

Atiq's son, aide killed in UP police encounter



ambulance later took them away.

STF officials said Asad and Ghulam were on the run since the murder of Umesh Pal February 24. Several STF teams were pressed to track them down.

Thursday, they were trying to flee on a motorcycle when they were intercepted by an STF team in Jhansi, the officials said, adding they opened fire on the personnel and were killed in retaliatory firing.

Umesh Pal, a key witness in the 2005 murder case of then BSP MLA Raju Pal, and his two police security guards were shot dead outside his home in Prayagraj's Dhoomanganj area February 24 this year.

His wife Jaya Pal had filed a case on February 25 against Atiq Ahmad, his brother Ashraf, Asad, Ghulam and others.

Reacting on the news of encounter, Umesh Pal's family thanked Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath and the police administration.

"Whatever they have done is right. He (the CM) has punished the killer of his daughter's husband. I express my gratitude. He is like a father. Justice has been done," Jaya told the media, adding she hoped strict action would be taken against other accused.

Deputy Chief Minister Keshav Prasad Maurya congratulated the Uttar Pradesh Police and the STF for the action. "Nobody will touch you if you don't commit a crime. And nobody will be spared if they commit a crime," he told PTI.

Boat capsizes: Four missing

POST NEWS NETWORK

Koraput, April 13: At least four persons including three women and a kid went missing after a country boat capsized in Kolab reservoir near Podagad ghat under

Semiliguda police limits in Koraput district, Thursday.

They were identified as Sabitri Kirsani, Rama Kirsani, Babita Hantal and the child. The boat capsized after it lost its balance.

Fire personnel from Semiliguda

and Koraput launched a search operation. They rescued four persons from the reservoir and launched a search for the four missing ones.

The rescued persons were admitted to a local hospital where their condition was stated to be

stable after treatment.

The missing persons were yet to be traced when the last reports came in.

The mishap occurred when the boat carrying eight persons was on its way to Podagada.

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THOUGHT OF CLIMATE CHANGE MAKES ELLIE GOULDING ANGRY

Singer-songwriter Ellie Goulding feels 'angry' at the thought of climate change and wants to change her concerts to better impact the environment. The 36-year-old, who used to cringe at the thought of writing about environmental views, is now inspired to do the same, reports [femalefirst.co.uk](#).

KATIE RECALLS HER FIRM REFUSE TO BE SEXUALISED

Katie Holmes 'didn't want to be sexy' as a young star. When she played Joey Potter in *Dawson's Creek*, the 44-year-old actress admitted that she would have someone make sure that she wasn't too sexualised in publicity shoots because she 'just wanted to be an actor', reports [aceshowbiz.com](#).



FORTUNE FORECAST

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ARIES
Logic and reasoning will hold court, while creativity takes a backseat today. There are challenges at work, but you are a dynamo and will meet them upfront. All tensions will be relieved by the loving touch of your near and dear. Such is life, sums up Ganesha.

TAURUS
Today, you will strike a great balance between your professional and personal life, predicts Ganesha. You will save your money from being swindled by others. You may be lagging in the race to catch up with your goals, but will not be disappointed by what you achieve.

GEMINI
Today, you will have a tendency to remain possessive about your personal belongings, says Ganesha. You are likely to join personality development courses to achieve your ultimate goals. An unpleasant occurrence is likely to throw you off guard. But remember, there is hope when there is life.

CANCER
You may have a way with words, but women somehow always have their way with you. Your problem is that while you may use your words to pull some strings, the master puppeteer, in most cases, will be a woman.

LEO
You may not have a halo around your head, but that most certainly does not deter you from playing the spiritual card today, says Ganesha. On this auspicious day, it is through religious scriptures that you satiate your desire to attain the intangible. Spend some time meditating on the finer aspects of life; you will be amazed at the answers such contemplation can throw up.

VIRGO
Today, your ingenuity will breed ideas like rabbits. You have the healer's hands, and so shall you make right many a wrong, predicts Ganesha. You shall be most understanding, and reading people's mind will do wonders for you and your beloved.

LIBRA
A wistful day lies ahead of you, says Ganesha. This day, just like 'on the summer day that we flew kites', may be the standard when it comes to wanting to have a better future. Ganesha expects a sea of change in your outlook, thanks to your sweetheart's noble gesture today.

SCORPIO
Dear friends and soul mates will bring you much relief and calm today, says Ganesha. Spend as much time as possible with them. Romantic escapades with your beloved will be heaven in itself. Blood relations will stand true and strong in matters of importance, says Ganesha.

SAGITTARIUS
Tempers will fly today, warns Ganesha. Rein in your anger by the leash of control and restraint. But the buck will stop somewhere! When it does, dig your feet in and battle the crunch situation, advises Ganesha.

CAPRICORN
Your outstanding intellectual ability will not only yield exciting results for you, but will also help your close associates who will have progressed a great deal in their career because of your valuable advice, says Ganesha. Scores of problems may come your way, but you will have nothing to worry about.

AQUARIUS
Your communication skills will work wonders today. Your eloquence will win you precious brownie points, and may prove highly beneficial in meetings. In fact, all your arguments will sound very persuasive. The trick is not to get ruffled, says Ganesha, when people don't agree with you.

PISCES
An auspicious time for starting new projects, today will see you make substantial investments in your future. Your family is the foundation of your success, and keeping that in mind will provide you with some vital insights.

Shruti gives it back to trolls

Mumbai: Shruti Haasan recently hit the headlines after she made a statement requesting filmmakers to show women in a more realistic way. Talking about her dance track in *Waltair Veerayya*, the actress said she faced challenges to dance in the snow while being simply dressed in a saree and blouse. However, her statement hit the headlines for all the wrong reasons. Shruti has reacted to the same saying her statements were taken out of context and people shouldn't try adding two and two and jump to conclusions. Responding to her criticism, she said, "I have always spoken about my experiences and given my opinion about my life. As much I love the free sharing of opinions on social and mainstream media, it is really hilarious to me that something like this which many artists, including myself, have spoken about before would be so blown out of proportion today. These instances are uncalled for and I'm the kind of a person who jokes around, speaks about relevant matters in a lighter vein and some troublemakers aren't going to change that."

Trouble makers are not going to change my personality."
AGENCIES



Our industry is too superficial: Aahana

Mumbai: Aahana Kumra becomes the latest celebrity on the list to talk about the campism in the Hindi film industry. In her recent interview, the actress also discussed how she went two years without a job because she wasn't a member of any camp. Aahana opened up to a news portal and said, "I didn't get any work for the last two years. I was not being approached for roles. In the industry, I have noticed that actors who hang out with a certain set of people get hired again and again. I am not part of any of that circle. So if you ask me, does it affect me? I'd say yes, it does." She also added, "I don't go to parties or award shows. Our industry is too superficial. It also bothers me that people have made such a circus out of this business. It cannot be so unreal. For me, my camp is my close friends and my college friends. When I work with my colleagues, we finish our work, have a good time, and go back to our homes." The actress will soon be seen in *Cancer*, starring alongside Sharib Hashmi.



Sunny's Kennedy going to Cannes

Mumbai: Actress Sunny Leone's next project, *Kennedy*, an Anurag Kashyap directorial, has been selected for the Cannes Film Festival. The film's shooting started last year and wrapped up by January of this year. Last year, the *Jism 2* actress took to social media to share that she was collaborating with filmmaker Anurag Kashyap on a film for the first time. Needless to say, it generated a generous buzz among the audience to see what this actor-director combination brings to the table. Throughout the shooting of the film, the actress remained tight-lipped. She also shocked the public when she revealed that it was one of only two auditions that she had given in an acting career spanning a little more than a decade. She revealed, "I believe I did well in the first one, but the commercials and the business side of it didn't gel up, and I ended up not doing that film. This was the other one where Anurag called and said, 'I want you to audition for this part.'" Nevertheless, the film has turned out to be a huge success with critics, and she felt like she was on cloud nine for the same reason.



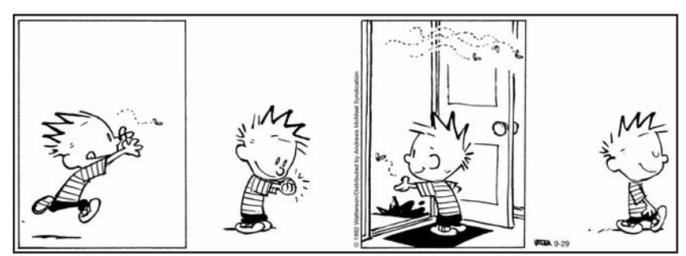
Malaika eyes a remarriage

Mumbai: Actress and fitness enthusiast Malaika Arora has recently opened up about her thoughts on love and the possibility of getting married again. The actress, who has been in a relationship with actor Arjun Kapoor for over two years now, spoke candidly about her views on love and relationships in a recent interview. On being asked if she would marry again, she responded, "Of course, I have thought about it. People think that I might be cynical about getting married again, but that's far from true. I believe in the institution; I believe in love and companionship. I can't answer when I will get married again because I believe in leaving some aspects of one's life as a surprise and not planning too much." She also shared her thoughts on the perfect relationship and said, "I believe that we romanticise the whole idea of love because, growing up, that is what we have seen in films or read in books. I am a realist and I know that there's no such thing as the 'perfect' relationship—you need to work on it. If you are able to connect with someone and be yourself, then that relationship is worth staying in."

PEANUTS



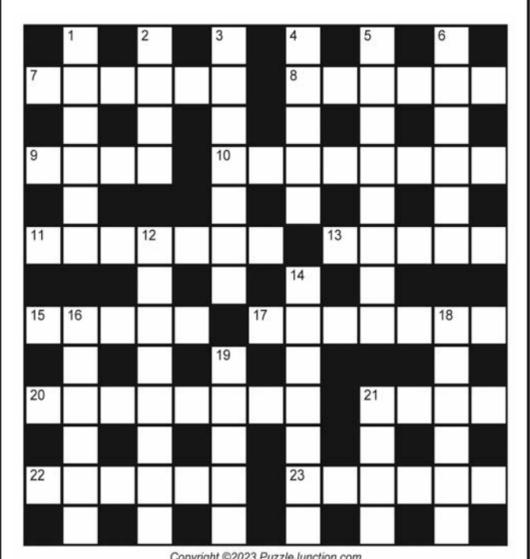
CALVIN AND HOBBS



BREVITY



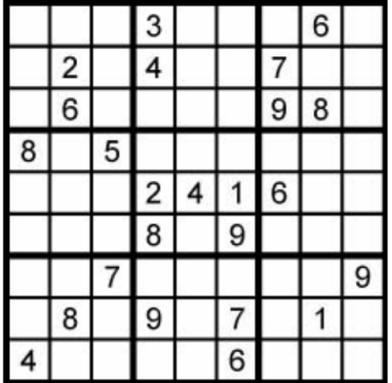
FUN post CROSSWORD



- Across**
- 7 Brazilian port
 - 8 Flag or banner
 - 9 Very dry, as wine
 - 10 Extroverted
 - 11 Template, of sorts
 - 13 Air freshener option
 - 15 Blacksmith's block
 - 17 Mountain sheep
 - 20 Thick dark syrup
 - 21 Delicate fabric
 - 22 Platitude
 - 23 Smooth, in music
- Down**
- 1 Clandestine
 - 2 Help for the stumped
 - 3 Type of exercise
 - 4 Breakwater
 - 5 Fill with wonder
 - 6 Schedule
 - 12 Irritation
 - 14 Minced meat dish
 - 16 Lonely pasta piece?
 - 18 Enumerate
 - 19 Michaelmas daisy
 - 21 Racing sled

SUDOKU

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



SOLUTIONS



CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW



YOUTUBER IN SOUP

Forest officials arrest YouTuber over a video of his pet parrot posted on YouTube

STATE P5



CHINA REVISES RULES

China releases new set of revised rules for military recruitment in wartime, including giving priority to veterans

INTERNATIONAL P10



AMAN CLINCHES GOLD

Aman Sehrawat claims India's first gold medal at the Asian Wrestling Championships

SPORTS P12

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BHUBANESWAR | FRIDAY, APRIL 14 | 2023

P3

FEMA case filed against BBC India

AGENCIES

New Delhi, April 13: The Enforcement Directorate has registered a FEMA case against news broadcaster BBC India for alleged foreign exchange violations, official sources said Thursday, two months after the Income-Tax department surveyed its office premises in February.

A deputy managing editor of the news company has deposed before the agency.

The ED has called for documents and the recording of statements of some company executives under provisions of the Foreign Exchange Management Act (FEMA), the officials said. The probe is essentially looking at purported foreign direct investment (FDI) violations by the company, they said.

February 14 this year, the I-T department conducted survey operations at the London-headquartered broadcaster's offices in Delhi and Mumbai as part of an investigation into alleged tax evasion. The survey went on for three days.

The action had led to a sharp political debate with the ruling BJP accusing the BBC of 'venomous reporting' while the Opposition questioned the timing - weeks after the broadcaster aired a two-part documentary, 'India: The Modi Question'.

IRREGULAR by MANJUL



They are adulterating our milk with Gujarat's milk

MARKET WATCH	
INDEX	VARIATION
SENSEX	60431.00 ↑ 38.23
NIFTY	17828.00 ↑ 15.60
DOLLAR	81.67 ↓ ₹0.29
EURO	90.27 ↑ ₹0.24
GOLD	₹61,030 ↑ ₹402
SILVER	₹76,495 ↑ ₹582

WEATHER		
	BHUB	CTK
TEMP MAX	40.8°C	41.4°C
TEMP MIN	24.9°C	24.5°C
Humidity	67%	69%
Rainfall	Nil	Nil
Forecast	Dry weather very likely	



JUBILANT MOOD: Students perform 'Bhangra' during celebrations of Baisakhi festival, at a wheat field on the outskirts of Amritsar, Thursday

PTI PHOTO

Mercury may go up by 2°Celsius

PNN & AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, April 13: There seems to be no immediate respite from the scorching sun as the India Meteorological Department (IMD) Thursday warned that the sweltering heatwave is likely to intensify over some parts of the state from April 14 to 8:30am of April 16.

Due to prevailing northwesterly westerly dry air and high solar insolation maximum daytime temperature is very likely to rise further by 2° Celsius during next two days at many places of Odisha and no large change is predicted thereafter, said the IMD in its latest bulletin.

The maximum temperature (day temperature) is expected to be more than 40°C while Jharsuguda, Baripada, Sambalpur, Boudh, Talcher, Bolangir, Titilagarh, Angul, Bhadrak, Sundargarh, Hirakud, Rourkela and Chandbali may witness 3 to 5° Celsius above normal temperature.

People belonging to these areas have been advised by the weatherman to take precautionary measures while going outside during the daytime - between 11am and 3pm. This apart, farmers have been advised to continue irrigation activities in sugarcane, summer maize, pulses and other crop and vegetable fields.



Net shutdown in Sambalpur

POLICE SEIZE PETROL BOMBS; 40 PLATOONS DEPLOYED TO MAINTAIN PEACE

POST NEWS NETWORK

Sambalpur/Jeypore, April 13: Internet services have been suspended for 48 hours in violence-hit Sambalpur, while Section 144 has been imposed in Jeypore, though with some relaxations, as a precautionary measure on the eve of Hanuman Jayanti, Thursday.

The state government suspended internet services in Sambalpur district from 10am, Thursday to check the spread of rumours which could incite fresh rioting after a Hanuman Jayanti procession a day before had turned violent.

Some 43 persons have been detained so far for the violence which broke out Wednesday which also resulted in injuries to at least 10 police personnel including a policeman. However, the number of civilians injured in the incident is yet to be made public.

"The situation is critical and miscreants are circulating false and inflammatory messages through social media to disturb public order in Sambalpur district," the notification issued by Additional Chief Secretary, Home Department, DK Singh, prohibiting internet use and access in



Collector Ananya Das (right), DIG (North) Brijesh Kumar Rai (middle), SP B Gangadhar (left) participate in a flag march in Sambalpur town, Thursday

OP PHOTO

Sambalpur, said.

The administration clamped prohibitory order under section 144 CrPC in areas coming under six police stations - Town, Dhanupali, Khetrarajpur, Ainthapali, Bareipali and Sadar - in Sambalpur city.

Singh said internet was suspended to prevent circulation of 'inflammatory and motivated messages', which have the 'potential to inflame communal passion'.

Sambalpur SP B Gangadhar said that 43 people have been detained

and 26 people have so far booked under different sections of the IPC.

The SP said 40 platoons of police force have been deployed in the area to stall any further attempts to create trouble.

The SP said the police have seized petrol bombs from some people.

Meanwhile, Collector Ananya Das and SP B Gangadhar attended a peace committee meeting and sought the cooperation of all for the peaceful conduct of the Hanuman Jayanti procession in the town.

The Hanuman Jayanti coordination committee did not attend the peace committee meeting in protest.

In the wake of the Sambalpur violence, the Koraput district administration clamped Section 144, though with some relaxations, in Jeypore Sub-Division in view of possible breach of peace. The restrictions are in force from 3pm Thursday and will continue till 9am, April 20.

MORE P4

Opposition unity gathers steam

AGENCIES

New Delhi, April 13: Efforts to cement Opposition unity gathered pace Thursday with Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge meeting NCP chief Sharad Pawar and Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar holding talks with Left veterans Sitaram Yechury and D Raja.

The BJP, however, took a dig at Kumar's outreach saying 'the PM post for 2024 is not vacant'.

As part of the efforts to bring several Opposition parties together on a common platform to defeat the BJP in 2024 Lok Sabha polls, Pawar met Kharge, where Rahul Gandhi was also present and pledged to take forward the process of Opposition unity.

"We have decided to unite together and fight and we will talk to all the parties one after the other. Yesterday we met two parties with Congress and today Pawar sahib has come and we have decided that we will meet everyone, talk to them and move forward unitedly," Kharge told reporters.

"I want that we should all work together in the nation's interest and

this is what Pawar sahib wants and said that all the like-minded parties should work together in national interest," he also said.

Pawar said all the parties have the same thinking, "but, mere thinking will not help and efforts should be made for unity."

Rahul Gandhi said, "What Kharge ji and Pawar ji have said is that this process of uniting the opposition has started. This is a beginning and all parties are committed towards this process."

Earlier, Kumar met Yechury and Raja and then left the national capital. He also held a meeting with Aam Aadmi Party's national convener and Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal, besides with Congress leaders.

Union minister Giriraj Singh took a dig at Kumar, saying "the PM post for 2024 is not vacant".

"Everyone wants to become the Prime Minister. People should know that the Prime Minister's post for 2024 is not vacant," he said while addressing a gathering at an event here.

The Bihar CM and his deputy Tejashwi Yadav had Wednesday met Kharge and Rahul Gandhi.

Three debutants in fray Museum offers \$25K for meteorite hunters

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, April 13: The Chief Electoral Officer (CEO), Odisha Nikunja Bihari Dhal issued formal notification for byelection to Jharsuguda Assembly seat, Thursday.

The seat of Naba Kishore Das, in the Legislative Assembly of Odisha, elected from 07-Jharsuguda Assembly Constituency

has fallen vacant on January 30, 2023 due to his sudden demise. The byelection is to be held for the purpose of filling the said vacancy, read the notification.

Byelection to the Assembly constituency will be held May 10 while the result will be declared May 13.

All three major parties in Odisha

- BJD, BJP and Congress - have named debutants as candidates for the bypoll.

The ruling Biju Janata Dal (BJD) was the first party to announce its candidate for the by-poll. The BJD has nominated slain Minister and late MLA Naba Kishore Das' daughter Dipali for the crucial byelection.

JHARSUGUDA BYPOLL

The Congress has nominated Tarun Pandey, son of ex-MLA of the area, Birendra Pandey, as its candidate for the byelection.

Similarly, the BJP has nominated its young leader Tankadhar Tripathy for the byelection. Tankadhar, a former state president of BJP Yuva Morcha, has been campaigning in the area follow-

ing the murder of Naba Das.

Dipali and Tripathy have already begun campaigning in the Assembly segment following the demise of Naba Das.

BJD sources said Dipali's candidature is aimed at drawing sympathy votes. Eyeing for a good margin win, the BJD has appointed three very senior leaders and a dozen of other leaders including ministers as observers for the bypoll. The party has prepared a strategy to reach each and every voter of the constituency ahead of the voting day.

The murder of Naba Kisore and failure of the state Crime Branch in establishing the motive behind his killing is likely to act as the main poll plank for the Opposition BJP to counter the ruling BJD in the Jharsuguda bypoll.

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Portland (Maine), April 13: Somewhere in a remote stretch of forest near Maine's border with Canada, rocks from space crashed to Earth and may be scattered across the ground - just waiting to be picked up. A museum says it'll pay out a \$25,000 reward to whoever finds the remains.

The unusually bright fireball could be seen in broad daylight around noon Saturday, said Darryl Pitt, chair of the meteorite division at the Maine Mineral and Gem Museum in Bethel.

NASA said the falling meteors was observed on radar - a first for Maine - and witnesses heard sonic booms. The museum wants to add to its collection of Moon and Mars rocks, Pitt said, so the first meteorite hunters to deliver a 1-kg specimen will claim the \$25,000 prize.

SPACE RACE

NASA satellites, weather radar, and the internet have changed meteorite hunting forever



Enthusiasts and entrepreneurs now have unprecedented access to technology that can tell them just where to go looking for rocks

This is a shift from relying on word of mouth, putting up flyers, and catching local news stories to learn about falls

According to Pitt, the fact that radar detected the fiery descent assures the meteorites can be found on the ground.

"With more people having an awareness, the more people will

look - and the greater the likelihood of a recovery," Pitt said Wednesday.

Still, there's no guarantee there are any meteorites big enough to claim the payout.

NASA said on its website that the "meteorite masses calculated from the radar signatures range from 1.50g to 322g although larger masses may have fallen."

NASA said four radar sweeps found "signatures consistent with falling meteorites, seen at the time and location reported by eyewitnesses." The Maine Mineral and Gem Museum maintains an extensive collection of specimens, including the largest intact Mars rock on Earth.

The museum is asking meteorite hunters to brush up on what meteorites look like before searching, so they know what they're looking for, and avoid private property unless they have permission.

Pitt said the museum is also looking to purchase any other specimens found by meteorite hunters. He said the specimens "could easily be worth their weight in gold."



PLATINUM JUBILEE EXPO: Information and Public Relations Minister Pradipto Kumar Amat along with other dignitaries browsing through a photo exhibition on 75th Capital Foundation Day organised at Soochana Bhawan in Bhubaneswar, Thursday

State braces to combat heat

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, April 13: The state government Thursday decided to implement several measures including reduction of working hours for manual labourers to combat the prevailing heatwave conditions in the state.

This was revealed during a review meeting on heatwave conditions chaired by Revenue and Disaster Management Minister Pramila Mallik Thursday.

Special Relief Commissioner and Additional Chief Secretary Satyabrata Sahu, principal secretaries of various departments, India Meteorological Department (IMD) regional director and other senior officers were present in the meeting in which various directives were issued to combat the heatwave situation.

Jal Chhatras (water kiosks) have been opened at strategic locations like market places, bus stands and crowded places in rural and urban areas. Arrangement for supply of drinking water through tanker has been made in water scarce areas. Panchayati Raj & Drinking Water department has been directed to immediately start preventive maintenance of tube wells and piped water supply systems, if not already taken up.

The meeting also revealed that sufficient life saving medicines, saline and ORS packets have been



- Sufficient life saving medicines, saline and ORS packets have been stocked in dispensaries, primary health centres, community health centres and subdivision or district headquarters hospitals to meet any exigencies
- Separate wards and beds have been earmarked for treatment of heat stroke patients in hospitals
- It has been directed to reschedule timings of public transport services during severe heatwave condition in order to avoid the peak hours of the wave

stocked in dispensaries, primary health centres, community health centres and subdivision or district headquarters hospitals to meet any exigencies.

Besides, separate wards and beds have been earmarked for treatment of heat stroke patients in hospitals. It has been directed to reschedule timings of public transport services during severe heatwave condition in order to avoid the peak hours of the wave. Necessary steps have been taken for providing uninterrupted power supply. Fisheries & Animal Resources Development department has been directed to make provision for construction/repair of shallow vats for stray

animals and roaming livestock.

Various community awareness activities in association with local communities, Vana Surakhya Samitis, Panchayati Raj Institutions and self-help groups have been instructed to combat forest fire and protect the wild animals during heatwave situation.

Keeping in view the intense heatwave condition, the working hours for labourers have been reduced and there will be no work between 11am and 3pm. The state government has already shut all government and private schools and Anganwadi centres till April 16. Morning office (from 7am to 1pm) has been in effect since April 10.

Harischandra Yojana aid hiked by ₹1,000

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, April 13: Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik Thursday enhanced the assistance being provided to perform last rites under Harischandra Sahayata Yojana.

Under the scheme, ₹2,000 is being provided for the beneficiaries in rural areas and ₹3,000 in urban areas.

Now, the assistance has been hiked from ₹2,000 to ₹3,000 for rural areas and from ₹3,000 to ₹4,000 for urban and Puri Swarga Dwar.

To facilitate it, the state government has constituted a revolving fund of ₹15,000 in each gram panchayat.

It is worth mentioning that Harischandra Yojana expenses are being met from the Chief Minister's Relief Fund (CMRF). So, in total, ₹10.19 crore has been sanctioned from the CMRF for the revolving fund of all panchayats across the state.

Gram panchayat extension officer or any other block-level extension officer has been given the responsibility to supervise this new process.

BJP for probe by high-level panel

SAMBALPUR VIOLENCE

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Bhubaneswar, April 13: Odisha BJP president Manmohan Samal Thursday urged the state government to form a high-level panel to probe the communal violence that erupted in Sambalpur Wednesday evening.

"A motorcycle rally taken out to mark Hanuman Jayanti celebrations in Sambalpur town was going on peacefully Wednesday evening. However, the manner in which some anti-social elements pelted stones, attacked people with swords, hit them with lathis, and burnt their vehicles was very painful and condemnable," Samal said in a press statement here.

More than 10 policemen and those who took part in the rally were injured in the incident.

"Who is disturbing peace-loving Odisha and why the state government is tight-lipped is a big question," Samal said.

"Though a day has passed since the incident, why is the Chief Minister, who also holds the home portfolio, silent?" the



BJP leader questioned.

Though a few policemen were deployed for the rally, they remained silent spectators during the violence, the BJP leader alleged.

Samal also asked whether there is pressure on the police not to arrest the rioters from the ruling party.

The state BJP chief also said that if Odisha police are incapable, the state government should immediately request the Union government to deploy central forces.

Similarly, senior BJP leader and Union minister Dharmendra Pradhan alleged that the law and order situation has completely collapsed in Odisha.

"Police personnel getting injured in a clash is a classic case of deterioration in the law and order

situation in the state," he said, adding that the Odisha government has failed to maintain law and order in Sambalpur, a city where Hanuman Jayanti celebrations are being held for a long time.

Not only the police, several civilians were also attacked and left injured in the incident, Pradhan said.

Reacting to Pradhan's statement, BJD spokesperson Shreemayee Mishra said, "The law and order situation is worse in the BJP-ruled states like Uttar Pradesh, Karnataka, Maharashtra and even in Madhya Pradesh from where Pradhan has been elected to the Rajya Sabha."

Such incidents are sensitive matters and should be dealt with restraint rather than by politicising them, Mishra said.

71K appointment letters distributed at Rozgar Mela

Bhubaneswar: PM Narendra Modi virtually distributed about 71,000 appointment letters to the newly inducted recruits in events held at 45 different locations across the country April 13, 2023. Union Minister Dharmendra Pradhan handed over appointment letters to 231 new recruits while another central minister Bishweswar Tudu distributed 183 appointment letters to the new recruits at Cuttack.

CLASSIFIED LOST

It is hereby informed that original sale deed bearing No. - 10391001145 dt.10.02.2010 in favour of Laxmandas Agarwal and sale deed No. 535, dt.04.01.2008 in favour of Laxmandas Agarwal has been lost by me on dt.09.04.2023. My document has lost at Jholasahi while going to Court and request the public to handover the same and missuser will be prosecuted. Address for communication: Ananta Kumar Kanungo, Glass Palace, Badambadi, Cuttack-753012.

AFFIDAVIT

I, Suresh Kumar Jain, S/o Ratan Chand Jain, 605, Govind Prasad, Bomikhal, P.S.- Laxmisagar, P.O.- Rasulgah, Bhubaneswar-751010 (Khurda) declare by this affidavit that I shall be known as Suresh Jain for all future purpose.

Contractual teachers' services to regularise

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, April 13: The state government has decided to regularize the service of contractual high school teachers. The School and Mass Education department has issued an official notification in this regard. More than 18,000 (Group B) high school teachers will be benefited from the decision.

Earlier, School and Mass Education Minister Samir Ranjan Dash had informed that the state government is considering regularisation of contractual teachers in a way that won't create disparity among others engaged prior to enforcement of the contractual rules 2013.

Dash said the government is actively considering regularisation of contractual teachers, without causing any disparity in the appointment of others. Official sources said, the department may come up with regularisation order along with pay protection measures for others to ensure they don't lose seniority after regularisation of those engaged on the basis of contractual appointment rules of 2013.

Explosives seized from Konark Exp

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, April 13: Railway Protection Force (RPF) officials Thursday seized suspected explosives from the general coach of Konark Express (Train no.11019) at Bhubaneswar Railway station during the wee hours of Thursday.

Sources said the RPF has launched an investigation after registering a case in this regard under Sections of 153,164 and 147 of the Railways Act.

The cleaning staffers of Bhubaneswar Railway station heard some sound from the general coach of Konark Express parked at Platform No-2 of the station. Later, they rushed to the coach and found smoke billowing out of the coach.

Informed, ASI Sk A Salim of RPF entered the coach where he spotted some plastic cylinder type materials lying scattered on the upper berth of the said general coach.

The RPF during checking found eight Red Parachute Signal Rockets, 15 Rocket Parachute Flares and one Path Finder Sart from the coach.

"On preliminary enquiry it came to notice that these are used for long range distress signaling on ships, life boats and life rafts," said the RPF sources.

The sniffer dog squad also reached the spot and conformed after examination that recovered



The RPF found eight Red Parachute Signal Rockets, 15 Rocket Parachute Flares and one Path Finder Sart from the coach

materials are highly inflammable. "We have taken serious note of the recovery of the suspected explosive from the train. As per our recruitment, the bomb disposal squad of Odisha police will come tomorrow and dispose of the material. We have been checking the CCTV footage of different stations to ascertain the accused carrying the materials in the express train, said Srinibas Patnaik, IIC RPF, Bhubaneswar.

Khimji Jewellers' Akshaya Tertiya Sale till April 30

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, April 13: Leading jewellery brand Khimji Jewellers has introduced 'The Grand Akshaya Tertiya Sale' from April 8 to 30, providing discounts on its jewellery products to celebrate the festival of 'Akshaya Tertiya' - the day that marks the beginning of the Kharif season.



During the sale, Khimji Jewellers is offering a flat discount of ₹ 2,700 per 10 gram of HUID gold and flat 20 per cent off on the making charge on silver items. Besides, the offer allows the customers buying diamond to pay only 81 per cent of the diamond value.

This offer is available at all Khimji stores across Odisha.

Speaking to media, Khimji Jewellers director Mitesh Khimji said, "Buying gold on the auspicious Akshaya Tertiya is believed to bring good luck and fortune. With our 'The Grand Akshaya Tertiya Sale', we want to offer our customers the opportunity to take home happiness and prosperity by receiving the highest possible benefit from the brand. We are committed to delivering the finest of jewellery to all our valued customers in Odisha, and we will always maintain the brand's principles of trust and transparency in the future."

LAWYERS' AGITATION

10 Sohela Bar Association members say sorry to SC

POST NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi, April 13: At least 10 members of Sohela Bar Association in Bargarh district have tendered unconditional apology before the Supreme Court for their involvement in strikes and picketing which resulted in disruption of court work.

Advocates Surendra Nath Panda, Bikash Chandra Bhoi, Sushanta Kumar Panigrahi, Rudradash Meher, Chandrakanta Barik, Ashok Kumar Barik, Bhubaneswar Barik, Mirza Akbar Beig, Raj Kishore Mahapatra and Birendra Panda submitted an affidavit in the apex court tendering unconditional apology.

The advocates submitted that the apology may be treated as an 'unequivocal condemnation of assault on the justice delivery system' that was manifested through agitations and resultant disruption of the courts. The advocates also submitted an undertaking that they would never take part in any picketing or strikes in future and will facilitate the duties as dignified officers of the court.

Asserting that they never had any intention to disregard the majesty of the legal process, the advocates pleaded the apex court to accept their unconditional apology and undertake and drop the charges of the contempt proceedings initiated against them.

The Supreme Court will hear



the matter April 17.

Earlier, the Supreme Court had in February refused to consider the unconditional apology tendered by the advocates, allegedly involved in vandalism and strikes at district courts.

The SC had held that it is too early to consider these unconditional apologies and that it would watch if the apology is coming from heart or merely an attempt to escape contempt proceedings. Along with the apology, the apex court had also directed the advocates to submit an undertaking that they would not indulge in any such acts in future.

A two-judge bench of Justices SK Kaul and Manoj Misra, however, clarified that the top court has not prevented the consideration of the bail applications of the arrested advocates due to pendency of the present plea.

In January, the SC had issued contempt notices to 191 advocates for their alleged involvement in agitation, picketing and vandalism during the protests for new bench of Orissa High Court in western Odisha.

'Attach Rose Valley's assets worth ₹6cr'

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, April 13: The Odisha Protection of Interests of Depositors (OPID) court, Cuttack, has confirmed the ad-interim order issued by the state Finance department regarding attachment of movable and immovable assets worth over ₹6 crore belonging to M/s Rose Valley group in connection with a multi-crore chit fund scam.

The tainted group had allegedly collected more than ₹450 crore from gullible depositors across the state through various ponzi schemes.

The investors who were defrauded by the sham company had first filed a case (182/13) at Soro police station in Balasore May 10, 2013. Later, the Economic Offence Wing (EOW) of the state Crime Branch took up the probe registering a case (15/13) in this

regard a few days later.

The depositors had alleged in their complaint that Rose Valley Hotels and Entertainments illegally collected public money by promising high rate of interest even though they didn't have any permits from the regulatory authorities.

"The company was taking deposits camouflaging the same as advance payment for hotel booking under holiday package, while issuing provisional certificates. The Rose Valley group of companies, without any authorisation either from RBI or SEBI, was collecting public deposit under its different schemes with its 65 branches in Odisha alone," revealed EOW in a press note.

The EOW submitted five charge-sheets against M/s Rose Valley group of companies, its directors, Goutam Kundu and Sibamoya Dutta, regional, branch managers

Bikramjit Bhoumik and Badal Kumar Kar under various sections of the IPC, PCMCs (Banning) Act, 1978, and the OPID Act.

The agency also unearthed large sections of movable and immovable assets acquired by the company directors through the firm or in their name using money illegally collected from the depositors. Later, EOW had sent three ad-interim proposals to the state government for attachment of the ill-gotten properties of the Rose valley group.

Subsequently, the state Finance department issued ad-interim orders for the attachment of properties. Out of the three orders, the 1st and 2nd ad-interim proposals had been made absolute earlier by the Cuttack OPID Court attaching assets worth ₹5 crore.

Notably, Subrata Mohanty worked as the special public prosecutor in this case.

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YouTuber held over pet parrot's video

FOREST OFFICIALS SAID THAT THE BIRD IS AN ALEXANDRINE PARAKEET WHICH IS LISTED ON SCHEDULE-2 OF WILDLIFE PROTECTION ACT, 1972

POST NEWS NETWORK

Keonjhar, April 13: Forest officials Thursday arrested a youth from Bansapal block in Keonjhar district on charge of keeping an endangered parakeet as his pet after he uploaded a video of his pet parrot on YouTube.

The accused was identified as Chinmay Mohanta, 25, of Kumundi village under Bansapal block in the district. He was arrested by the Forest department on charges of violating the Wildlife Protection Act, 1972.

Forest officials said that it is an Alexandrine parakeet which is listed on Schedule-2 of Wildlife Protection Act, 1972. Mohanta is accused of preparing videos of the bird and uploading them on social media platform such as YouTube.

In one of the videos uploaded on YouTube, Mohanta is seen teaching the bird to speak while in another he is seen giving tips on how to hold the bird without getting bitten. The video came to the notice of honorary wildlife warden



କେନି ଡେ ଡେ ପୁଡ଼ା // parrot talking #viral
Chinmay Vaj. 150K views
3.9K subscribers

Subhendu Mallick of Khurda. Subsequently, Mallick lodged a complaint with the Principal Chief Conservator of Forest (PCCF, Wildlife). Acting on the complaint, Keonjhar forest department arrested Mohanta on charge of violating the Wildlife Protection Act.

The videos show Mohanta dropping mustard oil in the bird's ears and making it pick up an iron bar

with its beak which is against the Wildlife Protection Act-1972. Similarly holding the bird in hand is tantamount to torture and also against legal norms for which Mallick wrote to the PCCF demanding action against the youtuber.

ACF Ashok Kumar Das said a case has been registered at forest range office at Bhuyan-Juang Pidha range and the bird was seized along

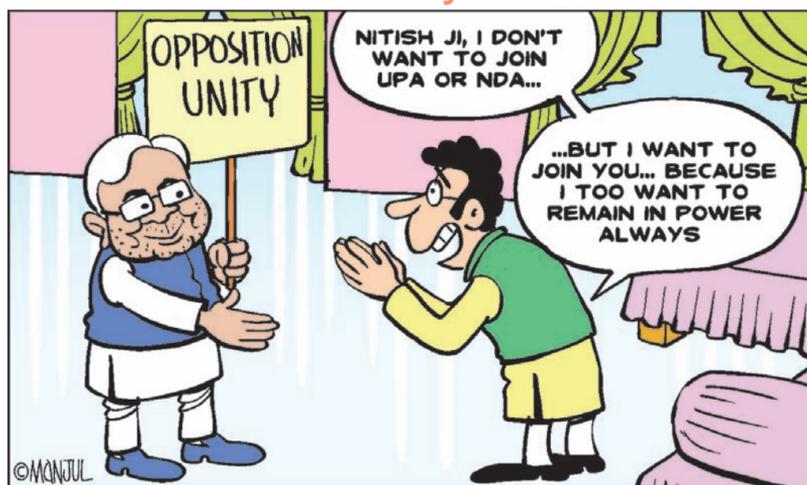
with its cage. The accused youtuber has been arrested and the mustard oil, a mobile phone, and an iron rod have also been seized in this connection.

Keonjhar DFO HD Dhanraj confirmed the development and said an investigation was conducted and the video Mohanta had uploaded on YouTube was checked thoroughly before arresting him and seizing the bird.

Mohanta admitted to his wrongdoing stating that he will not repeat such mistakes in future.

Notably, Keonjhar district is covered by dense forests and has numerous species of birds including parrots in its jungles. These parrots build nests on big trees and lay their eggs. Poachers catch these birds alive and sell them in local markets to interested people at prices ranging from ₹200 to ₹500. The birds are also smuggled outside the state for a premium. With the Forest department turning a blind eye to such incidents, unabated poaching of these rare birds has led to a decline in their population.

POLITICKLE by MANJUL



HUMAN SACRIFICE ALLEGED IN KEONJHAR

Keonjhar: The body of a missing 8-year-old boy was recovered Wednesday. The boy has been identified as Fakeer Mahakud, son of Rangadhar Mahakud of Karangadihi village under Bansapal block of this district. An autopsy of the body was conducted Thursday while police are clueless about the cause of death. However, Rangadhar, father of the deceased boy, has alleged that his son was murdered for human sacrifice. Police have said that the exact cause of death can be ascertained only after the post-mortem report. As per sources, the boy was missing from home April 9. After his frantic search went in vain, Rangadhar had lodged a missing complaint at Kanjipani police station April 11. The boy's decomposing body was traced Wednesday afternoon and later family members identified the body. As per sources, two villagers who were grazing their goats first saw the body on a farmland and raised an alarm. Police arrived and seized the body after Karangadihi sarpanch Varun Dehury informed them of the incident.

Goat trader shot dead

POST NEWS NETWORK

Sundargarh/Lephripara, April 13: Miscreants shot dead a goat trader and decamped with ₹9 lakh in his possession near a temple on Sundargarh-MCL road under Lephripara police limits in Sundargarh district, Thursday.

The deceased was identified as Prabhat Nayak, a native of Talmunda village in Jharsuguda district, who was staying at Guitha village under Bhasma police limits in the district for the last few years.

The incident occurred when Prabhat and two others

were on their way on motorcycle to Handipani haat in neighbouring Chhattisgarh to buy goats. They had reached near the temple when three youths wearing helmets waylaid them by hitting their motorcycle. The three goat traders fell down along with the vehicle. The miscreants tried to snatch away the bag of money from them. Prabhat tried to run away with the bag when the miscreants fired at him. He collapsed and died on the spot after the bullet hit his chest. Lephripara police reached the spot and launched an investigation.

JSP TO SET UP NEW RAIL MILL AT ANGUL



axle loads of more than 25MT. These rails are primarily used by various metro rail corporations, high-speed corridors and the bullet train project.

The Raigarh rail mill is regularly supplying 260m rails to Indian Railways, DFCCs and other critical projects of national importance. Such long rails with minimum welds are a key element in increasing track safety and comfort.

POST NEWS NETWORK

Angul, April 13: In its endeavour to contribute to an 'AtmaNirbhar Bharat', Jindal Steel & Power (JSP) plans to commission a state-of-the-art 1.2 MTPA rail & heavy structure mill at its Angul steel complex. After the commissioning of the new rail mill here, JSP's total rail-making capacity will be 2.2 MTPA.

JSP has developed speciality rails like 1175 HT, R350 HT, asymmetric rails, and 1080HH rails at its existing 1 MTPA rail mill in Raigarh of Chhattisgarh. These rails are an import substitution product required for heavy

"JSP is committed to supporting the government initiatives of GatiShakti Yojna, as part of the AtmaNirbhar Bharat Abhiyan by making available domestically produced import substitution products at competitive prices. JSP is proactively adding and augmenting further Rail manufacturing capacity to support the modernisation of the Indian rail network," said Bimlendra Jha, Managing Director, Jindal Steel & Power, in a statement.

UAIL's project 'Pustakalaya'



POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, April 13: In its endeavour to stoke curiosity and create interest among the young generation, Utkal Alumina International Limited (UAIL), a subsidiary of Hindalco Industries Limited of Aditya Birla Group has set up 'Pustakalayas' (Libraries) in the aspirational districts like Rayagada and Kalahandi.

These are located at its peripheral schools at Kashipur in Rayagada and Thuamul Rampur in Kalahandi. These unique libraries are in both government and local schools like SSVN, Tikiri; SSVN,

Kashipur; Govt UGME School, Maikanch; Govt High School, Hadiguda and Govt High School, Adri, in association with Angelique Foundation, New Delhi.

This according to Mazhar Beig, unit head and president of Utkal Alumina, will undoubtedly have a positive impact and raise the educational standards of the pupils in this isolated tribal hinterland. He advised the students and teachers to make the most of the facility. "Our mission," as stated by Beig, "is to raise the bar of education and to bring in a positive behavioural change among the pupils living in the outlying areas."

'Pustakalaya' project intends to build meaningful and practical library spaces for students in middle and high schools, between the ages of 10 and 17 years. Currently more than 3,500 school going children avail of this service. Each library houses 250 books.

भारतीय सभ्यता के प्रतीकों का संरक्षण,
प्राचीन संस्कृति की भव्यता का पुनर्निर्माण,
और स्वतंत्रता सेनानियों की प्रतिष्ठा का सम्मान कैसे किया जा रहा है,
जानने के लिए देखिए

धरोहर भारत की

पुनरुत्थान की कहानी

दो एपिसोड में बनी यह डॉक्यूमेंट्री देखना न भूलें
14 और 15 अप्रैल 2023 को, रात 8 बजे
डीडी नेशनल पर

FOCUS AMBEDKAR JAYANTI

ISSUES, NOT IDEOLOGY



It will be a meaningless tribute to Babasaheb if we ignore the rudimentary questions of caste, egalitarian social order and social democracy

lar, supporting huge tents. I am worried about the time when this pillar will not be in its place." Dadasaheb Gaikwad took this warning to heart and organised various land movements and led the Republican Party of India. It's noteworthy that RPI suffered from bifurcation twice. This fractured condition of Dalit movement gave rise to Dalit atrocities, unemployment issues and frustration amongst Dalits. The Dalit Panther Movement was an offshoot of the resentment and disenfranchisement of the Dalit youth slum-dwellers. Raja Dhale and Namdev Dhasal were quite instrumental in organising the masses and they started posing questions to both Dalit and non-Dalit leaders. But with the passage of time they suffered ideological rifts within the movement. Gail Omvedt in her article titled 'Ambedkar and after: The Dalit Movement in India' writes: "Dalit movement has failed to show the way to transformation because of late these movements are turning themselves into pressure groups."

Post Independence, the Constitution had made certain provisions such as Article 16, 46, 335 to safeguard the interests of Dalits, women, children and minorities within democratic framework. However, if we do an analysis of the data that was released recently by the Union Minister of State for Education we could find that 19,000 students from SC, ST and OBC category have dropped out of institutes like IIMs, IITs and other Central varieties from 2018-2023. We keep revisiting history, but we all the time fail to acknowledge our own historical mistakes that still haunt a large section of the society.

It will be a meaningless tribute to Babasaheb if we ignore the rudimentary questions of caste, egalitarian social order, social democracy. The present times require renewal of Bahujan autonomy, assertion and inclusion of Dalit independent movement with varied issues, then only we would be able to fulfil the dreams of Ambedkar of a more democratic and republican society.

The writer is Assistant Professor, Department of Sociology, Maitreyi College, University of Delhi.

On the 132th birth anniversary of the first law minister, champion of Dalit rights and Constitution-writer BR Ambedkar, it is customary to recall his legacy at seminars, lectures, and exhibitions. But this year, while remembering his passionate voice for social justice, we should also acknowledge the sense of trepidation that has come to haunt these celebrations. An apprehension has arisen that the political and social fronts of the Dalit movement have deviated from the core values the nationalist icon espoused and the critical engagements that shaped his life. Now, sixty-two years after Ambedkar's passing, we must acknowledge the tremendous changes in Dalit politics and society that led to the present-day conditions.

By the late 1920s Ambedkar got actively involved in Dalit politics. He had prescribed two paths through which Dalit could solve their socio-economic issues - agitational politics and secondly, through parliamentary representations. While addressing the gathering in the Constituent Assembly in 1950 Ambedkar observed, "Political democracy cannot last long without social democracy. Social democracy means a way of life which recognises liberty, equality and fraternity as the principles of life." After 72 years, this idea still stands very much relevant.

After Babasaheb, under the able leadership of Kanshiram and Khaparde, the BAMCEF was constituted in 1973. The objective behind having this party was to unite SC, ST, OBC and minority employees and create a think tank of intellectuals to materialise the motto of 'pay back to the society'. Subsequently, for the formation of Bahujan Samaj Party, Kanshiram made BAMCEF a shadow organisation in 1985. Consequently, Kanshiram could win the support of all members of BAMCEF and had considerable influence in Maharashtra and a huge fan base in Uttar Pradesh. After Kanshiram, BSP witnessed the leadership of Prakash Ambedkar in Maharashtra and Mayawati in Uttar Pradesh, but they have failed critically to have that influence among Dalit masses. The reasons could be absence of support from the Dalit community, lack of agency and recognition within the party. And when a situation like this arises, the leaders from the upper caste parties play their leadership role. It should be noted here that the Dalit intellectual class has been mute spectators to their sufferings and uncritical of the upper caste leadership.

MC Rajah, a Member of Legislative Council in 1922, first demanded reservation of seats for panchamas in government institutions, and local bodies and municipalities. The demand for separate electorate and reservation of seats in legislative council, and local bodies has been brewing since the 1920s had first manifested in being represented in the Simon Commission. Yet the leaders had differed if it was just about representation from depressed classes or for a separate electorate. The Rajah-Moonje pact was a testimony to it, and was considered detrimental for the depressed classes. Later in 1932, Ramsay MacDonald Award was created to provide depressed class choices in the legislature of Provinces and extra vote in a special depressed class constituency. This later culminated in Poona Pact 1935 yielding reservation of seats for depressed classes. It was considered as a well-founded safeguard against discrimination on the basis of caste, religion and race, and has shaped reservation politics till now.

What about the need for representation to be decentralised? The leadership and recognition is being located at the few ghettos of power and policymaking. Decentralisation, not just in terms of effective distribution of public goods and services, but also of assertion, the voices of elected women representatives, being accepted and acted upon. Aren't the actual spaces of assignments turning into another battleground of favouritism and discrimination in governance? The burning issues of the present day go beyond the subjects of reservation, untouchability and representation to that of institutional suicide/killing, Dalit women getting raped and killed, and the very frequent death cases of septic tank workers. As per the data of Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, from 2017-2022, there have been 400 deaths of Dalit labourers.

The representation has become purely lineage, family, urban, situated and mostly Delhi centric rather than representing diverse social, economic, political, regional backgrounds. Amidst all this, can we make the assertion if every house manual scavenger, cleaner of drains, trash picker, is part of these celebrations, or we remain entangled in the questions about which Dalit's interests?

In the 18th March 1956 speech in Agra, Ambedkar expressed his concerns about the plight of rural landless labourers and blamed the educated middle class Dalits for being self-centered and selfish. He warned the gathering by saying, "Today my position is like a pil-



Bijayani Mishra

WE KEEP REVISITING HISTORY, BUT WE ALL THE TIME FAIL TO ACKNOWLEDGE OUR OWN HISTORICAL MISTAKES THAT STILL HAUNT A LARGE SECTION OF THE SOCIETY



Gordon Brown

Putin is unlikely to leave himself open to arrest by entering any of the 123 states that are signed up to the ICC

Abnormality in Nature is no objection, no necessary sign of imperfection, but may well be an effort at a much greater perfection. **SRI AUROBINDO**



Prosecuting Putin

A few weeks ago, the International Criminal Court issued an arrest warrant for Russian President Vladimir Putin for the war crime of unlawful deportation and transfer of children from occupied areas of Ukraine to Russia. It is a significant - indeed, historic - step toward holding Putin and his henchmen accountable for their crimes in Ukraine. But more must be done.

Evidence of Russian atrocities in Ukraine - including murder, rape, torture, and attacks on civilians, civilian infrastructure, and other non-military targets - continues to accumulate. Just last month, a United Nations-backed inquiry published a report accusing Russia of war crimes and possible crimes against humanity. While the ICC indictment is unlikely to be the only legal action brought against Putin and his cronies, it is the first. The ICC prosecutor has ensured that Putin will go down in history as the first leader of a permanent member of the UN Security Council to be indicted for an international crime.

The move is not merely symbolic. Those who think imprisoning Putin is an impossibility should recall that Liberian war criminal Charles Taylor is currently serving a 50-year sentence in a British prison, and former Serbian leader Slobodan Milosevic died in prison in The Hague while on trial for war crimes. And those who think that the arrest warrant will have no impact on the accused should take note of reports of growing dissent within Putin's leadership cabal, with insiders no doubt fearing that they will soon face indictments as well.

Admittedly, while the ICC president has moved unusually quickly and issued a statement of intent to arraign Putin in The Hague, Putin is unlikely to leave himself open to arrest by entering any of the 123 states that are signed up to the ICC. Sadly, Russia does not recognise the ICC (nor does the United States). So, given that US President Joe Biden has welcomed action, despite opposing the ICC, how can the world add to the pressure on Putin and his cronies?

The crime of aggression - beginning with the invasion of Crimea in 2014 - is Putin's "original sin," the font of all the recent atrocities. As University College London law professor Philippe Sands has argued, aggression would be more straightforward to prosecute than war crimes and crimes against humanity because it can be linked directly to the Kremlin.

The ICC's mandate does not extend to prosecuting the crime of aggression, but a special international tribunal can be created with an explicit focus on this "leadership crime." The tribunal's work would complement and give weight to that of the ICC.

The encouraging news is that all major European countries, as well as the European Union and the Council of Europe, have endorsed Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy's request that Putin and his circle be prosecuted for the crime of aggression. A tribunal could be constituted in the coming months.

But American support will be vital to the success of such a tribunal. Biden need not fear that supporting an investigation into Putin would tilt the scales - which he has so carefully calibrated - from support for Ukraine's defense to active aggression against Russia. After all, the US has regularly supported special tribunals - notably for Cambodia, Lebanon, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, and the former Yugoslavia - to prosecute international crimes. And US prosecutors were at the forefront of the Nuremberg trials, carried out by the International Military Tribunal to prosecute and punish leading Nazis after World War II. The same went for the International Military Tribunal for the Far East, which carried out the "Tokyo trials" of Japanese war criminals.

Both tribunals were founded upon the 1941 Declaration of St. James's Palace, or London Declaration, in which the Allied powers agreed that there would be no safe haven for those guilty of aggression. This would likewise form the basis of the special tribunal tasked with investigating and prosecuting Putin.

Concerns that such a tribunal would open the door for prosecutions relating to conflicts like the Iraq War are also unfounded. The special tribunal on crimes of aggression in Ukraine would be a response to Zelenskyy's explicit request, made on behalf of Ukraine's government and people. The tribunal's authority would be derived from Ukrainian law, together with the prohibition on crimes of aggression inherent in international law. And the body would focus exclusively on the situation in Ukraine, where the evidence of wrongdoing arguably - and unlike in many other conflicts - meets the very high standard of proof required.

Nor will the prospect of a trial make Putin less willing to contemplate peace talks. I dealt directly with him, as both finance minister and prime minister of the United Kingdom, not least over the assassination in 2006 of the UK-nationalised Russian defector Alexander Litvinenko. Those experiences taught me that the only language Putin understands is that of power. He will not view pulled punches as an olive branch worth taking, but as yet more appeasement born of weakness.

In the face of Russian brutality, Ukrainians have stood united and fought valiantly. The rest of the world - led by the US - must show the same courage and resolve to ensure that justice is served, beginning with Russia's top leaders.

America has willed the end - accountability for Putin and his cronies. Now it must join Europe in supporting the means.

The writer is a former Prime Minister of the United Kingdom.
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WISDOM CORNER

- Hope is the thing with feathers that perches in the soul - and sings the tunes without the words - and never stops at all. **EMILY DICKINSON**
- Sometimes your joy is the source of your smile, but sometimes your smile can be the source of your joy. **THICH NHAT HANH**
- A dreamer is one who can only find his way by moonlight, and his punishment is that he sees the dawn before the rest of the world. **OSCAR WILDE**

WORDSWORTH

Haptic
This is a good example of a relatively unusual scientific word that in recent years has become more widely known through a specific use. It refers to the sense of touch or tactile sensations. It appeared near the end of the nineteenth century, at first as a medical term. It was coined from the Greek *haptikos*, able to sense or touch, which derives from the verb *haptain*, to fasten. It's closely related to the rare English prefix *hacto-*, as in *haptotropism* for the reflex action in plants such as honeysuckle or bindweed that causes them to twist around objects they touch. At one time, people most often came across the word in connection with hard contact lenses, which were described as *haptic* because they were moulded exactly to fit the shape of the eyeball. In the past couple of decades, *haptic* has become more widely used in the world of immersive virtual-reality computer systems by those who design techniques and tools that reproduce the sense of touch. Joysticks and the like are now being designed so that they feed tactile information back to the user about the way the system is functioning. An object that has been visualised on a computer may soon be capable of being felt as well as seen. Such tools are commonly known in the business as *haptic devices*.

SPECTRUM PHARMA SECTOR

Patients over patents

On 23 March, 2023, the day before the World Tuberculosis (TB) Day, the Indian Patent Office rejected the Johnson and Johnson's (J&J) patent application to extend its patent on Anti-TB drug, Bedaquiline, beyond July this year. The World Health Organization has introduced Bedaquiline as standard treatment in 2018 for treatment of resistant TB. The patent of the parent molecule is scheduled to expire in July and the company has been attempting to prolong its monopoly by claiming a patent of its salt which the Indian Patent Office has now rejected. This is evergreening of patent.

Before the introduction of Bedaquiline, it was a long and tormenting treatment for drug resistant TB. Twenty months long treatment with serious adverse effects including permanent hearing loss and psychosis was the practice. Bedaquiline based treatment is short and devoid of adverse effects associated with multi-drug resistant TB treatment. India along with China and Russia contributes more than the half of the global multi-drug resistant TB cases. There are an estimated 130,000 cases of drug resistant TB every

year and less than 30% of these patients are in appropriate treatment. Government (National TB Elimination Programme) procures Bedaquiline at a cost of \$350 for a six month course. This is not available for private use. The cost is expected to come down once generic manufacturers are permitted to manufacture making the treatment 80% cheaper.

J&J filed the patent application for Bedaquiline fumarate salt along with the Tween 20, a known wetting agent in 2009. It is very interesting to note that two surviving TB patients: Nandita Venkatesan, a two-time TB survivor, and Phumeza Tisile, TB survivor from South Africa, filed pre-grant opposition in 2019. On hearing both parties, the patent office rejected the secondary patent of Bedaquiline fumarate on the ground of lack of inventive step. The fumarate salt was already mentioned in the earlier patent application. The use of Tween 20 as a pharmaceutical wetting agent is well known. While rejecting the patent claim of J&J, the patent office observed that there is no proof of fumarate salt of Bedaquiline and Tween 20 provides better therapeutic efficacy. The company has

shown improved bioavailability and improved bioavailability is not same as improved therapeutic efficacy. The Indian Patents Act contains some important safeguards designed to ensure that frivolous patent applications are not granted at the cost of public health. These include Section 3(d) of the Patents Act, which prevents many "new forms" of known substances from being patented unless there is a significant improvement in efficacy, and Section 3(e) of the Act, which prevents "mere admixtures" of substances from being patented. The patent claim of the company is rejected based on Section (d) and 3 (e) of Patent Act. This is the health safeguard the Indian rule makers kept in the Act.

Worldwide TB is the leading cause of death and 1.6 million people died from the disease in 2021. Bedaquiline is the lifeline of TB treatment. Prior to introduction of this medicine, for almost 50 years there was no new anti-TB drug. It was not the investment of the company alone that has contributed to the development of Bedaquiline, there have been many public funding for its development and clinical trial. The public fund-

ing is reported to be five times more than J&J's investment in developing this drug. The company did not consider the public funding but continues its attempt to monopolise the drug. The order has broken the monopoly of a company over the life saving medicine. Had the company won the case, patent protection would have extended until 2027, further delaying the prospects of generic version.

The decision of the patent office is widely hailed and this would help the introduction of generic version. In addition to immediate benefit to TB patients of reduction of cost of resistant TB treatment, the recent patent office's ruling would encourage the patient groups to fight against the monopoly of big pharmaceutical companies' attempt to go for evergreening of patents, even if there is no support from others including the generic pharmaceutical companies. Patients' interest prevailed over profit of patents. This would help the country to eliminate TB well before the target of Sustainable Development Goal, 2030!

The writer is Professor, CL Baid Metha College of Pharmacy.



Dr. Guru Prasad Mohanta

THE INDIAN PATENTS ACT CONTAINS SOME IMPORTANT SAFEGUARDS DESIGNED TO ENSURE THAT FRIVOLOUS PATENT APPLICATIONS ARE NOT GRANTED AT THE COST OF PUBLIC HEALTH

Solar power boost

Sir, India's solar energy market is the third-largest globally, with a capacity of over 64,380 MW as of February 28, 2023. The Indian government has implemented policies and initiatives to promote solar energy, including subsidies, tax incentives, and net metering policies. The Kisan Urja Suraksha Evam Utthaan Mahaabhiyan (KUSUM) scheme aims to install 30.8 GW of solar capacity by 2022 for farmers. Under KUSUM, farmers are incentivised to install solar panels on their farmland, generating electricity for their own use and selling excess power to the grid. The scheme provides a 30% subsidy for solar pumps and financial support for grid-connected pumps. India is expected to install 16.8 GW of new solar capacity in 2023, including 14 GW of utility-scale solar projects and 2.8 GW of rooftop solar projects. India has introduced policies to encourage development of solar parks and net metering for rooftop solar installations. Various schemes support installation of solar panels in public buildings and agricultural fields. Ministry for New and Renewable Energy has stated that by 2026, India will have the capacity to manufacture solar modules worth 100 GW per year, making India a net exporter of solar power. **Krishna Kumar Vepakomma, HYDERABAD**

Normal monsoon

Sir, The meteorological department forecasting normal rainfall is welcome news. If it is normal, the country will record normal rainfall for the four month period from June to September. The onset month of June and the withdrawal month of September give a promising picture in terms of good countrywide rainfall distribution. Normal rainfall in the country is critical for paddy, sugarcane, maize, cotton, and soybean cultivation. **CK Subramaniam, NAVI MUMBAI**

What a windfall!

Sir, The influential BCCI office holders will benefit from the cricket body's decision to enhance their perks. From now on, a touring official will receive a daily allowance of \$1000 on foreign tours and be entitled to fly first class - the office bearers previously received \$750 daily. This is apart from the hotel room rental. Besides, those in positions of power can reserve a suite for domestic and international journeys. The IPL chairman's allowances have been included in the office-holders category. The board has also revised the allocations for members of its state units and three members of the Cricket Advisory Committee. What a windfall! **NJ Ravi Chander, BANGALORE**

Letters

TO THE EDITOR

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

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of the day quote

Everyone wants to become the Prime Minister. People should know that the Prime Minister's post for 2024 is not vacant

The state Backward Class commission has sought more time to submit report on 10.5 per cent internal reservations to the Vanniyar community

Today is a historic moment when we took another step forward towards empowering our youth in the cause of nation-building under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi

SHORT TAKES

Nitish ally Jitan Ram meets Amit Shah

New Delhi: Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar's ally Jitan Ram Manjhi set political circles abuzz following a meeting with Home Minister Amit Shah Thursday, more so as the development came amid the Janata Dal (United) leader's talks with several opposition leaders as part of his effort to forge an alliance against the BJP.

Man bludgeoned to death in Gurugram

Gurugram: A 28-year-old man was allegedly bludgeoned to death with hammers and iron rods in a case of suspected old enmity, the police said Thursday. The deceased has been identified as Gyanender, a resident of Asavata village in Palwal.

Youth loses ₹17L to online Ludo game

Ghaziabad: After losing ₹17 lakh while playing Ludo online, a businessman's son in Ghaziabad hatched a false story of robbery informing the police that he was robbed of ₹6 lakh, in order to mislead the family. The police launched a thorough investigation and solved the case.

Woman gangraped

New Delhi: Delhi Police has filed a case of gangrape on the complaint of a 19-year-old woman who alleged she was raped by a man and an associate of his, after he picked her from Malviya Nagar Metro Station in connection with a job he had offered her, police said Thursday.

Drone shot down

Rajouri/Jammu: A drone carrying cash and rifle magazines has been brought down by security forces after they launched a search and cordon operation in the villages of Jammu and Kashmir's Rajouri district, sources said.

ASAD AHMED ENCOUNTER

The Samajwadi Party and the Bahujan Samaj Party have demanded an investigation into the Jhansi shootout, suggesting that the state's Special Task Force staged a fake encounter

AGENCIES

Lucknow, April 13: Gangster-politician Atiq Ahmad's son Asad and an accomplice, both wanted in the Umesh Pal murder case, were shot dead in an exchange of fire with the Uttar Pradesh Police near Jhansi Thursday, officials said.

The alleged encounter took place apparently at the time Ahmad was in a Prayagraj court, where he was presented before the Chief Judicial Magistrate in connection with the same murder and remanded to 14-day judicial custody. The court also allowed a five-day remand for the UP Police to question him.

The Samajwadi Party and the Bahujan Samaj Party have demanded an investigation into the Jhansi shootout, suggesting that the state's Special Task Force staged a fake encounter.

Two other men have been shot dead in separate encounters with police since February 24, when Umesh Pal, a key witness to a 2005 political murder, and two policemen deployed to protect him were killed by gunmen in Prayagraj. Atiq Ahmad, a former SP legislator, had earlier expressed apprehension that he himself could be killed by UP Police while being brought to Prayagraj from the Ahmedabad prison, where he was lodged in connection with another case. When he was being taken to

RAHUL GANDHI DEFAMATION CASE

Surat court to pronounce order April 20

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Surat, April 13: A Surat Sessions Court hearing an appeal seeking stay on Congress leader Rahul Gandhi's conviction in a criminal defamation case has reserved its verdict, which will now be pronounced April 20, 'Bar and Bench' reported.

Rahul Gandhi's counsel argued in the court that his disqualification from the Lok Sabha following his conviction in a criminal defamation case over the Modi surname would cause him "irreparable loss and irreversible injury". Senior advocate RS Cheema, who represented Rahul Gandhi, claimed that the conviction based on an "imagined defamation was unfair since only an aggrieved person could file a complaint.

Kerala milk major flags aggressive marketing practices of other states

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Thiruvananthapuram, April 13: The Kerala Co-operative Milk Marketing Federation (KCMMF), known by its trade name Milma, has voiced serious concern over the tendency of some milk marketing federations to aggressively enter markets outside their respective states.

This according to Milma is a total breach of co-operative spirit based on which the country's dairy sector has been organised for the benefit of millions of dairy farmers.

Milma Chairman A.K.S. Mani said that of late, there has been a growing tendency on the part of some of the state milk marketing federations to market their staple products outside their respective domains.

Mani's remarks came after Amul announced in an ad last week that it would sell its products online in Bengaluru, stoking fears that the

Oppn demands probe



the city for Thursday's court appearance, he made a similar remark. The officer said a British Bulldog revolver and a Walther pistol were recovered.

Deputy Chief Minister Keshav Prasad Maurya also praised the STF and the UP Police. "Nobody will touch you if you don't commit a crime, and nobody will be spared if they commit a crime," he told PTI. Umesh Pal's family thanked Adityanath and the police.

Termed Adityanath a father figure, she said, "He has punished the killer of his daughter's husband. I express my gratitude," she said. "Justice has been done."

Umesh Pal's mother said, "The two gunmen who were killed in broad daylight today had committed a sin. They have been punished today. We have faith, we will get complete justice."

SP president Akhilesh Yadav slammed the state government. "By conducting fake encounters, the BJP government is trying to divert attention from real issues. The BJP does not believe in courts at all. Today's and other recent encounters should be thor-

SC slams Lalit Modi over post on judiciary



oughly investigated and the culprits not spared," he tweeted in Hindi. "Those in power do not have the right to decide what is right or wrong. The BJP is against brotherhood," Yadav said.

BSP leader Mayawati linked the Jhansi encounter to the gunning down in 2020 of gangster Vikas Dubey who had allegedly planned the ambush and killing of eight policemen in Kanpur.

She said a high level inquiry is necessary to get at the truth of Thursday's encounter. After the Umesh Pal murder, Akhilesh Yadav had flagged the law and order issue in the state assembly.

In the heated debate, CM Adityanath had then accused his party of "garlanding" gangsters like Atiq Ahmad and said the government will ground the mafias to dust ("mittee me mila denge")

In February and March, two men who allegedly took part in the Prayagraj shooting were gunned down in separate police encounters. One of them, Arbaaz, allegedly drove the car in which the gangsters came to kill Umesh Pal. The other, Usman, was allegedly among those who fired at him.

Atiq has admitted to links with ISI, Lashkar: UP police chargesheet

PRAYAGRAJ: Gangster-turned-politician Atiq Ahmad has confessed that he has direct connections with Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) and terror outfit Lashkar-e-Taiba, as per the chargesheet filed by UP Police.



"I have no dearth of weapons because I have direct connections with Pakistan's ISI and terror organisation Lashkar-e-Taiba. Weapons from Pakistan are dropped on the Punjab border with the help of drones and local connections collect them. Terrorists in Jammu and Kashmir get weapons from this consignment. If you take me with you, I can help you recover that money, arms and ammunition used in the incident," the chargesheet mentions Atiq Ahmad as saying.

This is bound to increase troubles for the gangster whose entire family is listed as his gang members.

The Chief Judicial Magistrate's court Thursday sent Atiq Ahmad and his brother Ashraf to four-day police custody in the Umesh Pal murder case. The police custody of the duo started from 5 p.m. April 13 till 5 p.m. April 17. On March 28, Atiq Ahmad was convicted by an MP-MLA court and sentenced to rigorous life imprisonment in the abduction case of now-dead Umesh Pal.

PM holds talk with Sunak

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, April 13: Prime Minister Narendra Modi Thursday raised the issue of security of Indian diplomatic establishments in the United Kingdom in a telephonic conversation with his British counterpart Rishi Sunak and called for strong action against anti-India elements, a statement said.

According to it, Modi also sought progress on the return of economic offenders wanted in India.

India is pursuing the extradition of beleaguered businessman Vijay Mallya and fugitive diamond merchant Nirav Modi from the UK. Mallya, who fled to the UK in 2016, is wanted in India over a default of ₹9,000 crore that was loaned to Kingfisher Airlines by several banks. Nirav Modi is facing charges in the estimated USD 2 billion Punjab National Bank loan scam case. About the vandalism at the Indian High Commission last month, Sunak conveyed to Modi that the UK considers the attack "totally unacceptable" and assured the security of the Indian Mission



and its personnel, the statement said. Last month, the tricolour flying atop the Indian High Commission in London was grabbed at by a group of protesters waving separatist Khalistani flags and chanting pro-Khalistani slogans, leading to an arrest related to the violent disorder.

The two leaders also reviewed the progress on a number of bilateral issues as part of the India-UK Roadmap 2030, particularly in trade and economic sectors. They expressed satisfaction at the recent high-level exchanges and growing cooperation, particularly in trade and economic sectors and agreed

on the need for early conclusion of a mutually beneficial Free Trade Agreement between the two countries, the statement said. During the talks, Sunak reiterated the UK's full support for India's ongoing G20 presidency. Modi also conveyed his greetings to Sunak, who is of Indian origin, and the Indian community in the UK on the eve of Baisakhi.

PM Modi invited Sunak for the G20 Summit to be held in September 2023. The British leader appreciated the progress made under India's Presidency of the G20 and reiterated the UK's full support to India's initiatives and their success, the release said.



milk major would take over Karnataka's own milk brand Nandini. "This grossly violates the federal principles and co-operative spirit based on which the country's dairy co-operative movement has been built and nurtured by pioneers like Tribhuvandas Patel and Verghese Kurien. The move of Amul (Gujarat Milk Co-operative Federation) to promote its staple products in Karnataka has been met with stiff resistance from

the homegrown stakeholders. "But the Karnataka Milk Federation (KMF) itself recently opened its outlets in parts of Kerala to sell its Nandini brand of milk and other products. How is this justified? It is a highly unethical practice which defeats the very purpose of India's dairy movement and harms the interests of the farmers," Mani said, adding that such practices need to be curtailed. As per the prevailing agreement

and courteous business relations existing among the milk co-operatives, cross-border marketing of milk shall be avoided as it amounts to blatant encroachment of the sale area of the respective state.

Such practices from any side will jeopardise the spirit of co-operative principles that have been nurtured for long by mutual consent and goodwill, Mani said.

It was further pointed out that the tendency to enter the markets outside one's domain by opening sales outlets or roping in franchisees should be avoided. Though the input cost in the dairy sector in Kerala is much higher compared to other states, Milma passes on 83 per cent of its turnover to dairy farmers through the co-operative societies under its network. Also, the bulk of Milma's surplus is given to the farmers as additional incentive on milk price and subsidy on cattle feed as the well-being of the dairy farmers is its prime concern, Mani said.

SHOW OF STRENGTH

In less than a month after Ex Vayu Prahar close to the Line of Actual Control (LAC) in the Eastern Theatre, the Indian Army and Indian Air Force (IAF) conducted yet another tactical drill in the first week of April to validate multi-mode insertion of strategic forces along the Frontier



SC slams Lalit Modi over post on judiciary

SENIOR ADVOCATE AM SINGHVI SAYS THE FORMER CRICKET ADMINISTRATOR MUST PUBLISH HIS APOLOGY ON ALL SOCIAL MEDIA ACCOUNTS

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, April 13: The Supreme Court Thursday came down heavily on ex-IPL commissioner Lalit Modi over his remarks against the judiciary made in social media posts and directed him to tender an unconditional apology on social media platforms and national newspapers.

Observing that Modi is not above law and the institution, a bench of Justices MR Shah and CT Ravikumar warned any repeat of such conduct will be viewed very seriously.

The apex court also directed him to file an affidavit before it tendering an apology and stating no such posts will be made in future which would tantamount, even remotely, to tarnishing the image of the Indian judiciary.

"We have gone through the counter affidavit filed by the respondent (Modi). We are not at all satisfied with the explanation given. We are of the view even the clarification would tarnish the image of the judiciary."

"Counsel for respondent A M Singhvi has stated at bar that an unconditional apology would be tendered in all social media where he has followers and leading newspapers at Delhi, Mumbai, Bangalore, Madras and Kolkata editions," the bench said while posting the matter for further hearing April 24.

At the outset, senior advocate Ranjit Kumar, appearing for CU Singh who has filed the contempt plea, submitted that Modi had made a tweet March 30, 2023 which tarnished the image of judiciary. He made scandalous remarks against judges and the apology expressed is to avoid punishment, Singh said. Claiming Modi has three mil-

lion followers on Twitter and four million on Instagram, Singh said the former cricket administrator must publish his apology on all social media accounts.

As senior advocate AM Singhvi, representing Modi, started making his submissions, the top court made scathing observations against the ex-IPL boss.

The bench said, "What does he mean by the statement that judges are in pockets of so and so? Does he think that the judiciary is weak? Where is the apology to the court? First you file an unconditional apology.

Otherwise you are in contempt. Apology must be made in public. He should say I have trust in the Indian judiciary.



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EAST COAST RAILWAY Tender Notice No. MSM-BOBRN-LPG-6-23 NAME OF WORK : ATTENTION OF REPAIR AND WELDING WORK OF UNLOADABLE BOBRN / BOXN WAGONS AT BPSL SIDING / LAPANGA, MAIL SIDING / LAPANGA FOR A PERIOD OF 22 MONTHS.

भारत का राजपत्र The Gazette of India सौ. नौ. - डी.एल. - 33004/99 REGD. NO. D.L.-33004/99 EXTRAORDINARY PART II-Section 3-Sub-section (ii) PUBLISHED BY AUTHORITY



'COVID cases may peak in couple of weeks'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, April 13: A newborn diagnosed with COVID-19 has been admitted to LNJP Hospital here, its medical director said on Thursday, as he cautioned that coronavirus cases in the national capital will peak in the next couple of weeks.

Delhi's single-day caseload addition on Wednesday breached the 1,000-mark for the first time in over seven months while the positivity rate stood at 23.8 per cent, according to data shared by the Health department.

The national capital logged 1,149 fresh cases and one fatality Wednesday. Dr Suresh Kumar, the medical director at LNJP Hospital, said during an interaction that wearing masks has been made "mandatory" at the facility.

The 2,000-bed British-era facility is the largest hospital under the Delhi government. "Children are not vaccinated, so we need to take precautions for them as they are getting symptoms like fever, cough, eye infection and stomach infection as well. This variant (XBB.1.16) is affecting children more. An 18-day-old newborn has even been admitted to our hospital and the child

The national capital logged 1,149 fresh cases and one fatality Wednesday

Amid a gradual increase in the number of Covid cases in Delhi, medical experts have said the virus' new XBB.1.16 variant could be driving the surge

Mock drills were conducted at hospitals in Delhi Tuesday to ascertain their preparedness to tackle the disease amid a surge in cases in the national capital



is Covid positive," he said. Four more children are admitted to the hospital, Kumar said. It is better to wear masks in schools and public places and even senior citizens should wear masks. Precaution

is surely better, he said. "We will see the peak of Covid cases in one-two weeks and the graph will go down from thereon," Kumar said, adding, "We have made all arrangements in the hospital for patients, includ-

ing children, as they are coming in more numbers with infection". Amid a gradual increase in the number of Covid cases in Delhi, medical experts have said the virus' new XBB.1.16 variant could be driv-

ing the surge. However, they maintained that there is no need to panic and people should follow Covid-appropriate behaviour and get their booster shots.

Mock drills were conducted at hospitals in Delhi Tuesday to ascertain their preparedness to tackle the disease amid a surge in cases in the national capital.

The drill was conducted as part of a nationwide exercise to take stock of hospitals' preparedness to tackle the surge in Covid cases. Kumar said more cases are being reported in the city but there is no need to panic.

"Only 10 patients have been admitted to our hospital while 440 Covid beds are vacant. The objective of the exercise is to ascertain our preparedness in terms of availability of essential medicine, equipment and staff," he had said on Tuesday. Talking about the recent Covid-related deaths, Kumar has said only those who had severe comorbidities such as tuberculosis, cancer and chronic lung diseases, among others, succumbed to the infection.

TN fishermen seek govt intervention



INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Chennai, April 13: Fishermen of Pudukottai and Ramanathapuram in Tamil Nadu and Karaikal in Pondicherry have sought government's intervention to retrieve their fishing vessels impounded by Lankan authorities.

The fishermen complained that more than 50 vessels worth crores of rupees are impounded by Sri Lankan Navy and coastal authorities on charges of crossing International Maritime Boundary Line (IMBL).

M. S. Antonio Joseph, a fisherman from Ramanathapuram said, "Mechanised fishing boats are our source of revenue and a group of fishermen from the shores of India venture into the sea for days to get a good catch and earn livelihood. Of late, life has become miserable for fishermen as we are being attacked by Sri Lankan Navy as well as sea pirates. The line demarcating the two is very thin and we can't recognise it." He said that most of the time fishermen cross the IMBL inadvertently. The mechanised boats with outboard engines are of huge costs, Joseph said. The Sri Lankan navy lets off the Indian fishermen after they serve the sentence but boats are impounded and left to be destroyed without maintenance,

Joseph claimed. Antonio Joseph said that the Tamil Nadu government must take up the matter with the Union government to retrieve the boats from Sri Lanka. The fishermen cited examples of Sri Lankan authorities giving away their boats to local fishermen who submerge their vessels as well as remove their outboard engines.

Ranganathan, a fishing boat owner from Karaikal, said that his fishing boat is left to the mercy of Sri Lankan authorities as it was in their custody since the fishermen including himself were arrested and jailed in Lanka for crossing the IMBL. The fishermen have also said that there were instances wherein the fishing boats that were seized and impounded are sold off without proper notice to the owners.

The fishermen associations of coastal Tamil Nadu and Pondicherry are planning to meet the Chief Ministers of the respective states M. K. Stalin and N. Rangasamy and urge them to take up the matter with Union External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar for further action. M. Muniyandi, a fisherman from Pudukottai, said that the fishermen will have no other option but to conduct a series of agitations in coastal areas to get justice.

Give uniforms to EWS students: HC



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, April 13: The Delhi High Court Thursday said the city government ought to provide uniforms to school students belonging to the Economically Weaker Sections (EWS) and not cash.

A bench headed by Chief Justice Satish Chandra Sharma noted the high court had in August 2014 asked the Delhi government to provide uniforms and not cash to the students and, in the absence of any modification of that direction, the authorities have to comply with it.

The court was hearing a batch of pleas concerning the supply of resources to students belonging to the economically weaker sections and disadvantaged groups in schools here and the implementation of the provisions of the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act, 2009 and the Delhi Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Rules, 2011.

Delhi government counsel Santosh Kumar Tripathi said the government is providing books and study material, and from the next academic session, it would also give uniforms to the students. The government lawyer stated from next year the heads of schools can procure uniforms from the market after a survey has been carried out and the cost approved by the authorities. In the meantime, it would provide cash for the purchase of uniforms.

"You are not supposed to pay in

cash. This is not compliance of the order. Compliance is provide a tailor for a school or cluster of schools. Government will say I will sanction Rs 50 per metre cloth. Heads of schools will say there is no Rs 50 per metre cloth," remarked the court.

Advocate Kamal Gupta, representing certain private schools in the matter, said a paltry sum of Rs 1,500 was given annually to the EWS category students which "makes a mockery of the EWS children". The same amount was also reimbursed to private unaided schools, the lawyer said.

Maintaining that Delhi is not special and must comply with the mandate of law on providing aid to EWS students, the court asked when certain schools were providing uniforms to EWS students why can't the government.

"We will ensure uniforms are supplied. We will monitor this," the bench, also comprising Justice Subramonium Prasad, said and listed the case for further hearing on August 25. In August 2014, the high court had said it was the duty of the state government and the schools to ensure that free textbooks, uniforms etc are made available to children belonging to the EWS category.

It had then noted that out of 68,951 EWS category children studying in private schools in session 2014-15, roughly about 51,000 children were without textbooks and uniforms. The high court had observed that such a situation was "wholly unacceptable".

Now, 'Bahubali' creating problems

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Chennai, April 13: While the Tamil Nadu forest department is in the process of catching the rogue tusker, 'Karuppan' in Erode area, it is confronting with another tusker, 'Bahubali' who is destroying crops and livelihood in border areas.

The Tamil Nadu forest department has deputed a group of foresters to prevent the entry of the elephant to the farm lands as it has been destroying crops including maize, banana and arecanut during its frequent forays into the agricultural fields.

Bahubali is now spotted even during day time at Samayapuram village in Mettupalayam area of Coimbatore district.

R. Velmurugan, a farmer at Samayapuram, said, "Bahubali created havoc here two years before and the forest department had then tried to capture him, but it did not

materialise. However, now it has come back after two years and is spotted even during day time. We demand the forest department to capture the elephant."

The wild tusker, according to Mettupalayam range forest officials is moving inside the forest area adjacent to Samayapuram, Nellithurai and Nellimalai.

Forest officials said that the animal has come out of the forest land in March even as water is available in the forest area where it is located. The forest department said that it was studying the behavioural practices of this particular elephant. Maize is a major attraction for the elephant and it is grown in good quantities on the banks of the Bhavanisagar river in the Mettupalayam area.

However, the forest officials said that the animal is presently quiet and has not inflicted injuries on humans.



BJP launches free pilgrimage programme

The BJP's free pilgrimage programme is modelled on the AAP government's Mukhya Mantri Teerth Yatra Yojna, under which elderly citizens are sent on pilgrimages for free across the country

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, April 13: The BJP Thursday launched a free pilgrimage programme for the elderly and women with Virendra Sachdeva, the party's Delhi unit chief, flagging off four buses ferrying devotees to Mathura-Vrindavan.

The BJP's free pilgrimage programme is modelled on the AAP government's Mukhya Mantri Teerth Yatra Yojna, under which elderly citizens are sent on pilgrimages for free across the country. The four buses, flagged off on Thursday from Kondli here, ferried around 200 elderly citizens and women to Mathura, Vrindavan and Govardhan.

The soul of India resides in places of pilgrimage and we are alive as long as our religion and culture are alive, Sachdeva said. Vishnu Mittal, the BJP's Delhi unit treasurer, said two buses would set off for different pilgrimage sites



with senior citizens and women from the city every week. There are many devotees who are going on a pilgrimage for the first time and rickshaws have been arranged for those pilgrims who face difficulties while walking. They are also being

provided with food, Sachdeva said.

"In the coming days, we will send buses to Varanasi and Ayodhya. India's culture is the oldest and best and it is our duty to protect it," he said. The BJP has undertaken the pro-

gramme in association with the non-profit group Aao Saath Chalen, Mittal said. The pilgrimage programme will be completely free. All arrangements for food and accommodation will be ensured through Aao Saath Chalen, he added.

TN Prison Dept to sell products online

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Chennai, April 13: The Tamil Nadu Prison Department will soon sell products made by inmates online.

Discussions to sell the "Freedom" branded products are underway with online retailers. Tamil Nadu Prisons and Correctional Services Director, Amareesh Poojari told mediapersons that there was high demand for the products, and if it is available online, the reach will expand leading to a jump in sales. The inmates make a variety of products, including wallets, nets, napkins, shoes and organic food items.

The initiative was conceived by late Chief Minister J. Jayalalithaa who opened the first prison bazaar at the Chennai Central Jail on December 9, 2013.

The prison bazaars at the jails in Chennai, Coimbatore, Madurai, Salem, Tiruchi, Palayamkottai, Cuddalore and Vellore are open from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m.



Under the initiative, inmates are being trained with a skill so that he or she may be able to pursue it even when they are out of prison.

According to the Department officials, the profit earned from the prison bazaars at present is apportioned as 20 per cent to inmates, 20 per cent to the state government, 20 per cent to prison staff welfare, and the balance 40 per cent for the Prison Department goods manufacturing fund.

Environmentalists welcome ban on woven and ruffian bags

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Chennai, April 13: Environmental groups and social activists have welcomed the Tamil Nadu Pollution Control Board (TNPCB)'s move of imposing a ban on woven and ruffian bags.

Wednesday, the TNPCB issued a statement stating that the woven or ruffian bags are single-use plastics and directed the public not to use such bags.

The board in the statement said that the manufacture, selling and distribution of these plastics is a violation as per the notification on ban on single-use plastic.

Mahadeva Ramalingam, Chief Advisor, Chennai Environmental Group -- a study group on environment -- said, "We have found large quantities of woven and ruffian plastics flooding into the Tamil Nadu market after the ban on single-use plastics. This is a method to bring in single use plastic through the back door ultimately polluting the environment."

Several environmentalists and social movements across the state have been campaigning against this, he said and added that the statement of the TNPCB was highly appreciated and welcomed. The Tamil Nadu Pollution

Control Board has in the statement said, "Plastic carry bags in the name of woven bags or ruffian bags are widely available with the vendors and shopkeepers.

Wednesday, the TNPCB issued a statement stating that the woven or ruffian bags are single-use plastics and directed the public not to use such bags



The board in the statement said that the manufacture, selling and distribution of these plastics is a violation as per the notification on ban on single-use plastic

Commercial establishments like super markets, textile shops, shopping malls, flower shops, groceries, food and vegetable shops are using these bags in large numbers and these single use items are used only once before they are thrown away and littered."

Environmentalists and social activists have been raising the issue of single-use plastic flooding the market through

back doors like woven or ruffian plastic bags.

Syed Umanullah Khan, activist based out of Madurai while speaking to IANS said, "When we protested against the use of woven and ruffian bags in Madurai and other southern Tamil Nadu districts, I was hounded out by the big cartel. We had to file several complaints with the police and pollution control board officers in Chennai and Madurai and there has been a relentless fight for this. Ultimately the result has come and we are happy at the TN PCB issuing the statement clarifying the position."

national

of the day quote

The Central government will focus on strengthening the Vizag Steel Plant (VSP) for the moment rather than privatising it

FAGGAN SINGH KULASTE | UNION MINISTER OF STATE FOR STEEL

Justice Gangopadhyay's single-point target is Abhishek Banerjee. He is trying to malign his image to satisfy the entire opposition, including the BJP, CPI-M and Congress. He is misusing his chair and behaving like a political cadre

KUNAL GHOSH | TRINAMOL CONGRESS SPOKESMAN

Nitish Kumar failed to take care of his home (Bihar) but aspires to run the entire country

SUSHIL KUMAR MODI | BJP RAJYA SABHA MP

SHORT TAKES

3 electrocuted to death in Hyd

Hyderabad: In a tragic incident, three youngsters died of electrocution while trying to save each other in Paramount Colony in the Sheikhpeta area in Hyderabad in the wee hours of Thursday. The incident occurred when they were trying to fix a broken water pump motor at their residence. According to police, two brothers and their friend died of electrocution. Police shifted the bodies to Osmania General Hospital for autopsy.

Father-son duo killed in blaze

Kolkata: A man and his son were charred to death while his other son was critically injured in a fire at a footwear label printing unit in Kolkata Thursday morning, police said. The blaze erupted at 7.20 am at the unit located on Topsia First Lane and four fire tenders took over two hours to douse it, a police officer said. The injured person has been admitted to a hospital where he is undergoing treatment, he said.

Shah reviews J&K security situation

New Delhi: Union Home Minister Amit Shah Thursday reviewed the security situation in Jammu and Kashmir, including the Line of Control and International Border, sources said. Shah was given a detailed presentation on the prevailing law-and-order situation in Jammu and Kashmir by security officials of the central government and the union territory administration. National Security Adviser Ajit Doval, Jammu and Kashmir Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha, Union Home Secretary Ajay Kumar Bhalla, Jammu and Kashmir Director General of Police Dilbag Singh and other senior officials attended the meeting, the sources said.



BJP government did not believe in the judiciary and is taking the law into its own hands

AKHILESH YADAV | SAMAJWADI PARTY CHIEF

FIRE BREAKS OUT IN AIIMS DEOGHAR

A fire broke out at an AIIMS building in Jharkhand's Deoghar Thursday, though no casualties were reported in the incident. Fire brigade teams that reached the spot brought the fire under control after an hour. State Health Minister Banna Gupta has ordered an inquiry into the accident



SC slams K'taka govt's call to scrap 4% Muslim quota

AGENCIES

New Delhi, April 13: The Supreme Court Thursday made some strong observations against the manner in which the Karnataka government scrapped the 4 per cent OBC quota for Muslims and placed them under the Economically Weaker Section (EWS) category, saying the foundation of the decision-making process is "highly shaky and flawed".

The Karnataka government undertook before the apex court that no admission or appointments will be made till April 18 on the basis of March 27 government order (GO), which scrapped the 4 per cent quota for Muslims.

A bench of Justices KM Joseph and BV Nagarathna told Solicitor General Tushar Mehta, representing the Karnataka government: "Prima facie, we are telling you, the first thing is that the order which you have passed... appears to suggest that foundation of decision making process is highly shaky and flawed... it is on an interim report, the state could have waited for a final report that is one aspect. What is the great urgency?"

Mehta submitted that the court should allow the state government to file its reply in the matter and the admissions will begin in May and nothing is going to happen if matter is heard next week either Monday or Tuesday.

"Please allow me to file a reply, these are original proceedings. There was no empirical data as a religion.... they (Muslims) were included on the basis of religion. It is not something extraordinary. Can't it wait till April 17?"

Senior advocates Kapil Sibal, Dushyant Dave, Prof Ravivarma Kumar, and Gopal Sankaranarayanan appeared for petitioners L Ghulam Rasool and



MUSLIMS ELIGIBLE FOR QUOTAS WERE CATEGORISED UNDER THE ECONOMICALLY WEAKER SECTIONS. THE STATE GOVERNMENT'S DECISION HAS PUSHED THE RESERVATION LIMIT TO AROUND 57% NOW

► The state's Basavaraj Bommai government decided to scrap the 4% reservation for Muslims in government jobs and educational institutions weeks ahead of the state assembly polls May 10

► The state government announced two new categories for reservation and divided the 4% Muslim quota between the Vokkaligas and Lingayats, the two numerically dominant and politically influential communities

others. Dave argued that staying the government order would mean Muslims continue to get the benefit of the reservation of four per cent and "if not, they will lose out in education and employment... Why should we lose out at all? This notification is per se illegal and unconstitutional". Sibal said since early 1990s, they were backward and now they put them in general category and after 23 years, Muslims are in general category without a study and this is a direct violation of Article 14, and also the entire notification is violative of Article 14 and it is taking away reservation.

"It is like I am poor, so I will be in the general category", he added. Dave reiterated there is no study to support scrapping of Muslim quota. After hearing detailed arguments, the bench said the decision was prima facie based on fallacious assumption and was vitiated as it is based on an interim report of a commission.

Though, the apex court did not stay the scrapping of the 4 per cent Muslim quota but made several strong observations against the

Karnataka government, which forced the state government to give an assurance that it won't undertake any admission to educational institutions or make appointments in terms of its March 27 order.

The bench orally observed: "A large number of people were denied the benefit of reservation by a stroke of a single decision", and indicated at passing an interim order staying the GO scrapping the Muslim quota. At this juncture, Mehta submitted that none of the candidates in admission to educational institutions or in appointment for a job would be affected until April 18 in compliance of its order; and stressed that nothing irreversible will be done based on its order ending the 4 per cent quota to Muslims and giving 2 per cent each to Vokkaligas and Lingayats.

Senior advocate Mukul Rohatgi, representing the Vokkaliga and Lingayat community members, strongly opposed any interim order in the matter. Rohatgi said unless something is going to happen, it would be highly unfair if stay is granted.

Priyanka sounds poll bugle in Chhattisgarh

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Jagdalpur, April 13: Congress General Secretary Priyanka Gandhi Vadra Thursday sounded poll bugle in Chhattisgarh, asking the people of the state to repose their faith in her party again and hitting out at the opposition Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP).

Speaking at a gathering at Lalbag Maidan in Jagdalpur city, the headquarters of the Bastar district, she said Bastar, earlier known for Naxalite violence, has now become a "brand" and "you (tribals of the region) have got identity across the country and abroad because of your handicrafts, other arts and processed food products."

Assembly polls are due in the Congress-ruled state this year. During the event, titled 'Bharose Ka Sammelan', she and Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel launched the Adivasi Parab Samman Nidhi Yojana under which financial assistance will be provided to Gram



Panchayats in the scheduled areas for organising tribal festivals, fairs and religious programs. "The Bhupesh Baghel government has been working to empower people of the state. It did not violate your trust. You have seen the 15-year-rule of the BJP and had placed trust in them too. But what happened? Only 'bhay, bhukh and bhrastrachar' (fear, hunger and corruption) were prevalent then," the Congress general secretary said.

"Your lands were snatched away and you were handcuffed. They made you dependent, not self-reliant. They broke your self-confidence and ignored your pain. The Congress government has returned you your pride and worked to empower you," she said.

KARNATAKA POLLS

BJP denies tickets to 7 sitting MLAs in its second list



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bengaluru, April 13: The ruling BJP has announced its second list of 23 candidates for the May 10 Assembly polls in Karnataka, denying tickets to seven sitting MLAs, including Madal Virupakshappa, who was recently arrested on corruption charges.

The party had released its first list of 189 candidates Tuesday. The latest list released Wednesday does not include Hubli-Dharwad Central segment, from where former Chief Minister Jagadish Shettar wants to contest, and Shivamogga city, where sitting MLA and former Minister K S Eshwarappa has announced his retirement from electoral politics.

Shettar has been asked by the party top brass to make way for youngsters, but he has asserted he wants to contest one last time. The list includes four SC, one ST and two women candidates. There are several new faces in the second list.

Ramachandra Gowda, son-in-law of senior JD(S) leader and MLA G T Devegowda, has got the ticket from Siddlaghatta assembly segment in Harapanahalli constituency, sitting MLA G Karunakara Reddy, who is the brother of mining baron G Janardhana Reddy - the head of

newly formed Kalyana Raja Pragathi Paksha, has been renominated.

Channagiri MLA Madal Virupakshappa, who was recently arrested by Lokayukta Police on corruption charges, was among the incumbent MLAs who were dropped. Shiv Kumar has been fielded from the segment.

In Haveri, sitting MLA Nehru Olekar was overlooked and replaced by Gavisiddappa Dyamannavar, while in Byndor sitting MLA B Sukumar Shetty made way for Gururaj Gantihole. Mudigere sitting MLA M P Kumaraswamy was dropped and Deepak Dodaiah was named in his place.

Recently, there was a large-scale protest against Kumaraswamy by a section of party workers in the constituency, when veteran leader BS Yediyurappa had visited there.

Kalghatgi MLA C M Nimbannavar (aged 76) has been replaced by Nagaraj Chhabbi who quit Congress and joined the party recently, and in Mayakonda Basavaraja Naik has been given ticket instead of sitting MLA N Linganna.

Davangere North MLA S A Ravindranath (76) was denied renomination; instead Lokikere Nagraj got the ticket.

Truck runs over pilgrims in Punjab, seven killed



The area where the accident occurred is a sub-mountainous region, police said, adding that while navigating a slope the truck driver lost control of the vehicle and hit 17 pilgrims who were on foot

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Hoshiarpur (Pb), April 13: Seven pilgrims, including five women, on their way to celebrate Baisakhi at

Khuralgarh Sahib in the district were killed while ten were injured after being run over by a truck near here early Thursday, police said.

The accident took place near Charan Choh Ganga Shri Guru Ravidass Maharaj, Sri Khuralgarh Sahib, about 55 km from here, police said. Garhshankar Deputy Superintendent of Police (DSP) Daljit Singh Khakh said the deceased were mostly residents of Mastan Khera in the Muzaffarnagar district of Uttar Pradesh.

The area where the accident occurred is a sub-mountainous region, police said, adding that while navigating a slope the truck driver lost control of the vehicle and hit 17 pilgrims who were on foot. It was suspected that the brakes of the truck had failed, police said.

Khakh said the deceased men were identified as Rahul and Sandesh Pal and the women as Santosh, Angoori, Unati, Sita Devi and Ramoh. Five of the critically injured persons were referred to PGIMER Chandigarh while the rest were admitted to Civil Hospital, Garhshankar.

Pilgrims have been flocking to Khuralgarh Sahib, a place associated with Guru Ravidass, in view of the Baisakhi festival.



JOVIAL MOOD: School teachers and students dance at a field on the eve of Baisakhi festival in Jammu

PTI PHOTO

Time-restricted fasting may raise fertility problems

AGENCIES

New Delhi, April 13: Time-restricted fasting, an eating pattern whereby people limit their food consumption to certain hours of the day, could cause fertility problems, according to a new research conducted in zebrafish.

The research team, led by University of East Anglia (UEA), UK, also said that it was important that they observed some of the negative effects on eggs' and sperms' quality after the fish returned to their normal levels of food consumption.

They further said that despite being conducted in fish, the study



highlighted the importance of considering not just the effect of fasting on weight and health, but also on fertility. The study is published in the journal Proceedings of the Royal Society B.

"Time-restricted fasting is a popular health and fitness trend and people are doing it to lose weight and improve their health." "But the way organisms respond to food shortages can affect the quality of eggs and

sperm, and such effects could potentially continue after the end of the fasting period," said Alexei Maklakov, professor from UEA's School of Biological Sciences.

To find out what happened when individuals were exposed to food during and after a period of fasting, the researchers measured how males and females zebrafish (Danio rerio) allocate resources to body maintenance versus production and maintenance of sperm and eggs. They also studied the quality of the resulting offspring.

"What we found is that time-restricted fasting affects reproduction differently in males and females. Once the fish returned

to their normal feeding schedule, females increased the number of offspring they produced at the cost of egg quality resulting in reduced quality of offspring. The quality of male sperm also decreased."

"These findings underscore the importance of considering not just the effect of fasting on body maintenance but also on the production of eggs and sperm," said Edward Ivimey-Cook, from UEA's School of Biological Sciences. He also said that more research was needed to understand how long it took for sperm and egg quality to return back to normal after the period of fasting.

GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA, "e"-PROCUREMENT NOTICE
OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER
PURI (R&B) DIVISION, PURI
E-mail: eerbipuri@yahoo.co.in
WORKS DEPARTMENT
Tender Call Notice
Bid Identification No. S.E. (R&B) Puri-01/2023-24

No. B-63- The Superintending Engineer, Puri (R&B) Division on behalf of Governor of Odisha inviting percentage rate bid in single Cover system in ONLINE MODE from the eligible class of contractors registered with the State Governments and contractors of equivalent Grade/Class registered with Central Government/MES/ Railways.

1. Nature of work	: Rest Shed
2. No. of work	: 1 No.
3. Tender Cost	: Rs.6000.00 (On-line)
4. Class of bidders	: "C" & "B"
5. Available of Bid document in the Website	: From 10.00 AM of Dt.17.04.2023 to 05.00 PM of Dt.26.04.2023
6. Last Date of receipt of tender	: Dt.26.04.2023 up to 5.00 PM
7. Date of opening of Bid	: Dt.27.04.2023 at 11.30 AM
8. The Bidders have to participate in ONLINE bidding only. Further details can be seen from the Website: https://tenderodisha.gov.in. Any Addendum/Corrigendum/ Cancellation of tender can also be seen in the said website.	

Sd./- Superintending Engineer, Puri (R&B) Division, Puri
OIPR-34064/11/0002/2324

international



Ukraine won't budge from its demand that Russia withdraw its forces from Crimea, as well as from other parts of Ukraine that Moscow illegally annexed more recently
DMYTRO KULEBA | UKRAINE'S FOREIGN MINISTER

GEARING UP

The state of Western Australia is bracing for a powerful category four cyclone -- deemed to be the strongest in a decade to hit the region



of the day quote

The Iranian delegation, welcomed by Saudi officials upon arrival, is going to implement the necessary measures for the reopening of the Iranian embassy in Riyadh as well as the consulate general and representative office to the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation in Jeddah
NASSER KANAANI | IRANIAN FOREIGN MINISTRY'S SPOKESMAN

The proscribed Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) is still using Afghan soil to launch attacks against Pakistan, especially in Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa (K-P)
KHAWAJA ASIF | PAKISTAN DEFENCE MINISTER

Australia will not be immune from global headwinds
JIM CHALMERS | AUSTRALIA'S TREASURER

Court preserves limited access to abortion pill

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Austin (US), April 13: A federal appeals court ruled that the abortion pill mifepristone can still be used for now but reduced the period of pregnancy when the drug can be taken and said it could not be dispensed by mail. The decision late Wednesday temporarily narrowed a ruling by a lower court judge in Texas that had completely blocked the Food and Drug Administration's approval of the nation's most commonly used method of abortion. Still, preventing the pill from being sent by mail amounts to another significant curtailing of abortion access, less than a year after the reversal of Roe v. Wade resulted in more than a dozen states effectively banning abortion outright. The case is likely to go to the US Supreme Court. "We are going

to continue to fight in the courts, we believe the law is on our side, and we will prevail," White House Press Secretary Karine Jean-Pierre said Thursday, speaking to reporters from Dublin during a visit by President Joe Biden.

Mifepristone was approved for use by the FDA more than two decades ago and is used in combination with a second drug, misoprostol. In a far-reaching ruling last week, a federal judge blocked the FDA's approval of the pill following a lawsuit by the drug's opponents. There is virtually no precedent for a lone judge overturning the regulator's medical decisions. The ruling was put on pause to allow an appeal. Just before midnight Wednesday the 5th US Circuit Court of Appeals in New Orleans ruled that the FDA's initial approval of mifepristone in 2000 could remain in effect.



A girl visits the Tulip-mania at Dalton Farms in Swedesboro, New Jersey

REUTERS

Japan orders brief evacuation after N Korea's missile launch

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Seoul (South Korea), April 13: North Korea Thursday conducted its first intercontinental ballistic missile launch in a month, possibly testing a new more mobile, harder-to-detect missile for the first time, its neighbours said, as it extends its provocative run of weapons tests.

Japan briefly urged residents on a northern island to take shelter in an indication of its vigilance over North Korea's evolving missile threats. The missile was launched on a high angle from near the North Korean capital of Pyongyang and fell in the waters between the Korean Peninsula and Japan following a 1,000-kilometre (620-mile) flight, South Korea's Joint Chiefs of Staffs said in a statement.

It described its range as medium or longer. The US National Security Council called it a long-range missile and Japan's government said it likely had an intercontinental range. South Korea's military believes North Korea launched a new type of ballistic missile, possibly using solid fuel, a defense official said under the condition of anonymity because of office rules. If the launch involved a solid-fuel ICBM, it would be the North's first test of such a weapon. North Korea's known ICBMs all use liquid propellants that must be fuelled before launches.

But the fuel in a solid-propellant weapon is already loaded, allowing it to be moved easier and fired faster. A solid-fuel ICBM is one of the key high-tech weapons that North Korean leader Kim Jong Un has vowed to build to better cope with what he calls US military threats. He also wants a multi-warhead missile, a nuclear-powered submarine, a hypersonic mis-



Japan briefly urged residents on a northern island to take shelter in an indication of its vigilance over North Korea's evolving missile threats

North Korea has launched about 100 missiles since the start of 2022, many of them nuclear-capable weapons that place the US mainland, South Korea or Japan within striking distance

Thursday's launch was the North's first long-range missile firing since the country tested its longest-range, liquid-fuelled Hwasong-17 ICBM on March 16

sile and a spy satellite.

Kim Dong-yub, a professor at the University of North Korean Studies in Seoul, said the launch may have involved a new intermediate- or long-range missile powered by solid propellants, or be linked to North Korean preparation to launch a spy satellite.

US National Security Council spokesperson Adrienne Watson said the latest launch "needlessly raises tensions and risks destabilizing the security situation in the region." Watson said the United States will take all necessary measures

to ensure the security of the American homeland and South Korea and Japanese allies.

During an emergency meeting of Seoul's National Security Council, officials stressed the need to tighten three-way security cooperation with Washington and Tokyo. Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida held a meeting of his NSC to analyse the launch and Japan's response.

The nuclear envoys of Seoul, Washington and Tokyo held a telephone conversation where they called for a "decisive and united international response" to North Korean provocations and stronger efforts to stem illicit North Korean funding of its weapons program.

North Korea commonly test-launches missiles toward the international waters between the Korean Peninsula and Japan, using elevated trajectories to avoid neighboring countries.

South Korea and Japan typically don't issue evacuation orders unless they determine the North Korean weapon is flying in their direction. Japanese Defence Minister Yasukazu Hamada told reporters the North Korean missile launched Thursday did not reach Japan's exclusive economic zone.

RISING GEOPOLITICAL TENSIONS

China revises wartime recruitment rules

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Beijing, April 13: China has released a new set of revised rules for military recruitment in wartime, including giving priority to the veterans, drafting high-calibre soldiers and optimising conscription procedures, which an analyst described as combat readiness for a war over Taiwan.

A set of revised rules regarding military recruitment has been released by the State Council and the Central Military Commission (CMC) - the high command of the Chinese military headed by President Xi Jinping - aiming to provide institutional guarantees for consolidating national defence and building strong armed forces, state-run Xinhua news agency reported on Wednesday.

The new regulation, with 74 articles in 11 chapters, focuses on recruiting more high-calibre soldiers, standardising and optimising conscription procedures, and improving the system's efficiency, it said in a brief report. The new

rules will come into effect next month.

The regulations said recruitment should "focus on preparing for war" and increase efficiency by calling up "high calibre" recruits, the Hong Kong-based South China Morning Post newspaper reported. For the first time, a separate chapter on wartime recruitment has been included in the regulations, which state that ex-servicemen would be prioritised and expected to join their original units or similar positions that ex-servicemen would be prioritised and expected to join their original units or similar positions. The new rules were promulgated as Beijing is facing geopolitical tensions on several fronts, including in the South China Sea, especially in the Taiwan Strait, according to the report.

The People's Liberation Army (PLA) broke new ground in its latest drill around Taiwan by testing its capacity to blockade the self-ruled island. The three-day exercises which ended on Monday followed Taiwanese President Tsai Ing-wen's meeting with US House Speaker Kevin McCarthy.

For the first time, a separate chapter on wartime recruitment has been included in the regulations, which state that ex-servicemen would be prioritised and expected to join their original units or similar positions

Norway expels 15 Russian diplomats

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Copenhagen, April 13: Norway's government said Thursday that it was expelling 15 Russian diplomats from the country, saying they were suspected of spying while working at the Russian Embassy in Oslo.

Foreign Minister Anniken Huitfeldt said the move was "an important measure to counter and reduce the scope of Russian intelligence activities in Norway, and thereby secure our national interests." The Russians declared persona non grata "must leave Norway within a short time," Huitfeldt said, adding, "We will not grant visas to intelligence officers who apply for a visa to Norway."

The minister declined to say whether the government was acting in response to a specific incident, referring questions to Norway's domestic security agency PST for details. The government said the activities of the expelled diplomats were "incompatible with their diplomatic status."

"We are not talking about regular diplomats, but intelligence officers under diplomatic cover. Their activities are a threat to Norwegian interests," Huitfeldt said. The Russian Foreign Ministry said Moscow would respond in kind to Norway's action, Russia's Tass and RIA Novosti news agencies reported.

Huitfeldt reacted during an afternoon news conference, saying: "Russia has no reason to respond. We have Norwegian diplomats stationed in Russia, but none of them are undercover intelligence officers."

SWEDEN CLOSES EMBASSY IN PAK

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Islamabad, April 13: Sweden has announced closing its embassy in Pakistan "indefinitely" due to the prevailing "security situation" in the crisis-hit country's capital.

The embassy did not elaborate on the nature of the threat, but Pakistan's political situation is getting worse amid growing tension between the government and the Supreme Court. Pakistan's Supreme Court was hearing a petition to annul a bill aiming at curbing the powers of the chief justice to form panels of his choice for different cases.

"Due to the current security situation in Islamabad, the Embassy of Sweden is closed for visitors. The Migration Section is not, at the moment, able to handle requests of any kind," a notice on the embassy's website reads.

"Also, we cannot send any documents to our consulates, Gerry's, or to your home address. We understand that this will cause inconvenience. However, the safety of our applicants and staff members is of the highest priority," it said. The notice also stated that any questions regarding the re-opening of the mission cannot be answered at the moment.

Lanka may export 1,00,000 endangered monkeys to China

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Colombo, April 13: Cash-strapped Sri Lanka is exploring the possibility of exporting 1,00,000 endangered monkeys to China, one of its largest bilateral lenders, the agriculture minister has said.

The toque macaque is endemic to Sri Lanka and classified as endangered on the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) red list. Sri Lanka's agriculture minister Mahinda Amaraweera has asked officials to study China's request to procure toque macaques, news portal Economy Next reported on Wednesday.

"They want these monkeys for their zoos," the minister was quoted as saying. The minister said the request for 1,00,000 monkeys to be exhibited at over 1,000 Chinese zoos could be considered, given

the large macaque population in the country, the report said.

No financial details were made available so far, it added. A special discussion was held on Tuesday on dispatching monkeys to China under the first phase of the programme, the Ada Derana news portal reported.

The discussion headed by Minister Amaraweera was also attended by officials from the Agriculture Minister, Department of National Zoological Gardens, and Department of Wildlife Conservation.



The toque macaque is endemic to Sri Lanka and classified as endangered on the International Union for Conservation of Nature red list

The meeting was informed that the current monkey population in Sri Lanka has reached nearly 3 million and the animals were a menace to local crops. The appointment of a committee to study the legal procedures for the programme was also discussed.

The request from China has

been made at a time when the local authorities have taken several measures to contain the monkey population, the report said. Sri Lanka bans almost all live animal exports and the proposed sale comes at a time when the country faces its worst-ever economic crisis.

The country, however, removed

several species from its protected list this year, including all three of its monkey species as well as peacocks and wild boars, allowing farmers to kill them. Sri Lanka will look to fulfill this request from China considering that Beijing is one of Sri Lanka's biggest bilateral lenders.

China on Wednesday said it was willing to negotiate a medium and long-term debt disposal plan with Colombo in a "friendly manner" to enable the crisis-struck island nation to achieve debt sustainability. Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Wang Wenbin said Beijing was committed to waiving off the principle and the interest of the debt for two years.

"As a bilateral official creditor, the Export-Import Bank of China has clearly stated in the financing support document issued to the Ministry of Finance of Sri Lanka

that it will extend the maturity of Sri Lanka's debts due in 2022 and 2023," Wang said.

In January this year, China gave debt-ridden Sri Lanka the financing assurances required by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) to unlock the bailout package, days after India strongly backed the island nation's efforts to secure the loan from the global lender to recover from its worst-ever economic crisis.

In March, the IMF approved a USD 3 billion bailout programme to help Sri Lanka overcome its economic crisis and catalyse financial support from other development partners, a move welcomed by Colombo as a "historic milestone" in the critical period. The IMF bailout, the 17th in Sri Lanka's history, was approved following prolonged discussions over Colombo's unsustainable debt.

of the day quote

Online gaming rules do not need to get into the nuances of chance or skills as wagering is barred in all forms of games irrespective of the nature of the game

RAJEEV CHANDRASEKHAR | UNION MINISTER

We have already invested ₹2,400 crore, and a further ₹1,100 crore is expected to be invested by the end of 2023 to increase our manufacturing capacity and support the government's vision of making India a global export hub

YOGENDRA SRIRAMULA | HEAD (BRAND STRATEGY), VIVO INDIA

Last several months have seen a steady decline in investments through P-notes. This is because Foreign Portfolio Investment has seen outflows, particularly since the beginning of 2023

VK VIJAYAKUMAR | CHIEF INVESTMENT STRATEGIST, GEJIT FINANCIAL SERVICES

SHORT TAKES

Direct tax mop up skyrockets 173%

New Delhi: India's gross direct tax collection increased 173 per cent to over ₹19.68 lakh crore in 10 years to 2022-23. On a net basis, after adjusting refunds, direct tax collection zoomed 160 per cent since the 2013-14 fiscal to over ₹16.61 lakh crore in 2022-23. The Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT) has released Time-Series data as updated up to fiscal 2021-22 and also provided provisional data for 2022-23. Direct Tax Buoyancy at 2.52 in FY 2021-22 is the highest Direct Tax Buoyancy recorded over the last 15 years. The direct tax to GDP ratio has increased from 5.62 per cent in 2013-14 to 5.97 per cent in 2021-22.

Infosys Q4 net profit rises 7.8%

New Delhi: Infosys Thursday posted a 7.8 per cent year-on-year rise in consolidated net profit at ₹6,128 crore in March quarter of FY23, and gave 4-7 per cent revenue growth forecast for FY24 amid macro-economic uncertainties. The net profit stood at ₹5,686 crore in the fourth quarter of FY22. Seen sequentially, the net profit for Q4 came in 7 per cent lower. The Bangalore-based Infosys -- which competes in the market with Tata Consultancy Services (TCS), Wipro and other IT firms -- also logged a 16 per cent year-on-year growth in consolidated revenue in the fourth quarter of FY23 at ₹37,441 crore.

PARTY OVER Leading Indian startups, unicorns continue to bleed money

Most of the leading Indian edtech startups have been bleeding money for months now. Some of these loss-making unicorns companies are expected to launch their IPOs soon but with their income nosediving, the public market route to raise money and stay afloat has become all the more difficult

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, April 13: The great Indian startup and unicorn party, which saw record funding volumes in 2020, 2021 and the first half of 2022, appears to be over for now as several top names in the ecosystem continue to bleed money, with no respite in sight in FY23. At least 55 (74 per cent) from 74 unicorns incurred a cumulative

operating loss of \$5.9 billion in FY22, according to leading startup covering portal Inc42.

Of those heavy loss-making unicorns, 14 were from the e-commerce sector, followed by fintech at 13, and consumer services at six unicorns, the report added.

While Swiggy incurred around \$398 million loss in FY22, BharatPe reported \$726 million operating loss in FY22. Flipkart incurred

\$568 million loss and Meesho reported \$422 million operating loss. VerSe Innovation reported a loss of \$343 million in FY22; ShareChat incurred \$377 million and Unacademy \$352 million, according to Inc42. Another unicorn udaan incurred \$229 million in FY22 operating losses. The curious case

of edtech major BYJU's continues to haunt millions. The company reported an astounding net loss of over ₹4,588 crore in FY21 on consolidated revenues of ₹2,428 crore. However, the company last year said it registered nearly ₹9,991 crore in revenues in its FY22 financial results.



55 from 74 unicorns witnessed cumulative operating loss of \$5.9bn in FY22

Startups raised \$2.8bn in Q1 of 2023; 75% dip compared YoY (\$1.9bn)

FUNDING VOLUMES PLUNGE BY 79% IN Q1 OF 2023 (\$1.8BN) COMPARED YoY

There were no new unicorns created in the January-March period, compared with 14 unicorns in Q1 2022, according to the report by Tracxn, a leading global market intelligence platform. The funding volumes contracted due to the reduction in late-stage funding, which declined by 79 per cent in the first quarter (\$1.8 billion) compared to Q1 2022.

Early-stage rounds saw funding of \$844 million, a drop of 4 per cent compared to Q4 2022 but a drop of 68 per cent compared to Q1 of 2022. Late-stage rounds in Q1 of 2023 saw funding of \$1.8 billion, a decline of 79 per cent compared to Q1 of 2022 and a 23 per cent drop compared to Q4 last year.

All eyes are now on top Indian startups/unicorns as they begin to reveal their FY23 results.

TRADE DEFICIT WIDENS

Exports scale record heights in 2022-23

Healthy growth in the outbound shipments of sectors such as petroleum, pharma and chemicals and marine

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

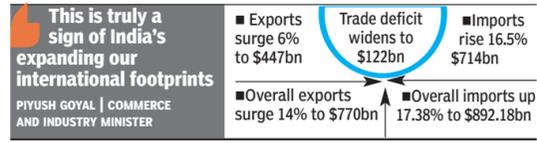
New Delhi, April 13: The country's exports rose by about 6 per cent to a "record" \$447 billion during 2022-23 on account of healthy growth in the outbound shipments of sectors such as petroleum, pharma and chemicals and marine, Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal said Thursday.

The country's imports also grew by 16.5 per cent to \$714 billion in 2022-23 as against \$613 billion in 2021-22. He said that the exports of goods and services together scaled "new heights" and has increased by 14 per cent to \$770 billion in 2022-23 as against \$676 billion in 2021-22.

"I am delighted to share with you the outstanding export performance for 2022-23, with India's overall exports scaling new heights at \$770 billion, registering 14 per cent growth over the previous year and



India's exports have increased substantially from countries like Russia (369.44%), Indonesia (62.8%), Saudi Arabia (23.31%), Singapore (24.43%) and Korea (21.46%)



all-time high record growing from \$500 billion in 2020-21 to \$676 billion in 2021-22," the minister told reporters in Rome.

Meanwhile, overall imports increased by 17.38 per cent to \$892.18 billion from \$760.06 billion in FY 2021-22 (April-March).

The country's trade deficit has widened to \$122 billion in FY23 from \$83.53 billion, the data showed.

India's services exports too have increased by 27.16 per cent to \$323 billion in 2022-23 as compared to \$254 billion in 2021-22. Services exports that led the overall export growth are projected to contribute 41.9 per cent in 2022-23 against 37.62 per cent in 2021-22.

India's overall exports (Merchandise and Services combined) in FY 2022-23 (April-March) is estimated to exhibit a positive growth of 13.84 per cent to \$770.18 billion from \$676.53 billion in FY2021-22.

Petroleum products export share in India's total merchandise exports has increased from 15.99 per cent in 2021-22 to 21.12 per cent in 2022-23.

Electronic goods export share in India's total merchandise exports has increased from 3.71 per cent in 2021-22 to 5.27 per cent in 2022-23. Smartphones export stood at \$9.31 billion during April-Feb 2022-23. Electronic goods import shares in India's total merchandise imports have declined to 10.82 per cent in 2022-23 from 12.02 per cent in 2021-22.

Markets extend gains for 9th day in a row

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, April 13: Benchmark equity indices Sensex and Nifty ticked higher for the ninth straight session Thursday, buoyed by fag-end buying in banking, financial and realty stocks amid encouraging domestic retail inflation data.

Weak trends in IT counters and fall in the overnight US equity markets triggered by fresh concerns over recession, however, put a check on market's uptrend.

In a largely subdued session, the 30-share BSE Sensex went up marginally by 38.23 points or 0.06 per cent to settle at 60,431. During the day, it hit a high of 60,486.91 and a low of 60,081.43. The broader NSE Nifty climbed 15.60 points or 0.09 per cent to finish at 17,828.

In nine trading days, the BSE benchmark has jumped 2,817.28 points or 4.88 per cent.

Among the Sensex firms, IndusInd Bank, Power Grid, Axis Bank, Bajaj Finserv, Kotak Mahindra Bank, ICICI Bank, State Bank of India and Tata Motors were the biggest winners. Infosys, Tech Mahindra, HCL Technologies, Larsen & Toubro, Wipro and UltraTech Cement were among the major laggards.



In the broader market, the BSE smallcap gauge climbed 0.33 per cent and midcap index advanced 0.16 per cent. Bankex rallied 1.38 per cent, realty jumped 1.17 per cent, financial services climbed 0.97 per cent and auto went up by 0.35 per cent. However, IT fell by 2.05 per cent, teck (1.94 per cent), capital goods (0.57 per cent), oil & gas (0.55 per cent), energy (0.32 per cent) and telecommunication (0.23 per cent).

Meanwhile, global oil benchmark Brent crude dipped 0.41 per cent to \$86.97 per barrel. Foreign Portfolio Investors (FPIs) continued their buying activity as they further bought equities worth ₹221.85 crore Thursday.

PV wholesales rise to all-time high in FY23



PV segment posted the highest-ever domestic sales, surpassing the previous peak in 2018-19, commercial vehicles posted the second-highest domestic sales and are close to the previous peak of 2018-19

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, April 13: Domestic passenger vehicle wholesales grew 26.73 per cent to a record high of over 38.9 lakh units in 2022-23, riding on a demand surge for utility vehicles, Society of Indian Automobile Manufacturers said Thursday.

Despatches of passenger vehicles (PVs) from manufacturers to dealers stood at 38,90,114 units in the fiscal ended March 31, 2023, compared to 30,69,523 units in 2021-22, as per the latest data released by Society of Indian Automobile Manufacturers (SIAM).

The previous highest wholesales of PVs were recorded in 2018-19 at 33,77,436 units.

The growth of the PV sales in FY23 was led by utility vehicles -- 20,03,718 units in FY23 compared to 14,89,219 units in FY22, a growth of 34.55 per cent. The segment now commands a 51.5 per cent share of PV sales.

SIAM President Vinod Aggarwal

said 2022-23 has been a year of consolidation post-Covid-19, although supply chain disruptions started again due to the Ukraine conflict. "However, with efficient management of supply chains and better availability of commodities, especially for the electronics items, prices have moderated over the year, though it remains a concern," he told reporters here.

Commercial vehicle sales were at 9,62,468 units in FY23 compared to 7,16,566 units in FY22.

SIAM Director General Rajesh Menon said commercial vehicles, two-wheelers and three-wheelers segments "are yet to reach the pre-pandemic levels".

The total two-wheeler sales in FY23 stood at 1,58,62,087 units against 1,35,70,008 units in FY22, a growth of 17 per cent. The segment had witnessed a decline in the previous three consecutive years.

Vehicle wholesales across categories stood at 2,12,04,162 units in 2022-23 compared to 1,76,17,606 units in 2021-22, a growth of 20.36 per cent.

As per the latest SIAM data, domestic wholesales of passenger vehicles grew 4.47 per cent year-on-year in March to 2,92,030 units. In March last year, wholesales of passenger vehicles were at 2,79,525 units.

Two-wheeler sales clocked 12,90,553 units in the domestic market last month compared to 11,98,825 units in the year-ago period, SIAM said. The total vehicle wholesales last month stood at 16,37,048 units against 15,10,534 units a year ago, it added.

BIZ BUZZ

PNB celebrates 129th foundation day

New Delhi: Punjab National Bank (PNB), nation's leading public sector bank, announced the launch of its new customer care numbers 1800-1800 & 1800-2021 on the occasion of the bank's 129th foundation day. The new easy-to-remember toll-free number aims to provide PNB customers with a seamless and hassle-free experience whenever they reach out to the customer care team. Additionally, the bank introduced other products such as E-Marketplace and Instant QR on Mobile Banking App PNB One, PABL (Pre-approved business loan), Central Bank Digital Currency (CBDC), Digital KCC through JanSamarth Portal, Current Account opening through TAB and Video-KYC, PNB eSWAR and PNB Metaverse. As a part of the 129th Foundation Day celebrations at the PNB head office, the new offerings were launched by Atul Kumar Goel, MD & CEO and Executive Directors, Vijay Dube, Kalyan Kumar, Binod Kumar and M Paramasivam in the presence of esteemed customers, senior officials and PNB employees.



Tanishq unveils 'Stunning Every Ear' collection

Bhubaneswar: On the auspicious occasion of Akshaya Tritiya, Tanishq, India's largest jewellery retail brand from the house of Tata, has launched a collection with a wide array of exquisite modern earrings across gold and diamonds called 'Stunning Every Ear'. The new collection offers a wide range of beautifully crafted earrings, designed to suit every taste, style, attire and occasion. The collection features traditional jhumkas, elegant studs, contemporary drop earrings, and much more. Each piece is crafted with utmost precision and attention to detail, comprising of extensive designs and craftsmanship in 18Kt and 22Kt gold. The brand has also announced a 20% discount on making charges of gold jewellery and diamond jewellery value from April 14 to 24. Ring in a new dawn of abundance this Akshaya Tritiya with Tanishq' exciting new collection and own the most stunning earrings by exchanging your old gold bought from any jewellery and get 100% (T&C apply) exchange value. Customers can also get Gold Rate Protection (T&C apply) by booking in advance and stay protected against increasing gold rates till April 30.



RBI begins evaluating potential bidders for IDBI

IDBI STAKE SALE IS THE FIRST MAJOR DIVESTMENT ACROSS STATE-OWNED BANKS AS PART OF A BROADER PRIVATISATION PLAN AND COULD FETCH THE GOVT ₹300BN AT THE CURRENT MARKET VALUATION

REUTERS

Mumbai, April 13: The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has begun evaluating at least five potential bidders interested in picking up a majority stake in state-owned IDBI Bank Ltd, three people familiar with the matter told Reuters.

Kotak Mahindra Bank, Prem Watsa-backed CSB Bank and Emirates NBD are among those that have submitted expressions of interest, two of the people said, speaking on condition of anonymity because the talks are confidential.

The stake sale in the lender is the first major divestment across state-owned banks as part of a broader privatisation plan and could fetch the government ₹300 billion (\$3.66 billion) at the current market valuation.

The federal government owns 45.48% of IDBI Bank, and is looking to divest a 30.48% stake in the lender, alongside state-owned Life Insurance Corp of India (LIC),



which will sell 30.24% from its 49.24% holding in the bank.

Expressions of interest - the first step in the stake sale process - closed in January, the three people said.

The potential bidders have since begun due diligence on the bank, according to the people, who added financial bids were likely to be placed later this year.

The RBI is also conducting a "fit and proper evaluation", including

extensive background and financial checks on the potential buyers, a crucial step before an investor is allowed to pick up a stake in a local bank, the people added.

Potential investors have raised questions around the extent of government control in IDBI Bank after the divestment since it will retain a 15% stake and LIC, a government company, will have a 19% stake, two of the people said.

"The government does not intend

Buyers with an existing bank might be required to merge the operation with IDBI eventually because RBI regulations do not allow the same investor to own two banking entities. A merger would dilute the amount of equity held by the government and LIC, potentially reducing government control

ASHVIN PAREKH | MANAGEMENT CONSULTANT, ASHVIN PAREKH ADVISORY SERVICES

to have any management control," one of the people said. "The government will take a call if a written submission to that effect is needed."

LAST-GASP WIN FOR TITANS High-flying KKR face SRH



SHUBMAN GILL

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mohali, April 13: Gujarat Titans roared back to winning ways with a six-wicket victory over Punjab Kings after Mohit Sharma's excellent return (2/18) to the IPL and Shubman Gill's 49-ball 67 (7x4, 1x6) here Thursday. Defending champions GT had restricted PBKS to 153/8.

Playing in his first game in the league since 2020, Mohit was exceptional in the penultimate over, giving away as little as six runs. When their turn to bat came, Gill led the way with his fine half-century as GT completed the chase of 154 in 19.5 overs, four days after suffering a heart-breaking loss to Kolkata Knight Riders.

Having done duty as the team's net bowler last season, Mohit, who has also played for the Indian team

including in the World Cup, mixed his pace and varied his lengths well throughout his spell.

Later, the young Gill once again showed his class with a quality innings that contained seven fours and a six. From GT's point of view, it was extremely important that Gill stayed on till the end, especially after the dismissal of captain Hardik Pandya with the team still 48 runs away from their third victory in 34 balls.

For PBKS, Matthew Short topped scored with a 24-ball 36 but it was M Shahruxh Khan's nine-ball 22, which helped the team cross 150. GT were off to a flyer and scored 56 in the six powerplay overs with the Gill going great guns.

Meanwhile, PBKS' lead pacer Kagiso Rabada became the fastest to 100 wickets in the IPL, when he had Wriddhiman Saha (30 off 19

balls) caught at deep square leg off a short ball. The South Africa speedster took just 64 games to reach the landmark, six matches fewer than Lasith Malinga's 70.

Earlier, sent in to bat after the coin landed in favour of the returning GT skipper Hardik, PBKS lost Prabhshimran Singh in the second ball of the over when his attempted flick off a length ball from Mohammed Shami went straight to Rashid Khan at short midwicket. Prabhshimran departed without scoring.

Short walked in at number three and he got off the mark with a boundary striking the ball through point. The next ball was short, and Short pulled the seasoned India seamer through the square leg region for another four.

Sharing the new ball with Shami, Josh Little was welcomed with two

boundaries by the in-form Shikhar Dhawan. While the first one was lofted over cover, Dhawan produced a delightful shot in the next ball, carrying the ball past mid-off in what was a high-class cover drive.

Australia's Short took on Shami and hit him for back-to-back fours including an authoritative boundary through mid-off. However, just when PBKS seemed to be putting GT under pressure Little gave his team a huge breakthrough, dismissing the dangerous Dhawan (8).

GT got another big wicket when the ever-reliable Rashid (1/26) foxed a well-settled Short with a googly with PBKS's score reading 55/3 in the seventh over. Having struck a flurry of fours and a massive six off Joseph, Short had settled down nicely but looked clueless when Rashid decided to bowl the wrong'un.

Short's dismissal set PBKS a bit, and it became trickier when Jitesh Sharma (25) was sent back by Mohit, thanks to a smart piece of work by Wriddhiman behind the wickets.

Sam Curran (22) struck a much-needed six – a big maximum over deep midwicket after star leg-spinner Rashid missed his length. Sri Lanka's Bhanuka Rajapaksa did not convince in his 26-ball 20, until his stay in the middle was cut short by Joseph. Shahruxh smashed the first ball he faced for a six over deep midwicket, before picking up another maximum off Shami.

BRIEF SCORES

PBKS 153/8 (Matthew Short 36, Jitesh Sharma 25, M Shahruxh Khan 22, Sam Curran 22; Mohit Sharma 2/18, Rashid Khan 1/26) **lost to GT 154/4** (Shubman Gill 67, Wriddhiman Saha 30; Harpreet Brar 1/20, Sam Curran 1/25) **by 6 wickets.**

Kolkata, April 13: On a high after Rinku Singh's phenomenal knock, Kolkata Knight Riders will be gunning for a hat-trick of victories when they face a resurgent Sunrisers Hyderabad in the IPL here Friday.

Having started off their campaign with a reversal against Punjab Kings at Mohali, KKR found two unlikely heroes in two matches to get their campaign up and running.

First, it was Shardul Thakur's storm with the bat that took a star-studded Royal Challengers Bangalore by surprise as the pace bowling all-rounder's 29-ball 68 led KKR to their first win of the season, a dominant 81-run victory.

Then the low-profile Rinku has become the flavour of the season after pulling off the greatest heist in T20 history by scoring 31 runs in the last over to win a match. KKR defeated the reigning champions Gujarat Titans by three wickets in their den, the Narendra Modi Stadium in Ahmedabad, courtesy Rinku's astonishing power-hitting.

The two-time former champions, who were hit hard by the absence of their skipper Shreyas Iyer and star all-rounder Shakib-Al-Hasan and were written off by many following a low-key auction, suddenly have become the side to beat this season.

That the two wins have come without any significant contribution from their star power-hitter Andre Russell and skipper Nitish Rana, make them an even more dangerous side.

While Shardul and Rinku have undoubtedly provided the finishing options, KKR think-tank would be keen to prove that these two wins were not a fluke.

By his standard, Russell, the fearsome Jamaican power-hitter,



has looked a shadow of his past. He would be keen to prove his credentials as he sweated it out during practice ahead of the match Friday.

KKR have tried out different opening combinations in the three matches so far and it is likely to be changed again against SRH, with England opener Jason Roy likely to be included in place of Rahmanullah Gurbaz.

The Afghanistan player has impressed with a fighting fifty against RCB, but with Roy being included as a replacement for Shakib, the Englishman is likely to be included, while Narayan Jagadeesan may do the wicket-keeping gloves.

As for SRH, the Aiden Markram-led side looks strong on paper after some big buys like Harry Brook, Mayank Agarwal and Heinrich Klaasen at the auction.

Overflowing with white-ball specialists, SRH, however, have failed

to impress in their first two matches. However, a Rahul Tripathi special led them to their first win of the season when they defeated Punjab Kings by eight wickets.

Boosted by the win, the Brian Lara-coached side would look to hold on to their winning momentum and give KKR a strong fight at home.

Tripathi will be up against his former team, playing the role of holding the innings together in the middle overs. Tripathi is someone who can rotate the strike in the middle overs and land a counter-attacking punch with his ability to tackle spin.

SRH would be hoping for the likes of Brook and Klaasen to fire and put up a big total. The high-profile Brook, who has been signed for Rs 13.25 crore, has so far managed scores of 13, 3 and 13.

A member of the England side that won the T20 World Cup last year, Brook has looked out of sorts in the opener's role, and it would not be a bad idea to bring him down the order.

They also have a potent spin attack in Washington Sundar and Mayank Markande, while the pace attack, led by Bhuvneshwar Kumar and Marco Jansen, will give KKR a tough fight. A win for KKR, currently placed third, may take them to the top of the table.



CHANGING BALL DUE TO DEW SURPRISES ASHWIN

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Chennai, April 13: Rajasthan Royals spinner Ravichandran Ashwin has been left puzzled by the umpires' decision to change the ball on their own because of the dew in the IPL match against CSK here, and called for consistency while taking such decisions.

The heavy dew at the MA Chidambaram Stadium Wednesday night forced the umpires to intervene and change the ball during the chase, leaving Ashwin, who returned figures of 2/25, "surprised".

Ashwin said he had never before seen the umpires changing the ball because of excessive dew. "I'm quite surprised the umpires changed the ball for dew on their own. It's never happened before and I'm quite surprised. Some of the decisions in this year's IPL on the field have left me a little flummoxed to be honest," said the India stalwart



at the post-match press conference.

"I mean, (it) left me flummoxed in a good or a bad way. It's because I think what you need is a little bit of balance," said Ashwin, who was adjudged 'Player of the Match'.

"As a bowling team, we are not asking for the ball to be changed. But the ball was changed on the umpires' accord. I did ask the umpire and he said we can change it. So I just hope every time there is dew they can change it every single time going forward in this IPL that sort of, you can do whatever you want, but you just need to be in a standard going forward," he added.

Odisha's second-half blitz blows away Aizawl

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Manjeri, April 13: Odisha FC registered a convincing 3-0 victory over Aizawl FC in their second match of the Super Cup at the Payyanad Stadium here Thursday. The victory fetched three points for Odisha, who have four points from two matches and are leading Group B, while Aizawl FC are yet to open their account.

It was a tale of two halves between Aizawl and Odisha, as they were evenly matched in the first 45 minutes. Both the sides shared more or less equal amount of ball possession as well as goal-scoring chances.

The first chance fell to Odisha centre-back Narendra Gahlot, who failed to keep his header from a corner kick in the 16th minute on target. Over the next 15 minutes, Aizawl took control of the game and twice came close to scoring.



On both occasions, Hruaitea was the player with the chances, his volleyed effort from a corner in the 20th minute flying just wide of the post. In the 28th minute, Hruaitea had a golden opportunity to put his side in the lead but couldn't get a touch on the ball at the mouth of the goal.

Just before the break, Odisha winger Isak Vanlalruatfela found himself in space with only Vanlalhratpuia to beat. But the goalkeeper did well to parry his shot away and ensure they went into the break level.

The very first chance in the second half once again fell Isak's way. The 21-year-old dribbled in from the left flank and went for an outrageous attempt from outside the box. Once again, it was Vanlalhratpuia who came to Aizawl's rescue with a last-gasp save.

The resultant corner in the 47th minute brought the opener. Diego Mauricio poked the ball home

from close range from a goalmouth melee and handed Odisha the lead.

Odisha followed it up with another goal in the 55th minute. This time it was Victor Rodriguez who displayed great footwork inside the box to beat a defender and slot it home to double his side's lead.

Clifford Miranda's men took complete charge of the game after that and kept hold of the majority of ball possession. In the second minute of stoppage time, substitute Nandha Kumar made it 3-0 to complete the win.

Mauricio's fierce strike was stopped by Vanlalhratpuia brilliantly, but the rebound fell to Nandha, who tapped it in. Mauricio had another chance to get on the scoresheet when he was brought down inside the box by K Lalmalsawma in the fourth minute of stoppage time. But the Brazilian's penalty was saved by Aizawl's goalkeeper.

REAL MADRID SEE OFF CHELSEA

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Madrid, April 13: Karim Benzema struck yet again against Chelsea, and Real Madrid are a step closer to eliminating the English club for the second straight season in the Champions League.

Vinicius Junior thrived with two assists and Marco Asensio also scored in Madrid's 2-0 win in the first leg of the quarterfinals Wednesday in the latest meeting between the last two European champions.

Chelsea played the final half-hour with 10 men after Ben Chilwell was sent off for stopping a Madrid breakthrough. It was a second consecutive defeat for new Chelsea interim manager Frank Lampard after he replaced Graham Potter amid the team's disappointing results. The second leg is next week at Stamford Bridge.

Benzema scored his sixth goal in five matches against Chelsea by hitting the open net off the rebound of a save by Kepa Arrizabalaga after an attempt by Vinicius from close range in the 22nd minute at the Santiago Bernabeu Stadium.

Benzema had scored four times against Chelsea in the last-eight last season, including the decisive goal in extra time in the second leg in Madrid. He had a hat trick in the first leg in London. The French veteran has scored 20 goals in 27 matches against English opposition. His last 14 goals in the competition have come in the knock-out stage.

Asensio netted the second in the 74th after another assist by Vinicius,



DEADLY DUO: Vinicius Junior and Karim Benzema celebrate the latter's goal against Chelsea, Wednesday

who kept the Chelsea defense in trouble during most of the match with his quick runs and nifty dribbles. The 22-year-old Brazilian was named the game's most valuable player.

The teams have met in the Champions League for three straight years, with Madrid prevailing at this same stage last season before winning a record-ex-

tending 14th title. Chelsea advanced past the Spanish powerhouse in the semifinals in the previous year en route to their second Champions League trophy.

Madrid are looking to make it to the semifinals for the 11th time in 13 seasons, while Chelsea have appeared in the last four only once since 2013-14.

Chelsea's winless run extended

Milan beat Napoli

MILAN: AC Milan beat Napoli for the second time in the space of less than two weeks – and this time with more at stake – as the Rossoneri won 1-0 in the first leg of their Champions League quarterfinal Wednesday. Ismael Bennacer scored shortly before the end of a first half that Napoli had dominated for long stretches. Both teams also hit the crossbar before Napoli midfielder Andre-Frank Zambo Anguissa was sent off 16 minutes from time, following two yellow cards in quick succession. The teams will meet again in Naples next Tuesday with the winner to play either Inter Milan or Benfica in the semifinals.

to five games. They have won only two of their last 11 matches in the Premier League, where they sit in the 11th place.

The match remained mostly even until Madrid broke the deadlock with Benzema's tap in. Chelsea nearly equalised a minute later when Raheem Sterling's close-range shot was stopped by a brilliant reflex save by Thibaut Courtois by the post. The shot appeared to deflect off Madrid defender Eder Militao, making Courtois' save even harder.

Chelsea's chances were reduced after Chilwell pulled Rodrygo from behind to stop the Brazilian forward from entering the area in a breakthrough in the 59th. Asensio came off the bench in the 71st and added to Madrid's lead three minutes later with a low shot from just outside the area.

Aman bags Asian C'ships gold

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Astana, April 13: Aman Sehrawat clinched India's first gold medal at the ongoing Asian Wrestling Championships after beating Kyrgyzstan's Almaz Smanbekov in the 57kg category here Thursday.

Sehrawat, who continued to impress on the senior circuit, beat Smanbekov 9-4 in the summit bout on the penultimate day of the championships. Sehrawat, who trains at Delhi's famed Chhatrasal Stadium, had earlier beaten Japan's Rikuto Arai 7-1 in the quarterfinal before defeating China's Wanhao Zou 7-4 in the semifinal.

Two other Indians also reached the bronze-medal round here Thursday. Deepak Kukna (79kg) and Deepak Nehra (97kg) will fight for bronze medals after losing their respective semifinals even as Anuj Kumar (65kg) and Mulayam Yadav (70kg)



could not reach the medal round. With Sehrawat's gold, India have won 12 medals so far in the com-

petition. The Greco-Roman wrestlers won four medals while the women grapplers grabbed seven.

NO CONCRETE EVIDENCE AGAINST WFI CHIEF: SOURCES

NEW DELHI: No concrete evidence of sexual harassment has been found against Wrestling Federation of India (WFI) chief Brij Bhushan Sharan Singh, who was accused of exploitation by the country's top wrestlers, it has been learnt. In an unprecedented move, top achievers such as Vinesh Phogat, Bajrang Punia and Sakshi Malik staged a sit-in protest at Delhi's Jantar Mantar in January and accused the WFI boss of sexual exploitation and intimidation. The wrestlers had demanded that WFI be disbanded and its president be removed. The Sports Ministry had formed a five-member oversight committee, headed by legendary boxer MC Mary Kom, on January 23 and asked it to submit its findings in one month. Later, it extended the deadline by two weeks and also added Babita Phogat to the probe panel as its sixth member on the insistence of the protesting wrestlers. The committee submitted its report in the first week of April but the ministry is yet to make its findings public. However, multiple sources confirmed that the wrestlers could not prove the sexual harassment allegations against the WFI boss after several hearings. "The wrestlers could not prove their sexual harassment allegations. During the probe, it was alleged that one female physio (name withheld) was asked by Brij Bhushan to give him massage to treat his back pain last year in Bulgaria during a competition. However, during the hearing, the same physio denied any such happening," a source told PTI Thursday. "Instead, she revealed that all Brij Bhushan wanted was a pain killer for headache and when she offered one, and was accompanied by a female coach at that time, the WFI boss even refused to take tablet 'disprin'. It was male coach Anil who had actually helped Brij Bhushan." WFI officials, however, did not make any official comment when approached.