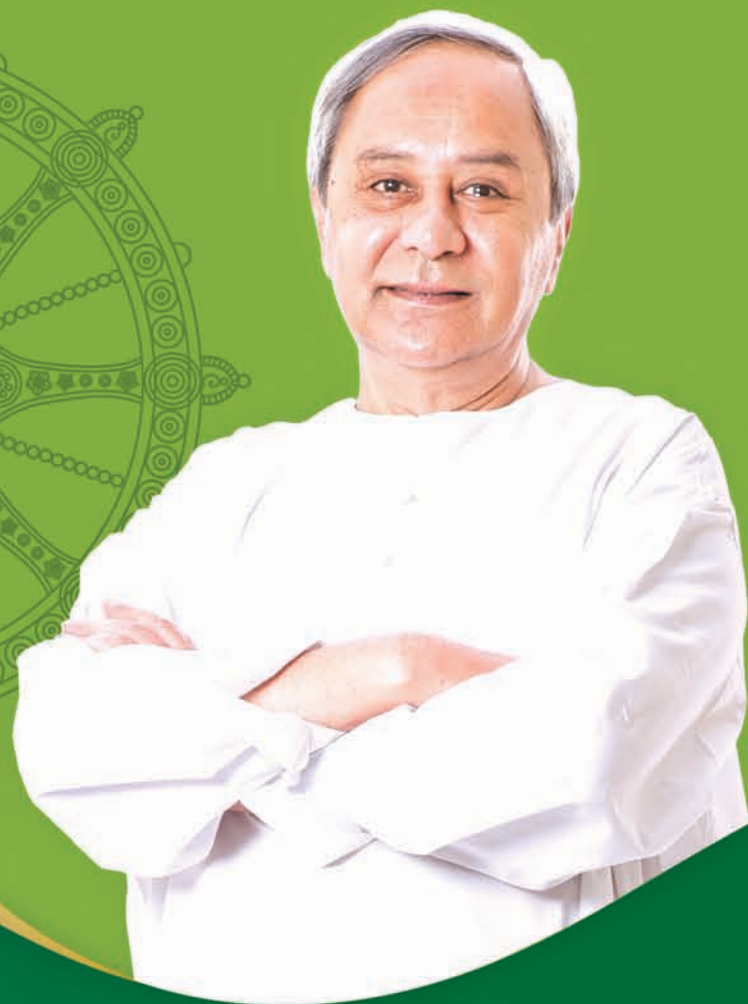


VISION FOR ODISHA

NO 1



ବିଜୁ ଜନତା ଦଳ



PEOPLE'S MANIFESTO 2024

YOUTH



- FIRST STATE IN THE COUNTRY TO INTRODUCE A YOUTH BUDGET.
- 1 LAKH CRORES ALLOCATED FOR YOUTH INTERVENTIONS.
- YOUTH THEMSELVES WILL DECIDE ON A BUDGET OF ONE THOUSAND CRORES PER YEAR.
- SCHOLARSHIP AMOUNTS INCREASED TO RUPEES 14,000 FOR GIRLS AND 12,000 FOR BOYS.
- EXPANSION OF NUA-O AND MAGIC CARD TO COVER ALL ELIGIBLE STUDENTS.
- 2 LAKH GOVERNMENT SECTOR JOBS TO BE PROVIDED FOR YOUTH.

URBANISATION



- DEVELOPMENT OF 4 MEGA URBAN CLUSTERS AND 20 ADDITIONAL CITIES.
- PURI WILL BE DEVELOPED INTO AN INTERNATIONAL CITY.
- EXPANSION OF BHUBANESWAR-CUTTACK METRO TO PURI AND KHORDHA.
- SCHOLARSHIP AMOUNTS INCREASED TO RUPEES 14,000 FOR GIRLS AND 12,000 FOR BOYS.
- LACMI BUS CONNECTIVITY TO ALL MAJOR TOWNS.
- AIRPORT CONNECTIVITY TO 20 CITIES.

INVESTMENT AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT



- FOCUS ON NEW-AGE TECHNOLOGY AND THE NEW ECONOMY WITH A SEMICONDUCTOR HUB, IT INDUSTRIES, AND ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE.
- CONTINUE TO ATTRACT THE HIGHEST INVESTMENT IN THE STATE.
- ESTABLISHMENT OF NEW TECHNICAL AND MANAGEMENT INSTITUTIONS.
- DEVELOPMENT OF 100 ECO-FRIENDLY TOURISM SITES.

ENERGY SECURITY



- FREE ELECTRICITY UP TO 100 UNITS FOR HOUSEHOLDS.
- FREE ELECTRICITY FOR FARMERS.
- ABOUT 90% OF FAMILIES IN THE STATE WILL BENEFIT.

MIDDLE CLASS



- EXPANSION OF BSKY TO INCLUDE ALL ELIGIBLE URBAN FAMILIES, INCLUDING GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES, CONTRACTUAL AND COMMUNITY STAFF FAMILIES.
- SUBSIDIZED INTEREST ON HOUSING LOANS UP TO 20 LAKHS.
- SUBSIDIZED INTEREST ON EDUCATION LOANS UP TO 10 LAKHS
- PROVISION OF FREE ELECTRICITY TO COVER URBAN AREAS.
- AFFORDABLE TRANSPORT FOR EVERYONE.

WOMEN EMPOWERMENT



- SOCIAL SECURITY PENSION FOR MISSION SHAKTI WOMEN.
- LOANS OF 15 LAKH RUPEES AT 0% INTEREST.
- 20,000 CRORE RUPEES OF GOVERNMENT BUSINESS TO BE PROVIDED TO MISSION SHAKTI.
- 100 CRORE RUPEES CORPUS FUND FOR WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS.
- BSKY COVERAGE EXPANDED TO ALL GRASSROOTS WOMEN WORKERS.

SOCIAL SECURITY



- 1,00,000 EACH SC/ST/OBC INDIVIDUALS WILL BE ELIGIBLE FOR ENTREPRENEURSHIP GRANTS OF RUPEES 1,00,000.
- RATION CARDS FOR ALL ELIGIBLE FAMILIES.
- SANCTION OF 10 LAKHS RURAL HOUSING UNITS.

FARMER



- CROP LOANS UP TO 1.5 LAKHS AT 0% INTEREST.
- FREE ELECTRICITY FOR FARMERS.
- RS 15,000 SUPPORT FOR FISHERMEN AS LEAN SEASON ASSISTANCE.
- MARRIAGE ALLOWANCE OF 25,000 RUPEES FOR A FARMER'S DAUGHTER.

LANGUAGE, HERITAGE, AND CULTURE



- SPECIAL ALLOTMENT OF 1,000 CRORES FOR HERITAGE DEVELOPMENT.
- 100 CRORE CORPUS FOR THE DEVELOPMENT FUND OF ODIA AS A CLASSICAL LANGUAGE.
- 25 CRORE CORPUS AT SAMBALPUR UNIVERSITY FOR RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE LANGUAGE OF WESTERN ODISHA.



PRESS THE SANKHA BUTTON

ONE VOTE FOR MP



ONE VOTE FOR MLA



leisure



RYAN GOSLING SHARES BIZARRE FAVOURITE SMELL

Canadian actor Ryan Gosling loves the smell of dogs' paws. The 43-year-old, who has Esmeralda, nine, and eight-year-old Amada with partner Eva Mendes, always finds canine feet smell of either popcorn or nachos but his beloved late pooch George had the 'perfect blend' of both.

KIM UNFAZED BY PUBLIC BOOING

Reality star Kim Kardashian was unfazed when she was booed on stage recently. "Because my mom Kris always brought me up to have a 'thick skin' amid the scrutiny that fame brings," stated the American media personality.



FORTUNE FORECAST

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FOR ASTROLOGY DIAL 55181

ARIES
Today, you will appreciate beautiful things and exotic artefacts. You may even seriously think of pursuing a business related to such commodities. However, you may not be able to make up your mind, says Ganesha. However, you will decide to keep an open mind about it.

TAURUS
You may find it hard to stop the impending outflow of cash while shopping today, says Ganesha. You aren't the one to be dominated and God help anyone who tries to dictate terms to you today. You may end up spending a small fortune, more than lavish to be precise, on the opposite sex today.

GEMINI
Today, you are likely to get encouragement and support for your endeavours from all quarters. You have a gift of gab and your ability to dispel tension with even the simplest of your remarks will be put to test. Still, you will rise to the occasion and prove your mettle.

CANCER
If you are a stockbroker, you may feel that things are not going too well for you. Today, you may regret being a stockbroker. Manufacturers must delay the launch of a new product. However, after a waiting game, you may go on to launch the product with a fanfare.

LEO
Everyone wants to be different. But little do they realise that they already are unique, says Ganesha. Today, you may meet a lot of such different people at work, some of whom may even test your patience. Always remember that working in a team means balancing a variety of egos and opinions.

VIRGO
Take time off all by yourself and introspect today, says Ganesha. Office cubicle looks set to be a war front and pay due attention there, lest things turn to be more difficult, advises Ganesha. New love may just blossom today, and you may even enjoy a nice quiet evening with friends.

LIBRA
Being in charge was never easy, but it's not for nothing that leaders are made of sterner stuff. As a person in charge, you are expected to give directions in a manner that gets the best efforts out of your juniors. Move away from traditional dictatorial style, and build a consensus that enables you to pull off the spectacular, says Ganesha.

SCORPIO
You shall be completely immersed in your routine today. It's the same old humbug of a day for you, says Ganesha. But this exhausting day may transform into an exciting evening – so be prepared to get surprised.

SAGITTARIUS
Cupid is hunting and you are the game today. Cupid's arrows will have you adrift on the ocean of love and turbulent emotions. Your rescue is imminent, when a member of the opposite sex answers your SOS calls. But use your discretion as to which boat you hitch a ride back home, says Ganesha.

CAPRICORN
It's a lucky day for your sweetheart! Wonder why it's written in your horoscope? You will pamper him/her to the hilt, take them out on a shopping spree and buy whatever they lay their eyes on, even if it's way beyond reasonable, says Ganesha. You will go overboard to make your love feel that nothing else matters, and although this lavish outing will serve the purpose, you may later regret not keeping a count of your cash.

AQUARIUS
You find solace in travel today. But if you plan to include others, beware, as you may end up doing all their dirty work too. But, you will find fulfillment even in that, which, says Ganesha, is your strong point.

PISCES
Today just might be the day when you invent a better mousetrap. However, your ideas have a propensity to wane and wax at the same speed, says Ganesha. Hence, keep a notebook handy to jot down all your earth-shattering revolutionary ideas.

Tamannaah's 'toxic trait'

Mumbai: Actress Tamannaah Bhatia has revealed her hilarious toxic trait through a meme, involving food, weather, and parking situations. The *Baahubali* actress took to her Instagram stories and shared a meme that stated: "My toxic trait is telling people I'm down for anything when in reality, I mean not after 8 p.m., food should be involved, and it also depends on the weather, the parking situation, and how tired I am."

The actress added a sticker featuring a girl nodding her head in agreement.

Tamannaah has recently been in the news for her romance with co-actor Vijay Varma.

Talking about her work, her latest release is the Tamil horror comedy *Aranmanai 4* directed by Sundar C.

The film also stars Raashii Khanna, Santhosh Prathap, Ramachandra Raju, Kovai Sarala, Yogi Babu, VTV Ganesh, Delhi Ganesh, and KS Ravikumar.

It marks the fourth instalment in the *Aranmanai* series.

The actress next has *Odela 2*, a Telugu-language supernatural thriller film directed by Ashok Teja.

IAN S

Sonam wants to showcase India's unity, diversity

Mumbai: Actress and fashionista Sonam Kapoor takes pride in representing the country's rich heritage, history, and diversity on global platforms.

The actress said she tries to highlight the country's heritage.

"If I had to represent India in one way or another, I would highlight the country's unity, diversity and resilience. The fact that we have such a strong cultural heritage and ancient civilisation means that whatever is made in India has great value," she said.

Sonam said: "It is a multicultural place where people from many faiths live together in harmony, and representing that is of utmost importance."

"Besides being the land of yoga and spiritualism, for which India is renowned in other parts of the world, it is also celebrated for its music

and artisanal craftsmanship. It is the realm of jewellery and embroidery," she added.

Sonam uses her social media platform to champion Indian craftsmanship.

The actress said: "When you have a platform, there is a responsibility to put your most authentic self forward; you must represent your true self and not a facade. When you have the right moral values and worldviews, it is interesting to see how people appreciate that and attach themselves to it."

In terms of acting, Sonam is gearing up for *Battle for Bittora*.

IAN S



Nandini Satpathy biography to release at Walking BookFairs

BHUBANESWAR: *Nandini Satpathy: The Iron Lady of Orissa*, one of the most awaited books authored by eminent journalist Pallavi Rebbapragada, will be released here at Walking BookFairs, Sunday.

The writer has also given consent to sign a few copies of the book and interact with the readers during the event, according to the organisers.

The book tells the riveting journey of Nandini Satpathy, the only woman Chief Minister of the state, who had earlier joined the Indira Gandhi Cabinet as the I&B Minister. Moreover, in Delhi circles, she is best remembered as 'Indira Gandhi's friend'. Nandini's political career was as tumultuous as her friendship with Indira. They were a close-knit duo, brought together by circumstances and kept together by a strong sense of affection and loyalty, according to some



excerpts from the book. Talking about Walking BookFairs, it is an independent bookstore founded by Akshaya Bahibala and Satabdi Mishra in 2014 to make books accessible to the common people and revive the state's love for reading. They also travelled more than 35,000 km in the last ten years to take books to more people in different parts of the country.

PNN



Manisha talks about on-screen intimacy

Mumbai: Manisha Koirala may have pulled off a couple of intimate scenes in Sanjay Leela Bhansali's Netflix India period drama *Heeramandi: The Diamond Bazaar*, but she's had reservations about on-screen intimacy in the past. In a recent interview, the Saudagaar actress said she was apprehensive of the intimate scenes with Jaideep Ahlawat in Dibakar Banerjee's short in the 2018 Netflix India anthology *Lust Stories*.

"I had my reservations about the love-making scenes. I very frankly told Dibakar that I've had some bad experiences with on-screen intimacy in the past. I thought he would not be able to get around that problem," Manisha said.

However, she then credited the film-

maker for being receptive and sensitive. "I was deeply impressed by Dibakar's open-minded, responsive attitude. He listens to everyone, not just actors but also the crew," she added.

Manisha, who plays a brothel madam Mallikajan in *Heeramandi*, has a couple of intimate scenes in the show. The first one is with Shekhar Suman inside a carriage, which he revealed wasn't a part of the script. The other one is a sexual abuse scene, which her co-star Jason Shah.

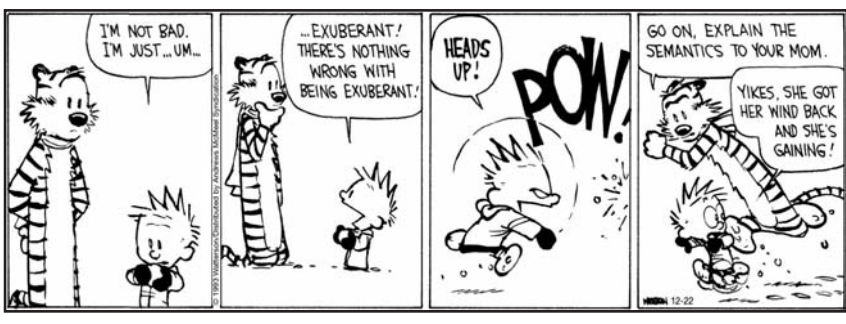
AGENCIES



PEANUTS



CALVIN AND HOBBS

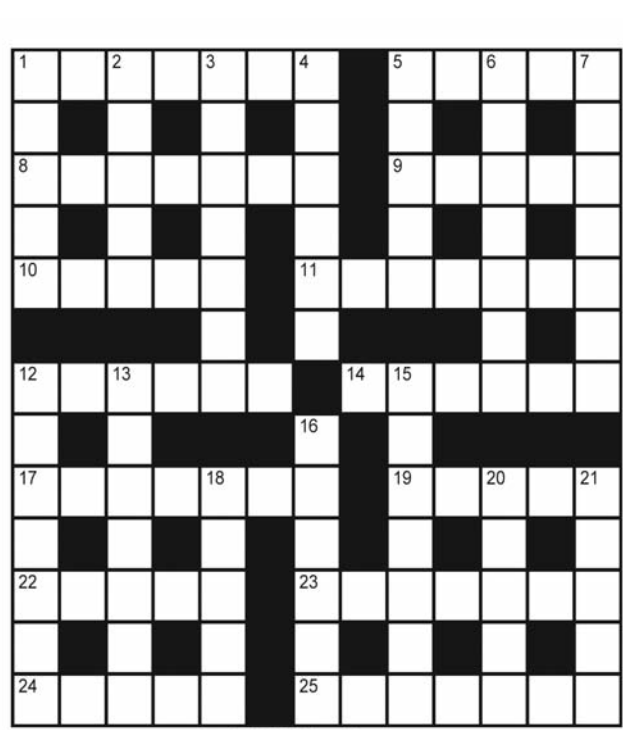


BREVITY



FUN post

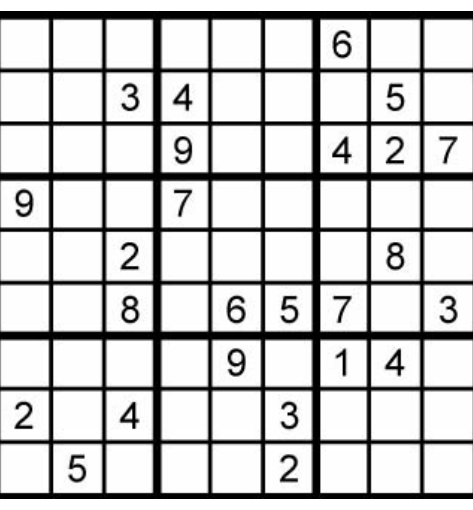
CROSSWORD



- Across**
- 1 Barefaced
 - 5 Kind of nerve
 - 8 Inflames
 - 9 Dug up
 - 10 Early European
 - 11 Level
 - 12 Burroughs' hero
 - 14 Medicinal shrub
 - 17 False belief
 - 19 Tropical lizard
 - 22 Glorify
 - 23 City on the Loire
 - 24 Much of Chile
 - 25 Core
 - 4 Sampled
 - 5 Zing
 - 6 Snarls
 - 7 Musical passage
 - 12 Crisp fabric
 - 13 Akin
 - 15 Like a cherub
 - 16 Man of affairs
 - 18 Gazetteer
 - 20 Wading bird
 - 21 Haven
- Down**
- 1 Seventh heaven
 - 2 Wing
 - 3 Lobster part

SUDOKU

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

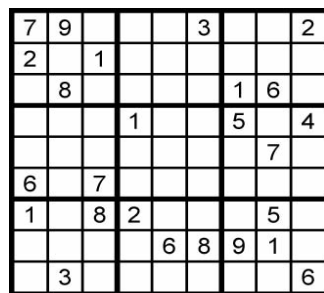


SOLUTIONS

CROSSWORD



SUDOKU



CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW



12 Naxalites killed

Security forces gun down at least 12 Naxalites in an encounter in Chhatisgarh's Bijapur district

NATIONAL | P7



Troops' withdrawal

Last batch of Indian military personnel stationed in the Maldives repatriated, the government of President Mohamed Muizzu says

INTERNATIONAL | P8



IIP growth slows

Industrial production growth slows to 4.9 per cent month-on-month in March 2024, mainly due to poor show by the mining sector

BUSINESS | P9



Leverkusen in final

Bayer Leverkusen reach the Europa League final keeping their treble bid on course and also preserve their unbeaten record

SPORTS | BACK PAGE

www.orissapost.com

BHUBANESWAR | SATURDAY MAY 11 2024

P1

CISF takeover of Parl security raises concerns

PNN & AGENCIES

New Delhi, May 10: The Centre's decision to hand over the security of the Parliament to the Central Industrial Security Force (CISF) from the Parliament Security Service (PSS) has led to concern among the latter.

The Rajya Sabha Secretariat Employees' Association (RSSEA) has taken up the matter with the Secretary-General highlighting the anxiety among the Secretariats' employees, especially those in the PSS cadre, about their role in the future set-up.

"In the meeting of the executive council of RSSEA held on 10.04.2024, the representatives of PSS informed that because of the possible divesting of their role, they are apprehensive about their service and service conditions in the future. This has put them into a deep sense of frustration and confusion. Without going into the merits of such a proposal about replacing the PSS, whose functions inter-alia include the delicate task of facilitating the MPs and other dignitaries in the Parliament House Complex, with a paramilitary force, the primary concern of the Association is to safeguard the service and service conditions of the PSS," the RSSEA wrote in a letter to the Secretary-General.

Meanwhile, the government has decided to constitute a joint survey team for conducting survey of the Parliament House Complex to deploy additional CISF personnel to take over the duties of the PSS.



STAR CAMPAIGNER: Prime Minister Narendra Modi holds a road-show in Bhubaneswar, Friday. BJP's Bhubaneswar Lok Sabha candidate Aparajita Sarangi is also seen

PIC: BIKASH NAYAK

Will quit politics if Naveen fails to become CM again: Pandian

AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, May 10: Bureaucrat-turned-BJD leader Kartik Pandian Friday asserted that he would quit politics if party president Naveen Patnaik does not become the Chief Minister of Odisha for the sixth time in a row after the Assembly elections.

Pandian, a close aide of Patnaik, challenged Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan to announce that the BJP leader would also take political 'sanyas' if the saffron party failed to come to power in the state.

"You (BJP) say that there is BJP wave and wave for a change in Odisha, but I strongly say that if the Chief Minister (Patnaik) does not become the CM again, I will take sanyas from politics," Pandian said while addressing a rally at Brajrajnagar in Jharsuguda district.

Patnaik has been at the helm of Odisha since March 5, 2000.

Pandian claimed that the BJP calls him 'gumastha' (clerk) or 'chamcha' (obedient servant) of Patnaik.

"But you (Pradhan) are a Union minister. If you have the courage, announce that you will also take sanyas from politics if the BJP does not come to power in Odisha," he said.

BAIL FOR 21 DAYS

ADR seeks voter data in 'absolute numbers'

In a massive respite for Arvind Kejriwal, the beleaguered Delhi Chief Minister, the Supreme Court Friday granted him interim bail for 21 days in a money laundering case, though with certain riders. This allows the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) supremo, who has spent 50 days in custody, to actively participate in the campaigning for the remaining four phases of the ongoing Lok Sabha polls. However, the court prohibited him from visiting his office or the Delhi secretariat, as well as signing official files, unless it is absolutely essential for obtaining the lieutenant governor's approval. The court ordered him to surrender June 2, which is the day after the final phase of the seven-phase election concludes.



able him to campaign in the Lok Sabha elections.

The court, however, barred him from visiting his office or the Delhi secretariat, and signing official files unless absolutely necessary for obtaining the lieutenant governor's approval.

New Delhi, May 10: Embattled Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal walked out of the Tihar Jail Friday evening, hours after the Supreme Court granted him interim bail in a money laundering case to en-

Setting him free for 21 days to hit the hustings for the remaining phases of the Lok Sabha elections after 50 days of custody in the money laundering case linked to the alleged Delhi excise scam, the court said he shall surrender June 2, a day after the last phase of the seven-phase poll gets over.

Kejriwal thanked Lord Hanuman as he stepped out of Tihar Jail. "I am feeling great to be with you. I had told you that I would come out soon... First of all, I want to pay obeisance to Lord Hanuman. I am among you because of the blessings of Lord Hanuman," Kejriwal said.

Kejriwal, 55, thanked the Supreme Court judges for granting him interim bail and the people for their blessings.

"We have to save the country from dictatorship, I will fight with all my might but need the support of 140 crore people," he told the media after stepping out of Tihar Jail in round neck T-shirt and trousers.

Observing that granting Kejriwal interim bail for 21 days will not make much of a difference, a bench of Justices Sanjiv Khanna and Dipankar Datta said the ED's Enforcement Case Information Report (ECIR) was registered in August 2022 while the CM was arrested March 21 this year.

"He (Kejriwal) was out there for one-and-a-half-years. He could have been arrested earlier or after but nothing such thing happened," the bench told ED.

Imposing a raft of bail conditions on the AAP leader, the bench said, "He shall not visit the Office of the Chief Minister and the Delhi Secretariat."

"He shall be bound by the statement made on his behalf that he shall not sign official files unless it is required and necessary for obtaining clearance/ approval of the Lieutenant Governor of Delhi," the top court said.

AGENCIES

New Delhi, May 10: Association for Democratic Reforms (ADR) has moved the Supreme Court seeking a direction to the Election Commission to upload polling station-wise voter turnout data in 'absolute figures' on its website within 48 hours of conclusion of polling for each phase of the ongoing Lok Sabha elections.

ADR has filed an interim application in its 2019 PIL seeking directions to the poll panel that 'scanned legible copies of Form 17C Part-I (Account of Votes Recorded)' of all polling stations be uploaded immediately after the polls.

"Direct the Election Commission to provide tabulated polling station-wise data in absolute figures of the number of votes polled as recorded in Form 17C Part-I after each phase of polling in the on-going 2024 Lok Sabha elections and also a tabulation of constituency-wise figures of voter turnout in absolute numbers in the on-going 2024 Lok Sabha elections," the NGO said.

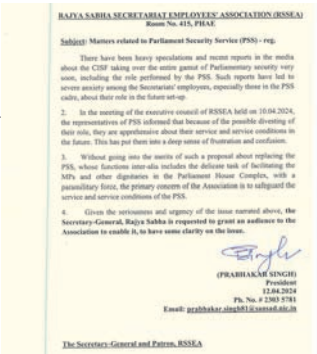
It said that the plea was filed to ensure that the democratic

process is not subverted by electoral irregularities.

"The voter turnout data for the first two phases of the ongoing 2024 Lok Sabha elections published by ECI April 30 has been published after 11 days of the first phase of polling held April 19 and 4 days after second phase of polling held April 26. The data as published by the ECI in its press release dated April 30, 2024 shows a sharp increase (by about 5-6%) as compared to the initial percentages announced by ECI as of 7 pm on the day of polling," the plea said.

The petition said the 'inordinate' delay in the release of final voter turnout data, coupled with the unusually high revision of over 5 per cent in the poll panel's press note of April 30, 2024 has raised concerns and public suspicion regarding the correctness of the said data.

The non-release of absolute number of votes polled, coupled with the 'unreasonable delay' in release of votes polled data, has led to apprehensions in the mind of the electorate about the sharp increase between initial data and data released April 30, it said.



IRREGULAR by MANJUL



Hello, A&A Associates? Yes, sir. Your product has been shipped. Will you be paying by RTGS, cheque, or tempo?

MARKET WATCH	
INDEX	VARIATION
SENSEX	72664.47 ↑ 260.30
NIFTY	22055.20 ↑ 97.70
DOLLAR	83.09 ↓ ₹0.44
EURO	91.00 ↑ ₹1.69
GOLD	₹72,525 ↑ ₹886
SILVER	₹ 84,729 ↑ ₹230

WEATHER	
BBSR	CTC
Max Temp	38.2°C 36.8°C
Min Temp	25.5°C 24.5°C
Humidity	76% 69%
Rainfall	Nil Nil
FORECAST	
FOG/PARTLY CLOUDY SKY WITH RAIN	

Friendship marriage: Japan's novel relationship trend

AGENCIES

Tokyo, May 10: A growing number of young Japanese are embracing a novel form of marital partnership known as 'friendship marriage,' which does not necessitate love or sexual intimacy, South China Morning Post reported.

Approximately one per cent of Japan's 124 million people are potential candidates for this type of relationship, including asexuals, homosexuals, and heterosexuals who have grown disenchanted with conventional marriage.

These numbers are based on information gathered by Colorus, an agency that prides itself on being Japan's first and only organisation specialising in friend-

ship marriages. Since its establishment in March 2015, around 500 members have established friendship marriage households through the agency, with some even raising children.

Friendship marriage is a type of relationship that is characterised by cohabitation and is based on shared interests and values. Unlike traditional romantic love or marrying a best friend, this type of marriage does not involve romantic love or sexual interaction between the partners. Although legally recognised as spouses, these couples may choose to live together or separately.

In the event that they decide to have children, they may opt for artificial insemination. It is important to note that both indi-



viduals in the marriage are free to pursue romantic relationships with other people, as long as there is mutual agreement. Prior to getting married, couples typically spend a significant amount of time discussing various aspects of their life together, such as eating meals to-

gether, dividing expenses, household chores, and organising refrigerator space. While these discussions may not seem romantic, they have proven to be beneficial for approximately 80 per cent of couples, leading to a happy coexistence and, in many cases, the decision to have chil-

dren, according to Colorus.

Individuals interested in friendship marriage are typically 32.5 years old, have incomes higher than the national average, and about 85 per cent of them hold a bachelor's degree or higher. This trend is particularly appealing to asexual individuals and homosexuals. Asexuals, who do not experience sexual desire or romantic love, still desire connection and companionship, while homosexuals may choose friendship marriages as an alternative due to the lack of legal same-sex marriage in Japan. Additionally, some heterosexual young people, who are not fond of traditional marriage norms or romantic relationships but face societal pressures, have also

embraced this new trend.

In search of alternatives to traditional marriage, people have turned to friendship marriage to project a 'stable and mature' image for career advancement or to please their parents. In Japan, being married offers tax benefits, and it remains challenging for single women to have children. More than 70 per cent of partners in friendship marriages choose this path to have children. Although these relationships sometimes end in divorce, they offer advantages such as policy benefits, companionship, and support for those who feel disconnected, dislike traditional marriage, or consider themselves social misfits, as stated by Colorus.



AUSPICIOUS BEGINNING: Maharana servitors performing the traditional rituals for construction of chariots of the sibling deities on Akshaya Tritiya, in Puri, Friday

Modi leads roadshow in City

PNN & AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, May 10: Prime Minister Narendra Modi led a roadshow in the state capital Friday as part of his campaign for BJP candidates for the Bhubaneswar Lok Sabha seat and seven Assembly segments under it where polling will be held May 25.

Modi, who is on a two-day visit to the state, arrived at the Biju Patnaik International Airport (BPIA) from Hyderabad in the evening where he was received by the party's state leaders. He went straight for the road show, beginning from Ram Mandir. He was joined by state BJP president Manmohan Samal and Bhubaneswar Lok Sabha candidate Aparajita Sarangi on an open jeep which was followed by a carcade. The mega road show began at around 8.30 pm.

A large number of people gathered on both sides of the road cheered for the prime minister and waved cutouts of the BJP's election symbol 'lotus' as Modi greeted them from the open jeep.

The crowd also shouted slogans and showered flower petals as the decorated vehicle with the prime minister standing atop it passed.

The two-kilometre stretch of Janpath connecting the Ram Mandir and Vani Vihar square wore a festive look as artistes performed different programmes depicting the culture of the state on 12 stages.



The roadshow was held for about one hour.

The entire area also turned saffron colour with roadside trees, light posts and other structures decorated with the BJP flags and even the lights of saffron colour.

Modi had held a similar roadshow ahead of the 2019 general elections in the City.

The prime minister will stay at Raj Bhavan here at night and attend three public meetings in the state Saturday.

Earlier during the day, state BJP sources claimed that more than three lakh party workers from across the state had converged to witness the event and cheer up the prime minister.

Hundreds of women party workers clad in traditional saree, and male workers in saffron colour kurta-pyjama with skull caps having party symbol, converged at the BJP state headquarters.

A massive security cordon was thrown around the entire area where roads had been sealed right from the afternoon, putting locals and daily commuters to inconveniences. The entire stretch turned into a fortress with the heavy deployment of security forces comprising the State police, Central forces and SPG.

Operations of city buses got affected due to blockage of roads and diversion of traffic to facilitate the road show.

Trio gets 20-yr RI for narco smuggling

AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, May 10: Three persons, who were caught while smuggling a huge consignment of brown sugar around four years ago, have been sentenced to 20 years of rigorous imprisonment each by a special court.

Sources in the Special Task Force (STF) said this is the first case in Odisha where the accused persons were awarded the maximum 20 years imprisonment under the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances



ment under the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances

(NDPS) Act of 1985.

The Second Additional District Judge, cum Special Judge, Bhubaneswar Thursday also imposed a fine ₹1 lakh each on Debasis Behera, Prabir Kumar Singh, and Sk Kausar Alli, who will have to undergo another year of imprisonment if they failed to furnish the fine amount.

According to the prosecution case, the trio was transporting the brown sugar consignment weighing 4.458 kg in a Bolero

jeep June 19, 2020, after procuring it from West Bengal, when they were intercepted by STF near Rasulgarh, here.

The charge sheet against the accused persons was submitted under Section 21(c)/29 of NDPS Act following through investigation.

During the trial, the prosecution examined 13 witnesses and exhibited 79 documents. The seized contraband Brown Sugar was later destroyed on an order of the court.

More summer special trains



ARINDAM GANGULY, OP

Bhubaneswar, May 10: The East Coast Railway (ECoR) has decided to run more special trains in its jurisdiction towards different destinations of the country to avoid additional rush in regular trains during summers, ECoR sources said Friday.

Special trains include Bhubaneswar-Mumbai LTT, Berhampur-Secunderabad, Berhampur-Surat, Chennai Egmore-Bhubaneswar and Chennai Egmore-Sambalpur.

Bhubaneswar-Mumbai LTT-Bhubaneswar weekly Summer Special (08420/08419) will leave Bhubaneswar at 11pm every Wednesday. During return journey, it will leave LTT at 1:20pm every Friday. The train will run from May 8 to June 28.

Secunderabad-Berhampur-Secunderabad Summer Special (07035/07036) will leave Secunderabad at 8:45pm May 11 and May 14. During return jour-

ney, it will leave Berhampur at 4:45pm May 12 and May 15.

Surat-Berhampur-Surat Special (09059/09060) will leave from Surat 2:20pm every Wednesday. During return journey, it will leave Berhampur at 2:30pm every Friday. The train will run from May 22 to June 28.

Chennai Egmore-Bhubaneswar-Chennai Egmore Special Train (06107/06108) will leave from Chennai Egmore at 10:30am May 11 and June 1. During return journey, it will leave from Bhubaneswar at 9:30am May 12 and June 7.

Chennai Egmore-Sambalpur-Chennai Egmore Special Train (06109/06110) will leave from Chennai Egmore at 10:30 am May 18 and June 7. During return journey, it will leave Sambalpur at 11:35am May 19 and June 8.

The special summer train services will operate on convenient schedules, offering flexibility to passengers to plan their trips according to their preferences.

AKSHAYA TRITIYA

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, May 10: Ahead of his Odisha visit, Prime Minister Narendra Modi Friday highlighted that 'Akshaya Tritiya' is an auspicious day in Odisha as chariot making of Lord Jagannath begins on this day for the annual Rath Yatra.

Taking to X, Modi said: "Akshaya Tritiya is a very auspicious day in Odisha and for the great Odia culture. This is the day when the making of chariots begins for the Rath Yatra of Mahaprabhu Shri Jagannath. It is also closely linked with Akhi Muthi Anukula, when farmers start sowing seeds. May the blessings of Mahaprabhu Shri Jagannath always remain upon us."

Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik also greeted the people of Odisha on the occasion of Akshaya Tritiya and wished good harvest this year.

Taking to X, Patnaik said: "My best wishes and congratulations to all on the auspicious occasion of Akshaya Tritiya. With the blessings of Lord Shri Jagannath, may the farmers' first showing of seeds be auspicious. May a good harvest this year bring happiness and prosperity in everyone's life."

Modi, Naveen greet people



Akshaya Tritiya is considered an auspicious festival in Odisha, which is observed in the Vaisakha month of the traditional Hindu calendar.

As per the traditional rituals of the farming festival, the farmers perform 'Akhi Muthi Anukula', the ritual of sowing seeds in their paddy fields after ploughing their lands.

It is also a festival that celebrates wealth, prosperity and good fortune. It is believed that any investments made on this day will bring prosperity and good fortune. Farmers in the state carry a basket of seeds and sow those in their fields as part of the rituals during the festival.

On this day, the construction

of chariots for the Puri Rath Yatra also starts. The day also is the beginning of Chandan Yatra, the longest festival observed at Jagannath Temple in Puri. It continues for 42 days and is observed in two parts: 'Bahara Chandana' and 'Bhitara Chandana'.

Bahara Chandana starts from Akshaya Tritiya and continues for 21 days. The representative idols of the sibling deities as well as the 'Pancha Pandava' are taken in a ceremonial procession from the 'Singhadwara' (Lions Gate) of the Jagannath Temple in Puri to the Narendra Tirtha tank, located in the vicinity of the 12th century shrine, and placed on decorated boats for an evening cruise.

Just 3 night shifts can raise risk of diabetes

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, May 10: Just three-night shifts may be enough to raise your risk of several diseases like diabetes, obesity, and other metabolic disorders, finds a study.

Researchers from Washington State University, the US revealed that night shifts can cause the body's protein rhythms related to blood glucose regulation to go haywire.

It also hampers energy metabolism and inflammation -- influencing the development of chronic metabolic conditions.

In the study published in the Journal of Proteome Research, the team explained about a "master biological clock in the brain," which makes the body follow rhythms by day and night.

When this gets "dysregulated," it leads to stress that causes long-term health consequences, said Hans Van Dongen, Professor.

Additionally, Van Dongen notes that just three-night shifts are enough to disrupt the rhythm and raise the health risks, which suggests that early intervention to prevent diabetes and obesity is possible.



Using blood samples the team identified proteins present in blood-based immune system cells, some of which had rhythms closely tied to the master biological clock and showed no change in response to the night shifts.

However, most other proteins showed change. Analysing proteins involved in glucose regulation, the team found a nearly complete reversal of glucose rhythms in night-shift participants.

Further, they found that processes involved in insulin production and sensitivity were found to be out of sync in night-shift workers.

In addition to this, previous studies have shown evidence that shift work has an additive negative effect on blood pressure, increasing the risk of heart disease and stroke -- elevated in night shift workers.

We4you brings magic of cinema to visually impaired students

ARINDAM GANGULY, OP

Bhubaneswar, May 10: In an effort to ensure the joy and wonder of cinema being accessible to all, We4you Charitable Trust, in support of Roundtable India BRT 53 and Mayank Enterprises has taken an initiative 'Movie Time', aimed at providing audio visual experience to visually impaired students, Friday.

Around 200 visually impaired students from different schools and colleges visited Keshari talkies here, and experienced the screening of the movie 'Srikanth' based on the life and journey of Srikanth Bolla, a visually impaired person who became the first blind entrepreneur in India.

"Movies have the power to transport us to different worlds, evoke emotions, and ignite our imagination. However, for visually impaired individuals, tra-



ditional movie screenings often present barriers," said Abhaya Mohanta, founder of We4you.

"We4you has collaborated with local schools to create a tailored cinematic experience that can cater to the unique needs of visually impaired students," he added. We4you Charitable Trust is committed to fostering inclusivity and accessibility in all aspects of the society, and 'Movie Time' is one of the many initiatives undertaken to create a more equitable society for individuals.

Srikanth is a biographical film on the life of Srikanth Bolla, a visually-impaired industrialist and the founder of Bolland Industries.

Indian Ocean surface temp could predict dengue outbreaks

Abnormal trends in sea surface temperatures of the Indian Ocean could help predict trends in global dengue epidemics, including case numbers and how they might change with time, according to new research.

Scientists said that these observed abnormal temperatures, which are a 'climate indicator', could help enhance the forecasting and planning for outbreak responses.

Currently, precipitation and temperature are some of the climate indicators that are being used as early warning systems to forecast disease trends such as dengue, they said.

The team, including researchers from Beijing Normal University, China, explained that, for example, events associated with warmer sea surface temperatures, driven by El Nino, are known to influence how dengue is transmitted around



the world by affecting mosquito breeding.

Being able to predict the risk of outbreaks and prepare for them can be crucial for many regions, especially those where the mosquito-borne disease is endemic, or constantly present.

However, the authors said

there were gaps in our understanding of long-distance climate drivers of dengue outbreaks. Their findings are published in the journal Science.

In this study, the researchers used data on yearly dengue cases reported from across each of the 46 Southeast Asian and

American countries from 1990-2019. Data of monthly cases from 24 of these countries reported from 2014-19 was also used for analysis.

Through modelling, the team drew associations between changes in climate patterns around the world and those in seasonal and yearly case numbers during dengue epidemics.

They found that dengue epidemics around the world were 'closely' linked with abnormalities in sea surface temperatures of the tropical Indian Ocean.

"We identify a distinct indicator, the Indian Ocean basin-wide (IOBW) index, as representing the regional average of sea surface temperature anomalies in the tropical Indian Ocean. IOBW is closely associated with dengue epidemics for both the Northern and Southern hemispheres," the authors wrote.

In the three months before a dengue outbreak, the IOBW

index was found to be a crucial factor in predicting the disease magnitude and timing of outbreaks per year in each hemisphere. The ability of IOBW to predict dengue incidence likely arises due to its effect on regional temperatures, the researchers said.

"These findings indicate that the IOBW index can potentially enhance the lead time for dengue forecasts, leading to better-planned and more impactful outbreak responses," the authors wrote.

They, however, cautioned that more assessments are needed to evaluate the performance of their model in predicting dengue epidemics.

"Although our model demonstrates its capability to capture observed patterns, making premature claims about its predictive ability without rigorous validation of future data would be unjustified," the authors wrote.

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Drinking water, price of agri produce main issues

Forest officials toil to prevent wildfires, 'poaching' of trees

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Koraput, May 10: Lack of drinking water facility, better price of agricultural produce of tribal farmers and good healthcare facilities are the main demands of the voters of Koraput Lok Sabha constituency which will go to the polls May 13.

Koraput which is known for its hills, waterfalls and forests has more women voters than male. Out of total 14.80 lakh voters, 7,73,885 are women and 7,06,777 are male.

Farmers in Rayagada district, a part of which is under Koraput Lok Sabha seat, are demanding regulation of cotton farming in the district as the farmers do not get fair price for their produce. They claim that they have to go for distress sale of cotton to the traders from Andhra Pradesh as there are no buyers of their produce.

They are demanding that the state government should come to the rescue of cotton growers who are hit by calamities.

"While paddy farmers get compensation over loss of their crop due to calamities, there is no such provision for cotton grow-

ers in the state," said Ramesh Pangi, a cotton grower.

The people are demanding piped drinking water facility in all villages as many people suffer from diarrhoea during the rainy season every year due to consumption of contaminated water both in Rayagada and Koraput districts, said a villager.

"Though some urban pockets are provided with piped water, most of the villagers depend on nullahs and streams to meet their drinking water requirement," the villager said.

Another villager said, "We need better healthcare facilities as people suffer from diarrhoea and other diseases during the rainy season."

The Koraput Lok Sabha seat will witness a three-cornered contest between BJD, Congress and BJP.

Ruling Biju Janata Dal (BJD) candidate Kausalya Hikaka claimed that the social security schemes of the state government along with Biju Swasthya Kalyan Yojana (BSKY) are popular among the poor people of Koraput.

"Our Chief Minister Naveen



Patnaik's popularity will help me win the seat," Hikaka said. Naveen Patnaik has already campaigned for the BJD candidate in Koraput.

Congress has re-nominated sitting MP Saptagiri Ulaka. Ulaka is optimistic about retaining the seat and claims that he has done a lot for the development of Koraput in the last five years.

Ulaka is the son of veteran Congress leader and former state minister Ramachandra Ulaka.

"I am meeting people and telling them about my report card for the last five years. I have ensured installation of 1,482 mobile towers, an aluminium refinery at Kansariguda, Jeypore airport, NH-326 by-pass road during the last five years," Ulaka said.

The Congress candidate claimed that people are happy that they have internet connectivity even as their villages are located amid hills and forests. The people call him 'tower man' for ensuring internet connectivity to people in forest and hilly areas of Koraput.

In 2019 Lok Sabha elections, Ulaka had polled 34.36 per cent of votes in Koraput, followed by BJD candidate Kausalya Hikaka at 34.03 per cent while BJD nominee Jayram Pangi came third with 11.29 per cent votes.

Former Union minister Giridhar Gamang, who had won the Koraput LS seat eight times and his wife Hema Gamang for once, is back in Congress after a tour to BJP and BRS.

Ulaka and two other con-

tenders in the Koraput LS seat belong to Kondh community, which forms around a significant 47 per cent of the population in the area.

BJP has fielded Kaleram Majhi for the LS seat. Majhi said Prime Minister Narendra Modi's election rally May 6 at Nabarangpur district will have an impact on the adjacent Koraput Lok Sabha seat also.

"The tribal people are overwhelmed by the BJP government facilitating the construction of Ram Temple at Ayodhya... many have praised Modi..." Majhi said, adding that free-of-cost rice by the Central government would also help him to get the support of tribals, Dalits and OBCs. The BJP has never won from the Koraput seat.

"BJP candidate may be good, but the party is yet to expand its base in Koraput," said political analyst Sandeep Mishra.

He said the BJP is also a factor this time in the Koraput LS constituency.

The Koraput LS constituency comprises seven assembly segments - Gunupur, Bisam Katak and Rayagada in Rayagada district and Laxmipur, Jeypore, Koraput and Pottangi in Koraput district.

POST NEWS NETWORK

Rourkela, May 10: The alertness of the Forest department has prevented major fires in jungles and 'poaching' of trees this summer, officials informed here Friday. They said there is a new trend to set forests on fire and then cut down the half-burnt trees to sell those as timber outside the state. Hence, officials of various Forest divisions are keeping a close watch on all the ranges, especially those in the Bonai division.

"Earlier there used to be illegal poaching of wild animals. Now miscreants are targeting the trees, as plenty of costly teak is easily available. We have to be on our toes always to prevent it," said an official. "We are determined to stop the smuggling of teak and other forest produce," he added.

A Forest department official working in the Sole and Jarda ranges informed that miscreants are responsible for more than half of the reported cases of forest fires. "The modus operandi is quite simple. Set a part of the forest on fire and then cut the half burnt trees and smuggle them out. Hence we have to continuously monitor

all the ranges," he stated.

An official informed that they received inputs from sources that 22 people including women were clearing a patch of the forest in Bonai range Tuesday on the pretext of creating agricultural land. "It was just an alibi," said range officer Kailash Kissan. "We rushed to the spot and found that valuable trees were being felled. Among them were mango, sal, jamun and arjuna trees. All the 22 were arrested and we seized sophisticated cutting equipment from them," informed Kissan.

In another incident, Forest department officials have apprehended habitual offender Satyanarayan Yadav, a truck driver by profession. He was nabbed while setting a dense forest area on fire in Barsuan range. "As we managed to reach the spot quickly we doused the flames easily," said an official.

Forest officials however lauded the locals for their cooperation. They said the locals keep a constant watch on the forest ranges and immediately pass on information if they find anything amiss or suspicious. "This has gone a long way to prevent major forest fires this season," said an official.

RSP organises HR conclave

POST NEWS NETWORK

Rourkela, May 10: RSP's plant-level HR Conclave-2024 was recently organised here at the HRD Centre. Six teams comprising three members each took part in a presentation titled 'Moving from Personnel to HR: Roadmap Ahead'.

Tarun Misra, ED (P&A) with additional charge of ED (Projects) presided over the discussion. He also headed the panel of judges. The other members of the panel were SS Roychowdhury, CGM (RMHP) and Sudip Pal Chowdhury, CGM (Projects). Present on the occasion were Rajashree Banerjee, CGM (HRD), and other senior officers of RSP.

The team represented by Sanjay Mehrotra, GM (Personnel), Sangeeta Maria Sindur, senior manager

(Personnel) and Sambit Nandi (MTA) emerged winners of the competition. They will now represent RSP at the 'SAIL HR Conclave' at MTI in Ranchi. The event was coordinated by S Badapanda, GM (Personnel-OD) and Simpi Patel, deputy manager (Personnel-OD).

This incidentally is a new HR initiative undertaken by the HR department of SAIL. It has been launched for developing the HR team keeping in mind the company's business priorities and to provide cultural transformation across the company.

This is an effort to meet the future challenge of producing 35 million tonne (MT) crude steel by 2030-31 which entails improvement of labour productivity to over 1,100 tonne of crude steel per person annually.

Pregnant woman walks 4 km to reach hospital

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhawanipatna, May 10: A pregnant woman had to walk for 4 kilometre to reach hospital Friday as the 108 ambulance failed to reach Paradangaguda village under Chancher panchayat of Bhawanipatna Sadar block in Kalahandi district as it lacks a motorable road.

As per reports, Mande Majhi, wife of Libri Majhi, experienced labour pain Friday morn-



ing following which her family members called the ambulance. However, the ambulance could not reach the village and stopped at Gudanga, a place 4 km away from the village.

Bereft of options, the pregnant woman had to walk for 4 km with the help of family members and the local ASHA to reach Gudanga where the ambulance was waiting. She was then admitted

to the district headquarters hospital at Bhawanipatna where she gave birth to a girl child in the afternoon.

With the polls scheduled for May 13 in the area, locals have raised questions about various government projects following the pathetic incident.

EAST COAST RAILWAY
EXPRESSION OF INTEREST FOR TIE-UP OF HOSPITALS FOR TREATMENT IN EMERGENCY CASES & SPECIALISED INVESTIGATIONS

No. CMS/ECOR/SBP/Tie-up (EOI)/2024/01, Date: 30.04.2024

Chief Medical Superintendent East Coast Railway/ Sambalpur invites "EXPRESSION OF INTEREST" (EOI) from the willing CGHS AND NON-CGHS EMPANELLED PRIVATE HOSPITALS LOCATED AT SAMBALPUR, BOLANGIR, TITLAGARH, KANTABANJI AND MAHASAMUDRA FOR SECONDARY AND TERTIARY CARE TREATMENT FOR RAILWAY PATIENTS OF EAST COAST RAILWAY / SAMBALPUR THROUGH MOU (MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING) IN NOMINATED IDENTIFIED SPECIALITIES. The details are available through website of East Coast Railway (<https://eastcoastrail.indianrailways.gov.in/>)

FOR EOI DOCUMENT :- EOI document and format should also be downloaded from our above mentioned website.

The responses on the prescribed format (as enclosed in Annexure: A, B & 2 should be submitted to the office of Chief Medical Superintendent, Divisional Railway Hospital Rajnagar, Khetrajpur, Sambalpur - 768003 on or before 29.05.2024.

For any further clarification Chief Medical Superintendent, DRH, Sambalpur may be contacted on mobile No. 8455886500.

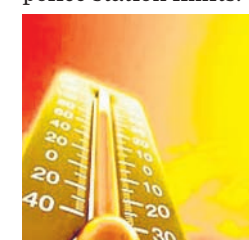
PR-102/P/24-25 Chief Medical Superintendent, Sambalpur

Youth collapses while playing cricket; sunstroke suspected

POST NEWS NETWORK

Berhampur, May 10: In what is suspected to be a case of sunstroke, a young man collapsed and subsequently died while playing cricket here Friday.

The incident occurred at the Khallikote College playground under Berhampur Town police station and the deceased has been identified as Sunil Kumar Nahak (31), son of late Manoj Nahak, of Ankuli Kumbharpalli under Baidyanathpur police station limits.



Sources said, Sunil along with some of his friends came to play cricket as usual at Khallikote college ground Friday morning. However, he suddenly asked for water in the middle of his batting but fainted and collapsed on the ground before water was brought to him.

Fellow players rushed him first to City Hospital and then to MKCG Medical College and Hospital here. There, the doctor declared Sunil dead.

Police have seized the body and registered a case of unnatural death (8/24) in the police station. The exact cause of death will be known after the post-mortem report, they said.

FORMAT C-1
DECLARATION ABOUT CRIMINAL CASES
(As per the judgement dated 25th September, 2018, of Hon'ble Supreme Court in WP (Civil) No. 536 of 2011 (Public Interest Foundation & Ors. Vs. Union of India & Anr.))

Name and address of candidate: Mr. Suresh Chandra Panigrahy
Name of political party: Communist Party of India (Marxist)
(Independent candidates should write "Independent" here)
Name of Election: General Election 2024
*Name of Constituency: Bhubaneswar Parliamentary Constituency (18)

I, Mr. Suresh Chandra Panigrahy (name of candidate), a candidate for the abovementioned election, declare for public information for the following details about my criminal antecedents:

(A) Pending criminal cases				
Sl. No.	Name of Court	Case No. and Dates	Status case(s)	Section(s) of Acts concerned and brief description of offence(s)
1	Sub Divisional Judicial Magistrate, Bhubaneswar	CT No.: 5495/20	Chargesheet pending	Section 143, 149, 269, 270, 323, 332, 353 and 427 of IPC, Section 96 of Orissa Urban Police Act, Section 3 of Epidemic Disease Act. unlawful assembly, obstructing public servant to do his duty, negligently and malignantly doing acts to spread infection, causing hurt, mischief, contravening traffic rules and violence against healthcare service personnel.
2	Sub Divisional Judicial Magistrate, Bhubaneswar	CT No.: 5349/20	Chargesheet pending	Section 143, 149, 269, 270 and 353 of IPC. Section 96 of Orissa Urban Police Act, Section 3 of Epidemic Disease Act. unlawful assembly, obstructing public servant to do his duty, negligently and malignantly doing acts to spread infection, causing hurt, mischief, contravening traffic rules and violence against healthcare service personnel.
3	Sub Divisional Judicial Magistrate, Bhubaneswar	CT No.: 789/13	Chargesheet pending	Section 147, 148, 149, 294, 323, 341, 353 and 96 of IPC, Section 7 of Opium Prohibition Act. rioting with arms, causing hurt, wrongful restraint, assaulting public servant, contravening traffic regulations and being a member of opium smoking assembly.
4	Judicial Magistrate First Class II, Bhubaneswar	CT No.: 3264/12	Chargesheet pending	Section 294, 34 and 427 of IPC. expressing obscene acts or songs and mischief.
5	Sub Divisional Judicial Magistrate, Bhubaneswar	CT No.: 1363/10	Chargesheet pending	Section 143, 149, 186, 341 and 431 of IPC, Section 96 of Orissa Urban Police Act. unlawful assembly, obstructing public servant to do his duty, wrongful restraint, rendering public road impassable, contravening traffic regulations.
6	Sub Divisional Judicial Magistrate, Bhubaneswar	CT No.: 4042/08	Chargesheet pending	Section 294, 34, 341 and 86 of IPC, Section 96 of Orissa Urban Police Act. expressing obscene acts or songs, wrongful restraint and contravening traffic regulations.
7	Judicial Magistrate First Class III, Bhubaneswar	CT No.: 4360/07	Chargesheet pending	Section 147, 148, 149, 336, 353 and 427 of IPC. rioting with arms, unlawful assembly, negligence, assault and mischief.

(B) Details about cases of conviction for criminal offences			
Sl. No.	Name of Court & Date(s) of order(s)	Description of offence(s) & punishment imposed	Maximum Punishment Imposed
NIL	NIL	NIL	NIL

FORMAT C-1
Declaration about Criminal Cases
(As per the judgement dated 25th September, 2018, of Hon'ble Supreme Court in WP (Civil) No.536 of 2011) (Public Interest Foundation & Ors. Vs. Union of India & Anr.)

Name and Address of Candidate : Sri Rama Chandra Kadam
Name of Political Party : Indian National Congress
Name of Election : OLA General Election, 2024
* Name of Constituency : Ac No. 145, Pottangi (S.T.)

I, Sri Rama Chandra Kadam a candidate for the above mentioned election, declare for public information the following details about my criminal antecedents:

(A) Pending Criminal Cases				
Sl.No.	Name of Court	Case No. and dated	Status of Case (s)	Section(s) of Acts concerned and brief description of offence(s)
1.	J.M.F.C. SEMILIGUDA	F.I.R. Case No.11/21	N.A	U/S.143/149/283/34 I.P.C.
2.	J.M.F.C. SEMILIGUDA	F.I.R. Case No.47/21 Pottangi P.S.	N.A	U/S.143/149/283/34 I.P.C.
3.	J.M.F.C. SEMILIGUDA	F.I.R. No. 55/23	N.A	N.A
4.	J.M.F.C. SEMILIGUDA	F.I.R. Case No. 24/21 Semiliguda P.S.	N.A	N.A

(B) Details about cases of conviction for criminal offences.			
Sl.No.	Name of Court & date(s) of order(s)	Description of offence(s) & Punishment Imposed	Maximum Punishment Imposed
1,2 & 3	N.A	N.A	N.A

* In the case of election to Council of States or election to Legislative Council by MLAs, mention the election concerned in place of name of constituency.

Sd./- Rama Chandra Kadam

Form C7 Declaration
Indian National Congress
Information regarding individuals with pending criminal case, who have been selected as candidates, alongwith the reasons for such selection, also as to why other individuals without criminal antecedents could not be selected as candidates.

(As per the Election Commission of India's directions issued in pursuance of the Order dated 13.02.2020 of the Hon'ble Supreme Court in contempt petition (C) no. 2192 of 2018 in WP (C) no. 536 of 2011)

(1) Name of the constituency (145, Pottangi (S.T))
Name of the Candidate: Sri Rama Chandra Kadam

Sl.	Particulars	Details
1.	Criminal antecedents	
a.	Nature of the offences	1.U/S. 143/149/283/34 I.P.C. 2.U/S. 143/149/283/34 I.P.C.
b.	Case No.	1. F.I.R. Case No. 11/21 2. F.I.R. Case No.47/21 Pottangi P.S. 3. F.I.R. No. 55/23 4. F.I.R. Case No. 24/21 Semiliguda P.S.
c.	Name of the Court	J.M.F.C. SEMILIGUDA
d.	Whether charges have been framed or not (Yes/No)	NO
e.	Date of Conviction, if any	NOT APPLICABLE
f.	Details of punishment undergone, if any	NOT APPLICABLE
g.	Any other information required to be given	NOT APPLICABLE
2.	The reason for the selection of the candidate	Honest and dedicated Service for the party, best social service, Good academic career and trust and bonafidness of the senior party members as well as good and clean moral character coupled with acceptance of the area people and the chance of winnability of the candidate as the Ex. M.L.A of Pottangi A/C for two terms.
3.	Reason as to why other individuals without criminal antecedents could not be selected as a candidate	NOT APPLICABLE

Name of the Constituency : (145, Pottangi (S.T))
Name of the Candidate : Sri Rama Chandra Kadam

Sd./- Sivananda Ray
Senior Vice President, OPCC
Indian National Congress

FOCUS PAY PARITY

CLOSING GENDER WAGE GAP



Within a given field, women and men begin at virtually the same base pay and have very similar opportunities. It is only later in life – around ten years after entering the workforce – that a significant pay gap emerges, and women with at least two children do notably worse than their counterparts with one child or none

Long-term data show that, during the first years of their careers, male and female university graduates in the US earn strikingly similar incomes, and whatever gap exists can be attributed mostly to differences in their chosen fields of study and employment. Within a given field, women and men begin at virtually the same base pay and have very similar opportunities. It is only later in life – around ten years after entering the workforce – that a significant pay gap emerges, and women with at least two children do notably worse than their counterparts with one child or none. A major reason why, Goldin argues, is that progressing into higher-paying roles often requires significant overtime work and uncertainty – a difficult proposition for mothers of multiple children. Fortunately, Iceland's experience can offer important lessons on how to narrow the gender-based gap. Last year's strike was not Iceland's first by women. In 1975, some 90% of Icelandic women participated in a similar strike – which was considered an extremely radical move at the time – to demonstrate just how vital they were to the country's functioning. In the half-century since then, Iceland has taken great strides toward equality, and we younger women can thank our mothers and grandmothers for blazing the trail. In fact, it was Iceland's decades-long equal-rights movement that impelled the government to adopt policy measures that vastly improved women's career prospects. The first such measure was substantial investment in government-subsidized pre-school education. Most families in Iceland can count on being able to enroll their child in a quality pre-school by the age of two, at an out-of-pocket cost of around \$200 per month. Second, Iceland instituted 12 months of paid childbirth leave (amounting to 80% of the average total wage), which is shared equally between the child's parents. This policy has been vital to removing the barrier to hiring young women, as it ensures that new mothers will be outside the labor market for as long as new fathers. Representing the genders as equal also ensures that strong role models are a part of the

household. Third, legislation was adopted to require companies listed on the Icelandic stock exchange (with at least 50 employees) to ensure that their boards of directors include at least 40% women. Since the quota was introduced in 2010, the share of women on company boards has increased markedly. Nonetheless, Iceland has still not fully eliminated the gender pay gap. In 2019, the adjusted gap was 4.3%. In other words, if men and women held the same jobs in the same sectors, women would be paid, on average, 4.3% less than men, simply because of their gender. Moreover, whereas being married or having a partner has a positive impact on men's pay in Iceland, it does not affect women's pay. The number of children under the age of two in the household has no statistically significant impact on women's pay and has only a marginal (downward) effect on men's. Women are also much more likely to take the 'third shift' at home, which includes cooking and cleaning, and they experience far more gender-based violence. It is these enduring inequities that prompted Icelandic women to strike again last year.

This is a cause everyone should get behind. As the nineteenth-century philosopher John Stuart Mill pointed out, the subordination of women is not only 'wrong in itself'; it is also 'one of the chief hindrances to human improvement.' Denying women the same opportunities as men not only impedes the development of roughly half the population, but also denies society of the benefit of their talents. That is why we cannot rest until true gender parity has been achieved. We must strive for genuine gender equality, and once attained, we must be vigilant in maintaining it.

The writer is Minister of Culture and Business Affairs of Iceland

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Last year, a 24-hour women's strike was organized to protest gender pay gap and gender-based violence in Iceland. Thousands gathered in central Reykjavik to demonstrate their solidarity.

For the 14th year running, Iceland (91.2%) takes the top position in the Global Gender Gap Report 2023. It also continues to be the only country to have closed more than 90% of its gender gap. The Economist's glass-ceiling index rates Iceland as the best place in the world for women in the workforce. Nevertheless, Icelanders firmly believe that any wage gap is too large.

In her Nobel Prize-winning research, Harvard economist Claudia Goldin offers crucial insight into the factors that shape women's labor market outcomes. For starters, she shows that changing expectations played a major role in narrowing the wage gap with men in the United States in the twentieth century. Between 1967 and 1989, the share of young women expecting to be employed at age 35 skyrocketed from 33% to 80%.

Birth control helped considerably. By making it possible to delay marriage and child-rearing, artificial contraception enabled women to devote themselves more fully to university education, envisage an independent future, and formulate their self-image before starting a family. As Goldin has observed, if a young woman has more control over when and whether she has a child, and if she expects to have access to a variety of career opportunities, she will invest more in her own future.

But progress eventually stalled; in 2022, women in the US were earning an average of 82 cents for each dollar earned by men, and the gender wage gap among Americans with advanced degrees has remained broadly unchanged since 2005. In her 2021 book, Career and Family: Women's Century-Long Journey toward Equity, Goldin offers an explanation.



Lilja Dögg Alfreðsdóttir

DENYING WOMEN THE SAME OPPORTUNITIES AS MEN NOT ONLY IMPEDES THE DEVELOPMENT OF ROUGHLY HALF THE POPULATION, BUT ALSO DENIES SOCIETY OF THE BENEFIT OF THEIR TALENTS

Talent Scarcity

In the wake of SKG Rahate's retirement, the temporary assignment of senior AGMUT cadre IAS officer Raj Kumar Goyal as Secretary Justice underscores the Modi sarkar's struggle to maintain a robust talent pool. Of course, this could be due to the government's preoccupation with the Lok Sabha elections currently underway, but it highlights the challenges faced in finding suitable successors for key positions.

While Goyal's appointment may be a stopgap solution, it also raises questions about the long-term sustainability of such arrangements. The reason, many observers have pointed out, is talent deficit. Major reforms such as lateral entry and 360-degree appraisals have been introduced, and now Modi is giving a fresh push to lateral entry, with a focus on filling top government positions by selecting subject matter specialists and posting them in departments for which they are best suited. It is essential to address the systemic factors contributing to talent shortage in the bureaucracy.

Interestingly, there are hints that the government is keen to change crucial aspects of judicial management after the elections when it forms the next government. While little has been revealed or said, quietly and definitively, Modi hopes to continue to change the rules of babudom.

IPS officer vindicated against bogus FIRs

Justice is finally knocking on the door for Chhattisgarh IPS officer Gurjinder Pal Singh. After getting slapped with three FIRs in 2021 because he didn't play ball with the big shots in the state government, Singh is now getting the green light to hop back into action. The Central Administrative Tribunal (CAT) has just ordered his reinstatement within four weeks.

Back in 2021, Singh found himself in hot water, suspended from duty, staring at three FIRs – one for corruption, one for sedition and one for extortion! But here's the kicker: Singh was doing his job, leading the charge on an SIT to sniff out allegations against former Chhattisgarh chief minister Raman Singh in a multi-crore public distribution system (PDS) scam. When he couldn't find the 'smoking gun', the state government fired back vindictively with bogus FIRs. It turns out that the case against Singh, including serious charges like sedition and extortion, was orchestrated by the state Anti-Corruption Branch (ACB).



BABUDOM BYTES

Dilip Cherian

The CAT order stated that there was substance in Singh's plea that two kgs of gold and seditious material had been planted by the investigating officer illegally to frame Singh in a criminal case. Hopefully, Singh can now put his nightmarish experience behind him and get the justice he deserves. And all this for daring to ruffle some feathers.

A clash of titans

In the latest twist of the drama surrounding the Vadra-DLF land deal in Haryana, senior IAS officer Sanjeev Verma has escalated tensions by writing to state Chief Secretary TVSN Prasad, calling for disciplinary and criminal action against noted whistleblower and colleague Ashok Khemka. Known for his fearless stance against corruption, Khemka had recently questioned the sluggish pace of the investigation into the controversial land deal.

At the heart of the matter is Khemka's unwavering commitment to transparency and justice in his handling of the Vadra-DLF land deal in 2012. His decision to cancel the mutation of a high-profile land transaction set off a chain of events that continue to reverberate within the state's political and babu circles. Several setbacks in his quest have only strengthened his determination to see the matter through to the end.

Interestingly, both IAS officers, Verma and Khemka, have their own history of conflict, notably over alleged irregularities in recruitment at the state Warehousing Corporation. Their ongoing feud underscores the entrenched power struggles in Haryana's babudom and perhaps mirrors the political rivalries playing out in the state. Interestingly, Khemka is one of few IAS officers who has managed to rub all political dispensations the wrong way, with his adherence to transparency and accountability. If he has many foes, surely, he must be doing something right!

Share a babu experience! Follow dilipthecherian@twitter.com. Let's multiply the effect

WISDOM CORNER

Music should strike fire from the heart of man, and bring tears from the eyes of woman
LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN

Music has healing power. It has the ability to take people out of themselves for a few hours.
ELTON JOHN

Take care of all your memories. For you cannot relive them.
BOB DYLAN

THIS DAY IN HISTORY

330: On this day in 330, Constantine I dedicated Byzantium (Constantinople; now Istanbul) as the new capital of the Eastern Roman Empire, an act that helped transform it into a leading city of the world.

1811: Conjoined twins Chang and Eng, who gained worldwide fame in the 19th century, were born in Meklong, Siam (Thailand).

1888: American composer Irving Berlin, who played a leading role in the evolution of the popular song from the early ragtime and jazz eras through the golden age of musicals, was born in Russia.

1943: During World War II, U.S. troops invaded Attu, one of the Aleutian Islands captured by the Japanese in 1942.

LOL

Customer's complaint

A customer was bothering the waiter in a restaurant. First, he asked that the air conditioning be turned up because he was too hot, then he asked it be turned down because he was too cold, and so on for about half an hour. Surprisingly, the waiter was very



patient, he walked back and forth and never once got angry. So finally, a second customer asked him why he didn't throw out the pest. "Oh, I really don't care or mind," said the waiter with a smile. "We don't even have an air conditioner."

SPECTRUM SOCIETY

Fear and loathing in Bharat Varsh

Almost every household item can be put back into the container they come in. Toothpaste is one of the few that can't. Once it is squeezed out of the tube, it is really out; not even a 'strongman' can push it back in again, at least not all of it. Narendra Modi's unvarnished Islamophobia—dangerous, desperate, disgusting—as the 2024 election enters its fourth week is the lethal paste that has slipped out of the PM's washroom and splattered the floor. Whether he returns to power or not, will India ever be the same for Muslims given the imprimatur their demonisation has received from the Prime Minister's Office? "My worry is that this hatred against Muslims is not limited to election-time only but continues after that," says former Jammu & Kashmir chief minister Omar Abdullah in the clearest diagnosis of the PM's oral hygiene. It can be argued that the pradhan pracharak has only returned to his default factory settings—after all it is venom which truly endears him to his base, not vikas—but at what cost? Everybody from Sharad Pawar to Kapil Sibal is openly doubting

Modi's mental balance. One of India's most influential media barons says even the RSS chief is sounding more reasonable than the PM in comparison. Imagine.

In the daily drip-feed of dog whistles, it is easy to miss the damage—the torment—Modi has caused to the psyche of India's biggest minority community comprising 12-15% of the 140 crores. They, who belong here, have en masse been called 'ghuspaithiye' (infiltrators) by a man whose PR pitch is 'Sab ka saath'. They, who have the right to exercise their franchise, have been accused of participating in a 'vote jihad' to defeat him as if that is illegal. The 'fringe' language of a Sakshi Maharaj or a Raja Singh is now mainstream, very mainstream, in the mouth of a man who resides on a road promising Lok Kalyan.

Like a latter-day Don Quixote, Modi sees patterns his Sancho Panzas can't. He thinks the Congress manifesto, which has zero references to Muslims on its 48 pages, looks like the Muslim League's. He warns if Congress comes to power, it will steal the mangalsutras (or bhains) of

Hindus to gift it to Muslims; it will rewrite the Constitution to give the reservations of SC/STs and OBCs to Muslims; it will put the locks of the Babri Masjid on the Ram Mandir in Ayodhya; it will reserve spots for Muslims in the cricket team. And as if this level of fear-mongering wasn't enough, his government which skipped the 2021 census citing Covid, releases a made-to-order survey to show how the Muslim population has exploded.

Endlessly taunted over what they eat, what they wear, how they pray, how they marry, how they procreate, how they divorce, never have Muslims been made to feel more like 'second-class citizens' in their own country as in this election campaign. And that too by a PM who, on odd days, claims more Muslims for voting for him and was hoping to double their support for him from 9% to 17%. The BJP candidate in Hyderabad blithely shoots imaginary arrows at mosques to applause. The public prosecutor who says he cooked up the story of how 26/11 convict Ajmal Kasab was served biryani in jail to build public opinion, is awarded a BJP ticket from

Mumbai.

The charitable view to take is that scraping and scavenging the gutters is normal election activity designed to appeal to the lowest common denominator. Congress did likewise to Sikhs in the 1984 election campaign, but it made amends with Manmohan Singh. From the man who used 'pink revolution' and 'Hum paanch, hamare pachchees' to signal to his constituency in Gujarat, this is an escalation of a level never seen before. Its blind and repeated amplification by hacks and flacks is conditioning millions more to think likewise. The price for that is going to be huge, and long after the results come in on June 4.

Narendra Modi might yet return, or might not, but India's 200 million Muslims will need a healing touch post-haste. Some words of remorse, some words of empathy, maybe just a sorry. Since truth is a commodity in short supply when fake news flows from the top, reconciliation like in post-apartheid South Africa must be the first step if the white paste of hatred and vengeance is not to spread red all over the floor of this Earth.

Blow to ED, NDA

Sir, By releasing Arvind Kejriwal on bail and, allowing him to participate in electioneering, the Supreme Court has proved yet again, that, justice is very much alive and kicking in our country. This is not only a blow to the Enforcement Directorate (ED) which is alleged to be dancing to the tunes of the ruling dispensation in a blatantly partisan manner but also, to the BJP which really wanted Kejriwal to remain in jail till the elections were over, for obvious reasons. We can now expect Kejriwal, the wounded tiger using all his might to get and see that the NDA bloc finds its Waterloo in many states, including Delhi. This is really practicable as people are also fed up with the manner in which, the ruling dispensation is trying to strangle the opposition parties and their leaders by allegedly misusing the constitutional bodies like the CBI, ED, IT and even the Election Commission of India. While most of the election pundits have predicted that the NDA will not be able to get the required magic number to form the government again, the release of Kejriwal is definitely going to make the results more miserable for the NDA.

Tharcus S Fernando, CHENNAI

Writing on the wall

Sir, The Congress campaign is suffering at the end of polling for 285 seats, with its key promises failing to strike a chord with voters and its isolated high command remaining out of sync with the party cadre. Furthermore, some friends are worse than enemies. Sam Pitroda is a friend of the INC, but he is a stranger to the mindset of Indians, and the language he used to explain the 'unity in diversity' of India during elections is ill advised. Congress has never been short of albatrosses around its neck. Mani Shankar Iyer was one such person. When he made the objectionable Chaiwalla dig against the PM candidate from the BJP in 2014, it helped the party script history. Sam Pitroda did not exactly help the poll prospects of his party when, in the 2019 elections, in response to a journalist's questions about the 1984 anti-Sikh riots, he uttered 'hua tho hua' in his own style. The writing is on the wall for the age-old party.

CK Subramaniam, NAVI MUMBAI

Letters

TO THE EDITOR

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

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TN bans 23 'dangerous' dog breeds

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Chennai, May 10: In the wake of a Rottweiler dog attacking a five-year-old girl in Chennai, the Tamil Nadu Animal Husbandry Department banned any import, breeding, or sale of 23 breeds of dogs that have been termed "dangerous" for people.

According to the Animal Husbandry Department statement, the dog breeds that are banned are Tosa Inu, Fila Brasileiro, American Bulldog, Caucasian Shepherd, Kangal Shepherd Dog, Terriers, Mastiffs, Tornjak, Cane Corso, Wolf Dogs,



Akbash, Pitbull Terrier, American Staffordshire Terrier, Dogo Argentino, Boerboel, Central

THE UNION ANIMAL HUSBANDRY DEPARTMENT HAS ALREADY RECOMMENDED BANS ON VARIOUS DOG BREEDS, INCLUDING ROTTWEILERS, PITBULLS, AMERICAN BULLDOGS AND OTHERS CONSIDERED DANGEROUS

IT HAS DIRECTED THE STATE GOVERNMENTS AND UNION TERRITORIES TO ENSURE THAT LICENSES ARE NOT GIVEN FOR THE SALE, BREEDING, AND KEEPING AS PETS OF SUCH DOGS THAT ARE DANGEROUS TO HUMAN LIVES

Asian Shepherd Dog, South Russian Shepherd Dog, Japanese Tosa and Akita, Rottweiler,

Rhodesian Ridgeback, Canaria, Moscow Guard, and Bandog.

It stated that the dogs in the above list should undergo sterilisation surgery immediately to prevent reproduction.

The Union Animal Husbandry Department has already recommended bans on various dog breeds, including Rottweilers, Pitbulls, American Bulldogs and others considered dangerous. It has directed the state governments and Union Territories to ensure that licenses are not given for the sale, breeding, and keeping as pets of such dogs that are dangerous to human lives.

Alarming levels of AMR in poultry environment: Study

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, May 10: A new study has found high levels of antimicrobial resistance (AMR) in the poultry farm environment in Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh, raising serious concerns about the impact on human health.

Surveys conducted by Toxics Link found that poultry farmers are using antibiotics indiscriminately due to a general lack of awareness and understanding of the possible consequences.

Despite the recommendation of the Bureau of Indian Standards to not use antibiotic growth promoters (AGPs) in poultry feeds, these continue to be available in the markets and used by poultry farmers. Colistin, a last-resort antibiotic drug for treating multidrug-resistant infections, banned for use in food-producing animals by the Union Ministry of Health in 2019, is still being sold through online platforms.

This has led to diseases such as pneumonia, gonorrhoea, post-operative infections, HIV, tuberculosis, and malaria becoming increasingly untreatable. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), at least seven lakh people die each year due to drug-resistant diseases, including more than two lakh people who die from multi-drug-resistant tuberculosis.

India accounts for three per cent of the global consumption of antimicrobials in food animals and has one of the highest intensity of antimicrobial usage (AMU) rates in the livestock sector. As the country intensifies its animal farming practices to meet food insecurity, there are growing concerns about the poultry sector emerging as a new hotspot for antimicrobial resistance.

AMR can spread through various routes, including contact with animals or their products and contaminated food, thereby increasing the risk of infection for veterinarians, farmers, and food handlers.

Even waste from poultry



Researchers from NGOs Toxics Link and World Animal Protection collected 14 poultry litter and groundwater samples from six poultry farms for the study

Eleven of these samples showed an alarming presence of antimicrobial resistance genes (ARG) against 15 important antibiotics, including glycopeptides, carbapenems, and macrolides

ARGs are genetic facilitators of AMR which causes bacteria, viruses, fungi and parasites to no longer respond to antimicrobial medicines

Although naturally occurring, ARGs in the environment have increased in recent years due to anthropogenic activities leading to overuse and misuse of antimicrobials across different sectors

farms, such as litter used as fertilizer in agriculture or feed in aquaculture, can cause the spread of AMR across different sectors. Gajendra Sharma from World Animal Protection said, "Poor animal husbandry practices, especially in poultry farming, significantly contributed to antibiotic overuse. Farmers often administer antibiotics preventatively and for disease treatment, resulting in high levels of antibiotic residues in both food products and waste."

"Addressing the root cause of antibiotic misuse in the animal farming sector, especially poultry, is critical for controlling and reducing AMR. World Animal Protection strongly advocates for the effective integration and implementation of animal welfare into National and State Action plans to combat AMR. The time to act is now to safeguard the health and welfare of animals, humans, and the planet," he said.

In 2015, the World Health Assembly adopted a global action plan on antimicrobial re-

sistance to optimise antimicrobial use, increase awareness, reduce the incidence of infections, and build sustainable practices that align with the reduction in overall antimicrobial use. Consequently, India also developed its own Action Plan on AMR in 2017, emphasising building surveillance networks to control the use of antibiotics across sectors.

According to Vijay Pal Singh, Principal Technical Officer at CSIR-IGIB, there is a need to work closely with all stakeholders and to develop sound protocols and control measures for arresting this trend of AMR.

Satish Sinha, Associate Director of Toxics Link, said India is highly vulnerable to risk related to AMR and there is a need to revisit the implementation of the national action plan. The country needs to identify potential hot spots, set up robust monitoring and surveillance systems to restrict the overuse of antibiotics across all sectors and adopt environmentally sound waste and effluent management practices, he said.

TN SSLC RESULT OUT

Girls outperform boys

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Chennai, May 10: The Directorate of Government Education, Tamil Nadu released the TN SSLC 10th Result 2024 today. The results were declared at a press conference by the TNGDE officials. Students who appeared in the examination for the Class 10 board examination can check their scores on the official website at tnresults.nic.in.

The Tamil Nadu Department of Government Examinations, which released the data related to LC examination, said the pass percentage of this year (91.55) is 0.16 per cent higher than that of the previous year (91.39).

Of the 13,510 differently-abled students, 12,491 cleared the exam (92.45 per cent) and out of the 260 prisoners, 228 got through (87.69 per cent). As many as 8,94,264 students appeared for the LC exams in the state and of them, 4,47,061 were girls and 4,47,203 were boys. In total, 8,18,743 students (91.55 percent) succeeded and of them, girls were 4,22,591 (94.53 percent) and 3,96,152 were boys (88.58 percent).

Ariyalur (97.31 per cent), Sivaganga (97.02) and Ramanathapuram districts (96.36) registered the maximum pass percentage. As regards government schools, Ariyalur (96.20), Sivaganga (95.45) and



In Math and Science subjects, 20,691 and 5,104 students got centum respectively

Only 8 students secured centum in Tamil and 415 got 100 percent marks in English

In Social Science, 4,428 students scored the maximum of 100 marks

Kanniyakumari (95.17) scored the maximum pass percentage.

Vellore (82.07), Ranipet (85.48) and Tiruvannamalai (86.10) were the districts to score the lowest pass percentage. Vellore (77.66), Chennai (79.07) and Chengelpet (79.20) districts saw the lowest pass percentage in regard to government schools.

In total, 9,10,148 school students had registered for the examination and 15,884 of them were absentees. Of the 32,348

private candidates, 2,236 were absentees.

The supplementary LC exam (2023-24 academic year) will be held from July 2, 2024 considering the welfare of absentees and students who could not clear the exam in March-April this year. Students clearing the supplementary exam will be eligible to pursue higher secondary course (Plus one and plus two and any other course for which the eligibility is a pass in LC) from the current academic year- 2024-25, the government said.

The supplementary exam time table will be announced on May 11. From May 13, all schools may download the provisional LC mark certificates from the government portal. The LC examinations were held from March 26 to April 8 in Tamil Nadu.

No special classes during summer holidays: TN govt

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Chennai, May 10: In order to protect students from the impact of heatwave, schools should avoid conducting special classes during the ongoing summer holidays and district collectors should ensure compliance, Tamil Nadu Chief Secretary Shiv Das Meena said.

In view of severe heat and heatwave identical conditions in most places of Tamil Nadu, people might be affected due to heat related illness and officials have been advised in advance on appropriate measures to tackle the situation, Meena said in an official release.

Against this background, the Chief Secretary said all kinds of coaching, special classes

and programmes should be avoided during summer holidays by all government and private schools in Tamil Nadu to protect children from the impact of heat and heatwaves. He has also advised district collectors to ensure compliance by schools.

The top official said maximum temperature may go upto 40 degree Celsius - till May 16- in several regions of Tamil Nadu and cited the India Meteorological Department's summer forecast related to aspects such as maximum temperatures and heatwave conditions in peninsular India including Tamil Nadu.

Bhogapuram Airport preparing for take off

CONSIDERED AS ONE OF THE FUTURE GROWTH ENGINES OF VISAKHAPATNAM, THE 2200 ACRE AIRPORT WILL REPLACE THE EXISTING AERODROME IN THE CITY

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Visakhapatnam, May 10: Upon arriving at a particular location in Bhogapuram, once a nondescript village, one is greeted by swirling clouds of dust that fill the air. A gaze through it reveals the hectic construction work of the upcoming international airport by the GMR Group.

Bhogapuram under Nellimarla Assembly constituency has begun its transformation from a dusty village to an upcoming airport city after Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy laid the foundation stone for a new greenfield airport in May last year. The YSRCP election manifesto says that the airport will be completed within 18 months.

GMR Visakhapatnam International Airport, a subsidiary of GMR Airports Ltd,

in 2020, was awarded the concession to develop and operate the greenfield Bhogapuram International Airport (BIA) to the north of this city under a 40-year Design-Build-Finance-Operate-and-Transfer model.

GMR Group will be investing ₹5,000 crore in the first phase, the infra major's Chairman GM Rao had earlier said. Though the land was acquired for Bhogapuram Airport a few years ago, the project could not take off as some land owners went to the court on compensation issues.

As part of the rehabilitation and resettlement package, the state government moved over 450 families to new locations, a local revenue official said. The government has also built two new colonies for the displaced families.

"I have given half an acre and I got ₹16.5 lakh as compensation. My family moved to the new colony (known as Airport Colony) one and a half years ago. We are happy with our settlement," Bollinkala Devi, one of the displaced persons, told PTI. The 40-kilometer stretch between Visakhapatnam and Bhogapuram is currently experiencing rapid growth, with real estate firms launching new ventures and people flocking with investment proposals.

AP POLLS

AGENCIES

Amaravati, May 10: Two of Tollywood's leading actors are in the fray for the May 13 Assembly elections in Andhra Pradesh.

While Pawan Kalyan, who heads the Jana Sena Party, is trying once again for his maiden electoral victory, Nandamuri Balakrishna is aiming to score a hat-trick.

Pawan Kalyan, who lost both the Assembly seats he contested in 2019, is testing his fortunes this time from Pithapuram in Kakinada district in coastal Andhra. Balakrishna, son of Telugu Desam Party (TDP) founder and former Chief Minister NT Rama Rao (NTR),

is seeking re-election from Hindupur in Sri Sathya Sai district in Rayalaseema region. Glamour has been a part of every election in Andhra Pradesh since 1983 when legendary actor NTR took a plunge into politics, altering the political scene of the region.

Balayya, as Balakrishna is popularly known, faces a tough battle this time from Hindupur, which was once represented by his father. Like in 2014 and 2019, he is locked in a direct fight with the YSR Congress Party (YSRCP) candidate.

This time the ruling party has fielded a woman candidate -- Tippegowda Narayana Deepika. He made his cinematic debut at



the age of 14 with the 1974 Telugu film 'Tatamma Kala'. The 63-year-old has acted in more than 100 movies. Balayya, who is the brother-in-law of TDP president and former Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu, made his electoral debut on a winning note from Hindupur in 2014. He defeated his nearest rival B.

Naveen Nischal of YSRCP by 16,196 votes.

In 2019, despite the YSRCP wave across the state, Balayya retained the seat, defeating Shaik Mohammed Iqbal, a retired police officer, by 18,028 votes.

Iqbal, who was later made a member of the Legislative Council by YSRCP, recently joined TDP.

This time Congress party has fielded Mohammad Hussain Inayatullah.

However, the contest is likely to be between Balayya and Deepika.

Deepika is from the backward class and the wife of YSRCP leader Venugopal. YSRCP's Rayalaseema coordinator and

state minister Peddireddy Ramachandra Reddy is guiding her in the campaign. As Backward Class and Muslim voters are considered a deciding factor in more than 2.10 lakh voters, the YSRCP is trying to garner the support of both sections. Since TDP has an alliance with the Jana Sena Party and Bharatiya Janata Party, the TDP camp is confident that Balayya will retain the seat with a comfortable margin.

Balakrishna, a Kamma, is also banking on the support from Backward Classes and Muslims. His wife and daughters are also campaigning for him. Hindupur is one of the key Assembly seats being targeted by YSRCP.

REMOVAL OF INVASIVE SPECIES

TN environmentalists petition Forest Dept

THE INVASIVE SPECIES SEEMAI KARUVELAM (PROSOPIS JULIFLORA) AND UNNI CHEDI (LANTANA CAMARA) ARE THE MAIN INVASIVE SPECIES THREATENING THE SURVIVAL OF THE SAPPLINGS PLANTED IN FOREST LANDS

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Chennai, May 10: Tamil Nadu environmental groups have petitioned the state Forest Department against the unchecked growth of invasive species that was leading to the sustenance of thousands of saplings planted in the forest land of the state.

The invasive species Seemai Karuvelam (Prosopis juliflora) and unni chedi (Lantana camara) are the main invasive species threatening the survival of the saplings planted in forest lands.

Environmentalists complained that the unchecked growth of invasive species like Prosopis juliflora (Seemai Karuvelam) and Lantana camara (Unni Chedi or Nandana Chedi) are threatening the sustenance of hun-

dreds of saplings planted in the forest areas over the past few months.

Environmentalist and social activist Karupanan Natarajan while talking to IANS said they have petitioned the Tamil Nadu Forest Department to clear the weeds and improve green cover with native varieties.

The state Forest Department as part of efforts to improve the green cover in the forest areas, spread over around 26342 square kilometres hectares, planted thousands of saplings of native tree varieties like neem, Indian beech (pungam) and Arjun.

Many of the saplings, however, withered due to climatic conditions. Environmental activists said that saplings should be planted during the rainy season so as to limit such damage.



"Invasive species are spreading more in the forests. This leads to stunted growth of other native plant saplings and these invasive species to absorb moisture. There should hence be clear

plans made for developing forests," Karupannan said.

He also proposed building check dams over the streams in forest areas to store excess water. The environmentalist said that

this will help wildlife quench their thirst as well as maintain flora.

Narayanan Vaidyanathan, Director, Centre for Policy and Environmental Studies told IANS that more native varieties help in regulating the temperature levels. "Land parcels are already dry due to insufficient rainfall in the state this year and the heatwave is making the situation worse. Proper maintenance of the tree cover in forests and planting native saplings will green up the state," the Director said.

A Tamil Nadu Forest Department official told IANS that the department is putting in all efforts to plant the native species and are curbing the invasive species.

"In certain forest areas, invasive species like Seemai Karuvelam are present in large tranches of forest land at the expense of native species. The Forest Department is looking into this and has alerted all district-level forest officials," the official said.

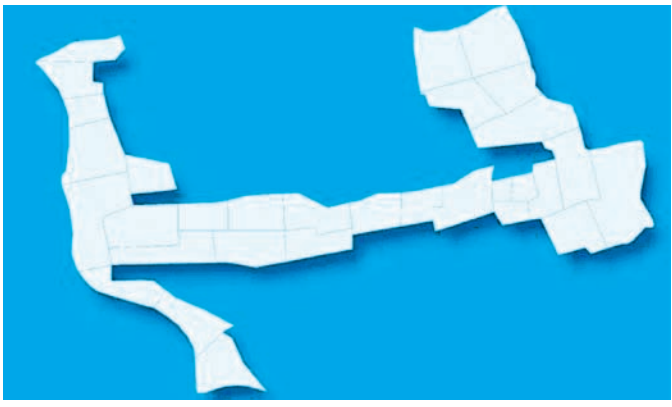
Rift in Rourkela BJP

RAJESH MOHANTY, OP

Rourkela, May 10: The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) here is reportedly grappling with factionalism as the cadres here are divided into Dilip Ray faction and the 'real BJP'.

The gap is so wide and conspicuous that much to the dismay of many it has become a headache for senior BJP leaders. "This development has come after BJP decided to change its two probable candidates and instead picked Dilip Ray as its nominee for Rourkela Assembly seat," said one person at a tea stall at Koel Nagar. In his opinion, Dhiren Senapaty and Nihar Ray both were strong claimants for the party ticket, but when "Dilip paradropped himself, they distanced themselves".

Nihar is a rebel candidate at this moment. "He has filed nomination as an independent candidate and has a good cadre base. This may cause problems for the party as I can sense in the field," said a local.



"Suddenly the BJP is flooded with new entrants, who are old followers of Dilip to whom Sarada never allowed much space, though they were with him," he added.

"Look at Dhiren's body language and facial expressions; they lack the real zeal," said another local.

Following Dilip's re-entry into the saffron party many of his 'old time followers' actually joined the party. Soon this was projected as the growing strength of the party.

Though many of them tommorred about their prospects, "soon there will be no one with Sarada" as it became evident that Sarada was not very keen about those who left. "This will not affect us. At least the trash got automatically cleaned," said Jayan Mishra, BJD spokesperson here. Their presence in Mayfair Hockey Village, the unofficial party office of BJP now, slowly sidelined the old timers of the saffron party.

A resident of Chhend won-

dered whether there is any senior leader from the party supporting Dilip. "Except the official party meetings where Dhiren, as party office bearer, remains present, who else is from the actual BJP," he asked showing a photograph from a newspaper.

Analysts say this is not a good omen for the saffron party in Rourkela Assembly segment. This is because rumours are flying thick and fast that most of the BJP cadres of Rourkela constituency have decided to shift their focus to Raghunathpali. They will work for Durga Tanty, the BJP candidate fully backed by RSS as insiders say.

An RSS supporter said, "We wanted Raghunathpali seat and got it. But, the development at Rourkela Assembly constituency has certainly irked us. For that, our whole concentration will shift to Raghunathpali." A BJP cadre of Raghunathpali was found to be very elated for this change. "Now, these are force multipliers and will be very much helpful for us," he said.



BJD candidate for Bhadrak Lok Sabha segment Manjulata Mandal files nomination at additional collector's office in Bhadrak Friday



Congress candidate Niranjan Patnaik files his papers for Bhandaripokhari Assembly seat at the additional collector's office in Bhadrak



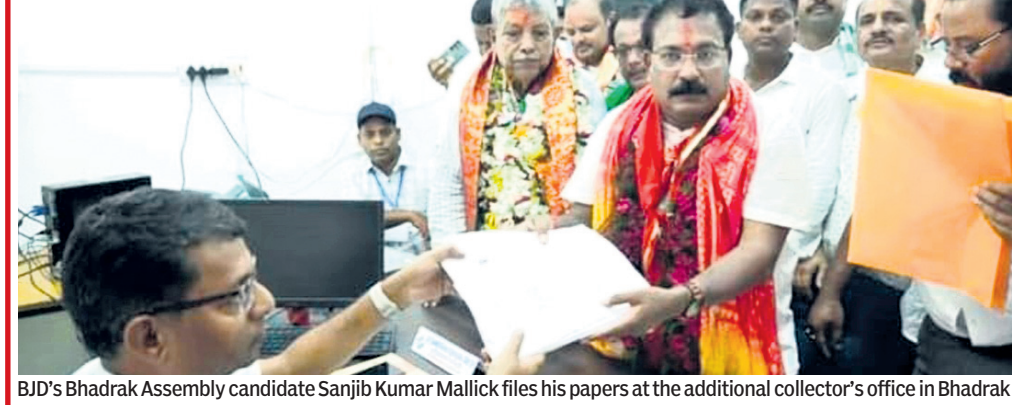
Congress MLA nominee for Mahanga Assembly seat Debendra Sahoo submits his papers at the Cuttack Collectorate



BJD's Kendrapara Lok Sabha nominee Anshuman Mohanty submits his nomination papers at the Collector's office in Kendrapara



BJP's Bajayant Panda files his nomination for Kendrapara Lok Sabha seat at the Collector's office in Kendrapara



BJD's Bhadrak Assembly candidate Sanjib Kumar Mallick files his papers at the additional collector's office in Bhadrak

BJD's manifesto full of fake promises: Pradhan



AGENCIES

Sambalpur, May 10: Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan Friday described the election manifesto released by the BJD as nothing but full of "fake promises".

"There is nothing new in the election manifesto released by the BJD," Pradhan said, adding that attempts have been made to copy BJP's style in many ways.

The Union minister, who celebrated Akshimuthi with the farmer brothers in Sapalahara village on the occasion of Ashkaya Trutiya, said many promises have been made in the BJD manifesto, adding there is nothing new in the manifesto.

On the BJD manifesto, which promised two lakh jobs for the youths, Pradhan questioned, "After being in the government for 24 years, why has the government not provided any employment or income to the youths?"

In the state Assembly, the BJD minister had stated that one lakh government posts are vacant in the state, said Pradhan while questioning as to who refused to fill these positions.

"It is nothing but a farce to say that you will provide jobs without filling the vacant government posts," Pradhan said.

He said the manifesto also promised to bring a Budget for the youth. The BJD government, Pradhan said, had earlier also brought Women's Budget and Agriculture Budget.

He said as per the National Crime Record Bureau (NCRB) report, women are insecure and are being subjected to extreme oppression in Odisha. The farmers in the state, he said, are not getting the minimum benefit, as there is neither cold storage nor irrigation facility in the state.

"The BJD manifesto is nothing but sheer public consumption only, and it has nothing to do with the development of Odisha," Pradhan remarked.

He said in Odisha, the majority of people depend on agriculture, but the BJD manifesto has no programme for the farmers of the state.

The BJP, Pradhan said, has announced that if voted to power in the state, it would abolish the "katni chhatni" system in the paddy procurement and raise the Minimum Support Price for paddy from ₹2,183 to ₹3,100 per quintal.

Panda, Niranjan, others file papers

AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, May 10: On the occasion of the auspicious Akshaya Trutiya festival Friday, a number of candidates including state BJP president Manmohan Samal, party's national vice-president Bajayant Panda and former state Congress president Niranjan Patnaik filed their nominations for the Lok Sabha and assembly elections in the state.

The day is considered auspicious for beginning any work and the day also marks starting construction of chariots for Lord Jagannath's Rath Yatra.

All the candidates went to file nomination papers after performing pujas in different temples on the day.

Bajayant, also called Jay Panda, filed his nomination from Kendrapara Lok Sabha constituency, while Samal submitted his papers for the Chandbali Assembly segment.

Panda's BJD rival Anshuman Mohanty also filed his nomination paper at Kendrapara sub-collector's office for Kendrapara Lok Sabha seat. Both Panda and Mohanty came to the election office in road shows along with their supporters.

Octogenarian Patnaik filed his nomination from the Bhandaripokhari Assembly seat.

Odia film actors Varsha Priyadarshini and Akash Das Nayak also filed their nomination papers from Badachana and Korei assembly segments re-

spectively in Jajpur district.

The BJP national vice-president Panda said that the development will be further accelerated in the country and also in Odisha under Prime Minister Narendra Modi's leadership.

Samal said he is optimistic of BJP forming the government in the state and also sweeping the Lok Sabha elections.

Patnaik said he was compelled to file nomination paper for the love and affection of the people of Bhandaripokhari in Bhadrak district.

A total of 14 candidates of different political parties including Varsha Priyadarshi and Akash Das Nayak and Independents Friday filed their nomination papers in Jajpur district Friday.



BJD's star campaigner Mujibulla Khan and the party's Dharmagarh Assembly candidate Pushendra Singh Deo during a campaign at Koksara in Kalahandi district

Cong too made mistakes, says Rahul Gandhi

AGENCIES

Lucknow, May 10: Congress leader Rahul Gandhi Friday said his party too has made mistakes and will have to change its politics in future.

The remark came at an event in Lucknow where he accused Narendra Modi of being a monarch and not a prime minister, calling him a front for

"two-three financiers."

Answering a question from a member of the audience at the event on the Constitution, the former Congress president said he was "100 per cent" prepared to take on Narendra Modi in a debate, but he knew that the prime minister will not agree.

"The Congress party will also have to change its politics in the coming times. This will

have to be done. I also want to say that the Congress party has also made mistakes and I am saying this while being from the Congress party," he said in his speech. However, he did not elaborate on what "change" he felt the Congress needed. The "Sam Vidhan Sammelan" was organised by the Samruddha Bharat Foundation.

BJP silent on inflation, jobs: Priyanka

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Rae Bareilly, May 10: Congress national general secretary Priyanka Gandhi Vadra Friday alleged the ruling BJP seeks votes in the name of God instead of talking about how it will control inflation or provide employment to people.

Addressing a number of 'nukkad sabhas' in support of Congress candidate from Amethi Lok Sabha seat Kishori Lal Sharma, Priyanka Gandhi said while Prime Minister Narendra Modi claims on TV that his government did in 10 years the work that was not done in the last 70 years, the situation on the ground

level is different.

Sharma is pitted against sitting Amethi MP Smriti Irani. The BJP leader had wrested the seat, which was considered a Gandhi family stronghold, from Rahul Gandhi in the 2019 Lok Sabha polls.

Targeting Irani, Priyanka Gandhi said her sole intention was to defeat Rahul Gandhi.

She said, "Your MP and BJP people come at election time but do not talk about how they will control inflation, improve farming or provide employment to your children. They come to your houses and say vote for us in the name of God. Did they not do this? They are misleading you. Why not seek votes in the name

Priyanka said while PM Narendra Modi claims on TV that his government did in 10 years the work that was not done in last 70 years, the situation on the ground is different

of work done in 10 years?"

"We are also religious people. For all of us, God and religion are very dear, but using religion for politics is wrong," she said.

Recalling her family's association with Amethi, the Congress general secretary said the tradition of politics here was such that it was

a leader's dharma to serve people and it was followed by all members of her family.

"That tradition was followed and so you always supported us and strengthened us. The relationship was such that we strengthened each other," she said.

"But... my brother was defeated and you were influenced by them (BJP). They succeeded in misleading some people. But in five years, you saw their new kind of politics and that no development has taken place," she added.

Priyanka said the situation on the ground is very different from the BJP's claims.

"I ask people wherever I go if people have got employment or if

farmers' issues have been resolved. No work is seen on the ground. But on TV, you find that Modi ji has done in 10 years what could not be done in the past 70 years," she said.

"If you did not make any progress, then whose lives have improved? In 10 years, the condition of big capitalists has improved and ₹16 lakh crore worth of their debt has been waived off but not for farmers," she claimed. The Congress wants to work for the people and not make false promises, she said.

In an apparent response to the allegation that Rahul Gandhi has been missing from Amethi since he lost the seat in 2019, Priyanka

Gandhi said, "Soon after the 2019 Lok Sabha elections, the Covid-19 pandemic began. Even after losing the seat, he (Rahul Gandhi) said we have to do something for the people of Amethi stranded in different places."

"The BJP had left the people at the mercy of God while we kept working for their safe return. Such is our relationship, it is not political and so it does not depend on becoming an MP or not," she said. Earlier, in a brief speech KL Sharma said a big responsibility has been assigned to him. "I have been working with you for 41 years and feel obliged that the Gandhi family has sent a worker in your midst."

of the day quote

Bengal used to get ₹3,000 crore for railway development work during the Congress government and now Modi ji sends ₹13,810 crore

The defeat of the Samajwadi Party chief's family members on all five seats is certain

There is no need for Chirag Paswan to comment on this issue. He is a prosperous Dalit, why doesn't he give up reservation? He is not aware of history and that is why he is with people having the mentality of BJP and RSS

SHORT TAKES

Chardham Yatra begins

Dehradun: The Chardham Yatra began Friday as the doors of Kedarnath and Yamunotri temples in the Garhwal Himalayas were opened for devotees on the occasion of Akshaya Tritiya after remaining closed during the winter season.

Arrest warrant issued against bizman Bam

Indore: A sessions court here Friday issued an arrest warrant against local businessman Akshay Bam and his father in a 17-year-old attempt to murder case.

Sandhu, Bittu, Channi, file nominations

Chandigarh: Several Punjab politicians, including Taranjit Singh Sandhu, Charanjit Singh Channi, Sukhjinder Randhawa, Ravnmeet Singh Bittu, Gurmeet Singh Khuddian Friday filed their nomination papers for the June 1 Lok Sabha polls.

NEET aspirant beaten to death

Jaipur: A 17-year old NEET aspirant was beaten to death in Rajasthan's Nagaur district by the family members of a girl whom he befriended through social media, police said Friday.



Farmers are suffering, unable to earn, everything has become expensive, from diesel to farming materials. Why is this not being discussed? Why are labourers being exploited and do not get enough wages?

THIRD FIR FILED AGAINST PRAJWAL

One more rape case has been registered against JD(S) MP and Lok Sabha poll candidate from Hassan Prajwal Revanna, taking the number of cases pertaining to the alleged sexual abuse of several women to three, police sources said



Oppn welcomes Kejri's interim bail

AGENCIES

New Delhi, May 10: Opposition leaders Friday welcomed the interim bail given to Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal by the Supreme Court, saying the "fight to save democracy" will now be with more intensity.

Congress leader Pawan Khara hoped former Jharkhand Chief Minister Hemant Soren also gets due justice. "We welcome the intervention by the Supreme Court in granting bail to Arvind Kejriwal... We also hope that the prime minister gets enough time after June 4, when he becomes the former Prime Minister of India, to introspect sitting in Sabarmati Ashram the kind of politics he has indulged in," he said.



heads the NCP (SP), said the country remains steadfast in the pursuit of democracy. "I welcome the interim bail order granted to the Chief Minister of Delhi, Arvind Kejriwal by the SC. India remains steadfast in the pursuit of democracy," Pawar wrote on X. Shiv Sena (UBT) leader Priyanka Chaturvedi called it a "big win" for Kejriwal.

won't bend, won't give in come what may. Bharat is watching, India is winning! Jai Hind!" she wrote on X. Another Shiv Sena (UBT) leader Aaditya Thackeray said justice and relief to Kejriwal against the "dictatorial regime" in the country was a huge sign of winds of change.

EC castigates Kharge for obstructing LS polls



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, May 10: The Election Commission Friday took strong exception to Congress chief Mallikarjun Kharge's letter to Opposition leaders over voter turnout data, terming it an attempt to "push a biased narrative" under the guise of seeking clarifications.

It also dubbed Kharge's letter an "aggression on the vitals of live conduct of elections". In a five-page response with a series of annexures, the poll panel rejected charges of mismanagement and delay in the release of voter turnout data in the first two phases of the Lok Sabha elections.

It termed Kharge's allegations "unwarranted", "without facts" and "reflective of a biased and deliberate attempt to spread confusion".

"Utterances from the president of a national political party attacking the very credibility of the electoral steps and processes can have a negative impact on voter participation and can be seen as a means to deter an elector from exercising their franchise and/or demoralising the huge number of election staff and machinery which is mainly drawn from the respective State Governments," the EC told Kharge.

The commission condemned Kharge's statement in which he wondered whether the delay in

The poll panel said while Kharge was free to express concerns with leaders of other parties, making the letter public raised question marks on the intention

It advised the Congress veteran to "exercise caution" and "refrain" from making such statements

releasing voter turnout data was an "attempt to doctor the final results". The poll panel said it found Kharge's letter, placed in the public domain in the middle of the ongoing electoral process, "highly undesirable" and designed to create confusion, misdirection and impediment to the conduct of smooth, free and fair elections.

"Through innuendos and insinuations, the contents of the post tend to create disharmony in respect of the delicate space of election management, can plant doubts in the minds of voters and political parties and potentially create an anarchic situation when you said 'could this be an attempt to doctor the final results?' which this Commission hopes you do not have any intention of," the EC said.

In a series of annexures, the poll authority also gave a factual matrix on changes in voter turnout trends during different phases of the 2019 Lok Sabha polls and subsequent assembly elections.

It underlined that booth-wise voter turnout data is available with all contesting candidates and suggested that the Congress should have analysed the data before levelling allegations.

In his letter to INDIA bloc leaders, Kharge had said that "apart from the delay, the voter turnout data released by the Commission does not mention crucial yet related figures, such as the votes polled in each Parliamentary Constituency and in the respective Assembly Constituencies."

Row over Aiyar's Pak atom bomb remarks

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, May 10: Congress leader Mani Shankar Aiyar's remarks on Pakistan sparked a political row Friday, with his party quick to dissociate itself from the comments while the ruling BJP latched on to them, accusing the Congress of being an apologist for Pakistan and the terrorism emanating from its soil.

Aiyar said the video was old and dredged up now as the BJP's election campaign is faltering.

In comments which have gone viral on social media, Aiyar is heard saying that India should give respect to Pakistan as it is a sovereign nation and engage with it as it also possesses an atom bomb.

As the remarks triggered a row, the Congress said it totally disagreed with the remarks made by Aiyar some months ago. Aiyar does not speak for the party in any capacity whatsoever, Congress media department chairperson Pawan Khara said on X.

"Indian National Congress dissociates itself completely from and disagrees totally with some remarks made by Mr Mani Shankar Aiyar a few months back which have been revived today by the BJP in its attempt to deflect attention from Prime Minister Modi's daily goof ups. Mr Aiyar does not speak for the party in any capacity whatsoever," Khara said.

He also posted a video of External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar and said, "If old videos are to be used, here is a not-so-old video where the External Affairs Minister is publicly advising India to be afraid of China." Latching on to Aiyar's remarks, Union Home Minister Amit Shah slammed the Congress for "raising question mark" on Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK) and asserted that every inch of it belonged to India and no force could snatch it.

We welcome the intervention by the Supreme Court in granting bail to Arvind Kejriwal... We also hope that the prime minister gets enough time after June 4, when he becomes the former prime minister of India, to introspect sitting in Sabarmati Ashram the kind of politics he has indulged in

PAWAN KHARA | CONGRESS LEADER

Kejriwal to attend his first roadshow today

New Delhi: Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal Friday said he will participate in a roadshow in South Delhi May 11 along with his Punjab counterpart Bhagwant Mann. The Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) national convener was granted interim bail till June 1 by the Supreme Court earlier in the day in a money laundering case linked to the alleged Delhi excise policy scam.

SNIPPETS

Netturu murder case: NIA nabs key accused

New Delhi: The National Investigation Agency (NIA) Friday nabbed a key absconder who was affiliated with the banned Popular Front of India (PFI), along with his harbourer, for the gruesome murder of BJP activist Praveen Netturu in Karnataka in July 2022, according to an official statement.

Dabholkar murder: Two sentenced to life

Pune: Nearly 11 years after rationalist Dr Narendra Dabholkar was shot dead in Pune, a special court Friday convicted his two assailants and sentenced them to life imprisonment for the murder, and acquitted three others, including alleged life conspirator Virendrasinh Tawde, for want of evidence.

Sandeshkhali: TMC accuses NCW of conspiracy

Kolkata/New Delhi: The Trinamool Congress Friday accused NCW chairperson Rekha Sharma of "abusing her authority and being involved in a conspiracy" in Sandeshkhali, where women have claimed they were deceived by the BJP into filing sexual assault complaints against TMC leaders.



JOVIAL MOOD: Students celebrate after receiving their marksheets of the West Bengal Council of Higher Secondary Education (WBCHSE) Class XII results, at a school in Balurghat

South India grapples with severe water scarcity: CWC

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, May 10: With the southern region most hit at just 15 per cent total live storage capacity in reservoirs, the storage capacity this year is below the average of last 10 years during the corresponding period, the Central Water Commission (CWC) data has revealed.

However, the live storage available in these reservoirs currently sits at 27 per cent, down from 36 per cent recorded last year and 32 per cent on average over the past decade. Compared with historical data, the bulletin highlights that the current live storage is only 79 per cent of last year's levels and 92 per cent of the 10-year average for the corresponding period.

year is lower than that of the corresponding period last year in all of the country while it is below the average storage of the last 10 years during the corresponding period in northern, eastern southern and western.

The southern region, encompassing Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Karnataka, Kerala, and Tamil Nadu, has a total live storage capacity of 53,334 BCM. According to the reservoir storage bulletin dated May 9, the available live storage in these reservoirs is 7,921 BCM, constituting only 15 per cent of their total capacity.

In comparison, last year's storage during the corresponding period was 27 per cent, and the 10-year average was 21 per cent of the live storage capacity. The northern region, which



comprises Himachal Pradesh, Punjab, and Rajasthan, has 10 reservoirs under CWC monitoring with a total live storage capacity of 19,663 BCM. The bulletin reports the current live storage available in

these reservoirs at 5,759 BCM, representing 29 per cent of the total live storage capacity.

During the corresponding period last year, the storage was 37 per cent, and the 10-year average was 33 per cent of the live stor-

The CWC's analysis also indicated a week-on-week decrease in storage levels, affecting not only the southern region but also the nation as a whole

As of last Thursday, the southern region's reservoir capacity stood at 16 per cent, dropping from 17 per cent the previous week

The data from the CWC shows that storage levels this year are lower than both the corresponding period last year and the ten-year average for the same period

live storage available in these reservoirs currently stands at 6,952 BCM, which is 34 per cent of the total live storage capacity.

In contrast, last year's storage during the corresponding period was 31 per cent, while the 10-year average was 34.2 per cent of the live storage capacity. The western region, covering Gujarat and Maharashtra, has a total live storage capacity of 37,130 BCM.

As per the reservoir storage bulletin, the available live storage in these reservoirs is 10,339 BCM, which is 28 per cent of the total live storage capacity.

Compared with last year's storage during the corresponding period (34 per cent) and the 10-year average (29 per cent), the current year's storage is notably lower.

12 Naxalites killed in Bijapur encounter

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bijapur, May 10: As many as 12 Naxalites were gunned down in an encounter with security personnel in Chhattisgarh's Bijapur district Friday, police said, taking the number of left-wing extremists killed so far this year in the state to 103.

Two security personnel were also injured in an Improvised Explosive Device (IED) blast triggered by Maoists during the operation, they said.

This was the third major strike on Naxalites by security forces in the last one month and comes three weeks after 29 extremists were killed in an encounter in Kanker district. Chief Minister Vishnu Deo Sai congratulated security forces and senior officials for the successful offensive in Bijapur. The latest gunfight took place in a forest near Pidia village under Gangaloor police station limits when a joint team of security personnel was out on an anti-Naxal operation, a police official said.

Personnel belonging to the District Reserve Guard (DRG) from Bijapur, Dantewada and Sukma districts, Bastar Fighters, Special Task Force (STF), Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) and its elite unit CoBRA (Commando Battalion for Resolute Action) were involved in the operation, he said.

The operation was launched based on inputs about presence of commander of PLGA (People's Liberation Guerrilla Army) company No. 2 of Maoists Vella, and Gagaloor area committee secretary Dinesh Modiyam along with 100 to 150 cadres in the forest, the official said.

The encounter broke out between the two side at around 6 am in the forest near Pidia, located over 450 km away from state capital Raipur, and then multiple exchange of fire took place in different places in the area, he said.

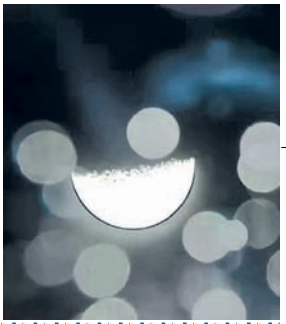
After the guns fell silent, bodies of 12 Naxalites were recovered from the spot, he said, adding their identity was yet to be ascertained. Besides, a barrel grenade launcher (BGL), a 12 bore gun, a country made rifle, BGL shells, a huge cache of explosives, Maoist uniforms, bags, medicines and Naxal publicity materials and literature were seized from the gunfight site, he said.

international



No, of course, we don't involve ourselves in elections in India as we don't involve ourselves in elections anywhere in the world. Those are decisions for the people of India to make
MATTHEW MILLER | STATE DEPARTMENT SPOKESPERSON, US

1ST IMAGES BY PAK'S LUNAR ORBITER
Pakistan's maiden lunar orbiter sent the first images of the sun and the moon, days after it was launched as part of China's moon mission, it was announced Friday. Pakistan's mini satellite 'iCube-Qamar' was launched as part of China's Chang'e-6 lunar mission May 3 from the Hainan province



of the day quote

We have said from the beginning the best way to ensure Palestinian full membership in the UN is to do that through negotiations with Israel. That remains our position
ROBERT WOOD | DEPUTY AMBASSADOR, US

There is no doubt it has been a difficult few years, but today's growth figures are proof that the economy is returning to full health for the first time since the pandemic
JEREMY HUNT | TREASURY CHIEF, UK

The number of births is the first indicator of the hope of a people. Without children and young people, a country loses its desire for the future
POPE FRANCIS | CATHOLIC CHURCH LEADER

Eric dismisses India democracy concerns

The US Ambassador to India believes certain things Indians do that are better than Americans

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Washington, May 10: US Ambassador to India Eric Garcetti has dismissed concerns raised by certain quarters about democracy in India and said he "100 per cent" believes that Washington can trust its relationship with New Delhi which is going to be one of the defining relationships of the 21st century.



In my heart, 100 per cent, I believe, not only will this still continue to be one of the world's most vibrant democracies. I 100 per cent believe we can trust this relationship. It's going to be one of the defining relationships of the 21st century, the US and India together
ERIC GARCETTI | US AMBASSADOR TO INDIA

'Satisfied with India's probe on Pannun'

The US is "satisfied" with the accountability it has demanded from India on the allegations that its officials were involved in an alleged plot to kill a Sikh separatist on American soil, US Ambassador to India Eric Garcetti has said. In November last year, US federal prosecutors charged Indian national Nikhil Gupta with working with an Indian government employee in the foiled plot to kill Gurbatwant Singh Pannun. "When I was referring to a relationship that might have bumps along the road, this would be potentially the first big fight in a relationship," Garcetti said in response to a question at an event organised Thursday by the Council on Foreign Relations (CFR), a top American think-tank. "And so far, knock on wood, I would say the administration is satisfied with the accountability that we've demanded on this, because this is a red line for America, for our citizens," he said.

Americans. He, however, added there are things that "we keep our eyes on. And I just disagree that we don't speak out about them". Garcetti also praised how the power is distributed between the states and the central government in India.

"We put them out. It's not the only thing. I mean, some people want us to only say that. But this is too important a relationship to spend all day long only saying that over and over. You're not going to get anything else done. It'll become a self-fulfilling prophecy that they will not be close to us. Whereas where we find the common ground, which I think is really human to human, very deep," he said. "... If you don't know state governments in India, which are as powerful as the centre and are run by opposition parties, and there's plenty of criticisms you can make, too, about other parties that have been in power," he said. Garcetti said Americans poll better in India than Americans do in America. "You have a lot of leaders there who have come worked, been educated here, have an affinity. There's a huge positive polling of Americans. I told the President (Biden) before the state visit (by Prime Minister Narendra Modi) that Americans poll better in India than Americans do in America. They like us more than we like ourselves. That's rare in the world today," Garcetti said, adding that Poland is the only other country that comes close.

SHORT TAKES

Xu China's new envoy to India

Beijing: China is ready to work with India to "accommodate" each other's concerns and find a mutually acceptable solution to "specific issues" through dialogue at an early date, Beijing's new envoy to New Delhi Xu Feihong has said, remarks that came against the backdrop of the prolonged military standoff in eastern Ladakh. An Assistant Minister ranked official, Xu, 60, appointed by Chinese President Xi Jinping for the sensitive job, said he regards his posting in New Delhi as an "honourable mission and a sacred duty" to improve and advance the bilateral ties. "China is ready to work with India to accommodate each other's concerns, find a mutually acceptable solution to specific issues through dialogue at an early date, and turn the page as soon as possible," Xu said without elaborating further.

Building collapse: Race against time

Cape Town: Hope was fading Friday for dozens of construction workers buried for days in the rubble of a building that collapsed in South Africa as the death toll rose to 12 and more than 40 remained missing. Authorities said rescuers were now faced with the challenge of moving thousands of tons of concrete with heavy machinery to see if there are any more survivors. Three more bodies were recovered from the wreckage of the five-story building that was under construction in the city of George on South Africa's south coast when it collapsed Monday. Another worker who was in critical condition died in the hospital earlier Friday, authorities said. At least 41 workers are missing and - with fears that the final death toll could exceed 50 - city authorities said.

Philippines calls for expelling Chinese diplomats

SCS ROW ESCALATES

REUTERS

Manila, May 10: The Philippines' national security adviser called Friday for Chinese diplomats to be expelled over an alleged leak of a phone conversation with a Filipino admiral in a significant escalation of a bitter row over the South China Sea. China's embassy in Manila had orchestrated "repeated acts of engaging and dissemination of disinformation, misinformation and malinformation", with the objective of sowing discord, division and disunity, Eduardo Ano said in a statement. Those actions "should not be allowed to pass unsanctioned without serious penalty", he said. Chinese foreign ministry spokesperson Lin Jian called the comments provocative and said Chinese diplomats in the Philippines had to be allowed

to do their job. The office of Philippine President Ferdinand Marcos Jr and the foreign ministry did not immediately respond to requests for comment. The two countries have been embroiled in a series of heated standoffs this past year in disputed areas of the South China Sea as the Philippines, emboldened by support from the United States and other allies, steps up activities in waters occupied by China's vast coast guard. China has accused the Philippines of trespassing and of treachery, while Manila has scolded Beijing for what it says is a policy of aggression and dangerous manoeuvring inside its exclusive economic zone.

Putin reappoints loyal ally as PM

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Moscow, May 10: Russian President Vladimir Putin reappointed Mikhail Mishustin as the country's Prime Minister Friday, a widely anticipated move to keep on a technocrat who has maintained a low political profile. Mishustin and other technocrats in the Cabinet have been credited with maintaining a relatively stable economic performance despite bruising Western sanctions for Russia's role in Ukraine. Most other Cabinet members are expected to keep their jobs, though the fate of Defence Minister Sergei Shoigu appeared uncertain.

In line with Russian law, Mishustin, 58, who held the job for the past four years, submitted his Cabinet's resignation Tuesday when Putin began his fifth presidential term at a glittering Kremlin inauguration. Mishustin, the former head of Russia's tax service, steered clear of political statements and avoided media interviews during his previous tenure. The speaker of the parliament's lower house, Vyacheslav Volodin, announced that Putin submitted Mishustin's candidacy to the State Duma, which will hold a session later Friday to consider it.

Under the constitutional changes approved in 2020, the lower house approves the candidacy of the prime minister, who then submits Cabinet members for approval. The changes were ostensibly meant to grant parliament broader power, but the procedure is widely seen as pro forma given Kremlin control over the body. Most Cabinet members are expected to keep their jobs, but it was not clear if Shoigu, the defence minister, would be among them after last month's arrest of his top associate, Timur Ivanov. Ivanov, who served as deputy defence minister in charge of massive military construction projects, was arrested on bribery charges and was ordered to stay in custody pending official investigation.

Indian military pulls out from Maldives



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Male, May 10: The last batch of Indian military personnel stationed in the Maldives have been repatriated, the government of President Mohamed Muizzu has said, a day ahead of the May 10 deadline set by him for their complete withdrawal from the archipelagic country. The relations between India and the Maldives came under severe strain after Muizzu, seen as a pro-China leader, insisted on the withdrawal of Indian military personnel operating three military platforms in the country by May 10.

Repatriation of some 90 Indian military personnel stationed in the Maldives was a key pledge of Muizzu during his presidential campaign last year. The first batch of Indian military personnel was withdrawn from Maldives in early March, followed by the departure of the second batch in April, totalling 51 soldiers. Although all Indian military personnel have withdrawn from the country, Male has not provided the final count, the media here reported.

The last batch of Indian soldiers stationed in the Maldives have been repatriated, Heena Waleed, President's Office Chief Spokesperson told Sun.mv news portal Thursday. The Indian military personnel were stationed in the Maldives to operate and maintain two helicopters and Dornier aircraft India gifted earlier. During their tenure here, they contributed to infrastructure maintenance, leveraging heli-

copters and other resources generously provided by the Indian administration to the Maldives, the state-run PSM News channel reported.

On Monday the Maldives government announced that 51 of these soldiers were repatriated to India in two batches. The government earlier announced the presence of 89 Indian soldiers in the Maldives, citing official documents.

India and the Maldives had agreed to withdraw the remaining Indian troops before May 10 following four round of meetings of the India-Maldives High Level Core Group. The last meeting was held in New Delhi May 3.

At a media briefing in New Delhi Thursday, External Affairs Ministry spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal said the first and the second batches of the Indian personnel returned to India and "now deputation of competent Indian technical personnel has taken place" to operate the three Indian aviation platforms.

The withdrawal of the Indian military personnel came as Maldivian Foreign Minister Moosa Zameer visited India. He met External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar Thursday. Jaishankar conveyed to Zameer that the development of India-Maldives ties is based on "mutual interests" and "reciprocal sensitivity". The Maldives is India's key maritime neighbour in the Indian Ocean Region and occupies a special place in its initiatives like 'SAGAR' (Security and Growth for All in the Region) and the 'Neighbourhood First Policy' of the Modi government.



Polish farmers and other protesters gather in downtown Warsaw to protest the European Union's climate policies and Poland's pro-EU government in Warsaw

LONG WAR Russia opens new front in Ukraine

RUSSIAN FORCES ATTACK UKRAINE'S KHARKIV REGION

REUTERS

Kyiv, May 10: Russian forces launched an armoured ground attack Friday near Ukraine's second city of Kharkiv in the northeast of the country and made small inroads, opening a new front in a war that has long been waged in the east and south. Ukraine sent reinforcements as fighting raged in the border areas of the region, the defence ministry said, adding that Russia had pounded the frontier town of Vovchansk with guided aerial bombs and artillery. Ukraine had warned of a Russian buildup in the area, potentially signaling preparations for an offensive or an effort to



vert and pin down Ukraine's overstretched and outnumbered defenders. It was unclear if Moscow would develop the attack. President Volodymyr Zelenskyy has said Russia could be preparing a big offensive push this spring or summer. Kyiv's forces were prepared to meet Friday's assault, but Moscow could send more troops to the area, he told reporters.

"At approximately 5 am, there was an attempt by the enemy to break through our defensive line under the cover of armoured vehicles," the defence ministry said. "As of now, these attacks have been repulsed; battles of varying intensity continue." Kharkiv region's governor said the length of the border and the settlements in it were a "grey zone" and confirmed active fighting taking place. A senior Ukrainian military source who declined to be named said Russian forces had pushed 1 km (0.6 mile) inside the Ukrainian border near Vovchansk.

Russia has begun a new wave of counteroffensive actions in this direction. Now there is a fierce battle in this direction
VOLODYMYR ZELENSKYI | PRESIDENT, UKRAINE

MASS EXODUS 1L civilians flee Rafah

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Rafah, May 10: Heavy fighting between Israeli troops and Palestinian militants on the outskirts of the southern Gaza city of Rafah has left crucial nearby aid crossings inaccessible and caused over 100,000 people to flee north, a United Nations official said Friday. Israel's plans for a full-scale invasion of Rafah appear to be on hold for now, with the United States deeply opposed and stepping up pressure by threatening to withhold arms. But even the more limited incursion launched earlier this week threatens to worsen Gaza's humanitarian catastrophe. Heavy fighting was also underway in northern Gaza, where Hamas



appeared to have once again regrouped in an area where Israel has already launched punishing assaults.

Over a million Palestinians have fled to Rafah to escape fighting elsewhere, with many packed into UN-run shelters or squalid tent camps. The city on the border with Egypt is also a crucial hub for bringing in food, medicine, fuel and other goods. The UN's Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian

We simply have no tents, we have no blankets, no bedding, none of the items that you would expect a population on the move to be able to get from the humanitarian system

GEORGIOS PETROPOULOS | UN'S OFFICE FOR THE COORDINATION OF HUMANITARIAN AFFAIRS

Affairs, known as OCHA, said about 110,000 people have fled Rafah and that food and fuel supplies in the city are critically low. Georgios Petropoulos, an OCHA official working in Rafah, said the two main crossings near the city remain closed, cutting off supplies and preventing medical evacuations and the movement of humanitarian staff.

of the day quote

As far as India is concerned, conditions are shaping up for an upshift in the real GDP growth, backed by a strong investment demand and upbeat business and consumer sentiments

DINESH KHARA | CHAIRMAN, SBI

About 17 out of 27 PLI companies will start production this year. Around 6-7 of them started production last year and two have plans to start production next year

S KRISHNAN | SECRETARY, METI

We will begin export from our plants in India this financial year. The exports will be to Europe, Middle East and some will go to US as well. Our server design is biggest differentiating factor in the market. We design our products in-house

SANJAY LODHA | CHAIRMAN AND MD, NETWEB TECHNOLOGIES

Q4 RESULTS

Tata Motors up 3X

New Delhi: Tata Motors Friday reported an over three-fold jump in consolidated net profit at ₹17,528.59 crore in the fourth quarter ended March 31, 2024. The company had posted a net profit of ₹5,496.04 crore in the same quarter of the previous fiscal, Tata Motors said. Total consolidated revenue from operations stood at ₹1,19,986.31 crore, as compared to ₹1,05,932.35 crore in the year-ago period.

BoB rises marginally

New Delhi: State-owned Bank of Baroda (BoB) Friday posted a marginal 2.3 per cent rise in net profit at ₹4,886 crore for the fourth quarter ended March 2024. The bank had earned a net profit of ₹4,775 crore in the January-March quarter a year ago. The total income increased to ₹33,775 crore during the quarter under review, as against ₹29,323 crore in the same period last year, BoB.

Bol profit surges

New Delhi: State-owned Bank of India (BoI) Friday posted a 7 per cent rise in net profit at ₹1,439 crore for the March quarter. The bank had earned a net profit of ₹1,350 crore in the same quarter a year ago. The total income increased to ₹17,913 crore during the quarter under review, as against ₹16,549 crore in the same period last year, BoI said.

Cipla profit jumps

New Delhi: Pharma major Cipla Ltd Friday reported a 78.7 per cent jump in consolidated net profit to ₹931.87 crore in the March quarter on the back of higher sales. The company had posted a consolidated net profit of ₹521.51 crore in the year-ago period, Cipla Ltd said. Consolidated total revenue from operations during the quarter under review stood at ₹6,163.24 crore as against ₹5,739.3 crore in the corresponding period a year ago, it added.

TVS Credit PAT rises

Chennai: TVS Credit Services Ltd has reported a 33.43 per cent rise in its standalone net profit for the January-March 2024 quarter at ₹148.29 crore, on account of an increase in demand. The city-based non-banking financial company had registered a standalone net profit of ₹111.13 crore, during the corresponding quarter last year.



China is willing to help Indian companies cater to China's market demands and tap into the potential for commercial and trade cooperation

XU FEIHONG | CHINA'S NEW ENVOY TO INDIA

SMARTPHONE MARKET GROWS

Smartphone shipments in India grew in the range of 8-10 per cent in the March 2024 quarter, with Samsung leading the market, according to reports. The reports noted that the Indian smartphone market grew by 10 per cent on a year-over-year (YoY) basis, with 5G handsets driving the growth



IIP growth slows

For the fiscal 2023-24, IIP growth touched 5.8% against 5.2% in the preceding financial year

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, May 10: India's industrial production growth slowed marginally to 4.9 per cent month-on-month in March 2024, mainly due to poor show by the mining sector, according to official data released Friday.

The factory output growth, measured in terms of the Index of Industrial Production (IIP), was 5.6 per cent in February 2024. However, it was 1.9 per cent in March 2023.

For the fiscal 2023-24, IIP growth touched 5.8 per cent against 5.2 per cent in the preceding financial year.

India's Index of Industrial Production grew by 4.9 per cent in March 2024, according to a statement by the Ministry of Statistics & Programme Implementation.

As per the latest data, the mining output growth decelerated to 1.2 per cent in March against a



6.8 per cent expansion in the year-ago month.

The manufacturing sector's growth accelerated to 5.2 per cent in March compared to 1.5 per cent a year ago.

The power generation increased by 8.6 per cent in March against a contraction of 1.6 per cent in the same month of the last year. As per use-base classification, the capital goods segment growth fell to 6.1 per cent in March 2024 from 10 per cent in the year-ago period.

In March this year, consumer durables output expanded 9.5 per cent. It had contracted by 8 per cent in March 2023.

Consumer non-durable goods

production grew by 4.9 per cent during the month compared to a contraction of 1.9 per cent in March 2023.

According to the data, infrastructure/construction goods reported a growth of 6.9 in March 2024 against a 7.2 per cent expansion in the year-ago period.

The data also showed that the output of primary goods logged 2.5 per cent growth in March this year, down from 3.3 per cent a year earlier.

The expansion in the intermediate goods segment was 5.1 per cent in the month under review, higher than the 1.8 per cent recorded in the same period a year ago.

Forex kitty surges to \$641.59 billion

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, May 10: After three consecutive weeks of drop, India's forex reserves increased by \$3.668 billion to \$641.59 billion for the week ended May 3, the RBI said Friday.

The overall kitty dropped \$2.412 billion to \$637.922 billion for the previous week ended April 26.

For the week ended April 5, the reserves had hit an all-time high of \$648.562 billion, following multiple weeks of increases after breaching the previous high of September 2021 in March this year.

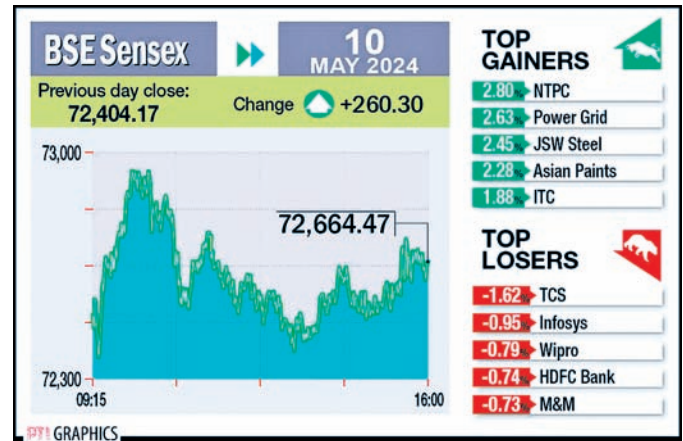
For the week ended May 3, the foreign currency assets, a major component of the reserves, increased by \$4.459 billion to \$564.161 billion, the data released Friday showed.

Gold reserves decreased by \$653 million to \$54.88 billion during the week, the Reserve Bank of India said.

The Special Drawing Rights (SDRs) were up \$2 million to \$18.051 billion, the apex bank said.

India's reserve position with the IMF was down by \$140 million to \$4.499 billion in the reporting week, the data showed.

Sensex, Nifty rebound on strong global cues



ON A WEEKLY BASIS, THE BSE BENCHMARK TANKED 1,213.68 POINTS OR 1.64%, AND THE NIFTY DECLINED 420.65 POINTS OR 1.87%

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, May 10: Equity benchmark indices Sensex and Nifty found firmer ground Friday, propelled by a rally in market heavyweights Reliance Industries, ITC and Bharti Airtel amid a supportive trend overseas.

However, unrelenting foreign fund outflows and investors' cautious approach capped the sharp gains, traders said.

Recovering from the sharp decline in the previous trade, the 30-share BSE Sensex climbed 260.30 points or 0.36 per cent to settle at 72,664.47. During the session, it rallied 542.37 points or 0.74 per cent to 72,946.54.

The NSE Nifty climbed 97.70 points or 0.44 per cent to 22,055.20.

"Short covering buoyed by strong overseas market cues helped key benchmark indices end in positive territory, although the overall sentiment still remains cautious with bouts of intra-day volatility," said Prashanth Tapse, Senior VP (Research), Mehta Equities Ltd.

From the Sensex basket, Power Grid, NTPC, JSW Steel, Asian Paints, ITC, Bharti Airtel, Hindustan Unilever and Tata Motors were the biggest gainers.

On the other hand, Tata Consultancy Services, Kotak Mahindra Bank, Infosys, Wipro, Mahindra & Mahindra and HDFC Bank were among the laggards.

In the broader market, the BSE midcap gauge climbed 0.81 per cent, and the smallcap index rose 0.80 per cent.

Among the indices, utilities rallied 1.61 per cent, power climbed 1.53 per cent, oil and gas (1.38 per cent), commodities (1.32 per cent), telecommunication (1.30 per cent), and auto (1.07 per cent).

In contrast, IT, bankex, realty and tech were the laggards.

Heavy FII selling, and concerns over the outcome of ongoing general elections added to the overall pressure in the markets

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

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

European markets were trading in the green. Wall Street ended in positive territory Thursday.

Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) offloaded equities worth ₹6,994.86 crore Thursday, according to exchange data.

In the previous session, the BSE benchmark dropped 1,062.22 points or 1.45 per cent to close at 72,404.17. The NSE Nifty dived 345 points or 1.55 per cent to 21,957.50.

BPCL to invest ₹1.7L-cr in core, new energy biz

The move will not just help meet the rising fuel demand of the world's fastest growing economy but also help the firm meet its target of achieving net zero carbon emissions by 2040

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, May 10: Bharat Petroleum Corporation Ltd (BPCL) plans to invest ₹1.7 lakh crore over the next five years in its core oil refining, fuel marketing and petrochemical business as well as in clean energy such as hydrogen, its chairman G Krishnakumar said Friday.

As part of 'Project Aspire', a five-year strategic framework, BPCL plans to raise its oil refining capacity, augment petro-



India has struck the right balance between its energy security and climate goals. Our rapidly expanding economy will inevitably lead to a surge in energy demand, prompting a continued demand and growth in BPCL's core and new businesses

G KRISHNAKUMAR | CHAIRMAN, BPCL

chemical business and expand its presence in cleaner fuel space with an eye on energy transition and meeting country's fuel demand, he said at a post earnings investor call.

"Our strategy is based on two fundamental pillars - 'Nurturing the Core'; and 'Investing in

Future Big Bets'. We remain committed to our core businesses, which include the refining, marketing of petroleum products and upstream. In addition, we are focusing on our big bets, which comprise petrochemicals, gas, green energy, non-fuel retail, and digital,"

Gold imports jump 30% in FY24

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

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, May 10: India's gold imports, which have a bearing on the country's current account deficit (CAD), surged by 30 per cent to \$45.54 billion during 2023-24 due to strong domestic demand, according to government data.

The imports stood at \$35 billion in 2022-23.

In March this year, however, the imports of the precious metal contracted by 53.56 per cent to \$1.53 billion, as per the data released by the commerce ministry.

Switzerland is the largest source of gold imports, with about 40 per cent share, followed by UAE (over 16 per cent) and

South Africa (about 10 per cent). The precious metal accounts for over 5 per cent of the country's total imports.

At present, there is a 15 per cent import duty on gold.

Despite the increase in gold imports, the country's trade deficit (difference between imports and exports) narrowed to \$240.18 billion in the last fiscal as against \$265 billion in 2022-23.

The imports mainly take care of the demand by the jewellery industry. The gems and jewellery exports in 2023-24 dipped by about 14 per cent to \$32.7 billion.

India's current account deficit narrowed to \$10.5 billion or 1.2 per cent of GDP in the October-December quarter as against \$11.4 billion or 1.3 per cent in the preceding three months ending September, according to RBI data released March 26.

AKSHAYA TRITIYA

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, May 10: The demand for gold and golden jewellery remained high on Akshaya Tritiya, despite 15-17 per cent increase in gold prices from last year, with retailers witnessing robust footfall throughout the day.

"We are getting reports of good footfalls from across the country, especially the southern region, as Akshaya Tritiya is an important festival in the south for buying gold," All India Gem And Jewellery Domestic Council chairman Saiyam Mehra told PTI.

"However, we are expecting a similar or a marginal fall of 5-7 per cent business in volume terms since the gold prices went up by ₹800 per 10 grams from



Thursday," Mehra said. On Friday, gold prices were ruling at over ₹71,000 per 10 grams as against ₹60,000 in April last year, registering an increase of 15-17 per cent.

Further, Mehra said, there is a demand for heavy weight items in the south like wedding jewellery and for light weight items in the north and

SNIPPETS

Jio bundles 15 apps' premium services

New Delhi: Jio Friday said it has bundled premium services of 15 apps, including basic subscription of Netflix, Amazon Prime Lite, Disney+ Hotstar, with its 30 Mbps broadband plan for ₹888 a month. Netflix access was earlier available for customers having JioFiber of ₹1,499 plan, while there was no access of entertainment apps for customers with entry-level 30 megabit per second broadband plan. Similarly, access to Netflix for AirFiber customers was available only in plans priced at ₹1,499 per month or higher. "Designed to provide the ultimate streaming experience coupled with unlimited data benefits, the new post-paid plan, priced at ₹888 per month, is available to JioFiber and Jio AirFiber customers...subscribers gain exclusive access to over 15 leading OTT apps, including popular platforms like Netflix's basic plan, Amazon Prime, and JioCinema Premium," Jio said in a statement.

According to a company source, the plan will provide access to premium content of all over-the-top (OTT) apps bundled with the plan including Sony Liv, Zee5, Lionsgate, Discovery Plus, and AltBalaji, among others.

LIC's April premium hits decade high

New Delhi: State-owned Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC) Friday said its premium collection in April was ₹12,384 crore, the highest for the month since 2014. Quoting Life Insurance Council's latest figures, the insurance behemoth said the total premium collected by LIC in April 2024 was ₹12,383.64 crore - 113.14 per cent higher than the ₹5,810.10 crore premium collected the same month a year ago. The achievement can be attributed to LIC's implementation of innovative marketing strategies and its strong reputation for reliability and customer-centric services, the insurer said in a statement. These factors effectively reached a wider audience, resulting in increased policy uptake and premium collections, contributing significantly to LIC's success in posting its highest premium in 12 years, it said.

Under the individual premium category, LIC collected a total premium of ₹3,175.47 crore in April 2024 - an increase of 25.17 per cent from ₹2,537.02 crore in the same month a year ago. The group premium grew 182.16 per cent to ₹9,141.34 crore during the month from ₹3,239.72 crore in April 2023. However, this growth was spurred by an increase of 100.33 per cent in the group yearly premium category, which rose to ₹66.83 crore in April 2024 from ₹33.36 crore in April 2023.

High gold prices unable to dampen sales

We are getting reports of good footfalls from across the country, especially the southern region, as Akshaya Tritiya is an important festival in the south for buying gold

SAIYAM MEHRA | CHAIRMAN, ALL INDIA GEM AND JEWELLERY DOMESTIC COUNCIL

fore the price rises further," Mehra noted.

World Gold Council Regional CEO Sachin Jain said there was little growth in jewellery demand during the January-March period while April was also a very quiet month.

"However, since then the prices have settled down and we are getting reports of very

strong customer confidence. The pre-bookings for big ticket items were very strong despite the high gold prices."

"In fact, very light ticket items have not done that well. However, Akshaya Tritiya is spread over till the afternoon of Saturday, we expect the demand for light tickets will also pick up," he added. PNG Jewellers Chairman and Managing Director Saurabh Gadgil, too, said there has been no impact in demand on the back of high gold prices.

Echoing a similar view, Kalyan Jewellers India Executive Director Ramesh Kalyanaram said, "We are witnessing encouraging momentum in consumer demand, especially around the wedding purchases during the current quarter and Akshaya Tritiya."

"This reflects EXIM's high strategic importance to the state, which stems from its long-term policy role, its status as a policy institution, 100 per cent state ownership and significant protection for EXIM's creditors due to access to liquidity from the authorities during periods of crisis," Fitch said in a statement.

Fitch views the government's 100 per cent ownership of EXIM as strategic and permanent.

"EXIM's longstanding policy role as the principal financial institution that finances and promotes India's international trade is driven by its founding act. EXIM extends lines of credit to less developed countries, underpinning its close linkages to the sovereign," Fitch said.



Gill, Sudharsan seal GT win

KKR eye playoffs, MI seek to salvage pride

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Ahmedabad, May 10: Captain Shubman Gill cracked a blistering century while B Sai Sudharsan hit his maiden IPL ton as Gujarat Titans kept themselves in the playoffs race with a 35-run win over Chennai Super Kings here Friday.

Sudharsan (103, 51b, 5x4, 7x6) matched skipper Gill (104, 55b, 9x4, 6x6) stroke for stroke as the two openers notched up destructive centuries to propel GT to 231/3. The home team's bowlers then stopped the defending champions for 196/8 despite fighting fifties from Daryl Mitchell (63, 34b, 7x4, 3x6) and Moeen Ali (56, 36b, 4x4, 4x6).

Sent into bat, Gill and Sudharsan put up a six-hitting exhibition as they notched up a 210-run stand, the highest partnership for any wicket in the IPL this season. The two also equalled Quinton de Kock and KL Rahul's highest-ever IPL opening partnership.

While Gill's remarkable innings was punctuated by nine fours and six maximums, Sudharsan's maiden IPL hundred was peppered with five boundaries and seven sixes.

In contrast, the CSK openers were back in the hut with just two runs on the board. Their best batter this season, skipper Rituraj Gaikwad (0) was also sent packing with Rashid Khan completing a brilliant catch on the boundary with the defending champions reeling at 10/3.

Mitchell and Moeen steadied the ship with some counter attacking play, stitching a 109-run partnership. The two targeted the Afghan spin duo of Rashid and Noor Ahmad, bringing down



the equation to 113 runs off the last 48 balls in the process.

But veteran Mohit Sharma (3/31) struck off his very first ball, dismissing Mitchell and then came back to take the scalps of Moeen and Shivam Dube (21). Rashid soon joined the party, getting rid of Ravindra Jadeja (18) and Mitchell Santner (0).

MS Dhoni (26 n o, 11b, 1x4,



3x6) got the fans excited with three sixes, including back-to-back maximums in the last over but it was in a lost cause.

The win lifted GT from the bottom of the table to the eighth spot. They have 10 points from 12 games, while CSK remain on fourth with 12 points, their net run rate took a hit, dropping from +0.700 to +0.491.

Earlier invited to bat first, Gill timed to perfection an over pitched Santner delivery for GT's first boundary of the innings. He then lofted the ball over mid on for a maximum, setting the tone of the game.

Gill's lazy elegance was on full display as he hit an effortless six off a Srimarjeet Singh delivery over long on into the stands

in the sixth over.

At the other end, after a relatively slow start, Sudharsan, who was elevated to the role of an opener, too accelerated. He went down on his knees to hit a slog sweep off Jadeja to get his fifty in 32-balls. A couple of overs later, Gill too reached his half century with a top edge that went the distance.

The CSK bowlers, barring Shardul Thakur (0/25), who was the most economical, could do little to stop the onslaught by Gill and Sudharsan. CSK's effort in the field was also found wanting, besides general sloppiness, the defending champions, dropped Gill at the boundary.

Tushar Deshpande (2/33) misjudged a miss-hit by Gill and dropped the GT skipper on 72. To add salt to the wounds, not only the dropped catch went for a six, the Daryl Mitchell over yielded 19 runs.

Gill soon brought up his fourth IPL hundred by sending a Simranjeet full toss through square leg for four. It was the 100th ton in the history of the IPL and the youngster celebrated rather animatedly. Sudharsan followed his skipper as he sent a length ball soaring over the fence to bring up his first-ever IPL hundred in style.

CSK bowlers then managed to stage a comeback as they gave just 41 runs in the last five overs. Deshpande picked up the wickets of Sudharsan and Gill.

BRIEF SCORES: GT 231/3 (Shubman Gill 104, B Sai Sudharsan 103; Tushar Deshpande 2/33) beat CSK 196/8 (Daryl Mitchell 63, Moeen Ali 56, MS Dhoni 26 n o; Mohit Sharma 3/31, Rashid Khan 2/38) by 35 runs.



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kolkata, May 10: In red-hot form, two-time former champions Kolkata Knight Riders will look to seal an IPL playoff berth for the first time in three years when they take on the struggling Mumbai Indians in their final home match of the season, here Saturday.

The return of their two-time title-winning skipper Gautam Gambhir as team mentor has done wonders for the side which has found ways to win games from difficult situations this season.

Sitting at the top of the 10-team standings with eight wins from 11 matches, another win will guarantee them the playoff berth as the Shah Rukh Khan-owned franchise will look to end on a high, its campaign at the home venue of Eden Gardens.

Gambhir's ploy to back Sunil Narine as an opener along with World No.2 T20I batter Phil Salt has been a masterstroke. The duo has scored bulk of the team's runs, giving it the perfect platform in powerplays to post six 200-plus totals from eight matches batting first.

With 32 sixes to his name, Narine is also the second in the list behind Abhishek Sharma (35). The consistency with which

MATCHDAY
Indian Premier League
KKR vs MI
Time: 07:30 pm
Telecast: Star Sports Network
Stream: Jio Cinema

Narine keeps churning out high scores match after match has been phenomenal.

With one century and three fifties, the Trinidadian has also been their leading run-getter, amassing 461 runs at a strike-rate of 183.66. Englishman Salt has scored 429 runs at a strike-rate of 183.33. The duo's explosive form has also meant that the likes of Andre Russell and Rinku Singh, who have been their designated finishers, have not got enough opportunities. Their performance has also covered up the team's bowling profligacy, particularly that of Mitchell Starc.

In contrast, five-time champions MI, under Hardik Pandya, became the first team to be knocked out after Sunrisers Hyderabad demolished Lucknow Super Giants the other day. Coming on the back of a morale-boosting win over SRH, MI will look to salvage some pride.

Leverkusen sail into Europa League final

Newly-crowned Bundesliga champions preserve unbeaten record, courtesy a late own goal by Roma



ASSOCIATED PRESS

Leverkusen (Germany), May 10 (AP): Bayer Leverkusen had a double reason to celebrate in stoppage time Thursday. Not only did they reach the Europa League final and keep their treble bid on course but substitute Josip Stanisic's late goal preserved their remarkable unbeaten record as Leverkusen rescued a 2-2 draw against Roma.

Both had seemed at risk during the semifinal second leg after two Leandro Paredes penalties had made it 2-0 on the night and 2-2 on aggregate. But an own goal by Roma defender Gianluca Mancini eight minutes from time and Stanisic's equaliser saw Leverkusen stretch their unbeaten streak to 49 matches.

Leverkusen advanced 4-2 on aggregate and will face another Italian team on May 22 in Dublin after Atalanta beat Marseille 3-0 to advance 4-1 on aggregate.

The fact that its unbeaten record was preserved about 30 seconds away from coming to an end was another improbable finale in an impressive season for Xabi Alonso's team, who have already won the Bundesliga title and also reached the German Cup final.

Leverkusen's equaliser was their 17th goal of the season in the 90th minute or later across all competitions and the third time they have come back from 0-2 down in the second half of Europa League knockout matches.

ATALANTA REACH FINAL

After kicking out Liverpool in the quarterfinals, Atalanta marched to their first European final with a dominant victory over former European champion Marseille.

Amid a string of chances, Ademola Lookman put the hosts ahead after half an hour in the second leg in Bergamo with a shot deflected into the net by Marseille captain Samuel Gigot.

Lookman set up Matteo Ruggeri in the second half to double the advantage and substitute El Bilal Toure finished it off in stoppage time. The biggest success in Europe for Atalanta so far was a semifinal in the Cup Winners' Cup in 1988.

EUROPA CONFERENCE LEAGUE

In the third-tier competition, Olympiakos set up the final in the Greek capital against Fiorentina by beating Aston Villa 2-0 in Piraeus. Ayoub El Kaabi scored both the goals.

After winning the first leg 4-2 in England, Olympiakos advanced 6-2 on aggregate to become only the second Greek team to reach the final of a major European competition after Panathinaikos in 1971.

Fiorentina held Club Brugge to a 1-1 draw in Belgium Wednesday, enough to advance to the second straight Europa Conference League final after losing 2-1 to West Ham last year in Prague.

Former US Open champ Thiem to hang up racquet

ASSOCIATED PRESS

London, May 10: Former US Open champion Dominic Thiem plans to retire at the end of the year after struggling to return to his top form following a wrist injury.

"I am going to finish my career with the end of this season," Thiem said Friday in a video posted on Instagram, calling it a "very sad but also very beautiful message."

The 30-year-old Austrian player won his only Grand Slam title at Flushing Meadows in 2020. His five-set victory over Alexander Zverev made Thiem the first man to overcome a two-set deficit in a US Open final in 71 years. He was also runner-up at three Grand Slams: the 2018 and 2019 French Opens and the 2020 Australian Open.

He reached a career-high No.3 ranking in 2020 and stayed in the top five until he injured his right wrist in June 2021, which sidelined him for nine months and has hampered his game ever since.

Thiem said that one reason behind his retirement was that his wrist "is not exactly the way it should be." "The second reason is my inner feeling," he said. "I was thinking about this decision for a very long time."

Neeraj finishes 2nd in Doha

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Doha, May 10: Olympic and world champion Neeraj Chopra finished second at the Doha Diamond League meeting javelin throw event as his final effort of 88.36m fell short by two centimeters of Jakub Vadlejch's winning effort here Friday.

The 26-year-old Chopra trailed Czech Republic veteran Vadlejch - who won the title with his third round throw of 88.38m - all through the competition.

Chopra made a last ditch effort but his final round throw fell 2cm short of Vadlejch's mark as the Indian superstar failed to defend the title he had won last year. Two-time World Champion Anderson Peters took the third sport with a best throw of 86.62m.

Kishore Jena's Diamond League debut ended in disappointment as he was eliminated after three rounds of throws, with 76.31m being his best. He began with a 75.72m, then fouled his second effort, before coming up with 76.31m to be at ninth after three throws each by all the 10 competitors.

The 28-year-old Jena has a personal best of 87.54m, a performance that fetched him a silver medal in the Hangzhou Asian Games last year, but it was not his day Friday.

Vadlejch had won a silver in the Tokyo Olympics and a bronze in the 2023 World Championships, the two events in which Chopra



had won gold.

Chopra had won the 2023 Doha Diamond League with a throw of 88.67m, ahead of Vadlejch (88.63) and Peters (85.88m). The next Diamond League meeting which has men's javelin as a discipline will be in Paris July 7.

At each DL meeting, athletes are awarded 8, 7, 6, 5, 4, 3, 2 or 1 points for ranking first to eighth respectively. The top six javelin throwers will compete in the Diamond League Finals in Brussels September 13-14 and the winner will lift the DL champion's trophy.

Bajrang, Sakshi hail court's decision

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, May 10: Star grapplers Sakshi Malik and Bajrang Punia Friday welcomed Delhi court's decision to frame sexual harassment charges against former WFI chief Brij Bhushan Sharan Singh, calling it a big victory for country's women wrestlers.

A Delhi court Friday ordered the framing of sexual harassment and other charges against Singh, a multiple-term Lok Sabha MP, under sections 354 (assault or criminal force to woman with intent to outrage her modesty), 354A (sexual harassment), and 506 (criminal intimidation) of the IPC.

"This is a big victory for the struggle of women wrestlers," Tokyo Olympic bronze medalist Bajrang, one of the leading faces in the protest against Singh, wrote on 'X'.

"The daughters of the country have had to go through such difficult times, but this decision will provide relief. Those who trolled women wrestlers should also be



ashamed. Satyamev Jayate." Rio Olympic bronze medalist Malik had retired after a fact-led by Sanjay Singh, an aide of the former WFI President, was elected to head the federation in December last year.

"We thank the honorable court. We had to sleep on the streets for many nights in the heat and rain, had to give up on our stable careers, only then have we been able to take a few steps forward in the fight for justice," Malik, one of the leading faces in the protest against Singh, wrote on 'X'.

"Heartfelt gratitude to those who showered love and blessings and may God bless those who trolled and said bad things. Long live Mother India."

Sakshi, Bajrang and Vinesh Phogat were the prominent faces during the year-long protest which started in January 2023 at Jantar Mantar in the national capital. Following months of protests, the Delhi Police had filed a charge sheet in the case against Singh June 15 under sections 354, 354A, 354D (stalking) and 506. The court will formally frame the charges May 21.

PRAGG LONE 3RD AS WEI YI WINS SUPERBET RAPID CHESS SECTION

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Warsaw (Poland), May 10: Grandmaster R Praggnanandhaa emerged as the best performing Indian yet again in the faster version of the game as he finished sole third in the rapid section of the Superbet Rapid and blitz chess tournament, a part of the Grand Chess tour here.

Wei Yi of China continued with his brilliant form and won the rapid section scoring over world championship challenger D Gukesh in the seventh round and Nodirbek Abdusattorov in the eighth before settling for a draw against Pragg in the final.

World No.1 Magnus Carlsen had to be content with the second place following a sole victory against Vincent Keymer of Germany besides two draws on the final day of rapid.

The event is only half way through as there are 18 more rounds of blitz to be played before a winner is decided in

the USD 175,000 prize money tournament.

For records, Wei Yi finished with 13 points in all with each win worth two points in rapid and each draw netting him one point. The Chinese drew one, lost two and won the remaining six games to go ahead of Carlsen.

Carlsen ended on 12 points in all scoring three wins and six draws while Praggnanandhaa scored 10 points that gave him the sole third spot.

Local star Duda Jan-Krzysztof and early leader Kirill Shevchenko of Romania ended up with nine points for a joint fourth place finish while Erigaisi Arjun was tied for the sixth spot on eight points along side Andusattorov.

Gukesh, Anish Giri of Holland and Keymer filled up the last three places with seven points but the field is still wide open as each game in blitz is worth one point for a win and half for a draw.