



UNIQUE APPEAL

Actor Shruti Haasan urges filmmakers not to make her dance in the snow with minimal clothing for their movies

LEISURE P2



KIM VOWS N-EXPANSION

North Korean leader Kim Jong Un vows to enhance his nuclear arsenal in more "practical and offensive" ways

INTERNATIONAL P10



CSK TAKE ON RR

Chennai Super Kings lock horns with Rajasthan Royals in a battle of IPL heavyweights today

SPORTS P12

BJP govt dismantling democracy, says Sonia

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, April 11: Former Congress president Sonia Gandhi has accused Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his government of 'systematically dismantling' all three pillars of India's democracy, saying their actions demonstrate a 'deep-rooted disdain' for the democracy.

In an Op-Ed in 'The Hindu', Gandhi said with the Narendra Modi government bent on 'misusing every power' and elections approaching in several key states, her party will take its message directly to people and join hands with all like-minded parties to defend the Constitution.

She also alleged that the PM 'ignores' the rising tide of hatred and violence, egged on by BJP and RSS leaders, and has not once called for peace or harmony or acted to reign in the offenders, let alone bring them to justice.

"Religious festivals seem to have become occasions to intimidate and bully others - a far cry from when they were occasions for joy and celebration. Instead, there is intimidation and discrimination

only on account of their religion, food, caste, gender or language," Gandhi said.

Launching a scathing attack on Modi, she said his statements either ignore the most pressing issues of the day or are 'platitudes and verbal gymnastics' to distract from these matters.

The Congress Parliamentary Party chairperson said despite the PM's best efforts, the people of the country cannot and will not be silenced.

Underlining that the next few months will be a crucial test of India's democracy, she said the country is at the crossroads, with the Modi government bent on "misusing every power" and elections approaching in several key states.

"The Congress party will make every effort to take its message directly to the people, as it did in the Bharat Jodo Yatra, and will join hands with all like-minded parties to defend the Constitution of India and its ideals," Gandhi asserted.

She said the Congress's battle is for safeguarding the voice of people and it understands its solemn duty as the principal opposition party.

Contd...P4



WOONG PEOPLE: Congress leaders Rahul Gandhi and Priyanka Gandhi Vadra wave at supporters during a roadshow in Wayanad, Tuesday

PTI PHOTO

Raj man cremated in Odisha as courier agency swaps bodies

AGENCIES

Cuttack, April 11: A courier agency 'inadvertently' swapped the bodies of two persons while sending them to their families in Odisha and Rajasthan.

According to sources, Bilash Bhuyan, a resident of Kuanasala under Nemalo police limits in Cuttack district, who had been working in Mumbai, passed away near his workplace following a brief illness a few weeks back.

A courier agency sent the mortal remains of 'Bhuyan' to Kuanasala, where his last rites were carried out Monday evening.

However, to the utter dismay of Bhuyan's family, Nemalo police informed them that the body they cremated was not of Bhuyan but that of someone from Rajasthan.

Sources said the matter came to light after the family in Rajasthan discovered that the body they received through the same courier agency was not theirs and filed a complaint with the police in Mumbai.

As the investigation began, it was found that bodies got interchanged by the courier agency.

Contd...P4

IRREGULAR by MANJUL



The bill has been passed! Where do you want me to send it for Governor's assent? His house or Supreme Court?

MARKET WATCH

INDEX	VAIATION
SENSEX	60157.72 ↑ 311.21
NIFTY	17722.30 ↑ 98.30
DOLLAR	82.12 ↑ ₹0.14
EURO	89.54 ↑ ₹0.53
GOLD	₹60,477 ↑ ₹414
SILVER	₹75,040 ↑ ₹717

WEATHER

	BHUB	CTK
MAX	40.7°C	40.0°C
MIN	25.0°C	26.0°C
Humidity	58%	63%
Rainfall	Nil	Nil

Forecast: Light to moderate rain

MERCURY BREACHES 40°C AT 9 PLACES; SCHOOLS SHUT TILL APRIL 16

Blistering heat till April 15

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, April 11: As the state Tuesday turned into a virtual cauldron after mercury crossed 40 degrees Celsius at nine places and weatherman issued heatwave warning from April 13 to 15, Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik directed the administration to keep schools and anganwadi centres shut till April 16.

The Met department said nine places recorded above 40 degrees Celsius Tuesday. "Baripada recorded the highest temperature at 41.6 degrees Celsius, followed by Jharsuguda at 41.2 degrees Celsius and Sambalpur at 40.8 degrees Celsius," it said in the evening bulletin.

While state capital Bhubaneswar saw a maximum temperature of 40.7 degrees Celsius, Titlagarh and Boudh registered 40.5 degrees Celsius. Cuttack registered 40 degrees Celsius, Angul 40.1 and Sundargarh 40, it pointed out.

The weatherman has issued a heatwave warning for several districts, including Balasore, Sundargarh, Keonjhar, Mayurbhanj, Sambalpur and Jharsuguda, from April 13 to 15.

"Due to northwesterly/westerly dry air and high solar insolation, the maximum temperature is very likely to rise further by 3-4 degrees Celsius in interior Odisha during the next four days, and at many



As daytime temperature soars, girls use umbrellas near SCBMCH in Cuttack, Tuesday

places in other districts of the state," it said.

Upon his arrival from Japan, the CM held a review meeting here with officials on the heatwave and Covid situations.

"In view of intense heatwave condition, anganwadis and all schools, both government and private up to Class XII, will remain closed from tomorrow (April 12) till April 16," Patnaik said in an official order.

He also asked officials to ensure smooth supply of drinking water and uninterrupted power supply.

While reviewing various activities of the Health and Family Welfare department, the CM expressed satisfaction over the functioning of the BSKY scheme which

provides free healthcare facilities to nearly three and half crore people of Odisha.

In view of the significance of the scheme, the CM advised the Health department to ensure prompt medical care for all the beneficiaries.

Patnaik was briefed about the current Covid scenario in the country in general and Odisha in particular.

Officials informed Patnaik that the situation is well under control. "Government has taken all precautionary measures including a massive awareness programme to contain the outbreak," they said.

The Chief Minister has advised officials to monitor the situation closely, it was learnt.

NORMAL RAINFALL THIS YEAR: IMD

AGENCIES

New Delhi, April 11: A day after 'Skymet Weather' predicted below-normal monsoon rains in India, the IMD Tuesday said that the country is expected to get normal rainfall during the southwest monsoon season despite the evolving El Nino conditions.

India has already seen four consecutive years of 'normal' and 'above-normal' rains during the monsoon season.

Normal rain is critical for India's agricultural landscape, with 52 per cent of the net cultivated area relying on it.

"India to see normal rainfall during the southwest monsoon season (from June to September). It is likely to be 96 per cent (with an error margin of 5 per cent) of the long-period average of roughly 87cm," M Ravichandran, Secretary, Ministry of Earth Sciences, said. There is a 67 per cent probability of 'normal' to 'above normal' rainfall, said IMD DG Mrutyunjay Mohapatra. He said 'normal' to 'below-normal' rainfall is predicted over parts of northwest India, west-central and northeast regions during the southwest monsoon season.

Man killed in plot to eliminate nephew



POST NEWS NETWORK

Barbil, April 11: A man, who had hired contract killers to eliminate his nephew over property dispute, was shot dead over payment of advance money near Damu hutting under Barbil police limits in Keonjhar, police said Tuesday.

The deceased Duhsashan Barik, an employee of Orissa Mineral Development Company (OMDC), was a resident of Thakurani Dalki slum under Barbil police limits, Barbil IIC Pramodini Sahu said, adding that he was shot dead April 7 night and his bullet-riddled body was recovered the next day.

The incident came to the fore with the arrest of three of the four accused.

The arrested accused Sahadat Khan, Shahrulkhan and Nehal Khan, all natives under Kothi police limits in Gaya district of Bihar, were residing under Barbil police limits. Another accused Waris Khan, also from Bihar, is on the run, the IIC said, adding that the mur-

der weapon is yet to be recovered. About the turn of events, the IIC said Duhsashan had a long-standing property dispute with his sister for which he hired contract killers at Rs 5 lakh to eliminate her son.

"Although Duhsashan had promised to pay Rs 2 lakh as advance, he paid only Rs 40,000 to the contract killers. Irked, one of the accused shot the OMDC employee dead April 7," police said, adding his body was found at Damu hutting the next day.

Police recovered two live bullets and Duhsashan's bike near his body. Police interrogated his family members and kin but failed to get any clues. Later, police collected Duhsashan's phone call details and the footage of CCTVs installed in the town.

During probe, police found Duhsashan's frequent phone calls to Sahadat. Later, Sahadat was brought to the police station, where he confessed to have killed Duhsashan.

SHORT TAKES

2 killed as earthmover hits SUV in Sundargarh

SUNDARGARH: At least two persons, including a deputy manager of Mahanadi Coalfields Limited (MCL), died and six others were injured after an earthmover collided with an SUV in a mine area here Tuesday, police said. The accident took place when they were returning home in the SUV after their duty hours. The deceased were identified as Jagdish Oram, deputy manager (mining), and Umakant Patel, MCL said in a statement. The injured persons are undergoing treatment in hospital. Apart from the police, the MCL has also initiated an internal inquiry to ascertain the cause of the accident.

HC bail to Archana in blackmailing case

CUTTACK: The Orissa High Court Tuesday granted bail to Archana Nag, the prime accused in a high-profile blackmailing case. She was arrested six months ago on the charge of running a sex racket that used to extract money from rich and influential persons including politicians. Justice V Narasingh accepted her bail application considering the welfare of her six-year-old child. Directing her to cooperate with the ongoing investigation, the High Court asked Nag not to leave the state without the permission of the lower court. The High Court also asked the lower court to fix the bail terms as it deems fit.

AGENCIES

Bareilly (UP), April 11: Cow urine, which has been touted as a miracle medicine for decades, has now found to be unsuitable for direct human consumption as it contains potentially harmful bacteria.

Research carried out by Bareilly-based ICAR-Indian Veterinary Research Institute (IVRI), the country's premier animal research body, has found that the urine of buffalo was more effective on certain bacteria.

The study, led by Bhoj Raj Singh of the institute along with three Ph.D students, found that urine

samples from healthy cows and bulls contained at least 14 types of harmful bacteria with the presence of Escherichia coli, which can cause stomach infections, most commonly detected.

The findings of the peer-reviewed research have been published in online research website, ResearchGate.

Singh, who heads the department of epidemiology at the institute, said, "Statistical analysis of 73 urine samples of cow, buffaloes and humans suggest that antibacterial activity in buffalo urine was far more superior than cows. Urine of buffalo was significantly more effective on bacteria like S Epidermidis and E Rhapontici."



He explained, "We collected urine samples of three types of cows - Sahiwal, Tharparkar and Vindavani (cross breed) from local dairy farms - along with samples of buffaloes

and humans. Our study, carried out between June and November 2022, concluded that a sizeable proportion of urine samples from apparently healthy individuals carry

potentially pathogenic bacteria."

The urine of some individuals, irrespective of sex and breeder species, might be inhibitory to a select group of bacteria but the common belief, that cow urine is antibacterial, cannot be generalised.

He further said, "In no case can urine be recommended for human consumption. Some people put forth the contention that distilled urine does not have infectious bacteria. We are carrying out further research on it."

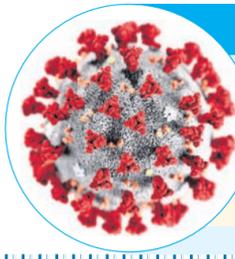
Notably, cow urine is widely sold in the Indian market without the food safety and standards authority of India (FSSAI) trademark by many suppliers.

downtown



MOCK DRILL

A mock drill was conducted at SCB Medical College and Hospital in Cuttack, Tuesday, amid rise in Covid-19 cases in the state



COVID-19 TRACKER

	INFECTED	RECOVERED	DEAD
World	68,50,64,148	65,78,97,967	68,38,185
India	4,47,62,496	4,41,96,318	5,30,979
Odisha	13,36,304	13,26,915	9,204

Govt orders crackdown against BSKY scammers

Bhubaneswar, April 11: Expressing concern over exploitation of Biju Swasthya Kalyan Yojana (BSKY) beneficiaries by nefarious elements, the state government has asked all district Collectors and superintendents of police (SPs) to crack down on the fraudulent activities.

Health and Family Welfare secretary Shalini Pandit has written a letter to all the Collectors, municipal commissioners, SPs, DCP (Bhubaneswar and Cuttack) and chief district medical and public health officers on this issue, Tuesday.

In the letter, Pandit said, "BSKY is a path breaking scheme to provide universal health coverage, with special emphasis on the health protection of economically vulnerable families & women. Under component 2 of the scheme, 96.5 lakh families of Odisha having ration card (NFSA/SFSS card) are provided with BSKY annual health coverage of ₹5 lakh per family and additional ₹5 lakh for the women members of the family, at empanelled private hospitals."

In view of recent incidents reported regarding exploitation of beneficiaries by nefarious elements, all concerned may be sensitised about the scheme, she said.

Pandit said the BSKY Smart Health Card once issued to a beneficiary does not require renewal,



POINTS TO REMEMBER

- All NFSA/SFSS beneficiaries having valid ration cards can avail benefit under BSKY at empanelled private hospital, without a BSKY card

- BSKY Smart Health Card once issued to a beneficiary does not require renewal, as it is auto renewed annually through BSKY IT platform

Recharge of the balance in the card is also done automatically on the 1st of September every year through BSKY IT platform

as it is auto renewed annually through BSKY IT platform.

Similarly, the beneficiary does not have to pay anyone or go to any office for renewal of the card as the same is auto renewed by the IT platform at the back-end, the Secretary said.

Further, all NFSA/SFSS beneficiaries having valid ration cards can avail benefit under BSKY at empanelled private hospital, without a BSKY card, she clarified.

Recharge of the balance in the card is also done automatically on the 1st of September every year through BSKY IT platform, she added.

The Health Secretary asked the Collectors and SPs to sensitise all field workers and beneficiaries on the above points so that nefarious elements do not exploit beneficiaries in the name of renewal of BSKY card or recharge of balance in the BSKY card.

Apex court asks HCs to submit response on CCTV installation

POST NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi, April 11: The Supreme Court has directed all the High Courts of the country including Orissa High Court, to submit their response to amicus curiae Siddhart Luthra on the progress of installation of closed-circuit television (CCTV) cameras on the court premises.

A two-judge bench of Justices Ravindra Bhat and Dipankar Datta was hearing a batch of petitions seeking directions for special measures to enhance security on court premises in the country.

"The High Courts are directed to cooperate with the amicus who has been requested to convene videoconference meeting(s) to compile their response on the two aspects. Suitable safeguards and guidelines may be indicated to the amicus. Information should be preferably sent to him at least a week in advance of the scheduled meeting. List after four weeks," the bench said.

The amicus curiae highlighted the need to record the High Courts' responses with respect to two aspects - first, the installation of CCTV cameras on the court premises and the progress thereof and second, the feasibility of audio-visual recording of evidence to ensure fairness and clarity in trials. "At a designated time, you hold a virtual meeting with the registrars-generals of the High Courts. They can get their instructions in writing and also send it to you before the meeting," the bench said.



POLITICKLE by MANJUL



State seeks 50K Covid shots

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, April 11: With more than 100 cases of coronavirus being reported in Odisha daily for four days now, the state government Tuesday requested the Centre for at least an additional 50,000 doses of vaccine in the first phase to cover people who have not received the booster dose yet, an official said.

The state director of Health and Family Welfare Bijay Panigrahi, who is also its nodal officer for immunisation, has in his letter to the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare sought

CorBEvax vaccine for Odisha. "Presently there is a rise in Covid cases in Odisha. Also there is a demand for public for precaution dose vaccination at government facilities," Panigrahi said in the letter.

The state does not have any vaccine left since February this, he wrote and requested for at least 50,000 doses of CorBEvax vaccine with long expiry as early as possible.

The state Tuesday reported 141 fresh infections and the number of active cases in the state has increased to 731. It has been reporting more than 100 new cases daily for the fourth day Tuesday.

Odisha public health director Niranjan Mishra said the infections are being reported from 16 districts and asked the people to get themselves tested if they had any symptom.

"The positivity rate in the country is 6.9 per cent whereas it is 2.8 per cent in Odisha," he said.

Of the 5,016 samples tested in the last 24 hours, 141 were found to be positive, he added.

The coastal state has so far reported 13,37,798 infections since the outbreak of the pandemic and 13,27,808 patients recuperated from the disease. It reported 9206 deaths due to the virus.

Rare surgery for cancer performed on City woman

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, April 11: The Surgical Oncology team at KIMS Cancer Centre (KCC) has performed a rare surgery on a 52-year-old woman of Patharagadia slum here who had cancer in gallbladder and small intestine as well. The patient is now doing good and undergoing chemotherapy after the successful procedure, said the hospital sources.

KCC senior surgical oncologist Sabyasachi Parida said, "The lady, when arrived at our super speciality cancer centre, was unable to eat and sip water for more than two weeks as nothing was going inside beyond her stomach due to complete obstruction. Without food and fluid intake, she had become very weak."

However, the entire team at KCC took on the challenge under the leadership of Parida and following stabilisation of the health of the patient, an operation was performed as it involved two organs. During the surgery, Radical Cholecystectomy for the gallbladder mass and radical excision of duodenal tumour for small bowel cancer, followed by Duodeno-Jejunostomy for restoration of intestinal continuity were performed.

Parida, while explaining the complex surgical intervention, also mentioned that it was extremely risky performing the procedure as there was high risk of leakage from the site of intestinal repair. However, the patient was treated with proper care by KCC team and recovered uneventfully, he said. "She was very happy as

During the surgery, Radical Cholecystectomy for the gallbladder mass and radical excision of duodenal tumour for small bowel cancer were performed

the entire treatment was done under Biju Swasthya Kalyan Yojana (BSKY) sending a message across the economically weaker sections that through it cancer treatment is possible and patients should come to oncology specialists as delay might endanger their lives," he added.

Director KCC, renowned oncologist Bidhu Kalyan Mohanti said, "We are integrating cancer support services for the well-being of cancer patients and support their family caregivers as the disease also creates psycho-social issues even among educated people."

Hospital sources said the Surgical Oncology section is equipped with modern modular OT with advanced laparoscopic surgery, precise diathermy, harmonic scalpel, intraoperative ultrasound, C-Arm and high-end surgical instruments.

Apart from Surgical Oncology, KCC has departments like Medical Oncology, Radiation Oncology, Palliative Care and Nuclear Medicine as it positions to offer comprehensive cancer care for the patients from across the state and neighbouring regions, said the sources.



SCINTILLATING SHOW: Artistes performed during 21st Ekamra Nrutya Mahotsav at Utkal Rangamancha in Bhubaneswar, Tuesday

OP PHOTO

HC bail to Archana in blackmailing case

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Cuttack, April 11: The Orissa High Court Tuesday granted bail to Archana Nag, the prime accused in a high-profile blackmailing case.

She was arrested six months ago on the charge of running a sex racket that used to extract money from rich and influential persons including politicians. Justice V Narasingh accepted her bail application considering the welfare of her six-year-old child.

Directing her to cooperate with the ongoing investigation, the High Court asked Nag not to leave the



state without the permission of the lower court.

The High Court also asked the lower court to fix the bail

terms as it deems fit.

Following the rejection of her bail plea by an additional district magistrate court in Bhubaneswar in December, Nag had moved the High Court. Nag, a 26-year-old woman from Kalahandi district, was arrested October 6, 2022. The police arrested her husband Jagabandhu Chand later.

Photographs of Archana and Jagabandhu along with many politicians of different parties had gone viral on social media.

She was taken into custody on the basis of a complaint at Khandagiri police station by a

woman, whom she had allegedly used in the sex racket.

An Odia film producer had claimed in an FIR that Nag had shot his intimate pictures with a woman after serving him intoxicating drinks at a hotel in the city and demanded ₹3 crore from him.

The Enforcement Directorate also launched a probe against the couple who had allegedly amassed properties worth crores of rupees during a span of four years from 2018.

The High Court had granted bail to Jagabandhu last month.

Mindset change key to stop child marriage: Min

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, April 11: Women and Child Development Minister Basanti Hembram Tuesday said that change in mindset of the people is essential to eradicate child marriage.

She said this while addressing a seminar on 'Prevention of Child Marriage and Trafficking of Women' was organised by State Social Welfare Board at Geeta Govinda Sadan here Tuesday.

Attending the seminar as the chief guest, Hembram said that in order to stop child marriage and women trafficking strict law enforcement alone is not enough but change in mindset of the people is needed. She added that child marriage is a big barrier to woman empowerment and development in the state. "Though there is a decline in child marriage in the state, its total eradication is necessary," she said.

The minister mentioned that child marriage rate in Odisha is lower than the national average. "According to National Family Health Survey-4, the rate of child marriage among girls in Odisha was 21.3, lower than the national average of 26.8, but we still need to work hard to stop this completely," she added.



Humans can create computerised avatar of loved ones

INDIAN ORIGIN SCIENTIST PRATIK DESAI ASKS PEOPLE TO START RECORDING THEIR LOVED ONES' VOICES, WHICH WILL "LIVE" EVEN AFTER THEIR DEATH

Humans will be able to upload consciousness and sensibility in computers by the end of 2023, claims an Indian-origin computer scientist.

Pratik Desai has asked people to start recording their loved ones' voices, which will "live" even after their death.

In other words, users can create a computerised avatar that resembles their loved one before their death, which can live forever on their screens.

"Start regularly recording your parents, elders and loved ones," Desai recently wrote Twitter.

"With enough transcript data, new voice synthesis and video mod-



els, there is a 100 per cent chance that they will live with you forever after leaving physical body. This should be even possible by end of the year," he noted.

Desai is not the only one who has claimed this.

Previously, metaverse company Somnium Space offered an AI-based "live forever" mode. It aims to allow individuals to talk with their loved ones in the metaverse.

In an interview with Motherboard, the company's founder and CEO Artur Sychoy said his project will allow people to store the way they talk, move, and sound until after they die, when they can come back from the dead as an online avatar to speak with their relatives. "Literally, if I die - and I have this data collected - people can come or my kids, they can

come in, and they can have a conversation with my avatar, with my movements, with my voice," Sychoy was quoted as saying to Vice.

"You will meet the person. And you, maybe for the first 10 minutes while talking to that person, would not know that it's actually AI. That's the goal," he added.

Another US-based company Deepbrain has also developed a programme called "Re:memory" which allows users the opportunity to walk down a memorial hall dedicated to a late loved one and even interact with the person "through an actual conversation".





TAKING REFUGE: Deer resting in the shadows of trees to protect themselves from the scorching heat at Tulsipur Deer Park in Cuttack, Tuesday **OP PHOTO**

EOW nabs 2 fraudsters involved in land scam

POST NEWS NETWORK

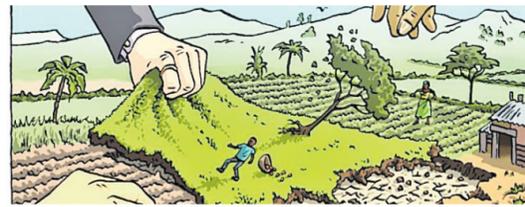
Bhubaneswar, April 11: The Economic Offences Wing (EOW) of Odisha police Tuesday arrested two fraudsters Gayatri Mallik and Krushna Chandra Behera from Bhubaneswar and Banki respectively in connection with a racket involved in land scams.

The arrests were made on the basis of a case registered on the written allegation of

The arrests were made against a case registered basing on the written allegation of Lipika Das of Nasadipur, Kendrapada, that the accused persons sold her land using fraudulent means.

During the investigation, EOW officials unearthed that in a criminal conspiracy, accused Antaryami Senapati, Haladhar Dash (a retired BMC employee), Gayatri Mallik (the impersonator) and Krushna Chandra Behera (acting as identifying witness), with others, had made false sale deeds of four plots by impersonating the real land owner Satyabhama Das of Dimiri, Gobindapur, Cuttack.

Further, the fraudsters manufactured a false Aadhaar card of Satyabhama Das by affixing a photograph of the impersonator Gayatri Mallik, who also signed as Das on the Registered Sale Deed (RSD).



The fraudsters prepared a false Aadhaar card of Satyabhama Das by affixing a photograph of the impersonator Gayatri Mallik, who also signed as Das on the Registered Sale Deed (RSD)

The four plots (khata no 365/926 and plot no 330/2074 in Malipada Mouza, Chandaka, Khurda) were sold to Damayanti Dash, wife of Haladhar Dash, Bhubaneswar, Pradipta Behera and Monalisha Behera of Nayagarh and Sulochana Behera of Bhubaneswar.

The EOW officials informed that the arrested Antaryami Senapati was actively involved in this land fraud as he has masterminded several such frauds before, selling land by using forgery and impersonation, targeting absentee land owners, and receiving the lion's share of the proceeds from such scams.

Earlier, Antaryami, Haladhar, Ananta Charan Pradhan, Mamata Parida and Subodha Parida were

arrested for fraudulently selling land belonging to Lipika Das in Malipada Mouza, Khurda to the accused Haladhar Dash by impersonating Das before the sub-registrar.

"The racket is very much into illegal sale and purchase of the lands by forged documentation and impersonation of the real owners. After the fraudulent sale of the land in favour of the persons of their interest, the accused persons were going to sell it again to other parties gaining considerable amounts," said an EOW official.

During the investigation, the Aadhaar and Voter ID cards of the accused persons were seized. They were produced before the SDJM Court, Bhubaneswar Tuesday.

BJEM golden jubilee celebrations kick-start

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, April 11: The year-long golden jubilee celebrations of Buxi Jagabandhu English Medium (BJEM) School kick-started Tuesday.

Golden Jubilee marks a major milestone in the school's journey. Over the years the school has bagged many national and international laurels in the field of academics, art, science and culture.



On the occasion, a press meet was organised in the school premises. SSEPD Minister Ashok Chandra Panda and the chief patron of BJEM School golden jubilee celebration committee graced the event.

The event marked the unveiling of the Golden Jubilee Logo and the release of the event calendar. The Neon LED Light was also inaugurated which enhanced and illuminated the school building.

The events for the whole year has been designed and scheduled for different months. A host of activities including Inter school technology, inter school sahitya sansad programme, plantation drive, poster making contest, street play, medicinal flora exhibition, inter school photography and videography contest, annual sports, foundation Day and Golden Jubilee Closing ceremony are some of the highlights of the year.

State celebrates 'Chhenapoda Divas'

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, April 11: The people of Odisha Tuesday celebrated 'Chhenapoda Divas', the day to relish the popular dessert of the state made of baked cottage cheese.

A programme was organised on the occasion in Paryatan Bhawan by Odisha Tourism department and Odisha Tourism Development Corporation (OTDC) in presence of OTDC Chairman Lenin Mohanty and Tourism Director Sachin Ramchandra Jadhav.

Addressing the gathering, Mohanty spoke on the importance of the delicacy as an aspect which immensely contributed towards the development of tourism in Odisha. Culinary Tourism in Odisha is on the rise and as such, we must take pride in promoting the local cuisines which will help in developing the image of 'Brand Odisha'.

'Future of Work' conducted at SOA

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, April 11: Technology has revolutionized the concept of work today with people sitting in one corner of the planet being able to take up assignments for others located in another corner of the world, Pradipta Kumar Nanda, Vice-Chancellor of Siksha 'O' Anusandhan (SOA) said.

"We need technology, we need scientists, we need disciplined people to work on issues and the workspace must be multifunctional in nature," Nanda said while speaking at a webinar on 'Future of Work' conducted by SOA Monday to celebrate India's G20 Presidency

and as part of the Education Working Group (EWG) in Odisha.

To develop a workforce to meet the future requirement, steps should be taken to ensure foundational literacy and numeracy, especially in the context of blended learning, and make tech-enabled learning more inclusive, qualitative and collaborative at every level, he said.

Nachieketa K Sharma, SOA's Director, International Relations and University Outreach Program, spoke about the different 'Jan Bhagidari' program being taken up in all districts of Odisha to highlight India's G20 Presidency.

SOA had been entrusted with the responsibility of taking up

these programs in three districts—Balangir, Mayurbhanj and Keonjhar during April, he said.

Sharma said the need was to structure the country's educational system in such a way that it would promote rationale thinking comprising both analysis and synthesis. "We have more book-focused students now which has to change as the need is for people who know what to do when the need arises," he said.

He also opined that the National Education Policy 2020 contained all these possibilities.

Jyoti Ranjan Das, Dean (Students' Welfare) and Nodal Officer for EWG at SOA introduced the theme.

ILS holds seminar to promote tribal health



POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, April 11: Institute of Life Science (ILS) organized a seminar Tuesday on the theme "Bioresources for Tribal Health and Wellbeing-Perspectives of Odisha" to bring all groups working in different aspects of tribal health, anthropology, public health and bioresources to present their ideas and concepts on how to promote tribal health and wellbeing.

ILS Director Pulok Mukherjee, in his inaugural address, highlighted the measures and strategies need to be adapted including the technological and research interventions to promote tribal health and wellbeing.

Utkal University VC Sabita Acharya and Madhav Mishra, Commissioner of Customs, Bhubaneswar Zone spoke on several issues in mitigating basic issues of the tribal health and well-

being's through bioresources. The seminar was participated by experts and scientists from different institutions, universities and NGOs. The participants suggested long-term action plan and priority research areas, which will be addressed by the research institutions in a coordinated and collaborative manner with support from the government.

Others speakers also mentioned about the ILS activities towards addressing the fundamental issues in tribal areas. The invited speakers focused on to have a mindset to promote tribal traditional knowledge and cultural practices, and emphasized on working closely with the tribal people to introduce them to latest technologies without hampering their local environment, traditional practices while maintaining the indigenous traditions, culture and biodiversity.

Oppn demands CBI probe into fake certificate racket

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, April 11: The opposition BJP and Congress Tuesday alleged that the ruling BJD is involved in the alleged fake certificate racket in Odisha and demanded that the Naveen Patnaik government hand over the probe to CBI.

The demand was made hours after the Odisha circle of India Post recommended a probe by the central agency into the alleged racket.

The BJD refuted the allegation and said the state police have always proved its professionalism.

A large number of candidates have allegedly got government jobs in the postal and education departments in the state by using fake certificates. The crime branch has been investigating the case and 19 people have been arrested in Bolangir, suspected to be the epicenter of the fake certificate racket.

Odisha BJP president Manmohan Samal came down heavily on the state government and alleged involvement of ruling BJD leaders in the fake certificate racket.

"How does the government not know of the racket when it has its agencies in all nooks and corners of the state?" he asked and ridiculed the BJD government for remaining silent on it.

"It is because of this silence of the BJD government that the racket

has flourished in Odisha," he claimed.

It has pushed the future of meritorious students into darkness. Any probe by the crime branch cannot do justice as the fraudulent activity is linked to different states, he said.

Only a thorough probe by CBI will unravel the truth and stringent action should be taken against those found guilty by it, the BJP leader insisted.

Joining forces with him Congress leader Suresh Routray alleged that the racket appears to have flourished under the patronage of BJD leaders and Patnaik should order a CBI probe to catch the kingpin and others involved in it.

A CBI investigation can ascertain how many fake certificates have been sold and how much money was transacted, he said.

BJD leader and government chief whip Prashant Muduli rejecting the allegations said that Odisha police have always proved its investigating skill and professionalism.

"Opposition parties should have patience as the investigation is being carried out in the right manner. The truth will be revealed and the culprits will be punished," he said.

Earlier in the day a spokesperson of India Post, Odisha circle, said the postmaster general has writ-

ten to the CBI superintendent of police in Bhubaneswar to probe the racket.

The postal department has found that certificates submitted by some of the candidates for the job of gram dak seva (GDS) were fake.

The department selected around 1,100 candidates for the posts of postmaster and assistant postmaster under the GDS based on the marks secured by the candidates in the Class 10 Board examination. No written or viva tests are required for the selection of candidates.

The incidents of fraud came to the fore in Bolangir district when the department began verifying the certificates of the applicants. As many as 37 candidates were found to have secured 98 per cent marks in the Class 10 examination. All these candidates had got the certificates from Uttar Pradesh Madhyamik Sikshya Parishad, which prompted the department to verify them.

The candidates were found to be unable to write an application properly even though their certificates showed that they had secured 98 per cent marks in English language, a postal department spokesperson said.

The Bolangir police have arrested 19 people, including the owner of a coaching center on the charge of running a fake certificate racket in Odisha.

ECoR felicitates 8 railway employees

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, April 11: East Coast Railway (ECoR) General Manager Manoj Sharma felicitated eight railway employees for their outstanding performance and alertness while performing their duties. Major mishaps were avoided due to their alertness while performing their duties. Both human lives and train operations were saved by them. Additional General Manager of ECoR Sharad Kumar Srivastava and other senior officials were present during the felicitating programme.



Felicitating the employees, Sharma said the hard work and alertness of Gangmen, Trolleyman, Gatemen, OHE Khalasis, and other maintenance cadres who are working hard day and night in ECoR in difficult conditions to ensure safe running of trains should have recognition. He also appealed to railway employees to be sincere and alert while performing duty so that passengers and trains could function smoothly.

CONTINUED FROM P1

BJP govt dismantling democracy, says Sonia

Raj man cremated...

The former Congress chief added that her party is ready to work with all like-minded political parties to achieve this objective.

In the Op-Ed piece, she said the people of India have learnt that when it comes to understanding the current situation, the prime minister's actions speak far louder than his words.

"His statements - when he is not venting anger on the Opposition or blaming past leaders for today's ills - either ignore the most pressing, vital issues of the day, or are platitudes and verbal gymnastics to gloss over or distract from these issues," Gandhi alleged. Modi's actions, on the other hand, leave little to the imagination on the BJP-led government's true intentions, she said.

"Over the past months, we have witnessed the prime minister and his government systematically dismantling all three pillars of India's democ-

racy - the legislature, the executive and the judiciary - with their actions demonstrating a deep-rooted disdain for democracy and democratic accountability," Gandhi alleged.

Pointing to the recent goings-on in Parliament, she alleged that the last session saw a government-led strategy to disrupt parliamentary proceedings and prevent the Opposition from raising issues of grave concern before the country and its people, such as unemployment, inflation and social divisions, and discussing the budget and the "Adani scam", among other vital issues.

Faced with a determined Opposition, the government resorted to unprecedented measures - expunging speeches, preventing discussions, attacking members of Parliament and finally disqualifying a Congress MP at a "lightning speed", she said, referring to Rahul Gandhi's

disqualification from the Lok Sabha following his conviction by a court in Gujarat's Surat in a criminal defamation case.

As a result, the budget of ₹45 lakh crore of people's money was passed without any debate, Gandhi said.

"The Narendra Modi government's misuse of the Central Bureau of Investigation and the Enforcement Directorate is well known, with over 95 per cent of political cases filed only against the Opposition parties - and cases against those who join the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) miraculously evaporating," she alleged.

Gandhi also said the prime minister makes grandiose statements about truth and justice even as allegations of financial fraud against his "chosen businessman" are ignored, Interpol withdraws a notice against fugitive Mehul Choksi and the convicted rapists of Bilkis Bano

are set free and go on to share a stage with BJP leaders.

She claimed that the systematic effort to undermine the credibility of the judiciary has reached a "crisis point", with the Union law minister calling some retired judges "anti-national" and warning that "they will pay a price".

This language is deliberately chosen to misguide people, inflame their passions and thereby intimidate serving judges, the Congress leader said.

Alleging that the media's independence has long been compromised by the political intimidation of the government coupled with the financial might of the BJP's friends, she said evening debates on television news channels have emerged as slanging matches to shout down and silence those who question the Centre.

"Not satisfied with this, the government has armed itself with legal

powers by amending the Information Technology rules to remove legal protections for any news which it dislikes under the label of 'fake news'. The Supreme Court of India has recently made clear that criticism of the government is not a ground for penal action. Is the government listening?" she asked. "No doubt, an army of lawyers from the BJP and Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) stands ready to harass any platform which publishes criticism of the great leader," she claimed.

Asserting that enforcing a silence cannot solve India's problems, Gandhi said the prime minister is silent on legitimate questions on his government's actions, which affect the lives of millions. She said Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman did not mention unemployment or inflation in her budget speech as if these problems do not exist.

Following the incident, villagers expressed resentment and anger at the callous approach of the courier service.

"I found it difficult to identify the body which was sent to Bilash's family. It looked slightly distorted but resembled Bilash and hence, all his family members were mistaken. The final rites were carried out but to the shock of family members, they were later informed that the body was not that of Bilash," a villager said.

Meanwhile, police informed that the family from Rajasthan is on their way to collect the mortal remains of their relative, who was cremated by Bilash's family, and are also bringing Bilash's body with them.

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AP luring Telugu-speaking Rayagada kids to its schools

FAILURE OF ODISHA GOVERNMENT TO PROVIDE STUDY MATERIAL IN TELUGU SPARKS RESENTMENT

POST NEWS NETWORK

Rayagada, April 11: The aim of the Andhra Pradesh government to create a sense of bitterness among the local populace staying in districts of Odisha close to the border continues. Sources said that officials of the neighbouring state are coming up with new ideas to woo the residents of the bordering districts in an effort to gain control over villages and land.

The latest effort has been to attract Telugu-speaking children living in the villages of Rayagada district close to the border. The AP government is trying to lure them to state-run schools promising them with the best of facilities. However, this has happened only because of the failure of the Odisha government to provide study materials written in Telugu to students on time.

Rayagada has a sizeable amount of Telugu-speaking population, more than half of the populace



living in the district. Telugu-speaking children study in local schools along with their Odia counterparts. Realising the importance of Telugu, the Odisha government had established bilingual mode of study in this district. Teachers fluent in Telugu were also appointed in the schools. However, in the last few years, the Odisha government

has fallen short as it has failed to provide the Telugu-speaking students books and study materials on time. This has sparked resentment among the guardians of Telugu-speaking children. Left with no option, some of them are either spending more and admitting their wards in English medium schools or sending

them to Telugu schools in Andhra Pradesh on the fringes of the district.

Sources said that the Odisha government has set up 11 bilingual schools only in Rayagada block of the district. A total of 451 Telugu-speaking children are taught by teachers who speak the same language. Sources however, pointed out that the lack of teachers who speak Telugu is also harming the plans of the Odisha government. They said that they don't remember the last time when a teacher who speaks the language was appointed in any of these schools. Sources informed that the

All the 11 dual language schools in Rayagada block face acute shortage of Telugu teachers and students are suffering due to it

Aerial attacks: New mode to tackle Maoists

POST NEWS NETWORK

Malkangiri, April 11: Security forces have launched aerial attacks with choppers and drones as a part of their new strategy to combat Maoists in areas of Chhattisgarh bordering Malkangiri district, sources said Tuesday. This new mode of combat has created panic among the Red rebels. They have now split into groups and are running for cover. Security forces decided to implement the new strategy as it is not always possible for them to engage in face-to-face combats with the Maoists.

To counter this new strategy, the Maoists are now organising 'Praja Meli' - a play to hide themselves among the residents of the area. Some villagers have been injured in the aerial attacks and the Maoists are trying to take advantage of this. Sources said that Maoists are forcing local villagers to actively oppose the aerial attacks. On the other hand, the South



Bastar Maoist outfit has issued a press release condemning the aerial attacks. They alleged that the Centre and the Odisha government are harming innocents on the pretext of combating the Red rebels. Sources said that the security forces have twice conducted air strikes in the last four months. First drones try and identify a Maoist hideout. Then choppers are used to drop bombs on the hideout and use machine gun fire on the fleeing Maoists. The new strategy was adopted after Union Home Minister Amit Shah visited Chhattisgarh a few months back and stated that there will be no more Maoists in the state before the 2024 general elections

20-yr RI to teacher for sexual assault



AGENCIES

Balasore, April 11: POCSO court Judge Ranjan Kumar Sutar convicted here Tuesday a 43-year-old private tutor for sexually exploiting a student and sentenced him to 20 years of rigorous imprisonment (RI). An additional fine of ₹6,000 was slapped on convicted teacher Saroj Kumar Das, a resident of Ranasahi village under Chandipur police station. In case he fails to pay the amount, Saroj will have to spend two more years in prison, the judge said.

Saroj was arrested after the mother of the 15-year-old victim registered an FIR with the police November 16, 2019. In the complaint, the mother alleged that Saroj had sexually assaulted the victim repeatedly. The teacher was booked under sections 376(3), 354(b), 506 of IPC and 6 of the POCSO Act.

A total of 11 witnesses testified in court and 24 exhibits were examined. "The court while announcing the verdict also directed the District Legal Services Authority, to pay ₹4 lakh as compensation to the victim," Special Public Prosecutor Pranab Panda said.

56 lightning deaths in Nabarangpur district

POST NEWS NETWORK

Nabarangpur, April 11: There were over seven lakh lightning strikes in Odisha from 2019 to 2023 while Nabarangpur district registering the highest number of casualties with 56 deaths, District Collector Kamal Lochan Mishra said at a press conference at the Ashok Mehta conference hall here Tuesday. A total of 17 persons suffered injuries due to lightning, Mishra added.

The collector pointed out that only awareness regarding the dangers associated with lightnings can prevent the loss of human lives and domestic animals. Mishra pointed out that the majority of the deaths could have been avoided if people had taken proper precautions. According to a survey this district experienced 6,448 lightning strikes in 2019, 16,957 in 2020, 12,752 in 2021 and 10,215 in 2022.

Mishra said the district administration will regularly conduct awareness



campaigns on lightning strikes. He stated that information plaque and boards will be put up at various intersections and crowded places to provide information to people.

Mishra said that during lightning and thunderstorms people entering the house should not stand on wet places or sit close to the wall. They should stay away from the electric switch boards and mobile phones during the period. Similarly, people who are outside should never take shelter under trees or utility poles. He said people outside during lightning and storms should sit down with hands clamping their ears as it would help in fending off the danger to a great extent.

Mishra informed that schools in the district have been asked to conduct classes once a week on the dangers that come with lightning and the means to avoid those. He said efforts are being made to sensitise people on how to protect themselves from lightning and thunderstorms.

Man gets 10 years in jail for rape

POST NEWS NETWORK



Baripada, April 11: A court in Odisha's Mayurbhanj district Tuesday sentenced a 30-year-old man to 10 years rigorous imprisonment for raping a 20-year-old deaf and dumb woman. Rairangpur Additional District and Sessions Judge Deepak Kumar also imposed a fine of ₹ 5,000 on the convict. Additional Public Prosecutor Pankaj Kumar Das said. The incident occurred on the night of April 21, 2020 at Manicha village when the woman went to relieve herself in a field. The judgment was based on the statement of 14 witnesses and medical report, Das said.

EAST COAST RAILWAY

Tender Notice No. MCSR-SCRAP-DIS-23-24-01
NAME OF WORK : SEGREGATION, LOADING, SHIFTING/TRANSPORTATION OF VARIOUS CATEGORIES OF SCRAP IN CARRIAGE REPAIR WORKSHOP, MANCHESWAR AND UNLOADING / DISPOSAL OF THE SAME AT DESIGNATED PLACES.
Advertised Value (₹) : ₹ 51,09,795.80, EMD (₹) : 1,02,200/-, Completion Period of the work : 24 Months.
Bidding Start Date : 13.04.2023, Date and time of closing of tender : 1500 hrs of 27.04.2023.
Manual offers are not allowed against this tender, and any such manual offer received shall be ignored.
Complete details including e-tender documents are available at <http://www.ireps.gov.in>.
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NO. CWC/RO PAT/ENGG/PN/2023-24
PRESS NOTICE
(NO. CWC/RO-PAT/ENGG/23-24/01)
CWC invites on-line tenders from the contractors for the following work:
SL Name of Work Estimated Cost (Rs. Lakh) Last date of on-line submission
1 Upgradation of Godown, Road, Damaged platform, New Office Block alongwith construction of Collapsed Boundary wall at CW, Koksara (Odisha). 112.12 25.04.2023
Detailed Tender Notice along with Conditions of Contract and Notice Inviting E-Tender may be seen and downloaded from the CWC's website www.cewacor.nic.in or e-tender website www.cwceprocure.com or CPP Portal <http://eprocure.gov.in/publish/app>.
Further Corrigendum/Addendum to this Tender, if any, will be published on above websites only. Press advertisement in Newspapers shall not be issued for the same.
Executive Engineer

GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA

DEPARTMENT OF WATER RESOURCES
'e' Procurement Notice No.01 (NGR) / 2023-24
1 Name of work River training work & canal work
2 Total No. of work 17 (Seventeen)
3 Estimated cost Rs. 10.83 lakhs to 41.87 lakhs
4 Period of completion (04) Four calendar months
5 Date & time of availability of bid document in the portal 15.00 hours of 15.04.2023 to 17.00 hours 24.04.2023
6 Last date / time for receipt of bids in the portal 24.04.2023 upto 17.00 hours
7 Date and place of opening of technical bid Dt.25.04.2023 at 11.00 hours in the Office of the Superintending Engineer, Nayagarh Irrigation Division, Nayagarh
8 Name and address of Superintending Engineer, the O.I.T. (Officer Inviting Tender) Nayagarh Irrigation Division, Nayagarh
Further details can be seen from the e-Procurement Portal <https://tendersodisha.gov.in/>.
Sd./- Superintending Engineer
Nayagarh Irrigation Division, Nayagarh
OIPR-32303/11/0001/2324

Hockey camp to woo kids starts in Rourkela



PNN & AGENCIES

Rourkela, April 11: The much-awaited hockey summer camp started Tuesday at the iconic Birsa Munda hockey stadium here. The camp was inaugurated by former India player Peter Tirkey in presence of Additional SP, Rourkela, Sangram Keshari Behera and veteran coach Kalu Charan Chaudhary and officials of the Sports and Youth Welfare department. The camp has been organised to attract kids to the game of hockey.

The response has been very good with 750 boys and girls registering for the camp in the six-16 years age group, organisers said Tuesday. Out of them, 465 have been selected for further training, informed Nilesh Shetty, an official.

"We have divided the participants in to two groups, six-10 years and 11-16 years. One coach will be attending to 10-15 participants and training will be provided in 10 sessions throughout the day," Shetty said. "The camp will run from April 11 to April 22. Basics of hockey along with other activities (strength & conditioning, nutrition, etc) will be taught to the participants," he added.

Officials also said that former players-turned coaches like Lazarus Barla, Pratul Tirkey and Rajen Ekka will oversee the activities along with the junior trainers. They will try and spot the real talent and groom them for the future. Parents of the participating kids thanked the Sports and Youth Welfare department for taking the initiative to popularise the game of hockey.

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Notice is hereby given to the public in general and in particular to the Borrower(s) and Guarantor(s) that the below described Movable/Immovable properties mortgaged/charged to the Secured Creditor, the constructive/symbolic/physical possession of which has been taken by the Authorised Officer of Union Bank of India (Secured Creditor), will be sold on "As is where is" and "As is What is" and "Whatever there is" basis on 26.04.2023, for recovery of dues as mentioned hereunder to Union Bank of India from the below mentioned Borrower(s) & Guarantor(s). The Reserve Price and the Earnest Money Deposit are also mentioned hereunder.

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Property No. 2: All that part and parcel of the Land and Building in Khata No.: 125/257, Plot No.: 277/741, in an Area:Ac.0.05 Dec. & Plot No.: 277/761 in an Area: Ac.0.05 Dec., Total Area: Ac.0.10 Dec., At: Pradyut Nagar, P.O.: Dosinga, Via:Dhamara, Dist.: Bhadrak in the name of Sahadev Mandal, Bounded by East: Pond, West: Subala Chandra Das, North:Road, South: Sachin Mandal Type of Possession: Symbolic / Reserve Price: ₹20,14,000/- / Earnest Money to be deposited: ₹2,01,400/-	
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Property No. 3: Residential Property in the name of Mr. Shankar Kumar Das over Khata No.: 564/114, 1) Plot No.: 2127/3130, Area: Ac.0.12 Dec., 2) Plot No.: 2128/3131, Area: Ac.0.12 Dec., Total Area: Ac.0.24 Dec., Mouza: Madhapur, PS.: Sukinda - 103, Tahasil: Sukinda - 103, Dist.: Jajpur, Bounded by North: Road, South: Laxman Das, East: Satya Narayan Mahapat, West: Road Type of Possession: Symbolic / Reserve Price: ₹19,70,000/- / Earnest Money to be deposited: ₹1,97,000/-	
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Borrower: Mirza Toraf Baig, S/o.: Late Yasin Baig, At/PO.: Sukinda, Dist.: Jajpur, PIN - 755018 / Co-Applicants/Guarantors: 1) Swaleha Tabssum, 2) Mr. Rabindra Das, S/o.: Ram Das, Both are At/PO.: Sukinda, Dist.: Jajpur, PIN - 755018	₹ 10,11,544.04 as on 01.07.2021 with further interest, Cost and expenses
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Name & Address of Borrower/Co-Applicant/Guarantor:	Amount Due
Borrower : M/s. Rath Electronics, Prop.: Dillip Kumar Rath, S/o.: Late Nilamani Rath, Co-Applicant/Guarantor: Rajib Kumar Rath, Both are At/PO.: Keshadurapal, PS.: Ghasipura, Dist.: Keonjhar, PIN - 758025	₹ 41,67,124.91 as on 05.01.2022 with further interest, Cost and expenses
Property No. 5: Residential Property in the name of Dillip Kumar Rath over Plot No.: 410/2783, Khata No.: 654/131, Area: Ac.0.10 Dec., Gharabari, PO/PS/Tahasil: Ghasipura, Mouza: Keshadurapal, Dist.: Keonjhar, Bounded by North: Road, South: Sanjay Rath Type of Possession: Symbolic / Reserve Price: ₹50,90,000/- / Earnest Money to be deposited: ₹5,09,000/-	
Dist.: Keonjhar, Ph. No.: 7978738752, Email: ubin0929701@unionbankofindia.bank	
Name & Address of Borrower / Guarantor:	Amount Due
Borrower: M/s. Star Enterprises, Prop.: Mr. Biswajeet Bej, At/P.O.: Jail Road, Nuasahi, Keonjhar, PIN-758001 / Guarantor: Chandrakala Bej, At/P.O.: Jail Road, Nuasahi, Keonjhar, PIN-758001	₹ 35,18,663/- as on 31.03.2021 with further interest, Cost and expenses
Property No. 6: All that part of the property consisting Residential Land belonging to Chandrakala Bej, situated over Khata No.: 73/81, Plot No.: 222/407, Area: Ac.0.050dec., Mouza: Mochigaon, Taluk: Keonjhar Sadar, Bounded by North: Radha Sahoo, South: Road, East: Srikantha Sahoo & others, West: Srikantha Sahoo & others Type of Possession: Symbolic / Reserve Price: ₹48,77,000/- / Earnest Money to be deposited: ₹4,87,700/-	
UDALA BRANCH - 2, Dist.: Mayurbhanj, Ph. No.: 06795-232004, Email: ubin0825549@unionbankofindia.bank	
Name & Address of Borrower/Guarantor:	Amount Due
Borrower: M/s. Himanshu Jewellery Shop, Prop.: Mr. Himanshu Sekhar Behera, Cinema Hall Road, Udala, Dist.: Mayurbhanj-757041 / Guarantor: Mrs. Chandramani Behera, W/o: Dasaratha Behera, At: Khuntapal, P.O.: Sanbiswal, P.S.: Udala, Dist.: Mayurbhanj - 757041	₹ 11,84,909/- as on 03.03.2020 with further interest, Cost and expenses
Property No. 7: All that part of the property consisting of Immovable Property of Residential Land and Building in the name of Mrs. Chandramani Behera over Plot No.: 106/1378, Khata No.: 354/66, Area: Ac.0.070 Dec., KISSAM: Gharabari, situated at Cinema Hall Road, Udala, Mouza: Khuntapal, PS No.: 130, Dist.: Mayurbhanj-757041, Odisha, Bounded by North: Road, South:Road, East: Land of R K Behera, West: Land of P Behera Type of Possession: Symbolic / Reserve Price: ₹13,00,000/- / Earnest Money to be deposited: ₹1,30,000/-	
Name & Address of Borrower/Co-Applicants/Guarantors:	Amount Due
Borrower: M/s. Maa Ambika Store, Prop.: Rakesh Kumar Khandelwal, At: Ward No.: 5, Mukunda Bazar, Udala (NAC), Dist.: Mayurbhanj, PIN - 757041 / Co-Applicants / Guarantors: 1) Pinkesh Khandelwal, S/o.: Shankarlal Khandelwal, 2) Shankarlal Khandelwal, S/o.: Ramji Khandelwal, Both are At: Ward No.: 5, Mukunda Bazar, Udala (NAC), Dist.: Mayurbhanj, PIN - 757041	₹ 11,67,999.34 as on 22.02.2022 with further interest, Cost and expenses
Property No. 8: All that part of the property consisting of property of (1) Land and Building at Mouza: Udala Town Unit-9 (Jirida), Khata No.: 167/247, Plot No.: 541/951/1028/1146, Area: Ac.0.02 Dec., owned by Pinkesh Khandelwal, 2) Land and Building at Mouza: Udala Town Unit-9 (Jirida), Khata No.: 167/153, Plot No.: 541/951/1028, Area: Ac.0.02 Dec., owned by Shankarlal Khandelwal, Bounded by North: Mr. Gardhan Lal Khandelwal, South: Mr. Arka Narayan Manna, East: Road, West: Vacant Land Type of Possession: Symbolic / Reserve Price: ₹13,33,000/- / Earnest Money to be deposited: ₹1,33,300/-	
BID INCREMENT AMOUNT FOR EACH PROPERTY : ₹10,000/- DATE & TIME OF E-AUCTION : 26.04.2023 between 1:00 P.M. to 5:00 P.M. (with 10 minutes unlimited auto extension), e-Auction Website : www.mstcecommerce.com LAST DATE FOR SUBMISSION OF EMD : On or before the commencement of E-Auction For Registration and Login and Bidding Rules visit: https://www.mstcecommerce.com/auctionhome/ibapi/index.jsp For detailed terms and condition of the sale, please refer to the link provided in https://www.unionbankofindia.co.in/english/tenderviewalliauction.aspx	
Place : Balasore Date: 11.04.2023	Sd/- Authorized Officer Union Bank of India

FOCUS GEOPOLITICS

WHY TAIWAN MATTERS



Aside from nationalist pique, China's rulers seem obsessed with Taiwan because its very existence refutes the premise of the authoritarian Chinese model. Because Taiwanese democracy might give Chinese people the "wrong" ideas, China wishes to crush it, as it has done in Hong Kong

devastating war? I believe it is. An attack on Taiwan would also be an attack on Japan and South Korea. If allowed to dominate the South and East China Seas, China would have a stranglehold over the economies of both countries. If Japan and South Korea lose confidence in America's ability or commitment to defend their security, they would either have to submit to Chinese domination or start acquiring nuclear weapons - and fast. Both options could have disastrous consequences.

Then there is the matter of Taiwan's strategic importance as the producer of more than 90 per cent of the world's advanced semiconductors. A Chinese takeover of Taiwan and its chip industry would help tip the global balance of power in favour of China, with far-reaching economic and strategic implications.

None of this would be a serious problem if China were a liberal democracy, or at least a relatively open society. Alas, it is not, and that is perhaps the most important reason to defend Taiwan.

Ironically, when the US was

obliged to defend Taiwan in the 1950s, the island was still ruled by an oppressive autocratic regime, not the democracy it is today. At the time, however, America's support of Chiang Kai-shek made sense: Mao Zedong's China was far worse. Fortunately, even though Maoism was popular for a while among revolutionaries, mostly in poor post-colonial countries and on Western university campuses, Mao's bloody tactics had little global appeal.

The current Chinese model has a great deal more credibility these days. Unlike the Soviet Union, the Communist Party of China has managed to confound liberal expectations by achieving remarkable economic success while maintaining a Leninist dictatorship. Liberals previously assumed that the combination of a growing middle class and a free-market economy would inevitably result in democracy. The transformation of South Korea and Taiwan from military dictatorships to liberal democracies seemed to lend support to this thesis. But we now know that capitalism can thrive under "socialism with Chinese

characteristics."

China's success has inspired many autocrats in developing countries, where large Chinese investments in infrastructure have bolstered the regime's image as a more efficient, more powerful, and more reliable partner than the often messy and meddlesome Western democracies. This is a dangerous trend, particularly at a time when liberal democracies are under attack by radical populists at home. A Trump victory in 2024 would galvanise dictators and authoritarians around the world, including Xi.

A pernicious form of cultural propaganda has long fostered strongman rule in China and in other parts of Asia. Its central idea, effectively promoted by Lee Kuan Yew, Singapore's founder and long-serving former Prime Minister, is that "Asian values" are incompatible with democratic governance. In Confucian societies, the argument goes, individual interests must be subordinated to the collective interest, obedience to authority is sacrosanct, and social order trumps freedom.

Members of China's increasingly wealthy middle class often subscribe to this view. Ordinary Chinese, one is often told in certain circles in Beijing and Shanghai, are not yet ready for democratic governance and still need the firm hand of authority to keep them in line.

That is why Taiwan matters. Aside from nationalist pique, China's rulers seem obsessed with Taiwan because its very existence refutes the premise of the authoritarian Chinese model. Because Taiwanese democracy might give Chinese people the "wrong" ideas, China wishes to crush it, as it has done in Hong Kong. Biden has repeatedly vowed to protect democracy against the threat of autocracy. If he is serious, he must ensure that Taiwan remains free.

The writer is the author, most recently, of The Churchill Complex: The Curse of Being Special, From Winston and FDR to Trump and Brexit (Penguin, 2020).

PROJECT SYNDICATE

No one seems to know how the United States would react if China were to invade Taiwan. For decades, US leaders did all they could to avoid this question. Then, in September of last year, President Joe Biden seemed to have ended Washington's policy of "strategic ambiguity" when he said that US troops would defend the island in the event of "an unprecedented attack." But almost immediately after Biden spoke, White House officials backtracked, insisting that the US policy on Taiwan had not changed.

While the 1960 US-Japan Security Treaty obliges America to go to war if Japanese territory is attacked, the US has no such treaty with Taiwan. If China decided to attack the island, it would have to guess how the US would respond. But while strategic ambiguity is meant to serve as a deterrent, the real question is whether it is enough anymore. After all, China is far more powerful now than it was when it tried to "liberate" Taiwan from Chiang Kai-shek's Nationalists by shelling the islands of Quemoy and Matsu during the 1958 Taiwan Strait Crisis. The US still had a mutual defense treaty with Taiwan back then, and American military leaders pushed to launch a nuclear strike on the mainland.

Today, China has the world's largest military in terms of personnel and a substantial nuclear arsenal. Chinese President Xi Jinping knows that the US cannot risk a nuclear war, which is why it has not intervened directly in Ukraine, and that emboldens him. After all, if the US does not want to fight the far weaker Russia, it will certainly not go into battle against China.

A political shift in the 2024 US presidential election could bolster China's hopes of taking Taiwan by force. A Republican president, whether former President Donald Trump or a like-minded figure, might choose to isolate the US from quarrels in faraway countries. This is a good reason for locking in place a security commitment to Taiwan now.

But is Taiwan really worth defending, even at the risk of a



Ian Buruma

A CHINESE TAKEOVER OF TAIWAN AND ITS CHIP INDUSTRY WOULD HELP TIP THE GLOBAL BALANCE OF POWER IN FAVOUR OF CHINA, WITH FAR-REACHING ECONOMIC AND STRATEGIC IMPLICATIONS

History Erased

In order to see, you have to stop being in the middle of the picture.

SRI AUROBINDO



Reconstructing past events and deeds, in other words, rewriting history is not an easy task. It is fraught with risks. The danger that the task poses is misrepresentation and misinterpretation of facts that distort the truth and give a coloured vision of what happened in the past because there will be gaps in the narration of events which are bound to occur. In many cases, writers of history or those tasked with presenting history betray a bias that is a reflection of their prejudices and vested interests. They become too eager to present past events to suit the interests of their masters or those who commission them to reconstruct historical events. This process is not new. History in India has always been written top down, from the perspective of the rulers, mostly ignoring the common citizen. It was also done during the colonial period by many historians who used available material to dish out a narrative preferred by the colonialists. This tradition, it seems, is being continued in post-Independent India too. Historians owing allegiance to the ruling dispensations project history to serve the interests - both ideological and material - of the ruling elites. The malaise is deep-rooted since writing history in the correct sequences while taking every possible angle presupposes objectivity, dispassionate portrayal of facts and a scientific temper. Whenever these difficult criteria are not met, a pseudo-history is reconstructed.

The same process is now being repeated by the National Council of Education Research and Training (NCERT) which has removed certain chapters from history textbooks for Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) students. The NCERT's move to remove sections on the Mughal Empire from Class 12 history books has not only sparked a controversy and triggered widespread criticism from noted historians and Opposition political parties but is also bound to create confusion for students in the future.

The NCERT has specifically targeted chapters on 'Kings and Chronicles'; the Mughal Courts (C. 16th and 17th centuries) from the book 'Themes of Indian History-Part II' and the topics of Central Islamic Lands, Confrontation of Cultures, and The Industrial Revolution from the Class 11 syllabus. From the Class 12 Civics book, Politics in India since Independence, the chapters - 'Rise of Popular Movements' and 'Era of One-party Dominance' - have been erased. Chapters such as Democracy and Diversity, Popular Struggles and Movement, and Challenges to Democracy have been removed from Class 10 Democratic Politics-II textbooks.

Such a one-sided approach to history has been criticised by many, including a group of 250 eminent historians from leading Indian and foreign universities. These include historians Romila Thapar, Jayati Gosh, Mridula Mukherjee, Apoorvananda, Irfan Habib, and Upinder Singh. They find the NCERT decision appalling.

The process initiated by NCERT is contentious enough and the political intent is too obvious. It is in line with the ruling BJP's politics of religious polarisation. Topics such as the history of the Mughal courts, the Gujarat riots in 2002 and the Emergency have been dropped from Social Science, History and Political Science textbooks of Classes 6 to 12. It goes without saying that one-sided accounts of history promote falsification of narrations.

Removing parts of history are also bound to create confusing gaps. For instance, if there is no clarity on the existence of Mughals then who would Aurangzeb's maternal uncle Shaista Khan be and who did Shivaji fight against at Pune in 1659? Similarly, the bravery of Maharana Pratap must not be erased. However, if there was no trace of Emperor Akbar, then the Battle of Haldighati fought on 19 June 1576 would not be mentioned as an actual event in history. There are many such similar events which would become rootless if the Moslem Mughals are obliterated from history. In other words, removing the Moslems would also result in removal of a large chunk of Hindu history. That would definitely give future students a lopsided and incomplete picture of the greatness of this land.

It is only imbecile minds governing us which can think of tinkering with history in such a big way. No generation should have the audacity to defile, pervert and deface history for the next generations. This brings to mind a saying that goes: 'We do not inherit this Earth from our ancestors. We borrow it from our children.'

WISDOM CORNER

Change your opinions, keep to your principles; change your leaves, keep intact your roots. VICTOR HUGO

Be thankful for what you have; you'll end up having more. If you concentrate on what you don't have, you will never, ever have enough. OPRAH WINFREY

Your vision will become clear only when you can look into your own heart. Who looks outside, dreams; who looks inside, awakes. CARL JUNG

WORDSWORTH

Halcyon

A halcyon time is calm, peaceful, happy and carefree. The fabled halcyon days of calm weather are traditionally the seven days each side of the winter solstice on 21 December. The story goes back to a Greek legend that the kingfisher nested in the sea at this time of year and that its floating nest brought calm to wind and water. A romantic version of the legend was told by the Roman poet Ovid about Ceyx and Alcyone. She was the daughter of Aeolus, the god of the winds, and he was the son of the morning star. Ceyx was lost at sea and Alcyone was inconsolable. The gods took pity on them, turning them into kingfishers so that they might continue to live together. When they mated each year at the winter solstice the gods calmed the winds and seas so Alcyone might brood her eggs safely. Alcyone's name came from the Greek name for the kingfisher, alkuon. It became halcyon in Latin, because of a mistaken belief that its real source was two Greek words that meant "conceiving on the sea". When the word first came into English, in reference to the Greek legend, it was usually written in the Greek way, but when it became a general word meaning peaceful or calm, the Latin form took over.

Handfasting

At one time, betrothal - the solemn exchange of vows of intention to marry - was as important a step as marriage itself. Some of the ceremony once common in betrothal - such as exchanging rings or a formal kiss - later became part of the marriage service as that progressively became more important. We don't know a lot about the rules in Anglo-Saxon England before the Norman Conquest, but the betrothal ceremony seems to have been marked by the happy couple joining hands. This was the handfast - the holding fast of hands. It seems that in Northern England and Scotland, handfasting marked a first stage of marriage, a temporary contract that lasted a year and a day. If at the end of that time no child had been born and the couple didn't want to continue, the betrothal lapsed. The ceremony's name has become known again in recent decades because it has been adopted by modern Pagans such as Wiccans.

LOL



WE ARE BEST FRIENDS

The patient shook his doctor's hand in gratitude and said, "Since we are the best of friends, I would not want to insult you by offering payment. But I

would like for you to know that I had mentioned you in my will." "That is very kind of you," said the doctor emotionally, and then added, "Can I see that prescription I just gave you? I'd like to make a little change."

IN JEST THIS

Storing eggs can help keep options open



Melvin Durai

A GROWING NUMBER OF WOMEN ARE HAVING THEIR EGGS FROZEN AND STORED, SO THEY CAN GIVE BIRTH WHENEVER THEY ARE READY TO DO SO

If you're like me, you've probably rented a storage space at one time or another. Perhaps you needed to store items while moving from one home to another, perhaps you had run out of space for your treasured possessions, or perhaps you were storing things that you didn't need right away, such as a batch of your eggs.

A growing number of women around the world are having their eggs frozen and stored, so they can give birth whenever they are ready to do so, allowing them to ignore the "tick, tick, tick" from the biological clock and perhaps even the "quick, quick, quick" from the mother-in-law.

If you are considering freezing your eggs, you will be glad to know that I have done enough research to answer your questions with more expertise than some of the world's most educated and forward-thinking primates.

Question: I'm thinking of freezing my eggs because I do not have a partner. Is that a good reason?

Answer: Freezing your eggs is a personal decision and there are many good reasons to do it. If you are in your 20s or early 30s, you may not be ready to have a child for various reasons, including health, career and marital status, but your egg count and egg quality are at their peak. Just imagine how many responses you will get when you place an ad that says: "High-achieving lady in her mid-40s looking for a partner. Good career, financial stability and plenty of frozen eggs."

Q: How many eggs should I freeze? If I freeze a dozen, will they fit perfectly into an egg carton?

A: The older you are, the more eggs you need to save. If you are under 35, you need to freeze 15 eggs to have an 85 per cent chance of having a baby. If you are 38, freezing 15 eggs will give you a 60 per cent chance. If you are over 40, you'll need to hire Sal Khan to do the math.

Q: Is it true that many women are traveling outside their home countries to get their eggs frozen?

A: Yes, many Americans and other westerners are traveling abroad to save money. Some are combining tourism with egg freezing. By traveling to a country like Iceland, for example, they can get their eggs and butts frozen at the same time.

Q: How much can I save by going to another country to have my eggs frozen?

A: It depends on where you live. In India, you will find some great deals inside the country and probably won't need to travel, unless you want to take your eggs on some sight-seeing. If you live in America, traveling to another country will probably save you enough money to get a lifetime subscription to Netflix for your eggs.

Q: What happens to my eggs after I have them frozen?

A: Your eggs are kept in storage until you need them. You will have to pay monthly or annual storage costs.

Q: If it's too expensive to store

my eggs in a special facility, can I just keep my eggs in my refrigerator?

A: No, of course not. What if someone makes an omelet out of them? There are so many things that can go wrong. You could have a power outage or a fridge malfunction. It's much safer to store your eggs in an embryology lab, where they'll be kept in liquid nitrogen tanks at an extremely low temperature, even colder than the frozen assets of Russian oligarchs.

Q: How often can I visit my eggs?

A: Visitation policies vary from lab to lab. Some labs allow visitation "under no circumstances," while other labs allow visitation "only if the eggs show signs of missing home."

Q: If I eventually decide to have a child with my frozen eggs, will I still need a man?

A: Yes, "technically" you would. Science has not yet found a way to leave a man out of the process. But give it time.

Tiger conservation

Sir, This refers to "Tiger census 2022 world's most extensive wildlife survey: Report." **Orissa POST**, April 11. The protect tiger project launched 50 years ago associated with the most extensive wildlife survey has paid off in the conservation of big cat in our country. The tiger numbers have appreciably grown and the count stands at 3,167 in 2022, making India a proud home to 75 per cent of the world's tigers. To bring back the tiger and other endangered animals from the precipice of extinction nine tiger reserves across the country were set up, covering 14,000 sq km. Today, the area of the ecosystem facilitating the thriving of wildlife and flora has, notably, swelled to 75,000 sq km. However, it has been observed that this expansion has come at the cost of man-animal conflict, especially due to habitat loss, fragmentation and poaching over the years. But, forest reserves have limited tiger-carrying capacities, - they can support up to only a certain number of tigers; crossing that figure means that the cats come out for prey, leading to conflict with humans. The future plan, thus, necessitates the linkage of sanctuaries that have crossed the carrying capacity with those that are underpopulated so that tigers could move from one protected area to the other unhindered. The reserves being far apart, it would entail land acquisition and compensation to the people uprooted.

N Sadhasiva Reddy, BANGALORE

COVID origins

Sir, Scientists in China collected key coronavirus data in 2020 from a market in Wuhan - ground zero of the first reported outbreak of COVID-19 - but didn't share the raw data publicly until March 2023. And experts suspect that China has much more data from the early pandemic that "have yet to be shared" with the global research community. That's according to a new editorial, published in the journal 'Science' and penned by Maria Van Kerkhove, the COVID-19 technical lead for the WHO. China likely has data that could shed light on how the pandemic began, Van Kerkhove wrote, and the country's failure to disclose the data makes the whole world more vulnerable to future pandemics. These undisclosed data likely include details of China's wild- and farmed-animal trades, as well as the operations of labs in Wuhan that work with coronaviruses, according to the editorial. The data also may include details about the earliest potential cases of COVID-19 detected in China and the diagnostic testing that was conducted in humans and animals in the early days of the pandemic.

Asit Mohanty, JAJPUR

Letters

TO THE EDITOR

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

OrissaPOST

B-15, Rasulgari Industrial Estate, Bhubaneswar-751010

As residents try to save a river in Eloor, officials deny crisis

The state Pollution Control Board downplayed the industrial pollution in the Periyar River, blaming it on sewage from homes, commercial institutions and markets upstream



Smokestacks spew fumes from chemical industries located along the banks of the Periyar River in Eloor, Kerala state

AGENCIES

Kochi, April 11: Eloor smells like it is dying. Once it was an island of rich farmland on the Periyar River, 17 km from the Arabian sea, teeming with fish. Now, a stench of putrid flesh permeates the air. Most of the fish are gone. Locals say people living near the river are hardly even having children anymore. Yet here is Shaji, a fisherman in his late 40s who only uses one name, is among the few who remain.

Many of the petrochemical plants here are more than five decades old. They produce pesticides, rare earth elements, rubber processing chemicals, fertilizers, zinc-chrome products and leather treatments. Some are government owned, including Fertilisers and Chemicals Travancore, established in 1943, Indian Rare Earths Limited, and Hindustan Insecticides Limited. Residents say the industries take in large amounts of freshwater from the Periyar and discharge concentrated wastewater with almost no treatment.

Residents have periodically risen up against the factories in the form of protests. Demonstrations began in 1970, when the village first witnessed thousands of fish dying. Both die-offs and protests happened again many times after that, said Shabeer Mooppan, a long-time resident who has often demonstrated. The state Pollution Control Board downplayed the industrial pollution in the Periyar River, blaming it on sewage from homes, commercial institutions and markets upstream. "We have not found any alarming rate of metals in the river water. All the levels are within the limits," said Baburajan PK, chief environmental engineer of the board.

As far back as 1998, scientists at the Kerala University of Fisheries and Ocean Studies found some 25 species of fish had disappeared from the region. Experts have found contamination in vegetables, chicken, eggs, fruits and tuber

crops from the region. Chandramohan Kumar, a professor in Chemical Oceanography at Cochin University of Science and Technology, has researched Periyar River pollution in several studies. A decade ago, the National Green Tribunal, ordered the government to create an action plan to restore water quality in the river to protect the environment and public health. It also ordered the formation of a monitoring committee. More recently, the Tribunal was worried enough to initiate its own proceeding on the pollution. It cited studies going back to 2005, carried out by the environmental non-profit group Thanal, that showed "hundreds of people living near Kuzhikandam Creek at Eloor were afflicted with various diseases such as cancer, congenital birth defects, bronchitis, asthma, allergic dermatitis, nervous disorders and behavior changes." The court cited another survey of 327 families in the region that showed hazardous chemicals, including DDT, hexachlorocyclohexane, cadmium, copper, mercury, lead, toluene, manganese and nickel had been discharged into Kuzhikandam Creek "and adversely affected the health condition of people in Eloor."

The Pollution Control Board responded that it recently began a study that could lead to curbing air pollution and reducing the intolerable stench in the area largely caused, it said, by bone meal fertilizer factories and meat rendering plants. It is expected to be finalised in May. The board dismissed allegations that it does not actively pursue polluters and said it ensures no untreated waste liquids are discharged into the river. Trainees with the Pollution Control Board do daily trips to collect samples from six different points along the river. For years now, many residents of Eloor say they no longer consume fish from the river, which they say give them serious diarrhea and taste like pesticides, even after cooking. As the blame game continues, the grass and trees in the area appear wilted as if scorched by the noxious fumes. The birds seem to have been driven away by the air. Without official action, the pall over the region and its residents is unlikely to lift soon.

Residents of Eloor town say the Periyar River was teeming with fish. Now, a putrid stench fills the air

Submit list of breast cancer patients: Kerala HC urges Centre

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Kochi, April 11: The Kerala High Court has asked the Central government to collect data from the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) about the people suffering from different types of breast cancer.

The Court gave this directive on a plea that sought, among other things, compulsory licensing of the life-saving breast cancer drug, Ribociclib. Even though the petitioner, who suffered from breast cancer later succumbed to her disease during the pendency of the petition, the Court took cognisance of the larger issue of the high cost of the drug.

Following this the Court appointed the petitioner's counsel, Advocate Maitreyi Hegde as amicus curiae in the matter.

It was based on her request for the data that the court passed the present interim order.

"Since it is an innocuous prayer sought for by the Amicus Curiae in the larger public interest, there will be a direction to the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare to collect the details from the sixth respondent and submit a report before this court within one month," the interim order stated.

The petitioner was diagnosed with HER2- negative metastatic breast cancer and was undergoing targeted therapy when she approached the court raising the issue of the price of Ribociclib which costs nearly ₹58,140.



AP bans marine fishing for two months

The annual ban will begin April 15 and last till June 14, spanning 61 days, requiring all the registered mechanised and motorised fishing vessels to refrain from fishing during this time

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Amaravati, April 11: The Andhra Pradesh government has banned fishing in the Bay of Bengal across the length of the state's territorial waters for two months to observe conservancy and sustain the breeding season of various prawn and fish species, an official said.

The annual ban will begin April 15 and last till June 14, spanning 61 days, requiring all the registered mechanised and motorised fishing vessels to refrain from fishing during this time.

"The main objective of the order is to observe conservancy measures during breeding season of



majority prawn and fish species. All the fishermen are requested to observe ban on marine fishing strictly

as was done in the previous years," the fisheries department official said in a statement. He said the meas-

ure is aimed at offering better catch to fishermen in the post-ban period as well as sustain fisheries wealth for posterity.

In the event of violation, the fisheries department will seize the culprits' boats, and levy a heavy penalty under the provisions of the AP Marine Fishing Regulation Act, 1994, including scrapping subsidised oil supply and other benefits.

To strictly enforce the ban, the department is teaming up with the Coast Guard, coastal security police, Navy and revenue department to patrol the coast of the southern state, which is endowed with India's second largest coastline.

'LIFE MISSION' SCHEME IN KERALA

Homeless people receive house keys

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kannur (Ker), April 11: The LDF government in Kerala handed over house keys to homeless people in four districts under its flagship "Life Mission" project.

"The LDF Govt in Kerala is ensuring #HousingForAll! Today, inaugurated 4 housing complexes, fulfilling the dream of 174 families. Through the #LifeMission over 3,40,040 beneficiaries have already received houses. 1,06,000 more houses will be completed this year," Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan said in a tweet.

While Vijayan handed over house keys to 44 families in Kadambur near here, Ministers K N Balagopal and J Chinchurani gave away the keys to beneficiaries at Punalur in southern Kollam district. Ministers V N Vasavan and Roshni Augustine distributed the house keys in Vijayapuram in Kottayam and Karimannoor in Idukki districts,



EACH FLAT IN THE FOUR HOUSING COMPLEXES COMPRISES A HALL, TWO BED ROOMS, A KITCHEN, BATHROOM AND BALCONY

"Project LIFE" (Livelihood, Inclusion, and Financial Empowerment) envisages making Kerala a "zero-homeless" State by providing a home for homeless and landless people

As many as 174 financially backward families in Kannur, Kollam, Kottayam and Idukki districts are the beneficiaries

respectively.

During the function, the Chief Minister said the Life Mission project has received widespread acceptance from all walks of life in the society. Over 3.40 lakh families have so far received houses through the project, and the construction of over 50,000 houses has been completed in the last financial year alone.

"At present, the construction of

as many as 64,585 houses is progressing in various stages across the State under the Life Mission project. In the present financial year, as many as 71,861 will be constructed under the initiative," the Chief Minister detailed.

The four housing complexes inaugurated today was completed as part of the 100-day programme commemorating the second anniversary of the Vijayan government.

Hartal against translocation of rice-eating tusker in Kerala

LAST WEEK, THE KERALA HC ORDERED RELOCATION OF THE TUSKER TO THE PARAMBIKULAM TIGER RESERVE AS SUGGESTED BY A COMMITTEE OF EXPERTS

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Palakkad (Ker), April 11: Residents of a local panchayat in northern Palakkad district Tuesday observed a hartal protesting the proposed translocation of rice eating rogue tusker "Arikomban" to the nearby Parambikulam wildlife sanctuary, based on a Kerala High Court order.

Majority of shops remained closed and otherwise-busy roads in Muthalamada panchayat could be seen almost deserted in the morning following the day-long hartal called by 'janakeeya samithi', a people's collective. However, both private vehicles as well as state-



run KSRTC buses could be seen plying on the roads as usual later in the day.

Last week, the Kerala High Court had ordered relocation of the tusker to the Parambikulam tiger reserve here as suggested by a Committee of Experts (CoE) appointed by the court to decide whether to relocate or keep in captivity the bull elephant.

A recent all-party meeting, held in the village, had decided to observe the hartal today to register their protest against the court's directive. Besides Muthalamada, inhabitants of six other panchayats would also be affected due to the transloca-

AP TEACHERS TO ENROLL IN IIT-MADRAS COURSES

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Amaravati, Apr 11: The Andhra Pradesh government school teachers could soon be able to pursue certificate courses offered by IIT-Madras to upgrade their teaching skills in science disciplines, according to a proposal approved by Chief Minister Y S Jagan Mohan Reddy Monday.

In a review meeting on Education department, Reddy approved the proposal on teaching methods for effective implementation of subject teacher concept over the next two years in mathematics, physics and chemistry.

Further, the Chief Minister stressed on the need to keep a vigil on attendance of students in schools as the State government is implementing schemes such as "Amma Vodi", "Vidya Devana" and "Vasathi Devana" to bring down the dropout rate, said a statement.

Reddy observed that tracking students' attendance employing the synergies existing between the education department and the secretariats will help reduce the dropout rate.

Likewise, he directed officials to finish printing next year's Vidya Kanuka textbooks in advance while the latter pointed out that they



According to officials, as many as 1,000 government schools have secured CBSE affiliation while efforts are underway to manage the same for the remaining schools

would be ready by May 15. Moreover, the Chief Minister underlined the need to prepare e-content to enable students take examinations such as Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) at the primary and junior levels.

He highlighted that students should be made to attend TOEFL examination at the primary and junior levels, including undergoing tests in reading, writing and listening to enhance their skills.

Meanwhile, officials informed Reddy that arrangements are being made to provide training for 1998 DSC selectees, who are given teacher jobs after more than two decades, in the summer.

Mangrove trees make way for booming city of Kochi

AGENCIES

Kochi, April 11: Burrowed between mangroves and a bustling skyline, 70-year old Rajan, who only uses one name, reminisces about his old home.

For nearly sixty years, Rajan has lived comfortably among the trees in Mangalavanam forest in Kerala. In the last two decades, the surrounding city of Kochi has boomed as the state's financial capital and swallowed up once-protected green areas, including Rajan's former home.

He was forced to sell his land to a local private realtor when the area was bought up for construction about 15 years ago. He moved into a makeshift dwelling on the edge of a protected bird sanctuary.

"Now there are buildings all

around and no wind," said Rajan, adding that the towering concrete has made the city and forest stifling hot.

Government buildings, private offices and homes have sprung up at pace, cutting deep into the forest known as the "green lung of Kochi." The trees are now squeezed on all sides by buildings, construction and smog.

Environmentalists are concerned over the loss and declining health of mangrove cover, which is particularly effective at sucking planet-



Rajan, who only uses one name, sits in his home in a forest in the heart of the city in Kochi, Kerala

warming carbon dioxide out of the air, can fend off scorching heat for nearby residents and sustains

populations of local wildlife. Mangroves also shield local habitations against ocean hazards such

Environmentalists are concerned over the loss and declining health of mangrove cover, which is particularly effective at sucking planet-warming carbon dioxide out of the air, can fend off scorching heat for nearby residents and sustains populations of local wildlife

Mangroves also shield local habitations against ocean hazards such as tropical cyclones, storm surges and tsunamis

as tropical cyclones, storm surges and tsunamis. Officials and developers alike defend the need to house the state's dense population and harness economic growth in the world's soon-to-be most populous nation, but experts say this cannot come at

the cost of green spaces.

Kerala has lost nearly 98 per cent of its mangrove forests, shrinking from 700 square kilometres in 1975 to just 17 square kilometres now, according to figures from the Kerala Forest Research Institute. Mangrove cover across the country crept up slightly between 2017 to 2019 at a rate of 0.5 per cent per year thanks to concerted efforts by the government with restoration and maintenance projects springing up in Kerala and beyond.

"I had literally fought with the government to come out with plans to protect the mangrove forests," said Kathireshan Kandasamy, who studies India's mangrove forests and is a former member of the National Mangrove Committee, a body set up by the government to advise on conservation.

national

of the day quote

The BJP will win more than 300 Lok Sabha seats across the country in next year's general elections and return to power for the third consecutive term with Prime Minister Narendra Modi at the helm

AMIT SHAH | UNION HOME MINISTER

Government is bringing a massive change in the field of education and would open Rajiv Gandhi Day Boarding Schools to provide quality education to children

SUKHVINDER SINGH SUKHU | HIMACHAL CM

Tamil Nadu may consider introducing mask mandate in the state if coronavirus cases surge beyond the 500 or 1,000 mark

MA SUBRAMANIAN | TN HEALTH MINISTER

SHORT TAKES

Dalit man assaulted

Lucknow: A group of youths, working as property dealers, allegedly attacked a Dalit man here to stop him from selling his land. They hurled casteist remarks and demanding extortion from him in Lucknow's Indira Nagar, the police said. Deen Dayal of Rasoolpur Sadat village under Indira Nagar had sold his land to one Vishal Yadav and the sale deed was registered at the office of registrar in Bakshi Ka Talab recently.

2 houses set afire

Meerut: Two houses were set on fire a day after a 24-year-old man was shot dead in Palda village in Uttar Pradesh's Meerut. The incident has led to communal tension in the area. In view of the situation, a heavy police force has been deployed in and around the village to control the situation.

LeT terror module busted in J&K

Srinagar: Security forces Tuesday busted a Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) terror module in Jammu and Kashmir's Baramulla district and arrested two associates of the militant group, police said. Based on specific information, the security forces, including personnel from the local police, Rashtriya Rifles and Sashastra Seema Bal, busted the terror module in Pattan area.

Woman dead, son injured

New Delhi: A 78-year-old woman died while her son was injured after a fire broke out at their home in west Delhi's Mansarovar Garden area, an official said Tuesday. The incident occurred in the early hours of Tuesday. According to police, a police control room call regarding a fire at a house was received at 1 a.m. at the Kirti Nagar police station following which a police team rushed to the spot.

Light pollution may extend mosquitoes' biting season: Study

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, April 11: Urban light pollution may delay the winter dormancy period for mosquitoes, and as a result they can bite humans and animals longer into the fall, a study suggests.

The researchers noted that the disease-carrying pests may not survive the winter if their plans to fatten up are foiled due to the disruption. However, their dormancy period, known as diapause, may simply be delayed—meaning they're biting longer into the fall. "If you have mosquitoes post-pone or delaying diapause and continuing to be active longer in the year, that's at a time when the mos-

Pilot sits on dharna, targets Raj govt

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Jaipur, April 11: Congress leader Sachin Pilot Tuesday sat here on a fast, piling pressure on his own party by targeting the Ashok Gehlot government in Rajasthan for "in-action" in alleged cases of corruption when the BJP ran the state.

Defying the Congress central leadership's warning that the move—which comes just months before the assembly polls—is "anti-party", he argued that Rahul Gandhi too has been leading a movement against graft.

As he left the protest site, Pilot told reporters that Rahul Gandhi, the Congress and other opposition parties have united over corruption and financial irregularities, and claimed that his fast will speed up this "movement".

The former deputy chief minister said he wrote two letters on this issue to Gehlot last year but received no reply.

"We had assured people that effective action will be taken against corruption by the former BJP government. I wanted the Congress government to take action but it has not happened in over four years," Pilot said. "This struggle against corruption will continue," he said.

K'taka BJP veteran to quit electoral politics



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bangalore, April 11: Senior BJP leader and former Karnataka deputy chief minister K S Eshwarappa Tuesday told the party's central leadership that he wishes to retire from electoral politics and requested it to not consider fielding him from any constituency in the Assembly polls next month.

The decision of the former state unit president, who played a key role along with B S Yediyurappa in building the party in the state over the last four decades, came in the midst of the BJP finalising its list of candidates for the elections. "I wish to voluntarily retire from electoral politics. Hence, it is my request not to consider my name for any constituency for the Assembly elections this time," the former Leader of Opposition in the Legislative Council said in a letter to BJP President J P Nadda.

Eshwarappa, who resigned as minister last year over a corruption charge, expressed his gratitude to the seniors in the party who gave him honourable positions in his 40-year political career right from booth level to the deputy Chief Minister.

The 74-year-old Kuruba leader, also known for his controversial statements, is a five-time MLA from Shivamogga, and has served as minister holding various portfolios. Kurubas come under the OBC category in the state.

The announcement came amid speculations that the central leadership was weighing the option of denying him ticket for the polls.



Without getting into details, the Congress leader referred to the liquor and sand "mafias" that allegedly operated during the BJP term. On Tuesday, the BJP described the allegations as "fabricated". Gehlot and Pilot have been in a power tussle in the state since the Congress formed the government in December 2018.

Pilot offered flowers at the portraits of Mahatma Gandhi and social reformer Jyotirao Phule before starting his silent protest around 11 am. He sat alone on the dais for five hours, against the

backdrop of a large banner that described the event as a fast against "corruption" during the term of BJP's Vasundhara Raje. It read, "Vasundhara Sarkar Me Hue Bhrashtachar ke Viruddh Anshan". The song "Vaishnav Jan To Tene Kahiye" played in the background. His supporters sat behind or below the platform. No ruling party minister or MLA showed up as they were asked by Pilot to keep away.

But several other leaders, including former MLAs Santosh Saharan and Ramnarayan

GEHLOT AND PILOT HAVE BEEN AT LOGGERHEADS SINCE THE CONGRESS FORMED THE GOVERNMENT IN THE STATE IN DECEMBER 2018. PILOT OFFERED FLOWERS AT THE PORTRAITS OF MAHATMA GANDHI AND SOCIAL REFORMER JYOTIRAO PHULE BEFORE STARTING HIS SILENT PROTEST AROUND 11 AM.

Papalpreet lodged in Dibrugarh jail

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Dibrugarh(Assam), April 11: Radical preacher Amritpal Singh's close aide Papalpreet Singh was brought here on Tuesday and lodged in the central jail, police said.

Papalpreet Singh, who is considered to be Amritpal's mentor, was nabbed in Amritsar district Monday and booked under the National Security Act. He was brought here from Delhi by a Punjab police team and escorted to the Dibrugarh central jail from the airport amidst tight security.

Meanwhile, a team of three lawyers from Punjab - Bhagwant Singh Siyalka, Mandeep Singh Siddhu and Rohit Sharma met the eight members of the outfit 'Waris Punjab De' already in the jail here, officials said. The first batch of the four arrested members of the



outfit were shifted here by the Punjab Police on March 19.

On March 21, three others, including Amritpal's uncle Harjit Singh, also detained under the National Security Act (NSA), were brought to Dibrugarh, around 2,500 km away from Punjab.

Besides, Papalpreet and Harjit Singh, the other members of the outfit lodged in the jail since last March are Daljeet Kalsi, Basant Singh,



Bihu dancers rehearse for the Guinness World Record event, in Guwahati. Over 11,000 Bihu dancers will perform in an attempt to set a Guinness World Record, during upcoming Rongali Bihu festival celebrations on April 14



both Ph.D. Candidates at Ohio State. Diapause for female Northern house mosquitoes (Culex pipiens) is not quite a winter slumber, but rather a period of dormancy when the in-

sects live in caves, culverts, sheds and other semi-protected locations. Prior to winter's arrival, mosquitoes convert sugary sources, such as plant nectar, into fat, the re-

TRINAMOOL RS MP RESIGNS

Trinamool Congress's Rajya Sabha member and former Goa Chief Minister Luizinho Faleiro tendered his resignation from the Upper House of Parliament Tuesday and said he wants to free himself from this responsibility to work as a foot soldier again in the interest of Goa



Cops detain boy for threatening Salman



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, April 11: Mumbai police have detained a 16-year-old boy from the neighbouring Thane district after he allegedly called up the control room and threatened to kill Bollywood superstar, Salman Khan, an official said on Tuesday.

The main control room of Mumbai Police received the call on Monday night. The caller told police that he would kill Khan April 30 and asked them to convey this to the actor before disconnecting the call, the official said.

When police called back, the caller claimed he is a "gaushala rakshak" (cowshed protector) and was speaking from Jodhpur in Rajasthan, the official said. The police then started an investigation, and with technical help, they tracked the number from which the call came to Shahapur in Thane district, located 70 km from Mumbai, he said.

The Crime Intelligence Unit (CIU) of the Mumbai crime branch was also roped in. A police team of CIU officials went to Shahapur and tracked down the suspect. After watching police personnel, the

The main control room of Mumbai police received the call Monday night

The caller told police that he would kill Khan April 30 and asked them to convey this to the actor before disconnecting the call, the official said

teenager tried to flee on his motorcycle with his friend riding pillion, but was chased and apprehended, the official said.

Police took the suspect into custody and started examining his mobile phone, where they found that he had called the control room and threatened to kill the actor. As per the preliminary investigation, the teenage boy hails from Rajasthan. He has been handed over to Mumbai Police for the further legal process, the official said.

A probe was on to ascertain the boy's motive behind issuing the threat to the 57-year-old actor, he said. The Mumbai police last month stepped up Salman Khan's security after he received a threatening e-mail, following which an FIR was registered against gangsters Lawrence Bishnoi and Goldy Brar, both accused in the murder of singer Sidhu Moosewala.

The 'Dabangg' actor was earlier provided with Y-plus category security by the police and he moved around in a bullet-proof car along with security guards. Notably, in June 2022, an unidentified person threatened Khan via a handwritten note.

Tejashwi grilled for nine hours

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, April 11: RJD leader and Bihar Deputy Chief Minister Tejashwi Yadav was Tuesday questioned by the Enforcement Directorate (ED) for about nine hours at the agency office here in a money laundering case linked to the alleged land-for-jobs scam.

The 33-year-old son of RJD president and former Bihar chief minister Lalu Prasad reached the federal agency's office in central Delhi in a carcade around 10:45 am.

The agency recorded his statement under the provisions of the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) and he left the office about 9 pm, they said. In between, he went for an about hour-long lunch break.

Last month, the CBI had questioned the RJD leader in this case. The ED booked a separate case under the criminal sections of the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) based on the CBI FIR. Tejashwi Yadav's MP-sister Misa Bharti was also questioned by the ED in this case on March 25, the same day he had deposed before the CBI.

Both the central agencies recently initiated action in the case, with the CBI questioning Lalu Prasad and his wife and former Bihar chief minister Rabri Devi and the ED carrying out raids against the RJD chief's family.

The ED, after the searches, said it seized "unaccounted cash" of Rs 1 crore and detected proceeds of crime worth Rs 600 crore.

It said the investigation was underway to unearth more investments made on behalf of Prasad's family and their associates in various sectors, including real estate, at various places.

The alleged scam pertains to the period when Prasad was the railway minister in the UPA-1 government at the Centre.

international



The resumption of diplomatic relations between Iran and Saudi Arabia will have positive impacts on regional peace, stability and security
NASSER KANAANI | IRANIAN DIPLOMAT

STRIKE BEGINS

An Indian-origin medic and co-chair of the medical association's junior doctors panel has called for action from the British government as members across England began a historic four-day strike Tuesday demanding a substantial pay hike in line with the spiralling inflation



of the day quote

Thanks to TCG Anadolu, we will become a country that is pioneering one of the first in the world, game-changing technologies, systems and solutions
RECEP TAYYIP ERDOGAN | TURKISH PRESIDENT

We are facing a serious challenge of cross-border supply of illicit weapons using drones, which cannot be possible without active support from the authorities in control of those territories
RUCHIRA KAMBOJ | INDIA'S PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE

In terms of the military base, I have said this repeatedly, we have no intention of building a military base (in Sri Lanka)
JULIE J CHUNG | US AMBASSADOR TO SRI LANKA

Military airstrikes on Myanmar village feared to have killed 100



ASSOCIATED PRESS

Bangkok, April 11: Airstrikes by Myanmar's military Tuesday killed as many as 100 people, including many children, who were attending a ceremony held by opponents of army rule, said a witness, a member of a local pro-democracy group and independent media. The military is increasingly using airstrikes to counter a widespread armed struggle against its rule, which began in February 2021 when it seized power from the elected government of Aung San Suu Kyi. More than 3,000 civilians are estimated to have been killed since

then by security forces. A witness told The Associated Press that a fighter jet dropped bombs directly into a crowd of people who were gathered at 8 a.m. For the opening of a local office of the country's opposition movement outside Pazigy village in Sagaing region's Kanbalu township. The area is about 110 kilometres (70 miles) north of Mandalay, the country's second largest city. About half an hour later, a helicopter appeared and fired at the site, said the witness, who asked not to be identified because he feared punishment by the authorities. Initial reports put the death toll at around 50, but later tallies reported by independent media raised it to about 100. It was impossible to independently confirm details of the incident because reporting is restricted by the military government.

There were no immediate reports about the attack in state-controlled media. In past cases, the military government has said it does not use disproportionate force.



A woman poses for a picture among the blossoming trees at the Japanese Garden in the King Michael I park in Bucharest, Romania

PTI PHOTO

Macron visits Netherlands

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Amsterdam, April 11: French President Emmanuel Macron is set to deliver a speech outlining his vision for the future of Europe during a two-day state visit to the Netherlands that began Tuesday. The afternoon speech at a theatre in The Hague comes after Macron raised eyebrows with comments on Taiwan after his recent visit to China.



"The question we need to answer, as Europeans, is the following: Is it in our interest to accelerate (a crisis) on Taiwan? No," Macron was quoted as saying in an interview published Sunday in French newspaper Les Echos and by Politico Europe. The remarks raised questions about whether Macron's views are in line with the European Union's position and whether the bloc of 27 is able to become the "third superpower" that Macron says he hopes to build within "a few years."

Kim vows 'offensive' nuclear expansion

Kim reviewed the country's frontline attack plans and various combat documents and stressed the need to bolster his nuclear deterrent with "increasing speed on a more practical and offensive" manner

AGENCIES

Seoul, April 11: North Korean leader Kim Jong Un vowed to enhance his nuclear arsenal in more "practical and offensive" ways as he met with senior military officials to discuss the country's war preparations in the face of his rivals' "frantic" military exercises, state media said Tuesday.

The meeting of the ruling Workers' Party's Central Military Commission Monday came amid heightened tensions as the pace of both the North Korean weapons demonstrations and the US-South Korean joint military drills have intensified in recent weeks in a cycle of tit-for-tat.

North Korea's official Korean Central News Agency said the commission's members discussed unspecified issues related to strengthening defence capacities and perfecting war preparations to counter the threat posed by the allies' drills, which the North portrays as invasion rehearsals. The report did not specify the directions the North intended to take. KCNA also published photos of Kim talking to officials while pointing to certain spots on a blurred map

that appeared to be of South Korea. KCNA said Kim and the military commission members analysed the security situation on the Korean Peninsula "in which the US imperialists and the (South) Korean puppet traitors are getting ever more undisguised in their moves for a war of aggression" and discussed preparation for proposed military actions that their enemy has no way of counter-acting.

The US and South Korean militaries conducted their biggest field exercises in years last month and separately held joint naval and air force drills involving a US aircraft carrier strike group and nuclear-capable US bombers. KCNA claimed the drills simulated an all-out war against North Korea and communicated threats to occupy Pyongyang and decapitate its leadership. The United States and South Korea have described their exercises as defensive in nature and said that the expansion of those drills are necessary to cope with the North's evolving threats.



North Korea in 2023 so far has fired around 30 missiles in 11 different launch events

Tensions are likely to be prolonged as the allies continue their drills and North Korea uses them as a pretext to advance weapons development and intensify military training involving its nuclear-capable missiles.

The North Korean report came as South Korean officials said the North did not respond to South Korean calls placed over inter-Korean liaison and military hotlines for the fifth consecutive day.

South Korean officials say North Korea cut off communications after the South last week urged the North to stop using without permission South Korean assets left at a now-shuttered joint factory park in the North Korean border town of Kaesong.

The paused military hotlines are particularly concerning in a time of heightened tensions as they are intended to prevent accidental clashes along the rivals' sea borders. Jeon Ha Gyu, spokesperson of South Korea's Defence Ministry, said Tuesday the South's military wasn't immediately detecting unusual activities by North Korea's military after the hotlines were paused.

South Korean Unification Minister Kwon Youngse, Seoul's point man on the North, in a news conference expressed "strong regret" over North Korea's "unilateral and irresponsible attitude" over the communication lines and also warned of unspecified legal action over its use of the Kaesong assets.

When asked about Kim's comments during the military meeting, Kwon said it's likely that North Korea currently sees the buildup of tensions as favourable to its interests and that Seoul is closely analysing the North's intent. South Korea pulled its companies out of Kaesong in 2016 following a North Korean nuclear test, removing the last remaining major symbol of cooperation between the rivals. North Korean state media recently showed what appeared to be South Korean commuter buses running in the streets of Kaesong and Pyongyang.

MEA Jaishankar meets Ugandan counterpart

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kampala, April 11: External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar on Tuesday met his Ugandan counterpart General Odongo Jeje and took stock of the "close and historical ties" between the two nations, and acknowledged that possibilities of partnerships in trade, investments, energy, defence and air connectivity were being explored. Jaishankar is on a two-nation visit to Uganda and Mozambique from April 10-15 to bolster India's robust bilateral relations with the two African countries.

Jaishankar said he had "comprehensive discussions" with his Ugandan counterpart and thanked him for the warmth of the welcome.



"Took stock of our close and historical ties that have been given greater intensity by our leadership. Possibilities in trade & investments, energy, defence and air connectivity being explored," Jaishankar said in a tweet.

During the meeting, Jaishankar also affirmed Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Kampala principles will be further implemented with a focus on digital, green and health projects.

In 2018, Prime Minister Modi unveiled a set of 10 guiding principles that would dictate India's engagement with Africa.

In his speech at the Ugandan parliament, Prime Minister Modi outlined a vision for not just a bilateral relationship with Africa but also a partnership at the global level.

The External Affairs Minister also participated in the virtual groundbreaking ceremony of solar-powered piped drinking water supply systems funded by the Exim Bank in Uganda.

SHORT TAKES

Sitharaman meets Yellen

Washington: Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman Tuesday met with US Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen here and the two leaders discussed strengthening the India-US economic and financial partnership and increasing engagements at bilateral and multilateral forums. Sitharaman, who is leading a high-powered delegation, met Yellen on the sidelines of the World Bank and IMF Spring Meetings 2023 here.

Fire erupts in Japan nuke plant

Tokyo: A fire broke out at an idled nuclear power plant in Japan's Niigata prefecture Tuesday, and was quickly extinguished, local media said. The fire was detected just after 11 a.m. at the No. 5 reactor building at the Kashiwazaki-Kariwa plant located on the coast of the Sea of Japan, reports Xinhua news agency.

Volcano erupts in Russia's Far East

Moscow: The Shiveluch volcano in Russia's far eastern Kamchatka Peninsula erupted Tuesday and spewed an ash plume up to 15 km into the sky, posing threat to air traffic. The Institute of Volcanology and Seismology of the Far Eastern Branch of the Russian Academy of Sciences has declared the highest "red" hazard designation for aviation, Xinhua news agency reported.

Philippines, US kick off joint military drills

Manila: The Philippines and US Tuesday kicked off the most extensive joint military activities in decades in the Southeast Asian nation amid criticisms that it escalates tension in the region rather than peace and stability. According to the Philippine military, the 18-day yearly exercise dubbed 'Balikatan' involves 5,400 Philippine and 12,200 US troops, making it the largest iteration of the joint drills conducted between the two nations in decades.

French building collapse kills six

Paris: French investigators are treating the deaths of at least six people who were killed when a building collapsed in the city of Marseille as a possible "involuntary homicide" case, a prosecutor said Tuesday. Prosecutor Dominique Laurens said an investigation was opened on that basis after the first body was found in the building, which collapsed in a fiery explosion early Sunday.

Tsai condemns China's military drills

China's three-day large-scale drills were retaliation for Tsai's meeting with United States House Speaker Kevin McCarthy

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Taipei, April 11: Taiwan's President Tsai Ing-wen has condemned China's military drills in the Taiwan Strait, saying Tuesday that China did not demonstrate the "responsible" behaviour of a major Asian nation.

China's three-day, large-scale drills that ended Monday were retaliation for Tsai's meeting with United States House Speaker Kevin McCarthy in California last week on her tour of Taiwan's official and unofficial allies. "As the pres-



ident, I represent our country in the world, whether it's a visit to allied countries or stopping through in the US and interacting with our international friends, and not only has this been going on for years, it's the Taiwanese people's shared expectation," Tsai said in a statement.

"But China used this as a pretext to start military drills, creating instability in the Taiwan Strait and region. This is not the attitude of a responsible major nation in this region."

China sees such meetings as encouraging Taiwanese voters and politicians who support formal independence for the island, a step China's ruling Communist Party says would lead to war.

The sides split in 1949 after a civil war, and the government says the island is obliged to rejoin the mainland, by force if necessary.

Pipe bombs found in Northern Ireland ahead of Biden's visit

REUTERS

London, April 11: Police in Northern Ireland said Tuesday they had recovered four suspected pipe bombs from a cemetery near the city of Londonderry following a public safety operation.

The discovery comes hours before US President Joe Biden is due to arrive in Belfast, about 110 kilometers (70 miles) southeast of Londonderry. On Monday, police said a number of masked people attacked a police vehicle with petrol bombs and other objects at a parade opposing the Good Friday peace

accord in Londonderry. "The discovery of these devices was a further sinister and worrying development," Assistant Chief Constable Bobby Singleton said. Biden arrives in Belfast late Tuesday at a delicate political time in Northern Ireland as he helps mark the 25-year anniversary of a peace deal that largely ended 30 years of bloodshed there.

Pipe bombs are crude improvised explosive devices used in the past by militants in Northern Ireland and are often around the size of a hand grenade. They are made by tightly filling a section of pipe with explosives.

Russian forces in Crimea brace for possible Ukraine assault

Satellite images published last week showed a complex web of trenches and other fortifications dug near Medvedivka, a small town near a crossing between Crimea and mainland Ukraine, suggesting Russian concerns about a possible Ukrainian attack there

AGENCIES

Kyiv, April 11: The Moscow-appointed leader of Crimea said Tuesday the region is on guard for what may be an impending Ukrainian counteroffensive.

Sergei Aksyonov told reporters that Russian forces in Crimea had built "modern, in-depth defences" and had "more than enough" troops and equipment to repel a possible Ukrainian assault after 13 months of war following

Russia's full-scale invasion. "We cannot underestimate the enemy, but we can definitely say that we are ready (for an attack) and that there will be no catastrophe," he said.

His comments came days after Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy reaffirmed Kyiv's intention to take back the Black Sea peninsula that Russia illegally annexed from Ukraine in 2014.

Aksyonov first announced the beginning of fortification works in



Crimea in November; without giving details. In February, at a security meeting chaired by Russian President Vladimir Putin, he said that the works were set to finish by April.

Satellite images published last week showed a complex web of

trenches and other fortifications dug near Medvedivka, a small town near a crossing between Crimea and mainland Ukraine, suggesting Russian concerns about a possible Ukrainian attack there.

Military analysts expect Kyiv

to take advantage of improving weather to seize the battlefield initiative with new batches of Western weapons, including scores of tanks, and fresh troops trained in the West.

Ukrainian forces could seek to break through the land corridor between Russia and Crimea, heading from Zaporizhzhia toward Melitopol and the Azov Sea. That might split the Russian forces in two.

Kyiv's forces face a formidable challenge to dislodge Russian forces, however. Their armour likely will encounter minefields, anti-tank ditches and other obstacles, while extensive trench systems provide cover for Moscow's troops.

The Kremlin wants Kyiv to acknowledge Russia's sovereignty over Crimea and also recognise

September's annexation of the Ukrainian provinces of Donetsk, Kherson, Luhansk and Zaporizhzhia.

Ukraine has vowed to drive the Russians out of all occupied territories and has ruled out any talks with Moscow until it fully reclaims control of its land.

The Ukraine-held parts of the four provinces have felt the brunt of Russian bombardments in recent months, and seven civilians were wounded by Russian shelling in Donetsk and Kherson Monday and overnight, the presidential office reported Tuesday.

Russia Tuesday also used Su-35 aircraft to launch strikes on two towns in the Zaporizhzhia region, the head of the Ukrainian presidential office said.

of the day quote

How do we take this model of India to the rest of the world is the challenge and we will use the G20 narrative to push this digital transformation story of India to the rest of the world

AMITABH KANT | INDIA'S G20 SHERPA

At Audi India, we strive to give our customers the best, but the rise in customs duty and input costs have compelled us to amend our prices upwards

BALBIR SINGH DHILLON | AUDI INDIA HEAD

Overall, our growth story continues with a record quarter and a record fiscal year...Double digit growth continues for us in 2023

SANTOSH IYER | MERCEDES-BENZ INDIA MD & CEO

SHORT TAKES

New zonal head of UCO Bank



Sambalpur: Rajesh Kumar has joined as the new Zonal Head of Sambalpur Zone of UCO Bank. Prior to this he was working in the Head Office of Kolkata. Rajesh Kumar, who joined the Bank in 2006, had successfully worked in various capacities in different places in Chhattisgarh, Odisha and West Bengal and has gained vast experience. It is noted that, Sambalpur Zone is having the total business mix of ₹8,326 crore.

BankBazaar.Com plans to go public

New Delhi: Fintech firm BankBazaar.Com Tuesday said it plans to go public in the next 12-18 months. The company had a net revenue of ₹160 crore in FY23. The Initial Public Offering (IPO) plans are in progress with an aim to list in 12-18 months, co-branded credit card issuer BankBazaar.Com said in a statement. Prior to the IPO, BankBazaar is planning to raise a round of capital and has appointed ICICI Securities to advise it on the same. The company grew its net revenue for FY23 by 60 per cent over FY22 on the back of a 60 per cent growth in its credit card issuances.

PE inflows plunge over 75% in Q1

Mumbai: Private equity inflows plunged 75.4 per cent to USD 2.2 billion in the March quarter, making it the sixth consecutive quarter of decline, amid global macroeconomic and geopolitical headwinds, according to a report. At USD 2.2 billion of inflows, this is the lowest private equity investment in the country since 2018, when it stood at USD 1.7 billion, according to the data tabulated by the financial markets data and insights provider Refinitiv, an LSEG Business unit. Internet-specific and computer software companies continued to attract the largest share of private equity capital, the report said. However, its share declined to 58 per cent from 75 per cent in the same period last year, primarily due to fewer deals.



Huge delta of opportunities are there in India
PIYUSH GOYAL | COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY MINISTER

IMF trims India's FY24 growth forecast to 5.9%



Global growth will bottom out at 2.8% this year before rising modestly to 3% in 2024, according to IMF's World Economic Outlook

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Washington, April 11: The International Monetary Fund (IMF) Tuesday lowered India's economic growth projection for the current fiscal to 5.9 per cent from 6.1 per cent earlier. Yet India will continue to be the fastest-growing economy in the world.

In its annual World Economic Outlook, IMF also lowered the forecast for 2024-25 fiscal (April 2024 to March 2025) to 6.3 per cent from the 6.8 per cent it had predicted in January this year.

The growth rate of 5.9 per cent in the 2023-24 fiscal compares to an estimated 6.8 per cent in the previous year.

IMF growth forecast is lower than projections by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI). RBI sees a 7 per cent GDP growth in 2022-23 and a 6.4 per cent in the current fiscal that started on April 1.

The government is yet to release full-year GDP numbers for 2022-23. Despite a significant drop in growth rate projections from 6.8 per cent in 2022 to 5.9 per cent, India continues to be the fastest-growing economy in the world, the World Economic Outlook figures revealed.

China's growth rate is projected to be 5.2 per cent in 2023 and 4.5 per cent in 2024 against its growth rate of three per cent in 2022.

On the surface, the global economy appears to be poised for a gradual recovery from the powerful blows of the pandemic and

Russia's unprovoked war on Ukraine. China is rebounding strongly following the reopening of its economy. Supply-chain disruptions are unwinding, while the dislocations to energy and food markets caused by the war are receding, said IMF Chief Economist Pierre-Olivier Gourinchas.

"Simultaneously, the massive and synchronous tightening of monetary policy by most central banks should start to bear fruit, with inflation moving back toward its targets."

"In our latest forecast, global growth will bottom out at 2.8 per cent this year before rising modestly to 3.0 per cent in 2024. Global inflation will decrease, although more slowly than initially anticipated, from 8.7 per cent in 2022 to 7.0 per cent this year and 4.9 per cent in 2024," he said. According to him, this year's economic slowdown is concentrated in advanced economies, especially the euro area and the United Kingdom, where growth is expected to fall to 0.8 per cent and -0.3 per cent this year before rebounding to 1.4 and 1 per cent, respectively.

By contrast, despite a 0.5 percentage point downward revision, many emerging market and developing economies are picking up, with year-end to year-end growth accelerating to 4.5 per cent in 2023 from 2.8 per cent in 2022, he wrote in a blog post.

NCS portal lists record 35.7L vacancies in FY23

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, April 11: As many as 35.7 lakh vacancies were registered on National Career Service (NCS) in 2022-23, which is a record so far, the labour ministry said Tuesday.

The Ministry of Labour and Employment is implementing the National Career Service (NCS) Project as a Mission Mode Project for the transformation of the National Employment Service to provide a variety of employment-related services like job matching, career counselling, vocational guidance, information on skill development courses, internships etc.

The services under NCS are available online, which was dedicated to the nation by the Prime Minister in 2015.

NCS portal has registered the highest vacancies during 2022-23 since its launch in July 2015, a labour ministry statement said.

Around 35.7 lakh vacancies have been reported by employers on NCS during 2022-23 compared to around 13 lakh vacancies in 2021-22.

The reporting of vacancies on NCS in 2022-23 has shown an increase of 175 per cent over 2021-22.

Further, 2022-23 also witnessed the highest active vacancies count of more than 5.3 lakh October 30, 2022.

The increase in vacancy posting on NCS has been observed across all sectors. The finance and insurance sector has shown phenomenal growth of more than 800 per cent and registered 20.8 lakh vacancies during 2022-23 compared to 2.2 lakh vacancies in 2021-22.

The vacancies in the opera-



tions and support sector have also registered a growth of 400 per cent, with 3.75 lakh vacancies reported in 2022-23 against 76 thousand in 2021-22.

The vacancies in other sectors - Hotels, Food Service and Catering, Manufacturing, Health and Education, among others, also significantly increased during 2022-23 over the previous year.

During 2022-23, the NCS portal has also achieved a milestone of registering more than 1 million employers since its launch. Out of the total registered employers, more than 8 lakhs employers were registered in 2022-23.

The maximum registrations of employers were from the service sector (6.5 lakh), followed by the manufacturing sector.

All the services available on the NCS portal are free of cost for all stakeholders, including jobseekers, employers, training providers and placement organisations.

Markets keep winning run for 7th day; Sensex reclaims 60k

Sensex, Nifty propelled by robust buying in metal, bank and financial stocks amid a firm trend in global equities and continuous foreign capital inflows

AGENCIES

Mumbai, April 11: Equity benchmark Sensex climbed over 310 points to reclaim the 60,000 mark Tuesday, propelled by robust buying in metal, bank and financial stocks amid a firm trend in global equities and continuous foreign capital inflows.

Rising for the seventh straight session, the 30-share BSE Sensex rose 311.21 points or 0.52 per cent to finish at 60,157.72. During the day, it jumped 421.17 points or 0.70 per cent to 60,267.68. As many as 21 stocks in the index ended in the green and nine in the red.

In the seven-day gaining streak, the BSE benchmark has jumped 2,544 points or 4.41 per cent.

The broader NSE Nifty gained 98.25 points or 0.56 per cent to settle at 17,722.30. A total of 38 Nifty shares gained, while 12 declined.

Among the Sensex firms, Kotak Mahindra Bank, Tata Steel, ITC, ICICI Bank, Bajaj Finserv, Maruti, Mahindra & Mahindra and State Bank of India were the biggest winners.

Tata Consultancy Services, Infosys, HCL Technologies, Tech Mahindra, Asian Paints, Wipro and Tata Motors were the biggest laggards.

POWER DEMAND UP 7%

Power demand in the country rose 7 per cent on an annual basis in the three months ended March, according to rating agency Crisil's latest report. "Although the month (March) saw a decline in demand, the fourth quarter of fiscal 2023 witnessed a 7 per cent on-year growth as January and February had seen demand grow 13.7 per cent and 10 per cent, respectively," it said.



Nexa Raj Bhawan unveiled the new Maruti Suzuki Jimny, Tuesday in the presence of Chief Guest Sanjay Kumar Jha, DGM, SBI and Purshotam Budhraj, Dealer Principal, Narayani Motors, Divij Budhraj, Director Narayani Motors, Anubhav Behera, TSM, MSIL, and BD Panda, GM, Nexa Raj Bhawan and others as part of a two-day (April 11 and 12) expo at Nexa Raj Bhawan, Bhubaneswar

Apple to open its first retail store in India next week

AGENCIES

New Delhi, April 11: Apple will next week open its first retail store in India, in signs of importance the iPhone manufacturer attaches to the world's fastest growing smartphones market.

The company will open its first official store in Mumbai April 18 and the second in Delhi April 20.

The company at present sells its products in India through exclusive Apple Premium Reseller (APR) stores, large for-



mat retail chains like Reliance Digital, Croma etc, multi-brand

retail stores and through e-commerce platforms.

"Today Apple announced it will open its doors to customers at two new retail locations in India: Apple BKC in Mumbai April 18, and Apple Saket in Delhi April 20," the company said.

According to CyberMedia Research, Apple captured 4 per cent market share in India with 17 per cent year-on-year increase in its shipments in 2022.

Apple has over 100 APR stores in India that sell Apple products only.

Govt may invite bids for Shipping Corp in May

REUTERS

New Delhi, April 11: The government plans to invite financial bids for the privatisation of Shipping Corp of India Ltd (SCI) next month, as it looks to sell the state-run company after years of delay, two government officials told Reuters.

The Prime Minister Narendra Modi-led government had, in 2019, announced plans to privatise a number of state-run companies, including selling its stake in SCI, which was stalled due to regulatory delays. SCI - which owns and operates bulk carriers and crude oil tankers, among others - had to spin off its non-core assets before the government could sell its 63.75% stake, which hit a roadblock over the amount of funds to be transferred to the demerged entity.

SCI completed the spinoff last month after getting regulatory approval late in February.

This demerged entity, called SCI Land Assets Ltd, will have to be listed before April 23 and government plans to do that soon, one of the two officials said.

The government now aims to invite financial bids for SCI, which owns and operates around one-third of India's total tonnage, by mid-May, said the two officials. The officials did not want to be named as the plan is not yet public.

A final decision will be taken April 14 by a panel headed by India's cabinet secretary, they said.

This panel will also consider a proposal to invite initial bids for selling the government's 31% stake in Container Corporation of India Ltd, which has been delayed since 2020, one of the officials said.

The finance ministry did not immediately reply to an email seeking comment.



In the broader market, the BSE smallcap gauge rose 0.62 per cent and the midcap index advanced 0.40 per cent.

Among sectoral indices, metal rallied 1.87 per cent, utilities jumped 1.73 per cent, bankex (1.64 per cent), financial services (1.03 per cent), power (1.03 per cent) and commodities (1 per cent).

Teck, IT, realty, consumer durables, and capital goods were the laggards.

In Asian markets, Seoul, Japan and Hong Kong ended in the green, while Shanghai settled lower.

Global oil benchmark Brent crude climbed 0.35 per cent to USD 84.53 per barrel.

Foreign portfolio investors (FPIs) bought equities worth ₹882.52 crore Monday, according to exchange data.

Meanwhile, the rupee depreciated 13 paise to close at 82.12

Investors richer by over ₹12.56 lakh cr

New Delhi: Equity investors became richer by over ₹12.56 lakh crore in seven days of market rally as sentiments remained firm amid continuous foreign fund inflows and stable global trends. In the past seven days, the BSE benchmark Sensex has jumped 2,544 points or 4.41 per cent. Helped by the ongoing rally, the market capitalisation of BSE-listed firms jumped ₹12,56,510.59 crore to ₹2,64,51,069.93 crore in seven days. Last week, equity markets were closed Tuesday (April 4) for 'Mahavir Jayanti' and Friday on account of 'Good Friday'. Stock markets were closed March 30 for 'Ram Navami'. The 30-share BSE Sensex climbed 311.21 points or 0.52 per cent to finish at 60,157.72 Tuesday.

(provisional) against the US currency Tuesday.

OPEC+ output cut may push up India's import bill: IEA

INDIA IS THE WORLD'S THIRD-LARGEST OIL-IMPORTING AND CONSUMING NATION. IT MEETS 85 PER CENT OF OIL NEEDS THROUGH IMPORTS

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Paris, April 11: The International Energy Agency (IEA) Tuesday termed the decision of OPEC+ to cut oil production as "risky for the global economy," saying it may push up already high prices, leading to higher import bills for nations like India.

Global oil markets were already set to tighten in the second half of 2023, with the potential for a substantial supply deficit to emerge, said Fatih Birol, head of the Paris-based energy watchdog.

Talking to reporters after a bilateral meeting with India's Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal here, he said, "The cut of the additional production would mean that we have all the reasons to believe that there could be an upward pressure on the prices."

"At this juncture of time when the global economy is still very



fragile and many emerging countries have difficulties with economic performance, I found this decision risky for the global economy," he noted.

Asked if oil prices could go past

USD 100 per barrel again, he said, "I think we are all the way but USD 85 now, and looking at the second half of this year, I have reasons to believe that it can go even higher at current levels."

Higher oil prices will not just translate into inflationary pressure on other commodities but will also lead to a larger import bill for nations like India, which are dependent on overseas supplies to meet their requirements.

"India is an energy important country, oil important country, a majority of the oil consumed in India is important, such a move could increase India's oil import bill and as such a burden on the Indian economy and Indian consumers," Birol said. Goyal is here to meet his coun-

terpart and French CEOs to promote trade and investments between the two countries. India is the world's third-largest oil-importing and consuming nation. It meets 85 per cent of oil needs through imports. It spent USD 118 billion on oil imports in the first 11 months of the 2022-23 fiscal.

Birol said India's economy is strong and continues to be stronger.

"We expect the Indian economy will soon be the third largest economy of the world and the growing economy needs... We do revise our numbers all the time but I expect that the Indian economy will still be strong this year, one of the strongest in the world. And as such, we require strong oil and electricity demand," he said.

Another last ball thriller

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, April 11: Rohit Sharma was at his vintage best en route to his first IPL half century (65, 45b, 6x4, 4x6) in 25 innings before Mumbai Indians overcame some tense moments to pull off a last-ball win over Delhi Capitals here Monday.

David Warner laboured to 51 (47b, 6x4) before Axar Patel (54, 25b, 4x4, 5x6) flaunted his much improved batting skills again to push Delhi to a competitive 172 after Mumbai Indians put the hosts in to bat.

With the pitch on the drier side compared to the first game here and finger spinners getting plenty of assistance from it, Mumbai Indians had a tricky task at hand but Rohit helped his side record their first win of the season.

With Cameron Green (17 n o) and Tim David (13 n o) in the middle, Mumbai needed five runs off the last over but Anrich Nortje bowled brilliantly to take the game down to the very last ball. David got the required two off the final ball for a much needed victory.

Promoted to number three, the in-form Tilak Varma came up with a crucial 41 (29b, 1x4, 4x6) and forged a 68-run stand with skipper Rohit. It was a much needed win for Mumbai after back-to-back defeats while the season got worse for Delhi who suffered their fourth loss in as many games.

When Rohit charged down the track to pacer Mukesh Kumar in the first over of the innings to pull him for a six over mid-wicket, one could see a special knock coming.

There is no better puller in the game than Rohit and that was on full display at the Feroz Shah Kotla. His second six was even better as he pulled Anrich Nortje off the front foot over wide long-on. Rohit's biggest six came off a pull shot too as he smashed a short ball from Nortje for a massive hit over deep square leg.

Delhi were able to stem the flow of runs in the middle overs via spinners Lalit Yadav and Axar before



Rohit Sharma plays a reverse sweep during his knock against DC

Varma produced timely boundaries to keep Mumbai ahead in the game.

Needing 30 off the final five overs with nine wickets in hand, Mumbai were on course for a comfortable win before Mukesh dismissed Varma and Suryakumar Yadav (0) off successive balls.

The nerves increased in the Mumbai dressing room when Rohit fell to a moment of brilliance from young keeper Abhishek Porel who dived to his right to take a sensational one handed catch off Mustafizur Rahman. However, the towering Australian duo David and Green took their team over the line.

Earlier, veteran Piyush Chawla (3/22) showed he has still got his sublime skills intact with a three-wicket haul for Mumbai. Prithvi Shaw, who struggled in the first

three games, hit some high quality boundaries in his 10-ball 15 before falling to a sweep shot off spinner Hrithik Shokeen.

Manish Pandey (26) used his feet brilliantly against the spinners but that also led to his downfall. Yash Dhuil, who made his IPL debut after warming the bench for the whole of last season, could last only four balls.

When Chawla trapped Rovman Powell with a googly in the 11th over, Delhi were staring at a below par total at 86/4. However, Axar joined a struggling Warner in the middle and single-handedly changed the momentum of Delhi's innings. Axar made his intentions clear with back-to-back inside out sixes off Shokeen.

Two overs later, it was the turn

of left-arm pacer Jason Behrendorff to be at the receiving end of Axar's onslaught. After dispatching him for a six over long-on, Axar targeted the same area again and got lucky as Suryakumar Yadav missed the catch completely and got hit above his eye with the ball going all the way.

Mumbai put the brakes on the scoring rate by picking four wickets in the 19th over bowled by Behrendorff (3/23).

BRIEF SCORES

DC 172 (Axar Patel 54, David Warner 51, Manish Pandey 26; Piyush Chawla 3/22, Jason Behrendorff 3/23) vs MI 173/4 (Rohit Sharma 65, Tilak Verma 41, Ishan Kishan 31; Mukesh Kumar 2/30) by 6 wickets.



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Chennai, April 11: The in-form dynamic opening Rajasthan Royals pair of Jos Buttler and Yashasvi Jaiswal will face a quality 'Spin Test' on a tricky Chepauk pitch when they lock horns with some world-class short-format tweekers in the Chennai Super Kings line-up in an IPL match here Wednesday.

The England white-ball skipper and his young Indian partner have both scored a couple of half-centuries each and that too at healthy strike-rates - 180.95 for Buttler and 164.47 for Jaiswal.

But in the three games that Royals have played so far, two were in Guwahati, which was the flattest batting deck amongst all the venues. The Hyderabad track was also loaded heavily in favour of batters.

And, suddenly, they come to Chennai where the ball can grip and also get slower as the match progresses. The toss is always an important factor in Chennai as chasing anything above 170 to 175 could be a risky proposition.

Especially when Moeen Ali, Ravindra Jadeja and Mitchell Santner are operating at the Chepauk and might bowl 10, if not 12, overs between them. Matches can be won and lost there. The three seasoned CSK cam-

CHEPAUK TEST AWAITS ROYALS



aigners have taken 11 wickets between them in three games but, more importantly, their economy rate has been very impressive.

Moeen has bowled at an economy rate of 6.50 in two games while Jadeja (6.88) and Santner (6.75) have also gone for less than seven runs per over.

Moeen missed the last game due to food poisoning and is expected to play the game in place of Sisanda Magala, while Dwaine Pretorius will fill in as an all-rounder in case Ben Stokes is not fit.

But by no means Royals' spinners could be taken lightly as the wily 'Cricketer Scientist' Ravichandran Ashwin has played all his cricket at this very ground and the intelligent Yuzvendra Chahal can outfox any batter on a given day. Add the other Tamil Nadu spinner Murugan Ashwin in the mix and CSK will also have their own set of challenges.

However, CSK will be missing Deepak Chahar, who is expected to be out of the tournament due to recurrence of a left hamstring



injury. Whether Dhoni prefers the erratic but pacy Rajvardhan Hangargekar or the incisive Simarjeet Singh will be a big question.

On the batting front, the vastly experienced Ajinkya Rahane showed he too could score quickly on his CSK debut as the team turned in a strong performance with spinners Jadeja and Santner doing a fine job.

Add the good run of Ruturaj Gaikwad at the top of the order and CSK do have a formidable batting line-up. But they would be up against an equally well-endowed Royals team.

It promises to be an interesting battle on the morrow with the two sides boasting of a strong batting unit, and the onus would be on the bowlers to seize the moment.

In skipper Sanju Samson and Shimron Hetmyer, the Royals have batters who can play big shots and boost the score. The pace unit comprising Trent Boult and Jason Holder looks better than CSK's on paper but how the respective attacks fare on the given day could determine the game's outcome.

The wicket at the MA Chidambaram stadium offered bounce in the game against Lucknow Super Giants and it remains to be seen if similar conditions are on offer. Nevertheless, an interesting battle is in store.

BCCI to upgrade stadiums ahead of World Cup '23

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, April 11: The BCCI is planning a massive renovation with an estimated cost of over Rs 500 crore of at least five major stadiums in India ahead of the ODI World Cup in October-November.

The game has attracted huge money over the past 10 years, making BCCI, the richest board in the world, richer. However, the stoic fan, who has made the game what it has become, is often deprived of basic facilities at most venues around the country.

During the India-Australia Test series in February-March, fans had vented their ire over the lack of clean toilets at the Arun Jaitley Stadium in Delhi. It is not surprising that Delhi is among the five venues which underwent a gap assessment from the BCCI.

A gap assessment outlines the existing gaps between the current and ideal future state of an organization. As per the list accessed by PTI, the other venues are Hyderabad, Kolkata, Mohali and Mumbai.

The Wankhede in Mumbai had undergone renovation before the India-Australia ODIs last month after a fan complained of poor sanitary conditions at the famous stadium.

The projected cost of renovation at the five venues runs into hundreds of crores. Even if one doesn't factor the cost of roof renovation, which is not a possibility at least in Delhi due to structural flaws at the venue, the costs are huge.

It will cost Rs 100 crore to re-amp the Delhi stadium, Rs 117.17 crore for Hyderabad, Rs 127.47 crore for the iconic Eden Gardens at Kolkata, Rs 79.46 crore for the ageing PCA stadium in Mohali and Rs 78.82 crore for Wankhede. The costs increase drastically if roof work is involved.

Twelve venues have been short-listed to host World Cup games and they include Bangalore, Chennai, Delhi, Dharamsala, Guwahati, Hyderabad, Kolkata, Lucknow, Indore, Rajkot, Mumbai and Ahmedabad, the likely venue for the final.

A total of 48 games will be played in the 46-day ICC event. India last hosted the ODI World Cup in 2011 when the MS Dhoni-led team lifted the trophy.

Chennai, Kolkata likely to host Pak games



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, April 11: The Pakistan cricket team would prefer playing bulk of its 2023 ODI World Cup matches in Chennai and Kolkata - the two venues where the team has felt safe during its earlier tours, according to ICC sources.

The World Cup will start tentatively October 5, with 46 matches, including the final set to be played across 12 Indian cities, including Ahmedabad, Lucknow, Mumbai, Rajkot, Bangalore, Delhi, Indore, Guwahati and Hyderabad, Dharamsala.

It is understood that discussions are currently on at the ICC level as Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) bigwigs are in talks with a top level ICC executive on the issue, which still remains a sensitive one.

"A lot will depend on what BCCI and the Indian government decide but given a choice, Pakistan will like to play most of its World Cup matches in Kolkata and Chennai. "In Kolkata, Pakistan played its



T20 World Cup game against India in 2016 and the players were very happy with the security. Similarly, Chennai as a venue remains memorable for Pakistan. It's also about feeling safe at specific venues," a source close to ICC Board, tracking developments, told PTI on conditions of anonymity.

The bone of contention will be the India versus Pakistan game. While Ahmedabad with 1,32,000 capacity gives ICC, the best chance to earn optimum profits but the Narendra Modi Stadium is already hosting the final, so another venue might host the game. Each team will play nine games at the league stage which will be held in round-robin format.

The ICC's Events committee, in association with host cricket board BCCI, will chalk out the final itinerary in the next few months so that it allows fans across India and other parts to plan their travel itinerary. Recently, ICC General Manager Wasim Khan, in his own capacity had told Pakistani media that the team could play its matches in Bangladesh as a part of a 'hybrid model' that could be followed since the Indian team is not travelling to the country for the Asia Cup.

But PCB chairman Najam Sethi, back then had rubbished the idea of playing World Cup games in Bangladesh. More so, ICC had made it clear that no such proposal had come from Pakistan about a 'hybrid' global tournaments.

Barcelona held at home by Girona in Spanish league tie

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Madrid, April 11: Barcelona failed to rebound from their humiliating loss to Real Madrid in the Copa del Rey semifinals and was held to a 0-0 home draw with Girona in the Spanish league Monday.

The result still allowed Barcelona to increase their lead over second-place Madrid to 13 points with 10 matches remaining. Madrid lost 2-3 to Villarreal at home Saturday.

Barcelona lost 0-4 to Madrid at the Camp Nou last week. It was the first time Barcelona had lost to Madrid at home by four goals since 1963 and they hoped to rebound in the team's rare Monday game.

Barca finished with 18 shots in total, but only three were on target.

Zverev, Dimitrov advance at Monte Carlo Masters

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Monaco, April 11: Alexander Zverev started his clay-court season with a 3-6, 6-2, 6-4 win over Alexander Bublik to reach the second round at the Monte Carlo Masters Tuesday.

The 13th-seeded German was playing on clay for the first time since a right ankle injury forced him to retire in the French Open semifinals against Rafael Nadal last year.

Zverev said he needed to "get the injury out of my head" and get used to sliding again. "It felt awful at times to be honest, but he made me feel awful," Zverev said. "Tactically he played well, he didn't let me play my game at all. He didn't let me have my rhythm and he almost won the match, just a



Alexander Zverev



Grigor Dimitrov

few points here and there." Still, Zverev limited his unforced errors to nine and hit 21 winners on Court Rainier III to set up a match against Spaniard Roberto

Bautista Agut in the next round. Two-time semifinalist Grigor Dimitrov also advanced by beating American Ben Shelton 6-1, 3-6, 6-3. The 20-year-old Shelton made

his debut at Monte Carlo and did not disappoint, testing Dimitrov in a tense contest that lasted more than two hours.

"It is one of those matches that

I did the right thing by playing slow: Rahul

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bangalore, April 11: On a day when Lucknow Super Giants' Nicholas Pooran smashed the second-fastest IPL half-century, his captain KL Rahul defended his inexplicable 20-ball-18 stating that he "has done the right thing".

The West Indian left-hand batter's 19-ball 62 - and his 15-ball half century - played a pivotal role in LSG chasing down a stiff RCB's 212-run total on the last ball at the Chinnaswamy Stadium Monday night.

However, the innings played by Rahul - who has often been criticised for his unflattering strike rate in T20 cricket and was included in the 2022 World Cup squad despite criticism - stood in stark contrast to the West Indian's hell for leather effort.

But Rahul, who lost his Test vice-captaincy midway through the Border-Gavaskar series, recently due to poor form, said post-match that losing wickets in a heap forced him to go slow.

"If I score more runs, the strike rate will go up. I looked at the situation and I feel I had done the right thing. Hopefully, with a couple of good knocks the strike rate will go up," Rahul said, following LSG's one-wicket win.

Rahul, in the 72 T20Is he has played has scored 2,265 runs at a strike rate of 139.12, and his overall strike rate in the shortest format is just 136.93. His strike-rate is



more about making it up towards the end.

In the end, Rahul's stay at the crease only added to the pressure on the likes of Pooran and Ayush Badoni to accelerate the run-rate. In fact, Marcus Stoinis, who came in at No.5, was left with little choice but to go for the big hits from the word go, smashing a 30-ball 65 to infuse some life into the innings.

Rahul, who has played most of his cricket in formative years at the Chinnaswamy Stadium, said, "From the position we were in, we were chasing 210-plus and we knew we had to go hard and attack. But, sometimes, when you do that you lose wickets. Unbelievable, I mean it's the Chinnaswamy. I've grown up here and I think it's the stadium with most last-ball finishes.

"They (RCB) bowled well in the powerplay, they swung it well. But the way Stoinis and Pooran played, if we have two points today it's because of them."