



## Beyond typecasting

Actor Sonakshi Sinha avoids typecasting, and aims to be cast in any genre, embracing diverse roles

LEISURE | P2



## Al Jazeera goes off-air

Israeli government moves to shut down the operations of the Al Jazeera television network in the country, branding it a mouthpiece for Hamas

INTERNATIONAL | P10



## Firms' incorporation

More than 1.85 lakh companies have been registered in the country last fiscal, higher than the count recorded in the year-ago period

BUSINESS | P11



## Jadeja scripts win

Ravindra Jadeja's all-round effort helps CSK keep the playoff hopes alive with an easy win over Punjab Kings

SPORTS | P12

# BJP releases 'Sankalp Patra'

Claiming that manifestos were just a formality during the Congress regime, BJP national president Nadda asserted the election booklets have gained importance and both people as well as parties are taking them as serious documents. Nadda listed the major promises - 3.5 lakh jobs in five years, cash voucher of ₹50,000 for women, 'Odia Samudaya Bhawan' in all metro cities, return of money lost in chit fund scam, and procurement of paddy at ₹3,100 per quintal. He also raked up the Ratna Bhandar issue and promised opening of all four gates of Srimandir and restoration of evicted mutts. However the 'Sankalp Patra' was silent on pressing issues such as the Mahanadi water dispute and border conflicts with neighbouring states.



₹5,000 scholarship per year to tribal students, and ₹3,000 monthly pension for all senior citizens, physically disabled persons, widows and destitute.

The BJP promised to provide 3.5 lakh jobs by 2029 and said it will fill up 65,000 vacant government posts in a transparent manner within two years.

It promised that it would return the money people lost by investing in chit-fund companies within 18 months, and implement the Ayushman Bharat scheme within 100 days.

The BJP also promised medical, engineering and law courses in Odia, and set up IT parks at Bhubaneswar, Rourkela, Berhampur and Balasore, besides textile parks in western Odisha.

If voted to power, the BJP said it would expand the capacity of government hospitals by 36,000

beds, modernise ICUs, dialysis units and operations theaters, and establish nursing colleges, medical colleges and super speciality hospitals in every district.

Alleging that the BJD government in the state mismanaged the Jagannath temple in Puri, Nadda said, "We will expedite the investigation of the missing key of the Ratna Bhandar, and make its inventory public." All the mutts evicted during the redevelopment project will be fairly compensated and re-established, and all four gates of the temple will be opened for devotees, he said.

Nadda alleged that violence against women has increased in the state under the Naveen Patnaik government, and scores of BJD leaders are involved in atrocities such as rape and murder. He also went on to allege that promises made by the BJD over the years are yet to be fulfilled. The BJP president listed the major promises made in the manifesto taking into consideration the needs of people belonging to various categories - mainly farmers, women, youths and the poor.

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, May 5:** Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) national president Jagat Prakash Nadda Sunday released the party's 'Sankalp Patra' (election manifesto) bearing the tagline 'Modi ki Guarantee' for the upcoming Assembly polls in state and termed it as the blueprint for the state's development.

In its manifesto, the BJP has promised 'Samrudh Krushak Niti', under which paddy will be procured at ₹3,100 per quintal and the money will be credited to the bank accounts of farmers within 48 hours.

If voted to power, the BJP said it will launch 'Subhadra Yojana'

under which every woman will receive a cash voucher of ₹50,000 which can be encashed over two years.

"We will aim to create 25 lakh 'Lakshpati Didis' in Odisha by 2027. For this, we will create industrial clusters for every 500 self-help groups, wherein we will provide facility management for product marketing and promotion," Nadda said.

The BJP made a promise to build 'Odia Samudaya Bhawan' in all metro cities of the country for the welfare of Odia people living outside the state.

The party promised an annual lean period allowance of ₹10,000 to every fisherman, construction of 75,000 km of roads in the state,

## IRREGULAR by MANJUL



No, you can't be our candidate. You're involved in too many crimes. Don't you have a son?

# IAF convoy attack: Many detained for questioning

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Mendhar/Jammu, May 5:** Several people were detained for questioning Sunday as a massive search operation for terrorists behind the Indian Air Force (IAF) convoy attack in Jammu and Kashmir's Poonch district entered the second day, officials said.

Additional Director General of Police, Jammu, Anand Jain and senior officers of the Army and intelligence agencies visited the

## Poonch attack BJP's pre-poll stunt: Channi

**Chandigarh:** Congress leader and former Punjab Chief Minister Charanjit Singh Channi said Sunday that Saturday's terror attack in J&K's Poonch district was a pre-election stunt by the BJP. "These are all stunts and not terrorist attacks. There is no truth in it. BJP is playing with the lives of people and bodies," Channi said while campaigning in Jalandhar from where he is in the fray for the Parliamentary poll. These attacks are not really happening but just meant to benefit the BJP... Whenever elections take place, such stunts are played like it happened last time, he added while pointing towards the 2019 Pulwama attack.

ambush spot in the Surankote area. The Army also conducted aerial surveillance using a helicopter, they said.

Five IAF personnel were injured in the attack Saturday evening near Shahsitar and one of them later succumbed to in-

juries at a military hospital.

The officials said a well-coordinated joint operation by the Army and the police was underway in many areas, including Shahsitar, Gursai, Sana and Sheendara Top, to neutralise the terrorists. The attackers are believed to have fled to a forest after the attack, they said.

Besides AK assault rifles, the terrorists also used a US-made M4 carbine and steel bullets to cause maximum casualties, the officials added. The IAF has identi-

fied the fallen hero as Corporal Vikky Pahade and expressed condolences to his family.

The CAS (Chief of Air Staff) Air Chief Marshal VR Chaudhari & all personnel of Indian Air Force salute the braveheart Corporal Vikky Pahade, who made the supreme sacrifice in Poonch sector, in the service of the nation. Our deepest condolences to the bereaved family. We stand firmly by your side in this hour of grief, it posted on 'X'.

# EBS potentially country's biggest scam: Bhushan

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, May 5:** Terming the Electoral Bond Scheme as "potentially the biggest corruption scam in the country", Supreme Court Lawyer Prashant Bhushan called for a thorough probe by an independent body while attending a seminar here Sunday.

The seminar 'Electoral Bonds and our Right to Information' was organised by Odisha Suchana Adhikar

Abhiyan (OSAA) at Bharatiya Vidya Bhawan in the Capital City. Supreme Court Lawyer Prashant Bhushan, social activists and members of National Campaign for People's Right to Information (NCPRI) and Satark Nagrik Sangathan (SNS) Anjali Bharadwaj and Amrita Johri were present in the seminar.

"The Electoral Bond Scheme is potentially the biggest corruption scam in the country, which requires thorough probe by an independent body," Prashant Bhushan said adding that people have to take the lead to bring political reform. Electoral bond distribution to big parties disrupts the level playing field during elections with difference in funds among the political parties.

In addition to potential kickbacks, data suggest regulatory inaction on companies that donated through electoral bonds and reveal potential money laundering, with loss making and shell companies donating funds to political parties. The experts demanded for a court monitored SIT into the Electoral Bond Scheme.

# Cong changes 5 candidates for Assembly polls

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Bhubaneswar, May 5:** The Congress Sunday changed its candidates in five Assembly constituencies in state while naming Akshaya Acharya from the Nilagiri Assembly seat.

The party has nominated former minister and four-time MLA Debashish Nayak for the Bari Assembly constituency replacing Arati Deo. Nayak had joined the Congress Saturday after BJP denied him a ticket.

Nayak had joined the BJP in February from the BJD. Nayak was elected to the state Assembly from the Bari Assembly seat in 2000, 2004, 2009 and 2014 on BJD ticket.

Congress spokesperson Sudarshan Das has been nominated for the Jaleswar Assembly constituency replacing Debi Prasanna Chand. For the Athamallik Assembly segment, the party has fielded Himanshu Chaulia in place of Bijayananda Chaulia while Sujit Mahapatra has been replaced by Uma Ballav Rath for the Puri Assembly segment.

Sudarshan Sahoo is the new Congress nominee for the Athagarh Assembly segment. The party had earlier nominated Maheboob Ahmad Khan for the seat. On Saturday, the party changed its Puri Lok Sabha constituency candidate Sucharita Mohanty after she returned the ticket due to alleged lack of funding from the party. The Congress has nominated Jay Narayan Patnaik for the Puri Lok Sabha constituency.

## Cong candidate attacked

**Puri:** Congress nominee for Puri Assembly seat Uma Ballav Rath was seriously injured Sunday after he was assaulted by unknown miscreants, police said. Rath, who sustained head and body injuries, filed a complaint at Kumbharpada police station. He claimed that while canvassing near the bus stand, he was suddenly attacked by unknown people with bricks and glass bottles. Local residents intervened and saved him, prompting a police response led by the City DSP. It is suspected that Rath's candidature as the Congress nominee could have been a reason for the attack. Meanwhile, angry over the change of candidate by the Congress leadership, supporters of Mohapatra ransacked the party's district office in the town, police said.

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# leisure



## DUA RECALLS GOING THROUGH HUMILIATION OVER HER DANCING

Singer Dua Lipa opened up about enduring two years of humiliation following criticism of her dancing and revealed that it wasn't until her comeback with *Future Nostalgia* that she regained her confidence. The singer said, "When people took that snippet of me dancing online and just turned it into a meme, it was humiliating."

## MADONNA ENDS CELEBRATION TOUR WITH HUGE FREE GIG

Singer Madonna closed out her Celebration tour with a free concert for around 1.6 million people in Brazil. The singer turned Rio de Janeiro's Copacabana beach into a giant dance floor when she took to the stage for the free show in front of an estimated 1.6 million people.



### FORTUNE FORECAST

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**ARIES**  
If you are in the mood to be alone, go ahead and indulge, says Ganesh. No need for friends and no need for music. Rush to the outskirts and mingle with nature. If you deal in money matters, says Ganesh, there may be some money coming your way.

**TAURUS**  
There is a strong possibility that you will put off those you love and respect on account of your unpleasant behaviour. Ganesh underlines the need to hold your temper as well as your tongue. You need to keep extra cool this day. This is a day full of romantic possibilities. You are likely to get attracted to someone of the opposite sex during the afternoon and spend a lovely evening in courtship.

**GEMINI**  
A marathon brainstorming session with your colleagues, a scamper for meeting deadlines, and a demanding spouse will leave you quite stressed out by the end of the day. You, however, are an expert in dividing time between business, home and pleasure. The answer to your prayers is a late-night party, at least that's what you think.

**CANCER**  
This is your big moment. You are going to deal with a huge amount of money – the kind of amount you would want to fill your swimming pool with and swim in it. Statutory warning issued by Ganesh: Don't dive in it, for you may hurt yourself as something or someone is likely to pull the plug, draining out most of the wealth that was amassed overnight.

**LEO**  
Your wish to be in a cocoon, protected from the vagaries of the world, may come to fruition today. You remain sensitive and protected, says Ganesh. At work, you will be filled with a sense of purpose, and a feeling of solidity. But it is the evening that you should look forward to, as you are assured of a fantastic time with your family and loved ones.

**VIRGO**  
Your professional life may just bounce up higher than ever today, predicts Ganesh. Expect incentives as well today. Executing plans to perfection will come naturally to you. In the evening, family will drown you in their unconditional love. A bright, charming day, says Ganesh.

**LIBRA**  
We all have our own worlds to manage, and play the superhero for. And our family, friends and work are what make up our world. Ganesh foresees a day in which you shall remain engrossed in managing these different aspects of your life. Expect to find your financial prospects shine bright on the professional front, and bask in the approval that you receive for your actions.

**SCORPIO**  
Proposals of your choice will come your way today says Ganesh. You shall probably retreat into your shell in the afternoon. But the passing hours will bring out a different you.

**SAGITTARIUS**  
You may just strike the notes of your beloved's heart today. Your presence and presents will make them realise how much you do indeed love them. Expect a trip to posh showrooms and designer shops to buy them expensive gifts.

**CAPRICORN**  
It's not every day that you wake up with a positive feeling, one that pushes you to make right everything that has been going wrong around and within you. Today, you may be in one of those high-spirited moods, says Ganesh.

**AQUARIUS**  
You are fully charged and raring to go! Your friends are supportive of your new schemes, and your bosses are pushing you to complete pending projects. This shouldn't be a problem, considering your current levels of energy and enthusiasm, says Ganesh.

**PISCES**  
Not the best of days for you, haunted as you will be by feelings of insecurity. However, do not be in too much of a hurry to get in the mood to grieve, for the evening brings you pleasant times in the company of your soul mate, says Ganesh.

# Alaya recalls facing disparities

**Mumbai:** Actress Alaya F made her acting debut in the Hindi film industry in 2020, and it was never an easy task for her to find her own path in this industry. In a recent interview, she talked about some disparities she faced with her male counterparts and some unpleasant experiences she had to face on set.

In a chat with Puja Talvar on her YouTube channel, she opened up about some awful experiences she had while doing some films. She believed that the people who are there with her on a project don't care about her and never wish anything good for each other. In such situations where any of the actors are not treated nicely, she wants everyone to fend for themselves and handle the situation.

While talking about some shocking experiences she had, the actress emphasised that, taking these as a part of the job, she could not feel nice. While working on a film, the actor should feel safe and happy and should be provided with a productive environment. But when the environment feels hostile, she finds it hard to adapt. But now the actress is capable of handling those. On the work front, Alaya will be seen next in *Srikanth*.

**Mumbai:** Actress Sushmita Sen showed her support for inclusion and the rainbow as she turned heads at fashion designer Rohit Verma's show at the Bombay Fashion Week. Sushmita looked every inch ethereal as she walked the runway in an ivory and gold-shaded lehenga. She completed her look with kaleeras and flowers adorning her neatly tied bun.

Talking about her walk for the designer, Sushmita said: "This is my second time walking for Rohit Verma, who prefers to be referred to as she. She ensures that every moment is a celebration of inclusion. In today's time, there is a lot of need for inclusion in the world. So, I feel privileged that he not only dressed me but also dressed my soul and gave me the opportunity to celebrate oneness, harmony, and goodness."

Talking about walking on the ramp with such ease, she said: "I like people and when you have a fortune like mine where people love you so much that when I come live (on runway) that feeling is something else. At that time, you don't feel scared or nervous. I enjoy it. It is a performance."

**Mumbai:** Veteran actress Zeenat Aman asked her fellow celebrities not to bring wild animals to filming locations in a lengthy Instagram post. She talked about how she was recently horrified to see an elephant on a set suffer.

The actress wrote, "I was brought to tears recently when I arrived on set to find an elderly, domestic elephant on the scene. She was standing on the burning asphalt, bejewelled and bedecked, and she stayed there all day as the cameras rolled. I was bound by contract to do my job, but I am absolutely guilt-ridden that such a majestic animal suffered for my job and your entertainment."

Zeenat also urged her colleagues in the industry to refrain from bringing animals onto filming locations. "It is my sincere and urgent appeal to my colleagues and compatriots in the film industry to avoid bringing wild animals onto set at all costs. We are so lucky that India hosts the majority of the Asian elephant population in the world and that this species is our national heritage animal. We are also blessed to have numerous organisations in India that work towards the welfare and conservation of this incredible animal. I am sharing a few resources from such organisations in my stories. I will be elated if you peruse them." Meanwhile, on the work front, Zeenat will be next seen in the film *Bun Tikki*.

# Sonakshi's quest for diversity

**New Delhi:** Since her debut in 2010, Sonakshi Sinha has tried to not get pigeonholed in a particular role. The actress said she has strived to reinvent herself and aims to be the kind of actor whom filmmakers can cast in any genre.

"An actor's job is to always strive and keep doing different things, reinventing themselves with everything they do, and I think that is what I have been doing. I have been doing it since I did my first solo film, which was *Akira*, and that's always been what I strive to do," Sonakshi told IANS.

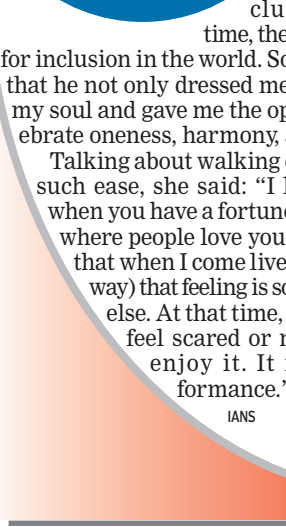
"I want to be that actor whom a filmmaker can cast in any genre. That's been my effort ever since then, and I think I have been doing pretty well at it. I have played many diverse roles. I have portrayed some very strong female characters on screen, and I am very happy to do so," she said.

"I have worked with all sorts of filmmakers. I have done many genres of films. I kind of have just explored things as and when they have come to me, and I have really enjoyed it," she said.

"Till today, any project I start, I treat it as my first film, and I think that is what keeps me engaged in the process," concluded the *Rowdy Rathore* actress.



## Sushmita bats for inclusivity



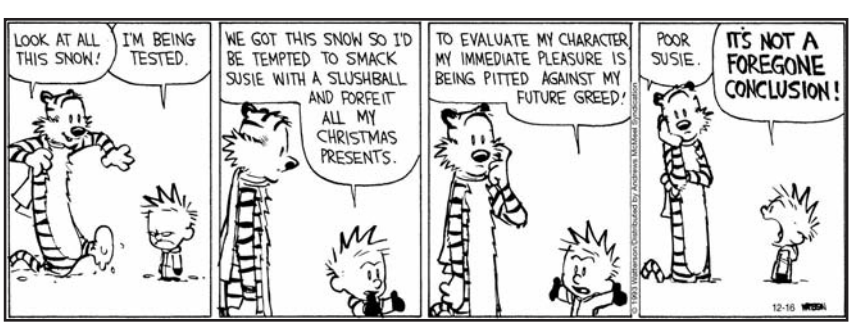
## Zeenat advocates for the voiceless



### PEANUTS



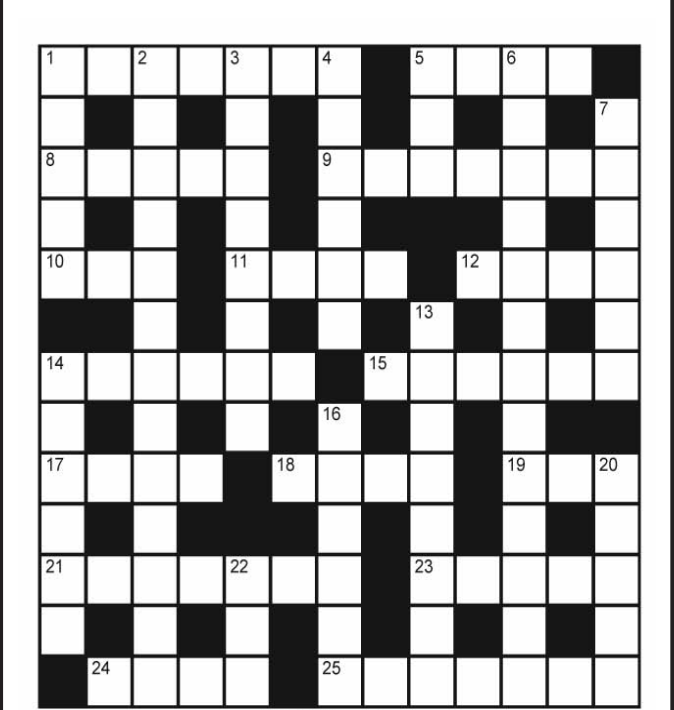
### CALVIN AND HOBBS



### BREVITY



## FUN post CROSSWORD



- Across**
- 1 Pergolas
  - 5 Matterhorn locale
  - 8 Dental appliance
  - 9 Burrows
  - 10 Lend a hand
  - 11 Small brook
  - 12 Hot rock
  - 14 Cup holder
  - 15 Prickly pear
  - 17 Lymph bump
  - 18 Combust
  - 19 Lab eggs
  - 21 Leaping insect
  - 23 Lacking zest
  - 24 Hideous
  - 25 Passed along
- Down**
- 1 Capital of Ghana
  - 2 Like a scream in a horror film
  - 3 Rattled
  - 4 Put down roots
  - 5 Beard of grass
  - 6 Like some advice
  - 7 Hollywood's laurels
  - 13 Carthaginian general
  - 14 Nero's tutor
  - 16 Zither's cousin
  - 20 Increased
  - 22 Critical

### SUDOKU

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

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

### SOLUTIONS

**CROSSWORD**

L	I	S	T	I	D	L	E	N	E	S	S
E	U	B	I	X	P	O	U				
V	I	S	I	O	N	S	P	O	I	S	E
E	H	O	O	E	C	T					
R	A	I	N	B	O	W	T	R	O	U	T
A	Y	N	I	R	C						
G	U	I	L	T	Y	A	M	O	E	B	A
E	N	R	A	E	S						
D	I	S	A	D	V	A	N	T	A	G	E
S	T	P	E	T	I	S	M				
C	H	I	M	P	R	E	A	L	I	S	E
M	A	L	E	S	L	L	E	N			
M	E	L	O	D	I	E	S	W	E	P	T

**SUDOKU**

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

CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW



# downtown

## IN MEMORIAM

Justice Sashikanta Mishra of Orissa High Court lighting the lamp to inaugurate the state-level birth anniversary of freedom fighter Dharanidhar Nayak (Bhuyan) organised by I&PR department in association with Keonjhar Citizens' Forum and Nikhila Bharat Bhuyan Sanskritik Samiti at Soochana Bhawan in Bhubaneswar, Sunday



# BJD seeks curbs on Chhattisgarh Governor's visit till end of polls

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Bhubaneswar, May 5:** Accusing Chhattisgarh Governor Biswabhusan Harichandan of violating the model code of conduct (MCC), the BJD Sunday urged the Election Commission to restrict his visit to Odisha till the completion of the simultaneous Lok Sabha and Assembly polls in the state.

The Naveen Patnaik-led party alleged that Harichandan, who hails from Odisha, violated the MCC by influencing voters in person and over the phone to support his son Prithviraj, who is contesting from the Chilika Assembly seat on a BJP ticket.

The BJD has mailed a complaint petition to Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) Rajiv Kumar and submitted a copy to the chief electoral officer (CEO) of Odisha in this regard, BJD MP Sasmit Patra said.

The Chhattisgarh governor, during his stay in Bhubaneswar from April 30 to May 4, engaged in indirect campaigning for his



son Prithviraj, Patra alleged.

He called up political leaders and important persons in Chilika Assembly constituency and requested them to support his son Prithviraj in this election, the BJD leader alleged.

"He invited several eminent intellectuals and opinion makers of Chilika area to his residence from time to time and held consultations with them, with a view to garner electoral support for his son Prithviraj," the party said in its petition to the CEC.

The governor's act is a 'gross violation' of the model code of conduct and 'doesn't behave' the high constitutional position he holds, the party alleged.

The ruling party in the state requested the CEC to conduct an inquiry into these MCC violations allegedly committed by the Chhattisgarh governor.

"He be suitably cautioned and told to refrain from coming to Odisha till the completion of the elections here, more so since his son is contesting as a BJP candidate from Chilika," the BJD said in the petition.

Reacting to the allegations, Prithviraj Harichandan said, "The BJD is leveling these charges as the party has realised that it is losing ground and will face defeat in this election."

"As my father is a governor of a state, many people, including political leaders from different parties and eminent personalities, usually meet him. Will it be stopped for the election?" Prithviraj told PTI over the phone.

He (the governor) has not attended any political meeting or programme during his recent visit to Odisha, Prithviraj claimed.



DEITIES' WATER SPORT PREP: Workers prepare a temporary ramp in Chandan Pond ahead of Chandan Jatra in Puri, Sunday

OP PHOTO

# STF seizes 49 kg marijuana, nabs 5

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, May 5:** The Special Task Force (STF) has seized 49 kg marijuana by intercepting two vehicles on National Highway-16 near Tangi area of Cuttack and claimed to have arrested five peddlers, including one from Bihar.

Two four-wheelers and several incriminating materials have been seized from the possession of the accused, said a senior STF officer.

According to STF Superintendent Police (SP) Kishore Kumar Panigrahi, the accused were identified as Roshan Kumar Choudhury, 30, a native of Samastipur district in Bihar, Purna Chandra Mallik, 36, a native of Cuttack, Sandip Diga, 24, a native of Kandhamal, Bikash Kumar Pradhan, 30, a resident of Kandhamal and Manas Kumar Mallick, 22, of Cuttack.

"Acting on a tip-off, the STF sleuths along with twin city police laid a trap near NH-16 Saturday morning and when the vehicles neared the spot, the sleuths intercepted it and conducted a search. The officials rounded up the peddlers and found the contraband wrapped in a gunny bag," said Panigrahi.

According to preliminary investigations, the arrested have confessed that they were transporting the contraband from Phulbani to Digha area of West Bengal. They were planning to sell the marijuana to local peddlers at a premium price, it added.

# Courts not 'mere tape recorders': SC

AGENCIES

**New Delhi, May 5:** Courts have to take a participatory role in a trial and not act as "mere tape recorders", the Supreme Court said here and lamented that there is "practically no effective and meaningful cross-examination" by public prosecutors of any hostile witness during hearings of criminal appeals.

The apex court said a judge has to monitor the proceedings in aid

of justice and, even if the prosecutor is remiss or lethargic in some ways, the court should control the proceedings effectively so that the truth is arrived at.

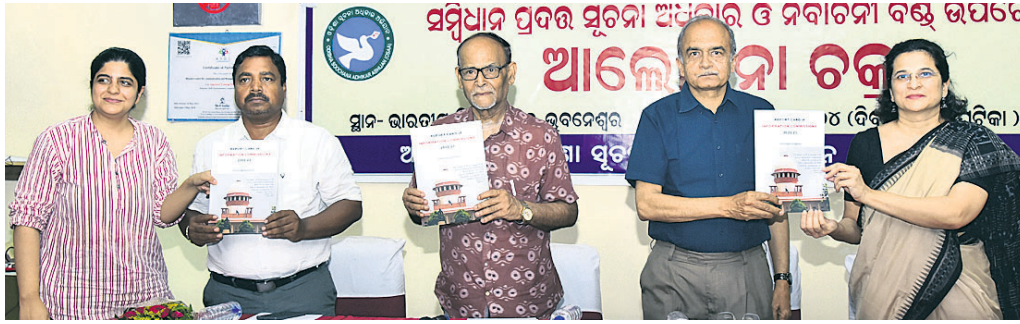
Observing that relations between the public prosecution service and the judiciary are the very cornerstone of the criminal justice system, a bench headed by Chief Justice D Y Chandrachud said

time and again, the top court has said that there should not be any element of political consideration in matters like appointment to post of public prosecutor etc.

The observations by the bench, also comprising Justices J B Pardiwala and Manoj Misra, came in a judgement while upholding the conviction and life sentence awarded to a man for murdering his wife in 1995.



# Central govt making attempts to weaken RTI Act: Anjali Bharadwaj



POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, May 5:** Noted social activist and co-convenor of the National Campaign for People's Right to Information (NCPRI) and founding member of Satark Nagrik Sangathan (SNS), Anjali Bharadwaj, accused the Central government of making every attempt to weaken the Right to Information (RTI) Act that makes the country truly democratic and gives people the power to question.

"This is because they (Central govt) do not want to be answerable to the people and wishes to continue with corruption," said Bharadwaj while speaking at a seminar, titled, 'Electoral Bonds and our Right to Information (RTI)' at the Bharatiya Vidya Bhawan, here, Sunday. The event was organised by Odisha Suchana Adhikar Abhiyan (OSAA).

Elaborating, Bharadwaj said the Central government, through many amendments, tried to weaken the RTI act, including controlling the salary and tenure of Information Commissions. "The government is also trying to effect more amendments to exclude different schemes under the act's purview so that the information can't be disclosed. This will further weaken the act," she said, adding that four states - Tripura, Madhya Pradesh, Jharkhand and Telangana - don't have proper Information Commissions at all.

Shedding light on the Electoral Bonds scheme, Bharadwaj said it is a Central government's ploy to make corruption legal wherein big corporates provide large sums of money through bonds to parties. "And the BJP is the biggest beneficiary of these bonds. Even BJD also get ₹1,000 crore worth bonds. The non disclosure of the received money is a clear violation of Right to Information," she added.

Prashant Bhusan and Amrita Johri, member of NCPI and SNS, also addressed the seminar.

Recently, in a land mark verdict the Supreme Court (SC) struck down the electoral bonds scheme calling it unconstitutional and stopped its further sale. The SC directed the disclosure of all bonds sold and redeemed. The SBI's attempt to delay disclosure of crucial information, which would allow tracking of donations through bonds, was rejected by SC.

Date shows ₹12,155 crore worth of electoral bonds were purchased by corporate groups and individuals, and ₹12,769 crore of bonds were encashed by political parties since April 12, 2019. The BJP was the biggest beneficiary of bonds accounting for ₹6,060 crore which is over 47 per cent of the total amount of electoral bonds encashed. The panel at the seminar demanded a court monitored SIT to probe into the electoral bonds scheme.

# PoK is back in national consciousness: Jaishankar

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**Cuttack, May 5:** Emphasising that Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK) has always been a part of India, External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar Sunday, said that the "very sorry state of affairs" has continued because the earlier governments did not pursue Pakistan's vacation from the region after Independence.

"PoK has never been out of this country. It has always been a part of this country. There is a resolution of the Indian Parliament that PoK is very much a part of India. Now, how did other people get control? Ab ho jaata hai (it happens) when you have someone who is not a responsible custodian of a house, an outsider will come and steal something," Jaishankar said during an interactive session in Odisha's Cuttack.

"Here you have allowed another country... It was because we did not pursue the vacation of Pakistan from these territories in the early years of Independence that this very sorry state of affairs has continued. What will happen in the future is very difficult to tell. But, I always tell peo-



ple one thing that today PoK is in the consciousness once again of the people of India. We had forgotten about it, we were made to forget about it but it is back now, definitely," he added.

It is not for the first time that the EAM has blamed the previous Congress governments for several problems that had emerged on the foreign policy front, post Independence. Last week in Hyderabad, Jaishankar told a gathering that Sardar Patel had opposed India approaching the UN on the Kashmir issue, but India's first PM Jawaharlal Nehru disregarded it.

"Today, there is a lot of interest in Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK), but we should not forget how the problem originated. The doors of international pressure opened in 1947 and continued all the way till Article 370 was repealed (in 2019). We have corrected an enormous mistake that we had made in 1947," said Jaishankar.

# AI, ML tools to check money laundering

India's Financial Intelligence Unit (FIU) has operationalised an advanced 2.0 version of its information technology system, armed with artificial intelligence and machine learning tools, to check money laundering and terrorist financing crimes in the country's economic channels.

The upgrade of the technological backbone was required as the volume of data (suspicious transaction reports) flagged by banks and various other financial institutions to the FIU for analysis and further dissemination to investigative and intelligence organisations has been 'increasing', a latest report for the 2022-23 fiscal said.

The agency was set up in 2004 to "play a decisive role in India's fight against the menace of money laundering and terrorism financing" under the legal setup of the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA).

The recently released report has been accessed by PTI which says that the Financial Intelligence Network (FINnet) 2.0 was envisaged as the country's regulatory environment has been changing, technology land-

scape has been evolving and hence an overhaul of the existing FINnet 1.0 system was required to achieve an efficient system of collection, processing and dissemination of financial intelligence.

"FINnet 2.0 leverages emerging technologies for superior analytical competencies, data quality improvement, incisive compliance monitoring and cutting-edge security tools for strengthening anti-money laundering and combating the financing of terrorism capabilities of FIU-India and its reporting universe," the report said.

It enables generation of risk scores for individuals, businesses, reports, networks and cases to be able to flag high risk cases, entities or reports for immediate action and it prioritises cases by using risk analytics, it said.

The 2.0 version has capabilities of 'advanced analytics' by employing artificial intelligence and machine learning tools and a strategic analysis lab to stay abreast with the developments in anti-money laundering and emerging technologies, the report said.



The new system also uses natural language processing (NLP) and text mining tools to analyse textual inputs like 'grounds of suspicion'.

The FINnet 2.0 is aimed to provide sophistication in FIU's 'analytical and data processing capacity' and it comprises three sub-systems.

While FINGate is meant for information collection from banks, financial institutions and intermediaries, FINCore is for analytics by FIU experts and FINex

is used for disseminating financial intelligence reports to probe agencies like the Income tax department, ED, CBI, DRI and snooping organisations like the IB, military intelligence (MI) and the NTRO among others.

FINCore, the most important vertical of this technology setup, uses artificial intelligence and machine learning to generate summaries and sharing suspicious transaction reports with various law enforcement agencies based on risk profile, it said.

This third sub-system uses information from external databases like the Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT), Ministry of Corporate Affairs, National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI), Central Registry of Securitisation Asset Reconstruction and Security Interest (CERSAI), Central Depository Services Ltd. (CDSL) and National Securities Depository Limited (NSDL) to draw a 'holistic picture of the entity in question and helps in more effective resolution and identification of the entity'.

The report stated that as the FIU deals with 'sensitive' financial data, confidentiality and data security were important component of the upgraded IT system.

"Various measures are put in place to ensure security of data, including strong, end-to-end encryption, automatic blocking of logins after a set number of unsuccessful login attempts, controlled access to content stored on the portal, logging of security incidents, identity management solution capable of managing security rights and privileges by individuals," it said.



# Titilagarh hottest at 45°C

Twin cities of Bhubaneswar and Cuttack recorded 39.9 and 38.5 degrees Celsius, respectively

ARINDAM GANGULY, OP

**Bhubaneswar, May 5:** With the heatwave continue to prevail in Odisha, at least 26 places in the state recorded maximum temperatures (day temperatures) of 40°C or more Sunday. According to the India Meteorological Department (IMD) regional center in Bhubaneswar, Titilagarh was the hottest place in the state with a temperature of 45 degrees Celsius.

It was followed by Boudh with 44.6 degrees Celsius, Nuapada 44.4, Bolangir 44.3, Jharsuguda 44, Bhawanipatna 44, Baripada 43.8, Subarnapur 43.5 and Sambalpur 43.4 degrees Celsius. Keonjhar, Sundargarh and Nayagarh registered maximum temperature of 43 degrees Celsius.

The twin cities of Bhubaneswar and Cuttack recorded 39.9 and 38.5 degrees Celsius, respectively.

The IMD has issued yellow warning for the districts of Mayurbhanj, Keonjhar, Boudh,



Angul, Nayagarh, Nuapada, and Bolangir where heatwave condition is very likely to prevail in next 24 hours.

It has also forecast that light rain/thundershower is likely at one or two places in the districts of Keonjhar, Mayurbhanj, Balasore, Ganjam, Gajapati, Koraput and Rayagada during the period.

"Thunderstorm with lightning accompanied with gusty

surface wind speed reaching 30 to 40 kmph very likely to occur at one or two places over the districts of Mayurbhanj, Balasore, Bhadrak, Ganjam, Gajapati and Kandhamal."

IMD also predicted strong gusty surface wind speed reaching 40 to 50 kmph along and off the north Odisha coast during May 6 to May 8. Fishermen are advised not to venture into sea along during the same period.

Due to anticipated high energy swell, waves in the near shore region and the low lying areas may experience surges (gushing of sea water into these near shore / beach areas May 6.

Coastal people are alerted to be cautious on possible surging of waves (gushing of sea water) intermittently in the near shore/beach region, particularly in the low lying areas and during high tide/spring tide phases.

Small vessels may ply near shore with due caution. Boats may be anchored at a fair distance from each other, to avoid collision and damage.



SUMMER RELIEF: Volunteers of Sai Trinath Neelachakra Yoga Samiti serving water to people from a kiosk near Chandini Chowk in Cuttack, Sunday OP PHOTO

# PM Modi begins 2-day state visit

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Bhubaneswar, May 5:** Prime Minister Narendra Modi arrived here Sunday night to lead the BJP's campaign for its candidates Monday, officials said.

Modi was received by senior BJP leaders including party's Odisha unit president Manmohan Samal and Bhubaneswar MP Aparajita Sarangi at the Biju Patnaik International Airport.

Modi was seen flashing a lotus symbol to people who were standing on both sides of the road connecting the airport with Raj Bhavan. He is likely to visit Shree Lingaraj temple in the City Monday morning, sources said. The PM is scheduled to address two election rallies in Berhampur and Nabarangpur Monday.

Sarangi said Modi will again visit Odisha May 10 and hold a roadshow here. He will address an election rally in Bolangir May 11, she added.

Modi arrived at the state Capital hours after BJP president JP Nadda left the City after releasing the party's manifesto ahead of the Lok Sabha and Assembly elections to be held between May 13 and June 1.



SIGNAL FAIL: A defunct traffic signal at the busy Odisha Judicial Academy intersection in Cuttack poses risk to motorists in the millennium city OP PHOTO

# 'Water pollution will have disastrous effects'

ARINDAM GANGULY, OP

**Bhubaneswar, May 5:** Using polluted water for domestic, commercial, industrial and agricultural purposes, including fish and aquaculture farms can be hazardous to public health, opined experts in a seminar titled 'Pollution of Coastal and Inland Waters,' organised by Orissa Environmental Society (OES) here recently.

The programme was held under the chairmanship of the OES president Sundar Narayan Patro. Former professor of department of Naval Architecture in IIT Kharagpur Suresh Chandra Misra attended as the chief speaker. Misra explained that polluted water is harmful to public health and its use in domestic, commercial, industrial



and agricultural sectors is detrimental. "Pollutants are mostly carried through the river system, which includes, wastes from shipping operations, leaked oil, discarded fishing nets, micro plastics and industrial and commercial wastes," he said.

"These wastes products are

illegally dumped into the river channels without carrying out proper treatment procedure. If precautionary measures are not taken immediately, the entire living world will face the disastrous consequences of water pollution in future," Misra warned.

Patro, in his speech, laid em-

phasis on preventing water pollution without affecting the process of development which is need of the hour.

In his welcome speech, OES secretary Jayakrushna Panigrahi said that increase in pollution of water resources is due to lack of awareness and sensitivity in the society, which leads to several serious health hazards, including cancer.

"Life is intensely dependent on natural resources and all living organisms need water for survival. However, changes in lifestyle through industrialisation, increased use of automobiles, advancements in technology and many other factors have led to an increase in production processes, which ultimately affect the natural resources," Panigrahi added.

# States, UTs asked to monitor brain stem death cases in ICU

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, May 5:** The Centre has asked states and union territories (UTs) to monitor cases of brain stem deaths (BSD) in Intensive Care Unit (ICU) patients, saying poor identification and certification of such cases is keeping the organ donations rate at low levels in the country.

The advisory to the states is aimed at augmenting the organ donation rate which is less than one donor per million populations.

In a letter to the states UTs,

National Organ and Tissue Transplant Organisation (NOTTO) director Anil Kumar said, "The organ donation rate in India continues to be low (less than one donor per million populations in a year). One of the key challenges identified in this is poor identification and certification of BSD cases despite availability of many such potential cases."

"As per provisions of 'The Transplantation of Human Organs Tissues Act, 1994', it is required to identify potential brain stem death cases in the ICU," he observed.

## ORGAN DONATION

Further, it is mandatory to enquire whether such potential donors had pledged for organ donation and if not to make the family members aware of the opportunity to donate organs before the heart stops under the law, he said.

The doctor on duty, with the help of transplant coordinator, is required to make the above-mentioned inquiry after certification of such BSD cases, Kumar said in the letter sent to directors of regional and state organ and tissue transplant or-

ganisations (ROTTOs and SOTTOs) last month.

Kumar said every institution is requested to facilitate and monitor the certification of BSD cases to ensure compliance of provisions of the Act and Rules.

In his letter, the official attached a template of 'required request display board' that is to be placed outside ICUs, emergency or any other strategic location in the hospital. He also attached a list of information to be collected from the hospitals on a regular monthly basis.

The head of the institution and respective SOTTO should

analyse the collected information and the corrective actions must be taken with the aim to maximise organ donation from all potential donors, he said.

Further, all SOTTOs are requested to collect such information as per the list from each registered hospital and send it to the NOTTO by the seventh of every subsequent month, the letter said.

"I seek your cooperation and support for augmenting the organ donation rate in the country so as to achieve self-sufficiency in the field of deceased organ donation," the letter added.

# RIE to observe 61st annual day today



ARINDAM GANGULY, OP

**Bhubaneswar, May 5:** The Regional Institute of Education (RIE), under the aegis of NCERT, will observe its 61st annual day here May 6.

Governor Raghuraj Das will grace the occasion as the chief guest. He will inaugurate the event at 11am, in presence of RIE principal PC Agarwal.

"The event will be a convergence of academia and cultural practices, symbolising the institution's commitment to excellence in education," an RIE faculty said adding "The event will feature captivating cultural performances by the students, showcasing the diversity and vibrancy of Indian heritage, through traditional dances and melodious musical renditions."

Students, who excelled in various curricular activities in 2023-24 academic sessions, will be felicitated on this occasion, he said.

"RIE is one of the premier institutions for teachers' education under NCERT, dedicated to prepare professional teachers and educators. Established with a vision to enhance the quality of education in the eastern and north-eastern region of India, the institute has been instrumental in shaping the academic landscape and fostering educational excellence for the last six decades," an official said.

# Can an organ transplant change someone's personality?

Changes in personality following a heart transplant have been noted pretty much ever since transplants began. In one case, a person who hated classical music developed a passion for the genre after receiving a musician's heart. The recipient later died holding a violin case.

In another case, a 45-year-old man remarked how, since receiving the heart of a 17-year-old boy, he loves to put on headphones and listen to loud music - something he had never done before the transplant.

A recent study suggests that heart transplant recipients may not be unique in experiencing personality changes. These changes can occur following the transplantation of any organ.

What might explain this? One suggestion could be that this is a placebo effect where the overwhelming joy of receiving a new

lease on life gives the person a sunnier disposition. Other transplant recipients suffer from guilt and bouts of depression and other psychological issues that might also be seen as personality changes.

However, there is some evidence to suggest that these personality changes aren't all psychological. Biology may play a role, too.

The cells of the transplanted organ will perform their expected function - heart cells will beat, kidney cells will filter and liver cells will metabolise - but they also play a role elsewhere in the body. Many organs and their cells release hormones or signalling molecules that have an effect locally and elsewhere in the body.

The heart seems to be most commonly associated with personality changes. The chambers release peptide hormones, in-



The donor organ, which may have a different base level of hormones and peptide production from the original organ, could change the recipient's mood and personality through the substances it releases

Neurochemical actions and interactions could feed into the nervous system of the recipient, enacting a physiological response that then affects the recipient's personality according to memories from the donor

cluding "atrial natriuretic peptide" and "brain natriuretic peptide", which help regulate the balance of fluid in the body by affecting the kidneys.

They also play a role in electrolyte balance and inhibiting the activity of the part of our nervous system responsible for the fight-or-flight response. The cells

mood and personality through the substances it releases.

It has been shown that natriuretic peptide levels are higher following transplantation - and never return to normal. Although some of the elevation is probably a response to the trauma of surgery, it may not account for everything.

The body stores memories in the brain. We access them when thinking or they can be triggered by sight or smell. But memories are basically neurochemical processes where nerves convey impulses to each other and exchange specialised chemicals (neurotransmitters) at the interface between them.

While in transplant surgery, many of the nerves that govern the function of the organ are cut and are not able to be reattached, this doesn't mean that the nerves within the organ do not still function. In fact, there is

evidence that they may be partially restored a year after surgery.

These neurochemical actions and interactions could feed into the nervous system of the recipient, enacting a physiological response that then affects the recipient's personality according to memories from the donor.

We know that cells from the donor are found circulating in the recipient's body and donor DNA is seen in the recipient's body two years after the transplant. This again poses the question of where the DNA goes and what actions it may have.

One thing it does is stimulate immune responses. These immune responses may be enough to trigger personality changes as long-term, low-level inflammation is known to be able to change personality traits, such as extroversion and conscientiousness.

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# Pollution wreaking havoc in Kendrapara

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Kendrapara, May 5:** This coastal district lacks a major industry with most of the residents earning their livelihood from agriculture. However, toxic effluents discharged by companies spread across four neighbouring districts, have made it living hell for people residing here. These chemicals have turned the waters of the seven rivers flowing through this district toxic. Sources pointed out Sunday that the water is not fit for consumption by either human beings or animals. It also cannot be used for agriculture purposes.



Polluted Luna river

Most of these industrial units are located in Jagatsinghpur, Cuttack, Jajpur and Bhadrak districts. These companies are polluting the water as well as the atmosphere, locals informed. The chemicals are also harming marine life and the green cover in this district, they added.

Residents here pointed out that administration in this district is not making any effort to prevent or control pollution. They said that they have approached officials time and again to take steps to prevent pollu-

tion, but to no avail. Some of them stated that the only way left is to approach the National Green Tribunal (NGT).

Environmentalist Samarendra Mahali pointed out that the toxic effluents and fumes emitted by the industrial units are also causing various forms of diseases including cancer. "The district administration has been informed a number of times on this issue, but it has not taken any steps," Mahali alleged. He threatened that he will soon file a case on this issue, he informed.

Mahali stated that 16 mega industries in Jagatsinghpur district lie close to Mahakalpara block. Toxic chemicals and gases

like ammonia, nitrogen, hydrogen, sulphur dioxide and chlorine are regularly being discharged by these units. He stated that not only the rivers have been polluted, but along with those 27 other water bodies have been affected.

Social activist Pratap Chandra Padhi said that the Central Ground Water Board had conducted a survey of the water samples collected from several parts of this district in 2011, 2017 and 2021. It was found that the samples had toxic chemicals content like nitrate, iron and fluoride and that too more than the permissible limits.

A team of experts compris-

ing Biotechnology Reader, BC Behera of North Odisha University at Baripada, SK Dutta from IRS in Bangalore and RR Mishra from the School of Biotechnology at MITS in Bhubaneswar had also filed a report on pollution and how it is affecting this district. They stated in the report that the industrial units in the four neighbouring districts are responsible for the alarming pollution level.

They have said that industries in Talcher and Angul are discharging effluents in the Brahmani river while those in Cuttack and Jagatsinghpur are responsible in polluting the Mahanadi.

Social activist Subhasis Sarangi said that pollution has deprived the 'Bhitarkanika National Park' from finding a place in the 'World Heritage List'. He pointed out that if this situation persists it will lead to the extinction of many animals and marine creatures.

When contacted, ADM Pitambar Samal said that the district administration has written a letter to state Environment department urging it to take action against the industries responsible for pollution.



**HOMEBOUND:** Women returning home after collecting kendu leaves from nearby jungle at Adenigarh village under Harbhanga block in Boudh district, Sunday

# NGT fiat to Maha Cement Mahanadi riverbed turns breeding ground for Indian skimmers

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Jajpur, May 5:** The National Green Tribunal (NGT) has issued a notice to Maha Cement Company over a case filed before it alleging establishment of a cement grinding unit on a forest land at Bairi village under Barchana block in Jajpur district, a report said.

The NGT while issuing notice has asked the Maha Cement as well as the state government to file their replies within a period of four months.

The Maha Cement is owned by My Home Industries Private Ltd and the construction of its cement plant is underway at Bairi village under Barchana block

in Jajpur district.

The NGT issued the notice following a complaint by a resident Bimal Hembram and other villagers before the tribunal.

According to the complaint, severe irregularities have allegedly been committed in the transfer of government land to Maha Cement. It is also alleged that the environmental clearance to the company was issued July 24, 2023 but the company started construction of its unit much before it.

According to records, the land handed over to the company is a forest land on which the soil conservation department had planted cashew nut trees on the land.

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Khuntuni, May 5:** The sand bed of the Mahanadi river near Kakhadi under Khuntuni range in Athagarh forest division in Cuttack district has turned into a safe breeding ground for the endangered Indian skimmer or Indian scissors-bill. The birds are also known as 'Panichiri' in local parlance. Thirty five of the eggs have hatched and Forest department officials are making every effort to keep the newborn birds safe.

The Indian skimmer is a rare species. According to a bird census conducted worldwide, there are only 4,000 such birds left. The decreasing population of



the bird has prompted International Union of Conservation of Nature (IUCN) to classify skimmers as 'endangered'. According to a rough estimate there are approximately 2,900 adult skimmers left on the face of the earth.

In this situation, the Indian skimmers have turned up for lay-

ing eggs for the first time on Mahanadi riverbed. Forest department officials said Sunday at a press conference that approximately 165 birds have arrived. The Indian skimmer plays an important role in protecting the environment. It sucks out oily material floating on water bodies. Hence the preservation of the birds is very



important, officials said.

Khuntuni forest ranger Nilamadhab Sahu informed that in the days to come, many more baby skimmers are expected as the birds have laid 85 eggs. Ornithologists and bird watchers are happy with the development. They said that if the Forest department starts working in a proper manner, the Khuntuni range can turn into a hub of

Indian skimmers. "We will try our level best to protect the species," Sahu stated.

Forest department personnel have been deployed at the site to keep watch round the clock to prevent dogs, jackals or wild animals from eating the eggs. The department is also involving local villagers and fishermen for the protection of the eggs and the birds. Awareness programmes are also being conducted regarding the importance of the birds.

The birds also have breeding colonies on the bed of the Chambal river which flows through both Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh. Various measures have been taken for their protection and increase in their population.

**Format C-1**  
**Declaration About Criminal Cases**  
As per the judgement dated 25th September 2018 of Hon'ble Supreme court of India in WP (Civil) No. 536 of 2011 in the matter of public interest foundation and ors. Vs. Union of India and Anr.

Name and Address of the candidate: **Prasanta Kumar Mallik**  
At: Sanakhani, PO: Badakhani, Via/PS : Mohana District Gajapati, Pin 761015 , Odisha

Name of the Political party: **Bhartiya Janata Party**  
Name of the Election: **Assembly General Election 2024**  
Name of the Constituency: **Mohana (ST) - 136 Assembly Constituency**

**The following criminal cases are pending against me:**

Sl. NO.	Pending criminal cases			Detail about cases of conviction for criminal cases	
	Name of the Court	Case no. and status of case	Sections of the act with brief description of offences	Name of the Court & Date of Orders	Description of offences & punishment imposed
1	In the Court of JMFC Court Mohana	G.R. 204 /2023	Section -304, Punishment for Culpable homicide not amounting to Murder, Section-286 Negligent Conduct with Respect to Explosive Substance. Section -3 of EX. S ACT Punishment for Causing Explosion Likely to Endanger to life. Section- 4 of EX. S ACT Punishment for attempt to cause explosion or for making or keeping explosive with intent to endanger life or property Section-5 of EX. S ACT Punishment for making or possessing explosives under suspicious circumstances	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
2	In the Court of JMFC Court Mohana	G.R. 78/2024	Section-, 143 whoever is a member of an unlawful assembly shall be punished with imprisonment or either description for at od which may be extent to 6 month or with fine or whit both Section-283, Whoever by doing any act or by omitting to make order with any property in his possession or under his charge causes danger obstruction or injury to any person in any public way or public line of navigation, shall be punished with fine which may extend to two hundred rupees Section-294, sings, recites or utters any obscene song, ballad or words, in or near any public place, shall be punished with imprisonment of either description for a term which may extend to three months, or with fine, or with both. Section-506, punishment for criminal intimidation. Section- 149, common object of person	Not Applicable	Not Applicable

In the case of election to council of states or election to legislative council by MLCs mention the election concerned in place of name of constituency: **Not Applicable**

Sd/-  
**Prasanta Kumar Mallik**

## Cops, villagers clash during anti-drug drive

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Baliguda, May 5:** In a bizarre incident, police had to face the wrath of some locals during an anti-drug crackdown at Barikia under Midiakia panchayat and this police station limits in Ganjam district in the wee hours of Sunday.

Police were tipped off that a huge stock of marijuana has been stored in some of the houses at Barikia village. A police team led by Baliguda SDPO Rahul Goyal raided various places and seized the ganja. However, when the police team was about to leave the village with the seized ganja, irate villagers besieged the police vehicle loaded with the contraband. Police tried to pacify the villagers but the villagers argued with them and detained the van along with the police team.

There was a four-hour long clash between the villagers with the cops that ended early morning. The villagers, including Jhunu Malik, ward member of Barikia village, have alleged that the police conducted a door-to-door search in the village in the absence of the Magistrate and without a search warrant.

The villagers also alleged that police took away gold and cash from the houses of the village while seizing the ganja.

Police are trying to identify the accused through the video captured during the incident and all the accused involved in the incident will be arrested soon, said the police.

## Man arrested for setting fire to reserve forest

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Rourkela, May 5:** A team of forest personnel from the Bonai forest division nabbed a transporter while trying to set fire to a jungle, forest officials said Sunday.

The accused was identified as Satyanarayan Yadav, 39, a truck owner. The accused was handed over to the police. Police registered a case and produced him in the court from where he was remanded to the judicial custody after his bail plea rejected.

Forest personnel said that Yadav transport iron ore in his truck from the Odisha Mining Corporation owned mines. The incident occurred when he had gone to the mines to pick his trip, Saturday. The practice is to collect the token form the Orissa Mining Corporation (OMC) office and then proceed to the location to get the loading.

Yadav kept his truck in the queue and went to get the token. However, as there was a long queue, for the token he slipped into the nearby Khandadhar reserve forest and tried to set the dry leaves and twigs on fire.

A fire prevention patrolling party which was passing by caught him red-handed and arrested him before handing him over to the police, Naveen Pradhan, the team leader said. Yadav was trying to put fire to the Khandadhar Reserve Forest under the Barsuan forest range, Pradhan alleged.

**ବକ୍ସି ନାରାୟଣ ପାତ୍ର**  
ଘଷିପୁରା ବିଜେଡି ବିଧାୟକ ପ୍ରାର୍ଥୀ

**ଅଭିମନ୍ୟୁ ସେଠୀ**  
ଆନନ୍ଦପୁର ବିଜେଡି ବିଧାୟକ ପ୍ରାର୍ଥୀ

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FOCUS SUSTAINABILITY

# DOING MORE WITH LESS



Staving off climate catastrophe will require more growth, not because ever-increasing GDP – itself a fundamentally inadequate metric – is the end goal, but because it is the result of cutting emissions fast enough

sions. Nothing short of a clean-energy revolution, complete with clean transport systems and industry, will turn the climate ship around. Moreover, achieving net-zero emissions requires trillions of dollars in investment, which will add to, not subtract from, economic growth.

That is not to say that improving energy efficiency is futile. In 2007, the United States passed a law that helped phase out incandescent lightbulbs. As shown by McKinsey's famous marginal abatement cost curve in 2010, there were large monetary savings associated with switching from incandescent to LED bulbs. But this does not imply that the change would have happened automatically. Instead, it shows that the policy paid for itself, with Americans free to spend or save the left-over money. Either way, economic growth was inevitable.

The growth potential for large-scale efficiency improvements is significantly greater than that from switching to LED lightbulbs. In fact, using limited inputs more efficiently is the definition of economic productivity – which, in turn, boosts growth. Moreover, the need to accelerate our economies' decarbonisation requires rolling out green technologies at a much faster pace. Staving off climate catastrophe will require more growth, not because ever-increasing GDP – itself a fundamentally inadequate metric – is the end goal, but because it is the result of cutting emissions fast enough.

*Alessio Terzi is an economist at the European Commission. Gernot Wagner is a climate economist at Columbia Business School.*

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Improving energy efficiency is undoubtedly a good thing. But efficiency should not be confused – as it sometimes is – with sufficiency, which calls for limiting energy consumption and is thus closely connected to the degrowth movement. Tackling climate change means doing more with less, not simply doing less.

The idea that sufficiency, and by association degrowth, could serve as a blueprint for reaching our climate goals gained traction after the COVID-19 lockdowns, when humans retreated indoors and global carbon dioxide emissions fell sharply, and Russia's invasion of Ukraine, which triggered energy-security concerns in Europe. In our hyper-consumerist society, the argument goes, consumption offers diminishing returns for human happiness, which implies that embracing minimalism would yield a double dividend: environmental preservation and improved well-being. Under this approach, wealthy countries would stop expanding their economies, while even the most strident degrowth advocates contend that poorer countries would still need to boost consumption and investment to escape destitution.

If this sounds too good to be true, that's because it is. First, some clarifications. Degrowth calls for an absolute reduction in consumption, rather than merely a shift in its composition. But such shifts – such as ditching the car and commuting by bicycle – have been a constant throughout history, and are what green growth strategies aim to achieve. To be sure, there is nothing wrong with slowing down and choosing to earn less (and apparently achieving inner peace in the process). But one should not be led to believe that

doing so holds the key to addressing the climate crisis.

Consider a simple thought experiment. Let's start with the global economy in a steady state, neither growing nor contracting, and assume an annual decarbonisation rate of 2.4 per cent – our calculation of the average over the past two decades, based on IMF economic statistics and emissions data from the Global Carbon Project. In such a world, global CO2 emissions would fall by 48 per cent by 2050. While far from reaching the goal of net-zero emissions, this hypothetical global economy would be nearly twice as carbon-efficient as today's.

Now imagine if decarbonisation were to depend entirely on decreasing economic output. To achieve the same outcome – almost halving global CO2 emissions – world GDP would need to shrink by 5 per cent every year for the next three decades. To put this in perspective, global GDP con-

tracted by 2.7 per cent in 2020, at the height of the pandemic. As successful as lockdowns were at slowing the spread of COVID-19, they were a terrible way to cut CO2 emissions.

Limiting this thought experiment to rich countries – as degrowth proponents propose – makes a weak argument an absurd one. Economic output in the G7 countries would need to shrink 17 per cent in 2024 alone, followed by an annual shock the size of the Great Depression. By 2030, purchasing power in the G7 would be roughly equivalent to South Sudan's today. How many climate-conscious Western consumers would be willing to endure this?

What's more, this thought experiment is necessarily limited. Our hypothetical began with a zero-growth economy, whereas over the past two decades global per capita GDP has grown by 6.8 per cent annually. Coupled with an increase in population, this steady growth has contributed to rising, not falling, CO2 emis-



Alessio Terzi & Gernot Wagner

**ACHIEVING NET-ZERO EMISSIONS REQUIRES TRILLIONS OF DOLLARS IN INVESTMENT, WHICH WILL ADD TO, NOT SUBTRACT FROM, ECONOMIC GROWTH**

SPECTRUM EDUCATION

# Technology & the future of learning

In the recent student protests at Columbia University in New York City, the university administration decided to use online classes as a way to mitigate the potential danger to students. Globally, online classes were widely adopted during the COVID pandemic to keep students from spreading the virus through proximate contact with each other. These examples may suggest that online education is a means to be adopted under extreme circumstances. This article presents an alternate view; that online education is an ideal solution for a variety of reasons and whose time has come.

Distance education, a precursor to online education, is not new. Some of the earliest versions of distance education were correspondence courses as far back as the 1950s and 60s. Written course materials were sent by mail to students. The students completed the assignments at home and sent in their answer sheets to be evaluated. The quality of these programmes was not very good and they did not receive any recognition from companies looking for qualified candidates for potential hiring.

In the 1980s, a different form of distance education began in the US. In these programmes, video tapes of lectures were recorded and mailed out to students at different learning centres. A sizeable group of stu-

dents watched the tapes at these learning centres. Proctored exams were conducted at these learning centres. This form of distance learning was a major improvement from the earlier correspondence courses. However, its major drawbacks were a lack of direct communication between the faculty and students as well as among students.

The next development in distance learning was streaming videos, which allowed students to stream lectures instead of watching video tapes. This made the access to lectures more flexible. However, there was still no direct communication between the faculty and students, and among students. All communication was through a learning management system such as Canvas and Blackboard.

The current form of online education uses live, online classes where the faculty delivers lectures and students can choose to either attend the lectures live, or watch the taped lecture at their convenience. The system permits students to either type in their questions or comments during the lecture, or to speak. This allows for a classroom atmosphere that more closely resembles a typical in-person classroom.

So, what are the main advantages and disadvantages of an online education system? There are three major, and compelling, reasons in favour of online ed-

ucation. First, it allows educational institutions to expand their academic offerings to a larger student population without a large scale increase in classroom capacity.

The second major advantage, especially in a country such as India, is that online education can help bring education to a larger section of the population without having students travel to a limited number of locations where high quality educational institutions are situated. Every year, cut-off percentages for admission to sought-after colleges seem to get further out of reach of a large section of students graduating from schools. In the last couple of decades, a number of colleges and institutions of dubious quality have sprung up in the country in response to the increased demand. It would be preferable for well established institutions to expand their offerings via on-line classes as there would be an expectation of quality from established institutes.

Finally, online education has a major impact on working professionals. It has been well established that with technological change, and new research, a lot of what people learn in colleges and universities becomes obsolete in a few years. This phenomenon has resulted in working professionals having to keep their knowledge up to date either through evening or full-time

courses. Both of these options pose a major burden both, on the professional as well the companies they work for. It is here that online education becomes an appropriate option.

This is why a number of universities in India and abroad have been offering online courses successfully. Some examples are BITS Pilani in India, and the University of Phoenix in the US. In addition to degree programmes, leading universities such as Stanford and MIT have collaborated in offering free online courses on various topics. These are known as Massive Open Online Courses (MOOC). Coursera, Udacity, and edX offer a large number of MOOC courses where the student can choose to either attend for free, or pay a nominal fee to get a certificate. The faculty who record the lectures for these MOOC courses are from leading global universities and the quality of lectures is excellent.

Although the number of online courses and their quality has grown exponentially, there is still a perception that the quality of online courses is inferior to live in-person classes. Universities have to focus on maintaining quality and invest in technology and faculty who can deliver online. It may not be too long before online education is accorded its rightful place in academia.

*Amarjeet Kumar, HAZARIBAGH*

# Tories' Countdown

The days of the British Prime Minister Rishi Sunak and his Conservative Party government are numbered. What had been fast becoming clear now tends to be confirmed following results this week from local elections across England. There are clear current indications that the Tories are on their way out. The chances of the Labour Party capturing power ousting the Conservative Party have brightened after what is being stated as one of the worst, if not the worst, Conservative performances in local government elections in the last 40 years. It has, so far, lost over 500 council seats. Quick to understand the implications of the defeat of his party in the local body elections and by-election to one national seat, Sunak has conceded that the results were disappointing, though that is understandably a gross understatement. For, the Tories have already lost over half the council seats they were trying to defend.

The upshot of the results is that the voters have stopped pinning their faith on the Conservatives. They are fed up with rising bills and the failure of the government to cushion them against the cost of living crisis. In other words, they are in a mood to punish the Conservatives who were given reasonably enough time to fix the problems. The reelection of Ben Houchen as Tees Valley mayor appears to be a poor consolation for the Conservatives and seems to be the proverbial straw that the drowning man clutches. There are other tell-tale signs that the Conservatives' fate is sealed. The most significant of these is the Labour's stunning victory in Blackpool which will now have Chris Webb as its MP who defeated the Conservative candidate with a 26% swing against the Tories. This is a clear message to Sunak that his time is up. The Labour also secured the newly enlarged north-east mayoralty and claimed victory in Sunak's back yard with its candidate winning the race to be mayor of York and North Yorkshire.

Labour is getting traction across England. It has wrested control of several decisive councils such as Hartlepool, Thurrock, Rushmoor and Redditch. These crucial contests show that the Labour's stand against Brexit is getting approval from a vast swath of the population. Surely, these are essentially domestic elections, but they reflect the mood of the people who are disenchanted with the internal bickering among the Conservatives which have already installed three Prime Ministers by turn since 2019. There are now talks about yet another change of leadership to replace Sunak. But, this eventuality is doubtful despite a muted demand for it. Those among the Conservatives, who are reluctant to effect yet another change of Prime Minister with the elections due in November, argue that this would only turn the party into a laughing stock. This appears to be the dominant thinking in the party and those who are opposed to Sunak's leadership are in the minority. But, such a tactic is no answer to the huge trust deficit of the electorate the party is facing. The Conservatives are on 25% of the projected national vote share, the lowest level since 2013.

However, despite the lack of a clear-cut replacement for Sunak there is no shortage of would-be contenders. There are the critics who resigned from Sunak's government such as Suella Braverman, who quit as Sunak's home secretary and Robert Jenrick, who left his job as immigration minister. There are also those disgruntled elements in the form of former Home Secretary Priti Patel and some others who are still serving in Sunak's Cabinet.

These indicators prove things look bleak for the Conservative Party in the November general elections. It seems to have reached the dead end and has nothing to offer to the deeply disillusioned electorate.



Rajiv Gupta

**A NUMBER OF UNIVERSITIES IN INDIA AND ABROAD HAVE BEEN OFFERING ONLINE COURSES SUCCESSFULLY**

# Letters

TO THE EDITOR

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

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

## Mending fences

Sir, Ties between the two economic and military powerhouses, the United States and China, have been unstable over the years. It was China that dramatically upped its authority over a host of international issues to unnerve the US in the past. So it was apt that US Secretary of State Antony Blinken stressed on "responsibly managing" differences between the two countries after he called on President Xi Jinping in Beijing on 26 April. The Secretary of State was very poignant while underscoring the importance of avoiding miscommunication, misperception and miscalculation between the two on contentious international issues. Open lines of communication should be the top priority for both nations in their endeavour to mend fences. Regardless of the hostility between the two global forces, it is time they meet a plethora of transnational challenges with equanimity.

*Ganapathi Bhat, AKOLA*

## Planet over profit

Sir, Addressing the global plastic crisis demands a comprehensive approach that goes beyond recycling and waste management. While these measures are essential, they are insufficient to tackle the magnitude of the issue. One critical aspect that needs urgent attention is lowering plastic production. The current rate of plastic production is unsustainable, leading to massive environmental degradation and contributing significantly to greenhouse gas emissions. Despite efforts to recycle, a vast majority of plastic waste still ends up in oceans and landfills, posing severe threats to ecosystems and human health. The failure to reach a consensus on imposing limits on plastic production at international negotiations reflects the challenge of balancing economic interests with environmental concerns. Petrochemical-rich countries and industry groups often oppose production limits, prioritising their economic gains over ecological well-being. However, it's crucial to recognise that the long-term costs of unchecked plastic production far outweigh short-term profits. Initiatives like India's ban on certain categories of single-use plastic demonstrate a step in the right direction, but more ambitious measures are needed on a global scale. A concerted global effort is needed to prioritise environmental sustainability over profit-driven interests and steer towards a future where plastic pollution is effectively mitigated.

*Amarjeet Kumar, HAZARIBAGH*



# Youngsters take up arms to 'protect' villages

**TRAINED IN BASIC COMBAT TACTICS, THE VILLAGE FORCES HAVE VOWED TO KEEP THEIR AREAS SAFE FROM THE ETHNIC VIOLENCE THAT HAS LEFT MANY DEAD, INJURED AND DISPLACED**

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Imphal, May 5:** Every day in shifts, morning and night, a group of armed youngsters patrol roads around Manipur's Koutruk village. Their objective: Keep residents safe from the warring factions of Meitei and Kuki, two communities that have been in conflict since last year.

These youngsters, mostly in their late 20s and early 30s, identify themselves as volunteers and say they have taken up the responsibility to keep their own safe as security forces "could not do enough to protect us". Koutruk in the Imphal Valley is one of the many villages in the state that is "protected" by groups which go by the names "Village Volunteers", "Village Volunteer Force", "Village Defence Force" and "Village Protection Force".

These groups, officials say, are not associated with any security agencies or the armed forces. Their presence in villages in the valley and Churachandpur in the hills cannot be missed. They are in uniform and can be spotted manning bunkers made of sandbags or patrolling with weapons, including sticks, batons and rifles -- some country-made, and

## STRIFE-TORN MANIPUR



some stolen or smuggled. Patrolling duties are assigned through a roster system. Each shift is between six and seven hours with small groups of five to six sent out to keep a watch on highways, village roads and narrow pathways that pass through hills and dense forests. "Clearly our (security) forces could not do enough to protect us. Now, we know that they cannot be trusted with the task of ensuring our safety. So, we had to do it ourselves and we decided to take up the task according to our calibre and capacity...we were forced to take matters into our own hands," a village volunteer told PTI on the condition of anonymity. Though patrolling is effective,

drones allowed teams to keep a vigil on a wider area, he said. "Earlier, we were operating drones to keep a vigil but now jammers have been installed by the central forces and, so, we cannot assess the situation that way," the volunteer said. This PTI reporter visited a camp of these volunteers, most of whom earned their living from farming. There are also those who have left their jobs or studies for the security of their villages. They showed this reporter the bullet holes on walls of houses and the measures in place to thwart threats. As some volunteers prepared for the morning patrol, others, including women from displaced families that now reside in relief

camps, attend to daily tasks, including cooking meals. Recalling an incident of violence, another volunteer said, "We were having dinner when bullets started raining from above (hills)... we could hear it but we thought we are safe inside. But a bullet pierced through our wall...luckily my father escaped it." "The next morning, we decided to send women, the elderly and children to the relief camps in the valley and decided to set up our bunkers," he said. On their training, another village volunteer said, "It varied from 20 days to up to two months, including training in basic NCC skills. Some training in country-made weapons too". He refused to comment on

# 'Modi's political history based on Hindu-Muslim dispute'

**Congress leader Digvijaya Singh targeted the BJP for seeking votes on lines of caste and religion instead of real issues**

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA



**Rajgarh, May 5:** Prime Minister Narendra Modi's political history is based on the "Hindu-Muslim dispute" and he should do some soul-searching as to who is benefiting from it, senior Congress leader Digvijaya Singh has claimed.

Singh, who has been fielded by the Congress from Rajgarh Lok Sabha seat in Madhya Pradesh, also said that he was not satisfied with the recent Supreme Court ruling on Electronic Voting Machines (EVMs). The former Madhya Pradesh chief minister spoke to PTI while campaigning in the rural areas of Raghogarh assembly segment that falls under Rajgarh parliamentary constituency. "If you look at the political history of Modi ji, it is based on the Hindu-Muslim dispute. It would be better if Narendra Modi does some soul-searching as to who is benefiting from it and who all are suffering due to it," Singh said.

Polling will be held in Rajgarh in the third phase of the Lok Sabha polls May 7. Singh asked, "Where are polls being fought on the basis of real issues?" The BJP has attacked the Congress over issues like inheritance tax. It has accused the Congress of planning to snatch the OBC quota to give it to Muslims as well as to "redistribute wealth to infiltrators".

Singh also hit out at the "Gujarat model of development", saying, "If you look at the Human Development Index (HDI) of Gujarat, then you will find that it doesn't even figure among the top 10 (states) in the country".

On the BJP's slogan 'Ab ki baar, 400 paar', Singh said the BJP managed to predict the number of seats it would win in the 2014 and 2019 Lok Sabha polls with "total precision". "If you look at 2014 and 2019, whatever figure they gave, they crossed it. In 2014, they gave the slogan of '272 paar' and won 284 seats. Similarly, in 2019, they gave the slogan '300 paar' and won 303 seats."

Asked if he believes that EVMs had a role in the BJP's electoral success, Singh said, "At least I believe in this." He also said he was not satisfied with the Supreme Court's recent ruling on EVMs but would talk about it after the polls. Terming the suspicion of manipulation of the EVMs "unfounded", the Supreme Court had on April 26 rejected the demand for reverting to the old paper ballot system, saying the polling devices were "secure" and eliminate booth capturing and bogus voting. Singh had won the seat in 1984 and 1991. His younger brother Lakshman Singh represented the constituency as a Congress candidate four times and once as a BJP candidate.

# 'School on Wheels' for kids in relief camps

**Around 18,000 students are currently staying in 480 relief camps**

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Imphal, May 5:** Manipur Governor Anusuiya Uikei Sunday launched a "School on Wheels" initiative to reach out to students staying in relief camps in the ethnic violence-hit state, a Raj Bhavan statement said.

Uikei during the launch of the programme at Bal Vidya Mandir Complex said the school bus is equipped with a library, smart TV, computer and sports items will visit relief camps along with a teacher. "The incidents which started on May 3 last year affected thousands of people especially students of the state," the governor said, adding "The school on wheels scheme will reach out to students and impart them



with necessary education." Stating that she understands the pain and sorrow of the displaced persons, the governor said she had instructed the chief minister and chief secretary to initiate a process for permanent settlement for displaced people staying in relief camps. The initiative is implemented by Vidya Bharati Shiksha Vikas Samiti which decided that children staying in relief camps should not face any kind of inconvenience, the governor said.

More than 219 people were killed and thousands displaced from homes after ethnic clashes broke out May 3 last year, when a "Tribal Solidarity March" was organised in the hill districts to protest against the Meitei community's demand for Scheduled Tribe (ST) status. Meiteis account for about 53 per cent of Manipur's population and live mostly in the Imphal Valley. Tribals - Nagas and Kukis - constitute little over 40 per cent and reside in the hill districts.

# Probes in 30 murder cases pending for 10-30 years in Manipur district

IMPHAL: The Manipur Human Rights Commission (MHRC) served notice to police officials concerned about 30 murder cases pending for investigation for decades in the state's Thoubal district only. MHRC sources said that Commission Chairperson, Justice Utpalendu Bikash Saha (retd) recently made a surprise visit to the Thoubal Police Station and Thoubal Women Police Station and found at least 30 murder cases pending investigation for 10-30 years. Justice Saha, a former judge of the Gauhati, Tripura, and Manipur High Courts, in his notice to the Deputy Inspector General of Police (Range-II), Superintendent of Police, Thoubal, and Officer-in-Charge of Thoubal police station, said that due to delay of investigation, both the family of the victim and the accused person are denied a fair trial as well as justice. "... delay of investigation is nothing but denial of justice which a citizen is entitled to from the political government and its administrative authority including police administration.

# IAF soldier killed in Poonch was to return home

**When Pahade left home to rejoin his unit in J&K after attending his sister's wedding 15 days ago, little did his family knew that it would be the last time they see him alive**

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**Bhopal, May 5:** Corporal Vikky Pahade, who was killed in a terror attack in Poonch region of Jammu and Kashmir Saturday, was supposed to return home to celebrate his son's birthday May 7.

The slain soldier hailed from Madhya Pradesh's Chhindwara district and was a resident of Nonia-Karbal village. Former Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister, Kamal Nath, in a social media post said: "I salute the martyrdom of Vikky Pahade, a resident of Nonia-Karbal, Chhindwara district, Madhya Pradesh, and pay my tribute to the immortal martyr."

Cpl Pahade had visited his family last month to attend his sister's wedding and had joined the unit April 18, local residents told IANS.



Cpl Pahade (33) had joined the Indian Air Force (IAF) in 2011. He is survived by his five-year-old son, wife, mother and three sisters. Pahade was killed while four other IAF soldiers were injured when militants ambushed a convoy of IAF in Poonch May 4. The IAF said that the Air Warriors fought back by returning fire.

The Indian Air Force's official X handle stated: "The CAS Air Chief Marshal VR Chaudhari and all personnel of the Air Force salute the braveheart Corporal Vikky Pahade, who made the supreme sacrifice in Poonch Sector, in the service of the nation. Our deepest condolences to the bereaved family. We stand firmly by your side in this hour of grief."

# In 34 years, 877 sq/km of forest cover destroyed for poppy farming: Biren



INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**Imphal, May 5:** Manipur Chief Minister N Biren Singh Saturday said that 877 square km of forest cover in the northeastern state were destroyed in 34 years (1987-2021), primarily for the illegal cultivation of poppy, which has been used to manufacture various drugs.

Singh, who also holds the Home portfolio, said that forest cover in Manipur was 17,475 sq km in 1987 and in 2021, it was destroyed to 16,598 sq km, primarily for the cultivation of poppy. The eviction of unauthorised encroachers carried out ever since the BJP government led by him came to power in Manipur

in 2017 and 291 encroachers were evicted from the Reserve Forest and Protected Forest throughout the state, the Chief Minister said in a post on X. It was never targeted towards any particular community, the Chief Minister pointed out. Singh earlier said that the influx of illegal immigrants from Myanmar led to the emergence of 996 new villages in the state in the past 18 years. He had said that between 2006 and 2024, massive deforestation occurred to establish settlements and carry out poppy plantations while these illegal immigrants started encroaching on the resources, job opportunities, land, and rights of the indigenous people.

# Dacoits long gone but caste still thrives in Chambal ravines

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Bhopal, May 5:** Madhya Pradesh's Chambal region, once the staple for Bollywood's dacoit and gunslinger dramas, is also a massive caste cauldron where change is seeping in due to modernisation, say a section of people.

The Gwalior-Chambal region, which is in the northern part of the state, borders Uttar Pradesh and Rajasthan and has three seats, namely Gwalior, Morena and Bhind, which is reserved for Scheduled Castes. A part of the Chambal region is in Shivpuri district and falls under Guna Lok Sabha seat. Gwalior, Morena and Bhind (SC) Lok Sabha seats are dominated by Other Backward Classes with a sizable population of SCs. Of the 24 assembly constituencies falling under these three Lok Sabha seats, the Congress had won 13 and the BJP 12 in the November 2023 elections, which was otherwise swept by the ruling party.

Of the eight assembly segments of Gwalior and Bhind Lok Sabha seats, the BJP and the Congress won four each, while in Morena, the score was five in favour of the Congress and four for the BJP. The three assembly seats in



Shivpuri were swept by the BJP. Bhuvnesh Singh Tomar, a professor at Centre for Studies in Journalism and Mass Communication in Gwalior's Jiwaji University, told PTI that caste sentiments were rooted even when the Gwalior-Chambal region was infested with bandits, dacoits or "baghis" (rebels) as these outlaws loved to call themselves. "Casteism in politics is not new. It always existed in the Chambal region, except on occasions when towering leaders,

like those from the Scindia family, contested. But a lot of social changes have taken place in the past three decades due to increased road connectivity and modernisation," Tomar said. Over the last two decades, the Dalits and backwards have become assertive and are playing a dominant role in politics, he said. "The last two Lok Sabha elections in this area were held around the narrative set by the BJP. The indication this time is not clear as campaigning is very low-key. BJP candidates were

looking weak earlier as the party fielded leaders from Gwalior and Morena, who lost polls earlier," he said.

However, a strong organisational set-up and the Narendra Modi effect will benefit BJP candidates, Tomar claimed, adding that several leaders from the Congress, including sitting party MLA from Vijaypur (Morena LS seat) Ramniwas Rawat have joined the ruling dispensation. Devesh Sharma, a Morena-based lawyer, claimed caste politics had managed to segregate society, government offices, markets etc in the past three to four decades. "Caste came first and then nationalism for the people of this region, which inspired so many films due to its ravines and bandits. These bandits used to influence politics in rural areas earlier but those days are long gone," he said.

KK Mishra, media advisor to state Congress chief Jitu Patwari, told PTI that his party will win half the Lok Sabha seats in the Gwalior-Chambal region. "Gwalior-Chambal region has traditionally supported the Congress and we will win half the seats here. The BJP knows this fact and will try to manipulate the elections through EVMs. The BJP is ahead only in

publicity," Mishra alleged. The Congress is on very strong ground as was evident in the assembly polls results, he pointed out.

However, state BJP spokesperson Pankaj Chaturvedi told PTI that his party would win all the Lok Sabha seats in the region. "The BJP has gone to the voters on the guarantees of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and the developmental works done by him as well as welfare schemes for the poor. We don't contest on the basis of caste or religion like Congress," he claimed. Chaturvedi further claimed that the people are aware that the Congress wants to snatch the quota of OBCs and give it to Muslims on the basis of religion like they did in Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka.

The ravines along the river Chambal, which runs through Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh and Rajasthan and gives the region its name, was infested with dacoits, though the last major gang, led by Rambabu Gadariya, ended some 15 years ago. Among the blockbuster films that had Chambal and its bandit lore as base include "Sholay", "Mera Gaon Mera Desh", "Gunga Jumna", "Mujhe Jeene Do" and "Bandit Queen".





As many as 10 frontline workers of Congress joined BJD in the presence of outgoing MLA and party's Ghashipura Assembly nominee Badri Narayan Patra at the party office in Ghashipura of Keonjhar district, Sunday

## POLLS & ASPIRATIONS

# Unemployment, civic woes hold the key: City youths

DEBADURLLAV HARICHANDAN, OP

**Bhubaneswar, May 5:** With less than a month left for the polls in Bhubaneswar Lok Sabha constituency and three Assembly seats in the City, the youths here seem to have decided to vote for leaders who can take steps to address the issues like unemployment and civic problems.

According to the latest data released by Chief Electoral Officer Nikunja Bihari Dhal, around 2.78 lakh voters in the age group of 20 to 29 years would exercise their franchise in the upcoming Lok Sabha and Assembly elections in the Capital city, out of the total 16.6 lakh voters.

Similarly, more than 34,000 first-time voters have been added to the electoral roll in the City, it added.

Since young voters play a crucial role in shaping the election results, their choices and aspirations can never be ignored. Speaking to OrissaPOST, several youths revealed about the kind of leadership they want in the upcoming polls.

Sanjit Kumar Shaw, a resident of Vani Vihar area and a final year PG student of Mass Communication in Utkal University, said, "Lack of employment opportunities in Bhubaneswar has been forcing the youths to relocate to other cities. Several MNCs and startup firms have expanded their operations in Bhubaneswar, and prioritised hiring of local talents. However, there is no drastic change in the job scenario."

Shaw also said that the government has pumped in huge amount of funds and resources to build startup-friendly ecosystems, but this too has failed to create any lasting impact on the ground.

According to India Employment Report 2024, Odisha has 33.1 per cent of population migrating to other states in

search of employment opportunities, which is higher than the national average of 28.9 per cent. Amongst the 22 states taken for survey, Odisha hits the bottom rank, only performing better than Bihar in creating employment.

Apart from joblessness, some of the youths also indicated at civic issues in the City which may decide the electoral fate of the leaders.

Khusbu Sahu, a PG student of Ramadevi University and a Jharpada resident, said, "The sole issue is promises made during poll campaigning never get translated into action. For example, Bhubaneswar-Ekamra MLA Ashok Chandra Panda had promised in the last election to fix the sewerage issue, which causes waterlogging in our area during monsoon. However, the issue still persists even though his term has come to an end."

Sahu also said the leaders need to focus on re-vamping waste management facilities in the City. Dedicated zones need to be created from where these facilities would operate, she said, adding how the whimsical decision to set up TTS facility in Gadakana choked the nearby slums and spread diseases.

Manisha Khora, a Rasulgarh resident and a student of Utkal University, said despite being the premier educational institute of the state, there is no emphasis on placements by the authorities. "Our problems remain unresolved even after lodging complaints with the authorities," she said.

Since higher education plays a crucial role in shaping the career of the students, lawmakers need to focus on adequate expenditure in this sector, she stated. "Infrastructure overhaul in the university is a must while the library needs more books. Students aspiring for government jobs are dependent on these resources," Khora added.



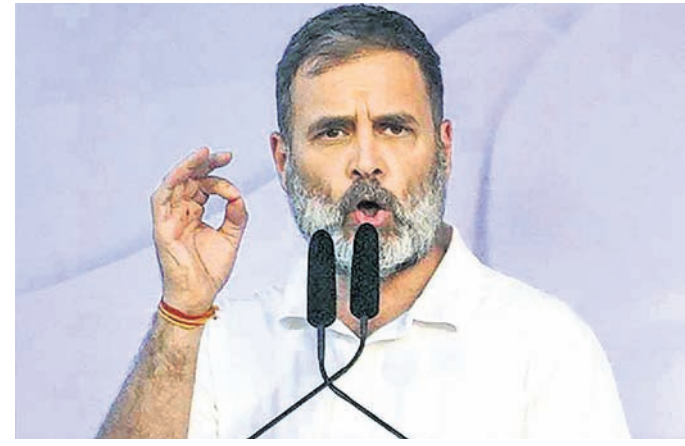
# Modi wants to take away quota: Rahul

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Hyderabad, May 5:** Mounting his attack on BJP, Congress leader Rahul Gandhi Sunday alleged that Prime Minister Narendra Modi is against reservations and wants to take away quotas from the people.

Addressing an election rally at Nirmal under Adilabad (ST) Lok Sabha constituency in Telangana, he claimed that the ongoing general elections is taking place between two ideologies in which Congress is trying to safeguard the Constitution, while the BJP-RSS combine wants to end it and people's rights.

"Narendra Modi ji is against reservation. He wants to take away reservations from you. The biggest issue before the country is increasing reservation from 50 per cent," he added. "The Congress has in its manifesto promised that if the party forms the government at the Centre, it will breach the 50 per cent limit and increase the quotas beyond 50 per cent, he said. BJP leaders also want reservations to end, he claimed. Alleging that Modi privatised the public sector, Gandhi said the



contract system implemented by the BJP-led government amounts to removing reservations. "We will remove contract systems in government offices and the public sector. Permanent jobs would be available, not temporary jobs," he said. "Narendra Modi has never said in his speeches till today that he will remove the 50 per cent barrier of reservations," Gandhi said. He claimed that BJP leaders have told the countrymen that if their party wins elections, they will change and finish the Constitution.

"If the Constitution is finished, reservation will end," he said. The BJP wants backward classes, Dalits, adivasis remain backward, he alleged. PM Modi waived off loans to the tune of Rs 16 lakh crore of about 22-25 people. "Rs 16 lakh crore means MNRREGA money of 24 years, Narendra Modi ji gave to 22 people," he claimed. The 22 rich people have money equivalent to what 70 crore Indians have. "The Congress is going to change this," he said. Observing that the Congress government in Telangana im-

plements poll promises like free travel for women in state-run buses, Gandhi said his party, if it comes to power at the Centre, would implement similar 'guarantees' across the country.

He said a list of poor families in the country would be taken up and Rs 1 lakh per annum would be deposited in the bank account of a woman from every family.

Noting that more than 90 per cent of the population comprises backward classes, adivasis, minorities and the poor in the general category, the Congress leader said they don't have a place in any organisation in the country.

Caste census proposed by the Congress would change the politics of the country because such poor and 90 per cent of people would come to know about their population and share, he said.

"We will make a survey of every organisation in the country. We will find out how much money the backward classes, Dalits, adivasis and the poor have. After the caste census, there will be new politics in Telangana and in the country," he said.

The Constitution should be safeguarded and reservations should be increased, Gandhi said.

## Reservations won't end, says Amit Shah

AGENCIES

**Hyderabad:** Reservations for Scheduled Casts (SCs), Scheduled Tribes (STs) and Other Backward Classes (OBC) would not end as long as there is even one BJP MP in the Parliament, Union Home Minister Amit Shah said Sunday.

Addressing an election rally at Kagaznagar in Telangana, Shah alleged that Telangana Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy forwarded a doctored video of the top BJP leader. This is a reference to the case over a 'doctored' video of Shah being circulated on social media. Shah exuded confidence that the BJP would win more than 10 seats in Telangana out of the total 17 seats.

The senior BJP leader alleged that AICC president Mallikarjun Kharge and Rahul Gandhi did not attend the Ram Temple consecration despite being invited for fear of their vote-bank.

He said the vote-bank of Congress and AIMIM chief Asaduddin Owaisi is the same.

## 3 relatives pitted against each other in Gunupur

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Koraput, May 5:** The Gunupur Assembly seat in Rayagada district which will go to polls May 13 is witnessing a fight between three relatives contesting on three different party tickets.

Sitting MLA Raghunath Gamang of Biju Janata Dal (BJD) who is seeking re-election from the seat is facing challenge from his grandson Satyajit Gamang, the Congress party nominee. Satyajit's mother is Raghunath's daughter.

BJP nominee for Gunupur Assembly seat is Trinath Gamang, a nephew of Satyajit. BJD candidate Raghunath Gamang is seeking votes on the development works undertaken by the Naveen Patnaik government like Mission Shakti aimed at empowering women and special development council for development of tribals.

"I am seeking votes based on the development work undertaken by the state government in our constituency, and I am confident of retaining this seat," said Raghunath.

Trinath is banking on 'Modi wave' and strengthening of rural infrastructure through Union government schemes focused on housing, drinking water, and road development under Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana.

"My priorities include securing Notified Area Council (NAC) status for Padmapur and enhancing irrigation facilities in the area," Trinath asserted.

Satyajit expressed confidence in putting up a strong fight. In the previous election, the Congress secured the second position in this constituency.

"Apart from the Congress manifesto, I aim to bolster healthcare facilities and explore job opportunities for the youths in our area with establishment of agro-based industries," said Satyajit.

Gunupur Assembly constituency has 2, 21,495 voters, including 1,14,762 female voters who are eligible to exercise their franchise.

# Lack of industry, joblessness major poll issues in Nabarangpur

BJD has fielded Pradeep Majhi, a former Congress MP who had joined BJD in 2021, while BJP nominee is Balabhadra Majhi, also a former MP, and Congress has nominated Bhujabal Majhi, a veteran tribal leader and three-time MLA from Dabugaon for Nabarangpur Lok Sabha constituency

AGENCIES

**Bhubaneswar, May 5:** Lack of industry, irrigation facilities and unemployment are the major issues in the tribal-dominated Nabarangpur Lok Sabha constituency in southern Odisha which will go to the polls May 13.

Nabarangpur Lok Sabha constituency comprises parts of Nabarangpur district and also some areas of Koraput and Malkangiri districts.

BJD has fielded Pradeep Majhi, a former Congress MP who had joined BJD in 2021, while BJP nominee is Balabhadra Majhi, also a former MP, and Congress has nominated Bhujabal Majhi, a veteran tribal leader and three-time MLA from Dabugaon for Nabarangpur Lok Sabha con-

stituency. There is no industry in Nabarangpur district. The government has also failed to provide irrigation facilities to farmers while unemployment is at an alarming stage in the area, the Congress candidate alleged.

"I was an MLA for three terms and the people are praising the works done in Dabugaon during my tenure. People have voted for other candidates and have seen that no work was done during their tenure. I hope that this time people of Nabarangpur will vote for me because I am a new face for Nabarangpur Lok Sabha constituency," he said.

Nabarangpur Lok Sabha (ST) constituency was traditionally a Congress bastion. Of the 17 general elections held since



PRADIEP MAJHI



BHUJABAL MAJHI



BALABHADRA MAJHI

Independence, Congress has won the seat 12 times.

In the first Lok Sabha election in 1951, Ponada Subarao of Gantantra Parishad won the seat by defeating Jagdish Chandra Naik of Congress. Khagapati Pradhani of the Congress party won the seat 10 times in a row from 1967 to 1998. The Congress retained the

seat in 2009. However, the Congress narrowly lost the Lok Sabha seat in the last two elections.

BJD candidate Pradeep Majhi said, "Due to the efforts of Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik, Malkangiri district has become a leading district in Odisha. We will seek votes presenting our developmental programmes in the

constituency during the BJD regime."

Pradeep Majhi had won the Nabarangpur Lok Sabha constituency in 2009 Lok Sabha elections on a Congress ticket.

BJP candidate Balabhadra Majhi alleged that Nabarangpur constituency was totally neglected by the BJD government.

"People have a strong feeling that until BJD is removed from the helm, no development activity can take place in the area. People want a change this time," Balabhadra claimed. He had won the Nabarangpur Lok Sabha constituency in 2014 on a BJD ticket.

In 2019 Lok Sabha elections, Ramesh Chandra Majhi of BJD had won the seat by defeating his Congress rival Pradeep Majhi.

Tribal voters and about two lakh Bengalis, who migrated from Bangladesh in the 1970s, will play a key role in the elections.

The Bengali settlers, who had migrated from Bangladesh, live in 213 villages in Malkangiri district and 64 villages in Nabarangpur district after acquiring citizenship in the early 1970s. Almost all of them belong to the scheduled castes category.

Umerkote, Jharigaon, Nabarangpur and Dabugaon Assembly segments in Nabarangpur district, Kotpad constituency in Koraput district and Malkangiri and Chittrakonda Assembly segments of Malkangiri district come under Nabarangpur Lok Sabha constituency.



Congress' Bhadrak Lok Sabha nominee Ananta Prasad Sethi and other senior party leaders and Assembly nominees attending a party workers' meet at Mandadari Kalyan Mandap in Tihidi of Bhadrak district, Sunday



BJP's Koraput Lok Sabha nominee Kaliram Majhi and Rayagada Assembly candidate Basant Ulaka campaigning at Bada Alubadi under Rayagada block, Sunday



of the day quote

Why has the trauma centre in Sitapur Hospital been defunct for 7 years? Was the promise to prioritise Tomato-Onion-Potato (TOP) yet another jumla? Why have sugarcane prices remained abysmally low in UP?

JAIRAM RAMESH | CONG GENERAL SECY

Why did the BJP raise the issue of changing the Constitution -- that protects the exploited, deprived and oppressed -- to end reservations. These are the real questions of the public, to which the BJP has no answer

AKHILESH YADAV | SP PRESIDENT

The Congress wants to snatch the issue of reservations of Dalits, tribals and backwards and give these quotas to Muslims to appease them. The Congress has mentioned in its manifesto that it will ensure special treatment for minorities

J P NADDA | BJP PRESIDENT

SHORT TAKES

6 of family killed in road accident

Jaipur: Six members of a family were killed and two others injured after their car was hit by a truck in Rajasthan's Sawai Madhopur district Sunday, police said. The accident occurred on the Delhi-Mumbai Expressway near the Banas river bridge. The family was on its way to offer prayers at a Ganesh temple in Sawai Madhopur, police said. Chief Minister Bhajanlal Sharma, deputy CM Diya Kumari and RLP leader Hanuman Beniwal have expressed grief over the incident. "Six members of a family were killed on the spot while two children were injured. They have been referred to Jaipur and reportedly stable," Additional SP Dinesh Kumar said.

Vivo case: Court grants bail to three

New Delhi: A court here has granted bail to three people accused in a money laundering case against Chinese smartphone-maker vivo. Additional Sessions Judge Kiran Gupta granted the relief to Bhupinder Kaur, Gagandeep Singh and Weigang Wang? in an order passed May 1. The judge accepted the arguments made by senior advocate P K Dubey, appearing for Wang, who lives in Andhra Pradesh, that the accused persons were not arrested during the investigation. The accused persons had appeared before the court in pursuance to the summons issued by the judge while taking cognisance of a charge sheet by the Enforcement Directorate (ED) in the case.

AICC spokesperson Radhika Khera quits

Raipur: AICC spokesperson Radhika Khera Sunday resigned from the party claiming that criticism over her visit to Lord Ram temple in Ayodhya led to the denial of justice to her in the incident that happened at the Chhattisgarh Congress office. Khera also claimed she didn't get justice even after repeatedly informing all the top leaders of the party.

Student dies by suicide

Mangaluru (Karnataka): A second year Pre-University student allegedly died by suicide at her hostel room in private college in Moodbidri, police said Sunday. She was identified as C M Divya (18) from Mysuru, they said.



I will specifically mention two places -- the Srinagar city, where repeated attacks have taken place be it on police personnel or minority community, and the Poonch-Rajouri area

OMAR ABDULLAH | NATIONAL CONFERENCE LEADER

PM OFFERS PRAYERS AT RAM TEMPLE

Prime Minister Narendra Modi Sunday offered prayers at the Ram temple in Ayodhya and held a roadshow, on his first visit to the holy town since the consecration at the shrine January 22



SEXUAL HARASSMENT CASE

HD Revanna remanded to police custody till May 8

Revanna, who is the son of former Prime Minister and JD(S) patriarch H D Deve Gowda, was arrested Saturday by a Special Investigation Team (SIT) after his bail plea was rejected in a case related to kidnapping and illegally confining a woman who is the mother of three children



son, JD(S) MP from Hassan Prajwal Revanna became public. Prajwal Revanna (33), who is the BJP-JD(S) Hassan Lok Sabha candidate, faces rape and molestation charges.

In the second complaint at CID Bangalore, a JD(S) leader accused Prajwal of raping her at gunpoint, videographing the incident and then blackmailing her. The third complaint is against HD Revanna pertaining to the abduction and illegal detention of a woman.

Bangalore, May 5: Senior JD(S) leader and party MLA H D Revanna was remanded to police custody till May 8 by a city court Sunday in connection with a case of alleged kidnapping and illegal confining of a woman.

Revanna, who is the son of former Prime Minister and JD(S) patriarch H D Deve Gowda, was arrested Saturday by a Special Investigation Team (SIT) after his bail plea was rejected in a case related to kidnapping and illegally confining a woman who is the mother of three children.

The FIR was registered against 66-year-old Revanna based on a complaint by the woman's son Thursday.

After his medical examination at the Bowring and Lady Curzon Hospital here, the former minister was produced before the Additional Chief Metropolitan Magistrate, who remanded him to the custody of the SIT. The SIT was formed by the Karnataka government on the recommendation of the Karnataka State Commission for Women chief Nagalakshmi Chowdhary after a huge cache of explicit videos of Revanna's

In the complaint of abduction against H D Revanna to the K R Nagar police, the 20-year-old son of the victim had alleged that the MLA's close aide Sathish Babanna had taken his mother away on a motorcycle April 29, stating that JD(S) leader wanted to see her. The complainant stated that Babanna told him that if his mother "opened her mouth before the police", she and her family members would be arrested.

Later, the 20-year-old complainant got to know from a friend and relative that his mother was among the women in the cache of videos that has gone public, and that it showed her being tied up and raped allegedly by Prajwal.

As he expressed fear that his mother was in danger, police arrested Sathish Babanna and secured the victim from a farmhouse. There are three FIRs registered in connection the sexual abuse allegations, involving the father and son, in total.

In the first case in Holenarasipura, the cook and relative of the Revannas complained that H D Revanna and his son Prajwal had molested her.

Campaigning ends for third phase of LS polls

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Ahmedabad/Bangalore, May 5: The high-octane campaign for the third phase of Lok Sabha elections that saw the BJP-led NDA and the INDIA bloc fiercely attacking each other on issues like reservations and sexual harassment charges against JD(S) leader Prajwal Revanna concluded Sunday evening in 92 seats spread over 11 states and Union Territories.

The stakes are significant for the BJP in this round as the party had in 2019 won an overwhelming majority of these seats, including all in Gujarat, Chhattisgarh, Bihar and Madhya Pradesh, that will go to polls May 7.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi led the BJP charge, asking the Congress to give in writing that it will not hand over the quota for Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and Other Backward Classes to Muslims.

The Congress and its allies accused the BJP of trying to tamper with the Constitution and do away with reservations. The principal opposition party, which has promised to remove the 50 per cent cap on reservations, also asked the BJP to clear its stance on the issue.

Congress chief Mallikarjun Kharge along with party leaders Rahul Gandhi and Priyanka Gandhi Vadra focused on issues of social justice, unemployment, "injustice" to farmers and alleged favourable treatment to select businessmen.

The BJP leaders targeted the Congress over wealth redistribution and inheritance tax issues and accused it of pursuing appeasement politics, while Rahul Gandhi reiterated Congress' commitment to conduct a caste census and economic survey if voted to power.

Over 1300 candidates, including around 120 women, are in the fray. Among the bigwigs are Union ministers Amit Shah (Gandhinagar), Jyotiraditya Scindia (Guna), Mansukh Mandaviya (Porbandar), Parshottam Rupala (Rajkot), Pralhad Joshi (Dharwad) and SP Singh Baghel (Agra).

EC working under Modi govt's diktats: Mamata



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bolpur (WB), May 5: Alleging that "mistruth" about Sandeshkhali was spread by the BJP using money, West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee Sunday called upon Prime Minister Narendra Modi to stop "shedding crocodile tears" as the "conspiracy hatched by the saffron party" has come to the fore with the unravelling of a recent sting.

Banerjee accused the Election Commission of working under the diktat of the Modi government and turning a blind eye to the splashing of full page ads in a section of the print media with his photo.

"Why do you (Modi) need to put up your photo in newspapers if you are so confident about winning people's support for your projects? The polls are on and Model Code of Conduct is in force. I know papers might have compulsions, I know they cannot refuse central government ads," she said while addressing an election rally in Bolpur in support of TMC candidate and sitting MP Asit Kumar Mal and Birbhumi TMC nominee and sitting MP Satabdi Roy.

The TMC chairperson said her party was mulling to move the Election Commission over the issue. "If we have to garland Rabindranath Tagore's statue on his birth anniversary day, we need to take the permission of the commission. But the EC sits idle then these things happen," she said. About Sandeshkhali, Banerjee

said, "Blatant lies were invented by the BJP, which plotted a conspiracy by giving money to some people to tell lies." The TMC Saturday released a video on social media, in which a man, who claimed to be a BJP mandal president in Sandeshkhali, was heard saying that leader of the opposition in the West Bengal assembly, Suwendu Adhikari, was behind the "whole conspiracy".

In the purported video, the authenticity of which could not be independently verified by PTI, the man was heard saying that Adhikari had asked him and other BJP leaders of the area to "instigate three-four local women to level allegations of rape against three TMC leaders, including Shajahan Sheikh".

"Did anyone ever imagine that BJP would stoop so low that it would spread canards on Sandeshkhali? Don't dishonour the mothers of West Bengal by leveling such heinous allegations. Don't dare try to disrespect women of the state by offering them money to level false allegations against our party," Banerjee said.

Accusing PM Modi of taking the words of "few people" in his party on face value, she said that "by seeing the reaction of BJP leaders to the video, it was apparent that they were scared".

"If some people, including those from the TMC, committed any wrong, the party and the state government have always been quick to take disciplinary action against them, no matter how powerful they are," she asserted.

SNIPPETS

EC orders transfer of AP police chief

New Delhi: The Election Commission Sunday ordered the transfer of Andhra Pradesh Director General of Police KV Rajendranath Reddy with immediate effect, sources said. The poll authority has asked the state government to submit by Monday names of three eligible Indian Police Service (IPS) officers in the rank of director general to fill the vacancy, the sources said. The reason behind the poll body's action was not immediately known. Elections for the 175-member assembly and the 25 Lok Sabha seats in Andhra Pradesh will be held simultaneously May 13. The votes will be counted June 4.

35 Naxalites surrender in Dantewada

Dantewada: A total of 35 Naxalites, three of them carrying a cumulative reward of ₹3 lakh, surrendered in Chhattisgarh's Dantewada district Sunday, a senior police official said. A 16-year-old girl and an 18-year-old boy are among those who turned themselves in before the police, he said. These cadres were tasked with digging roads, felling trees to block roads and putting up posters and banners during shutdowns called by Naxalites, the official said. Of the surrendered Naxalites, Baman Kartam (39) was the Jiyakodta Panchayat Militia Platoon Commander of the outlawed Maoists organisation, while Bhima Kunjam (28) was the Aranpur Panchayat CNM president, Dantewada Superintendent of Police Gaurav Rai said. Chetna Natya Mandli (CNM) is a cultural wing of Maoists. Woman Naxalite Kumme Lekam (35), who carried a reward of ₹1 lakh, was the Hurrepal Panchayat Krantikari Mahila Adivasi Sangthan (KAMS) president, he said. "They were part of Bhairamgarh, Malanger and Katekalyan area committees of the Maoists in south Bastar. They said they were impressed by the police's rehabilitation drive 'Lon Varratu' (return to your home) and disappointed with the hollow Maoist ideology," Rai said.



Delhi Pradesh Mahila Congress Committee workers stage a protest against BJP over the Karnataka sexual abuse case in New Delhi

Kerala's coastal hamlets witness sea incursion

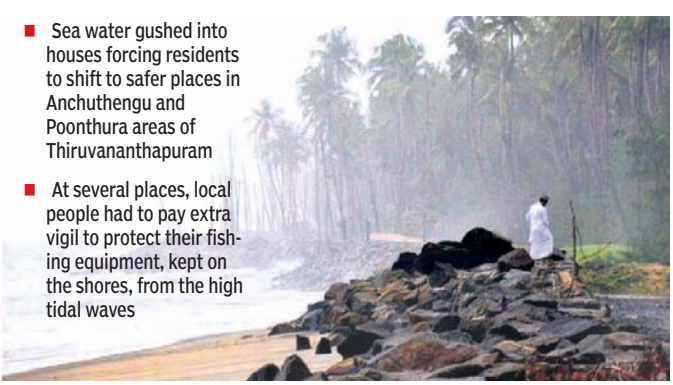
A NUMBER OF HOUSES WERE DAMAGED AND ROADS WERE FLOODED AS MASSIVE WAVES HIT THE SHORES IN MANY COASTAL HAMLETS

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Thiruvananthapuram, May 5: Amidst warning of a 'Kallakkadal' phenomenon in coastal areas of the state, several places in Kerala have been witnessing high tidal waves and intense sea incursion since Saturday night.

forcing residents to shift to safer places in Anchuthengu and Poonthura areas of Thiruvananthapuram. At several places, local people had to pay extra vigil to protect their fishing equipment, kept on the shores, from the high tidal waves.

Besides Anchuthengu, Poonthura and Muthalapozhi hamlets in Thiruvananthapuram, sea incursion was reported in Mundakkal and Alappadu areas in Kollam district, Purakkad in Alappuzha and Kodungallur and Perinjalam in Thrissur district and so on, local people said.



Meanwhile, the Indian National Centre for Ocean Information Services (INCOIS) Sunday continued to place the southern coasts of Kerala and Tamil Nadu under Orange Alert warning as part of the "Kallakkadal" phenomenon. In its latest alert, the agency

INCOIS, the Central agency that issues weather warnings for fishermen in the country, advised people to safely moor their fishing vessels in the harbour. It also warned fishermen not to venture into the sea in small boats and vessels after 8 pm Sunday.

Authorities advised people to continue their caution and avoid trips to the beach and completely stay away from activities at sea. The term 'Kallakkadal' literally means a sea that comes suddenly like a thief.

INCOIS has earlier said that the swells result from strong winds in the southern part of the Indian Ocean at certain times, and that they occur suddenly without any particular indications or warning which is why it is named 'Kallakkadal'.

Bengal Guv asks staff to ignore summons in sexual assault case

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kolkata, May 5: West Bengal Governor C V Ananda Bose Sunday directed all staffers of Raj Bhavan to ignore any communication from the Kolkata Police in connection with a woman employee's complaint of molestation against him.

The direction comes after Kolkata Police constituted an inquiry team to probe into the woman's allegation against the governor.

Bose, in a post on X, said, "It is clear that in view of Article 361 (2) and (3) of the Constitution of India, the state police cannot act in any manner whatsoever to inquire/investigate/set in motion any kind of proceedings against the hon'ble governor."

He also asserted that no criminal proceedings whatsoever shall be instituted or continued against the President, or the governor of a state in any court during his or her term of office. "No process for the arrest or imprisonment...shall issue from any court during his term of office," the governor said in the post, drafted as a communication to Raj Bhavan employees.

It is clear that the state machinery cannot set in motion any sort of criminal proceedings, whatsoever, against the governor, he said on the microblogging site.

"The reports from the media indicate that the police propose to conduct an inquiry into the incident and that they would be examining the staff of Raj Bhavan. It is also reported that the investigating team intends to collect the CCTV footage from Raj Bhavan."

"The question that arises is whether the police can conduct an inquiry and collect evidence in view of the immunity enjoyed by the governor...." Bose said in the post.





So we will continue working as hard as ever to take the fight to Labour and deliver a brighter future for our country  
RISHI SUNAK | UK PM

### PANAMANIAN VOTE

Panamanians began voting Sunday in an election that has been consumed by unfolding drama surrounding the country's former President, even though he is not on the ballot



### of the day quote

The question, however, is whether we have any advantage or insights into those businesses in India or any contacts that will make possible transactions that Berkshire would like to participate in. That is something a more energetic management at Berkshire could pursue  
WARREN BUFFETT | BILLIONAIRE INVESTOR

We are not ready to accept a situation in which the Hamas battalions come out of their bunkers, take control of Gaza again, rebuild their military infrastructure, and return to threatening the citizens of Israel in the surrounding communities, in the cities of the south, in all parts of the country  
BENJAMIN NETANYAHU | ISRAEL'S PM

Poland wants the best possible relations with America, regardless of who is in power  
RADOSLAW SIKORSKI | MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF POLAND

### SHORT TAKES

#### China's president arrives in Europe

Paris: Chinese President Xi Jinping kicked off a three-country trip to Europe Sunday with the continent divided over how to deal with Beijing's growing power and the US-China rivalry. European carmakers are losing ground to subsidised Chinese electric vehicles. Diplomats fret about alleged Chinese spies in European capitals. And China's continued defence trade with Russia worries anyone in Europe who supports war-ravaged Ukraine and fears that the Russian army won't stop there.

#### Shooting in Los Angeles injures 7

Long Beach: A shooting in the Los Angeles area has left seven people injured, including four who were listed in critical condition. Long Beach Police Department officers responded to a reported shooting around 11:15 pm Saturday in the area of South Street and Paramount Boulevard, the department said in a statement posted on social media.

#### Driver dies after crashing into WH

Washington: A driver died after a vehicle crashed into a gate at the White House Saturday night, but the fatal collision is being investigated "only as a traffic crash" and there was no threat to the president's residence, law enforcement authorities said. The male driver, who was not immediately identified, was found dead in the vehicle following the crash shortly before 10:30 pm at an outer perimeter gate of the White House complex, the US Secret Service said in a statement.

# Israel shuts down Al Jazeera offices

AGENCIES

Cairo, May 5: Israel ordered the local offices of Qatar's Al Jazeera satellite news network to close Sunday, escalating a long-running feud between the broadcaster and Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's hardline government as Doha-mediated cease-fire negotiations with Hamas hang in the balance.

The extraordinary order, which includes confiscating broadcast equipment, preventing the broadcast of the channel's reports and blocking its websites, is believed to be the first time Israel has ever shuttered a foreign news outlet.

The network has reported the Israeli-Hamas war nonstop since the militants' initial cross-border attack October 7 and has maintained 24-hour coverage in the Gaza Strip amid Israel's grinding ground offensive that has killed and wounded members of its own staff. While including on-the-ground reporting of the war's casualties, its Arabic arm often publishes verbatim video statements from Hamas and other militant groups in the region, drawing Netanyahu's ire.

"Al Jazeera reporters harmed Israel's security and incited against soldiers," Netanyahu said in a statement. "It's time to remove the Hamas mouthpiece from our country."

Al Jazeera issued a statement vowing it will "pursue all available legal channels through in-



Israel accuses Al Jazeera, funded by Qatar's government, of collaborating with Hamas. Criticism of the channel is not new, however. The US government singled out the broadcaster during America's occupation of Iraq  
Al Jazeera has been closed or blocked by other Mideast governments  
Al Jazeera is one of the few international media outlets to remain in Gaza throughout the war, broadcasting bloody scenes of airstrikes and overcrowded hospitals and accusing Israel of massacres

ternational legal institutions in its quest to protect both its rights and journalists, as well as the public's right to information."

"Israel's ongoing suppression of the free press, seen as an effort to conceal its actions in the Gaza Strip, stands in contravention of international and humanitarian law," the network said. "Israel's direct targeting and killing of journalists, arrests, intimidation and threats will not deter Al Jazeera from its commitment to cover, whilst more than 140 Palestinian jour-

nalists have been killed since the beginning of the war on Gaza." Israeli media said the order allows Israel to block the channel from operating in the country for 45 days.

The Israeli government has taken action against individual reporters over the decades since its founding in 1948, but broadly allows for a rambunctious media scene that includes foreign bureaus from around the world, even from Arab nations.

That changed with a law passed last month, which

Netanyahu's office says allows the government to take action against a foreign channel seen as "harming the country." Immediately after the announcement, Al Jazeera's English arm began broadcasting a prerecorded message from one of its correspondents from a hotel the channel has used for months in east Jerusalem, which the Palestinians hope to one day have for their future state.

"They're also banning any devices — that includes my mobile phone," correspondent Imran Khan said. "If I use that to do any kind of newsgathering, then the Israelis can simply confiscate it." Al Jazeera went off Israel's main cable provider in the hours after the order. However, its website and streaming links across multiple online platforms still operated Sunday.

The ban did not appear to affect the channel's operations in the occupied West Bank or Gaza Strip, where Israel wields control but which are not sovereign Israeli territory.

The decision threatens to heighten tensions with Qatar at a time when the Doha government is playing a key role in mediation efforts to halt the war in Gaza, along with Egypt and the United States.

Qatar has had strained ties with Netanyahu in particular since he made comments suggesting that Qatar is not exerting enough pressure on Hamas to prompt it to relent in its terms

for a truce deal. Qatar hosts Hamas leaders in exile at a political office in Doha.

The sides appear to be close to striking a deal, but multiple previous rounds of talks have ended with no agreement.

In a statement Sunday, Hamas condemned the Israeli government order, calling on international organisations to take measures against Israel.

Shortly after the government's decision, Cabinet members from the National Unity party criticized its timing, saying it "may sabotage the efforts to finalise the negotiations and stems from political considerations." The party said that in general, it supported the decision.

Israel has long had a rocky relationship with Al Jazeera, accusing it of bias. Relations took a major downturn nearly two years ago when Al Jazeera correspondent Shireen Abu Akleh was killed during an Israeli military raid in the occupied West Bank.

Those relations further deteriorated following the outbreak of Israel's war against Hamas October 7, when the militant group carried out a cross-border attack in southern Israel that killed 1,200 people and took 250 others hostage. Since then, the Israeli military campaign in Gaza has killed over 34,000 people, according to local health officials there, who don't break figures down into civilians and combatants.

### LA police again clear pro-Palestinian encampment at USC

REUTERS

Washington, May 5: Los Angeles police in riot gear swarmed a pro-Palestinian encampment at the University of Southern California early Sunday to clear away demonstrators, after warning everyone to leave the area or be arrested, officials and media reported.

"If you are in the center of campus, please leave," police said on the social media site X. "People who don't leave will be arrested. We will issue another alert when it is clear to return."

Police entered the encampment about 5 a.m. local time and began removing tents, the Los Angeles Times and other media reported. It was unclear if any arrests were made, and a spokesperson for the police provided no further information.

The anti-war protests have



been staged at campuses across the nation in response to Israel's offensive in Gaza, which it launched after a Hamas attack October 7 that Israel says killed 1,200 people.

Israel has killed over 34,600 people in retaliation, according to Gaza health authorities, and flattened the Palestinian territory.

The protests have roiled campuses at numerous schools and police have arrested hundreds of protesters and cleared campuses such as Columbia University, University of Virginia, Northeastern University and many more.

Students and other protesters have called on universities to divest of their financial ties to Israel and push for a cease-fire.

Last month, Los Angeles police arrested 93 people at USC after they cleared an earlier encampment.

# 'US tech industry cannot survive without Indians'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Santa Clara, May 5: Indians are one of the largest leaders of innovation in Silicon Valley and America's tech industry cannot survive without them, the CEO of the Silicon Valley Central Chamber of Commerce has said.

"I don't have the new figures, but what matters is that we (Indians) are such impactful contributors," Harbir K Bhatia told PTI in an interview.

"India(ans) are one of the largest leaders of innovation in Silicon Valley. At one point, ... the data was collected (according to which) 40 per cent of



Silicon Valley CEOs or founders were from South Asia or India. That is so huge," she said. Located in Santa Clara, the

hub of Silicon Valley, the Chamber of Commerce is made up of a group of visionary business leaders from multiple cities that help grow and shape the future of Silicon Valley.

"Here you get to bring your whole self to work and have the opportunity to be creative, to be all that you want to be without the worry of your colour, of your skin, the religion you practice, the cast, the culture, anything," she said.

Bhatia said Indians are heading all the major corporations like Google, YouTube, Google Foundation and Microsoft "They're either at the CXO (Chief Experience Officer) level

or they're the CEOs. That doesn't happen by chance," she said. Bhatia said Indians bring some of the best values like hard work and productivity to the work.

"I can tell you this, if you get a 98 per cent in school, your mom and papa will always tell you, but why didn't you get a hundred per cent? That's our culture. That's who we are. It's never enough, and that craving and that aspiration is what separates us (from others)," Bhatia said. "I'm not saying other ethnicities don't believe this way, but as being one of the largest populations on the planet, this is something that is part and parcel of who we are..." she said.



Russian servicemen take part in the Victory Day military parade rehearsal at the Red Square in Moscow. The parade will take place at Moscow's Red Square May 9 to celebrate 79 years of the victory in WWII

# Ukraine marks its third Easter at war

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Kyiv, May 5: As Ukraine marked its third Easter at war, Russia launched a barrage of drones concentrated in Ukraine's east where the situation on the front line is worsening.

President Volodymyr Zelenskyy urged Ukrainians in an Easter address to be united in prayer and called God an "ally" in the war with Russia.

Ukraine's air force said Sunday that Russia had launched 24 Shahed drones, of which 23 had been shot down by air defenses.

Six people, including a child, were wounded in a drone strike in the eastern Kharkiv region, regional Gov Oleh Symiehubov said.

Fires broke out when debris from drones that were shot down fell on buildings in the neighboring Dnipropetrovsk region. No casualties were reported. Officials in Kyiv urged residents to follow Orthodox Easter services online due to safety concerns. Serhiy Popko, head of the Kyiv



city administration, warned that "even on such bright days of celebration, we can expect evil deeds from the aggressor." Zelenskyy called on Ukrainians to unite in prayer for each other and soldiers on the front line. In a video filmed in front of

Kyiv's Saint Sophia Cathedral, wearing a traditional Vyshyvanka embroidered shirt, Zelenskyy said that God "has a chevron with the Ukrainian flag on his shoulder." With "such an ally," Zelenskyy said, "life will definitely win over death."

A majority of Ukrainians identify as Orthodox Christians, though the church is divided. Many belong to the independent Orthodox Church of Ukraine. The rival Ukrainian Orthodox Church was loyal to the patriarch in Moscow until splitting from Russia after the 2022 invasion and is viewed with suspicion by many Ukrainians.

In Moscow, worshippers including President Vladimir Putin packed Moscow's landmark Christ the Savior Cathedral late Saturday for a nighttime Easter service led by Patriarch Kirill, head of the Russian Orthodox Church and an outspoken supporter of the Kremlin.

### NATURE'S FURY

#### Southern Brazil rains: Over 100 still missing

Sao Paulo: Massive floods in Brazil's southern Rio Grande do Sul state killed at least 60 people and another 101 were reported missing, according to Sunday's toll from local authorities. At least 155 people were injured, while damage from the rains forced more than 80,000 people from their homes. Approximately 15,000 took refuge in schools, gymnasiums and other temporary shelters. The floods left a wake of devastation, including landslides, washed-out roads and collapsed bridges across the state. Operators reported electricity and communications cuts. More than 800,000 people are without a water supply. Brazilian President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva arrived in Rio Grande do Sul Sunday, accompanied by Defence Minister José Múcio, Finance Minister Fernando Haddad and Environment Minister Marina Silva, among others.

#### Toll from Kenya floods rises to 228

Nairobi: The number of people killed by flooding and other impacts of the heavy rains battering Kenya has risen to 228, the interior ministry said Sunday. The torrential rains that have caused widespread flooding and landslides across the country in recent weeks are forecast to worsen in May. In a statement, the ministry said further flooding was "expected in low lying areas, riparian areas and urban areas while andslides/mudslides may occur in areas with steep slopes, escarpments and ravines." The deluges have destroyed homes, roads, bridges and other infrastructure across East Africa's largest economy. At least 164 people have been injured by the adverse weather, while 212,630 have been displaced, the ministry said.

#### Hundreds rescued from Texas floods

Houston: High waters flooded neighborhoods around Houston Saturday following heavy rains that resulted in crews rescuing more than 400 people from homes, rooftops and roads engulfed in murky water. Others prepared to evacuate their properties. A flood watch remained in effect through Sunday afternoon as forecasters predicted additional rainfall Saturday night and the likelihood of major flooding in Harris County, the nation's third-largest county which includes Houston, and nearby areas. "A lull in heavy rain is expected through (Saturday) evening," the National Weather Service reported.

#### Cyclone Hidaya weakens

Nairobi: Cyclone Hidaya significantly weakened as it approached Tanzania's coastline, the country's meteorology department said Saturday. Officials warned residents to remain cautious, however, as the cyclone brings heavy rain and strong winds to the country through Sunday. The meteorology department did not say what the cyclone's updated maximum wind speeds were. A major blackout hit most of Tanzania Saturday as heavy rains and strong winds from Hidaya lashed the country following weeks of flooding in the region. Ferry services between Tanzania's commercial hub, Dar es Salaam, and Zanzibar were suspended as Hidaya earlier approached the East African coast with maximum winds of 120 kph (33 mph) and powerful gusts.

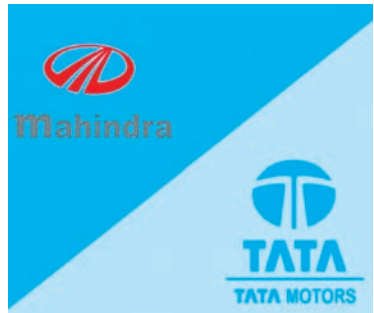




**The government has declared 50 new destinations. Investors will be interested to invest money in these destinations if the infrastructure is there**  
KB KACHRU | PRESIDENT, HOTEL ASSOCIATION OF INDIA

## M&M, TATA SEE RECORD PATENT NODS

Domestic automobile majors Mahindra & Mahindra and Tata Motors have received a record number of patent approvals for a wide spectrum of product and process innovations in the last financial year. Mahindra & Mahindra (M&M) received 674 approvals, its best-ever annual performance, while Tata Motors also witnessed the grant of 333 patents during the 2023-24 financial year



## of the day quote

On Monday markets will react to the US employment data and Q4 results of companies like Dmart and Kotak Bank

**SIDDHARTHA KHEMKA** | HEAD (RETAIL RESEARCH), MOTILAL OSWAL FINANCIAL SERVICES

The recent amendment of higher FDI limits in the space sector is a significant step towards transforming India's space program, in terms of infrastructure development

**SREERAM ANANTHASAYANAM** | PARTNER, DELOITTE INDIA

The significant levels of business development (land acquisition) we have executed in previous years at favourable terms allowed us to scale our bookings by 84 per cent to ₹22,527 crore in 2023-24 and become the largest publicly listed real estate developer in India by sales

**PIROJSHA GODREJ** | EXECUTIVE CHAIRPERSON, GODREJ PROPERTIES

## SHORT TAKES

### Mcap of six of top 10 cos dips

**New Delhi:** The combined market valuation of six of the top-10 most valued firms declined by ₹68,417.14 crore in a holiday-shortened last week, with Bharti Airtel and Reliance Industries taking the biggest hit. While Reliance Industries, Bharti Airtel, Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC), Infosys, ITC and Hindustan Unilever were the laggards, Tata Consultancy Services (TCS), HDFC Bank, ICICI Bank and State Bank of India emerged as the gainers. Reliance Industries remained the most valued firm from the top-10 pack, followed by TCS, HDFC Bank, ICICI Bank, State Bank of India, Bharti Airtel, LIC, Infosys, ITC and Hindustan Unilever.

### Mahindra Fin net drops 10%

**New Delhi:** Mahindra & Mahindra Financial Services has reported a 10 per cent decline in standalone profit and tax to ₹619 crore for the January-March quarter of 2023-24. The non-banking finance company also said that in a fact-finding assessment of the fraud in its Aizawl branch during the quarter identified 2,887 loan accounts as potentially fraudulent in nature. "These loans had an outstanding net recoverable balance of ₹135.9 crore as of 31st March 2024, which have been fully provided," Mahindra Finance said.

# FY24 sees incorporation of 1.85L companies

*Out of total, 71% were in services sector, followed by 23% in industrial segment and 6% in agriculture*

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, May 5:** More than 1.85 lakh companies were registered in the country last fiscal, higher than the count recorded in the year-ago period, and nearly 16,600 companies were set up in March this year, according to official data. As per the data, 1,59,524 companies were registered with a

collective paid up capital of ₹18,132.16 crore in 2022-23.

At the end of March 2024, the country had a total number of 26,63,016 companies and out of them, 16,91,495 companies or 64 per cent were active.

As many as 9,31,644 registered companies were closed, 2,470 were dormant entities and 10,385 companies were under liquidation.

A total of 27,022 companies were under the process of being struck off from official records.

During FY 2023-24, a total of 1,85,312 companies were registered with a collective paid up capital of ₹30,927.40 crore, according to the corporate affairs



ministry's information bulletin for March.

"Broader economic activity-wise classification reveals that community, personal and social

**In terms of states, 17.6% of the new firms were set up in Maharashtra**

services observed the highest rise of 11 per cent in the service sector as compared with FY 2022-23," it said.

The ministry is implementing the Companies Act, 2013.

"There is an increase of 0.10 per cent in the total proportion of active companies w.r.t registered companies when compared to February 2024," the bulletin said.

As March 31, 2024, there were a total of 5,164 foreign companies registered in the country and out of them, 3,288 companies or 64 per cent were active.

In March, the bulletin said 42,041 Director Identification Numbers were registered.

"Out of the total number of directors registered in India in March 2024, 67 per cent were male and the remaining 33 per cent were female... 43 per cent of newly registered directors belong to the age group of 31-45 years. Furthermore, 7 per cent of the new director registrations were older than 60 years," the bulletin said.

# Met coal imports from Russia rise 3X in last 3 fiscals

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, May 5:** Imports of metallurgical coal from Russia have spurted around three-fold in the last three years to around 15.1 million tonne in 2023-24 mainly due to lower prices while the same from Australia have declined, according to a research firm.

Russia's share in India's metallurgical coal imports of 73.2 million tonne (MT) has risen to around 21 per cent from around 8 per cent in 2021-22, research firm Big Mint said in a statement.

The import of metallurgical coal, which includes coking coal and pulverised coal injection (PCI), from Russia, stood at 5.1 MT, accounting for 8 per cent of India's total imports of 65.6 MT of the commodity in 2021-22.

Metallurgical coal imports from Russia rose to 11.3 MT in 2022-23, accounting for 16 per cent of 69.9 MT met coal imports in that year. In 2023-24, met coal imports from Russia were 15.1 MT or 21 per cent of total met coal imports of 73.2 MT.

Australia, a major supplier of met coal to India, saw a decline in the commodity's exports to India. Australia supplied 50.7 MT of met coal in FY22, or 77 per cent of the total imports of India. Met coal shipments dropped to 42.2 MT in FY22, while market share also declined to 60 per cent. In the last fiscal, met coal imports from Australia dropped further to 40.4 MT, resulting in a market share of 55 per cent.

Iron ore and metallurgical coal or met coal are essential ingredients in steel production. India is dependent on imports to meet its domestic demand for met coal.

According to BigMint analysts, "cost-benefit" is the main reason for the rise in imports of metallurgical coal from Russia. Imports from Russia are cost-lesser to domestic steel players because of low prices, a BigMint analyst said.

However, in the long run, imports from Russia are projected to whittle down as the country is expected to impose an export tax on met coal and an increase in logistics cost, another analyst said.

## OUTSTANDING LOAN IOB TO SELL 92 NPA ACCOUNTS

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, May 5:** Indian Overseas Bank (IOB) Sunday said it will sell 92 non-performing loans with an aggregate outstanding of ₹13,471.68 crore through an e-auction May 28.

The public sector lender invited expressions of interest (EOI) from asset reconstruction Companies (ARCs) and other eligible transferees by May 13 to participate in the auction process.

"Indian Overseas Bank has published sale notification pertains to the sale of 92 NPA loans, collectively amounting to an aggregate Book Outstanding of ₹13,471.68 crores, offered on portfolio basis in 2 lots through e-auction under the open auction method," IOB said in a statement.

The first portfolio encompasses, 46 accounts financed under consortium arrangements, three accounts under Multiple Banking arrangements, with the remaining two accounts being sole banking ventures.

Furthermore, 38 accounts within the portfolio are formally admitted under the purview of NCLT. The second portfolio consists of 41 sole banking accounts, it added.

Interested Asset Reconstruction Companies (ARCs) and other eligible transferees are cordially invited to submit Expressions of Interest (EOI) by May 13, 2024, to participate in the forthcoming e-auction scheduled for May 28.

The bank's Gross NPA (GNPA) levels plummeted from 11.69 per cent as of March 31, 2021, to 3.90 per cent by December 31, 2023.



# Go First situation 'painful'

## MUTED HOPES FOR A TAILWIND

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Mumbai, May 5:** Last May, it all started with flight suspension for just three days and "an unfortunate decision" of voluntary insolvency resolution option taken to protect the airline's interests.

A year down the lane, the now plane-less Go First's fate remains uncertain and come June, there are revival expectations, though muted, when the extended deadline for the resolution process ends.

There are concerns that the airline might even be pushed into liquidation, experts opined.

"It is extremely painful to see that even after one year, the airline has not been able to revive the operations," the budget carrier's former chief Kaushik Khona told PTI.

Since May 3, 2023, Go First has not taken to the skies, with its blue and white livery A320 planes gathering dust at airports, most staff leaving and many stalling at uncertain times, and a resolution process still remaining on the tarmac.

Hopes of a quick revival further faded, as the carrier's 54 planes have been deregistered after protracted legal battles and lessors will be taking away the aircraft.

The contrails of the Go First insolvency process also left trails of concerns not only about the grounded airline's trajectory but also about the rights of lessors provided under the Cape Town Convention.

Khona, who was at the helm when the more than 17-year-old airline filed for the voluntary insolvency resolution proceedings, said the staff were optimistic that op-

erations could be resumed from August 2023.

According to industry sources, the revival looks difficult but the airline has a lot of value left.

Among others, the airline had made a pre-delivery payment of around \$200 million to Airbus towards its second order for 72 planes. The first order by the carrier was for 72 aircraft, they added.

The sources also mentioned the airline's lawsuit worth about \$3 billion against P&W.

Management consultancy Primus Partners' Managing Director Shrawan Shetty said Go First seems to be headed unfortunately towards liquidation with the cost of revival increasing.

"This will be another case of value destruction due to an elongated NCLT process which points to a need to put measures in place to nudge creditors to close cases quickly," he said.

Sources said some domestic carriers might eye the deregistered aircraft, as the

lessors cannot fly them out due to non-availability of engines and spare parts, also various approvals are required.

Against this backdrop, lessors might also look to negotiate leasing these planes to Indian carriers, as they can be more cost effective, the sources added.

Cut to the insolvency resolution process, the deadline for completing the process has been extended by the National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT) till June 3.

Two bidders are in the fray

**The loss of a good, customer friendly airline which always offered affordable fares and which treated all its customers with the best comfortable journey on its youngest fleet has been a huge loss for all the customers. The revival was always possible and I hope people who are at the helm do it even now**

**KAUSHIK KHONA** | FORMER CHIEF, GO FIRST

for Go First -- Busy Bee Airways, along with SpiceJet chief Ajay Singh, and Sharjah-based aviation entity Sky One.

In a statement, Sky One Chairman Jaideep Mirchandani said the Delhi High Court's directive adds the "much-needed clarity to the situation, aligning with our commitment to transparency and fairness in the bidding process."

He also claimed that by bringing its own aircraft and expertise, Sky One is poised to successfully revive Go First.

After the court order, the DGCA has deregistered the 54 aircraft but lessors are likely to take more time to fly them out of the country, as many of the planes need engines and spare parts.

# Three cos set to bring ₹6,400cr IPO blitz this week

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, May 5:** The primary market is gearing up for significant activity this week, with three companies - Blackstone-backed Aadhar Housing Finance, healthcare tech firm Indegene and travel distribution firm TBO Tek -- poised to float IPOs aiming to collectively raise nearly ₹6,400 crore.

Before that, JNK India garnered ₹650 crore through its initial share-sale last month.

Since 2004, there hasn't been a single IPO launch during May in the last four general election cycles. Typically, the April to June period during these years has been slow for the primary

markets due to election uncertainty, said Mahavir Lunawat, Managing Director, Pantomath Capital Advisors.

However, this trend has changed now with the launch of three mainboard initial public offerings (IPOs) next week.

Samir Bahl, CEO of Anand Rathi Advisors told PTI that the new trend is a positive sign indicating the maturing of the Indian capital markets and confidence in India's long-term growth story irrespective of political developments.

The three-day IPO of Indegene will open for subscription May 6, while that of Aadhar Housing Finance and TBO Tek will be



launched May 8. Out of the total IPO size of ₹6,393 crore, the OFS (Offer-for-

Sale) component accounted for a significant ₹4,233 crore.

Pranjal Srivastava, Partner Investment Banking at Centrum Capital, said that the primary market momentum continues due to overall positive economic sentiments, bull run in secondary markets and strong flows.

The ₹3,000-crore IPO of Aadhar Housing Finance is a combination of a fresh issue of equity shares worth ₹1,000 crore and an OFS of ₹2,000 crore by promoter BCP Topco VII Pte Ltd, an affiliate of Blackstone Group Inc.

Further, healthcare tech firm Indegene has set the price band

at ₹430 to ₹452 per share for its ₹1,842-crore initial share-sale.

The IPO comprises a fresh issue of equity shares worth up to ₹760 crore and an OFS of up to 2.34 crore equity shares aggregating to ₹1,082 crore by selling shareholders. This takes the total IPO size to ₹1,842 crore.

TBO Tek's maiden public issue is a mix of a fresh issue of equity shares aggregating up to ₹400 crore and an OFS of up to 1.25 crore equity shares worth ₹1,151 crore by promoters and investors.

The company has set a price band of ₹875 to ₹920 per share for its IPO. At the upper end of the price band, the IPO size is pegged at ₹1,551 crore.

# FPIs take cautious approach

*Amid ongoing general elections, foreign investors inject ₹1,156 crore in May*

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, May 5:** Foreign investors have adopted a "wait and watch" stance amidst the ongoing general elections and have infused just ₹1,156 crore in the first two trading sessions of this month.

This came after FPIs dumped equities worth ₹8,700 crore in April, on concerns over a tweak in India's tax treaty with Mauritius and a sustained rise in US bond yields. Before that, FPIs made a net investment of ₹35,098 crore in March and ₹1,539 crore in February.

In the two days of trading in May, Foreign Portfolio Investors (FPIs) have invested ₹1,156 crore



**With general elections in full swing in India, foreign investors have adopted a wait and watch approach, until the election results are out**

**HIMANSHU SRIVASTAVA** | ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR (MANAGER RESEARCH), MORNINGSTAR INVESTMENT RESEARCH INDIA

in equity and sold ₹1,727 crore in debt, data with the depositors showed.

On the other hand, FPIs withdrew ₹1,727 crore from the debt market during the period under review. Before this outflow, foreign investors put in ₹13,602 crore in March, ₹22,419 crore in February, ₹19,836 crore in January. This inflow was

driven by the upcoming inclusion of Indian government bonds in the JP Morgan Index.

JP Morgan Chase & Co in September last year announced that it would add Indian government bonds to its benchmark emerging market index from June 2024. This landmark inclusion is anticipated to benefit India by attracting around \$20-40 billion in the subsequent 18 to 24 months.

# Home loan outstanding up by ₹10L-cr in last 2 yrs

## OUTSTANDING CREDIT OF HOUSING SECTOR REACHES ₹27L-CR IN MARCH, SAYS RBI DATA

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, May 5:** Credit outstanding to the housing sector rose by nearly ₹10 lakh crore in the last two fiscals to reach a record ₹27.23 lakh crore in March this year, according to RBI's data on 'Sectoral Deployment of Bank Credit'.

Experts from banking and real estate sectors attributed this growth in housing credit outstanding to a strong revival in the residential property market post-Covid pandemic on pent-up demand.

According to the data of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) on sectoral deployment of bank credit for March 2024, the credit

outstanding to the housing (including priority sector housing) stood at ₹27,22,720 crore in March 2024, up from ₹19,88,532 crore in March 2023, and ₹17,26,697 crore in March 2022.

The data also showed that the credit outstanding towards commercial real estate stood at ₹4,48,145 crore in March 2024. It was at ₹2,97,231 crore in March 2022.

According to reports from various property consultants, housing sales and prices have surged significantly in the past two financial years.

When contacted, Madan Sabnavis, Chief Economist with Bank of Baroda, said the high growth in home loans can be attributed to the housing boom seen across all segments.

In particular, Sabnavis said the affordable housing segment has witnessed an uptick due to the government push. "There was also some pent up



demand for buying homes in the last two years following Covid which is getting reflected here," he said.

Sabnavis said the home loan growth would remain robust, but might taper down to 15-20 per cent due to a higher base.

Indian real estate sector, which supports more than 200 ancillary industries including cement and steel, has been witnessing a strong demand since

**There is an unprecedented surge in the demand for homes, which has reached an all-time high in the past two years, particularly in the aftermath of Covid**

**AAKASH OHRI** | JT MD, DLF HOME DEVELOPERS

2022, after languishing for more than a decade because of subdued sales and stable prices.

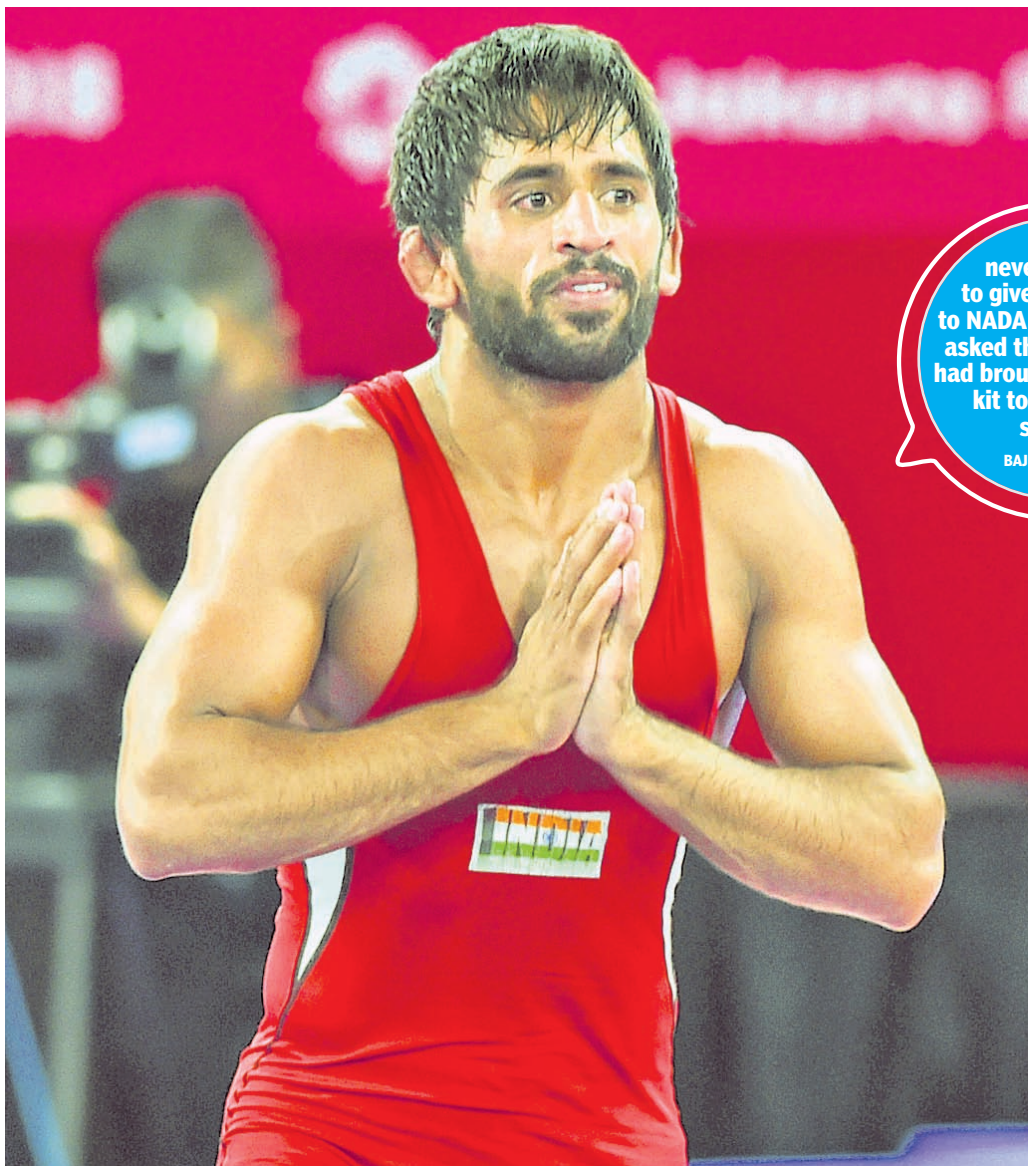
The real estate sector suffered on account of disruptions caused by new realty law RERA, GST and demonetisation besides trust deficit in the sector as many developers did not deliver projects after taking money from customers. However, the sector bounced back post-Covid as the pandemic re-emphasised the importance of home ownership.

Industry experts believe the sector to reach \$1 trillion milestone by 2030.



# Bajrang provisionally suspended

Tokyo bronze-winning wrestler's Paris Olympics dream in jeopardy as he may be barred from all competitions



I never refused to give my sample to NADA officials, but I asked them why they had brought an expired kit to collect my sample  
BAJRANG PUNIA

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, May 5:** Bajrang Punia has been handed a provisional suspension by the National Anti Doping Agency (NADA) for refusing to give his sample for dope test during recent trials. However, the Wrestling Federation of India (WFI) is furious that NADA kept it 'in dark' on the development. The WFI is planning to write to World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) on the matter.

Bajrang was handed a provisional suspension April 23 by NADA. He has been asked to send his reply by May 7 to avoid further disciplinary action.

The trials to pick the men's national team for the Asian Olympic Qualifiers in Bishkek were held March 10 in Sonapat. There Bajrang had walked off the venue without providing his urine sample after losing his bout.

Bajrang said he never refused to provide his sample to NADA officials. "I want to clarify that I never refused to give my sample to NADA officials. I requested

them to first answer me as to what action they took on the expired kit they brought to take my sample and then take my dope test," Bajrang wrote on 'X'. "My

lawyer Vidush Singhania will reply to this letter," he added.

If Bajrang fails to come out clean, he will be out of the race for Paris Olympics Qualification.

Meanwhile WFI president Sanjay Singh expressed his surprise that NADA did not inform the body about the suspension. "It's really surprising that NADA

did not keep us in loop while suspending Bajrang. I had a meeting with NADA DG and other officials April 25 and this matter was not raised in that meeting," Sanjay said.

"They keep communicating with us on matters such as whereabouts clause requirements, long list (for Paris Olympics) and so on. Even we had a discussion about the recent Federation Cup, where they sent officials to collect samples from the winners. But they did not let us know about this suspension of Bajrang Punia. Now, I plan to write to NADA and also inform WADA about this," Singh added.

It was reported that Vinesh Phogat had also initially refused to provide her sample after she won the women's 50kg trials in Patiala.

"We were not informed by anyone whose samples were taken after trials (in Sonapat and Patiala) and what came out of those samples. Just imagine if Bajrang had come to compete in the Federation Cup. We would have allowed him because we had no clue that he had been suspended," the WFI chief pointed out.

The World Qualifiers in Turkey from May 9 is the last chance for Indian wrestlers to lock quotas for the Summer Olympics. So far, four Indian women wrestlers have qualified for the biggest sporting event - Vinesh (50kg), Antim Panghal (53kg), Anshu Malik (57kg) and Reetika Hooda (76kg).

# Jadeja helps Chennai win battle of Kings



ALL-ROUND SHOW: Ravindra Jadeja celebrates with CSK skipper Ruturaj Gaikwad after picking up a wicket Sunday  
PTI PHOTO

AGENCIES

**Dharamsala, May 5:** Ravindra Jadeja (43 and three wickets) orchestrated a master-class all-round show as Chennai Super Kings (CSK) regained their winning touch with a comprehensive 28-run win over Punjab Kings (PBKS) in a low-scoring IPL fixture here Sunday.

Wily leg-spinner Rahul Chahar (3/23) and seamer Harshal Patel (3/24) put up a spirited show but Jadeja made a crucial 43 (26b, 3x4, 2x6) to prop CSK to a par 167/9 after they were sent in to bat by Sam Curran. The left-arm spinner then returned to grab three for 20 in four overs in the crucial middle-overs phase to derail PBKS' chase, which ended at 139 for nine. Comeback pacer Tushar Deshpande (2/35) and impact sub Simarjeet Singh (2/16) also featured among wickets.

CSK now have 12 points with three more matches left to secure their playoff spot. PBKS - eight points from 11 matches - slumped to eighth spot after en-

during their seventh loss of the season. A playoff spot looks remote for them.

Earlier Deshpande inflicted a twin blow, cleaning up Jonny Bairstow (7) and Rilee Rossouw (0) in three balls.

Earlier, at 60/1 in the power play, CSK were going great guns with skipper Ruturaj Gaikwad (32) and Daryl Mitchell (30) in the middle during an entertaining 57-run partnership when Chahar triggered a collapse taking two wickets in two balls.

The partnership was halted as CSK went on to lose three wickets in 11 balls with Harshal taking the dangerous-looking Mitchell in a controversial DRS call. Harshal returned at the death to dismiss Shardul Thakur (17) and MS Dhoni for a golden duck as CSK's hopes for a revival went up in smoke.

**BRIEF SCORES**

CSK 167 for 9 (Ravindra Jadeja 43, Rahul Chahar 3/23, Harshal Patel 3/24) beat PBKS 139 for 9 (Ravindra Jadeja 3/20) by 28 runs.

**SHORT TAKES**

**Eves in tough pool of T20 World Cup**

**Dubai:** India were Sunday placed in Group A alongside defending champions Australia, New Zealand, Pakistan in the Women's T20 World Cup, which will be played in Bangladesh from October 3-20 this year. The Indian eves will play all their games at Sylhet. They will open their campaign against New Zealand (October 4) and will follow it up with games against Pakistan (Oct 6), Qualifier 1 (Oct 9) and Australia (Oct 13). "Each side will play four group matches at the tournament, with the top two teams progressing to the semifinals. The semifinals will come off October 17 and 18 followed by the final in Dhaka October 20, the ICC said on its website.

**4th hat-trick for CR7**

**Riyadh:** Cristiano Ronaldo scored his fourth hat-trick of the Saudi Pro League season as Al-Nassr thrashed Al-Wehda 6-0 in a game played late Saturday night here. The five-time Ballon d'Or winner now has 32 league goals this season, two short of Abderrazak Hamdallah's record tally of 34 back in the 2018-19 campaign, with four games still to play. Ronaldo scored in the fifth, 11th and 48th minutes of the game. His fellow Portuguese star Otavio also scored as did Senegal forward Sadio Mane and Mohammed Al-Fatih.

**Shooters disappoint**

**New Delhi:** Indian trap shooters failed to enter the title round of the ongoing ISSF World Cup in Baku after Vivaan Kapoor bowed out Sunday 2-3 in a shoot-off with Tokyo Olympics bronze medallist Matthew John Coward-Holley of Great Britain. Vivaan shot 120 in qualification round to get into a three-way shoot-off for the sixth and final qualifying spot with Ireland's former junior world champion Ian O'Sullivan, besides Coward-Holley. However, the Indian missed his third shot to bow out. Prithviraj Tondaiman (score 117, rank 24th) and Bhowneesh Mendiratta (score 116, rank 39th) also had a disappointing outing in men's trap event.

# Chelsea, Liverpool triumph as Villa slip

AGENCIES

**London, May 5:** A bad week for Aston Villa got worse Sunday after a surprise 0-1 loss at Brighton in the race for the top four in the Premier League. Unai Emery's team lost 2-4 at home to Olympiakos in the first leg of their Europa Conference League semifinal Thursday. And on a day when Villa could have secured their place in next season's Champions League, they suffered another setback.

Joao Pedro's 87th-minute goal at the Amex Stadium gave hope to fifth-place Tottenham Hotspur in their pursuit of Villa in fourth. However, later in the day, Liverpool hammered Spurs 4-2.

Chelsea's troubled season could still end on something of a high after Mauricio Pochettino's team boosted their chances of European soccer next season with a 5-0 rout of West Ham, earlier in the day.

The win at Stamford Bridge moved Chelsea up to seventh in the standings and two points behind sixth-place Newcastle. Only the top six teams in the Premier League will be guaranteed a place in Europe next season. "We need to keep this momentum and belief going," Pochettino said.

After a morale-boosting 2-0 win Thursday against Tottenham, Chelsea followed it up by thrashing West Ham. Nicolas Jackson scored twice in



Mo Salah (R) celebrates with Harvey Elliott after scoring the opening goal for Liverpool against Spurs

the second half after Chelsea had raced to a 3-0 lead by the break through goals from Cole Palmer, Conor Gallagher and Noni Madueke.

In the day's last game, Liverpool went on the rampage from the start and established a 4-0 lead in no time. Mo Salah (16th), Andrew Robertson (45th), Cody Gakpo (50th) and Harvey Elliott (59th) got their names on the scoresheet and at that time it appeared that Liverpool would run away with the game.

# Narine power slays Lucknow's giants

AGENCIES

**Lucknow, May 5:** Riding on yet another brilliant knock from Sunil Narine (81, 39b, 6x4, 7x6) and combined bowling effort from Harshit Rana (3/24), Varun Chakravarthy (3/30) and Andre Russell (2/17), Kolkata Knight Riders (KKR) defeated Lucknow Super Giants (LSG) by 98 runs in their IPL encounter here Sunday. The win more or less confirmed KKR's spot in the playoffs, while for LSG it was yet another morale-shattering loss. After being put in, KKR scored 235 for the loss of six wickets and then bowled out LSG for 137 in just 16.1 overs.

Except for Marcus Stoinis (36) and skipper KL Rahul (25), none of the other LSG batters could handle the pace-spin combo of KKR and crumbled pathetically. They simply were not up to the mark and did not have the mentality to embark on the massive run chase.

Earlier Narine continued his explosive run in the IPL. Proving his worth with the willow once again, the West Indian went on a six-hitting spree, blasting seven maximums and six fours. Narine, who was dropped twice in the space of two deliveries, smoked five boundaries in five balls, setting the tone for the KKR innings. First, he hammered back-to-back fours off Naveen-ul-Haq (3/49) in the last two balls of the third over. He then attacked the offside, hitting three boundaries on the trot off Mohsin Khan in



Sunil Narine after his half century against LSG, Sunday  
PTI PHOTO

the fourth over.

Narine continued his onslaught and brought up his half century off 27 deliveries with a cheeky late dab that sent the ball rolling past short third. He took a particular liking to Stoinis, hitting three sixes in the 11th over. Haq got rid of Andre Russell (12) before Yuvraj Singh, who came as a concussion sub for Khan, picked up young Angkrish Raghuvanshi's (32) wicket. The Afghan pacer swung

back into action to account for the big-hitting Rinku Singh (16) while Thakur removed Shreyas Iyer (23). But Ramandeep Singh's unbeaten 25 (6b, 1x4, 3x6) took KKR past the 230-run mark.

**BRIEF SCORES**

KKR 235 for 6 (Sunil Narine 81, Naveen-ul-Haq 3/49) beat LSG 137 in 16.1 overs (Marcus Stoinis 36, Harshit Rana 3/24, Varun Chakravarthy 3/30) by 98 runs.

# Record-extending 36th La Liga crown for 'Los Blancos'

AGENCIES

**Madrid, May 5:** Real Madrid earned what coach Carlo Ancelotti said was a 'deserved' La Liga title Saturday after beating Cadiz 3-0 and Girona sealed it with a stunning 4-2 victory over Barcelona. Ancelotti's side did their homework by beating Cadiz and after last season's champions stumbled against Girona, the 'Los Blancos' were crowned champions for a record-extending 36th time.

Ancelotti rotated the players ahead of the Champions League semifinal second leg clash with Bayern Munich next week, but his players still got the job done. Brahim Diaz netted in the 51st minute to put Madrid ahead and then set up Jude Bellingham, with Joselu tapping home a third.

"We've had a spectacular La Liga campaign," Ancelotti told reporters. "We've made very few errors and the advantage is deserved."

Madrid's comfortable win over Cadiz sent them 14 points clear of last season's champions Barcelona, in third, with only 12 left to play for.

Belgian goalkeeper Thibaut Courtois started for the first time after a nine-month injury lay-off and kept a clean sheet for Madrid. Midfielder Luka Modric became the oldest player to appear for the club in La Liga, at 38 years and 238 days.

# Swiatek exacts sweet revenge

ASSOCIATED PRESS

**Madrid, May 5:** Iga Swiatek avenged her loss in last year's final to Aryna Sabalenka and won the Madrid Open tennis tournament Saturday after a third-set tie-breaker. The top-ranked Swiatek beat No. 2 Sabalenka 7-5, 4-6, 7-6 (7-5) for her third title of the season. The 22-year-old Polish player thus becomes the youngest player to reach 20 titles since Caroline Wozniacki in 2012.

Swiatek faced two match points when she was struggling with her serve at 5-6 in the third set. But she held on to force the tie-breaker, where she saved a third match point.

Swiatek collapsed on the red clay after Sabalenka hit long to end a match that lasted three hours and 11 minutes, the longest WTA final so far in 2024. Each



Iga Swiatek poses with her trophy at Madrid

player broke serve five times. "Who is going to say that women's tennis is boring now?" Swiatek said. "Congrats as well to Aryna because we both had an amazing effort today," she added. Swiatek will seek her fourth

French Open title later this month as the two-time defending champion at Roland Garros. Swiatek improved her head-to-head record with Sabalenka to 7-3. She has won her last seven finals, since her loss to Sabalenka here in 2023.

# Poor show by Indian relay team at Worlds

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, May 5:** Second leg runner Rajesh Ramesh pulled out due to cramps as the Indian men's 4x400m team failed to finish Sunday their heats at the World Athletics Relays in Nassau, Bahamas, during round one of Paris Olympics qualifications.

The Indian quartet of Muhammed Anas, Rajesh Ramesh, Muhammed Ajmal and Amoj Jacob was hoping to book a Paris ticket with a top-two finish in heat number four; but in a utter heartbreak, Ramesh left the race midway while clutching his left leg. Anas had already run the first leg.

"The men's 4x400m relay team had a good start. Muhammed Anas clocked 45.93 seconds in the first leg, but the second runner - Rajesh Ramesh - fell down due to cramps," Athletics Federation of India (AFI) said.

# 115 to vie for top honours



POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, May 5:** The 'J30 Bhubaneswar ITF World Tennis Tour Juniors Tournament 2024' started here Sunday. The event is being hosted by the Odisha Tennis Association (OTA) at the tennis centre inside the Kalinga Stadium complex here. The tournament will end May 10.

This prestigious event marks a significant milestone for the region as it hosts aspiring young tennis talents from across the globe. A total of 115 participants from Nepal, Canada, USA, and host nation India will compete for

top honours in both singles and doubles categories. A total of 64 players (32 boys and an identical number of girls) are participating in the qualifying rounds.

The tournament was inaugurated Sunday. Those present on the occasion were Asit Tripathy, president OTA and Satyajit Mohanty, the secretary of the association. ITF supervisor Prabin Kumar Nayak will see to it that the tournament is played as per rules and regulations.

Players will compete for valuable ranking points, with winners receiving 30 points in singles and 25 points in doubles.