



BREAKING STEREOTYPES

Actor Mrunal Thakur says her decision to work in a film is not based on the age of her screen character

LEISURE P2



ASSAULT ESCALATES

Russia steps up its assaults on eastern and southern Ukraine by sending more troops, says Kyiv

INTERNATIONAL P10



ADVANTAGE LIVERPOOL

Liverpool dominate the first leg of their CL semifinal tie to beat Villarreal 2-0

SPORTS P12



5 detained for 'Nagin' dance with cobra

Baripada: Five people, including a snake charmer were detained for using a live cobra while dancing to the tune of 'Main Naagin' song at a marriage procession in Mayurbhanj district, police said Thursday. A video, which has gone viral on social media, showed 'baraatis' (people from the bridegroom's side) dancing on the streets of Karanjia town Wednesday night with a snake charmer hired by them displaying the reptile in his basket with its lid open. Forest department personnel reached the spot and rescued the snake. Questioning of those detained is underway and action will be taken under Wildlife Protection Act, 1982, said an official.



Matric examinations start today

Bhubaneswar: The annual High School Certificate (HSC) or the matriculation examination will start Friday across Odisha. All preparations for conducting the examinations in a smooth and fair manner have been completed by the Board of Secondary Education (BSE), said School and Mass Education Minister, Samir Ranjan Dash here Thursday. A total of 5,71,909 students will appear for the HSC exams while 9,378 and 4,443 students will appear for the State Open School Certificate Examination (SOSC) and Madhyama examinations, respectively. The Class X exams will be conducted at 3,540 centres out of which, 3,203 will be for the HSC examinations. **MORE P3**

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ABOLITION OF AFSPA VERY SOON: MODI

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Diphu (Assam), April 28: Prime Minister Narendra Modi said efforts are on to remove the Armed Forces (Special Powers) ACT (AFSPA) completely from the northeast region. Modi made the announcement while addressing a 'Peace, Unity and Development' rally here. He said AFSPA could be withdrawn from various parts of the region as the law and order situation has improved in the last eight years.

"As the (law and order) situation improved with 75 per cent decrease in violence in the region, there have been changes in the imposition of laws. The AFSPA was first revoked in Tripura and then in Meghalaya," Modi said. "Due to proper control of the situation in the last eight years, the AFSPA has been removed from most parts of Assam. We are trying to withdraw it from the remaining parts too. The Act is also applicable in some areas of Nagaland and Manipur, and we are working speedily to revoke it completely," added the PM.

In a major outreach to the northeast region, the Centre had announced reduction of the disturbed areas imposed under the AFSPA in Nagaland, Assam and Manipur, April 1, after decades.

"Earlier, the northeast was known for bomb blasts and violence and the worst sufferers were our mothers, sisters and children. Now as I see the smile on their faces when the youths have given up their arms, I feel God is showering blessings on me," Modi said. Modi stated the effect of the BJP's 'double engine' government is evident in the return of permanent peace and speedy development in Assam.

Now palm oil pain for consumers

Fuel prices have already dented the pockets of the middle-class. Now most Indian household will feel another pinch with Indonesia banning the export of the edible oil

AGENCIES

New Delhi, April 28: 'Acche Din' seems to be slipping further away from a large segment of the Indian population. Even as the intense debate over VAT reduction on fuel prices by states continue, another dent in the pocket is awaiting the consumers. The price of palm oil is set to skyrocket with Indonesia stopping exports from Thursday onwards.

India is the largest importer of palm oil and needs 7,00,000 tonne every month. Half of it comes from Indonesia only. Now with that supply cut, Indian companies will have to outsource the oil from somewhere else which means an increase in costs that will ultimately boil down to consumers. Palm oil officials were quoted as saying by 'Reuters' that the ban on exports of palm oil has trapped in various Indonesian ports at least 2,90,000 tonne of the edible oil meant to be headed to India.

According to the officials, the disruption in shipments after Indonesia widened its export ban to include crude and refined palm oil will create a vegetable oil shortage in India. They also said that Malaysia, which is the second-biggest exporter, is al-



ready struggling to meet higher demand levels.

"Our vessel with 16,000 tonne of palm oil is stuck at Kumai port in Indonesia," 'Reuters' quoted a top official of a company which monthly buys 30,000 tonne of palm oil in India. "It means that there will be a shortage in the market and consumers will be hit hard."

With limited options left now, Indian palm oil companies are rushing to buy the stuff from Malaysia. However, they have run into a dead end as the Malaysian companies have their own commitments and cannot go back on those to supply palm oil to India. So there will not be any respite for the pockets of consumers across India who are already feeling the

pinch due to the astronomical rise in prices of petrol, diesel, LPG and piped gases.

Reports also said that Indonesia's palm oil industry association GAPKI is working with the government so that the restriction is lifted. However, at present no immediate solution is in sight.

As it is, edible oil prices have been under pressure for the last couple of months due to the ongoing Russia-Ukraine war. Both the countries are major exporters of sunflower oil. Now with the Indonesian ban coming into effect, the prices of edible oils are expected to rise by a minimum 15 per cent if not more which will definitely increase the heat on household budgets.

Couple, kid found dead

Police have ruled out any foul play, but suspect that the duo killed the child before hanging themselves

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, April 28: In a tragic incident, the bodies of a couple from Maharashtra along with their 15-month-old kid was found hanging in their rented accommodation at Chintamaniswar area under Lamxisagar police limits, cops said Thursday.

The deceased identified as Tushar Rajendra Jagtap, his wife Nila Jagtap and their daughter Sibanya were from Satara district in Maharashtra. Tushar had been working at the Krishna Palace hotel for the past six months. The hotel is owned by Uttam Pawar, who also is a native of the same district.

Tushar had recently brought his wife and daughter from Satara. The family was staying at the ground floor of a house also



owned by Pawar.

The couple used to dine with Pawar's family around 8.30pm everyday, but Tushar did not go upstairs for dinner Wednesday night. Later, Pawar's wife knocked at Tushar's flat, but there was no response. Then she sent her son to check on the couple, but he also did not get any response despite banging on the door.

Pawar subsequently called two of his staff who broke the win-

dow and spotted the trio hanging from a skylight of the room.

"They used to fight frequently over a property dispute in their village. Few days back, we brought them to our house. Last night, when I knocked on their door, I did not get any response," Surekha said Thursday.

Police were informed about the incident around midnight and they reached the spot and sent the bodies for post-mortem. **MORE P4**

BSF BOON FOR ODIA JAWAN

As Behera was deployed in a remote post with no road link, he was airlifted by a helicopter so that he can reach home in time for his marriage

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Srinagar, April 28: The BSF flew a special helicopter sortie Thursday to airlift an Odia jawan deployed at a remote post along the Line of Control (LoC) in Jammu and Kashmir. It was done so that constable Narayana Behera can reach his home in Dhenkanal district



for his wedding May 2.

Behera is posted at a high-altitude post in the Machil sector along the LoC. As the LoC post is snow-bound and its road link with the Kashmir Valley is currently inaccessible, a military air sortie is the only available mode of transportation for troops deployed at these locations.

The parents of the jawan recently got in touch with his unit commanders, expressing apprehension

that their 30-year-old son might not be able to make it for his wedding. They were worried as all the arrangements had been made for the said date, the officer said.

The matter was brought to the knowledge of BSF Inspector General (Kashmir frontier) Raja Babu Singh. He ordered that a 'Cheetah' helicopter of the force stationed in Srinagar should airlift Behera immediately, an official informed, Thursday. The helicopter picked up Behera early Thursday and brought him here. He is now on the way to his home in Adipur village in Dhenkanal district.

IG Singh said he approved the air sortie as the welfare of troops was his 'first and foremost priority'.

IRREGULAR by MANJUL



Removing these loudspeakers will certainly bring some relief

Raut's daughter slams Centre over inhuman 'eviction'

The 90-year-old Padma Shri awardee could have died at the way his eviction was carried out, claimed Madhumita

AGENCIES

New Delh, April 28: Madhumita Raut, the daughter of 90-year-old Padma Shri awardee and Odissi dancer Guru Mayadhar Raut, has slammed the government for the 'inhuman' manner in which her dad was evicted Wednesday from the government accommodation here at the Asian Games village. Madhumita has not termed the eviction as illegal, but has said that the process could have been done in a better manner.

Defending its action, the government has said that Raut's accommo-

dation was cancelled in 2014 and eviction notices had already been served. He, as well as other artistes, had approached the court but lost the case and had been given April 25 as the deadline to move out.

Visuals of a frail Raut outside his residence surrounded by his belongings triggered a backlash against the Centre. His Padma Shri citation could also be seen lying on the street. Madhumita said artistes don't get respect in the PM Narendra Modi-led government. "We are very low on this government's priority. There's no cultural policy as well. I am not against the eviction,

but the inhuman way it was done. Our belongings were thrown out. Had I not been with my father that day, he might have died," Madhumita was quoted as saying by 'NDTV'.

Madhumita explained that she was at her father's residence by chance when officials arrived at the house. She said they did not even allow her dad to finish his lunch. "Officials who introduced themselves as eviction officers barged into our home and said they don't have even two minutes to spare," Madhumita said. "When I asked them to show the eviction order, they got really angry," Madhumita added.

"Immediately, labourers and policemen arrived. They started throwing out his belongings and my father was in a state of shock," added Madhumita and stated he suffers from multiple ailments. "He is still in a shock as he did not expect such rude behaviour," pointed out Madhumita.

Following Raut's eviction, the Centre has asked eight other artistes to vacate the facilities by May 2. Sources informed that the artistes have agreed to leave the quarters. However, all said that the process could have been handled in a better manner.



The Padma Shri citation of Guru Mayadhar Raut

It's Exam Time!
Here's a BIG
GOOD LUCK!
wish to you

All HSC Examinees

OrissaPOST

MARKET WATCH	
INDEX	VARIATION
SENSEX	57521.06 ↑ 701.67
NIFTY	17245.00 ↑ 206.60
DOLLAR	76.84 ↑ ₹0.01
EURO	80.50 ↓ ₹0.35
GOLD	₹51,152 ↓ ₹47
SILVER	₹63,850 ↓ ₹830

WEATHER		
	BHUB	CTK
TEMP	MAX 39.8°C	40.0°C
	MIN 28.4°C	27.4°C
Humidity	73%	79%
Rainfall	Nil	Nil
		Light Rain

leisure



AMBER HEARD DATED ELON MUSK BUT NEVER LOVED HIM: CARINO

AMBER HEARD DATED ELON MUSK BUT NEVER LOVED HIM: CARINO

Singer Lady Gaga's former beau Christian Carino, who was also the former agent of actress Amber Heard, has testified about latter's relationship with Tesla CEO Elon Musk. Following her split from Johnny Depp, the actress dated Musk for a year, but she never loved him, shared Carino.



FORTUNE FORECAST

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ARIES
It is a sunny, sparkling day, and the stars spell success. If you're feeling creative, simply pick up a paintbrush or try a new recipe. However, care and caution should be the buzzwords if you are driving alone, suggest Ganesh.

TAURUS
Your romantic relationship will be working on an over-drive today, says Ganesh. You will discover answers to the finer aspects of your love life. Overall, you will have a refreshingly creative outlook all through the day. It is a favourable day for those who cherish unrequited love, says Ganesh.

GEMINI
You need to bear in mind that you need to concentrate on your own image and standing in society rather than worry about the actions of others. Those in the retail business will see an unprecedented spurt in their profits today, says Ganesh.

CANCER
You will try to improve ties with beloved ones. Your devotion and dedication will reap benefits for the future. You will have physical and mental happiness. You will keep your future in mind. This will boost your self-confidence. Ganesh's blessings are with you.

LEO
You will be confused with issues relating to the workplace today. You need to accept your present circumstances for what they are, and work towards resolving your immediate concerns to find your way ahead in life. This period of doubt will pass very soon, says Ganesh.

VIRGO
Your beloved will not only give you a surprise today but also demand one, says Ganesh. There may be some good news on the business front. Ganesh says own up to your old mistakes so that you don't repeat them, and chalk out the plans for the future. There is no need to shy from taking the advice of a loved one, as it will only benefit you, and later in the day, you may spend some good time together.

LIBRA
Ganesh says you will get the answers to all your questions. You will tend to worry about small things and issues. You will be able to earn from different sources today. Ganeshji assures that if you keep your mind balanced you will achieve amazing results in your work.

SCORPIO
You may bump into people with different tastes and temperaments, says Ganesh. Some may surprise you, while some may just shock you. Sometimes, it is difficult to understand when people react indifferently to your success. Handle it with smartness and diplomacy.

SAGITTARIUS
You have been experiencing the adverse effects of stressful lifestyle off-late. But not anymore, as you realise the importance of good health. Maintaining good health will begin with good news of either promotion or increment at work. This leaves you happy and satisfied, says Ganesh.

CAPRICORN
Today, you'll like to hold a cup of hot coffee in one hand, relax and go down the memory lane to cherish some golden moments. You may want to give another chance to your romantic relationship as you develop likings for your ex-boyfriend/girlfriend. Ganesh finds you to be busy in a lot social gatherings today.

AQUARIUS
You speed up your pace and try to do everything in order to complete your targets, but you won't be able to complete the tasks on time. Don't lose hope as tomorrow will be a different day, says Ganesh. Give yourself some time to relax and unwind. You have worked very hard and Ganesh assures that your efforts will not go unnoticed.

PISCES
You need to concentrate more on your personal life, and seriously think about the changes you need to make. You are guided more by your heart in these matters. However, there is nothing to worry about, as this is a golden period for you. Today should be a progressive day that will bring a lot of positive changes in your life, says Ganesh.

AFTER WORKING NONSTOP LAST YEAR, ANDREW GARFIELD IS READY TO TAKE A BRIEF BREAK FROM ACTING

After working nonstop last year, actor Andrew Garfield is ready to take a break. "I'm going to rest for a little bit. I need to recalibrate and reconsider what I want to do next and who I want to be and just be a bit of a person for a while," *The Amazing Spiderman* actor revealed.



Mrunal doesn't bother over on-screen age

MUMBAI: Actress Mrunal Thakur, who's most recent outing is the family sports drama *Jersey* opposite Shahid Kapoor in which she plays the mother of a seven-year-old boy, says that she never regards age as the deciding factor to play a part in any on-screen outing. She says: "There have been times when actors were cast for their ability to play a role, irrespective of their actual age - and a lot of them have been quite successful at it. In fact, most of them have been applauded by the whole industry to have taken up the challenge." "My decision to work in a film has and will never be based on the age of my character. Rather, it will be dependent on how well do I resonate with the script or how interesting or challenging it would be for me to get to play a much younger/older version of myself on the big screen," adds Mrunal. Mrunal will be next in a family comedy film *Aankh Micholi* with Abhimanyu Dasani followed by war drama biopic *Pippa* with Ishan Khatter and Priyanshu Painyuli.

Satyajit Ray film fest from May 2

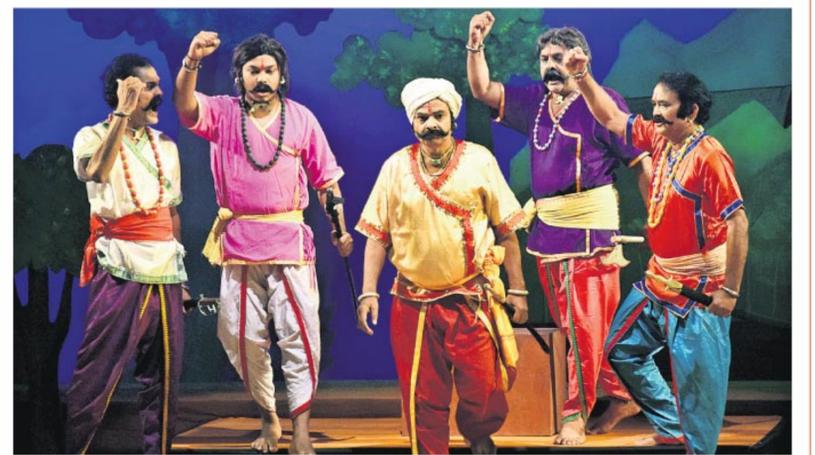
SCREENING OF RAY'S MOVIES SHALL BE HELD AT NEW DELHI, MUMBAI, CHENNAI, KOLKATA, BANGALORE AND PUNE



MUMBAI: The National Museum of Indian Cinema is set to exhibit legendary filmmaker Satyajit Ray's gallery and a three-day film festival as part of *Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav*. As May 2 is Satyajit Ray's birth centenary, the Union Ministry of Information and Broadcasting has initiated various activities to pay tribute to the legendary filmmaker.

The opening film at the festival is *Aparajito*, produced by Firdausi Hassan and directed by Anik Datta. The film is inspired by the making of Satyajit Ray's *Pather Panchali*. Furthermore, a panel discussion is scheduled to be held May 4, post the screening of *Pather Panchali*, the closing film of the festival. "People have seen Ray's films in some form or the other yet this time we invite Ray lovers for our handpicked package on the big screens in selected theatres for free," shared Ravinder Bhakar, Managing Director, National Film Development Corporation of India.

ODISHA SANGEET NATAK AKADEMI'S DRAMA FESTIVAL : DAY 4

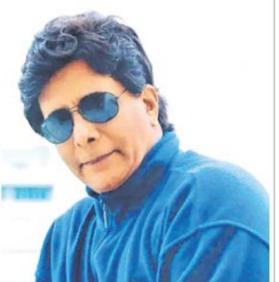


Indian revolutionary Veer Surendra Sai led an armed struggle in 1827 to end British Raj for which he had to spend over 35 years in prison. His valour and indomitable spirit Thursday came alive on stage through Odia play *Krantipurusha* at Rabindra Mandap, Bhubaneswar. Written by Dr Dwarikanath Nayak and directed by Satya Ranjan Behera, the drama was presented by theatre troupe Shree Cultural Association of Sambalpur.

Cameron's Avatar sequel titled Avatar: The Way of Water

LOS ANGELES: After a long wait, director James Cameron is finally ready to show audiences his otherworldly, underwater vision for the sequel of *Avatar*. It's newly titled as *Avatar: The Way of Water*. Disney, which inherited the franchise after acquiring 20th Century Fox in 2019, unveiled new footage of the highly anticipated film at CinemaCon, the annual gathering of movie theater owners that's currently unfolding at Caesars Palace in Las Vegas, reports Variety.

Salim Ghouse dies at 70



MUMBAI: Veteran stage, television and film actor Salim Ghouse - who featured in several Bollywood and south Indian movies - passed away following a cardiac arrest, here Thursday. Ghouse, 70, was rushed to the Kokilaben Dhirubhai Ambani Hospital in Versova late Wednesday but did not recover, his family members said. Born in Chennai and educated there, he later graduated from the FTII, Pune, and then plunged into theatres. Known for his roles in *Bharat Ek Khoj*, *Wagle Ki Duniya*, *Yeh Jo Hai Zindagi* and *Subah*, Ghouse enjoyed equal popularity in movies having acted with some of the biggest stars and banners since his debut in 1978 with *Suarg Nark*. He was seen with Shah Rukh Khan in *Koyla*, Mithun Chakraborty in *Mujrim* and *Shapath*, Kamal Haasan in *Vetri Vizhaa*, and Mohanlal in *Thazvaram*, and *Well Done Abba*.

PEANUTS



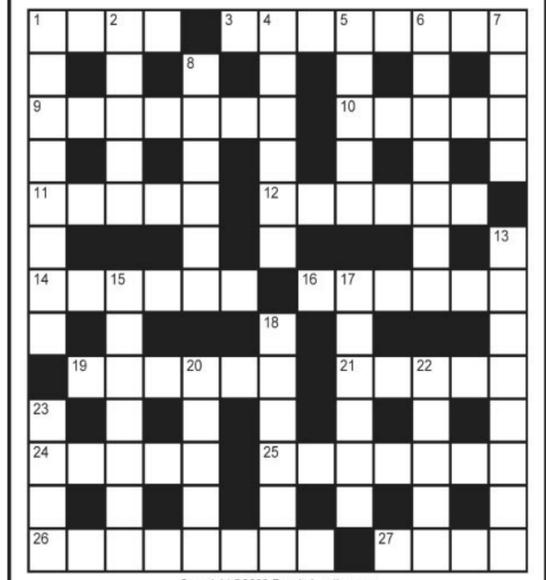
CALVIN AND HOBBS



BREVITY



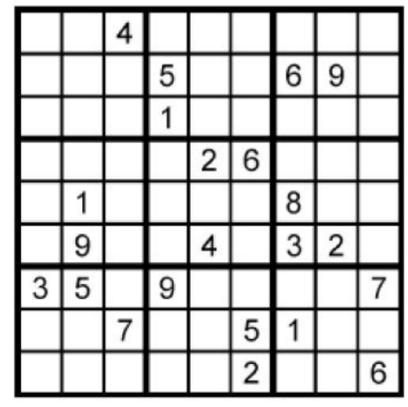
FUN post CROSSWORD



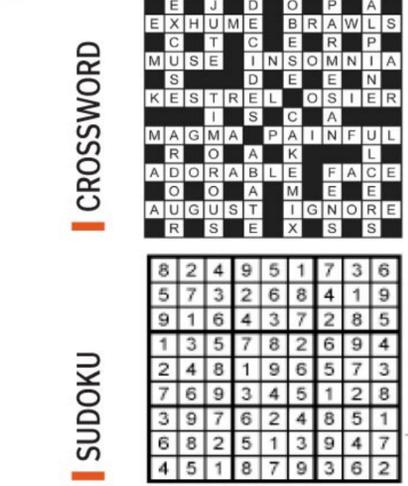
- Across**
1 Defeat decisively
3 Hand down
9 They fly into space
10 Cast
11 Destroy
12 Riga's place
14 Face, in slang
16 Member of the team
19 Bee house
21 Melancholy
24 Tequila source
25 This evening
26 Remote
27 Cross to bear
6 Competency
7 Embraces
8 Badger
13 Monkeys
15 Singing voice
17 King Arthur, for one
18 Periwinkle
20 Concert site
22 Hammond item
23 Picker-upper
- Down**
1 Off-road vehicle (4,4)
2 Quitter's cry
4 Artists' tools
5 Ill-suited

SUDOKU

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

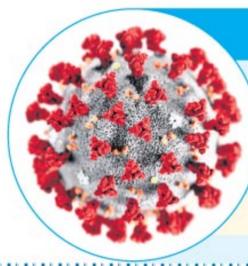


SOLUTIONS



CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW

Higher Education Minister Arun Kumar Sahoo inaugurated the first foundation day celebration of Madhusudan Law University in Cuttack, Thursday



	INFECTED	RECOVERED	DEAD
World	51,18,62,603	46,55,85,626	62,54,938
India	4,30,68,799	4,25,28,126	5,23,693
Odisha	12,88,024	12,78,779	9,124

57,650 cheque bounce cases pending in Odisha

POST NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi, April 28: As many as 57,650 cases of cheque bounce are pending in Odisha till April 13 this year, reveals a report submitted before the Supreme Court in a suo moto case of In Re Expeditious Trial of Cases Under Section 138 of Negotiable Instruments Act.

The report submitted by amicus curiae Sidharth Luthra to the Supreme Court stated that 7,826 cases of cheque bounce were registered in Odisha in 2021

The report submitted by amicus curiae Sidharth Luthra stated that 7,826 cases of cheque bounce were registered in 2021 while 3,518 such cases were disposed of in the same year.

The amicus curiae also submitted in his report that the Orissa High Court has not submitted an action taken report (ATR) stating the steps taken in furtherance of the apex court's request that High Court should issue practice directions regarding mechanical conversion of summary trials to summons trials and deemed service in all complaints with respect to one transaction.

Notably, the apex court has directed the Centre, High Courts and state governments to respond to suggestions of constituting special magistrate courts with retired judicial officials for faster disposal of cheque bounce cases.

The amicus curiae submitted that the special magistrate courts can be constituted invoking powers under Section 18 of the Code of Criminal Procedure.

Class XII board exams begin amid blazing heat



Students entering Rama Devi Women's Higher Secondary School in Bhubaneswar to appear the Class XII exams, Thursday

PNN & AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, April 28: Lakhs of students appeared for the Class XII board examinations in-person Thursday, braving a sweltering heatwave sweeping across the state, officials said.

The Annual Higher Secondary Examination (Theory) 2022, conducted by the Council of Higher Secondary Education (CHSE), Odisha, will continue till May 31.

After a gap of two years, students sat for the tests in offline mode, they said, adding, there will be one exam every day starting at 9 am.

A total of 3,21,508 students from arts, science, commerce and vocational streams have registered for appearing in the examinations held throughout Odisha.

The tests are being held in 1,133 centres and 202 management hubs have been set up for storing the



Students came out after appearing the board exams at SCS Higher Secondary School in Puri

question papers, the officials said. A three-tier security formation has been put in place at the examination centres, which are also

equipped with CCTVs. The state government has also made arrangements keeping in mind the prevailing heatwave con-

The Annual Higher Secondary Examination (Theory) 2022, conducted by the Council of Higher Secondary Education (CHSE), Odisha, will continue till May 31

A total of 3,21,508 students from arts, science, commerce and vocational streams have registered for appearing in the examinations held throughout Odisha

The tests are being held in 1,133 centres and 202 management hubs have been set up for storing the question papers

dition and the Covid-19 pandemic, they said.

Many students have expressed their happiness for appearing the Class XII exams in offline mode. "We are really happy to appear the examination in offline mode. We are well-prepared for the exam. The offline classes had helped us a lot to prepare for the board exam," said Sangeeta Sahoo, a Class XII student.

Manas Patnaik, another student, said this time the syllabus has been reduced by 30 per cent, which helped the students to manage the examination pressure amid the



Students writing the board exams at Sailabala Women's Higher Secondary School in Cuttack

Decision on school reopening after April 30

When asked about reopening of schools, the S&ME Minister said a decision in this regard will be taken only after reviewing the heatwave conditions April 30. "Appropriate decision will be taken based on IMD prediction and necessary guidelines issued by the Special Relief Commissioner," Dash added. In view of the intense heatwave conditions, the state government had ordered suspension of schools till April 30 this year.

Covid-19 pandemic. Earlier, the state government had warned stern action against those circulating fake question papers and rumours regarding answersheets on social media.

The government had directed the district Superintendents of Police (SPs) to keep a close watch on mischief mongers who circulate fake question papers and answer sheets on social media.

5.71L to appear matriculation exams today

As many as 5.71 lakh students will sit for the annual High School Certificate (HSC) or the matriculation examinations that will start across 3,203 centres in the state Friday, an official said.

School and Mass Education (S&ME) Minister Samir Ranjan Dash said the exams, which were earlier scheduled for the second sitting, will be held in the morning

shift owing to the prevailing heatwave conditions. The exams will begin at 8 am and end 10 am.

The Board of Secondary Education (BSE), which regulates the Class X board exams, said adequate arrangements are in place to ensure smooth conduct of the exam.

Despatch teams will leave the nodal centres at 5am and reach examination centres by 7am. On the

first day, candidates will enter the exam centres at 7 am and at 7:20 am on subsequent days.

The OMR answer sheets will be distributed to candidates at 07:30 am and question booklets will be distributed at 7:45 am, the BSE said.

It added that answer book packets will return to the nodal centres on the same day by the despatch teams.

MINOR'S RAPE

NHRC seeks reports from Keonjhar DM, SP

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, April 28: The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) has sought reports from the District Magistrate (DM) and Superintendent of Police (SP) of Keonjhar by June 4 this year in connection with the alleged abduction and rape of a minor girl under Town police limits in the tribal-dominated district in January 2021.

The commission's move came in response to a petition filed by rights activist Himanshu Sekhar Nayak. In his petition, Nayak had informed the commission about the abduction of a minor girl under Town police limits in Keonjhar in January 2021. "Although police managed to rescue the girl, they could not arrest the accused," said the petitioner.

Taking cognisance, the rights body October 29, 2021 sought action-taken report from the Keonjhar SP in connection with the incident.

The SP informed the commission that the Town police had registered a case (38/2021) initially under Section 363 of the IPC. "The girl was rescued from the residence of Chandan Jena in Bijuapur area of Khurda November 9, 2021. Her statements were recorded under Sections 161 and 164 of CrPC. Based on the victim's statement, Sections 366, 376(2)(n)/376(3) of the IPC and 6 of the POCSO Act have been added to the case," the SP informed the commission, adding that they were yet to arrest the accused.

The commission asked the Keonjhar Collector and SP to submit fresh status report of the case and details on measures taken by the investigating officer to arrest the accused as well as payment of compensation under 'Victim Compensation Scheme' within four weeks.

However, there was no response from the duo officers.

Expressing displeasure over the dilly-dallying approach, the commission warned the Keonjhar Collector and SP to submit the reports within four weeks failing which the NHRC will invoke its coercive power under Section 13 of the PHR Act, 1993 and order for the personal appearance of the officials concerned.

TRIBUTE TO MADHU BABU



Governor Ganeshi Lal, Information and Public Relations Minister Raghunandan Das and other dignitaries paid homage to Utkal Gourab Madhusudan Das on his birth anniversary near the Raj Bhawan in Bhubaneswar, Thursday



Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik paid floral tributes to Utkal Gourab Madhusudan Das in Bhubaneswar



Members of Bhubaneswar Lawyers' Association organised a meeting to celebrate the occasion

CM unveils Utkal Gourab Museum

PNN & AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, April 28: Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik Thursday inaugurated Utkal Gourab Madhusudan Museum and Interpretation Centre at the latter's birthplace Satyabhamapur in Cuttack district.

The museum and interpretation centre was opened by Patnaik through virtual mode on the occasion of the legendary leader's 174th birth anniversary.

"Madhubabu remains the example of Odia pride and his birthplace is a pilgrimage for the people of Odisha," Patnaik said.

Stating that the museum will work as a source of inspiration for the people, particularly youths, to further the cause of the state, the Chief Minister said Satyabhamapur is going to be an ideal village. He said the government is taking all possible steps to develop it as a tourist attraction.

The Chief Minister called upon people to work unitedly for development of Odisha. He said, "We need to emulate Madhu babu's love

for all Odias. He has never compromised his self-esteem as an Odia and his contributions to promote their interest would always be remembered."

Madhu babu had immense contribution towards the formation of Odisha as a separate state on the basis of language, the Chief Minister said, adding that it reflects the foresight of the great leader as several other states were formed on this basis.

Panchayati Raj Minister Pratap Jena, Salipur MLA Prasant Behera and Cuttack Collector Bhabani Shankar Chayani also spoke on the occasion.

Meanwhile, several functions were organized by different organisations, groups and associations across the state to mark Madhu babu's birth anniversary.

LAWYERS' DAY OBSERVED IN ORISSA HC

'Madhu babu believed in independence of judiciary'



Orissa High Court Chief Justice S Muralidhar paid tribute to Utkal Gourab in Cuttack

ORISSA HIGH COURT CHIEF JUSTICE S MURALIDHAR STRESSED UPON THE NEED OF A STRONG BAR FOR A STRONG JUDICIARY

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, April 28: The Orissa High Court Thursday observed the Lawyers' Day to commemorate the 174th birth anniversary of Utkal Gourab Madhusudan Das, an eminent lawyer in Odisha in the pre-independence era.

Orissa High Court Chief Justice S Muralidhar and other judges including Justice BR Sarangi, Justice Arindam Sinha, Justice SK Sahoo, Justice KR Mohapatra, Justice Savitri Ratho, Justice MS Sahoo, Justice AK Mohapatra and Justice BP Satapathy were present on the occasion.

Advocate General of Odisha AK Parija, Assistant Solicitor General of India for Orissa HC, President

The Chief Justice, other judges and dignitaries paid floral tributes before the statue of Utkal Gourab Madhusudan on the High Court premises

and office-bearers of High Court Bar Association, office-bearers of all Bar Associations of Odisha, District Judges and Judicial Officers of all 30 districts of the state also attended the event either in physical or virtual mode, sources said.

The Chief Justice, other judges and dignitaries paid floral tributes before the statue of Utkal Gourab Madhusudan on the High Court premises. On the occasion, the Chief Justice addressed the Bar

Associations of Odisha in virtual mode. "Utkal Gourab Madhusudan is the tallest among all tall figures of Odisha. He is held in the highest esteem by the Odia people," said the Chief Justice while paying homage to Utkal Gourab.

In the pre-independence era, Madhu babu believed in the independence of judiciary and championed all the values that were later embodied in the Indian Constitution. Remembering the commitment of Madhu babu towards the downtrodden, he urged the young lawyers to imbibe those values and said legal profession must address to the needs of the poor.

The Bench is just a reflection of the Bar, said the Chief Justice while emphasizing upon the need

of a strong Bar for a strong judiciary. Referring to the role of technology during the Covid-19 pandemic, the Chief Justice said the lawyers of various district courts are being trained in e-filing of cases and virtual hearing, with a view to equip the Bar associations to face the future challenges.

"The High Court is sensitive to the infrastructural needs of the District Courts and Bar associations. Steps are being taken in this regard," said the Chief Justice while announcing the plan for construction of an exclusive multistoried building for the High Court Bar Association.

He also announced the institution of an award for a young promising lawyer of the district Bar associations on the occasion.

CONTINUED FROM P1

Couple, kid found dead

“As all three persons who lived in the house have died, it is not possible to get eyewitnesses. We are waiting for the post-mortem report, which can establish the exact cause of death,” Bhubaneswar DCP Umashankar Dash informed.



“When someone is under acute mental depression, the person commits suicide. Only after investigation, we will be able to tell you why the couple took such a drastic step,” Dash added.

Police suspect that the couple first killed their kid and then committed suicide due to family dispute. Though an unnatural death case has been registered in this regard, police is likely to register another case of murder against the couple following the receipt of autopsy report as the cops suspect that the couple first killed the baby before hanging themselves.

Tushar was allegedly under mental and financial pressure as his father had registered the properties in the name of his second wife. He also had taken loans of more than ₹1,00,000 from different people.

There was a heated quarrel among the husband and wife over this issue Wednesday evening, said a police official.

CLASSIFIED

AFFIDAVIT

By virtue of an affidavit executed before the Executive Magistrate, Chatrapur vide Sl. No. 269 Dt. 27.04.2022, I JC-331462M Sub Maj/DED Gopal Sahu (Retired). Do hereby solemnly hereby declare that the correct name of my son is Priyanshu Sahu in all correspondence but in my service record his name has been erroneously recorded as Priyanku. So Priyanshu Sahu and Priyanku in one and same person. That I have no of objection if the above facts may be rectified in my service record and discharge documents for avoid future legally complicacy.

By an affidavit in the Court of the Executive Magistrate, Dharamsala, Jajpur No. 57AA 995025, I Kalandi Charan Jena, S/o. Bhima Charan Jena residing at: Kadampal, P.S.- Balichandrapur, Jajpur declare that in my Aadhaar Card My name has been wrongly mentioned as Kalandi Charan instead of Kalandi Charan Jena. Henceforth Kalandi Charan Jena and Kalandi Charan one and same person.

LOST

It is hereby informed that original Sale Deed bearing No. 2038 Dt. 02.09.1996 executed by Gokula Barik in favour of Sanchidananda Mohanty and others has been lost by me on Dt. 24.04.2022 on the way while coming from my Petrol Pump at Jatamundia to my father in laws house at Harirajpur, Banki. If found I request to hand over to me and not to misuse. Sd./- Manoj Kumar Nayak, 9778216955.

Boudh logs season's highest of 45°C

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, April 28: Heatwave condition continued to grip the state for another day as mercury soared to this season's highest temperature of 45°C at Boudh, Thursday.

According to Bhubaneswar Met Centre, 25 places of the state have recorded a maximum temperature of 40°C or above, of which eight weather stations reported temperature of 44°C or above.

The maximum temperature recorded was 44.5°C at Deogarh & Bolangir while Jharsuguda recorded 44.4°C, followed by Angul (44.3°C), Titlagarh (44.2°C) Sonepur (44°C) and Sambalpur (44°C). Mercury remained between 43°C and 44°C at places like Sundargarh, Hirakud, Bhawanipatna, Talcher and Bargarh.

Capital city Bhubaneswar and neighbouring Cuttack witnessed a maximum temperature of 39.8°C and 40°C, respectively.

There will be no respite from the heatwave for at least another

three days. After that, the mercury may slightly come down as a result of Nor'wester, said the Met Centre.

Maximum temperature is very likely to be more than 40°C and it is likely to be above normal by 3 to 5 degrees at many places over districts of interior Odisha and 2 to 3 degrees more than the normal temperature at a few places of coastal Odisha during next three days, it said.

Heatwave is very likely at isolated places over Sundargarh, Jharsuguda, Deogarh, Keonjhar, Mayurbhanj, Angul, Sambalpur, Bargarh, Sonepur, Boudh, and Bolangir Friday, and over the districts of Sundargarh, Jharsuguda, Sambalpur, Bargarh, Sonepur, Boudh, and Bolangir April 30.

The weather office advised people to take precautionary measures while going outside during the day between 11am to 3pm for the next three days. Farmers are advised to continue irrigation of sugarcane, summer maize, pulses and other crops and vegetables, it added.



Artistes from Kalahandi performed tribal dance (Dhaap) in the Adivasi mela held at the Exhibition Ground in Bhubaneswar, Thursday

OP PHOTO

FROLICKING FOLKS

Next 4 weeks crucial, stay sharp: Health Dir

PNN & AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, April 28: Noting that next three to four weeks are crucial for Odisha, the state government Thursday cautioned districts and asked them to keep all health infrastructures ready to tackle any possible rise in Covid-19 infections, a senior Health department official said.

Though the state used to report a maximum of up to 20 fresh cases daily this month, one should not consider that Covid-19 has completely gone from Odisha.

The infections are likely to rise in the state in the coming days, for which all measures need to be in place in order to tackle the impending situation, Health Director Bijay Mohapatra told reporters here.

He said hospitals have been asked to keep Covid wards ready to admit patients in case positive case count escalates. The districts have been directed to keep a close watch on the situation.

Stating that there is less possi-



bility of a fourth wave, he added that the infections could be seen in clusters as in the third wave. “The exodus of people of Odisha from the infected states led to the spike in the cases here during the third wave. Keeping this in mind, the government has asked district authorities to keep a close watch on those coming from other states to check the spread of Covid,” he said.

Meanwhile, the coastal state Thursday reported seven new infections, taking the Covid-19 tally to 12,88,024 while as many as

12,78,767 patients have so far recovered. With no fresh Covid fatality recorded in the last 24 hours, the state's toll stands at 9,124 and active caseload stands at 80, the Health department said in a bulletin. The state had reported zero Covid-19 fatality Wednesday as well.

Of the seven new cases, one is in the age group of newborn to 18 years. While four cases have been reported from quarantine centres, three individuals have contracted the virus locally. The state had registered 10 fresh Covid

“The exodus of people of Odisha from the infected states led to the spike in the cases here during the third wave. Keeping this in mind, the government has asked district authorities to keep a close watch on those coming from other states to check the spread of Covid

BIJAY MOHAPATRA | STATE HEALTH DIRECTOR

WODC chief meets agri, MSME entrepreneurs

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, April 28: Western Odisha Development Council (WODC) Chairman Asit Tripathy Thursday interacted with agri-business and MSME entrepreneurs in Bolangir.

Officials said that micro, small and medium enterprises in the district were assisted under the schemes like Mukhyamantri Karma Tatpara Abhiyan (MUKTA), Prime Minister Employment Generation Programme (PMEGP) and Pradhan Mantri Formalisation of Micro Food Processing Enterprises (PMFME) schemes.

Poultry farms, layer farms, food processing and cotton ginning units were seen to have made good progress in the district. One electric vehicle manufacturing unit was also in the pipeline, said Tripathy.

Some entrepreneurs raised issues relating to land demarcation, power supply, drainage system near industrial units, availability of bank

credit etc. Solution to the issues were decided through due deliberation with concerned officers. Tripathy set timelines for resolution of the issues.

Further, the WODC Chairman directed the district administration to organise regular facilitation sessions with local entrepreneurs and industries operating in the district. He instructed them to organise entrepreneurship training camps as well for local youths and handhold them in setting up their ventures.

The Bolangir district administration was also asked to develop marketing infrastructure and help link local products with national and international market. The proposal for organising one MSME exhibition in the district was discussed in the meeting.

Zilla Parishad president Debaki Sahu, Collector Chanchal Rana, along with district level officers of different departments joined this interactive session.

Only OSPHWC for infra work, HE dept reminds universities

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, April 28: The Higher Education (HE) department directed all state public universities for the execution of all infrastructure development work by Odisha State Police Housing and Welfare Corporation (OSPHWC) Ltd.

HE department Principal Secretary Saswat Mishra, in a letter to all such universities, wrote that in 2020, it was instructed by the state government that all infrastructure development work in state public universities would be carried out only by OSPHWC.

“Though, thereafter, state public universities are accordingly

assigning OSPHWC to execute their infra works, a couple of instances have come to the notice of the government wherein some universities are still with the idea of assigning works to agencies other than OSPHWC,” the letter read further.

“Therefore, it is hereby reiterated that all infrastructure development work of varsities shall be done only by the corporation and nobody else,” it added.

“However, as per the department rule, universities having state government engineers in deputation are allowed to execute infrastructure work by themselves, subject to the annual ceiling of ₹25 lakh,” the HE department letter read further.

CS unveils solar panels in Ganjam school

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar/Berhampur, April 28: Chief Secretary SC Mohapatra Thursday inaugurated a solar based energy system in a government-run high school at Narayanpatna in Ganjam district.

The Narayanpatna high school in Kankia panchayat is among the 535 government-run high schools in Ganjam that have been taken up by the district administration for installation of solar energy facility with an investment of ₹9 crore.

In the first phase, the solar panels would be installed in the transformed high schools under the 5T Initiative, where the infrastructure facilitation has already been completed, sources said. As many as 366 high schools have already been developed under the 5T Initiative.

“The solar panel installation work is going on in full swing. Thirty high schools have already been covered in solar energy so far and the rest will be completed in the next three months. The expenditure for the project will be met through CSR funds of different companies and contribution of Mo Schools

VIJAY AMRUTA KULANGE | COLLECTOR-CUM-DISTRICT MAGISTRATE, GANJAM



Additional Chief Secretary Anu Garg and Secretary to the Chief Minister and 5T VK Pandian accompanied the Chief Secretary to the high school. They reportedly praised the district administration for these innovative steps meant to implant a go-green concept in the district schools.

“The solar panel installation

work is going on in full swing. Thirty high schools have already been covered in solar energy so far and the rest will be completed in the next three months,” said Ganjam Collector-cum-District Magistrate Vijay Amruta Kulange. The expenditure for the project will be met through the Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) funds

of different companies and contribution of Mo Schools, he said. The solar energy generation units will be installed in the schools to provide 2kw and 4kw energy in small and big high schools respectively, he added.

The smart class, four lights, four fans, interactive panel, e-library, laboratory, lights in the toilets and verandah of each school will be powered with the solar energy, said Shinde Dattatraya Bhausaheb, project director, District Rural Development Agency (DRDA).

“The electricity bills in all the transformed high schools have gone up due to the use of interactive panels in smart classes and computers in the e-libraries. The solar energy project will help schools reduce their power bills and uninterrupted power supply,” he added.

Sagar Kavach: ‘Terrorists’ strike near Odisha coast, ‘neutralised’

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Kolkata, April 28: In a sea-borne strike, terrorists took control of a large bulk carrier anchored off the Paradip Port in Odisha.

The crew of the ship, including the Master, are being held hostage in the bridge of the ship. The terrorists have placed their demands. If they are not met, the ship and the crew will be blown up, the terror outfit behind this attack has stated.

Apart from the loss to human life, the blast will cause oil spillage along the Odisha coast, endangering marine species, including the endangered Olive Ridley turtles that migrate there from thousands of nautical miles away to roost and lay eggs.

The authorities do not press the alarm button to prevent panic and information about impending operations from reaching the terror-

ists. Indian Coast Guard Dhruv-III helicopters hover around the ship, providing live footage of the situation onboard to commandos preparing for a raid.

The helicopters are also a distraction for the terrorists who expect a heli-borne rescue attempt. There is a lot of chatter on the radio. The panic-stricken terrorists keep on repeating their threats and demand that the helicopters move away.

Calm and composed voices from the other end just ask them to lay down their arms and surrender. While all this happens, marine commandos have already boarded the ship and neutralising any explosives that may have been placed.

After ensuring that the ship can no longer be blown up, it takes a few minutes for the commandos to eliminate the terrorists onboard and rescue the crew unscathed. Blue Team wins.



This was one of the simulations carried out by the Indian Coast Guard (ICG) between Wednesday morning and Thursday evening along the Odisha coast as part of Ex Sagar Kavach. This was a real-life situation where the lives of seafarers (some of them from abroad)

were at stake. Evaluations on whether all procedures were followed will be taken up by a team of independent observers. Their recommendations will help tighten security along India's coastline.

The Indian Coast Guard Headquarters (North East), based

out of Kolkata, carried out the Ex Sagar Kavach along the Odisha coastline. The aim of the exercise was to evaluate the seaward threats emanating, given the present geopolitical situation in the region and the Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) that are in place.

This was also an evaluation of the three-layered security that is supposed to be in place along the Indian coasts. First, there is aerial surveillance. In the second layer, Indian Navy ships and large Coast Guard vessels are supposed to track and intercept any suspect vessel and destroy it if necessary. The third layer of security involves the use of ICG interceptor boats, boats of the state marine police, Central Industrial Security Force (CISF), Customs and the Forest department.

Those involved in Ex Sagar Kavach included the Indian Navy, CISF, marine police, personnel of the

Forest and Fisheries departments of Odisha, Railway Protection Special Force (RPSF), Customs, Paradip Port Trust, the Interim Test Range (ITR) and the Army Air Defence (AAD) College at Gopalpur, apart from several intelligence agencies.

This exercise was to evaluate the levels of efficacy at every level. The participants were divided into Red Team (attacking) and Blue Team (defending) and real-time simulated exercises were conducted. Every team did its best to win. Every aspect was evaluated and the SOPs studied, a senior ICG official said.

The purpose of the exercise was to strengthen the co-ordination between all coastal security stakeholders, develop progressive synergy, validating SOPs, identify grey areas and enhance the coastal security mechanism along the Odisha coast.

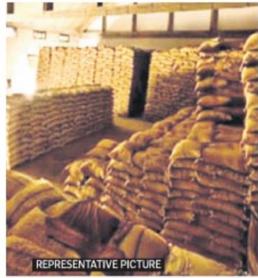
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SHORT TAKES

12-hour Athagarh bandh hits life

Athagarh: Normal life was thrown out of gear across this block in Cuttack Thursday due to a 12-hour bandh observed by locals protesting inclusion of 71 villages with Cuttack Development Authority (CDA). The dawn-to-dusk bandh called by Athagarh Surakshya Manch started at 6am and witnessed participation of various local outfits. All government offices and other business establishments remained closed during the bandh. The bandh was called after the state government decided to include 71 villages under the jurisdiction of CDA and issued a notification March 31 inviting suggestions and grievances. It is alleged that the residents were not informed in advance regarding the merger decision of the government. Moreover, the villages to be merged were from Khuntuni and Gurudijhatia areas but were shown as under Choudwar police station which irked the locals. This apart, April 30 was fixed as the deadline for submission of suggestions and grievances which was too short for them to file their reply.



REPRESENTATIVE PICTURE
POST NEWS NETWORK

Jajpur, April 28: After an audit report found irregularities in supply of rice in Dasarathpur block of Jajpur district, general manager (GM) of Odisha State Civil Supplies Corporation Limited (OSCSCL) Jayshree Senapati has directed the district civil supplies officer (CSO) to frame draft charges against Upendra Kumar Bhoi, former marketing inspector (MI) of Dasarathpur block.

CSO Salauddin Khan had earlier served a notice on the MI to reply on alleged dereliction of duty.

Reports said, the Civil Supplies department had conducted a special audit on the alleged bungling of rice by Bhatgawati Rice Mill at Samia in 2016-17.

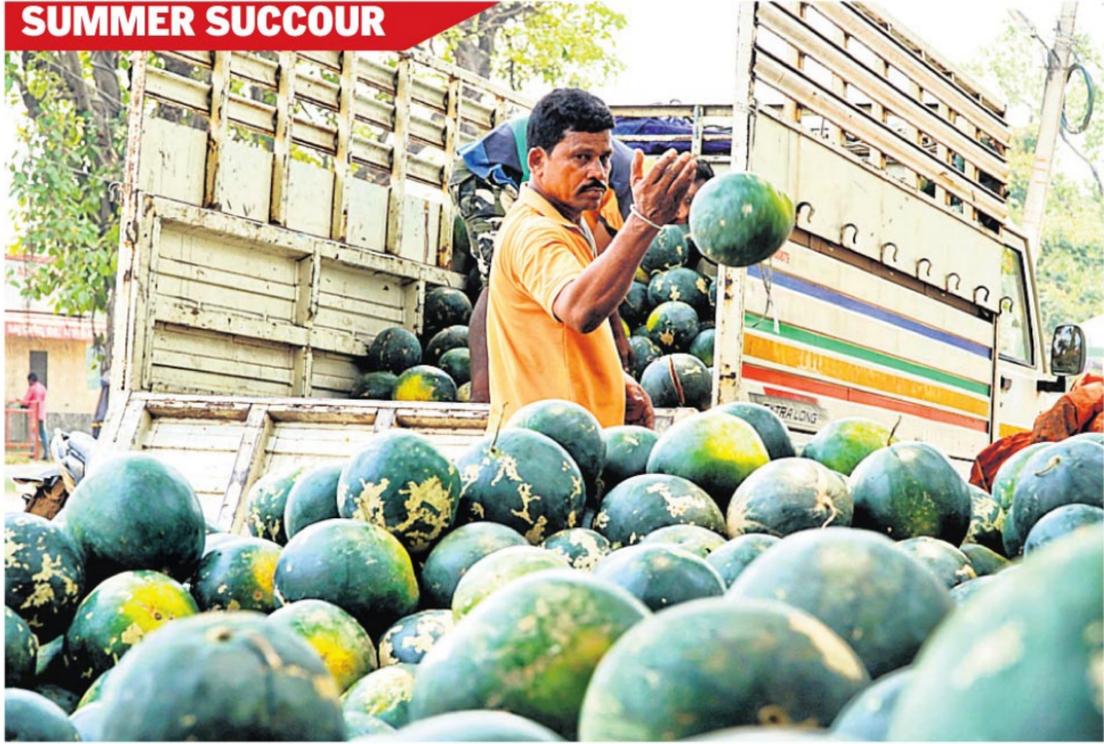
In the audit report, the department recommended recovery of ₹1.41 lakh from the rice mill, apart from regular payment of Rs 32.68 lakh.

Bhoi had been asked to look after the recovery of the dues from the rice mill.

The audit report had also detected misappropriation of ₹44.77 lakh by the MI. In the last five years, the OSCSCL has been sending reminders to the District Civil Supplies Department to submit necessary documents and papers about the irregularities. But a top officer and other officials had allegedly not taken any action in this direction and tried to hush up the matter.

The GM in a recent letter to the District Civil Supplies Department stated that a directive has already been issued to submit documents necessary for framing draft charges against the MI.

SUMMER SUCCOUR



A vendor unloading watermelons from a pick-up van in Angul, Thursday, with mercury soaring high across the state

OP PHOTO

Chheligada project to be ready by 2024

CHIEF SECY, 5T SECY REVIEW IRRIGATION PROJECTS IN GAJAPATI & GANJAM

POST NEWS NETWORK

R. Udayagiri/Gopalpur, April 28: Chief Secretary Suresh Chandra Mahapatra, 5T Secretary VK Pandian and Additional Chief Secretary of the Water Resources department Anu Garg Thursday took stock of the ongoing construction work of Chheligada irrigation project in Gajapati district and Ghatakeswar multi-purpose project in Ganjam district.

The review meeting revealed that the Chheligada irrigation project will be completed by 2024 and it will help irrigate more than 6,000 hectare farmlands in Ganjam and Gajapati districts.

That apart, it will produce 36 mega watt (MW) electricity after its commissioning. The construction work of 1,200 metre-long tunnel is expected to be completed by October this year, it was stated.

Briefing mediapersons, Chief Secretary Mahapatra said the construction work of Chheligada project will be completed well before the scheduled time.

"After its completion, water will be provided to farmlands through canals. As per the government guidelines, displaced people are being provided with financial assistance. Now, people displaced by the project have started going to the rehabilitation colony. Various measures have been taken for their self-employment and livelihood. In coming days, several schemes will be taken up for them," Mahapatra said.



Review conducted at Chheligada project site

Chheligada irrigation project will help irrigate more than 6,000 hectare farmlands in Ganjam and Gajapati districts. It will also produce 36 MW electricity after its commissioning

Ghatakeswar multi-purpose project at Kankia under Golanthara police limits is expected to be completed by December this year. It will irrigate around 600 hectare farmlands through underground pipelines. It will also cater to drinking water needs of 75,000 people of 14 villages

said. They reviewed the progress of Ghatakeswar multi-purpose project at Kankia under Golanthara police limits. The project is expected to be completed by December this year.

The work for this project had started December 20, 2019 at an estimated cost of over ₹168.10 crore. But its cost has escalated to 172 crore. About 25 per cent of the work has been completed so far. The project includes initiatives like rainwater harvesting and lateral use for irrigation.

Mahapatra said that 220-metre dam will be completed by December

and it will irrigate around 600 hectare farmlands through underground pipelines. It will also cater to drinking water needs of 75,000 people of 14 villages and Gosani Nuagaon under Berhampur Municipal Corporation (BeMC), he added.

Notably, 15 major irrigation projects will be operationalised in the state by 2024 under ambitious 'Transformational Initiative' of state Irrigation department.

Out of the 15 major irrigation projects, four will become operational in the current year, four in 2023 and seven in 2024.

Faulty irrigation project angers Titilagarh farmers

POST NEWS NETWORK

Titilagarh, April 28: People of 18 villages under this subdivision raised the issue of lack of irrigation facilities at a public hearing chaired by Bolangir Collector Chanchal Rana recently.

The district administration Tuesday resumed hearing of public grievances after a hiatus of two years.

The farmers pointed out that the Odisha government had set up Gurujibhatta lift irrigation project at a cost of ₹35 crore at Ranka. The project was completed two years ago. It is aimed at providing irrigation to 2,000 hectare farmlands in 18 villages. Despite the commissioning of the project, scores of farmers are deprived of water due to faulty survey and construction, the farmers pointed out.



REPRESENTATIVE PICTURE

During the time when Covid-19 hit the state, several acres of land were left fallow as water was unavailable from the project. L&T had been given the responsibility of the construction work. The district administration has asked the company to rectify the faults so that water would reach areas where irrigation is needed. L&T, however, has blamed the pandemic for the delay and faults in the project.

The farmers demanded that L&T should be told to rectify the construction faults as soon as possible. They added that one lift irrigation point has been set up to cater to the irrigation needs of 20 acres, but it failed to give proper coverage to the targeted area. They also said that legal action should be taken against L&T if the faults are not rectified immediately.

Rampant constructions turn Keonjhar into a hot cauldron

POST NEWS NETWORK

Keonjhar, April 28: Once known as a summer retreat for its cool climate, Keonjhar district has now turned into a hot cauldron as the summer has set in and construction activities are rising.

The continuous rise in temperature is forcing people to stay indoors as the district is slowly losing its past glory of being a cold valley. Environmentalists attributed the rising temperature to use of paver blocks in road construction works. Reports said paver blocks are road-building materials in the form of blocks of solid rock (granite, diabase, or basalt) having a form close to that of a parallelepiped.

Locals attributed the rise in temperature to loss of forest cover and sharp rise in construction of buildings commonly known as 'concrete jungles'. The rise in temperature has turned the cold valley into one of the hottest places in the state. This year, the heat is felt more than the previous years. The heat is being felt since March while the temperature has now touched 41 degrees Celsius.

Environmentalists alleged that trees that provide cover from summer heat are being felled to make way for construction of roads, schools and buildings. Compensatory afforestation is only in pen and paper, they said.

Sources said road construc-



tion works and renovation of ponds in various wards of Keonjhar town are being undertaken for the last two years where paver blocks are used. The paver blocks get heated during the daytime and radiate the heat during night.

Alekha Chandra Patra, a local, alleged that the consultancy firm lays sand, fly ash or crusher dusts on the ground during construction of roads. This prevents sunrays from penetrating into the ground, thereby increasing the atmospheric temperature.

Bibhuti Pattnaik, a senior citizen, said trees should be first planted by the roadside before laying the paver blocks which will help the sunrays to fall on the trees and not on the paver blocks.

Moreover, massive deforestation and unbridled mining have also contributed to pollution, said Sunaram Pradhan, a tribal of Kanjipani area. Several water bodies like ponds, wells and streams have dried up leading to water scarcity. Water shortage is a new phenomenon in the locality, he added.

Man kills cousin over land dispute

Nabarangpur: In a shocking incident, a man Thursday hacked his cousin to death over a land dispute at Hatibena village under Raigarh police limits in Nabarangpur district. The deceased has been identified as Debsingh Ganda, cousin of accused Kamalu Ganda. Police arrested Kamalu and sent the body for post-mortem. A murder case has been registered in this connection. According to sources, a quarrel broke out between the two siblings over farming in their paternal land. Kamalu, in a fit of rage, attacked Debsingh with an axe and hacked him to death. On being alerted by the locals, Raigarh police reached the spot and took the situation under control.

Portions of three buildings cave in

Balasure: Facades of three commercial-cum-residential buildings at Motiganj Bazar of Balasure town collapsed Thursday. However, none was injured in the incident though some traders were present there. The mishap occurred when construction of a drain was in progress. Locals blamed the ongoing drain construction work for the incident. The houses were 100-year old, but were repaired at different times. Preliminary investigation revealed that due to digging of pits for the drain, the walls of the buildings became weak and later caved in.

DEMO FOR DRINKING WATER



CPI activists staged a demonstration outside Junagarh block office in Kalahandi district demanding drinking water supply to Boraguda village under Dundermal panchayat of the block

Excise & police team attacked during raid

POST NEWS NETWORK

Koraput, April 28: A few villagers of Dangabir under Nandapur police limits in Koraput district reportedly detained and attacked about 10 excise and police personnel late Wednesday night during a raid on a ganja trader.

As per sources, the joint team of Excise department and Nandapur police got information from a reliable source that a trader has stashed 10 tonne ganja in a house. The joint team swung into action, raided the house and seized the cannabis. However, they were attacked by a few villagers when they were loading the seized contra-

band in a vehicle.

Besides, the villagers detained them as the personnel tried to escape from the spot to avert any untoward incident, the source added.

Informed about the detention of the team, Padua police reached the spot to rescue them but they were also not spared by the villagers. The seized cannabis was stolen from the police vehicle, said sources.

"Ten detained personnel were rescued after intervention of a police team from Nandapur. Some of the excise and police personnel including the driver of the vehicle were injured in the attack," an official said.

Gajapati teacher's passion for saving greenery

POST NEWS NETWORK

R. Udayagiri, April 28: He might be imparting knowledge to the students of a primary school for more than a decade, but his love for conservation of forests is what makes him different from other teachers.

Meet Karansingh Pradhan of Malipadar village under tribal-dominated Mohana block in Gajapati district. Though he is a teacher at a primary school at Deulakhani village, it is his love for forest and greenery that has brought him laurels from several quarters.

Pradhan has taken the responsibility of protecting a 30-acre forest which is home to a dozen of valuable trees like sal, mango, neem, tentuli

(Tamarindus Indica) and many others. Pradhan is leaving no stone unturned to protect the trees from smugglers and mafia.

Pradhan attributes his passion to his father Brahman Singh Pradhan.

"My father was a forest lover. He would do anything to protect valuable trees and herbs. His dedication and work had won him accolades from the government. But, 15 years back, he was killed by the smugglers and wood mafia," Pradhan bursts into tears remembering his late father.

"Now, I'm following the footsteps of my father. I will not let his efforts go waste," Pradhan added.

His day starts with a tour in the



forest. First, he goes and checks on the trees and does some work before he goes to the school. He then goes to school and returns in the evening to resume his work. He has been doing this since his father's

murder. He has been planting new varieties of trees in the forest. He is also making sure that no wood mafia or smugglers enter the forest. Slowly, all the insects, bees and birds that were lost are returning back to the

forest, much to the happiness of the villagers.

Now, villagers are also supporting him in tackling the mafia. They also help him in planting trees on a massive scale. Many have even taking up agriculture inside the forest, without any harm to the trees. Seasonal crops like black pepper, peas, beans, varieties of legumes and other vegetables are also grown in the forest to increase its fertility. These crops are sold in the local market or cooked for students in the school, Pradhan said.

"People have understood the value of forests and nature. It is extremely necessary to spread awareness on forest protection. I will continue to do this noble work until I'm alive," Pradhan concludes.

BUREAU OF ENERGY EFFICIENCY
(A Statutory body under Ministry of Power, Government of India)
4th Floor, Seva Bhawan, R. K. Puram, New Delhi - 110066
Website: www.beeindia.gov.in, Ph: 011-26796700

22nd NATIONAL CERTIFICATION EXAMINATION FOR ENERGY MANAGERS AND ENERGY AUDITORS 30th and 31st July, 2022

Bureau of Energy Efficiency will hold the 22nd National Certification Examination for Energy Managers and Energy Auditors on 30th & 31st July, 2022 (Saturday and Sunday).

Prospectus can be downloaded from www.aipnpc.org as per the instructions given in the website. Link to the above website are also available at www.beeindia.gov.in

Commencement of Online Registration: 03rd May, 2022 at 10:00 hrs.

Closure of Online Registration: 03rd June, 2022 at 23:59 hrs.

davp 34106/12/0006/2223

(Secretary)

GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA No.C-164:
OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER
PUBLIC HEALTH DIVISION, KEONJHAR- 758001
Ph. No.06766-254096, e-Mail: - eepkhjr@gmail.com

NATIONAL COMPETITIVE BIDDING THROUGH e-Procurement.

Invitation For Bids (IFB) No. SEPHKJR-03/2022-23 dt.26.04.2022

- Name of the Work : Provision of Water supply in Government College of Engineering at Keonjhar.
 - Estimated Cost : Rs.78.67 Lakh
 - Period of completion : 90 Days.
 - Date & Time of Availability of Bid Document in the Portal : 10 hours of dt.30.04.2022 to 17 hours of dt.10.05.2022.
 - Last date/time of receipt of bids in the portal : Dt.10.05.2022 at 17 hours
 - Date and time of opening of bids : Dt.11.05.2022 at 11 hours
 - Name and address of the Officer Inviting Bid : The Superintending Engineer P.H.Division, Keonjhar 758001, Odisha Ph.06766-254096 e-Mail:eepkhjr@gmail.com
- Further details can be seen from the website www.tendersorissa.gov.in.
Sd/- Superintending Engineer, Public Health Division, Keonjhar OIPR-13054/11/0004/2223

FOCUS SOCIETY

SNOBBERY OF STOMACH



Culinary globalisation operating through global capitalistic strategies has forced us to discard the virtues of food, no matter how richly we foot our bills at the counter

parcel. In fact, there are several kinds of such examples. The viral video of the delivery boy pilfering food from the parcel before delivering, the delivery boy in Bhubaneswar acting as Good Samaritan amongst the public, or the recent Haldiram halal controversy in Bangalore are quite a few. You could bring in race, gender, caste, class, region, religion, health, beauty, body, into this domain of culinary crises of our times. On the other hand, culinary globalisation operating through global capitalistic strategies has forced us to discard the virtues of food, no matter how richly we foot our bills at the counter. 'Gluttony' is a Christian sin, so it is in other religions too; yet we are being dragged into it. 'Charity' is a virtue across religions, yet we lavishly squander money on fashionable foods, when actually multitudes of people starve in places not very far from our restaurants and dining tables.

Similarly, in the very eating process, we have rationally profaned food and rejected its spiritual connections with body, mind and soul. We read such sacred relationship in Krishna's reply to Arjun in the Bhagavad Gita: "For like as foods are threefold for mankind, in nourishing, so is there threefold way of worship, abstinence, and alms giving!" The Catholic concept of transubstantiation of Christ's 'flesh as bread and blood as wine' would establish the spiritual symbiosis of food and humans.

We no more realise that food is not just a hunger-slaking item but also an integral part of a larger chain of place, people, culture, and Nature. The primitive poor fought for food due to their scarcity and ignorance of food, but the greedy millennials toil for food due to their excess knowledge of food. The difference between our ancestors and us is the difference between hunger and gluttony. And, I believe, a great lot of our present culinary crises will be eradicated, if we employ our conscience to realise this difference between hunger and gluttony!

The writer is Associate Professor, Department of English, Faculty of Arts, Banaras Hindu University.

Eating omnivorously and ubiquitously has become the consumption norm of our times! This new Epicureanism of unregulated gluttony has been the driving force of our modern lives. Gastronomical innovations and transformations seem to bombard the matters and manners of food in our times. Rapid and spectacular inventions in shapes, colours, textures, look, packaging, parceling, advertising, delivering of food, including even the very manner of cooking and eating it, are not just awesome but mindboggling too.

Added to this new culinary culture is the capitalist method of production, distribution and consumption of foods. And its marketing cousins—those tempting advertisements in their hard and soft presence around you! They coax you to subscribe that the new experiments with food is a sign of modernity and your status, and if you do not try a new dish every day, you are backward. Sticking to staple food is a stale sign—as much of the food as of you! These mercantile principles of food have brought in vast and forcible changes in our culinary culture. Everything about food, the matter and manner of it, the times and spaces of it, the mentalities and attitudes, as well as the cultures and rituals of it, has undergone radical changes. The most spectacular display of such culinary revolution can be witnessed in the picturesque menu-cards and the exotic names of the dishes with their desi and continental categorisations therein! Commenting on the modern culinary snobberies, AG Gardiner, the English essayist, opines: "Extravagant dinners bore me and offend what I may call my economic conscience; I have little sense of the higher poetry of the kitchen, and the great language of the menu does not stir my pulse. I do not ask for lyrics at the table. I want good, honest prose."

Food has certainly changed its domain—from the scared and private domestic sphere at home to the profane and public platforms of global world. So have our dining space and eating etiquettes. Internet,

YouTube and other social and digital forums are the ocular sites of such gluttonous culinary praxis. It would certainly not be a mistake, therefore, to consider such extravaganzas of food in our times as the snobbery of stomach! And this snobbery is inseparable from our modern lifestyle, as much as technology and computers are now inseparable from us. Oscar Wilde satirises this strange synonymy between consumption and city life in his play *The Importance of Being Ernest* (1895): ALGERNON - How are you, my dear Ernest? What brings you up to town? JACK - What else should bring me anywhere? Eating as usual...!

Food has thus appeared to be a strong marker of our identity and culture. It defines us, our space, our history, and the culture we live in. But, it has also bred several doubts and questions. Are we really happy and content with the freedom and choice we exercise in our culinary culture? Does our eating culture really define us modern, civil and refined? Are we ethical in not just what we eat but how we eat it also? Well, the ocular evidences from the world of our crude consumption culture suggest otherwise! In fact, this culinary exoticism has disturbed our lives—bringing cultural hazards of many kinds. The picture is more peculiar in developing countries like India, Bangladesh, Pakistan or a continent like Africa. The dominance of food capital-

ism, as we experience in the developing countries like India, is actually a kind of culinary crusade against the indigenous food culture. The menu of such global foods is actually the culinary syllabus for the oppressed! We the poor and oppressed are being baptised into Western menu, and in a visibly invisible way. What Macaulay's English education did earlier to our culture is being reiterated by Westernised food culture in our times. It is an elite culinary carnival which actually promises more but provides meagre. We are more seduced into the culinary cleavage between ours and theirs, hygienic and unhygienic, elite and ordinary. Globalisation and its food service sectors are not only defining nature and kinds of food, but also maintaining the culinary divide to rule. Our oriental foods are now exotic matters for the Western eyes, as we ourselves were to them during the colonial era. Awarding YouTube certificate for cooking channels is a neocolonial incentive now. We still need Western stamp for our culinary standard!

Capitalistic food culture is a culinary bomb that threatens all of us now, no matter how best it facilitates and guarantees food and services. It has given birth to hunger, violence, sins and culinary crises of many kinds. Take for examples the cases of delivery boys beaten up in Indore and Bangalore, or the delivery boy who died in a road accident while rushing to deliver the food

THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN OUR ANCESTORS AND US IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN HUNGER AND GLUTTONY



P. Dalai

The Green Imperative

Russia's invasion of Ukraine has forced the European Union to accelerate the pace of our energy and climate policy. Since the Kremlin has increasingly used energy as a tool for political influence, we must derive it of its leverage by radically reducing our dependence on fossil-fuel imports from Russia.

The geopolitical rationale for doing so overlaps with the imperative to tackle climate change. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change's latest report on mitigation underscores the urgency of that task. Total greenhouse-gas emissions must peak by 2025 if we are to avoid a catastrophic increase in global temperatures. Moreover, the economy-wide shift to clean energy must be managed carefully to account for the inevitable social and economic consequences; it must be a "just transition."

The EU and the European Investment Bank have a vital role to play in this transition. Investments in renewables, energy efficiency, and innovative technologies such as green hydrogen are important tools for dealing with Russia's aggression and helping to save the planet from dependence on fossil fuels. Every euro we spend on the energy transition at home is a euro we keep out of the hands of an authoritarian power that wages aggressive war. Every euro we spend on clean energy enhances our freedom to make our own decisions. Every euro we spend helping our international partners accelerate their own decarbonisation strategies is an investment in resilience and in the fight against climate change.

Since Russia's invasion February 24, the EU has been accelerating its energy transition plans to help end Europe's reliance on Russian fossil-fuel imports as soon as possible. Although this will not happen overnight, the incentives to do so are now greater than ever. We can achieve energy independence by improving efficiency, diversifying supplies, and ramping up renewables. This process requires a mobilisation at all levels—from supranational bodies down to households and individuals.

There are two important caveats to consider. First, the search for alternative suppliers of natural gas—critical as it is in the short term—must not lock us into a new long-term dependence that requires heavy investments in fossil-fuel infrastructure. That would be costly, catastrophic for the planet, and ultimately unnecessary, given the more climate-conscious options that are available.

Second, we must not trade one bottleneck for another by swapping our over-dependence on fossil fuels for over-dependency on raw materials needed for the green transition. These resources are heavily concentrated in just a handful of countries, not all of which hold the same values and interests as the EU. Strengthening the EU's strategic autonomy and resilience must remain a key objective of the transition.

Europe cannot do this alone. Winning the battle against climate change and standing up to Russian aggression are global challenges that demand a global response. Russian President Vladimir Putin's war has strengthened the strategic rationale for all countries to reduce their fossil-fuel imports and invest more in climate-friendly energy solutions.

That is why the EU is actively engaged in climate diplomacy. We want to encourage others to raise their climate ambitions, and we have committed considerable resources to working with partner countries so that they, too, can move to a resilient net-zero-emissions economy. Through the European Green Deal and the EU's new Global Gateway initiative, EU institutions and member states are mobilizing up to 300 billion (\$325 billion) of investment in green and digital infrastructure to address the climate, biodiversity, and energy crises.

Moreover, the EIB has pledged to support 1 trillion of investment in climate action and environmental sustainability by 2030. Through its new development arm, EIB Global, the bank is working with partners around the world to mobilise finance for energy efficiency, renewables, and electricity grid projects.

Working as part of the EU's joint effort under Team Europe, the EIB's support for a clean-energy future ranges from investing in solar power in Senegal to financing more energy-efficient kindergartens in Armenia. The bank has also helped forge a Just Energy Transition Partnership with South Africa; provided backing for the India-based International Solar Alliance, which supports solar power development across 105 tropical countries; and signed on to an integrated water management and flood prevention scheme in Argentina.

The EU stands ready to support the global community in ending its dependency on fossil fuels. Russia's war on Ukraine is not a reason to delay investments in climate action. On the contrary, more green investment will give us more strategic autonomy. Decarbonisation has become a geopolitical imperative. We call on our global partners in government and across international financial institutions to join us in accelerating finance for clean energy. By pursuing climate neutrality, we can also achieve energy security.

Josep Borrell is Vice President of the European Commission for a Stronger Europe in the World. Werner Hoyer is President of the European Investment Bank.

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WISDOM CORNER

What the caterpillar calls the end of the world the master calls a butterfly. RICHARD BACH

Faith is taking the first step even when you don't see the whole staircase. MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.

To live is to suffer, to survive is to find some meaning in the suffering. FRIEDRICH NIETZSCHE

WORDSWORTH

Staddle

Readers of Tolkien's *Lord of the Rings* trilogy may recognise this as the name of one of the villages of the Bree Land. It suggests the strength and stoutheartedness of a people who for him meant all that was solid and dependable about traditional England. Like most of Tolkien's words, it's no accident. He was borrowing an Old English word that meant variously a foundation or support. We've almost entirely lost it today, though it survived for some centuries in English dialect, most commonly in the south of the country. One sense was of a stump of a tree that was left in the ground after felling so that a clump of thin stems could grow from it, a technique called coppicing. It could also refer to a tree left in place when all around had been felled, so that it would grow to full size, called a standard, unencumbered by neighbours. The link between these senses is that one form of woodland management was called coppice with standards, which combined the two methods. Staddle seems to have been used indiscriminately for both components. The sense you're most likely to encounter, however, especially if you visit a museum of historic buildings, is of a stone carved in the shape of a mushroom, with a conical stem and a wide rounded top. This isn't a staddle, strictly speaking, but a staddle stone. It was one of the supports that kept the actual staddle, the wood or stone base of a hay rick or granary, clear of the ground. The staddle stones were that shape to keep the rats out. On the east side, in front of the house, a barn stands clear of the ground on staddle stones; and opposite is the cow byre. -- Watership Down, by Richard Adams, 1972.

SPECTRUM HEALTH

Dealing with insomnia



Nazia Arif

STUDIES FROM AROUND THE WORLD HAVE SHOWN THE PREVALENCE OF INSOMNIA IN 10% TO AS HIGH AS 60% OF THE POPULATION

For starters, there are biological factors such as changes in the circadian rhythm which acts as our body's natural clock. The circadian rhythm controls the timing during which we remain sleepy or awake throughout the day. These cir-

adian rhythms are sensitive to our body temperature, alertness and exposure to light. Little or too much of these can prevent our body from releasing enough sleep-inducing hormones, such as melatonin. Sleep disturbance may also be due to life stressors, muscular pain, and use of medications, or the sleep environment being too hot or cold, noisy or light. Visual and light stimulation, associated with television viewing or computer use prior to bedtime, may delay sleep onset and disrupt sleep. Daytime napping to top up nocturnal sleep is common in older adults and may cause awakenings during the night and/or early waking.

On the other hand, there are social factors such as night shifts or frequent travels. These cause our body clock to become out of sync with the environment it is in. When you travel between countries that have different time zones, your body will require some time to readjust to the new day light cycle of your destination.

And last but not least, there are psychological factors such as stress, depression, invasive thoughts and excessive worrying. A family history of sleep disturbance, can also lead to developing insomnia. So if you have been properly assessed by

a physician and are clinically diagnosed with insomnia, how do you treat it?

Eating the correct foods before bedtime is an easily adapted pre-sleep behaviour that can enhance sleep. It is well-known that caffeinated beverages can delay sleep onset and adversely affect the depth of sleep in susceptible individuals. Alcohol can also delay rapid eye movement sleep and cause sleep disruptions. Some consideration of the foods selected for the evening meal may have a significant impact on the quality of sleep. Research has shown foods that increase availability of tryptophan, or those that contain high levels of tryptophan, may be effective in promoting sleep. Foods high in tryptophan can be found in whey proteins, milk, yoghurt, pumpkin seeds. When consumed with carbohydrates, these foods help promote sleep.

You can try to create a daily and consistent routine by going to bed and waking up at the same time each day. Make sure your bedroom feels dark, relaxing and comfortable. You must limit your exposure to TV screens and mobile devices before you sleep. The blue light emitted by these screens prevents the production of melatonin, the hormone that controls your sleep-wake cycle. You should also eat light meals and

avoid caffeine and alcohol before bedtime. You can also make it a habit to exercise and be physically active during the day. In more severe cases, you may be prescribed sleeping medications. But even if used correctly, these medications can only provide you with help for a short period of time, they can become harmful and addictive if used for a longer period. Herbal preparations such as melatonin and valerian have been promoted for use in this condition primarily due to this concern. Melatonin is a hormone intimately concerned with the light-dark cycle and circadian rhythms, including sleep cycles. Its amount in the body is reduced due to the use of tobacco, alcohol, and many drugs. Its levels also go down with age.

For persisting insomnia symptoms, successful treatment requires cognitive-behavioural therapy (CBT). CBT has been found to reduce insomnia by 50%. CBT retrains people who suffer from insomnia to view the bedroom as a place of sleeping instead of a place of worrying about falling asleep. CBT can also help people improve their lifestyle, correct their sleeping environment, and learn new relaxation skills.

The writer is PhD Research Scholar, GM University.

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, opinions and suggestions, preferably by email, to: edit@orissapost.com

OrissaPOST
B-15, Rasulgah Industrial Estate, Bhubaneswar-751010

Blow to Congress

Sir, The resurgence of Congress was undoubtedly hit with another blow by poll strategist Prashant Kishor's rejection of Sonia Gandhi's proposal to join the Congress. Terming it as a 'generosity offer' Prashant clarified that the party needs leadership and willpower more than him. This development was certainly disappointing for the party. However, the efforts to rescue the Congress from the difficult situation have definitely brought the party into the limelight of political circles. Along with this revival exercise, the question is also being raised whether the democratic process within the party will be strengthened again? Undoubtedly, with changing times, methods and strategies of elections have changed. Simultaneously, the role of other factors influencing the mood of the public has increased. So has the Congress geared up for a radical change? To what level will it form an alliance to take regional parties along? How far will the exercise of leadership change in the states take? Will the creation of party cadre at the ground level and better use of modern information media also be part of the party's strategy? Though the Congress has understood that only symbolic reforms will not work, the party will have to bring many revolutionary changes in its strategies to enter the 2024 poll season.

Abhijit Roy, JAMSHEDPUR

Revenge politics

Sir, The arrest of Amaravati MP and her MLA husband by the Maharashtra government for mass reading of Hanuman Chalisa in front of the CM's official residence has created a furore in political circles. They were booked for treason and for creating disturbance. Reading Hanuman Chalisa was a symbolic protest against the administrative incompetence and apathy of the state government towards real issues afflicting the state. Punishment imposed to the MP was more than necessary. It was a political overkill. There is another side of the story. When Gandhiji was doing fast, he never blocked any road or public place. But, chanting Hanuman Chalisa in front of CM's official residence is not a wise decision. It could have created law and order situation. It could have also created traffic problems and put the public in jeopardy. Religion is a private affair. It is not meant for public exhibition. There are other suitable forms of protest. There should not be any place for revenge in politics. Politics should be for the greater good of the society.

Prabhudutt Dash, BHUBANESWAR

national

of the day quote

A spike in Covid cases is being reported in Europe and a few other countries especially among those who have not been vaccinated. About 98 per cent of the eligible population has been vaccinated in Karnataka. Attention is being given to administer precautionary vaccine doses in the state

BASAVARAJ BOMMAI
KARNATAKA CHIEF MINISTER

Constitutional and religious rights of every section are absolutely safe in India but nobody has the right to indulge in forceful and fraudulent religious conversion

MUKHTAR ABBAS NAQVI
MINORITY AFFAIRS MINISTER

Each individual has to work with a sense of purpose and intention. We should have a vision and put in concerted effort to achieve our goals

CONRAD K SANGMA | MEGHALAYA CM

SHORT TAKES

Delhi: Deer horns seized

New Delhi: A woman was arrested in the national capital Thursday, while trying to sell deer horns, a Delhi Police official said. According to the official, a tip-off was received regarding the supply of deer horns near BD Estate, Timarpur, Delhi by a woman. Police, accompanied by Forest and Wildlife Department officials conducted at the spot, and arrested the woman, a resident of Aruna Nagar, Majnu ka Tilla, Delhi. A total of 3 kg deer horns of barahsinga (swamp deer), valued at Rs 1.5 crore in international market, were seized from her possession.

Six Rohingyas detained

Agartala: Six Rohingyas, including a woman and two children, were detained in Tripura's Dharmanagar bordering Assam, the police said Thursday. The police detained the six Rohingyas late Wednesday night after they arrived at the Dharmanagar railway station by the Tripura Sundari Express from Delhi. The train runs between the national capital and Agartala once a week.

Manjhi invites Tej Pratap for Iftar party

Patna: A day after RJD leader Tej Pratap Yadav levelled serious allegations, including of "conspiracy" against him, former Bihar Chief Minister Jitan Ram Manjhi Thursday invited the former for his Iftar party Friday. In the month of Ramzan, various political parties of Bihar are organising Iftar parties. On Thursday, the ruling Janata Dal-United gave an Iftar party in the Haj Bhawan in Patna. Manjhi, who heads the Hindustani Awam Morcha, will now organise an Iftar party in his own residence Friday evening.

50 kg heroin seized

New Delhi: The NCB has seized about 50 kg of "high-quality" heroin and arrested a man after it conducted raids in the Shaheen Bagh area of Delhi's Jamia Nagar, the federal anti-narcotics agency said Thursday, claiming to have busted an Indo-Afghan drug-smuggling racket. Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB) Deputy Director General (Operations) Sanjay Kumar Singh said during a press briefing that cash amounting to Rs 30 lakh was also seized after the operation at a residential premises in the south Delhi area Wednesday.

Political slugfest over high fuel prices escalates

As opposition CMs launched a fresh offensive against the PM on the issue of tax cuts on petroleum products, Petroleum Minister Hardeep Singh Puri blamed high taxes imposed by the Opposition-ruled states on aviation turbine fuel for air ticket prices not coming down

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Chennai/New Delhi, April 28: The political slugfest over Prime Minister Narendra Modi flagging higher fuel prices in many Opposition-ruled states escalated Thursday with Tamil Nadu Chief Minister MK Stalin saying it was like hiding a whole pumpkin in a plate of rice, and his Kerala counterpart Pinarayi Vijayan asserting people's suffering cannot be mitigated by blaming the states. Raising the issue of higher fuel prices in many opposition-ruled states, the prime minister Wednesday called it "injustice" to people living there and urged the governments there to reduce VAT in "national interest" to benefit the common man.

Modi raised the issue of many states not adhering to the Centre's call for reducing the Value Added Tax (VAT) on petrol and diesel after his government slashed excise duties on them in November last, and asked them to work in the spirit of cooperative federalism in this time of global crisis.

While Congress leader Rahul Gandhi alleged that Modi's federalism is "not cooperative but coercive", his party colleague

Veerappa Moily, a former Petroleum minister, said the prime minister's call amounts to "travesty of justice".

Chief Minister Stalin said people were aware of the fact behind the issue and pointed to his government effecting a Rs 3 a litre cut on petrol earlier.

Chief Minister Vijayan, in a Facebook post, said that in a federal system attempts should not be made to blame certain States for the inflation, due to a variety of reasons, in the country when the Central government was responsible for the financial management.

West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee alleged that the agenda of Prime Minister Modi's meeting on Wednesday was not Covid situation as announced, but blaming state governments for the high prices of petrol and diesel.

The Centre also wanted to shrug off its responsibility in reducing the prices of fuel, she claimed while talking to reporters in Kolkata.

In a statement, Moily said the prime minister's call to opposition states to reduce VAT as against any semblance of reduction in excise duty by the Centre amounts to "travesty of justice".



BB must address WHO's Covaxin concern: MEA

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, April 28: Weeks after WHO suspended the supply of Covaxin through UN procurement agencies, the MEA suggested that vaccine-maker Bharat Biotech addresses the issue immediately to avoid cancellation of the world health body's emergency use approval for the job in the future.

In a communication to Dr V K Paul, the convener of a key empowered group on Covid vaccination, Tuesday, the Ministry of External Affairs said many issues about vaccines and international travel by Indians have arisen and these must be addressed immediately. "The issues pertain to m-RNA based booster dose requirement



by countries which, in effect, negates our effort to obtain recognition of Covishield and Covaxin, suspension of supply of Covaxin by WHO, acceptance of Corbevax and Covaxin-based vaccination certificates for children and international travel by Indians vaccinated with Sputnik-V," Foreign Secretary Harsh Vardhan

The thermal power plants hold 21-22 million tonnes of coal which are enough for 10 days and replenishment is done daily
PRALHAD JOSHI
UNION COAL MINISTER

FESTIVE FERVOUR



Muslim devotees prepare food to break their day-long fast during the holy month of Ramadan in Kolkata

NO CHANGE IN INDIA'S APPROACH: MEA ON PAK

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, April 28: Over a fortnight after Shehbaz Sharif became Pakistan's new Prime Minister, India Thursday asserted there is no change to its approach that talks between the two sides can only take place in an atmosphere free of terror and insisted that the onus is on Islamabad to create such an environment.

External Affairs Ministry Spokesperson Arindam Bagchi also said that the terror attack in Karachi only underlined the need for all countries to take an "undifferentiated" position against terrorism.

Bagchi was replying to a question. Three Chinese language teachers and their local driver were killed in a suicide bombing at the University of Karachi Tuesday. Asked whether India's position on engaging with Pakistan is changing, Bagchi said there is no change to it.

"Our approach is very simple. There should be an atmosphere free of terrorism; then only talks can take place. There was an exchange of courtesy letters between the two prime ministers. It is our legitimate demand that there is



Our stance against all forms of terrorism anywhere has been steadfast and consistent. We have been condemning (them). This particular incident only underlines the need for all countries to take an undifferentiated position against terrorism
ARINDAM BAGCHI

an environment free of terror," he said. The MEA spokesperson said without such an environment, talks cannot take place, adding "there is no change in our approach".

After Sharif took charge, Prime Minister Narendra Modi wrote a letter to him conveying that India desired constructive ties with Pakistan.

In his reply, Sharif pitched for "meaningful" engagement between the two countries. Asked about Pakistan's objection to Modi's recent visit to Kashmir and laying of the foundation stone for a hydro-electric project on the Chenab river, Bagchi said Islamabad has no locus standi to talk about it. "It is very clear at the reception that he got and

the visuals you saw and the development projects that he inaugurated and the changes that have happened on the ground, it is a very clear answer to any questions that may be raised about the Prime Minister's visit," he said.

"In any case, Pakistan has no locus to talk about it from this perspective on what's happening in Jammu and Kashmir and I answered it in the context of somebody questioning the visit itself," he said. India has been maintaining that it desires normal neighbourly relations with Pakistan while insisting that the onus is on Islamabad to create an environment free of terror and hostility for such an engagement.

JAHANGIRPURI VIOLENCE

Key accused held from West Bengal

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, April 28: The Delhi Police has arrested three more people in connection with the communal clashes in Jahangirpuri, including a key "conspirator and executor" who was nabbed from West Bengal, officials said Thursday.

With the latest arrests, a total of 30 people, including three juveniles, have been held in the case so far. Mohd. Farid alias Neetu (35), one of the "most wanted accused" in the case, was arrested from his aunt's house in Tamruk in East Medinipur district in West Bengal, they said.

The other two - identified as brothers Jaffar (34) and Babuddin alias Babu (43) - were held from Jahangirpuri Wednesday by the Delhi Police's Crime Branch which is probing the case, they said. Police said an analysis of CCTV footage revealed that Farid, along with his associate Md. Ansar, played a "very active and aggressive role in instigating riots" but whether he had opened fire or not is part of investigation being done by the Crime Branch with assistance from the Special Cell and the Intelligence Fusion and Strategic Operation Unit (IFSO) of the force.

7 IndiGo pilots under DGCA scanner

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, April 28: At least seven IndiGo pilots were allegedly found using offensive language over salary issues on a frequency used for emergency communications, sources said Thursday.

On April 9, these pilots were allegedly found venting their ire over low salaries by using offensive language on 121.5 MHz frequency, which is used for emergency communications only for the aircraft in distress.

The Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) has launched a probe in the matter. IndiGo is yet to issue a statement on the development, the sources said. Frequency 121.5 MHz, used for emergency communications, has to be compulsorily monitored by the air traf-



fic controllers who are in the vicinity of the aircraft.

For air-to-air communication among the pilots of different aircraft, 123.45 MHz frequency is used, which is not monitored by the air traffic controllers. Days before the incident, IndiGo had suspended a few pilots who were planning to hold a strike April 5 against the pay cuts effected during the COVID-19 pandemic.

During the peak of the pandemic, the airline had cut the salaries of its pilots by as much as 30 per cent.

Vaccination is key for long healthy life for all: Experts

THE WORLD HEALTH ORGANISATION (WHO) MARKS THE LAST WEEK OF APRIL, BETWEEN APRIL 24 AND 30, AS WORLD IMMUNISATION WEEK. THIS YEAR, THE THEME IS 'LONG LIFE FOR ALL'

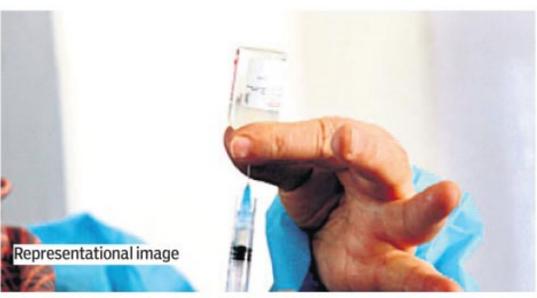
INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, April 28: Apart from healthy and nutritious food, and exercise, vaccines also play an important role in nurturing long life,

said experts Thursday, pressing the need for timely vaccination for children as well as adults.

According to the WHO, the Week "aims to highlight the collective action needed and to promote the use of vaccines to protect people of all ages against disease". It estimates that about 1.5 million deaths worldwide can be prevented due to timely vaccination.

Vaccination has proved to be successful in eradicating many diseases, such as polio and smallpox. Vaccinations have helped in preventing sickness and death associated with infectious diseases such as diarrhoea, measles, pneumonia, and have also resulted in higher gains in education and economic development. Recently, the shots developed against Covid-19 have also proved to curb the risk of hospitalisation and death.



Representational image

"Vaccines have proven their efficacy time and again and in today's time vaccinated people have chances of leading a better life," Dr Raja Dhar, Pulmonologist from CMRI, Kolkata, told IANS.

"Vaccines are the most important preventive measure that also helps in longevity and reduces the mor-

bidity rates. This is the best time to talk about vaccines as more than 29 vaccine-preventable infections are present. When vaccination is given timely, the immunity gets stronger irrespective of age," added Mumbai-based pulmonologist Dr Agam Vora.

However, pandemic-related dis-

ruptions, increasing inequalities in access to vaccines, and the diversion of resources from routine immunisation have left too many children without protection against measles and other vaccine-preventable diseases.

In 2020, 23 million children missed out on basic childhood vaccines through routine health services, the highest number since 2009 and 3.7 million more than in 2019. As a result, the world is also seeing outbreaks in infectious diseases such as measles and hepatitis.

"The Covid-19 pandemic has interrupted immunisation services, health systems have been overwhelmed, and we are now seeing a resurgence of deadly diseases including measles. For many other diseases, the impact of these disruptions to immunisation services will be felt for decades to come,"

said Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, Director-General of the WHO, in a statement recently.

The WHO noted that reported worldwide measles cases increased by 79 per cent in the first two months of 2022, compared to the same period in 2021. The global health agency also recorded at least 169 cases of acute hepatitis of unknown origin in about 12 countries. While children getting vaccinated is a common topic of discussion, adult immunisation is also the need of the hour, the experts said.

Adults, and elderly people with underlying conditions such as respiratory disease, diabetes, hypertension, and kidney diseases, among others are more vulnerable to infections that can be effectively prevented by vaccines, which would also help increase life expectancy.

Stalin attacks Modi over fuel tax cuts

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Chennai, April 28: Training guns on Prime Minister Narendra Modi over the issue of tax cuts on petroleum products, Tamil Nadu Chief Minister MK Stalin Thursday said people were aware of the fact behind the issue and pointed to his government effecting a Rs 3 a litre cut on petrol earlier.

Since 2014, whenever international crude rates dipped, the NDA government did not pass on the benefit to the customers but only pocketed the additional revenue earned from the differential, he said replying to an issue raised by Congress legislature party leader K Selvaperunthagai in the Assembly on the PM's virtual meeting with the state chief ministers.

"The Prime Minister had said some states were not cooperating with the Centre in its efforts to reduce the fuel prices and attributed the reasons for the rise in the price to the states as they are not reducing their taxes. To comment on it in one line: it is like concealing a pumpkin in a handful of rice," the CM said referring to the Tamil saying (Muzhu poosanikkayai



People are aware of this. Who shows real keenness in reducing petrol rates and who pretends and lays the blame on others -- I leave it to the people to decide

MK STALIN | TAMIL NADU CM

sothla maraikiradhu) indicating that the PM was not revealing the facts. While the excise duty levied on petrol and diesel has to be shared with states, that has been reduced, thus affecting the states' revenue, he said.

"While the cess and surcharges are not meant to be shared with the state governments, these have been exorbitantly hiked, thus burdening people and the union government is enjoying the revenue earned from this," the CM added.

He also accused the Centre of 'pretending' to have reduced the fuel-related taxes due to 'elections in some states,' in an apparent reference to the polls held earlier this

year in five states, including Uttar Pradesh and Goa.

He charged that a week after the state elections, the prices were hiked and the Union government imposed further burden on people. However, soon after winning the elections and forming the government last year, unmindful of the fiscal position, and according priority to people's welfare, his government had effected the tax cut for petrol even before Centre did, Stalin pointed out.

"People are aware of this. Who shows real keenness in reducing petrol rates and who pretends and lays the blame on others--I leave it to the people to decide," Stalin said.

'Common front must for Naga pol issue'

THE CENTRE, FORMER NAGALAND CM SHURHOZELIE LIEZIETSU SAID, WILL NEVER HAVE A 'PIECEMEAL' OR 'SEPARATE SETTLEMENTS' ON THE ISSUE WITH THE TWO CONFLICTING GROUPS - NSCN (IM) AND THE WORKING COMMITTEE OF NAGA NATIONAL POLITICAL GROUPS

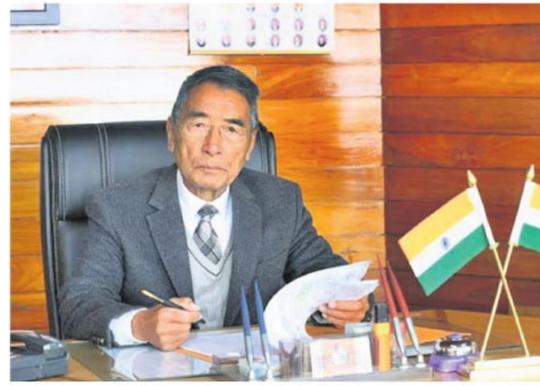
PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kohima, April 28: NPF president Shurhozelie Liezietsu has said that efforts should be made to bring together NSCN(IM) and the Working Committee of Naga National Political Groups for a common front on the Naga peace talks as the Centre may not continue separate talks with them.

The Centre, the former Nagaland chief minister said, will never have a "piecemeal" or "separate settlements" on the issue with the two conflicting groups.

Liezietsu, who was replying to queries by reporters at Pflutseromi village in Phek district Wednesday, said Naga Peoples' Front (NPF), which is an ally in the all party government in the state, can act only as the facilitator.

"The conflicting parties should come to an understanding and we (political parties) are appealing them to come together because the Government of India will never have piecemeal or separate settlements. Our main job now is to bring together the two conflicting groups to form a common front otherwise the Indian government may not continue to have separate talks for a final solution to the



The NPF MLAs are working together with the all party government but that does not mean the parties have come together... We still keep our entity... The NPF will contest the next state elections alone but if other political parties want to join us, we will welcome them

SHURHOZELIE LIEZIETSU | NPF PRESIDENT

Naga political issue," Liezietsu said.

The Centre has signed two agreements - Framework Agreement with the Isak-Muiwah faction of National Socialist Council of Nagaland (NSCN-IM) August 3,

2015 and Agreed Position with Working Committee of Naga National Political Groups (WC, NNPGs), which consist of at least eight factions November 17, 2017.

It has been holding talks with the two sides, with NSCN(IM) from

1997 and WC, NNPGs from 2017. But no final solution has been arrived at as the NSCN(IM) has remained firm on its demand for a separate flag and constitution for the Nagas.

Centre's interlocutor AK Mishra visited the state from April 18 to 24 and held talks with both the Naga groups, besides holding meetings with the state government and Naga civil societies.

Asked, he said NPF will go it alone during the state election, due early 2023 though the party is a member of the all party United Democratic Alliance (UDA) government.

UDA was formed in July 2021 with the object of finding a solution to the Naga political talks.

"The NPF MLAs are working together with the all party government but that does not mean the parties have come together... We still keep our entity... The NPF will contest the next state elections alone but if other political parties want to join us, we will welcome them," Liezietsu said.

The NPF has 25 MLAs in the current house, while Nationalist Democratic Progressive Party has 21, BJP 12 and Independents two in the 60-member house.

IIT-Madras to play TN state anthem during functions

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Chennai, April 28: Even though the Indian Institute of Technology-Madras is an autonomous institution under the Minister of Education of the Government of India, the premier institution will play the Tamil state anthem, 'Tamil Thai Vaazhthu' henceforth in its official functions.

The 'Tamil Thai Vaazhthu' is the state anthem of Tamil Nadu penned by Manonmaniam Sundaran Pillai and music by MS Viswanathan.

A senior administrative officer with IIT-Madras told IANS that the Union education ministry will soon send a circular regarding this to the institution.

It may be recalled that the Tamil Nadu Higher Education minister

K. Ponmudi had written a letter to the then director of IIT-Madras, Dr. Bhaskar Ramamurthi that during convocation ceremony in November 2021 at the institute, the Tamil state anthem, 'Tamil Thai Vaazhthu' was not rendered.

The minister in the letter, according to sources has mentioned that in all the future functions, 'Tamil Thai Vaazhthu' must be rendered.

The senior administrative officer at IIT-Madras told IANS that the 'Tamil Thai Vaazhthu' will be rendered along with the Vande Mataram and the National Anthem.

He also said that the Union Education Ministry has already directed the IIT-Madras that as part of promotion of Indian culture and tradition, the state anthem is to be rendered.

Insurgency in NE reduced by 80%: MHA

THE YEAR 2020 RECORDED THE LOWEST INSURGENCY INCIDENTS AND CASUALTIES AMONG THE CIVILIANS AND SECURITY FORCES DURING THE LAST TWO DECADES



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, April 28: Incidents of insurgency in the northeastern states reduced by 80 per cent in the last eight years while casualties of security forces went down by 75 per cent and civilian deaths by 99 per cent, an official report said.

According to the annual report of the Ministry of Home Affairs, the security situation in the northeastern states has improved substantially since 2014 and the year 2020 recorded the lowest insurgency incidents and casualties among the civilians and security forces during the last two decades.

"Compared to 2014, there has been an 80 per cent reduction in insurgency incidents in 2020. Similarly, in this period, security forces casualties have come down by 75 per cent and civilian deaths by 99 per cent," the report said.

The year 2020 saw a decline of about 27 per cent in insurgency

incidents (223 incidents in 2019 and 162 incidents in 2020) and 72 per cent in casualties of civilian and security forces personnel (25 in 2019 and 7 in 2020) compared to 2019.

The report said counter-insurgency operations led to neutralisation of 21 insurgents, arrest of 646 insurgents and recovery of 305 weapons in 2020 in the region.

As many as 2,644 cadres of insurgent groups of the north-eastern states surrendered their arms in 2020 and joined the mainstream.

While Mizoram, Sikkim and Tripura remained by and large peaceful, there is a marked improvement in the security situation in other states of the region.

In 2020, insurgency-related violence declined by 42 per cent in Arunachal Pradesh, 12 per cent in Assam, 23 per cent in Manipur and 45 per cent in Nagaland compared to 2019, the report said.

Agartala-Kolkata bus service via Dhaka postponed

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Agartala, April 28: The Agartala-Kolkata bus service via Dhaka, which was scheduled to resume from Thursday after a two-year hiatus due to the COVID-19 pandemic, was postponed owing to some "technical reasons", Agartala Mayor Dipak Majumder said.

The decision to defer the resumption of the service was taken minutes before a bus with 16 passengers was about to commence its journey for Kolkata from here, he said.

"We were ready to flag off the Kolkata bound bus via Dhaka but due to some technical reasons in the clearance process, the resumption of service has been postponed," the Agartala Municipal Corporation mayor said.



Assistant High Commissioner of Bangladesh at Agartala, Arif Mohammad, was present at the Tripura State Transport Corporation International Terminal at Krishnanagar for the programme.

"It appears that all partners concerned are not informed about the permission of resumption of the international bus service. But we all want to start the bus service at the earliest because there is demand on both sides," the Bangladeshi envoy said.

Bangladesh Assistant High Commission, Agartala receives 500-600 visa applications daily from people who want to visit their neighbouring country for various purposes. TRTC's Managing Director Rajesh Kumar Das said, "All the technical procedures from permission to visa for crew members were carried out on our side. We will sort out the problem for which the bus service could not be restarted."

'Individuals, not parties, objected to Meghalaya-Assam border MoU'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Shillong, April 28: Meghalaya Chief Minister Conrad K Sangma Wednesday said that some individual politicians and not parties in the ruling coalition have demanded revisiting of the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed between the state and Assam to end their five-decade-old border dispute in six contested locations.

The government is ready to explain all the aspects of the agreement to those who are raising objections to it, Sangma told reporters.

"The parties have not given me anything in writing or discussed any matter that they don't agree with the MoU," he said.

Assam and Meghalaya had on March 29 signed an MoU to end their border dispute in six of the 12 contested locations along the 884.9-km border between the two North-eastern neighbours. Some political leaders of the state have expressed opposition to the agreement.

"I have been in touch with the leadership of all coalition partners... We are all part of the decision. Certain individuals in the regional parties are raising concerns and we are ready to explain all aspects (to them)," Sangma said.



The chief minister said that the MoU was signed in presence of two ministers from the United Democratic Party (UDP), one minister from the People's Democratic Front (PDF) and one from the Hill State People's Democratic Party (HSPDP).

"They (the parties) have all been part of the regional committees (set up to find a solution to the border problem). Therefore, they have obviously discussed the issue at their party level," he said.

Court reserves order on Mevani bail plea

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Barpeta, April 28: A court in Assam's Barpeta district Thursday reserved its order on Gujarat's Dalit leader Jignesh Mevani's bail plea in a case where he is accused of "assaulting" a policewoman while being brought by a police posse from Guwahati to Kokrajhar.

Mevani's advocate Angshuman Bora told PTI that the District and Sessions Court has reserved the order in his bail petition till Friday.

"We placed our arguments before the court. The prosecution side tried to take an adjournment. But the court declined it and asked them to submit their arguments today itself," he said.

The Congress, which supports Mevani politically, took out a protest march against the arrest of the



Dalit leader, resulting in the detention of Assam Pradesh Congress Committee (APCC) chief among others.

Jignesh Mevani had been picked up by a posse from Assam police last week from Gujarat and arrested in a case against him for a purported tweet on Prime Minister Narendra Modi where he had claimed that

Prime Minister Narendra Modi "considered Godse as God".

The independent MLA from Vadgam seat in Banaskantha, who has pledged his support to the Congress, had used the same tweet to also urge Modi to appeal for communal harmony during his visit to Gujarat, the FIR at Kokrajhar Police Station, which

TN cops, social welfare dept on alert over child marriages

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Chennai, April 28: The Tamil Nadu Social Welfare department and the police are on high alert over child marriages that are taking place in the state.

While there were many incidents of child marriages during the lockdown period, the recent instance of a 40-year-old man trying to marry a 14-year-old girl has put the social welfare department and the police on an alert.

Acting on a tip-off, Childline officials of Vellore district along with the police and revenue officials rescued a 14-year-old girl who was to be married to a 40-year-old distant relative who was entering into his third marriage. The marriage was to be solemnised at a local temple



on Monday morning but the marriage was foiled. Police took the groom into custody and the girl

was handed over to the District Childline authorities in Vellore district. The victim had dropped out

of school from Class VII and was living with her mother after her father passed away. The 40-year-old man was from Andhra Pradesh and a distant relative of the girl who had married twice earlier.

In another incident, a 17-year-old girl was rescued by Police and Childline authorities in the Myladuthurai district of Tamil Nadu. Childline Vellore district coordinator, K.S. Devendiran while speaking to IANS, said: "After this incident, we are on a high alert in the district and have alerted all

school authorities on whether there is any drop in girl children reaching schools. We are also in touch with the resident associations, social organisations, political parties etc." The Tamil Nadu police is also on an alert to prevent any incidents of child marriages.

Sources told IANS that the state DGP was directed by the Chief Minister to get tips from across the state using the intelligence agencies on whether child marriages are taking place in Tamil Nadu.



“The current geopolitical situation necessitates the Indian Air Force to prepare for intense and small duration operations at a short notice. This new paradigm of high-intensity operations coupled with minimal build-up time would require major changes in terms of operational logistics

VR CHAUDHARY | INDIAN AIR FORCE CHIEF

AIRCRAFT TYRE BURSTS

At least 150 passengers and crew members on board a Thai Airways flight escaped unhurt after the aircraft suffered a tyre burst before it landed in Bangalore's Kempegowda International Airport (KIAL), according to sources



of the day quote

68% of all fuel taxes are taken by the Centre. Yet, the PM abdicates responsibility. Modi's Federalism is not cooperative. It's coercive

RAHUL GANDHI | CONGRESS LEADER

As we celebrate 70 years of establishment of diplomatic relations between India and Japan today, I am happy to see that our ties have deepened in every sphere, whether strategic, economic or people-to-people contacts

NARENDRA MODI | PRIME MINISTER

Though Covid cases have increased in Delhi, people are not developing severe disease and the hospitalisation rate is low. This is because our population is fully vaccinated and a large number of people have had the disease in the past. So, the situation is not serious

SATYENDAR JAIN | DELHI HEALTH MINISTER

SHORT TAKES

Man attacks girl with acid

Bangalore: In a shocking development, a jilted lover threw acid on a 23-year-old woman in Bangalore Thursday, police said, adding the victim sustained severe burn injuries and was shifted to a private hospital. The incident had taken place near the Muthoot Fincorp office in Sunkadakatte. The police have launched a hunt for the accused Nagesh, who escaped after the attack. Police explained that Nagesh had followed the victim while she was on her way to work. He then waylaid and poured acid on her.

Umar Khalid's petition adjourned

New Delhi: The Delhi High Court Thursday adjourned the hearing of the appeal of JNU researcher-activist Umar Khalid for Friday saying that his fresh documents explaining his alleged 'offensive speech' have not come on record. Khalid had approached the High Court with his appeal challenging the trial court order which denied him bail in connection with the larger conspiracy behind the 2020 Delhi riots.

Man charred to death in truck fire

Jaipur: A man was burnt alive in a vehicle when it caught fire after an accident in Rajasamand district and another died during treatment, police said Thursday. Two people more were injured in the accident, they said.

Three killed, 6 hurt in road accident

Unnao (UP): Three members of a family, including a toddler, were killed while six others injured when a car overturned and hit by another vehicle on the Agra-Lucknow expressway, police said Thursday. The incident took place near Nasirpur village in the Bangarmanu area Wednesday night when a car going to Gonda from Rajasthan jumped to the other lane and overturned before being hit by another car. Additional SP Shashi Shekhar Singh said.

Ker: Man found hanging in train

Kollam (Ker): A man in his fifties was found hanging in the toilet of the Malabar Express Thursday morning. The body was found in the toilet of a coach reserved for differently-abled persons when the train reached Kollam railway station at around 7 AM. The railway officials, thereafter, informed the police which came and carried out all the legal formalities and transferred the body to the District government hospital in Kollam.

Intense heat broils large swathes of India, no relief for next 5 days

AGENCIES

New Delhi, April 28: The blistering heatwave sweeping through vast swathes of the country intensified Thursday with the mercury crossing the 45-degree mark at several places.

Gurugram logged an all-time high of 45.6 degrees Celsius, breaking the previous record of 44.8 degrees Celsius April 28, 1979.

Its neighbour Delhi saw the hottest April day in 12 years at 43.5 degrees Celsius. The national capital recorded a maximum temperature of 43.7 degrees Celsius April 18, 2010. The intense heatwave scorched Allahabad (45.9 degrees Celsius) in Uttar Pradesh; Khajuraho (45.6 degrees Celsius), Nowgong (45.6 degrees Celsius), and Khargone (45.2 degrees Celsius) in Madhya Pradesh; Akola (45.4 degrees Celsius), Bramhapuri (45.2 degrees Celsius) and Jalgaon (45.6 degrees Celsius) in Maharashtra and Jharkhand's Daltonganj (45.8 degrees Celsius).

Amid the heatwave, India's peak power demand met or the highest supply in a day touched the all-time high of 204.65 GW Thursday.

The India Meteorological Department (IMD) said the spell of heatwave will persist over north-west and central India for the next five days and over east India for the next three days. "A rise of about two degrees Celsius in the maximum temperature (is) very likely over most parts of northwest India during the next two days," it said. An orange alert has been issued for Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, and the Vidarbha region of Maharashtra for the next four days.

The IMD uses four colour codes for weather warnings. Green means no action needed, yellow refers to watch and stay updated, orange means be prepared while red alert



The IMD uses four colour codes for weather warnings -- green (no action needed), yellow (watch and stay updated), orange (be prepared), and red (take action)

Maximum temperatures were 3.1 degrees Celsius to 5 degrees Celsius above normal in Jharkhand, Punjab, Rajasthan, Gujarat, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Odisha, and Madhya Pradesh Wednesday; with the mercury hitting 45.6 degrees Celsius at Rajgarh in Madhya Pradesh

Temperatures may even leap to 47 degrees Celsius in parts of northwest India, weather experts said

means take action. According to weather experts, temperatures may even leap to 47 degrees Celsius in parts of northwest India.

"A maximum temperature of 45 degrees Celsius is normal at places like Rajasthan's Churu, Barmer, Bikaner, and Sri Ganganagar, but 45-46 degrees Celsius in the plains of north India by April-end is quite unusual," independent meteorologist Navdeep Dahiya said.

The IMD said the heatwave could lead to "moderate" health concerns for vulnerable people such as infants, the elderly and people with chronic diseases.

"Hence people should avoid heat exposure, wear lightweight and light-coloured cotton clothes and cover the head with a hat or umbrella," it said. There is an increased likelihood of symptoms of heat illness in people who are either exposed to the sun for a prolonged period or doing heavy work, an IMD advisory read. A heatwave is declared when the maximum

temperature is over 40 degrees Celsius and at least 4.5 notches above normal. A severe heatwave is declared if the departure from normal temperature is more than 6.4 notches, according to the IMD.

Based on absolute recorded temperatures, a heatwave is declared when an area logs a maximum temperature of 45 degrees Celsius.

A severe heatwave is declared if the maximum temperature crosses the 47-degree mark. Dileep Mavalankar, the director of the Indian Institute of Public Health Gandhinagar (IIPHG), said, "People need to watch out for IMD advisories, stay indoors, keep themselves hydrated and rush to the nearest health centre if they feel moderate signs of heat-related illness."

"There's a special need to monitor the old and vulnerable just like we did during the Covid-19 waves as they can develop heat strokes even when sitting at home," he said in a statement.

BHALSWA LANDFILL FIRE

Delhi govt slaps ₹ 50L fine on North MCD

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, April 28: Delhi government Thursday imposed a fine of ₹50 lakhs on North Delhi Municipal Corporation in connection with Bhalswa landfill fire.

On Tuesday, a massive fire broke out at North Delhi's Bhalswa landfill.

After the investigation of the fire case, the Delhi Pollution control Committee(DPCC) submitted the report to the Delhi Environment Minister Gopal Rai on Thursday.



Reportedly, three incidents of fire have been reported this year at east Delhi's Ghazipur landfill site

It has alleged negligence on the part of MCD in its report. Minister Gopal Rai has imposed fine on the basis of DPCC investigation report.

Four fire tenders are still working to bring down the flames. Gopal Rai, Wednesday, blamed "corruption" in the municipal corporation as one of the reasons for frequent fires at landfills in the city. Reportedly, three incidents of fire have been reported this year at east Delhi's Ghazipur landfill site.

62 ultras killed so far in Kashmir this year



AGENCIES

Srinagar, April 28: A total of 62 terrorists linked to different proscribed outfits have been neutralised in various encounters across the Kashmir Valley so far this year.

Giving details, Inspector-General of Police (IGP), Kashmir, Vijay Kumar, said that the surviving rate of terrorists is drastically decreasing due to enhanced human and technical intelligence and focused operations.

In the current year, 62 terrorists have been neutralised in different encounters so far, of which

32 were killed within just three months of joining terror ranks.

Among the 62 slain terrorists, 39 were linked to Lashkar-e-Taiba, 15 to Jaish-e-Mohammed, six to Hizbul Mujahideen while two were connected to Al-Badr. Of them, 47 were local terrorists while 15 were foreign recruits.

The IGP Kashmir also reiterated his appeal to all misguided youth who have joined terror ranks to shun the path of terrorism and return to the mainstream. He also appealed to the parents and elders of these terrorists to plead their wards to shun the path of violence.

IED FOUND ALONG BUSY JAMMU ROAD

Jammu: A major tragedy was averted as an IED found alongside a busy road in J&K's Jammu city Thursday was successfully defused, police said. Police sources said that the explosive material, which was suspected to be an improvised explosive device (IED) or a sticky bomb, was found alongside the road in Sidhra area after which an alert was issued and traffic suspended in the area. "The bomb disposal squad was called in to examine the material and defused the IED," a source said.



Dream of becoming PM, not Prez: Maya



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Lucknow, April 28: BSP supremo Mayawati Thursday trashed SP chief Akhilesh Yadav's remark suggesting that the BJP could make her the President, saying she would prefer becoming the country's Prime Minister someday to realise her goals for the downtrodden.

Reacting to the dig at her Wednesday, Mayawati said she never aspired to being the President and the Samajwadi Party leader was dreaming about it only to clear his own path to become the Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister.

"I have not spent my life in comfort and have struggled to work on the path shown by Babasaheb Bhimrao Ambedkar and Kanshi Ram to ensure that their follow-

“I can only dream of becoming the Chief Minister of UP and the Prime Minister of the country in the days to come but can never dream of becoming the President

MAYAWATI

ers and the downtrodden stand on their feet. All know that this work can be done not by becoming the President but by becoming the CM of UP and the PM of the country," she said.

In the past as well, her party has projected her as a "future prime minister". Mayawati said if Dalits, adivasis, the backwards, Muslims and the poor from the upper castes join forces with the BSP not only can they make its leader the chief minister of Uttar Pradesh again but also the prime minister in the time to come. The SP dreaming of making her the President for its "selfish political motives" is futile, she said.

In Mainpuri Wednesday, Yadav said the BSP "transferred" its votes to the BJP in the recent Uttar Pradesh Assembly polls. "Now it will be interesting to see whether the BJP makes Mayawati the President or not in return," he added.

MOCKERY OF COVID NORMS



Commuters not maintaining social distance board a train amid a surge in coronavirus cases in Patna

PTI PHOTO

Kamal Nath resigns as Leader of Oppn in MP Assembly

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Bhopal, April 28: Veteran Congress leader and former Chief Minister of Madhya Pradesh, Kamal Nath, Thursday resigned from the post of leader of opposition in the state Assembly.

Congress President Sonia Gandhi has accepted his resignation and appointed Govind Singh as the leader of opposition in his place. Congress General Secretary (Organisation)

K.C. Venugopal wrote to Kamal Nath on Thursday saying, "This is to inform you that the Congress President has accepted your resignation from the post of Leader, Congress Legislature Party, Madhya Pradesh, with immediate effect. The party wholeheartedly appreciates your contribution as the CLP Leader, Madhya Pradesh."

Kamal Nath was holding the posts of leader of opposition and state Congress President. Now he

is only the chief of the state unit of the party. Kamal Nath had said that he had already made up his mind to give up one of the two posts, but the party had asked him to continue working on both positions. Kamal Nath has been the target of the BJP for the last few days for the dual posts he held with the saffron party continuously raising questions about his responsibilities. The allegation was that all the posts were with Kamal Nath.

HINDI LANGUAGE ROW

Politicians join debate after Ajay Devgn tweet

THE DEBATE STARTED WITH ACTOR AJAY DEVGN'S TWEET, SAYING IF HINDI IS NOT THE NATIONAL LANGUAGE OF INDIA, WHY ARE MOVIES MADE IN DIFFERENT LANGUAGES AND EVENTUALLY DUBBED

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bangalore/Hubballi, April 28: The friendly conversation between Bollywood actor Ajay Devgn and Kannada actor Kichcha Sudeep took a political turn with Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai and former Karnataka chief ministers Siddaramaiah and H D Kumaraswamy joining the debate and insisting that Hindi is like any other language in India and not the national language.

However, Bommai's cabinet col-

league Dr C N Ashwath Narayan said there is nothing wrong in learning Hindi as a communicative language at the national level.

"Whatever Sudeep has said is correct. After the formation of states on linguistic basis, languages got importance there (in those regions). That is supreme. The same has been said by Sudeep, which is right. Everyone should accept and respect it," the Chief Minister told reporters in Hubballi. "Hindi was never & will never be our National Language. It is the duty of every Indian to re-



spect linguistic diversity of our country. Each language has its own rich history for its people to be proud of. I am proud to be a Kannadiga!"

Congress stalwart Siddaramaiah tweeted. The JD(S) second-in-command Kumaraswamy too aired a view similar to Siddaramaiah and

backed Sudeep. "Actor @KichchaSudeep saying that Hindi is not a National Language is correct. There is nothing to find fault in his statement. Actor @ajaydevgn is not only hyper in nature but also shows his ludicrous behaviour."

According to him, Hindi is also one of the languages like Kannada, Telugu, Tamil, Malayalam and Marathi. Bollywood actor Devgn and Sudeep engaged in a 'brotherly argument' on Twitter on the topic of whether Hindi is a national language or not. However,

Sudeep clarified that the context in which he made the statement was different from the way it was perceived and that it was not intended to provoke, hurt or start a debate. The trigger for the argument was Sudeep's statement a few days ago during a function in Bengaluru where the who's who of the Kannada film industry celebrated the nationwide success of 'KGF-2' starring Yash. When the compe of the event said KGF-2 had a pan-India effect, Sudeep said Hindi is no more a national language.

international



The European Union is ready to face the suspension of Russian gas deliveries to its member states
URSULA VON DER LEYEN | EUROPEAN COMMISSION PRESIDENT

BOOSTING TIES

External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar Thursday called on Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, who offered her country's main seaport - Chittagong Port - to India's northeastern states like Assam and Tripura to enhance connectivity



of the day quote

The UK wants to keep growing its ties with India as part of efforts to work more closely with allies to create a so-called Network of Liberty

No agreement has been reached on a meeting between President Volodymyr Zelensky and his Russian counterpart Vladimir Putin

More than half of US howitzers are in Ukraine today and the first tranche of soldiers from the war-torn nation have been trained in how to use the long-ranged weapon system

SHORT TAKES

Israel PM's family threatened

Jerusalem: Family of Israeli Prime Minister Naftali Bennett has received a death threat and bullet in the mail for the second time this week, the police said Thursday. According to an Israeli official familiar with the matter, the target of the threats was Bennett's 17-year-old son. The official spoke on condition of anonymity in line with regulations. Officials have not said who might be behind the threats. Bennett, who leads a small nationalist party, has come under heavy criticism from Israeli hard-liners who accuse him of abandoning his ideology. In 1995, Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin was assassinated by a Jewish ultranationalist opposed to his peacemaking attempts with the Palestinians.

2 South Koreans held for spying

Seoul: A South Korean army captain and a businessman have been arrested and indicted for allegedly stealing military secrets under the direction of a North Korean spy who lured them with crypto-currency, Seoul officials said Thursday. Both have been formally charged with violating South Korea's anti-Pyongyang national security law, though authorities haven't established the whereabouts of the North Korean spy, police and prosecutors said. The army captain allegedly passed login information of a military-run computerised command and control system to the North Korean spy, the prosecutor's office said in a statement.

24 children killed in Darfur clashes

Cairo: A Sudanese doctor's union Thursday said 24 children and nine women were among dozens killed in tribal clashes over the weekend between Arabs and non-Arabs in Sudan's western Darfur region. The Sudan's Doctors Committee also said that 23 elderly and 144 men were also killed. Tuesday, Khamis Abdalla Abkar, the provincial governor of West Darfur province, said the death toll had surpassed 200.

Four dead

Manila: An old, quake-damaged bridge collapsed under heavy vehicular traffic in a central Philippine town, killing at least four people who were trapped in about a dozen vehicles that plummeted into the river, officials said Thursday. An Austrian visitor was among the dead, and at least 23 others including his wife were injured in the collapse of the bridge Wednesday afternoon in the coastal town of Loay in Bohol province, police and provincial officials said.

Russia steps up assault on east Ukraine

REUTERS

Kyiv, April 28: Russia stepped up its assaults on eastern and southern Ukraine, Kyiv said Thursday, and President Vladimir Putin threatened "lightning-fast" retaliation against any Western countries that intervene on Ukraine's behalf. More than two months into an invasion that has flattened cities but failed to capture the capital Kyiv, Russia has mounted a push to seize two eastern provinces in a battle the West views as a decisive turning point in the war. "The enemy is increasing the pace of the offensive operation.



TURNING POINT?

According to the intelligence received by Russia's Foreign Intelligence Service, Washington and Warsaw are working on plans to establish Poland's tight military and political control over its historical possessions in Ukraine

NATO is ready to maintain its support for Ukraine in the war against Russia for years, including help for Kyiv to shift from Soviet-era weapons to modern Western arms and systems

SENATE PRESS SECRETARY

SECRETARY GENERAL OF NATO

The Russian occupiers are exerting intense fire in almost all directions, Ukraine's military command said of the situation on the main front in the east. It said Russia's main attack was near the towns of Slobzhanske and Donets, along a strategic front-line highway linking Ukraine's second-largest city Kharkiv with the Russian-occupied city of Izyum. The Kharkiv regional governor said Russian forces were intensifying

attacks from Izyum, but Ukrainian troops were holding their ground. Although Russian forces were pushed out of northern Ukraine last month, they are heavily entrenched in the east and also still hold a swathe of the south that they seized in March. Ukraine said there were strong explosions overnight in the southern city of Kherson, the only regional capital Russia has captured since the invasion. Russian troops there used tear gas and stun

grenades on Wednesday to suppress pro-Ukrainian demonstrations, and were now shelling the entire surrounding region and attacking towards Mykolaiv and Kryvyi Rih, President Vladimir Zelensky's southern home city, Ukraine said. Kyiv accuses Moscow of planning to stage a fake independence referendum in the occupied south. Russian state media quoted an official from a self-styled pro-Russian "military-civilian commission" in Kherson on Thursday as saying the area would start using Russia's rouble currency from May 1. Western countries have ramped up weapons deliveries to Ukraine in recent days as the fighting in the east has intensified. More than 40 countries met this week at a U.S. air base in Germany and pledged to send heavy arms such as artillery for what is expected to be a vast battle of opposing armies along a heavily fortified front line. Washington now says it hopes

Support for Ukraine

Washington: President Joe Biden asked Congress Thursday for an additional \$33 billion to help Ukraine fend off Russia's invasion, a signal that the US is prepared to mount a robust, long-term campaign to bolster Kyiv and weaken Moscow as the bloody war enters its third month with no sign of abating. Biden's latest proposal — which the White House said was expected to support Ukraine's needs for five months — has more than \$20 billion in military assistance for Kyiv and for shoring up defences in nearby countries.

Russia deploys military dolphins

London: Russia has deployed trained military dolphins at its naval base in the Black Sea — possibly to protect its fleet from an underwater attack — according to a new analysis of satellite images, the media reported. The US Naval Institute (USNI) reviewed satellite imagery of the naval base at Sevastopol harbour, and concluded that two dolphin pens were moved to the base in February at the start of Moscow's invasion of Ukraine, The Guardian reported. Russia has a history of training dolphins for military purposes, using the aquatic mammal to retrieve objects or deter enemy divers.

Ukrainian forces can not only repel Russia's assault on the east, but weaken its military so that it can no longer threaten neighbours.

ECONOMIC TURMOIL

Trade unions seek Rajapaksas' ouster



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Colombo, April 28: Nearly 1,000 trade unions in Sri Lanka staged a one-day nationwide strike Thursday demanding the immediate resignation of the government, including President Gotabaya Rajapaksa and Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa, over its failure to tackle the country's unprecedented economic crisis. Sri Lanka is currently in the throes of unprecedented economic turmoil since its independence from Britain in 1948. The crisis is caused in part by a lack of foreign currency, which has meant that the country cannot afford to pay for imports of staple foods and fuel, leading to acute shortages and very high prices. The unions from a number of sectors, including the state service, health, ports, electricity, education and postal joined the strike under the theme 'Bow to the people - government go home', urging the President, the Prime Minister and

the government to 'go home'. Teachers' trade union spokesman Joseph Stalin said that the Rajapaksa government tries to hang on to power when the people have got into the streets and demanded them to go. Ravi Kumudesh from the health workers' trade union said that after Thursday's strike, they would give the government a week to resign. "After that, we would strike continuously till the government resigns". He said that over 1,000 trade unions joined the strike. The bank employees' union said that all banks remain closed and public transport was crippled with just a handful of government-owned buses operating. Plantation workers from the central hills also joined the token strike. "The plantation workers have joined the strike in thousands," Opposition politician Mano Ganesan said. The streets and trade markets looked empty in most areas.

India, Russia ties grew out of need: Blinken

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Washington, April 28: India built its partnership with Russia out of necessity as America was not in a position to do that earlier, US Secretary of State Antony Blinken has told a Congressional hearing, underlining that Washington is now investing in that effort. Blinken, during a Congressional hearing by the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on State, Foreign Operations Wednesday, said that the India-US partnership has the potential to be one of the most important and foundational partnerships going forward over the next decades. Amidst Russia's invasion of Ukraine, the US has been pressing India and other nations to impose sanctions on Moscow and reduce their reliance on Russian weapons, oil and other commodities. "In the case of India, there is a relationship that goes back decades. And Russia, for India, was out of necessity a partner of choice when we were not in a position to be a partner," he said in response to a question from Senator William Hagerty. "Now, we are investing in that effort. I think there is a growing strategic convergence between the United States and India. "And of course, China is a big part of that," Blinken said. Hagerty,

Amidst Russia's invasion of Ukraine, the US has been pressing India and other nations to impose sanctions on Moscow and reduce their reliance on Russian weapons, oil and other commodities

a Republican Senator, had sought Blinken's views on the India-US relationship. "What I see before us is something I'm certain that is very frustrating in the short-term when we have our differences and you deal with that every day." But in the long-term, the strategic partnership that we have with India I think poses the opportunity to do more good in the 21st century," Hagerty said. In response, Blinken said that he very much shares the perspective shared by the Senator. "I think this partnership has the potential to be one of the most important and foundational partnerships that we have going forward over the next decades," he said. Blinken said US President Joe Biden has spent "a lot of time directly engaging with Prime Minister (Narendra) Modi and India's leadership".



A woman flees from the polluting foam generated by a river full of waste, at the entrance of her house, in Mosquera, Colombia

Pak agencies suspect presence of more bombers

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Karachi/Lahore, April 28: Pakistani investigators probing the suicide attack at the Karachi University that killed three Chinese teachers have not ruled out the presence of more female suicide bombers at sleeper cells of the outlawed Baluchistan Liberation Army, even as police Thursday detained the suicide bomber's husband, who claimed that his wife was "mentally ill". Tuesday, an explosion triggered

UNIVERSITY BLAST

by a burqa-clad woman suicide bomber from the Baluchistan Liberation Army (BLA) ripped through a van of the Confucius Institute at the prestigious University of Karachi, leaving three Chinese teachers dead and one injured, in the latest targeted attack against Chinese citizens in Pakistan. Following the incident, the banned BLA took to social media to claim responsibility and announce that the bomber was a woman named Shaari Baloch who was highly educated mother of two young children, belonging to a well-established family and working as a school teacher in her native Turbat, Balochistan. Balochistan's Parliamentary Secretary for Information Bushra Rind said Thursday that the bomber's husband, Dr Haibat, who was arrested by law enforcement agencies, made the revelation of his wife's mental state during interrogation.

WAKE-UP CALL

Climate change may increase risk of new diseases: Study

THE STUDY HIGHLIGHTS TWO GLOBAL CRISES — CLIMATE CHANGE AND INFECTIOUS DISEASE SPREAD — AS THE WORLD GRAPPLES WITH WHAT TO DO ABOUT BOTH

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Washington, April 28: Climate change will result in thousands of new viruses spread among animal species by 2070 — and that's likely to increase the risk of emerging infectious diseases jumping from animals to humans, accord-

ing to a new study. This is especially true for Africa and Asia, continents that have been hotspots for deadly disease spread from humans to animals or vice versa over the last several decades, including the flu, HIV, Ebola and coronavirus. Researchers, who published their findings Thursday in the journal Nature, used a model to examine how over 3,000 mammal species might migrate and share viruses over the next 50 years if the world warms by 2 degrees Celsius, which recent research shows is possible. They found that cross-species virus spread will happen over 4,000 times among mammals alone. Birds and marine animals weren't included in the study. Researchers said not all viruses will spread to humans or become pandemics the scale of the coronavirus but the number of cross-



species viruses increases the risk of spread to humans. The study highlights two global crises — climate change and infectious disease spread — as the world grapples with what to do about both. Previous research has looked at how deforestation and extinction and wildlife trade lead to animal-human disease spread, but there's less research about how

climate change could influence this type of disease transmission, the researchers said at a media briefing Wednesday. "We don't talk about climate a lot in the context of zoonoses" — diseases that can spread from animals to people, said study co-author Colin Carlson, an assistant professor of biology at Georgetown University. "Our study ... Brings

together the two most pressing global crises we have." Experts on climate change and infectious disease agreed that a warming planet will likely lead to increased risk for the emergence of new viruses. Daniel R. Brooks, a biologist at University of Nebraska State Museum and co-author of the book "The Stockholm Paradigm: Climate Change and Emerging Disease", said the study acknowledges the threat posed by climate change in terms of increasing risk of infectious diseases. "This particular contribution is an extremely conservative estimate for potential" emerging infectious disease spread caused by climate change, said Brooks. Aaron Bernstein, a pediatrician and interim director of The Centre for Climate, Health, and the Global Environment at Harvard TH. Chan School of Public Health, said the

study confirms long-held suspicions about the impact of warming on infectious disease emergence. "Of particular note is that the study indicates that these encounters may already be happening with greater frequency and in places near where many people live," Bernstein said. Study co-author Gregory Albery, a disease ecologist at Georgetown University, said that because climate-driven infectious disease emergence is likely already happening, the world should be doing more to learn about and prepare for it. "It is not preventable, even in the best case climate change scenarios," Albery said. Carlson, who was also an author on the latest report from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, said we must cut greenhouse gas and phase out fossil fuels to reduce the risk of infectious disease spread.



The government is likely to hold 5G spectrum auction in early June. The DoT is working as per expected timeline and the process is on to resolve industry concerns around spectrum pricing
ASHWINI VAISHNAW | TELECOM MINISTER

TATA MOTORS' BIG EV PLANS

Tata Motors expects to aggressively ramp up annual production of electric vehicles (EVs) to more than 80,000 units this financial year, sources with knowledge of the matter told Reuters. That compares with the 19,000 EVs it built and sold in the last financial year



of the day quote

The ZED certification scheme will be beneficial towards improving quality, increasing manufacturing output and profits and controlling the detrimental impact on the environment
NARAYAN RANE | MSME MINISTER

We are strictly monitoring our water usage through the installation of water metres at key points in our manufacturing units, and constantly aiming to improve the water efficiency of our operations, along with reducing our use of groundwater
ANIL MAKKAR | MANUFACTURING DIRECTOR, JK TYRE & INDUSTRIES

I think small town India is now more exposed to the world than ever before... I think they are no more markets. They're actually hotbeds of new entrepreneurs getting created and they are not happy with just (being) in the tier two and tier three markets
RITESH AGARWAL | FOUNDER AND CEO, OYO

Heatwave, coal crunch fuel blackouts across states

After the hottest March on record, a large part of the country continue to experience extreme heat in April, sending power demand to an all-time high. Besides measures to increase coal supplies to power plants, the government has asked states to step up coal imports for the next three years to build up inventories

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, April 28: A potent combination of sweltering summer and acute coal shortages have triggered blackouts across many parts of the country as states struggle to manage record demand for electricity and low feedstock at power plants.

At the heart of the crisis are low inventories of coal - the fossil fuel that produces 70 per cent of India's electricity. While the government insists that there is enough coal available to meet the demand, the reduced availability of railway rakes to transport coal has led to coal inventories being at the lowest pre-summer levels in at least nine years. Also, with international energy prices shooting up following the war in Ukraine, coal imports have dipped.

Thermal plants across the country are grappling with coal shortages, indicating a looming power

STATES WITH HIGHEST POWER SHORTAGE

States/UTs	Demand met (mn units)	Shortage (mn units)	Shortage (%)
Jharkhand	216.7	45.27	17.28
J&K, Ladakh	289.3	38.02	11.62
Rajasthan	1824	193.75	9.60
Haryana	1,089.4	90.54	7.67
Uttarakhand	290	23.81	7.59
Bihar	798.8	30.29	3.65
MP	1,899	55.01	2.82
HP	222.6	5.33	2.34
UP	2,951.4	65.12	2.16

PEAK POWER DEMAND MET OR THE HIGHEST SUPPLY IN A DAY TOUCHED THE ALL-TIME HIGH OF 204.65 GW THURSDAY

FACTORIES ARE THE WORST HIT AS THE INDUSTRIAL SECTOR IS THE FIRST PORT OF CALL FOR REGULATING ELECTRICITY SUPPLIES

THE TOTAL ELECTRICITY SHORTAGE IN THE COUNTRY HAS HIT 623 MILLION UNITS, SURPASSING THE TOTAL SHORTAGE IN MARCH

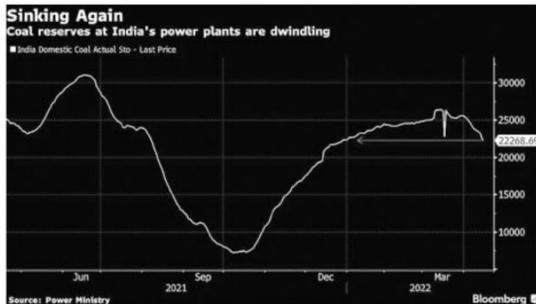
Latest data showed that 147 non-pit head plants with total capacity of over 163 GW monitored by the Central Electricity Authority (CEA) had 25 per cent of the normative coal stocks April 26. These plants had 14,172 thousand tonne of coal against the norm of 57,033 thousand tonne

crisis in the country. All India Power Engineers Federation (AIPFE) said. Peak power demand met or the highest supply in a day was 200.65 GW April 27 while peak power shortage was 10.29 GW.

Uttar Pradesh, India's most populous state, has a 3,000 MW deficit. Against the demand of around 23,000 MW, the supply is just 20,000 MW, resulting in load shedding in rural areas and smaller towns. According to the data made avail-

able by the state power department, at present, electricity is being supplied in rural areas on an average of 15 hours 7 minutes against the scheduled 18 hours. The government claims to provide 18 to 20 hours of power in rural areas while only 4 hours of electricity is being made available and there is a blackout all night in many places.

Kashmir valley is facing one of its worst power crisis as unscheduled and prolonged cuts in supply



Odisha government claimed that its power crisis will be over by the end of April even as a large population of the state complained about load shedding amid summer heat. Odisha, which claimed to be a power surplus state, however, faced acute shortage of electricity in mid April following breakdown of one unit of NTPC which used to generate 800 MW.

Currently, the discoms in the state are implementing a two-day 'power holiday' for industries every week.

In Punjab's Hoshiarpur, farmers blocked vehicular traffic in protest against irregular electricity supply. Jharkhand Chief Minister Hemant Soren admitted that the state has not been able to meet the peak demand and additional funds have been made available to procure electricity from the market.

Bihar too is witnessing frequent power cuts in rural as well as urban areas. Bihar is facing a power deficit of 200-300 Mega Watts (MW) per day because of the sudden increase in demand. The state's consumption is around 6,000 MW per day and the availability of power from different sources is 5,000 to 5,200 MW only.

Uttarakhand is no exception with long power cuts. UPCL (Uttarakhand Power Corporation Ltd) MD Anil Kumar attributed the acute power shortage to a rise in demand caused by the early onset of summer and to the closure of a gas-driven power plant in Kashipur in Udham Singh Nagar district.

Govt set to launch ONDC to take on Amazon, Walmart

INDIAN RETAILERS HAVE LONG CONTEMDED THAT AMAZON AND FLIPKART'S PLATFORMS BENEFIT A FEW BIG SELLERS, VIA PREDATORY PRICING, THOUGH THE COMPANIES SAY THEY COMPLY WITH ALL INDIAN LAWS



REUTERS

New Delhi, April 28: India will Friday launch an open network for digital commerce (ONDC) as the government tries to end the dominance of US companies Amazon.com and Walmart in the fast-growing e-commerce market, a government document showed.

The launch of the platform comes after India's antitrust body Thursday raided domestic sellers of Amazon and some of Walmart's Flipkart following accusations of competition law violations.

The government's so-called ONDC platform will allow buyers and sellers to connect and transact with each other online, no matter what other application they use. It will be soft-launched Friday before being expanded, the trade ministry said. The government document said

that two large multinational players controlled more than half of the country's e-commerce trade, limiting access to the market, giving preferential treatment to some sellers and squeezing supplier margins. It did not name the companies.

The document said India's ONDC plan aimed to onboard 30 million sellers and 10 million merchants online. The plan is to cover at least 100 cities and towns by August. It would focus on apps in local languages for both buyers and sellers, with a special emphasis on small merchants and rural consumers.

The government said it had already received support from retailers and venture capital firms. Lenders such as the State Bank of India, ICICI Bank and Bank of Baroda have already committed total investments of Rs 2.55 billion (\$33.26 million) into ONDC.

Now, Musk jokes about buying Coca-Cola to 'put cocaine back in'

After buying Twitter in a hostile takeover, the world's richest man teased followers about his next target: Coca-Cola which was enough to leave people in a frenzy online



said: "Now I'm going to buy McDonald's and fix all of the ice cream machines."

However, the Tesla CEO said it was unlikely he could make it happen. "Listen, I can't do miracles OK," he told his followers.

In another tweet, he said, "Let's make Twitter maximum fun."

Monday, Twitter announced that it has entered into a definitive agreement to be acquired by an entity wholly owned by Musk for \$54.20 per share in cash in a transaction valued at nearly \$44 billion.

Upon completion of the transaction, Twitter will become a privately-held company.

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

San Francisco, April 28: After buying micro-blogging site Twitter, tech billionaire Elon Musk, in a series of funny tweets, joked that he will next buy Coca-Cola and "put the cocaine back in".

In the past few hours, the tweet has received over 2 million likes and 455,000 retweets. "Next I am buying Coca-Cola to put the cocaine back in," Musk wrote on the micro-blogging site. He also shared a screenshot that

Twitter revenue rises to \$1.2bn, daily users up 16%

Twitter Thursday posted quarterly earnings of \$513 million days after it agreed to be sold to billionaire Elon Musk. The social media company said Thursday that revenue rose 16% to \$1.2 billion in the three months to March compared with the same period last year. Twitter, based in San Francisco, reported an average of 229 million daily active users in the quarter, up 16% from last year. Musk's \$44 billion deal to buy Twitter was announced earlier this week and the deal is expected to close later this year. Twitter canceled the conference call with executives and industry analysts that usually accompanies its results, so there will be little further insight into the company's current financial condition.

Prusty joins as new Circle Head of PNB



POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, April 28: Chittaranjan Prusty has joined as the new Circle Head of Punjab National Bank (PNB), Bhubaneswar Circle. Prior to this he was serving the bank as Deputy Zonal Head in Zonal Office of Ahmedabad. Prusty started his banking career in the year 1995 in the Corporate Office of Oriental Bank of Commerce in New Delhi.

During his interactions with Bhubaneswar Circle staffs, he has called upon them to focus on improvement in customer service and for growth in CASA deposits as well as on Retail Asset Management. Besides, he has focused on OTS in NPA account to improve recovery status of the Bhubaneswar Circle.

SHORT TAKES

HUL shares rise 4.5%

New Delhi: Shares of Hindustan Unilever Ltd Thursday gained 4.5 per cent after the FMCG major reported a higher consolidated net profit for the fourth quarter ended March. The stock jumped 4.55 per cent to end at ₹2,241.80 on the BSE. During the day, it rallied 4.92 per cent to ₹2,249.90. Hindustan Unilever Limited (HUL) emerged as the biggest gainer in the Sensex pack. On the NSE, it climbed 4.28 per cent to ₹2,237 apiece. The company's market valuation rallied by ₹22,920.37 crore to ₹5,26,731.37 crore on the BSE.

RIL plans bid for UK retail major Boots

London: Mukesh Ambani led Reliance Industries is considering a joint bid with US buyout firm Apollo Global Management for Britain's well-known retailer Boots, according to a UK media report Thursday. According to 'The Financial Times', the American private equity firm is working with one of India's richest businessmen on a bid for the Nottingham-headquartered health and beauty retail chain. If successful, it is expected to result in Boots expansion into India, South-east Asia and the Middle East.

NCLT gives Future time till May 12

Mumbai: The National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT) Thursday gave crisis-hit Future Retail Ltd (FRL) time till May 12 to submit its reply to the insolvency petition filed against the company by Bank of India. Last week, Bank of India had moved the tribunal seeking to initiate insolvency resolution proceedings against FRL, which has defaulted on loan repayments. The NCLT hearing Thursday also came against the backdrop of Reliance calling off its proposed ₹24,713 crore deal with Future Group after secured creditors voted against it.

Vedanta Q4 PAT dips 5% to ₹7,261 cr

New Delhi: Vedanta Ltd Thursday reported about 5 per cent decline in its consolidated profit after tax (PAT) at ₹7,261 crore in the March 2022 quarter on account of higher expenses. Its PAT was ₹7,629 crore in the same quarter of 2020-21, Vedanta Ltd said in a press statement.

Bajaj Finserv net profit surges 38%

New Delhi: Bajaj Finserv Ltd (BFS) Thursday reported a 37.5 per cent rise in its consolidated net profit to ₹1,346 crore for the quarter ended March 2022. BFS, the holding company of various financial businesses under the Bajaj group, had reported a net profit of ₹979 crore in the year ago period. Its consolidated total income rose 22.5 per cent to ₹18,862 crore during the January-March period of 2021-22, from ₹15,387 crore a year ago, Bajaj Finserv said in a regulatory filing. The consolidated numbers include the results of Bajaj Finance Ltd (BFL), Bajaj Allianz General Insurance Co Ltd (BAGIC) and Bajaj Allianz Life Insurance Co Ltd (BALIC). The company said it has recorded its highest-ever assets under management and annual consolidated profit after tax in 2021-22.



Axis Bank net profit jumps 54%

New Delhi: Axis Bank Thursday reported a 54 per cent jump in its standalone net profit to ₹4,117.77 crore for the quarter ended March 2022. The country's third-largest private sector lender had posted a net profit of ₹2,677.06 crore in the year ago period. The total income (standalone) rose to ₹21,999.58 crore in the January-March period of 2021-22 against ₹19,035.12 crore in the same period of 2020-21, Axis Bank said in a regulatory filing. For the full 2021-22, the net profit nearly doubled to ₹13,025.48 crore from ₹6,588.50 crore in 2020-21. Its income increased to ₹82,597.37 crore from ₹75,609.83 crore. The bank's asset quality showed improvement, as its gross non-performing assets (NPAs) fell to 2.82 per cent of the gross advances as of March 31, 2022, from 3.70 per cent at the end of March 2021.



WhatsApp giving cashback for making digital payments

GOOGLE AND PAYTM HAVE ALSO OFFERED CASH-BACK TO USERS TO DRIVE MORE ENGAGEMENT AND RETENTION GROWTH ON THEIR RESPECTIVE PLATFORMS

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, April 28: Meta-owned WhatsApp has confirmed that it is running a cashback campaign in India to

drive more users on its digital payments service.

The company is giving away ₹11 cashback up to three times by sending money to three different contacts via unified payments interface (UPI) on WhatsApp.

"We are running a campaign offering cashback incentives in a phased manner to our users as a way to unlock the potential of payments on WhatsApp," a company spokesperson told IANS.

"We'll continue to drive awareness of payments on WhatsApp as part of our broader efforts to bring the next 500 million Indians onto the digital payments ecosystem," the spokesperson added.



If you become eligible for the promotion, you will see a banner within the app, or a gift icon when you're send-

ing money to an eligible receiver, according to WhatsApp.

"Once selected, you can send money to any of your registered WhatsApp contacts and receive ₹11 cashback per successful transaction," the company informed.

On its support page, WhatsApp said that it will not offer cash-back for QR code payments, payments made on collect requests or made by entering the UPI ID of recipient, as well as payments on third-party online apps using WhatsApp.

Earlier this month, the National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) approved an additional 60 million users for UPI for WhatsApp - taking its cap to 100 million for Payments.

PHONEPE OFFERS CASHBACK ON GOLD, SILVER PURCHASES

New Delhi: Digital payments company PhonePe Thursday announced exciting offers on the purchase of gold and silver via the app on the auspicious occasion of Akshaya Tritiya. Users can buy the highest purity 24K gold through the app and choose to either accumulate it in bank grade insured lockers with zero hassle of storage or making charges or get delivery in the form of gold coins or bars from a wide range of design options. "24K gold and silver on PhonePe are of the best value and highest 99.99 per cent purity. Customers buying gold coins also get a purity certificate against each purchase," the company said in a statement. Users can additionally get upto ₹2,500 cashback on their gold purchase during the offer period. Customers looking to buy silver coins or bars can also enjoy up to ₹250 cashback. The limited period offer will be valid till May 3.

Kuldeep seals DC win



WRECKER-IN-CHIEF: Kuldeep Yadav celebrates with his skipper Rishabh Pant after taking a wicket against KKR, Thursday

Mumbai, April 28: Delhi Capitals made rough weather of an easy chase due to a middle-order collapse before recording a comfortable four-wicket victory over a lacklustre Kolkata Knight Riders here Thursday, keeping their IPL play-off qualification hopes alive. Chasing an easy target of 147, DC were 84/5 and 113/6 at various stages of the innings before Rovman Powell (33 n o, 16b, 1x4, 3x6) once again displayed his big-hitting

proress to get DC past the target with an over to spare. The hero of the win was certainly DC's Kuldeep Yadav (4/14). While DC with 10 points are placed sixth, KKR remained at third from the bottom, and the chopping and changing in the side is a testimony that all is not well in the Shah Rukh Khan-owned franchise's camp. Whether big bosses, coaching staff and captain Shreyas Iyer are all on same page is a million dollar question at the moment as they

suffered a fifth straight defeat. Defending a total of 146 wasn't easy but Umesh Yadav (3/24) did try his best as he started brilliantly with a diving return catch off the very first delivery of the DC innings to sent Prithvi Shaw (0) back. David Warner (42, 26b, 8x4) was in fine touch, adding 65 for the third wicket with Lalit Yadav (22), as DC cruised along at 82/2. But it soon became 84/5 as both the set batters were removed in quick succession and skipper Rishabh Pant (2) played a rank bad shot to bring

KKR back in the game. Axar Patel's (24) needless run-out made it 113/6 and more importantly 34 to get in five overs. KKR captain Shreyas Iyer had to get one over done on his non-regular bowler and Powell took advantage of that, dispatching Venkatesh Iyer for a six off the very first ball. The 17th over yielded 18 runs and it changed the fortunes for Delhi.

Earlier, KKR's much-vaunted batting line-up imploded, failing to get a grip of Kuldeep's deception and guile before Nitish Rana's half century (57, 34b, 3x4, 4x6) became a face-saver.

A host of changes in the playing XI did seem to have affected the balance of KKR as their innings lacked momentum, save Shreyas (42, 37b, 4x4) and Rana, who tried to get a move on.

Rana's partnership of 62 for the seventh wicket with Rinku Singh (23) proved to be a saving grace after the two-time champions slumped to 83/6 at one stage.

Kuldeep now has 17 wickets and one short of Yuzvendra Chahal's 18 scalps and performance was another reminder to his old franchise which didn't exactly looked after him well when chips were down. It was a bit surprising that skipper Rishabh Pant didn't complete his quota of overs.

If Kuldeep wreaked havoc in the middle overs, it was Mustafizur Rahman (3/18), who was brilliant at the death, giving away only two runs and picking three wickets in the last over.

BRIEF SCORES

Kolkata Knight Riders 146/9 (Nitish Rana 57, Shreyas Iyer 42, Rinku Singh 23; Kuldeep Yadav 4/14, Mustafizur Rahman 3/18) **lost to Delhi Capitals 150/6** (David Warner 42, Rovman Powell 33 n o, Axar Patel 24; Umesh Yadav 3/24, Sunil Narine 1/19) **by 4 wickets.**



Jammu pacer's first official age-group match, in Cooch Behar Trophy, was against Odisha COACH RECALLS UMRAN'S JOURNEY

It was (Abdul) Samad, who would record his bowling videos and mail them to VVS Laxman sir and Tom Moody in June 2020, when only a few people were training post the first lockdown. Sunrisers liked his videos and the rest, as they say, is history
RANDHIR SINGH MANHAS

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, April 28: It was business as usual for coach Randhir Singh Manhas during a winter day in 2017 when a 17-year-old boy walked up to him during a net session at the Maulana Azad Stadium in Jammu's Nawabad Area.

"Sir, kya aap mujhe ball daalne denge? (Could you allow me to bowl)," Manhas remembered the short and stout boy's request while senior state team batter Jatin Wadhawan was having a knock at the nets.

"What's your name?" "Umran Malik," replied the boy, who had dropped in at the net session without bowling spikes.

Manhas obliged but till date, he has failed to figure out whether it was his gut feel or just wanting to be indulgent with a young boy, that made him agree to the request. He had a bowler short at the nets, though.

Whatever it was, Manhas' role in giving a precocious talent wings to fly is beyond doubt. The seeds of the express pace deliveries that Umran is hurling at the best of batters under intense pressure on a platform like the IPL, were

sown that very day at the MA Stadium.

It was the birth of Umran Malik, the fastest bowler in the history of Indian cricket, who has made heads turn with 15 wickets in just eight games in this edition of the T20 league.

"On that day, he was very quick for a 17-year-old as Jatin, who was a first-class player was hurried by him. In my mind, I knew that the kid was special and my views were seconded by our senior team pacer Ram Dayal, who had then just reached the ground and saw him bowl. Ram told me that this boy had bright future," Manhas, the coach of the Jammu District Cricket Council said.

Umran is not a product of the system but despite the system, and his rise can be attributed to that. He didn't receive any structured coaching till the age of 17, never played with a leather ball, and all he did was to play in the 'Mohalla' tennis ball tournaments, from which any teenager could earn anything between Rs 500 to Rs 3000 per match depending on the reputation.

Hailing from a middle-class family in Jammu's Gujjar Nagar, his father, who runs his own fruit shop in the local market, initially wanted him to focus on studies, but later, along with his wife, encouraged him to take up professional cricket.

Having impressed the coach, Umran was asked to enroll in the academy but Manhas recollected that in the initial days in 2017-18, he was never a regular.

"He would come one day and then remain absent for the next few days. We had to tell him that he needs to be disciplined about training as he cannot let the opportunities go abegging.

"I told him, 'listen Umran, the day you play at the national level, you won't have to look back. So be serious'. I sent him for U-19 trials, where he borrowed bowling spikes and bowled. He was picked for Cooch Behar Trophy but got only one match, and that too, a rain-truncated one against Odisha.

"But those who watched him told me that the keeper was standing a good 35 yards behind the stumps, something that doesn't happen a lot at U-19 level," said the coach, who is a storehouse of anecdotes.

One of his favourite stories is the one where the Assam Ranji team, coached by former keeper Ajay Ratna, had come to Jammu for an away game.

"Umran was at the stadium that day and Assam team needed net bowlers for practice. Ajay asked Umran that if he would like to bowl at the nets. Umran agreed immediately but after 15 minutes, the Assam coach asked Umran to stop. Reason? His men had a match to play and didn't want them to get hurt," Manhas laughed.

In fact, Ratna was surprised that Umran wasn't playing Ranji Trophy back then.

The gifted physique One of the greatest pacers of all time, the legendary Andy Roberts, in various interviews have laid out one basic ground rule about a fast bowler's physique.

"You bowl fast not just because you have strong upper body but because you have strong legs that help in building the rhythm," Roberts had once said.

In the case of Umran, one would be surprised to know that before he entered the Sunrisers Hyderabad fold, he had never been a part of any systematic gym sessions but still had a rock like lower body.

"His house is near river Tawi and the adjoining area of the river bank is primarily sandy. Umran grew up running on sandy fields and playing cricket all his formative years. That has led to a very strong lower body. You won't find many guys who at 17 had such fabulous body structure and in-built strength without any gym training," Manhas said.

Umran went to the UAE in 2020 as a net bowler and was performing the same duties in 2021, before T Natarajan's injury opened the doors for him, and his consistent 150 click bowling forced the selectors to make him a net bowler for the last T20 World Cup.

Now, things are happening too fast for Umran but Manhas is confident that he will adapt to the changes in life and the focus will remain on cricket and donning the India colours.

Kings aim to stifle Rahul against LSG

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Pune, April 28: Punjab Kings would be keen to put brakes on Lucknow Super Giants skipper KL Rahul's rollicking batting form and notch up a win when the two sides clash in an IPL game here Friday.

Lucknow are currently in fourth spot, having five wins and three losses from eight games, while Punjab are at sixth, with four wins and as many losses.

Lucknow beat Mumbai Indians by 36 runs in their last game, while Punjab come into the game after defeating Chennai Super Kings by 11 runs.

Rahul has been in sublime form at the top of order and has already hit two hundreds – both against Mumbai Indians – and a fifty-plus score this season.

With 368 runs, he is the second highest run-getter so far this season, just behind Rajasthan Royals'

TODAY'S MATCH

PBKs vs LSG

Time: 07:30 pm

TELECAST

Star Sports channels & Hotstar

Jos Buttler and has been the batting mainstay for his team. Punjab's balanced bowling attack, led by South African pacer Kasigo Rabada, would be keen to put the brakes on the stylish right-handed batter.

Rabada and the likes of Arshdeep Singh, who has been impressive in death overs, Sandeep Sharma, Rishi Dhawan and Rahul Chahar, would need to pose serious questions to Rahul at the MCA stadium, which has witnessed high-scoring thrillers.

SHORT TAKES

Stokes new captain

LONDON: Ben Stokes was appointed as captain of England's Test cricket team Thursday. The all-rounder replaced Joe Root, who quit the role two weeks ago with England having only won one of its last 17 Test matches. Stokes has just returned to the team after a spell out for mental-health reasons. It is the first big decision by Rob Key, the former England batsman who was recently hired as managing director of men's cricket in England. "I am delighted that he has accepted, and he is ready for the added responsibility and the honour. He thoroughly deserves the opportunity," Key said.

Inter waste chance

ROME: For four months, Inter Milan had been pointing to its postponed match at Bologna as a chance to gain ground in the title race. Yet a goalkeeping blunder handed Bologna a 2-1 win Wednesday as Inter wasted a lead and a chance to reclaim the Serie A lead. Defending champion Inter were left trailing city rival AC Milan by two points with four matches remaining. Reserve goalkeeper Ionut Radu was to blame for Bologna's winner. Attempting to clear following a throw in, Radu instead kicked the ball toward his own net and Bologna's Nicola Sansone had the final touch to make sure it went in. Former Inter Milan striker Marko Arnautovic headed in the equalizer for Bologna after Ivan Perisic had put Inter ahead early on.

Liverpool overwhelm Villarreal



SUBLIME TOUCH: Sadio Mane (L, in red) scores past Villarreal goalie to double Liverpool's advantage at the Anfield

Liverpool, April 28: Liverpool look like being one European giant too many for Villarreal. Wins in the Champions League semifinals are rarely as routine as Liverpool's 2-0 first-leg victory on Wednesday over the Spanish underdog, which appears to have finally come unstuck on a fairytale run that has already accounted for European football royalty in Juventus and Bayern Munich.

Liverpool, still on course for an unprecedented quadruple of major trophies, proved to be a bigger test. The six-time European champions slowly dismantled the limited challenge of Villarreal on another night when they were swept along by the power of Anfield. The goals came early in the second half — and within 133 seconds of each other — as Villarreal left back Pervis Estupinan unwittingly deflected a cross by Jordan Henderson into his own net in the 53rd minute, with goalkeeper Geronimo Rulli only managing to tip a looping ball into his own net.

One goal can quickly turn into two in these energy-charged European nights at Anfield and that's what transpired again, with Villarreal still shaken up from conceding the opener when Sadio Mane ran onto Mohamed Salah's through-ball and toe-poked a low finish beyond Rulli.

amazingly, the quadruple is still on for a team that has already won the English League Cup, is into the FA Cup final and is only a point behind Manchester City in the Premier League title race.

It could yet be a Champions League final between the two north-west rivals, with City taking a 4-3 lead over Real Madrid into the second leg of their semifinal in Spain next Wednesday.

A sea of yellow-clad Villarreal fans — at around 5,000, they amounted to almost 10 per cent of the population of the town in eastern Spain — swarmed its way from Liverpool city center to Anfield ahead of the game. A rendition of The Beatles' 'Yellow Submarine', which is the nickname of visitors, was well-received by the lively away contingent before kickoff. That was as warm as the welcome got.

Liverpool snapped into tackles and pressed high from the first whistle, meaning Villarreal's players hardly got out of their half all match.

Yet, with Emery setting up his team with his back four screened by a deep-lying and narrow midfield four, Liverpool was initially starved of space in what quickly became tantamount to an attack vs defense exercise.

The two goals came in between two disallowed efforts, by Fabinho then Andrew Robertson, and it was only Liverpool's players taking their foot off the gas that stopped an even bigger victory.

SINDHU, SATWIK-CHIRAG SAIL INTO BAC QUARTERS



Satwiksairaj Rankireddy (L) & Chirag Shetty

Manila (Philippines), April 28: Star Indian shuttler PV Sindhu notched up a straight game win over lowly-ranked Yue Yann Jaslyn Hooi of Singapore in women's singles competition to advance to the quarterfinals of Badminton Asia Championships here Thursday.

to-head record against Bing Jiao, whom she has beaten twice in the last two meetings.

The Indian men's doubles pair of Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty also made it to the quarterfinals but it was curtains for London Olympics bronze medallist Saina Nehwal and world championships silver winner Kidambi Srikanth.

The third seeded mixed doubles duo of Satwik and Chirag too produced a fine performance to sail into the last-eight round with a 21-17, 21-15 win over Japan's Akira Koga and Taichi Saito.

Sindhu, seeded fourth, who had claimed a bronze in the 2014 Gimcheon edition, defeated Jaslyn Hooi, ranked 100th, 21-16, 21-16 in 42 minutes to set up a clash against third seed Chinese He Bing Jiao, whom she had beaten for a bronze at the Tokyo Olympics.

The world No.7 Indian pairing will next face either fifth seeded Malaysian combination of Aaron Chia and Soh Wooi Yik or Singaporean duo of Danny Bawa Chrisnanta and Jun Liang Andy Kwek.

World No.7 Sindhu, a double Olympic medallist, has a 7-9 head-

However, Saina's dream of claiming her fourth medal in the prestigious tournament ended after she ran out of steam to eventually lose 21-12, 7-21, 13-21 to 22-year-old Chinese World No.16 Wang Zhi Yi. Srikanth, seeded seventh, too couldn't step up his game when it mattered, going down narrowly to China's Weng Hong Yang 16-21, 21-17 21-21 in a men's singles second round match.