



**AFTERMATH OF 'REMA':** NDRF personnel remove Monday uprooted trees that fell on a house in North 24 Parganas district of West Bengal during 'Cyclone Rema'. Sixteen people, six in West Bengal and 10 in Bangladesh, were killed in the cyclone (Report P9 & 10)

## Unhappy student dies by suicide

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Panikoili, May 27:** Unhappy over the marks he had obtained in the Matric exams, a student, residing at Badabirua village under this police limits of Jajpur district, died by suicide late Sunday night, cops said Monday. He took the drastic step by hanging himself with a sari from the ceiling when he was alone in the house around 11.00pm at night. His family members had gone to a neighbour's house in the same village. Family members said that the deceased, since the results were announced appeared depressed as he got 'C' grade in the exams. He had expected higher marks, they added. However, they stated that they never thought that the student would die by suicide. Police after being informed, reached the house of the deceased and sent the body for post-mortem.

## Don't trust Guj govt: HC

The Gujarat High Court came down heavily on the state government and Rajkot Municipal Corporation while hearing the game zone fire mishap case in which 27 persons have died so far. It blamed the BJP-led state government for turning a blind eye to the mushrooming of a large number of game zones without proper licenses and fire safety certificates

### SC JUNKS BJP PLEA

**New Delhi:** The Supreme Court refused Monday to entertain a plea filed by the BJP challenging a Calcutta High Court order which had refused to interfere with a single-judge verdict restraining the party from issuing advertisements that are allegedly violative of the model code during the Lok Sabha polls. A vacation bench of Justices JK Maheshwari and KV Viswanathan refused to interfere with the high court order. "Prima facie, the advertisement is disparaging," the bench said. Earlier a division bench of the Calcutta High Court had said it was not inclined to entertain the appeal against the interim order passed by the single-judge bench which restrained the BJP from publishing advertisements that violated the MCC and criticised the Trinamool Congress until June 4.

AGENCIES

**Gandhinagar, May 27:** The Gujarat High court Monday, while hearing the game zone case in which 27 people, including children, have lost their lives, expressed ire both at the state government and the Rajkot Municipal Corporation (RMC) for their joint failure to prevent the mishap. The high court also stated that it does not have 'faith on the state machinery' which only gets into action after lives are lost. A special bench of Justices Biren Vaishnav and Devan Desai was hearing a suo motu PIL on the game zone fire tragedy which took place May 25. The bench was furious when told two gaming zones had been operating - for

over 24 months each - without the required permits, including fire safety certificates, and said it could no longer "trust" the state government, run by the BJP. "This has been going on for two-and-a-half years (referring to the Rajkot gaming zone). Are we to assume you turned a blind eye? What do

you and your followers do?" the court thundered.

The bench also ripped into the state government. "Have you gone blind? Did you fall asleep? Now we do not trust the local system and the state," the bench raged when told fire safety certification hearings have been unresolved for four years.

Advocate Manisha Luv Kumar Shah, appearing for the Gujarat government, acknowledged that two other gaming zones in Ahmedabad did not have permissions to operate. The state said a gaming zone cannot open sans a fire certificate, to which the High Court, appearing increasingly irritated, shot back. "Then this rule was not followed in Rajkot."

Meanwhile in a separate development Monday, the Gujarat government ordered the suspension of five officials, including two police inspectors and civic staff, with immediate effect for negligence in the fire mishap. Three persons so far arrested in the case were sent to police custody for two weeks by a court in Rajkot, special public prosecutor Tarun Gokani informed.

## Kejriwal seeks extension of bail

**New Delhi:** Delhi CM Arvind Kejriwal has sought extension of his interim bail by seven days from the Supreme Court to undergo a host of medical tests, including a PET-CT scan in view of his 'sudden and unexplained weight loss, coupled with high ketone levels'. In his plea filed May 26, Kejriwal said he will surrender back in jail June 9, instead of June 2.

## IRREGULAR by MANJUL



Well, I won't pay the bill, but during the next political crisis, I promise to book your entire hotel for my MLAs

## Betrayed me: Patnaik Desperate tactics: Panda

PNN & AGENCIES

**Kendrapada, May 27:** Odisha Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik launched Monday a scathing attack on BJP's national vice-president Bajjayant (Jay) Panda without naming him. He accused the two-time former Kendrapada MP of betrayal towards both himself and the people of the Lok Sabha constituency.

Breaking his usual stance of avoiding personal attacks, Patnaik aimed his criticism at Panda without explicitly naming him at an election rally where he endorsed BJD candidate Anshuman Mohanty. "I made someone (Panda) the MP from Kendrapada for 10 years. However, he worked only for his own prosperity and the profit of his company without doing anything for the people," the BJD president said while addressing an election rally here.

Panda was elected to the Lok Sabha from Kendrapada in 2009 and 2014 when he was with the BJD. He contested from the same seat for the third time on a

BJP ticket in 2019, but lost the polls by a margin of over 1.5 lakh votes to BJD's nominee and cinestar Anubhav Mohanty.

"The people of Kendrapada gave him the responsibility of the area for 10 years. He did nothing for the constituency and worked for himself. He betrayed me as well as the people," the Chief Minister said.

Responding to Patnaik's accusations, Panda, an industrialist-turned-politician, dismissed them as desperate tactics, insinuating external influence on the Chief Minister's statements.

"I've heard about the CM's allegations. I don't hold him accountable, as it seems he's being fed these allegations by someone else, colloquially referred to as 'Tamil Babu', who seems to be prompting him while holding the microphone," Panda said. "Lord Jagannath has given us enough and I am here to work for the people," he added.

Senior BJD leader Kartik Pandian echoed Patnaik's sentiments, accusing Panda of prioritising personal interests over public welfare during his tenure.

## Cricket's acid test against baseball in US

AGENCIES

**New Delhi, May 27:** Cricket, a popular pastime in the United States in the mid 1800s, is trying to regain foothold in the continent once again through the ICC T20 World Cup. However, despite some of the game's biggest known stars set to enthral the audience, there are still doubts as to whether cricket, or more so its shortest format, will manage to establish base again in the US. Cricket globally is driven by India and the BCCI, but the International Cricket Council (ICC) sees huge potential in the American market and claims there are already 30 million fans that follow the game in the massive country. A total of 16 games of the

For the average US sports enthusiast, games like baseball and basketball produce results, are fast-paced and action-oriented



recognisable cricketers in the world but someone who is the first to admit that he can walk around Miami without getting a second look.

The ICC is banking on the South Asian and Caribbean expat community to fill up its coffers. However, it is the first to admit that cricket is complex for the Americans for terms like 'third man', 'fine leg' or 'deep mid-wicket'.

To distract the average American household from baseball, NFL and NBA, cricket will need to grow at the grassroots level. "Ultimately what needs to change in the USA is that an American kid in a high school needs to see a future in the game. Then only cricket will grow in the US," said US team member Nisarg Patel.

**NAVEEN GUARANTEE**

**NOW HEALTH COVERAGE FOR URBAN RESIDENTS**

# BSKY

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## VOTE FOR SANKHA TWICE

ONE VOTE FOR MP      ONE VOTE FOR MLA

PUBLISHED BY DR. SASMIT PATRA, GENERAL SECRETARY, BIJU JANATA DAL.



# leisure



## CLAUDIA BROKE HER WRIST WHILE FILMING BRIDGERTON

Actress Claudia Jessie, who plays Eloise Bridgerton in the show *Bridgerton*, revealed that the crew went to great lengths to cover up her cast after she broke her wrist while filming season three. Jessie said, "They had to make a muff to keep my hands warm."

## JOHNNY WACTOR SHOT DEAD OVER SUSPECTED THEFT INCIDENT

Veteran soap opera actor Johnny Wactor, best known for his role as Brando Corbin on *General Hospital*, was tragically shot and killed in Los Angeles. According to *TMZ*, the 37-year-old actor was shot in downtown Los Angeles after he and one of his friends witnessed three people trying to steal his car's catalytic converter.



### FORTUNE FORECAST

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#### ARIES

You have been too busy with work and social obligations. It is high time you took a break and did something for yourself. Your health may need attention. Ganesh says, everything else should take a backseat if you're stressed out.

#### TAURUS

You are going to be exceptionally intense in the way you communicate your emotions and feelings. You will, no doubt, succeed in making the impact, the impression you are striving to make, says Ganesh. You will be so involved in this that you are likely to get caught in the mysterious and magical web of relationships.

#### GEMINI

An occurrence from the past will become a cause of worry for you today. You will also be concerned owing to the deteriorating health of the elders in your family. You will encounter medical expenses. The later half of the day should see your worries abate somewhat, says Ganesh.

#### CANCER

Chances are that your inquisitive nature will put in a difficulty. Others will be angry with you for keeping a secret a vital information. Ganesh counsels you to strengthen ties with friends and give up present attitude.

#### LEO

You will accomplish all your tasks with courage today. As a result of which, the efforts you have made in the last few months will now bear fruit. You need to make a schedule of the tasks you need to tackle today. You need to guard against over-stressing yourself, otherwise your health could suffer, says Ganesh.

#### VIRGO

Don't procrastinate matters regarding your health, advises Ganesh. Today you are raring to take on some past wounds. However, peace and quietude are the dominant flavours today. Ganesh suggests that you go ahead and enjoy yourself, if only just to recharge your batteries.

#### LIBRA

Ganesh says your uniqueness will be the focus of attention and praise today. Your undertaking of various tough tasks and completing them today will showcase your business acumen. You will show your inclination to the finer arts like music and dance. Those of you who may have thoughts about doing varied things may be able to put those thoughts into actions today.

#### SCORPIO

Suddenly, you become conscious about your looks today, says Ganesh. How you look, how you dress-up and the way you walk, all become a matter of concern for you. All prim and proper, you imagine yourself to be the best. Besides makeover, splurging is another activity that you indulge in.

#### SAGITTARIUS

Your temper is as hot as a fireball today, foresees Ganesh. Not for nothing they say that anger may destroy the world. Don't axe your own feet by your aggressive behaviour. Cool down and think before you act. There are chances that you may experience financial crunch, handle it carefully, advises Ganesh.

#### CAPRICORN

You have taken your personal relationships for granted but some irregularities in them have caught your attention. Now, you will focus upon them and try to get to the heart of the matter, feels Ganesh. Communication is the key when it comes to solving misunderstandings, and with that you will be able to clear out a number of them.

#### AQUARIUS

You have done backbreaking work to come this far. Today, you will see your efforts come to fruition. But, you need to be aware about the presence of the green-eyed people around you, especially if you are in some kind of a business, warns Ganesh. Take care of your health.

#### PISCES

Today you will be attracted by the heart and not the mind. This is usual for your star sign. Attempt to understand your emotions today. Ganesh says today you might figure out the way to control both your heart and your mind.

## NATIONAL THEATRE FESTIVAL - DAY IV



Artists of Uttarayani Club, Jatni, performed Odia play *Sephalira Mahak* Monday, on the fourth evening of the festival at Rabintra Mandap. The drama was written by Sanjay Hati and directed by Biplab Keshari Satpathy. The 5-day event is being organised by Bidyakanak Srujanusthan, one of the popular theatre troupes of Bhubaneswar.

## Janhvi shares her spiritual inclination

**Mumbai:** Actress Janhvi Kapoor, who is busy promoting *Mr and Mrs Mahi*, opened up about how the sudden loss of her mother, actress Sridevi, changed her outlook towards life and made her more religious.

In the interview, she talked about Sridevi and said, "She believed in things like, 'certain activities should be done on specific dates,' 'don't cut hair on Fridays as it will prevent Goddess Lakshmi from entering the house,' and 'avoid wearing black on Fridays.' I never believed in such superstitions. However, after she passed away, I started believing in them, maybe even too much. I don't know if I was this religious and spiritually inclined when she was around. When she was alive, we all followed these practices because Mamma did. But following her demise, the relationship our culture and history have with Hinduism... I think I started taking refuge in our religion a lot more."

She continued, "She used to invoke his name all the time, 'Narayan Narayan Narayan.' She used to visit the temple every year on her birthday when she was working. After her marriage, she stopped going. Following her death, I decided to visit the temple every year on her birthday. The first time I did, I became very emotional, but I also found great mental peace."

The late icon Sridevi passed away in 2018 in a Dubai hotel due to an accidental drowning.



## Kajal gets candid about motherhood

**Mumbai:** Actress Kajal Aggarwal is preparing for her upcoming projects, including the Telugu film *Satyabhama* and Kamal Haasan's *Indian 2*, while managing acting and motherhood and reflecting on the transformative impact of being a mother on her work and life.

In a candid interview, the *Singham* actress reflected on how motherhood has transformed her perspective and influenced her approach to work and life. She now approaches decisions with caution and prioritises the well-being of her family above all else. This newfound sense of responsibility has instilled in her a deeper level of patience and empathy as she navigates the challenges of balancing personal and professional commitments.

While family remains her top priority, Kajal finds that as her child grows older, the demands of motherhood become even more pronounced. Despite the challenges, she appreciates the understanding and support of her son, Neil, who has grown to comprehend her work commitments. As Neil becomes more communicative, the actress finds solace in their bond and strives to create a nurturing environment for her family. Navigating the demands of motherhood and career, she showed grace and resilience, showcasing how women can excel in both spheres of life.



## Adaa opens up on pay parity

**Mumbai:** Actress Adaa Khan's 15 years in the television industry have taught her the A to Z of showbiz, and as she commemorates the milestone, she shared that her biggest challenge has been the pay disparity in the industry. She said, "It is a good feeling that I sustained for this long. I mind my own business. I am professional and have followed ethics, which has worked for me. I feel I am loved and blessed. Fans' adulation is surely a good feeling. I have had my share of ups and downs, and I have positive learnings."

Talking about her changing times in the television industry, who completed 15 years in the showbiz, she said, "With the industry changing, there is disparity in payment structures, and shows shut down fast too. For one role, so many people are vying."

She further added, "Competition has multiplied, and finding the right role is a challenge. Also, people got work on the basis of pure talent previously, but now everyone looks at social media and judges based on the number of followers. Also, many people are ok to work for almost free."

"I was appreciated for all my roles. I did *Naagin* and *Comedy Nights Bachao*, which were both fiction and non-fiction. At the same time, it gave me the feeling of being a star. *Naagin* did add a lot of value to its popularity. I don't take my celebrity status too seriously, and it keeps me grounded. I love life and live one day at a time," she concluded.

### PEANUTS



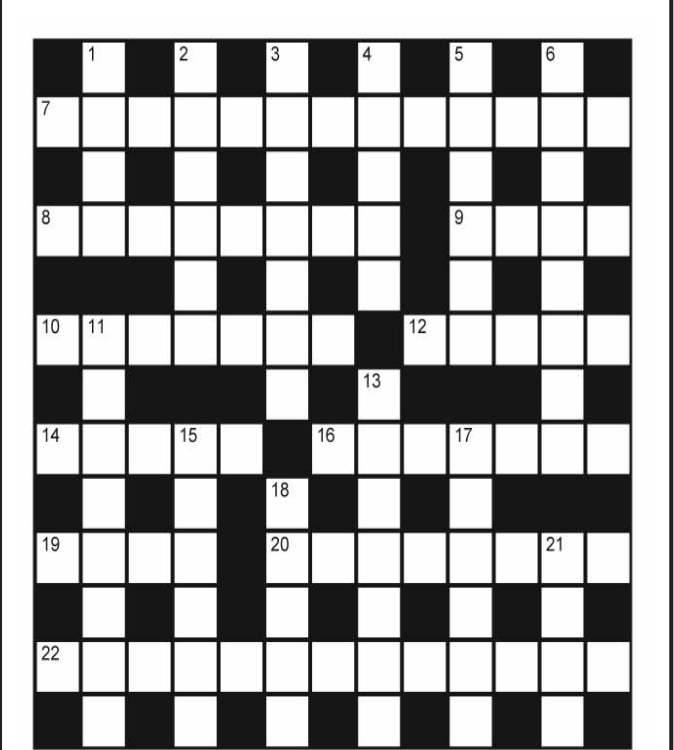
### CALVIN AND HOBBS



### BREVITY



### FUN post CROSSWORD



- Across
- 7 Quarrelsome
  - 8 Stretch
  - 9 Stew vegetable
  - 10 Fettuccine follower
  - 12 Hang loose
  - 14 Oblivion
  - 16 Weight room item
  - 19 Scoff
  - 20 Overtly expressed
  - 22 Lucky
- Down
- 1 Word-of-mouth
  - 2 Heating element
  - 3 Outdoor seating area
  - 4 Precipitous
  - 5 Golf shot
  - 6 Give a face lift
  - 11 Dawdler
  - 13 Primitive wind instrument
  - 15 Desolate
  - 17 Jewish pancake
  - 18 Rundown
  - 21 Markers

### SUDOKU

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

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

### SOLUTIONS

CROSSWORD

D	P	T	H	S	P
M	I	R	R	O	A
S	I	I	S	U	E
S	H	I	V	I	T
A	I	Y	S	Z	
A	S	H	T	R	A
P	E	L	A	U	L
C	R	U	L	A	D
I	R	E	V	C	H
A	N	N	O	U	N
R	E	M	O	V	E
R	T	R	S	N	I

SUDOKU

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

CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW



# downtown

## CEO MOVED

A BJD delegation, comprising MPs Sasmith Patra and Sulata Deo, and party spokesperson Lenin Mohanty, after submitting a memorandum to the CEO in Bhubaneswar, Monday, alleging violation of MCC by BJP's Bhograji Assembly candidate





## Did you check your name in the Voter's List?

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**DESH KA GARV**  
LOK SABHA ELECTION 2024

CBC 52101/13/0037/2425

## Mobile phones claim 163 lives in '23

ARINDAM GANGULY, OP

**Bhubaneswar, May 27:** Mobile phones are a potential source of distraction while driving, with Odisha witnessing 433 road accidents and loss of 163 human lives last year due to such dangerous tendencies during driving, said State Transport Authority (STA) officials, Monday.

In view of the rising fatalities caused by mobile phone distractions, the STA has urged drivers to not use phones while driving. In a message on social media, the STA said, "If you're using your phone while driving and think it's okay to do so then you're making a big mistake. Look at what has happened to many people who think like you."

The message is a direct reference to the fatalities caused by ob-



**Transport officials say 433 accidents in the state last year were linked to potential distractions caused by mobile phones**

cessive mobile addiction last year. An analysis of the 433 mobile phone-related road accidents last year revealed that 247 of those were serious in nature, STA said.

It is observed that when the signal turns red at the traffic in-

tersection, the driver stops. Then one takes out one's mobile phone and uses it to browse social media, and search videos, or read content. Even this is banned at traffic intersections, the STA said.

The STA said use of mobile phones, ear phones or Bluetooth devices while driving is strictly prohibited. Violation of the rules will invite a fine of Rs 5,000 as per Odisha Motor Vehicle Act, and Rs 500 as per Urban Police Act. "Commissionerate Police is also strict in this matter," the STA said.

Apart from use of mobile phones while driving, drunken driving, driving on the wrong side (in violation of the Motor Vehicle Act provisions) has also contributed towards the rising graph of road accidents in the state, said STA officials.



**PRIZE CATCH:** A fisherman casts his net at Naraj barrage on a sweltering summer afternoon in Cuttack, Monday

## 2 GET 3-YEAR IN JAIL OVER BRIBERY

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, May 27:** A special Vigilance court here Monday sentenced a former revenue inspector (RI) and an ex-senior clerk to three years jail term after convicting the duo in a bribery case.

Baikunthanath Mohanty, the ex-senior clerk, and Rabindranath Barik, ex-RI of Pratap Revenue Circle of Banapur Tahasil in Khurda were arrested and subsequently charged with the Vigilance under Sections 13(2) r/w 13(1)(d)/7 of the PC Act, 1988 and 120B of the IPC for demanding and accepting bribe from a person for grant of sand quarry lease. The court also slapped a penalty of ₹20,000 on

### Kalahandi PEO lands in Vigilance net

**KESINGA:** Vigilance sleuths Monday arrested the panchayat executive officer (PEO) of Kaniguma gram panchayat in Kalahandi district while he was receiving ₹10,000 as bribe from a Gram Sathi for processing muster roll and facilitate labour payment in connection with construction of check dam under MGNREG Scheme, an official said.

"Based on a complaint filed by the Gram Sathi, Vigilance sleuths caught Sanyasi Nayak at Bhawanipatna town red handed while he received ₹10,000 from the complainant. The entire bribe money was recovered from the possession Nayak which was seized in presence of witnesses. Both hands wash as well as pant pocket wash of Nayak gave positive chemical reaction, confirming acceptance and handling of bribe money by him," said the official.

Following the trap, simultaneous searches have been launched at the residential house of Nayak in Bhawanipatna town, another house at Lanjigarh and his office room. "The accused has been arrested," said the official.

each of the convicts for offences under Sections 13(2) r/w 13(1)(d) of the PC Act, 1988. Failure to pay the penalty would entail an

additional four-month jail term to the convicts, the court ruled.

Additionally, the court awarded three years imprisonment to the

duo for the offence under Section 7 of the PC Act, 1988, and slapped a penalty of ₹20,000 on each. The convicts would have to serve another four months jail term in case of failure to pay the fine, the court ruled, adding that all the sentences will run concurrently.

The Vigilance court also held the duo guilty for offences under Section 120B of the IPC and awarded a three-year term apart from slapping a penalty of ₹20,000 on each of them. Failure to pay the penalty would entail additional four months in jail, the court ruled. Odisha Vigilance will now move the competent authority for stopping pension of the convicts following their conviction, special public prosecutor (Vigilance, Bhubaneswar) Kamadev Tripathy said.

## BJP workers protest against Jagadev's arrest



AGENCIES

**Khurda, May 27:** BJP workers held a protest outside the sub-Collector office here, Monday demanding unconditional release of the party Assembly nominee Prasanta Kumar Jagadev who was arrested on charges of vandalising an EVM during polling, May 25.

They also threatened to stage a blockade on the national highway and call for a bandh in Khurda town if the Chilika MLA was not released.

The saffron party workers also alleged that the ruling BJD hatched a conspiracy to arrest Jagadev, who is contesting from the Khurda Assembly segment this time, and demanded the CCTV footage of the polling booth be made public.

BJP MP and Bhubaneswar Lok Sabha candidate Aparajita Sarangi said, "Locals claimed that Jagadev did not destroy any EVM. Why is CCTV footage of the polling booth not being ex-

amined? The police must make the footage of the booth public." Jagadev was arrested by the police Saturday for allegedly vandalising the EVM at the Kaunripatna booth in the Begunia Assembly segment where he, along with his wife, had gone to cast votes, May 25.

Khurda Superintendent of Police (SP) Avinash Kumar said the BJP candidate was arrested based on an FIR filed by the presiding officer of the polling booth in Bolagad block's Kaunripatna where he is a voter.

Jagadev was booked under various Sections of the IPC and the Representation of People's Act, the SP said.

In his complaint, the presiding officer alleged that the MLA created disturbances at the booth, obstructed the voting process and abused polling personnel there, Kumar said.

On May 25, polling was held simultaneously for six Lok Sabha seats and 42 Assembly constituencies in the state.

## Surge in urinary infections, kidney stones due to heat

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**New Delhi, May 27:** Doctors reported a significant rise in urinary tract infections and kidney stones in adults due to sweltering heat conditions, Monday.

Urinary stones are small, hard deposits of mineral and acid salts that tend to form when urine gets concentrated.

Staying hydrated by drinking enough water is key to prevent the condition.

"Urinary stone problems are likely to increase in summer. This problem occurs when the amount of water in the body decreases due to heat. Every day, 2-3 patients come for treatment with complaints of abdominal pain," Pawan Rahangdale, Urologist, Apollo Spectra, Pune, told IANS.

"One should drink water at regular intervals during hot weather, and urine colour should be like clear water. Yellow urine indicates dehydration," the doctor added.

He advised that fluid losses due to constant sweating must be compensated by adequate hydration, or else the kidney will make concentrated urine, and there will be formation of stones.

"If left untreated, then people with urinary stones can encounter renal infection or kidney damage," he said.

According to doctors, severe pain in the back or abdomen, nausea, and blood in the urine, urgency of passing urine are some of the common symptoms that people encounter due to urinary stones.

Ravinder Hodarkar, Urologist at Zynova Shalby Hospital, told IANS that the stone may increase up to a few centimetres in size. "Some stones dissolve on their own without any treatment, while the bigger ones may require surgical procedure. Summer is synonymous with urinary stones," he added.

The experts recommended following a diet low in oxalate-rich foods such as spinach, sweet potatoes, beet, and almonds to reduce the chances of stone formation, as well as lifestyle modifications.



Experts say staying hydrated by drinking enough water is key to prevent the condition. They also recommend a diet low in oxalate-rich foods such as spinach, sweet potatoes, beet, and almonds to reduce the chances of stone formation, as well as lifestyle modifications.



**KEEPING TRADITION**  
A young Roopakar servitor tries his hands in chariot making at Rath Yard in Puri, Monday

## Good news for farmers as IMD predicts above-normal rainfall

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, May 27:** India's core monsoon zone covering most of the rain-fed agriculture areas, including Odisha, is likely to receive above-normal rainfall this season, the IMD said Monday.

Below-normal monsoon rainfall is expected in northeast India, normal in northwest, and above-normal in central and south peninsular regions of the country, India Meteorological Department (IMD) Director General Mrutyunjay Mohapatra said at a virtual press conference.

Retaining its April forecast, the IMD said the country could see above-normal rainfall in the four-month monsoon season (June to September) with cumulative rainfall estimated at 106 per cent of the long-period av-

erage of 87 cm. "India's monsoon core zone comprising most of the rain-fed agriculture areas is likely to receive above-normal rainfall (more than 106 per cent of the long period average). This is good news for the country," Mohapatra said.

Large parts of Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat, Maharashtra, Odisha, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Bihar, West Bengal and Uttar Pradesh form the country's core monsoon zone where agriculture is primarily rain-fed.

At 94 per cent of the long-period average, India had recorded below-normal cumulative rainfall during the 2023 monsoon season due to drier June and August.

Northeast India has been recording below-normal monsoon rainfall since 2021, according to IMD data.



The IMD chief said the country is likely to experience normal rainfall (92-108 per cent of the long period average of 166.9 mm) in June.

"Barring a few parts of southern peninsular India, normal to above-normal maximum temperatures are expected in the country in June," the senior meteorologist said, adding that conditions are favourable for mon-

soon onset over Kerala in the next five days.

With the crippling heat testing power grids and triggering drought-like conditions in parts of the country, the prediction of above-normal monsoon rainfall comes as a huge relief for the nation.

However, normal cumulative rainfall does not guarantee uniform temporal and spatial distribution of rain across the country, with climate change further increasing the variability of the rain-bearing system.

Climate scientists say the number of rainy days is declining while heavy rain events (more rain over a short period) are increasing, leading to frequent droughts and floods.

The monsoon is critical for India's agricultural landscape, with 52 per cent of the net cultivated area relying on it. It is also crucial for replenishing reservoirs critical for drinking water, apart from power generation across the country.

According to the Central Water Commission, water storage in 150 major reservoirs in India dropped to just 24 per cent of their live storage last week, exacerbating water shortages in many states and significantly affecting hydropower generation.

June and July are considered the most important monsoon months for agriculture because most of the sowing for the Kharif crops takes place during this period. According to scientists, El Nino conditions are prevailing at present, and La Nina may set in by August-September.

While El Nino -- periodic warming of surface waters in the central Pacific Ocean -- is associated with weaker monsoon winds and drier conditions in India, La Nina -- the antithesis of El Nino -- leads to plentiful rainfall during the monsoon.



ELECTION MANIFESTOS

# Commitments made by political parties not 'corrupt practice': SC



Petitioner alleged that commitments in Congress manifesto for 2023 Karnataka Assembly polls promised financial help to the public

direct and indirect financial help to the public which amounted to corrupt electoral practice.

"The contention of the learned counsel that the commitments by a political party in its manifesto, which eventually lead to direct or indirect financial help to the public at large, will also amount to corrupt practice by a candidate of that party, is too far-fetched and cannot be accepted," the bench observed. "In any case, in the facts and circumstances of these cases, we need not go into such question elaborately. The appeals are, accordingly, dismissed," the bench said.

The petitioner, Shashanka J Sreedhara, a voter from the Chamrajpet Assembly constituency, had filed an election petition against the winning candidate B Z Zameer Ahmed Khan.

He submitted that the five guarantees made by the Indian National Congress (INC) party in its manifesto amounts to corrupt practice.

The Karnataka High Court had held that a party's announcement about the policies they plan to put into place cannot be regarded as corrupt behaviour under Section 123 of the Representation of Peoples Act

The Karnataka High Court had held that a party's announcement about the policies they plan to put into place cannot be regarded as corrupt behaviour under Section 123 of the Representation of Peoples Act.

"The five guarantees of the Indian National Congress have to be considered as social welfare policies. Whether they are financially viable or not is also another different aspect," the high court noted.

"It is for the other parties to show as to how implementation of the said schemes amounts to bankruptcy of the state treasury and it can only lead to mal governance of the state. It is possible that they can be termed as wrong policies under the given facts and circumstances of the case, but cannot be termed as corrupt practices," the high court had said.



CYBER EDUCATION: Police Commissioner Sanjeeb Panda and DCP Prateek Singh attend the Summer Cyber Security Internship Programme-2024, supported by ICICI Bank, at Police Seva Bhawan in Bhubaneswar, Monday

# BJP-BJD fight 'fixed reality show': Congress

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, May 27: Alleging that the on-going political slugfest between the BJD and BJP is a 'fixed reality show', the Congress Monday said the catfight between the two parties in the state is nothing but a clever ploy to dupe people once again.

"It is carefully crafted to take people's votes and then collectively loot them for another five years," said OPCC Disability Cell chairman Jitendra Kumar Biswal while addressing a presser here.

"The BJP and BJD were, are and will always remain together. If the people of Odisha want real change, they must realise that Congress is the only alternative available for them in the state," he added.



He also raked up the Odia pride (Odia Ashmita) issue, which has become a rallying point for the Opposition during this election. "Odia Ashmita or Odia Pride has been in serious danger only because a Tamilian bureaucrat was given absolute control, and in that, BJP is equally guilty for giving the bureaucrat in question a long rope," he charged, with an obvious reference to former bureaucrat and BJD's key election strategist Kartik Pandian.

Elaborating, he alleged the Naveen Patnaik-led state government could give absolute authority to a relatively junior IAS officer bypassing many of his seniors only because the Narendra Modi government at the Centre not just allowed but also facilitated it. "It was Union

Home Minister Amit Shah had not only given the Tamil officer direct access to him, but also was meeting him privately in different hotels and offices on many occasions," he claimed.

Now after facilitating the loot of Odia Ashmita in every possible way, the BJP fighting this election in the name of protecting it, he said.

"Even from the point of view of our PwD community, Congress is the only party that truly works for the empowerment of the most backward and marginalised communities of the society. The other parties just exploit them for votes," he added.

AICC media co-ordinator Ritu Choudhary, PCC spokesperson Suvendu Mallik and Sangram Kishore Majhi were also present at the press conference.

# 'Habaspuri' handloom posters launched at Cannes

ARINDAM GANGULY, OP

Bhubaneswar, May 27: Odia filmmaker Biswanath Rath recently created history by showcasing Kotpad handloom and launched posters of his feature documentary on 'Habaspuri' handloom at Cannes film festival.



On his very first visit to this world-famous film festival, Biswanath launched the posters of his upcoming Odia-English Feature-Documentary titled 'Habaspuri Weaving: The Second and Last Death???' which is about Habaspuri handloom, a unique, age-old, acclaimed, but near-extinct handloom tradition from Kalahandi district of Odisha.

This remarkable feature documentary follows the footsteps of his previous acclaimed handloom documentary "Kotpad Weaving: The story of a race against time" and marks a significant milestone in his journey to celebrate and preserve Odisha's rich artisan heritage.

After featuring in the final 12 documentary projects (selected out of 98 International entries) in last year's edition of NFDC Film Bazaar (Goa), this project

is now being supported by NFDC Film Bazaar Documentary Co-Production Market 2023.

While Rath is producing and creatively supervising this feature documentary under his banner 'BnR Films', it is being directed by Mayur Mahapatra. The research for this documentary was done by Rath, textile designer Anupriya Mridha, US-based textile enthusiast Corinn Flaherty, Mayur Mahapatra, Siddhant Swaroop and Debasish Pratihari.

Rath said, "This was my very first experience of Festival De Cannes (also known as Cannes Film Festival). And I had a really great, satisfying and memorable time there watching few of the selected film in Cannes's iconic theatres, meeting filmmakers from all corners of the world and promoting our own culture/tradition. Although Sambalpuri handloom has been showcased before, this is the very first time, Kotpad handloom was showcased to the world in this prestigious and famous international film festival."

## CLASSIFIED

### AFFIDAVIT

I, D. Tulasiram, S/o - Danda Narasinga Murti, Resident of At/PO - Boipariguda, Dist - Koraput, Odisha, PIN - 764043 declare by this affidavit No. 916 dated 24.05.2024, that now onwards I shall be known as Danda Tulasi Ram for all future purposes.

### LOST

I Mr. Biswachetan Mishra, aged about 40 years, S/o Late Rajanikanta Mishra, At/Plot No. 558, Rudrapur, Hansapal, P.O.-Balianta, District: Khordha. I hereby declare that after the purchase of land on dated 02.07.2018 document No. 11081807147 was registered in my name by District Sub-registrar Office, Bhubaneswar. But I was lost it on dated 03.04.2024 while my office renovation and I have not found the said document despite searching everywhere. So I file a case diary No.69 on dated 23.04.2024 at Kharvel Nagar Police Station, Bhubaneswar. If anyone found the documents please contact: 9348866065.



PROMOTING CULTURE: Participants perform during the inauguration of state-level summer vacation workshop at Kala Vikash Kendra auditorium in Cuttack, Monday

## MARKET WATCH

INDEX	VALUE	VARIATION
SENSEX	75390.50	↓ 19.89
NIFTY	22932.45	↓ 24.65
DOLLAR	83.13	↑ ₹0.03
EURO	90.21	↑ ₹0.13
GOLD	₹72,045	↑ ₹789
SILVER	₹94,408	↓ ₹3,860

## WEATHER

	BBSR	CTC
Max Temp	37.7°C	35.8°C
Min Temp	27.5°C	26.8°C
Humidity	85%	79%
Rainfall	Nil	1.4mm

FORECAST  
CLOUDY SKY WITH ONE OR TWO SPELLS OF RAIN

# Magic mushrooms show promise as a treatment for anorexia

Anorexia nervosa is a severe mental health disorder where people fear weight gain. Those with the disorder have distorted body image and hold rigid beliefs their body is too big. They typically manage this through restricted eating, leading to the serious medical consequences of malnutrition.

Anorexia has one of the highest death rates of any mental illness. Yet there are currently no effective drug treatments and the outcomes of psychotherapy (talk therapy) are poor. So there is need of new and improved treatments.

Psilocybin, commonly known as magic mushrooms, is one such novel treatment. But while it shows early promise, it's not used in clinical practice just yet - more research is needed to test if it's safe and effective.

What does treatment involve? The treatment involves the



patient taking a dose of psilocybin in a safe environment, which is usually a specifically set up clinic. The patient undergoes preparation therapy before the dosing session and integration therapy after.

Psilocybin, extracted from mushrooms, is a psychedelic, which means it can produce altered thinking, sense of time and emotions, and can often re-

sult in hallucinations. It also has the potential to shift patients out of their rigid thinking patterns.

What does the research show? Research has shown improved effects of psilocybin-assisted psychotherapy after one or two dosing sessions, a couple of weeks apart. Most research to date has targeted depression.

Psilocybin has been found to increase cognitive flexibility - the ability to adjust our thinking patterns according to changing environments or demands. People with anorexia similarly struggle with rigid thinking patterns. So researchers and clinicians have recently turned their attention to anorexia.

In 2023, a small pilot study of ten women with anorexia was published in the journal Nature Medicine. It showed psilocybin-assisted psychotherapy (with 25mg of psilocybin) was safe and acceptable. There were no significant side effects and participants reported having valuable experiences. Although the trial was not a formal efficacy trial, 40 per cent of the patients did have significant drops in their eating disorder behaviour. However, the trial only had one dosing session and no long-term follow up, so further research is needed.

Psilocybin, extracted from mushrooms, is a psychedelic, which means it can produce altered thinking, sense of time and emotions, and can often result in hallucinations. It also has the potential to shift patients out of their rigid thinking patterns.

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## FOR CLASSIFIED ADVERTISEMENTS CONTACT OUR BOOKING STATIONS

Acharya Vihar-Dayal Agency-9437135727, A.P. Tours and Travel, Maitri Vihar, C.S. Pur- 9861301598, Aurobindo Market-Sai Audio & Electronics-9438304668, Airport Road-Sai Baba Variety Store-9090071530, Anish Infotech-Tankapani Road-9861341488, Bapuji Nagar- Dreamland Studio- 9777517314, Baramunda Rental Colony-Maa Ramchandi Communication-9658821469, Baramunda Housing Board Colony-Pappu Variety Store-9040500106, Cuttack Road-Alishan Snacks-8984236754, District Center (Chandrasekharpur)-Sai Google Mart-9776056507, Forest Park-DTDC Couriers & Services (HB Services)-7381024156, IRC Village-Bapi Xerox-9090090404, Gift Hut(Antriksh Gifts & Decors Pvt. Ltd.)-9954781084, Pruthvi Medicine-9853314816, Janpath-Krupajal Book Store-7978646669, Jaydev Vihar-AK Enterprises-7978116618, Subam Sai Books Store-8895550649, Swain Graphics- 9337121249, Jagannath Mobile Point- Janpath Road, Ram Mandir- 9938475415, Kanan Vihar-Auro Electronics-8260697560, Khandagiri- Swosti Mobile Centre- 7992914045, World Solution- 9938317559, KIIT Road-Jugad Jn-9338545031, Laxmi Sagar-Aditya Mobile-9438191836, Lewis Road-Spider Web-7809186415, Metro Satellite City-Arogya Mitra Medicine Store-9853621640, Madhusudan Nagar-Mohapatra Communication-9124446664, Maa Santoshi travels- Gajapati Nagar- 9777675867, Nayapalli- The Cake Room- 7873660137, Near Mayfair Lagoon-Cookiemann-9439491273, Nigamananda-Omm Sai Travels-9668284823, Nr Cosmopolis Main Gate- Shreeram Medical Store- 8763711714, Net Square- Niladri Vihar (C.S. Pur)- 7205634821, Priyadarshini Market-Astro Point-9938134346, R.N. General Store-Nilakantha Nagar-9438642501, Sahid Nagar- Maa Communication- 9437353424, Sahini General Store- Near Patia Railway Station, Mahavir Vihar- 9937586626, Satya Nagar-Baishnavi Mixture & Sweets-7894821764, Samantapur- Download Point-7504557743, Sailashree Vihar-Harsha Book Store-8093449515, Saheed Nagar-Jagannath Graphics-7978652670, Photo World-7978468191, Sainath Photo Studio-8984436129, Shanti & Co-9937071063, Siripur-Omm Maa Sarala Communication-977682449, Sushree fashion- Jagmara-9938714347, Shree Vision- Sailashree Vihar-9861476678, Unit-3-LIC of India Premium Point-9337787080, Unit-7- LIC Premium Point- 9338227422, VSS Nagar-Friends Cake & Bake-8658200930, Jeet Infoworld-7205195782, XIMB Square-LD Books-9658061373.



# Chinks alleged in sensitive booths list



**ACTIVIST ALLEGES THAT OFFICIALS ENGAGED IN IDENTIFYING SENSITIVE BOOTHS HAVE FILED FALSE REPORTS**

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Jajpur, May 27:** Allegations of severe irregularities in identification of sensitive booths have surfaced in Jajpur district. The officials have identified 281 booths as sensitive out of 1,637 booths under the Jajpur Lok Sabha segment. However, allegations are rife that severe irregularities have been committed in identification of sensitive booths. The matter came to the fore after a social activist Pratap Kumar Jena filed a complaint before the Election Commission of India (ECI), Saturday. The ECI admitted the complaint and apprised the concerned officer through the National Grievance Services Portal (NGSP) and also

forwarded the email to him for quick response on the matter. The ECI has also informed the complainant about the action taken by it on the issue. The complainant has alleged that the concerned officials engaged in identifying sensitive booths have filed false reports on these booths at the behest of the ruling party in the state. They have done this to facilitate booth rigging and capturing in the actual sensitive booths. Sukinda block is not the lone block in the district where actual sensitive booths have been written off from the list of sensitive booths. Such irregularity has allegedly been committed in some other blocks of Jajpur district. He has demanded before the ECI to issue a public clarification and ensure that no such irregularity takes place in future. According to the complaint, 39 booths have been identified as sensitive booths under Sukinda Assembly constituency in Jajpur district. However, more than half of those booths are not at all sensitive, it is alleged. The complainant has claimed that CCTV cameras have been es-

tablished in these booths without any necessity, while the booths that are actually sensitive and hyper sensitive have been excluded from the list. It is apprehended that the law and order situation in these booths could go out of hands during the election scheduled for June 1, Saturday. The officials have not taken any preventive measure. As per past records, recent survey and intelligence reports, 32 booths under this Assembly constituency are hyper sensitive and the chances of rigging looms large on these booths. These booths are Deogaon, Ardapal, Ragada, Benagadia-1, Benagadia-2, Chingudipal-1, Chingudipal-2 under Chingudipal panchayat, Gurujang, Kaliapani-1, Kaliapani-2, Kaliapani-3, Kaliapani-4 under Kaliapani panchayat and Kalrangiatia-1, Kalrangiatia-2, Kalrangiatia-3, Kalrangiatia-4, Ransol, Mahulakhai and Kusumundia under Ransol panchayat. Similarly, Champajhar, Tomka under Kiajhar panchayat, Santargadia and Goubahali under Uchhabali panchayat, Chandia under Chandia panchayat, Rabana-1, Rabana-2, Dasamania under Mantira panchayat, Jakhpura-1, Jakhpura-2, Jakhpura-3 and Jakhpura-4 under Jakhpura panchayat and the Chakua booth under Khapuriapada panchayat have been categorised as hyper-sensitive booths. Names of some of these booths have been uploaded in the civil evidence section of ECI portal and complaints have been filed.



**POLL BOYCOTT THREAT:** Residents of Badamamudia village under Karakachia panchayat of Baripada Assembly segment vowed to boycott the upcoming polls over lack of a good road to their village, Monday

## 9 visually impaired students clear Matric exam

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Berhampur, May 27:** All the nine visually impaired students of a school for the blind in Ganjan district cleared the annual high school certificate or Class X examination. The nine visually impaired students, including five girls, cleared the examination conducted by the Board of Secondary Education (BSE), Odisha, said principal of the Red Cross School for the Blind, Ambapua, Priya Ranjan Mahakuda. A girl student secured B2 grade by securing 360 out of 600 marks, seven students got C grade and one passed in D grade, he said. The results of the annual Class X (matriculation) examination were declared by the BSE Sunday. In the classroom, the students are taught through the Braille textbooks. They, however, appeared in the examination through helper-writer. Bharati Bisoyi, a visually impaired student in the school who has secured B2 grade in the examination, and the other students who cleared the examination want to pursue higher education.

## Cyclone Remal brings havoc for Olive Ridley eggs, hatchlings

*Earlier, due to multi-layering at Nasi-2, more than 15 per cent of the eggs laid were destroyed in some segments during the mass nesting*

AGENCIES

**Kendrapara, May 27:** The adverse weather conditions and torrential rain caused by Cyclone Remal in the Bay of Bengal have severely disrupted the emergence of Olive Ridley turtle hatchlings at the mass nesting sites of Nasi-2, the world's largest rookery of the species in Odisha. DFO of Rajnagar Mangrove (forest) and Wildlife Division, Sudarshan Gopinath Jadav, said the turbulent sea, along with high tides due to Cyclone Remal, washed away several eggs. The incessant rain also damaged the turtle eggs, he added. Official sources said about 1.20 lakh Olive Ridley sea turtle hatchlings emerged from the eggs at the mass nesting sites of Nasi-2 three days ago. However, the prevailing adverse weather conditions due to Cyclone Remal have halted the emergence of the baby

hatchlings from the pits. "We are now in a wait-and-watch situation with fingers crossed, as we anticipate the eggs might have been destroyed due to Cyclone Remal," Jadav said. Around 3 lakh Olive Ridley sea turtles came ashore en-masse to the golden beach of Nasi-2 within Gahirmatha Marine Sanctuary and laid eggs over five days, starting April 2. The mass nesting process of the sea turtles was also affected by the adverse weather, Jadav noted. According to Jadav, the hatchlings of the endangered Olive Ridley sea turtles started emerging six days ago at the tranquil sandy nesting ground at Nasi-2, located close to the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) at Wheeler's Island under the Gahirmatha Marine Sanctuary. He said it was expected that the process would continue for at least the next five days, but Cyclone Remal has disrupted the emergence of the baby turtles from their eggshells. Earlier, due to multi-layering at Nasi-2, more than 15 per cent of the eggs laid were destroyed in some segments during the mass nesting, as turtles were seen laying eggs on the same

spot, digging the earth with their flippers, and destroying previously laid eggs. Female Olive Ridley sea turtles generally lay 100-120 eggs at a time. They lay their eggs at midnight in 45-cm pits, which they dig 2-3 feet deep with their rear flippers. Hatchlings emerge from the eggs after 45-55 days and find their way to the sea, creating a cacophony, the DFO said. Once hatched, the turtles dig their way to the surface and scurry to the ocean. It is believed by some that imprinting on the Earth's magnetic field may occur upon their emergence from the sand. This imprinting is thought to guide the hatchlings back to the same breeding areas in adulthood. If the hatchlings reach the ocean successfully, they will spend the next several years dispersing in ocean currents, associating with sargassum rafts and floating debris, which provide them with food and shelter, Jadav said. It is one of nature's rare phenomena where babies grow without their mother. The endangered species' mortality rate is so high that only one out of every 1,000 eggs laid hatches and survives to become an adult Olive Ridley turtle, Jadav explained.

## Huge amount of explosives seized in raid

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Balasure, May 27:** Police here recovered a huge quantity of explosives from abandoned stone quarries near Khanjamahal under Mahumuhan panchayat and Soro block in Balasure district, sources said Monday. The explosives were supposed to be used for blasting in the quarries in order to extract stones. According to sources, a team from Soro police station led by IIC Prabhanshu Sekhar Mishra conducted a raid on the instruction of Balasure SP Sagarika Nath. The team found 1500 kg of gelatin sticks from a secluded place near Bagudi and also recovered 6000 kg of explosives and gelatin sticks from an abandoned stone quarry near Mahumuhan. Police registered a case (476/24) in this regard at Soro police station and launched an investigation into the matter. The raid was conducted following allegations of stone smuggling from illegal quarries in Khanjamahal locality. It is pertinent to mention here that miscreants use explosives to extract stones from illegal stone quarries after blasting the hills.

## Villagers protest against rice mill over pollution

**Keonjhar:** Hundreds of local women and men protested in front of the Narayani Rice Mill in Kuapashi village of Badapatana panchayat under Patna block of Keonjhar district Monday morning over pollution and other issues. The villagers threatened to lock the rice mill and continue with their protest if their demands are not met in the coming days. They shouted slogans against the authorities of the rice mill for allegedly spreading pollution. The villagers alleged crops in their farmlands and nearby cashew fields were destroyed due to the wastewater released by the mill. Livestock have died of diseases after drinking the contaminated water, the poor villagers further alleged. People also demanded to free the land belonging to an elderly local allegedly encroached by the mill owner apart from employment to local youths. However when asked, the manager of the rice mill could not reply to the allegations of the villagers.

## Maoists kill Kandhamal youth suspected to be police informer

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Kotagada, May 27:** After a few days of silence, Red Rebels of the CPI-Maoist, Vamsadhara-Nagabali-Ghumusar (Baghuna) Divisional Committee brutally killed a youth at Badipanga village under Durgapanga panchayat and this police limits in Kandhamal district suspecting him to be a police informer. The matter came to the fore after the mutilated body of the youth was found near the village Monday, sources said. The deceased was identified as Metla Raita of Badipanga village. According to sources, armed miscreants took away Metla from his

house late Saturday night suspecting him to be a police informer. Since then he was untraceable. The youth's mutilated body was found lying near the village along with a poster containing threats by the Maoists. In the poster it was mentioned that Naveen and Modi governments are responsible for the killing of Metla. "Whoever is working as dalal like Metla should realise their mistake and immediately beg mercy from the Maoists, or may leave the area immediately. Otherwise, they will be punished like Metla" the poster read. On being informed, Kotagada police launched an investigation into the incident.

## RCCI holds its 62nd AGM



POST NEWS NETWORK

**Rourkela, May 27:** The 62nd AGM of Rourkela Chamber of Commerce and Industries (RCCI) was held at the conference hall of the business body here. The incumbent president Sunil Koyal presented the annual performance report. Apart from the past presidents, other incumbent office bearers and members were present during the AGM. Presenting the annual report,

Koyal thanked the state government and CM Naveen Patnaik for the all-round development of the state. "On behalf of RCCI and as the president, I am thankful to CM Naveen Patnaik for organising 'Make in Odisha-2023' and 'Enterprise Odisha-2024' as these two helped us all immensely," said Koyal while also thanking the state government officials in various departments for their help. He also thanked former president

Subha Patnaik for helping in getting the chamber registered last year. "Subha babu helped immensely in getting the land registered in the name of RCCI. This was pending for a long time," said Koyal. The president expressed his gratitude to the district administration and other officials who proved helpful in getting the registration done. The startup committee of RCCI was formed recently. Speaking about the benefit of the cell, he said, "Startup is the new age business concept. This is creating an environment where many budding entrepreneurs are jumping in and getting success. To make the startup atmosphere in Rourkela more vibrant, we have created this committee during my tenure. It has started showing the results and I am hopeful that this will be a game changer one day." He also threw lights on other achievements during his tenure. Past presidents and other office bearers also shared their views. This is the last AGM of the incumbent elected body. The election for the new body will be held June 2.

<b>Bank of India</b> Zonal Office : Star House, 1/1D, Jayadev Vihar, Nayapalli, Bhubaneswar-751015	<b>POSSESSION NOTICE</b> (Rule-8(1) of Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules-2002)		
Whereas, the undersigned being the Authorised Officer of the Bank of India, Kandarpur Branch under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 and in exercise of powers conferred under section 13(12) read with Rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 issued a Demand Notice calling upon the Borrower/Co-Borrower/Mortgagors in the loan account given below to repay the amount mentioned in the Notice plus interest & expenses thereon within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said Notice. The Borrower having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the Borrower/Co-Borrower/Mortgagors and the public in general that the undersigned has taken Possession of the property described herein below in exercise of powers conferred on him under Sub-Section (4) of Section 13 of the said Act read with Rule 8 of the said rules. The Borrower/Co-Borrower/Mortgagors in particular and the public in general are hereby cautioned not to deal with the property and any dealings with the property will be subject to the charge of the Bank of India, Kandarpur Branch for an amount mentioned below with interest & expenses thereon. The Borrower's attention is invited to provisions of Sub-Section (8) of Section 13 of the Act, in respect of time available to redeem the secured assets.			
<b>KANDARPUR BRANCH / Name &amp; Address of Borrower/Co-Borrower/Mortgagors</b>	<b>Liabilities due as per Notice</b>	<b>Date of Demand Notice / Date of Possession</b>	<b>Description of the Immovable Property</b>
Borrower/Mortgagor: Mr. Lalit Mohan Pradhan, S/o.: Late Arun Kumar Pradhan / Co-Borrower/Mortgagor: Mr. Asish Pradhan, S/o.: Late Arun Kumar Pradhan, Both are At: Danduasipara, PO.: Ayatpur, Dist.: Cuttack-754131	₹ 6,20,737/- + interest & expenses thereon	07.02.2024 / 22.05.2024	All that part and parcel of the property consisting of Land & Building situated at Mouza: Brahmanabada, P.S.: Cuttack Sadar No.: 96, Tahasil: Cuttack No.: 299, Dist.: Cuttack, Old Khata No.: 270, Mutation Khata No.: 463/78, Plot No.: 1006, Admeasuring Area: Ac.0.050 Dec. i.e. 2178 Sqft, Standing in the name of Mr. Lalit Mohan Pradhan & Mr. Asish Pradhan, Bounded by North: Siba Ch. Jena, South: Canal, East: Narendra Jena, West: Road
Place: Bhubaneswar, Date: 28.05.2024		Authorised Officer, Bank of India	

<b>यूनियन बँक ऑफ इंडिया</b> Union Bank of India	<b>Regional Office : Sambalpur</b> 1 <sup>st</sup> Floor, Balaji Midtown, Budharaja, Sambalpur- 768004, Dist.: Sambalpur, Odisha	<b>E-AUCTION SALE NOTICE</b>		
<b>SALE NOTICE FOR SALE OF IMMOVABLE PROPERTY</b>				
E-Auction Sale Notice of 15 days for Sale of Immovable Secured Assets under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 read with Rule 8 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 Notice is hereby given to the public in general and in particular to the Borrower (s) and Guarantor (s) that the below described immovable property mortgaged / charged to the Secured Creditor, the possession of which has been taken by the Authorised Officer of Union Bank of India (Secured Creditor) will be sold on "As is Where is", "As is what is" and "Whatever there is" basis for recovery of outstanding dues to the Union Bank of India from the Borrowers and Guarantors mentioned below. The Reserve Price and the Earnest money deposit is stated in the column respectively.				
<b>Date &amp; Time of Auction: 12.06.2024 between 12.00 Noon. to 5.00 P.M. (with 10 min unlimited auto extensions)</b>				
<b>Sl. No.</b>	<b>CHURIAPALLI BRANCH / Name &amp; Address of Borrowers/Guarantor</b>	<b>Description of Property to be Auctioned</b>	<b>Total Dues (in ₹)</b>	<b>Reserve Price/ EMD / Bid increment</b>
1.	Borrowers: 1) Mrs. Annapurna Mahapatra, W/o.: Binod Mahapatra, 2) Mr. Ananta Mahapatra, S/o.: Binod Mahapatra, Both are at Village: Banabira, Mouza: Banabira, GP.: Tabada, Block: Sohela, Bargharh - 768033, Odisha / Guarantor: Shri Ishwara Mahapatra, S/o.: Harishankar Mahapatra, Village: Banabira, GP.: Tabada, Block: Sohela, Bargharh - 768033, Odisha	All that piece and parcel of Land & Building at Plot No.: 344/1532, Khata No.: 187/102, Area: Ac.0.13 Dec., Village: Banabira, Mouza: Banabira, GP.: Tabada, Block: Sohela, Bargharh - 768033, in the name of Mrs. Annapurna Mahapatra.	₹4,64,671.42 as on 31.03.2024 + interest, costs and charges thereon	₹18,50,000/- / ₹1,85,000/- / ₹20,000/-
<b>Date and Time of Inspection of Property for Intending Purchasers: upto 10.06.2024 during Banking Hours</b>				
<b>Details of encumbrances if any: NIL</b>				
<b>LAST DATE FOR SUBMISSION OF EMD: On or before the commencement of E-Auction</b>				
For registration and login and bidding rules visit <a href="https://www.mstcecommerce.com/auctionhome/ibapi/index.jsp">https://www.mstcecommerce.com/auctionhome/ibapi/index.jsp</a> , <a href="http://www.unionbankofindia.co.in">www.unionbankofindia.co.in</a>				
<b>STATUTORY 15 DAYS SALE NOTICE UNDER RULE 9(1) OF STATUTORY INTEREST (ENFORCEMENT) RULES, 2002</b>				
This May also be treated as notice under Rule 9(1) of Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 to the borrower/s and guarantor/s of the said loan about the holding of E-Auction Sale on the above mentioned date. For any query please contact: Pitamber Nanda (Senior Manager) : Mob.: 9439489429				
Place: Sambalpur, Date: 27.05.2024		Sd/- Authorized Officer, Union Bank of India		



Love is the keynote, Joy is the music, Knowledge is the performer, the infinite All is the composer and audience.

SRI AUROBINDO



## Char Dham Deaths

Distressing news has come from Uttarakhand that 58 pilgrims have died in the last 16 days while on the Char Dham Yatra. Government sources have put daily 3 deaths on an average. The religious fervor spreading across India seems to have had its negative impact even though the religious minded are unwilling to accept these stark realities. The deaths are not isolated nor are they a rare occurrence. Take for instance the Madhya Pradesh Navaratri stampede in Ratangarh in 2013 which took the lives of 115 people and injured 110 and the Morbi bridge collapse during Diwali in Gujarat in October 2022 which killed 141 people and injured dozens. In a stampede at a fair in Gangasagar, six pilgrims died in a stampede in 2017. In another stampede at the Vaishno Devi temple in J&K, 12 people lost their lives and many others were injured on 1st January 2022. These few instances are but samples and there are numerous other incidents where large number of people have lost their lives and many have had near fatal injuries.

The Char Dham Yatra, like a few others across the country, is government sponsored and managed to infuse more religiosity amongst the citizens. According to Uttarakhand state government, as published in news reports, nearly three pilgrims have died per day during this current season of the Char Dham Yatra. It is undoubtedly a noble effort on the part of the people to take this arduous journey to liberate their souls by getting absolved of all sins committed during their lifetime. For people with such a high aspiration, the government seeks registration and a health certificate to distinguish who is physically fit to endure this pilgrimage.

Unfortunately, many pilgrims have been observed to be forging their health certificates which are a pre-requisite for availing this difficult journey. We have to keep in mind that they take all this trouble to get rid of their past sins. And yet many knowingly lie about their health condition on record. This disproves their keenness about the religion that they profess. Data shows that in 2022 in this same Char Dham Yatra, 300 people had died while 250 people had lost their lives in 2023. This means these huge number of deaths should ring a warning bell for the government that can, under present circumstances, be held responsible for those lives lost.

Therefore, the Char Dham Yatra consisting of Jamunotri, Gangotri, Kedarnath, Badrinath and similar pilgrimages should not involve the government machinery at any stage. Originally known as Chota Char Dham Yatra, which became bigger due to government sponsorship after 1962 China war, is a torch bearer of such pilgrimages. Seen in this background, the government has two options. First is to altogether stop approving such perilous journeys. Second, applicable only if religion overpowers, should be a complete withdrawal of government intervention in any religion linked journeys such as this Chota Char Dham Yatra or even Haj pilgrimage.

### WISDOM CORNER

Anger is an acid that can do more harm to the vessel in which it is stored than to anything on which it is poured.

MARK TWAIN

If you hate a person, you hate something in him that is part of yourself. What isn't part of ourselves doesn't disturb us.

HERMANN HESSE

Neither a wise man nor a brave man lies down on the tracks of history to wait for the train of the future to run over him.

DWIGHT D. EISENHOWER

### THIS DAY IN HISTORY

- 1291: Crusader rule in the Holy Land came to an end as the Mamluks took the city of Acre, the last stronghold of the kingdom of Jerusalem.
- 1660: George I, the elector of Hanover (1698-1727) and the first Hanoverian king of Great Britain (1714-27), was born in Osnabrück, Germany.
- 1788: The Federalist papers—a series of 85 essays on the proposed new U.S. Constitution and on the nature of republican government, written in 1787-88 by Alexander Hamilton, James Madison, and John Jay—were published in book form.
- 1804: Napoleon proclaimed the establishment of the French Empire. Napoleon was a French general, first consul (1799-1804), and emperor of the French (1804-1814/15), one of the most celebrated personages in the history of the West. He revolutionised military organization and training; sponsored the Napoleonic Code, the prototype of later civil-law codes; reorganized education; and established the long-lived Concordat with the papacy.
- 1830: The Indian Removal Act was passed, allowing U.S. President Andrew Jackson to grant Native American tribes unsettled western prairie land in exchange for their settlements within the borders of extant U.S. states, thereby clearing the way for further white settlement.
- 1937: The German automaker Volkswagen was founded to mass-produce a low-priced "people's car"; the company was originally operated by a Nazi organization.
- 1961: Dedicated to informing public opinion about human rights and to securing the release of political prisoners, Amnesty International was founded in London on this day in 1961 and won the 1977 Nobel Peace Prize. The publication of Peter Benenson's article "The forgotten prisoners" is commonly considered the organization's birth hour. Amnesty International is one of the world's most influential human rights organizations.
- 1998: Pakistan successfully conducted several underground nuclear tests, making it the seventh country to possess nuclear weapons. The nuclear tests came as a response to India's tests just days earlier. Fearing a devastating conflict between the two nuclear powers, a number of countries, including the U.S. and Japan, imposed economic sanctions

### LOL

#### Horse or chicken

A retiring farmer in preparation for selling his land, needed to rid his farm of animals. So he went to every house in his town. To the houses where the man is the boss, he gave a horse. To the houses where the woman is the boss, a chicken was given. He got toward the end of the street and saw a couple outside gardening.



"Who's the boss around here?" he asked.

"I am," said the man.

"I have a black horse and a brown horse," the farmer said, "which one would you like?"

The man thought for a minute and said, "The black one."

"No, no, no, get the brown one," the man's wife said.

"Here's your chicken," said the farmer.

### FOCUS WELFARE

# THE KERALA MODEL



Kerala does offer a model for other states to follow when it comes to treatment of in-migrants, i.e. guest workers. The state goes to considerable length to extend welfare to the workers and their families, and especially taking care of the educational needs of their children



Ajit Ranade

KERALA IS FAR AHEAD IN THE DEMOGRAPHIC TRANSITION AND AGEING AMONG ALL THE STATES OF INDIA

The class 10 state board exam results were announced last week in Kerala. One remarkable achiever was Shivraj Mohite from St. George's High School, Vennikkulam in Ernakulam district. He scored A+ in all his subjects. What was remarkable is this boy is the son of migrants from Maharashtra's Sangli district, and he had scored very high marks in all subjects including Malayalam, which is also the medium of instruction of his school. His father is a salesman in a textile shop and settled here two decades ago, even before his marriage. Both his children have received free education, in a private school of fairly high quality, making it possible for his son to be a top scorer. Another girl, daughter of a migrant worker from Uttar Pradesh also scored A+ overall. This is very unlike in the migrant worker's village in UP, where girls do not even reach class 10. Here they are already planning further studies for the girl, whose elder sister is pursuing an engineering degree in Kerala.

The success of 85 such students in Ernakulam district is due to an initiative called ROSHNI supported by the district administration. The ROSHNI project helps migrant children acquire proficiency in Malayalam, English, and Hindi by taking extra morning hours of about 90 minutes before the morning classes. Services of volunteers who are proficient in Hindi, Bengali and Odia are used. There are hundreds of such success stories of children of migrant workers, who get free education, in the local language and move on to enhancing their careers by pursuing higher degrees, based on this solid foundation. A few years ago the topper in state-wide Malayalam literacy exam was a woman from a Bihari migrant family. Another case was the daughter of a Bihari migrant who topped a University B.A. exam. During the pandemic the migrant labourers and their families were helped with pro-

visions and rations and did not have to go back to their respective states. They got food, shelter and medical care.

Kerala is far ahead in the demographic transition and ageing among all the states of India. It also is the state which traditionally has substantial outmigration to the Middle East. Due to a combination of these and other factors its dependence on migrant workers is high. An estimated 4 million migrant workers are based in Kerala where they are called guest workers. But for the state, it goes beyond lip service as some of the anecdotes above illustrate. For starters, the average daily wages paid to unskilled workers in the state was ₹709 in 2021, as against the national average of ₹309. Workers do all sorts of jobs from working in plantations, construction, retail malls, or as cooks, waiters, security and helpers in workshops. Kerala also has skill development and vocational training programmes to enhance the employability of guest workers. Then there is the free Aawaz Health Insurance scheme covering hospitalisation and medical treatment of guest workers. Free education for children and assimilation into the local language is a high point and has already been mentioned.

There is also special attention paid to protect the legal rights of workers from exploitation, unsafe working conditions or illegal low wages. The state has established a comprehensive database to register guest workers which helps in planning and implementing welfare schemes.

In 2021 a survey conducted by Gram Vikas, an NGO in the Kalahandi district of Odisha, found that seasonal migrants from 26% of households chose to go to Kerala to work in various sectors (unskilled) and earned an average salary of ₹12,000. Two third of most of the migrants located outside Odisha reported Kerala as their destination. The internal migration of workers from the rest of the country to Kerala itself has created a mini-remittance economy as money flows from savings generated in Kerala to the homes states like Odisha, Jharkhand, Assam and Bihar.

There are over 50 million migrant workers in India who are working outside their home state, of which 4 million are in Kerala. Ultimately Kerala's absorption rate of migrant workers will be limited by the size of its economy and its growth rate. Kerala used to get nearly 25% of its state income as remittance income from overseas workers. That has

dropped to less than 15%, indicating robust domestic drivers of growth and consumption. The state faces challenges of ageing demographics, lack of manufacturing investment and employment and unaffordable real estate. It has performed well in attracting knowledge industries, but much needs to be done in climbing the ladder of quality in education and innovation.

However, Kerala does offer a model for other states to follow when it comes to treatment of in-migrants, i.e. guest workers. The state goes to considerable length to extend welfare to the workers and their families, and especially taking care of the educational needs of the children. The special attention given to assimilating workers from the north, into the local language Malayalam, into society and culture is admirable.

According to the 2011 census, about 450 million Indians are on the go, as migrants, either within the state or inter-state. The migration can be seasonal, circular or semi-permanent. The Constitution gives us a right to move to any place in the country to seek economic opportunities. This is the great antidote or option available to escape lack of job or livelihood opportunities in one's own region. But not everyone can migrate, and even fewer can do so with their whole families.

People with land holdings, especially small ones are tied to the land. Only the able bodied can migrate. Migration is thus both a positive sign of enterprise as much as a response to lack of local opportunities. In much of the Western world there is a backlash against immigrants as they are seen as snatching away local jobs. But the case study of Kerala offers us constructive approach on how to harness the potential and energy of migrants without causing any negative disruption of local communities. That is the true spirit of calling the migrant worker a guest worker.

The writer is a noted Pune-based economist.

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### SPECTRUM SOCIETY

# The complex dynamics of student suicides



Bhaskar Nath Biswal

DESPITE THE GLARING MENTAL HEALTH CHALLENGES FACED BY STUDENTS IN THE CAMPUS THERE IS A SIGNIFICANT LACK OF ADEQUATE SUPPORT SYSTEM

Student suicides are a distressing reality that highlights the profound mental health challenges faced by them while pursuing education. Between 2019 and 2021, there were over 35,000 student suicides in India, as disclosed by Union Minister Abbaiah Narayanaswamy. The figures escalated from 10,335 in 2019 to 12,526 in 2020 and 13,089 in 2021. The National Crime Records Bureau says that 6,113 students committed suicide during 2022 which accounts for 7.6% of the total number of the year. They are not limited to general colleges but also to premier institutions like IITs, IIMs, and medical colleges.

Kota, a city in Rajasthan, is renowned for its coaching institutes, especially for students preparing for various entrance examinations to prestigious engineering and medical colleges. However, beneath its glass house lies a grim reality – the alarming rate of suicides among students which has drawn national and international attention.

According to data from Rajasthan Police, 15 students died by suicide in 2022, and the number alarmingly increased to 27 in

2023, the highest since such tragic end of lives have been recorded from 2015 onwards. The first quarter of the current year witnessed seven incidents where students, unable to bear the fear of failure and disappointing their families put an end to their lives. The government revealed in Parliament that 61 deaths by suicide occurred at IITs, IIMs, NITs since 2018. Around 130 medical students had died by suicide during the last five years.

The issue of suicides is a multifaceted one, rooted in the intersection of socio-economic, psychological, family and academic factors. One of the primary reasons attributed to student suicides is the intense pressure from family as well as institutions to excel academically. The fear of failure and the relentless pursuit of success can take a toll on their mental health, pushing some to take the fatal step of despair.

Despite the glaring mental health challenges faced by students in the campus there is a significant lack of adequate support system. In most institutions counseling services are often nil or inadequate or inaccessible, leaving students grappling with their emotional turmoil alone. At

the same time, there is a pervasive stigma attached to seeking help for psychological problems, particularly in academic settings. Students may fear being perceived as weak or incapable if they admit to experiencing mental health challenges. This stigma often prevents them from reaching out for support when they need it most, leading to a worsening of their condition.

The rigorous curriculum, demanding coursework, and high performance expectations create an environment where students feel constantly under scrutiny.

The financial strain is a significant stressor for many college students, especially those from low-income backgrounds or families facing economic hardships. The rising cost of tuition, accommodation, textbooks, and other expenses can create a heavy financial burden, forcing students to juggle multiple responsibilities, such as part-time jobs, to make ends meet. The constant worry about finances, combined with the pressure to succeed academically, can take a toll on students' mental well-being and contribute to feelings of hopelessness and despair.

Addressing student suicides re-

quires a multifaceted approach: implementation of programmes to educate students, teachers, and parents about mental health issues, stress management, and seeking help; training teachers and counselors to recognise signs of distress or mental health issues in students and provide appropriate support; ensuring students have easy access to mental health resources such as counselors, therapists, and support groups; fostering a supportive and inclusive school environment where students feel valued, respected, and connected; encouraging open conversations about mental health to reduce stigma and make it easier for students to seek help without fear of judgement.

It is also necessary to work with community organisations, healthcare providers, and mental health professionals to provide comprehensive support to students. By working together as educators, administrators, students, and community members, we can create environments that promote mental health, resilience, and academic success for all students.

The writer is Principal, Nabarangpur College.

### Hunger for fame

Sir, Another "Instagram tragedy" has snuffed out three young lives, this time on the Ahmedabad-Mumbai highway when a speeding car packed with Instagram crazy youngsters rammed into a tree near Adas, 100 km away from Ahmedabad. Young men brushing against death, or even embracing it, by high speed trains and other vehicles due to their obsession with "likes" on Instagram has been reported with frightening frequency in India, and this hunger for fame does not seem to end soon. Those who walk beside fast moving vehicles sidetrack the fact that the vehicles are, unfortunately, not "Instagram crazy" like them. The sad part of these injuries and deaths: all were preventable. Governments should maintain a combined register -- serious injuries and deaths on Instagram should be reported to create awareness among the parents.

Ganapathi Bhat, AKOLA

### Windfall dividend

Sir, The recent windfall dividend of ₹2.1 lakh crore from the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) to the government has garnered significant attention from global rating agencies. This amount is more than double the budgeted figure, offering the new government unexpected fiscal space. How they choose to utilise these additional funds will be seen as a signal of their economic priorities. This unexpected boost is positive news for India's fiscal health. It strengthens the government's finances and could potentially help them achieve the targeted fiscal deficit of 5.1% of GDP for the current fiscal year. Meeting this target would be viewed favourably by rating agencies, potentially impacting India's sovereign rating. However, the most crucial aspect lies in how the government decides to allocate these additional funds. There are two main possibilities. The government could prioritise deficit reduction, using the windfall to narrow the fiscal gap. This approach would signal a strong commitment to fiscal prudence, which would be well-received by rating agencies as it promotes long-term economic stability. Alternatively, the government might choose to invest these funds strategically in key areas like social welfare programmes or infrastructure development. In essence, the RBI dividend presents the new government with a valuable opportunity to communicate their economic vision.

Amarjeet Kumar; HAZARIBAGH

## Letters

### TO THE EDITOR

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

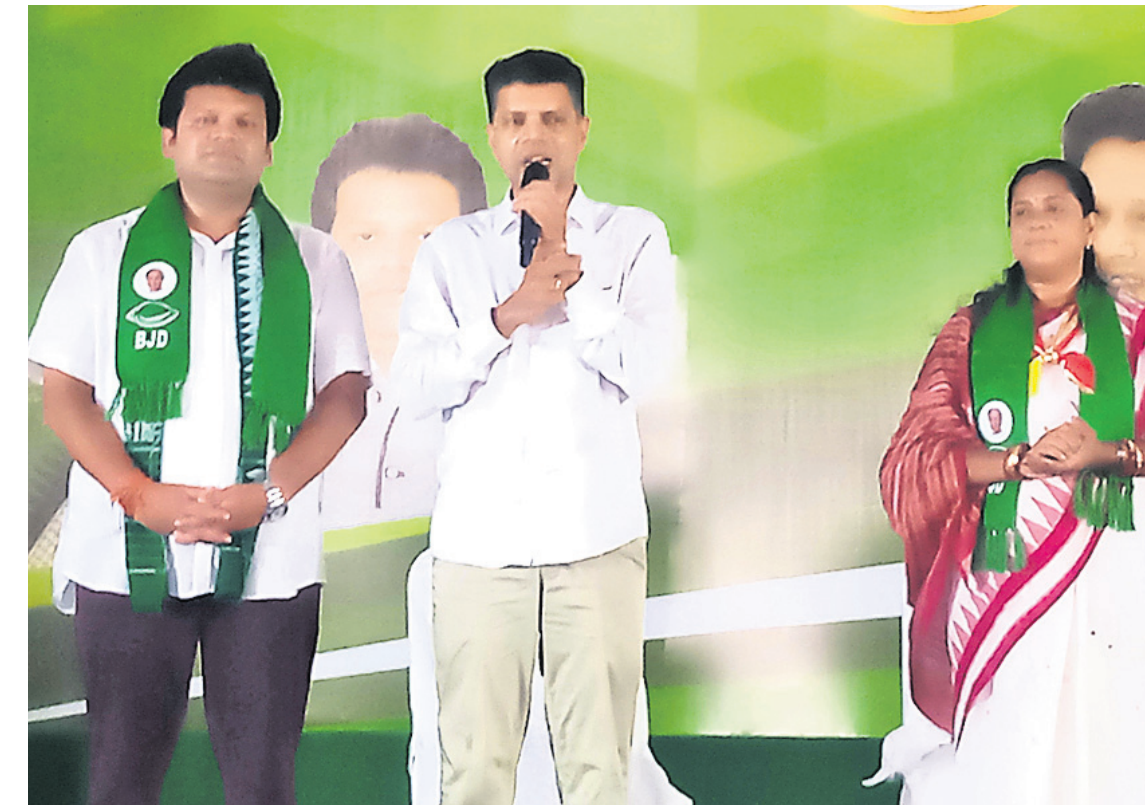
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BJD leader and 5T Chairman Kartik Pandian addressing an election meeting in the presence of party's Bhadrak Lok Sabha nominee Manjulata Mandal and Basudevpur Assembly candidate Bishnubrata Routray at Jadav Ground in Bhadrak, Monday



Union minister Dharmendra Pradhan campaigning for BJP's Balasore Lok Sabha nominee Pratap Chandra Sarangi and Nilagiri Assembly candidate Santosh Kumar Khatua at an election meeting at KC High School Ground, Nilagiri in Balasore district, Monday

## BJD, BJP, Cong brace up for endgame

BJD supremo Naveen Patnaik has claimed that his party will form a stable government in the state, while PM Narendra Modi and Union Home Minister Amit Shah have emphatically said that for the first time a double engine government will be formed in Odisha



formed in Odisha, dislodging the BJD government which had ruled the state for last 25 years. As the final phase draws closer, the BJD, BJP and the Congress have planned to hold a series of public meetings to woo the voters in support of their party candidates before the campaign ends May 30. The Prime Minister will visit Odisha again May 29 on his fourth leg of electioneering in support of party candidates. BJD sources here said Modi will address three public meetings during his day-long visit to the state Wednesday as Odisha goes to the fourth and final phase of polls. The PM had already visited Odisha thrice May 6, May 10 and May 20 and addressed as many as seven public meetings, besides two roadshows, one at Bhubaneswar and the other in the pilgrim town of Puri. During his visit May 29, Modi will address election rallies at Baripada in Mayurbhanj Lok Sabha constituency, Remuna under Balasore Lok Sabha Constituency and Kendrapara where party's vice-president Baijayant Panda is contesting the prestigious Lok Sabha Constituency, considered as the bastion of BJD. Elections to 15 Lok Sabha and 105 Assembly seats were completed in three phases in the state May 13, May 20 and May 25 last, leaving six more Lok Sabha and 42 Assembly seats to go to the polls June 1. However, political pundits said the fourth phase of election is most vital and will be deciding factor as to which political party will ultimately rule the state. In a last bid to boost to prospect of BJP capturing the power, the Odisha BJP has lined up its star campaigners for a high-profile campaign holding series of public meetings from Monday onwards. Party sources said Shah will visit the state May 29 to attend the election meetings at Chandbali, Panikoili and Nimapada. Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw, Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan and Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma, have already started campaigning and addressing public meetings from Monday leaving no stone unturned to woo the voters in support of party candidates. These three BJP star campaigners will address a series of public meetings in coastal Odisha, a stronghold of the ruling BJD. In 2019 elections, BJD had captured four of the six Lok Sabha and 34 of the 42 Assembly seats, while the BJP won two Lok Sabha and eight Assembly seats. Voting will be held for

## BJP govt will take oath in Odisha June 10: Himanta

Patkura/Kakatpur, May 27: BJP leader and Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma Monday claimed that a BJP government will take oath in Odisha June 10. "As per my prediction, we (BJP) have got almost a majority in the first three phases of Assembly elections in Odisha. Only very few seats are left to form a government and that will be filled up June 1," he said while addressing election rallies at Patkura and Kakatpur. Three phases of polling for the Assembly and Lok Sabha elections in the state is over. The fourth and final phase will be held June 1 for six Lok Sabha constituencies and 42 Assembly segments. Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik and his most trusted bureaucrat-turned-politician Kartik Pandian have chalked out whirlwind tours of the constituencies to hold election meetings and campaign for the party candidates. The Congress has also decided to launch an aggressive campaign and roped in party president Mallikarjun Kharge and party leader Rahul Gandhi, who will be visiting the state May 29 and 30 respectively. Congress party sources said Kharge will address a public meeting in Balasore May 29 in support of party candidate and former Union minister Srikanth Jena and another public meeting at Bhadrak. Congress leader Rahul Gandhi, during his third leg of electioneering, will address a meeting in Simulia coming under Bhadrak Lok Sabha constituency May 30.



Pandian (BJD leader Kartik Pandian) back to Tamil Nadu June 11," he said. If the state gets a good government then Odisha can become the number one state in the country, he added. "Today, the youth of Odisha are migrating to other states due to unemployment. On the other hand, one lakh government posts are lying vacant in the state and the Odia youth are not being employed in local industries," Sarma said. He claimed after the BJP government is formed in Odisha, the one lakh vacant posts will be

filled within a year. The natural resources of Odisha are being transferred to outsiders, he alleged. Slamming the BJD government's 5T (transformative initiative) model of governance, the senior BJP leader said, "One T" means teamwork. Is there any teamwork in Odisha? The elected MLAs, MPs and ministers don't have any power to exercise. Here only a team exists...that is in between Pandian and his wife and only one T, which stands for Tamil Nadu." Neither the state cabinet nor any officer has the power in Odisha. Only two persons (Pandian and his wife) have all the powers, Sarma alleged. Alleging that Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik was being "held hostage" by Pandian, Sarma appealed to Patnaik to come out alone to get respect from people.

**Bhubaneswar, May 27:** All the three major political parties - Biju Janata Dal (BJD), Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and Congress - have intensified their campaign for the final phase of general elections scheduled for June 1. Out of 21 Lok Sabha and 147 Assembly seats, six Lok Sabha and 42 Assembly seats are going to polls in the last phase. Electioneering in the last and final phase, will be a deciding factor as the three political parties will like to make up whatever the shortcomings they have in the last three phases of elections. Both the ruling BJD and the main Opposition BJP, meanwhile, have claimed that they will form the next government in the state. Both the parties had even announced the oath-taking day of the formation of the government. Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik claimed that BJD will form a stable government in the state, while Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Union Home Minister Amit Shah have emphatically said that for the first time a double engine government will be



Actor Shradha participating in a roadshow for BJD's Nimapara Assembly nominee Dillip Kumar Nayak in Nimapara under Jagatsinghpur Lok Sabha segment, Monday

## 'Chacha' is right: Tejashwi on Nitish's 'CM Modi' gaffe

Patna, May 27: RJD leader Tejashwi Yadav Monday said Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar's goof-up in wishing another 'CM term' for Prime Minister Narendra Modi showed a "sense of imminent defeat" in the NDA camp. Yadav was referring to the JD (U) supremo's gaffe at an election rally in Patliputra Lok Sabha seat Sunday, when he wished Modi, who was at the helm of Gujarat before becoming the PM, to become 'mukhya mantri' (chief minister) once again. Other leaders present on the stage realised the gaffe, following which he corrected his statement. "Dil ki baat zubaan pe aa jaati hai (what was in his mind slipped out of his mouth). What the CM said is correct... Modi ji is not going to become the PM again," Yadav said while addressing a rally in Jagdishpur with Congress leader Rahul Gandhi sharing the stage. "We know that our respected chacha ji (Nitish) wants from his heart that BJP is removed from

power at the Centre so that Bihar develops without any bias. We are taking forward his campaign. Nitish ji used to say earlier that those who have come in fourteen (2014) will go in twenty-four (2024)... Modi-led NDA will be completely routed," Yadav said. Other INDIA bloc leaders, including Communist Party of India (Marxist Leninist) Liberation general secretary Dipankar Bhattacharya and Vikassheel Insaan Party (VIP) chief Mukesh Sahni, also attended the rallies addressed by Rahul Gandhi in Bihar during the day. Further, reacting to PM Modi's recent "looted Bihar" remarks, Yadav said, "The people of Bihar are not afraid of anyone... A 73-year-old man (PM Modi) is threatening a 34-year-old youth of jail. People of Bihar are not afraid of the people of Gujarat... the people of Bihar are not afraid of anyone, our Lord Krishna was born in jail." PM Modi, while addressing a rally in Bihar last week, had said that the NDA government would not spare those who looted the state.

## 412 crorepati candidates in fray for Assembly polls

Bhubaneswar, May 27: As many as 412 crorepati candidates are contesting the Assembly elections in Odisha that are being held from May 13 to June 1. The Association for Democratic Reforms (ADR) and Odisha Election Watch have analysed the self-sworn affidavits of 1,283 out of 1,285 candidates, who are contesting for the 147 MLA seats in Odisha. Assembly elections in Odisha are being held simultaneously with the Lok Sabha elections. Out of the 1,283 candidates analysed, 412 (32 per cent) are crorepaties. In 2019 Assembly elections, out of 1,121 candidates, 304 (27 per cent) were crorepaties, the ADR said in its report. "... 128 BJD candidates, 96 BJP nominees, 88 Congress candidates and 11 AAP candidates have declared assets valued more than ₹1 crore," it said. The average assets per candidate contesting the Assembly elections 2024 stand at ₹2.89 crore. In 2019, the average assets per MLA candidate were ₹1.69 crore. Former Coal Minister Dillip Ray has emerged as the richest candidate in the fray for the



Dillip ray



Sanatan Mahakud



Subasini Jena

Top three richie rich nominees		
Names	Constituencies	Assets
Dillip Ray (BJP)	Rourkela	₹313.53 crore
Sanatan Mahakud (BJD)	Champua	₹227.67 crore
Subasini Jena (BJD)	Basta	₹135.17 crore

Assembly election in Odisha. As per a report, Ray, a BJP nominee from Rourkela Assembly segment, is the richest nominee with a total asset of ₹313.53 crore, followed by BJD candidate from Champua segment Sanatan Mahakud (₹227.67 crore). The third place is occupied by BJD candidate from Basta Assembly segment, Subasini Jena, who declared both mov-

able and immovable assets of ₹135.17 crore. Similarly, five candidates in the fray for the Assembly elections in Odisha have declared zero or nil assets in their affidavits, as per a report. The zero asset candidates are— independent candidates Ramesh Kumar Mahanand (Bhawanipatna), Sohan Sipka (Kantabanji) and Sanjay Kumar Das (Dhamnagar), BSP candidate from Rayagada Purna Chandra Majhi, and Ambedkarite Party of India's Gopal Krishna Mohanty, who is contesting from Korei. A total of 103 MLAs are re-contesting in 2024 Assembly polls, of which 74 are from BJD, 21 from BJP, five from Congress, two independent and one from CPI (M). Out of the 1,283 candidates analysed, 348 (27 per cent) candidates have declared criminal cases against themselves. In the 2019 Odisha Assembly elections, out of 1,121 candidates analysed, 332 (30 per cent) had declared criminal cases against themselves. In this Assembly election, 292 candidates are facing serious criminal cases. Similarly, 566 MLA candidates have declared their educational qualifications to be between Class V and XII while 652 candidates have an educational qualification of graduate or above. Besides, 51 candidates are diploma holders, 12 candidates are just literate and two candidates are illiterates, the report said. Among the total candidates in the fray for the Assembly polls, the highest 760 candidates are of the 41 to 60 years age group, 333 candidates are of the 25-40 age group, 188 candidates in the age between 61 to 80 years and two candidates have declared their age as more than 80 years old. Only 178 (14 per cent) women candidates are contesting in the Assembly elections in the state in 2024 while 112 (10 per cent) women candidates have contested in 2019 polls.

The percentage of crorepati candidates contesting the Odisha Assembly polls has increased from 27% in 2019 to 32% in 2024





When the followers of any religion or sect deviate from the path of spirituality, they become victims of fanaticism and suffer from unhealthy mentality  
DROUPADI MURMU | PRESIDENT

## SWIMMING BAN IN GOA

In view of the upcoming monsoon season, the administration in Goa has prohibited swimming in waterfalls, abandoned quarries, and rivers, among other water bodies, an official said Monday. The administration cited that many incidents of drowning were reported in waterfalls, abandoned quarries, rivers, lakes and other water bodies and swimming in these waters poses a risk



## of the day quote

BJP should not dare try to topple a democratically elected government. Its ambitions for success in the Lok Sabha polls will be shattered, as the people's verdict will be with the TMC  
MAMATA BANERJEE | CM, WEST BENGAL

Modi made all-out efforts to topple the democratically-elected Congress government in the state by indulging in corrupt practices and using money power  
PRIYANKA GANDHI | CONGRESS LEADER

We will not allow anyone to encroach on the reservation of our Dalit, tribal, backward and extremely backward classes. You will see what will happen to the opposition on June 4 (the counting day)  
JP NADDA | BJP PRESIDENT

## X POST OF THE DAY

The supposed neonatal ICU where seven babies died... Doctor on duty at night had a degree in ayurvedic medicine... Mumbai model of using ayurvedic doctors in ICU has reached Delhi... Does IMA have anything to say about MBBS/MD docs employing BAMS docs to save money?  
@REMANAGARAJAN

## SHORT TAKES

### Hospital fire: Safety lapses flagged

**New Delhi:** In the wake of the Vivek Vihar hospital fire tragedy, the Delhi government has directed all state-run and private health facilities to conduct a fire audit, even as several safety lapses have come to light at the five-bed neonatal centre with police also investigating why 27 oxygen cylinders were kept there. Five of the oxygen cylinders had exploded during the deadly blaze Saturday night in which six newborns were killed and five injured. Delhi Health Minister Saurabh Bharadwaj Monday said it had been learnt that oxygen refilling was being carried out at the hospital and stressed that it is illegal for a hospital to have a refilling system since it can lead to fire. A delegation of the National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR), which visited the site Sunday and spoke to officials and family members of the victims, said in its findings that emergency exits were absent in the hospital building.

### Mob attack on police station

**Davanagere:** Police have so far arrested at least 25 people in connection with a mob attack on Channagiri police station in Karnataka officials said Monday. A police station was vandalised in Channagiri town in Davanagere district and several vehicles were damaged by a violent mob over an alleged custodial death, during the small hours of Saturday. At least 11 police personnel were injured in the incident. Police said they have arrested 25 people in connection with a mob attack on the police station, personnel and properties under sections 353 (Assault or criminal force to deter public servant from discharge of his duty) and 307 (Attempt to murder) of IPC, and the suspects have been remanded in judicial custody.

# 'INDIA bloc to scrap Agnipath scheme'

CONGRESS LEADER RAHUL GANDHI ALSO PROMISED TO DEPOSIT ₹8,500 IN WOMEN'S ACCOUNTS EVERY MONTH

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Bakhtiyarpur, May 27:** Congress leader Rahul Gandhi Monday claimed that the INDIA bloc, if voted to power, would scrap the Agnipath scheme of recruitment in defence services and deposit Rs 8,500 in women's accounts every month.

Addressing back-to-back election rallies in favour of Mahagathbandhan nominees in Bakhtiyarpur (Patna Lok Sabha seat), Paliganj (Patliputra Lok Sabha seat) and Jagdishpur (Arrah) in Bihar, he asserted that Narendra Modi will not be able to become the prime minister again since there is a clear "storm" in favour of the INDIA bloc across the country.

"There is a clear storm (toofan) in favour of the INDIA bloc across the country, including in Bihar and Uttar Pradesh. Narendra Modi will not be the prime minister of India after June 4," he asserted.

"When the INDIA bloc forms the government, Agnipath scheme will be withdrawn," Gandhi said at the Bakhtiyarpur rally.

The scheme, announced by the Narendra Modi government in 2022, envisages recruiting



young soldiers, called 'Agniveers' after appointment, on a contractual basis of four years and retiring 75 per cent of them without certain benefits enjoyed by those who were not employed under this programme.

"The INDIA bloc, if voted to power, will throw the Agnipath scheme into the dustbin. Modi ji has turned soldiers into labourers. The Centre has made two categories in the Army -- Agniveer and others. If an Agniveer gets injured or is martyred, he will neither get a martyr status nor compensation. Why is this discrimination?" Gandhi said.

"He (Modi) calls himself a true patriot but he insulted jawans by implementing the Agnipath scheme," Gandhi said.

"From July, Rs 8,500 will be deposited in the accounts of women from BPL households every month... this will change their financial condition. Initially, we will give you Rs 1 lakh annually, later we may increase it

to Rs 2 lakh annually," he said.

Taking a jibe at the prime minister's 'sent by God' comment, the Congress leader remarked, "After June 4, if ED asks Modi about corruption, he will say I don't know anything... I was told by God to do this. This is the reason he concocted this story... he says he is not biological but a messenger of God. Did God send him to serve billionaires?"

Gandhi claimed that Modi has created 22 billionaires, while the INDIA bloc government would create crores of 'lakhpaties'.

He accused PM Modi of waiving loans worth Rs 16 lakh crore of his "billionaire friends", and said the country will never forgive him for this.

Voting will take place in Sasaram, Nalanda, Patna Sahib, Pataliputra, Arrah, Buxar, Karakat and Jehanabad Lok Sabha constituencies in the last phase June 1.

## SEXUAL ABUSE CASE

# Prajwal to appear before SIT May 31

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Bangalore, May 27:** Exactly a month after he left the country, Hassan MP Prajwal Revanna, who is facing charges of sexually abusing several women, has said he will appear before the Special Investigation Team (SIT), probing the cases against him, May 31.

Terming the cases against him as "false" and part of a "political conspiracy", he said he had gone into depression.

"I will personally come before the SIT Friday, May 31 at 10 am and cooperate with the investigation and also respond to it (charges). I have faith in the judiciary and I am confident that I will come out of false cases, through court," Pajwal said in a video statement that is now widely being circulated.

There was no independent confirmation from the JD(S) or the family of the suspended party MP immediately over the matter.

Apologising to his parents, grandfather Deve Gowda, uncle H D Kumaraswamy, people of the state, and party workers, Prajwal said, "I have come before you to share information, as I had not disclosed as to where I'm in (foreign country)."

Noting that he had sought a week to respond to the SIT notice through his 'X' account and his lawyers, Prajwal said, "Despite seeking time, the very next day Congress senior leaders including Rahul Gandhi started discussing things (about me), at public meetings."

"They indulged in political conspiracy. Looking at all this, I went into depression and isolation. So, I sought your apology first and your forgiveness," he said.



## HEAT ALERT



**Delhi hosps to reserve beds for heatstroke victims**

**New Delhi:** Delhi government-run hospitals will reserve two beds each for heatstroke patients while five beds will be reserved at the LNJP Hospital, Health Minister Saurabh Bharadwaj said Monday. Bharadwaj held a meeting with Health department officials to discuss the east Delhi neonatal hospital fire that killed seven newborns as well as the ongoing heatwave conditions. "In view of the ongoing heatwave conditions, 26 government-run hospitals will reserve two beds each for patients while five beds will be reserved at LNJP Hospital," Bharadwaj told reporters.

## HEAT ALERT

### Heatwave causes early vacations in Haryana

**Chandigarh:** The Haryana government has announced advancing summer vacations in state-run and private schools to Tuesday. According to an order issued by the Directorate of School Education Monday, all schools in the state will observe summer holidays between Tuesday and June 30. Earlier, it had ordered the closure of schools from June 1 to 30. However, in view of the prevailing severe heatwave conditions in the state, it has been decided to declare summer holidays from Tuesday, official sources said. During the past few days, most places in Haryana have witnessed blistering heat, with maximum temperatures hovering in the 44-46 degrees Celsius range.

### Mercury over 48 degrees C in 17 places

**New Delhi:** Temperatures in 17 locations breached 48 degrees Celsius Monday, with the relentless heat affecting health and livelihoods across large parts of northwestern and central India. However, some relief from the scorching heat is expected after three days due to a western disturbance and moisture incursion from the Arabian Sea, India Meteorological Department (IMD) chief Mrutyunjay Mohapatra said. The national capital stayed under the grip of searing heat as maximum temperatures in parts of the city crossed 48 degrees Celsius. The city was on red alert Monday and will remain so for the next three days, the weather office said. The IMD has predicted a higher number of heatwave days in northwest India and adjoining parts of the central region in June. "Normally, northwest India and the adjoining areas record two to three heatwave days in June. This time, we expect four to six days of heatwave in this region," Mohapatra said at a press conference. Except for a few parts of southern peninsular India, normal to above-normal maximum temperatures are expected across the country in June, he added. People endured the deadly heat Monday, with temperatures crossing 48 degrees Celsius in 17 places. At 49.4 degrees Celsius, Rajasthan's Phalodi was the warmest place in the country. At least eight more locations in the desert state recorded temperatures above 48 degrees Celsius.

# Cong pays tributes to Nehru on death anniversary

INDIA'S FIRST AND LONGEST-SERVING PM, JAWAHARLAL NEHRU, DIED IN OFFICE IN 1964

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, May 27:** The Congress Monday paid rich tributes to India's first prime minister Jawaharlal Nehru on his death anniversary with party chief Mallikarjun Kharge saying the country's history is incomplete without the incomparable contribution of "the architect of modern India".

Kharge and former Congress president Sonia Gandhi also paid floral tributes to the former prime minister at his memorial 'Shantivan' here.

In a post in Hindi on X, Kharge said the history of India is incomplete without the incomparable contribution of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, the architect of modern India, who took India forward in scientific, economic, industrial and various fields.

Nehru was a dedicated guardian of democracy and our



source of inspiration, he said.

"Our humble tribute to "Hind ke Jawahar" on his death anniversary," Kharge said.

The Congress president quoted Nehru as saying that the protection of the country, progress of the country, and unity of the country is the national religion of all of us.

"We may follow different religions, live in different states,

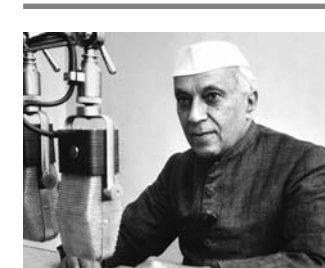
but that should not create any wall between us. All people should get equal opportunity in progress. We do not want some people in our country to be very rich and most of the people to be poor," Nehru was quoted as saying.

Even today, the Congress party is following the same path of "justice," Kharge said.

Former Congress president

Respectful tributes to the architect of modern India and the first Prime Minister of the country, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru on his death anniversary

RAHUL GANDHI | FORMER PRESIDENT, CONGRESS



Rahul Gandhi also paid tributes to his great grandfather.

"Respectful tributes to the architect of modern India and the first Prime Minister of the country, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru

## MEDICAL GROUNDS

# Kejriwal seeks extension of interim bail from SC

The Delhi CM, in his plea filed May 26, said he will surrender back to jail June 9, instead of June 2, the scheduled date for his return to prison

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, May 27:** Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal has sought extension of his interim bail by seven days from the Supreme Court to undergo a host of medical tests, including a PET-CT scan in view of his "sudden and unexplained weight loss, coupled with high ketone levels", which are indicative of kidney, serious cardiac ailments and even cancer.

Kejriwal, in his plea filed May 26, said he will surrender back to jail June 9, instead of June 2, the scheduled date for his return to prison.

"The appellant prays for an extension of his interim bail by a week, during which the Appellant can get the prescribed tests done and obtain results of the same. The Appellant will get all these tests done in the working week from June 3 (Monday) to June 7 (Friday) and then surrender on the weekend, i.e. June 9," the fresh plea, according to the sources, said.

The top court had May 10 granted 21-day interim bail to the chief minister, who was arrested in a money laundering case linked to the excise policy 'scam', to enable him to campaign for the Lok Sabha polls. It had directed that Kejriwal



shall surrender June 2, a day after the last phase of the seven-phase poll gets over.

The fresh plea, which is likely to be taken up in the coming days by a vacation bench, said during the incarceration from March 21 to May 10, the chief minister suffered a lot of health-related complications which are also "partly attributable to the negligent and callous behaviour of the jail authorities".

Kejriwal lost around six to seven kg of weight in the jail and has not been able to regain even after his release and renewing his earlier lifestyle to the extent possible, it said.

"In the meantime, recent test reports confirm that the Appellant has also developed an unusually high blood glucose level as well as high ketone levels in urine, which indicate that in addition to increased blood sugar level, the appellant may have also developed kidney related complications and kidney damage," it said.

Referring to his recent health check up at his residence by a senior physician of a private hospital, the plea said the doctor took note of Kejriwal's health complications and increased risk indicators and prescribed a host of full body tests, which are necessary to be carried out before he surrenders.

## FSSAI warns against selling mother's milk

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, May 27:** Food regulator FSSAI has warned food business operators against the sale of mother's milk and directed licensing authorities not to issue approvals for the processing and selling of human milk.

Amid complaints that some entities are selling mother's milk in the open market, the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) has issued an advisory on the "unauthorised commercialisation of human milk and its products" and also asserted that it has not given any permission for the sale.

"This office is in receipt of representations from various registered societies regarding commercialisation of human milk and its products. In this regard, it may be noted that FSSAI has not permitted the processing and/or selling of human milk under FSS Act 2006 and rules/regulations made there under," the regulator said in the advisory May 24.

## Govt cracks down on SMS scammers

**NEW DELHI:** In a major crackdown on SMS scammers, the government has blacklisted eight 'principal entities' behind SMS headers that were used for sending over 10,000 fraudulent messages over the past three months, according to an official release. The Department of Telecom (DoT), in collaboration with the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA), has taken decisive action to protect citizens from potential SMS fraud through the Sanchar Saathi initiative, it said. Indian Cyber Crime Coordination Centre (I4C) under MHA provided information about the misuse of eight SMS headers for sending fraudulent communications for committing cybercrime. It was noted that more than 10,000 fraudulent messages were sent using these eight headers in the past three months. The eight principal entities which were the owners of these eight SMS headers have been blacklisted. "All the 8 PEs along with the 73 SMS Headers and 1522 SMS content templates owned by them have been blacklisted. None of these Principal Entities, SMS Headers or templates can now be used to send SMS by any telecom operator. The DoT has prevented further potential victimization of citizens by blacklisting these entities," it said.



# international

## of the day quote

Our aim is to recognise the state of Palestine tomorrow, make all possible efforts to achieve a permanent cease-fire as soon as possible and also, in the end, to achieve that definitive peace

JOSÉ MANUEL ALBARES | FOREIGN MINISTER, SPAIN

There is an increasingly difficult situation, in which the Palestinian people are being squeezed without regard for the rights of innocent men, women and children who have nothing to do with Hamas and this can no longer be justified

GUIDO CROSETTO | DEFENCE MINISTER, ITALY

As the specter of Russia looms over us, partnership and rapprochement with Europe are the true path to preserving and strengthening our independence and peace

SALOME ZOURABICHVILI | PRESIDENT, GEORGIA

## SHORT TAKES

### Poland starts its border fortification

Warsaw: Defence officials in NATO member Poland were presenting plans Monday for fortifications and strengthening of its eastern border with Russia and Moscow ally Belarus. The government says that Poland, which supports Ukraine in its defence against Russia's aggression, is being targeted by hostile actions from Russia and Belarus. They include cyberattacks, attempted arson and migrants being pushed illegally across the border, which officials describe as intended to destabilise the European Union, of which Poland is a member.

### May 9 mayhem: Qureshi in soup

Lahore: Pakistan's jailed former foreign minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi was Sunday implicated by the police in eight more cases in connection with the unprecedented mayhem May 9 in 2023 following the arrest of ex-premier Imran Khan in a case of alleged corruption, according to a media report Monday. The 67-year-old Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) leader is currently imprisoned in Rawalpindi's Adiala Jail after his conviction in various cases. Riots were triggered almost across the country May 9 last year after Khan's arrest in the 190 million pounds settlement case.

### Royal insults: Min jailed for 2 years

Bangkok: A Thai court Monday sentenced a lawmaker, Chonhicha Jangrew, from a progressive opposition party to two years in prison after finding her guilty of defaming the monarchy in a speech she made during a protest rally three years ago. She was found guilty for parts of the speech concerning how the government then led by Prime Minister Prayuth Chan-ocha had amended laws to give King Vajiralongkorn more power to control the palace wealth, which is managed by the Crown Property Bureau.

### 23 militants, 7 soldiers killed

Islamabad: At least 23 militants affiliated with the banned Tehreek-i-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) were killed and seven Pakistani soldiers died in three separate clashes since Sunday in the troubled north-western province of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, the army said Monday.



There should be no doubt, there should be no scepticism in the United States, Taiwan or anywhere in the world, of American resolve to maintain the status quo and peace in the Taiwan Strait  
ANDY BARR | CO-CHAIR OF THE TAIWAN CAUCUS, US CONGRESS

MEXICO'S FIRST-EVER WOMAN PREZ  
Mexico is on course to elect its first woman president this weekend, with two front-runners competing to break the highest political glass ceiling in a country with a history of gender violence and inequality  
Ruling-party candidate Claudia Sheinbaum and opposition hopeful Xochitl Galvez have dominated the presidential race



# EU, Israel in war of words

THE TIES BETWEEN THE EUROPEAN UNION AND ISRAEL NOSEDIVE AHEAD OF SPAIN, IRELAND RECOGNISING PALESTINIAN STATE



ASSOCIATED PRESS

Brussels, May 27: Relations between the European Union and Israel took a nosedive on the eve of the diplomatic recognition of a Palestinian state by EU members Ireland and Spain, with Madrid suggesting sanctions should be considered against Israel for its continued attacks in the southern Gaza city of Rafah.

Israeli Foreign Minister Israel Katz told Spain that its consulate in Jerusalem will not be allowed to help Palestinians.

At the same time, the EU's foreign policy chief Josep Borrell, a Spaniard, threw his full weight to support the International Criminal Court, whose prosecutor is seeking an arrest warrant against Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and others, including the leaders of Hamas.

"The prosecutor of the court has been strongly intimidated and accused of antisemitism - as always when anybody, anyone does something that Netanyahu's government does not like," Borrell said. "The word antisemitic, it's too heavy. It's too important."

Angry words abounded Monday, with Katz accusing Spain of "rewarding terror" by recognising a Palestinian state, and saying that "the days of the Inquisition are over". He referred to the infamous Spanish institution started in the 15th century to maintain Roman Catholic orthodoxy that forced Jews and Muslims to flee, convert to Catholicism or, in some instances, face death.

"No one will force us to convert

our religion or threaten our existence — those who harm us, we will harm in return," said Katz.

Even though the EU and its member nations have been steadfast in condemning the Oct 7 Hamas-led attack in which militants stormed across the Gaza border into Israel, killing 1,200 people and taking some 250 hostages, the bloc has been equally critical of Israel's ensuing offensive that has killed more than 35,000 Palestinians, according to Gaza's Health Ministry.

The latest attacks have centred on Rafah, where Palestinian health workers said Israeli airstrikes killed at least 35 people Sunday, hit tents for displaced people and left "numerous" others trapped in flaming debris.

Italian Defence Minister Guido Crosetto said such strikes will have long-standing repercussions. "Israel with this choice is spreading hatred, rooting ha-

Israel has to stop its offensive in Rafah  
JOSÉ MANUEL ALBARES | FOREIGN MINISTER, SPAIN  
No one will force us to convert our religion or threaten our existence — those who harm us, we will harm in return  
ISRAEL KATZ | FOREIGN MINISTER, ISRAEL

tred that will involve their children and grandchildren. I would have preferred another decision," he told SKY TG24.

The strikes came after the UN's top court, the International Court of Justice, Friday demanded that Israel immediately halt its offensive on Rafah, even if it stopped short of ordering a cease-fire for the Gaza enclave.

Spain, Ireland and non-EU member Norway plan to make official their recognition of a Palestinian state Tuesday. Their joint announcement last week triggered an angry response from Israeli authorities, which summoned the countries' ambassadors in Tel Aviv to the Israeli Foreign Ministry, where they were filmed while being shown videos of the October 7 Hamas attack and kidnapping.

### Rafah camp attack kills 45

Cairo: An Israeli airstrike triggered a massive blaze killing 45 people in a tent camp in the Gaza city of Rafah, officials said Monday, prompting an outcry from global leaders who urged the implementation of a World Court ruling to halt Israel's assault. In scenes grimly familiar from a war in its eighth month, Palestinian families rushed to hospitals to prepare their dead for burial after the strike late Sunday night set tents and rickety shelters ablaze. French President Emmanuel Macron said he was "outraged" over Israel's latest attacks. "These operations must stop. There are no safe areas in Rafah for Palestinian civilians," he said on X.

### Tragic mistake: Israel PM

Tel Aviv: Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu acknowledged Monday that a "tragic mistake" had been made after an Israeli strike in the southern Gaza city of Rafah set fire to a tent camp housing displaced Palestinians and killed at least 45 people, according to local officials. Sunday night's attack, which appeared to be one of the war's deadliest, helped push the overall Palestinian death toll in the war above 36,000, according to the Gaza Health Ministry, which does not distinguish between fighters and non-combatants in its tally. "Despite our utmost efforts not to harm innocent civilians, last night, there was a tragic mistake," Netanyahu said Monday.

## NEW LEADERS

### Iran's acting Prez addresses new Parl

TEHRAN: Iran's acting President Mohammad Mokhber addressed the country's new parliament Monday in his first public speech since last week's helicopter crash that killed his predecessor and seven others. His speech comes as Iran prepares for a presidential election to replace the late Ebrahim Raisi in just a month, a vote that could see the previously behind-the-scenes bureaucrat potentially run alongside others. Meanwhile, Iran's new hard-line parliament is expected to select its new speaker Tuesday. In his remarks, Mokhber praised Raisi's time in office, noting that Iran's crude oil production, a key source of hard currency for the country, climbed to more than 3.6 million barrels a day. That comes after Oil Minister Javad Owji said Sunday that Iran was now exporting around 2 million barrels a day, despite Western sanctions targeting the Islamic Republic. Mokhber also asserted that the country's economy remained stable under Raisi when Iran took military actions in Iraq, Israel and Pakistan in recent months.

### Incumbent Lithuanian Prez reelected

COPENHAGEN: Lithuanian President Gitanas Nausėda secured a second five-year term as Lithuanian President in a landslide victory over Prime Minister Ingrida Šimonyte. Preliminary figures by the Lithuania's Central Electoral Commission showed that Nausėda won 74.5 per cent of the votes and Šimonyte 24.1 per cent. "Lithuania's independence and freedom is like a fragile vessel that we must cherish, protect and prevent from cracking," Nausėda said Sunday night after the ballots had been counted, the Baltic News Service reported.

## NKorea slams denuclearisation call at neighbours' summit

Seoul, May 27: North Korea condemned China, Japan and South Korea Monday for committing to denuclearise the Korean peninsula, describing their joint declaration after a rare summit in Seoul as a "grave political provocation" that violates its sovereignty.

At their first three-way summit in Seoul since 2019, the three countries sought to co-operate on security, reiterating positions on regional peace and stability and denuclearisation of the peninsula, they said in a joint statement.

Such discussion is an "insult never to be pardoned and a declaration of war against the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK)," however, a spokesman for North Korea's Foreign ministry said in a swift riposte.

"To discuss the denucleari-



sation ... today constitutes a grave political provocation and sovereignty violation," the unidentified spokesman said in the statement reported by the North's state media.

Such a move denies the North's inviolable sovereignty and constitution reflecting the

## PAPUA NEW GUINEA VILLAGE FLATTENED

# Landslide buried over 2K, says govt



The government figure is around three times more than a United Nations' estimate of 670

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Melbourne, May 27: The Papua New Guinea government said a landslide Friday buried more than 2,000 people and has formally asked for international help.

In a letter seen by The Associated Press to the United Nations resident coordinator dated Sunday, the acting director of the South Pacific island nation's National Disaster Center said the landslide "buried more than 2000 people alive" and caused "major destruction".

Estimates of the casualties have varied widely since the disaster occurred, and it was not immediately clear how officials arrived the number of people affected.

Australia prepared Monday to send aircraft and other equipment to help at the site of a deadly landslide in Papua New Guinea as overnight rains in the South Pacific nation's mountainous interior raised fears that the tons of rubble that buried hundreds of villagers could become dangerously unstable.

Australian Defence Minister Richard Marles said his officials have been talking with their Papua New Guinea counterparts since Friday, when a mountainside collapsed on Yambali village in Enga province, which the United Nations estimates killed 670 people. The remains of only six people had been recovered so far.

"The exact nature of the support that we do provide will play out over the coming days," Marles told Australian Broadcasting Corp. "We've got obviously airlift capacity to get people there.

There may be other equipment that we can bring to bear in terms of the search and rescue and all of that we are talking through with PNG right now," Marles added.

Papua New Guinea is Australia's nearest neighbour and the countries are developing closer defence ties as part of an Australian effort to counter China's growing influence in the region. Australia is also the most generous provider of foreign aid to its former colony, which became independent in 1975.

Heavy rain fell for two hours overnight in the provincial capital of Wabag, 60 kilometers from the devastated village. A weather report was not immediately available from Yambali, where communications are limited.

Traumatised villagers are divided over whether heavy machinery should be allowed to dig up and potentially further damage the bodies of their buried relatives

## Cyclone Remal: 7 dead, 15mn in dark

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Dhaka, May 27: At least seven people were killed and millions were left without power as Severe Cyclone 'Remal' lashed the coasts of Bangladesh with devastating winds of up to 120 kph and storm surges, inundating hundreds of villages.

'Remal' weakened into a cyclonic storm Monday morning, sustaining wind speeds of 80-90 kilometres per hour, following landfall around midnight of Sunday, the Met Department said. The department said that the weather system, which lay 150 km northeast of Sagar Island at 5.30 am, brought torrential rain and moved northwards to weaken further into a cyclonic storm.

Remal is the first cyclone in the Bay of Bengal ahead of this



year's monsoon season, which runs from June to September. The cyclone was named Remal (meaning sand in Arabic) by Oman, according to a system of naming cyclones in the Indian Ocean region. The cyclone has been accompanied by gusty winds and heavy rains, impacting areas including Barisal, Bhola, Patuakhali, Satkhira, and Chattogram.

The rural power authority

## India will deal with four ISIS suspects held in Gujarat: SL

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Colombo, May 27: The Sri Lankan government Monday said India will deal with the four Sri Lankan ISIS suspects arrested at Ahmedabad airport last week, while authorities here would probe if they have been party to any acts of terrorism in the island nation.

The Gujarat Anti-Terrorist Squad (ATS) May 19 arrested four Sri Lankans with links to the banned outfit Islamic State (IS) who were allegedly on a mission to carry out terror activities in India following the directions of their Pakistan-based handler.

The ATS apprehended the accused at the Sardar Vallabhai Patel airport in Ahmedabad. The ATS also seized three pistols and cartridges abandoned at a location in Ahmedabad based on geo-coordinates and seized a mobile phone from their possession.

The four men had taken an Indigo flight out of Colombo to Chennai May 19.

## 1,400 girls escape from burning school

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Peshawar, May 27: Nearly 1,400 girl students had a lucky escape Monday when they were safely evacuated from a school building that was engulfed by a massive fire in a remote mountainous region of Pakistan's Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province, according to a media report.

Geo News spoke to a rescue official who said the fire swept through the Government Girls Higher Secondary School in Haripur district's Sirikot village while hundreds of students were inside.

Firefighters along with the local residents began putting off the blaze, he said. The official said the fire brigade vehicles faced trouble reaching the site of the incident because of the mountainous terrain.

Chief Secretary Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Nadeem Aslam Chaudhry confirmed that the school building caught fire because of a short circuit.

## Another spy satellite launch failed

North Korean rocket carrying its second spy satellite exploded midair Monday, state media reported, after its neighbours strongly rebuked its planned launch. The North's official Korean Central News Agency said it launched a spy satellite aboard a new rocket at its main northwestern space centre. But KCNA said the rocket blew up during a first-stage flight soon after liftoff due to a suspected engine problem. Earlier Monday, North Korea had notified Japan's coast guard about its plans to launch "a satellite rocket," with a warning to exercise caution in the waters between the Korean Peninsula and China and east of the main Philippine island of Luzon during a launch window from Monday through June 3. North Korea sent its first military reconnaissance satellite into orbit in November last year as part of efforts to build a space-based surveillance network to cope with what it calls increasing US-led military threats. North Korean leader Kim Jong Un later told a ruling party meeting that the country would launch three additional military spy satellites in 2024. The UN bans North Korea from conducting any satellite launches, viewing them as covers for testing long-range missile technology. North Korea has steadfastly maintained it has the right to launch satellites and test missiles.

Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida urged Pyongyang to scrap its plans to launch a second spy satellite into orbit, Li made no mention of the expected launch.

Security Council resolutions sanctioning Pyongyang's nuclear weapons and missile program from 2006 to 2017, but in recent years Beijing has joined Russia in blocking new sanctions and calling for existing measures to be eased.



## of the day quote

Our crown jewel Mundra Port welcomed MSC Anna, the largest container ship ever to dock at an Indian port

**KARAN ADANI** | MANAGING DIRECTOR, APSEZ

The India story is pivoted around differentiation in product, 5G approach and affordability through Samsung finance plus

**RAJU PULLAN** | SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT, MX DIVISION, SAMSUNG INDIA

Today, UPI has become the common and preferred mode of payment for customers

**RAHUL KOTHARI** | RAZORPAY COO

## Q4 RESULTS CORNER

### LIC net profit rises to ₹13,763cr

**New Delhi:** Insurance behemoth LIC Monday posted a marginal 2 per cent increase in net profit at ₹13,763 crore in the fourth quarter ended March 2024. The insurer had earned a profit of ₹13,428 crore in the corresponding quarter a year earlier. The total income of the insurer during the reporting quarter rose to ₹2,50,923 crore from ₹2,00,185 crore in the same period of the previous fiscal, LIC said in a regulatory filing. LIC's income from first-year premium also improved to ₹13,810 crore in the latest January-March quarter against ₹12,811 crore in the same period of preceding fiscal. The income from renewal premiums in the reporting period rose to ₹77,368 crore compared to ₹76,009 crore a year ago. During the entire financial year ended March 2024, the insurer earned a profit of ₹40,676 crore as compared to ₹36,397 crore in the previous fiscal.

### Nalco profit up 2-fold to ₹996.7cr

**New Delhi:** State-owned Nalco Monday reported two-fold rise in consolidated profit to ₹996.74 crore for the March quarter on the back of lower expenses. The company had posted a consolidated profit of ₹495 crore in the March quarter of FY23, National Aluminium Company Ltd (Nalco) said in a filing to the BSE. However, the consolidated total income during the quarter dropped to ₹3,663.09 crore from ₹3,726.76 crore in the year-ago period. The expenses of the company in the fourth quarter of FY24 dropped to ₹2,720.42 crore from ₹3,160.50 crore a year earlier. Nalco is a Navratna PSU under the ministry of mines. It is one of the largest integrated bauxite-alumina-aluminium-power complex in the country. The company has formed a JV company - Angul Aluminium Park Pvt Ltd (AAPPL) - with Odisha Industrial Infrastructure Development Corporation (IDCO) to give a boost to ancillary, upstream and downstream products related to the aluminium industry.

### Sumitomo Chemical profit jumps 52%

**New Delhi:** Sumitomo Chemical India Ltd Monday reported a 52 per cent increase in its consolidated net profit to ₹109.89 crore in the quarter ended March. Its net profit stood at ₹72.12 crore in the year-ago period. Total income rose to ₹700.90 crore in the fourth quarter of the last fiscal from ₹668.05 crore in the corresponding period of the preceding year, according to a regulatory filing. During 2023-24 fiscal, the company's net profit fell to ₹369.74 crore from ₹502.20 crore in the preceding year.



Our government has reshaped the budget from a mere record of expenditures into a strategic blueprint for equitable development. We make judicious & efficient use of every rupee collected from our taxpayers and give them a transparent picture of public finances

**NIRMALA SITHARAMAN** | FINANCE MINISTER

## EXPORTS OF MARINE PRODUCTS DROP 9%

Exports of marine products contracted by 8.74 per cent to USD 7.37 billion during 2023-24 due to demand slowdown in key markets of the US and Europe, according to the commerce ministry data. Indian exporters, however, expressed confidence that in 2024-25, marine exports would register a healthy growth as they are getting good orders.



# What investors expect from poll outcome



REUTERS

**Singapore/Mumbai, May 27:** India's six-week long national election, the world's largest, has entered its final stage with votes scheduled to be counted June 4, and investors are gearing up for Prime Minister Narendra Modi's widely expected third term in office.

However, the margin of victory may be smaller than earlier expected, analysts and informal betting markets are speculating.

Here are the main themes and comments from over 10 fund managers Reuters spoke to on their expectations based on different scenarios.

### HOW WILL MARKETS REACT?

Indian equities outperformed most major markets in 2023 and are trading at expensive valuations. Yet, they could see a short term boost if the Modi administration comes back to power in a rare third consecutive term for any Indian government, fund

managers said, as it would suggest policy continuity and political stability.

The benchmark BSE Sensex is up 4% so far this year, with a Reuters poll of equity analysts indicating the index could double the gains by the end of the year.

Foreign investors poured in a net \$20.74 billion into Indian equities last year, the most in emerging markets in Asia, but have pulled back this year ahead of the election.

A lower margin of victory for Modi could lead to short-term volatility, fund managers said, while a win for the opposition could lead to a sharper correction due to policy uncertainty.

"The market is looking at continuity, so a coalition government or another party winning is not the expectation," said Mittal Kalawadia, senior equity fund manager at Mumbai-based ICICI Prudential Mutual Fund.

"There can be a knee-jerk reaction if the last scenario builds up," Kalawadia said.

### POLICY CONTINUITY

A third term for a Modi-led government will allow for continuity of policies, including improved fiscal management and keeping the currency stable.

"In the last couple of years, India had a good amount of stability in terms of the current account gap and fiscal discipline, and inflation has been in check," said Ashish Gupta, chief investment officer at Mumbai-based Axis Mutual Fund, who expects the focus on macroeconomic stability to continue.

"This has led to, both on debt as well as equity side, India's risk premium coming down," Gupta said.

Investors also expect the Modi government to continue focusing on turning the country into a manufacturing hub.

Modi's government has courted foreign companies, including Apple and Tesla, to set up in India as they diversify their supply chains beyond China.

A clear electoral mandate and a government perceived as pro-

# Sustained fiscal deficit reduction positive for India's ratings: Fitch



REUTERS

**Mumbai, May 27:** A sustained reduction in fiscal deficit, particularly if underpinned by durable revenue-raising reforms, would be a positive for India's sovereign rating fundamentals over the medium term, Fitch Ratings said in a note Monday.

The Reserve Bank of India's (RBI) larger-than-expected surplus transfer to the government should help ensure that the deficit target of 5.1% of GDP for the current fiscal year will be met and could be used to lower the deficit further, Fitch said.

Last week, the board of India's central bank approved a record surplus transfer of 2.11 trillion rupees (\$25.40 billion) to the government for fiscal 2024, sharply above analysts' and government projections.

In its post-election budget, the government could either opt to keep the current deficit target for FY25 or opt to offset upside spending surprises or lower-than-budgeted revenue,

for example from divestment, Fitch said.

In the first scenario, the windfall could also allow the authorities to further boost spending on infrastructure, the note said.

"Alternatively, all or part of the windfall could be saved, pushing the deficit to below 5.1% of GDP. The government's choice could give greater clarity around its medium-term fiscal priorities," the note added.

Transfers from the RBI to the government can be significant at the margin for fiscal performance, but depend on various factors, including the size and performance of assets held on the central bank's balance sheet and the exchange rate, Fitch wrote.

"The potential volatility of transfers means there is significant uncertainty about their medium-term path, and we do not anticipate that dividends as a share of GDP will be sustained at such a high level," they said.

# India to buy back govt bonds worth ₹400 billion: RBI

REUTERS

**Bangalore, May 27:** India will buy back 400 billion rupees (\$4.81 billion) worth of government bonds, the country's central bank said Monday.

The securities offered for buy-back are four government bonds with maturity dates in the second half of 2024, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) said in a statement.

The announcement comes a week after the RBI, acting on behalf of the government, accepted bids to buy back only \$2.7 billion rupees-worth bonds.

This was the government's third straight attempt with little success to infuse liquidity into the financial markets through a bond buyback. The government had also said earlier this month it will reduce the supply of Treasury bills by about 600 billion rupees until the end of June.



Spending by India's federal government is likely to remain slower for a few more months, which may prompt more steps to infuse cash into the banking system, Reuters reported last week.

The auction will be conducted May 30 and its results will be announced on the same day, while the settlement will occur May 31.

# Goldman Sachs ups India's growth forecast



INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**New Delhi, May 27:** Leading global financial firm Goldman Sachs has revised its forecast for India's GDP growth by 10 basis points to 6.7 per cent as it expects the government's heavy investments in big-ticket infrastructure projects to continue with the huge dividend coming in from the RBI.

"Going forward, we expect investment growth momentum to sustain with extra fiscal space for infrastructure spending given a higher than expected dividend transfer by the RBI. As a result, we recently revised our growth forecasts for 2024 slightly higher by 10 bps to 6.7 per cent," Andrew Tilton, head of emerging markets economic research at Goldman Sachs said in a note.

"In India, growth momentum remains strong, and while we think core inflation will bottom out in April-June, we expect it to be around 4.0 - 4.5 per cent in July-December," the financial company said.

However, the RBI's monetary policy committee members have recently sounded cautious on

The report came on a day when the IMD confirmed its forecast of above-average monsoon rains this year which are expected to spur production in the farm sector

sticky food inflation and may want to see monsoons progress and the summer crop sowing to assess the food inflation outlook in July-December, before pivoting towards monetary policy easing, the report said.

"Taking into account these developments, we push our RBI rate cut call back by one quarter to October-December, with the first cut most likely in the December 2024 meeting," the report added.

The report also came on a day when the IMD confirmed its forecast of above-average monsoon rains this year which are expected to spur production in the agricultural sector that was hit by erratic weather last year.

# SENSEX SCALES 76,000 BEFORE CLOSING LOWER



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Mumbai, May 27:** Sensex scaled the 76,000 level for the first time while Nifty hit a new lifetime peak before closing marginally down Monday as investors booked profits at record levels amid high volatility ahead of the results of Lok Sabha polls.

The 30-share BSE Sensex closed lower by 19.89 points or 0.03 per cent lower at 75,390.50. Intra-day, the barometer climbed 599.29 points or 0.79 per cent to an all-time peak of 76,009.68 following gains in select banking, financial and IT shares. However, investors preferred to book profits at record levels and the index declined around 835 points from the day's high to hit a low of 75,175.27.

Broader Nifty of the NSE declined by 24.65 points or 0.11 per cent, to end at 22,932.45. The 50-issue barometer rose by 153.7 points or 0.66 per cent to hit a new lifetime high of 23,110.80 during the day. However, it tanked around 240 points at the day-end due to selling in oil, energy and FMCG shares.

Equity benchmarks were on a record-breaking rally for the third straight day ahead of the results of Lok Sabha polls and a rally in global markers. The results of the ongoing general elections will be declared June 4.

Sensex breached the historic 75,000-mark for the first time April 9. It took 31 trading sessions for the benchmark to climb 1,000

points to reach the 76,000-mark Monday. The BSE benchmark took 21 trading sessions to reach 75,000-mark April 9 after hitting the 74,000-level March 6.

From the Sensex pack, Wipro, NTPC, Sun Pharma, Mahindra & Mahindra, ITC and Reliance Industries were among the biggest laggards.

IndusInd Bank, Axis Bank, Bajaj Finance, HDFC Bank, Larsen & Toubro and State Bank of India were among the major gainers.

"The bulls are facing stiff resistance at 23,000 levels as investors start booking profit at higher levels to avoid any knee-jerk reaction in the market ahead of the election result. Better earnings growth, the expectation of a revival in private capex, and a moderation in FIIs selling intensity are the key positive triggers in the market," Vinod Nair, Head of Research, Geojit Financial Services, said.

"Nifty ended almost flat in a volatile session after hitting record highs in the early part of the session," said Deepak Jasani, Head of Retail Research, HDFC Securities.

Ajit Mishra - SVP, Research, Religare Broking Ltd said that the tone was positive in the first half, but profit-taking in heavyweights in the second half erased all the gains.

In the broader market, the BSE midcap gauge climbed 0.63 per cent while smallcap index dipped 0.09 per cent.

# NSE reduces tick size for select stocks to boost liquidity

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, May 27:** The National Stock Exchange (NSE) has decided to introduce one paisa tick size for all stocks priced below ₹250 from June 10, in a bid to enhance liquidity and improve price discovery by allowing for more precise price adjustments.

Presently, the tick size for these stocks is five paise, which will be reduced to one paisa. "All securities (excluding ex-

change-traded funds) available in EQ, BE, BZ, BO, RL and AF series with security price below ₹250 will have a tick size of ₹0.01 as against the current tick size ₹0.05. The tick size determined for securities in T+1 settlement will also be applicable for T+0 settlement (series TO)," NSE said in a circular.

"Tick size is the minimum price increment between consecutive bid (buy) and offer (sell) prices. A smaller tick size allows for finer price adjustments



and potentially more precise price discovery. For instance, if

a stock has a tick size of ₹0.10 and the last traded price (LTP) was

₹50, the next possible bid prices would be ₹49.90, ₹49.80, ₹49.70 and so on.

In this case, bid prices like ₹49.85 or ₹49.92 are not allowed, as they don't meet the ₹0.10 tick size requirement.

The exchange said that tick sizes will be subject to review and adjustments every month, based on the closing price of the last trading day of the month.

In addition to changes in the Capital Market (CM) segment, the NSE has announced revi-

sions in the Futures & Options (F&O) segment.

The exchange said that the stock futures will have the same tick size as applicable for securities in the cash market segment from July 8. Further, revisions in tick size will be applicable for all expiries - Near-Month, Middle Month and Far-Month.

Last year, rival bourse BSE lowered the tick size for scrips trading below ₹100 to 1 paisa from 5 paise.



# FROM SETBACKS TO SUCCESS

FIH PRO LEAGUE

## Harmanpreet's hat-trick scripts victory for India



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Antwerp, May 27:** Captain Harmanpreet Singh led from the front with a sensational hat-trick as the Indian men's hockey team recorded a thrilling 5-4 win over Argentina in the FIH Hockey Pro League here.

Besides Harmanpreet (29', 50' and 52'), Arajjeet Singh Hundal (7') and Gurjant Singh (18') also scored for India, while Federico Monja (3'), Nicolas Keenan (24'), Tadeo Marucci (54') and Lucas Martinez (57') were on target for Argentina Sunday.

India made a good start, keeping the ball for most of the first quarter and came up with accurate passes to make their way into the Argentina striking circle. However, Argentina drew first blood when Federico found the back of the net from a close range to give them a 1-0 lead.

In response, India equalized quickly as Arajjeet scored a brilliant field goal. India also earned a penalty corner but failed to capitalize on it as the first quarter ended 1-1.

India started the second quarter on a high note. The fast counter-attacking aggressive approach helped India extend their lead after Gurjant scored an excellent field goal.

India were slightly dodgy the next few minutes after scoring the goal as they gave up possession and were punished when Argentina broke into a quick counter, making their way through the left flank.

It was Nicolas Keenan who drove into the Indian circle, beating the defenders to strike the ball into India's goal levelling the score at 2-2. However, India earned a PC with a minute remaining in the quarter and Harmanpreet made it 3-2 in India's favour.

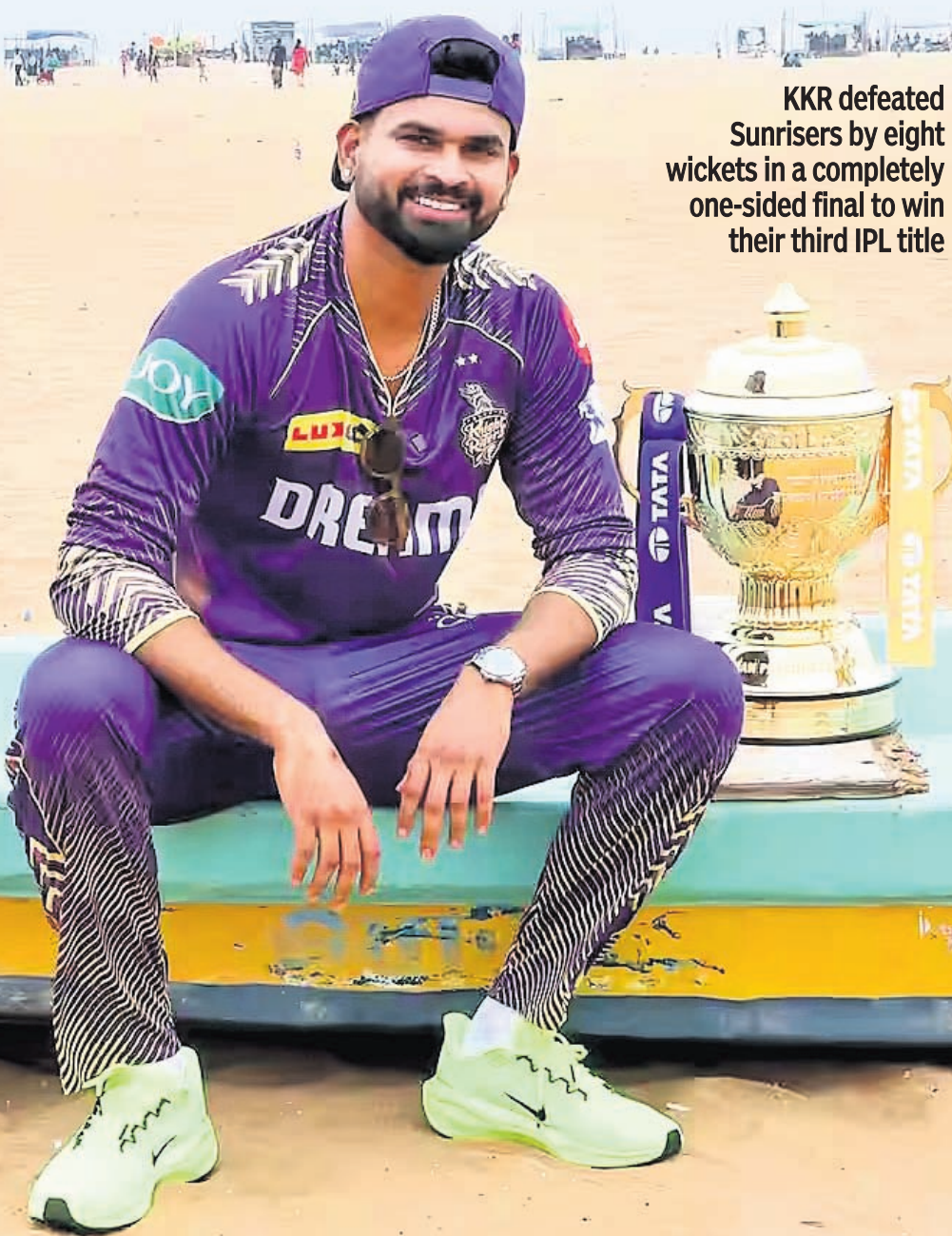
The third quarter was entertaining with both teams displaying quick-fire hockey. India secured a penalty corner but couldn't convert it as Harmanpreet's shot was blocked well by the Argentina goalkeeper. With both teams defence standing tall, the third quarter remained goalless.

India came out in top gear in the fourth quarter as they pushed Argentina to make errors, leading to a PC being awarded with 10 minutes remaining. The decision was changed to a penalty stroke and Harmanpreet's low powerful shot found the back of the net as India took a 4-2 lead.

Two minutes later, India were awarded another penalty stroke, which was again successfully converted by Harmanpreet.

Argentina pulled two goals back in quick succession as Tadeo and Lucas found the back of the net to set up an exciting finish to the game. The match ended with India winning 5-4.

## KOLKATA KNIGHT RIDERS CAPTAIN SHREYAS IYER IN IPL HISTORY BOOKS AFTER FACING MULTIPLE CHALLENGES THIS YEAR



KKR defeated Sunrisers by eight wickets in a completely one-sided final to win their third IPL title

Iyer achieved the rare feat of playing the summit clash as captain of two different franchises in the IPL. The KKR skipper missed the last season because of a back injury that required a surgery in London last year.

He made a comeback in the Asia Cup and went on to become India's third leading run-getter after Virat Kohli and Rohit Sharma in the last year's

ODI World Cup. The year didn't start well for him though as he had a difficult outing in the home Test series against England and looked patchy scoring 140 runs in the first two matches before being left out for the final three Tests.

It was learnt that he developed the recurring back problem, even though he was cleared by the Board medical staff. Iyer then became the centre of a controversy when he missed the Ranji Trophy for his home state Mumbai and went on to attend KKR's pre-season camp.

Iyer, however, returned to play

### LIST OF PRIZE WINNERS

- Winners: KKR**
- Runners-up: SRH**
- Orange Cap: Virat Kohli**
- Purple Cap: Harshal Patel**
- Most Valuable Player of the season: Sunil Narine**
- Ultimate Fantasy Player of The Season: Sunil Narine**
- Most 4s: Travis Head**
- Most 6s: Abhishek Sharma**
- Striker of the season: Jake Fraser-McGurk**
- Emerging Player of the season: Nitish Kumar Reddy**
- Catch Of The Season: Ramandeep Singh**
- Pitch and ground award: Hyderabad Cricket Association**

for Mumbai in the semifinal and final against Vidarbha where he scored a resolute 95 in the second innings of their 42nd Ranji triumph.

The Board omitted him from the Grade B contract and BCCI secretary Jay Shah issued a stern warning asking players not to prioritise IPL over domestic cricket.

However, Iyer personified "Captain Cool" and held the team's cause ahead of his individual milestones. He went on to become the fourth leading run-getter for KKR this season with 351 runs and two fifties.

His best came against the crucial first qualifier against SRH when he anchored their tricky chase of 160 with an unbeaten 58.

This year's IPL has been talked about for high-scoring matches with the peak team total record shattered twice. The 250-run mark was crossed as many as eight times this season.

## UNSUNG HEROES: CASH REWARDS FOR GROUNDSMEN, CURATORS

Describing them as "unsung heroes", BCCI secretary Jay Shah Monday announced that groundsmen and curators of all the 10 regular IPL venues will be given Rs 25 lakh each as a token of appreciation for providing "brilliant pitches" during the league. The IPL concluded in Chennai Sunday with Kolkata Knight Riders lifting their third overall trophy with an eight-wicket win over Sunrisers Hyderabad. "The unsung heroes of our successful T20 season are the incredible ground staff who worked tirelessly to provide brilliant pitches, even in difficult weather conditions," Shah posted on X. "As a token of our appreciation, the groundsmen and curators at the 10 regular IPL venues will receive INR 25 lakhs each, and the same at the 3 additional venues will get INR 10 lakhs each. Thank you for your dedication and hard work!" he said. The 10 regular venues for the IPL are Mumbai, Delhi, Chennai, Kolkata, Chandigarh, Hyderabad, Bangalore, Lucknow, Ahmedabad and Jaipur.

## SHORT TAKES

### Rafa fails to rock on return

**Paris:** Rafael Nadal lost in the first round of the French Open to Alexander Zverev 6-3 7-6(5) 6-3 Monday in what might turn out to be the 14-time Roland Garros champion's last match at his favourite tournament. It is the first time in his long and illustrious career that Nadal has been beaten in two consecutive matches on clay courts and the first time he has dropped a match earlier than the fourth round at the French Open. His career record at the clay-court Grand Slam tournament is now 112-4. The match was played with the retractable roof shut at Court Philippe Chatrier, and the loud cheers for Nadal from most in the capacity crowd of about 15,000 echoed throughout. Nadal, who owns 22 major trophies in all, turns 38 June 3 and he has been dealing with hip and abdominal injuries since January 2023, limiting him to 15 matches and an 8-7 record since the start of last year.

### Mixed fortunes

**Bangkok:** Former world youth champion Ankushita Boro defeated Namun Monkhor of Mongolia in 60kg category but Abhimanyu Loura lost against Ireland's Kelyn Cassidy in 80kg division in the second Boxing World qualifiers for Paris Olympics here Monday. Boro started strongly against her young Mongolian opponent. She effectively blunted Monkhor's speedy movements by tactically shifting gears to carve out a 4-1 win after three keenly-contested rounds. However, it was an opposite result for Loura. The National Championships bronze medalist came into the second-round clash high on confidence after beating Bulgaria's 10-time national champion Kristiyan Nikolov in a thrilling bout.

## Deadline ends; BCCI, Gambhir remain mum on coach issue

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, May 27:** The deadline for applying for the post of Indian men's cricket team chief coach ended Monday but both the BCCI and the top name in its wishlist, Gautam Gambhir chose to keep mum on the development.

After guiding Kolkata Knight Riders to their third IPL trophy Sunday it is but natural that Gambhir's name is getting more momentum.

While both interested parties haven't said anything on record, the BCCI, it seems, doesn't have too many quality options available at the moment.

It is understood that no notable foreign name has applied for the post, especially after BCCI secretary Jay Shah made it clear that the Board is looking at someone who has risen through the ranks and knows the domestic structure. It could be safely said

that the BCCI's primary target was VVS Laxman, the National Cricket Academy head, but the stylish Hyderabad-based seems not interested in a full time position which requires him to be available for 10 months a year.

"The deadline is fine, but the BCCI brass wouldn't mind taking some more time before reaching a decision. Right now, the team will be busy with World T20 for the better part of the month of June. After that seniors will be rested from tours of Sri Lanka and Zimbabwe where any of the NCA-based senior coaches can accompany the team. So what's the hurry," a BCCI source told PTI on conditions of anonymity.

There's another aspect that needs to be looked into seriously - what senior India players, currently in New York, feel on whether Gambhir can indeed be Rahul Dravid's replacement.

## Junior women hockey team lose again

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Dusseldorf (Germany), May 27:** The Indian junior women's hockey team lost 4-6 to Germany in its fifth match of their tour of Europe, here Monday.

However, after conceding six goals, India rallied to score four goals and asserted themselves in the second half of the match.

Sanjana Horo, Bhinima Dan and Kanika Siwach scored for India. Like their previous match, Germany scored early in the first quarter and doubled their lead soon after.

Despite trailing, the Indian defence did well to successfully defend multiple penalty corners.

In the final minutes of the first quarter, India won a penalty corner but the scoreline remained 2-0, in favour of Germany.

India began the second quarter on a positive note but failed to find the back of the opposition



net. Germany struck their third goal soon to put themselves in a dominant position at half-time.

Germany continued to assert themselves in the third quarter, scoring thrice, including a successful penalty corner conversion to take a commanding 6-0 lead.

But India fought back and scored their first goal when Sanjana Horo sounded the board late in the quarter.

India turned up the pressure on Germany in the final quarter. Sanjana Horo scored India's second goal before Binima Dhan and Kanika Siwach found the opposition net to reduce the margin to 4-6. On Sunday, the Indians lost 0-1 to Germany in their fourth match.

India will play their next match against Dutch club side Oranje Rood in Breda, Netherlands May 29.

## NORWAY CHESS

### Pragg to take on Alireza in opener

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Stavanger (Norway), May 27:** Indian Grandmaster R Praggnanandhaa will start his campaign against Alireza Firouzja of France, while his sister R Vaishali will face women's world champion Wenjun Ju of China in the first round of the Norway Chess tournament here.

Split in to two parts this year, the Norway chess tournament will have six top GMs in men's section and six top women players competing for a total prize pool of 1690000 NOK (around \$1.6 million).

In both the sections, the prize fund is identical with 750000 NOK (or about \$70000) reserved for the winner.

World No 1 Magnus Carlsen will feature in a classical chess tournament after a long hiatus. The local hero last played the World Cup under classical chess rules that he won but it remains to be seen if he is able to retain the same form after the gap.

All eyes will be on reigning world champion Ding Liren of China who is set to defend his title later this year against India's D Gukesh.

Since winning his last world championship match against Ian Nepomniachtchi of Russia, Liren has played very less competitive chess. In the opener, Liren will take on Carlsen.

Apart from these four, the American duo of Fabiano Caruana and Hikaru Nakamura will complete the six-player line up. Caruana and Hikaru are pitted against each other in the first round.

The format is pretty interesting that makes this event different from others. To start with, none of the matches can end with the split of points.

# Xavi wins his last game as Barcelona coach

## BARCELONA PLAYERS BID FAREWELL TO XAVI AFTER THE MATCH

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Madrid, May 27:** Xavi Hernandez ended his stint as Barcelona coach with a 2-1 win at Sevilla in the final round of the Spanish league.

Robert Lewandowski and Fermin Lopez scored for Barcelona, which announced Friday it was parting ways with the former midfielder with a year left on his contract.

"We didn't want this to end, but these are decisions made by the club," Xavi said. "We didn't win titles but we were on the right track. But soccer is like this, the

directors will make their decisions. The response by the players was wonderful."

"We will always wish Xavi the best," goalkeeper Marc-Andre Stegen said. "He's been a friend for many years and it's not easy to let him go... He deserves the best."

Barcelona had already clinched second place and a spot in the lucrative Spanish Super Cup in Saudi Arabia next season. It finished with four consecutive victories.

Youssef En-Nesyri scored for Sevilla, which ended 14th place after four straight losses.

En-Nesyri's goal came in the 31st minute, after Lewandowski had put Barcelona ahead in the 15th. Lopez netted the winner for the Catalan club in the 59th.

Xavi's departure came a month



after he had walked back a previous decision he made in January to leave the club this summer. In April, he said that he had changed his mind because the team was playing better and he believed it could bounce back

from a trophy-less season.

Barcelona president Joan Laporta had publicly celebrated Xavi's commitment to stay at that time. But last week the president was reportedly unhappy when the head coach spoke openly about how the club's poor finances would impede it from competing with fierce rival Real Madrid.

"Those who made the decision need to explain it," said the 44-year-old Xavi, who plans to take a break from coaching.

There was little to be decided in the league's final round Sunday. Champion Madrid, focused on the upcoming Champions League final against Borussia Dortmund at Wembley, drew 0-0 with Real Betis Saturday.

Barcelona, Girona and Atletico Madrid were the other three

teams that qualified for the Champions League next season, while Basque Country rivals Athletic Bilbao and Real Sociedad will play in the Europa League. Betis earned the Conference League berth.

The three relegated clubs were Cadiz, Almeria and Granada. In other results Sunday, Mallorca won 2-1 at Getafe, Celta Vigo drew 2-2 with Valencia, and Alaves drew 1-1 at Las Palmas.

Girona striker Artem Dovbyk ended as the league's top scorer this season with 24 goals, one more than Villarreal's Alexander Sorloth. Lewandowski and Madrid's Jude Bellingham were third with 19 goals.

Madrid finished with the best attack with 87 goals scored, and the best defense with 26 goals conceded.