a

cultural centre constructed by the Odisha government. They distributed free medicines to people who came to the camp for a check-up.

Everything was progressing smoothly till a team of Odisha government officials arrived at the spot. Among them were BDO Sukant Patnaik, tehsildar Debendra Bahadur Singh Dharia, chief of the community health centre, Dr Bhagabat Murmu and medical officer of Sunki panchayat, Dr Mrigendra Nath Hembram. They were accompanied by cops who shut down the camp.

Police then detained the entire Andhra team and sought an explanation from them. The Andhra officials were let off with a strict warning and only after they gave in writing that they will not set foot inside Odisha again without permission. Police have initiated a probe to find out the involvement of locals in the incident and who gave the Andhra team permission to set up the camp at the cultural centre.

Poll teams not to be air-dropped in Maoist-hit Swabhiman Anchal

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Koraput, May 9: With gradual improvement in the situation in Maoist-affected Swabhiman Anchal in Malkangiri district, the administration has decided not to air-drop personnel and security forces to polling stations as was done in 2019.

Since the construction of the Gurupriya bridge in 2018, which connected almost all the 151 villages in Swabhiman Anchal, which was earlier known as a cut-off area, and with all-weather roads, the necessity for air-dropping polling personnel and security forces has diminished, an official said.

During the 2019 Lok Sabha elections, polling staffers and security personnel were air-dropped in at least nine booths in Swabhiman Anchal.

This time, out of the 23 polling booths in Swabhiman Anchal, officials plan to ferry staffers to two

polling stations at Jantri and Sanyasiguda by boats, and to the remaining by road.

Previously, helicopters were used for transporting security forces and polling officials. This time, however, they will go by road to all but two polling stations, which do not have road connectivity. Malkangiri Superintendent of Police Nitesh Wadhvani said.

However, the SP said, a helicopter will be kept on standby at Jeypore airport in adjacent Koraput district for emergency purposes, should any untoward incidents occur. Noting a change in the situation, Wadhvani said, "Unlike previous years, when restrictions were imposed on campaigning due to Maoist presence, this time candidates are being provided with adequate security everywhere in Swabhiman Anchal area."

Wadhvani said that there are

over 100 hyper-sensitive polling stations out of total of 547 in the district. The SP said the Swabhiman Anchal is currently free from Maoist activities, allowing election campaigning even in remote villages with appropriate security arrangements.

"Our foremost aim is to conduct free and fair elections sans any violence. All necessary steps are being taken to ensure that," the SP said.

Wadhvani said that despite no major incidents of Maoist violence being reported in the district in the last 19 months, security personnel remain on high alert, particularly along Odisha's inter-state borders with Andhra Pradesh and Chhattisgarh, where most of the hyper-sensitive polling stations are located.

"Intelligence-based operations are being conducted in coordination with our counterparts of the neighbouring states," the SP informed.

HARDCORE RED REBEL SHOT DEAD

PNN & AGENCIES

Nabarangpur, May 9: A hardcore Maoist was killed in gun battle with the Special Operation Group (SOG) jawans and District Voluntary Force (DVF) inside a forest in this district Thursday. Police said the encounter took place inside Raigarh forest during a combing operation jointly conducted by the SOG and the DVF.

As the security forces advanced into the forest, the Maoists opened fire on them leading to a shootout in which the Maoist was killed. Police have seized the body and are trying to ascertain the identity of the deceased.

The Red rebels, in the wake of mounting attacks from the security forces, then fled from the spot, police said.

Politicos campaign at weekly 'haats' in remote tribal areas



PNN/AGENCIES

Koraput, May 9: Recognising the limitations of technology in remote areas, politicians of different hues have taken to weekly 'haats' to reach out to people in Koraput and Nabarangpur Lok Sabha seats.

The two ST-reserved seats and their Assembly segments will go to polls in the first phase of simultaneous elections in the state May 13.

Kausalya Hikaka, the BJD candidate for Koraput Lok Sabha seat, said, "In tribal areas like this, we cannot depend solely on hi-tech campaigning methods as many people are poor and illiterate or semi-literate with limited access to smartphones or television."

Also, tribal villages are located at a distance from one another but people converge at weekly 'haats', where campaigning becomes easy, she said.

Incumbent MP and Congress candidate for Koraput, Saptagiri Ulaka, campaigned at Kakiriguma weekly 'haat' along with the party's Laxmi Pur Assembly segment candidate, Pabitra Saunta.

Weekly markets offer an opportunity to effectively connect with a large number of people from varied locations, thus sav-

ing both time and money, Ulaka said.

"Haats" are held on specific days every week at fixed locations and fulfil essential needs for local residents besides serving as vital hubs for socio-cultural interactions within tribal communities. These markets have now become the focal point for political discourse. The sudden influx of political leaders into these 'haats' has also transformed the atmosphere as villagers accustomed to the routine of trade and social interaction are now encountering a politically charged environment.

Hemant Gouda, a resident of Lathikotar village in Koraput, expressed surprise over seeing politicians at Ranaspur haat. "No politician has visited our village due to its remoteness. But seeing them at the 'haat' was unexpected... the 'haat' now feels entirely different," he said.

Similarly, Bhima Kirsani, who attended Korukonda haat, remarked, "The 'haat' has been infused with political discussions, and we are enjoying listening to the politicians."

As per reports, there are around 200 large and small 'haats' in Koraput, Rayagada, Nabarangpur and Malkangiri districts.

Name and address of candidate: Sri Bibhuti Bhushan Jena, S/o Late Nityananda Jena, Resident of At/PO/PS: Golanthara, Dist: Ganjam-761008, Odisha

Name of political party: Bharatiya Janata Party (B.J.P)
Name of Election: ODISHA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY ELECTIONS, 2024

Name of Constituency: 132 Gopalpur Assembly Constituency
I, Bibhuti Bhushan Jena, a candidate for the abovementioned election, declares for public information the following details about my criminal antecedents:

Pending Criminal Cases				
Sl. No.	Name of Court	Case No. and Dated	Status of Case(s)	Section(s) of Acts concerned and brief description of offence(s)
1.	SDJM, Berhampur	G.R. 1435/2023 Out of P.S. Case No.418/ dt.25.08.2023 Golanthara P.S, Dist: Ganjam	Awaiting for final form	147-Punishment for rioting. 149- Every member of unlawful assembly guilty of offence committed in prosecution of common object. 283-obstruction or injury to any person in any public way or public line of navigation. 294- Obscene acts and songs. 241-Whoever delivers to any other person as genuine, or attempts to induce any other person to receive as genuine. 353-Whoever delivers to any other person as genuine, or attempts to induce any other person to receive as genuine. 506- Punishment for criminal intimidation. 3 of PDPP Act-Mischief causing damage to public property.
2.	SDJM, Berhampur	G.R.1434/2023 Out of P.S. Case No.417/dt.24.08.2023 Golanthara P.S, Dist: Ganjam	Awaiting for final form	427- mischief causing loss. 506- Punishment for criminal intimidation. 34-When a criminal act is done by several persons. 3 of PDPP Act-Mischief causing damage to public property.
3.	SDJM, Berhampur	G.R. 1097/2023 Out of P.S. Case No.150/ dt.29.05.2023 Gosaninugaon P.S, Dist: Ganjam	Awaiting appearance after charge sheet	341-Punishment for wrongful restraint. 109-Punishment of abetment. 323- Punishment for voluntarily causing hurt. 506- Punishment for criminal intimidation. 34-When a criminal act is done by several persons .
4.	JMFC, Berhampur	G.R. 13/2022 Out of P.S. Case No.429/ dt.24.11.2022 Golanthara P.S, Dist: Ganjam	Awaiting appearance after charge sheet	342- wrongfully confines a person. 506- Punishment for criminal intimidation. 353-assaults or uses criminal force against a public servant while they are doing their duty. 34- When a criminal act is done by several persons
5.	JMFC(R), Berhampur	G.R. 365/2022 Out of P.S. Case No.58/ dt.16.02.2022 of Golanthara P.S, Dist: Ganjam	Awaiting appearance after charge sheet	188-Disobedience to order duly promulgated by public servant. 269-Negligent act likely to spread infection of disease dangerous to life. 270-Malignant act likely to spread infection of disease dangerous to life. 271-Disobedience to quarantine rule. 171E- Disobedience to quarantine rule. 34-When a criminal act is done by several persons. 3 of PDPP Act-Mischief causing damage to public property .
6.	SDJM, Berhampur	G.R. 1910/2021 Out of P.S. Case No.298/2021 Dt.29.10.2021 B.N.Pur P.S, Dist: Ganjam	Awaiting appearance after charge sheet	147-Punishment for rioting. 148-Rioting, armed with deadly weapon. 152-assaulting or obstructing public servant while suppression of riot etc. 153-Wantonly giving provocation with intent to cause riot-if rioting be committed-if not committed. 332-Voluntarily causing hurt to deter public servant from his duty. 333- Voluntarily causing grievous hurt. 325-Punishment for causing grievous hurt. 431-Mischief by injury to public road, bridge, river, channel. 506- Punishment for criminal intimidation. 149- Common object' as if an offence is committed by any member of an unlawful assembly. 3 of PDPP Act-Mischief causing damage to public property. 7-Molesting a person to prejudice of employment or business
7.	JMFC (Smt. V.Nayak), Berhampur	G.R. 659/2017 Out of P.S. Case No.75/2017 dt.03.04.2007 Golanthara P.S, Dist: Ganjam	For trial	294- Obscene acts and songs. 323- Punishment for voluntarily causing hurt. 506- Punishment for criminal intimidation.
8.	JMFC (Smt. V.Nayak), Berhampur	G.R. 276/2007 Out of P.S. Case No.43(6)/2007 dt.03.04.2007 Golanthara P.S, Dist: Ganjam	For trial	143-Unlawful assembly. 341-Punishment for wrongful restraint. 431-Mischief by injury to public road, bridge, river or channel. 283-Danger or obstruction in public way or line of navigation
9.	SDJM, Berhampur Dist:Ganjam	G.R. 1076/2010 Arising out of ICC 240/2012 P.S. Case No.169/dt.09.10.2010 of Golanthara P.S.	For further order	147-Punishment for rioting. 323- Punishment for voluntarily causing hurt. 379-Punishment for theft. 427- Mischief causing loss. 506- Punishment for criminal intimidation. 149- Every member of unlawful assembly guilty of offence committed in prosecution of common object.
10.	SDJM, Berhampur	G.R.156/2008 Out of P.S. Case No.04/2008 dt.27.02.2008 Berhampur G.R.P.S, Dist: Ganjam	Awaiting appearance after charge sheet	143-Unlawful assembly. 341-Punishment for wrongful restraint. 149- Every member of unlawful assembly guilty of offence committed in prosecution of common object. 147 Railway Act-Trespass and refusal to desist from trespass. 174 Railway Act-Obstructing running of train etc.

FORMAT C - 2

(For political party to publish in website, newspapers, TV)

Declaration about criminal antecedents of candidates set up by the party

(As per the judgement dated 25th September, 2018 of Hon'ble Supreme Court in WP) (Civil) No. 536 of 2011 (Public Interest Foundation & Ors.Vs. Union of India & Anr.)

Name of Political Party : COMMUNIST PARTY OF INDIA (MARXIST)

*Name of Election : SIMULTANEOUS GENERAL ELECTION, 2024

Name of State/ODISHA

Sl. No	2 Name of Constituency	3 Name of Candidate	4 (A) Pending criminal cases	5 (B) Details about cases of conviction for criminal offences
1.	14- BONAI (ST) A.C.	Laxman Munda	G.R No- 489 of 2021, DJM, BONAI. U/S 147, 448, 341, 363, 149 of IPC Demonstration in front of DDM office, Koida for work employment	NIL
2.			G.R No- 488 of 2021, DJM, BONAI. U/S 188, 269, 234, of IPC Demonstration in front of DDM office, Koida	NIL
3.			RMC case No- 1/2020 of UK BEHERA JMFC, RKL. U/S 145, 147, 174-A of RLY Act Demonstration on PUBLIC RLY ISSUE	NIL
4.			RMC case No- 2/2019 of UK BEHERA JMFC, RKL. U/S 145-B, 147 of RLY Act Demonstration on PUBLIC RLY ISSUE	NIL
5.			RMC case No- 1/2019 of UK BEHERA JMFC, RKL. U/S145,147,174-A of RLY Act Demonstration on PUBLIC RLY ISSUE	NIL
6.			GR No-454 of 2018, SDJM, BONAI. U/S 143, 149, 186, 283, 341 of IPC DEMONSTRATION ON PUBLIC ISSUE	NIL
7.			GR NO-50 OF 2018, SRI UK BEHERA, JMFC, RKL. U/S143, 448, 341, 294, 427, 186, 353, 506 & 34 OF IPC DEMONSTRATION AT DDM, KOIDA, FOR OPENING CLOSED MINES	NIL
8.			GR NO-49 OF 2018, SDJM, BONAI. U/S143, 448, 341, 294, 427, 186, 353, 506, 149 OF IPC, 3 P.D.P.P ACT, 7Cr LA ACT DEMONSTRATION FOR OPENING CLOSED MINES	NIL
9.			RMC CASE NO-9/2018 OF UK BEHERA, JMFC, RKL. U/S145-B, 147, 147-A OF RLY ACT, DEMONSTRATION ON PUBLIC RLY ISSUE	NIL
10.			RMC CASE NO-3/2018 OF UK BEHERA, JMFC, RKL. U/S 145A, 147,174-A OF RLY ACT, AGITATION REGARDING PUBLIC RLY ISSUE	NIL
11.			GR NO-560 OF 2017, SDJM, BONAI. U/S143, 149, 186, 283, 294 & 34 OF IPC DEMONSTRATION AT BHASKAR STEEL AGAINST POLLUTION & FOR EMPLOYMENT	NIL
12.			GR NO 522 OF 2017, SDJM, BONAI. U/S143, 149, 283, 341, OF IPC DEMONSTRATION AT BHASKAR STEEL AGAINST POLLUTION & FOR EMPLOYMENT	NIL
13.			GR NO.91 OF 2017, JMFC (R) RKL. U/S147, 148, 149, 294, 307, 341, 323, 324, 325, 427, 506 & 120-B OF IPC DEMONSTRATION AT BIMALAGARH RLY SIDING FOR EMPLOYMENT	NIL
14.			RMC CASE NO. 8/2017 OF UK BEHERA JMFC, RKL. U/S 145, 147, 174-A OF RLY ACT AGITATION AT RLY STATION FOR REPAIRING N.H. 215/520	NIL
15.			RMC CASE NO 5/2017 UK BEHERA JMFC, RKL. U/S174-A, 147, 145 OF RLY ACT AGITATION AT ROXY RLY STATION FOR REPAIR OF N.H. 215/520	NIL
16.			RMC CASE NO 4/2017 UK BEHERA JMFC, RKL. U/S 174-A, 147, 145 OF RLY ACT AGITATION AT PSJ RLY STATION FOR REPAIRING OF N.H. 215/520	NIL
17.			RMC CASE NO 3/2017 OF UK BEHERA JMFC, RKL. U/S 174-A, 147, 145 OF RLY ACT AGITATION AT PSJ RLY STATION FOR REPAIRING OF N.H. 215/520	NIL
18.			PS CASE NO. 11 OF 2016, BNDM GRPS, DIST- SUNDAR-GARH. U/S 143, 149 & 34 OF IPC & 174 OF IR ACT DEMONSTRATION DEMANDING TALCHER-BIMALAGARH RLY LINE	NIL
19.			PS CASE NO 21 OF 2014 BNDM, GRPS, DIST- SUNDAR-GARH. U/S 143, 341, 283, 149, 146, 147 OF IPC & 174 OF RLY ACT DEMONSTRATION DEMANDING TALCHER-BIMALAGARH RLY LINE	NIL
20.			RMC CASE NO.8/2013 OF UK BEHERA, JMFC, RKL. U/S 174-A OF RLY ACT DEMONSTRATION ON PUBLIC RLY ISSUE	NIL

Sd./- Aii Kishor Patnaik, Secretary Communist Party of India (Marxist Odisha State Committee)

When we have passed beyond knowings, then we shall have Knowledge.

SRI AUROBINDO



AI For Resilient Cities

The cities that some 4.4 billion people call home are increasingly at risk of catastrophic climate-driven events. Rising sea levels and flooding threaten coastal megacities like New York City and Jakarta, and extreme heat waves, like those that afflict cities across South Asia and the Middle East each year, are projected to become more frequent and severe.

While our built environments and infrastructure are being tested by unpredictable weather and changing populations, many urban communities are facing heightened climate-related health and economic risks. Dangers such as air pollution and natural disasters can be especially acute in developing countries, where they threaten to drive more people into poverty.

At the same time, cities contribute disproportionately to the broader challenges we face today. Cities already account for an estimated 70 per cent of global carbon dioxide emissions and 78 per cent of energy consumption, and these figures could grow in an urbanising world. According to UN-Habitat, the share of people living in urban areas is expected to increase to 68 per cent by 2050.

Clearly, cities will play a central role in how the world addresses climate change. One factor that could give cities much-needed support and unlock opportunities for building greater resilience is artificial intelligence. If developed and deployed responsibly and ethically, AI could potentially accelerate urban climate solutions, enable science-based and sustainable development, and deliver innovation at an unprecedented pace, allowing us to put the most vulnerable communities first.

But the first step is to improve our understanding of AI's many potential applications as a tool for resilient cities. For example, the challenge of handling vast amounts of data is a major obstacle to modeling future climate scenarios accurately and making informed planning decisions. Fortunately, through the power of AI, foundation models and geospatial analytics could help us visualise our cities in a new way.

Consider the metropolitan areas facing severe and changing weather patterns. With real-time and historical climate data and AI-powered predictive capabilities, governments could introduce new tools for disaster response and readiness. Everyone, from ordinary citizens to those tasked with protecting and maintaining critical infrastructure, could be better informed and prepared.

AI also has the potential to help make city operations more sustainable at every level, thus reducing cities' outside emissions and environmental impact. Intelligent software applications could integrate AI to analyse buildings' energy usage, water consumption, and waste management, providing insights that allow communities and organisations to make more responsible decisions about sustainability.

Moreover, with the addition of connected devices to drive in-depth data collection, safety measures such as urban infrastructure maintenance could be more effective and efficient than ever before. Think of all the bridges and roadways threatened by unprecedented weather events. When combined with AI, the uses of data extend far beyond basic monitoring and reporting.

Nor will AI's urban applications stop there. The technology has the potential to optimise public transportation and traffic planning to achieve more sustainable urban transit. It could help to identify the best locations for expanding much-needed green space, while also preserving urban biodiversity and natural resources.

Governments, public-service providers, and nonprofits alike have growing opportunities to access and explore AI tools, such as through requests for proposals and pro-bono programmes, like those offered by IBM. However, recent research shows that while 69 per cent of cities are already exploring or testing the uses of generative AI, only 2 per cent are implementing it. As IBM's Chief Impact Officer, I know that access to technology and the skills required to use it effectively can be major obstacles to implementation. The need for greater access becomes all the more urgent when one considers the unequal distribution of climate-driven threats. Within our cities, problems like air pollution and a lack of access to clean energy disproportionately affect the poorest and most vulnerable residents. These are the communities that have the most to gain from AI.

We all have a responsibility to make AI solutions support vulnerable populations. That means providing equal access to climate tools, supporting training in AI and related skills, and creating programmes designed to respond to the specific needs of historically marginalised urban populations. Upskilling, especially, will play a key role in accelerating vulnerable communities' adoption of climate-mitigation and adaptation tools. The private sector can do its part by forming partnerships with public agencies and working closely with organisations that are already engaged in supporting vulnerable communities.

By embracing AI and putting it to work in the fight against climate change, we can help make our cities safer, more adaptable, and more sustainable. The technology to give people the tools to anticipate, address, and recover from climate-driven events is here. But it is up to all of us - communities, governments, and companies - to put it to the best possible use.

The writer is Vice President and Chief Impact Officer at IBM.
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WISDOM CORNER

In oneself lies the whole world and if you know how to look and learn, the door is there and the key is in your hand. Nobody on earth can give you either the key or the door to open, except yourself.
JIDDU KRISHNAMURTI

Beauty is the only thing that time cannot harm. Philosophies fall away like sand, creeds follow one another, but what is beautiful is a joy for all seasons, a possession for all eternity.
OSCAR WILDE

Every particular in nature, a leaf, a drop, a crystal, a moment of time is related to the whole, and partakes of the perfection of the whole.
RALPH WALDO EMERSON

THIS DAY IN HISTORY

■ **1936:** Seven months after invading Ethiopia and driving Emperor Haile Selassie I into exile, Italy annexed Ethiopia as part of Italian East Africa. He was the emperor of Ethiopia from 1930 to 1974 who sought to modernise his country and who steered it into the mainstream of post-World War II African politics. He brought Ethiopia into the League of Nations and the United Nations and made Addis Ababa the major centre for the Organization of African Unity (now African Union).

GLOBAL RISE, REGIONAL FALL

FOCUS DIPLOMACY

The government of Maldives, the archipelago country, has urged India to encourage tourists to visit their country. Maldivian President Mohamed Muizzu has urged Indian Prime Minister Modi that his country's economy depends on tourism and therefore India should continue to be a part of Maldivian tourism sector. Likewise, Maldivian Tourism Minister Ibrahim Faisal in an interview on 6 May has highlighted the historical relations between the two countries and has invited the Indian nationals to visit his country to vitalise its faltering economy.



DK Giri

THE QUESTION IS, IF INDIA STICKS TO ITS STRATEGIC AUTONOMY, HOW WILL IT BALANCE THE MISMATCH BETWEEN ITS REGIONAL AND GLOBAL INFLUENCES?

Maldivian concern about depletion of Indian tourists is being expressed against the backdrop of increased geopolitical tensions between the two countries. It started with election of 'pro-China' President Muizzu who asked for Indian Army personnel to be relocated away from Maldives. The dilution of India-Maldives bilateral relations is indicative of India's decline as a regional power, while India is growing globally. This simultaneous as well as contrarian development in India's foreign policy presents a paradox.

India's global rise is explained by its growth in absolute power, strategic positioning, economic growth in GDP terms, military strength and its largest demography, particularly the youth population. India's membership of strategic groupings like Quad, G20, even BRICS and SCO plus the invitation to G7 marks its global growth. At the same time, India seems to be struggling to retain its influence in the neighbourhood in the face of an aggressive and expansive China. Because of the obvious asymmetry in strength between the two countries India is experiencing a decline of relative power, in regard to China.

Paradoxically, the factors that cause the decline of India's regional influence are the ones that contribute to its growth as global power. I am referring to the withdrawal of America and



In comparison to China, India has greater soft power which New Delhi must deploy. This should be done not as a bully or a big brother in the region but as an unoffending friendly country

Western countries from South Asia and shifting their focus to Indo-Pacific region. This has left the space open to Chinese penetration into the region. In the face of competition from China, as said before, due to lesser economic strength, New Delhi is unable to maintain its hegemony in the neighbourhood. One Nepalese ambassador to India admitted frankly in a seminar that China has quite a bit of surplus money which countries in South Asia are seeking to tap into.

Withdrawal of the West from South Asia also has made India the focus of attention as a counterweight to China. Although New Delhi is cautiously moving between America and its allies and China-Russia axis, the West would like India to be a strategic ally. Unsure of America's un-wavering commitment to India vis-à-vis China, New Delhi has not cast the die. But surely, the West courting India is propelling the latter's global rise. The question is, if India sticks to its strategic autonomy, how will it balance the mismatch between its regional and global influences?

Let us probe India's fraying relations with the tiny archipelago, Maldives. Quite a few observers suggest that the rupture in the relations is not because of Muizzu's tilt towards China, it is largely how New Delhi is reacting to this. Before Muizzu, other leaders followed an India First

Policy but Muizzu changed it to Maldives First. As said before, countries in South Asia would like to exploit to their advantage the growing rivalry in the region between India and China. When Muizzu asked India to withdraw her forces, Govt of India reacted strongly. Muizzu also decided not to renew the agreement with India on a hydrographic survey of its waters. However, the tweet by Prime Minister Modi extolling the tourist potential of Lakshadweep vis-à-vis Maldives dramatically changed the people-to-people perceptions. This hit Maldives below the belt. What was worse were the unworthy personal comments made by two of Muizzu's ministers on Prime Minister Modi. The social media reacted to it very strongly to the point of boycotting Maldives. It was perhaps an overreaction as those ministers were promptly removed from the Cabinet. Not only that, Muizzu has been losing to his opponents after his apparent anti-India posturing. In fact, there have been protests by the Opposition in Maldives that warm relations with India should be restored forthwith.

Maldives is the smallest country in South Asia and India is the largest. The relations between two countries signify the conduct of Maldives on how to deal with the biggest country in the neighbourhood. But the onus lies more on India as New Delhi should be wary of giving an in-

feriority complex to Maldives. Despite the difference in size, both countries need each other in their mutual interest.

Maldives works as a 'toll gate' for nearly half of India's external trade and 80 per cent of its energy imports. Maldives is situated along the crucial maritime trade routes between the Gulf of Aden and the Strait of Malacca. Maldives is also strategically located in the Indian Ocean and is therefore, of great interest to India. Maldives can counterbalance China's growing influence in the Indian Ocean on behalf of India.

Likewise, Maldives needs India for various critical reasons. India is the main supplier of essential commodities, provides a base for education of a number of Maldivians. India is the second largest trade partner of Maldives. For Maldives, India has been the main responder; be it the coup attempt in 1988 which made the Indian forces intervene under the code 'Operation Cactus', or the Tsunami disaster in 2004. India was the first country to send relief assistance. In 2014, Male had drinking water crisis as a major desalination plant broke down, India overnight air lifted drinking water to the islands. During the pandemic, India sent essential medical supplies.

In comparison to China, India has greater soft power which New Delhi must deploy. This should be done not as a bully or a big brother in the region but as an unoffending friendly country despite huge difference in size and strength.

The track-II diplomacy consisting of cultural exchange, education collaboration and business promotion is the best way forward. The myth that foreign policy objectives can be met by the Ministry of External Affairs alone has to be busted. In so doing, India can resolve the contradiction between her global rise and local decline.

The writer is Secretary General, Association for Democratic Socialism. ©INFA

SPECTRUM PHILADELPHIA DECLARATION

Labour is not a commodity

Emphasising the inherent dignity of labour and the essential role of work in fostering human well-being and placing human beings at the centre of economic and social development with a call for policies and practices that prioritise the welfare of workers and their families, the Philadelphia Declaration, adopted by the International Labour Organization on 10 May, 1944 asserts, inter alia that labour is not a commodity to be bought and sold but rather a means through which individuals can realise their potential and contribute to the common good of society.

In the global discourse surrounding economics and commerce, the notion of labour as a mere commodity has persistently lingered. However, reducing labour to a commodity overlooks the intrinsic human dignity and complexity intertwined with work. While conventional economic theories often treat labour as a factor of production, it will be more appropriate to say that labour transcends the boundaries of commodity exchange and embodies multifaceted dimensions that encompass personal identity, social relation-

ships, and societal progress. At its core, labour is not solely an economic transaction but a fundamental human expression. It is the manifestation of individual skills, talents, and aspirations. Each person brings unique experiences and capabilities to their work, shaping the character and quality of their contributions. From the artisan crafting a masterpiece to the scientist unravelling the mysteries of the universe, labour is an avenue for individuals to realise their potential and make meaningful contributions to society. Moreover, work often serves as a source of personal fulfilment and self-actualisation. Through labour, individuals derive a sense of purpose, accomplishment, and identity. Whether it be through creative endeavours, intellectual pursuits, or service-oriented professions, work forms an integral part of an individual's self-concept and satisfaction.

Beyond its individual dimensions, labour also fosters social relationships and solidarity within communities. Workplaces serve as hubs of social interaction where individuals collaborate, communicate, and forge bonds

with colleagues. Through shared goals and collective endeavours, labour cultivates a sense of belonging and cohesion among workers, contributing to the fabric of social capital within societies. Moreover, labour enables individuals to contribute to the well-being of others and the broader community. Whether through providing essential services, producing goods for societal needs, or engaging in philanthropic efforts, work serves as a conduit for advancing the common good. This interconnectedness highlights the interdependence of individuals and underscores the notion that labour transcends mere commodity exchange by fostering reciprocal relationships and collective flourishing.

Central to the argument against treating labour as a commodity is the recognition of the inherent dignity and rights of workers. Labour is not a fungible resource to be bought and sold at will but entails the respect for individuals' autonomy, well-being, and fair treatment. Upholding labour rights encompasses ensuring safe working conditions, fair wages, and equitable opportunities for advancement. Furthermore, view-

ing labour as a commodity risks perpetuating exploitative practices and inequalities within the labour market. From sweatshops to precarious employment arrangements, commodifying labour can lead to the devaluation of human worth and the erosion of workers' rights. Therefore, safeguarding the dignity and rights of workers necessitates acknowledging the multifaceted nature of labour and rejecting its reduction to a mere commodity.

By recognising labour as more than a commodity, societies can strive towards fostering environments that uphold the dignity, rights, and well-being of workers. Moving beyond narrow economic paradigms, embracing a holistic understanding of labour is imperative for building more inclusive, equitable, and humane societies. In this context, despite being adopted in 1944, the Philadelphia Declaration remains profoundly significant in today's world.

The writer is General Secretary, Confederation of Central Govt. Employees and Workers, Odisha State Coordination Committee.



Bruhaspati Samal

AT ITS CORE, LABOUR IS NOT SOLELY AN ECONOMIC TRANSACTION BUT A FUNDAMENTAL HUMAN EXPRESSION

Juvenile delinquency

Sir, The Chief Justice of India DY Chandrachud, in the course of his address at a symposium in Nepal, highlighted the three causes of juvenile delinquency: economic disparity, poverty and domestic violence. Lack of parental guidance and peer pressure are documented offshoots for juveniles to go astray. The all-important family buffer system has become diluted thanks to domestic instabilities. Deprivation of a proper childhood, and the consequent physical and mental abuse, are known factors that lead to juvenile crimes worldwide, India not excluded. Child marriages and child labour are causes and consequences of juvenile crimes. A fragile criminal justice system and unplugged loopholes in justice dispensation have emboldened the country's youngsters. As Justice Chandrachud told the galaxy of legal luminaries at Kathamandu, a "holistic" approach based on deprivation and poverty is needed to curb juvenile delinquency.
Ganapathi Bhat, AKOLA

PLI underperformance

Sir, The Production Linked Incentive (PLI) scheme initiated by the Indian government to bolster domestic manufacturing, has encountered significant challenges in achieving its investment targets. With a projected outlay of ₹1.97 lakh crore over a five-year period, the scheme aimed to attract ₹50,000 crore in investments across 14 sectors in the fiscal year 2023-24. However, an official report reveals a shortfall, with only ₹30,000 crore secured in the first nine months. This underperformance is particularly evident in sectors such as automobiles, textiles, ACC batteries, specialty steel, white goods, and medical devices. To address the challenges facing the PLI scheme, it is imperative to consider strategies that extend benefits to all stakeholders involved in the manufacturing ecosystem. One potential approach is to incentivise not only the manufacturers but also the companies contracting them, such as Apple and Foxconn. By providing direct benefits to both parties based on their contribution to increased production within India, the scheme can create stronger incentives for investment and expansion. Additionally, restructuring the PLI budget to prioritise higher value-addition activities within the country could further incentivise manufacturers, encouraging them to invest more in advanced technologies and processes that contribute to the local economy.
Amarjeet Kumar, HAZARIBAGH

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

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EMPOWERING 'VOTERS OF TOMORROW'

Haryana launches initiative for kids

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Chandigarh, May 9: To increase voter turnout in the Lok Sabha elections slated May 25 in Haryana, the Chief Electoral Officer's office recently launched a new initiative involving school-children, who will be rewarded with cash prizes.

Under this initiative, children will be encouraged to motivate their parents to vote, and on the voting day, they will be required to upload a selfie of their family members after the voting.

At the district level, cash prizes of Rs 10,000, Rs 5,000, and Rs 2,500 will be awarded to the first, second, and third winners by conducting a draw of lots.

Chief Electoral Officer Anurag Agarwal said under this initiative, the school having the maximum number of selfies uploaded by their students will also be awarded a special prize



of Rs 25,000. A link has been developed on the <https://www.ceo-haryana.gov.in/> portal for uploading selfies, which will be available on the voting day, i.e., May 25.

The link for uploading selfies will be open for children along with voting from 7 a.m. until 8 p.m. Agarwal said the aim of this initiative is not only to increase voter turnout but also to make schoolchildren, who will be future voters, aware of their voting rights. The Chief Electoral Officer said more than two crore registered voters in Haryana, including 1,06,34,532 men, 94,06,357 women, and 464 transgender.

BSP friends change parties, turn foes

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Lucknow, May 9: Old friends in Uttar Pradesh have turned foes and are now battling against each other in the Lok Sabha elections.

Their friendship dates back to the days when they were members of the Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) but after their ouster from BSP, they have taken different paths and are now pitted against each other.

In Ambedkar Nagar, the sitting BSP MP Ritesh Pandey has joined the BJP and is now the BJP candidate here. His main rival is Lalji Varma from the Samajwadi Party (SP). Lalji Varma, till about two years ago, was one of the most important leaders in the BSP after Mayawati. He was the leader of the legislature party and was one of Mayawati's most trusted lieutenants. It is hard to say what went wrong and why Lalji Varma was suddenly expelled from the party. He joined SP and became MLA from the Katehri assembly segment. SP has now fielded him from the



Ambedkar Nagar Lok Sabha seat where he is pitted against Ritesh Pandey.

Pandey won his first Lok Sabha election on a BSP ticket in 2019. He was even made the leader of the BSP parliamentary party but things soured and Ritesh joined BJP. His father Rakesh Pandey, SP MLA from Jalalpur, has also shifted loyalties to BJP.

The two leaders who once held the BSP blue flag together are now holding the saffron (BJP) and green (SP) flags separately. A similar situation can be seen in Jaunpur where leaders from BSP are facing each other. Babu Singh Kushwaha, a former BSP minister, once en-

joyed a position in the party that no one else can boast of having ever enjoyed. However, when things started souring, he left the party and is now contesting the Jaunpur Lok Sabha seat on a Samajwadi Party ticket.

Pitted against him is the sitting BSP MP Shyam Singh Yadav. Yadav, disillusioned by BSP, was frequently seen accompanying Rahul Gandhi during the latter's Bharat Jodo Nyay Yatra when it entered UP.

Aware of his 'activities', Mayawati announced the Lok Sabha ticket for Shrikala Dhananjay Singh, wife of former MP and mafia don Dhananjay Singh.

Loyalties, like the fragrance of Ittar, last long in Kannauj

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Kannauj (UP), May 9: 'Ittar', a non-alcohol based perfume, is known for being long-lasting and loyalties in Kannauj, the nation's Ittar hub, also last long.

Former Uttar Pradesh (UP) CM, Akhilesh Yadav is contesting against Subrat Pathak, the sitting BJP MP, who defeated Dimple Yadav in 2019. Pathak says that ex-CM Akhilesh's entry has not made any difference to his prospects. He says the election has only become like "a World Cup cricket match between India and Pakistan" where the result is already known to all.

He is confident that the work done by the double engine governments will ensure a smooth victory for the BJP. SP chief Akhilesh's presence in the fray, meanwhile, has enthused the party cadres. The SP office in Sadar area is buzzing with activity as motorcycles whizz in and out. Dimple Yadav and daughter Aditi Yadav are now campaigning for Akhilesh in



Kannauj. Prabal Pratap Singh, party in-charge for Kannauj Assembly constituency, says, "The excitement of voters and workers here speaks for itself. This time we are winning with a huge margin."

Publicity vans are being sent out to all corners of the constituency and young men can be seen carrying bundles of campaign material for distribution among voters.

Others are busy cross-checking the details of voters at every booth. The constituency has over 19 lakh voters, with Muslims accounting for around 3 lakh and Brahmins and Yadavs being slightly more than 2.5 lakh each.

Dalits, who constitute the biggest chunk with a population of over 4 lakh, may play a decisive role.

HARYANA CRISIS

JJP writes to Guv, seeks 'immediate' floor test

THE CONGRESS, WHICH HAD EARLIER DEMANDED THE IMPOSITION OF PRESIDENT'S RULE AND EARLY ASSEMBLY ELECTIONS IN THE STATE, ALSO SOUGHT TIME FROM THE GOVERNOR FOR A MEETING WITH A PARTY DELEGATION, THE CONGRESS SAID

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Chandigarh, May 9: JJP leader Dushyant Chautala has written to Haryana Governor Bandaru Dattatreya, saying the BJP government no longer commands a majority and sought an immediate floor test.

Three Independent MLAs withdrew their support to the Saini government, reducing it to a minority in the state Assembly. They said they are now backing the Congress.

"It is evident that the BJP government in Haryana no longer commands a majority," former Deputy Chief Minister and Jannayak Janta Party (JJP) leader Chautala said in his letter to the governor Wednesday. However, Chief Minister Nayab Singh Saini maintained that his government is not in trouble.

He told reporters in Karnal Thursday that his government won



a confidence vote in March and "if it comes to seeking the trust vote, I will do it again when the time comes". "You ask Dushyant Chautala how many MLAs he has got," he said, challenging the claim that his government has lost the majority in the House.

His predecessor M L Khattar claimed that many MLAs are in touch with the BJP and there is "nothing to worry about". In the letter, Chautala drew Dattatreya's attention to the "current political turmoil in the state" and urged him to direct the appropriate authority to immediately call for a floor test.

JJP's former ally JJP had told reporters Wednesday that it is ready to help the Congress topple the government.

Independent MLAs Sombir Sangwan (Dadri), Randhir Singh Gollen (Pundri) and Dharampal Gonder (Nilokheri) withdrew support to the ruling BJP in Haryana Tuesday. The 90-member Haryana assembly at present has an effective strength of 88 with Karnal and

Rania assembly seats being vacant. The BJP has 40 MLAs, the Congress 30 and the JJP 10. The Indian National Lok Dal and Haryana Lokhit Party have one member. There are six Independents. Chautala wrote that after the Saini government demonstrated its majority in the Vidhan Sabha with the support of several Independent MLAs, Independent legislator Ranjit Singh Chautala resigned.

Given these developments, including the withdrawal of support by the three Independents, it is evident that the incumbent government no longer commands a majority in the assembly, Chautala said. Referring to Article 174 of the Constitution, the JJP leader said that the article "confers upon the Governor the authority to summon, prorogue, and dissolve the legislative assembly".

"The court emphasised that a Governor has a constitutional obligation to act judiciously and impartially in such matters and can call for a floor test to determine a government's majority," he said in the letter.

Considering the gravity of the current circumstances and the "urgent need to reinstate stability and uphold democratic norms in Haryana", Chautala urged the Governor to invoke his constitutional prerogative as per Article 174. Calling for an "immediate floor test", the JJP leader said, if the government fails to do so, it is essential for the Governor to fulfil his constitutional duty by imposing President's Rule in the state. On Wednesday, Chautala had urged the Congress to take steps to bring down the Saini government.

'Cast vote, flaunt inked finger to get discounts in multiplex'



INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Gurugram, May 9: The Gurugram district administration has come up with a unique initiative to increase the turnout of voters in the May 25 Lok Sabha polls in the Gurgaon Parliamentary constituency with officials announcing discounts on movie tickets and food items in multiplexes apart from complimentary refreshments.

A single-phase voting will be held in all 10 Lok

A single-phase voting will be held in all 10 Lok Sabha seats in Haryana May 25

Sabha seats in Haryana May 25. An official Wednesday said that all one needs to do is flaunt his/her inked finger on the polling day to get a discount on offline tickets available from the counter or on food and drinks

available on the cinema hall premises.

In this regard, a meeting of representatives of several multiplex chains was held Wednesday which was chaired by Hitesh Kumar Meena, ADC, and nodal officer for the Systematic Voters' Education and Electoral Participation (SVEEP) programme, Gurugram.

"The voters will also get complimentary refreshments in some multiplexes," Meena told the media. He said that all the multiplexes would telecast the message of the District Election Officer and Deputy Commissioner Nishant Kumar Yadav and short films related to voter awareness on the screens.

Recently, the Gurugram district administration has roped in Indian cricketer Yuzvendra Chahal as the 'brand ambassador' to boost voter turnout.

DECLARATION ABOUT CRIMINAL CASES

As per the Judgment dated 25th September, 2018 of Hon'ble Supreme Court in WP (Civil) No. 536 of 2011 (Public Interest Foundation & Ors. Vrs. Union of India & Anr.). Name and address of Candidate: Manoj Kumar Meher, At/PO: Chichaiguda, P.S.: Junagarh, District: Kalahandi, Odisha, PIN - 766014

Name of Political Party: Bharatiya Janata Party

Name of Election: Odisha Legislative Assembly

*Name of Constituency: 78 - Junagarh A/C

I, Manoj Kumar Meher, a candidate for the above mentioned election, declare for public information the following details about my criminal antecedents:

Sl. No.	Pending Criminal Cases			Details about Cases on Conviction for Criminal Offences	
	Name of Court	Case No. and Status of Case	Section(s) of Acts concerned and brief description of offence(s)	Name of Court & Date(s) of Order(s)	Description of Offence(s) & Punishment Imposed
01	J.M.FC-cum-Gramya Nyayalaya, Junagarh	C.T. 366/17 for hearing	U/S-143, 294, 342, 506, 109, 353 and 149 IPC being member of an unlawful assembly, absconding language wrongful confinement to any person, criminal intimidation abetment, assault or use criminal force to deter a public servant from discharge of his duty, if an offence be committed by any member of an unlawful assembly, every other member of such assembly shall be guilty of the offence.	Nil	Nil
02	J.M.FC-I, Bolangir	CT-310/15 for hearing	U/S-143, 283, 149 I.P.C. - Being member of unlawful assembly, cause danger, obstruction, or injury in any public way or line of navigation, if an offence be committed by any members of an unlawful assembly, every other members of such assembly shall be guilty of the offence.	Nil	Nil
03	J.M.FC-I, Balangir	CT-280/13 for hearing	U/S-143, 283, 186, 431, 149 I.P.C. R/W-Section - 7 of Cr. Law Amendment Act - being member of unlawful assembly, cause danger, obstruction or injury in any public way or line of navigation, obstruction public servant in discharge of his public function, Mischief by injury to public road, bridge, navigable, river or channel and rendering it impassable or less safe for travelling or conveying property, if an offence be committed by any member of an unlawful assembly, every other member of such assembly shall be guilty of the offence and 7 of Cr. Law Amendment Act.	Nil	Nil
04	J.M. FC-cum-Gramya Nyayalaya, Junagarh	CT-39/121 for hearing	U/S-143, 283, 506, 149 IPC being member of an unlawful assembly, caused danger obstruction or injury in any public way or line of navigation Criminal.	Nil	Nil
05	JMFC-cum-Gramya Nyayalaya, Junagarh	CT-345/21 for hearing	U/S-143, 283, 506, 149 IPC being member of an unlawful assembly caused danger obstruction or injury in any public way or line of navigation criminal	Nil	Nil
06	JMFC-cum-Gramya Nyayalaya, Junagarh	CT-261/21 for appearance	U/S-341, 323, 506/34 IPC wrongfully, restrained to any person abused obscene songs, causing hurt criminal intimidation with common intention.	Nil	Nil

बैंक ऑफ बड़ोदा
Bank of Baroda

REGIONAL OFFICE (SAMBALPUR REGION),
1st Floor, At: Christian Para, G.M. College Chowk,
Dist.: Sambalpur, Odisha, PIN - 768001, Mob.: 7752050804

E-AUCTION SALE NOTICE

E-Auction Sale Notice for sale of Immovable Assets under the Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest (SARFAESI) Act, 2002 read with provision to Rule 6(2) and 8(6) of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 to be held on 28.05.2024 from 2:00 PM to 6:00 PM

Notice is hereby given to the public in general and in particular to the Borrowers, Co-Borrowers, Mortgagees and Guarantors that the below described Immovable properties Mortgaged/Charged to the Secured Creditor, will be sold on the basis of "CONSTRUCTIVE/ PHYSICAL POSSESSION" of which has been taken by the Authorised Officer of the Bank of Baroda, Secured Creditor, will be sold on "AS IS WHERE IS", "AS IS WHAT IS", and "WHATSOEVER THERE IS" basis for recovery of dues in below mentioned account/s. The details of Borrower/s/Guarantor/s/Secured Asset/s/Dues/Reserve Price/e-Auction date & Time, EMD and Bid Increase Amount are mentioned below-

PROPERTY INSPECTION DATE AND TIME : 24.05.2024 time 11.00 AM to 1.00 PM.
Contact persons - Authorized Officer and Contact No.: VSS MARG, Mob: 7682829040,
Status of Possession of Properties: Physical, Encumbrance Known to Bank - NIL
Last Date of Submission of online payment of EMD : 27.05.2024 latest by 2.00 PM.
The linking of interested property started after 5.00 P.M. on 27.05.2024 till 2.00 P.M. on 28.05.2024,
The scheduled date of Auction to be held on 28.05.2024 from 2.00 P.M. to 6.00 P.M.

Sl. No.	VSS MARG BRANCH / Name & Address of Borrower/Co-Borrower	Description of the Property & the Owner	Reserve Price / EMD / Bid Increase Amount	Total Dues (Type of Possession)
1.	Borrower: Mr. Babul Padhan, S/o.: Krushna Chandra Padhan/ Co-Borrower: Mrs. Mando Padhan, W/o.: Krushna Chandra Padhan, Both are At/Village/PO.: Tabla, PS.: Sason, Dist.: Sambalpur, PIN - 768200	Equitable Mortgage of Land & Building measuring Area: Ac.0.020 Dec, situated at Khata No.: 498/281, Plot No.: 1764, Mouza: Tabla, Tahasil: Maneswar, Dist.: Sambalpur(Odisha), standing in the name of Mrs. Mando Padhan, W/o.: Krushna Chandra Padhan, At/PO.: Tabla, P.S.: Sason, Dist.: Sambalpur, Bounded by North: Kupan Padhan, South: Road, East: Mando Padhan, West: Ratu Padhan	₹5,50,000/- ₹55,000/- ₹20,000/-	₹ 7,81,238/- plus further interest and charges, legal expenses thereon from 07.05.2024 till full payment (Physical)

For detailed terms and conditions of sale, please refer to the link provided in <https://www.bankofbaroda.com/e-auction.htm> and <https://fbai.in>

Also prospective bidders may contact the Authorized Officer on Mob:7752050804/7682829040

STATUTORY 15 DAYS SALE NOTICE TO THE BORROWER/GUARANTOR/MORTGAGOR FOR SUBSEQUENT SALE UNDER RULE 6(2), 8(6) AND 9(1) AS PER AMENDED SARFAESI ACT 2002

This may also be treated as notice under rule 6(2), 8(6) AND 9(1) of security interest (Enforcements) Rules, 2002 to the Borrowers / Guarantors of the said loan about holding of E-Auction sale on the above mentioned date

Place: Sambalpur, Date: 09.05.2024

Authorised Officer, Bank of Baroda

Scan here for more details

EAST COAST RAILWAY
SUPPLY OF MATERIALS

E-Tender Notice No. Sr. DMM/SBP/Stores/
Tender Publication/2024, Date : 06.05.2024

1) Tender No. 40245388:
DESCRIPTION OF ITEM : DESIGN, SUPPLY, INSTALLATION, TESTING & COMMISSIONING OF VERTICAL TURBINE PUMP ETC.

Tender Value (₹) : 25,54,532.44, EMD @ 2% (₹) : 51,090.00.
Tender Closing Time and Date : 1500 Hrs. of 27.05.2024.

2) Tender No. 40245402:
DESCRIPTION OF ITEM : SUPPLY & COMMISSIONING OF SET OF RAILING EQUIPMENT ETC.

Tender Value (₹) : 40,50,163.56, EMD @ 2% (₹) : 81,000.00.
Tender Closing Time and Date : 1500 Hrs. of 29.05.2024.

Complete information including tender documents is available in website : <https://www.irops.gov.in>.

Senior Divisional Materials Manager / PR-99/P/24-25 Sambalpur

EAST COAST RAILWAY
Tender Notice No. 07/ET/SBP/ENGG/2024-25
Dated : 03.05.2024

1) e-Tender No. 05-eT-DENS-SBP-24
NAME OF WORK : MAINTENANCE OF TRACK BY FIXING ALIGNMENT RETAINERS ON GIRDER BRIDGES WITH STEEL CHANNEL SLEEPERS UNDER SAMBALPUR DIVISION.
Approx. Cost of the Work (₹): 3,35,10,520.80, EMD(₹): 3,17,600.00

2) e-Tender No. 05-eT-DENE-SBP-24
NAME OF WORK : EXECUTION OF PWAY RELATED WORKS VIZ. 1. JHARSUGUDA ROAD - KEREJANGA - TTR(TWS) - 55 SETS, TTR(CMSC) - 53 SETS, TTR (FS + TWS + WCMSC) - 1 SET, SEJ - 14 SETS & GLUED JOINTS - 94 NOS 2. JUJUMURA - KEREJANGA - TBR (TURNOUTS) - 9, 515 T/Km 3. JHARSUGUDA ROAD - SAMBALPUR. SEJ RENEWAL - 16 SETS UNDER JURISDICTION OF DIVISIONAL ENGINEER EAST IN SAMBALPUR DIVISION.
Approx. Cost of the Work (₹): 1,46,36,897.56, EMD(₹): 2,23,200.00

3) e-Tender No. 02-eT-SDENC-SBP-24
NAME OF WORK : MISCELLANEOUS P.WAY FOR REPAIR AND MAINTENANCE WORKS IN (588.000 - 637.438) - ATTABIRA (Ex) - DUNGIRPALI (Ex) SECTION UNDER THE JURISDICTION OF SENIOR SECTION ENGINEER (PWAY) BARGARH ROAD OF SAMBALPUR DIVISION.
Approx. Cost of the Work (₹): 1,64,45,258.46, EMD(₹): 2,32,300.00

4) e-Tender No. 03-eT-SDENC-SBP-24
NAME OF WORK : MISCELLANEOUS PWAY FOR REPAIR AND MAINTENANCE WORKS IN (556.500 - 588.000) - SARLA (Ex) - ATTABIRA (In) SECTION UNDER THE JURISDICTION OF SENIOR SECTION ENGINEER (PWAY)/SAMBALPUR OF SAMBALPUR DIVISION.
Approx. Cost of the Work (₹): 1,65,97,747.56, EMD(₹): 2,33,000.00

5) e-Tender No. 04-eT-SDENC-SBP-24
NAME OF WORK : MISCELLANEOUS PWAY FOR REPAIR AND MAINTENANCE WORKS IN (677.368 - 701.00) - BALANGIR (In) - DEOGAON ROAD (In) & BALANGIR - SONEPUR SECTION UNDER THE JURISDICTION OF SENIOR SECTION ENGINEER (PWAY) / BALANGIR OF SAMBALPUR DIVISION.
Approx. Cost of the Work (₹): 1,69,98,695.90, EMD(₹): 2,35,000.00

6) e-Tender No. 05-eT-SDENC-SBP-24
NAME OF WORK : MISCELLANEOUS PWAY FOR REPAIR AND MAINTENANCE WORKS IN (637.438 - 677.368) - DUNGIRPALI (In) - BALANGIR (Ex) SECTION UNDER THE JURISDICTION OF SENIOR SECTION ENGINEER (PWAY) / LOISINGHA OF SAMBALPUR DIVISION.
Approx. Cost of the Work (₹): 1,42,98,996.60, EMD(₹): 2,21,500.00

Completion Period for the work (For all the tender): 12 (Twelve) Months
Tender Closing Date and Time: At 1500 Hrs. on 27.05.2024 (for all the tenders).

No manual offers sent by Post / Courier/ Fax or in person shall be accepted against such e-tenders even if these are submitted on firm's letter head and received in time. All such manual offers shall be rejected summarily without any consideration. Complete information including e-tender documents of the above e-tender is available in website : <https://www.irops.gov.in>

Notice : The prospective tenderers are advised to revisit the website 15 (Fifteen) days before the date of closing of tender to note any changes / corrigenda issued for this tender.

Divisional Railway Manager (Engg) / PR-97/P/24-25 Sambalpur



Over 800 members of various political parties join BJD at a merger meeting held in Patana of Keonjhar district in the presence of party's Patana Assembly nominee Jagannath Naik and Keonjhar Lok Sabha nominee Dhanurajya Siddhu, Thursday



Kudagaon sarpanch and Congress leader Siddharth Kheta and his supporters from Athamallik in Angul district join BJD in the presence of Union Minister Dharmendra Pradhan at a merger meeting held in Sambalpur

Gadkari campaigns in Puri, plays devt card

AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, May 9: Union Minister Nitin Gadkari, who campaigned for BJP candidates in Puri Lok Sabha and Brahmagiri Assembly segments Thursday, unveiled plans for significant infrastructural development projects including an airport in Paradip and a six-lane ring road here.

Gadkari announced the decision to establish an airport in Paradip with an investment of Rs 200 crore and initiate work on the 11-km 6-lane Bhubaneswar ring road costing Rs 6,500 crore in October.

Addressing an election meeting at Krushnaprasad on the banks of Chilika Lake in Puri district, Gadkari also pledged to construct a road from Tangli to Digha.

"Due to Chilika Lake and the wetland, there is missing link between Gopalpur and Satpada. For this, people still depend on boats for transportation. Between NH-516 A and NH-316 A, a road will be constructed. Authorities have been told to prepare a detailed project report (DPR)," he said.

The Union Minister for Road Transport and Highways, however, said, "I would do something for you and you should also do something for me by casting votes in favour of BJP candidate Sambit Patra for Puri Lok



The Union minister announced the decision to establish an airport in Paradip with an investment of ₹200 crore and initiate work on the 11-km 6-lane Bhubaneswar ring road costing ₹6,500 crore in October

Sabha seat and Upasana Mohapatra for Brahmagiri Assembly segment." Asserting that the coastline is Odisha's greatest asset, Gadkari promised projects to boost fishery production and enable local fishermen to earn in dollars. He emphasised the significance of the Bhubaneswar ring road in reducing commute time for residents of Bhubaneswar, Cuttack,

and Khurda. Additionally, Gadkari disclosed plans to commence construction on the proposed 35-km four-lane Greenfield ring road in Sambalpur, costing Rs 1,333 crore, in October. This initiative aims to alleviate traffic congestion between Rourkela and Cuttack. Earlier, Gadkari visited the Srimandir in Puri and offered prayers before attending the election meeting.

BIRAMITRAPUR ASSEMBLY SEAT

INDIA block backing Rajesh may hit BJD's prospects

POST NEWS NETWORK

Rourkela, May 9: Politics in India is a game of stratagem and poll outcomes can never be anybody's guess, if the recent development of INDIA block's announcement to support independent candidate Rajesh Kerketta in Biramitrapur Assembly seat is an indication.

Till Wednesday evening the field was widely divided between BJD and BJP, as predicted by Surin earlier. The Congress and JMM openly declared their support to Rajesh, son of Remis Kerketta, who won the election on a Congress ticket in 1985.

Rajesh had contested once from Rourkela on a Congress



ticket in 2014 and had polled 13,006 votes, a vote share of 8.01 per cent which dipped by 2.01 per cent as compared to the previous election. Rajesh then switched over to BJD and became an active member of the party.

Besides, he remained active in some social organisations and fought for the causes of Biramitrapur. Though Rajesh was a contender for the party ticket in 2019, luck was not in his favour and Makhlu Ekka became BJD's pick.

According to his supporters, Rajesh was camping in Bhubaneswar for more than 50

days and lobbied for BJD ticket but to no avail. "This time he is a rebel independent candidate and is capable of being a spoiler for BJD," said a local scribe.

Rohit Joseph Tirkdy, son of George Tirkey, appears to be a formidable contestant. But if the locals are to be believed, BJD is a divided house in Biramitrapur. And this division is between old members and the George faction. "Nowhere any old timer is seen with George and the latter also doesn't bother to seek their support," said a local, adding that the factionalism will upset BJD's appercart.



BJD's Bijhar Assembly nominee Pramila Mallick filing her nomination papers before the ADM (Revenue) Subhendra Kumar Samal at the district Collectorate in Jajpur, Thursday



Congress' Bhadrak Assembly nominee Asit Patnaik filing his nomination before the sub-collector-cum-returning officer Manoj Patra, Thursday

Will campaign against Kalikesh: Adrija

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bolangir, May 9: Adrija Manjari Singh, the estranged wife of the scion of Bolangir's former royal family Arkesh Narayan Singh Deo, Thursday said she will campaign against her brother-in-law Kalikesh Narayan Singh Deo, who is the BJD candidate for the Assembly polls.

She told a press conference that she was surprised to learn that BJD had given a ticket to a member of the family against whom she had filed a police com-

plaint of domestic violence over dowry last year. "How could CM Naveen Patnaik give a ticket to that family even though he knows that they have tortured me? When I did not get justice what would be happening to those who have suffered a similar fate?" she asked. She said she would travel across the Bolangir Assembly segment, from where Kalikesh has been fielded, and inform the voters about her "ordeal".

Reacting to the statement, her husband claimed that she nar-

rated a script written by Bolangir's Congress MLA Narasingha Mishra, whose son has been fielded this time by the opposition party. "The situation of the Congress is not good and they are going to face defeat. So, to create a negative atmosphere against us, Mishra is doing all these," he alleged. Meanwhile, Mishra said, "As the local MLA, I will extend support to any man or woman of my constituency whenever he or she asks for it."

Pilgrimage for 5L people, if voted to power: Himanta

AGENCIES

Malkangiri, May 9: Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma Thursday said the BJP will ensure free pilgrimage for five lakh people from Odisha to Ayodhya's Ram temple if the party is voted to power in the eastern state.

Addressing an election rally at Kalimela here, the senior BJP leader also took a swipe at the ruling BJD for naming villages with numbers in Malkangiri district. "In Assam, I have decided to take one lakh people to Ayodhya, and the state government will bear the cost. As Odisha is bigger than Assam, five lakh people should get this facility. A new BJP chief minister will facilitate this pilgrimage if the party is voted to power in Odisha," Sarma said.

Sarma also sought to connect



with the large number of Bengali-speaking population in Malkangiri district, assuring the people that Bengali teachers will be appointed, among other promises. About one lakh Bengali-speaking people were rehabilitated in

Malkangiri district after the 1971 Bangladesh war. On names of villages in the district bearing numbers

Sarma also sought to connect with the large number of Bengali-speaking population in Malkangiri district, assuring the people that Bengali teachers will be appointed

Polls slipping out of Modi's hands: Rahul

AGENCIES

New Delhi, May 9: Congress leader Rahul Gandhi claimed Thursday that the Lok Sabha election is gradually slipping out of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's hands and he will now try to enact some drama to divert the attention of the country's youngsters.

In a video message, the former Congress chief urged young people not to get distracted by the prime minister's propaganda and assured them that once the INDIA opposition bloc forms its government June 4, it will start the work to give 30 lakh jobs to them by August 15.

Describing youngsters as the country's strength, Gandhi said the ongoing Lok Sabha polls are slipping out of Modi's hands and he will not be the prime minister anymore. "The polls are going out of



his hands. He is slipping and he will not be India's prime minister. He has decided to divert your attention in the next four-five days and do some kind of drama. But your attention should not be diverted," he said. "The youngsters of the country, the INDIA government is going to be formed June 4 and we guarantee that by August 15, we will start the recruitment process

for 30 lakh vacant government posts. Do not get misled by Narendra Modi's false propaganda, stick to your issues. Listen to INDIA, choose jobs, not hate," Gandhi said in a post in Hindi on X.

He said unemployment is the biggest issue in the country right now and pointed out that Modi had promised that he would give employment to two crore youngsters.

"He told a lie and he did notes ban, implemented a wrong GST (Goods and Services Tax) and worked entirely for people like (industrialist Gautam) Adani. We are bringing the Bharti Bharosa scheme. On June 4, the INDIA government is going to be formed and by August 15, we would start the work to give jobs to 30 lakh youngsters through the Bharti Bharosa scheme," Gandhi said in his video message.

of the day quote

The BJP raises the slogan of 'abki baar 400 paar' but is insecure. That is why it is discussing issues (to attack the Congress) that are not even mentioned in our manifesto. We have said we will give Rs 1 lakh to poor women annually. Now this is something the BJP will not discuss

PRITHVIRAJ CHAVAN | EX- MAHARASHTRA CM

The Muslim population here is sizeable but the SP does not give ticket to Muslims. They do not have time apart from their family and Yadavs have been fielded by the SP family (unko to unkey parivar se hi fursat nahi milti hai ticket dene main, so SP Parivar se Yadav khadey hote)

MAYAWATI | BSP PRESIDENT

The Congress must apologise to the nation for Pitroda's comments

YOGI ADITYANATH | UTTAR PRADESH CM

SHORT TAKES

Man working as spy for Pak held

Bharuch: A man has been arrested in Bharuch district of Gujarat for allegedly spying for a Pakistani intelligence agency, police said Thursday. Pravin Mishra, the accused, had allegedly collected highly confidential information about the Indian Armed Forces and defence-related R&D firms, said the Gujarat Criminal Investigation Department (CID). The CID started its probe following a tip-off from the Military Intelligence, Udhampur. A resident of Ankleshwar in Bharuch district and native of Muzaffarpur in Bihar, Mishra was in contact with a Pakistani intelligence operative through WhatsApp calls and audio chat "to carry out a criminal conspiracy against the country that could have serious security consequences," the CID said in a release.

6 Naxalites surrender

Sukma: Six Naxalites carrying a cumulative bounty of Rs 36 lakh on their heads surrendered in Chhattisgarh's Sukma district Thursday, an official said. Sukma Superintendent of Police Kiran Chavan identified the six as Dudhi Pojja and his wife Dudhi Pojje, Ayate Korsa alias Jayakka, Kawasi Muda, Karam Naranna alias Bhuma and Madkam Sukka alias Rainu.

6 injured in blast

Dehradun: Around six people were injured Thursday in an explosion at a scrap dealer's shop in the Raipur area of the city, police said. The explosion apparently took place when someone was sorting the scrap, according to the Raipur police station. Police said six to seven people were injured and hospitalised.



In the greed for crores of donations, BJP has put crores of lives in danger. BJP has become a 'jan-drohi' (anti-people) party by putting the lives of its own countrymen at risk

AKHILESH YADAV | SAMAJWADI PARTY CHIEF

KAVITHA MOVES DELHI HC

BRS leader K Kavitha approached the Delhi High Court Thursday seeking bail in a money laundering case being probed by the Enforcement Directorate in connection with the alleged excise policy scam. Justice Swarana Kanta Sharma is scheduled to hear the matter Friday



Air Express cabin crew call off strike

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, May 9: Air India Express cabin crew Thursday decided to withdraw their strike and the airline agreed to reinstate 25 staff who were terminated from service, according to sources.

The meeting, which went on for nearly five hours, was between representatives of Air India Express Employees Union (AIXEU) and airline management. The union is affiliated to the Bharatiya Mazdoor Sangh (BMS), an associate of the RSS. After the meeting, Girish Chandra Arya, All India Secretary of the BMS, said the termination of 25 cabin crew of Air India Express has been withdrawn.

Both parties will discuss the issues and there will be a meeting again May 28, he said. After detailed discussion, persuasion and on appeal of the Conciliation Officer and the Chief Labour Commissioner, the union representatives agreed that "all the cabin crew members who have reported sick will report for duty with fitness certificate immediately, according to a document



signed by the representatives of the union and the airline." "On appeal of the Chief Labour Commissioner (Central), the management agreed to reinstate 25 cabin crew who have been terminated May 7 and 8, 2024 for reporting sick as a concerted action immediately." "The management will review the cases of these crew as per service regulations," it said.

As per the document, the representatives of the airline assured that all the issues of cabin crew raised before the management and during conciliation proceedings will be looked into

and resolved. Earlier in the day, the Tata Group airline said it has cancelled 85 flights or about 23 per cent of the total operational capacity due to cabin crew shortage and will be operating 283 flights.

To minimise the disruptions, Air India is operating flights on 20 routes of Air India Express, which has curtailed services till May 13. Sources, earlier in the day, said around 250 cabin crew reported sick Thursday.

The civil aviation ministry Wednesday sought a report from Air India Express on the cancellation of flights and also asked

A section of the cabin crew started reporting sick from Tuesday night to protest against the alleged mismanagement at the airline, forcing cancellation of more than 170 flights and impacting thousands of passengers at various airports

The decisions to end the strike and withdraw the termination letters were agreed upon during a conciliation meeting between the representatives of cabin crew and the airline management at the Office of the Chief Labour Commissioner (Central) in the national capital Thursday

the airline to resolve the issues promptly. Discontent has been brewing among a section of staff at Air India Express after the start of the process to merge AIX Connect, formerly AirAsia India, with itself. A section of the cabin crew has alleged mismanagement and lack of equality in the treatment of staff.

A conciliation process is happening under the Industrial Disputes Act after a union representing a section of the Air India Express cabin crew had filed a complaint before the labour department last year.

SADESHKHALI CASE

Women 'deceived' to file complaints of rape



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kolkata, May 9: The Trinamool Congress Thursday accused the BJP of spreading falsehood about the incidents of Sandeshkhali, after several newly-surfaced videos claimed that a local female BJP leader made multiple women sign on blank papers, which were later filed up as complaints of sexual assault against TMC leaders.

The allegation was levelled within three days after the TMC took to social media to unveil a Sandeshkhali "sting operation" video featuring a local BJP leader Gangadhar Koyal who claimed that the rape allegations were "staged" and were lodged at the behest of state Leader of Opposition, Suwendu Adhikari.

In a bid to reassert its claims, the TMC shared a fresh set of videos Thursday of purported women residents of Sandeshkhali who alleged they were "manipulated" by the BJP into filing "false rape cases".

The party also shared a fresh video where BJP's Basirhat candidate and one of the leading faces of Sandeshkhali protests, Rekha Patra, was seen questioning the identity of the contingent of "Sandeshkhali victims" who were earlier taken to Delhi by the state BJP leaders to meet President Draupadi Murmu and relate their ordeal.

The TMC Wednesday had alleged that BJP leaders were issuing death threats to women who have expressed their willingness to withdraw their complaints of rape. PTI,

however, could not independently verify the authenticity of any of the tapes released so far.

Referring to the newly released videos, state minister and senior TMC leader, Shashi Panja, condemned the BJP for "perpetuating a false narrative on Sandeshkhali sexual assaults" and threatening victims who sought to retract their police complaints.

"Sandeshkhali victims may have had a few complaints over land grab. But they never had complaints of sexual offence. This again proves that the BJP is spreading falsehood. This despicable act of fabrication and intimidation will not go unpunished," Panja said.

West Bengal's Leader of Opposition Suwendu Adhikari, on the other hand, dismissed TMC's claims, alleging that the videos were fabricated by 'bhaiipo' (nephew), an oblique reference to TMC leader Abhishek Banerjee and the party's private poll-cum-political consultant, I-PAC, who "distributed money" to get the job done.

"We are soon moving court against both and will ensure they are taken to task for spreading such malicious lies," Adhikari said while participating in a nomination filing rally of Rekha Patra at Basirhat.

BJP Rajya Sabha MP and party spokesperson Samik Bhattacharya told reporters that the more such videos surface, the higher the margin of votes by BJP from Sandeshkhali Assembly segment under Basirhat Lok Sabha seat.

NIJJAR KILLING

Canada yet to share evidence, says India

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, May 9: India Thursday said Canada has informed it about the arrest of three Indian citizens in the case of killing of Khalistani separatist Hardeep Singh Nijjar but it has not provided any "specific" evidence or information in the matter yet.

"Let me first make it clear that no specific or relevant evidence or information has been shared by the Canadian authorities till date," external affairs ministry spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal said.

"You will therefore understand our view that the matter is being pre-judged," he said at his weekly media briefing. Last week, Canadian authorities charged three Indian nationals with the murder of Nijjar. It is reported that they entered Canada on student visas.

"Obviously, there are political interests at work. We have long maintained that separatists, extremists and those advocating violence have been given political space in Canada," Jaiswal said.

"We have also pointed to the Canadian authorities that figures associated with organised crime with links with India have been allowed entry and residency in Canada," he said in a statement. Jaiswal said the two countries are currently engaged in discussions on issues such as the activities of pro-Khalistan elements and threats against Indian diplomats in Canada.

India Tuesday hit out at Canada for providing "safe haven" and political space to criminal and "secessionist" elements, in a sharp reaction to pro-Khalistan elements displaying an effigy of the Indian Prime Minister in an offensive manner at a parade in Ontario's Malton area.

Kejriwal bail plea: ED files fresh affidavit

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, May 9: The right to campaign in an election is neither a fundamental nor a constitutional right, the Enforcement Directorate told the Supreme Court Thursday, a day ahead of the scheduled pronouncement of the court's order on grant of interim bail to Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal in a money laundering case.

In a fresh affidavit filed in the top court to thwart the release of the embattled Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) national convenor, the central probe agency said there were numerous examples where politicians contested elections while in judicial custody, and some even won, but were never granted interim bail for campaigning. "No political leader



has been granted interim bail for campaigning even though he is not the contesting candidate. Even a contesting candidate is not granted interim bail if he is in custody for his own campaigning."

"It is relevant to note that the right to campaign for an election

is neither a fundamental right nor a constitutional right and not even a legal right," the ED said.

Justice Sanjiv Khanna who headed the bench that heard Kejriwal's petition Wednesday against his arrest in the case, said, "We will pronounce the interim order (on bail) Friday. The main matter related to the challenge to arrest will also be taken up on the same day." The AAP leader was arrested March 21 and is currently lodged in Tihar Jail under judicial custody.

The agency in its affidavit said, "In light of the above factual and legal submissions, the prayer for interim bail deserves to be rejected as it would not only be contrary to settled principles of law but violate the rule of law which is a basic feature of the Constitution."



Miss Universe 2023 Sheynnis Palacios poses for pictures at the Taj Mahal in Agra, Uttar Pradesh

Toll rises to nine in firecracker blast in Tamil Nadu's Sivakasi

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Virudhunagar (Tamil Nadu), May 9: Nine workers, including five women, died and 10 others were injured in a blaze at a fireworks-manufacturing unit in Sivakasi Thursday, a senior police official said.

The workers, including five women, were killed in the accident at a fireworks-manufacturing unit near Sengamalapati in Sivakasi in the district. Seven rooms where the firecrackers were stocked were completely gutted, police said.

Police and fire service personnel rushed the injured to the government hospital in Sivakasi. A senior police official said the cause of the fire was being ascertained and added that the unit is a licenced one.

Reacting to the incident, President Droupadi Murmu said she was saddened to learn about the loss of many lives due to the explosion at the firecracker factory near Sivakasi.

"I convey my heartfelt condolences to the bereaved families. I pray for speedy recovery of the injured," she said in a post on social media platform X.

Vice President Jagdeep Thakur also expressed pain over the loss of lives in the tragic fire accident and offered his condolences to the bereaved families and prayers for the recovery of the injured. Stating that he was deeply pained by the loss of precious lives in the tragic fire accident, Tamil Nadu Governor R N Ravi said in a post on X: "My heartfelt condolences to the families of the deceased and prayers for the swift recovery of the injured."

Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M K Stalin, who expressed condolences over the incident, directed the district authorities to provide appropriate medical care to the injured and save lives.

Establishing open prisons can be solution to decongest jails: SC

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, May 9: The Supreme Court Thursday said establishing open jails can be one of the solutions to overcrowding and also address the issue of rehabilitation of prisoners.

Semi-open or open prisons allow convicts to work outside the premises during the day to help them earn a livelihood and return in the evening. The concept was brought in to assimilate the convicts with the society and reduce their psychological pressure as they faced difficulties in leading normal lives outside.

While hearing a plea on jails and prisoners, a bench of Justices B R Gavai and Sandeep Mehta



said it wants to expand the presence of open prisons across the country "One of the solutions for

overcrowding of the prisons can be establishing open air prisons/camps. The said system is

efficiently working in the state of Rajasthan. Apart from addressing the issue of congestion in prison, it also addresses the issue of rehabilitation of prisoners," the bench said.

The bench made clear that it would not touch upon issues related to jails and prison reforms which are already pending adjudication before its coordinate benches in some other petitions.

The counsel appearing for the National Legal Services Authority (NALSA) told the court it had sought responses from all

states on open prisons and 24 of them have responded.

Senior advocate Vijay Hansaria, assisting as an amicus curiae in the matter, said convicts are not informed that they have a right to approach the appellate court through the legal services authority.

The bench said if there is a uni-

form e-prison module across the country, many of these things can be sorted out. It said the issue of e-prison module, a comprehensive jail management system, was being dealt with by a coordinate bench.

"We will also consider the issue of open prisons in this proceeding," the bench said, adding, "We plan to expand it and ensure that this system of open air prisons is adopted across the country".

The bench requested advocate K Parameshwar to assist it as an amicus along with Hansaria. It also requested the counsel appearing for NALSA to assist the court in the matter and posted it for hearing May 16.

SEMI-OPEN OR OPEN PRISONS ALLOW CONVICTS TO WORK OUTSIDE THE PREMISES DURING THE DAY TO HELP THEM EARN A LIVELIHOOD AND RETURN IN THE EVENING

THE CONCEPT WAS BROUGHT IN TO ASSIMILATE THE CONVICTS WITH THE SOCIETY AND REDUCE THEIR PSYCHOLOGICAL PRESSURE AS THEY FACED DIFFICULTIES IN LEADING NORMAL LIVES OUTSIDE

international

of the day quote

Joe Biden | PRESIDENT, US
We're not walking away from Israel's security. We're walking away from Israel's ability to wage war in those areas

Zaw Min Tun | JUNTA SPOKESPERSON, MYANMAR
We have promised to hold a multi-party democratic election. We are currently preparing and implementing the necessary measures for that

Aimed Moa Fu | MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS, SOMALIA
UNSOM played a critical role, but now it's outlived its usefulness. The government believes it is now appropriate to transition to the next phase of our partnership

SHORT TAKES

PIO brothers held

Melbourne: Two Indian-origin brothers wanted in connection with the murder of a 22-year-old MTech student from India have been arrested by Australian police, media reports said. Abhijeet Abhijeet, 26, and Robin Gartan, 27, were arrested Tuesday in the New South Wales country town of Goulburn police are preparing to extradite them to Victoria, the Goulburn Post reported. The brothers were on the run since the early hours of Sunday after Navjeet Sandhu from Noble Park was killed and a 30-year-old man, also from Noble Park, was injured at an Ormond home in Melbourne's southeast.

SK Prez apologises

Seoul: South Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol conceded Thursday that his ruling party's crushing election defeat last month reflected the government's failure to improve people's lives, and apologised for a scandal involving his wife. He continued to reject calls by opposition lawmakers for a special probe into allegations that the First Lady had inappropriately accepted a pricey Christian Dior handbag as a gift last year, even as prosecutors begin investigating whether she broke any laws.

Lanka Prez election

Colombo: Sri Lanka will hold presidential election between September 17 and October 16, the country's top electoral body announced Thursday. In a notice signed by its chairman RMAL Ratnayake, the Election Commission said it will call for nominations to hold the Presidential election within the specified timeframe in terms of the provisions of the Constitution, according to local media reports. It said that the presidential election will be held on a day between September 17 and October 16.

Plane tyre bursts

Ankara: A total of 190 people were safely evacuated from a plane in Turkey Thursday after one of its tyres burst during landing at a southern airport, Turkey's transportation ministry said. No one was hurt. The Boeing 737-800, belonging to Turkish-based Corendon Airlines, stopped safely on the runway after landing at Gazipasa airport near the Mediterranean coastal town of Antalya, the company said. The plane, which carried 184 passengers and six crew members, was on a flight from Cologne, Germany.



We have no decision to build a nuclear bomb but should Iran's existence be threatened, there will be no choice but to change our military doctrine

KAMAL KHARRAZI | ADVISER TO SUPREME LEADER, IRAN

10,000-PESO NOTES

Prices in Argentina have surged so dramatically in recent months that the government has multiplied the size of its biggest bank note in circulation by five — to 10,000 pesos, worth about \$10. Argentina's annual inflation rate reached 287% in March, among the highest in the world



Pak on edge on first anniv of May 9 mayhem

THE MAYHEM MAY 9 LAST YEAR WAS LED BY SUPPORTERS OF KHAN'S PAKISTAN TEHREEK-E-INSAF PARTY WHO WERE TRIGGERED INTO ACTION BY THE ARREST OF THEIR LEADER IN A CASE OF ALLEGED CORRUPTION

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Islamabad, May 9: Pakistan was tense Thursday on the first anniversary of the unprecedented violence last year by supporters of jailed former prime minister Imran Khan against key military installations and government buildings.

The mayhem May 9 last year was led by supporters of Khan's Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf party



who were triggered into action by the arrest of their leader in a case of alleged corruption.

Khan's party workers vandalised a dozen military installations, including the Jinnah House (Lahore Corps Commander House), Mianwali Airbase and the ISI building in Faisalabad after the cricketer-turned-politician was arrested in a corruption case.

The Army headquarters (GHQ) in Rawalpindi was also attacked by the mob for the first

time. PTI leadership, alleging that May 9 was planned by its opponents, has announced "peaceful protests" on the first anniversary.

Party Secretary General Omar Ayub Khan said in a statement that the government launched a crackdown against its workers to stop them from taking to the streets but they would hold demonstrations.

"Regardless of all crackdown, peaceful rallies and protests will be held all across Pakistan in

The real aim of the May 9 violence was to end democracy and establish kingship and an individual's dictatorship

SHEHBAZ SHARIF | PM, PAKISTAN

the morning (of May 9)," he said.

He rejected the allegations of violence on the same day last year by saying that it was a "false flag operation" against the PTI and its founder Khan.

Meanwhile, authorities in Islamabad declared all gatherings as illegal by imposing a ban.

Separately, in a message released on the day's eve, President Zardari said, "May 9, 2023, will always be remembered as a dark day in Pakistan's history when a politically instigated mob ran amok across the country, damaging public property and military installations."

Hope fades for 44 trapped in collapsed South Africa building

REUTERS

Johannesburg, May 9: Relatives of 44 construction workers trapped under a collapsed building in the South African city of George faced a fourth day of anguished waiting Thursday as heavy machinery worked at the site in a race against time to find any survivors.

Of 81 people who were on site when the five-story building collapsed Monday, eight have been confirmed dead and 29 alive, 16 of them in a critical condition, according to the latest figures from George municipality.

The identities of the missing have not been made public, but a list of names was circulating among groups of relatives who have congregated at the site since Monday, desperate for news of their loved ones, state broadcaster SABC reported.

An earth mover could be seen removing broken slabs of concrete from the collapsed building, now a chaotic pile of masonry and twisted steel reinforcements. Sniffer dogs had been brought in to search the site.

The drama has prompted an outpouring of solidarity in George, with local companies providing equipment and volunteers setting up coffee stalls for waiting relatives and rescue workers.

Rescue teams had been hearing trapped survivors, a disaster management official said on Tuesday, but there have been no further updates about that since then.

Putin warns of global clash

AMID RUSSIA-WEST TENSIONS THAT SOARED TO THE HIGHEST LEVEL SINCE THE COLD WAR TIMES OVER UKRAINE, PUTIN ISSUED ANOTHER STARK REMINDER ABOUT RUSSIA'S NUCLEAR MIGHT

REUTERS

Moscow, May 9: Russian President Vladimir Putin accused the West Thursday of risking a global conflict and said no one would be allowed to threaten the world's biggest nuclear power as Russia marked the Soviet Union's victory over Nazi Germany in World War Two.

As Russian troops advance against Ukraine's Western-backed forces, Putin accused "arrogant" Western elites of forgetting the decisive role played by the Soviet Union in defeating Nazi Germany, and of stoking conflicts across the world.

"We know what the exorbitance of such ambitions leads to. Russia will do everything to prevent a global clash," Putin said on Red Square after Defence Minister Sergei Shoigu reviewed troops lined up in a rare May blizzard. "But at the same time, we will not allow anyone to threaten us. Our strategic forces are always in a state of combat readiness."

Putin, who sent his army into Ukraine in 2022, casts the war as part of a struggle with the West, which he says humiliated Russia after the Berlin Wall fell in 1989 by encroaching on what he considers Moscow's sphere of influence.

Ukraine and the West say Putin is engaged in an imperial-



Nazi Germany's unconditional surrender came into force at 11:01 pm May 8, 1945, marked as "Victory in Europe Day" by France, Britain and the US. In Moscow it was already May 9, which became the Soviet Union's "Victory Day" in what Russians call the Great Patriotic War of 1941-45

style land grab. They have vowed to defeat Russia, which currently controls about 18% of Ukraine, including Crimea, and parts of four regions in eastern Ukraine. Russia says the lands, once part of the Russian empire, are now again part of Russia.

WAR? The Soviet Union lost 27 million people in World War Two, including many millions in Ukraine, but eventually pushed Nazi forces back to Berlin, where Hitler committed suicide and the red Soviet Victory Banner was raised over the Reichstag in 1945.

"In the West, they would like to forget the lessons of the Second World War," Putin said, adding that Russia honoured all the allies involved in the defeat of Nazi Germany. He mentioned

Smolensk and Kyiv, in heavy, bloody battles from Murmansk to the Caucasus and Crimea."

In a much pared-down parade indicating the strains of war, Russia showed off just one T-34 tank. Fighters flew past streaming the Russian tricolour.

There were no leaders from the West.

Present were the leaders of Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Cuba, Laos and Guinea-Bissau.

Russian officials warn that the Ukraine war is entering the most dangerous phase to date. Putin has repeatedly warned of the risk of a much broader war involving the world's biggest nuclear powers.

The crisis has deepened in recent weeks: US President Joe Biden signed off on \$61 billion in aid to Ukraine; Britain said that Ukraine had the right to strike Russia with British weapons; and French President Emmanuel Macron has refused to rule out sending French troops to fight Russian forces.

Russia responded Monday by announcing it would practise the deployment of tactical nuclear weapons as part of a military exercise after what the Moscow said were threats from France, Britain and the United States.

Russia accuses US of meddling in India's affairs

DESCRIBING THE INTERFERENCE AS A "COLONIAL PERIOD MENTALITY," THE RUSSIAN SPOKESPERSON ACCUSED THE WHITE HOUSE OF COMPLICATING THE 2024 LOK SABHA POLLS

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Moscow, May 9: The US has not yet provided any reliable evidence of the involvement of Indian citizens in the murder plot of a Khalistani terrorist in that country, Russia has said, as it accused Washington of meddling in India's domestic affairs and the ongoing elections.

In November last year, US federal prosecutors charged Indian national Nikhil Gupta with working with an Indian government employee in the foiled plot to kill Gurpatwant Singh Pannun.

Pannun, wanted in India on terror charges, holds dual citizenship of the US and Canada.



He has been designated as a terrorist by the Union Home Ministry under the anti-terror law Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act.

Russian Foreign Ministry spokesperson Maria Zakharova, when asked to respond to a report by the Washington Post claiming that India is trying to adopt the policies as Russia and Saudi Arabia, said: "According to the information we have, Washington has not yet provided any reliable evidence of the involvement of Indian citizens in the preparation of the murder of a certain GS Pannun. Speculation on this topic in the absence of evidence is unacceptable."

Washington lacks understanding of India's national mentality and history and continues to make "unfounded accusations" about religious freedoms in India, she said.

"Regular unfounded accusations by the United States against New Delhi...we see that they groundlessly accuse not only India but also many other states...of violating religious freedoms are a reflection of the United States' misunderstanding of the national mentality, the historical context of the development of the Indian state and disrespect for India as a state," she said.

Describing the interference as a "colonial period mentality," the Russian spokesperson accused the White House of complicating the 2024 Lok Sabha polls.

"The reason is that they try to unbalance the internal political situation in India in order to complicate the (ongoing) general parliamentary elections. That is part of meddling into India's internal affairs," RT news quoted her as saying.

"The Washington Post, it seems to me, should use the term 'repressive regime' and everything you quoted in relation to Washington. It is difficult to imagine a more repressive

regime than Washington, both in domestic and international affairs," she said.

The Washington Post, citing unnamed sources, named a Research and Analysis Wing (RAW) officer in connection with the alleged plot to kill Pannun on American soil last year.

India has strongly rejected the claims, saying that the report made "unwarranted and unsubstantiated" imputations on a serious matter and that an investigation into the case was underway.

"The report in question makes unwarranted and unsubstantiated imputations on a serious matter," External Affairs Ministry spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal said in New Delhi.

Jaiswal said a high-level inquiry committee set up by New Delhi to look into inputs provided by the US on the alleged plot was still probing the case.

"There is an ongoing investigation of the high-level committee set up by the Government of India to look into the security concerns shared by the US government on networks of organised criminals, terrorists and others," he said.

"Speculative and irresponsible comments on it are not helpful," Jaiswal added.

Israeli forces mass on Rafah's outskirts



REUTERS

Cairo, May 9: Israeli forces massed tanks and opened fire close to built-up areas of Rafah Thursday, residents said, after US President Joe Biden vowed to withhold weapons from Israel if its forces launch a major invasion of the southern Gaza city.

As ceasefire talks continued in Cairo, Palestinian militant groups Hamas and Islamic Jihad said their fighters struck Israeli forces on the eastern outskirts of Rafah, firing anti-tank rockets and mortars at Israeli positions. Residents and medics in Rafah,

'Eunuch Maker' ringleader jailed



REUTERS

London, May 9: The ringleader of an extreme body modification conspiracy who cut off men's genitals and uploaded videos to his "Eunuch Maker" website was jailed for a minimum of 22 years in a London court Friday.

Norwegian Marius Gustavson was involved in several highly dangerous procedures which included removing the penis or testicles of men who had consented. British prosecutors said.

The practice is linked to a sub-culture of men seeking to become so-called "nullos", short for genital nullification, by having their penis or testicles removed.

Some of the procedures were filmed and the footage uploaded to Gustavson's pay-per-view website, which had nearly 23,000 users and made more than \$300,000 between 2017 and 2021.

Gustavson pleaded guilty last year to 13 offences, including conspiracy to cause grievous bodily harm, causing grievous bodily harm, and possessing criminal property relating to the money made from the website.

Prosecutor Caroline Carberry said that all the men who were subjected to the operations had consented to the amputations.

But, as a person cannot legally consent to the infliction of an injury causing bodily harm, the procedures amounted to a criminal offence even with consent.

Carberry also said that many of the victims were vulnerable and had been put under pressure by Gustavson and his co-defendants.

Gustavson himself willingly had his penis cut off at his London home in 2017 and later had his left leg amputated after deliberately submerging it in dry ice in 2019. Two men were jailed in January for their part in those procedures.

Prosecutors said Gustavson kept some amputated body parts in his freezer and that messages suggested he had offered some for sale.

Gustavson was "very much the mastermind behind this grisly and gruesome enterprise", Judge Mark Lucraft said, adding that some of the procedures were "little more than human butchery".

He was sentenced at the Old Bailey court Thursday alongside six other men, four of whom had also pleaded guilty to conspiracy to cause grievous bodily harm.

of the day quote

Household net financial savings flows were lower in FY23 and there were some concerns around that, which said households are saving less. But, in reality, it was a portfolio shift where the savings were going into real assets

ADITI NAYAR | CHIEF ECONOMIST, ICRA

GenAI technologies will impact almost every sector and the country going forward and enterprises have already invested in cloud, data infrastructure and large processing power

N CHANDRASEKHARAN | CHAIRMAN, TCS

Tyre exports are expected to remain moderate in the near term because of muted demand growth in key export destinations, namely the us and europe

NITHYA DEBBAI | ASSISTANT VICE PRESIDENT, ICRA

Q4 RESULTS

HPCL net drops 25%

New Delhi: Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Ltd (HPCL) reported a 25 per cent fall in its March quarter net profit on lower refining margins and announced one free bonus share for every two shares held. Its consolidated net profit of ₹2,709.31 crore in January-March - the fourth quarter of the 2023-24 fiscal year - compares to ₹3,608.32 crore in the same period of the previous financial year.

SBI profit grows

Mumbai: The country's largest lender SBI reported 18.18 per cent growth in March quarter consolidated net profit to ₹21,384.15 crore as against ₹18,093.84 crore in the year-ago period. On a standalone basis, profit grew to ₹20,698.35 crore from ₹16,694.51 crore a year ago, the lender said. Consolidated net profit in fiscal year 2023-24 was up 20.55 per cent to ₹67,084.67 crore as against ₹55,648.17 crore in FY23.

PNB rises 3-fold

New Delhi: State-owned Punjab National Bank (PNB) posted a nearly three-fold increase in net profit to ₹3,010 crore for the fourth quarter ended March 2024, aided by improvement in core income and decline in bad loans. The bank had earned a net profit of ₹1,159 crore in the same quarter a year ago. The total income increased to ₹32,361 crore during the quarter under review, as against ₹27,269 crore in the same period last year, PNB said.

HPCL profit dips

New Delhi: Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Ltd (HPCL) reported a 25 per cent fall in its March quarter net profit on lower refining margins and announced one bonus share for every two shares held. Its consolidated net profit of ₹2,709.31 crore in January-March - the fourth quarter of the 2023-24 fiscal - compares to ₹3,608.32 crore in the same period of the previous financial year.

BPCL profit falls

New Delhi: Bharat Petroleum Corporation Ltd (BPCL) reported a 30 per cent fall in its March quarter net profit on lower refining margins, and announced one bonus share for each share held. Its consolidated net profit of ₹4,789.57 crore in January-March -- the fourth quarter of the 2023-24 fiscal -- was compared to ₹6,870.47 crore in the same period YoY.



I am confident that in the coming 2-2.5 years India will be able to make its own carbon fibre T100 which can be used in manufacturing of hydrogen cylinders, missiles, launch vehicles, aircraft, bullet proof jackets and construction of bridges

VK SARASWAT | MEMBER, NITI AAYOG

ONE MILLION UBER DRIVERS

During the earnings call for the March quarter, chief executive officer (CEO) Dara Khosrowshahi announced that Uber has over 1 million drivers, according to reports. India has become the third country, following the US and Brazil, to achieve the milestone of 1 million drivers



BLOODBATH ON D-STREET

SENSEX TUMBLES OVER 1,000 POINTS, NIFTY FALLS BELOW 22K AMID ELECTION UNCERTAINTIES

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, May 9: Equity benchmark Sensex Thursday crashed over 1,000 points while the Nifty dived below the 22,000 level due to across-the-board selloff amid general election uncertainties.

Besides, persistent foreign fund outflows and heavy selling pressure in HDFC Bank, Larsen & Toubro and Reliance Industries weighed on investor sentiment, traders said.

Declining for the third day running, the 30-share BSE Sensex dropped 1,062.22 points or 1.45 per cent to settle at 72,404.17. During the day, it tanked 1,132.21 points or 1.54 per cent to 72,334.18.

The NSE Nifty dived 345 points or 1.55 per cent to 21,957.50. It tumbled 370.1 points or 1.65 per cent to 21,932.40 during the session.

"The broader market witnessed volatility, underscoring caution on account of Q4 earnings and general election uncertainties, which led investors to stay on the sidelines. We expect the trend to continue in the short term as the market slid



SENSEX DIPS 1.45% TO SETTLE AT 72,404.17
NIFTY DIVES 1.55% TO END AT 21,957.50

Nifty ended sharply lower led by institutional selling and traders squaring up due to nervousness on election progress

DEEPAK JASANI | HEAD OF RETAIL RESEARCH, HDFC SECURITIES

below the physiological level of 22,000. The global indices are trading with mixed cues ahead of the BOE policy meeting later today and US inflation figures due next week," Vinod Nair, Head of Research, Geojit Financial Services, said.

From the Sensex basket, Larsen & Toubro tanked over 5 per cent after March quarter earnings.

Asian Paints, JSW Steel, ITC, Bajaj Finance, IndusInd Bank, Tata Steel, NTPC, Bajaj Finserv, HDFC Bank, Reliance Industries

and Power Grid were among the laggards.

In contrast, Tata Motors, Mahindra & Mahindra, State Bank of India, Infosys and HCL Tech were the gainers.

In the broader market, the BSE smallcap gauge declined 2.41 per cent and midcap index dropped 2.01 per cent.

Among the indices, oil and gas lost 3.41 per cent, capital goods dropped 3.37 per cent, metal tanked 3.13 per cent, industrials (2.92 per cent), utilities (2.59 per cent) and com-

Investors lose ₹734 lakh crore

Investors' wealth Thursday eroded by ₹734 lakh crore as markets took a heavy beating, with the BSE Sensex tumbling 1,062.22 points. The market capitalisation of BSE-listed companies eroded by ₹7,34,513.48 crore to ₹3,93,34,896.14 crore (\$4.71 trillion). On May 2, the mcap of BSE-listed firms reached an all-time peak of ₹4,08,49,767.90 crore.

On the other hand, auto emerged as the major gainer. Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) offloaded equities worth ₹6,669.10 crore Wednesday, according to exchange data.

In Asian markets, Shanghai and Hong Kong settled with gains, while Seoul and Tokyo ended lower.

European markets were trading on a mixed note. Wall Street closed mixed in overnight trade Wednesday. Global oil benchmark Brent crude climbed 0.48 per cent to \$83.89 a barrel.

The 30-share BSE index declined 45.46 points or 0.06 per cent to settle at 72,404.17 Wednesday. The wider gauge Nifty remained unchanged at 22,302.50.

Equity MFs inflow drops 16% in April

THIS ALSO MARKS THE 38TH CONSECUTIVE MONTH OF NET INFLOWS IN EQUITY FUNDS, STARTING FROM MARCH 2021



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, May 9: Equity mutual funds attracted ₹18,917 crore in April, marking a slump of 16 per cent from the preceding month, on a huge decline in inflow in large-cap funds and increased volatility in market owing to pre-elections phase.

This also marks the 38th consecutive month of net inflows in equity funds, starting from March 2021, data with the Association of Mutual Funds in India (AMFI) showed Thursday.

Despite the decline in inflow, monthly Systematic Investment Plan (SIP) contributions crossed the ₹20,000 crore-mark and reached an all-time high of ₹20,371 crore in April compared to ₹19,271 crore in the previous month.

Further, SIP accounts surged to 8.7 crore in April with 63.65 lakh new registrations.

Overall, the mutual fund industry has witnessed an inflow of ₹2.4 lakh crore in the month under review after experiencing an outflow of ₹1.6 lakh crore in March. The huge inflow was due to investment of ₹1.9 lakh crore into debt schemes.

Driven by strong inflows in equity and debt categories, the industry's net assets under management rose to ₹57.26 lakh crore last month from ₹53.54 lakh crore in March-end.

As per the data, equity-oriented schemes witnessed an inflow of ₹18,917 crore in April, way lower than ₹22,633 crore

registered in March and ₹26,866 crore in February.

"This can be attributed to the pre-elections phase that has resulted in increased market volatility which may have cautioned smart investors that preferred to stay away from investments," Jean Christophe Gougeon, Director & Chief Marketing Officer, Sharekhan by BNP Paribas, said.

A total of nine schemes were launched in April in the category of open-ended scheme, raising a total of ₹1,532 crore.

Barring equity-linked saving schemes (ELSS), which saw an outflow of ₹144 crore, all categories experienced inflow in equity segments. Within the equity class, sectoral or thematic funds continued to remain the maximum contributors with inflows of ₹5,166 crore, followed by the multi-cap category which witnessed net inflows of ₹2,724 crore.

The small-cap category bounced back with net inflow of ₹2,208 crore in April after witnessing an outflow of ₹94 crore in March.

Notably, the inflow in large-cap funds drastically declined to ₹357 crore in the month under review from ₹2,128 crore in March.

In addition to equities, hybrid funds experienced a remarkable increase in inflows, reaching ₹19,863 crore as compared to ₹5,584 crore in March 2024. Huge chunk of the inflow can be contributed to the institutional money being reinvested in arbitrage funds.

Byju's cuts course fees by 30-40%

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, May 9: Edtech firm Think and Learn -- owner of Byju's brand -- has slashed course subscription fees by 30-40 per cent and hiked sales incentives by 50-100 per cent, according to sources.

Byju's Founder and CEO Byju Raveendran, who has started handling the company's daily operations, in a meeting with 1,500 sales associates and managers, has announced change in sales strategy inclined towards scalability and flexibility.



"The annual subscription for the Byju's Learning App is now available at a yearly early price of ₹12,000 (inclusive of taxes), while Byju's classes and Byju's Tuition Centres (BTC) are priced at ₹24,000 and ₹36,000, respectively, for a complete year of classes," sources privy to the development said.

This is almost a 30-40 per cent reduction in rates, they said. Byju Raveendran has also promised to settle all dues of the sales team with higher incentives.

"The average sales salary is ₹40,000 per month. So, close a couple of sales, and you can get not just your salary but also clear your arrears. You can earn many multiples of your CTC through this model," Byju said.

Dabur Glucose launches 'Energize India' campaign

BHUBANESWAR: Dabur Glucose, the leading instant energy drink from the House of Dabur, Thursday announced the launch of a mega campaign 'Energize India' to promote young sporting talent and drive awareness about the importance of energy and stamina among young athletes in major sports academies across India. As part of the campaign, Dabur Glucose conducted a special awareness session on energy and stamina management at the SOA University in Bhubaneswar, featuring renowned doctor and expert in the field. This session provided valuable insights and strategies to help athletes optimise their performance and achieve their full potential. Dabur also felicitated top athletes of this academy. "We are delighted to launch our 'Energize India' campaign to promote the importance of energy and stamina among young athletes and provide them with the necessary energy to excel in their respective sports. As a brand, Dabur Glucose is a perfect fit for athletes, sports enthusiasts, and people who lead an active lifestyle. The product is designed to provide an instant energy boost, which is essential for individuals engaged in physical activities," Dabur India Limited, Manager Corporate Communications, Dinesh Kumar said. The energy sessions, conducted by Sunita Barma, Sports Officer, SOA University, focused on educating young athletes about the importance of proper nutrition and hydration to ensure optimal performance. The session also included tips and techniques to improve stamina and endurance, which are crucial for any athlete. "Dabur Glucose has always been committed to promoting a healthy and active lifestyle among our youth. This partnership with young athletes is another step forward towards achieving this goal. With its refreshing taste and instant energy boost, Dabur Glucose is the perfect choice for young athletes to stay energized and perform at their best," Kumar added.



SUPPORTING ENVIRONMENT

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, May 9: Fitch Ratings Thursday affirmed the ratings of Axis Bank and ICICI Bank with a stable outlook citing supportive operating environment and large domestic franchise.

Fitch Ratings has affirmed India-based Axis Bank and ICICI Bank's Long-Term Issuer Default Rating (IDR) at 'BB+', the global agency said in two separate rating commentaries.

Fitch has also affirmed the banks' Government Support Rating (GSR) at 'bb+' and Viability Rating (VR) at 'bb'.

Fitch said its IDR ratings reflect expectation of a moderate

probability of extraordinary state support from the government relative to large state banks.

The agency said its expectation of a supportive operative environment is on account of India's robust medium-term growth potential. Fitch expects GDP growth of 7 per cent in 2024 and 6.5 per cent in 2025, supported by investment prospects.

"The economy has been resilient as healthy business sentiment, steady financial markets and the government's capital spending buffered global economic headwinds and inflation. These factors are conducive for banks to sustain profitable business, provided risks are well-



managed," Fitch said.

With regard to Axis Bank, Fitch said the bank's appetite for growth is likely to remain above the sector average, albeit similar to other large private banks.

"We have revised the outlook on Axis' earnings and profitability score to stable, from positive, as we do not see a significant further upside to the core metric from current levels, despite remaining high relative

to the years before FY23," it added.

On ICICI Bank, Fitch said it maintains a positive outlook on its earnings and profitability score, as it expects profitability to remain elevated relative to prior years.

On ICICI Bank's large domestic franchise, Fitch said the bank has a strong retail-focused domestic franchise as India's second-largest private bank.

"This, together with above-average capitalisation, should support sustained generation of revenue and business opportunities as well as market-share expansion through the cycle," it added.

India to again delay caps on UPI payments market share

NPCI ANNOUNCED THE 30% CAP IN 2020 BUT LATER EXTENDED THE DEADLINE BY TWO YEARS TO THE END OF 2024

REUTERS

Mumbai, May 9: India will again delay caps on market share for a popular digital payments method, two sources told Reuters, benefiting Google Pay as the authorities prioritise growth over concerns about market concentration.

The National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI), the quasi-regulator, will extend by as much as two years a year-end deadline to cap at 30% the market share of any company processing payments via the Unified Payment Interface (UPI), the sources with direct knowledge of the matter told Reuters.

PhonePe's share of UPI payments has risen to 48.3% from

37% in April 2020, while Google Pay's share has declined to 37.4% from 44%, according to NPCI data. The two processed a combined 11.5 billion transactions in April, the data showed.

NPCI and Google Pay declined to comment. PhonePe did not respond to an email seeking comment.

India launched UPI in 2016 but barred companies from charging for the instant digital payments service in an effort to promote online transactions and reduce the use of cash in Asia's third-largest economy.

Because they cannot charge for it, India's banks and others like Meta-owned WhatsApp and Amazon Pay have not pushed UPI-based payments aggressively, leaving authorities worried about



a concentration risk.

While their apps do not earn money from the payments, PhonePe and Google Pay have been able to use their UPI customer base to sell services such as loans and insurance.

NPCI, which has a regulatory mandate from the central bank, announced the 30% cap in 2020 but later extended the deadline by two years to the end of 2024.

The deadline will have to be extended again, said one of the

The UPI user base was about 300 million users and 50 million merchants last year

sources, as it is not possible for PhonePe and Google Pay to reduce their market shares without hurting UPI payments growth.

A final decision on the extension will be communicated closer to the deadline, said the sources, who asked not to be identified because they are not allowed to speak to the media.

NPCI had hoped for more competition when WhatsApp was permitted to offer UPI-based payments in February 2020, but the company had just 0.2% mar-

ket share as of April. India's Paytm, with the third-highest share, has experienced a decline in payments processed through its platforms after regulators placed curbs on a group entity.

Payment firms want the market-share cap removed, asking NPCI to let them charge for UPI payments to encourage competition, said an official at a payment company.

The government will decide whether to allow firms to charge for UPI payments, the two sources said, but one said NPCI does not favour removing the share cap.

The volume of UPI transactions rose 49.5% in April from a year earlier, less than the 54% rise logged March.

Javelin duo ready to go

NEERAJ, KISHORE SET TO START PARIS OLYMPICS BUILD-UP AT DIAMOND LEAGUE TODAY

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Doha, May 9: Olympic champion Neeraj Chopra's Paris Games preparations will be put through a stern test when he begins his season in the first leg of the prestigious Diamond League one-day meet series against a star-studded but familiar field, here Friday.

The 26-year-old Indian javelin superstar, who is also the reigning world and Asian Games champion, will be up against the likes of former World Champion Anderson Peters of Grenada as well as Olympic and Worlds medallist Jakub Vadlejch of Czech Republic.

Asian Games silver-medallist and his compatriot Kishore Jena will also be in the fray as he makes his Diamond League debut. Jena has a personal best of 87.54m while Chopra's all-time best is 89.94m, which is also the national record.

European champion Julian Weber of Germany, fourth in the Olympic Games and World Championships, will also compete in the 10-man field. The league will then move to Morocco May 19. Chopra is also the defending champion here as he had set the tone for his title-laden 2023 season with a victory ahead of Vadlejch and Peters.

The Indian had sent the spear to a distance of 88.67m then as against the 88.63m and 85.88m of Vadlejch and Peters respectively. In 2022, Peters had delivered the fifth-longest throw



in history (93.07m) at the Qatar Sports Club here.

Vadlejch, the Tokyo Olympics silver-medallist and 2023 Diamond League champion had recorded a personal best of 90.88m here in 2022. Chopra has won three individual legs of Diamond League and lifted the champion's trophy in 2022.

After this event, Chopra will compete at home for the first time in three years during the National Federation Cup Senior Athletics Championships to be held in Bhubaneswar from May 12 to 15.

Jena will also be taking part in the event. As per the schedule, the men's javelin qualifying

round will be held May 14 and the finals will take place May 15. Chopra last took part in a domestic competition at the same Federation Cup on March 17, 2021, when he won a gold with a throw of 87.80m.

After taking part in the domestic event, Chopra will compete in the prestigious Paavo Nurmi Games in Turku, Finland June 18. At that event, he will be up against 19-year-old sensation Max Dehning of Germany, the latest entrant to the 90m club.

His goal for this season is to defend his Olympic title and to break the elusive 90m barrier. In an earlier interview to PTI, Chopra had stressed on the need to stay injury-free.

In the current Paris Olympics cycle, Government has spent close to Rs 4 crore to assist Chopra's training, equipment, coach's salary and out-of-pocket allowances. He attributed his preparedness to the training he has undergone overseas at different international centres in Finland, South Africa, UK and Turkey at various times.

"I think I am ready for tomorrow (Friday). I really like to be consistent, it is one of my greatest weapons. I will throw over 90m but consistency is more important"

NEERAJ CHOPRA

round will be held May 14 and the finals will take place May 15. Chopra last took part in a domestic competition at the same Federation Cup on March 17, 2021, when he won a gold with a throw of 87.80m.

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Bajrang suspended by UWW

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, May 9: Wrestling's world governing body UWW has suspended Bajrang Punia till the end of this year following NADA's decision to hand him a provisional suspension for refusing to undergo a dope test.

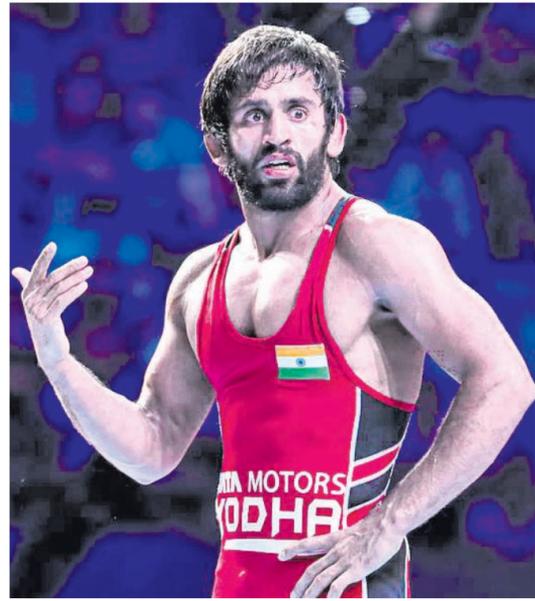
However, in a rather surprising decision, the Sports Authority of India (SAI) sanctioned close to Rs 9 lakh for his training abroad despite being well aware of NADA's order. Bajrang, one of the country's most successful wrestlers, was suspended by NADA April 23 after being served a whereabouts failure notice April 18.

In his defence, the Tokyo Olympics bronze-medallist said he never refused to give his sample for testing but merely asked the Dope Control Officer to explain the presence of expired kits which were brought to take his sample.

Bajrang told PTI that he has not received any communication from the UWW about his suspension but the world governing body while updating its internal system clearly mentions that he stands suspended.

"Suspended for the following reason until Dec 31, 2024," reads the update on Bajrang's profile. "Provisionally suspended by NADO IND for alleged ADRV (Anti-Doping Rule Violation)," was the reason mentioned.

Interestingly, the Mission Olympic Cell (MOC), in its April 25 meeting, was informed that Bajrang has been sanctioned Rs 8.82,000 plus air fare (actual) for his proposal to train at Dagestan, Russia from May 28.



"I am also surprised that SAI cleared it (training abroad). I have actually cancelled my plan, I am not going anywhere for training now"

BAJRANG PUNIA

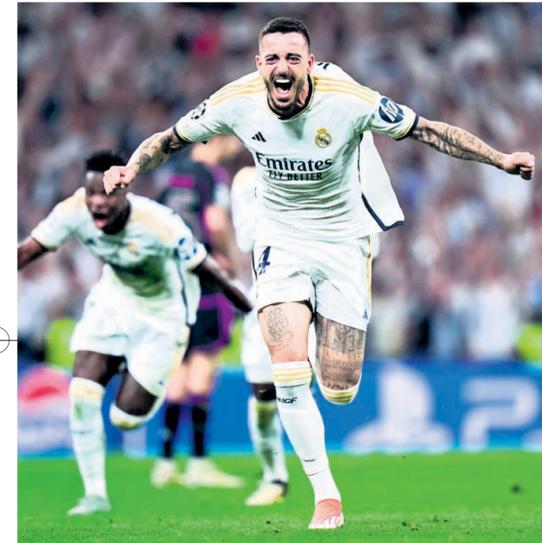
Bajrang's initial proposal was for a 35-day training trip from April 24 but, as per the minutes of MOC meeting, due to "conflicting travel dates due to his whereabouts failure, he chose to defer the travel plans from 24th April, 2024 to 28th May, 2024."

The proposal also included

travel plans of his strength and conditioning coach Kaazi Kiron Mustafa Hasan and his sparring partner Jitender. Neither Sandip Pradhan, the SAI Director General, nor Col. Rakesh Yadav, joint CEO TOPS, responded to calls or messages, when PTI reached out for an explanation for the decision to sanction his training.

Bajrang confirmed that he had given a proposal for approval to SAI. "I am also surprised that SAI cleared it. I have actually cancelled my plan, I am not going anywhere for training now," Bajrang said, adding that his lawyer has filed the reply to NADA.

Joselu late goals lead Real into CL title clash



Memorable outing: Joselu celebrates one of his goals against Bayern Munich, Wednesday

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Madrid, May 9: After yet another magical night at the Santiago Bernabeu Stadium, Real Madrid are back in the Champions League final. The 14-time European champion pulled off another thrilling comeback Wednesday, rallying to defeat Bayern Munich 2-1 and reach the final for the second time in three seasons.

Like it happened so many times in 2022, Madrid needed some late drama to advance. Joselu scored in the 88th minute and then in stoppage time as Madrid advanced 4-3 on aggregate to set up a final against Borussia Dortmund June 1 in London.

Bayern had taken the lead on an Alphonso Davies goal in the 68th — and then deep in stoppage time thought it had equalised but hadn't because of an offside call that Bayern coach Thomas Tuchel described as "disastrous" and "against the rules."

Joselu's first goal was a tap in after Bayern goalkeeper Manuel Neuer spilled an easy save. The second was initially called off for offside but was eventually allowed after video review.

It will be Madrid's record-extending 18th European Cup final, and ninth in the Champions League era, also a record. Madrid beat Liverpool when they last made it to the final in 2022, a season marked by several late comebacks like that one they pulled off Wednesday.

Madrid at the time pulled off thrilling comebacks at the Bernabeu against Manchester City in the semifinals, Chelsea

in the quarterfinals and Paris Saint-Germain in the round of 16.

Six-time European champions Bayern were looking to return to the final for the first time since winning the competition in 2019-20. The loss meant there will be no rematch of the all-German final in 2013, when Bayern beat Dortmund to win their fifth European title.

It was a mostly even match but Madrid created the most significant scoring chances. But they had not been able to get past what was a terrific performance by Neuer, who had made a series of difficult saves to keep Bayern in the match.

But the German international faltered in the final minutes, dropping an easy ball after a shot by Vinicius Junior and allowing Joselu — who came off the bench in the 81st — to equalise from in front of the goal.

Joselu, a German-born striker, then gave Madrid the lead a minute into stoppage time after a cross by Madrid defender Antonio Rudiger off the left side. The linesman initially raised the flag for offside, and it took a few moments before Madrid players and the crowd at the Bernabeu could celebrate the winner.

Bayern loudly complained at the end after a goal by Matthijs de Ligt didn't count because the referee blew the whistle for offside without letting the play be completed. De Ligt said the linesman apologised to him, saying he "made a mistake" for raising the flag without letting the play continue.

Kohli, Patidar shine as RCB keep playoff hopes alive with win

AGENCIES

Dharamsala, May 9: A classic 47-ball 92 (7x4, 6x6) by Virat Kohli and Rajat Patidar's breezy fifty (55, 23b, 3x4, 6x6) powered Royal Challengers Bengaluru to a commanding 60-run win over Punjab Kings Thursday keeping their playoff hopes alive in the ongoing IPL.

Kohli and Patidar added 72 off 32 balls for the third wicket before Cameron Green's 27-ball 46 (5x4, 1x6) helped RCB post 241/7 after they were invited to bat first. In response, PBKS were bowled out for 181 in 17 overs. The loss ended Punjab's playoff dream this season.

The Punjab fielders were guilty of dropping catches. Kohli, who was dropped on 0 and 10, made PBKS pay scoring his sixth fifty this season. Patidar, who was also given two lives, provided the early momentum. After Patidar's departure, Kohli and Green added 92 runs off 46 balls.

PBKS started off well despite losing Prabhsimran Singh in the first over as Jonny Bairstow (27) and Rilee Rossouw (61, 27b, 9x4, 3x6) added 65 runs. Shashank Singh too chipped in with a 19-ball 37 (4x4, 2x6), but it wasn't enough. Mohammed Siraj (3/43) bowled well for RCB.

India eyes whitewash Bangla

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Sylhet (Bangladesh), May 9: Radha Yadav (3/24) ran through Bangladesh's top-order after Richa Ghosh's quickfire unbeaten 28 off 17 balls (3x4, 1x6), setting up India's 21-run win in the fifth T20I and a 5-0 series sweep here Thursday.

Chasing a huge 157-run target, Bangladesh began promisingly but collapsed against the left-arm spinner Yadav. Despite the rearguard act by Ritu Moni (37, 33b, 4x4) and Shorifa Khatun (28 n o, 21b, 3x4), the hosts finished at 135/6.

All-rounder Moni and Shorifa put on a resolute stand of 57 runs for the sixth wicket to lead the fightback and put India in pressure, but the visitors returned eventually. It was leg-spinner Asha Sobhana (2/25) who broke the resilient partnership, cleaning up Moni in the 17th over to shut the doors on the home side. Bangladesh were left reeling at 52/5 halfway through but Moni and Shorifa reignited their hopes.

Earlier, Ghosh smacked a handy little innings with three fours and a six to take India to 156/5, providing a much-needed impetus after the visitors stumbled with a flurry of wickets.

Skipper Harmanpreet Kaur (30, 24b, 4x4), Dayalan Hemalatha



(37, 28b, 2x4, 2x6) and S Sajana (1) fell in quick succession which allowed Bangladesh to halt India's progress as they were aiming for a big score. Harmanpreet and Hemalatha put on 60 runs for the third wicket for a strong foundation.

India's 156/5 was the highest total of the series from either team with Smriti Mandhana (33, 25b, 4x4, 1x6) setting the tone early on. Ghosh, on the other hand, played the role of a finisher with a superb cameo.

Yadav finished as the highest wicket-taker in the series with 10 dismissals in five games whereas Mandhana's 116 runs in five outings were the most for any batter.

Brief scores: India Women 156/5 (Dayalan Hemalatha 37, Smriti Mandhana 33, Harmanpreet Kaur 30, Richa Ghosh 28 n o; Nahida Akter 2/27, Rabeya Khan 2/28) beat Bangladesh Women 135/6 (Ritu Moni 37, Shorifa Khatun 28 n o; Radha Yadav 3/24, Asha Sobhana 2/25) by 21 runs.

India name squad for Europe leg of Hockey Pro League

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, May 9: Harmanpreet Singh will lead a 24-member Indian squad in the Europe leg of the FIH Hockey Pro League starting May 22.

India will play a total of eight matches, twice each against Argentina, Belgium, Germany and Great Britain across two legs of the tournament. The first leg will be held in Antwerp, Belgium from May 22-30 while the second will be organised in London from June 1-12.

India are currently placed third in the Pro League standings, with 15 points from eight matches, behind leaders the Netherlands (26 points from 12 matches) and Australia (20 from 8).

The squad: Goalkeepers: PR Sreejesh, Krishan Bahadur Pathak; Defenders: Jarmanpreet Singh, Amit Rohidas, Harmanpreet Singh, Sumit, Sanjay, Jugraj Singh, Vishnukant Singh; Midfielders: Vivek Sagar Prasad, Nilakanta Sharma, Manpreet Singh, Shamsher Singh, Hardik Singh, Rajkumar Pal, Mohd. Raheel Mousen; Forwards: Mandeep Singh, Abhishek, Sukhjeet Singh, Lalit Kumar Upadhyay, Gurjant Singh, Akashdeep Singh, Arajjeet Singh Hundal and Bobby Singh Dhani.

Gukesh shares points with Carlsen



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Warsaw, May 9: Newly-crowned FIDE Candidates' champion D Gukesh recovered from a sedate start to script two wins — against compatriot R Praggnanandhaa and Vincent Keymer — and a draw with the World No.1 Magnus Carlsen — in three rounds on the second day of the Superbet rapid and blitz tournament, a part of the Grand Chess tour.

Gukesh made a strong comeback Thursday, defeating Praggnanandhaa and Keymer in fourth and fifth rounds. In the sixth round, he was up against Carlsen with the white

pieces and it was a spectacular game by all counts.

Carlsen managed to surprise Gukesh in the Italian two knights. He sacrificed a pawn for the bishop pair, and soon got a small advantage with the black pieces. But Gukesh fought back and equalised with a series of accurate moves.

After a few moves, the real drama started. Gukesh made a blunder after some moves which gave Carlsen a good chance to go for a win. But Gukesh did not succumb so easily. It was also not clear over the board - he found this tricky move. The next few moves saw Gukesh defending

with engine-like accuracy and the game ended in a draw.

Carlsen was co-leading with eight points alongside World No.10 Chinese Grandmaster Wei Yi. Gukesh was sharing the fifth spot with compatriot Erigaisi Arjun and Nodirbek Abusattorov of Uzbekistan, having six points in the kitty.

However, it was Praggnanandhaa who was the best-placed Indian, having seven points in his account as he was tied second with Romanian Kirill Shevchenko.

Gukesh, who recorded just a lone draw out of three games on the opening day, fought his way back at the expense of Praggnanandhaa earlier in the first round of the day before securing a crushing win against Keymer.

Wasting no time following the loss to Gukesh, Praggnanandhaa also returned much stronger in the fifth-round, defeating Holland's Anish Giri. The dream run of Shevchenko was ended by Arjun.

Earlier, World No.8 Arjun held Carlsen to an easy draw in the opener and then drew two more games to remain within striking distance of early leader Shevchenko after the third round of tournament.

Manika's sensational run at Grand Smash ends in quarters

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Jeddah, May 9: Manika Batra's giant-killing run at the Grand Smash tournament here ended in the women's singles quarterfinals Thursday as she lost to Japan's Hina Hayata 1-4, having become the first Indian woman table tennis player to enter the last eight stage of an elite WTT event. The Indian ace was coming off victory over World No.14 Nina Mittelham.

After stunning World No.2 Wang Manyu in the second round, Batra extended her red hot form in Saudi Arabia with an 11-6, 11-9, 11-7 win over her German rival in just 22 minutes Wednesday. However, she could not stretch the run against World No.5 Hayata, losing 11-7, 6-11, 4-11, 11-13, 2-11.

Earlier, Batra recorded first win over Mittelham in four attempts to set up a meeting with another formidable rival in Hayata. The Indian entered the quarterfinals, backing herself to put it past Hayata as she had upset the Japanese to win a historic bronze in the Asia Cup back in 2022. But the result did not go in her favour this time.

Earlier, after beating



Mittelham, the 28-year-old Batra said, "I'm feeling really proud with myself that I played my best game today after beating Wang Manyu. That match was really important to me and I was happy and excited so I had to keep myself calm for this match."

"Everything is going right here. Everything in my room, in my practice session, in my match; so I think I love this country! This is my first quarterfinals in a Smash so I'm really thankful to everyone that was there to cheer and my practice partner for coaching me and my coach in India."

Batra, ranked 39, had shocked China's Wang Monday after getting past Romania's Andreea Dragoman in the first round, her first win at a Grand Smash event.