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IN EUROPA LEAGUE

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EVERY ACTOR HAS SPACE TODAY: BHUMI
13 VIVACITY

Fani kills 8 in Odisha, loses steam into Bengal

Strongest cyclone in 20 years barrelled at 175km/hr uprooting trees, damaging houses

PNS ■ NEW DELHI
Cyclone Fani (also known as Phani, meaning “hood of the snake” in Bengali) rolled through Odisha’s Puri on Friday, bringing rain and windstorm that gusted up to 175 kmph, leaving at least 8 people dead, and blowing away thatched houses, uprooting trees, electricity poles, cutting off power supply, and swamping towns and villages in the State.
The strongest cyclone in India in 20 years made landfall around 8 am in Puri, with roaring winds flattening huts, enveloping the pilgrim town in sheets of rain, and submerging homes in residential areas.
The extremely severe cyclone Fani, a name given by Bangladesh, weakened from an “extremely severe” to “very severe”, and is predicted to further weaken to a “severe cyclone” before moving to West Bengal.

In several videos doing rounds on social media showed the impact of the powerful gale and heavy rain. In videos posted by Sitangshu Kar, the Director General of the Press Information Bureau, the roof of an undergraduate hostel in the Bhubaneswar AIIMS was seen being blown off. Later the wind speed of Fani came down to around 140-165 kmph.
According to officials, large areas in Puri and other places were submerged with water as heavy rain battered the entire coastal belt of the State. Several trees were uprooted and thatched structures destroyed at some places, including Bhubaneswar. All flights from Bhubaneswar have been cancelled since Thursday midnight, and Kolkata airport is shut from 3 pm on Friday till 8 am on Saturday. 140 trains, including 83 passenger trains, have been cancelled so far.
In Bhubaneswar, people took shelter under shades as the heavy rain lashed the city. They said their “homes were shaking”. After crossing Odisha, cyclone Fani is likely to move towards West Bengal before tapering off. Cyclone Fani also triggered heavy rain in parts of north coastal Andhra Pradesh, where gusty winds with speed reaching up to 140 kmph uprooted trees and electricity poles, officials said.
The Odisha Government has evacuated over 11 lakh people, including at least 600 pregnant women, to camps on higher grounds.
“I assure the affected people that the nation and the centre are with them,” Prime Minister Narendra Modi said at a rally in Rajasthan. He said over ₹1,000 crore had been released in advance for the states affected by Fani.
The Union Health Ministry has announced cancellation of Bhubaneswar as a centre for the AIIMS PG 2019 examination due to Fani.
“AIIMS PG exam is scheduled on May 5. Due to cyclone

Fani, AIIMS Delhi is cancelling the exam centre in Bhubaneswar. Another exam will be conducted for students affected by this cancellation as soon as normalcy returns (sic), Union Health Secretary Preeti Sudan tweeted.
KJ Ramesh, Director General of the India Meteorological Department (IMD), predicted light to moderate rain in northeastern States — Arunachal Pradesh, Assam & Meghalaya and Nagaland, Manipur, Mizoram and Tripura due to cyclone while heavy to very heavy rain predicted over Arunachal Pradesh and Assam on May 4 and 5.
“After making landfall this morning, cyclone Fani has started weakening and it’s likely to enter Bangladesh by Saturday evening,” he said.
No cyclone ever had such a long duration in April. The Home Ministry said an eye of cyclonic storm “Fani” “completely moved into land” by 10 am on Friday weakening its fury, but heavy rainfall is still predicted in Odisha, Andhra Pradesh, West Bengal and parts of the north-eastern States.
The system is likely to weaken gradually and emerge into Gangetic West Bengal as a “severe cyclonic storm” by the early morning of May 4. Thereafter, it is expected to move further north-north-eastwards and emerge into Bangladesh by May 4 evening as a cyclonic storm.



Damaged structures and uprooted trees lie along a road in Puri after Cyclone Fani hit Odisha on Friday

CAPSULE

AKSHAY SAYS HE HOLDS CANADIAN PASSPORT
Mumbai: Setting to rest speculation about his citizenship, actor Akshay Kumar on Friday said his aim is to make India a stronger nation even though he holds a Canadian passport.
KEJRIWAL GETS NOTICE FROM POLL AUTHORITIES
New Delhi: Poll authorities in Delhi have issued a showcause notice to Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal, asking him to submit certificate obtained by a panel, after receiving a complaint that a recorded audio message was allegedly sent by the party to mobile phone users.
MAN HELD WITH BULLETS AT DELHI METRO STATION
New Delhi: A man was arrested at Chawri Bazar metro station here for allegedly carrying over a dozen live bullets in his bag, a senior official said on Friday.
EC CLEAN CHIT TO MODI IN ALL COMPLAINTS
New Delhi: The EC concluded on Friday that Prime Minister Narendra Modi did not violate the model code or its advisory on armed forces in his speech in Varanasi. With this, the EC has decided on five complaints against Modi and gave him a clean chit in all matters.

Cong candidate raps Shatrughan for campaign for ‘Samajwadi’ wife

AGENCY ■ LUCKNOW
The Congress candidate from Lucknow on Friday took strong exception to party leader Shatrughan Sinha canvassing for his wife, who is the Samajwadi Party candidate in the constituency.
Shatrughan was present during the filing of nomination papers by his wife, Poonam Sinha. He attended an election meeting on Thursday with Samajwadi Party president Akhilesh Yadav.
“From the behaviour of Shatrughan Sinha, it appears that although he has joined the Congress, but has not yet resigned from the RSS,” Acharya Pramod, the Congress’ Lucknow candidate, tweeted.
Shatrughan Sinha quit the BJP recently and is the Congress candidate from the Patna Sahib constituency in Bihar. Poonam is the SP-BSP-RLD alliance candidate from Lucknow, who is contesting against Union Home Minister Rajnath Singh and Pramod.
Polling will be held in Lucknow on Monday.

Hans: I’m not Muslim, will sue Kejriwal for maligning my image

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI
BJP candidate from North-West Delhi Hans Raj Hans, with Delhi BJP MLA Vijender Gupta, addresses media in New Delhi on Friday
Ranjana Dimri | Pioneer
his image.
In a tweet on Thursday, Kejriwal had claimed that Hans would be declared ineligible to contest the election for fighting on a reserved seat.
Rejecting Kejriwal’s allegation as canard, Hans asked at a Press conference, “I am used to speaking Urdu but that does not mean I am a Muslim. Does a Muslim speaking Hindi become a Hindu? I was born in a Valmiki family and my mother worships Valmiki.”
A day after the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) claimed BJP candidate from North West Delhi Hans Raj Hans converted to Islam in 2014 and therefore can’t fight from a Lok Sabha seat reserved for the Scheduled Caste, Hans on Friday said he would file a defamation case against Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal and other AAP leaders for “maligning”

AAP MLA joins BJP, says party has strayed from its past ideals

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI
Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) MLA from Gandhinagar Anil Bajpai quit his party and joined the BJP on Friday.
“I worked with the AAP for many years. I was hurt by the lack of respect and the peculiar functioning of the party. AAP has deviated from its original path,” Bajpai said.
The move comes at a time when AAP leaders, including Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal, have accused the BJP of indulging in horse trading.
Bajpai joined the BJP in the presence of party national vice-president and Delhi BJP in-charge Shyam Jaju and Union Minister Vijay Goel at the Delhi unit office here.
Earlier Kejriwal had hit out at Vijay Goel for saying that 14 AAP lawmakers were in touch with the BJP and ready to switch loyalty. On Wednesday, Manish Sisodia had claimed seven AAP MLAs had been offered ₹10 crore each to join the BJP.

2 cleaners die in Noida sewer tank

STAFF REPORTER ■ NOIDA
Two sewer cleaners — residents of Janakpuri in West Delhi and engaged by the Noida Authority via a contractor — died in a sewer tank in Salarpur in Noida on Friday, officials said.
Though police are ascertaining the cause of the death of Hamid and Aslam late on Thursday, preliminary investigation suggests that they suffocated to death inside the sewer tank.
Police, the Fire Department, and the National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) were called in for rescue, officials said. The bodies of the workers were retrieved after nearly four-hour rescue operation by a team of the NDRF, said an official of the disaster response force.
“We reached the spot at 3.15 am and began operations at 3.20 am. The first body was recovered at 6.25 am and the second at 7.20 am,” said Jeetender Yadav, who led the nine-member NDRF team.

Burhan Wani’s last ‘Tiger’, 2 other Hizbul terrorists shot

MOHIT KANDHARI ■ JAMMU
A joint team of security forces early on Friday morning dealt a body blow to top Hizbul Mujahideen (HM) commanders active in Kashmir Valley by neutralising Lateef Ahmad Dar, alias Tiger of Dogripora Pulwama, the lone surviving member of Burhan Wani group, along with two other local terrorists in a fierce firefight in South Kashmir’s Shopian district.
Timing of the clinical operation is set to boost the morale of the security forces deployed in the area to ensure peaceful polling in the final phase in Shopian and Pulwama districts on May 6.
After the killing of HM’s poster boy Burhan Wani in July 2016, several other top commanders were neutralised by the security forces.
Lateef Ahmad Dar, killed in Shopian, was lone surviving member of the group who was still active in the area.
Detailed report on P7

Fani delays entry in State; 4 flights cancelled

Govt on toes to address exigencies
SAURAV ROY ■ RANCHI
At least four flights from Ranchi had to be cancelled on Friday as severe cyclonic storm Fani made its impact felt in parts of Eastern India including Jharkhand. At the time of filing of this report, MET officials said that the cyclone is expected to hit Jharkhand’s southeast corner at 11.30 pm on Friday and gradually deviate towards West Bengal.
While the weather remained windy and overcast along with low to moderate rainfall in most parts of the state on Friday, no major loss or casualty was reported, said weathermen.
“The cyclone will hit north-eastern part of Jharkhand at around 11.30 pm at a wind speed of around 50 to 60 kilometers per hour. The impact will be felt in different parts of

the state, especially in East Singhbhum, Saraikela Kharsawan and West Singhbhum,” said SD Kotal, Director, Ranchi Meteorological Centre.
The impact of the cyclone will be felt from 11.30pm on Friday to 5.30am on Saturday in different parts of Jharkhand, Kotal said on Friday evening. The wind speed of 50 kilometers per hour may uproot trees and cause damage to property, so it was important to stay prepared, he added.
The Ranchi District Administration on Friday issued strict guidelines to ensure preparedness of various departments for combating the impact of Fani. The Administration on Friday also issued an emergency number, 0651-2214182, for the residents of Ranchi. An emergency control room will be active for at least 24 hours in all the 24 districts of the state to immediately address any problems caused by the cyclone. Besides, the Disaster Management Department

issued a separate emergency number, 0651-2446923, for residents across Jharkhand on Friday.
“Two Air India flights, one to Kolkata and one to Bhubaneswar, were cancelled. Besides, an Indigo flight and an AirAsia flight, both to Kolkata, did not fly today (Friday). The flights had to be cancelled as Bhubaneswar and Kolkata airports were closed due to the cyclone,” said an official from the Birsa Munda Airport, not authorized to talk to the media.
Apart from impacting air passengers, the cyclone also affected domestic bus services in Jharkhand, sources said. However, railways remained mostly unaffected.
Schools remained closed in East Singhbhum, Ranchi and Dumka on Friday. As a precautionary measure, the respective district administrations have also decided to keep schools closed on Saturday.
Although the cyclone did not enter Jharkhand before sun-

set, parts of the state remained overcast since the wee hours of Friday. Parts of Ranchi, Dhanbad, Jamtara and Dumka witnessed rains with wind speed of 30 to 40 kilometers per hour, while parts of East Singhbhum, West Singhbhum, Saraikela Kharsawan and Khunti witnessed a greater wind speed of 50 to 60 kilometers per hour in the night, said weathermen from Ranchi MET department.
The cyclone brought relief from the soaring temperature in Ranchi and Jamshepur. The two cities, which were recording an average highest temperature of 35 degrees Celsius in the past one week, witnessed a fall in the mercury level by nearly 10 degrees Celsius on Friday. Ranchi recorded highest temperature of 26.7 degrees Celsius while Jamshepur recorded a high temperature of 27.2 degrees Celsius on Friday. Ranchi received 2.0mm rainfall while Jamshepur received 25.4mm rainfall on Friday, Ranchi MET department said.

No Government can take tribal land: CM

Opposition spreading lies about ‘Jal, jungle, jamin’, says Das
PNS ■ RANCHI

Chief Minister Raghubar Das today reassured people of the State that no Government will take their land and advised them not to get misguided by ‘corrupt politicians’. The CM, while addressing people at an election rally in favour of former CM Arjun Munda in Khunti said on Friday that those talking about land, jungle and water are the real exploiters of tribal people.
“In 2014, Congress and its allies had said that if BJP comes to power it will snatch land of tribal people. They are again playing the same tune, but the government has not taken any one’s land in last four and half

Chief Minister Raghubar Das welcomed by party workers during his election campaign rally in Khunti on Friday. BJP candidate for Khunti Lok Sabha Arjun Munda and others also seen in the picture
PNS

years. No one can take your ‘Khuntkari’ land; not even government. But, the corrupt people are spreading rumours that your land will be looted. Those who have looted the land are levelling allegations on BJP and trying to keep people away from development,” he said.
Hitting hard on Opposition parties, the CM said, “Those talking about tribal interest, water, jungle and land should

party ruled for decades in the region, still Khunti, Torpa and Simdega are lagging behind on development front. “They could not develop the country, but reached from Jeep scam to 2G scam while giving the slogan of ‘Garibi Hatao’. Why there is no change in the life of poor people? Someone must tell this to the thieves’ alliance,” he said.
Das said that the bugle of freedom struggle was blown from the land of Jharkhand by Birsa Munda, Sido Kanhu, Phulo Jhano and other martyrs. But, Nehru family never took their names. “On the contrary, the Prime Minister bowed and paid tribute to ‘Dharti Aba’ from the stage of Lal Qila. The thoughts of ‘Shahid Gram Nirman’ and ‘Shahid Sthal Nirman’ are his brainchild. It is in his regime that Rs 28 crore each were given to most backward districts of the State. Government schemes are also focussed on uplift of the poor,” he said.

Amit Shah, Yogi rallies cancelled due to Fani

PNS ■ RANCHI

The effect of super cyclone 'Fani' became visible in the election campaigning of different political parties in State. As Jharkhand will go to fifth phase of polling on May 6, BJP and Mahagathbandhan had planned a series of election meetings by star campaigners. But the rallies and public meeting were cancelled at last hour on the alert of Super Cyclone 'Fani' to hit the State on Friday.

BJP national president, Amit Shah was to address rallies in Koderma, Khunti and Ranchi soliciting support for Annapurna Devi, Arjun Munda and Ranchi candidate Sanjay Seth. Shah's rallies were planned a week back and State BJP unit had even made preparations for Shah visit. Shah was to reach Ranchi on Friday morning and thereafter had to fly to Koderma in Chopper to address rally in Koderma. After attending rally in Koderma, Shah was to visit Khunti the Lok Sabha seat. After participating in rallies in Koderma and Khunti, Shah in the evening was to address public meeting in Dhurwa in support of Sanjay Seth.

State BJP general secretary, Deepak



Chief Minister Raghubar Das gestures during an election rally at Dhurwa in Ranchi on Friday. BJP Ranchi Lok Sabha candidate Sanjay Seth, Minister CP Singh, MLA Naveen Jaiswal and others are also seen in the picture. Ratan Lal

Prakash said, "The public meetings of our national president were cancelled in last hour due to Cyclone Fani." Not only, Shah, BJP firebrand leader and Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath was to address election meeting in Hazarbag in support of Jayant Sinha. As the campaigning for fifth phase is to end on May 4, political parties had made hectic schedules on their star campaigners.

Due to Fani effect, not only Friday's public meeting were cancelled, Prime

Minister Narendra Modi's rally in Chaibasa was also extended by a day. Earlier, Modi was to address a rally on May 5, but as the impact of Fani will be till May 5, the rally will be held on May 6 the day on which Ranchi, Khunti, Koderma and Hazaribag is to go on poll.

Though Amit Shah could not visit State, in his absence Chief Minister Raghubar Das and State BJP in-charge Mangal Pandey addressed scheduled rallies in Khunti and Ranchi. Das reached Khunti via road, where he attacked Congress and Mahagathbandhan parties.

Not only BJP leaders meeting was cancelled, State Congress co-in-charge Umang Singhar was to attend public meeting in Chaibasa along with JMM leader and former chief minister Hemant Soren. But the two leaders could not fly from Ranchi due to bad weather.

State Congress spokesperson, Lal Kishore Nath Shahdeo said, "The two choppers today remained stranded in Capital due to impact of Cyclone Feni." Sources said that scheduled meeting of other leaders such as Jairam Ramesh too was scheduled at the last hour.

₹51L cash recovered from car

Ranchi: A joint team of the CBI and local police seized cash to the tune of nearly Rs 51 lakh from a car under Namkum Police Station area of Ranchi district on Friday.

BDO Namkum, DD Pathak said that the incident took place early in the morning when the police caught the car owner, who has been identified as Niranjana Prasad, a suspended mining officer of Lohardaga district along with two women who were also in the car.

Pathak said, a tip off had been received that money was being brought to Ranchi to influence the voters in a car after which with the help of the Namkum police the vehicle search drive was launched.

He said, during the checking drive a yellow coloured 'Nano' car was apprehended and upon searching the vehicle cash worth ₹50, 91,800 was recovered.

Pathak said that when inquired Prasad as to whose money he was transporting, he did not give satisfactory answers. Later, the officers called Income Tax officials and handed over the money to him.

Police have started investigation. Polling in Ranchi is schedule in the 5th phase on May 6, while campaigning on the seat will come to an end tomorrow.

ECI rule against religious bodies canvassing for candidates: BJP

PNS ■ RANCHI

The State Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) on Friday said that the established rules of the Constitution of India and Election Commission of India do not allow political parties for taking help from religious centres to garner votes but there is strong evidence that on last Sunday some religious groups have issued order to vote for a particular political party.

Addressing a press meet on Friday in Khunti State (BJP), Spokesperson Pratul Shahdeo said that we are getting information that on coming Sunday the religious centre will once again issue order to vote for the particular political party. "It is completely against the basic principles of the Constitution. The BJP is demanding to ECI that it should deploy a cameraman and observer outside the religious centre to monitor whole programme and if such kinds of incident take place then it should take strong action the culprits," he added.

Giving prior example of using religious centre for vote, Shadeo said that BJP had suspected during the by election of Kolebira also that some reli-



State BJP Spokesperson Pratul Shahdeo addresses a press conference in Khunti on Friday. PNS

gious preachers of specific religion are canvassing vote for particular political party. "A candidate contesting for Khunti seat has posted a message of renowned religious preacher on his Facebook page on April 23 and 24. It all instances are showing that some anti-national powers are doing business of vote on the name of religion,"

he added. Demanding strict vigil of election commission Shahdeo said that the BJP is demanding that the commission should pay extra attention on such kinds of cases. Soon a delegation of the party will submit a memorandum to election commission, he added.

21 women only booths to increase voter turnout

DIVYA MODI ■ RANCHI

With the State capital going to vote in the fifth round of the general elections 2019 on May 6, the entire Ranchi constituency is busy gearing up for the same. Ranchi has a total of over 18 lakh voters with more than 9.7 lakh male and 8.8 lakh female voters. Keeping the safety of the female voters as a priority, special polling booths are being made this election season in the State Capital.

Ranchi district will have a total of 21 women polling booths. Splitting them up constituency wise, Ranchi will have 2, Hatia will have 11 and Kanke will have 8 polling booths.

"There is a reason why these women's polling booths are being made this time. There were reports of some untoward incidents, which had happened in the last polls. In these places the number of such cases reported were high, so separate booths have been made this time," said an official from the Ranchi Deputy Commissioner's office.

The major difference between a normal polling booth and a women's polling booth is that these booths will have all-women staff including presiding officers, polling officers, micro observers and security personnel.

Women only polling

booths are being made with the perspective of increasing the turnout of the female voters in the city. This is a confidence building message to the women voters to come out and cast their vote," said Divyanshu Jha, Deputy Development Commissioner, Ranchi.

These booths are aimed not only to empower women but to also increase their participation in the election process. "Women were not keen to be a part of polling duty. This will also convey a message that the administration is committed to provide the necessary facilities required to the polling personnel and encourage them to be a part of the process. This is also being done to increase the partnership and membership with the polling personnel and there are plans of expanding this in future," added the DDC.

Apart from being manned completely by women, these booths will also have additional facilities. Amenities like a separate waiting area for women and a crèche will be there for those accompanying children. The decorations will also be done like that of a festival.

At the booths apart from the assured minimum facilities, there will be chairs provided for the elderly, shady areas to prevent heat strokes, sign-ages and properly demarcated rows for male and female voters.

Inter-House Chess at SBPS

PNS ■ RANCHI

An Inter-House Chess competition was held at SBPS. The competition was conducted in four categories i.e. grade VI to VIII (boys), grade VI to VIII (girls), grade IX to XII (boys) and grade IX to XII (girls). The students participated with great enthusiasm and showed their focus, ability to strategize and think ahead through their moves.

In the category VI to VIII (boys), Yajurveda bagged the first prize followed by Atharvaveda and Samveda on the second and third position

respectively.

In junior girls category Samveda emerged victorious followed by Atharvaveda and Yajurveda on second and third position respectively.

In senior boys category, Samveda house received the first prize followed by Atharvaveda and Yajurveda on second and third position respectively.

In senior girls category first prize was bagged by Atharvaveda house followed by Samveda and Rigveda house on the second and third position respectively.



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We cannot have justice while our entrepreneurs struggle to bring their dreams to life.



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Markets end marginally lower; IT stocks drag

PTI ■ MUMBAI

Market benchmarks surrendered early gains to end with modest losses on Friday, led by selling in IT bluechips, as investors awaited fresh buying triggers amid frothy valuations.

After trading on a positive note through the day, the BSE Sensex ended 18.17 points, or 0.05%, lower at 38,963.26.

In similar movement, the broader NSE Nifty slipped 12.50 points, or 0.11%, to close at 11,712.25. During the holiday-truncated week, the Sensex fell 104.07 points, or 0.26%, while the Nifty shed 42.40%, or 0.36 per cent.

IT stocks came under pressure after tech giant Cognizant slashed its full-year revenue growth outlook. A strong rupee also weighed on the counters.

The US-headquartered Cognizant, which has a significant portion of its employees based in India, revised its full-year 2019 revenue growth outlook to 3.6-5.1% in constant currency terms, significantly less than 7-9% projected just months ago.

In the Sensex pack, losers included TCS, HUL, Tata Steel, HCL Tech, Infosys, Bajaj Finance, HDFC, IndusInd Bank, Asian Paints, ITC and Vedanta, shedding up to 3.70%.

HUL too ended in the red ahead of its quarterly results.

On the other hand, Bharti Airtel, ICICI Bank, NTPC, Yes Bank, Tata Motors, ONGC, Bajaj Auto, M&M, Maruti, Hero MotoCorp and Kotak Bank rose up to 3.11%.

"Market started on a positive note



supported by strong rupee and fall in oil prices. However, gains are capped due to the premium valuation.

"Fall in 10-year yield led the bank index to outperform. Market is likely to stay range bound due to weak global cues while better quarter results may provide opportunity to accumulate," said Vinod Nair, head of research, Geojit Financial Services.

Sectorally, BSE IT, tech, healthcare and FMCG indices fell the most, dropping up to 1.91%.

However, telecom, realty, auto and bank rose up to 1.56%.

The broader BSE midcap and smallcap indices followed the benchmarks to end up to 0.31% lower.

Meanwhile, foreign institutional investors (FIIs) bought equity worth ₹597.54 crore on Thursday, while domestic institutional investors (DIIs) sold shares to the tune of ₹791.69 crore, provisional data available with stock exchanges showed.

Elsewhere in Asia, Korea's Kospi and Hong Kong's Hang Seng ended on a mixed note, while other major bourses in China and Japan were shut for holidays. European equities started off on a firm footing.

The rupee, meanwhile, appreciated to 69.34 against the US dollar intraday. Global oil benchmark Brent crude was trading 0.62% lower at USD 70.31 per barrel.

India produces 32.11 million tonnes sugar in Oct-Apr

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Sugar output in India has reached 32.11 million tonnes in the first seven months of the ongoing marketing year that started October 2018, and the total production could touch a new record of 33 million tonnes, the industry body ISMA said on Friday. Much of the sugar has already been manufactured and only a few mills are in operation at present, it said.

The country's sugar output during the 2017-18 marketing year (October-September) was a record 32.5 million tonnes. The annual domestic requirement of India, which is the world's second largest producer, is only 26 million tonnes.

According to the Indian Sugar Mills Association (ISMA), mills have manufactured 32.11 million tonnes of sugar between October 2018 and April this year. Only 100 mills were in operation as on April 30. The country's top three sugar producing states — Uttar Pradesh, Maharashtra and Karnataka — have produced 11.26 million tonnes, 10.7 million tonnes and 4.32 million tonnes, respectively, during the October-April period of the 2018-19 marketing year.

"Even though the quantum of sugarcane crushing in the current year is less than that in the last year, the sugar production in 2018-19 will be marginally more than last year," it said in a statement.

Sugar recovery in northern India has been substantially better than last year. In the other parts of the country, including Maharashtra and Karnataka also, the sugar recovery is better than last year, though not as high as it achieved in north India. "Therefore, the sugar production in the current year for the whole country is expected to be around 33 million tonnes, about 5,00,000 tonnes more than last year," the ISMA predicted.

Cognizant slashes full-year growth outlook; Q1 net income tumbles 15%

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

IT company Cognizant has reported over 15% drop in net income for the quarter ended March, and slashed its full-year revenue growth outlook.

The US-headquartered company, which has a significant portion of its employees based in India, revised its full-year 2019 revenue growth outlook to 3.6-5.1% in constant currency, significantly less than 7-9% projected just months ago.

Cognizant follows January-December as financial year.

It cited "first quarter under-performance" and likelihood of slower growth in financial services and healthcare as reasons for the massive cut in full-year outlook.

The first quarter net income at USD 441 million was 15% lower than USD 520 million clocked in the year-ago period. The quarterly revenue rose to USD 4.11 billion, up 5.1% (6.8% in constant currency) from the year-ago period, the company's own estimates.

"Cognizant's growth and performance in the quarter leave room for improvement," Brian Humphries, chief executive officer of Cognizant, said in a statement.

Humphries, who took over the baton from the Francisco D'Souza on April 1, admitted

that the company, despite its client centricity and innovative spirit, was not yet delivering against the market opportunity.

"While I am encouraged by our client centricity, our employees' winning spirit and our innovation, we are not yet delivering against the market opportunity. We are committed to strengthening our execution to invest in growth and drive shareholder value," Humphries added.

Cognizant said its second quarter 2019 year-over-year revenue growth was estimated to be in the range of 3.9-4.9% in constant currency. In the coming quarters, the company intends to bring cost structure closer in line with the revised revenue expectations but will continue to invest in growth, talent, and innovation, McLoughlin said. Also, the strong balance sheet enables Cognizant to maintain financial flexibility while retaining capital to shareholders.

HUL Q4 NET PROFIT RISES 13.8% TO ₹1,538 CRORE

FMCG major Hindustan Unilever (HUL) on Thursday reported a 13.84% increase in its net profit to ₹1,538 crore for the quarter ended March 31. The company had posted a net profit of ₹1,351 crore in the

January-March quarter of the previous fiscal.

Sales during the quarter under review stood at ₹9,809 crore, up 8.95%, as against ₹9,003 crore in the corresponding period a year ago, HUL said in a regulatory filing.

HUL's total expenses for the said period were ₹7,765 crore compared to ₹7,181 crore, up 8.13%.

CENTURY TEXTILES AND INDUSTRIES Q4 NET PROFIT ₹227.62 CRORE

Century Textiles and Industries Ltd (CTIL) on Friday reported a standalone net profit of ₹227.62 crore for the fourth quarter ended March 2019. It had posted a net profit of ₹108.69 crore in the January-March quarter a year ago, Century Textiles said in a BSE filing.

The company's total income during the quarter was ₹1,008.54 crore. It was ₹993.32 crore in the corresponding quarter of the previous fiscal. CTIL's total expenses stood at ₹765.38 crore.

Meanwhile, the company said its results were not comparable as it had granted right to manage and operate its Viscose Filament Yarn business, part of the textile segment, to Grasim Industries for 15 years from February 1, 2018, which has paid an upfront royalty of ₹600 crore.

The CTIL board has recommended a dividend of ₹7.50 per share of ₹10 each equivalent to 75% on paid-up equity share capital of the company for the year ended March 31, compared with 65% paid for the previous year for the year.

GCPL NET PROFIT RISES 51.5% IN MARCH QUARTER

Homegrown FMCG major Godrej Consumer Products Ltd (GCPL) on Friday reported a 51.53% increase in consolidated net profit to ₹935.24 crore in the fourth quarter ended March 31.

The company had posted a consolidated net profit of ₹617.19 crore in the corresponding period last fiscal, GCPL said in a BSE filing.

However, its total revenue from operations during the quarter fell 3.06% to ₹2,481.72 crore, compared with ₹2,560.14 crore in the corresponding quarter of the previous fiscal.

The firm's total expense stood at ₹1,974.73 crore, against ₹2,016.65 crore, a drop of 2.07%.

During the quarter, GCPL's India sales were marginally down 0.9% to ₹1,356.09 crore, compared with ₹1,369.76 crore in the year-ago period.

NIFTY 50

Table with columns: SCRIIP, OPEN, HIGH, LOW, LTP, CHANGE. Lists various stocks and their price movements.

BSE 500

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NIFTY NEXT 50

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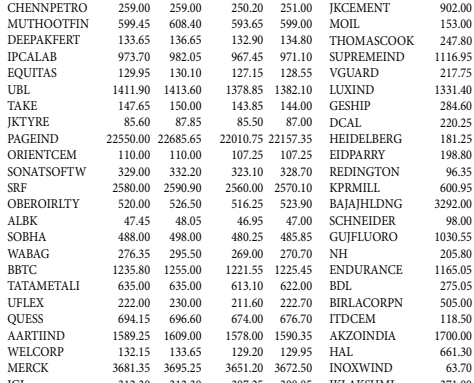


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SHORT CIRCUITS

BHUMI PEDNEKAR

Nowadays, there is space for every type of actor. Today, we are doing very good work and there is no scope for unhealthy competition. We all are supporting each others' work and want that our films should do well and get appreciation. All my colleagues are competent and brilliant so, I get inspired when I look at their work.



ADNAN SAMI

Whatever I am today and whatever I will be, it will be all because of her (singer Asha Bhonsle). I cannot thank her enough for supporting me during the tough phase of my career. I want to thank her for giving me a roof during my struggle as it is all because of her blessings it is where I have reached today.



ANANYA PANDAY

My father didn't give me any advice before my Bollywood venture because he knows that his time was really different as compared to mine. So he thinks that I cannot apply the things which he applied during his acting stint. But I have learnt a lot from his behaviour. He never changed because of his successes and failures, I want to be like that.

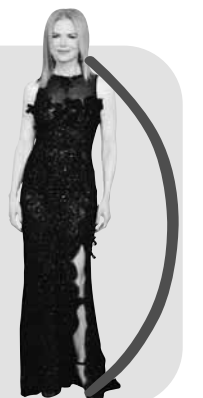


SANYA MALHOTRA

I like dressing up. At the same time, I know that I can't be perfect all the time. Actors don't have to be conscious all the time or up their game when it comes to fashion. I am a very lazy and a moody person. I'll only dress up if I'm in a mood. If not, I don't care if people judge me on social media. Everyone has an opinion. You can choose to not listen.

NICOLE KIDMAN

The greatest thing our family priest told us in our marriage was, 'Always kiss hello and goodbye.' It just keeps you connected. And when I got divorced, Hugh (Jackman) and Deb (Deborah-Lee Furness) were so much a part of my healing. They were some of my best friends through that period.



VERVE 45 MINUTES

Years after the Formula 1 failed at the Indian racing circuits, car racers ARMAAN EBRAHIM and ADITYA PATEL announce the X1 League, which will bring the thrill back to the tracks. CHAHAK MITTAL discovers the key moves made to implement the plan



PRIX GETS A NEW FACE

Super cars, classic sports cars, motors, single-seater racing cars, immeasurable race tracks — I had only witnessed them in dreams or while scrolling through my social media feed, until today. Even before I entered inside the main campus of the Buddh International Circuit at Greater Noida-Yamuna Expressway, the whizz of the racing cars as they ran through the tracks was audible. As I stepped into Pit 5 to attend the X1 Racing League Summit, the tracks were what immediately caught my attention. But the best was yet to be for we could experience life in the fast lane in a racing car alongside the driver. Even from far, I could hear the whizz of the car which made my spine tingle. The speed was equally thrilling. But let me confess, that my legs trembled at the thought of sitting inside the mean machine... yet I was extremely tempted to do so.

so hard that I could hear it above the din of the cars that were screeching past. But before I could change my mind (not that I had any intention to), we took off! The first few moments were the scariest but so was the thrill which was out of this world. All I could imagine was a huge audience cheering for us and the checked-white and black waving flag to announce that we had cleared the finish line in record time. The lap ended. Too soon, too fast. But it was certainly the experience of a lifetime. It was back from terra firma and to reality.

Indian car racers and young enthusiasts and aspirants lost their hopes of ever witnessing a Formula 1 Indian Grand Prix at the Buddh International Circuit after it was besieged with financial problems including a tax dispute with the government.

However, all that is set to change. The Summit saw the announcement of the X1 Racing League that begins from October 2019, the biggest feature of which is, "that it is backed by government and the Federation of Motor Sports Club of India (FMSCI) assuring long-term partnership rights for city-based 4W racing events and competitions in league format," said

ments, more people becoming aware, involved, and interested as well as with more brand sponsors and investors, the racing industry has definitely evolved over the years.

The racing league, he said, would be the world's first professional franchise-based motorsport league, which will include a mix of track and street races. Racer Armaan Ebrahim, who is co-launching the racing league, said, "This will be a new face of car-racing in the country. India has never had a history of racing but this will initiate a legacy which will last for years to come. You learn from history." Looking back, he goes on to add, "F1 was not India-centric, had no connection with the Indian public, no government backing or international support. These have been kept in mind to keep this one competitive."

He added that the league, which includes participation by 32 drivers including both national and international, males and females, had been worked to keep in focus the factors which would 'sustain in India and be suitable for it. We have gone in-depth to find such things out.'

The league, he informed us, will go on for 12 weekends, have 24 race days and 40 races. "There was a need to revive this culture in India and encourage its interest in people in order that the charm of this sport is not lost. It's an unconventional sport choice which not many opt for freely in this country. To encourage more participation, this was very important. We couldn't have relied on F1 to come back after years. The young talents and aspirants need proper training and exposure and a platform which is specific to India. Also, such an initiative will bring people from the grassroots level," said Armaan. There are still a few training centres in India, he claimed, and they "need to grow."

May the 4th is here to be with you, which means it's that time of the year when you must leave everything aside to celebrate the iconic space saga by George Lucas, *Star Wars* and embrace the force within you. While it all started in a galaxy, far away, we can celebrate *Star Wars* in a galaxy, which is not so far away. Jatin Varma, founder of Comic Con India suggests five different ways to celebrate the day.

May the Fourth be with you

Today is Star Wars day and here is a list of things fans could do to celebrate the saga created by George Lucas

Talk like Yoda with your colleagues and friends the entire day

Invest in a Star Wars Lego Set and spend the day building it



Do a Star Wars movie marathon

The celebrations will not be complete without revisiting all the films that have made this series so beloved. And, make sure you get someone from your team, who has never watched the series before, join you in the movie marathon. Watch

all of them in the mentioned order: *Prequel - The Phantom Menace (Ep: 1)*, *Attack of the Clones (Ep: 2)*, *Revenge of the Sith (Ep: 3)*; *Rogue One (Spin-Off)*; *Sequel - A New Hope (Ep: 4)*, *The Empire Strikes Back (Ep: 5)*, *Return of the Jedi (Ep: 6)*, *The Force Awakens (Ep: 7)*, *The last Jedi (Ep: 8)* and *The Rise of Skywalker (Ep: 9)*.

Save up for a once-in-a-lifetime trip to the new Star Wars land at Disney World

Your fandom for *Star Wars* will not be complete if you don't visit the much-anticipated Disneyland's new *Star Wars*-themed Galaxy's Edge land, which will open on May 31. Imagine getting a chance to fly the Millennium Falcon, join the Resistance, build a custom lightsaber and design a droid. Start saving up for this a once-in-a-lifetime trip to Disney World in Orlando.

Prepare for the *Revenge Of The Fifth (of May)*

This unofficial fan holiday celebrated on May 5, the day after *Star Wars* Day marks the louder side of the film. Rhyming with the *Star Wars: Episode III - Revenge of the Sith*, this day covers the dark side of the force universe, with all things silly and funny, which is not necessarily a part of the original trilogy.

Lastly, the nostalgia will not be complete without remembering Late Carrie Fisher who portrayed the role of the popular self-rescuing Princess Leia and made her last appearance in *Star Wars: The Last Jedi*.



Another legend lost

Peter Mayhew, who became known to fans worldwide as the lovable Wookiee Chewbacca in the *Star Wars* galaxy of films, has died. He was 74. The actor died on Tuesday in his North Texas home with his family by his side. His official Twitter account shared the news on Thursday, as per the reports. Mayhew had undergone spinal surgery in July in an effort to improve his mobility.

est any human being could be to a Wookiee: big heart, gentle nature... and I learned to always let him win. He was a good friend and I'm saddened by his passing."

—IANS

STUDIO CHAT 30 MINUTES



'Glad Nandita made a film on Manto'

Actor SHEKHAR SUMAN will soon essay the Urdu writer's role in a play

If Nandita had not made this film on Manto, probably he (would have) died in the memories of people... A play, movie or a series is the best way to reintroduce these great figures back to the society," said actor Shekhar Suman who will be essaying the role of late Urdu writer Saadat Hasan Manto in Randhir Ranjan Roy's play *Ek Haan*.

Manto, who died in 1955 at the age of 43, penned an impressive body of work touching various genres. He churned out about 22 collections of stories comprising a novel, essays, personal sketches and movie scripts. His work also gained attention for weaving stories around the ordeal of partition as well as sexuality.

—IANS

GALLERIA 45 MINUTES

ALL THAT JAZZ

This cruise line rivals Broadway and London's West End combined with 134 shows, 50 theatres

In a non-descript building in North Miami, two dozen dancers in bouncing yellow skirts are high kicking the can-can, aerialists are spinning perilously high from silk cords and frantic seamstresses are hemming outfits in a 20,000 square-foot costume shop. They are all part of a company that puts on more live productions a year than Broadway and London's West End combined.

Royal Caribbean International's cruise line directs 134 shows in 50 theatres on 26 ships around the world, including seven Broadway-originating shows, eight aqua shows, 18 ice shows and dozens of original musicals.

"We have a nightly audience of about 100,000. It is by scale a very, very large operation. Probably under one roof, the biggest in the world," said Nick Weir, senior vice president of entertainment. "At any one time, there's 1,500 to 1,800 cast members employed to make this all come to life."

It takes two to four weeks for an army of dancers, singers and aerialists to learn a show before they're dispatched to ports as far away as Australia and China.

On a recent afternoon, dancers roamed the halls in crop tops and buns. One stretched into a wide split on the floor. There are 14 dance studios, 15 rehearsal rooms, a recording studio, gymnasiums and auditorium. Exercise equipment lines some hallways. Nearby are living accommodations for 470 of the performers.

Often dismissed in the past as second-tier, cruise entertainment has evolved to a genre that Royal Caribbean says commands some of the best talent and technology around.

Several of the main characters in *Mama Mia* are from the Broadway version of the show. While New York theatre has struggled to turn profits with its small, intimate venues, fickle crowds and finite real estate, the cruise industry's onboard audience is growing exponentially.

Royal Caribbean is building five ships in the coming years, each with a custom-built theatre with sophisticated stages and high-tech effects. A few years ago, they built a small plane with a 22-foot wingspan that now flies over the audience in every production of *FLIGHT: Dare to Dream*.

"The stages that they have on the ships, the technology is far better than it ever was on a Broadway stage, even 10 years ago," said Greg



Graham, who was the resident choreographer for *Billy Elliot* on Broadway before coming to the cruise line to choreograph *Hairspray*.

Roughly 3,000 hopefuls showed up to recent auditions for *Hairspray* in New York and London.

Weir said the casting operation is massive, culling talent from 75 cities a year auditioning nearly 25,000 performers last year alone.

"At my audition, there were hundreds of girls... it's very competitive. There are so many people who want to be doing this," said Taryn Borman, a 21-year-old Australian dancer, who's performing on a ship for the first time in a new show with aerialists and contortionists. She'll head to Asia with the cast in a few weeks.

Singer and dancer Oli Reynolds, 26, wrapped up a starring role in London's West End production of *Mama Mia* and came back to Royal Caribbean where he's reprising the same role.

"I think there's still a stigma about cruise ship performing... historically, a lot of cruise lines didn't

put the focus on the performing, it was more about the destinations," said Reynolds, who stressed that's changed. "People come from Cirque du Soleil, they come from Vegas, they come from London, they come from Broadway and it is a progression in my career for me."

John Kenrick, a musical theatre historian and adjunct professor at New York University, says the evolution was inevitable as more sophisticated cruise audiences — accustomed to seeing shows in spots like Vegas and Atlantic City — are demanding better entertainment.

"It's certainly upped the game. (Cruise theatre) used to be a little better perhaps than summer stock just with better costumes," said Kenrick, adding "it's definitely improved. I can't say it's Broadway."

Each performance on every ship worldwide is rehearsed at the roughly 1,33,000 sq ft facility where the halls are literally alive with the sounds of music.

In one room, dancers with black top hats are perfecting choreography to *All That Jazz*. Across the



hall, six singers are harmonizing a number from *Once Upon a Time*. In a recording studio next door, the walls reverberate with what sounds like theme music from an adventure movie.

At the massive costume shop, the hum of a sewing machine where

a seamstress works on a gold glitter costume competes with the hiss of a steam iron. One of the head seamstresses is busy completing a white sequin ballroom dress, with flowing feathers and a rhinestone-studded bodice. The cruise line makes its own costumes and must



coordinate fittings for dozens of shows.

The cast on each ship performs not one, but three shows — a Broadway musical like *Hairspray* or *Grease*, a ballroom style show and a pop show. The shows are upbeat and family-oriented and chosen to appeal to a wide audience — nothing too sexual or intellectual.

Scheduling all the rehearsals is more precise than the choreography. The new casts arrive, rehearse and depart to sea at a dizzying pace every few weeks. It takes exactly 26 days to train a new cast to perform the musical *Cats*.

Typical theatre productions will rotate in new cast members periodically, but Royal Caribbean prefers to sign performers to roughly nine-month contracts. They spend a few weeks learning three shows from scratch and then head to sea. When it's over, the cruise line casts a new set of performers and begins again.

Staging a show at sea has its own challenges and quirks. Performers need extra core strength to adapt to rough waves and pitching ships. If a costume is ripped, there's no one to run to the store.

There are also perks that even the most legendary theatres on land can't compete with — picturesque ports, free meals, room and board, the chance to interact with the audience and the sense of onboard community not found at other venues where performers simply go home each night.

"You definitely become more of a family," said Mya Carpenter, a 22-year-old dancer who performed in Paris before joining Royal Caribbean. "You come to know people inside and out. They're friends for life."

—AP

THE CAST ON EACH SHIP PERFORMS NOT ONE, BUT THREE SHOWS — A BROADWAY MUSICAL LIKE HAIRSPRAY OR GREASE, A BALLROOM STYLE SHOW AND A POP SHOW. THESE ARE UPBEAT AND FAMILY-ORIENTED AND CHOSEN TO APPEAL TO A WIDE AUDIENCE

CELEB TALK 30 MINUTES

Wearing it like armour

Game of Thrones is not just breaking the social media but also world records



The global demand for the premiere of the eighth and final season of *Game of Thrones* exceeded the global premiere demand of every other TV series — setting a new Guinness World Record.

The last season premiered internationally on April 14. The global demand on the day of the premiere

exceeded the global premiere demand of every other TV series for any season across all platforms and markets under measurement, as per the reports.

Parrot Analytics, a TV content analytics firm specialising in global audience demand measurement, partnered with Guinness World Records to chart the demand

and declare it officially — 'Most in-demand' TV premiere.

The Parrot methodology claims to use global, real-time and platform-agnostic TV demand measurements. Guinness and Parrot charted worldwide demand for all series premieres from April 2015 to the day of *Game of Thrones* season eight premiere to determine the measurement.

"The fantasy series amassed a per capita global audience demand of 25.46 on the premiere day. Compared to its per capita global demand of 24.74 on the day of its season seven premiere, the latest and final season has premiered 2.9 per cent higher globally. Premiere day demand has been particularly strong in the US, United Kingdom and France," said Samuel Stadler, Vice President of marketing, Parrot Analytics.

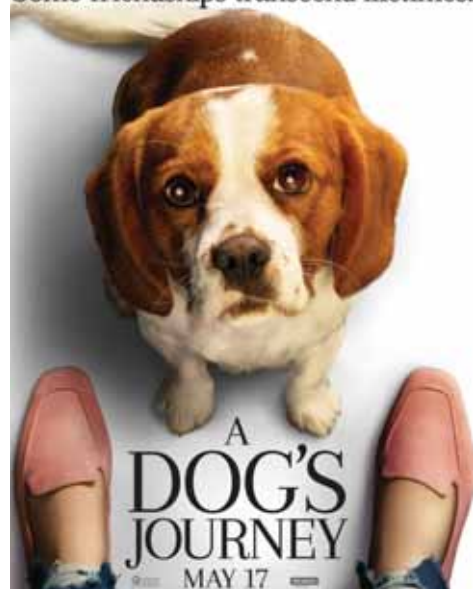
Craig Glenday, editor-in-chief at Guinness, said, "GoT looks like it's going to continue breaking records right up to the final, undoubtedly devastating episode."

Game of Thrones, based on George R.R. Martin's novels, is about the quest to claim the Iron Throne. But it also stands for complicated political gambits, scheming and the backstabbing nature of people and finding love in troubled times. The final season will wrap up on May 19. It is aired in India on Star World.

—IANS

An obvious choice

Some friendships transcend lifetimes.



Based on the eponymous novel by W. Bruce Cameron, *A Dog's Journey* is about a dog being on a mission to protect a person. The film, sequel to the global hit *The Dog's Purpose*, is directed by two times Emmy award-winning director Gail Mancuso.

Producer Gavin Polone feels that since the film involved protecting a young girl it was most appropriate to have a female director for the film. Polone says, "The first

'The film A Dog's Journey is about a dog being on a mission to protect a person. Since it involved protecting a young girl, it was appropriate to have Gail Mancuso as its director'

film was about our dog going from person to person to get back to Ethan. But with this film, our dog is on a mission to protect one person: a girl who becomes a woman. Of course, the dynamics of issues with young girls and their mothers is a different perspective."

Since the makers of the film were, in particular, looking for a director with great deal of experience with comedy, Gail was an obvious choice. A women's perspective was key for the makers. Polan further adds, "I had worked with Gail Mancuso on *Gilmore Girls*, and there are things tonally and comedically that are reminiscent of that show with this movie"

An animal lover herself, director Gail says, "I loved the first film and when the opportunity was given to me to direct this one, it was a blessing. I have five dogs and truly love animals."

This heartwarming adventure of Bailey (dog) through multiple lives filled with love, friendship and devotion music and laughter is set to release in India on May 17 by Reliance Entertainment.

Don't understand the negativity around my citizenship: Akshay

Actor Akshay Kumar on Friday issued a statement regarding the controversy over his citizenship. He says he has never hidden or denied that he holds a Canadian passport and that he doesn't understand the unwarranted interest and negativity about it.

"I really don't understand the unwarranted interest and negativity about my citizenship. I have never hidden or denied that I hold a Canadian passport. It is also equally true that I have not visited Canada in the last seven years," Akshay tweeted.

"I work in India, and pay all my taxes in India. While all these years, I have never needed to prove my love for India to anyone. I find it disappointing that my citizenship issue is constantly dragged into needless controversy, a matter that is personal, legal, non-political, and of no consequence to others," he added in the statement.

He concluded by saying, "Lastly, I would like to continue contributing in my small way to the causes that I believe in and make India stronger and stronger."

His absence from the polling booth made netizens think that it was due to his alleged Canadian citizenship.

In 2017, Akshay had said that he has been bestowed with an honorary citizenship by the Canadian Government, and hence, he carries the Canadian citizenship.

Akshay, who recently grabbed headlines for his "non-political" interview with Prime Minister Narendra Modi, was widely trolled for not casting his vote this year.

"Chaliye, chaliye (let's go, let's go)" is how Akshay responded when at a special screening of the film *Blank*, a mediaperson asked him about giving voting a miss. He then walked away.

The actor has featured in many films like *Kesari*, *Baby*, *Holiday - A Soldier Is Never Off Duty* and *Airlift*, with patriotism as a theme.

—IANS





Arsenal's Alexandre Lacazette, center, controls the ball between Valencia's Gabriel, left, his teammate Mesut Ozil and Valencia's Cristiano Piccini, right, during the Europa League semifinal first leg match between Arsenal and Valencia at the Emirates stadium in London on Thursday. AP

ADVANTAGE ARSENAL

Gunners overcome goal deficit to beat Valencia 3-1 in Europa League 1st leg semis

AFP ■ LONDON

Arsenal manager Unai Emery insisted his side's Europa League semi-final against Valencia is still "50-50" despite the Gunners taking a 3-1 first leg lead to Spain. Valencia's bright start at the Emirates on Thursday was rewarded with Mouctar Diakhaby's away goal. But Alexandre Lacazette quickly turned the game around with two goals in eight first-half minutes before Pierre-Emerick Aubameyang's late strike gave Arsenal a two-goal advantage to defend at the Mestalla on May 9. However, Emery, who managed Valencia between 2008 and 2012, knows the tie is far from over due to Arsenal's terrible away record this season. "It is a good result at home, but the second leg is going to be very difficult and maybe different. I consider for both teams it

is 50-50," said Emery. Arsenal are desperate not just for silverware in Emery's first season but the guarantee of Champions League qualification for next season that winning the Europa League would bring. A run of three straight Premier League defeats has left Emery's men needing more favours from Chelsea or Tottenham to stand any chance of Champions League qualification via a top-four Premier League finish. The Gunners had conceded three times in all three of those defeats to Crystal Palace, Wolves and Leicester and the same defensive deficiencies cost them again early on. Valencia had already missed a glorious chance to take the lead when Ezequiel Garay blazed over before Diakhaby forced the ball home at the back post for the vital away goal on 11 minutes. Emery has been reticent to

"WE CAN BE PROUD OF THE PLAYERS. IT IS NOT EASY TO BE CALM AND COME BACK WITH THAT RESULT AGAINST THIS TEAM."

—Unai Emery

"WE WANT TO WIN THE EUROPA LEAGUE TO GO STRAIGHT TO THE CHAMPIONS LEAGUE BUT ALSO TO WIN A TROPHY."

—Alexandre Lacazette

"WE PLAYED AGAINST TWO STRIKERS THAT ARE VERY GOOD WHICH IS WHY THEY COST THE MILLIONS THAT THEY DID. WITH THE SLIGHTEST ERROR THEY PUNISH YOU."

—Marcelino Garcia Toral

start Lacazette and Aubameyang together up front, but the game turned on one moment of magic from Arsenal's two prolific strikers. Lacazette played in Aubameyang and the Gabon international left his marker and Valencia goalkeeper Neto on the ground before squaring for his strike partner to roll into an empty net. Seven minutes later, Arsenal led as terrible defending allowed Lacazette a free header from Granit Xhaka's cross and a weak hand from Neto could not prevent the ball crossing the line. "We had the game completely in control until their first goal," lamented Valencia coach Marcelino Garcia Toral. Lacazette missed two glorious opportunities to complete his

hat-trick as he firstly failed to connect with an inch-perfect Aubameyang cross before Neto made a brilliant save at his near post to keep the Spanish side in the tie. At the other end Petr Cech also had to make a smart stop as he raced from his goal to deny substitute Kevin Gameiro. The veteran stopper has announced he will retire at the end of the season. And Cech's final game could well be against his former club Chelsea in next month's final as the Blues secured a 1-1 draw away at Eintracht Frankfurt in the first leg of the other semi-final. Arsenal still have work to do, but they moved much closer to booking their trip to Baku when Aubameyang turned home at the back post in the final minute.

'In no-man's land': Federer taking baby steps on clay return



AFP ■ PARIS

Roger Federer returns to clay court tennis for the first time in three years at Madrid next week, admitting it feels like a journey into "no-man's land". The 37-year-old last tested his ability on European dirt at the Rome Masters in 2016, before opting to concentrate on the world's hard surfaces and grass courts which have yielded the majority of his 101 titles. But with his career in its twilight, the Swiss has decided to re-enter a realm of tennis for so long dominated by rival Rafael Nadal — and Madrid seems the logical venue. Federer has won two of his 11 clay titles in the Spanish capital where the high altitude helps him negate the traditionally pedestrian pace of the dusty surface. "I'm very excited. It's a good challenge, a good test. Confidence, I don't know, it's in no-man's land. I have to start from scratch," said Federer after winning his most recent title in Miami. His long-term aim this spring is Roland Garros where he was champion in 2009 and where he has been a four-time runner-up in 2006, 2007, 2008 and 2011, losing on every occasion to Nadal. However, with 11-time French Open winner Nadal in something of a claycourt slump, having been deposed as Barcelona

and Monte Carlo champion in recent weeks, Federer saw a glimmer of hope. That shaft of light brightened when world number one Novak Djokovic exited Monte Carlo in the quarter-finals. "Roger is still very hungry," Federer's coach Ivan Ljubicic told *Sky Sports Italia*. "And he has got used to playing on clay again pretty quickly." Federer's last clay title was in Istanbul in 2015, the same year which saw his last Roland Garros appearance end with a quarter-final exit at the hands of close friend Stan Wawrinka. Rome in 2016 witnessed the Swiss star's most recent competitive outing on clay, a straight sets loss to Dominic Thiem in the third round seemingly convincing him that his dirt court career was done. "I'm not very confident going into this clay court season. I can tell you that — I don't even remember how to slide anymore," said Federer. "You know, I'm taking baby steps at this point. To be honest, I didn't play one point — not one shot on clay last year. Two years ago I played two days. "Three years ago I played not feeling great in Monaco and Rome and all that. So it's been so little that I really don't know what to expect." Despite his caution, his longtime rivals are wary of under-estimating the 20-time Grand Slam champion next week.

You will do special things in World Cup: Yuvraj to Hardik

PTI ■ MUMBAI

Yuvraj Singh, hero of India's victorious campaign in the 2011 World Cup, is expecting "special performances" from all-rounder Hardik Pandya in the 2019 edition, beginning May 30. Pandya is back to his best, at least with the bat, following testing times which saw him serve an interim suspension. The 25-year-old has been in remarkable form this IPL and his Mumbai Indians teammate Yuvraj hopes that he extends his explosive run to the 50-over mega event. "I was actually having this conversation with him (Hardik) yesterday where I told him that you have a great chance of performing really well with the ball and bat", the kind of form he is in at the moment. "Definitely, the way he is batting at the moment, it is phenomenal and I hope he carries that form (into the World Cup). He has been bowling well in patches but as I said it is all about how you handle the pressure," said Yuvraj. Pandya has been in the form of his life and Yuvraj said that his 91 against the Kolkata Knight Riders was the best IPL innings he has seen.



"It is probably the best shape as a batsman to get in. I have been watching since the practice games, he was hitting the ball really well. I had told him it is going to be a special tournament for you, the way you are hitting the ball," said the southpaw. "Over the years, as an experienced player you know if someone is hitting the ball well, he is in great shape. He got 91 from 34 balls against KKR, probably that is the best innings I have seen in the IPL

just because he hit four quality bowlers he was batting against. "When you are doing that, you know that someone is batting very well," added Yuvraj, who is known for hitting sixes in the 2007 edition of WorldT20 in South Africa. The man of the tournament of the 2011 World Cup also backed Virat Kohli-led India, hosts England and Australia to do well in the mega event. "My first two teams are England and India. Obviously with (David) Warner and (Steve) Smith coming back, Australia will be in contention. West Indies also looked a very power-packed side. You can't say much at this stage. I think it would be India and England first, third would be Australia. Fourth I don't know," said Yuvraj. He also backed chinaman Kuldeep Yadav to do well in the World Cup. "I don't assess T20 cricket (form) over 50 over (cricket). I think Kuldeep has been a fantastic bowler for India and I'm sure he will bounce back quickly. He has been very effective against England, South Africa, Australia," said Yuvraj when asked whether Kuldeep's current form in the IPL was a concern ahead of the World Cup.

SMITH, WARNER BACK IN AUSSIE COLOURS

AFP ■ BRISBANE

Steve Smith and David Warner have been welcomed back to the Australian team with "no tension", coach Justin Langer said on Friday, with the World Cup offering another opportunity for redemption. The duo returned to the national side for a World Cup training camp on Friday in Brisbane after serving year-long bans for their part in the "sandpapergate" scandal in Cape Town. "There is no tension," a smiling Langer told reporters. "They're back in the team now. They've been selected, which is brilliant." The duo have enjoyed a solid comeback in IPL, with Warner in blistering form, topping the batting rankings with 692 runs from 12 innings. Langer acknowledged there would need to be some adjustments for the former team leaders, but said the team would be boosted by their experience. "When you come from the titled position of captain then there is going to be a certain degree of humility that comes with that," he said.



"One of our really strong values is humility, so there will be great opportunity to develop that." The Aussie coach welcomed the selection dilemma Smith and Warner added to the top order, joining Aaron Finch, Usman Khawja and Shaun Marsh, made it "exciting to have those five 100-makers at our disposal." Australia are the reigning World Cup champions and have been in recent red-hot form winning eight one-day internationals on the trot, against India and Pakistan. "We have had great success in the past. While we celebrate that, it means nothing on how we play this (World Cup)," Langer said. He said the team needed to use every tournament on the calendar to "make Australians proud of us again." "We must make the most of every opportunity that comes up, including this World Cup," he said.

'Gambhir has no great records, just lot of attitude'

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

They have never shared a great rapport on and off-the-field and now former Pakistan captain Shahid Afridi has gone a step further terming former India opener Gautam Gambhir as someone with "no great records and just a lot of attitude". In his just released autobiography 'Game Changer', Afridi launched a scathing attack on Gambhir, some of which turned out to be factually incorrect. "Some rivalries were personal, some professional. First the curious case of Gambhir. Oh poor Gautam. He & his attitude

problem. He who has no personality. He who is barely a character in the great scheme of cricket. He who has no great records just a lot of attitude," writes Afridi. Gambhir played 58 Tests, 147 ODIs and 37 T20 Internationals scoring more than 10,000 international runs across formats. Afridi played 398 ODIs for Pakistan with a lot of matches as opener but the average despite 8000 plus runs stand at less than 24 compared to Gambhir close to 40. In Tests, Gambhir has an average of close to 42 compared to Afridi's 27 plus. In fact, Gambhir was the top scorer with 75 against Pakistan in

the 2007 World T20 final. He retired from all forms of cricket in December last year. However that didn't stop Afridi from taking a sarcastic dig at Gambhir. "Gambhir behaves like he's a cross between Don Bradman & James Bond. In Karachi, we call guys like him saryal (grumpy). It's simple, I like happy, positive people. Doesn't matter if they are aggressive or competitive, but you have to be positive & Gambhir wasn't," he writes. Afridi, who also reveals his real age in the book making him five years older than what the official records state, recollected the



infamous heated exchange with Gambhir during an Asia Cup game when they nearly came to blows. "I remember the run-in with Gambhir during the 2007 Asia Cup, when he completed his single while running straight into me. The umpires had to finish it off or I would have. Clearly we had a frank bilateral discussion about each other's female relatives," Afridi recalled the uncharitable verbal exchange. Afridi featured in 27 Tests, 398 ODIs and 99 T20 Internationals. He retired from international cricket after the 2016 World T20 in India.

SINGLES

MBAPPE SLAPPED WITH 3 MATCH BAN
PARIS: French World Cup winner Kylian Mbappe was banned for three matches on Friday following his sending-off for a reckless tackle during Paris Saint-Germain's French Cup final debacle against Rennes. The French football Federation (FFF) said they had also opened disciplinary proceedings against Mbappe's teammate Neymar for striking a Rennes fan following the shock defeat on penalties after extra time. Mbappe lunged with his studs into the knee of Rennes defender Damien Da Silva near the close of extra time on Sunday. Having already missed one game, Mbappe will miss Saturday's match against Nice and the trip to Antwerp the following week but will be available for the last two games of the season.

NABY KEITA OUT FOR THE SEASON
LIVERPOOL: Liverpool midfielder Naby Keita will miss the rest of the season with an adductor injury that is set to sideline the Guinea international for two months, manager Jurgen Klopp said on Friday. Keita limped off midway through the first half of Liverpool's 3-0 loss to Barcelona at the Camp Nou during Wednesday's Champions League semi-final first leg. "Bad news, a high-grade adductor injury with the tendon rupture so it keeps him out for at least two months," said Klopp of Keita, who will now miss Saturday's trip to Newcastle, as well as home games against Barcelona and Wolves -- Liverpool's last match of the Premier League season. "Bad news for us and for Guinea with the Africa Cup of Nations coming up. Not nice," German boss Klopp added.

PRANNOY CRASHES OUT FROM NZ OPEN
AUCKLAND: H S Prannoy fought valiantly before losing to fifth seed Kanta Tsuneyama of Japan in the men's singles quarterfinal, drawing curtains on India's campaign at the New Zealand Open badminton tournament, here on Friday. Unseeded Prannoy squandered a one-game advantage before losing 21-17, 15-21, 14-21 to world number 11 Japanese shuttler in a marathon last-eight round match which lasted an hour and 13 minutes. The two shuttlers now enjoy a 1-1 head-to-head record against each other. Tsuneyama will play third seed and Jakarta Asian Games Gold medalist Jonathan Christie in the last-four round.

GHOSAL, JOSHNA ENTER ASIAN SEMIS
KUALA LUMPUR: India's Saurav Ghosal and Joshna Chinappa moved into the semifinals with convincing victories over their respective opponents in the Asian Squash Championship here on Friday. Ghosal's was the last match of the day and the Indian had hardly anything extra to take care as he disposed of Malaysia's sixth seed Mohd Nafizwan Adnan in straight games for an 11-4, 11-4, 11-3 win. Joshna on the other hand had a task in hand suppressing compatriot Tanvi Khanna before prevailing 12-10, 13-11, 11-7. Tanvi, who had made impressive strides in the championship and played with lots of motivation, continued in that vein against her senior. Unforced errors undid much of her spirited fight but it must be said to her credit, Tanvi stretched Joshna in the first two games before losing them over tie-break points. AGENCIES

