



## BLUNT TALK

Actor Priyanka Chopra speaks about how some men are insecure about women's success and their insecurity contributes to inequality in society

LEISURE P2



## 24-HR CEASEFIRE IN SUDAN

The Sudanese army and a rival paramilitary force agree to a 24-hour ceasefire, Arab media reports say

INTERNATIONAL P10



## LSG FACE RR TODAY

Lucknow Super Giants look to tick all the boxes and return to winning ways when they take on Rajasthan Royals

SPORTS P12

## Saroj Samal new I&PR director



POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, April 18:** The state government Tuesday appointed senior IAS officer Saroj Kumar Samal as the director of the Information and Public Relations (I&PR) department.

Samal, who took charge as I&PR director soon after the order in the afternoon, replaced Indramani Tripathy. Tripathy has been posted as additional Secretary of the ST&SC Development, Minorities and Backward Classes Welfare department.

Tripathy would also continue with the additional charge of the director of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes Research and Training Institute (SCSTRTI). "The post of director is declared equivalent in status and responsibility to the post of joint secretary provided in the IAS cadre of the state," according to a notification by the General Administration and Public Grievance department, Tuesday.



**SUMMER COVER:** Girls walk through an alley covered with hanging umbrellas on a hot day, at Dilli Haat in New Delhi, Tuesday

## As state sizzles, schools shut till April 20

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, April 18:** As heat-wave sweeps state, Odisha government Tuesday ordered closure of all schools up to Class XII and Anganwadi centres till April 20, an official said.

Earlier, the state government had ordered closure of schools and

Anganwadi centres from April 12 to 16.

At least 29 places recorded temperatures above 40 degrees Celsius, with Baripara and Jharsuguda boiling at 44.2 degrees Celsius, the India Meteorological Department (IMD) said.

Bolangir and Boudh recorded 43.7 degrees Celsius, followed by

Nuapada (43.6), Titlagarh and Sonepur (43.2), Angul (43.1) and Sundargarh and Sambalpur at 43 degrees Celsius.

State capital Bhubaneswar and nearby Cuttack recorded 42.7 and 42.5 degrees Celsius respectively.

The IMD, in its bulletin, said there will be no major change in temperature in the next two-three days.

# Man, wives hacked to death in Bargarh

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bargarh/Bheden, April 18:** A 70 year-old man and his two wives were hacked to death at Akhiphuta village under Bheden police limits in Bargarh district, police said Tuesday.

The bodies of Tankadhar Sahu, Droupadi Sahu, 65 and Madhavi Sahu, 45, with deep head injuries were found in a pool of blood at their residence, said Bargarh SDPO Amrit Kumar Panda.

The incident came to the fore in the morning when neither of the three came out of house till 11am. One of their neighbours, who found something amiss, peeped through the window to find the two women lying in a pool of blood.

Soon, the news spread like a forest fire and police was informed.

Police reached the spot and broke open the door to find the women and Tankadhar lying lifeless in separate rooms. All three bore deep head injuries, a police official said.

The official added that they found a door in the rear side of the house open and a blood-stained axe nearby. Police suspect the assailant to have



Panic-gripped villagers near the crime scene

OP PHOTO

## POLICE SUSPECT THE ASSAILANT TO HAVE ESCAPED THROUGH THE REAR DOOR AFTER KILLING THE TRIO WITH AXE

escaped the house through the rear door after hacking the three to death with the axe.

"Tankadhar married Madhavi after he failed to have any child from Droupadi. The three were living happily," Shardul Rana, a neighbour, said.

Madhavi's brother Sananda

Deheri blamed Tanakadhar's nephew for the murder.

"Tanakadhar's nephew used to stay with them until a few months back when he fled with the 70-year-old's motorcycle. The matter even reached police station. I suspect him to be the killer," Sananda said.

According to the SDPO, preliminary findings reveal it to be a case of murder. "The matter is being investigated from all angles. A forensic team and sniffer dog have been pressed into service. Things will be candid as the probe proceeds," Panda said.

## IRREGULAR by MANJUL



Didn't you know it was a ruling party function? To shift the blame, they can do a surgical strike on you

## BILKIS CONVICTS' REMISSION

# Was gravity of crime considered, asks SC

AGENCIES

**New Delhi, April 18:** The Supreme Court Tuesday questioned the parole granted to convicts in the Bilkis Bano case during their incarceration period and said the gravity of the offence should have been considered by the Gujarat government.

A bench of Justices KM Joseph and BV Nagarathna said, "A pregnant woman was gang-raped and several people were killed. You cannot compare victim's case with standard section 302 (murder) cases. Like you cannot compare apples with oranges, similarly massacre cannot be compared with single murder. Crimes are generally committed against society and the community. Unequals cannot be treated equally."

"The question is whether the government applied its mind and what material formed the basis of its decision to grant remission," the bench said.

It added, "Today it is Bilkis but

tomorrow it can be anyone. It may be you or me. If you do not show your reasons for grant of remission, then we will draw our own conclusions." The bench posted the batch of pleas challenging the remission to the convicts in Bilkis Bano case for final disposal May 2 and asked all the convicts who have not been served notices to file their replies.

Meanwhile, Centre and the Gujarat government told the SC that they may file a plea seeking a review of its March 27 order asking them to be ready with original files on the grant of remission to the convicts in the Bilkis Bano case. The apex court asked the Centre and the state to make its stand clear about filing of a review plea. On March 27, terming Bilkis Bano's gang-rape and the murder of her family members during the 2002 Godhra riots as a 'horrendous' act, the SC had asked the Gujarat government whether uniform standards, as followed in other cases of murder, were applied while granting remission to the 11 convicts in the case.

Contd...P4



## MARKET WATCH

INDEX	VAIATION
SENSEX	59727.01 ↓ 183.74
NIFTY	17660.20 ↓ 46.60
DOLLAR	82.04 ↑ ₹0.06
EURO	89.91 ↑ ₹0.34
GOLD	₹60,542 ↑ ₹469
SILVER	₹75,281 ↑ ₹2

## WEATHER

	BHUB	CTK
TEMP MAX	42.7°C	42.5°C
TEMP MIN	25.6°C	26.5°C
Humidity	45%	52%
Rainfall	Nil	Nil
Forecast	Light rain very likely	

# Dead NASA satellite to hit Earth today

In its 16-yr mission tenure, RHESSI recorded over 1 lakh X-ray events, allowing scientists to study energetic particles in solar flares

AGENCIES

**Washington, April 18:** A retired NASA satellite, Reuven Ramaty High Energy Solar Spectroscopic Imager (RHESSI), is expected to reenter Earth's atmosphere Wednesday, almost 21 years after launch. It does not present any threat to humans, the US space agency said.

Launched in 2002, the RHESSI observed solar flares and coronal mass ejections from its low-Earth orbit, helping scientists understand the underlying physics of how such powerful bursts of energy are created. NASA decommissioned it after 16 years, in 2018,



due to communications difficulties.

The US Department of Defense, which is monitoring the satellite, expects the 660-pound spacecraft to re-enter

the atmosphere at approximately 9:30pm EDT (7am IST) Wednesday, but the timings can vary.

While NASA expects most of the spacecraft to burn up as it travels through the atmosphere, some components are expected to survive re-entry.

"The risk of harm coming to anyone on Earth is low - approximately one in 2,467," the agency said in a statement.

The spacecraft launched aboard an Orbital Sciences Corporation Pegasus XL rocket with a mission to image the high-energy electrons that carry a large part of the energy released in solar flares.

Contd...P4

Govt. of Odisha

### A little precaution can keep Heat Stroke away

### Take Care, Stay Safe

- Avoid exposure to sun and heavy work in hot weather from 11 AM to 3 PM.
- Drink enough water and, take umbrella & water bottle with you while moving out.
- Children, pregnant women, elderly people, and persons with high blood pressure or diabetes should be more careful.
- Stay away from alcohol, cigarette, tobacco and other intoxicants.
- In case of sudden illness due to heat wave, go to a nearby hospital immediately.
- Free treatment is provided for heat stroke patients in all Government Hospitals.

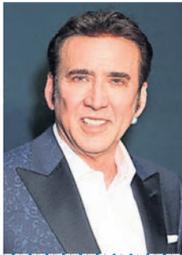
For more information please call **104 Health Helpline**

Healthy Odisha  
Happy Odisha

Health & Family Welfare Department

Facebook: @OHW Odisha  
@OHW Odisha  
http://www.health.odisha.gov.in

OIPR-10003/13/0008/2324



## NICOLAS CAGE ONCE ATE LIVE COCKROACHES FOR A MOVIE

Oscar-winner Nicolas Cage said that eating two cockroaches on camera during the making of his 1988 comedy *Vampire's Kiss* remains a career regret. "I'll never do that again, I'm sorry I did it at all" Cage told *Yahoo Entertainment*, reports *Variety*.

## MISCHA BARTON JOINS NEW SEASON OF NEIGHBOURS

Actress Mischa Barton is joining the new season of the iconic Australian soap *Neighbours*. Barton will guest star in the role of Reece, an American new to Erinsborough who's not quite who she appears to be, reports *Deadline*.



### FORTUNE FORECAST

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**ARIES**  
The yogis have finally succeeded in impressing you. Was it a stint in an Art of Living course? Ganesh gives you the thumbs-up and suggests you join that music or dance class you have been wanting to. Generally a nice day, and success is on the cards.

**TAURUS**  
Today is a day of closure. You may find yourself on the winning side of things, says Ganesh. Pending projects will reach completion and you will achieve satisfaction and success in education. With a little extra effort, you can build a castle from stone. Ganesh wishes you a cheerful and colourful day.

**GEMINI**  
You will think about the issues faced by other people as well as about increasing your social standing and elevating your social esteem. It is an extremely profitable day for those in the retail business and hence make the most of it, says Ganesh.

**CANCER**  
There may not be many opportunities visible on the horizon today. And, chances are that you may end up getting embroiled in some complicated situations, without even a fault of yours. Relax! Given your people skills and lively spirits, you will be able to sail through.

**LEO**  
The discomfort similar to the fish-out-of-water syndrome will be a thing of the past, as today you will be quite flexible and would want to remain on the move, says Ganesh. So much so that you may even begin to feel bound by the environment in your office.

**VIRGO**  
You are quick-witted, sharp and artistic to the core, says Ganesh, so you may go ahead and enrapture people with your special abilities, perhaps at a social gathering. However, Ganesh says it would be better if you could conserve some of that enthusiasm in order to focus your attention on issues of greater importance.

**LIBRA**  
Ganesh says that to gain future opportunities you may have to rely on past experience. You will tend to become possessive about things close to you. You will also have to deal with unpleasant situations where your integrity is questioned. All said and done your day will go good except for minor issues and your understanding attitude will be praise worth today.

**SCORPIO**  
It is very likely that the moment of victory is often preceded by a moment of peril; but that is not where the danger ends. In the heat of victory, arrogance and overconfidence can push you away from what you aimed for. So, it is important for you to learn when to stop in victory. Set a goal and stop when you reach there, says Ganesh.

**SAGITTARIUS**  
Today will be a day for introspection, says Ganesh, as you try and find the root causes of your problems. But the job is only half-done; the rest will depend on the initiatives you may take to implement possible solutions to your problems.

**CAPRICORN**  
You have meticulously planned every aspect of your plan and prepared the check list. The only thing left now to do is execution of that plan. Delays and obstacles, however, will block your path and will leave you disheartened. Don't doubt your abilities though. You have planned properly and have faith as those delays are not permanent, assures Ganesh.

**AQUARIUS**  
Don't let your emotions play a spoilsport in the important decisions of your life. The tendency to be sentimental when you need to be rational will become an obstacle in your path. Learn to curb this habit otherwise you may have to pay a heavy price, advises Ganesh.

**PISCES**  
Today your professional and love life will cause worry. You will want to be emotionally balanced but you may not find the time to sort things out. Long sightedness and open discussions will help resolve matters easily.

# Kangana laments lost friendship with Aamir

**Mumbai:** Actress Kangana Ranaut has shared that actor Aamir Khan used to be her best friend before her much-talked about legal battle started with actor Hrithik Roshan. Kangana took to Instagram,

where she shared a video of her having a conversation with Aamir on the sets of the TV show *Satyamev Jayate*. She also talked about how the Dangal star used to guide and mentor her with the choices.

She added captions: "Actually mujhe bhi kabhi kabhi woh din yaad aate hain jab Aamir sir was my best friend... jaane kahan gaye woh din." "One thing is for sure that he

has mentored me, appreciated me, and shaped a lot of my choices, before Hrithik did that legal case on me. Post that they made their loyalties clear - it was one woman against entire industry."

Kangana and Hrithik were engaged in a public tiff, after she talked about her "silly ex" in an interview. This led to mud-slinging, leaked e-mails, pictures and chats.



# Priyanka on bane of men's insecurity

**Mumbai:** Global star Priyanka Chopra Jonas discusses gender stereotypes and men in her life.

In her recent interview, *The Matrix Resurrections* star spoke about the men in her life and gave a shout out to her father and husband.

Priyanka spoke about how men's insecurity contributes to inequality. She said, "I have some incredible men in my life who are not insecure of my success but I also have men in my life who are very insecure of my success. It's threatening to their territory when a woman does that or if a woman is more successful or a man is staying at home and woman is going out to work."

Priyanka stressed the importance of raising sons without gender stereotypes. She said, "They (men) will feel bad but we have to teach our sons that there is no shame in crying. There is no shame in shedding tears...there is no shame in giving spotlight to your mothers, sisters, girlfriends."

Priyanka also recalled how her father never doubted her mother's accomplishment and always stood by her. She also lauded her husband Nick Jonas by saying "Now today when I am walking the red carpet with my husband and he steps aside and gives me centre stage, I feel proud."



# Big B's thoughts on ChatGPT

**Mumbai:** Top star Amitabh Bachchan hasn't caught the ChatGPT fever, yet. But, he may soon give it a try.

In a recent round-up of his day, the superstar said that he spent his lazy Monday without any agenda or issues to ponder over.

With no meeting to keep him distracted during the day, the 80-year-old shared his thoughts on American artificial intelligence

(AI) research company OpenAI's chatbot that has been taking the world by storm.

Bachchan wrote in his blog, "AI .. commandeth the World and as does the ChatGPT app., that, as we all know is the instrument that shall eradicate the human soon enough .. I wanted ChatGPT to write my DAY for me ... but then that would be without heart and soul .. but some day I shall make an effort .."

He also talked

about how infrequently he appears in public. He admitted, "The public appearances of course are restricted due to medical .. but generally there is apprehension .. what to say, how to conduct yourself .. what to wear .. how much to be involved."

The *Sholay* actor had suffered an injury while in Hyderabad filming his upcoming Nag Ashwin movie, *Project K*. The accident took place while shooting an action sequence for the film. The actor flew back to Mumbai and was resting at his residence.

# Samantha's cryptic note post Shaakuntalam failure

**Mumbai:** Actress Samantha Ruth Prabhu, who was recently seen in the film *Shaakuntalam*, shared a cryptic post on her social media Tuesday following the failure of the movie.

After the film tanked, a Telugu film producer named Chittibabu has criticised Samantha saying that her career is 'finished'. He told a YouTube channel that the days of stardom are over for the actress and she should do whatever offers she gets from now on.

But it seems Samantha is unfazed by the failure as she took to her Instagram to share a picture of herself with a caption in Sanskrit quoted from Bhagavad Gita. She seemed to have ad-

ressed the underwhelming response to the film calling that she can only do her duty, and can't control the outcome.

She wrote, "*Karmanye vadhika raste Ma phaleshu kadachana Ma karma phala he tur bhuh Ma te sangotsa karmani* (You can only do your karma, and can't be the authority of it. One should not perform karma with the desire for reward)."

Samantha will be next seen in upcoming Telugu romantic drama *Kushi*, in which she will share the screen with Vijay Deverakonda. She also has the Indian counterpart of *Citadel* with Varun Dhawan in the pipeline.



### PEANUTS



### CALVIN AND HOBBS

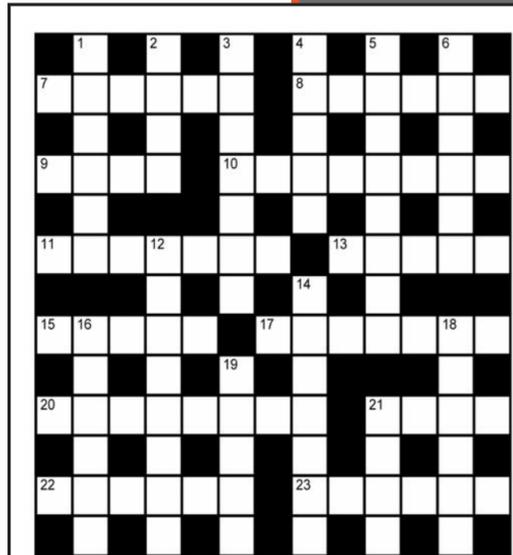


### BREVITY



### FUN post

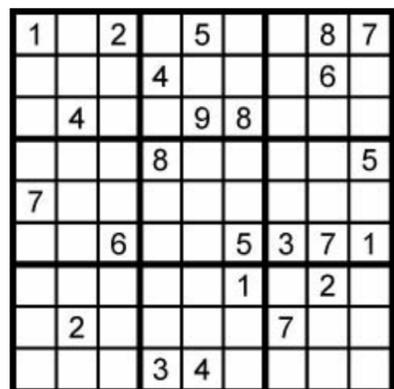
### CROSSWORD



- Across**
- 7 Courageous
  - 8 Auto shop problem
  - 9 Snake's warning
  - 10 Increase
  - 11 Paper carrier
  - 13 Beach or bath accessory
  - 15 Palace dweller
  - 17 Medical exam, sort of
  - 20 Team sport
  - 21 Jubilation
  - 22 Cleric's soapbox
  - 23 Sword
  - 5 Skilled musician
  - 6 Levy by force
  - 12 Drastic changes, usually in business (5-3)
  - 14 Mansion employees
  - 16 Like some gems
  - 18 Spectacles
  - 19 Piquant
  - 21 Breaks
- Down**
- 1 Reddish
  - 2 Menageries
  - 3 South American country
  - 4 Parenthetical comment

### 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



CROSSWORD

SUDOKU



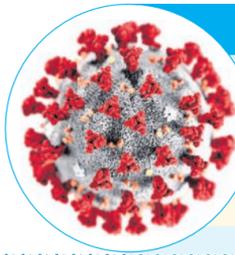
CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW

# downtown



## TROPICAL FRUIT

A woman sells ice apple at OUAT Road in Bhubaneswar as mercury rises in City, Tuesday



## COVID-19 TRACKER

	INFECTED	RECOVERED	DEAD
World	68,57,65,468	65,85,05,412	68,43,069
India	4,48,34,859	4,42,42,474	5,31,152
Odisha	13,36,304	13,26,915	9,204

## State to stay hot & humid for 2-3 days

Heatwave warning has been issued by the India Meteorological Department for some districts in north and western Odisha till Thursday morning

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, April 18:** Severe heatwave conditions continued to prevail in many parts of the state Tuesday with mercury soaring to 42 degrees Celsius mark at 17 places.

According to the India Meteorological Department (IMD), as many as 29 places of Odisha recorded a maximum temperature of 40 degrees Celsius or more, Tuesday.

Baripada and Jharsuguda have recorded a maximum temperature of 44.2 degrees Celsius each while it was 43.7 degrees at Boudh and Bolangir.

Similarly, Titlagarh and Sonepur registered maximum temperature of 43.2 degrees Celsius each, followed by Angul (43.1), Sambalpur

(43), Sundargarh (43), Talcher (42.8), Bhubaneswar (42.7) and Cuttack (42.5), Bhawanipatna (42.5) and Rourkela (42.4).

Dhenkanal and Jajpur each registered day time temperature of 42 degrees Celsius.

The IMD said that hot and humid weather conditions are likely to prevail in the state during the next 2 to 3 days. Heatwave warning has been issued for some districts in north and western Odisha till Thursday morning. The day temperature is very likely to be above 40 degrees at many places over the all the districts of Odisha.

There will be no large change in maximum temperature during next 2 to 3 days and fall by 2 to 3 degrees Celsius thereafter at many places over the districts of Odisha, it said.

Thursday morning. The day temperature is very likely to be above 40 degrees at many places over the all the districts of Odisha.

## Tudu, BJP team denied entry to Sambalpur

PNN & AGENCIES

**Sambalpur, April 18:** A high-level BJP delegation comprising Union Minister Bishweswar Tudu and several party MPs and MLAs was Tuesday detained after being prevented from entering this violence-hit city. The BJP team was intercepted at Sripura Square on Jharsuguda-Sambalpur road and denied permission to move further. Later, they were taken to the nearby Thelkoli police station and detained.

Sambalpur Additional Superintendent of Police (ASP) Tapan Kumar Mohanty clarified the reason why the BJP delegation was detained. "The BJP delegation was denied permission to enter the city because they were not abiding by the provision under Section 144 of CrPC. They cannot be allowed entry to the city at a time when curfew is in force," said Mohanty.

The team comprised Union Minister of State for Jal Shakti and Tribal Affairs Tudu, MPs Jual Oram (Sundargarh) and Suresh Pujari (Bargarh), and MLAs Nauri Nayak, Shankar Oram and Kusum Tete. Accompanying them were state BJP president Manmohan



The BJP delegation was detained by cops and then taken to Thelkoli police station

Samal and Sameer Mohanty. "I strongly condemn the Odisha government for preventing a Union minister's visit to Sambalpur where a tribal youth was killed during violence. As the country's Tribal Affairs Minister and myself also a tribal, it is my duty to meet the family members of the deceased youth. However, I was stopped midway by the police," Tudu told reporters at Sripura Square where the team was intercepted by police.

Tudu said that he will certainly raise the matter with the Centre. "It is unfortunate that the

Sambalpur district administration stopped me and my colleagues to enter the city. They (administration) were given prior information regarding our visit," Tudu said.

Sundargarh MP Jual Oram, said "It is unfortunate that the police stopped the delegation comprising BJP MPs and MLAs. We have been denied entry into the city while the rioters are moving freely."

Pujari also came down heavily on the state government. "They prevented us fearing exposure of police inefficiency. The police have

## NET REMAINS SUSPENDED

**Sambalpur:** The Sambalpur district administration Tuesday extended the suspension of internet services for another 24 hours. However, relaxation time during the curfew period has been increased, an official said.

The internet services would remain suspended till 10am of Wednesday. However, curfew has been relaxed in the city from 7:30am to 1pm and from 3:30pm to 6pm for the convenience of the public, said District Collector Ananya Das.

The city had witnessed large-scale violence in two phases, April 12 and April 14, leaving many people including 10 police personnel injured. Shops were burnt and many cases of arson were reported.

The district administration suspended internet services April 13 in Sambalpur, a day after violence was witnessed during a motorcycle rally in the run-up to the Hanuman Jayanti celebrations April 14.

This is for the fourth time that internet services have been suspended to curb the spread of inflammatory messages and prevent misuse of social media, in the aftermath of violence, officials said.

Meanwhile Sambalpur SP, B Gangadhar said that so far 85 people have been arrested for their alleged involvement in violence. He added that police are patrolling all the hotspots on a continuous basis and are keeping a close watch on the situation.

failed to arrest the killers of a tribal youth during the violence. The district collector of Sambalpur has been acting beyond her powers," Pujari said.

Earlier, Pujari alleged that he was also not allowed to come out of his residence at Sakhipada. "I will def-

initely raise the matter in Parliament," Pujari added. BJP's Odisha unit president Samal, who is also a member of the delegation alleged that "the CM is fearing the BJP leaders as they might expose the inefficiencies in handling of the large-scale violence in Sambalpur".

## Plus II student hangs herself in hostel room

The deceased's family members say Archana was being mentally tortured by her alleged boyfriend who is responsible for her suicide

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, April 18:** There is no let-up in incidents of student suicides as another girl has ended her life by hanging herself from the ceiling fan in her hostel room at Gothapatana under Chandaka police station here Monday night.

The deceased was identified as Archana Das, a native of Keonjhar. She was a Plus III Science second year student of the private college.

Monday afternoon, Archana did not come out of her room for several hours that aroused suspicion among the inmates and hostel authorities. The inmates later knocked at the door but there was no response from inside.

The panicked students informed the college authorities about the incident. They broke into the room and found Archana hanging from ceiling with her saree. She was soon rushed to a nearby private hospital where the doctors declared her 'brought dead'.

On being informed, Chandaka police reached the spot and sent her body to Capital hospital for post-mortem. The body was handed over to the family members after an autopsy Tuesday.



Monday afternoon, Archana did not come out of her room for several hours that aroused suspicion among the inmates and hostel authorities

The inmates later knocked at the door but there was no response from inside

The panicked students informed the college authorities about the incident. They broke into the room and found Das hanging from ceiling with her saree

Police have been investigating into the case to find out the reasons behind Archana taking the extreme step. An unnatural death (26/23) case has been registered in this regard, said the police.

The deceased's family members told the mediapersons that she was being mentally tortured by her alleged boyfriend who is responsible for her suicide. However, police sources claimed that the family members have not mentioned anyone's name in their complaint.

Notably, a female PhD student of a private college was Saturday

found hanging in her rental accommodation at Nandan Vihar area under Infocity police limits here.

Similarly, a female Plus II student was found hanging inside her hostel room at Rama Devi Women's University of Saheed Nagar area here March 29.

Likewise, a nursing student of West Bengal had reportedly committed suicide in Bharatpur area here January 31.

Sources in commissionerate police claimed that as many as 417 persons have committed suicide in the city during 2022.

## Man strangles wife to death in City

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, April 18:** In a shocking incident, a man strangled his wife to death following a heated altercation over some family dispute at Telugu Basti in Bharatpur police limits here Tuesday afternoon. The deceased was identified as Mama Pradhan, 21, a native of Digapahandi area in Ganjam district.

Sources claimed that the victim had tied the knot with accused Sagar, 25, of Golanthara area in Ganjam district around four years back. The couple has an 18-month-old daughter out of their wedlock.

The couple was staying at a rented house in Telugu Basti and Sagar was working as a house painter.

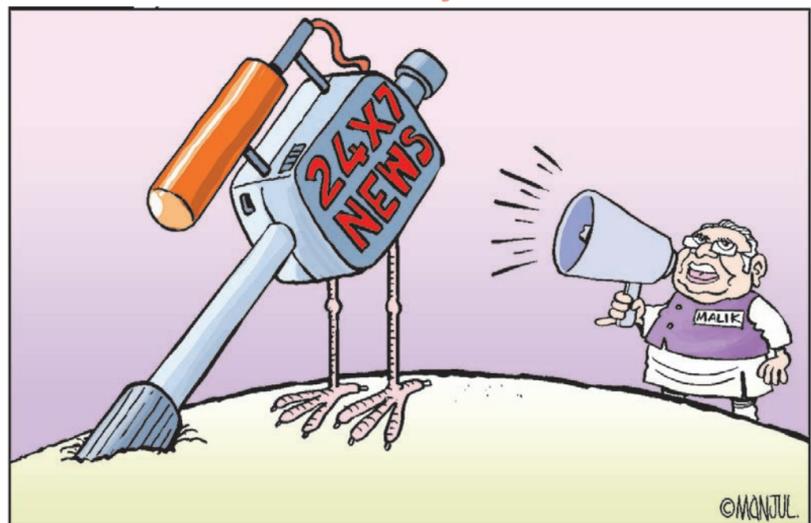
The relationship between them was going through a rough patch for past several months. Sagar's family had recently taken away the child with them.

Meanwhile, the couple again entered into a heated argument over some unknown issues at around 4:30pm Monday. The altercation soon turned violent and Sagar strangled Mama to death in a fit of rage.

Some locals in the slum area informed Bharatpur police that rushed to the spot and seized the body. Sagar was arrested and is being interrogated by the police.

The body has been sent to AIIMS, Bhubaneswar for post-mortem which is scheduled to be held Wednesday Based on the complaint lodged by the landlord, Pinky Das, police registered a case (167/23).

## POLITICKLE by MANJUL



## Crucial Srimandir files untraceable

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, April 18:** Two important files related to Shree Jagannath Temple Administration (JTA) have gone missing from the Law department.

The incident came to the fore after the department's deputy secretary wrote to all sections under it to trace out those two files on priority basis.

Because of these two important files from 2006 and 2014 being missing, the state government is facing difficulties in complying with the



Orissa High Court order. The deputy secretary, in a let-

ter to all sections, informed them that two files of the JTA Section couldn't be traced among the records of that particular section.

"Therefore, it is hereby requested to all sections of this department to conduct search operations in their records on a priority basis and submit the said files, if available, to JTA Section immediately for compliance of order of High Court," he said.

The deputy secretary has also asked the sections to report non-traceability of the said files for initiation of further necessary action.

## WORLD LIVER DAY

## Liquor, junk food, sugary drinks blamed for liver diseases

World Liver Day is celebrated April 19 every year in an attempt to spread awareness about the importance of liver health and educate people about maintaining a healthy liver.

Liver is a vital single organ that detoxifies our system, fights infections, regulates blood sugar levels apart from performing numerous other functions in the body that are key to leading a healthy life. However, most of the people realise the problems in liver function a little late, as there are hardly any visible symptoms like other diseases. So, it is important to know more about the liver diseases and how to maintain a healthy liver.

According to experts, increased consumption of alcohol, junk food, high-fat diets, and sugary drinks are responsible for a spike in liver disease in India.

Abhai Singh, senior consultant, gastroenterologist, Primus Super Speciality Hospital, New Delhi, said, "Liver illness has spread like an epidemic in India, affecting one out of every five persons."

"In India, liver-related fatalities have reached a startling 268,580 (3.17% of all deaths) every year,

accounting for 18.3 per cent of the global 2 million liver-related deaths making it the 11th leading cause of death globally. Alarming, liver cancer rates have tripled since 1980s, with a projected 1.1 million deaths from liver cancer by 2030," Singh added.

Liver diseases are broadly caused by hepatitis viruses (A to E), alcohol, non-alcoholic fatty liver disease (NAFLD), drugs, autoimmune and genetic diseases, cryptogenic and liver tumours - benign and malignant.

"The leading causes of these illnesses stem from consuming high amounts of junk food, high-fat diets, and sugary drinks," Singh maintained.

The incidence of alcoholic fatty liver disease (AFLD) is also growing in India due to steadily rising alcohol consumption, said Dr (Brig) Atul Kumar Sood (retd), HOD &



Liver diseases are broadly caused by hepatitis viruses (A to E), alcohol, non-alcoholic fatty liver disease, drugs, autoimmune and genetic diseases, cryptogenic and liver tumours

Director, Hepatic & Digestive Sciences, Sarvodaya Hospital, Faridabad. AFLD develops when excess fat accumulates in the liver, can lead to liver inflammation, scarring, and even liver failure.

"Some people are more vulnerable to AFLD than others because of metabolic and genetic factors. Heavy drinkers are at the highest risk, while obese people or those with a high body mass index (BMI) are also susceptible. Those with

diabetes face a higher risk of AFLD and, conversely, people with AFLD have a higher risk of developing diabetes," said Sood.

"The risk also rises as one becomes older. The poorly nourished people also are more vulnerable to liver damage. Moreover, women are at an increased risk of developing AFLD, as their bodies metabolise alcohol differently than men," he added.

However, all these are preventable and manageable with lifestyle modifications, vaccination against Hepatitis B, and early detection

and treatment of Hepatitis C. Liver transplantation also offers hope for those with end-stage liver disease.

The doctors suggested avoiding binge drinking and limiting alcohol consumption; avoiding foods that are high in fat, sugar, and salt, and eating a diet rich in fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and lean protein. They also recommended the need for regular exercise, maintaining a healthy weight and reducing stress.

"To take care of your liver, you should maintain a healthy weight, eat a healthy and balanced diet that includes plenty of fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and lean proteins, limit alcohol consumption, avoid exposure to chemicals and pollutants that can damage your liver," said Shuchin Bajaj, Founder & Director Ujala Cygnus group of Hospitals.

"Vaccinations can help protect you from hepatitis A and B, which can cause liver damage. Exercise regularly as well as practise safe sex as Hepatitis B and C can be spread through unprotected sex. Use protection to reduce your risk," he added.

## CM greets Ganjam admin for winning Panchayat Awards

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, April 18:** Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik Tuesday congratulated Ganjam district administration for winning the Best District Panchayat of the country.

In his Twitter account, Patnaik said, "Glad to share that Ganjam has been awarded the Best District Panchayat in the country. Indeed a proud moment to receive the National Panchayat Awards 2023 from President Droupadi Murmu. Congratulations to the people, people's representatives & district administration."

The Chief Minister also congratulated Hinjilicut block to receive the National Panchayat Award as

the best block in the country. "Thank you from the bottom of my heart to all those who have worked hard to make Hinjilikutu better, especially the people of Hinjilikutu. With everyone's efforts, Hinjilikutu will reach a new peak of development in the coming days," he said.

President Droupadi Murmu conferred eight awards under the National Panchayat Awards-2023 to Odisha during a function at Vigyan Bhawan in New Delhi, Monday.

Ganjam Zilla Parishad as well as Hinjilicut block secured the first rank in the country on the basis of the performance of gram panchayats (GPs) of the district and the performance of all the panchayats of the block respectively.

## OHRC seeks BDA's reply on shed demolition

**Bhubaneswar:** The Odisha Human Rights Commission (OHRC) has directed the secretary of Bhubaneswar Development Authority (BDA) to submit a reply in connection with the demolition of a shed near an Aahar centre run by BMC at Gautam Nagar where the advocates and some common people used to take rest. BDA officials had demolished the tin shed April 11, 2023. The petition was filed by rights activist Biswapriya Kanungo on behalf of some lawyers and a DTP operator. While hearing the plea, the commission directed the BDA secretary to submit his reply by May 25, 2023. The petitioner alleged that the shed is situated on Plot no. 370 (gharabari), which has been occupied by them since 2018 following the permission of Public Works department. The land belongs to the state GA department.

# SRESTA teachers to boost medical education in state



POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, April 18:** Taking a step to enhance the quality of healthcare and medical education in Odisha, the state government has initiated steps for redeployment of superannuated teachers of Armed Forces Medical Services (AFMS) in government medical colleges in partnership with the Defence Ministry and Ministry of Health & Family Welfare.

Tuesday wrote a letter to the Central H&FW secretary communicating the state government's consent for implementation of SRESTA (Scheme for Redeployment of Superannuated Teachers of the AFMS) in Medical Colleges and Hospitals (MCHs) of the state. It should be mentioned that AFMS, in partnership with Ministry of Defence and H&FW Ministry, has developed SRESTA to leverage the superannuated medical teachers of the armed forces to fill to strengthen the faculty systems at various government medical colleges of the country.

Under this scheme, the retired medical teachers of the AFMS, who are registered in a national pool, are referred to as SRESTA National Medical Faculty. Pandit informed that to carry forward this partnership, on behalf of the state government, the Medical Education and Training director has been declared the nodal officer. Usually, medical teachers in the government system retire between ages of 65 and 70 whereas 65 per cent of AFMS medical teachers retire at 58, thus having at least 7-10 years of active service for future. Apart from this, the AFMS teachers who avail premature retirement or release after short service, have longer periods of active service to serve. As these teachers are disciplined, experienced and adaptable to environments of any part of the country, they have been highly recommended by governments for deployment in medical colleges.



UP IN ARMS: Members of NRRI Contract Labour Union staged a demonstration in Cuttack, Tuesday, seeking fulfilment of their various demands

# State's disaster mgmt model hailed by delegates

State Chief Secretary briefed delegates from eight countries about the steps the state government has taken post the cyclone of 1999 to save lives and property from disasters

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, April 18:** State Chief Secretary Pradeep Kumar Jena, joining a symposium on 'Disaster Management in Odisha' recently held under the 'Zen Next-Democracy-Network' programme sponsored by the Indian Council of Cultural Relations (ICCR), informed the participants about how the state has been able to reduce the damage caused from disasters significantly over the years.



roads were also badly damaged. "Since that, we have faced 10 cyclones so far and have learnt a lot. The experience of each cyclone was different. But due to our preparedness, we ensured zero casualties since the cyclone 'Bulbul' in 2019," he said. Explaining the paradigm shift in disaster management, he noted the robust disaster management institutional mechanism; impact based forecasting and targeted evacuation strategy and 879 multi-purpose cyclone centres and flood centres.

## WORLD HERITAGE DAY

# Committed to preserve state's monuments: CM

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, April 18:** Taking note of the fact that Odisha is home to a diversity of archeological marvels, Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik Tuesday reaffirmed his government's commitment to protect the historical treasures of the state for the coming generations. Through his Twitter account he said, "Odisha is the land of majestic architecture, marvelous monuments and rich heritage which tell stories of our glorious past. On World Heritage Day/International Day for Monuments and Sites, reaffirm commitment to protect the timeless treasures of Odisha for future generations."



keeping of historical monuments, through its Twitter account pledged to preserve, protect and honour the rich heritage of the state. Meanwhile, to learn about the historical wealth of the Temple City, following the Media Session of Y20 Consultation at KIIT-Deemed-to-be University, 35 journalists from Delhi-based media houses joined the heritage trail themed "Romance etched in stones" under the initiative of Odisha Walks by Odisha Tourism, Sunday. They visited the 7th century Parasurameswar Temple and the

10th century Mukteswar and Kartikeshwar temple complex in the morning. They not only got fascinated by the unique temple architecture of the Kalingan era and intricate carvings on the walls, but were also delighted to know the stories behind the temples and their precincts. Jitu Mishra, a trained archaeologist, who guided the walk on behalf of Odisha Tourism, said "The Ekamra Kshetra has been regarded as a sacred abode of Lord Shiva and Parvati and the temples, also narrate the socio-cultural traditions of the bygone eras. He described how the temple architecture and designs had some influences from Hinduism, Buddhism and Jainism. Diptanshu, a travel writer, said, "This is my third visit to Odisha. However, for the first time I am taking part in a heritage walk in Bhubaneswar. I love it and I hope others should also explore the beautiful and unique temples."

# 'Support for transforming lives of handloom workers'



POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, April 18:** As many as 32 officers Tuesday joined the Handloom, Textiles and Handicrafts department. While 26 of them joined as Inspectors of textile, 6 have been recruited as auditors. An orientation was organized at the Lok Seva Bhawan Convention Centre for the new recruits. Joining the programme on virtual platform, Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik welcomed the new officers and said that they all have come out successful through a fair and transparent process under the 5-T framework of governance. He said, "I hope as key players in the implementation of these schemes, you will actively support the weaving community in bringing about transformation in their lives."

he said that the government has implemented many innovative schemes for the economic development of people engaged in handloom sector. Construction of work-shed cum houses, Boyan Jyoti Yojana, supply of improved looms and accessories, capacity building training and exposure visits of weavers to established handloom clusters for knowledge acquisition, concretisation of loom-pits and Baristha Bunakar Sahayata Yojana have been put in place making remarkable impact on the lives of people, he said. Handloom, Textiles and Handicrafts Minister Rita Sahu said that handloom sector is making impressive progress under the leadership of Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik. The weavers and handicrafts artisans are our pride. The new officers should work towards the welfare of these people with commitment, she added. Speaking on the occasion, Chief Secretary PK Jena said that our handloom and handicrafts are hugely popular and considered as premium products outside Odisha. The new officers should ensure that the programmes reach the weaving community. They should encourage youngsters to take up this profession with the use of technology and modern designs.

## Continued from P1

### Was gravity ...

It had sought a response from the Centre, Gujarat government and others on a plea filed by Bilkis Bano, who was gang-raped and seven members of her family were killed during the 2002 post-Godhra riots. Bano has challenged the remission of sentence of 11 convicts in the case. All the 11 convicts were granted remission by the Gujarat government and released on August 15 last year. The top court is seized of PILs filed by CPI(M) leader Subhashini Ali, Revati Laul, an independent journalist, Roop Rekha Verma, who is a former vice chancellor of the Lucknow University, and TMC MP Mahua Moitra against the release of the convicts. Bano was 21 years old and five months pregnant when she was gang-raped.

### Dead NASA satellite...

It achieved this with its sole instrument, an imaging spectrometer, which recorded X-rays and gamma rays from the Sun. Before RHESSI, neither gamma-ray images nor high-energy X-ray images had been taken of solar flares. Data from RHESSI provided vital clues about solar flares and their associated coronal mass ejections. These events release the energy equivalent of billions of megatons of TNT into the solar atmosphere within minutes and can have effects on Earth, including the disruption of electrical systems. Understanding them has proven challenging. During its mission tenure, RHESSI recorded more than 100,000 X-ray events, allowing scientists to study the energetic particles in solar flares.

# 14 mn type 2 diabetes cases linked to poor diet

Increased intake of refined rice and wheat as well as processed red meat, and low consumption of whole grains is causing a significant increase in the global cases of diabetes, according to a study. The study, published in the journal Nature Medicine, showed that poor diet contributed to over 14.1 million cases of Type-2 diabetes, representing over 70 per cent of new diagnoses globally. They found factors such as drinking too much fruit juice and not eating enough non-starchy vegetables, nuts, or seeds, had less of an impact on new cases of the disease. "Our study suggests poor carbohydrate quality is a leading driver of diet-attributable type 2 diabetes globally, and with important variation by nation and over time," said Dariush Mozaffarian, Professor



of Nutrition and dean for policy at the Friedman School of Nutrition Science and Policy at Tufts University. "These new findings reveal crit-

ical areas for national and global focus to improve nutrition and reduce devastating burdens of diabetes," Mozaffarian added. The analysis, based on a research

model of dietary intake in 184 countries from 1990 and 2018, revealed that poor diet is causing a larger proportion of total Type-2 diabetes incidence in men versus women, in younger versus older adults, and in urban versus rural residents at the global level. Diabetes is linked to a number of diseases like risk of heart attacks and strokes, nerve damage, blindness and kidney failure, among others. "Left unchecked and with incidence only projected to rise, Type-2 diabetes will continue to impact population health, economic productivity, health care system capacity, and drive health inequities worldwide," said first author Meghan O'Hearn, who conducted the research while a doctoral candidate at the Friedman School.

### City to get 3 new fire stations soon

**Bhubaneswar, April 18:** Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik Tuesday approved establishment of three new fire stations in the City here, official sources said. The new facilities will come up at Tamando, Mancheswar and Pahal. The state government also approved creation of 45 new posts for the fire stations. "Each fire station will have 15 staffers - a station officer, two leading firemen, a driver-havildar, a fireman-driver and 10 firemen," it added. With addition of the new facilities, the Capital City will have five fire stations. Currently, there are two fire stations in Bhubaneswar, one at Chandrasekharpur and the other at Kalpana Square.

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# Mysterious kidney ailment kills 20 in Nuapada village

**THE VILLAGERS HAVE DEMANDED THAT THE ADMINISTRATION PROVIDES THEM WITH WATER FROM THE TIKHALI DAM**

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Khariar, April 18:** Saragadi village under Khariar block of Risigaon panchayat in Nuapada district has been suffering from a severe outbreak of a kidney-related ailment. More than 20 people have already lost their lives and over 50 others are currently affected by the disease. Sources said that the ailment has affected more or less every family in the village. In most cases, it is the elderly who are suffering. However, in some of the families even the youngsters are bearing the brunt of the disease.

Sources said that the reason behind the increase of the kidney-related ailment is yet to be



ascertained, but some pointed out that the cause could be due to drinking polluted water. The disease is spreading at an alarming rate and most of the people have died as they did not have the money for treatment. Many families have been forced to sell off their belongings to cover treatment costs. Sources said that Sangeeta Bag, a resident of the village, has lost her husband, brother-in-law, and father-in-law to the kidney-related disease in the recent past and is now living the life of a pauper.

The lackadaisical attitude of the district administration has also added to the woes of the villagers.

The villagers have asked the administration to provide them with water from the Tikhali dam – a major irrigation project in the area. They have already discussed the matter with sarpanch Biranchi Nag. They are hoping that their pleas will be addressed soon. Among others suffering from the kidney-related ailment in the village are Urmila Bag, Samanta Bag, Kunti Bag, Khyamanand Mahanand, Giridhari Thela, Hrudra Shabara, Hrushi Ghibela, Shambhu Bag and Dheer Durga. Villagers have said that if the administration does not step in, the situation could turn for the worse in future.

When this correspondent approached the Khariar community health centre doctor, Dr Ranjit Rout, he assured that a camp would be set up in the village soon and proper action would be taken regarding the matter. Villagers are also hoping that steps will be taken soon to control the outbreak.



**NOBLE INITIATIVE:** A member of voluntary outfit 'Mahaveer Foundation' tying a water-filled pot to a tree for birds to drink during the prevailing heatwave at Tinikoshia reserve forest in Nilagiri of Balasore district. The members of the organisation have put up many water-filled pots at a number of places in the forest for birds to quench their thirst

# Prawn gheries make hay as admin fosters saline fishery

**THINGS HAVE COME TO SUCH A PASS THAT EVERY DAY 10 TO 20 NEW GHERIES ARE COMING UP INSIDE THE DEEP FORESTED REGIONS OF BHITARKANIKA**

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Kendrapara, April 18:** The haste shown by the district administration in implementation of saline fish cultivation has allegedly led to mushrooming of illegal prawn gheries on the coastlines of Kendrapara district, sources informed Tuesday.

The Odisha government is promoting brackish water aquaculture as a means of livelihood for people in the coastal district. The administration is going all out to implement the project in haste which has led to mushrooming of the prawn gheries.

Taking advantage of the situation, unscrupulous people have set up prawn gheries along the coastline as well as inside the Bhitarkanika National Park (BNP). Mushrooming of the prawn gheries is not only limited to Kendrapara. One can see scores of such gheries from Dhamra in neighbouring Bhadrak to Paradip



The Orissa High Court had ordered for eviction of the illegal gheries. However, the district administration is allegedly showing no interest to destroy the illegal gheries

Mushrooming of the gheries has proved to be detrimental to the ecosystem and bio-diversity of Bhitarkanika National Park apart from creating a host of other problems

in Jagatsinghpur district. This has happened allegedly due to the ineptitude of the district administrations and the haste they have shown in promoting saline fish cultivation.

However, the gheries have proved to be detrimental to the ecosystem and bio-diversity of BNP. Toxic chemical effluents and fumes they discharge are polluting the air, water and land and in the process, harming human beings, wildlife and marine creatures. Locals and environmentalists al-

leged that the district administration's encouragement to saline fish cultivation has only led to mushrooming of prawn gheries which is in violation of a Orissa High Court order. It had said that such illegal gheries must be taken down as quickly as possible. However, the haste with which saline fish cultivation is being promoted in this district has led to a complete halt in destruction of illegal prawn gheries.

Environmentalists Hemant Kumar Rout, Dolagobind Jena, Pradip Kumar Padhy, Sunil Kumar Gantayat and Pratap Kumar Tripathy blamed the state government and district administration for flourishing of the gheries. The gheri owners are carrying out their jungle raj in Bhitarkanika by encroaching upon large tracts of land in the wildlife sanctuary. The coastlines in the jungle have slipped into the hands of these unscrupulous persons, said environmentalists. Things have come to such a pass that every day 10 to 20 new gheries are coming up inside the deep forested regions of Bhitarkanika. Aviators and motor pumps being used in the gheries are producing deafening noise disturbing the natural tranquility and affecting wildlife inside the sanctuary. Various chemicals, pesticides

used in the gheries are causing deaths of wild animals and marine creatures. It is alleged that over 14 types of banned medicines are being used in these gheries to boost the growth of shrimps and prawns. The toxic effluents discharged by these gheries flow into the nearby nullah and then into the sea, harming the fish population and other creatures. Currently, it is the breeding time of 263 types of fish in Gahirmatha marine zone. The toxic effluents are hindering growth of fish population, locals said.

It is apprehended that migratory birds will stop coming here. Recently, the Forest department said that the population of dolphin has increased in and around Bhitarkanika. However, it is feared that the dolphin population might decline in coming days due to these reasons.

The mushrooming of gheries has also affected farming in the area. Owners have constructed small channels and drains to bring sea water to their gheries. However, sea water often flows into the farmlands and turns it unfit for cultivation as the salinity increases. The overflowing of sea water often results in fights between the farmers and gheri owners.

When contacted, sub-collector Niranjan Behera said that some farmers have received permission for saline fish cultivation. However, those who have set up gheries without permission will be evicted, he said.

# ACF Soumya's death takes a new twist

**COURT SUMMONS DECEASED'S WIFE, DFO, COOK TO APPEAR BEFORE IT PERSONALLY**

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Paralakhemundi, April 18:** In a new twist to the sensational ACF Soumya Ranjan Mohapatra death case, the court of sub-divisional judicial magistrate (SDJM) here issued summons to the deceased's wife Bidya Bharati Panda, DFO Sangram Keshari Behera and cook Manmath Kumbha to appear before it.

The court will conduct trial of the three pertaining to murder and criminal conspiracy under Section-302 and Section 120 (B) of Indian Penal Code (IPC). The court while issuing the summons, fixed the next date for hearing April 27. The decision to summon the three was taken by the court while hearing the plea filed by the deceased ACF's father Abhiram Mohapatra.

The court after examining the applicant's petition, statements that had been earlier recorded and other documents, felt that the charges of murder and criminal conspiracy are worth looking into and accordingly issued summons to the three persons, ad-

vocate Ashok Panigrahi told mediapersons here, Tuesday.

Notably, Soumya sustained severe burn injuries while his wife was at home, July 11 night last year. He was admitted to the MKCG Medical College and Hospital in Berhampur with 90 per cent burns and later shifted to a private hospital in Cuttack where he succumbed to his injuries during treatment, July 13.

A day after the incident, family members lodged a complaint with Paralakhemundi police. Police registered a case of murder against Bidya Bharati, Sangram and Manmath under IPC Sections 302 and 120 (b) and launched an investigation.

Later, the state Crime Branch also took up the matter for probe. However, it gave clean chit to the DFO and the cook and held Bidya Bharati responsible for the death of Soumya due to negligence.

The deceased's family members after failing to get any response from the police or Crime Branch knocked on the doors of the Paralakhemundi court.



# Man tries salt therapy to revive dead minor

**Basudevpur:** Blind faith can make people adopt desperate measures. In one such bizarre incident Tuesday, a man tried to bring back to life a two-year old boy with salt therapy. The boy had drowned in a pond at Gadebindha village under Bideipur panchayat of this block in Bhadrak district. The deceased kid was identified as Rohan, son of Rohitas Jena in the village. The boy drowned after he accidentally fell into the pond. Family members rescued him in an unconscious state and rushed him to the Basudevpur community health centre (CHC) where doctors pronounced him dead on arrival. However, a man present at the hospital premises said he could bring back the boy to life. Swayed by his words, the family members of the deceased agreed to his proposal. The man asked the family members to bring some salt. Later, he covered the boy's body with around 15 kilograms of salt and tried to revive the deceased in the presence of hundreds of onlookers at the hospital. However, he fled the spot when those at the spot started getting impatient. A doctor at the hospital said that the boy was received dead at around 11:30am and they have no information about the salt therapy given on hospital premises. "However, it is practically not possible to revive a dead person using such a technique," he added. Meanwhile, Kasia Marine police have registered a case of unnatural death and sent the body for post-mortem.

## EAST COAST RAILWAY

e-Tender Notice No. ETCECONIBBS2023014, Dt. 10.04.2023

**NAME OF WORK :** PREPARATION OF PLAN FOR FOREST DIVERSION PROPOSAL AS PER FOREST CONSERVATION ACT, 1989 FOR FOREST LAND WITH OBTAINING STAGE-I & STAGE-II FOREST CLEARANCE FROM MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT & FOREST (GOVT. OF INDIA) AND TREE ENUMERATION AND OBTAINING FOREST DEPARTMENT'S PERMISSION FOR CUTTING OF TREES IN RAILWAY LAND IN 10 VILLAGES INVOLVING 13.70 ACRES IN BARKOTE TAHASIL OF DEOGHAR DISTRICT (ODISHA) UNDER THE JURISDICTION OF D.Y. CHIEF ENGINEER/C/III/ANGUL IN CONNECTION WITH CONSTRUCTION OF TALCHER - BIMALAGARH NEW B.G. RAIL LINK PROJECT.

**Approximate Cost of the work (₹) :**  
₹ 31.23 Lakhs, EMD (₹) : 62,500/-

**Completion Period of the work :** 08 (Eight) Months.

**Date and time of closing of tender :** 1200 hrs of 02.05.2023

No manual offers sent by Post/Courier/ Fax or in person shall be accepted against such e-Tenders even if these are submitted on firm's letter head and received in time. All such manual offers shall be considered invalid and shall be rejected summarily without any consideration.

Complete information including e-tender documents is available in website <http://www.reps.gov.in>. The prospective tenderers are advised to revisit the website fifteen days before the date of closing of tender to note any changes / corrigenda issued for this tender. The tenderers / bidders must have Class-III Digital Signature Certificate and must be registered on IREPS Portal. Only registered tenderer / bidder can participate on e-tendering.

The tenderers should read all instructions to the tenderers carefully and ensure compliance of all instructions including check lists, para 3.1 (additional check-list) of Tender form (Second sheet) Annexure-I of chapter 2 of Tender documents, submission of Annexure-B duly verified and signed by Chartered Accountant.

**Chief Administrative Officer (Con)**  
PR-10/CG/23-24 Bhubaneswar

# Naba's daughter files nomination

PNN & AGENCIES

**Jharsuguda, April 18:** Dipali Das, the daughter of slain minister Naba Kishore Das filed her nomination Tuesday as the BJD candidate for the byelection to the Jharsuguda Assembly segment. The polls will be conducted May 10. The bypoll was necessitated following the murder of former Odisha Health Minister Naba Kishore Das, January 29.

Accompanied by senior leaders of the ruling BJD, Dipali went to the Jharsuguda sub-collector's office in a procession and submitted her papers for the bypoll. Dipali had been nominated April 15 as the BJD candidate by party supremo Naveen Patnaik.

Earlier, BJP candidate Tankadhar Tripathy and Congress nominee Tarun Pandey had filed their nomination papers for the byelection.

# Kanupur irrigation project on verge of completion

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Joda, April 18:** Work on the Kanupur irrigation project is on the verge of completion, officials informed Tuesday. This mega irrigation project on the Baitarani river will bring relief to thousands of farmers, they added. The project, touted as the second largest irrigation facility in the state, will help in providing water to over 29,000 hectares of farmland in 244 villages under five blocks in Keonjhar district. The irrigation facilities will help the farmers to raise crops in all seasons.

"The soil embankment of the project was completed in June, 2014 and the drainage of water is being done through the spillway method. The project will be completed by September this year and will be operational by June 2024," informed Prasanna Pani, chief construction



engineer (CCE) of the project. The news certainly has spread happiness among farmers residing in the villages. They have been waiting for more than four decades for irrigation facilities.

Authorities started storing river water in the dam from February 3. The storing of the water from Suna and Baitarani rivers has been partially completed. Currently accumulation of water has been suspended as some construction work is being carried out in the belly of the dam. The dam

will have 12 gates, officials stated.

Once the reservoir will become functional, water for irrigation will be provided through canals to the farmlands in 142 villages of Champua block, 78 villages in Jhumpura block, 11 in Patana block, 12 in Keonjhar Sadar block and one in Joda block, Pani informed. A total of 29,578 hectares of farmland will be benefitted, the CCE added. Pani also said that the maximum height till which water can be stored in the dam is 39.05 metres

and its water-retaining capacity stands at 33,102 MMQ.

Pani also dismissed doubts that low-lying areas of Joda will be affected if the water level in Suna river rises. He said that the water level will remain at 440 metres till Lahanda near Bileipada and hence the low-lying areas of Joda will not be affected. Moreover, there is a plan to produce 4.3 megawatt of hydro-electricity after the construction of the dam, the chief construction engineer said.

The estimated budget for the project was ₹2,438 crore but costs have gone up, officials said. The Odisha government is paying special attention to the project keeping in mind its importance. Keonjhar District Collector Ashish Thakare is regularly reviewing the project. He is also supervising the rehabilitation of villagers displaced due to construction of the dam.

# Village on Brahmani bank faces acute water scarcity

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Dhenkanal, April 18:** Despite the Brahmani river flowing near Kamalanga village of Odapada block in Dhenkanal district, its inhabitants are facing acute water scarcity. This is because the industrial plants are unabatedly drawing water from the river. Although farmers of the village are getting water for irrigation, there is shortage of water for domestic use. Left with no option, women of the village have to walk miles to fetch water from the river for domestic purposes.

The crisis has cropped up as neither the administration nor the

Rural Water Supply and Sanitation Mission (RWSS) have taken any steps for supply of drinking water to the village. This has sparked resentment among the villagers. They said that Kamalanga village has a population of approximately 7,000 people. The village however, does not have any tube well or bore well. The locals alleged that the administration has not made any arrangement for supply of clean drinking water.

The problem aggravates during summer. Then women have to walk in energy-sapping heat to fetch water from the Brahmani. However, as the river also dries up, they have to dig pits on the river bed to get water which is unhygienic. Also



even if water is available in the Brahmani river, it is not healthy for consumption due to the discharge of toxic effluents by the industrial units. However, with no proper drinking water facility available, the residents are forced to drink the river water risking their health.

Residents of Kamalanga village approached the district collector last week over the issue. They gave a written petition demanding setting up of piped water facilities. When contacted, RWSS superintendent engineer Surendra Behera said that his office has received the letter. He said that the engineers of his department will soon visit the village.

FOCUS NATION

# STATE & HATE



If everybody believed that all paths, propagated by different religions, lead to the same Supreme or as Swami Vivekananda in his famous Chicago address talked of the need for religious unity, much of the animosity that is witnessed today would not be manifest

Political consciousness may be good in understanding the nature of our polity but bringing religion to the forefront and spreading jealousy and hatred is obviously detrimental to socio-economic growth. Apart from Mahatma Gandhi, who has written extensively on his understanding of Hindu religion and the influence of other faiths, and believed that religion or spirituality must unite mankind, there have been other political leaders like Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, Sardar Vallabhai Patel and philosophers like Dr S. Radhakrishnan, all of whom embraced various religious communities. They emphasised the need for communal harmony and building fellow feeling in society.

The need for such harmony is essential in a pluralistic society where people from various religious communities live and work. But unfortunately, society has been polluted by religious rivalry and a fundamentalist attitude, which puts a question mark on the intent of the ruling dispensation. It leads to the moot question, why is it that only the people from the impoverished sections are affected by such actions that lead to violence and communal frenzy. The broader question being asked by sociologists is that unless societal bonds are strengthened, the innate growth of the individual and of the community cannot prosper.

Thus, the judgement of the apex court should be a sharp warning that religion and religious fundamentalist ideas and beliefs would have to be separated from politics. It is easier said than done as political parties today want votes in the name of religion and religious nationalism, which is disintegrating society and leading to chaos and violence. Those leaders who brag about India's development and achievement fail to realise that a sectarian approach in a secular state cannot bring in real development. Moreover, those who swear in the name of Mahatma Gandhi should hang their heads in shame as distorting religion and dividing the community cannot keep people happy and build communitarian amity. It is time for the State to act in time.

The writer is Sr. Consultant & Guest Faculty at Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, Kolkata. @INFA

It is indeed tragic that social relations, especially in urban areas, have reached dismal levels. The bondage that existed in society has been virtually lost, largely due to bad politics, hatred and jealousy perpetuated by politicians and fringe elements. It is not surprising then that at national level leaders may give great sermons but when it comes down to brass tacks, they are rarely interested to ensure that people in the lowest segments of society, who struggle for existence, are at least assured of a decent and peaceful life.

It is in this connection, the Supreme Court's recent verdict terming the State 'impotent', for failing to rein in hate speeches across the country gains credence as it clearly pointed out that the toxicity could be ended only when politics and religion are segregated from the national discourse. "Every day, fringe elements are making speeches to vilify others, including on TV and other public forums. The problem arises when politicians are mixing politics with religion. The moment politics and religion are segregated, this will come to an end. When politicians stop using religion, all these things will come to a stop," a bench of Justices KM Joseph and DV Nagarathana observed, while hearing a contempt petition against various State authorities for failing to register FIRs against those making hate speeches.

The question asked was "Why cannot people of India take a pledge to not vilify other citizens or communities?" And addressed the question "What is tolerance?" To the court, the answer was "it is not putting up with somebody but accepting the differences." The bench decided to hear the petitions because States are not acting in curbing hate speeches. In an indirect hint to hate speeches, specially aimed at Muslims, the SC further pointed out that such are like a vicious circle. "One person will make it and then another person will make it. Now these are cracks coming up in the idea of fraternity. There has to be some restraint. Some sort of mechanism has to be developed by the State so that we can curb these kinds of statements", Justice Nagarathana observed.

While we talk of liberal outlook in our social relations, it has

been found that Indians generally stick to their own religious group when it comes to their friends. In a major new Pew Research Center survey of religion across India, Hindus overwhelmingly say that most or all of their close friends are also Hindus. Of course, Hindus make up the majority of the population, and as a result of sheer numbers, may be more likely to interact with fellow Hindus than with people of other religions. But even among Sikhs and Jains, who each form a sliver of the national population, a large majority say their friends come mainly or entirely from their small religious communities.

Political analysts believe that our uneven feudal, social structure has kept us separated and we have always been a fractured land. The need to control, dominate – even decimate – the assumed enemy or usurper has remained an active switch. The occasional eruptions disturbing communal harmony since Independence were treated as geographically specific and limited periods. Each one was informing us that we are at war with ourselves and unless we address this internal strife, it will consume us. In such a situation, we should not be surprised that hate and anger dictate lives. But this cannot continue for long. The RSS and the BJP are being accused of helping spread this animosity with elan. Moreover, our language is offensive, filled with jabs and attacks. In the name of resisting the offender, we covertly sanction

revenge. When governments belonging to our side of the political aisle commit blunders, perpetrate violence, sell our people to major corporations, there is silence.

At the ground level, however, communities are not in conflict. The Pew survey found many Hindus (45 per cent) say they are fine with having neighbours of all other religions – be they Muslim, Christian, Sikh, Buddhist or Jain – but an identical share (45 per cent) say they would not be willing to accept followers of at least one of these groups, including more than one-in-three Hindus (36 per cent) who do not want a Muslim as a neighbour. Among Jains, a majority (61 per cent) say they are unwilling to have neighbours from at least one of these groups, including 54 per cent who would not accept a Muslim neighbour, although nearly all Jains (92 per cent) said they would be willing to accept a Hindu neighbour.

Delving into the crux of the matter, it may not be wrong to believe that politicians are trying to disturb social relations between communities by highlighting religious issues. Religion, as is generally agreed, is a very personal affair and this should not stand in the way of our social relations. If everybody believed that all paths, propagated by different religions, lead to the same Supreme or as Swami Vivekananda in his famous Chicago address talked of the need for religious unity, much of the animosity that is witnessed today would not be manifest.



Dhurjati Mukherjee

**POLITICAL PARTIES TODAY WANT VOTES IN THE NAME OF RELIGION WHICH IS DISINTEGRATING SOCIETY AND LEADING TO CHAOS AND VIOLENCE**

## Deafening Silence

The most astounding aspect of the sensational and damning disclosures about the 2019 Pulwama attack made by former Jammu and Kashmir Governor Satya Pal Malik against the BJP-led government at the Centre and Prime Minister Narendra Modi is the government's pregnant silence and refusal to act against him. This is in sharp contrast to the Centre's reaction to Rahul Gandhi's statements made in the West about the Indian government's incompetence. In the case of Satya Pal Malik, question is whether he has spoken the truth or made wild, unsubstantiated allegations against the PM, lowering his standing in the international community. Pakistan has reacted to Malik's allegations by urging the world to take cognizance of the matter. Pakistan's Foreign Office spokesperson Mumtaz Zahra Baloch has said that the latest revelations by Malik "demonstrate how the Indian leadership has habitually used the bogey of terrorism from Pakistan to advance its sham victimhood narrative and the Hindutva agenda for domestic political gains."

Under normal circumstances, India's voluble External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar would have countered Pakistan's version blaming India for the Pulwama attack in which 40 jawans lost their lives. But, this time through there is no word coming from him. The Pakistani spokesperson even said Malik's revelations have exposed India's "propaganda campaign" against Pakistan "based on lies and deceit."

These are indeed very strong words. This has been possible because of the studied silence being maintained by the government and the PM. The latter should come clean as his name has been dragged into the controversy and India's reputation is at stake.

The silence and inaction against the former Governor is in contrast to the lightning speed with which the government in the past slapped charges of sedition and other non-bailable sections on ordinary citizens, social activists and journalists for criticising government actions. Since no action is being initiated against Malik it may be presumed as if he has spoken the truth.

The former Governor said during an interview given to two news outlets that the PM had hid key facts from the public about the Pulwama terror attack in February 2019. He said he had immediately realised that the PM wanted to use the attack to blame Pakistan for the benefit of the BJP for electoral gains. The attack on the Central Reserve Police Force convoy in Pulwama, he asserted, was the result of incompetence and carelessness by the Indian system, specifically the CRPF and the Union Home Ministry. He gave details of how the CRPF had asked for aircraft to transport its personnel but was refused by the Home Ministry.

More importantly, he said, all of the lapses were raised by him directly when PM Modi called him. Immediately after, the world was shocked to find the PM taking part in a wildlife video shooting, while the country's jawans were being butchered. Malik claimed the PM had told him to keep his mouth shut about the whole thing. He further alleged National Security Adviser Ajit Doval also told him to keep mum.

To buttress his claim of intelligence failure in the Pulwama incident, he said a car carrying 300 kilograms of RDX explosives had come from across the border but was travelling around the roads and villages of J&K for 10-15 days without being detected and without anyone knowing. The air can be cleared only through an impartial investigation. It is hardly believable that the former J&K Governor levelled such grave charges for settling scores. If it is so, the government needs to take stern action against him for casting such aspersions on the PM and the Union Home Ministry. The truth should come out and the guilty be punished.

The former J&K Governor did not stop at that. He accused the PM of conniving in corruption too. "I can safely say the PM has no real problem with corruption," he said. This is a grave charge that assumes greater importance when observed in the backdrop of the multi-billion dollar stock market scam allegedly involving the Adani group. The head of the group, Gautam Adani, is supposedly a close friend of PM Modi and the government has been blocking the Opposition's demand for a Joint Parliamentary Committee probe into the scam.

The government's silence would only strengthen the suspicion of wrongdoing at the top since it will be construed as admission of guilt.

### WISDOM CORNER

All truth passes through three stages. First, it is ridiculed. Second, it is violently opposed. Third, it is accepted as being self-evident. **ARTHUR SCHOPENHAUER**

The greatest error of a man is to think that he is weak by nature, evil by nature. Every man is divine and strong in his real nature. What are weak and evil are his habits, his desires and thoughts, but not himself. **RAMANA MAHARSHI**

Peace in the world starts with peace in oneself. If everyone lives mindfully, everyone will be more healthy, feel more fulfilled in their daily lives and there will be more peace. **THICH NHAT HANH**

### WORDSWORTH

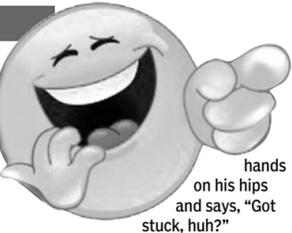
#### Haywire

Our modern sense of haywire is an interesting example of semantic drift. In the US of the latter part of the nineteenth century, hay wire (also commonly called baling wire, which is now what people usually call it) was literally a type of thin wire. In addition to tying together bundles of hay after cutting, it fastened bundles of grain stalks that had been cut by a horse-drawn reaper. But its uses went far beyond this. It was the duct tape of its era, the stuff you reached for when you had anything to mend, one of the world's versatile repair materials. If you needed to fix a broken barn-door hinge, the tailboard of a wagon, or a hole in a chain-link fence, you turned to hay wire. The first instance of the term I've been able to find records a particularly melancholy improvised use: *A young man named Samuel C. Hoyd who resided on the Mesa, South Pueblo, committed suicide on the 20th by hanging himself to a cottonwood tree with a piece of bale hay wire (Daily Gazette (Colorado Springs) 22 Jul. 1881).* Readers with memories of hay wire suggest that the character of the wire itself has been a significant factor in the development of the sense of something or somebody being out of control. Hay wire pulled off its coil to use it would retain a bend and, if unrestrained, would curl up into an impenetrable jumble. Similarly, when the wire around a bale – under considerable tension – was cut to use the hay, the pieces would snap apart in an uncontrolled and even dangerous way. Tossed aside, they would tangle with others to make a snarled mass.

### LOL

#### Stuck under a bridge

A truck driver was driving along on the freeway. A sign comes up that reads "low bridge ahead." Before he knows it the bridge is right ahead of him and he gets stuck under the bridge. Cars are backed up for miles. Finally, a police car comes up. The cop gets out of his car and walks around to the truck driver, puts his



hands on his hips and says, "Got stuck, huh?" The truck driver says, "No, I was delivering this bridge and ran out of gas."

### IN JEST THIS

# We need more rules to protect tenants

It has come to my notice that landlords are wielding a little too much power over tenants. This power begins, of course, with the terms "landlord" and "tenant." These terms originated centuries ago in Anglo-Saxon England when a certain lord of the manor allowed his land to be occupied by ten ants. One evening, after a bout of drinking, he grabbed a bullhorn and proclaimed, "Hear ye, hear ye, ten ants. I shall henceforth be your landlord, and you shall be my tenants. I shall make you sign a rental agreement and pay rent for using my land."

The ants, of course, could not sign the rental agreement, so the landlord stepped on them. And landlords have been stepping on tenants ever since.

But it's time to put a stop to landlord power. It's time to create some new rules for landlord-tenant relationships. To make these rules easy to incorporate in rental agreements (leases), the property owner will be known simply as "land-

lord" (in the singular) and the renter as "tenant."

**BACKGROUND CHECK:** Landlord may conduct a background check on a prospective tenant, but may not ask for the tenant's LinkedIn profile, Facebook account, Spotify playlist, etc. Landlord is also forbidden from requiring tenant to write an essay on topics such as "The Importance of Religion in my Life" and "Why I Believe in Hard Work, Dedication and Paying the Rent on Time."

**DISCRIMINATION:** Landlord may not discriminate against potential tenants based on race, religion, caste, age, gender, sexual orientation, disability or number of tattoos.

**RENT:** Rent will be due on the first of the month, except following any month in which the tenant buys a new car. In such months, the tenant will be offered a grace period of no less than 60 months. This grace period will be extended to 90 months if the tenant has purchased an electric car. (Note: Economists have determined that

the purchase of new cars is good for the economy, benefiting all citizens, including landlords.) Landlord may not increase the rent by more than 5 per cent per year. Before any rent increase, tenant must be given written notice of at least 90 months.

**SECURITY DEPOSIT:** Landlord may require a security deposit equal to the lesser of one month's rent and the value of the refrigerator. Security deposit must be returned after tenant has rented for one year and no windows have been broken.

**PESTS:** Landlord must require all cockroaches and other pests found on the rental property to pay their share in rent. Tenant will pay only half the rent until all pests have been evicted.

**PESTS:** Tenant will be permitted to keep a minimum of three pets on the property: one in an aquarium, one in a cage and one on the couch. Landlord will not discriminate against the size of the pet, as long as the pet can be squeezed

through a door or window.

It is important to note the distinction between a pet and a pest. A rat is not a pet, unless tenant feeds the rat, talks to the rat occasionally, and gives the rat a cute name.

**GUESTS:** Tenant will be permitted to have guests, but may need special permission from landlord if the guests intend to stay longer than the duration of a typical visitor's visa: six months. It is important to note the distinction between a guest and a pest. A guest is not a pest, as long as tenant feeds the guest, talks to the guest occasionally, and doesn't call the guest any names.

**REPAIR AND MAINTENANCE:** Landlord must repair broken appliances within a reasonable time, no longer than 120 minutes. If this is not possible, landlord must replace broken appliance with a new one.

**UTILITIES:** All utilities are included in the rent, including high-speed internet and a Netflix subscription.

## 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](mailto:edit@orissapost.com)

**OrissaPOST**  
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#### Paradigm shift

Sir, The pre-draft version of the National Curriculum Framework for School Education released recently gives all stakeholders an opportunity to express their views on shaping of education for future. Textbooks are designed in accordance with the proposals of the NCF. Changes in teaching-learning and examination system are also proposed by it. School education should be imparted in such a way that students gain equal understanding of Indian culture and the contemporary world. The proposal to include Vedas and Upanishads, Buddhism, Jainism and Vedic and Confucian philosophies and Yoga and Ayurveda in the curriculum is a right move. On the other hand, these ideas must be based on rationality. Cultural and religious ideas are likely to lead to creation of misinformation. The NCF has also proposed modular board examination instead of a single examination at the end of the year. Considering that a single board examination puts a great deal of pressure on students, this is a student friendly idea. Another notable proposal is semester system for class 12. The NCF has stressed upon the importance multidisciplinary education. It gives opportunity for students to choose subjects for examination. However, the paradigm shift in school education calls for changes in the educational institutions. They need to be restructured in such a way that they are well equipped to deal with the changes. Another challenge is managing the burden of the course structure. Undue burden on students must be avoided. **Venu GS, KOLLAM**

#### Liver care

Sir, World Liver Day, observed every year on April 19, aims to raise awareness about liver diseases and the importance of taking care of this vital organ. The liver is the second-largest organ in the body, performing over 500 functions, including digestion, metabolism, and immunity. Liver-related diseases account for approximately 20 lakh deaths globally each year, with cirrhosis and liver cancer being the leading causes of death due to liver disease. Lack of awareness of risk factors and prevention measures contribute to the rise in these numbers. Neglecting the liver can lead to severe health issues, and people with diabetes are at an increased risk of liver cirrhosis or scarring. Therefore, regular check-ups and a healthy lifestyle are crucial for maintaining good liver health and overall well-being. This year's World Liver Day theme is "Be Vigilant, Do Regular Liver Check-Up, Fatty Liver Can Affect Anyone," highlighting the importance of regular check-ups as non-alcoholic fatty liver disease can affect anyone, regardless of their body mass index. **Krishna Kumar Vepakomma, HYDERABAD**



Excavating half of Srinagar for a 'Smart City' by reducing motorable roads to increase pedestrian paths isn't just causing harrowing inconvenience. It also comes at the cost of aesthetics

MEHBOOBA MUFTI | PDP CHIEF

## BOOSTING TIES

India and Russia Tuesday agreed to work towards unlocking the full potential of their economic engagement including through addressing the trade deficit and market access issues



## of the day quote

Murder of Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister Jagan Mohan Reddy's paternal uncle YS Vivekananda Reddy is a case study for police officers

I recently went to Prayagraj where people told me that Atiq and others committed more crimes against Muslims than against Hindus. Atiq's son (Asad) was killed in a police encounter but the responsibility for what happened in police custody (Atiq's killing) rests with the Uttar Pradesh police

I have come to Delhi. There is nothing specific agenda. I have been an MP for several years. Can I not come to Delhi? Earlier, I used to come to Delhi regularly

## SHORT TAKES

### 110 former NDFB cadres join BJP

**Guwahati:** More than 100 former militants joined the BJP in Assam's Karbi Anglong district Tuesday. The former militants were former cadres of the National Democratic Front of Bodoland (NDFB). The group was led by Nabin Chandra Bodo. "A total of 110 former NDFB members joined our party today," said Tuliram Ronghang, chief executive of the Karbi Anglong Autonomous Council (KAAC), who welcomed the new members at the local BJP office. The ex-militants hail from various regions and earlier occupied top portfolios within the terrorist group.

### Efforts intensify to catch tiger

**Dalla (Pauri):** With people still in fear after constant tiger sightings, the Forest Department here Tuesday intensified efforts to trap the animal which killed two elderly men in Uttarakhand's Pauri district last week. Twenty camera traps have been installed in the area and three cages put up in Dalla and Simli villages which reported the two casualties, one each on April 13 and April 15, Garhwal DFO Swapnil Aniruddh told PTI.

### Naxalite arrested

**Gadchiroli:** Police Tuesday said they have arrested a Naxalite who was carrying a reward of ₹2 lakh and facing nearly two dozen serious offences in Gadchiroli district of Maharashtra. A press release by the Gadchiroli Superintendent of Police's office said acting on specific inputs, the district special force and CRPF jawans jointly conducted an anti Naxalite operation in the Hachbodi forest and apprehended the Naxalite, Sadhu alias Sanjay Narote.

## SAME SEX MARRIAGE HEARING

# Will not go into personal laws: SC



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, April 18:** The Supreme Court Tuesday made it clear that it will not go into the personal laws governing marriages while deciding the pleas seeking legal validation for same-sex marriages and asked the lawyers to advance arguments on the Special Marriage Act.

A five-judge constitution bench headed by Chief Justice D Y Chandrachud termed the issue involving the pleas "complex" and said the very notion of a man and a woman, as referred to in the Special Marriage Act, is not "an absolute based on genitals."

"It is not the question of what your genitals are. It is far more complex, that's the point. So, even when the Special Marriage Act says man and woman, the very notion of a man and a woman is not an absolute based on genitals," said the bench, which also comprised justices S K Kaul, S R Bhat, Hima Kohli and P S Narasimha.

On being pointed out the difficulties and ramifications for the Hindu Marriage Act and personal laws of various religious groups if the apex court were to hold same-sex marriages valid, the bench said, "Then we can keep the per-

sonal laws out of the equation and all of you (lawyers) can address us on the Special Marriage Act (a religion neutral marriage law)."

The Special Marriage Act, 1954 is a law that provides a legal framework for the marriage of people belonging to different religions or castes. It governs a civil marriage where the state sanctions the marriage rather than the religion.

Solicitor General Tushar Mehta, appearing for the Centre, referred to the laws on transgender and said there are several rights such as the right to choose partners, privacy right, right to choose sexual orientation, and any discrimination is criminally prosecutable.

"However, the conferment of socio-legal status of marriage cannot be done through judicial decisions. It cannot even be done by the legislature. The acceptance has to come from within the society," the top government law officer said. He said the problem will arise when a person, who is a Hindu, wants to avail the right to marry within the same sex while remaining a Hindu.

"Hindus and Muslims and other communities will be affected and that is why the states should be heard," the law officer said.

"We are not going into the personal laws and now you want us to get into it. Why? How can you ask us to decide it? We cannot be compelled to hear everything," the bench said. Then this will amount to "short circuiting" the issue and the Centre's stand is not to hear it all, Mehta said, to which the CJI responded: "We are taking a middle course. We don't have to decide everything to decide something."

On being pointed out that even the religion-neutral Special Marriage Act has the term 'man and a woman', the bench said it is not the question of "genitals" and the very notion of the special law having "man and woman" is not restricted to the genitals.

Mehta, however, insisted it is restricted to the genitals and added there were several laws which the court will be making redundant inadvertently if it chose to give legal backing to same-sex marriages.

The law officer gave the example of the Code of Criminal Procedure (CrPC) and said a woman cannot be called for examination after a certain time and there could be a situation where a man says that though he has the genitals of a male he is not a man.

The bench said though 10 petitioners wanted it to be dealt with on a broader aspect "we are restricting it and we are not going into personal laws etc". The law officer contended the bench was saying it will not go into the personal laws but the earlier judgments opened this window and so again this would open another window later.

The law officer said the court should decide first whether it can go into this question at all or it would be essentially for parliament to deal with it. Senior advocate Rakesh Dwivedi supported the Centre's objection to same-sex marriages and said all states were necessary parties in the matter and needed to be heard.

The apex court had Nov 25 last year sought the Centre's response to separate pleas moved by two gay couples seeking enforcement of their right to marry and a direction to the authorities concerned to register their marriages under the Special Marriage Act

## Top court refuses to discharge Assam MLA Akhil Gogoi in NIA case

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, April 18:** The Supreme Court Tuesday upheld an order of the Gauhati High Court which had set aside the discharge of independent Assam MLA Akhil Gogoi in connection with a case related to anti-CAA protests and suspected Maoist links.

## ANTI-CAA STIR

Allowing an appeal filed by the National Investigation Agency (NIA), the high court had remanded the matter back to the trial court to conduct a fresh hearing on the question of framing of charge against all the four accused persons including Gogoi. A top court bench of justices V Ramasubramanian and Pankaj Mishal confirmed the high court order in "all respects". The top court, however, granted bail to Gogoi pending trial while noting that he has suffered incarceration for about 567 days.

# INX Media PMLA case: ED attaches Karti's properties worth ₹11.04cr

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, April 18:** The Enforcement Directorate (ED) Tuesday said it has attached properties to the tune of ₹11.04 crore belonging to Congress MP Karti Chidambaram in the INX Media money laundering case, an official statement said here.

Out of four attached properties, one is an immovable asset located in Coorg district of Karnataka, the federal agency said in a statement. The ED issued a provisional order, under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA), for attaching the assets worth ₹11.04 crore. Karti Chidambaram, 51, is the son of former Union minister and senior Congress leader P Chidambaram and is a sitting Congress MP from Sivaganga Lok Sabha seat in Tamil Nadu. He was arrested in the INX case by the ED as well as the Central Bureau of



Investigation (CBI). The ED had filed a criminal case under the PMLA in 2017 to probe alleged irregularities in the grant of FIPB approval to INX Media group.

INX Media got its FIPB (foreign investment promotion board) approvals in 2007-08 when P Chidambaram was serving as the Union finance minister in the UPA government.

It is alleged that this approval was not legal and agencies have charged P Chidambaram with committing corruption and money laundering by taking kickbacks



**RAIL ROKO PROTEST:** Passengers wait for trains at a railway station after farmers blocked railway tracks during their protest seeking compensation for their damaged crops due to rains in Amritsar. At least 20 trains were cancelled after farmers squatted on railway tracks at several places in Punjab

## BJP enters MCD mayoral poll race

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, April 18:** The BJP Tuesday fielded Shikha Rai and Soni Pandey for the election of the mayor and the deputy mayor of the Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD), despite not having adequate numbers in the House.

Accompanied by Delhi BJP leaders, Rai and Pandey filed their papers for the polls to the posts of mayor and deputy mayor respectively on Tuesday, the last day of filing nominations.

Rai is the councillor from the Greater Kailash-1 ward, while Pandey represents northeast Delhi's Sonia Vihar ward in the civic body. Earlier, a top Delhi BJP leader had claimed that the saffron party was not likely to contest the polls as there was a "clear mandate" in the favour of the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP). The AAP has re-nominated incumbent mayor Shelly Oberoi and deputy mayor Aaley Mohammad Iqbal for the posts. Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) leaders hoped that the councillors in the MCD will elect Rai.

# Cong demands white paper from Centre on Pulwama attack



Indian Youth Congress supporters shout slogans during a protest over former J&K governor Satya Pal Malik's claims on Pulwama attack in New Delhi

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, April 18:** The Congress Tuesday demanded that the government should come out with a white paper on the Pulwama attack providing answers to questions such as what were the intelligence failures and why troops were denied aircraft.

Days after former Jammu and Kashmir governor Satyapal Malik's allegations over the 2019 Pulwama attack, the Congress held a press conference here by Col (ret) Rohit Chaudhry and Wing Commander (ret) Anuma Acharya, both associated with the party, and posed a series of questions to the government on the attack in which 40 CRPF jawans were killed.

There has been no reaction from the government since Malik's interview to a news portal was released, while the BJP has said that there were serious questions about his credibility and cited various statements made by him in recent years. The BJP had cited Malik's past remarks, including the one that mocked former Congress chief Rahul Gandhi as a political juvenile, and slammed him as the disgraced governor of Jammu and Kashmir.

Congress spokesperson Shaktisinh Gohil said the party did not make any political statement over an incident like Pulwama in 2019 but had to raise this issue as concerns have been expressed by

former army chief Gen (ret) Shankar Roychowdhury in an interview.

Chaudhry and Acharya, the two armed forces veterans, said the defence fraternity and the entire nation share the concerns of Malik and Gen. Roychowdhury.

They posed questions to the prime minister on the basis of the assertions by the former army chief. Why were 2,500 CRPF soldiers not allowed to travel by air despite their request, they asked. They also asked as to why were intelligence inputs between January 2, 2019 and February 13, 2019 warning of a terrorist attack ignored.

How did the militants procure around 300 kg of explosives? How could this huge quantity remain undetected despite heavy security presence in South Kashmir, especially the Pulwama-Anantnag-Avantipora belt, Chaudhry said.

Four years after the attack, how far has the inquiry progressed? Why is there a delay in completing the inquiry and letting the nation know its findings? they said.

At the Congress presser, the two army veterans said that in previous terror attacks, such as the Mumbai attacks in 2011 and the Pathankot attack in 2016, inquiries were held and findings made public. This was essential to establish the truth, fix responsibility, and strengthen India's national security. In Pulwama too, these serious questions must be addressed, they said.

## UNNAO GANGRAPE

### Accused set minor Dalit victim's house on fire

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Unnao (UP), April 18:** Two infants were in a critical condition Tuesday after a group of men set fire to the home of a minor Dalit girl, whom two of them had allegedly raped last year.

The injured babies include the rape victim's six-month-old child - born after the 11-year-old was impregnated in the sexual assault - and her two-month-old sister, police said. The two rape accused, recently released on bail, allegedly barged into the family's thatched shed Monday evening with five others, after the victim refused to withdraw the case.

They beat up her mother and then set the shed on fire. According

to chief medical superintendent Sushil Srivastava, the rape victim's infant son suffered 35 per cent burns and her sister 45 per cent burns in the incident. "As their condition worsened, both the kids were sent to Kanpur for better treatment," he said.

Santosh Singh, Circle Officer, Purva said the rape victim's father was attacked with an axe by her grandfather and uncle, who had sided with the accused, and four other people on April 13 according to a complaint filed by her mother. The father is admitted at the district hospital with serious injuries, he said. Police said the Dalit girl was gang-raped February 13, 2022. She gave birth to a son in September that year.

**New Delhi, April 18:** The Centre Tuesday directed local bodies to ensure only recognised organisations carry out the animal birth control programme in stray dogs as per the recently notified rules.

The municipal corporations need to implement the Animal Birth Control (ABC) Programme and Anti Rabies Programme jointly, the Ministry of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry & Dairying said in a release.

The Animal Birth Control Rules, 2023 were issued following the guidelines of the Supreme Court in a case between Animal Welfare Board of India and People for Elimination of Stray Troubles, it said. The 2023 rules which were notified by the Ministry of Fisheries, Animal



Husbandry and Dairying March 10, supersedes the Animal Birth Control (Dog) Rules of 2001 under the Prevention of Cruelty to

## BOY INJURED IN STRAY DOG ATTACK

**New Delhi:** A 14-year-old boy was injured in a stray dog attack in southwest Delhi's Rangpuri area, police said Tuesday. The incident took place on Monday morning when the boy, a resident of Rangpuri, had gone out to answer nature's call, a senior police officer said. "Around 7:30 am on Monday, the boy was attacked by 8-10 dogs near his house. He was bitten all over his body and was treated by a local doctor. Now, he is being sent to Safdarjung Hospital for further treatment," said Deputy Commissioner of Police, Southwest, Manoj C. No PCR call or medico-legal case (MLC) was received in this regard, the police said, adding that they are yet to receive a formal complaint in connection with the incident. The victim said he was in pain after the attack.

Animal Act, 1960.

As per new rules, the ministry said that the Animal Birth Control (ABC) programme for sterilization and immunization of stray dogs is to be carried out by the respective local bodies.

One of the requirements under

the rule is that the ABC Programme needs to be carried out by organisations recognised by the Animal Welfare Board of India (AWBI) specifically for this purpose, it said.

The list of such organizations will be made available on the website of the Board, which will also be up-

dated from time to time, it said, adding that cruelty involved in carrying out of ABC programme needs to be addressed.

"Therefore, the local bodies are requested to implement the rules in letter and spirit and not to permit any organizations to carry out ABC programmes which are not recognized by AWBI and approved for ABC programme or otherwise elaborated in the rules," it added.

The ministry said the rules also provide guidelines on how to deal with human and stray dog conflicts without relocating dogs in an area.

By effective implementation of these rules, the ABC can be conducted by the local bodies which will help in reducing the stray dog population addressing the animal welfare issues, it added.

## GOVT TO TAKE ACTION

## Banned pesticides found in TN

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Chennai, April 18: After complaints of banned pesticides available in some districts, the Tamil Nadu Agriculture Department has formed special squads to conduct surprise checks.

The state agriculture department had issued a circular on December 12, 2022, banning the sale and use of six pesticides based on the directive from the Centre. These pesticides, according to the Centre, were used by many people for committing suicide and hence it was banned from being used in the agricultural fields and farms.

Fertilizer shops were directed to stop sale and distribution of these pesticides under the Insecticide Act 1986 and the Insecticide Rules of 1971. The farmers of Tiruppur, Pudukottai and Salem districts complained that chemicals like monocrotophos – one among the six banned pesticides in Tamil Nadu – was being widely used in these



areas. According to the farmers, the banned product was reaching the hands of gullible farmers through online sale.

Satyamoorthy K., a farmer in Salem said, "The monocrotophos is widely used here in coconut farms and this helps the farmers to wade off the attack by white

flies." However, he said that in Pollachi, Kangeyam and Udumulpet farmers in large numbers were using the banned pesticide.

Following complaints from the farmers in large numbers from different parts of the state, the state agriculture department constituted squads to trace shops that

■ The state agriculture department had issued a circular on December 12, 2022, banning the sale and use of six pesticides based on the directive from the Centre

■ Sources in the agriculture department said that even after the seizure of monocrotophos, the fertiliser is being illegally procured and used in coconut groves

sell the banned fertilizers as well as the farmers, who are using the product even after directive from the agriculture department that the pesticide was banned.

Sources in the agriculture department said that even after the seizure of monocrotophos, the fertilizer is being illegally procured and used in coconut groves. The department is of the opinion that online sale outlets are pushing the sale of these banned pesticides, and the department has already constituted special squads to check, stop and prevent the use of these pesticides.

## Vijayan responds to Stalin

Stalin in his letter on April 11 had urged Vijayan to see that the Kerala Assembly pass a similar resolution which the Tamil Nadu Assembly had passed on April 10, urging the Union government and the President to 'fix a time frame' for the Governors to give assent to bills that were passed by the state Assembly



INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Thiruvananthapuram, April 18: Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan has written to his Tamil Nadu counterpart M.K. Stalin in response to his letter seeking cooperation to move together, against the way the Governors are acting by holding back Bills which require his/her clearance.

"As you have rightly stated, presently elected governments in many states are facing this issue.

In Kerala too, certain bills passed by the State Assembly after due deliberation have been kept pending by the Governor for unduly long time, some for more than a year," said Vijayan.

"As defenders of the federal spirit of our Constitution, we have to cooperate in every effort to prevent the curtailing of the functioning of elected state governments and we are ready to extend our whole hearted cooperation to you and will consider your pro-

posal," added Vijayan.

Stalin in his letter on April 11 had urged Vijayan to see that the Kerala Assembly pass a similar resolution which the Tamil Nadu assembly had passed on April 10, urging the Union government and the President to 'fix a time frame' for the Governors to give assent to bills that were passed by the state assembly.

The special resolution which needs 3/4th of the votes to be moved in the House was allowed by the Speaker with 144 of the 146 members in the House voting for it.

The AIADMK walked out of the House while BJP MLAs, C. Saraswathi and M.R. Gandhi voted against the resolution. Stalin while moving the resolution lashed out against the Tamil Nadu Governor R.N. Ravi and said that the Governor was making it a habit to speak against the state government whenever the Prime Minister was in the state or when he (Stalin) was in New Delhi.

## Cops file FIR against 'Great Bombay Circus'



INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Thrissur (Kerala), April 18: The Kerala Police have registered an FIR against the proprietors of 'Great Bombay Circus' for lacerating the wings of birds during their performances to prevent them from flying away as well as for using unregistered animals, and forcing them to do tricks that were not registered with the Animal Welfare Board of India (AWBI).

The action was taken following a complaint from People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA) India. The AWBI is the prescribed authority under The Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (PCA) Act, 1960, which regulates the use of animals for performances in the country.

The FIR was registered at the Thrissur East police station for cognisable offences under Sections 429 and 289 of the Indian Penal Code, 1860, for maiming the birds and negligent conduct with respect to an animal.

Further, the FIR also records violations of sections 3 and 11(1)(a) (for causing unnecessary pain and suffering to animals), 11(1)(l) (for mutilation of birds), and sections 26 and 38 (for using unregistered birds and making the animals and birds do unregistered acts/tricks) of the PCA Act, 1960.

"To prevent birds from exercising their natural right of flying, circuses repeatedly lacerate birds' wings and put them in cages," says PETA India Cruelty Response Coordinator Saloni Sakaria. "PETA

India urges families to support only those forms of entertainment which use consenting humans."

Since 2022, trial proceedings against Great Bombay Circus have been pending before the Court of Judicial Magistrate of First Class, Malalavdi. This was based on an FIR registered against the circus by the Mysuru police following a complaint by PETA India for similar offences relating to cruelty towards birds and violations of their performing animals registration certificate.

Several AWBI inspections and numerous investigations by PETA India proved that animal circuses are cruel: in them, animals are continuously chained or confined to small, barren cages; deprived of veterinary care and adequate food, water, and shelter; and denied everything that's natural and important to them. Through physical abuse with weapons, they're forced to perform confusing, uncomfortable, and even painful tricks. Many display stereotypic, repetitive behaviour indicative of extreme stress, PETA India stated.

## BJP revels as Vande Bharat Express does its first trial run

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Thiruvananthapuram, April 18: For the BJP, the trial run of Kerala's first semi-high-speed Vande Bharat Express from Thiruvananthapuram Central railway station to Kannur was a moment to revel.

After a small 'puja' at 5 a.m. on Monday at the station here, the train chugged out carrying top Railway officials along with staff members. The green signal was given at 5.09 a.m. and the first stop was at Kollam, then it stopped at Kottayam, Ernakulam, Thrissur, Kozhikode and finally at Kannur where it came to halt at 12.19 p.m.

The total time taken was 7 hours and 10 minutes – the fastest time taken to cover this distance. Normally it takes 8 hours and 40 minutes to cover the same distance

by the fastest train available.

The chief loco pilot of the trial run M.I. Kuriakose, who said it was an exhilarating experience and that he has never ever received such a reception in his career. "We could travel at 110 kmph speed from Shornur and at the rest of the sections it ranged from 80 to 100 kmph. The controls are so easy and the biggest advantage is that the acceleration is very quick and braking is also easy, compared to other trains," said Kuriakose.

Incidentally the train commenced its return journey from Kannur at 2.10 p.m. Meanwhile, at all the stops where the train halted, BJP workers gathered in strength and raised pro-Modi slogans, and sweets were also distributed to celebrate the event.

The BJP, which does not have any representation in the 140-member



Kerala Assembly or in the 20 Lok Sabha seats, is now losing no opportunity to project the functioning of the Modi-led NDA government in the state and, hence their cadres were out in large numbers to celebrate the trial run.

The BJP will be going to town with this as their main target is the

controversial K-Rail project, which is still not cleared at any level, but the CPI(M), especially Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan and party secretary M.V. Govindan has been pushing for a long.

The BJP workers are taking on Govindan in a big way as he had earlier said if K-Rail becomes opera-

tional women can make 'appam' (local bread) at their homes in Palakkad and board the K-Rail train and sell it at Kochi and return in a few hours.

The social media lost no opportunity to slam Govindan's statement. Ever since the Vande Bharat train arrived from Chennai last week, the BJP workers have been distributing appam at all the places.

But not to sit idle, Govindan hit back by saying "if women use the Vande Bharat trains to sell their appam, it will turn stale as the train takes a long time".

Meanwhile, the Congress party is battling for extending the Vande Bharat train till Mangalore, so that it benefits more people. Now all eyes are on April 25 when Modi himself arrives here to flag off the train on its first commercial run.

## Stalin hails cop for speaking up on children's education

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Chennai, April 18: Tamil Nadu Chief Minister MK Stalin Tuesday congratulated Sub-Inspector of state police for speaking up on children's right for education.

A video of the police officer Paramasivam, who is a sub-inspector with the Tiruvallur district police, visiting a village and appealing to the families to send their children to schools is doing rounds on social media.

Taking to his official twitter handle, Chief Minister Stalin said, "I read the happy news in today's paper in the morning and I will share. The job of the police is not just to prevent crime, but they have a role to play in shaping a good society. I congratulate SI Paramasivam of Pennalurpet for speaking up for children's right to education."

As per the video, the Sub-Inspector had visited village under the jurisdiction of his Pennalurpet



police station premises in Tiruvallur district after the staff of a government school informed police that children were not turning up at school for the examinations.

Accompanied by an education department staff, police visited the village where the SI could be seen appealing to the public to approach him personally if they need help.

In the video, Paramasivam could be heard saying, "Whatever the issue may be, school fee, food, or domestic complaints, you are free to approach me at the police station."

He further said, "Do only one favour for me in return.

A video of the police officer Paramasivam, who is a sub-inspector with the Tiruvallur district police, visiting a village and appealing to the families to send their children to schools is doing rounds on social media

Send these children to school. When they grow up and realise the ground realities, they are going to pose some hard questions at you (parents) for not sending them to schools."

## MERCURY SOARS

## TN health dept urges people to be cautious

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Chennai, April 18: The Tamil Nadu health department has urged people to be cautious and not venture out in the sun amid soaring temperatures across the state.

In a circular to district health officials, the department has directed them to raise awareness among the people on the rising temperature and to remain indoors during the afternoon to prevent from having a sunstroke and other issues related to heat.

In Erode, the maximum temperature on Monday was recorded at 41 degrees Celsius, which was 3.2 degrees higher than the normal during this time of the year. This was also the highest temperature recorded in Tamil Nadu during this season.

The weather department has predicted that Chennai, Tirunelveli,



Tirupattur, Ramanathapuram, Vellore and Erode could witness a rise in temperature by 1 to 3 degrees in the coming days. The neighbouring Andhra Pradesh is already experiencing a heatwave and this, according to weather department could lead to a spike in mercury in Tamil Nadu.

The weather department has however predicted light to moderate rains on April 21 and 22 and this could bring respite from the scorching heat.

## ALERT ISSUED

## TN records 521 fresh Covid cases

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Chennai, April 18: With 521 fresh Covid-19 cases reported in the last 24 hours and a test positivity rate (TPR) of 8.6 per cent, the state public health department has issued an alert to all the district health officers.

Except for Kallakurichi, Thiruvarur and Tirupattur, all other districts recorded fresh Covid cases. The total number of active cases in Tamil Nadu stands at 3,330.

There were 140 new Covid cases in Chennai, 45 in Coimbatore, 44 in Kanyakumari and 31 in Tiruchi districts of Tamil Nadu. Ten districts reported new cases between 10 and 25 and 21 other districts reported cases in single digits. One passenger each from UAE, Singapore, Qatar and Oman



tested Covid-19 positive.

Ten districts of the state reported TPR above the state average with Coimbatore showing a TPR of 12 per cent. The TPR of Kanyakumari, Tiruvallur, Salem, Ranipet and Chengalpattu was 11 per cent while that of Chennai and Kancheepuram

the TPR was 10 per cent.

The State Public Health department said that 150 people were admitted in the hospitals with three being admitted in the Intensive Care Unit (ICU). Seventy patients were on Oxygen therapy and 77 in normal wards.

## 'Karuppan' being monitored: TN Forest Dept

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Chennai, April 18: A special task force of the Tamil Nadu Forest Department is monitoring the movement of rogue elephant 'Karuppan', which was captured on Monday and released in the deep forest after radio-collaring it, officials said Tuesday.

The elephant, captured from Thalavadi hills in Erode district, was relocated to Thattakarai forest area in Erode division. The Forest Department has constituted a team of seven officials to monitor the movement of the elephant in the dense forest as well as its feeding. It had caused extensive damage at the Thalavadi hills after raiding sugarcane farms and destroying crops. Also several banana plantations was also raided by the elephant that relishes in eating sweet fruits.



The elephant was captured on Monday, after the Forest Department set up a team under the 'Operation Black' and it was transported in a truck to the deep forest range into the Thattakarai forest division on the Tamil Nadu-Karnataka border.

The seven member team of forest officials who are deputed to monitor 'Karuppan' will be staying at the Anti-Poaching Watchers

camp at Thattakarai and track his movement for one week.

According to senior forest officers, the elephant will have to walk for long distances for getting its feed but 'Karuppan' has the habit of straying into farmlands to get easy access to food. The Forest Department is also monitoring the behavioural changes of the elephant and said that it would become normal in a month's time.

➔ The elephant, captured from Thalavadi hills in Erode district, was relocated to Thattakarai forest area in Erode division

➔ The Forest Department has constituted a team of seven officials to monitor the movement of the elephant in the dense forest as well as its feeding

➔ The seven member team of forest officials who are deputed to monitor 'Karuppan' will be staying at the Anti-Poaching Watchers camp at Thattakarai and track his movement for one week

On Tuesday morning, the special team of the forest department has reported that the elephant had drunk water from a stream and had moved into dense forest area which was a good sign.

# national

## of the day quote

As G20 Health Working Group, we are heading in the right direction toward jointly creating a positive impact for future global health architecture

MANSUKH MANDAVIYA | UNION HEALTH MINISTER

My values and education doesn't allow me anymore. The leadership has played deaf ears despite bring front of them MANY TIMES @RahulGandhi @kcvenugopalmp @priyankagandhi (sic)

ANGKITA DUTTA | ASSAM YOUTH CONG PRESIDENT

A centenary hall would be set up in Chidambaram, Cuddalore in memory of Ilayaperumal who fought for abolition of untouchability

M K STALIN | TAMIL NADU CM

## SHORT TAKES

### Rice mill building collapses, 4 killed

Chandigarh: Four migrant labourers from Bihar were killed while 20 others injured after a three-storey rice mill building collapsed in Taraori in Haryana's Karnal district early Tuesday, police said. Over 150 labourers were housed in the building when the incident took place at around 3 am. "Four labourers from Bihar have died in the incident and 20 were injured," Karnal's Superintendent of Police, Shashank Kumar told PTI over phone.

### Bihar hooch toll rises to 31

Patna/Motihari: The BJP Tuesday demanded that the Bihar government provide monetary compensation to people who had developed health issues after drinking spurious liquor and release those thousands languishing in jail for violating the prohibition law of the state. The toll in the current hooch tragedy mounted to 31, with five more people dying after consuming spurious alcohol on the intervening night of Friday and Saturday.

### 11-year-old raped, strangled to death

Gangtok: Sikkim has been left horrified after an 11-year-old girl from Gangtok was sexually assaulted and then strangled to death. The police have arrested Pritam Sharma (29), who originally hails from Bihar but drives a taxi in Gangtok, for the alleged crime which took place last week. The arrest was made Monday by a special investigating team in Gangtok. The accused has been booked under IPC Section 302 and sent to police remand for 14 days till May 1 by a local court.



Saurashtra Tamil Sangamam is a festival that celebrates India's unity in diversity and such events are aimed at boosting the existing cultural ties between different parts of the country under the Centre's Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat initiative

HARDEEP SINGH PURI | UNION MINISTER

## SUNSTROKE TRAGEDY TOLL CLIMBS TO 14

The death toll due to sunstroke at the 'Maharashtra Bhushan' award event in Navi Mumbai rose to 14 after the death of a 34-year-old woman while seven patients are undergoing treatment, a civic official said Tuesday



# TWITTER TO RESTRICT VISIBILITY OF TWEETS THAT VIOLATE ITS POLICY

NEW DELHI, April 18: Social media platform Twitter will allow freedom of speech but not "freedom of reach" as it will restrict visibility of tweets that violate its rules, the company said in its policy update. "We also believe it is our responsibility to keep users on our platform safe from content violating our rules. These beliefs are the foundation of freedom of speech,

not freedom of reach -- our enforcement philosophy which means, where appropriate, restricting the reach of tweets that violate our policies by making the content less discoverable," the firm said. The sample screenshot shared an example of visibility restriction of tweets that may violate Twitter's rule against hateful conduct. "Restricting the reach of tweets, also known as visibility filtering, is one of our existing enforcement

Twitter will initially apply the visibility filter on tweets that are found violating hateful conduct rules and expand it to other domains later



The social media firm said that Twitter users have the right to express their opinions and ideas without fear of censorship

actions that allows us to move beyond the binary 'leave up versus take down' approach to content moderation. However, like other social platforms, we have not historically been transparent when we've taken this action," it said. The social media firm said that it will not place ads adjacent to content that is labelled under the new rule. "Starting soon, we will add publicly visible labels to tweets identified as potentially violating

our policies letting you know we've limited their visibility," the microblogging platform said. Twitter said that authors will be able to submit feedback on the label, if they think "we incorrectly limited their tweet's visibility. "Currently, submitting feedback does not guarantee you will receive a response or that your tweet's reach will be restored. We are working on allowing authors to appeal our decision," it said.

## Crude bomb hurled near residence of Atiq's lawyer

Prayagraj/Lucknow (UP), April 18: A crude bomb was hurled in a bylane near the residence of a lawyer of Atiq Ahmad Tuesday, sparking panic in the area as the incident came just three days after the sensational killing of the gangster-turned politician and his brother. In a statement issued in Lucknow, Special Director General of Police (Law and Order) Prashant Kumar said, "On getting information about a bomb being hurled in Gobarwali Gali, police reached the spot... It emerged that Harshit Sonkar had a dispute with Akash Singh, Raunak Yadav and Chhote Singh, due to which Harshit attacked them with a bomb. However, no one was injured."

### Now mafia can't threaten anyone in UP: Adityanath

Lucknow: Days after gangster Atiq Ahmed and his brother Ashraf were gunned down by three youth while in police custody in Prayagraj, Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath said Tuesday that no mafia or criminal can threaten industrialists in the state anymore. The Chief Minister said: "Before 2017, the state was infamous for riots. More than 700 riots rocked the state between 2012 and 2017. But not a single riot broke out after 2017. Earlier, just the names of many districts scared people. Now there is no need to be scared."

"This attack took place in a bylane in front of the residence of Dayashankar Mishra. However, rumour is being spread that Dayashankar Mishra was attacked. This is false information. The spot is being inspected and there is no problem of law and order," the statement said.

Though Atiq's lawyer, who rushed to the house from the court on getting information about the incident, said his daughter and locals told him about three bombs, the police maintained that only one crude bomb exploded. Assistant Commissioner of Police, Shivkuti, Rajesh Kumar Yadav said the culprit will be arrested soon. "I was in the court when my son informed me that bombs had been hurled. I rushed home. ... I think this has been done to frighten me, to create terror. It is a big conspiracy... It is for the police to find out who is behind this," Atiq's lawyer Dayashankar Mishra told reporters. Mishra had represented Atiq Ahmad and his brother Ashraf in the 2006 case of abduction of Umesh Pal, who was a witness in the 2005 murder of then BSP MLA Raju Pal and was shot dead February 24 this year allegedly at the gangster's behest.

### 'Atiq's secret letter being sent to CJI, CM'

Prayagraj/New Delhi: A letter written by Atiq Ahmad two weeks before his murder with instructions to send it to the Uttar Pradesh chief minister and the chief justice of India in case of his death is being dispatched to them, his lawyer said Tuesday. "That letter in a sealed envelope is neither with me nor sent by me. It is kept somewhere else and being sent by some other person. I don't know the contents of the letter," gangster-politician's lawyer Vijay Mishra said.



Locals gather after a crude bomb was hurled near the residence of Daya Shankar Mishra in Prayagraj



BEATING THE HEAT: Young women eat ice creams on a hot summer day in Gurugram, Haryana

## Will work for NCP till I am alive: Ajit Pawar on rumour of rift

Mumbai, April 18: Senior NCP leader Ajit Pawar Tuesday said he would work for his party till he is alive and scotched speculation that he and a group of MLAs loyal to him might align with the ruling Bharatiya Janta Party.



Talking to reporters here, the Leader of the Opposition said there is no truth in reports about any rift in the Nationalist Congress Party and his joining hands with the BJP. He said such unfounded reports hurt party workers and create confusion among them. He said the NCP has decided to strengthen the Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA) and the coalition has planned several rallies that target the Centre and the Maharashtra government over various issues. The MVA comprises Shiv Sena (Uddhav Balasahab Thackeray), NCP, and Congress. Responding to a query, Pawar

dismissed reports that he had taken the signatures of 40 of 53 MLAs of NCP amid a buzz about his rumoured alliance with the BJP. Pawar said no signatures of (NCP) MLAs were taken. "We are working as a family and will continue to do that," he added. Rumours about Ajit Pawar's next political move started doing rounds last week when he suddenly cancelled his scheduled meetings and also made comments which were seen as being soft on the BJP and Chief Minister Eknath Shinde's camp. The BJP is part of the Shinde government. Shiv Sena (UBT) leader Sanjay Raut on Sunday added grist to the rumour mill claiming Sharad Pawar recently told Uddhav Thackeray that his party will never join hands with the BJP even if anyone takes an individual decision to do so. Ajit Pawar slammed Raut without taking the latter's name on Tuesday and said spokespersons of

## 31 tribals from K'taka stranded in war-torn Sudan

Bangalore, April 18: As many as 31 people belonging to Hakki-Pikki tribal community from Karnataka are stranded in Sudan, where rival factions of the ruling military regime have been battling for control of the African nation. Karnataka State Disaster Management Authority Commissioner Manoj Rajan said, "We have got a message that a group of 31 people hailing from Karnataka are stranded in Sudan. We have informed the Ministry of External Affairs about it." The officer said his department has asked the group to follow the instructions of the Indian embassy in Sudan. "As of now, stranded people should stay wherever they are and not venture out. The MEA is seized of the matter and is working on it," Rajan said in a statement. In a series of tweets, Congress leader Siddaramaiah urged the Government of India to intervene and bring the stranded people back



# Migrants caught between jobless villages & city hazards

New Delhi/Jaunpur, April 18: As he crosses the mud houses and wheat fields around his village to catch a train to distant Mumbai, Sujeet Kumar says he is thinking about the better life that awaits him in India's city of dreams. The 21-year-old from Jaunpur district, in India's most populous state of Uttar Pradesh, was headed for the country's financial capital, saying he moved out of "compulsion", like hundreds of millions of others before him. This internal migration is bound to intensify as India becomes the world's most populous nation, throwing up enormous challenges for the government - managing the strains on urban infrastructure as well as creating 8 million to 10

million jobs every year to absorb its army of young unemployed. The United Nations had projected India's population would reach over 1.42 billion last week, overtaking China. Nearly two-thirds of India's people are under 35 and many of those in the countryside flock to the cities to take whatever job they can - becoming labourers, drivers or helpers in shops and homes. Many are from Uttar Pradesh and neighbouring Bihar



state, where populations are rising faster than elsewhere in the country. Besides the low-paid and difficult-to-get jobs, those arriving in the cities are faced with prohibitive costs of living and a struggle to find a place to live. They are unable to access social welfare benefits and many fall victim to the crime rampant in urban slums. Abdul Nur, a 37-year-old security guard in Bengaluru, said he left his village in the northeastern

turning home. Bhikhari Manjhi, 30, left his village in Odisha state and moved to Bengaluru where he was promised a job as a construction worker with a salary of 10,000 rupees a month. For two months, his contractor paid him 100 rupees every week, promised to pay the rest later, but never did. A 2020 International Labour Organization report said migrant workers contribute 10% of India's GDP and serve as the backbone of several sectors. The money they send back reduces poverty at home and improves the well-being of their families, it said. Experts say the government needs to help create more jobs and ensure they are distributed across the country, especially in the poorly-developed and predominantly rural north and the east.

state of Assam when he was 17, and has since lived and worked in Chennai, Hyderabad and Mumbai cities. He was in India's financial capital a decade ago, where, he said, it was very tough to live on the 14,000 rupees (\$171) he earned a month, with high rents and cost of food. GOING BACK Some of the migrants have become so disheartened they are re-

to the country. "It is reported that 31 people from Karnataka belonging to Hakki-Pikki tribe, are stranded in Sudan which is troubled by civil war. I urge @PMOIndia @narendramodi, @HMOIndia, @MEAIndia and @BSBommai to immediately intervene & ensure their safe return," he tweeted. The Hakki-Pikkis in Sudan were left stranded without food for the past few days and the government has not yet initiated action to bring them back, he alleged. Siddaramaiah sought the BJP government at the Centre to immediately open diplomatic discussions and reach out to international agencies to ensure the well-being of Hakki-Pikkis. At least 185 people have been killed and over 1,800 wounded since the fighting erupted in Sudan.

REUTERS

HUNDREDS OF MILLIONS MIGRATE FOR JOBS WITHIN INDIA ILO REPORT SAYS MIGRANT WORKERS CONTRIBUTE TO 10% OF INDIA'S GDP DESPITE SHORTCOMINGS, CITIES REMAIN MAGNETS FOR MIGRANT WORKERS

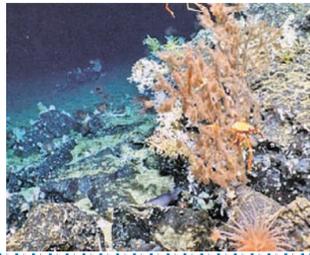
According to 2011 figures, the latest available, India's then population of 1.21 billion people included 456 million internal migrants



The government recognises the importance of the hydropower sector and its potential to become a strong base for the Himalayan nation's economic prosperity and export clean and green energy

NEW CORAL REEF FOUND

A scientific expedition has discovered a previously unknown coral reef with abundant marine life off Ecuador's Galapagos Islands, the country's environment ministry said



of the day quote

The child care, long-term care systems in this country just don't work well. High-quality care is costly to deliver. It's labour-intensive. It requires skilled workers. Yet care workers, who are disproportionately women and women of colour and immigrants, are among the lowest paid in the country

I am optimistic that one of Northern Ireland's main political parties would soon end a boycott that has kept the regional government on ice for more than a year

UN officials are negotiating with the Islamist government in the hope that it will make exceptions to an edict this month barring local women from working for the organization

Sudanese army, rival forces agree to 24-hour cease-fire

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Khartoum (Sudan), April 18: The Sudanese army and a rival paramilitary force that have been battling the past four days for control of the country agreed on Tuesday to a 24-hour cease-fire, Arab media reports said.

Hopes for at least a pause in the violence came as intensified fighting threatened to spiral even further into chaos. Millions of Sudanese in the capital and in other major cities have been hiding in their homes, caught in the crossfire as the two forces pounded residential areas with artillery and airstrikes and engaged in gunbattles in the street.

Over the past day, fighters in Khartoum attacked a US Embassy convoy and stormed the home of the EU envoy to Sudan, though neither attack caused casualties. The convoy of clearly marked US Embassy vehicles was attacked on Monday, and preliminary reports link the assailants to the Rapid Support Forces, the paramilitary group battling Sudan's military, US Secretary of State Antony Blinken told reporters. Everyone in the convoy was safe, he said.

Satellite channels Al Arabiya and Al Jazeera cited Lt. Gen. Shams El Din Kabbashi, a senior figure in the military command, as saying that the military would comply with the cease-fire. CNN Arabic cited the head of the military, Gen. Abdel Fattah Burhan, saying it would be party to the day-long truce. Earlier in the day, the military's opponent, the Rapid Support Forces, said it would abide by a 24-



- US CONVOY FIRED ON IN SUDANESE CAPITAL
HEAVY FIRING HEARD IN KHARTOUM EARLY TUESDAY
CLASHES DERAILED PUSH FOR CIVILIAN RULE
VIOLENCE RAISES HUMANITARIAN RISKS ACROSS SUDAN

hour humanitarian truce. There was no immediate public announcement of a cease-fire from military officials, however. In the afternoon clashes were still reported around the military's headquarters and close to the neighbouring airport, both major battle zones since fighting first erupted on Saturday. There was also fighting around a strategic air base in Merowe, some 350 kilometres (215 miles) northwest of Khartoum. More than 185 people have been killed and more than 1,800 wounded since fighting began Saturday, according to UN figures, which did not include a breakdown of civilians and combatants. The Sudan Doctors' Syndicate said Tuesday that at least 144 civilians were killed and

Russia upholds detention of US reporter

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Moscow, April 18: A Russian judge Tuesday upheld the detention of jailed American journalist Evan Gershkovich, who was arrested on spying charges as part of a sweeping Kremlin crackdown on dissent amid the war in Ukraine.

He and the US government vehemently deny the allegations. The Wall Street Journal reporter is the first US correspondent since the Cold War to be detained in Russia on spying allegations and his arrest rattled journalists in the country and elicited outrage in the West.



Dozens of journalists crowded into the courtroom to catch a glimpse of Gershkovich, who looked calm as he stood inside a glass cage to appeal his detention. Russia's Federal Security Service detained the 31-year-old in Yekaterinburg in March and accused him of trying to obtain classified information about a Russian arms factory. Gershkovich, his employer and the US government deny he was involved in spying and have demanded his release. "Evan is a member of the free press who right up until he was arrested was engaged in newsgathering. Any suggestions otherwise are false," the Journal has said in a statement.

G7 pledges unified stance on Russia's war



The G-7 communique laying out their commitments also included strong words over an unprecedented run of North Korean missile tests. But it was China's growing assertiveness in Asia and Russia's invasion of Ukraine that highlighted the three-day summit hosted by Japan in this hot springs resort town

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Karuizawa (Japan), April 18: Top diplomats from the Group of Seven wealthy democracies vowed a unified front against Chinese aggression, two crises that are seen as challenges to the post-World War II rules-based international order.

Global efforts to confront the matters at the United Nations have been stymied by Chinese and Russian intransigence on the Security Council. Leaders and foreign ministers of G-7 countries, most recently France and Germany, have recently concluded visits to China, and there is growing worry after China recently sent planes and ships to simulate an encirclement of Taiwan.

Beijing has also been rapidly adding nuclear warheads, taking a tougher line on its claim to the South China Sea and painting a scenario of impending confrontation. The G-7 ministers said that peace and stability between China and Taiwan in the Taiwan Strait is "an indispensable element in security and prosperity in the international community," and they called for "the peaceful resolution of cross-strait issues."

On Taiwan, "there is clear unanimity in the approach we are taking," US Secretary of State Antony Blinken told reporters of his talks with other ministers in Karuizawa. "What I heard was a remarkable convergence on concerns related to (China) and what we're doing to address those concerns," he said.

SHORT TAKES

Saudi minister visits Syria

Beirut: Saudi Arabia's top diplomat arrived in the Syrian capital on Tuesday, the first official visit by an official from the kingdom in more than a decade, the Syrian government said. The visit by Foreign Minister Prince Faisal bin Farhan to Damascus follows that of his Syrian counterpart, Faisal Mikdad, to Riyadh last week. Syrian state news agency SANA reported that after his arrival, the Saudi top diplomat was received by Syrian President Bashar Assad.

Pak diplomat in Kabul returns

Islamabad: Pakistan's head of the diplomatic mission in Kabul returned to the Afghan capital Monday, more than four months after he survived an assassination attempt, according to a media report. Foreign Office Spokesperson Mumtaz Zahra Baloch confirmed that Ubaidur Rehman Nizamani, the Pakistani Charge d'Affaires, returned to Kabul, however, she did not provide further details. The Express Tribune newspaper reported Monday.

17 arrested

Washington: Police in California have arrested 17 people in connection with a series of shootings in Gurdwaras in Stockton, Sacramento and other locations and seized weapons such as AK 47, handguns, and at least one machine gun in a series of raids carried out over 20 places, the State Attorney General said Monday. The 17 felony arrests were made during a operation with agents executing search warrants at 20 locations in Northern California Sunday according to an announcement made by California Attorney General Rob Bonta.

32 killed in China

Beijing: At least 32 people were killed in two separate fire incidents involving a hospital and a factory in China, official media reported Tuesday. A hospital's admissions building in Beijing's Fengtai district caught fire at 12:57pm (local time) on Tuesday, leaving 21 dead, state-run China Daily reported. The fire was extinguished at around 1:33 pm, and the rescue operation lasted until 3:30 pm. A total of 71 patients were evacuated and transferred. In a separate incident, 11 people died in a factory fire in Wuyi county, Jinhua city in China's eastern Zhejiang province on Monday, the local government said Tuesday.



SEARCH FOR LIFE: Paramilitary soldiers, rescue workers and volunteers search for survivors through the rubble at the site of landslide near the Torkham border town, Pakistan. A massive landslide struck a key highway in northwestern Pakistan near the border town of Torkham before dawn Tuesday, burying two dozen trucks, officials said

Chinese national sent to 14-day judicial remand

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Peshawar, April 18: A Pakistani anti-terrorism court has sent a Chinese national to jail on a 14-day judicial remand on blasphemy charges in the restive Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province after he was arrested Monday, according to media reports Tuesday.

The police arrested the Chinese national identified as Tian on Sunday and on Monday he was shifted to Abbottabad via an Army helicopter due to security concerns as the police feared local people could harm him.

Tian was booked on blasphemy

charges and sent to prison on a 14-day judicial remand by an Abbottabad anti-terrorism court on Monday, the Dawn newspaper reported. The Chinese citizen, a manager at the Dasu Hydropower Project, the biggest hydropower project in Pakistan, in the Upper Kohistan district of the province, allegedly made blasphemous remarks on Friday when the workers were going to perform the weekly prayer.

According to local people, the Chinese manager complained to workers at the dam that "precious time" was being lost due to prayer breaks.

Putin rallies troops with 2nd Ukraine visit

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Kyiv, April 18: Russian President Vladimir Putin visited command posts of the Kremlin's forces fighting in Ukraine, officials said Tuesday, as the war approaches its 14th month and Kyiv readies a possible counteroffensive with Western-supplied weapons.

A video released by the Kremlin and broadcast by Russian state television showed Putin arriving by helicopter at the command post of Russian forces in southern Ukraine's Kherson province and then flying to the headquarters of the Russian National Guard in Luhansk province, which is in the east.



Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said the visits took place Monday. The trip, Putin's second in two months to Russian-occupied territory in Ukraine, represented an apparent attempt by the Russian

Indian mountaineers rescued from Mt. Annapurna in Nepal

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kathmandu, April 18: Two Indians, prominent woman climber Baljeet Kaur and the youngest Indian to climb Mt Everest in 2010, Arjun Vajpayee, were rescued from Mt Annapurna in Nepal Tuesday, officials from the expedition organisers said.

Kaur, 27, who scaled the world's 10th highest peak without using supplemental oxygen, went missing near Camp IV while descending from the summit point on Monday. She was rescued from

7,363m after an aerial search team located her above Camp IV, Chairman at Pioneer Adventure Pasang Sherpa, was quoted as saying by the Himalayan Times newspaper.

"She has suffered from frostbite," Sherpa said. Kaur has been admitted to CIWEC Hospital in Kathmandu for treatment. Kaur was seen descending alone towards Camp IV by the aerial search team, according to Sherpa.

The leading Indian woman climber, who was left alone below the summit point, remained out



of radio contact till Tuesday morning, the report added. An aerial search mission was initiated Tuesday morning only after she managed to send a radio signal asking for 'immediate help'.

According to Sherpa, her GPS location has indicated an altitude of 7,375m (24,193ft). She climbed Mt Annapurna along with two Sherpa guides at around 5:15 pm on Monday. At least three helicopters were mobilised to trace her.

In May last year, Kaur, from Himachal Pradesh, scaled Mt Lhotse and became the first Indian climber

to have climbed four 8000-meter peaks in a single season. Indian climber Arjun Vajpayi was also rescued from 6,800 metres. Seven Summit Trek's Expedition Director Chhawang Dawa Sherpa said.

"He has sustained injuries," Department of Tourism Director Yubraj Khatiwada was quoted as saying in The Kathmandu Post newspaper. Vajpai, 29, was admitted for treatment to Hams Hospital after being airlifted to Kathmandu.

He was awarded by Guinness World Records in 2022 for becoming the youngest person to climb two

higher 8000ers (Mt. Everest in 2010 and Summit Lhotse in May 2011). Vajpai has already scaled Mt. Everest, Mt. Lhotse, Mt. Makalu, Mt. Kangchenjunga, Mt. Manaslu, and Cho-Oyu, making several mountaineering world records.

On Monday, Anurag Malu, a resident of Kishangarh in Rajasthan, went missing while descending from Camp III of Mt. Annapurna. A team of five Sherpa climbers has been conducting a ground search for Malu, who fell from around 6,000 metres into a deep crevasse.

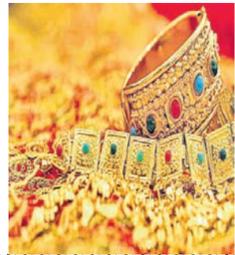


**The fact that India was able to increase its imports very dramatically over the last year, below the price cap, was a great thing. That is exactly what the price cap was designed to do**

SPENCER DALE | BP CHIEF ECONOMIST

## GEMS, JEWELLERY EXPORTS DECLINE 23.7% IN MARCH

India's overall gems and jewellery exports grew marginally by 2.48 per cent to Rs 3,00,462.52 crore in 2022-23 due to global challenges like inflation, the Russia-Ukraine war and the lockdown in China for almost six months, GJEPC said Tuesday. The total gems and jewellery exports during 2021-22 stood at Rs 2,93,193.19 crores, the Gem and Jewellery Export Promotion Council said in a statement.



## of the day quote

We are bringing in tried and tested technology - 28 nm, 40 nm, which is the best for ICT devices, automobiles, smartphones, which are...Decently priced. With semiconductors and displays, we will be making 60 per cent of every electronic device inside India

AKARSH HEBBAR | VEDANTA SEMICONDUCTOR AND DISPLAY BUSINESS, GLOBAL MD

Our strategy is very clear. One is premiumisation and the second has to be naturally in line with global positioning, electrification

ASHISH GUPTA | VOLKSWAGEN PASSENGER CARS INDIA BRAND DIRECTOR

My mantra for the exponential growth of the Indian Textiles and Apparel sector is investment, innovation and integration of the value chain. The idea is to align the industry's approach with the government's vision to make India a favoured textiles destination

MITHILESHWAR THAKUR | SECRETARY GENERAL OF AEPC

## India plans to appeal against WTO panel ruling on IT tariffs

According to the WTO, the country violated global trading rules by imposing tariffs on some IT products



REUTERS

New Delhi, April 18: India is planning to appeal against a ruling from a panel at the World Trade Organisation (WTO) that the country violated global trading rules by imposing tariffs on some IT products, a government source said.

Monday, the WTO panel gave its ruling related to a 2019 dispute with the European Union, Japan and Taiwan over import duties on IT products.

"Yes, India will go in to appeal," a trade ministry source, briefed on the government position, told Reuters. The official did not want

to be named as discussions are private.

India's trade ministry did not immediately reply to an email seeking comment.

If India appeals, the case will sit in legal purgatory since the WTO's top appeals bench is no longer functioning due to US opposition to judge appointments.

In 2019, the EU challenged India's introduction of import duties of between 7.5 per cent and 20 per cent for a wide range of IT products, such as mobile phones and components, as well as integrated circuits, saying they exceeded the maximum rate. Japan and Taiwan filed similar complaints that same year.

## Cook launches Apple's first India store

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, Apr 18: Apple's chief executive Tim Cook Tuesday launched the iconic consumer technology company's first retail store in India, welcoming customers into the facility inside a mall in suburban BKC.

"The energy, creativity, and passion in Mumbai is incredible! We are so excited to open Apple BKC - our first store in India," Cook, who opened the doors of the store for customers, tweeted.

Hundreds of customers had queued up since last night to be among the first ones to shop or get a feel of the store, which comes 25 years after the company first started selling its products and services in the country through partners.

Dressed in a black-t and grey pants and accompanied by the company's senior vice president for retail Deirdre O'Brien, Cook opened the doors of the store to walk into a crowded foyer to pose for the media, and then started welcoming customers into the store.

Customers took selfies with Cook, sought autographs and exchanged pleasantries before going in. One among them, a designer from Mumbai, carried his nearly four-decade-old Mac, a product which revolutionised personal com-



puting and established Apple as a strong brand with a design focus, with him.

"I brought this just to show Apple's journey from 1984. This is the first Mac SE which was launched in 1984. I have been using Apple products since 1984. Long journey it has been," said the de-

signer from suburban Goregaon, who had joined the queue at 6 am Tuesday and got more than just selfies and simple pleasantries with the Apple top executives.

"I have been here since last night 8 pm, been camping outside the Apple store for about 15 hours now. I haven't had breakfast, haven't

At present Apple accounts for just 3 per cent share in the highly competitive smartphone market dominated by Chinese and Korean brands, but has lately seen high growth in sales, which establishes India's importance

had a shower and you can see us all drenched in sweat. But yeah, we are super excited," said the first customer to go in, who wished to buy an Apple watch.

At present Apple accounts for just 3 per cent share in the highly competitive smartphone market dominated by Chinese and Korean brands, but has lately seen high growth in sales, which establishes India's importance. The company is also keen to expand sourcing of products or components from the country, as it looks to diversify its supply chain beyond China.

The company employs 2,500 people in the country and has indirectly helped create 10 lakh jobs through its app ecosystem.

## Deal activity declines 35% amid global recession fear



AGENCIES

Mumbai, April 18: Deal activities declined 35 per cent to USD 9.7 billion across 332 transactions in the first quarter of 2023 due to an overall decline in deal activities as the fear of a global recession has gained more traction amid the continuing war on Ukraine, according to an industry report.

Of the total deals, M&As constituted more than half, still lower by 21 per cent at USD 4.4 billion involving 76 deals, down 56 per cent during the March quarter, according to the data collated by Grant Thornton. In volume terms, overall deals fell by 46 per cent to 332 transactions.

The main reason for the poor show was the tepid IPO market, which plunged to USD 84.4 million from USD 1 billion in Q1 of 2022.

On the other hand, QIP witnessed two fundraise - Spicejet's cargo and logistics business raising USD 301 million, followed by Data Patterns raising USD 60 million. However, it was less than USD 541 million in Q1 of 2022.

Another reason is the deepening funding winter, resulting in PE activity recording its lowest in the last eight quarters, and the recent collapse of the Silicon Valley Bank in the US only added to the dry-run.

The decline in mergers and acquisitions activity, 21 per cent lower

at USD 4.4 billion, was led by a 62 per cent fall in domestic activity, recording the third-lowest quarterly deal volumes for any given quarter since 2011.

The startup sector continued to lead the deal activity with 22 per cent of the deals for the quarter but was 71 per cent lower over Q1 2022, registering only 17 deals worth USD 69 million.

IT and pharma sectors remained active, accounting for 28 per cent of the overall M&A volumes for the quarter. Driven by Jaypee Infratech's insolvency case led by Suraksha Realty, the real estate sector accounted for 55 per cent of the quarter's value, amounting to USD 2.5 billion, marking the highest recorded transaction in this sector in the last 12 years.

Private equity activity also witnessed a decline to the tune of 42 per cent in volume and 44 per cent in value, recording 256 deals worth USD 5.3 billion. This was the lowest quarterly volume and value since Q4 of 2020.

The startup sector occupied the larger share of volumes with 60 per cent of deals. Driven by six high-value deals of USD 100 plus million, the e-commerce sector accounted for 30 per cent of the quarter's deal value, amounting to USD 1.3 billion.

The activity was led by Phonepe, which raised USD 350 million and USD 100 million each in the two funding rounds. The quarter also saw the largest ever series A by InsuranceDekho raising USD 150 million.

## ESIC adds 16.03 lakh new subscribers in Feb

AGENCIES

New Delhi, April 18: Employees' State Insurance Corporation (ESIC) added 16.03 lakh new subscribers in February 2023, according to provisional payroll data released Tuesday.

As per the data, around 11,000 new establishments were registered in February under the Employees' State Insurance (ESI) scheme ensuring social security cover to their employees.

Employees up to age of 25 years constitute the major chunk of new registrations, with 7.42 lakh such employees added during the month, a labour ministry statement said.

It shows that the youth of the nation are getting good employment opportunities in the country, the ministry said.

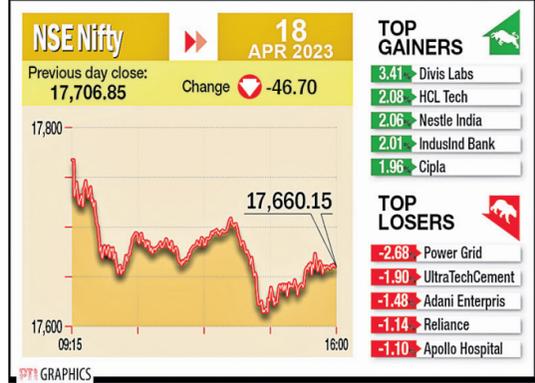
Gender-wise analysis of the payroll data also indicates addition of 3.12 lakh female workers under ESI scheme.

Also, a total 49 transgender employees were registered under ESI scheme during the month under review, reflecting ESIC's committed to deliver its benefits to every section of the society.

The payroll data is provisional since data generation is a continuous exercise, it stated.



## Sensex, Nifty fall for 2nd day



AGENCIES

Mumbai, April 18: Benchmark equity indices Sensex and Nifty closed lower for a second day Tuesday due to profit-taking in select banking, power and FMCG stocks amid mixed global markets and foreign fund outflows.

Fall in index major Reliance Industries, HDFC Bank and ICICI Bank also dented sentiment.

Reversing its early gains, the 30-share BSE Sensex fell 183.74 points or 0.31 per cent to settle at 59,727.01. During the day, it declined 331.45 points or 0.55 per cent to a low of 59,579.30.

The broader NSE Nifty dipped 46.70 points or 0.26 per cent to end at 17,660.15 as 29 of its stocks declined while 21 advanced. After a gap-up opening, the index moved in a range of 17,766.60 to 17,610.20 during the day.

Among Sensex stocks, PowerGrid fell the most by 2.62 per cent. UltraTech Cement, Titan, Reliance Industries, Bajaj Finance, Mahindra

& Mahindra, ICICI Bank, Tata Consultancy Services, Tech Mahindra, ITC and HDFC Bank were among the major laggards.

Nestle India bucked the trend, closing with gains of 1.99 per cent. HCL Technologies, IndusInd Bank, Wipro, Maruti, Larsen & Toubro and Asian Paints were among the gainers.

In the broader market, the BSE midcap gauge climbed 0.52 per cent and smallcap index gained 0.22 per cent.

Among indices, utilities fell 0.81 per cent, power went lower by 0.76 per cent, telecommunication declined by 0.71 per cent, consumer durables (0.62 per cent) and commodities (0.18 per cent). Realty, healthcare, metal, IT and tech were among the winners.

Meanwhile, global oil benchmark Brent crude dipped 0.12 per cent to USD 84.66 per barrel.

Foreign portfolio investors of flooded equities worth Rs 533.20 crore Monday, according to exchange data.

## CRYPTOVERSE: BITCOIN MINERS ESCAPE THE BEAR TRAP

The power-hungry companies that pump new bitcoin into circulation have been thrown a lifeline by the cryptocurrency's rally to above \$30,000 this year

REUTERS

Tokyo, April 18: Beleaguered bitcoin miners are finally feeling the spring sunshine after a cold, hard crypto winter.

The power-hungry companies that pump new bitcoin into circulation have been thrown a lifeline by the cryptocurrency's rally to above \$30,000 this year, which has conspired with falling electricity prices to boost their profitability.

The 30-day average of mining revenues has risen to \$27.34 million a day, the highest level since last June, according to data from Blockchain.com.

That's a relief for miners that struggled to service large debt burdens as revenues languished between \$15 million and \$21 million for most of the second half of 2022. They're still some way off a peak of \$61.2 million hit in November 2021, though.

"Many public miners were on the brink of bankruptcy at the end of last year. At the current bitcoin

price, these companies' cash flows have substantially improved and most of them should have no problem paying their obligations," said Jaran Mellerud, analyst at bitcoin mining services company Luxor.

Miners' debt-to-equity ratios now look much healthier, said Mellerud, adding that many companies had restructured and paid down debt over the past few months.

Marathon Digital Holdings' debt-to-equity ratio has dropped to 0.5 from 2 since the start of this year; for example, while Greenidge Generation Holdings' has dropped to 5.8 from 11.7, according to data from Luxor.

The spring thaw has seen investors flock back to publicly traded crypto mining companies; Among the biggest players, Marathon and Riot Platforms have seen their share price more than triple this year, while the Valkyrie Bitcoin Miners ETF is up 162% and Greenidge has gained 137%. But they've all still lost money since early 2022.



Bitcoin mining is the process by which a network of computers validates a block of transactions on the blockchain. Miners are rewarded with bitcoin for completing a block, competing against other miners by solving intricate

maths puzzles with energy-intensive computing systems, meaning electricity comprises a significant chunk of their operating costs.

Declines in power prices, particularly in the U.S., have eased pressure on company margins, ac-

ording to analysts at BTIG, who said the electricity cost for producing one bitcoin has fallen about 40% from the end of last year.

That means that despite both the computing power available on the network and mining difficulty rising steadily to new all time highs - meaning it should take more power to mine one block - the 30-day average cost-per-transaction for miners has fallen to its lowest level since September, Blockchain.com data showed.

### OUT OF THE WOODS?

Miners can't get too cozy though, given their fortunes are tied to bitcoin's capricious price trajectory.

"If we see bitcoin top out and consolidate, the run-up in miners may do the same, we expect to see more volatility as we head into summer," said Kevin Kelly, head of research at Delphi Digital, although he sees a favorable environment for crypto persisting through 2023, compared with last year.

Despite improvements in their balance sheets, many miners still

have plenty of debt to pay down and are still struggling, said Luxor's Mellerud.

"The bitcoin price increase has bought these companies time, but it would be detrimental for these companies if it were to fall back down to \$20,000," he said.

Most companies are focusing on debt reduction rather than spending on new equipment, BTIG said, even as the estimated cost of new mining rigs has dropped around 69% since the end of 2021.

There are some exceptions however, with CleanSpark taking advantage of falling prices to purchase of 45,000 new mining rigs, which would nearly double its computing power.

A rapid rise in power prices or a fast fall in bitcoin could usher in a new cold spell. For now though, the sun is shining.

"I don't think we're completely out of the woods, but I think the worst is behind us," said Marcus Sotiriou, analyst at digital asset broker GlobalBlock.

# GREEN, BOWLERS SEAL MI WIN

# Inconsistent LSG face RR test

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Jaipur, April 18: Blowing hot and cold, Lucknow Super Giants will look to tick all the boxes and return to winning ways when they clash with table-toppers Rajasthan Royals in an IPL match here Wednesday.

With three wins and two losses so far, LSG is a team overflowing with talent but they have missed a trick or two at times to find themselves on the losing side twice.

In the last match against the Punjab Kings, Lucknow couldn't get enough runs in the middle overs, leaving them 10-15 runs short in the end.

While KL Rahul returning to form with a sizzling 56-ball 74 is a big positive, LSG will rue the scoring opportunities they squandered in the middle overs.

Lucknow have no dearth of power in their batting, with Kyle Mayers at the top and Nicholas Pooran and Marcus Stoinis in the middle capable of pulverising any opposition.

While Mayers did his job in the powerplay, he, perhaps, needs to think about building partnerships after the first six overs, especially with Deepak Hooda struggling to get runs at the top.

Against PBKS, LSG also committed the mistake of bringing in the talented Ravi Bishnoi too late, allowing the batters to take the chase deep into the final over.

Bishnoi is a wily customer with a mean googly, and skipper Rahul may think of using him in the middle as well, instead of holding him back for the death overs. Krishnappa Gowtham and Krunal Pandya too have done well in their respective roles.

Among the fast bowlers, LSG



possess the fiery pace of Mark Wood and Avesh Khan. Yuvvir Singh Charak too will look to carry on his good run after a sensational two-wicket haul on debut against Punjab.

However, for Lucknow, it will be an uphill task to disturb the appeal of the Royals, who have performed like a well-oiled machine with a hat-trick of wins to grab the top spot in the IPL standings.

RR possess a formidable batting line-up with the likes of Yashasvi Jaiswal, Jos Buttler and Sanju Samson ensuring that the side has a good start and has enough runs in the powerplay.

While Buttler, with 204 runs has been their highest run-scorer, Jaiswal has struck at 149.45 during his 136 runs so far in the IPL. And, when the duo failed the other day against GT, skipper Samson rose to the occasion, bailing out the team with a 32-ball 80 as West Indian Shimron Hetmyer completed the job with a 26-ball 56. Devdutt Padikkal too has come up with cameos but

Riyan Parag hasn't been able to grab the opportunities.

RR also has some quality spinners, with the trio of Yuzvendra Chahal, Adam Zampa and Ravichandran Ashwin making life difficult for the opposition.

It was the spinners who had won them the match against Chennai Super Kings, while pace spearhead Trent Boult did the job against Delhi Capital by taking those two wickets in the first over to derail their chase. Medium pacer Sandeep Sharma too has used all his experience, taking wickets regularly during his spells.



came from skipper Rohit Sharma (28 off 18) and Ishan Kishan (38 off 31).

The 20-year-old Varma has been the stand out batter in the star studded Mumbai line-up and his rare talent and skill was on display again in his crucial cameo. Mumbai were finding it tough to get going in the middle overs but Varma's high quality knock gave the innings the much-needed momentum.

The lanky Marco Jansen was punished for 21 runs in the 15th over when Varma dispatched him for successive sixes, one in the cow corner and the other over the bowler's head.

In the following over, the south-paw used his wrists beautifully for a four over extra cover off leggie Mayank Markande before sweeping him for a maximum for a 14-run over.

Green, who struggled to get his timing right initially, got down to business after Varma's dismissal. The tall right-hander hammered three straight fours off T Natarajan to bring up his half century before collecting a straight six in a 20-run over.

Natarajan leaked runs in the 20th over and ended up conceding 50 runs in his four overs. Mumbai managed to smash 62 runs in the last five overs.

**BRIEF SCORES:** MI 192/5 (Cameron Green 64 n o, Ishan Kishan 38, Tilak Varma 37, Rohit Sharma 28, Marco Jansen 2/43, Bhuvneshwar Kumar 1/31) beat SRH 178 (Mayank Agarwal 48, Heinrich Klaasen 36, Riley Meredith 2/33, Jason Behrendorff 2/37) by 14 runs.

## KOHLI FINED FOR CODE OF CONDUCT VIOLATION

**Bangalore:** RCB batter Virat Kohli has been fined 10 per cent of his match fee for breaching the IPL Code of Conduct during the team's eight-run loss to Chennai Super Kings (CSK) at the M Chinnaswamy Stadium. A statement said that Kohli had breached the rules under Article 2.2 of the IPL Code of Conduct. While the IPL statement did not go into details about the incident, which attracted the code of conduct violation, it could have been due to the former RCB skipper's over-the-top celebration following CSK middle-order batter Shivam Dube's dismissal off the bowling of Wayne Parnell Monday. An IPL statement said Kohli had "admitted to the Level 1 offence under Article 2.2 of the IPL Code of Conduct." "For Level 1 breaches of the Code of Conduct, the Match Referee's decision is final and binding," the statement added.

## CSK TARGETING 200-PLUS STRIKE RATE: CONWAY

**Bangalore:** CSK opener Devon Conway has sounded an ominous warning to his team's opponents, saying his side has been aiming for 200-plus strike rates on good batting surfaces to put up imposing totals, which give them better chances of winning matches. "Tonight (Monday) was a really good surface to bat on, so for us to get those big totals it's about trying to create a strike rate of around 200-plus," said Conway at the post-match press conference. Conway indicated it wasn't easy for players to go about their job seamlessly with the shadow of the hovering spider cam causing problems. He added that things shouldn't come to a point where technology interferes with the game. Conway also praised young Sri Lankan bowler Matheesha Pathirana's efforts in winning the match for CSK.

## MAXWELL LAUDS CSK'S LEFT-HANDED BATTERS

**Bangalore:** RCB all-rounder Glenn Maxwell feels CSK's left-handers did the trick for the four-time champions by exploiting the shorter boundaries to the hilt to earn a crucial eight-run win in their IPL clash here. "I think with short boundaries (at the M Chinnaswamy Stadium), they played heavy left-handers. Devon Conway batted for a long period in that innings," said Maxwell. The Australian added that bringing in left-arm spinner Shahbaz Ahmed to bowl to left-handers would have been a risky proposition. "I think, it would have been a risk to bowl Shahbaz Ahmed to those guys," said Maxwell, though he added that the 28-year-old all-rounder was a "clever bowler". He said just one error - his or Faf du Plessis' dismissal - had a cascading effect and, sort of, set off a chain of errors.

## SEHWAG ASKS CHENNAI SUPER KINGS BOWLERS TO BUCK UP

**NEW DELHI:** Former India opener Virender Sehwag feels CSK bowlers are repeatedly letting MS Dhoni down and has urged them to "buck up" to avoid the risk of getting their talismanic skipper "banned". CSK posted an imposing 226/6 in their IPL match against RCB Monday, but Dhoni struggled to defend the total with his bowlers conceding six wickets before prevailing over by eight runs. "Dhoni was not looking happy because he has mentioned it before that he wants the bowlers to reduce the number of no balls and wides," Sehwag said on Cricbuzz. "It shouldn't go to a stage where Dhoni gets banned and CSK has to take the field without their captain." He added, "Dhoni has said earlier too to restrict wides and no balls. And to bowl six wides, is really disappointing." Seamer Tushar Deshpande conceded three wides to continue his poor run in the IPL, but Sehwag was livid with their spinner Maheesh Theekshana for bowling wide. "It's really disappointing when you bowl so many wides, especially by a spinner. At least they should control their wides. With the kind of knee injury he has, it appears he might play only a handful of matches more anyway. He is constantly pushing himself, but if his bowlers are bowling so many wides and no balls, then Dhoni will have to take rest," Sehwag added. A knee injury to Ben Stokes means that the English stalwart is unable to bowl. CSK's attack is also plagued by injuries to Deepak Chahar, Mukesh Choudhary and Sisanda Mangala. "I've been saying from day one Chennai is thin on bowling. It's their weak link. They have to focus on their bowling. They have to manage with this, they will have to bowl better, execute better," Sehwag said.

# Liverpool end barren run in style



**IMPRESSIVE OUTING:** Mohamed Salah goes for left-footed shot for his first goal against Leeds, Monday

ASSOCIATED PRESS

**Leeds, April 18:** Liverpool won for the first time in five English Premier League games after thrashing Leeds 6-1. Liverpool hadn't tasted victory in more than six weeks, since routing Manchester United 7-0.

But after Cody Gakpo's opener and Mohamed Salah's quickfire addition for a 2-0 halftime lead Monday, Liverpool tore apart Leeds in the second half. Salah and Diogo Jota finished with a pair each, and Darwin Nunez came off the bench to score late.

Leeds halved the deficit two minutes after the break when Ibrahima Konate was caught in possession by Luis Sinisterra, who lifted his effort over goalkeeper Alisson to make it 2-1.

But the Leeds defense collapsed in familiar fashion, suffering consecutive heavy home defeats eight days after losing to Crystal Palace 5-1. Leeds has conceded 60 league goals, more than any other side,

Liverpool remained eighth in the standings, two points behind Brighton. Leeds' survival hopes were dealt another big blow by staying 16th, two points above the drop zone.

Liverpool went ahead in the 34th minute in controversial fashion. Trent Alexander-Arnold appeared to use his arm to control the ball when dispossessing Junior Firpo. But referee Craig Pawson allowed play to continue and there was no VAR intervention after Alexander-Arnold received a return pass from Salah before crossing low for Gakpo to turn home.

There was nothing controversial about the visitors' second goal. Jota robbed Weston McKennie in midfield and slipped in Salah, who smashed a left-footed finish into the top corner from the left edge of the penalty area. The visitors had struck twice in four minutes from their first two chances to assume full control by halftime.

Leeds then hauled itself back two

minutes after the restart. Ibrahima Konate was caught in possession by Sinisterra and the Colombian showed strength and composure to sink a neat finish over Alisson.

But Liverpool restored the two-goal lead five minutes later. Jota raced on to Jones' defense-splitting pass and curled a first-time shot beyond Illan Meslier.

Leeds struck a post through Brenden Aaronson's long-range effort and Salah had an effort ruled out for offside after a VAR check before Liverpool put the result beyond doubt in the 64th.

Robertson's cross was helped on by Gakpo and the unmarked Salah converted his 15th league goal at the far post. Liverpool rubber-stamped its superiority with a fifth goal through Jota's scuffed finish from Jordan Henderson's cross in the 73rd.

The rout was completed in the final minute, with substitute Nunez's clinical finish from Alexander-Arnold's pass ruled outside by VAR.

# Man City aim to finish off Bayern Munich in CL

ASSOCIATED PRESS

**Duesseldorf, April 18:** Manchester City and Bayern Munich's seasons are each defined by one signing - for better or worse. As City prepare to finish off Bayern in the Champions League quarterfinals on Wednesday after beating the German champions 3-0 in the first leg, Erling Haaland has redefined the role of a modern striker.

Haaland has scored 47 goals in 40 games in all competitions, and has a possible 13 more games to play this season. The Norwegian scored against Bayern in the first leg after demolishing another German team, Leipzig, with five goals in the previous round.

## Jyothi matches world record to secure top seed

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Antalya, April 18:** Star Indian woman compound archer Jyothi Surekha Vennam matched the record qualifying score of 713 points to top the leaderboard in the season-opening World Cup Stage 1 here Tuesday.

Powered by Jyothi's joint world record score, the Indian women's team grabbed the top seedings ahead of Mexico, as the two sides got a first-round bye and will open their campaign in the quarters.

The 2021 World Championship silver medalist landed the arrow on target an incredible 66 times out of 72 shots to match Sara Lopez's world record score that she had achieved during the 2015 Colombian National selections.

Having totalled 353 in the first six rounds, the Telangana archer was bang on target as she shot 360 out of 360 en route to smashing a six-year-old Asian record.

Korean archer So Chaewon held the previous Asian record qualifying score of 709 shot at the 2017 Asian Championship in Dhaka.

Then there's Sadio Mané. The Senegal forward was supposed to reshape Bayern's attack into a fluid, flexible threat less reliant on a traditional striker when he joined from Liverpool last year as Robert Lewandowski left.

However, Mané has contributed little on the field in recent months and upset squad stability. He has been a bit-part player ever since a leg injury ruled him out of the World Cup, and was suspended from the squad for Bayern's draw at Hoffenheim Saturday for what the club called "misconduct" after confronting teammate Leroy Sané in the locker room following the loss



City would bank on Kevin de Bruyne and Erling Haaland against Bayern

to City. German media reported he had struck Sané in the face.

# ACT is a litmus test for Asiad: Harman



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Bangalore, April 18:** Indian men's hockey team captain Harmanpreet Singh Tuesday said the upcoming Asian Champions Trophy (ACT) in Chennai will be a "litmus test" for the side ahead of the Asian Games (Asiad) to be held in September-October later this year.

The seventh edition of the ACT is scheduled to be held from August 3 to 12, serving as a precursor to

# ACT is a litmus test for Asiad: Harman

against the same teams with whom we will be competing in the Asian Games. It will be a litmus test for the team ahead of the Asian Games.

"It will also give us a good understanding of our opponents and we can further prepare well for the Asian Games where we aim to win the gold medal and directly qualify for the Paris 2024 Olympics."

India won the ACT in the inaugural edition in 2011 and beat Pakistan in the final in 2016 to reclaim the title. In the following edition in 2018, India were joint winners with Pakistan after rain affected the proceedings in Muscat.

In the previous edition in 2021 held in Dhaka, the Indian team finished with a bronze medal. With Korea and Malaysia showcasing good form in World Cup 2023 in Bhubaneswar-Rourkela, Harmanpreet said that the competition will be intense.

"Korea has shown great progress over the last couple of years. They won the Asia Cup in Jakarta last year and also did very well in the World Cup," the ace dragflicker said. "Malaysia too is a strong contender for the title and they continue to have one of the best penalty-corner attacks. It will undoubtedly be a hard-fought tournament."